

# TfL SATELLITE OFFICE POLICY EXPOSED

**L**ondon Taxi and Private Hire has at last released the much delayed consultation on the private hire industry. The first thing that should be noticed is the opening comments where it states that “The Mayor has set out his ambition for private hire as part of his Transport Strategy”. One of the ways that he, through TfL intend helping private hire to be fully integrated, will be in the form of the “Provision of facilities to pick up as well as drop off passengers where appropriate.”

These two comments on the opening page of this consultation should be enough to send alarm bells to the Licenced taxi trade. While researching cab-related sexual assault figures from across the country a UNITE activist came across a document that I feel the taxi trade was not meant to see.

The taxi trade has long argued the toss with the authorities about the existence of Satellite Offices and their impact on our trade. We (the taxi trade) have been told time and time again, that they simply do not exist and that a private hire operating centre is an operating centre whether it is in a high street, at a suburban train station or inside a club.

This as we have long suspected is simply not the case. There are different criteria for those centres that operate within clubs and bars.

For the truth of the matter we have to go back to 2008, when our old ‘friend’ Peter Hulme Cross (pictured) – who you may remember as a member of the GLA’s Transport Committee, was at the head of the “quickie Knowledge brigade”.

He put together a report about minicab touting in London. Under the previous Mayor (Livingstone) this report would have no doubt been placed where it deserved to be, probably used as a wedge for a wobbly table. But this time it was different. This time we had a new Mayor (Johnson) and

this time the report was not only looked at, but the recommendations were acted upon.



The key recommendation that has proved to be so catastrophic to the night-time London taxi trade is this one: “*The Public Carriage Office, in partnership with TOCU, should reduce opportunities for touts and provide people with safe options for getting home by establishing additional marshalled private hire and taxi schemes, and encourage late night venues and operators to set up satellite offices in touting hotspot areas*”. TfL responded to this by using the 2008 Transport for London Act to remove the requirement on operators to keep extensive records at all operating centres (minicab offices to you and me). This one action has led to an explosion of satellite offices across London.

Recently I was invited to go on a fact finding trip in and around some of touting hotspots with the Head of Safer Transport Command and the Deputy Director of London Taxi & Private Hire. During the course of the evening we looked on a few Clipboard Johnnies that were operating outside their venues. This gave me a chance to look at the way that bookings were being recorded. What I found was that in the two cases that I managed to look at, the

By **PETER J ROSE**  
*Secretary UNITE Cab Section, London Branch*

recording of destinations was far too vague and not in line with LTPH requirements. The more startling thing that came to light was the fact that it is a requirement of licence that these late night premises provide a minicab booking service. The reasoning behind this seems to be the observation in the report that “*People may be unwilling to call and wait for a minicab or cannot find a local office.*” It is for this reason that I believe that parking enforcement outside venues that have satellite offices are treated to a ‘blind eye policy’. Simply put, they want them there!

The danger of this strategy is that it provides the perfect hiding place for the unlicensed tout. Again while on tour with Safer Transport Command, we found an unlicensed tout amongst the minicabs outside Tiger Tiger (below) in the Haymarket. How often does this happen not just there but London-wide? The danger would seem obvious to most. It is worth noting that at the time the report was published, (before the satellite office

explosion), there was a 46% fall in cab-related sexual offences. As we have just seen in figures published for the last year, there has been a 54% increase in cab related sexual offences. Surely this is not coincidental? The report also recommends that more marshalled taxi ranks should be set up to combat the danger of the unlicensed tout. This is something in the report that has been ignored. In fact budgets for this type of activity have been cut. Look at the fiasco of funding for the fixed fare rank; there is none beyond the first six weeks if that. Instead TfL has gone for the cheap minicab option and the danger to the travelling public is becoming all too apparent.

Unfortunately it seems that TfL are going to be unwilling to surrender this low cost late night travel option.

Taken from the LTPH Private Hire Consultation Document, October 2010. *Operator Proposal 9: That TfL introduces a requirement that the issuing of a private hire operators licence within a third party venue is restricted to those premises only where there is a clear need to provide the public with a suitable transport option through private hire services directly from that venue.*



**UNITE Cab Section will continue the campaign for the abolition of Satellite Minicab Offices and better ranks, (including the recommended marshalled ones) for the Licensed Taxi Trade.**

# MAYOR'S AIR QUALITY STRATEGY

By MIKE HEDGES



As the Mayor of London confirms the removal of the Western Congestion zone, there has still been no news of the result of the recent air quality strategy consultation that has recently taken place.

TfL have put forward a number of proposals for taxis starting with a 15 year age limit starting from 2012. The proposal is for the age limit to be reduced to 10 years from 2015. We have made it clear that this is totally unacceptable to us and that a 10 year age limit would have catastrophic effect on taxi drivers in London and would devastate the taxi trade. Every organisation in the taxi trade has agreed that the 10 year age limit is unacceptable. Taxis in London are not massive polluters the proposals would make only a small difference to London's air quality, but TfL seem to be focused on a very few number of 'hotspots', air quality monitoring stations scattered around Central London mostly around the edge of the congestion charge zone. For this TfL seem intent on radically changing the whole cost basis of running a taxi by drastically reducing taxi residual values.

When Ken Livingstone was Mayor he rejected outright the idea of age limits as a very blunt weapon to reduce emissions. All of our taxis are at least Euro 3 standard so age limits will have very little effect to our overall emissions. On top of this there is clearly no money available for any sort of

subsidies which was the original idea in the TfL consultation. Although the grants have gone the age limit proposals have stayed. We have put forward a number of proposals which we think will have a far better effect than age limits and enable the taxi trade to continue without the needless upheavals proposed. We believe that a voluntary environmental driving course would be beneficial in reducing emission levels and have fuel saving benefits for the driver. But we believe that experience has shown that only voluntary schemes have this benefit. TfL are proposing that these courses should be compulsory against our advice. We also believe that idling should be discouraged and more taxi ranks should be made available. The biggest contribution to the low air quality comes from brake and tyre wear. It seems that it may be possible to produce low emission tyres in the near future which would offer huge benefits.

We hope that TfL see sense and take note of the joint taxi trade response to the consultation and reject the notion of the 10 year age limit. With new technology being introduced all of the time it is likely there will be hybrid and electric solutions in the near future with all of the knock-on benefits for air quality. Hopefully the Mayor will take note of our response and we will get a solution that benefits taxi drivers and London's air quality.

# INTERNATIONAL CREDIT UNION DAY

By FRANK HULL

This year International Credit Union Day falls on 21st of October and its theme – Local Trusted Serving You – focuses on Credit Unions' Community-focused approach to members' services.

Credit unions are parts of the community all over the world from Minnesota to Malaysia and in these precarious, world-wide, financial times more people have come to realise the importance of our movement and membership figures, not surprisingly, are on the up.

UNITE has always extolled the benefits the credit union movement has given to local communities and industries. We take this opportunity to urge you all to consider

joining a credit union many taxi drivers have and found it to be a great asset to themselves and their families.

In talking credit unionism we can't go without mentioning the taxi flagship of credit unions; that is, of course, the very successful London taxi drivers' credit union. Look at how many taxi drivers have benefited from belonging to this great credit union. If you are a London taxi driver and not a member, why not talk to those who are members? Then you will, we are sure, discover the benefits of becoming a member.

NB: Frank Hull is the Chair of "HarlowSave" Credit Union.

## CAMPAIGN TO SAVE THE M4 BUS LANE

JOIN THE FIGHT, JOIN UNITE!



As drivers are probably aware the Con-Dem alliance has decided to scrap the M4 bus lane at the end of the year. The transport secretary who is also local liberal MP for Runnymede and Weybridge announced at the Tory Conference this month. He called it an end to "Labours War on motorists".

It appears that the Transport Secretary has not read the rationale of the bus lane which was implemented under John Prescott as part of an integrated transport plan. Nor does it seem that he read the report compiled by the Highways Agency three months into the scheme which showed.

- Average daily flows of traffic on this section of the motorway have increased
- The lane saved buses, coaches and taxis more time than cars, but journey times were quicker for all vehicles
- During the morning rush-hour buses and taxis saved up to nine minutes and other vehicles up to six minutes
- Overall, the bus lane saved more than 700 person-hours every weekday
- There is no evidence of drivers diverting on to other roads
- 3,400 vehicles a day have been using the lane - 700 coaches or minibuses and 2,700 taxis.

It has been estimated that accident rates on the stretch should drop by 20%. In 1997, a bus lane was introduced on the M4 Heathrow

Spur and accidents fell by 28% in a year.

The M4 bus lane is a fantastic asset for visitors and business users alike who fly into one of the world's busiest airports and are whisked into our capital to enjoy or conduct business here.

What a great signal it sends out to the world of a dynamic city with intelligent transport solutions. What sort of message will it send out with everyone sitting in the slow lane, getting nowhere fast? Welcome to life under a Con-Dem nation

UNITE is campaigning to fight the closure and you can help! Get your customers to sign our petition, send a letter to your MP. Better still! Join UNITE and join the fight!

You can download UNITE's petition to save the M4 bus and taxi lane and our MP letter template at [www.cabtradenews.co.uk](http://www.cabtradenews.co.uk) or pop in to the UNITE Office at the Heathrow feeder park taxi drivers canteen.



## ATTENTION ALL UNITE MEMBERS



### GENERAL SECRETARY ELECTION

In accordance with the Rules of **Unite the Union** the Executive Council has called an election for the first General Secretary of the whole union.

#### Voting in the election

Anyone who was a member of **Unite the Union** on 9th August 2010 is eligible to vote. This includes retired members.

A fully postal ballot will be held during late October and November. Ballot papers must be returned to The Independent Scrutineer to arrive no later than Friday, 19th November 2010.

Electoral Reform Services have been appointed Independent Scrutineer in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 by the Unite Executive Council, see their contact details below.

#### Ballot Enquiry Service

Members who have not received a ballot paper by **Monday 8th November 2010** should contact the ballot enquiry service on **0800 783 3856 (0818 333 155 from the Republic of Ireland)**.

The Independent Scrutineer can be contacted as follows:

Independent Scrutineer  
Electoral Reform Services Limited  
The Election Centre  
33 Clarendon Road  
London  
N8 0NW



## CARD PAYMENTS POWERED BY VERIFONE

VeriFone, the payments company behind many of the UK's leading retailers, is now bringing a safe and secure method of accepting credit, debit and contactless cards to London black cabs.

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\* All referrals must be licensed, independently owned black cab drivers. Offer valid for first 300 taxis in London only. VeriFone reserves the right to decline any referral if necessary. Referral fee to be paid once referred taxi installs payment system.

### How this benefits you:

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- **No cost to you.** Equipment, installation and maintenance are FREE. (2-3 hours installation)
- **Safer** as you are now carrying less cash.
- **Swift settlement.** Payments credited to your account 3 times per week.
- **VeriFone's robust payment solution** is more than just a simple wireless device. Our solution is physically mounted in your black cab. All elements of the solution are securely positioned, so they cannot be removed or altered.

### Sign up and collect

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Go online at [www.verifone.com/uk-taxi](http://www.verifone.com/uk-taxi) or call **0333 666 1000** and express your interest. We'll work with you to get further information and sign you up.

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**0333 666 1000**  
[nemea-info@verifone.com](mailto:nemea-info@verifone.com)

# CTN

## Comment

### STOCKTON-ON-TEES

By FRANK HULL

The conclusions of the Stockton-On-Tees appeal, which for months the provincial trade has waited with baited breath, have been finally reached. Lord Justice Munby in his summing up has given a very concise history of the taxi trade, this included a list of words that are and have been used to identify a taxi.

He also questioned the meaning of the aphoristic term “a hackney carriage is always a hackney carriage once it has been licensed “. He has also confirmed, what we suspected, that in law there are only two relevant types, these are either “hackney carriages” or “private hire vehicles”.

Lord Justice Munby in his judgement has also reaffirmed what we in the provincial trade all know and think to be unreasonable: It is not an offence for a taxi licensed in one area to be worked as a private hire vehicle in a completely different licensing area without having a licence for this other area.

However, this case also included the actions of out of town taxis in effect ranking up in a Stockton-on-Tees car park in the hours of darkness. Unlike the Court we think this an unreasonable abuse of taxi law. We do realise that it must be difficult for the judiciary to fairly apply elastic laws, but we think that taxi laws in this country like laws relating to other areas of our lives should be more rigidly constructed. It is a pity that judges, when faced with these elastic laws, don't have the power to send them back to parliament to be re-framed.

We believe that the law as it stands is unreasonable and reasonable is a powerful word in the world of taxi litigation. Ok we don't have the legal experience of the noble lord; but we do have something he does not have, that is, of course, the practical experience of driving legally licensed taxis for a living!

This brave attempt by Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council to have righted a glaring and un-reasonable use of taxi and private hire licensing laws has failed but has not been a total failure for it has rightly focused again on one of those many glaringly obvious pieces of bad taxi legislation. Now it is up to us, the taxi trade, to put pressure on parliament to right that which Lord Justice Munby could not legally right!

SNAP! Minister: We were all, I am sure, extremely sorry to hear of transport minister Norman Baker's recent and terrible experience at the hands of a Liverpool taxi driver who did not appear to comprehend basic English and did not know where he was supposed to be going.

Well Snap! Minister for years this has also been the experience of the whole of the taxi trade in this country. It is a fact that not one but many political types don't seem to have understood what we have been saying and propelled us in a different direction to that we requested.

Why not UNITE with us? Just fill in the application form on page 15.

Frank Hull is a UNITE Cab Trade Committee Member.

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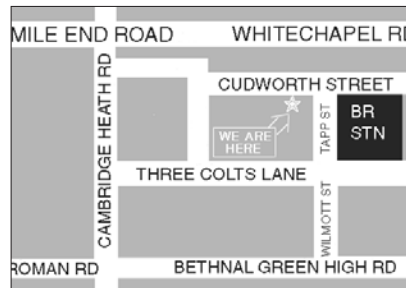
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# London-WIDE

By **PETER J ROSE**  
Secretary UNITE Cab Section, London Branch

## IDENTIFIERS - LET'S GET REAL

In a period when we have seen a 54% increase in cab related sexual assaults, Private Hire using taxi ranks – taking as directed bookings at the Dorchester and Grosvenor House Hotels, the removal of the M4 bus & taxi lane and the loss of rank spaces from Paddington and Mile End Stations in addition to those lost in Gresham Street & Cornhill.

At a time when TfL's private hire agenda has been revealed and satellite offices are discovered not to be an accident but actually part of the plan. At a time when Knowledge boys and girls are already facing severe appearance delays because LTPH has lost three examiners and has no intention of replacing them. At a point in the trade's history when taxi driver numbers are in real terms actually declining and set to get worse if Boris's ten year vehicle age limit is introduced! **What are some in our trade worried about? Rickshaws, restrictions on taxi driver numbers, cab colours, out of town taxis using bus lanes, dress codes and top of their Agenda taxi driver identifiers.**

Taxi identifiers, the most divisive proposition ever put to the London taxi trade, with no consultation what's so ever with those most effected and one which UNITE the UNION Cab Section members, present at branch meetings have had the chance to debate and categorically oppose. Let's be clear these were All London licence holders (green badge) and not as has been suggested by a frustrated few, as a 'room full of yellow badges'. Yes UNITE may stand alone on this, but we are very happy to do this. UNITE Cab Section is very proud of the fact that it has always looked to do the right thing for the trade, rather than just proceed with a headline grabbing agenda that will gain short term popularity.

As Secretary of the UNITE Cab Section, London Branch, I find it very satisfying that elected representatives, alongside the membership decided policy and not just a few officials sitting in a room watching the world go by from a window.

Speaking to UNITE members and non-members (green and yellow) alike, it is clear that they are gravely concerned, if not terrified for their jobs. TfL's minicab agenda is moving so fast that it is almost impossible for this trade to keep up. This is the overriding reason why we as the 'London taxi trade' should resist this attempt to further weaken our position. I have recently had a communication from a driver that indirectly described London suburban taxi drivers as "lazy parasites that do nothing for our trade"; really? So what of the drivers that work Richmond Station – supplying a safe regulated taxi service to local people and to the thousands that attend Twickenham Stadium?

What about those drivers that service the hundreds of taxi users at the O2 (Dome) in Greenwich? What about those less abled suburban taxi users that rely on Suburban drivers to service the Taxicard account? Is

all that taxi work to be handed over to private hire as well? Shouldn't we be supporting what the Suburban taxi driver does in these areas? Not branding them as people of a lesser order by way of an Identifier! Shouldn't we as a trade be helping them fight locally for their trade?

The only identifying this trade needs to be doing for now is identifying the illegal goings on at satellite offices, the blatant touting of minicabs and the deliberate blind eye that the authorities turn to it! But what are the authorities doing currently?

Extensive badge and bill checks right across London, phoning drivers directly because someone has reported them for working outside their area. And what was the evidence for this? Because the driver had his 'light' on!

The truth of the matter was that the driver had run in from his own area to cover a job for his radio circuit, a job that the circuit couldn't cover using a green badge and he was re setting his meter to stop going over the run-in. Still I suppose it's nice to see that 'someone' has a hot-line into LTPH. I have recently been asked to help a driver that has spent the last six months trying to change his address at LTPH, no such hot-line there. Also does no one find it curious that suddenly resources can be found simply to prove a point, when the taxi trade is always being told that there are none when it comes to minicab touts?

What are we going to see, if the identifiers are brought in, more cases of driver harassment? Green badges chasing yellow badges on the streets because they've seen a suburban driver bringing people in to the centre from City Airport etc. Green badges getting frustrated that no one is on the end of the 'Report a Yellow Badge' hot line to take their call because LTPH won't fund it. Perhaps even Yellow Badge v. Yellow Badge because one thinks the other is working outside their area. Worse still Green Badges being shunned by their friends at City Airport and the Dome?

What about the legal implications of this policy? As government cuts take hold and work gets scarce, are we going to see driver attacking driver, both verbally and physically. Are we going to see taxi drivers on assault charges or falling foul of something like the 1997 Protection from Harassment Act, falling foul of that could land you in jail? And while all of this is going on private hire and those working against our trade laugh at us!

Knowing that we have succeeded without any visible input from them, to split ourselves yet again, making this trade ever weaker, unable to resist the onslaught of a well organised and united private hire trade. You really "couldn't make this up"!

Be seeing you.

PS – I notice that LTPH notice 28/10 on page 6, gives advice on driver safety, perhaps LTPH will need to issue another one on how to protect yourself from other drivers as well!



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UNITE THE UNION

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CAB SECTION

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PCO Notice 28/10

Transport for London  
Taxi and Private Hire



## Taxi & Private Hire Driver Safety

The safety of all licensed taxi and private hire drivers is always of concern for Transport for London (TfL) and the incidents where one driver was murdered and another seriously assaulted highlight the importance of making sure drivers do all they can to stay safe when working.

To help drivers stay safe when working TfL, in partnership with the Metropolitan Police, is advising all drivers to follow the advice below.

### Do Make Sure You:

- Carry the following items with you when working:
  - A mobile phone
  - A notepad and pen to record any incidents
  - A spare key, in case an attacker throws your keys away
  - A card carrying your name, date of birth, blood group, allergies and a contact number for emergencies
- Install a CCTV system in your vehicle – further information can be found on our website at [tfl.gov.uk/tp](http://tfl.gov.uk/tp)
- Keep all of the doors locked when carrying packages or parcels
- Report any change of destination during a private hire journey to your operator so the new address can be recorded as part of the booking
- Follow these steps to help reduce the risk of conflict:
  - Be ready to explain the fare structure to passengers – taxi drivers should have a copy of the fare card available and private hire operators should confirm the fare when accepting a booking
  - Bilking (leaving the cab without paying) is a criminal offence – report incidents to the police and be prepared to make a statement
  - Communication with the passenger is important – be polite and pleasant
  - If you are going a long way round (for example, in order to avoid roadworks) explain the route you plan to take – this should help avoid a dispute over the fare
  - Make sure you are not tired – you need to be alert at all times
  - Make eye contact with the passenger when they get into your vehicle – this helps you establish a relationship with them and also lets them know that you could identify them afterwards if need be
  - Private hire drivers should ask passengers to sit in the rear of the vehicle whenever possible and only open windows enough to speak to people without them being able to reach in

### Do not:

- Carry too much cash – bank or drop off cash at home, or with your operator if you are a private hire driver. If you can't drop off your cash, keep it hidden from view in a secure box.

John Mason,  
Taxi and Private Hire

5 October 2010  
For previous Notices visit [tfl.gov.uk/tp](http://tfl.gov.uk/tp)

- Carry weapons – under Common Law you have the right to use reasonable force to protect yourself but you must not carry weapons or any items that can be used as a weapon as you could be liable to arrest by the police plus there is also the risk that they will be used against you
- Pick-up passengers who have not made a booking with the operator if you are a private hire driver – this is illegal and without the booking information it may be impossible to trace the passenger if something does happen to you or you are attacked

### If you feel threatened then:

- Try to stay calm and take slow, deep breaths – this may help to lessen your anxiety
- If you can, drive to a brightly-lit, busy place, as these are often covered by CCTV
- As taxis have a purpose-built screen, taxi drivers are likely to be safer staying in their vehicle than getting out
- Do not try to run after a passenger who owes you their fare – your safety is more important than the money

### If you are attacked:

- Gather as much information about the person as you can (for example their clothes and accent)
- Use your horn and lights to attract attention and call 999 for help
- Private hire drivers should contact their operator and taxi drivers contact their radio circuit if they work for one

### If something does happen then make sure you:

- Write down everything about the incident including a description of the passenger and what they said and did
- Report all violent incidents to the police
- Be prepared to make a witness statement. It may take time, but it may prevent an attack in the future – for you and other drivers
- You may be able to recover the costs of damage to your vehicle through the small claims system

Operators and controllers can help by making sure that when taking a booking they record clearly and fully the passenger's name, pick-up address, full destination address and telephone number. If something does happen to one of your drivers having this information available will help trace the person responsible.

Operators should also consider the safety of staff in the office, especially those in offices with public access and which are open 24 hours a day. Think about how you could improve safety by looking at outer-door security and fitting safety screens, alarms and CCTV. Information about safety and security is available from your local police Crime Prevention Officer.

Private hire operators should make sure that all of their drivers have a copy of this notice.

Joe Royle, Director Chief Superintendent  
Safer Transport Command



PCO Notice 29/10

Transport for London  
Taxi and Private Hire



## Private Hire Trade Consultation October 2010

The licensing of the private hire trade commenced in 2001 following the passing of legislation in 1998 which covered the licensing of private hire operators, drivers and vehicles in London.

The responsibility for implementing and carrying out private hire licensing falls to Transport for London as part of TfL's Surface Transport as London Taxi and Private Hire (formerly the Public Carriage Office).

Since its introduction, only small changes have been made in respect of private hire licensing and therefore, following a comprehensive review to gain a full understanding of the issues faced within the industry, TfL are now launching a consultation with a number of proposals regarding drivers, vehicles and operators.

This consultation seeks views of the private hire trade and other interested parties on a number of suggested changes to private hire regulations and licensing standards. The consultation document incorporates suggestions from trade associations and others, recognising that many aspects of private hire standards are due for review.

A summary of these proposals are set out in this notice however the full consultation document will be published on the TfL website – [tfl.gov.uk/tp](http://tfl.gov.uk/tp) – as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can request that the document is emailed to you by emailing [tp.consultation@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:tp.consultation@tfl.gov.uk). The consultation will close on 24 December 2010 so responses are sought before this date.

If there are specific issues that you feel are not covered within the proposals set out by TfL you are invited to openly respond to the consultation with suggestions and ideas.

### Summary of proposals

#### Drivers

- 1 Additional licensing requirements for new drivers

- 2 Enhanced driving assessment for new drivers
- 3 All drivers to obtain the NVQ in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving
- 4 All drivers to display identification to be visible to passengers
- 5 No driver is to make a remark of a sexual nature or have any sexual contact in a licensed vehicle

#### Vehicles

- 1 Replace the existing licence discs and red route signs with consolidated signage
- 2 Restrictions on what types of vehicles can be licensed as PHVs, and other measures to clarify the distinction between taxis and PHVs in London

#### Operators

- 1 Restrictions on operating centres in late night venues and other shared premises
- 2 A return to assessing the status of planning permission before granting licences for operating centres
- 3 A commitment to comply with parking regulations in the area of the operating centre(s)
- 4 Restriction on the acceptance of bookings to a designated area in the licensed premises
- 5 An obligation to have arrangements in place to provide accessible vehicles when required (directly or by sub-contract)
- 6 Restrictions on small operators and operating centres in residential premises.
- 7 A requirement that operators provide a landline number for accepting bookings
- 8 A requirement for a standard CRB check on applicants for an operator's licence.
- 9 Restrictions on premises where an operator licence would be granted.

John Mason, Director Taxi and Private Hire,  
5 October 2010. For previous Notices visit [tfl.gov.uk/pc](http://tfl.gov.uk/pc)

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## Street Legal

By ELLIE REEVES

# WAITING FOR NOTHING!

I've previously written about Lord Young's review of health and safety and "compensation culture". He's finally published it and it wasn't worth the wait. The report, called "Common Sense, Common Safety", offers no new evidence or research and appears to be based entirely on opinion which at times is both confused and contradictory.

Lord Young's terms of reference assumed that health and safety legislation didn't have much support and that a compensation culture existed, in spite of the clear evidence that this is not the case.

And in spite of Lord Young often referring to "compensation culture" as if it were a fact, he also concedes that it is "perception rather than reality" and that it is this perception that leads employers to be overcautious when attempting to interpret health and safety in the workplace.

Young accepts that the "compensation culture" is in fact a media myth. He says: "We have all read countless media stories blaming health and safety regulations for all manner of restrictions on our everyday life... The Health and Safety Executive runs a successful 'myth of the month' page on its website; there is no end to the constant stream of misinformation in the media. Again and again 'health and safety' is blamed for a variety of decisions, few of which actually have any basis in health and safety legislation at all."

Yet, even though Lord Young also accepts that the insurance industry has encouraged the myth of the compensation culture and caused organisations to be overly risk averse, insurers are the main beneficiaries of his proposed reforms.

Instead of confining his recommendations to ones that would dispel the compensation culture myth (which would be welcome) Young hits injury victims, union members and unions by recommendations designed to undermine health and safety and further load personal injury procedures in favour of insurance companies.

Young recommends that workplace injury claims should be brought into a new personal injury claims process which started in April for road traffic accident (RTA) claims worth less than £10,000.

The purpose of the new process is to speed up the settlement of low value and relatively RTA claims to save costs for insurance companies. But workplace accident claims are more complex than RTA cases and the relationship between employers and employees is very different to that between two drivers.

It would give employers the opportunity to put pressure on workers and their colleagues, who may be witnesses, before their lawyers can record the evidence accurately.

If Lord Young's recommendation is implemented by the government, it will hit injury victims and unions supporting members' claims.

Young also proposes a number of changes to health and safety legislation. Some proposals are fairly uncontroversial. Others, such as simplifying risk assessments for what he calls "low risk" workplaces such as shops, classrooms and offices, will condemn a significant sector of the working population to a second rate health and safety regime.

Young has at least accepted that individuals cannot be liable for the consequences of a voluntary act unless negligence can be proved and that it is a media myth that they are. However he suggests legislating to achieve clarity, what is described as a Good Samaritan clause.

A public information campaign aimed at debunking the myths about people's rights to sue others is makes sense, but legislating against a perception is impossible.

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Andrew was invited to Mann & Overton Birmingham to be presented with his prize where General Manager, John Loakes was on hand to make Andrew £1,000 richer.

"Andrew doesn't drive a black cab so maybe he will put the money towards a proper taxi," joked John Loakes. "Andrew

actually drives a saloon car but we don't mind, we are just happy that we can make someone a £1,000 richer just by entering our 'In It To Win It' promotion."

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# TAXI! PARIS STYLE

Earlier this month, along with a few colleagues, we threw caution to the wind and headed off to Paris for lunch. London cabbies work damned hard. A recent survey suggested our job is the second toughest in the UK, only North Sea trawler crew have it tougher!

Armed with the cheapest Eurostar tickets available, our passports and cash I had no guilt about leaving the streets of London behind for a well deserved mid-week day off. We boarded a train shortly before 7-30 and allowing for the hour ahead in Paris and Eurostar's half hour delay we were standing outside of the Gare du Nord a little after eleven. What next? ... Go to a bar and make a plan. ...

Once you have been in Paris for a little while you hear the language, see the street and shop signs and those days of school French drift back. I found it interesting to see friends remembering the odd word and conversing with the Parisian barman. English people are often reticent to speak foreign languages. It's a mystery? The best way to learn a lingo is to be with the natives and try your best.

There's many a London resident who doesn't have English as a first language, but with constant practise, their grip on English improves. I believe the reluctance of the English to speak other languages is because they are frightened of mistakes and wish to sound perfect with a very little knowledge. Buzzer it! Just try to do a bit. The mistakes sound great. A French woman once told me, an Englishman speaking French has the same effect on French women as French men speaking English appeals seductively to our lasses. It helps though, if you can try and sound like Sacha Distel or Maurice Chevalier, rather than Arthur Mullard.



A plan was established for lunch at the Chartier Restaurant, 7 Rue du Faubourg-Montmartre. En route, some of our 15 strong party needed to change some cash. Wise folk had Euros left over from previous trips and holidays, others used their cash cards in ATM machines, but changing cash sterling pounds into Euros was a little more difficult. The French banks had no facilities for exchanging cash. Even HSBC, the world's local bank, declined our request with a curt... Non!



Really this is not that surprising. 400 million people in Europe use a single

currency. Visitors to Paris from Spain, Germany, Italy, Greece, Poland, Finland, Holland and many other countries have the same shared currency in their pockets.

The Chartier meal was excellent and the service great with all diners' French language skills being greatly improved. Obviously, dear reader, we chatted a little about the cab trade over beers and lunch.



The subject of the M4 bus lane and its impending suspension coming up quite often. We also chatted over a fine bottle of Gerard Bertrand Languedoc Bio 2009 about the tiny glasses the wine was served in. This could be a remedy to prevent binge drinking. Also the mercilessly high prices asked for beer. Paris is essentially on a par with London regarding prices. You get good value on most things. The restaurants probably surpass London for value, but beware the cost of beers in the bars....this was the land of the booze cruise in the recent past... I guess that mirrors the low cost of beer in British supermarkets....



Time for a stroll after the fine lunch at Chartier. The French have a word for an aimless wanderer, Le Flaneur, which is just what we did. Strolling through Les Jardin Des Tuileries a few of us looked up and saw the Eiffel Tower and decided in true tourist fashion to make the top of the tower our next stop.

You can't get lost looking for the Eiffel Tower, look up and there it is. A short walk along the bank of the Seine,



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and in next to no time we were at the top with all the marvellous views standing shoulder to shoulder with tourists from around the world.

Down to the rank at the base of the tower and we were heading back to the Gare du Nord in heavy Parisian rush hour traffic. The French taxi driver, one of 17,500, told us he was time limited to an 11 hour day. French cabbies cannot work more than eleven hours in a 24 hour period, although they can work 7 days a week.

Our driver said he did only six days. So much for the European 48 hour working time directive.

He commented on the London cycle scheme, asking how many bikes we have. 6,000 are petite compared to Paris' 20,000 plus cycles. The cabbie bemoaned the lack of enforcement on Parisian bus and taxi lanes as he struggled with the city traffic

dropping us back at the station. Unlike the Paris bus/taxi lanes, enforcement in London is good. The impending loss of the M4 eastbound lane is a strange anomaly, we can only surmise the influence of Addison Lee, mini-cab operator, urging their drivers to use the lane and their boss's alleged donations to the Tory party have been the catalyst for lack of enforcement in the past few months. It just looks like manipulation and even corruption. So much for cleaning up politics... C'est La Vie! ...



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### VeriFone Press Release

#### VeriFone Ramps Up Licensed Taxi Driver Recruitment Campaign & Extends Offer of Financial Support to Victims of Journeypay Collapse

As the collapse of Journeypay rocks London's licensed taxi trade, VeriFone steps in to champion card payments in the Capital's black cabs. It also throws a vital lifeline to over 1,000 licensed taxi drivers who will have outstanding Journeypay payments withheld because of legal action by Ingenico.

VeriFone is currently recruiting London licensed taxi drivers to pre-register for its new VeriFone taxi payment system which makes accepting card payments easier for drivers and more convenient for travellers.

VeriFone's message to ex-Journeypay drivers is clear, "Sign up with VeriFone as your card payment partner for five years, and we will replace the cash that is being withheld as a result of Ingenico serving a Winding Up Petition on Journeypay."

Over 1,000 London licensed taxi drivers will be affected by Journeypay's receivership, as a result of the Winding Up Petition served on it by its payments terminal supplier Ingenico. Many of these drivers will have their recent earnings withheld as bank assets are frozen.

VeriFone, the world's leading payment solution provider, is aware of their plight. It is currently introducing a new purpose designed in-cab card payments solution, specifically for London black cabs.

Comprising a driver-side terminal, a fixed passenger-facing secure PIN pad and a full colour display screen for safety information and news content, the VeriFone payment system accepts all form of card payments including credit, debit and contactless.

VeriFone is offering the payment system FREE, to all London licensed taxi drivers that sign up. Installation,

maintenance and repairs are also FREE.

There are no capital or operational expenses on the part of the driver or black cab owner. All that is required is agreement to participate for a five year period.

Mark Roberts, VP Sales, VeriFone: "We have been listening closely to London's licensed taxi drivers – developing a unique card payment system tailor made for them. VeriFone's solution overcomes many of the issues drivers had with previous systems.

It is an integral part of the cab, is easy to use and offers faster funds release; delivering new payments convenience for customers and fare revenue opportunity for drivers without any risk or additional investment." "We are appalled at the situation many drivers now find themselves in as a result of Journeypay's receivership.

Consequently, we are eager to engage affected drivers in our own card programme. In exchange for their commitment, we will ensure that they do not suffer financially from the action that Ingenico has taken with Journeypay."

By extending its recruitment offer of FREE card payment equipment and installation to include the replacement of Journeypay drivers' lost funds, VeriFone aims to keep London's licensed taxi commitment to card payments live.

Studies show that consumers are carrying less cash. With contactless booming and a potential surge of overseas visitors to London in

2012, it is vital that London has a card-based payment infrastructure in-place across its transport links. VeriFone is committed to achieving this goal by offering cab drivers the best solution, the best support and the best partnership possible.

## T H E A T R E

By Tony Benson

### BLOOD AND GIFTS at the National Theatre



Left to right, foreground: PHILIP ARDITTI (Saeed), LLOYD OWEN (James Warnock) and DEMOSTHENES CHRYSAN (Abdullah Khan). Photographs by Richard Hubert Smith.

American playwright JT Rogers' attempts to cut through the murk of the 1981 Soviet campaign in Afghanistan by showing how the CIA and MI6 colluded with Pakistan to supply Afghan warlords with sophisticated weaponry (which in 2010 may well be rebounding back on US and British troops). The result is thought-provoking but complex, although one is left in no doubt as to how far anti-Soviet paranoia would motivate the US in order for them to preserve their worldwide influence – and retain access to oil supplies.

Lloyd Owen plays the CIA station chief, Adam James the Jewish MI6 agent, and Demosthenes Chrysan is excellent as the Afghan rebel leader. Director is Howard Davies.

### THE COMPANY MAN at the Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond (closes 6th November)

The Orange Tree maintains its reputation for excellence with this family portrait that seems as though it could have been written by JB Priestley in the 1930s, but in fact is a new work by talented Torben Betts.

The action takes place in a luxurious house in London's commuter belt. Jane (Isla Blair), dying of motor neurone disease, arranges a family weekend mainly to see her wayward son who hasn't been around for some years, and her young grandson. The alcoholic Richard turns up without the child because he's been thrown out by his wife and has nowhere else to go and needs to borrow money. Jane's husband William (Bruce Alexander), the eponymous Company Man, has just retired after a lifetime of well rewarded hard graft, and is now preoccupied with his garden, his birdwatching, and his cricket. He speaks very loudly in platitudes and is a total bore. William and Jane's daughter Cathy (Beatrice Curnew) is devoting her life to caring for her mother but is desperate to escape. And lastly there is James (Nicholas Lumley) a deeply religious, self-deprecating family friend who has been in love with Jane all their adult lives.

The weekend is a complete disaster but the play is spellbinding with as much humour, surprisingly, as pathos. Director is Adam Barnard.

### DESIGN FOR LIVING at the Old Vic

Noel Coward's 1933 play about a ménage-a-trois could be entertaining if the characters were believable. At the start of this offering, directed by Anthony Page, glamorous Gilda shares a Paris studio with immature Otto, an artist. But while Otto is away selling his paintings, she shacks up with their friend, immature Leo, a playwright.

When Otto returns to find Leo in situ he gets the dead needle and storms out. Is he jealous of Leo or of Gilda? It soon becomes apparent that the two men have enjoyed a passionate intimacy before Gilda appeared. The action shifts 18 months later to a luxury flat in London, where Leo has a hit play running and Gilda is becoming bored. A contrite Otto turns up again and moves in with them. Their situation can best be described by Leo when he says to Gilda: "I love you. You love me. You love Otto. I love Otto. Otto loves you. Otto loves me." Two years later the play reaches a farcical conclusion in New York.

Their shared passion for one another might be believable were it not for the fact that Gilda (Lisa Dillon), Otto (Tom Burke) and Leo (Andrew Scott) give the appearance of Marilyn Monroe sleeping with Ant and Dec.

### THE GAME – on Tour

One of my favourite plays, which I see whenever the opportunity presents itself, is Harold Brighouse's "Hobson's Choice", written in 1915. What I didn't know was that two years earlier Brighouse had written another play: this one was "The Game", about professional football. It may not be everyone's half-time cuppa tea, but as a football fan it was right up my alley.

The setting is a Lancashire town on the final Saturday of the football season. Barrie Rutter (also the play's director) is Austin Whitworth, chairman of a first division side, and he is desperate: he has sunk his last penny into the team he has supported all his life but they are languishing in the relegation zone and need to win their last match to stay up. No other result will do since second division gate money won't even cover expenses.

To make matters worse, on the previous evening Whitworth was forced to sell his star England team centre-forward, Jack Metherall (Phil Rowson) to the team they are about to play. What to do? Jack is in love with the chairman's daughter, Elsie (Catherine Kinsella). Maybe he could be persuaded to do his future father-in-law a favour.

If you want to know what happens, go see the play, which will be coming shortly to a theatre near you. (At the time of writing it has just moved from Watford to Newcastle-under-Lyne.)

Wonderful cast, in particular Wendi Peters as Jack's mother, a right old battlexe resembling Les Dawson in drag.

## UTTLESFORD

### By CTN REPORTER

All Uttlesford hackney carriage and private hire licence holders have been given a significant reduction in licensing fees.

This came about when the books were audited and the licensing department were found to be making a profit. It is of course not legal for an authority to make a profit from taxi and private hire licensing.

No doubt the release of this information will cause those licensed in other provincial areas in the country to wonder if their own areas have made a profit from their licensing fees.

Don't forget to let CTN know if anyone out there finds this has happened in their area of licensing.

After the outcome of the Newcastle v. Berwick-Upon-Tweed case, Uttlesford District Council asked all new applicants for hackney carriage licences to sign a declaration that stated the vehicle would be used predominately in the district of Uttlesford.

With the outcome of the Stockton-On-Tees appeal, Uttlesford District Council is looking into the legal merits of such declarations.

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# MAYOR CONFIRMS REMOVAL OF CONGESTION CHARGE WESTERN EXTENSION ZONE

From Transport for London

Sixty-two per cent of consultation responses back removal of Western Extension.

It is essential that the Congestion Charge is made fairer and more effective, but also that it continues to do what it says on the tin and remains a deterrent to all but essential journeys into the heart of the Capital.

Mayor of London, Boris Johnson

- Last day of charging in Western Extension will be Christmas Eve
- CC Auto Pay will offer £1 discount and easier, simpler payments

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, today confirmed his decision to remove the Western Extension Zone of the Congestion Charge scheme by Christmas and to make a number of improvements to the scheme, including the introduction of an automatic payment system (called 'CC Auto Pay') that will mean no one need ever be fined again.

Sixty two per cent of respondents to Transport for London's (TfL) public consultation on the Western Extension backed its removal. The last charging day in the Western Extension will be on Christmas Eve, 24 December 2010.

## Simpler and easier to pay

On 4 January 2011 a number of other changes to the scheme will come into effect. They include the introduction of CC Auto Pay accounts that will offer a simpler, easier way to pay and a new Greener Vehicle Discount to encourage a switch to much cleaner and greener cars.

The Congestion Charge will also increase from £8 to £9 if paid using CC Auto Pay; or £10 if paid in advance (or on the day) using conventional means and £12 if paid the next charging day. The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, said: 'The people of west London had the Western Extension unfairly foisted upon them and they have now voiced their antipathy for it loud and clear on several occasions.'

'After negotiating a testing course of several legal hurdles, I am delighted to be able to confirm that it will now be removed by Christmas.'

'It will be vanquished, annihilated and obliterated, with road markings literally blasted from the earth over the festive period.'

'It is essential that the Congestion Charge is made fairer and more effective, but also that it continues to do what it says on the tin and remains a deterrent to all but essential journeys into the heart of the Capital. I have therefore taken the difficult, but nevertheless crucial decision to increase the daily charge to £10.'

'However, motorists can take comfort in the new CC Auto Pay accounts that will mean a £1 discount and the peace of mind that never again will they get clobbered



for forgetting to pay the charge.'

## Smooth traffic flow

The Congestion Charge will remain under review in future years to ensure that it remains an effective measure to control traffic levels in central London. Efforts to smooth traffic flow in the Capital will also continue, to ensure essential journeys can take place, but not at the expense of air quality. All net revenues from the central London Congestion Charge will be invested in delivering improvements to London's transport infrastructure and to protect frontline transport services. TfL will be contacting registered customers in the Western Extension area of the Congestion Charge zone after 22 November to inform them of the removal of their discount and to issue any appropriate refund.

Ahead of CC Auto Pay going live in January, motorists can pre-register on the TfL website for a CC Auto Pay account from 22 November. This will make paying the congestion charge easier, more convenient and will ensure that no Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) are issued to registered vehicles, so drivers will no longer be penalised for forgetting to pay the charge. To register you will need a

credit or debit card and will have to pay a £10 registration charge for each vehicle on the account.

CC Auto Pay customers will also be eligible for a reduced daily charge of £9. Drivers will only be charged for the days they travel within the zone and will be billed each month.

## Greener vehicle discounts

The Mayor has confirmed that the Alternative Fuel Discount will be discontinued and in its place a Greener Vehicle Discount will be created to encourage a switch to much cleaner and more CO2 efficient cars.

The current alternative fuel discount provides a 100 per cent discount to some vehicles that are powered by an alternative fuel. However, some benefits of the alternative fuels have been outpaced by technological developments in other vehicles. This means some new vehicles that do not qualify for the alternative fuel discount have better environmental performance than some vehicles that do qualify.

The new Greener Vehicle Discount will provide a 100 per cent discount to cars that emit 100g/km of CO2 or less and meet the Euro 5

standard for air quality. Over the course of the next 12 to 18 months it is anticipated that new electric and hybrid electric plug-in vehicles will be brought to market with significantly lower emission levels.

TfL will monitor developments in the market and keep discount criteria under review, with the intention of reducing the discount levels to 80g/km or lower when the time is right. The review of exemption criteria will be carried out in 2012. As with the current Alternative Fuel Discount, owners of cars eligible for the Greener Vehicle Discount will have to pay a £10 annual registration charge. The eligibility criteria for the electric vehicle discount has also been widened to include plug-in hybrid electric vehicles. The changes to the Congestion Charge Scheme Order follow a 10-week statutory public consultation that ran between 24 May and 2 August 2010.

The consultation received more than 13,000 responses.

A report summarising the responses was provided to the Mayor who then made a decision to implement the changes to the scheme.

The report can be viewed at: [www.tfl.gov.uk/congestioncharging](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/congestioncharging)

# HOW WILL LONDON'S TRANSPORT NETWORK COPE WITH THE 2012 GAMES?

On each of the 16 days of the Olympic Games, Londoners will share public transport and roads with at least 500,000 spectators, 140,000 Games workers and 55,000 members of the 'Games family' travelling between competition venues, training sites and accommodation.

The London Assembly Transport Committee is reviewing progress on the Olympic Transport Plan and exploring how the transport network will cope with the extra pressure from the Games.

Chair of the Transport Committee, Val Shawcross AM, said: "As well as visitors and athletes travelling to and from venues, Londoners will need to go about their everyday lives against the backdrop of events that will

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attract hundreds of thousands of spectators.

"The transport network will come under a lot of pressure – and the international spotlight – so we need to get it right to ensure the success of the London 2012 Games."

All spectators will be encouraged to travel to and from events using public transport or by walking or cycling, and a number of big transport infrastructure improvements are underway to facilitate this, including the upgrade of Stratford station and the new Javelin rail service.

Along with progress on infrastructure

improvements, the Committee will also look at controversial plans for modifications to roads and traffic signals to allow the 'Games Family' – which currently includes athletes, technical officials and media – to get around.

Critics have argued that the proposed temporary Olympic Route Network, comprising nearly 500 roads in London, along with 'Games lanes' totalling nearly 60 miles in length will increase congestion and lead to difficulties with deliveries of stock to shops and businesses.

The Committee will gather evidence and an update from the ODA in advance of the first of

two public hearings in November and January. The findings from this investigation will seek to inform the ODA's third edition of the 2012 Transport Plan, due for publication in Spring 2011.

The terms of reference of the investigation are:

- To explore progress with the delivery of the Olympic Transport Plan and the main issues arising at this stage e.g. the impact on ordinary London life, the security of the transport network and its accessibility; and, in light of the findings
- To identify any further steps that could be taken to help ensure London's transport system operates effectively during the 2012 Games.

# DISPELLING THE TORY PROPAGANDA

## IT'S ALL LABOURS' DEBT, THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE CUTS!

By **DANNY FREEMAN**  
Secretary UNITE Cab Section, Heathrow Branch

What a load of old tosh! This has nothing to do with economics but everything to do with Tory ideology. It has always been the party of the rich, nothing has changed, and now they think they have found an excuse to finish off what Margaret Thatcher started – to crush the working man and women, to destroy the National Health Service and welfare state.

Let's be clear it was the bankers around the world that caused the debt through their sheer greed and cunning we are all paying for them.

We should remember the way mortgages were given out to almost anybody, regard-less of your ability to pay it back.

In the US they had NINJA mortgages no income, no job

applications given mortgages to people who didn't have a job! Over here of course we had self-certification mortgage, with no credit checks. Banks around the world were coming up with ever more devious ways of making money. Bundling up good and bad debt and selling it from one bank to another so that no-one had a clue what they were buying and selling.

And then the bubble burst and we bailed them out. If we hadn't I believe capitalism would have collapsed, just remember the huge queues at Northern Rock of people who had done nothing wrong but deposited their hard earned savings in a bank.

In the depression during the thirties governments around the world tried to pay off their debts too quickly. When you take money out of the economy it shrinks. If you sack public sector workers, they don't take taxi rides, buy cars, take holidays, they don't pay tax, they do rely on benefits.

When companies' profits then fall and they sack their workers, who don't take taxi rides, buy cars, take holidays, they don't pay tax, they do rely on

benefits. This downward cycle goes on and on and on.

Japan tried to do the same thing in the 80's their recession lasted over 10 years, closer to home Ireland are doing the same thing right now and they have just had to make further more severe cuts, the downward cycle has begun.

During the thirties a liberal economist came to the fore called John Maynard Keynes, he believed in a recession you needed to pump more money into the economy to create growth, you pay a man to dig a hole you pay another one to fill it in! They both have wages which they spend on cab rides, new cars, holidays. They do pay taxes and they don't rely on benefits. Economic growth then begins

The government keep telling us that they have to pay the debt off within 4 years – What a load of old tosh! Our loans are not due for around 16 years. If someone said you had to pay your mortgage off in 4 years instead of 25 you would say they were bonkers. That's exactly what the government are trying to do.

They are telling us the markets would get the jitters with anything less, they didn't get the jitters with Labours plan of halving it in 4 years and as the economies around the world slow down you could argue for an even longer period to pay it off.

They point to what happened in Portugal and the Greece. The United Kingdom is not a Portugal or Greece; we are the world's 5th largest economy.

Just as we live with debt, our government since the Napoleonic wars have lived with debt.

One final thought after World War II we had a much, much bigger debt, but we still created the National Health Service, the welfare state, and council homes for the heroes returning home from war.

Another world is possible but only if we are prepared to fight the cuts and show there is an alternative.

**"When companies' profits then fall and they sack their workers, who don't take taxi rides, buy cars, take holidays, they don't pay tax, they do rely on benefits. This downward cycle goes on and on and on".**



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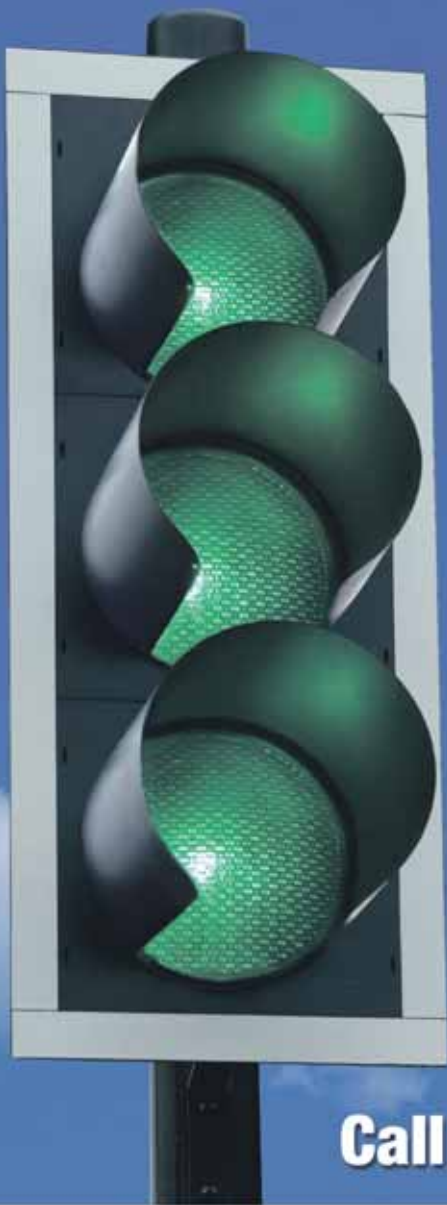
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