Journos in peril

ERNEST Sagaga, head of Human Rights and Safety at the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), of which the NUJ is an affiliate) came all the way from Brussels to tell London Freelance Branch’s September meeting about the work of the IFJ’s Safety Fund to support journalists in danger worldwide. We also heard from LFB’s own Safiullah Tazib on the conditions faced by journalists in Afghanistan (see page 4).

With the recent trend towards the “kidnap of journalists in countries like Syria” motivated by desire for ransom, political leverage or just media attention, “you freelances are in particular danger”, explained Ernest. Such countries are now so dangerous that media outlets “tend to send freelances, or locals, especially young ones who take on huge risks without any support at all”.

Since the IFJ started compiling annual reports on journalists killed in “work-related” incidents in 1990, there have been over 3000 journalists killed. Ernest noted: “apart from the army I don’t know any profession where so many are killed.”

The IFJ’s Safety Fund was started “by journalists for journalists”. It covers medicines and legal defence. In the past it was for journalists in developing countries but now requests are coming from Europe and America because of the “precarity of our members”. It has disbursed over £3 million: “it’s your money with your name on it.” The IFJ organises safety training, which is “very expensive… we invite journalists to attend these trainings… to prevent them being killed.” A lot of the IFJ’s Hostile Environment Courses are “training for trainers” to create a “pool of trained people who will train people in that country: we ask unions to recommend people to come to get training… freelances have got priority, we know that no one is going to get training” otherwise.

The Safety Fund Board is made up of IFJ officials, who “decide where to spend money and how”. Ernest is coordinator: his job is to “ensure the spending is admissible and make recommendations to the Board,” who are “very careful on donations from external funds – they are really vetted.” In 2010 Romanian media company owner Sorin Ovidiu Vintu “proposed a big sum for children of a killed journalist, €60,000”. This was donated, but Ernest received an “instruction to pay it back with no discussion.” (Vintu has since received prison sentences for embezzlement and money-laundering.) Money from external sources must be “to use as we see fit” with no strings.

The IFJ also tries to ensure that local journalists working for the global media companies “are trained and have social cover.” The Frontline Club also has a fund for fixers.

© Matt Salusbury

Congress and a lifetime of harassment

OUR BRANCH Chair Pennie Quinton was an NUJ delegate to Trades Union Congress 2018 – the annual meeting of the UK union movement. She reports on the motions the NUJ backed – and reflects on life-long sexual harassment in the workplace.

At TUC it soon becomes obvious that in the great scheme of trade unions the NUJ is tiny in comparison to the biggest unions affiliated to TUC, such as GMB or Unite – but being a journalists’ union is highly visible and punches above its weight. At TUC 2018 every member of the NUJ delegation addressed Congress, each composing their own speeches – in many other trade unions it is the norm for campaigns departments to compose the speeches.

At the bi-annual NUJ Delegate Meeting three delegates are elected following their being nominated by their branch to attend TUC, with the General Secretary and President attending de-facto. The elected delegates for 2018/2019 were: myself (LFB); Steve Bird (FT); and Chris Frost of the Union’s Ethics Council. The NUJ put forward three motions, including one emergency motion. The first, moved by General Secretary Michelle Stanistreet, called on TUC to urgently address the gender pay gap following Carrie Gracie’s bold stance at the BBC.

NUJ president Sian Jones moved the NUJ motion on limiting the exploitation of night working in the media industries. The emergency motion, calling for the protection of journalists’ data, was moved by Chris Frost – after two film-makers in Northern Ireland had their computers seized by the police. All three motions passed unanimously.

Steve Bird spoke in support of the TUC motion calling for the protection of imprisoned workers in Turkey – many of whom are journalists. Harassment is everywhere.

Arriving at Congress on Sunday night I am told I will be speaking in support of a composite of motions on sexual harassment from Equity the Actors Union, the Musicians’ Union and UCU, the university and college lecturers’ union, on sexual harassment – which is “er… up next.” TUC had conducted a survey on sexual harassment and something like 95 per cent of female respondents had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace – but only 3 per cent of women said they had thought of going to their trade union to address the issue.

Listening to the impassioned speeches – all by women – I was disappointed to see not one union brother in the huge queue of would-be speakers from the biggest unions wanting to speak on how he would support his sisters in the work place. That would have been particularly welcome from the majority-majority membership of unions such as RMT or ASLEF.

As I waited to speak I reflected how much damage – not just sexual harassment – I had suffered in my...
The Rate for the Job

THIS MONTH’S Rates for the Job include entries from the BBC’s new rate card, with uplifts of around 2 per cent on last year’s fees. There are more online, while the Freelance Fees Guide explains its terminology, such as “buyout” and “disco donut” at www.londonfreelance.org/feesguide/glossary.html

Thinking about work for a company you’ve not dealt with before? 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 at www.londonfreelance.org/rates — please give not only the basic rate (e.g. for First British Serial rights) but extra payments negotiated for extra uses, like the Web. These are shown as (eg) £400+100. Rates marked X are, in the editor’s fallible opinion, below par. Treat all rates as minimum, even perhaps the happy ◢ few.

Broadcasting: Advertising agency, voiceover – per hour – £150 (+ agent’s fee, if you have one). BBC Radio – recorded interview with guest(s), commentary or rant up to £128; press review £117; 8-minute World Service feature £659.

Photography: Construction company website, unauthorised use of photo, claimed £3k but accepted for a quick settlement £2000; US educational publisher, stock image – extensive rights, print run over 4m, worldwide, web, DVD etc. £1400; law firm, one-day location portrait – £1100.

Photography: Construction company website, unauthorised use of photo, claimed £3k but accepted for a quick settlement £2000; US educational publisher, stock image – extensive rights, print run over 4m, worldwide, web, DVD etc. £1400; law firm, one-day location portrait – £1100.

Training alert – let’s get better deals; freedom of information

SADLY this Freelance is arriving later than we expected — probably after the LFB-initiated Introduction to Data Journalism course on on Friday 19 October. To see whether you’d like to request a repeat, see www.londonfreelance.org/ff/1809tra.html

There’s a course in “Let’s role play better deals!”, on how freelance journalists can get paid more for their work — how to always ask for more — with veteran LFB tutors Phil Sutcliffe and Hilary Evans. It’s on Wednesday 28 November at Headland House (see back page) and costs £5.98 for NUJ members. To book, see this notice online at www.londonfreelance.org/ff/1810tra.html

Do you want to learn how to use the Freedom of Information Act? Are you already using the Act, but want to know more about how key provisions are being interpreted? A Campaign for Freedom of Information (CFOI) course on Wednesday 24 October at the Free Word Centre, 60 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3GA explains the legislation, shows how to draft effective requests and describes how to challenge unjustified refusals. For more details and to book, see this notice online as above.

For NUJ Training Scotland courses (also open to NUJ members in the North of England) see nujtrainingscotland.com — and for NUJ Training Wales activities see www.nujtrainingswales.org and for FEU Training courses see this notice online as well.

LFB recruits among journalism students

As part of its recruitment campaign aimed at student members, LFB is holding a series of meetings early in the academic year at selected London journalism schools. The first of these will be at City, University of London in Northampton Square, EC1V 0HB on 2pm on Saturday 3 December.

The format will be similar to LFB’s own New Members’ Meetings (see back page). Hosted by City’s own Professor Richard Evans, it will include talks on setting rates, pursuing payments and tax admin. Other LFB events at other London journalism schools are expected to follow. Watch this space for more details.
EU nationals ‘can stay’ if no-deal Brexit

WITH LESS than six months until the UK formally leaves the European Union, what’s the prognosis for our many EU national members in the UK and our numerous UK nationals living and working in the EU?

With the UK already stockpiling medicines to prepare for the eventuality of a chaotic “no-deal” exit from the European Union, the chances of the UK pulling off a deal with the EU which includes Settled Status (see the June Freelance) for EU nationals here are diminishing. In the event of a really catastrophic no-deal, it’s not even certain what happens to the provisionally agreed transitional period up to 31 December 2020 – during which freedom of movement is supposed to continue.

However, just before we went to press, UK Prime Minister Theresa May in a statement appeared to unilaterally guarantee the rights of EU nationals living in the UK, even in the event of “no deal.” She said, “There are over 3 million EU citizens living in the UK… even if there is no deal your rights will be protected… we want you to stay.” There are no further details yet.

EU nationals in the UK are supposed to be able to start their applications for Settled Status sometime “later in the year”. We’re still waiting for a date, so expect an unseemly rush when it’s eventually announced that applications are open.

A “managed live trial” of the EU Settlement Scheme, as Settled Status seems to now be officially known, started in late August. The Independent reported that EU nationals who are staff at three universities in Liverpool and NHS workers in north west England are being registered under this pilot, in an attempt to iron out any problems with the process in advance of its eventual roll-out. The managed trial includes only employees on salaried contracts, there’s no detail yet on the Settlement Scheme for the self-employed.

Meanwhile, Society of Authors Public Affairs manager Tim Gallagher has appealed for evidence from authors on how they are likely to be affected by Brexit, or are already affected. The examples he gives are authors who make appearances at literary festivals in the EU and whose freedom of movement to do so in the future may be restricted, or authors who have benefited from the EU’s Creative Europe funding.

Please let Tim know via tgallagher@societyofauthors.org and copy in the Freelance please.
© Matt Salisbury

Church backs NUJ no-nukes policy

London Freelance Branch put a motion to the union’s Delegate Meeting calling for the union to support nuclear disarmament, and it was passed. In July the General Synod of the Church of England voted by 260 to 26 to welcome the 2017 UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The Chaplain of the Fleet and other members of the armed forces spoke in favour of calling on the government to meet its obligations under Article VI of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to seek in “good faith” a world free of nuclear weapons.

© Elizabeth Ingrams

Pennie Quinton, below Image © an unknown young visitor to the Natural History Museum – the Freelance must, to its shame, resort to the “await claim” gambit

EU nationals ‘can stay’ if no-deal Brexit

Precarious prospect of Brits in EU

EVEN MORE uncertain than the prospects of our EU national colleagues here in the UK (see below) is the fate of our many members who are UK nationals resident in the EU – in NUJ Brussels Branch, NUJ Paris Branch and NUJ Netherlands Branch, for example. There’s nothing firm yet on what the 27 member states will offer them.

Immigration lawyers Fragman managing partner Caron Pope noted in the Evening Standard in August that we haven’t yet seen any details coming from any of the EU member states on how they will treat UK nationals. Caron advises that in the event of “no deal,” UK nationals living abroad would be regarded as “third party” nationals by the 27 immigration regimes operated by EU member states, with their different rules on length of stay, salaries, qualifications and good character.

Non-EU national partners of French and Belgian nationals can’t work in those countries unless they are married. France does not regard an unmarried partner as part of the family of one of its citizens. In Belgium and Luxembourg, non-EU spouses of citizens need special permission to be able to work. It’s not even clear how post-Brexit UK nationals would apply for permission to stay and to work.

The UK apparently concluded an agreement in September 2017 whereby UK nationals living in the EU will continue to get increases to their UK pensions paid to them in those countries.

But the Association of British Insurers (ABI) warned the Commons Brexit Committee at the end of July that it might become “illegal” to pay pensions into the accounts of British pensioners abroad should the UK crash out of the EU without a deal. Brexit Committee Chair Hillary Benn asked ABI’s general director Huw Evans, “They might find that they couldn’t be paid their pension – is that what you are saying?” Evans replied that, yes, “That is a perfectly plausible risk in the future if no agreement is reached in some countries of the EU.”

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Harassment from page 1

working life by being excluded from informal male networking, such as the liquid lunches at television studios and post-work conversations about football, and the way men kept each others’ backs in the workplace against female colleagues.

On the platform I kept it simple. From the age of fifteen as a Saturday girl (having my arse slapped with a tray by the manager of Pizza Hut) to at 47 as a researcher in the Middle East (having to abandon a research site due to a colleague suffering a sexual assault) I have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. It is a blight on women’s careers. Please support this motion.

I say this actually gazing down from the platform on a man who had physically assaulted me while I was at work.

That this motion must thoroughly examine and challenge every sector in the British work place, was perhaps illustrated by an exchange I had with a male member of another smaller union, seated at the table behind the NUJ delegation.

I was looking for my bag in the semi-darkness. “Ha ha luv, your bag is there can’t you see it?” he says.

As I found it, he continues with his banter, punctuated by “luv” used in a demeaning, patronising way at the end of his every sentence.

“Actually I hate being called luv”, I say calmly. His female colleague sitting next to him bursts out laughing but hastily smoothes her giggles as he glares at her and his hackles rise in my direction.

He did not say another word to me for the rest of Congress but glared balefully at me every time I passed to sit at the NUJ table.

© Pennie Quinton
Of course it rains. It’s a festival!

THE RAIN was pelting onto the flimsy roof of the tent as a bunch of bedraggled freelances huddled together to talk about what the NUJ meant to them. Members are sometimes called on to make sacrifices for the NUJ and six LFB members joined other freelances in braving the hazards of an English festival on the August bank holiday weekend.

The Byline Festival in Ashdown Forest in Sussex was organised by a radical crowdsourced publishing and campaigning group of London-based journalists. There were hundreds of journalists there and LFB had a stall and ran a union workshop. This took place in the torrential downpour but still 16 colleagues picked their way through the mud to get to the panel discussion conducted by branch officers and other union reps.

As at all festivals there was music and comedy, but in addition a dozen sessions a day with prominent journalists discussing current themes such as fake news, media regulation, data exploitation by the tech giants, Brexit and so on. Much discussion focused on journalists’ responsibility to stick to the highest standards – which is where the NUJ comes in.

A highlight was the annual Bad Press Awards, at which ironic accolades were heaped mostly on the Daily Mail; but the Mirror and The Times featured as well.

Nici Talbot, LFB’s social media officer, was the initiator of enterprise, having established contact with Byline at LFB’s last Freelance Salon. She had some NUJ T-shirts printed for the festival.

It has been confirmed that Byline will take place again on 23-26 August next year and preparations will be made for a deeper level of activity. The freelance team has submitted a report to the National Executive Council with recommendations for a union presence at national level.

The London Freelance participants along with Nici were vice-chair Pierre Alozie and secretary Tim Gopsill, with members Elizabeth Ingram and Laura Laker. They were joined by freelance photographers Nick McGowan-Lowe, chair of the Freelance Industrial Council, and NEC member Natasha Hirst.

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Judicial Review granted on Leveson 2 inquiry

PERMISSION has been granted for a Judicial Review of whether the decision to cancel “Leveson 2”, the planned follow-up inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the British press, (See the December 2016 Freelance for our most recent update on “Leveson 2”).

The Government announced in March that it was formally cancelling the inquiry, whose brief would have included “corporate governance and management failures” in Her Majesty’s Press, with a focus on specific claims about phone-hacking at the News of the World and what went wrong with the original police investigation into phone hacking.

Campaigners with the Hacked Off group, including the parents of the missing child Madeleine McCann and former Bristol schoolteacher Christopher Jeffries, convinced the High Court that the decision should be subject to a Judicial Review. The way in which the decision had made was “unlawful, irrational and unfair” and “contrary to a substantive legitimate expectation enjoyed by the claimants” and contrary to the commitment made by the then Prime Minister.

The Judicial Review will now come before the High Court, with the “substantive claim” heard some time “not before October,” with no firm date yet as we go to press in early October. Watch this space.

© Tim Gopsill

We hear of the plight of journalists in Afghanistan

BRANCH COMMITTEE member Safiullah Tazib told the September meeting something of the plight of journalists in Afghanistan, alongside the IFJ’s Ernest Sagaga (see page 1).

He opened by reminding us of the massacre of nine journalists, killed in deliberately-targeted attacks in Kabul on 30 April, along with a separate incident in which a BBC journalist in the north was killed in the same day.

Another journalist had been shot dead a few days earlier on the way to work, with two more killed shortly before that in a double suicide bombing in Kabul.

The IFJ categorises Afghanistan as the “worst country for journalists”, with 14 killed in 2018 alone. Safi described an incident in May last year in which six radio journalists were killed in the Afghan city of Jalalabad, and there have been many more such atrocities in the country recently – more than 47 local journalists and 16 foreign journalists have been killed in the course of their work in Afghanistan since 2001.

It was, however, the mass killing on 30 April that “shocked the world” and prompted LFB, through Safi, to establish a link with Kabul journalist unions, in a letter of solidarity and condolence delivered by Safi in June (see the August Freelance).

Afghanistan’s journalists have experienced corrupt MPs – who are involved in drug running to Moscow and another who diverted a national airline plane to come and pick him up from Kabul – as a result, neither of them were able to stand for election again.

Afghanistan’s 220 media outlets are “restrained on a daily basis” as a result of their reporting on corruption.

The UK has a stake in Afghanistan.

The UK has lost 457 soldiers in Afghanistan in the most recent bout of engagement. There are still 1,120 British soldiers in Afghanistan, which Safi described as a “presence which helps the free press.” Afghans “appreciate our letters,” said Safi. The “support they need is to help with protection on their work... to lobby the UK government to force the Afghan government to provide more protection.” They also requested “training with investigative reporting, financial assistance to children of killed journalists and employment rights.” Safi explained that most Afghan journalists are staff but have no holidays and no sick pay.

There are currently 17 different journalists’ unions in Afghanistan, but these are “working to create one big federation that will represent them all as a united union”.

How else can we practically help them? “Would it be possible to occasionally send experts to train them?” they asked. Afghan journalists want us to persuade UK government to encourage the Afghan government to provide financial assistance to children of slain journalists.

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More online...

Do check regularly for updates and new stories at www.londonfreelance.org/ft – one piece already up says farewell to the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom.
Internet not broken – copyright on the mend

So what is all that fervid hoo-ha around the EU Copyright Directive about, then?

COPYRIGHT may yet be improved in Europe – despite a vicious campaign in favour of the internet corporations that make fortunes scraping up your work and selling ads alongside it. The likes of Google, Apple, Facebook, and Amazon – GAFA for short – will fight on.

You have probably seen messages claiming the proposals will “break the internet”. Members of the European Parliament have seen and heard tens of thousands of them, delivered by websites linked to the corporations. MEPs nevertheless voted on 12 September to proceed with the Directive on copyright in the digital single market.

The untruths

Whenever lobbyists gather together to say something will “break the internet”, it turns out they are… exaggerating. Their claims are most reminiscent of the “they’re coming to take your guns away” mailshots of the US National Rifle Association. For example:

They said that the Directive means “censorship”. It does not. The text that of Article 13 that the Parliament voted on says that GAFA should make licensing agreements to reimburse you and other creators for works uploaded by users – for example through collecting societies, rather like public performance licences for music. Only if they decline to do this, they must “cooperate in good faith in order to ensure that unauthorised protected works or other subject matter are not available on their services”.

They said that it would “kill Wikipedia”. Non-profit encyclopaedias are explicitly excluded. The techies said it’s all about machine “filtering”. It isn’t. That’s just the most techy thing they found to talk about.

They said that the Directive means a “link tax” or prevents you linking at all. It does not. Article 11 says that newspaper publishers shall have the right to negotiate licences with GAFA for use of bits of your journalistic work. The Parliament text explicitly excludes “legitimate private and non-commercial use of press publications by individual users”. So the internet is not broken.

The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) reached a landmark agreement with European newspaper publishers’ organisations to promote a provision that “authors receive an appropriate share” of any income from this. This is in the text approved by the Parliament.

They said that it would “ban memes”. The Freelance is not in favour of internet randoms taking your photo, adding some substandard text, and distributing it without credit or compensation. Nevertheless, EU member states’ laws include an “exception” to copyright for the purposes of parody, and that isn’t changing. (What these laws mean – particularly about credit and uses that damage the creator of the original – remains to be settled in future court cases.)

All this US-style campaigning seems to be based on an assumption that elected representatives don’t read the measures they’re voting on. The Freelance can think of one “haunted pencil” in Westminster who probably thinks one should get one’s butler to do the homework for one.

Stung by accusations that their campaign was “astroturf” – like grass roots, but synthetic – the friends of GAFA called in-person protests in 26 August. Probably the largest was in Berlin, with 80 to 150 warmish bodies.

The good bits

Mercifully absent from the furor, so far, are provisions that would mean that those exploiting your work as a journalist would have to account to you what uses they make of it. In the event that they made much more money than was envisaged when you negotiated a price with them, you could claim a fair share of this “windfall”.

And now...

It’s not over. The next stage in the passage of the Directive is a three-way negotiation between the Parliament’s Legal Affairs Committee; the Commission which is the EU civil service; and the Council which is made up of member states’ governments. Some amendments passed by the Parliament need sub-editing. The EFJ will be vigilant in pushing for the intention of the good bits to stay in.

One issue will be ensuring that the provision for “heritage institutions” to licence “out of commerce” works through collecting societies isn’t used to weaken existing safeguards.

Presuming that the Directive passes, member states – and probably the UK, whatever happens with Brexit – have to “transpose” it into national law. Journalists’ and other authors’ organisations will have our work cut out ensuring they do that sensibly.

A particular concern here is a proposal from the Council to allow member states to share Public Lending Right payments between authors and publishers.

This appears to be necessary to make PLR work as it has in German and Austrian law: it mustn’t be implemented anywhere else – unless budgets are, say, doubled.

The chances of you getting a bit more income after all this work are quite high.

And the importance of making GAFA play by the rules of the real world is only emphasised by how much they hate it.

© Mike Holderness, Chair, EFJ Authors’ Rights Expert Group

No guineas

A member writes: “I wanted to use an image in my book on Virginia Woolf – as an indication of how ubiquitous she now is. It’s a Google search engine banner that appeared on her birthday.” The Freelance would like Virginia Woolf to be better-known for her A Room of One’s Own and Three Guineas – some of the best writing on making a living as a woman writer. The member continues: “at Google’s permissions page I see that they don’t allow anyone to use ‘Google Doodles’.” The Freelance advised the member to pull the picture. Google is, of course, possibly the largest funder of anti-copyright campaigns. But it knows the value of its own copyright (and trademarks). Virginia Woolf at Home by Hilary Macaskill is scheduled to be published by Pimpernel Press in May 2019.

© Mike Holderness

Photo by George Charles Beresford, died 21 February 1938 – so out of copyright since 1 January 2009.
How AI could actually help us; Xmas party

IN ADDITION to the usual cycle of monthly LFB meetings, there is a New Members Meeting for members new to the Branch, on Thursday 25 October. It's from 6.30pm at the Camera Museum in Holborn. It's a chance to get acquainted with other new members and also some more experienced freelance journalists who can offer advice. For details, see www.londonfreelance.org/fl/180newm.html.

The regular Branch meeting on Monday 12 November will be on Artificial Intelligence (AI), and how AI tools may be able to actually help journalists, rather than putting us all out of job. Our first speaker is Neil Maiden, Professor of Digital Creativity at the City University London. A principal and co-investigator on numerous EPSRC- and EU-funded projects, Neil researches digital tools to increase the creative capabilities of professionals including ours. Neil’s talk will include INJECT www.injectproject.eu—a tool for journalists that triggers new ideas for story angles using AI algorithms. We also expect to have someone from krzana.com who do training and consultancy.

The LFB gathering on Monday 10 December is a seasonal end-of-year party, with some free food and drink available, at the NUJ HQ, Headland House. We would not be utterly surprised to have a celebrity guest. Watch the online Branch calendar (below) for confirmation of the details of this event.

This went to press on 4 October. Your deadline for the November online issue is 29 October.

LFB meetings (except for the 25 October new members’ meeting) are always on the second Monday of the month, from 7pm to 9pm in the basement of the NUJ’s HQ at 72 Acton Street, London WC1X 9NB, which is accessible to people who use wheelchairs. The nearest Tube is King’s Cross or Chancery Lane. If you need the Branch to pay for care for a child or dependent so you can attend a meeting, contact a Branch officer to ask.

For updates on meetings and for confirmation of themes and speakers, see the Branch calendar web page www.londonfreelance.org/fl/meetings.html and LFB’s Twitter feed www.twitter.com/NUJ_LFB

Can members who have difficulty reading the agenda on paper please contact us to get the agenda in electronic form ahead of the meeting?

We draw members’ attention to the microphone that will be passed to you if you indicate you wish to speak at a meeting. This is so that any members with hearing problems can hear you via the induction loop. For updated guidance on etiquette on the NUJ HQ’s website, see the Branch calendar web page www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1805film.html.

LFB AS we went to press was seeking a new welfare officer; since David Wilkins has left for a position abroad.

He was one of two welfare officers whose job is to offer confidential support for members in serious trouble, whether through illness, personal or family tragedy or bereavement, or poverty and lack of work. In some circumstances they can secure small grants or loans for members.

David is blind and partially deaf and has been an active member of LFB, the Freelance Industrial Council and Disabled Members Council. He has been awarded a paid internship at the European Parliament media section, which has a vacant seat representing Black Members, another for a member with a London address and one for North West England as well. Others cover regional or specialised areas; there is a list of current vacancies linked via www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1810vac.html.

Candidates need to secure nomination by an NUJ Branch, the link below has details of how to seek LFB’s nomination in plenty of time for the November Branch meeting.

The branch sought candidates from among full Branch members for a new welfare officer at its October meeting (before this newsletter arrived). LFB has two Welfare Officers—traditionally and where possible one female (currently Arjun Wajid) and one male. Should the Welfare Officer vacancy remain, there will be an election at November’s Branch meeting. Watch the LFB meetings page for details.

After a Committee by-election LFB welcomes back to its Committee Elizabeth Ingams and welcomes new Committee members without portfolio Mohammed Attia and Baris Cimen. Updated Committee contacts will be at www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/contact.html.

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