

Mar/Apr 2016

# FREE

# Boosting freelances

THE NUJ'S "Boost your income and maximise your professional profile" event held in London in January was attended by over 100 journalists, including some who had recently been laid off from staff positions and were making the move into freelance journalism. The feedback from attendees was that it was a great success.

Photographer and NUJ Freelance Industrial Council Chair Nick McGowan-Lowe repeated again some of the most important things a freelance needs to constantly remind themselves about: "Ask for more," and "Get it in writing, always".

LFB member and NUJ Vice-President Tim Dawson gave advice on how journalists can make money

from ebooks (see page 5), "how to be interesting but not too interesting on Twitter", what to do if a commissioning editor nicks your story, and what to do when asked to work for nothing. Tim's answer to the last one is: "Never to do it."

Janet Awe, who curates LFB's own Twitter feed @NUJ\_LFB, shared with freelances practically all they'll need to know on maximising your website and social media profile. (Janet helped LFB into the Twitter-sphere back in 2012: see [www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1204twit.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1204twit.html)).

Mark Whitehead (pictured) told journalists about the tricky subject of how to wear both journalist and

PR hats, and attendant ethical issues.

There's an excellent write-up of the event at [www.nuj.org.uk/news/get-it-in-writing-and-always-ask-for-more/](http://www.nuj.org.uk/news/get-it-in-writing-and-always-ask-for-more/)

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- There are an awful lot of NUJ national events like this one coming up, some arranged not too long in advance – so do make sure you're on the NUJ mailing list for these. (Check with [membership@nuj.org.uk](mailto:membership@nuj.org.uk) if you're not getting messages). If you take time to read the many emails that come into your inbox from "National Union of Journalists", you may find details of some really excellent meetings of this type buried deep among other material.



Mark Whitehead advises freelances on wearing both journalist and PR hats

Photo: © Mark Thomas

## Photographers 'defrauded' on Payback forms

PHOTO AGENCY Rex Features wrote to photographers in December to say that it has "recently discovered that a small number of Rex contributors' authorisation forms were fraudulently signed by a Rex employee on behalf of some contributors and sent to DACS".

This follows an investigation by members of the Editorial Photo UK group ([www.EPUK.org](http://www.EPUK.org)) who were concerned about the possibilities for just such malpractice opened up by the proposal that photo agencies form their own collecting society.

As photographer David Hoffman points out, there are a number of other issues to be resolved, including how much of these payments have

been "skimmed" off and how they can be recovered.

The letter concludes, "If you would like us to modify your relationship with DACS, including by withdrawing Rex's collection of royalties on your behalf, please let me know by responding to this email". EPUK and the NUJ advise photographers not to take any action or to respond to this email until the extent of this malpractice becomes clearer.

DACS is the collecting society through whose Payback scheme many or most NUJ photographers currently get payment for their secondary rights – those that it is impractical for them to collect themselves, for example photocopying of

publications containing their work. EPUK understands that DACS is working quickly and diligently to carry out the necessary checks and is working to minimise the delay in Payback payments to Rex claimants resulting from the fraudulent actions at Rex.

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- And a reminder to photographers to be wary of any new contracts "offered" by agencies. They are likely to be trying to get you to sign away rights to payments for "secondary" uses of your work: details at [www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1512dacs.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1512dacs.html). If you have not yet signed up to receive these payments, go to [www.dacs.org.uk](http://www.dacs.org.uk).

LFB meetings

14 March

Women in journalism

11 April

What do (new) LFB members want?

See back page & [www.twitter.com/NUJ\\_LFB](http://www.twitter.com/NUJ_LFB)



And lo! This QR code shall convey your web-enabled smartphone device directly to the Rate for the Job page [www.londonfreelance.org/rates](http://www.londonfreelance.org/rates)

# The Rate for the Job

WE REGRET that there's a dearth of rates for the job this month. Are the thousands of freelancers in the Union (as well as the non-members who also submit rates) really not doing any new work for new clients?

The Union needs you – real – freelance rates, not the rates you'd have liked to have got. See the rate rating system below!

The suggested rates we *should* be getting, published in the Freelance

Fees Guide ([www.londonfreelance.org/feesguide/](http://www.londonfreelance.org/feesguide/)) are backed by the "historical survey" (open to non-members) of actual rates via RftJ. This prevents any unpleasantness from the UK competition authorities.

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](http://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.

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

**Photography:** VICE News £20 per photo for news feature on top of 18p per word £20.

**Punditry:** Chairing one-day in-

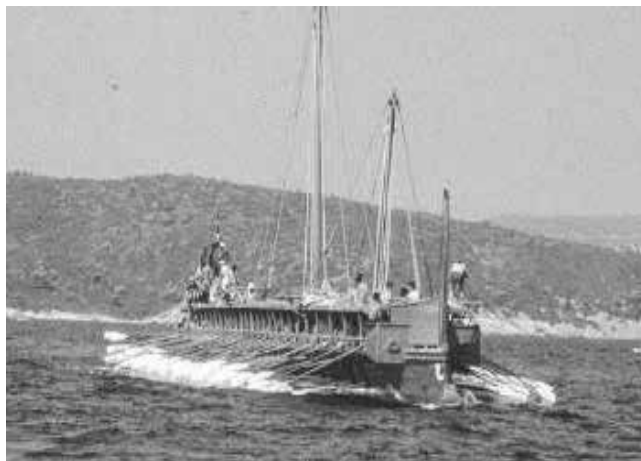
ternational conference on specialist subject, all travel, accommodation, subsistence paid €500;

**Shifts:** *The Grocer* newsdesk day £160; *Hello!* 7-hour subbing day £152; *Boat International* 7-hour subbing day £140; *Derby Telegraph* subbing day, 7.5hrs £100.

**Tip-offs:** *Private Eye* tip-off for 50-word article £20.

**Words, per 1000:** *New Statesman* (online) writing a blog/article for "The Stagers" columns – was £80 in 1990! Now £75 **XXX**; *The Sunday Times* (Ireland) page lead news story 2014 print and web £350 **X**; *Petroleum Economist* (also supplied pics) print and online rights £300; *The Irish Times* news story print and web £260 **X**; Easyjet Traveller Travel feature, 900 words £200 **X**; VICE News 18p per word plus £20 per photo for news feature £180; *The Baltic Times* 600 words @ €30 = €50 **XXX**.

**Words, other:** *The Quietus* – interview £50 **XX**; *Fortean Times* (Wild Talents/Dennis), 1600 words, £100 – "above standard rate, which has now fallen even lower!" **XX**.



## The Trireme Award

This year's Trireme Award for the "worst terms and conditions since I was last chained to the oars" goes to the unnamed Westminster-based company for whom Graham Timpson is the contact. This entity's Gumtree ad seeks "Five Long Term Writers... our rate is £15-£20 per article depending on word count... we require 300 to 500-word articles" and "expect at least ten articles per week" on topics such as UK probate law.

Were it to take at least two and a half hours to come up with a decent 500-worder on probate from scratch, this rate would be just above London Living Wage. Were it to take you three hours, it would come in just below National Minimum Wage. We can't imagine anyone with a highly employable legal background working for Mr Timpson for that money.

## Social media and the digital newsroom

NUJ INDEPENDENT Broadcasting and New Media Branch presents "Social Media and the Digital Newsroom: Closing the Gap".

This examines the increasing overlap between user-generated content, blogging, citizen journalism, new media marketing and more traditional news practices. It's for anyone (both NUJ members and non-members)

who works with online content for a living, be it within a tech start-up, multimedia newsroom, blogging or social media capacity.

The guest speaker will be Lisette Johnston, senior multimedia journalist at BBC World News, with 13 years of experience working across social, print, mobile video and television platforms. She recently won a

prize for her academic research on social media and TV coverage of the Syria conflict.

It's on **Tuesday 23 February** at LAUNCH22, 31A Corsham Street, London N1 6DR (near Old Street station) and kick-off is at 18:30.

It's free, with drink and nibbles provided. To register go to [www.bit.ly/LisetteJ](http://www.bit.ly/LisetteJ)

## Training alert

THERE ARE numerous NUJ training courses in London during the rest of February and in March, April and through to the beginning of May. As the NUJ's London HQ at Headland House is being refurbished, these will be at various London venues – most are at the Marx Memorial Library in Clerkenwell Green EC1, but do please check the venue when you book a course.

The ever-popular "Getting Started as a Freelance" course is on Friday 29 April, as ever delivered by tutors Louise Bolotin and LFB's own Phil Sutcliffe, both of the NUJ's Freelance Industrial Council. Course details are at [www.nuj.org.uk/events/getting-started-as-a-freelance-april-2016/](http://www.nuj.org.uk/events/getting-started-as-a-freelance-april-2016/).

There may still be places on the highly-discounted (under £200) Intermediate Adobe two-day course starting on **Thursday 3 March** at

Media Training Ltd, Great Suffolk St, SE1. Details from [training@nuj.org.uk](mailto:training@nuj.org.uk).

"Build Your Own website for under £50" is a two-dayer starting **Wednesday 24 February** (the course costs something over £50).

There's also "Pitching to book publishers" on **Monday 21 March**, "Mobile journalism" (journalism on mobile phones as a platform) on **Tuesday 12 April** and "Adding PR to your portfolio" on **Tuesday 26 April**. "How to boost your income" is on **Wednesday 27 April**. Unsure of your skills and opportunities? This will get your ideas rolling.

Finally, "Pitch & Deal" (negotiating for freelancers) is on **Friday 6 May**. You can find details of some courses via [www.nuj.org.uk/events/search/?keyword=training](http://www.nuj.org.uk/events/search/?keyword=training) which should lead to details of how you can book.



## LFB website

FEEDBACK from members suggests some of you are having difficulty finding details for the next London Freelance Branch meeting online. We apologise: it was originally designed for reporters expected to have research skills. Information about the next LFB meeting is always at [www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings](http://www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings) and to get to the "meetings" page from a standing start (from [www.londonfreelance.org](http://www.londonfreelance.org)), look down the page for "London Freelance Branch meetings and more" and click on that link. (ringed on the photo of LFB's homepage above.) Upcoming LFB meeting details are also tweeted out via the LFB Twitter feed ([www.twitter.com/NUJ\\_LFB](http://www.twitter.com/NUJ_LFB)).

# TTIPing the balance how?

WHAT'S HAPPENING with the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), the planned bilateral EU-US trade agreement? How will it affect us? Jude Kirton-Darling, MEP for the North East of England, briefed the NUJ's Freelance Industrial Council on this.

The European Parliament only has a scrutiny role in TTIP and this is a very blunt power – MEPs can't amend TTIP, but they can vote to reject the whole thing.

The Parliament resolved in July to delineate "red lines" that TTIP must not cross. The trade agreement should not stop EU member states from "re-organising" (that is, nationalising) public services such as the NHS "according to the will of the electorate." But TTIP can "lock in" privatisation once it's started, by giving investors in other countries access, making it more difficult to "re-organise" public services.

There's also a red line on labour rights, which like many minimum standards are very different on each side of the Atlantic. All EU states sign up to International Labour Or-

ganization rules on labour rights, while half of US states have "right to work" strike-busting legislation. In Tennessee, the State governor overruled Volkswagen's attempts at collective bargaining with the United Auto Workers union.

One threat is from "Investor State Dispute Settlements", which would be private tribunals arbitrating between corporations and governments. The theory is that these are written into such agreements to protect investors from "expropriation" in foreign markets. In practice, tribunal decisions – behind closed doors – are based on commercial law. One alarming detail is that just one London law firm currently providing a third of all arbitrators. The European Parliament has agreed that for ISDSs, everything will be in the public domain.

The UK government is the biggest cheerleader for a neo-liberal version of TTIP. It wants to keep healthcare and adult education on the table, while other EU countries want to keep these out of it. US Democrat Presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton

has said some "very negative things already" about TTIP. The countries are about a third of the way to a deal on TTIP. US President Barack Obama has to initial a deal by November 2016. Jude feels the most likely outcome is that TTIP becomes a "building blocks" agreement, setting in motion subsequent deals on the specifics of pharmaceuticals, manufacturing and so on.

Some of journalism is covered by existing GATTS deals. There is talk of "broader trade in digital services". Jude says "audio-visual services" – such as film-making – have been excluded, but "written digital services are a bit of a grey zone – it's hard to tell what's in and what's affected."

What can we do? We need to demonstrate now to MEPs and to Westminster that "people outside the room care about it." The more public debate there is, the more MEPs can "open the box" about the backroom deals the "corporates" and their allies in governments are trying to pull off. So at the least write to your MP and MEP now.

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## Salon in Salford

Following the very successful Freelance Salon event in London – see the January *Freelance* at [www.londonfreelance.org/fi/1512salo.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fi/1512salo.html) – the concept is going on tour. Put the date in your diary if you're in the North of England:

**Wednesday 18 May**, somewhere in Salford. For time, location and booking information please revisit [www.londonfreelance.org/fi/1603salo.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fi/1603salo.html)

## No to Armageddon!

NUCLEAR weapons are hitting the headlines once again, with the debate on whether to replace the UK's Trident nuclear submarines and the missiles and warheads they carry – and there's a demonstration to protest Britain's nuclear deterrent on Saturday 27 February.

This year is the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations: the first session of its UN General Assembly was convened on 10 January 1946 at Central Hall, Westminster. It is not often recalled that the UN's very first resolution was one seeking to ban nuclear weapons worldwide.

On 28 January 2016, an Open Ended Working Group was established at the United Nations in Geneva, to bring together, for the first time, 131 countries to work on the draft leg-

islation for a nuclear ban (see [www.icanw.org](http://www.icanw.org)). The United Kingdom has so far not attended this group.

On **Saturday 27 February** the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) will be joined by non-governmental organisations from both the disarmament and the environmental movements, including Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Compass, War on Want, Pax Christi, The People's Assembly, Stop the War International, International Peace Bureau, Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Medact, Scientists for Global Responsibility, Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

The march will start at noon from Trafalgar Square. Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the opposition will attend.

© Elizabeth Chapell



1946: opening session of the UN General Assembly

Photo © UN/  
Marcel Bolomey

## Investigate this Bill, again

THE UK government's Draft Investigatory Powers Bill has attracted quite a lot of attention, not least due to deep-pocketed internet service provider corporations spending money to complain that it would force them to spend money.

The Bill of course has much wider implications for privacy and freedom of expression – in particular, from

journalists' point of view, vagueness in drafting leading to threats to the protection of confidential sources – despite the safeguards that we reported in the January *Freelance* ([www.londonfreelance.org/fi/1512ipb.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fi/1512ipb.html)).

On 2 February the NUJ's full submission on the Draft Bill was published at [www.nuj.org.uk/doc-](http://www.nuj.org.uk/doc-)

[uments/nuj-submission-to-the-parliamentary-joint-committee-on-the/](http://www.nuj.org.uk/doc-uments/nuj-submission-to-the-parliamentary-joint-committee-on-the/) – read it if you care about media freedom.

The Parliamentary Committee tasked with looking at the Bill was required to report by 11 February. Watch this space (at [www.londonfreelance.org/fi/1603ipb.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fi/1603ipb.html)) for updates.



# Get the law on our side

FREELANCE WORKERS should be better protected in law and their needs must drive more public policy discussion – that is the claim from the Freelance Industrial Council that will be put to the NUJ's Delegate Meeting. The motion, which will be considered when NUJ activists gather in Southport this April, would commit the NUJ to bringing together a new coalition of unions and other progressive bodies to force freelance issues onto the mainstream political agenda. It builds on the emphasis on self-employed workers by Jeremy Corbyn in one of his earliest speeches as Labour leader.

"The NUJ needs to work with politicians across the political spectrum in all the countries where we organise", said Tim Dawson, who represents freelance members on the NUJ's National Executive. "But we also need fresh alliances in civic

society. In the popular imagination, building tradesmen epitomise the 'self-employed', but freelancers know that their world encompasses far more than just plumbing and electrics. Equity (the actors' union) for example, now has a freelance dancers network." The motion also calls for the NUJ to push for the International Labour Organization to adopt a "convention" on "atypical workers", as freelancers are sometimes called. This could require governments to ensure that freelancers are fairly treated.

Members can find full text of all motions for Delegate Meeting on the NUJ's website near [www.nuj.org.uk/about/union-democracy/](http://www.nuj.org.uk/about/union-democracy/)



Geneva, home of the International Labour Organization (above) and of WIPO (below)

Photo © Tim Dawson

## Stirrings on Authors' Rights

THERE WERE interesting developments for creators at the World Intellectual Property Organization's Standing Committee on Copyright and Related rights (WIPO SCCR), which met in Geneva from 7 December to 11 December.

In the long run, the most significant for journalists is a call from Brazil for future discussions on a wide-ranging review of how authors' rights work online. This appeared to call for authors and – more particularly – musical performers to give up our right to authorise who uses our work, in return for "equitable remuneration" administered through collecting societies.

The International Federation of Journalists raised this with the Brazilian delegation, who replied that they understood the importance of this "exclusive right" to journalists in maintaining our reputations and ethical practice, and they would not in fact seek to undermine it. Yes, they suggested, the initiative could and should lead to discussion on how authors and performers are forced to sign exploitative contracts.

For creators more widely, Senegal and other countries got ahead in a queue by proposing that the organisation open talks on a treaty to make the Artists Resale Right ("droit de suite") apply worldwide – which it must if it is to be effective. Following its implementation in the European Union, some art auction houses moved parts of their activity to the US, to avoid paying artists

4 per cent of the value of sales up to €50,000 – and started lobbying there to prevent its extension. The US blocked the proposal in Geneva, instead calling for a study of how the right is applied and what effect it has in the countries that offer it.

But the resale right proposal is now formally in the queue for debate. Ahead of it are a treaty giving broadcasters rights in an attempt to prevent "signal piracy", and calls for international rules on "exceptions" to authors' rights for the benefit of libraries, museums, archives, schools, colleges and, er, Google, which has formed a cunning alliance with libraries in particular.

Just after the January *Freelance* went to press the European Commission produced its "Communication" setting out plans for authors' rights. It observes that there is "growing concern about whether the current EU copyright rules make sure that the value generated by some of the new forms of online content distribution is fairly shared". Subsequent creators' meetings with EU Commissioner Andrus Ansip suggest that the Commission may in fact have appetite to do something about the unfair contracts imposed on us. See [www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1512copy.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1512copy.html) for details and links.

And in the UK organisations in and around the Creators' Rights Alliance (CRA), including the NUJ, are launching a campaign on those unfair contracts at [www.fairtermsfor-](http://www.fairtermsfor-)

[creators.org](http://www.creators.org) around the acronym C.R.E.A.T.O.R:

- **Clearer** contracts, including written contracts which set out the exact scope of the rights granted;
- Fair **Remuneration**. Equitable and unwaivable remuneration for all forms of exploitation, to include bestseller clauses so if a work does far better than expected the creator shares in its success even if copyright was assigned;
- An obligation of **Exploitation** for each mode of exploitation. Also known as the 'use it or lose it' Clause. This is the French model;
- Fair, understandable and proper **Accounting** clauses;
- **Term**. Reasonable and limited contract terms and regular reviews to take into account new forms of exploitation;
- **Ownership**. Authors, including illustrators and translators, should be appropriately credited for all uses of their work and moral rights should be unwaivable;
- All other clauses be subject to a general test of **Reasonableness**.

CRA member organisation the Society of Authors is running its own successful campaign, including author Philip Pullman getting coverage in many newspapers for announcing that he has "had enough" of writers being expected to work for nothing and withdrawing as a patron of the Literary Festival in his beloved Oxford after it refused his call to pay authors who appear there.

© Mike Holderness

### Public service TV at HoC

What with the proposed privatisation of Channel 4, the potential sale of ITV, the BBC's charter renewal and issues around the funding of S46, the NUJ's cross-party Parliamentary Group – which now includes some very prominent Labour Shadow Cabinet people – is hosting a meeting on the future of public service broadcasting. "Don't let them pull the plug on public service TV" is on **Monday 22 February** in Committee Room 10, House of Commons. Kick off is at 6pm, so be in the queue for the St Stephen's Green Entrance security scanner at least 45 minutes before that. It should be all over within two and half hours. Details: [www.nuj.org.uk/events/dont-let-them-pull-the-plug-on-public-service-broadcasting](http://www.nuj.org.uk/events/dont-let-them-pull-the-plug-on-public-service-broadcasting)

# New map to ebook millions

SOME SELF-PUBLISHING writers are making six-figure incomes from ebooks, and others are earning new royalties from old copy by the same means. Happily, the tips, tricks and techniques to emulate their success are contained in a new book, published by the NUJ and available to members for free.

*Make eBooks Pay*, by NUJ vice-president Tim Dawson, is a guide to the practicalities of ebook self-publishing, as well as featuring ten case studies of authors who have made a success of this medium: “ebooks probably won’t replace the paper-

and-ink variety, but around one third of all books now sold are now for eReaders”, Tim told the *Freelance*.

“Unlike news, films or music, it is a digital media format for which most consumers expect to pay. It favours shorter books, which is good for long-form journalism – and the lead-times to publication are unbelievably short”, he continued.

The book can be accessed in either ebook or pdf formats at [www.nuj.org.uk/make-ebooks-pay/](http://www.nuj.org.uk/make-ebooks-pay/) – you will need to register with the NUJ website as a member and get a password if you have not done so al-

ready. Writing and production of the book was funded by the Authors’ Licensing and Collecting Society.



## Pink’un may go dark

Journalists at the *Financial Times* voted on 26 January in favour of a 24-hour strike over what they call a “pensions robbery” by new owners Nikkei. No date had been set as the *Freelance* went to press. Watch this space and [www.nuj.org.uk](http://www.nuj.org.uk) for updates. As ever, the FT Chapel (the Union’s unit of workplace-based organisation there) would appreciate it if freelancers engaged to work on any strike days found themselves unavailable. Anyone suffering hardship as a result of being unavailable should contact the Chapel.

## From zero to hero

THESE DAYS there’s an onslaught of “clients” wanting us to toil for nowt. But now some union members are finding we’ve entered a new phase. The first offer for a given piece of work may be zero, but clients nowadays are just trying it on in hopes that freelancers who’ve grown used to exploitation won’t even challenge such non-offers.

Here’s practical encouragement, not statistical science, just enlivening examples of negotiation...

- the 1000-word magazine article – initial offer nothing, final agreed fee £300.
- the novice freelance bridging from studenthood into pro journalism has done a regular online column for zilch over several months, then says: “I can’t carry on like this cos I need to eat, more or less like you do.” Then they say to him “How about 150 quid?”
- the BBC radio pundit spots for which one NUJ member gets offered

nada by Radio 6 Music and says no, so they say: “Oh, all right, £50?” – and another on Radio 4 where the starting point was goose egg and the outcome 80 smackers.

...and three examples from the world of conferences and seminars, where potentially a journalist’s expertise may yield a good chunk of change, though most of us probably undervalue ourselves and don’t know to ask for it:

- a two-day conference, our member’s asked to chair, she says “How much?”, they say “We don’t pay,” she says “Then no,” they say “Oh... 500 Euros per day?”
- a London arts seminar at a venue so prestigious the organisers feel able to offer our member absolutely *rien* (bar £60 travel exes) to work as a panel member for an hour and a half. He says “Nothing for nothing”. £300 sterling persuaded him.
- Finally (with a couple of anonymising changes of detail) from the wom-

an in question: “I was approached to moderate a session at a digi-media conference... they wanted me to interview a German company boss, then run a Q&A session.

“So I said, ‘What are you paying?’ and they said ‘There’s no budget for moderators.’ I said, ‘You’re paying for the venue and the catering, I assume you’re being paid... and you’re charging participants... why do you think it’s OK not to pay for a really key professional person for their preparation and their work on the day?’

“My day rate for this kind of thing is £1000.” She didn’t expect a reply, but “two days later got an email apologising and saying please would I do it – for £1000.”

This is all anecdotal but still shows it’s worth dusting off those negotiatory skills. Remember: DON’T ASK DON’T GET and then ALWAYS ASK FOR MORE.

© Phil Sutcliffe

## Making Tax Digital – not four returns a year?

WE NOW HAVE more detail on the £1.3 billion plans by Her Majesty’s Revenue & Customs (HMRC) for “Making Tax Digital.”

After a Parliamentary Petition calling on the Government to “scrap plans forcing self-employed and small business to do four tax returns yearly” gathered 103,000 signatures in five weeks, the government responded at the beginning of January.

The response sought to reassure petitioners that Making Tax Digital, which was announced in the March 2015 Spending Review, would not mean “four tax returns a year,” which initially seemed to be on the cards.

The self-employed will instead be expected to provide the HMRC with “quarterly updates”, which will be “largely be a matter of checking

data generated from record-keeping software or apps and clicking ‘send’.”

Unspecified “software or apps” are mentioned, which it is claimed will make it an easier, “light-touch process,” they assure us.

We still don’t know the scheme will finally turn out.

So far it seems to be based on the assumption that the self-employed are all registered as companies and all do our own VAT.

It also assumes all freelancers do our accounts and banking online and we are all happy to use potentially risky internet-based “cloud accounting” systems, exposed as they are to security breaches, fraud, and to disasters involving government IT projects. Watch this space.

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HMRC’s old-school analogue head office in Whitehall.

Photo: © Matt Salusbury

## PLR statements up, money on its way

If you’re already signed up to Public Lending Right (PLR – that is, micropayments to authors whose books are lent at public libraries) your statement of income from PLR should now be accessible for you to see online. Any money due to you for public library lending of paper-based books should be paid out to you by 19 February. Details, including how to join PLR if you have a book (or a chapter in a book) published, and haven’t done so already, are at [www.plr.uk.com](http://www.plr.uk.com)

## LONDON FREELANCE BRANCH MEETINGS

# Women, members' views, snooper's charter

WOMEN in journalism is the theme of the London Freelance Branch meeting on **Monday 14 March**. (International Women's Day this year falls on the Tuesday just under a week before the meeting.)

Our speaker is NUJ General Secretary Michelle Stanistreet – the first woman to be elected to the post in the Union's history.

She was previously Mother of Chapel (elected rep for the NUJ at the workplace level) at the *Sunday Express*.

What do our members want? That's the question under discussion at the April LFB meeting (**Monday 11 April**).

This will feature a panel of new members discussing their hopes regarding the Branch and how it can support them (and how they can support it!).

Expect a very interactive discussion on Branch priorities and possible new initiatives.

We haven't done anything like this for a while – the last time LFB had a vaguely similar meeting was a decade ago, and now it's time for an update!

The meeting is an opportunity for members (both new and more long-standing) to input ideas.

LFB's own New Members Officer Elizabeth Ingrams will be among the meeting's facilitators.

Watch this space for more detail on the meeting's format.

The threat to journalists posed by the draft Investigatory Powers Bill is the subject of the LFB meeting on **Monday 9 May**.

The draft Bill's provisions include internet service providers having to keep records of what websites someone has visited, which they must give to the police without a

warrant. Speakers to be confirmed.

Deadline for the March online-only issue: **22 February**.

For details of NUJ London Photographers' Branch meetings, see [londonphotographers.org](http://londonphotographers.org)

This issue went to press on **3 February**.  
 ● 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 web page [www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings.html) and LFB's Twitter feed [http://twitter.com/NUJ\\_LFB](http://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.

For etiquette on recording or live-tweeting from LFB meetings, see [www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1507film.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1507film.html).

For details of NUJ London Photographers' Branch meetings, see [londonphotographers.org](http://londonphotographers.org)

## LFB XMAS PARTY REPORT

LFB'S SEASONAL end-of-year gathering is shown below in full swing.

LFB Chair Fiona O'Cleirigh (right, her head bedecked with tinsel) was surprised by a Christmas gift (pictured) from the Branch Committee, in recognition of all her hard work over the year. Fi had briefly interrupted the festivities to welcome new members and to make the absolute minimum of Branch announce-

ments – breaking with established tradition by not doing so standing on a chair. We were joined by members from other NUJ Branches including the London Central, London Independent Broadcasting and New Media, London Photographers' and London Magazine Branches.

Our apologies to our members who use wheelchairs who joined us in a smaller gathering in the lobby of the NUJ's Headland House HQ – this was due to the lifts to the fifth floor meeting room being repaired that day, a fact which the powers that be at Headland House apparently neglected to pass on to the

WEWELCOME some new faces to the London Freelance Branch Committee, together with some returning members. The complete Committee list, with contacts, is at [www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/contact.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/contact.html). New to the Committee this year are Rashmee Roshan Lall, columnist with *Arab Weekly* and *The National*; Zaki Dogliani, reporter on high education policy website Wonkhe; Joe Tucker (Membership Officer along with Elizabeth Ingrams); David Wilkins – currently on an NCTJ course – joins Arjum Wajid as welfare officer; Magda Ibrahim joins Safiullah Tazib as equalities officer; and Nora Mantey and Thibault Raymond Gbei. Pennie Quinton rejoins the Committee as training officer, while NUJ Vice-President Tim Dawson is the Committee's Chapel liaison officer. Former *Journalist* editor Tim Gopsill is our newly elected secretary, together with music journalist and Phil Sutcliffe, tutor on the NUJ's Getting Started as a Freelance course.



LFB's Xmas party

Photo © **Matt Salusbury** Branch in advance.

## UNCLASSIFIED ADS

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**I AM SEEKING** to diversify so have stated trading in vinyl records. So, fair prices paid for good condition LP records. In particular, 50s to 90s rock, 60s-early 70s soul, jazz, blues, folk, ska/reggae, Latin, Samba/bossa, African, Cajun/Zydeco, klezmer. But all popular genres

and eras considered. Contact Mike at: [info@vinylvanguard.com](mailto:info@vinylvanguard.com).

**FAR EAST** I'm a freelance correspondent, 36 years experience in S.E. Asia including BBC work, with a vast network of contacts. I'm Manila-based and available for freelance assignments. Contact Robert at [rharland@mozcom.com](mailto:rharland@mozcom.com)

**GALLOWAY COTTAGE.** Wood-burning stove and games room. One mile from Scotland's book town, two minutes walk to good village pub and distillery. Beautiful countryside and unspoiled beaches. [woodpeckercottage@btinternet.com](mailto:woodpeckercottage@btinternet.com) [woodpecker-cottage.co.uk](http://woodpecker-cottage.co.uk)

## COMMITTEE

## New members meet

LFB members new to freelance journalism are invited to meet other people new to the Branch, and members with more experience of freelance journalism, at the Camera Café, Museum Street, London WC1A 1LY on **Thursday 28 April** from 6pm. These meetings happen there on the last Thursday of every third month. The Branch hopes to resume inviting new members who come to their first Branch meeting to have their photo taken and give a few words about themselves: see them at [www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/intros.html](http://www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/intros.html)

## CONTACTS

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**FREELANCE**

Branch contacts: [www.londonfreelance.org/lfb](http://www.londonfreelance.org/lfb)  
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