



WALTHAM FOREST ECHO

COMPLAINTS POLICY OF *WALTHAM FOREST ECHO*

1. *Waltham Forest Echo* views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve the quality of its journalism and the contents of its publication for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

2. Our policy is:
 - To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear, convenient and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint (in particular those that are vulnerable or who have disabilities)
 - To uphold and adhere to the [Standards Code](#) (“Code”) set out in the IMPRESS Regulatory Scheme in our assessment of all complaints
 - To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
 - To make sure everyone at *Waltham Forest Echo* knows what to do if a complaint is received
 - To make sure all complaints are dealt with promptly and fairly, with decisions based on sufficient investigation of the circumstances and (where appropriate) offer a suitable remedy
 - To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that trust in our journalism and our publication remains strong
 - To gather information about all the complaints we receive to help continually improve the quality of our journalism and our publication
 - To submit an annual report to IMPRESS of all complaints received and their outcomes
 - To submit any complaint that is not resolved by us in a timely or satisfactory way to IMPRESS and to comply with directions issued by IMPRESS relating to its Regulatory Scheme
 - To make available to all employees and contributors of *Waltham Forest Echo* a confidential whistleblowing hotline which is independently operated by IMPRESS and not to take any action to the detriment of anyone who uses the hotline or declines to breach the [Code](#).

Definition of a complaint

3. A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about the editorial content, standards of journalism or conduct of employees or contributors involved in production of *Waltham Forest Echo*, that engages the standards set out in the [Code](#).

Who can complain and how?

4. Complaints may come from any person or organisation who is:
 - personally and directly affected by an alleged breach of the [Code](#)
 - a representative group affected by an alleged breach of the [Code](#), where there is public interest in the complaint
 - a third party seeking to ensure accuracy of published information
5. A complaint should be received by email or in writing although complaints are accepted by other reasonable means where it is not convenient or practical for the individual complainant to complain in writing.
6. Employees or contributors are encouraged to contact the IMPRESS confidential [Whistleblowing Hotline](#) (“the Hotline”) if they are being pressurised to breach the standards set out in the [Code](#) or if they have concerns that the standards set out in the [Code](#) are not being adhered to more generally by *Waltham Forest Echo*.
7. Any employee or contributor of *Waltham Forest Echo* who uses the [Hotline](#) does so with the full support of *Waltham Forest Echo* and in the knowledge that they will not be sanctioned as a result of doing so, even if a subsequent independent investigation carried out by IMPRESS, into *Waltham Forest Echo*, finds there to be no breach of the [Code](#) or of the IMPRESS Regulatory Scheme.

Confidentiality

8. All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Compliance records

9. *Waltham Forest Echo* will maintain a written record of all complaints, to include the name and contact details of the complainant, the material or conduct in respect of which the complaint is made and the alleged [Code](#) breach.
10. For each complaint record, *Waltham Forest Echo* will include any steps taken by it to address the complaint, and the outcome of the complaint. This record will be made available to IMPRESS and to the public (in a redacted form, where necessary), for publication by IMPRESS in its annual report.
11. *Waltham Forest Echo* should report to IMPRESS all compliance failures of which they become aware (whether complained about or not)
12. Monitoring and learning from complaints are reviewed quarterly by *Waltham Forest Echo* to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

Responsibility

13. Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the editor of *Waltham Forest Echo* James Cracknell (“The Complaints Editor”)
14. Responsibility for ensuring that complaints are managed in accordance with this policy lies with The Complaints Editor
15. If a complaint concerns the conduct of The Complaints Editor it will instead be handled by David Floyd, publisher of *Waltham Forest Echo*
16. The *Waltham Forest Echo* website shall include a statement of arrangements which includes details of the internal authority structure, where responsibilities for [Code](#) compliance lie, to whom notice of failure in compliance would be reported (whether complained about or not), together with steps to deal with any failures in compliance. A link to the relevant page of the website is published on Page 2 of every edition of *Waltham Forest Echo*.

Review

17. This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Adopted on: 01/08/2016

Last reviewed: 01/08/2016