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TRANSPORT COMMITTEE LAUNCHES INQUIRY INTO LICENSING AND STANDARDS IN TAXIS/PHV SECTORS

The Transport Committee is a cross-party group of backbench (non-Government) MPs appointed by the entire House of Commons to carry out inquiries into the DfT's policies, scrutinise its decisions and hold it to account. This new inquiry will 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.

The inquiry's full terms of reference are included below:

Local authorities (LAs) which issue licences, such as TfL, city councils, county councils or combined authorities – have some freedom to set their own local standards for safety, driver conduct and accessibility, within a statutory framework. Despite licensing authorities needing to have regard to statutory standards, local variations have arisen across different authorities.

Additionally, 'cross-border licensing' has given rise to the case of Wolverhampton City Council, where 96% of its taxi and PHV licences have been awarded to drivers from outside of the city. The Greater Manchester (GM) Combined Authority is among those calling for a change in the law, after an FoI Act disclosure showed that 9,000 drivers registered with Wolverhampton CC reside in the GM area.

The cross-party committee will also examine how standards across the sector could be improved and made more consistent across the country regarding accessibility, safety and safeguarding of passengers.

The inquiry will look at how best practice could be replicated, the effectiveness of enforcement and inspection regimes, and how standards vary – and could be standardised – between taxis, PHVs and ride-hailing services such as Uber and Bolt.

MPs will also look to the future at how the sector and its regulatory system might need to evolve to enable the use of self-driving vehicles (See pages 11 and 66-67).

The inquiry comes after the Committee published its report on accessible transport, which heard evidence of too few wheelchair-accessible PHVs and taxis being in circulation around the country, and even of drivers turning away blind people with assistance dogs.

Transport Committee Chair Ruth Cadbury MP said:

"When it comes to the licensing and regulation of

taxi/PHVs, a strange patchwork of driver and vehicle standards exists across every town/city in the country.

"This inconsistency has given rise to a situation that just isn't good enough for drivers or for the public, who can unknowingly leave themselves vulnerable when getting into the back of a stranger's car.

"This Committee will investigate whether a more standardised, more rational regulatory and enforcement regime could do away with the phenomenon of one city receiving applications from all over the country. We want to examine how an improved system could give greater confidence to consumers, particularly disabled people, women, children and other vulnerable people. And we need to look at how the system could make it clear who a passenger can complain to if standards aren't met."

CALL FOR EVIDENCE:

The Transport Committee is now accepting written evidence from those with knowledge of the sector.

Your voice matters:

This isn't just a formality. When the government opens a public consultation, it's literally asking you - the people in the industry - what works, what doesn't and what needs fixing. Silence can be interpreted as agreement with the status quo or acceptance of changes decided without industry input.

BREAKDOWN OF QUESTIONS & WHAT THEY MEAN:

Q: Do current licensing arrangements and tools enable LAs to effectively regulate and oversee the taxi and PHV sector across England, in terms of safety, accessibility and quality of service? If not, what improvements could be made?

Do current licensing systems work?

- Can councils keep passengers safe?
- Are councils able to properly check and regulate drivers and vehicles?
- Are cross-border and out-of-area drivers making that impossible?

Q: What is the impact on the travelling public and drivers of variation between LAs? Is reform needed to bring greater standardisation?

TAXI & PRIVATE HIRE STANDARDS

Is the patchwork system of licensing causing confusion or harm?

- Think about how wildly different the rules are from one borough to another
- Should we have national standards to level the playing field?

Q: What would be the practical implications for LAs and operators of more stringent or standardised licensing conditions in respect of safety, accessibility, vehicles and driver conduct?

What would national standards mean for you?

- More consistent rules, but potentially stricter requirements
- Think of safety checks, driver conduct, vehicle specs

Q: What steps should the Government take to address the challenges posed by cross-border licensing?

How should cross-border working be controlled?

- A major concern for local operators.
- Should out-of-town drivers be allowed to accept work without restrictions?

Q: What would effective reform look like in terms of enforcement, passenger safety and safeguarding, and regulatory consistency? Is there a role for regional transport authorities?

What would real enforcement reform look like?

- Should any officer from any council be able to enforce the rules, regardless of where a driver is licensed?

Q: How are ride-hailing platforms impacting standards and is further regulation in this area required?

Are digital ride-hailing apps playing by the rules?

- Uber, Bolt, etc. - should they face tighter oversight?

Q: How effective, accessible, and trusted are complaints and incident reporting systems in the taxi and PHV sector, for passengers and drivers?

Do complaints systems work - for both drivers and passengers?

- Are you being falsely accused?

Q: How effective is the National Register of Licence Revocations and Refusals in supporting consistent licensing decisions across LAs? What barriers, if any, are limiting its use or impact?

Is the national database (NR3S) working?

- Are problem drivers slipping through the cracks?
- Are councils actually using it?

Q: What are the implications for taxi/PHV licensing of the future rollout of autonomous vehicles?

What happens when driverless vehicles enter the picture?

- Will you be replaced?
- What does licensing look like when there's no driver?

SUGGESTED POINTS YOU MIGHT INCLUDE:

If you need help writing or structuring your response, **NPHTA** is happy to assist - just let us know the points you'd like to make, and we can help you draft it.

- Enforce section 75(1)(a): Stop out-of-area PHVs from immediately accepting new bookings until they are back within their licensed district.
- National "intended use" policy rolled out to all licence types: All councils should adopt it.
- Remove outdated vehicle requirements, such as first aid kits and fire extinguishers.
- Age limits on vehicles should be realistic, not arbitrary.
- Training (e.g. safeguarding) should be proportionate - not endless repetitive courses for experienced drivers.
- Wheelchair training only for WAV drivers.

WHY YOU SHOULD RESPOND:

This is an urgent plea to all members of our trade - if you have time to comment on Facebook, you have time to respond to the consultation.

This consultation could lead to major changes in the way in which the taxi and private hire industry is regulated across England - changes that could directly affect every stakeholder in the sector: drivers, operators, passengers and licensing authorities alike.

This is your livelihood, your safety and your future. Don't let others shape it without your input.

Click the link below to submit your response by 11.59pm on 8 September 2025

NB: This must be uploaded as a single file (word, ODT or RTF) under 25mb and with no logos.

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Fuel Consumption figures for the Skoda Octavia 1.5 TSI SE Technology 5dr Petrol Hatchback (WLTP Combined) 50.4mpg, CO₂ emissions 127g/km. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO₂ figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load.



SKODA



FLYING TAXIS

ABU DHABI TESTS FIRST DRIVERLESS AIR TAXI, LAUNCH SET FOR 2026

The future of urban travel took flight in Abu Dhabi as US-based electric air taxi manufacturer, Archer Aviation, successfully completed the maiden test flight of its driverless air taxi, the Midnight eVTOL aircraft.

This pivotal trial, held at Al Bateen Executive Airport on July 2, 2025, marks a significant stride towards the commercial launch of air taxi services in the UAE by early 2026.

The test flight initiates a comprehensive programme designed to assess the aircraft's performance in the UAE's challenging summer conditions," according to a Gulf News report.

Archer's Midnight, an "emission-free" and "fully electric" aircraft, is engineered for efficient short-haul urban journeys, such as "airport-to-downtown commutes," promising to significantly "slash travel times,

reduce road congestion and offer a quieter and sustainable transportation alternative."

Abu Dhabi is set to be Archer's inaugural international launch market. Contrary to assumptions that such technology would be exclusive to the elite, pricing is to be "affordable for the general public." This breakthrough in Abu Dhabi follows Joby Aviation's own test flight on June 30, 2025 in Dubai.

VERTICAL AEROSPACE MAKES HISTORY WITH FIRST AIRPORT-TO-AIRPORT FLYING TAXI FLIGHT

A significant leap forward in urban air mobility occurred in Oxfordshire as Vertical Aerospace successfully completed the first airport-to-airport piloted flight of its electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) vehicle, the VX4 prototype. This landmark flight saw the "flying taxi" travel 17 miles from Vertical's flight centre at Cotswold Airport to the Royal International Air Tattoo, a military air show at a Royal Air Force station.

The historic flight, which reached an altitude of 1,800 feet and a top speed of 115 mph, marked the vehicle's first landing at a public location and was fully approved by the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). "Flying the VX4 from airport to airport is a major milestone, and a powerful demonstration of the real-world capability of the aircraft," stated Simon Davies, the chief test pilot for the VX4 prototype.

Vertical Aerospace recently secured a \$60m stock offering to bolster research and development for its



four-passenger eVTOL. Key aerospace firms, including GKN, Honeywell, and Leonardo, are collaborating on the development of Vertical's proprietary battery and propeller technology that powers the eVTOL.

The company boasts an impressive 1,500 pre-orders for the VX4, with notable customers including American Airlines, Japan Airlines, GOL, and Bristow. Vertical has also expanded its partnership with Bristow, which includes a pre-order for 50 VX4 "flying taxis" and an option for an additional 50.

This achievement follows Vertical's recent "first piloted wingborne flight" of the VX4 prototype,

demonstrating controlled wing-borne flight in open airspace over the UK countryside. This earlier flight, also approved by the CCA, was a crucial step towards commercial deployment as part of Vertical's Flightpath 2030 strategy. Vertical is believed to be the only company globally flying a piloted winged eVTOL prototype under a design organisation approval from the CAA.

Looking ahead, Vertical is also developing a hybrid-electric version of its flying vehicle to extend its range up to 1,000 miles. This second-generation hybrid-propulsion system is slated for retrofitting into a VX4 full-scale prototype with flight testing expected to commence in 2026. The next phase for certification will involve transition testing, demonstrating the ability to switch between vertical and forward flight modes, a feat recently achieved by rival air taxi company Joby Aviation with a pilot onboard.

ROBOTAXIS

GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON FUTURE OF SELF-DRIVING CARS

The public and industry are being encouraged to help shape the future of self-driving vehicles, as they are invited to offer their views to make them safe and accessible before the first services become available next year.

On 21 July 2025, Future of Roads Minister Lilian Greenwood launched a consultation on the automated passenger services (APS) permitting scheme and the draft statutory instrument, a key legal element of how taxi/PH services of self-driving vehicles will be regulated once they hit the roads.

Access the consultation here: <https://shorturl.at/BVeAd>

The consultation follows the recent government decision to fast-track pilots of self-driving passenger vehicles to Spring 2026, helping the industry to innovate and grow. This will allow firms to pilot small-scale services without a safety

driver for the first time – which could be available to members of the public to book via an app – before a potential wider rollout when the Automated Vehicles Act (AVA) is implemented in full from the second half of 2027. Through the consultation, industry stakeholders, trade unions and members of the public will be able to make their views heard and influence future government policy over a variety of areas critical for self-driving vehicles to run safely and efficiently. These include:

- how self-driving vehicles can be made as accessible as possible for disabled and older people
- how services of self-driving vehicles are approved by councils
- when a permit to operate a service should be varied, suspended or withdrawn

The APS scheme is an essential part of the of the AVA, which will

regulate taxi, private-hire and bus-like self-driving vehicles once it is implemented in full in the second half of 2027.

The AVA will require self-driving vehicles to achieve a level of safety at least as high as competent and careful human drivers, and they will undergo rigorous safety tests before being allowed on our roads. Self-driving trials have been taking place in the UK since January 2015, with British companies Wayve and Oxa spearheading significant breakthroughs in the technology. The UK is already host to a thriving self-driving sector. Wayve secured a record-breaking investment of over \$1b and announced recent partnerships with Nissan and Uber, while Oxa has already supported 'bus-like' services in the US and started rolling out self-driving vehicles at Heathrow Airport to improve baggage handling.

UBER ACCELERATES ROBOTAXI AMBITIONS WITH DUAL PARTNERSHIPS

Uber is making a significant push back into the autonomous vehicle (AV) market, announcing two major partnerships to deploy robotaxi services. The ride-hailing giant is investing \$300 million in Lucid to acquire over 20,000 Gravity SUVs equipped with Nuro's autonomous driving technology, aiming for a late 2026 launch in a major US city.

This move follows Uber's April agreement with Volkswagen (VW), which will supply ID. Buzz electric minivans for a planned



commercial service in Los Angeles by 2026, with European rollouts expected in 2027. Approximately 30 ID. Buzz minivans are currently undergoing Level 4 autonomous testing with safety drivers in Hamburg, Germany, utilising

Mobileye's platform with an array of cameras, LiDARs, and radars.

Both collaborations signal Uber's renewed focus on robotaxis after exiting the sector in 2020. While the AV market faces hurdles like high costs and strict regulations, with some companies ceasing operations, others like Waymo and Tesla continue to expand. Uber's strategy centres on partnerships to leverage existing AV tech and vehicle manufacturing, aiming to redefine urban mobility with flexible, on-demand autonomous options.

VAT AND PRIVATE HIRE

SUPREME COURT REJECTS UBER'S APPEAL A MAJOR WIN FOR THE PRIVATE HIRE SECTOR

A landmark judgment by the Supreme Court has ruled that private hire firms should not be forced to change their business models, a move which would have resulted in passengers being forced to pay VAT.

Uber had sought a legal declaration that would have added VAT to all private hire fares outside of London. Uber was seeking to render unlawful a model they had previously used up to 2022 until they lost a London-focused legal challenge.

But the move was successfully challenged by Liverpool-based Delta Taxis and private hire operator Veezu.

Delta argued that legislation dating back to 1976 allows for multiple business models under the private hire licensing regime, meaning not all operators are required to charge VAT. While Uber's model does trigger VAT liability, the Supreme Court agreed that competitors can lawfully operate using alternative structures that do not.

The Supreme Court dismissed Uber's appeal and confirmed that private hire firms are not legally required to adopt the same model – or contract directly with passengers. As a result, VAT will not be automatically added to fares, avoiding a potential 20%+ price hike across England and Wales.

The decision is being celebrated as a huge win for passengers, particularly the most vulnerable in society, and is a welcome reprieve for thousands of small private hire firms who would have faced huge costs and complexity if forced to apply VAT, many of whom wouldn't have survived.

Layla Barke Jones, Dispute Resolution Partner at Aaron & Partners, which represented Delta said:

"This is a monumental decision, not just for DELTA, but for all private hire drivers and operators across England and Wales. Had this gone the other way, the cost and complexity of implementing VAT systems would have pushed many firms to the brink.

"This ruling ensures that operators can continue to operate under established, regulated models that have been in existence since regulation was introduced almost half a century ago - such as the agency model - without being forced into a 'one size fits all' model."

The ruling concludes a long-running case that's been ongoing since March 2022, following an initial judgment in the High Court, where the judge found that a private hire operator is required to contract directly with the passenger for providing the journey.

However, that decision was overturned by the Court of Appeal in July 2024 which held that the licensing regime already provided for contractual liability for the operator without requiring operators to change their business models, in a case jointly brought by Delta Taxis and fellow operator Veezu. The Supreme Court ruling now cements the Court of Appeal outcome as the final say in law.

Nia Cooper, Chief Legal Officer at Veezu said:

"This decision is a triumph for the UK private hire sector. The unanimous verdict ends a three-year legal battle and confirms that operators can continue to choose which business model they adopt to run their business. Uber was seeking a declaration that would have resulted in 20% VAT being charged on all PHV fares.

Today's outcome protects vulnerable passengers from crippling fare increases, avoids undue burdens on licensing authorities, maintains the status quo for licensed PHV drivers and allows the private hire sector to keep serving the people and places that rely on it 24/7. This ruling also shows that British-owned businesses can stand up against global giants that attempt to use litigation as a tactic to shape the sector to suit their business model."

Layla Barke-Jones added:

"Private hire firms are vital in the communities, and are used frequently by those with disabilities, low-income households and older people who rely on taxis for essential journeys and to maintain their independence.

"If VAT suddenly had to be paid by all those people, the additional cost would have meant many simply choose not to travel at all, leaving some of the most vulnerable people in our society isolated.

"A crisis has been averted. This ruling protects the freedom to operate and the right of communities to access affordable, reliable transport."

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POLICE LAUNCH SUMMER CRACKDOWN AS “MORNING AFTER” DRINK-DRIVE RISK REVEALED

A new study has revealed a concerning trend of “morning after” drink-driving, as police forces across the UK launch a summer crackdown on impaired drivers.

Research by the road safety charity IAM RoadSmart found that more than a third (38%) of drivers admit to consuming alcohol after 9pm, despite planning to drive before 9am the following day.

Alarmingly, one in five (21%) had their final drink after 10 pm.

This new data comes as DfT figures show that July has the highest number of drink-driving related casualties, surpassing even the traditionally high-risk December period.

Nicholas Lyes, Director of Policy and Standards at IAM RoadSmart, warned: “Drink-driving is a killer, and drivers may be unwittingly getting into their vehicle in the morning unaware that they could be doing so illegally if they have been drinking alcohol the night before, posing a serious threat to the safety of others.”

He emphasised that even if a



driver is just within the legal limit, “the level of alcohol in their system will impair their reaction times.”

The guidance from Drink Aware states that alcohol is removed from the body at approximately one unit per hour, though this can vary.

Consuming just three large glasses of wine or three pints of high-strength beer or cider, equivalent to nine units, could mean alcohol remains in the system until 7am or later if drinking stops at 10pm.

The IAM RoadSmart survey of 1,072 motorists also highlighted public concern about impaired driving.

Nearly a third (31%) of respondents had been with a friend or relative who consumed alcohol before

driving, with almost three-quarters (72%) warning them not to drive. However, one in four (23%) took no action, with 5% believing it was “none of their business.”

There is strong public support for measures to combat drink-driving, with 80% of drivers believing rehabilitation courses are “vital to reducing re-offending.” A similar number, 81%, stated such courses should be mandatory for those convicted of drink-driving offences, rather than being an optional choice.

In 2022, an estimated 300 people were killed in collisions involving at least one driver over the drink-drive limit in Great Britain, the highest figure since 2009.

Chief Constable Jo Shiner, roads policing lead for England and Wales, stressed that there is “no excuse” for driving impaired, including the morning after. “If you choose to do so you are putting your life and the lives of others at risk,” she stated.

Police are running Operation Spotlight throughout the summer, targeting drink and drug driving.

Sheena Hague, Director of Road Safety at National Highways, echoed these concerns, stating: “Getting behind the wheel with alcohol in your system impairs your driving ability and puts lives at risk.”

Lyes reiterated IAM RoadSmart’s advice: “Our advice is always ‘none for the road’... If you are socialising the night before and need to use your vehicle the following morning, you should exercise caution in what you consume or delay your journey the following day.”

DORSET CABBIES URGED TO LOOK OUT FOR PEOPLE BEING EXPLOITED BY GANGS

Dorset Police have confirmed they are working with taxi and private drivers and firms to help educate them on the possible signs of criminal gangs exploiting people to carry out their criminal activity. Drivers should look out for vulnerable passengers who may:

- have more than one mobile phone
- carry excessive amounts of cash
- ask to travel to multiple locations

in a short time - drivers should look out for this when taking on passengers.

Police have urged companies to report any concerns of suspicious behaviour of customers or youngsters who may be coerced into criminal activity by gangs.

People should call 101 or 999 in an emergency. You can also report concerning behaviour online.

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*Source: British Retail Consortium (BRC) 2022 Payment Survey

14 BRADFORD PH FIRMS SOFT MERGE UNDER “LOCAL” BRAND TO COMPETE WITH RIDE HAIL

In a strategic move to strengthen their market presence and improve service efficiency, fourteen private hire firms in Bradford have announced a soft merger under a new unified brand: LOCAL CARS

A spokesperson for Local Cars told **PHTM**: “In order to remain competitive and meet growing customer demand, we are entering into a soft merger with several private hire firms working only in Bradford who are uniting under our umbrella group, LOCAL.” With a combined pool of 800–1000 drivers, LOCAL will become the largest private hire provider in



Bradford. However, the merger is “soft” in nature:

- Each fleet will retain its current base, contacts, and operational processes
- No changes are planned for dispatch or management structures
- Drivers will continue working through their familiar channels

A key feature of the integration is a

shared bid system during peak times. This will allow jobs to be covered more efficiently across the entire network, reducing dead mileage and improving job fulfillment rates.

“As well as improving service quality and maintaining customer loyalty, we anticipate more work to share resulting in increased income for all drivers. It’s a win-win for all concerned,” the spokesperson added.

LOCAL Cars also revealed plans to expand nationally, enabling customers to book rides beyond Bradford through the upcoming LOCAL CARS APP.

REDUNDANCY TALKS UNDERWAY AT LEVC AS 180 JOBS TO GO AT ANSTY SITE

Redundancy talks are underway at Coventry taxi-maker the London Electric Vehicle Company (LEVC). It comes after the firm announced on July 9, that the workforce at its site in Ansty, Coventry is to be reduced by around 180 people. It is within the TX manufacturing related workforce that jobs are set to be lost. Customers, service or sales support are not included in the losses.

In an update, the firm has said that consultations are now underway with those at risk. “Staff have already been notified and the necessary processes and procedures are underway,” a spokesperson said.

“Employees will go through an individual consultation, resulting in a phased approach to the redundancies taking effect.”

The firm said that the ‘difficult decision’ behind the job losses came against the backdrop of ‘increasingly difficult automotive market conditions’. But it has said that the Ansty site will remain ‘its home’.

In a statement, Alex Nan, CEO of LEVC, said: “We are exceptionally proud of our world-class products, our home in Ansty and our employees.

“However, with the UK taxi market continuing to experience significant challenges, LEVC has reluctantly made the decision to reduce its TX manufacturing output, resulting in a round of compulsory redundancies. LEVC will of course provide full support for its customers as normal and there is no impact on the sales or

after-sales of new or used TX.

“LEVC firmly believes in the future of the UK taxi industry and we remain committed to our vision of being a leading provider of green mobility solutions. Despite the temporary challenges the taxi sector is facing, we are dedicated to safeguarding the iconic London black cab and are actively discussing with regulators the requirements to support the development of an all-new TX.”

He added: “In the short term, we unfortunately have to make some difficult decisions in order to ready LEVC for resilient, sustainable profitability and long-term growth. “Ansty will always be the home of the iconic London taxi and we will announce further details on LEVC’s new strategic vision very soon.”

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PROTEST PLIGHT

THANET CABBIES OUTRAGED BY COUNCIL'S PROPOSED PENALTY POINT SYSTEM

Thanet District Council (TDC) is facing a furious backlash from cabbies over a controversial draft policy proposing a penalty points system. The new rules, intended to "keep drivers in check," have sparked widespread outrage, with many warning of job losses and unfair enforcement.

Proposed infringements include infractions such as not adhering to a strict dress code, lacking a fire extinguisher or first aid kit, or even honking a horn to announce arrival. The policy also targets taxis deemed "too old or not green enough" and penalises drivers for



leaving vehicles "unattended." Dozens of drivers recently gathered outside TDC's offices to protest the plans. Muhammet Yesiloz, a local cabbie argued that the policy would "create jobless people rather than

improving society," adding: "this greener world, implementing it in this sudden manner, will create darker lives for Thanet drivers."

Yesiloz also questioned the fairness of the proposed system, highlighting fears of abuse. "Anyone can report anyone – if someone hates the way a driver looks, or his background, or just for the sake of fun, anyone can be reported," he warned. Concerns were also raised about the financial burden on drivers, particularly the mandate for cars younger than five years old, which Yesiloz noted "costs minimum of £15,000."

While acknowledging the need to improve safety, many drivers believe the council is attempting "too much change in one go." Andrew McMillan agreed with the council's intent to improve standards but criticised the sudden and extensive changes, which he thinks are "bringing to the surface lots of frustration and anxieties just in the day-to-day job."

Under the proposed system, penalty points would remain on a driver's licence for two years. Accumulating 12 or more points within this period would lead to a review by the council. TDC's papers state that the points system "will be used to deal with minor infringements of policy or unacceptable behaviour by licence holders," and "supports a risk-based approach to enforcement as the points threshold for considering further sanctions will be triggered by repeated or serious breaches." However, the council has yet to clarify precisely how these rules will be enforced.

BRADFORD PROTEST SEES UNITY OF OVER 250 LICENSED DRIVERS

Over 250 drivers gathered outside Bradford Council's Sherbridge offices on 28 July, to express their growing frustration with ongoing issues affecting their trade.

The protest was conducted respectfully and concluded before council vehicles were scheduled to depart for adult services, ensuring there were no disruptions.

Key concerns raised by the drivers were taken directly to the council. Cllr Kamran Hussain, has shown continued support for the trade, and engaged in dialogue with council reps to relay driver concerns. Following discussions, Cllr Hussain confirmed several issues have been addressed:

1. No unnecessary off-roading: as of 11 August, drivers who have submitted renewal applications will no longer be taken off the road while awaiting processing.



2. Restored testing slots: the 30-minute test slots have been reinstated to their original format, with services returning to the previous standard.

3. On-site minor fixes allowed: minor issues e.g. bulbs/stickers can be resolved on-site, and plates can be collected without a retest or additional fees.

The organisers thanked all the drivers and especially Cllr Hussain for his support and commitment to addressing the trade's concerns.

PROTEST PLIGHT

SCOTTISH PH ASSOCIATION AND UNITE THE UNION CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT GLASGOW TAXI & PH LIMITS

The Scottish PH Association (SPHA) and Unite the Union Cab Section have taken part in a joint demonstration in support of the taxi/PH overprovision policies, also known as plate caps, in Glasgow.

On 30 July, drivers from both sectors converged on Cochrane Street, flanking the City Chambers with vehicles, in an effort to protect their livelihoods and ensure a sustainable future for the industry. Both organisations also hand delivered petitions to Glasgow City Council. Unite the Union presented their members' petition, and the SPHA delivered their membership ballot report, demonstrating the overwhelming support within the private hire sector for maintaining current plate cap policies.

The Unite petition has gathered over 500 signatures while the SPHA ballot resulted in 83% of their members, on a 79% turnout, supporting keeping the plate cap. Both organisations had encouraged their members, as well as independent taxi and PH drivers, to participate in the demonstration to show support for the campaign.

Eddie Grice, SPA General Secretary said: "This is a critical moment for passenger safety and the long-term viability of our trade in Glasgow. Maintaining the plate caps isn't just about protecting driver incomes; it's fundamentally about public safety.

"The trade faces many challenges and drivers are feeling a financial strain. If that worsens then drivers will inevitably be forced to work longer hours and more shifts leading to fatigue. This puts everybody at risk. Scrapping the cap would lead to



an oversupply of vehicles and would fire the starting pistol on a race to the bottom, where corners are cut on vehicle standards, driver welfare, and ultimately, public safety.

"These overprovision policies are essential for so many reasons, but the most important one is they

stop an excessive number of vehicles from flooding the market, which would drive down driver earnings to unsustainable levels. The only voice seriously pushing for the cap to be scrapped is that of massive companies such as Uber, who have vowed to flood the city with hundreds more cars. It's not sustainable and it's not safe and it must not be allowed to happen.

"I'm also incredibly encouraged to see the taxi and PH trades standing shoulder-to-shoulder on this vital issue. It's heartening to find common ground and work together to defend policies that benefit us all, especially the safety of our passengers and drivers."

WAKEFIELD CABBIES PROTEST OUTSIDE WAKEFIELD TOWNHALL

Licensed taxi drivers staged a protest outside Wakefield Town Hall on 16 July. Drivers voiced strong concerns over long delays for compliance tests plus "unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles".

Chair of Wakefield Drivers' Association, Yasar Ahmed, told **PHTM**: "There are two motions impacting the trade being discussed: One for our trade and one against." He highlighted critical issues, including an approximate wait of "five weeks for a compliance test".

Ahmed has called for an end to the appointment-only system for plate collection, stating that drivers are currently "waiting a week just to collect a plate." He also advocated scrapping the 6-month compliance test, for an annual test in line with other West Yorks councils."

At the meeting councillors voted against a motion proposed by Cllr Nadeem Ahmed, requiring taxi drivers to undertake the knowledge test. However, a motion by Cllr Jack Hemingway was passed calling for enhanced DBS checks following the Casey Report despite the fact that as Cllr Nadiyah explained: "taxi drivers are already required to do an enhanced DBS check and his motion is pointless." Yasar added: "Cllr Hemingway wants to make licensing more 'stringent'. Cabbies can't have more than 6 points on their licence before a potential 5-year ban, yet police officers and councillors can have 12 points before a ban.

It seems Wakefield Council doesn't value or respect taxi drivers whatsoever.

PROTEST PLIGHT

EDINBURGH TAXI DRIVERS HAND OVER PETITION CALLING FOR CAP ON PHV NUMBERS IN THE CITY

On 10 July scores of black cabs lined the streets outside Edinburgh City Chambers as taxi driver Keith Auld, 44, handed over his petition: 'Cap number of Private Hire Vehicles in Edinburgh so everyone can make a living' - which has gained 1,764 signatures. The petition is calling for a cap on PHVs, like the one which limits the number of black cabs that can operate in the city.

Keith's petition says that this "dilution" of taxis in Edinburgh is leading to a fall in the quality and professionalism of the trade in the city, which he said "is ultimately going to lead to somebody getting seriously hurt or even killed".

The petition also says: "It's not just about inconvenience; it's about the sustainability of an entire profession that thousands depend on."

He believes there are 1,111 active black cabs in Edinburgh with a cap of 1,300 which was set by the council. However, he claims there are currently between 2,400 and 2,700 PHVs in the city.

Speaking outside the city chambers, he said: "This petition was created to cap the amount of PHVs so everyone in the trade can make a living. On the road to where we are now, we've brought on many stakeholders and the last one to come on board was the Scottish Private Hire Association (SPHA)."

The concerns coming from black cab drivers are that while they are heavily regulated through Edinburgh council, including having to stick to a meter for prices which is set by the council, private hire drivers don't have the same regulations. This means PH drivers



are able to offer much lower fares at unregulated price points separated from the council and their checks are through separate companies, usually the likes of Uber and Bolt.

David Horsburgh, 52, a clerk for the Association of Hackney Carriage Drivers, said: "Right now we're sitting at around three to four PHVs to every black cab which is affecting business not only for the black cab trades, it's also the PH who are getting affected."

"Unfortunately there's only one business model that suits and that's the multi-corp, that's Uber in Edinburgh. The smaller local companies they're feeling the effect, they're cutting their costs. We can't really cut costs because we're regulated by the council, every job we do is on the meter unless it's out of town."

"Uber don't use meters, they undercut every fare that's done and we just can't compete."

David says this has been a long time coming and they've felt ignored at council level until now. He added: "Right now, we want a cap on it so everyone's got a level playing field. We can all earn a good living without breaking the rules or having to fight each other. 'We're not putting up with it

anymore our voice has been raised, our heckles are up and we're doing something about it."

Representing the Scottish Private Hire Association, Scott Livingston says he feels PH drivers and black cab taxi drivers are often "played off against each other".

He said: "There's lots of issues that people think about differently, and that's fine, but when there's something we can unite around which is public safety and providing a high level of service, which is what both trades want to do for the people of Edinburgh, we should be working together."

He shared similar concerns as black cab drivers but his main concern is safety: "The approach we've taken to the council is the only approach they can legislate on, which is public safety. The more drivers there are, the more hours we have to work to make the same money and tired drivers equals public safety risk."

"It's getting out of control and it's going to take something really bad to happen until somebody starts taking action."

Scott claims drivers work 16-hour plus shifts through multiple apps. They will start using one app which logs you out after 10 hours to avoid this risk, but they will jump on a different app and start a new shift. Cllr Neil Ross, regulatory convener, said: "We reviewed the number of PHCs in January 2025. We have received a petition on this issue, and it will be addressed under the council's petition process. We maintains regular contact with the relevant trade groups and will continue to listen to their feedback."



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MODERN DISPATCH SYSTEMS

Article by Autologica Ltd

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In a fast-paced, tech-driven world, the difference between staying ahead and falling behind often comes down to one thing: smart operations. Managing a modern taxi business isn't just about dispatching cars; it's about digital bookings, apps, real-time tracking, automated processes, accounts, reviews, and more.

For taxi and private hire companies navigating today's competitive transport landscape, an advanced system to cover all aspects of the modern taxi industry is a must. Dispatch systems have come a long way and now a smart system must offer a complete solution to encompass all aspects of the operation in a modern taxi office. To satisfy the demanding customers it must combine high quality with low cost and flexible contracts.

Your business, your rules

In a diversified business environment one size does not fit all. A modern dispatch system needs to have the flexibility to adapt to your business processes while enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of each process. For example different companies have different criteria for sending out automated emails and text messages and the system must conform to all such requirements.

Easy to learn and use

You shouldn't need a tech team to run a smart dispatch system. Employing new controllers or drivers should not need days of induction. A good dispatch system must be built to be intuitive, even for small taxi operators and drivers with little or no tech experience.

Low cost

Running a taxi business today is tough. Margins are tight, competition is high, and the last thing you need is a system that eats into your profits. Days of expensive systems are gone and technology has lowered the cost of the systems. A good system needs to be affordable to obtain and have low monthly operating costs without compromising on quality, features or performance.

Online bookings and customer apps

In today's fast-moving, app-driven world, customers expect convenience. That means if your taxi business

doesn't offer online booking, you're already losing rides to the competition. Integrated apps and website online booking system should be viewed as essential features of a modern dispatch system.

Contracts and regular bookings

If your company handles school runs, corporate contracts, or council transport, you know how demanding and detailed that work can be. Strict schedules, fixed routes, passenger lists, last minute changes, a lot to manage while one mistake can damage your reputation or lose you a contract.

A smart dispatch system must allow the easy management of school runs, contract work and regular bookings, with all information at your hands to immediately deal with any enquiry about routes, passengers or bookings.

Short contracts & painless termination

We all know of occasions when taxi companies have been forced into long contracts with poorly built but well-advertised dispatch systems that overcharge and under-deliver, with no end to the suffering in sight. A long contract removes the burden from the system supplier to deal with the shortcomings of the system and place it on the client who have no way out.

Confident suppliers should have no hesitation to offer short-term contracts and easy termination terms for those who may find the system unsuitable for their operation.

Customer and driver accounts

Customer invoices, driver statements and payments follow different rules and procedures in different companies. A flexible dispatch system must offer seamless customised accounts, accurate calculations, traceable payments, and create all necessary documents and messages in the formats desired by the business.

Finally, a free trial

A free trial is crucial when purchasing a dispatch system because it lets you test how the software fits your real operations before committing. It helps you confirm that core features work as promised, that your team can use it easily, and that it integrates smoothly with your workflow - all while reducing financial risk.

Simply put, a no obligation free trial ensures you invest in the right tool with confidence.



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RANK RUMBLINGS

STEVENAGE TAXI RANK FACES REMOVAL AMIDST TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

A long-standing taxi rank in Stevenage town centre is slated for removal to make way for the construction of 261 new flats, a move that has sparked public notice and calls for comment.

Stevenage BC is proposing to remove the rank on Danestrete as part of the ongoing redevelopment of the former Swingate House site. The council's public notice outlines the necessity of the removal, stating: "This proposal is due to a major development taking place on the west side of Danestrete, which will require the

repositioning of the hoarding line to the kerb edge to accommodate the next phase of construction works." Further complicating pedestrian flow, the owners of the Westgate Centre on the east side of Danestrete are "also planning improvement works within the same vicinity." To ensure public safety during these overlapping construction projects, a "temporary pedestrian walkway will be established along the western side of the carriage-way," according to the notice. The layout of this temporary walkway "necessitates the removal of the

taxi rank on Danestrete for the duration of these works."

The public notice confirms that: "The existing taxi bay located on Westgate will remain unaffected." Looking ahead, the council has indicated its willingness to find a new solution for town centre taxis, stating: "As the regeneration of the town centre progresses, the council remains open to exploring suitable alternative locations for a taxi rank elsewhere."

The public can comment/object by emailing: licensing@stevenage.gov.uk by August 11.

VICTORY FOR CHORLEY CABBIES AS HIGH STREET RANK REOPENS ON TUESDAYS AFTER EIGHT YEARS

After more than a year of navigating legal red tape, Chorley's hackney drivers are celebrating reclaiming the town's key High Street rank on Tuesdays.

The win comes after campaigning by the Chorley Taxi Association, which pushed to reverse a 2017 decision that had handed over the bottom taxi rank to Tuesday market traders.

For nearly eight years, the change forced taxis to relocate further up the road leaving shoppers - many elderly or carrying heavy bags - to make an inconvenient uphill trek just to find a ride home.

"It simply wasn't practical," said Shaz Malik, spokesman for the Association. "It hurt the trade, but more importantly, it made life harder for the public. This wasn't just about taxis it was about access and fairness."

Mr Malik said the 2017 decision had gone unchallenged not due to lack of concern, but lack of representation. Although a public consultation was held, the individuals expected to speak on behalf of the taxi trade failed to attend the key meetings. With no voices at the table, the rank was reallocated.

In September 2023, the then newly-formed Chorley Taxi Association formally approached Chorley Council to relocate market stalls on Tuesdays, and restore the rank to taxis. They said the council agreed, but to make the change legal, the Association had to approach Lancashire County Council (LCC) to amend the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) governing the space.

"There's no quick fix with TROs," Mr Malik explained. "It has to go through the county's legal team,

be published for public feedback, and then approved again. We had no idea how complex it would be." Despite the delays, Mr Malik credits both LCC and Chorley Council for their cooperation and support throughout the process. He said: "We're grateful to both councils for working with us. They didn't brush us off they understood the issue and stayed engaged all the way through."

As of this month, taxis can once again use the bottom rank on Tuesdays restoring convenience for shoppers and bringing valuable business back to local drivers. Mr Malik said: "It's a win for both sides. The public gets easier access to taxis, and the trade regains a key rank we never should have lost. It proves that when the right people are at the table and the system is engaged properly, real change is possible."



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MAKING AIRPORT TRANSFERS

THE ART OF TURNING A RIDE INTO AN EXPERIENCE (WITH A SMILE)

Article by Rev'd Paul Newbery
The Elite Family
www.elite-liverpool.co.uk



Introduction

Let's face it: airport transfers don't exactly top the list of life's unforgettable moments. Most of us just want to escape the baggage carousel and avoid a driver who's been waiting since the Bronze Age. But what if we could swap yawns for "yays" and make a private hire vehicle transfer the highlight of your journey? Buckle up - let's make airport rides memorable (and maybe give you a giggle too). After all, there's no rule that says transportation can't be the best part of your trip - unless you're a suitcase, in which case, you don't get a say.

First impressions matter (so lose the cardboard signs!)

You only get one chance at a first impression, and it's hard to recover once you've tripped over a suitcase in front of your client. So, let's go all in:

- **Punctuality:** don't just be on time - be early enough to look mysterious but not creepy. Bonus points for holding a sign with the passenger's name spelled correctly (no pressure, but "Ms. Smyth" still has nightmares).
- **Presentation:** clean car, clean driver - no lingering smells of last night's takeaway. The only odour should be "new car" or "is that fresh cookies?"
- **Personal greeting:** a polite hello, help with the luggage, and maybe a joke if your passenger isn't heavily jet-lagged. Timing is everything.

Personalise, personalise, personalise!

One size fits none. The secret sauce? A sprinkle of personal touch.

- **Pre-arrival surveys:** ask about their favourite music, preferred temperature, or what snack keeps them from turning into a hangry gremlin.
- **Special touches:** welcome packs with water, local treats, or even a local trivia card - because who doesn't want to know who invented Dutch cheese?

- **Celebratory surprises:** if it's a birthday or anniversary, a small treat or a balloon (or both) goes a long way. Just don't let the balloons block the driver's view.

Comfort and conversation (or not)

The inside of that vehicle should feel like a spa on wheels. Unless they want absolute silence. Then, you become a professional mime. (*Fun fact: The world record for most words spoken by a driver to a silent passenger is currently zero.*)

- **Climate control:** make the temperature just right - Goldilocks would be proud.
- **Wi-Fi and chargers:** because low battery anxiety is real. Help your passengers avoid the "my phone died" horror story.
- **Read the room:** some people want to chat, others want to nap. The true pro can sense the difference. One gets a great restaurant recommendation; the other gets a pillow.
- **Sparkling cleanliness:** hand sanitiser, tissues, interior so spotless you can see your reflection in the gear stick.

Local knowledge: become the (friendly) encyclopedia

Nobody wants a lecture, but a good tale never hurt anyone. Share a few quirky facts or point out sights along the way - just keep it interesting (and optional). Did you know the local roundabout is actually a historical monument? Neither did anyone else, until the driver made it sound absolutely fascinating.

- **Insider tips:** "That's the best bakery in town." "Avoid that roundabout at 5pm unless you enjoy existential dread."
- **Language skills:** throw in a phrase or two in the passenger's language. Even if you butcher it, you'll get a laugh.

Efficiency meets style

There's nothing memorable about traffic jams, unless you make it fun:

- **Flight and traffic tracking:** stay updated. If you beat the passenger's flight to arrivals, you get bragging rights.

MEMORABLE IN PH VEHICLES

- Quick payments: no wrestling with change. Tap, beep, done. Magic.

Safety: peace of mind, not paranoia

Trust is everything. Make it obvious the passenger's safety is top priority. Safety isn't just about seatbelts - it's also about not driving like a contestant in a Fast & Furious sequel.

- Verified drivers: friendly, qualified, and definitely not a secret agent.
- Vehicle tracking: let loved ones follow the journey (so they know you haven't decided to drive to Norway by accident).

Going the extra mile (literally and figuratively)

The little things make the biggest difference:

- Refreshments: snacks, mints, maybe an umbrella for that classic "welcome to the UK" weather.
- Music playlists: let passengers choose - unless they pick whale noises, in which case, maybe negotiate.
- Photo ops: offer a quick stop for a selfie with a local landmark. Who says airport runs can't be Instagram-worthy?

And let's not forget the power of a well-timed playlist. A carefully curated selection of tunes can turn a routine ride into a private concert or, at the very least, a three-song dance party in the back seat. If you see your passenger tapping their foot or drumming on their suitcase, you've won the day. Just resist the urge to break into karaoke unless explicitly requested - especially if your rendition of "Bohemian Rhapsody" is more enthusiastic than accurate.

Sometimes, even the best-laid travel plans go awry. Flights are delayed, traffic snarls, and luggage decides to take its own vacation. In these moments, a dash of humour and a reassuring word go further than GPS ever could. A driver who can lighten the mood with a quick joke (*"Don't worry, your suitcase and I have already become good friends"*) can turn frustration into laughter, and show that flexibility and kindness are always on board.

Finally, remember that every airport transfer is a two-way street - metaphorically and literally. As much as drivers aim to leave a lasting impression, guests often do too. From the globetrotter with stories of seven continents to the business traveller who emails from

three devices at once, each passenger brings something unique to the journey. Treat every ride as a chance to collect memories and, occasionally, material for your next great road trip anecdote (names changed to protect the innocent, of course).

Feedback: because you can always be funnier (or better)

Drop a thank-you message or a survey link after the ride. Feedback helps you improve, and sometimes, the stories are gold - like the time you rescued a suitcase from a runaway trolley. Or the time your GPS took you to a goat farm instead of the Hilton. (Hey, at least someone got milk.)

Technology: your invisible chauffeur

Apps for easy booking, real-time updates, and digital guides turn a good ride into a great one. Pro tip: If the app crashes, a smile (and a backup plan) works wonders.

Inclusivity and sensitivity

Be ready for everyone: dietary needs, wheelchair access, or a passenger who speaks fluent emoji. A little flexibility goes a long way. Remember, "smiling in all languages" is a universal skill.

Conclusion

Airport transfers are more than a commute - they're the first chapter of an adventure or a well-earned homecoming. With a dash of humour, genuine care, and attention to detail, private hire journeys become stories passengers actually want to tell. So polish up the car, practise your best jokes, and make every ride memorable for all the right reasons. After all, life's too short for boring airport transfers - and if you ever get lost, just remember: all roads lead to another great story.

The Elite Family way

Within the family we believe that a flight is important and not a flight of fancy. Making our members more memorable and passengers impossible to forget is the way forwards.

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FIT AND PROPER

EDINBURGH CABBIE FACES SECOND LICENCE SUSPENSION AFTER ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT

Edinburgh taxi driver Baris Eroglu is facing a recommendation for a second licence suspension following multiple complaints, including an incident where he allegedly followed an elderly, grieving passenger into a funeral home to demand payment. This comes after his licence was initially suspended in 2024 and then reinstated.

Eroglu's history of complaints dates back to August 2023, when he was accused of mounting a kerb and using aggressive language. Subsequent incidents in September and November 2023 involved him being unhelpful, blunt, and aggressive towards passengers, and failing to provide a receipt.

During a spot check in October 2023, he was found not to be in compliance with the dress code and was unable to provide insurance documentation,

requiring multiple follow-ups.

In a particularly concerning incident in November 2023, officers struggled to arrange an interview with Eroglu to discuss allegations. When they finally reached him in December 2023, he reportedly told a council officer to "watch your f***ing words."

These accumulated complaints led to his licence being revoked in May 2024. However, it was reinstated in December 2024 after Eroglu claimed he was in a better personal place and fit to return to taxiing.

Despite the reinstatement and his assurances to officers of "no more complaints," new allegations quickly emerged. In January 2025, a cyclist accused Eroglu of driving aggressively close and shouting at them, while Eroglu claimed the cyclist made racist remarks. The cyclist expressed concern over Eroglu's "lack of awareness" regarding cyclists' rights.

The most recent and significant incident occurred in May 2025. A woman in her 70s, attending a funeral, reported that Eroglu's card reader failed, and he allegedly followed her into the funeral home to demand payment. The passenger described the experience as a "verbal assault" and noted his "no people skills." She stated she offered to pay him at an ATM after her appointment. While both agree she eventually paid, Eroglu maintained he spoke to her calmly and that she was abusive towards him, later "aggressively" slamming money into his hand.

Council officers have concluded that previous engagements with Eroglu have not been effective. Consequently, they have referred him to the Licensing Sub-Committee, recommending his licence be suspended again on the grounds that he is not a "fit and proper person" to hold one.

BANBURY CABBIE LOSES LICENCE OVER CONDUCT

A Banbury taxi driver, Mohammed Shahzad, 46, has permanently lost his licence after a Magistrates' Court upheld Cherwell DC's decision to revoke it due to "unprofessional" conduct towards a vulnerable female passenger.

The council initially revoked Shahzad's licence on July 4, 2024, following reports of inappropriate behaviour during a five-minute journey. Shahzad appealed the decision, but on July 7, Oxford Magistrates' Court found his actions breached licensing conditions.

Cllr Rob Parkinson, portfolio holder for safer communities commended the swift action taken to remove his licence "to protect the public."

Shahzad was also ordered to pay a portion of the council's legal costs.

IPSWICH CABBIE LOSES LICENCE OVER ACCIDENT

An Ipswich cabbie has had their licence revoked by Ipswich BC following allegations of causing a serious accident and failing to report the incident.

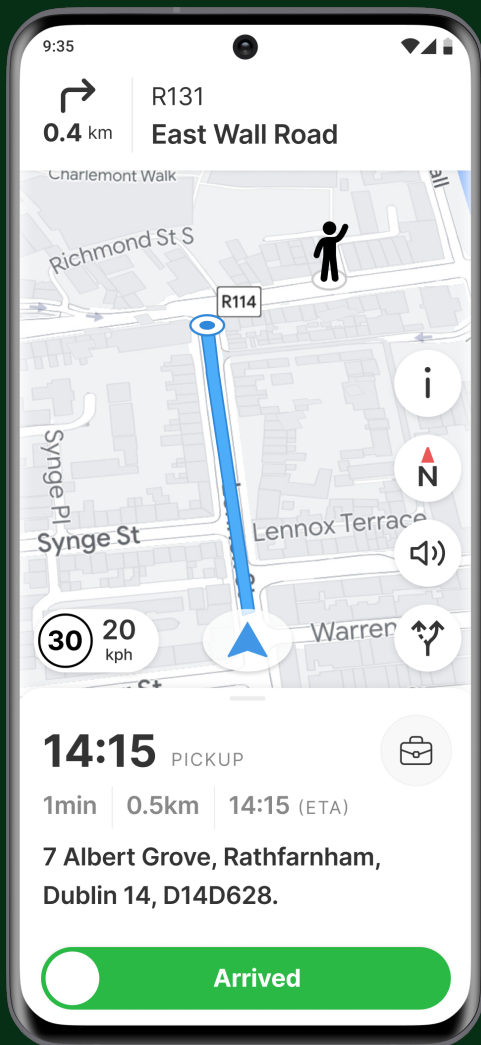
The decision, made on July 2, came after Suffolk police informed the council of the alleged incident. The council confirmed that the severity of the allegations left them with "no alternative options" but to strip the individual of their licence. Further, the driver reportedly did not disclose the incident to the council, a requirement for all licensed drivers.

The driver had a history of "a number of written warnings regarding driving standards which show a pattern of potentially dangerous behaviour," according to council documents.

The driver can appeal to Suffolk Magistrates' Court.

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FIT AND PROPER

WILTSHIRE TAXI DRIVER SUSPENDED AMID “PESTERING A GIRL FOR A KISS” ALLEGATIONS

A Wiltshire taxi driver has been suspended and is under investigation after allegedly “pestering a young girl for a kiss” following a fare on July 27. The incident, which reportedly occurred in Calne, involved a 17-year-old passenger.

The male private hire driver, who was working for the company Swoop, picked up the teenager in Swindon and drove her approximately 15 miles to her destination in Calne. Upon arrival, it’s claimed the driver “turned to the back seat and pestered her for a kiss.”

Swoop has confirmed receiving a complaint regarding the driver’s conduct and stated they are “cooperating with the authorities.”

A spokesperson for the company said, “A self-employed taxi driver, who started working with us on the 4th of July 2025, has been the subject of a complaint that we received by email yesterday, from the parent of a young female.”

The company has suspended the driver from receiving further bookings while a full investigation is carried out. “Whilst a full investigation is carried out, we have also been communicating

with the parent of the female who has brought these allegations, and cooperating with the police in their enquires, plus we will be assisting Swindon BC, who recently licenced the individual,” the spokesperson added.

Swoop expressed hope that “dashcam or CCTV footage might have captured the alleged event, thus assisting everyone, and speeding the correct outcome of this matter.” The driver will remain suspended until both the police and Swindon Borough Council determine “the appropriate course of action.”

BRACKNELL LICENSED TAXI/PH DRIVER FINED AFTER OFFERING ILLEGAL RIDE IN READING

A Bracknell licensed PH/HC driver has been ordered to pay almost £750 by magistrates after Reading licensing officers caught him illegally plying in the town centre. Asghar Ali, of Bracknell, pleaded guilty to use of a motor vehicle without insurance and plying for hire, at Reading Magistrates Court

on 20 June 2025.

Magistrates heard how, on 4 December 2024, Reading BC licensing officers conducting a test purchase approached Mr Ali’s vehicle on Friar Street, where he agreed to take them to an address in Wokingham for £35 without the required prior booking.

At sentencing, Mr Ali was given credit for his early guilty plea and cooperation at interview. He was fined £392 for operating without insurance and given eight penalty points on his driving licence.

For the offence of plying for hire, he was given no separate penalty. He was also required to pay a victim surcharge of £157, plus prosecution costs of £200.

Councillor John Ennis, Lead Councillor for Transport at Reading BC, said: “Thanks to the proactive work of Reading’s Licensing team, another driver operating unlawfully has been successfully prosecuted.

“Illegal plying for hire will not be tolerated in Reading. We will continue to take firm action against any driver who disregards the rules.”

BRADFORD PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER FINED FOR PLYING FOR HIRE

Leeds Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Service investigated and prosecuted Bradford licensed private hire driver Yasran Ghazanfar for plying for hire and no insurance on the 17 November 2024, in Leeds City Centre following Enforcement Officers

carrying out a routine compliance check.

On 1 July at Kirklees Magistrates Court, Mr Ghazanfar pleaded guilty and received a £291 fine, £420 court costs and his driving licence was endorsed with eight penalty points.

The Exchange

We are delighted to announce the launch of The Exchange. With the potential to encompass some 60,000 taxis in the UK and IE this network will be hands down the largest united pool of taxis available to passengers today. And it is all done through the local fleet. This means that a local taxi firm, who uses iCabbi taxi dispatch technology, can now offer their passengers access to local, national and soon, a global network. Critically, this collaborative approach to retaining, and winning bookings for the taxi and private hire sector serves to push ridehail back from taking over passenger transport in cities and towns across the UK, something that is becoming an ever growing problem as more and more councils issue licenses.



→ 60,000

Taxis in the UK and IE network



SHAME SHAME

ARBROATH CABBIE BUSTED WITH NEARLY A MILLION ILLEGAL CIGARETTES

An Arbroath taxi driver, Andrejs Nikitins, has been caught with a massive haul of illegal cigarettes and tobacco, valued at over £400,000 in unpaid duty and VAT. Nikitins' criminal operation was uncovered during a major investigation by HMRC known as "Operation Asleep," which targets duty-dodging schemes.

On May 12, 2022, HMRC officers monitored Nikitins as he accessed a storage unit at Keepsafe Storage in Dundee. Acting under a writ of assistance, they found large cardboard boxes filled with various



brands of cigarettes and tobacco. A subsequent full warrant led to the seizure of 890,640 cigarettes and 30.5kg of hand-rolling tobacco. The total amount of duty and VAT owed to the state on these items was calculated at £404,488.62.

Nikitins, 50, pleaded guilty to knowingly concealing goods with the intent to defraud HMRC.

His solicitor, Doug McConnell, stated that Nikitins, a taxi driver, was "trying to make a bit more money after Covid" and was only set to earn around £4,500 from the illicit enterprise.

However, Sheriff Jillian Martin-Brown warned Nikitins that "a custodial sentence is a possibility" given the extreme value of the seized goods.

Sentencing has been deferred until August.

CHATHAM CABBIE ORDERED TO PAY BACK £100K AFTER HELPING SMUGGLE IMMIGRANTS INTO UK

A cabbie from Chatham has been ordered to pay back £100,000 after helping smuggle immigrants into the UK. Habib Behsodim was found guilty of conspiring to facilitate illegal immigration in December 2022.

The 44-year-old ferried migrants who had been smuggled into the UK in the backs of lorries up to the West Midlands, where the Vietnamese organised crime group he was working with was based. Birmingham Crown Court heard Behsodi was part of a network bringing people into the country in the backs of lorries in the Europe-wide enterprise – with the human cargo referred to as "pork" and "chicken" in intercepted phone messages.

Those being transported are thought to have paid up to £17,000 for passage by entering into a debt

agreement, working off some or all of their fee by labouring in places such as cannabis farms. He was also involved in taking payments from those who had been transported in.

Barrister Danielle Barden, in mitigation, said at the time he had fled torture, including "having boiling water poured over him by Taliban officers".

Judge Dean Kershaw responded to that mitigation, saying: "He came here essentially as an asylum seeker. He then involved himself in this, knowing what he went through and then didn't care as to what others might be going through."

He told Behsodi: "Your role was like



a courier, but you were a courier of individuals who were vulnerable, and brought in for profit.

"These people were treated as commodities – but they were people, human beings."

Behsodi, he said, "played a significant role", and was "not just on the periphery", or an individual who – as the cab driver himself had claimed – had made "an honest mistake".

Behsodi was given a 20-month jail term, suspended for two years.

Following his conviction, National Crime Agency (NCA) financial investigators began work to identify assets that could be proceeds of crime.

At a hearing on Friday June 27, he was ordered to pay £100,000 or face an additional 12-month jail term. He has three months to hand over the money.

SHAME SHAME

FIVE YEARS' JAIL FOR CABBIE WHO SEXUALLY ASSAULTED TEENAGE GIRL HE PICKED UP IN **BURNLEY**

A 'despicable' cabbie sexually assaulted a teenage girl he picked up in his car. Wahid Riaz's victim told a court in a harrowing statement she was sick at home after the attack and cried herself to sleep. Riaz, 52, picked up the teenager just after midnight in his cab on July 23, 2023. During the journey, she told him she was 14, but he said she must be 16 or 17 then asked her if she had been with an Asian male, police said. She took videos throughout the journey and captured the conversation. Riaz then parked at the bottom of the victim's street, told

her to hug him and began kissing her. He then sexually assaulted her before dropping her home. In her victim impact statement to the court, the girl said: "Immediately after the incident, I had a deep feeling of being dirty. I had really long baths and showers, and I would scrub my body so much I would make it red. I was just trying to feel clean." Detectives said Riaz made his



young victim go through the stress of having to give evidence in court after refusing to admit what he had done. A jury at Preston Crown Court did not believe his lies and on July 10 Riaz, from Nelson, was jailed for five years and ordered to sign the Sex Offender's Register for life. Detective Constable Ryan Benson, who led the investigation, said: "Wahid Riaz is a despicable individual who has a sordid sexual interest in children. He used his position as a taxi driver to isolate and then engage in sexual activity with a vulnerable young girl."

GUERNSEY CABBIE DUMPS DASHCAM AFTER CRASH WITH CYCLIST AND BLAMES CARBON MONOXIDE

A taxi driver dangerously collided with a cyclist and then attempted to conceal evidence by throwing his dashcam into a bush. John Howard Robert, 65, initially denied charges of dangerous driving and perverting the course of justice but later pleaded guilty. The incident occurred last November at 6:35pm in St Peter's. Prosecutor Phoebe Cobb told the court that Robert's taxi was equipped with a dashcam and following the collision, officers arriving at the scene noticed a cable hanging from the rearview mirror. A police dog later located the dashcam in a nearby bush. Footage recovered from the device showed Robert using his mobile phone while driving, visible through the reflection in his glasses. He was also seen turning off the interior

light with his free hand, indicating he wasn't holding the steering wheel. Robert spent significant time looking at his phone, only briefly glancing at the road, and at one point, clipped a kerb. The cyclist, Alex Margison, sustained soft tissue damage to a shoulder and an injured finger. Robert apologised to Margison at the scene and called an ambulance. In a subsequent interview, Robert claimed he was under the influence of carbon monoxide poisoning due to a leaking exhaust, a claim later disproven after an inspection of the vehicle. He stated the cyclist was riding in the middle of the road and that he didn't think he needed to tell officers about the dashcam. Defending, Advocate Clare Tee stated that Robert had not driven

since the incident and was in the process of selling his taxi plate. Judge Gary Perry "totally rejected" Robert's carbon monoxide poisoning claim, calling it "quite frankly ridiculous." He criticised Robert for putting other road users at risk, disposing of the dashcam when the cyclist must have been lying in the road," and said only Robert's long, clean driving record prevented him from being imprisoned. Robert was ordered to perform 140 hours of community service as an alternative to five months in prison for attempting to pervert the course of justice. He also received 80 hours of concurrent community service as an alternative to two months in prison for dangerous driving, along with a two-and-a-half-year driving licence suspension.

BOOST YOUR APP DOWNLOADS

WHY APP DOWNLOADS MATTER MORE THAN EVER FOR PRIVATE HIRE FIRMS

In a world where nearly everything happens through a mobile screen, from food orders to banking, it's no surprise that the taxi industry is expected to follow suit. Yet despite investing in app technology, many local private hire operators still struggle to get people to **download and use their app**.

At **TaxiSolutions**, we work exclusively with firms in the private hire industry, and one of the biggest problems we see is this: operators have a solid app, but no strategy to promote it. The app ends up gathering dust in the App Store, while national brands continue to dominate local bookings. It's a frustrating and unnecessary gap.

The truth is, **app downloads are more than a tech upgrade**; they're the gateway to consistent, direct bookings, passenger loyalty and long-term brand visibility. Every download is a potential repeat customer. Every push notification is a reminder that your firm is just one tap away.

So, what's stopping firms from getting those downloads?

In many cases, the issue isn't the app itself, but rather a **lack of awareness and promotion**. Passengers don't download what they don't know about. And in a competitive market, simply telling passengers your app exists isn't enough.

That's where we come in. At TaxiSolutions, we run **targeted app download campaigns** that are tailored to your local audience. Our focus remains the same: **put your app in front of the right people** and give them a reason to download it.

The results speak for themselves. With the right campaign in place, we've seen firms go from barely any download numbers to thousands of active users, people who book regularly, leave reviews and stay loyal to local.

If your app isn't delivering the numbers you hoped for, the problem might not be the app, it might be the lack of visibility. And in this business, **visibility equals bookings**.

A promotional graphic for TaxiSolutions. It features a blue background with a hand holding a smartphone. The phone screen shows a circular loading icon and the text 'Continue with Email'. Above the phone, there are glowing blue and green circular motion lines. The text 'taxisolutions' is in the top left. The main headline reads 'BOOST YOUR APP DOWNLOADS AND PASSENGER REACH!' in large white letters. Below it, in smaller white text, is 'NEED MORE APP DOWNLOADS? TAXISOLUTIONS HAS YOU COVERED'. In the bottom right corner, the website 'taxisolutions.co.uk' and phone number '0330 088 6006' are listed.

taxisolutions

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PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER REPORTED FOR SUMMONS AFTER DANGEROUS **A50** STOP

A private hire driver is facing legal action after being caught stopping in a live lane on the A50 dual carriageway to adjust their sat nav, causing significant traffic disruption and posing a serious risk to other motorists.

Staffordshire Police Roads Unit brought attention to the alarming incident in a post on X (formerly Twitter), sharing an image of the implicated grey Toyota C-HR.

The vehicle is believed to be licensed by Wolverhampton Council, though confirmation was



difficult due to image quality.

According to the police, the driver's ill-advised stop forced "other cars [to go] swerving out the

way to avoid a collision & also causing unnecessary tail backs," as stated by the Roads Policing Unit. Their post emphasised: "If you're lost please don't stop in a live lane of a dual carriageway to sort the Sat Nav."

Police have not yet released further details, but the driver will face legal consequences for the perilous stop.

Drivers are advised to safely exit the carriageway if they need to check navigation or address vehicle issues.

LONDON CABBIE THREATENED WITH BLACKMAIL FOR USING PHONE DRIVING IN SLOW TRAFFIC

A viral TikTok shows a cyclist approaching the cabbie and reprimanding him for using his device while his Hackney Carriage was stationary on Shaftesbury Avenue in West End.

The cabbie can be seen with two phones, which were docked in mounts attached to the vehicle's centre console.

"What do we have over here? Black cab texting while driving. Not one but two phones," the cyclist said while riding alongside the taxi on a Santander Cycle.

After the driver appeared to point to his devices on the docks, the cyclist replied: "It doesn't matter mate, we're doing transactions now, so how do we come to a solution, a conclusion."

As the pair travelled slowly down the street, the cyclist offered to delete the clip for cash, saying: "So, shall I just take you to court? Just



give me a tenner and I'll let you be." The driver then pulls over after the cyclist offered to delete the video for money but it is not clear if a transaction was made.

But the LTDA described the cyclist's actions as "yet another scam". It posted on X: "The law permits touching a phone screen whilst the phone is in a fixed cradle in exactly the same way it is lawful to touch a fixed screen in a TXE or any other modern car! Tell the

scammers to go forth and multiply." Steve McNamara, the LTDA's general secretary, assumes the driver was making a call while stuck in traffic as "many rely on mobile phones to do business".

He said the tactic used by the cyclist is becoming more common and warned those visiting the capital of "another scam", alongside the likes of phone snatching and overpriced pedicabs.

Under current laws, drivers are permitted to use their phone for satellite navigation or swipe the screen for a call, provided it is secured in a cradle.

Guilty drivers face up to six points on their licence and a £200 fine, while TfL has a strict policy where drivers can have their licences revoked for using a phone while driving. However, there is no specific law against using a phone while on a bicycle.

POLICE SEIZE £39K IN CASH FROM TAXI TRAVELLING SOUTH ON M6 FROM GLASGOW

Police in Cumbria have been granted permission to hold onto £39,000 in “suspicious” cash seized from a taxi traveling south on the M6 near Carlisle.

The money, found in the boot of the vehicle, was discovered after officers stopped the taxi on Saturday, July 19.

A financial investigator told the city’s Rickergate court that the stop was initiated because officers “suspected something untoward was going on.”

The driver and a passenger, who were travelling from Glasgow, gave inconsistent accounts of their journey when questioned separately. The investigator noted that criminals often use taxis to transport illicit items from Scotland into England.

Inside the taxi’s spare wheel compartment, officers found a tightly wrapped package of cash.

The driver claimed he was delivering it to someone in London, while the passenger denied any

knowledge of the money, saying he was simply asked to collect the package in Glasgow.

Police suspect the money is linked to crime, and magistrates agreed, stating there were “reasonable grounds to suspect the money was linked to crime, or intended for some criminal purpose.”

An order was granted for six months under Proceeds of Crime legislation, allowing police to continue their investigation into the origin of the funds.

WAKEFIELD TAXI WITH PASSENGER ONBOARD SHOT AT WITH A METAL BEARING

A taxi with a passenger onboard has been shot at with a metal bearing whilst driving down Doncaster Road in Wakefield Tuesday night, 30 July.

Thankfully the driver and passenger were both unhurt but were left frightened and badly

shaken by the attack.

Also hundreds of pounds worth of damage was caused to the vehicle.

Yasa Ahmed, Chair of Wakefield drivers association told **PHTM**: “It’s been reported to the council and the police, but we need elected members to chase it up otherwise

people won’t do anything about it. “And why did the youths only target a taxi ?

“Door stickers need to be reviewed as a matter of urgency. This incident could have seriously hurt the customer and driver, it’s become a public safety issue.”



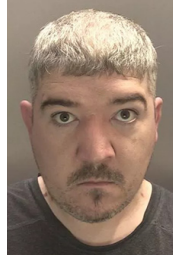
JUST DESERTS

MAN JAILED FOR 30 MONTHS AFTER KNIFE ATTACK AND RACIST THREATS AGAINST LIVERPOOL CABBIE

A man who threatened a taxi driver with a knife and subjected him to racist abuse over an unpaid fare has been sentenced to 30 months in prison. Lee Smith, 41, had only been released from prison two months prior.

The incident unfolded in the early hours of April 28, in Kirkby. The taxi driver had picked up a woman the previous evening, who stated she didn't have money for the fare. She directed him to Warrenhouse Road, claiming her partner would pay. However, once at the address, the woman went inside and did not reappear. Prosecutor Ian Criddle told Liverpool Crown Court

that after a 10 minutes, the driver knocked on the door. "The lady didn't come out, but the defendant did," Mr Criddle said. Smith, described as aggressive, then pressed a knife against the taxi driver's stomach. "He said 'you Black c***, get away from here, I'll stab you, I'll kill you'". The woman eventually emerged and suggested the driver return the following day for payment, but Smith continued his racist abuse and threats. The taxi driver



subsequently called the police, leading to Smith's arrest.

The court heard that Smith has a lengthy criminal record, with 90 separate offences across 37 convictions, including for damage, theft, violence and robbery.

The victim described the knife as being between 10 and 12cm in length and told the court he was "upset, he was distressed and he was scared" by the ordeal.

Smith pleaded guilty to threatening a person with a blade in a public place and racially aggravated common assault.

He received a total sentence of 30 months' imprisonment.

RACIST STOKE-ON-TRENT THUG SPARED PRISON AFTER BRUTAL CABBIE ATTACK OVER FARE

A "racist thug" who battered a cabbie in a dispute over an £8.60 fare has narrowly avoided a prison sentence. Robert Barone, 51, was handed a community order despite a violent outburst that left the cabbie needing stitches.

Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court heard that the incident, which occurred on June 5, 2023, escalated when Barone objected to being charged £1 more than his usual fare. David Isles, prosecuting, detailed how Barone "exited the vehicle, spat at him through the window, hit him in the face and called him a p***."

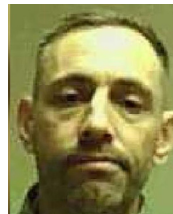
After the initial assault, Barone retreated into his Bucknall home. The victim, attempting to report the incident to his base and blacklist Barone, moved his car down the street. However, Barone

re-emerged, with a wallpaper scraper.

Isles stated: "The defendant came out and struck the victim three times with a metal rod wallpaper scraper and caused damage to his car door." The attack resulted in the victim's right arm bleeding, requiring stitches at the hospital.

A witness described seeing the defendant with the victim "in a headlock" and that it "looked like the victim was in fear and the defendant seemed aggravated."

Police later found the blood-stained wallpaper scraper under Barone's bed. Barone, who has a history of 28 convictions for 48



offences, pleaded guilty to racially aggravated assault occasioning ABH and threatening with a bladed article.

Judge Robert Smith, addressing Barone, stated: "You are a man predisposed towards violence." He highlighted the victim's need for hospital treatment and the significant impact on his livelihood, forcing him to take "six weeks off work and lost income."

Barone was ordered to complete 150 hours of unpaid work within 12 months, pay £1,000 compensation to the victim, and £500 in costs.

Judge Smith concluded by emphasising that he would be: "reviewing your suspended sentence and if you put a foot wrong, I'll send you to prison so fast your feet won't touch the ground."

JUST DESERTS

MIDDLESBROUGH THUG WHO FIRED BB GUN AT PHV AFTER FARE DISPUTE JAILED FOR FIVE YEARS

A terrifying dispute over a mere 20p spiralled into a violent BB gun attack on a PH driver, an incident that was just one in a series of escalating offences committed by Liam Blackburn.

The 22-year-old was recently jailed for five years after admitting to a litany of charges, including possession of an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear of violence, criminal damage, and conspiracy to possess a firearm.

The initial incident, occurring in February 2022, saw Blackburn take offence at being asked to pay a £3.70 upfront fare. According to prosecutor Sam Faulks, Blackburn insisted the fare should only be £3.50. After handing over £10 and being asked to wait for change, he

verbally abused the driver, calling him “a c***” and threatened to “smash him in.” As the driver got out to close the door left ajar by Blackburn, he was “racially abused by some women in the street.”

Blackburn then reappeared with a “small black glock type handgun” and began firing at the PHV, shattering a window and causing £400 damage.

The distraught driver told police: “I go to work to provide a service for the public... I shouldn’t be shot at.” Blackburn’s criminal activities didn’t end there. While on police bail, in September 2024, he was



identified from CCTV footage wielding a large machete at a hotel in Stainton. Then in October, armed police officers found a loaded sawn-off shotgun in a bag in his father’s garden in Stockton, with Blackburn’s fingerprints on it. Blackburn, from Middlesbrough, pleaded guilty to possessing an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear of violence, criminal damage, a section 4 public order offence, conspiracy to possess a firearm, and possession of a knife in a public place.

Upon his release, he will be subject to a criminal behaviour order preventing him from associating with named individuals and attending “hotbeds of drug dealing and weapon offences.”

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TAXIBOT LITE FOR EXECUTIVE TRANSPORT AND CHAUFFEUR SERVICES

TaxiBot Lite is a game-changer for executive transport and chauffeur companies looking to modernise and streamline their operations. By automating the booking process through WhatsApp, it offers a fast, familiar and professional experience for both clients and operators. Executives can book and manage journeys instantly, without the need for phone calls, emails, or third-party apps - saving valuable time and reducing friction.

The platform delivers real-time booking confirmations, WhatsApp notifications and seamless calendar integration, ensuring punctuality and reliability. It also simplifies expense management with centralised booking records, making reporting and invoicing easier for corporate clients.

For businesses, TaxiBot Lite reduces administrative workload, minimises human error, and allows staff to focus on delivering high-quality service. It operates 24/7, meaning bookings can be made anytime, even outside office hours. This level of convenience and responsiveness enhances the customer experience and strengthens brand reputation.

By adopting TaxiBot Lite, executive transport providers can offer a premium, tech-forward service that meets the expectations of today's business traveller - boosting efficiency, increasing bookings, and reinforcing a modern, professional image.

TAXIBOT LITE FOR AIRPORT TRANSFERS AND MINIBUS OPERATORS

TaxiBot Lite is a powerful tool for airport transfers and minibus companies looking to streamline operations and deliver a superior customer experience. With most passengers already using WhatsApp, TaxiBot Lite makes the booking process fast, familiar, and frictionless. Customers can book rides instantly, receive real-time confirmations, and get updates on driver location - all without needing to call or download another app.

The system operates 24/7, automatically handling inquiries, managing bookings and reducing the risk of missed calls or manual errors. This ensures faster response times, greater booking accuracy, and a more professional service overall. For operators, it means fewer administrative tasks, better resource management, and the ability to handle more bookings with less effort.

TaxiBot Lite also helps businesses stand out in a competitive market by offering a modern solution that meets today's customer expectations. Whether you're managing airport pickups, group transfers, or scheduled routes, this automation tool enhances reliability, builds trust, and increases customer satisfaction.

By adopting TaxiBot Lite, airport transfer and minibus companies can grow their business, improve efficiency, and deliver a seamless, high-quality experience that keeps passengers coming back.

AUGUST SPECIAL OFFER: 20% OFF TAXIBOT LITE!

Automate your bookings and elevate customer service with 20% off TaxiBot Lite subscriptions for the first six months - available on a first-come, first-served basis. This limited-time offer helps businesses grow by streamlining operations, reducing admin tasks, and capturing more bookings through WhatsApp. Customers enjoy faster responses, real-time updates, and a smoother experience, boosting satisfaction and loyalty. By adopting smart automation, companies enhance their reputation, improve efficiency, and stay ahead of competitors. Don't miss this chance to modernise your bookings and drive business growth.

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GREEN MEANS GO

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES £650M ECG SCHEME WORTH UP TO **£3,750 DISCOUNT** PER CAR

Supporting the manifesto commitment to phase out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030, the £650m Electric Car Grant (ECG) will back UK and other manufacturers, with eligibility dependent on the highest manufacturing sustainability standards. Discounts up to £3,750 will be available at the point of sale for new eligible electric cars priced at or under £37,000.

Drivers will start to benefit from discounts as soon as manufacturers successfully apply for

their zero emission cars to be part of the grant scheme from 16 July, with funding available until the 2028/29 financial year.

This latest scheme builds on the Government's major £63m package to support at home charging for households without driveways, transition NHS fleets to electric, and create thousands of chargepoints at businesses depots across the country. In total the Government is investing £4.5b to turbocharge the switch to EVs.

The latest update also comes as

the UK hits over 82,000 public chargepoints nationwide – with one added every 30 minutes. This latest move comes alongside the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Mandate, which requires manufacturers to sell increasing percentages of ZEVs each year.

Recent changes to the mandate give industry the certainty, stability and support they've been asking for, alongside crucial trade deals with the US, India and the EU following the recent global economic headwinds.

ROCHDALE CABS GET MORE TIME TO GO GREEN IN CLEAN AIR PUSH

Rochdale taxi and PH drivers are being granted a significant extension to upgrade their vehicles to greener models, pushing the deadline back by nearly five years to August 31, 2030.

This move aligns Rochdale with Greater Manchester's (GM) broader "investment-led approach" to tackling air pollution, which prioritises financial support for vehicle upgrades over daily charges for older, more polluting cars.

The decision comes as part of GM's Clean Air Plan, which aims to improve air quality across the region. While the initial deadline for vehicle upgrades was December 31, 2025, this was already extended due to the sheer number of vehicles involved and the anticipation of government funding.

Rochdale, notably one of two Greater Manchester authorities without existing emissions

requirements linked to taxi and private hire licensing, is now formalising this extended timeframe. A report to Rochdale Council's Planning and Licensing Committee, set to be discussed on July 31, outlines that licensed drivers in the borough will have until August 31, 2030, to meet emission standards. Currently, 345 out of 1,852 licensed vehicles in Rochdale - approximately 18% of the total fleet - are non-compliant with the new emission standards. The report emphasises the critical role of these upgrades, stating: "Taxi and PHVs represent an important mechanism for reducing exceedances under the investment-led plan and are grounded in the ability of the GM authorities to reduce emissions through licensing conditions."

The "appraisal of the investment-led plan has been developed on the

basis that an emissions standard, requiring all licensed hackneys and PHVs to be a minimum of Euro 6 (diesel) or Euro 4 (petrol) by August 31, 2030, will have been adopted by all GM Authorities." This uniformity is crucial to ensuring all GM-licensed taxis and PHVs comply with the emission standards.

The report highlights the necessity of this alignment, noting: "There are no alternatives as Rochdale is one of two Greater Manchester local authorities without an emissions standard linked to vehicle licensing conditions. Our trade would be significantly disadvantaged if we do not adopt the approach that aligns with the Clean Air investment-led plan."

The committee is expected to acknowledge these amendments, and the revised HC and PH Vehicle Standards will be presented to the council's cabinet on August 21.

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ROUND THE COUNCILS

KIRKLEES:

SUV GREENLIGHT / COMPLIANCE DATA

Kirklees Council's Licensing and Safety Committee has unanimously approved a policy change allowing SUVs to be used as taxis within the borough, citing improved accessibility for passengers. The decision, made last month, also came with a report detailing recent compliance test failures among licensed vehicles.

The new policy updates the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Specification Policy, which governs vehicle types and standards.

Cllr Eric Firth, chair of the meeting, supported the move, stating: "I think it makes sense for the SUVs to be licensed. They are higher, and actually easier to get into and out of for somebody with a disability." The change was prompted by the rise of smaller SUVs, which, according to Fiona Goldsmith, the council's Public Protection Group Leader for Licensing, make up "nine out of 10 vehicles on the road."

Public opinion on the matter was divided. A consultation with 372 respondents found that 57% disagreed with licensing MPVs and SUVs. One respondent commented: "MPVs are impractical...and SUVs shouldn't be licensed as we don't need more SUVs in our town centres or near schools."

However, others supported the change, with one person noting that a higher vehicle "might just be an advantage round here in winter" and is easier to enter with a disability.

A separate report provided an update on the council's licensing services, including compliance testing for all licensed vehicles. These tests, described by Goldsmith as an MOT with additional checks, can be administered up to three times a year.

The report's findings from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, showed:

- 2,445 tests were conducted.
- 653 vehicles, or 26.71%, failed the test.
- The highest failure rate was in April 2024, with 42% of 185 tested vehicles failing.

The most common reasons for failure were:

- Lighting: 308 vehicles
- Steering/suspension: 171 vehicles
- Wheels/tyres: 152 vehicles
- Brakes: 119 vehicles

Councillor Charles Greaves expressed concern that drivers were not conducting their own regular checks, noting that "dangerous vehicles" could be on the road for extended periods between annual tests.

Goldsmith clarified that while the onus is on drivers to perform their own checks, the council can require a vehicle to undergo an additional test if it "doesn't look quite right," for up to three tests per year. Councillor Firth added that it is a "minority" of drivers and vehicles that are not keeping up with maintenance.

BURNLEY:

CABBIE'S ENGLISH PROFICIENCY WORRIES

A former Conservative group leader on Burnley Council, now sitting as an Independent, Cllr Alan Hosker, has voiced strong concerns regarding the English language proficiency of some taxi and PHV drivers in the borough, calling for new regulations.

Cllr Hosker, himself a former taxi driver, brought the issue before the authority's executive last month, stating: "It was brought to my attention through concerns raised by members of the public on some taxi drivers not being able to speak English."

He emphasised that "members of the public need to be able to travel in safety, knowing that the driver can speak English," particularly in emergencies.

Highlighting past experiences, Cllr Hosker recounted his time on the licensing committee where "some drivers who were brought before the committee had to bring an interpreter." He stressed that this is "a matter of public safety and communication," asking: "How can Joe Public communicate with the driver in an emergency if he cannot speak English?"

Cllr Hosker expressed frustration, noting: "I have tried to raise this several times with the licensing committee and have been ignored. I want this addressed here."

However, Cllr Howard Baker, the council's community and environment boss, stated that the matter fell under the remit of the licensing committee, not the executive. He advised Cllr Hosker to provide specific examples of public complaints and instances where a driver's poor English was an issue in emergencies to ensure the matter is properly examined.

Following the meeting, Cllr Hosker remained resolute, commenting: "They have fobbed me off again. I shall continue to raise this issue, including at full council."

He recalled that Burnley Council "used to have a knowledge test, including that drivers must speak good English," and reiterated his desire for the public to "have confidence to be able to travel safely and understand the driver."

ROUND THE COUNCILS

NORTH NORTHANTS:

DELAYS COULD DAMAGE WAV NUMBERS

Drivers have complained that delays to a new taxi and private hire licensing policy could impact the number of wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) available in North Northants if they continue.

The concerns come after plans to bring in North Northants Council's (NNC) draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy in April this year were deferred by the previous administration.

Due to the timing of the local elections, the first available slot to re-examine them was not until mid-June, with implementation set for September.

Managing director at Harrisons Taxis, Ryan Church, has said that the lack of action on the policy has left private hire operators in limbo with licensing new wheelchair vehicles, as a result of the substantial changes set to come in.

Mr Church told Northamptonshire Telegraph "Private hire companies can't provide disability vehicles simply due to the cost. The rules are absolutely mental.

"In the industry, we're talking about boycotting and just retiring all these old vehicles because we're not bound to do it and we can't afford them. In that time, all that's going to happen is people can't get travel through no fault of their own and no fault of the operator.

"The policy speed is my issue really - they need to get it in place or do something to make sure disabled people can travel."

Mr Church explained that Harrisons currently has a WAV that desperately needs replacing, but that the costs associated with the current NNC licensing policy are too high.

He said: "In reality, if that vehicle breaks down tomorrow and we can't fix it, what can we do?

"It's not financially feasible for anyone to do it. We'll just have to say it's not available and people are then stuck.

"You don't want to be turning away disabled passengers or someone who needs assistance - it's what you should be offering - but we physically can't do it until this policy changes. Everything is at a standstill."

This is not the first time that the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy has come under fire, with cab drivers previously opposing a range of new rules that would be brought in, including zone harmonisation, an area-wide knowledge test, and strict vehicle requirements.

Officers were therefore asked to push back and further consider the draft policy when it was presented to the previous executive in February 2025, rather than approving it.

The policy was eventually approved by full council on June 26.

It is now scheduled to come into effect on September 1, 2025, subject to the Department for Transport approving the updated Hackney Carriage Byelaws.

Responding to the concerns, Cllr Kirk Harrison, NNC's executive member for regulatory services, said: "Implementation before 1 September is not possible because the updated Hackney Carriage Byelaws must be submitted to the Department for Transport for final approval. The September implementation date allows sufficient time for this process to be completed.

"In the meantime, the council continues to process licence applications on a case-by-case basis.

"No providers are currently prevented from offering wheelchair-accessible vehicles under the existing arrangements, and the updated policy includes transitional provisions to protect existing licence holders until at least 2028, including those granted a licence up to 30 August 2025.

"The executive and council have also requested a further review post-implementation to consider specific aspects of the policy, including requirements for wheelchair-accessible vehicles, the exceptional age policy, and transitional/grandfather rights arrangements. This will ensure the policy remains proportionate, evidence-based, and responsive to the needs of residents."

TRANSPORT for LONDON:

CONSULTATION ON CONGESTION CHARGE

TfL is proposing changes to the central London Congestion Charging Scheme. These include a change in the charge level from £15 to £18, a new discount for EVs and a change to the Residents' Discount for new applicants.

The Congestion Charging scheme was introduced in February 2003. Since its introduction the primary objective of the scheme has been to manage traffic and congestion in central London by imposing a charge during the busiest times of day.

If introduced, the proposals would begin to come into effect from January 2026. You have until 4 August 2025 to give your feedback:

<https://haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/congestion-charge-proposals>

ROUND THE COUNCILS

WOKING:

WAV EMISSION CONSULTATION

Residents, taxi drivers, and community groups are being invited to share their views on the future of wheelchair accessible taxis in Woking borough.

A public consultation has launched to gather feedback on whether the deadline for wheelchair accessible taxis and private hire vehicles to meet ultra-low emissions standards by 31 March 2026 should remain in place or be extended.

There are concerns about the availability and affordability of suitable wheelchair accessible ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs), as well as the infrastructure needed to support them.

This could result in fewer wheelchair accessible vehicles operating locally, reducing transport options for disabled residents and others who rely on accessible services.

Beverley Kuchar, Woking Borough Council's Strategic Director for Place, said: "Wheelchair accessible taxis are a vital part of our community, helping to make sure everyone can travel safely and independently.

"We are also committed to improving air quality, so it is vitally important that we get the balance right, so no one is left behind. This consultation is a chance for residents, drivers and community groups to tell us what matters to them and help shape a policy that works for everyone in our communities.

Share your views by completing the online survey: <https://shorturl.at/zpFla>

The 8-week consultation closes on 31 August 2025.

BOLTON:

SUSPENSIONS FOR UNCOMPLETED TRAINING

Dozens of taxi drivers in Bolton face suspension for failing to complete mandatory safeguarding and disability awareness training, six years after the programme was first approved.

According to a council report, 74 drivers have still not finished the course, prompting Bolton Council to take enforcement action.

The training, originally commissioned in July 2019, was designed to "improve industry standards and ensure vulnerable passengers are protected."

The scheme, which was delayed by the pandemic before moving online in 2022, has been a requirement

for all of the borough's roughly 1,800 licensed drivers. A report presented to Cllr Hamid Khurram, the executive cabinet member for transport, highways and regulatory services, on July 16, confirmed that suspensions are now being considered.

The report states: "We will shortly be compiling a list of those drivers that have not completed the training" and will advise them that "a request to suspend their licence until they complete is being processed."

The council is working with its training provider to expand session availability, including evenings and weekends, to accommodate the remaining drivers. Although the training was once offered free of charge, that period has since expired.

NUNEATON & BEDWORTH:

EXTRA CHECKS AND POINTS PROPOSED

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council is set to introduce a new policy aimed at enhancing public safety and raising the standards of local taxi and private hire drivers. The proposed changes include more frequent criminal record checks and a new penalty points system.

Under the new "taxi and private hire driver, vehicle licence proprietor and operator policy," drivers will be subject to six-monthly Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

The new policy outlines a penalty points scheme and other "significant criteria" for licensing. While the full details of how points will be accrued and their impact are available on the council's website, accumulating too many points could lead to a review of a driver's licence by the licensing committee.

A spokesperson for the Town Hall stated: "The aim of the policy is to create a better standard of licence holder and increase public safety."

This initiative follows guidance from the DfT's Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards and Best Practice Guidance, which encourages local authorities to develop their own specific licensing policies. The council has confirmed that these national guidelines were taken into consideration during the preparation of the new plan.

Before the new policy is implemented, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council is inviting residents to share their views through a public consultation which is currently underway and will conclude on 7 August. The full proposed policy can be accessed on the council's website at: <https://shorturl.at/X68wF>

ROUND THE COUNCILS

COVENTRY:

U-TURN ON EMISSION RULES CONSIDERED

Coventry City Council is poised to roll back strict taxi emission regulations and potentially scrap a 15-year age limit on vehicles, citing concerns that current policies could drastically reduce the number of available taxis. The proposed changes, agreed at a recent cabinet meeting, will now undergo an eight-week public consultation starting August 8th.

Under the new proposals, the deadline for zero-emission capable taxis could be pushed back to 2030, while the age restriction on vehicles might be abolished from January next year.

This comes as the council acknowledges the severe impact on drivers from the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

Debbie Cahalin-Heath, strategic manager within the council's regulatory services, warned that without these amendments, "over 400 vehicles would be required to be replaced by the taxi licensing trade. The operating fleet would be seriously reduced."

She highlighted the potential disruption to vital services, stating: "That would have an impact on the vehicles able to undertake school contracts within Coventry and Warwickshire."

Furthermore, the changes aim to address a looming shortage of WAVs, as "currently only hackney carriage vehicles are wheelchair accessible." Ms. Cahalin-Heath emphasised that extending the policy "allows sufficient time for the trade to prepare."

The council's report also cited DfT guidelines, which "strongly suggested that the imposition of arbitrary vehicle age limits may be inappropriate and counter-productive, recommending that local authorities focus on condition and standards, including roadworthiness and emissions."

The proposed revisions would also broaden the list of approved vehicle manufacturers, moving beyond the current limited selection of LEVC, Mercedes, and Nissan, to include popular brands such as Citroen, Fiat, Ford, Peugeot, and Volkswagen, offering drivers more choices.

Meanwhile, Coventry taxi drivers have submitted a petition, backed by over 1,600 signatures, to the city council, advocating for the relocation and expansion of a taxi rank in the city centre. Drivers are pushing to move the current four-space rank on Cross Cheaping to nearby Palmer Lane, which would allow for nine spaces. The plea comes amidst recent construction

work on the new City Centre South project, which has led to the closure of a rank on Rover Road, further reducing available spaces for drivers.

A council spokesperson confirmed receipt of the petition, stating it "will be considered through the usual process" and that the council "will continue to work with Taxi Forum representatives." However, the council currently has "no plans to change the existing taxi rank at Cross Cheaping, which accommodates four taxis," and confirmed this capacity "will not be reduced as part of the current works."

While acknowledging discussions with the Coventry Taxi Forum over the past year regarding this issue, the council highlighted that "options are limited" for increasing capacity. The spokesperson also noted that the "deculverting of the River Sherbourne does not affect the rank."

Despite the current stance, the council confirmed it is "reviewing the wider night-time economy as part of its Purple Flag bid, and taxi provision may be looked at as part of that," suggesting potential future consideration for improved taxi facilities.

STOKE-ON-TRENT:

NEW RULES MAKE TAXIS SAFER & GREENER

Stoke-on-Trent is to introduce new rules to make the city's taxis safer and greener. The city council's cabinet approved changes that will mean all taxi owners must have DBS checks for unspent convictions and cautions. Drivers will continue to face enhanced DBS checks and will have to attend courses about safeguarding children and vulnerable people before they begin work - and then re-attend every three years.

The new rules recommend that all drivers install CCTV in their vehicles for their safety, and their passengers. They mean drivers have to notify the council within 48 hours if they are questioned, interviewed or arrested by police. Previously the deadline was seven days.

Drivers will also have to demonstrate the right to work in the UK through a UK passport or right-to-work code. The rules would effectively mean only electric and hybrid taxis will be licensed after April 2031. Conventional diesel or petrol taxis will be gradually phased out before then, with the least polluting, WAVs given longer on the city's roads.

The new rules form part of a draft taxi and private hire licensing policy for 2025. Operators and drivers have been widely consulted on the planned changes, with the majority in favour of the proposals.

POLICE LAUNCH PROBE AFTER **BIRMINGHAM** CABBIE INJURED IN ROAD RAGE ALTERCATION

A Birmingham taxi driver was injured in a 'road rage altercation' as West Midlands Police have launched a probe. They were called to Bridge Road, at the junction with Anthony Road, in Alum Rock, at around 5.30pm, on Saturday 5 July.

The force said the taxi driver was punched by a man from a second car, a white Toyota Avenis, which then left the scene. The cabbie was taken to hospital, but thankfully his injuries are not believed to be life-threatening.

Police continue to hunt the driver of the second car but no arrests have been made. A police spokeswoman said: "Investigations are continuing to establish the exact circumstances and trace the second driver."

SHOCKING: PH DRIVER AMBUSHED BY GANG OF MEN WHILST WAITING FOR FARE IN **ST HELENS**

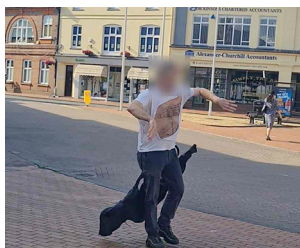
Merseyside Police were called out to Stainton Close in St Helens on Sunday, June 29 at around 5.10pm to reports of a robbery. The victim, a PH driver in his 40s, was sitting in his black Citroen waiting for a fare, when he was approached by a young white man on an electric bike. Shortly after this three further suspects, all white men, came out of a block of

flats near the taxi. They approached the cab shouting aggressively before attempting to grab the car keys. During the assault they demanded and took money from the victim. Det Insp, Jimmy Rotherham said: "This incident left the victim in shock with facial injuries and with considerable expense as the suspects stole cash and keys.

People working in our communities should be able to do so without fear of being subjected to an ordeal like this. "Enquiries are ongoing, including examination of CCTV footage and forensic enquiries, and we are keen to hear from anyone who might have dashcam footage or CCTV in that area or anyone who witnessed the incident to get in touch."

HATE CRIME PROBE AFTER RACIST ATTACK ON **CHESHAM** TAXI DRIVERS

Thames Valley Police has launched a hate crime investigation following a disturbing incident on July 9, where Chesham taxi drivers reported being racially abused and attacked at a local taxi rank. They described being subjected to racist slurs, shouting, and had a glass bottle thrown at them. A spokesperson for the cabbies stated they were standing outside their vehicles due to the heat when the assault began. While a glass bottle was reportedly thrown at one driver, he was not injured.



"The drivers are feeling very, very scared, they are just saddened and fearing for their safety," the spokesperson added, highlighting the impact of the attack on the cabbies.

A Thames Valley Police spokesperson confirmed the ongoing investigation, stating: "We were called to a racially aggravated assault without injury at around 5.50pm yesterday. A man was shouted at and assaulted in Chesham High Street. An investigation has been launched. No arrests have been made." Authorities are urging anyone with information to come forward. The taxi drivers' spokesperson noted that "a lot of people" were present and filming during the attack.

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HOW TO ATTRACT MORE PRE-BOOKED RIDES THIS SUMMER

Article by Phil Holloway
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These videos can be used on Instagram Reels, TikTok, Facebook, and your website – helping customers see exactly what to expect when they book with you.

Summer is one of the busiest – and most profitable – times of the year for local taxi companies. With families heading to the airport, guests needing transport to weddings, and crowds attending festivals, the demand for reliable, pre-booked travel is higher than ever. To make the most of this seasonal surge, taxi companies need to market themselves effectively and become the go-to choice in their local area.

1. Tap into summer travel trends

People love to plan ahead for their summer holidays. Promoting airport transfers early is key. Use your website and social media to remind customers to book in advance – especially during peak weeks when taxis are in high demand. Highlight benefits like fixed prices, large boot space for suitcases, and 24/7 availability. Position your service as a stress-free, guaranteed alternative to ride-hailing apps, especially for families with early morning or late-night flights.

Weddings are another summer staple. Let local couples know you offer smart, reliable cars for their big day – from transporting guests to providing a VIP vehicle for the bride and groom. Make sure you're listed on wedding supplier directories and connect with local venues and planners who can recommend you.

2. Use video to capture the summer mood

People respond emotionally to content that reflects the season. Short, upbeat videos of your taxis arriving at sunny airports, guests stepping into air-conditioned cars after a wedding, or drivers helping with bags can be really powerful. These don't need to be overproduced – even simple clips filmed on a sunny day with friendly drivers and happy customers can help convey your reliability and professionalism.

3. Run a summer booking campaign

Start a local campaign that builds urgency and highlights limited availability. Phrases such as: *"Summer slots filling fast – book now for July and August"* or *"Secure your airport transfer today"*, work well. Use bold, seasonal visuals – think sunshine, suitcases, sunglasses – to grab attention online.

Target your existing customers with email or SMS reminders, ideally with an incentive for early bookings, such as a discount or priority scheduling. You can even offer loyalty perks to those who pre-book multiple trips over the summer.

4. Optimise your online presence for summer keywords

Update your website and Google Business Profile with summer-specific search terms such as: *"summer taxi bookings," "airport transfers July,"* or *"wedding taxi near [your town]."* Add photos and customer reviews that mention summer trips and pre-booking benefits. This boosts visibility when locals search for reliable transport options during the season.

5. Connect with local summer events

Reach out to organisers of summer fairs, festivals and sports events in your area. Offer your services as an official transport partner or simply ask to be included in their communications. Being recommended by local events instantly builds trust with attendees.

In summary

Summer is the perfect time to grow your customer base and increase bookings – but it takes smart, seasonal marketing to stand out. Focus on what people need most this time of year: reliable airport transfers, stylish wedding cars, and safe rides to and from busy local events. Promote your services early, stay visible online, and make booking easy – and you'll be the first company locals think of when they need a lift this summer.

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The challenges of operating a taxi fleet

Running a taxi company can be very challenging. Taxi drivers often need to deal with various driving conditions and different types of passengers. As the owner of a taxi fleet, you're probably already aware

of these issues and have to deal with them as they arise.

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UBER UPDATE

UBER TO PAY \$272 MILLION COMPENSATION IN SETTLEMENT WITH AUSTRALIAN CABBIES

Uber will pay nearly \$272 million to settle a class action lawsuit brought by Australian taxi and hire-car drivers. The settlement, which is Australia's fifth-largest ever, resolves a five-year legal battle over Uber's aggressive entry into the Australian market more than a decade ago.

The lawsuit was initiated by Melbourne taxi driver Nicos Andrianakis and later grew to represent over 8,000 drivers. It centred on Uber's launch of its UberX service in Australia before it was legally regulated, which the drivers claimed caused them

significant financial harm, including loss of income and a drastic drop in the value of their expensive taxi licenses.

In a statement, Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, the firm that brought the suit, said Uber "fought tooth and nail" for years but ultimately agreed to settle on the "courtroom steps," holding the global giant accountable for its launch strategy.

Andrianakis had previously described Uber's arrival as being like "pirates" who broke every law. Uber released its own statement, acknowledging that when it

began operating, "ridesharing regulations did not exist anywhere in the world." The company noted that it is now regulated in every Australian state and territory and that the settlement will help to "put these legacy issues firmly in our past."

The class action settlement is a significant victory for the drivers, providing financial compensation where other cases against governments had failed. This settlement follows a 2022 ruling where Uber was fined \$21 million for misleading consumers about cancellation fees.

HONG KONG PROPOSES NEW LICENSING RULES FOR RIDE-HAILING SERVICES, INCLUDING UBER

Hong Kong is moving to regulate online ride-hailing services like Uber, proposing a new licensing system for platforms, drivers, and vehicles. The government has sent a document to the legislature outlining its plans, which aim to create a legal framework for the popular services while also ensuring the co-existence of traditional taxis.

Under the new regulations, ride-hailing platforms will need a business licence and a physical office in Hong Kong. They must also meet conditions related to operational experience, financial capability, and capital investment. To ensure safety and accountability, the platforms will be required to verify that their drivers and cars have the proper insurance.

For drivers, the government proposes stricter requirements, including:

- Holding a private car driving licence for at least one year.
- Having no serious traffic convictions within five years.
- Passing a test and completing training.

The proposals also include a quota on the number of vehicles allowed to operate, with a seven-year age limit for cars, which must also pass an annual inspection.

The move to regulate comes after years of legal ambiguity. Providing paid transportation in a private vehicle without a permit is currently illegal, and police have arrested and fined Uber drivers in the past. Despite this, services like Uber, which launched in 2014, have remained popular due to resident

frustrations with traditional taxi services.

Hong Kong leader John Lee emphasised that the new framework would need to ensure the "co-existence of online ride-hailing services and traditional taxi services." The government also suggested charging platforms fees to support the taxi industry in improving its service.

Uber Hong Kong, while welcoming the development of a regulatory framework, expressed concerns about the proposed caps on vehicles. In a statement, the company said: "Artificial limits risk increasing wait times, raising prices for riders and restricting earning opportunities for drivers." The company stated it is eager to continue discussions with the government and stakeholders.

UBER UPDATE

ABINGDON CABBIE FEARS CLOSURE AS UBER'S "AGGRESSIVE" PRICING HITS LOCAL FIRMS

An Abingdon taxi firm owner says his business is "struggling" and could be forced to close due to ride-hailing giant Uber's "aggressive" pricing tactics since its launch in Oxford and surrounding areas in February.

Yaseem Yusuf, who runs Thames Valley Taxis, claims his trade has fallen by 50% and that Uber's practices are "squeezing out local firms who could not afford to operate at a loss."

He fears his three-year-old business and other small taxi companies may "not exist in the area" within two years.

Yusuf specifically cited Uber's large, time-limited discounts as something local firms "can't match" because they "have to find a way to replace the money we [would] be losing." He added: "We're struggling to find ways to offer customers a good deal but also sustain a small business."

In response, an Uber spokesperson emphasised that "Oxford is a thriving city with a huge workforce, student community and booming tourism sector – there is huge demand across the city which all operators here can compete for."

Uber also highlighted "new earning opportunities for local drivers, all of whom have access to industry leading worker rights such as holiday pay and a pension, as well as formal representation through GMB Union."

Yusuf is also concerned about his elderly customers who "do not use smartphones" and rely on traditional taxi services.

"They have a very basic telephone and they give us a call, they are happy with our service," he explained, adding: "If we don't generate income, sadly the business will be lost."

TUNBRIDGE WELLS CABBIES "FUMING" AS UBER SECURES OPERATING LICENCE

Cabbies in Tunbridge Wells are reportedly "fuming" after ride-hailing giant Uber was granted a one-year licence to operate in the borough, with many expressing anger over how the announcement was handled and concerns about the future of local firms.

The decision by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's (TWBC) licensing department will allow Uber to cover Tunbridge Wells, Paddock Wood, Southborough, and surrounding villages.

An Uber spokesman confirmed the licence had been granted and that the company plans to begin signing up drivers in the area soon.

However, the news has been met with significant backlash from local cabbies. Clayton Berry, proprietor of Cleggy's Taxi, claimed

that the announcement was "leaked on social media" by a councillor before the council's senior licensing officer officially informed taxi drivers.

"Loads of cabbies are absolutely fuming. Something like this is major – it's got to go through the proper channels," Berry stated, confirming an "official complaint" has been lodged regarding the communication breakdown.

Concerns extend beyond the announcement's timing, with drivers fearing the impact on their livelihoods.

"Of course there are concerns – you'll see drivers leaving their firms," Berry said, predicting that Uber's presence could "slowly drive smaller taxi and private hire firms out of business."

He highlighted Uber's surge pricing

and unreliability in rural areas, arguing: "You have goliaths and the small ones and the goliaths will win at the end of the day."

Berry also expressed sympathy for Uber drivers, suggesting they receive only a fraction of the fare.

A council spokesperson defended the decision, stating: "Uber went through the full licensing application process, which includes an assessment against the council's policies, and were duly awarded their licence on 17 July 2025."

Uber did not specify an exact launch date for its services in Tunbridge Wells.

The one-year licence is a common initial period for the company when entering a new licensing authority, as seen with their recent five-year licence renewal in York after an initial one-year term.

CCTV: YOUR SECURITY

FUNDING IN **WEST SUFFOLK** FOR CCTV PILOT SCHEME - PROTECTS PASSENGER & DRIVER SAFETY

West Suffolk Council has secured funding for a voluntary pilot scheme that will see CCTV installed in 30 taxis – 10 in Bury St Edmunds, 10 in Haverhill and another 10 in Newmarket.

It comes just weeks after the Casey report on the child grooming scandal, and the allegation that taxi/PH were involved, which means it is crucial that the industry has measures in place, to protect drivers as well as the industry, from serious allegations.

While the council has not been made aware of such allegations in West Suffolk, it nevertheless takes public safety including that of

customers and drivers, seriously.

The CCTV pilot scheme has been secured with funding from Suffolk Community Foundation through the Serious Violence Duty Grant making Programme. The six-month scheme which will cost around £18,000, will be entirely voluntary. But if the pilot proves successful, the council can consult with the rest of the 600 taxi fleet on options to take it forward.

A council spokesperson said: "We are hoping that drivers and operators will see the advantages of CCTV in their vehicles. It offers protection and reassurance to customers when passenger safety

has been flagged through the Casey report.

West Suffolk taxi drivers can take advantage of this offer by emailing: licensing@westsuffolk.gov.uk - include Taxi CCTV in the subject line. So, drivers what are you waiting for, get protected, get covered, get insurance discounts and get it all free, including front facing camera, monitor, switch controlled audio, one month average recording cycle. This offer does not come around often!

Thank you to West Suffolk council and Tim Cleary, Senior Licensing Policy Office for his efforts in making this happen.

PORTSMOUTH COUNCILLOR CALLS FOR MANDATORY CCTV IN ALL PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

Portsmouth city leaders are demanding action to close a dangerous taxi licensing loophole after a passenger was allegedly sexually harassed by a driver licensed in Wolverhampton. The incident, which reportedly occurred in the early hours of Wednesday, July 2, involved a 44-year-old woman who said the driver made sexual advances toward her while taking her home from the hospital.

The vehicle was licensed by The City of Wolverhampton Council, which has been criticised for its more lenient and cheaper application process. Portsmouth councillors argue that Wolverhampton's lower standards, which do not require CCTV, undermine Portsmouth's own

stricter safety measures.

"All of that is being undermined by vehicles licensed in places like Wolverhampton, where standards are far lower," said Councillor Emily Strudwick, chair of the licensing committee. "We have no enforcement power over them, and it puts the public at risk."

The woman reported the incident to police after feeling unheard by the private hire firm. A police spokesperson confirmed a 32-year-old man from Portsmouth was arrested on suspicion of "attempting sexual assault on a female and using threatening or abusive words to cause harassment, alarm, or distress." He remains in custody.

Councillor George Madgwick, leader of the Portsmouth Indepen-

dents Party, urged residents to avoid Wolverhampton-plated taxis, citing the lack of CCTV as a failure in "deterrent, protection, and accountability." He added: "I'm calling on the government to close the loopholes, ban out-of-area vehicles, and mandate CCTV in all private hire vehicles."

A spokesperson for The City of Wolverhampton Council stated they take enforcement seriously and that their officers are "out across the country, every Friday and Saturday night, working to protect the public." They added that CCTV was not considered proportionate for Wolverhampton because drivers could turn it off, but noted that panic-switch-activated audio recording systems are permitted.

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CCTV COULD BE MADE MANDATORY IN **COVENTRY** TAXIS & PHVS AFTER TASK & FINISH INVESTIGATION

Currently in Coventry, CCTV is only on a voluntary basis, mandatory CCTV was considered before but it was not supported. However the city council said it is going to look again whether it should require taxis and PHVs to have CCTV as part of licensing requirements. It comes after taxi driver Abdul Wahab, 47, was jailed after he picked up a woman to take her home after a night out in the city. During the journey, he stopped the cab, got into the back of the car, and sexually assaulted her.

In January, he was sentenced to three years in jail and also placed on the Sex Offenders Register. A council communities and neighbourhoods scrutiny board paper has asked for a task and finish group on CCTV in taxis to be set-up. "Mandatory CCTV has been considered previously by way of a Cabinet Member report in 2022, where a 12-week consultation was undertaken, where 67.9% of respondents did not support the proposal," the paper explains. "Voluntary CCTV is currently a

policy requirement. There are strict requirements in terms of data protection, and drivers have to register with the ICO as they are the 'data controller' The communities and neighbourhoods scrutiny board met on July 17 to discuss setting up the task and finish group to consider several factors re: mandatory use of CCTV including national legislation, guidance, current policy, crime data, local comparators, costs and anything else within the scope of the investigation."

COLCHESTER TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS WILL NOT BE FORCED TO INSTALL CCTV

Taxi and private hire drivers in Colchester will not be compelled to install CCTV cameras in their vehicles, despite calls from some councillors to make the requirement mandatory. The decision came during a Colchester City Council licensing committee meeting on July 23. Council papers reveal that the chairman and other committee members had previously expressed a desire for mandatory CCTV in all taxis. However, the council ultimately opted against enforcing the measure, citing significant financial implications. The initial bulk purchase of CCTV units alone was estimated at £542,400. Instead, the council has agreed to "encourage owners, operators, and drivers to fit CCTV," while also providing guidance on correct usage as set by the Information

Commissioner's Office (ICO). Those who choose to install cameras will be urged to comply with all relevant regulations. Paul Donaghy, the council's licensing, community safety, and safeguarding manager, explained the complexities of mandating CCTV. He stated that: "Mandating CCTV installation would cause a one-off and ongoing financial burden to the council." Donaghy also highlighted that according to Local Government Association guidance, the use of CCTV and audio in taxis "must be proportionate to the risk presented." He further elaborated on the need for justification, noting: "The main rationale for using audio recording is to pick up any inappropriate conversations between passengers and drivers. For example, when they are carrying children."

Donaghy stressed the importance of public confidence in surveillance systems, reiterating the ICO's stance that such use must be "lawful, fair, transparent, and meets the other standards set in data protection law." He added that the council would be "required to demonstrate that any new monitoring system's implementation is designed with privacy by default and proportionate to the risks identified." Councillor Jocelyn Law, responsible for communities and public protection, said: "I think it's really important to prioritise the safety and welfare of our drivers and of the public, but to do that, we need to think about resources and all the implications of data and data ownership." She also suggested that a public consultation on the matter would be beneficial.

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Safe Systems CCTV Limited is proud to unveil a major milestone in transport safety innovation. Building on its already approved CCTV systems for Transport for London (TfL), the company has now extended approval to cover the LEVC Vista - and introduces the Road Angel Halo Guard Taxi/PH, which is officially approved for installation in ALL licensed PHVs.

This new system offers comprehensive protection for drivers with front and rear view dashcam. The system complies fully with UK GDPR regulations by excluding audio completely. These cutting-edge dashcams, developed exclusively for Safe Systems by Road Angel, represent the next evolution in legal and high-quality vehicle surveillance.

"Gaining TfL approval for our Road Angel Halo Guard system was remarkably efficient, requiring only two visits thanks to the collaboration and responsiveness of the TfL team," said Safe Systems CCTV Limited. "Orders are already coming in fast, confirming strong market demand."

Technical innovation meets intelligent design

Safe Systems has also introduced several key design enhancements to its market leading and unrivalled internal CCTV systems:

- A streamlined, smaller, and clearer highly visible monitor screen now includes auto dark mode to prevent continuous display.
- An LED panel with a built-in activation button allows drivers to reactivate the screen for 30 seconds - serving as a real-time reminder that recording is in progress.

This reinforces passenger safety and acts as a deterrent to disruptive behaviour and abusive passengers.

Expanding partnerships & national reach

The company's network of regional installation engineers continues to grow, cementing Safe Systems' presence nationwide. The new product rollout reflects

the company's unwavering commitment to innovation, security and regulatory excellence.

Key benefits of the Road Angel Halo Guard?

The Road Angel Halo Guard taxi/PH dashcam packs a serious punch when it comes to safety, compliance, and peace of mind - especially for taxi and private hire drivers.

Here is a breakdown of its standout benefits:

Crystal clear recording

- 2K Quad HD front camera and 1080p rear camera for sharp, detailed footage
- Wide 140° viewing angle captures more of the road and surroundings.

Night & parking protection

- HD Night Vision ensures clarity even in low light.
- Parking Mode records incidents while the vehicle is unattended.
- Auto Image Stabilisation smooths out bumpy footage for better clarity.

Fully UKGDPR compliant

- No internal audio recording - audio is permanently disabled.
- Designed specifically for licensed vehicles, meeting ICO regulations.

Smart Features

- Screen-free design reduces distractions while driving.
- Battery monitoring prevents your car battery from draining.
- Quick-release mounting makes installation and removal a breeze.

Tailored for taxi & PH drivers

- Helps defend against false liability claims with instant playback.
- May qualify for insurance discounts when professionally installed.
- Approved by local authorities like Wolverhampton City Council

This is not just a dashcam - it is a full-on guardian angel for your vehicle.

EXPANDED TfL APPROVAL

Feature Comparison: Road Angel vs other leading dashcams

Feature	Road Angel Halo Guard taxi/PH	Nextbase 522GW	Garmin Dash Cam Live	BlackVue DR590X
Resolution	2K front / 1080p rear	4K front / 1080p rear	2K front	1080p front
Night Vision	Advanced HD Night Vision	Enhanced night sensor	Excellent clarity	Sony STARVIS sensor
Audio Recording	none	Full audio	Full audio	Full audio
Parking Mode	Yes, with auto image stabilisation	Yes, with impact detection	Yes, with LTE alerts	Yes, with motion detection
App Functionality	Halo Playback (clip editing & sharing)	Nextbase app (Alexa, GPS)	Garmin Drive app	BlackVue app
Battery Protection	Built-in voltage monitoring	Optional hardwire kit	Optional power cable	Requires extra accessory
Installation	Quick-release mount, pro install	Magnetic mount	Adhesive mount	Hardwired or plug-in
GDPR Compliance	✔ Designed for licensed vehicles	✗ Audio always on	✗ Audio always on	✗ Audio always on
TfL Approval	✔ Approved for PH vehicles	✗ Not specified	✗ Not specified	✗ Not specified

What sets Halo Guard apart

- Tailored for licensed taxis and PHVs: most consumer dashcams are not built with GDPR or licensing compliance in mind.
- No audio recording: a rare feature that ensures full legal compliance without sacrificing video quality.
- TfL-approved: that's a big deal for London-based drivers and sets it apart from most mainstream brands.

Should you choose Halo Guard?

- If you are a professional driver or operate a licensed vehicle, Halo Guard is purpose-built for your needs. While other brands often fall short on compliance and tailored deterrents.

Potential insurance benefits

Installing the Road Angel Halo Guard taxi/PH dashcam could positively impact your insurance rates in several ways - especially if you are a taxi or private hire driver:

- **Lower premiums:** some insurers offer discounts for professionally installed dashcams, particularly those approved by local authorities like TfL and Wolverhampton City Council.

- **No claims discount protection:** in the event of a dispute, clear footage can help prove you were not at fault, preserving your no claims bonus.
- **Faster claims resolution:** having video evidence speeds up the claims process, reducing downtime and hassle.
- **Fraud prevention:** helps protect against staged accidents or “crash for cash” scams, which insurers take seriously.

Why Halo Guard stands out

- **UKGDPR compliant:** with audio permanently disabled, it meets strict privacy regulations—making it legally installable in licensed vehicles.
- **Professional installation:** many insurers require dashcams to be hardwired by approved engineers to qualify for discounts.
- **Parking mode:** records incidents while parked, which can be crucial for hit-and-run claims.

While not all insurers advertise dashcam discounts publicly, many will consider it during underwriting - especially if you can show it is TfL-approved and installed by a certified technician.

ALL THINGS LICENSING

Article by Mike Smith, Senior Specialist for Licensing and Community Safety at Guildford Borough Council and Vice-Chair of the Institute of Licensing South East Region.

Please note that this article represents my own views which are not presented as the views of the Institute of Licensing or Guildford BC.

The summer holidays are here... time for a well-earned rest...?

As we head into the summer holidays, on the back of the Lionesses roaring in a somewhat nail-biting manner into both the semi-final and final of the Women's Euros, and then winning it in an equally nail-biting penalty shoot-out; as well as on the back of the third heatwave this year, it is not only the traditional summer mix of football frenzy and the weather which are hotting up.

Just in time for the summer holidays there have been recent significant developments affecting the industry further due to the report on Child Sexual Exploitation failings, as I talked about in July's **PHTM**.

Following this report, the government has reacted and promised to update legislation and hot off the press a new Parliamentary inquiry into the current licensing system, and a consultation on Automated Passenger Services, or self driving vehicles transporting customers to put the term into clarity.

Clearly, any member of the trade or licensing authority wishing to respond to these consultations will either need to put holiday plans on hold or take their laptop with them to the pool!

However, despite the timing of these announcements (well at least it wasn't Christmas) there is perhaps the sense that after 49 years of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (or 178 years in the case of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847) that finally, there may be much needed change on the horizon.

New inquiry into licensing & standards in taxi & PH vehicles sectors

Following the publication of the Casey Report which I previously discussed in July's edition, the Government has announced a new inquiry by the Transport Committee will investigate how standards for taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) could be improved,

amid concern about inadequate regulation that varies from one area of the country to another.

The cross-party Committee will also examine how standards across the sector could be improved and made more consistent across the country with regards to accessibility, safety and safeguarding of passengers.

The inquiry will look at how best practice could be replicated, the effectiveness of enforcement and inspection regimes, and how standards vary – and could be standardised – between taxis, PHVs and ride-hailing services such as Uber and Bolt.

MPs will also look to the future at how the sector and its regulatory system might need to evolve to enable the use of self-driving vehicles.

The inquiry comes after the Committee published its report on accessible transport, which heard evidence of too few wheelchair-accessible PHVs and taxis being in circulation around the country, and even of drivers turning away blind people with assistance dogs.

The Transport Committee now accepts written evidence submissions from those with knowledge of the sector. This means that any member of the trade, driver, proprietor, operator, representative etc. and those which use and regulate the service are able to respond.

Submissions should be made via the Committee's website, by 11.59pm on 8 September 2025.

The Committee is asking for evidence on the following questions:

1. Do current licensing arrangements and tools enable local authorities to effectively regulate and oversee the taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) sector across England, in terms of safety, accessibility and quality of service? If not, what improvements could be made?
2. What is the impact on the travelling public and drivers of variation between licensing authorities? Is reform needed to bring greater standardisation?
3. What would be the practical implications for licensing authorities and operators of more stringent or standardised licensing conditions in respect of safety, accessibility, vehicles and driver conduct?
4. What steps should the Government take to address the challenges posed by cross-border licensing in the taxi and PHV sector?

ALL THINGS LICENSING



Information about the Committee and about how to respond to the inquiry are available at:

<https://shorturl.at/jT26n>

As readers will have guessed from previous articles, I am somewhat passionate about

5. What would effective reform look like in terms of enforcement, passenger safety and safeguarding, and regulatory consistency? Is there a role for regional transport authorities?
6. How are digital ride-hailing platforms impacting standards in the sector, and is further regulation in this area required?
7. How effective, accessible, and trusted are complaints and incident reporting systems in the taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) sector, for both passengers and drivers?
8. How effective is the National Register of Licence Revocations and Refusals (NR3) in supporting consistent licensing decisions across local authorities? What barriers, if any, are limiting its use or impact?
9. What are the implications for taxi and PHV licensing of the future rollout of autonomous vehicles?

Transport Committee Chair Ruth Cadbury MP said:

“When it comes to the licensing and regulation of taxi and private hire vehicles, a strange patchwork of driver and vehicle standards now exists across every town and city in the country.

“This inconsistency has given rise to a situation that just isn’t good enough for drivers or for the public, who can unknowingly leave themselves vulnerable when getting into the back of a stranger’s car.

“This Committee will investigate whether a more standardised, more rational regulatory and enforcement regime could do away with the phenomenon of one city receiving applications from all over the country. We want to examine how an improved system could give greater confidence to consumers, particularly disabled people, women, children and other vulnerable people. And we need to look at how the system could make it clear who a passenger can complain to if standards aren’t met.”

ensuring the legislation is adequate for the trade, local authorities and passengers, and therefore would encourage all members of the trade, particularly those part of an association or union, as well as any licensing officers reading to respond to this call for evidence.

DfT will legislate to address inconsistent taxi/PHV licensing standards

In addition following Baroness Casey’s National Audit on Group-Based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, the Government has confirmed plans to reform taxi licensing arrangements:

Responding to a written question from Lord Spellar, Minister of State Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill, stated that the Department for Transport will legislate to address inconsistent standards in the licensing of taxi and private hire vehicle drivers. He said all options will be considered, including tackling the issue of out-of-area working, introducing national standards, and strengthening enforcement, with passenger safety as the primary concern.

In advance of legislation, interim measures will be introduced. These include consulting on proposals that would transfer responsibility for taxi and private hire licensing to local transport authorities and evaluating how existing statutory guidance might be reinforced to better safeguard the public. Authorities’ compliance with current guidance is under review, with non-compliance subject to accountability.

Lord Hendy also highlighted protections already in place, including mandatory background checks for all licensed drivers across England and the use of a unified licensing database since 2023. This database prevents individuals who have been refused a licence on safety grounds in one area from obtaining one elsewhere. He cautioned that any changes must be carefully considered to avoid reducing access to properly vetted services or unintentionally encouraging illegal operators who bypass licensing checks.

ALL THINGS LICENSING

Government consults on self-driving vehicles law

Finally, looking to the future, Lilian Greenwood, Future of Roads Minister, has launched a consultation on the automated passenger services (APS) permitting scheme and the draft statutory instrument, a key legal element of how taxi-, private-hire- and bus-like services of self-driving vehicles will be regulated once they hit roads in Great Britain.

The Automated passenger services: permitting scheme consultation will close on 28th September 2025.

The Government says that the new scheme is intended to be flexible and avoid the various challenges of applying existing legislation. Introducing this scheme is intended to provide greater regulatory confidence for businesses to deploy services and build an understanding of viable commercial models.

The consultation sets out plans for a national authority for services that resemble a PSV, (the Secretary of State for Transport), while for devolved services resembling a taxi or PHV it will be the Secretary of State for Transport in England, and in Scotland or Wales, the power is with Scottish or Welsh Ministers). Where a service resembles a taxi or PHV, a permit may only be issued with the consent of the licensing authority for each place where the service is provided.

The consultation follows the recent government decision to fast-track pilots of self-driving passenger vehicles to Spring 2026, helping the industry to innovate and grow. This will allow firms to pilot small-scale services without a safety driver for the first time – which could be available to members of the public to book via an app – before a potential wider rollout when the **Automated Vehicles Act** is implemented in full from the second half of 2027. Bringing forward the pilots of self-driving vehicles will help the government deliver the Plan for Change by creating 38,000 jobs to put money in people's pockets, driving investment to back British engineering excellence and unlocking an industry worth £42 billion by 2035.

Future of Roads Minister, Lilian Greenwood, said:

“Self-driving vehicles are one of the most exciting opportunities to improve transport for

so many people, especially those in rural areas or unable to drive. We want to work with passengers and industry to make this new form of transport safe and accessible, as we take our next steps towards adoption.

“This technology doesn’t just have the potential to improve transport for millions of people. It will help stimulate innovation, create thousands of jobs, and drive investment to put more money in people’s pockets – all part of delivering our Plan for Change.”

Through the consultation, representative groups, industry stakeholders, trade unions and members of the public will be able to make their views heard and influence future government policy over a variety of areas critical for self-driving vehicles to run safely and efficiently.

These include:

- how self-driving vehicles can be made as accessible as possible for disabled and older people
- how services of self-driving vehicles are approved by councils
- when a permit to operate a service should be varied, suspended or withdrawn

The APS scheme is an essential part of the of the Automated Vehicles Act, which will regulate taxi, private hire and bus-like self-driving vehicles once it is implemented in full in the second half of 2027.

The **Automated Vehicles Act** will require self-driving vehicles to achieve a level of safety at least as high as competent and careful human drivers, and they will undergo rigorous safety tests before being allowed on our roads.

Self-driving trials have been taking place in the UK since January 2015, with British companies Wayve and Oxa spearheading significant breakthroughs in the technology.

This new legislation represents a significant departure from the current local taxi and PHV regime as it creates a national framework. Local authorities, under the terms of the Act, will still play a key role in this process. Councils would need to provide or withhold consent to any company that proposed to offer services resembling taxis or PHVs before an APS permit can be granted by central government.

ALL THINGS LICENSING



assaults in vehicles, all of which taxi and PHV drivers deal with, but autonomous vehicles won't be able to without a driver present!

It's important these risks are thoroughly considered.

If a council refuses to consent, no automated service could operate inside its legal boundaries, whether at the beginning, course or end of a journey.

Consequently, there needs to be comprehensive guidance (and training) on how councils provide consent as I can see a number of councils and Councillors being potentially very concerned about this and it is imperative that any decisions are taken for correct and robust reasons.

Furthermore, if a local authority is also going to be expected to play a part in the process, they need to be resourced to do so, as there will likely be many local considerations, such as pick up/drop off locations which need to be identified and mandated.

In line with the recent reports on exploitation, the Government needs to give proper consideration to the safeguarding implications of this new regime in discussion with relevant bodies.

Obviously an automated vehicle removes the risk of the driver playing a role in an offence, but there is a risk that those involved in child sexual exploitation and other offences could order a self driving vehicle to pick up a victim and it would not be clear from the records who had travelled in the vehicle.

In addition, there are other things such as lost property, witness appeals, problematic addresses, vulnerable and disabled customers, customers fighting or being subject to domestic violence, or

The consultation is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/automated-passenger-services-permitting-scheme>

To conclude

It will be really interesting to see what, if anything – considering the Law Commission report from 2014 has not been responded to and the majority of the 2018 Task and Finish Group recommendations were never progressed – happens.

However it is clear from the recent Casey Report on Grooming Gangs that the current status quo and outdated legislation should no longer be accepted. How many more Casey reports do there need to be in order to ensure that local authorities and the licensed trade get a system of regulation which is fit for purpose so that the public can receive the right protections.

I do hope that everyone takes the opportunity to respond to these important consultations, as well as being able to take some time off for the summer!

Finally, hopefully, someone may be listening and it is therefore essential that you don't miss out on hearing about and understanding what may be going on. There have never been a better time to join the Institute of Licensing.

For full details please visit:

www.instituteoflicensing.org

Open consultation

Automated passenger services (APS) permitting scheme consultation

Published 21 July 2025



Brighton & Hove Cab Trade View

Andy Peters

Brighton & Hove Cab Trade Association

info@bhcta.co.uk www.bhcta.co.uk



Intended Use Policy – local update

Update from last month where I tackled the Uber rep at a recent trade meeting for using Mid Sussex District Council hackneys in the city here and the rep being very dismissive, despite these having an IUP as a condition of licence with reported (by us) drivers/proprietors working here and being warned of the consequences of breaking that condition. Further to more reports, Mid Sussex licensing informed me that Uber has now taken their hackneys off their platform.

Quite a victory in my book and shows that the IUP works! It will also work with PHVs.

Not our problem

Like everywhere in the country, Brighton is flooded with out-of-town cars, as I always point out in my ramblings. Down here in the south it seems that Chichester is now taking over from Lewes DC in being the place to get a rubber-stamped licence. Unfortunately, the drivers of some of these PHVs (and from everywhere else) don't give a 'monkeys-whatzit' what they do to the extent of creating ranks, sitting on taxi ranks or right up close to them teetering on the yellow box lines. It sadly seems there is a new breed of drivers now with absolutely no respect.

Having reported this to my own licensing department, they suggested that I also report it, with photo evidence of the offending drivers/cars, to their respective licensing authorities. OK, I thought, but I know what the reply will be. So I sent off a report with such photographic evidence to Chichester District Council licensing, and sure enough the polite reply was along the lines of: 'Nothing to do with us, please report this to your own licensing department'.

However, shortly afterwards, and probably due to the intervention of Brighton & Hove City Council licensing following this up with me having passed the email on to them, I did receive a follow up email from Chichester informing me that an email will be sent to all their drivers warning them about sitting on/next to taxi ranks.

I have asked for an update as to whether this was sent, but at the time of writing I have not had a reply but if it is sent, I will ask for a copy.

Interestingly, via correspondence, Chichester licensing informed me that they do not have the resources for a Licensing Enforcement team, and with the massive increase in Chichester PHVs one wonders if it is a case of stamping the licensing and 'Be on your way'. I have to state that I do have some sympathy as getting a licence in an area but having no intention of working there is, unfortunately, now the norm.

This then makes a completely mockery of 'POAW' predominantly out of area working, more commonly known as 'cross-border hiring' when, as I have previously stated most local authorities do not have the facility or means for a taxi/PH licensing department, unlike we have in Brighton, unfortunately resulting in an out-of-sight and out-of-mind attitude. Not that this is the fault of local councils, but the fault of those men in suits and over-paid barristers who have broken the system. Yet the government seems to think that such dedicated licensing enforcement is taken for granted, but in reality, know sod all about this.

Wolverhampton communication

I have had interesting communications with Wolverhampton licensing following the report from Portsmouth about an allegation of a Wolverhampton PHV driver harassing a woman:

"The 44-year-old woman said the man made sexualised remarks, delayed unlocking the door and hovered his hand over her leg as she tried to leave the vehicle on Wednesday."

Based on this incident I questioned as to why Wolverhampton refuses to have CCTV as a mandatory condition of licence, suggesting the reason being that it would have to be the data-controller for the 29,173 PHVs it licenses. ***This figure is taken from the government's own database, dated as of July 2024, and no doubt whatsoever has greatly increased since with some stating nearing 40k.***

On a side note, looking at the database as of that date, there were 145 hackney carriages totalling all together 29,318 licensed vehicles of which there were only, wait for it.... 66 WAVs, which is appalling in my view. The population of Wolverhampton as of 2025 is 253k, that gives one licensed vehicle for around every nine



Brighton & Hove Cab Trade View

people in the city. There must be a licensed car waiting on most street corners in Wolverhampton. Yeah right! In Brighton & Hove there are 600 hackney carriages with around 50% of these being compulsory WAVs and if you want a five-seater hackney or PHV it has to be WAV compliant.

Back to CCTV. When Wolverhampton replied, I was provided with a list of everything that Wolves licensing felt it considered it excelled in. Eventually at the bottom of that list my question was answered and it basically stated that they don't have mandatory CCTV because... wait for it... drivers can turn it off. Yes, we all know that, and this was down to the ICO deeming that drivers of licensed vehicles do not need to have CCTV activated when they are not actually working but driving privately. Every LA knows this, but has not stopped many of them still requiring mandatory CCTV as a condition of licensing, and that includes my own LA, where we have had mandatory CCTV for many years, and it works.

Knowing that CCTV is already approved by Wolverhampton to provide CCTV to drivers who want to have it on a voluntary basis, I contacted my trade colleague, Dave Lawrie of Safe Systems, to provide some details of the on/off system he uses. He outlined the provision of a remote switch and how it works which is very straight forward and covers the provision for mandatory CCTV of a remote switch with a time delay. Full details of the information Dave supplied to me that I passed onto Wolverhampton licensing can be found at: tinyurl.com/safe-cctv

Additionally, compelling drivers to ensure that the CCTV is active when working can be included in the conditions of licensing with the consequences fully explained, just as Brighton & Hove does and also in many other areas.

So, I sent this back to Wolverhampton licensing, effectively providing them with no real reason as to why mandatory CCTV should not be imposed because their excuse not to have it was really feeble. I again suggested that the real reason was having to be the data controller for all those thousands of cars. To date I have not had a reply.

More interesting is the recent statement from a Wolverhampton Councillor:

"Councillor Simon Bennett, leader of the opposition Conservative group on Wolverhampton Council, said Baroness Casey's

report had highlighted weaknesses in the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles as a factor in the sexual exploitation of children."

Spot the irony, not only with the lack of Wolverhampton mandatory CCTV, but also the very possibility of such PHV drivers hiding in plain sight hundreds of miles away from respective local enforcement with the perfect disguise for getting up to no good. The vehicle doesn't even have to be working as a licensed vehicle, as Philip Kolvin KC stated with the '*right to roam*', it can go anywhere the driver wants it to go, free to do whatever it wants! Cheers Phil!

This is especially relevant as it is now the norm for 'alien' PHVs everywhere, which would be a rare sight a few years ago. I would like to make it clear that there is absolutely no accusations being made against any Wolverhampton drivers, just making a point. Incidentally, Wolverhampton cars have been seen here in Brighton recently. Were they actually working? Or dipping their toes in the sea exercising their '*right to paddle*'.

The irony here being that the government wants national standards, but has made it extremely clear that it has no interest in stopping cross-border hiring because, wait for it, it doesn't want to hinder the availability for taxi/private hire services: *"...which could disproportionately impact women and girls and disabled people..."* So, carry on issuing licences Wolverhampton, the government fully supports you.

Going back the Portsmouth incident. Portsmouth Councillor George Madgwick was rightly quick enough to make a media post demanding that CCTV be made mandatory in all PHVs, like Portsmouth has. He was also complaining about Wolverhampton-plated 'taxis' flooding the city. Annoyingly he referred to 'taxis' and not PHVs which really frustrates me when people do that and being the pedantic me, I emailed him explaining the difference.

I also informed him that we have many Portsmouth PHVs predominantly working here in Brighton, out-of-sight and out-of-mind of Portsmouth licensing enforcement, which is ironic, offering to send him further information. To date there has not been any reply.

Here's a thought, maybe Portsmouth Cllr George Madgwick and Wolverhampton Cllr Simon Bennet should get together.....you're welcome.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

In this month's edition we feature more road traffic issues relevant to the trade supplied by Patterson Law. These questions are based around real enquiries.

If you need any advice on motoring matters, email  **PattersonLaw** THE DRIVER DEFENCE SERVICE advice@pattersonlaw.co.uk or call us on 01626 359800 for free legal advice.

CASE 1

Question:

My father was involved in an accident involving a cyclist. He admits he hit him, but feels he wasn't informed about matters properly. The police officer who attended the scene said these things never lead to anything and then said it normally never goes to court. So my father admitted it was his fault, thinking that was the easiest thing to do.

We've now received a summons and seen the detail the cyclist has gone into, some of which is contrary to my father's account. Furthermore, the police have now put in their statements that my father admitted everything, but left out that they told him that it wouldn't go to court.

We totally feel ill advised by the police. We've not been to court before so are a bit worried and stressed to say the least! Would appreciate any advice! Thanks

Answer:

Now he has been summonsed, he has two options, to plead guilty or not guilty.

If he pleads guilty, he will be at risk of 3-9 points or a ban. The court will have to determine culpability when it comes to sentence. Culpability means how culpable you are – i.e. whether it was an accident, or whether you were on your phone, whether you were speeding or overtaking. If it's serious, you would be in the top bracket (7-9 points or a ban). If it's moderate, it's a middle bracket offence (5-6 points), and if it's minor, it's low level (3-4 points). So the first option is to plead guilty and mitigate to try to minimise the sentence.

Regarding the financial penalties, by pleading guilty at the earliest opportunity he would maintain maximum credit in sentence, meaning he will receive a fine of 100-150% of weekly income minus 1/3 for pleading guilty, a victim surcharge of 40% of the fine and costs of about £100.

The second option is to plead not guilty so the matter will be adjourned to a later date for trial. Between then and the trial, we would be able to examine the defence. This is where we can certainly scrutinise the officer's comments and whether they have misled or were ill advised. We'd get the footage from the arrest and the original notes which we can scrutinise.

However, my concern with doing so is that even if we manage to make a lot of headway in that regard, the fundamental point of the trial is still whether or not the standard of his driving has fallen below what was expected. So even if we managed to persuade the courts that the police have completely misadvised him, he still might be found guilty on the basis that his driving was below the required standard.

If we were able to successfully defend, of course he would not receive points and would be entitled to a costs order so that he could be reimbursed his reasonable legal fees incurred. But the risk is that if he was found guilty after trial, he would have lost credit in sentencing, meaning he would receive higher fines and costs. In terms of the fine it would remain at 150% of weekly income and this also means the victim surcharge will be higher (40% of the fine), and costs would increase to in the region £700. But initially I would like to check the evidence before we see if there's scope to defend.

Outcome:

In this case, the father decided to attend court and pleaded guilty. It was the right thing to do as even though he made admissions to everything at the roadside, the facts of the case still indicated that the standard of his driving fell below what was expected. So even if the court had disregarded everything the officer said and all his admissions to the police, he would still have been guilty.

However, the court did have sympathy and imposed only 3 penalty points, which was the best outcome we could have hoped for.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



CASE 2

Question:

I received a Notice of Intended Prosecution for a speeding offence that happened. The camera recorded me doing 133mph in a 70mph zone on a dual carriageway. I was trying to get home as quickly as I could - my mum was in a depressive state, and I was really panicking. I didn't call an ambulance because it would've made things worse for her, and I didn't want to escalate the situation.

I would also like to mention that I currently have 6 penalty points on my licence. Could you please let me know what my options are at this stage, and what the most likely outcome might be?

Answer:

Firstly, you are under a duty to respond to the Notice of Intended Prosecution to nominate yourself as the driver. If you fail to do that you will be summonsed to court for failing to provide information which carries 6 points and up to a £1,000 fine.

After that, the speed is too quick for a speed awareness course or a fixed penalty offer, so the police will summon you straight to court.

The Sentence Guidelines at court state that speeds of 101mph and above in a 70mph limit puts the driver at risk of either 6 points or disqualification of up to 56 days, or even longer if they consider the speed as “grossly in excess of the limit”. I would suggest your case would almost certainly be considered “grossly in excess”.

When the case gets to court, we have a couple of options. The first is to try to argue special reasons. A special reason is where someone is guilty of an offence but there are special reasons for not giving points or disqualifying. The special reason here would be on the basis of a medical emergency.

Obviously this would be the most ideal outcome, as if we win we can avoid sentences altogether. But I do have some concerns. A lot of it depends on the severity of the condition, because if her condition wasn't hugely serious - if it wasn't life or death - then going at that speed may not have been justified.

On top of that, we really do need to explore why you didn't call an ambulance. And it is risky, because if we went down that route and lost, we are significantly increasing the chances of higher fines and costs as well as lengthier disqualifications.

Alternatively, we can simply plead guilty, abandon special reasons and concentrate on presenting this as mitigation.

The benefit of doing that is that we maintain maximum credit and maximum sympathy. And by offering full remorse, we have the best chance of keeping the disqualification to a minimum or perhaps even persuading them to give you points instead.

Outcome:

In this case, we decided against running special reasons. It was a very difficult one to argue because on one hand we would have had to justify the speed of 133mph by arguing that the situation was almost life or death, yet at the same time we didn't call an ambulance.

However, the court still had a lot of sympathy with his situation, and although they suggested we really ought to have called an ambulance, they accepted that he was overcome with emotion and only disqualified for 28 days.

For updates on road traffic law follow us on:
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THE NATIONAL
HACKNEY
FARES TABLE

AUGUST 2025

RISE IN 2025	
RISE IN 2024	
RISE IN 2023	
RISE IN 2022	
RISE IN 2021	RISE IN 2017
RISE IN 2020	RISE IN 2015
RISE IN 2019	RISE IN 2013
NO SET FARE	

UPDATED DAILY
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NATIONAL AVERAGE
2 MILE
HACKNEY FARE
TARIFF ONE
£7.33

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE	
	COUNCIL	
17	MID SUSSEX	£9.00
18	ORKNEY	£9.00
19	READING	£9.00
20	TONBRIDGE & MALLING	£9.00
21	BRENTWOOD	£8.90
22	GLASGOW	£8.90
23	REIGATE & BANSTEAD	£8.90
24	SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE	£8.90
25	STROUD	£8.90
26	UTTLESFORD	£8.90
27	VALE OF WHITE HORSE	£8.90
28	MIDLOTHIAN	£8.80
29	BRIGHTON & HOVE	£8.70
30	RESTORMEL	£8.70
31	SEVENOAKS	£8.70
32	SWINDON	£8.70
33	WOKING	£8.70
34	EAST DEVON	£8.69
35	CAMBRIDGE CITY	£8.60
36	TEST VALLEY	£8.60
37	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	£8.60
38	WEST BERKSHIRE	£8.60
39	BCP	£8.52
40	PENWITH	£8.52
41	ARUN	£ 8.50
42	CLACKMANNAN	£8.50
43	COLCHESTER	£8.40
44	EAST LOTHIAN	£8.40
45	EAST SUFFOLK (NORTH)	£8.40
46	EASTLEIGH	£8.40
47	LEEDS	£8.40
48	SOUTHAMPTON	£8.40
49	WATFORD	£8.40
50	DARTFORD	£8.30
51	HUNTINGDONSHIRE	£8.30
52	LINCOLN	£8.30
53	RUNNYMEDE	£8.30
54	SWALE	£8.30
55	TORBAY	£8.30
56	BASINGSTOKE & DEANE	£8.20
57	BROXBOURNE	£8.20
58	EAST HERTS	£8.20
59	GRAVESHAM	£8.20
60	HART	£8.20
61	MANCHESTER	£8.20
62	NORTH HERTS	£8.20
63	WOKINGHAM	£8.20
64	FOREST OF DEAN	£8.13
65	HASTINGS	£8.10
66	OXFORD CITY	£8.10
67	PLYMOUTH	£8.10
68	MOLE VALLEY	£8.08
69	BRECKLAND	£8.00
70	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	£8.00
71	CHICHESTER	£8.00
72	COVENTRY	£8.00
73	EAST LINDSEY	£8.00
74	HARLOW	£8.00
75	HORSHAM	£8.00
76	MAIDSTONE	£8.00
77	MEDWAY	£8.00
78	NORTH YORKSHIRE	£8.00
79	NOTTINGHAM	£8.00
80	RIBBLE VALLEY	£8.00
81	RUSHCLIFFE	£8.00

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE	
	COUNCIL	
82	SHROPSHIRE	£8.00
83	SOUTH AYRSHIRE	£8.00
84	SOUTH GLOUCESTER	£8.00
85	TANDRIDGE	£8.00
86	TORRIDGE	£8.00
87	YORK	£8.00
88	HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH	£7.90
89	IPSWICH	£7.90
90	ROTHER	£7.90
91	STEVENAGE	£7.85
92	ADUR	£7.80
93	BRACKNELL FOREST	£7.80
94	DORSET	£7.80
95	EASTBOURNE	£7.80
96	GLOUCESTER	£7.80
97	LEICESTER	£7.80
98	NORTH SOMERSET	£7.80
99	ROCHFORD	£7.80
100	RUSHMOOR	£7.80
101	SOUTHEND ON SEA	£7.80
102	SOUTH HAMS	£7.80
103	STOCKPORT	£7.80
104	SURREY HEATH	£7.80
105	WAVERLEY	£7.80
106	MELTON	£7.75
107	DUNDEE CITY	£7.72
108	CHELMSFORD	£7.70
109	DACORUM	£7.70
110	HIGH PEAK	£7.70
111	WEALDON	£7.70
112	STRATFORD ON AVON	£7.68
113	WILTSHIRE	£7.68
114	NORTH TYNESIDE	£7.65
115	RENFREWSHIRE	£7.65
116	WARWICK	£7.65
117	SHETLAND ISLES	£7.62
118	ASHFORD	£7.60
119	BIRMINGHAM	£7.60
120	BRISTOL	£7.60
121	CONWY	£7.60
122	DUMBARTON & VALE OF LEVEN	£7.60
123	EAST AYRSHIRE	£7.60
124	FIFE	£7.60
125	GREAT YARMOUTH	£7.60
126	ISLE OF MAN	£7.60
127	KERRIER	£7.60
128	KINGS LYNN & WEST NORFOLK	£7.60
129	MONMOUTHSHIRE	£7.60
130	SCOTTISH BORDERS	£7.60
131	SOMERSET	£7.60
132	THREE RIVERS	£7.60
133	WEST SUFFOLK	£7.60
134	WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND	£7.60
135	WINCHESTER	£7.60
136	BATH & N. E. SOMERSET	£7.50
137	MILTON KEYNES	£7.55
138	BEDFORD	£7.50
139	CARDIFF	£7.50
140	CHESTER	£7.50
141	EPPING FOREST	£7.50
142	EXETER	£7.50
143	GOSPORT	£7.50
144	MID SUFFOLK	£7.50
145	SHEFFIELD	£7.50
146	SOUTH NORFOLK	£7.50

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE	
	COUNCIL	
1	LONDON (HEATHROW)	£13.60
2	LUTON AIRPORT	£12.60
3	EPSOM & EWELL	£12.00
4	TfL	£12.00
5	GUILDFORD	£10.00
6	JERSEY	£9.65
7	CARADON	£9.60
8	NORTH CORNWALL	£9.60
9	ELMBRIDGE	£9.50
10	CARRICK	£9.20
11	ST ALBANS	£9.15
12	GUERNSEY	£9.10
13	WORTHING	£9.10
14	HERTSMERE	£9.08
15	CHELTENHAM	£9.00
16	EDINBURGH	£9.00

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE	
	COUNCIL	
147	TAMESIDE	£7.50
148	THANET	£7.50
149	CANTERBURY	£7.40
150	EAST HAMPSHIRE	£7.40
151	EAST RENFREW	£7.40
152	LEWES	£7.40
153	LIVERPOOL	£7.40
154	PORTSMOUTH UA	£7.40
155	SOLIHULL	£7.40
156	TEWKESBURY	£7.40
157	WEST OXFORD	£7.40
158	NEW FOREST	£7.35
159	NEWARK & SHERWOOD	£7.32
160	BLACKBURN	£7.30
161	BRAINTREE	£7.30
162	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL	£7.30
163	KINGSTON-UPON-HULL	£7.30
164	NORTH DEVON	£7.30
165	NORTH KESTEVEN	£7.30
166	NORWICH	£7.30
167	SOUTH CAMBRIDGE	£7.30
168	VALE OF GLAMORGAN	£7.30
169	CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE	£7.25
170	MORAY	£7.26
171	TEIGNBRIDGE	£7.26
172	NUNEATON & BEDWORTH	£7.25
173	BASILDON	£7.20
174	CASTLE POINT	£7.20
175	DERBY	£7.20
176	FAREHAM	£7.20
177	HAVANT	£7.20
178	LUTON	£7.20
179	NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE	£7.20
180	NORTH WARWICK	£7.20
181	SUNDERLAND	£7.20
182	SLOUGH	£7.20
183	SOUTH LAKELAND	£7.20
184	WEST NORTHANTS	£7.20
185	CHESTERFIELD	£7.16
186	TAMWORTH	£7.14
187	ARGYLL & BUTE	£7.13
188	CANNOCK CHASE	£7.10
189	COTSWOLD	£7.10
190	CRAWLEY	£7.10
191	DOVER	£7.10
192	HIGHLAND	£7.10
193	ISLE OF WIGHT	£7.10
194	OLDHAM	£7.10
195	RUGBY	£7.10
196	WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD	£7.10
197	HARBOROUGH	£7.09
198	ABERDEENSHIRE	£7.06
199	BABERGH	£7.00
200	BROMSGROVE	£7.00
201	CARLISLE	£7.00
202	CARMARTHENSHIRE	£7.00
203	INVERCLYDE	£7.00
204	MACCLESFIELD	£7.00
205	NEWPORT	£7.00
206	PEMBROKESHIRE	£7.00
207	SWANSEA	£7.00
208	WELWYN HATFIELD	£7.00
209	COMHAIRLRE NAN EILEAN SIAR	£7.00
210	SANDWELL	£6.92
211	BURY	£6.90

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE	
	COUNCIL	
212	CLYDEBANK	£6.90
213	FYLDE	£6.90
214	NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME	£6.90
215	EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE	£6.90
216	WORCESTER CITY	£6.90
217	PERTH & KINROSS	£6.82
218	ABERDEEN CITY	£6.80
219	BARROW IN FURNESS	£6.80
220	BLACKPOOL	£6.80
221	BOSTON	£6.80
222	BRIDGEND	£6.80
223	BROXTOWE	£6.80
224	CEREDIGION	£6.80
225	EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE	£6.80
226	EAST STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.80
227	EAST SUFFOLK (SOUTH)	£6.80
228	EDEN	£6.80
229	ELLESMERE PORT	£6.80
230	MANSFIELD	£6.80
231	MID DEVON	£6.80
232	NORTH NORFOLK	£6.80
233	NORTH NORTHANTS	£6.80
234	S. LANARKSHIRE (CAMBUS/R'GLEN)	£6.80
235	SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.80
236	TENDRING	£6.80
237	TRAFFORD	£6.80
238	WEST LOTHIAN	£6.80
239	WIGAN	£6.80
240	WIRRAL	£6.80
241	WOLVERHAMPTON	£6.80
242	CHARNWOOD	£6.75
243	WALSALL	£6.75
244	MALVERN HILLS	£6.72
245	ANGUS	£6.70
246	BLABY	£6.70
247	CONGLETON	£6.70
248	OADBY & WIGSTON	£6.70
249	ROTHERHAM	£6.70
250	STIRLING	£6.70
251	DUDLEY	£6.60
252	FOLKESTONE & HYTHE	£6.60
253	KNOWSLEY	£6.60
254	LANCASTER	£6.60
255	NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE	£6.60
256	S. LANARKSHIRE (E. KILBRIDE)	£6.60
257	SOUTH TYNESIDE	£6.60
258	ST HELENS	£6.60
259	WAKEFIELD	£6.60
260	BASSETLAW	£6.50
261	CALDERDALE	£6.50
262	DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY	£6.50
263	EREWASH	£6.50
264	GEDLING	£6.50
265	HALTON	£6.50
266	ROSSENDALE	£6.50
267	SEFTON	£6.50
268	STAFFORD	£6.50
269	TORFAEN	£6.50
270	DONCASTER	£6.48
271	HYNDBURN	£6.42
272	BLAENAU GWENT	£6.40
273	COUNTY OF HEREFORD	£6.40
274	CREWE & NANTWICH	£6.40
275	DERBYSHIRE DALES	£6.40
276	NORTH AYRSHIRE	£6.40

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE	
	COUNCIL	
277	NORTHUMBERLAND	£6.40
278	SALFORD	£6.40
279	WEST LINDSEY	£6.40
280	WYRE	£6.38
281	WARRINGTON	£6.35
282	ANGLESEY	£6.30
283	BARNLEY	£6.30
284	DARLINGTON	£6.30
285	GATESHEAD	£6.30
286	SOUTH HOLLAND	£6.30
287	SOUTH RIBBLE	£6.30
288	REDDITCH	£6.25
289	CHORLEY	£6.20
290	COPELAND	£6.20
291	FALKIRK	£6.20
292	FENLAND	£6.20
293	NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE	£6.20
294	S. LANARKSHIRE (HAMILTON)	£6.20
295	SPELTHORNE	£6.20
296	WYCHAVON	£6.20
297	WYRE FOREST	£6.14
298	BRADFORD	£6.10
299	NEATH PORT TALBOT	£6.10
300	S. LANARKSHIRE (CLYDESDALE)	£6.10
301	NORTHERN IRELAND	£6.06
302	ALLERDALE	£6.00
303	BOLTON	£6.00
304	DENBIGHSHIRE	£6.00
305	GWYNEDD	£6.00
306	KIRKLEES	£6.00
307	NORTH WEST LEICESTER	£6.00
308	PETERBOROUGH	£6.00
309	POWYS	£6.00
310	PRESTON	£6.00
311	RHONDDA CYNON TAFF	£6.00
312	TELFORD & WREKIN	£6.00
313	THURROCK	£6.00
314	HARTLEPOOL	£5.90
315	NORTH LANARKSHIRE	£5.90
316	STOKE-ON-TRENT	£5.90
317	VALE ROYAL	£5.90
318	EAST RIDING	£5.85
319	AMBER VALLEY	£5.80
320	FLINTSHIRE	£5.80
321	LICHFIELD	£5.80
322	MERTHYR TYDFIL	£5.80
323	NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE	£5.75
324	CAERPHILLY	£5.70
325	STOCKTON ON TEES	£5.70
326	ASHFIELD	£5.60
327	MIDDLESBROUGH	£5.60
328	WREXHAM	£5.60
329	PENDLE	£5.50
330	REDCAR & CLEVELAND	£5.50
331	ROCHDALE	£5.50
332	SOUTH KESTEVEN	£5.30
333	STAFFS MOORLANDS	£5.20
334	WEST LANCASHIRE	£5.20
335	CHERWELL	£5.08
336	BURNLEY	£5.00
337	BOLSOVER	£4.60
338	MALDON	N.S.F.
339	RUTLAND	N.S.F.
340	SOUTH DERBYSHIRE	N.S.F.
341	WEST DEVON	N.S.F.

WORLDWIDE TAXI FOCUS

from India



CO-OP LAUNCH TAXI SERVICE TO TAKE ON UBER AND OLA

The government in India has launched a co-op taxi app in a bid to take on the market domination of private players such as Uber and Ola.



Registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, Sahkar Taxi Cooperative says it offers “safe, affordable, and reliable transport while supporting local drivers who earn 100% of their fare – no middlemen, no hidden charges”.

The initiative is backed by eight major co-operative organisations. Each promoter has committed ₹10 crore in the initial phase and the co-op has an overall authorised share capital of ₹300 crore, Rural Voice has reported.

The move was announced in parliament by union minister Amit Shah announced the plan in Parliament, who said the new service will register two-wheeler taxis, rickshaws, and four-wheeler taxis.

The Ministry of Cooperation says co-op is not being run solely for profit, and will charge reasonable fares, and a significant portion of the earnings will be distributed among the drivers.

Drivers will also receive social security benefits, the ministry adds.

The dominance of the ride-hailing market by corporate tech giants has long been a campaigning issue for co-op players like the Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC), who argue that the Uber model offers unfair working conditions and extracts capital from localities. With a number of co-op initiatives – such as the Drivers Cooperative, which operates in several US cities – set up around the world to offer a more ethical alternative.

In 2018, the PCC heard greetings from 45 taxi co-op leaders in Brazil, during its global conference in Hong Kong.

For this latest co-op foray in the taxi business, operations are expected to begin by December in Delhi, Gujarat, and Maharashtra, followed by a phased national rollout.

Around 400–500 drivers are expected to be enrolled for the initial phase, with the opportunity to become a member after six months by purchasing five shares worth ₹100 each. The co-op is also recruiting for executive positions.

A similar model already exists in West Bengal, the Economic Times reports, with the launch of Yatri Sathi.

from USA



NYC CABS FITTED WITH CAMERAS TO COMBAT INSURANCE FRAUD

The New York Federation of Taxi Drivers (NYSFTD) has launched a new programme,

“Operation Bright

Eyes,” to protect

drivers from insurance fraud and scams. The initiative will equip 500 cabs with front, rear, and interior cameras, with plans to expand the programme to more vehicles in the city’s livery and black car industry.

The programme’s goal is to provide drivers with video evidence against people who falsely claim to be victims of accidents or injuries. This comes after a viral dash cam video from last year showed what authorities believe was a staged car crash on the Belt Parkway in Queens, intended to fraudulently collect insurance money.

Fernando Mateo, a spokesperson for the NYSFTD, said the cameras are a necessary defence. “For years, powerful crime organisations - lawyers, clinics and scammers - have built empires by stealing from taxi drivers and insurance companies,” he said.

“We’re done being victims. We can’t carry guns or knives to defend ourselves so these cameras are our weapons, and we’re hunting the truth.” Mateo added, “If you’ve been part of this criminal game, we see you now.”

The NYSFTD collaborated with American Transit and Display Ride to raise the funds for the cameras, which cost around \$300 each. The federation will manage the video files to ensure all evidence is properly documented. The group claims this “billion-dollar fraud machine” drives up insurance costs and can lead to drivers losing their licences while investigations are underway.



WORLDWIDE TAXI FOCUS

from China



CABBIE SUSPENDED AFTER “SMELLS GOOD” COMPLIMENT TO PASSENGER

A Chinese taxi driver, identified only as Zhao, has been suspended for 21 days from an online ride-hailing platform after a female passenger accused him of verbal sexual harassment. The suspension follows a complaint filed on June 8, alleging that Zhao repeatedly complimented the woman on her scent, making her feel uncomfortable and unsafe.

According to the passenger, Zhao allegedly told her she “smells good” and asked three times if she was wearing perfume. When she stated she had not applied any scent, he reportedly continued: “The smell from your body is so good.”

The woman later clarified that the “pleasant fragrance” was from her liquid detergent, prompting the driver to inquire about the specific brand.

The passenger reported revealing the detergent brand before exiting the vehicle prior to her intended destination. Hours later, she filed a formal complaint with the ride-hailing company, which subsequently reviewed voice recordings of the interaction before imposing the 21-day suspension.

However, Zhao maintains his innocence, claiming his inquiries were polite and he “did not say anything wrong!” He told Zhejiang TV: “I just do not understand. If she had not replied to me, I would not have continued asking her.

Defending her reaction, the woman said: “My courteous replies were interpreted as being amenable to him. I believe any passenger would feel uncomfortable if a driver made such remarks.”

from South Korea



SOUTH KOREA CABBIE TELLS THAI TOURIST TO “PAY WITH BODY”

A shocking incident involving a South Korean taxi driver and Thai tourist has ignited a public backlash across social media in both South Korea and Thailand. The tourist posted a video on June 19, documenting the driver’s use of a translation app to make

inappropriate comments and sexual advances during her ride. The woman was en route to Seoul Station to catch a train to Busan when the driver reportedly began asking intrusive and offensive personal questions, such as: “Do you have a boyfriend?”

The situation took a disturbing turn when the driver allegedly stated: “If you don’t have money for the fare, you can pay with your body.” The viral video, which captured the incident, has garnered over 660,000 likes and hundreds of comments.

In her post, the tourist recounted that the driver not only made these “inappropriate comments” but also “stopped the car mid-way,” leaving her feeling unsafe. Although she was eventually dropped off at her destination, the driver allegedly persisted with his advances, offering his phone number and he even offered to drive her to Busan, once again reiterating his “inappropriate suggestion if she lacked money.” The tourist reported the incident and issued a warning to other travellers to exercise caution when using taxis in South Korea. Her post has drawn significant attention, with many demanding “strict action against the driver for his alarming behaviour.”

from Thailand



THAI CABBIE OFFERED CANNABIS AS FARE PAYMENT, FILES POLICE REPORT

A taxi driver in Pattaya, eastern Thailand, has filed a police complaint after a foreign passenger, unable to pay the agreed-upon fare from Suvarnabhumi airport, allegedly offered a bag of cannabis instead. The driver, Prachuap, 54, reported the incident to Pol Col Chanan Kesornbua. Prachuap told police he picked up a foreign passenger at the airport for a trip to a hotel in Pattaya. The fare was set at 2,000 baht, with the passenger stating his wife would pay upon arrival. However, upon reaching the hotel, his wife couldn’t pay. Prachuap informed the police that when he requested the remaining 1,050 baht: “The couple said they had no money and offered him a big packet of cannabis instead of money.”

The cabbie said he refused the illicit payment and informed them he would report the incident to the police. At this point, “The couple became angry and fled inside the hotel, leaving him confused and unpaid,” prompting him to go to the police station.

PHTM

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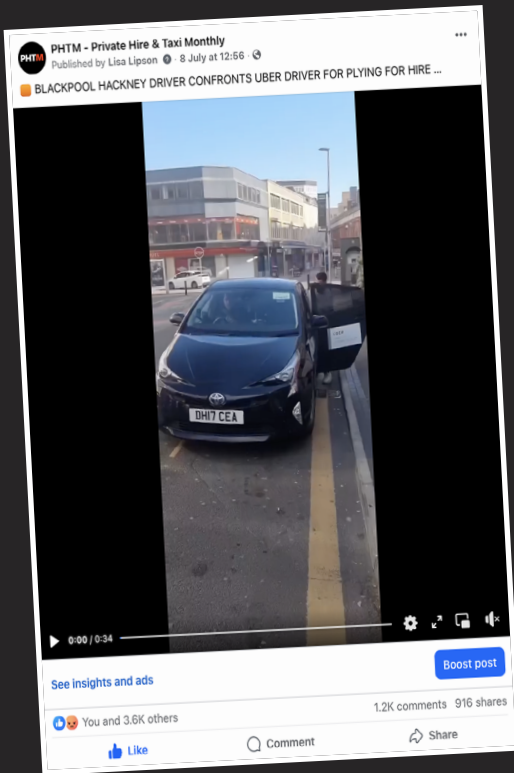
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PHTM

LONDON CALLING: AT THE EMIRATES OR THE BRIDGE? FEARS FOR EAGLES AND BEES

THANK THE LORD - THE FOOTY'S BACK!!

It seems an age since it left!! By the time you read this column, most leagues would have already kicked off and now is the time for my (almost) pre-season wagers.

BUT FIRST TO LAST MONTH..

Followers of the Book would be quids in, because not only did I pick **JANNIK SINNER** at a best price of 4/1 for Wimbledon glory in the Men's, but also picked **AMANDA ANISIMOVA** in the Women's at a whopping 33/1! Yes double carpet, and each way paid nearly 17/1. Admit it, had you even heard of her before the tournament??

JOHN RAHM, my headline pick at the Open didn't trouble the scorers, his putting was dire....

PREMIER LEAGUE WINNER

And so to the footy and centre stage is the Premiership which I predict will finally go to the Gunners. This is clearly going to be Arteta's last season if he doesn't deliver the title and his summer signings will finally tip the balance in his favour and away from the Northern powerhouses. In my humble opinion, Slot's Reds were not the best side in the league last year and also were lucky in the fact that Man City were in transition; a state I still believe they are yet to come out of. Let me go further... and I am a lifelong Blue, I think it's time that Pep was moved on! As it's too all samey samey and won't change without a new philosophy! As to the GOAT for Pep, don't make me laugh!

What I do believe though is that the two Pep disciples currently in employ in the Premiership, (Arteta and Maresca), or as I like to say: *Pep with a twist*, have developed a new style that has improved on the original. To that end, **ARSENAL** are widely available at 5/2 and **CHELSEA** at 10/1.

In conclusion, the Premier Handicaps are now out and I think **CHELSEA** with a start of PLUS 12 points is an absolute steal. See your bookmakers list for exact point starts and remember whilst they receive a twelve point start from Liverpool (scratch), they have



to concede 40 points to Sunderland (plus 52), but at 12/1, (even each way at a quarter the first 4 pays a whopping 3/1), its more likely than Donald Trump cheating on Melania, and we know how much his libido interacts!!

Click link to see the Bet 365 Handicap, but do your research for your fancy as handicaps vary with each bookie in points and odds: <https://shorturl.at/fPITi>

PREMIER LEAGUE RELEGATION

Conversely, you can also turn a profit on which teams are going to be relegated, and whilst the last two seasons have seen all promoted teams from the Championship going straight back down, this year, while I see no hope for Sunderland, I do see a torrid time for **CRYSTAL PALACE** (9/1) as their top players are being poached and they will have to play twice a week in Europe. Chalices are often poisoned and last year's FA success may lead to clouding the only true aim of surviving in the Premier Division.

I also think **BRENTFORD'S** time in the top flight is also under threat as Thomas Frank's team punched above their weight and with his departure I can see many a rendition of that Eighties pop anthem being played by Yazz and the Plastic Population (just substitute up for down!) At a whopping 11/2, back now before the season begins.



EFL LEAGUES

A full analysis of the EFL Divisions will be conducted next month, together with the Scottish leagues, but for now my original tips (which might be tinkered with after a few games have been played) are as follows:

CHAMPIONSHIP: **MIDDLESBROUGH** 20/1 and **NORWICH** 16/1

LEAGUE 1: **LUTON** 7/2

LEAGUE 2: **CHESTERFIELD** 15/2 and **GILLINGHAM** 14/1

Until next time

Good punting

Bernie the Book

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