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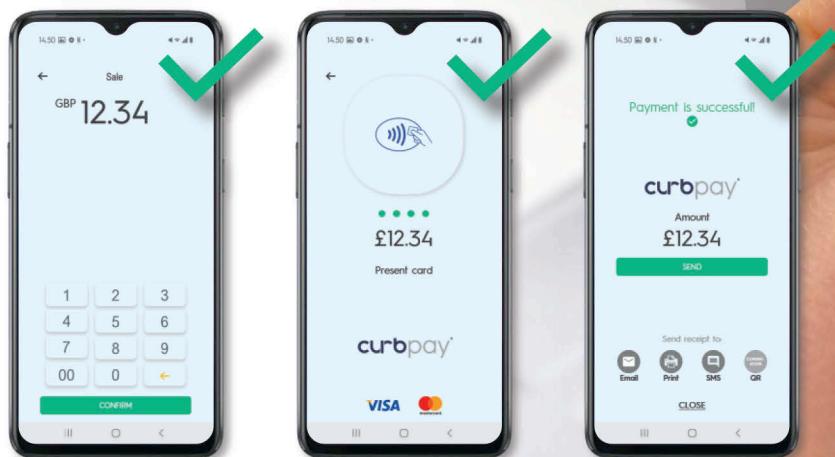
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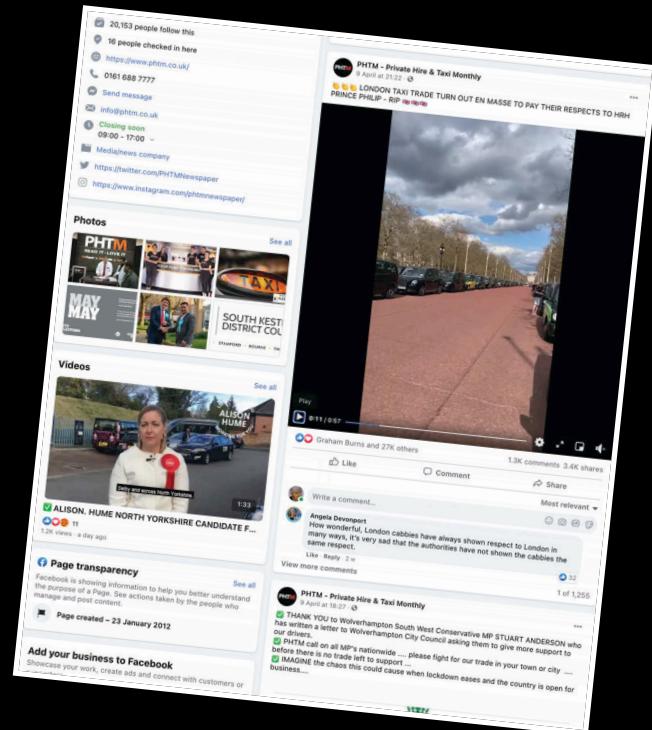
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MoT -v- COMPLIANCE TEST CERTIFICATES:

Article by: David Lawrie, Director NPHTA
dave@nphta.co.uk www.nphta.co.uk

This month we focus on a long-running topic which affects the trade throughout the UK: the matter of local authorities that do not issue an actual Ministry of Transport certificate. Instead they rely on an exemption, as seen on the exemption form V112 here:-

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925057/v112-declaration-of-exemption-from-MoT.pdf.

...where it includes in the categories of vehicles that are exempt:

- g) Hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licensed by local authorities authorised to check the road-worthiness of this vehicle
- h) Hackney carriage licensed by Transport for London

Notice the wording here: "...**local authorities authorised to check the road-worthiness**" which means that in order for this exemption to apply at all, the local authority must hold the certificate of authorisation from the Ministry.

What is the difference?

Many local authorities will say that the compliance test is far stricter than a standard MoT. This is simply not the case at all; the roadworthiness element of the test is exactly the same: testing lights, tyres, suspension, bodywork, seat belts, ball joints, oil leaks and all other "roadworthiness" aspects which are a national standard as set by the Ministry of Transport.

The compliance test is **ONLY** testing that the vehicle "complies" with local authority vehicle conditions and policies, testing such things as:-

- The taximeter is set to the correct local tariff.
- The roof light is working to the correct standards (some must be operated by the taximeter; others may have a separate switch to activate them).
- Testing to see that the fire extinguisher is present where required, and if required is marked with the vehicle registration number; also where required is certified as having been checked.

- The same applies to first aid kits: are the contents within the "use-by" date etc.; remember, not all vehicles are required to have first aid kits or fire extinguishers, either of which are for driver or passenger use.
- Check that the vehicle is the correct colour to satisfy local conditions.
- Check the overall appearance of the vehicle inside and out - cosmetic, not mechanical.

As you can see, a compliance test is far from being a road-worthiness test, let alone being far more rigorous; nor can it be a national standard since there are so many variations amongst each local authority's conditions, right down to age and colour of vehicle. Indeed, almost all of these checks can be performed whilst doing an actual MoT, since for example, the seats being dirty would be apparent whilst checking the seat belts. In fact in many cases, the compliance test does **NOT** include an emissions test.

"The two tests cannot be performed together!" Sez who?

On the face of it, it would make sense to have one test and one certificate as opposed to two separate tests - more convenient, right? Well actually, the two tests can be, and in fact in many regions are, performed at the same time by the nominated MoT testing centres, which is indeed then more convenient. This is the reason why the MoT test centres must be approved and authorised by the local authorities, since they are checking that the vehicle satisfies the relevant local authority conditions.

But is this a national exemption?

It actually is not, since firstly it is testing for local, not national conditions; and secondly, it only applies to those local authorities that are certified accordingly.

Furthermore, as we found out when attempting to create one of our regular tables, there are so many variations between local authorities, with answers such as:

- We issue both the compliance and the MoT certificate.
- We only issue the compliance certificate and require an additional MoT to be supplied.
- What is the exemption to which you refer?
- We only issue an MoT certificate and perform a visual vehicle check on application prior to issuing the plates.
- We only issue the compliance certificate.

WHICH CARRIES THE MOST CLOUD?



**M.O.T.
TESTING STATION**

The number of licensing authorities that actually knew about and declared that they held the appropriate certification in order to comply with the V112 exemption, could be counted on one hand!!

Of course, there were many local authorities that did not respond at all, which meant we could not publish a detailed national table on the topic.

But why is this important? If we are exempt, then we are legal - right?

OK, the first two aspects are more of an inconvenience than anything else since there are two downsides to not having an actual roadworthiness or MoT test certificate.

- The vehicle cannot be taxed online (after it is three years old of course), since a vehicle can be taxed without a valid MoT until its third birthday, which means printing off and completing the above exemption form (V112) and taking it to the local post office to tax the vehicle.
- The vehicle will flag up on all ANPR cameras, both on street and in police cars, which could lead to delays whilst answering the questions from the police - who may not be aware that your particular vehicle is subject to the exemption.

This could easily be avoided if the local authorities issued both certificates at the same time.

The third negative impact of relying on a local authority compliance test alone is far more severe and risky, since for this one you could find yourself with your vehicle seized and you being prosecuted.

Where there is no valid MoT for the vehicle, the "exemption" ONLY applies whilst the plates are valid

It is vital that the risks here are understood. During a routine inspection, if the door sticker is faulty, or the roof

light is not working as it should, or the meter is faulty, maybe there's even a scratch on the bodywork which exceeds local authority limits, the vehicle could be suspended during this inspection. However, these are **NOT** roadworthiness issues; these are nothing more than breaches of local authority conditions (compliance).

Since you do not have a valid MoT, and the plates are not current, the vehicle is deemed to be instantly unroadworthy and may **NOT** be driven away from the site of inspection at all.

What is the solution?

There are a number of options here, some far less likely than others.

1. The Government steps in and makes the compliance test certificate a nationally recognised document that must be uploaded on to the MoT database.
2. The Government abolishes the exemption in order to ensure that all vehicles are shown as being roadworthy to a nationally recognised standard.
3. Local authorities must issue both certificates in order to resolve the risks and reduce inconvenience to drivers/vehicle owners.

Once again, this is an important topic; we have been discussing this at national levels for a long time, in the hope of achieving a result, but we need **YOU** to support this topic - and to supply your feedback as to your own personal experience.

Remember, any organisation is only as powerful as its membership.

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PHTM COVID-19 FINANCE UPDATE

SELF-EMPLOYMENT INCOME SUPPORT SCHEME:

FOURTH SEISS GRANT:

If you believe you're eligible but you have not yet heard from HMRC then you should contact HMRC directly. Applications close at 11.59pm on 1 June 2021.

FIFTH SEISS GRANT:

The Chancellor has confirmed there will be a fifth final grant which can be claimed from late July is intended to 'cover' the period from May 2021 to September 2021; but the grant will only be calculated based on 80% of three months' average trading profits. This has led some to comment that the fifth grant has two 'missing months'.

The amount paid will depend on the extent of your turnover (sales) reduction between April 2020 and April 2021. There are few details available yet but if your sales have fallen by:

- **30% or more, then the grant will be 80% of three months' average profits (up to a maximum claim of £7,500);**
- **less than 30%, then the grant will be 30% of three months' average profits (up to a maximum claim of £2,850).**

THE FURLough SCHEME:

EXTENDED UNTIL THE 30 SEPTEMBER 2020:

The UK Government will continue to pay 80% of employees' usual wages for the hours not worked, up to a cap of £2,500 per month, up to the end of June 2021.

For periods in July, CJRS grants will cover 70% of employees' usual wages for the hours not worked, up to a cap of £2,187.50. In August and September, this will then reduce to 60% of employees' usual wages up to a cap of £1,875.

You will need to continue to pay your furloughed employees at least 80% of their usual wages for the hours they do not work during this time, up to a cap of £2,500 per month. This means, for periods between July and September, you will need to fund the difference between this and the CJRS grants yourself. You can also top up wages above the 80% if you wish, but you are not required to do so.

You must continue to pay the associated Employer National Insurance contributions and pension contributions on subsidised furlough pay from your own funds.

CJRS eligibility from May:

For periods from 1 May 2021 onwards, you will be able to claim for eligible employees who were employed by you and on your PAYE payroll on 2 March 2021.

VAT PAYMENT EXTENSION:

If you deferred VAT payments due between 20 March 2020 and 30 June 2020 you can:

- **pay the deferred VAT in full now**
- **join the VAT deferral new payment scheme and pay your deferred VAT in equal interest free instalments - 9 if you join by May 19 or 8 if you join by 21 June**
- **The online service is open until 21 June 2021**
- **contact HMRC on 0800 024 1222 by 30 June 2021 if you need extra help to pay**

RECOVER LOAN SCHEME:

This has replaced CBILS and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme. UK businesses of any size can apply for a loan or overdraft between £25,000 and £10m until the end of 2021. Asset and invoice finance between £1,000 and £10m will also be available. All will have a Government guarantee of 80 per cent.

Finance terms are up to six years for term loans and asset finance facilities. For overdrafts and invoice finance, terms will be up to three years. No personal guarantees will be taken on facilities up to £250,000 and borrower's principal private residence cannot be taken as security.

The RLS opened 6 April and will run until 31 December 2021 and is available through a network of accredited lenders. Any business based in the UK you can apply even if you have already had CBILS or Bounce Back Loan. The finance can be used for any legitimate business purpose, including growth and investment subject to the following criteria:

- **Be viable or would be viable were it not for the pandemic**
- **Have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic**
- **Not be in collective insolvency proceedings**

HELP TO GROW SCHEME:

Small businesses can get help via the new Help to Grow scheme, which will provide digital, management tools and training and any small business can apply for a £5,000 grant to pay for Government-approved productivity software.

REMINDER

Operators, sole traders, self-employed licensed drivers

Please regularly check the council websites where you are licensed and/or where you live because new grants are becoming available daily which you or your business **MAY** be eligible to claim

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THE PERFECT LICENSING SERVICE

Article written by Asif Shah: Chair of Better Taxi Action Group and the West Yorkshire Coalition

If there's one thing that this pandemic has taught the trade: each local authority (LA) has its own varying level of appreciation for the job that we do. Some would say that we are the 4th emergency service, providing a vital lifeline to their communities - others just look at us as a toxic area of their governance.

Up and down the country we have seen some LAs support their trade 10/10 whilst others have sadly offered 1/10.

WHY IS THIS?

The government itself has not stepped up. There should have been clearer guidelines issued to LAs about the importance of protecting our trade for the future, highlighting the value of how taxis support the British economy.

- **Without us there would be no safe rides home at the end of a night out.**
- **Without us there would be no rides to schools, surgeries, hospitals, supermarkets, airports.**
- **Taxis play a vital and strategic role in every developed country around the world.**

SO WHY DO SOME LAs TREAT US WITH SUCH CONTEMPT?

LAs have delegated authority (by laws) to govern local areas tailored to the needs of the local community. The needs of parking services in Manchester will vary greatly to those in Basildon. Schooling needs in a diverse city like Birmingham will vary greatly to those in affluent areas such as Harrogate.

The same logic applies to taxis with some LAs being under-served and others over saturated. Local licensing does work, but there needs to be some basic principles that all LAs adhere to:

- **Respect**
- **Appreciation**
- **Safety of the public**

(bearing in mind that drivers form part of the 'public' too).

One of the key problems with LAs is that senior officers are in the job for far too long and often have no experience of the trade or licensing laws. Take my LA for example: Bradford which had a private company contracted to manage all school transport services in the area. Eventually the company was struck off for serious failings and Bradford Council took back control. The senior administrator for that private company was offered a job by the LA to continue running school services but with the added bonus of overseeing the taxi licensing service.

The first few years were great; we had open dialogue to help improve services. After two to three years of positive actions, stakeholders who formed part of the reforms had no need to liaise with the officer as much because everything was running smoothly. Perfect bliss.

Over the following few years we can only assume that the dealings of the officer with the trade were more related to disgruntled drivers - the bad apples that we all have. He became accustomed to seeing the minority of bad apples more than the positive stakeholders, his perception of the trade slowly changed to the extent where the service began implementing new polices in an authoritarian way. We began to see polices which had a: negative impact on safety; financial impact on drivers; and created unnecessary delays for drivers.

Here's an example: the trade was concerned that waiting times to be seen at the depot were becoming excessive, sometimes up to four hours. The service blamed austerity and cutbacks. The trade had to remind them that the licensing service was self-funded and should not be subjected to austerity measures.

The officers solution was to create an appointment based system only. So now drivers need to email queries and wait for up to 14 days for a response - they cannot just turn up without an appointment. Also all telephone lines have been scrapped.

The outcome: there are now no queues at the depot. Instead drivers sit at home waiting to hear from the service for up to 14 days.

Great result for the officer! Disaster for the trade!

In my opinion senior officer roles should be changed every three to four years before the role itself becomes toxic. Our previous senior licensing officer went through the same cycle.

ELECTED MEMBERS (COUNCILLORS)

In Bradford we have a councillor responsible for overseeing the licensing service who has absolutely no previous experience in taxi licensing matters. It should be made compulsory for elected members who hold responsibility for taxis to have some minimum standards of experience. They should be required to carry out training to better understand the basic principles of the taxi trade, including public and driver safety matters. So should all senior officers too.

Some LAs seem to have drifted away from their basic core responsibilities to the trade. It's time that they are brought back into line and are reminded of the issues that matter the most and help facilitate a path to recovery from Covid that the trade so desperately needs.



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IN THE NEWS

MINICABIT SURVEY INDICATES MORE LEISURE CAB TRIPS AND SIGNS UK-WIDE PARTNERSHIP WITH BOOKING.COM



- 40% of customers expected to take more cabs for leisure, pointing to the pent-up demand to make up for everyone's missed months of travel
- for out of town trips in particular, taking the train is still the most popular mode followed by cab and then by coach.

minicabit, Britain's largest, most visited cab comparison site, recently ran a survey of its customers about how cab bookings might change post-lockdown. The findings make for interesting reading:

- half of customers said they would take the same amount of cabs for work, now with 69% taking them from their home rather than their office, reflecting the shift to remote working

At the same time, just as the world starts to prepare for travel to return again soon Booking.com, one of the world's leading digital travel marketplaces, is expanding the coverage of its pre-booked taxi service around the UK via a partnership with minicabit. minicabit is now one of Booking.com's largest pre-booked taxi partners in the UK and their customers can pre-book cabs up to 12 months in advance for travel to and from airport and



transport hub locations. Amer Hasan, CEO of minicabit said: *"Our customers are telling us they plan to take more cabs for their much-needed staycations this Spring and Summer. Indeed, our data backs that up with the average fare booked on minicabit jumping by 35% to £57 as compared to before Covid. We're on the lookout for more minicab and executive fleets of all sizes around the UK to take on this high value work."*

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IN THE NEWS

DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT SETS DATE FOR TAXI GUIDANCE IMPLEMENTATION

As always, **YOUR NPHTA** is on the case, finger on the pulse, on the ball, switched on, whichever is your preferred descriptive. We did announce the release of the Task and Finish Report and the government response, which was “let’s go into consultation”. Naturally, there was quite a bit more to it, but still we waited.

You may recall the DfT released the new Statutory Guidance last July which stirred up the pigeon’s somewhat, and placed a burden on all local authorities to have regard to it, to show how they had amended policies and conditions to satisfy the new guidance; in fact, we published an article dedicated to it in August last year.

The result was that many local authorities launched, deferred, are currently in, or have recently concluded their consultations.

As a result of Covid and the resultant delays, the following occurred:

On 29 April the DfT wrote to licensing authorities setting a definitive deadline for implementation of the Statutory Guidance. In the letter, Baroness Vere of Norbiton, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the DfT wrote:

“I would like to thank you and your teams for completing the survey issued by my Department in January to assess the progress in considering and implementing measures set out in the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards published in July 2020.

“Authorities have overall made significant progress despite the challenges we have all faced in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic; based on the responses from other authorities our view is that the review should be com-

pleted before 31 December 2021, so that any changes to policies can be in place as soon as possible in 2022.”

She concluded by saying that if any licensing authority is unable to meet the timeline, officials from the Department can provide support.

So as can be clearly seen here, although an extension has been granted, the requirement is very much still in place. We at the **NPHTA** have been involved in many of those consultations either directly making representations for members, or in a supportive and advisory capacity in the background.

If you are aware of any such consultations and need support, then please get in touch, reach out, it is just one of the many roles we perform for you.

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 The Taxi Centre

WORKER RIGHTS AND GOOD

THE STATUS QUO?

When Messrs Farrer and Asleem were successful in their tribunal many thought that was the end of the matter. Uber appealed the tribunal decision, which was dismissed. The appeal was then dismissed at the Court of Appeal, and most recently at the highest court in the land - The Supreme Court.

Those Uber drivers are now classified as workers.

We know (continuing on from my last **PHTM** article) that Uber proceeded to issue a press release, superficially offering worker status to all who want it. That statement hasn't yet stood the test of closer inspection of what is really happening to Uber drivers.

We know that the decision will (might?) have wider consequences to the gig economy. Will we eventually have delivery drivers waiting outside a fast-food joint to deliver its hot steamy fare, being entitled to minimum wage? Well, Deliveroo's investors certainly think so. The app currently depends on having thousands of workers on unpaid standby.

WHO SAYS WHAT AND WHY?

David Harmer, Markel's Groups Status Expert Supremo points out:

"The drivers' subordination to Uber, resembles the 'dependent contractor' outlined in Matthew Taylor's 2017 'The Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices'. Uber's structure only allows drivers to increase earnings by working more jobs, which drivers are less likely to do if waiting time were paid. As has happened during the pandemic, drivers waste time and petrol without any financial compensation when there are fewer jobs."

Aside from this, many think this will, or should open the doors for the HMRC. Employment lawyer and expert Darren Newman highlighted in his piece 'End of The Road' that it is time for HMRC to take on the score of a lifetime:

"Now that we know for sure that Uber drivers are workers, compliance officers can set about the task of assessing whether or not Uber has complied with their obligations (shouldn't be tricky - they clearly haven't) in respect of the minimum wage and set about calculating the amount of arrears that are due. They should then issue what might be their biggest ever Notice of Underpayment - plus a penalty of up to £20,000 per worker."

If no action is taken, HMRC risks losing all credibility, seen to be focusing on squeezing the little guy instead of going after the real crooks. If HMRC can get Uber to cough up,

then Uber drivers will have more confidence claiming against the tech behemoth. It is a double loss for Uber and a double win for workers' rights.

Charlie Thompson, employment partner at Stewarts Law, believes that little will actually change:

"Other gig economy businesses and workers will take notice, and we may see a spike in claims, but because every employment case is decided on its own facts, we will still see arguments that all business shouldn't be treated like Uber."

Two gig economy businesses are never the same, with the technology commonly the differentiating factor, even if drivers or users obtain jobs in the same way.

From a legal point of view, the rights of drivers as workers is significant. Uber is no longer allowed to define those that work for them in the way that most benefits them - that cannot be discounted. Uber is forced to admit that their drivers actually work for them, which is significant.

Co-lead claimant James Farrar, made an emphatic statement about the dream that Uber sells to drivers:

"Uber drivers are cruelly sold a false dream of endless flexibility and entrepreneurial freedom. The reality has been illegally low pay, dangerously long hours and intense digital surveillance."

WILL THE DECISION TRANSFORM THE TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE INDUSTRY?

THE ACTUAL FINDINGS

Although the drivers were free to determine when and where they worked, the Supreme Court highlighted five points from the tribunal's judgement as worthy of note:

- 1) The remuneration was fixed by Uber: drivers could not determine how much passengers were charged.
- 2) Not only was Uber's agreement with the drivers entirely dictated by Uber, so too were the terms on which drivers transport passengers.
- 3) Uber, not the driver, retains absolute discretion about whether it accepts a ride: the driver is not informed of a destination until a job is accepted, removing their right of refusal due to drop-off location. Moreover, the driver is penalised if they refuse too many jobs.
- 4) Uber exercises a significant degree of control over the way in which the driver provides services, with rating systems tantamount to performance management.
- 5) Uber restricts communication between driver and passenger: it is Uber's passenger, not the driver's.

PRACTICE (SURVIVING UBER)

The judgement in truth teaches us that 'superficial' changes to contract terms are simply not sufficient when deciding to treat people as self-employed.

Many issues were touched on, such as what and where is 'work'? In this context, does an app driver's travel, engaged and unengaged (passenger or no passenger), add up to their total working hours? And how do their earnings show per hour pro rata?

You would think that a purely self-employed driver does not actually start earning until his punter is in the back.

There were also some grey areas regarding app drivers accepting work from multiple apps and whether that affects their worker status during the waiting time.

However, in the end, the judgement amounts to the three things for those 26 app drivers we've outlined already:

- **holiday pay**
- **pension contributions**
- **National Living Wage**

Uber may not even bear the brunt of added costs, which are likely to be passed on to the customers. When New York City's minimum wage law came into effect in 2019, Uber simply raised its prices in the city to remain profitable.

WHAT DOES IT ACTUALLY MEAN TO YOU?

Let us look at what this actually means to you today. Workers Rights as per *'The Taylor Report'* will be a critical part of our future. We just don't know quite how yet?

If you have already taken the time to bring in a suitable professional and addressed the engagement of your self-employed workforce, taken into consideration your working practices, and the importance of those practices being properly reflected in a written contract, that contract is as relevant as it was before the Uber judgement.

Many of the points picked up by the judgement are usually already in the sights of status professionals like us. It has been observed that Uber's contract was not the traditional Contract for Services that many of you have or should have, with your subbies. Meaning the Supreme Court judges actually made their decision based on the specifics of the Uber arrangement.

We know that all cases which might come before tribunals, will need to be forensically examined based on the specifics of their own contracts and working practices. Even after Uber's announcement, we still don't have a definitive legal answer as to what constitutes working hours to allow us to set a minimum wage in this case. A tribunal does not create law, just something to be 'considered' for the next tribunal.

However, I have no doubt many more drivers will seek to go to tribunals, which will possibly lay the groundwork in the future for a sea change in sub-contractor to main contractor relationships. That is however a little way off, a closer issue will probably be copycat tribunals brought by sub-contractors motivated to 'try their luck'.

What they had were complicated and unclear working practices hidden behind lots of tech talk and weighty legalese. The point is nothing has really changed advice-wise. I have always said that a standard templated contract which does not reflect reality, will not protect businesses from employment status and worker status claims.

Your contract terms, media, contractor handbooks or training manuals for subcontractors as well as your day-to-day working practices must be considered as a whole to establish whether your subcontractors can legitimately be seen as self-employed.

The Supreme Court decision does not give all drivers protections and guaranteed work or money, or the right to sick pay, or the right to be ceased without due process. Uber was bought to task for not offering its workforce what the court decided were basic rights. We need as a trade to continue to seek to attract and retain drivers, by good practice. And we still have the chance to do that.

ADDISON LEE

I should also mention that as we come to press Addison Lee has had its application to appeal against the rulings of the employment tribunal and the Employment Appeal Tribunal dismissed, with Lord Justice Bean stating that it is unlikely to succeed following the recent **Uber BV vs Aslam and Others** judgment. This is more worrying because AddLee are a 'traditional' private hire style company, but the case still hinged on the use of an app.

In order to follow suit, drivers for AddLee will have to pursue their own claims but are being heavily courted by solicitors happy to oblige. This potential chaos was brought to you by; governments that have not addressed the massive digitisation of the hire and reward trade and won't make clear laws that recognise new ways of working.

Watch this space.....

Gary Jacobs

Director of Eaziserv, a compliance and status consultancy specialising in ground transport.
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ROUND THE COUNCILS...

OADBY AND WIGSTON: CABBIES 'MUST SPEAK AND WRITE ENGLISH'

Changes to the rules for taxi and PH drivers in Oadby and Wigston borough mean that they must be able to speak and write in English. According to the Leicester Mercury, the new policy came into effect on 1 April, as the council responded to fresh government guidelines.

New drivers, and existing drivers renewing their licence, will have to provide proof of their proficiency in English, where English is not their first language.

The new policy "requires evidence of an English test up to level 2." There are other new inclusions including training in recognising "County Lines" criminals.

However, the council has decided not to introduce mandatory CCTV cameras inside taxis.

The maximum age of vehicles on a first licence application will be lowered from five to four years, although that will not be brought in until April 2022.

The maximum vehicle age at the point of an annual licence renewal will be ten years in 2022 and reduce each year, reaching just six years in 2026. Ultra-low emission vehicles will be exempt from the policy.

The changes, agreed in March, were finalised after consultation with the borough's taxi and PH drivers, which resulted in 293 responses, said the authority.

The council did not give any information about the contents of the drivers' responses, but said: "The council has assessed the comments and amended the policy and put measures in place to allow the taxi industry to take appropriate action."

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: COMMON STANDARDS FOR LICENSING

A joint consultation between licensing authorities across Gloucestershire has been launched to decide on common licensing standards. Currently there are six different taxi and PH licensing policies with each licensing authority setting its own local standards.

Having one 'common standard' would mean the same high licensing standards would apply anywhere in the county - based on national guidance and best practice to promote public safety and protection - and would reduce unnecessary administration for businesses operating across district boundaries.

The proposed common licensing standards have been developed with support from South Gloucestershire Council.

Councils involved in the consultation include: Cheltenham Borough Council, Cotswold District Council, Forest of Dean District Council, Gloucester City Council, Stroud District Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council.

Consultation opens 13 April 2021 and will be open for 12 weeks to 6 June 2021.

For more information, including on how to respond, visit www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/21/consultations/944/licensing_consultations

POWYS: FEES FROZEN AFTER DRIVERS LEAVE TRADE

Taxi licence fees in Powys will be frozen this financial year because of the impact of coronavirus.

According to the County Times, at a meeting of Powys County Council's taxi licensing committee, councillors unanimously backed a recommendation to keep the fees for the current financial year the same as in 2020/21.

Senior taxi licensing officer Sue Jones explained that the department had needed to adapt its practices because of the pandemic. She said that many taxi drivers have either left the business or are waiting for better times before renewing their licences.

As of January 1, there were 247 licences for PHVs in Powys - 17 fewer than in October 2019. Similarly the number of HCs on January 1 was 117 compared to 164 on October 1, 2019.

Ms Jones said: "Obviously 12 months ago everything changed and we had to significantly adapt the processes last year. We had to temporarily stop compliance checks but we will be picking those up again next month."

Ms Jones pointed out that taxis had continued to be operated throughout the pandemic and the various lockdowns.

A review will take place later this year in time to implement any changes to fees from April 2022.

EAST SUFFOLK: PLANS TO UNIFY FARES TO BE SCRAPPED

Plans to unify hackney carriage fares across the Waveney and Suffolk Coastal areas of East Suffolk look set to be shelved next week after drivers requested the two separate tariff structures remain.

The Lowestoft Journal reports that East Suffolk Council opted to launch a consultation following a licensing meeting last year after councillors suggested the fares should be brought together across the old Waveney and Suffolk Coastal district council areas - the two predecessor authorities for East Suffolk Council.

However, consultation responses published in a report set to go before the authority's licensing committee next week has found the trade is in favour of keeping tariffs separate.

The committee was recommended to approve keeping separate structures at its meeting on Monday 19 April.

...ROUND THE COUNCILS

GUILDFORD: LICENSING POLICY UPDATED

Guildford Council's licensing policy has been updated to improve standards and make services more efficient. All drivers will need to sign up to the Disclosure and Barring Service to be checked every six months, all licensed taxis will be fitted with CCTV and there will be improved staff training and vetting for PH operators, following new rules by the DfT. There will also be stricter vehicle emissions standards to help reduce air pollution in the borough and improved maintenance standards to ensure vehicles are safer.

SOUTH LAKELAND: WARNING OF HARSHSHIP WITHOUT FARE RISE

South Lakeland taxi drivers are calling for the maximum meter rate to be raised to bring it 'in line with inflation'. The Westmorland Gazette reports that Windermere driver, Sarah Ibbetson, said the lack of change in the rate, which has been in place since 2014, was causing 'considerable hardship' as costs had increased in the same period. South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) has said it is 'committed to reviewing fares later this year' and 'will engage with taxi drivers, operators and members of the public'. Mrs Ibbetson added that taxis must now take card payments and that two to three per cent is lost on every transaction. Mrs Ibbetson, whose husband, Mark, is also a taxi driver, said she had written to the council, the licensing office, individual councillors and MP Tim Farron about the issue and was 'fed up of being so comprehensively ignored'. Bob Mullen, a Barrow taxi driver, said drivers in the town had been in talks with Barrow Council for 'quite a while now' but that everything's been held up with the pandemic. An SLDC spokesman said: "One of the main factors in determining fares is fuel prices, which at the moment are broadly lower than they were in 2014."

GLASGOW: QUALIFICATION NEEDED TO RENEW LICENCE

Taxi and PH car drivers in Glasgow will be required to complete their Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) next year before they can renew their licence. GlasgowLive reports that from January 1, 2022 drivers will be able to achieve their certificate in Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver at SCQF level 5. The introduction of the course was delayed due to the

impact of Covid-19.

In order to establish the views of relevant stakeholders, a meeting took place with all the current course providers in March this year. There are currently six training providers in Glasgow approved to deliver the course who have all invested financially to be able to deliver this course.

Chairman councillor Alex Wilson said: "I think it is good if we can get these operations up and running as soon as we can, we have invested a lot of money in setting this up. I know there are challenges for our drivers given there is not the same nighttime economy. I propose that we have a lead in time and start on January 1, 2022 just to give us a chance to get the nighttime economy back in business as well as any other contract work out there."

"I have got nothing but sympathy for the trade in general." The start date has been set for 1 January but if anything happens which could delay this then the committee will review its decision.

BABERGH: FARE RISE SCRAPPED TO AVOID DISCRIMINATION

Babergh Council has been forced to scrap new fares and admit they could "inadvertently enable discrimination". Suffolk News reports that Babergh District Council's cabinet in February agreed to a new table of fares to be introduced on 5 April. But the council said that it has had to suspend the new fare structure in order to prevent a breach of the Equality Act.

A report said: "In the week before the implementation date, the council received representations from the Suffolk Disability Forum that the revised fares potentially discriminated against people with protected characteristics due to the two-tier nature of the scale of fares which enables drivers to charge a higher rate for larger vehicles."

"The charge is based on the size of the vehicle rather than the number of passengers. Although the fares represent the maximum chargeable amount, the council has agreed a scheme that could inadvertently enable discrimination."

"On investigation it has emerged that a full Equality Impact Assessment was not carried out and therefore the impacts of the revised scheme were not properly assessed or mitigated. The monitoring officer has advised that the decision needs to be quashed and reconsidered in order to prevent the council breaching its duties under section 49 of the Equality Act. Therefore, the new fares will not be enforced at this time."

It is not yet clear when a revised attempt at the fares will be brought forward.

Trade members who gave representations in the previous consultations warned that basing the fares on vehicle size would unfairly hit passengers travelling alone, those with prams and wheelchair users, and suggested instead basing the tariff uplift on the number of passengers for a journey.

A NEW VISION FOR COLLABORATION

HOW SHARING RESOURCES AND IMPLEMENTING SIMPLE PROCESSES INCREASES PROFITABILITY



Omair Javaid, Director of DG Group Nottingham, and Shaz Ali, Director of 247 Cars Walsall, share their vision behind their recent joint acquisition of City Taxis in Lichfield - a taxi business based in a territory between their two core areas of operation; although PHTM

is aware this may not be a first; the way the two companies approach collaboration is certainly unique.

WHAT MAKES YOU SO DIFFERENT?

Both companies agree that they have helped improve each other's business through a common structure, and by discussing problems and finding solutions. They stress that trust is the big difference, with an open and transparent access all area approach to data sharing. Furthermore, they are not only willing explain what they're doing, but also show each other how to do it.

WHAT DRIVES YOUR GROWTH MIND-SET?

They have FOUR main focal points:

- One brand - one vision
- Long term plan
- Accountability
- Buying power

Although, the one brand is still a work in progress both companies follow a single vision which is detailed in a simple two-page document which answers the most important questions that will drive traction and forward momentum.

WHAT DOES YOUR DOCUMENT COVER?

- **Core values:** a set of timeless principles to guide our staff
- **Core focus:** we can't be everything to everyone
- **Long-term target:** we need a larger-than-life goal and not be afraid to say it out loud publicly
- **Marketing strategy:** this must make sense and be intertwined with the **core focus**
- **Three-year picture:** gives rationalisation to the current year
- **One-year plan:** goals set and then dissected into more manageable milestones to help take controlled steps to reach long-term targets.
- **90 day objectives:** people lose interest beyond 90 days so we mix it up to maintain momentum
- **Long-term issues:** if something cannot be solved short term then we stack rather than lose it.

CAN YOU EXPLAIN YOUR MANAGEMENT TOOLS?

Most companies rely on the individual manager's opinion about what tool to use for any given issue. However, we always use the same tools. We believe that it is not the decision that matters, but how we have reached that decision.

Help Mindset: When companies "hit the ceiling"- this is the place where most of the danger lies because when humans do

not know what to do next, they get frustrated. That can lead to the blame game, causing irreparable damage to cohesion. We encourage unfiltered conflict without pointing the finger. **Accountability:** This is assured by a clear chart focused on the role rather than the people. Clear lines of responsibility are marked out and our managers are given periodic training on how to lead, manage and account, ensuring they perform tasks on time and their team do the same.

Regular Communication: We meet regularly at a set time for a set period every week and the whole cycle is a time management tool.

Short Term Focus: When we have decided what needs to be done, we break that down into convenient time delimited targets which everyone aims to achieve as part of a team effort. No one wants to let the team down so will go all out to produce on time every time. Keeping a performance score underpins what happens at our meeting because we believe what gets measured gets done. All the above helps achieve a high degree of organisational health and this is something that is also measured every quarter.

JOIN US IN OUR VISION OF THE FUTURE:

Smaller companies normally have to work in the business but we will help people work on the business as well. Size is not the key driver; a growth mindset is. Traditionally taxi companies will ask each other what they're doing for advertising or how to get more work. However, the answers to these questions will not solve the woes.

We started this and now invite others to join us, all stakeholders need to have the same outlook and be paddling in the same direction. Our values and core focus help us align with people who are the right fit, 100% of the time.

Collaboration is not something new, many have tried but not been able to make it work successfully. We think we have the processes and accountability in place to make it work but also add value to everyone involved. Once the first project is successful and gaining traction this entire process can be replicated successfully from one city to another. This replication gives recognition to the single brand which will increase our buying power and influence.

Having a vision is the easy part, but making the vision a reality is the difficult bit. Our focus is to get the right people in the right seats and keep executing the vision relentlessly.

If you want to execute our vision, contact:
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MOBILITY MATTERS

FOUR TAXI DRIVERS FAIL TO PICK UP TAUNTON WHEELCHAIR USER

A wheelchair user claims four cabbies declined to pick her up at a taxi rank in the centre of Taunton.

The Somerset County Gazette reports that Jasmine Rankin says the fifth driver then overcharged her by setting his meter running while he prepared the ramp to enable her to get into the vehicle.

Jasmine, 27, had enjoyed her first night out in months with her fiancé Luke before the couple made their way to the rank in Corporation Street, when the evening turned sour.

She said: "The first driver in the queue just drove off straight-away. I said to Luke, 'Maybe he's had a call'. Then the next driver pulled up. He said he had a medical exemption, but when I asked to see it, he said he'd left it at home. The third driver just completely blanked me and simply drove off. The fourth said he wasn't wheelchair accessible."

Jasmine said she was so incensed she was having "a meltdown", but calmed down when the fifth driver agreed to take the couple home.

"I was grateful," said Jasmine. "But he started the meter before getting the ramp out of the back and setting it up. The meter was on £6 before we left the rank."

Jasmine added: "I'm really cross. It's discrimination. It makes the whole experience horrible. Sometimes I'm on my own and vulnerable and not being able to get a taxi is worrying."

Mike Davis, owner of A1 Ace Taxis, is adamant none of the five drivers worked for his firm. He said: "The rules are really clear. On a rank, you have the right to refuse a passenger, but there has to be a reasonable reason. But if you have a licensed hackney carriage and that vehicle is wheelchair accessible, you should be taking wheelchair customers from the rank. Unfortunately, some people who drive independently don't really want to serve disabled customers because it takes longer."

"Under the Disability Discrimination Act, you have to treat a disabled person in the same way as you treat an able-bodied person. You should turn the meter on at the start of a journey, not when you are loading and unloading the ramp before the start and after the end of the journey. At A1 Ace Taxis everybody is very clear about what the rules are and we embrace them because it's only fair."

WOLVERHAMPTON PHV DRIVER WHO REFUSED GUIDE DOG LOSES LICENCE

A Black Country taxi driver who refused to carry an assistance dog in his vehicle has had his licence revoked.

The Express & Star reports that Dudley Magistrates' Court dismissed Shamal Hussein Majid's appeal against Wolverhampton Council's decision to revoke his PH driver licence. The council's solicitor, Amy Groves, told the court on Friday, April 23, how Majid had initially refused to carry a customer with a guide dog from Molineux Stadium on 7 March, 2020. The customer was then advised to put the assistance dog in the boot of the vehicle - and told she would be charged an extra £10 in order to clean the vehicle. When challenged by the customer, Majid later stated that he was allergic to dogs, despite not holding an exemption certificate.

He then abandoned the customer - who is registered legally blind - at the roadside and drove away.

After dismissing the appeal, District Judge Wheeler, said: "I do not accept your evidence at all. You were making it up when you attended the review hearing in April last year and you are making it up today as you go along. I attach no credibility at all to your evidence. Wolverhampton Council was right to speak to you about this and to conclude that you abandoned the passenger and her guide dog. The council's decision was not wrong and their response was appropriate." Mr Majid was also ordered to pay the council £300 towards legal costs.

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CCTV: YOUR SECURITY

BOLTON CABBIERS CALL FOR CCTV AFTER RECENT INCREASE IN DRIVER ATTACKS

Cabbies in Bolton are growing more worried over the number of attacks they are facing behind the wheel and are calling for more action to be taken to protect them.

According to the Bolton News, on Thursday, April 8 at around 8.30pm, a taxi was being driven on Marsey Road in Breightmet when a passenger assaulted him, leading the vehicle to crash into a tree. Two men then stole cash before leaving the taxi driver, who was taken to hospital.

Then, in the early hours of Saturday, April 10 at around 3.30am on Bar Lane in Astley Bridge, a driver was strangled by a man before two others arrived and the victim was punched in the face and kicked in the ribs.

And at the junction of Colchester Ave and Lydgate Ave in Breightmet at around 1.20pm on 2 April, a motorbike pulled up to a taxi and the rider smashed a window with a baseball bat.

The Bolton PH Association say they have asked the council for CCTV to be fitted in their vehicles for years to protect themselves as well as passengers. A spokesman said: "We have been asking the council for CCTV to be put in our vehicles for quite a long time. A lot of the time when we have reported incidents we have been told there is not enough evidence.

"We are like sitting ducks and it feels like nothing is being done. These attacks are happening more and more. "The CCTV would not only make drivers safe, it would make passengers feel safe and help the police with cases. "At the end of the day we are doing a job and getting people from A to B. It is terrible and frightening for someone to have gone through what these drivers have been through.

"We often get children throwing bricks and stones at us as well."

In response to the call for CCTV to be

fitted in taxis, a Bolton Council spokesman said: "Bolton Council is working with Transport for Greater Manchester and the other boroughs in the city region to agree minimum licensing standards for hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.

"Plans were put to public consultation last year, among the suggestions was that all vehicles be fitted with CCTV.

"These would be funded by individual licence holders."

NHTA comment: *the consultation has ended and the results have not yet been published. NHTA has been informed in ongoing meetings with TfGM that there are no plans to introduce CCTV for at least a year if not longer.*

CCTV IN CRAVEN PUT ON HOLD

Taxi and PHV drivers in Craven have been given a reprieve over the compulsory fitting of CCTV cameras.

The Craven Herald reports that PHVs and taxis were expected to pay around £500 to have CCTV cameras fitted by April, for the protection of both drivers and passengers.

But, councillors have now decided to shelve the plans until September when they will revisit the new policy and make a fresh decision based on whether the economy is recovering.

At a meeting of Craven District Council's Licensing Committee on 6 April, John Pickering of the Craven Taxi Association said drivers had been hit hard by the pandemic and asked for the compulsory CCTV to be delayed for two years.

But Committee Chairman, Simon Myers, agreed with a six month delay after which the implementation date of cameras would be reviewed.

"September will be a good time to revisit this, and if we have had more lockdowns, we will look at it again," he said.

CCTV CAMERAS COULD BE MANDATORY IN COVENTRY TAXIS AND PHVS

CCTV cameras could be made mandatory in Coventry taxis and PHVs.

The Coventry Telegraph reports that stricter new rules are being considered by Coventry City Council with councillors told CCTV cameras could "provide a safer environment" for drivers and passengers.

It is one of a string of changes under consideration for the council's Statement of Licensing Policy to reflect updated standards published by the government last July.

Other changes include: more routine DBS checks for drivers, faster notification of offences, an arrest or charge, and new cross-boundary enforcement action. Plans were outlined at a recent council meeting where a 12-week consultation was agreed.

Sarah Elliott, head of fleet and waste management, said all councils within the West Midlands Combined Authority have agreed to most of the changes in principle. "The board has agreed in principle to adopt the standards proposed in the DfT report as a minimum in their taxi and licensing processes to ensure that maximum consistency across our region," she told the meeting on Wednesday, April 14.

"The only exception to this is the mandatory requirement for CCTV which will be decided locally following individual consultation."

Cabinet member for city services, Cllr Pat Hetherton, added: "At all times it is about the safety of everyone involved, the taxi drivers and their personal safety, but also passengers in the vehicles."

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The UK taxi trade is a fragmented market; there are thousands of private hire companies scattered across our island. Each and every one of them serving their local communities to a high standard. Every single one surviving by making profit.

The local staff know their customer base, the locality and their drivers. The unique selling points of these businesses is that they can offer multiple booking platforms, whether it be by booking, by app or by the traditional phone. However, what these small businesses lack is the backing; having a network that offers national branding, resources on a national level for accounts, sales, purchasing and legal know how.

Our beloved industry is being attacked by loss making apps that we have seen invade the market space over the last decade, which has put some of our businesses in jeopardy. They can't compete with the endless supply of promo codes, driver incentives and huge marketing budgets. Both drivers and customers, alike have been drawn away from the traditional operators to these sexy apps, rendering many private hire companies obsolete or in dire need of modernisation.

Take a student arriving in a new town, fresh from their parents arms and not knowing the locality. It is so easy for them to book on a national branded app, giving them peace of mind and knowing exactly the standard of service they will receive; the name of the app and the branding will be important. It is far easier and more

“ The outcome goal is to streamline our services, improve efficiencies, and to bring in a national brand bonded together by technology and the local talent housed at each company. ”

progressive for them to book an Uber/ Bolt / Ola than it is for them to use Google and phone the local taxi company, which they have never heard of, and that will appear outdated by its branding.

Such dated names as: Radio Cars, ABC 247, Something Line, or Express appear to brand the taxi company from a bygone age. These legacy firms may well have the reputation with local folk that have used them for the past 20 years. But for an outsider coming in stepping off a train from London, then it is far easier to reach for that national brand app which you have used in so many cities before.

The private hire industry however, still offers a higher level of local community service, a better standard of driver and a superior understanding of its customers. It is easier to book transportation from a wedding reception, conference or party with your local operator than it is on Uber for example.

For this reason, many private hire companies have flourished and grown during the Uber years, as the market for using taxis and PHVs has grown as they become more accessible. We are still the go to firms, we are far better at servicing the needs of school contracts and local business than any Silicon Valley-backed app ever can.



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REVOLUTION

There is a need to bridge the gap between the benefits of a local operator and the national app. For this reason, in August 2020 I sold my 600-car fleet in Leicester to MBH Corporation to form the Take Me group, the idea being that we would have the funding and security to approach other like-minded operators across the UK to bring them on board.

We have and will continue to add a new operator to the network every month for the next 18 months, combined under the branding of Take Me. Our team brings shared resources, shared know how, and very shortly new technology.

The beauty of the Take Me Group is that we embrace the talent within the industry. We are not asset-stripers. We are taxi men building a network and where possible we embrace having the owners join the journey with us; whether that be by acquisition, investment or franchise.

The outcome goal is to streamline our services, improve efficiencies, and to bring in a national brand bonded together by technology and the local talent housed at each company.

The exciting part is all the talent in the industry which we can now utilise. Every taxi company has a star that is the glue that keeps it together, whether you're in Brighton, Dundee, London or Liverpool. We all have the same stresses; the same concerns; the same passion for our industry. Working together as a team, we strive to build the UK's largest taxi network.

For those joining Take Me we can put together a bespoke package which could include share options and bonus schemes. In fact, you can even design your own incentive. We have various routes, from the traditional buyout model to issuing bonds, or cash payments or you may just want to join us on our journey as some owners have sold and remain on board.

As our industry looks and sees an uncertain future; as more technology changes our industry; as we sit at the precipice with driverless cars around the corner - by being part of the Take Me group, we can face these challenges together.

We can fight for our market share. We can share resources leaving our key legacy companies intact to live on for another generation. By the end of the year the Take Me group will have achieved a fleet size of 2,500 vehicles. Next year we will double that. We welcome any enquiry, whether you're very large or small, talk to us. Myself and the team look forward to seeing how we can help you.

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UNSUNG HEROES

OUR TRADE STEPS UP TO HELP LOCAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH LOCKDOWN 3.0

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Over the past year, Autocab has heard countless stories of our customers and their communities coming together to offer assistance to those who need it. One of the great positives we can take from the pandemic has been the way it's brought out the good in people.

There have been some high-profile examples, such as footballers campaigning for free school meals and clothing brands converting their production lines to make PPE for frontline workers. Others have gone more unsung, but have made a telling difference in their local area nonetheless – these are the people who've done laundry for an elderly neighbour, or school children who've sewed masks in aid of charity.

Among those who've made a difference in their community are local taxi operators. It's not been an easy time for the industry, with passenger numbers at an all-time low and many struggling to make ends meet. But, despite these difficulties, taxi drivers and operators have been using their resources to benefit people in their area.

Here's just a few of the great things they've done to help us get through lockdown 3.0.

1. TRIPS TO MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

The much-awaited Covid-19 vaccinations are now being rolled out en masse, offering hope for the elderly and vulnerable – many of whom have struggled to leave their homes since the pandemic began. While this has been fantastic, getting to vaccination appointments has still been a challenge for many who have no transport of their own, or are too afraid or incapable of using public transport.

In Brighton, however, two firms, 720 Taxis and City Cabs, have set up an initiative called Cabs for Jabs, to provide vulnerable people with free taxi rides to and from their vaccination. They have even set up a GoFundMe page and reached out to businesses and the general public for donations to fund these journeys.

They are not alone either. Across the UK and Ireland, taxi firms have been going the extra mile to provide for those in need of medical help. In Waterford, Rapid Cabs has been playing a key role in supporting the strained healthcare system by providing patient transport. Their drivers have provided 16,000 trips to and from hospital and doctors' appointments since the pandemic began.

2. DELIVERING ESSENTIAL GOODS

As well as taking people to important medical appointments, local operators have also been bringing essential goods to those who need them. This has included groceries and prescriptions, but it has also involved some stranger, albeit still essential, deliveries such as false teeth, live leeches and glass eyes.

In Swinton, Lynch Private Hire is a firm that deserves a special mention when it comes to supporting the most vulnerable in Greater Manchester. They delivered free school meals to children to ensure they got a nutritious lunch, despite school closures. They have also been making sure PPE gets to nursing homes to help protect the staff and residents living there.

3. KEEPING LOCAL RESTAURANTS AFLOAT

This third (and hopefully final) lockdown has been particularly tough for hospitality venues, whose doors are expected to be among the last to reopen. But taxis have yet again stepped up to offer restaurants a lifeline. They have been helping them to deliver food and beverages to customers while the doors of local bars and eateries remain shuttered.

In Nottingham and Derby, for instance, DG Cars is handling up to 3,500 orders a week for 160 different restaurants – delivering tapas for Bar Iberico, fried chicken for Chilli Flames, and mojitos for The Parlour, to name just a few.

Such partnerships between struggling restaurants and local taxi firms have proved hugely successful across the country. From high-end restaurants, to small sandwich shops, to award-winning cocktail bars, taxis and private hire vehicles have been responsible for ensuring that a little joy has still been reaching those people stuck at home.

The taxi and private hire industry has really showed its best colours during this third national lockdown, by all coming together to find ways to help out their local communities.

Despite being among one of most severely hit industries, drivers have selflessly given up their time or developed new ways to provide assistance – helping all of us get through this difficult time.

UNSUNG HEROES

HERO ALPHA PHV DRIVER RAN INTO BURNING LIVERPOOL BUILDING TO GET RESIDENTS OUT

A hero PHV driver has helped a pregnant woman and five others to evacuate a burning building.

Last month **PHTM** reported on a fire during the early hours of 26 March on Walton Road, Liverpool, after the blaze left three furniture shops damaged. The fire spread above three businesses with the roofs engulfed by flames as smoke billowed into the sky.

One business suffered flood damage, while the other stores suffered smoke and fire damage to their stock.

Fortunately no one was injured as the residents living above the shops were woken up by a taxi driver, who happened to be passing by at around 5am. Because of the driver's selfless actions, six people, including a pregnant woman, were evacuated from the building. Rob, from Walton, humbly



said it was "just instinct" which made him run into the building.

Speaking to the Liverpool Echo, the 41-year-old said he was taking a break when he noticed the fire.

Rob was the first to call 999 and he told the Echo: "It was like an orange glow, and I knew it was a fire. I knew where the entrance was to that block so I tried to knock but no one was

answering. I kicked the door down and started banging on everyone's door. I just told everyone to get out."

He said: "It was probably the adrenaline that kicked in and I just thought 'if I don't do it, who will?' I was worried that it could be too late when the fire brigade arrived."

Rob said the situation only sunk in later while he was back in his car and said he was "shaking" due to the adrenaline.

As the emergency services arrived, Rob said the evacuated residents were very kind to him and offered to buy him a coffee or some food.

Rob was also later credited for his quick thinking as it was feared the fire could have been worse and could have affected other neighbours.

Merseyside Police said an investigation is still ongoing into the blaze.



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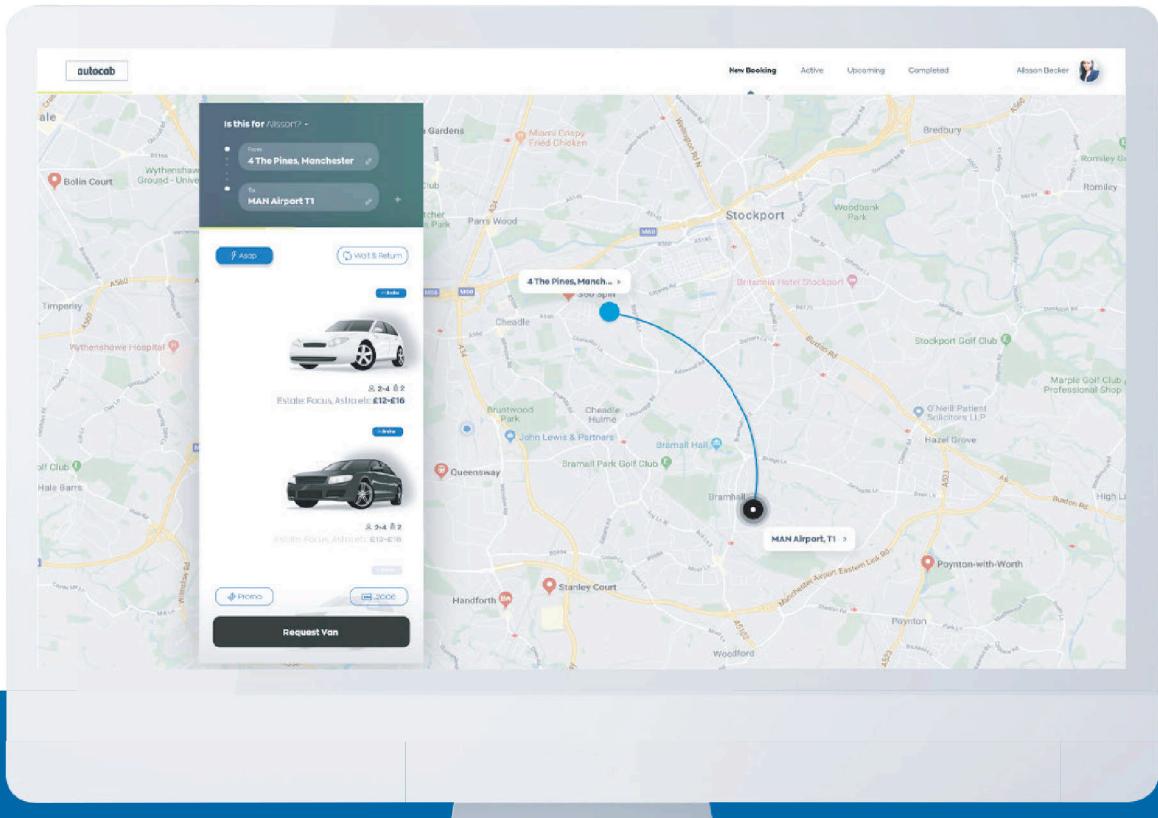
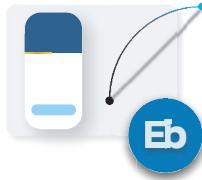


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IT'S A NEW WORLD...BUT THERE IS LIGHT

The UK is gradually opening up again but it is currently not permitted to travel abroad for holidays. Some countries have closed borders, and any country can further regulate travel or bring in new restrictions with little advanced warning.

However, UK nationals can travel if they can prove a permitted reason such as for work or medical grounds.

Conversely, passengers travelling into the UK must have proof of a negative test and have pre-booked two further tests prior to arrival, and then must self-isolate for ten days where they are staying.

There are 40 countries on the RED LIST whose citizens are forbidden from entering the UK:

Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, French Guiana, Guyana, India, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Suriname, Tanzania, United Arab Emirates (including Dubai), Uruguay, Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Although, UK nationals can still travel to these countries, on return they must have proof of a negative Covid test taken three days prior to arrival, and then quarantine for ten days in a government-approved hotel. The cost of £1,750 for a single person, £2,400 for a couple or £2,725 for a couple plus child under 11, must be paid for by the passenger and the whole process is managed by The Department of Health who ensure compliance.

THE FUTURE: THE TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM

It is believed on 17 May, the UK Government will announce plans to operate a traffic light system of red, amber and green. When launched the current ban on non-essential travel will be removed.

Countries and islands will be assigned colours based on a range of Covid-19 health metrics, including vaccination numbers and infection rates.

Variants and the ability of the country to identify variants will also be considered. The different traffic light colours will detail the risk in each region, but also the tests and quarantine periods required.

Because the Government plans to rate islands separately from a country's mainland, it will make holidays more likely. For example, if the cases rise in Portugal but not the Azores, these areas will be separated and assigned colours accordingly.

GREEN LIST REGIONS: Travellers returning from here will need to take a pre-departure test and a PCR test on or before day two of their return, but there is no requirement to quarantine.

AMBER COUNTRIES: Arrivals will need to quarantine at home for ten days, in addition to tests.

RED COUNTRIES: Arrivals must quarantine for ten days in government-managed hotel quarantine.

To reduce the risk of disruption the Government is planning to move countries between colours monthly, instead of weekly as happened last year.

INCREASED AIRPORT CHARGES

With over 58 million holidays booked in the UK in 2019, it is clear that income from airport work is a sizeable revenue stream for our trade.

However, during lockdown, over 50% of UK airports have increased their drop-off/pick-up charges as shown in the table opposite. Airports argue that these increases are levied to pay for improvements in infrastructure and are a physical penalty against climate change excesses.

Whilst it is still free to drop off at Heathrow, the airport has just announced their intention to introduce a £5 forecourt access charge later in the year and from 1 July it is increasing its feeder park charges from £3.60 to £10 stating: "The regulated price for the taxi feeder park is calculated purely to cover the cost of operating the service and does not generate any revenue for the airport."

Meanwhile, Gatwick has initiated a £5 drop-off levy, whilst Manchester's five-minute drop-off charge has increased 66% from £3 to £5.

“ Club Cars, Manchester, Manager, Gary Bregan, told PHTM: “We advise airport passengers that there is a £5 levy; but our concern is when you have a minibus full of passengers and you exceed 10 minutes, then a £25 fee is payable. ”

It is clear these stealth taxes that eat into our trade's profits are here to stay. Some will pass the extra cost directly to passengers whilst others may have no option but to absorb the charges themselves in order to remain competitive.

On the bright side there is no shortage of holidays being booked in anticipation of the Government announcement as many countries are now happy to welcome UK visitors due to our high level of vaccinations.

This news bodes well for our trade. Gear up, Get ready: these are positive signs that there are boom times ahead to kickstart our industry's much needed route to recovery!

LATEST UPDATE

A Fly Certificate has to be obtained pre-departure from UK airports in addition to the correct certificate from all UK ports which is given with a negative Covid result

UK AIRPORTS	ANNUAL FOOTFALL IN MILLIONS	PICK-UP/DROP-OFF			
		5 m	10 m	15 m	20+ m
ABERDEEN	3	£3	£3	£10	£10
BELFAST CITY	2	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
BELFAST INT.	6	£1	£1	£3	£3
BIRMINGHAM INT.	13	FREE	FREE	£3	£3
BOURNEMOUTH	<1	£3	£3	£3	£3
BRISTOL	9	£4	£4	£4	£4
CARDIFF	2	FREE	£3	£3	£6
DERRY	<1	£1	£1	£1	£1
DONCASTER/SHEFFIELD	2	£4	£4	£4	£4
EAST MIDLANDS	5	£4	£4	£4	£9
EDINBURGH	15	£4	£4	£5	£5
EXETER INT.	1	£3	£3	£3	£3
GLASGOW	9	£4	£4	£6	£10
GLASGOW PRESTWICK	<1	£2	£2	£2	£2
HUMBERSIDE	<1	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
INVERNESS	<1	FREE	FREE	FREE	£4.70
JERSEY	2	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
LEEDS BRADFORD	4	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
L'POOL JOHN LENNON	5	£4	£10	£25	£25
LONDON CITY	5	£3.50	£3.50	£8	£12
LONDON GATWICK	46	£5	£5	£10	£15
LONDON HEATHROW	81	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
LONDON LUTON	18	£5	£5	£10	£15
LONDON SOUTHEND	2	£4	£4	£7	£7
LONDON STANSTED	28	£5	£5	£7	£25
MANCHESTER INT.	30	£5	£6	£25	£25
NEWCASTLE	5	£3	£3	£3	£3
NEWQUAY CORNWALL	<1	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
NORWICH	<1	£2	£2	£2	£2
RONALDSWAY (IoM)	<1	£1	£1	£1	£1
SOUTHAMPTON	2	£2	£2	£2	£2
TEESSIDE	<1	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE

WORLDWIDE AIRPORTS

BEIJING INTERNATIONAL	FREE for 30 mins
BRUSSELS	FREE for 10 mins
DUBAI INTERNATIONAL	FREE for 30 mins
DUBLIN	FREE for 10 mins
FRANKFURT	FREE for 10 mins
LISBON	FREE for 10 mins
LOS ANGELES	FREE for 15 mins
PARIS CHARLES DE GAULLE	FREE for 10 mins
ROME FUMICINO	FREE for 30 mins
STOCKHOLM	FREE for 30 mins

UK PORTS & EUROSTAR

Like airports travel is not permitted from UK ports or Eurostar except for legally permitted reasons. This does not include holidays.

A travel declaration form must be completed and on your person supporting the reason for your trip. You will be required to show the form at port of departure. You may be issued with a fixed penalty notice and directed to return home if you do not have a valid reason for travel.

Eurostar is working with the London Medical Laboratory to supply access for a range of Covid-19 testing actions at a preferential price. These need to be booked in advance. All passengers must have a negative Covid-19 test and mandatory forms before departure.

**D-DAY 17th MAY
NEXT GOVERNMENT
ANNOUNCEMENT**



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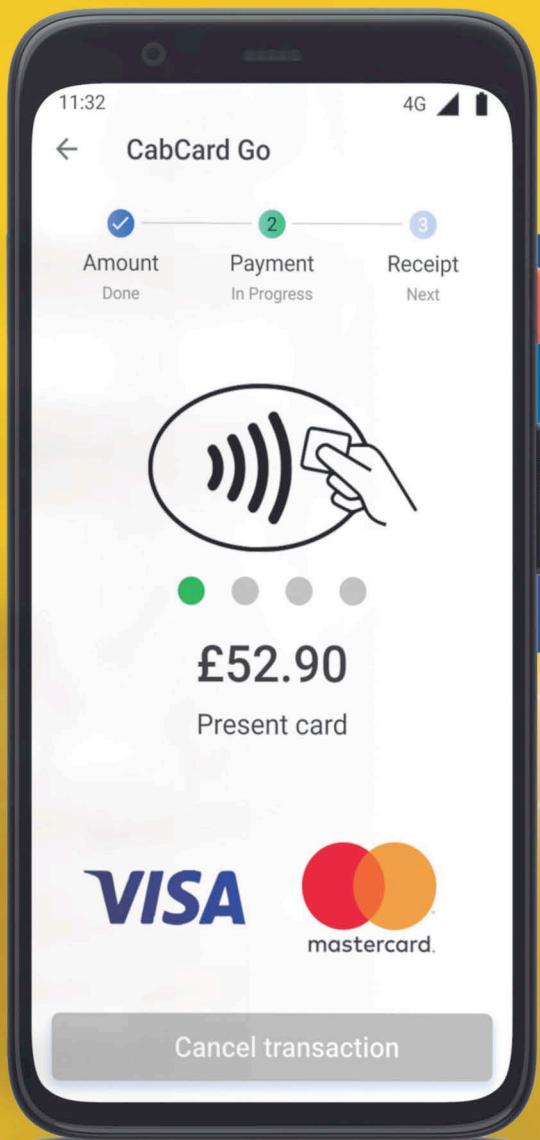
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GREEN MEANS GO

PORTSMOUTH CLEAN AIR FUND OPEN AS CAZ CAMERAS NOW BEING INSTALLED

From last month, contractors working on behalf of Portsmouth City Council have started installing cameras and supporting poles to prepare for the launch of Portsmouth's new Clean Air Zone (CAZ) in Autumn this year.

The cameras will use an automatic number plate recognition system (ANPR) to identify any 'non-compliant' vehicles that enter the zone.

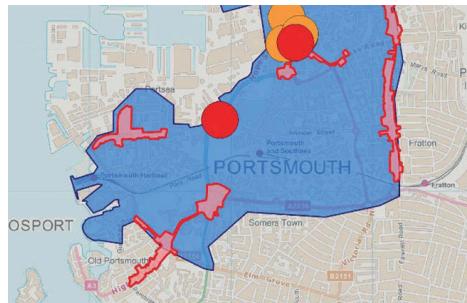
They'll only be used for this purpose and will always point towards traffic in order to read number plates.

The cameras are being installed at 34 sites around the edge of the CAZ, with a further five inside it and the council aims to have all the cameras in place by the end of September 2021.

The charging Clean Air Zone will result in a daily charge being issued to the most polluting vehicles for driving in the zone - these vehicles are referred to as 'non-compliant' vehicles.

For the Portsmouth charging CAZ, non-compliant vehicles are HGVs, buses and coaches, taxis and PHVs that:

Do not meet Euro 6 emissions stan-



dards (so are Euro 5 or older) if they are diesel

Do not meet Euro 4 emissions standards (so are Euro 3 or older) if they are petrol

The council is not currently proposing to charge vans, as the government has approved plans for a charging Class B CAZ. However, due to the uncertainty brought about by coronavirus, the government has indicated they may require the charging of vans to meet air quality objectives.

The proposed zone, approximately 3km², will be located to the south west of Portsmouth.

Some funding will be available for affected drivers to retrofit or upgrade to greener, cleaner ones.

Taxis and private hire vehicles

You can access £1,500 per vehicle to help you upgrade to a compliant taxi or PHV via purchase or lease.

At the moment, there is enough funding to support all active non-compliant vehicles licensed with Portsmouth City Council. This could change if more licensed non-compliant vehicles that aren't currently being used return to operation. If this happens, the council will assess and prioritise each application for funding.

There is no requirement for replacement vehicles to be electric to access the fund. If you're looking to buy a vehicle to license as a taxi or PHV, you should make sure that you can license this for use with Portsmouth City Council and that it is compliant with the Clean Air Zone euro standard.

From January 2022, any vehicles that are over four years old cannot be newly licensed, so you should make sure you can drive it in the CAZ before you buy a used vehicle.

To apply for the fund, you'll need to meet all the following criteria.

You must be the registered keeper or owner of a 'non-compliant' private hire or hackney carriage vehicle. You may have more than one vehicle.

The vehicle or vehicles must have been licensed with Portsmouth City Council at some point between May 2020 and the date you apply.

You must make reasonable attempts to continually license your compliant vehicle for the next three years.

You cannot have received any Clean Air Fund incentives from another council.

You also cannot be in the process of applying for one, or planning to apply for one in future from another local authority.

LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL APPROVES DYNAMO ELECTRIC HACKNEY TAXI

Taxi drivers in Liverpool now have another option to consider when deciding what vehicle to acquire. The Dynamo Electric Taxi is now plated for Liverpool effective 12 April.

- Car 'n' Cab Care is inviting drivers to try this vehicle for a day and experience the fuel savings - for just a daily rental cost including insurance
- Interested drivers will need to show taxi driver licence badge and proof of address to be accepted.
- The three unit hyper electric charge station will be up and running as



from May 2021

- Settle to buy and finance option available

For further information call: Car 'n' Cab Care on 0151 678 3066

GREEN MEANS GO

BIRMINGHAM CABBIERS DEMAND CAZ EXEMPTION AMID FEARS OF £2 PER DAY EARNINGS

Birmingham cabbies could face 'financial ruin by earning just £2-per-day' due to the impending Clean Air Zone (CAZ), the taxi union RMT has warned. The Birmingham Mail reports that hackney drivers are now calling on Birmingham City Council for a one-year exemption for cabbies using non-compliant vehicles who will have to fork out £8 a day to enter the city centre when the CAZ becomes operational on 1 June.

Licensed cabbies living and working in Birmingham have been offered a £1,000 Covid grant by the council and a £5,000 grant for replacing their vehicle - but scores of drivers do not live in the city.

RMT representative Mozafar Ali told BirminghamLive: "We are for a one-year exemption from the CAZ charge from June 1, 2021 to June 1, 2022, on the grounds that currently it is not financially viable for hackney drivers to pay the CAZ charge.

"The average earnings a day range from £20 to £40 - if you take out the fuel, CAZ charge, vehicle wear and tear we will be left with about £2 if we are forced to pay to come into the city.

"The city centre will be overloaded with taxis with nowhere to park as there is no adequate rank space, plus the constant harassment taxi drivers face from traffic wardens.

"So we urgently need Birmingham

council to give an extension for exemption from the CAZ charge.

If drivers are forced to pay the CAZ charge the majority of hackney drivers will leave the trade and be forced to go on the unemployment line just to meet their costs.

"This will already add extra burden on to the Government finances, not to mention the rise in unemployment.

"Also, a lot of drivers are on the brink of financial ruin and are struggling to pay their bills - let alone put food on the table."

Protesters have already been campaigning against the Birmingham Clean Air Zone, which they say will turn the city into a ghost town.

BRADFORD TAXI BOSSES HIGHLIGHT COST IMPACT OF CLEAN AIR ZONE

Bosses at a Bradford taxi firm have spoken about the struggles to afford costs associated with the introduction of a Clean Air Zone (CAZ) in January. According to the Telegraph and Argus, Sahil Iqbal, manager of Dial A Ride Bradford and Shipley Taxis, is also urging Bradford Council to help avert Bradford Taxi Action Group's (BTAG) plans for a taxi strike on May 13 and 14, which he said could result in the taxi trade "losing a lot of money".

BTAG has also said the full strike action could cause major disruption to Eid celebrations.

Mr Iqbal said: "In my personal opinion, I think that they shouldn't introduce the CAZ because due to Covid-19 and lockdowns taxi drivers haven't been able to earn money.

"If it goes ahead this means taxi drivers will have to fork out money for either a car with a Euro 6 engine, hybrid or full electric car and that is a lot of money, but the other option is to pay £12.50

per day and that is still a lot of money as drivers hardly make any money these days due to Covid-19.

"Our drivers haven't been making enough money. They simply can't afford the costs associated with introducing a Clean Air Zone.

"And the grants offered by the council towards hybrid or electric cars are not enough."

Muzakhir Afzal, owner of Dial A Ride and FTB Private Hire, said: "Drivers are not making a suitable amount of money to afford these cars."

Mr Afzal said the cars could cost roughly around £15,000 to £18,000.

Mr Iqbal added that a Clean Air Zone proposed for Leeds had failed and he said Bradford should follow suit.

"Bradford is such a small town and they're talking that a Clean Air Zone would cover some of the busiest roads in Bradford. I would like to see Bradford Council respond to BTAG's request by May 4

BTAG, like Mr Iqbal, is concerned about the impact a CAZ would have on taxi drivers.

"If this strike goes ahead, we will lose a lot of money," added Mr Iqbal.

A spokesperson for Bradford Council said: "The council works well with a number of trade organisations which represent the taxi trade and they comply with the rules set out.

"The council is under Government directive to introduce a Clean Air Zone and is therefore duty bound to comply.

"We are continuing to have conversations with the trade to support drivers to adapt and have already secured higher levels of grants from the Government for taxi and private hire drivers than other Clean Air Zone local authorities have received.

"We value the district's taxi drivers as an important part of our public transport service, they have had a very difficult year and we are grateful for all they have done in these challenging times."

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CHILD SEAT SAFETY

SAFE CARRIAGE OF CHILDREN IN TAXIS/PHVS

We've featured articles in past editions of **PHTM** outlining the current regulation (or lack of it, more like) in respect of child safety in taxis/PHVs. What we'll do here is to consider those parameters in light of the current situation we find ourselves in, with regard to social distancing, PPE, partition screens in saloon/minibus vehicles... and to ask **PHTM** readers specifically for your individual, personal feedback as to what options, if any, you have put in place in this regard for children who might be your passengers.

THE LAW AS IT STANDS

UK law dictates that:

- **a child must use a child car seat until they're 12 years old or 135cm tall, whichever comes first.**
- **children over the age of 12 or more than 135cm tall must wear a seat belt.**
- **a child aged three or older can travel in a back seat without a child car seat and without a seat belt if the vehicle doesn't have one.**

TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

If the driver doesn't provide the correct child car seat, children can travel without one - but only if they travel on a rear seat:

- **and wear an adult seat belt if they're three or older**
- **without a seat belt if they're under three**

If the correct child car seat isn't available, a child aged three or older can use an adult seat belt if the journey is all of the following:

- **unexpected**
- **necessary**
- **over a short distance**

You can't take children under three on an unexpected journey in a vehicle without the correct child car seat, unless both of the following apply:

- **it's a licensed taxi or PHV**
- **the child travels on a rear seat without a seat belt**

Evidently a journey in a taxi/PHV is considered both "**unexpected**" and "**necessary**"... but who defines "**over a short distance**"?

This aspect of safe carriage of children under three years old has perplexed us for over two decades. So the child over three years old can be strapped in; however if there is no car seat provided, the under-threes travel in licensed vehicles unrestrained? This is nothing short of preposterous! What sort of protection is that?!

And in light of Covid and all the cautionary restrictions, how many parents have not taken the journey in order to prevent the virus spreading amongst the family/passengers, never mind whether the young child is vulnerable in the event of a crash?! What has been your experience in this regard?

WHAT ABOUT BOOSTER SEATS?

Many licensed drivers have told us that they just keep a booster seat in the boot (or in the office, or somewhere in their home) in the event of having to carry a child. But once again, here is where you have to be cautious in light of carrying children in taxis and PHVs.

Selecting the right car seat will give a child the best possible protection in the event of a crash - but you're also risking a £500 fine if you're caught using an unsuitable or incorrectly fitted car seat. Bear in mind that - as with private motorists - **the driver is responsible for the safe carriage of any and all children under the age of 14.**

Previously, children who weighed as little as 15kg could use backless booster seats, but concerns over safety resulted in a change in the law. From March 1 2017, all new-to-market backless booster seats are only approved for children weighing more than 22kg or taller than 125cm.

Please note that the regulations affect newly designed and manufactured booster seats sold after March 1, 2017. The older rules still apply for seats manufactured prior to this.

The point here is: it's no use just throwing any backless booster seat into the boot of a taxi/PHV for carrying children.

The concept behind strengthening the booster seat regulation is that, in crash tests, it was proven that a backless child seat - with solely an adult seat belt securing the child onto such booster - provides no protection from side impact collisions.

There is a further complication: **NPHTA** Director Dave Lawrie attended many council and police meetings a few years ago in Rossendale when he was a licensed driver in the district. The subject of the safe carriage of children in taxis/PHVs was raised. Bear in mind that the vast majority of Rossendale licensed vehicles are hackneys, and most do rank work.

Councillors and police stated at the time what a good idea it was for every licensed taxi driver to supply a booster seat for child passengers. As Dave pointed out, in addition to the practical problem of carrying a variety of child seats and boosters required for the full spectrum of children both by height and weight, there was the issue of hygiene.

CHILD SEAT SAFETY

COVID-19: A DIFFERENT DILEMMA?

Supposing the child passenger urinated (or worse) on the seat. The next job off the rank involved a family with a child - obviously there would not have been time for the driver to clean off the child seat or change it for another (if he had one). So he would lose the job, or be prosecuted for failure to provide the booster seat, and may not be in a position to clean off the child seat until a much later time.

As a result, it was agreed that if a parent wished to provide a booster seat for their child, then they would be more than welcome to do so, the seat being held in storage until the return journey in the case of airport runs etc, but the drivers would not be expected to provide them for the journeys. As such the exemption remained in place.

Project that forward to today's pandemic-stricken scenario. What with PPE, social distancing and so on, do any drivers carry child seats or boosters? What about sterilisation of such seats after a journey: would subsequent passengers deem the seat to be sterile and safe for their child?

FRONT SEAT FIASCO

Some parents might even suggest that their child travels in the front passenger seat of a saloon PHV or MPV, to adhere to social distancing and lessen virus transmission to the driver (on the basis that children have been found to be less likely to succumb to Covid or be a potential carrier).

Steady on! You may or may not know that if the child is in the front passenger seat in a rear-facing car seat, the front passenger airbag(s) must be deactivated; it is illegal to carry that child in such a manner without doing so. How involved is that procedure in your licensed saloon or MPV?

If the child is in a forward-facing car seat in the front, check in your vehicle's manual that it's safe to have a forward-facing car seat in this position. If no advice is given, contact your car's manufacturer or dealership for advice.

If you're unable to find this information, the AA advises pushing the front passenger seat back to its rear most point to increase the distance between your child and the dashboard mounted airbag. But how would this affect the PPE partition screen you've had installed during Covid?

PURPOSE-BUILT TAXIS AND PUSHCHAIRS: A DILEMMA

We now come to the controversial issue of carrying children in 'black cabs': the purpose-built taxi into which so many mums have wheeled their babies or toddlers into a London style taxi whilst still in their pushchair. This has happened so

many times over the past few years; how many drivers have refused to carry these children in this manner?

Hopefully most of them, as it is not possible to restrain a child sitting in a pushchair in the same secure manner as it is to strap in a wheelchair-bound passenger. Again, there is no protection for the child in a pushchair in the event of a side-on collision... they wouldn't fare much better in a head-on incident either.

But now in light of Covid, we've heard tell of incidents where the parent tells the driver that it's all right to carry the child in its pushchair because they've got one of those Perspex covers over the front of the pushchair, which will protect both the child and the driver from transmission of the virus.

Cancel that! Not only is it fictional nonsense; it still leaves the child at risk in the event of a road incident... and who is responsible? The driver, of course.

LET'S GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS...

So where do you stand in this controversial issue of the safe carriage of children in licensed vehicles, especially during the Covid crisis? As mentioned in previous features on this matter, we don't know of many PH firms - or independent taxi drivers - who provide child seats for young passengers, and they're not obliged to do so, although for most school contracts, the education authority do provide the seats that are dedicated for the child's use during the journey. The other alternative is for the parent(s) to provide a child seat or legal booster, and in reality this doesn't happen very often.

It's going to have to be a judgment call on a day-to-day basis. But in these restricted times - when business is tough enough as it is - has this further hampered your job rates at all?

PHTM welcomes your input, as always - and particularly on this rather sensitive issue, for which there is scant concrete regulation and little insight into the reasons behind such sketchy and vague rules. As always, we would forward any views/opinions onto the Department for Transport and any other relevant government department, as they know that both **PHTM** and the **NPHTA** have our 'finger on the pulse' of the industry; indeed we are invited regularly to update them on any and all trade issues.

May your voice be heard!

Article written by Donna Short

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UNJUST DESSERTS

MAN WHO BATTERED BIRKENHEAD CABBY AFTER BEING REFUSED FARE WALKS FREE FROM JAIL

A cafe owner battered a cabby in a drunken attack when he refused to give him a lift. According to the Liverpool Echo, Karl Brady set upon Leonidas Mochovik after the PHV driver took exception to being told to "speak English".

Brady, 36, from Bromborough, repeatedly hit him in the head, then started kicking the victim. But he walked free from Liverpool Crown Court after saying that if he was jailed, eight workers at his two cafes would lose their jobs. Argyle Satellite Taxis worker Mr Mochovik arrived in Rock Ferry, at 1.20am last July 14 where Brady and a woman got in his car, but when Mr Mochovik started speaking, Brady told him: "Speak English." The victim who was speaking English but with a strong accent said he wasn't going to take the



fare and phoned his taxi dispatcher.

However, Brady punched him in the side of the head and when the victim continued making the phone call, hit him several times.

Brady got out of the car, walked around

to the driver's door and opened it, before kicking Mr Mochovik, until a man pulled him away. The victim suffered a black eye, a scratch to his head and complained of a sore head.

Mr Mochovik took a week off work and lost £800 to £1,000 in takings.

Brady was charged with racially aggravated common assault, but the prosecution accepted his guilty plea to

the lesser offence of common assault. Judge Stuart Driver, QC, told Brady: "The maximum sentence is six months. There are aggravating features - he's a taxi driver, that's an occupation that makes him vulnerable.

"Second, you've got a lot of previous convictions for violence, though I accept nothing of that sort since 2013." The judge handed Brady three months in prison, suspended for 12 months, with a 20-day Rehabilitation Activity Requirement.

He told Brady to pay Mr Mochovik £800 in compensation, at a rate of £100 per month, and made a ten-year restraining order to protect the victim. The judge reserved any breaches to himself and warned: "If I see you again, it's highly likely you're going to prison for three months."

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UNJUST DESSERTS

NEWCASTLE CABBIE WHO SUPPLIED CANNABIS USING HIS JOB AS COVER ESCAPES JAIL

A drug dealing taxi driver peddled cannabis using his job as cover. Chronicle-Live reports that Fashad Mohammad was working for Blue Line Taxis when he abused his position by supplying to users.

A court heard suspicions were raised when police saw him pick up one "passenger", drive round the block then drop him off where he had started, in Stepney Lane, Newcastle. Officers approached the buyer and he told them he had just bought a £20 deal.

Mohammad was stopped and searched and eight bags of cannabis, worth £160, were found and he had £630 in his jacket pocket. Two mobile phones in the car contained numerous text messages consistent with drugs supply.

Claire Anderson, prosecuting, told Newcastle Crown Court: "Numerous



people had contacted him asking if they could purchase drugs and if he could drop them off at different addresses throughout Newcastle."

When police went to his home in Fenham, they found more than £16,000 of cash in a large safe. At another property owned by Mohammad, four white envelopes were found, each containing £2,000 in cash.

When he was quizzed by police, he claimed the two phones with the

incriminating messages had been left in his taxi by customers and said the safe belonged to his brother and the £8,000 cash in envelopes was not his. However he later pleaded guilty to possessing cannabis with intent to supply, in March 2018 that said it was "easy to be cynical" and view the offending on that day as the tip of the iceberg but added that there was no evidence of dealing on other days.

But he added: "Having a taxi licence is a privilege not to be abused."

The judge said had he been dealt with promptly he may have been jailed but due to the delay, together with a positive pre-sentence report, he would suspended the sentence.

Mohammad was given nine months, suspended for two years, with 150 hours' unpaid work.

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EDINBURGH TAXI FIRM FILMS VIDEO ATTACKING NEW TRAFFIC POLICY

An Edinburgh taxi firm has produced a video attacking the council's controversial Spaces for People traffic schemes - describing them as "an accident waiting to happen".

The video, produced by Atholl Place-based firm City Cabs, provides several examples of what it calls "risk assessment failures".

According to STV News, the first example shows a taxi pulled into a "floating parking bay" - a parking spot situated between a cycle lane and the main carriageway - on George IV Bridge, during which a disabled passenger alights from the cab.

As the taxi is parked, a Lothian Bus overtakes the taxi, and drives past a traffic island on the wrong side of the road, followed by a stream of following cars.

After the video was shown to Edinburgh City Council officers, a spokesperson for the council said the bus should have returned to the correct lane, and the council will highlight this with Lothian Buses.

During the second example in the video, the taxi and disabled occupant attempt the same procedure on George IV Bridge.

This time, a cyclist using the cycle lane between the floating parking bay and the pedestrian walkway passes the taxi driver at speed, which the video describes as a 'very dangerous situation'.

In response, a council spokesperson said: "The cyclist passes around the taxi driver with around 0.5m between them. The cyclist should have stopped and allowed the taxi driver to complete the task. This is down to cycling behaviour rather than a design flaw."

In the same clip, a Lothian Bus clips the traffic island outside of the George IV Bar, which is described as 'a very dangerous situation for pedestrians and cyclists'.

The council spokesperson continued:



"In this example a black car is illegally parked on the opposite side of the road, potentially making it more difficult for the bus to approach the island at the correct angle. However, as above this manoeuvre has been tracked and can be done safely by buses without clipping the traffic island."

In the third example, again showing the same procedure on George IV Bridge, another cyclist passes the taxi driver at speed, a bus mounts the traffic island outside of the George IV Bridge, and a second cyclist nearly collides with an oncoming van as it overtakes the taxi, as the cycle lane is blocked by the taxi's disability ramp.

The council spokesperson said: "Due to the black car being illegally parked [on the George IV Bar side of the road] the van and cyclist both try to pass at the same time using the central area. The van does stop and allows the cyclist to pass. This is down to driver/parking behaviour rather than a design flaw. With regards to the bus clipping the island, this manoeuvre has been tracked and can be done safely by buses without clipping the traffic island."

The video concludes: "To summarise, the Spaces for People concept is dangerous. Examples show that on a quiet, locked-down Edinburgh day,

within a time frame of only an hour there was serious risk - imagine when Edinburgh is back to peak tourism - carnage will follow!"

City Centre councillor Karen Doran, Labour vice convener of the council's transport committee, said: "The changes introduced on George IV Bridge have not only created

a protected route for those travelling by bike into the city centre, but will provide extra space for people to walk and wheel safely once restrictions begin to be lifted in the near future.

"This scheme has been risk assessed and has been subject to a road safety audit, in addition to our own tracking of vehicles to ensure sufficient space for passing, and we are confident it is safe for all road users, assuming they travel in a responsible manner.

"We have had a good deal of positive feedback from people using this route, and have made sure there is still space for loading and dropping people off where needed.

"However, as with all Spaces for People measures, we will continue to monitor it and make any tweaks to improve it where necessary."

Colinton and Fairmilehead councillor, Jason Rust, Conservatives, said: "This footage brings to life some of the enormous practical difficulties road users are facing with the council's Spaces for People measures and particularly those with mobility issues."

"A cab stopped legally and situated as sensibly as possible in the broadest part of road between the traffic islands and yet massive challenges faced."

"These movements are no doubt regular occurrences and it is helpful this has been caught on film."

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HUNDREDS SIGN CHELTENHAM TAXI DRIVERS PETITION AS DISPUTE WITH COUNCIL RAGES ON

Hundreds of people have signed a petition aimed at getting Cheltenham Borough Council to think again about its planned change to licensed taxis.

GloucestershireLive reports that the authority agreed in March 2018 that all of its licensed HCVs would have to be wheelchair accessible in the future.

The deadline for drivers to have the correct kind of vehicles is due to come into force in December this year.

Drivers have protested about the planned change before because they say it threatens their jobs.

They say it costs between £22K and £35K to buy a WAV and with business greatly reduced by the pandemic, they have not been able to save up the money they need.

Their petition calls for the council to delay the implementation of the new policy for two years.

It adds: "The council has been approached regarding the delay of the upcoming policy but has refused to



show any understanding or compassion to the taxi trade. Most drivers have not been able to work properly for a year now and have received very little in the way of financial support.

"[Cheltenham Borough] Cllr [Andrew] McKinlay has stated that the drivers have had enough time to save up to buy a new WAV but the reality is that most drivers have had to use any savings to get them through this year.

"If there is no delay to the policy, many drivers will be forced out of work. We

would also like to point out that councillors got an automatic one-year extension to their term of office due to this pandemic."

Ilesh Magatla, who works on the ranks at Cheltenham Spa Railway Station and the Promenade, said: "I am one of the Cheltenham hackney drivers hit hard by the pandemic. We are asking the public for help. It's a humble request."

He said the drivers had tried several times to get the council to consider delaying the implementation of the new policy but it had turned them down.

It was a worrying time for people like him, he said.

Louis Krog, the council's licensing team leader, said: "In May 2020, the council's cabinet considered a request from the Cheltenham Taxi Drivers Association to delay the implementation of the WAV policy. Cabinet agreed that it would not support this request and that the decision taken to implement the WAV policy by December 2021 should remain in force to ensure publicly available transport is accessible to all.

"The reasons were published and recognise, amongst other things, that the WAV policy decision that was taken in 2018 gave licence holders sufficient time to plan and prepare for the transition. Delaying the implementation, would penalise other licence holders who have already changed their saloon vehicles to WAVs."

'NO ALTERNATIVE' DRIVERS PROTEST OVER NEWPORT TAXI RANKS

Taxi drivers across Newport have gathered to hold a "go-slow" protest in the city. According to the South Wales Argus, hackney cab drivers are angry at the lack of ranks available to them in the city, and Unite, the union representing them, says their "complaints have fallen on deaf ears."

As a result of their frustration with the council, drivers organised a protest on 27 April, taking them from Newport Railway Station, along the Kingsway to Friars Walk, back up to Queensway, and then around the Civic Centre.

And Unite warned that if a resolution to their concerns cannot be found in the next few weeks "they will want to express their frustrations again".

The drivers' complaints centre on



reduced rank space in Upper Dock Street and Corn Street resulting in limiting their earning opportunities.

Imran Badat, a taxi driver in Newport, said: "We have not been given enough hackney ranks in Newport city centre." Drivers say their message is clear: the local council must create more spaces for taxi drivers on the #Newport ranks.

BRADFORD PROTESTS

Bradford cabbies say no to the CAZ coming in January 2022.

- Bradford PH Operators Assoc: slow drive took place on 5 & 6 May
- BTAG: is calling for a full strike on 13 & 14 May unless Bradford Council responds to concerns about CAZ plans by 4 May.

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SHAME SHAME

SPEEDING CABBIE DROVE AT 89MPH ON ASTON EXPRESSWAY

A taxi driver has been caught doing speeds of up to 89 miles per hour - with a passenger on board!

The Birmingham Mail reports that Central Motorway Police Group (CMPG) speed cameras picked up the cabbie driving almost double the 50mph speed limit. A spokesman shared a photograph of the speed camera and tweeted: "The view from the speed gun today on the A38M Aston Expressway, 45 drivers reported for exceeding the 50mph limit in just an hour, the highest was 89 ... a taxi with a fare on board! "At 89mph a crossover collision impact speed would be close to 140, it would be devastating."

COCAINE FOUND IN CABBIE'S NORTH SHIELDS HOME

A cabbie has lost his job after police discovered 18 bags of cocaine inside his home. According to ChronicleLive, officers found the class A drugs when they searched Kenneth Phillipson's address in North Shields on October 16 last year. The 50-year-old immediately confessed that the cocaine was inside a tin and that it was for his own personal use, a court heard.



Phillipson, who was working as a self-employed taxi driver at the time, was arrested and admitted that he used the drug "once a week". Now the cabbie has been fined £200 after he pleaded guilty to possession of a class A drug at North Tyneside Magistrates' Court.

Kash Khan, defending, said Phillipson, who has seven offences on his record, had since lost his job as a taxi driver after his licence was revoked following his arrest.

Mr Khan added: "This is a man who very infrequently uses cocaine and tends to store it in his house."

As well as the fine, Phillipson was ordered to pay £85 costs and a £34 victim surcharge.

GLASGOW DRIVER ASSAULTED WOMAN AND CHILDREN

A PH driver who was jailed for assaulting a woman and children over eight years has been stripped of his licence. According to the Glasgow Times, Iftikhar Sharif was convicted of six charges at Paisley Sheriff Court and locked up for 340 days in January. Glasgow licensing chiefs have now banned him from driving PHVs after a complaint from Police Scotland. An officer told the council's licensing committee how the PH driver, from Paisley, had repeatedly kicked and punched his victims.

His licence had been granted in March 2020 for three years. It was initially suspended in March 2021 and has now been suspended for the unexpired portion by the committee.

The incidents took place between October 2010 and February 2019, the police officer said. He asked for the licence to be suspended due to "serious concerns for public safety".

Bailie John Kane, who was chairing the licensing committee, said: "This has been a rather shocking series of events covering a fairly substantial period of time, involving a fair amount of violence, particularly towards females."

Bailie Malcolm Balfour described the incidents as "quite horrendous". "To me, it's an open and shut case," he said. "Anyone who is violent at any level, particularly to women in this day and age, it just beggars belief."

Sharif had assaulted a young girl by "repeatedly punching and kicking her in the body", the committee heard. He had also punched and kicked a woman and was found guilty of shouting, swearing, and throwing plates and food around.

Licensing chiefs also heard Sharif had repeatedly struck a boy "in the body with his open palm".

As a result of the convictions, Sharif has a non-harassment order for six years to refrain him from approaching or contacting four people in any way. He has also been banned from entering an address in Paisley and one in Glasgow.

STALKING YORK TAXI DRIVER BUGGED EX WIFE'S HOUSE

A taxi driver who bugged his ex-wife's home and snooped in her personal papers has been ordered by a court to move out of the area and change his job.

According to the York Press, Neil Andrew Smith, 59, was so "obsessed" with her, he ruined her mother's funeral and lurked around her house at midnight dressed in black with his hood up. He listened in to her private conversations and got her phone and rummaged through its contents.

His actions were part of a 20-month stalking campaign against her during which he also haunted her street, repeatedly driving down it and looking up at the house.

Police warned him off, but Smith continued to stalk her. "What you did to your former partner was a form of mental cruelty," the Recorder of York, told him. "I cannot think of anything so low," the judge told York Crown Court. He gave Smith six months to prove that he shouldn't go to jail by moving to a home at least two miles away from her, changing jobs and not going to her street or contacting her. The judge warned: "I cannot see how on earth you can keep a taxi licence with a conviction for stalking a woman." Smith, from York, pleaded guilty to stalking. He will be sentenced in October.

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IN THE NEWS

CALLS FOR KIRKLEES CABBIERS TO FOLLOW UBER AND DISPLAY PURPLE VACCINATED BADGES

Huddersfield MP Barry Sheerman has called for a purple badge system to be introduced in Kirklees cabs to show passengers that drivers are fully vaccinated against coronavirus and tested once a week.

According to ExaminerLive, Mr Sheerman said: "If Uber can do this I don't see why my constituents should not have similar protection.

"It would be better if the local authority got involved but I would be happy to see the hackney carriage association in Kirklees organise their own system.

"There are different rules in different parts of the country but I think it is time



we got something sorted out on this one. "I got into an Uber and he had wiped down the seats, had a certificate showing that he was vaccinated and wanted me to wear a mask which I did of course. I think responsible cab drivers would welcome such a system and it is

high time it was brought in." Akooji Badat, secretary of Huddersfield Hackney Carriage Association, said: "The public needs protection and so do we from the public. The cab area is very enclosed and most cabs in this area don't have the protection of hardened glass separating the driver from their fares. I am tested every week at Batley Library and for Huddersfield and Mirfield drivers it's the Hudawi Centre in Huddersfield. I don't think taxi drivers would object to such a scheme being imposed when it would help provide greater protection for all concerned but we will have to see."

SCOTTISH CABBIER FORCED TO ROB BANK AT GUNPOINT SAYS LIFE HAS NEVER BEEN THE SAME

A Scottish taxi driver who was forced to rob a bank at gunpoint has hit out at a compensation scheme for crime victims. According to EdinburghLive, Alistair Rankin, 52, who was awarded £6,100 in criminal injuries, claims the payout didn't reflect the trauma he still suffers six years after the ordeal.

Alistair said: "My life has never been the same. I take a cocktail of 14 pills before I leave the house and sleeping tablets before I go to bed. It's been a nightmare and has put a strain on my family life. "I'm still in therapy and don't know when I will be able to put it all behind me. I'm still very angry with what happened.

"The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority offered me £1,000 before I appealed it. They then came back with an offer of £6,100 after five years, which I accepted.

"I'd had enough of fighting it so settled but I don't think it was enough. I know someone who got £10,000 for being bitten on their shoulder while at work.

"That's obviously distressing but small compared to what happened to me.



The system just seems so unfair." In November 2015, Alistair, of Cowdenbeath, was hired to pick up Andrew Patrick at an industrial estate in Lochgelly. Pat-rick - who faked an Eastern European accent and hid his face using a cap, glasses and scarf - ordered Alistair to drive to Bank of Scotland in Kirkcaldy at gunpoint.

When they arrived, he was given two bags and told one contained a bomb. He was told to take them into the branch and hand over a note while he was "watched". The note told bank staff to fill the bag with cash or the bomb would detonate within a minute. Workers quickly handed Alistair £10,000 but Patrick had fled by the time he returned to his vehicle.

Police took Alistair to a deserted golf course to detonate the bomb before

realising it was fake. The robbery sparked a three-week manhunt involving armed police, air support and dog units before gym instructor Patrick was arrested. He was sentenced to six years and nine months at the High Court in Glasgow and was released in 2019.

Victims of crime in the UK can make a claim via CICA for what they suffered. The body has the power to award up to £500,000 but most victims get just a fraction of that. Calculations are based on a tariff system and injuries sustained. In 2019 former victims' commissioner Baroness Newlove said CICA was "re-traumatising" claimants and seemed "calculated to frustrate and alienate" those it should be helping.

Alistair added: "Patrick is out and his life has gone on. He probably never even thinks about it. He's no real understanding of what he caused.

"Victims of crime are ignored by the system. I thought that at the time of his sentencing and I think it having gone through the compensation scheme."

IN THE NEWS

STRANGE FACT ABOUT PRINCE PHILIP REVEALED... HE OWNED AND DROVE AROUND IN A TAXI!

Yes! Really! The Duke of Edinburgh drove a taxi. The man who loved driving, was rich, and had access to the most luxurious vehicles in the world chose a simple, basic, low-cost taxi as his daily driver.

And Regit reports that this was not a passing fancy or novelty. He kept the car for almost two decades.

Prince Philip's Metrocab had a special skill that made it more preferable than a Rolls-Royce, Bentley, or Aston Martin. It blended in. It was anonymous. It was just another vehicle. That must have been comforting for a man who lived in the spotlight. The Duke could there-



fore travel without being constantly seen, judged, and pictured. The taxi probably gave him some sense of a 'normal life'.

The Duke also had the benefit of any doubt if he was spotted. In other

words, people likely thought: "Hey, that man looks like Prince Philip" rather than 'that is Prince Philip'. Who, after all, expected to see him driving a taxi? His bespoke metrocab ran on liquefied petroleum gas rather than diesel, had dark green paintwork and was retired to the Sandringham Museum in 2017.

Royal Historian, Hugo Vickers, once shared: "I believe someone has seen a taxi, tapped on the window, and asked the so-called taxi driver for directions. You could see that someone wandering off, scratching his head, and wondering if he had really seen the Duke in a taxi."

DAVID CAMERON FACES CALLS FOR A PROBE INTO HIS UBER LOBBYING

The lawyer investigating David Cameron's lobbying on behalf of loans firm Greensill has been urged to widen his probe to cover the former PM's role in torpedoing proposed curbs on Uber. According to the MailOnline, Steve McNamara, head of the Licensed Taxi Drivers' Association, has asked Nigel Boardman to expand his inquiry to include Mr Cameron's 'undue influence' as Prime Minister.

Four years ago, an investigation by the Daily Mail claimed Mr Cameron and the then Chancellor George Osborne told aides to lobby Boris Johnson, who was London Mayor at the time, against proposed curbs on Uber.

In September 2015, Mr Johnson said TfL was considering 25 measures, including making Uber and other private hire firms wait at least five minutes between taking a booking and picking up a customer. It was hoped this would curb the proliferation of minicabs, but the Mayor and his aides began receiving angry messages from Downing Street and 'forthright texts' from Mr

Cameron and Mr Osborne.

At the time, Mr Cameron had close personal relationships with Rachel Whetstone, Uber's then senior vice-president of policy and communications, and her husband Steve Hilton, who was his director of strategy from 2010 to 2012.

Daniel Korski, deputy head of Cameron's policy unit, led secret crisis talks between Ministers and the Mayor and his staff. In January 2016, the Mayor decided to drop almost all the curbs Uber disliked.

In his letter to Mr Boardman, Mr McNamara wrote: "The unprecedented interventions... included direct text messages believed to have been sent by Mr Cameron and Mr Osborne to the Mayor, as well as Number 10 officials, special advisers and Cabinet Ministers... dispatched to send a clear message that the proposed changes were unwelcome - even reportedly shouting at City Hall officials."

He claimed the lobbying by Mr Cameron, Mr Osborne and other No 10

officials amounted to an 'embrace of Uber' and an effort 'to protect its position in the market'.

In March 2017, Downing Street was accused of a cover-up for failing to divulge details of the lobbying operation following a Freedom of Information request. Emails between Mr Korski and the Mayor's staff were released by TfL.

The ICO investigated, but The Mail on Sunday has revealed that the Government was cleared due to Cabinet Office rules that let officials destroy 'trivial information', including emails, within three months.

Caroline Pidgeon, a Liberal Democrat London Assembly member, also wants the inquiry to be broadened beyond Mr Cameron's lobbying for Greensill Capital to issue Government-backed loans to firms during the pandemic. She said it had to 'address the lax lobbying culture.'

Greensill adviser Mr Cameron stood to make a fortune if it floated, but it collapsed in March.



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JUST DESSERTS

MAN WHO RACIALLY ABUSED BOURNEMOUTH CABBY JAILED FOR ALMOST THREE YEARS

A man who racially abused a taxi driver before threatening to stab police officers has been jailed for almost three years.

According to the Bournemouth Echo, James Anthony Taylor, 36, admitted affray, causing racially aggravated fear or provocation of violence and criminal damage.

Bournemouth Crown Court heard that in October last year, police were called to reports of a taxi alarm activation at the junction of Pembroke Road and



aggravated abuse at him - before threatening to attack him.

At Pembroke Road, Taylor got out of the taxi but refused to give the driver back his mobile phone, instead demanding £40 for its return. But

Alumhurst Road in Bournemouth.

The cabby raised the alarm after passenger Taylor grabbed his phone and shouted racially

when the cabby handed over the money, Taylor continued to walk away with the phone.

The victim did manage to take back the phone but the money was not reclaimed. Also, during the incident Taylor pushed the taxi driver causing him to fall to the floor.

Afterwards, unarmed officers approached the address Taylor had entered and attempted to detain him - but the defendant said he was holding a knife and would stab them.

THREE YEARS' JAIL FOR DUNDEE ADDICT WHO ROBBED CABBY WITH KNIFE AT HIS THROAT

A drug addict placed a knife across a taxi driver's throat and robbed him days after being released early from prison.

According to The Courier, cabby Alan Waterstone had to fight off Steven Stewart, 39, who was jailed for three years on Tuesday 13 April.

Dundee Sheriff Court was told Stewart was released in April last year while he

still had 108 days of his previous sentence to complete. He attacked and robbed Mr Waterstone on May 18.

The court was told: "The accused got into the passenger seat and immediately put the knife against the driver's neck and said 'gie's your money'.

"Mr Waterstone grabbed the hand holding the knife but Stewart, from Dundee, continued to apply pressure

with the knife towards his throat and used his other hand to take notes out of the driver's pocket."

The accused then ran away, but was traced by police a month later carrying a bag containing a lock knife.

He admitted assaulting and robbing Mr Waterstone on May 18, possessing a knife and breaching a bail curfew condition on June 15.

12 MONTHS' JAIL FOR RACIST PASSENGER WHO PUNCHED STOKE CABBY

'Vile' Scott Smallman hurled racial abuse at a taxi driver before punching him in the face.

The Stoke Sentinel reports that the 37-year-old had got in the cab outside the Royal Stoke University Hospital and asked to be taken to Stoke - despite having no money. And when the cabby refused to take him the defendant attacked him.

Now Smallman has been jailed for 12 months at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court. The cabby had been there to pick up



another fare when the defendant got in his taxi on May 12. Prosecutor Caroline Harris said: "The driver went to get the assistance

of security. As they walked to the car the defendant got out. He elbowed and kicked the passenger door. He shouted '*****' a few times. He punched the driver to the face striking him to the mouth. The victim was left with a cut

top lip and a large dent to the taxi door." In his police interview the defendant denied he was racist.

Smallman, who has 37 previous convictions for 116 offences, pleaded guilty to charges of racially aggravated common assault and racially aggravated criminal damage. He also admitted possessing a knife in a public place following an unrelated incident.

Paul Cliff, mitigating, said the offences were 'unpleasant and upsetting for the victim'.

JUST DESSERTS

TEN YEARS JAIL FOR PEMBROKESHIRE CABBIE WHO RAPED WOMAN IN HIS CAB

A taxi driver raped a passenger in the back of his cab as he drove her home, a court has heard. According to WalesOnline, Anthony Marcus Jones picked up the woman after a night out and assaulted her in a car park.

Jones, 43, denied rape but was convicted following a trial at Swansea Crown Court. The court heard the cabbie has a previous caution for assaulting a woman, and the judge said he did not think Jones should have been working as a taxi driver at all with that background.



The court heard the attack took place in Pembrokeshire in the early hours of the morning in April 2018. The victim had spent the night in pubs in Milford Haven and was extremely drunk, the court was told. Jones collected the woman in his cab and raped her after parking the vehicle in a car park. He maintained the sex was consensual.

Judge Paul Thomas QC told the defendant it must have been apparent to him how intoxicated his fare was and he had "cynically and callously" taken advantage of her.

He told the driver he had treated the woman "like a piece of meat for use to use sexually as you wished" and said he had had sex with her when "she was at best semi-conscious".

Jones was sentenced to ten years' jail and will serve two-thirds before being released on licence. He will be a registered sex offender for life.

MAN WHO HURLED RACIST ABUSE AT CO DOWN CABBIE AND ASKED TO FIGHT HIM GETS SUSPENDED JAIL TERM

A Moira man who hurled racist abuse at a cabbie has been sentenced to three months in prison suspended for 18 months.

According to Armagh I, dealing with the 30-year-old's case, the deputy district judge commented: "I find this sort of behaviour really reprehensible". Adam Kyle Foster, appeared for sentencing on disorderly behaviour

and common assault at Craigavon Magistrates' on Friday 16 April.

The prosecution outlined that on June 15, at 2am, police were flagged down by a taxi driver on Main Street, Moira, Co Down.

He stated that this defendant had ran and punched the window of his vehicle before entering it.

The injured party told police that

Foster had called him a "f***** Paki b*****" and asked the taxi driver to fight him.

The defendant was subsequently arrested and made no comment to all question put to him during interview. Defence barrister Joel Lindsay commented that he had seen footage which showed the taxi stopping and an "exchange between the two".

MAN JAILED FOR NINE YEARS AFTER CORBY CABBIE HELD UP AT GUNPOINT

A man has been jailed for nine years for his role in the terrifying gunpoint robbery of a Corby taxi driver.

According to the Northamptonshire Telegraph, William Smith, 37, left his victim fearing he would be killed and suffering from nightmares after taking part in the incident with fellow criminal Shaun Alexander.

Alexander, 38, is currently serving a sentence of six years and nine months for his part in the incident in 2019.



And now Smith has joined him behind bars after he was convicted at Northampton Crown Court.

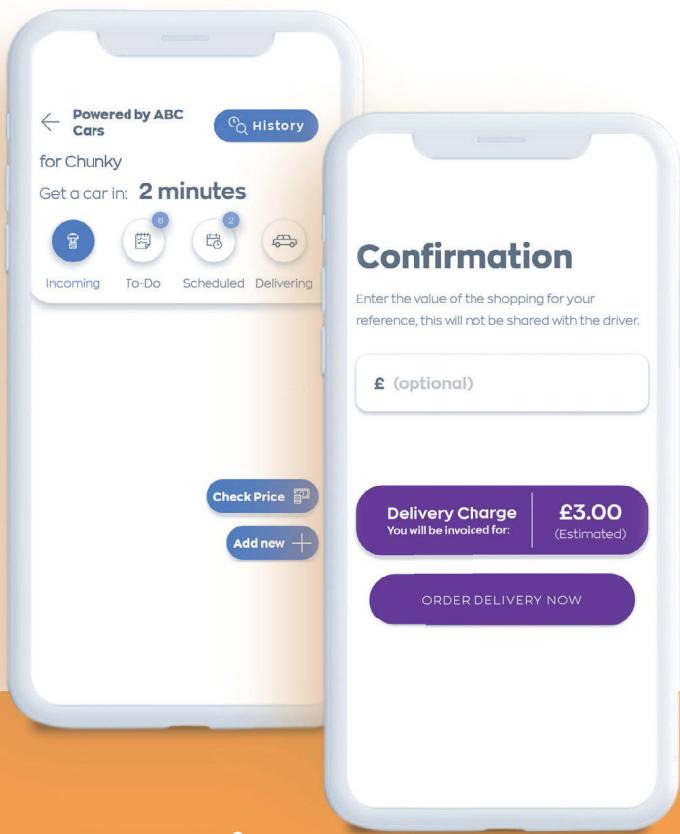
The incident happened at 1am in June 2019, when the cabbie made his way to Kensington Walk to pick up a person called "Lucy".

When he arrived at the location Alexander and Smith got in, claiming

"Lucy" was one of their girlfriends and she would be down in a minute. But one of the men then pulled out a handgun and demanded the driver hand over all his money and his wallet. The two men then made off.

Det Insp Dave Harley, said: "We were absolutely determined to bring both of these men to justice and I'm really pleased for the victim, who has shown tremendous courage throughout this case, that we have managed to do so."

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TERROR TIMES

SHOCKING IMAGES OF BRICK THROWN AT UBER DRIVER'S WINDSCREEN IN SEFTON

Shocking images show the moment a missile was hurled at the windscreen of a PHV, leaving the driver covered in glass.

The Liverpool Echo reports that Uber driver Stewart Williams was attacked on Southport Road in Bootle on Thursday, April 8. The 36-year-old was travelling along the top end of the road at around 11.45pm when the object - believed to have been a brick, was thrown at



his car. The force of the brick shattered Stewart's windscreen before it bounced off the bonnet and left a large dent.

Stewart told the Echo: "It was thrown with such force the car has a physical hole in the windscreen. There's glass all over the car - I had glass in my eyes, ears and in my throat."

Stewart said he is thankful that no passengers were in his vehicle at the time of the incident and that he managed to come away with minor injuries.

He added: "I don't want this man getting away with it. I've been struggling to get to this point as a taxi driver and just as things are starting to pick up now I can't work.

"At the moment, as it stands, I don't know how I'm going to sort it out. I'm waiting until to see what the bill is."

He is appealing for help from anybody who may have witnessed what happened or who may have caught the incident on CCTV.

BOLTON DRIVER CRASHES INTO TREE AFTER PASSENGER ATTACK

A taxi driver crashed into a tree after being attacked by a passenger in Bolton.

According to the Manchester Evening News, the shocking incident happened in Marsey Road, Breightmet, at about 8.30pm on Thursday 8 April. After the driver smashed into the tree, two men stole a quantity cash from him before running off.

The man, who worked for Bolton-based Orbit Taxis, was taken to hospital by a friend. Police say his injuries are not believed to be serious. No arrests have been made in connection with the assault, officers say.

The culprits are described as black, aged between 18 and 20, and were wearing face masks at the time. An eyewitness who saw the aftermath of the incident said: "The driver was in such shock. It was horrible to see him like that. Breightmet is definitely becoming worse. Things like this are happening all the time."

A spokesperson for Greater Manchester Police said: "Enquiries are ongoing and there have been no arrests."



RACIST ATTACK ON TORQUAY CABBIE OVER FACE MASK

A man from Torquay has been arrested on suspicion of racially aggravated assault after a taxi driver apparently asked a passenger to put on a face mask.

According to DevonLive, Devon and Cornwall Police confirmed the arrest in a statement after an incident occurred in Torquay on 20 April.

Any witnesses are being asked to come forward. The police statement said: "Police were called to reports of an assault in Belgrave Road, Torquay, at around 5.35pm, on Tuesday 20 April. A taxi driver reported he had also been subjected to racist abuse after asking a passenger to wear a face mask. A 48-year-old man, from Torquay, was arrested on suspicion of racially aggravated assault by beating and a public order offence. He has been released under investigation pending further enquiries."

"Anyone with information is asked to contact the police by email at 101@dc.police.uk or by calling 101, quoting reference CR/031280/21."

TERROR TIMES

BOLTON CABBIE PUNCHED AND KICKED BY THUGS IN SHOCKING GANG ATTACK

A taxi driver was punched in the face and kicked in the ribs by a gang of three thugs in a brutal attack in Bolton.

The Bolton News reports that the driver picked up a man, who had been waiting with a woman, outside the Travellodge Bolton Central River Street in the early hours of Saturday, April 10 at around 3.30am.

Only the man got into the taxi and during the journey the driver smelt drugs in the back of the car and told the passenger to stop taking them.

This led to an argument before the man told the driver he would get out at that current position, which was near Bar Lane in Astley Bridge.

But when the driver, who does not wish to be named, pulled over the passenger approached him from behind and started strangling him.

The driver managed to wrestle free of the man's grasp but

then saw two other men approaching his car.

One of them started kicking the car and the other opened a door and started attacking the driver, who got out of the car.

In a shocking show of violence, the three thugs punched the driver in the face and kicked him in the ribs before he managed to escape from them and get back into his car and drive away.

He drove to hospital after he suffered a swollen head and cheek as well as a black eye.

Damage was also caused to a wing mirror and another part of the vehicle.

The driver, who works for Metro Cars, describes the man he picked up and started the attack as white, mid 20s, of a slim build with dark hair. He wore a black puffer type jacket and had a black man bag.

The victim was unable to get a close look at the other two men who attacked him.

A family member added: "I am shocked by what happened to him and I find it upsetting.

"He has worked as a taxi driver for 20 years and nothing as bad as this has happened to him. He is still sore from his injuries."

Greater Manchester Police confirmed the force has received a report of an assault on Bar Lane in Bolton.

ROAD RAGE YOB FOLLOWED THEN PUNCHED SCOTS CABBIE

A road rage yob tailgated a taxi driver before punching him as he dropped off a passenger.

According to the Daily Record, the innocent cabbie was dropping off a fare in Renfrew, when he was assaulted.

Police investigating said the attacker followed the cab closely in a white Ford Fiesta before jumping out to pounce on the victim when he stopped to let out a passenger.

It's understood the brute hit the taxi driver in the chest after they both got out of their vehicles during the incident.

There are no reports of serious injury.

Police are now appealing for witnesses to come forward.

Inspector Tracy Harkins, from Paisley police office, said: "We are investigating after a 46-year-old man was assaulted in Wilson Street, Renfrew, at around 10pm on Tuesday night 20 April.

"The victim is a taxi driver and was assaulted by another male who had been driving a white Ford Fiesta.

"We are appealing to anyone who may have witnessed the incident to come forward to police."

She added: "Similarly, if you were driving in the area at the time, I would ask that you check dashcam footage to see if you captured anything which may be useful to our enquiries."

Anyone with information should call police on 101 or Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111.

BRICK SMASHES GLASGOW CABBIE'S WINDSCREEN

Police enquiries are underway following reports that a car being driven on the M8 motorway had its windscreen smashed by a brick thrown off an overpass in the north east of Glasgow.



GlasgowLive reports that the incident is believed to have happened in the afternoon of the 17 April as the vehicle passed below the overpass on Gartcraig Road linking Ruchazie and Cranhill.

The daughter of the driver in question took to social media to appeal for anyone who may have any dashcam footage of the incident to come forward.



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UBER ORDERED TO REINSTATE 'ROBO FIRED' DRIVERS AND PAY COMPENSATION

In a landmark ruling, the Amsterdam District Court has ordered Uber to reinstate six Uber drivers and pay compensation after they were unlawfully dismissed by algorithmic means. The case was brought by the App Drivers & Couriers Union together with Worker Info Exchange representing five UK drivers and one Dutch driver. This is the first time a court has ordered the overturning of an automated decision to dismiss workers from employment.



Separately, on Monday 12 April, the City of London Magistrates' Court has ordered TfL to reinstate the licence of one of the drivers which was revoked after Uber routinely notified the transport regulator of the dismissal.

A default judgment was entered in the Netherlands in favour of the drivers after Uber failed to contest the claim. However, Uber has failed to comply with the court order to reinstate the drivers and pay them compensation even though the time allowed to do so has expired.

This case is believed to be the first case of its kind brought under Article 22 of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which provides rights of protection against unfair automated decision making.

James Farrar, Director of Worker Info Exchange said: "For the Uber drivers robbed of their jobs and livelihoods this has been a dystopian nightmare come true. They were publicly accused of 'fraudulent activity' on the back of poorly governed use of bad technology. This case is a wake-up call for lawmakers about the abuse of surveillance technology now proliferating in the gig economy. In the aftermath of the recent UK Supreme Court ruling on worker rights gig economy platforms are hiding management control in algorithms. This is misclassification 2.0."

Yaseen Aslam, President of App Drivers & Couriers Union said: "I am deeply concerned about the complicit role Transport for London has played in this catastrophe. It has encouraged Uber to introduce surveillance technology as a price for keeping their operator's licence and the result has been devastating for a TfL licensed workforce that is 94% BAME. The Mayor of London must step in and guarantee the rights and freedoms of Uber drivers licensed under his administration."

Abbas Nawrozzadeh of Eldwick Law representing one of the drivers in London for the successful licensing appeal this week said: "The 'computer says no' approach taken by Uber, and endorsed by TfL, is a harmful erosion of due process and

an unashamed testament to their priorities. We are happy to have achieved a successful outcome in this appeal but remain concerned at the number of such cases still being pursued by TfL."

UBER DRIVER DROVE INTO SALFORD CANAL AND STILL CHARGED £29 FOR JOURNEY

A woman has told of her nightmarish Uber journey where her driver drove into a canal and charged her almost £30 for the ride.

According to the Mirror, Emma Lavelle, 30, urged her Uber driver to stop when he veered towards the Bridgewater Canal.

But the driver allegedly ignored her pleas and drove the car straight into the water in Salford, Greater Manchester. He later told police he had been following his satnav when disaster struck in the early hours of April 11, reported the Manchester Evening News.



Emma, a transport manager from Salford, managed to clamber out of the vehicle and was told to walk the rest of the journey. But after making the 15 minute journey home, she realised she had still been charged for the £29.31 trip.

She said: "I thought 'what the hell has even happened? How has he not seen the canal in front of him?'

"He turned down the wrong street and I said 'you shouldn't be here. Don't continue down that road, there's a canal'.

"He just carried on and I told him he was in the canal. He asked me if I could get out and thankfully, I could. He said 'are you okay to walk home?' It's a 15-minute walk and not the nicest area to walk on your own."

Emma emailed Uber on Sunday informing them she was involved in an incident and had still been charged.

She added: "They said they would investigate but no one came back to me. Then when it was on the news, I contacted them again with the article and they emailed to say they would give me a refund.

He wasn't going that fast. He was sort of going around 5mph, then all of a sudden the front of the car went into the canal."

An Uber spokesperson said: "We are currently investigating this concerning report. The safety of our customers, drivers who use the Uber app and the general public is a top priority for Uber. All drivers who use the app are required to adhere to the Highway Code, and any dangerous driving can result in drivers being removed from the app."

UBER SIGNING UP ANOTHER 20,000 UK DRIVERS AS LOCKDOWN BEGINS TO EASE

Uber has revealed plans to sign up another 20,000 drivers as demand begins to ramp up following the reopening of outdoor dining.

Yahoo Finance reported that the firm said it aims to have the new drivers on board by the end of the year under the recruitment drive that will boost its driver network to 90,000 in the UK.

It comes as the group reported a more than 50% increase in trips across the UK since restaurants opened for outdoor dining on April 12, with expectations for demand to rise further as restrictions ease over the summer.

The Supreme Court decision in February means that Uber now guarantees drivers at least the National Living Wage, holiday pay and auto enrolment into a pension scheme. But its drivers can retain flexibility to choose when to work and can drive with multiple apps at the same time.

In response to this latest recruitment drive Mick Rix, national officer of the GMB trade union, said: "Uber is trying to signal the horrendous collapse of the private hire minicab sector brought about by the pandemic is coming to an end. Signing up another 20,000 drivers on top of the 70,000 already using the app is a positive indicator.

"Now Uber has committed to treating its workers fairly, granting them the rights to which they are legally entitled, this can only be good for the beleaguered private hire sector." However, the App Drivers & Couriers Union expressed a conflicting attitude to news with a spokesperson for the union stating that: "Uber is taking advantage of an expected increase in post pandemic unemployment to draw more people into the gig economy and into precarity while it profits.

"This recruitment drive is only made possible by Uber's refusal to obey the Supreme Court ruling and pay drivers for all working time from log on to log off. Instead, Uber only intends to observe driver worker rights for the period from dispatch to drop off which means that waiting time remains unpaid which currently constitutes about 40-50% of working time."

Yaseen Aslam, President of the App Drivers & Couriers Union said: "Uber's post pandemic recruitment push will inevitably lead to increased driver poverty and rising urban congestion. They can easily afford to recruit an extra 20,000 people simply because it continues to rely on an illegal and exploitative employment model which allows them to strengthen their monopolistic position while driving more workers into poverty.

"We urgently need capacity controls and enforcement of employment law, but the government has abdicated its fundamental responsibilities. Our union will continue to resist Uber's brutal exploitation of people and communities."

UBER ORDERED TO PAY £795,000 TO BLIND WOMAN IN USA REFUSED 14 RIDES

Uber has been ordered to pay £795,000 to a blind woman in USA who was refused rides on 14 occasions.

BBC reports that Lisa Irving said on some occasions, drivers were verbally abusive, or harassed her about transporting her guide dog, Bernie, in the car. One driver allegedly cut her trip short after falsely claiming to have arrived at her destination. An independent arbitrator ruled Uber's drivers had illegally discriminated against her due to her condition. It rejected Uber's claim that the company itself was not liable, because, it argued, its drivers were contractors not employees.

Mrs Irving, from San Francisco, said she had worried about her safety after being stranded multiple times late at night due to being rejected by drivers. She also alleged that cancelled rides also led to her being late for work, which contributed to her being fired from her job.

The behaviour from drivers continued despite her complaining to Uber, she said.

A spokesman for Mrs Irving said: "Of all Americans who should be liberated by the rideshare revolution, the blind and visually impaired are among those who stand to benefit the most. The bottom line is that under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a guide dog should be able to go anywhere that a blind person can go."

In a statement issued to media following the ruling, a spokesman for Uber said the company is "proud" of the help it offers blind passengers. "Drivers using the Uber app are expected to serve riders with service animals and comply with accessibility and other laws, and we regularly provide education to drivers on that responsibility. Our dedicated team looks into each complaint and takes appropriate action," he added.

It is not the first time Uber has faced a legal battle from the blind community. In 2014, The National Federation of the Blind in the US sued the ride-sharing app over guide-dog regulations. The case was settled in 2017 when Uber agreed to ensure its drivers knew they were legally obliged to provide service to people with guide dogs.

UBER MAKES FIRST HOLIDAY AND NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE PAYMENTS

Uber has made its first holiday payment and national minimum wage to all its drivers.

Payment should show on drivers Uber dashboard from where it can be cashed out at anytime. If a driver still has any queries, they can get in touch with the Uber platform directly through the Uber driver app.

GMB PERSPECTIVE



You know how it can be when you take a step back and think: "Sod it". Well I had one of those moments and thought: "Enough is enough!"

But first let me tell you how the taxi/private hire trade and the council in Brighton & Hove works.

I have always said that we have a really good working relationship with the Licensing Department and Licensing Committee councillors. Certainly from what I know that goes on in other areas I consider that we are very lucky here. We pretty much all know each other by first names and we the repartee is good.

For many years now we have had regular Trade Forum Meetings where the various trade reps from all the different groups and local companies meet up with the licensing officers and councillors. At these meetings there may be guests who speak about specific subjects as well as police representatives who have recently been very helpful regarding bilking.

We discuss all the various trade issues such as ranks and variations in conditions of our 'Blue Book - Conditions of Licensing', every three years which we have just completed this year. The trade has recently worked with the council on important subjects such as setting up the CSE/Human Trafficking course which I am pleased to say has been very successful.

The most important focus of the Trade Forum Meetings is that we are all local.... with the local knowledge of our city and its quirks and needs. The 'local' trade really knows our city.

So...all in all this has worked really well over the years... Until 'U' know who came along with their size 13 boots and began to trample all over the city like Godzilla crushing everything in its path.

I know I have stated the following before but it needs to be stated again.

In Brighton & Hove the local trade has been decimated by cars from Southampton, Portsmouth, Havant, Fareham, Chichester and mainly the huge majority of the 500 cars licensed by Lewes next door where licences have had to be doled out because of lesser requirements needed compared to Brighton & Hove.

We have had the experience of OOT's (out of town cars) sleeping in the vehicles night in and night out. Uber at one time even directed people on its website to go and get licensed in Lewes if you wanted to work in Brighton & Hove.

As Uber holds a Brighton & Hove operator licence (won on appeal of a refusal in 2018) an Uber rep would turn up at the Trade Forum Meetings as they would be entitled to. These meetings would be held at the town hall where we would all sit around in the main councils meeting room. This last year the meetings have been via video conferencing - which has been great as I don't have to get fully dressed as my normal house attire is in shorts.

However... very rarely would the Uber rep contribute anything to the meeting. In fact I always considered that Uber being there was merely a tick-boxing exercise so that it could boast that they were taking part in the trade meetings. Well, true Uber would be there, but most of the time the rep would be sitting there with laptop open tippidy-tapping away, and I am damn sure this was nothing to do with the subjects at the meetings. Just to be clear - this is nothing personal against the Uber reps as they are just doing what they are told to do and the last one I have to say was a very pleasant lady - now replaced.

During the last 12 months there have been less appearances of the out-of-town (OOT's) cars.. but they have still had a presence. So now as we slowly come out of lock-down, with trade still being quite, there has been a steady increase of these OOT's which is very disheartening for the locally licensed guys and girls who all adhere to the local conditions.

At this point I do have to state that the three major companies in the city have excellent apps and have always offered a first-rate service getting a car to a job in five minutes. Between them over the years since the 90s millions has been spent on technology. In fact visitors to the city have always been impressed with the speed of service. Plus the fact that we all use the councils tariff of fares as the companies run mixed fleets of hackneys and private hire cars. This means the public has always been able to rely on metered fares so they know exactly where they stand.

As I previously mentioned that we have recently revised our 'Blue Book' of conditions of licensing and it would take too long to set out how different our conditions of licensing are compared to the OOT's respective conditions of licensing. But briefly we have compulsory council-controlled CCTV. Lewes doesn't. So as an individual proprietor we have had to fork out for this whilst Lewes cars have not had to do so.

Also, if you want to run a 'multi-seater' cab as a private hire or hackney here, you can only do this if it is a WAV. This of course makes it expensive to comply with. And yet we have Lewes cars predominantly working in the city using those little Toyota saloons that Lewes licenses to take six people. So you can understand how the local Brighton & Hove trade looks at things.

GMB PERSPECTIVE



All Brighton & Hove licensed cars carry specific council livery. The hackneys are white with aqua boot and bonnets with rear plates/ rear side door repeater plates. Private hire cars being any colour but these also have rear plates / rear side door repeater plates with 'Prior Booking Only'. In essence you know that if you get into a Brighton & Hove car you know it is fully licensed.

SO WHERE HAS ALL OF THIS BEEN HEADING?

Well, with the invitation to the April Trade Forum Meeting I had my 'Sod it' moment and sent an email to the council and my fellow Trade Reps based on the following which is a shortened version:

“I write with reference to the forthcoming Trade Forum meeting for April 28 2021. As you are very aware the city is overrun with cars not licensed by Brighton & Hove City council. These vehicles are from Southampton, Portsmouth, Chichester, Havant and Fareham, but mostly the 500+ private hire vehicles from Lewes.

An increase of out of town cars that carry no vehicle identification so no one knows where these cars are licensed. Uber's disregard for local licensing has diminished everything that the trade and the council has worked for over the years and belittles our Blue Book of conditions of licensing.

"This means that 'local licensing' which was given to local councils under an Act of Parliament for the safety of the public is no longer under the control of the council thanks to the way in which Uber works.

CCTV: We have council controlled CCTV for the safety and protection of the public and of course the driver. And yet this does not apply to all of those out of town cars. In fact as we were told by Uber itself that it was against CCTV and stated at the Uber Appeal where it

was mentioned that it was found out that Uber objected to Lewes licensed vehicles having CCTV.

Mockery of Local Licensing:

Uber attends the Trade Meetings as it is entitled to under its Brighton & Hove licence and yet has disregard for local licensing to the extent that the attendance of Uber makes a mockery of the meeting which is attended by local dedicated Trade Reps.

I would go to the extent that Uber has ripped out the heart of what the trade and council has striven to achieve.

On this basis as the GMB rep I will no longer be attending the Trade Forum Meetings all the time that Uber attends and sits with such contempt in the way that it operates on such a massive scale. Please be assured that I have not taken that decision lightly.

Future Trade Dealings:

However this does not mean that communications and future consultations have ceased. Rather it being a case that all such trade matters will be carried out by other methods of communications and not at the Trade Meetings all the time that Uber attends. ”

I am pleased to say that I have received full support from other trade reps who will also no longer be attending the meetings on the same basis.

So there it is... after many years of the Taxi Trade Forum meetings taking place where we could throw buns at each other and have that one-to-one communication with the HCO and council these will not be attended by the Trade Reps all the time that Uber is present.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH... AND SOD IT!

Lastly I would like to thank Sean Ridley the South East Unite rep with whom I have had the pleasure of working with as union reps over the last five years who has now decided to retire from the trade. Sean had over 35 years of taxi/PH experience with considerable knowledge of the trade and wrote many informative pieces for PHTM. Sean would mainly work the Lancing Station rank and saw the ever increasing Lewes and Chichester Uber PHVs hanging around waiting for a ping for a job - such is the way that the job has now gone and the obliteration of local licensing control.

Andy Peters
Secretary
GMB Brighton & Hove Taxi Section
andy.peters@gmbtaxis.org.uk



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

In this month's edition we feature more road traffic issues relevant to the trade supplied by Patterson Law. These questions are based on real enquiries that we have received from professional drivers this month. If you need any advice on motoring matters, please email e.patterson@pattersonlaw.co.uk or call 01626 359800 for free legal advice.

One of the most common questions we get asked at Patterson Law is whether you can "reject" a Notice of Intended Prosecution (NIP) if it has been received outside of 14 days. The simple answer to that is no, there is no such thing as 'rejecting' a NIP. But that does not mean that a Notice that has been sent outside 14 days is valid, and it still may be an argument to avoid prosecution at Court.

THE NOTICE OF INTENDED PROSECUTION (NIP)

The purpose of a NIP is to bring the offence to the attention of the driver. But it is only required for certain offences. The offences to which it relates are noted in the schedules to the **Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988**. For example, speeding requires a NIP but driving whilst using a mobile phone does not.

So the starting point is always to look at whether the offence itself requires one.

The most common offences that require NIPs are speeding, contravening a red light and driving without due care and attention.

HOW CAN A NIP BE GIVEN?

- 1) A written NIP is served on either the driver or the registered keeper within 14 days of the commission of the offence.
- 2) The driver is charged/summonsed to Court within 14 days.
- 3) A verbal notice is given at the time the offence is committed (for example if a police officer stops somebody for speeding).

There are rarely any arguments regarding (2) or (3) – most of the arguments surrounding NIPs relate to whether one was posted within 14 days.

WHAT IF I RECEIVE IT OUTSIDE OF 14 DAYS?

If you believe that a notice was served outside of 14 days, then there may be an argument. A NIP must be 'served', and served means sent and received.

Where a NIP is sent by first class post, there is a presumption that it has been delivered. But with evidence, for example evidence of postal issues or missing post, that presumption can be rebutted. So if the police say one was sent within 14 days but you did not receive it, then with supporting evidence there may be an argument.

But just because you haven't received one within 14 days it doesn't automatically mean that it has gone missing in the post or hasn't been served.

The most common misconception is where people receive a NIP sometimes months after an offence has been committed, simply because it is not their car. If it is a hire car or a leased car, very often the first NIP goes to the registered keeper (ie the lease car company) within 14 days, and they then nominate the actual driver. So even though the driver doesn't receive it until months later, this doesn't make it invalid as the first NIP went to the registered keeper within 14 days.

Then, the next step to check is whether any of the exceptions apply. There are a number of exceptions to the rule that mean that a NIP either doesn't need to be given, or at least not given within 14 days:

- 1) If the registered keeper contributed to the failure. This includes cases where, for example, the registered keeper was on holiday and didn't open it until day 16 or 17, or where the registered keeper moved address but failed to update the V5 with the DVLA.
- 2) Police can't with reasonable diligence ascertain the details of the registered keeper. This might include where the vehicle is not yet registered with the DVLA.
- 3) Where an accident has occurred that the driver knew about (an accident is defined as a collision causing damage between a vehicle and another vehicle, person or property) then no NIP is required at all.

WHAT IF THERE IS AN ERROR?

An error in the notice, for example an error in the road or in the name of the person on whom it is served, does not automatically invalidate it.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



The Court would examine the NIP carefully and look at the severity of the error and whether it fundamentally changes the offence or the particulars. They look at each notice on a case-by-case basis and so it is always best to get legal advice before arguing this point.

CAN I REJECT A NOTICE THAT IS DEFECTIVE OR OUT OF TIME?

Once you have established that a NIP is required but has not been given, and believe there may be an argument to be had, the next stage is to present that argument properly.

Put simply, it cannot be 'rejected'. There is no such thing as rejecting a notice. A NIP is a document warning the driver of an offence. There is no option to reject it.

Enclosed with the NIP - sometimes even on the same piece of paper - is a request for driver information. Very often, this is where people get confused. People assume that if a NIP is defective, they do not need to respond to the request for information.

But - even though it is often on the same bit of paper this is a completely separate legal document and legally requires the person to whom it is addressed to respond. Failure to complete that request (even if the NIP is defective) and return it could see you prosecuted for failing to provide driver information, an offence which carries six points and up to a £1000 fine.

SO WHAT OPTIONS ARE OPEN?

Even if the notice is defective, the correct procedure would be to continue to nominate the driver by completing the

request for information, and then after that has been done to take the matter to Court, enter a not guilty plea, and then before the Court have a legal argument that the NIP was defective/was not served so the driver cannot be convicted.

Often, depending on the strength of the case, we can have these arguments with the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service behind the scenes to persuade them that there is no realistic prospect of conviction and ask them to discontinue the proceedings before trial.

EXAMPLE

A good example was the case of David Beckham, which we reported in an earlier edition of **PHTM**.

Mr Beckham's vehicle was allegedly recorded speeding. Speeding is an offence which requires a NIP and therefore a NIP was sent to the registered keeper - Bentley Motors - within 14 days. But, Bentley Motors did not receive the NIP until day 15.

Bentley Motors however still nominated Mr Beckham as the driver - even though they received it out of the 14 days. And Mr Beckham then got a NIP/request for information in his own right, and he would have responded nominating himself as the driver.

He was then taken to court for speeding and at court entered a not guilty plea on the basis that no NIP was served within 14 days.

The court agreed and he was acquitted.

TO SUMMARISE...

The law is confusing and such cases are rarely straightforward. Always obtain legal advice before arguing these complicated legal points.

If you receive a NIP that you believe is defective or out of time, call us for free initial advice on 01626 359800 and we can advise you whether you have a case.

For regular updates on road traffic law

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The Bryan Roland Memorial

NATIONAL HACKNEY FARES TABLE MAY 2021

TABLE COLOUR CODE
RISE IN 2021
RISE IN 2020
RISE IN 2019
RISE IN 2018
RISE IN 2017
RISE IN 2016
RISE IN 2015
RISE IN 2014
RISE IN 2013
RISE IN 2012
RISE IN 2011
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RISE IN 2007
NO SET FARE

POSITION	TARIFF ONE	TWO MILE FARE	POSITION	TARIFF ONE	TWO MILE FARE	POSITION	TARIFF ONE	TWO MILE FARE
	COUNCIL/AIRPORT			COUNCIL			COUNCIL	
1	LONDON (HEATHROW)	£11.40	66	EAST DORSET	£6.60	131	FOLKESTONE & HYTHE	£6.20
2	LUTON AIRPORT	£9.20	67	EAST SUFFOLK (NORTH)	£6.60	132	HORSHAM	£6.20
3	EPSOM & EWELL	£8.60	68	EXETER	£6.60	133	MENDIP	£6.20
4	LONDON	£8.60	69	HIGH PEAK	£6.60	134	NORTHAMPTON	£6.20
5	WATFORD	(x) £8.40	70	MEDWAY	£6.60	135	NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE	£6.20
6	GUILDFORD	£7.60	71	MORAY	(x) £6.60	136	PORTSMOUTH UA	£6.20
7	KERRIER	£7.60	72	NORTH HERTS	£6.60	137	ROCHFORD	£6.20
8	JERSEY	£7.43	73	NORWICH	£6.60	138	RUNNYMEDE	£6.20
9	BOURNEMOUTH	£7.40	74	SCARBOROUGH	£6.60	139	SOLIHULL	£6.20
10	BRIGHTON & HOVE	£7.40	75	SHETLAND ISLES	£6.60	140	SOUTHAMPTON	£6.20
11	CHELTENHAM	£7.40	76	SOUTH CAMBRIDGE	£6.60	141	SPELTHORNE	£6.20
12	MID SUSSEX	£7.40	77	SOUTH GLOUCESTER	£6.60	142	ST ALBANS	£6.20
13	CARRICK	£7.30	78	TEIGNBRIDGE	£6.60	143	STRATFORD ON AVON	£6.20
14	BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET	£7.20	79	NORTH DEVON	£6.55	144	TAUNTON DEANE	£6.20
15	READING	£7.20	80	ASHFORD	£6.50	145	WEST OXFORD	£6.20
16	TORRIDGE	£7.20	81	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL	£6.50	146	WINCHESTER	£6.20
17	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	£7.20	82	HUNTINGDONSHIRE	£6.50	147	WYCOMBE	£6.20
18	CHELMSFORD	£7.10	83	MAIDSTONE	£6.50	148	CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE	£6.13
19	DARTFORD	£7.10	84	SOUTH SOMERSET	£6.50	149	ABERDEENSHIRE	£6.10
20	GUERNSEY	£7.10	85	WORTHING	£6.50	150	CARDIFF	£6.10
21	MOLE VALLEY	£7.10	86	BRISTOL	£6.40	151	CLACKMANNAN	£6.10
22	PENWITH	£7.10	87	CANTERBURY	£6.40	152	EAST HERTS	£6.10
23	SEVENOAKS	£7.06	88	COUNTY OF HEREFORD	£6.40	153	ELMBRIDGE	£6.10
24	EAST LOTHIAN	£7.00	89	CREWE & NANTWICH	£6.40	154	FYLDE	£6.10
25	HARROGATE	£7.00	90	EAST HAMPSHIRE	£6.40	155	NEW FOREST	£6.10
26	HERTSMERE	£7.00	91	HARLOW	£6.40	156	NORTH WARWICK	£6.10
27	POOLE	£7.00	92	HASTINGS	£6.40	157	SOUTH AYRSHIRE	£6.10
28	STROUD	£7.00	93	IPSWICH	£6.40	158	TAMWORTH	£6.10
29	TONBRIDGE & MALLING	£7.00	94	LEEDS	£6.40	159	SELBY	£6.06
30	WELWYN HATFIELD	£7.00	95	LINCOLN	£6.40	160	CHARNWOOD	£6.05
31	WILTSHIRE	£7.00	96	MALVERN HILLS	£6.40	161	SCOTTISH BORDERS	£6.05
32	RESTORMEL	£6.95	97	MID SUFFOLK	£6.40	162	ABERDEEN CITY	£6.00
33	EASTBOURNE	£6.90	98	NORTH KESTEVEN	£6.40	163	BASILDON	£6.00
34	VALE OF WHITE HORSE	£6.90	99	OXFORD	£6.40	164	BOSTON	£6.00
35	WEALDON	£6.90	100	PURBECK	£6.40	165	BRACKNELL FOREST	£6.00
36	WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND	£6.90	101	RUSHMOOR	£6.40	166	BROXTOWE	£6.00
37	ADUR	£6.80	102	SHEFFIELD	£6.40	167	CARMARTHENSHIRE	£6.00
38	CARADON	£6.80	103	SOUTHEND ON SEA	£6.40	168	CASTLE POINT	£6.00
39	CHRISTCHURCH	£6.80	104	SOUTH LAKELAND	£6.40	169	CONWY	£6.00
40	COLCHESTER	£6.80	105	STEVENAGE	£6.40	170	DOVER	£6.00
41	EAST DEVON	£6.80	106	SURREY HEATH	£6.40	171	EAST AYRSHIRE	£6.00
42	FIFE	£6.80	107	TENDRING	£6.40	172	EAST LINDSEY	£6.00
43	GLASGOW	£6.80	108	WAVERLEY	£6.40	173	EAST STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.00
44	GRAVESEND	£6.80	109	WOKING	£6.40	174	GOULCESTER	£6.00
45	HART	(x) £6.80	110	WOKINGHAM	£6.40	175	GREAT YARMOUTH	£6.00
46	NORTH CORNWALL	£6.80	111	NEWARK & SHERWOOD	£6.32	176	GWYNEDD	£6.00
47	NOTTINGHAM	£6.80	112	BLACKBURN	£6.30	177	ISLE OF WIGHT	£6.00
48	SEDGEMOOR	£6.80	113	BURY	£6.30	178	KETTERING	£6.00
49	SWALE	£6.80	114	COTSWOLD	(y) £6.30	179	KINGS LYNN & WEST NORFOLK	£6.00
50	WEST BERKSHIRE	£6.80	115	COVENTRY	£6.30	180	LUTON	£6.00
51	YORK	£6.80	116	DACORUM	£6.30	181	MILTON KEYNES	£6.00
52	EDINBURGH	£6.75	117	ISLE OF MAN	£6.30	182	NORTH DORSET	£6.00
53	NUNEATON & BEDWORTH	£6.75	118	LEWES	£6.30	183	PLYMOUTH	£6.00
54	TORBAY	£6.75	119	PEMBROKESHIRE	£6.30	184	PRESTON	£6.00
55	CHESTER	£6.70	120	SOUTH HOLLAND	£6.30	185	RYEDALE	£6.00
56	CRAWLEY	£6.70	121	FOREST OF DEAN	£6.27	186	SLOUGH	£6.00
57	EASTLEIGH	£6.70	122	MIDLOTHIAN	£6.22	187	SOUTH HAMS	£6.00
58	ROOTHER	£6.70	123	ARGYLL & BUTE	£6.20	188	SOUTH TYNESIDE	£6.00
59	SWINDON	£6.70	124	BIRMINGHAM	£6.20	189	STOCKPORT	£6.00
60	HARBOROUGH	£6.68	125	BRAINTREE	£6.20	190	TAMESIDE	£6.00
61	ARUN	£6.60	126	CHICHESTER	£6.20	191	TEST VALLEY	(x) £6.00
62	BABERGH	£6.60	127	DAVENTRY	£6.20	192	THREE RIVERS	£6.00
63	BASINGSTOKE & DEANE	£6.60	128	DERBY	£6.20	193	THURROCK	£6.00
64	BRENTWOOD	£6.60	129	EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE	£6.20	194	VALE OF GLAMORGAN	£6.00
65	CAMBRIDGE CITY	£6.60	130	EAST SUFFOLK (SOUTH)	£6.20	195	WARRICK	£6.00

The Bryan Roland Memorial

TABLE
COLOUR CODE

RISE IN 2021
RISE IN 2020
RISE IN 2019
RISE IN 2018
RISE IN 2017
RISE IN 2016
RISE IN 2015
RISE IN 2014
RISE IN 2013
RISE IN 2012
RISE IN 2011
RISE IN 2010
RISE IN 2008
RISE IN 2007
NO SET FARE

NATIONAL HACKNEY FARES TABLE

MAY 2021

POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE	POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE	POSITION	TARIFF ONE COUNCIL	TWO MILE FARE
196	WEST DORSET	£6.00	261	SANDWELL	£5.60	326	WAKEFIELD	£5.20
197	WEST LINDSEY	£6.00	262	SOUTH BUCKINGHAM	£5.60	327	CHORLEY	£5.10
198	WIRRAL	£6.00	263	SUNDERLAND	£5.60	328	CONGLETON	£5.10
199	DARLINGTON	£5.95	264	WEST LOTHIAN	(x) £5.60	329	GATESHEAD	£5.10
200	BASSETLAW	£5.90	265	WOLVERHAMPTON	(x) £5.60	330	SEFTON	£5.10
201	BROXBOURNE	£5.90	266	WREXHAM	£5.60	331	SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE	£5.10
202	DUDLEY	£5.90	267	CHERWELL	£5.56	332	COPELAND	£5.00
203	KINGSTON-UPON-HULL	£5.90	268	NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME	£5.55	333	EAST NORTHANTS	£5.00
204	MANCHESTER	£5.90	269	DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY	£5.50	334	KIRKLEES	£5.00
205	NORTHUMBERLAND	£5.90	270	EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE	£5.50	335	NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE	£5.00
206	STAFFORD	£5.90	271	EDEN	£5.50	336	NORTH LANARKSHIRE	£5.00
207	TANDBRIDGE	£5.90	272	EPPING FOREST	£5.50	337	PETERBOROUGH	£5.00
208	WALSALL	£5.90	273	EREWASH	£5.50	338	ROCHDALE	£5.00
209	CALDERDALE	£5.85	274	FALKIRK	£5.50	339	ROSENDALE	£5.00
210	TEWKSBURY	£5.85	275	HAMBLETON	£5.50	340	SOUTH NORTHANTS	£5.00
211	BLACKPOOL	£5.80	276	MERTHYR TYDFIL	£5.50	341	STOKE-ON-TRENT UA	£4.95
212	BRIDGEND	£5.80	277	OLDHAM	£5.50	342	CORBY	£4.90
213	BROMSGROVE	£5.80	278	SHROPSHIRE	£5.50	343	TELFORD & WREKIN	£4.90
214	CARLISLE	£5.80	279	TORFAEN	£5.50	344	WELLINGBOROUGH	£4.90
215	EAST KILBRIDE	(x) £5.80	280	CEREDIGION	£5.46	345	WESTERN ISLES	(x) £4.85
216	FAREHAM	£5.80	281	NEATH PORT TALBOT	£5.46	346	ASHFIELD	£4.80
217	FLINTSHIRE	£5.80	282	SALFORD	£5.46	347	DERBYSHIRE DALES	£4.80
218	HAVANT	£5.80	283	ALLERDALE	£5.45	348	HARLEPOOL	£4.80
219	HIGHLAND	(x) £5.80	284	BARNESLEY	£5.40	349	HYNDBURN	£4.70
220	LANCASTER	£5.80	285	BARROW IN FURNESS	£5.40	350	WEST LANCASHIRE	£4.70
221	LEICESTER	£5.80	286	CAERPHILLY	£5.40	351	BOLSOVER	£4.60
222	NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE	£5.80	287	CHILTERN	£5.40	352	BURNLEY	£4.50
223	NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE	£5.80	288	CLYDEBANK	£5.40	353	REDCAR & CLEVELAND	£4.50
224	NORTH NORFOLK	£5.80	289	DUNBARTON & VALE OF LEVEN	(x) £5.40	354	STOCKTON ON TEES	£4.50
225	NORTH TYNESIDE	£5.80	290	ELLESMERE PORT	£5.40	355	OADBY & WIGSTON	£4.40
226	ORKNEY	(x) £5.80	291	MACCLESFIELD	£5.40	356	PENDLE	£4.40
227	REIGATE & BANSTEAD	£5.80	292	NORTHERN IRELAND	£5.40	357	AYLESBURY VALE	£4.30
228	RUGBY	£5.80	293	PERTH & KINROSS	£5.40	358	MIDDLEBROUGH	£4.30
229	RUTHERGLEN	(x) £5.80	294	POWYS	£5.40	359	MALDON	£
230	SOUTH RIBBLE	£5.80	295	ROTHERHAM	£5.40	360	RUTLAND	£
231	TRAFFORD	£5.80	296	THANET	£5.40	361	SOUTH DERBYSHIRE	£
232	UTTLESFORD	£5.80	297	WYCHAVON	£5.40	362	SOUTH NORFOLK	£
233	WEST SOMERSET	£5.80	298	MANSFIELD	£5.35	363	SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE	£
234	WEST SUFFOLK	£5.80	299	INVERCLYDE	£5.34	364	WEST DEVON	£
235	WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD	£5.80	300	BLABY	£5.30			
236	WORCESTER	£5.80	301	BRADFORD	£5.30			
237	WYRE	£5.80	302	CRAVEN	(x) £5.30			
238	YNS MON	£5.80	303	EAST RENFREW	£5.30			
239	CHESTERFIELD	£5.75	304	FENLAND	(x) £5.30			
240	DONCASTER	£5.75	305	LICHFIELD	£5.30			
241	ANGUS	£5.70	306	MELTON	£5.30			
242	CANNOCK CHASE	£5.70	307	NORTH AYRSHIRE	£5.30			
243	GEDLING	£5.70	308	REDDITCH	£5.30			
244	MID DEVON	£5.70	309	RIBBLE VALLEY	£5.30			
245	MONMOUTHSHIRE	£5.70	310	SOUTH KESTEVEN	£5.30			
246	NORTH SOMERSET	£5.70	311	SOUTH LANARKSHIRE	(Clydesdale) £5.30			
247	RENFREWSHIRE	£5.70	312	ST HELENS	£5.30			
248	STIRLING	(x) £5.70	313	VALE ROYAL	£5.30			
249	SWANSEA	£5.70	314	WIGAN	£5.30			
250	WARRINGTON	£5.70	315	WYRE FOREST	£5.30			
251	DUNDEE CITY	£5.66	316	BEDFORD	£5.26			
252	BRECKLAND	£5.60	317	AMBER VALLEY	£5.20			
253	DENBIGHSHIRE	£5.60	318	BLAENAU GWENT	£5.20			
254	GOSPORT	£5.60	319	BOLTON	£5.20			
255	HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH	£5.60	320	EAST RIDING	£5.20			
256	LIVERPOOL	£5.60	321	HALTON	£5.20			
257	NEWPORT	£5.60	322	HAMILTON	(x) £5.20			
258	NORTH WEST LEICESTER	£5.60	323	KNOWSLEY	£5.20			
259	RICHMONDSHIRE	£5.60	324	RHONDDA CYNON TAFF	£5.20			
260	RUSHCLIFFE	£5.60	325	STAFFS MOORLANDS	£5.20			

NATIONAL AVERAGE TWO
MILE HACKNEY FARE
TARIFF ONE
IS NOW £6.00

PLEASE NOTE

The councils of Daventry, Northampton and South Northamptonshire have now merged to form a new administrative council of West Northamptonshire.

The councils of Corby, East Northants, Kettering and Wellingborough have now merged to form North Northants. However for our purposes the League Tables are not affected as the original councils still retain their individual tariffs.

Where an (x) appears by a listing, a fare update has been passed by the council, but our fare has not increased.

In the case of Cotswold where a (y) appears alongside the listing, the (y) refers to a fare update but one in which the fare has decreased for a two mile tariff.

RISE IN 2021
RISE IN 2020
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NO SET FARE

point of sale...point of sale...

OSRAM HELPS TAXI DRIVERS AND THEIR PASSENGERS TO BREATHE EASY AS COUNTRY GETS MOVING AGAIN

OSRAM

With the country gearing up for the easing of lockdown restrictions in the upcoming months, taxi drivers will be looking for ways to help keep themselves

and their passengers safe. The recently launched AirZing Mini air purifier from OSRAM is proving popular for this use.

Having a clean and fresh vehicle cabin is of paramount importance for drivers who spend a lot of time on the road. In a closed, small area, like the interior of a vehicle, harmful germs can easily spread. The driver and passenger unknowingly bring them along on the journey, and then, the ventilation system distributes the pathogens throughout the car - a risk that is heightened as a result of Coronavirus.

The AirZing Mini removes germs from the air inside vehicles and improves air quality for drivers and passengers by eliminating up to 99.9 percent of viruses and bacteria, offering added protection and reassurance.



Compact and easy to install:
The AirZing Mini from Osram

The ultraviolet light of Osram's AirZing Mini works at a wavelength of 360 to 370 nanometers and can remove viruses and bacteria from the air within the vehicle's cabin with a reliability of up to 99.9 percent.

The device has already been successfully tested against bird flu viruses; and can also eliminate

airborne allergens, pollutants or smells.

With a diameter of just 7.5 cm, the compact, round device is no larger than an apple and easily attaches to the vehicle's ventilation slats with a clip.

The included USB cable supplies power to the air purifier via any standard USB socket.

The device operates quietly and illuminates the brand logo

on the top in a subtle blue to show that it is working. Air is drawn into the unit and passed through a titanium dioxide filter, where it is cleaned by an array of UV-A light emitting diodes.

A photo-catalytic reaction kills viruses and bacteria cells before the purified air is expelled through the top of the unit.

The filter can be cleaned with clear tap water, dried and reused. There is no danger to passengers from the encapsulated UV radiation.

Additionally, the device can be used freestanding, making applications outside the car possible, including at home or on office desks.

The air purifier is available at a suggested retail price of £49.99.



The device can remove up to 99.9 per cent of germs from the air inside the vehicle

For more information please click the link:
<https://www.eurocarparts.com/p/osram-airzing-mini-in-car-air-purifier-551779290> or see our advert on page 58.

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DYNAMO HACKNEY TAXI OLD TRADITIONAL VALUES IN A MODERN ELECTRIC VEHICLE



NISSAN IS BACK!

The Dynamo Taxi is the perfect modern EV rank taxi because it charges as you slow down. In town it

will average 160 miles on a full home charge. Although not ideally a motorway or airport taxi, the Dynamo with five passengers and luggage will average around 120 miles on the motorway on a full charge. It can then be rapid charged in 40 minutes to 80 per cent charge. The Dynamo Taxi is possibly the best traditional rank taxi ever made with no emission issues; and although it may appear small on the exterior it has a large roomy interior.

FACT

1. Most drivers will agree it's similar in size to an LTI TX1 in the rear but has more storage and more room for the driver
2. The lightweight ramp is the strongest ramp we have ever tested with a 7-point wheelchair restraint system.
3. Both rear seats lift up to give access to larger wheelchairs whilst still leaving seating for two passengers
4. Storage area stowed away from the passengers

For the majority of the hackney trade that currently rent, this Dynamo taxi should tick most boxes, the fuel savings should make it more or less free to purchase when compared to the running and servicing costs of a derv taxi.

GOOD TIME TO BUY - GRANTS AVAILABLE

1. **Government grant:** Currently the price you pay for a Dynamo or LEVC taxi includes a £7,500 grant from the Government but hackney drivers **please note:** these grants will be removed in the near future which will then make these EV taxis more expensive to purchase
2. **Council grant:** furthermore, most councils are now offering grant incentives to help drivers purchase EV taxis. However, each council sets its own grant limits so grants offered range from free licencing fees to lump sum cash grants of up to £10,000 towards the purchase cost.

Car n Cab in just five weeks has already got the Dynamo Taxi passed by four councils: Liverpool, Chester, Halton, Argyle & Bute. Liverpool City Council has passed the Dynamo taxi with a few extras above the TfL Spec Dynamo - this is the spec that all Liverpool City Region Councils will require. They improve the taxi experience for passengers entering and leaving the vehicle and make it safer for road users whilst dropping off.

- Rear door opening sign • Full-size spare wheel and jack
- Extra yellow reflective tapes • Wheelchair light and switch
- Warning signs decals

Car n Cab Care has also made and tested the following optional extras which can be added for a small extra cost:

- Replaced the electric steps with a no maintenance stainless steel running board
- New stylish decal kit

DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT - TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

If you are hackney driver licenced by Liverpool or Chester Council you can work in a plated Dynamo taxi for a day to see for yourselves the fantastic fuel savings

FIRST CUSTOMER TO BUY:

Christopher Downes from Ellesmere Port is our first customer to purchase a Dynamo Taxi on our Settle to Buy Scheme. This is Christopher's second vehicle from Car n Cab, replacing his derv vehicle.

Christopher compared two full electric taxis, the MGS private hire and the Dynamo. As Chris no longer wants to work solely for an operator the obvious choice was to become a hackney driver and buy a hackney taxi.

He loved the old school-modern day Dynamo full electric taxi with the same turning circle as the TX brand. He feels safer with the factory fitted screen and its integrated intercom that is clear and can stay on while the radio is on; plus is happy that the meter controls both the lights in the payment area and in the rear of the vehicle.

Ellesmere Port already has a number of electric charging points but lucky for Chris three more rapid charges have also just been fitted at the Boat Museum; and from May 2021 Car n Cab Care will have a three vehicle mega hyper charger available 24 hours a day.

Although, to be fair Chris does have a driveway so is able to fully charge his taxi at home at night and will only hyper charge if he is working a longer shift.

We estimate the electric cost for Chris if he drives 1,000 miles a week to be around £30 (subject to tariff) compared to £240 per week for diesel - very cheap to run indeed!



For more information call 0151 678 3066, or see our adverts on pages 34-37. Please visit our Facebook page for build costs, specs, funding and payment options and watch videos of Car n Cab Care hackneys on YouTube - just search Full Electric Dynamo Taxi and E-Cabbi.

point of sale...point of sale...

COVID KILLED CASH DURING PANDEMIC



As the nation begins to emerge from lockdown, taxi fleets up and down the country are cheering the return of customers to hospitality venues, travel and other activities. One thing we have consistently heard from CabCard customers is the almost complete absence of cash.

A new report by the consultancy Enryo highlights the rapid decline of cash. As the report says, "2020 represented a step change in the total volume of cash transactions. We estimate that around 3.4bn cash transactions took place in 2020, much lower than the 6.2bn we were expecting and the 7.2bn made in 2019... This reduction pushes cash much further along its journey of decline. Taking the forecast from UK Finance as a guide, combined with our analysis, cash was used in 2020 at the level expected towards the end of the decade."

Although card payments were increasingly displacing cash before the pandemic, it seems Covid has all but eliminated cash from our wallets. This has important implications for taxi fleets and their drivers.

MAKE SURE YOUR BUSINESS KEEPS CONNECTED

In the ever-changing world of technology, sourcing the correct IT and Telecoms for your business is not only preferable, but essential. Telco Logistics can help you by supplying you with the correct equipment for your business, and can identify which Smartphone hardware works with which taxi dispatch software, ensuring that if you are an iCabbi or Autocab or Cordic customer, etc., we provide you with the device most compatible with your taxi dispatch software.

To succeed today, everything needs to be integrated, and this is why we can offer a Healthcheck Audit for your business.

The high level audit is FREE, and independent audit, and will provide you with a high level overview of its findings.

Whether you then want to go into more detail on this advice is up to you, but Telco Logistics will provide pricing that will be extremely competitive, if not unbeatable, on a like for like quote.

Our experience in this market place has been gathered over many years and we can supply the latest mobile phones in large or small quantities which match your software.

There has never been a more important time to link IT services, telephony, mobile and connectivity in one.

For more information please call Telco Logistics on 07789 755 504, visit www.telcologistics.co.uk or see our advert on page 39.

First, it's now abundantly clear that every taxi fleet needs to offer contactless card payments in every vehicle. It's the familiarity, convenience and security that customers demand. By not doing so, you're turning customers away and sending them to your competitors.

Second, taxi fleets must be alive to the possibility of an increased cost of doing business. While handling cash always carried some cost, it may not always have been felt. As cash is displaced, any taxi operation with an expensive supplier will be feeling the pinch. Many point of sale terminals in the UK have traditionally been sold by ISOs (Independent Sales Organisations), which can often be comparatively expensive deals because customers end up dealing with multiple parties. For example, you might end up with a contract for terminal leases, another for support and maintenance, another for gateway access and yet another for your transaction acquiring activity. This is not always obvious up front, but becomes painfully clear as your transaction costs rise during the lifetime of your contract.

One of the most common reasons we hear from customers who switch to CabCard is the desire to have a single, low-cost provider handle everything for you, including point of sale and online transactions, support and hardware. In addition, CabCard makes it possible for your drivers to pay for their own processing fees, eliminating card processing costs for the fleet operator.

Third, taxi businesses must take care about the flow of funds in their business. The recent ruling of the U.K. Supreme Court on the employment status of Uber drivers has highlighted that it is important taxi fleets can demonstrate the self-employed status of their drivers, in order to avoid any confusion over liability for VAT, holiday and sick pay among other issues. This explains the popularity of CabCard's option to have fares paid directly to drivers' bank accounts, ensuring that the flow of funds is clear, processing fees can be paid by drivers themselves, administration cost is significantly reduced and the fleet operator remains in control of all transaction activity.

Finally, it's more important than ever for taxi fleets to keep a close eye on the latest in payment technology. CabCard has recently announced the launch of CabCard Go, a highly innovative solution that lets you turn an Android phone into a contactless payment terminal simply by downloading an app. We're excited about the possibilities that this opens up for our customers, and we invite you to register for early access on our website.

For more information about CabCard Go, please visit <https://cabcard.services/go> or see our advert on pages 44-45.

point of sale...point of sale...



As you are no doubt aware, the Supreme Court finally passed judgement on the long running Uber worker status case on 19 February 2021. The Court ruled against Uber, upholding the original decision of the Employment Tribunal.

We have decided to highlight the **key factors** that the Supreme Court considered in their judgement that are inherently relevant to private hire operators:

- The Supreme Court all but disregarded the written contracts that Uber presented to support their argument that their drivers were self-employed. Instead, it highlighted the importance of considering **all of the circumstances of the case**, of which the written agreements only formed a part.
- **Uber dictated the fares** drivers earned for completing a booking through their app, and drivers could not influence the amount they could earn from a booking.
- **Uber unilaterally imposed the terms of the contract between the driver and Uber**; the driver had no say in the terms of the agreement.
- Once the driver had logged onto the Uber app, **Uber were held to be constraining the drivers' rights to accept and reject bookings**. Uber did this by monitoring acceptance rate of the drivers and penalised the drivers for rejecting bookings by imposing a ten-minute log off.
- **Uber exercised significant control** over the way drivers provided their services of which there were several methods. The Supreme Court mentioned the use of a 1-5 scale rating system. If a driver failed to maintain the expected customer rating, then Uber served the driver a series of warnings. If the driver's rating still did not improve Uber terminated the relationship with the driver.
- The final significant factor was that **Uber restricted communication between the driver and passenger**. It was held that Uber prevented the driver from **establishing a relationship** with a passenger beyond a single ride.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court held that the transportation service performed by drivers and offered to passengers through the Uber app was very tightly defined and **controlled by Uber**. Drivers were in a position of **subordination** and **dependency** in relation to Uber such that they have **little or no ability to improve their economic position through professional or entrepreneurial skill**. In practice the only way in which they could increase their earnings was by working longer hours while constantly meeting Uber's constraints and measures of performance.

A very curious comment by the Supreme Court was that the '**working time**' of the drivers was not while the wheels were turning (completing bookings), but as soon as the driver **logged into the app**.

Uber is ultimately left with no further actions, as due to Brexit, it is unlikely the UK courts would assign weight to judgements from the Court of Justice of the European Union ("CJEU") should Uber wish to appeal it to the CJEU.

OUR TAKE

In our opinion, this **judgement** is quite **narrow** as it mostly focuses on Uber's **interaction** with the **drivers**. That is not to say that this judgement will not have a knock-on effect on the rest of the private hire industry.

We believe that this decision will open the flood gates for unions and solicitors alike to try and follow up this successful worker status claim with subsequent **claims against private hire operators** (PHOs) - especially in cases where PHOs have been **exercising any form of control on drivers**.

We recommend that PHOs to take this opportunity to **take stock** of their own working practices. Furthermore, we encourage operators to consider undertaking a **cost-benefit risk assessment** of their working practices in order to identify and address any potential working practices that could give rise to grounds for a worker status claim.

We would like to reiterate that a **distinction** needs to be made between a massive multinational corporation, such as Uber, that develops its own software and technology, and a regional/local PHO which has developed its business from grassroots of pen, paper and radios, to using third party dispatch systems and smartphone apps to compete in the ever-changing market.

We appreciate that the **private hire industry** as a whole is facing itself at a **crossroads**. Given that the majority of statutory regulation is antiquated and **not fit for purpose**, case law such as the Uber judgement is now paving the way forward for new industry practices and subsequently impacting the 'gig economy' also.

If you're unsure whether your business's practices could leave you liable to a worker status claim or require further advice, please call Conor on: 01743 298460, email: admin@taxilaw.co.uk or see our advert on page 59.



WORLDWIDE TAXI FOCUS

from India



INDIAN CABBLE TAKES OWN LIFE DUE TO DISTRESS CAUSED BY APP COMPANIES

The financial distress felt by India's cab drivers after the arrival of Ola and Uber saw 32-year-old Pratap, a cab driver with the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC), die by setting fire to himself on Tuesday 30 March near Bengaluru airport.

Inc42 reports that not being able to pay his car loan, being worried about the fall in income due to the aggressive pricing strategy of Ola and Uber, but most of all and anguished by the lack of government support, Pratap took his own life. He succumbed to his injuries on Wednesday, and the news drove his fellow cab drivers to protest at the airport.

Pratap's struggles typify the experience for cabbies who have not joined cab aggregators such as Ola and Uber. Ola launched in 2010 with Uber arriving in 2013 and both companies now dominate the market once led by small private taxi companies in select cities.

The aggressive pricing strategy by these tech platforms for acquiring customers and the lucrative incentives for drivers in the early years meant that both companies managed to drive the regular taxis to the fringe.

But Ola and Uber's pricing while successful in gaining customers, has alienated their drivers, who spend time between fares campaigning for better wages and rights on Facebook forums and on the roads with their unions.

The protest launched at Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport after Pratap's death, against Ola and Uber, saw several drivers affiliated with those two companies also participate in the demonstrations. They may be on the opposite side of Pratap, but the grievances are theirs too. Tanveer Pasha, president of the Ola, TaxiForSure and Uber (OTU) Drivers' Union in Bengaluru told Inc42 that an indefinite strike may be on the cards if Ola and Uber fail to guarantee better prices to their drivers.

He said that after deducting the cab aggregator's commission on every ride and the GST surcharge, a driver is able to pocket only 70% of the ride fare. Last year, the central government had mandated that cab aggregators will not be allowed to charge more than 20% of the ride fare as commission.

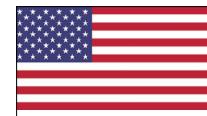
The last few months have seen cab drivers go on strike in



several cities. In Kolkata, drivers are refusing to switch on the air-conditioner in the car to save fuel, much to the chagrin of commuters. Similar incidents have been reported in Delhi and Bengaluru as well. Uber and Ola didn't respond to queries about this troubling development.

After Pratap's death, Facebook groups of cab drivers' unions have been flooded with condolence messages. There are other posts too, celebrating the show of unity by drivers in Bengaluru who have chosen to protest at the airport.

from USA



USA TAXIS SEE BUSINESS BOOST HELPING CANADIANS AVOID HOTEL QUARANTINE

Airport transport service, Buffalo Limousine, lost about 70 per cent of its business during the Covid-19 pandemic. But the company said its luck changed recently, thanks to Canadians returning from U.S. sunbelt states who want to avoid Canada's hotel quarantine requirement.

"This is a huge shot in the arm for us, this Canadian travel," said Carla Boccio, owner of Buffalo Limousine. "It's a godsend."

Since February 22, air passengers entering Canada have been required to quarantine for up to three days in a designated hotel and pay for the cost - up to \$2,000. However, travellers entering by land are exempt from the rule. To avoid the hotel quarantine, some Canadians are flying to U.S. cities close to the Canadian border - such as Buffalo, N.Y. - and then hiring a ground transport service - such as Buffalo Limousine — to drive them across the Canadian border.

"When Canada imposed that hotel [quarantine], then it was just like our phones were exploding," said Boccio. "What I hear from the majority of these people, it's not even so much the cost, it's like you're in jail ... with this hotel quarantine."

CBC News interviewed three airport transport services and the companies said they'll drive Canadians to or across the Canadian border for around \$100 US and, for an added fee, will drive passengers directly to their homes in Ontario. Each company said it has seen a boost in business after Canada introduced the hotel quarantine requirement.

Since late February, Buffalo Limousine has, on average, transported 50 customers a day across the Canadian border, increasing its business by around 50 per cent, Carla Boccio said. "I'm more thankful than I could even put into words."

The Canadian federal government surprised snowbirds abroad when it changed the travel rules requiring air passengers entering Canada to take a Covid-19 test upon arrival, and spend up to three days of their 14-day quarantine in a hotel to await the test results.



POLICE RECOVER \$13K FLUTE MISSING FROM TAXI SINCE 2012

A \$13,000 flute that went missing nearly a decade ago has been returned to its owner after police recovered it from a Boston music store, police said.



According to Wtap, The flute was reported missing in 2012 after its owner left it in a taxi cab, according to Boston police. It had been a cold case until this February, when a worker at a Boston music store called with a tip.

The worker told police that someone had come to the store with an expensive flute asking about its value. The employee took down the person's contact information and took a photo of the flute and its serial number. The worker later realized it might be a flute that had been reported missing back in 2012.

Earlier in April, detectives spoke with the person who had visited the music store with the flute. The person said he had bought the instrument from an unknown person, and he turned it over to detectives, police said.

But police said that they had determined that he was actually the driver of the taxi on that day in 2012.

Police said they plan to bring a complaint against him in Boston Municipal Court.

from South Africa



WESTERN CAPE TAXI VIOLENCE HAS CLAIMED 25 LIVES SINCE JANUARY

The unabated taxi violence in the Western Cape has claimed 25 lives since the beginning of the year.

News24.com reports that the latest murder case registered was that of the president of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (CATA), Victor Wiwi, and his protector. The pair were shot and killed while travelling on a recent Wednesday evening. Two of Wiwi's colleagues survived the shooting. Police are now investigating cases of double murder and attempted murder.

Member of the Executive Council for Transport, Mr Madikizela said: "Wednesday's incident brings the total

number of taxi related murders in the Western Cape to 25, with 11 attempted murders and injuries over the same period." He said police have assured him that they have assigned a dedicated team of detectives to investigate taxi related crimes.

"Following Wednesday's incident, I have called an urgent meeting with leaders of the SA National Taxi Council to express my grave concerns regarding their inability to stop the senseless taxi killings.

Madikizela urged citizens and taxi operators to work together with the police to identify hitmen and paymasters responsible for the recent taxi violence in the province.

from Singapore



UNCLE LENDS COMFORTDELGRO TAXI TO NIECE AS WEDDING CAR TO SAVE MONEY

An uncle helped his niece save a substantial amount of money in one day after he offered his ComfortDelGro taxi as a wedding day car instead of renting one.

Mothership reports that the unusual transport arrangement on the day of matrimony for one couple in Singapore was shared on Facebook by the taxi operator.



The post said the bride, Syarinah Sani, was preparing for her wedding in March 2021, when her uncle, Abdul Aziz Bin Talibak, volunteered to lend his Comfort Ioniq taxi to the engaged couple to cut down on expenses. The taxi, the cabbie felt, was still new and would be practical for the occasion. He said: "The taxi may not be a luxury car but it is only slightly over one year old, and still looks new."

But to let his idea come to fruition, he had to seek approval from the taxi operator. But the final say belonged to the Land Transport Authority, which had to give its permission. Even though this was likely the first time an idea like this was mooted, the approval came on the same day that evening. The grateful bride said she was more than happy to accept her uncle's help: "I was very surprised and thankful when Uncle Aziz offered to let us use his taxi."

"He even paid for the decoration out of his own pockets and made the taxi look so presentable on my big day."

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THE BERNIE THE BOOK COLUMN

AZZURI POISED FOR EURO CROWN

I confess to being a bit ambivalent to this years Euros.

Firstly they are still being called Euro 2020! So I feel like I have already missed the party.

And while the actual intention of embracing the beautiful game across 11 different countries across Europe, making it more accessible to grass root fans, with multiple venues, is very laudible, and certainly helps with closing borders in this continuing pandemic, to me it attacks at the very core of a cup competition.

But never let it be said that Bernie the Book baulks at a betting opportunity!!

One advantage is certain though, because of Covid England will host at Wembley, the semis and final, a huge advantage.

So will it become Sir Gareth for the pre-tournament 5/1 favourites? I sincerely doubt it as the gulf in class between Europe's elite AND not so elite will become apparent.

So who will contend?

If this was 2020 then I would be heavily advising both Belgium and Holland but, especially with Holland, I feel they have both peaked too early.

Belgium's world class players and their knowledge of playing in English conditions will serve them well and at 8/1 are not a bad bet, but my two against the field a PORTUGAL and ITALY.

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