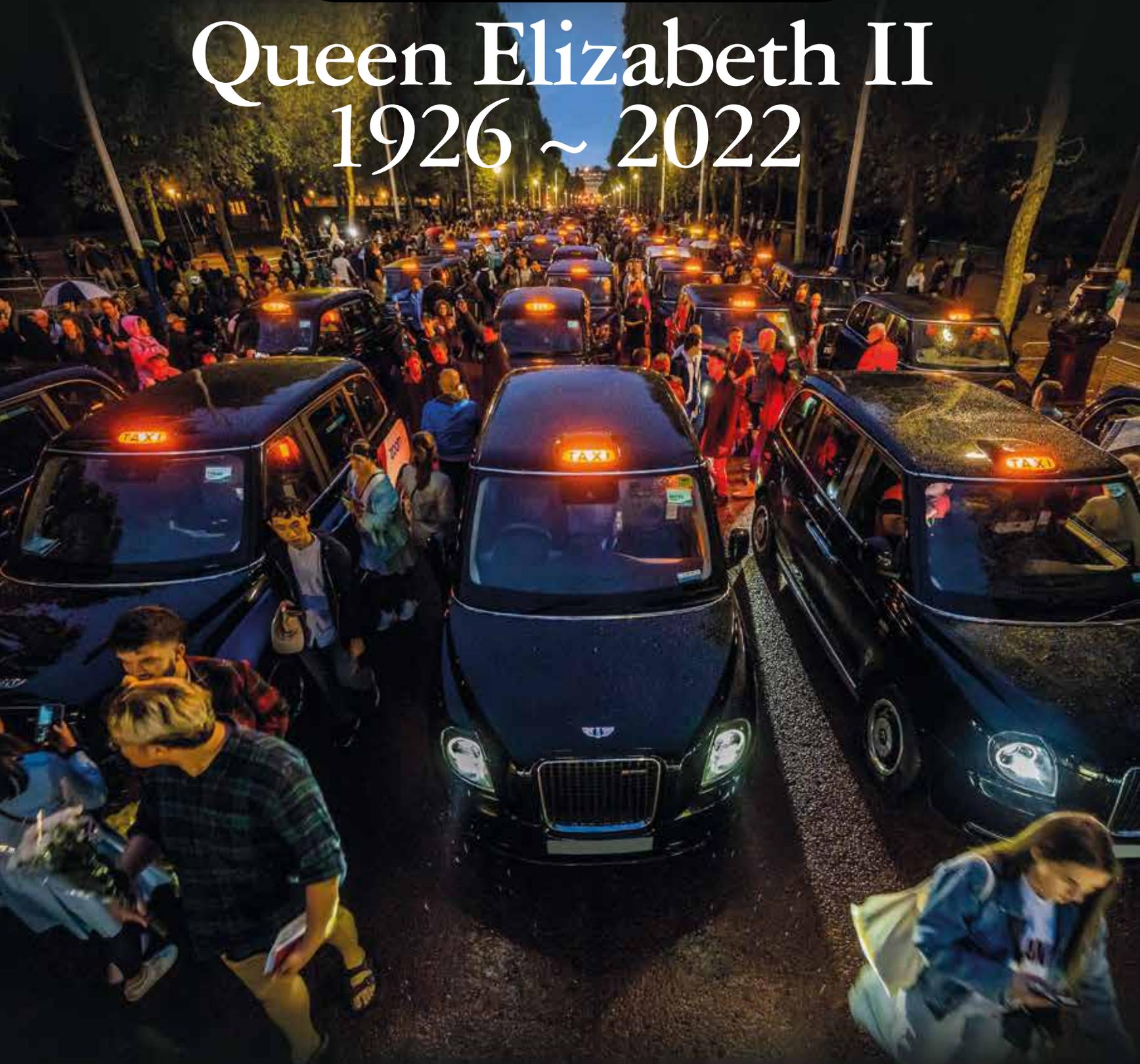


The newspaper of the Licensed Taxi Drivers' Association

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20th September 2022 #525

TAXI

Queen Elizabeth II 1926 ~ 2022

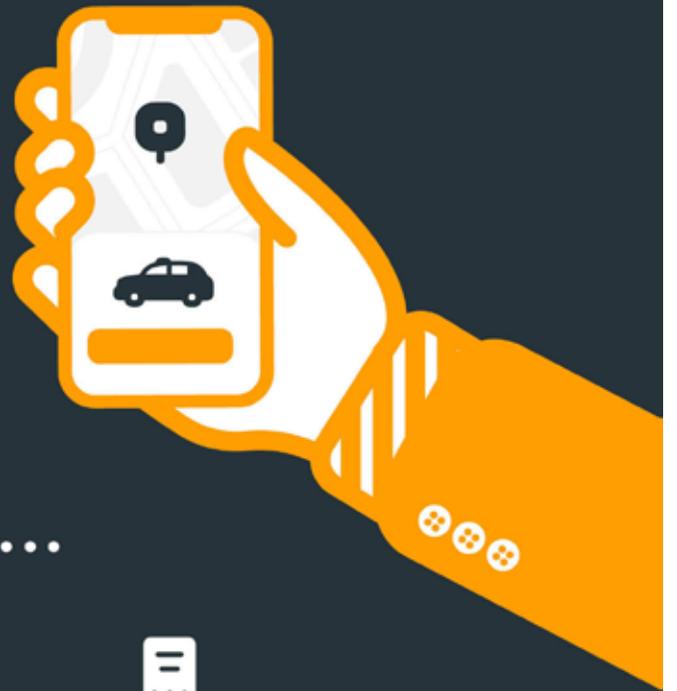


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20:09:22

QUEEN ELIZABETH II
21 APRIL 1926 - 8 SEPTEMBER 2022



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EDITOR'S NOTE

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

At TAXI, we were deeply saddened by the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Our thoughts are with His Majesty the King and the Royal Family at this difficult time. It was extremely moving to see so many of London's licensed taxi drivers showing up to pay their respects by lining the Mall upon the announcement of Her Majesty's death. This captured the feelings of a whole nation in mourning and was seen around the World as a fitting tribute to our much-loved and dedicated monarch. May she rest in peace.

SHERBET'S NEW AD CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS ELECTRIC TAXIS' GREEN CREDENTIALS

Sherbet Taxis is calling out *Uber* with its debut advertising campaign. The campaign includes a taxi with the large, bold message 'Uber is fuming', and a strapline underneath explains: 'They pump kilo tonnes of exhaust into the air.' The taxi with the Uber related ad was parked outside Uber's offices and on London's most polluted road to mark the launch of the wider advertising campaign, across Sherbet's 350 strong London electric taxi fleet. Other messages in the campaign, which will now appear on Sherbet's fleet include, 'Luxury doesn't have to cost the earth' and 'London's new street cleaner,' highlighting the green credentials of the electric taxi and quality of the vehicles.



MEMORIAL FOR PETER ROSE

Peter Rose, a greatly respected and well-liked member of our trade, very sadly passed away in October 2021. Peter was a LTDA representative on ranks and highways, who worked tirelessly to resolve issues impacting members and also helped to promote the work of the cab trade through social media. He is greatly missed by many both at the LTDA and throughout the trade. His family are holding a memorial next month and would like to invite anyone who knew him wishing to pay their respects to attend.

MEMORIAL FOR PETER ROSE
TUESDAY 25th OCTOBER 2-5PM
POPLAR ROWING CLUB, FERRY STREET, E14 3DT

As promised, dear Peter's memorial will be held a year to his passing. Please feel free to drop in and say a few words. We would love to see you there! Light refreshments and drinks will be served. RSVP to Adrienne and Alex Telephone: 07980 978621 Or email: adrienne.rose@ntlworld.com

We look forward to seeing you all.



LTDA
Taxi House 133 Great Suffolk Street,
SE1 1PP
T: 020 7286 1046 | www.ltda.co.uk
@TheLTDA

Editor
Katie Combes
E: editor@ltda.co.uk

Commissioning Editor
Mike Williams
E: taxieditor@centuryone.uk

Produced by
Century One Publishing Ltd
Alban Row, 27-31 Verulam Road
St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 4DG.
T: 01727 893 894, F: 01727 893 895
E: hello@centuryone.uk
www.centuryone.uk

Advertising Sales Executive
Loren Wedderburn T: 01727 739184
E: loren@centuryone.uk

Creative Director
Peter Davies

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You've probably heard of the **LTDA Lottery**. What you probably don't know is that since it started in 1986, we've paid out **more than £2,110,000** in prize money to more **than 400 winners!**

LOTTO WINNER!

Congratulations Mr John O'Donnell! August's winner was John O'Donnell. John was stunned to receive the call notifying him that he had won the lottery last month. A first-time winner, he advises others not to delay and to buy a ticket! He told us he will probably put his winnings towards a nice holiday and will maybe also spend some on home improvements.



LTDA LOTTERY

The first prize in our lottery is **£5,000** - every month! But you won't win it if you're not in it. **Tickets cost £5 each per month**. And even if you don't win, you'll know that proceeds from the lottery contribute towards the LTDA advertising campaigns run on radio, posters and AdVan.

To be in on it, call **020 7286 1046** and ask about the LTDA Lottery.

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6 Points Not Out, 12 Points Not Out!

(if you are an LTDA member!)

We will take whatever steps are necessary to protect and defend our members. Make sure you are protected by the best, before the worst happens.



Queen Elizabeth II

I must of course take a moment to express my deepest sadness over the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Throughout her extraordinary 70-year reign, Queen Elizabeth was a symbol of stability and steadfast dedication, in an uncertain and rapidly changing world. May she rest in peace. Well done to all the cabbies, who were out on the Mall to pay tribute to Her Majesty, you did the trade and our country proud.

his house had burnt down was lost on him! Make sure you are protected by the best, before the worst happens.

Fares Survey

Even though our annual fare increase is applied in April, the calculations are reviewed now, using both a 'cost basket' of various items, including the price of fuel, insurance, vehicles etc. and outside factors such as average earnings. The calculations show the figure for next year's potential increase is 11.64%.

There are two schools of thought with the current fare increase, the first is that we should take everything the cost index indicates, if we don't our fares and earnings fall behind. The second is that an increase or large increase could cost us customers, at a time when our competitors are charging similar fares to ours, and when they no longer have the advantage of being cheaper, in what is a price sensitive market, and possibly more so, if the economy deteriorates in the near future.

We would like to hear our members views, so that we can accurately represent them and push for the best outcome for everyone. We have sent an online link to all our members and would ask that everyone please takes 5 minutes to fill it in, if you haven't already.

Be lucky.

LTDA

Steve's comment

Transport for London's new Taxi and Private Hire Driver policy is well-documented. It gives TfL the right to suspend or revoke your cab licence for having as few as six points on your DVLA driving licence. The policy can be summed up as follows. Under the new policy, if you get caught holding a mobile phone, that could be you immediately. Please don't do it. A mobile phone offence results in a mandatory six points on your licence, and the TfL will then write to you advising that they are considering your suitability to be licensed and will suspend your cab bill.

If you are what's referred to as a 'totter' and you accumulate (or tot up) 12 points within three years the Courts would normally issue a driving ban, but

in exceptional circumstances, and with the right lawyer, they can be persuaded to allow you to carry on driving. This is often applied to professional drivers and those who rely on a vehicle to make their living. However, under the new TfL policy, and even if a Magistrate decides to allow you to retain your DVLA licence, TfL will still suspend your cab bill.

Not Out

We are still working hard to ensure that drivers are not unfairly penalised by this policy. Our legal team are working practically around the clock to support drivers who have fallen foul of these draconian new rules and to protect their licenses. They have now successfully represented the first members who had their taxi licenses suspended under these new rules.

Within the past few weeks, a member who had been convicted of holding a mobile phone and given six points by the court, and who subsequently had his

taxi licence suspended by TfL, was successfully represented by our lawyers at a reconsideration hearing and is back working. Another member, who had accrued 12 points for various speeding offences and was allowed to keep his DVLA licence by the Courts, following a submission by our lawyers, subsequently had his taxi licence suspended by TfL. Again, we were successful at the TfL reconsideration hearing, and our member is back driving his cab.

We will take whatever steps are necessary to protect and defend our members, but we are now seeing a number of drivers, who find themselves in similar situations to those above, and who are not members asking for help. One driver had been driving a cab for over 30 years and had never been a member. He told me we should help him because we are 'all cabbies' and should look after each other, he even offered to join! The irony that he effectively wanted to buy insurance after



Discuss, Consult and Inform

If you ask me, they should be called, 'spread misinformation', 'ask misleading questions' and 'tell you what we were always going to do anyway.'

Top rank

Back in April, I wrote in this paper how TfL seemed to be using the 'Skulduggery playbook' by misrepresenting the true cycling figures for Park Lane. They did this by gathering data to support the cycle lane scheme from locations within the parks, as opposed to actually on Park Lane.

Skulduggery

TfL used figures for West Carriage Drive and Broad Walk, with the effect of inflating the number of cyclists. Their figure for cycling on Broad Walk alone, was more than double the number of cyclists actually on Park Lane, which was based on counts at Stanhope Gate and Brook Gate. Even the figures from the counts at those locations, which are at least actually on Park Lane, could be argued not to be a true reflection of the number of cyclists using Park Lane. That's because they are points where those who have ridden through the park will pop out to use just a couple of yards of Park Lane, as they continue their journeys.

Our figures

I decided to have the Park Lane cycle lane monitored for myself, so I could compare our findings to the official numbers from July 2021 to Feb 2022. Other interested parties' figures often compare a wet and cold week from one year, with a warm and sunny one the following year, to give the illusion that cycling has increased by an inflated amount. To avoid this kind of bias, I didn't do the count in August when everyone was away, or even on a Monday or Friday, when the bulk



Broad Walk, Hyde Park

of working from home occurs. I did it between Tuesday 6th and Thursday 8th September each day from 7am to 7pm, when the weather averaged 20 degrees was partly sunny barring two hours of on/off rain on the 8th.

Let's compare the figures (see the table below). These are the average hourly counts at each location.

Slight difference there! And our count was done in what would unarguably be called a busy period for cycling, with both workers and tourists in abundance, I could have, but didn't, use a cold wet week in January.

Three conversations

I received the latest email from TfL on the Park Lane cycle lane, not another consultation this time, apparently, that will come later in the autumn, instead, for now it's 'let's have a discussion.' On TfL's 'Have your say' website it seems they have three types

of conversation. These are: 'discuss', 'consult' and 'inform'. If you ask me, they should be called, 'spread misinformation', 'ask misleading questions' and 'tell you what we were always going to do anyway.'

The email offered some quite outrageous reasoning for the scheme as points for 'discussion.' It stated that, "there is a strong case for less motor traffic and more space for walking and cycling along Park Lane." I don't think it's even a weak case, let alone a strong one. One of their key reasons is that Hyde Park isn't open 24 hours. That's very true. It's only open for a mere 19 of the 24 hours, the other five hours are from midnight to 5am, not exactly peak travel or commuting times!

The email goes on to say that cyclists can and do use Broad Walk, which runs parallel to Park Lane (2.29km away, but

technically yes, it is parallel), but, and I'm paraphrasing, commuting cyclists must navigate people who have the audacity to go out for a stroll and as a result there are 'frequent' collisions.

A place to dwell

TfL also state that Hyde Park is a place for people to 'linger' and 'dwell' and not an appropriate place for pedestrians and cyclists to mix. Now, this really jumped out at me, for a couple reasons. Firstly, Threadneedle Street in the City is being turned into a place to 'dwell,' and only open to pedestrians and cyclists. Perhaps someone from TfL had better tell the City of London that the two don't mix?

Secondly, Broad Walk is a very wide path, (the clue is in the name) in fact it can probably fit six or seven double decker buses side by side, yet TfL deem it not suitable. Conversely, at numerous locations across London, they have 'floating bus stops', where pedestrians 'dwell' waiting or alighting from a bus almost directly into a cycle lane. Unbelievably TfL don't see the irony. But why should they let irony get in the way of today's argument.

Hardly surprising then, their wording refers to cyclists as 'commuters' in a masked attempt to imply that they are there for a purpose, whilst the pedestrians are just out for a stroll. Funny that, as the biggest sustained increase in cycling is, I believe, according to the latest government statistics, "for leisure and at weekends." ■ LTDA

	Location	AM	LUNCHTIME	PM
TfL figures	Stanhope Gate	231	117	298
TfL figures	Brook Gate	151	115	365
LTDA figures	Park Lane	94	34	118



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St Thomas' Hospital Update

Tickets were being issued at an alarming rate to drivers dropping passengers off at the Hospital. I was shocked to hear of this and wanted to put a stop to it.

Streets ahead

Recently, we have had some very shocked and confused members getting PCNs for setting down and picking up passengers at St Thomas' Hospital. We've seen precisely 42 such PCNs. Drivers have been dropping passengers at the same point for years and had never been informed that they were committing a parking offence before, so what happened?

Dropping off

The location where drivers were dropping passengers off was on double red lines, just before the crossing, behind the ambulance pick up zone. As we all know, we can pick up and set down on TfL administered red routes, when loading or unloading wheelchair passengers and in such circumstances, taxis would be exempt from getting a PCN. Well, most drivers would have thought that the same rules would apply and why wouldn't they? Most of the hospital's grounds, just like St Thomas Hospital, are found on private land. At many hospitals, there are provisions in place for a 'taxi rank' that allows taxis to drop of passengers, especially those who are less able or who rely on a taxi that is fully wheelchair accessible to attend appointments.

Investigating

I visited St Thomas' to try to get to the bottom of this. Looking at the facilities to drop wheelchair users and other passengers off, I was shocked to find that the only place this was possible, was at the bottom of the ramp. This is the only place where there is a dropped kerb that allows taxis to deploy the ramp to unload wheelchairs and other passengers with mobility issues safely. This is also where these tickets were being issued at an alarming rate. I was as shocked to hear of this, as the taxi drivers, who



were just trying to do their jobs, were.

I tried to find the right department to speak to and after many calls, I finally spoke to the security parking team. A team member cancelled some of the tickets, but he couldn't cancel all and he explained the reasons why. I was advised that there had been two accidents with pedestrians using the crossing, because taxi drivers are dropping of passengers just before the crossing and blocking the line of site for others. They told me that taxis would now need to go through the barrier and enter the car park to set down and pick up passengers and will be given 15 minutes free of charge. They explained that if drivers ignore this, they would continue to get PCNs issued by private parking company, National Car Parks (NCP). I made it quite clear that this was unacceptable. I informed them that I was going to contact a senior person within the Trust and ask them to apply some common sense and rethink the new arrangements for taxis.

Next, I made contact with a member of the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and explained what was going on when taxis were dropping

off passengers and how NCP seemed to be taking advantage of the situation for financial gain and not showing any understanding or compassion.

Site visit

PALS were extremely helpful. I was asked to email them with more details and to copy in Chief Executive of the Hospital Trust, Professor Abbs. I did so and within a few hours I had received emails from senior representatives of the Hospital, voicing their concerns for patients and the taxi drivers. We arranged a site visit to try to resolve the issues.

During the visit, I explained that NCP do not seem to care or understand the need to put provisions in place for the taxi trade and our passengers to ensure St Thomas' is accessible. I also explained that there was no clear signage in place alerting drivers of any new rules or arrangements that have been implemented and showed that the existing signage was insufficient to discourage drivers from stopping before the crossing and should be placed in a more prominent place on the lamp post. (I also pointed out that perhaps it was designed like that to catch drivers out...) I also explained

what drivers need in order to deploy a ramp to unload a wheelchair safely and pointed out that the new drop-off point is not practical as there is not suitable kerb and passengers can not gain direct access to the hospital from there without using a lift.

A better outcome

The representatives I met onsite showed empathy and understood our concerns. I did however express misgivings that an important matter impacting patients' ability to get to and from hospital, had been left in the hands of the security and a parking company, with little understanding of patients' needs.

Following the meeting, St Thomas' and the parking company, have agreed to allow access through the barrier for 20 minutes free of charge, instead of the previous 15. Crucially, they will also mark a taxi bay drop off and pick up point, which will accommodate easy lift access for passengers. This will be found at the far end of the Hospital on the left-hand side. All tickets have also now been rescinded, but please be mindful of these new arrangements in future. ■ LTDA



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End of an Era

“If you ask me, the drop in our cabs age limit from 15 to 12 years is probably the hardest pill we have had to stomach as a trade.”

Streets ahead

What a historic couple of weeks it has been. I realise that this will have been covered in this issue, but I would like to say how I have always thought that Her Majesty The Queen was fantastic. Her Majesty radiated class and sophistication. She was an incredible ambassador and powerful symbol of everything our country stands for. She was revered the world over and everybody, no matter what country they came from, knew who she was.

In my opinion, Queen Elizabeth had the hardest role to play. If you ask me, Prince or Princess is the role to have. They get all the perks (private yachts, private planes, world travel, all that jazz) with much more freedom to enjoy it all and history tells us that they have always made the most of it!

Queen Elizabeth II, without a doubt, sacrificed some of her freedom for the role. I'm sick and tired of hearing from certain people how 'she had the life of Riley' and was 'waited on hand and foot,' ignoring the fact that she no doubt missed out on a hell of a lot of life's pleasures. Imagine not being



able to go out socially with your friends for drinks or dinner. Everywhere, she went she had to dress up and had the eyes of everybody on her. I'd guess that the only time she ever got to be herself was when she was at Balmoral and got to go out and about the Estate. I'd bet even then there was always security somewhere in the background. May she rest in peace.

Age limit drop

On 30 November, the age limit on our cabs will drop to a maximum of 12 years. Obtaining the last plate on your cab depends on its first date of registration. The last date you can have a plate fitted is the 30th October for cabbies that have '11' plates and in some case '12' plates. Please do not hesitate to call me and I can

advise you of what you need to do for your cab.

If you ask me, the drop in our cabs age limit from 15 to 12 years is probably the hardest pill we have had to stomach as a trade. I know many out there will shout, 'What about the American Private Hire Company?' but I believe we've seen them off. I will of course always remember that they came to London to wipe us of the streets, but they never pulled it off. Yes, them being here has changed some of our working practices, but they never did for us, which was their aim.

What annoys me the most

about the drop in the age limit, is that there is only one loser. Picture the scene: it's 2015, a cabbie walks into LTI (as they were at the time) or a Mercedes dealer and enquires what the price is for that shiny new cab in the showroom. After giving his sales pitch, the salesman finally gives a price of say £45,000. Mine, and I'm sure most other cabbie's, next thought would have been that £45,000 over 15 years works out as £3000 a year. I would then decide from there if it was workable. I'm sure that the large majority of cabbies purchased cabs on that basis, only to have 3 years' worth of equity taken from them.

The Mayor points to his decommissioning scheme and loves to say how cabbies used that money to upgrade to electric cabs. That may be true, but the age limit change also led to many cabbies retiring early or having to face buying another cab before they planned to. As I said above, there is only one loser and it's the cabbie. If a cabbie had been quoted £45,000 for a cab, that he could only use for 12 years, he may have thought twice about it.

Health concerns

At the LTDA, we frequently support members experiencing health issues such as having a pacemaker fitted, a stroke or a heart attack. They are often extremely worried about how it will impact their licence. We advise drivers on their rights and responsibilities, often just providing some much-needed reassurance. We also work with TfL's occupational health team to make sure drivers understand what they need to do to be declared 'fit to work' and how and when they can return safely to work. This can help take the stress and uncertainty out of the process, at what can already be a challenging and distressing time for someone.

My experience with cabbies' health issues is that TfL are primarily concerned with not leaving themselves open to litigation. They seem to want to be able to say 'we followed the correct process', if something terrible was to happen, so everything is done by the book. This means they tend to stick to the Group 2 driving regulations like glue. Generally speaking, if you are taking medication, they always want to know if the tablets affect your ability to drive. If not, then as I say, they are generally ok. There are plenty of working cabbies on medication for a range of issues, including Diabetes, high blood pressure and probably many others. As long as your blood pressure readings are within the Group 2 requirements, which are 180/100 and your condition is under control, you should be ok. We are always here to offer support, so please call if you need to.

LTDA



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The LTDA is the definitive voice of and for London cab drivers and is responsible for ensuring best practise in the trade, making sure its members' voices are heard and serving members with the back up and support they need.

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Turbulent Times

The only way forward is to make sure people are confident enough to carry on their lives as before, spending money in shops, pubs, gyms, restaurants, you name it.

M4 Musings

Everybody will have seen, heard and read plenty about the sad death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II by now, so I won't go into to. My Grandad was a proud republican, and good luck to him, but that's not for me. If such a question ever came up in this country, and I don't think it will, I would never vote to change a way of doing things that has persisted for a thousand years. It has evolved into an institution, which I think is still immeasurably valuable to the UK and its people.

A sad day

The 8th of September was one of those days when people will always remember where they were. I was in the cab, predictably enough, but hearing the news I pulled over and sat there thinking for a bit. Not everybody feels this of course, but for those who do, the Monarchy and the Crown, is a part of us. It belongs to the country and its people and represents pride and nationhood.

Not all monarchs are popular, but our late Queen certainly was, and not only here. We've all had tourists in the back, who are avidly curious and interested in the British Royal Family. By any measure, Elizabeth II was one of the greatest monarchs our country has ever seen. While it is a great sadness that she is gone, she had surely done her service and deserves to rest in peace.

The new King has his work cut out to follow the example of his mother, but I have a feeling he'll turn out ok. He is by all accounts a lover of black cabs, like his father before him, so that's a good start.

Lend Me A Pound

Meanwhile, the new government has announced plans to cap energy bills at £2,500 until October 2024, in addition to the £400 discount for this year already announced. There was really very little choice. Winter is just around the corner, and it



“By any measure, Elizabeth II was one of the greatest monarchs our country has ever seen.”

would be unthinkable to allow the consequences of fuel poverty to affect people, in a country as wealthy as the UK.

This policy won't be without consequences. The level of debt that the UK will owe in the coming months is truly staggering. Estimates range from £2 – 2.7 trillion. Yes, that's trillion, quite possibly more than our annual GDP. And debt is more expensive now, requiring more interest to be paid, simply to service it.

But, as I said, there is very little choice – the UK economy is around 80% services, and that includes us. So, the only way forward is to make sure people are confident enough to carry on their lives as before, spending money in shops, pubs, gyms, restaurants, you name it. The government needs the economy to continue growing so that the debt is a more manageable proportion of GDP and creditors don't demand ever more interest to buy our debts. Here's hoping someone has done their sums correctly.

Heathrow PCNs

We are absolutely snowed under with drivers getting drop-off related PCNs at Heathrow. Broadly speaking, these fall into two categories. The first is fines erroneously issued to drivers, who are doing jobs between terminals. Heathrow admit there have been problems with these and they are working to improve the system.

The majority of Heathrow PCNs we see that fall into the other category, are where drivers have not managed to successfully navigate, the admittedly difficult, APCOA system of payment, or who have received PCNs or reminders and have not responded in time.

We have highlighted all of these issues to Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL), but they appear unwilling to admit that the system is hard to use, particularly for those who have difficulty accessing the internet. HAL has adopted an approach which is unnecessarily punitive. Cab drivers bring a lot of customers to the Airport, we are different from occasional holidaymakers, who come once or twice a year. Contrast this with the approach used at Gatwick, which is clearer, easier to use and more forgiving when people make an honest mistake. We will continue dialogue with them to try to reach a solution that works for everyone, but in the meantime, drivers should be aware that a free drop-off is available at the Long Stay Car Parks.

Business at Heathrow remained strong throughout August. There is still no sign of the new tags, although HAL appear to be doing all they can to get them in. The latest estimate seems to be some time in October, although we will believe it when we see it.

Good luck out there.

LTDA

Farewell Your Majesty

London's black cab drivers remember the Queen.



13

FREE NOW ✓

Thank you

Her Majesty
Queen Elizabeth II

FreeNow

We're deeply saddened about the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. For the last seven decades she ruled the United Kingdom with admirable dedication, strength

and resilience, leaving a remarkable legacy behind her. On behalf of FREE NOW and our drivers, we thank Her Majesty for dedicating the last 70 years of her life to serving this country and its people.

Upon hearing the news of Her Majesty's death, more than 50 black cab drivers headed to The Mall to pay their respects. In a heartfelt gesture of respect, their cabs lined the

road in a salute to the Queen, just as they did when Prince Phillip passed away.

This isn't the first time London's black cab drivers have shown their support for the Queen. Earlier in the year they even offered free rides for a week to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The community also regularly goes above and beyond to give back to the community,

raising money for charities like London Taxi Drivers' Charity for Children, Taxi Charity for Military Veterans and Albany Taxi Charity.

Black cab drivers have always been an instrumental part of London and are proudly part of the history and culture of the capital. We couldn't be prouder and more honoured to be a part of this community of drivers.



The Nation's Matriarch

In an age of rapid change there has been one constant over the last eight decades.

A man in black

It's hard to imagine life in the United Kingdom without Queen Elizabeth II at the helm. She was more than a monarch, she was a nation's matriarch. It is a truism that very few people can touch the lives of an entire nation, let alone an entire planet; however, Britain's longest serving monarch achieved that with aplomb. She was the very definition of virtue, faith and self-restraint.

To partially quote the words of W.H. Auden, she was the nation's "North and South, its East and West". Her wisdom and humour helped navigate the choppy seas of international affairs as well as those closer to home. Not only would she engage with the upper echelons of society, she was equally as comfortable stopping to talk to the smallest child.

A lifetime

As head of state, the Queen oversaw the inauguration of 15 British Prime Ministers. She also reigned over more than 130 million people across 56 commonwealth nations, travelling to over 130 countries during her tenure on the throne.

With her engaging smile and twinkle in her eye, she was the consummate crowd pleaser. This was never more evident than when she made a cameo appearance in a parody film



"With her engaging smile and twinkle in her eye, she was the consummate crowd pleaser."

which heralded the opening of the 2012 Olympics. A decade later, she again starred in a parody film, this time alongside Paddington Bear in celebration of her Platinum Jubilee.

Born between two major conflicts, the Queen, who served as a mechanic and a driver during the Second World War, saw her fair share of heartache as well as joyous occasions. After marrying Phillip Mountbatten in 1947, her first child, King Charles III, was born. Her second child, Princess Anne, then followed.

February of 1952, saw Queen Elizabeth II ascend to the throne, with her coronation taking place on 2nd June, 1953. The birth of Princes Andrew and Edward then followed in 1960 and 1964, respectively.

1977 saw countrywide celebrations as the Queen celebrated 25 years on the throne. Just a few years later, she then celebrated the birth of her first two grandchildren, William and Harry.

Bittersweet progress

Tragedy was to strike in 1997 with the untimely death of Princess Diana. This led to the royal family facing a backlash for being out of step with the public feeling.

In 2002, the Queen celebrated 50 years on the throne. As part of the celebrations she travelled more than 40,000 miles, visiting countries as far afield as The Caribbean, Australia and New Zealand. This, however, was a bittersweet year with the passing of both her mother and her sister within weeks of each other prior to the Golden Jubilee.

Two notable events took place in 2007, with



the Queen becoming the oldest reigning monarch in British history and becoming the first reigning British monarch to undertake a state visit to the Republic of Ireland.

2021 saw the Queen endure a devastating loss when her constant companion for over seven decades, Prince Phillip, died just two months before his 100th birthday. The funeral saw just 30 mourners attend due to the Coronavirus restrictions in place at the time. But 2022 saw yet another milestone: her Platinum Jubilee. A four-day, star-studded event was watched by an estimated audience of one billion worldwide.

In what was to be her final duty, just 48 hours before her passing, a frail looking Queen invited incoming Prime Minister Liz Truss to form a new Government.

Queen Elizabeth II was the very definition of a royal who engaged with her adoring public. The sense of loss to the nation cannot be underestimated. She was respected, admired and revered.

Reverting again to the words of W.H. Auden's eulogy:

*Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos with a muffled drum,
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.
Let aeroplanes circle, moaning overhead,
Scribbling on the sky the message 'She is Dead'.*

Rest in Peace, Queen Elizabeth II (1926-2022)



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'Uber Files' Demo Shows Unity and Division in Taxi World

Protesters wanted EU commissioners to learn lessons from the 'Uber Files' which showed how the platform manipulated national laws.

International correspondent

On 8th September, over 400 taxis from six European countries (mainly Spain, France, Switzerland, Greece and the central group from Brussels and including one London cab from Unite), convoyed through the core of Brussels for four hours. It also included 150 taxi drivers on foot, largely from Italy, who, for energy-saving reasons, had taken the train to the European capital.

Many of the cabs, some ornately decorated, commented on Uber-friendly legislation, the 'Uber Files', the company's questionable business practices and politicians turning a blind eye. The protesters wanted EU commissioners to learn lessons from the 'Uber Files' which showed how the platform manipulated national laws in its favour – or simply ignored them. "We have left our families and work to come here. We are here to defend our livelihood," said Swiss taxi driver Abel Ben Mbarek, from Geneva. His colleague, Barcelona's Jaime Sau, asks that the taxi sector be better protected. "The basic problems are the same in all European countries. We want to be defended, because we are a public sector. We came here



together as taxi drivers to speak with one voice."

Uber, protected by politicians?

Organisers Elite Taxi (Spain) and the Brussels Taxi Federation, who demanded a full investigation of the 'Uber Files' scandal by the EU Commission, were satisfied with the turnout, the positive atmosphere and the classic taxi trade camaraderie. That taxis from the rest of Belgium, Austria, Germany and The Netherlands had chosen not to attend, plus the lack of support of many national taxi associations, showed that the European taxi world is divided in its goals, demands and solutions. Cabbies and trade unions were the driving force for Brussels.

Many associations are obviously more worried about proposed new EU platform regulations. Uber galvanises the bond between taxi drivers, as one Swiss taxi driver said: "They take our work away, they work illegally, they don't follow the rules, but they are still protected by politicians. Why?"

Taxi fares at airports up 10%

Every year, Dutch company Vliegvelldinfo.nl checks out

taxi rates at the 50 busiest airports in Europe. This year's Airport Taxi Report finds that with rapidly rising inflation everywhere, fares have shot up by an average of 10% compared to Summer, 2021. The average fare from the airport to the nearest city (a 32-minute trip) is £39. Travellers pay the most at the airports around London (Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and Luton), Milan (Malpensa and Bergamo), Munich and Oslo. The report, which looks at fixed fares and the price per kilometre, does not include fares of pre-booked cabs. In some cases the trip fare and the price per km may yield a very different outcome.

Of the 50 busiest in Europe, a taxi ride to the city centre is the most expensive at London Stansted Airport (£100), London Luton (£95), Milan Bergamo (£94), London Gatwick (£90), Milan Malpensa (£89), Munich (£81), Oslo (£78) and London Heathrow (£70). The price per km is highest at the airports in Geneva (£6.00), Nice (£4.00), Zurich (£3.65) and Copenhagen (£3.45).

Turkish taxi airport fares even doubled, but most Europeans are not paying more, as the Turkish lira

depreciated sharply. In the regulated taxi market, it usually takes a while before fare increases are implemented. Several European countries and cities are currently raising maximum fares, as taxi drivers and companies are facing rising costs for fuel, parts, maintenance and insurance. 'Incidentally, regulations and associated maximum rates in the taxi market are not always complied with,' the report notes. 'With increased demand (at many European airports), taxi drivers often charge higher prices than officially allowed.'

Russia and Ukraine

In the recent report, four Russian airports and one Ukrainian airport have been replaced by Birmingham Airport, Cologne Bonn, Izmir Adnan Menderes, Lyon-Saint Exupéry and Venice. This has also influenced the average price increase, as taxis at Russian and Ukrainian airports are relatively cheap, both in terms of the fare and the price per km.

The complete report can be found here:

<https://www.vliegvelldinfo.nl/reizen/airport-taxi-report-summer-2022/>





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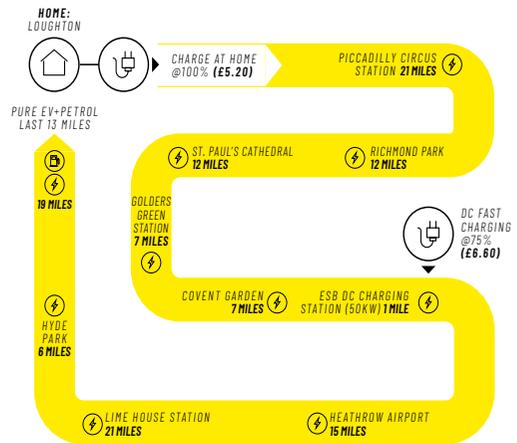
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'The Spy with Two Mothers' Part 2

In 1975, after years of preparation, Vaclav Jelinek (a spy working for Communist Czechoslovakia's secret police, the StB) established himself as a waiter at the Hilton, Park Lane.

Rob's history tips

Vaclav had adopted a new identity using the alter-ego 'Erwin van Haarlem'; a name stolen from the files of a Prague orphanage.

To communicate with Vaclav, the StB used a number station: a regular, shortwave broadcast in which random digits, often preceded by an identifying jingle, are narrated by an eerie, automated voice.

It's believed Vaclav's call sign was 646 and the station he used was one nicknamed The Czech Lady, recordings of which can be found on *YouTube*. In the kitchen of his Queen's Gate Gardens flat, Vaclav would tune into this station, usually at around 9am and 9pm, to receive instructions. To reply, he'd use a system of morse code.

In September of 1976, the jumbled numbers sent him a particularly baffling message:

'Your mother is trying to find you in Czechoslovakia.' The mother in question was Johanna; parent to the real Erwin.

Born in The Netherlands in 1925, Johanna was Jewish, but when the Nazis invaded in 1940 her father had renounced the family's religion and joined the Nazi Party as a means of seeking protection.

As such, Johanna was able to fraternise with Nazi soldiers, where one, Gregor Kulig, raped her. Months later, Kulig was dead, killed at the Battle of Normandy, whilst Johanna was pregnant.

When she gave birth, the baby, who she named Erwin, infuriated her father and ordered her to give the child up. Johanna reluctantly did, opting to take him to an orphanage in Prague. She had never forgotten Erwin though and now, in 1976, aged 51, she was determined to find her son.

Despite this major complication, the StB ordered Vaclav to go along with it; the reason being that, as Johanna was Jewish, the situation could in fact aid him in infiltrating Jewish groups.

Erwin van Haarlem listened to a station broadcasting numbers



So, when the Red Cross tracked 'Erwin' to his London address in October of 1977, Vaclav entered into correspondence with her. 'Dear mother,' he wrote, alongside a photo of himself, 'it truly was an exceptional feeling to receive your letter after so many years.'

The pair met for the first time at Queen's Gate Gardens in January of 1978, where Johanna begged her 'son' for forgiveness, to which Vaclav simply replied, "*What's done is done.*"

Shockingly, for the next ten years, Vaclav maintained the subterfuge of being a diligent, loving son, although in reality he found Johanna's frequent phone calls and trips to London infuriating, and he soon came to despise her.

Despite the added stress of pretending to be someone else's son, Vaclav's spy work was going very well, and after ingratiating himself with the Parliamentary Friends of Israel Group he managed to score a meeting with Yitzhak Rabin at the Houses of Parliament.

In 1983, he was tasked with garnering information on America's *Star Wars* project, which sought to develop a space-based defence system capable of shooting down Soviet nuclear missiles.

Thanks to conversations he'd been privy to at the Jewish Academic Society, Vaclav discovered that the science behind this project was dubious; a revelation which was of great comfort to the Soviets. Along with morse-code signals to Prague, Vaclav also passed intel on to his London handlers via messages left at a series of dead-letter drops; one of which was by a set of railings outside Golders Green Library, the other outside a private garage on

Willow Road.

By 1986, the British authorities were on to him, and Vaclav became increasingly aware he was being followed, including one incident at the Tate Gallery where, whilst on a date, he angrily confronted a pair of agents who were tailing him. It was also around this time that he moved to 35 Silver Birch Close, Friern Barnet, where he soon noticed several of his neighbours were over-friendly. Well, they were MI5 after all.

His immediate neighbour, 61 year-old Mrs. Saint, wasn't MI5, although she was head of the local Neighbourhood Watch. When she began noticing her television was interrupted by strange beeping sounds at exactly 9.20pm every night, she alerted police.

By 1988, the authorities felt they had more than enough on Vaclav, and so, on 2nd April, at 9.15am, Special Branch officers slipped into his property using a skeleton key where they caught him red-handed, in the middle of decoding a number station broadcast.

Vaclav was taken to Belgravia police station before being remanded in Brixton prison, where a heartbroken Johanna visited him to demand the truth.

Vaclav was tried at the Old Bailey in 1989, under the name Erwin, and found guilty of espionage, for which he received a ten-year sentence; although this was reduced following the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Following the coverage generated by the case, Johanna was finally reunited with her real son, who'd been living in Czechoslovakia all along.

Sadly, she died in 2004, while Vaclav now lives a quiet life in Prague.



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Summer Sales & New Plates

We are expecting bumper sales this month, which should definitely push the fleet back over the 15,000 mark by the end of September.



Cab you drive

August has always traditionally been a quiet month for cab and car sales. Lots of people are on holiday and many potential buyers prefer to wait until September to get the new registration plate.

This year, it's the '72' plate that people are holding out for. At first hearing, this may seem silly, but it does actually make good sense. When you come to sell the vehicle, whether it's a car or a cab, a '22' plate will be worth less than a '72' plate. A January 2023 '72' plate will also be worth more than a Dec 2022 '72' plate, that's just how it works.

Before the current licensing

rules were introduced, there was only one new registration per year, which came out in August. Back then, something like 60% of new vehicles were registered in that one month.

Despite all of this, 82 new TXEs joined the ranks in August, which isn't bad. At the same time, we lost ten Vitos and 78 TX4s. This means that the fleet, whilst greener, remains much smaller than it was pre-pandemic, holding at just under 15,000 (14,975) licensed taxis.

We are expecting bumper sales this month, which should definitely push us back over the 15,000 mark by the end of September, for the first time since the end of pandemic. The final reduction in the taxi age limit in November to 12 years, could however bring the figure back down again.

The only anomaly is that the number of Dynamo cabs licensed dropped by four. I would assume they are probably late for licensing, because I haven't seen any up for sale. With so few about, as they do start to come onto the second-hand cab market, it's going to be an awkward job pricing them.

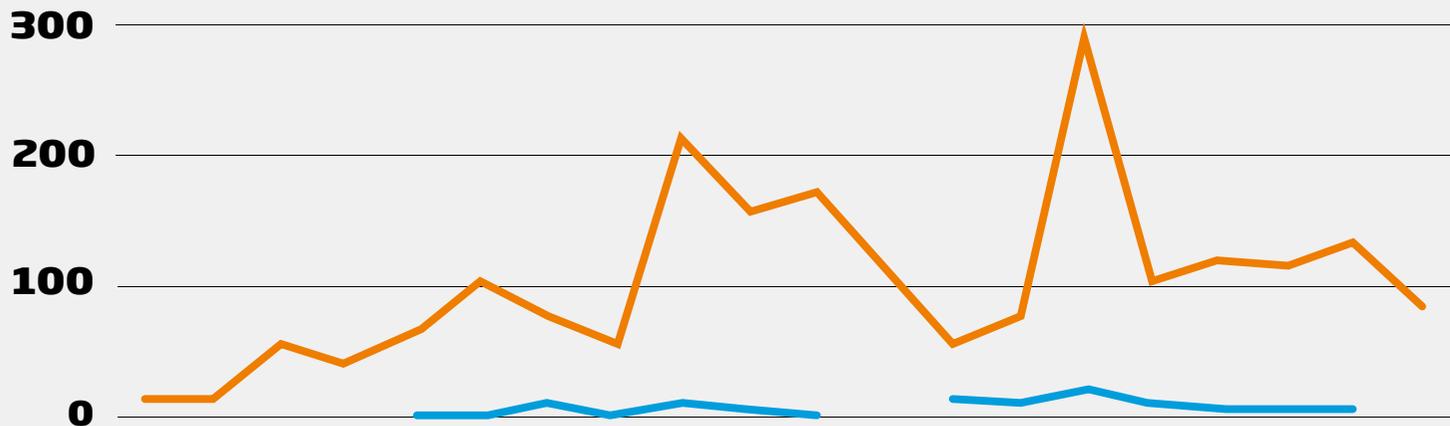
Price wise, the market is very stable. Low mileage late Euro VI cabs are holding up, although the Vitos less so than the TX4s, as fleets and mushers become increasingly worried about spares for the rear wheel steer. With TXEs, it's all about the mileage. Low mileage, one owner cabs are fetching high prices. The space shuttles (high mileage cabs) much less so, as drivers tend to worry about owning one outside of warranty.

I am still hearing constant

rumours about the imminent approval of a Euro V to VI conversion kit. If it's true, the Euro V Vitos will jump in price. It's a risky strategy though, because if it's not true, the age limit will stay at 12 years. Anyone fancy a punt? I won't be chancing it!

TAXI

DYNAMO	181
LEVC	5,732
METROCAB	1
TX1	1
TX2	80
TX4	6,367
VITO	2,613
TOTAL	14,975



	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
	2022												2023							
LEVC	13	15	57	28	61	102	73	52	207	154	167	109	55	72	285	102	118	115	128	82
DYNAMO	2		2		2	3	9	1	8	4	1		13	10	16	9	6	7	8	

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Who's loudest?

The Valley football stadium in London, has been the home to Charlton since 1919. With its official capacity registered at 72,000 back in the day, it was at one point England's biggest league football ground; this remained the case until its closure due to safety issues in 1985. However, did you know that it was also the site of the loudest rock gig in history and also gave rise to a rather odd coincidence?

The story begins several years after the gig took place, with a former Charlton player and manager, Alan Curbishley, who started his career with West Ham United and eventually became joint player-manager of Charlton with Steve Gritt.

Curbishley has a brother called Bill, who is a film producer and band manager. He has worked on films including *Tommy* and *McVicar* and managed artists including Jimmy Page, Robert Plant, Judas Priest and The Who.

With pressure from mounting debts, The Who spent much of 1976 on tour. 31st May saw Curbishley organise the Who Put The Boot In festival at The Valley, with the band headlining. This gig was played to a crowd of 60,000 fans, earning a place in the Guinness Book of Records for becoming the loudest rock band in history. Their sound system was registered at a deafening 126 decibels from 100 feet away. This feat beat Deep Purple's previous record of 117 decibels, which left three people unconscious.

Guinness have now abandoned this particular record due to the potential dangers that may arise from its inclusion into their book of records.

First woman cabbie

London's taxi industry is an iconic part of the capital's rich tapestry. With the Knowledge open to all, there is no barrier to entry other than one's own endeavour and aptitude. Despite the diversity of the industry and the qualification process known as the Knowledge, do you know who the first woman to drive a taxi was?

Little is known about Susan Dudley Ryder, other than the fact that she held badge number 1366. She was also the cousin of the Earl of Harrowby and the sister of champion women's golfer Mrs Gavin. By 1917, four women held London taxi licences but there was controversy due to the nature of how those licences were issued. With men fighting on the Western Front during WWI, women were seconded into driving buses, trams and taxis. This led to one union official opening. Driving a taxi was, according to the opinion of the time, not a moral occupation for a woman to follow.



Nowadays, there are over 500 women driving taxis, with the first woman to pass the modern day Knowledge believed to be Marie White (badge 25292) who earned her Green Badge on 13th May, 1977. She would regularly be seen on the St. Pancras rank with her little dog in the luggage compartment. There is, however, a possibility that Shirley Preston may have predated Marie by 10 years but it is unclear as to whether she was a Green or a Yellow badge cabbie.

22

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW LONDON?

Cleopatra's time capsule

Cleopatra's Needle is one of the most famous landmarks in London. The obelisk, which is located on Victoria Embankment, carries inscriptions by both Thutmose III and Ramesses II of the Egyptian New Kingdom. It was moved to Alexandria in 12BC, where it remained for two thousand years before it was presented to the United Kingdom in 1819 by the ruler of Egypt and Sudan, Muhammad Ali. This was in commemoration of Lord Nelson's victory during the Battle of the Nile and the Battle of Alexandria, fought under the command of Sir Ralph Abercromby. But did you know that the needle has a time-capsule incorporated into it?



Although the needle was presented to the UK in 1819, it remained in Alexandria until 1877, when it was shipped over to the UK and erected in September of 1878. Upon the arrival of the 92-foot monument, a time capsule was concealed on the front section of the pedestal.

Secreted into it were, bizarrely, a dozen photographs of English women, a box of hairpins and cigars, several tobacco pipes and a set of imperial weights. A baby's bottle, a selection of children's toys, a razor, a hydraulic jack and some samples of the cable used in the erection, and a three-foot (90-centimetre) bronze model of the monument were also placed there. A complete set of British coins, a rupee, a portrait of Queen Victoria, a history of the transport of the monument plans, a translation of the inscriptions, copies of the Bible in several languages and a copy of John 3:16 in 215 languages were selected. A copy of Whitaker's Almanack, a Bradshaw Railway Guide, a map of London and copies of ten daily newspapers made up the rest of the eclectic collection.



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Movie Corner

Amon Warmann assesses what's hot and what's not, with the UK's newest film releases.

Reel Talk

Walt Disney Studios



Pinocchio (PG) ⓘ

2022 is the year of *Pinocchio*. Later this year, Guillermo del Toro will serve up a stop-motion adaptation of the classic story on Netflix. But first up is Robert Zemeckis' live-action(ish) version for Disney+. Although it modernises a few elements here and there, this is mostly a faithful retelling. For the uninitiated, the tale sees Geppetto (Tom Hanks) build a small wooden puppet named Pinocchio (Benjamin Evan Ainsworth), who is then magically brought to life.

The adventure that the titular puppet goes on as he strives to become a real boy is not without its merits. Joseph Gordon-Levitt's vocal work as Jiminy Cricket is spirited and fun, and Cynthia Erivo's rendition of *When You Wish Upon a Star* is beautiful. But as is often the case with Disney's live-action adaptations, this never quite finds enough reasons to exist beyond the fact that it can. The character arcs for everyone not named Pinocchio range from slim to non-existent, and while there are some strong CGI visuals here it's poorly integrated with the live-action characters and environments. All in all, it just feels like what we're watching on screen is more product than passion. Here's hoping del Toro flips that script.



Pinocchio is available to stream on Disney+ now.



HBO Documentary Films

Moonage Daydream (15) ⓘ

From Todd Haynes' *Velvet Goldmine* to Gabriel Range's 2020 biopic *Stardust* and many more, there have (rightfully) been multiple movies made about David Bowie, who is one of the most influential and prolific musicians of the 20th Century. *Moonage Daydream* has an important distinction though: it's the first time the filmmakers have been given unrestricted access to Bowie's full catalogue (the film was approved by the Bowie estate). It's a goldmine that director, writer, editor, and producer Brett Morgen puts to good use, as the result is a definitive documentary that truly reflects the personality of its subject.

Indeed, just like its star, this film is bursting with energy and creativity right from its opening frame. There are rare live performances of bangers like *Heroes*, *Life On Mars* and *Space Oddity*, all sublimely edited to showcase just how much of a megastar Bowie was. There are animated sequences that are as striking as his many fashion choices, too. And the interview excerpts that form the film's narration clues us in to his artistic identity and a desire to live life to the fullest. If you're a seen-it-all Bowie fan, this is still incredibly entertaining. If you're unfamiliar with his work, this should certainly make you want to seek it out.



Moonage Daydream is in cinemas from 16th September.

24

Lionsgate Films



Fall (15) ⓘ

Jordan Peele's *Nope* made good use of its titular word earlier this year, with the phrase being spoken twice in critical, I'm-not-doing-that moments. But with *Fall* – a movie that sees best friends Becky (Grace Caroline Currey) and Hunter (Virginia Gardner) climb up an ancient and abandoned 2,000 foot radio tower, before finding themselves stranded with no way down – you may find yourself saying “nope” more than a couple of times. Especially if you're afraid of heights.

The impetus behind that ascent is Becky trying to move on from the traumatic death of her husband in a year-old climbing accident, that both she and Hunter were present for. The committed performances by both Currey and Gardner put you in each characters' headspace, and their friendly banter feels authentic throughout. But this is all about the tension, which is masterfully built from the first step of the climb onwards – the sound design, cinematography, and score all contribute to this – and keeps ratcheting up as the circumstances get more and more ridiculous. By the end, you'll be a sweaty mess. And, well, that's the point.



Fall is in cinemas now.



Everything You Need to Know About Energy Bills

The new Prime Minister has finally announced the long-awaited government help with the cost of living.



Money matters

Gas and electricity bills for households with 'typical' energy use will now be capped at £2,500 a year for two years.

The news came after weeks of speculation about how hard-up Brits will afford to pay their energy bills this coming winter. The Ofgem energy price cap, due to come into effect on 1st October, was set at £3,549, up from £1,971.

Energy bills have risen massively this year, citing a multitude of reasons including: post-Covid supply and demand, storage issues, the weather, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This time last year the price cap stood at just £1,277.

The unit rate is capped, but not your bill

Although stated as a typical annual cost, both Ofgem's energy price cap and the government's price cap actually limit how much suppliers are allowed to charge per unit of energy and for standing charges.

Under Ofgem's planned cap the maximum rates from October would have been 15p per kilowatt hour for gas (up from 7p now) and 52p per kWh for electricity (up from 28p at the moment). Standing charges would have been capped at 46p a day for electricity and 28p for gas.

The new maximum unit rates and standing charges under the government's price cap have not yet been announced - but they will be less than under Ofgem's planned price cap.

In short, your bill may be more or less than the price cap depending on how many units of energy you use.



The price cap only applies to households on their supplier's default or standard variable tariff. It doesn't affect people on fixed tariffs. If you're on an expensive fixed tariff and the government price cap will be cheaper, you can move to a different deal free of charge (fixed tariffs usually have an exit fee).

How to use less energy

The quoted annual energy price caps are based on a 'typical' household. If you live in a big house or use lots of energy, your bill could be higher than the price cap. Alternatively, if you live in a smaller home or are more energy efficient, your bill is likely to be less than the cap.

Either way, most people will be keen to reduce the amount of energy they use in a bid to keep costs down. Here are five ways you can use less energy:

Turn your thermostat down

During the winter, the majority of our energy bills are down to heating our homes. Experts suggest thermostats are set at a maximum of 19°C in both the battle to combat global warming and reduce energy bills. Whatever your preferred temperature, Uswitch.com calculates that

households could potentially save up to £128 a year by turning the thermostat down by 1°C.

Turn down your boiler's 'flow temperatures'

These are the temperatures the water leaves your boiler at to heat your home, or provide hot water. Energy supplier *Octopus* says that default flow temperature settings are usually too high. If you have a combi boiler, it recommends setting your flow temperatures to 50°C for heating and 55°C for hot water. Your boiler manual should explain how to change flow temperatures.

Don't leave electrical items on standby

When your electrical devices are on standby they go into a type of sleep - but they still use power. According to the *Energy Saving Trust*, leaving TV, computers and other electrical items on standby can add up to £86 to your annual electricity bill. It's also a good idea to unplug mobile phones, smartwatches, power banks and handheld games consoles when they are fully charged, to stop them using more electricity than necessary.



Only wash full loads

With both your washing machine and dishwasher, wait for a full load before using your appliance. "Eco cycles" on kitchen appliances might take longer but they work at lower temperatures and so use less energy. Don't worry that your clothes or dishes will come out dirty - modern detergents are able to get good results at lower temperatures.

Think about how you cook

Most people use their oven for cooking as a default, but this won't be the cheapest way. Energy firm *Utilita* looked at the cost of using each appliance for the average daily amount of time. It found electric cookers cost 87p a day to run. In comparison microwaves cost 8p a day, air fryers 14p a day, and slow cooker 16p. ■ TAXI



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.....

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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

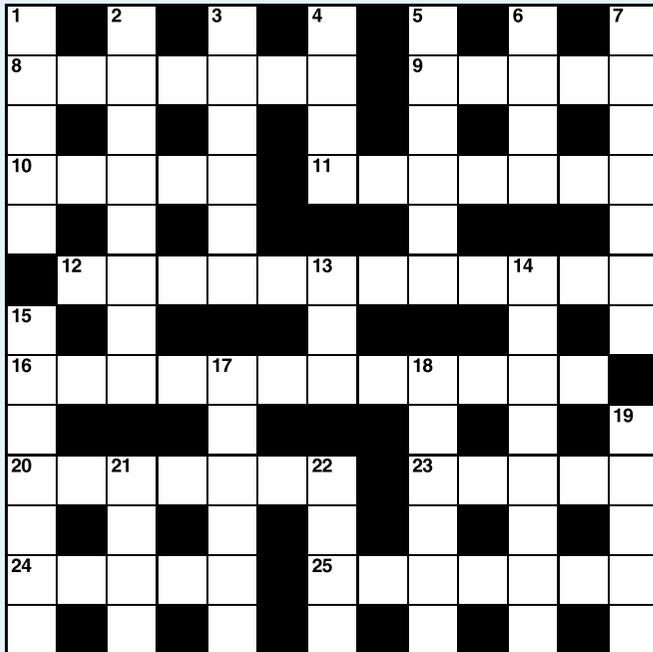


- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit LTDA will notify you (10 working days) in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you 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

Crossword



ACROSS

- 8 Able to keep afloat (7)
 9 Ring or stadium (5)
 10 Pig food (5)
 11 Infantile (7)
 12 Creche worker (7,5)
 16 Small brownish bird (5,7)
 20 Turn sugar into alcohol (7)
 23 Protection for a front door (5)
 24 Organs that allow us to breathe (5)
 25 Second-hand motor (4,3)

DOWN

- 1 Bottomless gulf (5)
 2 Becoming obsolete (8)
 3 Birds of prey (6)
 4 Cigarette butt (4)
 5 ___ dioxide, exhaled compound (6)
 6 Abominable Snowman (4)
 7 Bank teller (7)
 13 Rend, tear (3)
 14 Vehicle's storage frame (4,4)
 15 Mix together (7)
 17 Yet, all the same (4,2)
 18 Long slender sword (6)
 19 Seethe, swirl (5)
 21 Level of command (4)
 22 Faithful, constant (4)

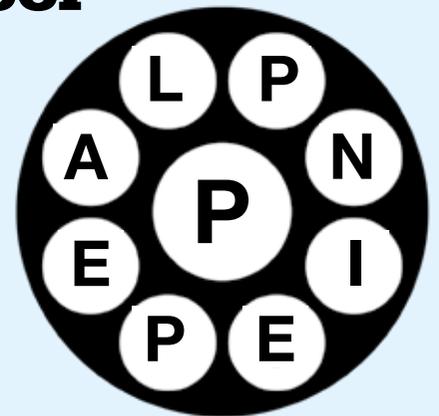
Sudoku

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.

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

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<	<input type="checkbox"/>	>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

All answers to puzzler on p30

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TAXI Chats to Brian Heffernan, New Chairman of the Taxi Charity For Military Veterans

"The news of the death of Queen Elizabeth II was received by the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans with profound sorrow. God save the King."

TAXI Hi Brian, congratulations on your new role. How does it feel?

Brian: I am really honoured to become Chairman. It's great to give something back and to be part of this truly exceptional charity and I'm really looking forward to taking the charity on its next journey with an amazing committee and supporting cast.

TAXI What plans do you have as Chairman?

Brian: Very much business as usual. Ian, the previous Chairman, was a much loved and respected part of the charity and after his tenure the charity is in a very good place despite the difficulties we faced during the pandemic. I am very fortunate that we are supported by a group of incredible London taxi drivers and many volunteers who give up their time to support veterans. One of my first actions as Chairman has been to ask cab driver Dean Euesden to join the committee and to invite Ben Mayne and Terrence McCarthy to become Charity Advisors. Former police officer, Ben, has an interest in the Second World War and Terrence served with the army for thirty years. Both will be welcome additions to the team. As Chairman, I am also very aware that we need to look at how we will support veterans over the coming decades. Times change but we will continue to work with veterans from all conflicts, including: WWII, Korea, the Falklands, Northern Ireland, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

TAXI Do people realise that you work with so many different veterans?

Brian: That's a good point. So many people still think that a veteran is an old person wearing a blazer covered in medals and that is a long way off the variety of veterans we support. We work with veterans of all ages; from all the services and our support includes veterans who might be aged between 18 and 100 or may not have ever seen conflict. We have recently been abroad with some veterans from the Falklands and Northern Ireland, we had a great day Go-Karting with young men who were being supported by a homeless charity, and we have been supporting younger veterans met through our close association with the Household Cavalry Division.



Brian Heffernan, Taxi Charity Chairman



Brian Heffernan (second left) with veterans and other Taxi Charity volunteer cab drivers



Brian Heffernan (far right) with volunteer cab drivers

TAXI What do you see as your greatest challenge?

Brian: The greatest will undoubtedly be fundraising. Every charity was affected by the fundraising restrictions forced on us through the Covid-19 pandemic and, having got through that, the country is now facing a cost of living crisis which will see most people having to reassess how they spend any money they may have previously donated. We used to raise much of the money to run the charity through train station collections, but it is now over two-and-a-half years since we were able to do a bucket collection in London and we are still to receive confirmation of when the first post-Covid collection might be.

TAXI I understand 2023 is going to be a huge year for the charity?

Brian: It will be a very special year as we will be celebrating our 75th anniversary! Who would have thought back in 1948, when three London cab drivers met in the Bedford Arms in Fulham to discuss how they might be able to support veterans returning from WWII, that their first meeting would lead to a charity that would remain dedicated to the welfare of veterans for 75 years? They chose to call the charity the 'London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled' but I'm very glad that the name was changed to the more modern Taxi Charity for Military Veterans,

also commonly known as the Taxi Charity. We have lots of plans to celebrate our 75th anniversary during 2023 and we hope people will come together to help us mark this important milestone.

TAXI What else are you planning?

Brian: 2023 will be important for the charity, but 2024 will also be special because the world will be honouring those who took part in major events of WWII, including D-Day and Operation Market Garden on their 80th anniversaries. I've been volunteering with the charity since 2015; it was a no-brainer to want to get involved because of my love of military history which sparked growing up watching *A Bridge too Far* with my father. I've been fortunate to travel to Normandy and The Netherlands on many occasions,

to take veterans back to remember those who didn't come home and to meet those who were part of the real story behind the film I loved so much. Over the last seven years, I have sadly been to too many WWII veteran funerals, but God willing there will be veterans who will be able to travel with us in 2024. One thing I really hope to be able to do with fellow cab drivers during the Arnhem commemorations in September, 2024, will be a parachute jump to celebrate the lives of those veterans we knew, respected and loved; and those who we never got the opportunity to meet.

TAXI Is there anything you want to say to our readers?

Brian: Two things. The first: a huge thank you for all you do. Second: we will be shaking our collection buckets by the barrier at the Heathrow Feeder Park on 7th October. We hope that you will come and see us and please don't forget to bring your wallets. Remember, as a London cabbie, this charity and everything it represents is yours too.

About the Taxi Charity

The Taxi Charity is run by volunteer London black taxi drivers and has been supporting thousands of veterans of all ages since 1948. The charity arranges free trips to Belgium, France and The Netherlands for acts of commemoration and days out to museums, concerts, or fundraising events across the UK, to catch up with friends and comrades.

The charity was awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in June, 2021.

In 2023, the charity will be celebrating its 75th anniversary.

To fund and facilitate their work, the charity is reliant on generous donations, grants, and sponsorship.

www.taxicharity.org

■ TAXI



Mind the Gap!

A tale of one dog and a few good Londoners.



A woman of words

Last week we had visitors from oop North: Ann and Martin. They're long-time friends who LOVE London and when they are down are crazy busy shopping, sightseeing and visiting galleries, museums and theatres. You know, doing all the things real Londoners don't.

Rory, their new puppy, came with them. He's a cockadoodlepo. Or is it a Chocmoccapoodleo? Summat like that. The pup is the size of a small cat (or your average London rat) and is very soft and slithery. Like a velvet handbag with a few bones inside.

When they arrived here at Meg Towers, Ann and Martin were both sweating and wide-eyed with anxiety. I wasn't

surprised as they'd travelled on the tube in rush hour. But it wasn't the crush that made the Northern pair freak out. It was that they didn't mind the gap.

Every Londoner knows to mind the gap.

As Ann and Martin stepped off the train, puppy Rory disappeared down the gap and was swinging on his leash somewhere between the platform edge and underside of the train.

The emergency stop handle was pulled and mass hysteria followed. As Ann and Martin screamed in horror, passengers inside the carriage joined in. Panic hollering is contagious.

Then all the folks on the platform who saw the ickle dog slide down and out of sight freaked and were shouting for help.

There is a belief that tube travellers studiously ignore one another and always look the other way if anything is kicking off on a train. Not true at all when there is a cute, caramel coloured 12-week-old pup in peril.

A station guard appeared on scene and told everyone to be calm, and quiet. Then he instructed Martin not to try and pull the puppy back up onto platform level in case he slipped free of the leash.

"Stand completely still" he ordered, as he stripped off his hat, jacket and jumper.

"What's this, then? The Fully Monty?" wise-

cracked a passerby who was unaware of the doggy drama going on.

The guard lay down on his belly close to the

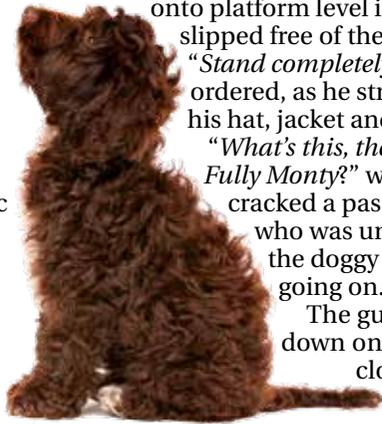
platform edge. A city type wearing what Ann described as a "reet bloody pricey suit" threw his computer bag and copy of the FT to one side and got down and joined the guard.

By this time, some travellers who were watching began to cry, fearful that the puppy had been injured in the fall.

Batman and Robin, I call them that because the city gent later introduced himself as Robin, were truly a dynamic duo. They managed to find the pup and, using four hands and teamwork, brought him up safely to the platform.

Rory was very cheery and waggy-tailed after his ordeal and the entire tube carriage and platform erupted in claps, high-fives and cheers after the rescue.

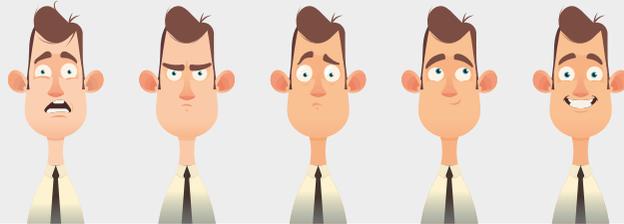
There are so many good things about travelling in a black taxi; the fact you don't have to mind the gap is one of them. Just ask Rory. ■ TAXI



LTDA A selection of our numerous Distribution Points

- ◆ A1 Taxis, Melody Lane, Highbury, N5
- ◆ Abacus Accounts, Southbrook Road, Lee, SE12
- ◆ Astral Café, Regency Place, SW1
- ◆ Bubbles Car Wash, E2
- ◆ C & S Taxis, Dunbridge Street, E2
- ◆ Cabsurance, Seven Kings
- ◆ Camberfield Taxi Services
- ◆ Computer Cab, Mitre Way, W12
- ◆ Coney Allen, Dunbridge Street, E1
- ◆ CP Beehive Service Station, Beehive Lane, Gants Hill
- ◆ Cricklewood Carriers, Cricklewood
- ◆ Dial A Cab, City Road, N1
- ◆ Edgware Station Rank
- ◆ Euston Station Rank
- ◆ G & L Taxis, Crayford Road, N7
- ◆ Globe Transmissions, Cudworth Street, E1
- ◆ The Ham, Brentford
- ◆ Heathrow Airport Canteen
- ◆ Hexagon Garage, Lukin Street, E1
- ◆ Jet Garage, Clipstone Street, W1
- ◆ Knowledge Centre, Caledonian Road
- ◆ KPM, Hemming Street, E1
- ◆ London City Airport Canteen
- ◆ LP Motors, Dunbridge Street, E2
- ◆ Martin Cordell, Thomas Road, E14
- ◆ Paddington Station Rank
- ◆ Putney Bridge Taxis, The Arches, Putney Bridge Station, SW6
- ◆ Richmond Road Taxi Centre, E8
- ◆ Safewise Supermarket, Harrow
- ◆ South Bank Service Station, Great Suffolk Street, SE1
- ◆ TAXI HOUSE, Great Suffolk Street, SE1
- ◆ Taxi & Private Hire, Blackfriars Rd, SE1
- ◆ Temple Place Shelter
- ◆ Turbo Accessories, Three Colts Lane, E2
- ◆ Ubiquitous Ltd, E1
- ◆ Waterloo Station
- ◆ Wimbledon Station Rank
- ◆ WizAnn Knowledge School, Watts Grove, E3

PUZZLER ANSWERS



Crossword

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

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SUDOKU

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

Wordwheel

SOLUTION: FORFEITED

All words: Diet, cliffer, dire, dirt, drift, edit, editor, eider, fetid, fief, fife, fiord, fire, fired, foetid, forfeit, fried, refit, retied, ride, rife, riff, rift, riot, rioted, rite, tide, tied, tier, tiered, tiff, tire, tired, tried, trio, FORFEITED.

Word targets: Excellent: 38, Good: 32, Target: 23, Kids: 18

Futoshiki

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

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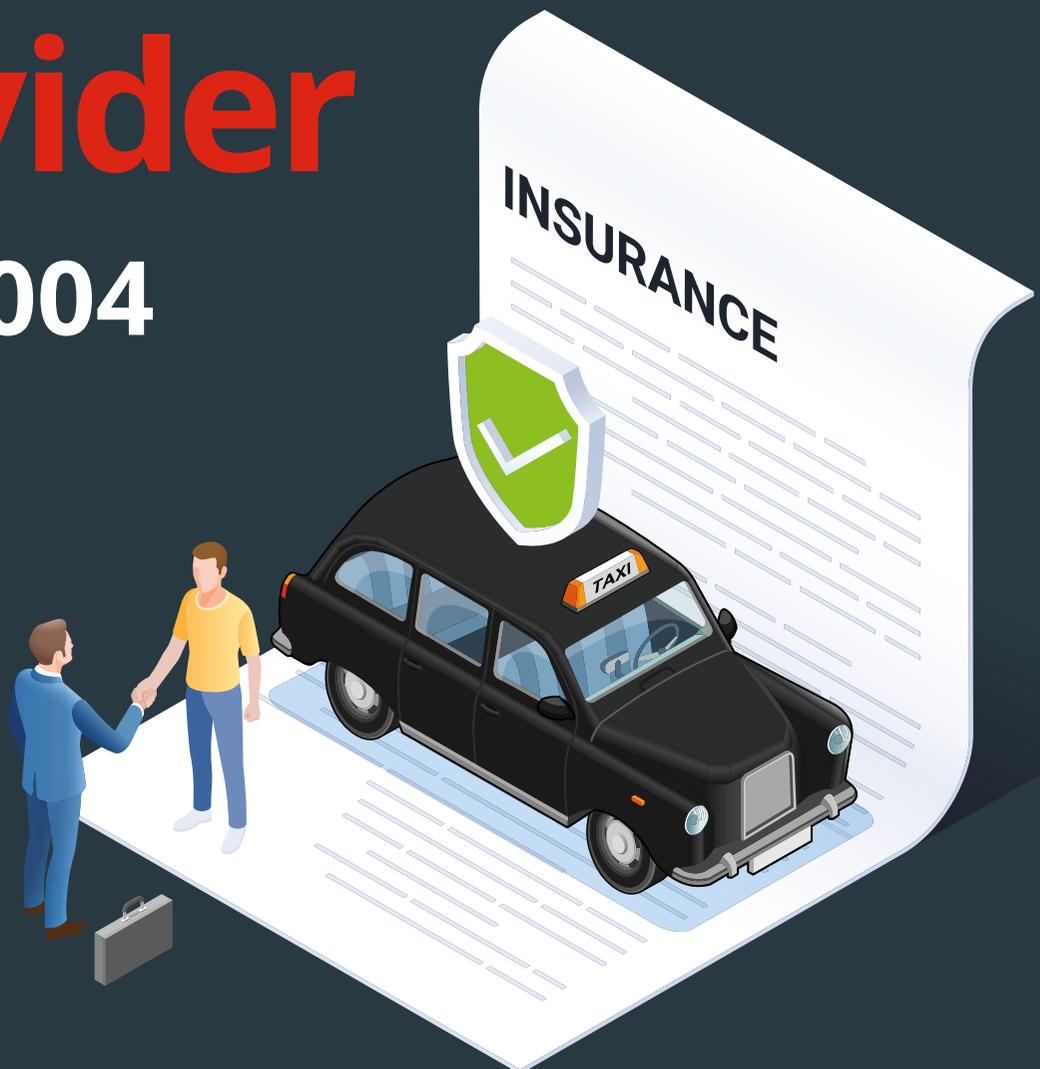
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