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**PLANS FOR NEW TAXI
AND PH COMMISSIONER
SCRAPPED**

TRANSPORT COMMITTEE TURNS DOWN PROPOSAL

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TAXI AND PH COMMISSIONER ROLE DENIED

In the last edition of *TAXI*, we covered the news about how talks around creating a new role, a Taxi and Private Hire Commissioner, seemed to be gathering pace, with a lot of Assembly members keen on the idea. However, since we went to print, that glimmer of hope seems to have extinguished.

After a motion was put to the Transport Committee, it seems there weren't as many in favour as first thought, because both the Labour

Party and the Green Party voted against the proposal, a source has revealed.

This is disappointing news from an industry perspective, as it would have been beneficial to have had this role in place moving forward. It would have helped strengthen the position of the taxi industry around the capital, so let's hope one day it will still happen.

More ways are being explored in an attempt to continue the push for a



commissioner position, with Conservatives seemingly in favour of the idea.

TESLA (SORT OF) TRIALING ROBOTAXIS

Tesla has just started to use its so-called robotaxis, a service it has promised for some time but had yet to deliver on. While the news may sound high tech and futuristic, the truth is far from it. The initial phase will only see this happen on a small scale and there will be a human sitting in the passenger seat to oversee what's happening.

While this small selection will be available in Austin, Texas, CEO Elon Musk previously claimed there would only be around 10 to 20 vehicles for this service from the beginning. While Musk has said there could be millions of self-driving Teslas on roads by now, experts tend to disagree, citing how they are sceptical about their autonomous capabilities. This doubt is only reinforced by this current trial, requiring a human supervisor to be seated in the self-driving car alongside a paying passenger.



LONDON CABBIE USES FINANCIAL SKILLS TO HELP OTHERS

London taxi driver Paul Buck has launched his own mortgage protection and advice business, offering financial services to those who need it - specifically targeting self-employed cabbies.

Paul has been a driver for just over a decade, having passed the Knowledge in 2014, after he began a career path in financial services 13 years ago. Having tried his hand at a number of manual labour roles, he came up with The Mortgage Cabbie during the pandemic.

After a plenty of studying and new qualifications under his belt, Paul decided it was time to combine his experience of being a self-employed cab driver with his valuable financial knowledge, to offer fellow taxi drivers an array of services and to help as many people out there as possible.



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General Secretary
**Steve
McNamara**

Divided Opinion on Oxford Street



The spectre of pedestrianising Oxford Street has reared its ugly head. This time it was done with a big fanfare and all the trimmings at a press event on the top floor of Selfridges.

Steve's Comment

Supporters were all lined up alongside the mayor, and there were smiles and plenty of thumbs up as Sadiq Khan announced that the public consultation was massively in favour of the scheme.

Room for scepticism

I always find it a bit galling when the 'public response' is quoted as justification for anything. Yet when the consultation responses go against their plans, they are quick to point out that it's not a referendum and the scheme is going ahead anyway in a clear indication that it's what the public wants and does not matter if you disagree.

Immediately outside the ticketed event, the London news cameras were lined up to present the other side of the glitzy press releases from the numerous groups and bodies that think this is madness. Yours truly popped up and registered our own concerns, which are pretty similar to many of the resident and business groups. We want to know where the diverted traffic will go, a simple and obvious question. But it remained an unanswered one, because no detail has been given, or likely even been discussed at this stage.

Publicity

This was all about the soundbites and CGI graphics of a wonderful looking piazza, with, presumably, shoppers eating and drinking in the middle of Oxford Street, all having a wonderful time. No gridlocked side roads or shoppers running for cover as hooded phone snatchers on e-bikes pick them off between



making their way from John Lewis to Selfridges.

Ironically, Will Norman the cycling Czar was there, all smiles and handshakes, as the mayor announced it will also be closed to cyclists. He was probably thinking that no self-respecting cyclist is going to delay his or her all important speed trials by diverting down any side streets; they will simply just carry on and ride over the paved area and run the gauntlets of slow-moving shoppers and flailing tourists who dare to get in their way or impede their progress!

Plan of action

Interestingly, following the TV and press coverage we have

been approached by a cross section of residents, business and local representatives, all of whom are looking to challenge the mayor's plans

We want to know where the diverted traffic will go, a simple and obvious question. But it remained an unanswered one.

through any medium available to them, up to and including the civil courts. We will meet them all and hopefully we can forge alliances and collaborate with them all to ensure this scheme joins all the others in the dustbin of history!

Another win!

Elsewhere, I was stunned when the lawyers popped up to the 4th floor here at Taxi House, to tell me of yet another victory, even though there was a fair bit of banter and

mocking associated with it, because this was one I'd told them they had no chance of winning! I am hoping to speak to the member concerned, after which I can hopefully report the case in a bit more detail. Basically, he was accused of driving without due care and attention following a cyclist submitting a video of said member doing a U-turn. Having seen the video, I thought it was pretty conclusive. Our legal eagles disagreed and supported the member in pleading not guilty. Long story short, they were right. They found the flaws, the magistrates agreed and I was proven wrong! ■





Chairman
Paul Brennan

Legacy Projects and Political Egos: A Tale of London's Transport Follies

From bendy buses to cable cars, and now Khan's latest ambition, as vanity projects continue to shape and disrupt London's transport landscape.

Top Rank

Mayor Khan's announcement that he intends to push ahead with his legacy vanity project came as a surprise to absolutely no one who has been paying attention.

Another mayor, another vanity project

Ken Livingstone had his own legacy projects with the bendy buses and hire bikes. Ironically, the bikes became known as 'Boris bikes' and credit for the scheme was given to Boris Johnson himself, rather than Livingstone. So that backfired spectacularly. As for the bendy buses, we all know how that ended: removed from service due to safety concerns and the chaos they caused on London's roads.

Boris's turn: Cable cars and new routemasters

Johnson left his own mark with what many still refer to as the 'cable car to nowhere' – one of the biggest wastes of time (and money) in recent memory. Originally sponsored by Emirates, the project now has a different



supporter. Can anyone name them? No, me neither. That tells us everything we need to know. It's a perfect example of the flaw in the old saying, "If you build it, they will come." Well, sometimes, they don't. (And that should be remembered with this latest vanity project).

Johnson also pushed through the new Routemaster buses as part of his legacy. Unlike the cable car, the updated Routemaster at least sparked some hope, as it was seen as a chance to modernise a much-loved design. But, as is often the case when vanity outweighs practicality, the buses were

overpriced and full of flaws, as they too look destined to go the way of the bendy bus.

Khan's project: No surprise, no plan

Now it's Mayor Khan's turn. His latest transport project seems determined to move forward, regardless of the consequences. And you can bet that the sweeping changes needed to the wider road network to make it remotely functional, such as restoring traffic access to Tottenham Court Road and returning Regent Street and Park Lane to their pre-pandemic layouts, will never materialise.

There's a stubborn belief that traffic will simply disappear. But it hasn't in the past five years and it won't in the future. No one drives around London for fun. People do it because they have to. Until that reality is accepted, these projects will keep failing and creating chaos.

The plans for Khan's scheme aren't even on paper yet, so we likely won't see anything until Christmas.

Is TfL's taxi and private hire department fit for purpose?

A growing number of people would say no. In fact, the question was raised recently not by a cab driver or trade rep, but by the Mayor of London himself. In response to a question from Assembly Member Elly Baker, Khan admitted: "It is unacceptable the way Assembly Members and drivers and representative groups have been treated.

"Secondly, I'm looking at whether this section of TfL is fit for purpose."

You can see the full exchange on City Hall Labour's X (formerly Twitter) feed here:

Let's be honest, the answer to the mayor's question is a

simple one: No, it's not fit for purpose. There are many hardworking and dedicated individuals within the department, but they're often sidelined by incompetence or overwhelmed by a dysfunctional system. Previously, a single email could resolve an issue. Now it takes a dozen, and that's if you get a reply at all. The only department that seems to be running smoothly is the one responsible for kicking the can down the road.

London's transport network has seen its fair share of vanity projects over the years, each wrapped in the ambition of its current mayor. But time and again they've ignored practicality, disrupted everyday life, and often faded into costly obscurity. Khan's latest scheme looks set to continue that trend. ■





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Senior Rep
Sam Houston

The Traffic Doom Loop

When will the traffic in London get better? Will it ever? I bet that's what most taxi drivers would say, and I tend to side with their cynicism as well.

M4 musings

There just isn't the will to do anything about the problem of congestion around the capital, and there's a significant body of opinion that traffic delay is at the very least a necessary evil to 'persuade people out of their cars' - although I'm far from convinced.

There's an orthodoxy in many western countries, particularly administrators in large cities like London, that motorised transport is bad, unsustainable, even immoral, and must be replaced to the greatest extent possible by a different way of living.

The congestion dilemma

There has always been a demand to dig up the streets, and this exploded when the communications industry was deregulated, and every tin-pot cable company gained the right to block streets at the drop of a hat.

But for too long have authorities totally ignored the benefits brought by an efficient road system. As Jimmy Hoffa says in *The Irishman*, "If you got it, a truck brought it to you." It is time the current administration

remembered this and came up with a viable plan to make London's roads work for its population again, because we are the laughing stock of the world when it comes to traffic.

We were told that reducing road space would improve efficiency for essential vehicles, but London languishes perpetually at the top of Inrix's list of most congested European cities, and this is never going to change under this mayor, as it seems to be what he wants.

Well, national politics in the UK and elsewhere has shown that if you ignore the needs of essential workers for too long you get voted out. London is not immune to this and the

other parties need to make sure they have good candidates and policies in place for the next mayoral election, because London at the moment isn't working. It is time to get our roads moving again.

Cash, please?

Most small traders prefer cash. I hear this a lot and being a cab driver I still assume it to be the case, but I've been surprised recently that some members have told me they actually prefer card. Likewise, I often offer to pay cash in smaller places and am surprised when they ask for plastic instead; like the local chippie I was in in Torquay just the other day.

The thing is, most people's bills these days are via Direct Debit and there are times when you just want the money straight in the bank - if your card payment provider pays quickly, this is a feature some drivers really value. However, traders like those mentioned above have a wider choice than taxi drivers do in their choice of provider.

Strength of the pound

I'm not one of those who believes cash will disappear altogether - it's still very useful

...being able to keep a bit of cash is one way for the ordinary citizen to keep more control over their own finances.



as a quick way of settling a bill or payment between friends or even to give as a gift. I'm sure the banks would love all payments to be on cards or conducted electronically so they can have even more of their cut, but there's a determined movement out there who are dedicated to keeping cash alive and long may it continue. The world seems to be changing at breakneck speed at the moment, so being able to keep a bit of cash is one way for the ordinary citizen to keep more control over their own finances.

I still work the airport a lot and have been surprised recently by quite substantial rides being settled in cash. Nothing like a few years ago, of course. You can still go days and not see a penny. And then there's the ones who turn up with paper notes the size of a tablecloth they've been saving since 1977, and you have to gently ask them for something a bit more current.

Cash use in 2023 was about 12% of all payments in the UK economy, according to UK Finance. Personally, I'd be very surprised if it went below the 10% mark any time soon.

Good luck out there. ■





Executive
Anthony
Street

Stopped for Studying: A Knowledge Student's Bizarre Encounter with the Law

It started out like any other day for one of our dedicated Knowledge students, until things took an unexpected, and frankly odd turn, when speaking to a local officer.



to violent offences, this feels like misplaced priorities. Knowledge students aren't criminals, they're the future of one of London's most iconic professions; a trade that still commands worldwide respect.

Pick a side

If the Met wants to keep the standards high and support the taxi trade, perhaps a good place to start is ensuring officers know what the Knowledge is. Ironically, many of their own colleagues have earned the badge and they are likely to be just as outraged. I called the Met and they immediately looked at the officer's body cam footage and rescinded the ticket.

Justice

We've spoken to our member and advised him not to worry. He came into the office, and sorted this nonsense out. This student, like so many others, deserves support, not suspicion. And while one misguided officer might not know what the Knowledge is, London certainly does. We won't allow one moment of ignorance to stand in the way of a legacy built on dedication and excellence.

Reassurance

To all Knowledge students out there: if you ever find yourself in a similar situation and you're a member of the Knowledge Associate of the LTDA (free of charge), costing nothing until you get your badge, remember that you're not alone. Visit the LTDA website and complete a membership form to belong to the biggest taxi organisation in the trade. We're here to protect and support you every step of the way. ■

Streets ahead

After four years of relentless commitment rain or shine, he's now within reach of the light at the end of the tunnel: 28 day appearances. The finish line is near, and like so many before him, he's earned every inch of progress with graft, grit, and a deep love for the streets of London.

But what happened next for this particular Knowledge student was something he never saw coming.

A strange conversation

He took his usual bike ride to run through the points and polish his runs as part of the daily routine for any aspiring black cab driver. This guy wasn't doing anything unusual. No run. No passenger. Just another day honing his craft. Then he got pulled over.

"Where are you off to?" a police officer asked.

The student blinked hard.

"Isn't it obvious? 'I'm doing the Knowledge,'" he replied.

The officer looked baffled. "What's that?"

Beyond belief

Now, here's where jaws begin to drop. The Knowledge, a famously known test of memory and of London's 25,000 streets, is a cornerstone of London's taxi trade. It's regulated by Transport for London (TfL), and was previously regulated by the Metropolitan Police itself. Yet this officer, who was patrolling the streets of the very city Knowledge students commit to do this task, had no idea what it was.

Trying to stay calm, our student explained. He even pointed out the perspex board on the front of his bike, a tool every Knowledge student knows well. It held a list of runs and point lists, which

they follow while riding, and has been a practice in this trade for over half a century.

But instead of understanding, the officer doubled down. "That's dangerous," he replied. "It's obstructing your view."

And just like that, he issued a ticket.

Shocking behaviour

Our student was stunned. Over four years he'd had no incidents, no accidents,

and suddenly this happens? The board wasn't oversized. It didn't block his mirrors or his line of sight. It was securely mounted as it always had been. Now he's left questioning whether this bizarre stop might threaten his future, and whether TfL will raise concerns over a completely unjustified ticket.

Let's be honest, in a city battling rising street crime, from phone snatching

The Knowledge, a famously known test of memory and of London's 25,000 streets, is a cornerstone of London's taxi trade.

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Columnist
Emma Lunn

Keeping Your Mobile Phone Safe this Summer



Whether you're staying in the UK for the summer or heading abroad, it's vital to keep your mobile devices protected from thieves.

Money Matters

Mobile phone theft is on the rise. According to official figures, the number of mobile phone thefts reported to police has almost doubled over the past five years.

These days your mobile is more than just a communication device. It holds your banking details, private messages, photos, emails, personal documents, and access to your entire digital identity – so protecting your device is critical.

On your jollies

Brits can often be lackadaisical about phone security while on holiday. So don't leave your phone sitting on a sunbed or charging unattended at their airport. Guard it safely in the same way you do your passport. And it's important to keep it out of the sun, because knowing Android and Apple, they don't take well to having their products overheat – and the same applies to Smartwatches, too.

Here's how to stop your phone – and your data – from falling into the wrong hands.

Note important details

Your phone's IMEI (International Mobile Station Equipment Identity) number is a 15-digit number that identifies the device itself. It's also used to block your phone if it's stolen. The simplest way to find your phone's IMEI is to dial *#06#. You can also find it in settings, or in the battery compartment if your phone has a removable battery.

Make a note of your own IMEI number and keep it safe. Also note down your network's phone number for lost or stolen phones.

Make your phone hard to access

Set a strong screen lock. A biometric lock, such as fingerprint or face recognition, is the best way to lock your phone. Most devices require a password or PIN as backup. Make sure you avoid simple PINs like 1234 or 0000, use something more unique or obscure.

Enable auto-lock. Set your phone to auto-lock after 30 seconds or one minute of inactivity. This reduces the window of opportunity for a thief to access your phone after they snatch it, limiting what they can actually do with it.

Disable lock screen notifications. Sensitive messages – such as banking one-time passwords – can pop up on your lock screen and so be used by thieves even if your phone is locked. Go to your notification settings and turn off lock screen previews for messages.

Use two-factor authentication (2FA)

Enable 2FA on all critical accounts such as email, cloud storage, and banking. Where possible use an authentication app rather than SMS-based codes, which can be intercepted if your SIM card is stolen.

Find My Phone

All smartphones come equipped with location-tracking services that help you locate your device remotely if lost or stolen.

Apple Devices: Use Find My iPhone (Settings > Apple ID > Find My > Find My iPhone). You can remotely locate, lock, or erase your phone data.

Android Devices: Use Find My Device (Settings > Security > Find My Device). It offers similar features to Apple's service, including the ability to ring your phone, lock it, or wipe it clean.

Always keep location services and Wi-Fi or mobile data turned on to ensure these tools work when needed.

Prevent easy access to your bank accounts

Phone thieves will often try to access your bank apps and steal your money. To stop them, set up your banking apps with biometrics such as fingerprint or Face ID for login.

Avoid saving your banking credentials in browsers

or apps. Use a reputable password manager instead, such as one that requires authentication to access.

What to do if your phone is stolen

If the worst happens, act as fast as possible. First, use Find My iPhone or Find My Device to track your phone's location, lock it remotely with a message to return it, or erase it if you believe it has been deliberately stolen.

Report the theft to your network provider as soon as you can. The network can suspend your SIM, preventing misuse of your phone number or mobile data.

Use another device to log into your key accounts, such as email, banking apps and social media, and change all your passwords. Revoke access from the stolen device where possible.

File a police report including the device's IMEI number. This is essential for insurance claims and in case the phone is recovered.

Notify your bank and credit card providers immediately, to monitor suspicious activity or temporarily lock your accounts.

Stay vigilant

Mobile phone theft is often opportunistic. Stay alert in crowded places and avoid using your phone near open car windows or by the door on the train or tube. Put it in your pocket or bag rather than have it sitting on a table in a café or pub.

If you're on holiday, consider locking your mobile in the hotel safe while you are by the pool or out and about. That way your phone will be safe – and you can focus on enjoying your break. ■





The Dos and Don'ts of Buying a Work Vehicle

One of the most frequent things I am asked is what the primary factors are that define a cab's value. So allow me to explain.

Industry update

First and most obvious is the age of the cab, although this is also split. So for example, a 2019 TXE will be worth more than a 2018 cab, but a cab with a 19 plate will be worth more than one with a 68 plate even though they were registered just days apart. It's not a big difference, but cab buyers are no different to car buyers and they will always choose the latest plate.

The second deciding factor is the mileage the cabs cover, even though cabs have higher mileage than cars, the rule is 'the lower the better' and an 'average' mileage for a London cab, depending on who you talk to, is anything from 18,000 to 25,000 per year.

A third factor is its condition. Bodywork, seats, interior trim, especially the rear trim which can get badly scratched (although a hot air gun works wonders, see YouTube), service history, life left in tyres, how clean the cab is, are always a good checklist to see how it's been looked after. It's also worth noting what shows up

via online checks with the service and history, including MOT history.

There are a thousand other bits and bobs, but a vehicle will talk to you if you listen to it. Stand and look at it. Ask yourself if it looks right. Is everything straight, including door panel gaps?

Storytime

My golden rule is to never buy a cab in the dark or rain! Funny story of the week, I was

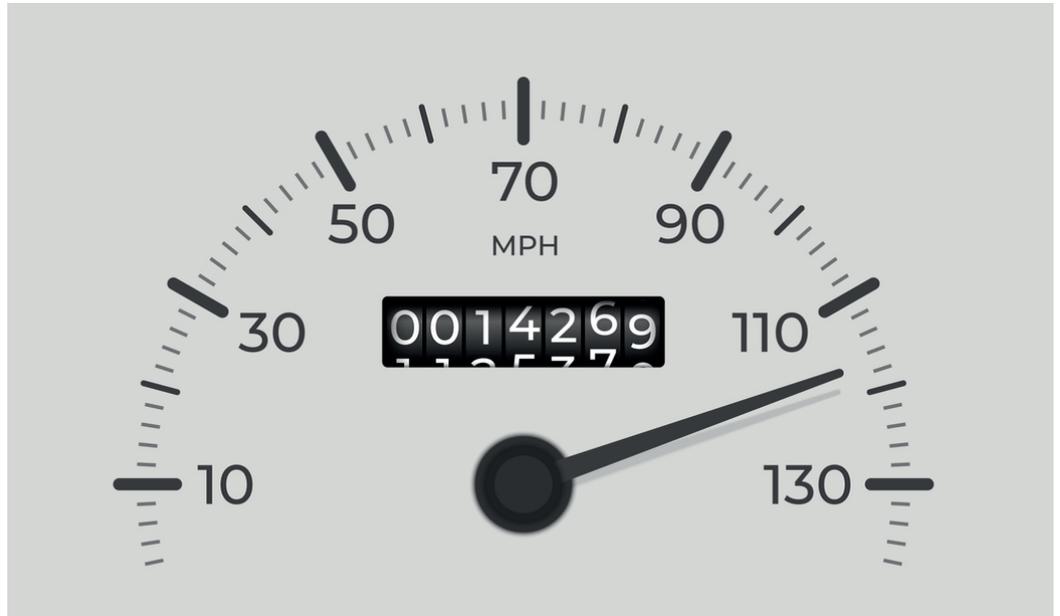
buying a cab from a musher, and he apologised for having lost the wheelchair belts and restraints. Upon checking the cab over I looked in the compartment under the luggage floor and there they were all still wrapped in plastic after nearly five years, he never knew the compartment was there! I then quizzed the next four cabbies I met, and only one knew that's where they were kept!

Comms issue

One of the biggest complaints I hear from drivers in the TX is that they cannot hear the passenger on the intercom if the cab is travelling at speed. I suspect it's because of where the intercom speaker is, in the luggage compartment. I am now starting to see various modifications and solutions to the problem, some by cab companies and a few from drivers who have solved it themselves. The best example being where a driver had fitted a small amplifier inline, upgraded the speaker and moved it behind

An 'average' mileage for a London cab, depending on who you talk to, is anything from 18,000 to 25,000 per year.

his seat. The difference was astounding, you could hear every word, even on the motorway! It turns out he is a hi-fi buff, and I suggested he contact LEVC because he has done a far better job than their engineers! ■





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Columnist
Phil Brown

A Journey Through Time: Hampstead's Health Service

This time, we investigate how healthcare has evolved, changing for the better, which hospital facilities were where and how treatments have developed.

Footprints and foundations

The heritage of the cab trade in London is unique. The origins of this method of hire and reward transportation can trace its roots back to the middle of the 17th century. A 19th century addition to the cab trade were the cab shelters, a relic from the Hansom Cab days of the past.

For those of you who have not visited a cab shelter, I encourage you to do so. These small green structures are the domain of cab drivers. The public are not allowed inside but can purchase food and beverages from the open window at the front of said shelter.

The St John's Wood Cab Shelter in Wellington Place



The Royal Free Hospital.

reopened on 6th May under new franchisee, Sarah. I met her on the first day of opening. She is a cheerful character whose ambition was

to manage a cab shelter. A local girl, formally from Camden, who I am sure will be an asset to the cab trade. She has created a wholesome menu which will entice salivating cab drives to divert to St John's Wood. Trust me, the food is extremely good and you will not be disappointed! It is important to attend the cab shelters in the hope they can survive in a stuttering economy. The people who run these shelters do a stirring job, so please try to support them where you can.

And the book I recommend this month is *London Under: The Secret History Beneath the Street* by Peter Ackroyd.

But for now, let us continue to focus on Hampstead's past, as I reveal more of its history, including the infirmaries that cared for its sick.

Welfare in the community

The National Health Service was founded in 1948 by Prime

Minister Clement Attlee. It has developed into one of the largest free healthcare providers in the world. Prior to the existence of the NHS, one had to pay to see a doctor or become an inpatient at a hospital. The poorer classes who could not afford to pay for treatment were seen by compassionate doctors and charity hospitals. In days gone by, the mortality rates for the lower classes far exceeded that of the upper echelons of society.

Perhaps we take the NHS for granted nowadays. It has become a contentious issue for successive governments over the past decades, and I am certain that most of the readership belong to a

surgery or have been a patient in hospital. We are fortunate to live in the age of technology, where science and medicine has advanced on an unprecedented scale. Once incurable diseases are now curable, and people can now live a fuller, longer life. We should all give thanks to the medical fraternity who do an outstanding job in healing the infirm.

The Royal Free Hospital

The Royal Free Hospital on Haverstock Hill dominates the Hampstead skyline. It is one of the capital's largest infirmaries, which has cared for the inhabitants of Hampstead since 1874. The original hospital was founded in 1828 by a young surgeon named William Marsden. He was inspired by free admissions to hospitals, after

It is important to attend the cab shelters in the hope they can survive in a stuttering economy.



Sarah's cab shelter.

he found a young woman on a cold winter's night dying on the steps of St Andrew's Church in Holborn. He was unable to get admission for the woman to any of the London hospitals, which all demanded letters of recommendation from a subscriber. As a result of no medical intervention, she sadly died. This was the reality of the Victorian period, in which medical care could only be assessed through payment.

Marsden's first hospital was located in Greville Street, Hatton Garden. It was under the patronage of King George IV (1820-1830) and has continued to receive royal patronage ever since. Formerly called The Free Hospital and later, under the patronage of Queen Victoria (1837-1901), the infirmary became known as The Royal Free Hospital. London's increasing population needed larger, better equipped hospitals. The Royal Free Hospital then relocated to Gray's Inn Road in the middle of the 19th century.

The hospital became one of the first undergraduate teaching medical facilities. It also pioneered the introduction of women to its medical school. Indeed, this new concept inspired Elizabeth Garrett Anderson to break down the barriers that had excluded women from the medical profession, as she became the first female

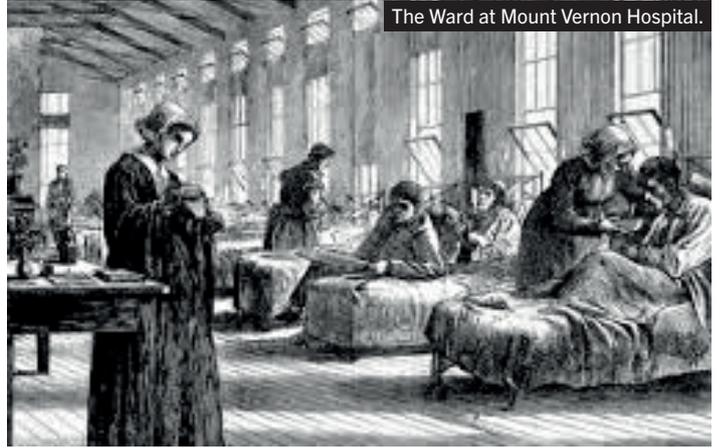
William Marsden at St Andrew's Holborn.



physician and surgeon in Britain. In 1875, the hospital was on the move again, this time to Hampstead, where a new building was constructed on the site of the old Hampstead General Hospital at Pond Street.

Mount Vernon Hospital

Another infirmary to establish a specialist centre for the treatment of tuberculosis was Mount Vernon Hospital, and was located at the north end of Frognal. In the early days of medicine, when one coughed up blood, it was known as consumption. There was no antidote for curing this ailment at the time. The disease was caused by a bacteria that attacked the lungs and became an epidemic worldwide. As medicine advanced, consumption became known as tuberculosis or TB for short.



The Ward at Mount Vernon Hospital.

The reason for building a hospital in the Northern Heights of Hampstead was due to the clean air that was deemed beneficial for patients. The hospital opened its doors in 1881, built in the French Renaissance style. It was a grand building that catered for an ever-growing population of patients suffering from tuberculosis. A well-trained medical staff were disciplined in the welfare of their patients. Hygiene, and in particular sanitary arrangements, were guidelines that were meticulously applied. Gardens in the grounds of the hospital provided healthy walks for the patients amongst the greenery too.

In 1913, the governors of the

hospital decided to build a new site in Northwood, in the outer suburbs of London. This would provide more adequate facilities in larger grounds. After the hospital closed at Mount Vernon, the building had many different functions down the years. During two World Wars, it was commandeered by the War Office for the use of allied troops from overseas. In the intervening years, the hospital was adapted for specialist treatments. The building and grounds were eventually sold off in 1980 and became luxury apartments.

I'm certain the readership will have taken a passenger to Mount Vernon and stopped outside its gates. When you next do, take a moment and look carefully at the building and visualise a consumption hospital that once sat on this site. ■

Former Mount Vernon Hospital building in Hampstead.





Columnist
Steve Kenton

The Ins and Outs of Cross-border Hiring

Dissecting what this practice is (and the grey area surrounding it) might help us better understand why it needs addressing at parliamentary level.

Man in black

1 5th March 1980. The League Cup Final between the mighty Nottingham Forest versus lowly Wolves. The result: Forest 0 - 1 Wolves. Andy Gray scored in the 67th minute, after Peter Shilton came storming to the edge of his area, as Dave Needham was nodding the ball back to him, leaving Gray free to simply tap the ball home. This was the last time Wolverhampton came top of the pile in... until now.

What is cross-border hiring?

Interestingly, there are some within the taxi industry that don't really understand what cross-border hiring is, so here's a brief explanation.

Cross-border hiring can in theory cover a number of different activities. Some which are perfectly legal, while others could, upon first sight, potentially be illegal. However, because at present there is no legislation in place, illegality becomes a bit of a moot point.



The nitty gritty

Licensing requirements for PHV drivers and their vehicles are different from the licensing requirements bestowed upon PHV operators. PHV drivers and their vehicles have the right to roam, whereas PHV operators have no such right. Their singular licence does not cover another licensing area.

A vehicle owner cannot use his or her vehicle as a PHV unless the vehicle is licensed by an authority or district. It is also an offence for an owner to allow a third party who is unlicensed to drive a vehicle for use as a PHV.

No offence is committed if a driver's vehicle is being used in one area, but the driver and vehicle are licensed in another area. However a driver, their vehicle and operator must have licences issued by the same authority. This is sometimes referred to as the triple-locking or triple licensing system. Despite having the right to

roam, PHV drivers must not ply for hire, and may only undertake a booking accepted by an operator licensed by the same authority that has licensed them.

Clear as mud

There is currently an enormous amount of confusion over this aspect of legislation because of the use of ride-hailing apps. This has raised questions over where they may be licensed in relation to where a driver receives a booking, as well as who technically receives the booking, if it's the operator or driver.

The operator themselves may only accept a booking in the area for which they are licensed.

If a PHV operator makes arrangements for drivers to go to areas where neither vehicle, driver or operator are licensed, it could be argued that the operator is unlawfully allowing the invitation of PHV bookings.

A PHV operator who knowingly sends drivers to areas other than the ones for

which they are licensed, could end up having their licence revoked on the grounds of undermining the local licensing regime.

Now here's the devil in the detail, with some councils and regulators giving out PH licences like sweets, on the back of a weak licensing system (not all are weak, incidentally), we are seeing a greater influx of drivers from out of London brazenly working in the capital, aided by ride-hailing app providers. After all, where there's muck, there's brass.

Leading the pack

It was revealed recently, via a government report, that Wolverhampton tops the charts for the greatest number of private hire vehicles (PHVs) per capita – and it's by a massive margin. Statistics show that as of 2024, there were 109 PHVs per 1,000 people under the Wolverhampton banner. Most authorities in England and Wales have less than 20 PHVs per thousand,

so congratulations to Wolverhampton Council on coming first in this particular event. Your prize is the coveted, *Blankety Blank* chequebook and pen.

Now, according to government statistics, the national average in relation to PH coverage per-capita is actually 5.1 vehicles per 1,000 people. As for London's statistics, PH sits at 10.7 drivers per 1,000 people. This means London's PH industry sits at more than twice the national average. To put that figure further into perspective, there are 2.1 licensed London taxis per 1,000 people.

Regulatory circumvention

To quote the iconic words of The Joker in *The Dark Knight*: "Why so serious?". Well, just about everybody within the taxi industry, as well as the PH sector, know that there is a problem with both cross-border hiring and workforce numbers in some areas of England and Wales. This problem has been exacerbated by the introduction of ride-hailing, app-based technology. The solution is relatively simple: the government could give local authorities and regulators the powers to cap numbers.

Quick fix?

Sounds easy peasy? Well, it's not. There are two facets to this particular problem. For capping to work, you have to address the problem of cross-border hiring. If the latter isn't in place, all that'll happen is there will be an exodus of PH drivers obtaining licences in areas so it either won't cap or simply hand them out like free toy soldiers you used to get inside a packet of Frosties (occasionally choking



Christmas? Answers on a Christmas card, please.

Not a new problem

Obviously this particular problem is not a new one. It was only six years ago when I wrote an article examining the same issues that are faced by the taxi industry today. There was a lot of talk at the time as to how the government of the day were going to look at different ways of dealing with the problem. Reports were produced, warm words exchanged, but ultimately there was about as much movement from the government as there is from a heavily constipated elephant. In fact, it could be

on the aforementioned rifleman when I was that kid). Therefore, the solution cannot possibly work without a regulatory change following in tandem. Of course, there is the argument that app service providers could solve the issue by simply geo-fencing the work provided to PH drivers – but why would they? How many turkeys do you see voting for

reasonably argued there was a total dereliction of governance over the problem. As time has moved on, there seems to be a general groundswell developing; forcing the government to sit up and take notice, rather than lie back and be hand-fed grapes, while mocking the serfs beneath them.

A cap too far?

Even if a cap was placed on every PH regulator in England and Wales, the problem would not be solved, because PH drivers would still routinely migrate to other areas to work. Either legislation has to be brought in to de-legitimise cross-border hiring, or only allow an A to B and B to A (ABBA) scheme, where a PH can only pick-up outside of their area to come back into their own licensing area. The only other solution is to bring in legislation forcing ride-hailing app providers to bring in geo-fencing, under pain of licence revocation.

It's actually heartening to see that both the taxi industry, as well as members of the PH industry, are seeing the same problem and pressing for action.

So, Secretary of State for Transport, Heidi Alexander, this one's falling squarely on your doorstep. Enjoy the ride. ■



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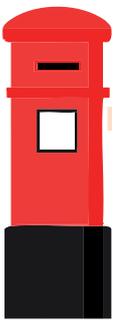


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TAXI & LTDA Mail



Subject: Pedestrianisation



Dear Editor,

Once again, the spectre of closing Oxford Street raises its ugly head, and this time it looks like our glorious mayor is going to push it through at all costs. The word 'costs' is ironic because it will 'cost' every cabbie lost time sitting in the resulting chaos and, of course, money in lost fares and jobs taking longer.

Pedestrianising the world's busiest shopping street sounds like a good idea but the traffic congestion in the surrounding streets is not a price worth paying. If anyone thinks that more people are coming to Oxford Street just because it's paved, they are deluded. It will become yet another windswept wasteland, with the phone snatchers, beggars, pickpockets and three-card trick merchants, who will quickly set up residency.

Stop the world, I want to get off!

David Leeson.



Subject: First-rate service

Dear Editor,

I phoned this morning to get some help with my licence renewal, as I struggle with the Tfl's obsession with everything having to be online to allegedly improve speed and ease of use. Newsflash: It fails spectacularly at both!

From the lady on reception, to the gentleman who helped me, your service was first rate as usual.

The monthly subscription (which I have paid for nearly 20 years) is excellent value and such great peace of mind, I honestly wouldn't know what to do without your excellent service.

Thanks a million and "be lucky".

Dave.



Subject: Licence renewal

Dear Editor,

I cannot thank the LTDA enough for the help I have been given over the past few weeks. I made the mistake of trying to renew my licence online and it was a disaster. Anyone reading this is much better off doing the paper version, photocopying it and sending it by Recorded Delivery.

I was in a neverending email chain with various people at Tfl, asking for yet another DVLA code. I eventually sent four queries about my DBS, even though I had subscribed to the update service. And I then requested my Tax Code two more times. I was at my wits end and, out of absolute desperation, I called into Taxi House for help.

I could not believe how many drivers now get the LTDA to do it for them, the place was packed! The two receptionists fielded a nonstop succession of calls and dealt with the drivers coming in, just like me. I was only kept waiting about 15 minutes, before Paul came down and took me through the entire process. He took over dealing with Tfl and kept me up-to-date with the progress of my renewal. On the final day before my bill expired, he called me and told me my licence had been renewed, and I could carry on working until it was delivered!

I am going to write to my MP and suggest the LTDA take over the licensing process, they are the exact opposite of Tfl - they actually know what they are doing! Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Yousuf Ahmed.



'Friends' Reunited

I went to my school reunion last week. The first in almost 50 years. Before I headed out, Mr Meg said something that made me think.

A woman of words

Mr Meg remarked, "Why bother?" His thinking was that if I hadn't seen my old classmates for five decades there must be a good reason for it.

I will whisper this because I have never spoken these words about the man since the day I met him in 1972, but he was right. There's a shocker.

I went to an all-girls convent school. We had a uniform list a mile long that included indoor PE knickers and outdoor PE knickers, and a papal style hat with a long gold tassel hanging from it. Classes included country dancing, where us girls took turns to be the man and lead. I loved being the fella and in charge of where we travelled on the dance floor. Was that the early cabbie in me shining through?

I know all about the ravages of time on women's bodies, just ask my crow's feet and saggy bum all about it. But honestly, I barely recognised any of my former classmates. Hair dye, ozempic, lip filler, botox. It was more like visiting Madame Tussauds than catching up on old times. These women had tried to stop time, or turn it back, and the results were middling to very bad.

First encounter was with a well-known actress in a TV soap, we'll call her Charlotte. "Darling!" she yelled



across the lawn, before running in six-inch heels to embrace me. Because her heels sank into the grass she lost balance and greeted me by sloshing a glass of red wine onto my white linen shirt. Her appearance was followed up with, "Sylvia! How fabulous to see you again!"

When I told her I was Meg, and not Sylvia, there was no hiding her disappointment. She didn't bother to chat, instead she headed off to find Sylvia, who turned out to be six feet tall and wide, with

I know all about the ravages of time on women's bodies, just ask my crow's feet and saggy bum all about it.

Kate Bush style hairdo. That made me feel so special.

Me being a cabbie was a hot topic at the reunion. The assembled throng asked plenty of loaded questions. "Isn't it boring sitting in traffic all day?" and "What did you really want to be?" And from the girl who was always top of the maths class all those years ago, "Lots of tax-free cash, then?"

They were a mixed bunch. One woman had 11 children and several had none. Same with husbands: one lady had endured seven and others none.

A girl who never did her homework is now running one of the biggest

hedge funds in Europe... I'm not quite sure what a hedge fund is, but I am sure she was dressed head to toe in Chanel and carrying a handbag that cost the same as a family car. Plus, she could barely lift her left hand because of a diamond the size of Gibraltar slotted onto her ring finger.

Carole commented how she expected I would have done something far more than 'just being a cabbie', then asked me to give her a free ride home from Hammersmith to Lewisham. It was a hard NO to that one.

There were women there who were richer, thinner and nicer than me, but while driving home I felt good about my work.

The fact is that driving a cab is NEVER boring. Every day I laugh out loud - a lot!

So to my rich, famous or snarky former school chums... beat that. ■





Columnist
Mike Williams

Entertainment Corner

Here's your round-up of the best entertainment to get stuck into on your mobile, tablet, or in the comfort of your own home, this month.

Lights, Camera, Action!



PODCAST: *The Rest Is Politics*

The other week I featured *The Rest Is History*, a worthwhile

podcast that delves into the finer points of our past. Well, there's a politics version presented by Alastair Campbell and Rory Stewart – not necessarily a pair of commentators and former political figures that everyone may agree with, but what they do do well is to dissect current affairs and topical news stories doing the rounds, in frequent episodes of podcast conversation.

As one of the best rated in the UK for political discourse, *The Rest Is Politics* breaks down all the major talking points from both within the UK and what's happening abroad, with several new episodes landing each week. Between them, they offer some credible insight to what it's like to be in and around the world of Westminster, while also respectfully disagreeing with one another in the process.

New and past episodes of The Rest Is Politics are available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and more.



MOVIE: *Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning*

When it comes to the *M:I* franchise, star Tom Cruise and writer/director Christopher McQuarrie don't do things by halves. At almost three hours to tell the final chapter of the action adventure series that started out almost 30 years ago, in 1996, the *M:I* films have taken on a new lease of life under the directorial eye of McQuarrie, who has enjoyed helming success on the past four of the franchise's instalments (including this one).

Serving as a second half to 2023's *Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning*, the incredible action moments, superlative stunts (famously carried out by Cruise himself who is now 62), as well as a conclusion to the entire story arc of Ethan Hunt (Cruise) and his team embroiled in betrayal, espionage and saving the world, is a lot of pack into one movie.

Fortunately, there's plenty of minutes for McQuarrie and co. to walk us through



everything we need, while subjecting its leading man to yet more death-defying sequences that will keep audiences right on the edge of their seats.

Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning is in cinemas, including IMAX, now.

Also Catch...

John Wick spin-off *Ballerina* stars Ana de Armas, so expect impressively choreographed fights to the death, as well as some heart-stopping violence and set pieces. In cinemas now.

Another Simple Favour is the follow-up to the 2018 dark comedy, this time taking Anna Kendrick's Stephanie to Italy, to be reunited with Blake Lively's unhinged bride-to-be Emily. Now streaming on Prime Video.



TV SERIES: *Murderbot*

This one's perfect for anyone after a blend of science fiction, drama and comedy. *Murderbot*, starring Alexander Skarsgard, is about a security bot in the future who is struggling with its own free will and developing emotions. Having self-hacked itself, the self-named Murderbot must continue to serve its humans while avoiding exposing the truth that it now has no restrictions over what it can or cannot do.

With great acting from its lead and supporting cast, there are some impressive comedic moments seamlessly intertwined into the narrative. For anyone looking for their next truly original sci-fi show to get stuck into, *Murderbot* is a neat series that impresses with a unique premise and character-driven story across 10 consistently solid episodes.

Murderbot is available to stream on Apple TV+ now.



Also Catch...

Steve Carrell stars in comedy-drama series *The Four Seasons*, a show about three couples who are rocked when one decides to get divorced. Available to stream on Netflix now.

Your Friends & Neighbors sees John Hamm as a hedge fund manager who resorts to targeting wealthy neighbours to burglarise, after losing his job. Streaming on Apple TV+ now.



Don Turrell at St Manvieu.



From left: Dorothea Barron, Robbie Hall and Marie Scott.

Taxi Charity for Military Veterans Returns to Normandy for 81st Anniversary of D-Day

The Taxi Charity for Military Veterans proudly honoured the courage and sacrifice of the men and women who played a pivotal role in the liberation of Europe during WWII.



The group, including six WWII and five post-Second World War veterans, accompanied by volunteer London cabbies and charity supporters, made the poignant journey to the Normandy beaches where British, American, Canadian and Allied forces landed on 6th June 1944.

The commemorative trip included visits to significant historical sites, memorial services and opportunities for reflection and remembrance.

The six WWII veterans, with a combined age of 598, were warmly welcomed to ceremonies at Pegasus

Memorial Museum and the Bayeux CWGC. For the veterans, the trip is a chance to remember fallen comrades and share personal stories of courage, loss and resilience.

During the service at Pegasus Memorial Museum, 100-year-old WWII veteran Dorothea Barron spoke passionately about the joy that she has experienced on visits to Normandy with the Taxi Charity. She thanked France for the wonderful welcome veterans received, and reminded guests that, for so many years, those who had given their everything to liberate Europe from the Nazis had been largely forgotten.

On 4th June, 100-year-old WWII veteran Don Turrell and his 28-year-old friend Callum Reid made an incredibly moving visit to St Manvieu Cemetery to visit the comrades Don had lost in the Battle for Hill 112, which saw

10 weeks of fierce fighting and cost many lives. Callum's great grandfather was also involved in this operation and sadly lost his life. He is buried in the beautiful St Manvieu CWGC,

and for the very first time Callum was thrilled to bring his medals to Normandy to his graveside.

Callum Reid said, "I feel incredibly lucky to have

Don Turrell, 99-year-old veteran

Don Turrell said, "Every year that I'm able to return to Normandy, I count it as a blessing. I was just 19 when I landed on Sword Beach, a few days after D-Day in June 1944. It's been 81 years, but I can still remember the noise, the chaos, the smell and the destruction.

"For me, going back to Normandy isn't just about remembering the past, it's about honouring the sacrifice of those who gave their lives. When I stand on those beaches and walk through St Manvieu Cemetery, I feel close to them. I speak their names aloud, Sgt. Bremner, William Carr, Thomas Freeburn. I haven't forgotten them, and I never will.

"That's why the support of the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans means so much. They make it possible for veterans like me to return with dignity, surrounded by friends and fellow servicemen, with carers and companions who understand the emotional weight these trips carry. Without them, I simply couldn't make the journey. It gives me something to look forward to and live for."

Veterans during a sombre moment of reflection.



met and formed friendships with those involved with the Taxi Charity. It is one of the most fulfilling things I have ever done and has made my friendship with Donald closer than I could have ever imagined it would be."

During this visit the veterans enjoyed meeting students from Saint-Germain-en-Laye who spent an hour asking the veterans about their wartime experiences.

Sylvie Habert-Dupuis, 1st Deputy Mayor for Education, Youth & International Relations said, "How can I thank the Taxi Charity for this unforgettable moment you allowed us to experience? Without your support, we fully understand that this exchange with our dear veterans would not have taken place. At least not in this exceptional format, allowing our 70 young people and 30 adults from



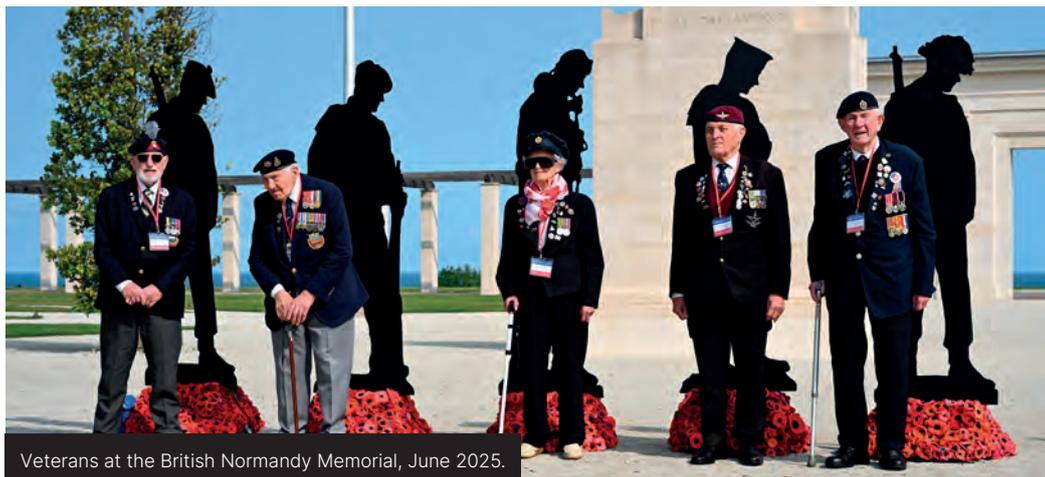
Veterans visiting the British Normandy Memorial.

Saint-Germain-en-Laye to meet, listen, share, watch, and forever engrave this unique moment in their memories."

"The Taxi Charity is honoured to support these incredible men and women who gave their everything without hesitation, for our freedom," said Paul Cook, Vice Chairman of the Taxi Charity. "Each year, as the numbers who were part of this campaign decrease, it becomes more important to ensure

their voices are heard and their sacrifices remembered. We are so very proud to help them return to Normandy and ensure future generations understand the price of the freedoms we enjoy today."

London cabbie Daren Parr said, "You don't only see the emotion on the veterans faces, you feel it! Whether it's telling a story or singing a song – they mean it. Goosebumps, tears and laughter are what makes it all so real and poignant." ■



Veterans at the British Normandy Memorial, June 2025.

Marie Scott, 98-year-old WWII veteran

Marie Scott said, "On D-Day, I was 17, wearing a headset at Fort Southwick, transmitting and receiving vital messages between our commanders and the troops storming the beaches of Normandy. I wasn't holding a rifle, but I was part of the operation, listening to the sounds of war, the chaos, and the bravery unfolding in real time.

"The voices I heard that day have never left me. Young men, full of courage, heading into unimaginable danger. I didn't see their faces, but I felt their fear and their determination. That's why it's so important for me to return to Normandy for the D-Day anniversary.

"It's not about reliving the past, it's about recognising the cost of our freedom. For those of us still here, it's our duty to honour those who aren't. The fields, the beaches, the cemeteries, these are sacred places. We return not for ourselves, but for them.

"When we visit Normandy, we are welcomed with open arms. The people haven't forgotten. Children come up to shake our hands. Teenagers want to hear our stories. That gives me hope that the next generation will remember what was done for them.

"I'm deeply grateful to the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans for making these journeys possible. They understand what it means to us, and they make sure we are treated with kindness, dignity, and care.

"As long as I am able, I will return. Because remembering is not a choice, it's a responsibility."

LTDA APPLICATION FORM

Name _____
 Address _____
 _____ Postcode _____
 Telephone _____ Mobile _____
 Email _____ X _____
 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.

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- Banks/Building Societies may not accept instructions to pay Direct Debit from some types of account.
5. Signature _____
 Date _____



This guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer

The Direct Debit Guarantee



- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit LTDA will notify you (10 working days) in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request LTDA to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- 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.

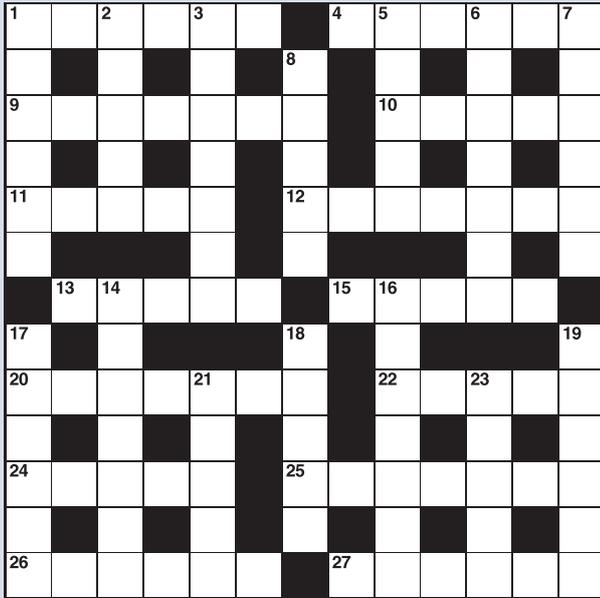
You can now also apply to join the LTDA online, simply scan here to complete an online application:



Crossword



Puzzler Page



ACROSS

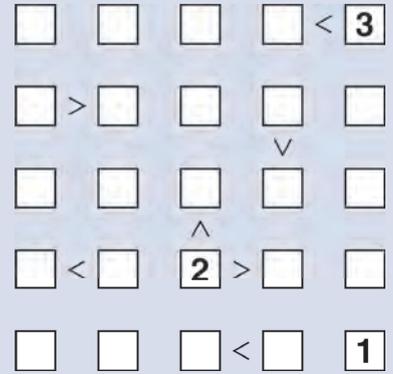
- 1 Open the lock of (6)
- 4 Red-faced (6)
- 9 Rescue (7)
- 10 Kent port with white cliffs (5)
- 11 Errol ___, Hollywood actor (5)
- 12 Allay the sorrow of (7)
- 13 Famous Enid Blyton character (5)
- 15 Prim and proper (5)
- 20 Cross a street recklessly (7)
- 22 ___ Allen, actor brother of singer Lily (5)
- 24 Vessels holding liquor (5)
- 25 Eases (7)
- 26 Well-known phrase (6)
- 27 Buys and sells (6)

DOWN

- 1 Hazardous (6)
- 2 ___ Bunter, fat fictional schoolboy (5)
- 3 Gained knowledge (7)
- 5 Weighed down (5)
- 6 Meat-filled pasta squares (7)
- 7 Bournemouth's county (6)
- 8 Fish, or bird's position (5)
- 14 Intellectual or spiritual quest (7)
- 16 Clip of a forthcoming film (7)
- 17 Forces out (6)
- 18 Girl's clothing item (5)
- 19 Stops, finishes (6)
- 21 Fire-raising (5)
- 23 Baffled (5)

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.



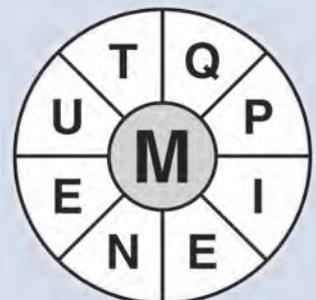
Sudoku

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.

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

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.



For answers go to page 30

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Restaurant Review - Mem and Laz

When it comes to knowing the perfect places to find food around London, it can sometimes be hit-and-miss... but not when it comes to this modest Mediterranean.

Sea Fare

Like most cabbies, I am always wary of recommending any restaurants to customers, unless I have been there myself or I have heard from a close friend or relative how good it is. Mem and Laz on Theberton Street now ticks both boxes.

It was recommended by a 'foodie' relative and now, having eaten there, I will be telling all my customers that it's one of my favourite Mediterranean restaurants anywhere in London.

The décor is, according to my partner, 'Moroccan-themed', but whatever it is it creates a good ambiance. This, coupled with friendly and attentive staff, makes it a nice place to spend a few hours. On the warm evening I was there,

we were sitting at one of the outside tables - were it not for the passing London traffic, I could have been anywhere on the Med!

This alone would have made it a good evening, but the choice of food is what puts this place at the top of my list. The menu covers everything from homemade burgers to sea bass; with a great vegetarian selection on offer as well. I made my choice from the specials list, going with chargrilled sea bream drizzled with virgin olive oil, a fantastic side salad and wonderfully marinated potatoes. My partner went for the sauteed



The décor is, according to my partner, 'Moroccan-themed', but whatever it is it creates a good ambiance.

king prawns on a bed of rice. Both were spot on, as was the homemade baked rice pudding I picked out for dessert.

A couple of cold Efes beers and a coffee later, and the total bill was just shy of £90,

which in my book is great value for food of this quality with this level of service. Put this one on your list of places so you too can, in turn, recommend it with absolute confidence!

Location: Mem and Laz, 8 Theberton Street, N1 0QX 0207 704 9089. ■



Puzzler Answers

All puzzles © Puzzler Media Ltd - puzzler.com



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

Sudoku

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

Futoshiki

1	4	5	2	<	3	
5	>	1	3	4	2	
4	2	1	3	5		
				^		
3	<	5	2	>	1	4
2	3	4	<	5	1	

Wordwheel

Solution: EQUIPMENT

All words: Emit, impute, item, meet, menu, mete, mien, mine, mint, minuet, minute, mite, mute, team, time, umpteen, unmet, EQUIPMENT

Word targets: Excellent: 15, Good: 13, Target: 9, Kids: 9

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