

November 2015



# Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International



*Was this DaC driver “set up”  
by Cab Enforcement???*



# NASH'S NUMBERS

From Alan Nash (A95)

*It's the time of year when parties are followed by night clubs! It's always rowdy revellers that jump in the cab and think you know every club in London. So here's a little help...107 clubs in and around central London...*

|                        |                                     |                        |                                  |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Africa Bar             | Africa Cntr, 38 King St, WC2        | Horse Meat Disco       | 349 Kennington Ln, SE11          |
| Alibi                  | 91, Kingsland High Street, E8       | Infernos               | 146 Clapham High Street, SW4     |
| Alley Cat              | 4 Denmark Street, WC2H              | Island                 | 180 Hungerford Lane, WC2         |
| Anaya                  | 9 Swallow St, W1                    | Jamm                   | 261 Brixton Rd, SW9              |
| Arcadia                | 51-53 Southwark Street, SE1         | Kanaloa                | 18 Lime Office Ct, EC4A          |
| Artesian Well          | 693 Wandsworth Road, SW8            | Kingly Club            | 4 Kingly St, W1B 5PW             |
| Babylon @ Roof Gdns.   | 99 Kensington High St W8            | Koko                   | 1a Camden High St, NW1 7JE       |
| Bar Rumba              | 36 Shaftesbury Ave W1D              | Leopard Lounge         | 660 Fulham Road, SW6             |
| Baroque                | 12 New Burlington Str, W1S          | Libertine              | see Chinawhite                   |
| Black Cap              | 171 Camden High Str, NW1            | Lock Tavern            | 35 Chalk Farm Road, NW1          |
| Blagclub               | 68 Notting Hill Gt, W11             | Maggie's               | 329 Fulham Rd, SW10              |
| Blagclub, Holland Park | 11 Russell Gdns W14                 | Mahiki                 | 1 Dover St, W1                   |
| Blagclub, Kensal Town  | 222 Kensal Rd, W10                  | Metra                  | 14 Leicester Sq, WC2H 7NG        |
| Book Club              | 100, Leonard St, EC2A               | Metropolis Strip Club  | 234 Cambridgeheath Rd, E2        |
| Boujis                 | 43 Thurloe St, SW7                  | Ministry of Sound      | 103 Gaunt Street, SE1 6DP        |
| Cable                  | 33a Bermondsey St, SE1              | Movida                 | 8 Argyll Street, W1F             |
| Camouflage             | 84 Wardour St, W1                   | New Rose               | 84-86 Essex Rd, N1               |
| Canvas                 | 177 Portobello Rd, W11              | No. 41                 | 41 Conduit Str, W1               |
| Cargo                  | 83 Rivington St, EC2A 3AY           | No. 5 Club             | 5 Cavendish Sq, W1               |
| Catch                  | 22 Kingsland Rd, E2                 | Nomad                  | 58 Old St, EC1                   |
| Chakana                | 23 Orchard St, W1                   | Notting Hill Arts Club | 221 Notting Hill Gate, W11       |
| Chinawhite             | 4 Winsley St., W1                   | Office Bar             | 3 Rathbone Pl, W1                |
| Clapham Grand          | 21, St John's Hill, SW11            | Plan B                 | 418 Brixton Rd, SW9              |
| Club 414               | 414 Coldharbour Ln, SW9             | Plastic People         | 147 Curtain Rd, EC2              |
| Club 49                | 49 Greek Str, W1                    | Platinum Lace          | 13 Coventry Street, W1           |
| Club Aquarium          | 256 Old Str, EC1                    | Po Na Na               | 82 Wimbledon Bdy, SW19           |
| Club Kali              | Dome, Dartmouth Pk Hill, N19        | Potion                 | 28 Maple St, W1                  |
| Club Supreme           | 65 Goding Str, SE11                 | Pulse                  | 1-4 Invicta Plaza, SE1           |
| Concrete               | Tea Bldg, Shoreditch Hi Str, E1 6JJ | Qube Project           | 191, Victoria, SW1V              |
| Corsica Studios        | 4 Elephant Rd, SE17 1LB             | Queen Of Hoxton        | 1-5 Curtain Rd, EC2              |
| Directors Lodge        | 13 Masons Yd, Duke Street, SW1      | Red                    | 5 Kingly Street, W1              |
| Eclipse W. Hampstead   | 283 West End Lane, NW6              | Redstar                | 319 Camberwell Road, SE5         |
| Egg                    | 200 York Way, N7 9AP                | Retreat                | 144 Upper St, N1                 |
| El Paso Club           | 350 Old St, EC1V                    | ReZ's                  | 1 Nine Elms Ln, SW8              |
| Electric Brixton       | 1 Town Hall Parade, SW2 1RJ         | Rhythm Factory         | 16 Whitechapel Rd, E1            |
| Electrowerkz           | 7 Torrens St, EC1                   | Rocket                 | 166 Holloway Rd, N7              |
| Elysium                | 68 Regent St, W1B                   | Rococo                 | 7 Cranbourne St, WC2             |
| Emporium Nighclub      | 62 Kingly St, W1B                   | Scala                  | 275 Pentonville Rd, N1           |
| Envy                   | 41, Woodfield Rd, W9                | Sophisticats           | 28 Marylebone Ln, W1             |
| Euphorium              | 1-3 High Street, W3                 | Studio 33              | 101 Tinworth St, SE11            |
| Fabric Nightclub       | 77a Charterhouse Str, EC1M 6HJ      | Studio 338             | Boord Street, SE10 0PF           |
| Fire                   | South Lambeth Rd SW8                | Sunset Strip           | 30 Dean Street, W1D              |
| French Kiss            | 2 Carthusian St EC1M                | Sway                   | 61 Great Queen St, WC2           |
| Funky Buddha           | 15 Berkeley St, W1                  | The 100 Club           | 100 Oxford St, W1                |
| G.A.Y.                 | see Heaven                          | Too2Much               | 11 Walkers Ct, W1                |
| Garage,                | 20 Highbury Corner, N5              | Tramps Nightclub       | 40 Jermyn St, SW1                |
| Ghetto                 | 58 Old St, EC1                      | Trap                   | 201 Wardour St, W1               |
| Ginglik                | 1 Shepherds Bush Green, W12         | Umbaba                 | 15 Ganton St, W1F                |
| Groucho Club           | 45 Dean Str W1                      | Under The Westway      | Acklam Road, W10                 |
| Hackney Central        | Amhurst Road, E8                    | Victory                | 55 New Oxford St, WC1            |
| Heaven Nightclub       | Villiers Street, WC2                | Whisky Mist            | Hilton Hotel, 35 Hertford St, W1 |
| Herbal                 | 10 Kingsland Rd, E2                 | Wyld Bar               | 10 Wardour St, W1                |
| HeyJo                  | 91 Jermyn St SW1Y                   | XOYO London            | 32, Cowper St, EC2A 4AP          |
| Hidden                 | 100 Tinworth St, SE11               |                        |                                  |

*Don't forget the [www.myfav.co.uk](http://www.myfav.co.uk) website. Just click the Taxi < ---- link for a page of taxi related icon links.*

# from the editor's desk

## A day in the life of Kings Cross taxi rank

Remember all that hassle at **Kings Cross** while the new taxi rank was being put in. It has to be said that it was sorely needed as its' users – our passengers – had required a degree in psychology and geography to work out how the old one operated and where it actually just started and ended! And indeed, even most drivers couldn't understand its method of working either and there were always arguments about where the front of the queue was.

But now London's taxi drivers, with their specially converted taxis that have been adapted at their own expense to take wheelchair passengers without them needing to leave their chairs, have a nice new rank that even I can understand!

But what I can't understand is the mentality of the designers who have put in the dividing rails to separate the queues so close to the kerb, that there is now no room for wheelchairs to be put in and porters have to go to the fourth cab or behind if they have a wheelchair passenger, as the first few taxis do not have the room to fit them in!

Who was it that said that you really couldn't make it up! But then again, we're used to stupidity in this trade; after all, we have TfL as our masters... so it's fine!

And to the pregnant woman who threatened to report me to TfL for refusing to let her jump the long queue at the Cross, feel free madam. Had you been around the 9-month mark rather than the just-showing mark, I would certainly have thought about it. But all is not lost, because my refusal to you was the first time I had ever been applauded by a taxi rank queue!

## Private Hire Consultation

We are now a month into the consultation that **Uber** considers to be so unfair on their business and no one – especially the U-men – still knows actually what they are. The world calls them minicabs; while they themselves go onto the radio and talk about how unfair the PH consultation document could be to their car service... after then adding that they aren't a car service but really a technology company.

We know they will get far more names supporting them than we have any hope in hell of ever achieving and I'm not going to say anything about where their recent petition support came from. I've heard the rumours and would usually assume that's exactly what they are... except that in this case and seeing some of the signatures, I believe them! What I do know is that many of those who support Uber do so for the most selfish of reasons – they are happy to see people with very little money be talked into buying high priced cars and have to work 15 or more hours a day just to pay off that debt, never mind earning a living. As much as we all detest the company, I have some sympathy for their drivers whose work schedule has caused London to see more PH accidents than ever before. And by far the large majority involve Uber.

I know many DaC clients read *Call Sign* and if you are one of those people that complain about the treatment of animals and those who work on the shop floor for minimal wages, yet you are happy to use Uber because they are cheap thanks to drivers who are knocking themselves out to come home with not even the minimum wage, then you should really think about it. We have no problem with reputable private hire, but supporting Uber is the equivalent to kicking a dog –



unless, of course, you find nothing wrong with that anyway.

After the reverse in the High Court where a learned judge didn't believe that a gadget measuring time and distance isn't actually a meter, I hope all DaC drivers will be filling in the consultation response and my sincere thanks go to **LTDA** General Secretary, **Steve McNamara**, who has made their suggested response available on the *Call Sign* website from next week ([www.dac-callsign.co.uk](http://www.dac-callsign.co.uk)). That followed a letter to this issue's Mailshot from **John Thomas (Y58)** suggesting the idea... and no, that isn't the same JT as the LTDA Chairman! At least I don't think it is!

## Uber and principles

**Dial-a-Cab** driver **Paul Arrowsmith (T83)** is a man of high principles as his letter in this issue's Mailshot shows. He discovered that mobile phone network **EE** was in partnership with **Uber**, so he cancelled his monthly contract with them. Then he read an article in the online version of the *Daily Telegraph* by **TalkTalk** CEO, **Baroness Harding**, praising **Uber** and coming out as being against any moves by **TfL** that involved placing restrictions on the PH trade. This time Paul cancelled his broadband and phone contract with that company. He ended by asking how many drivers were supporting those companies but were unaware that they were supporting Uber in doing so. I have to hold my hands up and say that I'm one of those that Paul is talking about.

Soon after mobile phones first appeared, I got one from **Hutchison Telecom** and stayed with them for many years until 1999 when they sold their European section to **Orange**. I stayed with **Orange** until they were taken over by **EE** and I'm still there. But Paul's letter has got me thinking about a move.

Then there's **TalkTalk**. I first went online and got an email address in 1987 with help from the then Editor of the Las Vegas **Trip Sheet**, **Dick Kawadler**. I had never heard of email – or electronic mail as it was known back then. From memory it was [474528674@compuserve.com](mailto:474528674@compuserve.com) – not the easiest address to remember! But in the 1990s personalised addresses came in and my address changed to [callsign@compuserve.com](mailto:callsign@compuserve.com). Then in the last decade, **Compuserve** was bought out by **America Online** and we became [callsignmag@aol.com](mailto:callsignmag@aol.com) as *callsign* on its own had gone to someone in **Baltimore**! Now the European arm of **AoL** has gone to **TalkTalk** and that's where I am now. Thanks to Paul, I'm thinking about moving but I'll have to make sure I can keep my email address as it is in the address book of 1000s of contacts around the world, not to mention

many drivers both past and present. But after reading Paul's letter, I will be changing if I can keep the email.

But what about the **Dido Harding** story; what can I say. She simply froths at the mouth at "**Uber's innovation**," writing how they offer customers a solution to the "nightmare" problem of getting around in London. Of course customers already have a solution – it's called **taxi** or **private hire**!

So let's take a brief look at Paul's comments on **Diana Mary "Dido" Harding, Baroness Harding of Winscombe**. She "earned" her title by being the daughter of **Lord Harding** and granddaughter of **Field Marshal John Harding, 1st Baron Harding of Petherton** who was deservedly immortalised for commanding the famous **Desert Rats** in **WW2**.

I doubt that **Dido** was brought up in a minimum wage family and she undoubtedly had a privileged lifestyle as a youngster.

She went to **Oxford University** and graduated in **Politics** and **Economics** studying alongside a certain **David Cameron**, before jetting off to the **Harvard Business School** where she gained a **Master of Business Administration (MBA)**. She obviously learned business practice well, because she is now the **Chief Executive of TalkTalk** and apparently approves of **Uber's** minicab drivers – many of whom are said to earn below £5 an hour, far below the minimum wage. But, of course, THAT is why people such as **Diana Mary "Dido" Harding, Baroness Harding of Winscombe** like **Uber**! Hands up if you thought that slave labour ended in **July 1833** when a Bill to abolish slavery was passed by MPs in the House of Commons!

Oh yes, and did I mention the *Which* survey published in September where 3,501 members were asked about the large brands they had interacted with in the previous 12 months. Each brand was rated on whether they made their customers feel valued, knowledge of their products and services, helpfulness of staff and how well they resolved customers' complaints and problems etc. Number 1 on the list and the best company to deal with was cosmetics firm **Lush**, which was said to have very knowledgeable and welcoming staff. The worst brand and in 100th place was **Scottish Power**, which just beat **Chief Executive Diana Mary "Dido" Harding, Baroness Harding of Winscombe's TalkTalk** to the title that no one wanted – that of worst company to deal with. They finished in 97th place.

The Lady's sh\*t may not stink but her security certainly does. We certainly don't need any advice from her and **Uber** are welcome to her help...!

## Green London...

The wife of a *Call Sign* reader was at a government meeting with several oil company executives. The subject of pollution was brought up and TfL mentioned the possibility of pedestrianising **Newgate Street** and **Holborn Viaduct**. Parts of **Victoria Street** were also mentioned as the licensing authority spoke of introducing electric cabs "very soon" to help in reducing pollution.

I can help with an answer there. Get rid of the cycle superhighways, the ridiculous number of roadworks and cut emissions in a single swoop! But TfL and the Mayor won't do that. Is it me or do they have no idea whatsoever of how London operates???

Alan Fisher  
[callsignmag@aol.com](mailto:callsignmag@aol.com)

# Reflections of the Chairman

## Uber Court Case

I don't believe there are many of us that were too surprised regarding Lord Justice Ouseley's decision that Uber were not contravening the law regarding their use of a smartphone as a meter. I'm glad he has cleared that up for me because now I know that an instrument that records time and distance is not a meter. Obviously TfL are delighted as it completely vindicates their decision to initially licence Uber in 2012; but what I can't understand is that TfL took Uber to court in order to clarify the situation, consequently, if there was any doubt in 2012 then Uber should not have been licensed until the situation was clarified by those same courts!

There isn't any question that Uber have done a great deal of harm to not only the licensed taxi industry in London, but also to the Private Hire industry. It appears that many members of the public are prepared to use Uber because they are cheaper than licensed taxis and that's all they are interested in - until there is a problem! Suddenly they become aware of the safety issues when it's too late.

Many drivers have deserted their operators in favour of Uber, which in turn has led to deterioration in the service that the Private Hire operators can offer, but with over 600 PH licences being issued every week, their numbers should soon be replenished. We are also all aware that Uber operate Surge pricing where the cost of the journey will increase depending on demand from the public and Uber cars that are available, but as more and more drivers are issued with PH licences and more cars are always available, then the Surge will be used far less frequently.

**I am led to believe that Uber will shortly start operating in Glasgow and I have some insight into that operation having had occasional dealings with Glasgow Taxis. They have acquainted me with the minicab situation in Glasgow, which is operated by a small select group of people and I think Uber could find it quite difficult to muscle in on their operation! It will be extremely interesting to see what happens (See July 2010 issue, Glasgow's minicab gangsters...Ed).**

There isn't any doubt in my mind that TfL, including Mayor Boris Johnson, have acted outrageously towards our trade and many drivers are worried and extremely angry. Quite rightly so and it does appear that the Mayor and TfL can do whatever they please when it comes to our trade. This got me thinking. Many of you will recall the Plebgate scandal back in 2012 when Conservative MP Andrew Mitchell, who at the time was the Government Chief Whip, had an altercation with some Police Officers where it was alleged that he called the officers Plebs. A pleb, I believe, was a commoner from the lower classes in Rome. A big issue blew up over the incident and the Right Honourable Andrew Mitchell resigned, although the issue raised its head again when certain police evidence was found to be incorrect!

However, the point remains that Andrew Mitchell resigned his position over the inci-



dent; yet in the Public Gallery at City Hall, Mayor Johnson can call the assembled - admittedly angry - Taxi Drivers Luddites, which again is a derogatory term associated with textile workers who would not embrace change in the early 1800s. On another occasion, it was widely reported that the Mayor had exchanged views with a passing taxi driver whilst the Mayor was riding his bike one evening. The jibes finished when the Mayor told the taxi driver to "f\*\*\* off and die!"

So there you have it, the Government's Chief Whip resigns over derogatory remarks to Police Officers, yet the Mayor can insult Taxi Drivers in public and that's fine. Can you imagine what might have happened had the Mayor thrown equally offensive remarks towards one of the many minority groups that we have today; he would have been - at the very least - reprimanded and possibly even worse. And there was me thinking that it was just the law that was an ass after the court ruling...

## Consultation

TfL are conducting a consultation regarding the Private Hire trade and anyone can complete the consultation online. It can be found at: <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/tph/private-hire-proposals>. I would urge as many of you as possible to complete the document,

including family and friends and I am pretty sure that as you read through the questions, the answers will be apparent and probably anyone in our trade would give the same answers. I was recently at LTPH in Blackfriars Road and we were discussing the consultation document regarding Private Hire and as I was leaving, I asked LTPH if they could tell me the outcome of the forthcoming consultation document. I must confess it was a somewhat facetious remark; I was of course intimating that the decisions had been made before the consultation had even started! However, after digesting Lord Justice Ouseley's decision that an instrument measuring time and distance is not a meter, then I'm not so sure the remark was facetious!

I mentioned earlier how some PH operators are having problems with their service, as many of their drivers desert to Uber. Consequently, we have two - and hopefully soon to be three - accounts that will stop using Private Hire in the evenings in favour of Dial-a-Cab as we have guaranteed their service levels. Although we have guaranteed excellent service, the ball is now in your court. We can guarantee anything, but it is you that has to supply the service. The good thing is that all three of these accounts will come off EC5, so I'm pretty sure our guarantees will be honoured by DaC Members.

**Remember, these are all existing DaC accounts that primarily use PH in the evenings. That work will now be switched to us, so let's hope it stays that way.**

Work has got slightly better recently, as it should do at this time of year and with it has returned the age old problem of coverage. During certain periods we do occasionally seem to struggle, so if you are within striking distance of any account trip please cover it because every account is precious.

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

## PAUL'S TAXI SPECIALISTS LTD

Unit 10, Ford View Industrial Estate, 83 New Rd Rainham, RM13 8ET

### Tel: 01708 553037

FREE AIR FILTER WITH EVERY SERVICE

TX1 servicing from £48

TX2 servicing from £70

TX4 servicing from £90

All Work Undertaken

Servicing - Running Repairs - Overhauls - Small Fleets Welcome - Discounts Available

All TX1, TX2, TX4

Starters - Batteries - Alternators - All with 2 year Warranty

Fax: 01708 551443



WE ALSO HAVE CABS FOR RENT

TX1s, TX2s, TX4s and Vitos

Rentals from £165 per week

Web: [www.PaulsTaxiSpecialists.co.uk](http://www.PaulsTaxiSpecialists.co.uk)

# High Court comes down on Uber's side

At 10.15 on 16 October 2015 in his written judgment, Mr Justice Ouseley wrote that smartphones used by some private hire drivers – ie Uber - are not taximeters. Whilst virtually all those bar Uber involved expressed disappointment, licensing authority TfL welcomed the legal clarity. The Uber driver's phones use GPS and external servers to calculate the cost of the trip. Taxi organisations said that meant it was a meter.

Other than TfL and Uber, the other two parties spoke against the smartphones. They were the LTDA and the Licensed Private Hire Car Association – a rare occasion when both sides of the industry were speaking from the same page. The court had been asked to decide whether GPS technology connecting to external servers for the calculation of fares is actually legal with the law saying that private hire cannot use meters in London.

TfL had previously said that in their view smartphones are not taximeters. As the licensing authority, they could have stopped Uber using the smartphones as meters but chose not to because of their



Mr Justice Ouseley came down in favour of Uber

belief that Uber would challenge the decision.

Mr Justice Ouseley's written judgement said: "A taximeter, for the purposes of Section 11 of the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998, is not a device which receives GPS signals in the course of a journey, and forwards GPS data to a server located outside of the vehicle, which calculates a fare that is partially or wholly determined by reference to distance travelled and time taken, and sends the fare information back to the device."

He acknowledged that the smartphone calculated the fare, but said that did not make it a device for calculating fares in breach of the

taximeter prohibition. He also found that it was the drivers and not the vehicles that were equipped with smartphones.

In a press release issued following the case, TfL expressed concern over the numbers of PH drivers being licensed. They admitted the number had risen from around 59,000 in 2009/10 to over 89,000 today and added that the number could be a further 30,000 over the next two years.

They also said that just over three years ago, an average of 448 licensed PH vehicles were observed daily in the Congestion Charge zone. By this August 2015 the figure had increased to over 13,000 – a 29-fold increase.

Following the case, an Uber spokesman said: "This was not a marginal call, it is quite emphatic. In fact, it is contemptuous of the case brought before it and Uber will continue going about our business and making sure customers have choice."

The LTDA have said they will appeal the decision...

## IoD: Get rid of the Knowledge!

The Institute of Directors have come down on TfL's consultation proposals that they say pick on Uber. They labelled them as "arbitrary, restrictive and inefficient," claiming that the way government responds "will be a crucial test of its pro-enterprise and free market credentials."

The controversy is mainly aimed at the imposition of a minimum five-minute wait time between when a car is ordered and the journey can begin, the barring of drivers from working for more than one operator and the blocking of operators' apps showing nearby minicabs as being "available."

A spokesperson for the bosses organisation said: "Britain's politicians have pitched themselves as champions of innovation and cheerleaders for creative disruption. Yet in the face of powerful lobbies, governments and regulators have buckled and reverted to the comfort of naked protectionism."

He went on to justify the statement by adding "safety features" of Uber saying that the app displayed the car registration, together with the make, model, colour and picture of the driver before going on to add some reverse logic to long-time licensed taxi driver demands, by saying that they wanting "a level playing field" for private-hire travel in London by making it easier for black cabs to compete against Uber – and that includes scrapping the Knowledge!

The IoD, whose Director General is Simon Walker, said that if Uber could offer flexible fares, then taxis should be able to as well and that if Uber drivers didn't need to pass the Knowledge then with satnavs etc, why should taxi drivers.

The bosses organisation spokesperson didn't mention that a large majority of Uber drivers work for far less than the minimum wage after paying Uber 20% of their cheap fares – some for less than £5 an hour Then again, that's the one thing we wouldn't have expected them to say...



IoD Director General Simon Walker

Baghwat Singh  
Call Sign Online

## WILL KNOWLEDGE POINT CLOSE?



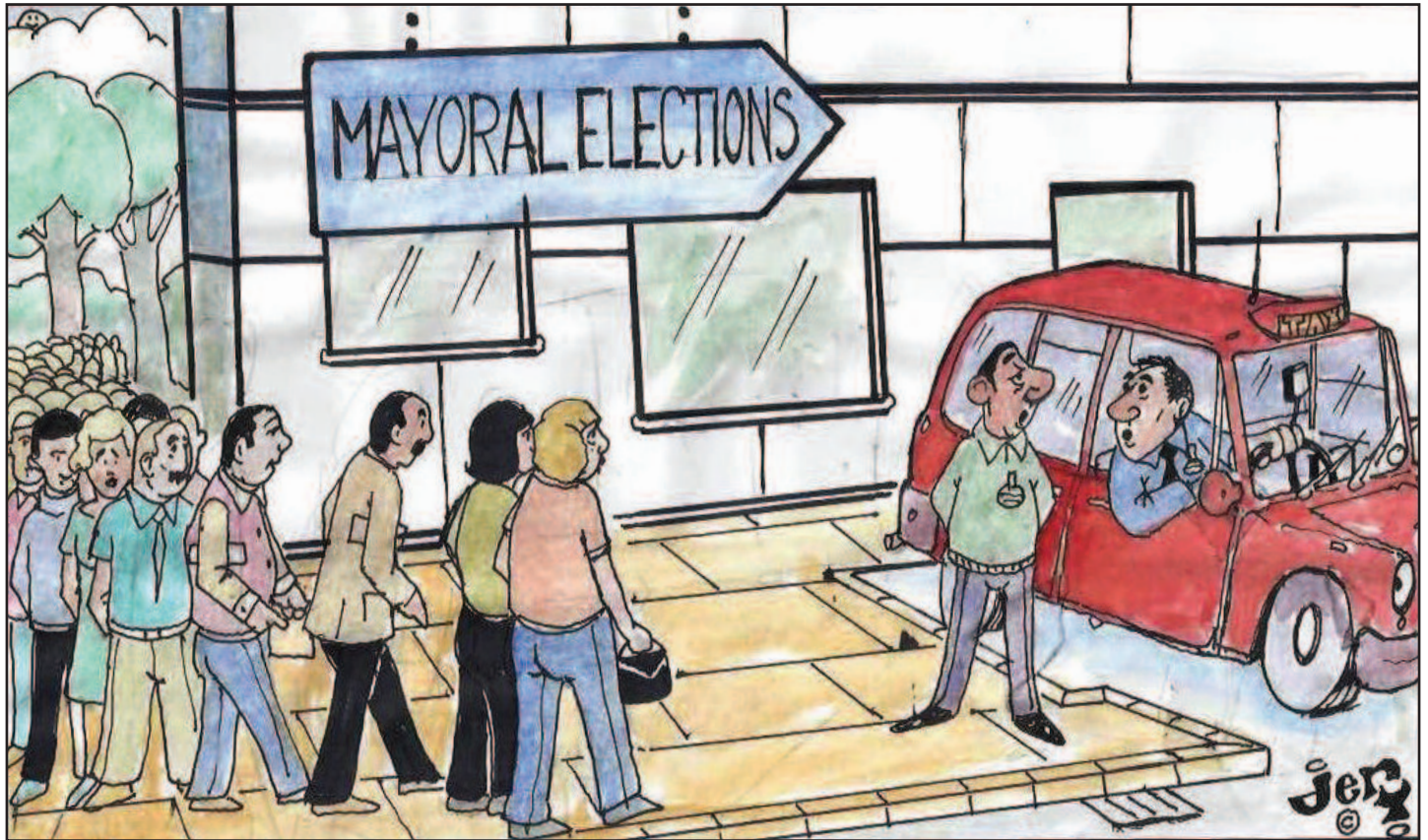
Malcolm Linskey

In shock news given by Managing Director Malcolm Linskey, the trade was told that Taxi Trade Promotions at 431 Caledonian Road will be closing as of 18th December. It's from that address that Knowledge Point school also operates.

According to Malcolm, the closure is due to them having been given notice to vacate the premises by the landlords who want the land to re-develop into luxury apartments. Knowledge Point has for the past 27 years been used for Knowledge training and received many awards, contracts and accolades in addition to helping hundreds of Knowledge boys and girls qualify as taxi drivers.

At present, they we will no longer be accepting 12 week subscriptions and will be renewing on a monthly basis only. At a time when the KoL takes so much more commitment than ever before, not just because of the four years it could take to pass out but because becoming a private hire driver seems to be a much easier option, we must hope that Knowledge Point finds a new home so that it can continue to produce first class taxi drivers. Anything else would be a tragedy for the trade...

# Jery's World



**"I don't need to meet the prospective Mayoral candidates. I know who I'm gonna vote for in May after they swore to look after the taxi trade - at least until after they were elected!"**

## LTFUC at the Pearlies Harvest Festival

**T**he London Taxidriviers' Fund for Underprivileged Children had the pleasure of being invited to attend the traditional annual London Pearly Kings and Queens Costermongers' 17th Anniversary Harvest Festival Parade on Sunday 27th September at the Guildhall.

I went along with the fund's Hon Secretary **Malcolm Shaffron** and our wives to witness this colourful and spectacular event. Scores of Pearly Kings & Queens from all corners of London had gathered for the festival; over 130 years on from when road sweeper **Henry Croft** covered his finest 'whistle and flute' (suit) in shiny white buttons in aid of the City's poor. Modern day Pearlies continue his mission in doing such great charity work.

It was a warm, sunny day and the crowds were out in force as we joined the long procession, led by the Pearlies, around the City to attend **St Mary-le-Bow Church** where the pealing of the **Cockney Bow Bells** welcomed the congregation for a thanksgiving service. Many tourists and onlookers lined the City streets waving, taking photos and cheering the parade along.

Once again our congratulations must go to **Doreen Golding**, Pearly Queen of the Old Kent Road, for organising such a brilliant event and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all the wonderful Pearlies for continuing to help our charity and all the many charities in the London and Greater London areas.



**Raymond Levy**  
LTFUC Press Officer

**C**hris Passfield (Y25) has been on Dial-a-Cab for 33 years out of his 41 years as a licensed taxi driver, but since May hasn't driven a single mile for the Society - or indeed for himself. But Chris's problems are nothing to do with the recent spate of drivers waiting for renewed licenses to be returned before the old ones expired and stopped them going to work.

Chris's story begins in **October 2014** when he had a medical and was told there might be a problem. Four months later - in **February 2015** - Tfl contacted him to ask for more details of his "condition." Then nothing and Chris was left in limbo because just a few weeks after that date, on **5th March**, Chris' cab reached its fifteenth plate and he had to go to **Roman Way** to have his terminal stripped out. He still had his licence, but no cab and no clue as to what Tfl were going to say - if indeed they would say anything! Should he buy another cab? What if he entered into a new financial contract to buy a cab and then Tfl turned round and told him that he couldn't drive a taxi anymore? Should he try to rent, but then lose being a DaC subscriber? Limbo was a good word for where Chris felt he was.

Then on or around **23rd May**, Chris received a phone call from Tfl giving him news of the results they had received from their medical assessment department... and it wasn't good.

"The nice lady at the end of the phone explained that it would be best for me to send in my Badge voluntarily rather than for Tfl to inform me by post. Apparently they could be a bit brusque," Chris told *Call Sign*! "So I sent it in - but Tfl still wrote to me and asked for my Badge!"

Chris's October medical tests apparently showed that his heart muscle was only operating at 20% to 25% and the medical form said the

## Chris Passfield: Tfl leaving me in limbo!



Chris with granddaughter Casey

*left ventricular ejection fraction* should have a minimum reading of 40%. So they asked Chris to return his licence.

"I've had no symptoms that could have warned me if something was wrong and even the doctors didn't know why it had happened. So they sent me for an MRI scan at the **Royal Brompton** heart hospital to see if they could find anything. They said that with medication I could get back to normal - although it couldn't

be guaranteed. But at least I had some hope."

But then on **21st September**, Chris's doctors put him on **Warfarin** and said he would probably have to take it for the rest of his life along with all the other pills they had prescribed for him. He knows it won't heal his heart but are precautionary medications to help prevent his blood clotting - possibly causing a heart attack. It made him wonder if he would ever get his licence back. Tfl stopped him driving on **23rd May 2015**, so Chris wondered if any drivers on **Dial-a-Cab** could help him...

"Do any of you take Warfarin but are still allowed to drive? I would be so grateful for any answers and advice as this would give me some hope and I could then work towards getting my licence back. As we all know, it's hard enough to get that in the first place! I'm not drawing any benefits and my bank balance is dwindling fast, so I'm hoping that someone out there can give me some answers."

If anyone can help Chris, please let *Call Sign* know and we'll pass your advice on. If you would rather remain anonymous, just let us know. Chris asked us to also pass on this message to DaC drivers: "**Be lucky, but please make sure you get plenty of exercise so as to keep that heart pumping at its maximum...**"

**Alan Fisher**  
*Call Sign Online*

## One-to-One Personal Service.

### Martin Cordell & Co.

Accountants & Tax Specialists to the Taxi Trade

#### Our services include:

- One-to-One personal service
- Annual confidential meeting
- Preparation of accounts
- Tax enquiries & investigations
- Limited company trading advice
- PAYE, VAT & company registration expertise
- Loss of earnings claim advice
- One point of contact for ongoing continuity
- Easy payment terms

#### FREE & SECURE PARKING

Only a few minutes walk away in  
Kilner Street, Limehouse, London E14 7BD

We're here to help. We want to meet you as we understand your business. Let us take the strain of dealing with your tax obligations.

With over 45 years experience of the taxi trade, and more than 40 expert staff members, we are the leading taxi drivers' accountancy firm in the UK.

Phone us today on: **020 8980 7161**

See us at: **Unit 6, Quebec Wharf,**  
**14 Thomas Road,**  
**Limehouse, London**  
**E14 7AF**

Email: [info@mcordell.co.uk](mailto:info@mcordell.co.uk)

Web: [www.martin-cordell.co.uk](http://www.martin-cordell.co.uk)

**CALL US FOR A FREE FIRST CONSULTATION IN PERSON OR OVER THE PHONE**



David “Kupkake” Kupler (Y74) could be a strange person. He held views on life that could keep a radio phone-in program going for hours; he could antagonise you while making you choke back a tear at the same time.

Although born Jewish, David was irreligious and often referred to religion as a load of tosh - even though he had a distant relative who had been a rabbi. He also had a wicked sense of humour added to his belief that so far as life was concerned, you're born, you live and then you die but along the way you try to do whatever good you can. So he may well have seen a funny side in his dying on 1st April this year - All Fools Day! He most certainly would have laughed at the date of his funeral - 24th September, the most holy day in the Jewish calendar, the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur. But he would absolutely have loved the fact that his cremation, which took place at Streatham Vale Crematorium was arranged by the **London and South East Committee of Anatomists** with their choice of music - **Johann Sebastian Bach's beautiful Air on the G String**, which perhaps became best known when advertising **Hamlet Cigars** back in the days of TV advertising for cigarettes.

The reason for the rather strange funeral arrangement came down to smoker David's belief in life that it all happens while you're here. A cough had been diagnosed as a lung cancer that was spreading so quickly, that his life expectancy was given as just a few months. But his strong belief of helping while you are here led him to the decision to bequeath his body to medical research.

Following the service, *Call Sign* - of whom David had been poet since 1974 - asked what

*Six months after DaC driver and Call Sign poet David Kupler died from lung cancer, it was..*

# THE FINAL GOODBYE



David's decision actually meant to medicine. We were told that his body went to the **University College Hospital** in Euston and because of that decision, student doctors had real people to practise their medical skills on with the hope that these students would one day become surgeons and consultants of the future. Practicing on mannequins had very little value and that is exactly what David told us in his last few weeks when he undertook to write his own obituary - something he did.

So we make no apology for once again reprinting some of his last few words after shocking us with his decision to donate his body to medical science after his death:

“How else can future doctors learn,” he said. “How do we eradicate these types of illnesses if they have no bodies to look at? What good does a grave and a headstone do for the world? Those who want to remember me need just look into their hearts and I'll be there, not to visit a cold cemetery to read nice words on a piece of stone.”

The cremation service was very brief and consisted of the piece of music, a short psalm and a few moments reflection. Afterwards, David's daughter **Rachel** - who used to work in the **Brunswick House** call centre - told us:

“The medical students have finally finished with dad's body and today he was finally cremated. It was quite funny because *they* picked the music and suddenly we heard the music from the old **Hamlet** cigar ads! Because it had been 6 months since he died and that initial shock had passed, the music made me want to laugh because a cigar ad isn't really an ideal choice of music for someone who died of lung cancer! I think dad would have preferred some **Rolling Stones!** But he would certainly have seen the funny side!”

But there was also sadness in this final goodbye to David Kupler. To his daughters Rachel, Ossie and Fiona and his wife Janet, just a short reminder of David's poignant words:

“Those who want to remember me need just look into their hearts and I'll be there...”

**Alan Fisher**  
*Call Sign Online*

## NOTICE OF LTFUC AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the London Taxidriers' Fund for Underprivileged Children will be held on Tuesday 3rd November 2015 at 7.30pm at the:

**New Park Day Centre,  
19 Highbury New Park,  
Highbury, N5**

There is parking at the Centre and refreshments will be available. All drivers are most welcome to attend..

## Dial-a-Cab Credit Union

Ever needed money quickly but were anxious about variable bank interest rates?

*Well wonder no more! If you are a subscriber, journeyman or member of staff at Dial-a-Cab, then you qualify to join the Dial-a-Cab Credit Union. Any member of your family residing at your address also qualifies for membership!*

Then if you are over 18, have been a member of the Credit Union for over 3 months and have established regular savings, you can borrow up to 3 times your total savings...

### The cost?

*Just 1% per month on the outstanding balance (or APR of 12.7%).  
Loans can be paid back early AND there can be an annual dividend on your shares.*

The question is: Can you afford NOT to be in it...?

Call us on 020 7729 8171 or 020 7749 0585

*Members of the Financial Ombudsman Service  
Member's funds protected up to limit set by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme  
DaC Credit Union Ltd, Peterley Business Centre, 472 Hackney Rd E2 9EQ  
Authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority  
Registration number 213263*



**A**ny taxi driver who has been plying for hire around London's streets for more than a few months knows that prospective passengers have more than the obvious way of hailing a cab. That way is, of course, by sticking out their hand. Others might whistle, while some may call out "taxi." But there are also those who look as though they want you but because you are on the other side of the road, may not do any of the above other than just look in your direction. That's what happened to Dial-a-Cab driver **John Davis (V41)** – except that the stare wasn't what it appeared to be.

John Davis has appeared in *Call Sign* a number of times over the years, mainly for completing in charity events. Several years ago he jumped out of a plane in aid of a young disabled boy, Jack Pitcher, to help his family buy a converted van. They got one, although Jack sadly died soon after. Then John ran in the London Marathon in aid of the Children with Cancer charity. He also appeared in these pages after helping to free four children from the wreckage of a car wreck as their mother lay trapped and unconscious in the driver's seat following a three-vehicle smash. He had jumped out of his cab and battled to free the woman's children and also a man trapped in one of the other cars – that one being on fire! But what happened to John on Lavender Hill this particular evening was as far from charity as you can get...

It was around thirty minutes after midnight and John was heading east along Lavender Hill with his 'for hire' sign on. There was virtually no traffic and even fewer prospective passengers. But standing by the kerb on the other side of the street was a lone man. As John was passing, the man looked at him in the way that some do when they want a taxi. John looked in his mirror to make sure there were no other taxis about that this guy may have flagged down. But there were none, so John did a U-turn, pulled up alongside the man and asked if he had hailed him and did he want a taxi? The man said yes and asked for McDonald's just past Wandsworth Bridge. The man asked how much, John said around £10 but that if it went more, he would cap it at a tenner. So the man got in and off they went.

As the cab reached St John's Hill, a Mondeo with two policemen inside started flashing their blue light and John pulled over to allow them to pass believing that they were chasing someone. But it was John they wanted. The passenger said nothing.

"I couldn't understand why they would be stopping me," John told *Call Sign*, "I knew I hadn't been speeding and searched my mind to remember if perhaps the Clapham Junction lights had been red when I crossed, but I just knew they had been green. So I pulled into the kerb and got out. One of the policemen then came up to me, told me to remove the keys from the ignition and switch off my lights. He then flashed his warrant card and simultaneously said Metropolitan Police Cab Enforcement. I just asked why they had stopped me; after all I hadn't done anything. But then he shocked me totally by saying that he was arresting me for touting! I asked why because all I'd done was to spot someone who I believed had hailed me and that in fact I was

# THE STRANGE CASE OF DAC'S JOHN DAVIS

*Was he 'set up by' Cab Enforcement?*



Was John Davis set up by Cab Enforcement?

correct in that he did want a cab. I thought I was being helpful by spinning round to pick him up."

**But the police were having none of it. They made John leave his cab where it was and drove him to the police station. It was only then that John realised that the passenger was working with the two men in the Mondeo.**

Once inside the police station, they took John's DNA, including swabbing both sides of his mouth, fingerprinting all ten digits via computer, doing his palms and sides of his hands. He then had his mugshot take from three different angles before they then charged him with touting. John was stunned, what he thought was a good turn had put his livelihood at risk!

"What might have made me smile had it not been so serious was that on the charge sheet it said touting by a private hire vehicle (!!!) before going on to say about not being covered by the minimum third party insurance. I have and always have had fully comprehensive insurance. I was later told by a solicitor that incorrect wording was irrelevant because police can change it any time up to six months after the arrest! The Police kept me at the station until 04.30am and then gave me a date of 25th September for a court appearance. Even then, I just couldn't imagine that any court in the land would convict me, but there was this tiny thought at the back of my mind that said nothing was impossible.

## 25 September: John's day in court...

John's day in court arrived and from the witness box, behind a bulletproof glass shield, he gave his personal details and the registrar then read out both charges. But then a strange thing happened; the duty solicitor representing John got up and whispered something to the bench.

The next thing John heard was the magistrate saying that the case was dismissed and he was free to go! He was asked if he understood and he said no! The magistrate then repeated that the case had been dismissed, that there was no further action going to be taken and that John was free to leave at any time.

John asked if he could make a statement and used the next few minutes to call the decision to prosecute him a disgrace, saying that he hadn't been touting and was just trying to assist a member of the public whom he thought had hailed him. He went on to say that a lot of time, money and effort had been wasted by the police because of this ridiculous arrest. He then told the court that he would be taking the matter further and making an official complaint to the Crown Prosecution Service about the whole incident and the action of the arresting officers.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Call Sign says...

*We only have John's side of this story, but going by that, by the instant dismissal of the court proceedings before any "evidence" or statements have been produced and the fact that the Ford Mondeo involved was obviously waiting to see what happened to the "passenger" who we must also assume was standing there deliberately to catch a taxi driver, the whole affair sounds as though it was a trap to 'set up' a taxi driver. If that is the case, and we obviously have to wait until the CPS finish their investigation, then there must surely be a case for a further court appearance – but this time by three policemen to confirm that they don't have something against London taxi drivers...*

**Alan Fisher**  
Call Sign Online

# LOOKING AT (TAXI) LIFE

With Tom Quigley (Y33)

Very shortly, I like many others will have to make the decision of getting rid of my TX1 due to the absurd 15 year rule. I say absurd, as I now know that my TX1 does not have to go to the Taxi cemetery, but can live a normal taxi life alongside the taxi I will have to get to replace it. I say this from experience as despite the ruling to improve air quality, this policy has had a reverse effect.

One of my brothers is a licensed Hackney Carriage Taxi Driver in Epping where the 15 year rule doesn't apply. He also happens to live in Leytonstone where it does. However, he has just bought a TX1 at a ludicrously cheap price and had it plated by Epping Council. This enables to him drive the cab each and everywhere we do - obviously not plying for hire but able to do 'wait and returns' and pre-booked jobs which, generally, are in the Mayfair and City area for brokers etc who live in Essex. It's bound to happen that one day the original owner will be sitting behind their old cab, no doubt breathing in the fumes from the exhaust, looking in astonishment at the meter running with a passenger on board...

## Life for bags

With the legislation brought in to improve the environment by reducing the amount of plastic bags given out, a random 5p is being charged with profits said to be going to charity. The introduction of plastic bags was brought about by the retailers and government themselves; there were paper bags, followed by cardboard boxes stacked at checkouts for the use of shoppers. Then, with the escalation of large supermarkets culminating in the reduction of local independent shops alongside a dependence on the car, that



meant we no longer walked to local stores with our shopping bags.

But it's strange that this new legislation has been brought about at a time when the larger supermarket chains have had their profits severely hit with the emergence of real opposition and from well organised old style shopping chains like Aldi and Lidl amongst others. These stores have always charged around 3p - nearly half the price of the large chains - for a good quality carrier bag. They have endorsed the use of boxes and encouraged the idea of using other means of packing; clever design of smaller checkout space to pack bags sublimely giving you the mindset of packing your goods away from the till area, therefore increasing the need to pack your shopping in a designated area or taking the trolley to the car and packing there.

With the added confusion of what can and can't be packed into a carrier for health reasons, the whole area seems to be a minefield of legislation. The first Saturday of the new rulings seemed to bring home, at least in my mind, the whole futility of the carrier bag

charge. I went along to North Weald market - one purported to be Europe's largest outdoor market - unfortunately facing a downturn but still thriving and busy.

I watched many of the popular stalls with a very large footfall, all providing the regulation blue plastic market stall bag in their hundreds, if not thousands, far busier in those few hours than my local store would be all week. The one thing for sure is that all those bags were produced and will have the environmental problems as any of the other bags being sold for 5p. I'm not saying the government should not be acting and doing their best to reduce the wastage, but I feel that once again they have knee-jerked to establish a policy but not looked at the obvious flaws of that policy.

It's like the 'bags for Life' policy brought out by the supermarkets. I used to regularly take old Bruce - a neighbour of mine in his late 80s - for his weekly shop to a large supermarket. One of the assistants, obviously under instruction to promote the scheme, was selling 'bags for Life' at 10p when old Bruce said he felt he was not getting good value as he would have less years for his bag than I would! The shop assistant did not know what to do; personally I thought she should have just given him a couple of bags for the sake of good will as we went there at the same time and day every week for almost five years, however she never did and Bruce declined the 'Bag for Life' using the free one instead. Alas Bruce is no longer with us, but I often wonder: Is the bag he declined still being used???

**Tom Quigley**  
Call Sign Online

## DO YOU WANT TO PLAY IN A BAND?

Are there any guitarists out there who are looking to join a band? We need a bass player and rhythm/lead guitarist, possibly an organist as well. We are based in the Woodford and Loughton area.

We play rock and blues or anything that takes our fancy! We're all in our 60s and have been round the block a few times, so no pressure there! But we'd really like to start gigging again.

If you think you fit any of the above and fancy having a go with us, please call Kevin on 07506 736421.



The band  
50 years  
ago and  
now.  
Do you  
want to  
gig with  
them?





## Why Have Your Taxi Serviced with Ascotts?

- We carry out manufacturer warranty repairs
- We use the latest diagnostic and test equipment
- LTC trained technicians
- Full access to manufacturer technical assistance and data
- We use genuine parts designed to your taxis exact standards.

**PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT AND RESALE VALUE OF YOUR TAXI**

*"putting the driver first"*

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



**MOT & NSL PRE TEST**

**£39.95**

### Every 10.000 Miles

10K,20K,30K,50K,60K,90K & 100K

**£99** INC vat

40K,80K **£225** INC vat

70K **£450** INC vat

ALL PRICES INCLUDE vat & ALL FILTERS

### Every 12.000 Miles

12K,24K,48K,60K,96K

**£99** INC vat

36K,72K,108K  
**£225** INC vat

84K **£450** INC vat

ALL PRICES INCLUDE vat & ALL FILTERS

LTC genuine Tx4 Front Pads

**£50.00**

Fitted inc VAT

*"less downtime at ascott's"*

**Now in Stock**



Service Dealer



Specialised Oil Products

**ASCOTT**  
CAB COMPANY

1-3 Blackhorse Rd, London SE8 5HY

**0208 692 1122**



The Only Taximeter that Has full MID approval ready for the changes in 2016

*Is your current Taximeter ready?*

Another true story from Geoff Levene...

# JUST DO IT YOURSELF..OR NOT!



I know I shouldn't let it happen but sometimes things get to me. Take that woman in **St John's Wood** who goes to **Pall Mall**. I knew there was a problem with the usual route, so we agreed on an alternative but every time I turned a corner, she sneeringly asked why I was going *that way*? And then, when I explained she would snarl that I should just get on with it!

**For the rest of the journey, I called her every name under the sun, but thankfully it was under my breath! I continue to pick her up but she gets the same treatment.**

Then there was that account customer who I wanted to punch last week! He was a thirty year old American banker whose booking with **Dial-a-Cab** said he was going to the City, but once inside the cab said he was changing the destination.

"I want the US Embassy," he said before a hint of sarcasm began creeping in. "Do you know it? It's a big building with a long facade."

My head was screaming: "Do you think you're the first person who's asked me for it? Have I been driving round here for 40 years with my eyes closed? Don't insult my intelligence." But don't worry DaC Sales team, it stayed inside my head!

Many years ago, a driver in **Edgware** blew in asking for a jump start. I was handy so I went round to him. It was in a *cul-de-sac* and in the dark I missed the house. I had to back up to find him and he seemed slightly peeved. Anyway, I pulled up to his cab, the bonnets were opened, leads attached and his cab started straightaway.

Then it happened. He took off the leads and closed his bonnet, but left mine open. Look, I know it wasn't the worst thing in the world but I'd gone out of my way to help him and surely the least he could have done was to close my bonnet for me! It's stupid I know, but it rankled with me.

You might say that I should get a life and you'd probably be right.

**So, about 20 years later messages kept coming up asking someone to give a jump start to a driver in Finchley Road. I found myself fairly close so I went to do the business. And who do you think it was!**

"Thanks," he said, "do you know that's the first time I've ever required a jump start?! I just smiled and couldn't stop myself exclaiming how amazing that was! Perhaps I'm learning the art of sarcasm!"

I should say that jump starts are the full extent of my mechanical knowledge. In the world of soaps any new female character is invariably a hairdresser and the males are usually car mechanics, but it wouldn't work with me. I think I'm scared of spanners.



## LTFUC collection at Victoria

Network Rail has very kindly given our charity permission to hold a collection on Thursday 12th November 2015 from 10am to 6pm at Victoria Station.

We will be in the centre of the main concourse around Platform 8 area and hopefully raising funds for our forthcoming events. It would be lovely to see any of you who may be in the area and would like to come and say hello, the Committee would certainly love to see you.

**Raymond Levy**  
LTFUC Press Officer

I don't think I ever saw my father handle one. My earliest memory was seeing him shortening the legs on the table that was to stand in our kitchen for about 40 years, but I can't recall anything else. I should imagine my great-great-great grandfather in some village in **Poland** was just the same. If his handcart needed painting, he would have had to take it to the local handyman to get it fixed!

But once, back in the 1970s I fitted a new top hose. *Oh yes I did.* I arrived home one cold, damp evening to discover the problem. I had a spare and I did it. I undid the jubilee clips, got the old one off, smeared some washing-up liquid inside the new one to slide it on - remembering to first put the clips on - and it was done; probably the high spot of my mechanical career. Sadly, the low spot followed not too long after.

**The cab's fan belt snapped in the Kings Road. Once again I had a spare and asked the despatcher if anyone could help me fit it. Along came a very nice chap who did everything. But there was one nut he couldn't get at. And that was when he said the words that still cause me to wake up screaming in the night.**

**"You're going to have to get underneath to do it." OH MY GOD!!!!**

So there I was, clad in a grey sports jacket and jeans sliding on the wet, greasy, oil-sodden road. And as if that wasn't bad enough, I couldn't tighten the thing anyway.

"You'll be alright for tonight," said the other driver when I emerged from the nightmare world of underneath a cab. The next day I consigned the jacket and jeans to the bin and joined the **AA**.

Some years before that, I had joined a car maintenance class at the local evening classes to learn how to fix those kind of problems. And what did the instructor show us that first evening? How to de-coke an engine! I really needed to know that.

These days I stick to changing the insurance certificate...with a bit of help of course.

**Geoff Levene (W32)**  
Call Sign Online

### AVAILABLE FOR RENT CLOSE TO DISNEY IN FLORIDA



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  Tel: 020 8530 5589



# BRAZIL CALLING

## Bonjourius!

Many years ago, I remember a **Dial-a-Cab** driver having a pickup in **Saint Martins Lane** being on the missing list when the passenger came out. At the time, it was just a matter of calling him on voice and asking him where he was parked. Usually the situation could be resolved in a matter of moments but I remember this driver causing momentary confusion when he told us he was in **William Ivies Street**. There was a slight impasse amongst the assembled few who eventually worked out he was in **William IV Street** (as in **William the Fourth Street**)!

When asked to confirm that's where he was, we questioned whether he knew that the IV represented four in Roman numerals? He said he didn't because where he went to school in **Stepney**, they didn't do **Roman**! He went on to say that he had taken **French**, but when a fat bloke in a corduroy jacket walked through the door and said **Buenos Dias**, he was out that door and never went back!

Now this had what could have only be described as having a ring of truth; not hanging about long enough to discover the language being taught shows a man who was confident that the class being taught had no relevance to his life's plan. And with most people with that native confidence, he was probably right.

Education in any big city can be a lottery at times. Whilst many cab drivers may have started with more or less privileged upbringing, the cab is the universal leveller that brings us all together. In **London**, there has always been a wide group of diverse people within our trade of who in the most part may have come from differing backgrounds, yet there seems to be a suggested homogenising effect once behind the wheel of that taxi. People who climb into the back invariably expect you to sound like **Ray Winston**, look like **Danny Dyer's** dad while also having numerous stories about picking up *whatsberface* from Four Weddings with two of her mates when she was out of her nut!

The reality is somewhat different; once you look beneath the skin of the cab trade you should not be surprised to see people from all over the globe who may have started as magistrates and police officers, printers, dockers, carpenters, shopkeepers, firemen and yes, even former minicab drivers! All of them have taken the plunge and trained to drive a London taxi.

All of us expect - and quite rightly so - to have the protection of the law. We all celebrate in the pride that we belong to a London specific trade that has existed for centuries. Our passengers equally go through the homogenising effect, from royals to rogues, bankers to brickies - they all sit in their private compartment within which their business remains private, a state we trust will continue as with luck, the authorities will regulate and enforce regulation. We should expect nothing less.

## And the legal side too...

The court case is over in London although continuing in many other cities around the world. We trusted their decision would be wise and protect our trade; they are after all, another trade that has taken years to develop. When **Henry II** - or the Henry the Second just in case you didn't do Roman (!!!) - started to create the court system, I don't imagine it would have occurred to him that the whole system might have had to be revised because of mobile phone apps appearing! The system of law was robust and has withstood the test of time; The King's system of judges sitting in London while others travelled round the country became known as the '**Assizes system**'. Incredibly, it survived until 1971. I don't imagine a justice app will be appearing anytime soon.

We now must hope that a robust nature will apply to forthcoming regulations that may be imposed on London. Let's hope that future children from London or elsewhere will be able to join a trade that has existed for centuries if they so desire - be that law or taxi driving.

## To finish...

Just as an aside and not to diminish the problems that can exist of serious health problems, I will sign off with an exam question that was shown on an exam website primarily used by teachers. The question was framed thus:

Bob has 36 candy bars, he eats 29. What does he have now? The kid answered Diabetes!

*Nice try kid, Buenos Dias...*

**Joe Brazil**  
DaC Board Member



**THE HERTFORDSHIRE**  
**WINTER PRO-AM GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Friday 27 November 2015  
Friday 18 December 2015  
Friday 29 January 2016  
Friday 26 February 2016  
Friday March 18 2016

09.30 Coffee & bacon roll on arrival\*\*\*  
10.30 Shot gun start\*\*\*

15.30 Presentation of Professional & Team prizes  
£45 per person in a team of 2 amateurs  
going out with a golf professional  
Maximum full handicap 24 Men, 30 Ladies  
Format: Stableford 3/4 handicap. Best two scores count.  
Please telephone if you would like an  
entry form or any further information.

Call Elaine Cochrane on 01992 466666 Ext. 249.

*The Hertfordshire was designed by Jack Nicklaus II. It is a par 70 spread over 6266 yards of beautiful Hertfordshire countryside, making full use of the natural surroundings. The lakes and forests in the area, for example, make for wonderfully challenging natural hazards. With full irrigation cover of tees, fairways and greens, the course is in fantastic condition all year round. Read more about the course at <http://www.thehertfordshiregolf.co.uk/>*



**Brian Marcantonio has been on Dial-a-Cab for 37 years and is also a former Taxi Driver of the Year. He has a few beefs and so he came to Call Sign. Now he is...**

# GETTING IT OFF MY CHEST!

## **Beef Number 1:**

**Zac Goldsmith**, potential Mayor of London, states that he is not going to ban **Uber**; funny, a so-called pillar of the community is endorsing criminal activity. The rules are written regardless of what the Judge said: Private Hire – I'll use that term because taxis and cabs are us, the rest are private hire – are required to keep records of bookings and are not allowed meters (a smartphone that calculates time and distance IS a meter) and also they require the correct insurance. Maybe as it's us that are being robbed and not him, he doesn't give a t\*ss.

People are saying that private hire need a **topographical KoL**; if this is done it will probably be a two week course and then they will be saying they have done the **Knowledge** so why is it that they cannot ply for hire? If we go down that route, it will be the final nail in our coffin. To keep private hire numbers down, they should be required to have correct insurance and police cameras should be able to tell not only if the car is insured, but what type of insurance the car has. They can probably do that already, but if they did they probably believe that roads like **Sussex Gardens**, **Edgware Road** and **Park Lane** will be so full of impounded cars that it would take days to remove them! Here's a lesson for us; break the law *en masse* and the so-called police will do nothing at all.

## **Beef Number 2:**

I was on holiday and in the hotel room the only English TV channel I could get was **BBC World News** - and most of that was about refugees / asylum seekers trying to get into the EU. If you were fleeing a country in fear for your life, you go to the first safe country. **Turkey** is safe, **Greece** is safe, **Albania** is safe. The BBC World News seemed to me as being a bit staged; an interview with an asylum seeker with a family almost in tears as he cannot get into the EU. What's wrong with Greece? Could it be his four-bedroomed council house, his child benefits, his income support, his free healthcare and his free education for his children... they all come a bit slow in Greece! And of course, his private hire licence and application to Uber. Most of the refugees on TV were single young men in designer T-shirts; many also had iPhones and a good few needed to go on a diet!

Real refugees were what we see in old newsreels following the second world war; Jews in fear for their lives, starving and in rags, injured and ill. The only safe place for

them was the UK. There has not been any bombs set off by Jews in the underground or on buses or flying planes into tall buildings because they don't like the way we live. As we are letting in so many refugees / asylum seekers, I think London should be renamed as **Troy**... all we are short of is the wooden horse. Think about it...

## **Beef Number 2a:**

Some of you will ask how I can be critical of immigrants with a name like **Marcantonio**. It comes from **Mark Anthony**, **Cleopatra's** lover. he gave **Cyprus** to her! Just think, if he had not done that I would own Cyprus and I wouldn't need to push a cab around London! Yes, I'm just joking!

My great grandfather came to England in the late 19th century. His son, my grandfather, was in the **Signals Regiment** during the first world war. My maternal grandfather lied about his age to join the navy in the first world war. My father, **John Marcantonio**, volunteered to join the **RAF** in WW2 and was sent to **Africa** at the height of the U-boat menace. While there, he caught Malaria for his troubles. My maternal grandfather was young enough to join the army in WW2 and was sent to **Italy**. While there, he received a letter from my mum - his eldest child - telling him that she had met someone and had fallen in love and that she was getting married. She told him his name was John Marcantonio. I bet he thought that was rich; he was over there shooting them and she was marrying one!

## **Beef Number 3:**

While getting all this off my chest, can I move onto **diesel emissions**. Seeing newspapers of late, it seems that it's not us causing all of the pollution in London after all, with VW and probably most - if not all car manufactures - fixing their emission tests to pretend their cars are greener than they actually are and that it is us who can take the blame. How many hundreds of thousands of diesel cars pumping out so-called harmful emissions, are out there compared to around 18,000 taxis. This brings into question the fifteen year rule, as most of the pollution was not really us after all. I wonder if there is a case for a class action against **TfL** and **Boris Johnson** as this is the vehicle we have to buy and drive. Now if you see tree hugging vegetarians (easy to spot as they wear sandals with grey socks) licking their forefingers and raising them into the air to see which way the wind is blowing, well apparently unleaded petrol is less bad than diesel!

## **Beef Number 4:**

Boris and Luddites! I thought Luddites were those who would not embrace new technology, but it seems that Boris is the same as many so-called journalists who don't get the facts before opening their gobs. **Dial-A-Cab (Lords)** closely followed by **Radio Taxis (Mountview)** started in the early 1950s, long before **Michael Gotla** and his **Renault Dauphines** from **Welbeck Motors** began trying to imitate taxi in 1961. I believe that what Lords and Mountview did was to embrace new technology. **Dial-a-Cab** was the first radio circuit in Europe and the second in the world to dispatch via data instead of voice. I think that is embracing new technology.

Now we have firms like **Hailo**, **Gett** and **cab:app** to name just a few who use smartphones to dispatch work. I think that is embracing new technology. It seems that Boris is talking out of his rectum again!

I suppose it boils down to one thing; you can tell when a politician is lying - their lips move! Is it true that the Godmother to **David Cameron's** children is a director on Uber? Apart from that, I think we have the best councillors and politicians that money can buy.

Well at least it's now off my chest...!!!

**Brian Marcantonio (R73)**

## HOME PC REPAIR

By **Essex PC Fix**

- Install new equipment, printers, etc.
- Upgrade / repair your current PC or laptop
- Virus / Spyware removal
- Wireless Networks set up and secured
- PC tuning (speeds up a slow PC)
- Advice given

Fast, Cheap, Friendly and Reliable service (over 25 Years Experience)

We can fix your PC at your home or collect & return the PC when it is fixed

Please see our website or contact us for list of services and costs

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Contact | - Paul Middleton   |
| Email   | - <a href="mailto:info@essexpcfix.co.uk">info@essexpcfix.co.uk</a> |
| Mobile  | - 07866 395 831  |
| Office  | - 01708 444480 (between 8AM and 8PM)                               |
| Web     | - <a href="http://www.essexpcfix.co.uk">www.essexpcfix.co.uk</a>   |

Area Covered - Hornchurch and 8 miles out - others by appointment

"When you're on the **Knowledge of London**, candidates think the examiner is testing *just* your knowledge of the streets and all that involves – roads and their names, theatres, hospitals, museums, tourist landmarks and all that kind of stuff," **Dial-a-Cab driver Raymond Horan (G80)** told *Call Sign*.

"In fact," Raymond continued, "if you think they're giving you a tough time, perhaps even being surly, stern or maybe acting in a peculiar fashion, they are in all probability sizing up your character and self-control because they know the general public can be very demanding in all sorts of ways! To let you loose on the streets of our capital city is stressful enough in itself for the driver, but then with a passenger under pressure for all sorts of personal reasons, safety and courtesy can go out the window and that is not a good situation to be in. The strict selection process is necessarily tough to maintain our reputation as the finest taxi service in the world - rightly so - and something of which I'm proud."

**Raymond recollected a journey as an example when he took a man and his family from Charing Cross station to Greenwich...**

"I left the station, turned right on to the **Strand** to head east and then went round the one-way system at Aldwych to go over **Waterloo Bridge**. The man then said I could and should have turned right from the Strand directly onto the bridge. I tried to explain that it was only buses and cycles that were

# Don't lose your rag!

allowed to do that and that all other traffic needed to go around the one-way system.

"He had other ideas and was adamant I should have turned right and continued to emit mumbling sounds, ever more insistently that I was wrong and he was right!

"I was getting increasingly fed up with this tirade but remained calm and professional throughout the lecture I was being given. As we got nearer to Greenwich, I had formed a strategy in my mind and suggested I drop his family safely off at their given destination and that I would then take him back to Waterloo Bridge, show him the sign showing 'buses/cycles only' and then return him to his destination *free of charge* just to prove my point," Raymond explained, the tone of his voice belying his obvious frustration in recalling the incident.

"When I got him home, the family piled out of the cab and he followed, came to my window and paid me off still mumbling about having to accept my word about the sign, although he was still certain that a right turn was in fact allowed. I didn't expect an apology and I wasn't disappointed because I didn't get one! But that incident proved to me that you have to remain cool under pressure and not lose your rag!"



Ray Horan: "Don't lose your rag!"

**Alan Green (E52)**  
**Call Sign Online**

**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 is from October 2001 and involves previous Mayor Ken Livingstone and his assertion that taxi driving had a prejudice against non-white drivers...**

### MEMO TO KEN LIVINGSTONE:

#### "I'M ASIAN AND HAD NO KNOWLEDGE PROBLEMS!"

**Saleem Raja (S46J)** has been on Dial-a-Cab for several years and a cab driver for twelve. His friends know him as Sal. His bit of 'one-upmanship' when it comes to name-dropping is that he recently picked up Mayor of London Ken Livingstone who happened to be standing in Horseferry Road looking for a taxi to take him to Victoria.

Unlike some members of the current Houses of Parliament who claim to use public transport while having secret Jags waiting around the corner, Ken Livingstone really does believe in using buses, trains and taxis before having to use the mayoral car.

His ill-fated Greater London Council had many points that the licensed trade would rather forget (remember Speedbus and the 'no right turn' from Shaftsbury Avenue into Charing Cross Road (south)? However, their policy of providing cheap – and occasionally free – transport, while costing the cab trade some work in those who would have got a cab if the bus never came, also improved the traffic flow and prospective passengers started to leave their cars at home which in the long term gave DaC much more account work, because getting around London suddenly became more feasible.

But recently, Mayor Livingstone controversially claimed that ethnic minorities were under represented within a cab trade that Ken described as an "...almost universal white male club."

**Call Sign took up the subject in its June issue when the Editor said that, while not wanting to appear racist, he was against "...any special privileges being granted to any group on the back of them being of a different race or culture. If an African cannot speak English well enough to communicate with a passenger, then I don't want him in my trade any more than I would want someone from the Valleys who could only speak Welsh."**

Many of the trade press have since joined in and Ken now knows the feelings of most of us.

However, Sal – an Asian – took that one step further. Within the short trip, he told the Mayor that he not only did NOT feel that he was being held back, he actually passed out in under a year! In addition, both of Sal's brothers are licensed taxi drivers and neither of them ever complained of being held back through any form of racism. As a form of proof, Sal actually had his PCO appointment card from ten years ago with him!

"He looked surprised when I showed it to him," said Sal.

Sal told the Mayor and then **Call Sign**: "We all thought that we were always treated fairly by the PCO and when we thought that we weren't, it was never anything that white Knowledge boys weren't going through as well!"

During the brief conversation, Ken asked Sal why he thought it was that black people obviously loved cars, yet so few were becoming licensed taxi drivers. The question was rhetorical, as Ken obviously believes that there is an undercurrent of racism at the PCO. However, Saleem Raja disagrees.

Sal gave the Mayor his views that there was no racism at the 'Yard' and later told **Call Sign**:

"If a Knowledge boy is prepared to work hard, it doesn't matter what colour he is provided he speaks English well. Otherwise, how can he answer the questions they throw at him? That isn't racism, it's common sense..."

Copyright Call Sign 2001





*Simon Scott is one of the new generation of taxi drivers whose life is captured as a blog! His story will now be in Call Sign because this is...*

# A Blogger's Tale

## A Fishy Tale!

It all started in 1986. Simon and I had gone to school together and had remained friends. His family was loaded; he worked in his uncle's fish factory in Essex and I saw this as a way to make my fortune. My thinking was that Simon would be my ticket into the smoked salmon trade. And so when the phone rang and Simon announced that he had signed onto **The Knowledge** and did I want to join him, I jumped at the chance. This was my opportunity to flood London with cheap smoked salmon - as much as it could eat - and I couldn't wait to get started!

Looking back at that first day, I felt quite light hearted as I closed my front door and walked over to Simon sitting at the wheel of the minivan that we had decided to start off

in, just in case it got wet and cold. I held the map and the **Blue Book** runs that he had photocopied for me and he did the driving.

We both peered through the windows left and right and gazed up at the tall buildings. We had numerous stops for tea and sandwiches. It soon became compulsive and I could feel it gradually taking over every waking moment. I took the photocopied sheets to bed with me and into the bath and I would entertain anyone who would listen to my parrot-like repetition of the runs I had learned.

Simon smelt of salmon, his van smelt of salmon and so did the Blue Book runs he had photocopied for me. Up until then I had associated this smell with money and prospects, but that idea was now wearing off. We decided we needed mopeds. I bought mine from Southend and rather than take the terrifying ride back to London on the A13, I brought it back on the train and it sat, poised, awaiting its new adventure in the guard's compartment.

The moped was far better than the van, it was economical and I could see a lot more. However it had its pitfalls. The winter was a very cold one and I was caught in a snow blizzard more than once. **Wildwood Road** in Hampstead was the scene of one such blizzard that came in so quickly, I had no chance of getting back home before it got too bad. I did make it back, but very slowly and was frozen stiff. It made me wish I'd opted for a career that didn't involve risking my life on two skinny wheels in the middle of winter!

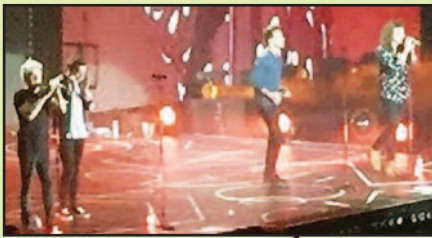
**I was living in a Peabody flat in Bethnal Green on Horatio Street. It was on the top floor and had a balcony facing the Nelsons Head. As Nelson proudly surveyed London from his lofty perch, I took this as a sign that I would indeed conquer London and get my hands on a green badge and a black cab.**

*To be continued...*

**Simon Scott (O40)  
Call Sign Online**

## ONE DIRECTION WINNERS ENJOY THE SHOW!

*At least we think they enjoyed it!*

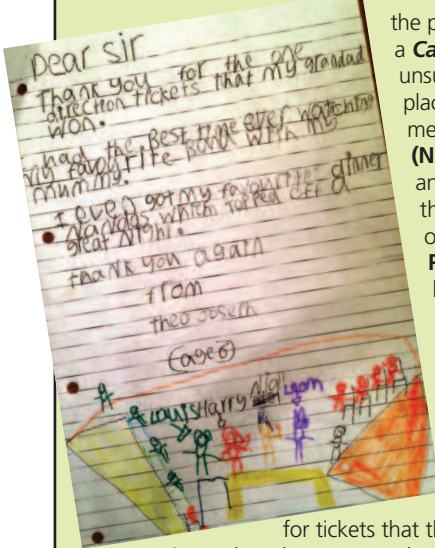


It seems that the two **Dial-a-Cab** drivers who each won a pair of VIP tickets to see the final London appearance of the biggest band on

the planet, **One Direction**, in a **Call Sign** competition, unsurprisingly took second place to their younger family members! **Dave Ballard (N28)** saw his wife **Alison** and daughter **Eleanor** take the seats towards the front of the arena, while **Paul Pavlou (W11)** had to hand his over to daughter **Natalie** and his six-year-old grandson **Theo**, who Paul says he was trying to coax over to **The Beatles** - but failed! The seats had face values of £120 each but such was the clamour

for tickets that the black market was queuing to buy them at a cool £800 each!

**Thanks to Eleanor who sent us a photo taken from her seat and young Theo who sent us a letter.**



## £100 caption winner

The winner of last month's caption competition was **Michael Galton (J05)**. His caption was: *"But missus, you did say how much you enjoyed the door-to-door service we offer!"*



**Michael wins £100...**

## Mike Brown Appointed New TfL Commissioner

Following the departure of Sir Peter Hendy to take up the position of Network Rail Chairman, former TfL MD of London Underground and Rail, **Mike Brown** has gone from Interim Commissioner to being appointed to the position full-time following an international recruitment process.

In addition to his now £355,944 salary, Mike Brown will also be eligible for a performance award each year of up to 50% of his salary. That was criticised by London Assembly Green Party member Jenny Jones, who said that the Mayor should have taken the opportunity to reduce the Commissioner's pay. She said that the Mayor had missed a golden opportunity to ratchet down top pay at TfL. She compared it to the Police Commissioner, whose yearly salary was £65,000 less than Mr Brown's. She said it wasn't fair or necessary.







“One man on his own is a nuisance, one man and his mates is an army!” That is the maxim of Mick Smith, founder of the new proactive presence on the streets of Mayfair and the Square Mile.



Before attaining his green badge, Mick had been a Yellow badge holder in the Croydon sector for 13 years and worked minicabs for 17 years before that. He began to notice similarities between the demise of work in the suburbs and what is currently being experienced in Central London - suburban drivers, over time, deserting town ranks in favour of train stations and unwittingly handing minicabs a free reign. That induced Mick's belief to help create taxi occupancy on ranks at all times.

Last January during the mother of all *kipper* seasons, disenchanted Mick joined *Twitter* where he soon met like-minded cabbies who desired more involvement in their destiny. Before long 15 - 20 of Mick's new comrades decided to 'blitz' high profile venues in Mayfair, reclaiming taxi ranks that had been overrun by Private Hire and valet parking. At this point, the moniker **Mayfair Mob** was coined.

In March, Peter Stringfellow contacted the Mayfair Mob and hastily arranged a meeting involving Deputy Mayor Isabella Deding, Head of TfL Compliance Steve Burton, MM and Peter Stringfellow. There were also subsequent meetings with Tessa Jowell MP, Green Party candidate for the next London Mayoral election Sian Berry and Chief Superintendent Matt Bell of TfL Compliance.

We've read about them and heard of what they've achieved, but now Marc Turner asks...

# THE MAYFAIR MOB: WHO ARE THEY?



Success followed quickly; word got around, more drivers joined and rooms were created on **Twitter** for instant communications. **Hakkasan** at **Bruton Street** even shut down their PH satellite office due to the attentions of the MM. Work was being won back from PH due to constant use of ranks by taxis and also by creating a permanent presence.

The Mayfair Mob are *not* vigilantes and don't indulge in any illegalities. They are legally proactive and their efforts eventually persuaded the 'powers that be' to grant new ranks on **Hakkasan** and **Novikov** at **Berkeley Street** and an agreement to extend the rank at **Forge** in **Cornhill** for four taxis. TfL have also funded marshals for Novikov at weekends.

Other Mayfair Mob initiatives are to communicate with councils, MPs and Mayoral candidates. They are also planning to visit Knowledge schools to enlighten students to the etiquette of our trade and the importance of communication skills. They also intend becoming involved with police training in regard to cab law.

Ultimately, it's a numbers game and there is strength in numbers. The more drivers coming on board, the easier the ranks will be to hold and progress to further areas.

Mick, affectionately known as The General, feels that our trade has to adapt to how the game has changed if we are to survive. The key is education for old and new alike. We are a service industry and need to act and look accordingly. Mick responded to my inquiry regarding the ethos of the Mayfair Mob with:

“Doomers and gloomers talk the trade down. MM talks our trade up. We don't do negatives and don't know the word surrender!”

MM Scab Busters meet once a month, every second Tuesday 8pm at the Royal Oak. In Mick's own words: “There's no hierarchy, no egos and no politics. As long as we breathe, the cab trade shall never die.”

When you think the Mayfair Mob have only been in existence for barely 8 months, what they've achieved thus far has been miraculous!

**Marc Turner (R97)**  
**Call Sign Online**

Mayfair Mob



Reclaim Our Ranks

Rules To Starve a Scab

No Brooming - Take CC - Clean Cab

Be Polite - No Politics - No Orgs

No Egos - Be Strong (Its your Right)

Join The Mob

Be Active and care about your Trade

Join Twitter: Starve A Scab @UCGup

Meetings at the Oak Cafe every month

# NOBODY TOLD ME THAT

"At first it was a bit like playing Russian Roulette," Liam Ratcliffe (T53) explained to *Call Sign*, "because when the rear wheel steering dash warning light ominously started to flash as I engaged the rear wheel steering in order to make a U-turn, I wasn't quite sure if the RWS facility on my Vito was actually going to work or not!"

Liam was referring to the recent warranty update undertaken by Penso in Coventry.

"Even though I was confident the remedial work had in fact been completed, the red warning light continued to flash when I engaged the rear steering, causing alarm bells in my head to go off and leaving me with a significant rise in blood pressure!"

Liam was grinning as he continued. "Thankfully I didn't have a passenger on board at the time or that might have been really exciting," he said as the grin turned into a laugh!

"It was only after several engine start/stop and restart cycles that the light went out and has so far stayed out, but there was a moment of mild panic at first, as you can imagine! The update carried out by Penso now seems to



"Why didn't anybody tell me!"

work ok but I just wish I'd been advised about what might happen!"

Ending his story, Liam told us that he had since spoken to other Vito owners who also had similar experiences, but the thing was that nobody said you should expect it.

"So it becomes quite confusing, not to mention surprising, and I am keeping my

eyes on that warning light every time I engage the rear steer, a little apprehensively, especially as my taxi is still under warranty!

"If only somebody has said..." he sighed wistfully as he drove off still looking at his dial...

**Alan Green (E52)**  
*Call Sign Online*

Richard Potter's bimonthly look at the world of taxis... and everything else!

## THE WAY I SEE IT...



**B**efore I pen my article every other issue, I always read the previous issue of *Call Sign*. It reminds me that I need to send the Editor a piece and there is always something within it that catches my attention and to which I feel I need to respond to. But it surprised me to read of taking away the 'reject' button during morning periods with me having recently given up working those mornings and reluctantly gone back onto lates.

It may be busy between 8.00 and 9.00, but there's not too much either side and I personally could not make it pay. Believe me, sitting by the roadside at 5am waiting a significant time for a job does nothing for your health, especially when the wait can be up to two hours. I think the BoM are being a bit harsh here and the early men do a very decent job under very testing circumstances.

One thing **Caroline Pigeon** recently said that was very true about Uber was that we were publicising their wrongdoings without remembering the public. When I was in the **Fire Brigades Union (FBU)** and we went on strike, we always used to mention the fact that the public would get a worse service with cuts - which was true.

What we as a trade fail to mention is that if Uber are allowed to take over, what would happen to our existing base of taxi users? There are over one million taxi journeys taking place every week and there is still a huge demand for our services. Personally, I feel that we are far too negative about things. Remember that you only hear from people when they complain and generally, if the public are silent about things, they are relatively happy.

**Richard Branson** was in the media recently telling us to change, but if we are put out of business, why should our existing punters - people in wheelchairs etc - be forced to use private hire? What about the choice for existing taxi users, of which there are thousands? When there were disputes at **Virgin**, Branson used to dismiss the unions by saying that if they didn't like it, then they shouldn't work for them. My advice to him would be that if you don't like the way the taxi trade is regulated, don't get involved.

Talking of the FBU, I was very happy that **Jeremy Corbyn** was elected Labour leader along with **John McDonnell** as Shadow Chancellor. This no doubt raised some eyebrows, but I remember attending a FBU conference in 2003 when so-called labour leader, socialist and trade union sympathiser, **Tony Blair**, was giving us a very hard time. John McDonnell stood and gave a speech telling us how wrong Blair was and that it should not be like that.

For those who do not know much about Messrs Corbyn and McDonnell, they are true socialists who will do really well for the country in the long run. No, we are not going back to the 70s but finally we have people in opposition who will take **David Cameron** to task, because he has been getting away with it over the past few years.

Finally, as it's November we think of the fallen in British conflicts and thank those that are still alive. If you go to modern day Germany in October, it is Beerfest time and a group of us regularly attend the **Stuttgart Volksfest**. Freedom is a wonderful thing and if you attend such an event and see all the young Germans having a wonderful time, you can't but help spare a thought for all those men and women who lost their lives in the name of Freedom. It makes you feel very proud to be British. In Stuttgart, 1.5 million cubic metres of rubble was created by Allied action during WW2 and much of that rubble was taken away by Stuttgarters who created a hill nearby called the **Birkenkopf**. At the top, it is so tall it towers over and has far reaching views over Stuttgart. A plaque at the top on one of the rubble pieces says: "A memorial to the victims and a warning to the living."

**And for those who made the ultimate sacrifice: "At the going down of the Sun and in the morning, we will remember them."**

**Richard Potter (T51), Call Sign Online**

**E**lliot's dad, David (H39) has written this piece for Call Sign. Any help readers can give Elliot would be truly appreciated and guaranteed to go to an excellent cause...

"Elliot has been extremely lucky in being chosen by the BBC's Children In Need program to represent a charity that is close to our family's hearts - **Teens Unite**. He will be cycling a rickshaw along with five other members of the team - each representing a different charity - beginning at **Lands End** on the 5th November and finishing at **Elstree Studios** on Friday 13th November, come rain, shine, hail, sleet or snow!

The challenge will be covered live on BBC's **One Show** following the official live launch of Children in Need and again on the One Show. Each night, cameras will focus on the team as their travels include crossing the **Severn Bridge**, cycling through the **West Country** and then finishing at the **East Enders** set at **Elstree**, via **Brighton** and **Chatham Docks** amongst many other venues. In total they will be cycling a total of 450 miles.

Elliot has spent a substantial amount of his time in first gaining a place on the team through an intensive selection process that sadly left many other youngsters disappointed. There was also filming and promotional photo shoots, through to reading a speech in front of a full house of over 10,000 people at the **SSE Wembley Arena** where he received a standing ovation. It really was a tearjerker!

His sister commented on a social media website that she had seen many rock and pop groups on that very stage, but never ever expected to see her little brother there - especially her little brother reading his speech and getting a standing ovation! He is currently following a rigorous training plan devised by BBC personal trainers to prepare them for the physical and mental challenge ahead.

The charity Elliot is representing is called **Teens Unite**; they have set up a **Just Giving** page (details at the end) that will allow people to show their support for Elliot and also help fund this wonderful charity. It was September 2013 that our

*When a DaC driver's son was diagnosed with Nodular Lymphocyte predominant Hodgkins Lymphoma just two years ago, the family's world was sent spinning. But young Elliot is a fighter and is now asking for help from Call Sign readers...*

## CHILDREN IN NEED, TEENS UNITE AND ELLIOT!



*Elliot meets Olympic Super Heavyweight Champion Anthony Joshua at a Teens Unite Sports Day*

world was turned upside down when we were given the devastating news that our son had been diagnosed with Nodular Lymphocyte predominant Hodgkins Lymphoma. Due to the position and size of his numerous tumours, an operation was not possible and so he began a course of Chemotherapy and steroids; thankfully this was successful and he is presently in remission. It wasn't an easy ride, cancer never is; but Elliot battled on and at the moment is winning. The support that he received from Teens Unite was pivotal in his move into remission.

Teens Unite are a Hertfordshire based charity that support young people between the ages of 13 to 24 years who are suffering from the effects of cancer; they do this by connecting teens who are going through or have gone through similar diagnosis, encouraging them to participate in workshops that they organise, as well as visits to exciting places such as football games, pop concerts, activity days and many other bonding experiences.

Elliot has made many friends through Teens Unite who gave him the strength and courage to fight his diagnosis head on. Sadly, not all those supported by Teens Unite go onto remission and Elliot lost a friend just a few months ago. This loss reinforced to Elliot just how important the Teens Unite family are to young people suffering from cancer.

Elliot feels passionately about his upcoming rickshaw challenge and would dearly love to raise a substantial amount for his chosen charity, Teens Unite, so it would be much appreciated if you could pass his *Just Giving* page details onto as many people as possible; let's see how much we can help him raise for Teens Unite."

Elliot's **Just Giving** website and the Teens Unite site for more info about the charity are at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/ElliotsRickshawChallenge>  
<http://teensunitefightingcancer.org>

## HMG support for Uber

Conservative MP for Bromsgrove and someone many predict will one day be Tory leader and possible Prime Minister, **Sajid Javid**, has warned against a "heavy handed" regulatory clampdown on Uber.

Mr Javid, the Government Business Secretary, was speaking at a select committee hearing and said he thought that if **TfL** brought in all the proposals in their public consultation on taxis and private hire, many consumers would believe that to incur a detrimental impact.

Javid added that he did not want a heavy handed regulation and wanted "to make sure that consumers are put first in terms of any sort of assessment about these types of services."

He was then asked if he would step in to remedy the situation should TfL come down against Uber? Mr Javid replied that the government welcomed innovation and 'disruptive technology'.

"And I wouldn't want to see anything done that jeopardies our status as a country that welcomes investment and jobs and puts consumers first."



*Sajid Javid: Support for disruptive technology*

*Immaculate White Cab Available for Weddings*



**Female driver**  
**10% reduction for Dial-a-Cab drivers**  
**Contact Debbie (W18) on**  
**07956 317040**

Said to have been one of Sir Walter Raleigh's top men when it came to the tobacco-discovering entrepreneur's expeditions, Captain John Bailey organised four horse-drawn carriages in 1634 to sit by the Maypole in the Strand and set up what was probably London's first cab rank – which probably made that the world's first cab rank too. The present church of St. Mary-le-Strand now sits on the site of where the Maypole was. So-called "sour-visaged Puritans" pulled it down after proclaiming it as being dangerous to the morals of youth!

The Conditions of Fitness as they were in 1679 and modified ever since, together with the Knowledge of London have ensured that the London taxi service, from those horse drawn carriage drivers through to the 1897 electric powered Bersey and up to the present day's TX4, Vito and Metrocab, remain the best in the world.

Yet with all that history, the latest buzz words throughout the trade are not about our enviable history, but how to preserve it and the service itself. But no one really expected help to materialise from a group of taxi driver's wives and girlfriends – although they really do not like being referred to a WAGS – whose purpose is to promote the positives of the Taxi trade. The group have not only organised successful demonstrations, but have also brought a new, ultra-modern phrase into the language that Captain Bailey may have thought came from Lucifer himself!

That phrase is #Save Taxi and a number of celebrities have suddenly appeared

# SAVE OUR TAXIS!



Paul Weller



Ken Bates

sporting the new catchphrase. Our thanks to LCDC Chairman Grant Davis for these two...

Paul Weller's father was a taxi driver, but Paul was always more into music and became famous as the founder of iconic bands The Jam and then The Style Council. He is still a successful singer / songwriter. His latest album, Saturns Pattern, was released in May and reached number two in the UK albums chart.

Ken Bates was the owner of Chelsea FC before selling it to current owner Roman

Abramovich for a reputed £140million. He then bought Leeds United before selling it onto GFH Capital in 2012. He was also involved in the formation of the Premier League and the new Wembley Stadium. He now flits between his Monaco home and Chelsea.

What both have in common is their love of London Taxis and of the new #Save Taxi. If any Call Sign reader can snap a photo of a celeb with the #Save Taxi sign, we'd be happy to publish it...

An occasional review from a struggling 14 handicapper at some of the marque golf courses I've had the privilege to play in my golf days away from the taxi...

## SIMON'S GOLF COURSES

In late summer, DaC driver Simon Wallis and some golfing pals took Le Shuttle over to France to try out a few of the nearby golf courses. In the September issue, Simon and co played a round at Harelot les Pins, while last month they moved to the magnificent Belle Dunes golf course at Fort Mahon Plage, some 30 minutes from the base they had made at Le Touquet. Now it was their final day...

### Day 3: La Mer at Le Touquet

When the great names in golf design are mentioned, you'll always hear Harry S. Colt's name and La Mer is one of his best layouts from the man who created the Sunningdale new course. The old course was designed by Willie Park Jr.

The clubhouse, which doubles as the course hotel, is some way from the first hole but there is a car park beside the opener. The best bet is to drive and park there.

As for the course itself, La Mer is one of those huge links layouts that just shout out: *This is how golf by the sea should be played!* It is a vast piece of land measuring just over 6000 yards. That may not sound overly long by today's standards, but it doesn't need to be. Seve Ballesteros won the French Open here back in 1977 and it has always had that real pedigree.

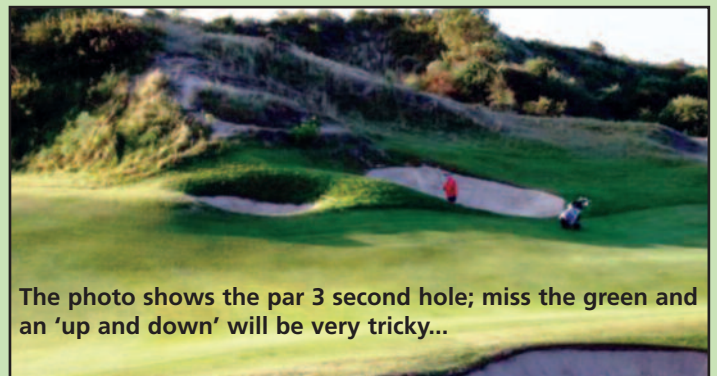
With the wind blowing across the multitude of huge dunes and fast hard running fairways turning into large lighting quick undulating greens, this course is a joy to play.

Before you tee off on the high 18th tee, you must take a moment to climb the steps to the viewing platform behind and above the tee - many players don't know it's there. The view over the whole course is simply spectacular.

I hope at some time you can make this trip, including the other two courses I wrote of in the last two issues of Call Sign. They all make a real treat for golfers who like to experience the best of golf. All three courses are different and all are excellent.

Happy golfing...

Simon Wallis (M11), Call Sign Online



The photo shows the par 3 second hole; miss the green and an 'up and down' will be very tricky...



**Keith Reading**  
Professional Toastmaster  
Master of Ceremonies

Tele: 01279 465 938  
Mobile: 07774 860 374  
Email: kgr.2@virgin.net

10% discount for DaC drivers and staff

Fellow of the Guild of  
Professional Toastmasters



*Hello ladies and gents,*

**High Court judge ruling**

Mr Justice Ouseley gave his decision on the Uber app on the 16th October and in his opinion it doesn't constitute it working as a meter, even though it calculates time and distance travelled via GPS then sending that data back to Uber's servers to determine the fare! The judge said he came to his decision because the app isn't a meter as defined by the Act. So that's where we're at, the use of technology won the day... not necessarily Uber.

**Tfl**

The proposals that are currently under consultation by **Transport for London**, if implemented, could hopefully have a far bigger impact on Uber than the court ruling over the use of a meter via an app. You can have your say on this consultation and have until the 23rd December 2015. Go to:  
<https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/tph/private-hire-proposals>

*From Garry White...*



**Tea at the Ritz!**

Ask friends and family sympathetic to our plight to also make their opinions noticed, because the big money being put into the lobbying campaign behind Uber is certainly being heard in the media.

**Hailo**

Hailo have decided to come back to black. I think a big part of their thinking on ditching the private hire trade is the consultation cur-

rently taking place where one of the points under consultation is that PH drivers can only work for one operator and that would have left them very short of drivers!

I do see apps as being a big part of the future of this trade and for the personal user that likes having a credit card linked to the app of their choice, it's very convenient. While for us drivers, we will have to accept that the meter starts at the point of pick-up on these types of journeys, just like street hails do.

**Celebration**

I recently had a day out in London where I took my wife to have tea at the **Ritz**; it sure was different from my usual cuppa at the **Finsbury Square** tea stall! It's a splendid hotel and although I've been in many of London's fine establishments while working, I've never been in the Ritz and the **Palm Court tea room**. Its splendour certainly lived up to expectation!

It was a truly great afternoon listening to the pianist, enjoying beautifully cut sandwiches and delicious cakes, so if you have a special occasion coming up I would highly recommend it as a great afternoon out in our great city.

*Be lucky*

**Garry White**  
**DaC Board Member**

**No, we didn't win but...**

**H**e is six feet one, sixteen stone and a rugby fan, so the recent **World Cup** was an exciting time for **Call Sign's Gary Cox (O46)** – even though the home nations were all knocked out so early.

During the tournament, Gary was thrilled to have picked up **Romanian** rugby legend, **Pompilie Bors**, from the **White House Hotel**. Pompilie is a hero in his home country after his time as captain of the national team before retiring and taking up his post as President at the **Federatia Romania de Rugby**.

Gary is no slouch himself, but standing next to Pompilie Bors our Gazza looks rather undernourished!

"What a nice man," Gary told us. "I recognised him straightaway and he told me that whilst disappointed that his team didn't do better, he thought they played well against both France and Ireland, although they lost both. But Pompilie said they also felt proud to have played at Wembley Stadium in front of the largest attendance ever to watch a Rugby World Cup match – almost 90,000."

"That will stay with me forever," the proud Pompilie Bors told **Call Sign's** Mr Cox.  
 Meanwhile, Gary Cox set off for McDonalds. "Gotta bulk myself up for the next World Cup," he said. "You never know who I might meet...!!!"



**Pompilie Bors next to 6-foot 1-inch Gary**

**LONDON LEGEND**  
*Limousine Taxis*



London Legend specialises in wedding transport. Our magnificent Asquith Limousine Taxis and Landaulets with drop hoods are replicas of the legendary 1930's Austin Low Loader Hackney Carriage. Special rates for Dial-a-Cab drivers on mid week and out of season weddings. We cover all areas of London and the south east.

**Tel: 01628 471632 Mob: 07974 348974**

Over the past year, *Call Sign* has run a number of articles aimed at warning taxi owners that there are nasty people out there who want – and are prepared to steal – the catalytic converter from your cab.

Although the spate of thefts began with **Martin Hizer's (M47) TX2**, that turned out to be a one-off and all our reports since then have been where the 'cat' has been stolen from Mercedes Vito taxis.

**Robert Webb (A03J)** was the first Dial-a-Cab driver we spoke to who'd had the catalytic converter stolen from his Vito. He told us at the time that he'd actually driven his Vito taxi for several days without even realising his cab was minus its 'cat' and only realised about the theft when a neighbour and fellow taxi driver knocked on his door to warn him of 'cat' thefts in the area! Alas, it was too late for Robert, even though his cab was parked just yards from his own front door! His cab had been running fine, but where he looked under it, the 'cat' was no longer there!

Diesel engines produce sooty exhaust gases so catalytic converters are fitted within the exhaust system to catch offending gases. But at around £2000 a pop, any crook with a metal-cutting hacksaw blade and a knowledge of how to get 'cats' off of cabs could consider this to be a lucrative way to earn a living – probably even better than driving one – but not in the way you would think.

Last month, **Gary Cox (O46)** wrote in *Call Sign* that Vito drivers might consider it prudent to go into a garage and ask for a 'cat lock' to be fitted, even though they work out close to £200. That was much cheaper than having to

## Watch out for 'cat' thieves!



Alex Teal

spend up to £2000, with the possibility of also losing the cab for two days.

Now Dial-a-Cab driver **Alex Teal (F54)**, who shares his Vito with brother **James (F54J)**, has confirmed Gary's advice. He told this magazine:

"For James and me, having a 'cat lock' fitted was a sensible pre-cautionary measure because we would prefer not to have the cabs' catalytic converter nicked!" The brother partnership had just had the 'cat' locking device fitted to their Vito.

"I now know that there has been a spate of

overnight thefts from Vitos recently and as these items are very expensive to replace, we are happier that it wasn't going to be our 'cat' that was added to the list of stolen ones," Alex said with a smile.

"I took our cab to **S&B Commercial** as it was convenient for us, but I'm sure other dealerships or most of the S&B garages can fit a 'cat' lock. It certainly works out a lot cheaper than having to fit a complete replacement - and certainly far less hassle!"

"Should some little blighter show an interest in our cab by crawling underneath it, the fact that the 'cat' is secured to the vehicle will hopefully act as a visual deterrent to any thief and they will then move smartly on!"

However, police claim that thieves are finding it difficult to resell the catalytic converters, but have fewer problems in selling them on as scrap metal. And to confirm that fact, they said that theft numbers had more than quadrupled in less than two years.

*Call Sign* also made some enquiries regarding insurance cover and unsurprisingly it depends on your insurance policy terms and conditions. But if the worst really does happen, you might be able to claim on your taxi policy but should expect to lose a chunk of your *No Claim Bonus* as well as any *Excess* in force at the time. But policies do vary, so always check with your own insurer.

*Either way, don't say you haven't been warned...*

## Beat Uber? No, better them and amalgamate!

This November makes fifteen years that **Joe Connor (N64)** has been on Dial-a-Cab so his views are always worth listening to. He has now written to *Call Sign* with a rather controversial suggestion...

Dear Alan and Dial-a-Cab Members,

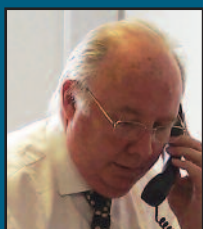
It's time we stopped trying to defeat Uber, but instead to be better than Uber! Everything we have, we know is better than Uber anyway. We have better drivers, better knowledge, far more safety and comfort in addition to the speed of using bus lanes etc.

**There is just one exception - the cost and customers know this; so let's put this right!**

It's time for all the radio taxis to amalgamate, to all have a new App system. No more run-ins, just the meter on when the time clicks in or the customer has been notified by dispatch. No £2 extra for cash trips and all jobs covered.

**With no rejects, all the modern systems we have together with some good advertising paid for from the money received from the amalgamation, we can then beat Uber by being better in every way. This will give us more jobs and more money in our pocket.**

Joe Connor (N64)



## AGM REMINDER

All members should have received the *Notice of Annual General Meeting 2015* advising that the meeting will again be held at The HAC, Armoury House, City Road on Sunday 7th February 2016 at 11am.

The meeting this year will consider an agenda *excluding* the election of officers, but *including* as usual, proposed Rule Changes and Propositions.

Any proposed Rule Changes and Propositions must be received at Dial-a-Cab House on or before 09:00hrs on Friday 27th November 2015 as per the *Notice of Annual General Meeting 2015* letter.

Please remember that if you do not vote by post then you should attend. If you do not attend or vote by post, you will be liable for a £50 fine.

Howard Pears  
Company Secretary

# Magical Taxi Tour to Disneyland Paris

This year's annual WCHCD Children's **Magical Taxi Tour** departed Canary Wharf following an **Ampersand** sponsored **Big Breakfast** send off. The Chairman of the Organising Committee, **Phil Davis (F10)** is always extremely grateful to everyone who helps make the trip possible, from the larger corporate sponsors all the way through to those making donations via **JustGiving** and the website. The **Marriot Hotel** Canary Wharf provided packed lunches, while the **London Taxi Company** donated spending money for the children.

The ribbon was cut by the Lord Mayor Locum Tenens **Alderman Sir David Howard** and the Master of **The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers, Colin Evans**. The 100 taxi convoy with their 400 passengers then set off on towards Dover, taking children with life limiting illnesses on a magical journey to **Disneyland Paris**. They were escorted by the **AA, City of London Police, Gendarmerie Nationale**, medical teams from hospitals the children were under treatment with and the **London Ambulance Service**.

At Dover, the convoy boarded a donated **P&O** ferry crossing to **Calais**. Seeing a car deck full of London taxis must be a surprising sight to those other travellers on the ferry! Before long the huge convoy was disembarking and making its way towards Paris and the Disneyland Resort. A fuel stop at the **Aire De Repos Assevillers Ouest** services gave the visitors a surprise when a band began playing and characters appeared to greet the children. Refreshments and face painting put everyone into a good mood for the remainder of the journey. Last year a WCHCD Award was made to this service area for their yearly warm welcome and a short speech was made by **Kevin Deneux** and **Mickael Bruder** welcoming everyone once again.

Some heavy rain hit the convoy on its way to the resort, but eventually it reached the **Hotel Cheyenne** and after dropping luggage to rooms, they headed to the **Chuck Wagon** for dinner before turning in for the night to prepare for a busy day in the **Disneyland Park** and the **Studios** where they were given fast track passes to ensure they didn't have to wait in long queues for the rides and experiences. Seeing the excitement and delight on the faces of the children, it's easy to see how worthwhile this trip is for them. It is a wonderful weekend in the mag-



Getting ready for fun at the Hotel Cheyenne

ical environment of the Disneyland Resort and a weekend away from the rigours of their hospital treatments.

The evening saw a **Gala Dinner** where guests were joined by Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Goofy, Pluto, Chipmunks, Donald and Daisy Duck and other famous Disney characters. They posed for photos with the children, signed autographs and even joined in the disco dancing!

The next morning and it was time for the return journey – once again via a fuel stop at **Assevillers** where the children enjoyed packed lunches in the sunshine before heading back to Dover and home.

This was the 22nd annual trip organised by the WCHCD and is testament to the kindness of the drivers and support services and their generosity in giving time and vehicles freely. Throughout the trip, people were telling the committee what a great time they were having, which is what makes all the hard work preparing for the trip and fund raising so worthwhile.

*Sandie Goodwin  
PR Officer, Magical Taxi Tour*

## HMRC pull up cab drivers over unpaid tax

A taskforce set up by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to check that taxi operators and drivers have paid the tax they owe, has targeted eight business premises across Northern Ireland as part of an investigation into suspected tax evasion.

HMRC officers visited the business premises in counties Antrim, Down and Fermanagh and uplifted business records for examination. **Michael Connolly**, HMRC's Taskforce Coordinator in Northern Ireland, said:

"Tax evasion is a crime that costs society dearly. While over 90% of people play by the rules and pay their dues, our taskforces target areas where we see a risk that people won't pay what they owe. The public's help in fighting tax crime is vital and it can be reported to us on 0800 788 887."

Enquiries are ongoing and any evidence of tax evasion can be taken forward either civilly or criminally through the courts.

HMRC

## HACKNEY ROAD TAXI TYRES

### FOR THE BLACK CAB TAXI TRADE

- Austones for the TX
- Barums for the Vito
- Michelin and Continental also supplied
- 4-wheel laser tracking for the Mercedes Vito
- Puncture repairs
- Also free tyre checks

*Find us downstairs the  
DaC Credit Union at  
The Peterley Business Centre,  
472 Hackney Road, E2*

**0207 729 5237**

DaC driver Sean Farrell (B39) looks at trade history from a different angle

# Brethren of the Whip



## The story that came too late...

A personal interlude; my wife's grandmother was born Adeline Hosgood in October 1911. She was often asked throughout her life where her first name originated from. Adeline did not know, she always replied that it was someone her father had once met and he had liked the name. This is the story of how Adeline got her name...

It begins in Manchester at the Tivoli theatre on April 3rd 1911. Appearing on stage was Flo Dudley, a 33 year old widow from Ilford. In the audience was a London businessman, Edward Hopwood aged 45. The two met after the show and there was an instant attraction between them, which may have been helped by Hopwood not only splashing money on Flo, but telling her she had the leading part in a stage play he was putting together!

They became lovers and soon the talk was about marriage - but there were problems. Flo was Roman Catholic while Edward was a Protestant. He was also married with three children - something that Flo was unaware of. Hopwood paid off any contracts of employment that were outstanding for Flo as he did not want her appearing on stage anymore.

The romance didn't last, at least not from Flo's viewpoint. She told her sister that Hopwood was always accusing her of infidelity and calling her vile names. The pair parted, but Hopwood was not prepared to see the woman he had allegedly spent £1000 on just walk out of his life.

Hopwood knew that Flo regularly commuted between Liverpool Street Station and Ilford to the home of her sister in Balfour Road. He employed several staff members at the station, a wine waiter, porter and bell ringer etc, to follow her home.

In September 1912, Flo received a telegram from Jim Kelly, a long-time friend who was a tobacco manufacturer and also High Sheriff of Dublin. The reply-paid telegram stated that he was currently in Southampton but would come up to London on his way back to Dublin. Flo agreed to a meeting at the Holborn Viaduct Hotel. The telegram was in fact from Hopwood and he was planning a fatal showdown with his ex-lover.

On September 28 1912, Flo found herself at the Holborn Viaduct Hotel (*City Thameslink and Fleet Place House now occupy the site*) and was confronted with Hopwood. According to him, she knew the

telegram was his all along and called him "an old rascal." The two remained at the hotel until a quarter to midnight when a taxicab was hailed for them to take the pair to Fenchurch Street Station.

The driver of the motor cab was Charles Matthews. He would later testify that he heard no arguments in the back of the cab and as there was no light or a rear view mirror, he could not see what was going on. As the cab drove down Fenchurch Street just past Cullum Street, Matthews heard three distinct bangs and a woman screaming. Fearing that he had lost three tyres, he immediately pulled over. Walking round the cab he could see nothing amiss, but as he opened the nearside door the woman fell into his arms. She was covered in blood.

He pulled her over to a shop front, number 138. The woman told him to be careful as the man had a revolver and that she needed to get to hospital. Back then, policemen walked the beat and within seconds of the shots ringing out, three City policemen converged on the scene. As one of them approached the cab, Hopwood put the gun to his own head and fired twice but neither shot proved fatal. One of the policemen snatched the gun from Hopwood's grasp.

Hopwood and Flo were both taken to Guy's Hospital, where Flo was pronounced dead. Matthews was told to take his cab round to a police station which was then situated in the Minories. There were three bullet holes in the cab - two in the canvas roof and one through the rear window. There was also a lot of blood. After 45 minutes, the police were finished examining the cab and Matthews was allowed to take it away.

At his subsequent trial, it was heard from Hopwood's secretary, John Travers Hosgood (my wife's great grandfather), that the writing for the telegram from Southampton was Hopwood's. He also confirmed that Hopwood was married with three children, one of them a daughter named Adeline; he had even named his own daughter after her!

Edward Hopwood was found guilty of murder and executed on January 29th 1913. Adeline Oylar, *nee* Hosgood, died in June 2001. She was never aware of her nominal link to the taxicab murder that shocked London. It was the story that came too late...

Sean Farrell (B39)  
Call Sign Online

## EVERYONE LIKES A GOOD COURT CASE

*But sadly we haven't got one!*

ITV's Judge Rinder seems to have reawakened the desire of the general public to look in on court cases. Sadly we don't have one! However, thanks to Dial-a-Cab Board Member Joe Brazil, who enjoys the occasional wander through the Old Bailey Online website, below is a brief - albeit partly rewritten into modern day English - extract from a case at the Old Bailey on 24 November 1856 concerning a burglary and the testimony from disgraced cab driver John Webb.



During a cross examination to decide his suitability as a witness, Mr Webb was asked by the prosecutor how many times he had been in prison. His answer brought up an interesting fact...

"About three or four times, I think. I was accused of stealing some money from a fellow servant. I was not discharged for stealing a bottle of spirits. I was discharged, I cannot say what for as the only reason given was for having a little too much to drink, but I did not steal the drink. I was also accused of robbing a man of his watch in a water closet while he was asleep. I was then accused of stealing a watch from the Vauxhall railway station. I was not charged with wearing clothes that the woman I lived with was charged with stealing. I bought the clothes off someone in the street and used them till they wore out, but a man had said they looked like his clothes.

I also had a licence as a cab driver but lost it for misconduct. I then had two months imprisonment for using a cab licence in a false name but it was not a false name at all, they just said it was and I was convicted. I have not been able to get another cab licence since then, but I am not trying to get one by pretending to be of a good character as a witness in this prosecution. I have in the past been fined 7shillings, 8shillings and 10shillings for plying for hire within eight feet of the kerb; that is what I have been in prison for... but not for dishonesty."

**Plying for hire within eight feet of the kerb? Is that similar to not being allowed to throw coins of the realm to the ground out of a cab window in order to cause a scramble by the public? You tell us!**



# Another day, another demo!

Call Sign has been on most of the recent demonstrations – currently suspended – and I have to admit to being surprised at how well-attended they are. The one at the Aldwych on the last day of September was a good case in question.

I had to first go and pick up the October *Call Sign* and make sure that it was going to be posted out as usual, then rush to the **Dial-a-Cab** office to sort out the mags that go to non-drivers, ie retired members that said they couldn't bear to lose their copy (!!!), other editors and some trade celebrities etc before handing them over to **Albert** to stuff in their envelopes and post. It also appeared quite busy on the radio – I assumed that was because of drivers going to the Aldwych.

**But for me there was no choice. The trade was fighting for its future and there was no way I was going to put an extra twenty quid before that, so it was off to join the demo of the day.**

I had arranged to meet the trade's unselected but excellent drummer, DaC's **Marc Turner (R97)**, at the Aldwych. He has become a symbol of the trade's cause and had become a familiar figure in leading the demos. But meeting him soon became a forlorn hope once traffic messages came on.

**It seemed that the police were trying to stop taxis getting to the demo. First it said that the Aldwych had been closed, then Rosebery Avenue had been shut at Clerkenwell Road, followed closely by New Fetter Lane, Fleet Street both ways and for those thinking of creeping in via the Embankment and Temple Place – well tough luck, that was also shut!**

My first thought was surprise because the police had been very supportive on every demo *Call Sign* has gone on. But they appeared to have had a change of heart and were determined to stop the demo by starving it of taxis. It was due to start at 4.30, having been brought forward by an hour from its original 5.30 start in an attempt to cause as little inconvenience as possible to theatregoers who may have paid big bucks to see a show and wouldn't have thanked us had they missed it. But at 5pm I was still driving around trying to get to it! But I was mistaken with my views of the police.

Somehow I had made my way onto **New Bridge Street** northbound in ultra heavy traffic and could see a policeman at **Ludgate Circus** waving taxis straight ahead and not allowing them to turn left into **Fleet Street** – which also had several cones across the entrance to make sure everyone knew what was happening. When I got there, I saw the reason – there was a police sign saying **'Taxis on Demo'** only. Those refused entry were working and had passengers on. I pointed to the sign and then to myself and almost magically the policeman waved me in. Fleet Street



Fleet Street stuffed with taxis all the way to Aldwych!



Steve Albasini



Keith D'urso

was stuffed both ways so far as the eye could see with stationary taxis. I pulled onto the end – literally just around the corner – and waited for the usual slow shuffle along. But absolutely nothing was moving. I switched the engine off, made sure my badge was facing the right way and got out.

Within seconds, a policeman came up to me. Here we go, I thought to myself, he's going to slag us off. I had taken some stick from an over-zealous policeman at the **Downing Street** demo for daring to stand in the middle of the road while taking some photos. But I needn't have worried.

"Mine's two sugars," he suggested with a smile as he saw me looking at a shop where drivers were coming out with refreshments! I assumed he was joking and of course he was. He asked if I could put a message out saying that even demo cabs could no longer get into Fleet Street as it was full from the Aldwych to Ludgate Circus before asking me why so many taxis were working normally. I shrugged my shoulders; if that's what they want to do then it's up to them, I told him. So long as they don't moan when the number of licensed minicabs reaches 100,000 – which it

probably will do by the end of the year – and they are suffering in the quietest winter ever.

**The weather was beautiful and we were obviously providing something of a tourist attraction because many were coming over to ask what was happening and drivers went out of their way to provide answers. Surprisingly, our Mayor didn't seem to come out of it too well, but that was probably due to driver's jealousy over his bleached blond locks!**

There was just one incident when an apparently anti-taxi driver cyclist seemed to deliberately drive into the mirror of a stationary cab. The police came and rather forcefully suggested to the cyclist that he should be more careful! There wasn't one policeman that you could say looked as though they didn't want us there! At 6.10 when the police asked us to finish the demo, we all began moving peacefully, if noisily! The only problem was that there was nowhere to go as the whole of the City had ground to a halt! Another day, another demo – and hopefully another message to the Mayor and TfL that the best taxi service in the world is not going to just lay down and die...



**"Yes, I guess you could call me a new recruit, but I'm not exactly that," Frankie Peet (K80) said to Call Sign when we met as he was being fitted with his Dial-a-Cab terminal.**

"My brother Terry and uncle Graham are

## Keeping it in the Family

both already 'on the firm' and our grandpa, Terry Peet, Sr was also on Dial-a-Cab, so my connections are strong and I feel I'm following a tradition of keeping it in the family!" Frankie allowed himself a big smile at the thought.

"I also have strong anti-app feelings as I believe it looks very unprofessional to keep tapping a device stuck to your windshield. Not only that, but it also divides the taxi community with conflicts of interest. Here at DaC, it looks to be much more professional.

I start work very early in the mornings and while my brother Terry, who also greets the early dawn, was usually buzzing around taking money, I was often just roasting on a rank somewhere; so I was convinced it was time to get fitted up and join DaC.

I'm 28 years old and when I started driving six years ago, my cab insurance premium was so high I had no choice but to rent a taxi. However, nowadays the insurance premium

has become manageable and so I have been able to become an owner-driver and here I am, joining DaC!

"Don't get me wrong, I expect there are drivers out there singing the praises of their own chosen apps and yes, it does keep passengers using licenced taxis, but it's definitely not for me. So far as I am concerned, Dial-a-Cab will be beneficial and more professional."

Frankie knows about "professional" because if you look in the DaC Driver's Reception, you will usually see that month's issue of Call Over, the magazine aimed at those on the Knowledge; and on page 3 of every issue is an Editorial – by Frankie Peet!

But for now and with his new terminal fitted, Frankie went out into the DaC world to put his belief into practice...

**Alan Green  
Call Sign Online**

## LONDON'S FIRST INTERACTIVE COLLISION MAP

*Shows the safety history of the capital's roads..*

The Mayor and TfL have launched London's first interactive digital collision map, part of a continued drive to improve road safety awareness to reduce the number of casualties in the capital. The **London Collision Map** can be viewed at [www.collisionmap.london](http://www.collisionmap.london). It uses extensive data collected by the police and held by TfL to 'shine a light' on road collisions in local areas and creates a useful way to inform road users about junctions with high collision histories, aiding improvement work in line with TfL's commitment to improve transparency for customers and stakeholders.

The map allows anyone to easily search for collisions anywhere within London, providing info on when, where and how severe incidents were dating back to 2005. The aim is to help raise awareness of road conditions and encourage road users to take extra care at junctions.

**It comes as the Mayor and TfL publish their Annual Road Safety report, which highlights the safety performance and improvements that have been made on the capital's roads in the past 12 months. During 2014, the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) fell to its lowest level since records began.**

The report also outlines the Mayor's new target, set earlier this year, to halve the number of KSIs by 2020 compared to the Government base line – meaning a reduction of more than 14,000 deaths or serious injuries over the life of London's road safety plan to 2020.

Isabel Dedring, Deputy Mayor for Transport, said: "Safety continues to improve on London's roads, but we are not complacent. It is a top priority and that's why the Mayor set a new target to bring down the number of people killed or seriously injured even further. This map is part and parcel of our drive to improve road safety awareness and complements ongoing work to overhaul and improve London's key roads and junctions."



"Safety continues to improve on London's roads."

Is Your Taxi Running as smooth and sweet as it could?

**Are You Sure?**

Feel The Difference When You Use alphaPowerPill

Enhance performance  
Reduce Emissions  
Smoother Running.

Still Only  
£16.95  
30 Day  
Money Back  
Offer

Order Today

Call 020 3239 6101  
07527 345810

Visit [www.OnlyCabs.co.uk](http://www.OnlyCabs.co.uk)



So said the late BBC commentator, Kenneth Wolstenholme, when a small pitch invasion took place at Wembley Stadium just as Geoff Hurst smashed the ball into the net to put England 4-2 ahead in the World Cup Final on 30th July 1966.

Some sports commentators gain recognition if their career is long enough, but these few words have become some of the most famous in British sport - and it got me thinking about how I could link this well-known phrase into a series of articles on London's long lost sporting venues.

As I approach my 60th year, it occurs to me that many younger readers may not even be aware of London's sporting history being lost to the wrecking balls and bulldozers for the creation of blocks of flats or trading estates.

I recall a cold winter's day back in the early 1980s when I was out on my Honda 50 looking for *points* around my blue book run, which ended at Homerton Hospital and my pink sheets invited me to look out - albeit belatedly - for Clapton Greyhound Stadium, Millfields Road.

Do you remember the frustration of not finding *points*? Well, I went up and down Millfields Road in vain, until I stopped an old boy out walking his dog:

*"Can you tell me where Clapton Dog Track is please, mate?" To which his outstretched arm assured me: "It used to be over there son, where that block of flats is now..."*

Clapton Stadium became lost to the London scene in 1974 and in some ways it seems sad to reflect back on *that* Sunday morning of discovery, when *this* Sunday morning's research confirms that as many as 37,615 football fans - a record attendance - crammed into the spaces to witness Clapton Orient lose 2-3 to Tottenham Hotspur in a 1928 Second Division match.

The O's eventually switched to playing at Lea Bridge Road before settling at Brisbane Road in 1938 and changing their name to Leyton Orient in 1945 following the end of the war.

Sport came to Millfields Road in 1896 and it was originally named Whittles Athletic Ground. It was mostly used for whippet racing until greyhounds arrived in 1928 - the track

*"Some people are on the pitch, they think it's all over...!"*

# "IT IS NOW!"



hosting a new race that gained Classic status called the 'Scurry Gold Cup' - although fans of dog racing will tell you these days is staged at the Perry Barr Stadium, Birmingham.



The only indication of any sporting link today with previous activities in Millfields Road is in the street name of Orient Way at the eastern end, by the Hackney Cut of the River Lea and maybe just a few of those residents in the sheltered housing part of the estate would have any inkling of their dwelling having once been the site of football fixtures and dog racing!

Greyhound stadiums used to be everywhere in London, but the frantic 30 second chase of a mechanical hare around a dusty track by six

beautiful creatures now only takes place at Wimbledon Stadium which, because it sits on the east bank of the River Wandle, is actually in Tooting!

At its peak in the 1940s, greyhound racing boasted 33 tracks in London alone and 50 million punters would click through the turnstiles each year - and next month I'll try to surprise you by revealing the whereabouts of some of those long lost temples of London's greyhound sporting heritage, including one that was officially opened by King Edward VII.

As the series develops, we'll explore the past and find those 'ghost' stadiums throughout the capital where folk once flocked for football, and I will have eventually written about everyone's favourite London club in cricket, rugby, greyhounds, speedway, athletics and tennis, plus even horse racing!

In the same way that readers sent in their WW1 and WW2 bomb site stories a few years ago, I would welcome anything you have on London's sporting past - just in case I am unaware of it!

Send them to [callsignmag@aol.com](mailto:callsignmag@aol.com) and mark it London's sporting past.

**Bob Woodford**  
Call Sign Online

## Barking Physical Therapy Centre

**EARLY TREATMENT MEANS SPEEDY RECOVERY**  
Treatment for pain & discomfort doesn't have to be expensive

The Centre offers fully qualified therapists in Physiotherapy, Osteopathy, Sports Massage, Reflexology, Shiatsu, Remedial Massage, Indian Head Massage, Hydrotherm, Massage Therapy, Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine.

Call us on 020 8507 8169  
or mobile 07973 639 473 for an early appointment  
Email: [andy@bptonline.co.uk](mailto:andy@bptonline.co.uk) or fax: 020 8507 9650  
Out of hours enquiries welcome

Barking Physical Therapy Centre  
90 Longbridge Road, Barking, Essex, IG11 8SF  
Opening Hours: Monday - Friday 9am till 8pm and Saturday 9am till 2pm  
[www.bptonline.co.uk](http://www.bptonline.co.uk)

It does sometimes appear that TfL are looking to enter the Guinness Book of Records for the largest number of Consultations launched! However, why a Consultation should be necessary to implement plain commonsense is another matter.

Nevertheless, the licensing authority for both Taxis and Private Hire has launched a Secondary Consultation following the initial one that ended last June and which received just under 4000 responses.

This latest TfL Consultation contains proposals for discussion in relation to potential changes to the regulations that govern London's private hire trade. These include a requirement for drivers to speak English, stricter controls on insurance and tighter controls on PH bookings.

Following a detailed analysis of responses to the initial consultation and meetings with trade reps, a number of detailed suggestions have been drafted for consideration with the aim of helping TfL to better regulate the 21st century private hire trade.

In addition to the English language capability and stricter insurance requirements, it includes proposals to improve driver skills and proposals around the way PH operators can accept bookings and changes as to how those bookings are recorded. There would also be what TfL refer to as a "tough topographic exam" that would include the ability to test drivers' navigational skills.

Among other important topics on TfL's Consultation...

# SHOULD PH DRIVERS SPEAK ENGLISH!



Alongside the Consultation, TfL has also published a vision for the future of the taxi and private hire trade as a whole, setting the proposed changes to private hire regulations in the wider context of developments in the entire industry.

Go to: <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/tph/private-hire-proposals>, click

'online survey' and answer the questions. It closes on 23 December 2015 and every taxi driver and members of their family who care about this trade should complete it.

*If you aren't sure about any answers, the LTDA have kindly helped at the Call Sign website from next week. Go to: [www.dac-callsign.co.uk](http://www.dac-callsign.co.uk). Please complete it.*

## 'U' in the wrong place???



because apparently not knowing how to get out, he just followed Debbie down the slope assuming that was the exit! And there he stayed until the next train came in, the rank moved and he could 'surge' forward! A classic case of are 'U' in the wrong place!!!

Debbie has a follower!

**D**ial-a-Cab driver **Debbie Hope (W18)** pulled into **Euston** to drop off her fare and in doing so just pulled past an **Uber** cab also setting down. Fare paid and Debbie decided to pull onto the rank – as did the Uber driver

### TAXI AIR CONDITIONING

All makes and models serviced and repaired  
Mobile service – we come to you!

Call Mick Wheeler on  
**020 8715 0079**

Covering London  
and the Home Counties

**O**ur thanks to the “regular reader” who says he works for **Glasgow Taxis** and has written to correct our **Geoff Levene (W32)** in his monthly *True Stories* page for *Call Sign*. The driver claims that the toilet at **Horseferry Road**, renamed the **Iron Lung** due to its shape, is no longer run by **Westminster Council** but is now cared for by **Carlisle Support Services**. Of course, Geoff’s article was written 20 months ago for the **February 2014** issue. So that could be some excuse, but why a Glasgow cab driver should take an interest in a London toilet famous for its shape and the almighty pong emanating from it, is anyone’s guess!

But we’re pleased to say that although no longer involved, the City of Westminster’s Byelaws as to Public Conveniences is still on display on the toilet wall, as is their important Byelaw 2a:

*“A person who enters or uses a convenience shall not interfere with any officer or servant of the Corporation in the execution of his duties.”*

We can’t really imagine any Council member doing his duties in our Iron Lung but be that as it may, with the £4.27 a year saved on

# Tales of the Iron Lung



their air fresh outlay, Westminster Council now employs a hit squad of ‘traffic marshals’ who go round fining any motorists £20 who

leave their engines run ‘unnecessarily’.

The fines are to help meet the fines meted out by strict European environmental targets. We don’t suppose the 90,000 minicabs floating in and out of Westminster have anything to do with that?

Don’t tell us... Big Boris does his duties there! Some would say it’s a fitting memorial to the man who has tried his best to destroy this trade...

**Jamie Corum**  
*Call Sign Online*

## ANOTHER OF ALEC’S FIGHTERS PICKS UP A STRAP!

**Alex Wilkey (W83)** has been on Dial-a-Cab for ten years, but for far longer than that he has continued his love as a professional boxing trainer.

He has undoubtedly been very successful and is well known in pro-boxing circles, with a number of his fighters picking up championship belts. In fact, in the August *Call Sign* another four fighters from the Wilkey stable picked up straps, led by his first female boxer, Greek fighter **Areti Mastrodouka**.

She sensationally captured three World Titles in her **Athens** hometown by beating Spanish fighter **Loli Munoz** and coming away with the **WBF, WIBF** and **GBU** World Championship belts following the super-featherweight unification match at the **Panathinaikos FC** stadium hall.

Also that month, **Danny Connor** captured the **British Masters Lightweight** belt, welterweight **Adam ‘Raw’ Salman** scored a sensational KO victory with one second left of the first round to take the vacant **International Bronze Masters** title, while making up the successful quartet was **Johnny Coyle**, who won the **Light-Welterweight Southern Area** Championship strap.

**Alec told Call Sign** after the Coyle fight that he thought **Johnny was ready to go for more titles and that came true on 10 October at Bethnal Green’s York Hall** following a ten rounds unanimous points decision when he captured the **WBC Youth Intercontinental light-welterweight Championship belt**.

The Alec Wilkey trained Stanford-le-Hope southpaw won every round against his game opponent in **AJ Faizy** by effectively counter-punching and taking control of each round with his superior boxing skills. Faizy was bundled over in the 6th round, but given a count by referee **Ian John Lewis**. It was irrelevant considering the wide scores of the three ringside judges: 100-90, 100-90 and 100-89.

**This means that Coyle has picked up two new titles in successive fights after winning that Southern Area title last time out.**

Also picking up a win on the bill was another of Alec’s fighters in **Adam ‘Raw’ Salman**. The Morden welterweight was given a hard fight by the notoriously tough veteran **William Warburton**. Salman produced some good clean work in the first few rounds with Warburton coming back at him as the fight neared its end. Salman got the decision from the judge after the 6 rounds with a score of 58-57.

**Both Coyle and Salman now fight next in Carshalton on the 5th December, joining Danny Connor on the undercard of Lenny Daws European light-welterweight title defence.**



**Johnny Coyle shows off his latest title belt. Alec Wilkey is on the left of the photo with corner man Johnny Sparks on the right...**

**David Wilkey**  
*Call Sign Online*

**T**ying in with the State visit to London of Chinese President Xi Jinping, The London Taxi Company / Geely unveiled their new TX5 prototype taxi at Lancaster House on 21 November. Also present at the unveiling were the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Geely Holding Group President, Li Shufu.

The cab will be zero-emissions capable so as to meet the new rules for London taxis from January 2018 and whilst no date has yet been set for the TX5, it will be released towards the end of 2017.

The TX5, which was designed in Barcelona by British designers, will be battery-powered but switch over to a petrol engine when the battery runs out. It is unmistakably a taxi and bears a strong resemblance to past taxis such the FX4, the Fairway and the TX group of cabs – a look that many associate with London’s taxis. The designers, **David Ancona** and **Peter Horbury** – who was a former chief designer at **Volvo** – said that they had developed the model around the “head-lights, grille and strong roof lines” of older cabs.

It will have a new light-weight aluminium body structure and composite paneling. LTC owners, Geely, will build the TX5 taxi at their new £300 million plant in Ansty outside Coventry and create 1,000 jobs in the process, plus an extra 500 jobs along the supply chain.

The new cab seats six passengers as against the current five and will feature rear-hinged doors once again, in addition to giving more leg-room to drivers. It will also incorporate a panoramic glass roof, have in-cab WiFi and charging points for passengers wanting to recharge batteries on their phones and lap-tops etc.

**Li Shufu**, founder and chairman of **Zhejiang Geely Holding Group** said: “We will have invested many years of development and more than £300 million in bringing the TX5 to market. This is testament to Geely’s commitment to the UK and The London Taxi Company and demonstrates our leading position on new energy technologies, our loyal and talented workforce and our competitive edge when it comes to delivering pioneering design and technology. At the same time, we are happy to play a part in furthering Sino-Anglo relations by investing in the UK and strengthening business and governmental ties between the two nations.”

**Peter Johansen**, chief executive of The London Taxi Company said: “We are hugely excited to be unveiling the TX5 prototype design for the first time and in such high company. The new vehicle has a wealth of new features, which will all be tried and tested and then tested again to provide a perfect balance of timeless design driven by ground-breaking technology.”

As the new TX4 Euro 6 hits London’s streets...

# LTC introduce the TX5



## The Flower Mill

Creating Beautiful Flowers For Weddings

Tel: 07854 738895

Web: [www.theflowermillessex.co.uk](http://www.theflowermillessex.co.uk)

Email: [theflowermill@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:theflowermill@yahoo.co.uk)

Covering Essex & The Surrounding Counties

“It is at the edge of a petal that love waits”- William Carlos Williams

# Mailshot

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

## Shopping in Call Sign

Hello Alan

Just reading another great issue in the October *Call Sign*. Re the **Unigate** story – is this garage **milking** the cab trade, I don't think it will be as big as the **Watergate** story of the 1970s but I would have expected a **red top** paper to run this story not a **gold top** like yours. In fact you may have only **semi-skimmed** the surface with this and I think you're a long way from the **full fat** of this story. But I'm glad it's at least out of the **bottle** now. **Gurinder Dhillon** obviously thinks he's the cat that got the **cream**, although it would seem it's we who keep his business afloat! How he expected this to go **past your eyes** and not be a story, I don't know. I hope the writer, **Marc Turner (R97)** hasn't **sterilised** some of the facts. Anyway, I'm sure this story will be **milked** and do the rounds but I don't want to create too much of a fuss otherwise you get **cheesed** off. Meanwhile I need to earn some **bread**, so bye for now...  
**Jon Robinson (E88)**  
Thanks Jon, methinks your wife should start going to Tesco alone!!! ...Ed

## Me a Luddite?

Hello Alan

I allowed myself a wry smile when I heard from Mayor Boris Johnson at City Hall that I was a Luddite because I drive a London taxi. In front of me as I drive is my DaC terminal, which in my opinion is probably one of the best kits of its kind and a brilliant product of technology. Another facet of the white heat of technology is my mobile phone and everything that they can do these days. It was not so long ago that jobs were despatched via voice and if you wanted to make a phone call you had to find a telephone box. No Boris, I'm no Luddite. Perhaps you should look nearer home. My Cab Driver's Licence! My Bill states that I am a "Motor Cab Driver." Very quaint that phrase, Motor Cab. It was brought in to distinguish those drivers who embraced the new technology of the 20th century by giving up the horse. There were Motor Cab Drivers and there were Horse Cab Drivers. The last horse drawn cab walked the streets just after World War 2. Since then there has only been Taxis, but first the PCO and now Boris with his inept mandarins at TfL are still stuck in the early years of the last century. And they call me a Luddite...

**Sean Farrell (B39)**

Ooooh! You can be so nasty Sean! ...Ed

## Shine

Hello Alan

On behalf of Leena, Cheryl and Jackie, I'd like to thank you not just for the free ride you gave us following our Shine Walk in aid of

Cancer Research UK from Southwark Park to Old Billingsgate, but also for the £10 you then donated! We had heard of black cab driver's generosity and the work they do for various charities, but I personally had never actually come across it before although since last Saturday (26 September), I've since heard of other cabbies who also didn't charge. All I can say is thanks and you guys have won a convert from Uber.

**Teri Fennell**  
**Blackheath SE3**

After you all said I reminded you of George Clooney, how could I not! You did mean it, didn't you! ...Ed

## TfL consultation

Alan

Can you press the LTDA and other trade orgs to have an early uniform reply to this consultation so you might publish it or DaC email it out to non-union members, even though I am one myself.

Brian Rice, I think, wrote about no one replying to these things, so if it can be copied and pasted, it would increase the replies.

**John Thomas (Y58)**

Great idea John and my thanks go to LTDA General Secretary Steve McNamara who said yes to your suggestion straight away. If you haven't yet filled one in, go to [www.dac-callsign.co.uk](http://www.dac-callsign.co.uk) ...Ed

## Uber... and Nash's Numbers!

Hi Alan

To the judge who apparently believes that what Uber use to calculate fares isn't actually a meter: What is it then???

However, can I also say how lucky we are to have Nash's Numbers in Call Sign each month; it is always extremely useful and has often saved me wasting my time wondering what time the next Eurostar train is coming in or whether Excel is likely to be worth a visit. I know lots of drivers that have files of information from his monthly column but have never read of anyone thanking him. So to Alan Nash, my sincere thanks.

**Alex Constantinou (N05)**

Thanks Alex, I do get drivers phoning about Nash's Numbers, but it's nice when someone takes the time to write. As for the meter issue, I'd rather not say! ...Ed

## Uber down under

Hi Alan

The London minicab wars of the 1960s have begun - but here in Brisbane! But instead of Gotla's Renault Dauphines, the target this time is Uber. Three Uber drivers and cars were attacked on Sunday night. A few days later, two Brisbane cab drivers went to the police and confessed to the attacks. They have been charged with assault, robbery and criminal damage and were bailed to return to court at a later date. The Taxi Council of Brisbane has said that no wars are good, but emotions are



running as high as they did in the '60s over in your neck of the woods.

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

Violence rarely solves anything other than to breed more violence. The question is what actually does help? ...Ed

## Supporting Uber?

Dear Alan

As I live a very sheltered life, I was totally unaware that mobile phone network EE is in partnership with Uber. On finding this out, I immediately cancelled my monthly contract with them.

I have also come across an article in the online Daily Telegraph in which the CEO of TalkTalk, Baroness Harding, praises the virtues of Uber and is against any moves by TfL to impose any restrictions on the PH trade, or in other words she is against them enforcing the law. Again I have cancelled my broadband and telephone contract with them. I wonder how many of us are paying into these companies unaware that they support Uber.

**Paul Arrowsmith (T83)**

See Editorial on page 3 ...Ed

## Dress code

I have been a cab driver for 25 years and have always been sceptical about various articles and letters over the years about having a dress code. Over the last few years with Uber etc, it seems to me that the public only want low cost. I'm not arguing that a chauffeur or a driver of a limousine should be very smart, but I doubt that Addison Lee drivers in their crumpled cheap suits impress anyone!

In my experience, passengers want us to know the best route and be friendly.

**Nicholas Fielding (O52)**

Any drivers changed their views either way? ...Ed

## Call Sign November 2015

Editor: Alan Fisher

Address: 39 - 47 East Rd, London N1 6AH

Tel: 0207 251 0581 Fax: 0207 553 7293

Email: [callsignmag@aol.com](mailto:callsignmag@aol.com)

Website: [www.22-callsign.co.uk](http://www.22-callsign.co.uk)

Printers: Premier Print Group

London E6 6LP

Design: Aldan Publications

Tel: 07958 300 428

Email: [debbiefresco@googlemail.com](mailto:debbiefresco@googlemail.com)

Views and opinion expressed in Call Sign must not be assumed to represent those of the Editor or Board. No part of Call Sign may be reproduced either manually or electronically without the express permission of the Editor.

**TX4 Euro 6**

# OUR NEW CAB IS BLACK AND GREEN.



## The new TX4 Euro 6 is here.

The new Euro 6 TX4 has arrived. Its 2.8 litre diesel VM engine has been designed to be cleaner, greener while delivering improved power output without impact on fuel economy. It has been engineered with a lighter chassis and drivetrain, offering an improved, smoother experience for driver and passenger. Sounds good, right? Book your test drive today and see for yourself.

TX4: A taxi from the people who only make taxis.

### Book your test drive today:

#### The London Taxi Company

Call us now on 03300 245 944

Go online to [London-taxis.co.uk](http://London-taxis.co.uk)


Visit Brewery Rd, London N7 9QH


#### Ascotts Cab Centre

Call us now on 0208 692 1122

Go online to [www.ascottcab.com](http://www.ascottcab.com)

Visit Blackhorse Road, London, SE8 5HY

 [TheLondonTaxiCompanyUK](https://www.facebook.com/TheLondonTaxiCompanyUK)

 [LondonTaxiCoUK](https://twitter.com/LondonTaxiCoUK)

 [LondonTaxiCompanyUK](https://www.youtube.com/LondonTaxiCompanyUK)



\*Terms and conditions apply. Business users only. Finance offer available on Personal Contract Purchase, figures based on TX4 Elegance (automatic transmission) at £42,795 OTR with a customer deposit of £2,995 followed by 48 monthly payments of £714.79 (equivalent weekly payments of £164.95) plus an optional final payment of £15,735 based upon an annual contracted mileage of 30,000 (120,000 over term). Deposits can be made from £0 and paid on collection; the above is an example deposit based on the finance illustration. Three year plans are also available. Excess mileage charge of 6.0 pence (+VAT) per mile applies. If the vehicle is in good condition and has not exceeded the allowed mileage you will have nothing to pay. Finance is subject to status and is only available to UK residents aged 18 and over. Finance is provided by Black Horse Taxi Finance a trading style of Black Horse Ltd, St William House, Tresillian Terrace, Cardiff CF10 5BH. Other models are available.

Fuel economy information: TX4 (Euro 6) in mpg (l/100km): Urban 25.7 (11.0), Extra Urban 41.5 (6.8), Combined 33.2 (8.5). CO2 emissions: 222 g/km.

A wholly-owned subsidiary of  
**GEELY**