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INSIDE



**Talking TfL chaos with
Centre for London's
Antonia Jennings** Page 3



**Babette runs Marathon
for Taxi Charity for
military veterans** Page 20




**George Foreman - from
feared boxing monster
to cuddly veteran** Page 18

NUT ZERO



Page 3


**WILL
MAYOR'S
VISION
ZERO
DESTROY
THE CAB
TRADE?**



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should be sent to the Editor at the above address.

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NEW PLAN WAS JUST A SHAM, AND HOW CAN YOU NOT SAY KHAN IS AT FAULT FOR OUR STRUGGLES?

Well, the so-called new 2025 Taxi & Private Hire Plan that was recently revealed was an utter sham.

They are even revisiting "should PH have driving tests?" This was consulted on in 2016 and voted Yes! Was it introduced... NO, I rest my case, an utter PR stunt.

A couple of weeks ago we had the report (p6), where the Centre for London published research stating that without help we would have about 20 years left.

I went on GB NEWS and said we have suffered since the day Uber got licensed and due to lack of TfL regulation. Later on Steve Mc from the LTDA also gave an interview on the same subject, where when asked by the host if our Major was at fault, astonishingly he replied "No" and said it was all the fault of white middle aged cyclists...

I am not being funny, at times we all "have to play the game", but you know what, this Mayor has done nothing for the Cab Trade and until Trade Leaders actually state the bleeding obvious, we will be managed into a decline.





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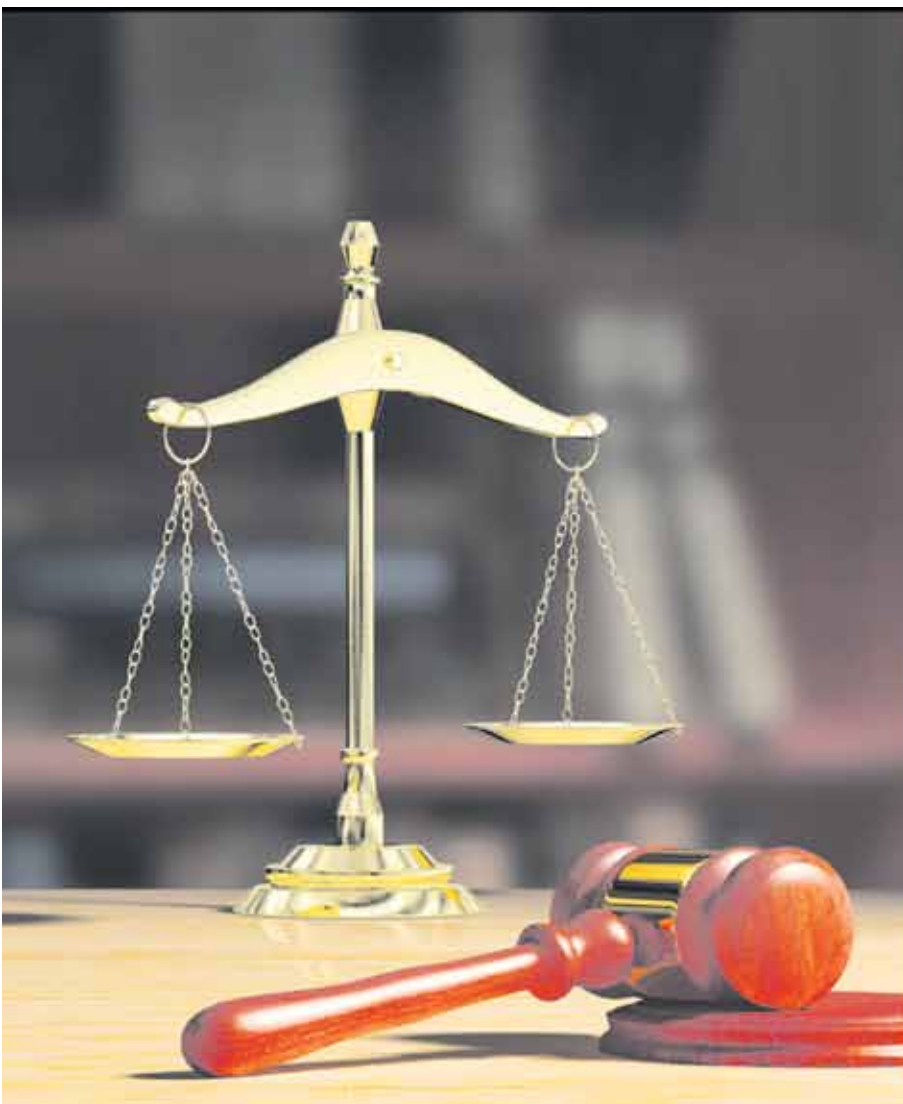
We at the LCDC don't often bang our own drum when it comes to helping our members with their legal troubles. A lot of the cases which come our way with members are quite sensitive and we respect their wishes to keep things in house and out of the paper which I can fully appreciate.

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

Tel: 0207 405 1999
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'NO PLANS ON LIMITS'

CAN TfL BE TRUSTED TO TELL OUR TRADE IF THEY PLAN TO PURSUE ANOTHER DELICENSING SCHEME AND IMPOSE NEW AGE LIMITS...?

As readers of the Badge will know, the Club has long suspected that TfL will pursue another delicensing scheme and implement new age limits on our cabs.

So much so that at a recent Senior Reps meeting, the Club's representative, Danny O'Regan asked Helen Chapman if TfL had any thoughts on a new emission policy and you can read her email reply to our question below.

But, after reading the new Taxi Plan, section 14, it states that they will be consulting this year on introducing a zero emissions (at the tailpipe) licensing requirement.

We do not know what TfL are planning but as you see they are actively looking at Zero emissions from the tale-pipe consultation and currently no taxis we drive meet this.

So when Helen Chapman at TfL informed the trade that they "currently" have no plans, that could be that very day and what is in the Taxi Plan is the future. I have a very bitter experience on TfL consultations and the cab trade and it is this:

We were holding a taxi trade meeting that was to discuss the impending age limit consultations at Blackfriars Road. I had spoken to a prominent

PH Union leader at that time who told me that he had received a call before Christmas and was told the news that all PH were to pay the C charge, much to his disgust, but he was then told not to worry as the taxi trade were to be given a 12 year age limit.

I was shocked to be honest and asked him who at TfL had told him this - he told me it was a very senior member of TfL staff, and gave me her name.

As the meeting progressed, she said that TfL wanted to hear our views and these would be taken into account as they valued our opinions... so I said to her what I had heard from an individual and was it true?... she said it was not true.

I then said to her that the individual who had spoken to me had agreed to attend the Club's Lawyers and he would be more than happy to sign an affidavit to say

Action 14

We will support the taxi trade and private hire industry to continue to reduce tailpipe emissions by:

- Consulting with the taxi trade and private hire industry in 2025/26 on a proposal to introduce a zero-emissions (at the tailpipe) licensing requirement for taxi and private hire vehicles in the future

the conversation he had was true.

She then admitted that she had indeed had that conversation... so what chance do you have with these TfL Consultations?

At the LCDC we firmly believe that TfL in conjunction with the

Mayor's Vision Zero in 2030 decided to introduce an age limit on all Euro6 taxis and also, which is more worrying introduce an age limit on TXe taxis as they can be driven using petrol and as this plan is on a "tailpipe" emissions, it would fall foul. The aim of our Mayor is to have zero

emission by 2030.

We know that LEVC are looking at bringing in a zero emissions taxi in 2030 but that is only 5 years away - where will this leave the trade? We are currently losing drivers hand over fist, again... where will this leave our trade?

In other parts of the country, local councils are given grants to taxi drivers to buy E6 vehicles, but we had to bite the bullet in 2018 when there was absolutely no meaningful EV infrastructure to help drivers who had made the plunge.

I have to ask, where does this leave us? What is the TfL timescale on this plan?

Email received by the LCDC from Helen Chapman

At our last quarterly meeting on 2 December we discussed age limit requirements and you sought assurances on whether there were any plans to reduce the 15 year age limit. I know we have spoken to some of you since then to provide assurances but I wanted to also follow up in writing to confirm we currently have no plans to revisit taxi age limits.

Apologies for the delay. I hope that's helpful but do let me know if you need anything else.

Kind regards,

Helen

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF TFL'S 2025 TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE ACTION PLAN: IS IT JUST DÉJÀ VU OR GENUINE PROGRESS?

By Grant Davis

In March 2025, Transport for London (TfL) unveiled its latest Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan, aiming to address longstanding challenges within London's taxi and private hire sectors.

For many seasoned black cab drivers, this initiative evokes a sense of déjà vu, reminiscent of the 2016 Action Plan. This article critically compares the two plans, scrutinises the outcomes of the 2016 strategy, and questions the credibility of promises made by Mayor Sadiq Khan and TfL in light of past performances.

2016 Action Plan: Ambitious Goals, Unmet Expectations

The 2016 Action Plan set out to create a "vibrant taxi and private hire market," emphasising safety, accessibility, and environmental sustainability. Key objectives included:

- **Enhancing Passenger Safety:** Implementing stricter licensing requirements and increasing enforcement against illegal activities.

- **Improving Accessibility:** Ensuring all taxis were wheelchair accessible and promoting services for passengers with disabilities.

- **Environmental Commitments:** Encouraging the adoption of zero-emission capable vehicles to reduce the industry's carbon footprint.

Despite these ambitions, the outcomes fell short:

- **Safety Measures:** While some stricter licensing requirements were introduced, enforcement against illegal activities remained inconsistent, leading to continued concerns about passenger safety.

- **Accessibility:** Although all taxis were mandated to be wheelchair accessible, the practical availability and reliability of such services did not meet the growing demand from passengers with disabilities.

- **Environmental Goals:** The transition to zero-emission vehicles was sluggish, hindered by high costs and inadequate infrastructure, resulting in minimal impact on reducing emissions.

2025 Action Plan: New Promises or Repackaged Commitments?

The 2025 Action Plan echoes many themes from its predecessor, with proposed actions such as:

- **Bus Lane Access:** Ensuring taxis continue to have access to bus lanes and encouraging boroughs to grant similar access on their roads.

- **Safety Enhancements:** Working with the government to secure greater powers to tackle cross-border hiring and regulate booking companies.

- **Driver Training:** Introducing new online voluntary training courses and Disability Equality Training, designed in partnership with disability stakeholders.

- **Modernising 'The Knowledge':** Reviewing and updating the Blue Book guide and exploring technological integrations to make the assessment process more efficient.

policies involves adjustments to licensing fees:

- **Operator Fees:** Despite the extensive resources required to regulate

discouraging the entry of new talent into the black cab industry while allowing private hire operators to benefit from static fee structures despite their expanding presence and the associated regulatory demands.

Trust in Leadership: Earned or Assumed?

Given the unmet objectives of the 2016 Action Plan and the questionable policy decisions regarding licensing fees, skepticism among black cab drivers towards Mayor Sadiq Khan and TfL is understandable. The repetitive nature of the 2025 plan's promises, without clear accountability for past shortcomings, undermines confidence in its potential success.

Conclusion: A Call for Genuine Reform

For the 2025 Action Plan to gain the trust of London's black cab drivers, it must go beyond reiterating previous commitments. Concrete actions, transparent timelines, and measurable outcomes are essential.

Moreover, equitable financial policies that support the sustainability of the black cab profession, rather than disproportionately burdening its practitioners, are imperative. Without these, the latest plan risks being perceived as yet another set of unfulfilled promises, further eroding trust in the city's transport leadership.



- **Environmental Initiatives:** Advocating for the continuation of the plug-in taxi grant and seeking tax reductions for the purchase of zero-emission vehicles.

While these initiatives appear progressive, they largely mirror the unfulfilled promises of the 2016 plan, raising doubts about their prospective efficacy.

Licensing Fees: A Questionable Redistribution

A particularly contentious aspect of TfL's recent

private hire operators, their licensing fees have remained unchanged since 2017.

- **'The Knowledge' Fees:** In contrast, fees associated with undertaking 'The Knowledge'—the rigorous examination for aspiring black cab drivers—have seen increases, adding financial strain to those entering the profession.

This disparity suggests a misalignment in TfL's approach, potentially

TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE ACTION PLAN 2016

As the world's greatest city, London deserves the best taxi and private hire services available. I am determined to create a vibrant taxi and private hire market, with space for all providers to flourish, while driving up standards to improve safety and the quality of service offered to all Londoners and the city's visitors.

London's taxi drivers are highly trained and are required to meet the strictest safety standards. They drive wheelchair-accessible vehicles, and possess the incredible geographical recall and sense of direction that only those with The Knowledge have. With the world's most qualified cabbies at the wheel, it's easy to understand why the iconic black cab is recognised across the globe and is a source of pride for Londoners.

The private hire trade also has an important role to play in the city's transport mix. Traditional minicab services exist all over London and remain prevalent in suburban areas, alongside suburban taxis, serving local communities. Meanwhile, chauffeur and executive services use high-end vehicles to serve London's thriving business and leisure industries.

In my manifesto, I set a clear objective to:

- Ensure the markets for licensed taxi drivers and private hire drivers are fair – with special privileges built in, as they always have been, for those who



become a licensed London taxi driver

- Ensure driver safety standards are rigorously enforced across both industries
- Retain the exclusive right of licensed taxi drivers to use bus lanes and ply for hire

Making this happen means reinforcing the

two-tier system between taxis and private hire services and taking account of the phenomenal change seen in the industry in recent years – in particular the role of new technology in enabling journeys.

The taxi trade is an icon of our city and should be supported. While the

legitimate private hire trade is an asset to London, we must not be complacent in ensuring it is safe for passengers. The need for greater enforcement and compliance, as well as stricter entry requirements, is clear for all to see. I also want those drivers who work in the private hire industry to be reassured that it offers a secure working environment with a pathway to appropriate vocational and educational training. Ensuring the highest of standards in the private hire trade benefits everyone with a stake in the industry.

This plan is an important step, and sets out how Transport for London (TfL) will deliver my commitments to both passengers and to the trades themselves. However, it is also a first step, and as the industry changes and develops, this plan will be kept under review to ensure this rapidly changing industry, and the customers it serves, are fully supported now and in the future.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

There are a number of measures that we would like to introduce to enhance public safety still further and to support law-abiding drivers. However, these would require changes to legislation.

26. We will lobby the Government for:

- Control over cross-border hiring for both taxi and PHVs licensed outside of London. Issues of cross-border hiring are increasingly commonplace and it cannot be right that Parliament intended private hire licensees to license themselves with one authority with, for example, the sole intention of working 100 per cent of the time in another authority. Introducing a requirement to ensure a journey either starts or ends in the area for which the driver and vehicle are licensed will still allow flexibility to undertake return journeys. A similar requirement exists in New York City
- Approval from the Secretary of State for us to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), for example to drivers found not wearing a badge, which would act as an instant deterrent for more minor offences. Were the Secretary of State to agree to use his powers to allow us to issue FPNs for a broad range of offences, it would be another method of compliance to ensure passenger safety in the taxi and private hire trades

- The introduction of legislation to control and regulate pedicabs in London allowing us to ensure the safety of passengers and other road users. Currently, we do not have the authority to regulate, or license, pedicabs in London. The Government has announced that it will bring forward legislation that would bring pedicabs within our regulatory framework and be subject to our licensing regime

Being able to control, regulate and ban unsafe pedicabs would also benefit the London economy by helping to keep the city moving – the congestion caused by pedicabs is significant, especially in parts of the West End. In the meantime, we will continue to work with Members of Parliament and the London Borough of Westminster to run operations to tackle dangerous and antisocial behaviour from pedicab drivers

- A statutory definition of plying for hire and pre-booked services – as the law stands, plying for hire is difficult to prove and requires significant enforcement resources. While we will continue to enforce to the full extent of our ability, along with the Mayor we are firmly of the view that a statutory definition of plying for hire and pre-booked services will remove ambiguity and clearly define the difference between taxi and private hire services, maintaining the two-tier system
- Greater enforcement powers – changes in primary legislation to address common enforcement issues in London, for example, the power to seize vehicles that are found undertaking a passenger journey without hire and reward insurance cover, automatic disqualification from driving on conviction of anyone found guilty of a touting or unlawful plying for hire offence, and extend the power the police already have to take DNA samples for touting offences to include drivers caught unlawfully plying for hire



The Government has announced that it will bring forward legislation that would bring pedicabs within our regulatory framework

"Guess who I had sat in the back of my cab".... Antonia Jennings

On Saturday, I had the opportunity to meet Antonia Jennings, the Chief Executive of Centre for London, who commissioned the report "London's Black Cab Trade is Iconic".

The report highlights the importance of the black cab trade as part of London's transport ecosystem and warns that, without adequate support, it could disappear within the next 20 years.

[Link to Report: <https://centreforlondon.org/publication/future-black-cab/>]

Antonia is an impressive individual, but unfortunately, she has been misled and misinformed by Transport for London (TfL).

She mentioned that TfL informed her they are unable to collaborate with the taxi trade because the trade itself does not know what it wants. In my view, this statement is, at best, disingenuous. The taxi trade's position is clear—it wants TfL to enforce existing laws, as proper law enforcement is fundamental to protecting the industry.

During our conversation, it became evident that she was unaware of several critical issues affecting the trade:

• Freenow's Legal Status:

She did not know that Freenow has been legally determined to be the principal in taxi hirings by the courts and tribunal service, despite claiming to act as an agent in its terms and conditions—an inconsistency/law breaking that undermines hackney carriage regulations.



• Licensing of the MaxiCab:

She was unaware that TfL refuses to license a more affordable taxi model, the MaxiCab, which could enable more part-time taxi drivers to remain in the profession.

• Impact of Private Hire Oversaturation:

She did not know that the oversaturation of the private hire market and the exploitation of private hire drivers by Private Hire Operators (PHOs) directly harm the taxi trade. The prevalence of private hire fares set at unsustainably low rates amounts to exploitative labour conditions, making it impossible for a regulated market to compete with an unregulated one.

• TfL's Licensing of Exploitative Operators: She was not aware that TfL continues to license private hire operators who exploit their workers, which has a direct impact on the taxi



trade. i.e Uber's continued non-compliance with the Supreme Court judgment.

• Unfair Vehicle Requirements:

She did not know that taxi fares cannot compete with private hire fares because TfL mandates that all taxis be wheelchair-accessible, while private hire vehicles are not subject to the same requirement. As a result, the taxi trade is forced to bear the socioeconomic responsibility of providing accessible transport, while private hire operators evade these obligations entirely. This regulatory

disparity, without proper protection, will inevitably drive taxis out of business.

• Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Compliance:

She was unaware that TfL is failing to meet its obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, particularly in ensuring that taxi apps comply with hackney carriage regulations.

• TfL's Approach to Public Safety:

She did not know that TfL offers nothing more than weasel words

regarding public safety, as highlighted by the numerous complaints about the LEVC taxi.

• Legal Challenge Against TfL:

She did not know that I attempted to hold TfL accountable for its regulatory duties by seeking a Part 8 declaration in court regarding taxi apps' compliance with the law. However, TfL responded by threatening me with costs if I proceeded.

These are just a few examples.

TfL has not provided her with a genuine understanding of the real reasons behind the decline of the taxi trade, nor has it acknowledged the extent to which the failures of its Taxi and Private Hire department have contributed to this situation.

I will be speaking with her again this week.

Chris Johnson

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Action 14

We will support the taxi trade and private hire industry to continue to reduce tailpipe emissions by:

- Consulting with the taxi trade industry in 2025/26 on a proposal to introduce a zero-emissions (at the tailpipe) licensing requirement for taxi and private hire vehicles in the future.

Mayor of London's Taxi and private hire action plan 2025.



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The Anderson Shelter's TAXI LEAKS

London, Worst City In Europe For Traffic Congestion, Fourth Year In A Row... TfL to sort it out, using PlayStations

As we all know, London has some of the slowest roads in the world. Not helped of course by Khan's unthinkable 20mph main roads.

Earlier this year a study named the UK capital,

drop in bus ridership.

Frightened by the lack of TfL's transport usage, plans have been revealed to speed up London's buses. Report's in the Evening Standard reveal, TfL is planning on making some major changes that are intended to tackle slow buses. The focus is primarily on two things which are the bane of every bus passenger: traffic lights and roadworks... Funny, the Standard doesn't mention the massive increase in Private hire cars!

complaints always falling on deaf ears.

2* New Technology akin to PlayStations... what could possibly go wrong?

Carl Eddleston, TfL's director of network management, likened the old computers that currently operate traffic lights to Atari games consoles. He claimed that the fancier new computers are akin to 'Playstations' and will respond quicker, telling the Standard, 'That means

and reduce the amount of time buses spend stuck at red lights. Unfortunately, in the wrong hands, it could make things a lot worse. Let's not forget that Khan's TfL have a history of making problems worse.

3* Reducing Roadworks:

Another way Eddleston suggested speeding up buses is by encouraging councils to charge utility companies for digging up roads. The aim is to reduce the amount of time roadworks take, as well as to generate income for councils.

numbers, and previously the government body has revealed several ways it is attempting to speed up the capital's bus network. These include more continuous bus lanes, increasing bus lanes' operational hours (and making most 24/7) and updating traffic signals to give buses priority.

So it's not about reducing congestion for all... it's just for TfL buses.

TAXI LEAKS EXTRA BIT:

I've been saying it for many years, our present form of representation isn't working. We desperately need better representation in the form of a United Taxi council.

Made up from all orgs and unions working together, instead of fighting against each other and trying to attract each other's members.

Over the last two decades, we have witnessed TfL's bias against the London Taxi trade, but this time it's essential we don't let our exclusion from bus lanes become part of any new initiative from our so called regulator. It is imperative that we keep our unique position, with a promise of access to all bus lanes.

Perhaps TfL should be looking more towards the barely used Cycle lanes, such as the one in Park Lane... and also increase journey times on major roads such as Park Lane, Finchley Road and Bayswater Road, by reintroducing the previous 30mph limits.



"Europe's worst city for traffic congestion" for the fourth year in a row... with the city's residents spending an average total of 101 hours in gridlock over the course of 2024.

While London's miserable traffic mostly hampers car drivers – after all, buses and taxis can speed up journeys with bus lanes – it impacts public transport, too. In the centre of town bus speeds have fallen to an all time low of 7 miles per hour, which has coincided with a recent

The reports agenda...

1* Speeding up traffic lights:

Changing traffic light settings and making them more responsive – especially during rush hour – could apparently add 10 percent more capacity to every junction.

Again funny... we've been complaining about the traffic light settings for years, our

instead of responding every eight seconds, the new tech at junctions will respond every one second.

(Although he didn't mention whether these new PlayStations were installed at the control centre or in the hands of staff working from home. One minute watching the lights on Euston Road, and the next, playing Mario Kart).

In the right hands, higher-tech traffic light systems could improve traffic flow

Surely it would be more sensible to inform utility companies to not leave road works unattended for days on end with work being carried out for just a few hours daily?

Eddleston went on to say, "In total, London's 33 boroughs are responsible for 95 percent of the capital's roads. If they all started charging utility companies for works, it could 'lower congestion, increase bus speeds and improve safety across the network'".

TfL says there is a direct correlation between increases in bus delays and falls in passenger

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Steve S,
Sherbet Rental Driver

OPEN LETTER TO HELEN CHAPMAN, DIRECTOR OF LICENSING, TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

Uber for Chapman?

A Decade of Decline – and Still No Accountability

Dear Ms Chapman,

I write in response to Transport for London's announcement of yet another licence fee increase for Taxi and Private Hire drivers.

Once again, the burden falls squarely on the backs of London's Black Cab drivers—men and women who meet the highest standards of training, accessibility, and safety—while Private Hire operators, many backed by Silicon Valley venture capital, remain untouched and unaccountable.

No operator fee increase.
No structural reform.
No justice.

You claim to support London's taxi trade. But this is death by a thousand licence cuts.

Gold Standard vs. Bog Standard

Let's be clear: London's Black Cab drivers represent the Gold Standard.

- We do The Knowledge—up to four years of unpaid study with no guarantee of success.
- We buy wheelchair-accessible vehicles costing over £65,000.
- We comply with every emissions rule, accessibility law, route restriction, and charge TfL demands.

What do we pay?

- Taxi Driver Licence: £343
- Taxi Vehicle Licence Fee:

£120

- Knowledge Fees: £650 (£225 written, £425 appearances)
 - SERU Test (from Oct 2025): £40
 - Medical/DBS: £100–200
- Total: Up to £1,650+ before a single fare is taken.**

Gold Solution

In 2015, I proposed a tiered licensing system:

- Gold: Full Black Cab – Knowledge, (ZEC) purpose built vehicle, taxi driving test, all-access rights.



Meanwhile, PHV drivers—bog standard by comparison—pay less than a third of that.

- PHV Driver Licence: £140
 - PHV Vehicle Licence Fee: £120
 - Application Fee: £100
 - Topographical, English, SERU: £100 total
 - Medical/DBS: same as taxi
- Total: ~£460–500 all-in. And that's assuming they're even working legally.**

No Knowledge. No accessibility. No meter. No regulatory parity.

And now? No increase in operator fees—despite over 100,000 PHVs clogging our roads and outnumbering taxis by more than 6 to 1. This is not regulatory equity. It's exploitation.

The Bronze, Silver,

- Silver: PHV – streamlined Knowledge, safety and topography training, advanced driving test. No Plying for Hire or E-hailing.
- Bronze: Entry-level – all new drivers start here with strict security, DBS, medical, and driving checks.

The Knowledge would be funded by ALL licence fees, building fairness into the system and professionalising the PHV sector.

Supported by Lord Henty on BBC Radio London's Eddie Nestor Show. Supported by Garrett Emmerson at City Hall. Acknowledged by Matt Daus during the TPH investigation

Ignored by TfL. Instead? We got Uber, saturation, collapse, and chaos.

Equality Impact Assessments: Where Are They?

You claim these fee increases are necessary for cost recovery.

But have you even assessed the impact on

drivers already working fewer hours due to health, caring, or age-related limitations?

Have you completed an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

If so:

- What were the findings?
- What mitigation has been proposed for part-time or vulnerable drivers?
- What data informed your assumptions?

If not:

- Why has TfL failed to conduct a statutory assessment on a proposal that directly affects thousands of older, disabled and marginalised drivers?

The 2025 Taxi & PHV Action Plan talks about inclusivity and equality. This fee hike does the opposite.

Where's the Tout Squad at Heathrow?

You want more money from drivers? Fine. Then drivers want action.

Will TfL commit to funding a full-time, visible anti-touting unit at Heathrow—paid for from licence fees?

The situation at Terminals 2–5 is unlawful and dangerous. PHV touts, uninsured runners, predatory apps—unchecked, unchallenged, unregulated.

TfL claims “safety is our priority.”

- So prove it.
- Ring fence the funding.
- Build the team.
- Enforce the law.

If Heathrow Airport Limited won't do it, then TfL must.

So I'll Ask You Directly.

Are these decisions made with any common sense—or are they politically motivated and quietly funded by Uber's influence in City Hall?

Beause from where we sit—in traffic, in debt, in despair—your licensing strategy looks less like transport policy and more like a commercial protection racket for platform capitalism.

You have presided over a decade of deregulation, disintegration, and digital manipulation.

So I ask you, Ms Chapman: How did you get the last ten years so wrong?

Yours in frustration and resolve,

Mark White, (LCDC)

Work is a little slow now, as I am sure that most of you will agree - there are several factors for this, our government's policies, other countries' governments' policies, our mayor's policies, the lack of tourists at the moment, and to top it all a late Easter holiday.

Easter has always been a low period for the taxi trade in London, especially when the Easter holiday falls late as the weather is normally a little better and people tend to take the opportunity to get away somewhere for a few days - when Easter is earlier the slow down doesn't seem to be as bad.

Why do they move the Easter weekend every year? It doesn't really make any sense to me - if you are a Christian and believe in Christ then how can you move the date around? Don't worry I am not going to get all religious as I am not that way inclined.

I always used to take the opportunity myself to get away for a few days over the Easter while the work was quiet, but I think we have been spoiled the last couple of years as the work was a little more plentiful.

So how do we cope with the downturn of work over the Easter break? Well some would say that as professional business people we should really plan for these seasonal trends as it happens every year, but we all know that very few of us actually do plan for these trends, so we just suck it up and do longer hours to keep our income at a sustainable level.

In hindsight we should really plan for these times when the work is leaner and maybe spend more time with our children while they are on a break from school or with our families getting away instead of working harder and longer for the same or less money, but that is easier said than done!



Cab Chat Show

Our loyal listeners will be quite aware that we have not really been consistent with the podcast since the pandemic - we did have a period during 2022 when we were producing bi-weekly shows for quite a few months, but since February 2023 we have lost the impetus to sit down and record the show.

The lack of a permanent base to have guests visit and the fact that Mac The Cab hasn't driven a Taxi for a few years now and the rest of the old team are off doing their own thing and some have actually left the trade to pursue other occupations, this has left us in a sort of limbo.

Mac and I did actually get together and record a 10th anniversary show, which if you haven't listened to it, you should go and download the show. We had some contributions from some of the old team, and recording the show made me realise that I actually miss doing it.

Also whilst out working in

the cab I quite often bump into other cab drivers who were loyal listeners of the show, and they always ask what has happened to the show and why are we no longer doing it?

After building the Cab Chat show for over 10 years it would be a great shame just to leave it to rot and not do another show, also as one cab driver said to me, I was the first in the Taxi trade to produce a podcast, and he stated that others were now reaping the benefits of what I had started.

The issue is, where do I record the shows? Do I host the show alone, or with other hosts? Should I even continue at all? Do I continue to do a 2 hour show? Or do I restrict the show to either 15 minutes or 30 minutes?

What format should the show be? The same as it has always been? A News related show? A show with interviews of cab drivers and prominent individuals within the trade? A combination of all the above? So many questions floating around in my head and I cannot

seem to make a decision, so I would love to hear what you think, give me your feedback, either give us a mention on X (Twitter) or Private Message me on X @CabChat

Jump

On Wednesday last week I popped down to Doon Street to get my tariff change done on my meter. I have a Cygnus meter and Taxi World were doing a Jump promotion and at the same time updating meters to save drivers having to worry about doing it themselves.

While there I was given a demonstration of the Jump App and the system that Taxi World are installing in the cab, other drivers have been telling me that they are impressed with the system but I wanted to see for myself.

I must say that I was impressed, the system is well thought out, the staff were great, and the whole ethos of the company appears to align with the aspirations of the drivers,

all this from a company that has been involved in the Taxi Trade for over 75 years!

I have been quite happy with Cab Vision who are my current credit card processing company, but I am also tempted by the additional benefits of joining Taxi World and having access to the Jump App.

You can only access the Jump app as a driver by having the Taxi World terminal fitted, there is the additional benefit of the TfL approved camera system, which is front, interior and rear facing and fitted free with the system. Taxi World state they have more ideas that they would like to implement into the system in the future and I look forward to seeing what these may be.

If you want to find out more about the app then look at my YouTube video @JamieTheCabby. Will I Jump? Well, that remains to be a question that I must answer myself.

Finally

I have been reading on social media that drivers have been stealing jobs from other drivers and picking up near ranks. Now we all know that the work is quiet out there now, but is it necessary getting a bad name for yourself by picking up fares in an underhanded manner?

We all know the trade etiquette, the rules around picking up near to a Taxi rank, the unwritten rule that if a driver lets you out of a side turning while they are plying for hire, that you should allow them to pick up the next job.

So, let's not turn over our colleagues by stealing a job that is rightfully theirs, be kind to each other, there are not that many of us left now and we really don't need more drivers leaving the trade.

So, until next month, be kind, be healthy, be prosperous, and most of all,

Be Lucky

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Warden Scheme Suspended!

Amid accusations of unfairness, hidden costs to drivers, and operational decisions, the feeder park warden scheme has finally been suspended—and about time too!

HAL, in conjunction with APCOA, has suspended the warden scheme, and the infighting, rumours, and accusations among feeder park trade organisations and drivers have reached fever pitch!



When I first saw “CHAOS AT THE PORT!” tweeted by the LTDA, I thought they were referring to the recent total shutdown of Heathrow Airport, or maybe another volcano had erupted and spewed an ash cloud across the whole of Europe! It was, in fact—wait for it—that drivers had to wait a whole ten minutes to get into the feeder park. Now, I’m pretty sure we’ve been queueing in Newall Road on and off for the last few months fairly regularly without any allegations of chaos at all. So why the sudden outcry? The simple answer is this: the LTDA has received what they perceive as a blow to their total domination of the trade at Heathrow. They have come out swinging, essentially at HAL and APCOA, for daring to suspend the warden scheme.

When Is an Office Not an Office?

LTDA members should look away now...

The LTDA does not



have a legitimate office at Heathrow. Don’t be fooled into thinking those LTDA reps wandering around in high-vis jackets with yellow lanyards hanging around their necks have any more authority at the airport than you do. They pay no rent and have no existing contract for the office in the canteen. They are, in fact, legally speaking, “squatting.”

Yes, you heard that correctly—they are squatting in the canteen office. Not that it matters—it’s not really an office, is it? If it was, the door would be open, but it’s not, is it? There are strategically placed coats across the window to keep out prying eyes, and when a “rep” is in residence, the door is more often than not securely locked—possibly to keep out those pesky members with questions about warden wait times and incentives.

There Is Also, in Fact, Zero “Chaos at the Port”

It’s business as usual, and apart from the few drivers who find it impossible to park correctly without a diagram and a warden guiding them in, waving two table tennis bats in the air, most drivers have hardly noticed the wardens are missing.

There may be a case for a scaled-down version of the scheme at peak morning times, but clearly, the continuously expanding behemoth of a warden scheme that we previously had is totally unnecessary.

‘Stranger Things’

There were some strange events immediately after the scheme was suspended.

On the first two days post-warden suspension, the police were called extremely quickly to disperse the queue in Newall Road. This was quite odd, as drivers had been queueing for months previously with the police rarely showing up.

The second strange event was that following an emergency COBRA-style meeting of wardens and LTDA airport reps, a “petition” emerged. The first words on the “petition” were “WE THE DRIVERS,” which is curious because it wasn’t started by the drivers at all. It was, in fact, started by the wardens themselves and punted around by an LTDA representative.

Now, I’m not sure which part of the email that the trade received regarding the pausing of the warden

scheme the LTDA didn’t understand, but the one I read stated that the scheme was paused to allow APCOA to monitor feeder park congestion, which is simply an operational issue. I’m fairly sure that APCOA and HAL execs will be astounded to receive a “petition” when all that has actually happened is they have announced an operational issue.

So desperate are those with their snouts in the trough that they cannot put up with enduring the same time as the rest of us for even a few weeks! My personal opinion is that this smacks of greed and desperation. Not only that, but this “petition” is potentially extremely embarrassing for the trade in general!

‘We Do Not Negotiate with Terrorists’

Let’s make this perfectly clear so there are no more misunderstandings.

The LCDC supported the idea of a warden scheme but was misled regarding incentives, wait times, and the duration of the trial.

We do not support one ride per hour as an

incentive, as we believe this gives those involved an extremely unfair advantage over our members.

We will not be held to ransom by any trade organisation rep or warden in regard to wait time incentives. If the scheme cannot be run with fairness and transparency, then it should not run at all.

Hidden Costs...

The hidden costs to drivers as a result of the warden scheme could potentially run into several millions of pounds in forgone earnings and increased wait times for regular tag holders at Heathrow, and we cannot and will not support it in its current form.

You may have noticed that the north park has been empty in the afternoons for quite some time since the pausing of the warden scheme and wait times have decreased. Does this mean there are more jobs for the rest of us now that the scheme has ceased hoovering up four jobs per hour?

Should the warden scheme remain “paused” indefinitely, this could be a blessing in disguise. It would mean that instead of your friendly neighbourhood rep or warden “filling their boots” every day at your expense, they will actually have time to do their job, which is getting more business into their members’ cabs. This could be done by increasing signage inside terminals, establishing taxi information desks, and possibly organising a new dedicated tout squad to deter touts from intercepting our work—instead of profiteering from queues created by their own inaction.

In the words of William Wallace... “They may take our rides, but they’ll never take us for a ride.”

I’m pretty sure it was something like that?

Be lucky!

Heathrow Fair Fares

TWO MODELS, ONE CHOICE, AND NOT ENOUGH CONSULTATION

Deadline for Trade Decision: April 2025

With the 2025 tariff change coming on 26 April, Heathrow taxi drivers face an important decision about the future of the Fair Fares system — the pricing structure used for non-compellable journeys outside the Greater London Authority (GLA) licensed area.

But while trade reps have been asked to make a decision, many drivers are asking: who was actually consulted?

The truth? Hardly anyone.

Many drivers don't belong to a recognised organisation, and even within the trade groups, little meaningful engagement has taken place. Despite this, several reps have already declared a preference — long before most drivers even saw both options.

What's Being Decided

The Fair Fares system affects fares to out-of-area destinations like Slough, Windsor, Staines, Shepperton, Iver, and hotels such as Hilton T5 and Holiday Inn T5. These are not compellable jobs — drivers can refuse or negotiate them — but under the Fair Fares scheme, drivers accept a set fare in exchange for a return ticket to a terminal rank (bypassing the Feeder Park).

Two proposals are on the table — both under the Fair Fares system — and both will shape how Heathrow

drivers work going forward.

Proposal 1 – Fixed Fares (Original Model)

Favoured by RMT, LTDA, Unite and UCG, this is the system currently in place.

- Out-of-area destinations are grouped into zones with set fixed fares

- Drivers receive a return ticket

- Passengers are quoted a flat rate, regardless of conditions

However, this model has drawbacks:

- Fares can exceed the meter, especially on shorter jobs

- One size doesn't fit all – some journeys are underpaid, others overpriced

- Uses outdated tech that's slow to update

- Confusion arises when drivers prefer to negotiate their own fare outside the system

- Limited flexibility, and unlikely to adapt well to future changes

Proposed Updated Pricing:

Zone
Destinations
Current
Proposed
Zone 1
Hilton T5, Holiday Inn T5

£30
£30
Zone 2
Slough, Staines
£40
£50
Zone 3
Windsor, Shepperton
£45
£55

Proposal 2 – Meter + Minimum Fare (New Model)

This model was first proposed by the LCDC after the original scheme reached deadlock in 2024. It offers a modern, more adaptable approach:

- The meter runs as normal

- If the fare is below the zone minimum, it is rounded up

- If the fare is above the minimum, the meter stands

- Return ticket is still given

Example (Zone 2 – Minimum £50):

- Meter says £44 → Driver receives £50

- Meter says £58 → Driver receives £58

This system rewards real journey conditions — and could be expanded in future to include additional destinations like Ascot and Weybridge, especially as the Taxi Expert system is introduced.

So What's the Difference?

Feature	Proposal 1: Fixed Fare	Proposal 2: Meter + Minimum Fare
Fare Type	Fixed by zone	Metered with zone minimum
Can exceed meter?	Yes – fares are fixed, not linked to the meter	Only when the meter is below the minimum
Driver flexibility	Low – fixed regardless of traffic/time	High – reflects real-world conditions
Passenger transparency	Moderate – fixed fare only	High – meter visible and trusted
Ease of updates	Slow – admin-heavy process	Easier – aligns with tariff and tech updates
Return ticket	Yes	Yes
Future expansion	Unlikely	Strong potential via Taxi Expert
Trade support	Backed by RMT, LTDA, Unite, UCG	Proposed by LCDC – neutral position today

What's the Problem? No Real Consultation

Reps were asked to consult their members. But:

- Many drivers don't belong to recognised trade groups

- Few have been formally asked or shown both options

- Decisions appear to have been rushed through, with positions adopted too early with no one asked

For a system that affects every cabbie working at Heathrow, that's simply not good enough.

The LCDC, which proposed the £10 zone increases in March 2024 and later introduced the metered minimum model, remains neutral in this current decision — calling instead for proper engagement and a fair vote based on facts, not backroom decisions.

Timeframe & Action

- Deadline for decision:

April 2025

- Implementation with tariff change: 26 April 2025

- APCOA requires 2–3 weeks to make any technical changes

If no agreement is reached, the current fixed fare structure remains unchanged.

Final Word – Every Voice Matters

This is not just a pricing tweak. It's about how we work, what we earn, and how Heathrow taxis are seen by passengers. Whether you favour the familiarity of fixed fares or the flexibility of a meter-plus-minimum, you deserve to be consulted.

There is still time to speak up — and there must be a fair process that reflects all views, not just those of some trade representatives.

Ask your reps. Demand clarity. Make your voice count.

By Mark White

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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

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From boxing monster to cuddly veteran – George Foreman was unique

George Foreman was one of the fiercest and most feared heavyweights in history.

There are two clear parts to the extraordinary boxing life and times of Foreman, who died aged 76 this weekend, and the fighter became a world heavyweight champion in both.

The story of Foreman's return to the ring after a 10-year exile is as remarkable as his unlikely passage to Olympic glory in 1968 and his first world heavyweight title in 1973. Foreman defied the odds, and in the middle of his boxing career made millions from his lean and mean grilling machine. What a life.

Foreman fought 81 times as a professional boxer, losing five in total and knocking out 68 of the 76 men he beat. He was the street kid from Houston's notorious Fifth Ward – he should have been in prison, lost to boxing, but somehow made the USA team for Mexico City and then won the gold medal. He was saved, as he said, by the sport. Big George knew a bit about redemption.

After Mexico City, he turned professional, and his reign of terror started. It is hard for people in modern boxing to understand just how scary Foreman was at the time. He was sullen, he was vicious, and he was big. He had huge dogs, he wore leather and jeans and snarled at every camera pointed his way. He was a boxing Hells Angel. There was genuine fear for his opponents.

He was unbeaten in 37 when he finally persuaded the heavyweight

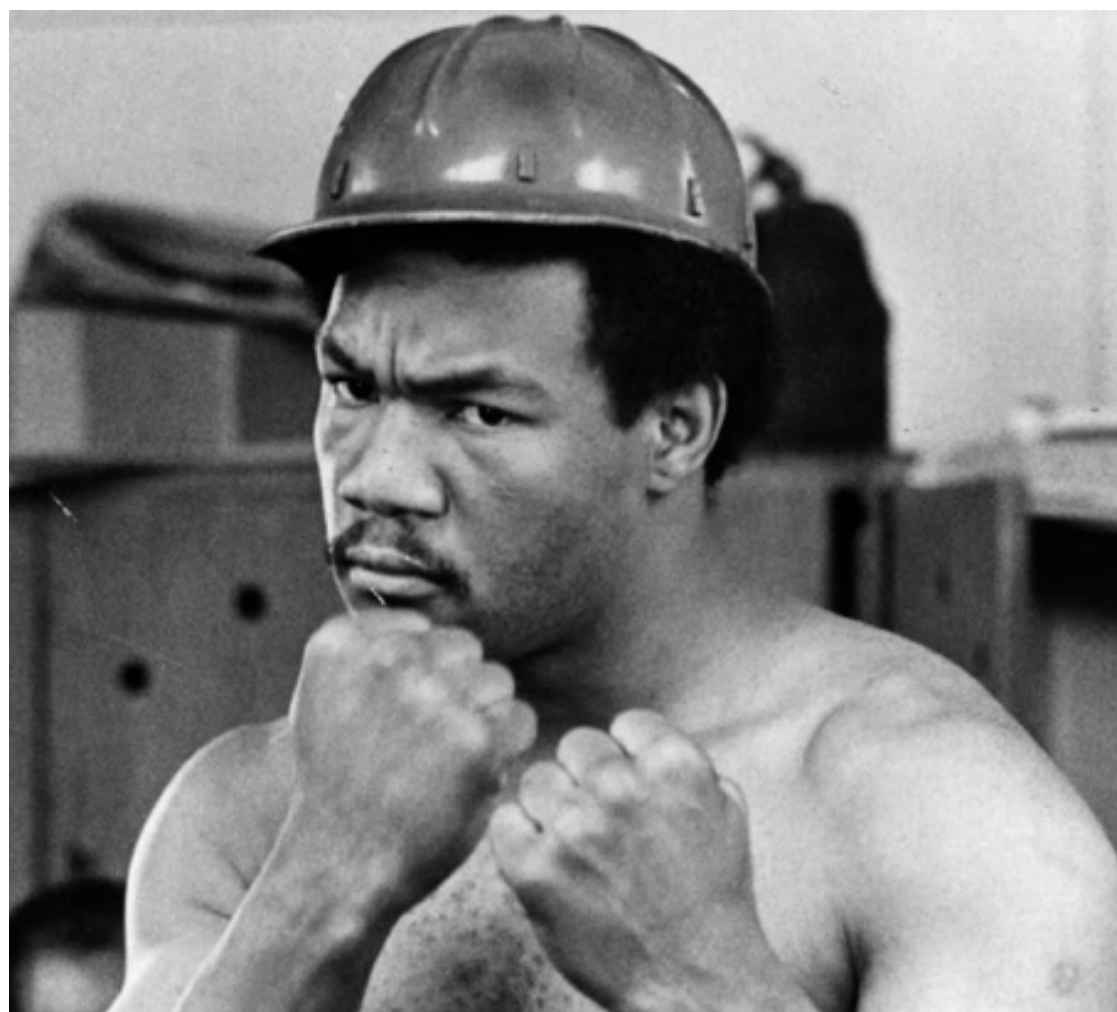
champion, Joe Frazier, to get in the ring with him.

The fight was in 1973, in Jamaica, and it was called the "Sunshine Showdown". It was a massacre – Frazier was sent tumbling and flying to the canvas six times and

His two heavyweight championship defences were so brutal that I believe they should only be shown to adults and after the watershed. Ken Norton and Jose Roman lasted a total of 420 X-rated seconds and were left ruined in bloody

he chased a rematch.

Just over two years later, after six more fights, Foreman grabbed his Bible and walked off into the wilderness. He was only 28 at the time and had lost just twice in 47 fights. He lost a



stopped in two rounds. It is the fight where Don King, later to be one of Foreman's promoters, arrived in a limo with the champ, and left in a limo with the champ: King changed sides during the fight.

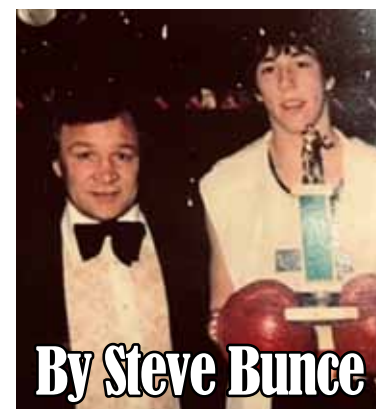
Foreman changed boxing with that type of devastation. He was called an animal and a beast, and he did nothing outside of the ring to persuade people otherwise. The cuddly George was a few years away, trust me.

heaps. There had never been a man like Foreman in the ring.

When the "Rumble in the Jungle" was made, there were genuine fears for Muhammad Ali's life. One British newspaper did a feature on the route Ali's ambulance would take from the stadium to the hospital. Foreman was a massive favourite but Ali had prepared for a beating and prepared for Foreman to tire; it was his genius that beat boxing's most dangerous champion. Foreman was broken, but

bout in 1977, suffered an epiphany and went wandering for 10 long years of sermons and penance. His abrupt disappearance was stunning, but his return to the ring in 1987 was even more so. Foreman had become a living storybook of extremes.

There is a lot of debate about Foreman's return to the ring and there is no dispute that he had easy fights, but the opposition improved, and the dream started to show on the horizon – Foreman



wanted to be heavyweight champion of the world. It was not an easy route for the now permanently smiling and approachable fighter. He was the veteran that everybody loved. The beast was tamed, it seemed.

He kept winning and beat a few good men: Gerry Cooney and Bert Cooper both went in two. In 1991, after 24 more wins with 23 knockouts, Foreman lost a world heavyweight title fight to Evander Holyfield, and two years later he lost another title fight to Tommy Morrison. Foreman never stopped believing that he was getting closer to the mad dream.

Michael Moorer was unbeaten in 35, a southpaw, smart, fresh and mean. He met Foreman in 1994 in Las Vegas and was knocked out in round 10. Foreman was trailing on all cards before the single, devastating punch. Foreman was 45, the new IBF and WBA heavyweight champion of the world and the oldest heavyweight champion in history. It was 20 years after the Rumble – the demons were dead, Big George was king again.

There were a few more fights, thousands of smiling cameos, over \$250m in revenue from the grilling machine. And too many memories to ever forget. There will never be a boxing monster like George Foreman ever again.



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Babette to Run London Marathon for the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans

The Taxi Charity for Military Veterans is delighted to announce that Babette Powell will be running the 2025 London Marathon to raise vital funds for the charity.

Babette, an experienced marathon runner from Gravesend, has completed eight marathons to date, including three previous London Marathons. Her personal best was an impressive 4 hours and 11 minutes, achieved in Paris in 2013.

This year, she faces a particularly challenging test, having committed to running the Paris Marathon on 13 April, just two weeks before taking on London.

Babette was introduced to the Taxi Charity by London



cab driver and charity Vice Chair, Paul Cook, who personally invited her to take on this challenge in support of the charity's invaluable work with military veterans.

Paul Cook said: "I was delighted when Babette agreed to run the London Marathon for the Taxi

Charity. This is a very special year for the charity as we will be travelling to the Netherlands to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Dutch Liberation on 5 May, followed by celebrations for the 80th anniversary of VE Day. These trips are completely free for the

veterans and their carers, and we are hoping that people will get behind Babette and donate to support the men and women who gave so much for our freedom."

Speaking about her motivation for running, Babette said:

"I just love running and challenging myself. Every year after a marathon, I say this is my last, and no one ever believes me! But this year, it's about more than just running London. I'm honoured to have been asked to run for the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans. The charity provides vital support to veterans, many of whom have faced unimaginable challenges. Running 26.2 miles is a small effort

compared to the sacrifices these veterans have made. By taking on this marathon, I hope to raise awareness and funds to help continue the charity's important work and get more veterans on trips."

The Taxi Charity has been supporting veterans since 1948, providing trips to the Netherlands and Normandy, outings, and special events to show appreciation for their service. The charity relies entirely on donations and the generosity of volunteer London cab drivers who dedicate their time to transporting veterans to various events and commemorations.

Please visit:
<https://2025tcslondon-marathon.enthuse.com/pf/babette-powell>



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Since the beginning of this year, we, London Taxi PR (LTPR), have taken our 'I Did it so Can You', Knowledge promotional campaign 'on the road', so to speak, attending a series of Job Fairs across the Southeast of London, at two football club stadia, Millwall FC and most recently, Charlton Athletic.

The invitations to attend initially arose as a result of our attendance at a business and community networking event at Millwall FC back in November last year, with the networking event being part of our sponsorship package deal.

I had asked to be kept informed of any forthcoming coming events and subsequently up popped an invitation to attend a community hub job fair at Millwall for the 16–23-year age group, albeit at very short notice in early January, so I decided to accept and went in with a, 'nothing ventured nothing gained' attitude.

Having visited The Taxi Academy Knowledge School some weeks previously, I called on Tom Scullion and Courtney Connell, as I had seen for myself the success of their learning facility and knowing Courtney's extensive experience as both a driver and former Knowledge examiner, thought he would be a perfect partner on the stand. They did not let me down, and together with some of their newly qualified drivers and a student or two, we set up and were pleasantly surprised at the reaction and response we received. Not only from those attending the job fair, but also from engagement with both local community and council representatives. From this, another invitation was extended to attend another similar event the following month, and also a further one in late March organised by Lewisham Council.

At the second event in February, also held at Millwall FC's Community Hub, we were once again

LONDON TAXI PR TAKES THE KNOWLEDGE ON THE ROAD TO JOB FAIRS

busy on the stand, with enquiries, and flyers and Knowledge information books being handed out to interested parties.

The success of the first event bought about interest and a response from Transport for London

As a further result, an invitation to be a part of another Job Fair event, this time much larger in size and attendance, at Charlton Athletic FC in early March, was extended to us by representatives from the Department for Work and Pensions, (DWP), who had

predominantly women I might add, were coming over who seemed to be pulled in by our roller banner, which features the same image and message, 'I did it so can you', as per our pitchside banners. I thought it important to repeat this, as familiarity and

students himself. His passion and enthusiasm came across, and that is in part I personally feel to the great training and mentoring he has had from Courtney and Tom at the academy.

I must pay tribute also and acknowledge Franco Zaccaria (again another who has recently completed The Knowledge) and Liola Jemmott (a single mother who is close to completion of her studying), as well as Lisa Seymour, who runs her own women only mentoring class based at the LTDA HQ and attends the Taxi Academy to assist when she can. All played their part in making these fairs a resounding success and helped to draw people into the stand.

Personally, I think that this exercise is demonstrating that there is clearly interest in the Knowledge as a potential career, the pitchside boards campaign has helped put it into the minds of the public and the engagement that has arisen from it has helped to further increase the profile and presented us with the job fair opportunities that have also been beneficial. Three months into the year and three job fairs done!

Further opportunities are now being explored for presentations at other locations, as well as exploratory discussions concerning access to much needed funding for students.

As an end note, I would like to express my thanks to all those who support us, including those who stepped up with much needed additional funding to help get the pitchside boards campaign across the line, You know who you all are.

For more information on London Taxi PR and their campaigns, plus details on how to become either an individual or a business supporter, visit their website <http://londontaxipr.com>

For information about the Taxi Academy Knowledge School, visit: <https://thetaxi.academy>



(TfL) who subsequently sent along examiner Mark Gunning to be with us on the stand. Mark was able to see for himself the response and reaction we were getting from attendees, which I commented on and requested he feed back to the powers that be.

employer personnel there from the South London, Bexleyheath and Bromley areas.

This, as stated, was a much larger event with exhibitors and attendees more than double what we had seen before, and more and more people,

repetition will hopefully help get the message across and be more widely recognised, which it is doing. It was good to see some of those from the previous Millwall Community event visiting us again, and signing up for the Taxi Academy beginners class, and also taking our LTPR flyers promoting The Knowledge. By the end of the day, we were cleared out of all of those.

This time we were joined by another TfL examiner, Everton Thomas, who also featured on our initial Knowledge billboards campaign, and was appointed to the examiner role last year.

Again, Everton was able to see the reaction we were receiving, which was helped I might add by recently qualified driver Sandro Berishvili, another graduate of the Taxi Academy and who is now mentoring

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UBER TO MISS ELECTRIC CAR TARGET AFTER SADIQ KHAN CONGESTION CHARGE BLOW

Minicab app had said all drivers would have EVs by 2025 before introduction of £15 fee

Uber will miss a target to eliminate petrol cars from London as Sadiq Khan imposes the congestion charge on electric vehicles (EVs).

The minicab app said in 2018 that all its drivers in the capital would drive electric cars by the end of 2025.

However, its plans have been set back by London transport officials imposing the congestion charge on EVs, which has made drivers reluctant to switch. It is now unlikely to hit the goal.

Uber said that just 40pc of miles covered in London were travelled by electric cars. While this has doubled since 2023, it means the company's goal of only having electric cars on the road by the end of the year are expected to be out of reach.

Mr Khan confirmed last year that EVs – which currently exempt from the £15 daily congestion charge – will have to pay the fee after Christmas Day 2025. The charge could add up to more than £5,000 a year if paid every day.

Uber said that “the exemption for EVs from the congestion charge has been instrumental in making EVs attractive for drivers”.

The company does not own its minicabs, meaning drivers must be encouraged to invest in new cars for Uber to hit its goals.

Escaping the congestion

charge has been seen as one of the major benefits of driving EVs for drivers in London, encouraging them to switch from petrol and diesel.

Rising electricity prices, which have made public charging significantly more expensive, have also discouraged drivers from switching.

While London has led the company's move to electric cars, it is still far from the target of being fully electric by the end of the year. It is understood that the company will not kick drivers off the app for using petrol vehicles.

“London is a global leader in electric vehicle adoption thanks to bold policies from the Mayor of London,” an Uber spokesman said.

“We have made huge progress in recent years towards our goals and remain committed to continuing that momentum, but we know we cannot achieve it alone.

“The exemption for EVs from the congestion charge has been instrumental in making EVs attractive for drivers and we want to work constructively on a solution that maintains London's progress in switching to fully electric vehicles.”

Uber has more than 45,000 drivers in London. The company has unveiled a series of incentives designed to encourage drivers to switch to electric cars, including a 15p per mile “clean air fee” that raised funds to subsidise



EV purchases.

More recently, drivers have urged more by completing EV-only “Uber Green” trips and the company has made electric car trips cheaper than petrol ones in some cases, and redesigned its app to accommodate EV drivers that need to charge between trips.

Under its plan, London would be the first city to go all-electric. It has said journeys across Britain would follow by 2030 ahead of a worldwide 2040 target. All newly registered minicabs in London have had to be electric or low-emission hybrid since 2023.

Transport for London (TfL), which licenses Uber and levies the congestion charge, has said ending discounts for cleaner vehicles will “maintain the effectiveness” of the fee, which was brought in to reduce traffic as well as improve air.

It says that the ultra-low emissions zone (Ulez), an additional charge on polluting vehicles, has been an alternative way to tackle toxic air.

Mr Khan's decision has been criticised by businesses and campaign groups. Last year Octado and Openreach were among more than 40 businesses signing a letter warning of the “astronomical cost” of ending the exemption for electric vans.

The businesses said they had invested in electric vehicles, often taking on debt, believing they would benefit from the exemptions.

Uber last year announced a tie-up with Octopus Energy to install home chargers that allow drivers to benefit from cheap electricity prices.

However, many are unable to install them at home, meaning they would have to pay more expensive public charging rates.

The cost of using a public charger is 60pc higher than fuelling a car with petrol, according to the RAC.

Uber has said that its drivers in North America and Europe are embracing

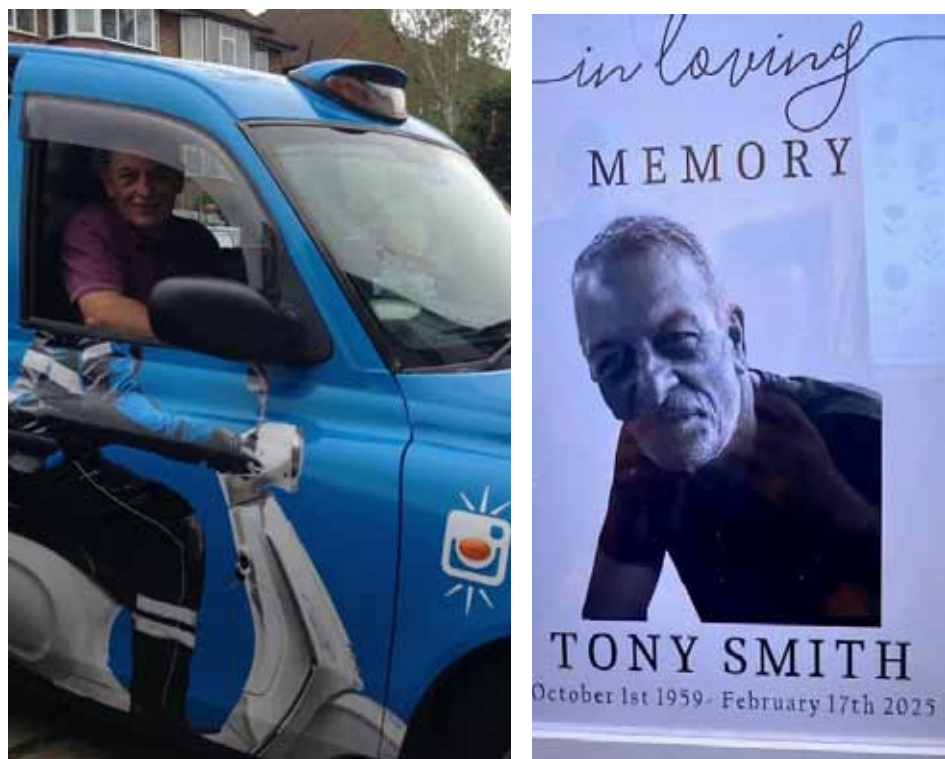
electric cars five times quicker than the average motorist. Last year it signed a tie-up with the Chinese EV maker BYD to put 100,000 of the company's cars on its service.

A spokesman for Transport for London said: “The Mayor and TfL have taken world-leading action to tackle the triple threats of air pollution, congestion and climate change.

“The congestion charge cleaner vehicle discount has been phased to reflect changes in vehicle technology since its introduction in 2019, following public consultation. It remains in place until the end of this year, when it will end in order to maintain the effectiveness of the congestion charge, which is in place to manage traffic and congestion in the heart of London. Through our policies, drivers will still be incentivised to switch to cleaner electric vehicles, rather than petrol and diesel.”

Courtesy of The Telegraph

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In Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo, Sadiq Khan has met his match

When, having promised during her 2020 re-election campaign she would never try for President of the Republic, Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo did in fact run two years later (as the Socialist Party presidential candidate), she scored 1.7 per cent of the national vote. In her own city, her score barely reached 2 per cent.

This may explain why, in a consultation she recently set up to ask whether Parisians wanted 500 more pedestrianised streets to be added to the 300 the city already numbers (most of them Hidalgo creations), she took as a major victory a turnout of 4.06 per cent

in which two-thirds of the Parisians who did vote – so about 3 per cent of the French capital's registered voters – approved her controversial measure.

Hidalgo, who's stepping down next year after a ten-year tenure in which the city lost on average 12,200 residents annually, decided early on to force a red-green agenda on the capital, mostly because she needed to keep the coalition (three shades of Green parties plus an active Communist group) happy. A number of "popular votes" similar to this last one were organised to force through higher taxes, treble the cost of parking (and then treble it again a couple of years

later just for SUVs), ban e-scooters and so on.

The low participation (the highest recorded was 7.5 per cent) is not a bug, it's a feature. The polling places vary; the "information meetings" take place in



remote arrondissements during office hours. This favours active supporters of the policies. (In this last vote, 16- to 18-year olds were allowed to vote, as they don't drive and don't remember the time BGT – Before Greta Thunberg). They equally approve of other decisions Hidalgo took against the advice of the

Government, such as closing down the banks of the Seine to traffic; reducing the speed on the Périphérique, Paris's ring road; and partly or entirely closing off large squares (including Place de la Concorde or Place du Trocadéro), creating traffic

almost straight line between the Place de la Bastille all the way to Place de la Concorde, with its Italianate arcades and majestic buildings overlooking the Tuileries Gardens and the Louvre. The summer bike traffic doesn't make up for the rest of the year where the avenue is largely empty, with a perpetually clogged up single bus lane.

On the Rue de Rivoli, as on other pedestrianised wider roads, shops and businesses simply close down. And a recent decision to close down the "ultra-centre" of the city to traffic on weekends and holidays, with a promise to close it the rest of the time soon.

Even Sadiq Khan never went that far: London respects business while Hidalgo's team openly celebrate "degrowth". As she prepares her "legacy", we fear the next "popular vote" the Mayor will cook up.

Courtesy of The Telegraph

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More for less? TfL hikes taxi licence fees again - while operators get off scot-free

Taxi drivers are once again being asked to dig deeper into their pockets as Transport for London (TfL) proposes a suite of licence and assessment fee increases—most of which hit the black cab trade directly.

The new proposals, set to be reviewed at the Finance Committee meeting on 9 April, will see taxi driver licence fees rise by more than 10%, with key assessments and tests also facing above-inflation hikes. While private hire (PH) drivers aren't spared, the balance of increases continues to suggest a system disproportionately loading costs onto the black cab sector.

The Main Changes – At a Glance

For Taxi Drivers:

- Taxi Driver Licence Fee: Up from £310 to £343 – a £33 increase (10.6%)
- Taxi Vehicle Licence Fee: Up from £300 to £343 – a £43 increase (14.3%)
- Taxi Driver Licence Application Fee: Up from £110 to £120 – a 9% increase
- Knowledge of London Fees:
 - Written exam: £200 to £225 (+£25)
 - One-off appearances payment: £400 to £425 (+£25)
- Total Knowledge cost: £650 (up from £600)

New Addition:

• **A £40 SERU assessment fee for all taxi applicants from October 2025—previously not required.**

For Private Hire Drivers:

- PHV driver licence fee remains frozen at £140
- PHV driver vehicle licence increases from £110 to £120
- Topographical assessment: £36 to £40
- SERU and ELR assessments:
 - SERU: Up from £16 to £30
 - ELR: Up from £36 to £40

Despite these increases, PHV drivers will still be paying less overall than taxi drivers,

and crucially, there are no changes to operator licence fees whatsoever.

Disproportionate or Justified?

For the black cab trade, the increases come on top of escalating vehicle costs, ongoing struggles with the TXE's known faults, and the rising burden of compliance with stringent environmental and accessibility standards.

The Knowledge of London—already a rigorous and expensive journey—will now cost £650 just in TfL examination fees, not counting maps, apps, petrol, or time off work.

From October, prospective taxi drivers will also be asked to take the same SERU test as

PHV drivers, at an extra cost of £40.

Yet, the PHV driver licence remains frozen at £140—a decision that seems politically calculated rather than based on actual enforcement or regulatory cost data.

And perhaps most glaringly of all—PHV operator fees remain untouched.

The Real Question: Why No Operator Fee Hike?

In a year where TfL has acknowledged significant increases in compliance costs, digital infrastructure needs, and testing expenses, one group remains conveniently protected:

private hire operators.

Uber, Bolt, FreeNow and other high-volume operators continue to pay licence fees that bear no relation to their passenger volume, enforcement demand, or regulatory burden. Unlike black cab drivers—who are individually licenced, tested, and tracked—these multinational companies are allowed to scale rapidly with minimal cost increases and, crucially, little accountability.

Why is it that the Knowledge Boy, putting in three years on the bike, is asked to pay more—while Silicon Valley-backed operators get a free ride?

Isn't it time TfL reviewed operator fees with the same intensity it applies to every black cab fare, plate, and test?

Agenda Item 3

Finance Committee

Date: 9 April 2025

Item: Taxi and Private Hire Licence Fees: Annual Review

This paper will be considered in public

1 Summary

1.1 The paper updates the Committee on the outcome of the recent taxi and private hire licence and assessment fees review and seeks approval of the proposals.

2 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the paper and approve:

- increasing the private hire vehicle driver licence fee from £310 to £343;
- freezing the private hire vehicle licence fee at £140;
- increasing the taxi driver licence fee from £300 to £343;
- increasing the taxi vehicle licence fee from £110 to £120;
- increasing the private hire vehicle driver first Topographical assessment fee from £36 to £40;
- increasing the private hire vehicle driver Topographical assessment resit fee from £16 to £30;
- increasing the private hire vehicle driver first English Language Requirement assessment fee from £36 to £40;
- increasing the private hire vehicle driver English Language Requirement assessment resit fee from £16 to £30;
- increasing the private hire vehicle driver first Safety, Equality and Regulatory Understanding assessment fee from £36 to £40; and
- increasing the private hire vehicle driver Safety, Equality and Regulatory Understanding assessment resit fee from £16 to £30.

Assessment Fees

Taxi / PHV	Type	Current Fee	Proposed Fee	£ change
Taxi applicants	Knowledge of London – written examination	£200	£225	£25
	Knowledge of London – appearances (one off payment)	£400	£425	£25
	Total	£600	£650	£50
Taxi applicants (and drivers)	SERU assessment from October 2025	N/A	£40	£40
	SERU (resit fee if required)	N/A	£30	£30
	Total	N/A	£40*	£40*
PHV applicants – first assessment	Topographical	£36	£40	£4
	SERU	£36	£40	£4
	ELR	£36	£40	£4
	Total	£108	£120	£12
PHV applicants – resit assessments (if required)	Topographical	£16	£30	£14
	SERU	£16	£30	£14
	ELR	£16	£30	£14
	Total	£16	£30*	£14*
PHV drivers – first assessment**	SERU	£36	£40	£4
	ELR	£36	£40	£4
	Total	£72	£80	£8
PHV drivers – resit assessments (if required)**	SERU	£16	£30	£14
	ELR	£16	£30	£14
	Total	£16	£30*	£14

THE WOKE OVERGROUND NAMES MAYOR SADIQ KHAN REJECTED

A lesbian bookshop that shut down in the 1990s and an obscure sub-genre of reggae were among the list of names for London Overground lines rejected by Sir Sadiq Khan.

Under last year's rebrand of the Overground, the mayor also rejected a plan to name one of its six new lines after a Second World War hero who saved the lives of hundreds of Jewish refugee children.

Each of the Overground's six lines was given a diversity-themed name last year by Sir Sadiq, prompting derision from Londoners who are paying an estimated £6.3 million for the production of new signs and logos.

The list, which was published by the London Centric news website, had been compiled by design agency DNCO, which said that it had been "asked to lead a citywide co-creation naming project by Transport for London".

"Now each of the six routes will have its own name and identity, celebrating London's diversity in the public realm, a pledge from Mayor Sadiq Khan," the agency said on its website.

However, critics branded the February 2024 move "virtue signalling", "patronising" and a "pointless gimmick".

Among the full list of names that Sir Sadiq



was asked to pick from was that of Sir Nicholas Winton, who saved 669 Jewish children from Nazi Germany's rampage across Europe in 1939.

Another suggestion put forward was Sisterwrite, an Islington bookshop known for its lesbian literary section and which closed down in 1993, as well as Lovers Rock, a reggae sub-genre that was exemplified by Janet Kay's 1979 hit single Silly Games.

Other rejected names in the list that Sir Sadiq picked the new Overground names from include 19th century footballer Jack Cother, who played for Watford FC in 1897. He is thought to be the UK's first Asian footballer.

Also in the list of

potential new Overground line names was the so-called Battle of Cable Street, a violent clash between far-Right and far-Left protesters in the East End in 1936. It led directly to the outlawing of political uniforms in Britain, denying the British Union of Fascists' infamous Blackshirts the ability to wear Nazi-inspired regalia.

TfL said that names of individuals were automatically rejected in favour of highlighting groups of people, London Centric reported.

The Telegraph previously reported on demands for an Overground branch to be named to honour the Irish "navvies" who dug the capital's canals (known in the 19th Century as "navigations", a name

that survives today on the Lee Navigation in north London) and built large portions of Britain's railways, having emigrated following the Irish potato famine of the 1840s.

Keith Prince AM, the City Hall Conservatives' transport spokesman, said: "Improving the representation of communities in London may be well-intentioned, but this £6 million splurge does nothing to improve the service on the Overground, or the wider TfL network, and indeed takes away from the money available to support vital community policing and housing needs.

A Transport for London spokesperson said: "The London Overground line naming project was one

of the largest customer-focused initiatives TfL has undertaken, helping to improve the experience for customers and celebrating London's diversity through giving each of the London Overground lines an individual name.

"A huge range of community and stakeholder engagement took place, and more than 60 potential name ideas were generated.

"We moved away from naming the lines after landmarks and individuals, following feedback as part of the engagement process. We are pleased that the six names have been so well received, and are now helping customers navigate across London more easily."

Courtesy of The Telegraph

A health message for all male cabbies

Hi Guys,

I hope you are well and below is an issue, I feel is important to share, that might just help you or someone you care about.

In 2024, Sir Chris Hoy – the Olympic cycling legend – was diagnosed with stage 4 prostate cancer. It would have come as a heart-breaking shock.. We all send him and his family our best wishes.

Sir Chris Hoye's diagnosis is a stark reminder to us that prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. The good news is: the earlier it's found, the easier it is to treat.

For over a decade, I've had a routine PSA blood test at my local GP surgery. PSA stands for prostate-specific antigen, a protein made by the prostate. Elevated levels can indicate something isn't right – not necessarily cancer, but it's worth looking into. That said, the PSA test isn't perfect. Around 1 in 7 men with a normal PSA reading may still have prostate cancer. Worse, 1 in 50 could have a fast-growing form that goes undetected by the PSA testing alone.

If you're over 45 and have a family history (father or brother) of prostate cancer, I strongly recommend booking a PSA test. And if you feel something is not right – even slightly – don't be afraid to push for additional tests like an ultrasound or MRI. Early detection genuinely saves lives.

Additionally, I want to take a moment to share something personal and important – not for sympathy, but in case it helps you or someone you know and especially relevant for us cabbies who regularly put off toilet breaks.

Last November, during my routine PSA check, I was told I had an enlarged prostate. Not cancerous, thankfully – but it was causing my bladder not to empty properly. While waiting for a procedure called RESUM (a steam treatment to reduce prostate tissue), things took a downturn. I contracted

combined, but much worse. I was hospitalised for five days, lost 4.5kg in weight, and was put on strong medication for a month. It took five weeks to fully recover.

The cause? My consultant said years of delaying loo breaks while driving the Taxi. As many of you know,

stretches, the bladder wall thickens, becomes weak and stops emptying properly, increasing the risk of infections like UTIs and serious kidney issues.

So, my message is simple:

- Get your PSA test from your GP – especially if

weekly email to cabbies that subscribe to it, look after their health, take regular breaks.

TfL require us to have regular medicals to see if we are fit to drive a cab, TfL are not helping matters by not assisting in this regard in hounding us if we stop for a pee.



Pyelonephritis – a kidney infection that started as a urinary tract infection (UTI) and spread to my kidney's

It was not good, I felt seriously unwell, and within 24 hours of a nurse taking blood samples at my doctor's surgery, I was admitted as an emergency at St Georges Hospital, waking up with drips of anti-biotics and glucose in both arms. The infection had overwhelmed my body – my red blood cells had turned white in a fight response to combat the Pyelonephritis infection. If not treated quickly it can in certain circumstances turn to Sepsis which is far more serious. It hit me like flu and COVID

it's a common issue, we all love a cup of tea or coffee, and that builds up in our bladder – toilets are hard to find, parking is a nightmare, and TfL hasn't exactly made things easier. Back in 2016, I was reported for parking on a night rank during daytime on Wardour Street to use the loo at Starbucks. I left a note on the dash, but that made no difference. A compliance office reported me to TfL resulting in a warning that is still held on my file today.

Here's the science: your bladder can hold about 500-600ml safely. But hold it in for too long and that goes up to 750ml or more as you increase fluid intake.. Over time, the bladder

you're over 45 or have a family history.

- Don't ignore symptoms or wait it out. If something feels wrong, get it checked.

- Go to the toilet when you need to. Do not put it off until after the next fare, then the next fare.

- Regularly holding it in, is doing long-term damage.

The LCDC and myself will be pushing TfL for better facilities—we all deserve basic dignity when working on the road and will be pushing for better working conditions such as toilet facilities.

TfL regularly post in its

Taxi drivers need more access to public conveniences without the fear of fines or warnings. Bus drivers have the benefit of Bus stands on many streets in the capital; We have all noticed how Busses "over rank" when there is no room on a Bus stand. Yet we run the risk of receiving a £130 PCN just to spend a penny

Take care of yourselves and don't put things off. Think of your health and your family. It might feel like a hassle having a PSA test, but it could save you a world of trouble later.

Be Lucky,

JimInLondon

Growing up, if I had any spare time, all I can remember doing really is playing football.

Whether kicking a ball against the sheds on my estate, and recreating a goal I had seen on the 'The Big Match' that Sunday afternoon or playing in a 30 a side game on a patch of waste ground (and somehow we always knew who was on our side?) or playing on the tarmac at my junior school, I was forever seemingly attached to a football.

When I progressed to the secondary school and started to grow physically, I somehow naturally gravitated towards being in goal. It felt natural being in there and in there I stayed right up until the age of 16 when pubs, the female gender and a growing love of music, beat the football into fourth place. Though I still attended live games, I lost interest in playing the game. Looking back though, I still remember

The Mumper of SE5



GLOVE STORY

my playing days with a lot of affection.

I didn't just play in goal then, I actually studied the art of goalkeeping. I watched any game I could and always made a point of examining the technique of the likes of Peter Shilton,

Ray Clemence at Liverpool, big Phil Parkes at QPR, Mervyn Day at West Ham, and Bryan King at Millwall before he moved on to Coventry.

I had a couple of pairs of the green cotton gloves, which were all you could get until the likes of Sepp Maier of (then) West Germany started to wear the large moulded latex gloves, which we all laughed at first and then slowly started to wear ourselves.

As I got older, I stood in goal and slowly realised that the position between the sticks was a thankless one really. If you made a decent save, you might get congratulated but there would always be someone

say, 'well, that's what he's there for' so praise was hard to come by.

But, if you made a horrendous howler, and in all honesty, I was prone to one or two a game, you got all sorts of dogs abuse aimed at you from all involved on your side.

It was like being a loner in a team. And I think that's why I, perversely, liked playing there. Go figure.

So, when I read recently of a forthcoming book called 'Glove Story, the number 1 book for every goalkeeper, past and present' by Rob Stokes, Derek Hammond and Gary Silke, I knew I had to investigate that further.

It has some fantastic

photos of some of my heroes back then, plus reminders of some great old goalkeeping characters – Hello John 'Budgie' Burridge – and focuses on a fantastic collection of keeper memorabilia mainly from the collection of Rob Stokes, a Portsmouth fan, who impressively played 334 games in goal for Waterlooville, where he also scored two goals – both penalties.

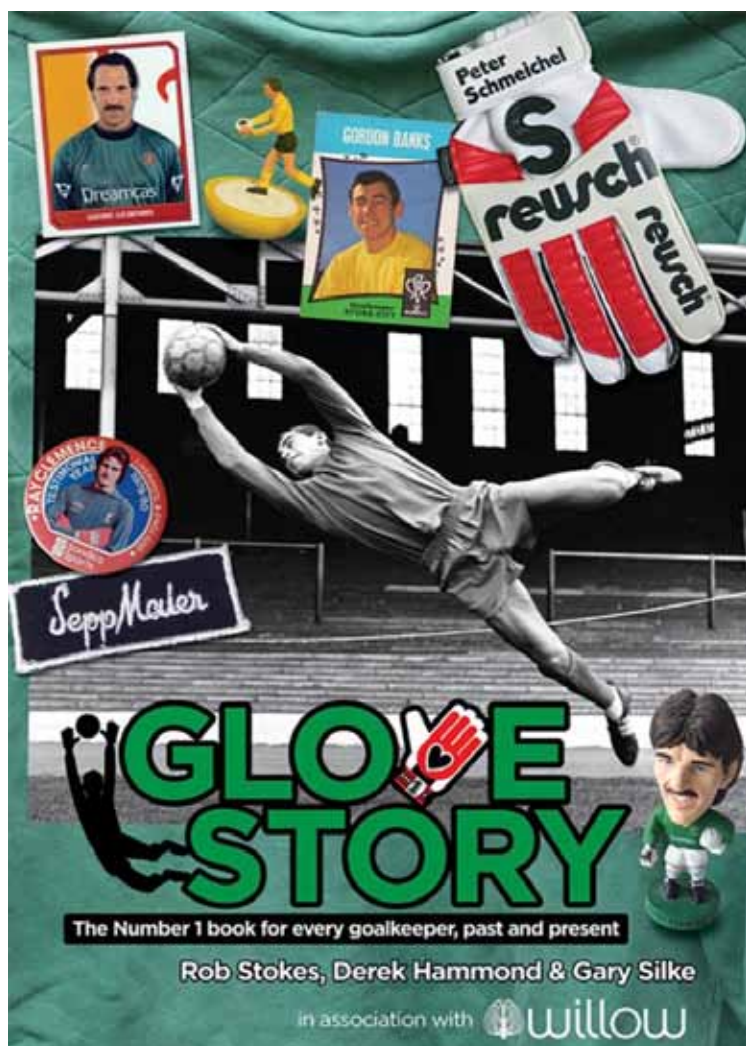
It also reveals the secret goalkeeping lives of Sherlock Holmes creator Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and revolutionary Che Guevara. Who knew?

If you ever spent anytime with any fondness in goal at any level, I highly recommend you get yourself a copy.

As I mentioned earlier, I retired from football when 'outside interests' took over. Well, a few years ago I had a call one day inviting me to play in a promotional game for kit supplier Umbro. My first instinct was to say no, but when it was explained to me that the game was being played at Wembley Stadium with all kit supplied, I soon changed my mind.

Of course I went in goal.

In truth, I was totally knackered after 10 minutes. But the little kid in me who played all those years for various teams on tarmac, cinder and dog shit covered grass, was smiling from ear to ear...

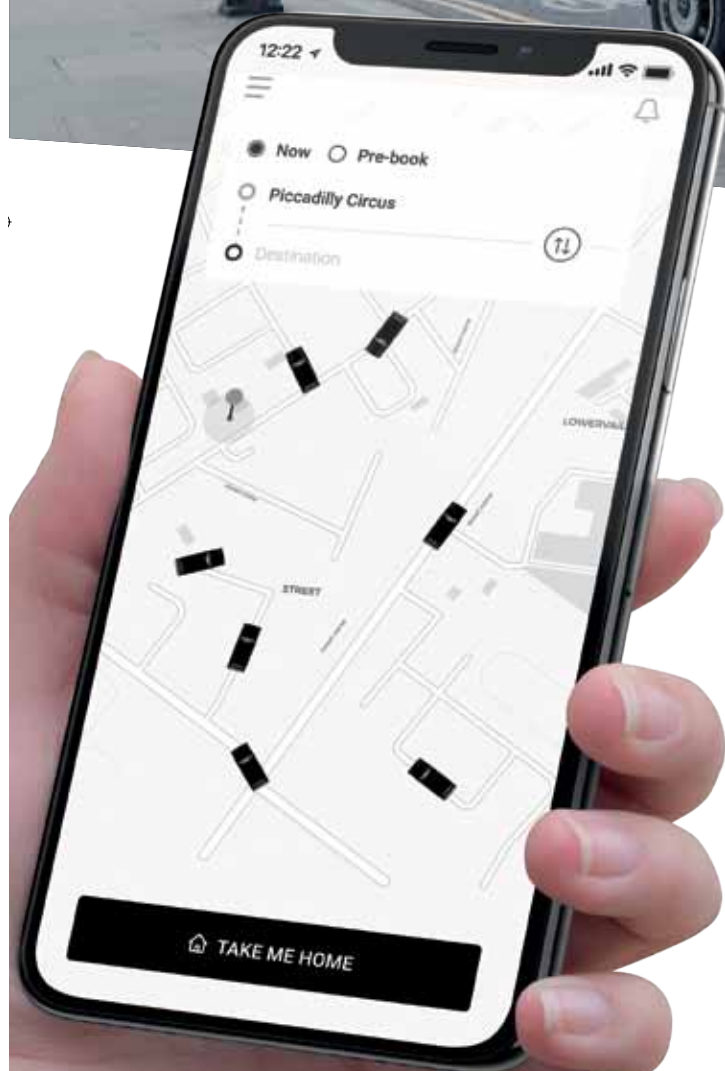
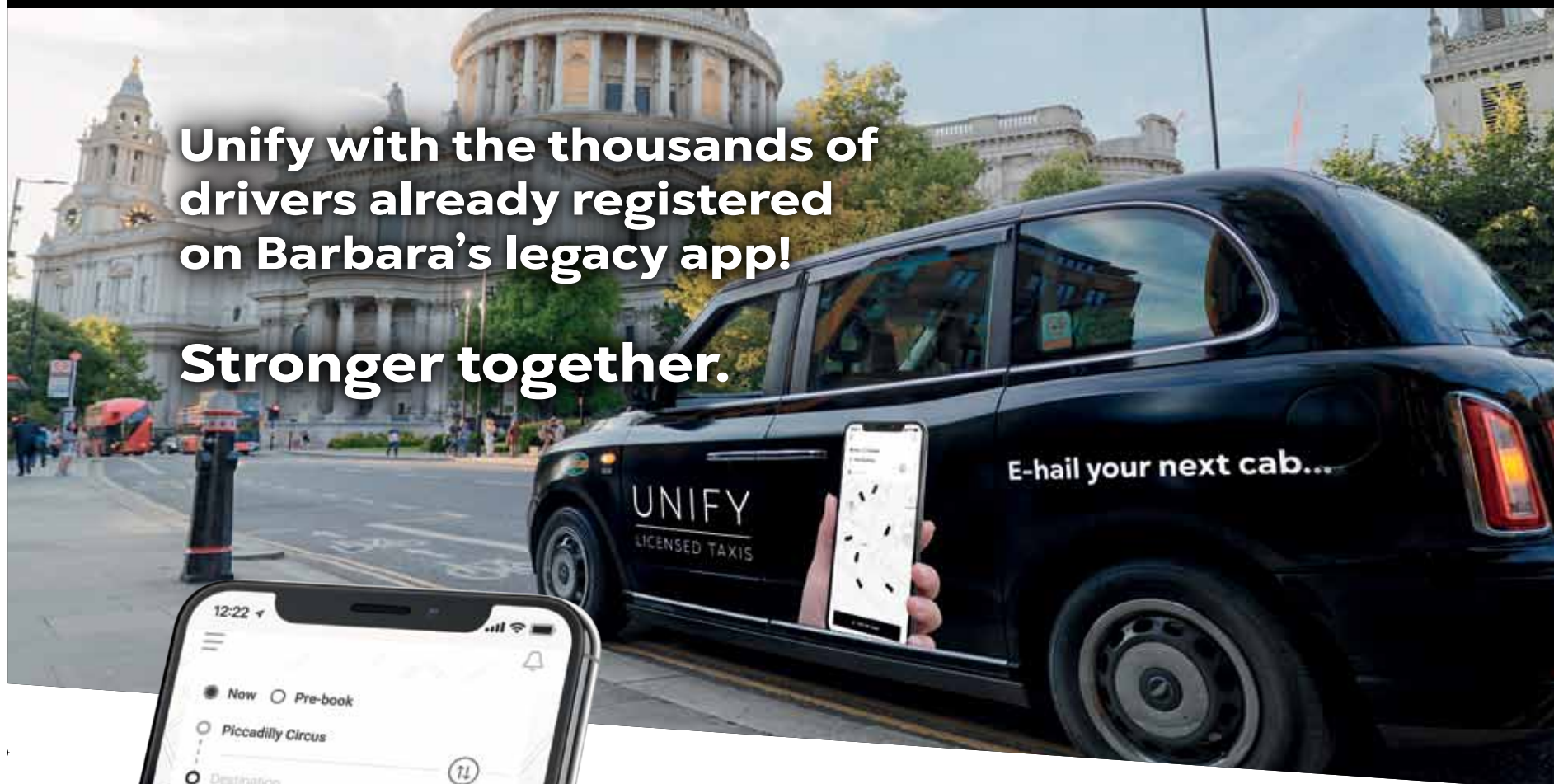


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