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FIT AND PROPER TEST

THE FIT AND PROPER PERSON TEST EXPLAINED

Article by Talal Malik, Solicitor
Transit Legal
www.transitlegal.co.uk



The statutory foundation and the absence of definition

Few expressions are more deeply embedded in taxi and private hire licensing than the requirement that an applicant or licence holder be a “*fit and proper person*”. It is found in the principal statutory frameworks governing hackney carriage and private hire licensing, including the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and the Town Police Clauses Act 1847. It is repeated in virtually every licensing policy adopted by local authorities across England and Wales, and it features routinely in committee reports, delegated officer decisions, and appellate judgments.

Despite its ubiquity, the phrase is deliberately undefined. The statutory language confers a discretion upon the licensing authority to determine whether it is satisfied that an individual is fit and proper to hold a licence. The courts have consistently recognised that this is an evaluative judgment rooted in public protection rather than punishment.

The absence of statutory definition is not a weakness in the framework. It reflects the breadth of circumstances that may arise and the need for local authorities to exercise informed judgment. The test operates less as a rigid rule and more as a structured assessment of regulatory risk.

Public protection as the governing principle

Taxi and private hire licensing is, at its core, a protective regime. Drivers operate in close proximity to members of the public, often in confined spaces and frequently with passengers who are vulnerable by reason of age, disability, intoxication, or unfamiliarity with their surroundings. Safeguarding concerns are not theoretical; they are grounded in lived regulatory experience.

It is against that background that the authority must decide whether it can entrust an individual with a licence. The DfT’s Statutory Taxi and Private Hire

Vehicle Standards reinforce the centrality of safeguarding within the decision-making process. Authorities are directed to prioritise public safety and to act where doubt exists.

When a sub-committee considers whether an applicant or existing driver is fit and proper, it is not conducting a moral inquiry. Nor is it replicating the criminal courts. It is asking whether it can be positively satisfied that the travelling public will be safe in that individual’s care. That is a forward-looking assessment.

Risk, not retribution

A recurring misconception is that licensing action requires proof of criminal wrongdoing. The evidential threshold in licensing is the civil standard: the balance of probabilities. Committees are entitled to consider a broad range of material, including complaints, police information, safeguarding referrals, and intelligence, provided it is approached with appropriate caution.

The authority is not imposing punishment. It is not revisiting criminal liability. It is evaluating risk. The distinction is significant. An allegation which did not result in charge may still be capable of consideration. The proper question is what the material reveals about judgment, reliability, honesty, or respect for professional standards.

From the regulator’s perspective, it is an assessment of future confidence. The passage of time, evidence of rehabilitation, and sustained compliance are all relevant. They may carry considerable weight. They are not, however, automatically decisive.

The confidence question

Although not expressed in statute, many committees adopt a formulation approved in case law: would members of the public feel safe if a close friend or family member travelled alone with this driver?

Confidence is central. The authority must have positive assurance that the individual can be trusted with the responsibilities of licensure. Where doubt persists, the consequence frequently falls on the licence holder rather than the public.

In practice, that confidence is shaped not only by the underlying conduct but by the manner in which it is addressed. Committees routinely assess credibility,

FIT AND PROPER TEST

observing responses under questioning and the extent to which genuine insight is shown into the conduct in issue.

Insight, attitude, and reassurance

Often, the decisive factor is not the incident itself but the attitude displayed when it is examined. A purely defensive stance, confined to disputing facts or criticising process, may do little to address the committee's underlying concern. Even where innocence is maintained, there remains an expectation of engagement with the standards required of a licensed driver.

Insight does not require admission of criminal liability, but it does require recognition of the high standards imposed. Demonstrated reflection and appreciation of safeguarding responsibilities can provide reassurance.

Conversely, failure to recognise the seriousness of concerns can erode confidence. Minor incidents may carry greater weight where coupled with a dismissive attitude; licensing engages judgment and temperament as much as events.

The expanding scope of relevant conduct

Over time, the range of matters treated as relevant to the fit and proper assessment has broadened. Conduct outside working hours, online activity, interactions with licensing officers, and failures of disclosure are now routinely scrutinised. The modern regulatory view is that public trust is indivisible.

Disregard for regulatory requirements in one context may signal risk in another. Non-disclosure of arrests or convictions, however minor, commonly engages honesty, and the failure to inform promptly can prove more damaging than the underlying event.

Operators, too, may find themselves subject to review where driver conduct suggests weaknesses in oversight or safeguarding culture. Although the statutory tests differ, the underlying principle of public protection remains consistent.

Reassessment and regulatory continuity

A feature of licensing that often surprises long-standing drivers is the authority's entitlement to reassess risk whenever new information emerges. A lengthy period of compliant service is plainly relevant and will ordinarily be acknowledged. However, it does not create a vested right to renewal or immunity from review.

Each renewal or review prompted by new information requires a fresh assessment of fitness and propriety. Past acceptance does not bind future decisions; the regime is concerned with continuing public safety.

Drivers may appear before a sub-committee following arrest, safeguarding referral, complaint, or alleged breach. In each case, the task is to assess whether confidence has been compromised and, if so, whether it can be restored.

The practical implications are substantial. Suspension or revocation may follow, sometimes with immediate effect where public safety is considered to require urgent intervention. The financial and reputational consequences are significant. It is therefore critical that representations address not only disputed facts but the broader issue of regulatory confidence.

Trust as the core of the test

At its heart, the fit and proper person test is about trust grounded in evidence. It is an evaluative judgment exercised within a statutory framework but informed by safeguarding imperatives, policy guidance, and local knowledge. It resists rigid definition because it must be capable of accommodating the wide variety of circumstances encountered in practice.

Those who approach hearings as though they were criminal trials sometimes find that they are answering the wrong question. The central issue is not whether the authority can prove wrongdoing beyond reasonable doubt. It is whether it can be satisfied, on the material available, that members of the public will be safe.

Understanding that reality materially alters how cases are prepared and presented. Engagement with risk, acknowledgement of regulatory standards, and credible reassurance frequently carry greater weight than technical argument alone.

I specialise in transport regulatory and licensing law, representing drivers and operators before licensing sub-committees, Magistrates' Courts, and the Traffic Commissioners. Those facing investigation, review, suspension, revocation, refusal, or public inquiry will often benefit from early, structured advice.

I am available to advise and represent licence holders navigating the fit and proper person test and the wider regulatory framework.

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JUST DESERTS

HAMMER WIELDING THUGS ROB WIGAN CABBIE IN LATE-NIGHT AMBUSH

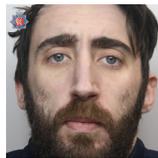
A Wigan cabbie was subjected to a terrifying ordeal when a routine 2am. booking turned into a violent robbery. The driver was waiting for a customer in Platt Bridge on December 29 when two masked men suddenly approached his black Hyundai Ioniq.

While one man opened the passenger door, his accomplice cornered the driver and threatened him with a hammer. Inside

the cab, a struggle broke out as the attackers snatched mobile phones from their cradles.

Thomas Stewart, 29, ransacked the centre console while demanding: "Where is the money?"

During the raid, the driver was struck with the hammer on his hand and again on his calf. The



thugs eventually fled with £90 they found under a floor mat, tossing the car keys away as they escaped. The entire attack was captured on the vehicle's dashcam, providing police with crucial evidence that led them to Stewart's home in Scholes, Wigan. He was arrested and sentenced to four years in prison for robbery on 20 February. However, the man who wielded the hammer remains at large.

LATE NIGHT CAB ROBBERY AT KNIFEPOINT ENDS IN 3-YEAR PRISON SENTENCE FOR COATBRIDGE MAN

A late-night robbery involving a taxi driver held at knifepoint has resulted in a 22-month prison sentence for a Coatbridge man.

Mark Doyle, 36, appeared at Airdrie Sheriff Court to face the consequences of the September 2024 attack, which saw the driver lose his earnings and his car keys. The incident began just after 1am

when a taxi was dispatched after a booking was made from Doyle's phone. Doyle and his accomplice, Jamie Lee Black, 30, entered the vehicle and the situation turned violent as both produced knives.

Doyle said: "Give us all your money." During the struggle, Doyle grabbed a pencil case from the driver's door containing £200 in

fares. He then snatched the car keys, leaving the driver stranded. Police caught up the pair later, finding Black with over £80 in cash. She was sentenced to 26 months in prison late last year.

Doyle's sentencing was delayed but eventually included an extra 14 months for unrelated crimes bringing the total to three years' jail.

16 MONTHS IN JAIL FOR RACIST THUG WHO STAGED TERRIFYING MOCK BOMB COUNTDOWN IN LEEDS

A racist attacker who sparked panic by claiming he had planted a bomb and counting down to a "blast" has been sentenced.

Aaran Barden, 33, carried out a series of vile attacks last August, beginning with a taxi driver taking him to Middleton, telling him: "You p*** b****, one of you took my money and drove off yesterday."

On 12 February Leeds Crown Court heard that Barden then began to talk about a "bomb" and said he

had one in his bag. He told the taxi driver: "I'm going to blow you up." He then shouted out of the car window to a group of Asian women, 'F*** off you p*** b*****'.

Barden then targeted a woman, her sister-in-law and daughter in the street, and after shouting, "Go back to your f***** country," he followed the family into a shop where he claimed to have a bomb, forcing staff to hide the family.

Finally, Barden followed one of the

women to her car, kicking the doors and beginning a mock countdown. The victim, trapped in the passenger seat, was left in fear for her life. Barden, who has a history of racially aggravated harassment, pleaded guilty to communicating false information and three counts of racially aggravated disorderly behaviour. The judge ruled that the severity of the threats and the "vile" nature of the racism warranted a 16-month jail term.

CABBIE FORCED TO LEAP FROM MOVING TAXI DURING TERRIFYING HANLEY KNIFEPOINT ROBBERY

A taxi driver was forced to dive out of his own vehicle to escape a violent mugging in Hanley that left him fearing for his life.

James Whitehouse, 29, has been jailed for 42 months after he and an accomplice targeted the driver parked near a pub last February. The victim had his window down when the two men ambushed him. The court heard that one attacker wore a balaclava while the other brandished a blade, shouting, "Give me the money, give me the money, give me your phone."

The court was told that the man with the knife "looked like he was going to stab the driver and he

seriously attempted to do that," while the second man grabbed the driver by the chest and neck. In a bid to survive, the cabbie scrambled across the seats and escaped through the passenger door, falling to the floor as the attackers kicked him in the mouth and sped off in his car.

The stolen taxi, which contained the driver's passport, iPhone, and cash, was later recovered after police found Whitehouse's DNA



inside the vehicle.

Whitehouse claimed he was not holding the knife, but pleaded guilty to robbery under joint enterprise.

His lawyer noted that Whitehouse suffered from mental health issues and drug struggles, offering apologies to the victim.

Judge Graeme Smith described the attack as a "nasty and totally unnecessary robbery" of a man who was simply in the "wrong place at the wrong time."

The judge noted that the driver, who once enjoyed his job, now lives with constant "fear and apprehension."

JAIL FOR PAIR OF COVENTRY BURGLARS WHO HIJACKED TAXI AND THREATENED TO STAB DRIVER

A pair of Coventry burglars hijacked a taxi and threatened to stab the driver. Ian Giles, 51, (left) and Jason Dalton, 37, (right) stole cars and burgled houses across the city, threatening and assaulting anyone who tried to stop them.

They even hijacked a taxi from Leicester to Coventry, threatening to stab the driver if he didn't drop them off at an address in Canley. On the night of this offence, the driver of the car was on his way to Coventry when his car was hit by an object thrown by one of the two defendants.

When he stopped, the pair approached, saying: "do you want to lose your life?" and demanding they be dropped off in Canley.

They jumped into the car and



repeatedly threatened the driver and original passengers with being stabbed.

The terrifying incident happened less than 30 minutes from a burglary the two men committed nearby. In that offence, the two had entered a property in the South West of the city looking for money and/or car keys.

When they were challenged by one of the occupants of the house, they stabbed him in the hand

before fleeing the scene. The two men were arrested after being spotted on CCTV removing clothing from a clothes bank.

After an investigation by Coventry Local Policing Area, the men were identified as suspects in the previous burglaries and the taxi incident.

Giles was aggressive throughout his time in custody, threatening to smash the laptops of the officers who interviewed him and insulting the victims of one of his offences. Both men were charged with burglary, blackmail, possession of a knife and assault by beating and were jailed at Warwick Crown Court on 6 February.

Giles was jailed for six years and nine months, while Dalton, was jailed for four years and six months.

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By Gary Jacobs - CEO Gigzee
www.gigzee.com

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The private hire sector has no shortage of challenges - rising operating costs, driver shortages and an increasingly competitive market led by the tech-driven ride-hailers. So how do operators fight back?

One issue consistently appears at the top of drivers' complaints: long waits to get paid. Whether working for large fleets or small family run bases, many drivers are still operating on weekly, or even monthly payment cycles, despite their costs being daily.

A new platform, led by Gary Jacobs, is Gigzee. Stepping into the private hire space with a solution that is creating a noticeable stir. Its pitch is simple but powerful: **give drivers access to their earnings within minutes of completing a job.**

For an industry where cash flow often determines whether a driver can afford fuel for the next shift, the appeal is obvious.

A problem deep in the structure of the industry

The founder of Gigzee, industry commentator and long-time private hire advocate Gary, says the idea emerged from listening to what drivers were really struggling with on the ground.

"Drivers kept telling me that waiting for payment was putting them under pressure," he explains. *"Fuel, repairs and bills don't wait for pay cycles. Yet the job is done, the operator has billed the customer - but the driver still has to wait. That's the gap Gigzee fills."*

The platform integrates with booking and dispatch systems, enabling same day payouts without requiring operators to change their existing financial processes. Gigzee releases funds to drivers within minutes of the job clearing. Payments are sent through Faster Payments and generally arrive immediately.

Just faster access to earnings

The most important distinction Gigzee makes is that this is not a lending product. There are no credit checks, and no borrowing.

"Some drivers are cautious because they've seen products in the past that were effectively loans," says

COO Jason Kron, *"Gigzee isn't one of them. We're not lending money. We're just funding operators through technology to get drivers their money sooner."*

Drivers pay a small, flat fee per early payout. They only pay when they use it, and there is no subscription. Many use it daily; others only when cash flow is tight.

Driver retention: growing concern for operators

For operators, the timing couldn't be better. The industry has fought a persistent driver shortage and retention remains a major operational challenge.

Operators report that offering faster access to earnings is proving to be a compelling recruitment advantage. Drivers value platforms that recognise their financial pressures, and many are choosing bases that offer modern benefits such as same day payouts. One operator remarked, off the record: *"It costs us nothing, but makes a huge difference to drivers. Anything that keeps good drivers with us is worth doing."*

Private hire first - but not private hire only

While Gigzee works across the broader gig economy, its base is in private hire. The structure of the PHV model - reliance on fuel, daily expenses, fluctuating hours, and delayed earnings - makes the sector an ideal fit.

A service built around the realities of PHV work

For drivers concerned about commitment, the answer is simple: there is none. Drivers can opt in or out at any time. Likewise, the platform does not replace existing weekly or bi-weekly operator payments - it simply sits alongside them, offering on-demand access when drivers need it.

A changing industry & a window for innovation

Offering same day earnings is fast becoming an expectation rather than a luxury. Gary believes this marks a turning point: *"Drivers have always been the backbone of this industry. If they work a full day, they should be able to access their money the same day. We're giving them something that makes their working lives easier - and helping operators stay competitive in the process."*

Operators retain their cash flow because it is in effect driver factoring, using Gigzee's funds, with Gigzee's payments then being made in the operators' pay cycle.

As the private hire industry continues to adapt to a more modern and dynamic marketplace, solutions such as Gigzee may soon become part of the standard operating toolkit.

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At CheckedSafe, we believe safety isn't optional, it's a daily responsibility. That's exactly why our vehicle checking app exists, to make sure that every taxi and private hire vehicle is inspected properly before hitting the road, to ensure it is safe to be used. Yet our recent Freedom of Information requests to over 40 licensing authorities revealed some harsh truths about the safety in this industry:

Up to 49% of private hire vehicles fail their first annual licensing test, and some are found during random stops to have defects so serious that their licences are immediately revoked.

Our industry prides itself on being "highly regulated," but in reality, daily walkarounds are rarely required. And even the councils that do ask for them, often provide no tools to ensure checks actually happen. Small defects such as worn tyres, squeaky brakes, failed lights, or faulty windscreen washers can accumulate unnoticed over months. Left unchecked, they can end up becoming serious safety risks.

The human cost is sobering. The AA reports that defective brakes caused 750 casualties, including 10 deaths. Tyres were responsible for 491 casualties and 12 fatalities. Steering and suspension faults contributed to 255 casualties and six deaths. That's 28 lives lost and nearly 1,500 people seriously injured. Sons, daughters, parents, friends, colleagues, all because preventable defects were ignored or not spotted. All of these could have been spotted and potentially prevented by a simple daily pre-use vehicle check.

Daily checks save lives. Portsmouth City Council recently mandated daily inspections for all licensed vehicles, a massive step in the right direction. But good intentions are not enough. Busy schedules, poor weather, or pressure to meet bookings can lead to checks being skipped. That's where CheckedSafe makes a difference.

Our app acts as a built-in safety net. Drivers are prompted to complete a full walkaround, inspect every critical component, record any defects, and

capture picture evidence if needed. Missed checks can be flagged to fleet owners or licensing authorities, keeping everyone accountable.

It's fast, simple and cost-effective, turning good intentions into consistent practice.



By making pre-use inspections mandatory, we protect drivers, passengers, and everyone else on the road. Annual or semi-annual tests are not enough for vehicles covering 20-40,000 miles per year. Daily checks, like those required for HGVs and coaches, should be standard for every taxi and private hire vehicle. It's not just about compliance, it's professionalism in action.

The Highway Code Rule 97 is clear: every road user must ensure their vehicle is legal and roadworthy. Even a few minutes each day spent walking around your vehicle can keep your vehicle running, spot faults and prevent serious accidents or fatalities.

It is hard to argue against taking a few minutes every day to walk around your vehicle and ensure that it is safe. If just one life is saved by a pre-use check that identifies an unsafe defect, then that would be justification enough.

The government's new Road Safety Strategy aims to reduce KSI (Killed or Seriously Injured) casualties nationwide, with an average of four lives lost daily in 2024. The taxi and PH industry must show it cares too.

CheckedSafe helps drivers do more than comply, it gives them the tools to reduce risk, protect the public, and drive with confidence.

Caring about safety shouldn't be complicated. With CheckedSafe, daily walkarounds are easy to complete, fully documented, and verifiable. Every inspection recorded in the app is a step toward fewer casualties, fewer licence suspensions, and a stronger, more professional industry.

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ROBOTAXI **MISTAKES** BUS ADVERT FOR PEDESTRIANS AS LONDON TRIALS LOOM

A driverless car performed a sudden emergency stop after mistaking a life-size movie poster on the side of a bus for real people standing in the road.

The incident, involving an advert for the film *The Man from UNCLE*, was revealed by Professor John McDermid of University of York during a briefing at the Science Media Centre.

"One of the AV companies I work with had a situation where their vehicle did a sudden emergency stop because it saw pedestrians in the road, except they weren't," Prof McDermid explained. "It was a life-size advert on the side of a bus, but to an AI, it was human beings. That seems very obvious [to us], but

actually, to the AI, it's not."

The revelation comes as Waymo prepares to launch a pilot in London this April, with plans to partner with Uber later in the year. However, British experts warn that the technology still struggles with the complexities of UK streets, including roundabouts and "rule-breaking" pedestrians.

Trials in York showed the vehicles are often baffled by unpredictable human behaviour, such as tourists crossing against a red light.

Prof McDermid noted that while the car recognises the traffic light has turned green, it cannot always account for people still in the road. "Computer vision doesn't understand what it doesn't have models

for in the world," he said.

Safety concerns are bolstered by reports from San Francisco, where a survey of 30 school crossing guards revealed that a quarter had experienced "close calls" with AVs. A veteran lollipop lady, who survived three near-misses, recalled a parent having to snatch a child out of the way of an empty car.

While proponents argue that automation could reduce the 1,600 annual deaths on British roads, many remain sceptical. Government guidance suggests AVs should meet the same standards as human drivers, but Prof McDermid cautioned that pedestrians should not become a "moral crumple zone" for the emerging technology.

NEW YORKERS **REJECT** ROBOT TAXIS OVER SAFETY AND JOB LOSS FEARS

A new poll has revealed that New Yorkers are firmly against the introduction of driverless taxis, such as Waymo, on their streets.

The survey, conducted by the Siena Research Institute, found that a majority of residents are worried about the technology's ability to handle chaotic traffic and bad weather, as well as the potential for massive job losses in the driving industry.

The data shows that nearly 60% of people across the state would feel unsafe in a car without a human at the wheel, while only 25% of NYC residents support the use of AVs in the five boroughs. This public hesitation comes even as state leaders look to expand testing.

Governor Kathy Hochul recently proposed legislation to test these cars outside of the city, stating: "This initiative builds on years of successful testing demonstrations across the state and reflects growing evidence that AVs can improve road safety."

While Mayor Zohran Mamdani has remained cautious about the expansion, he emphasised his commitment to the workforce, saying: "I take the arrival of AVs very seriously, and we'll always ensure our policy and our decision-making is focused on the drivers."

Waymo defends its technology by pointing to a strong safety record. Company spokesperson Ethan Teicher argued that their service

shows a "tenfold reduction in serious injury, or worse, crashes compared to drivers where we operate." He added that the technology would eventually make New York transportation "easier, safer, and more accessible."

However, the human cost remains the central argument for critics. Advocates for the disabled note that robots cannot assist those in wheelchairs, and union leaders see the shift as a threat to the dignity of work. Bhairavi Desai, head of the New York Taxi Workers Alliance, added: "Ordinary people understand the threat of AVs in terms of job loss and what it means as a society to have industries that no longer value human beings."

ROBOTAXIS...ROBOTAXIS

LONDON'S SELF-DRIVING ROBOTAXI CAUGHT BREAKING THE LAW BY RUNNING RED LIGHT

A high-tech driverless car has been caught on camera driving through a red light in central London.

Alex Kendall, the boss of British tech company Wayve, posted the video on social media to show off his car's "impressive drive without intervention" on his way to receive an OBE from the Princess Royal.

However, the footage revealed the car moving through a red light at Parliament Square while trying to navigate heavy traffic next to a bus.

The company has since admitted the mistake, explaining that their vehicles are "prototypes" that still



have humans behind the wheel to monitor them.

A spokesperson for Wayve said: "We acknowledge that the more appropriate action would have been to manually take over the vehicle and keep it stationary until a green light was visible again."

While some argued the car acted like a typical human driver in a traffic jam, running a red light is a serious offence that usually results in a fine and penalty points on a licence.

The incident has raised questions about how robotaxis will be policed.

Steve McNamara, from the Licensed Taxi Drivers' Association, pointed out that human cabbies can lose their jobs very easily for driving errors, asking: "Who is going to police these things and who is responsible for the points?"

NEARLY HALF OF BRITS WOULDN'T FEEL SAFE IN A DRIVERLESS TAXI ACCORDING TO SURVEY

As autonomous vehicles begin to navigate the streets of London, a new study reveals that the British public remains deeply sceptical of hitching a ride in a robotaxi.

Research by Go.Compare Car Insurance found that 46% of adults "wouldn't feel safe using a driverless Uber," highlighting a significant hurdle for the government-backed technology currently being trialled in the capital.

The survey of 2,000 people arrived following the January launch of self-driving SUVs in London, with Uber expected to join the pilot scheme this spring.

Results of the survey, which asked for their thoughts on driverless taxis, found that:

- 46% of those who took part said they would not feel safe using a



driverless Uber

- A further 38% would be worried about the car malfunctioning or locking them in

- 32% said they wouldn't use a driverless Uber because they don't want human drivers to be replaced

Meanwhile, 12% of people said they're excited to use a driverless taxi, and just 6% of people have no safety concerns at all.

The research also revealed that there's a big gender difference when it comes to opinions on driverless taxis, with over half (54%) of women saying they wouldn't feel safe using an autonomous Uber compared to 39% of men, and 43% of women saying they're worried about the car malfunctioning or being locked in, compared to 32% of men.

Tom Banks, a spokesperson for Go.Compare, noted that while the move marks an "exciting step" for innovation, the results prove that many are "hesitant about embracing the technology."

He added that for the public to accept the change, "there needs to be more education around people's safety concerns to help build confidence in autonomous vehicles."

UBER UPDATE

UBER'S BID FOR FIFE BOOKING HUB MET WITH FIERCE LOCAL BACKLASH FROM CABBIES

Uber has officially applied for a licence to open a 24/7 booking office at the Rosyth Business Centre in Fife, but the move is facing heavy criticism from local drivers.

While Uber claims there is "strong demand" for its services in the area, the East Fife Taxi Association (EFTA) has raised "serious concerns" about the impact on the local trade. Cabbies have hit out at Fife Council for keeping them in the dark, describing the lack of notice about Uber's application as "extremely poor communication."

Linda Holt, spokesperson for EFTA, said: "Fife Council recently held a meeting with taxi operators across Fife to improve communication and engagement with the trade. Many operators are surprised and disappointed that members of the Licensing Department and Committee did not mention the Uber application, despite it having been lodged on January 23."

She warned: "We have significant concerns about the impact this application could have on local drivers' livelihoods, passenger safety,

regulatory fairness and the long-term sustainability of the trade."

The association's formal complaint also questions the legitimacy of the proposed base. They claim the named manager lives in York and argue the Rosyth address may be a "nominal" front rather than a genuine operational base, stating: "These factors raise enforceability and public safety concerns."

The final decision now rests with Fife Council's Regulation & Licensing Committee, which will review the application in due course.

LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL GRANTS UBER A PRIVATE HIRE OPERATOR LICENCE

Lancaster City Council has granted a PH operator's licence to Uber despite denying earlier in the week that they had applied for a licence. The council states that the decision was made after the company fulfilled all required criteria. Until now, Uber drivers

operating in and around the Lancaster district were licensed by other local authorities.

By issuing this new licence, Lancaster council will be able to directly monitor, regulate and inspect Uber drivers who have been licensed by the council,

providing clearer accountability and improved local standards.

Cllr Paul Tynan, Chair of Licensing, said: "There's been understandable concern about Uber drivers operating in the district while licensed elsewhere. This meant we had limited ability to regulate or intervene locally when issues arose.

"By granting the licence, we now gain the local oversight and control we did not previously have. Uber applied for the licence, and when an applicant meets all the requirements, the council has a statutory duty to issue it.

"We recognise the concerns raised by existing local taxi and PH drivers, but this decision ensures Uber is regulated in the same way as the other 52 PH operators currently licensed in the district. This strengthens our ability to enforce standards, respond to complaints and protect passengers."

UBER PULLS OUT OF SOUTHEND JUST WEEKS AFTER GETTING LICENCE

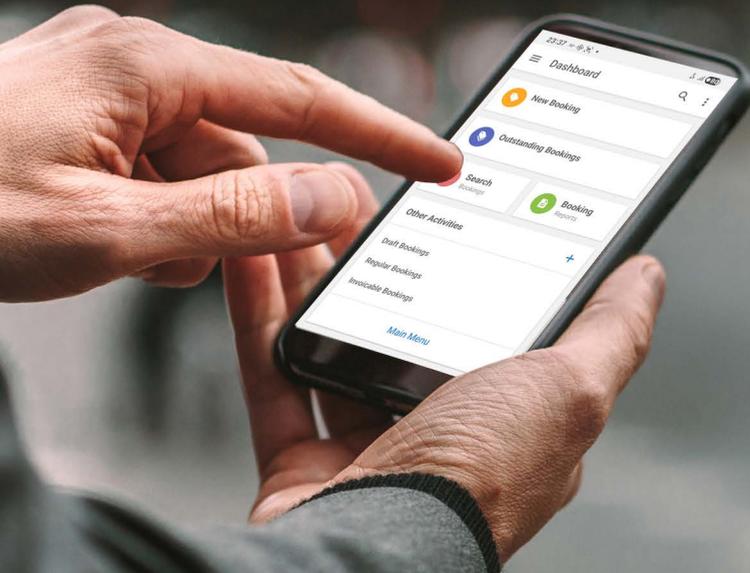
Uber has pulled out of Southend, just weeks after being granted a licence to operate in the city. Southend City Council said Uber has informed them it's chosen to surrender its PH operator licence.

It's understood the reason is that it could not abide by all of the conditions that had been set by the council's licensing committee. The company has not publicly confirmed this.

Your Southend reports that Uber is currently still operating in Southend and it's unclear when they will pull out.

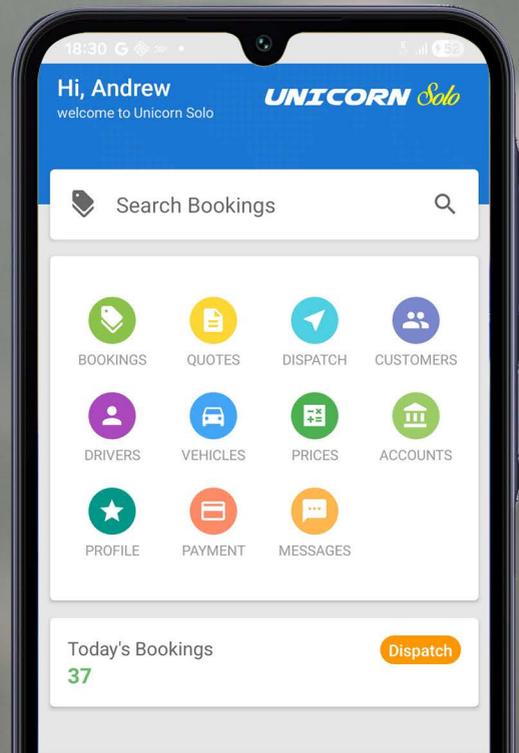
Cllr Daniel Cowan, Leader of the Council, said: "Whilst we remain open to applications from potential PH operators, we're clear that all operators are held to the same fair standards and safeguards – those who don't adhere to our conditions will not be operating in Southend."

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UBER UPDATE

CUMBRIA MP SLAMS UBER FOR THREATENING LOCAL CABBIES' LIVELIHOODS

Local taxi drivers in south Cumbria are facing an uncertain future as out-of-town Uber drivers continue to move into the region, according to Westmorland and Lonsdale MP Tim Farron.

The MP is sounding the alarm after receiving a joint letter from 30 concerned drivers across Kendal, Windermere, and Barrow who say they are being systematically undercut by competitors licensed as far away as Wolverhampton.

The tension follows a decision by Westmorland and Furness Council last September to grant Uber a three-year licence to operate.

While Uber planned to base its regional headquarters in Ulverston, local cabbies argue the current system allows outside drivers to swoop in and take work away from those who live and pay taxes in the community.

"I have spent a lot of time listening to the understandable frustrations of local taxi drivers who feel that they are being undercut by Uber," Mr. Farron said.

"It's unacceptable that local taxi drivers are able to have their livelihoods put at risk by drivers registered in Wolverhampton – and this is something I am

continuing to raise with the Transport Secretary."

The drivers are calling for "parliamentary attention" and a major overhaul of how licences are managed. In their letter to the MP, a spokesperson for the group demanded that PH companies "comply with basic consumer transparency requirements at the point licences are issued."

The group is also pushing for "scrutiny of licensing authorities' performance" to ensure councils are doing "the job Parliament expects of them" by protecting the integrity of the local trade.

CORNISH TAXI DRIVERS SOUND THE ALARM AS UBER THREATENS RURAL "DEVASTATION"

Local taxi drivers are warning that the arrival of Uber in Cornwall could "destroy" rural communities and dismantle local businesses that have served the Duchy for decades.

Since Uber was granted a PH licence by Cornwall Council last May, independent cabbies have raised concerns that it will push out traditional hackney carriages. Falmouth-based driver Brett Bennett warns that the shift will be "devastating," noting that "if all of a sudden Uber takes over, then hackneys are going to disappear." He fears that vulnerable residents will be left stranded as local firms collapse under the pressure.

While Uber claims it is "creating new earning opportunities for local drivers and expanding affordable transport options," local cabbies

argue the reality on the ground is far different. Drivers report that Uber is already charging significantly higher rates - in one instance £21 for a journey that costs £12 in a local cab - while lacking the essential local knowledge of Cornwall's winding roads.

There is a growing fear that Uber drivers will stick to busy hubs such as Truro and Newquay, leaving smaller villages without service because: "Uber is not going to go to those rural places because they can't guarantee a second pickup."

The struggle is further compounded by Cornwall's notorious "dead zones" for internet signal, making app-based booking impossible in many remote areas. Beyond the tech issues, drivers feel abandoned by the local authority, with Mr. Bennett stating: "I just feel

that the taxi industry isn't being looked after in Cornwall. The council doesn't seem to care."

As the council prepares to discuss a controversial plan to merge the old district councils into one single area, veteran drivers worry that "undercutting local set council tariffs" on certain journeys will eventually leave the public with no choice but to use a service that doesn't prioritise the local community.

Currently taxis in Cornwall are licensed in six separate areas, based on the old district councils of Penwith, Kerrier, Carrick, Restormel, North Cornwall, and Caradon. The consultation to remove the six zones to create one single taxi area for all of Cornwall, closed on December 31, 2025 - the results are due to be discussed in March.



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THE HIDDEN OPERATOR

WHO ARE YOU REALLY CONTRACTING WITH WHEN YOU BOOK A RIDE-HAILING JOURNEY?

Article by Christopher Johnson
Veteran London hackney driver

In an age where tapping “confirm” on a smartphone summons a car within minutes, millions of UK passengers unknowingly enter into contracts clouded by uncertainty. Behind the polished app interface of ride-hailing brands lies a critical question: who is actually accepting your booking - the familiar brand on your screen, the driver en route, or a booking accepted under the authority of a licensing body based in a part of the UK you have never heard of?

This is not a technical quibble. It is a core consumer protection issue that weakens accountability, obscures responsibility, and leaves passengers unclear about their legal rights and remedies.

With ride-hailing journeys now numbering in the billions annually across the UK, this opacity is more than inconvenient - it carries genuine public interest implications. Regulators are aware of the issue, platforms benefit from the ambiguity, and passengers bear the consequences.

The unchanged legal bedrock amid technological disruption

Private hire licensing in the UK rests on a longstanding and straightforward principle: every booking must be accepted by a licensed operator who assumes legal responsibility for the journey, including dispatch, record-keeping, and regulatory compliance.

This framework, embedded in legislation: Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998, exists to ensure accountability through identifiable, regulated operators.

Digital platforms have transformed the booking process, enabling near-instant matching between passengers and drivers. Yet they have simultaneously obscured the operator's role. In practice, many platforms route bookings through networks of licensed operators that may vary by region or even by individual journey. Passengers typically see only the platform brand - until a problem arises.

The legal framework itself has not changed. Rather, technological architecture has evolved faster than enforcement.

This is not merely licensing - it is core consumer protection

At its core, a ride-hailing booking constitutes a distance contract for services, engaging well-established consumer protection obligations.

The Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 require traders to provide, before a consumer is bound, clear information including their identity, geographical address, and contact details. These requirements apply squarely to app-based bookings.

The Consumer Rights Act 2015 further elevates pre-contract information to contractual status and requires transparency of terms. Without knowledge of the trader's identity, meaningful informed consent becomes difficult to establish.

The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024, now operational with strengthened enforcement powers, classifies misleading omissions - including failure to provide material information required by law - as unfair commercial practices.

Where operator identity could influence a consumer's decision, its omission raises obvious regulatory concerns. These obligations are neither novel nor optional. They apply routinely across e-commerce and other digital service sectors. Private hire booking is not an exception.

Real-world consequences: accountability, remedies and safety

The practical implications of operator opacity are significant. If a dispute, incident, or safety concern arises during a journey, identifying the responsible operator determines:

- Legal liability for the service provided
- The licensing authority exercising regulatory oversight
- Appropriate complaints and redress mechanisms
- The applicable safety framework governing driver and vehicle standards

THE HIDDEN OPERATOR

Cross-border dispatching illustrates the issue starkly. A vehicle licensed by one authority may lawfully undertake a journey in another area, yet enforcement approaches and local regulatory priorities can differ.

Without pre-booking and pre-contract operator disclosure, passengers cannot assess these factors or make informed choices. Transparency is therefore not a theoretical nicety but a functional safeguard.

Knowledge of the contracting operator enables accountability, supports consumer choice, and reinforces the regulatory system designed to protect passengers - particularly those who are vulnerable.

Enforcement gaps, not legal gaps

The relevant legal principles are clear and long-established. Comparable transparency requirements are enforced across numerous digital marketplaces. The challenge re: private hire appears to stem less from legislative deficiency and more from regulatory hesitation in confronting platform-based operational models.

Where private hire operator allocation occurs only after booking confirmation, tension arises with statutory pre-contract consumer disclosure duties.

Conversely, if the operator is known earlier in the

process (at the pre-contract stage), withholding that information becomes difficult to justify.

Regulators - including trading standards authorities and the Competition and Markets Authority - already possess enforcement tools capable of addressing this issue.

A straightforward & proportionate solution

The remedy is neither complex nor burdensome.

Before confirming a booking, platforms ought to be required, as a condition of their licence, to display the registered operating licence address, contact details, and the licensing authority regulating the trip.

Such disclosure would align platform practices with existing consumer law, strengthen public confidence, and enhance regulatory coherence without impeding innovation.

Ride-hailing has delivered substantial mobility benefits: convenience, accessibility, and expanded transport choice. Yet innovation must operate alongside transparency and consumer law. Passengers are entitled to know who stands behind the service they are purchasing.

The legal framework is already in place. The question is: why hasn't it been meaningfully applied?

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REFUSING WORK

THE STRANGE NEW BADGE OF HONOUR IN THE TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE TRADE - REFUSING WORK

Article by Rob Finlayson
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Like most people in the industry, I am in more driver groups forums and WhatsApp chats than is probably healthy, and one of the common themes that keeps popping up again and again is drivers openly bragging about how little work they are actually accepting.

You will see screenshots from certain ride-share platforms where drivers proudly share their acceptance rates sometimes down as low as 1 or 2%, sometimes even lower. That's not working, that is sitting, logged in waiting for the universe to drop a perfect hire into your lap.

And it is not just a ride-share quirk anymore, this mindset is creeping into traditional private hire and taxi fleets too.

We are now in a world where drivers are online and available, but only for work that fits their exacting preferences. Anything outside of that, too short, too long, wrong area, wrong time or wrong price gets instantly declined. For those of us who have been around the block a few times, this is a total reversal of how we were brought up in the trade. Being busy used to be a badge of honour and saying yes to everything was the norm. You did not cherry-pick, you grafted and chased work.

If half the fleet is cherry-picking and the other half is doing the heavy lifting then the whole system starts to crumble. That is exactly what we're now seeing across every city in the UK.

But the problem here is that no one really wants to talk about WHY this is happening.

Most operators are terrified of pushing back because the vast majority of the industry is self employed and with that comes a complete lack of oversight or leverage. A driver can simply say: "Nope, don't fancy that" and there's nothing the operator can realistically do about it without upsetting the apple cart.

- You start putting rules in place – drivers jump to another platform
- You try to enforce minimum acceptance rates, you're risking a clash over the drivers worker status
- You go too hard on any of the above and you're a pariah on social media and the damage is done.
- The flip side of doing nothing is just as bad, customers waiting longer, service levels dropping off a cliff and despite your app being littered with cars, your service is unreliable despite having dozens of cars online and showing as available for the customers.

At some point something needs to give, whether that's with a carrot to the drivers: smarter incentives, more transparency about the issues being created and more intelligent dispatching.

Or using a stick: enforcing minimum acceptance levels, performance reviews and honest conversations about what "online and available" actually means. Something has to shift, because pretending there is not a problem is exactly how this becomes a much bigger issue.

Whilst this behaviour is most extreme on ride-share platforms, with drivers declining tens of thousands of jobs across the country every hour of the day, the habits are contagious. If we don't get ahead of this it becomes everyone's problem.

What makes this even more complicated is the total lack of alignment between platforms, operators and drivers on what good behaviour actually looks like. You have the ride-share side with algorithms dictating pricing and demand, whereas private hire has traditionally been customer and reliability driven; but the problem is both share the same pool of driver talent. No wonder the system is creaking. Operators want speed, customers want reliability, drivers want control, but no one wants to be the bad guy in all of this.

The truth though is simple; cherry-picking used to be the exception, it is now become the norm and unless we face that reality head-on then it's going to reshape the industry whether we like it or not.

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SURGING COSTS WILL THIN THE NUMBER OF CABBIES SERVING LONDONERS AND VISITORS

Article by Danny O’Gorman
UK General Manager Freenow by Lyft
www.free-now.com/uk/



The taxi trade is a lifeline for many passengers and cities, yet it is being suffocated by relentless cost hikes. This is unsustainable for current drivers and provides little incentive for new entrants to join the trade.

The recent increase in taxi/PHV licensing fees, along with rising Knowledge costs proposed by TfL, create further barriers for an industry already under pressure.

The current landscape

Over the past 12 years, driver numbers have fallen by more than 25%, dropping from 22,000 to 16,100 in 2026. Taxi driver numbers are now at their lowest since 1975.

The trade is already costly. Drivers face high vehicle purchase prices, escalating EV charging costs, and the looming introduction of pay-per-mile road charging for EV/plug-in vehicles. Combined with uncertain income and the significant time required to pass the Knowledge, these factors are already discouraging new entrants. So why are we making things more challenging? It is a time to encourage uptake, not discourage it.

Fees disrupting a lifeline

Taxi driver licence fees are set to rise by almost 15%, from £300 to £343, while PH driver licence fees will increase from £310 to £343. On top of this, taxi vehicle licence fees, taxi driver and vehicle application fees, and grant-of-licence fees are also increasing. More PH fee hikes are expected, aside from vehicle licence fees that have been frozen, but this can hardly be considered a victory.

The Knowledge, globally recognised, gold-standard qualification that commands respect across the sector and the public, remains a key draw for many entering the trade. Freenow continues to offer financial support for drivers: <https://shorturl.at/xpa7t> However, the proposals set out in a Finance Committee paper last week outline increases in the KOL assessment and examination fees which can create significant financial barriers. These costs deter newcomers as well as threaten to stall the progress of those already in the system.

How passengers share the burden

The future of the trade is severely under threat, and urgent action is needed. Cabbies provide a safe and accessible transport option for millions across London.

For many, black cabs are not just a convenience, they are the only viable link to the city. Tubes and trains often fail to cater for people with mobility issues; wheelchair users are frequently blocked by out-of-service lifts and the lack of step-free access. As price hikes discourage drivers from entering or remaining in the industry, accessibility for those with mobility needs is increasingly at risk.

Safety is not a luxury, it is a right. Recent Freenow by Lyft research shows that 73% of people feel unsafe in their own cities at night, while 86% feel nervous going home alone after a night out. For 74% of people in the UK, the decision to stay out or head home early depends on access to safe transport. With door-to-door service and mandatory DBS checks, black cabs offer reassurance, with 47% of people perceiving them as safer than other options.

Removing this trusted and essential transport does not just affect an industry, it creates a mobility barrier for those who already feel vulnerable on our streets. Instead of creating new hurdles, we should be championing a trade that delivers security, reliability and inclusivity, and working to support the communities that depend on it.

A call for action

The evidence is clear: the London taxi trade is at a critical point. TfL’s rising licensing and Knowledge fees will create barriers to entry and retention that are simply too high for many.

If driver numbers continue to fall - already at their lowest level in 50 years - both passengers and drivers will lose. Without immediate intervention to reduce fees and provide better support for aspiring drivers, London risks losing a safe, accessible and reliable transport option. To ensure black cabs remain a lifeline for the city, Freenow by Lyft is calling all relevant stakeholders to ensure measures are in place to support the trade and to keep it alive.



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Drawing on decades of aftermarket manufacturing expertise, HJS took the strategic decision to engineer the solution in-house. The programme began at HJS UK, where initial prototypes were developed and subjected to comprehensive internal testing. Following

successful evaluation, the components were transferred to the company's headquarters in Germany for advanced prototyping and detailed flow analysis.

After rigorous durability and performance testing, the DPF, DOC and silencer assemblies were submitted for homologation, securing full approval and E-mark certification to meet UK regulatory requirements. Notably, the HJS DPF is manufactured using high-grade silicon carbide substrate technology - a material recognised for its superior thermal resistance, filtration efficiency and long-term reliability compared with lower-specification alternatives available in the marketplace.

The project also supports the continuation of HJS's Euro 6 retrofit upgrades for TX4 taxis operating in London. Under strict requirements set by Transport for London (TfL), Euro 5 diesel taxis undergoing conversion must replace both the DOC and DPF to achieve compliance. Retrofitting provides a highly cost-effective pathway for drivers to meet Euro 6 emissions standards, extend vehicle lifespan and significantly reduce environmental impact - contributing to improved urban air quality across the capital.

With certified components, OEM-level quality and a focused commitment to the TX4 platform, HJS reinforces its position as a trusted exhaust and emissions partner for the UK taxi industry.

For further information on our aftermarket products or Euro 6 emission upgrades call us on 01344 566050.

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HOW FEMALE DRIVERS ARE TRANSFORMING THE TAXI LANDSCAPE

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Breaking the rearview mirror

For decades, the UK taxi industry has been shaped by tradition, with its image closely tied to the sight of male drivers behind the wheel of iconic black cabs. Women, by contrast, have long faced an uphill battle in gaining visibility and acceptance within this male-dominated sector. The reasons for this under-representation range from deep-rooted stereotypes about gender roles, to concerns about personal safety and a lack of female role models in the business.

Historically, women who aspired to drive taxis encountered both overt and subtle barriers. Early on, many licensing authorities imposed restrictions or discouraged female applicants, citing safety fears or societal expectations. Even as formal barriers loosened, challenges persisted: from balancing irregular work hours with family commitments, to dealing with scepticism from passengers and colleagues alike. In 1990, women made up less than 2% of taxi and private hire drivers across the UK - a figure that underscores the scale of the challenge.

Yet, over the past two decades, the industry has begun to change gears. Cultural attitudes are shifting, with more women seeking flexible employment and economic independence. Taxi companies, recognising the value of diversity, have started to promote inclusive hiring practices and highlight the benefits of a more balanced workforce. Today, women account for approximately 10% of licensed taxi and private hire drivers - a modest but meaningful increase, and one that signals broader change.

The issue of visibility and leadership remains crucial. When women are seen driving cabs and taking on supervisory or entrepreneurial roles, it challenges outdated perceptions and inspires others to follow suit. Industry associations and advocacy groups are amplifying the voices of pioneering women, shining a spotlight on their achievements and the unique

perspectives they bring to customer service and community engagement.

Despite progress, obstacles remain. Many female drivers still report instances of harassment, unequal pay, or lack of access to the same professional networks as their male peers. However, the determination and resilience shown by women in the industry continue to break down these barriers, paving the way for a more inclusive future.

Key statistics and industry barriers

- In 1990, women made up less than 2% of UK taxi drivers; today, that figure has grown to around 10%.
- Surveys show women cite safety concerns, lack of flexible shifts and limited mentorship as top barriers to entry.
- Visible female leadership in the sector remains rare, but is growing thanks to targeted initiatives and networking events.

The power of pink and professionalism

The drive for gender diversity in the UK taxi industry has gained momentum thanks to innovative programmes and community-led initiatives. Standout among these is the Think Pink Drivers initiative, which has created a supportive network for women entering the profession. By providing tailored training, peer mentoring, and forums for sharing experiences, Think Pink Drivers has helped hundreds of women build confidence and thrive in roles traditionally reserved for men.

Similarly, iCabbi's 'Women in Taxi' events have become a cornerstone for empowerment and professional development. These gatherings offer a safe space for women drivers to connect, exchange practical advice, and hear from industry leaders who champion diversity. Workshops on topics such as self-defence, customer relations, and digital tools foster a sense of camaraderie and collective ambition.

One of the greatest strengths of these programmes lies in their focus on safety and innovation. Female drivers are at the forefront of adopting technologies that enhance personal security, from in-car CCTV to GPS tracking and app-based emergency alerts. These features reassure drivers and boost passenger confidence, making taxis a more appealing choice for all.

IN THE UK TAXI INDUSTRY



Success stories abound. Take, for example, the journey of Claire, a single mother from Manchester who joined Think Pink Drivers after being made redundant. With the support of her cohort, she gained the skills to navigate city streets and built a loyal customer base, all while enjoying the flexibility to care for her family. Or consider Shazia, who attended an iCabbi event and later founded her own taxi company, now employing a growing team of female drivers.

The sense of community and camaraderie among women drivers is palpable. Online forums and social media groups provide spaces for advice, encouragement, and friendship - vital resources in an industry that can sometimes feel isolating. This network effect not only supports individual drivers but also raises the collective profile of women in the sector.

Flexibility and financial independence

- Taxi driving offers flexible hours, making it attractive for women balancing family or study commitments.
- Programmes such as Think Pink Drivers, offer practical business advice, helping women maximise their earnings and plan for the future.
- Many women report increased confidence and independence from being their own boss.

The road ahead: a bright, inclusive future

Looking forward, the UK taxi industry stands on the brink of further transformation. Technology continues to play a pivotal role in shaping the experiences of drivers and passengers alike. App-based booking systems, cashless payments, and real-time route optimisation are lowering entry barriers and levelling the playing field for all, regardless of gender.

Safety remains a top priority. Innovations such as driver verification, live journey tracking, and integrated emergency support are rapidly becoming industry standards, offering peace of mind to women drivers

and their families. Companies are also investing in ongoing training, ensuring that all staff - regardless of gender - are equipped to handle challenging situations with confidence and professionalism.

Economic empowerment is at the heart of this evolution. As more women enter the industry, they are not only securing financial independence for themselves but also contributing to the vibrancy and adaptability of the sector as a whole. Mentorship programmes and networking events are helping to cultivate the next generation of female entrepreneurs, who are already making their mark as fleet owners and business leaders.

Cultural change is gathering pace. The growing visibility of women in taxis is challenging old stereotypes and inspiring a new wave of entrants from diverse backgrounds. Schools, colleges, and community organisations are increasingly highlighting the opportunities available in the industry, encouraging young women to consider driving as a viable and rewarding career path.

The future is bright. With continued investment in technology, a focus on safety and inclusion, and the unstoppable energy of women drivers themselves, the UK taxi industry is set to become a beacon of empowerment and opportunity. By embracing diversity and innovation, it will not only serve its passengers better but also set an example for other sectors to follow.

Future prospects and lasting change

- More women in leadership roles and ownership positions within the industry are expected in the coming years.
- Technological advancements will continue to improve safety and efficiency for all drivers.
- Mentorship and peer-support networks will help ensure lasting progress and a supportive working environment for everyone.

In summary, while the journey has not always been easy, the growing presence of women in the UK taxi industry is a testament to resilience, innovation, and the power of community. As the sector continues to evolve, it promises a future where everyone - regardless of gender - can steer their own course to success.

Steering change is never easy, though at the Elite Family we have a warm welcoming atmosphere celebrating a group without gender barriers. We believe inclusion is the way forwards and would love to include you as part of this growing family.

For more info email: family@elite-liverpool.co.uk

CONCERNS RAISED OVER TAXI LICENCE REVIEW PROCEDURE AT BRADFORD COUNCIL

PH firm Local Cars is formally raising serious concerns about the fairness, transparency, and independence of certain taxi and PH licence review panels conducted by Bradford Council's Licensing and Enforcement Team. Under the current structure at Bradford council, investigating officers prepare statements and present cases before panels comprised of colleagues from within the same department, including senior officers and managers/line managers. These panels then determine if a driver's licence

should be suspended or revoked. While we fully support firm and appropriate action against drivers who pose genuine risks to public safety, we are increasingly concerned about procedural fairness in a number of cases, in particular:

- Statements prepared by investigating officers may not always reflect the full context or mitigating circumstances.
- Drivers are often left to represent themselves in proceedings that directly affect their livelihood.
- Panel members are not necessarily legally qualified, yet they

are making determinations with life-changing consequences.

- The structure raises legitimate concerns about independence, as the investigator and decision makers operate within the same internal team.

Local Cars told **PHTM**: "A taxi/PH licence is not simply a permit but it is a driver's profession and means of supporting a family. Any process that risks revocation must meet the highest standards of natural justice, fairness, and impartiality. We're not trying to weaken enforcement. We believe in public safety. We are seeking to strengthen fairness."

Local Cars believes:

- Licence review decisions should be demonstrably independent.
- Drivers should have a clear and fair opportunity to present their case.
- Representation should be properly facilitated.
- Panels should operate with full transparency & balanced evidence.

Where decisions are justified, they should stand. However, where procedural fairness is in question, drivers deserve the opportunity for proper review and challenge.

The firm has now partnered with an independent legal team to examine cases where drivers believe they were treated unfairly during the review process.

Drivers: if you have been through a licence review and believe the process was not fair, transparent, or properly conducted, we invite you to come forward and share your experience confidentially whether you work with us or any other operator/app company.

Email : localcars@hotmail.com

CABBIE WINS TRIBUNAL AFTER FIRM TOOK £500 EXCESS FROM WAGES AFTER CRASH

An Aberdeenshire taxi driver has won a legal battle against his employer after the company deducted £500 from his wages to cover insurance excess cost following a car accident.

Fraser Allan, who worked for Central Taxis (North East) Ltd, took the firm to an employment tribunal after they began taking £100 a month from his pay following a crash in June 2024.

While Mr. Allan admitted he was at fault for reversing into a wall, the tribunal ruled the company had no legal right to take the money without his written consent.

Central Taxis argued that it was "company policy" to make drivers pay up to £500 for damages to be taken from their wages and had even posted a notice on an internal driver app. However, Employment Judge Mr. A. Kemp found that a message on an app did not count

as a legal contract.

The court heard that Mr. Allan had never signed a written agreement or a formal statement of employment. The company defended its actions by claiming the policy was fair and had been used for years without being challenged. Judge Kemp rejected this, stating fairness was not the issue, but rather the law. In his ruling, he said: "Having regard to all the evidence I concluded that there was no term of the contract between the parties permitting a deduction... the deductions made totalling £500 did not meet the requirements of section 13 of the 1996 Act, and were unauthorised accordingly."

Central Taxis has been ordered to repay the full £500 to Mr. Allan.

The firm indicated it intends to introduce new paperwork for staff to sign to ensure future deductions are handled legally.

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MOBILE-OPTIMISED WEBSITES

DOES YOUR TAXI FIRM NEED A NEW WEBSITE? HERE'S HOW TO TELL

Article by Taxisolutions
taxisolutions.co.uk



When was the last time you looked at your taxi firm's website, not as the owner, but as a passenger?

If it's **slow, outdated**, or **hard to use on a phone**, you're not just losing bookings, you're losing trust. In 2026, your website is often the **first impression** passengers and potential drivers get of your business. And if it's not up to scratch, they'll move on to the next firm... fast.

At **Taxisolutions**, we design and build **professional, mobile-optimised websites** tailored for the private hire industry. Whether you're a small family-run operator or managing a growing fleet, we help you stand out and get more bookings online.

Signs your website needs a rebuild:

- It looks old-fashioned or hasn't been updated in years
- It's slow to load, especially on mobile
- Booking process is confusing or missing altogether
- It's hard to find you on Google
- You rely on a Facebook page instead of a proper website

If any of these sound familiar, it's time for an upgrade.

What we offer at TaxiSolutions

We build websites designed specifically for PHV operators, no generic templates here.

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- **Fast, secure and optimised for search engines**
- **Branded design:** clean, professional and tailored to your business
- **Driver recruitment pages:** so you can grow your team too

We don't just give you a pretty website, we give you a tool that helps increase bookings, build trust, and grow your brand online.

Real taxi firms, real results

Our clients regularly tell us their new website helped them:

- Appear higher in local Google searches
- Convert more visitors into bookings
- Improve their reputation and win more returning passengers

Some have even seen booking increases of 30–40% within the first few months.

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POLICE LAUNCH DAWN RAIDS AND ARREST FOUR IN CONNECTION WITH FATAL **BOLTON** HEAD-ON CRASH

Greater Manchester Police have carried out a series of morning raids across Bolton, arresting four people in connection with a “devastating” head-on crash in Bolton that claimed four lives last month.

Officers stormed multiple properties on 5 February, detaining a 42-year-old woman and a man, 46, on suspicion of fraud offences. A 22-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of handling stolen goods and an 18-year-old male was arrested on suspicion of aggravated vehicle taking, a spokesperson for GM Police said.

The arrests follow the horrific January 11 collision on Wigan Road involving a Seat Leon and a Citroen



taxi. The crash killed Uber driver Masrob Ali, 54, (pictured), described by his daughter as “the gentlest soul” and “the best dad.” Three teenagers in the Seat also lost their lives. While five others were rushed to the hospital, police confirmed that one woman who initially had life-threatening injuries

is now in a “stable” condition. Amidst the tragedy, a community fundraiser for the surviving taxi passengers has reached £50,000 “to relieve some of the pressure on their families.”

Det Insp Andrew Page stated that the investigation is “progressing” but urged any witnesses with dashcam footage to come forward. The brother of the teenage driver, Mohammed Mukhtar, previously posted an apology on TikTok, claiming his brother was driving at 90mph and had made “a huge, huge mistake.”

All four suspects remain in custody for questioning as inquests into the deaths continue.

FRESH HOPE FOR JUSTICE AS 20 YEAR OLD **GLASGOW** BUSINESSMAN MURDER EVIDENCE IS REVIEWED

Authorities are conducting a fresh review of the evidence surrounding the brutal 2002 murder of Glasgow businessman Alexander Blue (pictured) The 41-year-old, who owned the Taxi Centre, was discovered with catastrophic head injuries on the driveway of his home nearly 23 years ago.

Despite decades of investigations and public appeals, the case remains one of Scotland’s most notorious unsolved crimes.

The victim’s brother, Billy Blue, has spent years campaigning for answers and recently met with the Lord Advocate to discuss the investigation.

He remains critical of the slow progress, stating it is “an absolute disgrace” that no one has been

held accountable. He believes the identity of the killer has been clear for a long time, remarking: “It’s been known for a considerable length of time who’s responsible for Alec’s murder.”

Billy Blue expressed the deep toll the delay has taken on his family, noting that his mother would “never get over what happened that day” and that the family has often felt “brushed off” by the legal system. He warned that officials should “hang their heads in shame” if the case is not resolved by the 25th anniversary next year. Reflecting on the lack of progress,



he added: “The fact that nobody’s been charged with murder is a disappointment. But the fact that nobody’s been charged with anything related to that murder is an absolute disgrace.”

Police Scotland and the Crown Office maintain that the case is not closed, emphasising that forensic advancements and new public information can often provide breakthroughs in cold cases.

A spokesperson acknowledged the family’s heartache, stating: “Police Scotland never considers cases closed and this case remains under review.”

For Billy Blue, the goal remains a courtroom conviction, concluding: “I would like to see them brought to justice, it would be a vindication.”



Taxi Licensing Conference 2026

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ROUND THE COUNCILS

CRAWLEY:

NEW DUAL LICENCE PLANNED

Crawley C has unveiled plans to simplify its taxi licensing system by introducing a “dual licence” that covers both HCs and PHVs.

The proposal is designed to modernise the licensing system, reduce duplication, and improve efficiency while maintaining all required safety, knowledge, and training standards.

The single application process will help drivers save time and avoid paying two sets of fees and undergoing separate processes.

Currently, over 100 drivers in the town hold both hackney carriage and private hire badges.

While the new system will be much faster, the council insisted that it will not result in lower standards as drivers will still be required to pass all the necessary training and knowledge tests for both types of licence. Cllr Yasmin Khan, Cabinet member for Public Protection, said the change is designed to support local operators. “We want to make it easier for our hard-working taxi drivers to expand their business,” she stated. “This proposal is to make our licensing system simpler for drivers, while keeping all our high safety and compliance standards firmly in place.”

The council believes that removing the extra paperwork will allow drivers to focus on their work rather than bureaucracy.

JERSEY:

CRACKDOWN ON ILLEGAL TAXI SERVICES

A Jersey politician is calling for urgent law reforms to stop unlicensed taxi services from operating across the island.

Deputy Catherine Curtis has proposed updating the Motor Traffic (Jersey) Law 1935, arguing the current wording is “inadequate for effective prosecution” of drivers using Facebook groups to offer unregulated lifts. The move aims to protect the public and licensed drivers from “unregulated and uninsured” services that avoid tax and safety standards.

Deputy Curtis highlighted the dangers for young people getting home after a night out, stating: “The main concern is that there could be an accident which is not covered by insurance, or an assault on a member of the public.”

While acknowledging that high taxi prices drive some

to use illegal alternatives, Curtis insisted that quality costs money. “If we want to have a safe taxi service, we have to pay for it,” she said, adding that “sometimes illegal taxis are not really cheaper anyway.”

If approved, the new rules would allow authorities to fine anyone facilitating or advertising these unauthorised services.

States members are expected to debate the proposal on 24 March.

SOUTH AYRSHIRE:

TIGHTENING OF TAXI LICENSING RULES

South Ayrshire taxi and private hire drivers are facing a potential shake-up of their licensing rules as the local council prepares to launch a major policy review. A report presented to the Cabinet on February 17 has called for a formal consultation to update guidelines that have governed the trade since 1996.

Council officers argue that a broader review is now necessary to “bring the policy in line with updated Scottish Government guidance and modern practice.” One of the most significant proposals involves toughening health requirements. While drivers currently only need to meet standard DVLA rules, the council is considering a shift to the “Group 2” medical standard - the same rigorous testing used for bus and lorry drivers. This change would reflect the reality that taxi drivers “spend long periods behind the wheel.”

Security and background transparency are also high on the agenda. While Police Scotland handles local background checks, they cannot track foreign convictions. Consequently, the council may soon require any driver who has lived abroad for six months or more to provide criminal record checks from those countries.

Additionally, the review will look at establishing formal rules for CCTV inside vehicles, as officers currently have to handle requests from drivers wanting to install cameras on a “case-by-case basis.”

The consultation will also explore “greener” incentives, such as allowing electric and hybrid vehicles to stay on the road longer than petrol or diesel models to offset their higher costs.

Drivers will also get the chance to voice their opinions on mandatory equipment, including whether requirements to carry first aid kits and fire extinguishers “should be reconsidered.”

If approved, the consultation period is set to begin on February 28, 2026.

ROUND THE COUNCILS

FIFE:

CALLS FOR RESIGNATION OVER FARES

Fife taxi operators have called for the resignation of the Licensing Committee convenor as council failure cost the trade over six months of lost fare increases.

Taxi fares should have risen on 3 December 2025 but Fife Council missed the deadline and there will not be an increase now until the summer.

According to the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, fare scales have to be reviewed at intervals not exceeding 18 months. The current fare scale came into effect on 3 June 2024.

Fife Council's taxi fare review process was formally initiated on 9 September 2025, with the committee agreeing to commence the 2025 fare review and publish proposed scales for consultation. The consultation ran until 10 November 2025, ahead of the intended new scale effective on 3 December 2025.

However, the Committee failed to implement the new fare scale at meetings on 2 December or 13 January, where the increase didn't even feature on the agenda.

At a heated meeting on 3 February, business owners expressed anger to Depute Convenor, Cllr Patrick Browne, that the Committee's failure to follow its statutory obligations in time meant operators lost out on months of fare increases. Fife Council solicitor Steven Paterson agreed the council had failed to meet its obligations and apologised to operators.

Operators rejected the Depute Convenor's attempt to blame operators for the delay, as they objected to how small the increases were at the statutory consultation. They said the Committee should have listened to operators in the first place and set more realistic fare scales. They accused the Committee of being out of touch with the trade, with few, if any, of the members having experience of running a taxi company.

East Fife Taxi Association (EFTA) spokesperson Linda Holt, who was at the meeting, commented: "Taxi operators have to comply with a whole raft of legislation and regulation - if they fail to do so, they have to pay. When Fife Council fails to fulfil its statutory duties, they don't pay but taxi operators do.

"This is a significant failure by the Committee which is costing operators dearly when trading is already extremely hard. For many small operators, six months of delayed increases represents thousands of pounds in lost income. We want to see some accountability from the Committee, which is why we are calling for the resignation of its convenor Cllr Tom Adams. We

have written to Cllr Adams on numerous occasions in the past year and have never received a reply."

"The reason the Licensing Committee called the meeting with operators was to discuss vehicle age limits, a meeting which was initially promised for the autumn after EFTA wrote to Licensing in early August last year. The requirement that vehicles must be less than five years' old at first registration and must be taken off the road by the time they are ten years old imposes a significant financial burden on operators. "Operators feel they are being squeezed from all sides - rising costs, strict vehicle policies, and now delayed fare decisions. Every day the Licensing Committee dithers and delays on raising fare scales and lifting vehicle age limits, operators in Fife are losing money and leaving the trade."

BARNESLEY:

DRIVERS FACE 10% HIKE IN FEES

Barnsley taxi and private hire drivers are looking at a potential 10 per cent increase in licensing fees as the local council moves to balance its books.

Under new proposals agreed at the licensing regulatory board on February 11, the cost of a standard one-year driver's licence would jump from £150 to £165, while those opting for a three-year licence would see prices climb from £240 to £264. Fees for vehicle licences would increase from £180 to £198, and operator licences would rise depending on their length.

The council insists the price hike is a necessary step to ensure that fees "accurately reflect the cost of running the licensing service," including processing applications, checks/inspections and issuing licences. According to the report, the licensing team has ramped up its workload, specifically increasing the number of compliance checks. To justify the increases, officers conducted detailed time-monitoring studies to pin-point exactly how long each administrative task takes.

The council launched a 28-day public consultation on 13 February finishing at midnight of 13 March 2026.

If objections are received, then the council must consider these and then make the decision to approve or amend the fees and charges accordingly. You can submit your responses via:

Email: licensing@barnsley.gov.uk

(Subject Title: Fees and Charges Review 2026)

The council plans to review the fees again in a year to keep costs aligned with the service provided.

ROUND THE COUNCILS

SOUTH KESTEVEN: KNOWLEDGE TEST SCRAPPED

New taxi drivers in South Kesteven will no longer have to pass a “knowledge test” to get their licence.

Council members approved and adopted a new HC and PH licensing policy removing the requirement for the knowledge test to make it easier and cheaper for people to start working as drivers.

Cllr Philip Knowles said the council received “a huge amount of feedback from drivers, members, operators and the public” asking them to rethink the old rules. The council made these changes because they were worried about the high costs of applying and the difficulty of keeping drivers in the area.

To help with the price, new drivers can now get a one-year licence instead of a three-year one, which is “less costly, obviously, than a three-year licence.”

Applicants can also now pay their fees in smaller amounts via direct debit/standing order, rather than paying everything at once.

Cllr Knowles noted that “it was an expensive business to recruit and retain new licensees,” and these changes should help.

While the knowledge test is gone, drivers must still pass an English test. However, the council has made the first attempt free to save people money. Cllr Knowles explained that “the first English test will be free and any subsequent test if you fail it once and come back for a second go, you would have to pay for.” The council has also written to the government to ask for fairer national rules, as Cllr Knowles argued the current system “is not fair at the moment.”

GLASGOW:

CONSULTATION ON MANDATORY CARDS

Glasgow City Council has launched a public consultation to decide if all black cab drivers should be required to accept card payments. Currently, passengers have no guarantee they can pay by plastic, as some drivers in the city still operate on a cash-only basis.

With more people ditching physical wallets for smartphones, the council has seen an increase in residents calling for a change to licensing rules. The move follows a decision by the licensing committee to address shifting consumer habits.

A report presented to officials noted that while cash

was once the “preferred payment method,” the rise of technology means it’s now “common for the public not to carry cash.” Many passengers now rely entirely on card payments or digital wallets on their phones.

The council is inviting the public to have their say before the June 1 deadline.

A spokesperson confirmed that the committee will “consider all views received to this consultation before making a decision” on whether to officially amend taxi licence conditions.

If the plan goes ahead, it would mean a significant shift for the 1,217 taxis currently licensed in the city.

Take part in the survey here: <https://shorturl.at/9Xh96>

CHARNWOOD:

NEW VEHICLE RULES APPROVED

Charnwood BC has pushed through strict new regulations for Loughborough’s black cabs, sparking fears that the cost of upgrading vehicles could force some cabbies off the road. Approved on 3 February, the policy aims to cut pollution by requiring all taxis to be newer models, despite a survey showing that over half of local drivers and residents opposed the plan.

Under the new timeline, drivers must have a vehicle newer than a 2009 plate by December 1 of this year to renew their licence, with standards tightening further to a 2014 plate by 2028.

The new rules give an extra two years to WAVs – of which only 11 are currently registered.

While council officers argued the move aligns with national guidelines, Cllr Glenn Matthews abstained from the vote, warning that many drivers “can’t afford a better car” and will feel targeted.

He told the committee: “They are going to read that letter and think: what have I done to deserve this? ... You are putting them out of business.”

To balance the impact, the council is introducing a 20% discount on licence fees for fully electric taxis - no such cars are currently registered in the district.

The council is relaxing the number of times a year that newer cars must be tested and scrapping the one-fail-barred rule, which meant older vehicles are immediately banned from re-testing if they fail.

However, critics argue these perks do little for those currently driving older vehicles.

Looking ahead, officers admitted they are unsure if future rules will be “stricter or softer on taxi drivers” once a new unitary authority takes over local government in 2028.

ROUND THE COUNCILS

RIBBLE VALLEY:

CRIMINAL CHECKS ON TAXI FIRM STAFF

Ribble Valley Council is considering new rules that would require taxi/PH firms to carry out criminal record checks on all staff members, including office workers, and notify passengers if their driver is licensed in a different town.

The proposals come as the government moves toward national licensing changes following past CSE scandals where taxis/PHVs were sometimes involved. While drivers already undergo high-level background checks, the new local plan would expand this to everyone working behind the scenes.

Council solicitor Stephen Barker explained: "This new change would require a basic DBS check for all operators and office staff." He added that while the council cannot view the records directly, they would require businesses to provide evidence that the checks have been completed.

The council also wants to address the rise in "out-of-area" drivers working locally through sub-contracting. Under the proposal, customers must be warned if a vehicle licensed by another council is being sent to pick them up.

"Our new proposal is that the customer should be notified if an out-of-area driver and licensed car will be used," Mr. Barker stated. "If the passenger has a complaint, they would have to take it up with the council elsewhere."

The council will now consult before making a final decision on the new requirements.

PORTSMOUTH:

MANDATORY VEHICLE CHECKS

Portsmouth City Council voted at a Licensing Committee meeting on Friday 20 February 2026 to implement, from the 1st April 2026, mandatory daily walk-around/ pre-use checks on all taxis and private hire vehicles.

The council is implementing the relevant provisions of the Department for Transport (DfT) Taxi and Private Hire Best Practice Guidance for Licensing Authorities. An FOI request made by Checkedsafe revealed that 49% of such vehicles failed their compliance MOT on first presentation.

The MOT is the minimum standard a vehicle has to attain before being road legal.

SLOUGH:

BACKTRACK ON GREEN RULES

Slough councillors have voted to push back strict environmental rules for taxis and PHVs to support drivers struggling with costs.

The decision marks a major U-turn on the town's air quality plans, with officials warning the move is "quite a significant shift" from an already agreed policy. Slough Borough Council had originally planned to stop licensing new diesel vehicles from January 1, 2026 as part of an already-approved 2023 policy. However, following a meeting on February 11, councillors agreed to delay the ban on diesel vehicles until 2030 and petrol cars until 2031.

They also extended the maximum age for licensed cars from nine years to 12 years, provided the vehicles remain roadworthy.

The phasing out of diesel and petrol vehicles will not apply to wheelchair accessible vehicles.

The shift comes as the industry continues to recover from the pandemic and faces a lack of promised financial help. A £370,000 government grant intended to help drivers buy cleaner cars has faced "significant delay," leaving many without the means to upgrade.

Ibrar Khan, chairman of the private hire drivers' association, told the meeting that "drivers were told help was coming. Instead, the grant [was] undelivered for years, and the policy has now gone live without the support mechanism that was used to justify [the changes]." He argued that "this is not a risk the trade should be forced to carry."

A report states that the project is anticipated to start this year, and will be used to allow some drivers to take part in a 'try before you buy' scheme and support charging costs for those who don't have access to EV charging points.

Cllr Waqas Sabah supported this view, noting that "the infrastructure is not in place" and there is currently nothing to help drivers make the switch to electric.

Others pointed out that taxi drivers were being unfairly singled out for air pollution caused by Heathrow Airport, local industry and data centres.

Tessa Lindfield, the council's director of public health, cautioned that the delay of the policy's implementation to 2030 would be a "reversal" of the town's air quality management plan.

Despite these concerns, the committee voted to 'formally' change the Vehicle Age Policy, with four votes for, four abstentions and no votes against.

CCTV: YOUR SECURITY

BARNSELEY TAXI CCTV TRIAL COULD OPEN DOORS FOR MORE FUNDING FOLLOWING SAFETY SUCCESS

Barnsley taxi drivers are participating in a new survey to determine if a recent roll-out of free in-car CCTV systems has been a success. Members of the Barnsley Town Board are set to receive an update on the scheme, which provided recording equipment to HCs through the South

Yorks Mayoral Combined Authority. The project was launched with the goal of improving safety for both drivers and passengers, while also encouraging taxi operators to work later into the night.

According to a recent report, the initial feedback has been positive, noting that “early anecdotal

evidence suggests CCTV has supported driver safety, with footage used in police investigations and no complaints against drivers.”

The survey results are expected by the end of February and if deemed a success, the pilot could lead to “further funding bids” to expand the safety measures even further.

COVENTRY TAXI CCTV PLANS COULD BE STALLED BY GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

Coventry councillors are clashing over taxi safety after a local push for mandatory CCTV was sidelined by a new government consultation. The city’s “task and finish group” saw its progress “trumped” by national plans to reform licensing, sparking frustration among officials who fear local safety needs are being delayed. There was a debate over how the council tracks serious crimes.

Cllr Ed Ruane expressed shock at a perceived lack of data following a high-profile sexual assault in a local cab, stating: “not having any written reporting mechanism in the council is something I can’t get my head around.” While Cllr Christine Thomas insisted the council “absolutely does have data on hand,” Ruane argued that without transparent reporting, it is impossible to measure safe-

guarding effectively.

In response to the confusion, councillors have agreed to formalise how they report licence revocations to ensure better oversight. They are also writing to the Transport Secretary and West Midlands Mayor to demand clear timelines, ensuring that national red tape doesn’t permanently stall local efforts to protect passengers and drivers.

ARUN CABBIES & PUBLIC CLASH OVER MANDATORY CCTV IN TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

Arun DC is facing a sharp divide between cabbies and the public over a new proposal to make CCTV mandatory in all licensed vehicles. While a recent report suggests the council moves forward with the plan, a public consultation carried out in November 2025, showed a dramatic split in opinion. Of 184 responses, 47%, supported CCTV, 42% were against and 11% unsure. However, within this, 74% of respondents identifying as drivers

responded ‘no’ to mandatory cameras, while an equal percentage of the public voted ‘yes’.

The council, which licenses around 240 HCs and PHVs, argues that the move would improve safety for everyone. Officials believe the cameras would reduce crime and offer drivers protection “against unfounded complaints.”

However, those opposing the plans have raised serious concerns regarding privacy and the financial

burden on drivers. It’s estimated installing the equipment would cost around £555 per vehicle, or a monthly rental fee of £24.

If the policy is approved, Arun would join most other licensing authorities across Sussex that already require cameras.

For instance, Brighton and Hove City Council has mandated CCTV in its taxis since 2010. The council is set to consider the report on the matter on Friday, 27 February.



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TWO IN CUSTODY FOLLOWING BRUTAL LATE NIGHT ATTACK ON **NEWCASTLE** CABBIE

A man and a woman have appeared in court following a violent robbery in Newcastle that left a taxi driver with a broken nose and a suspected broken jaw.

Stacey Lee Dodds, 36, and William Keith Allen, 46, were arrested after the driver was targeted for his cash takings in the Walker area during the early hours of 30 January.

Police rushed to Roman Avenue at 1:30am, where they discovered the injured driver lying in the road.

The victim was taken to the hospital for treatment of significant facial injuries after his money was stolen.

DI Phil Guard, of Northumbria Police, described the assault as a "shocking incident" and expressed

his well wishes for the driver.

Dodds faces charges of robbery, possession of a bladed article, and possession of a class B drug. Allen, of Walker, has been charged with robbery and possession of a bladed article.

Both suspects were remanded in custody to face a judge at Newcastle Crown Court.

ATTACK ON **WIGAN** HACKNEY DRIVER ENDS IN HIM BEING HOSPITALISED WITH A BROKEN JAW

Early on Sunday morning, 8 February, a couple of passengers approached a taxi waiting on the rank in Wigan town centre and asked for a price to be taken to a club in Bolton. The fare was agreed and as it was a long trip, the driver asked for payment up front.

However when the driver checked the £20 note he was given he saw it was fake so asked the passengers to exit his vehicle.

Shockingly the thugs reacted by attacking him, breaking his jaw, which resulting in the traumatised driver being hospitalised.

David Lawrie, Director of **NPHTA** said: "This really is getting out of hand, councils, police, government, CPS and courts all need to take more responsibility for this now!"

"I published a four page article on the subject where I pointed out the failings of CPS, councils, police,

courts, and government itself, following the release of the 2020 Statutory standards.

"PHTM regularly publishes stories of violent and verbal attacks on our drivers and these are just the ones we hear about ... how many more go unreported???"

Public safety is NOT just about passengers, nor is it just against women and young girls - drivers deserve protection too!!!"

NOTTS MAN IN COURT FOLLOWING KNIFEPOINT TAXI ROBBERY AND ROAD RAGE INCIDENT

A 36-year-old man has appeared in court after a taxi driver was robbed at knifepoint in Carlton. The drama unfolded on Wednesday, 28 January, when neighbourhood officers patrolling Gedling Road were flagged down by the victim at 2.35pm. The driver told police that a man had "held a knife to his throat and stolen cash from the vehicle before fleeing."

Tekla Adofo, from Nottingham, has

been charged with robbery and possession of a knife in public regarding the attack. However, his legal troubles do not end there. Adofo also faces a charge of threatening a person with a blade following a separate road rage incident in Hyson Green on 3 February.

During the second incident, officers recovered a bag containing heroin, cocaine, and

cannabis. As a result, Adofo is further charged with two counts of possession with intent to supply Class A drugs and one count of possession with intent to supply a Class B drug.

Adofo appeared at Nottingham Magistrates' Court on Wednesday, 4 February. He was remanded in custody and is scheduled to appear at Nottingham Crown Court on 4 March 2026.

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GREEN MEANS GO

MANCHESTER TAXI DRIVERS STICK TO DIESEL AS ELECTRIC GRANTS STALL

Less than a third of taxi drivers in Greater Manchester (GM) are using new government-funded grants to switch to EVs, according to research by the Clean Cities Campaign.

While an £8m Hackney Support Fund was launched to help clean up the region's air, data from January 2026 shows that the majority of cabbies are choosing to stick with traditional fossil fuels.

Of the 193 grant applications approved so far, 131 will subsidise "compliant" Euro 4 petrol or Euro 6 diesel vehicles, while only 62 are being used for fully zero-emission models.

Sarah Rowe of Clean Cities called the trend a "missed opportunity,"



noting that while London sees one in five taxis go electric, the figure for the rest of England remains as low as one in 100.

"To lock them into fossil fuel-powered vehicles seems short-sighted at best," she said, adding that a stronger push for electric cabs would "improve the health of all of us who breathe the air here in GM."

The grants for purpose-built WAVs, which offer up to £12,560 for zero-emission capable models and roughly half that for newer diesel cars, are part of a wider investment-led Clean Air Plan.

In an update on their plan, GM is to announce that they are delivering all the measures agreed with government to meet legal limits for NO₂, without the need for a charging CAZ.

However, campaign groups argue that without better incentives for electrification, the city-region is failing to catch up. As Rowe put it: "It's a shame that two-thirds of those taxis being upgraded will remain petrol and diesel."

BURNHAM BACKS LOCAL CABBIES WITH £4.4M FUND AS WAR ON 'WOLVERHAMPTON PROBLEM' ESCALATES

Greater Manchester Mayor, Andy Burnham, has launched a multi-million-pound offensive to clean up the region's private hire fleet while squeezing out-of-area drivers from local streets.

Announcing a new £4.45m fund for PHVs on 30 January, the Mayor confirmed that drivers facing a 2026 deadline to meet emissions standards can now access £5,000 interest-free loans or £1,000 grants to modernise their cars.

The financial lifeline, which mirrors an existing £8m package for black cabs, comes with a strict "locals only" caveat. In a direct shot at the thousands of drivers operating in the region while licensed elsewhere - most notably by the City of Wolverhampton Council - Burn-

ham declared that the cash is only for "those who have done the right thing and licensed with our authorities in GM."

Addressing a GM Combined Authority meeting in Stockport, he framed the move as a reward for loyalty, stating: "We believe this funding recognises what our trade has been through. It backs our trade."

The move is the latest escalation in a long-standing battle against the so-called "Wolverhampton problem," where nearly half of the PHVs currently operating in Greater Manchester are licensed by external authorities. While the government recently proposed streamlining licensing bodies from 263 down to 70 to help curb the practice,

Burnham argues that mere reduction is a half-measure. "It would not be good enough [to] just reduce," the Mayor insisted, adding that "if reduce means practically end, that's what we want."

The Mayor's administration is now looking to the capital for support, partnering with TfL to lobby for a total ban via an amendment to the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill. Reflecting on the frustrations of local operators, Burnham noted that "the challenge of out-of-area working is a significant complaint" and signalled that this funding is just one part of a broader strategy to ensure Greater Manchester's streets are served by Greater Manchester's drivers.

GREEN MEANS GO

OCTOPUS & FREENOW BY LYFT PARTNERSHIP SLASHES CHARGING COSTS FOR CABBIES

A new deal between Octopus Electroverse and Freenow by Lyft is set to make electric driving significantly cheaper and easier for taxi drivers across Europe.

The partnership provides tens of thousands of drivers across 180 major cities in the UK, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Spain, Poland and Greece, with access to discounted public charging and a simplified system for finding power points.

In the UK, the savings are particularly high, with drivers and fleet owners able to cut their public charging bills by more than 40 per cent annually.

This is estimated to save individual drivers approximately £1,100 a year, helping to lower the high costs of running a taxi while also

encouraging a move toward cleaner transport.

To benefit from these savings, drivers can link their Freenow accounts to the Electroverse platform, which provides access to 80 per cent of all public chargers in Europe. The platform also offers practical tools like route planning and live maps that work directly with in-car systems.

Matt Davies, Founder and Director of Octopus Electroverse, expressed his enthusiasm for helping high-mileage drivers, stating: "Our partnership with Freenow by Lyft is particularly exciting as it brings even more discounts to such an important sector.

"And with their drivers spending so much of their day on the road,

being able to help them find chargers quickly and charge affordably is fantastic – and who doesn't love snapping up savings of over 40 per cent?"

The move is part of a broader effort to clean up city air by making the switch to electric cars more realistic for professionals.

Felix Brand, Chief Strategy Officer at Freenow by Lyft, said the goal is to help cities meet climate targets, adding: "By making the transition to electric vehicles more financially appealing, we hope to encourage more drivers to make the switch, supporting cities in reducing emissions and accelerating their journey toward climate-neutral, fully electrified transport systems."

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A more professional image from the very first message

Passengers judge a taxi company long before the car arrives. Every notification, confirmation, and update shapes their perception of reliability. With M2M Smart Messaging, operators send rich, branded WhatsApp messages that instantly elevate the company's profile. Instead of short, plain text messages that often go unnoticed, customers receive polished communications with your logo, clear formatting, and up to 3,000 characters of space to explain, reassure and inform.

WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging app, and passengers instinctively trust it. They open it more frequently, respond faster, and engage more naturally. When your business communicates through the same channel they use with friends and family, it feels personal, modern and professional.

Customers see WhatsApp messages even when they miss SMS

One of the biggest frustrations for taxi operators is passengers claiming they "never received the text." Standard SMS is easy to miss, especially when phones filter unknown senders or when network congestion delays delivery. WhatsApp messages, however, appear instantly, with read receipts, push notifications, and a familiar interface that customers check constantly.

This dramatically reduces no-shows, improves pickup accuracy, and increases customer satisfaction. Operators gain a communication channel that is visible, reliable, and aligned with how people use their phones today.

Avoid the hidden dangers of mobile network firewalls

Mobile networks have become increasingly strict about high-volume SMS traffic. Their firewalls block standard consumer SIMs from sending large quantities of messages, and taxi operators often get caught in the crossfire. When a network flags a SIM, messages can be delayed or stopped entirely including essential driver-tracking links, payment links, and booking confirmations.

This creates operational chaos: drivers can't be located, customers can't pay, and dispatchers lose visibility. M2M Smart Messaging eliminates this risk by using approved, compliant channels that networks do not block. Your messages are delivered consistently, without interruption, and without the fear of being throttled or shut down.

Rich media, instant delivery, and a better customer experience

WhatsApp allows operators to send far more than text. With M2M Smart Messaging, you can deliver:

- High-quality images of the driver or vehicle
- Live tracking links
- Payment links
- Terms & Conditions or safety information
- Promotional content or loyalty offers

Everything arrives instantly, without the service issues that plague SMS. Customers get clearer information, richer detail, and a smoother journey from booking to drop-off.

A smarter, stronger brand for modern taxi operators

Taxi companies that adopt M2M Smart Messaging stand out immediately. They look more organised, more trustworthy, and more technologically advanced. Every message reinforces your brand, reduces friction, and builds loyalty.

In a competitive market, professionalism isn't just about clean cars and polite drivers it's about delivering a seamless digital experience. M2M Smart Messaging gives operators the tools to communicate like a modern mobility provider, not a legacy taxi firm.

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SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY

IS YOUR MARKETING STUCK IN 1985?

Article by Phil Holloway
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The next generation of taxi bookers are already on TikTok – are you? If you operate in the private hire and taxi sector, I want to ask you a direct question:

“Why is your marketing still stuck in 1985?”

I say that with respect - but also with urgency. We are now operating in a world where the average person spends over 4 hours per day on their smartphone. Of that time, around 2.5 hours is spent on social media. Platforms such as Facebook and Instagram still dominate attention - but the fastest-growing and most influential platform right now is TikTok.

In the UK alone, TikTok has over 23 million users, and critically, it dominates the 18–34 age bracket - the very people who are becoming your next generation of regular taxi and private hire customers. Yet many taxi firms I speak to still say:

“Our customers aren’t on TikTok.”

“We don’t really do social media.”

“It’s not for our type of business.”

Let’s be honest, your customers are absolutely on social media. They’re on their phones when they wake up. They’re on them during lunch. They’re on them at night. They are scrolling while waiting for a taxi.

So, the real question is not whether your customers are on social media - it’s whether your business is visible when they are.

Why are so many taxi firms not using social media properly?

From my experience working in marketing for over 30 years and specifically with taxi companies across the UK there are three main reasons:

1. Comfort with what’s always worked

Word of mouth, rank presence and a good local reputation have carried many operators for decades. But behaviour has changed. Booking journeys now starts online.

2. Fear of doing it wrong

Many owners worry about looking unprofessional or “cringe.” So they do nothing instead.

3. Underestimating the shift in customer acquisition

The next generation doesn’t pick up Yellow Pages or even search Google first. They search social platforms.

And here’s my key point: TikTok is no longer just dance videos and trends. It’s a discovery engine. It’s where people form brand perceptions quickly.

Why TikTok matters for taxi companies

TikTok’s algorithm rewards authenticity over big budgets. That means a well-shot phone video of:

- A driver story
- Behind-the-scenes dispatch footage
- A “day in the life”
- Customer reactions
- Safety features explained

... can outperform a polished corporate advert.

The platform builds familiarity. Familiarity builds trust. Trust builds bookings. If a 22-year-old student sees your company regularly on TikTok, when they need a ride home on a Friday night, who do you think they’ll open first - the company they’ve seen for months, or the one they’ve never heard of?

The industry is moving forward

We are no longer in an era where a logo on a door and a phone number in the window is enough. The most progressive operators in our industry are:

- Building driver pride through content
- Showcasing community involvement
- Demonstrating professionalism publicly
- Owning their local digital space

The ones who refuse to adapt will not disappear overnight - but they will slowly lose relevance. The next generation of taxi bookers are already scrolling. Already watching. Already forming opinions.

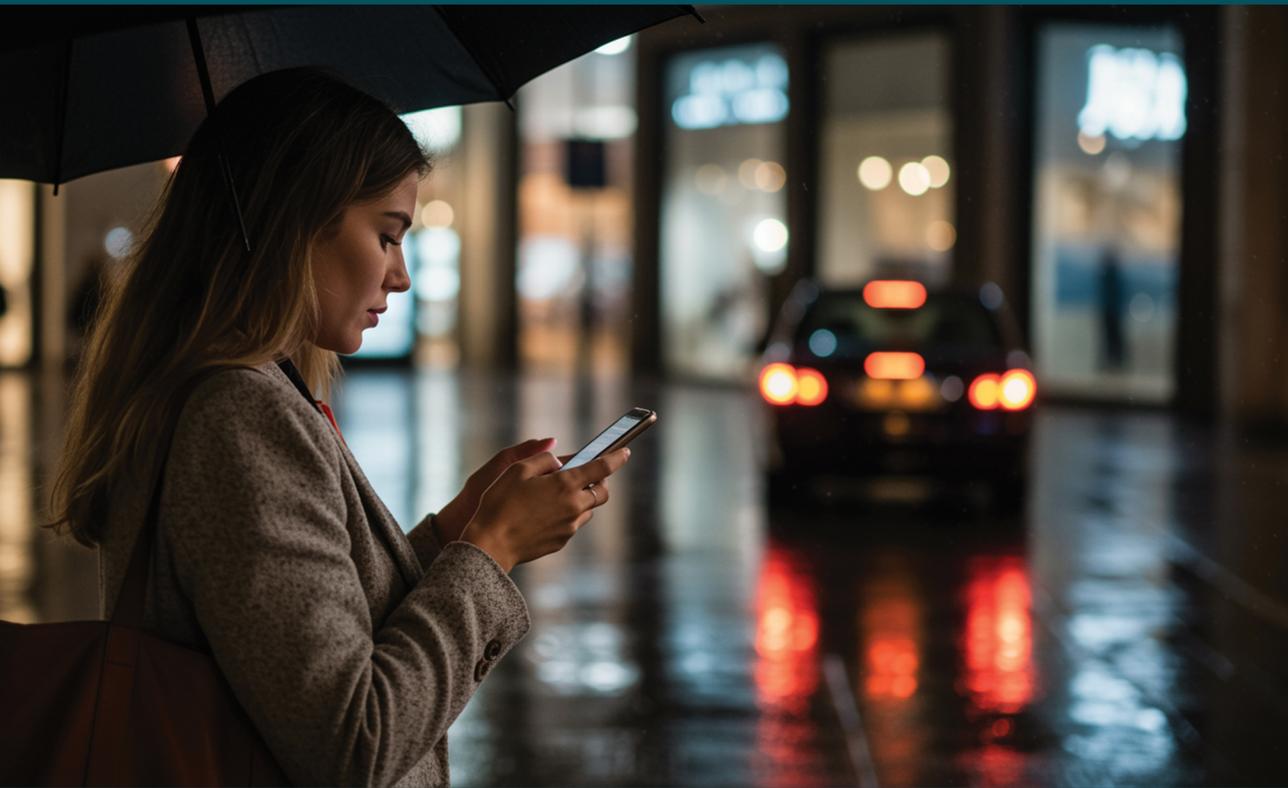
The only question is: will they see your business - or your competitor’s... or that big global ride hail app we mustn’t mention.

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SHAME SHAME

CARMARTHENSHIRE CABBIE JAILED FOR 9 YEARS AFTER RAPING PASSENGER IN HER HOME

A taxi driver who raped a woman after picking her up from a night out has been sentenced to nine years in prison. Dominic Dalton, 30, of Pencader, was found guilty of the attack following a five-day trial at Swansea Crown Court. The incident occurred in the early hours of February 25, 2024, after the victim and a friend hired Dalton's taxi in Aberystwyth. The court heard that after Dalton dropped the friend off he claimed the taxi meter stopped working at this point, as the journey was never recorded past the friend's address. The victim fell in and out of sleep during the ride. Upon arriving at her house, Dalton helped her

inside and up to her bedroom. The woman fell asleep again but woke to find Dalton raping her.

The victim grabbed a knife from her kitchen and screamed at him. When he refused to go, she fled the house barefoot, slashing the taxi's tyres as she left to prevent him from following. She found safety at a nearby address and contacted the police. Dalton fled the scene but later came back to return the victim's mobile phone, which he'd taken by mistake. After seeing police at the house, Dalton attempted to



formulate a story using his mobile phone to access information including 'have you been falsely accused of rape?' and 'perverting the course of justice'.

Despite Dalton's claims that the encounter was consensual, a jury took less than two hours to unanimously find him guilty. DI Mathew Nelson praised the woman's "bravery and resilience," stating that Dalton "abused his position to ensure his passengers got home safely that night, exploiting the victim's vulnerability." He added that the sentence "serves to punish Dalton for his actions, but importantly also validates the victim's voice."

FORMER DONCASTER PH DRIVER JAILED FOR 20 YEARS AFTER HISTORICAL RAPE CONVICTIONS

A private hire driver described as a "monster" has been sentenced to 20 years in prison for raping a vulnerable teenage girl and a woman in separate attacks. Riyasth Hussain, 45, was convicted of three counts of rape following a trial at Sheffield Crown Court. The offences, which took place in Rotherham between 2004 and 2008, were uncovered as part of major investigation, Operation Stovewood, into historical child sexual abuse. The court heard harrowing details of how Hussain targeted a 13 or 14-year-old girl in 2004, once driving her to an empty industrial estate where he pulled her out of the cab and raped her and later plying her with alcohol before raping her.

In a powerful victim impact statement, the woman told Hussain: "When you met me, I was just a fragile, vulnerable little girl who you could easily abuse. Today I'm a woman and my only goal is justice." She added: "You stole my childhood, now I'm taking your freedom." A second victim was raped by Hussain in a bedsit in 2008. In a statement read to the court, she said she could "never forgive what this monster has done to me," noting that he had "completely ruined my life."

Sentencing Hussain on February 19, Judge Sarah Wright told the



defendant that "the harm and the wider harm you have caused is of unimaginable proportions," adding that the damage to the victims' lives "cannot and never will be repaired."

Hussain, a father of three from Doncaster with a criminal record involving robbery and firearms, was brought to justice through the efforts of the NCA and the CPS. Liz Fell, specialist CPS prosecutor, said: "The cruelty and abuse the victims suffered at the hands of Hussain was horrific, causing a lasting impact on their lives today.

Judge Wright also paid tribute to the women, stating they had shown "the upmost courage" to ensure their "voices have now been heard."

SHAME SHAME

CHELMSFORD CABBIE'S DEVASTATING WRONG WAY A12 DASH ENDS IN SUSPENDED SENTENCE

A Chelmsford cabbie narrowly escaped jail after driving the wrong way down the A12 while more than two-and-a-half times the legal drink-drive limit.

Khurram Bashir, a driver with 20 years of experience, sped toward oncoming traffic at up to 60mph on December 23, forcing one motorist to swerve when she was "confronted by a sight of headlights driving at speed towards her."

The court heard that Bashir's vehicle came within metres of a head-on collision with a police car travelling at 70mph, a near-miss that left an officer "shaken" by an

impact that "would have been devastating and no doubt fatal."

He was finally intercepted by police who used their vehicle to block the carriageway. During sentencing at Chelmsford Crown Court, Recorder Paul Sharkey lambasted the actions as "foolish and stupid," telling Bashir: "It was your choice to drink a considerable amount of alcohol and put yourself in that position." While the defence noted that Bashir was struggling with severe



anxiety over a health scare, the judge emphasised that "this was a very bad case of dangerous driving where you could have collided head-on with a number of vehicles." Huda Mousa for the defence, noted that Bashir had expressed deep remorse, stating that "he actually wanted to thank police officers for stopping him." Describing the incident as a "one-off", he highlighted his immediate admission of guilt.

Bashir received an eight-month prison sentence, suspended for two years, plus a two-year driving ban and 200 hours of unpaid work.

DISGRACED LEEDS DRIVER JAILED FOR GROTESQUE CHILD FANTASIES AND SECRET BATHROOM FILMING

A former taxi driver from Leeds has been jailed after police uncovered a "sickening" collection of child abuse images and evidence of a hidden camera used to spy on a woman.

Rehan Farooq, 37, was caught following a police raid on his home in April, where officers found a hoard of indecent images and disturbing chat logs.

In these messages, Farooq discussed horrific fantasies involving the rape and murder of children and women with other offenders.

Despite his claims that he was not "into that sort of stuff" and was merely under the influence of drugs, a second police raid in October revealed even more evidence.

Forensic analysis of a new phone

uncovered hidden camera footage of a woman using a toilet and showering, which Farooq had shared with others.

In total, authorities found over 500 illegal images and videos, including the most severe "Category A" depictions of child abuse, along with extreme pornography involving animals.

Farooq, who was already serving a suspended sentence for dangerous driving, pleaded guilty to charges including voyeurism, making indecent photographs of children, and possessing extreme pornography.

His defence lawyer, Lily Wildman, claimed he was "genuinely remorseful" and blamed his actions



on illegal drug use. However, Judge Andrew Stubbs KC rejected these excuses during sentencing at Leeds Crown Court.

The judge told Farooq: "You took the deliberate choice to look for, download and distribute the most serious kind of indecent images of children.

"You shared the most grotesque of fantasies, including the rape and mutilation of children."

The judge added that Farooq sought out the material for his own "perverted sexual gratification" and noted: "You can't confront your own sexual addiction to children."

Farooq was sentenced to 40 months in prison, placed on the sex offender register for life, and given a lifelong order to restrict his internet use.

FIT AND PROPER

LUTON TAXI DRIVER TO PAY THOUSANDS AFTER STING OPERATION UNCOVERS OVERCHARGING

A Luton taxi driver has been ordered to pay thousands of pounds after being caught overcharging a passenger. Nazik Sabir was found guilty of failing to use his taximeter and charging more than the metered fare during a "test purchase" operation conducted by Central Bedfordshire Council in September 2025. Sabir admitted to remembering

the journey during an interview under caution, he denied that he had overcharged the undercover officers involved in the sting. The case proceeded despite Sabir failing to attend the court hearing. He was fined £220 and ordered to pay legal costs totalling £2,141.55. Cllr Tracey Wye emphasised the importance of accountability, stating: "Licensed taxi drivers are

trusted to charge passengers fairly and in line with the law." She added that the prosecution "sends a clear message that we will not tolerate drivers who abuse that trust by failing to use their meter or overcharging customers." The council maintains these checks are essential for "protecting the public and ensuring a level playing field" for drivers who follow the rules.

BOLTON COUNCIL TARGETS DRIVER MISCONDUCT IN LICENSING CRACKDOWN

Bolton Council has taken firm action against several private hire drivers and licence applicants, issuing bans and licence rejections to protect public safety. Following a series of licensing committee meetings in early 2026, officials emphasised that maintaining the status of a "fit and proper person to hold a licence" requires strict adherence to the law and transparency with the council. One driver was hit with an eight-

week suspension following a 2024 conviction for using a mobile phone while driving. The committee labelled the incident a "major traffic offence" and expressed concern that the driver failed to report the conviction to the council. His history, which included a previous warning letter "regarding breach of conditions," ultimately led to the 2-month ban. In a similar case, a second driver received a four-week suspension

for a mobile phone conviction from May 2025. The committee acknowledged "the driver's good record" when deciding on a shorter ban. A third driver narrowly avoided losing his licence after failing to identify a driver to the police, an offence that typically leads to revocation. He was issued a warning letter instead after the committee considered "the domestic difficulties the driver had experienced," despite him also failing to report a previous speed awareness course.

The council also proved it would take a hard line on an applicant's personal history, rejecting a licence for a man arrested in 2022 on suspicion of strangling his wife. Although no further action was taken by police at the time, the committee did not find the applicant's denials "credible" and concluded that "on the balance of probabilities a serious incident did occur." Officials blocked the application to ensure the individual did not "pose a risk to the public."

MESSAGE FROM BRISTOL AND SOUTH GLOS TAXICOP PATRICK QUINTON

Bristol and South Gloucestershire Taxicop, Patrick Quinton, gave the following message: in October 2024, a private hire vehicle was detected speeding in Somerset. The licence holder stated someone else was driving at the time (who was an unlicensed driver). We didn't believe that, and nor did Bath Magistrates who on the 22 January found him guilty of failing

to furnish the name and address of the real driver. He was sentenced to six DVLA points and £837 fine/costs. The matter has been reported to the council who will consider if he remains a fit and proper person to hold a private hire driver and private hire vehicle licence. Another reminder to not lie about traffic offences!

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FIT AND PROPER

MAN REFUSED **NORTH AYRSHIRE** TAXI LICENCE FOR VIOLENT ASSAULT AND SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

A North Ayrshire man has been denied a taxi licence following a “very serious” series of alcohol-fuelled offences that included stamping on a customer’s face and assaulting police officers.

Tyler Macauley, a construction worker, saw his application unanimously rejected by the North Ayrshire Licensing Committee on Wednesday, 4 February, after Police Scotland argued he was “not a fit and proper person to have a taxi driver’s licence.”

The committee heard that during an April 2023 altercation at a Prestwick restaurant, Macauley

engaged in a fight with a 50-year-old man. After the victim fell and struck his head, Macauley “approached the 50-year-old and stamped on his face with his foot.” The violence continued following his arrest, as Macauley resisted officers, used misogynistic slurs, and “repeatedly thrust his buttocks into the groin area of a male officer.” Once at Saltcoats Police office, he urinated on the floor and “spat into the face of a male officer,” eventually requiring a three-person team to move him to a cell. Macauley, who failed to disclose his previous convictions on his

application for the taxi licence, claimed his mother had filled out most of the paperwork and he believed the record was spent.

Expressing remorse, he told the committee: “It was not me,” and stated he was “embarrassed and had too much to drink.” He maintained that he has not consumed alcohol since the night of the incident.

Despite his apology, the committee remained firm on public safety. Cllr Donald L Reid emphasised the gravity of the case, stating: “These are very serious charges and we have a duty of care to the public.”

CHELTENHAM CRACKDOWN: DISHONEST CABBIES STRIPPED OF LICENCES AFTER SAFETY SWEEPS

Authorities in Cheltenham have sent a clear message to the trade following a series of enforcement operations that have left two drivers without their livelihoods and one facing a massive legal bill. In a joint effort between the police and Cheltenham Borough Council licensing teams, licensed vehicles were pulled over during race meetings to ensure they met safety and regulatory standards.

In one significant case, a driver licensed by the City of Wolverhampton Council was caught during the November race meet using illegal “ghost plates.” These plates are designed to evade cameras and tracking, and an inspection further revealed the driver was not wearing his required identification badges. A follow-up

investigation by licensing officials discovered the driver had also submitted a fraudulent insurance certificate.

Consequently, both his driver and vehicle licences were revoked, and he has been added to the NR3 national register of barred drivers as he was no longer considered a “fit and proper person.”

At another operation, this time at the 2025 March Festival, driver Mr. Rahman, was stopped for having two bald tyres that fell below the legal safety limit.

This discovery led to the uncovering of a long history of undeclared speeding fines and false statements made on his licensing applications. Despite Mr. Rahman’s repeated attempts to fight the ban through the legal

system, his final appeal was rejected by the Crown Court on February 9, 2026.

The court was scathing in its assessment of the veteran driver, noting that six driving offences over 11 years was an unacceptable record for a professional. The judge stated that Mr. Rahman was “not an honest person” and that there was a clear “pattern of dishonesty in this case.” Supporting the council’s original decision, the court ruled that officials were “perfectly entitled to find that Mr Rahman was not a fit and proper person” and were not persuaded that the revocation was “a wrong decision or anything approaching a wrong decision.” Mr. Rahman has now been ordered to pay £4,180.50 in legal costs to the council.

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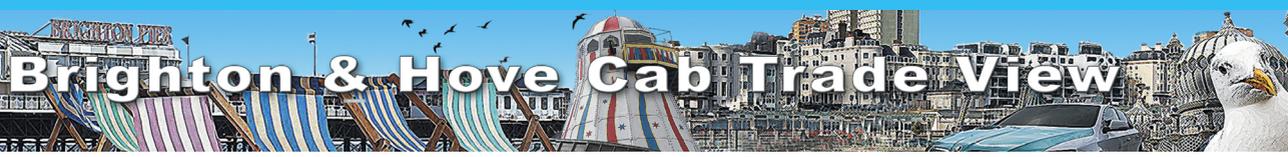


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Brighton & Hove Cab Trade View

Andy Peters

Brighton & Hove Cab Trade Association

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I don't take any animals

This has been my policy since over forty-years ago a passenger plonked a cage with a cat on the back seat of my fairly new taxi. This resulted in the seat being soaked in cat's pee, which as I am sure you will all know has a very distinctive smell at the best of times. This was worse because, as I found out, the cat was being taken to the vet with a kidney problem. Even though the seat had been fitted with tailored vinyl seat covers, nothing I used to clean it took away the acrid smell. Additionally, the offending liquid had also run under the seat and embedded itself to some of the sound deadening material and soaked into the seat foam.

In the end I had to replace the whole seat with a new one as the internet had not been invented back then to search for a second hand one.

About a year later, a woman got into the car on a booked job with one of those meaningless bits of fluff with teeth that someone stupidly invented for people to fawn over and treat like a little baby and stick a red ribbon on its head with the intention of making it look angelic. You know those ones that are all growl and saliva.

I have to make the point that this was in the days of 'pen and paper' and long before technology fortunately stepped in which allowed a driver the option of 'no animals'.

She suddenly remembered that she had forgotten something, so got out and left this 'claws and teeth' little scrote on the back seat. I looked around and it was just like in one of those old western movies with one cowboy dressed in black, being the 'claws and teeth', and me dressed in white both thinking whoever draws first walks out alive. You could almost hear the music.. 'Wolwawal.. Wolw.. Wolw.. Wolw'. Google 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly - Ennio Morricone if you are a certain age.



Unfortunately, I was not as quick, and this cannon ball of energy leapt from the back seat to the front.

However, I was quick enough to give it a retaliatory slap, knocking it into the front passenger seat floorwell although receiving a glancing nip at the same time. Fortunately, I had only just had a tetanus injection following an encounter with a hamster a month earlier.

However, I could see round two was about to begin as this little Shih Tzu had recovered unshaken and was looking directly at me, growling and eyeing up my neck.

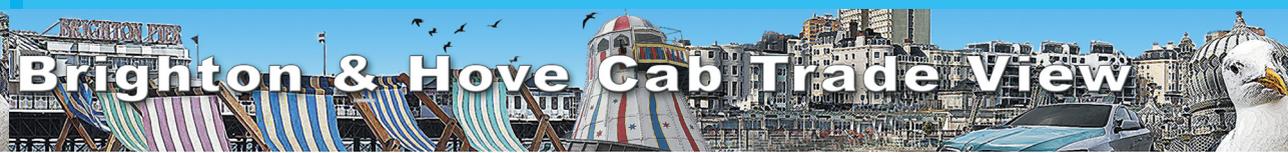
The door opened and the woman got back in again and the beast started whining all innocently. Have you ever heard those types of people who speak to their animals as if they were human babies? You know, the ones that make your skin crawl when you hear them do this, but you dare not say anything about their precious little rats. Well, this was one of them and the dog jumped up on the front seat, on to dashboard which rebounded it back to the seat repeating this at least three times, and then threw itself into the arms of its human who was now sitting in the back the seat whilst whimpering for sympathy. After pampering the dog she then told me where she wanted to go.

I turned around and looked at her and through gritted teeth told her that she and her precious little baby were going nowhere. She was quite taken aback, even though she had seen the acrobatics of the 'ball of spite', for which incidentally she made no apology. We had a stand-off which ended up with me being called various names as she got out of the car, which for a lady I was actually quite impressed with.

I do have to make it clear that guide dogs, or what is now known as assistant dogs, are more than welcome. In fact, I would take these dogs unaccompanied every day, all day.

So, this brings me to what happened recently.

It was raining hard and I was on the rank, first turn, which is 100 yards away from the train station, when the train came in and people were coming out and heading towards the rank. This is one of those times when you see a crowd of people and you try and work out which one will be your customer. Will it be one of the ones with the huge suitcases which means I could get soaked because I help people as I'm not an Uber driver that just sits there and lets the customer struggle. Maybe one of those fast-paced seasoned commuters who would do well as rugby players. It wouldn't be the old lady who was actually being



Brighton & Hove Cab Trade View

overtaken by everyone, but it was odds-on that I would be getting the one with the dog.

Yep, I ended up with the dog one, who was faster than anyone else and mainly because the dog was setting the pace and dragging its owner to the finish line.

I locked the doors and wound down the window and very, very politely told the woman that I don't take animals. You would think that would be the end of it with some respect shown to me and she would take the hint and go to the next one. But no, she protested that her bundle of joy was perfectly trained...even though the dog had been dragging her to get to the rank! Again, I was very polite, even though I was losing out on getting a fare because the other potential customers were now going to the taxis behind me.

She actually said to me: "Uber takes dogs!"

Now, I could have very easily got into a lengthy discussion and I really wanted to say something that could not be printed here. However, all I did was stare at her whilst pressing the button to lift the window back up which I think was actually far more impressive and effective. She left with her well soaked dog and I did end up with a suitcase customer which did mean that I got a bit wet whilst putting it in the boot. But I was very happy not to have a drenched dog in the car because we all know that distinctive smell that can linger.

I do have to make it clear that I did have a dog and a cat at one time, and a vicious hamster. Although the latter I was only temporarily looking after, it ended up with a broken leg in my care after biting me. However, I have found that dog owners seem to think that they expect their precious mutts to be loved and adored by everyone - which is OK, but don't expect to get in my taxi with one, especially a wet one!

Angry Uber driver

There has been a video circulating on the various trade media sites that gave me a good laugh of an Uber driver reacting to a job that was given to him. So, because I like to spread mirth and merriment you can also have a good laugh as well by viewing it here; <http://tiny.cc/angry-uber-driver>

I did have to edit out the many curse words to keep it family friendly and I would really like to play this at the next Trade Forum meeting which is attended by local councillors and an Uber rep. This would be fantastic to

play on the huge screen that is available, although I doubt our trade meeting chair would allow this. I'm going to try and work out if I can bribe a council technician to suddenly make it play mid-meeting.

Portsmouth – overrun with Wolverhampton PHVs

It has recently been reported that Portsmouth CC cabinet lead for community 'safety', Cllr Lee Hunt, has stated that the city is overrun with out-of-town taxis (wrong, these are PHVs and not taxis) with the chair of the licensing committee, Cllr Emily Strudwick, stating "If it's not Portsmouth, don't get into it".

This is quite ironic because in Brighton & Hove we have seen a significant rise in Portsmouth PHVs predominantly working here. Even more ironic is that very recently in one week I reported four of these to Portsmouth licensing for missing door signs, which are a condition of licensing to be able to safely identify the vehicle.

It appears that Portsmouth is also looking at improving its own standards after stupidly removing the need for a knowledge test for hackney drivers in 2023. Yep, suddenly realised that it is better to have taxi drivers actually knowing where they are going without the reliance on a satnav. Just like when you get someone in to service your gas boiler who has no need to search YouTube to do it. The council fell short of imposing a knowledge test for PHV drivers, as such high standards are apparently not required, so will continue to allow these drivers to have one eye on a satnav and the other on the road, and continuously apply to Portsmouth for a PH licence with absolutely no intention of working there. There is also the very misleading presumption that all dispatch systems provide the full details of the booked journey, maybe Uber does, but not all systems do.

I have a suggestion for Portsmouth licensing committee members. How about having what we have had in Brighton & Hove for many years, which is a dual licence that allows a driver to drive both a hackney carriage and PHV, which requires both the high standards equally, including passing a knowledge test. Maybe that will stop the influx of applicants to get a PHV licence with the full intention of working out-of-sight and out-of-mind of Portsmouth Licensing Enforcement, much like you are complaining about Wolverhampton PHVs working in your city!

ALL THINGS LICENSING

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

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

In this month's article I focus on two elements involving smoking; firstly around yet another Government consultation which is relevant to the licensed trade around vaping in licensed vehicles and secondly an interesting question on the use of medicinal cannabis and the DVLA Group 2 standards which came up at a recent licensing forum. Perhaps as a further addition to the above disclaimer I would add that the views on medical cannabis are my own and do not constitute an authoritative position.

Government launches consultation on new smoke-free, heated-tobacco-free and vape-free rules for England

We all know, or at least should know, that under the Health Act 2006, a licensed vehicle is considered a 'workplace' and an 'enclosed public place' for the purpose of the law and must be smoke-free at all times: i.e. smoking isn't allowed at any time, whether a passenger is aboard or not.

The government has now opened a major consultation on plans to expand smoke-free legislation and introduce new restrictions on heated tobacco and vaping in England; proposals that could have far-reaching consequences for licensed premises, taxi operators and other businesses whose activities fall within "enclosed and semi enclosed" workplaces and public places.

Published on 13 February 2026, the consultation forms part of the wider Tobacco and Vapes Bill and the government's ambition to create a 'smoke free generation'. The proposals would significantly extend existing rules under the Health Act 2006, which already bans smoking in enclosed and semi-enclosed workplaces, public places and vehicles used for work.

What the government is proposing

The consultation sets out three major strands of regulation:

1. Smoke-free outdoor places

The government proposes making smoking illegal in a range of outdoor settings where children or medically vulnerable people are likely to be present. These include:

- Public children's playgrounds
- Outdoor areas of health and social care settings
- Outdoor areas of education settings

Residential care settings (such as care homes and hospices) could be permitted to designate a specific outdoor smoking area.

2. Heated tobacco-free places

All indoor smoke-free areas including enclosed and semi-enclosed workplaces and public places would also become heated tobacco free.

This would apply to:

- Pubs, bars and hospitality venues
- Enclosed or semi enclosed smoking shelters
- Public transport
- Vehicles used for work

Outdoor areas proposed to be smoke free would also become heated tobacco free.

3. Vape-free places

The government proposes banning vaping in all indoor smoke-free places, meaning the same enclosed and semi-enclosed workplaces and public places would become vape free.

Outdoor vape-free rules would apply to:

- Public children's playgrounds
- Outdoor areas of education settings

Health and care outdoor settings would not be vape free, to preserve vaping as a smoking cessation tool for adults.

The consultation has significant implications for licensing authorities and operators across hospitality, transport and other regulated sectors.

Pubs, bars and smoking areas

The proposals would extend restrictions beyond indoor spaces to certain outdoor areas. While the government is not proposing a blanket ban on smoking in outdoor hospitality settings, the new rules on heated tobacco and vaping would apply to all enclosed and semi-enclosed areas, including many existing pub smoking shelters.

ALL THINGS LICENSING



This means:

- Smoking shelters that meet the “*enclosed*” or “*substantially enclosed*” test could become smoke-free, heated-tobacco-free and vape-free.
- Licensing authorities may need to update guidance and conditions to reflect the expanded definitions.
- Operators may need to redesign or reconfigure outdoor areas to remain compliant

Taxis, PHVs and other licensed vehicles

Significantly, the consultation proposes that all vehicles used for work which are already smoke-free would also become:

- Heated tobacco free
- Vape free

This would apply to:

- Taxis
- PHVs
- Chauffeur vehicles
- Work vans and fleet vehicles

For taxi and private hire licensing, this could require:

- Updated signage requirements indicating that neither smoking or vaping is permitted
- Revised enforcement powers, including additional FPN powers
- Clear guidance for drivers and operators on compliance and penalties

The Health Act 2006 has been in effect for nearly 20 years, however it continues to surprise me how many licensed drivers still believe they can, or try and get away with, smoking a cigarette in their licensed vehicle.

Whilst vaping is a more recent and believed to be better alternative to smoking, its long-term health effects are still not known. A number of licensing authorities have already imposed policy requirements and conditions on licence holders not to vape in their vehicle. This is for a number of reasons; so that there is no confusion for drivers about requirements, to ensure that odours from vaping do not impact the service to customers and to portray a more professional image for the licensed trade.

However, whilst not every local authority has taken this approach regarding vaping, if government plans come to fruition, it may well be that vaping is considered in the same way as smoking and be prohibited by legislation, with potential sanction available to those who do not abide by the rules.

The second part of this month’s article relates to smoking of a different sort and came to my attention due to questions from a couple of colleagues about licence holders who had been prescribed medicinal cannabis, and whether on the basis of their prescription they remained medically fit to drive a licensed vehicle:

Medicinal cannabis, taxi drivers, and the DVLA Group 2 Medical Standards: navigating a complex and emerging licensing issue

The number of UK patients prescribed cannabis-based products for medicinal use (CBPMs) continues to rise, and therefore it seems inevitable that licensing authorities will encounter taxi and private hire drivers or applicants who legally use cannabis under prescription.

This development raises challenging questions: Can a taxi driver taking medicinal cannabis still meet DVLA Group 2 medical standards? And, crucially, how do we protect the travelling public while respecting legitimate medical treatment?

This article explores the evidence, the regulatory landscape, and the significant public safety and public confidence issues now facing licensing authorities.

Medicinal cannabis and the law: Driving is legal. Impairment is not

Patients legally prescribed medical cannabis may drive if they are not impaired, according to UK driving law. The drug driving law (2015) treats cannabis as a controlled drug regardless of whether use is illicit or prescribed, but a statutory defence exists if a driver can show that:

- They have a valid prescription,
- They took the medication as directed, and
- They are not impaired at the time of driving

A prescription must be issued via a Home Office approved clinician only. However, even prescribed users can be prosecuted under **Section 4 Road Traffic Act 1988** if officers deem them impaired.

ALL THINGS LICENSING

Clinicians and patient groups widely advise that drivers taking medication containing THC should avoid driving for at least 4 to 6 hours after dosing because of slowed reaction times, reduced coordination, and difficulty concentrating.

The DVLA position: No direct guidance on medicinal cannabis

Most, if not all, licensing authorities have adopted the DVLA Group 2 Medical Standards for licence holders as is considered best practice and in line with the duty to ensure that a person remains physically and mentally *'fit'* to carry out their duty of driving fare paying passengers.

However, despite cannabis-based medicines being legal since 2018, the DVLA has not released specific Group 2 guidance for drivers prescribed CBPMs. The official document, *Assessing Fitness to Drive*, contains no dedicated section on cannabis-based medicines, even in its latest update (Nov 2025).

The DVLA has confirmed through Parliamentary written answers that:

- Drivers must notify DVLA if their underlying medical condition affects safe driving.
- Prescribers are expected to advise patients not to drive when impaired.
- Driving over the drug driving limit is still an offence for both illicit and medically prescribed cannabis if impairment is present.

It is also possible that any underlying condition which CBMPs are designed to treat may also mean that the licence holder doesn't meet the group 2 standard. One of the examples cited was a driver suffering from PTSD which would mean the removal of the Group 2 entitlement from a licence holder, unless:

- PTSD does not impair driving, and
- They have no flashbacks, dissociation, panic attacks, or unpredictable symptoms, and
- They are clinically stable, and
- Their medication does not cause impairment, and
- DVLA/the licensing authority receives any required evidence and clearance

Applying comparable DVLA standards: the 'methadone benchmark'

Because the DVLA provides no specific rules on medicinal cannabis for vocational drivers, many licensing authorities have been confused about how to respond to this scenario when it presents itself.

In Guildford I'm lucky to have engaged a GP to assist in us determining whether an applicant is medically fit based on their records. Our medical advisor has, in the absence of formal guidance from the DVLA, suggested using the closest comparable category: methadone and similar controlled substances used in treatment. Methadone is a substitute for heroin however is still a dependant drug and can still lead to impairment, much like cannabis.

Under DVLA Group 2 standards for drug misuse/dependence, drivers on methadone must show:

- Long term (at least 3 year) stability
- No impairment, and
- Sustained compliance with treatment

Group 2 drivers misusing or dependent on drugs are subject to stringent restrictions and cannot drive until medical evidence demonstrates stability and control.

While medicinal cannabis is not equivalent to methadone treatment, both involve psychoactive substances that may impair driving performance. As a result, our medical advisor has recommended applying a multi-year stability requirement for CBPM users before deeming them fit under Group 2.

This means any new applicant would be required to show that for the past 3 years they have been using medicinal cannabis and are stable. For existing licence holders with a prescription, the revocation of a licence should be expected until they can demonstrate compliance with the 3-year stability period.

Driving impairment: What the evidence shows

Research commissioned by the DfT identifies clear risks associated with medicinal cannabis:

- THC can impair reaction time, coordination, and concentration.
- Impairment varies between users and may last hours beyond peak therapeutic effect.
- Prescribers and patients often underestimate impairment risk.

This aligns with guidance from patient groups and clinics warning that THC remains detectable for hours to days and that impairment windows depend on dose, frequency and individual tolerance.

For taxi and private hire drivers who are responsible for passengers, other road users, and often operate long hours, these impairment risks carry additional safety consequences.

ALL THINGS LICENSING



Public safety and public protection

Direct safety risks

Taxi drivers operate vehicles for hire and reward, often carrying vulnerable passengers. Any impairment increases risk, and cannabis, whether medicinal or illicit, can cause:

- Slower hazard perception
- Reduced ability to multitask
- Increased braking distance
- Impaired decision making

Even if a driver is legally entitled to take prescribed cannabis, licensing authorities must consider whether they remain fit and proper to perform a professional driving role.

In my view the long held “*would you get in the car with them?*” test routinely applies in licensing practice.

Public confidence risks

Public perception matters. A reasonable person may with some justification feel uneasy entering a taxi driven by someone who uses a substance commonly associated with impairment, even when legally prescribed.

Because taxis are entrusted with the public, often alone, late at night, or in rural areas, licensing bodies must uphold not only physical safety but also public assurance and trust.

Insurance and disclosure issues

Drivers prescribed medicinal cannabis must inform their insurer. Many insurers treat cannabis-based medications as a heightened risk factor. Failure to disclose may invalidate insurance entirely, raising further concerns about fitness and propriety.

It may also be that a policy, particularly one for hire and reward, is prohibitively expensive to those on CBPMs.

What should licensing authorities do?

While there is no statutory requirement to revoke or refuse a licence solely because of prescribed cannabis use, authorities should:

1. Verify the prescription to ensure it is genuine, NHS or specialist issued, not online or unregulated.
2. Obtain medical evidence from a consultant or prescribing specialist addressing:
 - Stability of condition
 - Absence of side effects
 - Impact on cognition or reaction times
 - Fitness to meet Group 2 standards
3. Consider suspension or refusal where:
 - The driver has only recently begun treatment
 - Impairment cannot be ruled out
 - The underlying condition itself poses risks
4. Assess ‘*fit and proper*’ status holistically, including public confidence.
5. Request evidence of insurance disclosure.

Each case must be assessed individually, but the default stance should prioritise public safety and risk avoidance rather than assuming medicinal cannabis is risk free.

To conclude:

Medicinal cannabis presents licensing authorities with a nuanced and evolving challenge. While legal and medically prescribed, its potential to impair driving, combined with a lack of DVLA specific Group 2 guidance, means authorities must lean on analogous standards, medical evidence, and robust risk assessment.

Ultimately, Taxi and private hire drivers hold a position of trust. The industry’s credibility relies on ensuring that every licensed driver is both medically fit and publicly trusted. Until clearer national guidance emerges, a cautious, safety first interpretation of DVLA Group 2 standards remains not only justified but essential.

Therefore, with so much change again on the horizon it is vital that the licensed trade keep up to date with one of the best ways being joining the Institute of Licensing.

For full details, please visit:
www.instituteoflicensing.org

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Traffic law is often very complex, and there are a lot of misconceptions where people may think they are doing the right thing but in fact they could be breaking the law.

Below are some typical questions that we get asked on a daily basis highlighting these misconceptions - where people could be going wrong and putting their licences at risk.

If you have any questions about traffic law, please feel free to contact us for free legal advice on 01626 359800 or by email to: advice@pattersonlaw.co.uk.



Q I was stuck in traffic and hadn't been moving for a couple of minutes. When I'm stationary my engine automatically turns off. I picked up my phone to check a WhatsApp message that I'd received, at which point a cyclist came past and filmed me. I've now received a conditional offer of 6 points and a £200 fine. Should I challenge it because I wasn't moving and my engine was off?

A *It is an offence to drive whilst using a mobile phone. However, driving does not actually mean moving. You can be driving even though the engine is off and you are stationary.*

The law looks at whether you would continue driving. So if for example you are stuck in traffic or stopped at a red light, you could move any minute and therefore, according to the law, you would still be considered as driving.

It might be different if the road was closed, for example if there had been an accident and the motorway was completely shut, but if you were just stuck in traffic that means you would be considered driving and you cannot use your phone.

Q I clipped the wing mirror of a parked car on the way to drop off a customer. I continued on my journey, but when I went back to the scene, the parked car was gone. I immediately went home and reported it online and have also told my insurance company. Is there anything else I should do?

A *According to the law, yes, you need to go to the police station or to a police constable and report it as soon as possible.*

Under section 170 Road Traffic Act, if you have not stopped and exchanged details with another person, you must report the matter to a police station or a police constable as soon as possible and in all cases within 24 hours. Reporting it online is not enough, and that could see you prosecuted for failing to report an accident, carrying between 5 and 10 penalty points, or even a disqualification, and community orders/prison in serious cases.

Saying that, many police forces advise on their websites that if you have been involved in a collision and not exchanged details to report it online. Even though that is not what the law says!

At Patterson Law we have yet to see somebody prosecuted for reporting a matter online instead of to a police station, and if they were prosecuted for that you may be able to defend it on the basis that you have been advised to report it online via their website.

However, our advice is always that it's not worth the risk. Ultimately, if you have been involved in a collision, the police are still going to want to ensure that you are not under the influence or drink or drugs, and the requirement to report it to a constable/station will still stand.

Q I received a Notice of Intended Prosecution late. I know that when a speeding offence is committed, they have to notify you within 14 days. I didn't receive it until day 20. Can I challenge it on this basis?

A *This is one of the most common misconceptions that exists in traffic law and a question we get asked multiple times a day. The 14 day rule is complex with lots of different parts to it. Firstly, only certain offences require a notice to be served in 14 days. Speeding is one of them, but the first thing to do is always check whether the offence itself has the 14 day requirement.*

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



Second, the only requirement on the police is to notify the registered keeper at their last known address within 14 days. So if you are not the registered keeper; for example if the vehicle is on hire purchase or if it's a lease car, then the chances are the first letter would have gone to the registered keeper within 14 days and what you have received is the second or even the third letter, meaning you cannot challenge it.

Then, there are many exceptions to that rule. Some notable exceptions are: if a collision has occurred there is no requirement; or if the keeper is the author of their own downfall, for example if they have moved address but failed to update the logbook; or if a NIP was given verbally at the roadside - in any of these circumstances, it would not be challengeable.

If however you are the registered keeper, you haven't moved address, and you have simply received the letter late, then you may be able to challenge it. However, the correct procedure would still be to nominate the driver and then challenge the substantive offence. We get many queries where people have received a letter late but then failed to nominate the driver, instead just rejecting it and refusing to nominate. That sees people prosecuted for failing to provide driver information, leaving the driver liable for 6 points and up to a £1000 fine.

We always advise people that if you believe a notice has been sent to you late, seek legal advice immediately so that we can check whether you can challenge.

Q I was at the pub with friends, but I didn't have anything to drink. I think somebody saw me leave and reported me wrongly for drink-driving. I drove home and whilst at home had a few beers. Half an hour later, the police arrived and arrested me for drink-driving. I was over the limit but that's only because I drank at home.

They took me to the police station and asked me for breath, but I refused to give them because I wasn't drink driving. Can they still prosecute me even though they have no evidence that I was actually drunk behind the wheel?

A Yes, they can.

Under section 15 Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988, the police are legally entitled to assume that because you were over for the limit at some point after driving, you must have been over the limit at the time you were behind the wheel. They don't need to prove drunkenness whilst driving, they can legally assume it.

If you want to argue that you drank alcohol in between driving and being breathalysed, then you have to prove that in court on the balance of probabilities.

In a lot of cases, people make this worse because when they get to the station, they refuse to give breath on the basis that they were not drink-driving. It is quite an understandable refusal, however legally that is not a defence. It is only a defence if you can show that you were physically incapable of providing one, which in this case wouldn't apply as you chose not to provide.

A lot of people end up getting prosecuted for failing to provide a specimen of breath, leaving them liable to a minimum 12 month disqualification, community orders and financial penalties.

Our advice is always to give a specimen at the station if you are asked. If you are then charged with drink-driving wrongly, you defend that charge rather than try to defend failing to provide.

THE NATIONAL HACKNEY FARES TABLE

MARCH 2026

RISE IN 2026	
RISE IN 2025	
RISE IN 2024	
RISE IN 2023	
RISE IN 2022	RISE IN 2019
RISE IN 2021	RISE IN 2017
RISE IN 2020	RISE IN 2015
NO SET FARE	

UPDATED DAILY
www.phtm.co.uk

NATIONAL AVERAGE
2 MILE
HACKNEY FARE
TARIFF ONE
7.41

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE COUNCIL	
1	LONDON (HEATHROW)	£13.60
2	LUTON AIRPORT	£12.60
3	EPSOM & EWELL	£12.00
4	TfL	£12.00
5	GUILDFORD	£10.00
6	JERSEY	£9.65
7	CARADON	£9.60
8	NORTH CORNWALL	£9.60
9	SPELTHORNE	£9.50
10	ELMBRIDGE	£9.50
11	EXETER	£9.50
12	GLASGOW	£9.30
13	CARRICK	£9.20
14	ST ALBANS	£9.15
15	GUERNSEY	£9.10
16	WORTHING	£9.10

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE COUNCIL	
17	HERTSMERE	£9.08
18	EDINBURGH	£9.00
19	MAIDSTONE	£9.00
20	MID SUSSEX	£9.00
21	ORKNEY	£9.00
22	READING	£9.00
23	TONBRIDGE & MALLING	£9.00
24	DACORUM	£8.98
25	BRENTWOOD	£8.90
26	CHELTENHAM	£8.90
27	EAST LOTHIAN	£8.90
28	MIDLOTHIAN	£8.90
29	REIGATE & BANSTEAD	£8.90
30	SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE	£8.90
31	STROUD	£8.90
32	UTTLESFORD	£8.90
33	VALE OF WHITE HORSE	£8.90
34	TORRIDGE	£8.79
35	BRIGHTON & HOVE	£8.70
36	EAST DEVON	£8.70
37	RESTORMEL	£8.70
38	SEVENOAKS	£8.70
39	SWINDON	£8.70
40	WOKING	£8.70
41	CAMBRIDGE CITY	£8.60
42	TEST VALLEY	£8.60
43	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	£8.60
44	WEST BERKSHIRE	£8.60
45	BCP	£8.52
46	PENWITH	£8.52
47	ARUN	£ 8.50
48	CLACKMANNAN	£8.50
49	EAST AYRSHIRE	£8.50
50	SLOUGH	£8.50
51	WYRE	£8.50
52	COLCHESTER	£8.40
53	EAST SUFFOLK (NORTH)	£8.40
54	EASTLEIGH	£8.40
55	LEEDS	£8.40
56	MEDWAY	£8.40
57	SOUTHAMPTON	£8.40
58	WATFORD	£8.40
59	DARTFORD	£8.30
60	HUNTINGDONSHIRE	£8.30
61	LINCOLN	£8.30
62	RUNNYMEDE	£8.30
63	SWALE	£8.30
64	TORBAY	£8.30
65	WILTSHIRE	£8.25
66	BASINGSTOKE & DEANE	£8.20
67	BROXBOURNE	£8.20
68	EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE	£8.20
69	EAST HERTS	£8.20
70	GRAVESHAM	£8.20
71	HART	£8.20
72	MANCHESTER	£8.20
73	NORTH HERTS	£8.20
74	WOKINGHAM	£8.20
75	FOREST OF DEAN	£8.13
76	HASTINGS	£8.10
77	IPSWICH	£8.10
78	OXFORD CITY	£8.10
79	PLYMOUTH	£8.10
80	MOLE VALLEY	£8.08
81	BRECKLAND	£8.00

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

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE	
	COUNCIL	
147	BEDFORD	£7.50
148	ANGUS	£7.50
149	CARDIFF	£7.50
150	CHESTER	£7.50
151	EPPING FOREST	£7.50
152	GOSPORT	£7.50
153	MID SUFFOLK	£7.50
154	SHEFFIELD	£7.50
155	SOUTH NORFOLK	£7.50
156	TAMESIDE	£7.50
157	THANET	£7.50
158	BRAINTREE	£7.40
159	CANTERBURY	£7.40
160	EAST HAMPSHIRE	£7.40
161	EAST RENFREW	£7.40
162	LEWES	£7.40
163	LIVERPOOL	£7.40
164	PORTSMOUTH UA	£7.40
165	S. LANARKSHIRE (CAMBUS/R'GLEN)	£7.40
166	STAFFORD	£7.40
167	TEWKESBURY	£7.40
168	WEST LOTHIAN	£7.40
169	WEST OXFORD	£7.40
170	WIRRAL	£7.40
171	NEW FOREST	£7.35
172	NEWARK & SHERWOOD	£7.32
173	BLACKBURN	£7.30
174	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL	£7.30
175	KINGSTON-UPON-HULL	£7.30
176	NORTH DEVON	£7.30
177	NORTH KESTEVEN	£7.30
178	NORWICH	£7.30
179	SOUTH CAMBRIDGE	£7.30
180	VALE OF GLAMORGAN	£7.30
181	MORAY	£7.26
182	TEIGNBRIDGE	£7.26
183	NUNEATON & BEDWORTH	£7.25
184	PERTH & KINROSS	£7.25
185	CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE	£7.25
186	BASILDON	£7.20
187	CASTLE POINT	£7.20
188	DERBY	£7.20
189	FAREHAM	£7.20
190	HAVANT	£7.20
191	LUTON	£7.20
192	NORTH WARWICK	£7.20
193	SUNDERLAND	£7.20
194	SOUTH LAKELAND	£7.20
195	WEST NORTHANTS	£7.20
196	CHESTERFIELD	£7.16
197	TAMWORTH	£7.14
198	ARGYLL & BUTE	£7.13
199	CANNOCK CHASE	£7.10
200	COTSWOLD	£7.10
201	CRAWLEY	£7.10
202	DOVER	£7.10
203	HIGHLAND	£7.10
204	ISLE OF WIGHT	£7.10
205	OLDHAM	£7.10
206	RUGBY	£7.10
207	HARBOROUGH	£7.09
208	ABERDEENSHIRE	£7.06
209	ABERGH	£7.00
210	BROMSGROVE	£7.00
211	CARLISLE	£7.00

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE	
	COUNCIL	
212	CARMARTHENSHIRE	£7.00
213	INVERCLYDE	£7.00
214	MACCLESFIELD	£7.00
215	NEWPORT	£7.00
216	PEMBROKESHIRE	£7.00
217	SWANSEA	£7.00
218	WELWYN HATFIELD	£7.00
219	COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR	£7.00
220	SANDWELL	£6.92
221	BURY	£6.90
222	CLYDEBANK	£6.90
223	FYLDE	£6.90
224	NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME	£6.90
225	EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE	£6.90
226	WORCESTER CITY	£6.90
227	ABERDEEN CITY	£6.80
228	BARROW IN FURNESS	£6.80
229	BLACKPOOL	£6.80
230	BOSTON	£6.80
231	BRIDGEND	£6.80
232	BROXTOWE	£6.80
233	CEREDIGION	£6.80
234	EAST STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.80
235	EAST SUFFOLK (SOUTH)	£6.80
236	EDEN	£6.80
237	ELLESMERE PORT	£6.80
238	MANSFIELD	£6.80
239	MID DEVON	£6.80
240	NORTH NORFOLK	£6.80
241	NORTH NORTHANTS	£6.80
242	SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.80
243	TENDRING	£6.80
244	TRAFFORD	£6.80
245	WIGAN	£6.80
246	WOLVERHAMPTON	£6.80
247	CHARNWOOD	£6.75
248	WALSALL	£6.75
249	MALVERN HILLS	£6.72
250	BLABY	£6.70
251	CONGLETON	£6.70
252	OADBY & WIGSTON	£6.70
253	ROTHERHAM	£6.70
254	STIRLING	£6.70
255	DUDLEY	£6.60
256	FOLKESTONE & HYTHE	£6.60
257	KNOWSLEY	£6.60
258	LANCASTER	£6.60
259	NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE	£6.60
260	S. LANARKSHIRE (E. KILBRIDE)	£6.60
261	SOUTH TYNESIDE	£6.60
262	ST HELENS	£6.60
263	WAKEFIELD	£6.60
264	BASSETLAW	£6.50
265	CALDERDALE	£6.50
266	DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY	£6.50
267	EREWASH	£6.50
268	GEDLING	£6.50
269	HALTON	£6.50
270	ROSSENDALE	£6.50
271	SEFTON	£6.80
272	TORFAEN	£6.50
273	DONCASTER	£6.48
274	HYNDBURN	£6.42
275	BLAENAU GWENT	£6.40
276	COUNTY OF HEREFORD	£6.40

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

WORLDWIDE TAXI FOCUS

from Portugal



CABBIE SCAMMED OUT OF £4,500 AFTER 780-MILE JOURNEY

Two men have been arrested after allegedly tricking a taxi driver into a cross-country trip that spanned nearly 800 miles and ended without payment.

The pair, aged 50 and 23, convinced the driver to take them from Lisbon, Portugal, all the way to Barcelona, Spain. They claimed they had lost their wallets and promised they had already paid the fare via bank transfer, but the driver eventually realised he had been duped out of roughly £4,500 - a total that included the 15-hour drive, road tolls, and even meals the driver had kindly paid for along the way.



The scam came to an end in the village of Hostalric when the duo attempted to book yet another taxi, this time for an 80-mile trip across the border into France. A spokesperson for the Mossos d'Esquadra police force confirmed the arrests, stating: "Two men have been arrested on suspicion of fraud over a taxi journey between Barcelona and Lisbon that allegedly went unpaid." One of the suspects was already known to police for similar behaviour in other Spanish cities.

After their capture, the police spokesperson added: "Both men have been handed over to the courts so they can take over the ongoing investigation."

from Ireland



WATCHDOG CALLS FOR IRISH TAXI REFORM TO END CHRONIC SHORTAGES

Ireland's consumer watchdog is urging the Government to slash red tape and allow ride-hailing apps such as Uber and Bolt to operate freely. The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) warns that strict regulations are causing a

severe supply crisis, leaving passengers stranded.

Research shows 40% of people struggled to find a taxi in December, while two-thirds of rural residents say there are not enough cars.

CCPC chairman Brian McHugh stated: "Regulatory barriers in the taxi market have failed to facilitate innovations that have flourished in other countries and consumers are suffering as a result."

A major sticking point is the rule requiring new drivers to have WAVs. Mr. McHugh described this as a "blunt instrument" that prevents part-time drivers from using their own cars. He argued that "consumers shouldn't be faced with long waits or the possibility of staying home due to a lack of taxi availability."

While supporting safety checks like Garda vetting, the watchdog insists the market must open up to new entrants to provide the choice and reliability the public deserves.

from Greece



GREEK CABBIES THREATEN ESCALATION AS STRIKE TALKS COLLAPSE

Greek taxi drivers have vowed to intensify protests across the country as a major strike over new regulations continues. Drivers are marching on the government's headquarters in Athens, demanding the withdrawal of laws they claim favour private rental companies and "lead us to ruin."

The dispute centres on a mandatory switch to electric vehicles by 2026 and strict new criminal record checks for licences. Union leader Paris Orfanos warned: "If our demands are not satisfied, we will intensify our mobilisations."

A televised "clash" between Union President Thymios Lymberopoulos and Transport Minister Konstantinos Kyranakis highlighted the deep divide. Lymberopoulos accused the minister of acting as a "lawyer for private companies," while Kyranakis argued the reforms are essential for safety, stating, "someone convicted of assault cannot be driving a taxi."

While the government claims it has met several driver demands, it refuses to budge on fare increases or allow taxis unrestricted access to bus lanes. Authorities have also signalled a crackdown on the "shadow market" for taxi licences, which reportedly sell for up to 150,000 euros despite much lower official valuations.

WORLDWIDE TAXI FOCUS

from India



INSIDE INDIA'S ALL-FEMALE ELECTRIC CAB SERVICE



For many women in India, travelling from point A to point B often comes with a side of anxiety, involving shared live locations and constant vigilance. Fery Rides, an all-electric mobility platform founded in 2023, is working to change that narrative by ensuring both the drivers and the passengers are exclusively women.

A recent viral Instagram video has put the service in the spotlight, showing a "Sister Partner" - one of the platform's trained female drivers - explaining how the system prioritises security.

The app was born out of a need to dismantle the everyday stress women face due to unpredictable driver behaviour and the lack of trustworthy alternatives. By employing women to drive women, the company creates a unique ecosystem where "mobility should be safe, reliable, and free from anxiety."

Beyond just a ride-sharing app, it serves as a career path for women seeking financial independence without the safety compromises often found in the gig economy.

The service is tech-forward and eco-friendly, featuring an all-electric fleet equipped with cameras and real-time tracking. Fery Rides offers specialised features like "Scheduled Rides" for daily commuters to avoid surge pricing and "City Rentals" for those running errands or heading to brunch.

Ultimately, the platform is shifting the conversation from "How fast can I get there?" to "How safe and predictable will my journey be?" It is a model built on empathy and a deep understanding of the lived experiences of women on the road.

from South Africa



FOUR ARRESTED AFTER DASHCAM CAPTURES MURDER OF BOLT DRIVER

Three South Africans have been charged with murder following the killing of an Bolt driver, the manner of whose death, captured on



dashcam footage, has shocked many people. A video shared widely on social media shows a man and a woman tussling with the driver, Isaac Satlat, who they appeared to be robbing. Satlat tries to fight back before one of the passengers appears to strangle him until he goes limp.

The trio, Dikeledi Mphela, 24, Goitsione Machidi, 25 and McClaren Mushwana, 30, attended court in Pretoria last month. A fourth suspect later handed himself in. All four also face robbery charges.

According to prosecutors, the accused ordered the ride using a number not registered in any of their names. When the car arrived, Mphela and the fourth suspect allegedly got into the car while Machidi and Mushwana followed behind in a separate car. They then "forced the deceased to stop the vehicle, strangled him and robbed him of his cell phone and vehicle which was later recovered."

There has been a growing number of reports of e-hailing drivers coming under attack in South Africa, with many drivers calling for greater protection, as the country grapples with high crime levels and one of the highest murder rates in the world.

The e-hailing partners' council condemned Satlat's killing, adding that it was not an "isolated incident".

The organisation praised the role that the dashcam footage and social media played in capturing his murder but reiterated calls for "preventative security measures" to better protect drivers. It also called on e-hailing companies to "vet and verify passengers to prevent criminals masquerading as customers".

Numerous political parties and e-hailing drivers gathered outside the court house to protest against Satlat's murder. One driver called for the government to set up a task team to deal with the attacks on them. He also called for the establishment of a system to compensate the families of drivers killed on the job.

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- ✓ Direct Company
- ✓ From 40,000 Miles
- ✓ Air Con
- ✓ 6 Speed
- ✓ Choice 10

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 Auto MWB 13 Seat Minibus (Euro 6)**



- ✓ One Owner
- ✓ Air Con
- ✓ Long MOT
- ✓ Choice 3
- ✓ Direct Company

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

**2018 Peugeot Traveller Allure
 2.0HDI Blue 8 Seat Minibus (Euro 6)**



- ✓ One Owner
- ✓ Direct Company
- ✓ Air Con
- ✓ 90,000 Miles
- ✓ Choice

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

**2018 Peugeot Boxer 2.2HDI 17 Seat
 Disabled Access Bus c/w Ramp**



- ✓ Access Ramp
- ✓ Digital Tacho
- ✓ Direct Company
- ✓ Air Con
- ✓ 6 Speed
- ✓ Choice 6

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

**2018-21 Vauxhall Vivaro 1.6 TDCI
 9 Seat LWB Minibuses (Choice)**



- ✓ Direct Company
- ✓ Twin Side Doors
- ✓ From 80,000 Miles
- ✓ Free Warranty

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

**2018-21 Ford Transit T410 Trend
 2.2TDCI 14 Seat Minibus (Euro 6)**



- ✓ One Owner
- ✓ Free Warranty
- ✓ Service History
- ✓ MOT
- ✓ Choice 10

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

**2019-22 Ford Transt Custom Leader
 2.0TDCI 9 Seat LWB Minibus**



- ✓ Direct Company
- ✓ Air Con
- ✓ From 90,000 Miles
- ✓ Free Warranty
- ✓ Choice

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

**2017 Fiat Doblo Easy 1.4 95PS Petrol
 3 Seat Disabled Access Minibus**



- ✓ Direct Company
- ✓ c/w Ramp
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NOW THEN, HERE'S THE TOP 10 FOR CHELTENHAM



The annual pilgrimage is on, the roar is about to happen and the Irish are cash-rich and Guinness-fuelled for the battle with the rails bookies. Yes it's the highlight of the jumps season - the Cheltenham Festival from March 10 to 13. This year, I originally thought I would give you my Top Ten (hence the Alan Freeman theme... remember him?, but then I thought I would grade my selections in strength. Hence I have allocated an imaginary pot of 100 units to spend over the week, with the belief and knowledge that this will return a profit. Results next month. So, to the wagers:

IN AT 10... (pronounce as the DJ would..)

Top Jockey MARK WALSH 5/2 MEETING 15 units..

In his final year as JP's retained jockey, I think Mark Walsh gives a whole week's interest at a spicy 5/2. Due to be replaced by Cobden from next year, I think he is being harshly treated. More pertinently, he has the pick of JP's Irish battalions that transcend all the top yards, (including Willie) from the perennial leading owner (so certain to be top owner that the bookies aren't even betting on that eventuality!)



AT 9...

GAELIC WARRIOR GOLD CUP 8/1 NRNB Fri 10 units

Gallopín's crown has slipped and I think the winner will come from this year's King George and staying on best of all was Rich Ricci's star. Will he be redirected to the Ryanair? Back NRNB for safety

AT 8...

BRIGHTERDAYS AHEAD CHAMPION HURDLE 3/1 Tue 15 units

Redemption is at hand for last year's flop, this year he will serve it up in spades.

AT 7...

IRELAND 17-11 PRESTBURY CUP 12/1 MEETING 5 units

There is no doubt, the Irish have bossed the annual Cup between Ireland and England for festival winners in the last few years, but this year it will be a whole lot

closer and I think the score will be 17-11 or 16-12, with slight preference to the former at 12/1.

AT 6...

KOPEK DES BORDES ARKLE 11/4 Tue 10 units

Reports from across the sea have the one time ante post favourite for the Arkle sparkling again, and that being the case, I think this Willie Mullins star will put Lulamba in his place in Tuesday's novice feature.

TO THE TOP 5 AND IN AT 5 IS...

MIGHTY PARK TURNERS 4/1 WEDNESDAY 15 units

Speaking of whispers, I believe that Mighty Park is the shrewdies choice for the Grade 1 two-and-a-half miler on the Wednesday. Another J P hotpot and ridden by Walsh, 4/1 represents unbelievable value.

AT 4...

BOB OLINGER STAYERS 6/1 THURSDAY 10 units

Can he relive last year's mugging of his ownermate? You better believe it and in a Cheltenham swansong, take Henry de Bromhead's stable star to outlast Teehupoo et al at a juicy 6/1

TO THE TOP 3...AND AT 3...

SELMA DA VARY TRIUMPH 7/1 Fri 10 units

Despite inexperience at last month's DRF, Rich Ricci's import served it up to the Triumph favourite and I think he can turn the tables on the New Course on Friday

AT 2...

MAJBOROUGH CHAMPION CHASE 7/4 Wed 6 units

The big-face off between Marine Nationale and Majborough will be won by the younger horse

AND STRAIGHT IN AT NO 1..

Leading trainer (ex Mullins) HENDERSON 3/1 MEETING 4 units

In the race for Silver, have an interest on Nicky, the wily old fox at 3/1 - **until next month**

Good punting

Bernie the Book

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