STOP LEAVING MONEY ON THE TABLE
SUPER YES
Tap to learn more →

issue 410 november 2026

PHTM

minicabit
Bookings in 550+ cities
minicabit.com/phtm

ACORN
Specialist Fleet and Taxi Insurance
GET A QUOTE NOW

TaxiBot
Powered by m2m
£1M
In Revenue!
Read More!

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES
VAT CHANGES
FOR LARGE PRIVATE HIRE & TAXI OPERATORS
READ MORE →

The Taxi Centre
TAXI SALES EXPERTS
ORDER YOUR NEW TAXI TODAY
JudgeService
Outstanding ★★★★★
The Taxi Centre is a trading name of Grantham Motor Company Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Patons Insurance
feefo 4.9 / 5
Taxi Fleet Insurance
0333 015 6886
www.patonsinsurance.co.uk

THE TAXI INSURER
CALL US TODAY FOR A QUOTE
0121 506 2397
SPECIALISTS IN TAXI INSURANCE
taxiinsurer.co.uk
Trustpilot
Rated 4.9 out of 5 stars based on 3,867 reviews of all products as of 28 April 2026

Cab Direct
Toyota Corolla Touring Sports
Icon from £24,500 OTR* →
*OTR price includes VAT, vehicle first registration fee, RFL and delivery charges. Subject to availability. Prices correct at time of publication and may be withdrawn or changed without notice.

PHEV from
£56,995OTR*

Diesel

Plug-in Hybrid

Electric



Ford MAXiCab™

- Three powertrains available
- Full hackney specification
- Wheelchair accessible
- Up to 5 years/150,000 miles warranty†
- Original base model features
- Panoramic roof

Cab Direct™

*PHEV model from £56,995 OTR. OTR price includes VAT, vehicle first registration fee, RFL and delivery charges. Subject to availability. Prices correct at time of publication and may be withdrawn or changed without notice. Terms and conditions apply. †Warranty cover is up to 5 years or 150,000 miles, whichever occurs first. Eligibility criteria, exclusions and manufacturer warranty terms apply.

Visit **cabdirect.com/MAXiCab** | Call Our Team **0800 916 0007**

Icon from
£24,500OTR*

Hybrid



Toyota Corolla Touring Sports

- Front and rear parking sensors
- Reverse parking camera
- Adaptive cruise control
- Android Auto™ & Apple CarPlay™
- Up to 596 litre boot capacity
- Up to 64.1 MPG†

Cab Direct™

†Official WLTP figures. Actual fuel economy may vary depending on driving conditions and vehicle specification. *OTR price includes VAT, vehicle first registration fee, RFL and delivery charges. Subject to availability. Prices correct at time of publication and may be withdrawn or changed without notice.

Visit **cabdirect.com/corollats** | Call Our Team **0800 916 0007**

CONTENTS

CLICK EDITORIAL FEATURES

ALL THINGS LICENSING	70-73
BERNIE THE BOOK	81
BRIGHTON CAB TRADE VIEW	68-69
DEATH OF GOOGLE	16
FREENOW BY LYFT: AVs	18
INSURANCE INSIGHTS	36
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS	74-75
LICENSING LESSONS	66-67
M2M TAXIBOT	50
NORTHERN IRELAND POSITION	26-27
OPERATOR TO INNOVATOR	38-40
REFLECTIONS OF INDUSTRY EXPERT	6-8
SCOTTISH LICENSING	20-21
SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY	48
TRANSPORT COMMITTEE REPORT	58-65
WINNING BUSINESS CONTRACTS	22

CLICK NEWS FEATURES

CAPITAL NEWS	24
FIT AND PROPER	54, 56
HACKNEY FARES TABLE	76-77
IN THE NEWS	44
JUST DESERTS	46-47
ROBOTAXIS	14-15
ROUND THE COUNCILS	32-35
SEND TRANSPORT WOES	10-11
SHAME SHAME	42-43
UBER UPDATE	28
UNJUST DESERTS	52-53
VAT CHANGES	30
WORLDWIDE TAXI FOCUS	78-79

CONTACTS

Advertising Director:	Liza Lipson
Publisher:	Graham Burns
Assistant Editor:	Annabel Lee
Graphic Designer:	Jamie Holden

PHTM CAMPAIGN

PROTECT OUR DRIVERS
NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE
WINDOW STICKERS



ORDER NOW

0161 688 7777

PHTM

READ IT • LOVE IT

Breaking news stories

UPLOADED DAILY TO FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/phtm.newspaper

join us
follow us
like us...

47,312 of you already have!!

0161 688 7777 • info@phtm.co.uk • www.phtm.co.uk

The publishers reserve the right to refuse, withdraw, amend or otherwise deal with all advertisements without explanation. All advertisers must comply with the British Code of Advertising practice. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the publishers. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without prior permission from the publisher is strictly prohibited. Published by Private Hire and Taxi Monthly Ltd.

ACORN

Specialist Fleet and Taxi Insurance

GET A QUOTE NOW





Birkdale Insurance Group

Taxi & Fleet Insurance Specialists

Private and Public Hire
Fleets from 3 Vehicles
Low Deposit Finance Available

01704 336900
birkdaleinsurancegroup.co.uk
Authorised and regulated by the FCA, firm no. 927716.

THE TAXI INSURER

CALL US TODAY FOR A QUOTE
0121 506 2397
taxiinsurer.co.uk

- Private and Public Hire Insurance
- Taxi Insurance
- Fleet Insurance
- Minibus Insurance
- Chauffeur Insurance

Trustpilot
Rated 4.9 out of 5 stars based on 3,867 reviews of all products as of 28 April 2026



Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The Taxi Insurer is a trading name of Insurance Factory Limited, registered in England and Wales (No. 02982445). Registered Office: Markerstudy House, 45 Westerham Road, Bessels Green, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 2QB. Insurance Factory Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (No. 306164).

S.A.F.E systems CCTV Ltd.

CCTV SYSTEMS PURPOSE BUILT FOR TAXIS

PROTECT YOURSELF

YOUR LICENCE
YOUR PREMIUMS...
AND YOUR FREEDOM!

FINANCE AVAILABLE

01706 551 212
www.safesystemscctv.co.uk

The Taxi Centre

GET HUGE TRADE DISCOUNTS



0330 178 1083 | THETAXICENTRE.COM

Ford · Nissan · Skoda · Volkswagen · Hyundai · Toyota · MG · Kia · Renault · LEVC

The Taxi Centre is a trading name of Grantham Motor Company Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

GIGZZEE™

Become Every Driver's Favourite Operator

Pay drivers in under **5 minutes**, Funded by us.

Funded by Gigzzee
Part of Your System
Free for Operators
Retain your Drivers

GIGZZEE.COM | HELLO@GIGZZEE.COM

REFLECTIONS OF AN

Article by Dr Michael S. Galvin
mobilityserviceslimited.com

So much change, so little dialogue

The industry appears to have been in a state of flux for over a decade now. The relative calm and focus of competing on service, availability, and at the margins, growth is but a distant memory as is the era of profit being an indicator of a company's health. The heady days of drivers loyally working for one company and operators actually knowing what resources they have at their disposal are long gone. And thanks to worker status and the threat of tribunals, refusing bookings is now commonplace rather than an outlier which may warrant a final warning. Similarly, those companies that had a shift system in place so that nights and days had sufficient supply or those that had dress codes or even uniforms are left to fare as best they can.

I suppose the big question is whether any of this has improved the customer experience? I think we can all agree that has not been the case. The industry at times borders on the Wild West with drivers gamifying the multi app system for the biggest surge, leaving customers using operators with lower paying fares (i.e. non-surgers) stranded.

Did the industry formerly occupy planet normality or are we now the inhabitants of it? Whilst it felt normal, low bars to entry, lots of mom and pop businesses and a few biggies mainly domiciled in the larger cities, was it a ripe apple waiting to be picked? Too insular, too cosseted and complacent about regulation and the day-to-day demands of running a business being effective barriers to entry? Whatever was to blame, our world is very different now and we are still not back to anywhere near a steady state.

Politics and commercial are bedfellows

If the taxi and PH industry was one business or, dare I say it, a properly organised industry rather than fragmented at every level, we would have a clear list of commercial goals and the enablers needed to deliver them. As it is, we have a whinge list of largely domestic trivia which is aired for at an hour or two at whingefests aka trade meetings. Like a bad marriage we know what we don't want, but we have no mechanism to collate our top three or heaven forbid a top ten of what we really do want or indeed need.

We therefore get, if not what we deserve, certainly what we are given. Anyone who thinks running a business is all about the internal environment and the external environment is for others to sort out, is sadly mistaken.

If you think I am wrong, that's OK because I think you are wrong and we can both have differing opinions. My evidence is based on, yes experience, but also on observation. Just look at the big guys, their polished representatives turned up looking smart and well prepared for the recent Transport Select Committee Evidence Sessions. They delivered their points eloquently; they were rehearsed and largely aligned. They spoke of evidence and data and what was good for the customer. Authoritative and credible came to mind.

The big guys spend serious money on public and government affairs and it shows. Just look at the Transport Secretary's glee in press releases after meeting with Autonomous Vehicle (AV) companies who talk of investing millions in the UK creating jobs and bringing in new technology.

But these big guys don't only court politicians and policymakers, they manage their business operations as well. The reason they do both is because they are the sum parts of running a business.

You can be absolutely certain that the big guys have clear business plans and the strategies that set out what is needed to deliver those plans. The key question is why doesn't the rest of the industry which is busy worrying about cross-border, logos and stickers, colours of vehicles and differences between licensing authority regulations. All of which may have their place in a strategy, but they are not on their own a strategy.

What is our story? What do we want? How do we deliver it?

Taxis and PH are an important industry. I won't rehearse what we do and our place in transport infrastructure, we should all know these things off the top of our head. We turn over £13bn per annum through direct sales (fares), we provide a living to 400k people directly. We almost certainly provide a living to a similar number of people through our multi-million-pound investments in technology, vehicles, premises (CAPEX) etc. We are positive contributors to the UK's economy through tax and OPEX (operating costs) but who actually knows this? Where are those messages promoted on behalf of the industry? Why is the Transport Secretary not excited by our contribution to UK PLC? Maybe no one tells her!



What do we want? How much time do we as an industry really focus on what we want. How much time do you as a business person spend working out what you would like your business to look like next year and five or ten years time? Even if you think about it, what do you do to deliver it? Who has ever asked their customers what they want? And if you have, what have you then done to deliver it? Do you even know who your customers are? I don't mean you get to know every Mrs Miggins whom you take shopping once a week, albeit she may well feel she knows your company and loyally sticks with you. No, I mean what are your customers, why do they use your service, are they young or old, rich or poor, car owners or not, commuters or late night ravers? Would they like to use you to go to a restaurant or cinema but don't because they are not certain of getting home? What do they really think of your service? What would encourage them to use you more? If you don't know you should. The old excuse of: we are too small for all that is not a valid reason not to do at least some of it.

Are you getting new customers and then losing older customers? If someone was using you but stopped do you care as long as new customers are coming along? What happens when the new customers stop coming? What if a loyal customer stops using you after two bad experiences but could be won back? Perhaps you are too big for all that - if that is the case let's hope you stay too big for all of that.

None of this is rocket science it's basic customer relationship management, running a cab company 101.

So assuming you do all of the above what is the business plan? Where do you want to get to? The strategy may simply be to stay in business, to remain about the same size, to sell in a few years, to pass the business onto the kids or to grow significantly even perhaps geographically. Great so how? Yes you can talk about staff and drivers, upgrades to systems but what else does the business need to grow? Can you grow for example with the constant threat of a tribunal, an unreliable service not knowing how many drivers will cover your work due to multi-apping, is the VAT quagmire a concern, what about the changes to legislation next year, AVs? Are you really going to set out on an ambitious plan without thinking about these issues? If not what are you going to do to address them. And what does good look like from an external environment perspective? How will that be achieved?

If you run a 100-car service that you would like to grow to be a 1,000-car service in five years, it is not realistic to spend the money needed to significantly change the external environment, influence legislation or resolve worker status issues. That is where trade associations come in. Many issues are common to all companies in this industry, both big and small. Properly funded and functioning trade associations can achieve great things for an industry and should be expected to do so. But it takes two to tango.

Representation

Only a fraction of companies in this industry belong to a trade association and few of those do very much other than pay their subs and maybe turn up to a trade meeting now and again.

Getting the external environment right is vital to the delivery of your business plan whatever that is; buy and build, organic growth, steady state, sell, grow or keep. Go to meetings, bring your asks, request proper workshops, working groups or whatever to tease out what it is the industry wants and needs and then get your mates to join as well. Fund the trade association properly so professional public affairs people can be employed to do the hard yards and secure meaningful meetings with politicians and policymakers where our wants and needs are properly presented in professional documents that excite and clarify how important this industry really is and what is possible.

Trade associations that truly represent at least the majority of an industry have a decent voice and a significant chance of advancing their agenda. Trade associations cannot develop their own agenda, regardless what some may think. Trade associations need to canvass opinion, gain some form of consensus and develop the agenda from there. Then the skill is to deliver that agenda through professional engagement.

None of this is easy and to be honest as an industry we are not very skilled at it. But I'm sure we can all learn.

Trade associations should not act alone there needs to be some consensus across the industry to really move the dial. Dying in a ditch for a principle may have its place, but and sorry for the cliches, the best can be the enemy of the good.

The alternative

The alternative is not worth thinking about. We can all paddle our own little canoes in different directions, whinge and moan about decisions taken by others in a vacuum of ideas and proposals from the industry, ignore consultations, demand that decisions legitimately taken be reversed and sabre rattle about judicial reviews, which contrary to popular belief are not there to simply reverse decisions that a faction of the trade who never engaged in the process now don't like.

The big boys will engage, will submit comprehensive responses to consultations and will ensure that politicians and policy makers are 100% clear about what they want. Why does the rest of industry simply opt out?

So why does this matter

It matters because this is your wealth, your work and your blood sweat and tears. If this industry becomes unviable due to wrong legislation, wrong regulation and policies that just overload smaller businesses, what then is Plan B? Maybe like Marks and Spencer's mantra there is no Plan B. The dye will be well and truly cast and if you have anything left to sell, that will be your only option and if not it's been nice knowing you and please switch the lights off on the way out.

Too dramatic? Too fatalistic? Maybe.

My advice would be to reduce the risk and maximise your chances of success. Concentrate on your business but also don't ignore politics and policy - it can make or break you. There are enough brains in this industry to do what needs doing, you just need to work together on the things that really matter, that everyone can coalescence around and sacrifice a few hobby horses to get the big things across the line.

Remember if you don't maybe nobody else will and you will be playing on a pitch that won't be favouring you, your business or your future.



iCabbi

IT'S GO TIME

Introducing the all new iCabbi Passenger App



icabbi.com

BRADFORD FIRM LOSES REMAINING SCHOOL CONTRACTS AS ANOTHER HANDS BACK 23

Last month **PHTM** reported that local operators had raised concerns about school transport bids submitted at rates significantly below prevailing commercial levels. They warned Bradford Council that the prices quoted were too low to provide a safe, reliable and financially sustainable service.

Despite these reported warnings, contracts continued to be awarded. However, serious questions are now being raised about the council's tendering process following reports that Girlington Private Hire, which allegedly secured more than 300 school runs and had already handed back around 20 due to difficulties delivering the work at the agreed rates, received a letter on 16 October 2026 notifying it of the termination of its remaining contracts.

Issues have also emerged over alleged service failures, including late collections, inconsistent driver arrangements and safeguarding concerns involving vulnerable children. These allegations remain unverified, and Bradford Council has yet to confirm the grounds for the reported terminations.

Council decisions questioned

One operator, speaking anonymously, questioned why contracts continued to be awarded despite reported warnings:

"The council was made aware that the prices being offered were extremely low and that there were concerns about whether the work could be managed at those rates. Other operators raised concerns at the time, yet the contracts continued to be awarded.

"Now all the runs are being terminated, drivers could be left facing the consequences of decisions they had no control over."

AS WE GO TO PRESS – ANOTHER 23 RUNS HANDED BACK

PHTM has been informed that another Bradford operator, reportedly awarded 35 new school transport contracts, has handed back 23 of them. Sources claim Bradford Council subsequently put these routes back out to tender, allowing operators just 24 hours to respond. The council reportedly cited significant operational changes affecting the routes.

However, **PHTM** has been told that such changes applied to only four of the 23 routes. Why, then, was it necessary to retender all 23 at such short notice? Would it have been fairer and more efficient, where procurement rules permit, to approach operators who finished second or third in the original bidding process?

Furthermore, is 24 hours sufficient time for operators to properly assess the routes, calculate realistic costs, establish driver and escort availability and prepare a financially sustainable bid? Rushed tendering risks creating the very problems the council should be trying to avoid.

What checks were carried out?

The scale of Girlington's alleged original award raises further questions. What checks established whether the company had sufficient drivers, passenger escorts, vehicles and management resources to deliver so many school runs?

Were warnings about unrealistic prices properly investigated? And when contracts reportedly began being returned, did the council reassess the operator's ability to fulfil the remaining work?

Value for money – or simply the lowest bid?

The wider concern is whether Bradford Council's procurement process places sufficient emphasis on operators' ability to deliver safe, reliable and sustainable services, rather than concentrating too heavily on price.

Drivers and passenger escorts face potential loss of income, while families need reassurance that transport arrangements will continue without disruption. For SEND children in particular, familiar drivers and consistent routines can be essential.

Accepting the cheapest bid is no saving if contracts subsequently fail, routes have to be reallocated and vulnerable children face disruption to their journeys.

With school runs being handed back or terminated, Bradford Council must now address whether its own procurement and contract management procedures are contributing to the problem – and what needs to change to prevent it happening again.

PHTM has contacted Bradford Council for comment on both this article and last month's report. However, as we go to press, no response has yet been received. We would nevertheless welcome the council's response and would be happy to provide space in next month's issue for its comments.

CHILDREN RELUCTANT TO USE SEND SCHOOL TAXIS IN ESSEX

"I don't want to put my children in the school transport taxi, but how else do I get them to school?" asks Donna. Three of her children have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and rely on Essex County Council's transport scheme to get to their specialist school.

The BBC reports that Donna was one of a number of parents who got in touch with them after a watchdog found the scheme caused families distress and put children's safety at risk.

Sam Journet, cabinet member for education, SEND and skills, said the report "was shocking" and the council had "asked for a top to bottom review of home-to school-transport".

The council received more than 90 complaints about the transport scheme in autumn 2025 and more than 20 further complaints in January and February this year, according to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO, external).

It investigated two separate complaints concerning missed or late pick-ups, drivers changing frequently and one child going missing.

Under the transport provider 24x7, routes and drivers would change to save money, showing "a disregard" for the needs of children that "rely on consistency and routine", the report said.

Donna, 40 and from Colchester, said her children now "don't want to get on the taxi" and she had made a complaint to the council.

"We've had staff sicknesses, so at the last minute we're told they can't collect, or they'll be 60 minutes late - or you'll get to the other end of the day, where a pick-up will be late, stranding the children at school for an hour," she said.

On one occasion, staff drove her children home; on others, her husband has left work early to collect the children. She compared this to the previous transport company, where "the drivers were absolutely fabulous, fully trained, interacted with the kids".

Emma's husband had lost his job after "his boss didn't understand that he needed to do the school run", she said.

Their seven-year-old daughter is severely autistic and completely non-verbal and needs harnesses to keep her safe when she is being transported to school.

"The previous company were very welcoming, calling my daughter by her first name as soon as they saw her," said the 40-year-old.

"When she got in the taxi the first time, there was no communication, which made me feel uncomfortable - and can you imagine how it made her feel?"

Soon her daughter "didn't want to get in the transport, she was anxious, she was pacing and running, clinging to me, so that was really upsetting" she said.

Emma and her husband, who is now self-employed, now do the school run.

As they have another child whose school is 20 minutes in a different direction, their daughter "has a really long journey to get to school".

"He will be awake in the night - and it's the first thing he says to me in the morning is 'I don't want to go to school'," said Rebecca, 36.

"We haven't reached that point where he doesn't go, but there have been a few times when he has been stood outside completely frozen, not able to get into the taxi."

She was describing her 11-year-old, who was "really struggling" since he had begun using the scheme to take him to his new secondary school. "24x7 don't seem to have the information from the local authority about the children's needs and they just try and seem to be trying to get as many children into the taxis as possible," she added. Rebecca has also put in a complaint to the council.

Journet said the LGSCO report "was shocking, it's quite frankly atrocious... [parents] were very right to complain".

He said: "We can't say that it's never going to happen again, but we're doing everything in our power to ensure the service becomes the best it can be."

The Reform UK councillor blamed the previous Conservative administration, which had run Essex County Council for a quarter of a century.

"What we can take ownership of is how we move forward and we ensure that the service is the best that it can be," he added.

"Myself and the leader, Peter Harris, have asked for a top to bottom review of home-to-school transport and where providers are not providing that service, that high expectation that we have for the service, we will hold them to account."

PEOPLE CARRIER SPECIAL

The Taxi Centre

FORD TOURNEO CUSTOM

340 L2 PETROL FWD
2.5 PHEV 232PS H1
TITANIUM AUTO
9 SEATER



£237.96
WEEKLY EQUIVALENT

£1,000
CUSTOMER DEPOSIT

9 SEATER

£1,031.15
60 MONTHLY PAYMENTS

8.9% APR
REPRESENTATIVE

Ford

Cash Price	Customer Deposit	60 Monthly Payments	Amount of Credit	Total Amount Payable	Fixed Rate of Interest	Representative APR
£50,995	£1,000	£1,031.15	£49,995	£62,868.81	4.75%	8.9%

FREE NATIONWIDE DELIVERY

CALL THE TAXI EXPERTS
0330 178 1083

MPG (l/100km): 68.9-79.1 (combined). CO_2 emissions: 40-47 g/km. "Max range" or "Miles per Gallon" figures shown are usually from the Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP). These allow comparison between different vehicles as they are based on a standard laboratory test. Real world results will vary depending on factors including (but not limited to) the accessories fitted after registration, weather conditions, driving styles, vehicle load, vehicle and tyre maintenance including tyre type and pressure (and, for battery electric vehicles, temperature, starting charge of the battery and battery condition).

We are a credit broker and not a lender. Finance is subject to status and finance company acceptance. We do not act as independent advisors and can introduce you to a limited number of lenders. We will receive a commission from the lender which we will explain to you during the process. Your interest rate may vary based on your personal circumstances. *Savings shown against manufacturer's recommended retail price. All prices including VAT. Unless otherwise stated, metallic paint at extra cost. Library images shown for illustration purposes only. The Taxi Centre is a trading name of Grantham Motor Company Limited which is incorporated in England & Wales and is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Company registration number 04722957. FCA number: 312369. VAT Registration number 902737238. Registered office: Vertu House, Fifth Avenue Business Park, Team Valley, Gateshead, NE11 0XA



VOLKSWAGEN CADDY MAXI

2.0 TDI LIFE 5DR [TECH PACK]

£138.01 WEEKLY EQUIVALENT | **£1,000** CUSTOMER DEPOSIT

£598.02 60 MONTHLY PAYMENTS | **8.9% APR** REPRESENTATIVE

SAVE £5,678*

Cash Price	Customer Deposit	60 Monthly Payments	Amount of Credit	Total Amount Payable	Fixed Rate of Interest	Representative APR
£29,995	£1,000	£598.02	£28,995	£36,881.31	4.75%	8.9%



RENAULT TRAFIC

LWB MINIBUS DIESEL LL30 BLUE DCI 110 ADVANCE 9 SEATER

£185.60 WEEKLY EQUIVALENT | **£1,000** CUSTOMER DEPOSIT

£804.27 60 MONTHLY PAYMENTS | **8.9% APR** REPRESENTATIVE

SAVE £12,100*

Cash Price	Customer Deposit	60 Monthly Payments	Amount of Credit	Total Amount Payable	Fixed Rate of Interest	Representative APR
£39,995	£1,000	£804.27	£38,995	£49,256.31	4.75%	8.9%

FREE NATIONWIDE DELIVERY

SEARCH ONLINE THETAXICENTRE.COM

The Taxi Centre

Volkswagen Caddy Maxi 2.0 TDI Life 5dr [Tech Pack] MPG (l/100km): 50.4 (combined). CO_2 emissions: 146 g/km. Renault Trafic LWB Minibus Diesel LL30 Blue dCi 110 Advance 9 Seater MPG (l/100km): 40.9 (combined). CO_2 emissions: 180 g/km. "Max range" or "Miles per Gallon" figures shown are usually from the Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP). These allow comparison between different vehicles as they are based on a standard laboratory test. Real world results will vary depending on factors including (but not limited to) the accessories fitted after registration, weather conditions, driving styles, vehicle load, vehicle and tyre maintenance including tyre type and pressure (and, for battery electric vehicles, temperature, starting charge of the battery and battery condition).

Ford BYD GEELY NISSAN SKODA HYUNDAI MG KIA LEVC

LONDON NOT READY FOR DRIVERLESS TAXIS, REPORT ISSUES WARNING

London is not yet ready for driverless taxis, according to a report by the London Assembly's transport committee, which has urged TfL to withhold approval for a full rollout until much stronger safety measures are put in place.

The committee argues that operators such as Waymo, Wayve and Baidu have failed to provide sufficient evidence that their bold safety claims will work on the capital's busy roads, with concerns raised over passenger safety, increased traffic congestion and higher pollution levels.

The report warns that driverless vehicles could make existing transport problems worse and questioned how passengers would be protected during emergencies if they faced assault, serious illness or threats without a driver present.

The report also highlights concerns that TfL currently lacks the legal powers to limit vehicle numbers or revoke operator licences. Mayor Sadiq Khan and TfL executives also expressed unease over current rules where the DfT controls operational permits, leaving TfL with limited regulatory authority.

Caroline Russell AM, Chair of the Transport Committee, warned that introducing robotaxis could put further pressure on London's roads and public transport network. "Driverless cars may offer convenience, but could also delay local buses, add pollution outside schools or snarl up a busy junction," she explained, urging TfL to focus on the public purpose of streets as spaces for all Londoners to travel safely, efficiently and conveniently.

While driverless taxis already operate in several cities across the US and China, London's rollout has faced scrutiny over accountability, safety, congestion and job losses for private hire drivers. A Centre for British Progress report warned that over 400,000 UK drivers, including 121,000 in London, could soon see their livelihoods become obsolete.

Although Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander accelerated the timetable in mid-2025 to target a launch by spring 2026, regulatory delays have pushed timelines back, with TfL yet to publish specific guidance. Operators must also pass a national safety assessment by the DVSA before running without a human safety driver, and as of late 2026, no operator has completed this multi-stage process, making a wider UK rollout more likely in 2027.

Public opinion remains sceptical, with a YouGov survey showing just 29% of Londoners support driverless vehicles while 42% oppose them. In response, the committee has issued 13 recommendations, including granting TfL greater control over driverless vehicle permits, tougher safety standards, accessibility for disabled people, and support for workers.

Meanwhile, the ADCU has strongly backed the committee's call for TfL to have more control over AVs, welcoming the report, which is available at:

https://shorturl.at/WamrV.

The union has consistently argued that AV policy must prioritise public safety, democratic accountability and workers' livelihoods rather than commercial interests alone, having called for a legally enforceable just transition and meaningful worker consultation in its June submission to the committee.

ADCU General Secretary Cristina-Georgiana Ioanitescu said: "This report marks an important step towards ensuring that any future deployment of autonomous passenger vehicles is guided by the interests of Londoners, passengers and workers rather than the priorities of technology companies alone."

She added that the union welcomes recommendations on protecting driver jobs, giving TfL stronger regulatory powers, and addressing road safety and congestion. "The Assembly has rightly identified this as a devolved government issue, something we know to be close to the new Prime Minister Andy Burnham's heart, so we hope, and expect, that he will act to restore meaningful powers to license AVs to TfL - the body elected to manage, and regulate, London's transport network - and away from the DfT," she stated, emphasising that drivers and their unions must be involved at every stage of consultation.

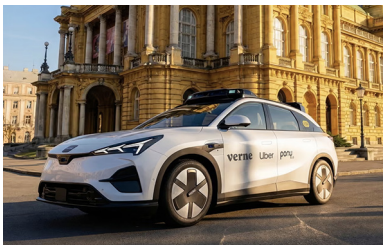
"We stand ready to work with both central Government, and TfL, to ensure our members' voices are heard, loud and clear."

Both Uber and Wayve have defended their phased approach, emphasising that safety operators remain in the front seats of current vehicles and that autonomous cars will coexist alongside human drivers for the foreseeable future.

UBER BEGINS SELF-DRIVING ROBOTAXI TESTING IN MANCHESTER

Uber has announced plans to pilot self-driving cars in Manchester, making it the second UK city after London to see the deployment of its AV technology. Partnering with tech firms Verne and Pony.ai, Uber announced the news last month, marking its latest expansion following the launch of Europe's first autonomous taxi service on the Uber app in Zagreb, in August. Testing is now under way with Gen-7 Robotaxis mapping streets in north-west England with a safety driver behind the wheel and no passengers. The move comes as Uber targets offering robotaxi trips in as many as 15 cities worldwide by the end of 2026.

In September Uber launched



limited passenger services in London using Wayve vehicles with safety drivers under TfL's licensing regulations. However, the rollout faces growing opposition from cabbies, politicians, and unions. Further scrutiny came from a recent critical report from London assembly's transport committee.

Local transport authorities in Greater Manchester have also emphasised caution amid existing road congestion and efforts to encourage public transport and active travel. While noting that the national government holds regulatory approval powers, a spokesperson for TfGM confirmed no formal application to operate driverless taxis has been submitted. They stated: "New technologies play an increasingly important role in the growth of our city region. But they need to be introduced responsibly, safely and with real thought about what it means for our residents," reiterating that safety remains their top priority and that strong assurances will be required before any vehicles are permitted to operate on local roads.

GMB DEMANDS TECH LEVY TO SAVE DRIVERS FROM DRIVERLESS CAR JOB LOSSES

The GMB Union is demanding that government set up a dedicated transition fund to protect workers facing job losses due to AVs.

Financed by a new levy on tech operators, the proposed funding would directly support drivers whose earnings fall or who are made redundant as driverless technology rolls out across the nation. The union estimates that more than 300,000 transport jobs across the UK could be placed at risk by the shift to automated travel.

Addressing delegates and Justin Madders, the government minister responsible for AVs, at the Labour Party conference in September, GMB official Mark Betteridge advocated for a "just transition" plan to help drivers reskill, noting that "the people who do these jobs will know the reality far better of what change will look like." He stressed that while AVs could complement existing services, the threat of worker displacement remains severe. "Our job is to improve pay, terms & conditions. When it comes to driverless taxis, we would look for some sort of transition plan even a transition fund to get people through. Driverless taxis have the potential to add to what is provided - but there is the obvious threat of people losing their jobs."

The campaign for statutory protections has grown, beginning at the union's annual conference in Blackpool in June, where delegates voted in favour of calling for government legislation to mandate the transition fund. The urgency was underscored again in a September letter to union members, in which representatives criticised transport authorities for inaction ahead of the impending rollout. The letter warned that "with AV deployment potentially imminent neither TfL or the DfT have done anything to ensure a 'just transition' that protects drivers, their families and communities during the future introduction of AVs."

The union insists AVs must not be introduced in the UK until a transition plan and all safety concerns are fully agreed with drivers.

THE DEATH OF GOOGLE?

ARE PEOPLE 'CHATGPT-ING' INSTEAD OF GOOGLING?

By David Hunter,
CEO, Take Me Group
www.takeme.taxi

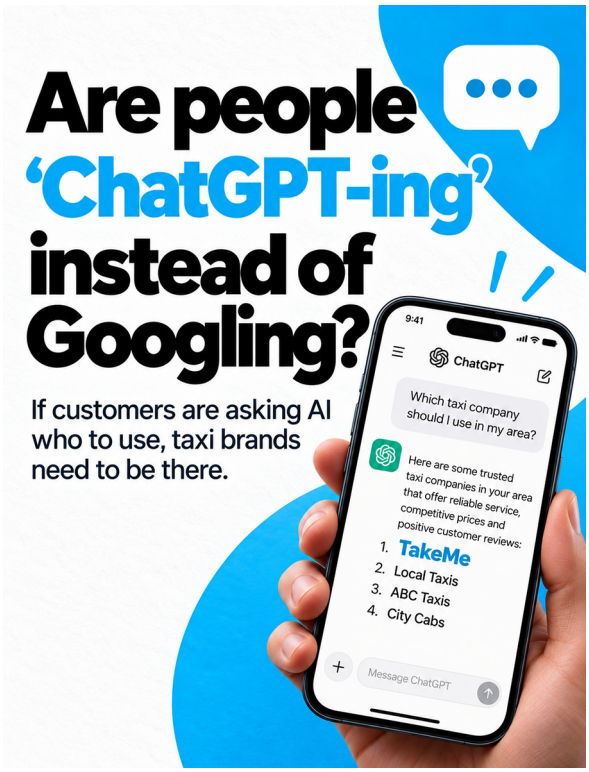


For years, "Google it" has been part of everyday language. But I increasingly wonder whether we are entering the age of "ChatGPT it". Consumers are no longer only typing a few words into a search box and working through pages of results. They are asking conversational questions: Where should I eat? Which hotel should I use? And, increasingly, who can get me a taxi?

That matters to our industry. Ofcom measured almost 13 million UK adults visiting ChatGPT in June 2025, more than triple the figure a year earlier. More recently, Yext found that 36.7% of UK consumers had used AI for local search in the previous month. Meanwhile, Department for Transport data shows that people in England average around nine taxi or private-hire journeys a year.

There is no published figure for how many of those taxi journeys begin with ChatGPT, so any estimate must be treated cautiously. But even if only 1% of the taxi demand associated with the UK ChatGPT audience involved an AI search, that could already represent well over 100,000 potential taxi-related opportunities a month. At 3% or 5%, the opportunity moves into several hundred thousand.

Advertising inside ChatGPT makes this particularly interesting. Unlike a traditional keyword advert, ChatGPT Ads can use the context and intent of a conversation to decide what is relevant. A customer asking about wedding transport could therefore be shown a wedding-focused transport advert; somebody arranging an airport journey could see an airport-transfer message. Advertisers can create separate ad groups, creative variations and "context hints" so the platform has the right message available for different customer needs.



The next step is measurement. OpenAI supports conversion tracking and UTM parameters, so a transport operator can tag clicks from a ChatGPT campaign. For a business using a dispatch platform such as iCabbi, those identifiers could potentially be carried into the booking journey and reconciled, via booking data or the iCabbi API, against completed trips. Suddenly we are not just measuring impressions and clicks: we can measure bookings, conversion rate, cost per booking and ultimately return on advertising spend.

For taxi and private-hire operators, the opportunity is not simply another advertising channel. It is the possibility that the customer's search journey itself is changing. Google did to the Yellow Pages what smartphones did to telephone booking.

AI may be the next shift - and our industry should be testing it now, while the market is still young.

Lynkpay

Powered by KNECTD

A partner you can trust.

Payments infrastructure built for UK taxi and private hire fleets, so you can run your business with confidence.

- FCA-regulated payments
- Bank-grade security testing
- PCI DSS card security
- KYC and AML checks
- Instant driver payouts
- UK GDPR



See how LynkPay works for your fleet

www.lynkpay.co.uk | support@lynkpay.com

Scan to find out more

LYNKPAY LTD

Registered in England and Wales Company number 13288967
We Work, 1 St. Peters Square Manchester, M2 3DE
ICO registration ZB338908

REGULATORY INFORMATION

Payment accounts are provided by Modulr FS Limited, authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for the issuance of electronic money (FRN 900573).

INTEGRATING TAXIS, PHVs AND AVs IN LONDON'S TRANSPORT NETWORK

By Danny O'Gorman, UK & Ireland General Manager at Freenow by Lyft
www.free-now.com/uk/



Autonomous vehicles (AVs) are becoming a reality on London's roads, raising important questions for drivers across the taxi and private hire trade. Rather than a binary choice between technology and drivers, AVs offer an opportunity to build a flexible, resilient transport network where autonomous tech works alongside black cabs and private hire vehicles (PHVs) to support driver earnings opportunities and customer service.

At Freenow by Lyft, we have begun testing Baidu Apollo's purpose-built AVs in London, initially in Brent, with safety operators on board. This marks an early step towards our planned public launch in 2027, subject to necessary approvals. It is vital to look at what AVs deliver in practice. If they add capacity during peak hours or in underserved areas where demand surges, they can help unlock extra market demand, reduce wait times for riders, and make on-demand transport a far more attractive alternative to private car ownership.

What does this mean for drivers?

Speaking to drivers across the trade, I know concerns about AVs are genuine and understandable. Any major shift in London's transport landscape sparks fair questions. Our focus is on growing the market pie rather than dividing existing work. Operational evidence demonstrates this: Lyft rides within the San Francisco operating area grew approximately 20% year over year. Furthermore, scaling AV operations creates new positions in fleet logistics and maintenance, where many full-time roles have been filled by drivers transitioning their skills.

Quicker, more reliable rides encourage more Londoners to leave personal cars at home, expanding total demand across the entire platform.

The role of the driver

An experienced driver remains essential for severe weather, complex routes, and passengers requiring physical assistance or personal care. Advanced technology cannot match human judgment, empathy, and tailored support. London's black cab trade in particular is world-renowned for good reason. Their unmatched knowledge of London, paired with vehicles built for full accessibility, featuring ramps, securement points, and spacious cabins, provides a service technology alone cannot replace.

That accessibility is essential to many passengers travelling independently. A recent survey by our charity partner, Whizz Kidz, found that 96% of young wheelchair users and their families were concerned that a decline in black cab numbers would make travel more difficult, while 53% said they used black cabs because suitable alternative transport was unavailable.

These findings reinforce what I tell our teams daily: maintaining a healthy, profitable, and accessible driver network is vital for London's mobility, economy, and social wellbeing. Driver skills and expertise do not lose value when new technology arrives, they become even more prized as passengers seek quality, safe and personal travel options.

There is demand for more choice

Clear evidence shows passengers are open to having more transport options as London evolves. Our research found that 58% of Londoners would be likely to try an AV. Support is even higher among younger Londoners, with almost two-thirds of those under 35 supporting the availability of AVs in the capital. For those interested in trying the technology, reliability was an important factor, with 43% highlighting it as a reason, while 51% said they were excited by the prospect of AVs.

These figures highlight a willingness to try new options, but one solution will never fit all journeys. Our responsibility is ensuring these technologies complement drivers, providing the right option for every trip while supporting driver earnings opportunities.

Building a bigger, more resilient network

The introduction of AVs marks a major evolution for London. At Freenow by Lyft, our participation in London's AV trials focuses on expanding total transport capacity, safeguarding driver earning opportunities, and ensuring drivers continue to thrive alongside new technology.

Cab Direct's **Taxi Price Drops & New Arrivals**

Cab Direct™

Big Brands. Small Prices.

Up to
£10,500
savings*



NEW ARRIVAL



MG HS Hybrid

MRRP £33,495 OTR

Now **£22,995** OTR*

Save £10,500 on MRRP*

TAXI PRICE DROP



JAECOO 7

Was £29,995 OTR

Now **£27,995** OTR*

Save £2,000*

TAXI PRICE DROP



MG S9 PHEV

MRRP £29,495 OTR

Now **£27,495** OTR*

Save £2,000*

*Selected vehicles and specifications only, subject to availability. Existing-stock savings compare the current Cab Direct selling price with the genuine previous Cab Direct advertised selling price. New-arrival savings compare the Cab Direct selling price with the applicable manufacturer's recommended retail price. "From" prices apply to entry level specifications. Savings vary by model and specification. Full terms apply.

Visit **cabdirect.com** | Call Our Team **0800 916 0007**

WRITTEN REASONS IN SCOTTISH LICENSING DECISIONS: WHAT *KINNEAR* REQUIRES

By Eddie Grice, Scottish Civic Licensing Agent
www.licencerep.co.uk and
Chairman Scottish PH Association
www.spha.scot

Anyone who has spent time before a licensing committee will know that a hearing can cover a considerable amount of ground. Evidence is discussed, questions are asked, submissions are made and councillors may express different views before reaching their decision. But once the meeting is over, one part of that process becomes particularly important, which is the reasons the authority gives for the decision it has actually made.

For those representing licence holders, that is not simply an administrative formality. Under **Schedule 1** to the **Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982**, written reasons can become central to any subsequent appeal to the Sheriff Court. They tell the licence holder what decision has been made and why, then provide the starting point for the court when examining that decision. That makes the quality of those reasons important so that the person whose licence is being suspended, revoked or refused is able to understand the basis on which that decision was reached.

The statutory framework

Paragraph 17 of Schedule 1 of the **'82 Act** provides a mechanism for requiring written reasons for certain licensing decisions. **Paragraph 18** then provides the statutory appeal route to the Sheriff Court.

The legislation therefore creates important links between the committee's decision, the reasons given for it and any appeal that follows.

The case law has developed alongside that statutory framework. The courts have repeatedly emphasised that a decision-maker must give proper and adequate reasons which leave an informed reader and the court in no real and substantial doubt as to why the decision was made and what material considerations were taken into account.

That principle comes from the well-known case of **Wordie Property Co Ltd v Secretary of State for Scotland (1984)**. Although Wordie was not a licensing case, its formulation has subsequently been applied across Scottish administrative law, including licensing decisions and, importantly for our purposes, decisions under the **Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.**

However, it is worth being clear about what this actually requires. A licensing committee is not expected to write a judicial judgment. It does not have to address every piece of evidence or explain every question discussed during a hearing.

In **Ritchie v Aberdeen City Council (2011)**, the court explained that the decision-maker does not need to engage in an elaborate evaluation of every point raised. The reasons must, however, identify the material considerations, evaluate them clearly and concisely, and set out the essence of the reasoning which led to the decision.

That distinction matters. The reasons don't need to be lengthy, but they need to actually explain the decision.

Kinnear and the reasons given at the time

This brings us to **Midlothian District Council v Kinnear**, an Inner House decision from 1992. Kinnear was the holder of a taxi driver's licence. His licence was suspended after the authority concluded that he was no longer a fit and proper person to hold it. The written notification of the decision stated that the suspension was imposed on account of his previous convictions.

When the matter reached the Sheriff Court on appeal, however, the licensing authority sought to rely on other matters which had been discussed at the committee hearing. These included matters concerning the appellant's ownership of a dog and his conduct before the hearing. The Inner House rejected that approach.

The significance of Kinnear is not that a licensing authority can never refer to anything which was discussed during a hearing. It is that the authority must be able to stand behind the reasons it actually gave for its decision. Kinnear was entitled to assume that the written notification contained the reasons for the decision and the council could not subsequently seek to supplement those reasons in order to defend the decision on appeal.

That principle has practical importance as a licence holder needs to know what decision they are

challenging. If the authority gives one reason for its decision but seeks to rely on substantially different reasons once the matter reaches court, the appellant is no longer dealing with the decision that was actually communicated to them.

The court has also made clear that this does not mean licensing authorities must produce something resembling a formal stated case. In **Loosefoot Entertainment Ltd v City of Glasgow District Licensing Board**, the court recognised the importance of the reasons given by the decision-maker while also making clear that the decision-maker simply needs to make the basis of the decision clear.

The two principles therefore sit together. The reasons must be sufficiently clear to explain the decision, but they do not have to be unnecessarily elaborate.

When detailed reasons still aren't enough

There is another useful illustration in **Black v Midlothian Council (2016)**. This is another case involving a taxi driver's licence under the 1982 Act. In that case, the licensing committee had provided a relatively detailed account of the matters before it. The problem, though, was that the reasons did not adequately explain how the matters considered by the committee led it to the conclusion that the appellant was not a fit and proper person to hold a licence. The Sheriff applied the **Wordie** test and remitted the matter for reconsideration.

That case is useful because it demonstrates that good reasons are not necessarily the same thing as long reasons. A committee can record a considerable amount of information and still leave the reader asking the most important question. Why did those matters lead to this decision?

Why this matters in practice

There is an understandable temptation, particularly after a contentious hearing, to treat the written reasons as an administrative task to be completed afterwards. The committee has reached its decision, the meeting is over and the paperwork simply records what happened. However, the above cases demonstrate why that approach can be problematic.

The written reasons are not merely a transcript of the hearing. They should identify the basis of the decision that the authority has actually made. If a committee has considered several matters but only some of them are material to its decision then the reasons should make that clear. If a particular piece of evidence is important to the conclusion then the reasons should explain its significance. If the decision turns on a fit and proper assessment then the reasons should explain how the matters relied upon lead to that conclusion.

That does not require a committee to write like a court, but it does require the decision to be intelligible.

This is also why Kinnear remains relevant more than three decades later. The case is a reminder that the appeal process is not an opportunity for a licensing authority to reconstruct its decision after the event. The Sheriff is considering the decision that the authority actually made, not a new decision developed through the council's answers to an appeal.

A practical safeguard for the trade

There is, therefore, a practical lesson here for anyone representing a licence holder or applicant before a licensing committee. That is, read the written reasons carefully. Do they actually explain why the decision was made? Do they identify the material matters relied upon? Do they explain the connection between those matters and the statutory test? Or, do they simply repeat phrases such as *"not fit and proper"* or *"in the interests of public safety"* without explaining what led the committee there?

If the reasons are unclear then that may matter on appeal. The courts have made clear that adequacy of reasons is not a cosmetic issue. It goes to the ability of the licence holder, and ultimately the court, to understand and scrutinise the decision. None of this means that every imperfectly drafted decision will automatically be unlawful. The courts have repeatedly recognised that the adequacy of reasons is a matter of substance and context rather than a test of literary perfection. However, there is an important difference between a concise explanation and an unexplained conclusion.

The lesson from **Wordie**, **Ritchie**, **Kinnear** and **Black** is, therefore, relatively straightforward. A licensing committee does not need to write a judgment, but it does need to explain its decision clearly enough that the licence holder and the court can understand what the decision was based upon. For a licensing system that can determine whether someone is allowed to continue working, that is not an unreasonable expectation.

The hearing may end when the committee leaves the room, but for the purposes of an appeal, the reasons the authority puts on paper may be where the real scrutiny begins.

WINNING BUSINESS CONTRACTS

A SMALL OPERATOR'S GUIDE TO SUCCESS

Article by Umar Jahangir
Founder of Hampton Travel, Coventry
www.hamptontravel.co.uk



Winning business accounts can provide valuable regular work for smaller PH operators. But securing a contract is only the beginning. Keeping clients depends on reliability, good communication and building trust.

I'm Umar Jahangir, founder of Hampton Travel, a pre-booked private hire operator in Coventry. Most of our business work involves council home-to-school transport. We also serve private medical transport clients and care homes, and provide airport transfers across Coventry and Warwickshire. Every driver holds a council PH licence, which requires an enhanced DBS check.

Here are the lessons I'd share with other small operators hoping to build long-term business relationships.

Start with an email, then build the relationship

Our first business client came through a cold email, but the work didn't arrive overnight. We spent time getting to know the customer and building a relationship before they booked with us.

Treat that first email as the start of a conversation, not a hard sell. Organisations arranging transport for children, patients or care home residents need to know they can trust you. Answer questions properly, be available and do what you promise. First impressions matter, but it's the follow-through that counts.

Be yourself

Don't try to sound like someone you're not. Business clients may work with you for years, so they want to know who they're dealing with. Be straightforward. If a request isn't possible, explain why. If something goes wrong, say so and explain what you're doing about it. In my experience, an honest answer is worth more than a polished sales pitch. Being approachable and genuine helps build confidence over time.

Give drivers clear instructions

A regular driver may know a customer's needs inside out, but what happens when they're unavailable? We give drivers a brief for each job, with notes about the journey, the client's requirements and anything a previous driver has learned. That way, someone covering the booking can provide a consistent service.

Important information should never be held by just one person. Clients shouldn't notice a drop in standards simply because a different driver arrives. That matters especially when passengers depend on a familiar, predictable routine.

Keep everyone informed

Even a well-organised operation can face unexpected changes. The important thing is how you respond. If a delay or last-minute problem arises, tell the client, the driver and anyone waiting at the destination what is happening and how you're dealing with it. Keep the information consistent so nobody is left guessing.

I believe silence can cause more damage to a business relationship than the delay itself. People want to know that someone is taking responsibility.

Sort out payment terms early

Agree how you'll be paid before the first journey. At Hampton Travel, we offer a prepaid Travel Account. Clients pay in advance, receive some extra travel credit and can see their journeys and costs in one place. The money they pay in doesn't expire, and each journey has an agreed fixed price.

This works well for us because it reduces the risk of late payment and makes administration easier for customers. It won't suit everyone, but clear payment terms matter whatever arrangement you choose.

Follow up and stay personal

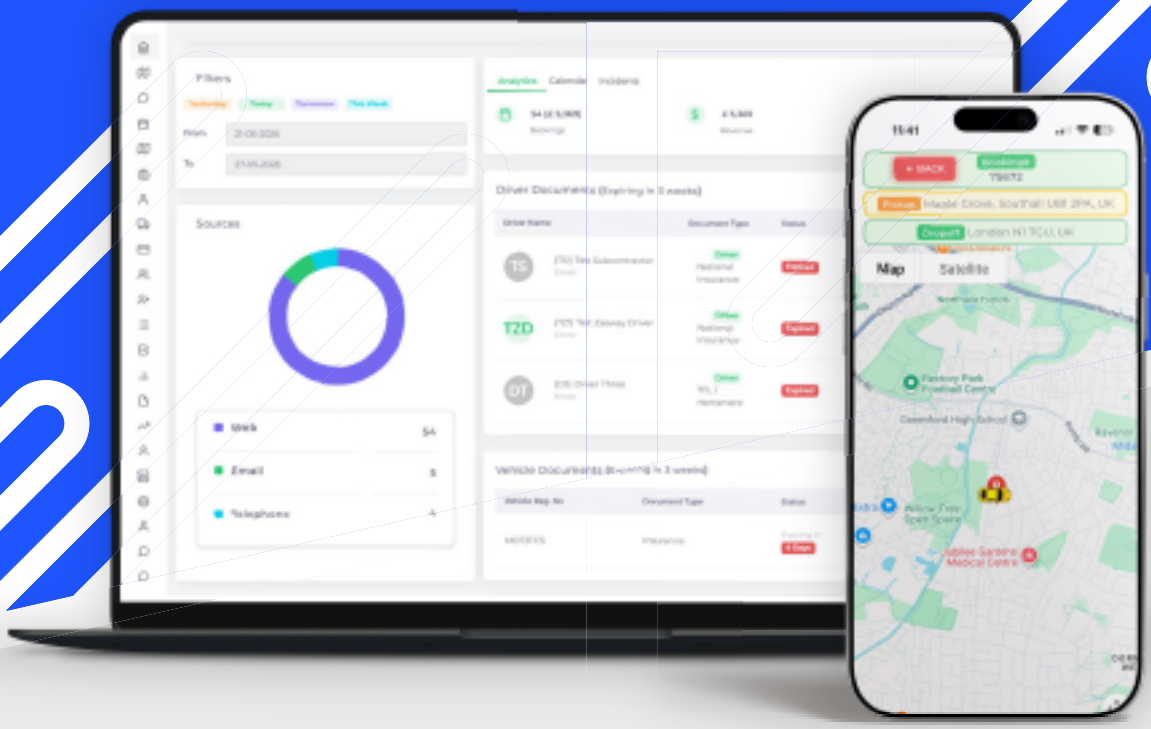
Not every email gets a reply. Set aside regular time to approach potential clients and follow up earlier enquiries. Building accounts takes persistence, and a polite follow-up can keep a conversation going.

A small operator has one advantage: the person answering the email is often the person running the business. Customers value being able to speak directly to someone who can make decisions.

Winning is only the start

A new contract is welcome, but keeping it requires consistent service. You don't always need the biggest fleet or the lowest price. Understand what your customers need, deliver what you promise and give them a reason to book again.

The Dispatch Upgrade You've Been Waiting For



- Cloud Based
- Web or App Booking
- Driver Tracking
- Custom Dashboard
- Incident Logging
- Client Portal
- TfL & Local Authority Compliant
- Two-Way Driver Chat

zasway

Contact us for a free demo
Tel: 020 8126 8111
Email: info@zasway.com

TfL UNVEILS PLANS TO MAKE ALL NEW LONDON PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES FULLY ELECTRIC BY 2028

Transport for London (TfL) has launched a public consultation on ambitious plans to phase out petrol, diesel, and hybrid engines from newly-licensed PHVs. Under the proposed roadmap, all newly-licensed PHVs across the capital must be fully electric and zero-emission from July 2028.

To support market readiness and give manufacturers sufficient notice, wheelchair-accessible PHVs will be given until July 2030 to make the complete transition.

The measures aim to tackle air pollution, lower carbon footprints, and improve public health by addressing harmful exhaust pollutants such as nitrogen oxide (NOx), which aggravate asthma and respiratory conditions.

TfL estimates that the shift could reduce NOx emissions from PHV by 9% and carbon dioxide emissions by 35% within the first decade. Over an 18-year period, combined forecasts suggest CO2 and NOx emissions could drop by as much as 97%.

While over 70% of London's 94,661 licensed PHVs are currently classified as zero-emission capable, many still depend on internal combustion engines. Figures from September highlight that only 35.5% of the fleet is fully electric, with 35.2% operating as plug-in hybrids that still emit exhaust fumes when burning petrol/diesel.

Alongside the main electrification deadline, TfL is proposing stricter licensing rules to take effect from March 2027. These include capping the maximum age of PHVs at 10 years and reducing the grace period to renew an expired taxi or PH licence from two years down to 12 months. Vehicles exceeding that timeframe would have to reapply as new submissions under the latest standards.

Additionally, TfL intends to stop approving new alternative fuel conversions - such as liquefied petroleum gas and compressed natural gas - as well as new exhaust emission-reduction systems.

Christina Calderato, Director of Strategy at TfL, highlighted the dual importance of the sector, stating: "We recognise the crucial role that London's private hire services play for customers, providing a vital door-to-door service. However, PHVs are also a vital component in London's transition to becoming a healthier city with less pollution. Building on the progress that has already been made, this consult-ation sets out our proposals to drive towards a zero-emission fleet."

Deputy Mayor for Transport Seb Dance added: "The Mayor and I are proud that London's PHV drivers have led the way in adopting zero-emission capable technology – but there is more to do. I encourage everyone to take part in the consultation as we continue building a greener, cleaner and more sustainable London for all."

The consultation, runs until 23:59 on 2 December and can be accessed at: https://tfl.gov.uk/tph-zero-emissions.

ADDISON LEE FOUNDER LOSES £20.5M DOMICILE FIGHT WITH HMRC

Sir John Griffin, founder of London minicab firm Addison Lee, has lost a court battle against HMRC over a £20.5 million tax bill accrued between 2013 and 2020. Despite living in the UK for over seven decades, Sir John claimed he was domiciled in Ireland through his parents, qualifying his foreign investments for preferential tax treatment under Britain's former "non-dom" rules.

To challenge the claim, HMRC had to prove that Sir John or his father had permanently settled in England. The First-tier Tribunal examined extensive family history, including Sir John's London roots, business history, Arsenal season ticket, and golf club memberships.

Judge Michaela Snelders ruled in favour of HMRC, concluding that Sir John's father had likely acquired an English domicile by 1959, which Sir John inherited. Additionally, the judge noted that Sir John's lifelong residence and business operations in London demonstrated a clear choice to make England his permanent home.

Although Sir John can appeal, the four-day tribunal highlights the flaws of the historic non-dom system, which relied on subjective debates over ancestral ties and personal intentions rather than clear statutory laws. The UK government officially scrapped the controversial system in April 2025.


THE Taxi SHOP
BACK WITH A BANG.
MERCEDES-BENZ VITO
9 SEATS | XLWB |
AUTOMATIC | VARIOUS OPTIONS |
ENQUIRE TODAY - 01525 717695

THE BIG TWO - A CHANGING NORTHERN IRELAND TAXI INDUSTRY

By Phil Hamilton CEO Belfast & Newtownabbey Airport Transfers
belfastanat@gmail.com



Who are the Big Two now?

In Northern Ireland, when we refer to the "Big Two" in the taxi industry, we have historically meant FonaCAB and Value Cabs. Having worked for both companies during more than 30 years in the local taxi industry, I have seen first-hand that both have impressive operations. In recent months, both FonaCAB and Value Cabs have taken steps to strengthen their presence in the Northern Ireland taxi market.

FonaCAB's expansion has been particularly notable. Its growth has increasingly involved bringing established local taxi businesses into the FonaCAB operation. This includes the acquisition of 365 Taxis. More recently, FonaCAB acquired Q Cabs and Bann Taxis in Banbridge, two long-established local businesses. FonaCAB has also brought Mahoods Taxis in Carrickfergus into its operation.

Value Cabs has also continued to expand, recently adding Alfa Taxis and East End Taxis to its operation.

This represents a significant development in an industry traditionally made up of a mixture of large operators and smaller, locally established businesses. It also raises questions about the future for independent operators as acquisitions become increasingly competitive and companies seek to attract drivers to their operations.

So, who are the Big Two now?

FonaCAB and Value Cabs remain two of the most recognisable names in Northern Ireland's taxi industry. However, the balance between them may be changing. FonaCAB's acquisition strategy has increased its size and geographical reach, bringing a growing number of established local operators under one umbrella.

The figures behind the changing market

To examine the current position more closely, I submitted a Freedom of Information request to the Department for Infrastructure, seeking figures for drivers affiliated with the operator licences of FonaCAB, Value Cabs and Uber.

In its response dated 19 October 2026, the Department provided the following figures, correct as of 8 October 2026:

- **FonaCAB Belfast Limited: 1,236 drivers affiliated with its operator licence.**
- **Uber NI R Limited: 1,017 drivers affiliated with its operator licence.**
- **Value Cabs Limited: 627 drivers affiliated with its operator licence.**

Source: Department for Infrastructure, Chief Executive's Office, Freedom of Information response concerning the taxi industry, dated 19 October 2026, following my request of 29 September 2026.

These figures make for interesting reading. FonaCAB has the highest number of drivers affiliated with its operator licence among the three businesses listed, while Uber has also established a substantial presence in the Northern Ireland market.

It is important to clarify that these are driver affiliation figures, not vehicle fleet totals or market-share figures. They provide a snapshot of the scale of each operator's licensed operation, rather than a complete picture of journeys undertaken or revenue generated.

The Uber question: are the official figures telling the whole story?

A further development may complicate the picture.

A recent informal survey circulated through the Uber Northern Ireland WhatsApp group and referenced on Facebook, reportedly suggested that 20% of responding drivers hold their own taxi operator's licence.



Applying that percentage to Uber's official figure of 1,017 produces an estimate of approximately 203 drivers.

If these 203 drivers are additional to those already recorded under the Uber NI R Limited operator licence, the combined figure would be approximately 1,220 drivers.

This is a provisional estimate, not a confirmed total. The survey's sample size, methodology and the extent of any overlap with the official figures would need to be established before the additional drivers could be counted with confidence.

Nevertheless, the finding raises an important question about the structure of Uber's operation in Northern Ireland. How many drivers using the platform are affiliated with Uber's operator licence, and how many operate under their own licences?

The distinction matters when comparing Uber with traditional operators such as FonaCAB and Value Cabs. Driver affiliations, vehicle licences and operator licences measure different things and should not be treated as interchangeable.

A changing industry

The Northern Ireland taxi industry has changed significantly over the past decade.

Uber introduced a different approach to booking taxis through a global technology platform. Its arrival in Belfast in December 2015 helped change the way in which customers viewed convenience, vehicle tracking and app-based bookings.

In October 2026, Freenow by Lyft expanded into Northern Ireland through an exclusive partnership with FonaCAB. Rather than establishing a separate fleet, Freenow integrated its booking platform with FonaCAB's existing dispatch system, giving app users access to its network of over 1,200 drivers.

Technology is now central to the industry. Customers increasingly expect quick responses, straightforward booking, transparent pricing, digital confirmation and convenient communication.

These developments have also created opportunities for independent operators. Smaller businesses can use modern booking systems, automated communications and online platforms to compete in specialist markets such as airport transfers, executive travel and tourism.

Consolidation and the future

Having worked with both FonaCAB and Value Cabs during more than 30 years in the local taxi industry, I recognise the scale and complexity of their operations. Both have made significant contributions to the trade.

But the industry is changing. Uber has introduced a major technology-led competitor, and acquisitions have reshaped the landscape for established and independent operators alike.

FonaCAB and Value Cabs remain the historic "Big Two" in the public perception of Belfast's taxi industry. However, the official figures and Uber's growing presence suggest that the competitive landscape is now more complicated than that traditional description implies.

For smaller companies, these developments raise important questions about competition, driver recruitment, customer choice and the ability to remain independent in an increasingly demanding market.

Perhaps the question is no longer simply who the Big Two are. It is whether Northern Ireland is moving towards a market in which a smaller number of large operators increasingly shape the future of the trade - and what that will mean for the independent businesses and drivers who remain at its heart.

UBER UPDATE

UBER TRIUMPHS IN £340M HIGH COURT BATTLE AGAINST LONDON BLACK CAB DRIVERS

Uber has secured a major legal victory after the High Court dismissed two linked lawsuits worth £340 million brought by around 13,000 London black cab drivers and two defunct private hire operators, Kabbee and Iride.

The claimants sued the ride-hailing app in 2024 - following delays caused by Covid-19 - alleging that Uber gave "misleading and inaccurate information" to TfL to obtain its operating licence in 2012, costing rival drivers millions in lost earnings.

Claimants represented by RGL Management were seeking nearly £200 million for black cab drivers, with individual payouts estimated at up to £25,000 each for loss of earnings, alongside a £140 million claim on behalf of Kabbee and Iride.

However, on 19 October, Mr Justice Birt threw out the cases entirely on limitation grounds without considering whether the allegations were true. Ruling that the lawsuits fell outside the standard six-year legal time limit, the judge stated that the claimants could have reasonably discovered the alleged deception before 2018.

Uber's legal team had argued that drivers had sufficient information to investigate years earlier, citing TfL's 2017 decision to temporarily refuse Uber's licence renewal and evidence that lawyers had already begun exploring class-action proceedings in late 2017.

Following the High Court ruling, RGL Management stated: "We are obviously very disappointed and are considering all options available to the claimant cab drivers with the legal team."

An Uber spokesperson welcomed the judgment, saying: "We are pleased that the court has dismissed all of these claims entirely at the earliest opportunity and the ruling today has put these legacy matters firmly in the past."

The decision removes a massive potential liability for Uber at a time when the company is expanding its operations into AVs across the UK.

COURT APPEAL CHALLENGES FIFE COUNCIL'S HANDLING OF UBER OBJECTIONS

A legal appeal has been served challenging Fife Council's decision to grant Uber a booking office licence after hundreds of objections were rejected without being heard. The writ, served on 20 October, asks Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court to quash the decision and return the application to Fife Council for reconsideration, with the appellants' objections taken into account.

The appeal is brought by James Glen, Tahir Ali and Tariq Ali. It argues that the council made errors of law, relied on incorrect material facts, exercised its discretion unreasonably and acted contrary to natural justice.

Uber Scot Limited applied on 23 January 2026 for a booking office licence at Rosyth Business Centre. When the application came before the council's Regulation and Licensing Committee on 22 September, 25 objectors had been invited to address members.

At the outset, Uber's solicitor challenged the validity of the objections. Following legal advice and a lengthy recess, the committee rejected them. The licence was subsequently granted under delegated powers without the objectors presenting their case. The decision and subsequent council apology attracted coverage local news outlets. The writ advances three central arguments:

- Signed postal objections were submitted.
- Objectors were denied a fair opportunity to respond.
- Typed names could satisfy the signature requirement.

It also refers to correspondence in which a licensing officer expressly accepted an objector's digital signature before the hearing.

These are the appellants' arguments and have yet to be determined by the court.

James Glen said: "Fife Council strung objectors along for eight months, accepted their objections as valid and invited them to speak. Then, faced with Uber's lawyer, it capitulated and shut them out.

"It then granted the licence without further ado, ignoring the stringent conditions set by other authorities on Uber licences. This was an abuse of the democratic process."

Cab Direct's **Taxi Price Drops & New Arrivals**

Cab Direct™

Big Brands. Small Prices.

Up to
£7,025
savings*



NEW ARRIVAL



BYD Seal DM-i Touring

MRRP £35,020 OTR

Now **£27,995** OTR*

Save £7,025 on MRRP*

TAXI PRICE DROP



Chery Tiggo 8 Summit PHEV

Was £28,995 OTR

Now **£25,995** OTR*

Save £3,000*

NEW ARRIVAL



Geely Starray EM-i

MRRP £29,900 OTR

Now **£22,995** OTR*

Save £6,905 on MRRP*

*Selected vehicles and specifications only, subject to availability. Existing-stock savings compare the current Cab Direct selling price with the genuine previous Cab Direct advertised selling price. New-arrival savings compare the Cab Direct selling price with the applicable manufacturer's recommended retail price. "From" prices apply to entry level specifications, other than the Chery Tiggo 8 Summit PHEV. Savings vary by model and specification. Full terms apply.

Visit **cabdirect.com** | Call Our Team **0800 916 0007**

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES VAT CHANGES FOR LARGE PRIVATE HIRE AND TAXI OPERATORS

The government has announced plans to change the VAT treatment of taxi and PH journeys from 2 January 2028, targeting larger operators while excluding smaller businesses from the new rules.

The announcement, published by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) on 29 October, follows years of uncertainty over how VAT should be applied to PH fares.

Under the proposed legislation, larger operators acting as agents for drivers would be treated as supplying the transport service themselves for VAT purposes. Affected operators would therefore have to account for VAT on the full passenger fare, rather than just the commission or booking fee they receive.

£50 million threshold proposed

The government intends to limit the new rules to businesses exceeding a specified annual passenger fare turnover threshold. Its preferred figure is £50 million, although the final threshold will be determined following consultation.

Crucially, this refers to the total value of passenger fares handled, not the operator's commission or profit. An operator processing £60 million in annual fares could therefore fall within the rules even if its commission income is considerably lower.

An important question for larger operators will be how the threshold is calculated, particularly where businesses operate through multiple companies, subsidiaries or different trading structures. This will need clarification as the legislation develops.

Smaller businesses below the eventual threshold would remain outside the new provisions, although existing VAT obligations would continue.

Why are the changes being introduced?

The announcement addresses longstanding differences in VAT treatment between London and the rest of the country. In London, PH operators must contract directly with passengers and act as the principal supplier of the journey.

Outside London, operators can act as agents for self-employed drivers, with the driver supplying the transport service directly to the passenger. Under genuine agency arrangements, the operator generally accounts for VAT on its commission or booking fee, while the driver is responsible for VAT on the fare if VAT registered. The government believes these differences create an uneven playing field between competing operators.

How does this differ from January 2026?

The announcement is separate from changes introduced on 2 January 2026, which removed the ability to use the Tour Operators' Margin Scheme (TOMS) for taxi and PH journeys supplied on their own.

Previously, some operators used TOMS to account for VAT on their margin rather than the full fare.

However, removing TOMS did not abolish genuine agency arrangements outside London.

The latest proposals would require larger operators using agency arrangements to account for VAT on the full fare, subject to the final legislation.

What about drivers and passengers?

The government has not introduced a blanket requirement for taxi or PH drivers to register for VAT. HMRC says some drivers may choose to register voluntarily, but it does not expect substantially more businesses to become legally required to register.

However, affected operators may review their commission structures, payment systems or commercial arrangements. Passenger fares could also increase if operators pass on additional VAT costs.

HMRC has not estimated how much fares might rise, and the impact will depend on individual operators' existing VAT arrangements.

The government's assessment acknowledges that passengers with mobility difficulties make more PH journeys annually than those without, raising concerns about possible fare increases.

Millions in additional vat revenue

The Treasury estimates the measure will raise £95 million in 2027–28 and £385 million in 2028–29, increasing to £425 million by 2031–32.

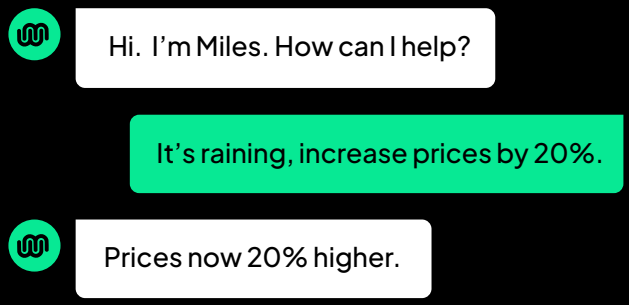
The government will consult on the turnover threshold and detailed legislation before implementation.

For the trade, the key questions are whether the changes will deliver fairer competition, how larger operators will respond and whether passengers will face higher fares.

Importantly, this is not a blanket new VAT charge on all taxi and PH operators. The proposals target larger businesses operating through agency arrangements, with smaller operators intended to remain outside their scope.

New

CORDIC
Dispatch



WE'RE CHANGING. ARE YOU?

A beautiful new Cordic Dispatch
Miles, your AI wingman

THE ONLY ONE IN YOUR CORNER

For the owners of other dispatch systems, their top priority is not you. You come second. **Every time.**

Owned by operators like you, Cordic lives or dies by your success.

cordic.com

ROUND THE COUNCILS

TELFORD:

CABBIES HESITANT OVER FREE CCTV

Taxi drivers in Telford & Wrekin are showing reluctance to adopt a free in-cab CCTV scheme launched in December 2022, primarily due to privacy concerns when using their work vehicles as personal family cars. Out of c. 400 licensed vehicles in the borough, only 48 HCs and PHVs have had CCTV installed so far using funding from the community safety partnership.

During a community scrutiny committee meeting on October 1, 2026, Cllr Peter Scott questioned why more drivers had not participated in the programme, calling it "an excellent scheme," while Committee members widely praised the safety project. A council official explained some drivers "don't feel comfortable having CCTV on because they think it would record every journey and they feel it's an invasion of privacy." However, council representatives are actively reassuring drivers that footage is strictly regulated. As the official noted: "We only ever take CCTV footage from inside a vehicle if there was a complaint or incident. It would be related to their work."

Alongside the CCTV rollout, the council continues to support safety measures such as a Taxi Marshal scheme, Street Pastors, targeted enforcement, and joint vehicle stop operations with West Mercia Police.

WEST NORTHANTS:

EIGHT-WEEK CONSULTATION LAUNCHED

West Northamptonshire Council has launched an eight-week consultation until midnight on Sunday, December 6, proposing changes to rules governing taxis, drivers and operators across Northampton, Daventry and South Northamptonshire.

The review, which is the first since April 2024, introduces clearer English language proficiency requirements, stricter DBS checks, and updated medical standards, alongside new obligations for drivers to report relevant incidents and personal circumstance changes.

Other proposed adjustments include removing the current requirement for fire extinguishers and first-aid kits, raising driver medical examination age threshold from 60 to 65, and updating vehicle identification rules such as door signage and restrictions on PHVs using the words 'Taxi' or 'Cab'.

While maintaining Euro 6 emissions requirements for new and replacement vehicles and postponing a broader review of existing taxi zones, the council emphasises that safeguarding children and vulnerable adults remains a central priority.

The updates stem from legislative changes, learned lessons, and daily industry feedback.

Full details and the consultation are available via: https://shorturl.at/6JeHK.

STRATFORD-u-AVON:

NEW LICENSING POLICY CONSULTATION

Stratford-on-Avon DC has opened a 12-week public consultation on a new draft licensing policy, running until 21 December 2026. The proposed framework, which would run from 2027 to 2032 to replace rules from 2009, introduces major changes to vehicle age limits to give proprietors more flexibility while encouraging greener travel.

Under the current policy, vehicles generally cannot be renewed once they are over six years old. The new draft proposes that petrol, diesel, and LPG cars can be licensed until they reach 12 years of age, hybrids up to 15 years, and fully electric or hydrogen zero-emission vehicles will have no age limit at all.

The previous requirement for a car to be under three years old when first licensed will be removed. All vehicles will still be subject to strict safety standards, including regular MOTs and council inspections.

From 1 January 2027, every licensed taxi and PHV must carry a working card or mobile wallet reader where network coverage allows, display an exterior sign indicating cards are accepted, and charge no payment surcharges. Additional proposals include:

- safeguarding training before a licence is granted, refreshed every three years
- disability awareness training refreshed every three years (new drivers already have to take it once)
- DBS Update Service for every driver, with online checks every six months; a driver who doesn't subscribe gets a six-month licence only, with no refund
- checks against NR3 register
- a vaping ban in licensed vehicles
- new rules on CCTV and dashcams, and on phones, satnavs and booking apps in the car
- a new convictions and cautions policy to guide officers and the licensing panel

Drivers would pay for the training themselves.

Interested parties can review the draft documents here: https://shorturl.at/TJAsQ.

ROUND THE COUNCILS

PETERBOROUGH:
LICENSING OVERHAUL CONSULTATION

Peterborough City Council's Licensing Committee has approved a public consultation on a draft Taxi and Private Hire Policy for 2026 to 2031. Councillors agreed on 8 October to invite feedback from drivers, operators, passengers and the wider public.

The authority is updating its rules to align with national recommendations, including those from the Baroness Casey Review, for tighter industry regulation.

The draft policy proposals include financial checks for all new and renewing PH operator applications to ensure businesses can meet licensing standards, as well as revised vehicle testing requirements.

Increased safeguarding for vulnerable passengers, particularly for services involving contracts transporting children, young people and adults at risk.

The new policy also features environmental incentives to encourage cleaner transport across the city: zero-emission vehicles would remain eligible for licensing for up to 18 years, supporting the uptake of eco-friendly transport.

Read the draft policy here: https://shorturl.at/nDe0u

SOUTH CAMBS:
POLICY CONSULTATION LAUNCHED

South Cambridgeshire DC is inviting views on proposed updates to its taxi licensing policy which will bring local rules into line with current legislation, national guidance and industry best practice, using advice from the DfT and the Institute of Licensing.

The draft policy outlines enhanced safeguarding measures, updated driver suitability and convictions guidance, modernised licence conditions and mandatory refresher safeguarding training. It also sets out refined standards covering operator responsibilities and vehicle requirements.

As part of the review, the authority is particularly keen to receive feedback on vehicle signage rules, such as the current requirement for PHVs to display yellow half-moon door signs to reassure passengers that drivers are fully licensed.

The public consultation will close at 11.59pm on Sunday, 29 November. Review the draft policy and submit comments online at https://shorturl.at/7niz1 before the final proposals go to the Licensing Committee for formal consideration.

ISLE OF WIGHT:
CODE OF CONDUCT CONSIDERED

Isle of Wight cabbies may soon have to follow a new code of conduct under proposed changes to local licensing rules. The council's environment and community protection committee (ECPC) has been advised to approve a draft HC & PH Statement of Licensing Policy 2027–2032 for a six-week consultation.

The updated guidelines aim to set clear standards of behaviour and professionalism across the sector. Key measures include raising the minimum period an applicant must hold a full driving licence from 1 to 3 years, expanding safeguarding training, and introducing more comprehensive drug/alcohol testing rules.

Under the new HC & PH Driver Code of Conduct, drivers will be required to handle complaints professionally, avoid unnecessary confrontation, and act responsibly when using social media.

Officers noted that compliance will be considered when deciding whether an individual remains a "fit and proper person" to keep their licence. ECPC councillors met on 29 October to consider the proposal

JERSEY:
REVIEW INTO "COMPLEX" TAXI SERVICE

A formal review into the regulations surrounding Jersey's taxi service has officially begun, Infrastructure Minister Deputy Jonathan Renouf has confirmed.

The announcement came in response to concerns raised by Deputy Samantha Gleave over whether current rules could be simplified to reduce costs, improve flexibility, boost the night-time economy and increase general service availability across the island.

Acknowledging that the present system falls short, Renouf stated that the current setup is "overly complex and not sufficiently transparent."

He also highlighted that it is "unacceptable that some regulatory requirements are being imposed when these appear to be based only on convention."

The minister pledged to establish updated regulations with a "clear basis in statute and policy", ensuring rules are only retained if deemed necessary.

Renouf gave assurances that the review will balance passenger needs with supporting drivers and the wider industry to earn a living, promising a full consultation with stakeholders to deliver a framework that "best serves islanders."

NORTH NORTHANTS:
HUMAN COST OF LICENSING DECISIONS

Neil Rielly told **PHTM** that he is challenging North Northants Council (NNC) to explain how its licensing decisions protect the public when drivers face losing their livelihoods and passengers could face reduced access to reliable and accessible transport.

In an email addressed to senior council officers and Cllr Kirk Harrison, Neil raises concerns about medical assessment procedures, knowledge testing, vehicle requirements and oversight of OOT PH operations.

The challenge follows correspondence in which a long-serving Corby taxi driver indicated that he intends to surrender his badge after 35 years, citing difficulty establishing where to obtain a medical assessment required by the council.

On 2 October, the driver reported that his GP could not provide the required test. The council advised him to approach his GP again. On 8 October, after he indicated his intention to surrender his badge, a council officer suggested Corby Community Diagnostic Centre. The correspondence did not confirm whether the centre provides the required assessment or how to access it.

Neil said: "Drivers understand that medical fitness and passenger safety are essential. What is deeply frustrating is seeing someone unable to earn a living while being passed between organisations without a clear route to obtaining the evidence the council requires. These decisions affect real people: drivers with bills to pay, families depending on their income and passengers depending on taxis."

The email also questions the impact of knowledge testing on established drivers and recruitment, and seeks clarification about the Licensing Panel safeguard described in the council's knowledge-test consultation.

Concerns about vehicle licensing include whether sufficient individual consideration is available when licences lapse, and how decisions affect the availability of wheelchair-accessible taxis.

Neil said: "The council needs to demonstrate that it has considered those consequences alongside the intended benefits of its rules."

The email also refers to the council's response concerning Uber which stated that NNC had not conducted a detailed investigation into Uber's booking allocation or undertaken a formal local impact assessment. Neil acknowledges that cross-border working can be lawful and that the council's enforcement powers are limited. He asks what pro-active checks and arrangements with other licensing authorities provide assurance for passengers.

He added: "'Protecting the public' must be supported by evidence and effective action. The council should explain how its approach improves safety overall, including transport availability and enforcement gaps. "Drivers and their families are members of the public too. Their welfare deserves consideration, alongside the needs of the passengers they serve."

The email requests a substantive written response within 14 days and a separate urgent response concerning the driver's medical assessment.

WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD:
REFORMS ON LOWERING EMISSIONS

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Council is considering sweeping changes to its licensing regulations in an effort to combat air pollution and reduce emissions. However, officials warn that implementing these stricter restrictions could lead to "unforeseen consequences" for local drivers, prompting the council to launch a public consultation on October 13.

The proposed rules mark a shift away from traditional vehicle age limits towards emissions-based standards, aligning with DfT guidance which cautioned that rigid age limits can be "inappropriate and counter-productive" for clean air initiatives, noting: "an older EV may produce lower emissions than a new petrol/diesel vehicle, so rigid age restrictions can hinder moves towards clean air initiatives."

Under the new framework, age limits will be completely removed from April 2027 for both existing and newly licensed vehicles that meet zero emission, Euro 6, ULEV, or ZEC standards. For all other taxis and PHVs, strict age caps will remain in force, requiring vehicles to be five years old or less when first licensed and capping their operating at 12 years from registration.

Transition deadlines will also come into effect in stages: from April 1, 2028, all newly licensed vehicles must be Euro 6, ULEV, or ZEC compliant, and by April 2030, all newly licensed vehicles must be ULEV or ZEC.

A council report highlighted that transport is the primary driver of local emissions, urging that the borough "make every effort" to reduce pollution where it holds influence, adding that phasing out age caps on eco-friendly taxis will lower emissions "in a meaningful way."

PEMBROKESHIRE:

LICENSING AMENDMENTS BACKED

Pembrokeshire County Council's licensing committee supported key amendments to the county's taxi licensing policy during its meeting on 22 October.

After a six-week consultation that gathered 30 responses, the committee backed the proposals as a recommendation for a final decision by full council.

Key changes include: mandatory DBS Update Service subscriptions, six-monthly criminal record checks, revised medical intervals, enhanced safeguarding training for new drivers, and stricter operator duties.

A minimum Euro 6 emissions standard will apply to vehicles first licensed from next January, though existing vehicle renewals remain exempt.

Addressing concerns over textured 'Raptor' paintwork making bodywork damage hard to assess, a new condition requires paintwork to be a "high-gloss, smooth finish". The policy also clarifies three-year licence rules regarding right-to-work and DVLA licence expirations, warns of suspension for missing medical certificates, introduces council feedback notices in vehicles, and allows deferred payments if card transactions fail in rural areas.

Officers stated the policy achieves "a balance between the council's responsibility to protect the public and the need for a practical and sustainable licensing framework."

REDDITCH:

EIGHT-WEEK CONSULTATION LAUNCHED

Taxi licensing in Redditch is under scrutiny after Redditch BC's Licensing Sub-Committee held a special hearing on 14 October. The council is currently consulting on proposals to raise the maximum permitted age of vehicles renewing their licences, allowing older cars to stay on the road longer.

Under the current policy, vehicles that exceed standard age limits are reviewed individually, with input from licensing officers and a qualified vehicle engineer. Council documents show that between February 2023 and February 2026, 95 applications for vehicles exceeding the age limit were considered, with only nine refused and 86 approved. The review follows comparisons with neighbouring authorities, which revealed significant differences in how vehicle age restrictions are applied across the region.

Additionally, discussions have taken place regarding licensing fees after the Redditch Taxi Association and operator A2B Taxis raised objections to a proposed three per cent increase in hackney carriage and private hire charges for 2026/27, which officers stated was designed strictly to recover service costs.

BOLSOVER:

CABBIES FIGHT COUNTY LINES GANGS

Cabbies in Bolsover are being trained to spot and report "County Lines" drug gangs, thanks to a new initiative by Bolsover DC's Licensing and Enforcement team. Because drivers spend long hours on the road, particularly late at night, they are uniquely positioned to notice unusual behaviour and criminal exploitation in local communities.

County Lines is a violent form of drug distribution that often exploits children and vulnerable adults to move drugs, cash and weapons. Drivers are being taught to look out for signs like "cuckooing" - where criminals take over a vulnerable person's home - plus passengers making frequent short trips, carrying multiple phones, or appearing frightened and controlled.

Other warning signs include requests to avoid police, large cash payments, and being asked to deliver packages rather than transport passengers.

Cllr Clive Moesby, the council's Portfolio Holder for Resources, warned that turning a blind eye puts people at risk. He said: "Drivers must put their own safety first, but by staying alert and reporting concerns via official safeguarding routes, taxi and PH drivers play a crucial role in stopping exploitation and serious harm in our communities."

WALSALL:

MAJOR CHANGES TO PHV POLICY

Walsall Council has approved major policy changes to PHV licensing conditions.

From Monday 2 November:

- Any age vehicle can be plated as a PHV as long as it passes MoT & compliance test
- PHVs will have one MoT & two compliance tests a year - one compliance test with MoT and another six months later
- Outside windscreen sticker will now be positioned inside the vehicle
- First aid kit & fire extinguishers are no longer required

WHY LOWER PREMIUMS SHOULDN'T STOP DRIVERS SHOPPING AROUND

By David Sweeney,
Head of Taxi Broking
The Taxi Insurer
www.taxiinsurer.co.uk

This month's article is full of positivity for taxi and private hire drivers – but it also comes with a warning.

Let's start with the good news: insurance premiums have come down significantly this year. Throughout my career, we've generally seen taxi and private hire insurance prices increase year on year. In some years they may have risen by 10%, in other years by as much as 30%.

This year, it's been the opposite. We're seeing many customers, whose premium last year was in the region of £1,400, paying anything between £950 and £1,100 at renewal in 2026.

The knock-on effect of these cheaper premiums is higher renewal retentions than we've experienced for around a decade, and that's a trend affecting the whole industry.

Factors that can influence premium levels

To put these price decreases in context, some customers have already attained their maximum no claims bonus, so it's not a case of their discount increasing. They've achieved nine years or more of no claims bonus, and they're now subject to market fluctuations in price.

Vehicle age is another factor. Although your premium may decrease as your car gets older and loses its value, you could be penalised at the same time. Some insurers will only cover vehicles up to a certain age, because they represent higher financial and safety risks than younger cars. Similarly, some councils will only license cars that are five years old or less, as they believe that older vehicles reflect poorly on their town or city.

The implications of higher renewal retentions

Prices are cheaper and I believe we're seeing a reduction in new business enquiries purely because customers are receiving their renewal premium and thinking: *"That's good. I'll have it."* Meaning they're not shopping around.

However, it can still pay to explore the options available. Brokers have access to different insurers and schemes, so the range of options available can vary.

At The Taxi Insurer, we have access to 10 insurers and 11 schemes. At renewal, we review the options available across our panel to see what is available for each customer, taking account of their individual requirements. This means customers can make their renewal decision knowing we've explored the options available through our panel.

Although we review our entire panel for every customer every year at renewal, to ensure we've offered the very best deal that we can, some brokers may be content to just offer the renewal price quoted by their existing insurer.

Getting the best possible deal

Customers have a couple of options to help ensure they're getting the best possible deal when they renew their policy.

The first is to always give themselves enough time to shop around for the best quote. That's not just to make sure they've done sufficient research to be comfortable they've secured a good deal to cover their needs. It's also because insurers actively provide a better price the further in advance of the policy's start date that they're contacted by a driver, as they aim to secure new business as early as possible.

The second is to discuss their requirements with a taxi insurance broker. These specialists have spent years nurturing relationships with a trusted panel of insurer partners, and focus on finding products and policies that meet their clients' needs and expectations.

THE TAXI INSURER

SAVE £200 ON YOUR INSURANCE!

SPECIALISTS IN TAXI INSURANCE

- Private and Public Hire Insurance
- Taxi Insurance
- Fleet Insurance
- Minibus Insurance
- Chauffeur Insurance



CALL US TODAY AND QUOTE: PHTM

0121 506 2397

Offer of £200 policy discount is available to new customers who purchase a taxi, fleet, minibus, or chauffeur insurance policy, **subject to underwriting criteria**. To claim the offer, you must quote code **PHTM** at the time of policy purchase. If you pay your policy by monthly direct debit instalments, the premium amounts and the date your payment will be taken are outlined in the policy documents provided by your sales agent at the time of purchase. The offer may be withdrawn at any time without prior notice. To be eligible for the £200 discount, you must have been a UK resident for a minimum of 3+ years.

taxiinsurer.co.uk

Trustpilot

Rated 4.9 out of 5 stars based on 3,867 reviews of all products as of 28 April 2026

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The Taxi Insurer is a trading name of Insurance Factory Limited, registered in England and Wales (No. 02982445). Registered Office: Markerstudy House, 45 Westerham Road, Bessels Green, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 2QB. Insurance Factory Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (No. 306164).

HOW ELITE, TAXIAPPS & 30 YEARS OF OPERATIONAL KNOW-HOW BECAME A ROUTE FORWARD FOR PH

Article by Rev'd Paul Newbery
Taxi Apps Founder
www.taxiapps.co.uk
paul@taxiapps.co.uk



Elite began on 24 January 2020. In hindsight, this was either brave timing or proof that the universe has a very dry sense of humour. Just a few months later, lockdown arrived and the PH industry - along with almost everything else - was forced to rethink how it worked.

Starting a company is never simple. Starting one immediately before a once-in-a-generation shutdown gives "learning on the job" a whole new meaning. The phones changed, demand changed and customer behaviour changed almost overnight. Yet the fundamentals remained: people still needed safe, reliable transport; drivers still needed work; and operators still had to make hundreds of small decisions every day while appearing completely calm on the other end of the telephone.

That period tested more than the business plan. It tested judgement, adaptability and the value of experience. Three decades in private hire had already taught me that the industry rarely travels in a straight line. It swerves, pauses, doubles back and occasionally takes the scenic route without telling the controller. Elite's early years reinforced the lesson: an operator survives by understanding what is really happening on the ground, not what a glossy presentation says ought to be happening.

Four years later: switching gears

Four years later, the next chapter began: TaxiApps. The idea was not to walk away from operating, but to turn thirty years of accumulated experience into software, websites and integrations that could help other private hire companies succeed. Every operator builds up a library of hard-won knowledge: what passengers actually ask for, where bookings fall out of a process, why drivers ignore one screen but respond to another, and which *"quick fix"* will still be causing trouble at midnight. TaxiApps was created to convert those lessons into practical tools.

The platform is built around the full operational journey - from the first booking through dispatch, the driver and the customer. Its products include browser and mobile voice tools, mobile-first dispatch, branded passenger booking, an online Web Booker, venue portals, custom apps and bespoke taxi websites. Those websites can integrate an operator's existing dispatch-management-system booker or use TaxiApps' own Web Booker, with sound mobile and search foundations included from the start.

The point is not technology for technology's sake. Nobody has ever finished a twelve-hour shift and said, *"What this business really needs is another dashboard with seventeen tabs."* The aim is focused technology that matches the way an operation genuinely works. TaxiApps can connect booking, voice and mobile products with supported iCabbi dispatch workflows, while custom development can cover specialist booking flows, internal dashboards, API integrations and automation. Operators can start with one useful product, then add connected capability as the need becomes clear.

Operator knowledge is a product advantage

There is a difference between software built for an industry and software built from within it. An operator knows a booking isn't just a neat row of data. It is a promise to a passenger, a job for a driver, a time-sensitive task for a controller and, if anything goes wrong, a telephone call that will arrive at exactly the busiest moment.

That operational knowledge changes the questions asked during development. Is the workflow clear at 2 a.m.? Can a member of staff use it while answering a customer? Does it remove effort or simply relocate it? Will it work on the device people already have in their hand? Most importantly, does it help the operator win, retain or serve business? A feature may be clever, but if it adds friction to a live operation, it is merely a very sophisticated obstacle.

This is where diversification becomes more than adding another revenue stream. It is the reuse of knowledge. The conversations with drivers, controllers, suppliers, venue managers and passengers become design research. The mistakes become specifications. The workarounds become clues. Even the complaints have value.

I also happen to be a priest, which adds another kind of juggling act: balancing Christ with .NET and C# programming. One moment may involve faith, people and purpose; the next may involve an API that has apparently lost faith in itself. They are very different callings, but both demand patience, problem-solving and the belief that even the most stubborn situation can be redeemed.

Networking: joining the chunks of knowledge

Not one person knows the whole industry, but a strong network can get remarkably close. Over thirty years, each relationship adds another chunk of knowledge: a supplier explains what an integration can do; an operator describes a bottleneck; a driver reveals what happens outside the office; a hotel explains what its front desk needs; and a technology partner opens a route that was previously closed.

The useful skill is not simply collecting those chunks. It is joining them. One conversation suggests an idea, another exposes a risk and a third provides the missing connection. That is how a venue portal, a branded booking experience or a mobile dispatch tool becomes more than a feature list. It becomes a response to a real pattern seen across real businesses.

Along the way, many professional contacts have become genuine friends. I have built friendships within iCabbi and Lopay, formed relationships with private hire companies up and down the country, and connected with businesses beyond the booking office - including vehicle specialists such as Car N Cab. Each relationship brings a different perspective: technology, payments, day-to-day operations, fleet growth or simply the honest view from someone who has already tried an idea and can save you from learning the expensive way.

People often say: *"It isn't what you know; it's who you know."* In truth, the strongest progress comes from both - but who you know will always help turn knowledge into opportunity. Expertise may tell you which door to knock on; a trusted relationship may be the reason it opens. And if nothing else, a good network usually contains someone who knows why the integration stopped working five minutes before the weekend.

Partnership matters here. TaxiApps works with industry technology and payment partners to create connected dispatch, booking and payment experiences. Collaboration allows independent operators to gain modern capability without losing the identity, local knowledge and customer relationships that make them valuable. The best network is not a collection of business cards slowly becoming archaeological evidence in a drawer; it is a working system for sharing problems, opportunities and solutions.

Helping private hire compete with ride-hail

The rise of ride-hail has changed what customers expect. A smooth digital booking journey, clear updates and accessible payment options are no longer nice extras; they are part of the basic service. The answer for private hire is not to imitate every move made by a global platform. It is to combine comparable convenience with the strengths local operators already possess: accountability, local expertise, established fleets, business relationships and people who understand the communities they serve.

Good software helps make those strengths visible. A branded website gives customers a direct route to book. A web booker keeps the journey inside the operator's own digital front door. A venue portal supports hotels and offices. Mobile operational tools keep teams informed away from the desk. Integrations reduce duplicated work and allow information to move where it is needed. Each improvement gives the operator more control of the customer relationship rather than handing it to somebody else's app.

This is how the industry pushes back: not with one miracle product, but with thousands of better interactions. Faster booking. Clearer communication. Easier access for venues. More useful information for staff. A journey that feels joined up from first click to final drop-off. Ride-hail may have scale, but private hire has experience, relationships and the ability to adapt. Give those advantages the right digital tools and the contest becomes far more interesting.

The line of travel

Imagine a simple line; failure sits on the left, success sits on the right. Between them is the journey every business takes, and effort is the constant force moving us forward. That doesn't mean every effort produces an immediate win. Some ideas stall. Some products need reworking. Some lessons arrive wearing a fake moustache and introducing themselves as "unexpected costs". But useful effort creates movement: a conversation, a test, a correction, a new contact or a better decision.

Failure is not a permanent address; it is a position on the line. The danger is not being on the left for a while. The danger is standing still, defending the spot and purchasing matching curtains. Consistent effort shifts the position. Experience helps choose the direction, networks shorten the distance and technology provides leverage, but movement still requires someone to act.

Elite's launch in January 2020 could easily be described as unfortunate timing. It can also be seen as the beginning of a body of knowledge that made the next move possible.

Four years later, TaxiApps turned operator experience into tools for other operators. What looked like a detour became part of the route.

Diversification with a purpose

Diversification works best when it is connected to what you already know. For me, the move from operator to software builder was not a leap into an unrelated world. It was a change of gear: the same road, seen from a different seat. Thirty years of operational experience supplied the problems worth solving; networking supplied the wider view; and software supplied a way to turn knowledge into repeatable value.

The ambition is bigger than building apps or websites. It is to help private hire companies compete, control their own customer journey and benefit from technology designed around the realities of their work.

If that helps more good local operators move from the left side of the line towards the right, then every difficult shift, awkward integration and mysteriously urgent Friday-afternoon phone call has contributed something useful.

I suppose, in the end, it is not about where you are; it is about where you are going - and journeys are nearly always better when they are shared. So reach out, attend the events, stay for the **PHTM** after-parties and make the effort to talk to people. You may occasionally have to deal with the morning-after consequences, but you will also make friends, exchange ideas and build relationships that can take you further than travelling alone ever could.

The next opportunity may begin with a conversation, a handshake or simply being the last person still discussing taxis when everyone else has sensibly gone to bed.



CheckedSafe®
Proudly part of cmac.

Protect Your Licence

Stay On The Road.

With CheckedSafe Walkaround Checks

- Fully Digital Checklists
- No Paperwork
- Easy to use
- Fully Compliant



Start a **FREE** 30 day trial at
www.checkedsafe.com

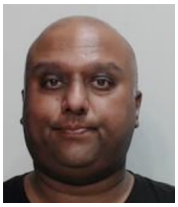
SHAME SHAME

EDINBURGH CABBIE JAILED FOR SIX YEARS FOR HISTORIC SEX ATTACKS ON TWO GIRLS

An Edinburgh cabbie who was previously placed on the sex offenders' register for ten years has been jailed for six years after being found guilty of historic sexual abuse against two young girls.

Akbar Ali, 47, of Edinburgh, was convicted unanimously at the High Court in Livingston for offences committed between September 1996 and December 1998, as well as between October 2005 and October 2006.

During his trial, the court heard how Ali attempted to rape a girl aged 16 or 17 after removing her clothing while she slept, continuing the attack after she awoke. He attacked a second victim, aged just 14, by removing her clothing and touching her breasts and buttocks. Both girls were temporarily in his care at the time.



Despite holding down employment in Edinburgh's taxi trade alongside a second job, it was revealed after the verdict that Ali had a directly analogous conviction from 2003 for a sexual offence against a young person.

Defending council Lisa Gillespie KC told the court that Ali had since become a "workaholic" and a "model citizen" who was happily married with two children, adding that his wife was "shocked and deeply upset" by the convictions and stated: "I don't recognise the man as the husband and father I know today."

However, Judge Susan Craig emphasised the severity of his actions and breach of his position of trust, noting that Ali had accumulated a "record for three separate sexual assaults committed over several years against three separate victims" while enforcing non-harassment orders, indefinite placement on the sex offenders' register, and a complete bar from working with vulnerable groups.

WAKEFIELD CABBIE JAILED AFTER BEING CAUGHT WITH £120,000 OF CLASS A DRUGS

A licensed cabbie from Wakefield has been jailed for six years and eight months after using his cab as a cover to transport up to £120,000 worth of cocaine.

Hasan Saghir, 26, travelled 220 miles from his home to Shepton Mallet in Somerset on 6 February to collect the package, using his cab to blend in and evade detection.

Leeds Crown Court heard how a supposed passenger entered Saghir's Toyota Prius carrying a black bag before getting out a short drive later, leaving the bag behind.

Internal CCTV footage inside the vehicle recorded Saghir calling an associate to confirm the delivery was "sorted" while peering into the bag. Police officers arrested him shortly afterwards at a nearby petrol station, seizing two kilograms of 90% pure cocaine with an estimated street value of between £38,000 and £120,000.

A subsequent search of Saghir's home uncovered a further £48,000 worth of heroin. Although Saghir confirmed his address during his initial police interview, he subsequently refused to answer further questions before admitting to two counts of dealing Class A drugs at court.

In mitigation, defence barrister Mohammed Rafiq explained that Saghir, who had no previous convictions, had developed a severe cocaine addiction that left him owing thousands of pounds. "He was under pressure to pay and got involved into the world of drug supply," Mr Rafiq said, adding that Saghir was ashamed and realised what he had done was wrong.

Judge Ray Singh firmly rejected Saghir's claim that he was merely acting as a courier, describing the defence as "fanciful" and "nonsense." Sentencing Saghir, Judge Singh told him: "You understood completely the scale of this operation. This is not foolish behaviour or a lapse of judgement. This was a conscious decision by you to be involved in the supply of Class A drugs, undoubtedly on the streets of this county."

The judge added that the severity of the offence was heightened by Saghir using a staged taxi journey to discreetly carry out the exchange.

FIVE YEARS' JAIL FOR LONDON UBER DRIVER WHO DROVE AT AND FATALLY INJURED HIS PASSENGER

An Uber driver who drove his car into a passenger after the man vomited in his car has been sentenced to five years' jail following a trial at Basildon Crown Court.

Hayadulla Turkmani, 53, from Hornchurch, was found guilty of causing death by dangerous driving after a 15-day trial. The jury acquitted the private hire driver of murder and manslaughter.

The court heard that Michael Ashton, 28, and his girlfriend were returning home after an evening out in September 2025. During the journey, Michael became unwell and vomited over himself inside the vehicle.

Infuriated by this, Turkmani dropped the couple off and drove his car directly into Michael



moments later, inflicting catastrophic head and leg injuries. Michael was rushed to hospital in a critical condition but died on 4 October 2025 having never regained consciousness.

Turkmani initially lied to Essex Police officers by claiming Michael had walked out in front of the vehicle. However, a detailed investigation involving collision specialists and technical experts disproved his claim and established that he had deliberately driven at the victim.

Turkmani denied murder, manslaughter and causing death by dangerous driving throughout the trial, but was convicted of the dangerous driving charge and subsequently sentenced to five years' imprisonment on 21 October.

DI Stewart Eastbrook said: "This was a horrific incident. It was the defendant's job to deliver Michael and his girlfriend home safely. Instead he reacted angrily after Michael became unwell and this escalated into violence and Michael's fatal injury."

Paying tribute to him, Michael's family said that they take comfort in knowing "how many lives he brightened just by being himself."

LIVERPOOL CABBIE JAILED FOR 38 MONTHS AFTER BEING CAUGHT COURIERING PINK KETAMINE

A cabbie was jailed for 38 months on October 1 after being caught couriering a kilogram of drugs to pay off gambling debts.

Peter McFadden, 55, a boxing coach and taxi driver from Norris Green, came to the attention of police in June when he was pulled over for speeding. Officers noticed a strong smell of cannabis and saw him trying to hide an object under his seat.

Prosecuting, Iain Criddle explained that McFadden was "reluctant to get out of the car and appeared to be nervous" before confessing he had a "kilogram of pink ketamine" in his possession. Police recovered two packages weighing a combined 995g of the drug, also known as tusi, which is a mixture of ecstasy and ketamine. A subsequent search of McFadden's home uncovered £11,250 in cash hidden inside a wardrobe.



McFadden claimed that he fell into substantial debt due to his own cocaine addiction and gambling habit. While visiting a bookmakers, he said he was propositioned by a mystery man and agreed to work as a courier to pay off his debts, receiving a payment of £100 for his services.

Defending, John Weate told Liverpool Crown Court that his client had previously volunteered as a boxing coach and had never served a custodial sentence.

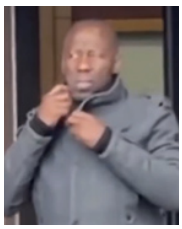
Sentencing McFadden after he pleaded guilty to possession of MDMA with intent to supply and possession of criminal property, Recorder Nicola Daley stated: "Those who traffic substances profit from the addiction, misery and degradation of users. The effects extend beyond those immediate users and contribute towards other crimes, violence, family breakdown, ill health and pressure on public services."

LIVERPOOL CABBIE AVOIDS JAIL DESPITE TRANSPORTING £50K OF COCAINE IN SHOPPING BAG

A cabbie from Toxteth, was spared jail after police found nearly £50,000 worth of high-purity cocaine hidden in a Sainsbury's bag inside his car.

Jean Nlemvo, 63, said he agreed to transport the illicit parcel from Manchester to Merseyside for a fee of just £75 due to financial difficulties. Despite claiming upon his arrest that he "didn't know what cocaine was", Nlemvo later admitted to possession of cocaine with intent to supply on the day of his trial.

The court heard Nlemvo's vehicle was initially stopped on the M62 in October 2024 over an unrelated matter. When officers searched his vehicle the next day, they found the bag under the driver's seat.



Prosecutor Jonathan Keane explained the bag contained a 485g block of 82% pure cocaine, valued at £19,400-£48,500.

Messages on Nlemvo's iPhone revealed contact from an recipient saved as "DDD", who text asking: "where he was" shortly after the driver was detained.

Nlemvo, who has no previous convictions and was a former driver for Alpha Taxis of 11 years, accepted that he turned a blind eye to the parcel's contents while attempting to cope with financial hardship.

Defending barrister Matthew O'Neill pointed to Nlemvo's strong character references, including one written by a local priest, highlighting that the defendant was a devout churchgoer and hard-working family man.

At Liverpool Crown Court, Recorder Mark Shepherd gave Nlemvo a three-year jail term, suspended for 18 months, 200 hours' unpaid work and a 12-months' probation.

The Recorder said: "It's astonishing to me that, as a churchgoing, family man, you would involve yourself in organised crime for £75. You came very, very close indeed."

He added that Nlemvo's lack of prior convictions and low risk to society justified a suspended sentence.

NOTTINGHAM CABBIE DRIVES SUSPECT WITH COUNTERFEIT CASH STRAIGHT TO POLICE STATION

A quick-thinking cabbie who was handed fake bank notes drove his passenger straight to a police station. The customer booked the journey at 11:30pm on 13 October but after he repeatedly changed his route, the driver asked how he intended to pay. This prompted the man to hand over a counterfeit £20 note.

The driver immediately recognised the note was fake due to the way it felt in his hands. When questioned, the passenger handed over further notes which were also fake.

The driver immediately rerouted to Radford Road police station in Nottingham, where officers arrested the passenger and consequently conducted a search of the 23-year-old suspect's home, where they seized a cannabis cultivation kit and a Rambo knife hidden beneath a mattress.

The man was arrested on suspicion of using counterfeit currency and possessing an offensive weapon in a private place.

Neighbourhood inspector Liz Gaskin praised the driver's actions, calling it a fantastic piece of work. She noted that as soon as the driver spotted the man's suspicious behaviour and fake money, he decided the end of his journey would be a night in custody, adding that officers were happy to help and were able to take a dangerous weapon out of circulation as a result.

Official guidance from the Bank of England highlights that genuine English banknotes feature a transparent window displaying a portrait of King Charles III or the late Queen Elizabeth II, alongside the note's value and the words Bank of England around the border.

Genuine notes also feature raised print and a silver hologram that changes between the word Pounds and the note's value when tilted. Because counterfeit notes are worthless and cannot be reimbursed, anyone who receives fake cash is urged to contact the police immediately so the notes can be passed to the National Crime Agency and Bank of England for examination.

Order your 76 plate at the UK's best prices!

Ford Grand Tourneo Connect
2.0 EcoBlue 122ps Titanium 7-seat LWB
Auto, Inc. DAB + Nav, F & R parking sensors, 16" Alloys,

£29,995 OTR



Ford Tourneo Custom P-Hev
2.5 Duratec 232ps Titanium 9-seater LWB

£50,995 OTR



Jaecoo 7
Luxury P-Hev 1.5T

£27,495 OTR



MG S9 P-HEV
7-seater Free Metallic Paint

Comfort **£27,995 OTR**

Premium **£30,495 OTR**



Kia Sportage Hybrid GT Line
1.6 T-GDi 235ps

£28,795 OTR



Renault Trafic
LL30 Blue dCi 150 Advance MY26 - 9-seater

£34,595 OTR



New Skoda Octavia SE Technology
1.5 Tsi e-Tec 116ps DSG Estate SE Tec

£23,495 OTR

1.5 Tsi e-Tec 150ps DSG Estate SE-L

£26,995 OTR



Chery Tiggo 9
1.5T GDi Super Hybrid Plug-in.
7-seater, Summit model

£32,995 OTR



All our prices are OTR and include Metallic Paint

Cabs 4 Less
The Aim is in the Name

Tel: 01522 300 266
sales@cabs4less.co.uk

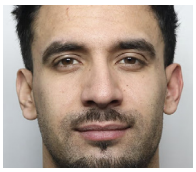
All photographs are for illustrative purposes only.

For all our offers see our website www.cabs4less.co.uk

JUST DESERTS

PASSENGER THREATENED TO CUT PH DRIVER'S THROAT AND ROBBED HIM IN BRADFORD

A 72-year-old private hire driver was threatened with having his throat slit and was robbed of £300 and his mobile phone during a fare in Bradford. Nikolas Balog, 31, targeted the driver after getting into the vehicle with two other men last August. After the other passengers were dropped off, Balog asked to go to another area.



When the driver stopped and asked for payment, Balog then demanded money.

Prosecutor Thomas Theakston told Bradford Crown Court that the defendant shouted: "Give me your money or you're done" and threatened to "cut his throat".

Defending Balog, Nick Cartmell said he pleaded guilty on the day of the trial, describing it as a "foolhardy and stupid act when he lost his temper".

Recorder Hill-Baker sentenced Balog to 46 months in prison for the robbery.

100 MONTHS' JAIL FOR BRADFORD ROBBER WHO HELD AXE TO CABBIE'S FACE

A 24-year-old robber who terrorised shop workers and a cabbie has been jailed at Bradford Crown Court. Ismael Ahmed 24 was sentenced to eight years and four months in jail after a two-day robbery spree. He targeted petrol stations and shops across Bradford in May, stealing cash and cigarettes and threatening staff with violence.



His offending culminated in an attempted robbery at a Co-op, when he returned to a waiting cab, became aggressive and held an axe to the driver's face, telling him: "I'm going to murder you, "while demanding he drive faster.

The driver managed to escape after stopping the vehicle and taking the keys with him. Ahmed later admitted 10 offences, including 2 robberies, 5 attempted robberies and weapons offences.

A judge at Bradford Crown Court said Ahmed represented a danger to the public and imposed an extended sentence, including three years on licence.

COVENTRY CABBIE DISFIGURED AFTER FORMER SOLDIER BITES HIS EAR IN ROAD RAGE ATTACK

A Coventry cabbie has been left disfigured after a man bit his ear during a violent late-night road rage confrontation. Shane Hurley, 41, pleaded guilty to assaulting Mohammed Hanan in an attack so severe the victim required stitches.

The incident happened at 1am on 23 December 2022 as Mr Hanan was driving home following his taxi shift. The two men met on a narrow road lined with parked vehicles that lacked space for both cars to pass. Hurley began shouting at Mr Hanan to reverse his taxi, triggering a five-minute argument between the drivers.

The row rapidly escalated when Hurley got out of his vehicle and confronted the cabbie. He leaned inside the cab and struck Mr Hanan before climbing into the vehicle to bite him on the ear.

Mr Hanan required multiple stitches, but the wound became infected and left his ear permanently disfigured. The assault also forced Mr Hanan off work during December and January, resulting in c. £3,000 in lost earnings. At Warwick Crown Court, Judge Kristina Montgomery condemned the assault as "wholly unacceptable." The court heard in mitigation that Hurley had previously served in the British Army and had been diagnosed with PTSD.

Hurley was sentenced to a 20-month suspended prison sentence and ordered to pay £3,000 in compensation to Mr Hanan to cover his financial losses.

DRUNK PASSENGER BLINDED LIVERPOOL CABBIE IN VIOLENT ROW OVER £9.50 FARE

A drunk father who left a cabbie permanently blind in one eye was jailed at Liverpool Crown Court last month. Paul Pollard grumbled that his sentence was "bulls***" after receiving six years, three months in prison, alongside a three-year extended licence period.

The incident took place on March 8 this year. James Thompson, a cabbie of 17 years, picked up Pollard, 39, from Litherland around 8.30am. Pollard was "very drunk", slurring his words, and carrying a bottle of pre-mixed margarita cocktail. After falling asleep in the back, Pollard was woken up at his destination in Anfield, but admitted he had no money to pay the £9.50 fare.

Mr Thompson pulled Pollard out of the vehicle, leading to a stand-off and an exchange of punches. Mr Thompson had retrieved a wheel brace from his car, but Pollard took

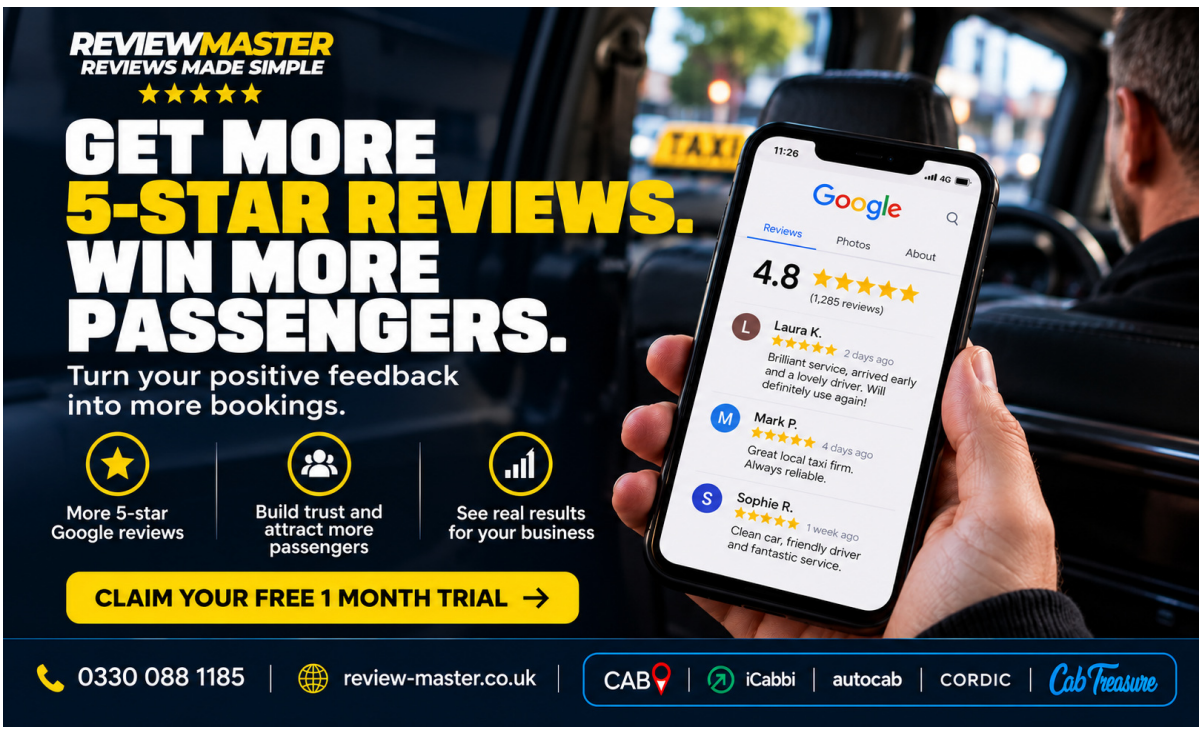


the weapon from him and struck him forcefully in the face. Paramedics later found Mr Thompson bleeding from his eyes, ears, and head. The victim suffered a bleed on the brain alongside facial and skull fractures.

He underwent emergency surgery the same morning and further operations but doctors fear he is "likely to permanently lose his sight in his left eye".

The court heard Pollard has 13 previous convictions for 31 offences, including a 10-year sentence in 2019 for a knifepoint robbery on another taxi driver. Defence counsel, Alex Langhorn, stated Pollard was travelling to see his children and felt "deeply ashamed" of his actions.

Sentencing him for causing grievous bodily harm with intent, Recorder Anna Price noted that Pollard committed the attack while on licence and under the influence of alcohol. She acknowledged his history of trauma but highlighted the severe consequences of the attack: "It may only have been one blow, but it caused catastrophic injuries. He will permanently bear the after effects of that blow to his head."



OWN THE FESTIVE SEASON

Article by Phil Holloway
Marketing Director
Hollogram Ltd
www.hollogram.com



As we approach the festive season, I believe we're entering one of the biggest marketing opportunities of the year for taxi companies across the UK. From Christmas markets and office parties to festive shopping trips, family gatherings, nights out with friends and New Year's Eve celebrations, November and December are packed with occasions when people need reliable transport.

And let's not forget, many of these occasions involve a few festive drinks! For taxi operators, this presents a fantastic opportunity to increase bookings, attract new customers and remind local people why booking a taxi is the sensible choice.

But here's my question: **are you actively marketing your taxi company around these events, or are you simply waiting for the bookings to arrive?**

Don't drink and drive – let us get you home

One of the simplest and most effective marketing messages at Christmas is also one of the most important. If you're going out celebrating, leave the car at home. Taxi companies have a brilliant opportunity to promote responsible travel through their marketing. Messages such as *"Enjoy the Party, We'll Get You Home"*, *"Your Christmas Night Out Starts and Ends With Us"* or *"Don't Drink and Drive - Book a Taxi Instead"* are simple, relevant and easy for customers to understand.

These messages work particularly well on social media, especially when accompanied by eye-catching festive graphics, photography and short videos.

Get your social media working harder

During the festive season, your Facebook, Instagram and TikTok pages should be full of relevant local content. Promote Christmas markets, local events, pantomimes, concerts, festive shopping destinations and popular venues. Create posts reminding people to book their transport for Christmas parties and New Year's Eve. You could even run competitions offering free taxi journeys or festive giveaways to encourage engagement and increase your local following.

My advice is to make your content fun, seasonal and relevant to your community. Don't just post pictures of taxis. Show people enjoying Christmas and remind them that your company can get them there and home safely.

Special offers can encourage more bookings

Christmas is also a great time to introduce targeted promotions. Consider offering discounted return journeys, group booking incentives, promotional codes for first-time app users or special deals with local restaurants and entertainment venues.

Corporate Christmas parties are another opportunity. Why not contact local businesses and offer to help organise safe transport home for their staff? A simple partnership could generate multiple bookings in one evening and potentially lead to regular corporate work throughout the year.

Don't forget traditional marketing

While digital marketing is incredibly important, traditional printed marketing still has its place. Well-designed festive flyers distributed through pubs, restaurants, hotels, shopping centres and local businesses can put your taxi company's details directly in front of potential customers. Include a QR code linking straight to your booking app or website, making it easy for people to book when they need you.

Start marketing before the festivities begin

The biggest mistake is leaving everything until December. People start organising Christmas parties, family gatherings and festive outings weeks in advance. Your marketing needs to be reaching them while they're making those plans.

At Hollogram, we always encourage taxi companies to think ahead, plan their campaigns and create content that connects with their local audience. Christmas isn't just about generating extra bookings over a few busy weekends. It's also an opportunity to introduce your business to new customers who could continue using your services throughout the following year.

So this festive season, don't just wait for the phone to ring. Get your marketing working, support your local community and make sure your taxi firm is the one people remember when it's time to head home. After all, your customers should be enjoying the festivities, not worrying about how they're getting home.

TAXI SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING



BOOK A PHOTOGRAPHY VIDEOGRAPHY FILMING SHOOT

SOCIAL MEDIA HELPS YOU BECOME THE LEADING TAXI BUSINESS IN YOUR LOCAL AREA

Hollogram.com

CALL 01509 398 002 or EMAIL studio@hollogram.com

Hollogram Ltd, 3 Beehive Lane, Loughborough. Leicestershire. LE11 2WN

TAXIBOT GENERATES £1M REVENUE!

By M2M TaxiBot
www.m2mtaxibot.com

TaxiBot has achieved a major milestone, generating £1 million in revenue through its AI-powered taxi booking technology, highlighting the growing commercial potential of conversational artificial intelligence within the taxi and private hire industry.

As operators continue to face rising costs, increasing competition and changing passenger expectations, TaxiBot is demonstrating how technology can help businesses secure more bookings, improve efficiency and deliver a more convenient customer experience. By enabling passengers to book journeys through familiar messaging platforms, TaxiBot is helping transform the traditional taxi booking process.

A Major Milestone for TaxiBot

Reaching £1 million in generated revenue represents an exciting achievement for TaxiBot and demonstrates the value of making taxi bookings simpler and more accessible. Traditionally, passengers have relied on telephone calls, booking websites or dedicated mobile applications to arrange transport.

TaxiBot introduces another option, allowing customers to begin their booking journey through a simple conversation. Using conversational AI, the technology guides passengers through the booking process, collecting essential journey information and helping connect customers with taxi operators. This approach removes unnecessary complexity while providing businesses with another valuable booking channel.

Turning Conversations into Revenue

One of TaxiBot's biggest advantages is its ability to turn everyday customer conversations into booking opportunities. For taxi operators, missed telephone calls, unanswered enquiries and complicated booking processes can mean potential revenue is lost.

TaxiBot helps address these challenges by providing an automated way for customers to request journeys through messaging platforms. Passengers can provide their pickup location, destination and journey requirements through a guided conversation.

For operators, this creates opportunities to capture additional bookings without requiring staff to manage every initial enquiry manually. The £1 million milestone highlights the commercial opportunities available when convenient communication meets intelligent automation.

Supporting Taxi Operators with AI

Beyond generating bookings, TaxiBot is designed to help operators improve operational efficiency. Taxi businesses regularly handle enquiries about availability, journey arrangements and booking details. Automating routine interactions can reduce repetitive administration, allowing employees to concentrate on more complex customer requirements.

TaxiBot can also support customer enquiries outside traditional office hours, helping businesses remain accessible when passengers need transport.

Importantly, the technology is designed to complement existing taxi operations rather than replace the people and systems that keep businesses running.

By combining automation with established dispatch processes, operators can offer customers additional ways to access their services.

The Future of Taxi Bookings

TaxiBot's £1 million achievement reflects the increasing importance of AI-powered communication within passenger transport. As customers become more comfortable using messaging platforms to interact with businesses, conversational booking technology offers opportunities for taxi operators of all sizes.

For passengers, the benefits are convenience, accessibility and a straightforward booking experience.

For operators, the opportunities include improved efficiency, additional bookings and stronger customer engagement.

Generating £1 million in revenue is a significant milestone for TaxiBot, demonstrating how artificial intelligence can deliver measurable commercial value in the taxi industry.

As the technology continues to develop, TaxiBot is helping shape a future where booking a taxi can be as simple as sending a message.

£1 million generated. Countless conversations.
A smarter future for taxi bookings.

TaxiBot

Powered by m2m DATA CONNECT group

Generated Over...

£1M

In Revenue!

Thank you to all of our partners involved

autocab

CORDIC

iCabbi

www.m2mtaxibot.com/book-a-free-demo/

UNJUST DESERTS

PH DRIVER WHO HUNTED DOWN RIVAL IN LIVERPOOL ROAD RAGE CHASE WALKS FREE

A private hire driver who used his vehicle as a weapon to hunt down and repeatedly ram a rival motorist has avoided a prison sentence, despite a judge declaring his behaviour "deserved custody".

Hawkar Karimi, of Wavertree, engaged in a terrifying high-speed pursuit through residential streets before smashing his cab into the victim's car during a shocking episode of road rage on Edge Lane.

The confrontation began when Karimi became enraged after missing a green traffic light. What started as a minor traffic frustration rapidly escalated into violence when both drivers pulled over and engaged in a physical punch-up in the street.

Following the fistfight, the other driver drove away, believing the incident was over. Karimi, however, refused to let the matter drop. Getting back behind the wheel of his PHV, Karimi used his vehicle to track the man down. For several minutes, the cabbie tailed the victim through heavy traffic and narrow residential roads.



The pursuit culminated on Edge Lane, one of Liverpool's busiest thoroughfares, where Karimi deliberately and repeatedly shunted his cab into the back of the victim's car, pushing it into oncoming traffic.

The entire ordeal was captured on Karimi's own dashcam, providing prosecutors with undeniable evidence of the attack.

Karimi later admitted his actions were "classless and very stupid."

Appearing at Liverpool Crown Court, Karimi faced a stern rebuke from the bench. The presiding judge made it clear that the severity of the offence - using a public service vehicle to terrorise another road user - warranted immediate imprisonment.

However, Karimi walked free from court due to recent changes in sentencing guidelines and emergency legislative measures aimed at managing prison overcrowding. Under the current legal framework, judges are required to suspend short custodial sentences whenever possible, allowing the rogue driver to avoid jail time.

LITHERLAND MOTHER COLLAPSES IN COURT AFTER AVOIDING JAIL FOR PH DRIVER SEXUAL ASSAULT

A mother of four, 41, has been spared jail at Liverpool Crown Court for sexually assaulting a PH driver while heavily intoxicated.

Emma Richards, of Litherland, sobbed and fell to the floor despite being given an 18-month community order and a 6-month alcohol abstinence requirement, reacting with distress upon learning she would also be placed on the sex offenders' register for 5 years.

She originally denied the offence, but Judge Simon Medland KC noted that "the evidence against her was overwhelming because of the car CCTV footage."

The assault occurred at 8:50pm on 12 June this year, when the victim picked up Richards. Sitting in the front passenger seat after drinking heavily, Richards told the driver he "smelled nice", grabbed his left arm, and tried to kiss him. Despite being rebuffed, she grabbed his arm again, touched and rubbed his groin over a period of a few minutes, and exposed her chest.

Prosecutor Ben Stanley stated that the victim did not tell her to stop "because he was worried how she would react as they were trapped in the vehicle together."

The four-minute ordeal ended when Richards left the car, prompting the victim to drive round the corner and call the police.

In a moving statement, the driver explained how the attack had forced him to give up his livelihood due to severe anxiety.

In mitigation, defence barrister Matt O'Neill described Richards's life as "very traumatic at times" as a survivor of domestic abuse who had previously attempted suicide.

Judge Menary acknowledged her history but emphasised the severe harm caused to the victim.

He remarked that "sexual assault, whether committed by a woman or a man is a very serious thing" which "often has a profound effect on the victim."

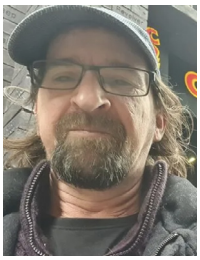
UNJUST DESERTS

RACIST PASSENGER WHO CHOKED LIVERPOOL PH DRIVER WALKS FREE FROM COURT

A racist passenger who throttled a PH driver with a belt while the vehicle was in motion has avoided an immediate prison sentence.

Gary Bohanna, 51, launched the unprovoked attack on driver Emmanuel Okinlola after being picked up from a Kirkdale pub on the afternoon of 15 December last year. On 2 October, Bohanna was handed a 12-month suspended sentence at Liverpool Crown Court.

The court heard Bohanna hurled vile racist abuse before moving behind the driver's seat, removing his belt, and pulling it tightly around Mr Okinlola's neck for around three minutes.



Despite fighting for breath and struggling to stay conscious, the driver managed to safely pull over in Anfield, fight off his attacker, and flag down police. When confronted with audio of the assault, Bohanna confessed to officers: "You've got me now."

Bohanna, who has 12 previous convictions, admitted intentional strangulation and racially aggravated threatening behaviour. The court heard he suffers from PTSD and alcohol dependency.

Sentencing him to a two-year suspended sentence with rehabilitation, alcohol treatment, and a restraining order, Recorder Ciaran Rankin told him: "You behaved disgracefully to a man going about his lawful, necessary business... Simply locking you up is not going to benefit anyone." Bohanna responded: "I agree."

SUSPENDED SENTENCE FOR BRUTAL ATTACK ON ONE-ARMED PH DRIVER IN SUNDERLAND

An Uber driver who uses a prosthetic arm lost his home, his marriage, and his livelihood after a violent attack by two passengers who mocked his disability. The cabbie feared for his life as he was punched, kicked, and stamped on in Sunderland on 14 July 2024.

The violence erupted after the driver politely asked passengers Drew Davidson, 26, and an unidentified man to add a second drop-off location using their booking app. The men became aggressive, calling him a "useless taxi driver" and telling him to "just f****** move". When the driver stepped out of his vehicle to escape the aggression, the men followed him outside.

Davidson mocked the victim's disability, asking: "What are you going to do with that?" before punching him to the head. The second man kicked the driver's legs out from under him, causing him to collapse.



While the victim curled into a ball to protect himself, Davidson stamped on his left hand - his only functional arm - while the other attacker repeatedly kicked and stamped on his head against the pavement.

The assault left the driver with facial injuries, a broken thumb, and a broken finger. In the 23 months following the assault, the victim lost £116,000 in earnings as he became unable to work nights. His PHV was repossessed, his marriage broke down, and he was left homeless and struggling with constant physical pain.

In a victim impact statement, he said: "It's left me a mental and physical wreck. I attempted to take my life. No one could imagine the impact this attack has had on me."

At Newcastle Crown Court, Recorder Andrew Haslam KC told Davidson this was a "thoroughly despicable assault" on a driver providing a public service. The judge said he should be ashamed that the victim believed he was going to die because he did not think his attackers would stop.

Davidson, from Sunderland, pleaded guilty to assault occasioning actual bodily harm, with his defence stating his actions were "completely out of character" while drinking during the Euro finals.

He received a 27-month sentence, suspended for three years, and was ordered to complete 250 hours of unpaid work, pay £1,000 in compensation, and £550 in costs.

GLASGOW HACKNEY DRIVER SITTING ON RANK HOURS AFTER BEING SUSPENDED

A Glasgow taxi driver who returned to work just hours after being suspended has been handed a further four-week suspension.

Mohammad Sarwar came to the attention of enforcement officers following an allegation that he refused to take passengers to Milton in the early hours of 9 May.

An inspection of his taxi revealed a meter clock running six minutes fast and missing documentation.

Officers suspended his licence, but later that same day, at 9.35pm, they spotted him at the Hydro taxi rank attempting a pick-up.

When challenged, Sarwar said he believed it was acceptable to continue working and admitted carrying out two or three hires. The licensing committee heard that he had arranged for the meter to be corrected. Sarwar apologised, saying he'd misunderstood the situation.

NEWCASTLE TAXI DRIVER FINED FOR ILLEGALLY PICKING UP FARES IN STOKE

A Newcastle-under-Lyme licensed taxi driver has been prosecuted and fined after illegally picking up passengers outside his permitted district. Dilshad Ahmed, from Longton, committed the offence on 26 December 2025 at a temporary match day taxi pick-up point at Trentham Lakes.

By taking a fare from a taxi rank in Stoke-on-Trent, he was unlawfully plying for hire outside his district, an action that automatically invalidated his vehicle insurance. He also failed to use his taxi meter for the journey, choosing instead to charge the customer upfront.

Mr Ahmed appeared before magistrates at North Staffordshire Justice Centre, where he pleaded guilty to the licensing breach.

The court originally fined him £325 and ordered him to pay £851.92 in costs to Stoke-on-Trent City Council, with the fine subsequently reduced to £250 in recognition of his guilty plea.

FORMER ROSSENDALE CABBIE FINED £1,623 PLUS 6 POINTS FOR DRIVING WITHOUT LICENCE/INSURANCE

A former taxi driver has been fined £1,623 and given six points on his driving licence after being found guilty of driving a Rossendale hackney carriage without the required licence or insurance.

Mohammed Manir, 63, from Rawtenstall, was spotted by Rossendale BC enforcement officers in March. The officers noticed the vehicle was missing its required roof light and recognised Manir, knowing he had not held a HC driver licence for several years. They followed the vehicle until it stopped and established Manir was not the owner.

Manir appeared at Burnley Magistrates' Court in September, where he pleaded not guilty to both offences, telling the court he had been test-driving the vehicle to a garage in Haslingden and believed his vehicle traders' insurance policy covered him.

Despite his defence, he was convicted of driving without proper driver licence and insurance.

PH DRIVER LOSES LICENCE AFTER TAILGATING AND SPEEDING ON M62

Police have suspended a PH driver's licence after witnessing erratic driving on the M62. Officers from Merseyside Police pulled over a white Toyota after they spotted it tailgating other traffic, weaving between lanes, and driving above the speed limit - all while a marked police car was following directly behind it!

A spokesperson for the roads policing unit said: "The vehicle was stopped,the driver reported, and they had their licence suspended."

PROTECT YOURSELF

Dashcam

S.A.F.E. Systems
CCTV Ltd

2K Halo Guard PH / Taxi Dash Cam

The first ICO compliant front and rear external view dashcam for Taxi & PH



£220 incl. VAT
+INSALLATION

3 YEAR WARRANTY
WHEN YOU REGISTER ONLINE AT ROADANGELGROUP.COM

Fully compliant product and installation

Permanently Disabled Audio Recording

Call us on 01706 551212 or email
info@safesystemscctv.co.uk

25 BRADFORD DRIVERS LOSE LICENCES OVER MOBILE PHONE OFFENCES

Figures obtained through an FoI request reveal that 25 Bradford-licensed drivers had their licences revoked for mobile phone offences:

- 2024: Eight PH drivers
- 2025: Eight PH and one HC driver
- 2026: Eight PH drivers so far

The latest case involved Zulfiqar Ali, 48, an Uber driver who lost his appeal against Bradford Council's decision to revoke his licence after he was caught holding a mobile phone while driving. Mr Ali was spotted by police in February with his vehicle weaving within its lane. An officer told the court Mr Ali was holding an illuminated mobile phone against his steering wheel and to dropped it onto the passenger seat when he noticed the police vehicle. He received six penalty points and had his PH licence revoked in March.

Mr Ali, had only been granted his Bradford licence in November 2025, but had been a PH driver in Birmingham for 14 years before this. He denied using the phone and said it had fallen from its holder and he was putting it back.

SPEEDING STOCKPORT CABBIE BANNED AFTER 91MPH RUN ON A55

A 76-year-old cabbie has been stripped of his driving licence after failing to convince magistrates not to ban him. Irshad Ahmed, from Stockport, appeared at Wrexham Magistrates Court on 23 October, after driving at 91mph in a 70mph zone on the A55 at Gaerwen.

Ahmed initially denied exceeding the speed limit, claiming he was rushing because an "unwell" passenger needed to reach a toilet. However, after prosecutor Brian Robinson allowed him to view police bodycam footage recorded during the traffic stop, Ahmed changed his plea to guilty. Mr Robinson noted that Ahmed had not mentioned a sick passenger to the officers, having stated at the time that he was "taking the passenger to the ferry port."

Already holding nine penalty points, the new offence added four more to Ahmed's record, taking him past the 12-point threshold for an automatic ban.

He mounted an exceptional hardship application to save his licence. However Magistrates ruled that Ahmed had failed to meet the strict legal criteria and imposed an immediate six-month driving ban. He was also ordered to pay a £466 fine, £130 in costs, and a £186 victim surcharge.

PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER FINED AFTER ILLEGAL PICK-UP AFTER MANCHESTER UNITED MATCH

Undercover Trafford Council officers caught a private hire driver in the act after he illegally picked them up outside Old Trafford on a Manchester United match day.

Abdul Kayum Talukdar, 47, from Ashton-under-Lyne, was parked on double yellow lines after Manchester United's match with Brighton on 25 October 2025.

He then drove towards the officers from Trafford Council's Licensing Enforcement Team, lowered his window down and agreed to take them into the city centre. When they asked him how much it would be, he cheekily asked: 'how much will you give me?' before insisting on £20. Shortly after the journey began, officers identified themselves and asked him to pull over.

Mr Talukdar, making the motions of crying pleaded that he was sorry and it was his 'first time', asking the officers not to take him to court as he had a wife and small children.

However, last month at Manchester Magistrates Court, Mr Talukdar, 47, pleaded guilty to plying for hire and driving without proper insurance. He was fined £500, with a surcharge of £200 and £300 contribution to costs, as well as six points on his driving licence.

LEADING UK SUPPLIER

S.A.F.E. Systems CCTV Ltd

CCTV

Approved by more than 50 Councils

We are the leading CCTV supplier in the UK for Taxi & Private Hire



March Update

Salford City Council

confirms

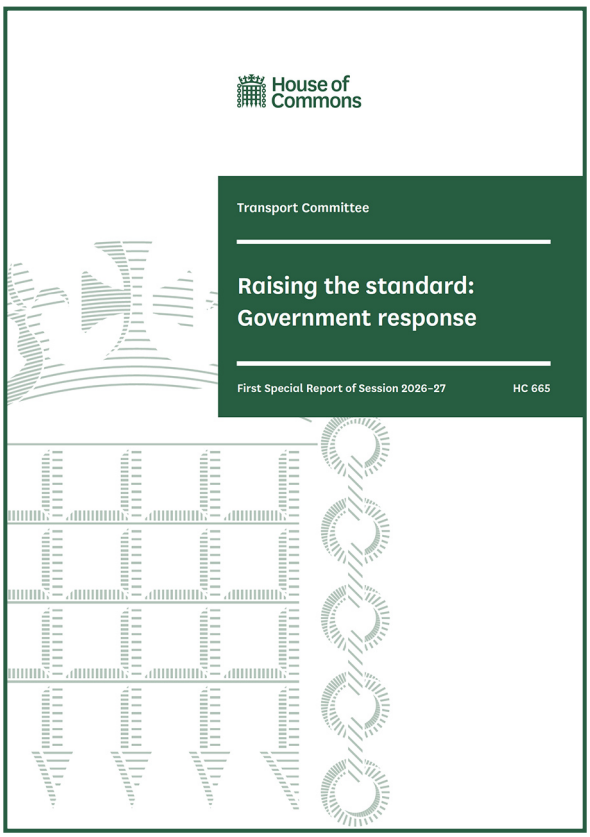
SAFE SYSTEMS APPROVAL

NATIONWIDE INSTALLERS

CALL US ON 01706 551212

www.safesystemscctv.co.uk

TRANSPORT COMMITTEE REPORT



First Special Report

The Transport Committee published its First Report of Session 2026–27, Raising the standard: licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles, (HC 80), on 10 June 2026. The Government Response was received on 14 September 2026 and is appended below.

Appendix 1: Government response

Introduction and summary

The Government welcomes the Transport Select Committee's report, "Raising the standard: licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles", published on 10th June 2026 following its inquiry into the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles [PHVs]. The Government is grateful to the Committee and to all those who contributed evidence for their engagement with this important issue.

Taxis and PHVs play a crucial role in the daily lives of many people, enabling essential journeys to work, school, and medical appointments. They are particularly important for those who may have limited access to alternative forms of public transport, including disabled passengers, older people, and those living in rural areas. For many of these users, taxis and PHVs are a vital means of maintaining independence, accessing employment, and reaching key services such as healthcare.

The Committee has brought forward its recommendations at a pivotal time. As announced in the King's Speech on 13th May 2026, the Government will publish a draft Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles Bill for pre-legislative scrutiny. These reforms are intended to strengthen safeguards, improve consistency across the licensing framework, and enhance accessibility. They will also support the Government's wider commitment to addressing the recommendations from the Baroness Casey Review, particularly Recommendation 11, which called for reforms which address inconsistent licensing standards and to strengthen safeguarding requirements.

The Government looks forward to working closely with the Committee throughout this process to ensure that the legislation developed is robust and addresses the challenges currently facing the sector.

Having carefully considered the Committee's report and the evidence presented, the Government's response to its recommendations is set out below.

Recommendation 1

We urge the government to use the Law Commission's 2014 draft bill and the report of the Task and Finish group as its starting points, updating them where necessary to reflect and incorporate app based operators.

A new framework should maintain clear distinctions between taxis and private hire vehicles, while placing both within a single consolidated statutory framework.

Government Response

The Law Commission's 2014 draft Bill provides a strong foundation for reform and that there should continue to be a clear distinction between taxis and PHVs. This is something the Government plans to retain in its draft Bill for pre-legislative scrutiny.

The Government also recognises the contribution of

the Task and Finish Group, which provided valuable recommendations to strengthen safeguarding, improve consistency, and support more effective enforcement within the existing framework.

The Task and Finish Group and the Law Commission reached different conclusions on several key issues. In particular, the Law Commission proposed a more flexible national framework, including consistent standards for PHVs and fewer restrictions on where journeys may take place. By contrast, the Task and Finish Group recommended tighter controls on out-of-area working, including requiring that journeys start or end within the licensing area, and proposed that licensing authorities should, where justified, have powers to limit the number of taxis and PHVs.

The Government will draw on both the Law Commission's draft Bill and the work of the Task and Finish Group in developing its reforms, while updating and adapting their proposals to reflect the current market.

Recommendation 2

We urge the department to bring forward a clear plan to curtail the extensive practice of out-of-area working (OOAW) and create greater incentives for drivers to license in the locality in which they operate. This will enable local licensing authorities to take enforcement action more readily, keep both drivers and passengers safe, and restore trust that has been lost across the sector.

Government Response

As stated in the Committee's report, the ways people travel are not restricted to administrative boundaries. The Government recognises that taxis and PHVs play a vital role in connecting people to employment, education, healthcare and leisure opportunities, particularly in more rural areas.

The Government shares the Committee's concern regarding the extent of out-of-area working [OOAW] by taxis and PHVs and the challenges it presents. As the Committee notes, OOAW has raised issues regarding the consistency of standards, the effectiveness of enforcement, and the alignment of enforcement resources with areas of demand.

We agree that the current system has created a patchwork of licensing standards across the country, creating an incentive for some drivers and operators to license in areas with lower requirements, quicker processing times, or lower licensing fees. The Government has already taken action to address this through proposals to introduce national standards and consulting on moving the licensing level to local transport authorities. These could reduce the incentive for license shopping and reduce inconsistencies in standards.

The Committee is right to highlight the enforcement challenges associated with OOAW. Currently, enforcement powers rest with the licensing authority that issued the licence, which can limit the ability of other authorities to take action against drivers who operate outside the area where they are licensed. The Government has already taken steps, through the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act, to address this. New powers adopted in the Act will enable local authorities to immediately suspend licenses in the interests of public safety, regardless of where a driver is licensed. To support licensing authorities in using this new power, the Government will provide guidance on its use to ensure it is exercised consistently and where justified by the circumstances of the case.

Any reforms introduced by the Government will be guided by the need to ensure passenger safety, particularly for women and girls, whilst ensuring that communities continue to have access to a reliable and accessible taxi and PHV service. The Government recognises that there is a relationship between restrictions on cross-border working, service availability , and passenger safety. Any measures that significantly restrict journeys across licensing boundaries could reduce vehicle availability in some areas, increase waiting times, and make it harder for passengers to access transport when and where they need it. In its evidence to the Committee, the Suzy Lamplugh Trust emphasised the importance of ensuring reforms support passenger safety and highlighted the need for a regulatory framework that protects the public while maintaining effective provision. The Government agrees and will therefore carefully consider any proposals that could limit cross-border working, ensuring reforms strengthen safety, safeguarding and regulatory oversight while not negatively impacting supply.

We will continue to work with the Committee, licensing authorities, industry representatives, unions and passenger groups to develop these options further.

Recommendation 3

Following the conclusion of its consultation on transferring taxi and PHV licensing to local transport authorities, the department should publish a comparative appraisal of licensing models, including the local transport authority approach and a potential national licensing model. This appraisal should assess which model would best reduce incentives for extensive out- of-area working.

Government Response

The consultation on proposals to transfer taxi and PHV licensing responsibilities to Local Transport Authorities [LTAs] closed on 1st April 2026. The Government intends to publish its full response to the consultation by the end of the year.

Taxi and PHV licensing in England is currently undertaken at a highly localised level. Responsibility rests, with the exception of London, with individual district, borough, or unitary authorities. These licensing authorities are responsible for setting requirements for drivers, vehicles, and operators within their areas, as well as undertaking compliance and enforcement activity.

As part of its response to the consultation, the Government will consider different licensing models, including LTA-based approaches and potential alternative arrangements, such as a more nationally consistent framework. This will include a comparative assessment of how different models could support more consistent standards, improve the alignment between licensing and enforcement, and reduce incentives for extensive out-of-area working.

Recommendation 4

The government's plan for national minimum standards must not mean low by default. The areas in which variation in standards is permitted should be minimised in order to disincentivise licence shopping and set at a high level wherever possible to ensure consistently high-quality passenger experience.

Government Response

The Government notes the Committee's recommendation. The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act received Royal Assent on 29th April 2026 and provides the Secretary of State with powers to introduce national standards for taxi and PHVs.

National standards must be sufficiently robust to improve consistency and maintain high levels of passenger safety and service quality. We recognise the Committee's concern that standards set too low, or with excessive scope for local variation, could perpetuate the incentives for license shopping and undermine confidence in the regulatory framework.

The Government is committed to developing national standards that are clear, enforceable, and set at an appropriately high level. These standards will seek to reduce unnecessary variation between licensing authorities, particularly in relation to safety, driver training, and accessibility. They will also aim to ensure passengers can have confidence in receiving a consistently safe and high-quality service, regardless of where they travel or where a driver, vehicle or operator is licensed.

There could be a role for local flexibility in certain areas, allowing licensing authorities to respond to specific local circumstances and policy priorities. In developing the standards, careful consideration will therefore be given to where a consistent national approach is essential, and where limited variation may be justified to reflect local needs.

However, the Government is clear that any element of local flexibility will not come at the expense of public safety, and the core safety and safeguarding requirements will be set nationally to ensure consistently high standards across England.. Where local varaiton is required we will consider how this could interact with any wider reforms, including any potential measures to incentivise or require drivers to be licenced in the area in which they undertake the majority of their work.

The Government will engage closely with local authorities, industry representatives, trade unions, and passenger groups as part of this process.

Recommendation 5

We also recommend that requirements for safeguarding training and clear requirements for frequency of rechecking DBS certificates be included in national standards so that they are applied uniformly across every licensing authority. The department should also review the impact that legislative changes have had on DBS filtering and work with relevant partners to ensure these do not create unintended gaps in the information available to licensing authorities.

Government Response

The Government agrees with the Committee on the importance of robust and consistent safeguarding requirements across taxis and PHVs. The safety of passengers will always remain our top priority.

The Government intends to include standards on safeguarding, including the completion of safeguarding training, as part of the forthcoming national standards. These will set consistent requirements for all licensing authorities to ensure that absolute safeguarding protections are applied across England. All national standards, including those relating to safeguarding and training, will be subject to consultation.

The Government recognises the importance of ensuring licensing authorities have access to relevant and comprehensive information when making decisions about the suitability of drivers. Enhanced DBS checks with a check of the barred lists play an important role in this.

Recommendation 6

The government should ensure that guidance clearly links the criteria for making a fit and proper person judgement to national licensing standards.

Government Response

There should be a clear and consistent link between national licensing standards and the criteria used by licensing authorities in determining whether an individual is a fit and proper person to hold a licence.

As part of the development of national standards, the Government will ensure that these are explicitly aligned with, and inform, the assessment of fit and proper person status. This will support greater consistency in decision making across licensing authorities. In addition, the Government will review the relevant statutory guidance to ensure it clearly reflects this.

Recommendation 7

The department should work with the Home Office to place information sharing between policing bodies and licensing authorities on a statutory footing so that there are common expectations everywhere. This should include a duty to share relevant safeguarding and risk information for licensing purposes, supported by a standard expectation on timeliness.

Government Response

The Government recognises the importance of timely and effective information sharing between policing bodies and licensing authorities, particularly in relation to safeguarding and the assessment of risk.

Inconsistencies in current information sharing arrangements can undermine licensing authorities' ability to make informed decisions about a driver's suitability and to act promptly when concerns arise. As well as considering this as part of the Department's feasibility work on the national licensing database, the Government will continue to work closely with the Home Office and licensing authorities to review existing mechanisms for improving information sharing.

Recommendation 8

The national licensing database should enable licensing authorities to confirm licence status, licensing history and the responsible authority quickly and ensure that refusals, revocations and other relevant decisions are recorded consistently and visible to all authorities. The department should set out a clear timescale on which this work will be completed.

Government Response

The Government is progressing work on developing a national licensing database for taxis and PHVs. This system will enable licensing authorities to confirm key information, including licence status, licensing history, and the identity of the responsible licensing authority. It will also support the sharing of other relevant decisions, including refusals, suspensions, and revocations, improving transparency, and reducing the risk of unsuitable individuals obtaining a license in another area.

We recognise that the effectiveness of a national licensing database will depend not only on the information it contains, but also on the consistency and timeliness of data entry, clear and consistent standards governing the information recorded, and how licensing authorities access it. As part of the pre-legislative scrutiny process, the Government will consider requirements for information that must be recorded on the database, including previous licensing decisions, together with expectations and timescales for submitting and updating records. These considerations will form a core part of the design process.

The Government also recognises the Committee's request for a clear timetable. While it is not possible at this stage to set out a detailed delivery schedule, the Government intends to provide further information on scope, design, and indicative timelines as the work progresses and once initial feasibility and development stages have been completed.

The Government also recognises the Committee's request for a clear timetable. While it is not possible to set out a detailed delivery schedule at this stage, the Government intends to provide further information on scope, design, and indicative timelines once the initial feasibility and development stages are complete. We expect a discovery phase to begin in the autumn of this year and be completed by spring 2027.

We will continue to engage with licensing authorities, industry representatives, and other stakeholders to ensure that the system supports improved decision making and enforcement.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that the government consult within the next 12 months on introducing mandatory in vehicle CCTV, with a view to including this requirement within national standards if it is sufficiently supported by evidence. The consultation should also seek views on how data protection, privacy and storage concerns could be suitably addressed.

Government Response

The Government will include the issue of in-vehicle CCTV within the forthcoming consultation on national standards, which we intend to publish by the end of this year. This will ensure that the question is considered alongside other measures to improve safety in taxis and PHVs.

The Government recognises that any requirement for CCTV would need to be designed in a way which appropriately balances safeguarding benefits with individuals' rights to privacy and obligations under data protection legislation. Any decision to introduce such a requirement will consider consultation responses, relevant evidence, and stakeholder engagement, including with the Information Commissioner's Office and industry representatives.

Recommendation 10

National standards should set a clear benchmark for licensing processing times, covering applications, renewals and variations, and require all licensing authorities to publish performance against that benchmark in a consistent format.

Government Response

The Government recognises the importance of timely and efficient taxi and PHV licensing processes, given their impact on drivers' livelihoods and the provision of services.

However, there would be challenges associated with introducing a national benchmark for licensing processing times. Licensing authorities operate in local contexts, with significant variation in application volumes, available resources, and reliance on external processes such as Disclosure and Barring Service checks and medical assessments. Fixed national benchmarks could place undue pressure on authorities and inadvertently incentivise speed at the expense of robust safeguarding and public safety considerations.

The current powers in the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act would not extend to requiring authorities to meet or report against a benchmark. The Government will consider if the introduction of this measure is necessary as part of future reforms.

The Government supports the sharing of best practice across licensing authorities, including more efficient application handling, risk based processing, and streamlined renewals for compliant drivers and operators.

Recommendation 11

The government's proposal to move responsibility for licensing to local transport authorities will not apply in London, where Transport for London already acts as the licensing authority. London's recent experience of licensing backlogs demonstrates that this reform will not, at a stroke, solve resourcing and efficiency issues.

The department must consider what can be learned from this experience about the operational and resourcing conditions that need to be in place if licensing responsibilities are to be exercised efficiently and reliably at a larger strategic authority level.

Government Response

The Government recognises the importance of learning from all licensing authorities, including the impact of operational pressures, and system changes on licensing performance. The Department will work with Transport for London and other licensing authorities to identify and share lessons learned.

A key element of this approach will be the active sharing of best practices and practical learning across the sector. The Government considers greater collaboration between licensing authorities essential to supporting improvement, enabling authorities to benefit from proven approaches to managing demand, streamlining processes, and maintaining high safeguarding standards.

Recommendation 12

National standards should set proportionate and fair requirements for key elements of driver competence, including spoken English language proficiency and appropriate knowledge of the areas in which drivers operate.

Government Response

The Government agrees that national standards should support clear requirements for driver competence. This includes ensuring drivers can communicate effectively with passengers, understand instructions, and operate safely.

The Government intends to include areas of driver competence within the forthcoming national standards consultation, including consideration of English language proficiency. In doing so, the Department will have to consider established benchmarks for English language ability as well as existing requirements for other modes of public transport, such as bus and coach drivers, where communication is also essential.

In developing these proposals, particular care will be taken to ensure that any requirements do not create unnecessary barriers to entry. The Government recognises the need to strike the right balance between consistency at a national level and flexibility to reflect local circumstances.

The Department will engage closely with licensing authorities, industry representatives, passenger groups, and other stakeholders to ensure that a wide range of perspectives and evidence are considered.

Recommendation 13

National standards should include mandatory disability awareness and equality training for drivers and operators, to be provided to a high minimum standard of quality, with clear refresher requirements and effective enforcement against non-compliance.

Government Response

Improving accessibility across the taxi and PHV sector is a priority for this Government, and we recognise the importance of ensuring that drivers and operators are equipped to support disabled passengers.

The Government recognises the need for disability equality awareness training to be included as part of national standards. The consultation will set out proposals for the training, and appropriate refresher requirements to ensure knowledge remains current.

The Government will work with stakeholders, including licensing authorities, industry representatives, and disability groups, to ensure the requirements support meaningful improvements in passenger experience.

Recommendation 14

The department should publish a national plan to increase wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) provision. The plan should be underpinned by a single national WAV fleet requirement, specifying the minimum proportion of each licensing authority's total licensed fleet that must be wheelchair accessible vehicles.

The plan should require every licensing authority to demonstrate and report progress against that requirement. While local delivery models may differ, including in rural and low-density areas, the required minimum proportion of WAVs and the standard of passenger access those vehicles must meet should be consistent nationally.

The plan should also include:

- **a new requirement to improve transparency, requiring all operators to publish their fleet's provision of WAVs; and**
- **specific measures to improve WAV provision and provide greater incentives for drivers to use them across the country, including rural and low-density areas.**

Government Response

The Government recognises the importance of increasing the availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles [WAVs] to ensure disabled passengers can travel safely, reliably, and with confidence.

Introducing a single national minimum fleet requirement for WAV provision would not come without challenges. The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee has stressed the importance of a mixed fleet to meet the needs of disabled passengers best. The demand for wheelchair accessible services varies significantly across areas, reflecting local demographics, travel patterns, and the availability of alternative accessible transport options, particularly in rural areas.

There are operational challenges in delivering consistent WAV availability. These include the fact that many PHV drivers are self-employed and own their vehicles, the need to ensure coverage at different times of day, and the concentration of demand at specific times, such as peak travel periods and home to school transport. These factors mean that a minimum fleet proportion would not necessarily guarantee the availability of accessible service when and where it is needed.

The Government is committed to exploring approaches to increasing WAV provision and will consider all options as part of our ongoing reforms to ensure demand for these vital services is met.

Recommendation 15

The plan should also be accompanied by additional funding, delivered through licensing authorities, to help drivers meet the costs of acquiring, adapting, and maintaining WAVs.

Government Response

The Government acknowledges the financial challenges associated with the provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles [WAVs], including the higher upfront costs of purchase or conversion, as well as ongoing maintenance and operational costs. These factors can act as barriers to wider adoption, particularly for PHV drivers who own the cars they drive.

The Department will continue to explore a range of alternatives to support and incentivise the uptake of WAVs as part of its broader policy development.

Recommendation 16

Accessibility in the broadest sense also means giving users the widest variety of options for finding out about and booking services both digital and non-digital. The department should consider including provision of a range of booking options by operators in the national standards.

Government Response

The Government recognises the importance of ensuring passengers can access taxis and PHVs through a range of booking channels. Providing a variety of booking options can help ensure services are accessible to all passengers, including those who may have different needs, or preferences. The Government will explore the feasibility of including such requirements in the national standards consultation.

The Department will engage with licensing authorities, operators, passenger groups, and disability stakeholders to ensure any proposals are practical, evidence based and deliver meaningful improvements in access to services.

Recommendation 17

The introduction of national standards should be accompanied by a single national complaint and incident reporting portal for taxi and private hire services. It should be digitally inclusive, route reports to the responsible authority, and include clear service standards for acknowledgement, updates, and resolution.

Government Response

The Government supports improvements to complaints and incident reporting across the taxi and PHVs, recognising their importance for passenger safety, confidence, and effective oversight.

The Government agrees with the principle of a more consistent and accessible approach, including the potential for a national system. Complaints should be considered in the first instance by the relevant operator and or licensing authority, with a potential national system providing a route for escalation where resolution has not been achieved or where issues indicate broader systemic or safeguarding concerns.

The Government will consider this, among a range of options, as part of the pre-legislative scrutiny process.

Recommendation 18

We welcome the minister's statement that the government wants licensing authorities to be able to take enforcement action against all the taxis.

and PHVs operating in their area. We look forward to the government's forthcoming legislation setting out a clear pathway to achieving this.

Government Response

The Government is committed to strengthening enforcement powers to ensure that licensing authorities can take action against all taxis and PHVs operating within their areas, regardless of where they are licensed. The Government has already taken action, through the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act as a first step to strengthen enforcement powers. These will enable the immediate suspension of licences in the interests of public safety, regardless of where a driver is licensed.

The Government recognises that the current framework can create challenges for authorities seeking to address non-compliance, particularly where vehicles operate away from where they are licensed. Expanded enforcement powers will need to be accompanied by clear guidance, safeguards, and effective information sharing to ensure that authorities can act confidently while avoiding duplication or inconsistency.

Measures to achieve this will be considered during the pre-legislative scrutiny process to establish a clear pathway for implementation.

Recommendation 19

The government should address the current mismatch between enforcement responsibilities and funding by enabling licensing authorities to recover the costs of enforcement action taken against out-of-area drivers from the authority that issued the licence. Transitional support may be required to build enforcement capacity in authorities with more limited resources.

Government Response

The Government recognises the challenges associated with the current distribution of enforcement responsibilities and resources, particularly in cases involving out-of-area drivers and operators. This can place disproportionate burdens on certain licensing authorities and create inconsistencies in enforcement.

The Government agrees that there is a need to consider how the framework can better align enforcement responsibilities with appropriate funding mechanisms, while ensuring that any approach remains fair, proportionate,

and workable in practice. Such mechanisms would require careful design, including consideration of administrative complexity, and ensuring a consistency of approaches across authorities.

The Government believes drivers should ordinarily be licensed by the authority in the area where they intend to undertake the majority of their work. To support this ambition, as part of the pre-legislative scrutiny process, the Government will consider a range of policy approaches to disincentivise out-of-area working. If effective, this would help address the mismatch between enforcement responsibilities and funding.

Transport Committee

The Transport Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for Transport and its associated public bodies.

Current membership

Ruth Cadbury (Labour; Brentford and Isleworth) (Chair)

Steff Aquarone (Liberal Democrat; North Norfolk)

Dr Scott Arthur (Labour; Edinburgh South West)

Mrs Elsie Blundell (Labour; Heywood and Middleton North)

Jacob Collier (Labour; Burton and Uttoxeter)

Daniel Francis (Labour; Bexleyheath and Crayford)

Olly Glover (Liberal Democrat; Didcot and Wantage)

Katie Lam (Conservative; Weald of Kent)

Alex Mayer (Labour; Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard)

Rebecca Smith (Conservative; South West Devon)

Laurence Turner (Labour; Birmingham Northfield)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No. 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

This Report, together with formal minutes relating to the Report, was Ordered by the House of Commons, on 13 October 2026, to be printed. It was published on on 20 October 2026 by authority of the House of Commons.
© Parliamentary Copyright House of Commons 2026.

IMMIGRATION STATUS AND TAXI LICENSING

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



The right to a licence in 2026

Immigration status now plays a direct role in determining whether a taxi or private hire driver may obtain or retain a licence. For licensing authorities, the obligation to prevent illegal working is statutory, not merely a matter of policy. Yet decisions involving expired documents, pending applications and restricted permission to work frequently require more careful analysis than an initial check suggests.

The Home Office guidance applying from 1 October 2026 reinforces the distinction between immigration eligibility, the prescribed checking process and the wider licensing assessment. That distinction matters both to licensing authorities making decisions and to practitioners challenging them.

Immigration permission and the right to a licence

The **Immigration Act 2016** amended the relevant taxi and private hire legislation across the United Kingdom. An authority must not issue, renew or extend a driver or individual operator licence where the applicant is disqualified by reason of immigration status. Disqualification arises where required immigration permission is absent, has ceased to have effect, or contains conditions preventing the particular licensed work.

Lawful residence alone is therefore insufficient. An individual may hold valid permission to remain in the United Kingdom but lack permission to work as a taxi or private hire driver. Skilled Worker permission, for example, generally authorises sponsored employment, with supplementary work subject to specific restrictions. Taxi and private hire work will not ordinarily satisfy those supplementary employment conditions.

Equally, immigration eligibility does not establish an entitlement to licensing approval. Applicants remain subject to the applicable statutory requirements, including the fit and proper person test. An authority must keep the immigration prohibition separate from its discretionary assessment of suitability. A perceived immigration irregularity does not, without more, establish dishonesty or risk to the travelling public.

Pending applications and digital verification

A recurring difficulty arises when a driver's previous immigration permission appears to have expired while a further application remains unresolved. **Section 3C Immigration Act 1971** may continue existing permission where a qualifying application was made before expiry. Subject to the statutory requirements, that continuation can extend through an outstanding application and relevant appeal or administrative review. Existing work restrictions generally continue as well.

An expired date on an earlier document is therefore not necessarily proof of disqualification. Conversely, simply having an immigration application pending does not itself create permission to work. The application history, its timing and validity, and the conditions of the previous permission are critical.

Where entitlement cannot be established through the ordinary prescribed methods, the Home Office's Status Verification, Enquiries and Checking Service can provide confirmation in specified cases. Positive verification relating to an outstanding application, appeal or administrative review ordinarily permits a licence for no more than six months, calculated by reference to the verification response. This is not an unrestricted discretion to issue a full-term licence.

The increasing use of eVisas creates further evidential issues. Applicants ordinarily provide a share code enabling the licensing authority to carry out a Home Office online check. Physical Biometric Residence Permits are no longer acceptable for manual checks. Where online records are incorrect or inaccessible, the authority should consider the relevant verification route rather than assume that a technical failure establishes unlawful status.

The October 2026 guidance also addresses prescribed document checks and registered digital verification service providers. Whatever checking method applies, authorities must conduct checks consistently, give applicants a reasonable opportunity to establish eligibility and avoid assumptions based on nationality or ethnicity. Fair procedure does not displace the statutory prohibition, but it is essential to determining whether that prohibition actually applies.

Licence duration, lapse and regulatory discretion

Time-limited immigration permission places a corresponding limit on licence duration. An authority cannot issue a licence beyond the permitted immigration period merely because its ordinary licensing policy favours a longer term. Where continuing immigration eligibility is verified, the maximum permitted duration remains subject to the relevant licensing legislation.

If a licence holder subsequently becomes disqualified on immigration grounds, the licence lapses by operation of law. That consequence is distinct from a discretionary suspension or revocation following misconduct. Financial hardship, an exemplary licensing record or the absence of safeguarding concerns cannot override a statutory bar where it genuinely applies.

The difficulty in contested cases is often establishing whether disqualification has occurred at all. A Home Office notification, an apparent expiry or incomplete documentation may require further enquiry. It is necessary to distinguish a confirmed loss of permission from uncertainty about the evidence. An authority should not treat those circumstances as legally interchangeable.

Immigration matters may also raise separate fitness concerns, particularly where allegations involve false documentation, deliberate unlawful working or misleading disclosures. Those allegations require an independent assessment of the available evidence, seriousness of the conduct, public protection and proportionality. The existence of an immigration dispute is not itself a finding of dishonesty.

Consequences for operators

From 1 October 2026, expanded right to work duties apply to certain taxi and private hire operators, including businesses engaging individual sub-contractors or providing online driver-matching services. A driver's self-employed status does not necessarily remove those obligations.

Without a statutory excuse, an operator engaging an illegal worker risks a civil penalty of up to £60,000 per worker. Knowingly engaging an illegal worker, or having reasonable cause to believe they lack permission, may also result in prosecution. Such breaches can prompt a licensing review and possible licence revocation.

Challenging decisions on their proper legal basis

Where a driver is refused renewal or informed that their licence has lapsed, the first issue is the legal basis relied upon. An asserted statutory disqualification demands examination of immigration permission and prescribed verification. A discretionary refusal based on fitness requires scrutiny of the alleged conduct, evidential sufficiency and the reasoning supporting the authority's assessment of risk.

Precision in the decision notice is particularly important. A statement that a driver has "failed a right to work check" may conceal three different problems: a statutory prohibition, insufficient documentation or an allegation that information was deliberately withheld. Each requires a different evidential response. The licence holder should be able to identify the relevant power, the material relied upon and the reasons why the authority considers that power engaged.

In my experience of challenging licensing decisions, difficulties frequently arise when an administrative inability to verify status is treated as a substantive finding that permission has ended. These situations can directly affect a driver's livelihood and expose operators to investigation. Neither consequence relaxes the statutory duty, but both reinforce the importance of accurate fact-finding and procedurally sound decisions.

Any challenge must also respect the boundary between immigration and licensing jurisdictions. A licensing appeal cannot necessarily determine the underlying immigration dispute, and the appropriate route of challenge will depend upon the legislation and the decision in question. Proper representation often requires those issues to be addressed in parallel.

I specialise in transport regulatory and licensing law and regularly advise and represent clients before licensing sub-committees, Traffic Commissioners and Magistrates' Courts. Where immigration status becomes relevant to a licensing decision, my role is to advise on the licensing implications, the application of the relevant statutory provisions and the lawfulness of the authority's decision. I do not provide immigration law advice or representation, and matters concerning immigration status, applications or appeals should be referred to a suitably qualified immigration specialist. Drivers and operators facing investigation, licence review, refusal, suspension, or revocation are invited to contact me for specialist advice or representation in relation to their licensing position.



Andy Peters
Brighton & Hove Cab Trade Association
info@bhcta.co.uk www.bhcta.co.uk

Fare Review

Following on from last month's ramblings where I reported on the trade's fare review, which we voted on in May, and we were expecting to go to the licensing committee, as it has always done, in June, where it didn't and instead went to the full cabinet on September 17. To date at the time of writing in late October, this has still not been advertised over a month later as per **Section 65 of the LGMP Act 1976**. In fact my emails to Cllr Trevor Muten (Transportation) and Licensing have effectively been blanked. This of course is unacceptable for the trade here in Brighton & Hove. As a 'fit and proper' person' I will refrain from putting in black and white what exactly I want to state about this. So, swiftly moving on...

Licensing Committee Meeting

I sat through the live streaming of the 8th October Licensing Committee where there was only the briefest mention of the previously quoted fare review which has still yet to be instigated.

I used to attend these meetings in the council chamber as there was seating directly nearby for public viewing. However, the council stopped this and anyone who now wants to attend the meetings has to sit upstairs in the 'Gods'. The issue of this is that there has to be a security guard there to make sure that you don't throw rotten tomatoes at the councillors, or similar. This meant that as I have been the only one from the trade to go to watch these meetings, I would have my own assigned security guard hovering around to keep an eye on me.

Anyway, as usual I was huffing and puffing at the laptop screen when I was hearing certain comments being made by certain councillors on specific subjects. It is just as well that I no longer attend these meetings as I think I would have been man-handled out and probably banned. I will be addressing what was stated at that meeting in due course. But, when you hear a councillor praise the Uber app and how convenient it is and effectively making a statement that local companies need to *'Up their game'*, although not quite in those words but certainly inferring that, you can imagine that I was practically leaping through the laptop screen with disbelief and great anger!

As a Streamline Taxis Association full member, I can state that we have invested hundreds of thousands over the years in technology, from being the first here to have radios, to auto-dispatch and going through continuous variations of in-car data-heads to now the equivalent Uber style driver/customer app. And yet we have a councillor who does not know anything about us, even though this year we celebrate 90 years of being a non-profit making owner-driver association. So, to that councillor, please do your research before you make unwarranted statements. You should also consider that local companies are not backed by billions of dollars and that those billions of dollars of profits from Uber here is sent overseas and the drivers are now being hit with up to 49% commission on the fares that you pay.

The biggest issue I have with local councillors, many of whom I have seen come and go over the forty-years of being in the trade, is that whilst they have the gift under legislation to control the local taxi and private hire trade (whilst having no control whatsoever on the OOTs), they make little or no effort to do their proper factually constructed research. That specific councillor, who has a say in the control of the local trade here, is typical of many who have come and gone who can actually cause damage to us. I do have to make the point though that I have worked on a one-to-one basis with several local councillors over the years who have actually gone out of their way to show an interest in our local trade rather than just sit at meetings making unwarranted statements. So, to all local councillors throughout the country I say to you: just because you have been given the power under legislation to 'control' us, do not think you can just make non-factual throwaway comments that affect the livelihood of hundreds of drivers without being challenged.

One other point that was spoken about at that meeting was the dwindling number of local driver/vehicle licences compared to over the last few years. It was effectively stated that this will be 'looked into' as to what the cause is and as to whether this is the same in other areas. This was another time where I could have leapt through the laptop screen and into the council chamber shouting: "Why don't you already know this?" because the facts are already



there in the government's recently updated stats where it is clear that private hire licensing has surged in areas such as Portsmouth, Southampton, Chichester, Lewes et al, while those same drivers predominantly work here. And why? Well certainly other areas do not require the high standards required here, where a dual badge to drive both a hackney and private hire vehicle entails passing an extensive knowledge test so that local drivers here are not driving with their eyes glued to a satnav being forced to use a prescribed route plugged into earphones for taking directions. Although whilst Lewes also issues a dual badge, the knowledge test is designed to be really simple.

Am I leading up to the only cure of increasing the number of locally licensed drivers here is to drop the dual badge with no knowledge test to drive a private hire vehicle? Absolutely not, because whilst numbers have dwindled, we still have drivers passing the knowledge test who have gone out of their way to become part of the local trade 'family' because it can be done with a bit of effort and is absolutely open to all.

Social Media Complaint

On a local Brighton Facebook group, a post was made an allegation that the author's young son was in an accident with a 'taxi' in Brighton. The allegation was that the driver of the 'taxi' made the young man go with him to a body repair shop and demanded a payment of £500 and also demanded that he paid £250 a day for every day the car was off the road. It was stated that they young man felt very threatened.

I was alerted to this post and as the plate and registration of the vehicle was provided, I knew straight away that the allegation was against an out-of-town private hire vehicle because I am very familiar with all the various plate numbers of the many OOTs that predominantly work here. I also knew exactly which licensing area that the private hire vehicle was from. So, I posted which licensing area this was and the contact details. I also contacted the respective licensing authority and gave the full transcript allegation of the post plus a screen shot of it.

You may be asking why I did this? Well, as usual, any social media post about 'taxis' (which is a term that everyone uses who does not know the difference between a taxi and a private hire vehicle) has the usual slagging off about taxi drivers. And as this was a Brighton Facebook group, you can see where this was going with every anonymous troll surfacing and spitting as much venom as they could before they were put to bed by their carer.

So, as a natural busy-body, I had to step in and make it clear that the allegations were against a driver that was not licensed in Brighton & Hove and I gave the licensing area. I also made the point that this private hire vehicle did not have council controlled CCTV, as that licensing area does not have it as a condition of licensing, unlike all B&H taxis and private hire vehicles. I also stressed the important point that when using a particular national app here, and where there is a complaint, the chances are very high that B&H council will not want to assist and it will be up to the user to try and find out which licensing area under which the driver and vehicle was licensed. I don't know if the licensing area is supplied when the booking is taken.

The licensing authority concerned was reasonable in as much as they stated they would speak to the driver, but would need a statement from the victim to investigate this further. I don't know if this was followed up as a complaint, however, there are three important points here:

1: CCTV is an essential requirement in taxi and private hire vehicles to not only protect the customer but also to protect the driver should any complaint be false, which could have even been the case in the example given.

2: This clearly demonstrates how utterly ridiculous the situation is with out-of-town drivers predominantly working in another area which could be a hundred-miles plus away from respective licensing enforcement, if that even exists.

3: As a trade it is up to us to be vigilant and be the eyes and ears for the protection of people in our own towns and cities and make every effort to report any rogue drivers who think they can work out-of-sight and out-of-mind of respective licensing enforcement. If we don't, then they get away with it and the rest of us get tarnished.

Lastly, at the time of writing the government's response to **'Raising the standard'** has been published and at a quick glance it is very clear that 'predominant out-of-area working' (POAW) is here to stay.

BUILDING EXCELLENCE FOR LICENSING: WHY IoL'S NEW STRATEGY MATTERS FOR LICENSED TRADE

Article by Mike Smith, Joint Deputy Licensing Manager at Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils Shared Regulatory Services and Advisory Council Representative of the IoL South East Region.

Please note that this article represents my own views and is not presented as the views of the IoL nor Guildford or Waverley Borough Councils.

As the leaves begin to turn and autumn settles across our towns and cities, November brings with it a familiar period of reflection. It is a time when licensing professionals look back on a year of legislative change, challenging decisions and evolving public expectations. It is also a time when many of us gather at the Institute of Licensing National Training Conference to consider the future of our profession.

This year, that future has been brought sharply into focus by the launch of the Institute of Licensing's new five-year strategy, **Building Excellence, Achieving Charter Status**. The strategy sets out an ambitious roadmap for the period 2026-2031 and represents perhaps the clearest statement yet of the Institute's long-term vision: to establish licensing as a recognised profession with clear qualifications, robust professional standards and ultimately Chartered status.

For those working within taxi and private hire licensing, this is far more than an internal organisational document. It has the potential to influence the way licensing professionals are trained, recognised and empowered, ultimately leading to better regulation, greater consistency and improved public confidence across the sectors we regulate.

Why professional recognition matters

Those of us who work in licensing have long understood the complexity of the role.

Licensing officers are frequently required to navigate legal frameworks, assess risk, interpret evidence, balance competing interests and make decisions that directly affect public safety. We deal with everything from alcohol licensing and gambling regulation to taxis, animal welfare, scrap metal, street trading and public protection.

Yet despite the significance of this work, licensing has often lacked the professional recognition afforded to disciplines such as planning, environmental health or building control.

The IoL strategy openly acknowledges this challenge. It notes that licensing requires specialist knowledge, ethical judgement and ongoing professional development, while facing increasing pressures arising from legislative change, devolution, local government reorganisation and financial constraints.

Many licensing practitioners will recognise that description immediately.

Across the country, licensing teams are being asked to do more with less. At the same time, the issues facing regulators are becoming increasingly complex. Whether that is safeguarding vulnerable passengers, responding to new technology platforms, tackling illegal working, preparing for autonomous vehicle developments or ensuring appropriate standards among drivers and operators, taxi licensing has never been more demanding.

Against that backdrop, the IoL's ambition to professionalise licensing feels both timely and necessary.

A qualifications framework for the profession

One of the most significant proposals within the strategy is the development of a qualifications framework spanning Levels 3 to 6. The Institute aims to create a structured pathway allowing practitioners to develop knowledge and skills throughout their careers.

This is important.

Historically, many licensing officers have entered the profession through varied routes. Some come from environmental health, others from enforcement, legal services, community safety or administration. While this diversity brings strength, it can also result in inconsistencies in training and professional development.

A recognised qualification pathway would help address that.



For taxi licensing specifically, it could provide officers with a stronger grounding in areas such as:

- Driver suitability assessments
- Enforcement powers
- Safeguarding
- Disability awareness obligations
- Licensing policy development
- Committee processes
- Evidence gathering
- Regulatory decision-making
- Public law principles

A structured qualification framework would also support recruitment and retention, which remains a significant challenge for many local authorities.

If licensing becomes a recognised professional career with clear development pathways, it becomes easier to attract talented individuals into the sector and provide them with opportunities for progression.

Continuing professional development

The strategy also places significant emphasis on Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The Institute intends to introduce a formal CPD framework and has set a target of achieving 90% CPD compliance among its members. For many professions, mandatory continuing development is simply accepted as part of maintaining competence. Licensing arguably has an equally strong case.

The legislative landscape changes continually. In the taxi world alone, recent years have seen developments around safeguarding expectations, national standards, immigration checks, disability access duties, information sharing, medical standards, vehicle emissions, fraud prevention and emerging technologies.

No licensing officer can rely solely on knowledge acquired years earlier. Likewise, drivers and operators benefit when licensing authorities are supported by well-trained officers who remain current with legislation, case law and best practice.

Better informed regulators generally lead to better informed decision-making. That provides benefits not only for authorities but also for the trade itself, creating greater consistency, transparency and confidence in the regulatory process.

A professional conduct framework

Alongside qualifications and CPD, the strategy proposes the introduction of a professional conduct framework. Although details will develop over time, the principle is significant. Licensing professionals exercise considerable influence over matters affecting livelihoods, businesses and public safety. Public confidence depends not only upon technical competence but also integrity, objectivity and ethical conduct.

The introduction of recognised professional standards helps reinforce those expectations. Importantly, this should not be viewed as something that exists purely for practitioners.

High professional standards within licensing authorities help drive higher standards across the industries and sectors being regulated. If we expect taxi drivers and operators to meet rigorous standards of conduct, professionalism and compliance, it is entirely reasonable that regulators hold themselves to similarly high standards.

A stronger voice for licensing

Another notable aspect of the strategy is the Institute's commitment to expanding its policy and research role. Plans include increased engagement with government, parliament and stakeholders alongside the production of annual State of Licensing reports.

This matters because licensing professionals frequently find themselves at the sharp end of emerging public policy challenges.

The taxi sector provides numerous examples. Issues such as vehicle accessibility, safeguarding, vehicle standards, cross-border hiring, operator models, autonomous technology and national consistency continue to generate debate across local and national government.

The profession benefits from having a strong, credible and respected body capable of bringing practical frontline experience into national policy discussions.

The IoL's ambition to strengthen that voice should therefore be welcomed by licensing practitioners and responsible members of the trade alike.

What does the IoL strategy mean for the taxi trade?

A reasonable question from operators and drivers may be: *"How does any of this affect us?"*

The answer is straightforward. Better qualified, better trained and better supported licensing professionals ultimately create a stronger regulatory environment.

That does not necessarily mean more regulation. Rather, it means better regulation.

Good licensing is not about creating unnecessary burdens for compliant businesses. It is about ensuring decisions are evidence-based, proportionate, consistent and focused upon public safety.

Professional standards help deliver exactly that. For the taxi trade, the likely benefits include:

- **Greater consistency**

One of the frustrations often expressed within the trade is inconsistency between authorities.

While local circumstances will always differ, stronger professional standards and qualifications can help promote greater consistency in interpretation and decision-making.

- **Better decision-making**

Improved training and development supports better quality decisions. Whether concerning applications, enforcement action, suspensions or revocations, decisions should be legally robust, proportionate and evidence-led.

- **Improved public confidence**

Public confidence remains fundamental to the taxi industry.

Passengers must feel safe when using licensed vehicles. Professional licensing standards strengthen the credibility of the regulatory framework underpinning that confidence.

- **Enhanced partnership working**

The strategy emphasises collaboration as a core value.

Effective taxi regulation depends upon constructive engagement between authorities, operators, drivers, police, safeguarding partners and other stakeholders. Professionalisation should help strengthen those relationships.

- **The road to chartered status**

Perhaps the most ambitious element of the strategy is the aspiration to achieve Royal Charter status by 2030.

Some may see this as symbolic. I would suggest it is far more significant. Chartered status would represent formal recognition that licensing is not merely an administrative function but a profession in its own right.

It would place licensing alongside other recognised disciplines that operate in the public interest and require specialist knowledge, competence and ethical standards.

For many practitioners who have spent years championing the importance of licensing, that recognition is long overdue.

Licensing decisions shape local economies, support businesses, protect vulnerable people and contribute directly to safer communities. Whether regulating alcohol sales, gambling premises or the taxi and private hire trade, licensing sits at the heart of public protection.

The profession deserves recognition reflecting that responsibility.

Looking ahead

The strategy rightly acknowledges that achieving these ambitions will require growth, investment and engagement from members. The Institute aims to increase representation from 3,636 practitioners to more than 4,600 by 2031 while improving retention and expanding professional development opportunities.

These are ambitious targets. Equally, the challenges facing licensing demand ambitious solutions.

As local government continues to evolve through devolution, reorganisation and increasing financial pressures, the need for highly skilled licensing professionals will only increase.

This strategy provides a vision for meeting that challenge.

Taxi to Stratford?

Finally, as we move into November, there is no better opportunity to explore these issues than at the **National Training Conference 2026**, taking place in Stratford-upon-Avon from 18-20 November. The conference marks 30 years of the IoL's flagship training event and remains the UK's leading gathering for licensing professionals.



Of particular interest to **PHTM** readers is the strength of this year's taxi-related programme. The programme reflects the growing prominence of taxi licensing within the broader licensing landscape and provides valuable opportunities to hear from national experts, discuss emerging challenges and share best practice.

For anyone involved in taxi regulation or the licensed trade, these sessions offer a chance not only to keep abreast of policy developments but also to contribute to the wider conversation about professional standards, public protection and the future direction of the sector. At the time of writing, there are still some places available.

Of particular interest, one of the headline sessions at this year's Conference will be the dedicated Taxi & Private Hire Panel, taking place on Wednesday 18 November 2026. Bringing together a broad range of regulators, legal specialists and trade representatives, the session promises to provide an invaluable opportunity to explore some of the most significant issues currently facing the sector.

At a time when the industry is navigating evolving regulatory expectations, legislative reform and increasing public safety considerations, the panel has been designed to encourage open discussion, knowledge sharing and constructive dialogue across the profession.

The session will be chaired by James Button of James Button & Co, one of the sector's most respected specialist licensing solicitors, who will guide discussion across a range of topical issues affecting taxi and private hire licensing.

Reflecting the IoL's commitment to bringing together all parts of the licensing community, the panel features an impressive line-up of speakers from local authorities, the legal profession, trade associations and major operators.

The confirmed panellists are:

- Local Authority Regulators:
  Emma Rohomon (Birmingham City Council), Michelle Gorton (Cheltenham Borough Council), Yvonne Lewis (City and County of Swansea) and myself.
- Trade and Operator Representatives:
  Andy Mahoney MBE (24x7 Group), Steve Wright MBE (LPHCA), Steve McNamara (LTDA), David Lawrie (**NPHTA**), and Matthew Freckelton (Uber).

The session will focus on taxi and private hire licensing reform, regulatory standards and the practical challenges and opportunities facing both licensing authorities and the trade. By bringing together a diverse range of perspectives in one room, delegates will gain valuable insight into the issues shaping the future of the industry and the role that professional standards will play in maintaining public confidence.

This is likely to be one of the most relevant and engaging sessions in the programme, providing a rare opportunity to hear directly from regulators, operators, representative bodies and legal experts on the future direction of taxi and private hire licensing across England and Wales.

To conclude

The IoL's new strategy is ultimately about people. It is about supporting practitioners, strengthening competence, promoting professionalism and protecting the public.

Those objectives should resonate with everyone involved in taxi licensing. Because whether we sit on the regulatory side of the fence or work within the trade itself, we all share the same goal: a safe, professional and trusted taxi industry that serves communities well.

And if the profession succeeds in delivering the ambitions set out in **Building Excellence, Achieving Charter Status**, the entire licensing sector, including the taxi trade, will be stronger for it.

For further information on the Institute's work, membership and upcoming events, including the National Training Conference

visit: www.instituteoflicensing.org

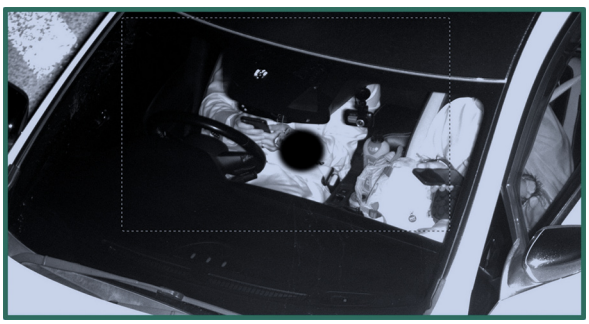
ROAD TRAFFIC LAW IN THE HEADLINES: WHAT THE STORIES REALLY MEAN FOR DRIVERS

Over the last month there have been a number of road traffic related stories in the press, each of them generating strong reactions from drivers who understandably want to know what these developments actually mean for them. The difficulty is that most news articles tend to focus on the headline rather than the underlying law, and very few explain what options drivers have, what risks they should be aware of, or how these changes might affect them moving forward.

Below we break down some of the key stories from the last few weeks and explain the legal position in practical terms.

AI cameras and automated enforcement

In October, the BBC reported that a new AI camera in the West Midlands had detected nearly 19,000 road traffic offences in a few weeks. The examples highlighted included a front seat passenger holding a small child on their lap without a seatbelt, and a driver holding a mobile phone with both hands.



These cases understandably caused concern, but the real question is: **what does this mean for drivers, and what offences can these cameras actually detect?**

AI enforcement cameras are now appearing across the UK. They are not the traditional yellow speed cameras that simply record a vehicle exceeding the limit. These new systems use internal technology to identify a range of offences. They can still detect speeding, but they can also identify whether a driver is holding an object, not wearing a seatbelt, or otherwise distracted.

The offences they can capture include:

- Speeding - Many AI cameras still record speed in the traditional way. If you exceed the limit, you can expect the usual penalties.
- Seatbelt offences - Under current law, failing to wear a seatbelt usually results in a fine only. However, there are ongoing discussions about increasing this to include penalty points in the near future.
- Not being in proper control of a vehicle - This is a broad offence covering anything from driving with a misted windscreen, vaping, holding a child, or any behaviour that prevents full control of the vehicle. It carries three points and a £100 fine.
- Using a mobile phone whilst driving - If the camera identifies a driver holding a phone, this can lead to six points and a £200 fine.

One important point is that drivers will not necessarily see a flash or any obvious sign that they have been caught. Unlike traditional cameras, these systems operate silently. The first indication a driver will receive is a Notice of Intended Prosecution arriving through the post, asking them to confirm who was driving and advising that prosecution is being considered.

The message for drivers is simple: ensure you are wearing your seatbelt, avoid holding anything in your hands, keep distractions to a minimum, and assume that cameras may be monitoring more than just your speed.

Graduated driver licences

Another story that made headlines this month was the introduction of Graduated Driver Licencing (GDL) in Northern Ireland - the first part of the UK to adopt the scheme. The aim is to reduce the number of collisions and fatalities involving young and inexperienced drivers. Although currently limited to Northern Ireland, the intention is for these rules to be rolled out across the rest of the UK in due course.

The new rules may include:

- A minimum six-month learning period - New drivers must spend at least six months gaining experience before they can take their practical test.
- 14 mandatory training modules signed off by an instructor.

- Restrictions on carrying young passengers at night - designed to reduce risk-taking behaviour and distraction.
- R plates being displayed for 24 months after passing.

These restrictions apply both before passing the test and for the first two years afterwards. Breaching them can result in three penalty points and a significant fine.

Although the scheme is currently limited to Northern Ireland, it is widely expected to be the start of a UK wide rollout. Young drivers - and parents - should keep a close eye on developments, as these rules will almost certainly become part of the licensing system in England, Scotland and Wales in the near future.

The A20 Sidcup speed limit controversy

Drivers in the South East will almost certainly have seen recent coverage about the A20 in Sidcup, where a motorist has reportedly become the first person to overturn a speeding conviction linked to the temporary 40mph limit imposed in 2024. The headlines have suggested tens of thousands - perhaps even hundreds of thousands - of drivers could now have their cases overturned. As ever, the reality is more complicated.

To recap: in 2023, an emergency traffic order was introduced to reduce the speed limit on the A20 from 70mph to 40mph. Cameras were activated shortly afterwards, and within the first six weeks alone around 60,000 drivers were recorded exceeding the new limit. The story quickly became national news. Facebook groups formed, drivers shared experiences, and many attempted to challenge their cases. On the whole, these challenges were unsuccessful, and a significant number of motorists received points, fines, and in some cases disqualifications.

The recent news reports focus on one driver who has succeeded in overturning his conviction. The key point - which the articles often gloss over - is that he is not the first person to win a case, but he is the first to obtain a written Crown Court judgment stating that the temporary speed limit was unlawful. Crucially, the judge's ruling was based on administrative grounds relating to how the order was implemented. It was not a finding that the cameras were faulty nor that the signage was inadequate – so there's no automatic right to have a conviction overturned due to inaccuracy. And on top of that, a Crown Court judgment does not create a binding precedent, meaning other Courts are not bound to follow it.

Adding to this, both Transport for London and the Metropolitan Police have publicly stated that they are not changing their position. They maintain that the temporary limit was lawfully imposed, and they intend to continue enforcing the convictions already handed down. In other words, despite the headlines, there is no automatic overturn and no immediate change in policy.

For drivers who have already been convicted, there are only two realistic routes forward. The first is a High Court appeal. If a driver who has lost their case appeals to the High Court, that ruling would create a binding precedent. That is the only legal mechanism capable of forcing wider change. The only other option is political pressure; to continue lobbying TfL and local authorities in the hope that they voluntarily review or revoke the convictions. This is a political route, not a legal one, and there is no guarantee it will succeed.

High profile disqualifications

Finally, a couple of footballers have also made headlines recently after receiving driving disqualifications. Notably, Mohamed Salah has received a disqualification, and Morgan Gibbs White is reported to be at risk of one.

Footballers being banned is not necessarily uncommon, but a question that arose was why these players did not have to attend court in person.

Attendance depends on the nature of the case and what the driver intends to do. If a driver wants to argue exceptional hardship to avoid disqualification, they must attend. In cases such as drink driving, attendance is also mandatory.

However, if a driver is simply accepting the disqualification and not contesting it, they may request that the court excuse their attendance. Courts can sometimes agree to proceed in their absence if the outcome is not being challenged.

If you need any advice on motoring matters, then please send us an email to: advice@pattersonlaw.co.uk or call 01626 359800 for free legal advice.

PattersonLaw
THE DRIVER DEFENCE SERVICE

THE NATIONAL HACKNEY FARES TABLE

NOVEMBER 2026

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

UPDATED DAILY
www.phtm.co.uk

NATIONAL AVERAGE
2 MILE HACKNEY FARE
TARIFF ONE

£7.53

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE COUNCIL	
1	LONDON (HEATHROW)	£15.00
2	EPSOM & EWELL	£13.40
3	TfL	£13.40
4	LUTON AIRPORT	£12.60
5	GUILDFORD	£10.00
6	GUERNSEY	£9.90
7	JERSEY	£9.65
8	CARADON	£9.60
9	EASTBOURNE	£9.60
10	NORTH CORNWALL	£9.60
11	ARUN	£ 9.50
12	SPELTHORNE	£9.50
13	ELMBRIDGE	£9.50
14	EXETER	£9.50
15	STROUD	£9.40
16	EDINBURGH	£9.30
17	GLASGOW	£9.30
18	CARRICK	£9.20
19	LEWES	£9.20
20	ST ALBANS	£9.15
21	SOUTHEND ON SEA	£9.10
22	WORTHING	£9.10
23	HERTSMERE	£9.08
24	MAIDSTONE	£9.00
25	MID SUSSEX	£9.00
26	ORKNEY	£9.00
27	READING	£9.00
28	TONBRIDGE & MALLING	£9.00
29	DACORUM	£8.98
30	BRENTWOOD	£8.90
31	CHELTENHAM	£8.90
32	EAST LOTHIAN	£8.90
33	MIDLOTHIAN	£8.90
34	REIGATE & BANSTEAD	£8.90
35	SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE	£8.90
36	TORBAY	£8.90
37	UTTLESFORD	£8.90
38	VALE OF WHITE HORSE	£8.90
39	TORRIDGE	£8.79
40	BRIGHTON & HOVE	£8.70
41	EAST DEVON	£8.70
42	RESTORMEL	£8.70
43	ROTHER	£8.70
44	SEVENOAKS	£8.70
45	SWINDON	£8.70
46	WATFORD	£8.70
47	WEALDON	£8.70
48	WOKING	£8.70
49	SHETLAND ISLES	£8.64
50	CAMBRIDGE CITY	£8.60
51	COVENTRY	£8.60
52	TEST VALLEY	£8.60
53	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	£8.60
54	WEST BERKSHIRE	£8.60
55	BCP	£8.52
56	PENWITH	£8.52
57	BOSTON	£8.50
58	CLACKMANNAN	£8.50
59	EAST AYRSHIRE	£8.50
60	SLOUGH	£8.50
61	WEST SUFFOLK	£8.50
62	WYRE	£8.50
63	COLCHESTER	£8.40
64	EAST SUFFOLK (NORTH)	£8.40
65	EASTLEIGH	£8.40
66	LEEDS	£8.40
67	MEDWAY	£8.40
68	NORTH YORKSHIRE	£8.40
69	RENFREWSHIRE	£8.40
70	SOUTHAMPTON	£8.40
71	SOMERSET	£8.36
72	DARTFORD	£8.30
73	HUNTINGDONSHIRE	£8.30
74	LINCOLN	£8.30
75	ROCHFORD	£8.30
76	RUNNYMEDE	£8.30
77	SWALE	£8.30
78	THANET	£8.30
79	WILTSHIRE	£8.25
80	BASINGSTOKE & DEANE	£8.20
81	BRISTOL	£8.20
82	BROXBOURNE	£8.20
83	EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE	£8.20
84	EAST HERTS	£8.20
85	GRAVESHAM	£8.20
86	MANCHESTER	£8.20
87	NORTH HERTS	£8.20
88	RUSHMOOR	£8.20
89	WOKINGHAM	£8.20
90	ARGYLL & BUTE	£8.15
91	FOREST OF DEAN	£8.13
92	HASTINGS	£8.10
93	IPSWICH	£8.10
94	NORTH DEVON	£8.10
95	OXFORD CITY	£8.10
96	PLYMOUTH	£8.10
97	DUNDEE CITY	£8.08
98	MOLE VALLEY	£8.08
99	BRECKLAND	£8.00
100	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	£8.00
101	CHICHESTER	£8.00
102	DOVER	£8.00
103	EAST LINDSEY	£8.00
104	EAST RENFREWSHIRE	£8.00
105	HARLOW	£8.00
106	HORSHAM	£8.00
107	NOTTINGHAM	£8.00
108	RIBBLE VALLEY	£8.00
109	RUSHCLIFFE	£8.00
110	SHROPSHIRE	£8.00
111	SOUTH AYRSHIRE	£8.00
112	SOUTH GLOUCESTER	£8.00
113	TANDRIDGE	£8.00
114	YORK	£8.00
115	FIFE	£7.98
116	DENBIGHSHIRE	£7.90
117	HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH	£7.90
118	STEVENAGE	£7.85
119	ADUR	£7.80
120	BRACKNELL FOREST	£7.80
121	DORSET	£7.80
122	GLOUCESTER	£7.80
123	ISLE OF MAN	£7.80
124	LEICESTER	£7.80
125	NORTH SOMERSET	£7.80
126	SOUTH HAMS	£7.80
127	STOCKPORT	£7.80
128	SURREY HEATH	£7.80
129	SWANSEA	£7.80
130	WAVERLEY	£7.80
131	MELTON	£7.75
132	CHELMSFORD	£7.70
133	HIGH PEAK	£7.70
134	NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE	£7.70
135	WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD	£7.70
136	STRATFORD ON AVON	£7.68
137	NORTH TYNESIDE	£7.65
138	WARWICK	£7.65
139	ASHFORD	£7.60
140	BASILDON	£7.60
141	BIRMINGHAM	£7.60
142	CONWY	£7.60
143	DUMBARTON & VALE OF LEVEN	£7.60
144	GREAT YARMOUTH	£7.60
145	KERRIER	£7.60
146	KINGS LYNN & WEST NORFOLK	£7.60

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE COUNCIL	
147	MONMOUTHSHIRE	£7.60
148	HART	£8.20
149	SCOTTISH BORDERS	£7.60
150	SOLIHULL	£7.60
151	THREE RIVERS	£7.60
152	WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND	£7.60
153	WINCHESTER	£7.60
154	INVERCLYDE	£7.56
155	BATH & N. E. SOMERSET	£7.50
156	MILTON KEYNES	£7.55
157	BEDFORD	£7.50
158	ANGUS	£7.50
159	BLACKPOOL	£7.50
160	CARDIFF	£7.50
161	CHESTER	£7.50
162	COUNTY OF HEREFORD	£7.50
163	EPPING FOREST	£7.50
164	EREWASH	£7.50
165	GOSPORT	£7.50
166	MID SUFFOLK	£7.50
167	MORAY	£7.50
168	SHEFFIELD	£7.50
169	SOUTH NORFOLK	£7.50
170	TAMESIDE	£7.50
171	CEREDIGION	£7.45
172	BRAINTREE	£7.40
173	CANTERBURY	£7.40
174	EAST HAMPSHIRE	£7.40
175	LIVERPOOL	£7.40
176	PORTSMOUTH UA	£7.40
177	SUNDERLAND	£7.40
178	S. LANARKSHIRE (CAMBUS/R'GLEN)	£7.40
179	S. LANARKSHIRE (E. KILBRIDE)	£7.40
180	STAFFORD	£7.40
181	TEWKESBURY	£7.40
182	WEST LOTHIAN	£7.40
183	WEST OXFORD	£7.40
184	WIRRAL	£7.40
185	ABERDEENSHIRE	£7.39
186	NEW FOREST	£7.35
187	NEWARK & SHERWOOD	£7.32
188	BLACKBURN	£7.30
189	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL	£7.30
190	KINGSTON-UPON-HULL	£7.30
191	NORTH KESTEVEN	£7.30
192	NORWICH	£7.30
193	SOUTH CAMBRIDGE	£7.30
194	VALE OF GLAMORGAN	£7.30
195	TEIGNBRIDGE	£7.26
196	NUNEATON & BEDWORTH	£7.25
197	PERTH & KINROSS	£7.25
198	CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE	£7.25
199	CALDERDALE	£7.22
200	SOUTH RIBBLE	£7.22
201	CASTLE POINT	£7.20
202	DERBY	£7.20
203	FAREHAM	£7.20
204	HAVANT	£7.20
205	LUTON	£7.20
206	NORTH WARWICK	£7.20
207	SOUTH LAKELAND	£7.20
208	WEST NORTHANTS	£7.20
209	CHESTERFIELD	£7.16
210	DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY	£7.15
211	TAMWORTH	£7.14

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE COUNCIL	
212	CANNOCK CHASE	£7.10
213	COTSWOLD	£7.10
214	CRAWLEY	£7.10
215	HIGHLAND	£7.10
216	ISLE OF WIGHT	£7.10
217	OLDHAM	£7.10
218	RUGBY	£7.10
219	HARBOROUGH	£7.09
220	ABERDEEN CITY	£7.00
221	BABERGH	£7.00
222	BROMSGROVE	£7.00
223	CARLISLE	£7.00
224	CARMARTHENSHIRE	£7.00
225	MACCLESFIELD	£7.00
226	NEWPORT	£7.00
227	PEMBROKESHIRE	£7.00
228	WELWYN HATFIELD	£7.00
229	COMHAIRLRE NAN EILEAN SIAR	£7.00
230	SANDWELL	£6.92
231	BURY	£6.90
232	CLYDEBANK	£6.90
233	EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE	£6.90
234	FYLDE	£6.90
235	NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME	£6.90
236	NORTH AYRSHIRE	£6.90
237	POWYS	£6.90
238	WORCESTER CITY	£6.90
239	REDDITCH	£6.85
240	BARROW IN FURNESS	£6.80
241	BRIDGEND	£6.80
242	BROXTOWE	£6.80
243	CAERPHILLY	£6.80
244	EAST STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.80
245	EAST SUFFOLK (SOUTH)	£6.80
246	EDEN	£6.80
247	ELLESMERE PORT	£6.80
248	MANSFIELD	£6.80
249	MID DEVON	£6.80
250	NORTH NORFOLK	£6.80
251	NORTH NORTHANTS	£6.80
252	SEFTON	£6.80
253	SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.80
254	TENDRING	£6.80
255	TRAFFORD	£6.80
256	WIGAN	£6.80
257	WOLVERHAMPTON	£6.80
258	CHARNWOOD	£6.75
259	WALSALL	£6.75
260	MALVERN HILLS	£6.72
261	BLABY	£6.70
262	CONGLETON	£6.70
263	OADBY & WIGSTON	£6.70
264	ROTHERHAM	£6.70
265	STIRLING	£6.70
266	WARRINGTON	£6.65
267	DUDLEY	£6.60
268	FALKIRK	£6.60
269	FOLKESTONE & HYTHE	£6.60
270	KNOWSLEY	£6.60
271	LANCASTER	£6.60
272	NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE	£6.60
273	PRESTON	£6.60
274	S. LANARKSHIRE (CLYDESDALE)	£6.60
275	SOUTH TYNESIDE	£6.60
276	SALFORD	£6.60

POSITION	TARIFF ONE 2 MILE FARE COUNCIL	
277	ST HELENS	£6.60
278	WAKEFIELD	£6.60
279	BASSETLAW	£6.50
280	GEDLING	£6.50
281	HALTON	£6.50
282	ROSSENDALE	£6.50
283	TORFAEN	£6.50
284	DONCASTER	£6.48
285	HYNDBURN	£6.42
286	BLAENAU GWENT	£6.40
287	CREWE & NANTWICH	£6.40
288	DERBYSHIRE DALES	£6.40
289	NORTHUMBERLAND	£6.40
290	WEST LINDSEY	£6.40
291	EAST RIDING	£6.35
292	ANGLESEY	£6.30
293	BARNSLEY	£6.30
294	DARLINGTON	£6.30
295	GATESHEAD	£6.30
296	SOUTH HOLLAND	£6.30
297	CHORLEY	£6.20
298	COPELAND	£6.20
299	FENLAND	£6.20
300	NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE	£6.20
301	S.LANARKSHIRE (HAMILTON)	£6.20
302	WYCHAVON	£6.20
303	WYRE FOREST	£6.14
304	BRADFORD	£6.10
305	NEATH PORT TALBOT	£6.10
306	NORTHERN IRELAND	£6.06
307	ALLERDALE	£6.00
308	BOLTON	£6.00
309	GWYNEDD	£6.00
310	KIRKLEES	£6.00
311	NORTH WEST LEICESTER	£6.00
312	PETERBOROUGH	£6.00
313	RHONDDA CYNON TAFF	£6.00
314	TELFORD & WREKIN	£6.00
315	THURROCK	£6.00
316	HARTLEPOOL	£5.90
317	NORTH LANARKSHIRE	£5.90
318	STOKE-ON-TRENT	£5.90
319	VALE ROYAL	£5.90
320	AMBER VALLEY	£5.80
321	FLINTSHIRE	£5.80
322	LICHFIELD	£5.80
323	MERTHYR TYDFIL	£5.80
324	NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE	£5.75
325	ROCHDALE	£5.70
326	STOCKTON ON TEES	£5.70
327	ASHFIELD	£5.60
328	MIDDLESBROUGH	£5.60
329	WREXHAM	£5.60
330	PENDLE	£5.50
331	REDCAR & CLEVELAND	£5.50
332	SOUTH KESTEVEN	£5.30
333	STAFFS MOORLANDS	£5.20
334	WEST LANCASHIRE	£5.20
335	CHERWELL	£5.08
336	BURNLEY	£5.00
337	BOLSOVER	£4.60
338	MALDON	N.S.F.
339	RUTLAND	N.S.F.
340	SOUTH DERBYSHIRE	N.S.F.
341	WEST DEVON	N.S.F.

WORLDWIDE TAXI FOCUS

from USA

NYC CABBIES KEEP DYING ON THE JOB, UNABLE TO MAKE ENDS MEET



New York City's taxi industry has been shaken by the deaths of at least four immigrant drivers who suffered fatal medical emergencies on the job over the summer while struggling against crushing financial pressures. The tragedies highlight the ongoing crisis in the city's once-iconic taxi sector, which has been severely undercut by app-based ride services such as Uber and Lyft over the past decade.

Data from the Taxi and Limousine Commission indicates that app services now operate over 84,000 cars compared to just over 10,000 active yellow cabs, leaving the average yellow taxi to bring in about $387 per day in fares before deductions. Faced with fixed weekly finance payments ranging from $800-$1,200, many drivers are forced to work long, gruelling shifts despite severe health issues.

Among the victims was Babacar Dem, 60, a driver since 2001 who was undergoing dialysis three times a week. Dem collapsed in a toilet in a Bronx restaurant and was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital. He had fallen behind by about $3,800 on his lease contract.

Other drivers met similar fates over the summer. Khalifa Siwa, a diabetic driver recovering from a stroke, was found dead in his taxi with his insulin pen in his hands. Richard Coulibaly, 73, died of high blood pressure and heart disease in his cab during a July heat wave, while Jagjit Singh, 53, suffered a suspected heart attack while alone in his vehicle in September.

Union leaders and industry workers have heavily criticised the punishing financial structures of the trade. Bhairavi Desai, executive director of the New York Taxi Workers Alliance, described the situation starkly: "It's a debtors' prison. It's an industry where your expenses are fixed, but your income is not guaranteed, and that's why drivers feel that they're handcuffed to the wheel. You begin each day at a negative and you have to keep working, whether you're sick or have an emergency."

from Japan

JAPAN ALLOWS CABBIES TO KICK OUT RUDE PASSENGERS

Japan is updating its transport regulations to allow taxi drivers to throw out passengers who display disruptive behaviour, such as verbal abuse and unreasonable demands. The move comes as the nation was recently voted the world's most polite destination for visitors.

The changes will explicitly give drivers the authority to remove unruly passengers from their vehicles. Under existing regulations drivers could only ask passengers to leave under strict circumstances, such as physical violence, carrying dangerous/illegal items, or severe intoxication. The new rules aim to protect drivers from hostile situations rather than requiring them to continue serving abusive customers and are expected to take effect before the end of the year.

from South Korea

THOUSANDS OF FOREIGN PASSENGERS FALL VICTIM TO SEOUL FARE SCAMS

Foreign visitors in Seoul have submitted more than 6,000 complaints over alleged taxi fare overcharges over the past five years. Seoul city government data showed 6,481 reports were logged between 2021-Aug 2026 but despite the high volume of complaints, action was taken in just 204 (3.1%) of cases. Severe penalties were rare - only 28 drivers had licences suspended/revoked, while 176 received warnings.

A significant majority of reports - 4,368 cases (67%), were closed internally because authorities struggled to verify details or because complainants withdrew their reports.

In 2013, the Seoul city government revised its policy on taxi overcharge complaints, establishing a rule allowing foreign passengers to apply for 500,000 won (c. £280) compensation if their report resulted in administrative measures against the driver. However, records reveal this payout has never actually been awarded to a passenger. This has been attributed to a severe lack of public awareness and a complicated application process that proves especially challenging for short-term visitors to navigate.

from Italy

BATTLE ON ROME'S COBBLES AS CABBIES FIGHT GOLF-CART BOOM



A rapid surge in tourist golf carts operating across the cobbled streets of Rome has triggered a bitter turf war in the Italian capital. Rental companies champion the quiet, EVs as an eco-friendly and low-emission way to carry visitors to iconic landmarks such as the Colosseum, and Trevi Fountain. However, critics argue the carts cause traffic congestion, park illegally, and function within a regulatory grey area.

High stakes are involved, with a four-hour driven tour in an eight-seater golf cart fetching up to €1,000 (£850). Hostility frequently escalates into direct road confrontation, leading drivers on both sides to swap aggressive gestures. Cab drivers insist the open-sided carts present severe safety hazards for passengers.

Golf-cart operators firmly reject claims that their services are unsafe, while pointing the finger back at angry and aggressive cabbies.

from Gran Canaria

GRAN CANARIA TAXIS FITTED WITH PANIC BUTTONS CONNECTED TO POLICE

A new security system being developed in Gran Canaria will allow taxi panic buttons to connect directly with local police control rooms, giving officers live access to images and sound from inside vehicles during an emergency. The governing body of the island - the Gran Canaria Cabildo - is progressing with the system following a meeting involving taxi cooperatives and local police forces. When a driver activates the emergency button, officers will be able to see and hear what is happening inside the taxi in real time, allowing them to assess the situation and determine the appropriate response. The system will also allow police control rooms to communicate directly with the interior of the taxi, so officers can respond during potentially dangerous incidents.

The project builds on the installation of security cameras in taxis across Gran Canaria. So far, 1,160 taxis have been fitted with surveillance cameras through financial support provided by the Cabildo and administered through taxi cooperatives. The recordings are already regularly requested by police forces and courts when investigating possible crimes, with approximately two requests being made every day.

The new panic-button connection will take the system a significant step further by allowing police to access information as an incident is actually happening rather than relying solely on recorded footage afterwards.

The Cabildo is also preparing another funding programme worth almost €500,000 to extend security equipment to more taxis. The proposed subsidy will provide €450 per municipal taxi licence, with taxi cooperatives responsible for applying for the funding and distributing it among drivers.

from Hungary

CABBIE CLINGS TO BONNET FOR OVER 100M FOLLOWING BUDAPEST CRASH



A minor traffic dispute on a road in Budapest turned into a chaotic scene after a female motorist drove for more than 100 metres with a taxi driver clinging to the bonnet of her vehicle.

The incident began when the woman's car reportedly collided with the rear of the taxi. Although both drivers initially pulled over to discuss the crash, they were unable to reach an agreement, leading the woman to get back into her vehicle and drive off.

As the car began moving, the cabbie grabbed onto the bonnet to try and stop her. Police confirmed the driver then travelled at around 30 km/h with the man hanging on. An astonished onlooker who filmed the incident remarked, "I thought it was a film shoot!"

Following the confrontation, the cabbie complained of pain in his hand and leg. He was taken to hospital for a medical examination.

CAR AUCTIONEERS

www.auctioneers.co.uk
MERTHYR MOTOR AUCTIONS MMA
www.auctioneers.co.uk

01685 377818 MMA, Redbarrel House, Pant Road, Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 3SH
www.auctioneers.co.uk
Live Online & Telephone bidding

Massive selection of Minibuses, Welfare Buses, Coaches, Tepees, Cars, etc... Wkly with & without Lifts

2022 - Ford Tourneo Connect Zetec 1.5TDCI Ecoblue 5 Seat Minibus



- ✓ Direct Company
- ✓ Air Con
- ✓ Parking Sensors
- ✓ 65,000 Miles

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

WEEKLY AUCTIONS
MONDAY & THURSDAY - 7:00PM
Viewing by Appointment
Also offering Buy Now Options @ www.auctioneers.co.uk

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



- ✓ One Owner
- ✓ Free Warranty
- ✓ Service History
- ✓ MOT
- ✓ Choice 6

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

2021 - Renault Trafic SL28 Sport 2.0DCI Energy 5 Seat Disabled Access Minibus



- ✓ Direct Company
- ✓ Access Ramp
- ✓ Air Con
- ✓ 85,000 Miles

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

2005 - Volvo B-Series Plaxton Auto 57 Seat Coach



- ✓ Direct Council
- ✓ Seat Belts
- ✓ Air Con
- ✓ 57 Seater
- ✓ Choice

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

2019 - Peugeot Boxer L3H2 5-7 Seat Disabled Access Minibuses (Euro 6)



- ✓ Direct NHS / Lease
- ✓ c/w Access Ramp
- ✓ Long MOT's
- ✓ Choice 5

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

2016 - Renault Master LM35 5-7 Seat Disabled Access Minibuses (Choice 15)



- ✓ Direct NHS
- ✓ Air Con
- ✓ c/w Access Lift
- ✓ Long MOT's
- ✓ Choice 15

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

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

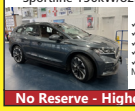


- ✓ One Owner
- ✓ Direct Company
- ✓ Air Con
- ✓ 90,000 Miles
- ✓ Choice

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

LOW RATE FINANCE
T&C Apply. Subject to Status. Subject to Availability. UK residents only.

2021-22 Skoda Enyaq IV80 Sportline 150kW/82kWh Auto



- ✓ Service History
- ✓ Fully Electric
- ✓ Direct Company
- ✓ Choice 5
- ✓ From 20,000 Miles

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

2019-21 Toyota Corolla Icon Tech 1.8VVTI Auto Hybrid Estates (Euro 6)



- ✓ One Owner
- ✓ Service History
- ✓ MOT
- ✓ Choice
- ✓ Direct Company

No Reserve - Highest Bidder

This is just a small selection of our Cars, Buses, Welfare Buses, Coaches, Ambulances, etc... Please call 01685 377818 or visit www.auctioneers.co.uk for full auction listings.

Finance Deals Available - Contact a Spotter

Weekly Auctions
Every Monday 7.00PM
Every Thursday 7.00PM
Viewing by Appointment

Always a Large selection of cars, vans, 4x4's, pickups, tippers, dropsides, minibuses, ambulances etc... Weekly

RADIOS

RadioTrader
WE BUY!
Your Unwanted Taxi Radios
If you have radios gathering dust, give us a call on
0151 676 2888



PRINTING

NEED PRINTING?
5,000 CARDS FROM £77*
5,000 A5 LEAFLETS £136*
CARD HOLDERS £1* EACH
FORMS - RECEIPT PADS - LABELS
* FREE Design & Delivery to Mainland UK, Exclusive of VAT
www.prestige-printing.co.uk
01933 411332
sales@prestige-printing.co.uk

ACCOUNTANTS

eazitax
The Tax Specialists for the Trade.
Tax Returns
£30 per month.
eazitax.co.uk/drivers
020 8529 2600

DRIVER SAFETY

PROTECT OUR DRIVERS
NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE
WINDOW STICKERS



ORDER NOW
0161 688 7777

KIWIS TO DETHRONE AUSSIES - THE HUNT IS ON IN SPOTY

Firstly, an update. I hope my readers availed themselves of my two headline tips last issue, as both won. **DARYZ** won the Arc in the style of a very good horse (9/4) and last week, **MILWAUKEE** claimed the baseball World Series at 7/1 advised pre play-offs.

That's a 25/1 double and more than the abolition of standing charges on gas, Mr Healey!

And so to November's action...

THE RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP

Although in its early group stages with the semis taking place around Bonfire night, one thing is abundantly clear, it's going to be a Southern Hemisphere lockout, freezing out England and, as the opening fixture demonstrated, the undisputed kings of the game, Australia, are not going to have it all their own way and at 3/1, **NEW ZEALAND** just have to be backed in what is likely to be a very close tussle.

Nearer home, our domestic season is in full swing:

PREMIER LEAGUE

An interesting month to say the least, what with the Premier League finding Man City guilty of being too good and the rest of their opponents guilty of whinging (you can see where my loyalties lie!), but nevertheless this presents huge opportunities to win some dosh, dependent on your viewpoint. Let me enlighten you...

IF YOU BELIEVE that the Premier League will impose, AND ENFORCE, say a 100 point deduction (that has been mooted), then back Man City to be relegated at 10/11 with a number of firms, a no-brainer.

IF YOU BELIEVE Man City will prove their innocence or at the very least be fined and have no points deduction, then the 4/1 currently available to win the Premier League represents huge value where their true odds would be somewhere nearer Evens.

But there are other opportunities in the Premier League relegation market, especially when you factor in that there might only be two or three 'other places' available (dependant on Man City occupying one of the three places).

AND, having watched Spurs last Monday against a really poor Coventry City, I think the 14/1 on *'too good to go down'* **TOTTENHAM** is a whopping price that needs to be taken now! Simply put, they are a poor outfit who will continue to hover near the drop zone.

SPOTY



AND FINALLY... Awards season is just around the corner, starting with SPOTY, and in a year where our sportsmen and women have hardly excelled in the traditional individual pursuits of football (dire), motorsports, cricket, golf et al, there is only one logical choice - **AMY HUNT** who came of age in the European Championships in the summer with four gold medals.

At a shade of odds on, 10/11, you might argue that this is hardly value. I counter that with not only the above reasoning, but she will also get a huge sympathy vote (though she would not want it or need it) due to the fact that she is the daughter of BBC commentator John Hunt, who tragically lost his wife and two other daughters to a cross bow killing last year by one of the daughter's boyfriends. So, in this instance, it is huge value. Just imagine the massive coverage the unbiased! BBC will give to this human interest story prior to *'the phone lines are now open'*.

Spare a deep sea diver (£5) for **SAFFIE OSBORNE** , who at 66/1 is a huge price for the first female jockey to win a British classic, the St Leger back in September. Some layers will do forecasts, so bear this in mind or back Saffie each way, which should pay 10/1 a place.

Until next time

Good punting

Bernie the Book

The Taxi **Centre**

USED CARS FOR TAXI DRIVERS

HANDPICKED BY TAXI EXPERTS

*WE AT THE TAXI CENTRE OFFER **QUALITY USED** TAXI MODELS, FROM PETROL AND DIESEL TO HYBRID AND ELECTRIC.*



*CHOOSE FROM TRUSTED MAKES LIKE **TOYOTA, NISSAN, SKODA, FORD, MG AND BYD** – ALL SOURCED FROM OVER 7,000 VEHICLES NATIONWIDE.*

*CALL THE TAXI EXPERTS AT **0330 178 1083***

FIND YOUR NEXT TAXI ONLINE – WWW.THETAXICENTRE.COM/USED-TAXIS/

The Taxi Centre is a trading name of Grantham Motor Company Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Company registration number 04722957. VAT Registration number 902737238. Registered office: Vertu House, Fifth Avenue Business Park, Team Valley, Gateshead, NE11 0XA