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INCREDIBLE EFFORT BY POPPY CABS, FORD EV AND THE LATEST ON HEATHROW

This month, I'd like to start by giving a massive shoutout to my fellow Cabbies, who once again went above and beyond to support ex-servicemen and their families on Remembrance Sunday.

It was an incredible effort, and the day leaves a lasting impression for weeks afterward. While no gesture can ever truly repay the sacrifices these individuals have made, speaking to them makes it clear how much they value and appreciate our efforts.

A special mention goes to Mike Hughes - Mr. Poppy Cabs himself - for his outstanding work.

There's been plenty of chatter on X about the new Ford EV taxi being mooted to enter London, with opinions split among taxi organisations, leaders, and even trolls.

While some argue about the need for an "iconic" shape, I can't help but wonder: when passengers arrive at a train station and see a silver E5 Vito,

a white TX4, a navy blue E6 Vito, a grey TXe, or a black Dynamo on the rank, do they really feel confused?

You'll also find updates on the situation at Heathrow Airport. The office space issue for trade groups remains a disgrace. Currently, only the LTDA and Unite the Union have proper facilities, leaving the LCDC, UCG, and RMT to conduct their business in cafés or the back of their taxis in the feeder park.

HAL claims there's no legal "ownership" of the offices but refuses to create a shared space for all trade groups - what a farce.

Lastly, don't miss the article by Jamie Hawes, LCDC Heathrow Representative, who shares his perspective on the introduction of taxi marshals after attending a recent trade meeting at HAL. Stay safe out there, and I'll see you on the road!





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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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TFL 'BIASES' NEED SCRUTINY

In the August edition of The Badge, the LCDC reported that a member reminded Transport for London (TfL) through a court claim that traditional taxi laws are still in force.

In response to this claim, TfL's legal department clarified a key issue raised by our member: whether a taxi driver may start the meter upon accepting an immediate app-based booking. TfL replied:

"TfL has already confirmed to you in correspondence dated 21 May 2024, that a hackney carriage driver may not switch on the taximeter prior to the point at which the passenger is picked up, when it is being pre-booked as a hackney carriage. Again, we consider that this point is clear and does not require a declaration from the High Court before that is the case."

This statement from TfL appears to contradict a 2017 statement made during a trade meeting with

organisations like the LCDC, LTDA, Unite, RMT, and UCG, where TfL stated: "...case law has determined that a hiring for a London taxi takes place where the booking is accepted, not where the passenger is picked up."

This 2017 statement was related to a case involving yellow badge taxi drivers working for Computer Cab, addressing whether they were plying for hire in the green badge sector. Given that TfL understands that hiring occurs at the booking location, it should also recognize that Section 39 of the London Cab Order 1934 permits the meter to start from the acceptance point.

Section 39 of the Cab Order 1934 specifies: "The driver of a motor cab shall start the taximeter no sooner than when the cab is hired or at such later time as the driver thinks fit."

This inconsistency raises questions about TfL's taxi and private hire department? Drivers are asking if they are

potentially favouring the commercial interests of app companies?

These companies, also licensed by TfL as private hire operators and contribute substantial revenue through licensing fees, could this be a conflict of interest?

TfL has stated that it does not regulate taxi apps, an assertion that seems intended to deflect responsibility for protecting both the public and taxi drivers.

However, case law classifies taxis as public transport, unlike private hire vehicles, which are categorized as private transport. As a result, Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires TfL to fulfil its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) when third parties, such as app companies, dispatch taxis. Therefore, TfL's claim that it does not regulate apps appears misleading; it has a statutory duty to ensure that these apps operate within the

legal framework for London's regulated taxi service.

By treating taxis and private hire vehicles similarly and allowing app companies to do the same, TfL may be acting unlawfully?

Since taxis perform a public service, the app companies that dispatch them also perform a public function, thereby falling under the PSED, which TfL is tasked with enforcing.

The PSED mandates that TfL eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimization, and practices that endanger the public. Therefore, TfL cannot permit app companies or drivers to cancel bookings, which could leave passengers, particularly those relying on contracted services in a vulnerable situation if drivers cancel the app job in favor of a street hail.

TfL's policy requiring drivers to start the meter only when the passenger is picked up may lead to app booking

cancellations if drivers are not compensated from the moment of booking acceptance, as case law and the London Cab Order allow.

Moreover, TfL's PSED duty includes maintaining regulated fare limits. Added fees, such as technology charges, high-demand fees, and surge pricing may make a taxi unaffordable for vulnerable passengers, including wheelchair users and disabled individuals who may already be financially disadvantaged.

In conclusion, TfL's claim of non-regulation over apps seems disingenuous given its statutory duty to safeguard public welfare in taxis, a form of public transport distinct from private hire vehicles.

There is a pressing need for government intervention to address TfL's apparent shortcomings and potential biases that continue to affect the London taxi industry.

TfL has been contacted for comment.



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POPPY CABS - REMEMBRANCE



By Andy Scott PR & Comms. London Taxi PR

Poppy Cabs and Remembrance Sunday. For me, now, the two elements are uniquely fused together, and a date that always goes first in my diary every year.

This year, Poppy Cabs 15th of providing the free black cab transport for military veterans, was uniquely special. Its been an exceptionally tough year for everyone, particularly for the profession, and yet once again, as a collective, they came together.

Having surveyed the

landscape of the forecourt of the Renaissance Hotel at St. Pancras on the Friday prior to Sunday's meeting, and had a final chat with the Hotel management, it was reassuring to know everything was in place ready for our forthcoming early morning attendance and meeting.

Myself and my fellow marshal, Taxi driver and tour guide Lee Cooper, were picked up just after 5am on the day by our driver and close compadrie, John Massey. Making our way to the venue the banter was about the profession and the day's proceedings. For John, it was a first visit to the Renaissance Hansom Cab



venue for the meeting, and you could tell he was impressed. I remember my first visit several years ago to discuss the possibilities of having the hotel as a location for the Poppy Cabs meeting, and with its unique historical connection to the profession one I was so pleased and proud to have attained.

As usual the team at the Renaissance looked after us royally, with bacon and egg muffins a plenty, and an endless supply of tea and coffee to prepare us for the day ahead. We were among the first to arrive, so it was especially wonderful to survey what had been prepared for us and await the arrival of fellow Poppy Cabs attendees and volunteers.

One by one they started to drift in and be seated and began to avail themselves of the bounty before them (as all good cabbies do!). All that was left was the arrival of the head of Poppy Cabs operations, Mike Hughes, someone who I have come to admire and be proud to know and assist since being involved with Poppy Cabs when I first started working for London Taxi PR.

Mike told me a couple of years ago I was now on the Poppy Cabs committee, at the time I was somewhat taken aback,

support. With our drivers assigned (to those of us on marshalling duties) it was time for me to take some final pictures of the hotel interior and exterior, before we were underway, with Waterloo Station our destination, a little after 7.30am.

Upon arrival at the Station, we found the central office and dutifully signed in and then undertook what seemed like an endless online test before we could be assigned our contractor badges to allow us to be on the station's premises. It was not long before service veterans began to arrive, immediately seeking us out to attain their Poppy Cabs transport. Slowly and surely, with messages conveyed we had passengers waiting, a steady stream of Black Cabs began to emerge, like the cavalry arriving when they heard the call, and it was not long before we were despatching the assembled veterans to their respective destinations. What I always know is that for certain I will see various cabbies that I know and know me, so it was not long before some familiar faces appeared, and brief chats ensued whilst awaiting to take their place in the queue of cabs. Window Stickers and flyers were provided to those who required them, a few badges sold as well to help add to the Poppy Cabs donation funds.

Then, as our final passengers were dispatched into cabs, a little after 10am, we were back on the road to our final destination of Westminster Bridge, to rank up with the lines of Taxis both old and new, to take our position in the line.



SUNDAY SERVICES 2024



Again, being on the Bridge provides everyone with the opportunity (prior to the two minutes silence at 11am) to see and catch up with old friends and acquaintances, and it was not long before Sean, Mirna and Jim appeared, and we were soon having a chat and catch-up. Others soon followed, and I took the opportunity to wander in and out of the rows of cabs to take some more pictures, do some more posts, and partake of several sweets that were kindly being offered.

An old friend and a former cabbie Steve (Mepham) was over from Thailand, and how strange our paths should cross all these years later, having known him when I was a print journalist in the early noughties, and not knowing before he knew Grant and was also involved with Poppy Cabs at its inception. It truly is a small world as they say!

Soon it was nearing the time for us to observe the silence, which we all dutifully did, before assuming our assigned roles to then await the returning veterans. Slowly and surely, they started to emerge, and I found myself at the head of the rank and file on the Bridge, holding aloft my Poppy Cabs flyer to alert those seeking cabs to our position.

I lost count of the number of hands I shook, the number of conversations I had, and thanks I received, from veterans and their families of all ages, amidst my enquiries

to them as to where their onwards destinations were. Then, another familiar throng appeared, all wearing their coloured scarves, and I knew Scotty's Little Soldiers had arrived. I had prepared a tub of Heroes chocolates for them (I thought it appropriate) which I duly presented and am sure they enjoyed before they too were underway.

After a number of false finishes, as another veteran would always appear with a smile on their face as they saw us still there, we had reached our finale and despatched our last passenger. We shook hands with those remaining who had been by our side throughout the day, and fellow marshal Lee and I took a deep breath, knowing that a good day's work had been done by all.

Everyone who volunteers should be proud of themselves. We give our time, freely, in recognition of the sacrifices they (the veterans) made when the call came. It is the least we can do. To spare a few hours, make someone's journey that much easier, give them a sense of acknowledgement and recognition. They deserve that. I am proud to be a part of that Poppy Cabs. I will see you all next year, god willing.

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The Anderson Shelter's TAXI LEAKS

Every year, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11 month, we honour the memory of those who fought and died for our freedom, this year celebrating the 106 anniversary of the end of WW1.

It was supposed to be the war to end all wars, but perhaps that was too much to hope for...and in 1939, we were again were faced with another.

The 6th of June 1944 holds a significance in the history of World War II, as it marks the day of the Allied invasion of Normandy, known as D-Day. The Allied invasion of Normandy was a massive military operation that involved over 156,000 troops from the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and other Allied nations.

For many, including my uncle Leslie Sharwood, this day was not just a historical event but a personal milestone, as on that fateful day it was Leslie's 20th birthday, most of it spent on Sword Beach, fighting for our freedom.

His courage along with that of countless others, played a crucial role in shaping the outcome of the war and securing a better tomorrow for future generations. Growing up, I never fully understood the horrors of what my uncle went through, until I watched the opening scenes of Saving Private Ryan.

Four days after landing on Sword beach, Leslie Sharwood wrote a letter to my mother, explaining he



was ok. He asked her to let his mother, sisters and brothers know that he was safe. He also asked mum to let his best friend know he was fine...but unfortunately, his friend was killed in London by a V1 rocket (also known as doodlebugs or buzz-bombs) while Les was in France.

Of the three Sharwood brothers who went off to fight, all three came home, albeit Ronnie was shot in the head as he parachuted into France, but was picked up by American medics and taken to a field hospital where they managed to saved his life, and George (Tank regiment)

was wounded when his tank was blown up by a landmine, spending time in medical rehabilitation. My father and uncle Henry were in the fire and rescue service, so also played their part. My mums other brother Bobby, was seconded along with his mate Tommy Flowers to work on building Colossus, the world's first programmable electronic computer, to help decipher encrypted German messages.

Uncle Les would never speak about his time on the beach, or the days that followed. His brothers would always change the subject when I brought up the war. Dad and uncle Henry were also reluctant to talk about the horrors they faced in the City of London. Uncle Bob said he couldn't tell me about his time at Bletchley Park, because he'd signed an official secrets act.

Normandy marked a turning point in the war and paved the way for the eventual defeat of Nazi Germany. The sacrifices made by Allied forces on D-Day were immense, with thousands of troops losing their lives in the initial assault. It's important to reflect on the sacrifices made by so many whose willingness to give their todays for our tomorrows is a testament to their bravery and selflessness.

Although all of my family made it through the war, we must never forget the many thousands that didn't...and that's why I always attend Westminster bridge on Remembrance Sunday

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Poppy Cabs

This year was the 15th of Poppy Cabs, and I think that I have attended 11 or 12 of them. Poppy Cabs is where taxi drivers give free rides to veterans from railway stations and some of the service clubs to the cenotaph so that they can take part in the Remembrance Day Parade.

The taxis then queue up on Westminster Bridge to take the veterans back again.

I am always proud and honoured to be able to be part of this service that has, for the past 15 years, been organised by Mike Hughs, and I must say he does a fantastic job of organising things.

I think all the drivers that took part in Poppy Cabs on Remembrance Sunday should give themselves a big pat on the back for a job well done.

New Cab

So, I have had my TXe for 5 months now and I have to say that I am still enjoying it, as the weather is getting colder, I am not seeing as big savings as I was in the summer months, but I am still saving on fuel.

There are things that I miss about driving a diesel cab, and I will be making a video about this soon, but the pro's most definitely out way the cons for me.

I am also finding the customer really do like the new cab, the comments that I am getting from the are extremely positive, they absolutely love it.

YouTube

Since changing the channel name to Jamie the Cabby I have seen a moderate amount of success with both video views and an increase in subscribers, so a massive thank you to everyone that has subscribed to my channel.

One thing that I have found very encouraging is the amount of comments from other drivers who have approached me and told me how much they enjoy the videos and to keep it up, to those of you that have come up and given me words or encouragement, you really do



not know how much this means to me and how it spurs me on to create more videos.

I currently have a lot of videos recorded but it is the editing that takes a lot of time. I suppose the more that I edit the quicker I will get at it in the same way that I did with the podcast editing. I also have a lot of ideas for future videos but if there is something that you would like to see me do a video about then please let me know.

Cab Chat Show

November was the 10-year anniversary of The Cab Chat Show. Can you believe it was 10 years ago that we started the podcast? No neither can we! We recorded the first podcast in late October 2014, but we did not call it

Cab Chat until the first week in November.

So, to mark this momentous occasion Mac The Cab and myself got together and recorded a show in which we reminisced about the past 10 year. The show also includes contributions from past members of the Cab Chat team.

Over the past 10 years we have really enjoyed doing the show and have some great people involved with Cab Chat and as mentioned in the show we used to have an absolute blast.

We have had just short of 500,000 downloads over 10 years which is quite an achievement, and we were the first to produce a Taxi podcast and we hope that we inspired others to give it a go as there are now a few taxi podcasts and video podcasts

that have come and gone and a few that are still ongoing.

We have done interviews, special shows, the regular Cab Chat show and of course, we used to broadcast the show live on the internet while we were recording it. We have had singers performing live on the show, various guest take part in the show, and Mac even had his eyebrows waxed live on the show.

The total number of shows that we have recorded is about 400 and we even managed to get all of the orgs around the table on one show which we called "The Big Debate" We recorded Parody songs and jingles written by us and listeners of the show, most were sung by the great Joe Cartwright but we all had a go at singing some of the Parodies.

The last time we recorded a show was in February 2023, nearly 2 years ago, so it was long overdue for us to record another. While we were recording the show we both agreed that we miss doing the podcast and agreed that we would probably get together to make some more, depending on how this show is received.

If you haven't listened to the Cab Chat Show before, why not? You can find it in your favourite podcast app by just searching for "Cab Chat" or you can also listen via our website cabchatshow.uk

Phone and Taxis

I am still hearing of drivers being caught using their handheld phones whilst working the cab. With the likes of Cycling Mikey around using his camera to catch drivers and various other cyclists doing the same you would think that Taxi drivers would not be falling foul of this offence.

Cab drivers have their own views on the ethics of Cycling Mikey, and most will agree that he methods of recording drivers falling foul of this offence are somewhat questionable, but we are the gold standard of Taxi drivers and really should know better.

Phone holders can be purchased quite cheaply from around £5 for a cheap one, even magnetic wireless chargers can be obtained from Amazon for about £25.00 so there really is no excuse for using a handheld phone at any time.

Speaking of phones, I can't believe that I am still seeing drivers with wires hanging down the side of their face from their headphones that they are using as a handsfree device. Air pods or a Wireless Handsfree earpiece can be bought just as cheaply as a phone cradle.

So, invest a few quid and present a more professional image while at the same time avoiding falling foul of the law.

Well, that's all from me for this month, Christmas will soon be upon us, the time of peace to all men, and of course the silly season. Until next month please stay safe out these on those mean streets, earn well, be nice and of course Be Lucky



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HOW THE GREAT CYCLING BOOM COLLAPSED

When Donna Wright shelled out £1,500 for a stationary Peloton bike in 2021 as the pandemic raged on, she was following in the slipstream of a global sporting phenomenon.

Taking her place alongside Joe Biden and A-listers such as Venus Williams and Alicia Keys, the Ipswich-based businesswoman took to Instagram to extol the virtues of sweating at home while the world locked down.

The pandemic helped drive a cycling revolution, both in our bedrooms and garages and on conventional bicycles on deserted roads, and led to a preponderance of pudgy middle-aged men in Lycra (MAMILs).

"The Peloton bikes were great in the pandemic because everybody was struggling to do their exercise classes with the gyms closed down," says Wright, 45. "But I wasn't. I felt I had something that other people didn't have.

"I was definitely showing off online – that I was still at home exercising when most other

people couldn't."

But Wright dismounted from her Peloton for the final time earlier this year, and now it gathers dust at her daughter's nearby home. She has also abandoned her road bike, and she is not alone.

The numbers show that the peak of Britain's cycling boom is well and truly in the rear-view mirror.

Cycling had increased by nearly 63 per cent between 2013 and March 2021, according to the Department for Transport's cycling traffic index, which is based on data from automatic traffic counters in England. But by June this year, it had decreased by 33 per cent from its Covid-era peak and, remarkably, was 2.9 per cent lower than pre-pandemic levels in 2019.

Those looking for a silver lining will point to figures being up 8 per cent from 2013, but this represents an abysmal rate of return when you consider all the investment into cycling.

The precipitous fall in cycling participation – both on and off the road – is reflected in the



vertigo-inducing losses racked up by those in the vanguard of Britain's cycling industry.

None more so than the achingly trendy clothing company Rapha, whose gear was worn by Chris Froome in 2013, when the Briton careered up the Champs-Élysées in Paris to claim his first Tour de France win.

However, accounts published by Rapha last month revealed pre-tax losses of £22 million, almost double the £12 million loss recorded in 2022-23. The brand, which is owned by the heirs to the Walmart fortune,

also said the number of members in its cycling club fell from 22,000 to 18,000. It cited "the backdrop of an ongoing turbulent and competitive post-pandemic cycling sector, as well as decreased consumer confidence in several key markets" by way of explanation.

Even Britain's largest cycling retailer, Evans Cycles, announced a £23 million loss for 2023, increasing from £5 million the year before. But the most remarkable financial roller coaster has been experienced by Peloton, whose former CEO and founder John Foley

revealed in August that he had "lost all [his] money". "I've had to sell almost everything in my life," he said. The company was valued at £32 billion in January 2021, but this has plummeted to £2.2 billion.

A spokesman for Frasers Group, which owns Evans Cycling, says: "The surge in cycling demand witnessed during the pandemic may have slowed down, but [we] remain committed to the long-term growth of its cycling business."

A Rapha spokesman says cycling "holds the key" to improving mental and physical health, as well as creating cleaner and safer cities, and that Rapha is strengthening its business.

Peloton declined to comment but told investors that they believe they are "making [the] business sustainable and profitable in the long-term", and that globally subscribers remain consistent.

It would appear that, for now, the wheels have well and truly come off Britain's cycling revolution.

Courtesy of the Telegraph

Cricklewood Carriers Cab Co Ltd.

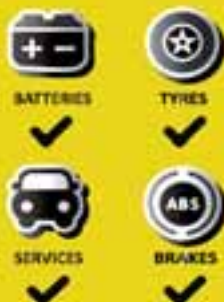
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Decline of Taxis nationally - the n

The National Crisis Facing Hackney Carriage Drivers: Private Hire Expansion, Regulatory Loopholes, and the Need for Reform

In cities across the UK, traditional Hackney Carriage drivers are struggling to maintain their livelihoods in the face of unchecked growth in the private hire vehicle (PHV) industry, primarily driven by app-based ride-hailing platforms. This trend, which has gained particular visibility in London, mirrors a national issue that impacts drivers, public safety, and municipal (Local Authority) resources. With legislative limits preventing local councils from capping PHV numbers, other policy approaches such as increased licensing fees and heightened safety standards may offer solutions.

This report examines the comprehensive data on PHV expansion relative to Hackney Carriages, discussing the VAT loophole, regulatory gaps around agent-principal distinctions in app-based services, the externalisation of industry costs onto the public, and critical safety concerns. The findings demonstrate the urgent need for collective advocacy and regulatory reform to protect the Hackney Carriage industry and safeguard public interests.

1. Industry Overview: Data on Decline in Hackney Carriage vs Rise in PHV Numbers

In cities across the UK, the number of PHV licenses has risen sharply over the past decade, with Hackney Carriage licenses stagnating or declining. PHVs have rapidly saturated city centres, creating fierce competition, increasing congestion, and undermining the traditional role of Hackney Carriages. This section analyses data from key cities to illustrate the scale of the problem.

This data highlights an imbalance that leaves Hackney Carriage drivers with fewer fares and reduced earning potential, while cities experience worsened congestion and pollution. The consistent rise in PHV licenses without a corresponding regulatory check has major implications for both economic sustainability and public welfare.

2. VAT Loophole: Pricing Advantage for Private Hire Platforms

A major issue exacerbating the financial strain on Hackney Carriages is the VAT treatment of PHVs. Although Hackney Carriages

do not charge VAT on fares, many private hire platforms are similarly exempt from charging VAT on trips arranged through their apps by classifying themselves as “agents” rather than “principals” in the booking process.

- Pricing Advantage Through VAT Avoidance: By avoiding VAT obligations, many PHV platforms offer fares that are artificially lower, creating a competitive disadvantage for Hackney Carriages. This discrepancy allows PHVs to dominate the market, especially among price-sensitive consumers.

- Lost Tax Revenue: VAT exemptions on private hire journeys represent a substantial loss of revenue for HM Treasury, depriving the public sector of funds that could be reinvested in transport infrastructure or public services.

- Economic Imbalance: This VAT loophole provides PHVs with an artificial cost advantage that contributes to oversupply, congestion, and the marginalisation of Hackney Carriages.

Without consistent enforcement of VAT obligations, PHVs continue to undercut Hackney Carriages, amplifying financial strain on traditional drivers. Addressing this loophole is critical for establishing a level playing field and ensuring sustainable competition in the industry.

3. Regulatory Ambiguities: Agent vs Principal, Contract Law, and Consumer Protection

The legal distinction between “agent” and “principal” in the context of private hire apps has significant implications for consumer protection, accountability, and regulatory enforcement.

- Agent vs Principal Classification: Most ride-hailing platforms position themselves as “agents” that connect passengers with drivers, who are considered the “principals” in the transaction. This structure minimises the platform’s liability and places full responsibility on individual drivers.

- Limited Consumer Recourse: In this model, consumers have limited avenues for redress in cases of cancellations, fare disputes, or incidents of driver misconduct, as the platform is not technically responsible for service quality.

- Unregulated Pricing Practices: Ride-hailing apps employ dynamic pricing, where fares increase based on demand. This unregulated surge pricing lacks transparency, and consumers often face inflated costs, particularly during peak times or emergencies, without any official oversight.

Clearer regulations around the



contractual responsibilities of ride-hailing platforms would enhance consumer protection, ensure accountability, and prevent exploitative practices in fare pricing. Reforming this area of contract law is crucial to safeguarding passengers’ rights and restoring public trust.

4. Hidden Costs: Externalising Industry Expenses onto the Public Purse

The proliferation of PHVs places considerable hidden costs on public resources, creating a financial and logistical burden on local councils, emergency services, and the wider public.

- Congestion and Infrastructure Strain: The rapid rise in PHV numbers has led to increased congestion, particularly in city centres, resulting in slower traffic, elevated pollution, and degradation of air quality. Unlike Hackney Carriages, which are increasingly transitioning to low-emission vehicles, PHVs add significantly to environmental pressures.

- Public Road Maintenance: The oversupply of PHVs also contributes to increased wear and tear on roads, necessitating more frequent maintenance. Local councils, relying on limited budgets,

are forced to prioritise road repairs, creating additional public expenditure.

- Strain on Emergency Services: PHVs are involved in an increasing number of road accidents, which has a direct impact on emergency services. Police, ambulance, and fire departments face heightened demand as

they respond to the growing number of incidents involving PHVs. This added strain not only diverts critical resources but also results in delays in emergency response times, impacting overall public safety.

- Health and Environmental Costs: Increased congestion and pollution from the surplus of PHVs have tangible health implications for urban residents, including higher rates of respiratory illnesses. The environmental cost of rising emissions, particularly in areas with dense PHV activity, adds to the public health burden, ultimately affecting the NHS and other health services.

These hidden costs illustrate how the unregulated growth of PHVs places a financial burden on society. This externalisation of expenses means taxpayers and local governments indirectly subsidise the private hire industry,

eed for mass lobby of Parliament



distorting the true economic footprint of PHVs.

5. Public Safety Concerns: Safeguarding, Assaults, and Road Traffic Accidents

The unchecked expansion of PHVs raises serious public safety issues, exacerbated by inconsistent regulations and inadequate enforcement measures. The tragic outcomes of regulatory failures have been highlighted in cases like the Rotherham scandal, documented in Professor Alexis Jay's report, where safeguarding shortcomings allowed vulnerable individuals to be exploited. This section explores safety concerns that demand immediate action.

- Inadequate Safeguarding Standards:** While Hackney Carriage drivers undergo rigorous vetting processes, PHV licensing standards are less stringent in many areas.

Background checks for PHV drivers are often inconsistent across jurisdictions, with some councils lacking the resources to conduct thorough vetting, putting passengers at risk.

- Incidents of Sexual Assault and Abuse:** There have been numerous reports of assaults linked to PHV drivers. Professor Jay's report in Rotherham, alongside further investigations across the UK, has highlighted instances where inadequate safeguarding in the PHV sector left vulnerable passengers exposed to risks. This underscores the need for mandatory, uniform safeguarding standards across the entire industry.

- Traffic Accidents and Emergency Service Strain:** The rapid increase in PHV numbers correlates with a rise in road traffic accidents involving PHVs. These incidents often require immediate response from police and ambulance services, diverting resources from other emergencies and impacting public safety. Increased accident rates involving PHVs also raise insurance costs for all drivers and add to the strain on local health services.

To address these safety concerns, a regulatory framework requiring comprehensive background checks, safeguarding training, and uniform safety standards across the PHV sector is essential. Ensuring that all drivers, whether Hackney Carriage or PHV, are held to the same high standards would enhance public confidence in the industry and reduce the risk of harm to passengers.

6. Potential Solutions: Raising Licence Fees and Enhancing Safety Standards

Given that legislation currently prevents a cap on PHV numbers, alternative strategies are necessary to address the oversupply issue. Increasing licence fees and raising public safety standards are two viable approaches to reducing PHV saturation while ensuring that remaining drivers adhere to the highest standards of safety and professionalism.

- Increased Licensing Fees:** By raising PHV licensing fees, local councils could reduce the number

of active PHVs, particularly those who enter the market due to low entry costs rather than a professional commitment to the trade. Higher fees could serve as a natural deterrent, limiting oversupply and ensuring only those who view private hire work as a serious profession remain in the industry. Additionally, increased revenue from licensing fees could help councils cover the costs associated with road maintenance, congestion, and emergency services strained by PHVs.

- Enhanced Safety and Training Standards:** Implementing stricter training requirements and safeguarding protocols for all PHV drivers would elevate the standards of the industry and improve public safety. This could include mandatory background checks, driver training courses, safeguarding awareness programs, and mental health support, ensuring that all PHV drivers meet criteria similar to those required of Hackney Carriage drivers.

- Enforcement of VAT Compliance:** Ensuring that all private hire operators, especially app-based platforms, comply with VAT obligations would create a more level playing field. Consistent enforcement of VAT on private hire trips would reduce the pricing advantage currently enjoyed by many PHVs, supporting the financial sustainability of Hackney Carriage drivers.

- Re-evaluation of Agent-Principal Distinction:** Reforming contract law to clarify the legal responsibilities of ride-hailing platforms as principals rather than agents could protect consumers by making the platforms accountable for service standards, safety, and pricing transparency. This shift in accountability would require platforms to comply with the same consumer protection regulations as other transportation providers, offering passengers more recourse in cases of poor service or unsafe conditions.

Conclusion: A Call to Action for Hackney Carriage Drivers and Regulatory Reform

The data and analysis make it abundantly clear that the challenges facing Hackney Carriage drivers are not limited to London but are symptomatic of a broader crisis

affecting cities nationwide. The unchecked growth of PHVs, combined with VAT loopholes, regulatory ambiguities, and significant public safety concerns, have created an unsustainable landscape for the Hackney Carriage industry.

While legislative caps on PHV numbers are currently unavailable, other policy changes—such as raising licence fees, enforcing safety standards, and closing VAT loopholes—offer practical steps toward balancing the market. To achieve these reforms, a mass lobby of Parliament by Hackney Carriage drivers is essential. A coordinated, nationwide effort would bring the collective voices of drivers to the forefront, demonstrating to policymakers the importance of a fair regulatory landscape that supports both public safety and the viability of Hackney Carriages.

By uniting for this cause, Hackney Carriage drivers can advocate for:

1. **Stricter Licensing and Safety Standards for PHVs:** To ensure that all drivers operate to high safety and professional standards, protecting passengers and enhancing public trust.

2. **Increased Licence Fees for PHVs:** To manage oversupply, reduce strain on public resources, and ensure that PHV drivers contribute their fair share to city maintenance and emergency services.

3. **VAT Compliance Across Private Hire Operators:** To remove unfair pricing advantages and create a level playing field that allows Hackney Carriages to compete.

4. **Reformed Contractual Responsibilities for Ride-Hailing Platforms:** Clarifying the legal obligations of platforms to ensure consumer protection and platform accountability.

The time to act is now. Hackney Carriage drivers across the UK must come together in a show of solidarity to demand these necessary reforms. Through this collective action, drivers can protect their livelihoods, secure safer, fairer transportation services, and advocate for a sustainable future for the Hackney Carriage industry and the public alike.



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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.

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TFL RESPONSE ON PEDICAB REGULATION

Dear Adam and Paul,

Pedicabs Regulation

Thank you for your letter regarding the regulation of Pedicabs in London and for providing some elements of the scheme you consider are essential.

I am really pleased that TFL has now been granted the powers to introduce a regulatory regime for Pedicabs and we are keen to progress this as quickly as possible. Our Licensing and Regulation team has experience of introducing new regulatory frameworks and understand the importance of establishing an effective regime, but we must also ensure we have workable rules that can remain effective for years to come and this takes time to develop.

All of the issues in your letter are already under active consideration and many have already been discussed with your officers.

You will no doubt be aware that the Act requires TFL to consult whoever it considers appropriate before making pedicab regulations. We intend to carry out a full public consultation early in the New Year on the proposed regime. Feedback from the consultation will help shape these important new regulations and will help enable us to confirm a timetable for their introduction. This timetable will include time for the regulations to be laid before Parliament via a Statutory Instrument as envisaged by the Act.

Ahead of the consultation we continue to engage with a number of stakeholders, including pedicab operators and pedicab operator associations as well as Westminster City Council and business groups such as The Soho Society and the Heart of London Business Alliance. We will be meeting with Rachel Blake MP and some of the businesses in her constituency later this month as part of this ongoing engagement.

areas you consider are essential for pedicab regulation. I know all of these points are being actively considered by the team as they shape the consultation material. Your first-hand experience of pedicabs in Westminster is extremely valuable and we would welcome further engagement with yourselves or officers. We would also welcome any quantitative information you have, or may be able to collect, to help us build up as full a picture as possible of the way they currently operate. For example, the number of pedicabs you see, at what locations and what times of the day and week etc.

In your letter you mentioned the possibility of establishing some form of interim scheme. It would be useful for our teams to discuss this further but we are mindful that any interim regulations, irrespective of their simplicity or narrow focus, would still require full public consultation and be laid before Parliament in accordance with the Pedicabs (London) Act 2024. This would therefore not be a quick solution.

I acknowledge the timeline for introduction the regulations is longer than you hoped, however we are working to get them in place as soon as practicable. In the interim, I feel it would be useful for a follow up discussion between our teams which will allow us to explore whether there is anything we can do using existing powers held by either organisation or others to help with the current issues Westminster residents, visitors and businesses are experiencing.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely



Andy Lord





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How taxi and private hire numbers have evolved over time: what it means for black cab drivers

In the past decade, the landscape of London's transport industry has changed dramatically.

For London's black cab drivers, understanding these shifts is crucial to navigating the future. Both the number of licensed taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) have experienced significant fluctuations, which have reshaped the competition and challenges facing traditional black cab drivers. Let's delve into the data, explore the trends, and assess what it means for the iconic black cab.

The Decline of Licensed Taxis and Drivers

Black cabs have long been a staple of London's streets, but recent trends indicate a worrying decline in both the number of vehicles and drivers. In the 2009/10 period, there were 22,445 licensed taxi vehicles on the road, with a combined total of 24,914 drivers (All London and Suburban). However, by 2022/23, the number of taxis had dropped to 15,130, and total drivers had dwindled to just 18,297—a loss of over 6,600 drivers in 14 years.

The fall has been particularly steep since 2016/17, when the total number of drivers was still over 24,000. The pandemic exacerbated this trend, with many drivers exiting the profession due to reduced demand, financial strain, and a challenging recovery period. Although the data for 2022/23 shows a slight uptick from the pandemic low, the overall picture for black cabs is clear: fewer drivers and vehicles are operating today than at any time in recent memory.

The Rise (and Stall) of Private Hire Vehicles and Drivers

While black cabs have seen declining numbers, private hire vehicles (PHVs) have been on the opposite trajectory. Between 2009 and 2017, the number of private hire drivers and vehicles surged. In 2009/10, there were 49,355 PHVs, and 59,191 drivers—figures that steadily increased

over the years. By 2016/17, there were a staggering 87,409 PHVs and 117,712 private hire drivers on London's streets.

This explosion of PHVs, driven in part by the rise of ride-hailing apps like Uber, created fierce competition for traditional black cab drivers. The influx of private hire drivers made it harder for black cabs to maintain their market share, as consumers were drawn to the convenience and lower cost of app-based rides.

However, in the years following 2017, the growth in private hire numbers began to slow. In 2020/21, during the height of the pandemic, PHV numbers dipped sharply, with the number of drivers falling to 105,329. Although there has been a recovery since then, with 101,535 private hire drivers in 2022/23, the boom days of rapid growth seem to be behind us.

What's Behind These Trends?

Several factors have contributed to these trends, impacting both black cabs and private hire operators:

1. Ride-Hailing Technology:

The emergence of platforms like Uber transformed the private hire industry. Consumers could now book a ride with just a few taps on their smartphone, often at a lower cost than traditional black cabs. This technological shift spurred the growth of private hire vehicles, driving down the demand for black cabs.

2. Regulatory Changes:

As private hire vehicles increased, regulatory bodies introduced tighter rules to level the playing field. Measures such as English language tests for PHV drivers, licensing caps, and clean air requirements put a brake on the uncontrolled growth of the private hire sector. For black

cab drivers, the introduction of stricter emissions standards (leading to the adoption of electric taxis) also caused some to leave the trade.

3. The Pandemic Impact:

COVID-19 wreaked havoc across the entire transport sector. For both taxi drivers and private hire operators, demand plummeted during the lockdowns. Many drivers found it difficult to justify staying in the industry, especially those close to retirement or those already struggling to compete with the rise of ride-hailing apps. While black cabs suffered, the private hire industry also saw significant job losses, with vehicle numbers falling during the pandemic years.

4. Competition and Market Saturation:

As the number of private hire drivers peaked in 2017, competition within the sector intensified. Many drivers found themselves with fewer trips and longer waiting times between fares. For black cab drivers, this meant more



competition on the streets, especially in key areas like central London, further eating into their earnings.

What Does This Mean for Black Cab Drivers?

The data and trends reveal a challenging landscape for black cab drivers. The steady decline in the number of taxis and drivers reflects the difficulties facing the industry. However, the slowing growth of private hire vehicles may offer a glimmer of hope. As the ride-hailing industry matures, the intense competition of previous years may ease, potentially providing more room for black cabs to differentiate themselves.

Moreover, the value of black cabs remains strong in several key areas. They still offer superior knowledge of London's streets (the iconic "Knowledge"), greater reliability in busy or restricted areas (such as bus lanes), and the assurance of a fully licensed, highly trained driver. The transition to electric vehicles among black cabs also positions the trade as a leader in sustainable transport.

Moving Forward: Adapting to Change

To thrive in the current environment, black cab drivers must continue to adapt. Embracing technology (through apps like Free Now or Gett) and improving the customer experience will be key. Additionally, highlighting the unique benefits of black cabs—such as accessibility for disabled passengers and guaranteed service standards—will help maintain their relevance.

The future of London's taxi industry may not look like the past, but black cabs remain an integral part of the city's transport network. By evolving with the times, London's black cab drivers can continue to be a vital presence on the capital's streets.

This detailed analysis of the licensing numbers highlights both the challenges and opportunities for black cab drivers. The iconic black cab has faced fierce competition, but there are still reasons for optimism if the trade continues to innovate and adapt to the evolving market.

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HIGH COURT AWARDS KEN BATES £150,000 IN LIBEL DAMAGES

Ken Bates, the former owner and Chairman of Chelsea Football Club, has today been awarded £150,000 in damages by the High Court in London in respect of a May 2023 article published by Tom Rubythorn and Business F1 magazine.

The article made extremely serious, yet entirely false, allegations against Mr Bates, including the absurd suggestion that he had almost certainly had business rivals murdered.

The Judge described the article as a 'comprehensive character assassination' of Mr Bates. The allegations were not put to Mr Bates in

advance of publication and the Defendants did not seek to defend the allegations as being in any way true or rely on any other substantive defence.

The Defendants attempted to argue that the allegations had not caused serious harm to Mr Bates' reputation – an argument that the Judge wholly dismissed.

As well as awarding very substantial damages, the Judge granted an injunction against the repetition of the libels. The Judge also ordered the Defendants to publish a summary of the judgment in their magazine, and pay Mr Bates' legal costs.



Mr Bates said 'I am very pleased with the decision of the court today. This is an article that should never have

been published, and the judgment makes that clear'.

Mr Bates is represented by

Antonia Foster and Caitlin Harris of Carter-Ruck and William McCormick KC of Selborne Chambers.



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Heathrow Opinion

Wait times of 1 Hr for Feeder Pk Wardens: A SCHEME OR A SCAM?

BRAWLS BETWEEN WARDENS AND TAG HOLDERS , ALLEGED ATTEMPTS AT MOWING DOWN WARDENS , ALLEGATIONS OF VERBAL ABUSE AND CLAIMS OF A SCAM , AMIDST A BATTLE OF THE TRADE ORGANISATIONS ... no it's not last night's episode of 'Eastenders', it's day to day life at the Heathrow Taxi Feeder Park (TFP)...

It's been some time since the Feeder Park Warden scheme was initiated at Heathrow Airport and, I think it's fair to say, that opposition to the scheme is increasingly growing.

Feeder Park Wardens are currently enjoying a 1 hour wait time per ride regardless of increasing Feeder Park wait times and the lucrative concession of a 100% discount on the entry fee (a discount that was suggested as a temporary measure prior to the covid 19 pandemic in 2019 to encourage drivers to join the scheme) and also the concession that rides may be carried over to the following day...

Value for money?

The question is: is the average driver seeing any real benefit from the scheme?

Let's take a look at the 1 hr wait time. The scheme was brought in on the back of the busiest year on record for the taxi feeder park at Heathrow - wait times were reduced dramatically and the 1 hr wait per ride suggested by the Warden Manager, LTDA Rep, Suzanne Sullivan, may have seemed fair to those who proposed it and even those who agreed it at the time. But times change.

Unfortunately, due to a downturn in global and national economics and with what appears to be a looming recession, the brief increase in footfall through Heathrow has now passed. Footfall is currently down 20% on last year, and dropping - TFP wait times have increased dramatically, economic uncertainty is now the order of the day and wait times continue to grow. Previous opposition to the wardens scheme has casually been



swept aside with cries of "Nobody complains in September!"

But this September - traditionally the busiest month of the year at Heathrow - fell flat and the average wait at Heathrow increased to anything from 2-5 hours per ride. Out of the 2431 movements monitored by APCOA from 31/10/2023-2024, only 103 movements were 1 hour and under - so the Wardens excuse of "Drivers don't moan when it's busy!", or the old chestnut of: "No one moans when it's in and out!" clearly doesn't stand up to scrutiny.

In fact, during this period the actual number of APCOA monitored wait times that proved to be "In and Out" was in fact....wait for it...ONE!!!

As a result, Tag holders are now justified in their criticism of such short wait times for Wardens. It may be time for those that implemented and run the scheme to police themselves and increase Warden wait times to greater reflect the actual TFP wait times before their hand is forced into doing so. The majority of Organisations, members and Tag holders will not be able to stomach this clear abuse of the system for much longer. If this decision has to be made for them it may leave them looking as though they have no regard to the woes of drivers who may be waiting 4hrs + for a ride as the kipper season approaches. This would be particularly awkward for those Trade Reps currently operating as Wardens whilst enjoying a fraction of the wait time of those they claim to represent.

Further to this it can be argued that to have a small group of drivers negating long TFP wait

times in favour of much shorter and more lucrative wait times, could be having a negative impact on the mental health and well being of all drivers.

All drivers have bills to pay; all drivers have family and friends they wish to spend quality time with - and should wait times continue to increase - I'm sure that many will feel aggrieved to be issued tickets on their vehicles by those enjoying the privilege of a golden ring-fenced 1hr wait per ride.

It's also becoming apparent that should drivers raise concerns, they are finding themselves victimised and even threatened by those less professional drivers taking part in the scheme. In addition drivers are now coming to me with complaints of Wardens speeding in Newall Road when en-route to terminals. How ironic will it be if a driver that has endured a 4hr wait were to get run over by a speeding Warden that's just bagged two rides for two hours!

"Wardening"

We must also be very careful not to allow the Warden Scheme to become ever more encroaching on what should be a pleasant working atmosphere. Amidst allegations of verbal abuse and even an allegation that someone has tried to run a Warden down, one or two Wardens are wearing body cams. These are not supplied by APCOA, so the wearers are buying them privately and at their own volition and expense - this may lead to problems. For instance, if someone were to raise concerns regarding the scheme, a Warden could very easily entrap that driver either by provoking or engineering a difficult situation - Wardens are after all just fellow

Tag holders with no real powers and shouldn't be in a position to punitively punish any driver. The question also arises that if drivers were happy with the scheme why would a Warden need a body cam in the first place? Surely if the Scheme is such a success as the Warden Manager has suggested, drivers would be welcoming Wardens with open arms. A high viz jacket with "Bobs cleaning service" on the back and a cheap body cam bought on eBay does not, in itself, give you any special powers or legitimacy.

Also Drivers will never readily accept a "Polite notice" for being a few minutes late from someone that may have done as little as a quarter of the actual wait time and hasn't even had to enter the Feeder Park in the first place. I'm sure nobody wants a situation where the familiar high viz jacket worn by Wardens becomes synonymous with gaming the system.

CARRIED OVER RIDES?

As if free entry fee and lucrative 1 hr Feeder Park wait times weren't enough, we now have the added bonus of Wardens starting shifts "AM", being allowed to carry rides over to the following day - what for? Why would a Warden that started an AM shift that is enjoying a ridiculously low wait time of 1hr per ride, need to carry rides over? I would've thought they were the last ones to need such a perk, bearing in mind, their working day at Heathrow finishes, at the very least, 50% earlier than their colleagues.

Answers on a postcard please?

LIABILITY

Recently, after having endured a 20min wait in Newall road, a 1 hr

wait in the North park and a further 2 hours in the South Park, I eventually lost track of my number on the board in the canteen (the Boards have been playing up recently or are filled with largely irrelevant messages), I came out less than 5 min late to the South Park to find cabs starting to go around me and a "Polite Notice" on my windscreen. Upon pulling away, I was directed by a Warden to go left, so as to catch up with my place in the queue, unfortunately, just as I was waved left, another driver stepped out in front of me - luckily for him I was paying attention to what was in front of me. I wasn't going fast and I passed him safely, but it got me thinking; if I had hit him who is liable? After all I was being directed by a Warden at the time. Another driver was recently hit in the rear by the cab behind him, due to a Warden distracting the driver. So who was to blame in that situation? Many of us have already witnessed minor collisions between Wardens and moving cabs. Do Wardens have public liability insurance? If not why not? Should APCOA and HAL even be allowing them to operate without it?

Who is ultimately responsible should the actions of a Warden cause injury or even death?

If the Warden scheme was authorised by a committee, who does a driver sue if a Warden directs him into the path of another vehicle or worst still into a pedestrian?

As the saying goes: "If it can happen it will!"

How long before a Driver faces a fellow Driver/Warden in Court when such a situation occurs...what training do Wardens have? As I understand it, they have a few hours training with the Warden manager - the question is who trained the Warden Manager? What qualifications does she have in Health and Safety?

The training, in fact, seems to be so poor, that when cabs begin to queue in Newall Road, that at the junction of Neptune and Newall Roads, wardens are directing traffic westbound on Newall Road onto the north hand side of the road (against the flow of traffic and then snaking back onto the south side of the road eastbound (again, against the flow of traffic) towards the Feeder Park. The whole process is extremely dangerous, bearing in mind, this takes place on a busy junction, amidst vehicles coming and going from offices on Newall Road.

When asked the question APCOA/HAL state that Wardens are not authorised by them.

Do we, in effect, have some Trade Representatives voting for themselves, in regard to lucrative wait times, free entry and carried over rides?

Is it acceptable, or even appropriate, that some Trade Representatives should be benefiting from a scheme that they themselves thought up? At the present time we have at least three Trade Representatives acting as Wardens, this is a huge conflict of interest.

100% discount on Feeder Park entry?

The discounted entry fee for Wardens was first suggested as a temporary measure to encourage drivers to sign up for the scheme. That is no longer a problem, as due to much more lucrative incentives, there is now a waiting list of potential new recruits. Why should Wardens now enter the TFP free of charge? Wardens use the toilets and facilities at the TFP along with everyone else so should they not pay the going rate?

The loss at the gate due to the Warden discount is currently around the £24,000 per annum mark, which in the great scheme of things, doesn't seem much. But for every job taken by a Warden, a Tag holder loses a ride, so the true cost to Tag holders is much, much higher. Could that money be better spent on maintenance of toilet facilities or signs to encourage drivers to park correctly and be on time when leaving the TFP, Possibly eliminating the need for Wardens at all?

It has been said that Wardens who are still putting the £2 airport charge on the meter that is in place to cover the £3 TFP entry fee that they haven't paid in the first place, is morally wrong and they are, essentially, almost doubling their money and potentially passing the charge on to customers illegally.

Personally my belief is that Wardens at times can be effective in making sure the TFP is running correctly, but are currently receiving excessive incentives to do so.

In my opinion an increased wait time for TFP Wardens would provide much better coverage at all times, lead to a much fairer, healthier and more conducive atmosphere for drivers working the TFP - not least for the Wardens themselves, who must be feeling that all eyes are

currently focused on them.

The former system of Terminal Marshalls doing two thirds of the actual TFP wait time seems to be much more reasonable and there is no reason why the same system should not be applied to TFP Wardens. The current 1 hour wait also seems counter productive - what's the point in a Warden wait time of 1 hr when at times only 2-3 lanes may have exited during that time, leaving Wardens standing around looking at their phones and drinking coffee as very little movement of lanes occurs?

It should also be noted that the amount of jobs available at Heathrow each day is finite collectively.

At the time of writing, just 16 wardens are receiving approx

entry fee!

WARDEN RECRUITMENT

Here's where things get interesting - have you seen all the adverts in "The Badge" and various other trade papers? No? Well, that's because they're not there! Warden jobs don't seem to be advertised anywhere? How are Wardens selected? Where is the transparency around recruitment? Is Warden selection based on nothing but word of mouth? Who is selected and why? Is it just friends and family of those doing the recruiting? One of the criteria for Wardens selection stated in the Service Level Agreement is that Wardens must be "regular airport workers" but I'm sure we've all seen Wardens that drivers don't recognise - that seem to have been parachuted

before the noise from the trade becomes so loud that they are forced into doing so? All Tag holders should be reminded that the Warden scheme at Heathrow is supposed to be for the benefit of ALL Drivers not just the few.

It may be the case that the Organisations must increase wait times for Wardens to a more reasonable time, so as to be very careful that the scheme not be seen as a lucrative gravy train, which at this moment in time seems to be exactly what it is. Drivers could be forgiven for thinking it's beginning to look more like a 'scam' than a scheme.

Incredibly, the LTDA Heathrow Rep and Warden Manager has infamously stated, via a YouTube podcast interview, that

How have we ended up with a scheme where some Trade Representatives are dashing in and out of the Taxi Feeder Park at a rate of 1 hour per ride, paid for by members and tag holders waiting 2 - 5 hours?

The job of Trade Representation is not a role for the self serving and many Reps would do well to remember that.

Working as a Trade Representative for a Trade Organisation should never be used as a smokescreen for your own ends.

As the Warden scheme/scam begins to unravel we may see Unions, Trade Organisations, Union Representatives and even APCOA and HAL increasingly distancing themselves from what appears to be quite the little scandal.

I believe the feeling amongst Tag holders is of growing contempt for those that have engineered such a huge financial advantage over the rest. They have had enough! Drivers don't want to be filmed or shouted at when merely pulling into the TFP and doing a days work...

At the present time I agree with the gentle approach by Organisations to formulate a fairer Warden scheme for all, but those that run the scheme must be open to change - they cannot continue to reap the excessive rewards of the scheme without creating growing resentment and increasing lack of unity - at a time when we need unity above all else!

Uber couldn't have done a better job of dividing the trade than we are doing to ourselves through the acts of a greedy few.

At present the majority of Trade Organisations are now in favour of updating the Warden Service Level Agreement so that incentives become more transparent, fair and legitimate. If the wishes of the majority continue to be ignored by a self serving few, then my fear is that at some point all support for the scheme from Trade Orgs will be withdrawn, or spontaneous direct action will become inevitable and a boycott of the Taxi Feeder Park a reality.

Ultimately, there is a case for having Wardens at Heathrow but certainly not at the cost of ridiculous incentives and the total loss of unity within the trade.
"It's a big club and you ain't in it"
George Carlin - Comedian



34 jobs per day, which may increase if the scheme continues to expand, which may not seem significant but means, realistically, that 34 drivers will "blow out" each night as a result of jobs already taken by Wardens. That is 16 Wardens between them receiving 34 rides a day, excluding locals and Fair Fares, which would bring this number up much higher.

Do the math; 34 rides per day, 364 days per year, equals 12,376 rides per annum - those rides divided by 16 Wardens equals 774 rides per Warden. All of those rides acquired after a 1 hr wait and free of charge and thanks to the perk of carrying rides over, and no chance of "blowing out" either!! Think about that the next time you drive away from the terminal empty handed at 11.30pm after a possible 4hr wait and a loss of your £3 TFP

straight into the 'one hour per ride' job. How is the term "regular airport worker" defined and by whom?

Could the reason be that genuine regular airport drivers are reluctant to join the Warden waiting list because they don't want to be seen as gaming the system at the expense of their colleagues?

Does anyone know how Warden recruitment actually works?

Again, answers on a postcard please!

As already stated, maybe its time those that initiated the scheme should make an adjustment to perks that may seem increasingly disproportionate to any benefit of a Warden system at Heathrow,

incentives are "Very, very good" well I have news for the "Warden Manager" ... the wait times for everyone else are increasingly becoming 'very, very long'!

I have heard time and again from Wardens that it is a "thankless task"

Au contraire! The rewards are, in fact, as stated: "Very, very good!" and a growing number of Trade Representatives and Tag holders would agree - excessively incentivised.

I'm led to believe that tensions have in fact reached such a serious level, that recently we had a serious altercation after a Warden placed a 'Polite Notice' on a fellow Driver's windscreen, which ended up with both Warden and Driver having a 28 day 'holiday' from the TFP.

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By Steve Bunce

On Friday night in Texas, Mike Tyson joined a sad list of men behaving badly in a dangerous sport and he's not bothered.

Boxing's fallen idols have always returned to the scene of their former glory; they are men on some type of mission to discover if they have one last fight left. On Friday in Arlington against Jake Paul, Tyson was not in search of any such ridiculous truths or notions because he was back for money. And lots of it, perhaps as much as \$60m (£47.5m) between them.

The giants of the ring fight on because they want to and, contrary to the simple thinking, they will not damage their reputations if they get splattered by a child star from Disney or a novice YouTuber. There is nothing that Paul could have done to Mike Tyson on Friday night that would have in any way diminished Tyson's boxing achievements. To believe otherwise is just lazy; Tyson's dignity – especially the clip of his backside hanging out of his protector straps – took a beating, not his place in boxing history.

In recent years, Evander Holyfield and Roy Jones Jr – both genuine greats – took fights in search of one more win, one more night under the stars. Jones Jr might not be finished just yet.

In 2021, Holyfield was 58 – the same as Tyson last Friday – when he met one of the UFC's genuine bad boys, Vitor Belfort; the fight finished after one minute and 49 seconds of the first round with Holyfield falling over and looking like an old man who had misjudged a step at a care home. It was sickening to witness the stumbling and confusion from Holyfield each time he was tapped by Belfort. Holyfield's balance was diabolical and Belfort, unlike Paul against Tyson, had no reservations about hurting the old man in front of him. It looked like Belfort wanted to damage Holyfield and it was dangerous.

Incidentally, the Belfort fight, which was paraded as an "exhibition", was 35 years after Holyfield won his first world title. Thankfully, Holyfield has not fought since under any rules

MIKE TYSON SHOULD NEVER STEP IN A BOXING RING AGAIN - BUT DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH



and against any backdrop.

The Jones Jr story is disturbing. The former middle, super-middle, light-heavyweight and heavyweight world champion appears to have no idea how far he has declined. Jones Jr is now 55, his last sanctioned fight was in late 2023 when he lost to a man making his debut. Jones Jr was 54 that night and fighting on memory and instinct. To be fair, there is a lot of memory and instinct to play with, and, at

the AT&T Stadium open image in gallery Tyson throws a punch at Paul at the AT&T Stadium (USA TODAY Sports via Reuters Con)

In 2020, Jones Jr and Tyson fought an exhibition, and it was a quality spar, a good watch for purists, but not what the bloodthirsty gang wanted.

Jones Jr and Tyson showed a lot of their history in the ring, but it was most definitely a

back in 2021 open image in gallery Vitor Belfort knocks down a 58-year-old Evander Holyfield back in 2021 (Getty)

Jones Jr is different from Tyson and Holyfield because he never took a long break, he just kept on chasing the dream and that can hurt a boxer's legacy. Jones Jr last won a genuine world title fight in 2003 – he has fought 26 times since then and he will be on a shortlist to fight Paul in the

The crazy truth is that Jones Jr, even at 55 and after 76 fights, might just be too lively for Paul.

And finally, in the recent list of shame, there is Brixton's Danny Williams. Sure, Williams never won a world title, but in 2004 he finished the last real ambitions of Tyson when he stopped him in four rounds. At the time, Tyson was being hyped and there was talk of one more title; Williams was a mad underdog, and it finished with Tyson sitting and bleeding on the canvas. It should have been the end, but Tyson had one more fight in 2005 and quit.

Williams lost a world title fight to Vitali Klitschko and then went on one of boxing's craziest runs. Williams is now 51, still fighting if a call comes in from somewhere odd. In the last 10 years he has fought in 11 countries; against Tyson that night in Louisville, Williams had fought 34 times, losing just three times and now his record stands at 89 fights and 33 defeats.

He is one of boxing's lost stories. His life is at risk, his legacy forgotten forever. Tyson is an innocent man in those terms compared to Williams, but it would be nice to see them both quit for good. Please, don't hold your breath.



times, Jones Jr can still look like the man from the early nineties. There were moments on Friday when Tyson looked like Tyson, but not when he was fighting.

Tyson throws a punch at

planned and schemed show. I had no problem with that; a year later the Holyfield fiasco took place and that was scary.

Vitor Belfort knocks down a 58-year-old Evander Holyfield

future. Jones Jr was part of the broadcast team for Netflix on Friday (hey, no comment on that ringside circus) and there was a sense that he fancied a bit of the Paul-pot of cash.

FROM SE17 TO SAVILE ROW



Whenever talk turns to clothing and believe me, in my circle that is pretty much every day, I always claim that one of the best bespoke tailoring cutters of all time, is a south east Londoner, (well, we claim him as one of ours) namely Edward Sexton.

Hands up who just said, who? Well, that's fair enough I guess, but you obviously need a drop of sartorial education and that's handy, because that's just what I'm about to give you today.

Edward was born in London in November 1942, the fourth of six siblings to a working-class family. He attended the English Martyrs junior school on Rodney Road, Walworth SE17, a spit and a cough from where your correspondent resides. His uncle was a tailor and Edward learnt the rudiments of the craft with him from the age of 12.

He had his initial formal training, under the auspices of Lew Rose from 1957, learning to cut and construct each element of a suit over the course of his time there. Once he had the basics under control, he moved on to equestrian tailor Harry Hall on Regent Street aged 16. Sexton – '(we made) riding jackets, hacking jackets, breeches, jodhpurs and so on – so I came to like that longer jacket with a nice flared shape. I was also always interested in the 30s, the 40s, the romantic period. Pin collars, tabs, all that – a very nice, neat look; the strong shoulder line. I liked all that.'

He then started with Cyril A. Castle aged 19 and polished up his cutting skills at what is now the London College of Fashion. He then moved to Kilgour, French and Stanbury, which was founded in 1880. There under the instruction of

'uncle' Fred Stanbury, he developed the 'Sexton Look' which he made for private clients. His first job as a fully trained cutter was at Welsh and Jefferies, a long-established military tailor. As part of his duties, Sexton made the uniforms for the new influx of officers passing the grade at Sandhurst.

Whilst working next at Donaldson's, Williams and Ward on Burlington Arcade, he met a young and vibrant salesman, one Tommy Nutter. Getting on well, they

'Nutter's' on Valentines Day 1969 at 35a Savile Row, financially backed by Cilla Black, her husband Bobby and Peter Brown, long-time assistant to Beatles manager Brian Epstein, and Tommy's lover.

These 'new kids on the block' hit the ground running with The Beatles, Elton John, Twiggy and her then partner Justin de Villeneuve, all being regular visitors to the premises.

Sexton – 'You couldn't orchestrate what happened

find the quality they were looking for. Particularly the musicians – they were very artistic and talented, not just in their music but in other ways. They just wanted to have nicer, better quality clothing. In any business you need finders, minders and grinders to make it all really flow and work. Tommy was the finder – he was very social and had great connections. I'd term myself as the minder and the grinder. I ran the workshop, I did the cutting, I did the fitting. You'd have The

Tommy left and Edward became managing director. A friend said at the time 'Tommy was a great designer but a poor businessman while Edward was a brilliant cutter who ran the business. They had a violent argument and Tommy left.'

In 1982, Edward moved from 35a to 36–37 Savile Row and changed the name of the business to 'Edward Sexton.' As mentioned earlier, he was well known for cutting and making for women, and that heritage led in 1995, to Stella McCartney working as an apprentice with Sexton. He then assisted with her St Martins graduation show, which featured friends Kate Moss, and Naomi Campbell modelling her clothes. When she then moved to take over at the fashion brand 'Chloe' in 1997, Edward worked for her for a time as a consultant.

He then left Savile Row in 1990 and for many years worked out of 26 Beauchamp Place, SW3 but recently, his name is back on the Row, with a stand-alone shop situated at number 35, working alongside creative director Dominic Sebag Montefiore.

Edward – 'I always believed in a working showroom, where the client comes in and sees and senses hand-craftsmanship going on. A suit is about so much more than dressing a person. It's about romance and presenting an image.' Amen.

The Mumper of SE5
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began to work together and make for private clients. With Tommy's ideas and Sexton's skills combined, they developed their own in-house style, which was more modern in outlook. Wide lapels, flared jackets, often made in interesting and flamboyant fabrics.

Sexton – 'Tommy was working as a front-of-shop salesman. We'd go and have a pint after work and chat about style and came up with this look that we were both very keen on – longer than average, waisted and flared.'

So, this dynamic pairing joined forces. Nutter gay and Sexton married with a new baby, opened their own shop

with us. Lots of things happened to us that were a total fluke. The Beatles crossing the road in suits we'd made (for them) on the Abbey Road album cover – who could have orchestrated that bit of PR?'

Amazingly, in those less media savvy days, it appears no one had actually discussed the clothes they were wearing for the photo shoot. They just turned up and wore what they had on that day.

Sexton – 'London was changing, you had the King's Road, Carnaby Street, a lot of new money around, rock stars, but even people with money couldn't necessarily

Beatles, you'd have Elton John, you'd have Mick Jagger, you'd have Bianca, Yoko and John Lennon, and they're all coming in and out like it's a club. That was the initial kick of the business. But then we had a lot of captains of industry as well – Rupert Murdoch, Kerry Packer, Sir Paul Hamlyn – so our clientele was very mixed. They all wanted that touch of freshness and youth in their clothes, because they were young then too.'

Another way Sexton and Nutter bucked convention was by making women's clothes, which was unheard of at the time on the Row. Then, the pair went their separate ways in 1976. A major disagreement meant



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