

COVER STORY

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TOUT OF ORDER

SUZANNE SULLIVAN **Page 10**

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS

OF THE TAXI CHARITY

PAGES 24 & 25



21st November 2023 #554

LTDA CALLS FOR CHANGES TO DAMAGING GUIDANCE

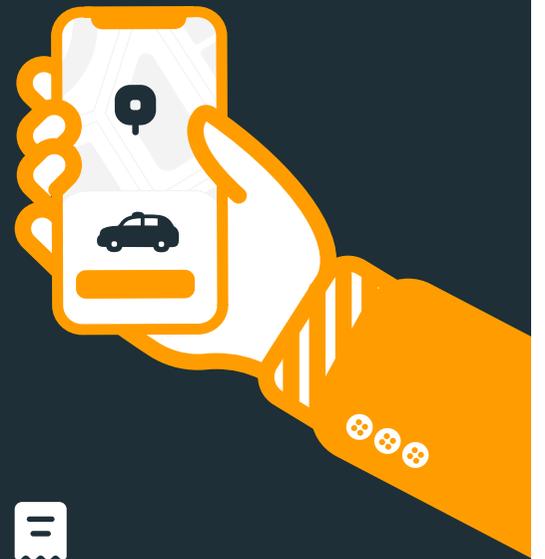


GUIDANCE BEHIND SIX POINTS AND YOU'RE OUT UNDER REVIEW

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GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES £8.3 MILLION FUND TO TACKLE POTHOLES

The Government has announced “unprecedented” levels of funding to help local authorities tackle the “scourge of potholes” and address the rapidly declining state of our roads. The £8.3 billion of funding for local roads maintenance in England will be made available over a period of eleven years. It will be largely focused on the North with funding coming as part of the government’s so-called *Network North* plan using the money saved by the scrapping of HS2, however £2.8 billion will be allocated for the East of England, South East and South West, and London.

ROAD COLLISIONS MORE LIKELY FOR APP FOOD DELIVERY WORKERS

App delivery riders on motorcycles and scooters delivering hot food are more likely to be in a collision where their bike is damaged or someone is injured than those directly employed by restaurants, according to research by UCL.

The researchers also found that freelance delivery riders employed in the gig economy are more likely to report that time pressure from their employer means they are more likely to speed or ride through red lights. They are also more likely to report being distracted by their phone, through which they accept jobs.

The paper suggests that the increased number of accidents and safety risks drivers take to complete jobs are due to companies paying less attention to the safety and wellbeing of riders and paying them per delivery rather than for time worked, putting them under pressure.

TWO THOUSAND RAPID PACKS NOW IN LONDON TAXIS

RAPID, the emergency bandages charity, hit a major milestone earlier this week, as it equipped its 2000th London taxi with a life-saving kit. The charity’s founder Alex Chivers presented taxi driver, Howard Taylor, with the kit, which contains military-style emergency bandages, outside London Bridge tube station commemorating the fourth anniversary of the 2019 London Bridge terrorist attack later this month. They were joined by Darryn Frost QGM, who during the attack confronted the terrorist with a Narwhal tusk, preventing further loss of life, and Travis Frain BCA, an anti-terrorism activist and survivor of the 2017 Westminster Bridge attack.

The 2000th installation is part of RAPID’s ambition to deploy its emergency bandage kits in half of London’s famous Hackney carriages. Supported by the Licensed Taxi Driver’s Association (LTDA) and endorsed by Transport for London (TfL), the initiative aims make emergency bandage kits as accessible as possible so that members of the public can become vital first responders in emergency situations where casualties experience blood loss. Since the rollout began, RAPID’s kits have been used several times, including in a recent road traffic accident and an incident in which a police officer flagged down a cab so they could help an injured member of the public.



WOLVERHAMPTON COMPLIANCE OFFICERS IN LONDON

Compliance officers from the City of Wolverhampton Public Protection Department have reportedly been working in London alongside Transport for London (TfL) officers, presumably in an attempt to clampdown on the growing number of Wolverhampton registered vehicles working in London and exploiting the cross-border hiring loophole. In a tweet, promoting their presence in London, the City of Wolverhampton Public Protection team stated: “Wolverhampton taxi compliance officers working in London with TfL. Building relationships.” With London already inundated with its own 100,000 plus PHV drivers, this action is long overdue.



VICTORIA BUS STATION CLOSURE

Until 22nd December there will be a complete closure of Victoria Bus Station and Terminus Place from Buckingham Palace Road and Wilton Road. As a result, the first portion taxi rank on the station forecourt of Victoria Station will also be closed/suspended. This is to enable essential safety works to be carried out and to allow for the complete resurfacing of the bus station. The Wilton Road feeder rank will act as the main taxi rank and pick up point for passengers from Victoria station for the time being. The loading bay on Buckingham Palace Road (outside the hole in the wall) will also be suspended for taxis so that passengers with accessibility needs can be picked up safely.





Politics, Lost Property

I was asked to talk about “*the biggest single issue affecting our business*” so of course I talked about the devastation being wrecked by the six points and you’re out policy.

Steve’s comment

It’s been another crazy couple of weeks in the world of politics. Who would have thought that ‘Call Me Dave’ would be making a comeback? I had hoped we had seen the back of the now Lord Cameron of Chipping Norton, for good. Cabbies will remember the reported dodgy dealings that went on, in and out of Number 10 during his time as Prime Minister, with his team famously intervening at City Hall (under Boris Johnson) and fending off proper regulation in an effort to protect Uber’s interests and one can only presume those those of his friends, who held high up jobs at the company at the time.

Cameron comes back

I thought with Daniel Korski out of the picture we’d seen the last of the Uber Chumocracy, but it seems not. Cameron is now back but working on foreign policy, so it doesn’t really matter to us in cab land, but if you ask me, it’s an absolute farce that he’s back. This is made even more shocking when you look at his involvement with the now defunct, Greensill Capital, which sparked a lobbying scandal over his efforts to lobby former colleagues to get the company access to a Covid corporate financing loans scheme.

Whilst he was cleared of doing anything illegal by a parliamentary select committee inquiry and a Cabinet Office review, the House of Commons Treasury Select Committee did say his conduct made a “*good case for strengthening*” the rules around lobbying. Similarly, the Cabinet Office review found

he had played-down his relationship with Greensill, when lobbying the Treasury, yet his actions were not unlawful. From everything we know about what went on with Uber in 2015/16, this is surely just another example of cronyism and poor judgment.

Elsewhere, we also have a new transport minister with responsibility for roads and local transport, which includes taxis, Guy Opperman, MP for Hexham in Northumberland. As a former barrister, he doesn’t seem to have much of a background in transport, but we will be getting in touch to set up a meeting.

Fighting 6 points & you’re out

Last week, I spoke at the Institute of Licensing (IoL) Conference in Stratford-Upon-Avon. I was asked to talk about “*the biggest single issue affecting our business*”, so

of course I talked about the devastation being wrecked on our members and their livelihoods, by the six points and you’re out driver policy. I explained how these new TfL rules on how taxi drivers, who receive points on their DVLA driving licence are treated, are resulting in drivers losing their licence or under threat of doing so, in some cases for a single motoring offence. We continue to be inundated with drivers, who find themselves in this situation and our legal team is busier than ever fighting for members’ licences.

TfL has repeatedly told us that the new policy was introduced in response to the Government’s Statutory Standards on Taxi and PHV licensing, but those standards are in turn based on Suitability Guidance for Licensing Taxi and PHV drivers, which was first produced by the IoL.



and Points

Urgent changes required

The IoL guidance issued in 2018 to help licensing officers and licensing authorities develop their policies was developed without consultation with the trade. In fact, no-one was really aware of it until the Government's Statutory Standards came out and authorities around the country started introducing draconian new policies. We called for urgent review of this guidance when the IoL consulted on it and they are now undertaking that review, to look again at the points issue and thresholds for action to be taken against a driver, which are wrecking havoc on our members and the wider trade.

At the conference, I emphasised how important this review is and how the taxi trade must be consulted and heard on the real-world impact of the policy to ensure any changes are effective and do not unfairly penalise drivers. After my talk, I spoke with a number of licensing bods, who assured me they were aware of the negative impact the policy is having and were looking to make changes, which would be the first step in reversing TfL's policy changes. We will keep pushing on this issue.

Lost property

For some considerable time, our members have been experiencing serious problems when trying to hand in lost property at police stations. Many officers and civilian staff incorrectly inform drivers that the "Met no longer accept property found in cabs", it has even been reported that some police stations have signage stating that they do not accept property left in cabs.

The problem has been exacerbated since the TfL lost property office moved from South Kensington to West Ham. The new office's restricted its restricted opening hours and location have made it almost impossible for many members to hand in lost property.

After several letters to the Commissioner, I have finally received confirmation that the police do still accept property left in cabs, and they have given me a high-level contact to report any instances of officers or staff not accepting property or any police



stations displaying incorrect signage. See the letter on the next page, which you can show to any officers, or police staff, who refuse to accept property left in the cab.

Since the letter was received, we've actually had an update as it seems, Book 49, which the assistant commissioner mentions, no longer exists, however we have had it confirmed that a new computerised version has been put in place which will ensure stations can accept any property.

In the unlikely event that a police officer or member of the civilian staff still refuse to accept property, please politely request their name or shoulder number and let us know by emailing info@ltda.co.uk with details of the

police station concerned, time and date etc.

Age limit biting

There was a significant drop in the number of cabs licensed in London last month, as a large number hit the 12-year age limit. I know how hard this is for the cabbies affected, particularly those who are nearing retirement, but who weren't ready to hang up their badge just yet, who now need to find a cab to double, rent or buy or find a new way to make a living.

I know many drivers have been hoping for news on the HJS conversion so they might be able to add a few more years onto their cab's life. I have supported

HJS since they started looking to get into the taxi market, all the way back in 2018, as anything which kept drivers in their cabs longer had to be a good thing. I have followed their progress with TfL closely, raising it in meetings with decisionmakers, whenever I had the opportunity. It's been a long process and as time ticks on there is a risk that drivers won't benefit from this. However, I understand that they have now started the 10,000-mile road test with one model and that they are ready to start shortly with the other. This could be good news for drivers but there are still a few more hurdles to get TfL's approval for the tech to be fitted to cabs. We will keep drivers updated as things progress. 



The New No Go Zones



Once feared crime ridden 'no go zones' for cabbies have not materialised, but they've been replaced by a different kind across large areas of Islington, Hackney, Lambeth and the City of London...

Top rank

In the past when I've had discussions with fellow cabbies about the state of our beloved London and just how safe it was (or wasn't), we would sometimes discuss the latest incidents where a cabbie had been robbed or attacked. The discussion would then quickly come around to the 'no go areas', if you didn't want to end up in trouble.

Back then the idea of future 'no go zones' and where we would end up, was very much linked to what was being reported about the state of things across the pond in the USA and how much of that culture often ends up in London.

Gang warfare and the violence that goes along with that was the only fear or reason we could see impacting our neighbourhoods.

Whilst we're unfortunately still seeing the rise of violence and murder involving gangs with one postcode not being safe for certain other postcode dwellers, for the vast majority of members of the public, we're free to roam from one area of London to another, without much thought. I know as I drive around London now, I am much happier to travel through many areas where I was once maybe very cautious of being, certainly ones where I would lock the cabs doors and travel at the

top end of the speed limit.

As I drove the streets of London through the 90s and the 00s, into the teens, I thought that one day my working area would shrink as crime escalated and like the many American neighbourhoods portrayed on TV, more London areas would become unsafe.

"Accidentally entering an LTN may feel like being robbed, as the fines are way in excess of the wages that we and other Londoner's earn."

We already had places like Loughborough Junction, the Lisson Grove estate, Heygate Estate and Clapton Road, famously named murder mile in the early noughties.

A different kind

Thankfully, the once feared crime ridden no go zones for cabbies have not materialised in London but many different kinds of no go zones have. Large areas of Islington, Hackney, Lambeth and the City of London are now to many cabbies, no go zones.

The barrier in these areas is road closures and restrictions

as opposed to crime or the fear of being robbed, although it may feel like being robbed as accidentally entering LTNs and other restrictions can bring about fines, at a level way in excess of the wages that we and other Londoners earn. To make matters worse, just as TfL has increased their PCN fines, the London boroughs are now all doing or thinking of doing the same. So, we can expect to see the £400 million highway robbery of motorists in the last 12 months increase even further.

How wrong we were back then thinking our working area would be impacted by crime. What has happened is however in some ways worse, as it has been purposely manufactured by the very same people who should be working to ensure our streets run freely and our passage is unhindered. Moreover, it's been done to further the ideology of just a few, an ideology that squanders millions and results in bankruptcy, debt and the need to rob motorists.

Pedicabs (London) Bill

This bill announced in the King's Speech could hand power to Transport for London to regulate pedicabs, including controlling fares, requiring licenses and ordering criminal record checks. In the reporting and resulting articles came a statement from TfL that stated 'Pedicabs are the only form of unregulated public transport in London, and as

such impact the safety of the capital's road network, as well as customers being charged well-documented rip-off fares.'

My question is, who at TfL decided that Pedicabs were 'public' transport? Remember this is the same TfL who, prior to our Bishopsgate court case kept insisting London's taxi trade weren't even a form of public transport! It beggars' belief.

In that one insulting statement from TfL, we once again see the reason why we have an explosion of minicabs on our streets whilst they are seemingly want to drive cars off our streets to lower pollution. Why we have drivers losing their livelihood for three months after making one minor mistake, in a career spanning decades and covering millions of trouble-free miles, who are suddenly deemed not fit and proper by TfL. If that was to happen to senior TfL staff every time, they made a mistake, their offices would be even emptier than they are now.

At least if that happened, the decent helpful members of staff, of which there are many, would be left behind and we might actually get some progress in what London needs. I won't hold my breath though. My experience is that the good ones are generally moved on, muted, or demoralised, until the fight is stamped out of them, and they basically give up. ■ LTDA

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Don't Wait Til It's Too Late

On occasion, we've seen that making a request for your full medical history from your GP, has the magical effect of your GP conjuring up a slot for you to attend an appointment...

On Point

Quite a few members are facing issues when calling their GP practice to book their medicals. The GPs are in some cases either refusing to give an appointment full stop or saying that they driver will have to wait for six to eight weeks for a date, which can cause huge problems with licensing renewals.

Get in early

My advice is to call the GP as soon as the forms are delivered. The forms are sent to you one month before your birthday. As I say, call the GP as soon as they arrive and see what they say, as this will give you time to explore other options, if you need to.

You do always have the option of going to a private medical practice for your medical. There are lots of private practices advertising their services for Taxi Driver and HGV medicals, including *4Armed Health*, who the LTDA has been working with to support a number of drivers.

You often find that they are a lot cheaper than the GP (most of whom now charge you for routine medicals and doctor's / fitness notes. Unlike the GP (in mine and many other peoples' experience) they also do not insist on being paid in cash.

The only issue is that they must be in possession of your full medical history to help you. On occasion, we've seen that making a request for your full medical history from your GP, has the magical effect of your GP conjuring up a slot for you to attend an appointment, which can solve the original problem. The cynics in us may come to the conclusion that the GP is not really prepared to watch north of £100 for a 10-minute appointment walk away from them. I have also heard that some GP practices make it quite difficult for our members to be supplied their medical records but an indication that they will complain to the British Medical

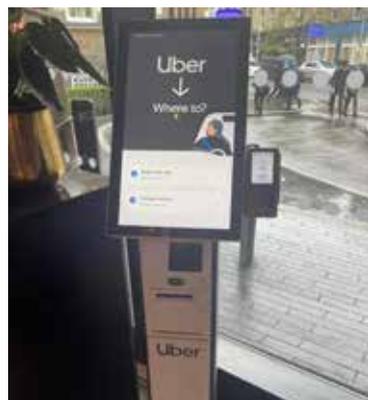


Association as a last resort, usually does the trick!

On my list

As you can see from the image below, the Hilton Hotel in Tooley Street now seems to be advertising the American Mini Cab Company to its customers, in their reception. This is not really new, but I would like to inform members exactly where this hotel's loyalties seem to lie.

For me personally, this hotel will now go on my list (it's quite extensive) of the venues where I have great pleasure of ignoring the doorman of the hotel, who might attempt to hail me when I have a choice and it's screaming busy. You have to pick your moments and take into account that the residents may have refused to be driven in a mini cab. I am of course not saying refuse a fare, but if there is a legitimate choice to be made, I wouldn't be serving this hotel.



Paddington slip westbound

Please be aware that when you exit the Westway slip road at Paddington westbound, there is now very often a policeman with a speed camera hiding in the entrance, where the road sweepers keep their dustcarts. This hiding place is just before the Travis Perkins roundabout on the righthand side. The issue the cabbie has is that when they are on the Westway, it's 30mph and as you come off to go to Paddington it very suddenly becomes a 20mph zone, which can catch people out. We are seeing quite a few members picking up speeding tickets due to a simple mistake or simply not slowing down quickly enough, so please be aware of this lower speed limit!



NSL font failures

I am getting the odd report that cabs are being failed at NSL tests because of the size of font on the cab's insurance certificate, that we must all place in the cab. It is technically the responsibility of your insurance company to supply you with the correct certificate, but if you are going up, make sure yours is correct. I believe that the major cab trade insurance companies have this under control but the ones which are not cab trade specific don't seem to be aware of this requirement. So, when you renew your policy make sure they are aware and it's all correct. **LTDA**



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Tout of Order

It is imperative that we report touts to the correct authority, otherwise incidents don't get logged, registered or dealt with.

Airports & beyond

There has been a noticeable increase in the number of taxi touts operating at the airport since the pandemic. By the end of July this year, it was estimated that up to 30 touts were operating on Terminal 4 alone.

Police operation

Undercover police gathered evidence of this increased touting activity in a recent operation, which allowed them to identify key players.

In a two-day operation, six touts were arrested and subsequently convicted at Uxbridge Magistrates Court. They have all been disqualified from driving for up to six months.

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Only two of the six were TfL PH licensed drivers and the remaining four drivers had no insurance or licences and had their vehicles confiscated.

The police have reassured us that there will now be intermittent patrols on the terminals to identify touting and they will intercept where necessary and escort them from the terminals. Repeat offenders will be given probation orders and possibly prosecuted if they continue to offend.

It is very hard to catch and prosecute these touts. The evidence required is difficult to obtain due to the nature of the offence and the unscrupulous tactics these touts regularly use.

Raising awareness

The police have produced a taxi tout information advertisement, which they are hoping HAL (Heathrow Airport Limited) will place in and around terminal arrivals areas as well as on digital billboard displays. The advert informs passengers about the dangers of using a tout and advises them to only use approved licensed taxis and minicabs. The advert has a QR code that translates into 12 different languages.

In the meantime, please report ANY tout activity you see or suspect to the tout line via the



QR code. It is imperative that we report touts to the correct authority, otherwise it doesn't get logged, registered or dealt with. It also helps with continual police tout squad funding from HAL. With more reported complaints, will hopefully convince HAL to be more resourceful when it comes to touts in their terminals, and maybe eradicate these tout parasites once and for all.

Taxi House busier than ever

I have been covering the reception at Taxi House at Great Suffolk Street for the past week and I cannot believe how incredibly busy it is! Hats off to the girls, Paula, Gemma, Janet and Kate, who normally cover the desk. As soon as 9.00 comes the phones do not stop ringing and you literally don't look up until the last call at 5.00. I have covered this before, but in my personal experience of the last few days, it's definitely become a lot busier.

On top of the calls, you get drivers who walk in looking for advice and again the girls do their best to help. These lovely ladies then have to direct the calls to the officers upstairs who can help. As a result of the increased level of calls, the officers are also under added pressure and from what I

can see, do a fantastic job. It isn't always possible to return the call straight away, but they do a good job at getting back to people and make sure everyone gets the help and support they need.

There is also an accounts department that does a lot of work behind the scenes and the legal department get calls by the minute and referrals from reception and the officers.

I was also impressed at how much the Executive team get involved, often taking calls on the spot when the officers are under immense pressure, life on the streets of London is certainly presenting more challenges. From



the calls I was taking, the number of drivers calling after receiving a NIP (Notice of Intended Prosecution) was constant, as well as speeding fines (often 24mph in a 20mph), complaints (often from a cyclist recordings), as well as drivers simply living in fear of what may happen.

Stressful all around

As a cab driver myself, I know how difficult it is driving in London and all its potential pitfalls. So, when answering these calls, I understand fellow drivers concerns. I do try to advise drivers not to worry about potential fines that they may not even get. It's like bleeding before you are even shot. But I totally get it.

Helping on reception has definitely been an eye opener and after four days of it, I have never slept so well! Driving a taxi in all the London traffic is tough and the issues with restrictions can be so stressful, but I have experienced a different kind of stress working at Taxi House. Trust me when I say the team do an amazing job and really do care about helping drivers and the trade. I now look forward to driving my taxi again and leaving the help that is provided by the LTDA to the professionals!

LTDA

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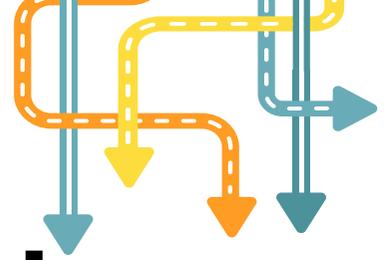
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We Want Road Access, Not Ownership



The trade has never claimed to 'own the roads', but what we do want, need and expect from those imposing the restrictions is a fair and level playing field when it comes to road access...

Knowledge is power

As London taxi drivers we face numerous obstacles in our day-to-day working lives, whilst doing the job that we all love. It could be impatient passengers stressing about the time the journey is taking, probably due to the City Hall / TfL manufactured traffic or council implemented road closures and restrictions. It might be cyclists riding in the middle of the road whilst completely ignoring the expensive white elephant cycle lanes that they desperately 'needed', or even construction vehicles being left parked and unattended on our taxi ranks.

12 Defending our ranks

We are too often, and very wrongly, given a bad name by the social media keyboard warriors for being rude or argumentative towards other road users. This isn't the case. The fact is, we are professional drivers who ply for hire every day on the busy streets and from our taxi ranks but too often we are prevented from doing our jobs by PHVs or lorries lawlessly parking on these ranks. This impacts on the way we earn a living and is made doubly frustrating by the fact that we all know there is a very good chance that they will not even receive so much as a PCN. Sometimes, when

drivers approach these offenders and ask why they are parked there or try to reasonably explain what a taxi rank is used for, they are faced with either 'I'm only trying to earn a living' or more often a barrage of foul-mouthed abuse. The common response from PHV drivers is 'but I am a taxi', well guess what, you are NOT.

Our members often send in pictures as evidence, which are always forwarded on to TfL compliance to hopefully act on, or on other occasions the LTDA have contacted the actual companies involved, alerting them to the complete and total disregard their drivers have toward the working practices of our trade.

Difficult to move around

Thanks in large part to the Mayor of London and some boroughs, our city is becoming more and more difficult to move around due to road closures, bad road planning and having to give up the already crowded road space for the numerous and often unused cycle lanes. Don't get me wrong, I am a supporter of safe cycling, but these routes must be implemented more on quieter routes and not on main arterial roads, like the ill-thought-out Victoria Embankment/ Upper and Lower Thames Street super cycle highway disaster. Despite what the cycle lobby spout continually on Twitter, its usage is definitely not 'super' or at the level it was built to accommodate. These schemes seem to have no real thought process behind

the restrictions that are put in, especially those which restrict taxis from access to roads that we need desperately to continue to provide a professional service to the public. Access is particularly important for those with mobility issues, many of whom rely on taxis, who are now being penalised through no fault of their own.

A level playing field

All over the various social media outlets, you will find a lot of cycling groups posting negative comments regarding the taxi trade. These are generally about the way we drive, and how we supposedly think we 'own the roads'. The trade has never claimed to own the roads, well not that I know of, but what we do want, need and expect from those imposing the restrictions is a fair and level playing field when it comes to road access so we can continue to do our job effectively.

Amid all these pressures and problems, tensions are running high between all types of road users and we are seeing a growing number of the 'plastic police' cyclists filming drivers, (which surely has to be a danger to themselves, as well as others nearby, because don't tell me they can look at the road ahead and still film vehicles at the same time in the manner that they do safely). My point here is please, be very careful out there and don't give them the perverse satisfaction that they crave from reporting you. **TAXI**



Kirby's PCN Hotspots

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

YELLOW BOX CAMERAS

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

CAMERA PCN ENFORCEMENT

- Harrods (Brompton Road) Over-ranking
- Tottenham Court Road
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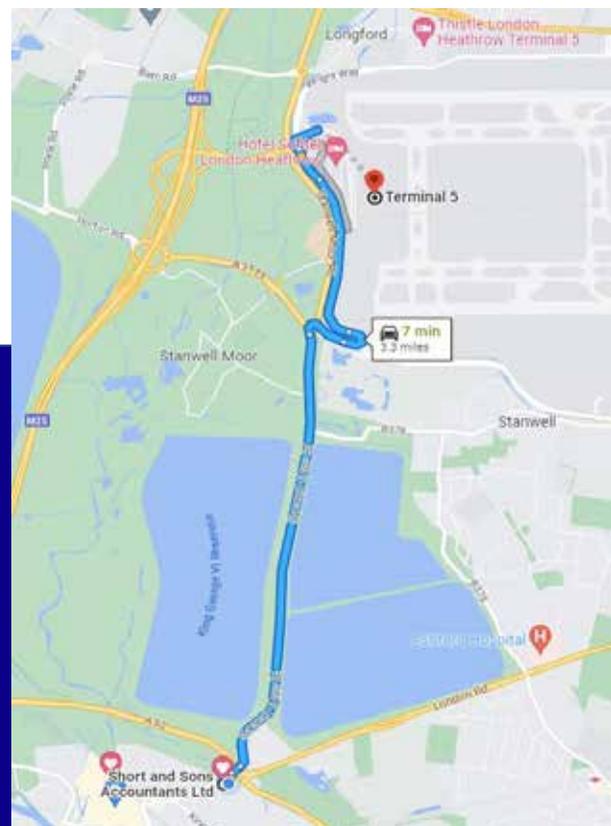
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Apps to Collect Earnings Data & Uber Scraps Local Cab Service

A look at the latest big news stories and developments with implications for the taxi industry around the country.

National correspondent

There have been two big news stories impacting the industry nationally over the last few weeks. Here's what they could mean for the industry in London and around the country.



Taxi apps must report driver earnings to HMRC

Taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) drivers will now have to provide additional information to taxi booking apps and operators, as part of a new law that aims to ensure digital platforms report their earnings to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Starting from January 2025, this measure aims to promote fair taxation and will mean cabbies in London will need to supply a few more details if they currently use apps like FREENOW or Gett.

The law defines digital platforms as online services that connect customers with suppliers of goods or services, including taxi and PHV operators, food delivery companies, freelance workers, and short-term accommodation providers. From January 2024, all digital taxi and PHV operators in the UK will be required to collect and store revenue data for their registered drivers. This information will then be reported annually to HMRC, starting from January 2025.

To comply with the new legislation, taxi drivers will need to provide their app providers with additional details. This might include:

- National Insurance number
- Full name
- Address
- Date of birth.

These details will help HMRC

identify drivers and assess their tax liabilities.

Impact

While it is difficult to determine the exact number of drivers who may be misreporting their digital revenue, it is believed the figure will be low within the London taxi industry.

Those more affected by the changes are those who rely on gig-economy work. There have been incidents, such as in the food delivery app sector, where multiple users share accounts to work on platforms. In response to an increase in immigration offenses by gig workers, the Home Office has recently taken action against drivers working for companies like Deliveroo, JustEat, and UberEats.

The London taxi industry, known for its higher regulation and professional standards, is not expected to encounter significant issues. Many cabbies are well-versed in accurate accounting and use professional trade accountants.

Ultimately, the new rules will help prevent the sharing of private hire vehicle licences and delivery app profiles among drivers. If they continue, any driver allowing someone else to work under their name fraudulently would now be required to declare all earnings made under the licensee's name and pay the corresponding tax liability. I can't see many people wanting to pay someone else's tax bill!

Uber Ends Local Cab Service in the UK After Initial Controversy

Uber made the surprising announcement that it will be terminating its Local Cab service in the United Kingdom on the 11th December 2023.

Introduced amid controversy in 2021, this service allowed users to book rides from local private hire and taxi operators, who utilised Autocab's booking and dispatch technology. Autocab, a UK-based company known for providing software solutions to the taxi industry, operates the iGo referral network. This network enables operators to send and receive jobs to and from each other.

The partnership between Uber and Autocab aimed to expand Uber's reach in the UK. By utilising Autocab's iGo network, Uber could offer its app to customers in towns and cities where it did not have its own drivers. Additionally, the partnership aimed to benefit local operators by providing them with access to more customers and more earning opportunities.

Criticism and controversy

Despite the potential benefits, the Uber-Autocab collaboration encountered significant criticism and controversy from various stakeholders throughout the UK. Local authorities, including Oxford City Council, voiced concerns about Uber's legal status and licensing, in the regions where the Local Cab service was offered.

Tom Hayes, the deputy leader of Oxford City Council, labelled Uber's service as "murky" and declared that the Council had not granted a licence to Uber in the city to protect the local

taxi trade. Some taxi drivers and unions also opposed the partnership, fearing that Uber would undercut their fares and compromise the quality of service, potentially leading to market dominance. An Oxford taxi driver expressed his opposition, stating that Uber was attempting to "sneak in through the back door" and that he would refuse any jobs from the Uber app.

Uber did not possess licences to operate in certain towns and cities where the Local Cab service was available through its collaboration with Autocab. This fuelled concerns among industry insiders that the partnership was a means of sidestepping local regulations and authorities overseeing the private hire and taxi industry.

Uber's arrival in new markets was perceived as a significant threat by existing local operators not participating in the Local Cab platform. Worries emerged that Local Cab would undermine their pricing, divert customers, and eventually dominate the market.

Since its pilot launch in May 2021, Local Cab had been introduced in over 65 towns and cities across the UK. While Uber did not disclose specific reasons for terminating the Local Cab service, the company stated that Autocab's core business remained unaffected and continued to grow.

Autocab also announced that it would be launching the Local Cab service internationally, where it believed there was a more favourable market fit. The company revealed that it was actively working on launching the service internationally, with the initial partnerships set to be unveiled in the upcoming New Year. **TAXI**



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European News

A look at some of the unsavoury actions of Uber et al, as well as what's been going on in Brussels.



16

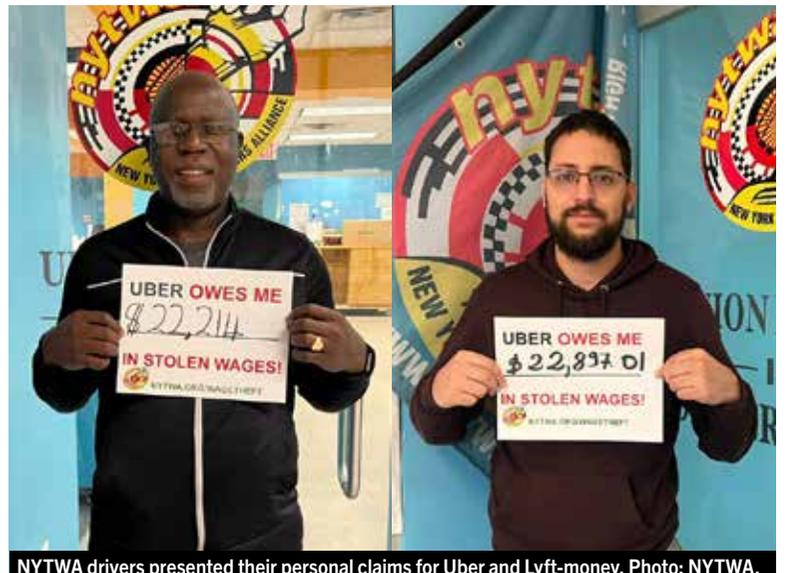
International correspondent

Early Xmas gift from Uber to PHV drivers

Christmas came early this year for about 100,000 PHV drivers in and around New York City. Uber and Lyft will be filling drivers' stockings with sizeable sums from a settlement of \$328 million (£264.7 million) for wage theft. Uber will pay \$290 million (£234 million) and the significantly smaller Lyft will pay \$38 million (£30.7 million) into two funds that will cover claims from current

and former drivers. Between 2014 and 2017, both gig companies had taken taxes and surcharges, which should have been paid by passengers, out of the drivers' income.

On 2nd November, New York State's formidable Attorney General, Letitia James, came to an agreement in this case - aptly called 'Wage Theft'. It was brought by two drivers (one for Uber, one for Lyft) from the New York Taxi Workers Association (NYTWA), which had earlier this year solved the debt crisis for NYC cabbies suffering from debts due to a large-scale medallion (licence) swindle.



NYTWA drivers presented their personal claims for Uber and Lyft-money. Photo: NYTWA.

Round-Up



Uber & Lyft deny all

Uber and Lyft didn't admit to being at fault for the above. Both came out with incredibly sanctimonious statements, of which Lyft's easily was the worst: "This is a win for drivers and we're proud to have partnered with the New York Attorney General's office to make it possible." Uber's statement, by Chief Legal Officer Tony West, added insult to injury: "We thank Attorney General James and her team for their hard work in crafting a solution that brings accountability and innovation to balance while addressing the real needs of these hardworking drivers in New York." By the way, West is the brother-in-law of US Vice President Kamala Harris.

Attorney General James' statement was much more forceful: "Gig drivers are working around the clock to get people where they need to go. For years, Uber and Lyft systematically defrauded their drivers of hundreds of millions of dollars in wages and benefits while working long hours under difficult conditions." Both companies will also be offering sick leave and minimum wage.



Radtke says the permanent pandemic is Uber exploitation. Photo: European Parliament.

'Devilish methods' to spread disinformation

Meanwhile in Brussels, the negotiations about the Platform Work Directive are nearing a compromise. That ride hailing companies didn't shy back from spreading their 'truths' about the effects the Directive might have, all became clear at a demonstration on 12th October by 500 German taxi drivers in Cologne. They were putting their case across for fixed prices for taxis and minimum fares for PHVs, to the conference of German state mobility ministers. At the demo, Dennis Radtke, European Parliament member, gave an insight into the 'devilish' methods used by Uber & co to spread disinformation.

In the EU, platform work is a billion-Euro business, with 28 million workers, of which five million have been misclassified: "These are bogus self-employed. This is a huge mess that simply has to stop." Normally lobbyists launch two or three stories to counter proposed legislation, Radtke also said. But this time it is far worse. "We are dealing here with lobbying that is not only diabolical but also damn smart. Here, not two or three stories were sent out, but very different stories were sent specifically to the Parliament offices and EU-institutions. That

caused the strangest stories to circulate in the parliamentary corridors." Radtke cited the claim that all email account users would be seen as a platform in the future or that regulations would ban all activities of commercial and insurance agents. He called the lobbyists' argument, that the EU platform regulations would destroy the business model of the platform companies, repugnant. "I can only say that no one needs business models that ultimately only work because you deny access to the minimum wage and social security to workers who you don't even call employees." For Radtke it is clear: "The permanent pandemic for the taxi industry is not Corona, but Uber and the exploitation model behind it."

On Wednesday, 8th November, platform workers held a demonstration outside the European Commission building called 'Don't let Uber make the law'. Prior to these recent negotiations on the Platform Work Directive that day, Uber had spent lavishly on over 100 ads on Meta social media and on EU politics website Politico. Politico reported that Uber's most recent ad stated that "it's time to share the facts." In its PR, Uber omitted to mention the \$328 million New York settlement. **TAXI**



Not a taxi demo this time, but a demo of platform workers at the EU HQ.

The many languages of London

London is a melting pot of various cultures and ethnicities from around the world, which is reflected in the diverse range of languages spoken in the city. But did you know that there are more than 300 languages spoken in London?

Obviously the most widely spoken language in London is English, serving as the lingua franca for communication between different communities. However, due to a large number of migrants and international students, a vast array of languages can be heard on the streets of the sprawling Metropolis.

Latin languages such as Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese, are highly prevalent in the UK, with languages such as French and Polish also commonly spoken. The historic ties between England and former colonies have also resulted in a significant number of people speaking languages like Arabic, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi, and Tamil.

In recent years, there has been a surge in communicative languages from Eastern Europe, Eastern Asia, and Africa. Languages like Romanian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Russian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese, Turkish, Somali and Swahili can be commonly heard in various parts of the city.

London is also home to a large number of international students, resulting in a diverse range of languages being spoken on university campuses. Students from all over the world, including Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Arabic, Spanish, and German individuals, often form language pockets where they communicate in their native tongues.

Furthermore, London enjoys a strong influence from South Asian communities, resulting in a vast number of languages being spoken here, including Gujarati, Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu, Tamil, and Malayalam.

It's easier to tell which location certain demographics tended to gravitate toward by the location of the churches, mosques and synagogues. For instance, the Italian church in Clerkenwell serves a large Italian community, while the UK's largest synagogue, which was located in Greatorex Street in Whitechapel, served London's Yiddish and Hebrew speaking Jewish communities, while the Central London Mosque at Regents Park serves London's Arab quarter.

In short, it is believed that there are more languages spoken in London than any other city on the planet.



Brick Lane's Beigel Bake bakery

Just about every taxi driver in London will know this Brick Lane bakery. This iconic institution is renowned for its delicious beignets and rather colourful history. Located in Bethnal Green, it hasn't actually been around as long as you may think. Opening its doors in the 1970s, it is actually one of two beigel bakeries within 20 yards of each other.

The bakery's claim to fame is its traditional Jewish-style beignets, which are hand-rolled and baked in a wood-fired oven. It is also famed for its salt beef and smoked salmon beignets.

The location, which was originally a butchers, was opened by Jonny Cohen in 1974. Cohen already owned three beigel bakeries, in Dalston, Ridley Road and the one in Brick Lane, two doors down. The shop has stayed with the same family since opening its doors, with Danny Cohen now running premises.

Past customers include everybody from Prince Charles to Madonna, but its most prolific customer base comes from the market trading and taxi-driving communities.

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW

LONDON?

Cockney rhyming slang

Over the last couple of weeks, one of the hot topics on the news is the gradual disappearance of some of the UK's dialects. The one which has attracted the most attention is the Cockney dialect, or more specifically Cockney rhyming slang, which is unique to East London. But where did the Cockney 'lingo' spring from, me old china? For the answer, we have to go back to 1362.

The etymology of the word itself is rather peculiar, with its earliest recorded use taking place in passus VI of William Langland's *Piers Plowman*. It is the Middle-English term for 'a small, misshapen egg'. The words 'coken' and 'ey' together meant 'a cock's egg'. Interestingly, at the same time, the mythical land of luxury Cockaigne started appearing in the UK's lexicon. A variety of spellings were used, including Cockayne, Cocknay, and Cockney and became synonymous with Londoners in general.

Moving forward in time to the 19th century, East End rogues and villains developed a form of coded linguistics in a bid to evade the local constabulary. This became known as Cockney rhyming slang, with its earliest incarnation dating back to around 1840. Since that time, numerous Cockney words and phrases have entered into the English language. Despite the true definition of a Cockney being somebody who is born within the sound of the Bow bells at St Mary le Bow Church, the term has now encompassed a much wider geographical area.

Rhyming slang often didn't even rhyme. The last rhyming noun was sometimes dropped, so 'whistle and flute', which means suit, would become whistle. This made it more difficult for those who weren't au fait with the language to understand. Despite the language going into decline, it is highly unlikely it will disappear completely, with some Cockney terms firmly entrenched in the English language.



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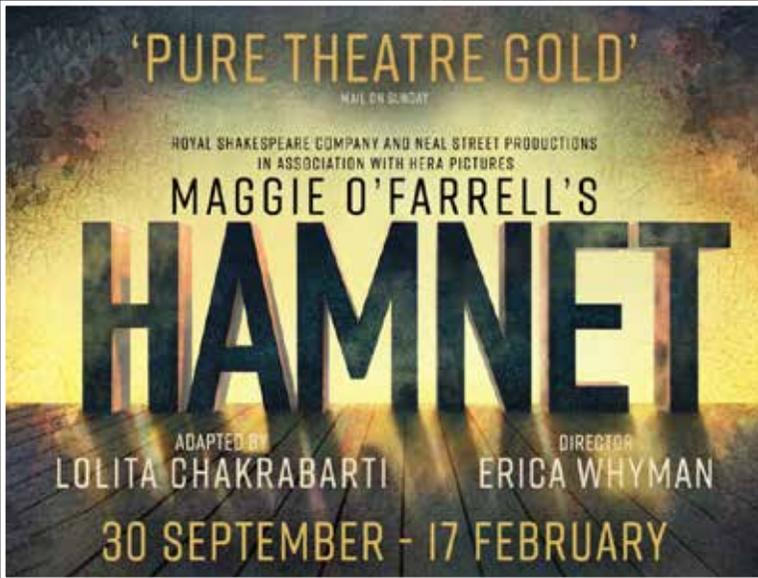





What's On? West End

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

Under the spotlight



20 *Hamnet* – Garrick Theatre 📍

Considering he continues to be thought of as one of the greatest writers of all time, there's little actually known about the life of William Shakespeare beyond some key facts. In 2020, author Maggie O'Farrell took those facts and wrote *Hamnet* – a novel inspired by Hamnet Shakespeare, his only son who died during childhood.

This is the theatrical adaptation of said book, following William Shakespeare and Agnes Hathaway from their first meeting, through to their illicit romance which resulted in a hasty wedding (due to pregnancy), the births of their children, and what came next.

It's beautifully staged, with one central set – which Agnes observed looks like a giant A – feeling authentically like the rural and intimate village that would become Stratford-Upon-Avon. Tom Varey and Madeline Matnock have excellent chemistry as Bard and Wife, performing Lolita Chakrabarti's adaptation with sweet emotion and compassion. Although Shakespeare adjacent, this is a moving and accessible watch about love & loss.



Hamnet runs until 17th February, 2024.

Derren Brown presents Unbelievable – Criterion Theatre 📍

This show does not feature Derren Brown. All the marketing materials want you to be very aware of that. There's even a sign up by the box office on arrival. It is, however, a brainchild of his – another creation from his long-term collaboration with Andrew O'Connor (co-creator of *Peep Show*) and Andy Nyman (director-star of British horror movie *Ghost Stories*). And it definitely has his tells and flare all over it.

Unbelievable is a family-friendly show featuring seven individuals who perform a loosely interlinked series of set pieces featuring magic. There's music, song, and a bit of dance. There's a lot of audience participation, which can be entered upon arrival through a couple of different opportunities that quickly become apparent, or through volunteering during the show. It's one of the-if not the-most immersive and interactive shows on the West End right now, which makes its two-hour-and-20-minute runtime fly by. It's just unfortunate that it gets bogged down with a recurring plotline about inner/outer belief that feels painfully earnest to the point of cheesy.



Derren Brown presents Unbelievable runs until 7th April, 2024.



What else is on?

■ *Two Strangers (Carry a Cake Across New York)* – Kiln Theatre (until 20th January, 2024)

A new musical about a naively optimistic Brit (Sam Tutty), in town for his father's second wedding, who finds an unexpected connection with the bride's sister (Dujonna Gift).

■ *Backstairs Billy* – Duke of York's Theatre (until 27th January, 2024)

Luke Evans and Penelope Wilton star in this regal new comedy about the Queen Mother's loyal royal servant, who served at her side for over half a century.

■ *Stranger Things: The First Shadow* – Phoenix Theatre (until 25th August, 2024)

A prequel to Netflix's hit sensation, following Jim Hopper, Joyce Maldonado, and Henry Creel in 1950s Hawkins.



A Big Drop & A Temporary Blip

I am convinced this will all settle down after Christmas. My advice to anyone looking to buy an older cab is to be careful and not get caught up in this temporary blip.



Cab you drive

Last month, saw the biggest drop in cab numbers, ever! However, before the doom and gloom brigade start talking about how the 'end is nigh' and rushing to Knowledge schools to tell them 'The game is dead', there is a reason for this dramatic looking decrease.

It's a combination of high sales numbers 12 and 13 years ago, coupled with a double year of cabs impacted by the age limit changes, as a lot of owners had brought forward their NSL plate date to gain the full 12 years.

I understand that there were also more than a few who simply made a mistake and did not correctly calculate the date their cab could get its last plate. It's absolutely critical that anyone with an older cab checks when their cab is

coming off the road, works backwards and gets it passed at NSL before its 11th birthday to ensure they get a full year.

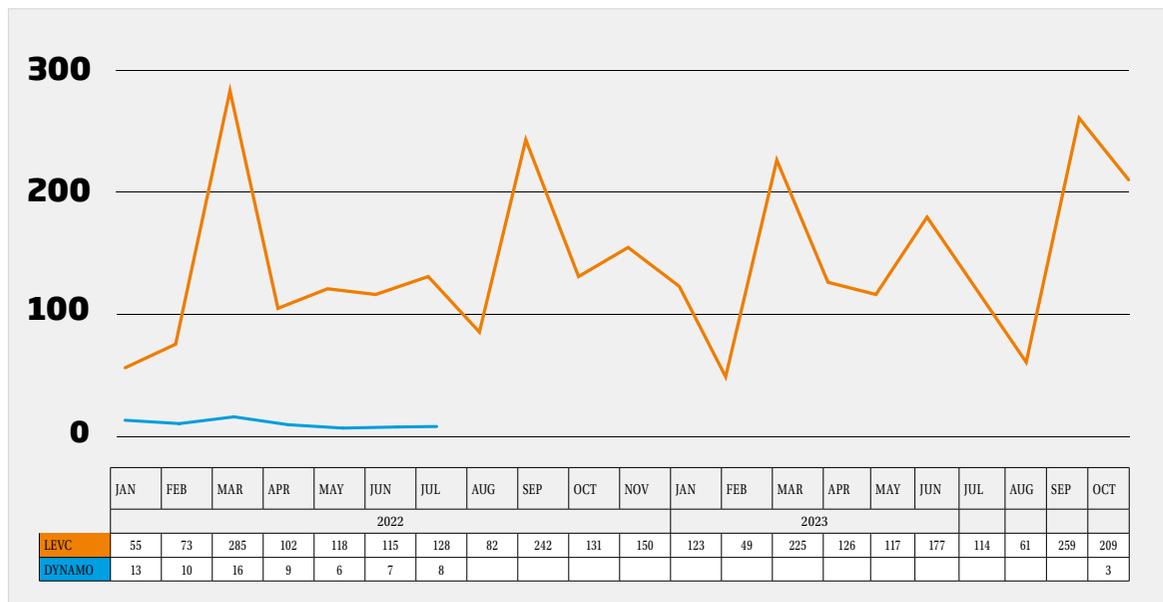
The DVLA V5 for the cab shows the date of first registration and its this date that you plan from, not the existing plate expiration. Using this date, book the cab into NSL a week or ten days before, and as long as the cab is plated before its 11th birthday you get a full year. I have met cabbies who forgot this and tried to book an NSL appointment a few days after the cabs turned 11 only to

be told it was too late and the cab was finished in London! Don't let that happen to you, check the V5!

As a result of the changes over the last month, there are very few cabs anywhere for sale. This means some silly prices are being asked for older cabs. The basic rule of £3k per plate left for cabs nearing the end, has gone out of the window.

I am convinced this will all settle down after Christmas, so my advice to anyone looking to buy an older cab is to be careful and not get caught up in this temporary blip. Be realistic and work out exactly how long the cab has left, factor in the cost of maintaining it, will it need a gearbox or diff, what is the bodywork like etc.

With some of the prices I have seen recently, it may be wiser to give the older ones a swerve and look at paying a bit more for a newer cab with a longer life and less maintenance. **TAXI**



DYNAMO	182
LEVC	7,642
TX2	65
TX4	4,517
VITO	2,210
TOTAL	14,616



A Passage Through Time: A Farewell Walk Around Covent Garden

A final wander through the bustling streets where a thriving market once stood – and a look at what it's evolved into nowadays.

Footprints and Foundations

Our excursion through Covent Garden will be concluded in this article. I hope you have been captivated by the narratives that I have disclosed in this location. To increase your knowledge of London, it is important to walk through its ancient streets. I implore you to conduct your own research, it will give you a completely different perspective of the heritage of the capital. The next time you are in Covent Garden, park your cab and go for a walk. A combination of exercise and exploration will provide you with a welcome break from the cab.

London has always been an evolving city. To maintain the heritage of days gone by, an equilibrium must be sustained. Old and new structures can exist cheek by jowl. It has always been a constant battle between developers and conservationists to demolish or preserve a building. An example of this sentiment is the Bloomberg building in Queen Victoria Street EC2. Incorporated in the basement of the structure is a Roman temple dedicated to the Persian God Mithras. This Pagan temple is 2,000 years old. The entrance to this exhibit is in the Walbrook, admission is free and well worth a visit.

Regeneration

Covent Garden has experienced a rapid transformation over the past 40 years. The Piazza has always played centre stage during this transitional period. In the 12th century, a religious order of nuns planted seeds to cultivate fruit and vegetables on arable land. This quarter was originally known as the Convent Garden, named after the presence of a religious order of nuns who resided here. From a small holding in a rectangular square, one of London's largest wholesale produce markets evolved. Here, the character of the costermonger was truly at play with its own vernacular.

Fruit, vegetables and flowers were transported throughout the capital. The popularity of the market had sustained the palates of Londoners for centuries.

Closing down

Even though Covent Garden Market was a thriving place of consumerism, it had its detractors. As far back as the 1890s, voices were being raised about the congestion in the local neighbourhood. There was also another dilemma, from the early 1800s, when Covent Garden became an insalubrious red-light district. Numerous brothel houses flourished in the tightly packed streets abutting the market. In these darkened thoroughfares at the twilight hour, city gentlemen converged to the houses of ill repute seeking their carnal pleasures. Pickpockets and mendicants were a regular feature, roaming the narrow passageways looking for unassuming victims. However, the market continued, although its reputation had transformed from its earlier origins.

The estate landlords, the Bedfords, sold the market in 1918 to a consortium of businessmen led by Sir Joseph Beecham (the pill manufacturer). The following decades were filled with

To maintain the heritage of days gone by, an equilibrium must be sustained. Old and new structures can exist cheek by jowl.

altercations on the premise of the removal of the market. In 1961, the Covent Garden Market Authority was established; this marked the beginning of the end of trading in Covent Garden Market. The owners of the market had a plan to relocate to Beckton, East London. This proved unappealing to the traders, a majority who came from south of the river. Finally, a compromise was reached by all parties to reposition the market in Nine Elms, Vauxhall. On 8th



October 1974, London's famous produce market closed. A deep sense of loss was felt by traders and residents, who had formed an enduring relationship with the market. The colourful cries of the costermongers, 'ripe bananas, sweet oranges and fresh apples' simply faded into the ether...

Rebirth

The capital has always been a place of transformation. In the 1980s, Covent Garden was about to administer this process. Since the market's closure, the central buildings, known today as the Piazza, were to be demolished. The Greater London Council planning department contemplated a variety of schemes, including new roadways, tall office buildings and conference centres. The residents were angered over what the council was considering. Huge demonstrations involving residents and conservationists took place. Thankfully, the protesters won their day in the law courts.

The former market buildings were converted into shops, restaurants, coffee bars and craft stores. The Flower Market now houses the London Transport Museum. The many warehouses that had stored fresh produce have morphed into residential apartments, commercial businesses, designer shops and art galleries. North of the Piazza, the area continued its regeneration. Neal's Yard, the Pineapple Dance Studios and avant-garde hotels have brought a vibrancy to Covent Garden.

Lasting memories

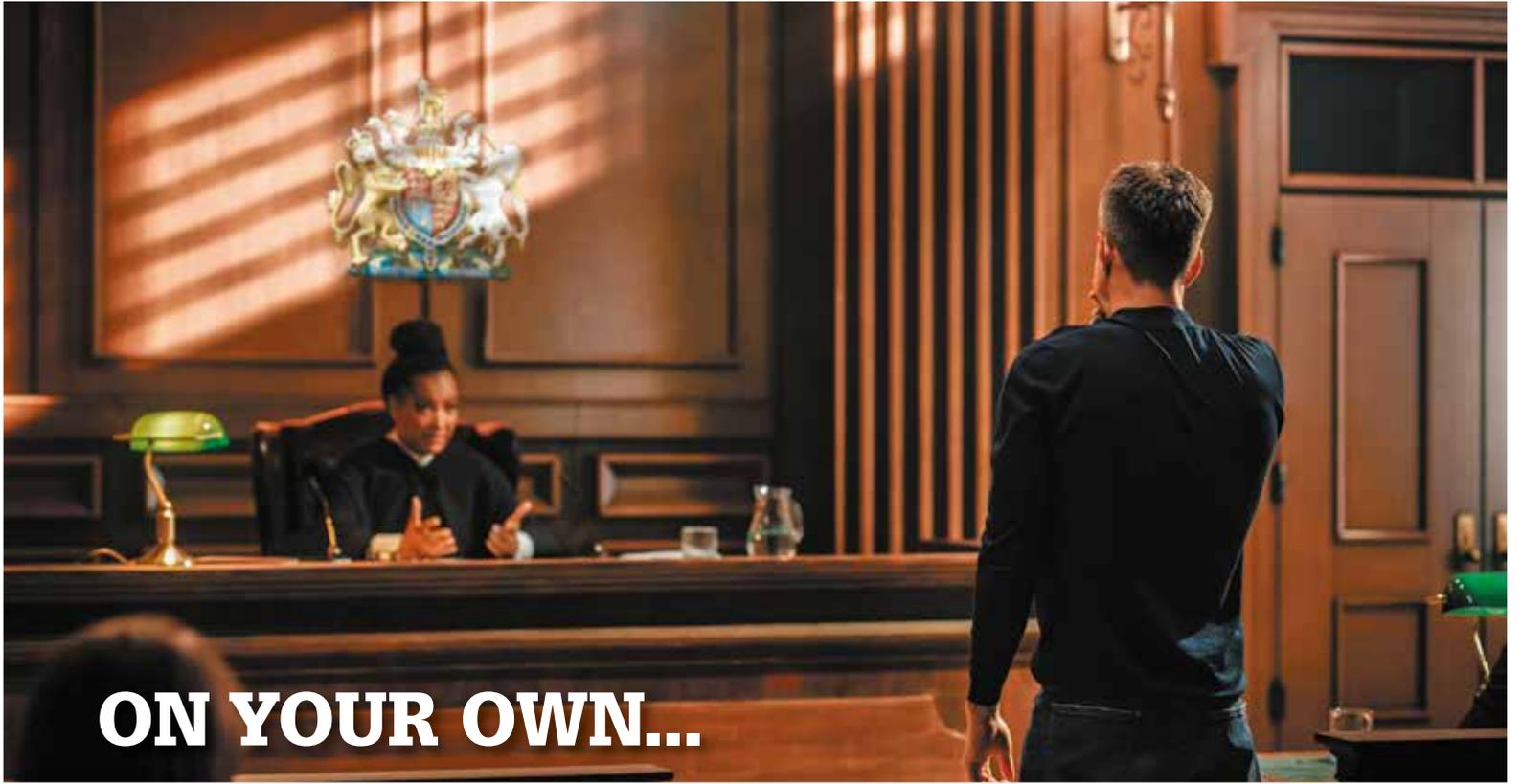
As we conclude our journey through Covent Garden,

I hope you now have a deeper understanding of its colourful past. Today, the thoroughfares are busy with tourists who mingle with shoppers looking for retail therapy. The restaurants, cafés and public houses are full to the brim. Covent Garden is a hive of activity seven days a week. Perhaps it has become London's main attraction. However, the decadence mentioned in previous articles is still very much alive.

Lurking in the shadows of the Piazza and its nearby streets are the homeless, hungry, and destitute. They are people just like us who have fallen off the edge of society. Covent Garden has a long history of penury. The workhouse in Endell Street has been erased from the landscape. However, hostels and lodging houses can still be found. Keeble Street provides a fine example, Bruce House, a large Edwardian grade II listed red-brick building, offers shelter, food, and free advice for employment. The Peabody Trust is the administrator of this place of welfare.

Now it's time to leave Covent Garden to relocate to a new location. Please join me in January, as I descend into Soho, where a rich tapestry of heritage will be explored. **TAXI**

If you have any questions on London's history or are contemplating a tourist guide course, contact me via journeythroughtime@hotmail.com



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Taxi Charity Celebrates Its

On 29th October, the Taxi Charity celebrated its 75th anniversary with a party for cab drivers, veterans and supporters at the Royal Hospital Chelsea.



24



Saxophonist and cab driver Jon Cox.

TAXI spoke to Taxi Charity Chairman Brian Hefferan about the landmark event.

TAXI Hi Brian, tell us about the big party.

Brian: It was a fabulous night celebrating our 75th anniversary, with a gathering in the magnificent Great Hall at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Our honorary Secretary, Dick Goodwin, planned the event and what a fabulous job he did to make it such a huge success!

TAXI Who else joined you?

Brian: We invited our drivers, Chelsea Pensioners, veterans and many of our volunteers, supporters and donors. The charity could not do what it does without the support of all

these people – or friends as they have become – and we wanted to throw an event to thank them for their continued support.

TAXI Tell us a bit about the history of how the charity was formed.

Back in 1948, a small group of London cab drivers got together to see how they could support friends who had returned from the war and the Taxi Charity was born, although it had a different name back then. They were primarily helping those who had been injured and it was called The London Taxi Benevolent Association For War Disabled – I think they made the right decision to change the name in 2016 to the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans. To think

75th Anniversary



the charity has been supporting veterans for 75 years, through volunteering and donations with no government support, is a wonderful achievement. To put this into context, we were formed in the same year as the NHS, which is also marking their 75th anniversary alongside us.

Janet Brodie Murphy, Chelsea Pensioner, Royal Hospital Chelsea:

"I was delighted to be a guest of this wonderful charity, my second time with them and they are poppets. It was a great night, I made loads of new pals, and thoroughly enjoyed the music. I love all the black cab boys and their banter is as unique as ours here at Chelsea.

They do so much for military veterans throughout the year. They have been in existence now for 75 years and my goodness they make a huge difference to a great deal of veterans who find themselves living with old age, who are alone and lonely. Great night, lots of music, delicious nosh."

TAXI We hear the entertainment was pretty special!

Brian: It was! First on the stage was Shaun Chambers who sang for us. He has performed at our events before and it was great to see him joined on stage by a D-Day veteran, 99-year-old Bill Gladden, who loves to sing songs from the period. Then to get people on the dance floor we introduced a band called The Choice. The band's saxophonist is London cab driver Jon Cox, one of our volunteers, so we couldn't think of a better group to join us. The guests were quick to get to the floor and it was great to see people of all ages throwing shapes up there.

TAXI Rumour has it you showcased your new taxi?

Brian: As our guests arrived there was a show-stopping, almost life-sized balloon replica of a London black cab. We were in total awe of the guys from Luxury Bows who created the taxi and also dressed the room with balloon displays, one of which I believe was taken to the room of one of the Chelsea Pensioners as a memento of the evening. Not too sure where

my new balloon taxi is now, hopefully it's not been clamped. While it had a hire light and number plate, I don't think there was a meter! ■ TAXI

Jon Cox, London cab driver and saxophonist for The Choice:

"The Taxi Charity is a wonderful cause and it was fabulous to perform at their 75th anniversary party and to see so many people singing along with us and boogieing on the dance floor."



Frances Chambers:

"Thank you for inviting us to the celebrations last night, we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. As usual we met some lovely people and heard wonderful stories. Food and entertainment were amazing."



Volunteers Susy Goodwin, Keely Allen and Theresa Rouese.



Volunteers Keely Allen and Kaye Thorpe in a balloon taxi at the Taxi Charity 75th anniversary party.

About the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans

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

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26

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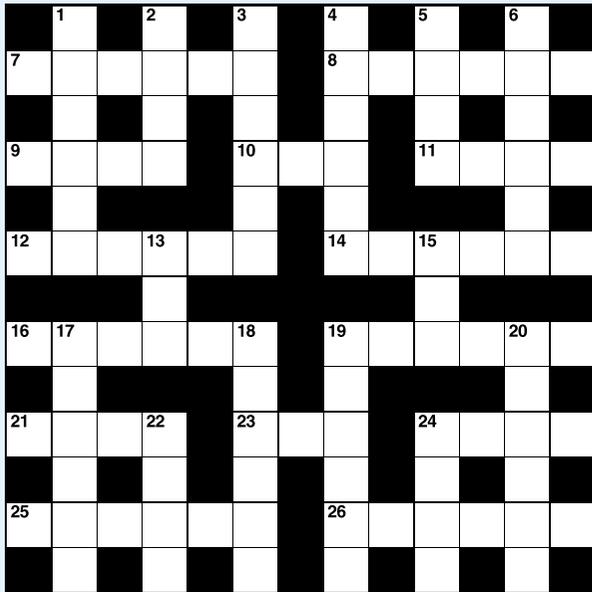


www.ltda.co.uk



Puzzler Page

Crossword



ACROSS

- 7 Ski run with obstacles (6)
- 8 Magazine chief (6)
- 9 Cold white flakes (4)
- 10 Of advanced years (3)
- 11 Long, limp (of hair) (4)
- 12 Bequest of property (6)
- 14 Breathe out (6)
- 16 OT book of the Bible (6)
- 19 Firearm used in science fiction (3,3)
- 21 Canine animals (4)
- 23 Part of a curve (3)
- 24 Gentle (4)
- 25 High-intensity flashing beam of light (6)
- 26 Insignificant (6)

DOWN

- 1 Move suddenly downwards (6)
- 2 Steady continuous stream (4)
- 3 Epitomise (6)
- 4 Hawk (6)
- 5 Jack's nursery-rhyme partner (4)
- 6 Preferably (6)
- 13 The lot (3)
- 15 Variety of lentil (3)
- 17 Uncreased (6)
- 18 Contrived, presented (6)
- 19 Culinary formula (6)
- 20 Spread open slowly (6)
- 22 Revise hard (4)
- 24 Glossy fabric (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				3	8
8	1			3			6	
		9			4		8	5
		4	6	1				2
		1			3		7	4
4	9			7			5	
		7	3				2	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. We found 13 words - can you do better?



Futoshiki

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

<input type="checkbox"/>				
^			^	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			∨	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	^			
<input type="checkbox"/>				
^	∨			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1

All answers to puzzler on p30

TAXI

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**John
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LTDA Branch Meetings

Forthcoming LTDA Branch Meetings will take place on the following dates, times and locations.

Heathrow Branch

30th November at 1.00pm
West Drayton Community Centre,
228 Harmondsworth Rd, West Drayton UB7 9JL

Suburban Branch

5th December at 1.30pm
New Malden Squash Club, Somerset Close, KT3 5RG

Central Branch

18th December at 10.00am.
Christchurch hall, Blackfriars Rd, London, SE1.

TAXI

LINAGE

TAXI

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28

● **We want your cab any condition** quick decision cash or bank transfer you decide, finance cleared if required – 07877 093 866

● **All cabs wanted. Tx4, euro 4, 5 & 6 also TXE wanted** We come to you,

any condition, very quick decision. cash paid instantly. 07702 554 934

● **De-commissioned your tx4's and Euro 5's?** Earn more by selling outside London. We pay cash, collect, and drive away. Definitely still buying. John 07702 554 934

● **All Vitos for rent, full back up,** based in East London – 07872 504 604

● **TXE's available for rent, from £320** per week. Call Wax 07951 843 663

● **TXEs for hire, new and used, full** back-up, no ads – call 07980 288 333

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● **TXEs, TX4s and Vitos available** from £260 per week contact Sabri – 07958 973 944

CAB SHARE

● **I live in Waltham Abbey. I need** a cab: Full or Half flat, share or days. Call Jony Spencer 07779 582 690

■ **Get in touch**



Paul Heitzman



paul.heitzman@cplone.co.uk



01727 739 196



LTDA APPLICATION FORM

Name _____

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? (please tick) Yes No

If Yes how many points do you have?

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

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

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

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

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

Signed _____ Date _____

LTDA Basic Direct Debit Instructions Instructions to your Bank/Building Society to pay Direct Debits:

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Service User Number

9 1 4 4 2 8

For Office use only

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



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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:





The Bouncer, The Chair and The Fire



Mr Meg and his trusty wheelbarrow are out walking the streets of North West London. He's on the hunt for wood to burn. It's like being married to Stig of the Dump.

A woman of words

My husband likes nothing better than a fire in the hearth at Christmas. **Correction - he likes nothing better than a free fire at Christmas. This is why here at Meg Towers we often sit in the warm festive glow of neighbours' broken tables, chairs and fencing, burning merrily in the wood burner.**

Last week, Mr Meg upset our neighbour, Adam, the man-giant from Number 24. Adam is a colossus with muscles, much like Popeye, and he works as a bouncer.

Adam left an old-fashioned rocking chair out by his bins. Mr Meg, out scouting for wood, spotted the chair and thought, "That'll burn nicely!". So, he nabbed

it, brought it home and sawed it up and added it to his woodpile.

Trouble was, the chair was the one that Adam's mum had, er, 'gone to heaven' in and he'd left it out to be collected by a furniture restoration company. He had to go to work, they'd messaged to say they were running five minutes late, and in that time Mr Meg had swooped in and taken it away.

Adam got a message from the company to say there had been nothing left out to collect. Puzzled, he viewed his security camera footage and saw Mr Meg and his barrow making off with the precious chair.

He came over to confront the chairnapper. I

was parking the cab on the drive after a long shift, made worse by the eco idiots lying down on Waterloo Bridge, so waved him round to the back to find Mr Meg. I didn't know a ding dong was coming.

Adam started shouting and Mr Meg made several errors of judgement during the 'chat' that followed.

First, he showed Adam the pile of firewood he had made from the chair. He didn't say sorry. Second, he told him he shouldn't have left it out by the bins even if it was just for a few minutes, because that was asking for trouble in the mean streets around Gladstone Park.

He still didn't say sorry. Third,

he commented that being sentimentally attached to things is an emotional weakness, especially in a big fella like Adam, and one that needs to be conquered. He furthermore didn't say sorry.

Mr Meg failed to spot the fury in Adam's face. I know this because I heard him ask, "You keeping that rickety garden gate of yours, Adam mate? That'd burn lovely, that would".

With one hand Adam tossed Mr Meg's wheelbarrow on top of the woodpile, before grabbing him by the scruff of his neck and dropping him into it. Then Adam marched off without a word.

I had to rescue a shocked Mr Meg. There were splinters everywhere.

The moral of this story is buy smokeless fuel to burn. And fellas, always remember to zip your flies before you are thrown onto the woodpile. **TAXI**



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- ◆ Camberfield Taxi Services
- ◆ Computer Cab, Mitre Way, W12
- ◆ Coney Allen, Dunbridge Street, E1
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- ◆ Cricklewood Carriers, Cricklewood
- ◆ Dial A Cab, City Road, N1
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- ◆ G & L Taxis, Crayford Road, N7
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- ◆ The Ham, Brentford
- ◆ Heathrow Airport Canteen
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- ◆ 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, Three Colts Lane, E2
- ◆ Ubiquitous Ltd, E1
- ◆ Waterloo Station
- ◆ Wimbledon Station Rank
- ◆ WizAnn Knowledge School, Watts Grove, E3

PUZZLER ANSWERS



Crossword

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

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Sudoku

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

Wordwheel

SOLUTION: EXONERATE

All words: Earn, eater, enter, entree, erne, exert, extra, near, neater, ornate, rant, rate, rent, rota, rote, tarn, tear, tenor, tern, toner, tore, torn, tree, EXONERATE.

Word targets: Excellent: 21, Good: 17, Target: 13, Kids: 8

Futoshiki

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



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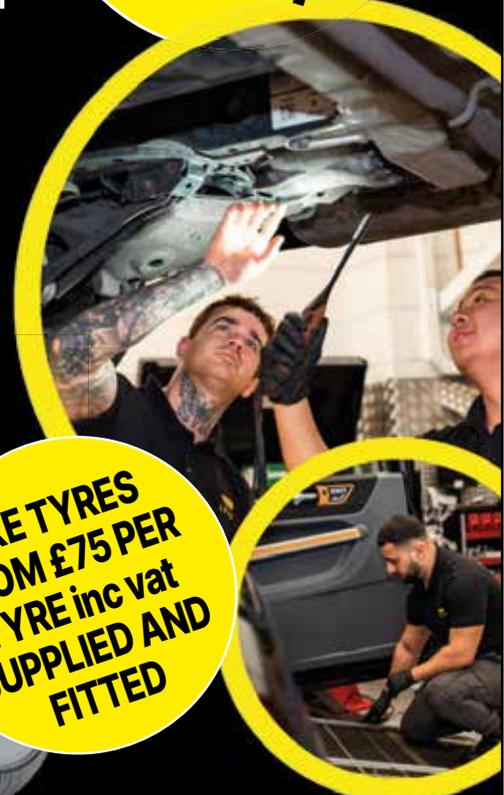
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