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Issue 306 July / August 2025

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KPM SHUTS DOORS



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WHILE TFL FIDDLES, THE TRADE BURNS...

I have often said that the taxi trade is a reflection of wider society, and right now, we are witnessing the slow breakdown of both.

The recent and deeply unsettling closure of KPM after 50 years of service has left many members contacting me with the same pressing question: "Who's next?"

My greatest concern is that this could trigger a domino effect across the trade. As detailed on pages 3, 4, 5 and 7, the Club has been actively working to hold TfL accountable for its continued failure to address critical aspects of our working environment. Their persistent inaction and neglect may have serious and lasting consequences for the future of our industry.

With the future of LEVC still uncertain, it's worth reminding ourselves that we were promised five ZEC taxi models - yet we are left with what is effectively a monopoly. Similarly, the lack of meaningful progress on EV infrastructure represents yet another broken commitment.

The trade has been forced to endure one unfulfilled promise after another, and much like the broader state of the country, we are now approaching a critical tipping point.

The question remains: where will this leave us?



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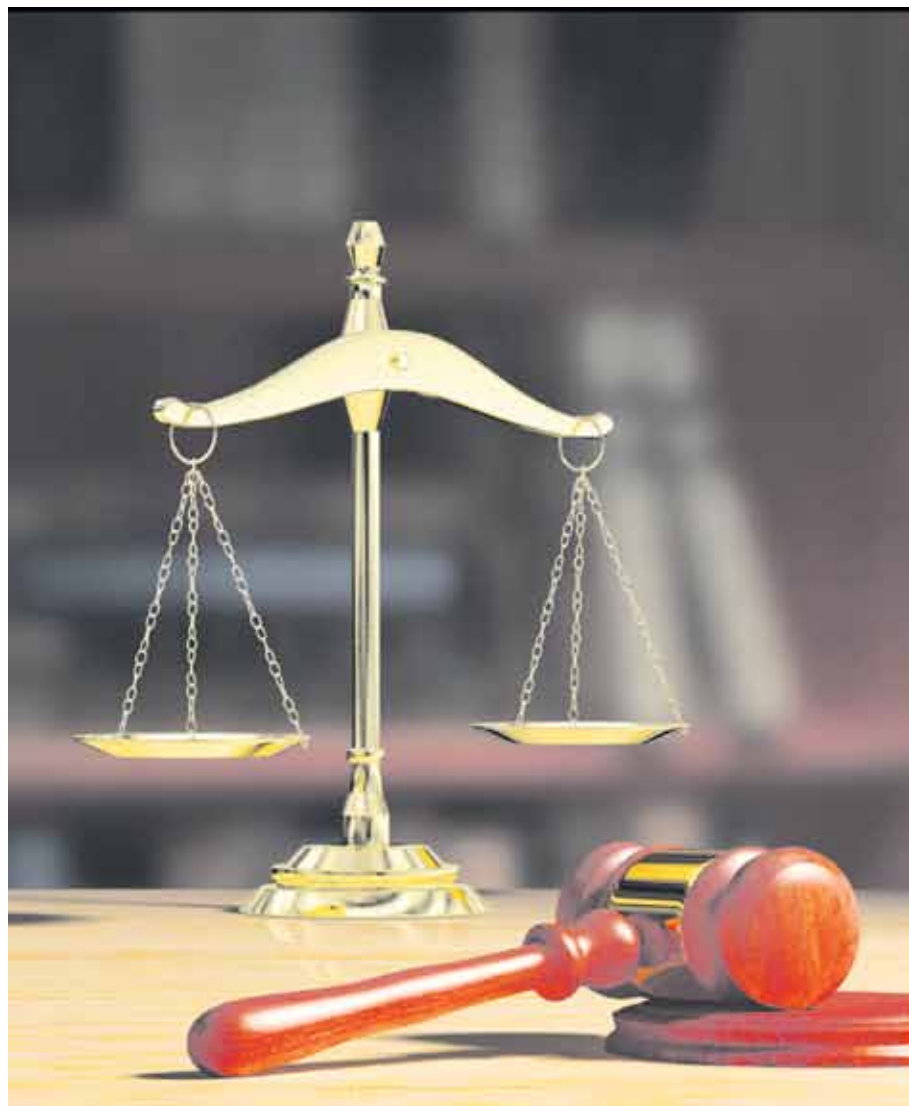
We at the LCDC don't often bang our own drum when it comes to helping our members with their legal troubles. A lot of the cases which come our way with members are quite sensitive and we respect their wishes to keep things in house and out of the paper which I can fully appreciate.

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

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

- Grant Davis, LCDC Chairman

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LCDC QUIZZES TFL OVER ITS INACTION

**To Helen Chapman,
Director of Licensing,
Regulation and Charging,
Transport for London**

Dear Helen

Re: Clarification and Enforcement of Section 2 of the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998

I am writing to seek your clarification and to request that Transport for London investigate an important matter relating to the enforcement of the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998, particularly in light of the differences with the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

As you know, under the 1976 Act, it is unlawful for a private hire operator to operate unless licensed in the relevant district. Section 80 defines "operate" as making provision for the invitation or acceptance of bookings for a private hire

vehicle in the course of business.

By contrast, under section 2 of the 1998 Act, it is unlawful for an unlicensed operator to make provision for the invitation or acceptance or to accept a private hire booking. The inclusion of the words "or accept" is significant: it makes clear that only an operator licensed by TfL may lawfully accept private hire bookings within London.

This issue was notably highlighted during the first refusal of Uber London Limited's licence. I refer specifically to your first witness statement at that time, where you explained TfL's position: "TfL was not satisfied that ULL was accepting bookings at its licensed operating premises in London because:

(a) ULL does not accept bookings before assigning them to a driver — the booking is accepted by the

driver, and the operating system then relays the acceptance back to the customer;
(b) In common sense terms, it is the driver, not ULL, who accepts the booking."



As a result, Uber London Limited amended its operating model to comply with the 1998 Act, demonstrating that TfL considers 'backfilling' — where bookings are accepted by a driver and then relayed — to be unlawful within London.

This raises serious concerns about the increasing number of private

hire vehicles licensed under the 1976 Act but working within London for large app-based platforms. Licensing authorities outside London which issue operator licences under the 1976 Act may have no knowledge of whether an operator is 'backfilling' bookings. Furthermore, they may not consider it unlawful, as the 1976 Act merely requires the recording of bookings, not compliance with the stricter provisions of the 1998 Act.

Accordingly, something which may be lawful under the 1976 Act is not lawful under the 1998 Act within London. A Driver accepting in London before his operator, no matter where that operator is licensed is an unlicensed operator and in breach of Section 2.

In light of this, I would be grateful if you could clarify

the following:

1. What measures does TfL have in place to ensure that drivers and operators licensed under the 1976 Act, but operating within London via large app-based platforms, are not in breach of section 2 of the 1998 Act?
2. How does TfL monitor and enforce compliance in cases where 'backfilling' may be taking place across licensing borders?
3. Does TfL engage with licensing authorities outside London on this matter to ensure the integrity of private hire booking regulations within the capital?

Given the public interest in maintaining fair, safe, and lawful private hire operations in London, I respectfully request that this issue be investigated and that appropriate enforcement action be taken where breaches are identified.

Kind regards
Grant Davis, Chairman,
London Cab Drivers' Club

Dear Grant,

Thank you for your email.

Transport for London (TfL) is the licensing authority and regulator for private hire vehicle (PHV) services in London. The Private Hire Vehicles (London) 1998 Act enables TfL to licence private hire operators, drivers and vehicles in London.

Outside London, the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 applies to the licensing of private hire operators, drivers and vehicles and is currently undertaken by local licensing authorities.

We recognise, and share, your concerns about PHVs and PHV drivers licensed outside of London working partially or wholly within London. Under current legislation this is legal and is a practice known as Cross



Border Hiring (CBH).

That is why, in 2018, we published a policy paper raising concerns about this practice and providing proposals for legislative change.

CBH was examined by a Department for Transport-commissioned Task and Finish Group on taxi and private hire licensing, that

TfL was an active member of. The Group's final report was published in 2018 and included a number of recommendations, including some that would address CBH, including: a start/finish requirement and better enforcement powers.

In 2019 the Government published its response to the report and indicated that it was not minded to

progress legislative change to address CBH.

You will be aware that we also recently published the TPH Action Plan (2025). In the Action Plan we have a range of legislative asks, including a request that Government urgently introduces measures to address the issue of CBH.

The findings of the Casey Review into group-based child sexual exploitation exposed harrowing failures in protecting vulnerable children and highlighted the urgent need for reform. We support the Government's commitment to closing loopholes in taxi and private hire licensing laws, which were identified as a contributing factor in some past exploitation cases. Strengthening these laws is essential to ensuring that all drivers operating in London meet the same high standards of

safety and accountability, regardless of where they are licensed.

The Transport Select Committee also announced, recently, that it was launching a new inquiry to investigate how standards for taxis and PHVs could be improved, amid concern about inadequate regulation that varies from one area of the country to another. TfL will actively engage with the inquiry to continue to lobby for legislation to address CBH.

We would welcome the support of the LCDC, alongside other taxi and PHV stakeholders in our continued lobbying efforts on this issue.

Best wishes,
Helen

**GRANT RESPONDS:
SEE OVERLEAF**

'Mayor has watched taxi trade wither on the vine'

Dear Helen,

Thank you for your response. However, once again, it merely serves to underline just how ineffectual Transport for London has been in supporting the taxi trade over the past decade. Since Uber was granted what can only be described as a free pass into London, the taxi trade has been in a state of continual decline—and in my view, it has never truly recovered.

We've seen plan after plan, each dressed up with buzzwords and vague promises, yet none have delivered a single tangible benefit to the licensed taxi industry. Not one.

Why does a licensed taxi need three separate stickers instructing passengers on how to make a complaint, while—despite over a decade of my repeated requests—no such requirement has ever been applied to private

hire vehicles? This is not oversight; it's gaslighting.

With minimal enforcement of meaningful regulation for PH vehicles, TfL under this Mayor has stood by and watched the taxi trade wither on the vine. After ten years of broken promises, the reality is stark: not one thing has improved for the taxi trade—not one.

Under TfL's oversight, every facet of the taxi trade has deteriorated—driver

numbers are falling, the Knowledge of London is in decline, the vehicle supply is monopolised, and licensing backlogs have become the norm. It speaks volumes that even the Mayor himself has publicly stated that Taxi and Private Hire is not fit for purpose—the only thing he's ever said that I fully agree with.

We are not just struggling—we are being actively managed into decline. Perhaps it's time

senior managers such as yourself reflect honestly on your performance and the role you've played in this ongoing collapse. Maybe the industry needs fresh leadership—someone with the clarity and courage to genuinely fight for the survival of London's taxi trade before it disappears entirely.

Yours

Grant Davis,
Chairman, LCDC

WHY LONDON NEEDS A NEW TAXI

By Roy McMaster

The recent sad news that 180 people have been made redundant at LEVC means that nearly half the 460 staff from 2023 have gone. The company has made huge losses every year since it started producing the TXe. Is there any future for the dedicated purpose-built taxi?

Some Orgs, TfL and King Canute

I have worked in the supply side of the purpose-built taxi market for the past 35 years. It was always hard to make money while delivering the TfL Conditions of Fitness and giving customers a quality product. At LTI we spent £25 million developing the TX1. Even with a market that was 30% bigger than it is today we struggled to deliver a quality and make money. It's the other way around now, with the TXe investment maybe 10 times greater than we spent on TX1, it is generally liked by passengers and drivers, but the market is much smaller, and the business loses a fortune. Some drivers and orgs say that's



exactly why we should keep the turning circle and defend the monopoly. They say you can't let anyone else into London, or we will lose this iconic taxi. But to my mind that's a bit like the ancient Viking king who couldn't hold the sea back. Long term no parent company even as big as Geely is going to tolerate such a drain on its resources. Meantime TfL stick to the same old script.

Learning from history

When I left LTI and started working with Jevon Thorpe (ex-MD of LTI and Chief Designer) and Peter DaCosta of KPM on a new Vito Taxi for London we recognised there is a formula for success in our niche taxi market. You could invest a much smaller amount of money by piggybacking on the billions spent by a major

motor manufacturer like Mercedes and adapt it for the special requirements of the London taxi market. The Vito delivered a product with plenty of space, comfort, 6-seats and great donor vehicle quality. The only thing that let it down was the rear wheel steering system which just couldn't deliver the turning circle. We spent more money and effort on RWS warranty than we spent on designing and

developing the Vito Taxi. Ironically, most drivers said they didn't use it anyway. If 4,000 London Vito drivers didn't use their RWS and it's been removed as a condition in every other major UK city, what's the point in keeping the turning circle as a mandatory condition? You're just trying to beat back progress. Like Canute.

What's to be done?

Converted taxis must be the future, because they are the only way to make smaller volumes for this niche market. Standards must be high. But they must offer M1 Full GB Type Approval as a side-access wheelchair accessible taxi, with a robust glazed partition for driver and passenger safety. And that's why I support this new Ford Maxicab from Cab Direct. It has all the attributes of the Vito and more. More driver and passenger space, 20% more wheelchair accessibility including side access as well as a 2.5-litre hybrid and a fully electric version. The Maxicab has been accepted in every other major UK city as a purpose-built taxi. London needs to change and accept the Maxicab too.

A now-deleted post by the General Secretary of the United Cabbies Group (UCG) recently stated:

"None of you are stupid. None of you are mugs. We're entering a situation where minicabs are acting like taxis through technology, and taxis are behaving like minicabs. FFS."

At the London Cab Drivers Club (LCDC), we agree: taxi drivers are not stupid. They may be disillusioned or apathetic at times — but certainly not lacking in intelligence or awareness.

We also agree with the sentiment that technological change is reshaping the industry. App-based platforms are enabling private hire vehicles (PHVs) to operate in ways that closely resemble taxis, while simultaneously encouraging taxis to behave like PHVs. But while these changes are increasingly obvious, there is a troubling lack of strategic understanding — and action — from within the trade itself.

Understanding the Legal Shift – and the Trade's Silence

At LCDC, we believe we are one of the few organisations that fully understand the legal dynamics driving this transformation. Unfortunately, understanding is not enough. In the absence of broad, coordinated support from the taxi trade, we are unable to initiate the kind of robust legal challenge needed to clarify and protect the distinct regulatory status of taxis in law.

This fragmentation is holding the trade back. Without unity, no single trade organisation has the financial or institutional strength to take Transport for London (TfL) or app companies to court and seek a declaratory judgment on the legal obligations that apply to app bookings — obligations that stem from long-standing Hackney Carriage legislation.

The Legal Reality: Plying

Lines Have Blurred - But Trade Remains Paralysed

for Hire Has Been Settled

Some within the trade still argue that PHVs plying for hire via apps is a breach of regulation. That argument is no longer tenable. The courts have made clear — most notably in the Uber (Reading) judgment and UTAG v Freenow — that a private hire driver accepting jobs via an app is not plying

contracts which lack the same level of public duty or compellability. In other words, once a taxi driver accepts a hiring — whether from a hail or an app — they are legally obliged to fulfil it. That obligation does not apply in the same way to PHV drivers.

Yet this distinction is not being enforced. And TfL —

driver who cancels such a booking — unless directed to by the passenger — may be in breach of licensing conditions.

Despite the significance of this ruling, the trade continues to view Johnson through the narrow lens of employment law, failing to grasp the powerful implications it carries for contract formation, agency relationships, and enforcement under Hackney Carriage law.

TfL's Reluctance – and the Apps' Advantage

If, as Johnson confirmed, a taxi driver's contractual duty begins at the point of acceptance, then Section 39 of the London Cab Order 1934 provides that the taximeter may be started from that moment.

However, app companies are reluctant to embrace this. Why? Because allowing metering from acceptance makes app fares less competitive compared to street hails. This undermines the app companies' market strategy, so they avoid it — and TfL, instead of stepping in to uphold taxi regulations, turns a blind eye.

This benefits only the apps. It weakens Hackney Carriage law, undermines driver income, and creates unfair asymmetry between taxis and PHVs. Yet no trade body has been willing or able to directly challenge this through the courts.

One Member's Challenge – and TfL's Inaction

One of our members has taken an independent stance. His position is that, under current consumer law and app terms, he is entitled to start the meter from the moment a booking is accepted — provided the following conditions are met:

1. The app's terms and conditions define the company as acting as the driver's agent.

2. The passenger consents to a variation of the contract that allows the meter to run from the point of acceptance — a variation permitted under Section 50 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015.

Because the app company claims to act only as the driver's agent, the driver remains the principal and may negotiate directly with the passenger (within the boundary of Hackney Carriage regulations). This is entirely consistent with consumer law, which requires contracts to be clear and transparent — especially in pre-booked arrangements.

Despite threatening enforcement action, TfL has not followed through — because doing so would require them to take legal responsibility for defining the law in this area. TfL would rather let ambiguity persist than risk being challenged in court on these regulatory inconsistencies.

Conclusion: The Trade Must Unite or Accept Defeat

When the UCG's General Secretary says that taxis and PHVs are now operating in similar ways, he's right. But simply pointing this out on social media achieves nothing. The trade still has the legal tools to defend its unique regulatory position — but doing so requires unity, funding, and legal strategy. Without those, individual drivers and small organisations are left to pick up the pieces while TfL and the app companies redefine the industry by stealth.

The LCDC remains committed to defending the future of the taxi trade. But unless the wider industry steps up and supports a coordinated legal response, we are all — collectively — reaping what we've sown.



Trev @TM1654 · 7m

None Of You's , are stupid None Of You's Are Divs . We are embarking on a situation where Mini Cabs are acting like a Taxi via Technology and Taxis are acting like a Mini Cab via technology. Ffs . So the UCG are treated like C***s for calling this out 🙄 You Couldn't Make It Up

for hire. This legal debate has been settled.

Persisting with this outdated view does nothing but paralyse the trade. It wastes time, prevents progress, and feeds the illusion that victory lies in a legal principle that no longer exists.

Two Legal Frameworks, Two Standards of Duty

The law still draws a clear line between taxis and PHVs — and the obligations placed on each. Taxis, regulated by the London Hackney Carriage Acts and the London Cab Order 1934, are bound by a public transport duty to fulfil an accepted hiring. This compellability applies for up to 12 miles or one hour and is a core feature of the public service model.

Private hire vehicles, by contrast, operate under the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998 and are engaged in commercial

as the regulator — continues to allow a situation where app companies can sidestep taxi regulations, while the burden of legal duty remains firmly on the driver.

Johnson v MyTaxi: A Missed Opportunity for the Trade

One of the most overlooked judgments in recent years is Johnson v MyTaxi. While much of the industry's reaction focused negatively on its implications for worker status, the judgment also made an important finding that the trade has largely ignored: The legal duty of the taxi driver starts at the point of acceptance of an app booking.

The tribunal in Johnson went further — recognising that the relationship between the app and the driver was one of principal and agent, and that once a booking was accepted, the driver had entered into a contract which must be honoured. A

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PHV lawbreaking in plain sight – and still no action from TfL

By LCDC Editorial Team

A heated exchange of emails between the London Cab Drivers' Club (LCDC) Chairman, Grant Davis, and TfL's Helen Chapman has exposed yet again the failure of Transport for London to uphold the legal framework it is charged with enforcing — particularly regarding the scandal of Private Hire bookings being unlawfully accepted in London by out-of-town operators.

The issue, raised forcefully by Grant on 6 July 2025, centres on Section 2 of the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998, which makes it unlawful for anyone other than a TfL-licensed operator to accept a private hire booking within London. It's crystal clear: if a driver

or non-TfL operator is accepting bookings inside London, they're breaking the law. And TfL knows it.

In his letter, Grant cited TfL's own historic position — notably from Helen Chapman's own witness statement during Uber's licence battle — which confirmed that 'backfilling' (where a driver accepts a job before the operator formally does) breaches the 1998 Act. That legal interpretation hasn't changed — so why is it being ignored?

Instead of taking enforcement action, Helen Chapman replied with the same well-rehearsed TfL position: "It's legal under current legislation." Her response dated 18 July avoided the direct questions

and simply reiterated that Cross Border Hiring (CBH) is legal under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. But as Grant's reply on 25 July made clear, that law doesn't apply in London. Helen's letter trots out the usual distractions: an old 2018 policy paper, vague lobbying promises, and a nod to the 2025 Taxi and PHV Action Plan. But there is no explanation of:

- How TfL is monitoring this unlawful activity,
- Whether enforcement operations are being conducted, or
- What discussions are happening with local authorities who are licensing PH operators to operate illegally in the capital.

Her final line — inviting the LCDC to "support" TfL's

lobbying — lands hollow. Grant's reply points to the reality drivers see every day:

- TfL demanding licensed taxis plaster their cabs with three separate complaint stickers, yet no such requirement for PHVs.
- Knowledge numbers in freefall.
- LEVC's monopoly and spiralling vehicle costs.
- Licensing delays now the norm, not the exception.

And perhaps most damning of all, the Mayor himself recently stated that "Taxi and Private Hire is not fit for purpose" — a rare moment of truth that echoes the trade's long-held view.

In his final reply, Grant didn't mince his words. He challenged TfL senior leadership — including Helen Chapman — to

"reflect honestly on your performance and the role you've played in this ongoing collapse."

The LCDC Chairman's message is blunt but fair: if TfL won't enforce the laws that protect the integrity of our trade, then the damage being done isn't accidental — it's institutional.

The LCDC will not sit back. We will continue to press this issue, including through the upcoming Parliamentary Transport Select Committee inquiry into taxi and PHV licensing. This isn't just about rules — it's about survival.

If you're tired of the excuses and want to see action, support the LCDC. Join today and stand up for the future of the trade.



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CLEAR STANCE ON METER STARTS...

Our member has taken a clear and principled stance on app-based taxi work:

The meter should start the moment a job is accepted.

Let's be clear — this is not legal advice. Drivers should always consult their union or obtain independent legal advice. However, in the absence of clear public guidance from Transport for London (TfL), and given TfL's ongoing refusal to seek a declaratory judgment on the matter, our member has formed a view grounded in long-standing taxi law and contract principles.

The Legal Basis

Most app platforms position the taxi driver as the 'principal' in the contract with the passenger. In our member's view, that makes an app booking no different from a street hail or a rank pickup.

And in those situations, the process is clear: the cab is hired, the meter is started.

Section 39 of the London Cab Order 1934 allows the meter to be engaged once the taxi is hired. Our member argues that pressing "accept" on an app job constitutes being hired — a legally binding agreement is formed, and the meter can lawfully be started from that point.

Compellability — and Why It Matters for Public Safety

But this isn't just a question of contractual formality or payment mechanics. It goes deeper than that — to public safety.

Under Section 17 of the Hackney Carriage Act 1853, a hired taxi is compellable — meaning the driver is legally required to carry the passenger for a

trip of 12 miles or 1 hour.

Our member argues that compellability is triggered at the point of acceptance, not pickup. Once a driver accepts a booking, both parties are contractually bound. The driver is under a legal obligation to fulfil the journey, and the passenger

a breach of TfL's Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires public bodies to eliminate discrimination and protect vulnerable groups.

This is not hypothetical. These app cancellations happen regularly — and our member believes TfL has a legal and moral duty

This is arguably a lawful variation and, in our member's view, strengthens both parties' rights — and avoids disputes.

TfL's Authority — and Overreach

TfL has reportedly stated

meter at acceptance — despite those drivers being told they are the principal in the contract — then who really controls the terms? That question was central to the MyTaxi Employment Tribunal case, which found that such contractual relationships were often a legal fiction. In reality, the app companies are the ones in control — and that raises serious regulatory and public safety concerns, which TfL has failed to address.

Despite this, TfL continues to engage with and legitimise these app platforms as stakeholders, even as they erode passenger protection and driver independence.

Conclusion

Our member's position is as follows:

Once a taxi driver accepts an app booking, they are legally hired — and legally entitled to start the meter.

If the passenger agrees (which can be done through an in-app message), the contract terms may be lawfully varied, and the meter may start immediately.

This is not just about making extra money in difficult trading circumstances — it's about legal clarity, professional standards, and above all, public safety.

Cancelling app jobs after acceptance leaves passengers vulnerable and unprotected — and our member believes that practice has no place in the regulated licensed taxi trade, which is performing a vital public transport service.

Start the meter when the job is accepted, make sure the passenger consents, and fulfil the hiring - that's what keeps passengers safe.



has a legal right to rely on that commitment.

This legal protection exists for a reason: to provide certainty, especially for vulnerable passengers — such as lone women late at night, elderly individuals, or disabled passengers — who depend on the reliability and professionalism of licensed taxi services.

App-based cancellations after acceptance directly undermine this protection. They create a dangerous situation where a vulnerable person, believing a licensed taxi is on its way, is suddenly left stranded — potentially in an unsafe or isolated location, without alternatives.

In our member's view, allowing such cancellations is not just bad practice — it is a serious public safety risk and potentially

to act.

The Terms & Conditions Trap

App companies often state that drivers cannot start the meter until the passenger physically enters the cab. Our member acknowledges that by agreeing to these terms, drivers may be bound by them. However, he also argues that the terms do not override statutory rights.

These bookings form consumer contracts — and under the Consumer Rights Act 2015, particularly Section 50, a trader (driver) and consumer (passenger) may mutually agree to vary contract terms. That means that even if an app prohibits meter activation at acceptance, the driver can lawfully start the meter — if the passenger agrees, for example via an in-app message.

that drivers should only start the meter at the point of pickup. But our member strongly contests that TfL has no legal authority to impose this policy.

TfL did not write the Hackney Carriage Acts. It is not the lawmaker — it is an enforcement body. It cannot reinterpret long-established taxi legislation and case law to suit the commercial practices of private app companies operating in the regulated taxi market.

Last year, our member received a warning from TfL for starting the meter at acceptance. He challenged the basis of that warning, and TfL has not taken further action — which, to our member, speaks volumes.

Who's Really in Control?

If app companies remove drivers for starting the

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Why does Sadiq Khan want to destroy London's Black Cab Trade?

By Alex Wilson

Motorists in London can be forgiven for feeling that there is a target on their backs. First, there was ULEZ. Last August saw the expansion of ULEZ to outer London. April saw the introduction of charges for the Blackwall Tunnel, free to London's motorists for its entire 128-year history.

But one prized community in London's motoring history is feeling particularly threatened and that is the licensed black cab trade. In March, the Centre for London produced a report in partnership with taxi and private hire app FreeNow stating that on current trends, black cabs will have vanished from London's streets by 2045, just twenty years' time. While ten years ago, almost 23,000 black cabs were licensed to operate on London's streets, the figure for last year was less than 15,000. Underlying the forecasts in the report is a catastrophic collapse in the number of new licences being issued. In 2000, the figure was 1,073. The number for 2024 was just 104.

London's black cab trade is prized not just because of its history and symbolic presence. Uniquely, black cabs are all equipped to transport wheelchair users around a city that will never have a public transport system that adequately meets their needs. Only one third of tube stations have lift access and while lifts are being added to more stations, only half the network will ultimately be covered. Ask a wheelchair user about taking the bus and they will tell you about having to navigate floating bus stops and, once on board, finding the bus's wheelchair bay jammed with bikes or prams. Only black cabs consistently provide

London's wheelchair users with a means of getting around the city.

While the barriers to entry and operating costs for black cab drivers get higher and higher, they get lower and lower for private hire drivers, leading to an 82%



increase in their numbers since 2009/10 to almost 108,000.

Only one manufacturer of black taxis is approved by Transport for London and the most popular model, the LEVC Vista Comfort Plus costs just under £75,000 to buy. The central government-funded Plug-In Taxi Grant softened the blow when it provided £7,500 but this fell to £4,000 in April. A private hire driver can get on the road with a compliant vehicle for as little as £15,000. He or she can be working after just three to four weeks going through TfL's licensing process. For black cab drivers, the Knowledge can take three to four years to complete.

Once on the road, London's black cabs find it increasingly hard to navigate the city's streets with access often barred by Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, bus and cycle lanes.

Along with other London Assembly Members, I've asked the Mayor a number of questions both in the chamber and in writing because I want to see the decline in licences halted and for our remaining cabbies to flourish and return to growth. We were

This is what I've come to recognise during my year on the London Assembly as Sadiq Khan's classic MO – it's what I call the technocratic shoulder-shrug. It's as if he's saying: "I'd love to support the taxi trade. Of course, I would. Access to roads? That would be the

vehicles; nor is it required for black cabs in the vast majority of other cities. While popular with many cabbies and something that should remain available as a choice, the requirement keeps the cost of new vehicles artificially high. The recent announcement by LEVC of the loss of 180 jobs at their factory in Coventry makes action on this more pressing. I've pressed the Mayor on this and he has told me that there are no plans to remove it. Make no mistake – this has nothing to do with market forces, it is decline by design.

Secondly, when the Mayor genuinely wants to make something happen, he finds money for it. In the conversion to electric vehicles, London's black cab drivers have more than played their part with around two thirds of the black cab fleet now EVs. The Mayor has allocated an eye-watering £1.4 billion pounds for his Net Zero ambitions in the 2024-25 budget. Remember those cycle lanes and LTNs? London's boroughs already spend heavily on this but the Mayor is throwing another £162 million at the boroughs in the next year alone. He is spending £353 million over the next three years on electrifying London's bus fleet. If he were serious about reducing the cost of new taxis, he would find the money to do so.

The decline of London's prized black cab trade is not a result of "market forces". Sadiq Khan and TfL have had their foot on the throat of the trade for years. Rather than perform a technical shoulder-shrug and watch the decline continue, it is within the Mayor's gift to divert some funding from his prodigious net zero budget and help our cabbies flourish.

urged to wait for the much-vaunted "Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan". Well, this plan was published earlier this year and I'm afraid the prospects for our black cab trade are bleaker than ever.

Over the course of 55 pages, the plan is rich on platitudes but when it comes to action to reverse the decline of the black cab trade, it is lamentably poor. Of the fourteen action areas, only two directly address it. Of these, it appears TfL can only try and influence matters outside its control.

On the access to roads, "boroughs are encouraged to consider access to all streets for which they are responsible." On helping drivers with the cost of new taxis, TfL is: "continuing to call on the government" to maintain the plug-in taxi grant and remove VAT from the purchase of wheelchair accessible taxis.

boroughs – I'll encourage them. The cost of a new taxi? Well, decisions on VAT and plug-in grants sit with central Government of course. I'll call on them to help."

The report would love to have you believe that TfL is taking action but, when it comes to some of the key areas, it's outside the control of the Mayor and TfL. This simply isn't true. It isn't true for two reasons.

Firstly, when I've asked the Mayor in the chamber about the high cost of a new London taxi, he laments the "declining numbers" which make the market unattractive to all but one manufacturer; he blames "market forces". But lack of competing manufacturers is entirely down to the historic requirement for black cabs to have a 25-foot turning circle. This is unique to London and is not required for private hire

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KPM ANNOUNCES ITS CLOSURE



A Message from KPM Automotive



After five decades in the trade — from Brady Street to Hemming Street and now Lukin Street — Peter has been, unfortunately, forced into the heart-wrenching position of turning off the lights at KPM for the last time on Friday, 25th July.

This decision has not come lightly. A combination of factors has made it unavoidable: TfL's unfair punishment of vehicle age limits, along with ongoing emission consultations. The involuntary retirement of many of our core customers and the lack of new drivers coming through the system have added to the pressure — creating less demand and greater uncertainty.

With just 12 months left on our LEVC Authorised Service Agent Agreement, and following the recent announcement that LEVC has laid off 45% of its workforce — along with expectations of further notices with more changes that will make trading conditions even more uncertain than they currently are — it has only confirmed that the road ahead is unsustainable.

Add to that the 200% increase in business rates, National Insurance contributions, and rising inflation, along with non-communication from our landlord, conflicting lease terms, and extortionate rent increases, and it becomes clear that the pressures on businesses like ours have only intensified.

It is simply not viable to take on greater financial risk for ever-decreasing reward.

To all our customers — thank you. Your loyalty and kindness over the years have meant everything to us. We are truly grateful for your continued support through the ups and downs.

To our staff, past and present — many of whom have stood with us through multiple chapters of this journey — thank you. You've all played a part in what we built.

A special mention must go to Andy, who has been with us for nearly our entire existence.

To customers with Auto Group/Evolution Warranties — we can confirm that your warranties remain valid, and further communication will be sent in due course.

Be lucky

BRITISH VETERANS HAIL TAXI CHARITY AS HUNDREDS GATHER FOR SPECIAL REUNION IN WORTHING: 'I'M OVER THE MOON!'

British veterans have hailed the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans as they enjoyed a special day out to Worthing in Sussex.

A hoard of 50 volunteer black cab drivers gathered in Surrey to drive hundreds of veterans down to the coast for a day of fish and chips, 1940s music and an Elvis Presley tribute act.

Heaping praise on the charity, which has been operating for more than 70 years, 100-year-old World War Two veteran Dorothea Barron said it was "so exciting" to be a part of the special day.

Barron told GB News reporter Charlie Peters: "It is very special indeed, and it's exciting to hear their stories and how we match up in what we went through when we were youngsters."

"I remember pre-war, my mother saying those

wonderful London taxi drivers have been taking cockney children to the seaside again."

"And I said, have they seen the sea before? And she said, no. And I couldn't believe it because we used to go down to Brighton at weekends."

Reflecting on the success of their annual event, Vice Chair of the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans Paul Cook said it is "so great" to see such a huge turnout for the event, year on year.

Cook said: "It's great. This is our annual event, and it's so nice to see around 250 people here each year."

"We've been doing this, as you know, for over 70 years, and it's nice to see everybody coming together again."

Speaking to another veteran, Bill told Charlie

that thanks to the charity event, he was reunited with somebody he had previously served with 54 years ago.

Bill explained: "We met each other last Thursday, he's a Chelsea pensioner, and he's up here today. The last time I see him was 54 years ago, with the 36 Regiment down to Shoeburyness. I'm over the moon."

"It's great, it's brilliant, it's been absolutely out of this world."

Paul Cook told GB News that it is 'so great' to see such a large turnout for the event

Reflecting on the significance of the event, Charlie told GB News: "So many people here are benefiting from the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans, they've done an amazing work here at that charity."

"We're expecting some music to come in a second, and we'll have a band and plenty more entertainment for these amazing people, our finest generation."

"But not just them,

veterans from conflicts all the way up to Afghanistan as well, every generation here is represented and being supported by the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans."

Courtesy of GB News



Sometimes it's all too easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of trade politics and work — so a day out on the coast, helping our incredible veterans, is an absolute treat in my book!

I've always loved the charitable side of the taxi trade, and joining my fellow cabbies on these outings feels like such a meaningful and rewarding experience.

You can't help but feel immense admiration for these remarkable men and women who were willing to risk everything to protect our country — what an extraordinary generation they were!

After picking up my three lovely passengers, we set off for South Holmwood, where the residents pulled out all the stops to make sure everyone had a fantastic time. There was an amazing buffet, free

drinks — it honestly felt like we'd all been whisked away on an all-inclusive holiday!

Watching these wonderful veterans reunite and share laughs was truly heartwarming.

Next, we all hopped back in our taxis and headed to Worthing, where we were greeted by the town's finest. Everyone filed into the Pavilion Theatre, and once again, the veterans

were spoiled with great food and drink, alongside the Mayor of Worthing, whose dad was a London cabbie himself — what a lovely connection!

The afternoon was packed with singers, speeches, and so much joy that the hours just flew by. By late afternoon, early evening, you could see a few tired smiles as we all gently herded our passengers back into the taxis for the ride home.

On the way back, we couldn't resist one last pit stop at South Holmwood for a good old cuppa and a slice of delicious Victoria sponge (heavenly!). Finally, I dropped everyone home, and I'll admit, we were all absolutely cream-crackered — it must be that bracing sea air! What a truly wonderful day it was — one I won't soon forget.

*Grant Davis,
LCDC Chairman*



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■ HEATHROW AIRPORT REPRESENTATION

With our reps at the airport working

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

■ RANKS AND HIGHWAYS

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

■ CAB TRADE ADVICE

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

■ TRADE'S FUTURE

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

■ CAB TRADE REPRESENTATION

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

■ VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS

The Club works alongside LTC and

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

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**WELCOME
ABOARD!**



When I look around at the system we have at Heathrow it never ceases to amaze me that some drivers still can't get it right.

When you enter the north park drivers are required to fill the lines from right to left. So you enter and park in the first lane which the regulars call the fence, pull up as tight as you can and completely fill the lane. No spaces left at the back and no starting a new lane because you're too lazy to walk to the canteen from the back of the north park.

If you're charging your electric cab wait for the cab to pull in behind you and then tell that driver that you're going to charge and can he let you back in when we move across to the South Park.

Don't assume he's a mind reader and knows what you're doing, it's also good manners and drivers are usually more cooperative when asked nicely.

It's come to the attention of the reps that there's a certain element that take this arrangement for granted and are becoming quite aggressive and feel they don't need to explain to the



incoming driver. Well if you

carry on in this manner the charging concession may be removed.

The police have been called twice now in the last month for situations between drivers all because someone thinks it's beneath them to offer an explanation to the newly arrived driver. Treat each other as you like to be treated and we can all get along.

While you're in the north

park have a walk over to the cabin to check how many credits you have on your tag as there's nothing more annoying or embarrassing than getting to the barriers and not having sufficient credits to enter the South Park.

If for some reason you make this mistake please pull back from the barrier park up and go to the cabin. Do not block the barrier and go to the cabin as again it's bad manners. Also blocking

the barrier has a knock on effect for the north park and subsequently out onto the Newall Rd.

When the time comes to move across to the South Park make sure you are back to your cab on time as delays can mean drivers are left stranded out on Newall Rd and we all know what this means. Drivers being sent away or having their numbers taken and threatened with expulsion for over ranking and blocking the road. A draconian measure which we are not happy with but Heathrow won't budge on this decision.

Again the South Park is filled from right to left, the right hand lanes being the Shorts across to the far left hand lane being The Runway. Again whatever you decide to do, if it's going to the canteen or going to the gym you need to be back in time to exit the South Park and be despatched down to the terminals. I know the majority of you know how to behave out here but it's the select few who are making life difficult for everyone. Have some respect for your fellow cabbie.

One rule for some? Prayer Cabin priority exposes HAL's contempt for cab drivers

It's a question on the lips of many Heathrow cabbies: how can Heathrow Property Services suddenly magic up a portacabin for a multi-faith prayer room—fast-tracked, funded, and fully installed—while the rest of the Taxi Feeder Park continues to rot?

Let's be honest: this isn't a neutral "multi-faith" space. It will become, in effect, a mosque, disproportionately serving one group within the trade. That's not an attack on anyone's right to worship—but it is a legitimate challenge to the glaring double standards at play.

Because when drivers ask for basics—like clean

toilets, working showers, a proper canteen, or just a bit of dignity in the place we're forced to wait for hours—it's always "no budget", "no space", or "consultation needed". But when a select group demands a prayer facility, suddenly Heathrow finds the space, the funds, and the will. No long consultations. No delays. No fuss.

So let's ask the obvious:

- Who paid for the portacabin?
- Who authorised it?
- Why was it prioritised ahead of long-standing and more urgent welfare issues?
- Why were trade reps not properly consulted, or were some selectively informed while others were kept in the dark?

This whole affair reeks of preferential treatment and contempt for the wider driver workforce. We are tired of begging for basic hygiene while HAL panders



to identity politics. We're tired of watching religious facilities fast-tracked while the disabled toilet still doesn't lock and drivers eat in their cabs because the canteen's a joke. It's not good enough.

If HAL can find the budget and space for a portacabin mosque, then it can damn well find the money to repair the toilets, expand the canteen, and improve the entire feeder park—which, let's not forget, is funded by our £1 fee every single time we enter.

Let's be crystal clear: this isn't about religion. It's about respect. And right now, the message from HAL is loud and clear—some groups get it, the rest of us don't.

Enough is enough.

The LCDC calls for:

- A full financial disclosure of who funded the prayer cabin
- Immediate investment in feeder park facilities for all drivers
- A proper, transparent consultation process that includes every trade rep—not just the ones who toe the line

Heathrow needs reminding: this is a workplace, not a place of worship—and if they've got the means to provide for one group, they've got the means to provide for us all.

— *The Badge Team Holding Heathrow to Account*

HEATHROW UPDATE ***STOP PRESS***

New Taxi Feeder Management System Nears Rollout – What Drivers Need to Know

Following a recent meeting between Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL), Sensor Dynamics, and trade representatives, we've received a formal update on the progress of the new Taxi Feeder Management System (TFMS). While the meeting was relatively light on detail, it did confirm several key developments that drivers should be aware of as the system edges closer to launch.

Here's a summary of the current position.

System Rollout Timeline

The new TFMS system—designed to modernise how Heathrow manages taxi flows at the Feeder Park and terminals—has now entered its testing and commissioning phase. Full rollout is currently scheduled for Q4 2025, subject to final testing.

Key dates include:

- July–August 2025: End-to-end system testing and on-site commissioning
- Early August 2025: Small-scale user trial involving 5–10 volunteer drivers
- Late August–September 2025: Wider driver registration to begin
- Q4 2025: Full go-live, subject to successful completion of trials

What's Already in Place?

According to the update,

the following milestones have already been reached:

- ANPR cameras and signage (VMS) have been installed and optimised
- Kiosk hardware is in place
- The new cloud-based TFMS system is operational and integrated with HAL's internal systems

register using:

- Their Taxi Bill
- Driver Badge
- A passport-style photo
- A credit or debit card

The registration process will be self-service via smartphone, with follow-up on-site ID verification.

modernised way.

What Comes Next?

Familiarisation materials will be shown on the TFP canteen screens and available online in the coming weeks. We understand that the driver

contributed constructively. We've asked for:

- Clear communications around the registration process and any changes to access rules
- Assurance that drivers without modern smartphones are not excluded
- Clarity on how personal data (e.g. GPS, card details) will be used and protected
- Ongoing driver support during the rollout, particularly during the transition phase

We'll continue to engage with HAL and APCOA to ensure the driver experience is smooth and that any concerns are addressed before the system goes live.

Final Thoughts

This is a major change in how Heathrow's taxi operations will be managed. While the technology and systems are moving ahead, it's essential that implementation remains fair, transparent, and workable for the drivers who rely on Heathrow as a key part of their living.

Trade reps will stay engaged as the system progresses and will share further updates as soon as they become available. In the meantime, if you're approached to participate in the early trials or have questions, don't hesitate to get in touch with your representative body.

Let's ensure that as this system moves forward, driver voices remain central.

Mark White



• Software and app development is complete, with demonstration sessions underway for HAL and APCOA staff

Sensor Dynamics are on-site from 17 July to 15 August to carry out testing and commissioning across both the Feeder Park and terminal areas.

New Driver App and Registration Process

A new mobile app will form part of the driver interface with the TFMS system. Drivers will be asked to

QR codes for easy app download will be displayed in the canteen and elsewhere on-site.

The app will require drivers to have:

- A smartphone running Android 8.0+ or iOS 15+
- Permission for Bluetooth, GPS, and Notifications (only while active at Heathrow)

The system is designed to operate efficiently within the Heathrow environment, allowing drivers to register, receive updates, and interact with the new dispatch processes in a

trial will help identify any teething issues before registration opens more widely.

While not every question has been fully answered, HAL and Sensor Dynamics have confirmed that further updates will be shared as the system progresses through its test phases.

Points Raised by Trade Reps

Although this meeting was more of an update than a full consultation, trade reps were present and



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Stop talking about it and JOIN!

Voi and Lime 'in limbo' as UK trials of e-scooter rentals extended again

Trials of public e-scooter rental schemes have been extended again until 2028, leaving e-scooter firms and users in the UK "in limbo" for an extraordinary eight years of indecision.

Since the authorised schemes started in 2020, several UK operations have folded, including those in London of the now-merged Tier and Dott, while about 1m illegal e-scooters are estimated to have taken to the streets.

The biggest e-scooter operator, Voi, and its rival Lime welcomed the extension but urged the government to bring forward legislation. Voi said the latest trial period "had to be the last", adding that the uncertainty was damaging investment.

The trials of e-scooters had been due to end in May next year, after originally being launched in August 2020 to run for 15 months.

The Department for Transport said the trials would now be extended until May 2028 "to help fill evidence gaps and gather

new learning around e-scooter safety, the impact of local area characteristics and how e-scooters contribute to meeting new government missions".

New cities and regions will also be able to apply to join the trials.



According to the parliamentary safety body PACTS, data on e-scooter accidents is widely underreported. While public legal rental schemes are regarded as relatively safe, with casualty levels on a par with cycling, illegal

e-scooters are frequently modified to go much faster than the 15mph limit, and much more dangerous.

Although hundreds of cities worldwide have embraced e-scooters, Paris notably has banned them, and Italy last year issued strict controls on riders.

Harry Foskin, the public policy manager at Voi, the company that has operated the majority of UK legal e-scooter trips since 2020, said the extension was good news "because otherwise in nine months we wouldn't have a UK

business. But our stance on this is that this has to be the last trial."

He said the company had invested about £100m in schemes in the UK, adding: "We've had more than 45m safe journeys, in 18 towns and cities across the UK, we've proved that these scooters are a safe, sustainable and affordable way to travel. Being in this limbo has handicapped our ability to further invest in the UK and to bring in new vehicles."

Foskin said that the uncertainty had also deterred cities and planners from integrating e-scooters and micromobility into public transport services.

He urged the government to bring forward legislation to make schemes permanent as well as clarifying the law around private e-scooters, "to bring in a level playing field on strict standards that we adhere to on power, weight, speed and batteries", adding: "We look forward to working with them through the process."

Hal Stevenson, the

director of policy for UK and Ireland at Lime, said the extension would protect jobs and services, but added: "There remains a clear need for long-term legislation to help deliver business certainty and future investment. Our data shows the trials have been a success and e-scooters can be introduced into UK cities safely. We look forward to working with the Department for Transport to get this done."

A DfT spokesperson said: "Safety is at the heart of all e-scooter trials and riding a privately owned e-scooter on public land remains illegal.

"We are extending trials to deepen our understanding of e-scooter safety, as we move towards legislating around their use, to better crack down on nuisance and antisocial use."

Labour's last transport secretary, Louise Haigh, in November promised that the government would legislate on e-scooters as it "was clearly required. It's not good enough that it's been left in this situation for too long."

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SCAN ME



By Scott Kimber
LCDC Rep

The first Time I met Grant properly was back in early 2017 when I was invited along to an event at City Hall, hosted by the UKIP Assembly members, to speak and give a cab drivers opinion on what was happening to our trade.

At that time I was trying to push an idea that we all try and boycott the new electric vehicle that was due out later that year in the hope that we could put pressure on Geely and LEVC who in turn could maybe put pressure on TFL and the mayor and help fight our corner.

Of course they chose not to but instead chose to shut down any concerns and criticisms we had. The list of fears, short comings, failings and problems I had started with UBER and their predatory pricing model and iffy work practices

The new Beta Max?

trying to drive us out of business.

Then we had cross border hiring, loss of earnings to credit card suppliers, rickshaws, bikes and scooters, reduction in road space, and the lack of infrastructure for an untested vehicle along with the monopoly creation of our work tool.

There were wild claims about how this vehicle would save us £100 per week yet there was no release on how much it would actually cost so the affordability question couldn't be answered. I wanted to know why we were being forced into this EV revolution 12 years before everybody else (17 once the Tories put the electric promise back to 2035), and not nearer the end when everything was in place and up and



running. The only reason must have been that they could force and control us and we couldn't do anything about it.

Fast forward to today and we are still facing the same fears and concerns that we were 8-9 years ago along with speed limit reductions and an over zealous regulator putting themselves above the courts with the 6

point rule. We also now know there are massive reliability issues meaning even more down time and strains on our income. To add to boot if you need a new vehicle now they're only being built to order so you're going to have to wait. Could this be because of the LEVC L380 (YouTube it people)?

Now I may be the first to criticise LEVC but this vehicle with its 400 mile all electric range is fantastic and a great competitor to the Mercedes Viano and the Ford Maxi. They are clearly going for the ph market but I'm sure there'll be a taxi version for us. As I said, look it up and see what you think.

But, with all the research I've been doing on electric vehicles, my worry is that electric isn't the answer. The

Japanese and Germans are heavily investing in hydrogen technology and development. Even Tesla are onto it. Soon you'll probably be able to drive your car on water! That British bastion JCB are amongst the world leaders in hydrogen plant vehicles and machinery, citing the total impracticalities of using electric in these vehicles. Forget the Maxi cab, EV's could become the new Beta Max!

Whatever the future holds in store for us all we need to make sure that we are never again held to such ridiculous ransom and used as guinea pigs for new technology. Our families rely on us putting food on the table, not us being some part of a political project feeding egos at City Hall.

Keep watching and be assured that all of us here at the LCDC will have your back however we can.

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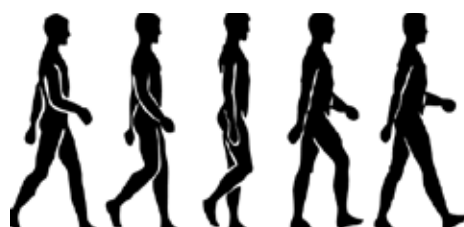
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Walker on the march...

IS IT ALL OVER?

"The game's dead, son"! Those words were spoken to me by a cab driver as we waited at a traffic light, he in his cab and me on my Honda 90, in 1978.

There were probably Lightermen saying that to new recruits on the Thames 400 years ago. Lately though, it does start to look a bit ominous. The LCDC was telling TFL and GLA members, along with others, 12 years ago that the increased cost burdens TFL were placing on our trade and their "couldn't care less" attitude to what Apps were doing to the intended rules, were in danger of killing us off.

Everybody knows that currently the Knowledge is failing. TFL and The Mayor can tinker all they want around the edges of the K but unless they stop Apped-up PH drivers working as taxi drivers, the K will continue to fail. Even if that doesn't put a new boy or girl off from doing the K, they then have to think about the cost of running a cab.

1982

That was the year I bought my first new cab, the newly-released FX4R, that we were all glad to see the back of, eventually. The top of the range model cost £10,070. Don't laugh! diesel was a lot cheaper too.

You may say that takings were a lot lower back then and to a degree you may be right but maybe not as much as you think. In May of that year, my average weekly takings were £450 and diesel cost £39.50. Taking inflation into account, that equates to a net £1850 per week less the cost of the cab. Well, we already know that the cab costs 7 x what is cost in 1984. I'm feeling poor already.

Then we have to think about the cost of getting work. Today, we pay for work. How much do Gett and FreeNow nick off of you for work. If you think it's just the 15-20% of your fare, think again. In 1984, we paid subs but the radio circuits paid us.

Today, you reach the pick-up and wait up to 5 minutes

their customers. So, from my old geezer's point of view, it really is starting to look like the game isn't worth the candle these days.

IT'S COMING FROM EVERYWHERE

The problem isn't only that PH Apps are operating a pseudo taxi service rather than a PH service.



before even setting your meter. Back then, we had a "run-in" that allowed us to put the meter on about a mile before reaching the pick-up point and if we were kept waiting, we were paid 5p per minute plus the meter. On top of that, a 10% tip was compulsory. Lastly, because R4 kicked in at a notional 6 mile point on the meter, many radio fares were on clock and a half, whereas a similar street fare was not. Sometimes, the meter would be on R4 before even leaving the pick-up point.

Then there are the airports. Heathrow didn't always charge for picking up a fare but they have done for a long time. Now though, all London Airports except LCY are charging for us to deliver

It isn't that TFL do not recognise what the PH Act acknowledged. That is, you cannot put different rules and regs and costs on the taxi trade that are far higher than those imposed on the PH trade and expect them to compete in the same market. Kids taking their first business/economics class in school can explain why not. So how come a 14 - year - old kid can work that out and not people on salaries of half a million quid a year?

Then there is The Mayor. I'd like to say he was a chocolate teapot but he is far more destructive than that. You can't help but think he has a hatred of the cab trade. That may be because his dad was a bus conductor (as

he tells us a 1000 times per week) and nasty cab drivers cut his bus up or whether he wrongly thinks our trade is "A white, male club" as Ken Livingstone put it.

He would rather protect large PH operators that exploit over 100,000, mainly immigrant PH drivers that deserve better. That's why most of the few, new taxi drivers coming through the K are from the PH trade. PH is a temporary occupation, in the main, because when drivers realise they are being grossly exploited, they move on as soon as they are able to. No problem though for the likes of Uber, etc as there is always an ample number of new immigrants to exploit. I want to be absolutely clear here. I'm not having a pop at these drivers; they are trying to make a living as best they can. I'm having a pop at the Operators that exploit them and TFL/Mayor that enables and assists them to continue this exploitation.

THE KNOWLEDGE

It is a sad fact that on a weekly basis, more taxi drivers leave the trade than are replaced by newly passed out drivers. We are now in a situation where almost 75% of drivers are 50 years old or older. Last year there were only 500 KOL applications and I don't have to tell you what % of those will see the KOL through.

In June, only 14 new drivers passed out, while 55 drivers handed in their badges. If that is a typical month, our 16,575 (July 11th) drivers will be reduced by 500 a year. We lost a quarter of drivers over the last 5 years so the probability is that we will be down to around 12,500 if no action is taken to prevent this slide.

This has an obvious knock-on effect on vehicles. In June, there were a hundred more cabs came off the road

than there were new cabs licenced. That equates to a fleet reduction of 1200 cabs per year from the current total of 13,985 (11th July). We lost a quarter of the fleet over the last 5 years, so the likelihood is that it will be reduced to around 10,500 cabs in the next 5 years if no action is taken.

The question has to be asked is how long does this have to go on before the trade is unviable? All the main garages, dealerships, renters, etc are struggling now. Personally, I think 10,500 is a critical number, although I may be being optimistic. This will be the point where all the businesses that supply our trade, from manufacturers, through repair garages, to meter and card suppliers can no longer make enough money to survive.

The KOL is the key to our survival. We need new drivers to replace the leavers and then some. That is the only way to build the fleet and thus, the businesses that supply the fleet.

There are only 3 ways to do this:

- 1) Make the KOL easier;
- 2) Make it harder to become a PH driver;
- 3) Legislate to prevent PH drivers using Apps to effectively pick up from the street.

The first is unacceptable. That would be inflicting punishment on, and lowering the standards of the London taxi trade.

It is for TFL and The Mayor to act to put either of the other two options into effect or they will be forever remembered as the clowns that caused the death of the London cab trade that has been around for 400 years and has been widely regarded as the world's best taxi service for a century or more.

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LONDON TAXI PR'S 'CHOOSE TAXI' CUSTOMER CAMPAIGN GOES LIVE ON CENTREFORCE 883 RADIO

London Taxi PR (LTPR), an organisation which represents and promotes the interests of the Licensed London Taxi profession, has announced that 'Choose Taxi,' its new customer focused campaign, is now going live on commercial radio station, Centreforce 883 Radio, with a six-month advertising deal having been agreed, thanks to support from AScotts Group, the UK's only fully independent LEVC electric sales and warranty dealer, and London's largest independent Taxi dealer.

The six-month Centreforce deal, which commenced at the beginning of July, includes a number of exclusive items for London Taxi PR, including a - 30 Second Advert to be played every 2nd hour - up to 12 times per day across the six-month period; Weekly Premium DJ Show sponsorship – with a Premium DJ show ensuring visibility to Centreforce's engaged audience; and a number of other items and events that London Taxi PR and Centreforce will co-collaborate on.

"I cannot thank AScotts Group enough for their generous contribution, support, and encouragement in helping us to get this promotional deal done. Centreforce have also been great with their assistance and advice with what we can do, and hopefully achieve as part of this promotion," said Andy Scott, PR, and Communications for London Taxi PR.

"With the help of the regular advertisement and other promotions and mentions of the Choose Taxi campaign, this will enable us to promote the profession and the use of



London Taxis to a massive audience, with specific messages. It's a win-win for us on many levels."

Essex-based Centreforce 883 Radio is a global dance music radio station that is popular within the Taxi profession community. Available on DAB, online and app, Tune In and

Freeview, Centreforce is seen as the go to station for events and music, and broadcasts to over 16million listeners in 192 countries worldwide.

'Choose Taxi' has been launched to encourage the travelling public to use London Taxis more and is also in response

to the numerous recent media headlines falsely predicting the London Taxi profession's imminent demise. The aim is for the campaign to be one that customers can relate to and interact and engage with, in the hope that it will not only generate more business for London Taxi drivers but also be a campaign that has a fun feel to it.

With regards to this, London Taxi PR has produced T-shirts which have a throwback feel to the eighties on them, bearing the campaign slogan, 'Choose Taxi.'

The T-shirts have been designed to be reminiscent of Katherine Hamnett's 'Choose Life' ones that were produced for the pop group Wham. The hashtag #ChooseTaxi is also being used in conjunction with any social media posts on respective platforms.

The campaign was launched with the assistance of renowned author and journalist, Tony Parsons, a keen supporter, and advocate of London Taxis, and has since seen the likes of TV personalities such as George Clarke, Nick Knowles and Cliff Parisi wearing them, along with entrepreneur Chris Davies and Deano from the band The Rifles, as well as several Taxi drivers and a

Cabmen's Shelter Keeper.

Since their formation, London Taxi PR has undertaken a series of targeted media campaigns, which are being used to promote the benefits, advantages, and safety of using the iconic licensed London Taxi service to a wide audience.

All the campaigns and publicity that has so far been generated by the company has been funded by fellow London Taxi drivers and businesses within the profession, many of whom have signed up to donate to the cause on a monthly basis, indicating how passionate they all are about their industry and the cause.

London Taxi PR. Passionate about promoting and preserving the iconic London Taxi trade and funded by London Taxi drivers and businesses who care about their industry.

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>

Centreforce 883 Radio can be found on 88.3 DAB and at <https://centreforceradio.com>



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Gett.

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Summer is now upon us and the Chelsea Flower Show behind us which is the time of year where most say that the work levels pick up.

This year has not been as good as the previous couple of years but things could be worse, and I have certainly known the work levels to be a lot worse in years gone by. I hope that you have all been earning well and not having to work too many hours to keep the wolf from the door.

Autonomous Taxis

There has been a lot of publicity recently regarding self-driving taxis in the news and I would imagine you are wondering how, if they became a reality, it would affect our profession?

The honest answer to that question is nobody really knows how it would affect us, but contrary to news articles stating they will be on the road by 2026, I personally do not think they will become a reality until a lot later than that.

I have been asking passengers in the cab if they would use a self-driving private hire vehicle over a Taxi and the vast majority have that they would not want to use a taxi or private hire vehicle that did not have a driver.

There are a lot of things that a car without a driver cannot do, like helping people with luggage, helping those with mobility issues, deciphering where passengers want to go when they don't have the correct address, and a driverless vehicle cannot do a tour of London.

So, I think that we still have quite a few years left in our trade as it will probably affect the private hire trade before it has any impact on the Black Cab trade.

Choose Taxi

Andy Scott at London Taxi PR has come up with a great promotional idea for the Taxi Trade called Choose Taxi, the inspiration



being the Wham Choose Life T-Shirts.

It is 40 years since Wham rose up the charts with Wake Me Up Before You Go Go in which they wore the Choose Taxi T-Shirts which if you are or a certain age, I am sure you will remember.

Andy has had T-Shirts produced with the slogan "Choose Taxi" on the in the same font and style as the Choose Life T-Shirts that Wham were 40 years ago, you may have seen our very own Grant Davis wearing the T-Shirt in a short video that I put out on Tik Tok, Instagram and Facebook.

The campaign is generating a lot of interest, especially as Andy has convinced a lot of celebrities to get involved and don the T-Shirts.

If you would like to get your hands on one of the Choose Taxi T-Shirts, they are available to purchase from Adny Scott at London Taxi PR.

The Children's Magical Taxi Tour to Disneyland Paris

This year marks the 30th Trip to Disneyland as we

missed 2 years due to the pandemic, the Charity is actually 31 years old this year.

This year's trip leaves Canary wharf on Friday 12th September at around 7:00am travelling over to Paris via the P&O Ferry from Dover to Calais.

I took part in my first trip to Disneyland 25 years ago and this will be my 23rd trip to Disneyland with the charity.

This event give Children with Life Limiting Illnesses a break from their World of treatment and therapy which is only made possible for them because of the support that we take along with us which includes Doctors, Nurses and the London Ambulance Service.

The Magical Taxi Tour holds a very special place in my heart and something extra special will be happening this year which is very close to me, I cannot reveal to much at the moment but there will be a full video after the trip on my YouTube channel.

If you would like to donate towards the Magical Taxi Tour you can do so by

visiting the website www.magicaltaxitour.com

Cab Chat Podcast

Cab Chat is the longest running Taxi related podcast in the UK and probably one of the longest running in the World.

Recently I started Cab Chat again with a slightly different format, the main reason for the change of format is not having anywhere that we can record the podcast as we did before. So I have ben recording the podcast in both Video and Audio format in the back of the cab, which make sense really as it is

called Cab Chat.

I haven't been that consistent with recording the podcast or getting the episodes out, but I did say that I would not commit to following any specific regime. The main focus of the podcast now is basically chatting to people in the back of the cab, I don't like to call them interviews as we really do not follow any specific questioning technique, they are more of an informal chat.

If you would like to take part in Cab Chat, if you have something you would like to say or have nay suggestions as to people that you would like to see on the podcast then please do let me know, you can contact me via the podcast website at www.cabchatshow.uk

YouTube

I would like to personally thank all of the you who have subscribed to my YouTube channel, I really do appreciate your support. It is also nice to meet some of you when you come over and introduce yourselves.

Also, the comments from Taxi drivers have been really encouraging and makes me feel that it is all worthwhile, so thank you very much.

You can find me on Youtube @JamieTheCabby

That's all from me this month, so until next month please stay safe out there, earn well and most of all Be Lucky





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Champion Oleksandr Usyk faces complicated mess after supreme win over Daniel Dubois in fifth

Oleksandr Usyk is not thinking about his future and his place in boxing history. "I'm just Alex, the Ukrainian guy," he insisted when I spoke to him after midnight at Wembley Stadium.

He finally looked tired when he retreated to his dressing room, where religious icons covered the walls and surfaces. "I go home now and spend time with my family and children," he added. That was all he said about tomorrow's fights.

An hour earlier, his fists had ruined Daniel Dubois in the fifth round, dropping the British boxer twice before the towel came in; the referee, Michael Griffin, called it off at the same time. Dubois was nearly up but out of his head, and he stood in silence for several minutes trying to process what went wrong. He looked stunned.

The bare stats from a night of raw and savage drama are simple: Usyk retained his WBO, WBA and WBC titles, added the IBF version, and left the ring in glory in front of 90,000 fanatics at Wembley.

There is never any boasting or bragging with Usyk, but he was strangely cold in the ring at the end against Dubois. It looked to me like he ignored him. His lack of sympathy for Dubois was noticeable when the fight was over. Usyk had been ruthless and that part of his brilliance is often overlooked.

When asked about Dubois, there was very

little from Usyk. "It's a sport," he said with a shrug. The code normally demands praise in defeat, but Usyk was vicious on Saturday – not cruel, just honest.

Dubois promised to be back and praised Usyk, but his path to a new world title, even at 27, is going to be hard. In modern heavyweight

again and would love to fight in his homeland. He has not yet fought there in 24 fights. It is just one of the bold plans, just one of the logistical problems that Usyk and his team must solve.

The main concern will be satisfying the requests and demands of the four leading sanctioning bodies, all of whom have one or two men in pole

has the fourth claim, and the WBA and WBC have the two middle slots.

It will be difficult for Usyk to satisfy all four sanctioning bodies, and that is where the trading will start. Parker will, correctly, demand his shot at the title, which is long overdue. Meanwhile, the WBA, WBC and IBF will all want assurances that



By Steve Bunce

issuing challenges and making claims; Joshua has kept a dignified silence. "It's my turn now," said Parker, at ringside. But as Don King famously declared: "In boxing, you get what you negotiate, not what you deserve."

The IBF will possibly push for Derek "Del Boy" Chisora, who is their No 2 – their top slot is vacant. Usyk has already beaten Chisora. The WBC has an interim champion in Agit Kabayel, a quality fighter. However, Usyk might be looking for a bigger name. The WBA could push for their interim champion, Fabio Wardley, and that would be hugely entertaining.

At present, Warren represents all four of the men waiting for their chance in some way. He also handles Fury. It is, as I said, a complicated mess and requires some artful dealing. Let us not forget that Usyk faced off with YouTuber-turned-boxer Jake Paul in the Wembley ring on Saturday night, amid fanciful talk of an MMA bout.

Usyk would start as a heavyweight favourite against all of his contenders right now. He has slowly taken care of business in the ring and, by only fighting once each year in six of the last seven years, has massively protected his health. "Thirty-eight, it's only [the] start!" he declared. He might not have been joking.



boxing, there are no simple routes to the title. Dubois went down twice, but his resistance had vanished in the seconds before the first knockdown, and Usyk sensed that Dubois had nothing left. The second knockdown was much heavier. Dubois missed the count, but the towel had landed; his future will now have to be expertly plotted once again by Frank Warren, his promoter.

Usyk's future is far from simple. He wants to fight

position for a shot at the undisputed champion.

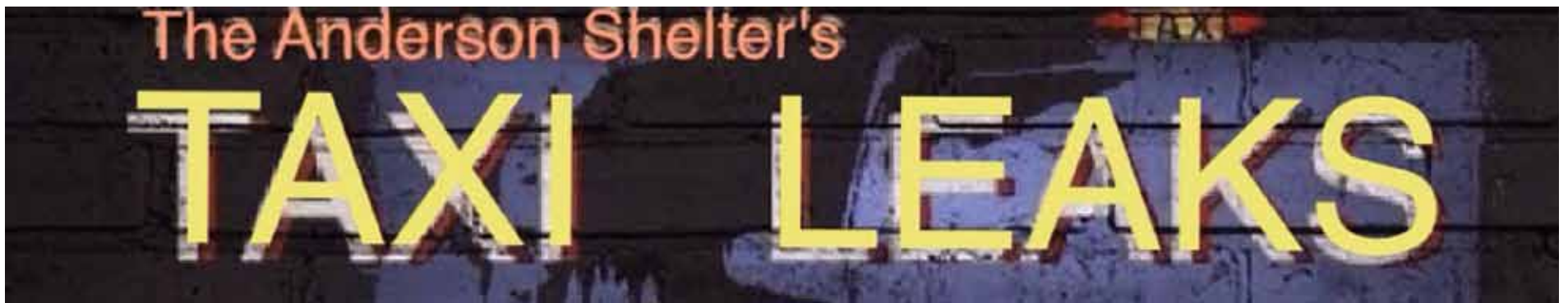
Last year, when Usyk beat Tyson Fury to win all four belts and become the undisputed champion, he lost the IBF version outside of the ring; Dubois won it, and on Saturday night, Usyk claimed it back. It is messy, and it will get messier in the months ahead.

Right now, the WBO have the first claim on Usyk's services and their No 1 is New Zealand's Joseph Parker. The IBF

their men get a chance. To be honest, it's an impossible job.

And, just to confuse the issue further, Anthony Joshua and Fury are the leading names for an Usyk fight. Usyk has beaten the pair twice, but a third fight with either would still do overwhelming business. Joshua and Fury will not be nominated by any of the sanctioning bodies, but the bank, as they say, will make negotiations easier.

Fury was busy all week



A series of unfortunate events

First we had Hailo, which sold us out and acquired a private hire license...drivers felt betrayed and left in droves and so eventually it had to close down. But was the lesson learned?

This was followed by a number of apps who promised to be Black Taxi only. That was fine for a few years but suddenly the more successful ones were bought out by PH companies, playing into TfL's secret plan of a one tier service, (Project Horizon).

A couple of Taxi only apps remained, but with no financial backing, didn't appeal to the majority of the trade who by now, had sold their soul to the devil and were working alongside our competitors. Honor, comradeship and trade loyalty started to disappear, at the rate of knots.

Then the unthinkable happened...Uber opened its doors to Taxis and to everyone's surprise, quite a few drivers took the 30 pieces of silver on offer, believing that if they kept quiet, their colleagues wouldn't know.

Taxi World, a trusted long time supporter of the trade announced the arrival of its new Taxi Only app:

"No driver fees forever, no passenger fees forever.

Their motto being... Jump, Just jobs."

The passenger pays only the metered fare (with option to leave a tip), the driver pays no fees. Complete with a dash cam and dash mounted tablet, the system is everything thing drivers have been calling for. Unfortunately, the system only being available to drivers signed up to Taxi World's card clearing system.

But then drivers complained that the

credit card acceptance, I was part of the Save Our Black Taxis Group committee, who had a 'Go Fund Me page' to raise money to take TfL to court, saying it should be completely up to the driver, to decide how they received payment and be able to use whatever machine they prefer (I myself had previously been accepting cards for a number of years using my own hand held device). As sole traders, TfL should never have the right to tell us how we accept payment.

round and see what's wrong?

But again, little to no support from the trade and the case was eventually dropped.

The attitude of the trade has slipped into the realms of expecting everything for nothing and expecting others to do the fighting for them...as seen at the ITA demonstrations. When protests were advertised, often you would see remarks on social media claiming "it's at the wrong time, it's in

TAXI LEAKS EXTRA BIT

When I first came into the trade in the early 70's, I joined the Owner Drivers Radio Taxi Service (ODRTS later to be renamed Dial a Cab) based in Shirland Road.

To acquire work in the areas we preferred to work, (in my case Maida Vale, Hampstead and Marylebone) drivers would spend a few hours every week putting cards in letter boxes, reminding potential customers, we were there for them.

The radio circuits worked well for many years but eventually, after getting involved with certain car services, the wheels came off and the emergence of certain mobile phone apps, uttered the death rattles that were ignored by most of the trade and is surely becoming the final nail in the coffin.

Your future is in your own hands:

If you want this trade to survive the outcome of what TfL have in store, you need to take the right path and fight back, yes you, the individual, ordinary rank and file cabby. Don't sit back and hope someone else will do the fighting for you, because they won't.

It's an old saying but still true today:

And when they finally came for me...
There was no one left to fight for me.
Pastor Martin Niemöller
1946.



clearance fee on card jobs is too high...even though it's in line with the other TfL authorised systems.

Most drivers today are using their own hand held unauthorised machines, which unfortunately puts them in grave danger of retribution from TfL, just to save a couple of percentage points...but still, many drivers carry on regardless.

Looking back to when TfL first announced their intention to proceed with the mandate for debit and

Unfortunately we didn't get the support from the trade required and were accused by many of being Luddite's, saying the new mandate would 'put bums on seats'.

We then went to court to stop the machines being fitted in the rear saying it put drivers in danger of possible robbery and assault (especially female drivers). Just imagine being directed to a dark secluded back road and the passenger saying they couldn't get the reader to work and can you come

the wrong place, it's too busy to protest..." Drivers would happily drive passed protesters with jobs in laughing and in some cases waving £20 notes out the window.

We now have a new app about to launch by a much trusted company who have supported the trade for many years, and drivers have already taken to social media saying, if this app becomes successful, it's just a matter of time before they sell out to the highest bidder, take the money and run.



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