When work reappears, try re-claiming

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I finally got round to contacting the rights department last month, and – after some nudge – had a reply explaining that the purpose of this slot was to “draw upon the resources of the Guardian archive to “highlight the richness of Guardian journalism over the years”.

There was, I was told, no policy on fees. “However, as a goodwill gesture we would be happy to make payment of £50.”

When I asked Pamela Morton whether the Freelance Office had received complaints before (it hadn’t), she said “I love his comment about highlighting the richness of Guardian journalism. Perhaps some richness back to you?”

Indeed! I pointed out to the rights manager that as this was re-use of an article sold for one use only, a goodwill gesture was inappropriate: I should be paid at the features rate which, pro rata, would amount to £210.

But this rate, he countered, related to commissioned content. “We are offering this payment as a reproduction fee and not a commission fee”. Ah, a reproduction fee – and not a goodwill payment. He had a point, I agreed. In that case, it should be 50 per cent. And so it was that I received £105. A small victory. But proof that one should “always ask for more”

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THE LONDON Freelance Branch meeting on Monday 11 May will feature Susan Mayor giving very practical advice for journalists on dealing with statistics.

Sue is highly regarded as a leading medical writer and health communications specialist and recently won the Communique award for her book Finding the right molecule, which traces the story of the development of Pradaxa, a drug used to prevent blood clots and to reduce the risk of stroke. She has won the Medical Journalist of the Year award from the Medical Journalists’ Association twice in the last five years.

You can see more about her at www.susanmayor.com

The topic of the meeting on Monday 8 June is not yet fixed. Check back at www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings.html and watch for the Virtual Freelance arriving in your inbox for updates.

For the meeting on Monday 13 July we have booked a Committee Room in the Palace of Westminster (also known as the Houses of Parliament). Our topic will be: what legislation from any new government could help journalism? more, later.

This issue went to press on 21 April. The deadline for the June online-only edition is 18 May.

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 right to reproduce, covered by the 6.5 per cent uplift negotiated by the NUJ through ACAS (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) in that year. That’s one reason it’s worth keeping details of the individual contracts you work under.

Mike Holderness

MONEY FOR OLD WORK

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REPORTING PROPERLY ON STATISTICS

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