

Annual Ipsos statement for KM Media Group 2017

About us

KM Media Group is an independent publisher employing 84 journalists across Kent.

We publish weekly paid-for and free newspapers and the kentonline.co.uk digital network, an umbrella for our 26 local news portals and associated kmfm, Kent Business and What's On brands.

We also operate a network of kmfm radio stations, whose output is subject to regulation by Ofcom.

KM Media Group also works in partnership with other organisations. Our content is syndicated by South West News Service whilst we jointly hold a terrestrial television licence with the University of Kent.

The terrestrial service, serving Maidstone and Tonbridge, launched in 2017 and is subject to regulation by Ofcom.

We hold two licences for Local Democracy Reporters, who are funded by the BBC and employed by KM Media Group. The reporters are employed on standard KM terms and are thus obligated to abide by the Editors' Code.

In April 2017 KM was wholly acquired by Iliffe Media Ltd, a company with a similar publishing ethos to KM. However, we continue to operate as a separate publishing unit.

Our products

We publish the following weekly paid-for newspapers:

Kent Messenger, with editions for Maidstone, Malling and Weald

Medway Messenger

Sittingbourne Messenger

Kentish Gazette

Herne Bay Gazette

Whitstable Gazette

Faversham News

Kentish Express, with editions for Ashford, Romney Marsh and Tenterden

Folkestone and Hythe Express, with editions for Folkestone and Hythe

Gravesend Messenger
Dartford Messenger
East Kent Mercury, with editions for Deal and Sandwich
Dover Mercury
Sittingbourne News Extra
Sheerness Times Guardian

We publish the monthly Kent Business, which runs inside the Kent Messenger and Medway Messenger. We are also working in partnership with the independent Times of Tunbridge Wells series, which begins carrying Kent Business from February 2017.

We publish a series of free newspapers, the Extras, with editions for Medway, Gravesham, and Thanet.

Our kentonline.co.uk network is an umbrella site encompassing 26 local news portals, What's On, kmfm and Kent Business.

Responsible person

The responsible person is editorial director Ian Carter, who also sits on the Editors' Code committee. His contact details are icarter@thekmgroup.co.uk or 07808 632908.

Training

All editorial staff are issued with copies of the Editors' Code as part of their induction process.

Given our interests in television and radio, we occasionally recruit reporters who possess BCTJ qualifications rather than NCTJ. However, all editorial staff are required to study the Editors' Code irrespective of the platform they work on.

We have signed up to the Press Association's online training for a second year and all staff are required to pass all modules. We receive an automated alert once a member of the editorial team is due to resit the module at the 12 month point.

New licences are purchased each time a new member of staff joins the KM, with a requirement to complete all modules with two weeks of starting. We have a 100% completion rate.

Refresher courses also take place every six months, which include reviews and discussion of recent published adjudications.

Staff were also issued with emailed guidance about changes to the Editors' Code in January 2018 and this was followed up with editors at a group-wide meeting on February 2.

Compliance with the Code

There were no upheld complaints in 2017. One complaint was resolved via our own internal procedures through a letter from the editor.

KM Group has robust procedures in place to ensure all complaints are dealt with promptly.

A complaint received via our [online form](#) generates an email which goes to all editors. We then log who is dealing with the complaint and what the outcome is. We diary all complaints so we are aware when we are approaching the 28 day mark.

Corrections and clarifications appear on letters pages when necessary. Placeholder copy takes the place of any corrections where none exist.

Details of all ongoing complaints are also circulated to all KM Media Group board members.

Pre-publication guidance

KM Media Group contracts a legal advisor to provide pre-publication advice and we are also subscribed to the News Media Association's legal advice service. All editorial staff are aware of these facilities, and pre-publication advice is obligatory in some instances (for example, court cases involving sexual offences).

All staff are also aware of the availability of Ipso's pre-publication advice service, whilst editorial director Ian Carter sits on the Editors' Code committee.