

August 2010



# Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International

*Why does  
this dent in  
Martin's  
taxi  
damage  
DaC's  
reputation  
as The  
Gentleman's  
Circuit?*



*At last, could this be trade unity?*





# NASH'S NUMBERS

From Alan Nash (A95)

It's that time of year again when Eurostar change their timetable. The new table is below and valid until 11 December 2010...

From	Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Notes	Train
Brussels	07:55	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			9109
Paris	07:58	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9005
Paris	08:28	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			9007
Brussels	08:56	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			9113
Paris	09:36	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9011
Brussels	09:56							✓	until 30/8/10	9117
Brussels	10:26	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			9119
Paris	10:34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9015
Paris	11:28	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9019
Paris	12:29	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9023
Brussels	12:33	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9181
Paris	12:59					✓			until 30/8/10	9025
Paris	13:28	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	until 30/8/10	9027
Paris	13:28	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	from 31/8/10	9027
Paris	14:31	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9031
Paris	14:59							✓	until 30/8/10	9033
Brussels	15:03						✓	✓		9137
Brussels	15:26	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9139
Paris	15:29	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	until 30/8/10	9035
Paris	15:29					✓	✓	✓	from 31/8/10	9035
Brussels	15:56							✓		9141
Paris	15:59					✓			until 30/8/10	9037
Paris	16:36	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9039
Brussels	17:03					✓				9145
Paris	17:34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9034
Paris	17:59							✓		9045
Brussels	18:05	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		9149
Paris	18:29	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9047
Paris	18:29						✓			9047
Paris	18:34							✓		9047
Paris	18:59							✓		9049
Brussels	19:03	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9153
Paris	19:29							✓		9051
Paris	19:34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9051
Brussels	19:56	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		9157
Paris	20:06	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9053
Paris	20:34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9055
Brussels	21:03						✓		from 18/9/10	9161
Paris	21:29	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9059
Brussels	21:33	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	until 11/9/10	9163
Brussels	21:33	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	from 12/9/10	9163
Paris	21:36						✓	✓		9059
Paris	21:59							✓		9061
Paris	22:29						✓	✓		9063
Paris	22:34	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9063

DaC driver Sid Nathan (K88) has asked if I can compile a list of Central London hand car washes. As these are rarely advertised, if drivers would like to send me their favourite wash n' dry place, I will happily publish them. Emails to [alan@nashsnumbers.co.uk](mailto:alan@nashsnumbers.co.uk) please.

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# from the editor's desk

Where have you all been? If you decide to go on your hols, why should I suffer! It's bad enough having to go through the usual quietness on the road once the kids break up from school, but even that hasn't been so bad this year. It's just the trade in general and when you are looking for something to write about but nothing actually happens!

As usual, there have been many members of Dial-a-Cab who have taken part in charity events that involve running, walking and even climbing mountains. These are notable achievements that not only does **Call Sign** report on, but in many cases also sponsors. In fact I have no doubt that there isn't a magazine in the cab trade that is involved in as much sponsorship as we are – and it's something I am proud of. However, I'm talking about real news and there hasn't been a lot of it. Of course, real news can be amusing as well as serious and whilst the news aspect may be missing, the two cases below made me smile...

## Case 1

Just for a change, "Russell Wilson" of internet blog *The Nissen Hut*, has had a go at the magazine and me and at least given me something of a smile! Using a 10-year old photo of me nicked from **Call Sign's** website, Mr Wilson begins by writing about those who speak from within ivory towers before mentioning me by name. He claims I have "...wrongfully accused both DC and TG as being co-authors of *The Nissen Hut*. Although he only uses their initials, the cab trade at large are well aware who the individuals are that are said to have reported Dial-a-Cab to the FSA and to not publish their full names to accompany his false accusation is a cowardly act of a desperate man and in my opinion has put paid to him having any credibility as a cab trade journalist!"

Well, one of the first requisites of a journalist is to give your name, so Mr Wilson's credibility won't stretch much further than mine! He / they / she / it (is that better???) also claims that DaC and I have some devious plan to manipulate the cab trade – apparently something I have been doing for years! He then proudly claims I'm not even close in my estimation as to who writes his blog, before accusing me of not having the balls to name the two drivers! Pots, kettles and a huge smile to that piece of lunacy! At least my name is at the bottom of every editorial I write. "Mr Wilson" slags off anyone who he / they / she / it doesn't agree with, but never, ever uses a name. Sadly I had something of a summer cold and my laughter split my lip open!

We're also asked why "...neither Fisher nor Dial-a-Cab have condemned the organisers of the recent demonstrations for their involvement with the ultra right wing EDL organisation?" Could that be because 99% of those drivers present had no political allegiance outside of the usual trade organisations? Mind you, as he / they / she / it is obviously scared to give their name, could it be that it is actually they who are the right wingers? Mind you, in their case it should probably be right whingers, because those who criticise from behind closed curtains are usually whinging cowards anyway.

They then start on Dial-a-Cab's **Natalia Shalom (A34)**, who **Call Sign** is proud to have worked with to help expose the Nobu bullies before the rank was placed outside. According to The Wilsons – sounds better than he / they / she



/ it - Natalia was a "gift from heaven" for DaC before *The Nissen Hut* then went on to link the situation to Concierge. My split lip was stopping my laughing, but only after great difficulty!

They end by saying I had no hard evidence that those I accused were actually involved – something akin to the old detective movies where the culprit challenges the police to "prove it copper!"

Well I can't, but at least everyone can see whom the accusation has come from. Can "Mr Wilson" say the same about the response? And by the way, the man I referred to as TG was never really a runner as the last I heard he wasn't even in the trade having departed to learn the plumbing business. I just wanted to see if it drew any response. More in case 2...

## Case 2

On the same topic but from a different outlet; in the July issue of LCDC's paper *The Badge*, under a banner of *The Nissen Hut* and using the same photo as the blog, former DaC driver Darryl Cox has written a piece about me and how I falsely accused him and another former DaC member of being behind *The Nissen Hut*. Mr Cox uses the same expression as *TNH* in saying I "didn't have the balls" to name the pair rather than just use initials. Again Mr Cox makes absolutely no mention of the fact that *TNH* author uses no name whatsoever, but has no problem in criticising anyone it doesn't like.

Mr Cox then goes on to answer some of the points in my original article beginning by telling *The Badge* readers, indeed almost to the point of boasting, how he and Tony Gillam "...were indeed responsible for DaC being investigated by the FSA, an investigation that took ten weeks to complete." He even put 'ten weeks' in capitals as if to show the world how much it must have cost and called it "nonsense" that absolutely nothing untoward was discovered.

His reasoning – and get this - because DaC didn't expel him! Well, that well and truly split my lip open once again! *TNH* and other internet sites have often laid the claim that DaC gets rid of anyone they don't like and yet here we have Darryl Cox, someone whose latter years with Dial-a-Cab were spent seemingly trying to bring the Society down, criticising the Society because it didn't expel him! Well Mr Cox, correct me if I am wrong, but weren't you completely within your rights to go to the FSA if you collected 100 signatures? Ok, so I also have a list on file of many of those 100 drivers who had no clue that

you were using the petition to report DaC, but that's another story. The question was always whether there was any logical reason why the two of you should ask the *Financial Services Authority* to investigate DaC. The answer sticks out a mile. NO! So why did DaC allow you to stay? Well you broke no physical rules and moral rules don't count. So let me repeat once again for the benefit of Darryl Cox, who obviously has something of a mental block on the subject. You lost! The FSA found absolutely nothing because there was nothing to find. DaC always play by the rules – some might even say too much because some businesses thrive on lies and deceit. But yes, you and Tony Gillam did cost the Society a lot of money, so your time wasn't totally wasted.

Darryl Cox then goes onto the subject of Tony Gillam. Unlike DC, TG was expelled but it had nothing to do with his part in going to the FSA, it was in connection with his failure to do 40 account rides month after month after month during the busy period prior to recession. In fact he did a total of 7 trips in six months and was put on complaint after being given several chances to increase his trip numbers. The complaints committee expelled him.

Amazingly, Mr Cox says that TG was expelled "illegally" following "...a protracted court case once again costing members of DaC a huge amount of money." DC does seem to get a buzz when DaC have to waste money.

He goes on to say: "...Mr Gillam won his case and DaC was forced to pay compensation."

So as DC has opened up the matter, let me first correct him. It wasn't a court case, it was an employment tribunal. But yes, DaC had to shell out. TG claimed he couldn't do DaC work because he had a back problem so he preferred working at Heathrow (where I assume he refused luggage or any passenger that weighed over 10 stone) instead.

The tribunal found that Mr Gillam was indeed capable of complying with the 40 trip rule, but also found that his back problem was a disability. They claimed that it would not have been unreasonable for the Society to disapply the 40 trip rule in his case, but added that they were satisfied Mr Gillam was not expelled because he was disabled. He was seeking compensation of £20,000 - £40,000. The Tribunal awarded him £2,500 for injury to his feelings – out of which he had to pay his own costs.

I suppose that had it not been discovered that TG was working at Heathrow, DaC may well have given him some leeway on the 40 trips – although as it's nothing to do with me, I can't be sure of that. But I know a substantial number of drivers who tell me that DaC are very understanding when it comes to illness.

Tony Gillam and his bad back then left the trade and I believe became a plumber. Is that easier on your back? No doubt Darryl Cox will let us know in a column somewhere or other!

Also on that same page is yet another pop at Brian Rice from LCDC Chairman Grant Davis. If his words have as much credibility as Darryl Cox's article on me, then that too is probably a load of dangly bits - and at this rate my split lip will never heal!

**Alan Fisher (oh look! He's not afraid to sign his name)!**  
callsignmag@aol.com

# reflections of the chairman

## MAQS

*Transport for London* issued a consultation document earlier this year regarding the *Mayors Air Quality Strategy* (MAQS). There were also a series of meetings at the PCO with the trade in order to gauge their opinion. I think it's probably safe to say that the Mayor would like a ten-year-old age limit on taxis in London by 2012; however, the trade believe this should be a fifteen-year age limit by 2012.

How can anyone possibly argue against the taxis in London being newer and greener while emitting less particulates into the atmosphere? No one could, but it is how you arrive there that is important. I believe that the trade at the moment could not afford the ten year rule and all driver organisations are adamant that it should be fifteen years.

However, as you might expect, all the three radio circuits in London would like a newer greener fleet to help us compete with the competition. I also know that many members on Dial-a-Cab believe the fleet should be newer and greener. These are the members that invest in new vehicles and who believe that older cabs on the fleet are letting the side down by making the taxi trade less attractive in comparison to the Private Hire industry. Running a radio circuit, I also subscribe to that theory along with both ComCab and the Radio Taxis Group. Of course, what I believe to be right and what the trade can actually afford in the short term are two different things.

What I find irritating is that the trade is only allowed to buy one of two prescribed vehicles, whereas the minicab industry can purchase whatever they desire. The authorities then come back to us and state the vehicles we were told to purchase are dirty and they need to be replaced by newer greener vehicles. If that is the case, then TfL should introduce a scrappage scheme for the trade. After all, the Olympics in 2012 are going to cost approximately £10billion and unless the Mayor improves the air quality in London, Europe is going to fine him £300m and at this moment in time, London has already exceeded its quota of emissions for the current year. In fact it was exceeded in the first six months!



The LTDA approached all the major interests in the taxi industry - barring the RMT - to see if we could arrive at a joint decision. I believe the story is elsewhere in this issue of *Call Sign*.

As I explained earlier, the radio circuit's interest is slightly different to those of the driver organisations, but here was the opportunity to present a united front to the authorities. This is probably the first time we have done that since 1997, some thirteen years ago. Consequently, the circuits had a meeting and we decided to agree the joint proposal on the grounds the trade could not afford the Mayor's proposal at the present time.

Consequently the Radio Circuits, LMCPA, LTDA, Unite, LCDC and even the Manufacturers assembled at Dial-a-Cab House to sign the document that was to be presented to TfL. I just hope this is the forerunner for all the trade to work together in the future, something I believe is vitally important. What must be remembered here is that the radio circuits - and particularly both taxi manufacturers - signed this document for

the sake of trade unity, something I believe to be commendable. After all, if the Mayor introduces the ten-year rule from 2012, which he could well do, then the manufacturers would obviously sell more vehicles.

As I stated earlier, all the trade organisations were present at Dial-a-Cab House for the signing, the only exception being the LCDC. Although they had signed the document, their Chairman would not do so in the company of some of those present at the official signing. It isn't particularly gratifying to know that one of the trade's driver organisations has a Chairman of such immense stature, that when events are not going exactly as he wants them to, he just picks his ball up and goes home! Interests of the trade at heart? Not from where I'm sitting...

## August again

We are now entering the slowest month of the year, but I am hopeful it will be busier than last August, which was the quietest we had ever known. The trend is on the increase because for the past two months we have exceeded turnover over the corresponding period of last year, so I am hopeful this continues through to August.

However, even if that does happen, it will still be a quiet month with the schools closing for their summer break, so hopefully some of you younger members will be taking the children on holiday, thereby at least missing a week or two of August.

For all you older members that do not go away in August due to inflated prices and lots of children everywhere (I know you have done all that), I wish you a good month...

**Brian Rice**  
Chairman  
Dial-a-Cab

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### Call Sign August 2010

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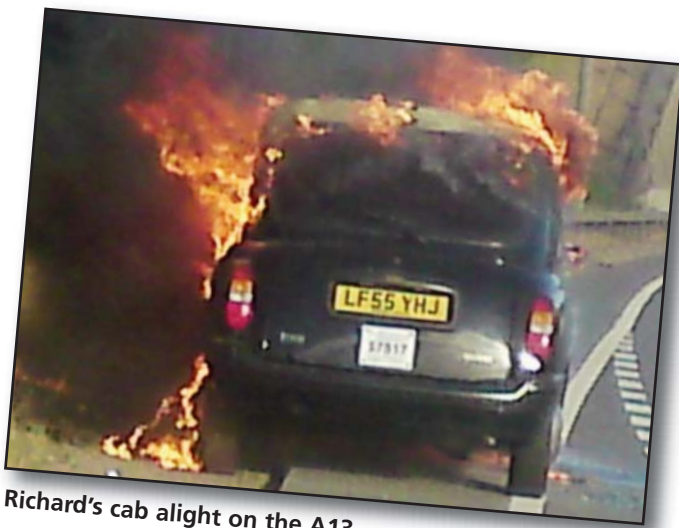
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*As Richard licks away on his ice cream...*

# DaC driver's TX2 catches fire!



Richard's cab alight on the A13



Richard a few days later talking to Call Sign

**Richard Payne (O80)** is a very lucky man. While bowling merrily along the A13 recently in his '55' plated TX2, he suddenly noticed smoke pouring through the dash air vents!

"I knew it wasn't good news," Richard told **Call Sign**, recalling the hair-raising experience in a remarkably calm tone of voice.

"I had just had some extensive (and expensive) work done on the engine after the long rubber belt that drives the alternator and power steering pump broke apart and penetrated the timing chain case on the front of the engine. That caused the timing chain to jump two teeth on its sprockets, meaning that the inlet and exhaust valves hit things inside the engine that they were not meant to hit!"

Still calm and matter of fact, Richard went on to tell this magazine that the damage required a reconditioned cylinder head, valves, timing chain and all that goes with that.

"I took the cab out of the garage on the Friday evening with all the repairs apparently completed and worked over that weekend and throughout the following week. All was going well up till then. But on the Saturday evening - a week and a day from when the engine was repaired - I was travelling eastwards along the A13 when smoke suddenly billowed out of the dash air vents. I managed to pull over onto the hard shoulder, grabbed what personal effects I could and literally escaped from the burning cab, which was by now well and truly on fire. I tried to use the cab fire extinguisher, but it had no effect whatsoever. I phoned the fire brigade and then, while waiting for them to arrive, the LTDA's **Steve McNamara** was passing with a baby in the back, closely followed an ice cream van!"

A smile crossed Richard's face as he continued his story.

"They both stopped and the ice cream man said I looked rather stressed and offered me a free ice cream complete with a '99' Cadbury's Flake! By then the fire guys came in force and put out the fire in minutes while closing off the traffic lane. They told me that a cab can catch fire quickly because of the inflammable materials used in its manufacture, but I guess you can say that about many cars that are built nowadays as well," Richard added.

"Eventually four police cars attended the scene, took details and arranged for my wrecked cab to be towed away somewhere. I still do not know exactly where in Essex it is. My insurers are awaiting an engineer's report before I can be paid out, as the cab is quite obviously a burned-out write-off."

At the time Richard spoke to **Call Sign**, no one had any idea why the cab caught fire, or why it was so completely destroyed in less than four minutes, although it seems to be very unlikely that it had any connection to the TX4 fires in 2008.

Richard ended by saying that he knows how lucky he was to

have got out of that inferno without a scratch or a mark, and for that alone he was grateful. Then he drove off in his rented Fairway.

**Call Sign** also spoke to **Steve McNamara** later that evening. He wasn't working at the time he stopped, but told us what he saw.

"To see someone's taxi engulfed in flames like that is truly awful, but to see the driver standing there watching his cab go up like that while calmly eating an ice cream was astonishing and almost made me laugh!" He also managed to take a photo and our thanks go to Steve for sending it to **Call Sign**.

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# Jerys World



Just cos Dial-a-Cab is bigger than us, knows more than us, has more knowledgeable people than we'll ever have who are far better looking than us and with a magazine that makes our blog look like rubbish, that doesn't make them better than us. So what is it we're Nissen???

## Hybrid taxi completes Brighton to London eco rally

Along with Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, **Chris Huhne**, celebrities and designers alike began this year's Brighton to London Eco-Rally, which is sponsored by *Bridgestone Tyres*.

On the rally were a range of low and zero-emission vehicles going from the Brighton seafront to Hyde Park. They were waved on their way by ex-Formula 1 driver, Eddie Irvine and for the first time, the participants in their hydrogen, electric and hybrid vehicles included a London taxi. As Chris Huhne pointed out, the vehicles taking part were no longer just souped-up milk floats, with some capable of speeds exceeding 100mph – even though some competitors were using left-over frying oil. That, we have been assured, is not recommended for a TX4 – unless, of course you would like your warranty nullified and your cab to smell something like a kebab shop!

It was *EVO Electric Ltd* that demonstrated the plug-in hybrid version of the London taxi using their *EVO DuoDrive* system. The result showed a fuel economy improvement of 56% and it was suggested that following further optimisation, that might be improved by a substantial increase that could possibly double the average mileage per gallon obtained by most drivers.

The rally provided the first public demonstration of the *EVO Electric DuoDrive* hybrid



Chris Huhne: "These are no longer souped up milk floats!"

system with its axial flux motors and disc-like rotor between two disc-like stators.

According to *EVO*, this design allows for peak power density of 5kW/kg and represents a 33% increase over the previous generation of *EVO* motors, with the highest power density of any electric motor currently available for automotive applications.

The taxi's gearbox was replaced with a generator connected to the rear of the engine and can operate in several modes, which could even allow drivers to use the hybrid version in town and then switch over to diesel when going out of town. Further improvements are expected...



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Dial-a-Cab driver **Terry Catherall (Y90)** has been with the Society since May 1985 and on his own admission didn't put too much effort into anything approaching exercise. But when he realised he was fast approaching the age his father was when a heart attack prematurely ended his life, Terry decided that things needed to change and that he would begin this new regime by taking part in the London to Brighton bicycle ride.

Together with his friend Chris Mckellick and son-in-law Dean Saunders – the trio left the capital on June 20th and began cycling with any sponsorship money they managed to raise – including some from **Call Sign** – to go in aid of the **British Heart Foundation**. Terry told **Call Sign** how the ride went...

"Well, we did it! Me, Chris, Deano and 26,997 others cycled to Brighton to raise £4.5million for the British Heart Foundation. Many thanks to all DaC drivers who donated. If you want, you can still do so by going to <http://original.justgiving.com/terrycatherall>.

The weather was ideal for the ride; our start time was 7.30am from Clapham Common. An earlier 6am start would have been better for us as it got a bit congested at times and we were occasionally forced into gridlock, but we used that time to take on fluids and food.

On route, there were 15 feeding stations with first aid, bike repairs, hot snacks and of course lots of port-a-loos! 150 Marshall points were also scattered along the route in case you needed help. There were also lots of

# TERRY CYCLES FROM LONDON TO BRIGHTON

## To Help the British Heart Foundation



Chris and Terry ready for the 'off'

ambulances and we did see quite a few in action as bikers took a too-close look at the tarmac!

We managed *Ditchling Beacon* without stopping, but tragically one competitor died going up that hill just 6 miles from the finish and our thoughts go out to his loved ones. We did a 9-week training program for this event, going out twice a week and averaging

20 miles each session. Without sounding too smug, we found it easier than we thought! The distance was ok, it's the hills that give you grief and good use of the gears is essential because once you stop, that's it. You have to then walk! Luckily for us, our training took in Ingrebourne Hill at Hornchurch Country Park - it was good practice.

I also trained on my mountain bike, which is hard work on long rides but borrowed a road bike with slick tyres for the event. It came from a Dial-a-Cab driver, so thanks very much for that, Steve.












I would definitely consider doing it again as it has kept me much fitter whilst in training and I intend to keep cycling for the good of my health. The ride was an amazing day, so many people turning out to cheer us on, with thousands lining the Brighton sea front. It really was quite emotional.

*If anyone is interested in doing it next year, perhaps as Team Dial-a-Cab, please let Alan at Call Sign know and he can put you in touch with me. I will be happy to answer any questions."*

**Terry (on your bike) Catherall Y90**

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My God, what an edition the *July Call Sign* was! Three people that I know or knew all mentioned. Firstly there was **Lou Gitlin**, to whose family I would like to pass on my sincere condolences. I met Lou on several occasions out on the road and spoke to him on the radio, a really lovely genuine man.

Then there was **Marie White** who I knew from our Knowledge days. She was on the last of her last 28s when I joined the LTDA Knowledge School, which was run by a guy called Martin (I can't recall his surname), and a Knowledge boy who was on his 21s by the name of **Bernie Silver**. I don't think it's the same Bernie who is a member of the current circuit.

Last but not least, **Stanley Roth**, who I first met on a 2-cab job in Hampstead when we were both on Mountview. In those days he ran a green petrol cab! That would have been back in around 1979 and even then he was expounding the benefits of alternative fuels to diesel.

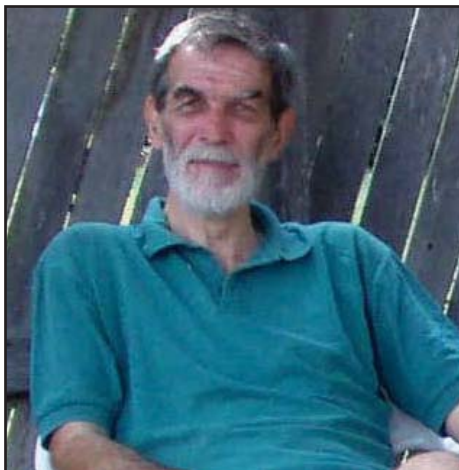
On the subject of the LTDA Knowledge School, one night a bald-headed guy turned up and sat in with us on our table to do call overs. He was obviously pretty good, but I never saw him again until I went for an appearance at the PCO a few months later and he was behind the desk! His name was Mr Shearne, an ex-sergeant and naturally he gave me my 21s - much to the disgust of the infamous Mr Finlay! Not that Mr Finlay put me back, he just laid on the Scottish accent a bit thicker than usual when I next saw him!

Also at the school was **Oscar James** who played Tony Carpenter in the early episodes of **Eastenders**. Coincidentally, the opening scene of that soap featured an actor in a police uniform standing outside one of the houses where a guy had been found dead. I delivered that uniform to the BBC studios from Bearmans!

As for me, at the end of October 2009 I got a detached retina and needed an urgent op at the beginning of November, with a second one in February to remove scar tissue where they had to laser up a hole in the retina. I then had a third op on July 14 to remove a cataract, which I was told was inevitable as a result of the first op! At the end of July I am going back to be tested for new glasses. There's a point to me telling you about my eyes. It provides a salutary lesson to which none of us are usually aware. As we get older, the vitreous gel in the eye becomes more fluid and some people may suffer *floaters* in the eye. One in 15000 will have a problem when the gel pulls away from the retina and can pull a hole into it. The result can be that the gel gets behind the retina, which then peels off like wet wallpaper. If this is not treated early enough, it can cause total blindness in that eye - and is not reversible. I was lucky in that a friend was concerned and made an appointment for me to see a specialist. By that time I was looking out of a slot that appeared to me to be about 1/4 inch wide at the top of the eye. I was told that that if left any longer, I would have lost the sight; as it was they said that they could only restore around 80% in that eye and I have been left with a slight distortion of sight - a horizontal line that appears to have a dip in the middle!

# A Lousy Month in Call Sign

*Says on-line reader Howard Sales in Oz*



amount of time off. I wasn't allowed to drive until after the second op in February but a London cabbie would also have to have a PCO eye test to see if he was fit to keep his licence. So, if anybody starts getting 'floaters', get it checked out straight away. I had it checked by a local optician and he missed the fact that the retina had developed a hole, so make sure that they are good - or go to a specialist.

*Best wishes to all from Oz....*

**Howard Sales (ex-A11)  
Queensland, Australia**

*Ed's note: Howard was DaC's driver trainer for our second generation data terminals. He was also the guinea pig that tried out new software and tracked down drivers reported faults. He later emigrated to Australia where he opened a garage and now reads Call Sign on line...*

## WCDHCD FOUNDERS' DAY CELEBRATION

It was 23 June 1654 that an Ordinance for the Regulation of Hackney Coachmen in London was ordered by the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell together with his Council, to provide legislation for the formation of the *Fellowship of Master Hackney Coachmen*. This was disbanded some years later, but it is the history of that original fellowship upon which *The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers* was found-

ed and on 23 June 2010, the Master, Michael Davies together with his Wardens, Liverymen, Freemen of the Company and guests, attended the Founders' Day luncheon to celebrate at the Grade 1 listed Trinity House.

Following a champagne reception and lunch, guest speaker Colonel Mike Russell gave an entertaining speech. This was an opportunity for many in the cab trade to take time out of a busy working week and it seems to have been enjoyed by everyone, including **DaC** Chairman and WCHCD Lower Warden. **Brian Rice**.

Trinity House is a major maritime charity, which is wholly funded by its endowments. It spends around £3 million every year on the welfare of mariners, education and the training of future seafarers, promoting safety at sea and fulfilling its role as a *Deep Sea Pilotage Authority*.



*DaC's Chairman at Founders Day*



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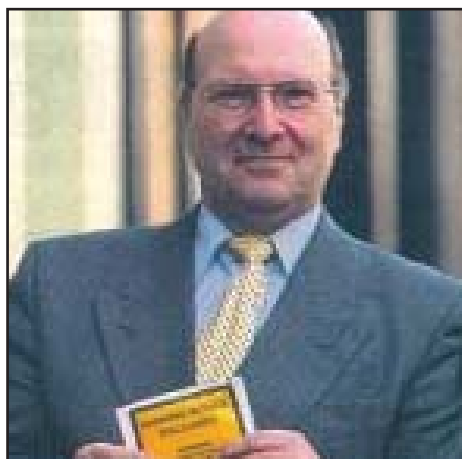
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**Barrie Segal** is the founder of **AppealNow.com** – the website that has helped thousands of drivers facing unfairly dished-out PCNs. Barrie also assists in fighting parking tickets issued to **Dial-a-Cab** drivers whilst doing credit trips, with the result that money the Society now pays out in fines has been slashed!

His ongoing battle against PCN bureaucracy sees him often being interviewed on radio and TV programmes around the world and **Call Sign** came to meet him when he phoned to say how pleased his late mother had been using the disabled TaxiCard. Over the years, his successes against authorities that think they can walk over motorists and especially taxi drivers, whose only crime is the need to park briefly in the course of their work, are many.

Now in a landmark decision and triumph over authority, Barrie – acting on behalf of clients in front of a Parking Adjudicator – heard Camden Council pronounced as being guilty of illegal conduct in the way they produce evidence for parking adjudications. The Adjudicator held that Camden Council had acted unlawfully by failing to make full disclosure of evidence to motorists when cases are submitted to the Parking Adjudicator. Barrie argued that Camden Council had removed evidence from the bundle that is required to be sent to all motorists when appealing to an Adjudicator. DaC drivers such as **Martin Hizer (M47)** and **John Shakeshaft (P52)** are just two of many who know all about receiving PCNs and how important the batch of papers containing evidence sent to those who appeal against the ticket is. So if some papers were deliberately left out, the whole appeal could be threatened – and that's what Camden Council did!

Barrie Segal told **Call Sign**: “**I have complained about Camden Council's behaviour in dealing with appeals for several months, but the complaints had fallen on deaf ears. There have been cases where evidence in the form of copy parking tickets supplied to the Adjudicator but not submitted to the motorist, have been different from the original parking tickets received by the motorist and the motorist was none the wiser.**”

Barrie added: “**It is not surprising in my view that Camden is the council with the lowest percentage of winning appellants (34%) at the Parking Adjudicator. The council's scandalous behaviour in the above case (case 2090479625: Hilton v Camden) and others I have now won demonstrates that motorists have been treated unfairly, particularly where they have relied on the paperwork received from the council. I believe that motorists who have lost cases at the Parking Adjudicator and have not received the full evidence, can seek a refund from Camden Council.**”

DaC are certainly lucky to have someone with Barrie Segal's undoubted knowledge of the rights

# DaC's Barrie Segal Defeats Camden

**Council failed to make full disclosure of evidence at parking adjudications**

and wrongs concerning PCNs – especially as regards to Camden where in 2009 (the last year for which figures are available) they issued 419,666 penalty charge notices and towed away 3,474 vehicles. Then according to those figures, Camden Council had 2,679 appeals heard by the Parking Adjudicator and won 1,769 (66%) of them. Certainly not an encouragement to take on a council who seem to be constantly looking for taxi drivers – whether it's stopping to use the loo or daring to want to U-turn in Southampton Row.

The Adjudicator said that the bundle of papers Barrie Segal's client received was “deficient in a number of relevant documents whereas the enforcement authority (ie the Council or TfL) must send a complete and equal copy of the case papers to both parties. Camden also apparently sent colour photos to the tribunal but black and white to the Appellant!”

The authority should also serve evidence by first class post on the Appellant at their corre-

spondence address, so that in the ordinary course of post it would arrive no later than 4 days before the hearing. DaC drivers will tell you otherwise – some even getting evidence one day before the Appeal was to be heard. The Adjudicator said that failure to comply with the requirement could result in the Appeal being adjourned or allowed on the basis that the Appellant's right to a fair trial had been prejudiced.

The Adjudicator's decision regarding the non-sending of important paperwork to Barrie Segal's client read:

*“I find that the authority has not complied with this direction and that there has been prejudice to the Appellant by the failure to make full disclosure; this is especially so when the authority is aware that an Appellant is represented. The appeal is allowed...”*

**If you need help with a PCN that came other than when doing an account trip with DaC, go to AppealNow.com and get the best help available – from Barrie Segal.**

*The following press release comes from Transport for London..*

## Taxi Advertising and PH Signage

### New TfL guidance

Transport for London has issued revised guidelines for advertising on licensed London Taxis and signage on licensed London Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs). The key changes outlined in the guidelines are the removal of the existing advertising approval process and the approval of full rear window advertising for taxis.

The new guidelines seek to help taxi drivers and advertising agencies to clearly understand what they are allowed to advertise on their vehicles without the unnecessary administrative burden of a formal approval process. The guidelines also clarify what signage PH drivers are allowed to display. They include detailed diagrams to illustrate on which parts of the vehicle advertising/signage is permitted.

The revised guidelines seek to implement a common sense, less onerous process when it comes to installing and maintaining advertising on taxis, whilst providing an opportunity for taxi drivers to earn more money from full rear window advertising.

The guidelines clearly state what owners and operators can and can't do and, in particular, the taxi trade are no longer required to seek our approval for every advert. However, we are on hand to provide additional guidance and assistance should drivers or advertising agencies require it.

If advertising or signage fails to comply with the guidelines, TfL may request a copy of the advertisement or sign and if it is considered appropriate, TfL will request that the advertisement/sign is removed.

See *A Case of Paranoia* in this issue..

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# call centre chat

## SE75

We are now entering the quiet period and it is essential that everyone follows and complies with our procedural rules. Focus should be on booking into zones correctly, especially the outer zones where you have to be physically in the zone before booking in. With the work being slightly down, controllers will have more time to monitor the system.

**For those drivers who regularly work SE75, I can inform you that the account client's summer break will end on 5th September and normal working will begin again on the 6th September.**

## Cab licence

We are also still finding drivers forgetting to bring in a copy of their cab licence. This finds us having to send out reminder letters, which



in some cases does offend. Please remember that a sure way of proving you are the owner of the taxi is by us seeing the cab licence. If your overhaul looks like it will be taking a little longer than necessary, please call Driver

Services and inform them so we can update our records. That also goes for any personal details that change, including mobile telephone numbers. It is essential our records are fully up to date, especially if we need to contact any of you in an emergency.

## Courtesy

One last point is to remind all drivers to remain courteous to clients even when you might find them being a little unreasonable. Let us take the higher ground and prove the service we provide is second to none.

If you are going away, have a lovely time...

**Keith Cain**

**Call Centre Manager  
Driver Operations Manager**

# South Side Stories???

**Gordon Bennett (Y91)** has been with **Dial-a-Cab** since 1994, but his only previous contact with **Call Sign** was in our July 2005 issue when he asked all drivers on the circuit to look out for dodgy minicabs with what appeared to be fake licenses. And his interest in the "little people" seems not to have waned too much since then!

Living on the south London / Kent border, Gordon sees more than his share of both legitimate private hire and the touting variety and has sent **Call Sign** several examples of PH life in the south.

It starts with **Lightning Cars** whose flyer leaflet in the local **Bromley News Shopper** announced that each time you entered one of their minicabs, you were entered into a £750 holiday voucher competition. Even **Call Sign** found it difficult to be too nasty about that, but not to worry, Gordon's south side stories hadn't quite finished.

Next in the paper and spread right across the front page was the story headed: "Absolutely Disgusted." This told of kind-hearted Orpington minicab firm, Jason's Cars, whose driver refused to take a deaf and visually impaired passenger because she had a guide dog with her.

The **Disability Discrimination Act** – of which **Call Sign** has always supported, especially when it comes to seeing and/or hearing dogs – makes it clear that taxis and private hire companies have a duty to carry passengers with those amazing animals at no extra cost. Invariably, that type of dog is always extremely well-behaved and as in the case of Drew, extremely cute with a lovely smile! And ever since that part of the Act came into being back in March 2001 to bolster the original from 1995, anyone failing to comply with these duties would be guilty of an offence and, on conviction, liable to a fine of up to £1,000.

But in all the years we have reported on misdemeanours against the Act, not once have we had to report that it was a licensed taxi driver who was the culprit – it was always a minicab company. Yet another reason this magazine doesn't like the equalisation that Transport for London seems to be pushing for.

But getting back to Gordon's south side reports;



**Guide dog Drew doesn't look to vicious to us!**  
**Pic Courtesy Bromley News Shopper**

last but not least comes a piece on page 15 where a 64-year old minicab driver was sent to prison for 3.5 years for drug offences after his Skoda Octavia was stopped by police in Biggin Hill. They found it stacked with crack cocaine, Ecstasy and cannabis in addition to bundles of cash.

That's Gordon Bennett's life in the south. **Call Sign's** only comment – and yes, we know we're picky – is that there were very few mentions of the words private hire. The Bromley area obviously know that a minicab is a minicab and always will be a minicab regardless of TfL's fascination with PH. Yet the only mention of the word 'Taxi' was when a source from the Guide Dogs Association quoted from the DDA and said that it was an offence for Taxis and private hire to refuse seeing / hearing dogs. How strange that they felt they had to mention taxis in the same breath when they have probably never had a complaint about us refusing dogs!

Thanks Gordon, at least we know that nothing changes whether in London, Essex, Kent or anywhere!

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Just because I'm a bit paranoid about those that used to be known as the Public Carriage Office, as the saying goes, that doesn't mean they're not after us! Transport for London and the Mayor's office have been coming up with a regular supply of press releases and that's where my paranoia comes in. They all seem to have one thing in common and that is a desire towards giving equality to private hire.

In the *January Call Sign*, we wrote of a phone call we received from DaC driver **Jon Robinson (E88)**. He told us about a minicab he'd seen that had a partition and like Jon, we had always believed they were not allowed to have one. What was even stranger was that Jon took registration details of the vehicle and noted the make; a TW200... and that was where the real mystery came in because the TW200 - a cheaper version of the Vito - was made purely as a taxi (out of London only as it does not pass our *Conditions of Fitness*). Jon said that he had never heard of the TW200, so the chances of him mistakenly writing down that name were rather remote to put it mildly. The vehicle also had the usual PH roundel sticker on the rear windscreen.

We phoned TfL's Surface Transport Panel and they said they supported private hire having partitions as it improved the safety of passengers and drivers. They went on to tell **Call Sign** that they had passed on advice from the *British Standards Institute* and the *Vehicle Certification Agency* regarding the installation of driver shields in private hire vehicles to the manufacturer to help them obtain approval, although adding that approval had not yet been received. However, until such time that it was approved, there was still a choice of licensed vehicle types in London ie the Mercedes Eurocab, Fiat Scudo and the Peugeot Partner, all of which allowed optional factory fitted shields.

**Call Sign** then asked TfL since when had PH partitions been allowed as we hadn't heard of it. Skipping the question, they replied that if the partition was factory fitted, then it would be passed but it could not - at that time - be fitted to a PH cab after purchase. TfL also traced the registration number Jon Robinson had given us. They said it belonged to a Fiat Scudo, which was allowed a factory fitted shield if required. So where did Jon get the TW200 name that he had never heard of and which can only be a taxi?

Well that was last December and you will not be surprised to know that TfL have now given permission for PH to fit partitions whenever they want. No doubt one PH company based around Hampstead Road, will over the next few months convert all their vehicles to include partitions and make them look even more like real taxis. Fortunately for Mr Griffin, this paranoid writer hears that the end result - unlike anything new taxis have fitted - will NOT have to be passed so they can have whatever partition they feel fits in with TfL "guidelines." These will no doubt be taken with the same pinch of salt that their rear windscreen wipers used when they suddenly disappeared and apparently something he still hasn't forgiven **Call Sign** for pointing

# A CASE OF PARANOIA?

**Call Sign's Editor wonders why he is becoming paranoid...**



**The TW200 is a taxi out of London, but it is allowed as a PH vehicle here...**

out to the then-PCO, causing the company rather a lot of hassle.

So what next for this Mr Paranoid? Well yet another press release informs the trade that taxis can now advertise anything they like on their rear windscreens (within common decency boundaries) and without approval. More money, so that can't be bad... can it?

Well in return, private hire - who now always get something when we get some small drippings - have been told exactly where they can advertise their company details. Hopefully that will be exactly where it is now, but when you are paranoid you tend to think that something is up and if they

now have vehicles looking like Vitos, with a nice partition and a big door logo, aka Dial-a-Cab, ComCab or Radio Taxis, then can we assume that the radio taxi trade will be closer to Mr Griffin's long-held prediction of PH having all the radio work and us sweeping the streets?

To a paranoid person, it appears that TfL may well end up as that company's spokesperson. And I suppose in all fairness to our friends on the opposite side of the getting-smaller fence, they did have the Vito first...

**Alan Fisher**  
**Editor, Call Sign Magazine**

**You may not need us now, but cut us out for when you do!**

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All we seem to hear about nowadays is how green we have to be and that cars such as the Prius are far greener and evermore shall be so.

But there seems to be evidence from some of the five clients using **Dial-a-Cab's** Concierge system, where car companies they regularly use and register with DaC can be ordered via Concierge, that there is some movement. Up until fairly recently when work was much quieter, records kept by DaC showed that some companies were specifically asking for a 'green' car even though some individual passengers were saying that the Prius was too small for comfort and often too slow!

So **Call Sign** asked DaC Chairman **Brian Rice** whether he had noticed any change and while the answer was not a tremendous amount, but he did say that there had been a shift towards the use of taxis against the Prius.

"Undoubtedly many passengers prefer the extra room that a taxi offers and our figures show that the number asking for a Prius has gone down from the time when banks advised staff that they should use a Prius whenever possible, to what they are now.

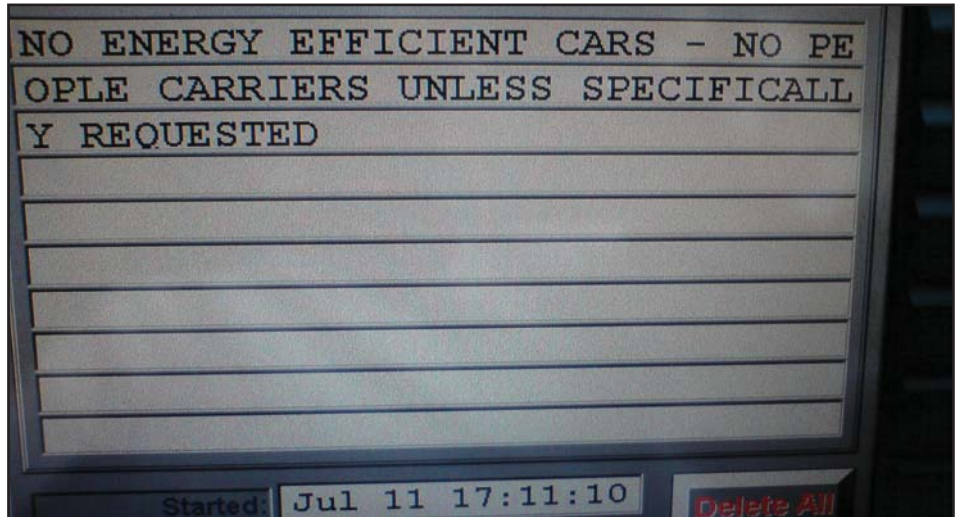
"Taxi usage has gone up against the original number but of course that could also be to do with coverage, because when it gets busy no car companies can complete against our excellent coverage. And as the Prius is not famous for its comfort, put the two together and it comes out in our favour. However, there is no point in denying that much of the work the Prius does was originally done by taxi before the 'green revolution' came in.

"Neither is there any point in pretending that the Mayor is going to look the other way

# Does Green Still Grow the Rushes-O?

*I'll sing you one-o, green grow the rushes-o.*

*What is your one-o? One is one and all alone and evermore shall be so.*



Page two trip details from one DaC client saying he wants a taxi!

when it comes to diesel vehicles after 2015. He wants every taxi to be Euro V but unless he pays for drivers to get one or at least offers a generous scrappage deal, I can't see any huge change in the immediate future. When

you see how much London will be fined if we don't go green, it makes financial sense to help out London's taxi drivers. So will he? It doesn't look too probable, but you can never tell with Boris."

At St John's, Smith Square, DaC's Mike Son organises...

## LTFUC CHOIR CONCERT

Most **Dial-a-Cab** subscribers are aware that Board member **Mike Son** is also a committee member on the *London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children*. On behalf of that charity, he is organising a concert at **St John's Smith Square** on the **15th December 2010** beginning at 8pm.

Although some time away, there has been a great deal of interest so **Call Sign** thought it prudent to let readers know about this event, which we believe will be rather different. Mike Son explains...

"The project was intended to be a Christmas Carol concert with traditional Christmas Carols and some classical festive music. However, there are other religions celebrating festivals around that time of year too, including the Jewish festival of Hanukkah, the Arabic festival of Eid al-Adha, the Hindu festival of Dewali and I am sure many others. With this in mind, we now hope to include music and songs within the Christmas Concert that are appropriate to the occasion."

**The London Charity Orchestra and Finchley Children's Music Group with guest Soloist Emma Halnan will perform this Festival of Seasonal Music from around the world.**

The London Charity Orchestra was originally named *The London Taxidriver's Symphony Orchestra* and founded by taxi driver, the late **David Todhunter** - The Maestro, as he was known in the taxi trade. David was a fine organist who dreamed of conducting an orchestra. When the Taxi Drivers Orchestra was founded, he was the principle conductor. David would



The Finchley Children's Music Group

often be seen in taxi watering holes studying various classical pieces for his next performance. Unfortunately after David passed away at a very early age, the orchestra disbanded. It has now reformed with a number of the original players and renamed as The London Charity Orchestra.

The LCO is a mix of music students, experienced amateurs and professional musicians who have performed regularly at Holy Trinity and St. John's, Smith Square and other similar venues in aid of organisations such as the British Heart Foundation, the Alzheimer's Society, the National Autistic Society and CLIC Sargent Cancer Care for Children. The Finchley Children's Music Group recently celebrated its 50th anniversary and is well known for its natural, vibrant vocal quality and high level of musicianship and professionalism. They have appeared with orchestras such as the Royal Philharmonic, Boston Pops and the BBC Symphony and have made several

appearances at the BBC Proms. The choir has also performed live with Madonna for *Live Earth* at the new Wembley Stadium and recorded with Sir Paul McCartney and George Martin at Air Studios!

St. John's, Smith Square itself is regarded not just as one of the masterpieces of English Baroque Architecture, but also as one of London's major concert venues. Its excellent acoustics are suitable for nearly all forms of music and the versatility it has in terms of space enables it to accommodate anything from instrumental recitals to orchestra and choir without losing its special atmosphere of elegant intimacy.

There will be more details about how to book for this concert in future issues of **Call Sign**.



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**For the first time ever, the London Taxi Trade has responded to a public consultation from Transport for London with one voice, with every recognised group signing the same document.**

The *Mayors Air Quality Strategy* (MAQS) proposes the introduction of a ten year age limit on taxis from 2015, along with compulsory 'smarter driving' courses for ALL taxi drivers and the introduction of non-idling taxi ranks and zones across the central area.

After a series of meetings between all groups representing the London Taxi Trade and senior managers from TfL and the PCO, it was soon realised that the threat to the trade from these proposals was very real and that in order to avoid any doubt or confusion on the trade's objection to a ten year age limit and many of the other proposals, the London taxi trade would have to make a joint, single submission. The document, as well as setting out 'The Trades' proposals for helping to clean up the air in our City, also questions the commitment of the Private Hire industry in assisting the Mayor in his objectives.

**The Trade's response to the Mayors Air Quality Strategy was signed by the LTDA, LCDC, Unite the Union, LMCPA, Dial-a-Cab, ComCab, Radio Taxis, London Taxis International and KPM-UK Taxis PLC (see cover pic).**

The Mayor will publish his completed Air Quality Strategy in September and we are hopeful that he and his advisors will recognise the Trade's desire to do all it can to improve the air that we all breathe - but that a ten year age limit would decimate our industry.

#### **The joint trade response was that:**

**1.** All taxis licensed for the first time in London to be Euro V compliant from 1st Jan 2012.

**2.** All newly licensed taxi drivers to undertake an eco driving course as a prerequisite of licensing from 1st January 2011. The Taxi Trade representative organisations and radio circuits are especially keen to encourage existing drivers to undergo an Eco driving course. To this end, the LTDA, LCDC and Unite are currently considering the option of offering courses, on a voluntary no-cost basis, to their existing members in the expectation that there would be a considerable take up. It is anticipated that this pro-active approach would negate any resistance that the introduction of a compulsory requirement for existing licence holders to attend such courses might create.

**3.** The Trade is keen to embrace the concept of a non-idling policy and welcomes the introduction of a non-idling zone in

# **The Mayors Air Quality Strategy**

*A united response from the trade...*



#### **Will the Mayor agree to a bit of give and take?**

conjunction with an increase in taxi ranks as a dual policy mandate. This would significantly reduce the amount of empty running by taxis, especially in the central area and relevant 'hot spots' which are at risk of not meeting the EU limit value for daily PM10 emissions by the extended 2011 deadline. These are Marylebone Road and Euston Road, Marble Arch and Hyde Park Corner and Victoria Embankment to Tower Gateway.

Taxi drivers already operate taxi sharing schemes at several central London locations enabling up to 6 passengers to share a cab, thereby reducing the duplication of journeys at peak times. This practice provides a significant beneficial environmental impact and the Trade is actively seeking to work in cooperation with TfL to extend these schemes across the Capital.

**4.** The two existing manufacturers of taxicabs for London - London Taxis International and Mercedes Benz - are both developing alternative fuel vehicles and are currently trialling electric, hydrogen fuel cell and hybrid taxis. These companies have an in depth specialist knowledge of taxicab operations in the Capital and this, coupled with an expertise in low volume specialised vehicle production, will ensure that cleaner, less-polluting vehicles will be available to the trade at the earliest opportunity.

Recent technological innovations reducing the empty running time of taxis, including Twitter, electronic hailing devices and internet booking services, are also currently being introduced into London and the Industry is very supportive of any future advances of this type.

The Trade is particularly aware that 22% of taxi related emissions are caused by PM10s resulting from tyre and brake

wear. In an effort to significantly reduce this figure, the Trade is in discussions with tyre and brake component manufacturers to facilitate the earliest possible introduction of cleaner alternatives into London. It is important to note that as soon as this technology is developed, we anticipate a rapid and substantial reduction in related PM10s due to the Trade's high volume replacement cycle of tyre and brake parts.

**5.** The Trade broadly supports the proposal to enable drivers and owners to have their vehicle licensing inspections undertaken at MOT centres.

**6.** The Trade, having carefully considered the impact of various vehicle age related options, contends that without the assistance of extensive funding, the only sustainable age limitation policy for taxis would be 15 years from 2012, with no possibility of further tightening of this criteria. Any additional restrictions on the fleet would make it impossible to mitigate the serious negative economic impact, which our industry is experiencing during one of the worst recessions in recent history.

#### **The Trade has also reviewed the proposals for the Private Hire Industry and offers the following comments:-**

##### **\* Restrictions on new vehicles:-**

If the Taxi Trade, with a restricted choice of just two approved vehicles, can agree to all newly licensed taxis meeting Euro V from January 2012, we find it surprising that the PH industry, with its unlimited choice of vehicles, can only agree to newly licensed PHV's meeting Euro IV from April 2012.

##### **\* Restrictions on idling and improvements in waiting facilities:-**

The trade is seriously concerned about the proposals for Private Hire stands. Private Hire vehicles are exclusively pre-booked and therefore have no need to 'rank up' whilst waiting to be hired and the introduction of any PHV stands/ranks would encourage, and appear to endorse, illegal plying for hire.

**The unique document was signed at Dial-a-Cab House by Steve McNamara (LTDA), Ivan Kovler (LMCPA), Rob Laidler (LTI/LTC), Geoffrey Riesel (RTG), Mike Hedges (Unite), Malcolm Paice (ComCab), Brian Rice (DaC) and Peter DaCosta (KPM UK)...**





### Martin's Cab was hit by another DaC driver who never stopped

One of the first things you see when signing-on to your **Dial-a-Cab** data terminal at the beginning of a shift are the words *The Gentleman's Circuit* - a slogan epitomising the ethos of our Society from its very earliest days. Imagine then the dismay that **Martin Leat**

(P35) – who has been on DaC for 9 years - felt when he returned to his taxi recently, only to discover a damaged front wing and bumper but soon to find out that not only was it caused by another taxi driver who declined to stop, but that taxi was also on **Dial-a-Cab**! Martin takes up the story...

"It was Tuesday 29th June at around 8pm when I parked on the back of the Sheraton Park Tower hotel rank to meet my son who works there. I left the cab for 10 minutes and when I returned, I noticed the offside front wing and bumper had been hit. I checked with the security people who confirmed that another cab had squeezed onto the rank at 8.05pm and had collided with my cab as it did so. Camera footage showed the cab impacting my vehicle with such force that my taxi was seen to lurch sideways as the third party's cab struck it, so he could not possibly have been unaware of the collision. His *for hire* light can be clearly seen illuminated, so he must have

intended to 'put on' the rank.

"However, having hit my cab, he was then seen to pull away rather swiftly and disappear down Harriet Walk. Sadly, the security camera footage also showed the errant cab to be a **Dial-a-Cab** subscriber, so I'm less than impressed to think that one of our own would not have the common decency to stop and admit to the damage (*see cover pic*). I have reported the matter to the police, who are taking the incident seriously and are treating it as the criminal offence of failing to stop at the scene of an accident. His own cab must have been damaged as well and I reckon it was his nearside front wing that took the brunt of the impact, so if there are any garages out there that have recently repaired a black DaC taxi front wing, I and the police, would be very interested in hearing from them..."

©Call Sign Magazine MMX

## DaC drivers on ELCO Maldon outing

As usual, Dial-a-Cab drivers were among London licensed taxi drivers on the annual **East London Cabbies Outing** (ELCO) taking special needs children from London's east end on a fun-packed day out to Maldon. Among those were **John Dixon (B67)** and father / daughter team **Jan Ramsden (G35J)** and **Brian Fox (G35J)**.

It was back in 1952 that taxi driver Charles Flemwell started the first ELCO with 8 taxis. Now in 2010, those 8 have risen to 87 with Charles Flemwell's son, Kenny heading the organising committee. The drivers collected children and their carers from several schools in the East End before heading out to Maldon with a City of London Police escort. The London Ambulance Service provided medical back up and once in Essex, the Blue Knights on their motorbikes also joined the convoy. T&J Rescue accompanied the huge convoy to ensure that any cabs with problems soon felt better!

As always, Maldon was ready to once again welcome their guests with the town brightly decorated and streets lined with cheering people, both young and old. Kenny Flemwell was at the front of the convoy with air horns blaring to announce the arrival of the taxis, which then made their way into The Plume School for Performing Arts where the students were waiting outside, dressed up with a pirate theme. The Mayor of Maldon, Ken Smith, along with his Mayoress and staff from the school were waiting to receive the visitors.

Food was served for the children as well as entertainers being on hand to make the day even more special. Drivers were also given a hot lunch and then it was time for the convoy to parade through the High Street, led by pupils from The Plume School. The Town Mayor, dressed in his robes, together with the Mayoress, Deputy Mayor and Councillors welcomed the taxis from outside the Moot Hall in his robes with the Macebearer in attendance. The convoy made its way to Promenade Park on the river estuary where guests enjoyed an afternoon of entertainment.

For anyone making this trip for the first time, the welcome given to the taxis and passengers in the lovely town of Maldon is an amazing experience, one they will remember for a long time.

With thanks to Sandie Goodwin and Bob Fisher



Some of the DaC drivers taking the children to Maldon: L-R Janet Ramsden, John Dixon, Brian Fox (behind) and WCHCD Master Michael Davies

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Dial-a-Cab began producing E-Statements for members around 2.5 years ago and we had

## Your Society Needs You, The Environment Needs You...

### To use E-Statements!

a great initial response in signing up around 700 drivers. This figure has barely changed. Dial-a-Cab is committed to reducing its *Carbon Footprint* of not only taxi journeys, but all aspects of its business. One such area where we can improve on our Carbon Footprint is Driver Statements. We have reduced the amount of printing, postage and packaging by having fortnightly runs, but this can be greatly reduced if we could double the number receiving an E-Statement.

Ideally, every driver should be receiving an E-Statement. Please sign up if you haven't done so already. Just send an email to [driverservices@dialacab.co.uk](mailto:driverservices@dialacab.co.uk) and put E-

Statement and your badge number in the subject field. The advantages to this service are obvious and remember, your statements are held for a rolling two years from when you start.

As a contrast, Dial-a-Cab already has over 2,700 clients on E-billing and it is now mandatory for every new client to be on E-billing.

**Your Society Needs You - The Environment Needs You. Please sign up now.**

**Warren Smith**  
DaC Financial Controller

## Dial-a-Dream and the Independent

The *Independent* newspaper recently donated a large chunk of valuable space to **Dial-a-Dream**, the children's charity that helps turn the wishes of terminally ill children into reality. It asks that we try to help the charity in getting a child to say *Let me live another day* by giving them a dream to show that not all memories in their life are bad.

**So for the benefit of those who may be new to the licensed taxi business – a trade that has long been famous for its charity work – this is why the Dial-a-Dream name has such obvious similarities to that of Dial-a-Cab.**

It was the late 1980s and two Dial-a-Cab drivers were talking at our previous Brunswick House home about a disturbing incident they had both read about involving a children's charity. It had been set up with the noble aim of helping to make sick children's wishes come true, but had suddenly cancelled a children's organised trip due to what were described as "financial irregularities". Those two drivers organised a series of events that they hoped could raise enough money to save the children's trip and astonishingly, raised £28,000 in just nine weeks - including one amazing evening at a pub in Ilford where they raised around £16,000 in just one night!

Those same two drivers - **Tom Whitbread** and **Bob 'the dog' Heath** - later went on to set up Dial-a-Dream – and you don't need to be brain of Britain to work out how they thought of the name! It is a completely voluntary organisation, which helps to make a wish come true for sick – often terminally ill - children between the ages of 3 and 18.

That was over 20 years ago and Dial-a-Dream is now one of the longest running and most respected charities of its kind. Over the years, the number of children whose wishes have been fulfilled run well into four figures. Some children want to do fairly simple things



**6 bedrooms and five bathrooms in the villa!**

another terminally ill child's dream a reality.

You can view photographs relating to some of the dreams on Facebook under the Dial-a-Dream page or you can watch a video on YouTube under Dial-a-Dream video.

If you would like to just talk about a sick child or offer to

help in fund raising, then talk to Bob on 020 8530 5589 or email the chairman at [tom@dialadream.org](mailto:tom@dialadream.org). Otherwise you can visit them at [www.dial-a-dream.co.uk](http://www.dial-a-dream.co.uk).

– perhaps they have never owned a bike and would love one - others have their fantasies of going to meet Mickey Mouse at either Disneyland Paris or Florida (where Dial-a-Dream have three properties that are used for the children) and the charity helps bring their wishes to reality.

Dial-a-Dream need help in raising funds every bit as much now as they ever did and while they shake the begging bowl out occasionally, you can also help just by enjoying yourself!

**How? Well, if you are thinking of a holiday in Disneyworld Florida, then visit their website at [www.thedreamvillas.com](http://www.thedreamvillas.com) and see what you think of their villas because providing no children are scheduled to be there at that time, they are all available for rent.**

All three villas are specially designed with children in mind and are brim-full of luxuries. As an example, if you enjoy going with a group of friends, the largest of their villas sleeps 12 and includes a pool, jacuzzi, carpeted barbeque, 400 film cinema, large games room with pool table, high speed internet, a 40 inch TV and the whole fully air-conditioned villa is in a private secure estate with a 24 hour security guard. The estate has tennis and volleyball courts, is in close proximity for that round of golf and just a few minutes drive from Disney. Dial-a-Dream can also assist with your flights and car hire should you want them to. Any monies raised by renting out the villas goes towards making

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# Pinewood Studios Raffle

## School wins after driver donates prize back!

Several issues back, **Dial-a-Cab** driver, *Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers* Upper Warden and soon to be Master, **Jim Rainbird (T25)** launched a raffle in **Call Sign** with the amazing prize of a personalised tour of Pinewood Studios. The draw raised much funds for the WCHCD *Children's Magical Taxi Tour* and was the brainchild of **Terry Bamber**, Production Manager on the James Bond movies and many other Pinewood productions. Jim told **Call Sign**:

"The winner was City Airport regular, **Dave Fuller**, who very kindly donated his prize back "to give to someone less fortunate than himself" the opportunity of an amazing day out. A lovely gesture and a reflection of the licensed taxi trade's big heart. As the WCHCD has an affiliation with **The Royal Docks Community School**, it was offered to their GCSE photographic course students as an invaluable experience to enhance their studies. Names were put into a hat and the lucky winners were Megan, Laura and Lakeisha - accompanied by their teacher David Oliver.

They were picked up at the school in a Pinewood Studios/Magical Taxi Tour liveried taxi and met at Pinewood by a film crew and stills photographer who recorded the whole day for them.

Terry Bamber was the host for the day and used his vast repertoire of new (and old!) jokes to make the girls wince and laugh in equal measure. He gave each of them some film related books and a film crew tee shirt from upcoming movie *Gulliver's Travels* starring Jack Black. Terry's enthusiasm for the film industry is infectious and the students came



Jim Rainbird drives the taxi alongside the 3 winners and their teacher  
Pic Christianblack.com

away inspired and amazed at what goes into making movies.

**A lot of people generously gave up their time and services to make this prize draw the success it was. These included the following:**

*Yellow Dot* for design and print of the prize draw tickets free of charge; *Geoff Russell and Dennis Knight* at *Eon Productions* for selling lots of tickets; all the guys in the cab trade (you know who you are) for also selling lots of tickets; *Terry Bamber*, Production Manager from the James Bond films for selling lots of tickets and pulling the whole day together; *Dave Worrall*, author and James Bond expert + publisher of *Cinema Retro* magazine; *Julia*

*Hillsdon*, Head of Marketing at Pinewood; *Fern Colao*, Marketing at Pinewood; *Chris Smith* of *Technicolor*; *David Williams* for our lunch at the *Palm Suite Restaurant*; *Dave Shaw Diving Services UK* (Pinewood underwater stage); *Graham Anderson* of *Alpha Grips*; *Richard Pryke*, Pinewood Sound Re-recording Mixer (and Oscar winner for *Slumdog Millionaire*); stills photographer *Christian Black*; *Saloum N'jie* and *Tony Chivers* of the film crew, and of course to *Dave Fuller* who donated the prize back.

A big thank you to everyone who helped out and gave the three girls a great day at Pinewood and especially from the kids who will travel on this year's Children's Magical taxi Tour."

**Jim Rainbird (T25)**

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July 16 saw the release of the latest blockbuster from the Dial-a-Cab movie studios – well ok, it was a Dial-a-Cab introduction on *YouTube* to anyone who wasn't sure exactly what DaC did when we weren't making movies!

The 6minute and 17seconds film – produced entirely by the Chairman's son Billy - begins with an introduction from Brian Rice on our history and his confirmation that the carbon emitted by DaC taxis on account trips is totally offset.

It then moves onto Operations Manager Keith Cain speaking about the call centre, while DaC's Director of IT, John Bankes, explains how the Society works in a technological sense and how you can book a cab on the DaC website via your credit card or by using your smartphone – with a screen that redirects its size as the system detects which smartphone you are using! John also touches on future developments regarding iPhone apps, new terminals and how DaC tries to help drivers manage their DaC business.

## DaC on YouTube!



Brian Rice introduces the DaC movie on YouTube

The movie also takes viewers on a DaC tour of London in a TX4 that looks remarkably like the one the Editor earns his living in! In addition, there is also some surprising news about Dial-a-Cab and the Royal family.

The *YouTube* film can be accessed direct at

[www.youtube.com/user/dialacabUK](http://www.youtube.com/user/dialacabUK) or from Dial-a-Cab's newly revamped website at <https://www.dialacab.co.uk>.

And of course, with the UK now totally taken over by smalltalk, visitors can also follow DaC on Twitter.

### Beatles fan David Burnetts asks his wife:

*Will you still need me...*

### Will you still feed me - when I'm 64?

**David Burnetts (S43)** recently celebrated his 60th birthday with a bash attended by relatives and close friends, while music from the 60's echoed around the venue all evening. The only person missing was **Sir Paul McCartney** – mind you, he wasn't actually invited!

David is a long time fan of **The Beatles** and a line from one of the smash hits on their 1967 **Sgt Pepper** album, *When I'm 64* - written and sung by Paul - had him posing that very same question to his wife **Maureen** as they swished around the dance floor:

"Will you still need me; will you still feed me, when I'm 64?" to which she replied "Yes," much to the relief of the guests, before adding to laughs, "so long as you do the washing up afterwards!"

Happy birthday David...



Even Davids' cake has the 'Fab Four' crossing Abbey Road!

## TOUGH GUY CHALLENGE

### ...for the Magical Taxi Tour

The *Tough Guy Challenge* 2011 will be taking place on Sunday 30th January 2011 at a venue near Wolverhampton. This annual event is around 8.5 miles long. The 2011 challenge is named *Year of Braveheart Hero II* and a team organised by **Carlos Oliveira** is planning to take on the challenge.

Carlos said: "We'd like to seek sponsorship and run the course on behalf of the Disney Trip 2011. The organisers describe this event as the world's safest, most dangerous taste of mental and physical pain, fear and endurance! Teams with a minimum of 8 competitors will take part at a cost of £129.50 (inc vat) per person. We're not expecting to break any records, we will just be happy to complete the course!"

So if you fancy taking on the *Tough Guy Challenge* and bravely face the original and toughest test of its kind anywhere in the world, just get in touch with Carlos on **07956 504 585**. You will need both mental and physical

strength to face the heights, tight spaces, fire, water and electricity that will test the teams to the max. Everyone bar the very toughest will be beaten. If the Challenge is not for you, then perhaps sponsoring the team to raise funds for The Magical Taxi Tour would be the best alternative!



When they say tough, they mean tough!





"I did it"

## Maria crosses the finish line smiling!

**Maria Holmes**, UK & International Marketing Manager at LTI Vehicles, managed a tired smile as she completed her first *Race for Life*, raising £1100 for *Cancer Research UK* in the process. She had set herself the challenge after losing family and close friends to cancer.

Maria trained hard so she could run the 5 kilometres for the first time at Coombe Country Park on Thursday 15th July and that training paid off, as she didn't stop for the whole 5K and crossed the finish line in a respectful 34 minutes - faster than she had ever done. Maybe the bad weather that followed after the finish spurred her on!

Maria said: "With 2700 other participants, I was a little nervous before the start of the race in case I couldn't complete the course without stopping, but I was amazed that once I got going I could have gone a bit further. The most important thing is raising money for a very worthy cause and I would like to thank all my colleagues at LTI, suppliers, friends and family for their generosity.

Maria plans to run again next year, this time raising even more money and running faster!

# Nosey Tom Strikes Again!



## AL car stops and 3 cars pile into the back!

Many of you know **Dial-a-Cab** Board member **Tom Whitbread** from our City office and those who read his articles regularly will probably have even worked out where he lives! Last month he was watching an ambulance attempting to get to a multi-car accident that he said took forever due to the incompetence of what he calls Plastic Police ie PCSO (Police Community Support Officers). In his words: *"I had the balcony door open, which allows me a great view of Dalston Lane and Queensbridge Road; this is the balcony of the house with all the flower boxes and hanging baskets on the corner of Parkholme Road."* That's cleared that up then! This month he was obviously sitting by the same open balcony door and spotted an accident apparently caused when an **Addison Lee** vehicle stopped rather suddenly, with the result that another three vehicles piled into the back! Tom grabbed his camera and the result is above...!

# Black Cab Collection is Back!



## New website, new prices, new products...

LTI Vehicles *Black Cab Collection* of special London Taxi themed gifts has been improved and is available again with better than ever service and prices.

Drivers have always expressed an interest in being able to buy not just nice taxi gifts, but also useful items such as multi-tools and flasks etc. The range also appeals to tourists and overseas customers, all wanting to buy a little memento of the best taxi in the world.

LTI have now relaunched the range with new low prices, an easier to use website and new products in the near future. The improved service is thanks to LTI's new partner, *Arcadia*.

To visit the new website, go to [www.blackcabgifts.co.uk](http://www.blackcabgifts.co.uk) and check out the lower prices. Online ordering couldn't be simpler and your gifts will be with you in 2-3 days.

LTI will be introducing new items and special offers to the range as the old ones sell out, so save the website to your favourites and visit regularly to see what else is new.

*London 60s Week* took place between 16th and 25th July and sent some **Dial-a-Cab** drivers into a memory recall situation! The 50th anniversary week saw a brief relaunch of the best of Britain in the 60s, with an explosion of the fashion, music, film and design which put Carnaby Street, Kings Road, the Beatles, Rolling Stones, David Bailey, David Hockney, Twiggy, the Shrimp et al onto the UK map and soon sent a message out to the rest of the world that there was only one place to be in the swinging sixties – and that was London!

The man with the creative mind behind the vision was Chris Pleydell - who wasn't even born until the 70s but who was determined to launch an explosion of events as a catalyst for new young talent to celebrate an extraordinary decade that began in London 50 years ago.

Chris's aim was to inspire today's young generation of artistic designers, talented musicians, creative film-makers and entrepreneurs to once again place London as the number one city in the creative industries and attract talent from around the world to come together to unleash youthful creative spirits. The only way to do it was by bringing generations together in an intergenerational celebration, remembering parents and grandparents, because it was they – or to many... US - who were the font of youthful creative energy back in 1960.

Many names are famous even today for their 60s work – people such as *Zandra Rhodes* who still delights with her bright colours and fantasy evening wear, the miniskirt is still synonymous with the name *Mary Quant*, designer *Barbara Hulanicki* founded the iconic fashion boutique Biba, while **Call Sign** Editor Alan Fisher's sister-in-law *Daphne Sherman* worked together with her late husband *Ben Sherman* from their Carnaby Street showroom introducing the button down shirt to London. Few today realise that Ben Sherman was a real person.

The week saw many iconic venues promoting gigs that recreated – albeit briefly - those euphoric days. Places such as the candlelit Troubadour in the Old Brompton Road, a beatnik hangout where stars of the ilk of Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell and Paul Simon played. There was Oxford Street's 100 Club, Rockers and ton-up boys favourite hang-out at the Ace Café, and The Tabernacle where Pink Floyd were a regular attraction. In addition, the whole of Camden Lock Market turned back the clock to the 60's with Dingwalls having a Mods & Miniskirts evening. Over at the O2, Radio Caroline, Britain's most famous pirate radio station that took to the high seas in 1964 armed only with a transmitter and some records, told their story at an off-shore pirate radio exhibition. As Pete Townsend said: "The Who would never have happened had it not been for Radio Caroline."

**Call Sign** asked some "mature" drivers for their memories of the decade.

**Ray Sorene (A53)** already had taxis on the brain with the 60s bringing back his time on the Knowledge. It was during the winter of 1962, the worst for decades, and then getting his badge on the day a fire at Battersea Power Station blew out all the lights in the West End! Ray also remembered fondly getting his new Mini – the car, not the skirt - delivered the day he got out! Then towards the end of the decade, Ray remembers going onto ODRTS

# DaC 'OLD TIMERS' REMEMBER LONDON IN 60'S WEEK

...as the golden era hits its golden anniversary!



**Bernie Silver** watched *The Who* smash their instruments live on stage!



**Gerry Dunn** went for a snog at *Le Concorde*!

and listening to all the dispatcher's voices that are now gone. Among those he remembered were Johnny Thwaites, John Saunders, Charlie Rubin, Bernie Conway and the Conway brothers – Manny and Sid.

**Bernie Silver (G08)** was more for the entertainment side when remembering some of the clubs the young Bernie "hung out" at: There was the Empire Leicester Square, Le Kilt in Greek Street and The Pigalle where he famously watched pop music history unfold as The Who smashed up their instruments live on stage! He also remembers buying his clothes at Lord John in Carnaby Street.

**Gerry Dunn (S84)**, in the days when being awarded an MBE for services to charity would have seemed extremely remote, remembers fondly his first serious girlfriend – going steady as it was described at the time. He was rather coy beyond that, preferring to tell **Call Sign** about his "haunts" – The Concorde in



**Editor's sister-in-law** marries the original Ben Sherman in August 1968

Oxford Street, where slower continental music was the order of the day – probably the only place where Gerry could go for a quick snog! Living northeast, he also remembers The Purple Pussycat and Le Cage D'or.

Editor **Alan Fisher (F07)** told us that the anniversary sent his mind racing back to his brief tenure working for pop pirate Radio Caroline at 6 Chesterfield Gardens in Mayfair and his occasional trip to the coast to pass over food and records to DJs such as Tony Blackburn, Kenny Everett and Dave Cash. He also enjoyed many nights at Wardour Street's Whiskey a Gogo and The Royal in Tottenham, where The Dave Clark Five entertained.

It was a great time and nice to see it back even if it was just for one week...

**Ron Yarborough**  
Call Sign online

The following press release comes from Transport for London...

## Driver's Safety Partitions in PHVs

TfL are committed to ensuring that drivers of Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) are supported and advised as reasonably and practically as possible in respect of the drivers' personal safety. The availability and use of driver safety partitions that can be installed in vehicles used for private hire purposes, is supported by TfL for the purposes of improving the safety of private hire drivers and reducing the threat of attack from passengers. Following discussions with members of the private hire trade, TfL is pleased to announce the introduction of guidelines to assist vehicle owners, drivers and/or operators who are intending to install a driver safety partition into their licensed private hire vehicle.

See *A Case of Paranoia* in this issue..



# compliance officer's update

*Hello Ladies & Gents,*

It's pleasing to know that the majority of recent complaints have been reasonably minor and that as a whole, we are trying our best to work within the procedures that are there for all to follow.

Work in July was helped by Wimbledon and Ascot and those that weren't particularly interested in the World Cup, would have enjoyed the unusually low volumes of traffic during certain games and hopefully the extra tourists coming into London have helped keep you busy over the school holidays.

August is probably the quietest period of the year and it is even more important that we book-in correctly and make sure that no one member has any unfair advantage over their fellow subscribers. If we stick to the rules, then everyone will be equal.

I have mentioned previously that due to horrendous traffic conditions in the capital, it is more than possible that you may encounter traffic problems on any journey and on any route. Many clients make the same journey on a regular basis and are used to going a particular way or perhaps may have a preferred route. If you intend taking a route that may seem unusual to the client, it's worth either asking



them if they have a preferred route or explain the reasons why the direction is slightly different from normal. It will certainly prevent any confusion during or at the end of the trip.

Parking is becoming even more of a major problem that it already has been, especially outside account locations in the City and West End. If you are unable to wait or feel that it is illegal to stop, can you please use your **Parked** button so that the call centre can

inform your passenger appropriately. When clients are unaware of your location and finally enter the taxi with a large amount on the meter, it becomes a source of complaint. Can I also please remind you that it is very important you press your **Arrival** button when you reach the actual pick-up and not before. Clients are aware of run-ins and do query increased amounts, especially when they are already physically waiting outside of their offices for the taxi to arrive.

**I mentioned last month that Autostone Chip Repair will have a technician on site at Roman Way each Tuesday and Friday between 8am and 5pm.**

They repair chipped windscreens and prevent them from cracking and also have the facility to replace the windscreen should the need arise. It is normally covered free of any charge by your insurance company and is a quick and efficient service designed with our members in mind. Apart from being unsafe, it can result in a failure at SGS, so it may well be worth a visit to our fitting bay.

*Enjoy the summer break and be lucky!*

**Allan Evans**  
**DaC Compliance Officer**

**Call Sign has always provided a forum for its readers and whilst the Editor has never made a secret of his LTDA membership, he is always happy for DaC members to be able to put across their point of view...**

## RMT and the LTDA

May I firstly thank **Call Sign** Editor Alan Fisher for the balanced view he has given to different trade organisation's debates.

I left the LTDA and joined the RMT, as many years earlier whilst working on London Transport, the NUR - as it was then known - had served my family well. My Father died through illness whilst working on London Transport. Bob Crow, our rep at the time, sorted out all the financial details and entitlements while also arranging for my Mother to visit one of their convalescent homes where she made lifelong friends. I have never forgotten Bob's help in our hour of need.

The LTDA had served me well in the past and I believe that all Taxi Drivers should join an organisation to help and support each other and for the protection they offer. But when the opportunity came along to join the RMT, as a trade unionist I did not hesitate. I now hold a position on the RMT Committee.

My personal thoughts on the trade arguments are below and if you would kindly publish them in **Call Sign** I would be grateful as I believe others are rejoicing in the division it brings.

### LTDA tunnel vision?

In its continued attack against the RMT and especially its committee, do they not see that they are attacking fellow taxi drivers who have exercised a freedom of choice to join a trade union?

Their continued attacks are an insult to all trade unionists and I believe, also to the majority of Taxi Drivers who do not wish to be associated with these divisive tactics. Regardless of how many members each group has, the fact is the majority of Taxi Drivers do not belong to any organisation. Yet those who have joined a trade group of their choice and for a trade newspaper to then try and suppress another group of Drivers, is frankly despicable.

The LTDA, London Cab Drivers Club, RMT and all other trade organisations are built, run and paid for by self employed Taxi Drivers and they are all adults. The abuse of each other by their leaders has got to stop, especially in a City whose history has been built on the foundations of freedom of choice. There are plenty of roads and buildings on the Knowledge to remind us of people's struggle to get freedom of choice.



**Tom Quigley**

**Tom Quigley (Y33)**

## FLIGHT SIMULATORS AT THE SCIENCE MUSEUM

At the Science Museum's new Fly Zone simulator area, adults and kids can take control in 360° flight simulators or fly with the Red Arrows in a sensational 3D motion effects theatre.

*Legends of Flight 3D* is a captivating new film showcasing some of history's most amazing aircraft. Soar over the highest peaks, feel the gut-wrenching force of take-off and loop and roll above the ocean. From one of the first passenger airliners to make long range flying practical, to the Boeing 787 Dreamliner, which seeks to take its place among aviation greats, *Legends of Flight 3D* brings together the past and future of air travel. Taking you through over 100 years of flight, you can explore the lessons learned by trial and error - lessons that ultimately influenced the design of a radically new 21st Century airplane, bringing us to the dawn of a new era of revolutionary aircraft.

And, don't forget to visit Fly Café to refuel before taking off again - if your stomach can take it!

**Fly 3D prices:** Adult £4, Concessions / Children £3, Family (1+2) £8, Family (2+2) £11

**Fly 360 prices:** 2 people £10 per ride, 1 person £8 per ride

**Fly Kids prices:** £2 per ride

**Combination tickets are available with the IMAX 3D Cinema and Force Field.**

And of course the Science Museum has other exhibitions going on throughout the building including Who Am I (free) that was previewed in the last issue of **Call Sign**.

**Call Sign** doesn't usually publish driver items where no name is given, but we sometimes make an exception and this occasion is certainly one of those occasions because it was a sombre subscriber who asked to remain anonymous when we met him at Roman Way recently. Not only had his cab been broken into overnight, but the miscreants also stole his Dial-a-Cab radio, which was fitted under the driver's seat on his TX1. It was probably mistaken for a computer part and thought to be of greater value than it really is.

"I accidentally left a rear window open by an inch or two," he told our reporter, "and the culprits used a stick poked through that tiny gap to open the door. They then kicked out the sliding section of the partition to gain access to the driver's compartment. I always take the radio face-off section in with me, but they still smashed the actual unit out of the dash and left my personal effects strewn all around the cabin, leaving a right old mess! Oh yes, they even had a go at trying to steal the exhaust emissions control box, which is cited near to the DaC black box on the luggage floor!"

"I came out to my cab at 8am on a Saturday morning ready to start work and was confronted with the mess on my cab seat and floor. When I couldn't sign on to the DaC terminal, I discovered the cut ends to the wires of the DaC equipment hanging on the floor! I contacted the control room and told Dispatcher **Ivor Belkin (C97)** what had happened. He wisely suggested that I go immediately round to my local police station at Kentish Town where an officer took my details and offered the services of a forensic crime officer, who coincidentally was at the station. She enthusi-

**Failing to steal a cab's exhaust emissions control box and music radio, they stole a driver's DaC radio and smashed the music radio main unit so no one else could use it...**

## BREAKING AND ENTERING...

astically took fingerprints from the remnants of the central division and other crime-busting evidence from the cab! Both police officers agreed that while mine may not have been the crime of the century, with the evidence gathered from my taxi, there could well be further developments that might lead to a suspect.

"It might not be the crime of the century to them, but it has turned out to be a great inconvenience to me as well as an expensive one because I have had to replace the plastic central section of the division, which set me back £120. I also replaced my music radio and now I'm at Roman Way having repairs done," he said with a philosophic sigh.

At this point our reporter admitted that he too had had his cab entered into over that same weekend, although nothing had been stolen or damaged other than the usual mess with the knowledge that an uninvited guest has violated your personal space.

A third driver coming into Roman Way joined in the conversation and acknowledged that his cab too had been broken into several times over the past few years.

So the message is clearer than ever; remove anything of value from your taxi, leave nothing on view – satnav, mobile phone and MP3 etc – and make sure you secure your taxi before leaving it, even if that is just for a short time...



The DaC driver found his central partition kicked in and this mess in the cab front

## Driver Rates M&O AfterCare "Second to None!"

The level of customer care given by staff at Mann & Overton is improving by the day and being noticed by drivers and fleet owners across London as positive feedback floods in.

Vince Riley, a London Taxi driver was overwhelmed by the service he recently received from the LTI dealership based at Brewery Road, Islington. Vince said: "I arrived at 3pm and was back on the road by half past. Nick McDonagh and Simon Williams really looked after me. The customer care I received was second to none. M&O have had some bad press about their customer service in the past, but I would like to be first to set the record straight - since owning my cab, I have never been so pleased with the turnaround time and care I was shown. M&O can do all my future service and repairs if this is a sign of things to come!"

At a recent press event held at Brewery Road, new General Manager Mark Brown announced his plans regarding aftercare and the importance to make changes immediately. Commenting on Vince Riley's statement, Mark commented: "This is great news, our customers are already starting to notice the changes I've introduced since joining the company in May. Last week alone we carried out one hundred while-you-wait re-works with an average downtime of 12 minutes, hardly enough time to grab the free cuppa!"

"Our plans reflect a whole new attitude to customer service and focus on what customers really want from their dealer. Early indications are good but there are a lot more improvements to follow."

Mark has a strong automotive background but is new to the taxi trade. If you have any customer service improvement suggestions Mark would love to hear from you and you can send these to [enquiries@londontaxis.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@londontaxis.co.uk).

To contact Mann and Overton for parts, service or repairs, please call 0207 7000 888



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GM Mark  
Brown

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**Mike Son continues the debate he began in the January Call Sign by answering Alec Wilkey (W83), who called Mike naïve in the July Mailshot for his view that you should not be stopped for PCO random checks if PoB...**

*Dear Alec*

It is gratifying to know that you read *Call Sign* and I do appreciate the fact you read my articles. The article you referred to within *Mailshot* was an experience I had when a member of TfL/PCO instructed me to pull over at one of their temporary checkpoints. As I made it abundantly clear, I do not have a problem with this. It is important that checks are made to make sure the driver's licence is in order and that he/she is who they say they are.

I am very well aware that some suburban cab drivers come into town to work due to, maybe, the lack of work in their yellow badge areas. It is also important to remember that some radio circuits have yellow badge drivers within their fleet and that these drivers are allowed to take street hirings or radio taxi trips to Central London or wherever. But as you say, we all know that some of those drivers then decide to continue to stay in Central London and pick up work. Is that right? No, absolutely not. However, I did not see within your response how you would resolve this problem? So let me tell you, without being as you put it, naïve.

For many years this issue has been spoken about, but no action taken. The licence plate on the back of the same type of cab that we

all drive is not specific to the area that the driver actually is licensed to work in. I am aware the yellow badge issue has again been raised and TfL are under consultation and may consider the issue of a specific disc or plate that will be affixed to a cab that has been designated to ply for hire in a yellow badge area. Perhaps that might help with the problem of those drivers plying for hire in town. Incidentally, there are at this time some 3,500 yellow badge drivers.

But to get back to your original point, Alec, I still think it is quite wrong that a passenger should pay extra on the meter and lose journey time because of PCO checks. The only time I would consider it to be acceptable is during security alerts or if the police suspect



the passenger - or even the cab driver - has committed a crime.

I also think that TfL should pay more attention with regard to the issue of licences to both minicab drivers and their vehicles. I still see hand-written notices on the shop front of minicab offices saying *Drivers required. Apply within*. The display of the "licence" either on the rear or front screen of a minicab is far from discernible or tamperproof, especially when the original objective by the authorities was to have more control over the minicab fraternity and to protect the public from unlicensed and unscrupulous minicab drivers. However, whatever we say or do, the plain fact of the matter is that minicabs are here to stay.

Prior to the 2012 London Olympics, the vetting procedure of minicab drivers should be stepped up and minicab vehicle licenses be made more visible and difficult to counterfeit. When issues occur between the passenger and a minicab driver or the service supplier, we in the London Taxi industry also get maligned. We've all read in newspapers about taxi drivers being involved in all sorts of law breaking that, after reading the whole story, turn out to be minicab drivers. But I guess that's for another day...

**Mike Son**  
**DaC Special Projects**

### *Couples needed for new Channel 4 program*

## Want to give your wife a makeover?

Are you a woman who feels like her wardrobe is in desperate need of updating and are willing to let your husband take over? Or perhaps you're a **Dial-a-Cab** driver who would love to give your wife or long-term partner a style overhaul?

Plum pictures (producers of James May's *Toy Stories*) are making a new pilot for Channel 4, which gives Britain's men the chance to pick out the clothes they think would look fantastic on their wife or partner. Perhaps she is so self-conscious about her body that she has all but given up on clothes. Or since having children she hasn't had any time to herself to buy some new clothes.

*Maybe this woman's you and you'd love your husband to pay you some attention in this area?*

\* Do you feel you lack the confidence to wear anything but your comfort clothes?

- \* Maybe your dress sense is super-wacky and you're ready for a change?
- \* Do you feel lost when it comes to style?
- \* Perhaps your husband or partner would prefer it if you didn't dress so sexily?
- \* Perhaps you feel your husband/partner doesn't take any interest in how you look?

And don't panic! The presenters will be with you every step of the way!

**If the above describes you or your wife/partner, we would love to hear from you.**  
**Please contact Amy at: [amy@plumpictures.co.uk](mailto:amy@plumpictures.co.uk).**



### Obituary **MICHAEL FACCINI**

Dial-a-Cab driver **Michael Francesco Faccini (W59)** had been ill for a relatively short time and sadly died just one day after his 60th birthday. One of his friends on DaC, **Joe Skeggs (V34)**, who had known Michael for 15 years, told *Call Sign*

"Mickey was such a lovely guy and it's just so hard to realise that he is no longer with us. He was one of those people who, if you needed a favour, you would never have to ask twice. In the trade we call people like Mickey, Diamond Geezers."

Joe continued by saying that Mickey had been on the circuit for around 7 years, but had driven a taxi for 38 years. Prior to and during his time on the Knowledge, he got a taste for the trade by cleaning taxis at a cab garage and he never really lost that love for taxi driving.

"But," added Joe, "that love came a long way down the list when compared to the love he had for his wife Susie, daughter Nicola and his Arsenal-mad grandson Tom. Even though Mickey had very little interest in sport, he would often have a kick-around with a football so that Tom could pretend to be Arsenal. They will all miss him like crazy - as will many of his friends on Dial-a-Cab, including me."

Allan Evans represented the Board at Mickey's funeral on 13th July at the Islington Crematorium. There were several DaC taxis in the car park, most of them bringing other DaC drivers with as a sign of how much he will be missed. *RIP Mickey...*



## John and his Slipping / Gripping Gearbox!

**Call Sign** readers will recall **John Gibbings (M76)** from an item we did in January 2010 regarding John's exclusive use of biodiesel fuel in place of the usual regular diesel fuel to power his TX1 taxi.

This time when we met John again, he was highly delighted with a recently fitted recon auto gearbox on his TX1.

"I'd covered over 300,000 miles on my old gearbox and it began slipping in the gears. I kept putting off getting it sorted for various reasons, as you do. I struggled on with the old gearbox for quite a while, but I knew time was running out and I was concerned that I would break down sooner or later - and no doubt at the most inconvenient time and



**John is delighted with his new gearbox place!"**

"Eventually," said John with a grin, "it was

getting so bad that I had to think twice which way to go to avoid climbing Muswell Hill with 5 people in the back! I asked a few friends and they all mentioned Johnnies Autos Ltd at 9a Anton Street in Hackney. I called them and arranged to take the cab in the following day.

"I got there at 9am as arranged and had my cab back on the road before 2pm that same day. How bad is that," he said smiling broadly. "The new gearbox has behaved perfectly and I now have no fear of any hills - be they Muswell or Dog Kennel Hill! My recon gearbox grips like glue, transferring the engine power to the road wheels like I was on tracks. Regrets? Yes, I should have got it done much sooner than I did!"

*Win one of three family tickets to see the hottest young show in town...*

# The GO!GO!GO! Show

## A pop musical for kids

**THE GO!GO!GO! SHOW** is the debut production from **The Show for Kids**, a company set up by **Mike Stock** - the most successful writer and producer in British singles chart history - to fill a gap in the market for high quality children's entertainment.

Featuring brand new pop songs, five young performers and a sock-stealing Fluffalope, **THE GO!GO!GO! SHOW** is packed full of music, dancing, jokes, magic and a story that all the family can enjoy.

The team behind this all-new family extravaganza has an undisputed track record of success. Music is by Mike Stock and Steve Crosby (Stock/Aitken/Waterman, Steps, Kylie, Jason Donovan, Rick Astley, Bananarama), the story is by Dean Wilkinson (Ant & Dec, SM:TV, CBBC, Disney), choreography by Paul Domaine (BBC's So You Think You Can Dance, Royal Variety, Steps, Dannii Minogue, Sugababes), while the director is Carole Todd (Dreamboats & Petticoats, Elvis The Musical, Buddy, Dancing In The Streets).

The cast comprises five young, highly talented individuals who have undergone a rigorous series of auditions over the past 18 months and have come together to form the pop band **GO!GO!GO!**. Together, their individual skills and personalities are showcased as the cast of **THE GO!GO!GO! SHOW**.

Holly is the unofficial and bossy, creative team leader who is constantly trying to organise the others. Carl loves performing and showing off his magic tricks. He has a brother/sister relationship with Emma, who is a dreamer, loves animals, lives on a cloud and who often gets the wrong end of the stick! Steve is a martial arts expert and talented artist who loves keeping active. Kirsten is the songbird. Her world is full of music and her voice is pure and sweet.

**THE GO!GO!GO! SHOW** is a good old-fashioned caper! It kicks off when the gang awakes one morning to discover that their socks are missing yet again and it soon becomes apparent that there's something smelly going on! They discover that the culprit is a cheeky little creature called the Fluffalope who it seems likes nothing more than to munch his way through a tasty pile of socks! So begins a quest to catch the Fluffalope, return him to his family home and most importantly - retrieve their socks! En route, the gang visit Holiday Bay and spend time in the Land Of Lost Property where they are waylaid by the bumbling Mr Baffled.

**Mike Stock** became a household name under the banner Stock Aitken Waterman in the 1980s and is the most successful songwriter and record producer of all time and the winner of many prestigious and international awards. Artists from Sir Paul McCartney to Kylie Minogue, Sir Cliff Richard to Bananarama and Robson and Jerome to The Fast Food Rockers have all enjoyed success and achievement in collaboration with Mike Stock.

In a career which so far has spanned three decades, Mike Stock has written more hit songs and achieved more hit records worldwide than any other songwriter or record producer in the history of popular music.

**THE GO!GO!GO! SHOW**, an energetic song & dance fuelled musical adventure for kids of all ages, is currently at the **Leicester Square Theatre until 30 August** before going on tour. Stacked full of laughs and audience interaction, it will put a smile on your face, a spring in your step and a song - or several - into your head! More details at [www.gogogo.tv](http://www.gogogo.tv).

**If you would like the chance to win one of three family tickets for the Leicester Square Theatre (a family ticket is for four people), just tell Call Sign who has written more hit songs and achieved more hit records worldwide than any other songwriter or record producer in the history of popular music?**

*Entries to the usual Call Sign address. The Editor's decision will be final...*



**The 5 stars of the GO!GO!GO! SHOW**



## LUXURY VILLA FOR RENT IN NERJA

**Close to Frigiliana on the Costa del Sol**

- Luxury villa sleeps 6
- Has its own private pool
- 180° uninterrupted panoramic view of the mountains and countryside
- 7 minute drive from Nerva's beautiful beaches
- 5 minute drive to historic village of Frigiliana
- Prices start from £650 per week

Contact Steve on **07939 503 132**



# ALAN, JPM AND THE 'ROUND THE ISLAND' RACE

And all with a broken hip!

Alan Jacobs (P92) may have been driving a taxi on **Dial-a-Cab** since October 1992, but he also uses another form of "transport" - being an accomplished and enthusiastic yachtsman. However, you would be wrong in always assuming that yachting is the calmer of the two.

Alan told *Call Sign's* new young reporter that he was quite used to hauling in the sails when the weather turns nasty, getting thrown around the deck in rough seas and bumping into obstacles around the ship while bouncing over the waves.

"Knocks and bruises are part of the scene," he told young Rupert who by now was feeling slightly seasick at the constant mention of high waves, "and safety on board is of paramount priority of course, but if I worried about every little ache I'd be scared to leave my house, let alone go to sea."

So when our eagle-eyed *Call Sign* cub reporter saw Alan again recently, limping and in obvious discomfort, our junior hack took a quick anti-seasick tablet and then enquired why?

"I've just had a call to tell me I've got a broken hip," he stuttered, the surprise news still lingering in his quavering voice. "I've had this dull ache in my hip and leg for quite some months now. I've seen two doctors and three - yes three physiotherapists - but nobody even hinted at broken bones! So in the meantime I just carried on with my seafaring activities, despite the pain and discomfort."

But things seemed to be getting worse for Alan, so he saw yet another doctor who told him he should get an X-Ray and quickly! And that's exactly what he did. In the meantime, while awaiting the results of the X-Ray, he was committed to being a crewmember in the **JPMorgan 'Round the Island Race**, which is held annually around the coast of the Isle of Wight. This is a gruelling 50-mile slog, with some serious contenders and prestigious prizes to be won and definitely no Hyde Park paddle.

"I didn't want to let my Captain and crew down, even with my aching joints," he told young Rupert. "It's true that at the time I didn't know what I had done to my hip and even now I still cannot recall how I might have injured it, but I guess that's life."

So all that was left was to ask how Alan got on?

"Well, we finished 8th out of 1800 entrants, so I guess that was a pretty satisfying result," he beamed while holding the medal he was proudly wearing around his neck - and even with a broken hip! But to cap it all, after the race my captain asked me if I could fly to Jersey on the following Monday to help crew a ship for delivery to its owner, but by then my joints were really beginning to twinge quite badly, and so I declined. I suppose it's just as well I did, knowing what I do now! I also think that picking up at JPM in a taxi is far less risky...!"

© Call Sign Magazine MMX



DaC's Alan Jacobs finished in 8th place

*Views on life as seen through the eyes of David Kupke (Y74) at...*

## Kupkake's Korner



Driving through Camden  
the other day,  
I had a 'near miss'  
that went my way.

My light was green  
his was red,  
his mouth obscene  
he wished me dead!

I'd hit my brakes  
he lost control,  
he made mistakes  
and hit a pole!

He cursed and spat  
clenched his fists,  
so short and fat  
and rarely kissed!

His van was wrecked  
my cab unscratched,  
cause and effect  
perfectly matched!!!

*Kopyright Kupkake 2010*

*Every issue of Call Sign takes a look back at ODRTS history through the pages of the magazines of the time with a flashback*

## DIAL-A-CAB FLASHBACK

*This month's Flashback comes from the ODRTS Magazine, June 1967 and was written by the Editor at the time, Joe Toff...*

From ODRTS Magazine, June 1967

### EDITORIAL

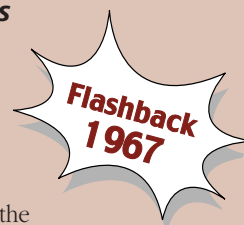
I think that the trade and national press have quite adequately reported the initial success of the **Licensed Taxi Drivers' Association**; it now remains to be seen whether the support is forthcoming from the men themselves. Day by day, reports seem to indicate the eagerness of many to join. The recent meeting again of representatives from both radio circuits - Lords and Mountview - appears to show a keen interest of both parties to work closer together and they must be congratulated on their foresight. It now seems not too far off that different sections of the trade will weld themselves into a force to be reckoned with.

At the time of writing, the small proprietors are meeting to discuss the formation of a group to which the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the LTDA have been invited. At last some commonsense is coming to light. When all the small people get together, they become big people. It will be interesting to see who is going to remain aloof.

One of the aims of the LTDA is for all cabs to be on radio - this is a very ambitious project and not so impossible as it sounds. Discussions have already started and figures studied.

I would like to congratulate **Mr. Sam Harris (D08)** and the members of the Committee of the Fund for Underprivileged Children on the fantastic success of their dance at the Lyceum on Monday, 22nd May 1967 - a worthwhile cause, which was very well supported.

**Joe Toff**  
Editor



# CYCLISTS SAFETY?

## Initiatives from the Mayor and TfL - but it must be a no from Call Sign...

In November 2008, **Call Sign** brought up the subject of cyclists being a menace to themselves with the way many undertake on the inside. We followed that up in May 2009 when reporting on the tragic death of two cyclists, both of whom were hit by lorries whilst trying to get through on the inside. Then in December of last year, **Call Sign** wrote:

*"There is a case for mirrors that cover a larger area and as I said earlier, both cyclists that died were said to have been experienced and would have ridden their bikes in a responsible and safe way, but there are too many cyclists who do not have the vaguest clue as to how you should ride a bike safely. Many continue overtaking on the nearside, even though vehicles in front are indicating a left turn. The only surprising thing is that more aren't killed."*

*We currently have a Mayor in London who is very pro-bike and talking of legalising the two-wheelers making left turns even when the lights are red.*

*The plain fact is that many cyclists are menaces on the roads. The new breed is not only aggressive while ignoring traffic signals and pedestrian crossings, but travel at excessively fast speeds- appropriately dressed as though they had just returned from the Tour de France!*

*The answer is easy. Make every cyclist take a cycling proficiency test and question them on the cycling section of the Highway Code. Then make them display a licence plate. Is that too difficult if it means that no more young cyclists are tragically killed?"*

Now the Mayor and TfL have announced major initiatives to improve cycle safety around lorries with on-street cycle safety mirrors, together with a new awareness campaign warning cyclists that undertaking lorries at junctions can be fatal. There will also be an agreement signed with the *Freight Transport Association* to improve cycle safety in London.

The Mayor and TfL have unveiled three new measures to tackle collisions between cyclists and lorries on London's roads.

The first cycle safety (Trixi) mirror to be trialed in a UK city has been installed on a traffic signal at a junction in Tooting. Trixi mirrors give drivers of large vehicles better visibility of cyclists at junctions and 39 of them will be installed at traffic signals on London's roads for a six-month trial period. The mirrors aim to reduce the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured in collisions with lorries and 37 of them will be installed on the Barclays Cycle Superhighways pilot routes. The trial also coincides with a thought-provoking new TfL poster campaign that illustrates the potentially deadly situation cyclists put themselves in if they ride up the left hand side of lorries at junctions. It carries the stark warning that undertaking at junctions can be fatal. A *Memorandum of Understanding* has also been signed that commits the Mayor, TfL and the FTA to working together to improve cycle safety in London.

Mayor Boris Johnson said: "Safety is the top priority of the cycle revolution that we're bringing to London. That is why we are taking direct action to do everything we can to give cyclists and HGV drivers the tools and information they need to navigate our roads - and each other - safely. Trixi mirrors will improve the visibility of cyclists and our poster campaign will increase awareness of the danger of being on the inside of heavy vehicles at



**Call Sign suggests licence plates and a compulsory proficiency test. And how about a helmet Mr Johnson!**

junctions. But I am especially pleased that the HGV industry has responded and is ready to act on this issue. Their commitment is important for us to be able to make the Capital's roads even safer to cycle on."

A working group made up of TfL and London's key freight operators will manage a seven-point agreement that forms a *Memorandum of Understanding*. It includes identifying specific locations and times of the day where loading and unloading activity or commercial vehicle routing might conflict with cycle routes and identifying training needs for all road users, particularly cyclists and drivers of large vehicles, examining road traffic enforcement and engineering measures to find a balance between their enforceability and practicality.

TfL is also encouraging existing cyclists or anyone planning to use Barclays Cycle Hire and the new Barclays Cycle Superhighways pilot

routes to watch a two-minute film on how to cycle safely around the Capital. The film is available to view at [www.youtube.com/user/BarclaysCycle](http://www.youtube.com/user/BarclaysCycle).

**Call Sign** suggested to both offices that a much wider benefit could be obtained by forcing all cyclists to take a proficiency test and to make licence plates compulsory - we should have also mentioned helmets! Neither office has yet responded...

*The Anita Flavin Kidney Cancer Appeal Presents...*



## *The Black & Green Ball*

**Saturday 11th September 2010**  
**@ The Marriot Hotel, Waltham Abbey**

A night of dinner, dancing and entertainment to raise money and awareness for the James Whale Fund for Kidney Cancer - the UK's leading specialist kidney cancer charity

Tickets in advance only: £45 incl. 3 course dinner  
 Dress Code: Black Tie, wear something Green  
 For tickets contact: Leanne - 07743641931  
 Rachel - 07980765623  
 Facebook Page: Anita Flavin Kidney Cancer Appeal




James Whale Fund  
 for Kidney Cancer

Charity Number: 1120146. Fundraiser ID: JW1009



Although *The London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children's* annual and legendary outings have been running for 82 years, it is incredible how much excitement, passion and enthusiasm the Southend outing still produces. So it was no surprise that when the big day arrived on 13th July, so many dedicated drivers and helpers turned up at *Victoria Park* determined to make sure that the 300 special needs and underprivileged children had a great day - and that's exactly what they had! It was a brilliant outing and we thank them and the park itself for making the day possible as without them these outings just could not take place.

We are also very grateful to *Miss Ballooniverse*, *Blanco the Clown* and *Misiz and Clown Jolly Jack* who kept the children entertained in the park and also came to Southend with us to entertain them all day.

Nintendo's lovable characters *Mario* and *Luigi* were also on hand to mix and mingle with the children and we thank Nintendo very much for their support. Also there to meet the children were the *Deputy Mayor of Tower Hamlets Councillor Anna Lynch*, the *Lady Mayoress of the Corporation of the City of London Claire Anstee*, the *Sheriff of the City of London Peter Cook*, *Julie Cook* and *The Master Elect of the Tin Plate Workers, Maurice Avent*. We appreciate them giving up their valuable time to be with us.

The 100 yellow and blue balloon decorated taxis departed at 10am, carrying their very special little passengers and with horns blaring and lights flashing we started our journey with many people lining the streets to wave us on our way. We were extremely lucky to have with us the excellent *City of London Police Escort Team*, consisting of *Jack Warner and Tracey* in the police car and seven outriders nicknamed *Guy, JJ, Buzz, Face, Rob, Howard and Sonic!* We are extremely grateful to them for doing such a tremendous job in helping us keep safe. And of course the *RAC* and *St. John's Ambulance* were there for us and we thank them.

A 'wee' stop was made at the *Live (Palms) Hotel* in Hornchurch and we thank the Management and staff for the refreshments they provided. While there we were delighted to be greeted by the *Mayor of Havering Councillor Pam Light* and the *Mayor Consort, Terry Light*. We appreciate them taking the time out of their busy schedule to be with us.

At 12.30pm the convoy arrived at the *Cliffs Pavilion*, Southend where *Sarah* as *Snow White*, Southend FC's mascot *Elvis J Eel*, *Salvo the Clown*, *Blanco the Clown* and *Clown Jolly Jack* were all there to greet the children, with *Balloonist Tony Hanscombe* and *Miss Ballooniverse* providing the children with lots of amazing balloons. After a welcoming speech from the Fund's Hon Chairman *David Lessman (D19)*, lunch was hastily consumed and the children were ferried down to *Adventure Island* on the seafront. Here we must thank *Brian Houssart MBE*, *Hon President of the Southend Taxi Charity Fund for Children* for his assistance in providing an extra minibus to ferry us there and back. It was a dry, dull afternoon, but the lack of sunshine was

# LTFUC Take 300 SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN TO SOUTHEND



When it comes to a fun day out this picture is as good as 1000 words

replaced with the warmth coming from the smiles on the children's faces as they enjoyed themselves on all the free rides on offer. The squeals were of delight!

At 4.30 it was back to the *Cliffs Pavilion* for a tea and disco. *David Lessman* welcomed the *Mayor of Southend Councillor Ann Holland* and thanked her for coming. They both presented the *Terry Stapleton Memorial Rose Bowl* and a *Bottle of Champagne* to *Anton Haynes* as the winner of the best decorated taxi. The runner up was *Steve Pullen*, who was presented with the *Peter Lucas Shield* and a *Bottle of Champagne*. *Samantha Coates* won the final prize of an overnight stay with breakfast at the *Connaught Hotel*.

With formalities over, it was time for *DJ Dave Davies* to start the disco and everyone crowded onto the dance floor. We were lucky to have found two local facepainters and are grateful to *Jackie Tomlinson* of *Jackie's Face Painting* and *Donna Trussler* of *Dazzle Me Faces*, both from *Benfleet*, who worked tirelessly painting the children's faces! Thanks also to local magician *Ryan Sholem* who won the children over with his magic act. We also thank *Alan Jones* of the *Southend Carnival Court* for bringing the *Southend Carnival Queen* and two *Princesses* to join us. The children adored dancing and having photos taken with them.

The day just kept getting better and we were thrilled to welcome *Maisie Smith*, who plays *Tiffany* in *Eastenders*. *Maisie* was on her way to a school show and had popped into the *Cliffs Pavilion* for a drink with her family. We spotted her and invited her in to meet the children - which she was happy to do before a

cleverly planned giant conga led the children out of the hall, where on leaving they were each given books and animal key rings. Sticks of rock, kindly donated by Southend's *Paul Van Looy* were also handed to each child.

The very tired and weary convoy arrived back at *Victoria Park* about 8.30pm. It had been yet another brilliant and successful outing. I had the pleasure of driving *Miss Ballooniverse* and her husband in my taxi and at the end of the day they said: "We have been totally overwhelmed by the whole day and if we feel like this as adults, how must the children feel!"

Finally, in addition to the above can we also thank *London Communications*, *Kulsom* and *Cathy* of the *Chingford Costco* and all our generous sponsors. An anonymous donor gave drivers *diesel vouchers*. We apologise if we have missed anyone out.

The *Hon President*, *Hon Chairman* and *Committee* are extremely grateful to all the brilliant drivers and helpers who made this day possible. What a wonderful crowd of guys and girls they were, making every effort to ensure the children had a wonderful fun-packed day. Our motto is *None Walks So Tall as He who Stoops to Help a Child* and what tall people you all are! Finally, a pat on the back to the *LTFUC committee* for their skill in running the outing so smoothly, no wonder we all look forward to the Southend trip so much!

**Raymond Levy**  
**LTFUC Press Officer**

There are many other photos from the trip on the picture gallery website at [www.ltfuc.org.uk](http://www.ltfuc.org.uk).



Many **Dial-a-Cab** drivers have been rather mystified of late judging by the number ringing **Call Sign**, regarding a terminal message that has been going out regularly over the past four weeks concerning the possibility of winning a home in a beautiful Yorkshire country village. Well, this "village" has nothing to do with *The Prisoner*, but is a real opportunity for someone to win a new life in a fully paid for home. If you like the idea of escaping the city to start a new mortgage-free life, then read on...

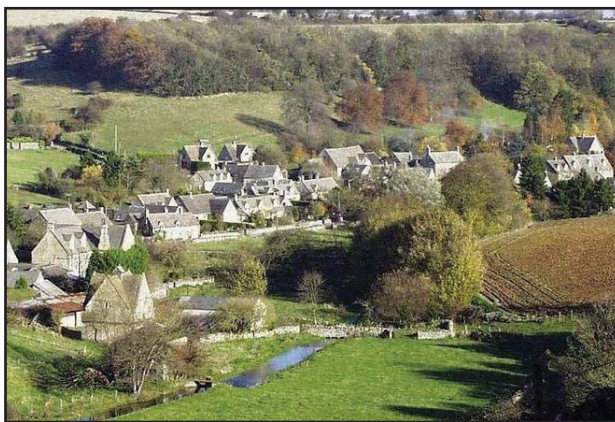
**An exciting Channel 4 series is offering you a life-changing opportunity to win a home in this beautiful village and to start a new life there.**

**The Village** is a new Channel Four observational documentary series and the makers are appealing to individuals/couples and families who would love the opportunity to start a new life in the British countryside with the chance of winning a three-bedroom home in an idyllic picturesque Yorkshire village.

**Since the terminal messages have gone out, some 25 Dial-a-Cab drivers have already applied, but you now have less than one-week left in which to put your**

# Win a new home in the countryside!

**...and even start up your own DaC taxi service!**



**Would you like to move to a fully paid up house in an idyllic Yorkshire village?**

week to sample their potential new life and home. During the week's filming, they will get involved in village life and meet up with the residents to demonstrate to them why they would become a valued member of their community. Several families will go and try out life in the village over September

**name down.**

The local people in the village have told the makers that they would be thrilled to have a real London taxi driver re-locate and start up a business there, because currently there is no-one offering a service of that kind. This could be a really exciting opportunity for someone in the industry wanting to make a fresh start in a new part of the country.

The Channel Four series will follow the participants as they move to the village for a

and October.

**Ultimately the local residents will then decide on who wins the home and becomes the newest resident of the village.**

If you are interested, then you can get more information on how to apply for the series by contacting [thevillage@studiolambert.com](mailto:thevillage@studiolambert.com) or you can phone on 0207 534 2029.

*And the very best of luck...*

## Under Attack" London, Coventry and Dresden!

*New exhibition at the London Transport Museum*

A new exhibition, *Under attack - London, Coventry and Dresden*, opens at the London Transport Museum on 7 September 2010 to mark the 70th anniversary of the London Blitz and the 65th anniversary of the Dresden bombing. It runs until March 2011.

The exhibition will explore the role of public transport in helping to create a sense of identity and normality for the three cities during the Second World War and in particular, the air bombing campaigns. It will reflect on the part played by transport organisations and workers in both keeping the cities moving and bolstering public morale. In particular, the exhibition will seek to explore the areas of commonality, as well as difference and to convey the experiences of passengers and staff alike – irrespective of nationality.

The experience of the three cities was not the same, but all suffered the terrible effects of aerial attack. Throughout the Blitz, London Transport carried on and all staff became front line war workers in the battle to keep London moving. The Blitz devastated Coventry and to keep the city moving, buses and drivers were loaned from towns across England.

Dresden was initially unaffected by bombing, but after the Firestorm of February 1945, the city and its transport system, was completely destroyed.

To complement the exhibition, the Museum's award winning LT-type bus, dressed in wartime livery with blast netting on win-



dows, original seating, wartime notices, dimmed headlights and blackout markings, along with a one-person LT air raid shelter, will be on temporary display in the ground floor gallery.

*Under attack - London, Coventry and Dresden*

will be displayed in the CBS Outdoor Gallery at the London Transport Museum, Covent Garden Piazza and admission is included in the entry ticket to the main Museum galleries (adults £10.00\*; senior citizens £8.00\*; students £6.00\*; under 16s free (\*includes voluntary Gift Aid donation). For further information visit [www.ltmuseum.co.uk](http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk) or call 020 7565 7298.

**The London Transport Museum opening hours are Saturday to Thursday 10.00 to 18.00 (last admission 17.15) and Friday 11.00 to 18.00 (last admission 17.15).**

## THE ALPHA POWER PILL

**Now even better!**

**Helps cut the cost of diesel – and reduces smoke!**

Chris Hayball is happy to supply any Dial-a-Cab drivers with the amazing Alpha Power Pill & at an even better rate than before!

You can buy 1 pack for £16, 5 packs for £70 or 10 packs for £120 – and all prices include postage!

You can order by phone on 01246 856 153 or 07737 956 298

You can order via post to: Chris Hayball, Grove Bungalow, Mansfield Rd, Heath, Derbyshire, S44 5SF

Or by visiting [www.powerpillonline.com](http://www.powerpillonline.com)

Pay via PayPal [ziggystardust100@hotmail.com](mailto:ziggystardust100@hotmail.com) (Enter promo code DAC 10)





There was a time when a chipped or cracked windscreen or any other glass on the cab for that matter, would have to be replaced. Nowadays, improvements in glass technology means that some damaged areas can be satisfactorily repaired, meeting legal requirements and keeping the cab safely on the road with the minimum of fuss and down-time.

You will have seen fleet messages going out regularly on **Dial-a-Cab** terminals advising that we now have a mobile glass repairer visiting our **Roman Way** depot. So a **Call Sign** reporter went along to see what goes on when a chipped windscreen is repaired.

Our man arrived at Roman Way and his cab was immediately inspected by **Mark Davis**, MD of **Autostone Chip Repair** for existing bodywork damage, and then windscreen repair viability. If the damage is within an area directly in line with the driver's vision ie line of sight, the windscreen must be replaced for legal reasons, there is no option! Our man was lucky and a safe repair was deemed possible, so work began in earnest to fix the little chip, the size of a pea, in a corner of the screen.

Firstly the bonnet and wings were protected by a felt cover, the glass was then thoroughly cleaned both inside and out before a piece of tissue paper was stuck to the glass, just below where the repair was to be made to catch any stray splinters of glass during the repair. Then a triangular suction pad with a mirror attached was placed on the inside of the

## Chipped Windscreen? Just go to Roman Way...



**Autostone MD Mark Davis repairs another chipped windscreen**

windscreen and another, mirrorless triangular suction pad placed on the outside, and then directly aligned with the first.

The internal mirror, Mark explained, was to allow him to accurately gauge the repaired area. Within a few minutes, the repair was effected and left to 'cure' while **Call Sign** asked a few questions.

Mark has been in the glass repair industry for decades, so there is nothing he doesn't know about his craft. His company, Autostone Chip Repair, is recognised by many insurance companies and prides itself upon being qualified to NVQ BSAU 242UA, the required standard for both the British Motor Federation and VOSA.

Autostone Chip Repair is also the first company to offer a 24/7 mobile service,

but obviously location is dependent upon the weather. They will however, meet drivers at a mutually agreed venues. Mark suggested the Westfield Centre if you are in the west or Brent Cross in the north as examples of their mobility and desire to meet driver's needs.

Advances in adhesives means that repairs that used to take 2 hours can now take as little as 30 minutes and the company can repair or replace any vehicle body glass, including heated rear screens where necessary. If they cannot fix the glass on the spot, they can 'board-up' with emergency Perspex until the correct glass can be fitted.

As an aside, he said that the MB Vito taxi is susceptible to 'stress cracks' in the central area of the lower front edge of the screen, below the wiper blades due to movement of a flexi-plate sited inside the body panel.

Our reporters' cab was now repaired, the glassware given a final inspection and declared ready to go back to work, which he did...

**Autostone Chip Repair can be contacted on 0800 612 7950 or for further info, their website is at [www.autostonechiprepairltd.com](http://www.autostonechiprepairltd.com). They are at Roman Way every Tuesday and Friday from 8am to 5pm.**

**Former Dial-a-Cab driver, Bob Wooford, writes a regular column for Call Sign from his home in Languedoc, France...**

## Call Sign

Regular commuting between the south of France and south London for the past year or so has not only helped me to build up **Black Cab Heritage Tours** as a viable enterprise (and more of that next month when I explain how DaC subscribers can earn commissions with us), but I have recently passed the *City of London Guiding Qualification* – well worth the hours of study put in over the past 9 months.

I am not the only Taxi driver to have come through the course that all the Blue Badge Guides are queuing up for and I certainly won't be the last. I am all for singing the praises of cabbies who further their education, thus adding another string to their bow - and usually do - but this month I want to promote a non-cab driver, but a fellow student on my course none the less.

If you are considering taking up a Guiding Course and there are plenty out there ie Cabguide, City of London, City of Westminster, Clerkenwell and Islington for example, then go on a few Walks to see how some people who are enthusiastic about our great City, paint such a wonderful picture of our history and heritage.

## En La Belle France



Zoe Bramley is one such individual. A fellow student on my course, she has really hit the ground running since we passed our exam just a few weeks ago. Talk about girls doing it for themselves, Zoe built her own website, printed her leaflets and business cards and set about promoting her Walks and I was fortunate enough to enjoy her very first one. Zoe has skilfully produced a Walk through 2,000 years of history, incorporating the Romans, Great Fire and the Blitz among

many other events, while portraying the life and times of William Shakespeare in a wonderfully upbeat presentation.

Got a couple of hours free one Saturday morning while waiting for the work to pick up? Take a stroll on a London Walk, pick up a little more knowledge, a few more anecdotes to pass on to your punters and of course, you might even get the buzz and want to take up a course yourself! There are plenty of Walks to choose from and help for choosing is at hand by popping into the City of London Information Point and the friendly staff there will let you know what's taking place that day.

Alternatively, you could do a lot worse than going on Zoe's Shakespeare Trail - you will not be disappointed! Check out Zoe's very user friendly website [www.shakespearetrail.com](http://www.shakespearetrail.com) and book a tour today! In the meantime, think about starting a course yourself this September...

**A bientot...**

**Bob Woodford (Ex-P49)  
Saint Genies de Fontedit, Languedoc,  
France**

A flat battery hits us all at some time in our working lives. Perhaps you've accidentally left the cab interior light on overnight or another electrical accessory has drained the battery so much so that you just can't start the cab engine.

Another problem is when your MDT 'freezes', either when you try to sign on at the start of your shift or, very occasionally, while you are working!

So **Call Sign** decided to investigate how best to deal with an MDT that will not boot up or was stuck, so we sent a new **Call Sign** recruit - whose terminal had indeed frozen - to DaC's **Roman Way** facility for some advice from the guys who know...

The manager, Dana, explained that the entire system is protected by fuses to ensure that the delicate and expensive **Dial-a-Cab** electronic equipment is not damaged due to power surges within the battery charging circuit. A sudden burst of electrical energy zipping through sensitive components - such as that in a jump start - can only add to the grief of a malfunctioning MDT, as the smell of burnt circuit boards permeates through the cab!

Dana went on to describe the correct procedure for re-booting a frozen data terminal. Firstly, hold down the yellow button at the top of the terminal for several seconds, this will hopefully power-off the terminal and the screen will go blank. Then press the yellow button again to re-start the terminal, which should then go through the start-up process.

**Moving back to jump starts, Dana emphasised that if you do need to jump start the cab due to a flat battery, or if the MDT does not respond to the above actions, you should remove the line fuse. This will kill the power to the MDT.**

These fuses can be found close to the battery cables on the **TX4** and for the **TX1** and **TX2** in the fuse box behind the dash, bottom row of fuses, second fuse in from the left. It's a 5 amp orange coloured fuse in each model. Then replace the fuse and start the terminal normally.

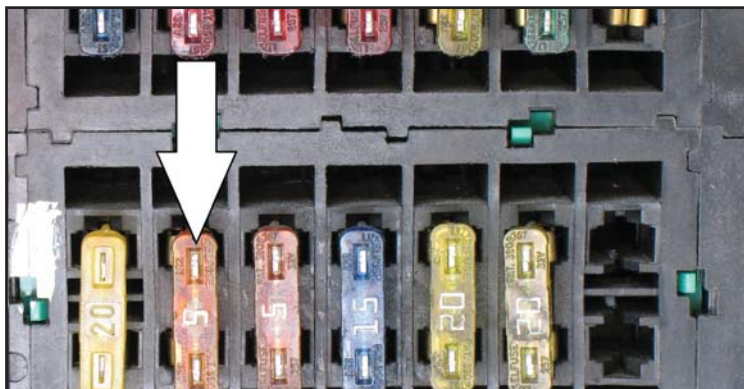
For the **Mercedes Vito**, slide the driver's seat fully forward and unplug the red contact by unscrewing the knurled thumbscrews.

Before attempting a jump start, always remove the fuse first, jump start the cab and only then should you refit the relevant fuse. This will prevent any damage to the DaC equipment due to an electrical power surge in the process. Any other issues should be dealt with by our Roman Way Depot staff.

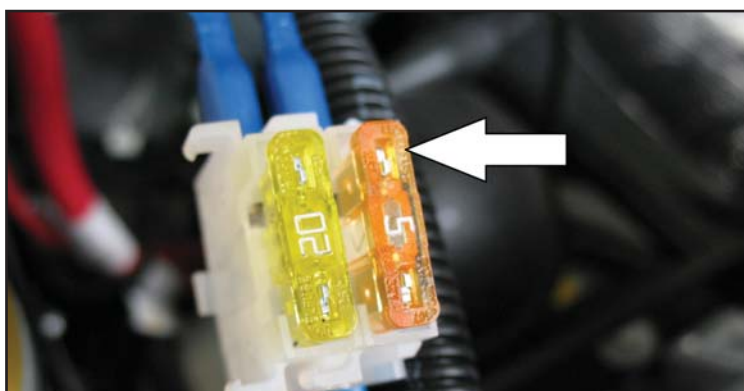
*Our grateful thanks to Dana and his team for their advice.*

## Call Sign looks at...

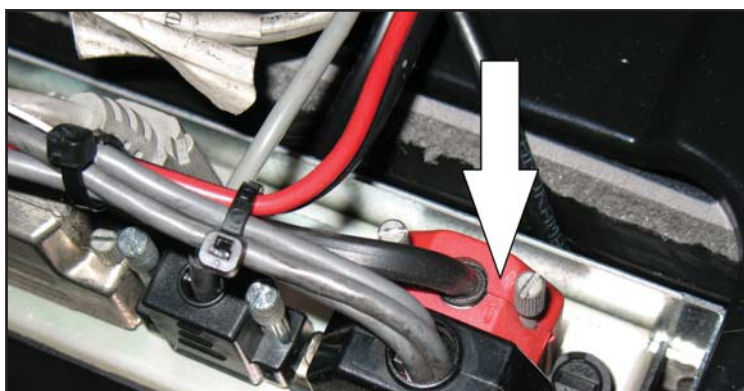
# Flat batteries and freezing MDTs



How to locate your power fuse: TX1 and 2



How to locate your power fuse: TX4



How to locate your power fuse: Vito

## ARMED FORCES DAY TAXI TRADE THANKED FOR IT'S SUPPORT...

**The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers** recently received an email from Major Hobbs thanking the Company and the licensed taxi trade for its support on **Armed Forces Day**. Company members had attended Regent's Park Barracks to add their support in addition to many drivers sporting the Armed Forces Day sticker in their cabs.

Major Hobbs told the WCHCD: "Many thanks for your contribution, support and encouragement for Armed Forces Day - its success was due in no small part to your help and assistance. We are already getting very positive feedback from many areas that were part of the campaign and I thought that you would appreciate a quick overview of the measures of success. Across the UK, a total of 365 events were registered on the website - there were probably more we didn't know about - with hundreds of thousands of people taking part in the brilliant weather of that weekend. The 14 VIP military guests at Wimbledon were given a rapturous standing ovation by the crowd on Centre Court, mimicking the levels of support across the UK."



# Albert the Fixer!

Albert Kyei-Kankam Poakwah has probably been with **Dial-a-Cab** longer than most drivers and is commonly regarded as our very own *Bob the Builder*! He is known for his repairing capabilities and confidential document shredding machines are no exception.

During one of *Call Sign's* regular hanging-



Another successful repair for Albert

up-for-stories visits to the coffee machine in Drivers Reception, our very observant junior hack spotted Albert in his office, busily wielding a screwdriver over a particularly large and complex-looking piece of equipment.

**"The shredding machine has jammed,"** Albert told our eager beaver reporter, **"it looks like the pages have become mangled in the shredder's teeth and the only way to clear them is to take it apart, clear the clogged paper out and put it all back together again!"**

Several minutes elapsed with the several fellow coffee drinking drivers biting their nails down to the 'moons wondering if Albert could fix it? Suddenly the tension was lifted with a huge Albert smile. "There, it's working perfectly now," Albert declared by way of a demonstration as he fed several sheets of paper through the slot in the top of the shredder before uttering the immortal words: "What's next...!"

## Concept4Football

# Top Class Football Coaching by London Cabbies

Former DaC driver Russell Hall introduces two London taxi drivers who are also qualified football coaches and beginning a junior football coaching scheme. Russell told **Call Sign**:

"With the 2010 World Cup in South Africa now a distant memory, it's time to look to the future. If you think that your son / daughter / nephew / niece is good at football, but they need some specialist coaching, well you are in luck! Two London cabbies have now begun their own soccer schools in conjunction with a well established and respected football programme called *Concept4Football*.

First up is Allan King. I've known Allan since we were young lads and we even did the Knowledge together. Allan has coached at Arsenal, Chelsea and is currently at West Ham.

Second is Alex Smith. I've also known Alex for many years through youth coaching and from being out in the cab. He too is currently at West Ham United.

*Concept4Football* is a professional technical coaching programme designed for youth football players. It has been successfully developed with elite academy players at top professional clubs and is now being implemented at grassroots level, aimed at boys and girls with ages between 5 and 16.

Allan has a free taster session open day on 8th August from 10am - 12pm at The Robert Clack Leisure Centre, Gosfield Road, Dagenham, Essex RM8 1JU. Gwynne Berry, Academy Technical coach at West Ham will also be there and leading the coaching sessions.

**To register call freephone 08006899440 and press option 2, or you can go online at [www.concept4football.com](http://www.concept4football.com) and complete the registration form.**

This is a fantastic opportunity to enable your child to have an insight into top class professional coaching. The *Concept4Football* coaching programme has been endorsed by many of today's top coaches. Among them are Tony Carr (Academy Director at West Ham), Scott Fitzgerald (Head of Youth Development Millwall), David Moss (Academy Director Crystal Palace), Gary Brazil (Youth Team Manager at Fulham) and Alan Pardew (Manager of Southampton).

Don't miss this excellent chance for your children to receive quality, experienced, professional coaching from fully qualified FA coaches, Allan King and Alex Smith.

## New Style CRB Disclosure Application Forms

As of 20 July 2010, the **Criminal Records Bureau** (CRB) will no longer be able to process the old style (white) CRB application form. From that date all applications will need to be made on the new (purple) form. All application packs for taxi (or private hire) driver licenses now contain the new CRB form. No further applications should be submitted using the old CRB form. If you have recently submitted an application using the old form, TfL will counter-sign it and despatch it as usual. Should any individual problems arise with these forms, TfL will write to the applicants concerned individually.

Any driver intent on submitting an application who is in possession of an old application pack (containing the old CRB form) can email us on **TPH.Enquiries@tfl.gov.uk** to request a new CRB form providing us with a full postal address. Drivers who have recently submitted an application on the old form need take no action unless specifically contacted by TfL.



**Keith Reading**  
Professional Toastmaster  
Master of Ceremonies

**Tele: 01279 465 938**  
**Mobile: 07774 860 374**  
**Email: [kgr.2@virgin.net](mailto:kgr.2@virgin.net)**

**10% discount for DaC drivers**

**Fellow of the Guild of Professional Toastmasters**

**Tom Whitbread**, Dial-a-Cab's Dalston Board member, was listening to the *Magic FM* hourly news as he was about to exit his car, when they briefly mentioned an event taking place on Hackney's London Fields. Being local, he kept on listening. The event was described as an extravaganza of colour and family fun, before the newsreader went on to describe it more succinctly as a Drag Queens Race around the Fields!

As Tom is the owner of a Nikon camera, he considered it his public duty to capture some images for **Call Sign**!

After the event, Tom told this magazine: "The race seemed to consist of old queens, ancient queens, injured queens, ugly queens and coy queens hiding under masks. But judging by the happy faces under those masks, London Fields celebrated a truly gay day and a brilliant time was had by all..."



Tom snaps a gay day in Hackney

## LONDON ACCORDING TO DAVE

FOLLOWING THE PIED PIPER...

*\* At last the people in a body,  
To the Town Hall came flocking:  
"Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy;  
"And as for our Corporation — shocking!"*

You with your masquerading,  
you with your always-contem-  
plation of what to do, come  
on, step inside and follow  
me. I'm the pied piper, trust  
in me and I'll show you how  
your lives should *really* be...

First of all they were  
instantly recognisable and  
coloured red. You could  
jump on and off and they  
had a conductor who gave  
you a ticket. Widely known as the Routemaster or dou-  
ble decker, its safety record was average.

Then along came the new Mayor, known as Red Ken, who said  
no, *this* is what you need, just follow me. And they had two  
halves with three access points and you bought your ticket in  
advance. Widely known as the 'Bendy' or among the regulars, the  
"free" bus, its safety record dropped 75% below that of the  
Routemaster.

Then along came the alchemist and new Mayor, Boris, who said  
no, *this* is what you need, just follow me. And they had two  
wheels, you sit on a saddle and peddle for all you are worth and  
pay by credit card. Widely known as Bixi Bikes or Boris Bikes, its  
safety record is currently unknown, but if like most of London's  
non-Boris cyclists, probably horrendous!

Are many about to be caught in a £140 million rat trap making  
their hearts go pit-a-pat? Who will pay?

Well come on and follow me, I'm the pied piper, trust in me  
and I'll put up your fares every time!

There is one form of surface transport you can follow *and* trust,  
London Taxis, widely known as 'Black Cabs' where five people still  
travel for the price of one. Safety record? Excellent...

*\* Courtesy The Pied Piper of Hamelin by Robert Browning  
David Heath (ex-W27)*



## "Golden Rank" goes live next month

The so-called Leicester Square Golden rank is set to go live on Friday 24 September. It will be situated in Coventry Street with the front of the rank starting outside the Café de Paris. The rank outside the former Planet Hollywood, still used by some drivers, will become a feed to the main section.

Unlike the old rank at Leicester Square station, this rank will be first come, first served and will not be a going home one as was the former.

Although the rank will be in use all week, the "golden" fixed price fares will only operate on Friday and Saturday nights when the rank will be marshalled. Operating hours are between 10pm and 6am.



2 Bedroom 2 Bathroom Pool home sleeps 4/5



4 Bedroom 2 Bathroom Pool home sleeps 8/9



6 Bedroom 5 Bathroom Pool home sleeps 12



Pool and conservation view at 6 bedroom home.

**Three properties owned by UK Registered Charity Dial A Dream. Reg. 1011637**

Your opportunity to rent one of these villas and at the same time making it possible for this charity to continue its work with children from all over the UK all of whom are suffering from a life limiting illness. All villas within minutes of the main Disney theme parks, golf courses and restaurants.

We can offer car hire and theme park tickets for you and your family at very competitive rates.

So, if you are considering a Florida based holiday in the near future then call us and you may be helping us to give a very sick child the will to say  
*"Let me live another day"*.

Prices from £56 per night through to £237 per night  
(Prices are for the villa and not per person.)

[www.dialadream.co.uk](http://www.dialadream.co.uk)



Tel: 020 8530 5589



## Mailshot

**Either write to Call Sign at Dial-a-Cab House or email us at - callsignmag@aol.com**

### Credit cards – who's right?

*Dear Alan,*

I can fully understand July's letter from David Lessman (D19) as I was also confused about our credit card procedure. I read the *March Call Sign* (P15 to be exact!) article by Keith Cain, which clearly stated that on any street hiring paid for via credit card, we must ensure we use the old brass rubbing method etc as the banks wouldn't always accept payment when swiping the card and using the receipt from our DaC terminals. Please can you look back at the March edition and clarify the situation.

Keith Cain and Warren Smith seem to have different views on what we need to do! Warren Smith's reply seems to be the better explanation, so then why did Keith write that article back in March?

**Graham Negus (Y73)**

**Keith Cain replies:** Regrettably there is still some confusion amongst drivers as to the current procedures for undertaking a credit card trip. Let me first say that the original procedures remain the same. Nothing has been altered. What perhaps did not come across very well, it appears, is when it is necessary for drivers to not only rely on the receipt from the terminal but in addition, as to when to use the manual receipt. The manual receipt (brass rubbing) must be used for those trips finishing outside of our radio frequency. Again nothing has changed with the credit card procedures. Please see Warren Smith's answer in last month's issue of Call Sign.

### Things on the up!

*Hi Alan*

Re Brian Rice's Chairman's Report in the *July Call Sign*, I too have found things picking up with my recent credits being close to those I was regularly taking before the recession hit us so badly. Fingers crossed...

**Divyesh Ruparelia (V59)**

**And very tightly too, Divyesh! Things have certainly bucked up as of late and we just need to hope that they stay that way ...Ed**

### Which way???

*Dear Alan*

I have seen some taxis with a notice on their partitions saying that if the passenger prefers a certain route, then they should tell the driver before they set off. With radio trips, that could be even more important if a passenger does the same trip every day. I have assumed that the notices I have mentioned are probably not sanctioned by PCO / TfL, but in my view it is a message worth passing

ing across. So I wonder whether Dial-a-Cab could print their own stickers that will have been passed by the PCO? There are always some passengers who – if you hit traffic – will ask why you “didn't go the other way!” With a notice, they can have the opportunity of telling drivers to go “the other way” before the journey starts!

**Sid Nathan (K88)**

**Call Sign asked Allan Evans about Sid's suggestion and he will speak to TfL. Whilst he doesn't see why there should be any problem, we will have to wait until then ...Ed**

### Cash booking number...

*Dear Alan*

Regarding Allen Togwell's statement that only 31 drivers have the cash booking line number on their taxis; I was one of those until the end of May, then I went to Roman Way for a refit to a 57 plate *Gold TX4* from my S reg TX1 - which I currently rent out and have kept in tip-top condition. But after the strip out, all the glue from the stickers was still left on both doors and when I mentioned it, I was told to use white spirit and tissue paper, which I think that after paying nearly £130 for the refit, the least they could have done was to give me back my taxi in the condition it was before the stickers were placed on it. Maybe this has happened to other drivers when they have had their old cabs stripped out and they did not want to spend five hours getting glue off the doors as I had to? I did not want to complain, but maybe if Allen Togwell reassured drivers that when their old cabs were stripped out, the bodywork would be left in the same condition as it was before the stickers were put on, it might make a difference. That is the only reason I refused to have the cash booking line number put back on my new cab as I did not want to have that same performance with my new cab when I need that one stripped out.

**Lee Wood (T18)**

**Dana Thananjeyan, Manager at Roman Way responds:** Lee, we always take the greatest care when fitting the door telephone numbers so that they are level and centrally located, ensuring the cab goes out of Roman Way looking smart and promoting a professional image of the driver and our company to the public at large.

The logo itself has to be securely stuck onto the paintwork so that it does not detach itself from the door and look scruffy, possibly leading to the cab receiving a PCO 'Stop Note' and then causing the driver to lose time by having to visit the Depot to have the detached logo replaced. Equally, when a cab is stripped out and the logos removed, we take extreme care when taking the logos off so that the vehicle is left in a pristine condition, again reflecting the high standards of workmanship I expect of my staff in all that they do. We carefully

wipe over the paintwork after we have removed all the logos, however some drivers have asked the best way to remove excess adhesive and we have advised that white spirit and tissue paper is the answer. I was therefore a little surprised at Lee's claim that a logo 3.5cm wide and 60cm long left residue that took him 5 hours to remove! I was also disappointed that he did not bring this to my attention when he was here, because it could have been sorted out very quickly indeed. The cash number logo is an important part of our marketing strategy and I would urge more drivers to visit Roman Way to have them fitted onto the cab, bringing more business into Dial-a-Cab.

Finally, I would like to assure all DaC drivers of my determination to maintain the highest standards of workmanship here at Roman Way and that if they have any concerns regarding the service they receive, to raise these matters with Victor or myself.

### Call Sign in black and white?

*Hi Alan*

Here we go again! Receiving my *July Call Sign* at the beginning of the month, I was looking forward to a good read about OUR Society. There was the sad news about the death of Lou Gitlin, the Chairman's usual intelligent report which always makes good reading, Allen Togwell's futile attempts to smarten up the flip-flop, t-shirt n' shorts brigade - no luck there Allen, apart from a few of us who still take a pride in our appearance! Perhaps Keith Cain can get some more of those nice polo shirts with the Dial-a-Cab logo etc, or maybe some short sleeved shirts that have our logo on? Surely they would look better than some of the scruffy t-shirts that some of our drivers wear! But then lo and behold, I got to page 20 and there we were back with another full page article on the black / white issue. Our magazine is about our Society and not about a member's racial opinions - whatever colour you are. Make those complaints / opinions known to your MP and not our Society's readers. We are getting bored with it all. We want to read about all things that are relevant to our trade and our members. If you think you are getting a raw deal racially, take it to the appropriate authorities and not to our mostly satisfied members / readers.

**Roy Martin (R42)**

**Hi Roy, sorry to you and anyone else who may have found the debate between Louie Christian (A48), Ian**



## Mailshot

Connelly (T49) and initially me, who seems to have started the whole thing! However, I feel that I should defend *Call Sign's* reputation by saying that this magazine belongs to our drivers and they – including you – control what goes into it. There is no magazine in the whole of the cab trade that has so many non-press releases taken (usually with my permission) to republish in their papers. They don't do that because the articles are boring.

If I stuck purely to news on the Society or trade, we'd be back to the days when we had trade press releases or Board Members commenting about covering work in the southwest of London – not, of course, to say that we shouldn't! But it didn't always make inspiring reading. The July issue that you are referring to, Roy, in addition to Brian Rice's column and the sad news about Lou Gitlin, also contained stories about our drivers running marathons, climbing mountains and walking across the country – all for charity. It told of one driver's efforts to return to the UK after the volcanic ash debacle with the airline companies, Glasgow taxi gangsters, a nude cycle ride, a driver's son's boxing exploits and quite a number of other things that bore little association to Dial-a-Cab except for one thing – they all involved our drivers.

Going back to the issues of October 1999, May, April and June 2000, *Call Sign* ran a fascinating series of articles from one of our drivers that even found the pages of the *Evening Standard*.. It helped to expose a parting ticket scam being carried out by traffic wardens in the borough of Lambeth. In reality, that driver's cab was the only taxi to be involved in those days when the only cameras were those carried by tourists – and there weren't too many of those in Lambeth at the time! But I thought it merited inclusion even though it didn't really involve DaC at all and up until that point, didn't really involve our drivers except the one who got the ticket – who, by the way, was Roy Martin (R42)! The fact that I remember the series of articles shows how important I felt they were, but in reality, they were included because I thought they would provide interest to readers. No doubt some may have found them quite dull at a time when we didn't get too many PCNs.

So back to the black/white issue. It began in my Editorial when I wrote of a complaint made against me by a call taker for publishing the account of a DaC driver who had been threatened by a gang of hoodies. The call taker didn't like the wording and as is his right, he complained. That led to a response from black driver Louis Christian and a response to Louie from white driver Ian Connelly (T49) – a series of events that has been repeated numerous times over the years in the mag with only the sub-

jects and driver's names changing.

Roy, I count myself as being tremendously lucky to edit a magazine with so many intelligent taxi drivers as readers – including you – who can, when they deem it necessary, articulate their views on any given subject so well. I don't expect every single one of 2500 drivers to read every article, but they are there to read if they find the topic to be of interest. No doubt some will even find my response dull! And Roy, if I were you, I'd skip the next letter! ...Ed

### And Call Sign in black and white!

*Dear Mr Christian,*

You wrote your first article in response to an Editorial that Alan had wrote and I read it with interest, although I did not agree with the points you raised. I would have felt no need to comment had it not been for the one comment you made about the many idioms and sayings that contain the word *Black*. You stated it was the negativity of such sayings that were highly derogatory to much of the black population. It was this one comment only, which as you so eloquently put it, rattled my cage. I had said in so many words that comment was plain stupid. I now realise that I should have been more diplomatic in my choice of words and for that I apologise. The thing is though, you continued in the same vein in your second article, so again I feel compelled to take issue with you. While you dismiss my analogy of skin colour as being nonsensical, you go on to ask me again: "Have you ever seen black ice?" Do you not see, that is the point! You can't see it, it's a negative saying and inherently wrong, although in your view all my examples are nonsensical, simplistic and lack merit. You go on to cherry pick bits of my letter out of context to suit your argument and you are also selective with the definition of your examples such as black sheep in the family. You state that "it is derived from the unwanted presence of black individuals in a herd of white sheep." This could imply a black person and may suit your argument of negativity to black people, but when you *Google* further, it goes on to state that because sheep are generally white of colour, on rare occasions one would give birth to a black one and it then became commercially useless as you could not dye the wool, hence the saying was coined. It's nothing to do with black people. Now I am not so naive as not to realise there are morons in this world who could say any phrase that contains the word black in such a way as to cause offence, but for you assume that these everyday sayings that contain the word black in a negative context were coined with reference to black people and therefore are highly derogatory to much of the black population is what I find hard to believe.

You also make some assumptions about me as well as other comments, of which I would like to respond to. First of all, I did not

ignore your comment on *not living in an ideal world*, as I took that as a given. Although I cannot claim to have anything close to your academic achievements, of which you are rightly proud, I do question though if you have recently undergone a commonsense bypass as you not only ask me why, but also assume I would think it fair that Germans can freely come, work and remain in this country while your WW2 veteran Caribbean grandfather whose great grandchildren cannot do so and would need visas to visit. Surely you know exactly why? If you or I wish to live and work in Germany, we have the same rights as do all who are part of the EU. To my knowledge, all people from the Commonwealth need a visa, so I am unsure of what your point is. The two youths you mention (not sure if this is an example or fact), either way you seem to be implying the white middle class magistrates would treat the black youth more draconian than the white one. I accept that this probably does happen more than it should, our justice system is far from ideal although I wonder what the outcome of said case would be if the magistrate was black middle class? In my letter I asked whether instead of a Black list, why not something on the lines of a Afro/Carib list as many whites are from Africa and the West Indies. Your answer that whites only inhabit those lands because of brain washing, brutality and colonisation strikes me as a rather glib one. White people have been in those lands for generations and are no more responsible for what happened a century or so ago than the present generation of Germans are for what the Nazis did. You seem to be implying that to be a true African / WI you have to be black, which would be as nonsensical as saying you can only be English if you are white.

I accept your obsession with statistics may well be a result of your academic background, but to furnish me with a load of unnecessary statistics of teenage pregnant girls and insinuate I was exclusively pinpointing black absent fathers, was not what I was saying. If you read the letter you will see that I said: "How many kids black or white..." I am fully aware of the large number of young single mothers and feckless fathers who are white. I also did not advocate that black kids should only aspire to being sporting and pop stars, it was a vain attempt on my part of an example of how black and white youths compete with and against each other and get to the top on hard work and merit alone, unlike what you were justifying, that they need divisions such as the Black Power list because there was little chance of a black person making it into a national Rich List, of which I disagreed with. I suspect most of these awards, be they black, white or whatever, are more to do with a





## Mailshot

good night out and a few pats on the back and not the inspirational message of success to the disadvantaged youth, who I suspect you are referring to.

Although I do not think you and I could ever agree on what we both wrote, it seems I am a minority of one who took exception to your articles. That may suggest the rest of **Call Sign's** readership agreed with you. What I can't deny is the passion and conviction that came through in your articles. Of some of what you wrote, I sense you have encountered a fair degree of negativity in your life. As a trade, we were perceived by some as a white male closed shop and even now by my observations, black, ethnic and women are still a minority. If you ever consider writing an article of your experiences of what it was like 25 years ago to join a trade that was, and still is, predominantly white and why the change is slow, I for one would be interested in reading such a article.

**Ian Connelly (T21)**

**Lou Gitlin**

*Hi Alan,*

It was with great sadness that I read of Lou

Gitlin's death in the *July Call Sign*. Yet another name from the past that helped to make Dial-a-Cab the much admired radio circuit it is today. Lou and Ivor Belkin made quite a pair of dispatchers, always reliable and it seemed that they would be there at weekends covering the work at DaC forever.

In addition, may I correct you about when the first trials involving taxi drivers taking part in hippocampus tests took place. I had a request in the early 1990s from Eleanor, asking me as editor of *Taxi Globe* to print a request for volunteers for these hippocampus tests at the National Hospital in Queen's Square. Among those who I can remember volunteering was Eddie Lambert (and myself). In fact I made it a condition that I would undergo the test before asking for volunteers to see that it would be a good reflection on our trade, which it was. She offered something like £5 plus costs for parking, light refreshments, a T-shirt with the volunteer's brain scan printed on it and a set of the volunteer's individual scans. These scans I still have, though with my increasing age I wonder how they would compare with an updated set of scans!



I'm also glad that you have had your editorial position renewed, keep up the good work of making **Call Sign** a good way of staying in touch.

**Rodney Lewis (aka ex-Dan 77)**

**Rodney Lewis was with ODRTS in the early days at Pentonville Road, whereas Ivor Belkin probably will be here forever! ...Ed**

### PHV blacked-out windows petition

*Hi Alan,*

If possible, would you please be so kind as to print this online petition website address in **Call Sign** regarding the banning of PHVs with blacked-out windows due to safety reasons. It can be found at <http://www.gopetition.co.uk/online/37501.html>.

**Roland Brewer (M38)**

**No probs ...Ed**

# Disneyland Paris Magical Taxi Tour Thank You



## Rest ranks agreed

TfL have introduced rest ranks where taxi drivers can park legally whilst they take a break in their working day. A total of 59 rest bays have been introduced across the capital with the first batch being in Westminster. On a rest rank, drivers can leave their taxis for up to an hour in order to do what it says on the box – have a rest or a bite to eat etc. What it doesn't mean is that drivers can leave their cabs to go shopping, because you may well stop another driver who needs a legitimate rest from putting on there.

Among the ranks allocated are those in New Bond Street, Marylebone Road by Baker Street, Lancaster Gate, a section of the Law Courts, Great Portland Street, Arundel Street, Praed Street, Great Portland Street, Grosvenor Street, Hyde Park Street, the rear section of Russell Street, Mathew Parker Street and Aldwych.

Transport for London will be putting up notices at all rest ranks. If it doesn't have the notice then it isn't a rest rank and you may be likely to get a PCN if your cab is unattended

For some time the licensed taxi trade has been feeling the effects of the recession and so particular thanks go to all of those who donated so generously at the two collections held recently to raise funds for the *Magical Taxi Tour*.

Each year a huge sum of money needs to be raised to finance the annual trip for children with life threatening illnesses to Disneyland Paris. This comes in many different guises; cab drivers doing marathons, corporate sponsorship, fund raising events, raffles and of course collections on taxi ranks. So the committee would like to say a big thank you on behalf of the children to everyone who dug deep in their pockets at both London City Airport and Wimbledon taxi rank recently...

## Taxi Driver of The Year Dinner & Dance

**The above Charity is holding their 37th annual Dinner Dance on 4th December 2010 at the Holiday Inn London Kensington**

**Reception drink, 4-course meal, dancing to a live band...**

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**Russell Poluck MBE (T55)**

**Hon Chairman**

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