The newspaper of the Licensed Taxi Drivers' Association

COVER STORY: STEVE McNAMARA Page 5

UNSOLVED 1988 LONDON MURDER: ROB LORDAN Pages 14 & 15

MONEY MATTERS: INFLATION

EMMA LUNN Page 18

for Long

www.ltda.co.uk 14th June 2022 #518

POINTS AND YOU'RE

TFL DEMONISE DRIVERS WITH NEW PENALTY POINTS POLICY





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24



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LTDA

Taxi House 133 Great Suffolk Street, SE1 1PP T: 020 7286 1046 | www.ltda.co.uk ♥@TheLTDA

Editor Nick Hartop E: editor@ltda.co.uk

Produced by Century One Publishing Ltd Alban Row,27-31 Verulam Road St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 4DG. **T:** 01727 893 894, **F:** 01727 893 895 **E:** hello@centuryone.uk www.centuryone.uk

Advertising Sales Executive oren Wedderburn **T:** 01727 739184 E: loren@centuryone.uk

Creative Director Peter Davies

Designer Sean McNamara

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TWO CABMEN'S SHELTERS ADDED TO THE NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST

To mark London History Day, two iconic cabmen's shelters have been listed at Grade II by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on the advice of Historic England. The shelters in Kensington and Chelsea at Pont Street and Chelsea Embankment join ten others in London already on the National Heritage List. The Chelsea Society applied for the two shelters to be considered for listing. Only 13 shelters now survive in the capital today. They are one of the few relics of nineteenth-century London's horsedrawn hansom cab trade.



Pont Street

The shelter at Pont Street was built by the Cabmen's Shelter Fund in 1892. It replaced an earlier version from 1875, which was one of the earliest cabmen's shelters constructed in London. It is still open today as a friendly rest stop for taxi drivers. According to the Pall Mall Gazette, the 1892 shelter was largely funded by contributions from residents of the local neighbourhood. It was reported to be well used, with average attendance of cabbies daily varying from 12 to 180, but often much higher numbers on the busiest days. The distinctive wooden structure retains its overall character, and while it has been modernised inside, the basic original arrangement of a galley kitchen and serving hatch at one end and a communal section with benches at the other end can still be found. Inside, the shelter is reserved strictly for black cab licence holders. Non-licence holders and the public can be served from outside the hatch.

Chelsea Embankment

The shelter at Chelsea Embankment, sometimes referred to as 'The Pier' due to its proximity to Cadogan Pier, was built by the Cabmen's Shelter Fund in 1912. It has been moved slightly from its original position on Royal Hospital Road to the east.

A brief history of the cabbie shelter

In Victorian London cabmen were prohibited by law from leaving their cabs unattended in the rank. While on the job there

was no protection from the elements, access to hot food or a place to rest. This led many drivers to stop at a pub between fares. However, they would have to pay someone to look after their cab, risk it being stolen, and some drivers were found to 'drink more than is good for their health or behaviour'.

The idea of providing shelters on the ranks was first conceived by Captain George C Armstrong, editor of The Globe newspaper. When Armstrong was unable to get a cab during a storm because the drivers had all sought refuge in local pubs, he decided to band together a group of wealthy and influential philanthropists to provide a solution. He helped establish The Cabmen's Shelter Fund (CSF) in London in 1875, providing warm and dry rest stops at ranks across the capital. The charity still operates today.

The first shelter was moveable and was built in February 1875 on Acacia Road in St John's Wood, outside Armstrong's home. Designs of cabmen's shelters varied over time but the most recognisable 'ornamental' shelter design we see today was the work of architect Maximillian Clarke. The familiar size, shape and colour helped cabbies spot them easily.

The shelters had a small kitchen run as a café by an attendant and space for around ten drivers to sit, enjoy a meal and each other's company. Gambling, drinking and swearing were strictly forbidden. Most of London cabmen's shelters have been lost - their roadside position made them prone to damage from traffic and vandalism or impacted by changes to road layout. Of the 61 shelters known to have been built between 1875 and 1950 only 13 now survive.



STAY SAFE WHILE WORKING

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), in partnership with TfL, has produced a 'Stay Safe While Working' leaflet for taxi and private hire drivers. The leaflet contains information



on how drivers can keep their money and possessions safe while also ensuring their own safety, and how to report any criminal activity they may see while driving.

Digital copies of the leaflet can be viewed and downloaded at https://content.tfl.gov. uk/health-and-safety-advice-for-tph-drivers. pdf. MPS officers will also be handing out hard copies of the leaflet to drivers on-street.



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General Secretary Steve McNamara

6 Points and you're Out?

"Buried deep inside this new policy are significant changes to how TfL treat drivers with penalty points on their licence..."

Steve's comment

.....

Bearing in mind that we are consulted with (and normally ignored), on just about everything from major road schemes to a bus stop being moved a few metres up the road, one might expect the latest iteration of TfL's Taxi and Private Hire Driver Policy not to contain any significant changes which would warrant consultation...

Draconian

But buried deep inside this policy are significant changes to how TfL treat drivers with penalty points on their licence. How about this? For an offence of driving without reasonable consideration, if the courts award 6 or more points, the penalty from TfL could be a licence revocation. If the courts gave less than 6 points TfL could issue a three-month licence suspension!

For an offence of using a handheld mobile phone, which carries a mandatory 6 points, again TfL could possibly revoke a licence.

• More than one conviction for a major driving offence within the last five years would merit (a licence) refusal and no further application would be considered until at least seven years after the most recent conviction

They then define 'Major' as any single offence that results in

6 points. This could mean that a driver who was convicted of any offence and got 6 points and were then unlucky enough to get another offence for 6 points five years later, and long after the points had vanished from his DVLA licence, would lose his cab bill and not be able to get it back for seven years! An average sentence for manslaughter is seven years! Draconian does not begin to cover it.

No discussion

How could they think it was acceptable not to even discuss it with the trade? At the moment, we are seeing lots of members getting points for speeding in the new 20mph zones, often at 24 or 25mph in the early hours on a road that until very recently had a 30 or 40mph limit. We expect to see many more as the mayor's 'Vision Zero' initiative has an ambition of getting the Met police to double the number of speeding fines issued to one million next year!

LTDA legal team support

As a result of this we now have an increasing number of members who have accrued 12 points in a 3-year period and face a driving disqualification in the courts. Often, when our legal team represent them at a magistrate's court, they are able to successfully plead 'exceptional hardship' and the courts allow our member to carry on driving. Under this new policy and irrespective of any decision by the courts TfL will suspend the taxi licence of any driver with 12 points for 6 months, in what can only be construed as a snub to the trained and experienced magistrates who make the decision to allow the driver to keep working.

COVER STO

"Our legal team will continue to assist

revocation or suspensions through the

any members impacted by this new

TfL policy and we will appeal any

Safety challenge

courts system."

Once we became aware of the changes and challenged this frankly draconian policy, in a recent meeting, I was advised that it was a 'safety' issue and that TfL take the safety of passengers very seriously. When I asked that if safety was the issue, why had TfL not reinstated the enhanced driving test for all taxi and private hire drivers, that was suspended back in 2017, and consulted on in 2018, yet we were still awaiting the outcome I was informed it was still 'pending'. So not so concerned about safety then!

Unnecessary intervention

TfL's main argument is that the new policy is to bring it into

line with the Department for Transports 2020 Statutory Standards on taxi and PHV licensing. That's just wrong, whilst the issue is raised in the standards, it is left to the discretion of individual licensing authorities to set a specific policy. In fact, many licensing authorities have not implemented any changes and TfL have opted into this when it was not necessary.

Top of the transport agenda

There is an upcoming meeting with the new Deputy Mayor for Transport, Seb Dance, and the Transport Commissioner, Andy Byford, and I have asked that this be placed at the top of the agenda. In the meantime, our legal team will continue to assist any members impacted by this new policy and we will appeal any revocation or suspensions through the courts system.

real reason it's now taking so long and is it any surprise that fewer people are prepared to spend five years doing the Knowledge?

None of this is a particular problem to anyone driving a cab today, in fact the opposite argument is true. Less new cabbies means more business for the existing ones. The problem will start to manifest itself in the years to come, because with the existing taxi driver age profile and so few people either on, or completing the Knowledge, in 8-10 years' time there will be a shortage of cabs on the streets and our political masters will be looking at alternatives.

The Knowledge was last reviewed back in 2020 and whilst the number of runs reduced from 470 to 320, the time frame from signing on to getting a licence has continued to increase and at the rate it's going, by 2025 it will be six years! TfL have been carrying out an in-house review of the entire Knowledge process, looking into every stage and all the time frames. The report is due to be published later this year, let's hope it has some sensible suggestions that will keep our gold standard but make it achievable in a realistic time frame.

The Knowledge

It's no secret that the numbers on the Knowledge of London are down, there are a plethora of reasons for the decline. It began with the damage Uber and the apps did to our income from 2015 until recently, and the pandemic didn't help – but I think the elephant in the room is the time it now takes to complete.

I recently saw some graphs showing how over the past 40 years the time taken to complete the KOL from start to finish has gone up from an average of 22 months in 1982 to over 60 months (five years) today. I have heard and read all the reasons for it... more people are doing it part time; London's more complicated; there are more 'points' and my favourite, 'people are not as dedicated/smart as they were!' Of course, London has changed, in 1982 there were still banana boats at Canary Wharf but equally there were dozens more roads in the City that are now closed and no longer called. There are more hotels and restaurants but also less roads available and less one-way systems, so there are alternatives. It certainly has not gotten three times harder to learn your way around, so what is the

@TheLTDA 🄰

Chairman | Paul Brennan

Guess Who?

"Certain sectors of the private hire industry are going all-out to try and turn the tide back in favour of their law-breaking, less than minimum wage paying, failing business model...'

Top rank

f I were to make the following statements to you, could you tell me who you think is being described?

They enjoy a dominant position in London's market, but it has nothing to do with the quality of service they provide or the prices they charge.

They benefit enormously from preferential treatment by Transport for London (TfL), the city's public sector transport provider and regulator.

They have special privileges.

Get brand new electric vehicles, partially subsidised by TfL.

They are a heavily unionised industry. They are a government-granted monopoly.

In the absence of direct competition (and with the less direct competition hindered by their government-granted privileges this industry has), they are able to enjoy a dominant position in the market regardless of the quality of service they provide and the prices they charge for it.

They use coercion to maintain its position.

They do not want a free competitive market where the best service wins, but rather to extend government coercion to restrict the market and people's choices and opportunities further still - all to protect their industry and their jobs in it.

So, after reading the above descriptions, can you recognise the industry that is being referred to? What industry in London would you say is heavily unionised? As I write this, we are having another 24-hr strike on the London Underground, so perhaps it's the Underground? What industry gets brand new electric vehicles subsidised by TfL? The private bus companies perhaps? Who are a government granted monopoly and use coercion to maintain its position?



Nope, it doesn't ring any bells with me either...

According to some muppets - sorry, paid lobbyists working for think(less) tanks - it's actually us! And no, I didn't recognise us in these descriptions either... It really does remain 'silly season' against the London cab trade at the moment. Certain sectors of the private hire industry are going all-out to try and turn the tide back in favour of their law-breaking, less than minimum wage paying, failing business model that has seen an absolutely massive crash.

To be a success, it needed all competition gone across the globe, so it could have the monopoly we are accused of having just in London. It's not happening, it's not going to happen, but bless 'em - they aren't going down without a fight, even if they've lost all their main event fighters, the 'mid-card' and are now only left with those who barely scraped on to the undercard at all.

LTDA General Meetings LTDA

The LTDA Annual General Meeting will be held at 10am on Friday 15th July at John Marshall Hall, 27 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1 8NY, further details will be emailed to members. We will also be holding a general meeting of our Central Branch at 10am on Monday 18th July, also at John Marshall Hall to invest a new Chair and Secretary who will be voted on via the members area of our website, the

details including the candidates and how you can vote will be sent to members via our regular member update emails. If you are not receiving these emails, please contact info@ltda.co.uk with your name and badge or membership number asking for your details to be updated. Please only use email when requesting this rather than calling. Thank you.

LTDA

More enforcement against motorists

TfL is supplying the Met Police with five 'LASERcam 4' devices that combine a speed gun and video camera which enables footage to be collected that can be used to issue fines at new 'hot spot' locations. These cameras also work during the night-time. The laser cameras are being operated by a team of Police Community and Support Officers (PCSOs) in the Mets Roads and Transport Policing Command.

As well as being used to target non-compliance 'hotspots' the devices are to be deployed in areas where local communities are concerned about speeding on residential roads. Since the new cameras have been in operation the Met Police have already enforced circa 10k speeding offences with them, including one driver who was travelling at 90mph in a 30mph speed limit. The aim is to have the capacity to enforce up to one million speeding offences by 2024/25 - in the last 12 months, the Met enforced 476,685 speeding offences.

A report to TfL's safety committee said: "The devices, which will supplement hundreds of fixed-site speed cameras, are regarded as 'game changing' because they collect evidence able to be used in court and which avoids the need for the driver to be pulled over by a police patrol further up the road."

In March 2020, TfL introduced a 20mph speed limit on 50 miles of their 'red routes' with the intention to have a further 140 miles converted by 2024 within the central London Congestion Charging zone. These speed limits are operational 24/7 regardless of the road, the road conditions or time of day or night you happen to be travelling down one. There can be absolutely no excuse or forgiveness for someone travelling at 90mph in a 30-mph zone. However, receiving points and a fine for going just 24mph on a deserted road at 2am and the possible repercussions of this are beneficial to no one neither is having thousands of motorists concentrating harder on their speedo for fear of slightly creeping over 20mph than looking at the road ahead.

It's a pity no-one is looking at introducing or funding cameras to catch and punish the myriad of premeditated crimes being perpetrated against Londoners and its visitors rather than the easy target of motorists who have a minor slip in judgement.



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EXECUTIVE Anthony Street

A One Stop Shop

Exec, Anthony Street is here with a reminder of how the LTDA are on-hand to help its members...

Streets ahead

e are always looking at ways to offer our members more services and ensure we can help them with any problem they might encounter – serving as a 'one stop shop'...

A real bargain

I have spoken to many drivers that are unable to continue to work due to issues in applying for their licence or legal matters and as a result, one thing I do know is that lawyers can be expensive! If you are faced with an unfortunate issue such as this, legal expenses will have a serious impact on you finances... But, as an LTDA member, costly legal fees are one less thing you need to worry about. For just £153.60 a year (the total cost of a monthly subscription) you have the LTDA's expert in-house lawyers and barristers on hand to help with all your legal needs.

For the same £153.60, you also have access to a team of resolute and knowledgeable officers ready to assist you with licencing, PCNs and give you advice on all trade related matters, at Taxi House or over the phone. With the LTDA, you get all of this and so much more, for just £153.60, which works out at less than £3 a week after deductions.



Health worries

We also frequently support members who have had health issues such as needing to have a pacemaker fitted or returning to work having suffered a stroke or a heart attack. These members are often extremely worried about how it will impact their licence. Many members, especially since the dawn of the pandemic have had concerns related to their mental health and how to declare and manage this when it comes to licensing.

We can advise drivers on their rights and responsibilities, often just providing some much-needed reassurance. We also work with TfL's occupational health team to make sure drivers understand what they need to do to be declared 'fit to work' and how and when they



can return safely to work. This can help take the stress and uncertainty out of the process, at what is already likely to be a challenging and possibly distressing time. Make sure you are protected by the best and if the worst then happens and you need help, don't hesitate to give us a call!

Avoiding PCNs

We have had quite a few drivers receiving Congestion Charge, ULEZ and Bus Lane tickets because they have not followed the correct procedures when updating their documentation. Remember when purchasing a second-hand cab, make sure that all the documents and the V5 change of name and address has been completed before you have your NSL test.



When buying a cab that previously had a private VRM number that was registered by DVLA, you must contact DVLA to have the original registration registered - but if the cab has an existing TfL taxi licence (The white plate on the back of the cab) when purchased, you must attend a NSL test centre to have the cab licence changed. This will then be updated on TfL's system which will avoid you receiving Congestion Charge, Bus Lane, and ULEZ tickets. We have in many cases requested that TfL rescind these tickets, and more often than not they have agreed (following some pressure from our end), but not always - so if you are unsure of what procedure to follow, please contact a team member at the LTDA.

Who has the Knowledge?

Let's see who really has the knowledge. Answer the following six simple questions and see how good you are...

1. How many months is your licence renewal pack printed prior to expiry date of licence?

A) 4 months B) 2 months C) 3 months

2. Once your licence renewal pack is issued, how long should it be before you receive it? A) 10 days B) 1 day C) 20 days

3. Who do you contact if you do not receive your licence renewal pack?

A) TFLTPH B) NHS C) Post Office

4. What is the minimum amount of time you should start the DBS application process before your licence expires?A) 3 months B) 4 months C) 2 months

5. If you haven't received your licence renewal pack, can you

still start your DBS application three months before your licence expires?

A) Yes B) No C) Unsure

6. How do you become eligible for a temporary licence? A) If you have received your licence renewal pack, applied and completed your DBS three months before your licence expiry date and your DBS has not been processed.

B) If you have not received your renewal pack.

C) If you have applied two months before your licence expiry date and your DBS has not been processed?

How did you do?

You need to have answered A) to all 6 questions in order for you to be eligible for a temporary licence.

To make it easy for you, once you have received your licence renewal pack and need a hand to complete the application, give us a call or drop us a mail and make an appointment and we'll help you get it done.



ComCab

London

Who are ComCab London Limited?

ComCab London is the last original radio taxi company still in operation, established in 1974 and has one of the largest fleets of black taxis in London. Offering unrivalled coverage and flexibility to London's business community and valued private clients within the city and surrounding areas.

What makes ComCab London different?

We are not just another faceless app on your phone, we have a large team of experienced staff to support our drivers and customers. ComCab London doesn't do gimmicks; we like to keep things straightforward and understandable for the drivers.

How do ComCab London Support drivers?

All drivers have the ability to talk to someone on the phone 24/7 as well as being able to text in, email or even walk into the office and speak to someone face to face.

What type of support do you provide?



Drivers have four main teams that they can contact. The teams are Fleet Services, Fitting Bay, DQO and Driver Recruitment.

The teams all deal with different aspects of a drivers daily working life. There is always someone that the drivers can talk to 24/7 whether it be on the phone, email or text. Monday to Friday drivers are able to come to the office and see someone face to face and have a cuppa.

COMCAB LONDON FAMILY

ComCab London answers questions about who they are and what they do. Read below to find out everything you want to know!

What is the fleet services team?

Fleet Services are there to support our drivers. They can speak to this team if they have any queries about past jobs or compliance issues.

What is the DQO team?

DQO stands for Driver Query Operator team. They are responsible for making sure that all bookings are allocated to drivers and assisting drivers with live job issues.

What is the Fitting Bay team?

The fitting bay team provides commissioning, installation, and maintenance for our installed equipment, this also includes live technical help over the phone or remote access through the ComCab London Tablet.

What does the recruitment and training team do?

This team receives and reviews all applications from drivers and provide training on the ComCab London app; whether it be through video or one to one training. They make sure all driver documents are up to date and are the people to contact if a driver wants to discuss their subscription options

Joining ComCab London

It is super easy to join ComCab London. Once you have registered that you would like to join, you will be sent an application form. Once you have sent it back, you will be signed



up by the next working day! You can start maximising your earnings in no time.

Already on the ComCab London Circuit and interested in referring a friend? ComCab London have some great incentives available if you refer a friend to join! You can receive £50 if you recommend a friend to ComCab London and they complete 100 trips. This offer is also available to drivers who are referred to join the ComCab London App with a referral bonus of £50.

Driver Testimonials

Introducing Martin:

"My name is Martin and I have been with ComCab for well over 15 years now, all of them great in every way. ComCab London has a great team and without their support and emotional commitment to us drivers, the past 2 years would have been very grim indeed. Fast forward to today I am back to earning what I was 12 years ago which can only be possible due to everyone's commitment to go above and beyond. I am confident in the future with ComCab London, especially with the recent collaboration between the two biggest TPH companies."



SCAN ME TO APPLY NOW



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Missed our last Episode? ComCab London Family - Episode Three



@TheLTDA 🄰

Membership S.O | Kanize Cozens



Behind the Scenes

Most of you might already be aware of the what the Executive staff and call handlers do at the LTDA, but what about the people behind the scenes?

Membership matters

he LTDA receive around two hundred calls a day from members – and even more when the General Secretary makes announcements. I thought that I'd use my column this edition to introduce you to some of the LTDA staff who take so many of these calls and who are everpresent to welcome members in person when you visit Taxi House....

Janet works in our Accounts department but also helps out on reception. Her trade pedigree is impeccable, having worked for ComCab for 20 years and then moving over to the LTDA 18 years ago.

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Q: What was it like at ComCab?

ComCab was an experience, there were lots of social events like The Grosvenor Ball rooms, the House of Commons, Cab Driver of the Year show where I acted as a hostess on numerous occasions. They dressed us up all fancy, which was great fun, and we sold raffle tickets and generally schmoozed/networked with the main corporate companies in London. Good nights out and great fun going to venues, a young girl like me would never normally attend.

Q: Why did you move over to the LTDA?

We were based in the same building, and I was aware of what a good company the LTDA were, and an opening arose whereby I could use the skills I had and also learn new ones. It was also time for a new challenge and the opportunity meant I would also still remain connected to the cab trade. Maybe I should have done the knowledge? I think I would have enjoyed being a cabbie and we need more women out there!

Q: What has made you stay with the LTDA?

They really look after their staff, like family. No previous company have ever been so caring, David Sparks, my





manager is a lovely man to work for along with all my other colleagues.

Q: What kind of calls come up the most?

Licence renewals, DBS checks, medicals and PCN's. Now that the 20mph limit is on most roads in London, the increase in PCN's has rocketed, especially in Camden and Islington.

Q: What memorable incident has made the biggest impact? We have had some famous faces come in, Zac Goldsmith, Boris Johnson but meeting Duncan from Blue really made my day!

Paula is our full-time receptionist who has been with

us for over 30 years. There is nothing this lady doesn't know about the trade, and she has been a solid pillar in the Association and rightly recognised as such by her colleagues and the thousands of members she has assisted over the years. She also deals with



the Sickness Insurance Scheme, which has helped hundreds of members over the years with financial aid – if you are not already in it, it's definitely worth looking at.

When Covid first hit us, Paula worked from home - the calls being re-routed from our switchboard to an iPhone. The messages, queries/problems were then emailed to our Officers via a laptop. the LTDA didn't skip a beat and we were still able to provide the same 100% service to all our members during the pandemic. We never lost a day or an hour due to our resilience planning and our staff's ability to accommodate change. Paula is currently taking some hardearned leave, but if I were to ask her what she would like to pass on to our readers, I'm pretty sure the reply would be something along the lines of ...

Please ask members when they email or write in, to always include their: Full Name Badge or Membership
 Number
 Contact Number

Jemma joined us in 2013 as a part time receptionist but one who thankfully switches to full time hours to help cover the holiday periods. Her flexibility is such a bonus, and she is a real team player.

Q: You've been with us for a few years now, why?

Coming from a corporate background I was immediately impressed by the warmth of my colleagues. I had never experienced this before, there's a real feeling of working together. The position/hours have enabled me to still look after my young family as a working mother and yet progress through training, take up new opportunities and expand my job role.

No two days are ever the same, no two drivers are the same, every day brings on new challenges and the unexpected. Life behind the counter is never boring! My favourite days are when the lottery winners come in to receive their cheques, they are buzzing, and I always ask them, *"How is your wife planning on spending it"*.

I appreciate that when most drivers come in its because they have a problem and knowing that we can help, makes me think we are like the 'F ourth Emergency Service.'



ΤΑΧ



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Customer deposit £3,250.00		Agreement duration	61 months	Interest rate (fixed)	4.12%

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Advertising Feature | Card Payments What is London to you, and

What is London to you, and how much of it has changed?

London is my home, my office and my future...

Scott Singleton, Lover of London, Green Badge driver and eternal optimist

ondon has changed almost beyond recognition. Hardly breaking news as it's been constantly reinventing itself for hundreds of years.

Take my cab for example. For a start it's not black! A couple of generations ago that would have been pretty radical. I actually sold my trusty old TX4 and took some time out when Covid first hit. Back on the road last year, I invested in a TX eCity and love it. Diesel will soon go as you won't be allowed to buy a new fossilfuelled vehicle by 2030.

Even the roads have changed since I've been back. Not only have many runs been complicated by cycle lanes but, according to the latest edition of the Highway Code, it looks like roads are there for everyone and everything – except vehicles.

Everything is contactless

If my experience is anything to go by, cash will become history before long. It already is on TfL buses. I can already go a whole shift in the cab without taking a single cash fare.



Even paying with a Chip & PIN card is pretty old school now. Everything is contactless, and increasingly 'mobile' these days.

Payment technology is built-in to phones and watches, and goodness knows what else in years to come.



"Change is the only constant in life"

Change isn't a new phenomenon. 500 years before Jesus was born, Greek philosopher Heraclitus said "Change is the only constant in life". That old quote is just as relevant today as it was back then. I've certainly changed too! To be fair, I was encouraged to by Curb.

Curb supplied my card machine. They organise all my fare payments, and transfer the funds to my account every day of the week. I had a good Curb machine before which I was very happy with, but they offered me their latest **CurbLite** payment device recently so I took their advice and changed.

I know what you're thinking. If I was so happy with my old machine, why change? Well, there were a few very persuasive factors.

Best in the trade

The biggest deal is cost. **CurbLite** rates are probably the best in the trade for me (1.7% for most cards

with no extra charges per trip). Those transaction costs can soon mount up, so **CurbLite** was the best option for me.



There's also the support - the 24hour Curb Helpdesk - although I've never had to use it. Nice to know it's there if I need it though. On a practical level, the **CurbLite** is less bulky, it's fitted to the door pillars so I can't even see it in the mirror. It's so user-friendly now, my passengers have been using it without any prompting from me! That means I can get them on their way with no fuss and find my next fare more quickly.

They're tipping me well too when paying on the **CurbLite** unit – although I like to think that says more about me than the device!

And my old system had started to show its age, especially the unit in the back. The latest Curb devices are so sleek and smooth now, especially the **CurbLite** unit which looks really modern. As my eCity cab is state-of-the-art, I was keen to make sure all the tech in it was too.

So **CurbLite** won me over, and I'm really appreciating the change.

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ΤΑΧΙ

TAXI Columnist | Robert Lordan

The Murder of Deborah

"In April 1988, a reconstruction of Deborah's final journey was broadcast on the BBC's Crimewatch UK which attracted over 100 calls..."

Rob's history tips

ver the years, London has witnessed many shocking, unsolved crimes. Here's the story of one of them – the murder of Deborah Linsley...

Sherlock Holmes Hotel

Born in 1962, Deborah was raised in Bromley, and as she approached adulthood, she decided to pursue a career in hospitality. This led her to Edinburgh where she secured work in a hotel, quickly working her way up to become the head receptionist. In March 1988 Deborah, now aged 26, headed back to Bromley to spend several days with her family. Her brother Gordon was getting married in April, and as Deborah had agreed to be a bridesmaid, a dress fitting was required. Deborah also used this break to attend a hotel management course in Hertfordshire, where she happened to be offered a job at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel. The

role was tempting after living far away from home, and Deborah was keen to be nearer her family. And so, on Wednesday 23rd March she arranged to pop to Baker Street for a chat, after which she planned to catch the train back to Scotland.

Isolated compartments

The rain was heavy that day, and so Gordon drove his sister to Petts Wood Station, from where Deborah boarded the 2.16pm to Victoria. Although things today are still far from perfect, it's easy to forget just how risky rail travel once was, especially for lone females. In the 1980s, many of London's suburban stations were grubby affairs with little to no CCTV coverage and, to make matters worse, many of British Rail's old 'slam-door' carriages contained isolated seating compartments which were not connected by corridor. It was one such compartment Deborah opted

for that day, most likely because it permitted smoking.

Screams

Despite wearing a distinctive bright blue outfit, no witnesses recalled seeing Deborah beyond Petts Wood. Evidence suggests though that she was unperturbed for most of her journey as it was clear she'd had a cigarette and eaten her packed sandwiches. The last stop before Victoria was Brixton, and shortly after the train departed, an 18-year-old French au-pair named Helene heard screams coming from the next compartment. At first Helene thought it was teenagers mucking about, but it soon became obvious the disturbing cries were for real- and they lasted around two minutes. Helene considered pulling the emergency cord, but so petrifying were the disturbing sounds, she froze.

Shoulder-length red hair?

When the train pulled into Victoria's platform two at 2.49pm, Helene disembarked and spotted a man emerge from what she believed to be the neighbouring compartment. She described this individual as being in his 40s, stocky with shoulder-length red hair and a moustache. Plucking up the courage, Helene followed this mysterious man, but soon lost him on the concourse - which was a lot busier that afternoon as England were due to play the Netherlands at Wembley later that evening.

Frenzied attack

Meanwhile, a porter named Ron Lacey was walking along platform two, opening and slamming doors in a routine check for lost luggage. It was in the second carriage that he discovered Deborah's body. Lying in a pool of blood, Deborah had been stabbed in what was clearly a frenzied attack, with the fatal blow striking her heart. So traumatic was the murder scene, Ron was never able to work at Victoria again.

Brave fight

The motives for Deborah's murder were unclear. She still had cash on her, so hadn't been





Linsley





"Meanwhile, a porter named Ron Lacev was walking along platform two, opening and slamming doors in a routine check for lost luggage. It was in the second carriage that he discovered **Deborah's body. Lying** in a pool of blood"

robbed, and she hadn't been sexually assaulted- although it's possible she'd stood up to someone who'd attempted to do so. Indeed, it was obvious Deborah had put up a brave fight as traces of someone else's blood were found alongside hers. Furthermore, the red-haired man whom Helene had seen walked with a limp – perhaps he'd been injured in a struggle?

Suspects

Other possible suspects were suggested, namely one man who was seen walking away from platform two at around 3pm with

a cut on his face.

Not long after, another person - it's not clear if it was the same individual - was seen tending to a wound in the lavatories at Victoria. Again however, the match at Wembley hindered things as it was known there had been a few booze-fueled scuffles already that day, and so these men could simply have been football fans who'd been in a punch-up. The only other sighting of a possible suspect occurred at Penge East Station where a man in his 20s, described as having dirty blonde hair, quickly switched between carriages – an action he

"£20,000 (almost £45,000 in today's money) was offered for any positive information leading to **Deborah's killer"**

TAXI

seemed so set on, it made other passengers take notice.

Investigation Ticket collectors at Victoria estimated that the train on which Deborah was on had carried around 40 to 50 passengers, although ultimately only 26 of these people were traced. The investigation into Deborah's murder was based at West End Central Police Station, and the carriage in which she's been killed was taken away and stripped down - although the murder weapon, believed to have been a kitchen knife, was never found. It was reported that Deborah was buried in Bromley, wearing the dress she should've worn at Gordon's wedding.

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Crimewatch UK

£20,000 (almost £45,000 in today's money) was offered for any positive information leading to Deborah's killer, and in April 1988, a reconstruction of her final journey was broadcast on the BBC's *Crimewatch UK* which attracted over 100 calls - including a mysterious, sobbing caller who offered a direct name.

Unsolved, despite DNA Despite this, the murder of

Deborah Linsley remains unsolved - although some crime experts have suggested a prime suspect could be Robert Napper, the serial killer who was sent to Broadmoor in 2008 for murdering Rachel Nickell, and Samantha and Jasmine Bisset. Deborah's murder does indeed bear Napper's hallmarks, and the figure seen at Penge East is believed to have resembled him - although detectives managed to extract a DNA sample years later, but surprisingly there was no match on the database. Police considered this to be very odd, as they were convinced it wasn't the attacker's first offence. The case remains open. TAXI



"This car was state of the art, it had everything, including the latest in mapping technology... sadly, this was my mum."

A man in black

h, I remember it well, 1978 - the 'ticker-tape final'. Passarella. Kempes and Ardiles v Neeskens, Krol and the Van Der Kerkhof twins. Argentina and its corrupt military junta had just robbed The Netherlands of a world cup win - it took an entire government to beat the flying Dutchmen. A couple of days after the final, my dad decided to take us up to Clacton (that's what happens when you swear at the TV during a football match, you are punished with a day trip to Clacton). We were chauffeured there by my dad in his red, 1973, Toyota Corolla Estate. This car was state of the art, it had everything, including the latest in mapping technology... sadly, this was my mum.

Blind pirate

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Now the problem with my mum (lovely as she is) is that she has all the map-reading skills of a blind pirate trying to navigate the Magellan Straits - she's ruddy hopeless (and she cannot tell her left from her right). I'm forever trying to explain to her to her that her left hand is the hand that she cannot write with, although in her defence she's ambidextrous - but only in the sense that she can't write with either hand. So, there I am, sitting in my full England kit (commemorating our non-qualification for the '78 World Cup) in the back of the car listening to my mum giving directions to my dad, "turn left, turn right, comply with the roundabout" (she did call-overs with my dad when he initially earnt his Yellow badge). It took nine people and a Yorkshire Terrier to pull us out the expanse of sand that my dad drove into - mum was reading the map upside down - and I didn't get any ice-cream because I swore... again.

Infallible sat-nav?

Now the reality for those cab drivers like my dad and myself, who pre-date sat-nav technology is that our nightmare scenario wasn't a signal drop-out from our phone, it was trying to find the right page in the A to Z, squinting to see the correct road and doing all of that in the dark at a set of traffic lights. Thankfully, nowadays, we don't have to suffer with the above issues - we have a pretty decent mapping system on our phones. We also have a plethora of satellite navigation devices. However, the big question is are they infallible? The simple answer is no.

If you read the Adam Smith Institute's report about the taxi industry, 'A Fare Shake', you will see that they are calling for a single tier system with the knowledge (as well as other topographical tests outside of London) to be made redundant, leaving sat-nav to take over the role of route-guidance. There is so much wrong with that suggestion, it's hard to know where to begin – but I'm going to have a jolly good

try...

The birth of the sat-nav

Believe it or not, GPS was originally devised for military use in a bid to give US forces an advantage over other military forces. Inventors of GPS then realised that it could be useful amongst the civilian population – but how could it be marketed without putting national security at risk? The answer was simple, create a 'watered-down' version specifically designed for public use.

Now here is the science bit – military-grade GPS, otherwise known as Precise Positioning Service (PPS), is accurate to around 70 feet of its target however, the watereddown version called Standard Positioning Service (SPS), is less accurate, pinpointing a target to around 330 feet. These two versions of GPS were separated by something called Selective Availability (SA), function which can be switched on and off by government at will.

Interestingly, in May 2000, SA was switched off by order of President Bill Clinton. This single act improved accuracy for those using GPS outside of the military. As a result, the GPS that we use on our mobile phones is accurate to around 15 feet of its target. This of course can vary, and signals can even 'drop out' due to atmospherics, line of sight issues with satellites and signal reflection. The irony is that this military-grade piece of software may actually be more accurate for civilian use rather than military use due to augmentation systems such as Wi-Fi or Bluetooth.



Now, according to the wonderful Maxwell Marlow at the Adam Smith Institute (as Robbie Williams once sang, get up and see the sarcasm in my eyes), sat-nav's will rule the taxi world and the Knowledge should be consigned to room 101 - and that ladies and gentlemen proves that Maxwell Marlow knows as much about the taxi and private hire industry as I do about medieval bow-making. Satellite navigation systems are a fantastic aide-memoir, they really are a good replacement for the traditional map-book, of that there is no doubt - but absolutely

nothing beats the human brain and local knowledge, or in a licensed London taxi drivers' case - The Knowledge.

I've got into the habit of popping an address into Google Maps as a matter of course, primarily to see where traffic may be and also to laugh at some of the weird and wonderful routes it suggests. Basically, I like to experiment and toy with the app. Recently I had to undertake a short job from Bayswater Road by Brook Gate to Kensington Gardens Square. We all know the correct route, Bayswater Road, Queensway etc, it's straightforward. However, Maxwell Marlow's new technological best buddy was showing a rather different route, sending me through Hyde Park to Kensington Road, up Kensington Church Street and then into Bayswater Road. Now after nearly a third of a century in the trade, I think I can successfully put up a pretty good argument to suggest that the route was as daft as Maxwell Marlow's report into the industry.

Sat-nav's are devoid of three things, a sense of direction, instinct and a brain (there's an Uber joke in there somewhere). A sat-nav is a working tool but not a cure-all – it cannot detect address variations. How many times has somebody jumped into a taxi and asked for a road where there are similar or identical names and you have identified the customers destination via a landmark? Then, we have the issue of road restrictions... sat-nav's cannot differentiate between normal lanes on a road and operational bus lanes as well as bus gates, play streets and timed restrictions.

Research performed by location-finding app company, What3Words revealed that although 71% of UK motorists use sat-nav, 87% of those people didn't trust their system to send them to their correct destination. The research also found that 27% of journeys made with the aid of sat-nav, actually ended up at the wrong address. In short, as a professional tool, the sat-nav is not fit for purpose – something which mirrors Maxwell Marlow's report for the Adam Smith Institute.





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TAXI Columnist Emma Lunn What is inflation and why does it matter?

"Most people know the basics of how inflation works: it's when things rise in price and your money loses value... but not everyone knows how it's calculated and why it matters so much."

Money matters

he headlines about inflation are undoubtedly scary. First it hit a 30-year high in March at a rate of 7% - then a mere month later in April inflation reached 9% and a 40year high. Most people know the basics of how inflation works: it's when things rise in price and your money loses value. But not everyone knows how it's calculated and why it matters so much...

What is inflation?

Inflation is the measure of how much the price of goods (such as milk or bread) and services (such as energy) increase over time. For example, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), in 2000 a loaf of bread typically cost 69p. But 22 years later, the same loaf of bread costs an average of £1.22. When organisations such as

the ONS talk about inflation,

they look at how things rise in price across the whole economy. Obviously, some things rise faster in price than others, and rising prices will matter more for some items than others.

At the moment, energy and food prices are rising - this affects everyone as we all need electricity and to eat. The cost of a second-hand car is also increasing - but this will only impact people who need to buy a used car.

How is inflation measured?

There are two main measures of inflation in the UK: the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Retail Price Index (RPI). Both are calculated by the ONS with figures released each month. It does this by measuring and monitoring the cost of a virtual 'basket' of goods. What's in the basket changes over time to reflect the world we live in. For example, mobile phones have been included since 1998 and smartphones since 2011.

Each inflation measure looks at a slightly different basket of goods and services. RPI includes housing costs such as mortgage interest, rent and

encourages people to spend their money, which in turn grows the economy and decreases unemployment.

If prices were consistent, it would be more competitive for businesses to sell their products or services. Lower prices might sound good, but they often mean people delay purchases in the hope of getting a better deal in the future.

Low and stable inflation is good for the economy. The Bank of England aims to maintain inflation at 2% – so the current rate of 9% is well above that. High inflation can mean prices surge out of control. People will become poorer, struggle to afford the essentials, and will cut down on non-essential items such as holidays and new smartphones.

How can I protect myself from inflation?

council

tax. whereas

CPI does

not.

Why do

in price?

due to supply and demand. As

the demand for a particular

available supply decreases.

consumers are willing to pay

Take energy, for example.

There has been an increase in

demand for gas and electricity

emerge from the pandemic. But

supply has been constrained by

renewable sources like wind and

weather conditions (meaning

since the world started to

more.

good or service increases, the

When fewer items are available,

Items go up in price

things go up

Look at your budget and see where you can make savings. Can you find a better broadband deal? Should you switch to a budget supermarket? Should you take a cheaper holiday?

If you have all your savings in cash, inflation means your money will be losing value over time as interest rates are lower than inflation. Investing in the stock market is usually a way to get better returns – but it's riskier than cash and very volatile at the moment. Saying that, it's still your best option over the long-term.

The Bank of England has already put up interest rates in a bid to control inflation. With further interest rate rises likely, opting for a fixed rate mortgage rather than paying a variable rate can help you manage your money.

High inflation won't last forever. Although it's likely to hit 10% later this year, experts predict it will fall to close to 2% in around two years' time. TAXI

solar produced less power) and geo-political events (such as the war in Ukraine).

Is inflation always bad?

A moderate inflation rate









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TAXI So You Think You Know London?



The spies in the Tower

The Tower of London has a rich and incredibly bloody history. Executions at the world-famous landmark were commonplace since it was founded toward the end of 1066. It has imprisoned many a famous name, including Sir Walter Raleigh, Rudolf Hess and even the Kray Twins - but did you know that Carl Hans Lody was the first prisoner of war to be held and executed at the Tower. In fact, Lody was the first person in any capacity to be executed at the Tower for over 170 years.

At the start of the First World War, the British Army Head Quarters for the London District wrote to the Tower Constable suggesting that executing spies at the Tower of London would psychologically have more effect on the country and Germany than an execution at an ordinary gaol would have. This was as a direct response to the influx of enemy agents as soon as war was declared – with Carl Hans Lody being one of those agents.

German naval officer Lody, arrived in Britain at the start of the war and was surprisingly ill-trained for espionage, as were many of his compatriots. Fluent in English, Lody posed as an American, making his way to Scotland, under orders to observe and gather information on a fleet of warships anchored at Rosyth, a Royal Navy base near Edinburgh.

After MI5 captured him and uncovered his true identity, he was brought back to London to be tried by court martial. Lody's court martial took place at the Middlesex Guildhall in Westminster on 30th October 1914 and lasted four days. Lody was described in court as looking like a clerk rather than a dangerous spy.

Hapless Lody was found guilty on the 2nd November 1914. He was held at Wellington Barracks before and during his trial. After his conviction, the Major of the Tower of London was informed there was only a short amount of time to prepare and carry out his sentence. On the 5th of November, he was transferred to the Tower, with his execution taking place a day later. By the end of 1916, A total of eleven spies had been executed by firing squad at the Tower.

Misplaced Ely Place

If you were stopped at the traffic lights at Holborn Circus and were asked how far the Cambridgeshire border is, you'd be right in saying that the nearest point would be approximately 50 miles away, north-east of your location – except that you would be wrong until relatively recently. There was in fact a little piece of Cambridgeshire just 100 yards from Holborn Circus...

Ely Place, which is situated in the heart of London's diamond district, just behind Hatton Garden was technically part of Cambridgeshire. This little street, which houses the Federation of Master Builders, Audley House and St Etholdrode



Master Builders, Audley House and St Etheldreda's Church was for centuries an enclave, physically situated in the City of London but not under its jurisdiction. It was instead, privately owned by the Bishops of Ely.

Toward the latter end of the 13th century, John de Kirkby became Bishop of Ely. Owning land to the north of Holborn, he decided to establish a town house in Ely Place which became the official London residence of the Bishops of Ely. The reason for this was due to his need to remain in London, to help him in exercising his responsibilities in the House of Lords. It was however not uncommon for efforts to be made in avoiding the various taxes and levies of the day, therefore Ely Place was legally ratified as part of the Diocese of Ely, Cambridgeshire – despite its London location.

Through a narrow passage off Ely Place, a tiny pub is situated. Ye Olde Mitre, which has been in existence since 1546 was built on the orders of Bishop Thomas Goodrich, the first Bishop of Ely who submitted to the King's authority over the Church in England after Henry VIII's Reformation. Owing to Ely Place's previous status as an enclave, the pub's licence was issued by the Cambridge authorities until as recently as the 1960s. Interestingly, the pub contains examples of letters addressed to Ely Place, Holborn, Cambridgeshire. Although the street is no longer the property of the Bishops of Ely (their new London residence is in Mayfair), Ely Place continues to be governed separately via an 1842 Act of Parliament, which devolved responsibility of the maintenance and security of Ely Place to a group of commissioners.

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW

LONDON?

The many capitals of England

London has a rich and varied history, it is probably the most iconic capital city on the planet, but did you know, it wasn't the England's first capital, nor second – not even third? London, is a Roman city, formerly known as Londinium, however during the Roman era, Britain's capital was Colchester. The earliest records of Colchester being the capital date to around 50AD. Catus Decianus was the Procurator in charge of what would later become the Kingdom of England, Eventually the seat of power shifted to Londinium by the end of his rule. With the demise of the Roman occupation of England, a power vacuum ensued for several centuries, leaving kingdoms such as Mercia and Wessex fighting for control, and the principal seat of power shifting accordingly.

Tamworth was promoted from being the capital of Mercia to the capital of England under King Offa in the 600s and Winchester became the capital under Alfred the Great during the late 800s. In 913, Northampton was reclaimed from the Danes and became the capital for almost 200 years. There was however a break within that period after King Sweyn Forkbeard was crowned on Christmas Day 1013. He shifted the capital to Gainsborough in Lincolnshire. He also became the nation's shortest reigning monarch, lasting a mere 40 days – the capital then shifted back to Northampton.

Eventually London became the Capital of England again. There was a brief break in London's reign after Oxford was declared the nation's capital for a time during the English Civil War. Charles I held his court in the city from 1642, after Oliver Cromwell expelled him from London. London's tenure as one of the world's leading capitals has remained ever since.

Ancient capitals of Britain Scene Geinsborengh Tenoworth Machynilleth Colchester Oxford O Winchester

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TAXI Column | Cab You Drive



Prices, Recovery, Coronations & Rumours...

"Contrary to every prediction made at the end of the pandemic, the size of the fleet is recovering nicely."

Cab you drive

ou know it's busy when you get calls from other dealers and the odd cabbie all looking to buy cabs over the Jubilee weekend! There is still a shortage of good quality, low mileage cabs of all types and this is rapidly being reflected in the prices being asked and achieved...

Price variations

Early TXEs can vary in price enormously, with a low mileage example, one owner example achieving anything from 10% up to 15/18% more than a space shuttle (dealer speak for a high mileage vehicle). These sorts of premiums never used to apply to TX4s or Vito's but are now becoming more common, especially with late Euro VI examples.

Recovering nicely

Contrary to every prediction made at the end of the pandemic, the size of the fleet is recovering nicely. We are now up to and over 14,800 cabs. At this rate we will be back over 15,000 in July and another good



New King early next year...

New cab sales are consistently

strong with 124 new cabs joining the ranks in May and a quick look at the fleet breakdown shows the natural evolution of events as the number of TX4s continue to decline to just 6550, as does the inevitable date when the TXE becomes king of the ranks. There are currently 5400 TXEs and with the age limit changes and continued strong sales, I estimate the succession will be early next year.

New cab?

Finally, always good to share a rumour, especially one I keep hearing from so many different traders. Another potential taxi conversion is being rumoured to be designed / built / planned, depending on who you talk to. It is (or will be) apparently, based on the Stellantis EV van, variously branded as Peugeot, Citroen, Vauxhall or Toyota in the UK. If it turns out to be true, you read it here first. If not, it wasn't me!

MAKE	VOLUME		
DYNAMO	170		
LEVC	5,403		
METROCAB	1		
TX1	1		
TX2	81		
TX4	6,549		
VITO	2,648		
Total	14,853		







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TAXI Columnist | Phil Brown



A Passage Through Time

Phil's 'London heritage' knowledge journey is designed to hopefully make your driving day and workplace surroundings, a little more interesting...

Footprints & foundations

or a majority of the population, the workplace provides employment to earn a salary to maintain sustenance. Long hours are now a routine agenda and employees are expected to work to full capacity. Companies are beginning to realise the needs of their employees and it's now commonplace for businesses to take their staff on an away-day, or offsite day - an excursion to a place of leisure activities and team building. These offsites provide social interaction and chance to let one's hair down. Additionally, there is a plethora of gyms (especially in the Square Mile) offering recreation to City workers, often subsidised by their employer.

Ancient amusement

In the past, Londoners were also in need of entertainment, which was an escape from the physical demands of the dexterity and the toil of the long working day. The pleasures of the city can trace its origins back to the Roman period two millennia ago. In the location of the Guildhall on the Southside of Gresham Street, an amphitheatre existed. In this area, gladiators fought to the death in front of large crowds. This ruthless entertainment is how early Londoners enjoyed a good day out, such were the times. This article will explore how the city's ancient population were provided with amusement...

Beware of the Apprentices

Throughout history, apprentices have always been up for a laugh. A chronicler William FitzStephen writing in 1180, described the martial and athletic pursuits of young apprentices 'larking about' on the open land north of the City's boundary walls. The feats included balancing on sword-points and stilt-walking with a jug of water on the head. At times being overzealous when a citizen passed by, whilst they were frolicking around under the influence of beer.



Curiosities have always been a part of the London landscape. Madame Tussauds is the bestknown waxworks in the world. However, an earlier house of wax replicas was Mrs Salmon's Waxworks founded in the early 1700s. The premises began in six rooms at St Martin's Le Grand before moving to Fleet Street in 1711. The painter William Hogarth and writer James Boswell were both patrons and it survived well into Victorian times. Londoners were intrigued by the wax lookalikes.

Frost fairs

The popular television programme 'Dancing on Ice' has inspired Londoners to put their skates on and take to the ice, following in the footsteps of Olympians Torvill and Dean. In the 16th and 17th centuries before the invention of ice rinks, Londoners also took to ice. This happening was due to the river Thames occasionally freezing over. The Thames became a place of amusement, when the sluggish tide of the river, impeded by the piers

supporting London bridge, froze solid during extended periods of inclement weather. In the winter of 1564, archers and dancers took to the ice. In 1683-5, when the freeze lasted right through December and January, booths selling their wares were lined up on either side of the river, replicating a street market on the thick ice. The Frost Fairs continued into the 19th century, concluding in 1813 when the last extravaganza took place on the river Thames. The reconstruction of old London Bridge speeded up the flow of the Thames that it never again froze over sufficiently to enable further such fairs to be held.

Bartholomew Fair

Attending the traditional Bank Holiday fair was always the highlight of my childhood years. It brought excitement and danger, travelling at high-speed whist being propelled to great heights on the colourful amusements.

In the past, a regular fair was held in the location Smithfield. It was known as Bartholomew Fair named after St Bartholomew's



Hospital and the tolls from the fair went on to support the infirmary. The fair was founded in 1133. The place name, Cloth Fair in West Smithfield indicates a cloth fair, where the largest gathering of cloth-makers in the country attended annually. It was customary for the Lord Mayor to open the fair by ceremonially cutting a piece of cloth to start the event - a ritual later extended to hospitals and bridges to mark their formal inauguration. The owners of the fair were private individuals until the early 1600s, when the City Corporation took over the control. A cattle fair existed alongside the traditional entertainment.

The playwright Ben Johnson (1594-1637) wrote a drama based on the fair; it was aptly named Bartholomew Fair. It gives a good account of what the fair was like in the early 17th century. Johnson's play brought all the fun of the fair to the stage. He included: strolling players, wrestlers, fire-eaters, and tight-rope walkers. By the 1850s, the popularity of Bartholomew Fair was still attracting huge crowds from London and the provinces. However, with a large gathering of the public converging on the fair, an insalubrious element of impoverished vagrants mingled with the masses. Drunkards, pickpockets, and beggars caused concerns to the City Corporation. The authorities decided that this





BEAR

"In the location of the Guildhall on the Southside of Gresham Street, an amphitheatre existed. In this area, gladiators fought to the death in front of large crowds..."

improper conduct could not be tolerated. The last vestiges of this colourful event were at an end. In 1855 the fair was finally closed down. Smithfield meat market was built on the site.

Animals

Since the beginning of time, animals have a roamed the earth long before the evolution of civilisation. As humans evolved, they needed nourishment to survive. Vegetation was important to their daily diets; however, they quickly became carnivorous in their eating habits. As the centuries advanced, the animals were reared to produce milk, eggs and wool. Horsepower enabled people to travel far and wide. Animals had a much closer link to people in the days when agriculture was the main employment of the populace.





The Industrial Revolution brought the greatest of changes, as the workforce drifted from the land into the factories. The advance of technology has distanced the urban dweller from the flora and fauna, that surrounded the very existence of London's past.

Bloody sports

At most times, natures creatures were treated with respect and even became sacred symbols for differing religions. However, human beings never fail to deceive, and the abuse of the animal kingdom became a form of entertainment. Bear and bull baiting was introduced into England by the Italians in the reign of King John (1199-1216). The

popularity of these blood sports reached its peak in the Tudor period. The City had banished all forms of entertainment to across the Thames at Bankside in Southwark, Here, in this licentious area south of the river, theatres brothels and bloody sports enthralled inebriated Londoners.

Bear, dog, bull and cock...

The place name Bear Gardens is a token reference to the bear baiting pit that existed on the corner of Park Street and Bear Gardens. Inside a small semicircular pit with sand spread over the ground, awaited the bemused fighting bears. They were led into the ring by their owners, pulled

along with an iron collar fixed to a thick silvery chain. The ring was surrounded by a baying crowd in a drunken frenzy, all gambling on the outcome. Much blood was spilled in the darken dens of Southwark.

It was not only bears who fought in the baiting pits. Bull, dog and cock fighting provided recreation too. Bear baiting pits could also be found in Tothill Fields (Westminster), Saffron Hill and Islington. Oliver Cromwell (1649-1660) tried to suppress the blood sport but failed. In the 1800s the pubic grew weary of this brutal cruelty to animals. Animal rights groups lobbied Parliament and in 1835 the so-called sport was forbidden by law. TAXI

LTDA APPLICATION FORM

Address					
	Postcode				
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? (ple	ase tick) Yes No				
If Yes how many points do you have?					
Please tick if you DO NOT wish to receive information from the	LTDA and other related organisations in the future? \Box				
I understand that my application for membership of the Associatior this is confirmed I am not eligible to vote in relation to any form of A membership shall be at the discretion of the Council of Manageme Please note: We do not provide assistance for any matters th	Association matters. I agree that all benefits prior to approval of ent.				
Signed	Date				
LTDA Basic Direct Debit Instructions	TWO MONTHS FREE FOR FIRST TIME JOINE Service User Number				
Instructions to your Bank/Building	9 1 4 4 2 8				
Society to pay Direct Debits:	For Office use only				
Please complete parts 1 to 5 to instruct your branch to make					
direct payments from your account. Return form to FREEPOST LTDA	1 Please write the name and full postal address of your branch in the box (left)				
To the Manager of	2 Name of account holder				
	3 Account number				
Bank/Building Society Address	4 Bank Sort Code — — — — —				
	Banks/Building Societies may not accept instructions to pay Direct Debit from some types of account.				
	5 Signature(s)				
	Date				
This guarantee should be det	ached and retained by the payer				

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
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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.



So you know every street and every run between two points in London? Let's now see how your knowledge stands up to these brain twisters...



ACROSS

- 3 Caesar salad lettuce (3)
- 7 Cater (to) (6)
- 8 Battlefields (6)
- 9 Robots (8)
- 10 Percussion instrument (4)
- 11 Act (6)
- **12** British film studio which was famous for its comedies (6)
- 15 Tidier and smarter (6)
- 18 Two-headed muscle (6)
- 20 Sob noisily and uncontrollably (4)
- 22 Quiet compliance (8)
- 23 Absorbent paper (6)
- 24 Able (6)
- 25 First musical note (3)

DOWN

- 1 Soldier's greeting (6)
- 2 Egg-based liqueur (8)
- 3 Invent, make (6)
- 4 Barbaric (6)
- 5 Sunflower pip, eg (4)
- 6 Distant 'ringed' planet (6)
- 11 Currant cake (3)
- 13 Publican (8)
- 14 Neon or helium, eg (3)
- **16** Chocolatey cream cake (6)
- 17 Battered (against) (6)
- 18 Cleaning agent (6)
- 19 Small bouquets (6)
- **21** Head sculpture (4)

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.

	6		9	2	5		4	
9		7				3		2
	8	4				6	1	
		6				7		
5			1		3			8
5 6								9
			4		7			
		9	6		8	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 39 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.



All puzzles © Puzzler Media Ltd - www.puzzler.com 🌋



CABS FOR RENT



CABS FOR RENT



DRIVERS WANTED

DRIVERS WANTED

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LINAGE

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by selling outside London. We pay cash, collect, and drive away. Definitely still buying. John 07702 554934 • All cabs wanted. Tx4, euro 4, 5 & 6 also TXE wanted We come to you, any condition, very quick decision. cash paid instantly. 07702 554934

CABS FOR SALE

• Cabs for sale. Main Dealer service history. Non-fleet cabs. New stock daily. Cabs also wanted. Finance Paid 07957 465423

• 2018 vista TXE comfort plus immaculate condition

75,000 miles, service history, new air con, tyres & break pads, plated until June 2023 -07712115907

CABS FOR RENT

• TX4s for rent £220 per week based in Mitcham – 07450506656

• All Mercedes vitos for rent, full backup, prices starting from £200 please call – 07956211478 • All vitos and TX4s for rent, full back up, starting from £200 based in East London – 07872504604

• TXEs, TX4s and vitos available from £230 per week contact Sabri - 07958973944

DRIVERS WANTED

• Drivers wanted 15 and 17 plate vitos £230 & £260 per week respectively – 07980 790222



Exclusive | Taxi Charity

Happy 100th Birthday, Alec!



TAXI talks with London Cab Driver, Pat Granger about WWII Veteran Alec Hall who celebrates his 100th birthday this month...

TAXI Hi Pat, how do you know Alec?

Pat: I've been volunteering for the Taxi Charity ever since I got my badge 19 years ago. I was a member of The Parachute Regiment between 1894 and 2011, and therefore wanted to become part of the charity at the earliest opportunity. I have driven lots of veterans in the cab over the years, but it wasn't until last December that I drove Alec. I picked him up from his home in Southend and took him to the Charity Christmas Party at Millwall FC. He is such a great guy and in May I was happy to drive him and his two daughters Sue Hall and Anne Bennett over to The Netherlands with the Taxi Charity for Dutch Liberation.

TAXU Is he an Arnhem Veteran? Pat: Yes, he is. He was in 181 Field Ambulance and was a medic in Africa and Italy before being sent to The Netherlands with the Royal Army Medical Corps attached to the Airborne Division. He flew into Arnhem in a glider, and he tells me his medical knowledge was needed almost straight away when Reg Curtis, had his leg badly injured. Not only did Alec use his own shirt as a tourniquet but he donated two pints of his own blood to save his fellow soldier.

TAXI What were your highlights of the trip to The Netherlands?

Pat: There are always so many great memories when you are away with the charity, but if I was to pick two from this trip, it would be the Dutch Liberation parade and taking Alec on a battlefield tour. On the 5th of May, Alec was one of the veterans in the Parade in Wageningen and having



Pat Granger with Alec Hall



been in the Para's, I was honoured to be asked to march alongside the veterans as an escort. The way the Dutch respond to these guys is incredible.

My other highlight was taking Alec and his daughters on a short battlefield tour. During the Battle of Arnhem in September 1944 the Schoonoord, which is now a restaurant with the nickname 'Airborne pub no.1' and two other hotels in Oosterbeek were equipped as emergency hospitals where Alec worked with extreme professionalism saving many lives. We visited the three sites, one of which is now an office block. Spotting Alec in his beret, outside the office block they promptly invited us in and showed us pictures of how the building had looked during the war. The tour prompted lots of memories and he showed us many places and explained their significance.

TAXI How did his war end? Pat: He was working with the Dutch resistance and when they made their escape, he stayed behind with the wounded, was captured and taken as a POW and transferred to a camp in Munich. After he was repatriated, he went to

Dortmund to run the nursing side of a hospital.

TAXI Tell me about his family? Pat: Alec has always been sports mad - hockey, rugby, football, and tennis. During the 1950's he was the captain of the local tennis club in Southend and can you believe he was still playing tennis in his mid-seventies! A young girl called Margaret came to the club one day for a trial and they fell in love and were married in 1956. Alec and Margaret's two daughters gave them four grandchildren, Dominic, Millie, Edward, and William. Sadly, Margaret died in 2019 and everyone really misses her.

TAXI What sort of a guy is Alec? **Pat:** He is a joy to be with and certainly defies his age mentally and physically. The Airborne ethos that 'there is nothing these men can't do' shines through in Alec. He looks much younger than his years, is very sharp and fit and he speaks eloquently about what happened seventy-eight years ago. He recalls memories of the war as if it happened yesterday, although whatever stories he shares are never about him but always about what others did.



TAXI How will Alec celebrate his 100th?

Pat: Alec is having a party at home in the garden of his bungalow in Southend in early June for his friends and family. I am delighted to have been invited and understand we will be having sandwiches, cake, tea, and fizz. Alec doesn't know, but the mayor is going to surprise him by popping in to join the birthday celebrations.

To find out more about the support the Taxi Charity offers veterans visit: www.taxicharity.org

TAXI Columnist | Musher Meg



No Sex, No Drugs and **72 Sausage Rolls**

Meg is no street-party virgin. The jury is still out on Arthur however...

A woman of words

v cab stayed parked up for the Platinum Jubilee weekend. I was partying. To be more specific, street partying. I am not a street party virgin...

No street-party virgin...

We threw one in the Summer of 2019 to celebrate one of our residents, Arthur, reaching the grand old age of 105. On the morning of the big day, Mr Meg delivered a birthday card and gift to Arthur and made a pathetic attempt at small talk. "Are any of your friends joining you to celebrate today?" asked the witless Mr Meg. Arthur replied, "Of course not you bloody idiot. Mr Meg pressed on, "And why

is that Arthur?" In the loudest 105-year-old shout he could muster, Arthur put Mr Meg in the picture ... "Because they are all DEAD!"

Sgt. Major Joyce (No.73)

Èvery street party must have a Sergeant Major. They are recognisable because they carry a clipboard with several different lists attached, and goose-step around barking orders. Our Sergeant Major was Joyce from no. 73. Joyce chose the party date, the time, the menu, the cake and the dress code 'dress to impress'. Mr Meg was distressed when he heard this and wailed, "I don't even know what that means!" Having been married to him for eons, I can confirm this is true, and then some.

72 sausage rolls

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5 9 6 1 8 2 3

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Sergeant Joyce issued instructions to everyone about who was to

bring what. She made us swear an oath that there would be no 'shop bought rubbish' and that everything would be

home-made. My job was to whistle up seventy-two sausage rolls. Number 44 got scotch eggs and no. 7 were down for cream horns. My sausage rolls were a work of art golden, warm, flaky and moist. I wrapped and stacked them on the bench-seat in the kitchen. Minutes later, Mr Meg, grumbling about dressing to impress, was tugging at the stringy shoelaces on the only pair of smart shoes he owns. He plonked himself down on the bench seat where I had stacked my sausage rolls and his big backside flattened them into sausage and pastry pancakes.

My friend Gregg...

At the eleventh hour I found myself years young.

in the cab on the way to Gregg's. The staff helpfully furnished me with the exact number required.

Back home, I unwrapped them from their branded packaging and then re-wrapped the rolls in foil... as I saw it, the foil intervention by my own fair hands to all intents and purposes meant I had crafted home-made sausage rolls as commanded.

Street snooze

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AUTOMATA

Dear Arthur turned out to be a party pooper. He snoozed all through the party. Joyce (who else?) stepped in and blew out the candles on his cake. When Arthur woke up and heard he had missed his own birthday street party he said, "Ah well, there's always next year!" That's the sort of attitude which likely got Arthur to 105 ΤΑΧΙ

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ARENAS

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MEEKNESS

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ILTDA

30

A1 Taxis, Melody Lane, Highbury, N5
 Abacus Accounts, Southbrook Road,

Distribution Points

- Lee, SE12
- Astral Café, Regency Place, SW1
 Bubbles Car Wash, E2
- C & S Taxis, Dunbridge Street, E2
- Cabsurance, Seven Kings
- Camberfield Taxi Services
- Computer Cab, Mitre Way, W12 Coney Allen, Dunbridge Street, E1
- CP Beehive Service Station, Beehive Lane, Gants Hill
- Cricklewood Carriers, Cricklewood
- Dial A Cab, City Road, N1
 Edgware Station Rank
- Euston Station Rank
- G & L Taxis, Crayford Road, N7 Globe Transmissions, Cudworth Street, E1
- The Ham, Brentford
- Heathrow Airport Canteen
 Hexagon Garage, Lukin Street, E1
- Jet Garage, Clipstone Street, W1
- Knowledge Centre, Caledonian Road
 KPM, Hemming Street, E1

- London City Airport Canteen
 LP Motors, Dunbridge Street, E2
 Martin Cordell, Thomas Road, E14
- Paddington Station Rank
- Putney Bridge Taxis, The Arches, Putney Bridge Station, SW6
 Richmond Road Taxi Centre, E8
- Safewise Supermarket, Harrow
 South Bank Service Station,
- Great Suffolk Street, SE1
- TAXI HOUSE, Great Suffolk Street, SE1
- Taxi & Private Hire, Blackfriars Rd, SE1
 Temple Place Shelter
- Turbo Accessories, ThreeColtsLane, E2
- Ubiquitous Ltd, E1
- Waterloo Station
- Wimbledon Station Rank WizAnn Knowledge School, Watts Grove, E3

TISSUE

Crossword

Wordwheel

SOLUTION: CAMERAMAN

Acme, acne, acre, arcana, arcane, came, camera, cane, care, cram, crane, cream, mace, nacre, race, CAMERAMAN.

Word targets: Excellent: 14, Good: 11, Target: 8, Kids: 8

Futoshiki

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