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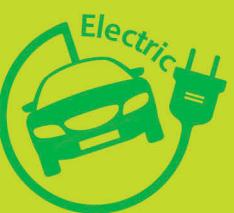
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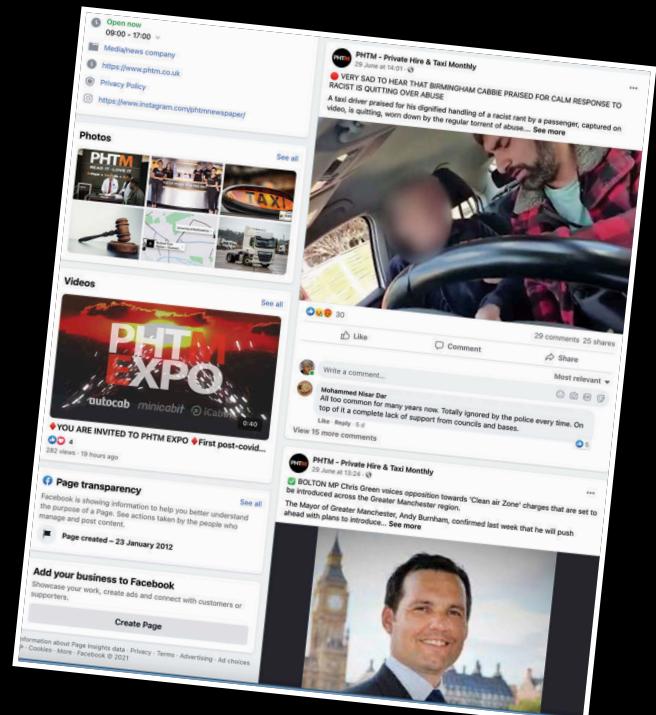
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**The Taxi
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David Lawrie, Director NPHTA
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Once again it has been brought to our attention that there is an issue with local authorities having a tinted window restriction policy for rear windows.

This is a topic that both Donna and I have been successful in overturning in many areas, including by way of a Judicial Review which resulted in a consent order being issued in 2017 which read:

UPON the Respondent, by its Licensing committee, resolving on 27 September 2017 to amend its extant policy to prohibit the licensing of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles with tinted glass, the said committee resolved that: "Tinted windows will be allowed so long as they are manufacturers' specification, not after market and not self-adhesive films."

But why? What exactly is the problem

Well first we must look at what we mean by restrictions, or more importantly, verify that this is nothing more than a local authority desire, and NOT a statutory decision, nor does it have any bearing at all on any legislation. This is not even a nationally accepted or adopted condition, resulting in once again, the differences between local authorities being confusing to say the least.

What does the legislation state?

According to the The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, the Road Traffic Act 1988 (RTA) , and the Ministry of Transport Regulations, the light levels are very clearly written and are as follows.

- Front windscreen must allow at least 75% of light through
- Front passenger windows must allow a minimum of 70% of light to pass.

There are no restrictions to any windows rear of the front passenger seats.

What are the local authority conditions on rear windows?

This varies so much from one authority to another; some have no restrictions at all, some have the same condition as front passenger windows, whilst others have gone even further to copy the windscreens restrictions! Unbelievably, some have introduced their own criteria by stipulating 50% or even 30% - someone clearly has an overactive imagination! How do they even come up with such a figure, and do they actually understand what this means in practice?

We have sent out one of our famous surveys to formulate a comparison table to see just how much of an issue this is nationwide; we will publish the results once we have them all in.

Why are these restrictions in place?

The only actual and truthful answer we can suggest here is that these restrictions are based on nothing more than personal opinions; a condition for the sake of having a condition, which by its very nature is a breach of the Regulator's Code, which we will come back to later. But there have been several attempts to try to justify such restrictions.

"We need to be able to see inside the vehicle as it passes to verify no offence is being committed."

Simply put, any passenger or indeed driver committing an offence, such as an assault, is far more likely to divert away from crowded areas into a dark alley somewhere before committing it, in fact it is exceedingly rare that such offences take place on the main carriageway.

"We need to be able to verify the vehicle is not carrying more passengers than it is licensed to carry."

This view would only be relevant in broad daylight, with licensing officers standing at the roadside on a straight stretch of road, since at night-time, even with clear glass, the interior would not be visible unless the interior light is on whilst driving, which in itself would be an offence under the RTA.

So, the simple question that must be asked here is: how often are council officers on duty, standing on a random roadside, in the very early hours of the morning whilst a vehicle is approaching at normal driving speed, with the interior lights lit up, and able to observe clear enough and for long enough to do a head count in order to make this "reason" justifiable? Simple answer, NEVER; it is impossible to achieve this goal regardless of window tint level!

"It is for passenger safety and protection!"

Actually, in light of the above, window tint restrictions serve no such purpose, in fact quite the opposite, since the legitimate reason for vehicle windows to be tinted is to improve passenger safety and protection from harmful UV rays and sun glare, which then also improves passenger comfort too.

Do tinted window restrictions affect passenger safety or reduce risk?

As a part of our Judicial Review on this topic, we made use of a national Freedom of Information request that had been sent to all UK police forces which asked this question very clearly.

"Has the fact that a vehicle has tinted windows ever been considered to be a factor in any taxi or PH related incident?"

The answer from every single police force in the UK was a resounding *"no, tinted windows have never been considered to have any bearing at all in any taxi or PH related incidents."*

Ok so why is this such an issue?

As we all know, there is a nationwide push towards entry age limits and expiry dates of vehicles, and of course electric or hybrid vehicles with Clean Air Zone charges being implemented in various areas across the UK.

There are very few modern vehicles, or vehicles above the very basic models that do not come with rear tinted windows as standard, in fact many vehicle manufacturers even have rear tinted windows as standard on their very basic models.

Indeed, in the case of most of those modern vehicles, there is no clear glass option available at all. So those local authorities with such restrictions must make a choice; do they want modern stylish cars, or old, basic vehicles with little to no passenger comfort options?

Do they want newer, cleaner vehicles or not?

Why are vehicles moving to tinted rear windows?

- Darkened rear windows reduce UV rays and therefore improve passenger health and safety.
- Reducing the level of light passing through rear windows reduces glare and therefore improves passenger comfort.
- Reduction of the amount of sunlight passing through rear windows reduces the heat within the vehicle, which then reduces the need to use air conditioning, which in turn improves fuel economy, therefore reducing harmful emissions.

Hang on, improves health and safety, passenger comfort AND reduces emissions!! So, what have those local authorities got against such improvements? Surely the goal is for a better passenger experience AND reducing emissions, isn't it?

Is this really such a problem?

Yes, as explained previously, in most cases there is no clear glass option at all, in the case where there is an option, it is still a vehicle modification which could void the vehicle warranty, and potentially void the insurance too, since the vehicle no longer has manufacturer specifications, the modification made being classed as structural.

And that's before even considering the modification costs, which can be as much as £1,000 per vehicle. Then add to that the difficulty in sourcing a vehicle, which is Euro 6 AND does not have tinted rear windows.

OK, so what is the solution?

There are various solutions available to resolve this problem.

1. Scrap any window tint restrictions!

Ok, this is not likely to happen. The view from our industry will be split, with some not recognising why this is an issue, and wondering why drivers would not want the rear glass to be clear; versus those who see the problem, those who transport executive type customers who do not wish to be

in a goldfish bowl; and of course those who are more environmentally conscious and see the emissions issue.

More importantly it would create the eventuality of market tints or plastic sheeting being stuck on to glass - which if not done properly looks awful, and even when done professionally, is not liked by fire services because it can create an issue in the event of an accident as it makes it more difficult to gain entry to the vehicle to save you.

2. Allow manufacturers tinted glass!

Indeed, the vehicle is designed and built with construction and use compliant glass, for safety, strength, and structure, why in the world would anyone want to change them?

3. Allow CCTV to be installed!

Now there's an option, and we are not for one second suggesting mandatory CCTV, as that's a completely different topic, with a whole different set of regulations, which we have covered before and will no doubt cover again.

But if there was a choice made available to vehicle owners to either change the glass OR install CCTV (not a dashcam since they are not CCTV as stated by Milton Keynes Council), in order to have the vehicle of their choice, then this would resolve all options and concerns.

What are the benefits of installing CCTV?

- There would be no structural change to the vehicle, so as opposed to potentially voiding insurance, you might actually obtain insurance discounts.
- There would be no effect on vehicle warranty since the structure has not been modified.
- The safety of both drivers and passengers would be improved far more than could ever be achieved by simply having clear glass.
- If there were any reports or incidents, the event would have been captured without having to hope and pray that somebody somewhere happened to be walking past the scene at the time.
- The costs would be reduced since in most cases it is far more affordable to install CCTV than it is to replace all rear glass in vehicles.
- The saving would be further increased in the event of any incident as the need for interviews, committee hearings, court appeals and legal fees would be massively reduced.
- Drivers and passengers would feel safer, and council time would be saved.
- Councils do not have to completely reverse their views, merely amend them slightly to achieve a better result.
- Drivers will not be severely hindered in the options available when purchasing a newer vehicle due to nothing more than a local opinion.

It really is an ideal solution for all concerned.

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IN THE NEWS

ADDISON LEE ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT TO ACQUIRE BLACK CAB OPERATOR COMCAB

Addison Lee, London's leading private hire business, has announced an agreement to acquire black cab provider ComCab, creating the capital's largest private hire and taxi company with over 7,000 vehicles.

Business Matters reports that the acquisition will see Addison Lee purchase the London operations of Computer Cab plc (ComCab), City Fleet Networks and Flightlink International from the ComfortDelGro Corporation. This now makes Addison Lee London's largest private hire and taxi company, as well as London's largest same day courier business. Following completion, customers will be able to book car, taxi, and courier services all on one seamless mobility platform.

Addison Lee's CEO Liam Griffin said: "I

am sure there will be a few raised eyebrows at this deal given that Addison Lee and black taxis were once seen as competitors. However, the industry we operate in has changed and this alliance combines the two most professional companies in our sectors who share the same focus on quality of service, the customers we serve and the importance of the drivers.

"We have always held the black taxi as our benchmark, and it's now a privilege to be able to work with them.

"As London emerges from the pandemic, there's going to be a significant increase in demand for safe, quality transport from both corporates and consumers.

"The London black taxi is iconic and famous as the best taxi service anywhere in the world. By bringing

Addison Lee and ComCab together we consolidate our position as the market leader in corporate ground transport and we will be able to meet the need for quality and excellence in a way that none of competitors can."

Rudy Tan, CityFleet Networks CEO, said: "We are excited to be coming together with a strong brand like Addison Lee that shares many of our same values.

"By joining forces with Addison Lee, our customers will have access to a wider choice of premium transport solutions, and our hackney carriage drivers will get access to a growing pool of customers and more opportunities to work.

"Keeping the ComCab branding will preserve our status as the leading taxi operator in London."

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IN THE NEWS

LATEST DfT STATISTICS REVEAL HUGE DECLINE IN NUMBERS OF TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCES AND VEHICLES

The Department for Transport released its Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Statistics, England: 2021 on 30 June. The figures confirm, as predicted, that between 2020 and 2021 the total number of licensed taxi and private hire vehicles and licensed drivers in England has fallen. In effect, the trade is being destroyed; the DfT acknowledges, this is largely attributed to the Government's handling of Covid.

Licensed vehicles:

The total number in England decreased by 15.9% to 251,100. Over three quarters (77%) of vehicles lost were private hire vehicles (PHVs).

Hackney carriages:

There were 58,300 licensed taxis in 2021, a 14.0% decrease from 2020.

Private hire vehicles:

There were 192,700 licensed PHVs in

2021, a 16.0% loss from last year.

Licensed drivers:

There were 343,800 driver licences in 2021, a decrease of 5.7% compared to 2020.

Of the total licences, 64% were PHV-only licences, 13% were taxi-only licences and 22% were dual licences.

The drop has been much faster for vehicle licences than for driver licences, this is likely to be since vehicles are licensed for one year, with a driver licence mainly being for three years.

Licensed PHV operators:

The number of PHV operators decreased by 5.6% to 15,100 from 2020.

Dave Lawrie, **NPHTA** director said: "Within the various government meetings since the start of Covid, I stated clearly that unless our industry was protected at least to the same level as the

other transport sectors, then we would see huge losses of licence holders. These comments have been made directly to Grant Shapps, Rishi Sunak, Boris Johnson, Baroness Vere and within all team meetings with the DfT, the NHS Test and Trace, HMRC, Dept for Business, local authorities and anyone else with whom we could get an audience.

"The figures shown for 2021 are highly likely to be a pattern, due to the three-year cycle of drivers' badges; the true reflection of how many drivers have retired or found alternative work, such as courier work, will not be fully known until 2023/2024.

This impact will be catastrophic for those who rely on taxi and private hire services.

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DRIVER SHORTAGE CRISIS

It comes as no surprise to PHTM that in many parts of the UK we are now experiencing an acute shortage of drivers to service the increasing amount of passengers now venturing out due to the partial relaxation of covid restrictions since mid April.

PHTM predicted this mass exodus due to the abject lack of support afforded to the industry by both national and local government. Last year in a series of damning features we made the point very strongly and very clearly that we are:

#the forgotten industry.

We stated: "The message is very clear: this industry is being eroded through neglect, lack of guidance and lack of support. Its demise would be catastrophic. The result would be:

- **No services to take special needs and Social Services children to and from school**
- **No one to provide continuity and onward transport from airports, bus stations and railway stations**
- **No one to clear the city/town centres of passengers, mostly the worse for wear, late at night when there is no other form of transport available**
- **No one to act as the very "eyes and ears" of the community - as has so often been the case over the years - to protect the public in a way no other transport provider can ever do**
- **No one continuing to risk their own health and safety to provide support and backup to NHS workers, other key workers, elderly and other self-isolating people"**

There are a myriad of reasons why individual drivers have left the trade but collectively it all boils down to one fundamental factor - total and utter **NEGLECT**. Government and local authorities have failed dismally to offer any meaningful financial support to our industry and any assistance which has been made available has often been dependent on the driver's postcode and has proved to be too little too late.

So now as a direct consequence of the disgraceful apathy shown by the authorities to the plight of our drivers, many firms across the country are now reporting a worrying shortage of drivers to fulfil jobs, which is of course resulting in frustratingly long delays for customers.

This is not just a phenomenon limited to the UK, but is happening across the globe, including New York City, where a shortage of drivers is resulting in huge difficulties getting a cab and a massive spike in surge pricing for Uber and Lyft rides. The main reason for the decline there is that drivers, who largely stopped working during the pandemic, remain reluctant to come back, instead taking other jobs or collecting the federal sweetener of \$300 a week unemployment benefit available for the jobless in New York.

The following articles offer examples of the desperate situation being reported throughout the UK by some taxi and PH firms and illustrate the many factors causing the driver deficit and the damaging repercussions. We finish with an article from a taxi boss despairingly describing the lack of grant support offered by his local council.

TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE OPERATORS EXPERIENCING A 40% SHORTFALL IN DRIVERS

Taxi and private hire firms are experiencing a 40% shortfall in driver numbers as demand on local operators increases across the UK. With various sectors of the UK economy now reopened, particularly the hospitality industry, the need for taxi services has returned close to pre-pandemic levels.

However, due to a significant decrease in work during the pandemic, the industry has lost large numbers of drivers - with many going into the delivery industry or leaving the industry completely. This has created a significant gap between the demand for taxis or private hire vehicles and the supply of available vehicles.

This driver shortage has been compounded by the initiatives many local operators have taken to create new work, beyond passenger fares, during lockdown. For instance, many have deployed technology that is allowing them to receive and fulfil takeaway and restaurant deliveries. For some, the volume of work this has generated has already created driver shortage problem.

Dominic Moyes, Sales Director at DG Cars in Nottingham,

said: "We now operate a delivery service for local restaurants and takeaways in the Nottingham and Derby areas - and it's created more than 3,000 extra trips per week. That's on top of the standard passenger work. We're having to recruit more drivers and expand our fleet in order to keep up."

Dispatch technology company, Autocab, provides technical support to local operators across the UK, including Need-A-Cab and DG Cars. It created an Operator Relief Fund and played a leading role in developing the Safe Taxi & Private Hire Charter for the taxi and private hire industry during the pandemic.



DRIVER SHORTAGE CRISIS

DOZENS OF PLYMOUTH TAXI DRIVERS QUIT LEAVING PEOPLE STRUGGLING TO BOOK A CAB

Dozens of taxi and private hire drivers have quit the trade in Plymouth during the coronavirus pandemic - leaving customers struggling to book a cab in the evenings.

The Plymouth Herald reports one operator estimates that about 400 hackney and private hire drivers have given up in the city. Taxi bosses admit that many of the remaining self-employed drivers prefer to work during the day in the week, leaving a shortage of vehicles in the evenings and at weekends. Peter Bresland of Tower Cabs said: "The public are being let down badly. Operators lose their customers and their reputation because no cabs are available. We're very sorry but there is nothing we can do."

Tower Cabs had about 190 cars on its books before the pandemic but now runs about 120.

Another big city company, Need-A-Cab?, has also lost about 75 drivers over the same period and is running 210 cars.

Official Plymouth City Council figures show that the numbers of hackney drivers has fallen from 387 to 312 in the last year. Private hire drivers have reduced in number from 803 to 690, according to official figures.

But both Mr Bresland and Need-A-Cab director, Dave McIntosh have called on the council to reduce the cost of becoming a cabbie and some of the tests drivers have to sit - while still keeping the public safe. But the authority has said that it had to rigorously vet potential drivers and was seeing a slow rise in the number of applicants.

Mr Bresland, speaking for his own company, said after Brexit the supply of new drivers into the trade had "dried up".

He added: "Because of coronavirus restrictions hitting business a lot of drivers have returned home to Eastern Europe. A lot of them because of quarantine and other restrictions have been unable to get back. A lot of other drivers have gone to Amazon or Deliveroo to supplement their income."

One customer said he had never struggled so badly to book a taxi in 40 years, including from popular pick-up points such as the city centre and the railway station.

Dave McIntosh said: "We now have jobs coming through on our app, website, phones and via Uber - which has boosted the demand for our vehicles in a big way. We simply don't have enough drivers to cope with the current levels. We have launched a major recruitment drive but it's not easy. The last year hasn't been kind to taxi drivers but we are now trying to convince people to come back and in large numbers."

Mr McIntosh said that Need-A-Cab? has tried to help drivers by providing everything from training to Perspex screens. But he said that those on benefits faced a big outlay before they could start earning on the roads.

A spokesperson for the council said: "Taxi and private hire driving has suffered due to the lockdowns and many drivers have retired or have found other work.

"We have seen a slow increase in new driver applications but this will take some time to recover."

SHORTAGE OF CABBIERS IN NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE CAUSES DELAYS AND FIGHTS AT RANKS

The shortage of licensed drivers is causing long delays for customers throughout the UK - a situation which will only get worse. Manager of Fon-A-Car in Cleethorpes, Gary Handy, said lockdowns had decimated the number of taxi drivers in North East Lincolnshire.

He told the Grimsby Telegraph that customers, who previously only had to wait five minutes for a lift, now regularly have to wait for up to an hour and a half at busy times. Delays have led to scuffles at taxi ranks and flared tempers. Gary said many drivers had given up their badges during the lockdown to seek employment elsewhere. His firm lost 80% of their orders as a result of the lockdowns since March last year. From having 35 cabs the firm is reduced to just four.

But now customer numbers have escalated, with more people returning to bars and restaurants and wanting a lift home.

"We are now back to the number of customers since before the lockdown, but with only half the number of drivers we used to have and they are earning more than they ever did

before. If anyone was thinking of getting into the taxi trade, now is the time to do it," said Gary.

He said the number of licensed drivers in the borough is 70 per cent of what it was in previous years.

A taxi driver, who did not wish to be named, said: "It is a real problem. A lot just retired or left for other work last year. Some let their badges expire. I'm working flat out and struggling to get to all the jobs. I've been doing it 35 years and never seen anything like it. All the taxi firms are finding the same problem. "If anyone was thinking of starting up it means they have to get the qualifications which can be £100 each. Then there is the licence which is £300 and you need a vehicle which is less than five years old. So the costs mount up."

Grimsby man, Gregory Ford, 29, was stranded in Cleethorpes on a recent Saturday night at around 11.30pm.

"We tried every firm and then went on the apps. But they said we haven't anything and would have to wait 40 minutes. So we decided to walk back to Grimsby instead," he said.

DRIVER SHORTAGE CRISIS

TAXI SHORTAGE: ONE DERRY TAXI COMPANY HAD 11,000 MISSED CALLS LAST WEEKEND

Taxi companies in Derry are struggling to meet growing public demand as society reopens after lockdown. Derry Now reports that people are having to wait for long periods or walk home after a night out due to a shortage of drivers. There is a concern that it could affect city centre trade if people decide against going out due to a fear of being stranded at the end of the night. Those representing local cabbies are now calling on the government for support. Over a recent weekend in Derry, one of the bigger taxi companies had over 11,000 missed calls, demonstrating the level of unmet demand for taxis.

Across the city and Northern Ireland as a whole, the number of taxi drivers is down by around 30 per cent. Cabbies have left for work as food delivery drivers or work of another kind. Eamonn O'Donnell, of NW Taxi Proprietors, said that older drivers who suffer from breathing conditions are reluctant to return and some drivers are still worried about bringing Covid home to vulnerable family members.

Mr O'Donnell says that pre-pandemic entry procedures for new drivers were an obstacle to recruitment. He told Derry News: "We have asked the Department for Infrastructure

(DfI) to relax and suspend the entry procedures to the taxi industry until we get the numbers back in place.

"We need breathing space to recover from the pandemic, and that's what we're asking for from them. If they did that it would allow us to recruit, including younger drivers. People need to be able to get in cheaper and quicker.

"If it's not addressed, come September when society is reopened and schools are back we could be looking at a serious shortage of taxis; not only to support the city centre, but to supply the school and hospital work that we do as well." In order to encourage more drivers to work weekends, he added, increased weekend fares will have to be given consideration. Otherwise, it is his view city centre business could be 'strangled' because people will not want to go out if they risk being stranded at the end of the night.

It could lead to anti-social behaviour in the city centre with intoxicated people unable to get taxis and an increase in 'unregulated' drivers.

A spokesperson for the DfI said any relaxation to the current entry requirements would require further legislative consideration by the department.

AS RESTRICTIONS ARE EXTENDED FLEET TAXI FIRM CALLS FOR MORE LOCAL COUNCIL SUPPORT

Fleet based Hart Taxis has called for Hart District Council to use discretionary grant funding provided by local government to support business sectors desperately in need of support.

Owner of Hart Taxis, Roy Sheriff said: "Our business has been devastated over the last 12 months. As an industry we are reliant on the hospitality industry, airport transfers and business travel and trade has ground to a halt.

"Taxi firms have not been required to close but we have had days where drivers have taken as little as £14 in a 12 hour shift. The latest extension of restrictions is another blow to our industry and we desperately need more support.

"Even though the government has made it clear that local councils can allocate discretionary grants to meet the needs of local businesses in the community, Hart District Council has ignored businesses, such as taxi firms, who are reliant on sectors forced to close.

"This lack of understanding and support from Hart District Council astounds me.

"Retailers or restaurants required to close have been able to access tens of thousands of pounds in government grants and still been able to sell online or offer takeaways.

"For example, in the latest round of funding, a local restaurant

which has been able to offer takeaways could have received a grant six times higher than the grant which was available to us.

"We pride ourselves on being part of our local community and have provided free transport to the vaccination centres for the elderly and vulnerable, continued to offer the school transport service, offered discounts to NHS workers and have partnered with local charities to give back what we can in these difficult times.

"While other councils recognise the impact of national and local restrictions on taxi drivers, as well as their importance to vulnerable people during the pandemic, the council has simply ignored us.

"As a company we have received a small percentage of the grants available to other businesses.

"In addition, taxi drivers have received very little in the form of grants, even though many other councils have made grants available to recognise the importance of taxi companies to the local economy.

"Knowing that the council has the flexibility to support us through grants but chose not to has caused me months of sleepless nights, worrying about my business, our drivers and my family."

WARNING FROM PHTM

TO GOVERNMENT, COUNCILS & MPs

CHAOS IS COMING!!

We predicted that if you did not act – then our trade would be decimated

AND IT IS

OUR INDUSTRY NEEDS SUPPORT AND IT NEEDS IT NOW:

PROPER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- to make up for lost income
- to purchase EVs
- freeze licensing fees

PROTECTION

- fund in-vehicle CCTV
- fund temporary screens
- supply PPE

LICENSING

- entice those who have left the trade to come back
- incentivise people to enter the trade and speed up the application process

LOCKDOWN IS EASING, THE PUBLIC NEEDS OUR TRADE

YOU MUST ACT NOW
BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!!

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IN THE NEWS

£20M SANDWELL COUNCIL TRANSPORT CONTRACT TO GO TO 'LAND DEAL PROBE' EX-EMPLOYEE

Opposition councillors have questioned the decision to award schoolchildren's transport contracts to companies run by a former employee implicated in an explosive report about land deals at Sandwell Council.

The only two companies successful in a tendering process to run transport for children with special educational needs (SEND) for Sandwell Council are both run by Azeem Hafeez, the son of former deputy leader Mahboob Hussain. According to the Express and Star both were implicated in the 2016 Wragge report, which alleged code of conduct breaches by ex-Councillor Hussain.

Mr Hafeez was arrested over the scandal before he was released without charge and the investigation was dropped. He denied any wrongdoing. Sandwell Council bosses were set to

sign off on the agreement worth over £20m on 16 June which will see SEND transport provided by North Birmingham Travel and County Cars until 2025. Mr Hafeez, 36, is listed as a director of both on Companies House.

A council report said the companies were chosen following a "closed bid tender process". The Labour-run authority said it had chosen providers who "have provided the most economically advantageous tender".

The land deals probe overshadowed Sandwell Council during the mid-2010s. Part of it looked at the sale of a Coroner's Office in Smethwick, which was sold to Mr Hafeez, a council



Mahboob Hussain

employee at the time for £80,000 in May 2013. Mr Hafeez put in a bid for the site the day before it was advertised. The report says the sales were "likely to be the result" of confidential information being shared between Mr Hussain and his son. Mr Hussain labelled the report's findings "lies" but was later found to have abused his position as a councillor by the authority.

David Fisher, leader of the Sandwell Conservatives, said: "We've been promised they are going to do everything transparent and that lessons have been learned. Although they are talking about it, they are not acting on it.

"Councillors making these decisions have still got links to previously elected members." He added, by choosing companies run by the same person, the council was "putting all its eggs in one basket".



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IN THE NEWS

MILTON KEYNES RAPIST TAXI SCANDAL: DEPUTY COUNCIL LEADER APOLOGISES

A deputy council leader has apologised for his part in allowing a serial rapist to get a licence to drive a PHV. BBC News reports that Lib Dem Robin Bradburn took on the role at Milton Keynes Council after his party and Labour formed a coalition. But taxi drivers have called for him to resign over his decision to grant Nadeem Ahmed Kiani a licence in 2014. The council revoked Kiani's licence in 2014 after it was revealed he had been given a private hire licence by the licensing committee in 2011.

A second committee had lifted a suspension on his licence in 2012, despite Thames Valley Police having written to the authority giving details of Kiani's convictions for raping and assaulting sex workers in London, in 1994.

Councillors Stuart Burke and Gladstone McKenzie resigned from the council's

licensing committee as a result. Mr McKenzie also stood down from the council, while Mr Burke lost his seat at the next election.

Subhan Shafiq, who had vouched for Kiani as a friend in 2011, resigned as Mayor and later quit as a councillor. Mr Bradburn had sat on both committees, but had lost his Bradwell seat in May 2014, three months before the scandal broke. As he was no longer a councillor, Mr Bradburn avoided much of the scrutiny his colleagues faced.

He was then re-elected in 2015, despite concerns being raised.

Mr Bradburn had told a 2014 council investigation into the scandal that



Robin Bradburn

"everyone is saying [Kiani] was a risk but he has not done anything in 14 years since his release". He added he was "confident the right decisions were made".

Following May's local election, Labour's Peter Marland continued as council leader, while Mr Bradburn became his deputy. At the time of the taxi scandal, Mr Marland had said the decision to grant Kiani a licence had been a "tragedy" and the incident had "damaged the reputation of Milton Keynes." Angry taxi drivers told BBC Three Counties Radio Mr Bradburn should not continue as deputy leader.

Mr Bradburn, who admitted he had been aware of Kiani's offences when making the decision, said "the matter has lived in my memory" and he had learnt from his mistake.



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Cash Price	Customer Deposit	60 Monthly Payments	Weekly Equivalent	Amount of Credit	Total Amount payable	Fixed Rate of Interest	Representative APR
£16,795	£1,000	£329.06	£82.27	£15,795	£20,743.75	5.0%	9.4%

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Cash Price	Customer Deposit	60 Monthly Payments	Weekly Equivalent	Amount of Credit	Total Amount payable	Fixed Rate of Interest	Representative APR
£19,995	£1,000	£395.73	£98.93	£18,995	£24,743.75	5.0%	9.4%

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Fuel Consumption figures for the Hyundai Ioniq 1.6 GDi SE Connect DCT Hybrid MPG (l/100km): WLTP Combined 138.9 (2.0), CO2 emissions: 102 g/km, KIA Niro 1.6 GDi 2 DCT Hybrid MPG (l/100km): WLTP Combined 58.9 (4.8), CO2 emissions: 110 g/km. Toyota Corolla Saloon 1.8 VVTi Icon CVT Hybrid MPG (l/100km): WLTP Combined 55.3 - 62.7, CO2 emissions: 125 g/km. ŠKODA Octavia 1.0 TSi e-TEC SE DSG Hybrid MPG (l/100km): WLTP Combined 44.9-56.5, CO2 emissions: 115-143 g/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.

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£19,995	£1,000	£395.73	£98.93	£18,995	£24,743.75	5.0%	9.4%

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All-Round Electric Windows • Toyota Touch 2 with Go Navigation
Reversing Camera with Intelligent Park Assist
Dual-Zone Automatic Air Conditioning



Cash Price	Customer Deposit	60 Monthly Payments	Weekly Equivalent	Amount of Credit	Total Amount payable	Fixed Rate of Interest	Representative APR
£19,995	£1,000	£395.73	£98.93	£18,995	£24,743.75	5.0%	9.4%

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ROUND THE COUNCILS

CHELTENHAM: CABBIES' FEARS DUE TO WAV PLANS

Council leaders in Cheltenham say they will talk with taxi drivers who fear plans to make all hackney carriages wheelchair accessible will put them out of business.

GloucestershireLive reports that cabbies have been calling on Cheltenham Borough Council to delay its planned changes to licensed taxis for two years.

The council agreed in 2018 that all local hackney carriages would have to be wheelchair accessible from January 2022. But cabbies say these changes threaten to put some of them out of business as it costs between £22,000 and £35,000 to buy a wheelchair accessible car.

They also say the pandemic has hindered their opportunity to save up the money needed for the upgrades.

A petition by signed by 793 people calling on the council to delay the implementation of the new policy until 2024 was presented to the council. However, councillors unanimously backed a recommendation to continue with implementing the new policy on 21 June.

Taxi driver Ilesh Mugatnal said the trade has really been struggling during the pandemic and a delay to the new policy would really help them.

"A lot of drivers managed to buy second hand WAVs and are going to carry on with the trade," he said.

"But it's a tough time for us. We thought the council could be more understanding and take into account the times we've just been through. The pandemic is still there and our trade is being affected by it.

Mr Mugatnal, who is mainly based at Cheltenham Railway Station, said the situation has improved slightly as lockdown restrictions have eased. But trade is still down compared to before the pandemic. He added: "It's not even half of that at the moment. It's very worrying."

Cllr Horwood said he understood the taxi drivers have had a very difficult time since they considered the policy in 2018. He says he is willing to have genuine discussions with them over the planned changes.

"I understand with no night time economy, no trade from Cheltenham Festival and no shoppers for much of this time they have had a torrid time of it," he said.

"The starting point for this debate is the fact that only 66 out of 200 hackney cabs are currently wheelchair accessible.

"That compares with all 19,000 London cabs, every cab in Birmingham and the West Midlands, every cab in Reading and almost every cab in Bristol.

"I'm new to this portfolio and I'm absolutely genuine with my offer to engage both with the accessibility forum, disabled people in Cheltenham and members of the taxi trade.

"I want to look at this policy in detail and also think ahead to the inevitable replacement in the future of these vehicles with electric or other low carbon vehicles."

GLoucester: PLANS TO INCREASE FARES BY 6.5%

Taxi fares in Gloucester are set to rise above inflation. Gloucester City Council licensing chiefs will consider plans to raise tariffs by around 6.5 per cent - or as much as 69p. The last increase was in December 2017.

According to GloucesterLive, the main reason that cabbies are asking for the increase is due to rising costs such as replacement parts for their vehicles and insurance.

If the increase is approved, the running mile rate will go up from £1.98 to £2.10 and the cost of one-mile and two-mile journeys will go up to £4.55 and £6.62 from £3.95 and £5.93 respectively.

The soiling charge is also to increase from £65 to £75. The city council says the increase in charges will make them the second lowest within the county in terms of the running mile cost and third highest when it comes to one-mile and two-mile journeys.

The licensing and enforcement committee will consider the changes on June 15.

WYCHAVON: CHANGES TO TAXI LICENSING PROPOSED

Wychavon is consulting on changes to its Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy following new DfT guidance, reports the Evesham Observer.

This has led to several proposed changes including:

- All new applicants for a taxi or private hire licence will have to take safeguarding training
- All licence holders will have to be registered with the DBS
- Anyone refused a licence on the grounds they may cause harm to a child or adult will be referred to the DBS and police informed
- All drivers will have to demonstrate a basic proficiency in the English language, both written and verbal
- All new applicants will have to meet the requirements of the Worcestershire Taxi and Private Hire Competency Certificate
- Taxi and PHV operators will have to keep a register of staff

Views are being sought from taxi and PHV drivers and operators, as well as the public who use their service.

Cllr Emma Stokes, responsible for licensing on Wychavon District Council, said: "These proposed changes are in line with new government guidance to give people reassurance that public safety is our top priority when issuing licences." People can have their say using the online feedback form at:

www.wychavon.gov.uk/consultations

The consultation runs until Friday September 3.

ROUND THE COUNCILS

BROMSGROVE: CONSULTATION ON DRAFT HC AND PH POLICY

Bromsgrove District Council has launched a consultation on proposals to introduce new policies in relation to their hackney carriage and private hire licensing functions.

The drafting of a new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy document is part of a review of the council's existing policies which has been prompted by the publication by the DfT of the "Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards" in July 2020.

Full details of the consultation, including a link enabling people to provide their views online, can be found by visiting: www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/consultations

To assist the council in receiving the views of as wide a group of stakeholders as possible, please forward this email to any other individuals, organisations or groups that you think may have an interest in responding to this consultation. This consultation will remain open until 3rd September 2021.

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE: CABBIES PLEA TO KEEP OLDER CARS AGREED

Taxi drivers in Burton could be handed another lifeline to keep them in business as they try to recover from the impact of Covid on their business.

Three cabbies in the town asked for a four-month extension for all drivers in Burton and Uttoxeter on how long they can keep ageing vehicles before having to replace them as drivers across the town battle to stay afloat.

The cabbies asked East Staffordshire Borough Council to grant them the extension due to the major downturn in trade. One driver told the council: "I am not in a position to replace vehicles due to the lockdown. Work has been terribly slow and I do not have funds available to purchase a new vehicle and request that you consider my appeal for extension."

It is the third time since last April that the council's licensing team has been approached by taxi drivers seeking extensions to when they need to buy newer cars.

They were previously granted two four-month extensions in April and then in November last year following a letter signed by 19 taxi firms across East Staffordshire, now known as the Burton Taxi Trade after forming an alliance.

Previously private hire vehicles had to be replaced when they reach seven years old and hackney carriage vehicles at ten years old.

From May 2021 to December 2021, a total of 107 private hire vehicles and hackney carriage vehicles would need to be replaced under the old licence agreements issued by the borough council.

From December 2020 to December 2021, a total of 90 private hire vehicles and 26 hackneys would have needed to be replaced, but these drivers were granted the reprieve on older cars.

But taxi drivers have said many have seen their workload plummet to ten per cent of what it used to be when compared to January last year, before the pandemic hit.

The licensing committee met to discuss the extension on June 8. A report to the council said that the options available to the committee were to extend the licences by another four months; grant a six-month extension; an extension until December 31; or impose no extensions.

The committee voted to make an extension until Friday 31 December 2021.

BABERGH: REVISED FARES TO GO TO CONSULTATION

Fresh fares for hackneys in Babergh will go out to public consultation, after previous tariffs had to be scrapped days before coming into effect for breaching discrimination laws. According to Suffolk News, licensing bosses said they have used suggestions from the cab trade to help ensure there are no issues this time around.

New fares due to have been introduced in April had to be shelved at zero hour because the way the fares would work could breach the Equality Act, and a council report suggested it could "inadvertently enable discrimination".

That was because fares were based on the size of the taxi, rather than the number of passengers, which could have penalised those with wheelchairs or pushchairs who have no choice but to use the larger vehicles.

Cab drivers in their consultation comments had raised the matter as a problem, but the proposals still proceeded.

The council's licensing committee, which ousted committee chairman Mark Newman with a vote of no confidence over the handling of the matter to date, agreed to a fresh tariffs. The saga has been ongoing for more than a year, with the latest fares the third set to come to committee in that time. Cab fares have not increased in Babergh since 2016, with the raise designed to help drivers cover increased costs of running vehicles but not at the expense of putting travellers off. A 28-day public consultation will now be held, with responses returning to the committee on August 13, and a final decision being made by cabinet after that.

The proposals for one-four passengers now start at £3.20 for a day rate with an 18p increase every 176 yards, £4.80 for evenings with 27p every 176 yards and £6.40 for Christmas and New Year with 36p every 176 yards.

For five or more passengers the day rate starts at £4.80 with 27p every 176 yards, £6.40 for evenings with 36p every 176 yards and £8 with 45p every 176 yards on Christmas and New Year.

CORDIC NEWS

CORDIC CEO MESSAGE RE: RECENT SYSTEM OUTAGE

The following is an announcement from Cordic's CEO, Tom Peyerl, regarding the recent system outage which has affected some Cordic customers.

“ Cordic has always prided itself on providing the most reliable booking and despatch system on the market. Therefore, the events that have affected part of our cloud platform over the last couple of days have been taken extremely seriously and are a cause of great concern to us. Our technical support team have been working round the clock until all services have been fully restored.

Conversation and transparency are vital to our business; this is why we are disclosing this information to all customers, including those not affected by the event.

First and foremost, we would like to offer our sincere apologies to all of our affected customers and reassure you that we are taking a series of steps so that this type of outage does not happen ever again.

Over the last 12 months, Cordic has been working extensively on projects to improve our cloud platform's resilience, and we have been migrating customers to this new platform.

What happened?

From Monday, 21st June 1:45 pm to Tuesday, 22nd June 12:56 am, there was a sudden and unprecedented outage at one of our cloud computing suppliers, prompting us to start our disaster recovery process immediately. The outage affected customers on our legacy cloud platform and was caused by a network failure at a third party data centre, caused by a damaged BT fibre cable. Our legacy cloud platform used this data centre.

Cordic's Customer Support team was in continuous conversations with the customers affected throughout the event, and email updates were being continually sent.

Our new cloud platform, which we are currently rolling out, is built on Microsoft Azure and takes advantage of Microsoft's resilience and redundancy that has been built into the established Azure platform.

In response to the failure we experienced on Monday, we decided to migrate all affected customers onto the Azure platform from data backups, to restore basic despatch capabilities as quickly as possible. Our teams completed this process sooner than the original data centre came back online.

The Cordic logo is a large, bold, blue lowercase word "cordic." with a dot over the 'i'.

We then continued working around the clock to bring all other services back online. We will be fully discontinuing the legacy cloud platform so all cloud customers will benefit from the additional resilience and redundancy built into the infrastructure supporting our new cloud platform.

We will do better next time

We have learnt important lessons from this incident about our disaster recovery processes and capabilities. Infrastructure failures can happen at any time, and systems must be built on top of the infrastructure to ensure the effects of these failures are mitigated as quickly as possible. Therefore, whilst the event that caused the outage was outside of Cordic's control, the response to it was within our control, and we recognise we need to do better.

What happens now?

We will conduct a thorough review of the systems and processes we have in place, and we will produce a full report to be published on our website on the 30th of July 2021. This report will be emailed to all customers directly affected by the system outage. It will include a thorough review of our failover processes, recommended actions, and an implementation plan for which we will provide regular updates on our progress.

Cordic prides itself on being at the heart of our customers' businesses. Very little happens that does not go through our software. It is trusted and depended on to work at all times, no matter the circumstances. This week we have let you down, and we take full accountability for this. As such, we are offering a total discount on the main recurring bill for June as a goodwill gesture to all customers affected by this issue.

Once more, we are extremely grateful for your continued support and valued custom.

Yours Sincerely,

Tom Peyerl ”

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BURGLAR JAILED AFTER SUNDERLAND TAXI FIRM HELPED POLICE WHEN HE BOOKED A CAB TO FLEE HOUSE RAID

Station Taxis has been praised by police after the firm helped to trace a burglar who booked a cab to leave the scene of a crime.

Jason Taylor raided a Sunderland city centre home in the middle of the night and stole various items including an electric saw, a Blu-Ray player and a hover-board while the occupants were asleep upstairs.

The 32-year-old stashed the items in his rucksack, carrying the hover-board under his arm then phoned Station Taxis and booked a cab home.

Station Taxis worked with police to trace the burglar to his phone after CCTV was found. Taylor, from Sunderland, admitted burglary and was jailed for two-and-a-half years on 14 June. DC Harry Atanasov said: "This was a fantastic outcome as we worked with Station Taxis to irrefutably prove Taylor was responsible for the burglary."

Sergeant Maria Ord, part of the city centre neighbourhood team, added: "We have a fantastic relationship with our taxi firms and deliver regular vulnerability training for drivers on how

best to identify and safeguard vulnerable people in our night-time economy. "They play a hugely important role in helping us to protect the public - and also ensuring criminals are swiftly identified and located, as in this case."

Station Taxis director Jimmy Usher said: "Our drivers and staff are embedded into the fabric of our local community and have a unique perspective of what's happening in the city. They often come across difficult situations of concern, which is why the safeguarding training has been invaluable."

27 MONTHS' JAIL FOR LINCOLN CABBY WHO FELL ASLEEP AT WHEEL AND HIT PEDESTRIAN

A cabbie had been driving for 21 hours and fell asleep at the wheel when she hit a mum walking with her daughter. According to the Nottingham Post, Lisa Mason's taxi came off the road and ploughed into her from behind on the A614/Bawtry Road, near Bircotes, on August 23 last year.

Nottingham Crown Court heard that the mother and daughter encountered Mason, 42, from Willingham, Lincoln.

The daughter witnessed her mother "flying through the air", said Steven Taylor, prosecuting, having been hit by a vehicle.

"The defendant's vehicle didn't stop, having mounted the pavement and grass verge, it drove off after the collision."

Found at the scene was a magnetic car badge which displayed the taxi company logo, based in Lincoln, and "04" under the logo which corresponded with the taxi Mason was driving on the morning in question.

Mason worked for the company on a self-employed basis. She had a pick-up that morning. Messages on her phone showed her boss had asked if she would go to Doncaster Airport for a



customer that wanted to go back to Lincoln. Mason had replied "no, as I'll fall asleep at

the wheel. If I'd had some sleep, I would, but I haven't. I don't trust myself".

"He said 'do it for me and I will give you a day off tomorrow and Monday' and she replied 'okay' and she indicated to him she would sleep in a lay-by until 8.30am. The accident was around 6.30am.

"Whether she was on her way directly to the airport or heading to some place where she was planning to rest a while," said Mr Taylor. "She was travelling with a view to pick up passengers from the airport at Doncaster.

"In a prepared statement she had indicated that she had not felt tired. She thought she'd had a blackout. She now accepts she must have fallen asleep at the wheel. The messages suggest that would have been the case".

The victim of the accident suffered two broken legs. Surgical intervention involved a pin inserted in one limb and a plate in the other.

She was kept in hospital for three weeks and then discharged. Her victim impact statement revealed she had to use a wheelchair when she left hospital. She requires constant care from her partner and daughter. She is unable to walk more than 100 yards due to the pain.

She added: "Never did I imagine I would be reliant on a walking aid or a wheelchair at the age of 56."

Mason, represented by Chris Jeyes, said she was sorry for what she did and the affect on the victim. Had she been aware of what happened, she would have stopped and lent assistance. She handed in her taxi licence immediately and she no longer wishes to drive.

Judge Stuart Raafferty QC sentenced her to 27 months in prison after she pleaded guilty to causing serious injury by dangerous driving. She will serve half before she can be released on licence.

A driving ban was imposed for two years after she is released.

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UNEMPLOYED? WHY!

Most local authorities will tell you that if a licence holder applies for a renewal, but the licensing authority fails to determine his application before the licence expires, he must stop working.

We have been saying for many years that provided a licensee submits his renewal application prior to the expiry of the existing licence, then they may continue about their business as normal whilst they wait. In fact, the printing of the licence should take no more than 30 minutes.

So much so that David Lawrie challenged this several times at local levels successfully during his former role as chair of a local trade association, which was supported by David Wilson of A2Z licensing who advised local authorities that *“an application should not be rejected due to a missing tick box or document, further information can be requested.”*

FINALLY CHALLENGED IN THE CROWN COURT

This has now been successfully challenged at Nottingham Crown Court by the leading licensing QC in the UK, Gerald Gouriet of Francis Taylor Buildings in London, who coincidentally also represented us in our Judicial Review.

DISPARITY AMONG COUNCILS!

Until the mismatch of taxi licensing legislation is reformed, there is one law for London, another for the rest of England, another for Plymouth, and yet another for Scotland.

In Greater London: **Section 17(7) of The Transport Act 1985** says -

17(7) Where a person holds a licence which is in force when he applies for it to be renewed, the existing licence shall continue in force until the application for the new licence, or any appeal under this section in relation to that application, is disposed of.

Under the **LGMPA 1976**; There is no ‘*continue in force*’ provision; when a licence expires, it expires, even if the licensee has applied to renew it.

IS THERE A SOLUTION?

James Button offers an alternative to this forced unemployment of a licensee whilst waiting: issue a temporary licence.

But that solution relies on the willingness of the licensing authority to be helpful - which, as the Nottingham Crown Court case demonstrates, cannot always be guaranteed.

CARTLEDGE V GEDLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr. Cartledge had applied for the renewal of his driver's licence long before it expired. His application was not granted until 14 days after expiry. A council officer saw him standing by his cab in a public street the day before his driver's licence was renewed. There was no suggestion he had been plying for hire or taking passengers. The council prosecuted him under **section 46 Town Police Clauses Act 1847** for driving a hackney carriage without holding a licence. He was convicted in the Magistrates' Court and appealed to Nottingham Crown Court.

THE MATERIAL FACTS

Cartledge had been a licensee since 1987, holding a succession of licences, renewed without any issues arising. He was also a licensed PCV (Passenger Carrying Vehicle) driver, allowing him to drive any kind of bus or coach. His most recent licence was renewed on 22 August 2016, valid until 21 August 2019.

On 24 April, the council sent a reminder that his current licence was due for renewal on 22 August 2019.

On 10 June Mr. Cartledge made an appointment and attended the council offices on 19 June with a completed application form and various documentation to renew his licence. His application was not accepted, due to his not having current safeguarding refresher training.

The following day he arranged this refresher training for the morning of 16 August.

Cartledge then asked for an appointment to renew on the afternoon following his refresher training; but *“appointments are not held on Fridays”*. An appointment was made for Monday 19 August.

He completed the training on the morning of Friday, 16 August. **Confirmation was emailed by the course provider.**

He returned to the council on Monday 19 August. He resubmitted the completed application form and the required documentation, but still his licence was not renewed.

The licence expired on 21 August. He drove his hackney carriage on 4 September. His licence was renewed on 5 September. The council prosecuted him for driving a hackney carriage on 4 September without holding a hackney carriage driver's licence.

THE CROWN COURT DECISION

Mr. Cartledge's appeal against conviction was allowed: the Judge, sitting with two Magistrates, found that the application to renew had been refused: Mr. Cartledge had asked for a licence to take the place of his current licence on its expiry and had not been given what he had asked for.

THE REFUSAL TRIGGERED SECTION 77(2) OF LGMPA 1976 -

"If any requirement, refusal or other decision of a district council against which a right of appeal is conferred by this Act... makes it unlawful for any person to carry on a business which he was lawfully carrying on up to the time of the requirement, refusal or decision..."

... then, until the time for appealing has expired, or, when an appeal is lodged, until the appeal is disposed of or withdrawn or fails for want of prosecution... that person may carry on that business."

BUT WE HAVE NOT DECIDED YET, SO WE HAVEN'T REFUSED!

The council said that **section 77(2)** was irrelevant. Since the renewal application had not been refused: on the date the appellant's licence expired the council had yet to process his application.

Against that, it was submitted that to make sense of the appeal provisions in the **LGMPA 1976**, it is necessary to give the word "refusal" a less literal definition. Where an application to renew a licence is made prior to expiry, a failure to issue by the time it expires should be treated as a refusal in order to avoid absurd consequences which cannot have been the intention of Parliament.

WHAT DOES 'ABSURD CONSEQUENCES' MEAN?

It is a presumption of statutory interpretation that Parliament intends to act reasonably: see **IRC v Hinchy [1961] AC 748** at p 767 per Lord Reid. In **R v Central Valuation Officer [2003] UKHL 20** at 116, Lord Millet cited Hinchy and continued:

"The Courts will presume that Parliament did not intend a statute to have consequences which are objectionable or undesirable; or absurd; or unworkable or impracticable; or merely inconvenient; or anomalous or illogical; or futile or pointless."

The literalist construction of **section 77(2) LGMPA** as claimed in this appeal had a number of such consequences:

THIS CANNOT BE LOGICAL OR CORRECT!

A refused renewal application would be in a better position than a driver whose renewed licence is granted late; since the refused driver may continue to drive his vehicle for 'the

appeal period' even after his licence expires; yet a driver who has applied to renew his licence but has not been given a decision in time would have to stop driving until the council looked at his application.

Even a driver whose licence is revoked would be better off than a driver who is simply waiting for a licence to be printed.

IT GETS WORSE!

If the council's 5 September decision had been to refuse, he could have appealed the decision, but not have carried on pending the result of the appeal because – the council says – since 22 August he would not have been "*lawfully carrying on his business up to the time of their decision*".

It was argued that it would be irrational had the decision been to refuse, to have the right to carry on working pending appeal, but to deny him that right if his application is refused after the licence expires, being unemployed just because the council has not done their job yet, is unlikely to have been the intention of Parliament.

CONCLUSIONS

Whether this decision is restricted to this case or is more generic, will depend on similar cases coming before the courts.

There is nothing unusual about a licensee who applies to renew a licence before it expires working whilst waiting. The fact that **Section 17 of The Transport Act 1985** applies only to London would suggest Parliament is satisfied that outside London is already satisfactorily covered by right to appeal of the **LGMPA 1976**. It is unlikely that Parliament intended to create a North/South divide!

A street trader enjoys the same entitlement, regulated by the **LGMPA 1982**. **Schedule 4, paragraph 6(10)** which says: *"If a licence-holder applies for renewal of his licence before the date of its expiry, it shall remain valid."*

Even the operator of a sex shop or lap dancing club has that security. **Schedule 3, paragraph 11(1)** of the **LGMPA 1982** says: *"Where, before the date of expiry of a licence, an application has been made for its renewal, it shall be deemed to remain in force notwithstanding that the date has passed until the withdrawal of the application or its determination by the appropriate authority."*

It would be odd indeed if Parliament intended a driver to be forced into unemployment while waiting for a licensing authority to reach a decision on the renewal of his licence, whilst giving the licensee of a lap dancing club the benefits of his licence for as long as the authority takes to make up its mind.

ACCOUNT WORK AND VAT

Introduction

Further to last month's editorial, we have decided to focus further on a potential area of ambiguity within the private hire industry - account work.

For the purposes of this editorial, we shall be referring to two types of account work in light of how VAT applies to taxis and PHVs (**VAT Notice 700/25**) guidance as issued by HMRC, which at first glance seems rather straightforward, but has been known to be problematic in practice.

Why Does It Matter?

Differentiating between account work and tendered account work is important when determining how to treat VAT on any invoice sent from the operator to the account customer, as demonstrated below.

In both instances below, it is likely that the self-employed driver who completed the account booking will be paid the fare(s) of the journey provided, weeks before the operator collects the fare(s) from the account customer.

Account work meaning: a customer who pays for passenger transportation services provided by the self-employed driver, on agreed credit terms with the operator acting as the driver's agent.

Example: Account Work

John Smith ("JS") books passenger transportation services on a regular basis through 'Triple P Cars' ("TPC"), which dispatches these bookings to self-employed drivers, for the purposes of this example, Driver A.

TPC will then invoice JS once a month with all the fares due to Driver A for the completed bookings they have undertaken. It is likely that TPC would invoice JS on behalf of Driver A for the fare(s) owed to them without VAT. This would likely be the case as most self-employed drivers are not VAT registered, which in this example Driver A is not.

In the example above, it could be argued that TPC is invoicing JS on behalf of Driver A as their agent. Should this be the case, it would not be unreasonable for TPC to invoice without VAT.

It's important to note this can be possible for informal account work i.e., JS and TPC above, however, with tendered account work the relationship is more formal - see below.

Tendered Account Work Meaning: an account customer with whom the operator has entered into/tendered for a contract. Usually, a local authority or government department with a formal contract in place.

Example: Tendered Account Work

'Springfield Council' ("SC") enters into a contract for the

provision of passenger transportation services with TPC. This contract expressly refers to TPC as the 'principal' of the contract and imposes a number of terms and conditions on TPC and any of their self-employed drivers that undertake bookings for SC.

In this instance, there is a formal and rigid engagement between SC and TPC. Should Driver A undertake bookings from TPC for SC, it is much more difficult for TPC to justify they are invoicing SC on behalf of Driver A as their agent.

It is more likely, due to the contractual relationship mentioned above, that TPC is subcontracting bookings that are generated by virtue of the contract with SC to Driver A.

Should this be the case, it would not be unreasonable to expect TPC to invoice SC for the fares with VAT. We would suggest this is likely to be the case even if TPC does not make a service charge to SC for the provision of transportation services, due to the contractual agreement with SC.

Should a relationship such as SC and TPC be scrutinized by HMRC and TPC have failed to charge VAT on the fares TPC collected on behalf of the self-employed drivers, it is likely to result in a substantial VAT liability for TPC.

It is worth noting that if any operator is making a service charge to an account customer unbeknown to the driver, this will likely invalidate the suggestion that said Operator is acting as the driver's agent.

Conclusion

It is suggested that operators review their working practices and contractual relationship with self-employed drivers in light of both normal day to day activities and existing accounts that they undertake for formal and informal customers alike.

As per **VAT Notice 700/25** we would encourage our operators to discuss their current processes with us in order to properly establish best practice with us and how there might be a potential VAT liability on work previously undertaken.

It is worth remembering Samuel Goldwyn's words that a 'verbal contract isn't worth the paper it's written on.'

We would be pleased to hear from any operators with any queries in relation to improving their internal processes.

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MOBILITY MATTERS

HARROGATE COUNCIL LIFTS CAP ON WHEELCHAIR-ACCESSIBLE TAXI LICENCES

A limit on the number of wheelchair-accessible taxi licences in the Harrogate district has been removed, despite concerns from cabbies that it will have a “devastating” impact on trade.

According to the Stray Ferret, on Wednesday 9 June, Harrogate Borough Council’s licensing committee agreed to the move, which aims to support disabled people in the district. Campaigners say disabled people have been “cut off from society” and left suffering with “social isolation and frustration” because of a lack of travel options.

But some taxi drivers are against an unlimited number of licences and urged the committee to reconsider sticking to a previous plan to introduce 12 extra plates or risk “deregulating” the trade.

Speaking at the meeting, Richard Fieldman, who runs A1 Cars of Ripon and Harrogate, said: “When there are only ten applicants for the proposed 12 wheelchair accessible plates, why are you considering a proposal to deregulate the number of them?

“This would not only be devastating to the trade but also to

the council and its road traffic problems which will be worsened as there is just not enough rank space to accommodate any increase.”

Kevin O’Boyle, owner of Central Taxis and the longest holder of a taxi licence in the district, also said in a letter to councillors before the meeting that the move risked Harrogate “losing control” of how many taxis are allowed on the roads.

He said: “If you decide to deregulate, you, the council, will lose control and will be letting the genie out of the bottle. A genie I fear that once out, will be impossible to put back in again.”

In September last year, the licensing committee agreed to double the number of wheelchair-accessible taxi licences from 11 to 23 after a council-run study concluded that disabled people were suffering from a “great deal of anxiety” over worries that they could not get out and about in the district.

However, the authority says it has since run into difficulties over creating a “fair and lawful” system to distribute just the 12 additional licences, and it believes it could be left vulnerable to legal challenges from disappointed applicants.

Currently there are 22 wheelchair-accessible taxis operating in the district – a figure that has declined in recent years. This decline is something the council believes is partly down to the costs of purchasing a wheelchair-accessible taxi – and it is these costs that it says will “self-regulate” the number of vehicles on the roads.

Cllr Victoria Oldham, chair of the licensing committee, also told the meeting that the council was not expecting a “surge” in licence applications and that it had not been made aware of any rank space issues.

She said: “The purpose of these proposals is to overcome the lack of provision for customers who require wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

“We know from the work that officers have done that the current provision by the trade is insufficient and does not meet the need.

“Based upon the expression of interests received in January 2021, there is no indication at this stage that there will be a surge in applicants. What the proposals will facilitate is the market meeting the existing demand. Numbers will also be naturally limited by the cost in purchasing and upkeeping a wheelchair accessible vehicle.”

The licensing committee voted in favour of the proposals with two amendments to conditions:

- a review will be carried out in a year’s time rather than five
- a requirement that drivers must complete a disability training course within one month of being approved rather than six years.

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STAND AGAINST RACISM

RACIST ABUSE OF PRIVATE HIRE AND HACKNEY DRIVERS SO

PHTM is well aware of this nationwide issue and sadly regularly reports attacks on our drivers including a vast number of racist attacks and it is clear these attacks are on the increase and get more violent.

We strongly support and encourage drivers to install CCTV, if allowed, and we are persistently calling for more support from Government, councils and the police to address this problem.

David Lawrie, Director of National Private Hire and Taxi Association told **PHTM**: “I have felt passionate about this issue for over 20 years and it is the very reason why I set up Safe systems UK (www.safesystemsccctv.co.uk); and the reason why the **NHTA** is proud to be working with <https://tellmamauk.org/> to raise awareness of the problem and create an easy to access reporting network and also to work with the police and government to get this matter addressed.”

This specific report - called: ‘When No-one is Looking - the Racist Abuse of British Taxi Drivers’ - has been produced by academic and equality consultant Dr Karamat Iqbal. He said it was a video of a racist attack on Birmingham private hire driver, Abid Mustafa, that inspired his research.

Sadly Mr Mustafa, who won national praise for his dignified handling of a racist passenger, said he had been reduced to tears by some of the abuse he’s received and he has now had enough and is quitting the trade.



The Birmingham Mail reports that Dr Iqbal interviewed taxi and private hire drivers and conducted a questionnaire with 271 drivers across the country - 90% of them either black or Asian - as he tried to assess the level of abuse.

“ I am not ashamed to say some of these incidents have made me cry. It is very difficult and emotionally affects me. It is the same for many taxi drivers. ”

What he found was alarming

- Asian and black taxi and PH drivers are racially abused “every day”, some punched, scratched and threatened - yet hardly anything is done to protect or support them.
- Incidents are occurring “by the thousand”, with a third of drivers saying they experience abuse at least once a week.
- Nearly one in ten say abuse is “daily”.
- Only a handful of cases are ever reported because, say drivers, it has become ‘normalised’ and they think very little action will result anyway.

Driver experiences

Incidents ranged from casual use of the N-word and the P-word, being told to “go back home/to your own country”, and, for Asian drivers in particular, being called a “terrorist”.

Incidents increased after Brexit, his inquiries found.

But the level of reporting was ‘tiny’ in comparison - with drivers deciding it was too time-consuming and the outcomes limited.

“There is little or no support from the licensing authorities for the drivers who experience such abuse,” says the report.

“They tend then to suffer in silence, treating it as a normal part of their job.”

One driver reported: “The abuse is not just words. Some passengers try to attack us, they damage our cars. They may not pay the fare.”

Another driver explained why they don’t report the abuse, telling Iqbal: “Sir, unfortunately we have to take all these things within ourselves. Just saying to ourselves: ‘it’s OK; it’s part of life.’ It’s a part of our profession.”

Comments from drivers in the report include:

Yaseen Aslam, President of the App Drivers and Couriers Union said:

“Many drivers think racism is part of the job. That’s not right. The older generation put up with racism. Abuse is common...when it happens, you decide it’s not worth pursuing it with the police because you know they’re not going to do anything.”

STAND AGAINST RACISM

'NORMAL' THAT THEY SUFFER IN SILENCE SAYS REPORT



Sajid Mahmood, a Birmingham drivers' representative and a taxi driver for 23 years, said:

"Taxi drivers are seen as low. There is a lack of recognition of us being human so we lack human rights. Everyone looks down on us."

*"Added to that is the fact that a large number of us are minority backgrounds. So we get treated as low. When we are called P*** or face institutional racism, that is obviously to do with our ethnic minority status."*

"They don't mince words; whatever comes to their mind they use it, including racist words."

He said often drivers don't report incidents because of the lengthy time involved in filling in forms, making statements, and always thinking the perpetrators won't likely be traced anyway.

"And the non reporting means the perpetrators get away with their undesirable behaviour."

Dr Iqbal says the stage has been set for racism to flourish against taxi and private hire drivers, born out of their perceived 'low status' and because they are isolated.

In Birmingham, the vast majority of drivers are Asian (86%) with the majority being Pakistani, says the report.

Report Recommendations

The reports makes a string of recommendations, including:

- Better support for drivers from councils, taxi and private hire firms and the police
- Licensing authorities should take far more seriously the racist abuse of taxi and private hire drivers and support the drivers to take the appropriate action against the perpetrators
- Licensing authorities should provide an easy way for drivers to report such incidents
- Drivers should be assigned a Link Officer within the local authority to make reporting easier and provide support

The regularity of the abuse means that some drivers suffer the equivalent of 'battle fatigue', with psychological and physical symptoms.

Raja Amin, from taxi drivers' union the RMT, said that drivers were 'vulnerable' and that often frustrated customers who were angry about something else in their lives, or after drinking, would take it out on the drivers.

- Create a national racial abuse offender register, with perpetrators banned from using private hire or taxi services anywhere
- Passengers who perpetuate racism should be required to attend a racism awareness course
- All taxis and private hire vehicles should be equipped with CCTV, and should be financially supported by their local authorities.
- Passengers should be warned that the evidence gathered through the CCTV in suspected abuse cases will be used against them in the courts.

A West Midlands police spokesperson urged anyone who experienced a hate incident or crime to always report it to officers.

The spokesperson said:

"We understand that experiencing a hate crime is extremely distressing and upsetting. We are proud to police our diverse communities and will take action against those who commit a hate crime."

"If it is not reported to us, we can't investigate, so we encourage anyone who experiences hate crime to tell us."

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TALE OF A TERROR VICTIM

TALE OF WELSH DRIVER'S VICIOUS ATTACK BY A PASSENGER

PHTM was contacted by Dr Steve Williams in relation to a savage attack on him by a passenger last Christmas. Not only did he have to contend with the physical effects of the brutish beating but sadly, like so many victims of violence in our trade, he has had to deal with a total lack of interest, empathy and meaningful action by the police regarding his case. Furthermore, when he tried to highlight his plight within local newspapers, they deemed his story not worthy of a single column inch. Dr Williams sets out the circumstances and repercussions of the assault. It makes for grim reading.

BACKGROUND

“ I’m not actually a taxi driver specifically, I usually run a business selling things online and on occasion work in academia (hence the Dr Williams). I moved to Ammanford in Wales July 2018 and decided to stay here. As I didn’t really know anyone, I decided to deliver takeaway food for a bit of extra income and once I knew where I was going (so to speak) a local firm asked if I’d consider taxi driving. I’d done the job before in the old days and knew more or less what to expect and I figured I’d enjoy doing it.

Although I work for Lyn Davies of Saron Taxis (Saron is an area of Ammanford) I’m not an employee as such, more like a contractor, along with being a director of two companies in the family line of business. I’ve been helping out Saron Taxis through the lockdown as three drivers have left the trade and sadly two have also died within the last year both from cancer. So the amount of drivers naturally “adjusted” to the amount of work available. Lyn employs a number of drivers full-time doing the day shifts, leaving evenings and weekends to cover but as it wasn’t that busy until last October onwards Lyn and his wife Debbie covered most of the work.

A CHRISTMAS NIGHTMARE

Once it got busier and Lyn couldn’t be in two places at once he rang me and asked if I could pick some people up at 7.15pm from the local Co-Op which is in front of a call centre company. The boss of the company had made the booking on behalf of three of his employees. It turned out the call centre staff had been at a Christmas party (during lockdown *cough*) and each had been given a bottle of vodka to take home. So at 7.15pm a youngish lady, an older lady and the perpetrator of the assault a man maybe late 20s early 30s, ask to go to Llanelli via Llangennech, so a decent enough run. I head for Llangennech and they’re all chatting and drinking from the bottles; the younger lady in the front, the guy behind



me, the older lady behind the younger lady. When we get to Llangennech they “faff about” taking ages for the older lady to get out of the car and finally we move off and they mention turning right after the church so I head that way.

Several times I asked where they wanted to go and eventually he muttered something about “past the campsite”. Seeing the sign for a campsite I head that way; as we’re going along I keep asking “where to?” and again no coherent answer until he says something which sounded like an address. So I stop to put it in my phone (Google Maps) and he gets out of the car shouting: “I’m not your fucking Sat Nav, you’re trying to rip me off you bastard,” and opens the driver door and starts punching me in the face. The younger lady had got in the back at Llangennech and after he’d hit me maybe nine or ten times she got out of the car shouting: “No stop” and words to that effect, whilst getting in his way.

He was thrashing about and she got bruised herself. I had blood pouring down my face and I was thinking, “if I don’t leave he’s going to kill me”, so I drove away leaving the pair of them in the middle of the road. I wasn’t 100% sure what I was doing but I managed to get to Ammanford Police station.

POLICEMEN PLOD

At the police station I called my stepson and Lyn about the incident. My stepson came and Lyn turned up with Debbie to take the car back to his place. It was at this point both my stepson and Lyn took photos (clearly the police couldn’t be bothered). I had pressed the buzzer outside the station door but nobody showed any concern and came out to see to me although they did tell Lyn to call an ambulance, which he did. The 999 call said an ambulance would be at least two hours - ironic as the ambulance station is less than a mile from the police station. In the end he “cancelled” the call and took me himself to Carmarthen Gwangwili A&E. Lyn stayed at A&E for the three hours or so I was there and took me back as well for which I am immensely grateful to him.

TALE OF A TERROR VICTIM

AND HIS SUBSEQUENT TREATMENT BY THE POLICE AND MEDIA

After showering, the other pictures were taken which are on my site link: <https://diabetic.ninja/lланelli/>. The “bloody” pictures are pre-hospital, “bruised” pictures are afterwards.

SO MUCH MORE THAN BEING PUMMELLED IN THE FACE

In the attack my glasses and my right hearing aid were both broken. When I went to the opticians for new glasses they detected there may be something in my eye between my eyeball and the socket and I was referred again to Gwangwili Hospital and they referred me to Bristol Eye Hospital the next morning. Lyn took me at 6am for a very early appointment. A piece of debris was removed from my eye (possibly glass, they didn't clarify) and they concluded that despite the haemorrhaging of my left eyeball my retina was OK and not detached and my sight would improve.

I now have a scar across my left eyelid where I was stitched in A&E and just one floater remains which won't go away. My sight isn't 100% in my left eye but it is certainly good enough maybe 99% or so. I also later had an ear infection which turned out to be the result of a small piece of my hearing aid which had got stuck in my ear and came out with the infection. It all could have been much worse.

Not long before this event I had been put on anti-depressant medication for an unrelated issue and I approached the victim support service (who were useless and doing nothing because of “COVID”) so I approached my GP who just upped my anti depressants. I was referred to counselling but they called me once and never rang again (COVID was the excuse again) and to be honest I feel like nobody gives a s*&^. The police have been slow, slow, incompetent, slow and mostly useless. They did eventually arrest my attacker (bear in mind we know the company he works for and there's little doubt that he “did it”) and in his statement he claimed it was self-defence and showed the police a tiny little scratch on his nose as “evidence” of this, sigh.

STILL NO FURTHER ON - BUT I'VE CARRIED ON

The attack happened on 22nd of December and as I write this it is now the 10th of June. The police have apparently “processed” it and sent it to the CPS, but getting any information out of them is nigh on impossible. Meanwhile the attacker is still employed by the company, even though they know what he did and I've seen him around town (I've wondered about running him over!! But frankly I'd rather he got prison). I even approached my local MP (I know him personally) through the formal channels and he contacted the police chief and got a standard: “We're so busy, Covid, it takes time bla bla”, reply from them.



I went back to taxi driving for two reasons. Firstly, the odds on it happening are quite long and I figure the odds on it happening a second time are even longer. Secondly, if I quit the perpetrator has sort of “won” in a way hasn't he? Physically I guess I'm fine but I've had serious bouts of depression, nightmares most nights since the

attack and sleeping problems. I'm not as comfortable about late night driving now but I still do it. Thankfully Lyn gets me doing the long runs, airports and the like (one of the drivers who sadly died used to do them), being English I guess he also knows I'm pretty knowledgeable around England's routes as I've also done courier work in the past etc. I do also enjoy doing it.

MEDIA MADNESS

I contacted the local press, the South Wales Guardian and Wales Online a number of times. The silence has been deafening. I've also contacted major newspapers after I saw they were happy to feature a story about a girl in a local hit and run as a “major” article. Yet again silence. It all adds to the general feeling that nobody gives a s*&^. The South Wales Guardian is particularly bad, stories about a man getting three points for speeding or a cat being rescued from a tree seems to more their sort of thing it seems.

The reason I want this “all over the place” is because I want the perpetrator and his employer to get hit hard with bad press. Not only should he not be assaulting people, the company, which has a bad reputation, shouldn't be having staff parties during lockdown. I would also emphasise that the employer's attitude has been disgraceful - why wasn't the perpetrator disciplined or fired - it's beyond me! ”

On deadline for this issue, Dr Williams contacted PHTM to say that the police finally got in touch to inform him that the perpetrator has been formally charged with ABH and criminal damage and that the CPS are taking the matter to court.

Let's hope he is finally suitably punished!!

PHTM thanks Dr Williams for sharing this deeply troubling experience and wishes you all the best moving forward.



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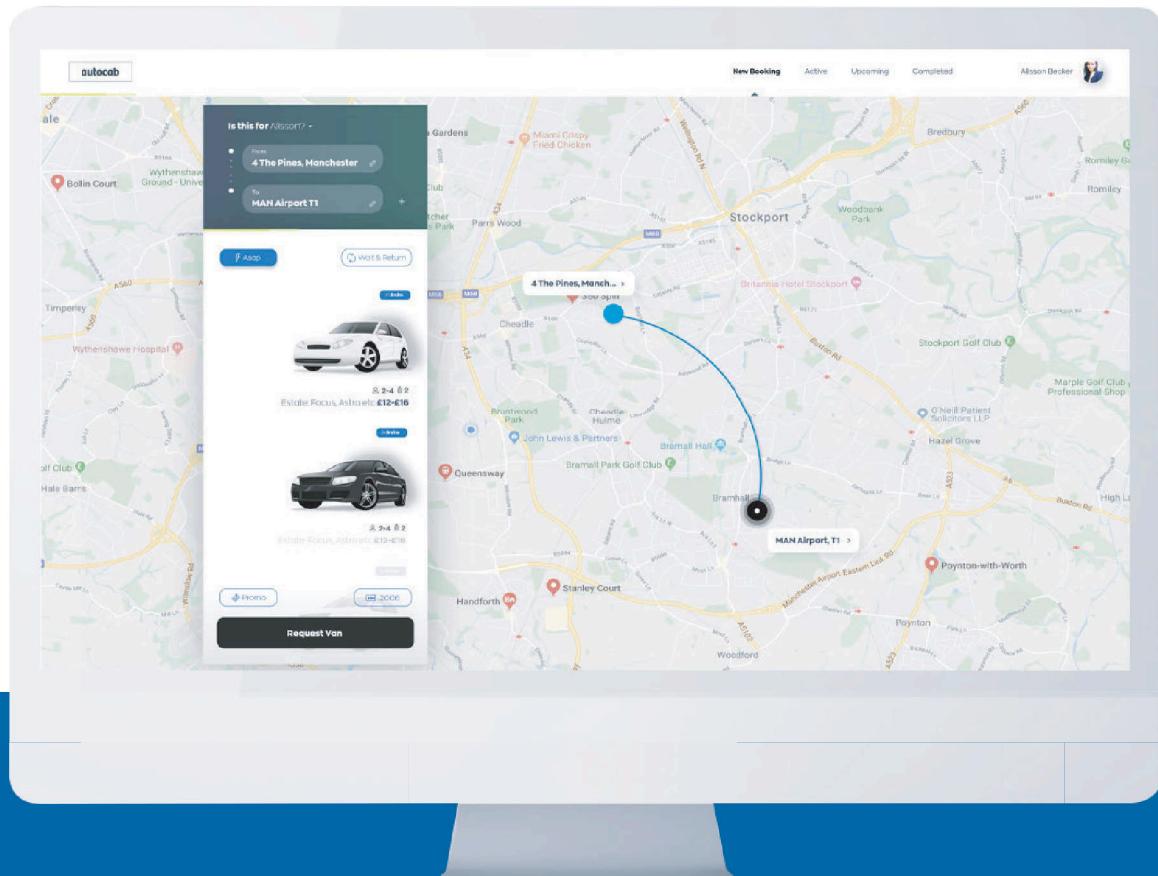
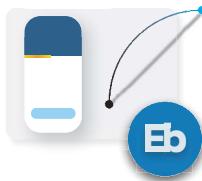


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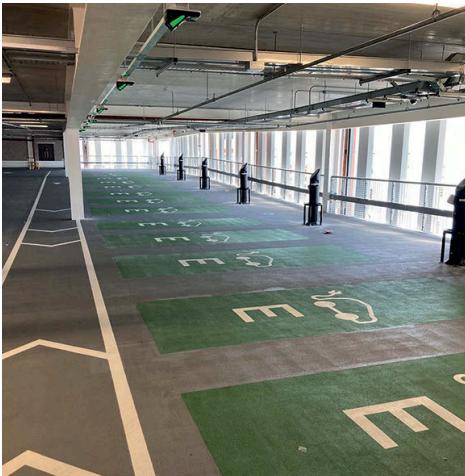
GREEN MEANS GO

NOTTINGHAM CAR PARK SET TO BE AN ELECTRIC RECORD BREAKER

With the long-awaited reopening of Broad Marsh Car Park and Bus Station on course for the autumn, Nottingham City Council have revealed the new building will host the largest number of electric vehicle charge points in one location in the whole of the UK.

Work to install the 81 charge points, operated by BP Pulse, is nearing completion, along with a host of other smart technology that will make customer journeys easier and reduce the site's carbon footprint.

Cllr Sally Longford, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Energy and Environment, said: "As a council we've been



at the forefront of embracing new EV technology, including supporting the transition to cleaner taxis, electric and bio-gas buses and trams.

"We recognise there are times when a car is the most convenient travel option. That's why we've encouraged the switch to electric vehicles, including developing a regional network of more than 400 charge points in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire."

Measures at the car park will include a vehicle management system consisting of electronic signs and lights showing available parking spaces, reducing vehicle movements and congestion

BRADFORD COUNCIL LAUNCHES £10M CLEAN AIR TAXI PROGRAMME FUND

Bradford City Council has made grants available to help Bradford meet Clean Air Zone standards.

Owners of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles in the Bradford district are being encouraged to apply for grants to help make sure that their vehicles meet the new Clean Air Zone (CAZ) standards.

Bradford Council has been directed by the Government to reduce concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) through the introduction of a CAZ, due to start in the district next year.

In response, Bradford Council successfully bid for just over £10m worth of Government grants to help taxi and private hire vehicle owners to switch to cleaner vehicles, including electric hybrid and pure electric vehicles.

The Bradford Clean Air Taxi Programme (CAT) has the highest level of grants available for PHVs out of any of the proposed CAZs in the country and will help tackle air pollution, and improve the health of residents in the district.



Private hire vehicles could get grants of up to £3,200, wheelchair accessible vehicles, including hackneys, can get grants of up to £5,000.

The CAT Programme will distribute almost 3,000 grants which can go towards upgrading vehicles to cleaner versions. A quarter of the grants are for taxis looking to switch to electric vehicles with grants available to help cover their running costs for the next two years.

Councillor Sarah Ferriby, Bradford Council's portfolio holder for Healthy People and Places, said: "We have been working with drivers and companies in the district to make sure we can deliver the best package of measures for this important service in our district.

"These grants will give them choice in how they best prepare for the Clean Air Zone - whether that is switching to a second hand hybrid or getting a newer electric vehicle.

"By making these changes, not only will they be making their working environment cleaner and healthier, but they will also be helping to improve the health of everyone in the district.

"With one in five children having a breathing difficulty in Bradford, it is essential they apply for these grants as soon as they can."

The grant scheme is now open and can be accessed here:

<https://bit.ly/3xcSGp4>

More information can be found here:
<https://bit.ly/369JndP>

GREEN MEANS GO

GREATER MANCHESTER TO PRESS ON WITH UK'S LARGEST CAZ AFTER SECURING GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Greater Manchester has confirmed that it will push ahead with a Clean Air Zone that would see drivers of heavily-polluting vehicles hit with daily charges. The Manchester Evening News reports that heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches would need to pay £60 a day to drive within the zone, with vans paying £10 and taxi and PHVs paying £7.50. Failure to pay the charge will also result in a £120 fine plus the daily charge. Private vehicles will not fall within the CAZ, which will cover all 493 square miles of Greater Manchester, making it the largest in the UK.

The zone was supposed to come into effect this year but was delayed due to the pandemic and a standoff between councils and the government over funding. But Mr Burnham confirmed that the combined authority has

received the £150m it had asked for to help businesses and individuals with the transition.

Most of the funding - £120m - will help people pay for new cleaner vehicles or upgrade their old ones, while the rest will pay towards infrastructure such as cameras to monitor the roads.

The government has not yet committed to a hardship fund for those who will be most affected by the zone, but it is understood that they are interested in the idea in principle.

Many businesses and individuals - particularly in the taxi and private hire trade - had raised concerns about the financial impact of switching to cleaner vehicles after the pandemic.

Mr Burnham said: "We recognise it's a difficult time for businesses but we have been listening carefully during

consultation, and we've got a significantly improved financial package as a result of negotiations."

For the first 12 months of the scheme **ONLY** buses and HGVs will need to pay the daily charge.

ALL other vehicles will not be affected until May 2023.

Greater Manchester has secured £21.4m from government for a Clean Taxi Fund to support hackney carriages and PHVs (licensed with the ten Greater Manchester local authorities) to be upgraded to meet CAZ emissions standards. This would provide funding towards the retrofit or replacement of non-compliant vehicles or towards running costs when the compliant vehicle has also been eligible for a Government plug-in grant. For more information visit: gov.uk/plug-in-car-van-grants.

GM-LICENSED HACKNEY CARRIAGES: PROPOSED FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Replacement grants

- Up to £10,000 towards replacement with a zero-emission-capable (ZEC) wheelchair-accessible vehicle
- or
- Up to £5,000 towards replacement with a compliant wheelchair-accessible vehicle
- or
- Up to £6,000 towards replacement with a ZEC non-wheelchair-accessible vehicle
- or
- Up to £3,000 towards replacement with a compliant non-wheelchair-accessible vehicle

Retrofit grant

- Up to £5,000 to retrofit (through an LPG conversion) existing vehicle so it is compliant

In addition to grants, eligible owners would also have access to vehicle finance, offering a 0% or low-cost loan up to £10,000.

It is proposed that there is to be a limit of five vehicles per applicant for grant funding and finance, with funding and finance initially open to single owner/drivers only.

GM-LICENSED PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES: PROPOSED FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Replacement grants

- Up to £10,000 towards replacement with a zero-emission-capable (ZEC) wheelchair-accessible vehicle
- or
- Up to £5,000 towards replacement with a compliant wheelchair-accessible vehicle
- or
- Up to £6,000 towards replacement with a ZEC non-wheelchair-accessible vehicle
- or
- Up to £3,000 towards replacement with a compliant non-wheelchair-accessible vehicle
- or
- Up to £5,000 towards replacement with a compliant minibus

Retrofit grant

- Up to £5,000 to retrofit existing vehicle so it is compliant

In addition to grants, eligible owners would also have access to vehicle finance, offering a 0% or low-cost loan up to £10,000.

For proposed vehicle limits etc. - see hackneys opposite.

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STILL THE BEST!

David Lawrie, Director **NPHTA**
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We have all seen articles in the press and on the news entitled “*taxi driver accused of*”- “*taxi driver convicted of*” and yet when we read the article or watch the news item, they are in fact referring to a private hire driver!

This is so annoying for all hackney carriage drivers, since it feeds into the public perception of “*all taxi drivers*”, when the truth is, the article is not about a taxi driver at all!

LATEST OFFENDER - ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGE POINTS

Leeds City Council has installed EV charging points for “*taxis only*”, as seen here:

This prompted a private hire driver from Leeds, (Mr X) to write to the council to enquire why PHVs were not allowed to use these various EV charging points since the signage installed clearly states “*taxis only*”.



The response from the council was that “*taxis only*”, covers both taxis and PHVs and that the bays had been in operation for well over a year with no other complaints received about the wording. It explained it had used the word “*taxis*” because it is clear and widely understood and enables people to know who can and cannot use the reserved bays”.

*With the greatest of respect to the council, the term is indeed clear and widely understood to exclude PHVs. It is far more likely that the reason there have been no other complaints, is more related to the fact that maybe not many PHVs have tried to migrate to electric vehicles, and as such, have not tried to park in the “*taxis only*” bays.*

Mr X also questioned the council on the basis that if “*taxis*” included PHVs for the purposes of using charging point bays then this should also apply to PHVs being allowed to use bus lanes designated for the use of “*taxis*”. However, the council explained that this was an unrelated highway matter and that the charge points are located in off street locations.

*Terribly sorry, but unless all the acts to which each sign relates is included at each charging point, bus lane, and taxi rank, then the public and the drivers, can only rely on the dictionary, the meaning of the word “*taxis*” does not change according to where or how it is used, in fact if you would care to check with your own licensing conditions, and the LGPMA 1976, you will indeed see that they are two separate regimes.*

The council explained that Mr X as a PH driver can use the “*taxis only*” charge points bays: “*..and no parking place order will penalise a PHV for using a taxi bay*”.

*As reassuring as that may be, what about the obvious arguments that will follow between actual taxi drivers and those attempting to pull on to bays that are clearly marked “*taxis only*?” What about the simple fact, as in Mr X’s case, that all PH drivers will read the signage, and know this means they may NOT use those charging points?*

Dissatisfied with the council’s response, Mr X complained to the Ombudsman. A decision was made as follows: “*I see no evidence to suggest there has been fault by the council in its handling of this matter. Moreover, Mr X has not been caused injustice sufficient to warrant an investigation. We will not therefore investigate this complaint.*”

WAIT WHAT?

This would therefore suggest it is perfectly legal for a PHV to sit on a taxi rank, since the use of the word “*taxis only*” is generic and means both. It would mean PHVs can legally use bus lanes which also state “*taxis only*”. It would also suggest that PHVs do not need to receive work from an operator. And also that all hackney carriage legislation be applied to PHVs: being flagged down and taking their own bookings, since the term “*taxis*” is generic and means both....right?

WRONG!

The legislation is not only perfectly clear, but also quite prescriptive. More than that, PHVs, drivers and operators are not even mentioned in the **Town Police Clauses Act 1874**, since they did not exist at that point. They are covered by the **Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976**, so there is absolutely nothing generic about the use of the word “*taxis*”.

The word “*taxis*” or “*cab*” or even “*for hire*” may not appear within the name or branding of any PHV or company! This is enshrined into legislation and licensing conditions throughout the UK. The **NPHTA** has even had to clarify this restriction to potential PH operators as the reason why their application for an operator’s licence had been rejected and then help them rebrand and reapply. PHVs have been suspended for this very offence simply due to lack of awareness.

SO, WHAT IS A TAXI?

The legal definition of a taxi is: “*a hackney carriage vehicle licensed to carry passengers for hire and reward.*”

Taxis can:

- sit on or “*ply for hire*” at a “*taxis*” rank • be pre booked
- be “*hailed*” in the street • actively seek its own work
- accept bookings directly without an operator’s licence

Now there are many who believe that a taxi or “*hackney carriage*” must also be a purpose-built vehicle such as a London-style “*black cab*” or specially converted minibuses with conference seating and a screen separating the passengers from the driver, and with no front passenger seat. In fact in some local authorities, that is indeed a licensing condition whereby they will not license a saloon car for hackney carriage use. But this is far from being a national condition, nor is it written into any legislation anywhere. The type of vehicle which is acceptable as a hackney carriage is a matter for each local authority to decide.

OK, SO WHAT IS NOT A TAXI?

A vehicle licensed as a PHV is a PHV only, not a taxi or hackney carriage. They cannot accept their own bookings directly (except in Scotland where they can accept their own bookings until they are operating three or more vehicles).

All bookings must be processed by a licensed PH operator (booking office for Scotland) and then passed onto the PHV driver during the process of “operating” those vehicles and the private hire booking.

Private hire vehicles cannot:

- sit on a taxi rank and ply for hire
- patrol the areas looking for potential passengers
- be flagged down in the street
- appear to be available for immediate hire
- appear to be the same as a hackney carriage or taxi

WHICH CAME FIRST?

In essence, the whole private hire regime is a spin off from the taxi industry, the private hire sector simply did not exist at all until the invention and popularity of the telephone. Why? Because there was no way for any passenger to “pre book” or “ring” a taxi, all passengers had to rely on a taxi rank, or a vehicle approaching that they could “hail” or flag down. This is why it has always been so important that taxi ranks are clearly visible and located near to popular areas such as bus or train stations, shopping areas or pubs and restaurants.

WHY CAN PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS AND VEHICLES NOT WORK THE SAME WAY?

This one is simple to answer, all drivers decide the way in which they want to work when choosing which licence to apply for. If the decision is to have a saloon vehicle, without a roof light, and focus on pre-booked jobs without having to take bookings themselves, then they can choose to have the limited ability of being a private hire driver. If the decision is to be able to be flagged down, take your own bookings and build your own business, or to make yourself available for immediate hire, then you select the hackney carriage licence.

This means in reality, that the decision of how you wish to work is made by you at the time of applying for a licence.

IS THE USE OF “TAXI ONLY” SIGNAGE REALLY AN ISSUE?

Absolutely on many levels! It is factually and lawfully incorrect. But the implications have far more drastic consequences.

1. If the sign states “taxi only”, then a PHV may NOT use those chargers, nor may it even stop on that bay, the signage is perfectly clear.
2. If a PHV is parked on a marked taxi bay, then an offence is committed.
3. Since the bay states “taxi only” then the taxi sector would be within their rights to refuse to allow PHVs on that bay.
4. Since the provision is not made for PHVs, there is a reduced number of available charging points for PHVs, which has an impact on the move towards EVs.
5. If indeed the term “taxi only” means PHVs are allowed, then the flood gates could open for PHVs to park on taxi ranks, which use the same term of “taxi only”.
6. The use of bus lanes where the signage is clear: “bus, cycles and taxi only”, would then include PHVs.
7. If the above point is valid, then every single bus lane ticket ever issued to a PHV must be refunded with immediate effect, since the signage being “colloquial” would suggest that none of those tickets should ever have been issued.
8. There will be heated “discussions” between taxi drivers and PHV drivers when PHV drivers use “taxi only” bays.

WHAT MUST HAPPEN! DECISION’S DECISIONS

- a) The extra three words “AND PRIVATE HIRE” need to be added to all signage on all charging points immediately together with a formal apology issued to both the hackney carriage and private hire sectors within the region for the confusion caused by the serious error. OR....
- b) All PHVs issued with bus lane penalty notices must be refunded to the total value of any and all such penalty charges, since the use of the word “taxi” meant that they were allowed to be there, rendering the tickets invalid.
- c) National legislation including the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976 must be changed to reflect local council opinion on the meaning of the word “taxi”.

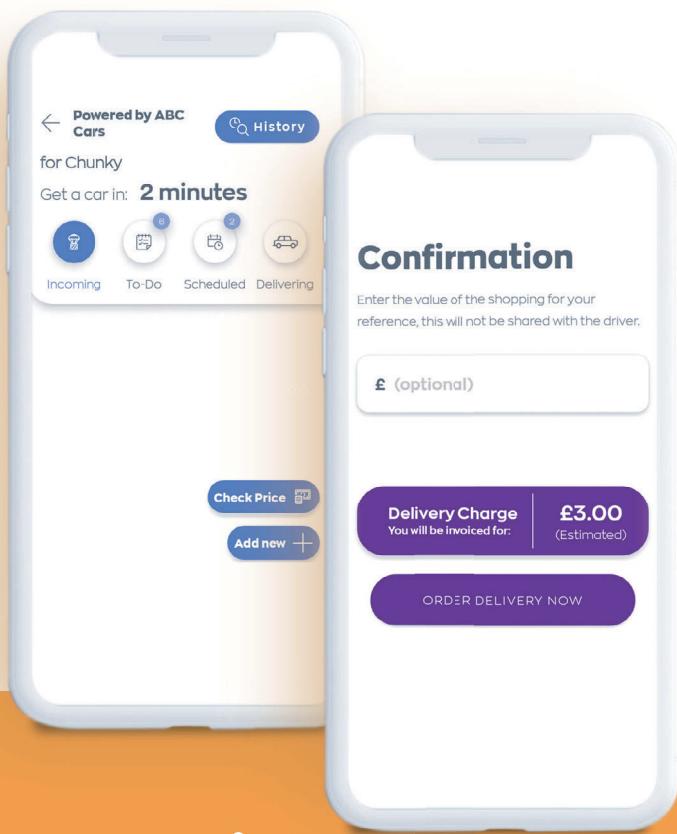
A TAXI IS A HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE!

A PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE IS NOT A TAXI!

The range of issues we encounter and are asked to get involved with never ends. If you have any such issues or problems then get in touch.

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UNSUNG HEROES

STRANGER RESCUES PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER FROM BURNING CAR IN LONDON



The daughter of a cab driver who was helped from a burning car has thanked a stranger for saving her father's life. BBC News reports that Abdul Awal, 58, was driving his Mercedes on Bellegrave Road in Welling, south east London, when a man shopping nearby spotted flames and called the fire brigade.

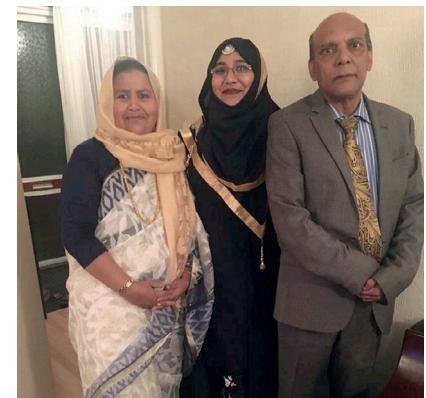
Mr Awal, who has hearing issues, was initially reluctant to leave the car as he thought the stranger wanted a fight.

"This is how humanity should aim to be," daughter Iffath Nowrin said. "If more people were like this, the world would be a better place."

Mr Awal had been returning from a petrol station early on the afternoon of Wednesday 2 June, when his car started to overheat.

The man who helped, and who wishes to remain anonymous, was at a Nisa Local when he alerted the authorities to a fire under the bonnet of a car.

Mr Awal continued driving the vehicle, which by now was on fire, so the stranger sprinted towards Mr Awal's minicab, repeatedly knocked on his window and encouraged him to pull



Iffath Nowrin and her parents

over and leave the car somewhere safe. Eventually, the stranger grabbed Mr Awal's arm to help move him away from the vehicle towards safety, before the fire brigade arrived to extinguish the fire.

"You have to physically touch him to get his attention," Mrs Nowrin told the BBC. "The whole world could be up in flames and he'd continue what he's doing. The fact he went over and spoke to my dad who was so unresponsive - people are saying, 'You're so lucky this stranger came over to help you.'

"If I saw fire, I wouldn't go towards it. I wish more people were like him - everybody else there was playing football or filming on their phones, compared to one guy who genuinely actually concerned about my dad's health."

"I am so, so grateful that there are people like this that exist."

The family are practising Muslims and believe the stranger may have been sent down by God as an angel to save Mr Awal, who ended up covered in soot. "It's an absolute miracle he was untouched," Ms Nowrin added. "It's so unbelievable as it was really hot and smoky."

"He's literally a lifesaver - a random guy who came out for a random person and saved him. I am so, so grateful."



The story also received positive comments on our Facebook page with comments including:

- "Great for the owner to realise that the drivers have stuck with the firm through thick and thin."
- "Refreshing to hear someone say nice things about others. Well done fella."
- "Masha Allah he is a great person and his friend and partner Mr Riaz both have wonderful personality."

UNSUNG HEROES

HORRIFIED CABBIE REPORTED HULL MUM WHO THROTTLED AND HEADBUTTED DAUGHTER 7, IN HIS CAB

A drunken mother throttled and headbutted her seven-year-old daughter in a taxi as the shocked driver watched in horror.

The Hull Daily Mail reports that the woman, who cannot be named to protect her children's identity, was so drunk she insisted the driver had not dropped her off at home despite her daughters telling her they were at the right address.

The mum appeared at Hull Crown Court after previously admitting two counts of child cruelty and one of possessing cannabis.

Charlotte Baines, prosecuting, told the court the woman and two daughters had been at a relative's home comforting her following a recent bereavement. She and her two daughters then got a taxi to their home in

Bransholme at around 9pm.

Ms Baines said: "The defendant appeared to be struggling with her younger daughter. She then strangled and headbutted her which left a red mark on the girl's face.

"The taxi driver decided to call the police after witnessing what happened. But as he rang them the girls told him not to call the police as they didn't want their mum to go to jail.

"Both girls were very upset and crying loudly."

Camera footage from the taxi was shown in court which captured the argument taking place between the mum and her daughters.

When police arrived the woman's behaviour was erratic, being aggressive one minute and then expressing concern for the welfare of her daughters.

Officers searched the woman and found a small amount of cannabis.

She was arrested and when interviewed the next morning, the woman admitted she had drunk vodka for much of the day and didn't normally drink more than a couple of beers each week. She also admitted taking cannabis fairly regularly.

Dale Brook, representing the woman, told the court the incident was completely out of character.

He said: "On the one hand her behaviour that night was appalling but ordinarily she is a loving and capable mother.

"She ended up being without her daughters for several months after this happened and her daughters were split up, staying with different family members. But she has since satisfied social services she is a good mother and they are now back together.

"She admits her behaviour was appalling and belligerent and she is full of remorse."

Recorder Taryn Turner said: "The taxi driver should be applauded for his patience that night during what was an ugly incident.

"You attacked one daughter while the other was having to try and deal with a mother who was out of control while watching her little sister being assaulted. "I accept you are embarrassed and ashamed of what you did and your remorse is genuine.

"You have no relevant previous convictions, you are remorseful and you are the primary carer for your children."

Recorder Turner decided not to send the woman straight to prison, sentencing her to 12 months for the first count of child cruelty, suspended for two years, and eight months for the second child cruelty offence, also suspended for two years.

The sentences will run concurrently. There was no separate penalty for the cannabis possession.

MBE FOR CAMBRIDGE TAXI BOSS WHO DROVE NHS STAFF FOR FREE

Taxi firm boss, Rowhi Nemer, who drove NHS staff to and from work for free, has been awarded an MBE.

BBC News reports that Mr Nemer, 63, offered the services of his Cambridge-based taxi company to thousands of frontline staff and has been recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to NHS workers and the community.

The owner of CamCab decided to offer free lifts for NHS and air ambulance staff at the beginning of the first lockdown in March 2020.

Hundreds of people have used the service, and it has expanded to include free delivery of food packages as well as medication to those unable to go out.

Mr Nemer re-mortgaged his property in order to keep his staff working and paid. Recognised for his community support,



he said: "To be honest, I've been doing this sort of charity work for 30 years - it's how I was brought up.

"I can't feel great inside unless I do something good on the outside."

The MBE, he said, was "very special for me, my family and everyone I work with."

PROTEST PLIGHT

GLASGOW TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE CAR DRIVERS PROTEST OVER SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Taxi and private hire car drivers gathered in Glasgow on 9 June to challenge the second round of support grants offered by the Scottish Government to the industry.

Members of the App Drivers and Couriers Union (ADCU) and the All Glasgow Hackney Union joined the go-slow convoy along Paisley Road. The protest follows the previous week's announcement that grants of £1,500 would be awarded to drivers and up to £10,000 for operators, but many operators are receiving significantly less than this.

Eddie Grice, chairman of the Glasgow



Branch of ADCU, said: "Over 100 drivers took part in the protest and the message being sent to the council and government was crystal clear.

"Drivers are disappointed with the level of support being offered and are demanding that more be done to help. "It's not just about grant money though, we are demanding the council extend the lifespan of PH cars from seven to at least ten years and that the loss on our licence lifespans be mitigated.

"Today, the ADCU's private hire drivers turned out in solidarity with Glasgow hackney drivers. This was a small protest and we won't hesitate to go bigger. We will not back down until our demands have been met and the survival of our trade has been ensured."

VICTORY FOR 100 PETERBOROUGH TAXI DRIVERS WHO PROTESTED PLANS FOR NEW PRIVATE HIRE FIRM

Up to 100 angry taxi drivers descended on Peterborough council's offices to protest against an application to set up a minicab office in Westgate, which had been recommended for approval by planning officers.

But after a dramatic day, which saw dozens of hackney carriages outside the authority's Sand Martin House offices given parking tickets, councillors on the planning committee voted to turn down the plans.

The proposed new development would have been a booking office and waiting area for people booking a private hire vehicle and had been recommended for approval, despite 41 objections being received, and even the council's own licensing team highlighting its opposition.

The Peterborough Telegraph reports that a council officer met the drivers outside and gave them an assurance that the parking tickets handed out during the protest would be rescinded. Among the concerns highlighted was the potential for conflict between hackney and private hire drivers as



right outside the proposed office site, there is a taxi rank and concerns were raised about private hire drivers being allowed to use the site to pick up passengers illegally.

Among the other objections raised by the Peterborough Hackney Driver's Federation, in an open letter published by the Peterborough Telegraph, were the loss of business they would suffer, on top of having to already abandon the rank near the bus station due to competition from A2B's nearby office; the negative impact to

wheelchair users coming out of Queensgate; and the impact to Peterborough's work towards becoming a 'green city.'

Hackney drivers have been encouraged to invest in greener, very expensive, electric cabs and say that the loss of their business would not encourage others to do the same and the city centre would risk being flooded with more minicab offices and in turn, more pollution and anti-social behaviour.

The cabbies turned up at around 1:30pm on Tuesday 29 June, when the meeting was due to start, to make their thoughts known.

One protesting cabbie said: "We have no idea why Peterborough City Council is telling us to invest in green cars, which can be £60,000 a vehicle, and then letting all the minicab firms from the surrounding area come and operate in Peterborough; this is a double standard.

"This is our livelihood, we've just been hit by a pandemic for the last 18 months and now the ranks are being taken away from us."

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CHARITY CORNER

WWII VETS DRIVEN IN BLACK CABS TO BATTLEFIELD LINE BY TAXI CHARITY VOLUNTEERS

On Saturday 5 June, a group of WWII veterans were invited to enjoy an afternoon on the Normandy Flyer steam train on The Battlefield Line in Leicestershire.

The WWII veterans were driven to the Battlefield Line in London Black cabs driven by Taxi Charity volunteers. The veterans enjoyed a ride on a steam train which had been renamed Normandy Flyer for this special visit. The Normandy Flyer left Shackerstone station in glorious sunshine and travelled to Shenton. The London volunteer cabbies, the veterans and their carers all enjoyed a fabulous picnic on the return journey to Shackerstone. The visit was particularly poignant as the line had been used to transport fuel for the D Day invasion in 1944.

Dick Goodwin, Vice President, The Taxi Charity for Military Veterans, said: "The Taxi Charity had been invited to take WWII veterans to the National Memorial Arboretum on 6 June to watch the opening of the British Normandy Memorial. When we heard about The



Battlefield Line, we decided to make a weekend of it.

"Our volunteer cabbies brought veterans from all over the South-East and we were joined by a veteran from Kenilworth and a group of veterans

from Preston. I am sure the volunteers who run the Battlefield Line enjoyed the veterans' visit as much as our veterans."

101-Year-old WWII veteran Major Ted Hunt said: "What a fabulous day. The sound of the steam train brought back so many lovely memories for us all. We are so lucky to be part of the Taxi Charity family and we have an amazing group of volunteer London cabbies who always look after us veterans so well.

"It's been a difficult fifteen months with all the pandemic restrictions, so to be out enjoying ourselves with our fellow



veterans was just what we all needed." The next day, 6 June, the 77th anniversary of D Day, The Taxi Charity volunteer cab drivers took the veterans to the National Memorial Arboretum to watch the opening of the British Normandy Memorial.

To find out more about the support the Taxi Charity offers veterans visit www.taxicharity.org

CHESTERFIELD TAXI FIRM AND PUBS RAISE MONEY FOR HOSPICE DURING EUROS

Two Chesterfield pubs are teaming up with a taxi firm to raise funds for Ashgate Hospicecare during this summer's Euro football tournament.

The Spotted Frog, the Butchers Arms and Galaxy Travel's 24hr Taxis and Airports will be bringing in money for the vital local hospice.

Over the coming weeks, there will be a series of fundraising activities, including a competition to win £1,000 cash. Dave Lewis, chief executive of Galaxy, said: "After such a difficult 12 months, it's amazing to be able to come together and plan this campaign with such a great team. We are really looking for-



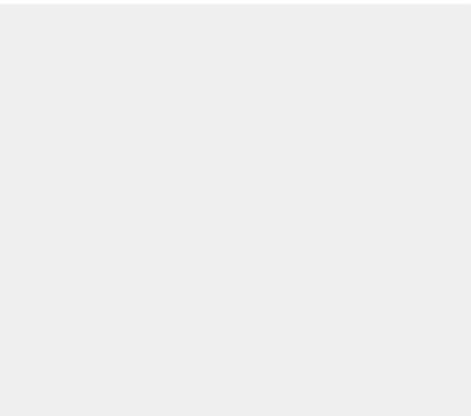
ward to getting out there and raising funds for a place so close to the hearts of everyone in Chesterfield.

"To be able to spread some much-needed joy and positivity around the community at the same is a huge bonus as well."

Charlotte Gratton, from Ashgate Hospicecare, added: "This fundraising will make a real difference in helping the hospice care for patients and their families across north Derbyshire."

For more information, visit Galaxy's Facebook page:

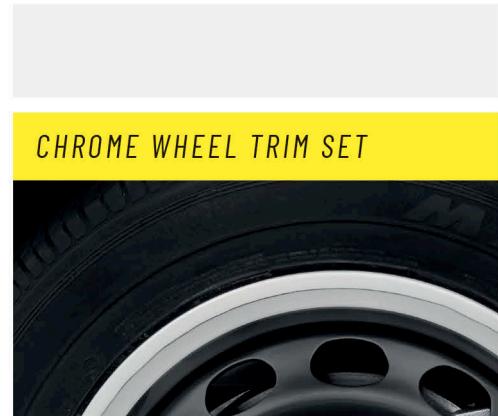
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FIT AND PROPER

BOLTON CABBIE SUSPENDED AFTER ALLEGATIONS OF ASSAULT AND CARRYING A HAMMER

A PHV driver has been suspended following allegations of 'inappropriate behaviour' and that he was 'carrying a hammer'.

According to the Manchester Evening News, the unidentified man was the subject of a licence review by a panel from Bolton Council which heard details of alleged misconduct in relation to him being licensed to drive private hire vehicles.

The panel heard the cabbie had received a caution for a public order offence, which he needed to disclose to the council by law.

Minutes of the meeting, which was attended by the driver and not held in public, were published recently.

They included allegations of an assault on a woman and the man in

question hammering on a wall in frustration for up to 20 minutes.

A council report of the meeting stated: "There was a complaint from a member of the public about the inappropriate behaviour of the driver and also that he was carrying a hammer.

"The driver admitted losing his patience and hammering on the wall but he denied that this action was going on for a period of 20 minutes and he also denied hitting the lady."

It is not thought the driver was working as a taxi driver when the alleged incident occurred.

After hearing evidence about the matter from both the driver and the council, the panel decided to sus-

pend the driver's licence.

They said: "The licence to drive a PHV be suspended for a period of seven weeks on the basis that the committee are not satisfied that the driver is a fit and proper person to hold a licence.

"Drivers are in a position of trust and have a duty to conduct themselves in a lawful and professional manner at all times.

"Members of the public entrust their personal safety and wellbeing to private hire drivers whenever they take a journey.

"The committee's primary duty is of concern for the safety and wellbeing of the public.

"There is therefore reasonable cause to suspend the private hire licence."

FRAUDULENT NORTH YORKSHIRE CABBIE GIVEN THREE MONTHS TO PAY £42K

A taxi driver who kept working, unofficially, despite receiving £42,000 in insurance, must pay that sum in a crime proceeds confiscation.

The Northern Echo reports that Rodney Bell received the overall pay out after claiming he was unable to work due to injuries suffered in a road accident, in 2007.

But Durham Crown Court was told council enforcement officers discovered Bell was operating an unlicensed taxi in Richmondshire.

A joint inquiry between the district council and fraud specialists from the City of London Police led to court proceedings in Durham, last October.

He pleaded guilty to a charge of fraud and received a two-year prison term, suspended for two years, at a

subsequent sentencing hearing, on November 2.

The, now, 53-year-old defendant, from Hawes, was also made subject of a three-month, electronically-monitored 9pm to 7am home curfew, and had to attend 30 rehabilitation activity days with the Probation Service.

He returned to court for a crime proceeds hearing, on 4 June when it was agreed his benefit from the crime was £42,310.

Peter Sabiston said his available assets were assessed at £194,700, mostly made up of equity in his home, after the mortgage, plus £1,700 savings in a bank account.

Recorder Craig Hassall QC, therefore, made a confiscation order for £42,310 to be paid within three

months or the defendant will be at risk of a nine-month prison sentence in default of payment.

The recorder told Bell, however, if he is unable to pay the sum in three months his solicitors could apply to the Magistrates' Court for an extension of up to a further three months. Ismael Uddin, for Bell, said he has applied for a re-mortgage in the hope that he will not have to sell his home.

But Recorder Hassall told him that on the expiry of the three months, or six months if an extension is granted, if payment of the £42,310 has still not been made, Bell may have to serve the nine-month sentence and the Crown can seek an enforcement recovery sale of the house from "under" the defendant.

FIT AND PROPER

LEICESTER CABBIE TAKING PREGNANT WOMAN TO HOSPITAL RAN OVER WOMAN LYING IN ROAD

A pedestrian drunkenly lying in the road was run over and killed by a taxi driver who failed to see her.

The Leicester Mercury reports that Anis Mohamed, 64, from Leicester, admitted causing Miss Baker's death by careless driving, in the early hours of Saturday January 11 last year.

David Outterside, prosecuting, said: "At 4am the defendant's Vauxhall Vivaro seven-seater drove over the victim who was lying intoxicated in the road.

"Shortly before 4am an ambulance driver saw the victim staggering on the footpath in Coleman Road, looking as if she was drunkenly heading home from an evening out.

"An Uber driver also saw her on the footpath, she held up her hands and he slowed, not knowing what she was doing. She walked into the road gesturing with her hands telling him to 'go away and turn around'.

"The defendant was behind the Uber, taking a man and his wife - who was 38 weeks pregnant and in considerable

pain - to hospital to check if she was going into labour.

"He saw the Uber in front of him with brake lights on and another vehicle, a Citroen, on the opposite side of the road at a standstill."

A passenger in the Citroen heard and filmed the victim saying: "I don't care, run me over, I don't care."

When she lay down on the road, the Uber driver reversed back around the defendant's minibus, to turn around. Footage from the Citroen's dashcam showed the minibus then accelerate and "shoot forwards," running over her and dragging Miss Baker 11 metres under the vehicle.

Mohamed, who waited at the scene and gave a negative breath test, later told the police he was concentrating on looking at the side of his minibus because he did not want the Uber driver to hit his wing mirror.

He failed to see the victim laying in the road when he drove forwards - despite a four second opportunity to have

done so, according to an accident investigator's report.

Sentencing, Judge Timothy Spencer QC said: "At the point of the collision Miss Baker deliberately lay down in the road, effectively blocking traffic.

"Why she did that, no-one knows. It may have been something to do with drinking or even some medical condition."

Addressing Mohamed, he said: "The essence of this case is that you shouldn't have been looking at your side mirror, but at the road ahead.

"As a taxi driver you have an exemplary and impeccable driving record. I have read 26 references about you.

"You're a pillar of the community and rarely have I had to sentence such an outstanding member of society - it's a great tragedy it should come to this and it gives me no pleasure."

He said no sentence could attempt to quantify the loss of Miss Baker's life which was "beyond measure."

Grahame James, mitigating, said: "He feels profound guilt about this appalling tragedy and takes full responsibility.

"This was a four second lapse of judgement and there's not a single aggravating feature put forward by the prosecution. He's never had a single point on his driving licence or any complaints from customers. He's an honest, God-fearing, respectful and well respected man in his community."

Mr James said that taking into account all the circumstances, including the actions of the victim, the incident "in some ways was a perfect storm."

He said: "My client was anxious about a pregnant woman, possibly being in labour, and a car stopped in front of him.

"As Miss Baker's family say, the road should have been better illuminated. He didn't see anyone in the road in front of him or he would have stopped." Mohamed was jailed for two months. He was also banned from driving for one year.

ACTION TAKEN AGAINST CABBIERS CONGREGATING NEAR A DUDLEY PARK

Dudley Council has taken action against taxi drivers congregating in Woodside, Dudley.

Dudley News reports that residents complained that taxis had been congregating in Avenue Road by Woodside Park, causing a nuisance to residents, with at least one cabbie urinating in the adjacent park.

Officers from Dudley Council's waste enforcement team undertook a joint operation with West Midlands Police to target the licenced vehicles (both PH and HC) using Avenue Road.

At the time of the operation, three vehicles were spotted and the own-

ers approached. One was suspended for not displaying the required private hire signage, the other was given advice concerning their actions. The third vehicle was registered as private hire outside of the borough but was still advised regarding the reason for the operation.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for public realm said: "People should not feel intimidated or unwelcome on their own street or in their local park. We will continue to monitor the results of this intervention and if necessary carry out further enforcement within the area."



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SHAME SHAME

THREE YEARS' JAIL FOR MANCHESTER CABBY CAUGHT TRYING TO MEET GIRL, 13, FOR SEX

Paedophile hunters cornered a taxi driver from south Manchester who had driven nearly 50 miles to meet a '13-year-old girl' for sex.

According to the Manchester Evening News, Dad Naveed Ashraf, 37, from Levenshulme, drove to Kidsgrove in North Staffordshire with a pizza for the 'girl' and was later found to have condoms and viagra in his car along with red roses and a gift bag.

However, the girl, who he had previously been messaging for several months, was in fact a decoy set up by the group Justice4Kids who then filmed him arriving at the meeting point and confronted him.

They also alerted police and the footage was passed to officers to ensure Ashraf, was put safely behind bars reports Stoke-on-TrentLive

The shocking footage begins with the exposers arriving at the scene on January 3 this year and quizzing the married dad-of-two about his online sex chats with the young girl.

In the 40-minute film - which was live-streamed on Facebook - the defendant looks sheepish as his reaction to the questioning is filmed.

One of the group says: "Today you've come all the way from Manchester to Stoke-on-Trent to order a pizza for a 13-year-old girl. And you were going back to stay at her property.

"You text the child to let them know you were in the takeaway and you were going to meet her."

Another hunter - who had a print out of the online chats - adds: "You've clearly been speaking to a 13-year-old girl knowingly. You have incited sex.

"What's all this about leggings? You've got a right thing about leggings. Every other page is about leggings.

"One question I really do want to ask you. In these chat logs there was a point where you were trying to arrange to meet the child out in an open space and you were quite concerned that it



was cold. And what did you say to her?

"You said 'don't worry I'll keep you warm by rubbing your bum and thighs. I think that a coat would have been a bit better.'

Ashraf finally admits he was planning to meet a child for sex which he is then told is 'statutory rape'.

He goes on to say he feels 'sad' and claims it is the first time he's ever done this. At one point he nearly faints as he goes into shock.

He says: "I feel very bad. My wife is going to be very angry. Forgive me this time. I haven't done anything before. Please. I wouldn't rape anyone. I'm ashamed of myself."

"I wasn't going to do anything, I was just going to eat pizza."

Ashraf is then told that the police are on the way as he remains with his head bowed.

At one point he breaks down in tears and repeatedly shakes his head as he's told he will be going to prison.

After nearly three quarters of an hour, two officers arrive on the scene and Ashraf is led away as the footage comes to an end.

Stoke-On-Trent Crown Court was told at Ashraf's sentencing hearing that he had asked the girl to send him pictures or herself in leggings and her private area. He also sent her pictures of sex positions.

Prosecutor Nick Tatlow said the defendant attempted to incite a 13-year-old girl to engage in sexual activity on July 29, 2019.

Then, between November 2019 and January 2020, he tried to arrange sexual activity with the 13-year-old girl

from Kidsgrove, who was in fact a decoy set up by Justice4Kids.

The defendant contacted the girl and said, 'Do you want to have sex with me?'

Mr Tatlow said: "She responded saying she was only 13. He replied saying, 'It's OK, we do gently and we use condoms'. He reassured her sex was easy with condoms."

The defendant then asked the girl about her private area and asked where they should have sex.

Mr Tatlow said: "He said they could meet at his house and he would pick her up. He sent her his mobile number on WhatsApp."

Following the defendant's arrest, his phone was analysed and google searches including, 'Is it ok to have sex with a 13-year-old girl?' were found.

Michael Goldwater, mitigating, said Ashraf, who has no previous convictions, was 'in every other way is a model citizen' and that the offences were a 'tragedy' for him and his family. However Judge David Fletcher said: "This is behaviour by you which is difficult to fathom. In all other aspects of your life you live a perfectly law-abiding existence.

"You went straight in there, talking about the sexual behaviour that you wanted to have with her.

"What makes it more serious is you travelling down to North Staffordshire from South Manchester. You came down with condoms, viagra and other items."

Ashraf was jailed for three years this week after pleading guilty to attempting to incite a child to engage in sexual activity; attempting to arrange or facilitate sexual activity with a child; and two charges of possession of an indecent image of a child.

He was also made the subject of an indefinite Sexual Harm Prevention Order and was placed on the sex offenders' register for life.

SHAME SHAME

15 YEARS JAIL FOR SOUTHPORT CABBIE WHO SEXUALLY ABUSED TWO TEENAGE GIRLS 25 YEARS APART

Southport cabbie, Steven Halton, who sexually abused two teenage girls in sickening attacks around 25 years apart has been jailed for 15 years.

The Liverpool Echo reports that his first victim, Girl A, came forward after his second victim, Girl B, went to the police and exposed the pervert's abuse against her.

The 58-year-old denied any wrongdoing, which forced both of his victims to relive their ordeals by giving evidence in a harrowing trial at Liverpool Crown Court.

But he was found guilty of ten counts of indecent assault against Girl A and four counts of sexual activity with a child against Girl B.

Judge Brian Cummings, QC, said the factual basis upon which he would sentence Halton was "one of which I am myself sure, having heard the evidence".

The judge said Halton abused Girl A on multiple occasions, touching her breasts, bottom and genitalia over clothing, forcibly kissed her, and on multiple occasions committed sexual offences involving penetration.

He said Halton "made her life a misery" in the 1990s.

Judge Cummings said Halton then abused Girl B in the last decade, when he groomed her and kissed her "insistently and in a manner that the jury rightly found was sexual".

He said this happened on four occasions, the second of which when he also tried to undo her bra and unzip her jeans, and on the third time when he gave her a lift in his taxi, put his hand under her skirt and touched her upper leg and groin area over clothing.

Girl B's dad made a victim statement to the court in which he said finding out what his daughter had been through was "devastating".

Mr Dillon summarised how Girl B explained Halton took "advantage of her" and left her suffering from "sleep-



less nights, bad dreams and trauma that is indescribable". He said: "She went to counselling because she went through a stage

of not wanting to be here anymore." Girl A said she had struggled to live with what happened to her, which led to low self-esteem and a lack of confidence, and feared she wouldn't be believed.

The now adult woman said she also felt "guilty" that she hadn't reported the abuse sooner, because that may have prevented Girl B from being molested. Girl A said she has problems sleeping, described being put through a trial as

"unbearable", how she felt angry, and had counselling to rebuild her life. The court heard Halton had a small number of previous convictions for dishonesty dating back to the period from 1985 to 1990.

Judge Cummings said Girl A had been "particularly vulnerable" and told Halton: "It's a serious aggravating feature of your case that there were multiple offences committed against the victim and there have been very significant lifelong ill effects on her, dealt with in the victim personal statement and dealt with also and movingly during her evidence at trial."

He jailed Halton for 15 years and told him to sign on the Sex Offenders Register for life. Halton must also comply with a Sexual Harm Prevention Order and a restraining order indefinitely.

EAST LOTHIAN CABBIE WITH COVID PUT VULNERABLE PASSENGERS LIVES AT RISK

A cabbie put the lives of his passengers at risk after continuing to pick up fares despite being diagnosed with Covid.

Gordon Leadbetter, 59, picked up "vulnerable" members of the public after he had tested positive for the killer virus and had been ordered to stay at home and self-isolate.

Leadbetter exposed his unaware passengers to the "risk of a heightened communication of transmission" of Covid while they were in his cab over the festive period last year.

The taxi driver appeared at Edinburgh Sheriff Court on 1 June, where he pleaded guilty to culpably and recklessly carrying on his business as a taxi driver to the danger of his passengers lives and health between December 17 and 26 last year.

Sheriff Chris Dickson was told the Crown had not prepared a written



narrative regarding the case and as a result no details of the offence were read out in court. The sheriff accepted the driver's guilty plea and deferred sentence for the preparation of reports next month.

Leadbetter, from Musselburgh, East Lothian, was granted bail.

The charge states the taxi driver carried out the course of conduct after testing positive for the Covid 19 virus and ought to have been self-isolating and thus did expose his passengers to immediate risk of transmission of the virus, all to the danger of their lives and health at various locations between December 17 and 26 last year.

SHAME SHAME

COCAINE SNORTING RUNCORN CABBIE WHO SERIOUSLY INJURED PASSENGERS IN CRASH WALKS FREE

A cocaine snorting taxi driver who injured his passengers, including a child, after crashing into a lamp post has walked free from court due to a CPS charging blunder.

The Liverpool Echo reports that Anthony Beck, 51, has walked free from court with a six-week sentence suspended for one year.

Beck appeared in Liverpool Magistrates' Court on Wednesday 23 June, where a prosecutor explained that two charges of causing serious injury by dangerous driving would be dropped. Andrew Page, prosecuting, explained: "On December 29, 2019, Mr Beck was driving a taxi which led to a collision." Mr Page said: "the Crown say serious injuries were sustained" by a child and an adult who were both passengers in the taxi. Emergency services were called to Edge Lane in Old Swan at 1.50pm, which resulted in a partial closure of the carriageway.

Beck, from Runcorn, was arrested for driving whilst over the limit for con-



trolled drugs. When he went to court he admitted two counts: of driving a car with a proportion of specified controlled drug above the legal limit and using a vehicle while unfit through drugs.

He was sentenced on November 30 last year to six weeks in prison suspended for 12 months and ordered to complete 20 Rehabilitation Activity Requirements. He was also banned from driving for two years.

At the recent hearing Mr Page continued: "It is abundantly clear when the court was sentencing Mr Beck for the drug driving it was fully aware of the extent of the criminality and the injuries had been taken into account."

Mr Page said: "Mr Beck runs the risk of being sentenced twice."

He added there had been "serious consideration" to the case by senior members of the CPS and in all the circumstances it would be wrong to continue with this prosecution for causing serious injury by dangerous driving.

District Judge Wendy Lloyd questioned the prosecution's decision. The Judge said she took the view all charges should have proceeded at the same time and added: "It seems to me Mr Beck is very lucky in these circumstances, but the Crown should have put everything together."

Iain Criddle of CPS Mersey Cheshire said: "Anthony Beck was charged with offences relating to driving a vehicle having consumed controlled drugs and was received a suspended prison sentence on 30 November.

"The case was presented to the court on the basis that the driving was impaired, that the suspect was driving for reward and that injury was caused to the passengers who were taken to hospital.

"On 13 January 2021, the CPS gave authority for Anthony Beck to be charged with causing serious injury by dangerous driving in respect of the same incident.

"The CPS is required to keep all cases under continuous review. It became clear that the District Judge at the earlier hearing had been made aware of all aspects of the offending in this case and had taken these factors into account when deciding the appropriate sentence.

"There is a general rule in criminal law that a person should not be tried twice for the same offence. Based on this, on 24 June 2021, the CPS applied for the second prosecution to be withdrawn. "The offence that was withdrawn was based on the same facts as the offences that Mr Beck had already been sentenced for on 30 November 2021."

HARROGATE'S AIRLINE TAXIS TO BE WOUND-UP WITH £55,000 DEBTS

A liquidator was been appointed on Friday 18 June, to wind-up Harrogate firm Airline Taxis, which has debts totalling £55,000.

Creditors include Tracey Lee, a former telephone operator at the company who won an employment tribunal against the taxi firm in January last year. A judge ordered the company to pay her £25,501.

She is yet to receive a penny and previously described to the Stray Ferret the "horrible" process of trying to get the sum awarded through the courts.

The company's statement of affairs shows it also owes HSBC bank £20,000 for a bounce-back loan taken

out last year.

A directors report to creditors, signed by Airline's sole director Mohammad Suleman, said the company experienced a "significant decline" in turnover due the covid lockdown.

The report added "there is no prospect of a dividend to any class of creditor". It also said Airline employed three staff and the rest were self-employed drivers.

A company called Parade Taxis Limited was created in July last year with the same registered address as Airline Taxis on East Parade. Its sole director is Areefa Naz Suleman, the daughter of Mohammad Suleman.

SHAME SHAME

EX-CABBIE FROM STOKE-ON-TRENT JAILED FOR 22 YEARS FOR RAPE OF TWO GIRLS

'Sexual predator' Paul James has been jailed for 22 years after being convicted of raping two young girls.

According to the Stoke Sentinel, the 47-year-old 'groomed and isolated' his victims before carrying out various sexual offences against three individuals over the course of a decade.

A jury found James guilty of six counts of rape and five counts of sexual assault following an eight-day trial at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court.

Judge Paul Glenn has now handed James an extended sentence, after ruling that he is a dangerous offender. He will serve at least 12 years behind bars before being considered for parole, with an additional four years on licence.

Judge Glenn told the defendant: "You showed yourself as a sexual predator. You groomed and isolated victims. There's significant risk to members of the public of serious harm, occasioned by your commission of further specified offences.

"For that reason, the appropriate sentence is an extended sentence of imprisonment."

The court heard that the first count of sexual assault was a 'one-off', with the victim only coming forward years later after hearing about other allegations against James.

James, from Penkhull, subjected his second victim, who was aged under 16 at the time, to sexual assaults. He also raped her on two occasions. After the second rape, he told her 'not to tell anyone'.

The third victim, who was aged under 13, was also raped.

All three victims gave personal statements, describing how their abuse had impacted on them physically, emotionally and mentally, with the effects such as anxiety and flashbacks lasting up to the present day.

In her statement, the third victim said: "I lived for many years with high anxi-



ety. I was fearful of him coming back to get me. If I saw a van like his it would trigger my fear. I became obsessed with checking the doors were locked. To this day I can't sleep in the dark."

Paul Cliff, mitigating, said: "This case was well publicised before his trial, in the local media and on social media. He has been subject to abuse and threats

of assault from various people in the local community. But nobody else has come forward to make a complaint against him.

"He is a hard-working man. He's always worked since leaving school, mostly as a taxi driver, and in the last few years as a long-distance lorry driver."

In his sentencing remarks, Judge Glenn referred to the victims' personal statements, particularly the statement from the third victim, who was the 'most seriously affected'.

He said: "The abuse has affected every intimate relationship she's ever had. She speaks of three years of weekly counselling, of fear, anxiety, nightmares, flashbacks. She speaks of the effects of the trial, and the deeply traumatic effect of giving evidence, and being left feeling vulnerable."

ISLE OF WIGHT CABBIE WHO HARASSED CAFE WORKER GIVEN RESTRAINING ORDER

A Totland taxi driver found guilty of harassing a cafe worker, racking up 90 missed calls and as many texts in a whirlwind 24-hours, has been dealt a restraining order.

According to the County Press, Ian Meadows appeared before the Isle of Wight Magistrates' Court on Monday 7 June. The 55-year-old was found guilty of harassment without violence following a trial.

Prosecutor, Ann Smout, told the court that Meadows had been in a relationship with the victim, but she told him she wanted time and space.

Mrs Smout said the following day, the victim received 90 missed calls from Meadows, and the same number of texts. She said the texts became awful, and the victim blocked his number.

The court heard Meadows started turning up at her place of work, and on one

occasion, followed her to her car. He even started calling customers at her place of work to talk about her, and spoke to fellow taxi drivers.

She said the calls, texts and discussions with others amounted to harassment. Meadows, who represented himself, took full responsibility for the things he said. He said he accepted the relationship was over, and desperately wanted to put it all behind him.

He asked magistrates for "latitude", given he did not apply for legal aid. Meadows was sentenced to a 12-month community order, to include 15 rehabilitation days and 60 hours of unpaid work. He was also made subject of a 12-month restraining order, and told not to contact the victim or go to her workplace.

He was ordered to pay costs of £650 and a £95 surcharge.



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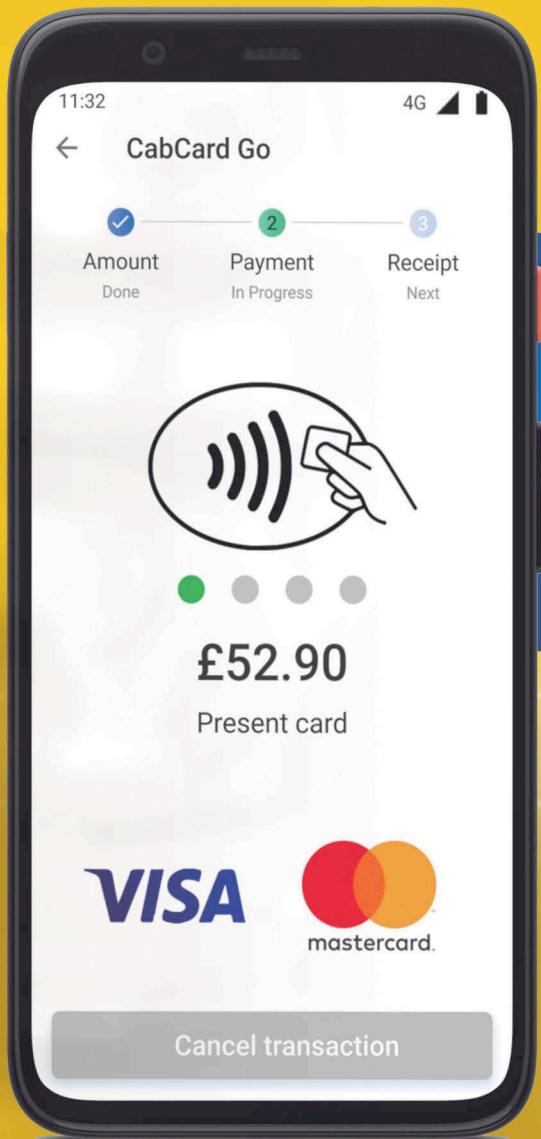
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TERROR TIMES

PHV CONTROLLER VICIOUSLY BEATEN IN UNPROVOKED ATTACK IN BURY BOOKING OFFICE

A granddad who “wouldn’t hurt a fly” has been left battered and bruised after being violently set upon in an unprovoked attack at a PHV booking office in Prestwich, Bury.

According to the Manchester Evening News, Alan Walker suffered cuts and severe bruising following the assault in the early hours of 6 June.

The 68-year-old was working in a locked staff area behind a screen when the incident happened. Mr Walker was well into his night shift when a man came in asking for a taxi at around 12.30am.

Mr Walker explained there were no vehicles free at that time due to it being a busy evening, but the customer decided to stay at the offices.

Around ten minutes later, he said the customer approached the screen and asked where his taxi was. Mr Walker calmly explained again that no taxis would be available for some time.

He says the customer then “went bananas” and kicked down the door separating the staff office and public area. He began punching the grandfather-of-



one – who suffers with a chronic heart disease – repeatedly in his head and body. To protect himself, Mr Walker, who helps out at the Poppythorn Lane booking office several times a week to keep himself active, says he let the man beat him.

The incident led to him suffering an angina attack.

Speaking to the Manchester Evening News, his daughter, Victoria Walker, said: “We’re just really saddened by it. It’s sad that such a kind and gentle dad and grandad has been attacked for no reason because the guy couldn’t get a taxi.

“That’s what it boils down to.” Mr Walker was taken to hospital for checks and has been left “shaken” by the incident. He no longer feels comfortable working at the booking office and is unsure when he can return.

A spokesperson for Greater Manchester Police said: “Officers were called to reports of an assault at Poppythorn Lane, Prestwich, that occurred at around 12.30am on June 6, 2021.

“Three men tried to book a taxi and one has then assaulted a 68-year-old employee, who needed hospital treatment for cuts and bruises.

“The offender is described as approximately 60 years old, white, around 5ft 9in tall with a muscular build, bald with tattooed arms.

“Enquiries are ongoing and there have been no arrests.”

Anyone with information should call police on 0161 856 8172, quoting incident 1322 of 06/06/2021 or call 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

COUPLE ASSAULTED ROSYTH CABBY

POLICE INVESTIGATING AFTER CABBY SERIOUSLY ASSAULTED IN LUTON

Bedfordshire Police are investigating a “serious assault” on a taxi driver that took place in Luton on Sunday, May 30. Police said a taxi dropped off a man in Denham Close in Luton, between 12.30pm and 1.10pm. The man then asked to be taken to another location but the driver refused, the offender then assaulted the driver.

The victim sustained serious injuries which required hospital treatment.

The offender was travelling from Welwyn Garden City and is described as approximately 18-years-old and mixed-raced.

Detective Constable Kimberly Anderson, who is investigating the assault, said: “Violence of any kind won’t be tolerated and we encourage anyone with information to come forward.”

In a Facebook post, Bedfordshire Police said: “Anyone who has information about this incident is asked to contact the police by visiting their online reporting centre or by calling 101 and quote reference number 40/27204/21.

“Alternatively, you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.”

Two people have been arrested and charged after an alleged assault on a taxi driver in Rosyth.

Police were called to the alleged incident in Rosyth around 8.20pm. A man and a woman were arrested and are due to appear in court at a later date.

A Police Scotland spokesperson said: “Around 8.20 pm on Saturday, 30 May, 2021, police were called to a report that a taxi driver, a 40-year-old man, had been allegedly assaulted within his taxi on Admiralty Road.

“Two people, a man aged 29 and a 33-year-old woman, have been arrested and charged in connection with the incident. They have been released on an undertaking to appear at court at a later date.”

TERROR TIMES

PASSENGER SHOT DEAD AFTER PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE AMBUSHED ON AN SANDWELL STREET

Officers were called to Dudley Road East in Tividale, just before 1.30am on 20 June, where a teenage boy was found with serious gunshot wounds. According to the Express and Star, Kimani Martin, 18, was treated at the scene before being taken to hospital but was later pronounced dead.

The street was cordoned off and a forensics tent erected which later revealed a blue taxi inside from 1-2-1 Cars, based in Tipton.

The victim was a passenger in the PHV



when a shotgun was fired at it from a dark hatchback which then sped away from the scene.

Thankfully the driver escaped without injury but suffered severe shock. The private hire firm did not wish to comment but it is understood the driver was helping West Midlands Police with enquiries.

Three men have since been arrested on suspicion of murdering Kimani Martin and a fourth is being held on suspicion of assisting an offender.

Residents living near to the scene of the shooting spoke of their shock, saying that crime was not usually an issue in the area.

FIVE ARRESTS AS CARJACKERS CRASH SOLIHULL TAXI STOLEN AT KNIFEPOINT

A taxi driver was robbed of his car at knifepoint by an armed gang in Solihull - who later crashed the vehicle.

According to the Birmingham Mail, the cabbie had his VW Passat stolen by carjackers late on Monday, June 28. He is said to have been threatened by the gang wielding a machete.

The driver contacted police, and the stolen car was quickly spotted. But the thieves came to an abrupt stop after smashing into another vehicle.

All five occupants were arrested and police seized the weapon - a huge fearsome-looking machete.

Police later shared pictures of the blade, and the wreckage of the Passat, which smashed on a residential street. Another vehicle, which appears to have been parked outside a property, was also written off in the crash.

West Midlands Police's Force Response team tweeted: "Another great result for A-Unit Stechford last night."

KNIFE THREAT TO NOTTS CABBY

A taxi driver was allegedly threatened with a knife when a passenger refused to pay. The West Bridgford Wire reports that police were called to Cross Street in Arnold shortly after 12.30am on 19 June following reports of a disturbance. Officers quickly arrived and were told a passenger had pulled out a knife after refusing to pay a fare up front. A scuffle ensued but thankfully no-one was hurt. A 22-year-old man was arrested at the scene on suspicion of affray and possession of a bladed article.

Superintendent Mike Allen, of Nottinghamshire Police, said: "The taxi driver was in a state of shock when officers arrived and I am pleased that an arrest was swiftly made.

"I'd also like to reassure local residents that we take all reports of knife-related offences extremely seriously and to the taxi drivers working in our communities, the force will deal robustly within anyone who puts your safety in jeopardy. Anyone who witnessed the incident is asked to call 101 quoting incident number 39 of 19 June."

LIVERPOOL CABBY STABBED IN THE ARM AFTER A ROW OVER THE FARE

Merseyside Police were called just before 1.25pm on 18 June, following reports a man had dropped off a male passenger on Ennismore Road, Old Swan and a row had broken out over payment for the taxi.

The Liverpool Echo reports that the passenger and a second man then attacked the taxi driver and stabbed him in the arm before stealing a number of items from the cab.

A woman is also believed to have been

present but was not involved in the assault and all three people fled the scene via St Ives Grove.

An investigation is underway and a 48-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of assisting an offender and is currently in custody.

DI Ben Dyer said: "We ask anyone who was in the area or who has doorbell, mobile phone or dash cam footage to contact us. Please DM @MerPolCC quoting reference 21000426609."



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JUST DESSERTS

BRISTOL MAN WHO SLASHED CABBY IN FACE GETS COMBINED SENTENCE OF OVER 11 YEARS

A man who said he wanted to stab someone, slashed a cabbie in the face and robbed him.

The Bristol Post reports that Daniel Armstrong-Eccles had produced a blade and stated he had wanted to carry out a stabbing, Bristol Crown Court heard. When cabbie Makhron Miah arrived to take Armstrong-Eccles and a friend to Bedminster, they refused to pay the fare upfront.

Armstrong-Eccles then produced a knife and slashed the cabbie from his left eye to his left ear and also stabbed him in the back, the court was told.

He then said: "Give me all your money, where's the money."

The court heard a wounded Mr Miah handed over £30 and said: "Please don't kill me, I don't have anymore."

With that the robber fled, the court heard, leaving his flip-flop style shoes

at the scene. The two men boarded a bus, where Armstrong-Eccles counted the cash. In the meantime police attended the scene and gave a shocked and bleeding Mr Miah first aid. He was taken to hospital for stitches to his cut face.

A search of the area was conducted by officers, with assistance from the police helicopter, and the 25-year-old was arrested that same evening on suspicion of robbery telling police: "That's news to me."

The 25-year-old, from Hartcliffe, pleaded guilty to robbery and possessing a blade on October 31 2020.

Mr Miah made an impact statement in which he said he thought he was going



to die and was scarred for life. The father-of-two stated he was back in his taxi again, but was nervous. Judge Michael Longman handed Armstrong-Eccles an 11-and-a-half year sentence, comprising six-and-a-half years' custody and five years' extended licence. The judge told him: "You had taken both alcohol and cocaine knowing how that combination effects your behaviour. You can't remember the circumstances. You armed yourself with a knife. It seems you had stated an intention to use it by stabbing someone before you actually did so."

The judge told him he would serve at least two-thirds of the custodial term before the parole board considers his suitability for release.

Peter Binder, defending, said his client had mental health issues but had "fallen through the cracks".

ORMSKIRK PHV DRIVER HIGH ON COCAINE AND DRIVING WITH PASSENGER BANNED FOR 15 MONTHS

A private hire driver was caught high on cocaine while driving a passenger through Huyton.

The Liverpool Echo reports that Shaun Porteous was stopped by police after they spotted his fare wasn't wearing a seatbelt. But officers became suspicious of the dad-of-three who was showing "signs of drug use".

Despite initially denying taking any drugs, a roadside test revealed he was over three times the legal limit.

Andrew Page, prosecuting at Liverpool Magistrates' Court on 7 June, said police pulled over the Ford Galaxy at 2.20pm on October 1 last year. He said there was a "small amount of cannabis" on the rear seat next to the passenger, which Porteous said he was unaware of.

During the roadside test Porteous

returned a result of 158 micrograms of benzoylecgonine, a by-product of cocaine, per litre of blood.

Porteous has a previous conviction for dangerous driving in 2004, but no previous drink or drug driving convictions.

Keith Webster, defending, said it was "above and beyond wrongdoing" and explained his private hire driving career had been "coming to an end very much because of the pandemic".

Mr Webster added: "This has, quite rightly, put an end to it."

He said Porteous regretted his actions and was remorseful.



Porteous, from Ormskirk, admitted driving a motor vehicle with a proportion of benzoylecgonine above the specified limit.

District Judge Wendy Lloyd, sentencing, said it was an "obvious aggravating feature" that he had a "paying passenger" in the car.

The judge said: "It is different when you're a taxi driver, you're putting others at risk as well as yourself and you are making a profit from it.

"You lied at first to the police, I'm sure out of sheer panic."

District Judge Lloyd said his previous conviction for dangerous driving was "a very long time ago".

Porteous was banned from driving for 15 months. He was fined £200 and ordered to pay costs of £85 and a victim surcharge of £34.

JUST DESSERTS

ROBBER WHO TERRIFIED CABBIE IN MILTON KEYNES IS JAILED FOR 31 MONTHS

A robber who “terrified” his victim before spending money on their stolen bank card has been jailed.

The Bucks Free Press reports that Steven Corcoran, 26, of HMP Bullingdon, was sentenced to 31 months in prison after he recently pleaded guilty to robbery and fraud at Aylesbury Crown Court.

The court heard how on July 5 last year, Corcoran and another male, who has not been identified, robbed a taxi driver of his bank card and around £50 in cash. The incident took place between 6.30am and 7.30am in Milton Keynes. The two offenders were passengers in Said Agha's taxi and the court heard how the men threatened their victim mid-way through the journey.

A statement from Mr Agha read out in court said: “I got the impression that they were going to rob me. You know when people are planning something they shouldn't do, I started looking at them in the rear-view mirror

“One of them said: ‘he's a big man’ and the other said ‘don't worry.’”

“He said give us your money otherwise you're going to get seriously injured. “I was so terrified that I replied OK, take whatever you want.”

The offenders stole between £50 and £60 in takings from the taxi, as well as a bank card from the victim's wallet.

After the incident, the two men ran off. Mr Agha called his bank about 30 minutes later to cancel his card and was told that £50 had already been spent

at a newsagents.

In mitigation, the court heard how in the last two years Corcoran had lost his father-in-law to cancer, his uncle had passed away and that his cousin was in a coma.

The court also heard that in 2019 Corcoran's father killed himself, and he was the first person to find him.

Speaking from HMP Bullingdon via video link, where he is already serving time for another offence, Corcoran addressed the judge and apologised for what he had done.

He said: “When I found my dad hanging, that really put me on a bad road.

“I am so sorry to you, to the victim, I apologise to everyone for wasting everyone's time.

THREE YEARS' JAIL FOR EX SOLDIER WHO ROBBED GATESHEAD CABBIE AT KNIFEPOINT

A taxi driver was robbed at knifepoint by a customer who threatened to kill his family.

The victim said in a statement read to Newcastle Crown Court: “I felt shocked due to the incident and very nervous. I've never been robbed before and this has been a very scary experience.

“I was just doing my job. I told him to leave without paying then he became aggressive.

“This behaviour is disgraceful.”

ChronicleLive reports that on 20 February Longstaff, using a false name, ordered a Blue Line taxi to pick him up in Gateshead. The cabbie requested payment up front and Longstaff said he needed to go to a cashpoint.

After directing him to various locations, Longstaff's attitude changed when the driver eventually refused to go where he wanted him to.

He then told him to stop and claimed he lived in the location and was told the

fare was £5.60.

Longstaff reached for his pocket and the taxi driver thought he was getting money and turned the light on for him but Longstaff turned it off.

He then asked the cabbie how much money he had, at which point he was told to leave without paying.

Elizabeth Muir, prosecuting, said: “He just wanted to get rid of him. The defendant asked him again how much money he had and he told him he didn't have any.

“The defendant produced a knife from his pocket eight to ten inches long, with a slightly curved blade and said “Give me £40”.

He then said: “I have a picture of your car registration and of you and I will kill your family if you don't give me



the money”.

He was given £40 but then demanded another £10 before saying if he told the police he would harm his family.

The court heard Longstaff was on a tag at the time and so when other evidence suggested his guilt, GPS revealed he was in the taxi at the time.

The 24-year-old, who has 38 previous convictions including for harassment of his dad and breaching a restraining order aimed at protecting his parents, pleaded guilty to robbery and was jailed for three years.

Fiona Lamb, defending, said he had been a soldier but had to leave the army after hurting his knee playing football.

After that he started consuming more alcohol and then his life went off the rails.

Miss Lamb said Longstaff had claimed that it was a butter knife which he had in his possession.



IS YOUR COUNCIL BREACHING GDPR WITHOUT REALISING?



What I am referring to is the Public Register of licensed vehicles and drivers that all councils have to keep. Many councils have this readily accessible on line which allows for anyone to check if a vehicle carrying a council issued plate/door livery is a genuine cab. This is such an important public safety matter that it should be enshrined in legislation.

In Brighton & Hove we have been flooded with hundreds of out of town cars from Portsmouth, Chichester, Southampton and now TfL cars (where no one knows what operator they are working under) but mainly from Lewes District council. In fact we would say that most of the Lewes fleet predominantly works in Brighton & Hove - and even some of the hackneys are now creeping back in defiance of the Intended Use Policy that we persuaded Lewes DC to impose.

Yes, this is the result of policy backed by Baroness Kramer in 2015, that private hire vehicles are allowed to predominantly work out-of-sight and out-of-mind of respective licensing enforcement, which can be hundreds of miles away from where they are actually licensed and which has destroyed local licensing control everywhere.

So dear Baroness, if you are ever down this way on the Sussex Coast to dip your toes in the water then let me know. I will give you a tour of the city and point out all the cars which are showing expired TfL private hire licences, that our council cannot touch, which are picking up people. And I will also show you the hundreds of private hire vehicles that predominantly work here without Brighton & Hove controlled CCTV that we have for the safety and protection of the public and indeed the drivers. I will even buy you a stick of rock.

Sorry for the rant but that is how we feel down here...

Out of that group of licensing authorities, it is only Lewes District Council that does not have an online Public Register. So over the last 18 months or so I have applied several times for an updated list of currently licensed vehicles, which I have been sent unhindered and thank you very much. Because Lewes DC has allowed magnetic rear plates/door repeater plates we have submitted nearing 100 reports of Lewes DC vehicles that have violated conditions of licensing where these have been removed/not displayed correctly.

So we recently applied for an updated list of licensed vehicles which has always requested the vehicle licence number/start/expiry dates, vehicle make/model and vehicle

registration mark (VRM) However, Lewes District Council has now refused to supply the VRM? And the reason for this is that the council considers the registration number of the vehicle to be personal data.

The supplied Public Register allowed us to cross reference VRM's to identify licensed vehicles but we can no longer do this, which is a shame because it is only the Brighton & Hove licensed taxi trade which is keeping a close eye on these Lewes DC vehicles which is in turn doing the council a massive favour!

Lewes District Council is relying on a ruling made in 2017 where a motor trader had asked various councils for details of licensed vehicles to build up a database (for profit) where anyone purchasing a car could check if the vehicle has ever been used as a cab. Most councils obliged, but one did not and it went to the ICO for a ruling. The ICO ruled (incredibly) that the VRM is personal data - I kid you not! Details of the ruling by the Appeal Hearing are Appeal reference: EA/2019/0025.

I asked Lewes DC for a revision of this decision and provided the following:

- **Reports of Lewes District Council licensed vehicles violations of conditions of licensing:** Lewes District Council licensing has received nearly 100 reports from me of its licensed vehicles which have not complied with conditions of licensing which consists of the removal/absence of vehicle licence identification which is a serious public safety issue.

I consider that such reports have been extremely beneficial to Lewes District Council licensing because had these not been supplied then the council would have been unaware of such violations of conditions of licensing. It must be noted that these violations still continue and reports are still being provided.

- **Public Registers held by other Licensing Authorities:** I need to point out that Brighton & Hove city council provides this information on its online public register.

Chichester, Portsmouth, Southampton and Transport for London also have online Public Registers which we have relied on to identify licensed vehicles by entering vehicle index numbers which instantly provides extremely important information for public safety reasons. Whilst Mid Sussex does not have an online register I have been provided with a full database of the information required. All of which provide the index numbers of licensed vehicles.



ICO RULING Breach of GDPR Is your council guilty?

It is therefore considered that these licensing authorities recognise the important public safety factor that is required.

- Purpose of the Public Register:** If a Licensing Authority does not provide the minimum details of the vehicle index number to which the council licence is assigned then the Public Register held by any licensing authority which does not provide this information is not fit for purpose and puts the public at great risk.
- Unidentified cars working as private hire vehicles in Brighton & Hove:** I must also make the point that in Brighton & Hove we have a major issue of many vehicles which are working as private hire vehicles which do not carry any local authority identification at all which could easily include those licensed by Lewes District Council. With this refusal to provide the requested information we have to reluctantly claim that Lewes District Council is now contributing to the risk of public safety.
- Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking:** Brighton & Hove City Council has recently carried out training for its licensed drivers for child sexual exploitation and human trafficking awareness. Who is to say that such activity is not carried out by vehicles licensed by Lewes District Council which have removed all vehicle licensing information that predominantly work away from Lewes District Council enforcement?

Having set out all the reasons as to why Lewes District Council should provide the index number of vehicles that have been assigned a licence for public hire I am therefore referring this matter back to Lewes District Council for reconsideration to provide the index number of each currently licensed hackney carriage and private hire vehicle as a matter of public safety.

If Lewes District Council continues to withhold the requested information, I will then have to refer this matter

to the ICO where all points will be raised to justify the release of the information.

Despite pointing out all these reasons Lewes District Council has refused to budge.

When you consider that any vehicle can be checked online for the MoT and that vehicles appear in the media with VRM's in full view the ruling by the ICO is illogical.

Also where licensed vehicles only carry a council Compliance Certificate and not an MoT certificate then without a Public Register available (which all councils should have online by law in my opinion) then the police will not be able to instantly check if the vehicle is legally allowed on the road.

I have written to the ICO and have urgently requested that there is a full review of the decision made because the ruling goes against public safety and safeguarding. I have also informed the ICO that if it is sticking to its ruling then it must write to all local licensing authorities to have them remove the VRM of every single licensed vehicle on their Public Registers. Good luck with TfL!

I do suggest that you all contact your own councils and put it to them that according to the ICO if the Public Register contains the VRM of licensed vehicles then there is a breach of GDPR.

If you are a licensing officer reading this then nip off to your Governance Information Team and ask them to assess this situation.

My own licensing authority, Brighton & Hove, is keeping the VRM info accessible until further notice and is making its own enquiry with the ICO.

I am pleased to say that to date having written to all the three main licensing authorities that have vehicles predominantly working here I been refreshingly informed by one that until I get a response from the ICO (which I will pass on) **“...all our public registers stay as is!!!!”**

Now that is the attitude the Lewes District Council should take instead of finding an excuse to hide the VRM data and hindering public safety....

Andy Peters

Brighton & Hove Cab Trade Association

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

 facebook.com/groups/bhcabta  [@cabsbrighton](https://twitter.com/cabsbrighton)

UBER CUTS PAY AS IT GIVES WITH ONE HAND AND TAKES WITH OTHER, SAYS IWGB

On 28 June Uber announced that their longest serving drivers would see the service charge that they take from their pay, increase from 20% to 25%. This comes at a time when drivers are still desperately trying to recover from being hit hard by the pandemic. Last year drivers saw wages reduced to almost nothing while rental fees and other overheads continued.

Uber has cynically claimed that the change, which comes into effect on the 13th July, is in order to bring equality amongst drivers as new starters are already charged the 25%. In the same breath as announcing the pay cuts, Uber made reference to the worker contracts and improved pay and conditions that they were forced to implement in light of the Supreme Court ruling. This latest move by Uber proves that while they have rolled out new contracts, they are now making drivers pay the costs. This is a big challenge to the voluntary recognition agreement recently signed by Uber, making it look even more like a PR stunt.

Nader Awaad, UPHD Chair and Uber driver: "We all knew that Uber would raid the drivers pockets to pay for them breaking the law and depriving drivers of their rights, and here they are doing exactly that. They can more than afford to pay the hardworking drivers what they deserve, but instead it is the drivers who are being forced to pay out of the pittance they are making. This shows Uber cannot be trusted."

Hassan Haji, Uber driver and UPHD member said: "I have worked for Uber for six years and worked throughout the pandemic. We have seen pay drastically fall and the thanks I have got from Uber is a 5% pay cut that will further destroy my finances. I am trying hard to recover from the pandemic and Uber seems to just want to make things worse."

UBER LAUNCHES LOCAL CAB PILOTS IN OXFORD, EXETER AND BEDFORD

Uber has announced pilots of its new product, 'Local cab', in Oxford, Exeter and Bedford. Anyone opening the Uber app there will now see the 'Local cab' option which will connect passengers to the taxi firm 001 Taxis Oxford, in Oxford; Apple Central Taxis and and Need-A-Cab Exeter, in Exeter; and Key Cars in Bedford.

Uber's app will integrate with Autocab's iGo network, which has the potential to connect passengers with 80,000 private hire and taxi drivers in the UK.

Ash Kebrity, UK General Manager, Uber, said: "Launching pilots of Local cab in these places is an exciting first step in connecting these riders with local operators so that eventually the Uber app can be used anywhere in the country."

PORTSMOUTH DRIVERS PROTEST AT TOO MANY BROKEN PROMISES BY MANAGEMENT

Portsmouth Uber drivers recently had "a day off" to protest at too many broken promises by management. A spokesman told **PHTM**: "Uber's policy, when entering a new market, has always been to undercut the main competitors in that area by between 8% and 12%. Nothing wrong with that. It makes good business sense to "buy" market share."

However, in Portsmouth (and many other cities) Uber has been content to let prices remain ridiculously low (in the view of local Uber drivers), whilst competitors have widened the gap by increasing their fares in line with general inflation.

In Portsmouth, Uber has failed to review prices (apart from some minor cosmetic adjustments) since they opened in the city on 13th November 2015.

That's nearly six years without a price review, despite Uber promising one two years ago.

One of Uber's major failings is the blatant lack of communication with its, so called "Partner Drivers". Nearly three years ago, Uber launched their "Uber Engage" programme, supposedly aimed at encouraging active dialogue with its driver base.

After 18 months, Uber claimed the programme a great success, and announced plans to "roll out" the programme internationally.

Perhaps not unsurprisingly, the programme was swiftly binned (well before Covid-19 struck), leaving those drivers who had been involved for 18 months, attending numerous meetings - some with the most senior Management in Uber UK - with the distinct feeling that the whole exercise was cosmetic, and "management" "certainly didn't like what they were hearing".

Promises were made about several issues the drivers raised - including price reviews - but few were kept.

Now drivers in Portsmouth have had enough, and in an attempt to draw the attention of management to their plight, they held their first "constructively coordinated day off" on Wednesday 9 June - the first of many planned.

Whilst it's seen as a chance to meet socially with other colleagues, it is also intended to disrupt Uber's activities locally. A spokesperson for the local group said: "Uber seems to care little about their drivers. We can't even access anyone at management level to discuss concerns and grievances. As for sound bite statements made at the time of the recent management shuffle about 'Championing the drivers', that's frankly laughable and beyond contempt."

PHTM understands that some other cities are in the same position and are watching Portsmouth and talking to them about coordinating similar "days off" on a much wider front.

UBER FACING UP TO LOOMING LEGAL ACTION FROM LONDON'S BLACK CABBIES

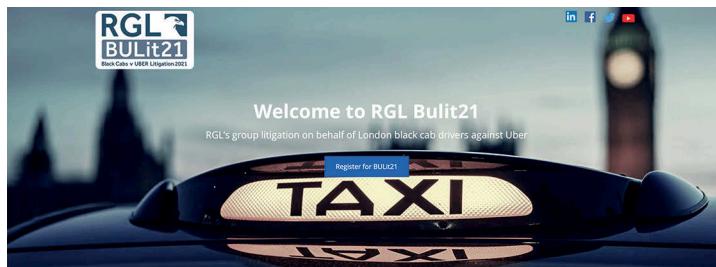
More than 10,000 black cab drivers in London have signed up to a group legal action against Uber that could be worth in excess of £200 million.

According to Times News Express, the action centres on a claim that Uber broke the law in the UK capital between June 2012 and March 2018, when it allowed its drivers to accept bookings directly when they were not licensed to do so.

London's black cab drivers allege that Uber breached the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998, which stipulates that PHVs, including ride-hailing cabs, in the city must be organised through a centralised office.

Uber has denied the allegation. No claim has been issued as yet against Uber. Should the claim reach the courts, it would mark the latest regulatory headache for the ride-hailing giant in one of its most important markets.

The company was dealt a blow by the UK Supreme Court in March, which ruled that it must classify its some 70,000 drivers in the country as workers.



The latest action, known as the BULit21 campaign, is being headed up by litigation firm RGL Management and law firm Mishcon de Reya. The companies believe PHV drivers operating in the city between June 2012 and March 2018 can sue Uber for a loss of earnings and that as many as 30,000 drivers could be eligible to join the campaign.

RGL and Mishcon said the claim could be worth in the region of £25,000 per driver in lost earnings, giving it an overall value of more than £200 million (\$283 million).

Uber said the allegations were "completely unfounded."

"We are proud to serve this great global city and the 45,000 drivers in London who rely on the app for earnings opportunities, and are committed to helping people move safely," a representative said in a statement.

James Hayward, the chief executive of RGL, said reaching 10,000 drivers was a "landmark moment".

"The rapid growth of this claimant group really is testa-

ment to the number of cabbies who suffered at the hands of Uber's failure to adhere to the relevant legislation," he said.

"We are extremely confident in the merits of the claim and are lending the BULit21 group our full support and deep expertise in bringing large and complex legal actions to court."

The campaign comes after Uber agreed to recognise the GMB trade union in the UK for its drivers.

UBER'S OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO DECISION BY COMPETITION & MARKETS AUTHORITY

Uber has responded to the Competitions and Markets Authority's (CMA) decision which approved its acquisition of Autocab. The ridesharing company stated:

"Earlier this year Autocab was acquired by Uber, which has led to some questions from within the industry. We want to answer these questions and give Autocab customers the reassurances they deserve.

"When the CMA cleared the acquisition, they concluded that the deal did not give rise to competition law concerns. We agree, and believe it is positive for competition.

"The deal will help cement the place of local operators in their community. Consumers will easily be able to access a local cab, and operators and drivers will have greater earnings opportunities.

"We understand the importance of protecting Autocab's customers' commercially sensitive data, not only because it is imperative that we are always fully compliant with the UK's data protection laws, but also because we know that protecting this data is key to our, Autocab and their customers' success.

"Since launching Local Cab, our new product that allows riders to connect with local operators through the Uber app with Need-A-Cab in Plymouth, they have seen demand for trips increase exponentially. As a result, they are now recruiting drivers. Need-A-Cab is the first of many operators we hope will partner with us over the coming years."

"Hundreds of thousands of people open the Uber app in towns and cities where Uber doesn't operate and which have great local operators willing and able to serve them. We want to help connect these passengers directly with operators.

"If you're an operator looking to expand, get in touch with the Autocab team so you can understand exactly how they can help your business."



NEW NPHTA BOARD MEMBERS

Over the last two years, since taking over from the former **NPHTA** director, Donna Short, whom most of you will know and respect, many things have changed. The effect of governments' management of the Covid situation which has been so strongly felt by our industry is of course the biggest thing, but these changes also include revisions to some of our board members, with some long-standing members having retired and gone on to pastures new, and some new ones coming on board.

We have been extremely involved in various issues around the UK from driver safety and protection measures, such as Covid screens and CCTV, Clean Air Zones, local consultations, national consultations with government agencies and lots more. But this month is more about us as a family, a group, a team, or simply put: the truly national and all-round representative association.

WELCOME TO THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

STEPHEN ANDERSON FOR SOUTH YORKSHIRE:

"I have actively been involved with the trade for over 30 years progressing along the way with various organisations and associations. During this time I have built up working relationships with various councils in South Yorkshire as this is equally as important as helping and defending the overall trade. I do work mainly in Rotherham where I have been involved for many years. Recently I have been helping in shaping policies; working successfully in pursuing various grants for drivers in South Yorkshire; and nationally, along with other associations and unions, ensuring regular school contract payments reached operators and drivers during Covid."

*"I also work alongside operators and drivers respectively, helping ensure that there is a level playing field throughout and also at board level. Working with drivers to maintain their income and livelihood is of paramount importance to me. Any driver finding themselves in a difficult situation can find the whole experience daunting when being summoned by any council and it is comforting to know they can count on the **NPHTA** for support, advice and representation as a member."*

*"I advise all drivers, vehicle owners and operators alike to join the **NPHTA**. The importance of representation is significant as are the other membership benefits, including: discounted legal fees, access to case files and court rulings, support and advice, assistance with consultations.*

*"The advantages that the **NPHTA** offers go a long way to providing continuity in the workplace and stability overall."*

"This work is never done, that's why we're around and working hard behind the scenes to help you - our members."

stephen@nphta.co.uk

COLIN DODDS FOR SCOTLAND:

"I have been a private hire driver since November 2008, working with one of the largest firms in Glasgow. In 2018 I switched to Edinburgh to work due to getting married and now live in Peebles, Scottish Borders. I owe a lot to being a private hire driver which has helped me deal with personal issues of depression and dealing with my father's death from a heart attack after I tried to save him. Driving has given me the flexibility to work when I felt I could and take time off when I needed it."

"I have a mission to make sure that private hire and hackney drivers can work in the safest possible environment and make sure our voice is heard when all issues affecting our industry are decided. So many people want to divide private hire and hackney drivers to achieve their own agenda. I believe we should not allow this to happen and that we should be a united voice in demanding what is best for both PH and HC drivers."

*"New fresh challenges to the trade are coming, and we need to be as "one" to meet them. I'm ready and willing to meet these challenges for the Scottish private hire and hackney drivers. I believe that my role as board member of the **NPHTA** puts me in a better position to be able to do this as part of a team."*

colin@nphta.co.uk

Thank you both and welcome to the board.

Of course, most of the existing team are still very much in place and remain extremely active on your behalf daily, responding to consultations and upcoming changes, supporting drivers with enquiries and council representations, and attending various meetings, virtually and otherwise, on your behalf.

Dave Lawrie, Director NPHTA

NEW NPHTA ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

WE ARE ALL CONNECTED

NPHTA's online presence all over the UK, via LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Facebook and various other media has grown to unprecedented levels - this could explain why our membership has grown far greater than it has ever been, with new members joining on a regular basis.

Here's a list of recent memberships:

LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

- Herefordshire HC & PH Association: 120 members
- Durham Licensed Taxi Association: 20 members
- Harlow Licensed Drivers Welfare Association: 40 members
- Wakefield Drivers Association: 500 members
- Medway Licensed Taxi Association: 300 members
- Thanet Private Hire Association: 350 members
- Leeds Private Hire Drivers Organisation: 450 members

OPERATORS

- Berridge Taxis of Oakham, Leicester: 30 drivers
- Rawal Private Hire Ltd of Rishton: 3 drivers
- Exclusive Cars Northants Ltd: 3 drivers
- Brighton & Hove Streamline Taxis Ltd: 360 drivers
- Delta Merseyside Ltd: 4,000 drivers
- Mayfair Cars Northampton Ltd: 33 drivers
- PRC Streamline Taxis of Bournemouth: 190 drivers
- Culloden Ltd of Inverness: 25 drivers
- Dean Taxis Ltd of Gateshead: 300 drivers
- Torbay Taxis Ltd: 180 drivers
- 247 Transport Solutions Ltd of St Leonards-on-Sea: 120 drivers

SOLE TRADERS AND INDEPENDENT DRIVERS

- Shaun McManamon: driver from Felixstowe
- Gordon Fraser: long time member from Morayshire
- Mark Steed: driver from Wyre Forest
- Tauseef Shah: driver from Rotherham
- Shahid Ulah: driver from Leicester
- Waqas Masood: driver from Manchester
- Ian Lloyd: driver from Wigan
- John McGregor: driver from Glasgow
- Mohammed Ashfaq: driver from Telford

Clearly, we have not listed all members, it would take up the entire magazine, so if we have not listed you here, it does not mean you are any less important to us. As you can see, we represent the whole range of industry bodies, which includes sole traders, operators large and small, and local associations.

Together we are a unified industry, we have an immensely powerful voice, and without your continued support and membership, we would cease to exist.

**A UNIFIED TRADE
IS A POWERFUL VOICE!
NOW MORE THAN EVER
WE NEED TO STAND TOGETHER!!**



JOIN THE NPHTA NOW!

0161 280 2800 info@nphta.co.uk

IT SEEMS FLYING TAXIS

The flying car is something we've been anticipating for a very long time now. Around the world there are plenty of active flying car projects, many of them with actual flight-tested hardware. If a practical flying car can ever be built, it would naturally offer the possibility of airborne taxis, often envisaged as something you might find in the smart cities of the future.

An air taxi is a more realistic idea to begin with than a personal flying car; a taxi operator is able to finance an expensive vehicle and get it to pay its way more easily than an individual owner. That's why, when the first motor vehicles appeared on city streets over a hundred years ago, they were typically cabs rather than private conveyances. Until after World War II, the only way a normal person would ever ride in a motor car was in a taxi (or maybe for military service). Personal cars were rare for many decades after cars took over from horses in taxi service, and it would seem that history may say the same of the flying car.

BIG BUSINESS

Certainly big money is now backing the idea of air taxis, rather than privately-owned flying cars. Billions have been ploughed into the new wave of air-taxi startups. In March, German air-taxi firm Lilium announced a special purpose acquisition company (SPAC) flotation plan that values it at \$3.3bn. Others besides Lilium are heading for stock market listings via SPACs. One of them, Joby Aviation, has been valued at nearly \$7bn. Another, Archer, is worth almost \$4bn. Morgan Stanley has estimated that the market for aerial taxi rides could be worth \$674bn by 2040.

But a flood of investment doesn't necessarily mean the dreams will come true. In truth there are several serious technical obstacles ahead of the flying-cab dream.

First, an air taxi should be able to pick people up and drop them off in the heart of a city. This means that it can't make use of a runway: it has to be able to take off and land vertically. The main type of aircraft in widespread use today which can take off vertically carrying a useful load is the helicopter. Way back in the 1940s people expected that the helicopter might become the flying car of today. Helicopters did catch on to some degree, but the fact is that they aren't suitable for picking people up or dropping them off in city centres.

MULTICOPTERS

One answer offered by the new wave of air taxi firms is basically an electric helicopter, often called a "multicopter". Such designs, rather than a single large set of rotors, usually have many small sets of rotors attached to a frame above the fuselage, each powered by its own electric motor (though China's eHang attaches the rotor frame to the bottom of the cab).

Perhaps the best known multicopter design comes from **Volocopter**, a German company which has been working on its aircraft for ten years now. Its latest fourth generation machine, is called the **VoloCity**.



A multicopter's many rotors give it almost as large a thrust disc area as a normal helicopter, so if it can muster as much power and carry as much energy as a normal helicopter it will offer similar performance.

The VoloCity is similar size and weight to a normal light helicopter. Volocopter says it can lift two average men with a small margin left over, and as such will be suitable for piloted taxi operations with one passenger. However, the VoloCity won't be able to stay up for long before its batteries go flat, but the company says it can make useful short trips.

TILTROTOR

Electric multicopters are seriously limited in endurance, range and speed. Volocopter claims that the VoloCity can make 35km trips. The reality, as with any battery-powered machine, is likely to fall short of the manufacturer's spec, especially once the batteries have been through a significant number of charge-discharge cycles.

This range problem is why most air taxi startups favour something other than a simple multicopter. There are many variations out there, but all involve landing and taking off vertically under propeller thrust and transitioning to aeroplane-style flight once moving horizontally. Using lift from wings requires much less power than vertical thrust, and allows aircraft to achieve a much greater speed and range.

Tiltrotors point their propellers up in helicopter mode to make vertical landings or takeoffs and swivel them to point forward when flying in aeroplane mode which allows them to fly further and faster than a normal helicopter can. They are a popular idea in the air taxi world as it's comparatively easy, with electric drive, to use lots of propellers bringing safety and reliability benefits as the machine can keep flying even if it should lose a motor or a prop (or even two).

One prominent electric tiltrotor design is that of **Joby Aviation**, set to list on the NYSE through the SPAC Reinvent Technology Partners at a projected valuation of \$6.6bn. Joby's current aircraft, the **Joby 2.0**, is a five-seater design with six tilting propellers, four on the wings and two on its V-shaped tail. It has actually flown, though mostly unmanned so far, and its maker claims 250km range and

AREN'T QUITE READY YET!

300+ kph speed and it is also very quiet. Joby says it has an agreed pathway to certification with the Federal Aviation Authority, and expects to be cleared for piloted passenger carrying in 2023. Some of its pre-SPAC venture funding came from Toyota, so there is at-scale manufacturing expertise on tap.



LIFT AND CRUISE

There are other kinds of copter-plane transitioning craft out there. Some don't tilt their propellers, instead having separate, dedicated vertical and horizontal thrusters. This is referred to in the air-taxi sector as "lift and cruise". Drag from the lift fans when cruising is a problem here, as is the weight of two sets of equipment, but the approach does have the virtue of simplicity. Contenders in this area include the **Cora** from **Wisk Aero**, spun off from Google co-founder Larry Page's Kitty Hawk venture, and the **PAV** from well-known aircraft firm **Aurora Flight Sciences**, now owned by **Boeing**.

DUCTED-FAN CRAFT

Yet another design is the use of ducted fans, where the propellers are inside round or tubular cases which can be separated from the aircraft or built into it. One company taking the built-in path is **Lilium**, which mounts the tubular ducts in rows along the wings of its aircraft. The company calls these "jets" and its aircraft is known as the **Lilium Jet**. The electric jets swivel to point down for takeoff and landing, and then point back in the cruise. Significantly, the planned Lilium Jet has maximum takeoff weight of more than three tonnes, triple that of the Volocopter and half again that of the current Joby 2.0. This means that it can carry six passengers plus pilot - and lift more battery.



The hefty aircraft and the jets' small discs mean high disc loading and heavy energy drain in the hover, and Lilium admits this is a weak point. But the ducts act to cut down noise and once in the air, the Lilium Jet's large battery and streamlined, closely integrated fans should mean better range and speed than its competitors - 250+ km and cruising speed of 280kph - about the same as Joby. Lilium also states that it's not interested in flights of less than 20km.

So there's a spectrum, perhaps, among the electric vertical-lift startups. At one end there are short-hop companies such as Volocopter and at the other companies such as Lilium seeking to link different cities - but still from downtown pads rather than out-of-town airports. And in the middle there's Joby, claiming to be the best of all worlds.

BATTERY CAPACITY OR LACK OF...

There is one huge issue hanging over all these companies, and that is the matter of battery capacity. It's more or less openly acknowledged by most of them that their projected endurance, range and speed figures do not refer to the prototypes they have flying today. Rather, these figures are based on their current aircraft - but equipped with better batteries which they think they might be able to get in the near future.

Yes, an electric multicopter or tiltrotor or ducted-fan craft can lift off, fly, and land again. But it's safe to say that with current battery technology, very few of the current aircraft have stayed up for long or gone very far. There isn't, yet, a working flying car/taxi.

This can be stated because the mathematics of disc loading, weight and battery power are relatively well understood, and the sums have been done by people other than the electric air taxi firms. NASA engineers, for instance, have recently said that battery packs capable of storing 400 Watt-hours of energy per kilogram of weight (400 Wh/kg) are a requirement for useful vertical-takeoff electric aircraft.

It's important to note here that there's a big difference between the specific energy a single lithium-ion cell can hold and the amount a whole lot of cells assembled in a pack can hold: cells can't just be packed together in a mass, they need to be insulated from each other and usually provided with cooling systems and other additions. It's not uncommon, when battery cells are either charging or discharging quickly, for them to overheat: if precautions aren't taken, cells can catch fire and then set off other cells, in a phenomenon called "thermal runaway".

All this means that assembled, ready-for-service battery packs have much worse specific energy figures than their individual cells, so that almost miraculous 600 Wh/kg cells would probably be needed to achieve NASA's required 400 Wh/kg packs.

It therefore seems that we may be waiting for our flying taxi rides for quite some time yet.

This article is an abridged version of a feature written by Lewis Page for VERDICT

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

At Patterson Law we have had an increasing number of enquiries in relation to allegations of '*driving otherwise in accordance with a licence*' and using a vehicle without insurance in relation to the use of privately owned e-scooters. But are they legal, can anyone use them and what are the implications for the trade?

Currently, the law is complicated and the use of e-scooters is generally prohibited. But the government is now trialling e-scooters in some UK cities and depending on the outcome of those trials is proposing new laws which will change the face of transport in cities as we know it.

THE CURRENT LAW ON E-SCOOTERS

Is an e-scooter a motor vehicle?

Currently there is no regulatory framework specifically for e-scooters, so they tend to fall within the legal definition of a '**motor vehicle**' as they have an electric motor. The **Road Traffic Act 1988 (RTA)** defines a motor vehicle as "**any mechanically propelled vehicle intended or adapted for use on roads**". This covers a variety of personal transport devices which are mechanically propelled:

In the case of **DPP v Saddington [2000]** the High Court found that a Go-Ped, which is a scooter powered by an internal combustion engine, was a motor vehicle in the statutory framework. The rider in this case was therefore required by law to have a driving licence and insurance when using one on the road. **Winter v DPP [2002]** considered the use of a 'City Bug' electric scooter, and whether its user was bound by the compulsory insurance requirements. It found that it was, and that the appellant had been properly convicted of the offence of driving a vehicle without insurance. Further to this Segways were considered '**motor vehicles**' in **Coates v Crown Prosecution Service [2011]**.

So generally, e-scooters are considered as '**vehicles**'. But electric bikes (EAPCs) and mobility scooters are different and are governed by their own statutory framework.

EAPCs are pedal cycles that can be propelled by both pedals and an electric motor, and have their own specific law. Generally, it will only be considered a '**motor vehicle**' if it is capable of being propelled at more than 15mph, exceeds 40kg or has a power output of greater than 250W.

Similarly, mobility scooters have their own legislation designed to allow the use of electric vehicles specifically designed to transport sick and disabled persons, and so are also not classed as '**motor vehicles**' under the **RTA**.

But an e-scooter is adapted for road use and therefore to be

used on a road or a public place lawfully it must meet several different requirements. These include having the correct licence and insurance; paying vehicle tax and adhering to the same safety criteria as other motor vehicles such as fully functioning brakes, lights, indicators, and correct and safe tyres.

Can people use e-scooters if they meet these requirements?

Yes – but only if a person can meet the requirements that apply to motor vehicles.

However, users will no doubt find difficulty in meeting various (and complicated) safety and registration requirements, as well as insuring them. Additionally if they are not ridden safely, riders can be charged with the same offences as they would be if driving a car or riding a motorbike such as dangerous driving, driving without due care and attention, driving whilst using a mobile telephone and drink/drug driving.

Can e-scooters be used on the pavement?

No. It is an offence to use an e-scooter on the pavement under **section 72 Highway Act 1835**. This rule applies to almost all vehicles, with special legal exceptions for mobility scooters and wheelchairs.

In addition, e-scooters are forbidden from using footpaths. A footpath is a public right of way over land which may only be used on foot (as opposed to a bridleway or a carriage-way). Mechanically propelled vehicles are forbidden from using footpaths by **section 34 RTA**.

What about in a cycle Lane?

No. E-scooters are prohibited from using cycle tracks, cycle lanes on roads, or other spaces dedicated to pedal cycle use only (**s.21(1), RTA**). EAPCs and mobility scooters are exempt.

What about private land?

Yes. However, for this purpose the **RTA** states that private land can only be private if it is not accessible to the public. Spaces which might be thought of as private such as car parks, public squares, privately-owned roads, industrial estates, and university campuses are not always classed as private land as the general public have access to them. Whether land is public or not is a complicated legal issue, and every case is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Trials

The Government is currently running a scheme where people can ride a rented e-scooter. At the conclusion of this scheme the government is proposing to amend the legislation, so e-scooters have a specific regulatory framework.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

The Trial guidance states how to travel safely, licensing guidance and the rules of the road as part of the Trial **only** and is not applicable to privately owned scooters but gives an indication as to the likely framework when it is introduced.

The specifications for e-scooters within this Trial under **The Electric Scooter Trials and Traffic Signs (Coronavirus) Regulations and General Directions 2020** are as follows:-

An “**electric scooter**” means a vehicle which

- (a) is fitted with an electric motor with a maximum continuous power rating not exceeding 500 watts.**
- (b) is not fitted with pedals capable of propelling the vehicle.**
- (c) has two wheels, one front and one rear, aligned along the direction of travel.**
- (d) is designed to carry no more than one person.**
- (e) has a maximum weight of 55 kgs (excluding the driver)**
- (f) has a maximum design speed not exceeding 15.5 mph;**
- (g) has a means of directional control through the use of handlebars mechanically linked to the steered wheel;**
- (h) has a means of controlling speed through hand controls;**
- (i) has a power control that defaults to the ‘off’ position**

Driving licences

Riders must have category Q entitlement on their driving licence to use an e-scooter. A full or provisional UK licence for categories AM, A or B includes category Q entitlement.

If they have a provisional licence, they do not need to show L plates when using an e-scooter.

If they have an overseas driving licence, they can use an e-scooter if they:

- have a valid full licence from an EU or European Economic Area (EEA) country (so long as this does not prohibit them from driving low-speed mopeds and motorcycles)**
- have a valid full licence from another country that entitles them to drive a small vehicle (e.g. cars, mopeds, or motorcycles) and they entered the UK within the last 12 months.**

They cannot use an e-scooter if they have an overseas provisional licence, learner permit or equivalent.

Insurance

E-scooters must have motor insurance, but riders do not need to arrange this as this will be provided by the e-scooter rental operator.

Helmets and clothing

Riders should wear a cycle helmet when using an e-scooter. Helmets are recommended but are not a legal requirement. They are advised to wear light-coloured or fluorescent clothing

so that other road users can see them in daylight, poor light and in the dark. But again, this is not a legal requirement.

Where people can use a trial e-scooter

They may use a trial e-scooter on the road (except motorways) and in cycle lanes.

They must not use an e-scooter on the pavement.



Traffic signs with the cycle symbol apply to e-scooters (unless a sign is displayed prohibiting e-scooters from that particular cycle way):

Registration plates and vehicle excise duty

E-scooters do not need to be registered, display registration plates, or pay vehicle excise duty.

Other safety rules for trial e-scooter users:

- e-scooters should only be used in the area hosting the trial.
- e-scooters should be used by one person at a time.
- they must not tow anything using an e-scooter.
- they must not use a mobile phone when using an e-scooter.
- they may use a screen to display navigation information, but this must be set up prior to setting off.
- always ensure bags or other small items will not cause a danger – never hang them from the handlebars.
- they should not ride an e-scooter while drunk or otherwise intoxicated – they may be prosecuted under drink or drug driving laws as careless and dangerous driving offences also apply to users of e-scooters.
- they should also refer to the terms of use of the e-scooter operator before renting a trial e-scooter.

The future

The future of e-scooters is uncertain and much will depend on the success of these trials. But considering the government’s green energy push and relentless ambition to remove cars from the road, it’s unlikely this will disappear.

After the trials we will no doubt see further trials and amendments, before a permanent change in the law allowing use of e-scooters. But whether that will be a free use, allowing all to use as freely as skateboards and bicycles, or a restricted use, similar to one being trialled at the moment, will almost entirely depend on the next few months.

If you need any advice on motoring matters, please email e.patterson@pattersonlaw.co.uk or call 01626 359800 for free legal advice.

For regular updates on road traffic law follow us on twitter.com/Patterson_law_ or facebook.com/PattersonLawMotoringSolicitors



A LOOK BACK AT GARAGES

THE WORD 'GARAGE' ACTUALLY COMES FROM THE

It is easy these days to pull up to one of the many petrol stations to put fuel into your vehicle, or to visit a garage shop. That might all change in time with the advent of electric vehicles?

How annoying is it when you want to pull up to a pump to find that you are waiting for an indefinite period of time whilst the person in front of you is buying food and drink, some of them have not even filled up with fuel, they have just abandoned their vehicle?

In the early 1900s, before petrol pumps even existed, you had to purchase petrol from hardware stores in two gallon cans, or believe it or not, visit the local blacksmith's shop which could sell you petrol whilst his forge was merrily heating a piece of metal to an extremely high temperature. Cars also had running boards and on these boards was a place where you could conveniently attach an extra fuel can.



Early petrol stations were not custom-built, most of them, particularly those in villages and small towns, were buildings built for other purposes which were converted into a garage that had a mechanic, who was usually the garage owner and lived in the house situated at the back. The word 'garage' comes from the French word 'Garer', which means to shelter.

In fact, an interesting point I found whilst researching this article was that these early garages usually had a car that was available for the mechanic to take the local doctor, business person or anybody in particular to the train station whilst their vehicle was serviced. This believe it or not was the beginning of the private hire vehicle business.

Cars of yesteryear were nowhere near as complex as cars of today. Mechanics were usually self-taught and were familiar with engines of any make of car.

If your car broke down and you could not repair it yourself, it was usually a man with a horse who came to your rescue to tow you to the nearest repair shop. The repair shop was usually a cycle shop. Cycles became increasingly popular in the 1890s, so much so that when automobiles were increasing in numbers, the cycle shops became car sales shops and then small garages.

The **Locomotives and Highways Act 1896** removed the strict rules and UK speed limits that were included in the early government acts. Before the 1896 Act came into force, we had the **Locomotive Act 1865** which stipulated that any self-propelled road vehicle had to have a person in front, about 60 yards, carrying a red flag. The top speed was 4 mph in the country and 2 mph in towns and cities but after the **1896 Act** you could drive at 14 mph.

Naturally, the powerful railways lobby and those that wanted to keep using horse drawn vehicles wanted low speed limits to be kept on public highways. They were concerned about noisy combustion engines frightening the horses and their riders as well as horse drawn carriages.

In 1902 the Imperial Motor Works of Lyndhurst, Hampshire started to operate as a garage. It is now called Meridien Modena, an official Ferrari dealer. Lyndhurst is known as the capital village of The New Forest but in the early 1900s, although the garage had petrol pumps there were more New Forest ponies, (who of course have the right of way wandering the roads in this area) than cars. The garage staff at Imperial were experts at a wide range of repairs, stripping down engines, repairing upholstery and specifically mending tyres that had collected nails used to shoe horses.

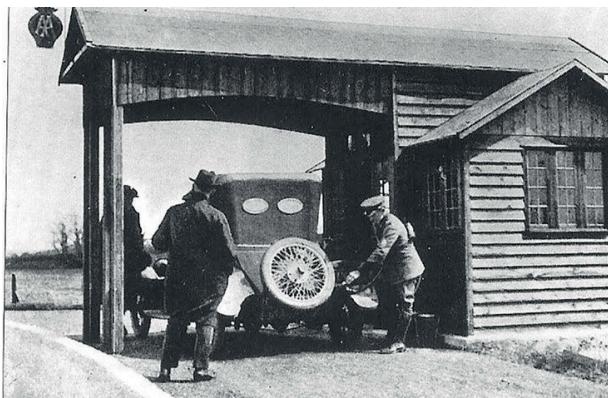
In February 1914, an unusual incident at this garage occurred when one of the staff was employed as a chauffeur to take an American guest on a day's visit, touring the local area. The passenger pulled out a revolver and told the chauffeur to drive to unfamiliar places. He randomly fired the gun on the journey, but was eventually arrested and he shot himself dead.

In 1908 the Automobile Association published its first AA membership's special handbook which contained a list of nationwide agents and repairers. Later, in 1949 they launched a night-time breakdown and recovery service, first in London then elsewhere in the country.

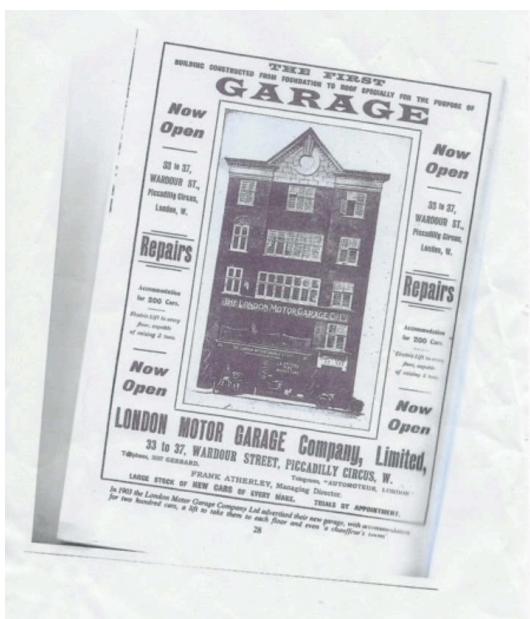


A LOOK BACK AT GARAGES

FRENCH WORD 'GARER', WHICH MEANS 'TO SHELTER'



The famous AA garage at Aldermaston is regarded as the first UK garage solely constructed for the sale of fuel in 1919. When the **Roadside Petrol Pumps Act** became law, it allowed local authorities the power to license the increasing number of garages that were being constructed. Surprisingly, the AA were the leaders of garage designs, followed by oil companies who saw the possibilities of their product being sold nationwide.



The London Motor Garage Company Ltd of Piccadilly Circus was the first building constructed from the foundation to roof, especially for the specific purpose of use as a garage.

As the 1903 photograph above states, it could accommodate 200 cars and had an electric lift to reach every floor, which sounds incredible.

In the 1930s a semi-detached house could be bought for between £300 - £600, depending on where in the UK and how many houses were in the area. Around the same time, a garage in Yorkshire, with living accommodation and four petrol pumps and space for ten cars was advertised at £1,400.

When the Second World War came, garages were struggling financially. Mechanics went away to war, fuel was in limited supply and many vehicles were used by the government for different forms of wartime transport. However, after the war had ended, there was a shortage of private cars being manufactured and the second hand market value of older models rocketed!

It was not long before large companies, such as Ford, Morris and Austin, along with other makers insisted that a garage would act as an agent for its models and for that garage only to be the agent for one particular brand of car. Mechanics were then fully trained on particular cars, in the same way as someone who we seem to forget, the motor parts department personnel (store man). So, it was a full circle of business fortune.



Of course, the sale now of old fuel delivery cans, garage signs, in fact anything to do with historic memorabilia fetches high prices at auctions including the internet.

Ian Hall, Chairman SHPHA

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WORLDWIDE TAXI FOCUS

from Ireland



IRISH CABBIE CLEARED OF CARELESS DRIVING AS JURY ASK FOR NEW LAWS FOR E SCOOTERS

A taxi driver was cleared on the charge of careless driving causing serious bodily harm to a young man travelling on an e-scooter wearing dark clothes - and the jury called for new legislation for people using e-scooters.

According to Echo Live, the jury at Cork Circuit Criminal Court reached a unanimous not guilty verdict in the case and attached a note to the verdict for the attention of Judge Brian O'Callaghan who invited the foreperson to read it.

"We recommend that the legislation be updated in regard to all road users to include electric scooters and the legal requirement to wear a high visibility vest and to have insurance to drive on the road.

"The full responsibility and due care should not fall solely on car users," the foreperson said.

Judge O'Callaghan told the taxi driver Jonathan Anayochukwu of Ballincollig, County Cork, that he was free to go as there was no further charge against him.

The judge assured the six men and six women of the jury that their recommendation would be brought to the attention of the relevant authorities.

The charge on the indictment had alleged that on July 28 2020, the defendant did drive without due care and attention thereby causing serious bodily harm to Bojan Vucak.

The injured party was travelling on an e-scooter at the time of the incident which gave rise to the charge being brought. Mr Vucak said he left work at 11pm on his e-scooter wearing a black leather jacket, dark blue jeans and shoes. He had a hood up because it was raining heavily. He was not wearing a helmet. There was a backlight on the scooter and reflectors on the front wheel, he said.

"Approximately, 100 metres from home, going up the hill I got hit. I thought it was a bus. Before I knew what was happening I was on the floor, blood pouring down my face, Mr Vucak said.

Prosecution barrister, Ray Boland, said that the injured party sustained a skull fracture and fractures to his facial bones and other injuries.

Mr Vucak told defence barrister Emmet Boyle he was much better now apart from some numbness to the left of his face. Sam Daly, the front seat passenger in the taxi stated that it was darker where the accident occurred due to the presence of trees. But Mr Daly said he did not see the moment of the collision because he was looking at his phone.

Pedestrian Alina Skoryk was walking by at the time and similarly she did not see the moment of the collision because she was also looking at her phone.

IRISH CABBIE GETS SUSPENDED SENTENCE FOR KISSING PASSENGER WITHOUT CONSENT

A taxi driver who kissed a passenger without her consent as she was collecting her bag from the car has been given a suspended sentence for sexual assault.

According to breakingnews.ie, father of four, Kusika Kudia, 55, later admitted to gardaí in interview that he had kissed the woman without her permission but suggested she was "looking for a kiss".

Kudia, from Dublin, pleaded guilty at Dublin Circuit Criminal Court to sexually assaulting the woman in February 2020. He is still working as a taxi driver.

Judge Karen O'Connor said Kudia's behaviour was "totally and utterly unacceptable and it amounted to sexual assault". "A person who is the holder of a public vehicle licence has a duty to be trustworthy and ensure members of the public can travel safely and be returned home safely," she said.

She took into account a number of mitigating factors, including Kudia's lack of previous convictions and his early guilty plea. She sentenced him to nine months prison, suspended on conditions including that Kudia remain under the supervision of the Probation Service for 12 months.

Garda Mark Paul told Elva Duffy BL, prosecuting, that the woman got into Kudia's taxi with a friend following a night out in Dublin. Her friend was dropped off before she directed Kudia to take her to her home.

She said during the journey she asked to stop at an ATM to withdraw cash. On her return to the taxi, Kudia asked her to sit in the front seat beside him rather than in the back seat. She refused, but Kudia asked her to move again. The woman later told gardaí that Kudia was not aggressive and spoke quietly, but she continued to refuse to move.

On reaching her destination, she got out of the car and noticed that Kudia had got out of the taxi also.

The woman told gardaí that he approached her and asked for hug and to "come back with me". She refused, but he wrapped his arms around her and "got a good hold of her". She said "no in a meaningful way" and tried to elbow him, but he pushed his face towards her and forced his tongue into her mouth. The woman said she then went into "survival mode" and managed to get away and into her house.

Kudia was identified through CCTV footage and he was traced as the registered user of the vehicle.

He was interviewed two weeks later and accepted he had kissed the woman without permission, but insisted he had not used his tongue.

Keith Spencer BL, defending, submitted to the court that his client's livelihood is now in jeopardy. He asked the court to accept that his client has no criminal history and he has never been accused of any similar behaviour since.

"It was a massive error of judgement. He accepts that he had no right to make the advance he did," Mr Spencer said.



from Spain



MADRID UNVEILS PLANS FOR 1,000 HYDROGEN TAXIS BY 2026

Madrid taxi association, Federación Profesional del Taxi de Madrid (FPTM), wants to replace 1,000 of its current internal combustion engine fleet of taxis with hydrogen-powered vehicles by 2026 in the Spanish city.

According to H2-View, the plans are part of the pioneering €100m 'Taxi-as-a-service' project, which will see FPTM work in partnership with Madrileña Red de Gas, Fotowatio Renewable Ventures (FRV), Toyota Spain, Grupo Ruiz and PwC, and aims to offer taxi fleets hydrogen vehicles that are cost competitive with traditional technologies.

FRV will be responsible for developing the entire infrastructure for renewable production and recharging, as well as supplying hydrogen to the taxi fleet; Toyota Spain will supply its Mirai fuel cell electric vehicle (FCEV).

FPTM plans to introduce the first Toyota Mirais by 2022.

A 10MW electrolyser is expected to be built in Madrid, powered by a 20MW photovoltaic solar plant, to supply the green hydrogen for the taxis.

from Germany



TAXI COMPANY BECOMES THE FIRST IN GERMANY TO ACCEPT CRYPTO AS PAYMENT

German taxi company Tesla Taxi Aschaffenburg announced that it now accepts payments for rides in cryptocurrencies. According to Tesmanian, a few days ago, Tesla Taxi Aschaffenburg made an announcement on Reddit that it is starting to accept Dogecoin as payment for using the service.

The company's website states that it began accepting payments in cryptocurrency from May 30, 2021 becoming the first taxi in Germany to accept Dogecoin, as well as Bitcoin and Ethereum cryptocurrencies as payment.

The introduction of such a payment method in a small company demonstrates how easy cryptocurrencies are to use. At the moment, all developed countries of the world have access to the Internet. So the clients can quickly and easily transfer cryptocurrency to the company's account using the wallet installed on their smartphone.

The taxi service has Model S and Model 3 in its fleet and offers a wide range of services in its region, from everyday trips to

catering for special events. The adoption of cryptocurrencies makes Tesla Taxi Aschaffenburg an even more interesting and innovative taxi service, and the company owner Stefan Müller says he is always open to new technologies.

from USA



NYC BANS NEW ELECTRIC TAXI LICENCES SNUBBING REVEL'S TESLA TAXI PLANS

New York's taxi regulator voted on Tuesday 22 June, to stop issuing new for-hire licences for EVs, snubbing a company that wanted to launch an all-Tesla ride-sharing rival to Uber. The New York Post reports that the five-to-one vote by the Taxi and Limousine Commission blocks electric transit startup Revel from launching its fleet of 50 Model Y Tesla taxis. The TLC argued that Revel can still operate if it buys 50 gas cars and swaps their licences out for EVs - a requirement Revel called "the very definition of limiting market competition."

"It is not sustainable to allow an unlimited number of new vehicles to the road in a city that is all too familiar with the choke of traffic congestion," TLC Chair Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk said at the meeting.

"What we will not allow is the opportunity for another corporation to flood our streets with additional cars."

Revel CEO Frank Reig slammed the TLC's ban, saying that in addition to its plan for environmentally friendly taxis, Revel offered its drivers fairer treatment than Uber and Lyft as it hired them as full-time employees.

"We're offering exactly what this commission has been asking for for years: fair treatment and stable pay for drivers - who are all W-2 employees with benefits - and a plan to drive EV adoption in the city," Reig said.

Reig's company - which has raised \$31.6m from backers including Toyota, griped that the TLC "offered no evidence or analysis" to support its move to end the EV exemption.

"The Commissioners sat through almost three hours of testimony on all sides yet asked zero questions and spent zero time deliberating before making a policy decision with profound consequences," Reig said in a statement after the vote. "The TLC never intended to consider what drivers and New Yorkers had to say, and only cared about jamming through this vote with as little scrutiny as possible."

Revel's plan would have been allowed under previous TLC rules, but shortly after Revel announced its plans to launch the Tesla service, Heredia Jarmoszuk said the agency planned to eliminate the EV exemption for ride-sharing licences.

Representatives of the New York Taxi Workers Alliance and several taxi drivers praised the TLC's rule change, while the Independent Drivers Guild and activist groups blasted it, saying it would set back efforts to address climate change.

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THE BERNIE THE BOOK COLUMN

REJUVINATED SPIETH TO LIFT CLARET JUG BUT IT'S ALL TOO FAMILIAR AT SW19

BY THE TIME YOU READ this we should (English weather permitting) be in the second round of Wimbledon so hopefully nothing too dramatic has happened.



The Men's tournament looks all too familiar with Novak Djokovic seemingly peerless but **4/5 IS HARDLY A WORKING MAN'S PRICE**. The effect of the draw does however lend itself to betting opportunities with Federer, Zverev, Medvedev and recent Queens champion Berrettini all vying for a final appearance.

And that is where my focus will start.

MATTEO BERRETTINI looks a natural on grass and he might emerge from the bottom half where the other top ranked seeds are neither proficient or familiar on grass and where Old Father Time might just be calling for the FedEx Express (finally). A Novak/Berrettini final is available at 8/1 and a win for the young Italian 12/1 (pre-tournament). The Womens tournament is a minefield and stakes should be kept small. Can you ever remember being able to back the serene Serena at 7/1 on grass!!! Unthinkable, but true.

Every Women's Grand Slam seems to bring up a new champion and this year, Osaka has withdrawn, Barty is playing through injury and recent champions are not here... and therefore the best bet appears to be the ex-champion, **GARBINE MUGURUZA** who is available at a very generous 12/1, in some lists. Add in the mix **MARIA SAKKINI** at

double carpet (33/1) and we have a staking plan for small stakes.

The thing about the women's tournament is that this could be the year where the old guard is vanquished, and any number of East European tennis players could come to the fore. But Wimbledon is Wimbledon - so back Muguruza.



July is always a stellar month for British sport with Sunday, July 11 a double whammy with both the Wimbledon Men's Final and the final of Euro 2020 taking place. My tips for Euro 2020 are well documented with my original fancy, Italy, still in the tournament. But the other major sporting event happening in July is the Open Golf Championship, this year staged at Royal St George's in Kent. The tournament takes place from the 15th-18th July.

Who will lift the Claret Jug this year?

My number one fancy is **JORDAN SPIETH** who has a rich association with our Open. Winner in 2017 (do you remember that miraculous recovery in the final round to break the heart of Matt Kuchar?) and also involved in the final stages of the Open at St Andrews.

Well now he's back and his form that, at the beginning of the year could be looked upon as transitory, is certainly more permanent. Americans have to adapt their game more so than Europeans and South Americans, but Spieth is one of a number who can acclimatise. The other selection is **DUSTIN JOHNSON** who finished second here to Darren Clarke last time it was staged in Sandwich. If the world number two was in better form he would be a much shorter price but I'll happily take the 14/1 currently available.



But the markets for the Open are not confined just for the winner, with a whole raft of bets available from groups, match bets and top golfer from their continent. These are not yet out but you should keep the following on your side:

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Fuel Consumption figures for the ŠKODA Octavia 1.0 TSi e-TEC SE DSG Hybrid MPG (l/100km): WLTP Combined 44.9-56.5. CO₂ emissions: 115-143 g/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.

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