

Have a Johnston Press pension?

CAN ANY NUJ member who is a former employee of Johnston Press and who is now freelance please get in touch if you have a pension with Johnston Press. We can add you to the group discussing the concerns if you so wish. Please contact the National Newspapers organiser at publishing@nuj.org.uk with "Johnston Press/JPI Media pension" in the subject line.



The Gong

The Gong is a wake-up call for late payers. But freelancers also need to remember that they often won't get paid until they invoice their clients. The Freelance Office reports that one member has let themselves get into a situation where they are owed something in the region of £24,000, just by failing to invoice promptly and to make enquiries as soon as invoices are due but still unpaid. This is a reminder to invoice promptly. If you do invoice promptly and in little bits, you can claim £40 compensation plus interest at rates over 8 per cent on each invoice – see www.londonfreelance.org/interest.html – but if you finally get around to sending one big belated invoice for a five-figure sum you're owed, you can claim only £70 plus interest for amounts between £1000 and £10,000 if payment is late.

Photo © Dave Rotchelle

The Rate for the Job

THIS MONTH'S Rates for the Job include more entries from the BBC's new rate card, with a link to a guide explaining some of the terminology. 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

(Service) £659; BBC News, daily buyout (On Air or online reporting or producing) £266; BBC TV News, interview – assumes half day shoot and half day edit – £224; BBC TV News, track and piece to camera and rushes £188; BBC Radio News, Daily Buyout (Fixing or producing for non on air/non website work) £165; BBC TV News, Action Rant/Show & Tell with own kit £153; BBC Radio News: Recorded interview with Guest(s) or Commentary or Rant, as live, up to 5 minutes £128; Disco donut (see www.londonfreelance.org/feesguidefeesguide/glossary.html for explanation!) £105; Straight piece/despatch including Generic Minute, over 2 minutes £89, up to 2 minutes £75.

Photography: video commissioned for Newsflare via Mentorn Media £400; Daily Mail online, 1/4 page photo £180 X; KeyAGENT Ltd (property photography for estate agents), min. 20 photos + floorplan with measurements of property, per property up to 5-bed house. No expenses paid, All Rights. DBS and Insurance required. £30 XXXX.

Shifts: Third Age Matters, "day and a quarter" £200; Money Saving Expert, writing & editing day £170; Schools Week, subbing day £150; Boat International, subbing day £150; The Week Junior, subbing day £145.

Words, per 1000: a record company, programme feature for a pop group £1500; professional association, 2000 words @ US\$1800

= \$900; a trade union, article drafted for senior staff £350; CSP union, £300; Fire Brigades Union, £300; BBC History magazine, £285; Short-List, 1800-word feature, including research, interviews and writing £220 XXX; Resident Advisor £187.50; Travel Market, 2000 words @ £150 = £75 XXX; Times, article filed from abroad £50 XXXX.

Words, other: industry-specific guide book (How to...), researching and writing 50,000 word book, including about 20 original interviews, about 4 weeks full time and 4 months part time. – exclusive license for 5 years, then copyright reverts to author £5000; Guardian, The Long Read 3000 to 4000 words, expenses paid £4000; Guardian, The Long Read ditto £2500; Guardian Long Read, 5000 words of in-depth reporting £2500; Local newspapers, researching, writing & sourcing pics for 30 pages of editorial (A5 mag), offered £350 for everything, after negotiation they offered £400 all in – still turned down XXXX; BBC News online, commissioned long-form feature/analysis, usually over 1000 words £326.00; BBC News online, News Piece (copy/colour/instant analysis) 500-800 words £191; The Resident, arrange interview, do interview, write up, provide pictures and boxes for double-page spread, "no idea" of terms £175 XXX; Uncut, album review, 100 words £25.00; Country Music, album review, 90 words £9.00 XXXX.

(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 minima, even perhaps the happy © few.

Broadcasting: BBC TV News, Newsnight feature, 8 to 10 minutes, plus 2.5-minute cut-down version £1099; BBC Radio News, Long Feature (8 minutes) for Analysis (World

Beware the Purchase Order payment plan

"OK, I started work without a formal contract. But I did have a letter outlining the job and offering a rate, and I knew that was good enough," a member writes.

Then the contract arrived – when I was more than half way through the work, but see above – technically, I was contracted. This was a book publisher, and they like complicated contracts – even when they are not offering anything complicated like royalties.

But the last page of the contract included something I'd not come across before – but I'm told it's not completely unheard of. That was that no invoice would be accepted without a purchase order number.

"Purchase Order number? Please provide this thing, as I'll be through with the job soon, and I would very much like to invoice you ..."

Erm... Erm...

I ask again. The freelance who's managing the project asks again on

my behalf (and that of another writer who's involved in the same project).

Eventually, the reply comes back that because of technical problems (genuine ones) there will be a delay.

Now, I'm not blaming anyone – not anyone I'm dealing with, anyway. But remember that every day I wait for the PO number is a day before they'll accept my invoice, and makes the wait for money all the longer.

Eventually, it was sorted out, but there is a moral to this story, which I am sure you will all take to heart.

That is, if anyone mentions purchase orders, make sure you get one straight away, before you spend too much time on a job. Because it can be used to delay payment for god-knows-how-long, if the publisher chooses. And some, no doubt, will choose to do just that.

© Jenny Vaughan

An offer of help

The Freelance contacted the Office of the Small Business Commis-

sioner about this issue.

Its Caseworker Manager Neil Cowley replied: "We would definitely want to hear from anyone who is having difficulty getting paid or getting a purchase order raised."

Neil added that he "recommend anyone who is experiencing issues to contact us and we will investigate and try and resolve the matter for them."

The Commissioner's involvement often expedites the resolution of delays so we would encourage your members to contact us via www.smallbusinesscommissioner.gov.uk/contact and will be happy to help."

More online...

The Freelance is frequently updated online at www.londonfreelance.org/fl – do check regularly.

New meeting time

London Freelance Branch meetings now start at 18:45 – see back page