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WE'RE READY TO SUPPORT THE MAYOR - BUT IS HE READY TO SUPPORT OUR TRADE AT LONG LAST?

Welcome back to this month's
edition of the Badge, an absolute
"must read" for all the half
sensible among us.

In this month's Badge we have
several stories regarding our newly
elected Mayor... none of which hold
him in a good light.

The Club will always support the
incumbent Mayor if he wants to
work with and support the taxi
trade, but again, I am struggling to
tick that box.

Unlicensed PH freely working in
London, TfL taking advertising
revenue from oil and gas
companies whilst he extends the
ULEZ zone and takes three years
off our age limit... I won't bore you
anymore, it's all in the Badge for
your delectation.

A big shock for owners of E5 Vito
owners with the E6 retro fit
seemingly scrapped. Again you
don't have to listen to a mate's

cousin who heard a fella in
the cafe, the owner of HJS
whose company was doing
the refit speaks exclusively to
the Badge to get the facts out
there.

He informs me that he has
NOT given up on the Vito,
and is pushing ahead with
the TX4 system.

The whole purpose of the
Badge is to keep the trade up
to date with news and
information and I believe it's
the best out there by a
country mile.

With also a cracking
unbeaten legal team with a
¹⁰⁰ record, if after reading this
edition you still don't want to
join up... may I suggest the
Beano or Dandy for your
further reading pleasure...
keep well.

Grant





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We at the LCDC don't often bang our own drum when it comes to helping our members with their legal troubles. A lot of the cases which come our way with members are quite sensitive and we respect their wishes to keep things in house and out of the paper which I can fully appreciate.

However, not only do Payton's Solicitors offer our members a 24 Hour Duty Solicitor 365 days a year, but since getting involved with the Club, our solicitor Keima Payton has the distinction of having a 100% success rate in all her cases which she has handled on behalf of the Club's members.

Keima Payton has a fearsome reputation in court and should ever the need arise you will find no one better able to fight your corner and save your Badge than Keima.

- Grant Davis, LCDC Chairman

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Wolverhampton minicabs in London

A growing concern for passenger safety and also fair competition

Last Saturday, I encountered a red private hire vehicle (PHV) in a back street in Brixton.

Watching as four people entered the car, I noted something that has become all too frequent lately: the PHV was licensed by Wolverhampton City Council, as the photo shows. This could be a sign of a bigger issue brewing in London.

The Cross-Border Hiring Dilemma

The legality of cross-border hiring is due to existing case law and permissible subcontracting. If the "triple lock" is observed - meaning the operator, vehicle, and driver are licensed by the same authority and provisions are correctly made - it is lawful for the vehicle to fulfill a booking outside its licensed area.

However, this incident raises a crucial question: why would a passenger in Brixton book a minicab licensed in Wolverhampton?

This is not the first time Wolverhampton minicabs have been discussed in the context of London, and it certainly won't be the last. The implications for Londoners are concerning.

Since neither the vehicle nor the driver are licensed with Transport for London (TfL), how can passengers be assured of their safety? TfL has the ability to conduct compliance inspections of TfL-licensed vehicles, checking driver credentials, vehicle insurance, and roadworthiness. This is not the case with Wolverhampton vehicles and drivers.

The VAT Position

One reason behind the influx of out-of-town vehicles in London could be related to VAT. In London, there is now a requirement for operators, licensed under 1998 PHV London act, who accept a



A Call to Action

The current situation is untenable and calls for immediate action from TfL and the Mayor to increase lobbying action. We would also question why TfL is not highlighting and warning the

London public. Without stringent regulations and enforcement, London risks becoming a hotbed for potentially unsafe PH operations. The need for a coherent and unified regulatory approach has never been more urgent.

private hire booking to enter into a contractual obligation to provide the journey as 'principal.' This was due to a declaration sought by Uber in 2021. Though the declaration wasn't a HMRC/Tax ruling, it has those implications.

HMRC VAT Notice 700/25 indicates that operators acting as principal must apply a 20% VAT charge on the full fare.

Uber sought the same declaration for PH operators outside London, licensed under the LGMPA 1976, leading to a ruling that all PH operators in England should contract as principal.

However, major PH companies outside London, such as Delta and Veezu, appealed the 1976 act decision, and the original verdict was overturned. This creates a clear and worrying distinction between the two Acts.

The Competitive Disadvantage for London-Based PH Operators

Some established London PH operators have already obtained licences in Wolverhampton, using those vehicles to fulfill bookings that start and end in the capital. This may give them a competitive advantage over other London operators that might apply the 20% VAT charge, whereas using the Wolverhampton licence there could be a 0% VAT charge, depending on type of operation.

This raises a critical question: why would London-based PH companies remain licensed by TfL? They could all relocate their licensing outside of London while continuing to fulfill bookings within the capital. This would render TfL compliance checks ineffective, potentially compromising passenger safety.



MORE THAN 200 ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS FOR MAJOR OIL AND GAS COMPANIES ACROSS LONDON'S TRANSPORT NETWORK DESPITE KHAN'S VOW FOR ZERO CARBON CITY

More than 200 advertising campaigns for major oil and gas companies have been displayed across London's public transport network since Sadiq Khan set out his plan to make the capital a "zero carbon city".

The mayor said in his 2018 environment strategy that he was "passionate about taking the lead and using the powers at my disposal to boost London's green economy and deliver sustainable growth".

But campaigners at Friends of the Earth say that since the publication of that strategy, the number of ads placed by fossil fuel companies across the Transport for London (TfL) estate is "undermining" his environmental policies.

According to data obtained through Freedom of Information requests by climate news service DeSmog, some 237 advertising campaigns for oil and gas giants BP, Shell, ExxonMobil and Equinor were displayed across the TfL estate since April 2018.

The figures come after UN Secretary-General António Guterres in June urged every country to ban advertising from fossil fuel companies, likening it to the restrictions placed in many nations on ads for "products that harm human health, like tobacco".

TfL said it reviews adverts on a "case-by-case basis" and that all comply with guidance issued by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA).

A large majority of the ads were placed by BP, with TfL displaying 168 campaigns from the company during the 2019/20 financial year alone.

Each campaign ranged from between one and 20 posters, TfL said, meaning that the full set of campaigns contained



within the FOI data likely amounted to thousands of posters.

Jamie Peters, climate coordinator at Friends of the Earth, said that by running the adverts, TfL is "undermining the London mayor's progressive zero carbon goals".

He said: "You can't claim to champion green action while offering the companies responsible for driving climate breakdown such a vast platform to push their greenwashing campaigns. Enabling such activity is what has delayed vital progress to date and led to the increasing weather extremes we're now seeing worldwide."

"Many of London's most prominent institutions are breaking ties with the fossil fuel sector, which clings on for dear life and to their good names – TfL must follow suit and get fully behind the green transition."

Responding, a TfL spokesman said: "All advertising copy on

our network is reviewed on a case-by-case basis against TfL's published advertising policy which also requires advertisers to comply with ASA Guidance and Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP) Codes.

"Advertising copy pertaining to fossil fuel extraction, or copy submitted for brands affiliated with fossil fuel extraction, must meet the environmental guidance of the advertising industry regulators."

Mr Khan vowed following his re-election in May to "double down" in his efforts to achieve net zero carbon emissions in London. He has said that he wants the capital to reach net zero in 2030 – a full two decades ahead of the Government's UK-wide target of 2050.

The world's largest oil and gas companies have all rejected accusations that they are guilty of 'greenwashing' and insist they are taking critical steps to

reduce their environmental impacts.

BP aims "to be a net zero company by 2050 or sooner" and says it wants "to help the world get to net zero", with Shell setting a similar target and promising to provide "more and cleaner energy solutions in a responsible way".

ExxonMobil says it is "committed to creating sustainable solutions that improve quality of life and meet society's evolving needs", while Equinor has said it "supports the Paris Agreement" and is transitioning into "a broader energy company, reducing the carbon intensity of our products in the process".

It is understood that many of the adverts included in the FOI data were promoting the companies' investments in developing clean energy technologies.

However, according to the International Energy Agency,

the oil and gas industry globally invested around \$20billion in clean energy in 2022, which is only about 2.5 per cent of its total capital spending.

TfL is itself aiming by 2030 to have a zero-emission bus fleet, and to power the whole of its operations – including the Tube system – entirely with renewable energy.

Since February 2019, TfL has imposed a ban on the advertising of junk food – generally comprising foods high in calories from sugar or fat, or high in salt. Mr Khan said the measure was introduced in an attempt to combat child obesity.

Over the last year, the ban has resulted in the removal of a poster for a West End theatre play because it included an image of a wedding cake, and another poster for a show by the comedian Ed Gamble, because it featured a hot dog.

Courtesy of the BBC



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KHAN U-TURN DESPITE TRANSPORT COMMITTEE CALLS FOR OVERHAUL IN TAXI AND PHV SECTOR

The Transport Committee, chaired by Keith Prince AM, has presented crucial findings and recommendations to Mayor Sadiq Khan following an extensive investigation into the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) industry in London. This investigation was prompted by ongoing challenges in the sector, culminating in a meeting held in January 2024.

The Committee's investigation was driven by the announcement of a new Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan by Mayor Khan on 21 December 2023. The meeting featured prominent figures, including Helen Chapman and Christina Calderato from Transport for London (TfL), Steve McNamara from the Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA), Mariusz Zabrocki from FREENOW, Steve Wright MBE from the Licensed Private Hire Car Association (LPHCA), and Asher Moses from Sherbet - The Electric Taxi Company.

Key Issues and Recommendations

New Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan:

The Committee emphasised the need for an updated action plan to replace the outdated 2016 version. Over the past decade, there has been a substantial increase in PHVs



and a decline in black taxis. Steve McNamara pointed out that policies to phase out older, more polluting taxis have further reduced taxi numbers, resulting in significant financial losses.

TfL confirmed that the new plan would address both the taxi and PHV industries. Key suggestions included revisiting the vehicle age limit, expanding the range of Zero Emissions Capable (ZEC) vehicles, making taxis more affordable, and considering additional exemptions for black taxis due to their accessibility features.

Affordability of Taxi Vehicles:

Concerns were raised about the high cost of the sole ZEC taxi model available, which has contributed to a decline in taxi drivers. Mariusz Zabrocki

highlighted the lack of competition in the market, while Asher Moses pointed out issues with vehicle reliability and maintenance costs. Despite the vehicle's high quality, the lack of competition remains a significant barrier. The Committee supports extending the Plug-in Taxi Grant (PITG) beyond April 2025 and calls for VAT exemption for accessible vehicles.

Supporting More Drivers to Complete the Knowledge:

The decline in Knowledge applicants, particularly among women, is a pressing issue. The Committee suggested making the Knowledge more modular and flexible, allowing candidates to study alongside their jobs. Initiatives like FREENOW's funding for

Knowledge study have shown promise, with significant interest from prospective drivers. The Committee also supports targeted efforts to increase female participation in the Knowledge.

Licensing Issues Affecting Drivers:

Updates to TfL's Taxi and PHV Driver Policy have led to disproportionate license suspensions for minor speeding infractions, creating significant stress for drivers. Steve McNamara described the enforcement changes and numerous 20mph limits as devastating. The Committee called for a review of TfL's enforcement approach, emphasising the need for proportionality and fairness. They also urged TfL to reform the tone of its correspondence with drivers and ensure the appeals process remains independent and transparent.

Current Licensing Figures:

The latest figures for the week ending 14 July 2024 are as follows:

- **Taxi driver licences:** 17,208 (a decrease of 2 from the previous week, with 2 new licences issued).
- **All London licences:** 15,447
- **Suburban licences:** 1,786
- **Taxi vehicle licences:** 14,650 (a decrease of 9 from

the previous week, with 16 new licences issued).

- **Zero Emission Capable (ZEC) taxis:** 8,551
- **Private hire driver licences:** 107,774 (an increase of 159 from the previous week, with 205 new licences issued).
- **Private hire vehicle licences:** 93,231 (an increase of 121 from the previous week, with 351 new licences issued).
- **Private hire operator licences:** 1,767 (an increase of 1 from the previous week, with 4 new licences issued).

Moving Forward

The Transport Committee's recommendations aim to address the critical issues facing London's taxi and PHV industry, ensuring a sustainable and fair future for all stakeholders. These include developing a comprehensive engagement plan for the new Taxi and Private Hire Vision, consulting on incorporating new forms of transport like pedicabs, increasing market competition, and supporting drivers through a fairer licensing and enforcement system.

Keith Prince AM expressed hope that Mayor Khan and TfL will take these recommendations on board to support the taxi and PHV industry moving forward.

Flip-flopping Sadiq - the Mayor's Dramatic PH Cap U-turn

By Dan O'Regan

Readers might recall that during his first term, the recently re-elected Mayor Sadiq Khan called for the ability from the government to cap the number of private hire vehicles (PHVs) in the capital. The lack of power is due to current legislation; if an applicant meets requirements, Transport for London is obliged to issue a PHV licence.

At that time, the Mayor was very vocal, both at the London Assembly and within the media, about the necessity for such capacity. He presented a compelling argument in his letter to the then Transport Minister Chris Grayling. The letter clarified a disputed lobbying claim:

"There has been a significant increase in recent years, which is unsustainable in terms of congestion and air quality

and for drivers who are struggling to make enough money to support themselves and their families."

The letter, dated April 2017, noted that private hire vehicle numbers stood at a hefty 87,400.

Fast forward seven years, and we see an astonishing 5,700 increase! If you then factor in diminishing road space, the huge increase in cycle lanes, the rise in low traffic neighborhoods, and a recent report that found London roads to be the most congested in Europe for the third year running, the problem of congestion has worsened.

The Club was shocked when, at June's commissioners meeting, upon asking the Deputy Mayor for Transport Seb Dance if the Mayor still had the desire for the ability to cap PH vehicles, we were told he doesn't!



Speculation abounds as to why the Mayor has performed this spectacular

U-turn. Especially when, in the lead-up to the general election, he extolled the virtues of a Labour mayor and government, and how he could achieve more. Maybe he never had any intention to cap, using the issue as a political football, knowing the former government would never grant him that ability? Or maybe he just doesn't care that our roads are gridlocked?

The Transport Committee's call for a comprehensive overhaul in the Taxi and PHV sector, along with Mayor Khan's policy reversal on capping PHVs, highlights the ongoing challenges and political complexities within London's transportation system. The Committee's recommendations aim to create a sustainable and equitable environment for drivers and passengers alike, while the Mayor's shifting stance raises questions about the future direction of London's transport policies.

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Sadiq Khan's blanket 20mph speed limits across the capital have cost Londoners stuck in traffic jams an extra working day every year, new figures have suggested.

Delays on roads managed by the Greater London Authority (GLA) increased by six per cent between 2019 and 2023, analysis of Department for Transport (DfT) data by The Telegraph found.

It comes after Mr Khan, the Labour mayor of London, introduced his Vision Zero policy in 2018, which included pledges to cut the capital's speed limits to 20mph.

This was fully achieved by 2020, Transport for London (TfL) has previously said, adding that lower speed limits mean fewer people are killed or seriously injured in traffic collisions.

On average, Londoners travelling by car or taxi faced delays of 104.5 seconds for every mile travelled in 2019. By 2023 that had increased to 110.8 seconds per mile, according to DfT data published on Thursday.

With the average London car racking up 5,600 miles a year, over a 12-month period those seconds of delay add up to nine hours and 48 minutes.

'EXTRA DAY A YEAR IN TRAFFIC JAMS DUE TO 20MPH LIMIT'

It means Londoners now spend the equivalent of an extra working day per year stuck in traffic jams.

Meanwhile, average speeds on A-roads controlled by the GLA decreased from 14.2mph in 2019 to 13.6mph in calendar year 2023. The authority did not respond to a request for comment.

Nationwide, Britain's roads got worse during the financial year 2023-24 ending in March, according to the latest DfT figures.

Delays on England's motorways and major A roads reached record levels, with journeys on the nation's strategic road network (SRN) being delayed by an average of 10.6 seconds per mile travelled

in the 12 months to the end of March. That is the longest delay in records dating back to 2015, although the DfT said the delay figures are averaged out over time and so do not reflect the impact of congestion.

'Impact of roadworks'
Rod Dennis, senior policy officer for the RAC, said: "It's concerning to see annual delays on motorways and major A-roads appear to have hit an all-time high, but this is perhaps a further sign of just how important vehicles are to people's lives.

"There could be a number of reasons for the increase, including higher traffic volumes – which are well on their way to returning to pre-Covid levels – and the impact of roadworks, including the rolling programme

of adding new refuge areas to smart motorways."

A spokesman for National Highways, which is responsible for the SRN, said: "We know delays are frustrating, but a number of factors contribute to slower-moving traffic.

"The make-up of vehicles on the road is changing, with more HGVs and larger vehicles together with less cars. This brings average speeds down.

"Our programme of improvements will result in long-term benefits for motorists – shorter and more reliable journeys as well as safer and smoother roads."

A spokesman for the Mayor of London, on behalf of the GLA, said: "Comprehensive TfL data

suggests that journey times on the TfL road network actually remain at similar levels to those in 2019, while analysis from around the UK suggests that lower speed limits have not increased congestion.

"London has made trailblazing efforts to reduce congestion levels and help people travel more sustainably. Roadworks are the biggest cause of delays in cities – which is why the Mayor's Infrastructure Coordination Service is working with boroughs and utility companies to deliver the pioneering Lane Rental Scheme, helping to save London road users over 1,250 days of roadworks since 2019.

"London was also the first city in the world to implement a Congestion Charge, reducing congestion by 30 per cent and avoiding millions of car journeys. We are also investing in a high-quality public transport network, and a network of cycleways and school streets, to make it easier for Londoners to leave their cars at home and travel sustainably, keeping roads clear for those who have no choice but to drive.

"Through all these measures, we're delivering a greener, healthier, and more efficient London for everyone."

Courtesy of The Telegraph

TfL CEASE PROGRESS ON VITO APPLICATION - AND ALSO RECOMMEND TX4 TRIAL PAUSE

Unfortunately, early last week, TfL have ceased any further progress on the Vito application.

As per a previous update, HJS have been really unlucky with the Vito at the final Millbrook test where the original diesel particulate filter has failed prematurely causing a negative result for particulate matter (this filter was replaced with new at the start of this process as per TfL instructions, HJS do not manufacture or supply this part).

We have on several occasions invited TfL to discuss these results and have suggested that an annual, professional test be implemented to ensure that any such failures are identified and addressed.

After a long period of silence on this topic, TfL finally responded and confirmed their position on Monday of last week.

Shortly after receiving the official notification on the Vito, TfL also stated their position with the TX4 which has now stood still for a similar amount of time waiting for TfL to complete a mid-durability test inspection.

The TX4 has so far faultlessly completed 5k miles of the 10k mile on road durability significantly reducing NOx emissions by an impressive level.

In this notification letter, TfL state that "We have not yet concluded our consideration of these issues (referring to the Vito) so we recommend pausing the durability trial for the TX4 to avoid HJS and TfL incurring potentially unnecessary costs. Should you wish to continue with the trial this will be at your own risk".

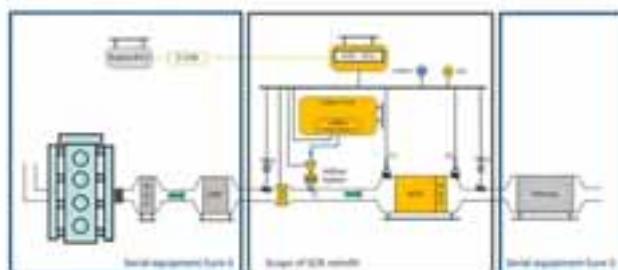
Despite the responses received from TfL, HJS remain committed to seeking ways to deliver the project which will benefit Londoners and the taxi driving community. When we initially commenced this project 4 years ago our aim was to



System design



System diagram



assist taxi drivers who had recently lost three years of

vehicle life whilst simultaneously improving on



the quality of London's air.

This, more than ever remains to be our goal so please be rest assured that we will not stop in our attempts to help you all.

*Mark Cooper
Head of Sales and Business
Development (UK)*

*HJS Emission Technology
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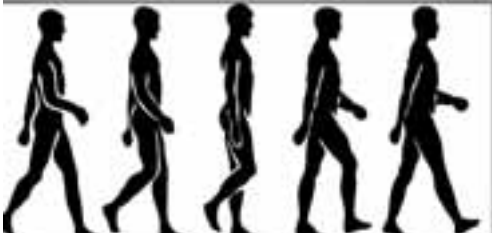
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We are still renting a limited amount of diesel taxis

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Walker on the March...

WE'RE CAB DRIVERS; TfL DON'T LIKE US!

The actions of successive Mayors and TfL make it hard to dispute the opinion that they are constructively trying to get rid of London's Taxis.

Since TfL took over, they first imposed a 15 year age limit on cabs, taking perfectly road-worthy cabs off the road for no good reason. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this had an effect on older drivers (60 plus), who have consistently made up about 25% of total drivers during this century. Drivers who intended retiring when their current cab came off the road, retired earlier, rather than have the burden of forking out for a new or newer cab.

This would not have been so bad if this had been imposed on cabs applying for a first plate. To impose it on a driver retrospectively, that had intended to run a vehicle for longer, it was plainly unfair.

On top of that, they decided to do it all over again and reduce the age limits on diesel cabs not meeting Euro VI standards to 12 years in 2018, with a similar impact on drivers nearing retirement. How on earth are we supposed to make our business forecasts into the future when we cannot be sure that TfL will not change the rules retrospectively? How do you operate when a cab has been budgeted over 15 years and then mid-way through, discover that its life has been reduced by 20% and you have been under-budgeting for 7/8 years?

How many drivers truly believe that the Euro 6 TX or TXe they bought will get to 15 years without TfL changing the rules again and reducing any cabs not fully electric to a 12 year life? It's total ballcocks.

IT GETS WORSE

Ascotts, a main dealer, have closed their diesel repair shop. It's too embarrassing for them to keep telling TX owners that they cannot source genuine parts. What a disgrace on the part of TfL for the way they have managed the change from a diesel to an electric cab fleet.

A third of the fleet are still diesel taxis – 5,226 taxis – and they can no longer get repairs done at one of the trade's leading garages.



ARE THEY REALLY TRYING TO GET RID OF US?

If you study stats, then yes, it really looks like they are.

When the GLA FP (Future Proof) report came out in 2014 that was meant to safeguard our future and which TfL largely ignored, we had a fleet of 25,546 drivers and 22,597 cabs. This was when Apps such as Uber really began to motor. At that time PH was 275% larger in size than the cab trade.

Due largely to TfL inaction on PH and over-reaching regulation on taxis, by January 2020, just prior to the Covid outbreak, we had reduced to a fleet of 20,527 cabs and 23,368 drivers, a reduction of 9%.

Meanwhile, PH had grown rapidly, increasing drivers by 51% to 107,321 (450% higher than cab driver numbers). It wasn't a surprise because Future Proof categorically warned of something like this happening. What did TPH do? Pretended they had never seen the report.

It went on. After Covid, our numbers had dropped and made something of a recovery by the start of 2022. By then, the number of drivers had fallen by 23% on the 2014 FP figure and cabs had fallen by more than a third.

Meanwhile, in the same period PH numbers had only fallen slightly since pre-covid and still 42% higher than in 2014.

POST – PANDEMIC: THE PRESENT

We are truly up s**t creek. The rot continues for us, while PH are doing OK. Now that everything has returned to normal, PH driver numbers have returned to the pre-pandemic high and PHVs have actually grown 6% since then.

What about us. Our numbers continue to fall, even after the pandemic fall-out. Taxi driver numbers have fallen by another 13% in the last 18 months to a total of 17,234 drivers (against 25,546 in 2014).

The fleet has increased slightly in this period by 2% to 14,666 (against 22,597 in 2014). However, this rise may not continue in the light of the diesel repair situation.

AND THEN IT GETS EVEN WORSE AND TPh SING “LA LA LA”

We are not replacing older drivers with new ones at a fast enough rate. KOL numbers are frightening, if unsurprising.

In 2000 BU (before Uber) there were 3419 KOL applications and 1073 new



drivers passed out.

By 2023 AU (After Uber) there were only 566 KOL applications and 121 new drivers.

JUST LOOK AT THOSE FIGURES AGAIN

In the first half of this year, there have been only 246 KOL applications and 43 new drivers.

There may be some of us that think these figures are a good thing. More work for those of us already in the lifeboat. But it's still only a lifeboat. If we continue to shrink, we will cease to be an important part of London's transport system. How long before we are nothing but a tourist attraction.

History has a tendency to repeat itself. The cab trade in the 1960s, through the 70s, drove on roads paved with gold. There were far too few taxis to satisfy demand and taxi drivers were coining it. Such a situation never lasts. Its an economic fact that if there is an unfilled demand, someone will eventually supply that demand.

In our case, that led to the birth of the minicab in the 1960s, that was 60,000 strong by the 1980s and we all know what has happened since.

It's the same deal. If we don't grow to meet demand,

then PH will grow instead. We are in a situation of under-supply and that can only last short-term

TfL must sort out the KOL. They accept the problem but only tinker around the edges to try and solve it. They need to do two things and neither are where they are focussing – on advertising the KOL. They need to sort out the administration. The KOL does not need watering down in any way but even so, it should not take more than an average 2 years to complete. A university degree only takes 3 years, as do many professional qualifications such as accounting.

The other thing is the Apps must be prevented from e hailing. Currently, a new driver is faced with a choice of taking 6 weeks to become a plastic taxi driver or 4 years to become a proper taxi driver. Unless such a person is economically illiterate, there isn't a choice; become an e taxi driver.

ALL CHANGE WITH THE ELECTION

While I heartily congratulate Caroline Pidgeon on being sent up to the House of Lords, the trade has lost the best friend it will ever have on the GLA.

The other side of that coin is Peter Hendy, former boss of TfL. Apart from reportedly spending part of his £565,000 salary on a £140 p.hr brass, he masterminded the slide of the taxi trade. When giving evidence to the GLA Transport Committee back in 2015-16, it became clear that he was a bit cosy with Uber and if he didn't actually promote PH Apps picking up off the street, he didn't do anything at all to try and stop them.

It was a good day for us the day he left office at TfL. Tragically, Keir Starmer has just made him Minister for Transport. I think we have to assume that the life of the taxi trade is about to get a lot harder than it already is.

There is a chink of light in that Hendy is 71 years old. With luck, he'll retire soon or maybe get himself in trouble with the ladies of the night again and have to resign. Fingers crossed.

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Grant: Irfan, thank you for the opportunity to break this exclusive story to the taxi Trade, via the Badge.

Irfan: No problem Grant, nice to see you again.

Grant: Irfan, can you start off by telling the cab trade how this all came about please because I know this will be great news for all concerned owners of TXE taxis.

Irfan: Yes of course, at IDTAXIS we were keen to strengthen the cab trade for Vehicles "outside of warranty" and we were aware that was developing in the taxi trade where owners of TXe taxis were becoming very anxious that once out of warranty the cost of keeping a TXe was becoming a major worry and with LEVC recently increasing the cost of their warranties to around £5,500 (potentially £6,500 with additional costs) many of them said that they were playing " Russian Roulette" in keeping their cab out of warranty. Many drivers I know are scared of not being in warranty especially with the Erad being the major worry. I know this news will make the driver feel a bit more secure and hopefully keep their lovely cab they now have

and not have to go running to the shop to buy a new taxi every 3 years. We had an internal meeting and decided we were going to develop a more affordable solution to help the drivers keep their cabs.

Grant: And what is the situation now Irfan?

Irfan: I am very happy to say that IDTAXIS have the solution to the trades worries and we are delighted to inform the trade. This has taken months of development and testing and we also fitted our replacement Erads to some working TXE taxis and the results, we are glad to say, have been fantastic

Grant: What is the cost Irfan?

Irfan: The best news is that we are pleased to announce that the replacement Erad Will be £2,495 + VAT this compares with

between £4k - £5k offered elsewhere. The replacement Erad also comes with a 40k miles / 1 year warranty (what ever comes first). Our replacement Erad has been carefully constructed to be as, if not more reliable but at a fraction of the cost. We hope this will resolve the major worries drivers face keeping their TXe Outside of warranty.

Grant: This is great news for drivers Irfan, when will the Erads be available?

Irfan: We are happy to say that we have stock and are ready to go.

Grant: Thank you Irfan

Irfan: No, thank you Grant

CAMDEN HIGH STREET BEING PEDESTRIANISED IN AN 18-MONTH TRIAL

Anyone who has walked the length of Camden High Street is familiar with the internal pep talk required before embarking on said journey.

Repeat after me: don't take a CD passed to you by a stranger (it's not free), don't take a shortcut and find yourself lost in Camden Market and don't expect to see the same Camden that was once a haven for subcultures, from mods to punks and ravers. Oh, and don't get run over on the bit of road outside Camden Town station exit that sort of seems pedestrianised but isn't.

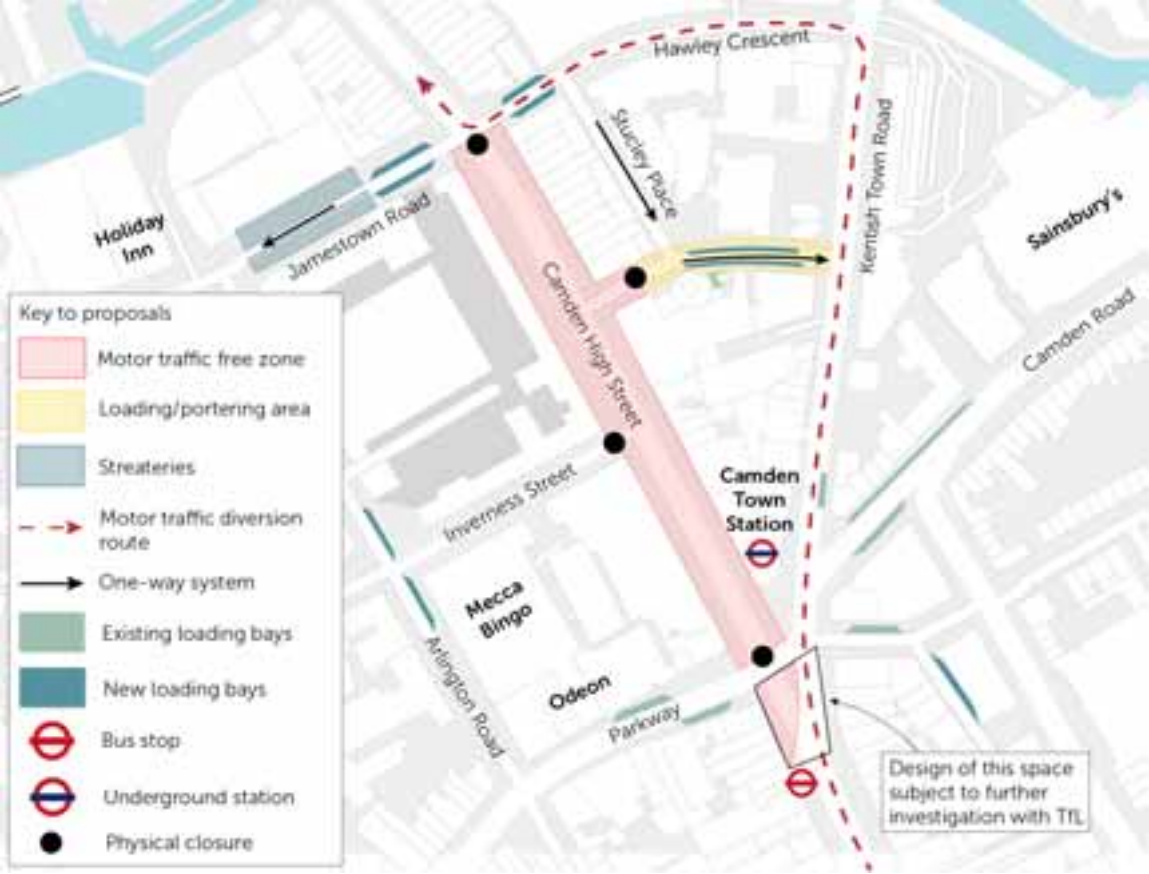
But this could all be set to change, as Camden Council has announced plans to pedestrianise the high street. According to London guru IanVisits, the entire length of the road from Camden Town tube station up to just before the canal at Hawley Crescent will be closed off to cars. TfL has provided £130,000 for development of a trial which will last 18 months and is expected to be

implemented in early 2025 at the very latest. While emergency vehicles and bicycles would still be allowed to use the road, it'll be completely free of cars, with deliveries for businesses diverted to Buck Street.

As many as 40,000 people are estimated to visit Camden High Street at any one time, so opening the road to those on foot would mean you'd no longer have to fight for a spot on the pavement. Having initially announced plans to pedestrianise the high street in 2019, as part of the GLA-funded Low Emission Neighbourhood scheme, the official consultation is finally up and running and will be open to the public until 30 August 2024.

Hoping to 'expand cultural activities into the street', the plans also include bringing al fresco dining to Jamestown Road. What's better than an Aperol spritz in the sun? A curbside one.

Despite its history as



The map shows Camden High Street from Jamestown Road to Hawley Crescent. A pink shaded area indicates the 'Motor traffic free zone'. A yellow area near Camden Town Station is marked as a 'Loading/portering area'. A dashed red line shows the 'Motor traffic diversion route' around the street. Other features include 'Streeteries' (blue), 'Existing loading bays' (green), 'New loading bays' (dark green), 'Bus stop' (red circle with a horizontal line), 'Underground station' (blue circle with a red line), and 'Physical closure' (black dot). Landmarks like Holiday Inn, Sainsbury's, Mecca Bingo, and Odeon are also labeled.

Key to proposals

- Motor traffic free zone
- Loading/portering area
- Streeteries
- Motor traffic diversion route
- One-way system
- Existing loading bays
- New loading bays
- Bus stop
- Underground station
- Physical closure

Design of this space subject to further investigation with TfL

London's countercultural hotspot, Camden has struggled to keep its cool in recent years. Opening it back

up the people that live, work and visit it could be just the surge of vitality it needs. The consultation is open to

both residents and visitors to Camden.

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The Anderson Shelter's TAXI LEAKS

HAS THE PARADOX OF PRAED STREET, FINALLY BEEN SOLVED?

The issue of Taxis plying for hire beside the Paddington Hilton instead of using the official Taxi rank on Bishops Bridge has been a topic of contention among drivers for many years, especially new drivers, who really have no idea of the troubles the trade faced in the shadow of the STAN report and the implementation of minicab satellite offices.

The concern at Praed Street, stems from the fact that passengers arriving at Paddington Station would often opt to flag down Taxis passing the southern exit, instead of using the designated Taxi rank.

Many drivers believed the Taxis waiting outside the Paddington Hilton were taking advantage of passengers looking for a more affordable fare, bypassing the official Taxi rank and causing loss of potential income for legitimate taxi drivers. However, what these drivers fail to understand is the reasoning behind this action and why some drivers continued to operate in Praed Street.

In reality, passengers arriving at Paddington Station were simply looking for the most cost-effective way to reach their destination. By leaving through the Praed Street exit, they could easily flag down passing Taxis and potentially save a few pounds on their fare. But the fact that passengers were leaving the station by the southern exit in large numbers, drew the attention of private hire drivers who saw an opportunity to illegally attract customers.

Despite being reported to Transport for London (TfL) on numerous occasions, the presence long lines of illegal



touting minicabs in Praed Street became a common sight. The lack of enforcement by TfL and the scarcity of Public Carriage Officers (PCOs) at this location only exacerbated the problem, allowing minicab touts to operate with impunity.

Recognizing the seriousness of the situation, certain concerned individuals similar to the Twitter Action Group (TAG), the Mayfair Mob, and the ITA took it upon themselves to try and address the issue.

In the past, action groups had many successes taking work back from the touts, with organised 'hits' outside Swallow Street, Tiger Tiger, OnAnon, Sketch, Nobu, Hakassan and Novikov. Just their presence outside a venue, deterred

Private Hire drivers from touting. Plus, their actions eventually resulted in the victory of having Taxi ranks implemented outside most of these night venues.

But their action didn't just concentrate on Mayfair, they expanded their operations and ventured on to the City at Abacus (the Forge), Revolution and also at Fabric in Smithfield...also resulting in ranks being implemented.

These precision 'hits' on venues go way back to a time before phone apps, to a time before PH were licensed, organised by Jim Wells, chairman of the newly formed London Cab Drivers Club.

Mr Ali's was a notorious minicab office operating from a passage



of a shop in Cranbourne Street, his cars flooded the area especially when the theatres turn out. But Jim Wells led the actions there most nights and also at places such as Victoria Sporting Club, Hombre, Stringfellow's and the Sports Café. It was Jim Wells actions that led to the formation of groups such as the Twitter Hit Squad, TAG, Mayfair Mob and the ITA groups.

With a track record over the years of successfully advocating change, certain drivers were determined to put an end to the illegal minicab touting practices in Praed Street and London Street, to ensure the safety and fair treatment of passengers by legitimate Taxi drivers.

Unfortunately, as with seen on many occasions when it comes to taking action, the trade becomes fragmented and starts to tear itself apart, especially on social media.

The drivers putting themselves on offer to win back this work

were themselves accused of touting and many arguments ensued. Some drivers even resorted to taking details of their colleagues and reporting them to TfL.

The official representative orgs regularly asked for an official Taxi rank outside the Hilton, but were constantly rejected by both the council and TfL, saying it would "interfere with traffic flow and cause congestion."

But now, traffic flow and the fear of congestion appears to have gone out the window, as the pavement has been widened and a cycle lane has been added...squeezing the previous two lanes into just one.

The issue of Taxis ranking for work outside the Paddington Hilton was always a complex one, that required a deeper understanding of the history and underlying factors at play. By working together and holding authorities accountable, we can address the problem of illegal touting and create a safer and fairer environment for all stakeholders involved.



L.C.D.C LEADERS NOT FOLLOWERS

Stop talking about it and JOIN!

70 black cabs take veterans to Worthing

Over 100 veterans from London and the home counties enjoyed a day in Worthing courtesy of volunteer cab drivers who support the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans.

After rendezvousing for refreshments in the village of South Holmwood, the cabs drove in convoy to the Pavilion Theatre on the Worthing Pier. The veterans were welcomed on the Marine Parade by Bob Smytherman, the official Town Crier for the Borough of Worthing and Adur, before entering the magnificent Art Deco building.

The veterans enjoyed a fish and chip lunch before guest speaker Matt Hellyer, the Chief Executive of the charity Pilgrim Bandits, who reached the rank of Warrant Officer in the SAS and served in every conflict over the past three decades and completed over 400 operations, spoke about his life and experiences.

Taxi Charity Chairman Colin Mills thanked the Mayor Of Worthing Cllr Ibsha Choudhury for donating the splendid venue and finding parking for the cabs along the seafront.

As is customary on the annual visit to the coast, which has been a highlight for veterans since 1948, the guests were entertained, and had the chance to get up and dance or join in with the singing before the raffle was drawn and the cabs took the veterans home – meter off!

Colin Mills, London Cab Driver and Chairman of the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans said, "This was my first Worthing outing as Chairman of the Taxi Charity and I am delighted that the team who organised the day did such a fantastic job and everyone I spoke to said they'd had a really good time. On the journey back home via South Holmwood I thanked everyone at the village hall and they were delighted that so many had stopped off at the village hall on their



journey home from Worthing and I assured them we will be back next year and the tradition will continue."

Afghanistan veteran Ben Mead said, "Yesterday was a phenomenal day. Being able to enjoy the camaraderie and the banter between veterans and the taxi drivers is truly priceless. It is like being in the military where you don't see each other for weeks, but suddenly whenever everyone gets together the conversation and the laughs carry on, as if it was only yesterday. As always when leaving to come home, I was full of happiness and had a huge smile on my face, thanks to the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans."

Andy McClaren who accompanied WWII veteran Norrie Bartlett to Worthing said, "Typically superb day laid on by the cabbies for our cherished vets. Well organised boy and girls."

To find out more about the support the Taxi Charity offers to veterans or to donate visit www.taxicharity.org

About the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans

The Taxi Charity is run by volunteer London black taxi drivers and has been supporting thousands of veterans since 1948. It is the only Forces charity that focuses on providing fun and entertainment and arranges free trips (for veterans from all conflicts) to the Netherlands and France for acts of commemoration and days out to museums, concerts, or social events across the UK.

The charity received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2021 and celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2023, a



remarkable milestone for a small, niche charity peopled by enthusiastic volunteers. In 2024, they took a group of veterans to Normandy for the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

To fund and facilitate their work, the charity is wholly reliant on donations, grants and sponsorship. www.taxicharity.org



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■ HEATHROW AIRPORT REPRESENTATION

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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SUPPORTING LONDON'S BLACK TAXI TRADE

Hello and welcome back to another issue of The Badge, if you have come back to read my column again then thank you.

Work levels appear to be a bit more buoyant this month over last, very few taxis around with their lights on at the busy periods during the day. But I am still noticing that customers are having trouble deciding whether a Taxi is For Hire or not, especially on the Electric TXe taxis! And I am still noticing some taxis have the home-made signs in the front windscreen with "Available" and "Occupied" on either side!

LEVC did develop a peak for the hire sign which I believe is still currently a free option on the TXe and I would be interested to hear from those of you who have had it fitted. Is it noisy and does it make a difference when customers are hailing you? This is obviously more of a problem when the sun is shining than of a night, not that we have seen much sunshine this year so far and the forecast is not looking good either.

Cab Chat

I still keep getting asked when we are going to produce another Cab Chat show from many of our loyal listeners, we haven't done a show for quite some time now and the listeners' enquiries got me thinking. So, I called MacTheCab to sound him out with regards to doing another show and we jointly came to the decision to do a special Cab Chat show for the 10th Anniversary, yes can you believe that in October it will be 10 years since we published the first Cab Chat show. So, for the 10th Anniversary show we are going to try and get the whole team back together and see where we all are now, what we are doing, and how our lives have changed since we all sat around the table and recorded a show. So, stay tuned and look out for Cab Chat when it pops up in your podcast feed and after that show we will see where things go!

They're Nicking our Work

For years I have heard Taxi drivers moaning that private hire are nicking our work and I am probably going to be denigrated for what I am about to say!

It is no good moaning that we are losing work when we haven't really got our own house in order, when you look around you can still see taxis that look like they could do with a good wash, wheel trims missing, adverts peeling off and flapping in the wind.

I have always driven a clean Taxi, I cannot stand driving around in a dirty cab, it gives me pride when people comment on how clean and shiny my cab is, and yes you could say that it doesn't earn me any more money, but it does give me a sense of pride. We all worked extremely hard to become London Taxi Drivers and we should be proud of our achievement, but we cannot rest on our laurels thinking that because we are the "Gold Standard" of drivers around the World, that should be enough for the customers!

We should be showing the customers that we are the Gold Standard by presenting clean and tidy taxis, be



presentable in the way we dress and be courteous to the customers, they are after all, paying our wages, it's how we earn a living.

I have never been an advocate for having adverts on Taxis, to some extent it cheapens us, but adverts have been posted on Taxis for decades now and I cannot see them disappearing any time soon. Some of the liveries have been quite good but some have looked quite tacky.

I also realise that carrying an advert on your taxi provides an additional form of income but at what cost? You could argue that having adverts on taxis in some cases loses us customers, but some customers actively look for taxis with a particular advert for a special occasion or event.

Driving around with a peeling advert that is flapping in the wind does nothing for the image of our trade, in fact it does the opposite and makes us look cheap and tacky. I know this is not the fault of the driver as most taxis carrying adverts are rental cabs, but the companies applying these adverts should ensure that they do not come away from the panels.

The other thing that I think makes us look less than professional is missing or broken wheel trims - the number of taxis that I see driving around with wheel trims missing seems to be on the increase again. Wheel trims are not overly expensive even for a set of 4! A new set of wheel trims and a clean cab can really go a long way towards presenting the right image to our fare paying customers.

So come on guys and girls, let's not drive around cocooned in our cabs thinking we are the best in the World, we already know that we are, but we need to show the travelling public that we are the best in the World. Portraying the

right image goes a long way and first impressions count - keep our cabs clean, decent wheel trims, dress presentable and be nice, being polite and courteous costs nothing.

Social Media & Doom and Gloom

Social media has become common place in people's lives over the past 10 years and nowhere more so than the taxi trade. There are various Facebook groups, WhatsApp groups, Twitter (now called X) and even Instagram.

We all see the posts from the Doom & Gloom merchants, some of them can be quite entertaining, and some just bore the life out of you, and there is one person that has become quite prolific in publishing doom and gloom posts. I am not going to name the person, but I am sure most of you know who I am referring to. No matter whether you like, or dislike posts made on any Social Media platform there is no need for some of the disgusting replies and messages that have been aimed at certain posters, wishing that someone would die is the lowest of the low. If you do not like what someone posts on social media, then don't read it, just scroll on by and ignore their posts or mute that person, replies and private messages wishing someone dead actually makes you look worse than the person you are claiming is wrong for posting doom and gloom.

Speaking of social media, another thing that does not show us in the best light is when a customer makes a post about a problem they have had with private hire, there then follows a plethora of replies from cab drivers having a pop at the customer for using private hire in the first place, which actually makes us look worse than them. Now I know we all think the customer was wrong in the first place but please think before replying in that manner, why not instead show empathy for the customer and politely suggest

that next time try using a licensed London Taxi, be nice and instead of alienating that potential customer we may just win some more customers back to using our services.

There is a good rule to follow when posting something on social media, once you have written your post, read it, then read it again, if you are not happy rewrite it, then read it again, once you are entirely happy then post and only then, post it. Also never post something in anger, I have seen too many posts that have quite clearly been written in anger and have then been deleted by the poster, but even though the post has been deleted there is always the chance that it has been screen shot by someone with the potential of being used against the original poster at a later date, so best not to post when angry.

YouTube

This month has been so busy for me with work and other things that I haven't managed to find the time to publish any new YouTube videos. I have a lot of stuff recorded but finding the time to edit videos can sometimes be a challenge.

Editing video takes so much longer than editing audio, when I used to edit Cab Chat every week I had it down to a fine art and found it quite easy and quick to edit a 2-hour show. Video editing on the other hand takes a lot longer and a 20-minute video can take 4 hours to edit, then it needs to be uploaded to YouTube and the description needs to be added.

I need to start setting time aside to edit my videos and get them out there and that is my plan going forward so please stay subscribed for new content coming soon.

A Big Change

This month has seen a big change for me and the way that I work, something very exciting that I never thought I would do this soon but have found to be quite a pleasant change, I will fill you all in next month after I have had time to adjust and fully assess the changes this has made to my working life.

Magical Taxi Tour

It is now less than 2 months until the Magical Taxi Tour leaves Canary Wharf for Disneyland Paris with 100 taxis full of children with life limiting illnesses. This charity event has become the highlight of the taxi trade's calendar and something that is very close to my own heart.

I will be live streaming most of the weekend on Facebook again this year and you can follow the trip on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and X (formerly Twitter) by searching for @MagicalTaxiTour.

If you want to donate towards the cost of running this fantastic event you can do so by visiting the website www.magicaltaxitour.com and clicking on the donate button.

That is all I have space for this month, I hope you are all keeping well and earning plenty, until next month please stay safe, be nice, be courteous, keep your taxis clean and presentable and Be Lucky.

EU hits Chinese electric cars

The European Union has raised tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles, as Brussels takes action to protect the bloc's motor industry.

The new tariffs on individual manufactures range from 17.4% to 37.6%, which is on top of a 10% duty that was already in place for all electric cars imported from China.

This could raise the price of EVs across the EU, making them less affordable for European consumers.

The move is also a major blow for Beijing, which is already in a trade war with Washington. The EU is the largest overseas market for China's EV industry and the country is counting on high-tech products to help revive its flagging economy.

EU officials say this rise in imports was boosted by "unfair subsidisation", which allowed China-made EVs to be sold at much lower prices than ones produced in the bloc.

China has denied this repeated allegation from the US and the EU: Beijing is subsidising excess production to flood western markets with cheap imports.

The new charges come into effect on Friday but are currently provisional while the investigation into Chinese state support for the country's EV makers continues. They are not likely to be imposed until later this year.

So who are the potential winners and losers in this trade dispute?

It is not just Chinese brands that are affected by the move. Western firms that make cars in China have also come under scrutiny by Brussels.

By imposing tariffs, Brussels says it is attempting to correct what it sees as a distorted market. The EU's decision may seem tame compared to a recent US move to raise its total tariffs to 100%, but it could be far more consequential. Chinese



EVs are a relatively rare sight on US roads but much more common in the EU.

The number of EVs sold by Chinese brands across the EU rose from just 0.4% of the total EV market in 2019 to almost 8% last year, according to figures from the influential Brussels-based green group Transport and Environment (T&E).

Patryk Krupcala, an architect from Poland, who expects to take delivery of a brand new China-made MG4 in two weeks told the BBC: "I have chosen an MG4 because it is quite cheap. It is a really fast car and it's a rear-wheel drive like my previous car which was BMW E46."

T&E projects firms like BYD and Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (SAIC), the Chinese owner of the formerly British brand MG, could reach a market share of 20% by 2027.

But not all Chinese-made EVs will be hit equally by the new tariffs.

Winners and losers

They were calculated based on estimates of how much state aid each firm received, while companies that

cooperated with the probe saw the duties they were hit with cut. Based on these criteria, the European Commission has set individual duties on three Chinese EV brands - SAIC, BYD and Geely.

SAIC has been hit with the highest new tariff of 37.6%. State-owned SAIC is the Chinese partner of Volkswagen and General Motors. It also owns MG, which produces one of the top-selling EVs in Europe, the MG4.

"The price for not cooperating is a severe blow to SAIC, which gets 15.4% of its global revenues from EV sales in Europe," says Rhodium Group, an independent research firm.

For Mr Krupcala, who bought his MG4 before the tariffs hit, the EU's move does not matter much: "I don't really care about the tariffs. I have a nice car with a seven-year warranty."

For China's largest EV maker, BYD, it is a different story, as it faces an extra duty of 17.4% on the vehicles it ships from China to the EU.

That is the lowest increase

and one that, according to research by Dutch bank ING will "give the automaker an advantage in the European market".

Luís Filipe Costa, an insurance industry executive from Portugal, who has just bought a BYD Seal, says price was one of the deciding factors when he chose his new car.

But, he added that even if the European Commission's new tariffs had already been in place he would still have gone with BYD because "other brands would also be affected".

Portuguese business executive Luis Costa standing next to his BYD Seal.

Geely, which owns Sweden's Volvo, will see an additional tariff of 19.9%.

According to Spanish bank BBVA, the company will "still export to the EU profitably" but "its profits will be significantly reduced."

Other firms, including European car makers operating factories in China or through joint ventures, will also have to pay more to bring electric cars into the

EU.

Those deemed to have cooperated with the probe will face an extra duty of 20.8%, while those EU investigators see as non-cooperative will pay the higher tariff of 37.6%.

US-based Tesla, which is the biggest exporter of electric vehicles from China to Europe, has asked for an individually calculated rate which EU officials have said will be determined at the end of the investigation.

Still, the firm has posted a notice on some of its European websites, that prices for its Shanghai-made Model 3 could increase due to the new tariffs.

Last year, businessman Lars Koopmann, who lives in the motor industry powerhouse that is Germany, bought a China-made Tesla Model Y.

Mr Koopmann says he particularly enjoyed the car's high-tech features, such as the large touch screen.

"Price was also a big factor that set it apart from premium German brands," Mr Koopmann says.

with swingeing new tariffs

"If the tariffs had been in place, they would have always affected my decision."

Localising production

While some China-based exporters will be better off than others, it is clear from the European Commission's plans that all of them will be facing higher costs when shipping to Europe.

The hardest hit "will be SAIC brands like MG... as well as joint ventures between foreign and Chinese firms in China, which often have narrower profit margins on the cars they export to Europe," Rhodium says.

"The biggest beneficiaries of the duties are European-based producers with limited China exposure, such as Renault."

In other words, the duties are likely to do as the EU

hopes they would - cut the number of Chinese-made EVs coming into the region, easing pressure on local manufacturers.

There is also another result of the move - some big Chinese EV firms are planning to build production capacity in the EU, which could help shield them from the new duties.

Work on BYD's first European factory is well under way in Hungary and production is expected to begin there by the end of next year.

Chinese car maker, Chery, has recently signed a joint-venture deal with a Spanish firm that will see the two companies making EVs and other types of cars in Barcelona.

And, SAIC is looking to secure a site for its first factory in Europe.

"It's a well architected plan to encourage companies to shift their investments to the EU, instead of relying on exporting from China," said Bill Russo, from Shanghai-based consulting group Automobility.

"The fact that some companies are taxed higher than others is a signal that they will make the penalty higher or lower based on the degree the company is committed to investing in the EU."

The Chinese government placed its bet on EVs early on.

According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, between 2009 and 2023 more than \$230bn (£181bn) of state support was pumped into the industry.

As a result its EV industry has become world leading.

The International Energy Agency says China accounted for more than 60% of the world's new electric car sales last year.

While the vast majority of EVs produced in China are sold domestically, overseas markets, and particularly Europe, have become increasingly important.

"Exports are the profitable segment," said Rhodium's senior analyst, Gregor Sebastian.

"The EU tariffs will hurt China's EV industry because these exports help recover losses from China's domestic price war."

Meanwhile, the world's second largest economy is struggling to shake off an economic slowdown in the wake of the pandemic and an ongoing property crisis.

Faced with lower domestic consumption and investment levels, China is trying to "export its way out" of the slump, says Alicia Garcia-Herrero, chief economist for the Asia Pacific region at investment bank Natixis.

And Beijing is placing yet another large bet on EVs by making the industry one of its "New Three" growth drivers - a government blueprint for reviving the economy that also relies on exports of batteries and renewable energy.

However, with major markets like the US, the EU and others imposing tariffs and other barriers, it looks like China's latest gamble could deepen trade tensions with some of its largest trading partners.

Courtesy of the BBC

A40 WESTWAY: MAJOR ROUTE INTO LONDON TO PARTLY CLOSE FOR MONTHS WITH DETOURS SET TO BE 'EXTREMELY BUSY' WARNS TFL

A major west London road will see closures from Sunday until mid-October for critical safety work, with drivers being warned of busy diversions.

Work to the A40 Westway, one of the capital's busiest roads, is needed to make sure the road stays safe, Transport for London said.

Structures which carry the Wood Lane flyover to the Marylebone flyover date back to 1969 and now require urgent maintenance as they have reached the end of their service life.

The closures will begin from 10pm on Sunday.

Until Thursday August 22, the eastbound slip road from the Westway

Roundabout and the A3220 West Cross Route southbound between the Westway Roundabout and the Holland Park Roundabout will be closed to all traffic.

Then from Monday September 2 to mid-October 2024, the westbound on slip from the A3220 West Cross Route to the A40 Westway via the Westway Roundabout will be closed.

The A3220 West Cross Route from Holland Park Roundabout to the Westway Roundabout will also be closed to northbound traffic.

TfL said that the A40, on the approach to Wood Lane, and diversion routes, are expected to be "extremely



busy".

The Westway carries around 90,000 vehicles a day in and out of the capital.

TfL said it was trying to keep disruption to a minimum, with the most impactful works undertaken during the summer holiday period when there is less traffic.

Work will be paused during the Notting Hill Carnival to minimise disruption.

Stuart Harvey, TfL's Chief Capital Officer, said: "We're determined to ensure a safe and well-maintained road network can play a full role in enabling Londoners to travel across the capital.

Courtesy of The Standard

July Airport Update

The HAL Taxi Trade Liaison Meeting held on July 10th covered a comprehensive agenda, addressing crucial topics impacting the taxi operations at Heathrow Airport. Representatives from various taxi unions, Heathrow management, and other stakeholders engaged in detailed discussions to address ongoing issues and future plans.

Meeting Recordings

A request to record future sessions for transparency is being explored.

Multi Faith Prayer Rooms (MFPR) at Heathrow Airport: Promoting Inclusivity and Respect

Introduction

In an effort to foster inclusivity and accommodate the diverse religious needs of passengers and staff, Heathrow Airport has introduced Multi Faith Prayer Rooms (MFPR). This initiative, spearheaded by Ruth Bottoms, Head of Heathrow Multi Faith Chaplaincy, aims to provide safe spaces for prayer and quiet reflection, welcoming individuals of all faiths and those who identify with no religious affiliation.

Purpose and Principles

The MFPR initiative emphasises transparency and inclusivity. These prayer rooms are designed as shared spaces where mutual respect and understanding are paramount. It is crucial that all users adhere to a strict code of conduct, jointly developed by Heathrow Airport and representatives from various religious groups within the chaplaincy team. Key principles include:

- Respectful Conduct: Users must respect the sanctity of the MFPR and the diversity of beliefs represented.
- Permission for Services: No preaching or leading of religious services is allowed without explicit permission from chaplaincy representatives.
- Regulation of Materials: Any literature or notices displayed must receive prior authorisation and will be subject to removal otherwise.
- Purposeful Use: The MFPR is designated for prayer and



quiet reflection only; eating, drinking, or sleeping is prohibited.

Community Engagement and Feedback

To ensure widespread awareness and compliance, unions and other relevant stakeholders have been encouraged to disseminate information about the MFPR among their members. Specific concerns, such as unauthorised vehicle access to the Taxi Feeder Park where the MFPR is situated, are being addressed collaboratively.

Future Directions

Looking ahead, they do have MFPRs at the airport that can be partitioned due to their larger size. However the MFPR at TFP does not have plans to have a curtain rail installed. Further details on this proposal will be shared in due course, reflecting ongoing efforts to optimise the utility of these spaces while maintaining their inclusive ethos.

Conclusion

The Heathrow Multi Faith Chaplaincy underscores that the MFPR is intended for shared use and respect among all users. It is not exclusive to any single religious group but rather serves as a communal area for prayer, reflection, and inclusive engagement. The commitment to diversity and mutual respect is central to the ethos of these prayer rooms, affirming Heathrow Airport's dedication to

accommodating the spiritual needs of its diverse community.

In summary, the MFPR initiative stands as a testament to Heathrow's ongoing commitment to inclusivity, offering a sanctuary for spiritual practice and contemplation amidst the bustling environment of the airport.

Police Update

PC Andy Garvey highlighted the persistent issue of taxi touting, which is being actively managed through patrols and targeted projects across all terminals. There is a proposal to review signage in Terminal 4 and consider increasing AVA charges to fund further patrolling efforts.

Taxi Rank Layout and TDOC Camera

Alison from APCOA presented a recommended change to the layout of the Terminal 3 taxi rank, with a 3D walkthrough already submitted for review. Additionally, issues with PCNs and the responsibility for the Terminal Drop Off Charge (TDOC) camera were discussed, with ongoing efforts to gather relevant data and improve the situation.

Taxi Desk

The need to maintain discussions regarding the Taxi Desk at Arrivals was acknowledged.

Canteen Concerns

Additionally, union

representatives are set to meet with Claire from Eurest to discuss the canteen services, with some expressing strong opposition to renewing Eurest's contract. LCDC's Mark White met with the Manager to discuss a number of issues, including the menu, prices, quality of food, holding times, cleanliness and an extension of both cooking times and opening hours. Another meeting with Rolly and his senior staff is planned before meeting Claire.

Sensor Dynamic Project

Funding for the Sensor Dynamic project has been secured, and unions are pushing for more involvement in its implementation.

Hotel Drop-off Charges and Road Markings

The Sofitel hotel's unchanged drop-off process was noted, along with issues regarding road markings at T5 Welcome Roundabout and other key areas. These concerns are being followed up with the relevant engineering and highway authorities.

Fair Fare Increase

The potential fare increase in April remains on the agenda, pending a decision by the union.

Representation

There was a strong call for better representation of black cabs at the Heathrow Forum, an issue to be raised

with HAL's Timothy Wells.

Wardens and Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

After more details were supplied by HAL and APCOA, the proposal for APCOA to provide additional wardens was not adopted. The cost for 6-9 Wardens per day was estimated to be in the region of over £300,000/annum and therefore the current Warden scheme proved to be more cost-effective despite some opposition from Unite. Three wardens have now been trained and are operational, primarily in the evenings.

Tensions Rise Over Heathrow's Proposed Taxi Service Level Agreements

Central London, 3rd July 2024 – The proposed Service Level Agreements (SLAs) at Heathrow Airport have ignited a heated debate among taxi associations, with Unite the Union standing in firm opposition. Brian Nayar, an Airport Representative for the London Cab Drivers Club (LCDC), publicly challenged Unite's stance, calling for clarity and cooperation in a recently released statement. A meeting was held the week before the Liaison Meeting, which included all of the Senior Trade Representatives and an Airport Representative from each Organisation. Grant Davis and Brian Nayar represented the LCDC.

Unite's primary objection, later articulated in an email, by Jim Kelly, Head of Unite the Union's Cab Section, is that the SLAs might negatively impact their membership. However, Nayar criticised this assertion as "broad and unsubstantiated." He highlighted that despite multiple opportunities to provide evidence or suggest specific amendments, Unite's responses lacked detail and did not facilitate constructive dialogue.

In contrast to Unite's position, none of the other recognised taxi associations at Heathrow raised any objections. This widespread agreement underscores a collective commitment to enhancing the professional governance of the Taxi Feeder Park. Brian told Jim Kelly that the SLAs aim to establish clear, transparent, and fair practices for Collections, Wardens, and Reps, which are essential for

maintaining order and preventing misuse.

One point of contention was the operation of the Heathrow Learning Centre. Kelly claimed that the SLAs dictated the hours of operation, a point Nayar disputed. He clarified that the SLAs are intended to ensure all facilities are used effectively and not monopolised by a single group. This move seeks to prevent misuse and promote fair access for all drivers.

The need for these agreements is further underscored by documented instances of misuse, such as representatives sleeping in their taxis while signed in or misusing their sign-in privileges for personal activities. Nayar argued that such behaviour damaged the credibility of all representatives and necessitated stringent rules and guidelines.

Nayar also refuted the suggestion that the SLAs would hinder Unite's ability to represent their members. On the contrary, he asserts that the measures are designed to enhance efficiency and transparency, benefiting the entire taxi driving community. He suggested that any legitimate concerns about emergencies or exceptional circumstances can be addressed through specific clauses in the SLAs.

The controversy has been exacerbated by personal attacks and unprofessional behaviour from some Unite representatives, including false accusations and verbal abuse directed at LCDC and LTDA Reps. Such conduct,



Nayar states, is "unacceptable and damaging," and he criticised the lack of an apology from Unite's leadership.

In conclusion, Brian Nayar stressed that the SLAs were a crucial step towards improving governance and professionalism within the Taxi Feeder Park. They represented a collective effort to ensure fair, transparent, and efficient operations. He urged Unite to reconsider its stance and engage constructively to finalise these agreements for the benefit of all stakeholders involved.

As the debate continues, the taxi community at Heathrow Airport remains divided, with

the proposed SLAs at the center of the contention. The outcome of this dispute will have significant implications for the future governance and operation of taxi services at one of the world's busiest airports.

The contentious issue of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) concerning collections, wardens, and representation were voted on and approved at the Liaison meeting, with the majority of organisations agreeing to implement these changes starting July 15th. Reps can now only sign in between 6am and 8pm in order to stop some of the abuses carried out by the odd person, who would not conform to the rules of not

signing in overnight.

Additional Business

Several other issues were addressed, including:

- Drivers to be discouraged from making U-turns at T5 Western Perimeter Road.
- The need for more bins, recycling options, and signage about feeding wildlife in the TFP. Please do not feed the birds, you could lose your tag!
- Updates on EV charging stations, with specific faults are still being addressed. Another meeting to discuss the EV Charging options is planned for the end of the month.
- A request for broader access to wardens' sign-ins was made by Unite. HAL

later asked for more information to be supplied in order to evaluate the justification due to data protection concerns.

Next Meetings

The next meetings are scheduled for September 11th and November 6th, 2024, in Room Istanbul at the Compass Centre.

Conclusion

The meeting concluded with a commitment from all parties to continue addressing these issues and improving the working environment and operational efficiency for taxi services at Heathrow Airport.

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Johnny Fisher delighted his travelling fans with another first-round knockout at the Copper Box on Saturday night.

The Romford Bull, as Fisher is known, sold over 4,000 tickets and needed precisely 36 seconds to leave Alen 'The Savage' Babic tumbling into dreamland. 'Bosh', as they say in the Fisher business, and it is a business.

It was Fisher's fifth first-round stoppage in 12 fights and his 11th stoppage or knockout in total. It is easy to be a boxing cynic and say that Fisher has not yet been tested – that is true, but then it is also true of just about every unbeaten, popular fighter in the entire history of the sport. It is a slow and tested process.

"I dream of nights like this," said Fisher, his flock ecstatic with the win and forming an endless chorus of approval. "This is why we train so hard. This is why we fight."

The win was better than the raw statistics; Babic is not a bad fighter, but he was caught early, often and hurt quickly. Fisher was accurate and – this might sound like a contradiction – patient as he let both hands go. Fisher saw that he had hurt Babic, and he just unleashed his punches in one flowing assault.

The fans helped transform the night in a venue that has been looking for a hero since the Olympics left the city nearly 12 years ago; so many good fighters have flopped at the Copper Box. Perhaps Fisher and his horde will get a few more visits, and that could transform the place into a fortress packed with 5,000 devoted Fisher followers.

Top heavyweights Tyson Fury, Daniel Dubois and so many other quality boxers have fought in front of a lot of empty seats at the venue; the seats are bright and multi-coloured and tend to show up clearly. Fisher's fans never quite filled it, but they came close, and they filled the venue with wild atmosphere that has been missing since it opened its doors to professional boxing.

The first fight there was Billy Joe Saunders against John

ROMFORD BULL DELIGHTS FANS



Ryder for the British middleweight title in 2013, and it should have been heaving that night; it was a sign that the venue is hard to sell. Fisher has cracked the code and, if he fights there again, he might just sell every single ticket.

"You all made this possible," Fisher told his fans from the ring at the end of the brief encounter. Fisher, by the way, also talked about a fight in Australia.

Fisher is just 25, still a novice in many ways, but he is improving with each outing and that is the real measure of a young heavyweight. The win is crucial, but a young boxer needs to show something different, show some new qualities and Fisher did. It was short, but it was not wild, and it could have been hard and ugly – Babic has the right nickname, he can be savage. Too many unbeaten and protected heavyweights just go through the motions in fight after fight and forget Fisher will now get a lot of men wanting to fight him, wanting to beat him and wanting the type of payday that comes with fighting a popular boxer.

Johnny Fisher is not the best heavyweight in Britain and is possibly only just in the top ten and that is fine. Fisher is still a work in progress and so far, it has been a very entertaining journey. Good luck getting a ticket to his next fight.



JOYCE AND CHISORA TO FACE-OFF

Joe Joyce and Derek Chisora will face-off in a heavyweight showdown at the O2 Arena on July 27.

It is an all-British bout that has been mooted for a number of years, and it takes place this summer at a stage in both fighters' careers when retirement questions are growing.

Joyce, 39, suffered two bruising defeats to Zhilei Zhang last year and returned to action in March with a low-key win over Kash Ali, while Chisora has fought just once in 18 months. The 40-year-old, with a 34-13 record, beat Gerald Washington on points last August, having been stopped by Tyson Fury when the pair fought for the third time

in December 2022.

At a press conference on Wednesday to announce his fight with Joyce, Chisora revealed he intends to have three more fights and then hang up his gloves. After this final bout in London, he wants a bout in Manchester before bringing down the curtain on his career in Zimbabwe.

"I know Joe is going to come [forward], I'm going to come, so it's going to be a very exciting fight," Chisora said. "I'm excited. I've got so much to show, it's a perfect fight for me and it's a perfect fight for him. It's the first time he's fought at the O2 Arena - this is my home."

He added: "Joe is not going to

win. He can train as much as he wants, but when it comes to the real grind of it, I'm more vicious than him, I'm more crazy than him. I fear no man. There's no feeling each other out in the first round - I'm going in."

Joyce has repeatedly insisted he still has ambitions to reach the top table of the heavyweight division, and promoter Frank Warren suggested that the winner is in line for a big fight later this year.

While Chisora did not appear particularly concerned about his long-term future in the sport, it is a must-win bout for Joyce.

"We're going to crash in the middle, there's going to be sparks and flames," he vowed.



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It was that turn wasn't it? Versus Sweden in the 1974 World Cup. One second, he was there and the next, well, he was gone.

Within days we were all trying to emulate the man and mainly falling arse over teacup. For the majority, it put his name on the footballing map and there he stayed for many years to come. He was born Hendrik Johannes Cruyff on April 25, 1947, in Amsterdam, the second son of Hermanus Cruyff and his wife Petronella, known affectionately as Nel but we all knew him as Johan Cruyff and he rose to become one of the most iconic and influential figures in the history of football, renowned for his exceptional skill, athleticism, vision and tactical brilliance. Cruyff left a lasting mark on the sport as a player at first, then manager, and football philosopher. He simply loved playing football from a young age and had an innate talent that quickly became evident to all those who saw him play. Growing up in a working-class neighbourhood in Amsterdam, he honed his skills playing street football, developing the close ball control and improvisational abilities that would define his playing style.

In 1957 aged 10, Cruyff joined the youth team of his local club, Ajax Amsterdam. Under the guidance of influential coach Rinus Michels, Cruyff's talent blossomed.

Michels would go on to play a pivotal role in Cruyff's career, both as a player and later as a manager. Johan made his debut for the club in 1964, and it wasn't long before he became the club's star player. He helped lead Ajax to a period of domestic and European dominance in the early 1970s, winning 8 Eredivisie titles and 3 consecutive European Cups – now known as the UEFA Champions League – from 1971 to 1973. In 329 matches for Ajax, he scored 257 goals and was credited with 170 assists.

Cruyff's style of play was revolutionary. He was a forward who possessed not only incredible technical skills but also an innate footballing intelligence. He had an uncanny ability to read the game, anticipate movements, and create opportunities for himself and his teammates. His dribbling, vision, and precise passing made him a complete player. One of Cruyff's most significant contributions to the game was his role in popularising what became known as Total Football.

This tactical philosophy, developed by Michels, emphasised fluid positional play, versatility among players, and constant movement to maintain control of the ball. Perhaps above all, Cruyff epitomised these principles and became the face of that era. The football world acknowledged his talents, and he won the Ballon d'Or three times,

in 1971, '73, and '74. In 1973, he made a high-profile move to Barcelona for around \$2million, a world record fee at the time.

'I remember my move to Spain was quite controversial. The president of Ajax wanted to sell me to Real Madrid. Barcelona weren't at the same level as Madrid football wise, but it was a challenge to play for a Catalan club. Barcelona was more than a club.'

Once there he continued to dazzle crowds with his footballing brilliance. His impact on the club was profound, as he helped lead Barcelona to their first La Liga title

opening match of the World Cup in '74 and remains an iconic moment in football history. The Dutch then finished third in the European Championship of 1976, before Cruyff refused to play in the 1978 World Cup, due to a kidnapping attempt in Barcelona.

'Someone put a rifle at my head and tied me up and tied up my wife in front of the children at our flat in Barcelona. The children were going to school accompanied by the police. The police slept in our house for three or four months. I was going to matches with a bodyguard. All

decided not to renew his contract, so he signed for bitter rivals Feyenoord instead and won the title there too in 1984, alongside a young Ruud Gullit.

He then went back and managed Ajax from 1986, winning the European Cup Winners Cup in 1987, before he joined Barcelona in 1988 as its manager where began implementing his footballing philosophy, later known as Tiki-Taka.

At the Nou Camp, he emphasised youth development, ball possession, and attacking football, principles that continue to define Barcelona's playing

there aren't many who know.'

In his personal life, Cruyff had met his future wife, Diana Margaretha Danny Coster in 1967, and they married in 1968, with Cruyff then aged 21 and his bride 19. Her father Cor Coster, was also Cruyff's agent. They had 3 children together, Chantal 1970, Susila 1972 and Jordi in 1974, named after the patron saint of Catalonia, St Jordi, and who would go on to play for Barcelona and Manchester United, among others

In 1991, Johan Cruyff faced a significant personal challenge when he was diagnosed with lung cancer, attributed to a lifetime of smoking 20 cigarettes a day. He underwent successful surgery to remove a tumour, and the experience served as a turning point in his life. He quit smoking and became an advocate for a healthy lifestyle. Cruyff's resilience in the face of this health scare was characteristic of his determination both on and off the field. He continued to be involved in football, providing commentary and analysis on matches and contributing to the development of youth academies and coaching programs.

Sadly, his lung cancer returned, and he died on March 24, 2016, at the age of 68. He was cremated in Barcelona. His death was met with an outpouring of tributes from the footballing world, highlighting the profound impact he had on the sport.

'I played 18 years in top football and 17 times for Sweden but that moment against Cruyff was the proudest moment of my career. I thought I'd win the ball for sure, but he tricked me. I was not humiliated. I had no chance. Cruyff was a genius.' – Swedish defender Jan Olsson, the victim of the 'Cruyff turn.'

'His intelligence off the field as well as on it was quite remarkable. How well I remember seeing Cruyff surrounded by journalists from all over the world in 1978 to whose questions he replied almost casually in a multiplicity of languages. Not only Dutch, but English, French, Spanish and German.' – Brian Glanville.

'When players like Bale and Ronaldo are worth around €100 million, Johan would go in the billions!' – Franz Beckenbauer. Last word to the man himself.

'In Spain all 22 players make the sign of the cross before a game; if it worked, every game would be a tie. Every trainer talks about movement, about running a lot. I say don't run so much. Football is a game you play with your brain. You have to be in the right place at the right moment, not too early, not too late.

Playing football is very simple but playing simple football is the hardest thing there is.'

The Mumper of SE5



COME IN NUMBER 14...

in 14 years during the 1973-74 season.

During this period, Cruyff also made a significant impact on the international stage, winning 48 caps for the Netherlands national team and scoring 33 goals. He played a pivotal role in their run to the 1974 FIFA World Cup final. The Dutch team were captained by Cruyff, his famous number 14 on his jersey. Managed by Michels, they played an innovative and attractive brand of football that captured the imagination of fans worldwide. Despite losing to West Germany in the final, Cruyff's influence on the tournament was immense, earning him the Golden Ball award as the tournament's best player.

The Adidas shirt he wore for the national side at that World Cup had 2 stripes down its sleeves, instead of the standard 3. This was due to Cruyff already having a sponsorship deal with sportswear rivals Puma, so a compromise had to be found. The memorable moment mentioned earlier, which became known by the footballing World as the Cruyff Turn, came during the

these things change your point of view towards many things. We wanted to stop this and be a little more sensible. It was the moment to leave football and I couldn't play in the World Cup after this. To play a World Cup you have to be 200% okay, there are moments when there are other values in life.'

Following a brief retirement, he came back and moved his family to the USA where he resumed playing.

'I had lost millions in pig-farming and that was the reason I decided to become a footballer again. It was wrong, a mistake, to quit playing at 31 with the unique talent I possessed. Starting from zero in America, many miles away from my past, was one of the best decisions I made. There I learned how to develop my uncontrolled ambitions, to think as a coach and about sponsorship.' He signed with the Los Angeles Aztecs in 1979, then moved to the Washington Diplomats in 1980. He then returned to Ajax and they became league champions in 1981-82 and 83 seasons. The following year, Ajax

style to this day. Under Cruyff's management, he firmly established the club as a dominant force in Spanish and European football and alongside the local talent he already had, he brought in players such as Pep Guardiola, Ronald Koeman, Michael Laudrup, Gheorghe Hagi, Romario and Hristo Stoichkov.

In his time there, he won the 1989 European Cup Winners Cup, The La Liga title from 1991 to 1994, the Copa del Rey in 1990, and the European Cup and the European Super Cup in 1992, totalling 11 trophies in all. He then fell out with the chairman Nunez and was sacked.

His tenure however had laid the foundation for Barcelona's future success under later managers like Pep Guardiola, who Cruyff had a hand in appointing, thus continuing to build on the Cruyffian footballing philosophy. 'The biggest test for a coach at a team like Barça is the strength to make decisions and the ability to talk to the press, because they don't help and you have to manage that. After that, it's easy for those who know football. But

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