

INSULT AND INJURY



City of London Police replace taxi rank with minicab office!



Then & now. Main picture shows the bar shortly after final construction work was complete, with the taxi rank markings still visible. Inset, shows customers lining up to go into this new late night venue, which is now open until 3am at the weekend.

A year after the opening of the Anthologist bar in Gresham Street EC2, which coincided with the loss of the existing taxi rank after final construction work, was complete.

Cab Trade News has learned that the late night venue has been granted a minicab satellite office license by TfL London Taxi and Private Hire (LTPH) following a specific request from City of London Police, which left LTPH no choice but to grant the request.

The news was conveyed during a conversation between London Cab Drivers' Club committee member Danny Sullivan and Deputy Director LTPH, Helen Chapman. Club Chairman, Grant Davis then contacted UNITE's London Cab Section and informed us of the development.

UNITE along with the other recognised driver groups have been campaigning constantly for the

restoration of the rank, expressly because of the new work opportunity that the Anthologist would provide for taxi drivers. The Corporation has refused to reinstate the taxi rank because since the construction of the new buildings in Gresham Street they have also widened the pavement outside the club leaving no room (they say) for a taxi rank.

Lack of space was also used by the Corporation in Cornhill during the Abacus rank negotiations. This is why the rank remains a good few yards from the door.

Like Cornhill the part of Gresham Street where the Anthologist is situated is a double yellow line thoroughfare with heavily restricted parking. It will be worth watching to see if the Corporation is as heavy with private hire stopping there as we have seen them being with the taxi trade picking up parking tickets whilst doing radio work.

UNITE Cab Section continues to campaign for the restoration of the taxi rank.



Under construction, the rank remained in place throughout the building works.

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CTN

Comment

REFORM

By FRANK HULL

When it was announced that a select committee was to be set up to consider taxi legislation, we thought we detected a glimmer of hope. However, that was quickly extinguished by the Condemn Minister responsible for taxis etc, Norman Baker, when he told the Committee that the Government regarded a Law Commission as a sensible way to proceed rather than the Committee's recommendation for an in-house review by the DfT.

Now that this government has passed the buck and given the job of reforming the workings of this trade to the law commission, it is essential for those involved in this trade to start pressurising now for that reformation to evolve with the benefit of the long practical experience of this taxi trade.

Any changes to the workings of this trade have usually been introduced by people who in many cases knew nothing of the workings of the taxi trade. Nothing changes!

Now the battle lines have been drawn there are already forces outside the taxi trade putting their own views forward and being listened to.

Look at the so called National Association of taxi users. They may be a laughable outfit to many taxi drivers but they are a threat to licensed taxi drivers nationally. This group is already talking of a one tier trade all taxis no private-hire. You can tut-tut if you like but look at what is happening to the taxi trades in Ireland both North and South and you will realise why we say it is essential now that this trade should for once unite and start putting the pressure on for us to be heard.

This Government has stated that the review by the Law Commission, an independent body, should be underpinned by a deregulatory objective!

If we look again at Ireland in the South the whole of the trade was deregulated and taxi drivers there lost thousands of euros destroying the lives of hundreds.

In the North at present confusion reigns nobody can tell the difference between taxi and private hire.

All this has been brought about by reform that has not involved the taxi trades that were being reformed.

It is obvious to us that all agencies that represent the licensed taxi trade in this country should for once unite to put pressure on those who would Condemn us.

If you want to Unite with us then fill in the application form on page 15.

Frank Hull is a UNITE Cab Trade Committee Member.

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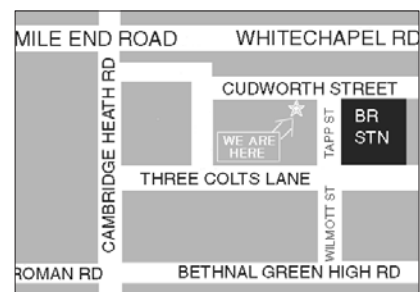
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WHY THE OLYMPICS IS GOOD FOR TAXI DRIVERS

By MIKE HEDGES

We have heard a lot of doom and gloom about how dreadful the Olympics is going to be for taxi drivers and how every taxi driver is going to be leaving the country in August.

Also it seems, these same people are telling us that for those of us that stay and work it will be dreadful as supposedly we will be stuck in one almighty traffic jam, whilst the Olympic Games vehicles will be flying past us along the Olympic Route Network (ORN).

Well, nothing could be further from the truth. The problem with these people is they are either ignorant or they believe in their own propaganda. It was part of the Olympic contract that the Olympic "Games family" are transported to events along the ORN. It makes sense that the competitors, officials, regulators and coaches are at the events on time.

Nobody could argue that we would want a transport system like in Atlanta, where competitors were jumping off the official transport and running to their events. The games vehicles are all supplied by BMW and driven by volunteer drivers. No private hire vehicles are involved in the transportation of the "games family".

It is hard to imagine just how many visitors are expected to come to London for the Olympics. It will be the biggest event ever to have been held in the UK. The benefits will be felt well before the games begin, and history shows, for at least a year afterwards. So it is hard to see how the Olympic Games will not benefit taxi drivers.

UNITE has been very proactive in ensuring that our members will have access to most of the sections of the ORN that are going to open to buses. It must be remembered that buses will not have access to the majority of the ORN. When UNITE, along with the LTDA and LCDC, met with the Mayor he assured us that wherever possible we would have the same access to the ORN as buses.

Access to the ORN is not the most important issue as all traffic running along the ORN route will move at the same speed. Official Olympic vehicles will not be travelling faster than everyone else. The key is to be able to pick up, set down and turn left or right across the ORN.

UNITE alongside the other two drivers' organisations have been meeting regularly

with TfL and the ODA to ensure that our members have the best practicable options possible to ensure that they can move around as easily as possible. TfL and the ODA want taxis to be able to access all the venues, which is why there are taxi ranks and clear taxi pick up points at all the venues. It is also the intention to produce an information booklet nearer to the Games opening explaining to drivers where all the venues are, the dates and times that events will be taking place and pick up and drop off points for the venues.

There will also be lots of information available about the ORN and access and egress to venues. There will be a dedicated website which will have up to the minute information about events and any road closures. But, probably, the most important information for drivers can be obtained by signing up to TfL's Olympic updates at TPHENquiries@tfl.gov.uk which will give text message updates throughout the Olympics.

Through discussions with TfL we have also managed to gain access to a number of areas that originally were prohibited to all vehicles except for buses and Games vehicles. Some areas will have very limited access such as St James and the area around the Mall. These will have so many people that it will be impossible to access, even buses cannot use these areas.

Also Whitehall will be closed to all traffic except buses as the volume of people using Whitehall to Parliament Square will be so severely restricted that it will probably will not be worth using. We have now been given access to Trafalgar Square and most importantly, will have a choice of exits, which was not on the original plans. Also private hire will not have the access that taxis will have around Trafalgar Square or on any of the ORN.

We are making progress, not always as quickly as we would like, but we are definitely being listened to and changes are being made to our responses and suggestions. Unite wants our members to be able to work whenever they wish to during the Games, with as much freedom of movement as possible. We are getting there through negotiation and discussion, which is the only way that we can ultimately succeed.



Remember to sign up for Olympic updates from LTPH please email TPHENquiries@tfl.gov.uk to get live text updates.



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The UNITE the Union Cab Trade Advisory Committee administer the Section Fund on behalf of the Cab members in London & Eastern. UNITE the Union seeks to obtain the best possible deal for union members it cannot, however, accept any liability for the benefits provided by outside organisations.

WESTMINSTER POLICE CLAMPDOWN ON RICKSHAWS



Mobile Custody Unit provides rapid processing.

Using laws first drawn up over 150 years ago, Metropolitan Police's Westminster Safer Neighborhoods team has instigated a crackdown on the activities of Rickshaws operating in London's West End and Covent Garden.

The Metropolitan Police Act 1839 Section 54 Prohibition of nuisances by persons in the thoroughfares – is the piece of legislation that Officers led by Sergeant Christian Ardron are using to deal with this 21st Century London menace.

Sergeant Ardron and his team have been given the use of a Mobile Custody Unit which meets all Home Office specifications for custody facilities. Effectively, it is a 'non-designated police station' which allows suspects to be held for up to six hours before they have to be transferred to a designated police station or released.

It can be parked close to the site of a police operation and provide rapid processing for low level criminals. Which means arresting officers can be back out on the street much more quickly.

Three paragraphs of Section 54, Metropolitan Police Act 1839 are being used to make arrests:

Paragraph 5. Every person who shall ride or drive furiously, or so as to endanger the life or limb of any person, or to the common danger of the passengers in any thoroughfare:

Paragraph 6. Every person who shall

cause any cart, public carriage, sledge, truck, or barrow, with or without horses, to stand longer than may be necessary for loading or unloading or for taking up or setting down passengers, except hackney carriages standing for hire in any place not forbidden by law, or who, by means of any cart, carriage, sledge, truck, or barrow, or any horse or other animal, shall wilfully interrupt any public crossing, or wilfully cause any obstruction in any thoroughfare:

Paragraph 7. Every person who shall lead or ride any horse or other animal, or draw or drive any cart or carriage, sledge, truck, or barrow, upon any footway or curbstone, or fasten any horse or other animal so that it can stand across or upon any footway:

Offenders are issued with Fixed Penalty fines and the Rickshaws impounded.

Officers involved are from Westminster's Safer Neighborhoods Team, PCSO's and TfL's Safer Transport Command (STC). The STC officers for the operation are from the Roads policing teams (who are experts at dealing with congestion and obstruction of the highway etc) and the Cycle Task Force (who are traffic officers and expert in dealing with cycle offences). Cab Enforcement Unit officers are not involved.

The operation will run until mid-November.



PCSO's Stop and question Rickshaw riders on Charing Cross Road.



CAB TRADE NEWS.co.uk

Taxi trade news and comment from working drivers belonging to UNITE the UNION

Birmingham PH drivers hand in petition

Private hire taxi drivers have handed in a petition to Birmingham City Council calling for changes over licensing fees, timings of spot-checks and car signage.

Some drivers said they wanted a meeting with councillors after the fee for taxis rose by 8% for 2011-12.

Drivers also want to be allowed to use magnetic signs on their cars rather than stick-on ones.

The council said fees had been kept low for the past five years.

Spokesperson for the drivers Tanveer Choudhry said he appreciated the fee increase was "not a great deal" but said that it was another contributing factor to rising costs, along with fuel prices and insurance costs.

Mr Choudhry said another issue for the drivers was the timing of spot-checks when their cars and badges were checked over.

'A compromise'

He said they had no problem with the "important" checks being carried out, but said they could take too long especially during busy times.

Birmingham City Council said the licensing fee had gone up by 8% in April but pointed out that in the five previous years, it had either gone up by below the rate of inflation or had been frozen.

Talking about the signage, the council said: "The decision to require semi-permanent liveries was a regulation agreed with the taxi associations several years ago as a compromise rather than full vehicle livery/uniform colourings."

As for spot-checks, the council said they should take "no more than 15 minutes."

Chris Neville, city council head of licensing said he made "no apologies" for the fact that spot-checks were carried out at weekends when drivers were busy.

"That's when we get the truest reflection of compliance rates of drivers," he added.

From BBC NEWS



Chris Neville, city council head of licensing said he made "no apologies" for the fact that spot-checks were carried out at weekends when drivers were busy.

London West End pedicabs need licences, peers say

Conservative Baroness Gardner of Parkes said they posed "quite a danger" and could "cut right across traffic", while Labour's Lord Kennedy of Southwark said they could be a "nuisance".

The vehicles, which can carry up to three passengers, were debated in the Lords in a debate on the Localism Bill.

They "needed to be dealt with", added Tory Lord Jenkin of Roding.

However, ministers think the issue should be handled locally, rather than nationally.

Labour's Lord Berkeley, who used to be a transport spokesman for his party, said that as a cyclist he found the pedicabs "irritating". But he said they were "here to stay" and "good fun".

Lord Kennedy, the son of a London taxi driver, said licensing could help to ensure owners had insurance and kept their vehicles in good condition.

Transport spokesman Earl Attlee told peers that pedicabs in London were the responsibility of City Hall and Transport for London.

Westminster Council, which oversees much of the West End, is already devising a voluntary registration scheme, which would also include a code of practice.

Lady Gardner said pedicabs were not liked by taxi drivers and created hazards which could be reduced with appropriate regulation.

After the debate she withdrew her amendment to the Bill which called for licensing, but said action was still needed to prevent anyone being seriously injured.

From BBC NEWS



Transport spokesman Earl Attlee told peers that pedicabs in London were the responsibility of City Hall and Transport for London

GLASGOW CALLING

By CHRIS FARQUHAR

Further to my previous article in Cab Trade News and after a lot of hard work by George Kelly, who was fronting the appeal as only an operator is allowed to do under Scots Law and UNITE activists, which I am proud to say I am one of many, we finally got a date for or hearing with THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION into our abysmal tariff.

It is the lowest in the UK for a city with an all Hackney fleet akin to London. The Glasgow City Council (GCC) had offered us a 6.64% increase; we had lobbied for a front loaded tariff of 9.1%. This was not an exorbitant figure by any means.

I am afraid to relate there was no happy ending as it all came down to a numbers game. We had thought we had petitioned enough operators (33%) to validate our claim. Alas GCC manipulated the operator numbers to their own end which in effect scuppered our appeal. At the "eleventh hour" they also sprung on us that they had engaged a QC to front their case against the appeal.

To add insult to injury Glasgow Taxis Limited (GTL) who are the only taxi radio system in Glasgow and who are also in an unhealthy alliance with the Council gave their backing to the GCC tariff. GTL are actually a TOA



owned by their members. On this occasion though they never balloted their members on the two tariffs and it was the management committee of GTL who on their own volition backed the Council.

In my opinion GTL have stabbed their "Brother Taxi Drivers" in the back and are guilty of fratricide against the taxi trade. The sin and shame of Cain is upon them. They have left us with a tariff that is barely viable to maintain the running of a taxi which costs circa £30k...

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Mark's Mélange 91

By MARK EDWARD TAYLOR

TRAVEL PLANS

Traffic engineers are constantly reviewing and revising the way motorists use the public highway. Fashions come and fashions go... trends and schemes change with political and environmental initiatives and London, as always, is at the sharp end.

Historically London traffic has been stagnating at 11 miles per hour for the last one hundred and fifty years... and it doesn't look like changing. Speeds now are the same as in this picture from Temple Bar in 1870....



Back in the 1960's and 70's, as mass consumer motoring took hold, the traffic planners view appeared to be in favour of one-way streets trying to maximise speed often to the detriment of pedestrians.

The finest examples of this are allowing traffic to run straight and direct while pedestrians were tunnelled underground into subways which have often been devoid of investment and became unwelcome places that some members of the public feared.



In recent times the one-way schemes are being updated to two-way traffic flows the most current being St James's Street and Pall Mall. Has this improved traffic speeds and flow? Probably not, but it is better for pedestrians and cyclists and tends to stop drivers accelerating and braking erratically.



It is more of a step towards the shared space concept of Exhibition Road where all road users will use eye contact to negotiate the space between South Kensington and Hyde Park.



The changes to Oxford Circus are aesthetically pleasing, Shoreditch one-way system made two-way in 2003 has definitely improved that neighbourhood and Trafalgar Square reworking a little later is certainly better for tourism, although traffic flow-through is slow and frustrating. Reflecting on this though; all roads lead to London.

All roads in central London converge at the city centre of Charing Cross just south of Trafalgar Square where it never has moved very fast and as long as London remains one of the world's top visitor attractions and desirable place to live we should celebrate Trafalgar's slow vehicle speeds! Some may say this is bollocks...but it is worth thinking through.



Street Legal

By VICTORIA PHILLIPS

COMPENSATION CULTURE – WHO IS TO BLAME?

Insurance industry claims that the soaring cost of motor insurance premiums are down to the so-called compensation culture must be challenged. Insurers are pointing the finger of blame in many directions, but not at themselves.

Road traffic accident (RTA) compensation claims, which represent 80 per cent of all personal injury cases, are rising year on year. But that's not evidence of a compensation culture. Employers liability claims – work-related injuries – are falling.

Insurers cannot be allowed to just sweep everything up as compensation culture, blaming vulnerable injured people for premium levels by saying the price will only come down when claims are cut.

They are pushing hard for reforms to the civil justice system that will deny access to justice for injured people but in particular for those injured at work. The reforms the government is railroading through parliament with the insurance industry's enthusiastic support will not tackle the issue of rising RTA claims.

The rise in claims is being fuelled as much by insurance industry behaviour as by TV advertising for no win no fee injury services. Insurers blame claims management firms and lawyers for these, but they are encouraging people to claim by the practice of third party capture.

This is when they contact policy holders whose vehicle has been in an accident and offer them money to settle their injury claim before they take independent legal advice. Many union members have come to us for advice after being hounded by insurers to accept an offer. Some hadn't even thought of claiming for personal injury until then.

Then there are referral fees. These are payments demanded of lawyers by insurers and claims firms in return for cases. Former Labour minister Jack Straw wants them banned because, he says, they encourage claims. We support a ban.

Referral fees represent a significant proportion of insurance company profits. Admiral shares plunged on the announcement of the proposed ban. Insurers could as an industry have put a stop to them along time ago and stemmed the rise in claims and the cost of premiums.

But their priority their profits and shareholders' interests, not policy holders.

Traffic engineers have been very busy over the capital. The area to the front of Buckingham Palace has been re-engineered around the Queen Victoria memorial. Queen Victoria Street and Cannon Street have been reverted to the fashionable two-way trend. Aldgate has lost Braham Street to embrace two-way working on Whitechapel High Street. Elephant & Castle has seen pedestrian barrier removal like Oxford Circus and minor changes to the roundabouts plus something is always happening to Russell Square. When will those fickle traffic planners settle on something firm?

Statistically, the UK has some of the safest roads on planet Earth, definitely in the European Union. Why mess with the law and cause unnecessary death and injury.

These environmentally detrimental proposals, which could effectively see lawful speeds of almost 90mph allowing for margins of error on speedometers, may be quietly dropped with ministerial changes.

Transport secretary, Philip Hammond, has been moved to Defence as fallout from the peculiar Liam Fox/Adam Werritty affair. Female, Justine Greening, conservative MP for Putney (pictured below), is the new Secretary of State for Transport. Women usually have a more sensible approach to driving. Ask any insurance company.



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NEWS FROM LTPH

Charing Cross Road Marshalled Taxi Rank

A new taxi rank has been appointed in Charing Cross Road.

The taxi rank operates between 20:00 and 03:00, 7 days a week, and is split into two portions. The first portion is located on the west side of Charing Cross Road, near Bear Street. The second portion acts as a feeder rank and is on the east side of Charing Cross Road.

The new taxi rank will be marshalled on Friday and Saturday evenings, between 22:00 and 03:00 and will operate as a normal taxi rank, i.e. the first taxi takes the first passenger and the fares are on the meter. TfL has worked together with the taxi trade and local authority to appoint this new taxi rank and drivers are encouraged to use the rank and support the marshalled taxi rank scheme.

The fixed-fare marshalled taxi rank scheme in Coventry Street has now stopped as this was only being marshalled temporarily by TfL marshals whilst Westminster City Council seek long term funding for the scheme.

SFM Security Ltd

The Metropolitan Police have informed Transport for London (TfL) that as of 4 September 2011 SFM Security Ltd have been accredited by the police and have powers to control and direct traffic and receive the name and address of people in connection with Road Traffic Accidents.



Staff from SFM Security Ltd will be used at events where there are agreed Traffic Management Plans in place (e.g. the St Patrick's Day Parade), will be

wearing high-visibility clothing and will have the necessary badges and accreditation displayed.

The badges will be credit card sized and similar to those worn by Security Industry Authority (SIA) accredited staff. The high-visibility clothing will be similar to that shown on the right but with 'Traffic Marshal' on it.

Bank of England new style £50 note

You may be aware from recent media coverage that the Bank of England is introducing a new-style £50 note in to circulation on 2 November 2011.



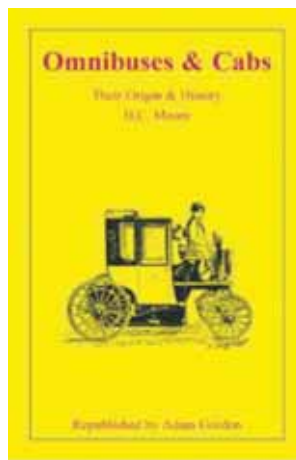
The key points regarding the new note are:

- The new-style £50 note featuring Matthew Boulton & James Watt will enter circulation on Wednesday 2 November 2011
- From 2 November 2011 the new-style £50 note will co-circulate with the current £50 note, featuring Sir John Houblon, until further notice
- Images of the new-style £50 note and free publicity materials, giving full details of the new note, will be available on 2 November 2011
- Free publicity materials can be pre-ordered by calling 020 7601 4878, or by completing the order form attached, or via the Bank of England website which also has further information about the new note: <http://www.bankofengland.co.uk>

Transport for London – London Taxi and Private Hire

A SEMINAL WORK ON THE CAB TRADE

By **ROGER TRASK**



When I edited Cab Trade News in the early 90s I was completely unaware that my grandfather, HC Moore had written a seminal work on the trade nearly 100 years earlier.

Such is the authority of "Omnibuses and Cabs" that it has been re-published recently perhaps because Moore's tales of the battles fought by the trade in the late 19th century are comparable to many of those faced today.

London's streets have witnessed an array of competing hire transport from early in Charles I's reign, with water buses being challenged by sedan chairs and Hackney coaches. According to Moore, the King was ill-pleased with the "unnecessary multitude of coaches" hindering the capital's carts and carriages.

But Hackney coach drivers were astute in evading the limitations put on their usage. A triumphant Samuel Pepys wrote that, notwithstanding the King's proclamation preventing coaches sitting on ranks, "I got one to carry me home". The coaches were small narrow

vehicles drawn by two horses and it was often claimed they were damaging the paving, a problem that was only alleviated after the Great Fire of London when the roads were widened.

In the early 1800's coach men were not licensed unlike the proprietors, who needed the recommendation of a peer or MP to operate. For the 1,000 coaches allowed to be licensed fares were a shilling a mile, with a waiting fare of three shillings an hour

The origins of Cabriolets – a name soon shortened to cabs – can be traced back to 1805. Their import from Paris reflected dissatisfaction with the lumbering hackney coaches. Not everyone agreed. Dickens in a sketch questioned why people were risking their necks in one of "them crazy cabs when they can have a 'spectable' 'ackney cotch with a pair of 'orses as von't run away with no vun".

Efforts by cab proprietors to drastically restrict the number of licences were finally defeated in 1832 resulting in hundreds of cabs appearing on London's streets. By 1860 there were 4300 licensed cabs and 200 stands

Moore colourfully relates the battles of cabbies over the subsequent decades. Fights such as those to end the obligation to knock at the customer's door; for cabbies shelters; for cuts in proprietor's charges; and for universal access to station forecourts brought cabbies together and resulted in the formation of the Cab Drivers Union. Strikes in the second half of 1800's first secured many of the rights that are so important to the trade today.

On one point Moore was very wrong. Not foreseeing in 1901 the development of the motorised cab he predicted that the Hansom cab would survive for a further 60 years.

Omnibuses and Cabs was written by HC Moore and is published by Adam Gordon (01408 622660 – adam@ahg-books.com).



POLICE MAKE 'BANANA MAN' PLEA TO TAXI DRIVER

Police are keen to trace a taxi driver who may hold vital information into an allegation of a sexual assault.

A taxi left The Beat nightclub in Bridge of Allan around 2am last Thursday (October 6) and went to Wallace Street in Stirling.

There were possibly two-four male passengers in the car along with a female. Two of the passengers were distinctive as they were in fancy dress costume – one was dressed as a banana and the other was possibly dressed as a clown.

A Central Scotland Police

spokeswoman said: "We have carried out extensive inquiries in an effort to trace the taxi driver.

We believe he may hold vital information and we are keen for him to come forward. We are certain that the taxi driver would remember this pick-up as two of the men were in fancy dress costumes."

Anyone with information can contact Central Scotland Police on 01786 456000 or information can be given anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

RESIDENTS REMINDED NOT TO USE ILLEGAL MINICABS

Dartford's residents are being reminded to check their cab is safe following the discovery of unlicensed taxi services advertised in shop windows.

Following complaints from the public and inspections by Dartford's Community Safety Unit (CSU) and Kent Police, shopkeepers have been advised to remove the advertisement cards from their windows.

In addition, two drivers have been identified and interviewed where they admitted to acting as taxis despite being unlicensed. The pair were issued with formal warnings and have been advised that further action will be taken against them if they come to the

attention of the CSU or Kent Police again.

Dartford Borough Council's Community Safety Unit and Kent Police work closely together to help to ensure the safety of the Borough's residents. Part of the CSU's work also includes the licensing of Hackney Carriages and minicabs.

Councillor Dave Hammock, Lead Member for Enforcement & Licensing said, "We do all we can to ensure illegal unlicensed cabs are not operating in the Borough. Cab users should always remember to hire their cab from a reputable company and if they're not happy – don't get in and report it to the Police.

GOVERNMENT IGNORE SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT

The government has recently published its reply to the Transport Select Committee's report on taxis and private hire vehicles. The Transport Select Committee made a number of recommendations to the government to try to overcome the cross-border hiring problem. Whilst the committee was receiving evidence the Minister, Norman Baker, announced to the Select Committee he had asked the Law Commission to undertake a review of taxi and private hire legislation.



The Minister, Norman Baker, indicated on 15 March whilst giving oral evidence that the Government regarded a Law Commission review as a sensible way to proceed and the Law Commission agreed that a review of taxi legislation fitted in with their criteria for taking on projects. He said the Law Commission is an independent body with a statutory remit to modernise and simplify the law. The Government has indicated that it wants the review to be underpinned by a deregulatory objective

commensurate with maintaining satisfactory levels of safety. Beyond that, the Law Commission has been charged with carrying out a root and branch review with a view to providing recommendations and drawing up a draft Bill.

To give a flavour of how the government are now passing all responsibility for taxi and private hire legislation to the Law Commission it is worth looking at the first three government responses to the Select Committee's recommendations.

Recommendation 1. In our view, the case for a thorough overhaul of the legislation relating to taxis and private hire vehicles is irresistible.

DfT response: The Government agrees that there is a strong case for overhauling the legislation governing taxis and private hire vehicles. That is why the Government has asked the Law Commission to undertake a comprehensive review of the legislation.

Recommendation 2. We recommend that, instead of referring reform of taxi and PHV legislation to the Law Commission, the Government should engage with the trade, local authorities and users about the objectives of future legislation on taxis and private hire vehicles and commit to overhaul that legislation during the course of this Parliament. Once these objectives are decided, the detailed work to frame legislation and guide it through Parliament should begin. This need not involve primary legislation: we consider that the swifter legislative reform order procedure could be used in this case.



DfT response: The Government does not consider that referring the review of taxi

and PHV legislation to the Law Commission is in any way inappropriate. On the contrary, the Government considers that the Law Commission is the ideal body to undertake such a review.

Its fundamental purpose is to review complex areas of law, it has experience and expertise in carrying out this function and with its independent status comes an ability to assess the issues in an objective way.

The Government is satisfied that the Law Commission will undertake an effective and productive review, the final report of which will be delivered during the lifetime of the current Parliament.

The Government is not inclined towards the legislative reform order route to establish a new legislative framework for taxis and PHVs.

Whilst the Government expects the draft Bill produced by the Law Commission to have a good degree of support, there will be substantive and controversial issues to be addressed and the Government considers that these would best be considered and debated during the passage of a Bill through Parliament.

Recommendation 3. We recommend that, in developing proposals for changing the legislation applying to taxis and PHVs, the Government should commission authoritative research into consumers' opinions. Particular attention should be paid to the views of vulnerable groups, such as disabled people, who are often most reliant on taxis and PHVs.

DfT response: The Government accepts that seeking the views of users is a vital element of undertaking any reform of the taxi and PHV legislation.

The Government does not, however, accept that a dedicated research project is needed. The Law Commission will engage with consumer organisations – in order to gain a full understanding of the views of everyone with a stake in this sector – as part

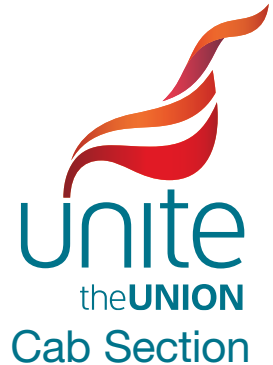
of its review of the legislation.

We are very disappointed that the government has chosen this path when the Transport Select Committee had provided a thoroughly comprehensive review of taxi and private hire legislation.

They have decided to pursue the Law Commission route which will allow the free market, deregulatory approach. This may work with some industries but the disastrous Office of Fair Trading recommendation of delimitation, achieved through the same free market approach, shows how taxis and private hire do not conform to this ideological dogma.

UNITE is responding very robustly to these proposals. We are holding a National Taxi Conference with representatives from every part of the country attending.

From this conference we will be taking our position forward to the Law Commission as well as getting the support from as many other organisations as possible. UNITE are the only national taxi organisation that is able to do this. So if you want a say in your future join UNITE Cab Section now.



Transport for London

London Taxi and Private Hire



Important Information Regarding London Taxis and the 2012 Games

Next summer, London will host the world's two largest spectacular events, the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Transport will be integral to the success of the Games and I can assure you that the Mayor, TfL and Games delivery partners recognise the key role that you, as a licensed London taxi driver, have to play in keeping the Capital moving.

With up to three million additional journeys expected in London on busy days, and recent research from Visa suggesting the Capital will benefit from an increase in consumer spending of £750m, we are confident there will be significant demand for taxis in the lead up to, and during, the Games.

Discussions between TfL, Games delivery partners and taxi trade representatives regarding the Games have been ongoing since September 2009 with various workshops and meetings on a wide range of topics relating to London 2012. Whilst there are many challenges ahead, we are working hard to tackle these challenges together and help drivers make the most of the opportunities that the Games will present.

Olympic Route Network (ORN) and Paralympic Route Network (PRN)

Much has already been said about the ORN and its impact on London. However the ORN and PRN are core elements of London's Host City contract with the International Olympic Committee and International Paralympic Committee; they are absolutely essential to meet the commitments made when London secured the Games in providing members of the Games Family with safe, secure, reliable transport to and from the venues.

The ORN covers 109 miles (around 1%) of London's road network. The vast majority of the network will remain open to general traffic, though around one-third will feature a dedicated Games Lane reserved for official Games vehicles and on call emergency vehicles only.

Games Lanes will be used to transport many of the 80,000 people who are essential to the success of the Games including athletes and technical officials. They will only operate on the busiest parts of the network and will generally be located on the off-side to minimise disruption. In these instances, you will still be able to pick-up

and drop-off in the nearside lane, as normal.

Games Lanes will come into operation a couple of days before the Olympic and Paralympic Games and will continue for only as long as required. During peak times there will be up to 800-1,000 buses and vehicles per hour using the dedicated lanes. No contracts have been or will be awarded to taxi or private hire companies that will enable them to drive in Games Lanes.

A very small number of roads on the ORN will be closed to traffic, except for official Games vehicles. These include Birdcage Walk and Constitution Hill, as well as some roads around the Olympic Park. Further details of road closures will be publicised over coming months, along with alternative routes to serve areas affected by these restrictions. TfL continues to work with the taxi trade and Games delivery partners to ensure areas of concern relating to the ORN are addressed where possible and we are currently investigating where taxis can have the same exemptions from "banned" turns as buses. See www.tfl.gov.uk/ORN for more details.

Games and venues and key transport hubs

There will be high demand for taxis at many Games venues, including the Olympic Park, Excel, Lord's Cricket Ground and Wembley. Key transport hubs, such as St Pancras, Paddington and Victoria, will also be particularly busy in the lead up to, during and after the Games.

Work is ongoing with Games delivery partners to finalise arrangements for taxi ranks and feeder ranks at these venues as a priority. Games delivery partners are well aware that specific marshalling arrangements at such venues will be needed and are intending to award contracts for marshals for this purpose. Any group, organisation or company wishing to tender for the marshalling work should register their interest at www.competefor.com.

Future communications and information

On going communication with drivers regarding the Games is vital and I would urge you to register your email at TPHENQUIRIES@tfl.gov.uk to receive direct updates.

Over the coming months, TfL will be working with the Games delivery partners on a range of information and initiatives to help you prepare for the Games. This will include a specific Games "info pack" detailing all you need to know about Games events, rank facilities at venues, road events, maps and plans of the Olympic and Paralympic Route Networks. We also hope to hold sessions at the venues themselves where you can see for yourself the facilities that are to be provided for taxis.

By working together, I am confident that yet again, we will show billions of people around the world what sets London and indeed, London's cabbies, apart from any other city on the planet.

Yours sincerely, John Mason Director – TFL, London Taxi & Private Hire.

LESS CHANGE IN POCKETS MORE CHANGE IN CABS



Passengers Are Driving More Taxis To Card Payments

Thousands of London's taxis are now either installed or signed up to VeriFone's card payment system. "And not before time too," according to Mark Roberts, the man responsible for championing its rapid uptake across the City. "Cards are fast squeezing cash out of Londoners' pockets. Credit card use in the UK is among the highest in the world, with an average 2.4 credit cards per person. Most drivers accept its time to change – it makes sense to offer passengers more ways to pay than just cash."

And it's not just credit and debit cards, London is set to become a 'contactless' Capital – where you simply wave a card at the acceptance device to pay. Pret A Manger already uses it and so does McDonald's, your local Tesco is probably testing it out and, by 2013, TfL hopes to use it across all of its services.

Mark points out, "All of this will have tremendous impact on spending behaviour and how much cash people carry. If you can buy a coffee by waving your card (or mobile phone in the future), why not pay for a cab? That's why we've made sure our payment system accepts contactless too."

Changing to Win

Some of the more reluctant drivers suggest that their passengers never ask to pay by card – so why do they need it? "Not all who want, ask," says Mark. "Many assume that London black cabs just don't. I'd be interested to know how many of these same 'cash-only' drivers have experienced bickers, run up parking fines waiting at cashpoints or been overlooked by a concierge."

To drivers Mark's message is clear, "Fear of change is normal. But reluctance to change won't stop it happening. Consumers will simply vote with their feet. Yes, cash only taxis will always find business but, increasingly, they'll have to work harder to find it. Card payments open the door to new fares, higher tips and longer journeys. It means everyone is a potential passenger – not just those who carry cash. Cards help you win."

Driver Feedback

This message is reinforced by those who have already taken the plunge.

James Darvill, a driver who has seen great improvement to business since signing up with VeriFone, "I'm really happy with the system. I recently took two girls from Euston Station to Birmingham and picked up my highest fare of £433.32- I took the rest of the day off!"

David Lloyd, a new driver has also had a positive experience, "When I started, I was actually missing out on fares - I definitely needed a card system. Passengers are now surprised when they see it – they think it's really good. Feedback and fares have been very positive."

Similarly, Paul Fleming has seen a dramatic boost to business, "Sitting in a taxi rank, I'm regularly asked by a concierge or rail user if I can take a credit card job. It's always usually a long run."

See more driver testimonials on youtube.com/verifoneinc or verifonetaxi.co.uk

Exploiting 2012

And the demand for card payments is likely to rise, particularly with the start of London 2012. Even with the current controversy around access during London 2012, the event will drive millions of visitors to the Capital and presents major opportunities for taxi drivers.

"Being able to accept card payments will help London's licensed taxis compete more effectively - particularly with private hire - for airport runs, picking up foreign passengers and hotel work," states Mark. "London 2012 is being positioned as the 'cashless' games, so people will be discouraged to carry cash. Without card payments, taxi drivers could easily miss out on big ticket fares. VeriFone can help stop them getting left behind, if they are prepared to change now."

With free installation, 'turn up and fit' schedules at multiple locations across London and a fistful of driver incentives, VeriFone is making change as easy as possible for London's drivers. To find out more contact taxi-uk@verifone.com or 03336 661000.

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PAT HICKS

1935-2011

It is with great sorrow that I have to report the death of Pat Hicks. He was one of the bravest (he was in a bomb disposal unit) and honest men you could wish to meet. Through the then TGWU he worked tirelessly for the working man and received a gold medal from the Union for his services. He leaves a wife (Kay) and family and will be sorely missed by all those within the Union who knew of his generosity. Pat died on the 29 September 2011 whilst watching his favourite team Spurs on TV. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him. – Chris Harrison, Unite the Union 1/300 branch.



PAT HICKS AS I KNEW HIM

By Harry Bennett

Pat was a no nonsense fighter for the cab trade who led 1-230 cab section branch of the old TGWU through its most difficult days. With the rise of the LTDA and other fringe organisations all declared enemies of trade unionism he truly believed that there was only one way forward to secure better pay and working conditions and that was unity of all within the trade.

A powerful speaker he was at his best in dismissing criticism from opponents within who believed the cab section should pursue an independent path for short term gain.

Born 76 years ago into a family of active militant trade unionists, his father

was a leader of the Dockers and stevedores. His younger brother Michael was a leader of the print workers union.

It was certain that Pat would take an active role to become elected a member of the T&G national executive committee, a huge honour for the cab trade.

I worked with Pat as chairman of the Cab Trade News editorial committee and knew of his dedication to the cause of trade unionism and determination to eradicate wars, unemployment, social injustice and racial inequality.

Pat will be sorely missed by all who knew him, above all by his wife Kay and family to whom I send my condolences.



Cab Trade News Editorial Board, was sad to learn of the sudden death of Pat Hicks, an outstanding campaigner for the Cab Trade and trade unionism, who will be missed by all who knew him. We offer our condolences to Kay and the family.

THEATRE

By TRUDI-JOY LEVY

THE KITCHEN at the National Theatre

Arnold Wesker based this play upon a restaurant in Paris, where he worked in the 1950s. The Kitchen is set in the Tivoli restaurant where 1,500 lunches are prepared every day. The stylised circular set is pristine: no food is shown being prepared, which I think is a pity. I understand that in the original 1959 Royal Court production, real food was being cooked and the smell wafted over the audience. It is beautifully choreographed; chefs are seen whisking and chopping in a dazzling ballet. But without the smell of food cooking, it is almost clinical and there is no sense of the heat about which they complain.

Wesker seems more interested in examining the relationships between the various nationalities of the employees. They represent English, Irish, German, Cypriot Russian and Italian. This is not long after the second world war and volatile Peter, the German fish chef, seems still to be at war with his colleagues. He is in love with married waitress Monique, but she has no intention of leaving her husband, although she is pregnant with Peter's baby. Every now and then the owner, Marango, enters the kitchen and the banter stops. They are all anxious to keep their jobs, but at what cost? They dream of a life beyond the repetitive days in the kitchen, but this is their reality. The huge cast (30) show great teamwork – this kitchen works like clockwork.

Christy is played by Robert Sheehan, making his stage debut. He is an engaging young man, full of blarney, but he seems to take his new celebrity in his stride, and fails to show the wonderment that this would cause. The widow Quin is played by Niamh Cusack, as a flirtatious and knowing predator. She is easy to understand, as is Gary Lydon playing Christy's father, who turns up, very much alive. Once the stories are found out to be lies, the locals turn against Christy, so he attempts, unsuccessfully, to batter his father to death with a spade. This is an allegory for our times, when we are quick to give people celebrity status, but turn against them when they disappoint us.

The talented cast play instruments and serenade us with folk songs between scene changes, which consist of revolving the set, for no discernible reason.



Pictured above are Robert Sheehan (Christy Mahon) and Ruth Negga (Pegeen). Photo courtesy of Manuel Harlan.

BROKEN GLASS at the Vaudeville Theatre

I first saw this Arthur Miller play at the National Theatre in 1994, when the performance of Henry Goodman, playing Dr Harry Hyman made a profound impression on me. In this new production the emphasis has been changed, and it is Antony Sher, playing the husband, Phillip Gellburg who gives the more showy performance.

The play is set in Brooklyn in 1938 at the same time that Kristallnacht (The Night of the Broken Glass) is happening in Germany, as the Nazis gain power. Reports of synagogues and Jewish-owned shops being smashed are appearing in the world's press, but Phillip Gellburg - proud to be the only Jew employed in his company - is largely untouched by the events happening in Europe. He is also proud that their son, Jerome, is the only Jewish captain at West Point. His wife, Sylvia (Tara Fitzgerald), conversely, is horrified. Literally paralysed by fear, she is seeing Dr Hyman (Stanley Townsend) in the hope of regaining the use of her legs. The doctor gradually falls in love with her, while her husband, not understanding her condition, is, literally, impotent to help.

I've no doubt that Antony Sher will be nominated for awards for his performance but, for me, it was far too melodramatic; I could see him acting. It's hard to understand 'hysterical paralysis', but Tara Fitzgerald maintains a convincing Brooklyn accent throughout and Stanley Townsend has a strong stage presence.

There is good support from Suzan Sylvester as Sylvia's non-comprehending sister, and Brian Protheroe as Gellburg's boss. Laura Moody plays discordant cello music throughout the scene changes, which eventually becomes tiresome. This is not vintage Miller, but it is still beautifully written: "Being a Jew is a full-time job".

THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD at the Old Vic Theatre



Karen Cogan (Nelly McLaughlin), Niamh Cusack (Widow Quin), Robert Sheehan (Christy Mahon) & Grainne Keenan (Sara Tansey). Photo courtesy of Manuel Harlan.

J. M. Synge's Irish classic was first produced in 1907 and was met with rioting and controversy when it premiered, sending shock waves across the dramatic world. By today's standards there seems little to shock. It is set in a small village on the west coast of County Mayo where nothing very much happens.

A stranger, Christy Mahon, enters the local pub and enthralls publican's daughter, Pegeen Mike, with tales of how he murdered his father, burying his body in a potato field. He instantly becomes a local celebrity and has the village girls fighting over him. I've no doubt that the actors have stayed true to the Connemara accent, but thereby lies the problem. I couldn't understand a word that Ruth Negga, playing Pegeen, said in the opening scene with her suitor, Shawn Keogh (Kevin Trainor). Either my ears became attuned to the dialect or her diction became clearer, but I gradually understood the majority of her dialogue.



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