

15/16

Annual Report

Society of Editors

www.societyofeditors.org



fighting for media freedom

The Society of Editors was formed by a merger of the Guild of Editors and the Association of British Editors in April 1999.

Its members are editors, managing editors, editorial directors, training editors, editors-in-chief and deputy editors in national, regional and local newspapers, magazines, radio, television and online media, media lawyers and academics in journalism education.

They are as different as the publications, programmes and websites they create and the communities and audiences they serve.

But they share the values that matter:

- The universal right to freedom of expression
- The importance of the vitality of the news media in a democratic society
- The promotion of press and broadcasting freedom and the public's right to know
- The commitment to high editorial standards

These values give the Society the integrity and authority to influence debate on press and broadcasting freedom, ethics and the culture and business of news media.

To keep up to date with the society's work visit our website:
www.societyofeditors.org

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President's Report

Being President of the Society is a privilege. It offers a grandstand seat from which to witness the energy and determination that editors and journalists apply to meeting – and beating – the huge challenges facing our industry.

Lesser mortals might be worn down by the doom mongers, and take their bats home. Not us. Whether it is commercial pressures, threats to media freedom from those who prefer the public is kept in the dark, or the incessant pace of technical and editorial change, we remain at the sharp end.

By their very nature, journalists relish something new every day and thrive on deadlines. That is why they have adapted so well to the digital revolution, the thrill of testing new platforms, and the demands of diverse audiences.

While our first focus must be on what both potential and loyal traditional audiences require as well as how we can find the revenue to cover the costs of

news gathering, the Society's special role is to maintain our freedom to report.

Our usually competitive industry has pulled together to defend itself from multiple threats to its ability to inform the public. That is why the Society used its 2015 annual conference to launch a campaign to defend the public's right to know. Alongside the Campaign for Freedom of Information, guided by dedicated director Maurice Frankel, the Society's #HandsOffFOI campaign had a major impact on the review of the Act.

The Society's efforts in encouraging editors and the wider public to oppose proposals to restrict the scope of the Act, charge for requests and, rather bizarrely, reject calls by Russell Group universities to allow them to be exempt from the important legislation, resulted in a government back-track. Editors across the country, nationally, regionally and locally, wrote to the Prime Minister, lobbied their MPs and highlighted the public interest journalism they had produced thanks to the Act. They gave 30,000 reasons why the review commission should think again about restricting the legislation.

The government undoubtedly underestimated the strength of feeling when it called for the review. The outcome was that ministers decided not to make any legislative changes to FOI. While common

sense is always welcome, complacency must be avoided. The campaign must continue to increase the scope of the Act, and to ensure it is not restricted.

My predecessor, Doug Wills, told the London conference that over the course of the event, delegates would hear more about raising revenue from content, how to make money from advertising and making the best use of social media. He did not disappoint. We heard practical, state-of-the-art ideas to take back to newsrooms.

He went on to highlight the work of the Society and successes such as the strides in the family courts where secrecy is slowly being replaced by transparency and openness, and gradual attempts to improve relationships between the police and the media at all levels. Work continues on both fronts. This is without mentioning the numerous activities explained in more detail in Jonathan Grun's parliamentary and legal report.

HANDS OFF
FOI

But fighting for the media and defending it against those critics who are only too ready to criticise it, is time-consuming and costly. The public has a right to know what is done in its name and with its money. When the media is attacked, it is ultimately the public that suffers.

That is why the Society's campaign to attract new members and supporters is vital. Newsrooms have changed along with the roles played by those that work in them. The all-seeing singular editor is a personality of the past. If you share the basic objectives of maintaining freedom of expression and the right to give and receive information – fundamental rights so easily taken for granted and therefore equally easily threatened – we welcome you to join the Society.

We are actively seeking new associate members and affiliates to help us turn up the volume of our campaigning work. We encourage deputies, assistants, department heads and journalists generally to sign up at affordable rates to show their commitment

to the freedom to deliver news in whatever way audiences demand, on whatever platforms that exist now, or are yet to be invented. The Society needs your support!

The Society of Editors' National Press Awards and Regional Press Awards showcase the important journalism produced by the whole of the Press on paper and online. Despite the challenges, the standard is undimmed. Similarly, the world looks to the high standards set by UK broadcast and digital media.

Editors and journalists should be proud of all they have achieved, as the Society is proud of its role in maintaining and enhancing the reputation of the media.

This year, as President, I am taking the annual conference up north to Carlisle. And, as to the year ahead, I wish continued success to Ian MacGregor as our President, during what will be another important year for our industry.



Nick Turner
President of the Society of Editors
Digital Strategy Manager, CN Group



Director's Report

The spectacle of journalists being hauled before the courts simply for doing their jobs has hopefully ceased. Sadly, attacks on the public's right to know and the ability of the media to hold government to account, have not.

At the end of Doug Wills' year as president, he reminded us of the battles for media freedom that had still to be fought and won.

Both he and his predecessor Ian Murray presided over the Society through difficult years as enemies of a free, unfettered Press waited for juries to proclaim the guilt of a group of journalists and, by implication, the whole of the trade. It was a relief, then, to see the Elveden affair brought to a close.

A police investigation that had cost millions resulted in jurors displaying a less jaundiced view of journalists and particularly the papers that are read by millions. The Crown Prosecution Service eventually decided to drop charges when jury after jury found

defendants not guilty. Justice delayed was nonetheless justice denied.

In his Society of Editors Lecture last October, Alan Rusbridger celebrated the returning confidence of the UK newspaper industry. Indeed, Fleet Street regained its mojo in 2015 and began to walk tall again – battling for exclusives, informing, entertaining and campaigning on behalf of the public.

In supporting our campaigns it is hard to remember a year in which the industry has been so unified in opposing attacks upon it. An editor's job is to lead his or her troops into the sound of gunfire – and 2015, and now 2016, have provided plenty of examples of that. The industry that is more suited to fierce competition than cosy co-operation kicked back against attempts to shackle the free and vociferous UK media.

Journalists' sources, which should be sacrosanct, have been vigorously defended, as has the need for openness and transparency. More than 100 editors in national, local and regional newspapers, broadcasting and magazines, signed our letter to the Prime Minister, protesting against misuse of terrorism legislation to target journalists. Papers took aim and hit their targets.

The Independent Commission to review the Freedom of Information Act appeared as lacking in independence as it was unwelcome. It was met with opposition across the board. Criticism was levelled at the make-up of the committee, which included former ministers who were on record as opposing the Act. There was also concern about the panel's terms of reference – its remit did not include any assessment of whether or not the Act was considered a success.

Maurice Frankel, Director of the Campaign for Freedom of Information, used his conference speech to call for a campaign to save the Act. Within minutes incoming president Nick Turner

gave him one by launching #HandsOffFOI with support from Press Gazette and HoldTheFrontPage.

Editors were encouraged to join the campaign, sign the petition against proposed changes, and highlight the powerful public interest stories they had been able to uncover over the years thanks to the Act. Written and oral evidence was given to both the Commission and the cross-party review led by Labour's Deputy Leader, Tom Watson. The Commission's call for evidence resulted in considerable reading – 30,000 responses worth!

Ministers backed away from restrictions to FOI and pledged to spread transparency throughout public services. Cultural change is certainly required, but it is difficult to achieve. We must maintain the campaign to change the default switch from 'tell them nothing unless forced' to one where public bodies release everything the public is entitled to see unless there is an exceptional reason for withholding it.

The lack of satisfactory protections for journalism in the Investigatory Powers Bill promised by the then Culture Secretary Sajid Javid at our conference in 2014, is as predictable as it is infuriating. It will only be a matter of time before we witness legislation once again being used for purposes for which it was not intended.

Javid's successor, John Whittingdale, as former Chair of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee and no stranger to the media, used his keynote address to the 2015 conference to voice his belief that he was "not persuaded" to sign into operation laws forcing publishers to pay both sides' legal costs in libel and privacy cases even if they successfully defended an action.

Despite this, he hinted the final decision may ultimately depend on the performance of the Independent Press Standards Organisation and whether chairman Sir Alan Moses' call for changes in budget, structure and management were approved by the Regulatory Funding Company. This has now been achieved and, with an external review of the organisation's effectiveness in place, it is hard to accept criticisms from predictable directions that IPSO is not Leveson-compliant. It has already demonstrated its independence with a number of robust judgements, whether they concern minnows or mammoths.

In the midst of the Government's review of the future of the BBC ahead of its Charter renewal in 2017, swords were not drawn in the Culture Secretary's direction, despite the Head of the BBC Trust also addressing the conference. Rona Fairhead used the occasion to discuss the future of the BBC and concerns that

the Corporation's local online coverage damaged local and regional media.

While recognising the digital arena would play an ever-increasing part in the work of all broadcasters and publishers, she echoed calls for the BBC to work together with local and regional newspapers to ensure all parties benefitted. That is a cause with which we are closely involved.

Despite an increased focus on digital platforms, digital advertising revenue was not set in stone according to PR and advertising guru Sir Martin Sorrell. The Chief Executive of WPP, in a conference conversation with Steve Hewlett of the BBC Radio 4's Media Show, said he now advocates that his clients should have a varied ad spend, and that print is certainly not dead.

That was a sentiment echoed by David Dinsmore, then newly-transformed from editor of The Sun to chief operating officer of News UK. While the reach and influence of content available online cannot be underestimated, he pointed to the fact The Sun's ability to shape public opinion and debate wielded more influence than social networks.

With monotonous regularity relationships between the police and the media again returned to the conference platform. While delegates were provided with an off-the-



Director's Report

record briefing by Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley on counter-terrorism and Norfolk Chief Constable Simon Bailey on historic sex abuse investigations, delegates used the opportunity to call for greater co-operation from the police in releasing information to journalists and promoting openness and transparency – for the benefit of the police as much as the media, and certainly for the public. Unfortunately, that remains an unresolved issue. We are working on it!

We heard from Sylvie Bermann, French Ambassador to the UK at the annual dinner. She spoke of her experiences with the British press, French media and the significance of the Charlie Hebdo attacks on the debate around Press freedom. Her address was followed by a lively repost from Sir Christopher Meyer, former UK ambassador the United States during 9/11, which provided light relief as well a serious defence of the British Press and the Society's campaigns.

The conference saw a trio of influential media figures awarded fellowships of the Society of Editors. The worthy recipients

were Alan Rusbridger, who was presented with the award after delivering the Annual Society Lecture; Ian Beales, former chairman of the Editors' Code Committee; and Maurice Frankel, distinguished Director of the Campaign for Freedom of Information. It is a continuing disgrace that after ten years of the Act being in force we still need the campaign. Constant vigilance is required to resist attempts to row back on the benefits of the Act for the public.

The conference once again topped a remarkable year of campaigning for the Society under the leadership of President Doug Wills. Handing over the reins to incoming President Nick Turner, he said that in the year to come he expected the Society's work would be more vital than ever before. He was not wrong.

The National Press Awards, hosted by LBC's Nick Ferrari, took place at the London Hilton in Park Lane, celebrating the best of national journalism during 2015. The Society was disappointed to see the diversity of newsrooms was not always reflected in the entries. As founders of the Journalism Diversity Fund with

the NCTJ, we are endeavouring to look more closely at the issue, and Sue Ryan is chairing a working party. The awards were generously supported by Camelot which has worked with the Society of Editors since 2001; EY; Wiggin; Wellcome Trust; Google; Luther Pendragon; Gorkana; Press Association; JTI; Reuters; Battleface; The Hilton Park Lane; PCS; BT; Journalists' Charity; and the British Journalism Review.

The Regional Press Awards, also hosted by Ferrari, returned to the Marriott Grosvenor Square Hotel. After the interruption caused by a fire at the previous year's event, the awards featured a celebration of great journalism, but thankfully neither smoke nor fire. Our thanks go to Camelot, UK Power Networks, ASDA, Foot Anstey, Gorkana, JTI, HoldtheFrontPage and the Press Association without whose support the awards could not happen.

The Society could not work effectively without the support of its board members. While we welcome the election of Ian MacGregor, Weekend Editor of the Telegraph, we bid farewell with heartfelt thanks to long-serving Robin Esser, former Executive Managing Editor of the Daily Mail, along with Simon Bucks, formerly of Sky News. The pair were instrumental in so many of the Parliamentary and Legal committee's achievements down the years. We also offered thanks to Graham

Dudman, former Managing Editor of the Sun, Chris Elliott, Readers' Editor of The Guardian, and Paul Connolly from Northern Ireland, who also retired after long and valuable service.

Jonathan Grun must get special mention. Not only is he chairman of the Parliamentary and Legal Committee, he is also vice chairman of the Defence Security Media Advisory committee and secretary of the Editors' Code Committee. Not a bad package of retirement jobs for the Emeritus Editor of the Press Association. He has also twice been president of the Society.

Santha Rasaiah and the team at the News Media Association, and John Battle and the Media Lawyers' Association, continue to offer advice and guidance and champion our causes. As a consultant for the Society, Anthony Longden continues to provide his expertise whenever it is called for.

The small but effective Society of Editors team of Claire Meadows and Angela Upton continues to punch well above its weight, with the invaluable support of Lyn Disley and colleagues at MagStar who provide marketing and admin support, and deliver our events, publications and website.



Bob Satchwell
Executive Director
Society of Editors



Parliamentary and Legal Report

It requires constant vigilance to preserve our freedoms and the Society of Editors has been at the forefront of hard-fought campaigns. When the Society fights on an issue it does so on behalf of the whole of society.

For example, the Freedom of Information Act has shone a bright light into dark corners of our society, which may be why the government wished to water it down. It convened an inquiry that bore all the hallmarks of a kangaroo court. Faced with that threat the Society, in conjunction with Press Gazette and HoldtheFrontPage, launched a campaign to defend FOI.

Speaking at the Society conference in October 2015, incoming President Nick Turner, described the government's plan to curtail FOI as a cynical and dangerous backward step in the long fight for greater openness and transparency.

He added: "If MPs really want to serve their constituents, they will support this campaign to maintain the tremendous work of the Campaign for Freedom of Information."

The #HandsOffFOI campaign was born. As well as encouraging editors and the public to highlight the successes of the Act, we gave evidence, both written and orally, to the Commission headed by Lord Burns and a cross-party review organised by Deputy Labour Leader Tom Watson.

We opposed proposals to introduce fees for requests, called for public service contractors to be subject to requests, and cited the numerous public interest stories that had resulted from the transparency legislation.

We co-ordinated a letter to the Prime Minister expressing widespread concerns with regard to the review. It was signed by more than 140 media organisations – an unprecedented act of solidarity and co-operation. We urged newspapers to run campaigns and to write directly to their MPs opposing the review.

We welcomed the government's announcement that it would not be making any legal changes to the Act in the wake of the Review's report stating that it 'was working well'. The report echoed the Society's opposition to introducing fees for requests and called for a public interest time limit extension to tackle delays in responding to requests.

The report also said the Act should be extended to those who provide public

services under contract and that there was no convincing evidence for the exclusion of universities from the scope of the Act.

It was a victory of sorts – and a warning. There are still those who prefer to stop us informing the public about issues they are entitled to know. Newspapers across the country have done a brilliant job, but pressure must be maintained to ensure the Act is extended rather than curtailed.

In March 2016, more than four years after Deputy Assistant Commissioner Sue Akers of the Metropolitan Police sat in front of the Leveson Inquiry and spoke of the increased resources required for Operation Elveden, the police investigation into allegations of inappropriate payments to police officers and public officials was finally shelved.

The failed prosecutions of journalists undoubtedly humiliated and tarnished the reputation of the Crown Prosecution Service and the Metropolitan Police Service. The lives of innocent reporters who spent years on police bail, were ruined.

It took independent jurors little time to throw out case after case based on the archaic charge of 'conspiracy to commit misconduct in public office' when it had taken years to bring some cases to trial.

They clearly took the view that the journalists really were acting in the public interest.

The Met declared that the Elveden debacle was 'certainly not an attack on journalists or free media'. Perhaps, but police relations with the media had plumbed new depths – fuelled by paranoia and distrust on the part of senior officers. The public has suffered as a result.

We have done our best over the past year to melt the permafrost. Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe asked the Society to help to improve relations. We are now working with the MPS to build on the College of Policing's Code of Ethics in including guidelines on investigative issues including journalistic confidentiality. That is a small step in the right direction.

With the support of the Media Lawyers' Association and the News Media Association, we have worked with the National Police Chiefs' Council in trying to update police and media guidelines, trying to change the mindset which states: 'tell them nothing unless forced to'. That is best described as work in progress.

The Society also worked with the MPS to arrange briefings on counter terrorism that led to an informal voluntary understanding regarding requests to delay

live broadcasting during terrorism events. We will continue to assist in any way that we can.

In other areas of legislation, the Government has so far reneged on its promises to promote freedom of the press and the public's right to know.

Journalists have a moral obligation to protect their sources – the information they provide can benefit the whole of society. And yet the Regulation of Investigatory Powers fiasco – in which police used, some would say abused, their powers to access journalists' phone records – showed how vulnerable our sources can be in a surveillance society.

Despite recommendations by the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Investigatory Powers Bill that it does not go far enough in protecting sources, widespread opposition has currently fallen on deaf ears.

While the Bill requires that a "judicial commissioner" gives prior approval to a police application to obtain information likely to identify a source, the Home Secretary has the power to approve an "urgent warrant". We oppose the lack of a requirement for prior notification to be given to the subject of a communications request and the failure to ensure that the legislation contains similar provisions





to the Police and Criminal Evidence and Terrorism Acts to protect journalistic information.

We remain committed to ensuring that Theresa May's promises when Home Secretary come to fruition, and that the-then Culture Secretary Sajid Javid's assurances to our members at our annual conference in 2014 are not selectively forgotten.

To our dismay, privacy injunctions also re-emerged in 2016. While the public interest in the sex lives of celebrities continues to polarise opinion, court orders that ban the publication in the UK of information which is widely available on social media, on the front page of US magazines and even in Scottish newspapers, is as much of a waste of the courts' time and money as it makes a mockery of the justice system. As the Daily Mail succinctly put it: "the law is an ass". We will continue to campaign against and highlight the absurdity of the draconian legislation.

The Society wrote to Greg Dyke, then chairman of the Football Association to voice concern about requests that local newspapers should not publish the results of under-7 and under-11 youth games. A reply from the chief executive said that while the FA advised newspapers not to publish weekly U7 and U11 football results because it could affect morale

and should be judged as more fun than competitive, it was ultimately a decision for editors.

The Society has helped to facilitate a working group tasked with finding ways in which the BBC could work with regional and local press for mutual benefit. We welcomed a potential deal for the BBC to fund 150 local journalists in a move to boost coverage of local councils and devolved bodies.

The corporation has agreed to commit £8m per year to the partnership to provide a new "public sector reporting service". The deal, which will also involve the formation of a shared data journalism unit and local access to a BBC news bank, is included in the Government's White Paper on the future of the BBC, and as part of its proposed Charter renewal. Practical details have yet to be finalised.

The Society attended a roundtable with then-Culture Secretary John Whittingdale and voiced support for business tax rate relief for local newspapers. We used the occasion to express concern about the implementation of provisions in the Crime and Courts Act for cost orders and exemplary damages as part of the Royal Charter process on Press regulation. Along with the News Media Association, the Society responded to the Press Recognition Panel's request for

comments on the application by IMPRESS for recognition under the Royal Charter. We look forward to discussing these and other industry issues with the new Culture Secretary, Karen Bradley MP in due course.

The Society has monitored the work of the Independent Press Standards Organisation over its first two years. We have welcomed wider publication of its adjudications and the industry's acceptance of changes to ensure budgetary independence and the appointment of an external review of its work. The Society has reprinted the wallet-sized version of the revised Editors' Code of Practice which have been distributed to newsrooms and colleges and universities across the country.

Changes to the Code, which came into effect in January 2016, included a specific reference to headlines in relation to accuracy, a standalone clause on reporting suicide, the need to avoid prejudicial or pejorative reference to an individual's gender identity, the importance of resolving complaints swiftly and an update of the definition of the public interest.

The Parliamentary and Legal committee has continued to meet government ministers and other organisations. These have included Sara Thornton, chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, then

Justice Minister Dominic Raab on the subject of the proposed Bill of Rights. We welcomed proposals to deal with protection for journalism but cautioned that after the problems of recent years any such protection must be straightforward and uncompromising not just for the media but for the wider public's right to freedom of expression.

With the Chief Coroner we discussed issues about access to inquests and information from coroners and we continue to encourage openness in this area alongside clearer guidance. We have worked with the Ministry of Justice and senior judges to improve openness in Family Courts. The Court of Protection pilot scheme has been extended into 2017. Having established the principles the welcome judicial initiatives need the support of the media by covering the courts and reporting information that has until now been hidden.

We again voiced opposition to custodial penalties for breach of the Section 55 of the Data Protection Act because of its chilling effect upon investigative journalism. Despite Christopher Graham's advocacy of tougher penalties, the Society records its thanks to the outgoing Information Commissioner for his support over the years on many other aspects of his work. We hope to continue this with his successor, Elizabeth Denham.

The Society attended a meeting with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) with representatives from IPSO. The meeting focused on racist and homo/transphobic hate speech in the British media. Hopefully we changed some misconceptions.

We have continued to update guidance and matters of interest to members on our website. These included updated the reporting restrictions guidance for the Criminal Courts which was published in February and we are currently discussing updating guidance on reporting diversity with the Department for Communities and Local Government.

We have also been concerned with reporting the Royal Family and particularly the family of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. While foreign media feel they are fair game the UK media's reporting and especially the use of photographs has been appreciated.

The so-called D-Notice system has been reborn as the Defence, Security and Media Advisory system complete with a review of DSMA Notices. The aim is emphasise the mutually beneficial advisory nature of the system and to remove the myth of D-Notices, that have never in fact existed as censorship in peace time. Media side members of the committee made it plain that there should be no "mission creep" in

the scope of the notices that refer solely to matters of national security.

As chairman, I would like to record my thanks and the thanks of the committee to my predecessor Simon Bucks who stepped down from the role last year. He has been a fierce advocate of promoting greater transparency in all areas of government, the police and public bodies and it is partially down to his campaigning that we welcomed the news earlier this year that cameras would be trialled in the criminal courts for the first time. We owe him our thanks.

We are grateful to Santha Rasaiah of the News Media Association, the Media Lawyers' Association and Foot Anstey LLP for their ongoing guidance and advice and our committee members for their continued support.



Jonathan Grun Chairman
Parliamentary and Legal Committee
Emeritus Editor, Press Association

Training Report

The Society has continued to champion the training of journalists, the promotion of high editorial standards and the need for ongoing personal development.

The Society is proud of the part it plays in encouraging and supporting the National Council for the Training of Journalists. The approved courses and qualifications have achieved growing status as a 'must-have' for journalists seeking to enter any part of the industry.

In response to editors' requirements in 2015, the NCTJ unveiled its revamp of the Diploma in Journalism which aims to integrate digital and traditional skills, and cater for all sectors of the industry across all news platforms.

Changes include revising the structure of the diploma to cover mandatory subjects and, for the first time, making skills such as public affairs, shorthand and media law court reporting elective rather than compulsory. While some skills remain essential in any newsroom, it is important that as the industry adapts, our training of journalists properly reflects the newsroom of today especially the ability to spot and develop a story for its intended platform.

Flexibility is key in an industry innovating in response to the many commercial and technological changes it faces. Training and development opportunities through continuous professional development initiatives are essential for both a thriving media and individuals' success. CPD requires a mixture of formal development of skills that can be measured, and informal gathering of knowledge and experience that will provide leaders for the future.

Initiatives to encourage diversity in the industry were also discussed so that newsrooms can better reflect the communities they serve. The Journalism Diversity Fund, set up by the Society of Editors and the NCTJ in 2005, celebrated its 10th anniversary and to date it has awarded more than 200 bursaries to support students from backgrounds of all kinds helping them forge successful careers.

The Society continues to support and promote the fund passionately because it is right so to do, both ethically and for the future success of the media.

The Society supports excellence through its awards handed out in its name in the National Qualification in Journalism exams and the Awards for Excellence that highlight the hard work and dedication that goes into mastering necessary skills.

SoE members have crucial roles on the

NCTJ board and in its curriculum and qualifications committees – Donald Martin, Head of Publishing at DC Thomson, and former chairman of the Society's training committee is on the NCTJ board, along with Brien Beharrell and Roz MacKenzie.

The Society will continue to recommend NCTJ qualifications gained through accredited courses as the basis for a career in journalism. It will support the work of the Independent Press Standards Organisation in its regulatory role. It is always available to offer advice to those involved in the training of journalists, and mentoring and guidance to would-be journalists through talks, lectures and individual counselling. We have created a new membership category so that trainee journalists can demonstrate their commitment to the industry and the Society's aims and objectives through student membership.



Ian Murray
Chairman, Training Committee
Editor in Chief, Southern Daily Echo

As a members' organisation the Society does not seek to make profit. That said, it is important our finances can support our crucial campaigning work and services to members along with the promotional activity we undertake for the industry as a whole.

While the annual accounts for 2015 are fundamentally sound, we continue to rely heavily on the support of the industry and our partners, for which we remain ever grateful, and which we must seek to increase as our activity and influence grows.

The formal accounts for 2015 show we had maintained or increased revenues and carefully controlled costs. However, based on the snapshot position at 31 December they show a loss for the year and therefore a negative figure for members' reserves at the year end. That picture changed within days as the New Year began and funds owed to us were realised. By the end of the first quarter of 2016 the accounts revealed a more healthy position with a positive net figure of £109,249 owed to us. Adding in money

in the bank, this meant we had a notional balance of £160,540 as money came in from the National and Regional Press Awards.

While a healthy position in the early part of the year is good news, this should not disguise the fact the Society needs more revenue to overcome cash flow issues across the year. The core issue is insufficient funding, to the tune of £50,000 a year. We have an established cash flow pattern, with income arriving early in the year and expenditure reaching a peak at the year end, due to the conference and both awards programmes being held in the winter months.

We maintain vigilant on expenditure in all areas. We have to continually renew efforts to increase sponsorship for the awards programmes and for general activities on behalf of the industry. In addition we have to progress membership recruitment activity, which has already attracted members from new areas including students and associate members. That is an investment both in future editors and the future of the Society.

We remain a victim of our own success in that costs continue to grow but we believe that as our profile develops so too does our ability to access new revenue. Profile and revenues are, of course, interlinked and both require considerable effort in order to achieve our ambitions.

Honorary Treasurer's Report

Major efforts to chase funds that have been owed to us for more than 90 days bore fruit, but we do need the help of members and the industry more widely to pay bills as soon as possible. Total amounts outstanding consistently remain in excess of £100k and chasing for these many small debts uses up valuable secretariat resource, which would be better used on more positive activity. We particularly need to encourage faster payments of both personal and corporate invoices to overcome the resultant cash flow issues.

Overall, finances have been managed well over the year. We have invested in the redevelopment of the website, initiated a significant recruitment campaign, delivered cost-effective and sustainable events, and controlled costs. The next few years will require a concerted effort to generate new income and increase commitment from all arms of the media industry we strive to champion.



Moira Sleight
Editor and Publisher
Methodist Recorder

Balance sheet
As at 31 December 2015

		2015		2014	
	Note	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	4		114		209
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	5	46,291		104,684	
Cash at bank		73,528		55,237	
		<u>119,819</u>		<u>159,921</u>	
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	6	<u>(126,751)</u>		<u>(125,293)</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			(6,932)		34,628
NET ASSETS			<u>(6,818)</u>		<u>34,837</u>
CAPITAL AND RESERVES					
Profit and loss account	8		(6,818)		34,837
			<u>(6,818)</u>		<u>34,837</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to small companies within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2015).

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board and were signed on its behalf on

R E Satchwell
Director

Notes to the financial statements
For the year ended 31 December 2015

1 BASIS OF PREPARATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2015).

2 OPERATING LOSS

The operating loss is stated after charging:	2015	2014
	£	£
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets - owned by the company	95	153
Auditor's remuneration	<u>2,800</u>	<u>6,666</u>

During the year, no director received any emoluments (2014 - £NIL).

3 TAXATION

	2015	2014
	£	£
Adjustments in respect of prior periods	-	6
Tax on loss on ordinary activities	<u>-</u>	<u>6</u>

Factors that may affect future tax charges

The company has tax losses carried forward of £37,575 (2014: £22,654) to utilise against future profits.

4 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office equipment
Cost	£
At 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2015	<u>13,602</u>
Depreciation	
At 1 January 2015	13,393
Charge for the year	95
At 31 December 2015	<u>13,488</u>
Net Book Value	
At 31 December 2015	<u>114</u>
At 31 December 2014	<u>209</u>

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 31 December 2015

5 DEBTORS	2015	2014
	£	£
Trade debtors	28,041	70,820
Other debtors	18,250	33,864
	46,291	104,684
6 CREDITORS	2015	2014
Amounts falling due within one year	£	£
Trade creditors	66,857	28,166
Corporation tax	84	-
Other taxation and social security	456	1,509
Other creditors	59,354	95,618
	126,751	125,293
7 COMPANY STATUS		
The company is a private company limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the members is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 for every full member, and 25 pence for every other member, towards the assets of the company in the event of liquidation.		
8 RESERVES		<i>Profit and loss account</i>
		£
At 1 January 2015		34,837
Loss for the financial year		(41,655)
At 31 December 2015		(6,818)
9 RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENT IN MEMBERS' FUNDS	2015	2014
	£	£
Opening members' funds	34,837	100,652
Loss for the financial year	(41,655)	(65,815)
Closing members' (deficit)/funds	(6,818)	34,837
10 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS		
RR E Satchwell is a director of the company. During the year the company incurred consultancy fees and reimbursed expenses of £74,928 (2014: £62,036) from R E Satchwell.		
S J Ryan is a director of the company. During the year the company incurred consultancy fees of £2,500 (2014: £5,000) from S J Ryan.		

Detailed trading and profit and loss account For the year ended 31 December 2015

TURNOVER	2015	2014
	£	£
Subscriptions	22,027	10,788
Conference income	357,924	321,021
Sponsorship	33,333	33,333
Book sales and other income	2,905	919
	416,189	366,061
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES	2015	2014
	£	£
National Secretary	114,468	110,831
Rent and water rates	12,022	12,037
Insurances	2,686	2,867
Travel and subsistence	3,627	3,812
Telephone and internet expenses	13,556	6,429
Printing, stationery and postage	6,367	2,308
Sundry expenses 162 653	162	653
Conference expenses	277,352	254,877
Meeting expenses	119	764
Books and publications	3,944	3,659
Gifts and donations	12,591	9,487
Entertainment	2,238	177
Irrecoverable VAT	-	536
Legal and professional	-	11,301
Accountancy fees	4,458	4,021
Auditors' remuneration	2,800	6,666
Depreciation	95	153
Bank charges	1,534	1,419
	458,019	431,997
INTEREST RECEIVABLE	2015	2014
	£	£
Bank interest receivable	175	127

Society Profile

Objectives of the Society

- To defend and promote the freedom of the media and to champion the universal right to freedom of expression.
- To represent members' interests in all matters of editorial and professional concern and interest.
- To monitor legislation on matters affecting the news media either directly or indirectly and to make appropriate representations to parliaments, regional assemblies, the European Commission and Parliament and other organisations and authorities at all levels of public life.
- To interpret legislation and advisory notices to other organisations.
- To provide a forum for discussion of the practical problems of editorship and to promote the objectives of the Company.
- To provide access to a network of professional contacts.
- To offer advice to members on issues of practical and ethical concern and to support other bodies in promoting standards in journalism, the independence of the media and self-regulation.
- To help improve the quality of journalism through the active support of education and training.
- To represent the UK's senior journalists internationally, assisting editors abroad to establish independence and ethical standards.

Governing Body

The Society is managed by a board of directors elected by the membership and administered by an executive director. An advisory council made up of senior figures in the industry offers advice and support.

International Links

The Society has long-standing relationships with the CPU Media Trust (formerly the Commonwealth Press Union), WAN IFRA, the Global Editors' Network and ISWNE (International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors based in the USA.) Their David Greenslade Bursary enables a member to visit North America.

Committees and External Representation

The Society's two standing committees – Parliamentary and Legal and Training – draw up policy guidelines and report to the board through the chairmen. Working parties and think tanks are set up as required. The Society welcomes any time that members can give to support its work. Society members serve on key industry bodies including the Editors' Code Committee, the Defence Security and Media Advisory Notice System, the National Council for the Training of Journalists, regional training advisory committees and the Journalism Diversity Fund which the Society founded with the NCTJ.

The Society works closely with other industry organisations including the News Media Association and Media Lawyers' Association and the regulatory affairs teams provide legal and research support.

The Society also co-operates with other organisations by briefing visiting groups of editors from around the world. The Society maintains links with the Government Information and Communications Service, the Association of Police Public Relations Officers, the Information Commissioner, the Policing College, the National Police Chiefs' Council and other public organisations. It frequently submits evidence and comment to Government consultations, to Parliamentary committees and the Competition Commission.

The Society has close working relationships with the Campaign for Freedom of Information, the London Press Club, the Media Society, the Journalists' Charity and the Media Trust. It works with other organisations such as the Samaritans, the Youth Media Agency, the Age Action Alliance and other lobbying groups.

Society Officials

President

Nick Turner

Vice President

Ian MacGregor

Immediate Past President

Doug Wills

Honorary Treasurer

Moira Sleight

Chairman, Training Committee

Donald Martin

Chairman, Parliamentary and Legal Committee

Jonathan Grun

Executive Director and Company Secretary

Bob Satchwell

Accountants

Price Bailey



Research Officer

Claire Meadows



Administrator

Angela Upton

MAGSTAR

The Society is supported by MagStar Ltd who organise events for the Society including the annual conference, the National Press Awards, the Regional Press Awards and regional seminars.

Their team is:



Lyn Disley
Managing Director



Paul Foulsham
Creative Director



Krizia Gallone
Head of Market Development and Events



Robyn Honey
Head of Operations and Digital Systems



Olivia Disley-Stevens
Marketing Project Coordinator



Adrienne Deller
Administration Manager

Administration and Committees

Board

Charles Garside, Alison Gow, Jonathan Grun, Barrie Jones, Ian MacGregor, Donald Martin, Ian Murray, Sue Ryan, Bob Satchwell, Moira Sleight, Nick Turner, Francesca Unsworth, Doug Wills, Joy Yates.
(Paul Connolly, Graham Dudman, Robin Esser, Simon Bucks and Chris Elliott retired from the board during the year)

Past Presidents

Doug Wills, Ian Murray, Jonathan Grun, Francesca Unsworth, Robin Esser, Donald Martin, Nigel Pickover, Simon Bucks, Paul Horrocks, Charles McGhee, Keith Sutton, Neil Benson, Jonathan Grun, Liz Page, Edmund Curran, Neil Fowler, Geoff Elliott.

Advisory Council

Kevin Beatty, Robin Burgess, Paul Dacre, Paul Davidson, Simon Fox, Phil Harding, Adrian Jeakings, Clive Jones, Murdoch MacLennan, Chris Oakley, Richard Tait.

Fellows

Ian Beales, Ben Bradlee, Peter Cole, Andrew Colman, Edmund Curran, Geoff Elliott, Robin Esser, Phil Harding, David Meara, Bob Pinker, Peter Preston, Alan Rusbridger, Richard Tait.

Financial Administration

The income of the Society, whatever its source, must be applied solely in promoting the objects of the Society.

Parliamentary and Legal Committee

Chairman: Jonathan Grun

Members

John Battle, Ian Beales, Neil Benson, Guy Black, Peter Cole, Catherine Courtney, Edmund Curran, Mike Dodd, Chris Elliott, Robin Esser, Sarah Edmonds, Jonathan Grun, Phil Harding, Tony Jaffa, Anthony Longden, Marcus Partington, Ian Murray, Peter Preston, Santha Rasaiah, David Jordon, Caroline Kean, Mary Russell, Sue Ryan, Bob Satchwell, Hannah Walker, Simon Westrop, Doug Wills, Peter Wright, Ian MacGregor and Simon Bucks.

Training Committee

Chairman: Ian Murray

Members

Joanne Butcher, Graham Dudman, Cathy Duncan, Robin Elias, Jonathan Grun, Marie Kinsey, Stephen Mitchell, David Rowell, Chris Rushton, Sue Ryan, Keith Stafford, Peter Cole, Donald Martin, Peter Sands, Richard Tait, Barrie Jones, Doug Wills and Roz MacKenzie.

***Board members can attend standing committees ex officio if they are not already members.**

Members of the Society are assigned a region. They are given details of board members or other regional contacts. Regional meetings are organised to meet the requirements of members in those regions, if they so wish.

REGIONAL BOUNDARIES

Eastern Region

Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, North Essex and Kettering. Nigel Pickover, Editor-in-chief, Archant Norfolk, 01 603 772401, nigel.pickover@archant.co.uk.
Society of Editors head office, Cambridge
01 223 304080, office@societyofeditors.org

Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland

Paul Connolly, 02890 264000, pconnolly@belfasttelegraph.co.uk

London & Home Counties

Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Berkshire, Central London, Greater London, Surrey, Kent, West and East Sussex, Essex (South).
Ms Moira Sleight, Editor and Publisher, Methodist Recorder, 020 7793 0033, editorial@methodistrecorder.co.uk

Midlands

Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Humberside south of River Humber, Peterborough, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Hereford and Worcester, West Midlands, Warwickshire, and Welshpool and Banbury.
Neil White, Editor, Derby Telegraph, 01 332 253 058, nwhite@derbytelegraph.co.uk

North Western

Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Leek.
Nick Turner, Digital Strategy Manager, CN Group, 01 228 612321, nick.turner@cngroup.co.uk
Richard Catlow, richardcatlow@hotmail.co.uk
Ken Bennett, 01 457 820494, kd_bennett@yahoo.co.uk

The Society In the Regions

Northern

Northumberland, Tyne & Wear, Durham
Joy Yates, Group Editor, Johnston Press North East, joy.yates@jpress.co.uk

Scotland

Donald Martin, Head of Publishing, DC Thomson
01 382 575788, dmartin@dcthompson.co.uk

Wales

Barrie Jones, Editorial Director, NWN Media
01 352 707721, barrie.jones@nwn.co.uk

Wessex

Dorset, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, parts of Somerset, Newbury, Reading, Salisbury and Wokingham.
Ian Murray, Editor-in-Chief, The Southern Daily Echo, 02380 424777, ian.murray@dailyecho.co.uk

Western

Gloucestershire, Avon, parts of Somerset, Wiltshire, Devon and Cornwall.
Andy Cooper, Editor, Devon Life, 01 803 860910, andy.cooper@archant.co.uk

Yorkshire

South, West and North Yorkshire, and Humberside north of River Humber.
Peter Charlton, former Editorial Director, Yorkshire Post Newspapers, Peter.Charlton@blueyonder.co.uk

Society of Editors AGM

NOTICE OF THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY OF EDITORS TO BE HELD ON MONDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2016 AT THE HALSTON, CARLISLE

Any full or deputy member who wishes to put a resolution or raise a matter under any other business should advise the executive director by Friday 30 September 2016. Full and deputy members are entitled to vote and qualified members may appoint a proxy to attend and vote in his or her stead in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association. A copy is available on the website www.societyofeditors.org or from the executive director. To be valid a proxy must be received at the Society office no later than on Friday 30 September 2016 or at the Halston, Carlisle by 12 noon on Sunday 16th October 2016.

R E Satchwell
Executive Director and Company Secretary

AGENDA

1. President's opening remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. MINUTES: To adopt, if approved, the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 18 October 2015.
4. ACCOUNTS: To receive and, if approved, adopt the accounts for the financial year up to 31 December 2015.
5. ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16: To receive and, if approved, adopt the Annual Report for 2015/16.
6. To record the Society's thanks for service on the board to Graham Dudman, Simon Bucks, Chris Elliott and Robin Esser who retired from the board during the year.
7. To confirm co-option of Charles Garside as an ordinary member of the board for three years. This is the unanimous proposal of the board.
8. To re-elect Fran Unsworth and Donald Martin as ordinary members of the board for a period of three years. This is the unanimous proposal of the board.
9. To note and approve the appointment by the board of Jonathan Grun as chairman of the parliamentary and legal committee for a period of three years. This is the unanimous proposal of the board.
10. To note and approve the re-appointment by the board of Moira Sleight as Honorary Treasurer. This is the unanimous proposal of the board.
11. To note and approve the re-appointment by the board of Bob Satchwell as Executive Director and Company Secretary.
12. To elect the President for the year 2016-2017: Ian MacGregor, Weekend Editor of the Telegraph, is the unanimous proposal of the board.
13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will take place in the Autumn of 2017 at a time and venue to be confirmed.
14. Any other business.



Society of Editors

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Twitter: [@socofeduk](https://twitter.com/socofeduk)

