What next for press rules?

WHAT'S HAPPENING about press regulation after the Leveson Inquiry? Our speaker at May's meeting of London Freelance Branch was Tim Gopsill, who's been following "Leveson" as editor of the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom's publication Free Press. He'll be familiar to many Branch members as a former editor of the journalist.

Currently there's a complicated constitutional impasse, with two rival "post-Leveson" draft Royal Charters on press regulation before the Privy Council, which can accept neither of them. One Royal Charter was agreed by all parties at a Downing Street gathering and then rejected by PM David Cameron. The other Royal Charter – the Pretender Charter, perhaps – was drawn up by some newspaper editors.

But the issues involved are simple: press regulation has become a "straightforward power struggle," says Tim.

The Leveson inquiry into the culture, ethics and practice of the Press was "set up because the overwhelming political power big media had accumulated meant it was unaccountable." It was "not just phone hacking": the core issue is accountability to the public – whether those who are intruded on or maligned can have any comeback.

The current Press Complaints Commission (PCC) self-regulatory system actually makes things worse, according to Tim. It "defends editors from criticism, removes editors from having to deal with the public." The PCC would routinely "fix the meanest possible redress they could get away with." Regrettably, it looks as if new arrangements to replace the PCC won't be much better.

The NUJ was "pretty impressive at the Leveson inquiry" – its counsel John Hendy QC interrogated Murdoch and got him to agree that the NUJ's proposed conscience clause was "a good idea."

"The Leveson process was good: nothing's come out of it. We gave it our best shot... Every decent thing we tried to put forward is no longer on the table." The editors' recent hysterical "Free Speech Network" adverts carried pictures of Castro, Mugabe and King John: but no one has ever suggested that press regulation should include censorship.

Tim reminds us that "Leveson" was a response to "cops taking bungs from journalists, accepting bribes." All journalists arrested in connection with these investigations are out on bail, "all charged with specific offences that have nothing to do with anything they've written."

Immediately Leveson's recommendations came out, "Cameron said he wouldn't have it, although most MPs want it". Cameron's Downing Street office "dreamt up this scheme for a Royal Charter", on the model of those which cover organisations like the BBC which are "not controlled by Parliament." The Press had a general "quite reasonable constructive reaction to Leveson – the Times, the FT, the Indy, the Guardian got together and produced a "quite good" proposal for self-regulation, with a conscience clause.

The "sensible paper editors" were "excluded from discussion, then with the support of the NUJ, the Telegraph, News International and of Pressbof – the Press Board of Finance, the body that collects the money to run to old PCC – editors produced their own version of a Royal Charter, in which signing up to the new regulatory body isn't compulsory.

What's unfolding now is self-regulation, says Tim: it's "regulation by editors and owners." "Free speech" is turning into "the 'free speech' of the editors... the 'freedom' to act under the instruction of owners".

What happens next? The impasse caused by the editors' rival Royal Charter could "antagonise people so much that [the editors] get something imposed on them." And there's still widespread dissatisfaction at the unchecked malign influences of powerful media owners, presenting vote-winning opportunities for the Opposition in the 2015 election.

Tim's own suggestion was for a tribunal system, which would negotiate an agreement on a correction.
The Rate for the Job

WE HAVE some lucrative gigs in this month’s RfJ, including almost a grand for a Sun exclusive. We also list the City of London’s convoluted fees for photo uses. In keeping with archaic tradition, “The City” pay more for colour (the rates shown here) for black and white they pay less.

Thinking about work for a company you’ve not dealt with before? Simply look at the Rate for the Job to find out what companies in similar niches have paid. Then aim higher.

You can submit rates online, in confidence, at any time, at www.londonfreelance.org/rates – please give not only the basic rate (e.g. for FBS, First British Serial rights) but also any payments negotiated for extra uses, like the Web – or for print if it’s a Rate for the Online Job. These are shown as (£) £400 + 100. We now record rates paid in Euro as well.

Rates marked X are in, the editor’s fallible opinion, below par. Treat all rates as minima, even perhaps the happy £ few.

The Gong


Collect-o-matic!

WE ARE PLEASED to report that a member told the May London Freelance Branch meeting they’d used LFB’s online interest calculator to work out how much interest they were owed for late payment, put it on an invoice and got the full amount they’d then billed for. Our handy form to tell the Freelance Office everything they need to know to help members collect is at www.londonfreelance.org/collect.html – and our calculator for DIY claims of late payment of commercial debts is at www.londonfreelance.org/interest.html

Shifts: bank in-company magazine editing day £700; arts organisation media consultancy (day?) £200; Shortlist subbing day £130 X.

Teaching: Sunderland University undergrad PR/media student seminars, 1hr prep for each contact hour; £43–£47 per hour.

Words, per 1000: Rock band tour programme note £750; Evening Standard arts review 300-400 words @ £140 = up to £647; Rolling Stone news story £400; Mail Weekend 800 words @ £300 = £375; Sunday Telegraph 800 words @ £200 = £250 XX. Independent feature £240; Classic Pop cover feature £121, cover feature sidebar £100, 350-word review @ £30 = £86 XXX.

Words, other: Sun p7 page lead (exclusive) £950; Uncut Ultimate Music Guide re-use of two-part feature originally from Uncut mag £750, re-use of feature from another IPC publication £500; World Travel Guide (Columbus Travel Media) travel feature all rights £200; Euromag online review of long computer game, £120 or about 75p an hour XX.9.

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Small Claims Claims limit is now £10,000

ON 1 APRIL the maximum for Small Claims went up to £10,000. That would be the Small Claims track of the Court if your claim is over breach of copyright, for example if your words or images were used without payment or without permission. Fees start at £25 for a claim up to £300; for a claim of £10,000 they appear to be £210. (We have a report of the judge in charge of Patents County Court saying he “doesn’t see why” about that limit going up.) A major advantage of the Small Claims track is that the other side can’t get significant costs from you even if you lose.

Just looking…

The UK’s Supreme Court decided on 17 April that it’s probably not a breach of copyright to look at a web page that contains a copyright infringement. If you save or print it, you have made a copy, and if the owner finds you they can sue (but not for very much). Probably, because the Supreme Court referred the question to the European Court of Justice (ECJ), which has the last say on the implementation of the relevant EU law. For details see www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1305nla.html

Mission impossible for travel writers?

DORLING KINDERSLEY, Eyewitness travel guides, the largest UK-based travel guide publisher and a branch of Penguin Group, has recently been contacting freelances offering work revising the hotel and restaurant listings in their guides. This is apparently part of a major renovation of these sections in the whole series, with a new format, and so a large-scale operation.

Previously this kind of work was paid for on the basis of a planning fee and then a rate per listing entry. For the new work DK are offering flat rates of £100, or £130 per double page spread, all planning included.

At the same time they have increased the required content of each spread by well over half.

Comparing the two systems of payment exactly is difficult, but overall this represents a cut of 30 per cent to 60 per cent on what DK paid for comparable workloads two years ago. In time terms the new spread rates represent hourly rates of roughly £6 to £11 per hour – so they may even be below the UK minimum wage.

It’s very hard to see how work at these rates can even be viable – covering costs – let alone worthwhile for any freelance working legally, paying tax and social security, anywhere in the EU. If DK are offering these rates they appear to think they can find people to do the work.

Anyone contacted by DK should check their figures and the exact amount of work required, very carefully, before taking these jobs on.

And all DK freelancers who’d like to discuss the situation and what they think about their work being graded at below minimum-wage level, please get in touch. It would be useful to discuss these issues on the email list at www.londonfreelance.org/Flipper – or email freeloanceoffice@nuj.org.uk

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Fairly frequently asked questions on copyright

These are main points from the Freelance Industrial Council document, online in full at www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1306faq.html

Did copyright law change in May?
No. There is no “licence to infringe copyright” and creators and users should stick to the current law and best practice for licensing and using copyright material.

How will the law be changed?
The ERR Act provides for several major changes to copyright law including licensing of “orphan works” and “extended collective licensing”.

What are orphan works?
Orphan works are works that will they be able to be used?

Nobody will be able to use orphan works without permission or payment. The proposal on “orphan works licences” is that a government body (and, maybe, authorised collecting societies) should be able to issue licenses to use “orphan” works, under strict conditions. Some of the most important are:

- That the applicant will have to demonstrate that they have done a “diligent search” for all the authors (and performers) of the work.
- The applicant will then have to pay a fee, as close as feasible to a market rate for a similar work by a known author, to the licensing body.
- The licences will specify what they can do and for how long.

Once the law is changed, if someone uses my work without permission, can they just claim they thought it was an “orphan”?
No. In that situation, one of two things must have happened:

- Either they have gone to the trouble of getting an orphan works licence;

- Or they don’t have an orphan works licence – which will mean that they have “flagrantly” breached your copyright and you can ask the Small Claims Court for extra cash.

So what is “extended collective licensing”?
“Extended collective licensing” will be a scheme that may allow the British Library, for example, to pay one cheque to the Authors’ Licensing and Collecting Society and another to the Design and Artists Copyright Society as fee for putting online words and pictures, respectively, from their archive.

The collecting society will then distribute the money to you (and also to people who do not belong to it – the “extended” bit) in the same way as it does for photocopying.

But this will be able to happen only if:

- A collecting society shows it is representative of authors; and

- The authors represented by a collecting society democratically approve it making an application to issue a specific kind of extended collective licence; and

- The Minister consults on the application, and after weighing all the responses the Minister approves it.

So there is no chance of a publisher or broadcaster getting an extended collective licence for any “primary” publication of your work. So everything is fine?
Far from it. The next, and far bigger – challenge is the government’s overdue announcement of its plans to expand the “exceptions” to copyright (see below).

To mock an author bird
Finally, Harper Lee, author of To kill a mocking-bird, is suing to get copyright in the book back, reports the Guardian. She alleges that the successor to her late agent tricked her into assigning her rights away.

© Mike Holderness

Copyrightoy from page 1

The sins of the publishers...

Three members of an Australian family have won AU$4,750 (£34,887) as we went to press) from publisher Allen & Unwin over use of their photographs in a book. Four of the five photographs were “pick-ups”; various people (often not the photographer) may have said “OK, you can use this for your newspaper story”… but no-one ever gave permission for them to be used in a book. The judge ordered that any remaining copies of the book – which was reprinted about six weeks before the trial – be handed over for pulpung. For the full story see www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1305pick.html

My NME’s enemy...

To be caught out infringing contributors’ copyright once is sad; to be caught out twice means you’re IPC. Around a dozen years ago IPC decided to re-print interviews and images in a series of specials. Most contributors had retained copyright, and the publisher had to pay out for infringement. Now freelances have discovered that back copies of NME are available on a website called ProQuest, for a fee. Again, the freelances’ permissions have not been obtained. ProQuest claim they have a licence from NME, but are removing work on request of the freelances until such time as the matter is resolved. The NUJ is approaching IPC on behalf of members, and if non-members join now we will include them in any action. A few have already applied. Contact: freelanceoffice@nuj.org.uk

The Intellectual Property Bill 2013 has its Second Reading in the House of Commons on 22 June. There’s little (yet) directly affecting journalists. The NUJ will be proposing amendments in favour of stronger rights for designers, not least to avoid setting unfortunate precedents for copyright – especially in the area of the “exceptions” that allow use of works without permission from or payment to you.

And we were told on 28 May that “within weeks” the government will publish proposals for extending “exceptions” to copyright – rules that allow certain non-commercial uses without asking, or paying.

Freedom of expression and payment for expression

The anti-censorship group Article 19 in April issued The right to share, a statement declaring that the rights authors – such as reporters and photographers – have over our work exist “at the expense of freedom of expression”. The International Federation of Journalists responded with an open letter to Article 19 Executive Director Agnés Callamard. It opens: “The IFJ has always valued the work Article 19 does to protect press freedom and denounce attacks against free speech around the world… [You] appear to argue that the defence of freedom of expression is in opposition to other journalists’ fundamental rights, for which we have been campaigning for decades – and which we regard as fundamental to citizens’ abilities not only to express themselves but for that expression to be informed by professional, independent reporting.”

The full text is linked from this story online at www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1306copy.html
Can games writers make money?

MAKING a living writing about computer games, and scriptwriting for computer games, was the focus of “The NUJ Presents: Game Over!” organised by the NUJ New Media Industrial Council (NMIYC) in London in April. This event revealed the struggle for survival of writers in the games industry has many challenges familiar to all freelances.

London Freelance Branch’s own Emma Boyes, instigator of the event, described how “most national newspapers don’t pay games journalists, even though they have paid staff”.

Games writers “should start to value” themselves: Emma urged them to “challenge people, say that not being paid is unacceptable.” Rather than admonishing aspiring games writers taking on work for free, says games freelance writer Dan Griliopoulos, “it’s the employers, they are the people we should be remonstrating with.”

Will Porter freelances for PC Zone and says long cover features that used to command £300 now earn you £100-120. To write such reviews, “you definitely have to complete the game,” which works out at around 75p an hour – the minimum wage in Albania, as it happens.

Freelance Guardian games writer Steve Boxer said: “these days I get paid word for word what I got paid by the papers in the nineties.” But print is “not entirely dead,” he says: he’s part of a team behind Games 24/7 – last autumn saw its first loose insert in Shortlist, the “most successful mag in the country”.

Dan said you will need “something unique these days,” because game reviewers are “up against people with writing ability, people with skill in front of a camera” (increasingly doing their own YouTube “pressy” – presentation, as “kids don’t read nowadays”).

All panellists emphasised importance of face-to-face human contact in the actual physical universe, and in getting your face known by reliably turning up to all the industry events. (Game Over? began with beer and pizza, and ended with an NMIC tab at the pub afterwards for networking purposes.) Will observes that the people with whom the panelists were socialising a decade ago are “the commissioning editors of today.”

The future? While the young seem to have time to sit around playing endless video games, Dan notes that games writers’ “time shrinks when you get older”. As Will put it, “Why the fuck should a 15-year-old care what a 50-year-old thinks about their games!” Games writers should also have a long-term exit strategy.

© Matt Salusbury
● There’s a longer version online at www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1305game.html with a link to our write-up of the Game Over session on writing the narrative element of games, somewhat akin to scriptwriting for film and TV, but with challenges all of its own.

Policing update

THE CONDUCT of police dealing with journalists covering events has shown improvement in recent years, and the NUJ Freelance Organiser John Toner has written to South Wales police to congratulate them on their helpful interaction with photographers covering a National Front demo in March.

The last few months have, however, also seen a couple of alarming cases. In one, police stopped and searched a vanload of nine journalists travelling to cover a far-right march in Brighton, under the Terrorism Act: see http://sussexstompandsearch.notlong.com – and in another Greater Manchester Police got a “production order” forcing NUJ freelance videographer Jason Parkinson to hand over a clip from his video footage of a Unite Against Fascism counter-demonstration in Bolton: see http://productionor- der.notlong.com. And as a result of recommendations in the Leveson report, the announcement of a consultation on weakening the defense of “journalistic material” in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) is imminent. Current law requires police to obtain a court order before seizing “journalistic material.”

Watch our “right to report” roundup at www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1306trai.html

Rhianna Pratchett escaped Discworld to work on the recent Tomb Raider prequel, and told the masses at about making a living in games. Photo © Matt Salusbury

Training courses in the near FEUture

Free one-day training workshops are available from the Federation of Entertainment Unions (FEU, of which the NUJ is a part). These include “Realistic Optimism” (goal-setting) on 21 June in London and “Get Noticed” (the latest conventions in CV writing) on 28 June in Bristol. See www.feutraining.org for details – and go there to register your interest in forthcoming training courses (with nominal fees) on building your own website, marketing yourself, money matters and networking via the interwebs. The next NUJ “Getting Started as a Freelance” course is on 1 November and “Pitch and Deal” on 15 November: see www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1306trai.html

Friends with benefits?

A RECENT “invitation” by Scotsman editor Ian Stewart to organisations in “industry, academia, law, charities, the arts, sports, science, medicine” called on them to become “friends of the Scotsman”: see http://FOTS.notlong.com. These Friends would pay for “a basic subscription package... less than £300 a year” and write and submit articles to dedicated pages of the newspaper. Stewart expressed a hope that each Friend would contribute at least 750 words six times a year on themes such as “Environment, Finance, Education, Food and Drink.”

The invitation, though mentioning articles being “submitted”, was vague on criteria for acceptance.

One freelance had a bold suggestion for the paper: “if some of these writers regularly contribute interesting stories which people buy the paper to read, then the ‘journal’ could pay those writers a fee out of the profits to encourage them to write more, or even take them on full-time to write stories every day.”

By analogy of people who write diaries being diarists, perhaps we could call them “journalists”.

Meanwhile, the Yorkshire Post, also from Johnstone Press, has Yorkshire Vision (tinyurl.com/yorkshirevi- sion) with copy submitted by spon- sors. While the design is good, there would seem to be no time to sub the raw copy submitted by the PRs. Vision contributors get sent copies of the publication with their articles in it, to show off to clients.

The editors of the Freelance extend an invitation to contribute input to the Advertising Standards Authority (www.asa.org.uk) and to seek the ASA’s views on whether such developments would comply with their strict guidelines on the labelling of “advertorials” in newspapers and magazines.

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Universal credit’s restrictive plans

UNIVERSAL Credit (UC) – planned to replace most existing benefits – has already started for claimants using the Job Centre at Ashton-Under-Lyme in Greater Manchester with “elements” of UC being “trialed” in three other nearby job centres. The Greater Manchester trial currently only applies to Job Seekers’ Allowance (JSA) claimants, but the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is seeking ideas on how to extend “conditionality” to working claimants. That piece of jargon may extend “conditionality” to working claimants. Currently get WTC being moved to three other nearby job centres. Lyme in Greater Manchester, with has already started for claimants using to replace most existing benefits – income working journalists applying to stop them.”

How does it work? The editorial team write guides to the best ways to save money, and then the advertising team go and look for affiliate links to the companies mentioned in the guides. These appear as starred “links that help this site” and generate commission for “click-throughs”. Martin refuses to take advertising. A member of the NUJ since 1997, Martin is “proud to be journalist, not a financial advisor; proud to be biased,” and also proud to pay the 52 per cent income tax rate. After the sale, he set up charitable trusts and made a big donation to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Companies “spend billions a year on advertising and teaching staff to sell: we don’t get that training [or] the resources that they do”, adds Martin, whose work aims to “redress that balance.”. In an “adversarial consumer society, their job is to make money out of us, our job is to stop them.”

And what financial advice could the money-saving expert offer freelances? Plan for tax – “for every £100 you earn, £33 is not your money.” Take “a third of it and put it aside”. And “Be careful with accountants. They often say you can claim things you can’t.”

© Matt Salusbury
• There is, as usual, a more complete report online.

MoneySavingExpert.com

founder Martin Lewis

Photo © Richard Lipman,

www.lipmanfilms.com

Universal credit’s restrictive plans

HAVE ONE unique idea in your career, advises www.MoneySavingExpert.com founder and editor, financial journalist Martin Lewis. His unique idea was that website. He told London Freelance Branch’s April meeting that he set it up with £100 in 2003. He sold it for £87 million last July, and still retains editorial control of the site. Now it’s on the National Curriculum.

“All you need,” he says, “is unique content and a way to reach millions of people.”

Be “the go-to person, even if it’s very ‘niche’ to start with.” His rise to the fame and fortune he enjoys today came with a lot of “dealing with rejection… I almost gave up.”

His financial journalism career took him from the BBC indirectly to a Daily Express column and a period with a cable TV financial channel where he “was only person who knew his ISA from his elbow.” He got a regular gig with ITV’s This Morning after its editor, late for work that day, heard him on a one-off BBC 5 Live debate with Evan Davies.

When he started his website, Martin’s only regular gig was an Express column, and “800 words is not enough to live on.” He set it up initially to support his broadcast work. It showcased some of his Express pieces – he’d taken the precaution of asking when he started there, would you mind if I kept the copyright?

He kept stumbling across ways of saving money that were “too-short-lived for a newspaper,” so he emailed these to friends. These quickly became Martin’s Money Tips, an informal service which “went viral before the word ‘viral’ was invented,” Martin said.

How does it work? The editorial team write guides to the best ways to save money, and then the advertising team go and look for affiliate links to the companies mentioned in the guides. These appear as starred “links that help this site” and generate commission for “click-throughs”. Martin refuses to take advertising.

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MoneySavingExpert.com

founder Martin Lewis

Photo © Richard Lipman,

www.lipmanfilms.com

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An ominously-named consultation document, Extending labour market interventions to in-work claimants – call for ideas, was doing the rounds in March.

© Rosanne Rabinowitz

and Matt Salusbury

• LFB Committee is studying the TUC’s Will Universal Credit work? – which does mention the “self-employed” and highlights problems around UC’s presumptions of a deemed “reasonable income”.

Independent shifts – get in touch

Can any NUJ members who do shifts at the Independent, the Independent on Sunday or the Evening Standard please contact the Freelance Office via freelanceoffice@nuj.org.uk
SORTING out your taxes and your finances is the theme of the London Freelance Branch meeting on Monday 8 July.

Some of you may have already received the standard HMRC letter reminding you that you have to submit a tax return by 31 Jan 2014, or by 31 October this year for an "old school" paper tax return. It may seem a long way off, but these deadlines have a habit of creeping up on you, so now's the time to start thinking about it.

In a tough time for freelancing, we need to think about how to pay no more tax than you legally have to and then how to take care of what's left to deal with all the normal contingencies from horrible bills to lovely holidays, family necessities and delights and even the possibility that you might live for some while and want to aver fiscal glum circumstances when you get there. So we shall.

Our speakers are accountant Eric Longley – accountant to the stars, and to some LFB members – and financial adviser Ion Tsakalis, who also advises LFB people.

For Eric's last LFB appearance, in 2010, see www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1006tax.html

There is no LFB meeting in August, as the Branch takes the nearest freelance equivalent to a holiday.

The Branch returns on Monday 9 September, with a meeting – provisionally – on how to avoid being bamboozled by figures, and how to avoid bamboozling your readers on matters numerical. We are inviting speakers are from the world of statistics-literate journalism: more details next issue.

Watch www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings.html and http://twitter.com/NUJ_LFB for confirmation of the topic and speakers for September meeting.

This issue went to press on 4 June.

Deadline for the August-September print edition is 3 August.

LFB meetings are from 7pm to 9pm at Friends House, Euston Road, NW1 (opposite Euston Station), which is accessible to people who use wheelchairs.

If you need the Branch to pay for care for a child or dependent so you can attend a meeting, call a Branch officer. For updates on meetings see the Branch calendar page at www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings.html. Minute-takers are needed for LFB meetings for the rest of the year. For details of NUJ London Photographers' Branch meetings, see londonphotographers.org.

Haymarket details

THE FREELANCING situation at Haymarket is much more complex than Tim Dawson suggested in the April Freelance. The new regime began with the insistence that I register on Haymarket's "Supplier Management System" – a lengthy series of forms which asked extremely intrusive questions about turnover and profit, and even delved into the detail of my liability insurances (which it was clear Haymarket expected me to have).

These forms took me four unpaid hours to complete.

This is, I am told, an attempt to establish that you are actually self-employed, and I have some sympathy with Haymarket's belts-and-braces approach: HMRC is hounding the self-employed mercilessly at the moment, and Haymarket needs to cover its ass.

That said, the suggestion at the end of my last contract with Haymarket was that they would now tax everyone at source regardless; I made it perfectly clear to them that I can show six years' accounts and a list of 20 clients which say I am self-employed; I am not prepared to go through the ridiculous charade of being offered holiday and the expense of reclaiming income tax, merely because Haymarket's not prepared to have a showdown with HMRC. I have not worked for Haymarket since.

It's facile to blame Haymarket for this situation. The culprit is HMRC with its zeal for pursuing the small change of freelances, because tackling huge corporate tax fraud has been placed in the round file marked "Too difficult."

Broadening the subject to rates (and Haymarket's were decent), a fag-packet calculation shows that anyone earning less than £140 a day will be better off getting a salary; add in the inevitable weeks when the work dries up and the sums show that the minimum experienced freelancers should settle for is £150. And that ignores the cost of actually running your micro-business.

Mark Williams

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Taxes, finances, holidays, numeracy

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July's London Freelance Branch meeting will hear from accountant Eric Longley about the ins and outs of tax for freelances. (See top of page.) To get us warmed up, LFB’s own Humphrey Evans (a tutor on NUJ Training’s courses for freelancers) has produced a quick guide to some of the tax advice out there online. This directs members to some sites to trawl for guidance.

You can find Humphrey’s meta-guide (a guide to guides) on tax websites at www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1306tax.html.

If we had to boil the advice down to one sentence, we’d say: don’t try to get clever with Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs. (Shown here is their office in Aldwych.)