LTDA LOBBY KEY PLAYERS FOR STREETSPACE ACCESS
**NEWS**

**The BBC Complaints Team have issued an apology for their inappropriate use of a black taxi image in their London News broadcast on 28th April. A BBC Complaints Team representative apologised “…for the inclusion of the black taxi image in this report.” stating that the image “…was mistakenly chosen” and that “the editor has spoken with the person concerned.” Taxi driver Mousa Brown contacted the BBC to raise a complaint following the image of a Taxi being wrongly associated with a news report relating to Coronavirus deaths.**

**Surrey Police, Roads Policing Unit (RPU) on the 26th June were out on the M25 in an unmarked police vehicle. They spotted the (pictured) PHV driver using a handheld mobile phone whilst driving…**

**Toyota’s corporate governance report, released on 24 June, demonstrated that the Japanese company holds a £235 million stake in Uber. It is thought that the partnership with the ride-hailing company provides a means of expanding further into new mobility related services. The report also revealed that Toyota has sold shares in some of its suppliers, thus adjusting its portfolio to include partnerships with rival automakers and technology firms as it transforms into a mobility services company. Shareholdings have been reduced in 24 companies and increased in ten, including two listed companies. Toyota said it now holds 10.25 million shares in Uber, valued at 31.15 billion yen (£235 million) as of March 30th 2020. This equates to around 0.6% of Uber’s shares outstanding, according to Reuters.**

**Jaguar Land Rover have been contracted to supply the ‘world’s first’ wireless charged taxis to the City of Oslo. The company has joined the ‘ElectriCity’ initiative that seeks to develop high-powered charging infrastructure in the Norwegian capital city. The plan is to install multiple charging plates in the ground of 50kW to 75kW each, at ranks and key drop off destinations around the city. This will enable taxis to charge automatically whilst ranking without any physical connection with the charger. Taxis will utilise this method of charging throughout the day, constantly topping up to remain operating. Jaguar Land Rover will provide 25 I-PACE models to Cabonline – the region’s leading taxi network. However, the wireless charging technology will be provided by American developer, Momentum Dynamics.**

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“Give cabbies the confidence of knowing they can get back to work with the same access we had pre-coronavirus and we can aid this recovery, keep investing in the future and move forward.”

LTDA LOBBY KEY PLAYERS FOR STREETSPACE ACCESS

TOP TRADE STORY

Without a doubt, the biggest threat to our business going forward is the threat from TfL and the various Boroughs to restrict our access to what is essentially our office - London’s streets.

LTDA Message Remains Clear

So far, the only changes introduced have been new bus lanes such as those at the Aldwych and on the Harrow Road, alongside the Westway, and we have full access to these, but many of the proposals for closures have been very unclear on who will, and who won’t, get access. Our message remains clear – we need universal taxis access, with taxis given the same access as buses.

We’ve sent letters and briefings our far and wide, including to all MPs representing constituencies in London and surrounding areas and all London Assembly Members (AMs).

Strong Cross-Party Support

We have strong cross-party support from the London Assembly. Caroline Pidgeon has written to the Mayor calling for universal access and explaining why the plans as they currently stand are flawed and would cause economic hardship. The Conservative Group on the Assembly are supportive of our position and their transport spokesperson Keith Prince AM and Brexit Alliance AM David Kurten AM both pressed the Mayor heavily on the need for taxis access at the recent Mayor’s Question Time.

I had a good first meeting with the new Chair of the London Assembly Transport Committee, Labour AM, Dr Alison Moore to introduce her to the cab trade and make our views known. She was receptive to our concerns and the problems associated with Streetspace and need for universal taxi access should be discussed in more detail at the next Committee meeting in July.

Cycling & Walking not for Everyone

Turning to the GLA, I also met with the Cycling and Walking Commissioner, Dr Will Norman, one of the key architects of Streetspace and members of Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy Shirley Rodrigues’ team in the last two weeks. None of them were forthcoming with any more detail of the plans or on taxis access, but they did recognise that cycling and walking isn’t for everyone and agreed that taxis have an important role to play now and in the future. We also explained the damage that giving only electric taxis access would do.

City Hall’s mantra seems to be that we need to find the right “balance” for different road users and avoid car-based recovery but shutting taxis out of any key areas would not be balanced. Licensed taxis are a vital form of public transport and we are still unclear what the reason would be for giving buses access but excluding taxis?

Streetspace ‘Decision Makers’

From these meetings, it has become clear that the Government has more sway over City Hall and TfL in the wake of the TfL bailout. A “taskforce” made up of representatives from all three is meeting weekly to agree “operational decisions”. So, I have written to two of the Prime Minister’s key advisers who sit on this taskforce, as well as Minister for London, Paul Scully and Baroness Vere, Minister for Taxis, setting out the damage the proposals would do.

Hopefully, the Government will see the irony of the situation we’re in, where the Chancellor has taken steps to support the trade and help us keep the wolf from the door, only for the Mayor to half and puff and potentially blow us off his streets.

Working in Partnership

Elsewhere, I was happy to meet with the Head of Retail at Fortnum and Mason, who is also Chair of the Jermyn Street Association. We discussed how two iconic London brands can work together at this challenging time. He asked to meet as he recognised that our business goes hand in hand with theirs and that cabs can help get London moving and shopping again. He got it. Hopefully, policymakers will too.

Legal Preparations

Some General once said something about, ‘hoping for the best and planning for the worst’ and in that vein, we are working with the United Trade Action Group and are jointly funding the preparation of a possible legal challenge in the event of our exclusion. Initially the lawyers are preparing a Generic Statement of Claim against our exclusion which would allow us to request a Statutory Hearing in the High Court should it be necessary to do so.

Confidence, Knowledge & Investment

In every meeting over the last two weeks, I’ve been talking about the importance of confidence. The Fortnum and Mason CEO was quoted in an article recently saying, “confidence breeds consumption, breeds commerce”. This sums it up perfectly. Give cabbies the confidence of knowing they can get back to work with the same access we had pre-coronavirus and we can aid this recovery, keep investing in the future and move forward.

Steve McNamara is the LTDA’s General Secretary
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a participating dealer. Quote
"£2500 FDC" to claim your
finance deposit contribution.

*Available at participating dealers only. Business users only. Finance illustration refers to Personal Contract Purchase. 7.3% APR Representative; figures based on TX Vista at £59,448 OTR (OTR figure is net of OLEV Plug in Taxi Grant which is up to £7,500 and is subject to European Whole Vehicle Type Approval and European Commission state aid notification) and including an optional 5 year service plan costing £1,700 and an optional 5 year warranty costing £649, a finance deposit contribution of £2,500, a customer deposit of £1,250, followed by 60 monthly payments of £842.88 (equivalent weekly payments of £195 – it is not possible to pay by week, balance is paid monthly via direct debit) plus an optional final payment of £18,873. Based upon an annual contracted mileage of 30,000. You have the option at the end of the agreement to 1. Return the vehicle and not pay the optional final payment. If the vehicle has exceeded the maximum agreed mileage a charge per excess mile will apply. In this example, 6p plus VAT per excess mile. If the vehicle is in good condition (fair wear and tear accepted) and has not exceeded the maximum agreed mileage you will have nothing further to pay. 2. Pay the optional final payment and keep the vehicle. Or 3. Part exchange the vehicle subject to settlement of your existing finance agreement; new finance agreements are subject to status. All prices inclusive of VAT. Two, three or four year plans are also available. Finance is provided by Black Horse Taxi Finance a trading style of Black Horse Ltd, St William House, Tresillian Terrace, Carfax Oxford OX1. Credit is subject to status and is only available to UK residents aged 18 and over. All prices and promotions are valid for vehicles ordered and delivered before 30 June 2020. LEVC reserves the right to terminate offers at any time. Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer. Excludes Meter, credit card equipment and any local authority fees. For full details of LEVC Servicing and Warranty inclusions please refer to the 'LEVC Operators App' available to download via IOS and Android.
LEVC News Update

New Accessories Collection Launched - Customise your TX!

- LEVC has launched a range of new accessory options for the TX electric taxi.
- All accessories are available through LEVC authorised dealers.

LEVC has launched its brand-new accessories brochure, with a host of new driver-focused accessories for the TX. Owners will be able to purchase a wide range of accessories directly from LEVC authorised dealers - from wheel trims to phone holders, giving drivers more opportunity to customise their vehicle than ever.

For the exterior, drivers can now choose from silver or chrome wheel trims, wind deflectors and a series of domestic charging cables.

Customers can also opt for LEVC Protect; Powered by Supagard, LEVC Protect exterior and interior protection products help to keep TX in showroom condition. Available as a paint protection service by our network of trained technicians or as a stand-alone high-quality cleaning product kit.

Moving inside the vehicle, accessory options are aimed at making life easier for the driver and providing some subtle aesthetic enhancements. There are a range of device holder accessories such as tablet and phone holders, and a universal printer mounting kit, all of which can be mounted to the accessory bar in TX.

Drivers can also choose to fit a cup holder, coat hook, map pocket and a luggage door pull cord in the driver compartment as well as opting for branded LEVC carpet mats throughout their vehicle.

Further information and details of the full pricing list for accessories is available from LEVC's website: https://www.levc.com/ownership/tx-accessories/

£9 Million Advanced Propulsion Centre Funding Received for Future EV Technology Development

- £9m APC Government funding awarded to a consortium led by London Electric Vehicle Company
- Project ‘EVE’ (Electric Vehicle Evolution) will focus on the research and development of future electric vehicle technology for LEVC products
- LEVC is the only dedicated production facility for electric vehicles in the UK.

LEVC has received a multi-million-pound grant to further the development of electric vehicle technology and will lead a consortium of UK industry and research institutions in the design, build and manufacture of new EV technology.

The Advanced Propulsion Centre (APC), a joint venture between UK government and the automotive industry which seeks to make the UK a centre of excellence in low emission vehicles, has released £9m-worth of funding to this project.

Campaign to Support Safe City Journeys

- Black cabs help city travellers stay safe and protected during Covid-19
- Purpose-built taxi is designed with protective partition, contactless payment systems and easy clean surfaces
- 3-point code of conduct in place to cover social distance rules and cleaning standards
- Free ‘Back to Work’ kits including face masks and sanitisers available to black cab drivers.

The new ‘Black Cab: Private Public Transport’ initiative highlights how passengers can always stay socially distanced, in a personal and contactless space by choosing to travel in a licensed black taxi.

LEVC is also supporting cabbies to get back behind the wheel with 2,000 ‘Back to Work’ kits available for collection free of charge from LEVC’s authorised dealer network. These provide protective PPE and cleaning equipment, designed to keep occupants safe and vehicles clean. Each kit includes 250ml sanitising gel, 750ml antiviral disinfectant spray, 40 disposable face masks, microfibre reusable cloths, anti-bacterial taxi-receipts and a 3-point pledge window sign.

The taxi driver 5-point pledge reads:

- I will never work if I or any of my household have symptoms
- I will clean my taxi after every journey, and at the end of my shift
- I will wear a mask when it is necessary for me to do so
- I will encourage passengers to pay by card where possible
- I will not allow passengers to sit on the seats closest to the driver, to maintain a safe distance.
The LTDA has been engaging with Westminster City Council as it unveils its plans to bring life back to the City’s streets and to implement measures designed to improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists as people start to return to work after the long Covid-19 lockdown.

Mixed Messages From TfL
We were advised that the City Council had considered removing Taxis from all of its Bus Lanes but had concluded that this measure would have been impractical and has decided to maintain the status quo. In addition, Westminster has informed TfL that it did not agree with its proposals for car free corridors within its boundaries which would have included Waterloo Bridge. That is not to say that TfL would not try to impose its will on WCC when we eventually find out what their intentions are. It seems that TfL has yet to make up its mind on how it intends to accommodate Taxis, and mixed messages are still coming from that organisation and the Mayor.

Westminster Haste
Meanwhile, Westminster has begun implementing some of its post COVID-19 measures on major thoroughfares such as Regent Street, Victoria St. and the Akswyk. The City Council admits that it is all being done at haste and some of the measures are likely to change as things move on, and indeed some changes have already been made. One such change was when the feeder rank to Charing Cross station in the Strand was suddenly removed without notice and then rapidly re-instated because an alternative feeder had not yet been provided in Duncannon St... as it should have been.

Hospitality Zones
Westminster has now also started work on the installation of ‘Hospitality Zones’ in areas such as Soho, Mayfair and Covent Garden where a large number of streets are set to be closed to traffic, at certain times of day or the evening to enable the reopening of restaurants and bars under social distancing requirements, that will see chairs and tables set up in the roadway.

Taxis Access
The LTDA stated its requirement for Taxis to be able to continue to move passengers around as efficiently as possible and to be able to continue to provide a door to door service to our more vulnerable customers. The City Council were sympathetic to these concerns and stated that a common sense approach will be taken to allow through any vehicles that have good reason to enter a closed street, it was agreed that this should include Taxis carrying passengers who have difficulty in walking or have luggage etc. The arrangement would also cover Taxis going in to pick up passengers. The roads will be closed at specified times either all day or during the evenings with a clear section of carriageway retained, wide enough to accommodate emergency vehicles. Entry will be via moveable barriers which will be manned throughout the closure periods so Taxis should be able to enter when there is reason to do so.

Westminster Listening to LTDA
On ranks, Westminster stated that it was not looking to remove any ranks unless it was unavoidable due to social distancing measures in which case it would look to provide an alternative. In addition, the City Council also agreed to the LTDA’s suggestion to provide temporary ranks at convenient locations to provide a service to people visiting the hospitality areas.

City of London
As an update to my previous reports on the measures being implemented in the City, a third meeting has taken place this time between officers of Col with other sections of the trade involved. The City has now stated that Taxis can enter all of its closed streets at any time when carrying disabled passengers and in this case ‘disabled’ has been widely drawn and refers to anyone that has difficulty in walking.

The major issue that remains in the City is the intention to install four bus gates which will not be available to Taxis. These are to be situated in Leadenhall St.; Newgate St.; Eldon St.; and Moorgate south bound. However it was stated that the one in Newgate St will not go ahead until October/November due to current roadworks while the lead officer was surprised to hear about the one in Moorgate as he said that Taxis should be able to go as far south as London Wall which is contrary to what is stated on the City’s website. We await further clarification and will continue to argue for Taxis to have full access to all Bus only facilities.

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The City is requesting feedback on its current measures and all comments should be made by email to the City Transportation Team until a portal is installed on their website for this purpose.

Richard Massett, LTDA Chairman, and Chairman of the London Cab Ranks Committee

RICHARD MASSETT

“One such change was when the feeder rank to Charing Cross station in the Strand was suddenly removed without notice and then rapidly re-instated because an alternative feeder had not yet been provided...”

LTDA ENGAGE WITH COUNCIL AS WESTMINSTER REOPENS
FOOTWAY & CYCLE SCHEMES

PADDDINGTON STATION/PRAED STREET AREA/HYDE PARK ESTATE AREA/WEBBOURNE TERRACE - W2
Create additional pedestrian space and cycling on the carriageway using barriers.

Buckingham Palace Road, Ebury Bridge Road, Pimlico Road - SW1W
Create pop up cycle lanes along the road and providing additional pedestrian space at pinch points by reallocating road space using barriers, signs and lines.

Queensway, Inverness Terrace, Porchester Road - W2
Creating increased footway space at pinch points whilst co-ordinating with existing traffic management along Queensway. New cycle lanes (combination of advisory and mandatory) to form a north south link on Queensway / Inverness terrace.

Harrow Road, Between WC2 Boundary and Edgware Road - W2
- Provision of over 3km of additional cycling. Footway widening at retail areas.

Kingsway, Aldwych Gyratory, Strand, Lancaster Place - WC2
- Create Additional pedestrian space in pinch points. Additional peak time cyclist space by introducing wide peak time bus lanes.

Waterloo Place - SW1Y
Closure of the east side of waterloo place to provide a new large area of pedestrian space, improve the walking route between st James park and piccadilly circus. Creation of additional temporary cycle parking.

Lupus Street - SW1Y
- Creation of additional pedestrian and cycling on the carriageway using barriers.

FOOTWAY SCHEMES

Golden Jubilee Footbridges - WC2N
- Signage to encourage social distancing and no waiting. Lifts will be operational. Location will be staffed via Villiers Street.

Marybone Station and Pedestrian link to Baker Street Station - NW1
- To provide additional pedestrian space along Melcombe Street by reallocating part of the carriageway using temporary barriers.

Piccadilly - W1J
- Create additional pedestrian space along Piccadilly and at Piccadilly Circus by installing barriers along sections of the carriageway from Green Park to Piccadilly Circus, whilst leaving some sections available for ongoing servicing.

Regent Street - W1B
- Create additional pedestrian space by reallocating one lane of carriageway in each direction North and South using barriers maintaining access to bus stops and some sections for servicing.

Charing Cross Road - WC2H
- To provide additional pedestrian space along Charing Cross Road at pinch points by reallocating part of the carriageway using temporary barriers.

Oxford Street (East & West) - WC2H
- To infill the bus pull ins and layby's with barriers to create additional pedestrian space whilst maintaining access to the bus services. Provide additional pedestrian space on Oxford Circus by installing barriers north and south on Regent Street.

Victoria Station (TFL) - SW1E
- To provide additional pedestrian space around Victoria Station street at pinch points through complementary measures to a TfL scheme.

Charing Cross Station - WC2N
- To provide additional pedestrian space around pinch points.

Wilton Road & Warwick Way - SW1V (On Hold)
- Creation of additional pedestrian space at shops and cafes by reallocating parking bays to footway using barriers. Maintaining access to some sections for servicing.

Church Street - NW8
- Suspension of single yellow line in Market area and use of paint in the carriageway to indicate temporary increased footway space to help social distancing without conflicting with Market operations. Provide additional pedestrian space around pinch points.

Knightsbridge - SW7
- Creation of additional pedestrian space outside shops and hotels with barriers.

North Audley Street - W1K
- Creation of additional pedestrian space along North Audley Street by reallocating parking bays to footway using barriers. Maintaining access to some sections of servicing.

Elizabeth Street - SW1W
- Creation of additional pedestrian space by reallocating the loading and parking bays to footway using barriers.

Duke Street - W1K
- Creation of additional pedestrian space along the street where shops and cafes are located with barriers. Only some pay-by-phone parking will be suspended but kerbside space for loading and drop-off & pick-up to be retained.

Rochester Row - SW1P
- Creation of additional pedestrian space by reallocating parking bays to footway using barriers.

Marybone Highstreet - W1
- Creation of additional pedestrian space by reallocating parking bays to footway using barriers. Making street one way eastbound between Camellian Road to Warrington Crescent.

Cycle Schemes

Cycle Stand Programme - Borough Wide
- Additional cycle parking facilities to be installed at key locations throughout the City in areas of high cycle demand, commercial areas and transport hubs.

Portland Place - W1B
- To install pop up cycle lanes north and south along the road by reallocating road space using barriers, signs and lines.

Northumberland Avenue - WC2N
- To install pop up cycle lanes north and south along the road by reallocating road space using barriers, signs and lines.

Kensington Road and Queensgate - SW7
- Installation of cycle lanes from Westminster Boundary to Queensgate.

Bayswater Road Cycle Link - W2
- Installation of lanes cycling on Bayswater Road from Broadwalk to CS3 Lancaster Gate.

Kensington Road Cycle Corridor - SW7
- Installation of bus/ cycle lanes in both direction of corridor between Queensgate and Knightsbridge.

Westbourne Terrace (Harrow Road Package) - W20J
Installation of lanes cycling on Harrow Road, Westbourne Bridge and Westbourne Terrace.

Schools

School Streets Programme
Localised improvements to increase pedestrian space at schools across the city. These will be simple barrier and cone measures for short periods of time and man aged by school staff.

St Peter’s CofE Primary School - SW1W
George Eliot Primary School NW8
St Clement Danes - WC2
Essendine Primary School - W9
Barrow Hill Juniors, Bridgeman Street - NW8
Queens Park Primary School - W10
St Mary’s of the Angel RC Primary School - W2
King Solomon Academy - NW1
St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School - W2
St Peters Eaton Square CE Primary School - SW1W
Wetherby Senior School - W1U
St James and St Johns CE Primary School - MK18
Hampden Gurney CE Primary School - W1H
“I’ve been a cab driver for over twenty years and have always used from day one our cab drivers Etiquette. Please don’t forget - we are all on the same side…”

VANDALS, RANKING & 14TH BIRTHDAY PLATING!

STREETS AHEAD

I wrote an article back in June 2019 with an update on the Mayor of London and his proposals for a cycle scheme (contentious I know) through West London. These proposals caused uproar from the residents, because they would have a detrimental impact on the area, causing more traffic, resulting in increased pollution levels, presenting difficulties in the boarding and alighting of passengers with disabilities… the list went on.

The estimated cost for this scheme was £42 million pounds, but this was kicked into touch because TfL came up against some strong opposition from different residents’ groups and the LTDA, resulting in the Borough of Kensington & Chelsea listening to the residents and stepping in.

Road Jacking - Not My First Rodeo...

After a strong campaign by the ‘Lycra gang’ in support of the scheme this must have hit a nerve because a member sent me some pictures of a few very disgruntled cyclists who believe they have the right to behave with complete impunity and so painted cycle lane signs on the roads in Holland Park Avenue.

Should I have been surprised? No. They have no respect for other road users, jumping red lights, mounting the curbs to gain a few yards, on their phones - not concentrating on what’s in front of them… well many of them. For this to change, the police must take immediate action. I witnessed a cyclist in Oxford Street jump a red light and hit an elderly lady that was crossing the road, seriously injuring her, then trying to get on his bike and ride away - luckily, he didn't get very far.

On the night, pictures were taken. There was a group of around four or five individuals decimating the roadways. I teamed up with a local resident group and we notified the Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and requested the unlawful signs be removed immediately - I also informed the police and asked them to take appropriate action against the culprits.

Today, I’m informed that the paint still remains to be removed and recent reports from local businesses are that cyclists are now deliberately taking advantage and cycling down the route that they knew was planned. I can only describe this as a childish act. I would venture a bet that those involved don’t even reside in West London – the lobby would do well to draw the distinction between the perceived needs of commuting cyclists passing through and the real needs of people who actually reside in the area.

Ranking at Kings X

I have received a high volume of calls from drivers raising concerns about the behaviour of some drivers at Kings Cross Station - not the main taxi rank but the unofficial feeder in Goodsway. We are all experiencing financial worries in these unprecedented times with work levels currently low and not knowing when they will be returning to normal (let’s hope it’s very soon), but in my opinion we should not let ourselves down and should always maintain what we are renowned for - our gold standard.

As we all know, Goodsway was always used for the overspill for drivers to wait, which we also all know is illegal but has never caused any problems between drivers before (only with Camden Council). Now though, some drivers are using Camley Street, which is causing a big dispute between drivers with who’s next in line to join the queue.

We now have unofficial ranks operating in both Camley Street and Goodsway. The problem at this location is that there’s a set of traffic lights at the junction (red stop / green go), and when a space becomes available in the queue, the driver will join as dictated by the traffic lights. Is the driver wrong?

This queuing system is unlike Paddington Station taxi rank, where the queuing works in two lanes and when you join the rank, you take the last cab’s registration number then wait until he passes you then you know you’re next to join the point of the rank.

We all know this is an unauthorised rank, no one can dictate who jumps onto the next available space because it’s not a taxi rank. The unofficial queuing arrangements at Kings Cross is causing arguments between drivers, with temps running high and all in front of our potential clients. With them seeing and hearing all this aggression, maybe it’s making them think twice about using our service?

I have been a cab driver for over twenty years and have always used from day one our cab drivers Etiquette - helping passengers, never purposely nicking a fare from a fellow driver etc… Please don’t forget - we are all on the same side. We have enough barriers and challenges out there in the form of the cycle lobby, PHV’s, TFL, and the Mayor of London - so don’t make it easy for them. Let’s work together, not against each other.

Camden Council have been highlighting problems at Kings Cross with cabs over ranking to TfL and the London Cab Ranks Committee and our answer is simple: ‘the amount of taxi rank space is inadequate for this mainline station to meet passenger demand.’

We have put proposals to Camden to put in a feeder rank in Camley Street. This would remove all the ongoing issues with taxis over ranking, however this was point blank refused by Camden on safety grounds. We will keep pursuing Camden Council for more taxi rank space but in my opinion, if they don’t want play ball, drivers will always make their own mind up.

Assured Cleaning Group

One of our LTDA representatives was approached by a company that clean hospitals up and down the country, offering LTDA members a free ‘deep clean’ treatment during the COVID-19 outbreak and we welcomed the opportunity.

On the 15th June, at Printworks, an LTDA marshal was present to organise and welcome drivers. 120 LTDA members took advantage of this offer and were very grateful to also receive a sticker informing passengers that the cab they were travelling in had been through this cleaning process. This can only be good for the trade and helps to give confidence to those passengers that want to use our services. Well done to everyone involved.

Plating the Cab Before its 14th Birthday

As many of you know, if you book an NSL test before a taxis 14th birthday you will receive another one year cab licence (plate).

Due to COVID-19, TFL closed all the NSL test stations - leaving a lot of drivers who had booked a taxi inspection during this period before the birthday in limbo. They are now experiencing unnecessary stress as their cab licence runs out early July and are being told by NSL they cannot attend a taxi inspection because the taxi has exceeded the 14th birthday. We have raised the concerns with TFL. They are in talks now, to see how they resolve this very unusual situation. If you ask me it’s very straightforward - as soon as we have an update, we will be emailing all members.

I hope you and your families are well.

Be lucky.

Anthony Street is an LTDA Executive Support Officer

www.ltda.co.uk /// @TheLTDA

30 June 2020
Enhance your TX with our new range of Genuine Accessories and products.

Whether you would like to keep your TX in showroom condition using our new LEVC Protect package, or you simply want to make your vehicle’s interior more comfortable and appealing, we have the accessories for you.

Our new range includes accessories for your TX interior and exterior; device holders, storage, paint and upholstery protection, and an on-street charging cable which allows a full charge in as little as 1 hour 15 minutes.*

View the full TX accessory range at [levc.com/taxibrochure](http://levc.com/taxibrochure) or scan the QR code with your phone camera.

Order from your local LEVC dealer, find them at: [levc.com/electric-dealer-network](http://levc.com/electric-dealer-network)

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*Charge time based on 22kW charge point and 22kW AC charging equipped vehicle under optimal conditions.
We are proud to work with London’s finest

Thank you for your support at this time

“As a nurse who has just worked 85 hours this week a ride home in a black cab with a fantastic driver has been such a wonderful treat. Thank you to all the cabbies doing this for NHS workers. I actually don’t have words enough to thank you all. You are amazing!”

Ciara, London

Gett The Black Cab App
You can only play the cards you’re dealt. It’s a saying I’ve often heard and of course, it’s true - you can only do what you can with the circumstances that you have in front of you, and with the tools at your disposal.

**Dodgy Dealer**

It seems over the last 10 years the cards the taxi trade has been dealt have always been the losing kind. We just cannot seem to catch a break, and right now I’d settle for just one lucky hand, let alone a lucky streak.

Even when it appears we have a winning hand, we come across a dodgy dealer that palms a winning card to our opposition. The trouble is, regardless of the hand we have, we have to play it, because in this game we cannot just fold. Sometimes, if not all the time, it feels like we are the only ones who are having it bad and it also feels very, very personal.

Of course, it’s not. Our opposition, our fellow road users and many others besides are all at the dealers table and all are suffering. That doesn’t make me feel better and I don’t say it to try and make you feel better or by way of saying “Buck yourselves up, it could be worse” - I’m sure it could be, but it doesn’t alter the fact it’s feeling pretty bloody bad right now.

**You HAVE Been Impacted…**

Thankfully the vast majority of the trade have received a grant via the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) and so have a lifeline. Round one of this support will see drivers required to make a claim in the second half of July for a payment in early August. There are some changes to the scheme, it’s only 70% rather than 80% and you will need to confirm that you have been impacted by the Coronavirus after the 13th July. Some drivers have been concerned about this, after sighting misinformed social media posts implying we may no longer be able to claim due to London coming out of lockdown. The simple answer to that, is you absolutely should claim - I’m sure it could be, but it doesn’t alter the fact it’s feeling pretty bloody bad right now.

**Improvements to the Taxi Trade**

In recent months, we have seen a number of improvements to the taxi trade. For example, Blackhorse, Mercedes Finance and Shawbrook who are probably the three big lenders on cab purchases are all willing to offer further assistance, so please contact them without delay to get a plan in place. The recent farce in parliament with MP’s queuing up to vote should have been a wakeup call to the powers that be, in that with the current social distancing measures in place, any sizeable return to work just won’t or can’t happen. We’ve seen the ‘vested interests’ insist that thousands upon thousands of people will return to work by walking and cycling and so in turn, large parts of the road network will need to be closed off to accommodate them all.

The first test we were told would come on 1st June when many workers would return to work - it didn’t happen. The commuters from Kings Cross, London Bridge and Waterloo stations that we were all told would be walking or cycling didn’t materialise, and the morning rush hour came and went with nothing but deserted platforms and concourses.

**Workplace Elevators?**

It came as no surprise to me that this would be the case. Many within the City & Canary Wharf estimate only twenty percent of office workers will return to work over the next two months. This is because whilst plans (and bad ones at that) have been made to get people from the stations to the office block, they seem to have forgotten the little things - like the fact that in the City & Canary Wharf, many offices are in very tall buildings… Whilst the very fit or those on lower floors can use the stairs, the vast majority will need to use an elevator, but social distancing means maybe as few as two people will be permitted in a lift at any one time. Everyone therefore, under whatever social distancing regulations which are in place will have to queue (just like the MP’s had to queue around Victoria Tower Gardens park to vote) to get into their office, we will see thousands of office workers having to queue through the lobby, out the door and down the street with workers from the office block next door for an hour or two, in order to get to their desks and then repeat the process come knocking off time.

**Increase in Footfall**

Mid-June saw non-essential retail shops allowed to open and again we were told, ‘the crowds are coming’ and whilst we saw some large queues at Primark & Nike stores, everywhere else was a little bit more sedate. That’s because people are using something that our leaders are seriously lacking - common sense. That said, the approximate 47% increase in footfall when the shops opened is encouraging and I’ve no doubt we will see more restrictions lifted and social distancing will almost certainly reduce (if it hasn’t already) to one metre from the current two. This will mean more businesses like bars & restaurants will be permitted to open and people will become more confident and begin to venture out in ever increasing numbers.

Some lenders are asking for further assistance. Many drivers have also received Taxi payment holidays for April, May & June and will now need to contact their lenders asking for further assistance.

It appears that Blackhorse, Mercedes Finance and Shawbrook who are probably the three big lenders on cab purchases are all willing to offer further assistance, so please contact them without delay to get a plan in place.

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**Plain English Required**

Once again, a TfL notice 8/20 has brought confusion for drivers, it states ‘From Monday 15 June, all taxi and private hire (TPH) drivers should wear a face covering at all times when in a taxi or private hire vehicle’. However, it appears that in this case for TfL’s ‘should’ actually means ‘must’ so why didn’t they just say ‘must’? (Probably because the advice on public transport from the Government via the DfT doesn’t say Taxi drivers are required to wear one.)

Another point causing confusion is the need for Taxis to have the 6 monthly MOT - many believed this would not be required after MOT’s had an automatic extension applied. TfL have confirmed to me that whilst you were not required to go out and get one whilst lockdown advice was ‘stay home’ & avoid unnecessary travel, if you are intending to go back out to work, your Taxi will be required to have the 6 monthly MOT. It’s such a pity that yet again TfL have issued confusing messaging, when they have got many other things right, like allowing drivers who are due a medical to submit a self-declaration.

**Paul Brennan, LTDA Executive**
“It seems reasonable to hope that we have perhaps seen the worst of this crisis, or at least, as somebody once said, the end of the beginning...”

ECONOMIC, QUARANTINE & COVID-19 RECOVERY

M4 MUSINGS

AIRPORT
Desperate times at the airport, and not just for Taxi drivers. The air travel industry is one of the very worst affected by the global pandemic, the future rife with uncertainty as far as the eye can see. Passenger numbers at Heathrow are a tiny fraction of the usual level, and the recent introduction of the much-criticised quarantine regulations has made things worse. These rules are set to be reviewed every 3 weeks, so expect some inbound press as operators put pressure on the government to relax the restrictions. There is also the possibility of ‘air bridge’ arrangements with individual countries.

Over and above the actual rules though, there is sentiment; will people want to jump on planes in July and August? Well yes, probably, is my opinion. I know of plenty of people who still want to go on holiday this summer if they can, and I’m sure there are people in other countries who would come here if the quarantine was relaxed. Of course, it won’t be the usual numbers, and business travel will take longer to recover as firms reassess how important it is to meet face to face either domestically or internationally. As passenger levels do increase, and they will, it’s reasonable to expect more customers to choose a Taxi, with the obvious safety benefits of a partition and plenty of room. Airport drivers will be there to provide that service when they do.

CLOSURES: SOUTH CHISWICK
Yet another scheme to exclude vehicles has sprouted in my local area, the so-called ‘South Chiswick Low Traffic Neighbourhood.’ Reading through the bumf on Hounslow’s website, it’s the usual promote cycling and walking stuff. This one is even more Orwellian than others I’ve seen, with ANPR cameras to enforce a ban on through-traffic over such a wide area. It’s not yet clear how much of this will go ahead, and exactly how it will work. Certainly, Hounslow are rushing it through as quickly as they can in order to take advantage of the money made available by the DfT for such schemes.

This is happening all over London now. I must admit, when the pandemic emerged in February and March, the last thing I would have ever thought was ‘oh, this will mean they have to build more cycle lanes and close more roads!’ but here we are. We have to fight tooth and nail in every one of these schemes for complete Taxi access. Better still, the Mayor and Transport for London could make a blanket statement to boroughs that Taxis should be assumed to have access to any area of London being considered for changes. People call me naïve.

SEISS/BBLs
The government has now published the detailed guidance for the extended Self-Employed Income Support Scheme. Martin Lewis immediately commented that applicants will have to confirm that their business has been affected after July the 14th. This will certainly be the case for Taxi drivers. The SEISS has been an unprecedented lifesaver for the cab trade. Our business has evaporated since March and is only very gradually returning as at this week. No-one can put a time scale on a complete recovery but it’s fair to say our trade won’t be anything like it was until people are able to socialise properly again and the tourists come back. People have criticised some aspects the government’s handling of the pandemic but the furlough scheme and SEISS are hard to fault. Government acted quickly and decisively to make sure people knew they would have an income; it’s hard to overstate the importance of that in a time of national crisis.

The so-called ‘Bounce Back Loans’ are another decent idea, but I’ve seen and heard mixed reports on these. Some banks are apparently easier than others, you need to have/open a business account, long waits, etc. Possibly there’s a reluctance by certain banks to have too many of these relatively unprofitable loans on their books. The earlier iteration, small-business loans were virtually impossible for cab-drivers to access. If you can get one, it seems like cheap money to me at a time of great uncertainty when you might well need a reserve in your bank account.

A year without paying interest, and a low rate after that. Important to remember though it’s a loan not a grant and will need to be paid back in the end. Speaking of which, I wonder how many drivers will take advantage of the facility to defer the July 31st self-assessed income tax payment till January 2021? I’ve scratched my head over this a bit. This is really just another loan, this time for 6 months with no interest. Great. I’m just not sure that come January next year I’ll be in a better position to pay that money than I am now, so I’m going to pay as much as I can afford in July.

DEXAMETHASONE
I was very heartened by the results of the Oxford University trial on Dexamethasone. This is a steroid that is cheap and ubiquitous that showed remarkable effects on patients on ventilators or non-invasive oxygen. Apparently a third more people were saved who were on ventilators, and a fifth more who had been on oxygen. This is truly impressive, and if repeated in populations will give hospitals a real weapon in treating the virus in its more serious form. As it is already approved, dexamethasone can be put into use immediately. It is hoped other drugs will also be found that can be used in combination. In this way, even if a vaccine is not developed quickly, outcomes can be improved by other means.

This has a knock-on effect for economic recovery. The more treatments and outcomes are improved, and lives are saved, the more leeway the government has for allowing the economy to run as smoothly as possible. People will have more confidence to get their lives back to normal and businesses will be able to trade with fewer restrictions. Even if, as is reasonable to expect, the virus remains with us and there is another peak at some point, hopefully the disruption will be significantly reduced.

The first priority for government will of course be to keep everybody safe but trial results like the Oxford Study make that job incrementally more achievable. It seems reasonable to hope that we have perhaps seen the worst of this crisis, or at least, as somebody once said, the end of the beginning...
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To be fair, I was about as gentle as a medical check-up at the Harold Shipman Health Centre…

The Art of Deception

A Man in Black

And so, in the tradition of following on directly from my previous article…

London Has Fallen

Having watched ‘London Has Fallen’, a fortnight ago, I’ve now discovered that there is the odd director who is able to use London as a film backdrop without turning it into a directorial cow-pat. The Strand actually led into Fleet Street, it did go into Ludgate Circus and Ludgate Hill AND (rubs eyes in disbelief) St Pauls Churchyard - take note producers of National Treasure 2, we drive on the left when going over Southwark Bridge (unless of course you’re an Uber driver in which case all bets are off!). Anyway, after munching on some barbecued squirrel and contemplating the art of deception, the second thing that I noticed about the film was that there was a rather pleasing number of taxis and there were also no social distancing warnings.

I’m Three Feet Above the Ground

Now, as you are no doubt aware, if you have been reading this column over the past four editions or so, it’s a satirical look at the absurdities both within and facing our industry from the perspective of engaging in sitting three feet above the ground for a ridiculous amount of hours. Think Jeremy Clarkson or Steve Allen and you get the drift - except I don’t have the writing abilities nor bank balance of the great Jezza, nor the reasonably decent Mr Allen.

Despite this column giving me a voice, it does not stop me from being an even bigger pain in the arse than I usually am in relation to contacting the great and the good that run our country and our industry.

In the last couple of weeks, I have emailed everybody from Piers Morgan to Grant Shapps, from Lib Dem London Assembly members and MPs to Independent London Assembly members and MPs, along with everybody in between. I have done this in the hope that many will sit up and take notice of the fact that as we come out of lockdown, we are being hamstrung by the Streetspace initiative. I am hoping that these ladies and gentlemen will make enough noise so as to gently cajole both the mayor and one or two local authorities in seeing sense and allowing taxis entry to all streets which will be used by buses. To be fair almost all of these individuals, who I won’t name, have been broadly supportive. I was however perturbed by the response to one of the emails.

I emailed the Mayor himself - now I appreciate he is a busy man with a thankless task on his hands, however the response that I got from his office bore absolutely no relation to the email which I sent. It was like asking him for the time and his office responding, “cheese and pickle sandwich”. Baffled was a minor understatement, so quicker than a traffic warden slapping a ticket on an alighting taxi, I fired off another polite, but rather strong email explaining the pitfalls of our exclusion from various roads as well as the ‘transportational’ apartheid that will be inflicted upon the disabled community.

The Harold Shipman Health Centre

Now, if you find that I haven’t produced the next edition’s ‘Man in Black’ after that email, then someone has probably gone Jimmy Hoffa on my arse and I’m no doubt buried in a field somewhere near Brentwood. To be fair I was about as gentle as a medical check-up at the Harold Shipman Health Centre, but I felt justified giving our current plight.

My concerns as a taxi driver, trade activist, raconteur and general loudmouth, are for my colleagues and myself - so I felt it was appropriate to be rather vocal about our current situation.

I still cannot fathom out the thinking behind warning against using mass-transit and then preventing the only form of public transport which is segregated and can be sanitised after each journey, from trawling the very same streets which buses are allowed to use. But then a £1.6bn Government bailout is a strong incentive to hack a few hackney carriage drivers off!

As of two weeks ago, there were only a few ranks closed to the trade due to the widening of the pavements around London, in that time we have lost well over a dozen ranks and it is rising. The last thing anybody wants to do is to continually drive around London searching for work, yet the taxi industry is being forced to do just that - this of course is about as ecologically friendly as deliberately manufacturing congestion so as to be seen to be attempting to ‘cure’ the problem (can you see what I did there?).

Noel Edmunds Multi Colour Swap Shop

The taxi industry is a simple beast: get hailed, pick person up, take them to destination, (preferably in one piece) and receive fair remuneration from customer for performing said task - it’s really not rocket science. Yet at every turn, the industry is being kicked in the coxcomb, with no valid, coherent reason attached to the kicking. What makes it worse, is that it is generally being done despite the industry’s willingness to co-operate with the Mayor’s office and be part of the solution rather than the problem. I get the impression that the Mayor just doesn’t really care for the industry one way or the other. I genuinely don’t believe for one minute he is deliberately trying to destroy the licensed London taxi industry, yet he is having a ruddy good go regardless.

So, where do we go from here, does the taxi industry start blockading roads? Well, it would be an unwise move, especially at the minute, besides, I don’t think too many people would notice at the moment anyway. No, our way forward will undoubtedly be via extensive dialogue. Right now, there is a feeling that ZEC taxis may get a hall pass on some of the closures, but what needs to be remembered is that the rest of the industry is in the process of ‘Going Green’. However ‘Going Green’ cannot happen overnight, if you take a taxi driver’s ability to earn an income, you simply slow the ‘greening’ process up, because a cabbies ability to earn will drop like a stone and therefore he or she will be unable to afford to switch to a ZEC vehicle.

Oh, what a tangled web we weave - when we’ve just had £1.6bn loaned to us to cover our impending financial collapse. So, just like Noel Edmond’s Multi-Colour Swap Shop (if you are under 40 just YouTube it), why not write in to the Mayor and tell him you will swap your Hornby train set for the right to ply your trade and have access to the same roads as your common-or-garden bus? Come on, get writing - you know you want to. ☺️

Steve Kenton is a Licensed Taxi driver of 30 years
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We’ll begin south of the river on Bermondsey Wall East. Here you’ll find Dr. Salter’s Daydream which is in fact a collection of four statues; Dr Alfred Salter, his wife Ada and their young daughter, Joyce alongside her little pet cat. Alfred and Ada were marvellous people. In the early 20th century they pioneered free health care for the people of Bermondsey, long before the NHS was established. They were also big supporters of London’s cabbies and firefighters who have died in the line of duty; both during the War and since.

Tragically, Joyce died of Scarlet fever when she was just 8. The artwork depicts Alfred and Ada in their later life - the figure of Joyce is, as the name suggests, a daydream; a memory of a life - the figure of Joyce is, as the name suggests, a daydream; a memory of a life - the figure of Joyce is, as the name suggests, a daydream; a memory of a life - the figure of Joyce is, as the name suggests, a daydream; a memory of a life. The artwork was also made by Sir David Wynne, this time in 1975. The boy depicted is in fact his son, David Wynne; an artist who befriended the Beatles.

We’ll run it from there to Golden Square which has a statue at its middle. This one’s a bit of a mystery: the identity of the stone figure, which is depicted wearing a Roman-style outfit, is unknown. The most likely candidates are King George II or King Charles II… but no one knows for sure.

Now let’s go back to the Square Mile; Philpot Lane to be exact.

Here we have a Knowledge favourite; the two mice eating cheese which is believed to be London’s smallest public statue. The mice are said to be a memorial to two workers who perished whilst building the nearby Monument. Apparently, one of these fellows noticed his sandwiches had been nibbled and blamed his mate for it. The two got into a punch up and plummeted to their deaths. It was later discovered that mice were picking at the builders’ sandwiches.

Go from Philpot Lane to Highgate Hill where the Whittington Stone stands. The stone, which marks the spot where Dick Whittington is said to have turned back towards London after hearing the bells of St Mary-le-Bow, was erected in 1821. The cat was added much later in 1964. It was sculpted by Jonathan Kenworthy who was just 21 at the time.

Let’s start the next run with another cat: the statue of Hodge in Gough Square. Hodge was the beloved pet of Samuel Johnson; compiler of the first English dictionary. Run it from Gough Square to Carriage Drive North, Battersea Park where, towards the western end, stands The Brown Dog which was put in place in 1985 as a statement against vivisection. This is the second such dog to be placed in Battersea as a protest against this controversial practice - the first was erected in 1906. This original piece however drew the ire of medical students who subjected it to frequent vandalism - so much so that it was removed by the Council and supposedly melted down.

Now let’s head to St Katherine’s Way where you’ll find the graceful Girl with a Dolphin fountain. This was sculpted in 1973 by Sir David Wynne, an artist who befriended The Beatles. Go from there to Cheyne Walk where you’ll find the fountain’s twin; Boy with a Dolphin. This artwork was also made by Sir David Wynne, this time in 1975. The boy depicted is in fact his son, Roland. Tragically, Roland took his own life in 1999, aged just 35. The sculpture is now dedicated to his memory. ●
“Driving down to the New Den with some Norwegians once, I had to explain why I took my West Ham air freshener down before we arrived...”

CAB TRADE & FOOTBALL
FAN PARALLELS

ON THE ROAD

Rejoice. Football is back – well, the teams are, if not the fans and atmosphere.
And when the season’s over, it’ll start again almost straight away.

Scepticism, Realism & Champions League

Following a team is a bit like being a member of the cab trade itself. It’s in the Cab driver’s nature to view the glass as half empty. Most of us come at it from an angle of scepticism. If you support an inconsistent club, you’ll make a fine cab driver. This is because your aims are realistic. Arsenal, Tottenham, or Modern-day Chelsea fans aren’t the best disposed towards a cab driving philosophy because they are accustomed to success. If you expect success in the cab trade, you are setting yourself up for failure. You might enjoy a bit of a cup run, but you’ll never make the Champions League.

The Millwall Philosophy

I was known to have enjoyed a bit of sport with supporters of Millwall Football Club in my book about the cab trade, but it was always done with affection. You see, inside every cab driver there’s a Millwall supporter trying to get out... OK, not an actual Millwall fan, but an individual harbouring a similar fatalistic philosophy. We hope for the best but expect the worst. We want to earn good money, but we rarely do. We want to be liked. But if we are not liked or respected, we are thick-skinned enough to be able to take it. “No-one likes us, we don’t care” is Millwall’s most famous song – brilliant! It perfectly encapsulates the inner-Millwall supporter inside us. We are everything that the young, ambitious, corporate wage-slave isn’t. We play poorly as a team. We constantly fail to meet targets. We set goals that we cannot reach. And if you’ve ever seen a group of cab drivers converge on a café, it’s like a mob of Millwall fans turning up at your local. That’s your quiet Sunday lunch with the missus gone.

The Bad-Lands of South East London

Driving a cab, I’d often be asked to drive people to Arsenal or Chelsea games as their stadiums are pretty central. Runs down to Millwall were quite frequent too, but usually with foreign visitors. Many tourists like to take in a football game while in London. Unfortunately, it’s not easy to get hold of tickets for Premier League games, so they invariably end up in the ‘bad-lands’ of South-East London. It’s not so bad around the New Den these days, but relations between West Ham and Millwall have never been warm. Driving down there with some Norwegians once I had to explain to them why I took my West Ham air freshener down before we arrived.

England’s Midfield Engine Room

Should you be tempted to show any football allegiance, you are setting yourself up for all sorts of problems. Other cab drivers love commenting on your team’s humiliating defeat after the day’s results have come through. Clocking my West Ham sticker another driver would invariably draw alongside to deliver a cheery, “I see West Ham lost again at home, heh heh!” Even if they have won, I don’t like being told the result. I rarely watch live football on TV or listen to it on the radio. In traditional fashion I wait until I get home on a Saturday to watch Match of the Day with the wife. Many passengers are up for a chat about football if they know you are a fan. I like football - but I don’t understand it. I’m happy to talk about the general aspects of being a supporter, but things can get technical. Once someone wants to discuss the nuances of England’s midfield engine room, I change the subject to flower arranging or something.

Hammer Loses Stadium

I used to go to matches regularly, but I only make a couple of games a season now at most. I always seem to get lost at the Olympic Stadium. In the half-dozen times I’ve been there, I must have walked a different route from Stratford Station to the stadium on each occasion. One night, I walked around the no-man’s land around Stratford and Hackney for ages. It was dark and I didn’t recognise any landmarks: though I guess a football stadium and one of the biggest shopping centres in Europe should be distinctive enough for most people. I never even attempted to use Hackney Wick station instead of Stratford. In the cab I was always fearful of being asked to go to Stratford or Hackney Wick: the area has developed at an alarming rate, and I can never keep up with the road layout changing so rapidly.

Canned Laughter & Crowd Noise

I expect to see out the season sat at home, so I’ll catch a few games on TV. I was alarmed at the introduction of artificial crowd noise. I feel the same about that as I do canned laughter on TV comedy programmes. I was surprised to learn that players are being encouraged to avoid contact. West Ham’s defenders have been avoiding contact all season, so no change there. Everything is getting back to normal.

Chris Ackrill is a taxi driver and former Knowledge examiner

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No matter how careful, even the best drivers in the trade can find themselves with legal trouble when the odds are stacked against them.

The LTDA legal service is the only trade scheme which defends members for all alleged offences (traffic, hackney or criminal), anytime, anywhere in the UK.

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*Insurance conditions require drivers to have been renting for 3 years or more and have had no fault accidents for 3 years or more. Based on PCP purchase at 6.9% APR. Figures are based on a TX Vista Comfort Plus. Offer valid until 31/09/2020.
On Tuesday 2nd June, Paul Bell (56) ‘Larger than Life’ cabman of thirty-five years and also late-night Liverpool Street Station Taxi Marshall, passed away four days shy of his 57th Birthday.

In March, Paul was diagnosed with ‘Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma’. He valiantly worked up until a fortnight before his passing.

Whilst being transported for radiotherapy, Paul felt unwell and was diverted to A&E. Due to complications, he was transferred to a Covid-19 Ward, where six days later Paul left us, in the loving embrace of his (Ambulance Driver) daughter.

Paul resided in Hextable, Kent, for twenty-five years, later moving to Dalston but grew up in East Ham, son of Ernie, a vintage cabbie of forty plus years.

Paul’s previous occupations range from a runner for ‘London Weekend Television’ to proof reading for the ‘Daily Mirror’. He even tried his hand at his lifelong dream of becoming an actor. A modicum of success followed with parts as an ‘extra’ and roles in short comedy films.

From the ages of 28 – 40, Paul indulged his thirst for adventure by travelling the world, before acquiring the love of his last 15 years - ‘Buddy’, a Staffordshire bull terrier whom Paul doted on, to the point where he re-arranged shifts and never ventured abroad again.

Best mate and fellow Cabbie & Taxi Marshall Steve Cairns, praised Paul’s ‘heart of gold’, saying, “Whichever part of London we visited, people gravitated towards a man who with fag, pint and chat was blissfully content.”

Paul’s son’s abiding memory is “Dad used to love being around people, despite his risqué jokes. He would chat to anyone and everyone”.

Paul is survived by brother, Jerry and children, Victoria & Luke.
Save with LTDA Plus
From reaching your health and fitness goals to relaxing in front of a blockbuster, take a look at these offers for LTDA members.

Stuck at home craving a movie fix?
We know that you love going to the movies, as do we! Being confined to home is difficult for us all but so necessary at this time. Now we can help you save money on home movie streaming from Rakuten TV*.

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*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice. Mongoose - Voucher terms and conditions will apply. Each individual voucher is worth 350 Rakuten Points, the equivalent of £3.50 in value for 1 movie rental in standard resolution on Rakuten TV. A Rakuten TV account is required to use any of the voucher value, setting up an account is simple and free with no ongoing subscription, simply use the vouchers to pay for what you use. Click here to visit Rakuten TV. Further conditions apply above refer to the voucher page within “The Cinema Society” for full details. Foyles - Unfortunately the discount is not applicable against certain items, including but not limited to already discounted products, events, gift cards, book kits, theatre tickets, A Year of Books and the Animator’s Survival Kit. The discount is not applicable to postage costs. Foyles reserves the right to alter products included or excluded from the scheme, and to add to or amend these terms and conditions. LTDA Plus is managed and run on behalf of LTDA by Parliament Hill Ltd.
Memories of The Taxi Charity Patron Dame Vera Lynn

Dame Vera Lynn died on 18 June 2020 aged 103, she was Patron of the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans for over 50 years.

Dame Vera Lynn was not only our Patron, but she was a great friend who gave her time freely for “The Boys” as she called the veterans - and they loved her for it.

Paul Davis, Honorary Secretary, Taxi Charity for Military Veterans, said “In the early days Vera Lynn would sing on the stage at the Town Hall, during the charity’s annual outing to Worthing, having driven herself and her brother Roger from her home in Ditchling to attend the event she loved so much.

During the lunch break the veterans would queue to talk and shake Dame Vera’s hand while reminiscing and thanking her for her efforts during the War and beyond. Dame Vera never refused any of them and was seldom able to finish her lunch, but she never complained and always had time to have a photo with them and always demonstrated enormous patience and kindness for all ‘The Boys.’

Once, when The Taxi Charity was visiting The RAF Museum in Hendon, Dame Vera came into a back room and queued with everyone to make tea for the veterans and then sat down with her tea and chatted to them. This was the Vera we knew, always helpful, kind and considerate, she was never a diva but always put ‘The Boys’ first.

These visits made memories that the veterans would never forget. She was their sweetheart and her music had helped them to get through their darkest hours. On a personal note it was a real pleasure to have met and known her.”

“She was not only a Patron of the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans, but she was a great friend who gave her time freely for “The Boys” as she called the veterans - and they loved her for it.”

Dame Vera was an enormous supporter of the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans for over fifty years, attending events when she was able to and promoting the work of the charity whenever she could.

NEWS IN BRIEF

LTDA Election of Council of Management 2021

The following members were elected to the LTDA Council of Management in June and will take their seats in January 2021: Steve McNamara, Paul Brennan, Peter Walsh, Richard Massett, Lloyd Baldwin, Jimmy Smith, Steve Hawes, Anthony Street, Steve Howard and Paul Kirby.
BEWARE SCAMS OF THE COVID-19 TIMES

MONEY MATTERS

The coronavirus outbreak might have curtailed work opportunities for many people - but scammers and fraudsters are thriving.

With many people scared and confused about the pandemic, criminals are using an ever-growing array of loathsome tactics to get their victims to part with their money.

The over 50’s can often be a key target for scammers as they view this demographic as ‘not technically savvy’, and as ‘having more money’ than younger generations.

I’ve taken a look at the most common coronavirus scams and as to how you can protect yourself…

Track and Trace Scams

The Government’s controversial Track and Trace scheme has led to a boom in fraudulent calls claiming to be from the NHS.

In the scam, a message or phone call informs someone that they have been in contact with somebody who has tested positive for Covid-19 and that they need to self-isolate and take a test.

The scammers then ask the victim to confirm their address so a testing kit can be sent to them. Bank card details are also requested – purportedly to cover the cost of the testing kit.

A spokesperson for the City of London Police said: “It’s important to remember that NHS Test and Trace will never ask for your financial details, PINs or banking passwords. They will also never visit your home. We would encourage anyone with concerns about a phone call, text message or email they have received, in relation to Track and Trace, to check the website address being provided to you carefully. If you think you have been sent a scam message, please report it to Action Fraud.”

The correct website from which to obtain a coronavirus test is www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test and the Track and Trace website is www.contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk/

SEISS Scams

The Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) has been a lifeline for many self-employed workers during the pandemic. But fraudsters are using phishing scams to try to steal personal and financial details of self-employed workers using the scheme.

Victims typically get a text message or email offering a tax rebate or refund and directing them to a fraudulent copy of the HMRC government site.

A form on the site then asks for the individual’s email address, postcode and HMRC log-in details. It subsequently calculates a fake refund amount then asks for the victim’s card number, name, account number, security code and expiry date so the amount can be paid.

Once the details are handed over, the scammer has enough personal and banking details to steal the victim’s money.

Purchase Scams

According to research by Natwest, purchase scams in which goods are offered for sale but never actually delivered are on the rise.

Scammers typically offer goods people are keen to get hold on during lockdown - such as hot tubs and Nintendo Switches. Hot tub scams increased five-fold in May with the warmer weather leading to an increase in the number of genuine purchases.

Other potential scams include criminals claiming to sell you things like protective face masks and hand sanitiser at vastly inflated prices.

TV Licensing Scams

Natwest research also found there’s been an increase in TV Licensing scams. These commonly target customers with emails stating that an urgent payment is due and link to a fake site.

Many emails show a fake licence number - if you cross reference this with your real TV Licence, you’ll find the numbers don’t match.

Other emails might say you can get a refund or a cheaper licence. But the TV Licensing Authority will never contact you ‘out of the blue’ about these subjects.

It’s best to always treat these emails with caution, avoid clicking on any links, and to contact the TV Licensing Authority directly if you have any doubts about your payments being up to date.

Pet Scams

Many people have seen lockdown as the ideal time to buy a pet – prompting fraudsters to try and cash in on our furry friends. According to Action Fraud, 669 people lost a combined total of £282,686 in March and April, after putting down deposits for pets they have seen advertised online.

The adverts that victims responded to were posted on social media, general online selling platforms, and also specific pet selling platforms.

Scammers typically use social distancing rules as a reason a dog or cat can’t be viewed until a deposit, or money for insurance and vaccinations, has been paid. In most cases the animal doesn’t exist, and the fraudsters pocket the cash and disappear.
Name
Address
Postcode
Telephone
Mobile
Email
Twitter
Date of Birth
Badge No.
Badge colour (Please state whether green or yellow)
Year badge obtained
Suburban 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 __________________

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. Then return the form to the LTDA, FREEPOST, (PAM 2005), London W9 2BR

To the Manager of ___________________________

Address __________________________________

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 ___________________________

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.
Alf’s still locked down reading up on his cabbie history. He’s in the crosshairs of organised criminals. But he ain’t giving up his debit card details to nobody...

ISOLATION, SCAMMERS & BUTTERBIRDS?

A s with other ‘Golden Oldies’ living on their own, I’ve had a belfryful of self-isolation. But I am realistic enough to know that so far, this has kept me fit and well when the odds have been stacked against me. My son and my lovely neighbours provide me with a meal seven days a week. I’m not being ungrateful, but being common, I’m fed up with all the pasta and rice! I’d love to be able to walk down to the ‘Chippie’ in Fortune Green Road and order a plate of cod and chips – with a couple of Pickled Gherkins and a glass of beer! But beggars can’t be choosers! For now, I remain at home – and don’t some people know it...

Captive Isolating Audience

The genuine firms are focussing online with what is basically ‘A Captive Marker’. They are trying to flog specs, pills for all different ailments, keep fit classes and Bitcoin. But it appears that the scammers are focussing – big time, on all the elderly people who are self-isolating at home! And these scammers are not amateurs, they go out of their way to appear ‘kosher’!

I got an e-mail recently purporting to be from a well-known food store. The e-mail was decorated with all the images that we associate with that particular store. ‘Would you like to play a game and maybe win a top-of-the-range mobile phone?’ it said. So, I pressed the button and up came a spinning wheel. I hit the spinning wheel and it stopped by the picture of a mobile phone. But I got fed up because there were so many questions to answer, so I switched off the e-mail.

Next Intended Victim

The following day I got another e-mail from them that said, ‘Albert Townsend, congratulations you are our winner!’ Even though I hadn’t finished the game! I had to press a button to accept my mobile phone worth £1300. Then I got a bit suspicious when they said there will be a delivery charge of just one pound. For a start, nobody charges as little as one pound for a delivery charge, so I knew what was coming in the final of the ‘spiel’. ‘Your iPhone will be delivered in two days – after you’ve entered your Debit/Credit Card number!’ So that was deleted and ‘Caller Blocked’, but I got another e-mail from them the following day – obviously using a new number and with a different-named food store!

Top of the Hit List

I don’t know if I was top of the scammer’s hit list that week, but I had three calls in one day and they were all scams! First up was this guy telling me that the guarantee for my washing machine was running out and how much do I pay. I rudely replied, ‘You seem to know all about my guarantee, why don’t you know that?’ He ignored my rude remark and just carried on with his sale’s pitch. ‘We can reduce the annual charge by 25%’, he said, ‘and all you need to do’ – here we go again, ‘is supply us with your Debit/Credit Card Numbers. Down went the phone poste-haste! The next scammer asked me who my energy supplier was. He must have been new, because he was rattling through his script too quickly and he wasn’t at all convincing! I replied that I didn’t know, and he said I could save £25 a year if I signed up with them. All I had to do was to accept the deal – and of course enclose my Debit/Credit Card info. Down with the phone yet again!!

A short while after, I got another scam call from the same firm. It was probably the Office Manager, showing his young colleague how it should be done. The same ‘spiel’ only told a little slower. He seemed a little miffed when I said I wasn’t interested and put the phone down again!

So, please be very careful because unfortunately, some elderly people are too trusting and are not tech savvy. Always remember that nobody ever gives away ‘goodies’ for nought!

From Butterflies to ‘Butterboys’

There are several interpretations of where the name ‘Butterboy’ (a new cabbie), comes from. Some of the history buffs say that it means ‘but-a-boy’, while other more cynical cabbies say, ‘He takes the bread and butter out of my children’s mouths!’ But the trade historians inform me that the origin of part of that word goes way back to the Victorian era, when the semi-retired cabbies living in the country were nicknamed ‘Butterflies’ because they would come up to London every Summer for one month in the peak season. The disgruntled Cabbies used to say, ‘They fly up, fly all around London nicking our work for a month, then fly back again like a swarm of bleedin’ Butterflies’! The official name for a ‘swarm of Butterflies is a Kaleidoscope’ – not a lot of people know that!

The Origins of Taxi Talk

Nobody really knows exactly when and where the name ‘Butterboy’ came from, and the ageing ‘Butterflies’ who may have known, have made their last flight to ‘the big cab rank in the sky’. But to hazard an educated guess, it may have been near the end of the Victorian era when ‘The KOL’ became progressively more difficult. Generations of cabbies had passed their dislike of the ‘Butterflies’ to the new generation. These cabbies got their Bill after months of hard work, discovered they were accepted as an integral part of the transport in London and it was a good earner. But further down the line, when new drivers pitched up, challenging their earnings - they may well have remembered the hated ‘Butterflies’ of the past and perhaps made for the creation of the derogatory nickname of, ‘Butterboy’?

On an aside, I don’t know if the present female cabbies are ever called, ‘Buttergirls’, ‘Butterwomen’, ‘Butterladies’, or maybe even ‘Butterbirds’! I’ll get my coat...
PUZZLER
CROSSWORD

ACROSS:

1 Considerately (12)
8 Aroma (5)
9 Tool for removing blockages (7)
10 Be jealous of (4)
11 Hired killer (8)
14 Rarely, hardly ever (6)
15 Lavatory cleaning fluid (6)
17 Endless life after death (8)
21 Popular caged pet (7)
23 Frequently (5)
24 As an upper limit (2,3,7)

DOWN:

1 Sense in the mouth (5)
2 Put too high a price on (9)
3 Very strong wind (4)
4 Old office worker in a ‘pool’ (6)
5 Not fit for purpose (8)
6 Cover (pipes) (3)
7 Make very wet (6)
12 ___ Bolognese, pasta with meat sauce (9)
13 First-rate (3-5)
14 Boll, as with anger (6)
16 Hi-fi unit (6)
19 Move rhythmically to music (5)
20 Verse writer (4)
22 Annual car check (inits)(3)

SET SQUARE

Place each of the digits 1 to 9 in the grid to make the sums work. We’ve started you with two numbers.

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.

LETTERBOX

Complete the grid so that four words read across and a different four words read downwards using only the letters in the given word.
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- All cabs wanted, we come to you, top prices paid, cash/ bank transfer, instant decision, finance settled, non-runners or sell & rent back, Taxi’s available to rent. Call 07956 317300
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Have you heard the expression (now not at all PC), ‘the things you see when you haven’t got a gun?’

FATTENING THE CURVE

Here comes the sun. Mr Meg has got his knees out. He wears shorts from May to December every year and only puts them away, reluctantly, when the hairs on his legs start to freeze.

He has sported the same khaki green shorts for over two decades. They cost 10p in a jumble sale in 2007. I think he was robbed. The fabric of the shorts felt like corrugated iron even then, and every year since they have got stiffer and stiffer. Now they’re like a suit of armour.

Yesterday, I was applying lipstick and mascara in the bedroom (gotta make an effort girls, in case George Clooney comes calling) and behind me Mr Meg was grunting, huffing, puffing and swearing trying to get the shorts on.

“What have you done to my shorts?” demanded, “Have you boil washed them or something?” I pointed out that the shorts were too stiff to get into the washing machine and they had to be hand washed in the bath. This, somehow, is my job and another reason that I detest the said shorts.

Mr Meg was sweating, a lot, his eyes were bloodshot, and he was short of breath because his precious shorts were not sliding up over his hips.

He flopped back on the bed and wiggled and jiggled and squiggled and finally shouted, “Haha!” He leapt up from the bed to show me. Have you heard the expression (now not at all PC), ‘the things you see when you haven’t got a gun?’

Mr Meg had managed to squeeze the shorts over his ass but the button and zip at the front were wide open exposing a large wodge of his boxers.

It was a look that would certainly get him arrested for indecent exposure if he ventured out onto the street. I nodded down at his tackle and shook my head, He puffed, “Alright! I know! I’m just about to button them up!”

“You are!” I asked. “Zipping and/or buttoning those shorts would have been a physical impossibility. Never the twain would meet.

“I’ll just walk around in them a bit and loosen them up first!” he said, trying to sound all cocky. Pun intended.

“OK. Just don’t open the door to anyone or go in the garden.” He headed out of the bedroom walking like a Geisha girl. The tight shorts had him gripped across the top of his thighs which meant he part slid, and part fell down the stairs.

When I joined him downstairs, I found Mr Meg positioned in front of the fridge eating straight from it. He had a chunk of cheddar cheese in his right hand, a slice of rolled ham hanging from his lips and a wedge of pork pie in the other hand.

“Is that your lunch?” I enquired.

“It’s elevenses” he said, as the clock struck ten.

“Why don’t you just stuff your elevenses down the front of your shorts and cut out the middleman?” I suggested.

That made him come over all indignant. “Why would I do that? Are you saying I’m getting fat? I haven’t gained any weight in lockdown!”

He added a sly, “Have you?”

“I haven’t put on a pound since the day we got married!” I lied. And as a payback for him being mean I told him, “Face facts. It’s time to buy a new pair of shorts”.

Appalled, he gasped and slung his ‘elevenses’ straight back into the fridge. “No way, Hose. I’m off out for a run.”

See how I went from fattening to flattening the curve in minutes? Let’s call it a wife-style change.
 Lockdown blues seem to be getting to everyone and since my last column I have had lots of drivers asking, via the editor, how I managed to secure the work, and now school runs that I have.

**Adversity to Routine**

Pre Covid, the one thing that I never wanted was a regular job, I know some cabbies have always strived to get regular jobs and pre book airport rides etc, but for my style of irregular hours and days it was never appealing. The attraction to me of cabbaging was being able to come and go as I pleased, switch my hours about and have the odd lay-in on a workday.

How times have changed - and so have I. When it first happened, I had a simple flyer drawn up, with a picture of my TXE乔伊. When it first happened, I had a simple flyer drawn up, with a picture of my TXE and a few bullet points, fixed fares, safe travel, air conditioned, fully partitioned, sanitised after every trip etc. I then started putting them through doors within a few streets. I then had the flyer done professionally and 5000 printed for less than £200 and I ventured further and further afield advertising across my little bit of suburbia. The first two bits were two regular City and return jobs, one of which I still do, and then I started getting doctor, hospital and supermarket runs and eventually a contract with my local medical centre.

**Popping Home for Lunch**

I have single handed almost put the local minicab office out of business, to the point where they asked me to work for them fulfilling small business contracts. By the time they asked, I didn’t need them - a few weeks earlier and I might have had a dilemma on my hands!

Customers love the cab, everyone appreciates the clean credentials and comments on how I am always jumping out, cleaning the cab and helping with fetching and carrying, with gloves, hand gel and a mask. Moneywise, I am now earning almost what I was in town, I am doing more hours but its all local and I am popping home for lunch between jobs, charging the cab and spending a lot of time hanging around waiting. It never rains but it pours is the saying and whilst some afternoons I have nothing, other days I have 4 jobs at the same time and I now have two local TXE owning cabbies helping me cover these occasions.

**Three Roads to Success**

Putting this small success down to three things: my idea and efforts to try and source local work, my TXE and accepting lower fares (but more of them), all paid on my contactless reader. It does not look like London will return to anything like normal for a long time, I would suggest, depending on where you live, that printing the flyer and going door to door has to be worth a punt! Setting in front of daytime TV and worrying won’t solve it.

When it first happened, I had a simple flyer drawn up, with a picture of my TXE and a few bullet points, fixed fares, safe travel, air conditioned, fully partitioned, sanitised after every trip etc. I then started putting them through doors.

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POLICY CONDITIONS: Claims for Back/Depression related illnesses have a reduced benefit of £90 per week. 14 day deferment period before claim payments start. Maximum period for which weekly benefit is payable to 26 weeks. The age limit for joining Platinum is 49 years and for the Gold is 54 years. You are covered up to your 65th Birthday. (subject to terms & conditions).
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