

WELCOME TO...

The Henley Standard Media Pack

Higgs Group are publishers of the *Henley Standard*, providing quality services to businesses in and around the local area. Higgs has built an enviable reputation for reliability, professionalism and excellence in Design, Print, Publishing and Office Supplies.

Higgs Printers was established in 1877 by Thomas Octavius Higgs in Bell Street, Henley. At this time there were two local newspapers, the *Henley Advertiser* and *Henley Free Press*, forerunner of today's *Henley Standard*. In 1892, seven years after being established, the *Henley Free Press* was sold by founder, Rev. Joseph Jackson Goadby to the Conservatives, seeing an end to the independent liberal newspaper. It was at this time that the paper first appeared as *Henley and South Oxfordshire Standard* 'with which is incorporated the *Henley Free Press*'. The subtitle was to remain for another 64 years.

The changes came with the awarding of the printing contract to Mr. Thomas Octavius Higgs, who by this time had built our current premises on the corner of Station Road and Reading Road. The Newspaper expanded and the future looked rosy, but only four years later the *Standard* announced that the newspaper company would be wound up and the ownership was passing to a syndicate of gentlemen.

Following the death of Thomas Octavius Higgs, the printing business was sold to Messrs. Hobbs and Sons. Mr Charles Luker, whose father ran the *Farringdon Advertiser* and who learned the trade whilst serving an apprenticeship with Mr Higgs, became a partner and by 1900 was the sole proprietor.

In 1901 the editor of the *Standard* left and it might have been the end of the newspaper as the proprietors were getting tired of running it. For Charles Luker, not yet 25 and the proprietor of a moderately successful printing firm, the loss of his biggest printing job would have been disastrous. Charles Luker persuaded the proprietors to let him take over the publishing of the paper on their behalf and by 1919 they had agreed to hand over the ownership to him entirely. For the first time Higgs Printers and the *Henley Standard* were united under one roof.

Charles Luker continued the tradition of publishing editorials supporting the Conservatives but under the influence of his son Tom and, later when Mr. John Luker

came into the business, editorials came to be restricted to occasions of local importance.

1956 saw a big change, when for the first time news was put on the front page, replacing columns of advertisements. By 1964 the print run had reached 5,000, and the first 12-page edition was published.

In 1978 the printing process changed from letterpress to offset lithography and a new collating and folding machine was installed to allow pagination to increase. In 1984 printing was transferred to a Web machine allowing 16 pages to be printed at a time, at high speed.

In the 1990s the *Henley Standard* launched its first Website, which was later extended to incorporate other divisions of Higgs Group. New publications dominated the next few years, when in 1998 Higgs launched the *Henley Pages*, annual consumer and business director and then in 2004 *Lifestyle & Homes* monthly magazine, later re-named *Henley Life*.

2007 has seen the expansion of Higgs services with the establishment of a printing division in Wallingford.



Higgs Printing Office C.1896