THE JULY meeting of London Freelance Branch was entertained by Eric Longley, who described himself as “an ex-Inspector of Taxes aiming to go straight”. How can we freelances be sure that we pay just as much tax as we have to? We also heard from financial advisor Ion Tsakalis on how managing what’s left (a report of Ion’s talk is on page 3.)

Parliament is still arguing over the idea that freelances should claim expenses at a flat rate, rather than keeping all our invoices and claiming actual expenses, says Eric.

This is not unconnected with the government having since 2005 got rid of 37,000 of the Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) officers who decide whether what you claim is reasonable.

What is reasonable? You can claim as a deduction everything that is “wholly and exclusively for the purposes of” your trade.

Eric gave as an example the case of draughtsman Harry Prince, who also played guitar professionally. He claimed the cost of repairing a fin-...
The Rate for the Job

This month’s Trireme Award for the Worst Terms since I was last chained to the oars” goes jointly to the Independent and the Telegraph. Both are reported paying a big fat zero for online comment pieces – the latter for one about Wonderwoman, who would surely have lassoed a little more had she done it herself.

Trireme Award

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ALCS holiday money!

If you are a member of the Authors’ Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS), you may be the recipient of some “free money” around 20 August, the date of ALCS’s second 2013 “distribution” of monies from licences for secondary uses of its members’ work, such as photocopying in university libraries.

If you got a little less than usual in the first distribution in February, that may be because some was held over to August. For details see www.alcs.co.uk/ALCS-News/July-2013/August-2013-Distribution. If you’re an author and not yet signed up to ALCS – they regularly pay hundreds of pounds annually to some LFB members – sign up now at www.alcs.co.uk.

You can submit rates online (whether or not you have a smartphone) 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 extra payments negotiated for extra uses, like the Web – or for print if it’s a Rate for the Online Job. These are shown as (eg) £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 £.

Broadcasting: Independent radio production company, research for radio documentary £150; Opera organisation’s podcast: record, edit, mix £150; Radio Jackie 7 hour overnight newsreading shift £300 XXX; ITV presenting and reporting day (including holiday pay) £385.

Photography: Sunday Life photography day £840 XXX; Belfast Telegraph photo day £740 XXX; Belfast Telegraph per pic £25 XX; Sunday Life per pic £25 X; Premier Guitar full page photo, print and digital, plus use on Facebook 6-month exclusive rights re: guitar specialist magazines, non-exclusive elsewhere £100; NME 1/4 page photo £25 XX; Swn Festival full coverage of festival (payment in form of festival ticket) £0 XX.

Shifts: CNBC producing corporate TV/web content, per day £1230; The Author editing Society of Authors quarterly journal, offered per issue £2200.

Words, per 1000: Easyjet Traveler front of book and short features FBS £300; Telegraph Weekend Review book review – print, 500 words £250; Independent online piece piece £0 XX; Telegraph online piece for “Wonder Woman” – 900 words £0; Grazia news story for “10 Hot Stories” section, 600 words @ £300 = £500; Guardian feature, basic NUJ/Guardian terms £350.

Words, other: GamesTM, X360, Play (Imagine) per 450-500 word page £50 X; Oxford Dictionary Of National Biography posthumous short biogs, starting at 600 words (more paid for more words) £100.

Reckoning of day

Freelance financial journalist Andrew Bibby has released the latest edition of his invaluable Freelance Ready Reckoner.

Produced every two years, and now in its sixth edition, the Ready Reckoner has become a standard guide for freelance journalists looking to compare their pay with that of staff writers.

Key facts in this year’s report include: freelance journalists should invoice media clients £283 for a day’s work to achieve comparability with a staff journalist earning £25,000 – and for comparability with a staffer earning £40,000, a day’s freelance earnings should be £427.

The real cost to an employer of an employee earning £30,000 is £43,689. See: www.andrewbibby.com

New late payment rules

The late payment of Commercial Debts Regulations 2013, passed recently, make some significant changes to the rules on when debts are late and, possibly, how much you can claim – affecting contracts made after 16 March 2013.

The changes include allowing you to claim for the actual costs of recovering money, if that’s more than the minima set out in law (£40 on claims up to £1000, more on bigger claims).

They allow your clients to specify a “procedure of acceptance or verification” to be completed before the late-payment clock starts ticking. Let us know at editor@londonfreelance.org if you sight one of these.

We are seeking advice on the full implications: the detail of our current reading of them is at www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1308lpcd.html and our calculator for penalty interest and recovery costs is at www.londonfreelance.org/interest.html (pictured).
Put it in your trust...

QUANTITATIVE easing is coming to an end, Ion Tsakalis warned London Freelance Branch at its July meeting, and the result is that anyone who has any form of debt – mortgage or otherwise – will find it getting more expensive. Ion is a Chartered Financial Planner and Independent Financial Adviser. Then he got gloomier.

“What happens if you get sick? Unless you plan to exist on poverty-line benefits, or unless you have assets, it’d be good to plan for the worst… some form of insurance? Twenty years ago I’d have been talking about pension plans… now I just hope people can make some kind of plan.” As if when you would like to stop working? What would you need to live on?

Financial advisers used to do product-led advice – “you want this pension?” Now the field is more varied, with clients relying on second properties, downsizing, other investments and so on. Ion gets asked a lot whether he thinks personal pensions – without employer contributions – are in people’s interest. True, if you pay in £80 in you get £20 tax credit. But when you draw on it, though, 75 per cent will come to you as taxable income. On the other hand a couple can pay £23,000 a year into Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs)… and although there is no tax relief the proceeds come back free of capital or income tax. That may be preferable.

One thing that upsets Ion is “how deficient people’s estate planning is. Who has a will?” Many hands went up. “And who has a trust alongside it?” No-one owned up.

“I have a wife and two children: whatever I build up should go to them. If I get here before my wife, and my will simply says my estate goes to my wife, and if she is not around to pass it to my children, there’s no guarantee the children get anything.”

Ion outlined a possible scenario after his death: his wife remarries and then they divorce. The new husband “walks off with… half my estate.” In another “thoroughly miserable picture,” Ion’s future widow “ends her days in a care home – and the local authority will be taking the assets she inherited from me to pay for it. But if the money were in a family trust, they’d have difficulty doing that… a trust is a good plan. She can benefit during her lifetime, and the remainder will pass to my children.”

We also heard in the same meeting from accountant Eric Longley on paying just as much tax as we have to: for a report see page 1.

Minister wants fairness for interns

BUSINESS MINISTER Vince Cable, launching an event for “fairer recruitment” in creative industries on 4 July, said: “The law on the National Minimum Wage is clear and interns need to be paid in a fair way. Anyone who feels they are being exploited should contact the Pay and Work Rights Helpline (www.gov.uk/pay-and-work-rights-helpline) on 0800 917 2368 who will actively investigate every complaint.”

The event was organised by training organisation Creative Skillset, (www.creativeskillset.org) which wants more employers to adopt fair approaches to the way they recruit and pay interns. The campaign calls on employers to improve access and diversity in the creative workforce and advocate best practice by adopting Skillset’s updated Guidelines for Employers Offering Work Placement Schemes. Many companies run successful programmes and examples of best practice are included in the guidelines.

As of July, as reported in the Daily Mail, nine British companies had been ordered by Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs to pay a total of £192,808 in fines – and back pay – to 167 interns at the minimum wage for £192,808 in fines – and back pay – to 167 interns at the minimum wage for a total of £192,808 in fines – and back pay – to 167 interns at the minimum wage of £6.19 an hour (going up to £6.31 in October) HMRC wouldn’t name the companies.

In the same Mail article, the Arcadia retail group was reported to have voluntarily made payments to former interns who had done “administrative tasks” in the PR departments of its companies, after it had “worked with HMRC” about payments made to interns. One graduate who had worked as an intern in Miss Selfridge’s PR department – for the princely sum of a TfL Travelcard and the princely sum of a TfL Travelcard and £192,808 in fines – and back pay – to 167 interns at the minimum wage for £192,808 in fines – and back pay – to 167 interns at the minimum wage for £192,808 in fines – and back pay – to 167 interns at the minimum wage for £192,808 in fines – and back pay – to 167 interns at the minimum wage – to a former graduate marketing intern.

Universal Credit – weekly-sign ons for tax credits

THE LATEST bad news on Universal Credit (UC) is that “in-work conditionality pilots” are being rolled out in ten Jobcentres, including Hammersmith. For the moment, these pilots will affect only Job Seekers’ Allowance claimants. Self-employed people who have their income topped up by benefits such as Working Tax Credit will remain largely left alone by the Jobcentres, for now.

But “in-work conditionality” is likely to eventually be extended as part of the full-blown national UC roll-out planned to start in October. This raises the spectre of much more Jobcentre intervention in the lives of the millions of Workers on Benefits (WoBs), with the aim of encouraging “claimants to progress in work.” This “progression” would presumably include compelling freelance WoBs to give up their unpredictable underemployment in irregularly-paid journalism work in favour of badly-paid, unskilled salaried work with regular hours. There have also been noises from the Department of Work and Pensions suggesting that some types of benefit will move from the current requirement of fortnightly signing-on at the Jobcentre to weekly signings. As everyone who’s been there knows, nothing quite knocks on the head your attempts to solicit and carry out work like having to drop whatever you’re doing and race across town to sign on.

The Guardian reported in June that software problems could mean delays to the October 2013 launch of UC. Faced with these glitches, the DWP could meanwhile resort to tweaking Working Tax Credits instead. Watch this space.

© Matt Salusbury; additional reporting by Rosanne Rabinowitz
**Suing for million$**

NEW YORK TIMES photographer Robert Caplin is suing celebrity blogger Perez Hilton for $2.1 million. According to court documents, Caplin claims Hilton (whose real name is Mario Lavandeira Jr) used 14 copyrighted photographs of Glee actor Darren Criss without seeking permission after Caplin published 32 of the photographs to an online gallery (the photographs were originally published in a New York Times story about Criss’ Broadway debut). In addition to publishing the photos, Hilton slapped a “PEREZHILTON.COM” watermark onto the photographs and linked the images to a store selling the clothing worn by Criss in the images.

In a separate case, Kai Eiselein is suing website BuzzFeed in the New York District Court for $3.6 million after it distributed one of his images – which was then used without authorisation by dozens of others.

The cases rely on the ability to claim “statutory damages” for works registered with the US authorities – rather than having to show actual damage from the unauthorised uses. BuzzFeed is claiming that their distribution of the photo was “fair use”. See [http://tinyurl.com/fairusetest](http://tinyurl.com/fairusetest) for a round up of recent cases that test the “fair use” concept enshrined in US copyright law.

**Setback for Google Books authors’ claims**

BOOK AUTHORS pursuing Google over its unauthorised scanning of 17 million or more books suffered a setback on 1 July. The United States Court Of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York overturned an earlier ruling by Judge Denny Chin that the case qualified as a “class action”. The Appeals Court said that Chin must consider Google’s defence that its copying was “fair use” – that is, that it met the vague defence that its copying was “fair use” – that is, that it met the vague criteria for “exceptions” to copyright under US law – before reconsidering whether compensation could be sought on behalf of the entire “class” of authors.

This means that the “fair use” case must be argued only on the facts concerning books by the named authors who stood as representatives of the “class”.

University of Maryland law professor James Grimmelmann concludes that this suggests that “the judges on this appeal were convinced that Google has a winning fair use defense across the board.”

For us in the UK, this reinforces the argument that Google’s promotion of the “fair use” concept to Her Majesty’s Government is merely seeking to promote its ability to do what it damn well pleases, because it can afford more expensive lawyers than anyone else.

**Plagiarism survey**

DO YOU FEEL as though you’ve been ripped off? The NUJ wants to know. You open a newspaper or magazine, or visit a website, and you see your work – exactly the same arrangement of written words or an image – copied without acknowledgment, any prior agreement, or (nearly) a byline.

It’s not a good feeling.

Of course, in this wired world, it’s easy for members’ work to be copied and transmitted globally in seconds. At the NUJ’s 2012 Delegate Meeting, members supported a motion calling for freelances to get their just reward for published work that has been copied illegally.

The NUJ has done outstanding work in clarifying the copyright situation, for example winning the creation of a Small Claims Court that can deal with UK copyright cases, now for amounts up to £10,000. It has backed members’ justified claims for redress.

The motion seeks to to re-examine the situation regarding copyright abuses. In the autumn, therefore, the NUJ’s Freelance Industrial Council (FIC) will organise a survey to elicit members’ views on: a) the extent of the problem; b) where breaches have occurred and how they were identified; and c) how successful members have been in seeking redress.

In addition to the survey, FIC will look to see if new software solutions exist that could help to identify copyright breaches.

On that point, it must be stressed that writing an article that uses ideas from another piece is not in itself a breach of copyright. A breach only occurs under current UK copyright law when a members’ work – or a substantial part of it – is copied word-for-word or when an image is used without a license or prior agreement. It’s the copying of the exact arrangement of an author’s words (“the expression”, not the “idea”, in copyright law terminology) that constitutes a breach. See [www.londonfreelance.org/fl/quoting.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/quoting.html) for more detail.

If you have comments or quotes on this subject, don’t hesitate to contact John Chapman ([john.chapman@redandwrite.eu](mailto:john.chapman@redandwrite.eu)) or Matt Salusbury ([mattsal@gn.apc.org](mailto:mattsal@gn.apc.org)). And please answer the survey: we want to know the facts and depend on you to provide them.

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and Matt Salusbury

**Spoils of quiz night victory**

BEATING OFF the nearest rivals – three teams from NUJ London Magazine Branch – by more than a third, LFB’s quiz team (chair Dave Rotchelle, Fiona O’Cleirigh, treasurer Jenny Vaughan, Pat Healy and Freelance assistant editor Matt Salusbury) achieved a runaway victory at the London Magazine Branch/ LFB “pub quiz nite” in Covent Garden in July. The prize was a wad of Marks & Spencer vouchers, which the team have generously donated to the Branch to help with alcohol costs for our Christmas Party. (Shown here is the spread in 2012.)

As Dave Rotchelle put it, “knowing all sorts of trivia about all kinds of nonsense is exactly what we do as freelances” LFB’s superior knowledge of the big kahuna burger from Pulp Fiction and the discography of Billy Idol and Men Without Hats secured its dominance.

Photo ©
Matt Salusbury

**Exceptions from p1**

The motion presented covers all works, and fails to address the “database right” in a collection of works.

So the proposal would allow lots of things that policy does not say should be allowed, but almost none of the things that should be.

In common with other organisations – and even some representatives of the real researchers who would benefit from the changes – the NUJ has suggested the government take a pause and come back with a “respectable” proposal.

The government intends to respond to the “technical consultation” in the autumn – when they will also produce detailed proposals on “extended collective licensing” and orphan works licensing.

For links to the proposed changes to “exceptions” on copyright, and to the full responses see [www.creatorsrights.org.uk?page=exceptions](http://www.creatorsrights.org.uk?page=exceptions)

© Mike Holderness
Let 1000 gardening writers bloom?

CAn writes still make it in specialist fields, such as gardening? June's London Freelance Branch meeting heard from Express "Garden" editor Deborah Stone, and Marcia Macleod, founding editor of North London's Your Allotment magazine. The meeting also featured an LFB plant swap table for enthusiasts. But the debate went beyond the gardening niche - with speakers giving advice relevant to any field.

Deborah had been at the top of her game - she was Daily Express regional editor - before she had her first child, which meant she could no longer "do nights". She turned to "something I enjoy writing about: gardening".

She then found she had to start again from the bottom, an experience which can make a journalist "lose confidence." For gardening, "most nationals will only really employ big names". When she pitched gardening feature ideas, the Express asked her: "Do you have any [horticultural] qualifications? No! In that case we're not interested."

In response, Deborah "became qualified" - it took her three years to get the Royal Horticultural Society's Advanced Certificate in Horticulture. Her garden journalism top tip? "Consider getting some qualifications [even] on a part-time night school basis." And "never say no to work. " Also, "go to as many networking events as you possibly can."

Finally "start a blog." These days that's your best way in.

And you can join as a probationary member the Garden Media Guild, of which Deborah is chair, and later "get in as full member if you're published, this could include blogs." The £70 joining fee includes a handbook listing "Public Relations people... magazines, book publishers, national newspapers details."

Marcia was writing for the trade press when she "got an allotment in Barnet". Someone suggested starting a newsletter, which eventually became Your Allotment.

It is deliberately not free, "not online, not national". Keeping it local means Marcia "gets interviews with local growers, tips on growing on clay - which is what most of London has... if there's someone doing it up the road then readers think, 'maybe I can do that too.'"

To evolve from journo into publisher, as Marcia did, you need an ad rep ("I was very lucky to find an ad rep... willing to work on commission only.") a designer and a printer who lets you run up credit. "It's going to take a lot longer and cost a lot more money. Get people to do things you can't do, like ads."

Don't be afraid to ask friends for help. "Network, like mad." Finally, "don't give up, but know when its time to call it a day, according to my friends I missed that point." There's a possible franchise opportunity for a South London version of Your Allotment - contact Marcia via editor@yourallotmentmagazine.com

EDM 80 on FOIA: yes, write to your MP please

PLEASE CONSIDER contacting your MP to request they support Early Day Motion 80 on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). EDM 80 notes that "the Government is proposing to make it easier for public authorities to refuse Freedom of Information requests on cost grounds. This would clearly be an impediment to proper journalism.

As of press day EDM 80 had 75 MPs signed up - EDMs can no longer be ignored when they reach about 200 signatories. See www.parliament.uk/edm/2013-14/80 for details and which MPs have signed it. If your MP's already signed it, please contact them to congratulate them for their support.

The motion opposes this proposal. As of press day EDM 80 had 75 MPs signed up - EDMs can no longer be ignored when they reach about 200 signatories. See www.parliament.uk/edm/2013-14/80 for details and which MPs have signed it. If your MP's already signed it, please contact them to congratulate them for their support.

Training time: courses galore

THE NUJ is offering a wide range of courses relevant to freelances this autumn. Confirmed courses in London include the following, presented by the Branch experts Humphrey Evans and Phil Sutcliffe:

- Getting started as a freelance - 1 November (£60 to NUJ members, £50 student members, others £110);
- Pitch and deal - 15 November (£70 to NUJ members, others £130)
- Others (some possibly subject to sufficient interest) include:
  - Making internet journalism pay - 11 September, 9 October & 13 November;
  - Numeracy for journalists - 17 September
  - Writing for the web - 23-24 September & 18-19 November
- Build your own website - 3-4 October & 28-29 November
- Business for journalists - 29 October
- Writing headlines, standfirsts and intros - 6 November

For details and to book, contact training@nuj.org.uk - and members in Northern Ireland can contact the Irish Confederation of Trades Unions education officer, kevin.doherty@ictuni.org - in Scotland joannm@nuj.org.uk - and in Wales see www.nujiuntingwales.org

Always Ask For More

Humphrey Evans gives a foretaste of the Pitch & Deal course with this true story: Footballer Zlatan Ibrahmovic scored all four Swedish goals when they beat England in a 2012 friendly. The one that reverberated around the football world was an acrobatic overhead bicycle kick from 30 yards that looped over the head of England goalkeeper Joe Hart straight into the net.

Someone on a national newspaper sports desk that night tells us that their picture people quickly established that only one photographer had a good image of Zlatan launching himself horizontal. They rang and asked how much he wanted.

"30 euros," he said. Our source says they virtually had to stuff socks in their mouths to stop themselves laughing in gleeful amazement. The full story is at www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1308more.html

Web woes

London Freelance Branch's website was down between 31 July and 5 August due to a massive Denial of Service attack on another user of the Internet Service Provider that hosts it. We apologise for the inconvenience, which was beyond our control.

In the unlikely event of the site going again, watch the LFB Twitter feed www.twitter.com/NUJ_LFB for updates. And see page 2 for a "QR code", readable by smartphones, that will take you straight to the LFB Rate for the Job page.
**LETTER**

**Worse than useless**

Former **Journalist** editor Tim Gopsill hit the nail on the head when he told the May London Freelance Branch meeting that the current Press Complaints Commission (PCC) actually makes things worse than anything the NUJ has proposed (June Freelance). As Tim said, the Commission defends editors from criticism and removes editors from having to deal with the public.

Both the Commission and the previous Press Council decline to deal with the two biggest sources of complaints: claims made in leader columns; and refusal by editors to print readers’ letters.

Most editors of Murdoch titles were not consulted over the company’s predictable opposition to changes proposed by the Leveson Inquiry – yet both they and the Commission are strangely silent over the fact that all UK-produced titles sold in the Republic of Ireland are subject to the very rules they claim they are against!

Yours fraternally
Bro. Chris Youet, NUJ rep on TUC Midlands

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**UNCLASSIFIED ADS**

**FREELANCE UNCLASSIFIEDS** are FREE to members for non-commercial purposes. To non-members and for commercial purposes, £10 for this much. Acceptance is at the editors’ whim; appearance does not imply endorsement. If you have any comments on an advertiser; tell us. Submit your ads by email to unclassified@londonfreelance.org

**IRISH COUNTRY COTTAGE** for rent, 1 hour from Cork: remote, rustic cottage, well equipped, recently renovated, sleeps 9. Breathtaking views. Near Macroom and Killarney. Rates €350 June-Aug, €300 Sept and €250 any other time. Karl or Phil via jkhowers@eircom.net

**LONDON B&B** Wimbledon / Putney area in photojournalist’s home. Details: www.southfieldsstudio.co.uk or email southfields.bed@btconnect.com

**DON’T GET IT RIGHT – GET IT WRITTEN!** Most people don’t want to write a book – they want to have finished it. Frances Coombes 5th non-fiction Motivation book published by Hodder due September. Details: admin@francescoombes.com

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**MOTION for 9 September**

This meeting of London Freelance Branch votes to allocate out of branch funds £1000 – or whatever lesser sum is needed – to pay an NUJ member to telephone all members of LFB who are on the next warning of lapsing list for non-payment of subscriptions in order to persuade them to remain in membership of the NUJ.

**Proposed: Mike Holderness**

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**Your Branch needs you!**

LONDON Freelance Branch currently has vacancies for a Branch Secretary and for a Membership Secretary.

The work of the Branch Secretary includes writing up and circulating the minutes of meetings (usually taken by somebody else, see below), following up on matters arising and liaising with the venue management on hiring a space for meetings.

The Membership Secretary’s responsibilities include welcoming new members in the brief new members’ spot immediately before meetings. There’s also some admin on membership applications and input into organising occasional New Members’ Meetings.

We expect Committee members to commit to turning up to most LFB Committee meetings, which are from 6.30-8.30 at the NUJ King’s Cross HQ on the third Monday of each month.

Jobshares in both the Branch Secretary and Membership Secretary roles are encouraged. If you are considering standing for one of these roles, get in touch a member of the Committee. There’s a list of LFB Committee members online (with vacancies) at www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/contact.html.

Elections for vacant posts will be held at the September LFB meeting on Monday 9 September.

Geraldine Hackett is kindly handling minute-taking at Branch meetings, but we need more volunteer minute-takers. LFB can arrange a free course in minute-taking.

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