





# London

**JOIN TODAY!**

 0207 432 1600  [Join@comcab.com](mailto:Join@comcab.com)

More trade stories than all the others put together

Issue 305 June 2025

Sales • Servicing  
Warranty • Bodyshop





FIND US IN  
DARTFORD AT  
**DA1 1JD** [www.ascottsgroup.co.uk](http://www.ascottsgroup.co.uk)  
020 8692 1122

**TAXI &  
PRIVATE HIRE  
PLAN**

7+7=0



**Pages 3, 4 & 5**

**WHY THE  
MAYOR'S  
TAXI PLAN**

**DOESN'T ADD UP**

## INSIDE



**ALBANY TAXI CHARITY  
TRIP TO HASTINGS**

Page 12




**WELLINGTON PLACE SHELTER  
THE CHAPEL IS REOPENED**

Page 22



**JAMES COOK WAS ADORED  
BY ALL IN BOXING'S CIRCLES**


Page 27



Call to see how much you can save:  
**0208 691 9691**

The World's leading Taxi drivers  
deserve the best Insurance partner

Visit Us: Quotax Insurance, Unit 7 Avery Way, Questor, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1JZ  
On Site @Ascott Cab Company



[www.quotax.net](http://www.quotax.net)





Published by  
The London Cab Drivers' Club Ltd.  
China Walks, Suite 111,  
Black Prince Road, London, SE1 7SJ

Telephone: 020 7394 5553

E-mail for membership enquiries:  
[thelcdc@gmail.com](mailto:thelcdc@gmail.com)  
Web: [www.lcdc.cab](http://www.lcdc.cab)

Editor: Grant Davis

The Badge is distributed free to the  
Licensed London Cab Trade.

For advertising enquiries please contact the office  
on 020 7394 5553 or E-mail: [thelcdc@gmail.com](mailto:thelcdc@gmail.com)

All advertising in The Badge is accepted under  
our terms and conditions. These are available at the  
LCDC office. Before entering into any commitment,  
financial or otherwise, always remember to seek  
professional advice.

The views expressed in this publication are not  
necessarily those of the Editor or of the Management  
Committee of the London Cab Driver's Club.

Contributions for publication are welcomed and  
should be sent to the Editor at the above address.

Printed by Iliffe Print. T: 01223 656500

## MAYOR'S TAXI PLAN HAS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

While there are still concerns surrounding the Mayor's PH & Taxi Plan, which we've thoughtfully reviewed on pages 3, 4, and 5, it's clear that there remains room for improvement in delivering real benefits for the taxi trade.

Over the years, I've had the opportunity to engage with TfL and various trade groups, all with the shared goal of creating a stronger, fairer future for drivers. Although progress hasn't always met expectations, these conversations continue to be crucial in moving things forward.

On a much brighter note, I recently had the pleasure of joining the Albany Taxi Charity trip to Hastings. The dedication and generosity shown by the drivers behind the scenes was truly inspiring - hats off to all of you! (More on page 12).

This month's issue of The Badge also features some excellent contributions from members Scott Kimber and our new Heathrow Airport Rep, Gary Long - both pieces are definitely worth your time.

And for some great news - we've just received a fresh batch of shiny new lanyards here at LCDC Towers! Membership packs for all new members will be sent out very soon.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

**Grant Davis, Chair, LCDC**



**E16**  
RENTALS

**TX4s TO RENT**

- Ascotts maintained
- Pay by cash/bank/online
- Mercs also available

**CALL US TODAY**

**07957 465423**  
[e16-taxirentals.co.uk](http://e16-taxirentals.co.uk)

## PAYTON'S SOLICITORS

Suite 12, Temple Chambers,  
3, Temple Avenue,  
London EC4Y 0HP

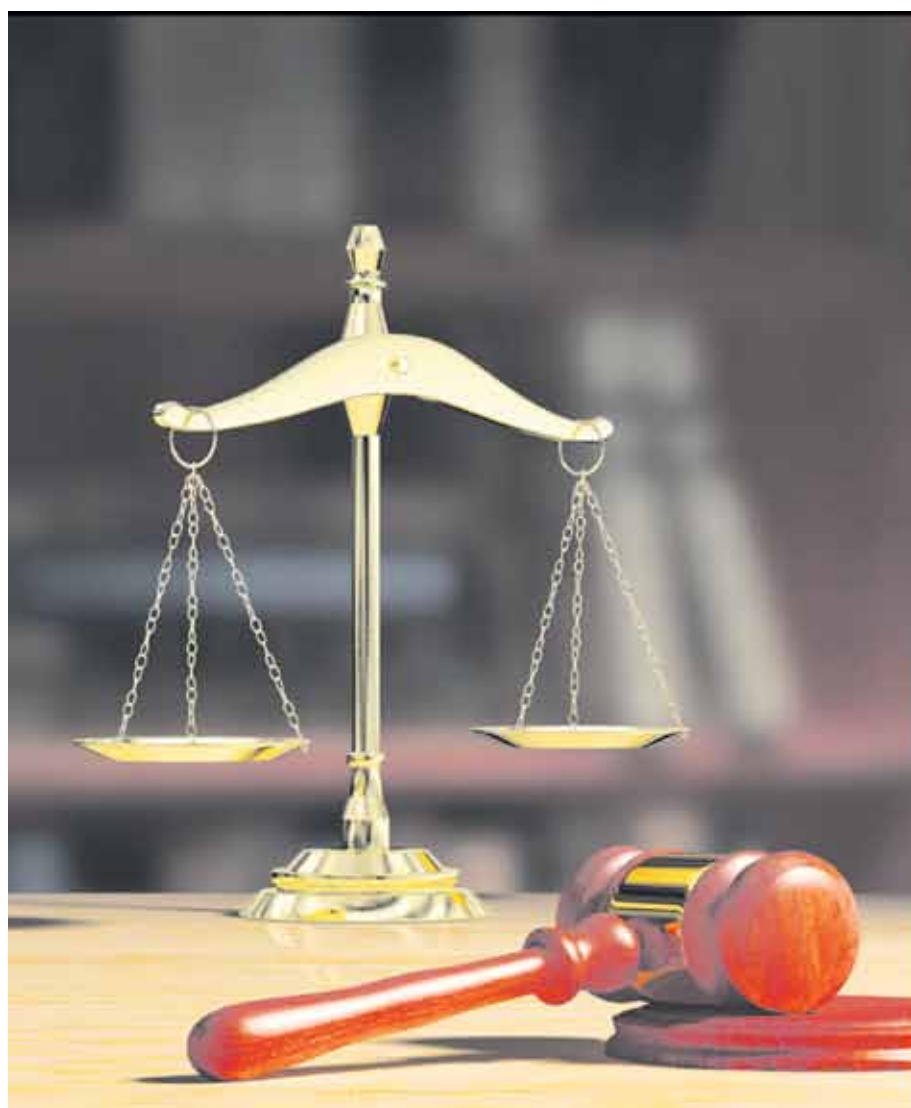
We at the LCDC don't often bang our own drum when it comes to helping our members with their legal troubles. A lot of the cases which come our way with members are quite sensitive and we respect their wishes to keep things in house and out of the paper which I can fully appreciate.

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**  
**FAX: 0207 405 1991**



# PLAN FOR THE WORST?

## LCDC runs the rule over TfL's 'action plan'...

The Taxi and private hire Action plan started with the words: 'We want to attract brilliant, diverse applicants who are looking to

make a positive contribution to London'. There is nothing in the plan where TfL commits to promote the taxi trade!

### Action 1

We will take steps to halt the decline of London's taxi trade to ensure Londoners continue to have access to a safe, reliable and high-quality taxi service both now and in the future, through the following:

- Our general policy is to allow taxis access in all bus lanes, except where specific safety or bus operational issues make this impractical. Exceptions to the general policy include where there are, in our view, safety, operational and/or Mayor's Transport Strategy reasons to limit access. Where an exception arises or is likely to arise, we will table discussion of proposals at regular stakeholder forums unless it is impractical to do so. Boroughs are encouraged to consider access for taxis to all streets for which they are responsible and to which buses have access in their areas

### Action 1

'Boroughs are encouraged to consider access for taxis to all streets for which they are responsible and to which buses have access in their areas'

This is welcomed, though we find it puzzling when TfL themselves restrict access in Bishopsgate/A10. It also doesn't address the real issue of access. The wide increase of low traffic neighbourhoods mean longer journeys and costs for passengers, especially those with disabilities.

### Action 2

'We will ensure taxis and private hire vehicles can safely access the kerbside where appropriate, by:

- Updating our design guidance within the relevant parts of the

streets toolkit by the end of 2026/27 to ensure that kerbside access for taxi and private hire passengers is considered in street scheme design, where appropriate'

Are TfL going to implement numerous drop off/pick up zones solely for taxis and PHVs? Unlikely. Effectively taxis will be the same as general traffic. It's just lip service.

### Action 4

'Considering a range of measures to further enhance passenger safety, such as restarting the taxi driving and wheelchair assessments and introducing a driving assessment for private hire drivers. These measures will be explored through consultation where appropriate in 2026/27'

*Continues overleaf...*

### Action 4

We will continue our work to reduce road danger and enhance our understanding of taxi and private hire vehicle collisions by:

- Considering a range of measures to further enhance passenger safety, such as restarting the taxi driving and wheelchair assessments and introducing a driving assessment for private hire drivers. These measures will be explored through consultation where appropriate in 2026/27



# THIS PLAN DOES NOTHING TO

TfL have already consulted on advanced driving assessments for private hire drivers, the majority of consultation respondents were in favour. It's just kicking the can down the road.

## Action 6

'Reviewing and updating our guidance and requirements on in-vehicle CCTV in taxis and private hire vehicles in 2025/26 and from 2026/27, giving further consideration to mandating in-vehicle CCTV, which may include consultation on proposals'

As part of DfT's new statutory standards, TfL have already consulted on CCTV, with the majority of respondents in favour. Again TfL are just kicking the can.

## Action 7

'We will call on the Government to make the legislative changes

required to give us the powers we need to make taxi and private hire services even safer. Changes required include:

Introducing measures to address cross-border hiring issues to ensure that all operators providing services in London are subject to the same safety and security checks as local operators'

This will not solve the issue of cross border hiring. In fact it looks like TfL are happy to have vehicles not licensed by TfL operating in the capital, adding to congestion, drivers with no topographical knowledge of the city etc.

## Action 10

'Engaging with drivers and passengers, and working collaboratively with private hire operators and taxi booking companies to investigate the scale and impact of

bookings being cancelled; sharing information on the impact of cancelled bookings on passengers with drivers, private hire operators and taxi booking companies; and investigating new solutions that support the taxi trade and private hire industry to manage this challenge, commencing in 2025/26'

Private hire operators are principal in PH services, drivers sign terms and conditions. PH operators totally have it within their ability to restrict drivers from refusing or cancelling PH booking allocations.

## Action 11

'We will ensure taxi and private hire drivers have improved access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure by:

Continuing to inform TfL, London boroughs and neighbouring local authorities' public electric vehicle infrastructure delivery to meet taxi and private hire driver charging needs'

## INFORMING doesn't ENSURE !!

Taxi dedicated charging is woefully inadequate and expensive. There are currently 9083 ZEC taxis. We have approximately the same low number of dedicated charge points (80) as when the ZEC fleet stood at 4000!

Future taxi dedicated charge points don't even get a mention in London's 2030 electric vehicle infrastructure strategy. TfL will not commit or inform the 2030 target for dedicated charge points.

## Action 14

'it is vital we use this positive momentum to continue reducing tailpipe emissions as soon as possible'

'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

## Action 6

We will continue to enhance safety and security standards and best practice for passengers and drivers by:

- Reviewing and updating our guidance and requirements on in-vehicle CCTV in taxis and private hire vehicles in 2025/26 and from 2026/27, giving further consideration to mandating in-vehicle CCTV, which may include consultation on proposals

## Action 7

We will call on the Government to make the legislative changes required to give us the powers we need to make taxi and private hire services even safer. Changes required include:

- Introducing measures to address cross-border hiring issues to ensure that all operators providing services in London are subject to the same safety and security checks as local operators

# ADDRESS TRADE'S DECLINE

introduce a zero-emissions (at the tailpipe) licensing requirement for taxi and private hire vehicles in the future'

Firstly there is no current taxi vehicle approved that could fulfill the proposed requirement. Secondly this proposal only creates uncertainty, it's clear by the wording TfL wish to reduce emissions further, when the taxi trade has already made huge

sacrifices. Euro 6 licensees are rightly concerned, this will have an impact on values and the ability to reinvest.

Other proposals not mentioned are just something you would expect of any licensed authority, rehash of current policy or just lip service.

This action plan does nothing to address the reasons for the taxi trade decline.

## Action 10

We will enhance the inclusivity and accessibility of London's taxi and private hire services by:

- Working with London Councils to review the Taxicard service to improve the service for members, by the end of 2026/27
- Engaging with drivers and passengers, and working collaboratively with private hire operators and taxi booking companies to investigate the scale and impact of bookings being cancelled; sharing information on the impact of cancelled bookings on passengers with drivers, private hire operators and taxi booking companies; and investigating new solutions that support the taxi trade and private hire industry to manage this challenge, commencing in 2025/26

## Action 11

We will ensure taxi and private hire drivers have improved access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure by:

- Continuing to inform TfL, London boroughs and neighbouring local authorities' public electric vehicle infrastructure delivery to meet taxi and private hire driver charging needs
- Continuing to work with boroughs to address parking and/or charging in taxi-dedicated charge bays on their roads

## 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



# COLTS CABS LTD

96/99 DUNBRIDGE STREET LONDON, E2 6JG



- Central London location
- Back up and support

**TXE taxis to rent**

We are still renting a limited amount of diesel taxis

TELEPHONE

020 7613 0684 | 020 7613 0630

# Lime and Forest fined £33,000 in TfL crackdown on abandoned e-bikes

Lime and Forest have been sent more than £30,000 in penalty fines under the latest crackdown on abandoned e-bikes in London.

Transport for London has issued hundreds of £100 penalty tickets to the two main operators of dockless e-bikes in the capital after ending a "grace period" when only warning letters were sent.

By May 15, a total of 333 penalties had been issued – with a total "face value" of £33,300, though the cost is reduced to £50 if paid within a fortnight.

This follows TfL's decision in November last year to sent out a new enforcement policy for dockless bikes parked or abandoned on



the capital's network of Red Routes – the main arterial routes through London.

TfL uses CCTV to gather evidence of e-bikes obstructing the road or pavement. Photos are sent to the firms, urging them to move the offending bikes.

The details of the TfL crackdown emerged as a third e-bike hire firm, Voi, said London should follow Paris and introduce a city-wide set of rules on dockless bikes.

This has been promised for more than a year but

TfL and the 33 boroughs have yet to announce details – meaning that each borough can set its own rules on the number of e-bikes on the streets, and what operators are required to do to tackle badly-parked bikes.

Last week, Lime and Voi both won contracts to provide 6,000 hire bikes in Paris.

Voi, which recently has set up pilot e-bike schemes in west London, said the lack of regulations in London left the capital "falling behind in the micromobility revolution sweeping across Europe".

It called for a pan-London tender to be issued for three firms to operate in London under the same

city-wide rules.

A Lime spokesperson said: "We take the issue of poor parking very seriously and we're working closely with TfL to help keep London's streets accessible for everyone."

Will Jansen, Forest's chief operating officer, said: "Dockless e-bikes are transforming the way Londoners get around - offering an affordable, sustainable, and convenient way to travel across the capital."

"As demand continues to grow, we are working closely with TfL to improve parking compliance and ensure the benefits of dockless e-bikes reach every corner of London."

*Courtesy of The Standard*

**ev SERVICE HUB**  
ELECTRIC VEHICLE REPAIRS • SERVICING • CHARGING

**EXCLUSIVE OFFER for**  
**TAXI Drivers**  
(Out of warranty cabs only)

- ✓ Full Annual 25k mile Service
- ✓ FREE MoT included with Service
- ✓ Full NSL/TfL Licensing Check

**Only £225<sup>+VAT</sup>**  
(quote 1830004)

**0204 553 0957**

**SAVE £100+ NOW**

LEVC Approved Dealership | Genuine Parts | Fast Service | Fully Trained Technicians | ERAD Specialists  
FREE Taxi Charge | FREE Coffee | Comfortable Waiting Area | Tottenham Trading Park, Edmonton N17 0QJ

**LEVC**



# The Anderson Shelter's TAXI LEAKS

## TfL, NOT FIT FOR PURPOSE

On Wednesday 11th June, TfL's board meeting, chaired by Sadiq Khan, had to be abandoned when private hire drivers turned up en masse and disrupted proceedings.

The drivers hurled abuse at the board members after the death of a driver, they claim died because of holdups to his licence renewal.

PH driver Robert Dale 65, had applied for his new licence back in August of 2024 ahead of its expiry in October. But it never arrived.

As laid out in a letter to me from Leon Daniels, on behalf of Peter Hendy, Private Hire drivers (unlike London Licensed Taxi Drivers) cannot work after the expiry of their licence and have to wait until they receive a renewal before they can continue working.

His family say that father of two Mr Dale, had a heart attack caused by high stress, anxiety and a feeling of helplessness, after TfL's three month delay in renewing his license.

In desperation, Mr Dale fired off an email to TfL early in October saying that due to the delay, he couldn't earn a living, couldn't pay his bills,

couldn't pay his mortgage and got to the stage where he couldn't buy food to feed his family. He went on to say "you, as an organisation, should be ashamed of yourselves."

Mr Dale collapsed and died from a massive heart attack on 10th of November. Ironically, his license renewal arrived at his home on the 27th November.

TfL Commissioner Andy



Lord and Chief Operating Officer Claire Mann offered apologies at the board meeting for the delays. Ms Mann went on to apologise to all private hire drivers who have suffered from delays.

TfL's Director of Licensing and Regulation Helen Chapman, later issued a statement saying "We are very sorry for any upset caused to Mr Dales family, by our handling of this case."

She attributed the current

delays to new licence processing software, introduced in February of 2024.

Although this is a sad case and TfL have promised to fix the delays, they have done absolutely nothing to deal with the delays to London's Licensed Taxi Driver renewal, which have been going on for well over a decade.

But at least in our case, as

long as we have supplied TfL with all relevant details, application and payment... under the Transport Act 1985 section 17, subsection 7... our old license stays valid until we are in possession of the renewal or you receive notice of a revocation.

It's a disgrace that these delays of Taxi bill renewals have been going on so long and TfL have made no effort to amend the delays.

Of course there are drivers commenting on social

media saying they got their renewal in a couple of weeks, but there are many who have had to wait months past expiry date.

The system for renewals has become too complicated under TfL and needs a complete shake up within the licensing department.

The delays have been a huge factor in older drivers early retirement, myself included. After the trouble I had with my last two renewals, both going months over the expiry date and so I decided to call it quits after nearly 50 years in the trade.

Hats off to the Private hire Union who arranged this protest that got the board meeting abandoned and well done to the drivers who turned up to support the action.

## TAXI LEAKS EXTRA BIT:

815,345 drivers were caught breaking Sadiq Khans new 20mph speed limit in Greater London in 2024, up 85,000 in a year.

In the run up to the last Mayoral election, when I was canvassing for Susan Hall who had announced on many occasions she would scrap the new 20mph speed limits, do away with LTNs and also most of the

unused cycle lanes (such as the one on Park Lane), I was bombarded with comments like:

"I couldn't vote for a Tory."

"I don't trust a Tory."

"She'd say anything to get elected."

"She's a liar."

Susan also came up against many trolls in the shape of a group called Hope Not Hate, who absolutely destroyed her on social media, calling her a far right racist.

I've know Susan for many years and she has always been a huge supporter of London's Black Cab trade. She was instrumental in getting the Taxi rank reinstated in Station Road Harrow after the council had removed it.

She has gone on record many times supporting the trade, and always puts our reputation forward when talking about women's safety, especially when traveling alone at night.

But too many listened to the trolls and didn't vote for her.

So... if you were one of her knockers, then you have only got yourselves to blame and you got what you deserved... another 4 years of Khan.



# L.C.D.C LEADERS NOT FOLLOWERS

## Stop talking about it and JOIN!



# Ford MAXiCab

100% ELECTRIC, ZERO EMISSION BLACK CAB



All London taxis must be  
zero emissions from 2030?

Will your taxi meet the  
requirement?

The all-new **MAXiCab** is  
100% electric. A zero emission  
black Cab for London.

**It's time to choose change**



An exclusive partnership between Ford & Cab Direct  
Visit [cabdirect.com/maxicab](https://cabdirect.com/maxicab) or call 0800 587 9679





# A growing concern: toxic conduct and online bullying in the taxi trade

By Christopher Johnson

**In recent years, much has been said about the challenges facing the taxi trade—licensing pressures, app-based competition, regulatory inconsistencies. But one issue remains unspoken in many quarters: the toxic culture developing within some corners of our own trade, particularly online.**

Social media groups and trade forums were once valuable spaces for support, organising, and professional exchange. Increasingly, however, they have become platforms for abuse, misinformation, and intimidation. Constructive debate has given way to name-calling, character attacks, and even defamatory claims. It's not uncommon now to see drivers labelled "mentally ill," "unfit," or "dangerous"—not by regulators or journalists, but by other drivers.

In my own case, I have had to issue formal cease and desist notices in response to persistent online abuse. This included personal comments, insults regarding my mental health, and deliberate attempts to undermine my credibility within the industry. These attacks were not in the heat of debate, but part of a pattern of targeted provocation and harassment. I have raised these incidents with Transport for London (TfL), as I believe such conduct has serious implications not only for individual well-being but also for public confidence in the licensed trade.

The concern is not simply about hurt feelings. When drivers use trade platforms to mock, threaten, or intimidate others—

particularly those raising legitimate issues—it creates a culture of silence and fear. It deters whistleblowing. It marginalises those who speak out against wrongdoing. It damages the trade from within.

But professionalism is not weakness. Holding our peers to account is not "cancel culture." It's regulation. It's safeguarding. And it's how we retain public trust in a licensed trade with strict obligations—both on and off the road.

within professional trade spaces, is too often overlooked.

There is a growing argument that TfL needs to step up and take online harassment and abusive behaviour more seriously.

end, I believe TfL should commission an independent culture review of the taxi and private hire industry—just as the London Fire Brigade did in 2022, following allegations of bullying, discrimination, and a toxic internal culture.

The Fire Service culture review, led by Nazir Afzal, uncovered a deeply troubling environment of misogyny, racism, and abuse within a public institution that had long prided itself on integrity and courage. The transparency and boldness of that review set a precedent. If a service like the LFB could confront its flaws in the interest of accountability and reform, so too should the taxi and private hire sector.

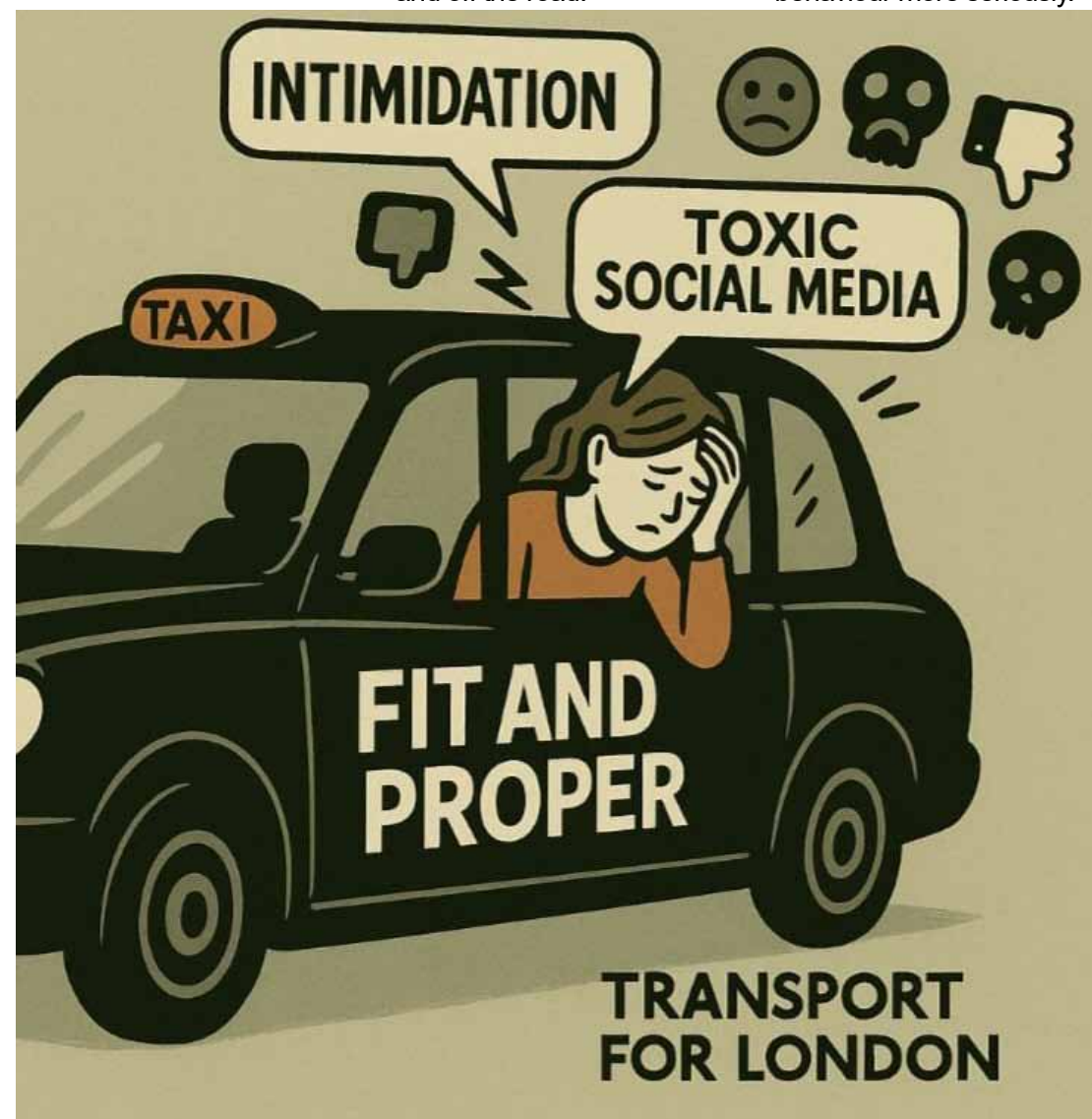
The taxi trade has undergone immense technological and regulatory change in recent years. But culture has lagged behind. TfL must now ask: Is the conduct and culture of this trade fit for the public we serve?

## A Call for Change

The taxi trade should be a profession built on trust, respect, and service—not fear, mockery, and online hostility. If we want our profession to be respected, we must ensure it behaves respectably—not just in the cab, but in our digital spaces, meetings, and union branches.

TfL must act. Drivers must speak up. And trade bodies must stop turning a blind eye to the damage being done from within.

It is time to lift the standards—and the culture—of the trade, before it corrodes the public trust we still hold.



Worryingly, some of this behaviour has gone unchecked by those with the authority to intervene. In some cases, individuals with significant followings or influence use their platforms to stir animosity rather than encourage dialogue. When challenged, they often dismiss objections as "snowflakery"—a word used to invalidate legitimate complaints by painting them as weakness.

## TfL's Role in Safeguarding Standards and Culture

Transport for London is not merely a licensing authority. It is the regulator of a public-facing industry with statutory and moral obligations to uphold high standards of conduct, safety, and inclusion. TfL already disciplines drivers for physical or verbal misconduct in public—but online conduct, particularly

Where drivers are using public forums to threaten, insult, or harass fellow licensees, TfL should consider whether such behaviour breaches the "fit and proper person" test—a fundamental requirement of licensing.

Moreover, TfL must move beyond reactive enforcement and take proactive responsibility for the culture of the trade it regulates. To that



# DRIVE INTO SUMMER

with our

## Pick 'N' Mix

deal on new TX Taxis



**What will you choose?  
Your deal, your way!**

**ASCOTTS**  
GROUP  
**020 8692 1122**



FIND US IN  
**DA1  
1JD**



# Albany Taxi Charity trip to Hastings

Waking up on Monday the 9th June (earlier than normal) and checking the weather on my phone before putting on the kettle and making a cuppa, I found myself smiling in the mirror, having a shave thinking about the day ahead.

If you have never taken part on the Albany Taxi Charity trip to Hastings, then you really should consider it for next year, as it's a day where you find yourself not only feeling good, but also being proud of this cab trade. Once again, unsung actions, but unwavering in helping those less fortunate than themselves.

I must say pulling into the car park at Charlton FC and seeing a multitude of cab drivers laughing, joking around whilst sticking balloons and various stickers to their cabs was a truly heartwarming sight.

Charlton FC put on a very hearty English breakfast for the drivers (it was lovely, thank you the Addicks) and the tables were buzzing with taxi stories being told and "faces" strolling into the canteen at various speeds. After breakfast and a trip (or two) to the toilets (it's my age) we all proceeded downstairs to double check our taxis and meet the families and children who we would be taking to Hastings.

There was a buzz and you could sense the levels of excitement build for both drivers and our passengers - with a motorcycle escort we left the car park beeping our horns and swept onto



the A2, a cavalcade of loveliness.

After a quick pit stop at Bewl Water, we made good time getting to Hastings and once there we parked up and the fun really began for everyone. It was lovely to see the rush to the bumper cars and haunted house

rides at the funfair... but that was just the drivers!

Seriously, our passengers enjoyed the rides, ice creams and also some of the most tasty fish and chips I have had in a long time.

Around 4pm, we all made our way back to the carpark,



our passengers turned up, some falling asleep and some tearing into candy floss and sticks of rock, what a day.

After dropping my passengers home in Bromley and Lewisham I made it home, telling my wife not to "do dinner" as I was full of scampi and chips plus several ice creams and treats. I then took my place on the sofa, finishing the day off as it had started... having a cuppa and continually smiling... not a bad way of spending a Monday.

Thank you all at the Albany Taxi Charity for being absolutely fantastic.

Grant Davis

The first event started as a one off to Margate with 72 children and 36 brightly decorated cabs. These Taxi Drivers started to meet regularly in premises in the Albany Road, hence the name of the charity.

Over the coming years more and more Taxi Drivers wanted to join in. The Charity decided that there could be two trips a year, one to Margate and then another to Hastings, so in 1992 our first trip to Hastings was organised by Bob Baylis, Gina Sexton and George Payne and the 1066 L.V.A. Publicans who raise funds at their pubs throughout the year, now sponsor this event.

In 2004 the charity received a letter from another charity that caters for the needs of children from Chernobyl, Russia, who visit England, asking about these children visiting the seaside - the Heme Bay Catholic Club offered to sponsor the whole day.

Over the years the Albany Charity have taken children with special needs and their carers to places: Thorpe Park, Chessington and visits to Pantomimes. Besides outings the Albany Charity have also bought Televisions, Stereos, Sound Equipment, Karaoke machines, Trikes, Wheelchairs and Special Bikes for these schoolkids.



By Scott Kimber,  
LCDC Rep

This month marks my 27th anniversary as one of London's finest. Nine bills, a medical, and nearly three decades behind the wheel — and yet, I feel like I'm witnessing the slow destruction of a part of Britain's heritage from within.

For the first couple of years, I didn't even put on at Heathrow — just straight into town at 3pm, working into the early hours, with the usual stops at the Oak or Piccolo under Marble Arch. Five days a week. Saturday off. One day midweek for a bit of life. There was a real sense of togetherness back then — plenty of laughs, graft, and mutual respect.

When I finally started working the airport, that sense of unity was magnified a hundredfold. We were part of something bigger. And without us drivers, let's be honest — London couldn't function and Heathrow's taxi

# DIVIDED, WE WILL FALL

operations would be nothing.

Fast forward to today, and all I see are forces trying to pull us apart — some for money, some for status, and some just because they can.

There's talk of a new group to bring all the trade orgs together. Sounds great, doesn't it? But in reality? It just looks like another layer of bureaucracy. More hot air. Another platform for the same people who've been selling us out for years — just now sitting around a bigger table.

Meanwhile, other orgs are fragmenting the trade even more, launching different "divisions" for different communities. That's not unity. That's branding. And it's dangerous. We should be pushing the message that we are all the same, showing a united front. Some want to dictate how we spend



our money and who we do business with — interfering in drivers' expenses instead of fighting to give us more time with the people we love. Others have jumped into bed with private corporations, even our competitors, just to keep their balance sheets looking healthy — with no thought for our falling incomes or rising pressures.

What's happening to our trade mirrors what's happening in this country at large. For years we trusted a

few to do right by the many. And, just like in politics, people may have started off with good intentions — but once the paydays and perks roll in, it's amazing how quickly principles go missing. They jump on the gravy express while we're left stewing on the ranks.

In my 27 years, I've seen: Unlimited PHV licensing, Road space vanish, Cross-border hiring explode, Rickshaws, scooters and cycles everywhere, Age

limits on perfectly serviceable taxis, Compulsory credit cards that we end up paying for And tech giants stealing our work and selling it back to us. This is not why I — or almost any of us — did The Knowledge.

In my opinion there's only two entities to blame for the situation we now find ourselves in. One is the biggest org in the trade — you know who they are. The other is TfL and past and present Mayors. Without their collusion, none of this would've been possible. Has it gone too far? Maybe. But if there's even one throw of the dice left, it has to count.

That's why I joined the LCDC — the \*London Cab Drivers' Club\*. This trade doesn't need another umbrella. It needs a backbone. It needs people who'll stand up, not roll over. Perhaps now is the time to break from the norm and try something different and give someone else a go at fighting our corner? They surely can't do any worse.

## GREEN LINE CAB COMPANY LTD



THE VERY BEST IN THE WORLD



# ERADS

\* TOTALLY STRIPPED  
DOWN TO THE LAST  
COMPONENT\*

RE-ENGINEERED,  
EXTENSIVELY MODIFIED,  
RE-BUILT



GUARANTEED FOR 12  
MONTHS - UNLIMITED  
MILEAGE

APPOINTED  
PROFESSIONAL  
FITTING CENTRE

CALL: BOOKINGS / TECH ENQUIRIES: SHELDON - 07572 0 07572

## Heathrow Airport Feeder Park: One Rep's View of a Managed Decline

Having been a licensed taxi driver for over thirty years, I still remember driving out to Heathrow on my very first day — a world away from what we see now. Back then, the trade was overwhelmingly white and male. Today, it's a genuine melting pot of cultures and backgrounds, and rightly so.

After three decades in the job, I thought I'd seen and heard it all. But then you work Heathrow — and you realise there's always more. The port is full of opinions, full of individuals who believe they're always right. We have representation groups who won't even speak to each other, despite supposedly representing the same group of airport drivers. Then we have those advocating for undercutting the meter — as if that's the solution to boosting work to and from the airport.

The meter exists to protect both the passenger and the driver. It's our standard — and many organisations proudly promote it as such. So why do we even have a tariff review board, where each group has a seat, if some of the "new kids on the block" are determined to undermine it?

Just because I've been around a long time doesn't mean I reject new ideas — far from it. But let's not pretend these proposals are original. They've all been tried before. Every time, it comes down to individual choice. Some drivers will try fixed fares. Others won't. But in this climate — with biblical levels of traffic and £80,000 cabs to pay off — the question isn't novelty, it's viability. Personally, I think the TXe is the best cab we've ever had. I've driven them all. But it comes at a cost.



Apps offer fixed fares to the airport, but they're not exactly flooded with work. Some passengers just want the cheapest option. I'm not interested in a race to the bottom — especially not in an £80K vehicle.

Then there's the issue of tags. Since 2019, an extra 460 have been issued — against the advice of some reps, who saw the damage it would do. These tags went to new drivers or were reissued to those returning after Covid. Combine that with a 20% drop in park movements, and we now have an oversubscribed feeder park. Drivers spill out onto Newall Road. It's not new — we've always queued there — but now it's worse. HAL started clamping down only because of complaints from local offices. Parking wardens or not, drivers will still queue — for many, this is their only place of work.

And yet, the conditions we're working under are shocking. The ranking and despatch system is outdated. The toilets are a public health disgrace. If Environmental Health paid a visit, they'd shut the place down. There's one shower for over 400 drivers — covered in mould, ceiling tiles



missing overhead. And there's still no provision for women drivers to freshen up.

All of this has been allowed to happen despite a surplus of £2.2 million. That surplus was once £3.7 million — but because trade groups couldn't agree on how to spend it, HAL stepped in and slashed the gate fee to £1. We should have kept it at £3 and invested in improvements: tout squads, staffed taxi desks, better driver facilities. But here's the thing — to get those desks in the terminals, we need a single entity that HAL can deal with. Some may see that as a threat to their power base. It's not. A unified voice would show the solidarity we desperately need.

We need to invest in driver wellbeing — outdoor gym equipment,

decent showers, proper facilities for female drivers. We work in a 24-hour rank — yet the canteen shuts at 10pm, and food is overpriced and poor-quality. This isn't good enough.

The driver must come first — not the egos or aspirations of individual reps. If you can't work with others for the good of the trade, step aside. Let the grown-ups take over. Put away the snide remarks about crayons and stop looking for ways to bypass the feeder park to get freebies. Go through the same channels as everyone else — and maybe then, you'll win back the respect of working drivers.

### COMMENTARY: Time for One Voice at Heathrow — or No Future at All

The Heathrow taxi operation is at a crossroads. In recent weeks, powerful articles — by Gary Long, Jamie Hawes, and others — have laid bare the crisis we face: degraded conditions, broken systems, internal division, and a trade losing ground fast to Private Hire.

Each piece has exposed a different side of the problem. But the

conclusion is the same: We're running out of time.

For years, reps have shouted over each other. Trade groups have worked in silos. HAL has exploited the division. Drivers have been left to suffer — unsupported, misrepresented, and overcharged for substandard facilities.

What's been missing — and is now urgently required — is a formal, unified umbrella body that can speak on behalf of all taxi drivers operating at Heathrow. Not a talking shop. Not a power grab. But a genuine working group with shared goals, rotating leadership, and a remit to deliver real results.

That means: Holding HAL to account for the £2.2 million surplus

Securing decent facilities — including safe, clean showers for female drivers

Delivering staffed taxi desks in terminals, proper signage, and anti-tout squads•

Agreeing fair policy on tag issuance, despatch, and working conditions

Restoring respect for the trade — and putting the driver back at the centre of it all

The signs above the door may say "Always in there punching" — but as Jamie Hawes made clear, the real fight hasn't even started. And Gary Long is right: without a single voice, we get nowhere.

It's time to stop playing politics. It's time to stop pretending. And it's time to build something better.

If we don't unite now, we won't need to worry about managing decline — because there won't be anything left to decline into.

Let's make this the moment we turned it around.



# AIRPORT SQUAT SHOP

Signs such as “Always in there punching”... “Reps” wandering in and out, keys jangling, yellow lanyards hanging authoritatively around necks... signs above the door scream “always in there punching”.... anyone would be fooled into thinking there was an office in the Heathrow canteen, but, of course, there isn’t, in fact it’s more akin to a squat.

No rent is being paid, no utility bills are paid, there is no evidence of any contracts, leases or indeed a single document that gives authorisation for the LTDA “office”

No harm done you may think, but think again. Firstly, if you are a member of the LCDC or UCG for instance and you have something private to discuss, licence issue maybe or just some advice, the only place you’ll be able to discuss it is the amidst the noise of the canteen or the back of a cab, not ideal obviously, however, there is a far more serious issue....

Whilst those reps inhabiting the office swan in and out without going through the feeder pk, simultaneously tinkering with a member’s parking ticket (albeit with no real legal expertise) and waffle on about their own dodgy schemes being “value for money” the harsh reality is that

business is down 20% for black cabs at Heathrow and business is up 20% for PHV.

The reason for this situation is that the LTDA has become so insular and blasé about their own personal little gravy trains

presided over decade of the decimation of the London Cab Trade.

The LTDA office has become a bone of contention that is dividing the trade organisations to such a degree that meaningful dialogue has

Gravy trains however are the order of the day.

The future of the cab trade can only be assured by unity within the organisations.

The LTDA office at Heathrow is a microcosm of the bigger picture, self

terminals, better signage and advertising and the possibility of a full time tout squad at Heathrow..

Don’t be fooled, we are in the end game, the pincer movement between TFL’s insistence that we drive £80k vehicles that ensure our fares remain high and PHV undercutting us is going to bring about the end of the cab trade.

We have had years of self serving so called representatives of the cab trade only serving themselves... thousands of drivers pay subscriptions to these people, they’ve had the money so where’s the action? One driver recently informed me that he had received a notice of intended prosecution over a speeding fine, asked to be put through to LTDA legal and was in fact put through to Sam Houston, a rep with no legal expertise, who told him to... wait for it... “Take the points” Not bad for £25 quid a month!

This driver himself fought the case successfully and the fine was dropped!

The sign above the squat screams out “Always in there punching” but is the fight going to start? Or has your trade org simply taken the money and preparing to go down in the first to fill their coffers?

For now, Be lucky!

Jamie Hawes



that they have forgotten why they exist.

Trade orgs are supposed to be there to represent their member interests first and foremost, not their own.. if only LTDA chairman Steve McNamara had been as outspoken and defensive of the trade as he has about the little scheme his reps had going at Heathrow, then perhaps he may not have

almost stopped entirely.

Over the last decade The LTDA has overseen the downfall of the trade, not only at Heathrow but London too.

They have pandered to TfL when there should have been resistance,

“War chests” have remained firmly locked.

serving, inept and insulated from the real issues facing the trade, existing only at the expense of others.

We are proposing that the office be opened up for the use of all organisations so that we may get a united taxi group up and running, a space from which we can unite and take the fight to Private hire, initiating our own desks in



**L.C.D.C LEADERS NOT FOLLOWERS**  
**Stop talking about it and JOIN!**

# SAVE **BIG** ON YOUR CAB INSURANCE.

*The LCDC has Partnered  
with CoverMy Cab to Bring You  
Exclusive Black Cab Insurance Savings!*



Call today on **01992 946 567**  
or scan the QR code and use  
promo code **LCDC** to unlock  
your exclusive savings!



cover my **cab** 





## AS AN L.C.D.C MEMBER YOU WILL RECEIVE:

### ■ 24 HOUR DUTY SOLICITOR EXCLUSIVE TO THE CAB TRADE

Your 24 Hr duty solicitor hotline membership card.  
Peace of mind 24 hrs of the day.

### ■ LEGAL COVER

Our fantastic team of City Of London based solicitors and barristers, experts in Hackney Carriage and road traffic law.

### ■ COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

As a member of the LCDC, we will deal with any complaint that has been made against you by members of the public. Also we will attend the LTPH with you on any personal appeals that would affect your licence.

### ■ HEATHROW AIRPORT REPRESENTATION

With our reps at the airport working

hard on the trade's behalf for a fairer, and more safer future at Heathrow.

### ■ RANKS AND HIGHWAYS

The LCDC attend the Joint Ranks committee, working hard for more ranks and more access for the taxi trade in London.

### ■ CAB TRADE ADVICE

All members can call the office for any information or up to the date news on any trade related subject.

### ■ TRADE'S FUTURE

The Club worked tirelessly in bringing in the green & yellow identifiers to the taxi trade. And are always working hard to protect our future.

### ■ CAB TRADE REPRESENTATION

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

### ■ VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS

The Club works alongside LTC and

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

### ■ CLUB PROTECTA

To help drivers who have acquired twelve points keep their licence.

**JUST  
66p a  
day!**

\* £12 per month is tax deductible



**Join over the  
phone - just call  
and we'll take  
your payment  
details**

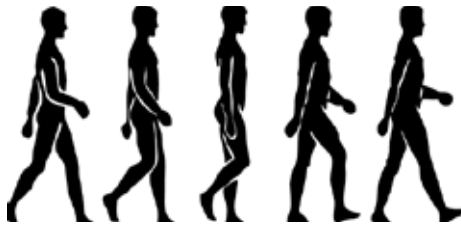
# JOIN THE LCDC IN JUST FIVE MINUTES!

- 1: Call 020 7394 5553
- 2: Get the DD link sent to your phone
- 3: Activate the link
- 4: You are now a member of the London Cab Drivers' Club

**WELCOME  
ABOARD!**







# Walker on the march...

## DIGGING OUT; IT'S ONLY NATURAL

I don't really do Twitter (or X) but some posts come my way from others that do. Recently, it appears that the Chair of the UCG is getting a bit miffed with non-members expressing views on UCG proposals/decisions and should keep their noses out.

I would have thought it obvious that if you don't want these comments, then you shouldn't be airing your views on public social media and should be doing it on a members-only platform. The problem there is that putting stuff out publicly makes it look like you are doing stuff, whether or not you are actually doing it. Great when people agree but not so much when they disagree. The LCDC certainly get criticism on social media daily from non-members. No use crying about it.

Besides, digging each other out is our trade's favourite sport. It's how trade organisations begin and grow. The reason new trade organisations are started in the first place is because some motivated drivers dislike or disagree with what the established organisations are offering and so start a new one.

## T&G

Until the mid-1960s, the only trade org was the T&G (now Unite the Union). This made sense as this was a very powerful transport workers union and many drivers came from previous backgrounds associated with unions, such as post, buses, docks, print, etc.

Not only that but owner-drivers were not common. Most drivers rented and it was common to work a cab on shifts and pay a % of fares to the garage, effectively working for the

garage. Joining a union was a natural thing to do.

## LTDA

The 1960s brought Welbeck Motors and minicabs on the scene. Many drivers thought the T&G weren't doing enough to get minicabs banned and so the LTDA was formed. The LTDA was born from the disaffection of members and non-members of the T&G.

It's a fact that many drivers are free riders. A large % of drivers do not and will not join any trade org for various reasons, so while it is possible to attract some of these drivers with new ideas, the best way to grow is to take committed drivers away from other trade orgs and the best way to do that is to criticise them for not doing anything.

The LTDA grew very quickly and accelerated their membership in 1974 when they broke the Radio Taxis and DAC (then Mountview and Lords) closed radio circuit shop by investing in their own radio circuit, Comcab (then London-Wide), open to full or associate LTDA members. Demand for the circuit expanded the membership significantly and they became the overwhelmingly largest trade org in London, while the T&G Cab Section maintained superiority on a national basis. The two had no reason to fight each other.

## LCDC

Although the Club had been around since the introduction of the Metro cab, it never became a bona fide trade org until the 1980s. There were plenty of reasons for drivers to become disaffected in the 80s, even if it were not the fault of the two driver orgs. On top of a national

recession, minicab touting was rife.

The LCDC grew by taking action on the streets to combat touting and by criticising the inaction of the two existing orgs. There was no social media back then but the LCDC published the Badge. At that time, the Badge was pretty much



dominated by criticism of the inaction of the orgs, particularly the LTDA, and the regulator.

Unite stood apart and never reacted to outside criticism and the LTDA had now become too powerful, politically and financially, to entertain responding to attacks from the LCDC and later, the newer groups, RMT and UCG.

## RMT

This org appeared almost out of nowhere. The curious thing was that they appeared at a time when the trade groups were unusually united and active. It seemed nobody had heard of the taxi branch of the RMT until they showed up at the Trafalgar Square drive-in, with their banners and flags.

The RMT gained a foothold largely by social media criticism of the three established orgs, following the same well-worn path of

increasing membership.

## UCG

There was a large, social media group supporting the RMT and independently arranging "hits" on nightclubs, forming impromptu ranks to sort out the touts. When two of this group's leading lights were

observed on an EDL rally, they were invited to resign their RMT membership and "The 12 Nutters in a Café" formed the UCG.

The UCG's MO for gaining membership followed the same path, constantly criticising the LTDA and LCDC for not doing enough to help the trade, etc.

At one point, it seemed as though the UCG were actually criticising the LCDC for the sole purpose of nicking LCDC members.

## TRADE UNITY

Ask any driver and they will lament the fact that the trade orgs do not get together and act as one. There is even some drivers at the moment trying to organise an umbrella group with no affiliation to a particular org. The idea is to bring together the orgs to act collectively on issues that all drivers want to see followed.

The bad news is that it won't ever happen. From a driver view, it makes sense for the orgs to act together and as one. Anyone can see that. The problem is that although the orgs are run by working cab drivers (barring the LTDA exec com), they run effectively as businesses. While they all work for their membership, they are in the business of recruiting members.

Drivers often complain that everybody wants a slice of their earnings. They are right. As a cab driver, your only customers are the people that hail your cab. In every other aspect, you are the customer.

Outfits such as manufacturers, cab renters, meter companies, apps, repairers, etc are not the leeches they are often accused of being. They are simply businesses supplying their customers, cab drivers, needs.

Driver orgs are not that much different. Members are effectively customers and the orgs compete for your custom and against each other to win your custom. So, while politically and from a driver's perspective, it would be great if all the orgs worked together, the orgs are constantly busy trying to make their org more attractive to drivers than the other orgs are.

There is the problem. Unless you have a single org, orgs have no internal incentive to work together. Certainly, they all want the same thing; what is best for the drivers/members. The problem is that they each want to be the single org to achieve this aim.

So, the next time you call for trade unity and cannot see why the orgs cannot work together, sadly you will know the answer.





**ASCOTT'S**  
GROUP

Sales

Servicing

Brakes  
& Tyres

Warranty

NSL  
Pre-Test

MOT's

Meters

Onsite  
Media

Bodywork  
Repairs

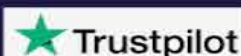
Onsite  
Insurance

# The Original One Stop Taxi Shop

- 5 star customer rated
- Servicing the trade for over 45 years
- State of the art EV centre & waiting facilities
- Only 10mins from Dartford Crossing
- Your downtime is our priority



**020 8692 1122**  
**www.ascotts.co.uk**



SCAN ME



# SHERBET

THE ELECTRIC TAXI CO

EXPERIENCED REPAIR CENTRE IN PUTNEY BRIDGE



We know your taxi is your livelihood, and time off the road means lost earnings. That's why we get the job done right first time and fast. Conveniently located in West London, we're here to support drivers with reliable service when it's needed most.

## WHAT WE OFFER

- 📍 Taxi Servicing – All Makes & Models
- 📍 Taxi Tyres, Taxi Parts and Taxi Meters
- 📍 Taxi Air Con Servicing & Repair
- 📍 Taxi Bodyshop, Overhauls & MOT
- 📍 Repairs on Extended Warranty Vehicles\*



\*Administered by Assurant

## LEVC APPROVED WARRANTY CENTRE



- 📍 SPARE TAXIS AVAILABLE
- 📍 COURTESY TAXI GUARANTEED!!

SHERBET  
PUTNEY BRIDGE

62 THE ARCHES  
LONDON  
SW6 3UH

020 7736 8818





# SHERBET, THE ELECTRIC TAXI CO LAUNCHES FIRST-EVER RADIO ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN ON LBC NEWS LONDON

London, 16th June 2025 – Sherbet Electric Taxis, London's fastest growing privately owned licensed black taxi fleet, has today launched its first ever mass market media campaign on LBC News London, urging Londoners to 'book a Sherbet' with a catchy whistling tune.

This marks a major milestone for the industry as whilst there are approximately 17,000 licensed black taxis on the streets of London, Sherbet is proving that there is a market for building an elite fleet to not only better serve London with a higher quality service but to also offer its drivers the support to earn more by creating a brand that London can rely on and making its drivers famous.

This isn't just a radio ad. It's a milestone for the black taxi industry which is centuries old. It has always been perceived as 'the black taxi industry' as a whole and the perception is that all taxis are created equal. However the industry is facing strong competition from all sides so it can't get complacent. Clever drivers know they need to come together to compete on a platform and that's exactly what once taxi driver come entrepreneur, Founder and CEO Asher Moses offers drivers. Sherbet is a successful rental company that is investing to grow every one of its driver's livelihoods by creating a brand for their taxis and making sure London knows Sherbet taxis are not just "another cab", but the best choice for quality and peace of mind. Individual drivers can't easily do this alone, they need to be part of a bigger organisation to do this on their behalf.

Sherbet is building a brand the public can trust. Asher Moses, Founder



and CEO of Sherbet said "I understand that my drivers take huge pride in their work and I want them to earn well and feel part of a community that's got their back. I also know that nowadays people book brands, not taxis, so I'm investing hard to ensure that every Sherbet driver gets work over and above any other taxi on the streets".

When drivers rent from Sherbet, they are not just getting a vehicle but they are joining a business that's changing how the public sees licensed taxis. Asher is a long-standing pioneer of the black taxi trade having been the driver of taxi media advertising back in the 80's to being the first to introduce credit card payments and the first to buy an electric TXE from LEVC. Asher is

widely known in London circles and continues to prove he knows what he's doing to take the iconic taxi into the future. He's committed to investing in the brand to ensure London knows that not all taxis are equal and that 'booking a Sherbet' means booking the best.

By advertising on LBC News London, Sherbet is reaching hundreds of thousands of Londoners with one clear message: 'if you want the best black taxi experience, "book a Sherbet"'. The campaign will feature two adverts; one driving home the benefits of 'booking a Sherbet' and the other focusing purely on the reliability of Sherbet's airport transfer service. The LBC campaign will also be supported with social

media and some Sherbet taxi advertising. Drivers who know Asher will instantly recognise his charismatic personality as the voiceover on the adverts. The radio campaign will run from June 16th to July 17th so tune in!

So whilst the LBC campaign is making Sherbet drivers famous, Sherbet calls on all its drivers to ensure they are fully serviced, ship shape and shiny and fully branded, ready for new passengers. Asher enlisted a Marketing Consultant, Halla Ragi, to create a brand which is now the instantly recognisable coloured stripes so London knows which taxi to book. Halla said "when you build a brand, you build trust. So making your brand visible drives bookings because when a passenger

sees a Sherbet-branded cab, they know it stands for something: quality, professionalism, and a better taxi experience".

This LBC campaign comes off the back of consistent growth with the new HQ premises in Camden's Parkhurst Road now turning one years old, a new repairs garage imminently opening and a new first of its kind 'Driver Hub' Café, also at Parkhurst. This is just the beginning, so watch this space for more investment and more passengers who 'book a Sherbet', because they've heard the name, heard the radio ad and now they trust it.

Sherbet wishes to thank all its incredible drivers for choosing to be part of the Sherbet family.



It was a very early start for me on the morning of 6th May, as given the news that The Cabmen's Shelter at Wellington Place in St John's Wood, aka The Chapel, was to reopen its doors for business, and having already been in touch with the new keeper, Sarah Webster, I was keen to pay a visit on opening day and welcome her into her new establishment.

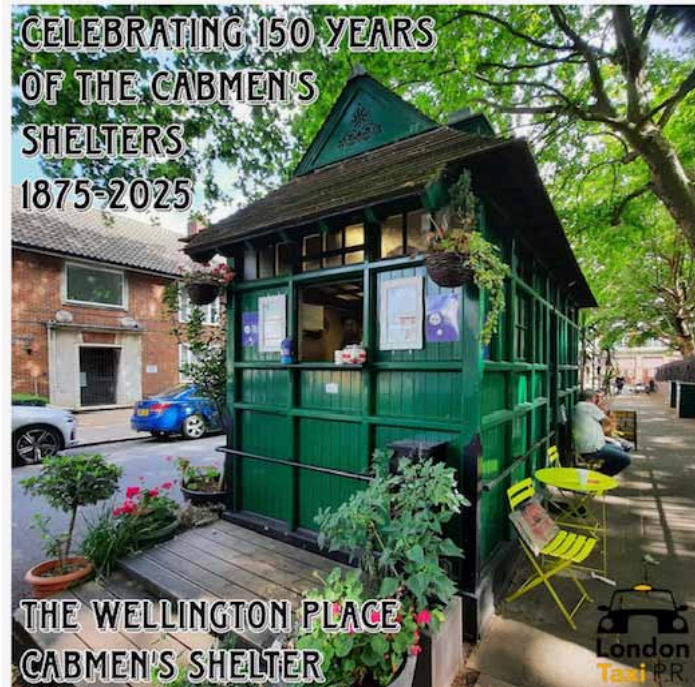
The news of former keeper Andre's sudden departure came as a shock to all, especially as it had been run by him and his family for in excess of 20 years, so it was good to see the Shelter reopen with a new smiling face at the helm after a short sojourn and a bit of a tidy up, including a new coat of Buckingham Green paint.

The Shelter looked magnificent upon arrival, given its makeover, and inside Sarah had also blitzed the place cleaning it and making it look spotless and ready for business.

The food that I had was excellent. My bacon and sausage roll was cooked to perfection, and the coffee piping hot and strong. Biscuits were also provided in a jar on the newly installed counter tops, again, a nice touch.

Sarah's certainly no stranger to the profession,

# Wellington Place shelter The Chapel reopens



as her mother-in-law Sue is the Shelter keeper at Grosvenor Gardens, where Sarah has also been helping out. As Sarah herself admits, she is known about the Shelters and their history and uniqueness through Sue and has been around cabbies and the profession for the past 20 years.

Prior to getting the call to take over the reins at The Chapel, Sarah has been

working in education at the Totteridge Academy secondary school in Barnet for the past 18 years.

"I loved working with children which is amazing but challenging however very rewarding, which I will miss," she stated.

"I've had my name down for a Shelter for a number of years, so when I got the call from the charity I was delighted and can't wait

for the challenge and the banter from the drivers," she enthused.

Sarah said not only will she be serving breakfasts and lunches, also for takeaways, but providing a range of various daily specials, including homemade meals, bread pudding, apple crumble, as well as ice cream and ice lollies, rolls, paninis, baguettes, and jacket potatoes. The Chapel Shelter at Wellington Place is open Monday to Friday, 7am-3pm, and if anyone deserves to make a success of it, then Sarah does.

In the 150th anniversary year it's great to see 'The Chapel' back up and running once again, with a welcoming smiling face to greet you and a great offering for both cabbies and window customers alike. In fact, several representatives from local establishments had already popped over to introduce themselves to Sarah and welcome her to the area, so I am sure it will not be too long before she is seen as a familiar fixture within the local community.

I also dropped off two



welcome gifts for Sarah which I thought fitting. One was a 150th anniversary mug and the other a welcome to your new home card, both featuring 'The Chapel' Shelter and marking the anniversary year.

## Additional piece

Since the reopening Sarah has built up a regular following and has been extremely busy which is great to see. I was there again recently for filming with the BBC and Ruth Goodman for a piece that will appear in the next few months as part of their From the Factory programme, which will feature an item on tea, with the Shelter being featured, along with an interview with trustee Colin Evans and Taxi driver and Chapel regular Phil Brown.

So, here's wishing Sarah all the best and continued success for The Chapel Shelter.

I can't wait to try the bread pudding, and I'll be back soon.

**Andy Scott**  
PR and Comms.  
London Taxi PR

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





# SADIQ KHAN'S LONDON IS CRUMBLING. REEVES MAY HAVE JUST SEALED ITS FATE

Rachel Reeves knew the Conservatives would condemn her spending plans in the strongest terms they could conjure up. The same goes for the Liberal Democrats and Reform.

What she might not have expected was the strength of opposition from within her own party. Sir Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London and one of Labour's most high-profile figures, issued perhaps the most cutting criticisms.

From crime to transport to housing, the newly knighted veteran of Left-wing politics laid into the Chancellor's schemes.

"This spending review could result in insufficient funding for the Met and fewer police officers. It's also disappointing that there is no commitment today from the Treasury to invest in the new infrastructure London needs," Sir Sadiq said.

"Projects such as extending the Docklands Light Railway not only deliver economic growth across the country, but also tens of thousands of new affordable homes and jobs for Londoners. Unless the Government invests in infrastructure like this in our capital, we will not be able to build the numbers of new affordable homes Londoners need."

The mayor's outburst comes amid signs the capital is crumbling, with crime surging. Without additional support, Reeves risks condemning the city to a future of decline – imperilling a Labour stronghold in the process.

Shoplifting jumped by more than 50pc in the capital last year according to police data, a far sharper increase than in any other



region. Non-violent thefts such as pickpocketing were up by 41pc.

Shopkeepers view the Metropolitan Police as the worst force for responding to crime, according to the British Retail Consortium. Its surveys found one in three Londoners witnessed shoplifting last year.

Crime has got so bad that Greggs has moved its drinks and sandwiches behind the counter in five stores, including in London's Whitechapel, Peckham and Ilford, blaming anti-social behaviour. It follows reports of a growing problem with thefts from the bakery chain.

"We've got youths who think it is perfectly acceptable to run through the streets with machetes, we've got people literally walking into shops and taking exactly what they want," says Susan Hall, a member of the London Assembly and the Conservative candidate for the mayoralty last year.

"The whole social fabric is just disappearing. It is becoming more and more lawless," she says, noting fare-dodging on public transport is at "epidemic levels".

The capital's decline is attracting increasing political attention. Robert Jenrick, the shadow justice secretary, filmed himself confronting fare-dodgers at London stations. Neil O'Brien, a Conservative MP, posted photos of a train carriage covered floor to ceiling in graffiti, saying: A guerrilla group of graffiti cleaners recently publicised their activities on social media, scrubbing despoiled Tube carriages in high-vis jackets bearing the slogan "Doing what Sadiq Khan".

Rough sleeping in London has doubled since 2021, more than erasing the improvement in the lockdown era. The boroughs of Westminster, Camden and the City of London top the rankings.

London's unemployment

rate of 6.4pc is the highest in the nation, and the fastest-rising.

Despite the capital's problems – and the fact London has long been a bedrock of Labour support – Reeves and her colleagues show no signs of trying to make the problem any better.

For one thing, the Government is making it harder to take on workers. Higher staffing costs since April's National Insurance tax raid and a sharp increase in the minimum wage are squeezing already cash-strapped restaurants, bars and cafes. London institutions including The Gun in Homerton, Leroy in Shoreditch and Lyle's, which held a Michelin star for a decades, are among scores that have closed their doors in recent months. It adds to fears for London's eroding nightlife scene: around 3,000 nightclubs closed from 2020 to 2023, according to the Night Time Industries Association (NTIA).

The economy's woes have hit the housing market, too. House prices across the UK as a whole have risen by 4pc since the start of 2023, according to the Office for National Statistics. Yet the average price in London is down by more than 3pc. All of this went unrecognised in the spending review.

When the Chancellor name-checked towns and cities across the Midlands and the north of England, as well as Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, her comments appeared to rile London's mayor.

"The way to level up other regions will never be to level down London," he said. "I'll continue to make the case to the Government that we must work together for the benefit of our capital and the whole country."

Reeves disputed his argument, noting rising police spending and a four-year £2.2bn fund for Transport for London, which runs public transport and the main roads. The Treasury called it "the largest multi-year settlement for London in over a decade".

Hall says the dispute is evidence of a split at the heart of the governing party, shattering Left-wingers' hopes that a Labour Government and mayoralty would herald a tide of new funding for London. "Sadiq Khan has been completely shut out," she says.

A split in Labour and dissatisfaction with the state of the capital raise the possibility his grip on power may not be unshakeable. Reeves' snub may not be just a disappointment for London – it could be a blow to the hopes of re-election for the city's Labour mayor too.

*Courtesy of The Telegraph*



# Volvo to slash 15% of its workforce thanks to low electric vehicle demand

**Volvo will cut 3,000 jobs as it battles against the slowdown of electric vehicle sales across the globe.**

The Swedish car giant revealed this morning 15 per cent of its office workforce will be impacted, with the majority of those hitting white-collar jobs in the Scandinavian country.

It forms part of a £1.4bn cost-saving strategy Volvo announced earlier this month in order to 'offset external headwinds' caused by the decline in EV sales, high costs and global trade uncertainty.

Owned by China's Geely Holding Group with production in both



China and Europe, Volvo has been highly exposed to the 25 per cent tariffs introduced in the US by President Trump on imported cars.

Volvo confirmed its annual electric car sales plummet 11 per cent in April, with

sales of its electrified models – fully electric and plug-in hybrids – falling 16 per cent compared to the same period last year.

As of 2024 Volvo employs roughly 44,000 employees globally, with nearly 20,000 are 'white-collar'

workers.

The job cuts are the latest part of Volvo's £1.4bn cost saving plan announced earlier this month

Volvo is one of the car makers to have invested most in the EV transition, as it was one of the first to offer an electrified version of every model in its range.

In 2021, Volvo said all of its cars would go electric by 2030, before U-turning on that last year after admitting it needed to scale back the ambitious deadline due to a number of issues including 'additional uncertainties created by recent tariffs on EVs in various markets'.

In its latest sales report

from April, Volvo confirmed that its share of fully electric cars constituted 20 per cent of all cars sold for the month while the share of plug-in hybrid models accounted for 25 per cent.

Fully electric sales were down 32 per cent from April 2024.

While poor EV uptake has hit Volvo just like many other manufacturers, Volvo said it could become impossible to import the smallest cars in the company's line-up to the US due to the new tariffs.

Volvo UK declined to comment to This is Money when asked how many UK jobs could be impacted.

*Courtesy of This is Money*

## I.D TAXIS



**TX4 Euro 6 FOR SALE**

- ALL OWNER DRIVEN
- PRICES START FROM £20K
- MILEAGE START FROM 100K
- F.SH.
- CAN BE PASSED & PLATED IN YOUR NAME
- 1YR BREAKDOWN COVER WITH 

**Call sales office: 0208 591 0700**  
**Mobile: Darren Lazarus - 07956 317300**



# JAMES FORD: when Sadiq lobbies, London loses

**In every spending review there are winners and losers. Stars rise, Cabinet careers are made, and political reputations forged on an ambitious politico's ability to secure Treasury funding for flagship policies and vote-winning initiatives.**

The big winners from the 2025 Spending Review are clear: the Health Secretary, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Defence Secretary, and the Metro Mayors. The losers are equally obvious; in this case they include DEFRA Secretary Steve Reed (with his department's day-to-day spending cut by 2.7%) and Foreign Secretary David Lammy (awarded a 'success rating' of 1/10 in the Guardian's analysis). Unfortunately for London, the biggest loser is painfully apparent: the Mayor of London.

That is not to say that London comes away entirely empty-handed, but even these apparent wins are overshadowed by the much bigger wins for other cities and come with heavy caveats. For example, although the Met will benefit from the boost in spending power granted to all UK police forces, City Hall has warned that police numbers in the capital are still likely to fall. Whilst Transport for London (TfL) got the multi-year funding settlement it has long craved, it was for four years and not the five year term that other city regions secured. There was an extra £2.2bn for TfL capital renewal programmes, but that is notably less than either the £2.5bn awarded to Greater Manchester (part of the £15bn awarded to mayors in the Midlands and North for transport projects) or the massive £25bn allocated for HS2. Perhaps most egregiously, London tied

with Blackpool for the number of times it was named by the Chancellor in her speech (three times apiece, in case you weren't counting). Little wonder, then, that the Evening Standard, City AM, and The Economist all concluded that London had been "short-changed."

It was clear from the pre-Spending Review briefing by City Hall that Sadiq Khan's main objective in this spending round was to secure the funding for two long-delayed transport

transport infrastructure wish list. That is Crossrail 2 (otherwise known as the Chelsea-Hackney line), which is proposed to comprise 47 new or expanded stations and connect New Southgate and Broxbourne in the north to Epsom, Chessington and Shepperton to the south west. According to TfL estimates, Crossrail 2 would create 200,000 jobs, act as the catalyst for the construction of 200,000 homes, and boost London's transport capacity by ten per cent.

homes.

Khan's epic failure to persuade his colleagues in the Labour Government to back his administration with a serious injection of extra funding is set to have profound consequences for London economically and Khan politically. It is not just that nearly 200,000 jobs will not be created and 200,000 homes will not get built. The Mayor had staked his entire plan for growing the capital's economy on two pretty big assumptions: that

Hall denied the bulk of the funding it was seeking for the lifetime of this Parliament, those plans are now in tatters.

As grim as London's prospects are in the short term, they are also unlikely to improve in future spending rounds. The Chancellor has made it clear that she is changing the Green Book, the guidance that the Treasury uses for evaluating projects, to ensure that schemes outside London and the South East will stand a better chance of securing funding than they have previously. This means that the deck will be stacked against the capital from now on.

The political consequences of further set-backs in delivering new homes and additional delays to already long overdue transport projects coupled with a lack of progress on getting Londoners their promised £11,000 personal cash boost by the time the capital next goes to the polls in 2028 will no doubt weigh heavily on the mind of senior figures in the Mayor's office. Indeed, this Spending Review may well mark the moment when Khan started considering a future after City Hall.



projects: the Bakerloo Line extension to Lewisham and the DLR extension to Thamesmead. Whilst the Treasury has not said these projects will never go ahead, it is clear that neither project will be progressing in this spending round with central government funding.

The scale of Khan's failure is particularly galling as he had set the bar for himself rather low to begin with. The Bakerloo and DLR extensions are not the top prize on London's

Truly transformational stuff. However, Crossrail 2 was projected to cost £41.3bn back in 2019 (which is more than double the £18.8bn that the Elizabeth Line ended up costing). By contrast, the DLR extension is estimated to cost £1bn (at 2022 prices), create 10,000 jobs and support the construction of up to 30,000 homes. The Bakerloo extension comes with an expected price tag of between £5.2bn and £8.7bn (based on 2021 prices), create 9,700 jobs and deliver around 20,400

Labour would deliver growth nationally and that Khan would be able to leverage significant investment from the Starmer Government. Launched with much fanfare just a few months ago, the London Growth Plan set out Khan's intention to "turbocharge" London's economy to the tune of £107bn over the next decade, create 150,000 jobs, boost the exchequer by £27bn, and put £11,000 a year more in Londoners' pockets. With the government so far failing in its core 'Growth Mission' and City

The net result of the Spending Review is that the Mayor of London cannot deliver on his flagship growth plan. Important infrastructure projects have not just stalled but languished on his watch. Crime looks set to continue to rise in the capital. And now he can't even persuade his Labour colleagues in Cabinet to take him seriously or trust him with taxpayers' money. Londoners are entitled to ask: what, exactly, is the point of Khan?

*Courtesy of  
Conservative Home*



# 0%

## Commission

for your first 4 weeks!\*

### Unlock Your Full Potential as a Driver - Starting Today!

- ✓ Daily payments\*\*
- ✓ 24/7 driver support
- ✓ Easy to use driver app designed for BC driver
- ✓ Drivers' Office in Zone 1
- ✓ Unlock Exclusive, High-Paying Corporate Opportunities,  
Including Premium Hospitality and VIP Meet-and-Greet Services.
- ✓ Year-Round Perks & Promotions -  
Unlock Exciting Bonuses, Exclusive Discounts, and More!

Join gett now →



**Gett.**

\*Must be new to Gett or inactive in the last 6 months | \*\* Weekdays, Monday to Friday.  
Earnings from Friday will be credited to the account on Monday the following week.



# James Cook was universally adored in boxing – his pursuit of the impossible dream will endure

**James Cook was known and respected as one of the nicest men in the boxing business on both sides of the ropes.**

His death last Saturday was greeted with a rare and sincere outpouring of heartfelt messages, genuine love and sorrow. In the modern business of boxing, it is impossible to find anybody with a bad word to say about Cook – he was universally adored.

Cook belonged to a different boxing world, a world where good fighters knew they would seldom get a chance and never get a break. Cook struggled for recognition as a boxer and chased a living away from his Hackney home in fights as the designated loser in Germany, Italy, France, the Netherlands and Finland. He was robbed of money, robbed of decisions, but he kept fighting against all odds.

The motto in boxing is simple and brutal: Have gloves, will travel. Cook was the king of the travelling fighters for a few years in the Eighties. There were signs that he could beat the best prospects and compete with the best fighters, but the truth is that James Cook's face never fit. "I'm too good-looking for this business," he joked.

Cook's win in 1986 over the prospect, Michael Watson, who was unbeaten in seven, is a prime example; Watson was still the star after the loss, Cook still an annoyance. The fight before Watson, Cook had lost in Amsterdam and in the fight after, he lost in France. It was the reality for a lot of invisible boxers.

"It was a tough business back then," said Cook. "It was hard to get a break and that is why I had to go overseas. I had to earn a living."

Cook had been a professional for seven years, having fought 19 times and losing seven, when he got his chance at the British middleweight title. On that night in 1988 in Sheffield, he was stopped by the great

loss, back earning a living without a single complaint.

In 1990, he was given another shot at the British title, but he had to travel to Belfast to fight local idol, Sam Storey. It looked like a typical night on the road and against the odds for Cook; he stopped Storey in 10 rounds, won the British super-middleweight title and then travelled to France to add the European

would be in the corner with Anthony Yarde. Let me tell you this now: James Cook did not play games.

I stood with Cook and Yarde and remembered a classic but lost night in British boxing. It was 1991 at York Hall and for some ridiculous reason, Cook was defending his European super-middleweight title at the tiny venue against Mark Kaylor, who had been one



By Steve Bunce

at an anonymous time in British boxing for many men, who simply never had a break and had to struggle for every single tiny bit of recognition. Cook struggled, but he never moaned or complained.

In 1992 he took the money, went to France and lost the European title, then he regained his British super-middleweight title at a wave-pool centre at the Elephant and Castle in south London. At the same time, Benn and Eubank were making millions at the same weight.

James Cook fought for the last time at York Hall in 1994 when he lost his British title. And then the real work started on the safe side of the ropes at the Pedro Club, an old-fashioned youth club, on Hackney's "murder mile".

On his commendation for his MBE in 2007, it said he had performed miracles on the streets of Hackney. And he had. "The boxing gym gives them hope and they don't have a lot of hope," he told me in 2019. "They can see what boxing can do for a man – boxers have a good name in here." Cook loved the Pedro, and it seems that every day was a brutal struggle for funding to keep the doors open and to keep his dreams alive. He was the man for the struggle - James Cook never turned away from any fight.

He was still part of that impossible dream circuit when he died last Saturday.



Herol Graham. The best middleweights in Britain then, Watson and Nigel Benn, had no interest in fighting Graham; Cook dared to be great.

At that time, it was obvious just how decent Cook was. He was never bitter about missing out on the carnival of fights involving Benn, Watson and Chris Eubank. He never had an invite – he was not the type of man you invited to that type of jamboree. Cook was back on the road, but this time on the small-hall circuit in Britain, after the Graham

version with a 12th-round stoppage. James Cook was anonymous no more. Well, that was the sensible thinking.

In late April, a few days before the Conor Benn and Chris Eubank Jr fight, I spoke to Cook during that week of events. He was drained, weary, shrunken, but still smiling and optimistic. He arrived one day, fresh from chemotherapy – I knew the signs, but James was not playing the cancer game. There was no searching for pity in his eyes. He had business on the night; he

of the stars of the business and remains the last great East End boxing idol. In the modern game, that fight would be in front of 20,000 at the O2.

"It was just the way it was," remembered Cook. Yarde listened and was stunned. On the night, Cook silenced Kaylor's faithful with a punch-perfect stoppage in the sixth round. Kaylor retired after the fight, Cook defended his European title at a leisure centre in Wandsworth in his next fight. A glance at Cook's record is a glance back



# THE RACE CARD IS ALIVE AND WELL!

A few months ago, I stopped at the Pret on King's Road, Chelsea, for the regulation coffee and a quick break. As I walked around the back of my cab to put my bag in the boot, I noticed a young man leaning on the bonnet of his car, eating what looked like a sandwich. Nothing unusual — until I came out and saw him drop his paper napkin straight onto the pavement.

I said, "You wouldn't do that in your home, so why do it in the street?" He didn't take it well. After a brief denial, he exploded — aggressively accusing me of racism. I hadn't even known he was foreign until he spoke.

A second man nearby also commented on the litter, which led to another

heated exchange. The driver — who turned out to be a PHV — called the police. Officers arrived promptly. He gave his version of events. I gave mine. The police asked if I wanted to file a complaint, but I decided it wasn't worth the stress. The matter, I assumed, was closed.

It wasn't.

A week later, I received a letter from TfL stating they had received a complaint about my conduct — specifically, an allegation of racial abuse. What stood out immediately was the tone: there was no presumption of neutrality or fairness. The letter read more like a warning than a fact-finding exercise. It made clear that my fitness to hold a licence was under consideration, even though no police action had been

taken, and even though my own account and complaint against the PHV driver appeared to carry no weight whatsoever.

Worse still, TfL referenced old minor infractions — including one for "parking on a rank" in Soho Square, a location that's never had a cab rank — as part of my overall compliance record, painting a picture that didn't reflect the reality.

Despite submitting a full rebuttal and complaint of my own — highlighting the PHV driver's aggression and abusive behaviour — the focus remained squarely on the original accusation. TfL made it clear that the complaint against me, not the facts or context, was the basis for their licensing review.

In their words:

"Licensing action must be considered where an allegation of a serious nature such as this is made, even where a criminal conviction has not been made..."

And:

"Should you come to adverse attention in the future for any reason, this would again call your fitness to hold a Taxi Driver's licence into question..."

The message is clear: one complaint — however unsubstantiated — can mark your record. Two, and you're skating on thin ice. There is no presumption of innocence. There is no balanced weighing of evidence. The mere existence of an allegation can be enough.

I have since requested a full disclosure from TfL regarding both the PHV driver's complaint and my own, including who reviewed the matter and how it was handled. I will report back when I receive a response.

In the meantime, here's my advice to fellow cabbies:

Say nothing. Stay calm. Be cautious. Even a mild remark about litter can be twisted. In today's climate, it only takes one person to play the race card — and TfL's current culture assumes the driver is in the wrong unless they can prove otherwise.

Keep your record clean, and protect your badge — because that second yellow could easily become a red.

## Taxi charity returns to Normandy

**The Taxi Charity for Military Veterans proudly returned to Normandy this June to mark the 81st anniversary of D-Day, honouring the courage and sacrifice of the men and women who played a pivotal role in the liberation of Europe during WWII**

The group, including six WWII and five post war veterans, accompanied by volunteer London black cab drivers and charity supporters, made the poignant journey to the Normandy beaches where British, American, Canadian and Allied forces landed on 6 June 1944.

The commemorative trip included visits to significant historical sites, memorial services, and opportunities for reflection and remembrance.

The six WWII veterans, with a combined age of 598, were warmly welcomed at ceremonies in Pegasus Bridge and the Bayeux CWGC



and during visits to Arromanches, where a Mulberry was installed to aid the landings and the British Normandy Memorial in Ver-sur-Mer where the names of the fallen are recorded. For the veterans, the trip is a chance to remember fallen comrades and share their personal stories of courage, loss, and resilience.

One hundred year old WWII veteran Don Turrell and his 28 year old friend and trip companion Callum Reid made an incredibly moving visit to



St Manvieu cemetery to visit the comrades that Don had lost in the Battle for Hill 112. The Battle for Hill 112 took ten weeks of fierce fighting and cost many lives. Callum's great grandfather was also involved in this huge operation and lost his life. He is buried in beautiful St Manvieu and for the very first time Callum was thrilled to bring his medals

to his graveside.

"The Taxi Charity is deeply honoured to support these incredible men and women who gave their everything without hesitation, for our freedom," said Paul Cook, Vice Chairman of the Taxi Charity. "Each year, as the numbers who were part of this campaign decrease, it becomes more important to ensure their voices are heard and their sacrifices remembered. We are so very proud to help them return to Normandy and ensure future generations understand the price of the freedoms we enjoy today."

During this visit the veterans particularly enjoyed meeting students from Saint-Germain-en-Laye who spent an hour asking the veterans about their wartime experiences.

The charity's work is made possible by the generous support of donors and sponsors who continue to champion the charity's mission of offering friendship and support to military veterans.

To find out more about the support the Taxi Charity offers to veterans or to donate visit [www.taxicharity.org](http://www.taxicharity.org)

### WWII veterans on the trip to Normandy

Mervyn Kersh  
Dorothea Barron  
Ron Butcher  
Marie Scott  
Don Turrell  
Robbie Hall

*Photos: Don Turrell and Callum Reid in St Manvieu CWGC*

*Dorothea Barron at the British Normandy Memorial*



During the making of a documentary on John Simons made in 2018, John started speaking of a group of well dressed 'erberts' as he put it, from the mid 1950s who were part of a scene that had been forgotten, or at least had been written out in favour of the modernist wave that followed a few years later.

Due to a lack of time and mainly money, the filmmakers never used that footage, but it was something John and myself (I produced the film) have discussed over a coffee many times since.

The people and the time they feature in mean a lot to John, and in many ways, they and others like them, are the reason he became who he became.

John is an infectious guy if you get him talking and I found the best thing to do is not interrupt him. So, just like the best jazz riffs, I let him go and held on tight. I haven't dumbled any of this down so if you don't recognise a name then please feel free to investigate further. It's a little snapshot of a time, that I felt if not written down, would be one day lost to us.

So, grab yourself a single espresso and join us for a trip to discover a lost world. As John said as I turned on the tape recorder 'If you want to talk about this subject, be ready for the charge of light brigade, because it will come right through!'

Ready?

'I've mentioned to you a colourful, exciting period, well before the notional colourful, exciting period of the 60s. This is a mad 'potpourri' of memories I've got. I have not itemised them and I have not written them down. All this is from my memory.

What I'm about to talk about is the 50s. There were a lot less people involved, and it was a cottage industry, communications were low, group expectations were low, BUT, if you were part of



## The Mumper of SE5

# THE 1950S NEW BOHEMIAN TASTY LONDON LAD BEATNIKS!

this Soho/West End/Chelsea underground, the beat generation was active and happening in London.

It might have permeated out into the suburbs later in the decade towards the 60s, but it definitely started in selected jazz clubs from 1952/53, so earlier than many now, might expect.

One place that was at the heart of it was Cy Laurie's jazz club. There, beatniks, hipsters and characters would meet. Titled ladies would rub shoulders with 'Ethel' and 'Ethel' would rub shoulders with his majesty. It was all happening. It was a magical period.

The rich and the poor and the Debs (debutantes) all mixed. A couple of really cool guys were Brian and Eddie and they would be wearing their Levis jeans tucked into their riding boots. This is '53/'54. There would be characters in their circle, who would be hiring flats in Dolphin Square and there they made parties.

Another face on the scene was trumpeter Buddy Bounds, who was a terrific trumpeter, who unfortunately had deformed arms, a

thalidomide victim. He was a very cool cat, a beatnik. He also managed to play the vibes as well. A lovely guy.

Its soundtrack was the newly found music importing from the USA, modern jazz from the likes of Charlie Parker & Dizzy Gillespie.

There was quite a big East coast jazz thing going on at Cissy's rehearsal club on Archer Street, Soho. It was the first strip club as such and my mate Harvey's mum, Cissy, owned it. Around 52/53 we'd go down there after school for a cup of tea. It was also a place that musicians met and practiced in between the shows.

Later the music went West coast, with Gerry Mulligan and Chet Baker and all that schtick came along a little more in the mid 1950s around the time the Stan Kenton band appeared at the Albert Hall was 1954.

For me the Lyceum would be the first Mod reflection I could give you. The little boxer Terry Spinks would mix with the 'Up on the Roof' singer Kenny Lynch. They stood in the 'Mod Corner' of the Lyceum around 1954. Kenny always wore a check

Burberry overcoat. He WAS a really early 'London Lad.' He knew everything that was going on.

I always noticed the South London guys were always very smart, well dressed 'Jack the Lads.' They used to wear KD's, which were chinos, with the KD meaning 'compulsory drill' and they would wear a navy Fred Perry with it, which is quite a sharp look even this afternoon...

I was like 14 you know. However I was never stopped going in. They never said anything to me. Remember, I had all the gear on...

My uncle Max made me a grey double-breasted suit to go to the Lyceum in. I used to see scooters parked up outside The Lyceum around '55 or '56. Not loads of them, just a few, but they were there.

The music was by the Oscar Rabin band. Big band jazz, dance music and I think Don Lang sat in?

There was a form of dancing in the Lyceum, which is now extinct. You would have seen that in all the youth clubs in London. In the early 1950s they were all good jivers, natural jivers. NOT taking lessons in jiving, they just could do it.

By the way, Cecil Gee brought over a tailor from Rome called Giorgio who ended with a little shop in an arcade here.

He was brought over here in 1955/56 and he was

like a peasant really. But in the end he had some very successful years and sent his kids to private schools. He made me a couple of lovely suits. The Italian look was big.

And don't forget we had loads of Italian waiters in Soho. There was one place they would get there lunch and stand outside with their pasta eating it out of a bowl. Those guys were very sharp.

The first week I worked at Cecil Gee, I found this old English menswear shop around the corner and I had a white poplin pop over shirt made there. This would be 1955.

I was looking at the American clothes from the age of 12. My uncles would go to the States and bring back magazines and I studied the clothes within them. I went to David's in Charing Cross Road where they sold Lion of Troy shirts, Hickocks belts and gawd knows what else.

And I would sit in the coffee bar attached to the shop at Cecil Gee watching the world go by, soaking it all up. A lot of the communications about what was going on would be picked up from around Soho. From in the jazz clubs really.

At this time I was studying the distributive trades course at St Martins School of Art and I even gave a few saxophone lessons. I never became a great player, but in the basement there I taught a few, one of who became a professional, George Carne...he won't remember me though. He became a very good player.

Don't forget this period is described to us and in many books, as a dull period, so grey and boring. I'm saying, not a bit of it!

I reckon 800 – 1000 people from all walks of life were involved.

A real cross section.

The Toffs....the toffs and bottoms!'





**SCEPTRE**  
*finance*

## FOR A FARE DEAL ON TAXI FINANCE

- New and Used Taxi Finance
- Hire Purchase / HP with Balloon Payment
- Private Sale (Ltd Co.s only)
- Credit Lines for Fleets
- Refinance / Refinance of Balloon Payments
- Flexible Terms and Competitive Rates

Call us on **01268 799541**  
or email **info@sceptrefinance.co.uk**

Please visit **www.sceptrefinance.co.uk**  
for more information

Sceptre Finance Limited is a credit broker and not a lender. Authorised & Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FRN: 673142) Registered in England and Wales with company No. 4247886. We can introduce you to a limited number of carefully selected finance providers and will receive a commission if you take out finance.

## LONDON TAXIS TO RENT



**Suit all budgets**  
**Full back up**  
**Clean and well maintained**  
**Call 07738 162 518**

## ASTRAL CAFE

ENGLISH BREAKFAST  
SALADS - ROAST DINNERS  
PASTA - SANDWICHES  
ALL FRESH EVERY DAY



# Who's in your corner?

**The LCDC: fighting for the trade and YOU**  
**Call 020 7394 5553 to become a member**



# One-to-One Personal Service.

## Martin Cordell & Co.

Accountants & Tax Specialists to the Taxi Trade

**We're here to help. We want to meet you as we understand your business. Let us take the strain of dealing with your tax obligations.**

**With over 45 years experience of the taxi trade, and more than 40 expert staff members, we are the leading taxi drivers' accountancy firm in the UK.**

**Our services include:**

- One-to-One personal service
- Annual confidential meeting
- Preparation of accounts
- Tax enquiries & investigations
- Limited company trading advice
- PAYE, VAT & company registration expertise
- Loss of earnings claim advice
- One point of contact for ongoing continuity
- Easy payment terms

**CALL US FOR A FREE FIRST CONSULTATION**  
IN PERSON OR OVER THE PHONE

Phone us today on: **020 8980 7161**

See us at: **Unit 6, Quebec Wharf, 14 Thomas Road, Limehouse, London, E14 7AF**

Email: **info@mcordell.co.uk**

Web: **www.martin-cordell.co.uk**



# London's Trusted Taxi Insurance & Breakdown Cover

## All under one roof

- Exclusive Insurance schemes
- Breakdown cover only £99
- Roadside assistance and recovery
- Recovery to any UK Location



Platinum  
Trusted  
Service  
Award



2022 feefo<sup>co</sup>

**QUOTAX**  
INSURANCE SERVICES

Call us on:

**0208 691 9691**

Quotax Insurance Services is a trading name of London Taxi Insurance authorised and regulated by the FCA (504042)

[www.quotax.net](http://www.quotax.net)