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Expert damns Stratford “legacy,”

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Passenger called a “slut”

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The Cab You Drive

UBER GOES TO WAR WITH TfL

US firm to oppose new safety regs in court, p2

More readers than the rest put together. Ask any driver!
Uber has launched a legal action against TfL in a bid to overturn tough new minicab regulations brought in to improve safety in the capital.

The US app company has made a U-turn after initially claiming the regulations as a victory when several of the initial proposals were dropped. It has now applied for a judicial review in a bid to repeal the new rules, which it feels are too strict.

Fearful about the effect of the regulations, which include a new English test, on its business it is attempting to put pressure on Mayor Sadiq Khan.

An email was sent to its customers urging them to oppose the new regulations.

But Transport for London says the proposals are designed to improve standards and are here to stay. The Addison Lee chief Andy Boland said Uber was trying to “undermine” passenger safety and has written to the mayor to voice his support for the regulations.

Uber says that the requirement for part-time drivers to have costly full-time commercial insurance, which is already in force, even when they’re not driving is unfair on them.

It also questions the need for Uber to tell TfL of any changes to its app and claims it will slow down the roll out of new features.

Uber’s about face appears to have followed the rules will take, which are more onerous than expected.

It claims the English language requirement rule, which comes into force on October 1, and means drivers will have to pass a two hour written language test, is harder than the test for British Citizenship.

Those who receive the Sadiq Khan email are asked to click on a link to send a letter to the mayor. This automatically signs the note with the customer’s name and forwards it to Mr Khan.

The company said: “Uber has already invested £100m in London - and we plan to invest even more in the future. It’s why we support the new mayor’s Keep London Open campaign.”

“But bureaucratic new rules from Transport for London send the opposite message and threaten the livelihood of thousands of drivers.”

Helen Chapman, TfL’s taxi and private hire general manager, said they were “working to modernise and improve standards in London’s private hire industry” and it was appropriate for an English language requirement to apply.
Uber throws a temper tantrum

Uber's poorly manoeuvred U-turn makes it look like it doesn't know whether it's coming or going...
Contactless is coming whether we like it or not, so what’s the best deal for you?

A s you should be aware by now, it will be mandatory to have a working contactless credit card machine in the back of your cab from October 3.

So, in an effort to be helpful, I’ve decided to outline the various machine suppliers, costs and contracts, in order to make the choice a little easier. I’m not endorsing any particular one supplier and will make my own choice when the time comes – so don’t shoot the messenger.

I know the decision has split the trade, with some drivers against it, but most seem to be broadly in favour. I am one of those – although I do have reservations about some of the decisions made by TfL.

Our competitors offer the most up to date options to their customers and consequently they snatch work from us regularly. There are many issues, but it can’t be denied that this is partly because of our reluctance, or slowness, in adopting some technological advances.

Only last week, a driver told me of his dismay at the number of airport jobs that simply walk away and download a minicab app after being told by cabbies that they didn’t have a credit card facility.

We are not Luddites, as our former Mayor Boris Johnson once declared, but have a deep seated mistrust of the authorities that govern us, which is not without just cause because they are frequently found wanting.

Understandably, TfL’s decision to make us pay the surcharge hasn’t gone down well with the trade. Nor the decision for a surcharge cap, which, let’s face it, is a sop to greedy card companies.

It is essential for any driver who is yet to choose a provider and book a fitting appointment to get a move on. All the companies listed below are getting very busy.

The fact of the matter is, drivers are struggling, and we need to use all the tools at our disposal to fight the enemy, and to win back some of the work that is rightfully ours.

Credit card options approved by TfL...

**Paypal Here**
The PayPal Here Complete Cab Bundle includes a card reader which allows you to accept card and contactless payments with your smartphone or tablet, a mount to fix the card reader in the taxi’s passenger area and a Bluetooth printer. There are no monthly fees or hidden costs. Drivers will need to set up a PayPal account online.

- Visa, Mastercard, Maestro debit and credit cards, ApplePay and contactless payments accepted.
- No hidden costs, no minimum term, no monthly fees.
- Payments are deposited in your PayPal account straight away.
- UK-based customer support available 7 days per week via phone and email.

Complete Cab Bundle: £269 + VAT.
Transaction fee: 2.75%
Visit [www.paypal.co.uk/here](http://www.paypal.co.uk/here) or call us on 020 8080 6500 or 0800 358 9448

**Verifone**
Verifone offers a free payment system with no upfront costs and no monthly rental fees or maintenance costs. There is no CPU box and the printer is integrated.

- 2 year contract
- Fares paid five days per week
- 24/7 drivers services helpdesk
- Onsite engineers
- All forms of payment accepted inc. AMEX, Apple and Android pay.
- There is a flat 3.95% charge on all transactions, and no additional transactional fees e.g. 3.75% + 20p etc.

Current Special offer:
- £50 sign up bonus
- Meter deal with payment system £90 per year inc VAT.

T&Cs:
- Free to transfer system to a new taxi during term.
- £299 de-installation fee if de-installed during term
- Call 0333 666 1000 or visit [www.verifonetaxi.co.uk](http://www.verifonetaxi.co.uk)

**Payleven**
The Payleven bundle includes a card reader, Star SM-L200 Bluetooth receipt printer, card reader mount for passenger, printer mount for driver and printer rolls.

There is no contract required but the bundle costs: £269 excluding VAT.
 Fees: 1.95% per transaction, except Amex which is 2.75% per transaction)

To sign up visit [www.go.payleven.co.uk/taxi](http://www.go.payleven.co.uk/taxi) select a package and book an approved installation with a partner.

**Cabvision**
Cabvision terminals are linked to the taxi meter and includes a printer and SIM. Accepts all major cards, including American Express.

- Quick Tip prompt
- Damage-free installation
- 24/7 UK telephone support
- Driver reporting app
- Warranty included
- Free replacement till rolls
- Online electronic statements
- Exclusive meter deals (Option 1 only)
- No obligation to take advertising screen or advertisement
- T’s & C’s Apply
- No upfront costs or contract applies.
- Cabvision offers a free replacement in case of theft or damage.
- Option 1 - £1.00 per day + 1.95% per transaction
- Option 2 - 2.95% + 16p per transaction. Support fees are free unless the driver processes less than £700pcm (currently reduced to £400pcm) until year end, otherwise its £4.99 per week inc VAT.

Contact Cabvision Network Ltd
2-4 Hemming Street, London E1 5BL
Tel: +44 (0)207 655 6970
Taxiworld
Taxiworld has two options, one for drivers and one for fleets. Owner drivers can get a “smart, colour screen tablet that offers additional features such as live traffic updates and satellite navigation powered by google maps and A-Z.”

Taxiworld recommends our fixed terminal for fleet cabs. This boasts a full colour touch screen that is permanently fixed to the inside of your cab, unlike the tablet terminal that is easily removed.

There is no installation or rental charge and there is no minimum transaction requirement.

- Transaction fee is 3.75% +20p
- The standard contract is three years but the company is “flexible” with cabs approaching the 15 year age limit.
- Drivers are paid twice a week for free and daily for £1.25 a week.

Taxiworld offers credit card system support from all four of our main London sites Monday – Friday, 8am – 5pm and additional weekend support from the Tottenham branch, 8am – 12pm Saturday.

Our offices: Taxiworld Tottenham / Taxiworld LTC (Brewery Road) / Taxiworld White City / Taxiworld Barking (Long Lane Bodyshop)

*All information was supplied by the companies at the request of Taxi and is meant for comparison only. It is advisable to speak to the companies directly to ask further questions.
The Olympic Park is a £9bn Mausoleum

London

The Olympic Park is a £9bn Mausoleum.

The average annual salary in East London is less than £20,000 but one bed homes on the site sell for around £470,000 – requiring an annual income of £70,000.

London 2012 expert Dr Penny Bernstock, of the University of East London, said: “The whole thing is a scandal.”

The redevelopment of the site is largely deserted, dotted with the empty hulks of two weeks of Olympic glory.’

It has failed to live up to Lord Coe’s ambitious prediction that “the most enduring legacy of the games will be the regeneration of an entire community for the direct benefit of everyone who lives there,” and “a model of social inclusion.”

For a start, the premise that the Olympics would benefit ordinary East Londoners is a con, according to Jenkins.

London has a serious shortage of affordable homes, but developers in Stratford are basically being told “do what you like.”

They now intend to set aside a measly 600 seats (and an outpost of the

Vis-A museum,” over which will loom tower-block apartments.

“As we can see again in Rio, the Olympic Games are a disaster for host cities,” he says.

“The £10.6m Orbit slide.”

They are estimated to have cost a million people their homes and jobs in the past half-century — for no ‘legacy’ whatsoever.

“The Stratford site ... lost 300 businesses and 14,000 jobs in its cluster of factories, warehouses and canal-side businesses. These informal activities never return, for the simple reason that the lofty vanities of Olympians prefer parks, stadiums and windy spaces. It used to be called fascist planning. It is now excused on the grounds that sport justifies all.”

It is also an appalling drain on public funds, as the LLDC’s 2014/15 annual accounts reveal.

The Orbit tower, designed by Turner Prize-winning artist Sir Anish Kapoor, was supposed to attract 350,000 tourists and make a £1.2 million profit in its first year. In fact, it was visited by just 123,000 people and lost £520,000, and has now been turned into a £12 a go slide.

LLDC chief executive David Goldstone, whose salary and perks are not far short of £200,000, was forced to admit to the London Assembly that Orbit had amassed a debt of £10.6 million and cost £2 million a year to run.

The £269million Olympic pool is no more profitable, and together with the Copper Box arena costs £642,000, with a similar deficit is expected this year.

The London Games cost as much as six large NHS hospitals or 60 secondary schools, but the LLDC sees things differently and says that despite the enormous task, “over the next 15 years we will build a new heart for East London.”
Recent figures show increased compliance activity which has both good and bad points for the trade.

Some additional facts
- New regulations for PHV Hire and Reward insurance came into force on July 11, 2016. In the first week, 1,703 PHV checks were carried out including, 491 insurance checks; 158 did not have their documents on them and 46 unfit notices were issued because H&R insurance could not be verified.
- From April – June 2016, 12,334 PHV and 4,692 taxi driver checks resulted in 2,906 reports against PHVs and 954 against taxi drivers.
- Operation Border started in July at key transport hubs and included enforcement of unattended taxis left on ranks and illegally parked PHVs around railway stations.
- Between April and June, 357 taxi drivers were reported for not wearing a badge.

Licensing Active Licences
The table below confirms the number of licensed taxi drivers broken down by type (All London and Suburban). For Suburban drivers it also highlights each sector passed.

### Operation Heathrow Enforcement Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Apr-Jun 15</th>
<th>Apr-Jun 16</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>PHV drivers advised &amp; moved on</td>
<td>1,691</td>
<td>1,472</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHV drivers reported for no badge and stopped from working</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHV drivers reported for not wearing their badge</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHV drivers reported for plying / section 2 offences</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking ticket issued</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlicensed drivers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expired discs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrendered PHV disc</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of drive offs</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>804</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Heathrow Enforcement Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Apr-Jun 15</th>
<th>Apr-Jun 16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles inspected</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advised</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>No Identifier</td>
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<td>Identifier Exemption</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifier Displayed Incorrectly</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Badge</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badge Not On Display</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Bill</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Unsigned</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Newly Registered Taxis**
- The Euro 6 standard came in on September 2015. The vehicle manufacturers had a derogation (i.e. exception) to continue to sell Euro 5 taxis at the same time as Euro 6 taxis until the end of 2015.
- The Euro 6 Vito taxi is in development and is expected to be available in September 2016.
Transport

Millions of pounds is to be spent drafting in more transport police to ensure the safety of passengers using the new Night Tube. Transport for London is handing British Transport Police around £3.4 million of extra cash which will enable the force to provide at least 100 officers. The announcement follows the unveiling of plans to quadruple the number of TfL enforcement officers to 332 by September 2017 to target on illegal minicab activity.

The much-delayed 24 hour Tube service finally got underway on the Central and Victoria lines on Friday, September 19. The service is expected to boost the night time economy by £360m, according to Mayor Sadiq Khan, and provide around 2,000 jobs.

British Transport Police, Chief Superintendent Martin Fry, said: “We have recruited extra police officers in order to ensure there is a visible uniformed presence across the network on Friday and Saturday nights.

“Station staff and passengers will see a presence at key stations, and mobile teams who will travel the lengths of the Central and Victoria lines throughout the night and the Northern, Piccadilly and Jubilee lines, once they are open.

“A network of BTP rapid-response vehicles across London will also be in place to ensure police will be ready to attend any incident quickly.

“Police presence will be backed up by CCTV cameras across the network, supported by the London Underground Control Centre, which operates 24-hours a day, seven days a week, working closely with the police to respond to any incidents that may occur.”

King’s Cross was revealed to be London’s most crime-ridden station earlier this year, according to the BTP, which showed 457 crimes were recorded at the station in the 12 months to December 1. Oxford Circus and Stratford stations were also high up the table, recording 344 crimes each in the same period, with Victoria not far behind on 308.

The Northern and Piccadilly lines will go 24 hour in the autumn with other lines to follow suit.

To complement the new Tube services a number of new taxi ranks have been appointed at Fairlop, Wanstead, West Ham, Kilburn, Dollis Hill, Neasden, Queensbury, High Barnet, Totteridge and Whetstone, Finchley Central, Hendon Central, Oakwood, Brent Cross and Mornington Crescent.

A further 14 ranks are in the pipeline and should be appointed soon at Seven Sisters, Colliers Wood, Barons Court, White City, East Acton, North Acton, Northfields, Hainault, South Woodford, Woodford, West Finchley and Bounds Green.

Night Tube to get Extra Police

News in Brief

St Pancras Protest Appeal

Taxi drivers who took part in the demonstration on Pancras Road in April and were given a section 59 notice by police are urged to contact the LTDA legal team.

The LTDA is investigating the possibility of taking legal action against these notices, which state that the taxi concerned can be seized if it is found being driven inconsiderately in the next 12 months.

A number of taxi drivers staged protests between April 18 and 21 over the failures of Transport for London.

Please contact John Luckhurst at Taxi House on 020 7266 3607

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sherbettaxirentals.com
Court

A “kindly” cabbie came to the rescue of an Uber passenger who was called a “slut” by her driver and ditched by the side of the road late at night.

The taxi driver not only comforted the victim, Frances Carbines, but gave her a reduced fare after hearing of her plight.

She has since complained to Uber about her treatment but the company dismissed her claims and refused to apologise.

After a meal with friends in Shoreditch, Ms Carbines said she had got the Uber to take her home to Crouch End, but the driver started taking her to Brixton.

When she alerted him, the driver became aggressive, calling her a “slut” and commenting on her short skirt, before telling her to get out of the car on Waterloo Bridge.

But Miss Carbines told the Standard: “He took the wrong address and tried to take me to Brixton. When I complained he said I must live in Brixton because the system couldn’t be wrong.

“He said ‘get out or something bad will happen to you’ and stopped on a busy dual carriage way. He didn’t even pull over, then he called me a slut.

“I was shaken and crying and the Uber driver made me get out at night miles from home. He didn’t even pull over, then he called me a slut.

The British Council worker said she opted for Uber because she did not have any cash. She was eventually saved by a taxi driver, who she paid by getting money from her mother when she got home.

The cabbie only asked for £20 instead of the usual £30 fare.

Miss Carbines described him as a slim Londoner with grey hair, square framed glasses, and a “kindly face”, who had been working as a driver for 20 years.

She said: “I wish more drivers could be like you.”

Miss Carbines has also demanded an apology from Uber.

Uber is investigating the incident but has denied that it unfolded as described by Miss Carbines.

In response to the company’s callous reply, Ms Carbines posted an open letter to the company on Twitter.

She said: “Of course, you or your driver couldn’t possibly have known this. But regardless, you should provide a safe service to your customers: male or female, young or old, rich or poor.

“They should never be made to feel intimidated, abused, frightened or upset when paying for a service which is only to be driven safely from A to B.

“When I posted about this on Twitter, you didn’t reply. Instead, you posted ‘Uber driver called me a slut.’

“Please refer to tph notices 115/13 and 19/13 on their website for ‘official’ advice

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Trade

LTC still has the London taxi market all to itself and this will remain the case until Mercedes makes its long awaited re-entry into the trade and starts selling its new Euro VI model at the end of September. Even with uncertainty surrounding the economy and the cab trade, LTC has been performing well, with 77 new cabs sold in July.

However, cautiousness is still king, brought about by the uncertainty. Many drivers are awaiting the arrival of the new TXE next year and as a result second hand cab prices remain stubbornly sky high. In fact, early TX4s are now fetching more money than they did three years ago, which is almost unbelievable. The big question on everybody’s lips regarding the TXE is what will it cost? The Euro VI TX4 is now upwards of £42k and the Euro VI Mercedes will be £47k, so what price state of the art technology?

Concerns about taxi pricing have not fallen on deaf ears at City Hall either, with some London Assembly members, such as Caroline Pidgeon, calling for TfL to introduce a subsidy plan of some kind, possibly even a bulk buying scheme. But whether this is practical is yet to be decided.

Concerns have not been helped by the pricing strategy of Volvos, which is another of the companies owned by LTC owner Geely. The Chinese manufacturer’s new state of the art XC90 has been priced way above its competitors. In fact, the hybrid version, believed to be using many similar components to the TXE, is £20,000 more than its BMW equivalent.

Unfortunately, drivers expecting any concrete news on this front are likely to be disappointed, because pricing won’t be announced until summer next year, probably around the time that a fleet of the new cabs will hit the streets for real time working trials. LTC hopes to launch the TXE by the end of 2017.

What a Lotto Dough!

Matthew collects his cheque from Bob Oddy

Charity

What better way to start planning your summer holiday than with an extra £5,000 in your pocket.

Every month the LTDA hands over a cheque for that amount to one lucky member whose name is pulled out of the hat and all you have to do to be in with a shot of joining him, is pick up the phone – it costs just £5 each month.

Matthew Coburn, of Surrey, was stunned and a little bit suspicious when Deputy General Secretary Bob Oddy called to say he had scooped thousands of pounds.

“So much so, that he redialled the number to check that it wasn’t a hoax call. Matthew, who collected his cheque at Taxi House, said: “It was a total surprise – I have never won anything in my life before. I did phone back to check that it was real. But I’m looking forward to spending some of it on a holiday; a trip to Italy is on the cards I think.”

To take part call 0207 286 1046 and ask for Jenny.
Go contactless without the hassle

Enjoy simple payments with our new TfL approved contactless payment bundle, tailor-made for taxis.

Get it now – or pay as you go. For more info, go to taxi.izettle.com or call 020 3322 4500.

Our TfL approved contactless payment bundle includes a Card Reader Pro Contactless, a receipt printer and mounts to fix the devices in your cab.

Read more about the bundle and our pay as you go option on taxi.izettle.com. Or give us a call on 020 3322 4500.
Working in the frontline is an increasingly risky business with hundreds of taxi drivers being subjected to assaults each year. So, it pays to learn how to defend yourself and LTDA members once again have the chance do just that by signing up to Ricky Manetta’s popular Krav Maga course.

The martial art is a self defence system created in the 30s to protect Czech Jews from anti-Semitic attacks. And once again we are offering a

the eight week course in East London to LTDA members.

More than 1,000 taxi drivers have benefitted from the training, which many have hailed as life-changing.

Cab driver and self-defence expert, Ricky, says: "This is all about giving people confidence, so that they can deal with threatening situations. The ultimate aim is to help drivers get out of violent or threatening situations without having to fight."

Not only does Krav Maga give the skill was developed by the Israeli army and teaches the use of blocking, grappling and wrestling even those wielding weapons.

Drivers have even claimed it improved their driving.

The Department for Transport has agreed to pay £30m and is £15m underwriting of the bridge. A further £30 million will come from Transport for London.

Lord Davies also admitted that the bridge would not be completed until 2019, a year later than scheduled.

The Garden Bridge is the brainchild of the actress Joanna Lumley and intended as a memorial to Princess Diana.

It was championed by former Mayor Boris Johnson, but was mired in controversy when questions were raised about the procurement process won by project designer Thomas Heatherwick.

New Mayor Sadiq Khan has backed the scheme but said TfL will pay no more than £30m.

The tree and shrub bridge would span the Thames between Temple underground station and the South Bank.
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CARD FACILITY CHARGES & RATE COMPARISON. Comparison based on taking £600 (30 fares x £20) over a 28 day period. VERIFONE: 3.95% + no additional costs or add-ons, includes free installation (equivalent total rate 3.95%, equivalent fee £23.70). CMT: 3.75% fee + 20p per transaction (equivalent total rate 4.75%, equivalent fee £28.50). CABVISION 1: 1.95% fee + £1 rental per day (equivalent total fee 6.62%, equivalent fee £39.70). CABVISION 2: 2.95% fee + 16p per transaction + £4.99 rental per week (equivalent total rate 7.08%, equivalent fee £42.46).

TfL APPROVED & FUTURE-PROOF. Terms & Conditions apply. £50 Bonus payment offer expires 31 July 2016.
Cool for Kelly and Ace for Alex

Flitting around London on a mission to spread a little happiness amongst the ranks is a pretty good job, especially one then sun is out. Our spotters like nothing more than seeing the smiles on drivers’ faces when they hand them £150 worth of M&S vouchers for nothing.

Our diary spotters recently stumbled across Kelly Cashman, after spotting her snazzy LTDA diary in the windscreen. Kelly, who was picking up her copy of TAXI in Euston, was delighted with her windfall. She said: “Fantastic. I’m already looking forward to making time to get along to my nearest store.”

Short while later and he was more than happy to take some vouchers off our hands. Alex, of Bexley, said: “Great, thanks very much - it’s a nice bonus.”

Each year we give away almost £8,000 worth of vouchers, so the odds of coming up trumps are pretty good. Just make sure you have your LTDA membership diary on display and let us do the rest.

Kelly “Fantastic”

Alex: “Bonus”
JOIN FOR £16.80 PER MONTH WITH £12.80 ALLOWABLE AGAINST TAX!

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Address ____________________________ Postcode _________________________
Tel _______________________________ Mobile ______________________________
Email ______________________________
Date of Birth ________________________

Badge No. ____________________ Green (G) or Yellow (Y) ____ When obtained - Month ______ Year ______

Have you been a member of the LTDA before? (Please tick) YES ☐ NO ☐

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 a Share Certificate will be issued to me if my application is confirmed.

Signed ____________________________ Date __________________

Please complete parts 1 to 5 below to instruct your branch to make direct payments from your account. Then return the form to the LTDA, FREEPOST, (PAM 2005), London W9 2BR

LTDA Basic Direct Debit Instructions

INSTRUCTIONS TO YOUR BANK/BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY DIRECT DEBITS:

To the manager of ____________________________
Address ____________________________

_______________________________

1. Please write the name and full postal address of your branch in the spaces above.

2. Name of account holder ____________________________

3. Account number ______________

4. Bank sort code ____________ ____________ ____________

For Office use only

Originator’s Identification No. 9 1 4 4 2 8

Originator’s Reference ____________________________

5. Your instructions to the Bank/Building Society, and signature:

• I instruct you to pay direct debits from my account at the request of the LTDA LTD.
• The amounts are variable and may be debited on various dates.
• I understand that the LTDA LTD may change amounts and dates only after giving me prior notice.
• I understand that if any Direct Debit is paid which breaks the terms of this instruction, the Bank/Building Society will make a refund.

Signature(s) ____________________________ Date __________________

Bank/Building Societies may not accept instructions to pay Direct Debit from some types of account

Phone 0207 286 1046 now!
Surviving Troubled Times

Have we ever experienced more troubling times than the past four years? We have fought nickolaws, TFL indifference, global corporations, the London Olympic drought, cycle lanes, our mortgages, and even wrestled with our own conscience over our decision to do the Knowledge in the first place. On top of all the above, we have to contend with ill-informed people, who opt for the “cheaper,” less safe Mickey Mouse brigade from the US. The hanging rear view mirror boxing gloves appear to be the only weapons we have! Or are we are quick to criticize things... 

Rory Fraser

Cheers to a Top Cabbie

I recently witnessed a plonker in a white TX4 from Long Lane Cab Centre who, upon seeing the London Bridge rank was full, reversed onto the top of the feeder rank and despite remonstrations, remained unphased, and jumped ahead of six other honest cabbies. This sort of thing is ignorance in the extreme and reflects badly on us. 

Dave Jenkins

Hail to Steve

Recently took a cab with a driver called Steve, who lives in Potters Bar and also works in Barnet. We both enjoyed travelling to the Caribbean in Barnet. We both enjoyed in Potters Bar and also works due.

Rosie Chisnall, West Hertfordshire TR (email Rosie.Chisnall@whht.nhs.uk)

The Kindness of Cabbies

I was in London recently and the traffic was horrendous because the Northern line was closed, and because of a cycling event. I picked up a taxi at King’s Cross and asked him to take me to the National Gallery Café, where I was meeting friends from Italy at 3.30pm. The taxi crawled through the terrible traffic very slowly, and I arrived at my destination at about 4.15pm. The fare was £27, so I went to give the driver two £20 notes, intending to give him £50. He refused, handing me back one of the £20 notes, and giving me another £10, saying I should take that and buy myself a bottle of wine for undergoing such a stressful journey! When I said no, he insisted that I take it. I have told lots of friends about him, and they were extremely impressed by his kindn

Hilary McCusker, BBC Scotland

Don’t Pass Empty Ranks

I think we should adopt a new slogan, “don’t pass an empty rank!” The campaign should start at Moorfields rank. At least 50% of the time it’s got a parked minicab or an ambulance on it. If it and the Great Russell Street rank were serviced better they’d be available for working cabs.

Neil Hutchinson

Play Fair!

TFL really must tell those yellow badge drivers wrongly plying for hire in Fulham, Wandsworth and Tooting that they should not overtake cabs plying for hire legally.

Adrian Card 70322

The Best Bar None

I would like to thank the LTDA and Anthony Street in particular. The reason for my gratitude starts with a chance meeting. I was ranking up at Buckingham Palace and got chatting with Anthony he was a Marshall outside the palace. I told him there was under three months left on my cab licence. I happened to mention extensions on the cab licence, and he told me that there are certain circumstances and criteria that a person has to fall into for a taxi to be considered for an extension. I told Anthony of my situation, and he said I would probably meet these requirements. Anthony was very helpful, and said to leave it with him. Roughly two weeks after I submitted my application I was involved in an accident, which resulted in my cab being written off, and I had just been granted a year’s extension — a double whammy. I informed Anthony and he was sympathetic. He said he would find out if the extension would still apply if I got it repaired. The nice lady who crashed into me was denying responsibility, and with the expiry date on my cab plate getting closer and closer, I started to think that was it for the cab. Eventually she admitted liability and Anthony had finally heard from TFL - it was good news. However, all the work had to be done by a registered garage. The parts had to be genuine taxi parts and new, with a bill and receipts and part numbers for each bit. Anthony sent all the relevant documentation to TFL, which then asked for a four wheel alignment with computer results and print out with one day to go, argghh! It wasn’t easy, as not many places do taxis, but I found somewhere in Bermondsey. I took my cab to the test centre and it passed. Pheew! I have my cab for one last year! Thank you Anthony, and the LTDA for all the help and guidance through a stressful time.

Adam Hutchins

Support Guaranteed

Unfortunately, the driver did not leave a name or a contact number, so I would like to say thank you very much to him through TAXI.

I understand that black cabs are under pressure from Uber and the like, but actions like his mean that I will continue to be an ardent supporter of black cabs.

Paul Humphrey

Do you have a gripe or praise? Contact us at 0207 121 0523 or email editor@ltda.co.uk
that gets up my nose when I am stuck in horrendous traffic-jams – invariably caused by Boris Johnson’s barmy bike lanes - is the thought of the perpetrator of this mayhem, packing his bags and getting ready to jet off to some distant clime (first class of course) as our Foreign Secretary. Clearly, ascending the political ladder (course) as our Foreign Secretary.

Sadly, we’ve become all too familiar east along the Embankment, passing with the aggro of heading (or not!) east along the Embankment, passing huge and mostly empty cycle lanes. Now we have been lumbered with a western approaches to Parliament Square, namely Storey’s Gate and Great George Street. Storey’s Gate is bad enough, with heavy traffic approaching the square, reduced to a single lane because of the massive cycle lane. But Great George Street is an absolute joke, you couldn’t make it up! Single line traffic, with traffic lights about 100 yards before the square – only allowing south and north-bound traffic to proceed alternatively. But the biggest joke of all is that the massive and often deserted cycle lane has got its very own traffic lights! The guys tell me that a fare from Paddington to Waterloo becomes far too expensive and the punters won’t stand for it a second time – and who can blame them? Instead, they will head to vehicles approaching the square, reduced to my ear about the two southbound approaches to Parliament Square, namely Storey’s Gate and Great George Street. Storey’s Gate is bad enough, with heavy traffic approaching the square, reduced to a single lane because of the massive cycle lane. But Great George Street is an absolute joke, you couldn’t make it up! Single line traffic, with traffic lights about 100 yards before the square – only allowing south and north-bound traffic to proceed alternatively. But the biggest joke of all is that the massive and often deserted cycle lane has got its very own traffic lights! The guys tell me that a fare from Paddington to Waterloo becomes far too expensive and the punters won’t stand for it a second time – and who can blame them? Instead, they will head to vehicles approaching the square, reduced to

London has been brought to a standstill but the solution isn’t to build more cycle lanes. Instead, they will head to vehicles approaching the square, reduced to

The following day Nicola phoned the RSPCA for a second time and the

ketty of a cat up a tree?" She then went on to say - before banging the phone down - “give her three days and she’ll be down.”

The following day the eagle landed on

“What’s The Point of Black Cabs?”

Certainly not a question I would pose, even though he appears much more sympathetic to our trade, he gave notice from day one that he is in favour of more pedestrians and even more cyclist. He’s still going ahead with plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street and he’s given the go-ahead to the controversial north/south cycle highway from Swiss Cottage to Oxford Street. This will entail the massive and often deserted cycle lane has got its very own traffic lights! The guys tell me that a fare from Paddington to Waterloo becomes far too expensive and the punters won’t stand for it a second time – and who can blame them? Instead, they will head to vehicles approaching the square, reduced to

That makes sense! Letter number two

The author, the maver should consider that “the mayor should consider whether to postpone the closure of part of Avenue Road and Regent’s Park outer circle to traffic while HS2 construction is underway. HS2-related roadworks are already set to bring NW1, NW3 and NW4 to a grinding halt as it is, without closing yet more north-south routes.” That makes sense! Letter number two focused on the theory that these cycle lanes are mostly about the benefits of “improving London’s air.” The author, a cyclist, argued that boosting riding “is an almost irrelevant side issue here – and at worst a distraction.” He makes the valid point, “that the only way significantly to improve Londoners is to reduce pollution from motor vehicles.” Both of these letter-writing cyclists are intelligent enough to realise that creating cycle lanes won’t get rid of the vehicles on our roads. They will simply be using an alternative road and spewing their toxic fumes on a different route. If only our politicians realised this simple fact!

The following day the eagle landed on

The following day the eagle landed on

The following day Nicola phoned the RSPCA for a second time and the

But this doesn’t happen anymore thanks to massive cuts – and the dreaded, “elf ‘n safety” laws! My neighbour Nicola became distraught recently when her moggy disappeared into the upper branches of a massive tree outside our house. She quite sensibly phoned the fire brigade, only to be curtly informed that they wouldn’t come out because it wasn’t an emergency. She was advised to phone the RSPCA. They said they would look into it, but didn’t show for the next 24 hours!

In the meantime my attempt to watch the golf on telly was rudely interrupted by various neighbours and children shouting out the

I was hoping that the new Mayor, Sadiq Khan, would have a different perception on the cycling situation when he took office. But sadly for us – even though he appears much more sympathetic to our trade, he gave notice from day one that he is in favour of more pedestrians and even more cyclist. He’s still going ahead with plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street and he’s given the go-ahead to the controversial north/south cycle highway from Swiss Cottage to Oxford Street. This will entail the massive and often deserted cycle lane has got its very own traffic lights! The guys tell me that a fare from Paddington to Waterloo becomes far too expensive and the punters won’t stand for it a second time – and who can blame them? Instead, they will head to vehicles approaching the square, reduced to

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No matter how careful, even the best drivers in the trade can find themselves with legal trouble when the odds are stacked against them.

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Crash, bang, wallop...

Our Caught on Camera mailbox was once again bursting with all manner of weird and wonderful pictures laying bare the chaos on London’s roads.

As usual, there were a high number of the now obligatory examples of the Uber drivers’ mastery of the art of driving badly.

After a show hands, the snap of the Uber car park came out on top – unlike Londoners, who will always be the losers while the US company is allowed to expand.

We do our best to use as many of your pics as we can each week in the paper, but don’t be deterred if you haven't seen yours yet – it may appear in the near future.

As you should know by now – the winning snap gets the photographer £30, which is not bad for a few seconds work.

Send your entries to us via the MMS line on 07908 640017 or email them to editor@ltda.co.uk

New Uber car park opens

U-turn (illegally) if you want to

They’re cheap though!

Highway Code? What’s that?

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It's tough being a cabbie at the moment but spare a thought for drivers in worse situations

W
ev'e a lot to deal with in the London cab trade these days, but there are things going on up the M1 that'd make your hair curl. How about local taxis being kicked off Luton Airport in favour of London minicabs?

I'm shocked that the contract to supply transport at Luton Airport has been given over to private hire. Travellers wanting a taxi have to pre-book in arrivals, and then walk around to the car park where their Addison Lee minicab will be waiting. Customers might not think anything is amiss when they're directed to a line of shiny black vehicles looking vaguely like taxis, but they'd surely be surprised if they realised they were being picked up by a London minicab.

Then again, no-one can read the car's licensing identification through the tinted glass, and many unsuspecting tourists believe they've landed in London anyway.

Luton Airport sits in Bedfordshire and is my local airport. Despite the misleading name, "London – Luton Airport," it has nothing to do with the city. I have a green card in the back of my cab indicating an All London licence. If Luton Airport was really in London I could pick up there too – and at Stansted, Southend and Gatwick, come to that. It's a marketing scam aimed at conning tourists into thinking they're flying into the capital. Once in Luton, the airport can then broker a long and expensive ride into London, while making money from those actually providing the transport.

If you've ever dropped off at Luton Airport you'll know that you're charged for the privilege. I'm unhappy at being charged £2.50, but as I've possibly made a day's money in an hour, the pain doesn't hurt for long. It's a bigger deal for the local drivers facing an uncertain future.

We can survive by cruising the streets looking for work. We can put on at any station rank, or use City and Heathrow Airports, if we're so declined. Outside London, drivers rely on ranks, and even when they're allowed to rank at major transport hubs they are often charged hundreds of pounds a year for the privilege. My objection to this is that local taxis provide an essential service to these stations and airports. It shouldn't be reliant on payments and contracts. This isn't Ronnie and Reggie. Taxi drivers should be encouraged to rank, and for free. Without an adequate supply of taxis you will get touts forming unofficial ranks around the corner, and private hire cars blocking up residential streets awaiting calls.

Airports and stations offer a snapshot of "rip-off Britain." These shopping centres with transport facilities attached, cynically maximise their profits by selling outrageously priced facilities such as luggage weighing machines, trolley hire; and pay-toilets at certain stations. Then there's the over-priced food and drink offered to captive consumers, and airport duty free shops more expensive than your local supermarket.

When I lived in Northampton, the cab drivers had to pay to use the station rank. The rank had a lengthy feeder and cabs were always available. Some drivers queued two hours before getting a job. The situation appears similar in Leighton Buzzard where I live now. The station and town centre ranks are well serviced, but business often appears slow. There's only a small shopping centre, and there's little in the way of a night-time economy. I suspect there are few opportunities for night men at the 24 hour MacDonald's.

In London, we take for granted the facilities our out of town colleagues have to fight tooth and nail for - and have to fight to keep. I hear the cab rank serving Nottingham train station has been moved nearly 600 metres away, and many journeys will be made longer if a proposal to restrict taxis using bus gates is imposed. Demonstrations against these changes included elderly and disability groups. People take taxis expecting a door-to-door service, and because they

TRAINS, PLANES,
AND TAXIS

Chris Ackrill, Taxi Driver and former Knowledge Examiner

It’s tough being a cabbie at the moment but spare a thought for drivers in worse situations
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Too many drivers are getting caught out at Harrods but it really isn’t worth the risk

We are still getting lots of LTDA members getting 655 PCNs for over ranking on Brompton Road, whilst trying to get outside the front Harrods. Every time I drive past there seems to be at least two cabs doing it and I’m sure Tfl absolutely love receiving this easy money. So, if you are passing there and you see a fellow cabbie doing it, and you’re stopped in traffic, please give them the heads up. The fact of the matter is it’s not worth the gamble. Drivers will end up with a fine bigger than any job they will get off the rank. Also, please be aware that there is a new camera at Selfridges which looks down onto the bus stop where again drivers seem to be chancing a ticket.

Be Smart!
Compliance officers seem to be spending a lot of time around Victoria Station and Harrods - so keep your eyes peeled. LTDA members are getting warning letters for all sorts of reasons, ranging from not wearing a badge, smoking in the cab, loitering, and illegal ranking, dirty cabs and some for illegal signage in the back of the cab.

In most cases the member receives a warning letter that gives them no right of reply. The LTDA has been discussing the matter with TFL as some members deny any knowledge of being approached by the compliance officers and feel they should be able to defend themselves. However, the upshot of this is that it’s best to try and maintain the highest of standards at all times and try to avoid giving compliance any opportunity to give you a second glance.

Dodgy Hotels
I’ve been pushing a cab around London now for 20 years, but it only took me about six weeks to either find out for myself, or be informed by other drivers, which hotels were bent or straight. Now, I realise we’ve had a very hard over the last few years, but I am still amazed that fellow drivers service these hotels and take all the jobs that the doorman can’t take a cut from, or put another way, sell to a driver. To be honest, I don’t think the hotel doormen give a monkey’s about one driver boycotting their ranks, but I do take a lot of pleasure when it’s pouring with rain, or there is trouble on the Tube, and I drive past a bent hotel with a few jobs waiting and I don’t stop: although these circumstances are few and far between, and some may call it petty, it works for me.

A very good pal of mine actually worked for me.

A very good pal of mine actually worked for me.

The Winner by a Mile
I have never really been an avid watcher of the Olympics until they arrived in London. I ended up watching a hell of a lot of it though, because there was, as I’m sure you remember, no work at all for three weeks. It was one of the worst periods for the trade in my career. But if you watched the Rio Olympics and have a looked beyond the arena in which the events were being held, it makes you realise what a fantastic looking city we work in. I have been lucky enough to travel around most of Europe and, although I work here, and the traffic can drive you to despair, London is without doubt for me the best city of them all.

Relicensing at NSL?

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- Insurance certificate (not a copy) - properly affixed in the luggage compartment
- Valid MOT certificate (issued 13 days or less before inspection)
- If vehicle is less than one year old an MOT is not required
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Although life in 21st century London is stressful, it’s nothing compared to what our Victorian predecessors had to endure. Chronic overcrowding and appalling sanitation ensured diseases such as smallpox, cholera and typhoid were rife. This, coupled with treacherous working conditions, meant that by the 1850s the life expectancy of an average Londoner was just 43. With people dying in such unprecedented numbers, the city’s graveyards rapidly became overwhelmed and unable to cope – so packed was ‘Crossbones Yard’ on Redcross Way for example that corpses began to poke through the soil. In response to this burial crisis, Parliament established the London Necropolis & Mausoleum Company in 1852, the aim of which was to create a vast, single cemetery on the outskirts of London capable of handling the flow of bodies from the metropolis. The site chosen for this City of the Dead was at Brookwood, Surrey, which at 500 acres was the biggest cemetery in the world when it opened; it remains Britain’s largest today.

To ensure corpses could be swiftly transferred from London to Brookwood Cemetery the LNMC came up with a unique innovation - the Necropolis Railway, a private funeral train based at Waterloo. Inaugurated by the Reverend of St Olave’s in November 1854, the Necropolis Railway’s London terminus was kept strictly separate from the rest of the station and offered special waiting rooms for grieving relatives. The funeral coaches themselves were segregated into Anglican and Nonconformist and, as in life, the deceased also had a choice of first, second and third class. The first coffins to be transported on this sombre line were a pair of tiny caskets containing two baby twins who’d been stillborn at a cramped house on Ewer Street.

Although the Necropolis Railway was contracted to service all funerals as quickly as possible, it didn’t take long for first and second class passengers to take priority. Third class passengers were mainly paupers in cheap coffins, their scant arrangements funded by charity from their local parish and, unsurprisingly, there were a lot to handle. As the backlog grew, the company took to stacking the bodies of these awaiting unfortunates beneath the railway arches close to Westminster Bridge Road. This grim practice sparked panic amongst locals who feared the rotting corpses “heaped up together like so many bales of worthless goods” would spread disease. The Times meanwhile reported that local businesses were suffering as people - “especially ladies” - were inclined to avoid the area. There was further controversy at the line’s Brookwood end, where a refreshment room intended for mourners resulted in at least one engine driver becoming so drunk he was unable to drive his train back to London.

At the turn of the 20th century Waterloo station underwent a major expansion which required the Necropolis Railway’s terminal to shift to a new base on Westminster Bridge Road. Opened in 1902, the brooding facade of this second station can still be seen today – it’s now Westminster Bridge House. As with the station’s first incarnation, waiting rooms were divided by class and religious belief and an oak paneled chapel was also included where folk could pay their final respects before boarding the funeral train.

It was estimated the Brookwood Cemetery would take up to 50,000 burials per year when it was first conceived. However, as cemeteries such as Kensal Green, Tower Hamlets and West Norwood started to develop within London, numbers on the Necropolis Railway began to dwindle, a process further aided by the introduction of cremation in the late 19th century and overall improvements in health.

In total, the Necropolis Railway transported just over 203,000 bodies during its 87 years, a figure well short of the original estimate. The final blow came on the night of the April 16, 1941, when the station was pounded in a massive air-raid which shattered the tracks beyond repair and the funeral carriages were smashed and consumed by flames. The service limped on for a while after switching to the main platforms at Waterloo, but it soon became clear the operation was no longer cost effective. The Necropolis Railway ferried its last body - that of 73 year old Chelsea Pensioner, Edward Irish – to Brookwood in May 1941 and was officially dissolved at the end of WWII.

**Waiting rooms were divided by class and religion**
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NEWS

MASSETT’S

CAMERA HOTSPOTS

- MANSION HOUSE STREET ................................................................. Yellow box
- BERKLEY STREET J/W PICCADILLY ............................................ Yellow box cameras
- BAGLEY LANE/NEW KINGS ROAD ................................................ Yellow box
- HARRODS ................................................................. Zig-Zags behind the rank in Brompton Road and no U-turns
- CAMDEN ................................................................................. 20mph limit
- WATERLOO ROAD .................................................................... Zig-Zags
- SELF RIDGES ........................................................................... Zig-Zags
- LUDGATE HILL .......................................................................... Zig-Zags
- CLAPHAM HIGH STREET ............................................................ Zig-Zags
- ISLINGTON ................................................................................ 20mph limit
- RED ROUTES ................................................................................ Tfl is actively enforcing yellow box restrictions
- TOWER BRIDGE ........................................................................... 20 mph speed limit – average speed cameras
- LIME HOUSE LINK ....................................................................... 30mph speed limit
- NORTH CIRCULAR ........................................................................ Average speed cameras
- SMITHFIELD ................................................................. Do not park in loading boxes, they are enforced by camera
- A13 .......................................................................................... Average speed cameras in operation
- THE CITY ....................................................................................... 20mph limit

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Comparing overseas transfer deals is now more important than ever. Since the result of the EU referendum the pound has fallen against almost all of the world’s major currencies. This means we get less for our hard-earned money when we travel abroad and need to buy other currencies.

Many travellers fall for the marketing gimmicks used by banks and foreign exchange providers. Providers often advertise “0% commission” or “the best exchange rates” – but all of them will make a profit from the transaction somehow.

Finding the best currency deal comes down to one key question: “After all the fees and charges, how many euros/dollars etc will I get for X pounds?”

Waiting until you get to the airport to buy your holiday money is madness!

Do you wait until you get to the airport to buy your holiday money? If you do, you’ll be paying over the odds to exchange your pounds into foreign currency.

Holidaymakers heading to Europe this summer could be collectively missing out on £265 million by not buying their money in advance. Euros are on average 7.3% cheaper bought from a local bureau rather than from an airport kiosk, according to a recent study by Sainsbury’s.

Its banking analysts calculated the cost of changing £500 into Euros. A traveller exchanging their money at the airport would get an average of €575.05. However, if they used a specialist foreign exchange provider instead they’d typically get €617.25 for £500.

Company travel money expert, Simon Taylor, said: “Holidaymakers could save €42 per transaction by getting their money in advance – enough for a lunch for two in Spain or perhaps a few drinks in France.”

The best deals are offered by specialist foreign exchange bureaus in the high street but it’s usually necessary to book ahead to lock in a good rate, rather than just turn up. The same bureaus operate at airports too but walk-up customers get a rough deal.

At the time of writing, £1,000 would buy €1,161.78 delivered to your home with BestForeignExchange.com. Rival TravelFX would give you €1,160.30 for £1,000. If you went to Natwest, you’d get just €1,126.80 for £1,000. That’s almost €40 less.

It’s a similar story with US dollars. £1,000 will buy $1,289.15 with BestForeignExchange.com but M&S Bank, which is often popular with travellers, would give you just $1,268.90. It’s not just on cold hard cash that banks will rip you off abroad – they will charge you extra to use your debit or credit card abroad too. One of the worst offenders is the Bank of Scotland debit card. If you make a non-sterling transaction it will charge you 2.99% plus £1 per transaction. So if you made a £10 transaction overseas it would actually deduct £1.30 from your account.

Most debit cards also have charges for using an ATM overseas. One of the highest charges is from Clydesdale and Yorkshire Banks. They both charge a 3.75% ATM fee with a minimum of £1.50. So taking out £100 cash would cost £103.75. The only debit card with zero fees worldwide is linked to Norwich & Peterborough’s Gold Classic current account while Metro Bank’s debit card doesn’t charge additional fees in Europe. The best credit cards to take on your travels are Halifax’s Clarity credit card or the Creation Everyday credit card – both have zero fees for overseas use. Other cards will charge you up to 2.99% non-sterling transaction fee, plus up to 5% if you use your credit card to withdraw cash abroad.
TAXI DRIVER’S £9795 REFUND FROM BANK

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Al’s technological breakdown leaves him empty-handed but can he recover the cab fare?

I’ve all had those moments, when – out of the blue – a hand goes up, and the flicker of late points in your direction. Such a moment occurred a couple of Fridays ago, just as I was about to pass the Marylebone Road side of the Landmark Hotel. I saw the top-hatted linkman’s beckoning hand, and just had time to nip into the gap between the bollards and the traffic lights at the foot of Harewood Avenue, and squeeze down the narrow driveway between the railings to the hotel entrance. Through the open luggage door window, I heard the phrase that’s becoming more familiar: “do you take credit cards?”

I’m still a bit of a technological dinosaur, but if nothing else, I’ve learnt from my cab-driving son, Danny, that having a card facility is almost as important as a having a taxi meter. I had no idea where the fare was going. It was early Friday evening. The female passenger and her suitcase on wheels could have been destined for Heathrow; just as well as Pimlico or City Airport. As it was clear and we were parked up in the forecourt, I asked my passenger if she would bring up the relevant app on the phone. She declined, citing that credit card details as we made our way west. She vanished into the vanishing point.

I looked around for clues. Maybe the inside lane was moving faster. My eyes followed a white van as it zipped down the nearside lane – and vanished behind the shrubbery of Heston Services. I peered into the door window, I heard the phrase “they’ve shut the motorway.”

I called Danny at home and asked if he had any idea what the problem was. He called me back almost immediately. “There’s a car on fire near the airport slip road,” he said, “they’ve shut the motorway.” He illustrated the news with a short video of the blazing vehicle. My passenger looked at the clip of the smouldering wreckage, glanced at her watch, gave an almost imperceptible shrug, slid back into the seat, and glued her phone back to her ear. If she wasn’t bothered, I wasn’t.

The traffic surged forward. I couldn’t make up the lost 25 minutes, but at least the road to Terminal Five was clear and we were parked up in no time. My passenger handed me her credit card, and began the process of filling in her details. Despite a complicated surname, I punched numbers and letters into the app – checked with the passenger that the fare was OK, and sent the details on their way. No response. No “on screen” spinning wheel to identify a transaction in progress, I could just as well have been holding a marzipan mobile. By now, my passenger was standing at the side of my cab with her suitcase. “I can’t stop,” she said handing me her business card. “Email me your details. I’ll send you the fare.” She vanished into the glass and steel edifice, and I was left contemplating her card. All sorts of scenarios ran around in my mind, until all the tumblers clicked into place and spelled “F A I T H.”

I emailed that evening, and got a response the following morning. She would get her PA to handle it first thing on Monday, except Monday was Independence Day. The PA emailed - everything was under control; however, payment could not be processed until the 11th of the month. I had about a week to wait. The week came and went. I contacted the PA. An automatic message told me she was on vacation and wouldn’t return until the 23rd. That date came and went, too. I prepared to up-my-game, and looked up the name of the head honcho. It was a global company, and my CEO fare dodger was a major player. I sent her PA another reminder, and c’d the CEO.

Once again, despite the five hour time difference, at first light, she emailed back. She had no idea the debt had not been honoured. Heads, I thought, would roll. Back came the PA, Pauline. Sorry, Alan, she said (by now, we were on first name terms) but there is no precedent on our payment system to pay a cab fare in pounds sterling. That’s what’s caused the delay. And there I was thinking – they’ve got a bank account, I’ve got a bank account – ta dah! “Have you got a PayPal account?” “No, but my daughter in Law, Jo, said I could use hers!”

Emails wafted through the ether like humming birds in a hurricane and 24 hours later, the fare was paid. I’d been paid and 195 pounds was in my bank account. What happened to the one? PayPal took five quid commission!

### THE DINOSAUR AND MISSING CAB FARE

**AL FRESCO**

![Two Fingers]

More readers than the rest put together! 23 August 2016 | TAXI 33
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Scientists could learn a lot about the human race by studying people dancing at weddings.

Last month we had the first wedding of a Mini Meg, and what a grand day it was. There was a lovely, meaningful service, followed by a great meal and tear jerking speeches that were full of love. And then came the dancing.

I don't know whether we Megs are unusual, but we don't often dance together. Actually, I don't dance much at all these days unless you count Zumba classes and hopping on the spot when I am furious with Mr Meg about something or other.

So to find ourselves on the dance floor with members of our extended family and friends was a revelation. The first thing I noticed is that people of …ahem…a certain age….have poor balance. And no balance whatsoever when they drink and dance.

And, not only do they tend to fall over but, when they do, they take other dancers down like skittles. Uncle Peter, 57, was grooving away to Disco Inferno when he dashed forward, toppled backwards and slid – creating quite a pile up of beautiful people.

Confucius ever say that it takes one man to fall down than your average groover. Cousin John reckons he is to Northern Soul dancing what Rudolph Nureyev was to ballet. He was bobbing about, spaghetti legged, to the Northern Soul classic Apples, Peaches, Pumpkins and threw a spectacular backward flip. The crowd around him clapped and cheered so loud that no-one heard his wrist break, and they thought he laid out on the floor and crying with laughter. But no, cousin John had to be ferried to Waterloo after the reception, but instead it dropped him off at King's A&E. We all signed his plaster cast the next day.

Another rule of mob dance is that a bopping crowd must have someone in the middle. For at least three minutes that someone was me - until the movers and shakers got bored of my funky chicken elbow pumping and face pulling routine and actually turned their backs on me.

Mr Meg requested that the DJ played Ooops Upside Your Head. This song is hard core for heroes because it involves sitting on the dance floor and smiling, even though your backside is in a puddle of beer and wine. The “toon” is also a potential marriage wrecker because Mr Meg was sat between two nubile young women who appeared to find him charming and hilarious. I can't think why.

When the song was over Mr Meg jumped to his feet and assisted his laydees-in their low cut and very short dresses – up from the floor. I, his wife of almost 30 years, was left to get myself into a standing position by turning over onto all fours and heave ho-ing to my feet.

But the family that dances together stays together - and us Megs had a family bop and a sway to. All was forgiven.
Why should you apply to join the **Platinum Insurance Scheme**?

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- Deferment period before claim payments start – 14 days
- Maximum period for which weekly benefit is payable – 52 weeks

The age limit for joining Platinum is 49 years and for the New Gold is 54 years. You are covered up to your 65th Birthday (subject to terms and conditions).

---

**Terry Lyddall**
LTDA member & Platinum scheme subscriber

Approaching the age of 50, I visited my GP for the routine TFL medical. I then discovered, out of the blue, that I was suffering from Thyroid cancer. It was a great shock, but thankfully I had the LTDA Gold Scheme payments to help me out during my treatment.

---

**Lynn Granger**
LTDA member & Platinum scheme subscriber

I was unable to work for 12 months; I could never have coped without the LTDA sickness payments.

---

**Can you afford not to join?**

- **Platinum Premium**
  - £59.90 per month

- **New Gold Premium**
  - £51.20 per month

(This also includes LTDA Basic Membership of £16.80 – of which £12.80 is allowable against your tax)

**This is the equivalent of less than £2 per day**
Depending on your preferred tipple, this is the equivalent of:

- About half a pint of beer a day
- About two thirds of a cafe latte, cappuccino or even an old fashioned “coffee with milk” a day

---

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Alternatively, please feel free to call in at Taxi House and pick up an application form or download the form from our website at **www.ltda.co.uk**
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A minicab driver is one of four people accused of trafficking vulnerable women from South East Asia to become prostitutes at hotels near Gatwick Airport.

The 40-year-old private hire driver, who lives in London, has been charged with conspiring to control prostitution for gain between February 1, 2013, and June 2015.

He is also alleged to have used or controlled criminal property (a bank account) between November 1, 2013, and June 2015.

The driver also faces a separate charge of using or controlling criminal property (a bank account) between November 1, 2013, and June 2015.

Sussex police carried out an operation last summer targeting organised crime.

A gang was shipping women to the UK, planting them in hotels across South East England and sexually exploiting them for cash.

Detectives received tip-offs from hotel staff who reported suspicious activity.

They examined more than 400 hotel bookings made by men via text from two websites.

On the day of arrests, June 10, a total of 10 female victims were found at various hotels.

Now four people arrested during the investigation on June 10 have been charged before Crawley Magistrates’ Court on September 7.

Stay in the know with the LTDA

DVLA reminder
The photo card part of the driving licence lasts for 10 years and must be renewed after that period. The licence becomes invalid if it is not renewed with a current picture.

15 year reminder
The London taxi 15 year age limit refers to the cab’s ‘birthday’ (in the log book) not its plate date.

For example: A cab passed when it is 14 years and 11 months old WILL be granted a further 12 months of life.

Cabs may be booked in for testing in the normal way when the plate has 28 days or less to run.

The cab can then work up to the test date. If the plates are taken off with more than 28 days to run, both the plates and the paper licence must be surrendered to one of the six NSL inspection centres in and around London.

The ‘unplated’ cab must then not be worked, and at least one week should be allowed before attempting to book the next NSL test, to allow the computerised booking system to recognise that the plates have been registered.

Lost/stolen identifier
If your identifier is lost or stolen you must notify LTPH immediately (0343 222 4444 / ph. enquiries@tlph.gov.uk).

You may then continue working. A letter of confirmation will be sent out to you by Transport for London, prior to a replacement identifier being processed.

Shop a tout
Anyone who sees touting or any other form of illegal cab-related activity is urged to contact TfL with the details.

Take down the registration number and make a note of the date, time and location where incident took place.

Type “cab enforcement” into your internet search engine and follow the links to the ‘report illegal activity’ section of the TfL website.
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To complete our crossword puzzle and be in with a chance to win £50 send your completed entry to: Crossword 375, Taxi, Taxi House, 11 Woodfield Road, W9 2BA before 13 September. First name out of the hat gets the cash.

Across:
7 Suit fabric (6)
8 First of series (6)
9 Lesion (4)
10 Indoors (8)
11 Tuesday to Thursday (7)
13 Colourful flower group (5)
15 Untamed (5)
17 Tramp (7)
20 Sea-level (3, 5)
21 Chilly (4)
23 Atom twinned molecule (6)
24 Referee (6)

Down:
1 Area (4)
2 Pallid (6)
3 Non-landing spacecraft (7)
4 Bingo (5)
5 Detritus (6)
6 German accordion (8)
7 Frozen water store (8)
8 Meeting place (7)
9 Self-confidence (6)
10 Cooking instruction (6)
11 Jewelled headband (5)
12 Harp (4)

CONGRATULATIONS!

ISSUE 373 WINNER
Peter McCracken, Edgware

Across: 7 Mailed, 8 Girder, 9 Rand,
10 Poolside, 11 Sticker, 13 Alarm, 15 Obese,
16 Hairnet, 20 Admonish, 21 Fail, 22 Eczema, 23 Autumn.

Down: 1 Savant, 2 Glad, 3 Adopter, 4 Igloo,
5 Wrecker, 6 Vendor, 7 Customer, 14 Warhead,
15 Bedeck, 18 Enigma, 19 Cigar, 21 Feta.

Just for fun...
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.
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### LTDA Meetings

- **LTDA AGM**
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    - Woburn House Conference Centre,
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  - **Friday, September 16 at 9.30am**
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