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TAXI

www.ltda.co.uk
17th May 2022 #516

GIG ECONOMY DESPERATION AS SHARE PRICES PLUMMET



THINK TANK ATTACKS TRADE



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has 24 hour £10
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has loads of great
corporate work



no PHV for the
general public



and doesn't take
commission on
your tips!



Putting more work into Black Cabs

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ZSL | LONDON ZOO

FREE TICKETS TO ZSL LONDON ZOO FOR CABBIES!

For all those times you have taken passengers to ZSL London Zoo, ZSL wants to say a little thank you for all your hard work. For two weekends in June, ZSL is inviting the 'Voices of London', otherwise known as cabbies, concierges and tourist information staff to enjoy a visit to London Zoo, free of charge. As special guests of ZSL, from Friday 10th to Sunday 12th and Friday 17th to Sunday 19th June 2022, drivers are invited to explore London's wildest attraction, home to over 14,000 animals in leafy Regent's Park.

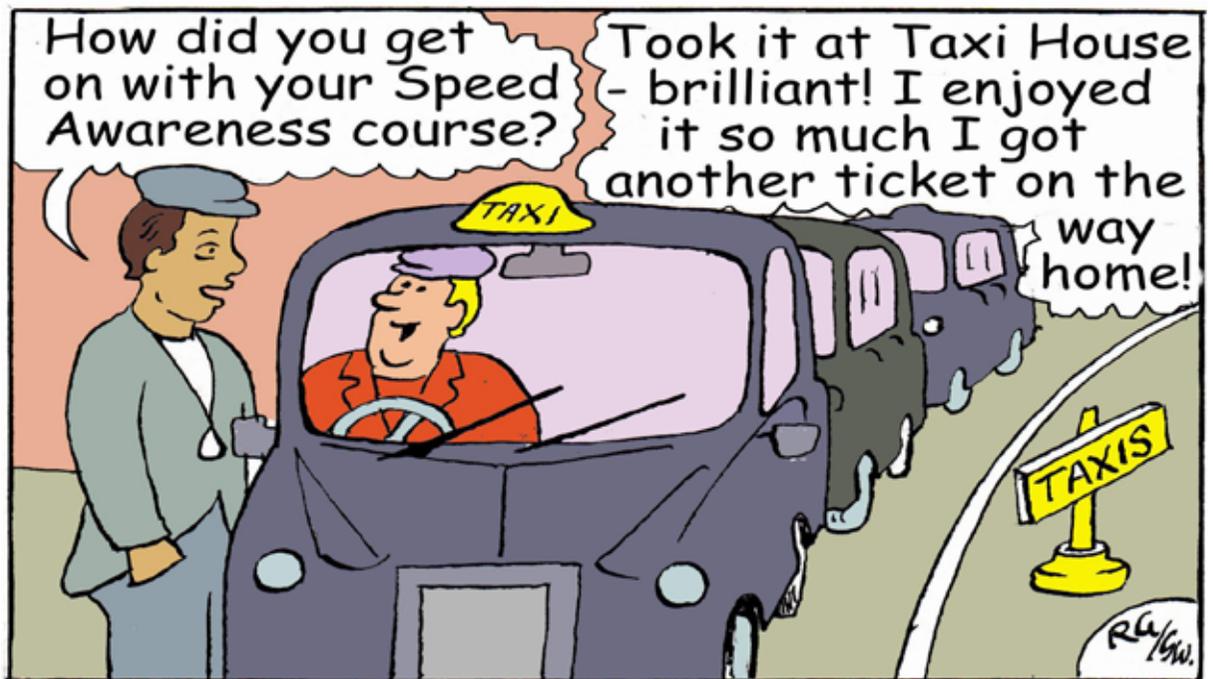
Find yourself beneath leaping Lemurs, face-to-face with endangered Sumatran Tigers or even facing your fears in Europe's only spider walkthrough. And it doesn't stop there, with a full schedule of live

animal talks and feeds throughout the day, you can be transported to Africa, India or as far as the Outback, right in the heart of the capital you know so well.

Unfortunately, as much ZSL would love to give tickets to everyone, there are only 1000 tickets available which must be booked in advance and they are expected to be taken up quickly, so head over to the website with haste to claim yours. On the day you will be required to bring your badge as proof of entitlement and free entry tickets are limited to two adults and two children per badge holder.

Booking link:

<https://www.zsl.org/ticket/the-voices-of-london>



TAXI Mail



TAXI Letters

Subject: Thank you, kind cabbie...

Dear Editor,
I wonder if you can help, please? On Saturday 7th May in the late evening, my partner came out of UCL Hospital on crutches after having a hip replacement. His lift didn't turn up, so someone flagged down a Black Taxi for him. The driver was very helpful and chatted with him on the way home.

When dropping him off, the driver rang the doorbell and helped with his bags. An hour or so later, the doorbell rang, and there was the same cab driver with my partners phone in his hand. He had driven ALL THE WAY BACK TO WESTMINSTER whereupon he found the phone and then driven all the way back to Wimbledon where we live, to return it. He wouldn't let me give him anything for his troubles.

Would it be possible to put a note in your newspaper in the hope he will see it and know how GRATEFUL we both were for how LOVELY and KIND he was.

Kind regards,
Ms Didi Ferguson

Subject: Taxi driver, Gary saves day...

Dear Editor,

On Tuesday May 10th, I found myself unable to get a taxi outside the Chelsea Physic Garden. As the minutes ticked by, I found myself in a state of considerable panic, because I had to get my sister and her daughter to the Royal Marsden Hospital for an important appointment. There were plenty of taxis, however none of them were free.

My sister had travelled down from Yorkshire for this second opinion which we were about to miss. I began to leap out and stop ordinary motorists, begging for a lift. Nobody obliged. I shouted at passing taxis "This is an emergency!" but to no avail. Just when I was on the brink of a meltdown, a taxi sped up flashing its lights. He had seen me yelling, his passenger had kindly got out and the driver had come back for us. He got us to our appointment with seconds to spare.

All I know is that his name is Gary. I didn't have time to thank him properly or make note of his taxi number or registration. Could you possibly put a message in the paper to say a massive thanks to him? His kindness saved the day and all three of us can't stop thinking about how wonderful he was, and his passenger who got out so he could pick us up.

Thanks,
Caroline Cox-Johnson

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“Think Tank Report Going Nowhere”

“The big apps don’t want any more rules, regs’ or requirements and are doing all they can to bring political pressure and gain support from politicians of all parties and locations...”

Steve's comment

A combination of Brexit, the pandemic, worker’s rights, the cost of a new electric PH car, charging problems, congestion and ULEZ charges have all massively impacted on our competitors and their prices are now equal to, and sometimes, above that of our metered fare.

Millennial comprehension

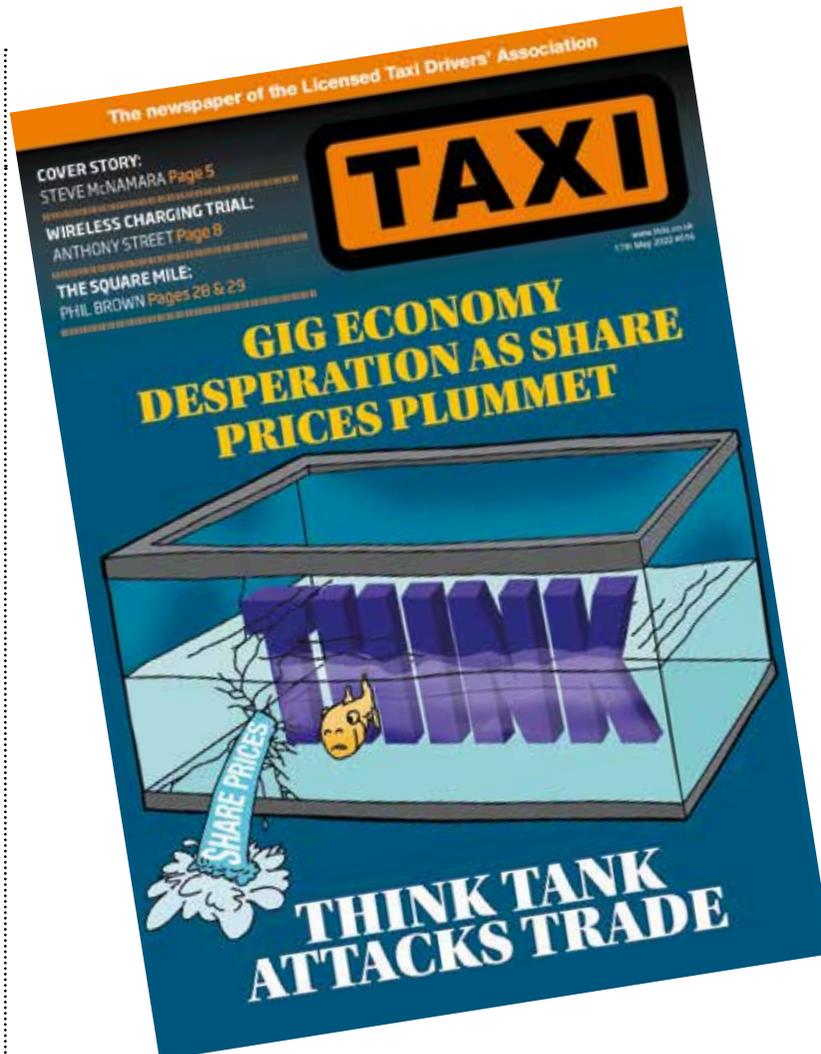
A quick glance at social media will show that the army of Uber supporters who used to wax lyrical about the ‘wonderful service’ and ‘convenience’ are now all screaming about the unavailability and high prices! The irony is that it’s these same people who used to tell the world that their choice of transport was not based on price, but now Ubers prices have risen they are all screaming! To be fair, many of them are millennials who have only ever known a time when a Prius was waiting to take them home at all hours for virtually no money, and they are struggling to comprehend why it’s changed.

Our successes

None of this is likely to change unless Uber, Bolt and the others can recruit (and get licensed), tens of thousands of new drivers prepared to work long hours for low pay. Uber recognise that our successes in tightening up the licensing process for PH drivers with increased regulatory standards such as English language requirements, a topographical test, HMRC registration, a requirement to buy electric cars (which many PH drivers cannot home charge). ULEZ and the congestion charges for those who still run older PHVs, is also a major problem. In short, it’s no longer cheap and easy to become a private hire driver!

Further PH requirements

It could get even worse for them. As a result of the



Baroness Vere, Under Secretary of State for Transport

recommendations in the Taxi Task and Finish Group report, the government are currently consulting on Best Practice Guidance for licensing authorities around the UK. This will almost certainly mean further requirements around the country with stuff like enhanced driving tests and mandatory CCTV on the agenda. This was brought to the fore when in the house of Lords

debate on the Queens Speech, Baroness Vere, Under Secretary of State for Transport, said:

“Technology has also led to changes in how the taxi and private hire vehicle industry works—for example, through booking apps available on mobile phones. We will modernise the law to ensure that the same minimum standards are met by drivers across England to gain or retain a taxi or private hire vehicle licence, and we will enhance licensing authorities’ existing compliance and enforcement powers. These changes will create a level playing field and make journeys safer for all passengers.”

Think tank...

It goes without saying that the last thing any of the big apps want is any more rules, regs’ or requirements and are doing all they can to bring political pressure and gain support from politicians of all parties and locations. Just as Ubers share price bottomed out

last week, and probably to detract from the news, the Adam Smith Institute (ASI), a neo liberal free market think tank, published a report arguing for less regulation. Rather cleverly, their press releases referenced ‘scrapping the Knowledge’ which secured them some great media coverage. I then spent the day doing interviews, countering the ASI’s calls for a race to the bottom and championing the KOL, our safety record, green credentials, and professionalism. The report is going nowhere but it is indicative that Uber are looking at licensing rules nationally, possibly as a way of influencing decisions in London.

APPG expansion

To ensure we stay abreast of what is happening politically around the country, we plan to expand membership of our All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) to include representatives from companies around the country, and also invite their representative MPs to participate. We have also joined the National Institute of Licensing, which represents licensing officers from around the country. This will give us a wider overview and make us a more national and representative group in both houses of Parliament. I will keep you updated.

Minicab collaborations

In London, the minicab firms that survived the Uber onslaught are now fighting back by collaborating with each other using shared dispatch platforms, and its working – they are getting drivers back and keeping them.

Ubers response to this trend in the rest of the country has been the launch of ‘Uber local’ where Uber provide the branded booking and payment platform and allocate jobs to local minicab firms using their Autocab platform. This is now running at 40 locations, mainly across the north, with Durham, Corby, Stoke on Trent and Tyneside being the most recent additions.

In London all the bigger companies are denying having had an approach from Uber, yet ironically, they are all concerned that their competitors have, only time will tell!

LTDA



A Real Renaissance

“One might think that the poisonous few in our trade would be happy and far too busy to spread discord but sadly that does not appear to be the case.”

Top rank

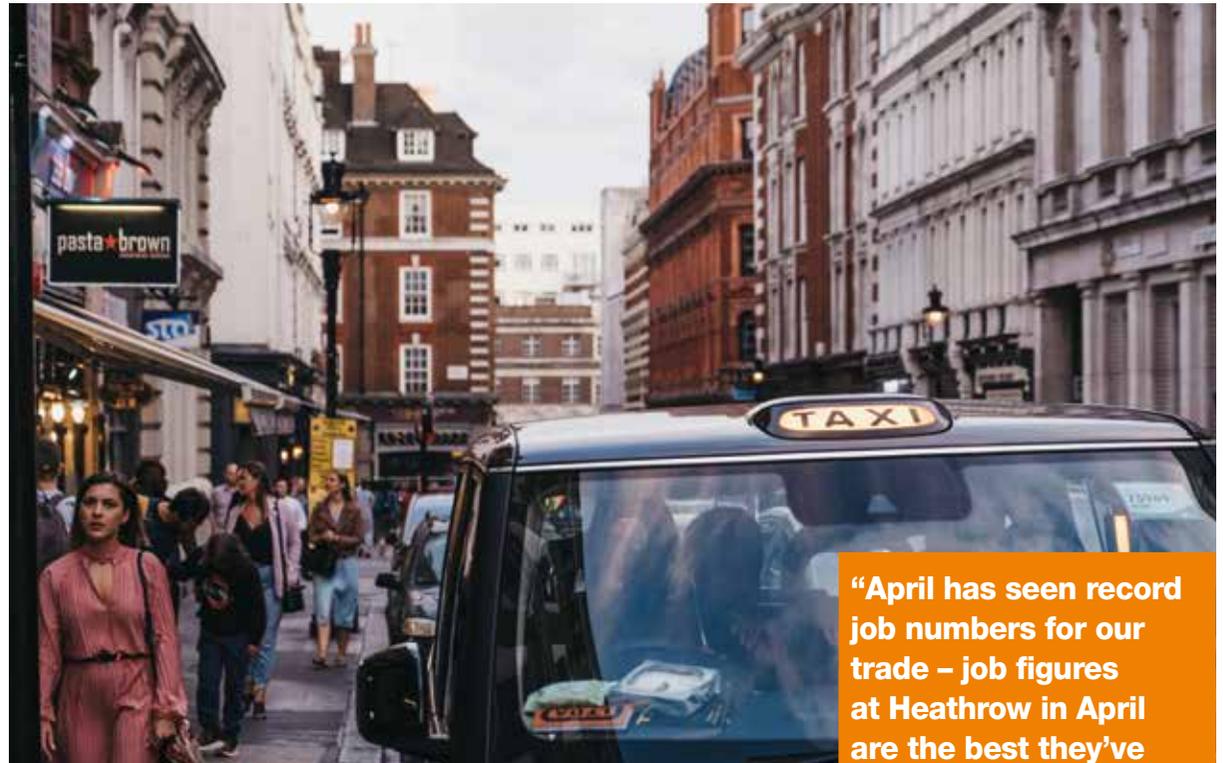
April has seen record job numbers for our trade – job figures at Heathrow in April are the best they’ve been over the past 15 years and our mainline station surveys are also showing record numbers of cab fares. It’s been a very healthy upturn in work levels for us. In fact, even greater than the last good increase we saw when credit cards were mandated. Whilst we have not done a survey on street hails for quite some time, I don’t think there will be many drivers who were out pre-2015 that wouldn’t agree the hand being raised in the street is also just like ‘the good old days.’

Hateful, bitter, idiots.

The above said, is exactly why it becomes even more frustrating that within our trade we still have the never-ending infighting that plagues everything we do. I had hoped that one of the positives that would come from the pandemic and the devastation that came from it, was that we would see an end to that small group of idiots who think that what this trade really needs is to sling a field-full of mud at their fellow drivers in the most public of arenas. Sadly, that has not happened and worse still, they seem to have returned (not with a new insight of the hell that many have gone through or a sense of what can be done to grow, thrive and rebuild) but rather with a hateful bitterness towards their colleagues and peers.

Multiple accounts – zero accountability

The damage done by this small minority is costing us all dearly, and sadly they know that, but for some reason they just don’t care and the rest of us will continue to suffer the consequences of their selfish actions. Some, in fact the vast majority of drivers do so in complete silence, some are brave and fight back but are then swiftly rallied upon by the group or more probably by multiple accounts held by the same pathetic individuals. To be clear there is nothing helpful, funny or honourable about washing our dirty laundry in public, even more so when it’s not even genuine laundry.



“April has seen record job numbers for our trade – job figures at Heathrow in April are the best they’ve been over the past 15 years and our mainline station surveys are also showing record numbers of cab fares.”

A real renaissance

I didn’t want to write the previous two paragraphs. I’m likely sure you didn’t want to read them, but I do know from talking to hundreds of drivers they find it truly frustrating as well. As I eluded to at the beginning of this article, we are currently enjoying a real renaissance in the trade with work levels that many may never have seen – levels I can only recall when I first got out in the mid and late 90’s. One might think that the poisonous few in our trade would be happy and far too busy to spread discord but sadly that does not appear to be the case.

Think tanks & oxymorons

This upturn in our fortunes has also awoken the haters from outside the trade and the silly season of attacks on us from external forces has truly begun in earnest. This, rather than being a wholly negative situation, rather highlights just how concerned certain competitors are in our good fortune and the real concerns they have with their own.

First, we saw the most pathetic and yet strangely familiar “we need to remove all regulations in the taxi and private hire market so we can have a truly free market” or to put it in genuine terms “I want a cheap ride and bugger the fact its driven

by slave labour.” I always thought these ‘think tank’ (now that’s an oxymoron) reports were written by sixth formers on work experience and then I saw the author of the latest load of tripe and ‘blow me down’ if he didn’t look like the said sixth former – albeit one from a very posh school.

We are now also seeing the usual stories: “*sat nav means the Knowledge is redundant, cabbies refuse credit cards and won’t go south of the river...*” (insert any other stereotypical nonsense here), and that’s why we need the fantastic tax-dodging ride-hailing services. Yawn, yawn – don’t rise to the bait, just have a chuckle safe in ‘the Knowledge’ (pun intended) it’s just desperate measures deployed by desperate people.

Road network

Local election results in Westminster and Wandsworth could see even more restrictions to the road network we use. You can bet your bottom dollar the ‘safe climate streets’ campaign or whatever new branding they have this week (that fits the new lie taking them forward since the last lie was exposed), will be using the result to shout that it’s a clear show of support for what they are trying to do. Of course, we all know it was for a whole host of reasons that Labour did well in London and

the rapid and reckless churning out of LTN’s and cycle lanes was probably not one of those reasons. If the ‘trade savers’ want to attack anything then attack this, but obviously do it with facts and from high ground and don’t resort to threats, insults or gutter talk.

Returning drivers

I have spoken with a lot of drivers who are now returning to the trade having taken up previous or new jobs to help pay the bills throughout the pandemic, all are very nervous about coping with the extensive changes and so I’ve passed on the words of those who have returned before them: “Don’t worry, you’ll get used to the changes and your knowledge will kick in quicker than you think.” One big word of caution I would give you all is please be very careful in looking out for and observing the new 20mph zones as fines and points are being handed out for going just 24mph even if it is at 2am without a single soul in sight. ■ LTDA

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Wireless & Airport Charging

“Could wireless charging be the solution or at least part of the solution to the charging infrastructure barrier our trade is facing?”



or at least part of the solution to the charging infrastructure barrier our trade is facing?

Wireless charging trial

Last year, wireless charging pads were installed in a Nottingham City Council depot so as taxis fitted with wireless charging equipment could be tested. This was stage one of a private pilot trial. The project is now moving on to stage two of the process – the public trial. Wireless charging pads are now going to be installed on the rank adjacent to Nottingham train station and nine taxis are being fitted with wireless charging equipment. A mix of Dynamo and LEVC TXE taxis will be used, and these will be in operation in Nottingham from mid-August 2022, which is the target date for stage two of the trial being fully operational.

I’m particularly interested in this project as the approach has been built upon a successful feasibility study and has addressed both the technology and commercial challenges which were identified. I will be keeping a close eye on proceedings and how the ‘Wireless Charging of Electric Taxis’ (better known as the WICET project), fairs. Afterall, the main purpose of the WICET project is to demonstrate the commercial and technical viability of deploying wireless charging for electric Hackney Carriages in medium and large cities... I’ll keep you updated. ■ LTDA

Streets ahead

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We are receiving many calls regarding some changes to our trade and some that are coming on trial, and I thought the information would be helpful to share with you.

Charging infrastructure

We all know that drivers are switching to purchase an LEVC vehicle, but a question I get asked frequently is about charging points and drivers worrying that “the infrastructure is just simply

not there...” and more needs to be done in this regard to encourage and support drivers into making the transition. Having the tool to do the job (a TXE) and not being able to take advantage of the savings that you could be making by using on street charging points because the charging infrastructure is either not there, not working or already in use (often by a PHV), is highly frustrating.

We need more help from the Mayor of London financially. We require grants to facilitate having home charger units fitted and many more on-street taxi charging points. There are over five thousand LEVC taxis currently on the streets. If you

add the thousands more drivers coming off the road due to the twelve-year age limit and subsequently returning to the road, having purchased new electric cabs, can you imagine what the situation may look like? In attempting to find a charging point, more drivers will likely just give up and run the cab on petrol – very much defeating the many reasons for opting to purchase the cab in the first place. For the past year or so in Nottingham, they’ve been experimenting and trialling wireless charging. They currently have a couple of cabs with this capability, but this will very soon be increased to nine. Could wireless charging be the solution

Airport charges

Most of you will be aware of the drop off charges that have been introduced at Heathrow airport but for those drivers that are not, please find below, details of the charges and how to pay. We have noticed an increase in drivers getting fines for dropping off at other airports – you may be lucky to get away with not getting a PCN but why take a chance?

Note: £5.20 Drop Off Charge for Heathrow must be applied at the start of the journey

I would recommend you set up an Autopay account, similar to the Dartford Tunnel where you will be charged automatically every time you use it. You can review it, get a trip history and its simple, hassle free and takes two minutes to set up. There is a guide you can request from info@ltda.co.uk if you need any help. More information can be found at: www.heathrow.com/transport-and-directions/terminal-drop-off-charge

Airport	Drop off	Pick up	Notes
Heathrow	£5.20	£0	From 30 April 2022
Gatwick	£5	£5	For first 10 mins, £1 for each additional minute up to 20 Maximum charge of £25 and a length of stay 30 mins FREE TP PICK UP IN LONG STAY
Luton	£5	£5	1-hour free parking in the Long Stay Car Park and 15 minutes free in the Mid Stay
Stanstead	£7	£7	Up to 15 minutes. Over 15 minutes £25
City	£3.80	£3.80	On-Site parking 0 – 10 mins: £3.80; 10 – 20 mins: £8.50; 20 – 30 mins £13.00; 30 mins – 1 hour: £16.00

ComCab

London

COMCAB LONDON FAMILY

ComCab London talks about who they are, and drivers have provided some testimonials. Read below to find out more:

Who are ComCab London Limited?

ComCab London is the last original radio taxi company still in operation, established in 1974 and has one of the largest fleets of black taxis in London.

Offering unrivalled coverage and flexibility to London’s business community and valued private clients within the city and surrounding areas.

ComCab London is incredibly proud of its association with London Taxicard, a relationship which has spanned 25 years. The scheme operates within all of the London boroughs and provides Taxicard members reliable, professional and trustworthy transport across London and the suburban areas.



What makes ComCab London different?

ComCab London are not just another faceless app on your phone, we have a large team of experienced staff to support drivers and customers. ComCab London doesn’t do gimmicks; we like to keep things straightforward and understandable for the drivers.

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Don’t take our word for it. Listen to what ComCab London drivers have had to say:

Introducing Lyndsey!

“I’m Lyndsey, I have been part of the ComCab team for almost 5 years and as a working mum, I enjoy the flexibility it offers and being able to plan my day around my family. I believe I make a difference to our Taxicard account passengers who are reliant on our accessible taxis and I enjoy the variety of customers who book with ComCab.”



Meet Stuart!

“My name is Stuart and I have been a taxi driver for 43 years. I have been on other circuits throughout the years and recently joined ComCab London.

I would recommend anyone that wants to earn extra to join ComCab, in my experience, they are the most friendly and helpful and will do anything they can to help. ”



Meet Anthony!

My name is Anthony, I received my green badge on the 7th of July 1987. I joined ComCab a year later in October 1988. There’s never been a day when I haven’t wanted to go to work, my working association with ComCab makes every day a good day!!!



Joining ComCab London

It is super easy to join ComCab London. Once you have registered that you would like to join, you will be sent an application form. Once you have sent it back, you will be signed up by the next working day! You can start maximising your earnings in no time.

Already on the ComCab London Circuit and interested in referring a friend?

ComCab London have some great incentives available if you refer a friend to join! You can receive £50 if you recommend a friend to ComCab London and they complete 100 trips.

This offer is also available to drivers who are referred to join the ComCab London App with a referral bonus of £50.

SCAN ME TO APPLY NOW



Missed our last Episode? ComCab London Family - Episode Two





The Hotel Café Royal

“In short, here we have a hotel with a TfL approved rank outside it, sticking two fingers up at us...”

On point

Just shy of five years ago, we received numerous complaints from members stating that dodgy doormen at the Café Royal Hotel had been ordering mini cabs for their clients when reports suggested their clients had asked them for a taxi. I and my colleague Anthony Street approached the management at the Café Royal Hotel to make the senior hotel staff aware of the situation...

Demonstration

A meeting was granted by the hotel and after Anthony and I turning up at the agreed time, we were shown into a big plush office of the hotel manager and offered coffee and croissants. We politely refused both. He came across as absolutely horrified at our accusations and bleated on about how important The London Taxi trade was to the hotel and how he would personally investigate the behaviour of his concierges and doormen. He did insist that if a hotel guest asked for a taxi, then they must be given one. In that meeting Anthony did inform him that if the situation did not change and we continued to receive complaints from our members, we would arrange for the LTDA to demonstrate outside the hotel for a week. We also informed the hotel management that any demonstration would be publicised in TAXI newspaper and would be seen by my many thousands of cabbies. This attempt by us did make a difference for a couple of weeks but after that, the complaints from cabbies started to come again.

“One thing is for sure, we’ve tried the nice way and the hard way and nothings worked so far...”



Not impressed

So, in early July of 2017 and after some particularly nasty comments by one of the doormen to a female cabbie, the LTDA held a week-long demonstration in Air Street and Regent Street with placards – telling every passer-by and anyone driving past exactly what sort of establishment the Hotel Café Royal was. The relationship between the hotel and the LTDA broke down as a result. To say that the hotel was not impressed with our demonstration and the wording on our placards is an understatement. Who knows whether the same management or doormen are still in place at the hotel, but what is for sure is that those in place are still at it. The twitter trade savers will probably claim that if they’d be in place, they would have stopped it all a long time ago, but we all know the game with bent hotels. They all claim, ‘oh we didn’t know’ and ‘we’ll put a stop to it’ – but they don’t.

Boycott

Realistically, the only way to stop this is for the trade to stop picking up from the hotel and to make people that have hired you to take them there, aware of the hotel’s practices. I am not for one minute asking anyone to refuse a hiring there because it could lead to a complaint. I am always very wary of asking for cabbie support

“To say that the hotel was not impressed with our demonstration and the wording on our placards is an understatement.”

in boycotts of hotels – especially with what the trade has had to face over the last few years but do feel that at the present time the Café Royal deserves a very large

blank from the trade. In short, here we have a hotel with a TfL approved rank outside it, sticking two fingers up at us and I don’t think there’s every been a better time to retaliate against this hotel because there is a decent chance you may pick up quickly after driving past a waving doorman. One thing is for sure, we’ve tried the nice way and the hard way and nothings worked so far. As I always say, I refuse to tell cabbies how to go about their business, I can only put the facts out there.

Extra charges on app-jobs

I’ve taken several calls lately from members enquiring if they can add £2 extras when accepting a job from an app company. I think this goes back to the days when some of us were on radio circuits. I myself was on *Dial a Cab* and when someone called them ordering a cab and they wanted to pay for the cab in cash (remember that), it meant that because the person ordering did not have an account with *Dial a Cab*, they did not get a booking fee. So, to get some income from the booking *Dial a Cab* charged the driver £2 per cash job and took it from the credit work for that week. This was then passed on to the customer by the cabbie with him or her adding £2 on the extras. We have enquired about the legality of this with TfL who came back advising drivers to look in the terms and conditions of whichever app they use. ■ LTDA

ULEZ zones

Cabbies are having PCNs issued to them when taking jobs to certain cities around the country and unwittingly entering a ULEZ zone. My colleague Suzanne Sullivan highlighted this issue in more detail on page 10 of edition #512 page back on the 22nd March. If you drive a diesel cab, you need to be aware of these restrictions. Our problem is that whilst we are exempt in London, we are unfortunately not exempt in the following cities listed:

- Birmingham
- Bradford
- Bristol
- Greater Manchester
- Portsmouth



It really takes the edge off the job when you see most of it removed by way of a PCN. One thing is for sure, the clean air brigade will not be stopping here, and many other cities have made it known that they will set up ULEZ zones towards the end of the year. The one I’m seeing the most tickets for, is Portsmouth. So, if you are lucky enough to get a roader and you’re concerned, just give me a bell on the way there and I will look it up for you.

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Beep-beep. Transaction authorised!

Unless you're Wile E. Coyote, beep beeps are a very welcome sound...

Dave Cannell,
Working green badge driver, taxi
trade ambassador and BCHT Navigator

The beep-beep of a card payment authorisation is music to the ears of many of us keen to make up for all that lost business in 2021. Remember when workers weren't working, tourists weren't touring and shoppers weren't shopping? Expensive new cabs need beep-beeps as much as they need rapid charging points.

Thankfully, many drivers have been much busier over the past few months despite the best efforts of Covid. Business has definitely picked up now so many people are vaccinated and get regular tests, so the welcome beep-beep of card transactions can now be heard ringing out once again.

12



Those beep-beeps haven't always signalled good news though. Some transactions can't be completed if your payment terminal lets you down and there's no back-up. I've also heard of drivers thinking they've got a great deal with a decent transaction rate, only to find that hidden extras, like 'per transaction' charges and machine rental, push the cost up unexpectedly - like an Uber fare!

The card payments merry-go-round

I go back far enough to remember carbon paper receipts. That was before microchips and PIN numbers arrived. Since then things have moved on of course, but service has been unreliable and value from many payment system providers had generally been a heap of 'beep-beep' for too long. Many drivers jumped on the card payments' merry-go-round in time for London 2012, only to find

that the machines available back then could be more trouble than they were worth. That was a decade ago now, so what's changed?

I signed up with Verifone (now known as Curb) years ago and have been with them ever since. Over the years their systems have been good and Curb rates have certainly been competitive. I know some Curb drivers had problems in 2018 when they upgraded to the new TXN system although I must admit that in my case everything has worked like a dream.

I checked with Mary, who runs the Curb Driver Services Team, and asked her what issues she had to deal with. She explained "There were some instances of old hardware failure made worse by the aging 2G network which meant that coverage was patchy. Now 4G is well established and has proved to be a much more reliable network. Having spoken to those affected at the time, we realised that a back-up system was needed to protect drivers in the future."

Lessons learned

Curb learned from that experience, and it shows. I've tried out the new CurbLite system and it's a triumph. Advanced technology means less parts, and that makes it much smarter and more reliable. It provides 100% coverage and even includes a unique new back-up solution which gives added reliability and reassurance. It's been really well received by drivers already, and is available now for installation at the smart new Curb Operations Centre in W3.

Transaction fees compare very favourably

CurbLite is incredibly easy to use – if you can use a smartphone, you'll have no problem with it. It's even easier than my Curb TXN system which I loved. The transaction fees compare favourably to anything else on the market too, and there are no nasty hidden costs.

Great value

All the popular UK and European EEA debit and credit cards are processed on CurbLite at just 1.7%. That accounts for almost every card



The CurbLite payment solution fixes neatly beside the door to satisfy TfL regulations

CurbLite is incredibly easy to use – if you can use a smartphone, you'll have no problem with it.

you're ever likely to encounter – around 96% to be precise.

After the year we've had, everyone will be reassessing their outgoings so CurbLite is bound to be in demand. If you're in the market for a new payment system or aren't happy with the system you've got in the cab, you'd be well advised to reserve your CurbLite now.

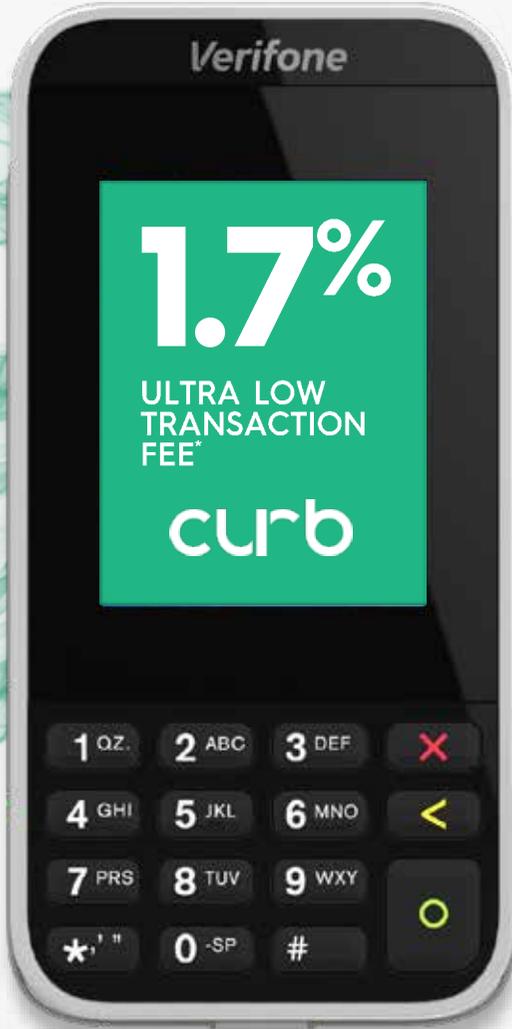
All things considered, CurbLite is beep-beep great. I'm sold on it and am getting mine installed at the Curb Operations Centre this week. Maybe I'll see you there?



Dave's gleaming cab at the Curb Operations Centre

For more information about the CurbLite card payment system or to reserve your device, call Curb on 0333 666 1000 or visit gocurb.co.uk.

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The Bow Cinema Murder



Learn Rob's tales of notorious London crime to increase your tips!

Rob's history tips

Over the years, London has witnessed some truly shocking crimes. Here's the story of one of them, the case of the Bow Cinema Murder... In the age of the modern multiplex, it's easy to forget just how luxurious cinemas once were. Grand picture palaces offered comfort, warmth, and lavish decor which, for many people, were a welcome escape from the harsh realities of everyday life.

Upper circle balcony horror...

One such place was the *Eastern Palace Cinema* (later known as the *Regal*) which was located on Bow Road, opposite Bow Church. In the early 1930s the Eastern Palace was managed by 40-year-old Dudley Hoard – a veteran of WWI – along with his wife, Maisie, and the pair lived in a flat above the cinema. Early on the 7th of August 1934, the cleaning ladies arrived at the Eastern Palace for their shift but, unusually, they found the premises were still locked. Another staff member who happened to be a key-holder soon turned up, and once the group were in, they were met with a horrific sight: Dudley, who'd clearly been beaten about the head, lay unconscious on the upper circle's balcony.

Trail of blood

From his body, a trail of blood led all the way to the apartment, where Maisie was discovered in a similar state. Still alive, the couple were rushed to St Andrew's Hospital (which was on Devons Road), but sadly Dudley died soon after. Fortunately, Maisie managed to regain consciousness and was soon able to describe their attacker, saying he'd been a young man, with a pale complexion, long dark hair, and that he'd been wearing a dark suit.

A bloodied hatchet and a taxi?

Back at the cinema, detectives discovered a coat in the bedroom which didn't belong to the Hoards; it had clearly been pulled off during a struggle. £100 (approximately £7,600 in today's money) and been stolen from the



"He checked into the Metropolitan Hotel and signed his name as 'J.F Smith' of 138 London Road, Luton... Hertfordshire."

Luton, Herts?

Here, he checked into the *Metropolitan Hotel* and signed his name as 'J.F Smith' of 138 London Road, Luton... Hertfordshire. This made the manager suspicious – Luton is in Bedfordshire – why would a fellow who claimed to live there make such a mistake? The slip-up led to the police being called, and Johnny Stockwell was arrested. On the car journey back to London, he told the two accompanying Met officers what had happened. After finding the hatchet in a yard close to his home, he'd hidden it in his coat and taken a bus to the cinema. Arriving after it was closed, he rang the apartment bell and was greeted by Dudley Hoard, who he told "I have left a ten-bob note in the hall – can I come in and look for it?" Being an employee, Stockwell was allowed in and as soon as he was, he lashed out with the axe, striking both Dudley and Maisie around the head. News travelled fast, and by the time Stockwell arrived at Bow Road police station, a large crowd had gathered to vent their anger.

Old Bailey

After being held at Brixton prison – where tests ascertained that he was sane, Stockwell appeared at the Old Bailey on the 23rd October 1934. Despite an initial plea of 'not guilty', his solicitor advised him that was farcical, and so he agreed to switch to guilty. The only mitigating circumstances Stockwell had to offer was that he'd had a rough childhood; his father had been killed at Gallipoli in WWI, and his mother died when he was 11. This didn't help, and despite pleas for mercy due to his young age, Johnny Stockwell was sentenced to death, going to the gallows at Pentonville on the 14th November 1934. TAXI

safe, and the manner in which the blood was spattered suggested that Dudley – who was known to be a tough man – had put up a ferocious fight, possibly pushing the attacker off the balcony before collapsing from his injuries. The team believed the intruder then exited via the rear of the building – where the murder weapon; a bloodied hatchet was discovered – at around 4.30am, and possibly flagged down a taxi.

Johnny Stockwell

Dudley was buried in Croydon cemetery, and as Maisie recovered further, it became clear the suspect was known to her. She believed it to be Johnny Stockwell, an attendant they'd employed at the cinema. Stockwell, who was just 19 years old, was indeed the culprit and in the wake of his barbaric assault he'd stashed £90 of his ill-gotten gains in a locker at Aldgate East station before fleeing to Lowestoft, where he sought lodgings at a B&B. Because Stockwell looked so young and wasn't shy about the wad of cash he carried, the landlady, Alice Tripp was immediately cautious of

her new guest. When she spotted a photograph of him in the press on the 9th August, naturally, she contacted police. However, that very same day, a letter arrived at Lowestoft police station which had been written by Stockwell...

Outwitted

In it, he confessed to the attack and apologised for killing Dudley Hoard, adding that "by the time you get this letter I shall be dead as I am going to drown myself... I do not get any sleep as a picture haunts my brain and I cannot face the ordeal of a trial." This hint at suicide however was merely a half-baked ploy by Stockwell to fake his own death. Earlier that morning he'd left some of his clothes neatly piled on Lowestoft beach. These were quickly spotted by a passer-by who informed police.

Thanks to the postmark on the letter he'd sent to Lowestoft police station, it was clear Stockwell had posted the note after his garments had been handed in. Dafter still, Stockwell told his B&B landlady exactly where he was heading next... Great Yarmouth!



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The Great Credit Card Anomaly



In the early 90s, our Man in Black had shoulder length hair, smoked 20 Marlborough a day and was three stone lighter – he was also a ‘hammy’ Yellow badge driver...

A man in black

Parma Ham is one of the finest hams in the world. This dry-cured culinary beauty is characterised by its deep pink colour and sliver of fat running down one side. The meat is rather silky, and the flavour is deliciously savoury – and it is also a pretty useful as a form of currency, especially when paying for a taxi journey... and no, I'm not telling you porkies.

The currency of ham

In the early 90s, when I had shoulder length hair, smoked 20 Marlborough a day and was three stone lighter, I was a Yellow badge driver servicing the East London / Essex Border. I predominantly worked City Airport, Stratford, Plaistow, Barking, Ilford and Gants Hill (and the Whipps Cross tea stall). One evening, I was flagged down by a chap near Ilford's pioneer market, this was a bit of a Red letter day for me, because as many Yellow Badge drivers may testify, being flagged down in the suburbs is as rare as San Marino scoring an international goal (cue the Stuart Pearce back-pass jokes). I was asked to go to an address in Rainham, obviously due to the passage of time I cannot remember the conversation in too much detail – although I do remember that he was a butcher and he had a shop near the Pioneer market.

Upon reaching our destination, my customer had discovered that he had no money in his wallet, he had apparently left his cash in the till at the shop – all he had on his person was an Access credit card. I explained that I was unable to take a card as I had no card facility. I remember

him offering to go back to the shop so that he could pick up some cash. I told him not to worry, I would pop into the shop during the week to pick up my fare. My customer agreed to this on the proviso that I accepted some sort of payment, and without further ado he ‘plonked’ this enormous lump into my hands. Now this brown paper covered lump wasn't light, it must have weighed at least two kilos. I peered inside the bag and then looked up at the chap and said: “Miss Piggy”. He replied by saying “Parma ham”. He then asked me to accept the ham and enjoy it. Now I have to tell you that this ham was ruddy delicious – nowadays the cost of that amount of meat would have exceeded the fare by a considerable distance.

The golden age of steam

I never did go back for the fare – what I did do though was enquire into taking up a credit card facility. A few weeks later I was the proud owner of a steam-powered credit-card roller-machine along with a book of carbonised credit-card slips. I also had a mobile phone fitted inside my taxi to help me clear credit card jobs. A whole new income stream had been opened up to me – or so I thought. In reality, maybe one in 300 jobs were paid for via my shiny new



credit card facility. Despite credit cards being around in the UK since 1966, they still weren't in common usage in the very early 90s. Nowadays, almost every job seems to be paid for via a credit or debit card – and as every taxi driver is aware, having a credit card facility in the rear of the taxi is part of a cabs conditions of fitness – but there are anomalies attached to this.

Rotten tomatoes

One of the most contentious aspects of any debate surrounding the use of credit card facilities is whether you can be compelled to take a card. The short answer is yes. According to the London Cab Order which had been signed off by Leon Daniels (put the rotten tomatoes away – he's long gone) on 31 March 2016, “Every cab-driver's licence shall be granted subject to a condition that, if so requested by a passenger,

the licensee shall accept payment by credit card or debit card using a payment device approved by Transport for London.”

For many taxi drivers, this shouldn't be an issue, especially given the current climate. Cash is no longer king, and the taxi industry is most certainly not the proverbial Luddite. Love them or loathe them, cards are here to stay. However, there is an issue surrounding this... what happens if your credit card machine fails through no fault of your own? Technically you are supposed to withdraw the taxi from service however,

any reasonable, right-minded person would describe that as completely nonsensical.

When caught in a situation, TfL advise drivers to take their customer to the nearest cash machine. However, it could be argued that this is an unreasonable request because the whole purpose of credit and debit card acceptance is customer convenience. If a customer doesn't have cash available via their bank account and is reliant on a credit card with no cash facilities, what are they supposed to do? Potentially the customer could face a legal action and the driver may not get paid. Cue the back-up credit card machine. Now this is a bit of an issue for both the driver and Transport for London, because if you carry a back-up credit card machine which is not approved by TfL, you could be in breach of your conditions to hold a licence. Problems begin to surface because a hand-held machine would never be approved, it would neither be linked to the meter, nor rear-fitted.

Now, here is another anomaly – given the metered fare is the maximum that you can charge, in theory you could actually charge the customer nothing in relation to the meter if you so desired. From what I can make out, this is neither illegal nor in breach of any licensing conditions – in turn, a customer could then offer to make a donation in any given format. This donation could range from two kilos of Parma Ham or several packets of Spangles.

The Logical Song

The logical answer (oh crikey, *The Logical Song* by Supertramp has just popped into my head) would be for TfL to continue to require taxi drivers to carry a working credit card facility in the rear of the cab as a matter of course – but also approve a number of handheld systems which the drivers can then use in conjunction with their main system, should that system fail. This then removes the legal anomaly which has plagued the industry since the current cab order came into force. Anyway, I'm off, I've just done a Manor House Station to Gibson Square and been weighed off with a cracking piece of Haddock that needs frying. ■ TAXI

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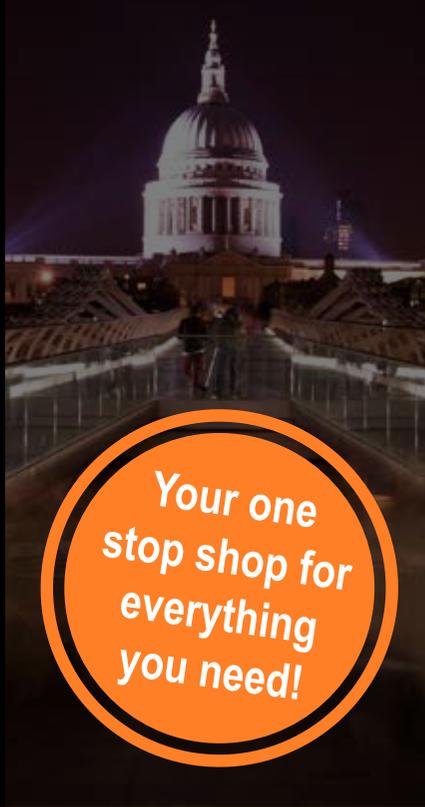
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An American Werewolf in London – A Unique History

"*Puts you in mind of the days of the old demon barber of Fleet Street, don't it?*" As soon as you hear actor, Alan Ford (playing a taxi driver) uttering those words, it can only mean one thing – you are watching *An American Werewolf in London*. This iconic film has many accolades attached to its production. It was the first film to win an Academy Award for Best Makeup, it also won a Saturn award for best horror film – but did you know that this cult classic was the first film to be allowed to shoot in Piccadilly Circus for 15 years?

For reasons unknown, no film had been allowed to be shot at the world-famous landmark since the 1966 filming of *Bedazzled*, starring Peter Cooke, Dudley Moore and Raquel Welch, which was released in 1967. To facilitate filming in the area, director John Landis, who also worked on *Animal House* and *Kentucky Fried Movie*, invited 300 members of the Metropolitan Police to a screening of his new film *The Blues Brothers*. In return, the police granted the production a two-night filming permit between the hours of 1am and 4am. Incredibly, traffic was halted only three times for a mere two-minutes each time. This was to facilitate the filming of a stunt involving the crashing of a taxi and the tipping of a double-decker bus. If you look closely within that segment of the film you will also see John Altman – a.k.a *Nasty Nick Cotton* from *Eastenders*, in only his third film, playing a police officer.

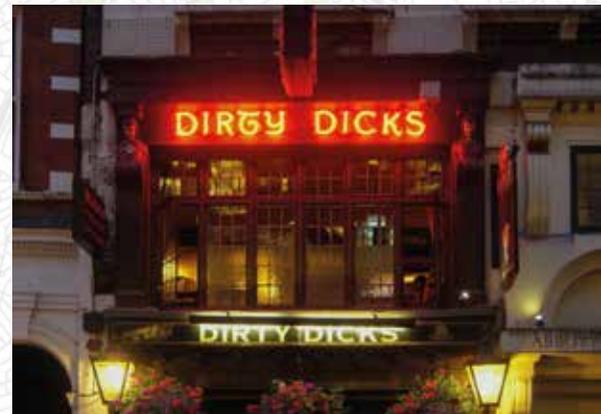
Of course, filming wasn't just confined to Piccadilly Circus, other locations included Putney High Street, Redcliffe Square, Tower Bridge, Tottenham Court Road and London Zoo, to name but a few. Nowadays filming in and around Piccadilly Circus is not uncommon, with *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*, *Nil by Mouth* and *28 Days Later* being just three that have used the area to powerful effect.

The Life and Times of Dirty Dick

Just about every taxi driver knows that Dirty Dick's public house resides in Bishopsgate, opposite Liverpool Street Station – but did you know that Dirty Dick was in fact a real person?

Nathaniel Bentley was born in 1735, contrary to his latter sobriquet, Bentley was originally known as the Beau of Leadenhall Street due to his sartorial elegance. His favourite adornment was believed to be a blue and silver suit, with his hair dressed in the highest style of fashionable extravagance. Bentley was a prosperous city merchant who owned a hardware shop and warehouse, consequently being a man of some wealth. He fell in love with an unnamed woman and later became engaged to be married. However, tragedy struck in the cruellest way when he discovered that his fiancé had died on the morning of their wedding – thus the legend of Dirty Dick was born...

Following his beloved fiancé's death, Nathaniel Bentley neither washed nor changed out of his wedding attire for the rest of his life. The forlorn merchant also allowed his warehouse to descend into a state of filth and disrepair. This in itself made Bentley famous due to the nature of his subsequent demise – he was known as, the *celebrity of dirt*. Any letter addressed to "*The Dirty Warehouse, London*" would be delivered to Bentley. He stopped trading in 1804 and the warehouse was later demolished. He died in Haddington, Lincolnshire, circa 1809 and was buried in nearby Auburn parish church. During the early 19th century, Dirty Dick's was called The Old Jerusalem, but the then owner, William Barker, renamed the pub after Dirty Dick. For years the cobwebs, dead cats, and other unusual features of Dirty Dicks were kept in the cellar bar, but these have now been confined to a glass display case.



SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW LONDON?

Frederick Hitch, the Only Cabbie to be Awarded the Victoria Cross



Since its inception in 1856, there have been 1,358 Victoria Crosses awarded – but only one has gone to a licensed London taxi driver. Frederick Hitch was born in Southgate in 1856. An illiterate, Hitch joined the Army and served in the 2nd Battalion, 24th Regiment of Foot, never getting beyond the rank of Private. In January 1879, at the age of 22 he fought at the Battle of Rorke's Drift, which was later made famous in the film *Zulu*, starring Michael Caine. His bravery led to him being awarded the Victoria Cross. The war office missive (official letter) conveying news of the award read as follows:

"*THE Queen has been graciously pleased to signify Her intention to confer the decoration of the Victoria Cross on the undermentioned Officers and Soldiers of Her Majesty's Army, whose claims have been submitted for Her Majesty's approval, for their gallant conduct in the defence of Rorke's Drift, on the occasion of the attack by the Zulus, as recorded*

against their names, viz.:—

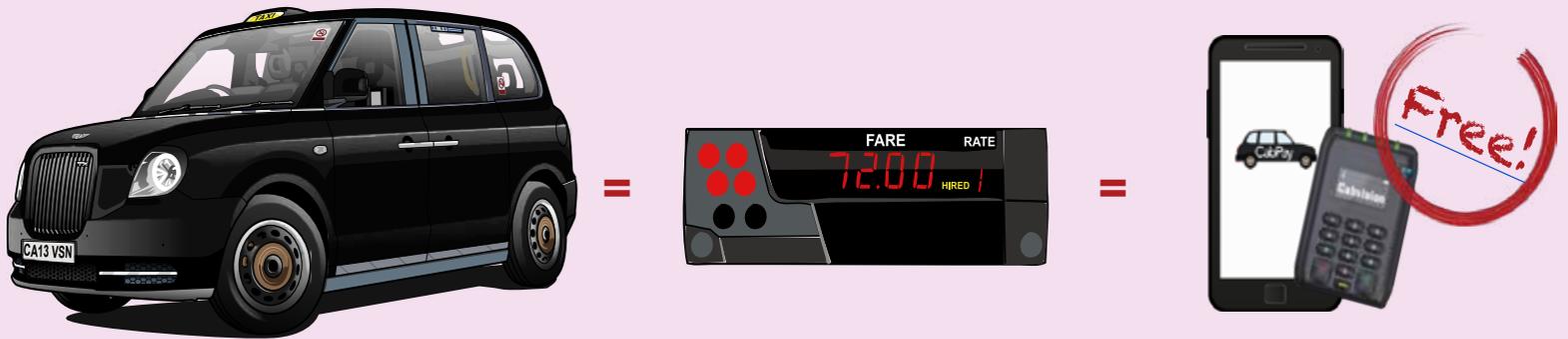
2nd Battalion 24th Regiment Corporal William Allen and Private Frederick Hitch

"It was chiefly due to the courageous conduct of these men that communication with the hospital was kept up at all. Holding together at all costs a most dangerous post, raked in reverse by the enemy's fire from the hill, they were both severely wounded, but their determined conduct enabled the patients to be withdrawn from the hospital, and when incapacitated by their wounds from fighting, they continued, as soon as their wounds had been dressed, to serve out ammunition to their comrades during the night."

Frederick Hitch had been severely wounded during the battle, and was still in the Royal Victoria Military Hospital, Netley, Southampton when he received his medal from Queen Victoria. He was eventually released from hospital and discharged from the military due to his injuries. He was unable to carry out any manual labour due to his wounds. He also had his Victoria Cross stolen – this was subsequently replaced. However, the stolen VC later emerged at auction and was bought by Hitch's descendants for £85. Hitch who had eight children, eventually became a London cabbie and plied his trade until his death in 1913. He was buried in St Nicholas' churchyard in Chiswick, with full military honours and his funeral was attended by a large number of cabbies. There is a blue plaque at his home in Chiswick commemorating his life.



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“You’ve never had it so good”

Our resident trader reports that the fleet is still increasing, and now up to 14,790 licensed cabs – that’s an increase of 800 cabs from its lowest ever point during the pandemic.

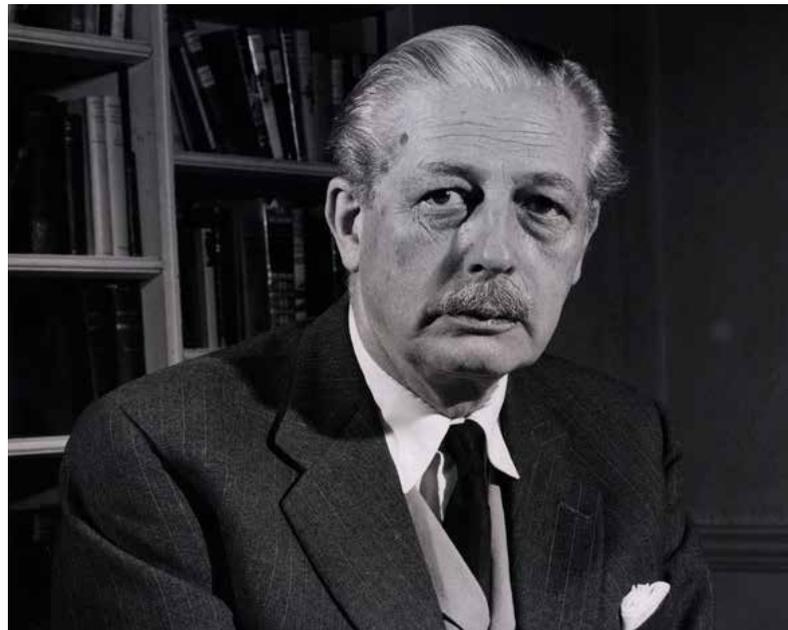
Cab you drive

As more drivers return to work both new and second-hand sales are buoyant, and the fleets tell me that demand for rentals is about on par with supply, so everyone is doing well.

‘Mac’

I sold a late Vito to a returning cabbie about a month ago, previously he’s always had TX’s and he just cannot get on with the Merc and wants either a late TX4 or a TXE. As we were discussing numbers and what was about cab wise, we started to discuss work levels, income, and the game generally over the past 30 years which we have both been around to see. He says it’s now busier than it ever has been, even going back to the mid 80’s – the big bang, yuppies and ‘greed is good’ era.

He was unusual in that he has diaries and records going back to his first day in the cab – number of jobs, cash or radio (as it was) price of diesel, miles driven etc and allowing for inflation, price of cabs and all of that – his quoted figures certainly backed up his claims. He even had records of



“I currently have a bet running with a fleet Operator as to when the numbers of TXE’s will exceed the numbers of TX4’s...”

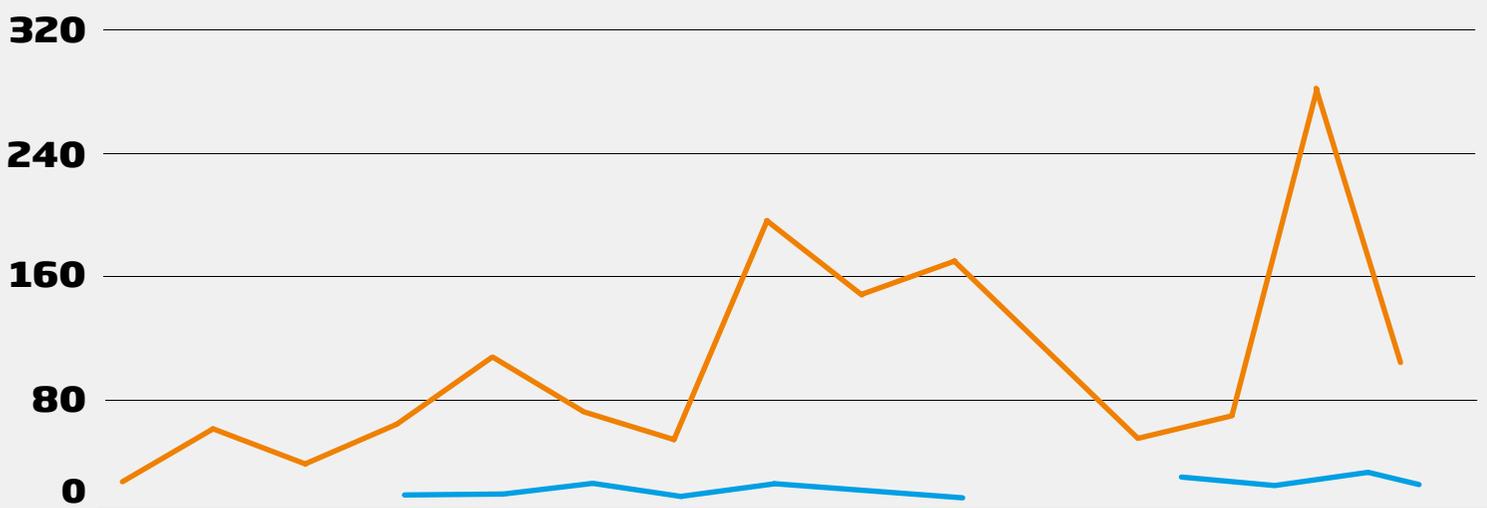
his ‘dwell’ time in the feeder park at Heathrow, I started calling him ‘Mac’ and when he asked why, I explained it’s because he sounds like former Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan who was famously quoted as saying “You’ve never had it so good”!

High stakes betting

More good news is that the fleet is still increasing, albeit slowly but is now up to 14,790 licensed cabs, up over 800 cabs from its lowest ever point during

the pandemic. Sales weren’t bad at all for April with 111 new vehicles joining the fleet, including what has to be the last nine Dynamos ever to be converted. Every month the gap closes between the current king of the ranks the TX4, now down to 6580 whilst the contender for the crown creeps up to 5286. I currently have a bet running with a fleet Operator as to when the numbers of TXE’s will exceed the numbers of TX4’s. At the moment, it’s looking like I am on target to collect a few quid – but get it wrong and not only am I down a few quid, I have to hand wash ten of his oldest cabs! **TAXI**

OTHER	2
DYNAMO	165
LEVC	5,286
METROCAB	1
TX1	1
TX2	79
TX4	6,580
VITO	2,676
Total	14,790



	FEB 21	MAR 21	APR 21	MAY 21	JUN 21	JUL 21	AUG 21	SEP 21	OCT 21	NOV 21	DEC 21	JAN 22	FEB 22	MAR 22	APR 22
LEVC	15	57	38	61	102	73	52	207	154	167	109	55	73	285	102
DYNAMO		2		2	3	9	1	8	4	1		13	10	16	9

TAXI TYRES



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Fresco's Farm

Al, explores the idea of responsibly owning a real, meaningful environmentally friendly pet he can bond with – y'know, the kind of pet you can make some decent money from...



Cabbie chronicles

Ever since I saw, what I thought was an innocuous article in a daily paper about 'saving the planet,' I've been fixated, not only on saving the planet, but cleaning up the environment too. So much so, that I began researching owning a new, environmentally friendly, pet. In my early deliberations, I couldn't decide whether or not to buy myself a pig, a chicken, or build a beehive – with its own swarm of bees. In fact, if I was going to pursue a serious hobby, I'd like to turn it into a money-making operation. There must be a demand for instant honey, nurtured in a local back yard? When you consider the price of Manuka honey, a hive of bees could be a real investment. I could really make a sting. Ouch!

Google is your friend

I decided to investigate my options, and the feasibility of housing the critters in our backyard. And not only that, would it be legal? I know you can't have cocker-doodle-dos strutting their stuff and disturbing the peace, as the creeping fingers of dawn stretch out across the eastern sky. So, I checked with highest authority in the land, 'Google.' This is where a search engine comes into its own. As long as you have access to the internet, you have an instant solution to virtually ANY subject, and, true to

form most beekeepers are non-commercial and have fewer than 25 hives. Many people have small beekeeping operations that they run as a hobby. As beekeeping technology has advanced, beekeeping has become more accessible, and urban beekeeping has become a growing trend. Some have found that 'city bees' are actually healthier than 'rural bees' because there are fewer pesticides and greater biodiversity. Good work, Google.

Bees...

Having a beehive appealed to me – all those stripy warriors working on my behalf, and that peaceful drone reminded me of hot, summer days lying in the tall grass, whilst a gentle stream lapped quietly in the background: only to have the mood disturbed by the intrusive cabbie next door setting off for his afternoon shift. I turned off the garden tap, my substitute for a babbling brook, rolled off my Simpsons Lilo and slid an old, sticky honey pot label in between the pages, to keep my place, in *Amazing Bees: Buzzing with Bee Facts*. Fascinating. I could almost smell the honey and see the remaining jars of *Al Fresco Original Stanmore Honey*, rapidly disappearing from the shelves of Holland and Barrett and the more salubrious settings of Harrods and Fortnum



and Mason's. If I did want to keep bees – and not get into trouble with the neighbours, the emphasis apparently is on the beekeeper in stopping their bees from becoming, literally, a pain in the arse. I knew exactly where I'd place my hive – in the top left-hand corner of the garden, amongst the huge ruby-red fuchsia shrubs and dark green bay tree, well away from the kitchen door and the neighbours.

Pigs...

Being a responsible citizen, one thing I had to consider was, like having a pet dog, do I need to have my pot-bellied micro-pig, micro chipped? The short answer is no, but my investigations discovered that pot-bellied pigs are likely to need more licences than a thoroughbred stallion. In my naivety, I assumed you could pop down to your local pet shop with alacrity and pick up a piggy, or two.

I'm told they are very sociable animals, but having just one, might cause the creature boredom, with naughty, anti-social repercussions – like digging up flower beds and being generally annoying. You might just as well save your money and keep a couple of kids as pets. Still, I carried on reading the rules and regulations regarding keeping a pig at home, and discovered the authorities are really strict. Quoting from a brochure, it says:

"You can't keep a pet pig at your home until you get a county parish holding (CPH) number from the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). You must also tell the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) that you're

keeping pigs, within 30 days of your first pet pig arriving on your land."

APHA will then give you a herd mark – you'll need this to identify your porker if you move it from your land. You will also need a licence from the APHA to walk your pet pig outside your home or premises. Even then, APHA may not approve your walking route if it poses a health risk, for example if it passes close to a livestock market, a pig farm, or a fast-food restaurant. Oh, yes, and you must have your licence with you whenever you're walking your pig and you'll need to renew it every year. Blimey! There's almost as many rules and regulations as driving a cab – except I bet that pig owners don't have to have a medical every year if they had a 'dicky heart' and do a stress test on a walking machine. Pigs must be exercised regularly to avoid obesity, constipation and to prevent their tootsies from becoming overgrown. By this point I was beginning to consider a budgerigar as a serious alternative option.

Hens

But, my search for a real, meaningful pet, was still up-and-running. Having a hen was another serious option, particularly after a daily newspaper published an article about the rising price of eggs, and the likelihood of chickens costing as much as £60 each. FYI, there's a smallholding in France, which produces the world's most expensive chickens, roughly twenty times the cost of a supermarket chicken. So, the idea of converting an old TX4 into a mobile chicken coop, became deliciously more appealing. My hens would be my friends. I'd know them all by name and, like in the glossy weekend magazines, I'd pick them up like feathery puppies, fit them up with little harnesses and walk them down to the shops. Thankfully, you don't need a licence to keep hens in your back garden – but I'd advise against cockerels 'doing their thing' in the early morning, unless, that is, you want an angry neighbour on your front doorstep. ■ TAXI



Meet the LTDA legal team

Driving a taxi for many hours of the day in one of the world's most congested cities is a challenging task. Cabbies often fall victim to complaints and false accusations from police, passengers and other road users (especially cyclists and PHV drivers). When these events arise it's



comforting for LTDA members to know that they have the immediate support of the best specialist in-house legal team in the business. The success rate of the LTDA Legal Team is second to none. In fact, according to Criminal Justice Statistics, LTDA members defended by our team are **FOUR** times more likely than the national average to be acquitted of allegations made against them.



John Luckhurst
Senior Partner



Charlotte Collett
Solicitor



Farouk Merdjane

I was involved in an accident whilst driving my cab in Shepherd's Bush. I wasn't too worried about it because I was confident that it wasn't my fault and the insurance would sort it out. A short while later I received a summons for driving without due care and attention. I had no witnesses to help me, but the other driver had produced "independent" witnesses out of thin air! I quickly contacted the LTDA's legal department and they immediately visited the scene of the incident and arranged for professional photographs to be recorded. I later appeared before magistrates at Lavender Hill Court, where the LTDA barrister tied the witnesses up in knots and demonstrated they could not have seen what they said they had. Thank you, LTDA legal department; you gave me an excellent service.



Tom Poulson

I joined the LTDA when I first got my badge and it turned out to be the best thing I ever did. Due to an unfortunate set of circumstances I ended up getting my licence revoked by TfL. I turned to John Luckhurst, one of the LTDA's legal eagles, for assistance. John went to great lengths to prepare a detailed appeal against TfL's decision and briefed a brilliant barrister to represent me in court. The appeal was successful and saved my livelihood. LTDA subscriptions are only four quid a week, which is less than a pint, and three pounds can be claimed against tax. I can't believe that every cabbie in town is not a member.

“FOUR times more likely than the NATIONAL average to get an acquittal”

Ken Jackson

The LTDA's solicitors and support team, could not have been more helpful when I first informed them that an allegation had been made against me. The LTDA was quick to check all the CCTV cameras in the area and arrange for plans of the location to be drawn up. Witness statements were also obtained and Mr Demidecki was successful in getting the Crown Prosecution Service to drop the case against me. Thanks LTDA - an all-round brilliant service!



Paul Baxter

I was filled with confidence the very first time I contacted the LTDA's legal team and as it turned out, I certainly wasn't disappointed. They did a great job in sorting out my problem with TfL. They've got to be the best in the business!



“LTDA subscriptions cost less than four quid a week”

LTDA APPLICATION FORM

Name

Address

..... Postcode

Telephone..... Mobile.....

Email..... Twitter

Date of Birth..... Badge No.....

Badge colour (Please state whether green or yellow)..... Year badge obtained.....

Suburban badge sector numbers.....

Have you ever been a member of the LTDA before? (please tick) Yes No

Do you currently have points on your DVLA driving license? (please tick) Yes No

If Yes how many points do you have?

Please tick if you **DO NOT** wish to receive information from the LTDA and other related organisations in the future?

I understand that my application for membership of the Association must be approved by the Council of Management and that until this is confirmed I am not eligible to vote in relation to any form of Association matters. I agree that all benefits prior to approval of membership shall be at the discretion of the Council of Management.

Please note: We do not provide assistance for any matters that have occurred prior to you joining LTDA.

Signed..... Date

26

LTDA Basic Direct Debit Instructions

Instructions to your Bank/Building Society to pay Direct Debits:

Please complete parts 1 to 5 to instruct your branch to make direct payments from your account. Return form to **FREEPOST LTDA**

To the Manager of

Bank/Building Society Address

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For Office use only

1 Please write the name and full postal address of your branch in the box (left)

2 Name of account holder

3 Account number

4 Bank Sort Code - -

Banks/Building Societies may not accept instructions to pay Direct Debit from some types of account.

5 Signature(s)

Date



This guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer

The Direct Debit Guarantee



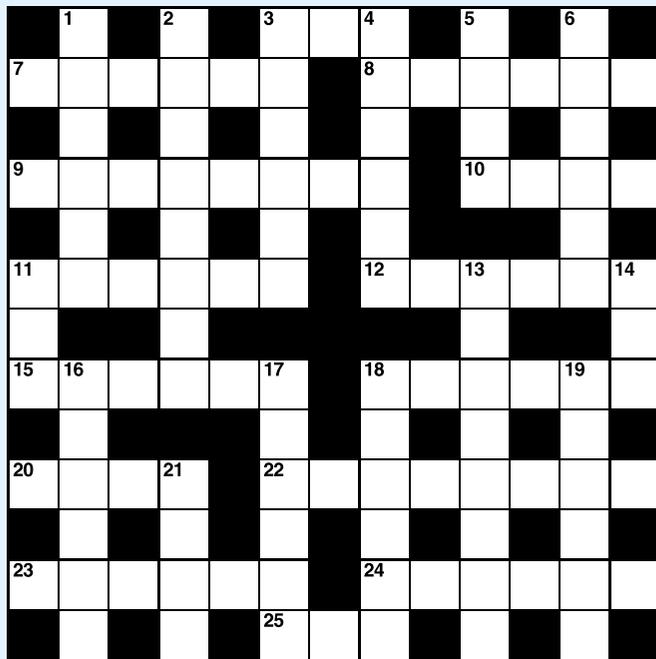
- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit LTDA will notify you (10 working days) in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request LTDA to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by LTDA, or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
 - If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when LTDA asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.



Puzzler page

So you know every street and every run between two points in London? Let's now see how your knowledge stands up to these brain twisters...

Crossword



ACROSS

- 3 Pea husk (3)
- 7 Film festival resort in France (6)
- 8 Putrid (6)
- 9 ___ Highsmith, crime novelist (8)
- 10 Fancy (4)
- 11 Heavy uninteresting food (6)
- 12 High hat, familiarly (6)
- 15 Enthusiasm, vitality (6)
- 18 Most confident (6)
- 20 Large flightless birds (4)
- 22 Person overseeing a will (8)
- 23 Altered, abridged (6)
- 24 Martial art (6)
- 25 Reserved (3)

DOWN

- 1 Learned person, scholar (6)
- 2 Gatecrasher (8)
- 3 Soul, mind (6)
- 4 Saw in your sleep (6)
- 5 Chew away at (4)
- 6 Phrase likening one thing directly to another (6)
- 11 Bring an action against (3)
- 13 Followers (8)
- 14 Putrefy (3)
- 16 Itinerant peoples (6)
- 17 Gives in (6)
- 18 Deceitful (6)
- 19 Gushes (6)
- 21 Proposed position (4)

Sudoku

Have a go at this medium level Sudoku puzzle. Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 just once.

					2		6	
	2			7				1
		6		1				
	9	5		2				8
	8		5		9	2	4	
2		7		8				
9			2		8	4		
				3	4		9	
		8	1					

Wordwheel

How many words of four letters or more can you make from this Wordwheel? Each word must use the central letter, and each letter may be used once only. At least one nine-letter word can be found. We found 39 words - can you do better?



Futoshiki

Fill in the blank squares so that each row and column contains all the numbers 1 - 5. Use any given numbers and the symbols that tell you if the number in the square is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

		4		
				^
v	v	v		
	>		1	<
	>		>	

All answers to puzzler on p34





A Passage Through Time: The Square Mile



Phil's 'London heritage' knowledge journey is designed to hopefully make your driving day and workplace surroundings, a little more interesting...

Footprints & foundations

The City of London is the engine which drives Britain's financial well-being. The Square Mile is the leading financial centre in the world and its expertise contained within it, in banking, stocks, shares and insurance affords Britain a solid monetary base. Since the Roman period two millennia ago, the city has always been a trading epicentre. The presence in the city of the Romans, Saxons, and Normans through the timeline of history, has one common denominator. These invaders from Europe all traded in commodities (goods and possessions that were tangible). Many street names in the city are an indication of the goods that were sold in a particular thoroughfare. Bread Street, Milk Street, Fish Street Hill, Honey Lane and Cornhill give the clues to what was traded in each location. Where once a bread or milk shop existed, there is now a financial house on the site.

Speculators

For centuries, speculators have made and lost fortunes on the premise of taking a risk of investing in a commercial adventure for a return on their capital. The popular song released in 1976 'Money, Money, Money' ("...it's a rich man's world.") sang by the Swedish group Abba may have some resonance. In response, the Bible quotes that "the love of money is the root of all evil." This presumption may have some credence. However, the populace will all dream their lottery numbers will one day make them millionaires. The media platforms are overloaded with schemes to get rich quick on a whim and whilst a very small number of people may win the jackpot – for most of the population, their daily lives will continue unabated. Another reality is that as a cab driver, all of your financial transactions have at some juncture passed through the financial hub that is The Square Mile – from cab purchase agreements and cab insurance, to mortgages, home insurance policies and

"For centuries, speculators have made and lost fortunes on the premise of taking a risk of investing in a commercial adventure for a return on their capital."

personal credit cards. The focus of this article will be on the two highly respected institutions that provide the financial stability for the county's wealth management. The Bank of England and The Stock Exchange...

The Bank of England

The fortress-type building on Threadneedle Street at the intersection of Bank Junction is the formidable Bank of England. At first floor level, it is noticeable that there are no windows on the structure. This stronghold is where the country's gold reserve is kept within the vaults. There are

400,000 bars of gold with a value of over £200 billion. High, thick walls and huge black doors safeguard the bank from any would-be intruder. High up in the portico, a carving of a woman, holding the bank on her knee, can be seen. The bank acquired the nickname 'The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street.'

Founded in 1694 by William Paterson, the purpose of the national bank was to lend share capital to the Government. The first governor was Sir John Houblon, the grandson of a French Huguenot refugee. The original bank opened its books at the Mercers Hall in Cheapside. The Bank moved to the present site in 1734 and through the centuries, the citadel was expanded to 3.5 acres. The outer wall is known as the 'curtain wall' – the only remaining part of the original structure (the bank was completely redeveloped between 1925-39 by the renowned architect Sir Herbert



Baker). The Bank of England was brought into public ownership in 1946 and from this period, the appointments of the Governor and sixteen directors have been determined by the Crown on the advice of the Prime Minister.

Functions

The functions of the Bank of England are to design, print and issue banknotes in England and Wales and to store gold in its vaults for its customers. As the Government's banker, the Bank acts for the Treasury in raising finance and managing



the government's debt. In essence, the Bank safeguards the domestic and international value of the nation's money by continuing to bring pressure to bear on inflation, maintaining a sound financial system and promoting the efficiency and competitiveness of the UK. One of the Bank of England's most



important tasks in preserving a sound financial system is the supervision of banks operating in the UK, to protect depositors. The watchful eyes of bankers and consumers look in the direction of the Bank of England at six-week intervals as base interest rates are announced. Investors and borrowers are in contradiction of each other as the base rate normally displeases both groups.

The Stock Exchange

For those of you who have investments in stocks and shares, it is a daily grind watching the markets fluctuate. To know when to buy or sell often depends on events in the changing world. The London Stock Exchange in Paternoster Square lies in the shadow of St Pauls Cathedral and is a commercial centre that provides the trading of stocks and shares in the City of London. Joint stock companies first appeared in the 16th century. Shares were usually bought and sold privately. The commodities that were originally listed were salt, coal and paper. By the 1690s there were 140 companies trading in stocks and shares. The Royal Exchange at Bank junction founded in 1571 by Thomas Gresham (Gresham Street) was the first trading centre in the city. In the early days, the Royal Exchange excluded stockbrokers because of their rowdiness. The stockbrokers as a result took up residence in nearby Jonathan's coffee House in Exchange Alley. Overcrowding in the coffee house led to the brokers trading outside in this thoroughfare. Eventually, the brokers were allowed into the Royal Exchange. By 1812, a purpose-built building in Capel Court opposite the Bank of England was constructed. Gradually rules and regulations were enhanced to prevent illegal dealings. To trade, you had to be a member. The membership reached its peak in the early 1900s, with 5,500 members enrolled. Boom and bust have always formed the foundations of a capitalist system. In times of decayed markets, many prominent investors could be ruined overnight. These downward shifts in the market were known as 'Bubbles'. In the 1720s, investments in the 'South Sea Bubble', burst – which sent shares tumbling.



City of London former Stock Market location on what is now Mansion House

Technology

By the end of the 19th century, the reliance on the trade winds for merchant fleets to deliver their cargos within a time frame, ceased. The implementation of the telegraph, the tickertape machine and the telephone gave instant access to up-to-date information across the world. The new technology would revolutionise the trading in stocks and shares. The old building in Caple Court was becoming antiquated and a new contemporary building was sought. In 1972, Queen Elizabeth opened the new Stock Exchange Tower in Threadneedle Street. A 26-storey structure dominating the City's skyline. Within the confines of this high-tech building, traders were transfixed to computer screens rather than engaging in open outcry across the trading floor. In 1984, the 'Footsie' one hundred index (FTSE 100) was launched in conjunction with the Financial Times. Its purposes were to track the movements of the leading 100 companies listed on the Exchange. In 2004, the Stock exchange relocated to Paternoster Square. It was not until 1973 that women were permitted on to the trading floor of the Stock Exchange. It was clear that society was changing and women in the workplace could now become high achievers. Indeed, Clara Furse became CEO of the Stock Exchange from 2001-2009, a remarkable achievement. At the entrance of the Stock Exchange there is a coat of arms. Below the emblem, an inscription in Latin reads "Dictum Meum Pactum" – 'My Word is my Bond.' **TAXI**

TAXI Interviews Volunteer Cabbies!



As the cabbies and veterans assembled at Harwich on May 2nd for their ferry crossing to the Hook of Holland, Taxi interviewed some of the cabbies who were volunteering for the week, driving veterans to The Netherlands for Dutch Liberation.

Dave Hemstead, 61 has been a cab driver for 20 years and has volunteered for the Taxi Charity for the last 18. He has been on many trips over the years including taking older veterans to The Netherlands and Normandy as well as driving younger veterans to Belgium, to support Waterloo Uncovered.

TAXI Why do you volunteer for the Taxi Charity?

Dave: I enjoy military history and being able to spend time with these veterans is an honour. They are a very special generation and I really appreciate that when we are out in the areas where they fought during WWII, they share so many memories with us and we learn so much. Their stories are very powerful and really make history come alive. I picked up three Chelsea Pensioners this afternoon and they are all so excited about the trip. They will no doubt all head to the bar before we can get them settled in their cabins!

TAXI If you could only use one word to describe the taxi Charity what would it be?

Dave: Outstanding

Mike Hughes, 74 is one of the few London cabbies who has done the KOL twice. He got his badge in 1977 and did 20 years before leaving the trade. After a break away running a printing business he then worked as a cab driver in Brighton for 6 years while he did the KOL for a second time and has been driving in London again since 2004.

TAXI Why do you volunteer for the Taxi Charity?

Mike: I have made so many friends amongst the drivers and veterans and it is a pleasure to volunteer. For the last four years, I have been driving 102-year-old WWII veteran Major Ted Hunt who lives near me in Worthing. Ted and I have developed an amazing relationship. Anyone looking at us might think I was being incredibly disrespectful to him but it's only banter. This year when the rest of the drivers' head home Ted and I will be staying out in The Netherlands a little longer as he has been invited to another

event the following week at which he is the guest of honour.

TAXI If you could only use one word to describe the Taxi Charity what would it be?

Mike: Unselfish.

Gillian Concannon, 55 has been a London cabbie for 19 years and has been volunteering for The Taxi Charity for the last seven. On this trip, Gillian has been paired with WWII naval veteran Peter Smoothy from Herne Bay, who very nearly didn't make the trip as his passport got caught up in the well documented delays at the Passport Office. But thanks to the charity alerting the media and his MP and asking for help, Peter got his passport just in time.

TAXI Why do you volunteer for the Taxi Charity?

Gillian: It is a privilege. I have been on many trips with the Taxi Charity but for me nothing compares with being in The Netherlands. When I see the bridge at Arnhem it gives me goosebumps remembering what this special generation went through. And my highlight is attending the Liberation Parade in Wageningen, when the streets are lined with people shouting and cheering "Thank you for our freedom!"

TAXI If you could only use one word to describe the taxi Charity what would it be?

Gillian: Brilliant

Danny Shelton, 54 has been a cabbie for 26 years and his first trip with the Taxi Charity was in 2017 for their 'Back to the Beaches' tour when Danny was one of the 78 Taxis that took 95 veterans to Normandy for the D Day commemorations.

TAXI Why do you volunteer for the Taxi Charity?

Danny: I feel like this country has let this generation down, no one seems to care about the huge sacrifices these men and women made so that we have our freedom. I love driving the vets, the older guys have seen so many changes in the world and have some excellent advice and certainly know a thing or two. I was also happy



Danny Shelton, Tom Schaffer and Dave Hemstead.



Tony Neal and Danny Shelton



Ron Geraghty



Peter Smoothy and Gillian Colcannon

to do my bit to drive the two cabbies who did the Three Peaks fundraising challenge last year as the charity relies entirely on donations and every penny counts.

TAXI If you could only use one word to describe the taxi Charity what would it be?

Danny: Fantastic

Ron Geraghty, 67 has been a cabbie since 2008 and has been volunteering since he got his badge. He has been a driver on many of the charity trips and today he picked up veteran Les Hammond in Northampton to bring him and his son and daughter in law to Harwich.

TAXI Why do you volunteer for the Taxi Charity?

Ron: It's a simple answer - I like to give something back for what these veterans did for us! It's the least I can do. My first trip was the charity's annual trip to Worthing. On route we stop at South Holmewood and after I had off-loaded my passengers and parked the cab, I headed back to the village hall to find a room full of veterans straight on the beer at 10.30am. I asked if anyone wanted a cup of tea and they looked at me as if I was talking a different language.

TAXI If you could only use one word to describe the taxi Charity what would it be?

Ron: Tremendous

Tony Neal, 57 has been a cab driver for 19 years and has been volunteering for the charity for 13 years. He will be driving WWI veteran Geoff Roberts on this year's trip.

TAXI Why do you volunteer for the Taxi Charity?

Tony: It is a great charity and volunteering allows me to give something back. I have driven Geoff Roberts who was a POW during WWII, many times and hearing first-hand what his life was like during that time is unforgettable. My most memorable moment was on the trip to The Netherlands in 2012 when during the Gala Dinner the veterans all joined in to sing 'Roll out the Barrell', 'We'll Meet Again', 'White Cliffs of Dover' and many other songs that got them through the war.

TAXI If you could only use one word to describe the taxi Charity what would it be?

Tony: Phenomenal ■ TAXI

If you would like to volunteer for the Taxi Charity, please email dickgoodwin@taxicharity.org

‘The Professionals’

– What sets those with ‘The Knowledge’ apart from the rest?

What does it mean to be a professional in 2022? When does an occupation or a job become professionalised? What makes those with ‘The Knowledge’ different from other “... suppliers of transportation services...?”

A brief background search produces suggestions as to what the make-up of a ‘professional activity’ might involve. Modern definitions include notions of ‘accountability; integrity; competency; knowledge and qualifications’ – deprive a Knowledge Boy or Girl of a 5G network and these skills would still exist, though some other ‘suppliers of transportation services’ might well struggle!

Some of the key ingredients of ‘professionalism’ involve:

‘The deployment of formal certified learning’

Can other ‘suppliers of transportation services’ really claim to be engaged in doing this? Possibly, though that might depend on the depth and quality of learning involved in order to be accredited. In what world can those that pass ‘The Knowledge’ be compared to the learning involved to obtain other road-based transportation service operator licenses?

‘A professional owns the power, skills and freedom to problem solve.’

It’s pretty certain that an individual having the means to purchase and blindly follow a mobile device with a sat-nav app doesn’t meet this threshold. ‘Knowledge Boys & Girls’ have in-built ‘chips and processors’ that deploy real knowledge, in real time. Out on the roads, real professionalism isn’t dependent on the battery life of a mobile device or if that device knows that the football kicked off late or is going to penalties - which will impact on both journey time and route choice.

‘A professional possesses the ability to make decisions in the best interests of others.’

We know that this level of responsibility is based on the use of specific, localised, operational expertise - rather than hoping a digital device can

provide an AA graded Knowledge rating of a route selection in line with traffic conditions, whilst ensuring a disabled passenger arrives at the entrance to their hotel which has suitable wheelchair access and porter assistance.

Those who possess ‘The Knowledge’ and have responded to the strength of the calling to the highest standards of the profession don’t just know the optimum route within an ever-changing landscape, they know its history too. If the formation of a professional identity is also about ‘**providing a specialised service to society,**’ those professionals with the ability to share that learning with their passengers are actually, inter-generational custodians of present-day and historical London knowledge. Black cab drivers are trusted ‘old school influencers’ in relation to the sites, attractions, facilities, services and cultural traditions of the capital - including being ambassadors of a historic trade, which is known as the best taxi service in the world.

All this, whilst transporting passengers in the most direct and safest manner, in accordance with codes, ethics and the standards of a professional community of operators.

Those with ‘The Knowledge’ have often picked up and are moving before a passenger has informed them of their destination - professionals are not sat around backing up traffic, typing postcodes into gadgets, in the hope a device can professionalise their practice and make them what they are not.

When people are lost - a professional finds them and gets them where they need to go. When they are too tired to go on - a professional takes the reins and when they are late for what’s important to them, professional road craft and knowledge get them to their destination safely and quickly.

So how are those with ‘The Knowledge’ valued and whose responsibility should it be to promote the identities and activities of such professionals, in turn separating them from other “suppliers of transportation services...?”

You are professionals. We know it.

Let’s ensure everybody else knows it and values it too.

■ **The LTDA are here to represent, protect and ensure recognition of the professional practice, identity and standards of our members.**



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INCLUDES A COMPLIMENTARY ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK ✓
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TAXI

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LINAGE

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Murderous Meg

Meg is plotting murder on the grounds she lives with a man who is only capable of losing stuff and incapable of finding it again...

A woman of words

If I was ever to murder Mr Meg, it would most definitely be on a Bank Holiday weekend. And as there is one extra long one on the way, the man is in mortal danger. The reason being? The man loses EVERYTHING. All. The. Time.

Lost not found

Bank Holidays are especially trying because there is an extra day off work for him to bumble around playing hide and seek with his stuff and drive me crazy. Here in Meg Towers, there is a place for everything. It's not complicated. By the front door there is a bowl for keys. In the front hall there is a row of hooks for coats and hats. There is a shoe rack in the porch that Mr Meg made himself with offcuts of wood he collected from skips. Yes,

a photo of this lopsided shoe rack could be the logo for a mental health charity... but he made it so I put up with it in the sincere hope that he might one day use it. There are bowls for fruit, loo roll holders for loo rolls, towel racks for towels... and so on. And on. Got the picture?



Neighbourly empathy

So why oh why can't he ever put anything back in the right bloody place?

Or I would even settle for him remembering the *wrong* place where he has put something. And

don't get me started on our fridge. It's a standard freaking fridge. It's not the size of a double wardrobe. It's got three glass shelves and a light, and you would think it would be impossible to lose anything in it. But no. After his morning toast Mr Meg might decide to put the butter away in the salad drawer, balanced on the egg rack, or even on top of the fridge and not actually in the fridge. Then, when lunchtime comes around and he needs the butter again for his cheese and pickle sandwich he opens the fridge door, glances inside and hollers, "Meg! Where's the butter?" Yesterday, he shouted this question so loud that our neighbour who was pegging her washing out at the time shouted back, "How the bloody hell should she know? Where did you have it last?"

"Petty domestic conventions"

After that intervention we had

a serious sit-down talk. I told him he was driving me loopy loo because living with him was like sharing a house with Sherlock Holmes. Mr Meg is always trying to solve the mysteries of missing jackets and disappearing keys and glasses. Putting things in the same place is too difficult for him. He reckons he can't be constrained by these petty domestic conventions. So, he has bought a pouch to solve the problem. Yes, a pouch. And a short pencil and notebook.

The pouch...

The pouch, containing the notebook and pencil, will be worn around his neck, and he will jot down where he last left things. This will save his time searching for missing gear and give me a break from wanting to choke him. This new system began this morning. And guess what happened five minutes ago? Mr Meg yelled up from downstairs, "Meg! Have you seen my little pencil?" ■ TAXI

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- ◆ Ubiquitous Ltd, E1
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- ◆ WizAnn Knowledge School, Watts Grove, E3

PUZZLER ANSWERS



Crossword

S	I	P	O	D	G	S			
C	A	N	N	E	S		R	A	N
V	T	Y	E				A	M	
P	A	T	R	I	C	I	A		W
N	U	H					M		L
S	T	O	D	G	E		T	O	P
U									O
E	N	E	R	G	Y		S	U	R
O							I	N	S
E	M	U	S				E	X	E
A	I	L					A	E	U
E	D	I	T	E	D		K	A	R
S	E		S	H	Y		S	S	

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SUDOKU

9	6	2	8	5	1	7	3	4
7	3	8	6	4	9	1	5	2
5	4	1	3	2	7	8	9	6
3	5	9	1	8	4	6	2	7
6	2	4	7	3	5	9	8	1
1	8	7	2	9	6	5	4	3
8	7	3	9	6	2	4	1	5
2	1	5	4	7	8	3	6	9
4	9	6	5	1	3	2	7	8

Wordwheel

SOLUTION: BRILLIANT

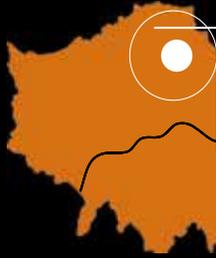
Alibi, bail, bait, bill, brain, lain, lair, liar, libra, lilt, lint, lira, nail, rail, rain, rill, tail, tibia, till, trail, train, trial, tribal, trill, BRILLIANT.

Word targets:

Excellent: 22, Good: 18, Target: 13, Kids: 8

Futoshiki

2	5	>	4	1	3	
5	3	>	2	<	4	1
3	<	4	1	2	<	5
4	1	3	5	2		
		^				
1	2	<	5	3	<	4

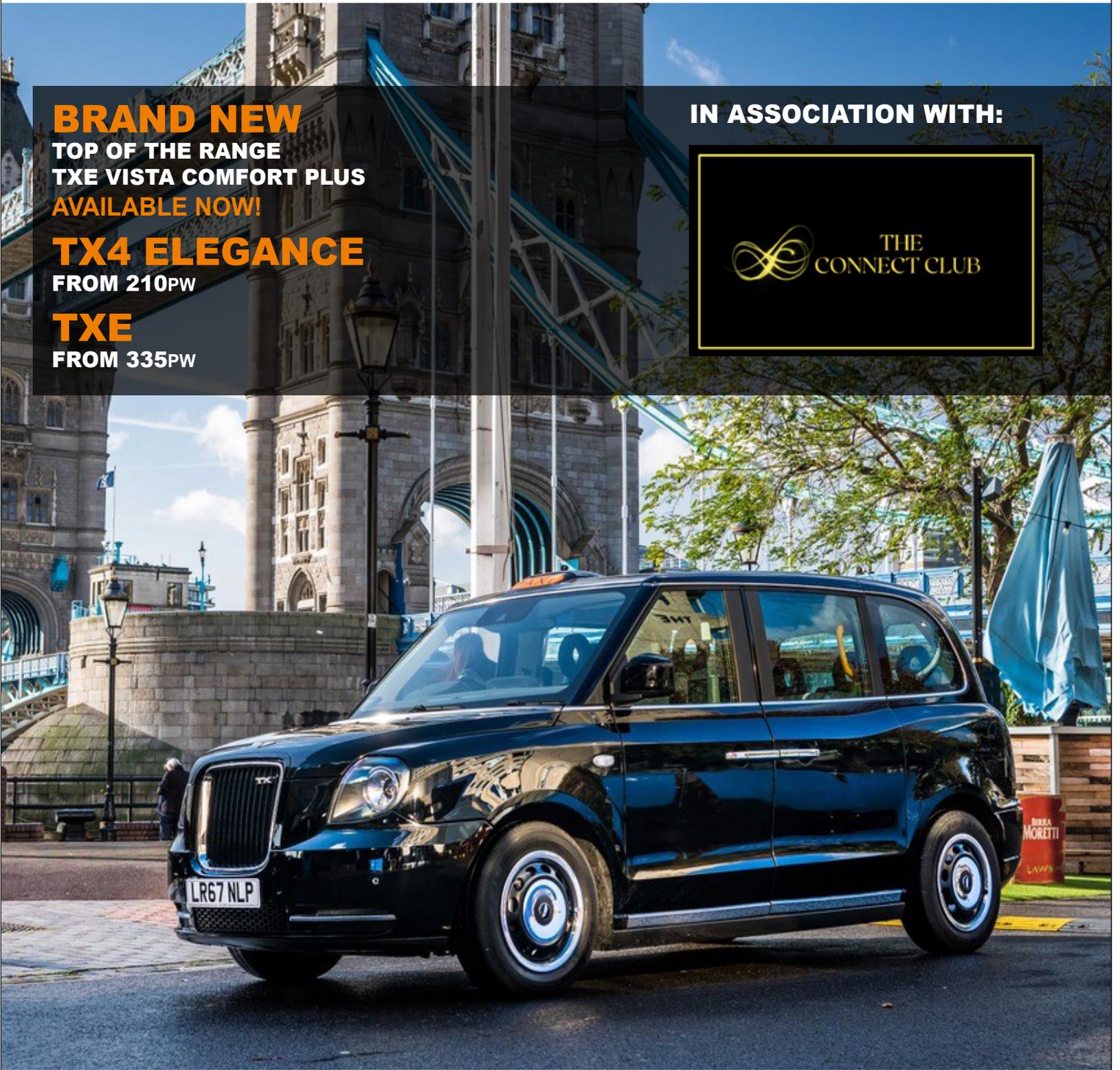


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