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**BOW STREET'S HISTORY
OF LAW & ORDER**
PHIL BROWN Pages 20 & 21



24th October 2023 #552

PLUG-IN TAXI GRANT MUST CONTINUE



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Puzzler answers

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TAXIPOINT WHATSAPP NEWS SERVICE TAKING OFF

TaxiPoint's free WhatsApp news service has achieved an impressive milestone, gathering over 1000 subscribers within months of its launch this summer. This unique service has rapidly gained the support of drivers and industry stakeholders, with a bold aim of achieving 10,000 subscribers by the end of 2024. Joining the community is simple, you need to already have WhatsApp or download the app, then simply click the link provided below or scan the QR code and select 'join community' when prompted. Your privacy is guaranteed as no one can see who is signed up or send messages except the TaxiPoint news team.

TaxiPoint founder, Perry Richardson, aims to foster better communication within the fragmented UK taxi industry, transcending traditional social media outlets. With this WhatsApp service, TaxiPoint is looking to revolutionise how the industry stays informed and connected. You can join the WhatsApp group by scanning this QR code or at <https://chat.whatsapp.com/KRRbilaenuaEDVrjke0IbT>.



FREENOW PARTNERS WITH MUSIC VENUE TRUST

FREENOW has unveiled its 'Ride for Music' initiative, vowing to donate £1 for every taxi ride to the Music Venue Trust. The app is teaming up with the Music Venue Trust, a charity dedicated to protecting and improving grassroots music venues across the country, ensuring their survival in the face of the cost-of-living crisis. FREENOW has committed a minimum of £200,000 to support these struggling venues. Michelle de Maat, Head of Marketing at FREENOW UK said: "By contributing to the resilience of these vital spaces during such challenging times, we aim to ensure that the stages remain lit, and artists have a place to showcase their talent. Ultimately, this supports our users, drivers and all those who rely on these exceptional venues and a thriving nightlife throughout the country."



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS SERVICE AT GROSVENOR GARDENS

Last week, a well-known face and trade favourite, Sue Webster, celebrated a remarkable milestone of two decades of unwavering service as shelter keeper at the Grosvenor Gardens green hut. Sue's journey began at the popular Double Six Café in Euston, where she worked for six years before moving to the Grosvenor Gardens shelter. Congratulations Sue!



UNIQUE JOB OPPORTUNITY

Lord Borwick, former CEO of Manganese Bronze Holdings, and Chairman of London Taxis International, now a member of the House of Lords, is looking for a part-time driver, who is also able to help with some basic DIY jobs. Having worked closely with the taxi trade for many years, he is looking for an experienced, professional London taxi driver, who might be interested in this unusual but rewarding job.

The driver would be needed for about 100 days a year to work as required, based in Kensington, West London. The job would have a salary of around £12,000 per year, to be discussed further with suitable applicants. The successful candidate would use Lord Borwick's own taxi, a TX4 15 plate. The taxi is plated and fully insured for hire and reward and could be used for plying for hire if desired, when not in use by Lord Borwick.

The work would involve driving for Lord Borwick and occasionally for members of his family, in and around London, using his Bentley on special occasions and some basic DIY to help maintain the family's home. The role could suit a semi-retired / retired cabbie wanting to supplement their income.

If you would be interested in finding out more and discussing this unique opportunity with Lord Borwick, please email katie@ltda.co.uk outlining your experience and interest in the role and we will put you in touch.

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To Toll or Not to Toll

It goes without saying that we would expect the taxi trade to be exempt from any such tolls in the same way we are exempt from the Congestion Charge and the ULEZ.

Steve's comment

To Toll or not to toll is the predicament facing Mayor Khan in the next two years, ahead of the completion of the new Silvertown Tunnel in 2025. The Mayor has said tolls will be needed for both the new Silvertown and existing Blackwall Tunnel, to pay for the former much needed additional river crossing in the East.

With the exception of the Green Party and some local and environmental campaigners, just about everyone agrees that a new river crossing has been needed since the 1970s. In fact, it's clear to most of us that this will actually relieve congestion and resulting emissions and in many respects have a positive impact. Sadly, that doesn't stop some groups arguing that basically building any new roads, tunnels, bridges or other infrastructure for vehicles will create new traffic. I know the famous quote goes "if you build it, they will come", but in this case it's nonsense. The vehicles are already here, and they are all too often sitting in gridlocked traffic waiting to use one of the few river crossings that are currently available. The queues for the existing Blackwall Tunnel regularly stretch back several miles in each direction, and if one or both of the tunnels are shut, gridlock ensues across East and Southeast London.

Costs

Completing the new tunnel is set to cost £1.2 billion and it has been clear for a while that the plan was for the new tunnel and the neighbouring Blackwall Tunnel to be tolled to help recoup this huge outlay. A figure had not been publicly discussed until a draft TfL sign was reportedly approved by the DfT in September, quoting a figure of £4, to be charged between 6am and 10pm. TfL said at the time that the figures were just placeholders and a decision had not been made.

Now, in a subsequent letter to the Transport Secretary, Rt



The future of the Blackwall Tunnel?

Hon Mark Harper MP, Khan told him that it is "Neither financially nor environmentally viable to ditch the tolls". He also suggested that the figure would need to be closer to £5.25 or a return trip of £10.50 taking into account inflation. Raising the prospect of inflicting such a heavy price on Londoners so soon in the wake of the ULEZ expansion seems like a risky move if you ask me, although the Mayor's letter did call on the Government to work with him to provide discounts for "low-income" residents, in boroughs near the tunnels, such as Greenwich, Tower Hamlets, and Newham.

Exemption for taxis

It goes without saying that taxis would expect the taxi trade to be exempt from any such tolls, in the same way we are exempted from the Congestion Charge and the ULEZ, because we are compellable and must take the shortest route. Imagine a scenario where a cab is hired at Canary Wharf to go to the O2 and had to

pay a toll, it would either mean adding a fiver to the fare, or the cabbie, understandably refusing the job. Even if the passenger offered to pay the toll, the cabbie would be liable for another fiver just to return to the Wharf, wiping out anything he made on the job going in the first place. Sounds like a guaranteed refusal, I would argue quite reasonably. Nothing has officially been decided yet, but in order to ensure that common sense prevails, and we are exempted from any toll, I have written to both the Mayor and Mark Harper.

Plug-in taxi grant

With the Autumn Statement coming up next month, along with the State Opening of Parliament and the first 'King's Speech' setting out the Government's legislative agenda for the next year, I have been continuing to emphasise the importance of the plug-in taxi grant and calling for it to be extended past 2024.

It seems like policymakers

are beginning to realise that the only vehicle available to cabbies in London remains extremely expensive and is becoming more so with rising interest rates and inflation. I am explaining to everyone I can that without the grants, the strong sales and progress being made in our trade in terms of moving towards electric taxis would be undermined.

This is particularly relevant as we've just officially reached the major milestone of 50% of the fleet now being electric, zero emission taxis. Perhaps unsurprisingly, we have heard nothing from City Hall on this. So far there has been no celebration by the Mayor or our regulator of this fantastic accomplishment, which has been achieved largely off the back of hardworking cabbies investing heavily in these vehicles. I have raised this with TfL and asked that they support our calls for the extension of the grant and lobby the government on this issue.

LTDA



Unjust & Unfair

In this case, they seem to have made a hasty, and in my view misguided and unjust decision, which failed to take into account the driver's history and the facts of the case.

Streets ahead

When the new driver policy came into force, the implications hit us all like a sledgehammer. Suddenly, it was much easier for a driver's licence to be put in jeopardy and for their livelihood to be taken away. Getting towards two years later, we are now seeing the policy hitting hardworking cabbies, including many who have never previously put a foot wrong, and who are being left in very worrying financial predicaments.

Under the new policy, the reasons that a cabbie's licence could be revoked or suspended now include being convicted of a single mobile phone offence which results in six penalty points on their DVLA licence. It now even seems that if you get three points for certain offences you could be at risk of having your licence suspended for three to six months!

A recent case

I'm currently assisting a member, who has held his badge for over 40 years. During that time, he has been a shining example of professionalism for our trade. He has only ever called on the LTDA for support a couple of times in all those years. He now finds himself in a terrible situation with his licence suspended for three months, and I can't see how this is right or fair.

For me, the key point about the new driver policy should be that ultimately TfL, as the licensing authority, has the discretion to make decisions on a case-by-case basis. They should look at the specific circumstances and a driver's record when making a decision. Whereas, in this case, they seem to have made a hasty, and in my view misguided and unjust decision, which failed to take into account the driver's history and the facts of the case.

The facts are as follows. Our member was hailed from the street, so he indicated, completed all the safety points,



before making the manoeuvre to pull to the side and pick the passenger up. Unexpectedly from nowhere, a cyclist appeared. The driver stopped quickly, waved his hand to apologise and the cyclist continued. He thought no more of this, as no accident had actually occurred, and no police

intervention was required.

Unfortunately, the member then received a Notice of Intended Prosecution for the incident. It did not result in any harm, but he is charged with inconsiderate driving. TfL has since sent our member a 'Fitness to be Licensed' letter, suspending

his licence for three months even though he has not yet been prosecuted.

Context is key

It is crucial to acknowledge that our member has been driving for decades and has an exemplary record as a taxi driver spanning over 40 years. Throughout his career, he has maintained an impeccable driving history, earning praise from passengers and colleagues alike for his professionalism and commitment to safety. This isolated, unfortunate incident should not overshadow his long-standing dedication to responsible driving.

Our member is also widely regarded as a person of outstanding character. So why is TfL threatening to suspend his licence? I have written a letter on his behalf appealing the decision, and I am helping him to follow the appeals procedure, but it sometimes feels like TfL have already made the decision before you attend a hearing.

Since the introduction of this new driver policy, the implications have been severe for many involved in the taxi industry. It has made it much easier for drivers to face licence jeopardy and the potential loss of their livelihood. Hardworking cabbies, some with impeccable records, are now left grappling with worrisome predicaments.

Make sure you're protected



I speak to drivers daily who are concerned about falling foul of this policy, and the LTDA's response is always that we will do our utmost to ensure you can continue providing for your family. We receive numerous calls from members and even non-member in need of help. While we offer advice to non-members, our primary focus is on our members. Without the legal backing of the LTDA, non-members who wish to fight their cases in court or appeal licensing decisions must seek suitable solicitors and potentially incur substantial legal fees, running into thousands of pounds.

When you are already facing trouble, it's too late to join the LTDA, so we urge you not to delay – join us today! When

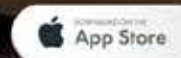
you apply for LTDA membership, from day one, our dedicated legal team will be at your disposal to provide support if needed.

When you spend ten to twelve hours on the road per day, even a simple mistake can result in convictions and penalty points on your driving licence. It's crucial to have the best team behind you to defend and protect your licence, no matter what challenges you may encounter.

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Your Health Matters

One thing cabbies experiencing health issues tend to say is that they wished they had taken a little time out of their day's shift to get out of the cab, stretch their legs and go for a walk.

On Point

As self-employed people, health issues can be a big problem for cabbies. Anything that take us out of action or prevents us from working, for any period of time, means we aren't able to earn a living. The amount of time we must have away from the cab will vary depending on the particular problem but whatever it is, in our trade, time is money, and this can cause a lot of extra stress and worry for drivers.

I'm sure many of you reading this will have experienced family or cabbie mates having heart issues. I have spoken to four cabbies this week alone, who have called me for a bit of advice after being taken to hospital with a heart issue.

One of these cabbies had had a heart attack, and the three others went into A&E with discomfort in and around the left arm and chest. All four of them are now thankfully fine after lots of tests. All four ended up having stents fitted. One of them had two. The thing they all told me was how much better they felt after the procedure and how the stent fitting was done whilst they were awake and the whole procedure was a doddle.

The downside is that after this procedure because it's a heart issue, the DVLA group 2 regulations state that a cabbie cannot work for six weeks. After the six weeks are up, the cabbie will need to take an exercise test to prove their fitness. The exercise test is a 9-minute treadmill test. It's not as strenuous as it sounds. It's not the same as you see a Premiership footballer take, where they are running as fast as they can. It's a walk and the six weeks you must take off gives you time to prepare for it. If you need to take one, and you are worried, please give me a call and we can go through it.

Staying healthy

One thing that the cabbies experiencing health issues tend to say is that they wished they



had taken a little time out of their days shift to get out of the cab, stretch their legs and go for a walk. I know a lot do already, but this is a nudge to those who don't. I'll admit I've never done it, but lately I have changed my ways.

I used to eat my packed lunch whilst sitting on a station rank that doesn't move to fast. My problem is that if I stop working to have a break for more than 15 minutes or so, I have real issues starting work again. I've found that as soon as I get the first job in after my walk, I'm fine and just carry on.

I've always said working a cab is a battle of the mind and this is a perfect example of that. It works for me. I'm no doctor and I am not as arrogant as some people (mostly on Twitter), who love to tell you what you should think and what you should be doing, but let me tell you, I feel great after a walk, whether its during my shift or at the weekend.

I wanted to share this because I have honestly been a bit freaked this week with the number of cabbies calling me from hospital all with heart issues. So please look after yourselves and make sure you get out, get moving and get some fresh air, if you can find some.

Medicals

As you will all know, cabbies have to take medicals at age 50, then 56, 62 and 65. They are then required yearly from the age of 65 onwards. I have seen a few problems lately where members have sent the necessary forms off to TfL and then receive a letter from them saying it has not arrived. Most cabbies send the forms recorded delivery and I have taken delight in sending TfL the proof of delivery and telling them they need to look harder. On the odd occasion that the paperwork does go missing in the post. This is a rarity, but it does happen. To guard against this particular problem, I suggest that you ask the GP to print off a set of the completed forms for you, so you have some cover if it does go missing. I'm sure the GP won't mind doing that for you, particularly taking into account that they have probably just relieved you of north of £100 for a 15-minute form filling in!



AA recovery

Although my colleague Suzzane has done a comprehensive article in a previous edition of TAXI regarding the AA. Here is a reminder that they have decided to now class cabs as commercial vehicles and, in some incidents, it's been reported to me that they have refused to come out unless the cabbie pays an increased premium. The problem is that the cabbie is often not aware of this until he calls up for assistance. If you are an AA customer, it may be best you give them a call and find out where you stand now, before you end up in a difficult situation. **LTDA**



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DBS Delays

Know Your People, they don't even know themselves! When I spoke with customer service, they had no idea that the change had even been implemented.

Knowledge is power

Back in August, the LTDA received notification that from the 30th September, the online DBS criminal record check service, that we as drivers are required to use by TfL, as part of the licensing process, was changing. We were told that TfL's provider, *First Advantage*, would still be running the service but under a new name – *Know Your People* – and that the application format would also be changing. We were told that further communication relating to the change would follow.

Well, surprise, surprise this didn't happen. Then, without any warning whatsoever, on the morning of the 7th September, the change was implemented.

Teething problems

The new system did not work smoothly. We experienced lots of technical issues trying to access and use the new *Know Your People* system, which forced the drivers who had prebooked their appointments at the LTDA to complete the application, to be cancelled and rescheduled, which in turn could possibly delay their renewal applications. The LTDA was also inundated with calls from members who had tried, unsuccessfully, to do their own online applications and couldn't.

I contacted the provider, *First Advantage*, to express our concerns. After being pushed from one department to another, when I finally spoke to a customer service agent their response to me was a shocking, "Sorry, what is *Know Your People*? I've never heard of it." They had no idea that the change had been implemented.

It was then suggested to me that I email my questions to them, which I did immediately. I did receive an email back, but not until the next day, and it was a generic one of, please check our 'Frequently Asked Questions' on our website. What an absolute shambles!



The worrying thing is that this is something that could potentially put drivers out of work if they can't make the system work and complete their applications on time. I'm sure many remember the massive delays when the last changes to DBS checks were introduced a few years ago, which I know did stop some drivers from being able to work for a period of time.

I contacted their customer service department again, this time with specific questions about the system and asking for information we need to be able to support drivers. One of these related to the important E Reference number that TfL use to check a driver's application and that we can also use to check the ongoing status and progress on the member's behalf, so we know if everything is on track to be completed in time. I was told initially that TfL will give out that number, which is totally wrong. I was then informed that there was no longer such a function available and then finally that the driver himself would have to email *Know Your People*, from their registered email address supplying some personal information and then the reference number would be sent to them directly - making it a much slower and more complicated process.

Post office problems

Another change, and potential issue for drivers, is that differently than before, you now must choose a Post Office from their list and pay online before the application is started. The problem here is that some of the Post Offices we know that do the service are now not on the list. At the same time some of those on the list do not seem to offer that service, as drivers have found out to their cost. We are doing what we can from here to get this changed, but as we all know dealing with big organisations, such as the Post Office, is never straight forward.

Implications for cabbies

In relation to the update service, this hasn't yet changed, so if you are registered on it and still have the original certificate, then you do not have to do anything else.

I am telling you all of this because these changes could result in confusion, mistakes and delays, which makes it even more important for drivers to start the DBS application as early as possible.

As of writing this, we still do not know how much of a delay all of this will cause for drivers, so please do not hesitate and

Kirby's PCN Hotspots

The enforcement camera 'hotspots' that I am hearing about all the time from drivers who've been caught out are the following:

Yellow Box Cameras

- All along Piccadilly
- Park Street/Green St W1
- Vauxhall Cross
- Shepherds Bush Green (Westfield)
- Hans Road (Rear of Harrods)
- Victoria Street/Palace Street

CAMERA PCN ENFORCEMENT

- Harrods (Brompton Road) Over-ranking
- Tottenham Court Road
- Sopwith Way (Chelsea Bridge) 15 min stay only
- Cornhill (coming from Leadenhall Street)
- Bath Street EC1 No Motor Vehicles 24/7
- Wilton Road, Victoria Station Over-ranking
- Edgware Road W2 Red Route
- Borough High Street Red Route
- Tower Bridge Road Red Route

start the DBS process as soon as you receive your renewal pack. If you are in any doubt whatsoever about completing the application or have any questions relating to it, please call the LTDA and book an appointment. I cannot stress the importance of this enough.



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PCNs & The Truth About Tags

There is so much propaganda around tags, none of it is correct or factual. If you put your name down, ask what number you are on the list so you can track your progress.

Airports & beyond

As we approach winter, we are hearing from many members who are still receiving APCOA PCNs whilst within the Taxi Feeder Park System. The main issues still appear to be encountered whilst passing the Terminal 3 drop-off zone when on the way to the Terminal 3 pick-up rank, and local inter-terminal jobs, which should obviously be exempt.

PCN problems

We deal, on average, with about ten APCOA PCNs every week, it's usually just a simple appeal process but sometimes we find more complex issues, such as a legitimate Drop-Off Charge (DoC) payment taken but put towards an alleged contravention, which should actually be an exempt job. Sorting these out can be more difficult.

As tags are not connected to a driver's Vehicle Registration Number, we have requested APCOA put ANPR cameras at the exit of the South Park to make vehicles leaving exempt from the DoC for a couple of hours, to allow for local journeys and fairs fares etc. We estimate that this would eliminate these ongoing PCN mistakes by 90% and would save a lot of time, energy and money, let alone stress, but so far this request seems to have fallen on deaf ears.

4D Plates

In more positive news, Heathrow Airport Ltd (HAL) have recently changed their ANPR cameras on all the terminals, which now appear to be picking up all the characters on 4D number plates. Unfortunately, the local constabulary, who seem to set up regular 'stop bays' in and around Heathrow, as well as in town, are claiming their ANPR handheld devices are not picking up all characters on these 4D plates and so are issuing drivers with £100 fines or the option to appeal in court.

We are still in contact with APlates, who are validating these



plates, and advising members accordingly. At the last trade meeting with HAL, we were informed a planned new system would be implemented by December this year in order to eradicate this ongoing problem. Let's hope this happens and I have asked Heathrow to keep me updated. I have personally received two tickets in the past few days, when I was dispatched to T3 from the Taxi Feeder Park, so I know how frustrating it can be.

Tag waiting list

I received a call last week from a member asking me, how come an '8' badge has a Heathrow tag? This member has had his name down on the list for past 18 months and was understandably frustrated, but as I explained to him, tags are not given out in badge order, but by how long your name has been on the list. The '8' badge has been in operation for three years now, so if someone put their name down as soon as they got their badge, it is likely they will have a tag. It's also good to bear in mind that if someone

loses their badge they will have an '8' badge.

This member suggested there was some kind of skull doggerly going on, but this is just not the case. I want to assure everyone that I personally, and the rest of my colleagues at the LTDA, are doing all we can to pressure Heathrow to release tags. In fact, as I have written about before, many drivers at Heathrow actually dislike me because they don't want to see more tags issued.

I have also previously heard it suggested that Heathrow favour LTDA members and they get their tags sooner. I can categorically say that this is completely untrue. When I hear these kinds of accusations, they are usually preceded by something like 'my cousin said' or 'my mate said'. There is so much propaganda around this, none of it is correct or factual. If you put your name down, ask what number you are on the list and remember it, as this number stays the same so you can track your progress. At the time of writing, 260 tags have been released since June 2019, when the list was first created.



Polite reminder

Lastly, as the Feeder Park has had a record number of movements with the highest ever recorded throughput in September, we have seen more cabs holding up the park. Can you please all be mindful of how quickly the Feeder Park moves at times and make sure to be in your cabs.

The wardens do not get pleasure in posting polite notices. All we want is for the ranks to be filled with taxis, but we have no choice but to warn drivers, as ultimately they are stopping their colleagues from going to work and passengers from getting into a taxi. I know I probably sound like a broken record, but it's important we don't lose customers, let alone hand them to our competitors on a plate.

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Closing the Loophole

Drivers operating outside their licensing area undermines regulations established in each respective region, leading to a distorted market and potentially compromising passenger safety.

National correspondent

It came as no surprise that private hire drivers registered with City of Wolverhampton Council are working in Manchester, despite the considerable distance between the two regions. What was surprising was the sheer volume of them.

Out of area drivers

According to data obtained through a Freedom of Information request, over a third of private hire drivers working in Greater Manchester hold licences issued by City Wolverhampton Council. This amounts to nearly 9,000 drivers working away from their registered council, highlighting the scale of the



problem caused by a gap in the current legislation. With current laws technically allowing drivers to technically operate anywhere in England and Wales, Transport for Greater Manchester has expressed valid concerns about ensuring consistent standards across the industry.

The figures revealed that Wolverhampton-licensed private hire drivers account for over 36,000 drivers, that's approximately 13% of Wolverhampton's population, while Greater Manchester has 16,300 licensed private vehicles.

The situation is not limited to Manchester; even in London, an increasing number of Wolverhampton licensed drivers are being observed working within the city. Transport for London (TfL) has acknowledged the potential safety risks associated with limited inspection and enforcement of drivers and vehicles operating outside their registered areas.

Action needed

TfL has long highlighted the necessity of new legislation to restrict cross-border hiring

in the taxi and private hire industry. In a statement given to *TaxiPoint*, TfL stressed the importance of passenger safety and denounced the potential compromise posed by the current legislative 'loophole'. While cross-border hiring may be lawful under specific circumstances, TfL maintains that the lack of regulation and inspection for drivers operating outside their licensed area poses serious risks.

Government intervention in this matter cannot come quickly enough for many in trade. But there is simply little political appetite from government despite repeated pleas for action from across the sector. TfL has continually advocated for legislation that would mandate journeys to start and end in the area where the license was granted, effectively putting an end to cross-border hiring. They even produced a comprehensive policy paper in 2018, with detailed proposals for change. Despite the government's own commitment in 2019 to consider this topic, progress has been disappointingly slow.

Compromising safety

To balance the argument, it could be said that cross-border is better for competition and accessibility, but as we've learned the hard way in recent years, the primary focus must always be on passenger safety and ensuring consistent standards across the industry.

The main point here is that drivers operating outside their licensed areas undermines the regulations established in each respective region, leading to a distorted market and potentially compromising passenger safety. Safeguarding the well-being of passengers and other road users should be the top priority, and implementing stricter legislation to put an end to cross-border hiring is an essential step towards achieving this goal.

A Welsh solution?

In Wales, they are at least looking for potential solutions and discussing a way forward. Welsh Transport Minister, Lee Waters, recently summarised plans to introduce new national standards for taxis and PHV in Wales to help

tackle cross-border concerns.

The move comes after the release of consultation responses to the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle (Wales) Bill, which were reviewed to gather public opinion and expert insights on the proposed changes. While some respondents expressed concerns about the implications of these national standards for vehicles licensed in England but operating in Wales, Waters assured that legitimate cross-border journeys would not be affected. To prevent drivers from obtaining an English licence to bypass the Welsh standards, safeguards are now likely to be introduced.

Welsh Transport Minister, Lee Waters, said: "One of the chief complaints from drivers, especially in south-east and north-east Wales, is the issue of drivers from areas with less onerous standards of training and testing unfairly competing with them for passengers. This so-called cross-bordering doesn't give passengers a consistent level of safety and customer service, and is bad for drivers and operators too."

"Many respondents also felt that discretion for local authorities to set additional local standards should be kept to a minimum. We will continue to work with stakeholders to finalise the national standards. As a result, whenever you use a taxi or a private hire vehicle in Wales, you will be assured that the driver, vehicle and operator have been subject to the same requirements, safety checks and training."

"Respondents had mixed views about the implications national standards would have for taxis and private hire vehicles licensed in England and working in Wales. We will not stop legitimate journeys that cross the border between Wales and England. We will seek to introduce safeguards to ensure that drivers do not obtain a licence in England to avoid Wales's national standards."

And we will continue to monitor the situation and engage stakeholders on both sides of the border as we develop our proposals."

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Taxi Conference Round-Up: Marrakech, Myrtle Beach And London

A look at all the big stories from across Europe and the recent events that were held.

International correspondent

It's not often that so many different taxi conferences are held in such a short space of time. I had to swallow extra vitamin pills just to keep me going in a multi-continent odyssey.

Many different voices, to a mildly positive tune

In one month, I had the distinct pleasure of attending the Director's Taxi Summit in Marrakech, Morocco (11th - 14th September), the Taxi Alliance Annual in Myrtle Beach, USA (19th - 23rd September) and the meeting of leading European taxi CEOs at the European Radio Taxi Association (ERTA, 28th - 29th September) in London.

Summarising these three events here is almost an impossible task (although I'll have a stab at it later on in this column). Suffice it to say they were all different in character and attendance. The Marrakech event, organised by Azmat and Jack from UK-based *Dotted*, mixed business, education and pleasure in a special setting, whereas Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, was the sleepy backdrop to a well-attended annual of the US Transportation Alliance (TTA). The most special event was ERTA's first 'live' annual post-Covid conference, drawing a sizable number of European taxi CEOs to London, representing 11 EU and non-EU countries.

Search for drivers

One theme, apart from a mildly upbeat tune, united all three events: the universal lack of drivers and the intense search for innovative solutions to solve service problems, often at night. Add to that the impressive surge in demand post-Covid and the fact that in many places the taxi trade now more than holds its own in competition with app taxis. Sustainability goals make stark demands on cab operators, with electrification the main task – unfortunately, often not properly subsidised and/or supported



Taxi.eu's Gregor Beiner outlined the progress of the EU's Platform Workers Directive.

with cab-only charging facilities. Finally, the digitisation of the industry continues, with many new solutions to intelligent booking (via WhatsApp, for instance) and fleet management.

Uber-less Denmark

At the extreme ends of the conference scales was the news that, like in New York and San Francisco, Taxi LA taxi-companies will now carry out Uber trips, hoping to improve nightwork, which had collapsed completely through Covid and... *Uber/Lyft*. Yet in Denmark, taxi regulations with tight fiscal controls of all taxis (no PHVs there) caused Uber to leave the country, not inclined to share figures with the tax authorities. At the same time, changed LA-regulation led to lightly branded grey vehicles (goodbye to yellow cabs) with no more tightly screwed-in taxi elements like metres and cameras, rendering cabs into driver-owned attractive, second-hand vehicles.

In Marrakech, Gregor Beiner (*Taxi.eu/Taxis4SmartMobility*) sketched the progress of the EU's Platform Workers Directive, creating uniform rules for app drivers. But so far, divisions between the EU countries are proving steep. Starting in Munich, Germany's taxi world now counts on fixed prices to counter Uber & co.

Pink taxis for Egypt

From Marrakech, the amazing initiative of Dr. Reem Fawzi of

multi-faceted *Rimo Tours*, who launched 400-strong *Pink Taxis* in 2015, making travel by taxi safe for women in Egypt, providing jobs for women drivers. In the USA, a growing interest in tendered Non-Emergency Medical Transport (NEMT), a large new market, is leading to a growing number of takeovers. Not unlike the situation in the UK with *Veezu* and *TakeMe* and organisations like Bill George's *zTrip* targeting larger takeover and turnaround targets in major cities, building up a large portfolio of cab companies across the USA.

Handing over LaGasse and Riesel

Talking of remarkable achievements, Al LaGasse, at the TTA's annual, said goodbye after no less than 46 years at the helm of the organisation. At a festive reception closing the 2023 event, many members who were supposed to 'roast' the departing CEO actually praised LaGasse, who is said to have had only one regret in his career: "Not to have reacted quick enough to the threat of Uber and Lyft." TTA members vehemently denied that, saying he could not have done more.

In London, Geoffrey Riesel, who created the European Radio Taxi Association, presided over his last ERTA-meeting as chairman, handing over the lead to interim chairman Vinny Kearns (CEO Xpert Taxis Dublin) and newly elected chairperson Hedy Borremman, CEO of TCA Amsterdam.



Showing her taxi-colours: in Egypt, Dr. Reem Fawzi launched Pink Taxi.



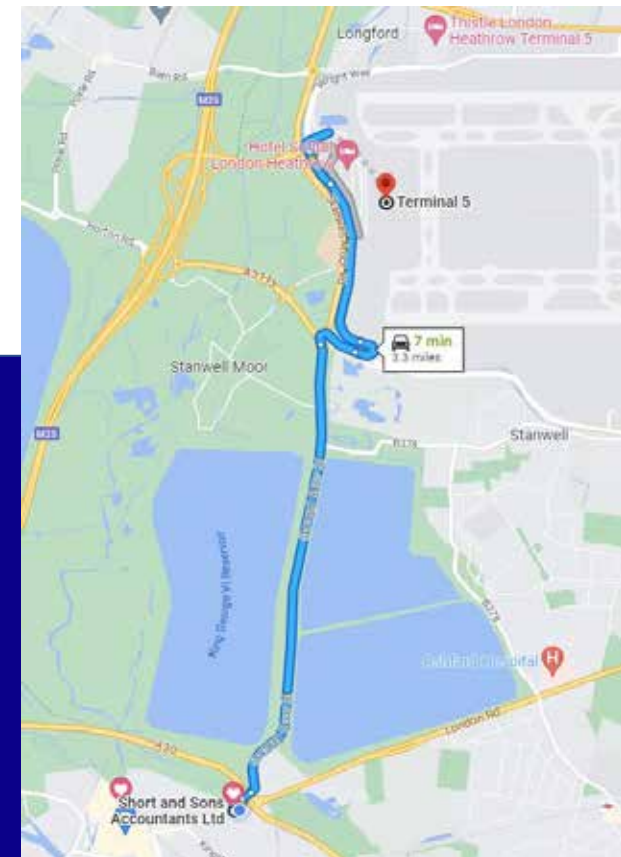
At the TTA: Al LaGasse's farewell.



A view from ERTA.

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Axelle Lemaire.

There have been 41 wars between England and France, with the French claiming victory on 24 occasions. England has been victorious 11 times and there have been six draws - although none were decided by penalties.

The last of these conflicts took place between 1940 and 1942, known as the Anglo-Vichy French War. Since then, there has been peace between the two countries, but did you know that London is the sixth biggest city in France? That's right, France even has an MP in London.

Ottawa-born Axelle Lemaire served as Secretary of the French Socialist Party in London, from 2008 until 2012. In 2012, she was elected to the French parliament, claiming one of France's 11 overseas seats and becoming an MP for the constituency of Northern Europe, a brand new political position. French citizens from different Northern European countries - including Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Ireland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania - were eligible to vote.

By virtue of her appointment (and the fact that there are over 400,000 French people living in the UK, with over 200,000 living in London) England's capital technically became France's sixth biggest city. In fact, London has now become known as Paris-on-Thames within the French government, as Lemaire was known as France's MP for London.

In May 2014, Lemaire resigned her parliamentary seat and was succeeded by Christophe Premat.

The Oxo Tower

Synonymous with the South Bank, the 175-foot Oxo Tower sits majestically alongside its equally visually stunning neighbour Seacontainers House. With its iconic lettering lit up at night, this Art Deco building is a joy to behold. However, did you know that when the building was being designed the architect of the Oxo Tower wasn't allowed an electrified advertising hoarding in the building? So instead, they incorporated the company's name in the windows on all four sides to circumvent the problem.

The Oxo Tower, which was built on the site of the old Stamford Wharf, at the end of the 19th century, was originally constructed as a power station, supplying electricity to the Royal Mail. In the 1920s, the building was acquired by the Liebig Extract of Meat Company, manufacturers of the world-famous Oxo cube.

The building's Art Deco design was the brainchild of architect Albert Moore, with the revamp taking place between 1928 and 1929. Despite most of the building



being demolished during its redevelopment, the river facing facade was retained and extended. Within its construction, Liebig wanted to include a tower featuring illuminated signs advertising the name of their product. However, permission was refused due to a ban on skyline advertising along the South Bank. Undaunted, the meat extract company requested that the design of the tower incorporated four

sets of three vertically-aligned windows, each of which "coincidentally" happened to be in the shapes of a circle, a cross and a circle.

Nowadays, the Oxo Tower is a trendy place to eat, drink and even live. The building boasts a set of design, arts and crafts shops on the ground and first floors with two galleries, Bargehouse and gallery@oxo. The Oxo Tower Restaurant is situated on the eighth floor, which is rooftop level. There are 78 flats between the third and seventh floor.

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW LONDON?

The peculiar life of George Wilkins

One of the most notorious and dangerous roads in Tudor and Stuart London was Clerkenwell's Turnmill Street. This relatively small street (which still exists today) had the rather unsavoury reputation of being a haven for drunkenness, prostitution and violence.

Located on the corner of Turnmill and Cowcross Street, sat a pub which was run by a rather unpleasant chap called George Wilkins. Wilkins had an appalling reputation for violence and spent much of his time in and out of prison. His offences included stamping on numerous victims' heads and even kicking a pregnant woman in the stomach. The pub itself was actually a front for a brothel - many drinking establishments were used as them during that time period.

Ordinarily this villain's life would have been of no consequence to anybody of

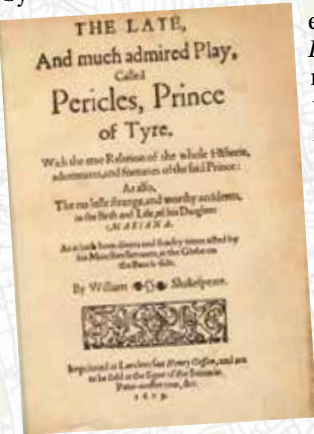
a decent nature, but there was one thing that set him apart from the ruffian: he wrote a play with a rather famous playwright.

The play *Pericles*, which was first performed in 1608, was co-written by Wilkins and none other than William Shakespeare. Wilkins wrote most of the first two acts. It is believed that the brothel scenes in the play were very much a case of art imitating life, due to Wilkin's involvement with the play.

This wasn't the first that he had written either. He also wrote *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage*, based on a real-life murder trial. This play was performed with some success at the Globe Theatre in 1606. He also collaborated with some other minor Jacobean playwrights.

It is unclear how Wilkins and Shakespeare became acquainted but it is suspected that the prostitution outside of the Globe Theatre could have been the link between the two.

Wilkins died in 1618, two years after William Shakespeare.



The Game's Not Dead Yet

September saw 259 new cabs join the ranks, the second highest number of sales ever, and almost three times an average month back in the days of the legendary TX1.



Cab you drive

For the first time in a long while, I met a real doom and gloom cabbie, he all but told me, 'The games dead mate! According to him he could not make a living, well not like he used to, and he could no longer afford to rent a cab, which is why he was sat with me, he was looking to buy a pre-owned TXE.

He had decided to buy a TXE after he saw the prices of his first choice of cab, a second-hand Euro VI Vito, and had quickly worked out that there was so little difference in the prices that he may as well buy a newer cab, with a longer life expectancy.

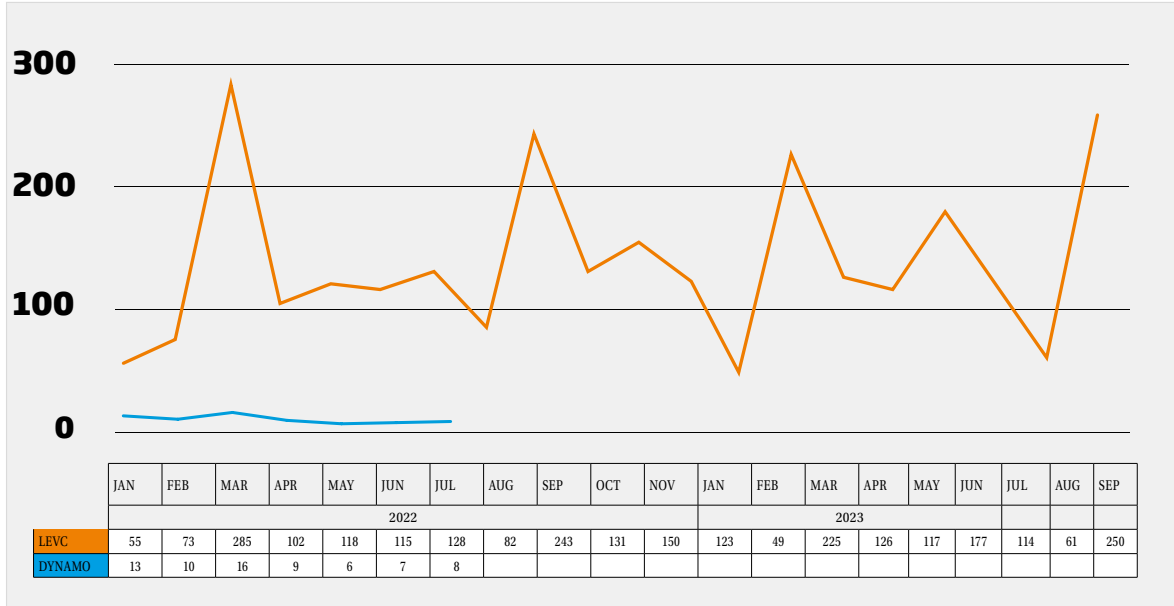
The TXE was going to be his first foray into not just modern cabbie, but from what I gleaned from our conversation, the 21st Century! He wasn't on any of the apps or radio, he still begrudged taking cards and I got the distinct impression he

"Mr Doom and Gloom must be wrong, the game is far from dead!"

spent most of his time on station ranks. Unfortunately, there was a problem with the finance, and we could not do business. I think he was going to try to double a cab with a relative for a while. I wish him well.

Despite what this cabbie thought of the current wellbeing of the trade, he must be in a minority because September saw 259 new cabs join the ranks, the second highest number of sales ever, and almost three times an average month back in the days of the legendary TX1. All of this is despite astronomic interest rates.

Couple these strong sales, with a significant increase in the numbers applying to do the Knowledge, my own experiences in not being able to get a cab at various times of the day and night, despite being prepared to pay a premium on an app to get one, and I conclude Mr Doom and Gloom must be wrong, the game is far from dead!



DYNAMO	180
LEV	7,442
TX2	67
TX4	5,096
VITO	2,311
TOTAL	15,096



A Passage Through Time: Bow Street's History Of Law And Order

Exploring the origins of our legal system and the invention of a police force across the capital. So let's take a journey back to the 16th century...

Footprints and Foundations

We now continue our journey through Covent Garden and arrive in Bow Street. A place where the foundations were laid for today's Metropolitan Police Service.

Law and order

I'm sure you've dropped off a fare at the exclusive NoMad Hotel on Bow Street. I want you to take a closer look at this structure. Behind the façade of this building lies an illustrious past, in which the seeds of law enforcement evolved. This building was once Bow Street Police Station.

As a cab driver, you have more engagements with the police than the public. Indeed, for mature cab drivers, they will have memories of the Public Carriage Office in Penton Street, just off Pentonville Road. In the past, the regulators of the cab trade were the Metropolitan Police under the authority of the Home Office.

It is difficult to imagine that London was virtually unprotected in the 18th century: a lawless society where crime manifested itself in every cornerstone of the capital. Murder and mayhem were constant companions for innocuous Londoners during this period. Something had to be done. Thomas De Veil, the son of a French Huguenot, was instrumental in setting up a magistrate's court on Bow Street, in 1740.

De Veil was respected for his impartiality in dispensing justice to the felons that stood in dock in front of him. The Bow Street Court gained popularity with the judiciary who relied on legal representation being conducted within the framework of law.

Henry Fielding (1707-54)

Henry Fielding was an unlikely candidate to accept the position of magistrate upon De Veil's death. During his early career, he was a novelist and



A view of modern day Bow Street.



playwright. His book, *Tom Jones*, was turned into an Oscar-winning film in 1963. Fielding abandoned writing in 1737 and entered Middle Temple to study law, becoming a circuit justice a few years later.

Fielding was selected through an old school friend, the Duke of Bedford, the estate landlord of Covent Garden, to become chief magistrate of Bow Street. Here,

nepotism was firmly at play.

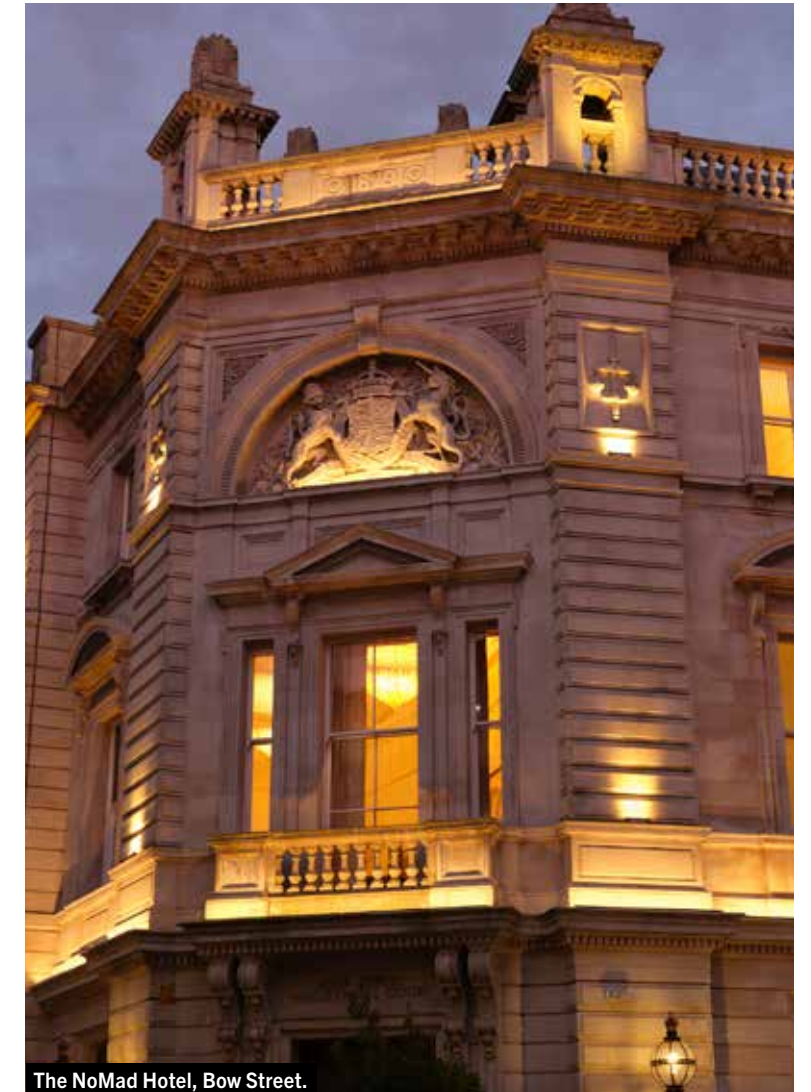
Fielding was chief magistrate for five years. Throughout his tenure, he focused on the causes of crime and finding solutions for the criminal fraternity not to reoffend. London did not have an effective police force to protect its citizens from predators who stalked the cobblestone streets. In 1749, Fielding influenced the setting

up of a small body of constables who were drawn from the criminal classes. They were unpaid but entitled to a share of any reward money. Their uniforms were basic, sporting a long tunic, top hat, and a wooden club for protection.

John Fielding

When Henry Fielding died, his half-brother, John, was

appointed to the Bow Street Court as chief magistrate. He continued the legacy of his brother and formed the Bow Street Runners, a small force of detectives who laid the foundations of the Metropolitan Police Force. John had gone blind at the age of 19 and implemented his duties with the utmost of vigour. For the condemned who entered his



The NoMad Hotel, Bow Street.

court, Fielding had an inbuilt empathy for their unlawful activities. He was prominent in establishing charities for those who had fallen from grace. Schemes were provided for young sex workers to turn them away from the brothel houses, where their virtue was sold for a few pennies. John Fielding acquired the pseudonym 'the Blind Beak of Bow Street.'

Bobbies on the beat

It had taken a century for the government to seriously consider the conception of a police force to protect London and enforce law and order. In 1829, an act of Parliament finally passed a bill to create a single uniformed police force of 1,011 men. They were dispersed across the capital where London's population at last had some protection.

The Bow Street Runners were excluded from the new police force and remained under the Bow Street Magistrates Office until they were disbanded in 1839. Before the succession of Robert Peel's occupancy as Prime Minister in 1834, he participated in the bill for an active police force in the capital. Peel is not only remembered as an influential politician, he's also recalled for the familiar names that a police officer is known: Peeler, Bobbie, Bluebottle and Runner. The former court and police station buildings on the east side of Bow Street have morphed into an avant garde apartment and hotel. ■ TAXI

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What's on? WEST END

Charlotte takes a look at this month's top London shows to recommend to your passengers.

Under the spotlight



The Little Big Things - Soho Place

Soho Place continues its run of telling unusual stories in gorgeously immersive ways, with this brand-new musical. *The Little Big Things* is an extraordinary true story about an ordinary family. In 2009, the then 17-year-old Henry Fraser was on holiday with his older brothers, when he dived into the sea and hit his head on the seabed. Instantly his life was transformed, nearly dying on multiple occasions, and now paralyzed from the neck down.

Perhaps the unexpected source material for a big-hearted musical and yet, within moments of the opening number, it all makes total sense. Musical theatre is about being uplifted, finding joy in the darkness, being united and feeling connected. Henry's life, and those of his loved ones, was changed irrevocably after his accident; his life would never turn out as they all expected.

To articulate this, Henry is played by two actors - Jonny Amies is Henry pre-accident and Ed Larkin is Henry post-accident. The two are on stage together at the same time, interacting, as they negotiate the trauma with both dialogue and songs that amuse and move in equal measure. They're joined by a fabulous ensemble cast, with the MVP being Amy Trigg as Agnes the physio - a bawdy and endearing support both physically and emotionally to Henry.

Few shows are this full of hope and joy, and this one is as life-affirming as they come.

★★★★☆

The Little Big Things runs until 2nd March, 2024.

Dear England - Prince Edward Theatre

Who would have thought the most feelgood play of the year would be one that is almost three hours long and is about the England football team's past three losses at major tournaments. And yet, *Dear England* is one of the funniest, most creative and heartfelt plays seen in the West End for a long time.

Flying through its runtime, we start with Gareth Southgate (a phenomenal Joseph Fiennes, earnestly captivating in the role) being appointed interim manager with the team he has been charged with, having come off a lengthy number of losses. Armed with a whole host of analogies and a determined want to work out why exactly things aren't working, he tasks himself with putting together a new team both on and off the pitch.

We get to revisit those iconic moments, the joyful wins and the painful losses, told with some truly inventive staging and lighting. It manages something that should be impossible: to bring tension to moments that we know exactly how they end.

But the real joy comes from the interactions in the changing rooms. Thanks to a spectacularly witty and warm script, we get to see the ensemble cast form a believable team. Their endearing rapport is infectious, as they play out real-life people as tongue-in-cheek caricatures mostly out of admiration and affection (aside from the political figures who are closer to parody out of disaffection). Will Close's Harry Kane is another standout addition.

This is a play not just for football fans. This is an essential watch for everyone. Rarely do we get to see such positive representations of masculinity, male friendship and discussions of mental health. This really is one you need to see, as soon as possible!

★★★★★

Dear England runs until 13th January, 2024.



Marc Brenner

What else is on?

■ Stephen Sondheim's Old Friends - Gielgud Theatre (until 6th January)

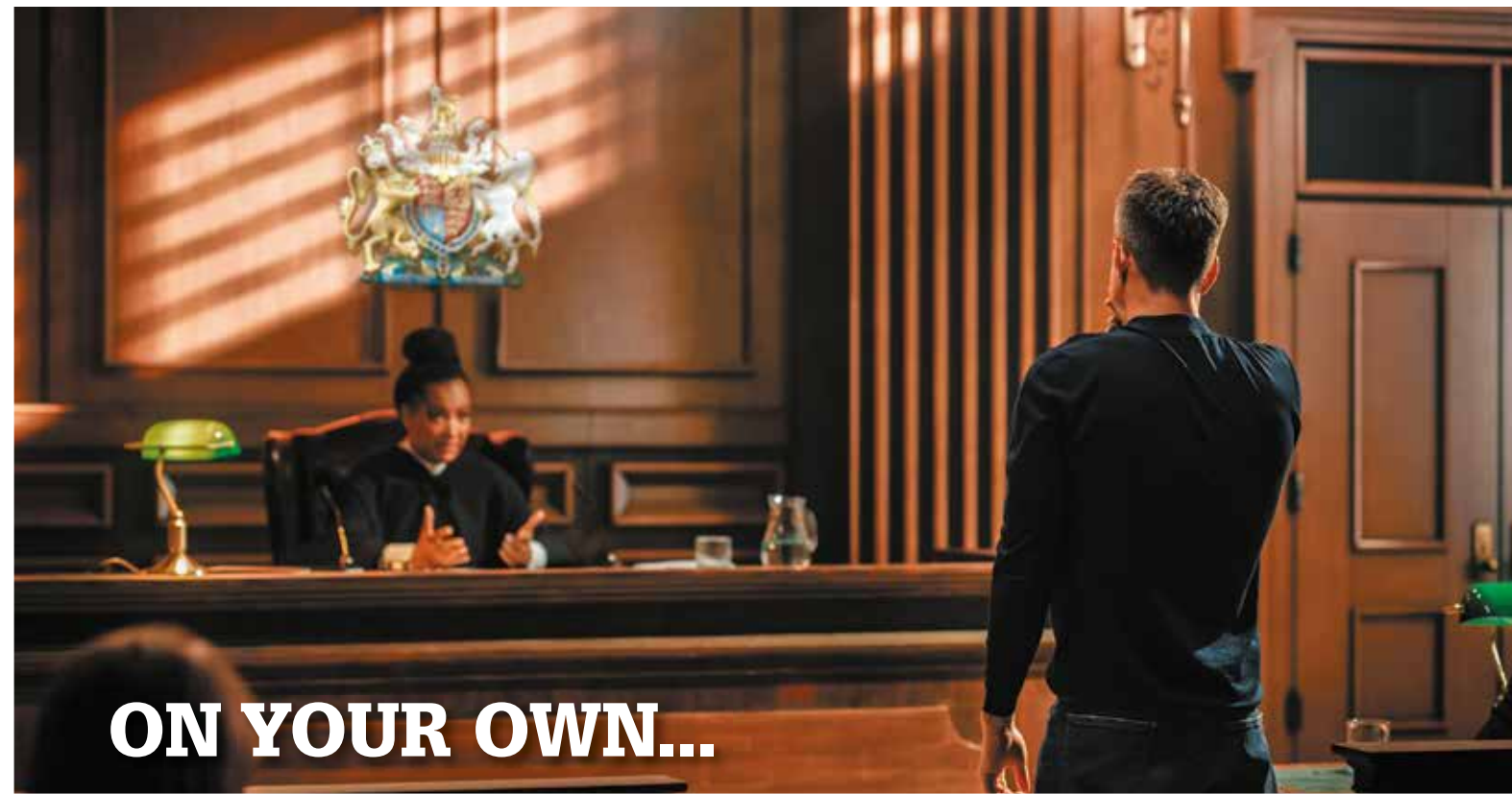
An unique opportunity to see Broadway legends Bernadette Peters and Lea Salonga in a show celebrating the life and work of composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim.

■ The Ocean At The End Of The Lane - Noel Coward Theatre (until 25th November)

The sumptuous stage show adaptation of Neil Gaiman's novel returns for a short stint. A must-see!

■ The Time Traveller's Wife - Apollo Theatre (until 30th March)

A new British musical, an adaptation of Audrey Niffenegger's internationally best-selling novel, with music by Joss Stone and the Eurythmics' Dave Stewart.



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Veterans And Cabbies Take To The Race Track

Ten London drivers (who volunteer for the Taxi Charity) took 15 veterans to Goodwood for the Mission Motorsport event.



Chelsea Pensioners at Mission Motorsport.



Volunteers collecting veterans from Royal Hospital Chelsea.



Mission Motorsport.



Chelsea Pensioner Mike Smith.

TAXI spoke to London taxi driver and Taxi Charity for Military Veterans Chairman, Brian Heffernan, about the event that took place on 29th September.

TAXI Hi Brian, what was this all about?

Brian: As someone who loves speed, this was the perfect day out for me. The Taxi Charity had been invited by Mission Motorsport to attend their race day at Goodwood, and we were delighted to accept. As well as seeing a plethora of sleek sports cars, we also got to see Spitfires taking off and landing. And nothing beats the sound of those planes!

TAXI What exactly is Mission Motorsport?

Brian: They are a great charity doing some wonderful work with veterans. They launched in March of 2012 to help those affected by military operations, by engagement through sport and have the motto 'Race, Retrain, Recover'.

It was fascinating to discover that they have delivered hundreds of events, providing over 2,040 wounded, injured or sick beneficiaries with sporting output and supported over 300 to access employment through their training and placement schemes.

They have been really



Mission Motorsport Event at Goodwood.

Frances Wyhowska, Ambassador, Taxi Charity for Military Veterans said:

"Mission Motorsport gave our veterans and drivers a marvellous day at Goodwood Motor Circuit. Everyone was given the opportunity to experience laps in sleek supercars at speeds of up to 150mph and the Chelsea Pensioners couldn't be drawn away... until they discovered the skid pan! The kindness of everyone at Mission Motorsport was outstanding and the smiles on the faces of our veterans and drivers said it all."



Taxi Charity at Mission Motorsport day at Goodwood.



Andy Brown, Chief Operating Officer at Mission Motorsport, said:

"Our Invitational Track Day at Goodwood is one of the highlights of Mission Motorsport's sporting calendar, bringing together members of the Armed Forces community from all over the country. It was also wonderful to be able to invite the Taxi Charity along for the first time. The sight of a parade of black-cabs doing laps around the circuit was simply fantastic. And of course, the iconic scarlet tunics of the young Chelsea Pensioners was the icing on the cake of an amazing day."

we couldn't drive the cars - I would have really relished that opportunity but it was a great experience to be a passenger on this iconic race track.

TAXI What speed did you reach?

Brian: I got to ride in a Porsche and reached a top speed of 120mph. Danny Shelton was in a Lotus Elise and he beat me with a top speed of 136 mph. Paul Ray rode in an AC Cobra recreation and hit 115mph, but Paul Davis experienced the fastest at 155mph in a Porsche!



A Taxi Charity volunteer's cab on the Goodwood track.

TAXI And am I right in thinking the cabs went round the track too?

Brian: Yes, at lunchtime a safety car led us round the track for three laps but at a much more sedate speed than the other cars!

TAXI Will you do this again?

Brian: Absolutely. The day was a huge success and I am really looking forward to taking more veterans to experience this great day and I'd really like to go a bit faster next time too. **TAXI**

About the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans

The Taxi Charity is run by volunteer London black taxi drivers and has been supporting thousands of veterans since 1948. The charity arranges free trips (for veterans from all conflicts) to the Netherlands and France, for acts of commemoration and days out to museums, concerts, or social events across the UK. 2023 is the charity's 75th anniversary, a remarkable milestone for a small, niche charity, peopled by enthusiastic volunteers. The charity received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2021, an award approved by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the equivalent of the MBE for charities. To fund and facilitate their work, the charity is reliant on donations, grants and sponsorship and has launched a '75 for 75' fundraising campaign to raise £75,000 in its anniversary year. www.taxicharity.org



Veterans ready to get on the race track.

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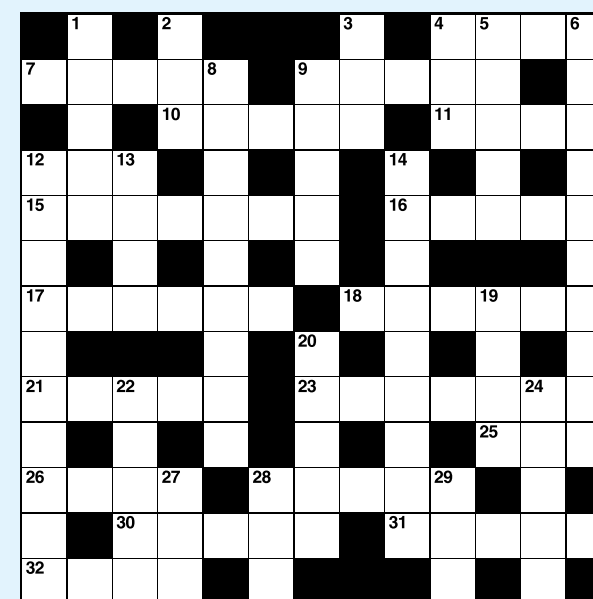


www.ltda.co.uk



Puzzler Page

Crossword



ACROSS

- 4 Use your __, think (4)
7 __ Richards, Stones guitarist (5)
9 Yellow gemstone (5)
10 Military student (5)
11 Insensitive person (4)
12 Unbattered (toast) (3)
15 Makes it possible for (7)
16 Famous Italian fountain (5)
17 Brings to power (6)
18 Enthusiasm (6)
21 Barb of a rose (5)
23 Sports competitor (7)
25 Soft wet earth (3)
26 Hard animal fat (4)
28 Sandbank (5)
30 Complain, grumble (5)
31 Pronged eating utensils (5)
32 Bend in the wind (4)

DOWN

- 1 Long (for) (5)
2 And so forth (abbrev)(3)
3 Fester (3)
4 Scientist's workroom (3)
5 Atmospheric layer (5)
6 Prescient (3-7)
8 Pellet of falling ice (9)
9 Taut (5)
12 Pessimistic people (10)
13 American university (4)
14 Spouse (5,4)
19 Article in a newspaper (4)
20 Hidden store (5)
22 Last Greek letter (5)
24 Young __, reforming radicals (5)
27 Rugby score (3)
28 Town such as Bath, Cheltenham or Leamington (3)
29 Cloud at ground level (3)

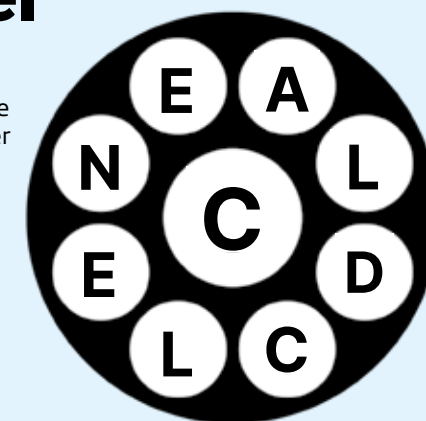
Sudoku

Have a go at this medium level Sudoku puzzle. Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 just once.

		1	2	7			4	
			9	8				
8					1			
3	4					8		
9	8						7	
		5			6	2		
			4		3			9
2				9				6
						1	3	2

Wordwheel

How many words of four letters or more can you make from this Wordwheel? Each word must use the central letter, and each letter may be used once only. At least one nine-letter word can be found. We found 13 words - can you do better?



Futoshiki

Fill in the blank squares so that each row and column contains all the numbers 1 - 5. Use any given numbers and the symbols that tell you if the number in the square is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

	>				
	<				
			3		
					3

All answers to puzzler on p30

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TAXI

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TAXI

TUNNEL TOLLS: TAXI EXEMPTION VITAL
STEVE MCNAMARA Page 5

NEW DBS SYSTEM DELAYS
PAUL KIRBY Page 10

BOW STREET HISTORY
OF LAM'S ORDERS
PHIL BROWN Pages 20 & 21

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MUST
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REMAIN IN PLACE BEYOND 2024

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Telephone _____ Mobile _____

Email _____ Twitter _____

Date of Birth _____ Badge No. _____

Badge colour (please state whether green or yellow) _____ Year badge obtained _____

Suburban badge sector numbers _____

Have you ever been a member of the LTDA before? (please tick) Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you currently have points on your DVLA driving license? (please tick) Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes how many points do you have?

Do you have any motoring or other prosecutions pending? Yes ☐ No ☐

Please note: We do not provide assistance for any matters that have occurred prior to you joining the LTDA.

Please tick if you **DO NOT** wish to receive information from the LTDA and other related organisations in the future ☐

I understand that my application for membership of the Association must be approved by the Council of Management and that until this is confirmed I am not eligible to vote in relation to any form of Association matters. I agree that all benefits prior to approval of membership shall be at the discretion of the Council of Management.

Please note: We do not provide assistance for any matters that have occurred prior to you joining LTDA.

Signed _____ Date _____

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9 1 4 4 2 8

For Office use only

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- Name of account holder _____
- Account Number
- Bank Sort Code --
Banks/Building Societies may not accept instructions to pay Direct Debit from some types of account.
- Signature _____
Date _____

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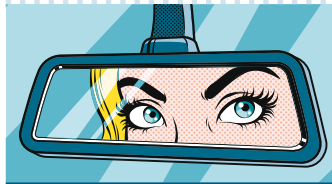
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- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by LTDA, or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
- If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when LTDA asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.



You can now also apply to join the LTDA online, simply scan here to complete an online application:





Hairy Tea



Mr Meg claims we have a poltergeist because his stuff keeps disappearing and reappearing elsewhere in the house...

A woman of words

There's no poltergeist. There is just a very irritated me, forever putting his gear back in the right place.

In the last 48 hours, I've moved his house keys from the downstairs loo to the key drawer, his TV specs from the plant pot in the back garden to the coffee table in the front room, his AirPods from an empty coffee mug on the drainer back to their little holder, his car keys out of the cheese drawer in the fridge back onto the car key ring. I could go on.

Happily, this lumpy dumpy carry on is not a sign of anything worrying. He's been at it for years. It's just an acute case of lazy-ass-itis. His mother told me that, aged 12, he once rinsed his teeth brace

in the goldfish bowl to clean it, because it would have been five steps further to the sink.

The daft poltergeist theory is his latest excuse for him dumping stuff everywhere and anywhere.

But it was toenailclippergate that pushed me over the edge. I found them in the Weetabix box. I exploded. "This cannot go on!" I yelled.

"But it's the poltergeist, not me!" he answered.

As it is Halloween season, I shocked him silly by pretending to take what he said seriously and told him it was time to contact his 'poltergeist' and tell it to clear off once and for all.

I enlisted the help of another cabbie friend, she's a dead ringer for

Yvette Fielding, that ghost hunter woman off the telly. She and I met in the cabbie's shelter in Warwick Avenue and hatched a plot to make Mr Meg change his sloppy ways.

Fright night came and 'Yvette' was brilliant. Mr Meg was convinced it was really her. Having believed my story that she'd been a fare, we'd got chatting and had

offered to help clear the poltergeist that had been playing fast and loose with Mr Meg's stuff.

He bust a gut to do everything 'Yvette' instructed him to. First, she told him to cast off his clothing, so very reluctantly, he stripped down to his boxers and

socks. She said that a brew made from his hair (head, ear, nose, chest) sipped slowly would help to drive the spirit out.

My favourite command from 'Yvette' was that all the windows at Meg Towers had to be washed inside and out. And every mattress in the house turned and hoovered. Genius. Saved me a couple of jobs that's for sure.

And the best part was that Mr Meg couldn't challenge 'Yvette' without confessing he'd invented the poltergeist.

'After three hours, 'Yvette' declared Meg Towers poltergeist-free and went home to have a good laugh.

Did it work?

He's definitely being a lot tidier, but yesterday at breakfast I noticed him patting his PJs down. "Lost something?" I asked.

"No, no," he replied, fearful of another hairy cuppa. Spirits 1, Mr Meg 0.

TAXI



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- ◆ Martin Cordell, Thomas Road, E14
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- ◆ Putney Bridge Taxis, The Arches, Putney Bridge Station, SW6
- ◆ Richmond Road Taxi Centre, E8
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- ◆ South Bank Service Station, Great Suffolk Street, SE1
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- ◆ Taxi & Private Hire, Blackfriars Rd, SE1
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- ◆ Ubiquitous Ltd, E1
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- ◆ Wimbledon Station Rank
- ◆ WizAnn Knowledge School, Watts Grove, E3

PUZZLER ANSWERS



Crossword

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Y	E		R	L	O	A	F
K	E	I	T	H	T	O	P
A	C	A	D	E	T	B	O
D	R	I	N	O	N	S	
E	N	A	B	L	E	S	T
F	L	S	E	H	G		
E	L	E	C	T	S	R	E
A	T	H	O	R	N		
T	H	O	R	N			
I	M	E	C	A	M		
S	U	E	T	S	H	E	L
T	G	R	I	P	E	F	O
S	W	A					

Sudoku

6	3	1	2	7	5	9	4	8
5	2	7	9	8	4	6	1	3
8	9	4	3	6	1	5	2	7
3	4	2	7	1	9	8	6	5
9	8	6	5	4	2	3	7	1
7	1	5	8	3	6	2	9	4
1	6	8	4	2	3	7	5	9
2	5	3	1	9	7	4	8	6
4	7	9	6	5	8	1	3	2

Wordwheel

SOLUTION: CANCELLED

All words: Accede, acne, cadence, call, called, cancel, candle, cane, caned, cede, cell, clad, clan, clean, cleaned, dace, dance, lace, laced, lance, lanced, CANCELLED.

Word targets: Excellent: 19, Good: 16, Target: 12, Kids: 7

Futoshiki

5	>	2	3	1	4
					∇
2	<	3	4	5	1
				∇	∧
4	5	1	3	2	
∇	∇				
1	4	5	2	3	
				∧	
3	>	1	2	<	4
					5



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