



More trade stories than all the others put together

Issue 248 April 2017

# AT LAST!



## Mail turns spotlight on Uber & Govt links

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and should be sent to the Editor at the  
above address.

The London Cab Drivers' Club Ltd.

## THE PENNY STARTING TO DROP

As you can read in the Badge, the mainstream media and certain MPs are now waking up to what we had published in the Badge last year regarding the email trail between the government, TfL and Uber.

This can only be very positive for us and I would like to thank both Mark White and Chris Johnson, who have been working hard with the Daily Mail to get this out.

## UBER VAT COURT CASE

As you see on page 9, the proposed court case against Uber for the non-payment of VAT has got the green light.

The LCDC is proud to be the only trade group who has contributed to the fighting fund. This case could have massive ramifications and again, we're proud to be helping the battle for our members' futures.

## SEAN STOCKINGS UPDATE

You can see from page 3 that the accusations made against LCDC member, Sean Stockings, of harassment have now been dropped.

We still have a long way to go but we will not stop until Sean's licence revocation has been quashed.

Grant Davis  
LCDC Chairman



# L.C.D.C LEADERS NOT FOLLOWERS

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# Harassment charges dropped



## Sean Stockings

As you can see from the letter opposite, it seems that the Met Police now agrees with the LCDC and not TfL, that charges made against our member, Sean Stockings, over harassment were not sufficient to take any action. This is still not over by a long way and Sean will now be facing an appeal hearing to keep his licence in May.



Due to the injustice our member faces, we contacted Baroness Shami Chakrabarti CBE at the House of Commons, requesting a meeting to discuss Sean. I am very pleased to report that Shami, like us, was outraged with the situation and has agreed to get involved and help us.





# Daily Mail

# highlight

At last the main stream media has picked up on the Government, TFL and Uber emails that the LCDC exposed back in 2016 (*left inset*) - the club now hopes the Mayor will undertake a public enquiry on how Uber were originally licenced.

## PETER OBORNE: The growing smell over Uber and the malign power of Cameron's chumocracy

Even David Cameron's fiercest critics can't deny his real achievements as prime minister.

His government halved the deficit inherited from New Labour from £150 billion a year to approximately £70 billion today (though it could and should have done better).

And it worked hard to push through important reforms to Britain's out-of-control welfare state and education system. Mr Cameron also deserves praise for bringing some grace back to Downing Street after the thuggish New Labour years.

But the former occupant of Number 10 had one significant flaw. Like Tony Blair before him, he governed through a cabal of close friends. Mr Cameron's 'chumocracy' replaced the Blair 'sofa government'.

And in the past few days we have been discovering the shocking extent of its malign influence. The growing scandal over the American internet minicab company Uber, uncovered in an exemplary investigation by

the Mail's Guy Adams, is symptomatic of the gross weakness at the heart of Cameron's administration. This is a story dating back to late 2015 and Cameron's last year in Downing Street before he resigned following Britain's decision to leave the EU.

### Threatening

The then Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, was determined to protect the capital's highly regulated black cab drivers by applying tough regulations to Uber, a company whose current £56 billion market capitalisation is built on enabling customers to access cut-price minicabs, within minutes, using mobile phone technology. Following the launch of Uber in the capital in 2012, there were fears its ultra-cheap fares were putting traditional cabbies out of business.

As we now know, Mr Johnson was promptly cut off at the knees by Downing Street after he was bombarded by a series of threatening emails from senior officials in No. 10 — and lobbied personally by the Prime Minister and his chancellor George Osborne.

Meetings were set up for

the Mayor with Cabinet ministers and Downing Street officials, who made it clear that Uber's business interests were not to be curtailed.

Shamefully, Boris Johnson gave in to this pressure rather than stand up for London cabbies (and, by extension, taxi firms elsewhere in Britain, whose livelihoods are also threatened by Uber as it spreads all over the country). People like Kollie Badis, a cab driver of my acquaintance who came to Britain in the Nineties to escape the Algerian civil war. He invested his life savings in acquiring 'the knowledge' — the qualification all black cab drivers must have to ply their trade.

For more than a decade, Badis, 50, earned enough to make a good life for his wife and five children in their home in Hounslow, near Heathrow Airport. Not any more. His living has been cut from under him since Uber arrived.

There is a giant mystery at the heart of all this. Why on earth did Cameron decide to wage war on exactly the type of self-employed, tax-paying,



small businessmen and women who are the backbone of the British economy?

Why did he join battle on behalf of a monolithic, grasping international corporation with no roots in Britain, where it pays an effective rate of 1 per cent tax? This, remember, is also

a firm that does not pay VAT here, though it is facing a legal challenge on the issue.

The Mail yesterday provided one important clue. In the run-up to the EU referendum last year, Uber agreed to message its users — the vast majority of them young and likely to be pro-EU — urging



# nt Govt & Uber links



the Messina Group, a political consultancy run by a man he paid £400,000 to work on the Tories' 2015 election campaign.) As a result, the direction of the Conservatives fell into the hands of Tory donors rather than ordinary members, whose numbers withered on the vine under the public school clique that ran the party. The culmination of the Cameron approach to government came with his resignation honours list, in which obscure 'yes' men and women were rewarded with honours they frankly did not deserve. One such beneficiary — he got a CBE! — was Daniel Korski, the Downing Street aide tasked with ensuring that Uber was protected.

English. Crucially, they are much less regulated. Indeed, according to the police, an Uber driver is accused of rape or assault in London once every 11 days. So what was Downing Street up to?

## Thrall

The answer casts a depressing light on the relationship between business and politics in modern Britain — and on a prime minister who was too often in thrall to others in his social circle, or dazzled by the very rich and famous. Given what we now know about how Cameron helped Uber, it seems unlikely to be a coincidence that the firm's senior vice president of policy and communications is his friend and former colleague, Rachel Whetstone, godmother to his late son Ivan. Ms Whetstone is married to Cameron's former chief strategist at No. 10, Steve Hilton: she is one of the best-connected operators in Britain. Around the time of her appointment to the taxi firm, George Osborne met with Uber twice, and

business minister Matthew Hancock once. And how fascinating that BlackRock, the largest world's largest asset management business, holds a £500 million stake in Uber. BlackRock's connections with the Cameron Tories are, of course, second to none. After the 2015 election, Rupert Harrison, George Osborne's gifted special adviser in Downing Street, joined BlackRock as a senior adviser. Notoriously, George Osborne has since joined, too — on an annual salary of £650,000 for working one day a week. The full facts have yet to emerge, but this strange saga is smelling worse by the day. Nor is Uber an isolated example of the way the upper echelons of the Cameron government conducted themselves. For instance, Mr Cameron appointed his old university friend and tennis partner, Andrew Feldman, as Tory Party chairman, a decision which has left the party in desperate straits. Like Cameron, Lord Feldman cultivated very rich men. (As the Mail reported yesterday, he has just taken a job with

## Ugly

All this goes a long way to explain why the British people — including plenty of black cab drivers — voted for Brexit last year. They felt that we were governed by a political class intent on looking after their own interests. It is for this reason we need to know the full truth about how Uber used its Downing Street connections. So far, officials have done their best to protect Cameron by refusing to release documents which would cast light on any alleged lobbying by, or on behalf of, Uber. That is unwise — not least because Transport for London has released details of the relevant correspondence it holds, which suggests No.10 officials were implicated. Theresa May ignores this scandal at her peril, otherwise she risks being drawn into it, too. The nation must learn the full truth about this ugly story of how money and power conspired to compromise government, and wreck the livelihoods of many ordinary Britons.

them to register to vote. So Uber appears to have done a political favour for David Cameron, shortly after the prime minister had helped it out commercially. But that can't be the only reason. Black cab drivers have long been one of the symbols of British national identity, like

Marmite, the monarchy and red telephone boxes. If they represent tradition, then Uber symbolises the kind of trendy internet venture that seems to utterly bewitch Cameron. Yes, Uber drivers are cheaper — no wonder. They have no training and are entirely reliant on a sat nav. Some of them barely speak



# London Taxi Company inaugurates £300 million new vehicle plant

## UK's first dedicated car factory to produce electric vehicles for global markets

- Ansty plant to be UK's first dedicated electric vehicle manufacturing facility
- First all-new vehicle manufacturing facility to be built in Britain for more than a decade
- The first major Chinese investment of its kind in UK automotive from parent Geely
- The creation of more than 1000 high skilled, high quality manufacturing jobs
- A new R&D Light-weighting and EV centre for Geely and Britain

Wednesday 22nd March 2017, Coventry, England: The London Taxi Company (LTC) today announced the official opening of the UK's first car plant dedicated solely to the production of range -extended electric vehicles. This new, state-of-the-art, vehicle plant in Ansty, Coventry, is where the world's first purpose-built, mass-market electric

taxi will be built. LTC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Geely, has invested more than £300m in the new site and the next-generation London taxi, which will be produced at the plant and exported around the world. The investment and expansion of LTC has created more than 1,000 new jobs, including 200 engineers and 30 apprenticeships. The site has the capacity to build more than 20,000 vehicles per year - vehicles designed for, and dedicated to one task: to be the best ultra-low emission commercial vehicles in the world. The taxi vehicle is using proven Volvo Car electric powertrain system technologies and components comprising a new EV light weight platform, while retaining the iconic design heritage recognized around the world. Further derivatives of this new EV architecture will follow. All vehicles produced at this plant will go through the most stringent testing regime in the company's history. Each test vehicle will cover almost 500,000 kilometers, often in

extreme conditions, to ensure that no city is off-limits. This program will enable LTC to deliver world-leading urban commercial vehicles, which meet the highest levels of quality, reliability and usability, purposefully designed for demanding daily drive cycles. The all new electric taxi goes on sale first in London in quarter four 2017, and then around the world in early 2018. The new vehicle will be highly competitive with substantially lower fuel costs than its previous taxis.

**Chris Gubbey, Chief Executive of the London Taxi Company, said:** "Today marks the rebirth of the London Taxi Company. A company with a singular vision; to design and build dedicated urban commercial vehicles that can operate without emissions in cities around the world and bring down running costs for drivers." The fully integrated factory – from research through to production – will also become a globally connected research and development centre in

electric vehicle powertrains and lightweight aluminum body structures, which will be applied in all vehicles made at the plant. The technology behind the new facility and vehicle is cutting edge. It has been developed in collaboration with other members of the Geely group, including Volvo Cars, whilst drawing on LTC's heritage and expertise in the development of purpose-built taxis. This partnership has ensured that the vehicle retains its key features such as being wheelchair accessible, and having a high level of manoeuvrability whilst incorporating new features like a spacious cabin area with six passenger seats and a highly sophisticated electric drivetrain.

**Carl-Peter Forster, Chairman of the London Taxi Company, said:** "The opening of our new plant sets a number of records; it's the first brand new automotive manufacturing facility in Britain for over a decade; the first dedicated electric vehicle factory in the UK; and the first major Chinese investment in UK

automotive. We are extremely proud of what we have achieved today, and we have firmly put our stake in the ground as a new, global, automotive leader in urban commercial vehicles." The new fully integrated research, development and production facility, where work began just under two years ago, has been supported by the UK Government through its Regional Growth Fund.

**The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy** attended the opening ceremony and welcome the investment, stating: "Our iconic black cabs are famous across the world. The London Taxi Company's impressive new factory and R&D facility showcases the innovation that makes the UK a world leader in the development of new automotive technologies. Through our ambitious Industrial Strategy, we are committed to building on our strengths and taking advantage of the opportunities the new low carbon economy provides."





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# Thank you for your support.

**As you will have noticed we have now hit the initial fundraising target. This means we are in a position to commence proceedings against Uber.**

The legislation gives Uber a period of time to provide us with a VAT receipt - until the middle of this month - and this means we can't sue it until that period of time has run out. But we will not drag our heels. Last week - even before the fundraising target was hit - I asked the barrister team to start drafting the claim against Uber and I hope and expect we will be in a position to start proceedings against them in the High Court before the end of the month.

Some people have asked why the funding target has been raised.

If you read the original listing it explains that it is very difficult to work out how much a case like this will cost and it points out that £75k is unlikely to be enough. I also said this on twitter a number of times whilst we were raising the £75k. And although £75k is a lot of money, remember, the case could well be worth billions of pounds to Uber.

Because the barristers and solicitors are working at low rates, I think £75k will take us most but not all of the way. If we don't hit the raised target I am likely to need to seek more crowdfunding later on. But we will still take the initial steps. Indeed, I cannot absolutely rule

out the possibility that we will need to raise more money even if we do hit the raised target. But I will try very hard to avoid that possibility.

Yes, I could have asked for more money to start with - but sometimes people like to see how you spend the money they've given you before they give you more. And if you ask for too high a target you run the risk that you won't hit it and you won't be able to do anything. So I exercised my judgment.

In the meantime, you should make sure that your MP understands your frustration at the fact that it is you who is having to pay to challenge Uber's tax avoidance. You should ask him or her why HMRC isn't doing it.

Thanks, again, for your support. I know the money you pledged was hard earned.

Jo Maugham



## RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS

♥ LCDC pledged

£3,000

Match LCDC's pledge of £3,000.



# L.C.D.C LEADERS NOT FOLLOWERS





# Sadiq: It's up to you



To say it has been a very interesting few weeks for the London Taxi trade would be an understatement.

The LCDC have been instrumental in a number of initiatives that have galvanised the trade and offered some optimism in our battle with our inept regulator. The Club has worked closely with the Daily Mail exposing to the public what we have known for years, David Cameron and George Osborne's unethical political lobbying of UBER and senior TFL Management collusion. Osborne personally pressuring Boris Johnson and Isabel Dedring not to push through the new PH regulations that would have slowed the explosive growth in UBER licences. Osborne giving no consideration, to the fact that they pay no UK tax and the number of PH drivers in London is beyond saturation point, causing mass pollution, RTA's and gridlock to our city. The links between Cameron, Rachel Whetstone, Osborne and UBER investors Blackrock leads many to believe that this is corruption on an industrial scale. Huge appreciation to journalist Guy Adam of the Daily Mail, for his articles and LCDC rep Chris Johnson, who worked tirelessly in providing Guy with all the necessary facts and information.

We all knew at the time, when the new regulations were announced that the consultation was rigged, in favour of UBER. The LCDC believe that these regulations should be deemed void. A new consultation should proceed with immediate effect.

After all the revelations in the



press, we still have not heard anything from the Mayor, other than a news interview whilst he was on a train journey to Brussels. The interview did not offer any confidence that Khan is willing to act on this evidence or make necessary changes. He shifted blame on the Boris Johnson administration, offering no commitment to readdress the mess he has inherited. I got the impression that he wants the dust to settle and then sweep it under the carpet. He stated he wants to make taxis more "viable", how can that be the case when he is burdening us next year with an expensive untested electric taxi and PH do not have to be ZEC compliant till 2023. He expressed he has been lobbying government for controls over cross border hiring. Well I have asked

LTPH details of this lobbying and after receiving no reply, I now have to ask them via my MP.

Khan's mayoralty is approaching its first year. Never shy to have a selfie with a member of the public or z-list celebrity, he appears to have an aloofness to officially meet taxi trade orgs. This is disingenuous, the trade is in crisis, and he is a public servant voted into office with the help of thousands of taxi drivers and their families. Whilst on his election campaign he made a bold statement, he would begin the "renaissance" of the taxi trade; to date there is no evidence of this materialising. HIS "action plan" announced last year is impotent; the majority of it has been dismembered by UBER in the courts. Is the

action plan no more than a distraction to silence us? To allow the continuation of lax PH regulation, and allow large PH Operators to continue to be unaccountable?

Also concerning is the disappearance of Val Shawcross. She knows what a perilous state the trade is in, in fact two years ago whilst a London Assembly member, she said the trade is "falling off a cliff". In addition, when she became Deputy Mayor for Transport she said she would improve relations with TFL and the trade. She has failed miserably, in fact, under her watch it has deeply deteriorated, unrepairable with the current incumbents at the head of LTPH.

Taxi drivers, wives, partners and their families have had



their lives disrupted for a number of years now by TFL's deregulation. Many are in serious financial hardship unable to pay their mortgage or rent on their homes. Drivers in large numbers are suffering from stress related illnesses such as depression and anxiety bought on by TFL policies and interpreting regulations in favour of UBER.

We have been patient and restraint long enough; we have given this mayor sufficient time. The information that has become public, via the Mail, supplies all the evidence at his disposal to call for a public enquiry into the licensing of UBER. He will be as complicit as the previous Mayor, if he allows this malfeasance to fester. On moral grounds alone, such as the employment tribunal and subsequent VAT legal action, surely the Mayor must ensure that UBER are not re-licensed. The Mayor should meet the trade and let us know his intentions. He must be honest with us. Does he want a thriving taxi trade? If so, is he prepared to make it happen? The current situation can no longer be tolerated; it is time for him to act!



# Drivers demonstrate at Tory HQ & Palestra over Uber controversy

They say the sun shines on the righteous, and on a sunny Thursday, 30th March, this very much proved to be the case:

Drivers from all the trade Organisations who had read the UBER email stories unfold in the Daily Mail organised an impromptu protest at both the Tory HQ, 10 Downing Street then carried on along the Embankment and headed to Palestra.

The Protest was very well received by the public and the police alike and the staff at Tory HQ who watched in amazement from the windows were left in no uncertain terms exactly the depth of passion and the message, from the drivers.

As the procession reached Parliament, drivers lowered their banners as a sign of respect for PC Keith Palmer who was tragically killed in the recent terrorist attack at the House.

Once at Palestra, drivers vocally demonstrated against TFL with shouts of "Daniels Out.... Daniels out" ringing around Blackfriars.

I would like to go on record thanking all those involved in Organising such a well-supported and planned protest.





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# Alan's Angle

## Westminster News round up

### EVERY MONTH I do like to keep everyone up to date with what's going on in and around Westminster.

Right let's start with some good news which is very rare these days in the taxi trade. I always get excited these days when I get taxi ranks plans handed to me - how sad is that? In the next few weeks Westminster will be sending out the plans for the consultation, these should contain rank proposals for Hard Rock Café, Charlotte Street Hotel, Ronnie Scott's, loading pad outside Gielgud Theatre, Arts Club, 10 Wardour Street rank extended to 4 spaces, Panton Street and Villiers Street. This list is just one part of a tranche, with another one to follow quickly afterwards.

Obviously I'm a hard man to please most of the time but do feel we're getting some traction on ranks now in WCC. The London cab Ranks committee alongside TPH have worked hard to work with Westminster and are now reaping the benefits on Taxi ranks, and that all the good news - now the bad! Let's start with Baker Street Two way

system; in one word at the moment we're being shafted in my eyes. Yet again we turn up to a meeting to be told here are the plans and we've put your ranks here, here and here. Really how are we supposed to work those? The rank at 55

ranks in the area are being moved, but not to our liking though. We do have a site meeting soon, but not sure if anything will change, I will keep you updated. Now this week I went on a modelling class and for those who know me it

from TfL whose name was at the bottom of most CSH plans a number of questions. At first I asked him if the digital picture of Farringdon Street was a good reflection of how things look now. The picture showed a very empty Farringdon Street. What was more worrying was that he thought the picture was of Blackfriars Road. Then when I questioned him regarding the CSH north south and east west routes and if it was working he fudged the reply. I asked a simple question - do the cycle schemes work, yes or no? He wouldn't commit, which I expected. He even tried to blame the congestion on Blackfriars Road going north on a Tesco lorry unloading. Really? Nothing to do with your office kow towing to the cycle lobbyists and the mayor and we're left with your carnage now. He did get a grilling all the way through the meeting as we don't trust the modelling base TfL use as it doesn't seem to be accurate at what it has forecast in the past. But what this meeting does allow is for us to have our input from the start to try and get this scheme right for us and our customers.

### “He even tried to blame the congestion on Blackfriars Road going north on a Tesco lorry unloading.”

in the same location facing north, what good is that going to be? Most people are going to come out and look right with the new traffic flow. We need the rank relocated to the right. I'm not sure they will give us the rank where we need it as it doesn't fit in their plans. A few other

wasn't anything to do with my good looks. I was invited to a meeting to listen to plans re Oxford Street. The plans are to close off Oxford Street westbound for certain hours of the day. The meeting was to discuss this but I think I moved it off course when I asked Peter Hewitt



## Quick Taxi update

### WESTMINSTER

Any tickets issued at Gerrard Place for the no right turn, between 16th December 2016 and 14th December 2017 will automatically be refunded or cancelled.

Previously Westminster council requested we write in and ask for the refunds. This was before a FOI was done,

revealing that 924 PCNs were issued during this time. A total of £50,000 in revenue that will now be returned to drivers.

### KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

Have put up no idling signs around Harrods near our ranks with the threat of a £40 Pcn if caught with your engine

running on the rank. Now I'm not sure if this a threat or they intend to enforce it. This council is not a lover of the cab trade so id say the might try and enforce it so lets switch off when stationary at Harrods.

### MAIDA VALE

We have been seeing reports

and I've seen as well that taxis are being broken into when left on certain ranks in the area. the rank in Elgin avenue seems to be popular for the thieves. So please be careful and don't leave anything on show when leaving you taxi here.

### ST THOMAS STREET

Over the Easter Holiday

Period St Thomas Street will be closed to all vehicle Access from Borough High Street. The closure will be in place to allow a crane to be erected. All passenger's needing the shard will be need to dropped off in London Bridge Street and all guest will be shown up the escalators to the rank on London Bridge Station.





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With our reps at the airport working

hard on the trade's behalf for a fairer, and more safer future at Heathrow.  
■ **RANKS AND HIGHWAYS**  
The LCDC attend the Joint Ranks committee, working hard for more ranks and more access for the taxi trade in London.

■ **CAB TRADE ADVICE**  
All members can call the office for any information or up to the date news on any trade related subject.

■ **TRADE'S FUTURE**  
The Club worked tirelessly in bringing in the green & yellow identifiers to the taxi trade.  
And are always working hard to protect our future.

■ **CAB TRADE REPRESENTATION**  
We are working hard to work with members of the GLA and also politicians to fight our corner against TFL and was a major influence in the recent "future proof" document.

■ **VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS**  
The Club works alongside LTC and

Mercedes to deliver a vehicle that meets our standard as a London taxi driver. Recently we have held meetings to work against the ULEZ strategy and the introduction of taxi age limits.

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Sort Code 20-10-53. Account No- 40450421.

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I agree to abide by the rules of the Club. I also agree that the above information will be kept by the LCDC in a computer system under the terms of the Data Protection Act.

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**PAINT:** 3-year  
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**FINANCE:** 3-year  
**RENTAL:** 3-year



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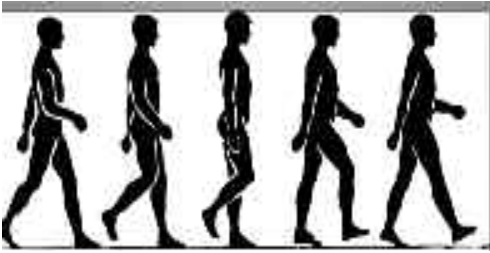
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# Walker on the March...

## UBER POOL

**I had a young bloke in the cab the other Saturday night/Sunday morning. He thought he'd save himself some money by using Uber Pool.**

I mean, if we believe the publicity they are already 50% cheaper than us and with another 25% off for sharing the back seat of a car with a complete stranger who may be some sort of drunken psychopath and being driven by a driver who may not have a UK driving licence, what could possibly go wrong?

Why wouldn't he want to save all that money? Here's a little maths test for you all. A cab from Waterloo Stn to Warwick Sq, SW1 costs around £12 – £13 at that time of night. How much does the Uber Pool fare cost?

If you divided £12 - 13 by half and then deducted another 25% and came up with around £5 and you were right, then Uber would not be lying to its customers. You are well wide of the mark if that's the figure you came up with. Dunces!

This is how you work it out. First, the Uber fare is quoted at £8.00 (making the UberLux fare only 15% cheaper than our highest tariff).

Next, the driver drops the passenger off, not at Warwick Sq but at Barbican Stn (no doubt unable to find Warwick Sq, EC4). Next, the passenger hails my taxi and pays me £23.40 to take him to Warwick Sq, SW1.

So you dunces, the answer you should have given for a trip from Waterloo Stn to Warwick Sq, SW1 was not £5, nor was it £8 as the passenger thought. The cost was £31.40 - 2.5 times higher than the cost of a proper taxi ride and took about four times as long to complete.

NOTE TO TFL: Why are you are allowing these cowboys to rip of the travelling public you are supposed to serve.

## TFL – 'AVING A LAUGH

**Like the rest of you, I read the letter to Sean Stockings from Peter Blake explaining why they revoked his licence with amazement.**

One sentence of the letter almost struck me dumb. It read as follows:

"Whilst these do not warrant licensing action on their own they are derogatory in nature and show a contempt towards the licensing authority, which, I find, unacceptable."

Well I have some news for you Mr Blake. There are approximately 25,000 taxi drivers that find the licensing authority contemptible and around 120,000 PH drivers, along with a whole bunch of PH operators (with one in



particular), that TREAT the licensing authority with contempt.

If you, Mr Blake, should use the unilateral power that you appear to hold, to translate this contempt from "not warranting licensing action" to "warranting licensing action" you will need to replace every taxi and PH driver and most PH operators.

Good luck with that. I wonder if I will be getting a revocation letter as a result of this article?

## TFL LICENCING RENEWAL MEETING (spoof)

SIR HUMPHREY: Well Bernard, who's up for renewal in May?

PS BERNARD: The Uber PH operator licence Sir Humphrey.

SIR HUMPHREY: Well, I doubt there are any problems there.

PS BERNARD: Well, there may be a few points to be looked at.

SIR HUMPHREY: Like what?

PS BERNARD: Well, the London office and UK company is really not much more than a shell. The real business is done in Holland and that's outside of London. There are quite a few other things Sir.

SIR HUMPHREY: Well come on man, list them.

PS BERNARD: OK then, ready?

1/ They are supposed to take pre-

bookings only but they only accept instant requests for cars and refuse to accept advance bookings.

2/ Their method of booking discriminates against the disabled.

3/ They are supposed to agree fares to a reasonable accuracy but instead use mobile telephony to calculate fares in the same way as a taxi although this telephony itself is not technically a meter?

4/ They are licensing drivers from all over the country as London PH drivers. In some cases, this allows drivers to continue working in licensing authorities that have banned those drivers.

5/ They deliberately mislead the travelling public by showing "ghost" cars available in areas that customers are looking at on their app and claiming their fares to be cheaper than taxis by a much greater margin that is truthful.

6/ By operating actually but not technically in "the cloud" they are avoiding paying considerable sums of tax while preventing their drivers earning a living without income support. As a result, they are causing the state to informally subsidise their business while not paying a fair return of tax on their real profits.

7/ Similarly, they are avoiding paying most of the VAT that would be a fair on their turnover. This affects the state in the same way as above and together these tax avoidances put genuine

London-based PH competitors at a very unfair disadvantage.

There are many more points Sir, so should I continue?

SIR HUMPHREY: No Bernard, no need. It seems obvious that this licence should not be renewed.

PS BERNARD: Well actually Sir, there are a few points to be made towards renewing this licence.

SIR HUMPHREY: Like what for heaven's sake?

PS BERNARD: Well Sir, the boss of Uber UK is a great friend of the former PM and Chancellor and many of the current Cabinet.

SIR HUMPHREY: Oh!

PS BERNARD: She also has a very close working relationship with Leon Daniels. They have enjoyed many phone conversations together.

SIR HUMPHREY: Ooher!

PS BERNARD: Then there is the most important point. Uber are a huge company with lots of political clout, a huge PR machine that could make us look bad, have the financial, political and corporate muscle to chase us through the courts and not least, they are much bigger than us.

SIR HUMPHREY: I see. The case still seems fairly strong for refusing their licence renewal. What would the taxi trade say if we renewed against all this evidence to the contrary?

PS BERNARD: Well, they'd be furious. End of the day though, a few of them will write to MPs and maybe 10% of them will stage a couple of two hour drive-in demos. Luckily for us though, they are disjointed and disunited and at least half of them will not put a hand in their pocket to seriously dispute any decision we make.

SIR HUMPHREY: In that case, what are we discussing this for? Give Uber another 3 years and get some more biscuits sent in.

Now, what's the news on us forcing these taxi driving oiks into paying £60,000 for a new taxi. I nearly wet my pants the first time that little treasure turned up on my desk. I didn't stop laughing for a day. That'll learn these upstarts.

PS BERNARD: very good Sir. Wise choice.

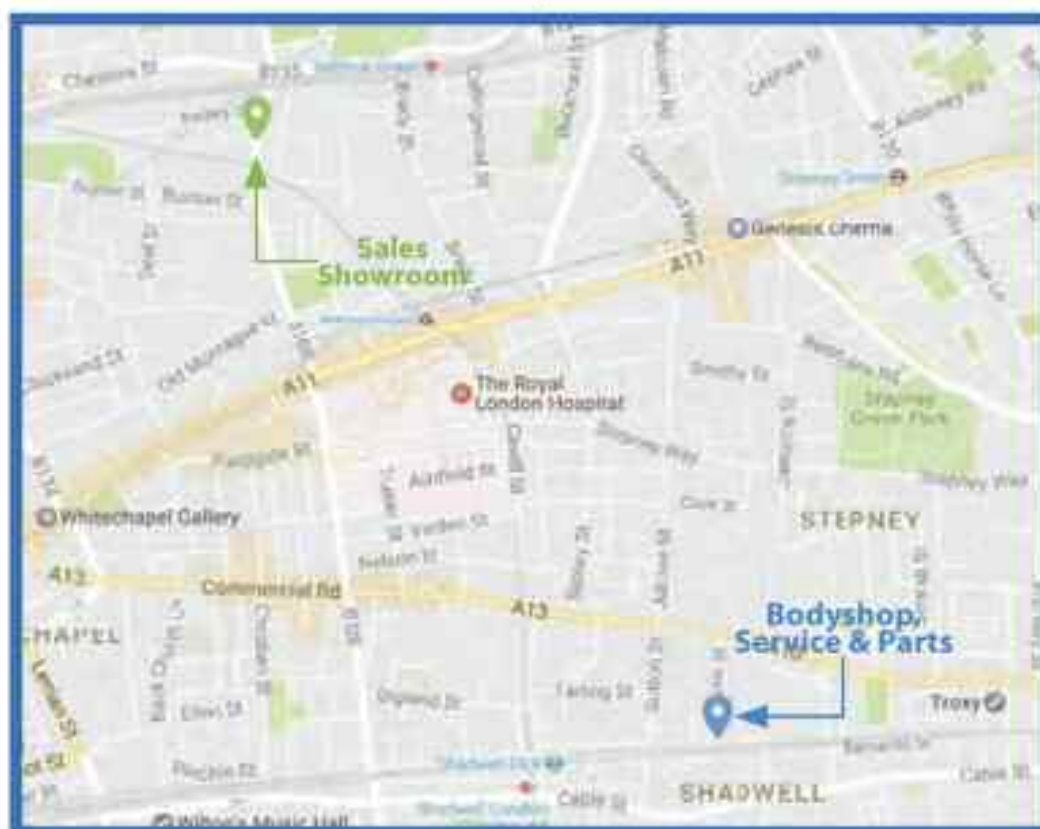
SIR HUMPHREY: By the way Bernard, table a meeting for early next year just in case. This £60,000 taxi should finish 'em off but we may need further measures if that doesn't complete the job. Maybe we could try taxis having to be completely electric rather than ZEC from 1 January 2019 and reduce the maximum for diesel and ZEC to a five plate maximum. What do you think?

PS BERNARD: Very good Sir. Terrific wheeze. Another Bourbon Sir?





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# Airport matters... by Alex White

## Out west (Heathrow)



### MORE WORK

Since the credit card mandate we have had an increase in jobs every month, the last 5 months have seen as much as 13% increase a month compared with the same month the year before. This is great news, I feel this is down to taking cards and less brooming on the terminals. I am noticing that more and more of the work is credit card work, which is ok until I have to pay for my TAG credits, the cabin will at some point be able to take payments with cards, this is work in progress.

### COMPLIANCE

All the Airport reps attended a meeting with TFL recently to mainly talk about compliance, main agenda item was touting and enforcement of touting, any driver seeing touting of any type please take pictures and give them to a rep with time and dates.

### NORTH PARK

The back wall and far side wall (in the north park) that is currently used as a taxi park will be cleared at some point, we are waiting on HAL to get it cleared through the legal team, this will improve the capacity of the north park, meaning less taxis on the road. I am one of the north park wardens, when my colleagues or myself ask you to move up close to the taxi in

front, we are not doing it to wind you up, we are doing it to get taxis off the road, the police can turn up at any time and move you on if your over ranking on Newall Road. Please don't leave your taxi until your lane has finished moving, this causes us a lot of issues.

### CLEARWAY

The whole of the Airport has been converted into a clearway, this means you cannot park on any of the roads, this does include Newall Road, also most roads inside the Airport have a 30 MPH speed limit this is down from 40 MPH.

### AGENTS

The Acpoa Agents are improving all the time, they are enforcing the rules better currently than previously, so anyone asking for a local ticket on a non local journey can expect to be reported to the cabin and expect a 7 day ban from the feeder park on the first offence. Also brooming by way of overpricing metropolitan areas will also result in bans as well.

Because of the way things work at the Airport every driver that gets a ticket when they should not have done is basically stealing work off other drivers, every blagged ticket during the day is one more driver at night not getting off.

### RADIO BAYS

These have gone from T3, they won't be coming back, anyone parking on them once the works have finished can expect a ticket or worse being towed away. Don't leave your taxis unattended.

### Speed Cameras on the M4

These are now average speed cameras and they are up and running, please be careful.



i

## Important Notice

## Heathrow

### New Driver Policy

- Commencing 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017 a new procedure will be in place for all new drivers wishing to register to work at Heathrow Airport
- The process will require all new drivers to undergo a Heathrow Induction on working practices and procedures which will be hosted by the collective trade groups and bodies from the Taxi Trade.
- The purpose of the induction is to provide information in relation to the working practices that are in place at Heathrow, the bye laws that cover the use of the ranks and feeder parks and the roles and responsibilities of APCOA who manage the Taxi Operations on behalf of Heathrow Airport
- Unless a driver has attended an induction course they cannot be issued with a Tag and Booster which is a requirement to access the feeder park and ranks at Heathrow Airport.
- In addition new drivers will be required to pay for the Tag and Booster from that date and will need to sign the terms and conditions and provide a copy of their bill before the Tag and Booster will be issued. A refund will be issued to drivers who leave Heathrow against the return of the Tag and Booster pro rata to the time spent working at the Airport. (this will be set by Heathrow Airport limited and provided upon issue)
- Please Note this fee will only apply to new drivers and will not be set retrospectively to any drivers currently working at Heathrow.
- The issue of any new tags and boosters is suspended until that date. (please note this does not apply to replacement of damage or non functioning tags)
- Please note Heathrow Airport Limited reserves the right to refuse the issue of a Tag and Booster to any driver who does not comply with the process or suspend the Tag and Booster of any driver who fails to comply with the byelaws or terms and conditions set for working at Heathrow.
- Roy Tucker Operational Delivery Manager Customer Relations and Services  
Team - Landside Operations  
Landside Operations - 31/01/2017 - Do not remove

Making every journey better



# Why should Gett drivers 'share the app' with their street hail passengers?

**Gett's Geoffrey Riesel takes a look at his company's latest tool for keeping the work in black cabs**

Gett has a new bonus scheme (you will see the advert for this later in this edition of Badge): if a driver talks to a street hail passenger about Gett and uses the in-app tool to send them a link to Gett, the driver will get a £10 bonus payment when they ride with us for the first time. And the bonus is doubled to £20 at the beginning of the campaign.

But why should drivers do this (apart from the fact they can make a lot of extra cash commission free)?

Let's start with some hard facts. The trade has lost work to Uber; no-one could sensibly dispute this. By some estimates, Uber now does

more daily rides in London than the trade. We have to adapt if we are to survive; we need to stop more work being lost and win back the work that has already gone.

## The 'die hard' street hailer

There are customers who will always be street-hailers. Many of these will generally pay by cash. Gett can never win these over. Those customers don't want to use an app - they possibly don't even own a smartphone. At Gett we are not targeting them as clients.

However, only the biggest technophobic driver would fail to recognise that more and more people, especially the younger generation, won't stand in the street waving their hands waiting for a yellow light to drive past. They want to use technology to get a cab to their door (including in areas where it's hard to street hail) to book in advance, or to use a credit card or Apple Pay and get an emailed receipt! They get their dry cleaning, cappuccinos and shopping on an app - they

want their cab on an app too. If the trade doesn't offer a really good one, they'll just use the competition which has fast driver allocation times and unfairly subsidised cheap prices. Millions are thus drawn in.

Those are the street hail customers Gett wants to target and win back to the trade with this new bonus scheme. No other black cab app - however much you might want it to be true - has the expertise, the innovation or the deep pockets (and believe you me, your pockets have to be very deep in this game) to succeed. On this bonus scheme, Gett is funding £5 off the first five rides for these customers using Gett for the first time.

## Make a lot of extra cash

So why not talk to your street hail passengers about Gett? It's very simple:

1) Chat to your street hail about Gett during the ride - tell them they can get £5 off their next five black cab rides

2) At the end of the ride, tap on the INVITE button on the Busy screen, enter their mobile number and they'll get a link to download the app.

3) If they ride with Gett having never done so before, we'll pay you £10 commission free. In fact at the beginning of this new campaign, we'll double every payment to £20!

There is some serious "money for nothing" to be made here - just for helping to keep work in the taxi industry and to win it back for black cabs.

Many of your street hail passengers are already using Uber. They hail taxis only when Uber surges or it's a longer journey. By sharing the Gett app with them you'll be winning that work back for the taxi trade.

This is why I think Gett drivers should be sharing the app. This is absolutely not money that would have ended up in taxi drivers' pockets anyway through street hail - it's money and work that without Gett would almost certainly go

straight to Private Hire. Keeping this work in the trade is only possible with the millions of pounds of investment being made by Gett in bonuses for drivers and discounts for passengers.

So why not give it a go? You'll be hurting the competition, helping the trade and getting an extra £10 or (£20 at the beginning!) in your pockets which could make a significant difference to your take at the end of the week.

Think of this: a £9 street hail this week ends up being worth £29 to you, and you've kept a customer in the trade. Not bad for having a chat with a passenger is it? After all, lots of cab drivers like a good chat, don't they?! Give it a go - 'share the app' on your next street hail ride.

Geoffrey Riesel was Chairman and CEO of Radio Taxis for more than 23 years and is now Chairman of Gett in the UK.







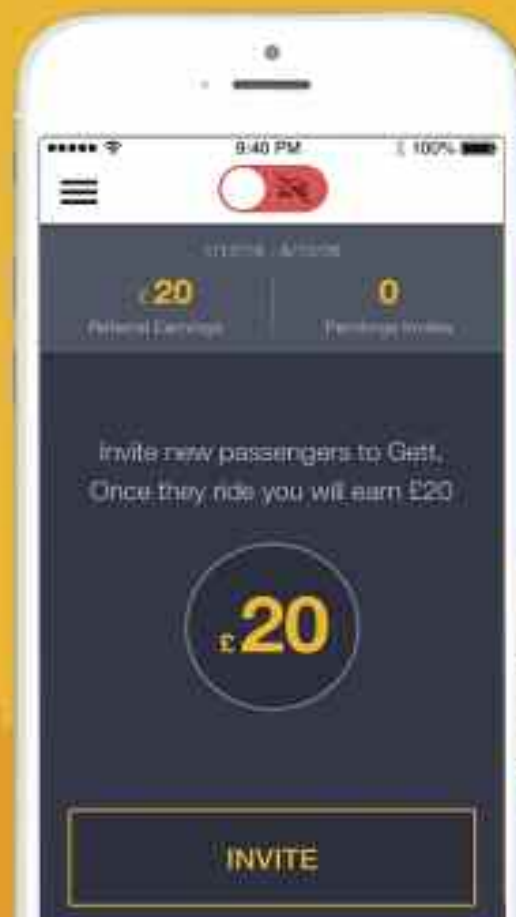
## INTRODUCING SHARE THE APP

A new way for you to earn more money with Gett while keeping customers out of the competition and in Black Cabs.



Share the app with a street hail customer who hasn't used Gett before and earn **£20 throughout April as soon as they ride with Gett.**

*Share,  
earn,  
repeat*





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# Sorry, I just don't GETT it!

**Right before I start this semi rant ill lay all my taxi app cards on the table, I'm not a luddite I'm on mytaxi/Hailo, Taxi app and Gett, writes Alan McGrady...**

Also these are my views and not the club's and I know we do put a GETT ad in the Badge, so no we don't just take the advertisement money. I think apps are a major supplier of our work these days and the days of the public putting out their hand and hiring a taxi are becoming a rarity. I also long for a return to those days when it was a bit easier and we weren't being charged ten percent on our work that we used to get full fare on. Recently we had a meeting with some GETT representatives and we spoke for quite a while about where we feel GETT is leading the cab trade with their pricing structures and driver safety issues. I find it very unlikely that I might be part of a small band of drivers that have their app blocked over the last few weeks re driver acceptance rates being too low.

Now I've been blocked twice in the last three weeks due to the fact of refusing some fixed price jobs, I'm very sceptical about some of the fixed fares I'm being offered, and sometimes I feel that we're being forced fixed price jobs like a goose being forced corn for fois gras. It's nearly every job now and some of the prices are skinny to say the least, but GETT are always quick to reply saying that we will give you £36 a hour guaranteed if you get caught in traffic, but you'll normally find if it's a clear run 9 times out of ten mid priced jobs will go less than the meter. Also GETT staff confirmed to us that they offer the customer one price and then take a cut off that and then offer the driver another price. So let's say the customer wants to go from A to B, GETT will quote them a fixed price say £20 pound then it might offer the driver the same job to the driver for £17.46. Not sure where the 46p comes from but they've taken £2.54 then they go and take 10% off you. Are GETT trying to be like Robin Hood, nicking off the big jobs to let them add to the smaller jobs to make them look more attractive? Just give us the full fixed price fare and

offer us the lower price at original price with no incentive added to it. That means GETT takes nearly 20 % of the job nearly as much as U\*\*R take from their drivers. In fact on this sort of race to the bottom with pricing are GETT copying the U\*\*R model as they've been so successful in other parts of the world? With the driver ratings and acceptance rates, I'm even more frustrated if I turn down a job that's 20 mins away as I feel it's too far to run to and I also don't feel the customer shouldn't have to wait that

*Just so you know we're listening! Lets hope so James.*

As for some off the airport fixed price these are really cheap and some might say I don't mind it's a job but maybe if they did these jobs as a loss leader and not take the 10% as they've already taken their cut and give us a cheap fare it might push the price up, making it financially better for us. Now my biggest bug bear is the job offer that says sorry you were to slow to respond. Well I'm sorry I was watching a crossing and



## Why lose 10% from our street work to convert to apps?

long, it goes against me. Now five other drivers might have turned that job down but I still get penalised - how fair is that? Also when you turn a job down and it sends you it again that also goes against you, it's like GETT are saying you must not refuse and be a good boy. I've just received this back from GETT:

*Alan,  
Just to let you know, that our Head of Supply pushed our technical team (in Israel) on repeated orders over the weekend - they are working on improving this and recognise that it's a problem. There's been a fix done already in some situations but it may not cover everything, which would explain why you're still seeing it. Sorry for the delay, but hopefully more improvements soon.*

trying to second guess if someone was going to step on it. But yep you've guessed it that goes against me as well, and my drivers rating is now going through the floor and another ban is imminent all because I was too slow to react to a job offer. How safe is that to me and the public if GETT are saying please interact with your phone quicker and take your eyes off the road? Come on TPH when are you going to make all apps not issue work whilst were are driving as I'm now putting my licence on offer for points and being distracted by the app and could cause injury to myself or the public. The whole mobile safety issue is massive now and neither TPH or App companies want to address the safety issue around interaction, when

responding to job offers. It's now not us that interacts with the phone it's the phone interacting with us, saying please touch me. You only have to see the carnage the other mob are leaving behind them on our roads due to phone distraction probably. It make me wonder why more pressure isn't being applied to have changes made to the apps, maybe it needs for someone to tragically get hurt due to driver distraction in our trade which is normally the way you get a public outcry. Why aren't TPH being proactive instead of being reactive regarding safety issues? When I spoke to GETT about this subject they said TPH have said it's ok as long as the driver is driving responsible, that's the sort of cop out reply I expect these days from TPH regarding this subject, they don't want to address it. So I asked GETT if their solicitor could represent me in court if I have an accident whilst looking at one of their job allocations, I bet you can guess what their reply was. Now we need taxi apps but we need to be treated a bit better than were being treated now, show us some respect we work for you as much as you work for us. It feels like they know we are struggling at the moment and I know drivers will take fixed prices and say it's a job and I need the money. I understand that as I'm in the same boat as a lot of drivers are out here regarding finances but there is a line where I feel enough is enough and I either I don't switch it on or I'm slung off as I've just received another text saying my driver rating is now below the threshold and if nothing changes in the next few weeks I'm being kicked off. Oh well looks like my GETT days are numbered but still hope to meet them and get some dialogue going to make changes for the drivers still working for GETT.

PS Also if GETT or any other app wants to try and get me to sign passengers up to their app for £20 so that they can take 10% of that customer's future rides it's not going to happen not in my cab. If a customer is happy to put their hand out and hail a cab off the street I will pass that passenger on to the next taxi driver who will also collect 100% of the fare RANT OVER!!!





# Caroline Pidgeon calls for investigation into Government-Uber FOI requests



Dear Ms Denham,

You may be aware of reports in both the Daily Mail on Saturday 25th March and Monday 27th March, as well as also in yesterday's Financial Times, relating to correspondence between Mr Korski, the former deputy director of the Policy Unit at 10 Downing Street and Transport for London (TfL), concerning the regulation of private hire vehicles in London.

Identical Freedom of Information requests were submitted to both TfL and to 10 Downing Street on the 26th February 2016.

As you can see TfL provided a response setting out the details of a number of email exchanges between themselves and 10 Downing Street.. The reply from 10 Downing Street was simply

"We do not hold information in relation to your request."

I find it deeply disturbing that 10 Downing Street refused to publish

any information in relation to a precise freedom of information request, when correspondence had taken place in relation to an important regulatory matter.

I appreciate that the Information Commission receives numerous complaints about the responses provided by public bodies in answering freedom of information requests, however I do think it is significant when it appears 10 Downing Street is blatantly refusing to provide responses on such an important matter.

If 10 Downing Street, at the top of UK Government, is failing to observe the 2000 Freedom of Information Act, this sets an appalling example to every public body and public funded organisation in the country that is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

I do hope you will consider an urgent investigation into this matter.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM  
Liberal Democrat Assembly Member  
Chair of Transport Committee



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