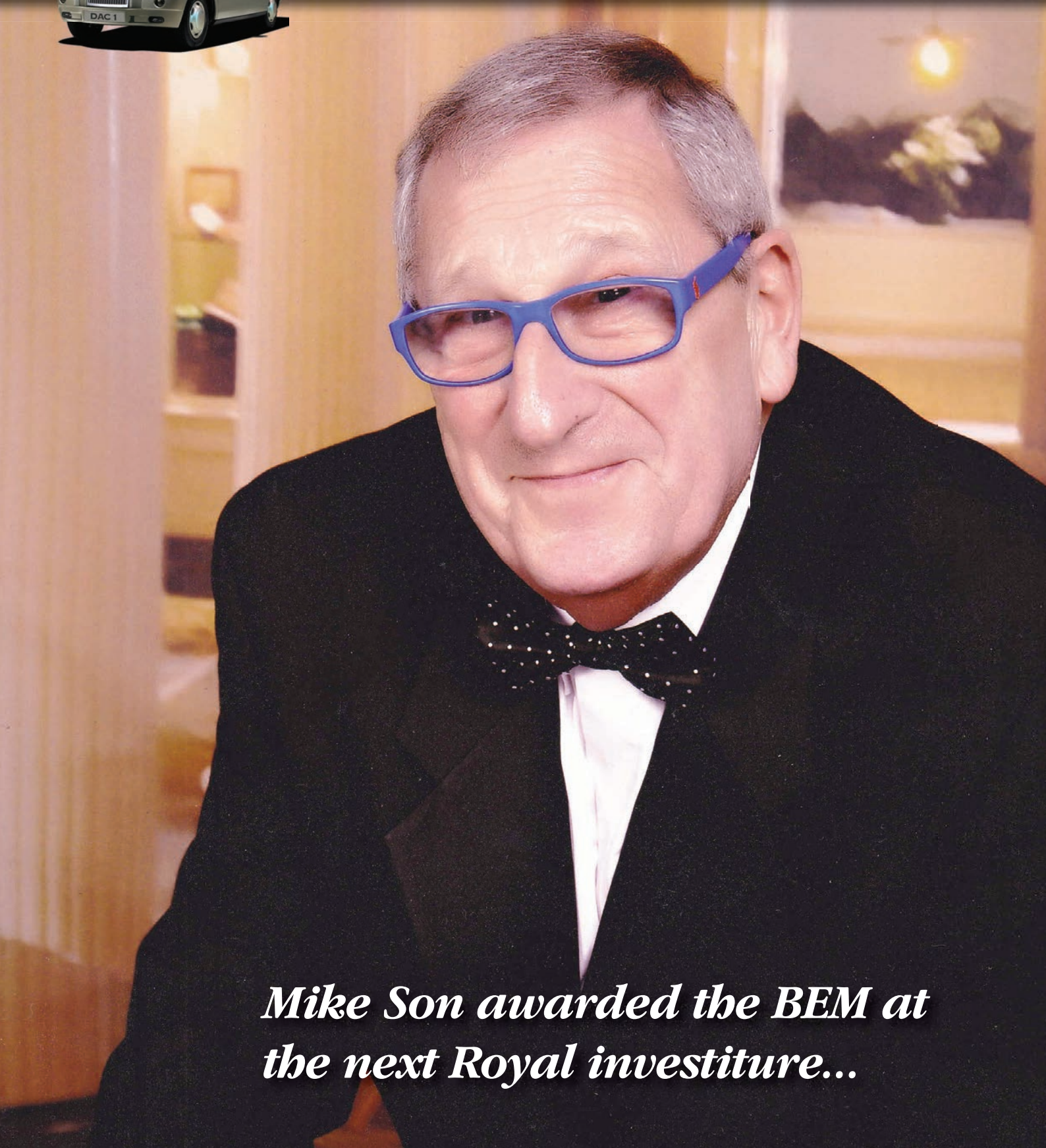


July 2016

# Call Sign



From the home of Dial-a-Cab International



*Mike Son awarded the BEM at  
the next Royal investiture...*



# NASH'S NUMBERS

From Alan Nash (A95)

*'What's On' is proving very popular. With most drivers having smartphones, much of information I have supplied in the past can now be found in real time, ie Eurostar and City airport arrivals etc...*

## What's On - July 2016

Venue	Event	Date	Venue	Event	Date
Business Design Cntr	New Designers (finish 18:00)	01/07/2016	Troxy	City Warriors: The Summer Smash	14/07/2016
ENO/Coliseum	Jenufa (finish 22:00)	01/07/2016	Alexandra Palace	Last Shadow Puppets (finish 22:45)	15/07/2016
Hammersmith Apollo	Bill Bailey	01/07/2016	ENO/Coliseum	Swan Lake (starts 19:30)	15/07/2016
O2 Arena	Earth, Wind & Fire	01/07/2016	ExCel	SAI Computing	15/07/2016
Olympia National	Art & Antiques Fair (finish 19:00)	01/07/2016	ExCel	Star Wars (finish 19:00)	15/07/2016
Royal Albert Hall	RCA Convocation Ceremony	01/07/2016	Lords	England v Pakistan - Day 2 (starts 11:00)	15/07/2016
Wimbledon	Tennis	01/07/2016	Olympia Grand	Hyper Japan (finish 20:00)	15/07/2016
Business Design Cntr	New Designers (finish 17:00)	02/07/2016	Olympia National	50+ Show (finish 16:30)	15/07/2016
ENO/Coliseum	Tristan and Isolde (finish 19:00)	02/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 1: 1st Night of the Proms (Sold Out)	15/07/2016
ExCel	World Power	02/07/2016	Alexandra Palace	Last Shadow Puppets (finish 22:45)	16/07/2016
Hammersmith Apollo	Buddy Guy	02/07/2016	ENO/Coliseum	Swan Lake (starts 14:00)	16/07/2016
O2 Arena	Lionel Richie	02/07/2016	ExCel	Star Wars (finish 19:00)	16/07/2016
Olympia National	Art & Antiques Fair (finish 19:00)	02/07/2016	Hammersmith Apollo	Jill Scott	16/07/2016
Royal Albert Hall	Gladys Knight	02/07/2016	Lords	England v Pakistan - Day 3 (starts 11:00)	16/07/2016
Wembley Stadium	Beyonce	02/07/2016	Olympia Grand	Hyper Japan (finish 15:00 & 21:00)	16/07/2016
Wimbledon	Tennis	02/07/2016	Olympia National	50+ Show (finish 16:30)	16/07/2016
ExCel	World Power	03/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 2: Mussorgsky – Boris Godunov	16/07/2016
O2 Arena	Lionel Richie	03/07/2016	SSE Wembley	Arijit Singh Live In Concert	16/07/2016
Olympia National	Art & Antiques Fair (finish 17:00)	03/07/2016	Business Design Cntr	Bellavita (finish 17:30)	17/07/2016
Royal Albert Hall	The Armed Man	03/07/2016	ExCel	Star Wars (finish 17:00)	17/07/2016
Wembley Stadium	Beyonce	03/07/2016	Lords	England v Pakistan - Day 4 (starts 11:00)	17/07/2016
Wimbledon	Tennis (Only if excessive rain delays)	03/07/2016	O2 Arena	Bellator MMA	17/07/2016
Olympia Grand	Imbibe (finish 17:00)	04/07/2016	Olympia Grand	Hyper Japan (finish 18:00)	17/07/2016
Royal Albert Hall	Tea Dance (starts 14:00)	04/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 3: Mozart, Haydn and Fauré	17/07/2016
Wimbledon	Tennis	04/07/2016	Business Design Cntr	Bellavita (finish 17:30)	18/07/2016
ENO/Coliseum	Madam Butterfly (Burst 22:20)	05/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 4: MPO and Valery Gergiev	18/07/2016
Hampton Court	RHS Hampton Court Flower show	05/07/2016	Lords	MCC v Nepal (starts 10:15)	19/07/2016
Olympia Grand	Imbibe (finish 17:00)	05/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 5: Beethoven (starts 18:30)	19/07/2016
Wimbledon	Tennis	05/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 6: Gospel Prom (starts 22:15)	19/07/2016
Business Design Cntr	New Designers (finish 21:00)	06/07/2016	ENO/Coliseum	Cinderella (starts 19:30)	20/07/2016
ENO/Coliseum	Jenufa (finish 22:00)	06/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 7: Fauré, Stravinsky and Poulenc	20/07/2016
Hampton Court	RHS Hampton Court Flower show	06/07/2016	ENO/Coliseum	Cinderella (starts 14:00)	21/07/2016
O2 Arena	Lionel Richie	06/07/2016	Lords	Middlesex v Surrey (starts 18:15)	21/07/2016
Olympia Conf. Cntr.	Flat Living (finish 17:00)	06/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 8: Strictly Prom	21/07/2016
Wimbledon	Tennis	06/07/2016	ENO/Coliseum	Cinderella (starts 19:30)	22/07/2016
Roundhouse	Elvis Costello	06/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 9: Le Cercle de l'Harmonie	22/07/2016
Business Design Cntr	New Designers (finish 20:00)	07/07/2016	Alexandra Palace	Food & Beer Festival	23/07/2016
ENO/Coliseum	Madam Butterfly (Burst 22:20)	07/07/2016	Alexandra Palace	Summer Festival	23/07/2016
Hampton Court	RHS Hampton Court Flower show	07/07/2016	Alexandra Palace	Food & Beer Festival	23/07/2016
Olympia Conf. Cntr.	Flat Living (finish 16:00)	07/07/2016	ENO/Coliseum	Cinderella (starts 19:30)	23/07/2016
Olympia National	Network Under the Stars (16:00-10:00 Fri)	07/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 10: (Sold Out -starts 11:00am)	23/07/2016
Wimbledon	Tennis	07/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 11: Wagner (starts 19:30am)	23/07/2016
Business Design Cntr	New Designers (finish 18:00)	08/07/2016	SSE Wembley	Street Dance XXL Championships	23/07/2016
ENO/Coliseum	Jenufa (finish 22:00)	08/07/2016	Alexandra Palace	Food & Beer Festival	24/07/2016
ExCel	Mens Issues	08/07/2016	Olympia Grand	Pure (finish 18:00)	24/07/2016
Hammersmith Apollo	Bill Bailey	08/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 12: Ten Pieces II (starts 16:00)	24/07/2016
Hampton Court	RHS Hampton Court Flower show	08/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 13: Beethoven (starts 20:00)	24/07/2016
Olympia Grand	3 events Allergy/Nutrician(finish 17:00)	08/07/2016	Olympia Grand	Pure (finish 18:00)	25/07/2016
Troxy	A Night of White Collar Boxing	08/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 14: Rossini – The Barber of Seville	25/07/2016
Wimbledon	Tennis	08/07/2016	Olympia Grand	Pure (finish 16:00)	26/07/2016
Business Design Cntr	New Designers (finish 17:00)	09/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 15: BBC Symphony Orchestra	26/07/2016
ENO/Coliseum	Tristan and Isolde (finish 19:00)	09/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 16: Prokofiev – Romeo and Juliet	27/07/2016
ExCel	Mens Issues	09/07/2016	ExCel	Cycling Show	28/07/2016
Hampton Court	RHS Hampton Court Flower show	09/07/2016	Lords	Middlesex v Essex (starts 18:15)	28/07/2016
Olympia Grand	3 events Allergy/Nutrician(finish 17:00)	09/07/2016	Olympia Grand	Film and Comic Con (finish 20:00)	28/07/2016
Wimbledon	Tennis	09/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 17: Roger Norrington	28/07/2016
ExCel	Mens Issues	10/07/2016	ExCel	Cycling Show	29/07/2016
Hampton Court	RHS Hampton Court Flower show	10/07/2016	ExCel	GamerMania (finishes 17:00)	29/07/2016
O2 Arena	Marc Anthony	10/07/2016	Olympia Grand	Film and Comic Con (finish 18:00)	29/07/2016
Olympia Grand	3 events Allergy/Nutrician(finish 17:00)	10/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 18: Mahler (Starts 19:00)	29/07/2016
Royal Albert Hall	Carmina Burana	10/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 19: David Bowie (starts 22:15 - sold out)	29/07/2016
Wimbledon	Tennis	10/07/2016	ExCel	Cycling Show	30/07/2016
ENO/Coliseum	Swan Lake (starts 19:30)	13/07/2016	ExCel	GamerMania (finishes 17:00)	30/07/2016
ExCel	SAI Computing	13/07/2016	Olympia Grand	Film and Comic Con (finish 18:00)	30/07/2016
ENO/Coliseum	Swan Lake (starts 14:00)	14/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 20: Berlioz – Romeo and Juliet	30/07/2016
ENO/Coliseum	Swan Lake (starts 19:30)	14/07/2016	SSE Wembley	World Cup '66 Minute by Minute	30/07/2016
ExCel	SAI Computing	14/07/2016	ExCel	GamerMania (finishes 17:00)	31/07/2016
Lords	England v Pakistan - Day 1 (starts 11:00)	14/07/2016	Olympia Grand	Film and Comic Con (finish 18:00)	31/07/2016
Olympia National	50+ Show (finish 16:30)	14/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 21: Aurora Orchestra – (starts 15:45)	31/07/2016
SSE Wembley	Rock Assembly 2016	14/07/2016	Royal Albert Hall	Prom 22: Ravel, Lera Auerbach and Debussy	31/07/2016

*For a large type faced version with 'days' as well as 'dates' go to: [www.myfav.co.uk/wojul16](http://www.myfav.co.uk/wojul16)*

# from the editor's desk

## Karhoo

In February I wrote about a new Taxi/PH comparison site that contacted *Call Sign* for its view on their app; my first question was whether they really expected taxis to be happy to share a platform with minicabs? The answer surprised me when they said that both **Dial-a-Cab** and **ComCab** had signed up alongside **Addison Lee**. It turned out that they were wrong about DaC but that ComCab had indeed signed to go onto **Karhoo**, as had Addy Lee and other minicab companies. In fact, **Nick Monteith**, owner of PH company **Mornington Cars**, said that **Karhoo** was a life-saver for the classic, licensed minicab driver.

Several months on and Karhoo has been launched and nowadays I no longer have the problem with PH (other than Uber) that I once had – that probably stemming from our joint mistrust of **Uber** and **Transport for London**, who have done so much to promote the Californian start-up regardless of it being to the detriment of this trade. However, there is still the one problem that I mentioned back in February when revealing Karhoo's existence – how can black cabs compete on a price comparison site with minicabs? How many passengers will select a taxi from **Cabot Square** to **Heathrow** when minicab prices will start at around £36? I think we all know the answer to that. In-town work will still be slightly more expensive, but some passengers may possibly consider the extra to be worth it in order to get a driver who knows where they are going without the help of a satnav – which means he/she also looks where they are going rather than gazing at their phone or tiny satnav device.

**My problem is a feeling of concern that after constantly seeing black cab fares always showing up dearer, many may stop comparing and just look straight at minicab prices. Either way, we lose. But there is one good part – Uber cannot go on Karhoo and the people behind the site do actually describe it as a way to take back work from Uber.**

Am I against Karhoo? Not really... but that is probably more to do with me being worn down after 45 years of fighting against minicabs. Even **Mountview/Gett** – they of the “we only work with black cabs” – are on it. So it's really just price; the idea of a comparison site is obviously to compare and if we offer reduced prices to compete with PH, then there is the matter of the 10% Karhoo charge. Who will pay that? Will it come off the driver's already reduced price or will DaC pay it and lose on every single job covered? That doesn't sound like a way to earn money.

But let's not write it off because if it does turn out to work in our favour, I'm sure DaC would consider *really* signing up rather than being told that they had – when they hadn't!!

## June is busting out all over...

*Call Sign* has always closed down for June so invariably the world of taxis explodes into life during May – and we're not around to report on any of it!

This time it was **Toyota**, they of the 10 million recalled cars that were said to have been in danger of catching fire. They have now pumped an undisclosed amount into **Uber**, they of the drivers that keep smashing up their **Toyota Prius**' thanks to a need to watch their satnavs rather than the road! The match-up sounds logical as the ultimate aim is said to be driverless cars!

Then we heard **Gett** CEO **Shahar Waiser**



announcing that **Volkswagen** have pumped \$300 million into their app, with VW saying that the ride-hailing market represents the greatest market potential in on-demand mobility, while creating the technological platform for developing tomorrow's mobility business models... which also sounds a bit like driverless cars!

I recently had a letter from a semi-retired **Dial-a-Cab** driver who had heard about the Toyota / Uber deal and told me that was the straw that broke the camel's back. He said he was now thinking of giving it all up in entirety. But he hadn't heard of the VW deal because it had not yet made the papers. When I told him, he suddenly changed – not because it was going to necessarily alter things because we are still up against an evil creation that cares little about anything other than itself. But this driver suddenly felt that we were no longer alone and that even though **Gett** is the opposition to DaC and in common with all taxi companies is said to be losing money, a huge multi-national company in VW thinks that taxis have a future. It isn't a huge amount to grab onto because in all probability it's the system rather than those on it that they really want... but it's at least a start. But it begs the question... just who or what is next???

May also saw the announcement of London minicab company **Addison Lee** crossing the divide and being granted the TAXI licence for picking up at Luton Airport! The local drivers are apparently incensed, but that won't change anything. All I know is that it happened in May so I missed that too!!!

## The Pledge

**Sky News**' discussion programme, **The Pledge**, recently had a section on **Licensed Taxis v Uber** where successful businessman and former Dragon, **James Caan**, put forward his belief that **TfL** was unfair to black cabs and how much **Boris Johnson** had let us down – nope, there was no mention of our official “taxis” title because as the whole panel said, London's **black cabs** are known around the world for being unique. Taxis are world-wide; black cabs are a London phenomenon. Mr Caan also said we would be dead within five years as **Uber** takes over.

His belief was that within the Congestion Charge zone, only black cabs should be allowed to work... but in return, our prices should be reduced. I'm sure Mr Caan knows how difficult it would be to go back and the subject is far too serious for me to blow my own trumpet. But I have to say this because I find the whole situation so distressing.

For the past five years on or around the January issue, I have gone into print on this page almost begging for our trade organisations to speak to TfL and reject any fare increase because we were in the midst of the longest recession we have ever suffered. While a number of drivers went into print to agree, many more said that we should always get a yearly fare increase even though our work levels were dropping like stones. Even the leader of a large trade organisation came out and said that we must not allow our meters to stagnate and that it was important that we should get an increase every year.

It won't really affect me but it *will* affect younger drivers and I always wanted and hoped that when the time came to put my feet up, that I would leave a trade that has seen me live a reasonably good life in at least as good a condition as it was when I joined it in May 1971. But it seems certain that won't happen and some of that is our own fault, because accepting a yearly fare increase during such a long recession was sheer madness and is what has priced us out of the market. It's a shame that James Caan wasn't standing for Mayor!

## Celebrating job losses

Not a topic I usually write about other than that it involves **Transport for London**. Technology has cost our trade money because while satnavs are a long way from being perfect, they are good enough to make a large number of former taxi users jump into minicabs. Let's forget Uber's price-cutting for a minute because that is a totally different aspect.

No, my problem involves the dismissal of around 800 underground station staff via the closure of around 290 ticket offices. I consider myself to be a realist and I understand that there are some things in life that even if we don't like them, they will happen. But that is different from actually celebrating the loss of people's jobs and the consequences of that.

Recently at **Piccadilly's RAF Club**, the TfL offshoot team of **Fit for the Future Stations** via **Mike Bracken**, who is the head of its so-called Delivery Team, made a speech to around fifty TfL managers citing the dedication and commitment of his team and congratulated everyone for their achievement – the achievement of putting hundreds of their workers out of a job. Then they celebrated with an exclusive three course meal with unlimited amounts of plonk.

**RMT** General Secretary **Mick Cash** – as you would expect, but on this occasion with my support – called it obscene that nearly 50 senior TfL managers should treat themselves to a slap-up beano in order to celebrate the axing of 800 safety-critical jobs and the smashing up of London's tube ticket offices. He also wanted to know whether the taxpayer was funding “this disgusting spectacle.”

And how did the information become public? Well TfL gloated about it in a bulletin they put out, which astonishingly also went to those losing their jobs!

Mr Cash said that his members were furious about the cuts but that the evening soiree was an additional kick in the teeth. Imagine minicabs being given access to bus lanes and TfL celebrating the fact... and we would get a minute feeling about how those underground workers must feel.

**Alan Fisher**  
callsignmag@aol.com

# Reflections of the Chairman

## Letter to Members

You should all have received a letter from me advising you of a Special General Meeting to be held on 11th July at 6pm. Of course, you do have the facility to vote by post as long as the Electoral Reform Services (ERS) receives your vote by 6th July. But please remember that if you do not attend or vote by post, you will incur a £50 fine.

When we received the questionnaire back from Members, it was totally overwhelming that you wished to demutualise, with a total of 99% of Members voting in favour of demutualisation.

Consequently, with that many Members in favour, it was fairly obvious that the demutualisation process would succeed; but the process will still require two meetings to be successful.

With that in mind, we have decided to give Members the opportunity of bringing in a Rule that would allow Proxy Voting for those wishing to use it.

## Proxy Voting

I have been advised that the two meetings would have required at least 50% of the total membership to attend with 75% of those present voting for change and then 50% at the second meeting. Postal voting is void in a demutualisation process; consequently, we have decided to give you the opportunity of changing the rules to allow Proxy Voting.

What Proxy Voting actually means is that you do not have to attend either meeting to demutualise, but you can award your vote to someone else to vote on your behalf. The reason we decided to adopt this stance is because the response to the questionnaire was so conclusive, that we decided to make the process as easy and convenient as we could for you.

No doubt there will be some that will believe there is some sort of secret agenda, but all we are trying to do is make life easier for you.

## Renting and retaining DaC membership

I have also included the rule change to give you the opportunity to allow someone that has been a Member for 10 years to retain their membership should they relinquish the ownership of their taxi and rent another with our equipment in it. I have included this because it would appear the majority of Members were in favour of allowing Membership to continue, should drivers be forced to sell their taxi and have to rent - much of that being down to the previous Mayor's fifteen year rule.

It was also apparent that you wished to reduce the size of the Board of Management, but instead of instigating a rule change now, we decided to reduce the size of the Board to a Chairman plus 3 Board Members in the demutualisation process; the difference in time regarding a rule change and demutualisation will probably only be measured in weeks, so it seemed hardly



worth doing it at this point in time.

To be honest, the rule change regarding the 10 year rule seemed very popular and the verdict regarding instigating a rule change on demutualisation was overwhelming, so I am not expecting a large turnout on 11th July. With that expectation and due to the fact there seems to be an apparent urgency on behalf of some Members, I have decided to book the local school because it was available and the cost is a tenth of what we normally pay at the HAC. And, of course, we would have to book the HAC well in advance with the obvious delay that would incur.

There isn't any ulterior motive in having the local school on a Monday evening instead of the HAC on a Sunday afternoon; it is just a matter of availability and convenience.

## New website

Many of you will have noticed that Dial-a-Cab now has a new Website, which coincides with the launch of our new logo. However, I can't help but notice that there are still some of you who have not yet changed to our new logo.

I also assume that if you have the old logo, that you have not yet upgraded your terminal with the latest version of

Volante. I have been told that the launch of Volante Aided Despatch (VAD) is imminent, but that if you have not been upgraded by launch time, then you will not be able to sign on to the system.

So please, if this scenario applies to you, then go to Roman Way as soon as possible to be upgraded and have the new logo fitted.

## Selling the Building

It seems quite extraordinary to me that I have now been approached by four Agents who wish to handle the sale of our Building, Dial-a-Cab House. It really did leave me with a feeling of total astonishment as to how these Agents learned of our situation before any of them had even been approached!

I have not entered into a dialogue with any of them at the moment because it is still early days and you, the Members, have not even voted on the demutualisation process.

So regarding the building, nothing has been or will be decided yet until we have had the vote on demutualisation, then we will either proceed or the *status quo* will prevail.

## Holiday time!

Well, after the last 12 months and what with all the above, we all probably need a holiday! So with the schools now closed or on the verge of closing for their 6 weeks or so, the holiday season will soon be in full flight. So in hoping that you all have a great time, can I also remind you to bear in mind the two dates above:

The Special General Meeting which will be held on 11th July at 6pm or voting by post, but only as long as the Electoral Reform Services (ERS) receives your vote by 6th July. As it's holiday time, I won't mention the £50 if you do neither!

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

## PAUL'S TAXI SPECIALISTS LTD

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Starters – Batteries – Alternators – All with 2 year Warranty

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Ever since *Call Sign* began reporting on gas cab conversions that will give your 15 year old TX2 an extra 5 years and even road tested one, drivers have been calling to find out more details. Well now you can ask the company behind the scheme when representatives from Autogas Ltd are at the Dial-a-Cab car park on Wednesday July 20th between the hours of 11 and 4pm to demonstrate a converted TX2 and TX4 gas cab and answer any questions you may have.

LPG converted cabs will get that extra five years and that even with the cost of conversion working out at around £9,800 (including VAT), is still much cheaper than buying another cab or renting.

The Dial-a-Cab Credit Union had confirmed to *Call Sign* that they would give loans to any member requiring one in order to convert their taxis. DACCU gave the monthly cost of members borrowing £10,000 as £264 over 48 months, £333 over 36 months, £470 over 24 months or £890 if you can afford to repay it over 12 months. Put those costs against buying or 5 years renting and they come out as being very favourable. In fact, the 4 year deal will cost you around £60 a month – you'd have a job renting one for two days let alone one month! DACCU will be at the DAC car park on July 20th for anyone interested.

The conversion consists of replacing your diesel engine with a brand new Opel one that will give you the same torque as a TX4 without

**Got a 15 year old cab and interested in converting it to LPG to get an extra 5 years? Come to DaC House on Wednesday July 20 between 11 and 4 to find out more and even take a test drive...**

# LPG CONVERSIONS



The Ed road testing an LPG converted taxi

test to convince TfL that a London conversion is sound and a launch date of around October is hoped for.

The vehicles existing gearbox is used and an adaptor plate is manufactured to marry the gearbox up to the new engine. As the new engine has been tuned to match the power and torque output of the original diesel engine, this means no additional strain is put on the existing gearbox.

It would be appreciated if you could let *Call Sign* know at [callsignmag@aol.com](mailto:callsignmag@aol.com) if you intend coming to give an idea of how many will be attending and whether we need to allocate individual times.

Put the date in your diary; it's Wednesday July 20th...

**Alan Fisher**  
Call Sign Online

## DaCs Jim helps the Boleyn to close!

Jim Rainbird (T25) has been on Dial-a-Cab since 1994, but for far longer than that he has been a supporter of West Ham United and like all Hammers fans, was drawn even more than usual to the 10 May match against Manchester United because that was to be the last-ever football match to be held at the ground they had occupied since 1 September 1904 when the team defeated Millwall.

West Ham had been in existence since 1895 as Thames Ironworks FC and in those first 9 years had already moved twice until they arrived at Green Street in east London. Now 112 years later, they have left their home to move to a new one at the former London Olympics stadium at Stratford.

After that last game, which they won 3 – 2, there were celebrations featuring former members of the team together with a history of events since the first-ever game. Cheers filled the Boleyn ground as several taxis came out of the tunnel and drove round the pitch; each cab containing former players... and leading the way was DaC's Jim Rainbird! The celebrations were screened live around the world by Sky.

As a staunch Hammers fan, a former Master at the WCHCD and well-known London taxi driver to several agencies for various jobs such as being in a Bollywood movie, appearing in a Japanese quiz show when not speaking a word of the language, appearing with Kermit the Frog and even chasing Prince Harry as a challenge, Jim Rainbird was an obvious choice to lead the parade.

Jim told *Call Sign*: "Not only was driving round the ground an amazing feeling, but I had one of my boyhood heroes in the back of the taxi. Martin Peters was there along with his daughter. In 2016 it was revealed that he was suffering with Alzheimer's, but before I drove him onto the pitch, I shook his hand and thanked him for some great times at the Boleyn Ground whilst I was growing up.

"Then something magical happened that will stay with me for the rest of my days. Part of the ceremony involved Frank Sinatra's My Way playing over the speakers while some old footage was being shown on screens around the ground. Suddenly Martin started singing and was word perfect! I joined in with him – a DaC driver singing a duet with a World Cup winner in my taxi! I had to stop when the emotion got the better of me and the tears came. Just an unforgettable moment!"

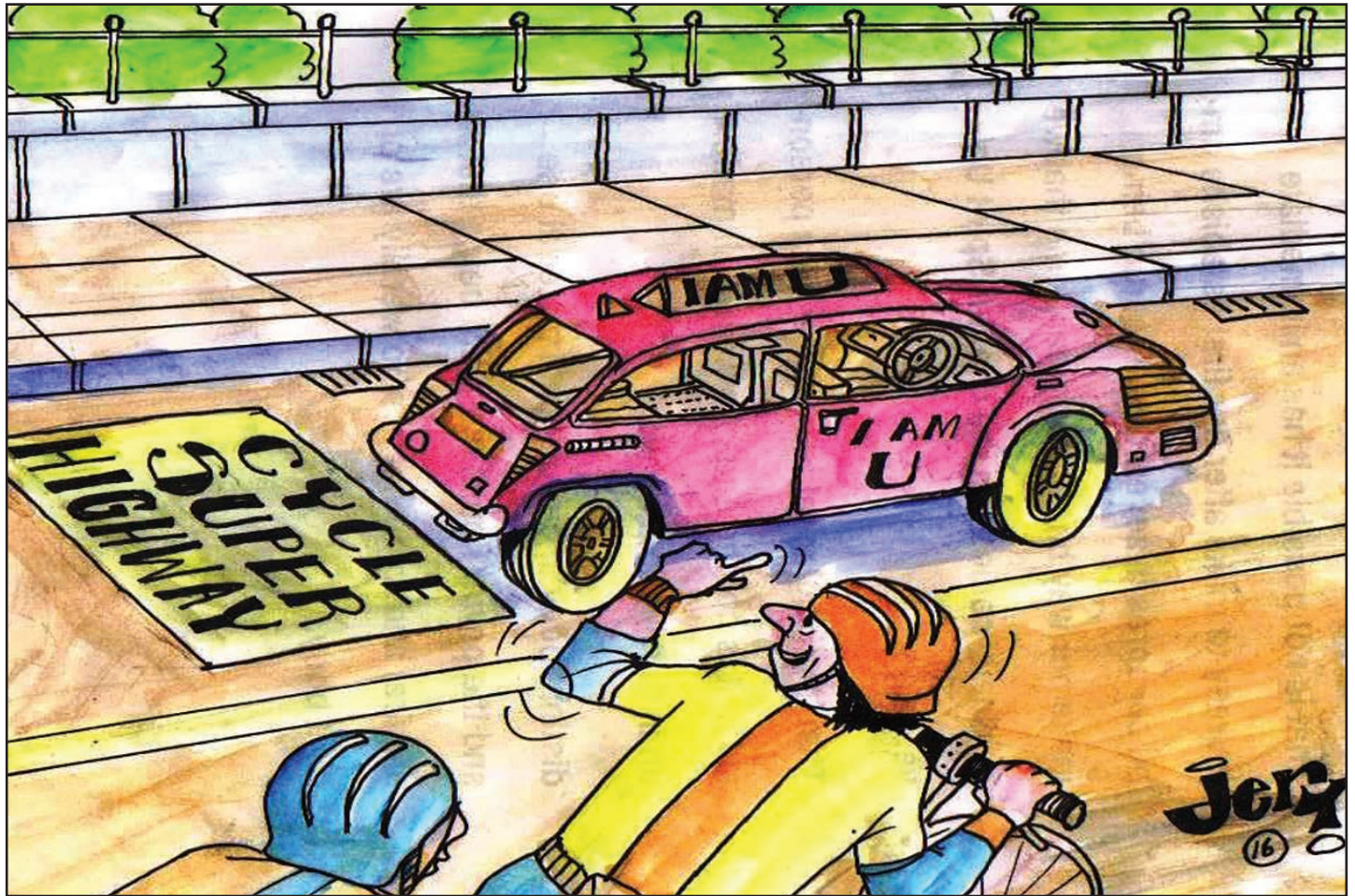
In March 1970, Martin Peters was involved in one of the most amazing transfers of its day when West Ham sold him to Tottenham Hotspur for a then record fee of £200,000, which included £50,000 as part-exchange for Jimmy Greaves who moved the opposite way from Spurs to the Hammers! Martin was later sold to Norwich and then Sheffield United, whom he briefly went on to manage. He later went on to work as part of the hospitality teams at both White Hart Lane and Upton Park. In 2006 he was deservedly inducted into English football's Hall of Fame.

But for Jim Rainbird, 10 May 2016 will be a day he will never forget...



Jim (inset) took his boyhood hero Martin Peters round the Boleyn for the last time

# Jery's World



“TfL must be right; Uber’s app leaves the rules behind. Push a button and their cars become bikes!”

## Geely raise \$400 million for electric TX5

As new Mayor, **Sadiq Khan**, announced plans to clamp down on London's toxic air, **London Taxi Company** owners **Zhejiang Geely Holding Group** made their own announcement – they had raised \$400 million needed to electrify its fleet of iconic taxis via a green bond sale. The proceeds will finance development of their new 6-seater range-extended electric **TX5**.

The group's chief financial officer, **Frank Li** said: **“This is a landmark for us, not only in the sense of the funds raised, but also the purpose. We're going to do a clean taxi, not only for the UK market, but it is going to be a global product that we can definitely grow to help reduce emissions and provide a cleaner environment for everybody.”**

A growing number of investors are said to be looking to put money into green bonds for funding projects that promise to accelerate the shift away from polluting energy and transport fuels to renewable and clean technology and Geely's green bond has been oversubscribed by eight times!

Geely is the first global auto company to offer a green bond, according to **Barclays Plc**, which was a joint coordinator of the issue with **Industrial & Commercial Bank of China Ltd**, **Bank of America Merrill Lynch** and **Societe Generale SA**.

From Geely's new Coventry factory, they will soon begin working on the TX5 prototype. The new range-extended cab will be able to cover between 150 and 200 miles before needing a recharge - more than enough for most drivers and one top-up covering even the long distance **Dial-a-Cab** drivers. The technology is similar to the electric **Metrocab**. Both cabs will have to be available by January 1 2018 when all new taxis licensed in London will have to be zero-emission capable.

The LTC factory will be able to produce 36,000 electric cabs per year and is said to be already in discussions with other European cities looking to turn their fleets green.



The range extended electric TX5

At the end of April, Dial-a-Cab Chairman Brian Rice sent out a letter on behalf of himself and the Board of Management asking drivers for their views on which direction they felt the Society should move towards. It followed a promise at this year's AGM when Brian confirmed that he would write to every driver, but the launch of a new VAD dispatching system delayed things.

The questions that drivers were asked to vote on were not official as in the usual type of DaC postal ballot, but to give the BoM an idea of the way drivers were thinking. Answering was not compulsory, but for those drivers that did respond – a majority - the votes had to be returned within two weeks...

*These are the options given and the percentage of votes as cast...*

1. If a Member has completed 10 years of service as an Owner Driver with the Society and then for whatever reason has to dispose of his/her taxi and rent another vehicle with DaC equipment installed, then he/she could retain their Membership of the Society.  
**Retain membership after 10 years: 82 percent in favour.**

2. It was felt by the majority of the Membership attending the AGM that the current Board of Management was too large and

# THE FUTURE OF YOUR SOCIETY



### Some of the returned votes

the number of elected Board Members should be reduced to either a Chairman and two elected Board Members or a Chairman and three elected Board Members.

#### Size of the BoM:

**Remain the same: 19 percent**

**Chairman + 2 Board Members: 47 percent**

**Chairman + 3 Board Members: 34 percent**

3. Dial-a-Cab House is a very valuable asset to the Society and some members present at the AGM were of the opinion that asset should be realised and together with our cash at the

Bank, be distributed to Members. But that would mean demutualising and winding up the Society.

#### Three options were given on topic 3:

3.1 To remain as we are, although the Society is now running at a loss on an annual basis and cash reserves will probably not exceed three years.

#### Remain as we are: 1 percent

3.2 To demutualise the Society, move to less expensive premises (either purchased or rented) and distribute any surplus to Members after retaining working capital from our cash reserves, but the Society would continue to trade.

#### Demutualise and move after distributing surplus: 40 percent

3.3 The Society could demutualise and be wound up and following the sale (or merger) of our circuit, if it could be achieved on acceptable terms, the cash from the sale of all our assets together with the remaining cash balances could be distributed to Members.

#### Demutualise and wind up or merge: 59 percent

An SGM has been called for July 11th to consider and vote on the two following propositions:

1. To introduce proxy voting
2. To allow members that have completed 10 years of service to retain their membership in certain circumstances...

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Carleen's taxi driver

Graffiti can cost councils £millions in cleaning up, but go to some parts of **Bethnal Green** and not only will you see walls covered in what is now better known as Airbrushing, but it is apparently encouraged and often paid for! Nowadays it also brings in tourists – many of them art students – to look and marvel at some of the incredible creations on the walls in and around **Cheshire Street**.

Once upon a time, it was called graffiti and deemed to be a nuisance. Not anymore...

# AIRBRUSHING A LONDON TAXI DRIVER!

One of the best exponents of Airbrushing is Londoner **Carleen De Sözer**, who has been supplying art in various formats on walls and canvas for many years. Her talents include graphic design and tattooing, in addition to designing CD covers, t-shirts and teaching young people in her art. But it was her airbrushing outside a London taxi garage that caught the attention of **Call Sign's Simon Scott (O40)**...

"I pulled into a parking bay in **Hemming Street** one Monday morning, getting as close as I could to the brilliant depiction of a London Cabby on the wall next to the entrance of **KPM**, a cab garage that has been in these parts for at least as long as I have!

Although I was already late, I just had to stop and stare at the image that jumped out of brick and paint with a joy that just left me smiling.

I had a long wait at the garage and later that

day I met the artist with her paints and materials neatly strapped to her hand trolley. **Carleen De Sözer** was charming and very interesting. She told me she had come back to finish off the drivers shirt before going on to her next assignment in **Brick Lane**. The cab driver in the Airbrushing is a **KPM** employee and Carleen plans to include a second member of the East London garage – an employee that has been with the company for 30 years.

I came away thinking about the cheer Carleen is helping to spread around this otherwise grey and industrial part of **Bethnal Green**. I felt glad that I had met her."

Carleen De Sözer is at [www.carleendesozer.com](http://www.carleendesozer.com).

**Simon Scott**  
Call Sign Online

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**Phil Buchan**,  
**Hillier Buchan, 01322 553313**

## Taking the pee for Doc Martin???

If we mentioned the Cornish village of **Port Wenn**, many would immediately think of the hit ITV series about **Doc Martin**, brilliantly played by **Martin Clunes**. But in reality, **Port Wenn** is the beautiful Cornish fishing village of **Port Isaac**, miles from anywhere and because of the hilly terrain, the elderly need a cab just to get around the village. So a reliable taxi service is vital.

"We have always been both reliable and reasonable," said the owner of **Port Isaac Shuttle Service, Louise Houston**. "We've been using our name for the past three years until the local council put a stop to it and forced us to change the name to **Port Isaac Shuttle**."

Just like **Dial-a-Cab** is often abbreviated to **DaC** and the former **Radio Taxis Group** answered to **RTG**, the taxi **Port Isaac Shuttle Service** began advertising themselves as **PISS**. However, following a complaint, the council stepped in and forced the firm to change their name.

"We never meant to offend anyone," said Louise, "our service runs really well and is appreciated by traders because we bring trade into the village. The ad was just a piece of Cornish humour. I am grateful that the villagers have started a petition for us to keep the name."

A Cornwall Council spokesperson said that the council had not asked the **Port Isaac Shuttle Service** to change its name, but just to remove the advertising on the side of the vehicle that emphasises an offensive acronym. They added: "Their current advertising breaches the council's **Hackney Carriage** vehicle licence conditions, which state that advertisements, livery, stickers, markings, slogans or information on, or in, the **Hackney Carriage** must not contain anything of a religious, political or ethnic nature; advertise alcohol or tobacco; be pornographic or offend good taste; promote anything illegal or obscure vehicle windows."

Thank gawd we're just **Dial-a-Cab...!!!**



Taxi service or acronym!



Dial-a-Cab Board member, Mike Son, has been awarded the BEM in the Queen's birthday honours list for his work as a committee member of The London Taxi Drivers Fund for Underprivileged Children and charitable services to children. *Call Sign* caught up with Mike after the announcement and asked how he had heard of the honour...

"Several weeks before the announcement, I received a letter in a brown envelope that resembled a tax bill rather than anything else. I just opened it without looking to see whether the envelope had any identification on it. The letter inside looked genuine, informing me that I would be getting a BEM at the Queen's next investiture. I assumed it was a scam of some kind because I believed that the **British Empire Medal** had been withdrawn some years earlier. But I took a chance and phoned the number in the letter, half expecting someone to say that I had to give them my bank details as security!

But I soon realised that it was genuine. The person at the other end of the line confirmed that the BEM had in fact been withdrawn but was brought back in 2012 for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The voice continued that I had been nominated by a number of people but they were not allowed to actually say who. I was also told that I couldn't say anything until Saturday 11th June when the announcements were made official.

I was really chuffed, but at the same time felt rather guilty because there are other guys on the LTFUC committee who have been on there as long, or even longer, than I and who've done every bit as much as I have – and even more – to help 'special needs' children. I felt

# Mike Son BEM in Queens Birthday Honours List



Mike meets the LTFUC patron Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, last Christmas

even worse when a few days before the date, the Cabinet office phoned to say that the details of all the awards would be going to the press and that my details would be passed over to my local newspaper, *The Evening Echo*, as well. That got me worried even more because I didn't want other committee members finding out via newspaper stories. But I needn't have worried, they were all delighted for me (they didn't mention **Sir Rod Stewart**)! In fact, within 24 hours of the announcement I was being interviewed by **BBC Essex**.

Unfortunately we only get the one medal, but so far as I am concerned, it is for everyone including our Patron, **Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cornwall** for her generosity

and kindness when meeting extremely ill children from the LTFUC at **Clarence House** during the Christmas periods. It is for every member of the hard-working LTFUC committee and all our wives and partners including my own wife **Maxine**. They often work as hard as we do! Then it's for our wonderful drivers without whom there would be no outings for the children. It is also for the trade

press who publish all our press releases and who often accompany us to take photos. Then it's for DaC's *Call Sign* magazine that for many years sponsored the upstairs buffet at the **Grosvenor House Mad Hatters** party.

I sincerely hope that the award helps the charity get even more donations from those that read about it so that we can do even more in helping such deserving children."

The LTFUC committee's honorary Life President **Bill Tyzack** has a BEM, **Alan Cohen** has an MBE and **Gerry Dunn** also has an MBE. Mike makes four of the LTFUC committee to receive an award and every one of them is so richly deserved.

Our congratulations go to Mike Son...



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# MARTIN ROSE

Many drivers on Dial-a-Cab were shocked recently when the sudden death was announced of Martin Rose (F69). Martin's long-time friend, former DaC driver Sam Stuart who moved to Spain many years ago, has written a piece about his friend...

"I have known Martin for over 40 years and before we moved to Spain, my wife Celia and I were very close to him and his wife Fran. But we still kept in close touch. They have three children, two boys in Simon and Michael and a girl, Gemma and have always been a very close knit family.

Martin and I did the Knowledge together. We did most of it during the evenings and often that continued through till the early hours of the morning. But we both had to also work and we fitted things in whenever we could.

In those days it wasn't unusual for Knowledge students to work as minicab drivers – which we did – and that gave us the opportunity to check up on runs and points that we may not have been sure about. As a result, we both passed out in just over 12 months.

Martin didn't suffer fools gladly and if he had something to say, he would just say it. But for all that, if you needed help in any way, he would always be the first to offer it.

We used to meet up in Piccadilly during the early hours of the morning when we first passed out and in the days when you could park almost anywhere. He always had stories about his fares, some funny and some not, but always something and always interesting.

He was a big man both as a person as well as in stature. He was also a friend and I will miss him greatly..."

**Sam Stuart, Torrevieja, Spain**



## Is Uber finished in France?

Soon after the good news for Uber of a \$3.5 billion investment from Saudi Arabia, some rather bad news followed when a French court convicted the app and two of its executives guilty of starting an illegal car-booking service. This was said to be the first criminal ruling to target Uber managers of the car-hailing app that has disrupted taxi business worldwide.

It was Thursday 9th June when the Parisien court ruled that Uber was guilty of "misleading commercial practices" and "complicity in the illegal exercise of the taxi profession." That led to a fine for the company of €800,000. The heads of Uber both in Western Europe and France were ordered to pay €30,000 and €20,000 respectively in addition to the company fine. However the court stopped short of imposing prison sentences or barring either from running companies in France.

Last year, following anger from French taxi drivers, the UberPop service that uses non-professional drivers using their own cars, was suspended following demands by **President François Hollande's** government to stop the service and that led to the above case.

Uber said it would appeal against the verdict claiming they had already stopped UberPop "but that the judgment did not impact on their service in France."

Uber was banned in Spain for one year while UberPop was banned in Germany,

Italy and parts of Sweden. The app itself pulled out of three German cities last year, claiming that the regulations imposed on them made its business "untenable." Meanwhile a German court recently rejected an Uber appeal against a judgment from last year that imposed a Germany-wide ban on its UberPop service.

**Transport for London** appears to be out on its own in its view of Uber...

**Dennis Latchett**  
Call Sign Online



Parisien taxi drivers demonstrate against Uber

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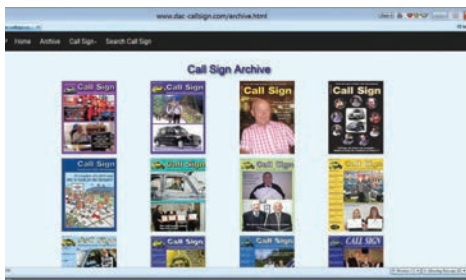
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# New Call Sign Website

**C**all Sign has been online since the late 1990s and amazingly, its website has continued year after year with very little maintenance needed. However, it has finally been brought back to earth by no less than Microsoft who told us that our website was so old that within five weeks it would no longer work after being put temporarily onto their last Windows Server 2008.

In that time we needed to either redesign Call Sign or lose the 'search' capability. So thanks to our website master and maintenance guru, Vince Chin, Call Sign now has that new website.

The addresses are the same ([www.dac-call-sign.co.uk](http://www.dac-call-sign.co.uk) or [www.dac-call-sign.com](http://www.dac-call-sign.com)) but everything else has been brought up-to-date. After logging on, the choice is



simple with the menu easily seen at the top. It will open on the 'Home' screen where you can read the latest issue by hovering over it and clicking the PDF sign.

You can also click on the 'Archive' screen; there you will see a copy of Call Sign from every year.

Hovering over the icon you will see the year and a message on each one to *click on here to view the monthly magazines*. Click on whichever year you want and then hover over each copy to find the month you want. Hover over the message to 'click here to see full magazine' to see the issue but in a small version. Click the PDF sign to see the full issue but in a large easy-to-read format.

You can also just go to the 'Call Sign' screen if you want to go straight to the year you want and finally to the 'Search Call Sign' button if looking for something specific by just putting a relevant word into the search box.

I hope you like the new look...

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

## Hunted Down!

**"I was stationary at a set of traffic lights in Wigmore Street, my mind miles away, when suddenly the cab passenger door flung open, two people jumped in, crouched down on the floor and shouted 'drive, drive, go, go, go!' in a very excited manner," Steve Palmer (K30) announced to Call Sign when we met recently.**

**"I was a bit spooked in those first few seconds, but the lights changed in my favour and I instinctively pulled away. But how could I not be suspicious - not to mention wary - of just who it was that huddled on the floor of the cab, and why they did not want to be seen!"**

Steve continued his story to our fascinated reporter. "I pulled round into Marylebone Lane, stopped the cab and turned around to face them - my initial thought being that they may have just robbed a bank and that I had just helped them escape! I demanded they tell me what was going on because at that moment, I didn't much like what was happening to me. However, the sight that greeted me as I faced them astonished me even more because the woman was soaking wet from her hair to her shoes, while the man with her looked like he just seen a ghost!"

Steve continued and said that at first all the mysterious duo did was to continue shouting back at Steve, telling him to drive on. But the Dial-a-Cab driver stayed put, telling them their behaviour was completely out of order and that his cab would not move anywhere unless they could come up with a plausible answer for their - so far, anyway - extreme excitability, not to mention the back of his cab becoming soaking wet.

"They finally admitted they were participants on a TV programme in which they were given daily tasks to complete and then had to phone into the TV station each evening as to their whereabouts before being given the following days tasks. In the meantime, other contestants had to predict what the couple might be doing, where they might be and more importantly, to 'catch' them before they could escape the hunters! On this occasion," Steve continued, "the couple had been in a hair-dressing salon when they thought they had been discovered and had rushed out of the shop just as the woman was having her hair washed, and that was why she was soaking wet!"

Steve dropped them in Tottenham Court Road, where they felt they had escaped the clutches of the hunters and continued his days' work, musing on the variety of people London's taxi drivers meet during the course of a day.

**"Suddenly I came back to the present when a fleet message appeared on the terminal. It asked whether any driver had recently set down a woman with wet hair in TCR. It didn't take much working out to realise who the driver was - I still had the puddle in the back of the cab!**

"So I rang the control centre for further details and later met up with the producers of the show, was interviewed at length and appeared in a cameo

role on the TV!"

Call Sign could see how proud Steve was at the events... before he added a telling remark...

"Unfortunately, try as I might, I just can't recall the programme name!"

**Alan Green**  
Call Sign Online



Steve thought he had picked up a bank robber!

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# DaC Sales Report

With Keith Cain

**W**e have been focusing more on offering fixed rate journey prices in an effort to generate more business from a market that is still highly motivated by reduced costs. Many years ago, we offered fixed rate journeys that took into consideration run-ins, some waiting time and if we were fortunate, some - if not all - of a gratuity. Now it's the complete opposite and we have to offer either a mileage rate for longer trips or a price that's very similar to what car companies are offering.

Clients have expressed the view that if only we could supply a black cab at the same rates as the car firms, they would be delighted to offer us their business. I have been analysing reams of data with this in mind so that we can offer our drivers the opportunity to accept these types of trips if it suits at a particular time.

**With the new dispatch system now only weeks away from being fully operational, the inclusion of the economy button for these trips will be a way forward. Seeing some of the prices charged was a shock and I have no doubt that when we start offering them to you, you will feel the same. I have asked the questions over and over again about how drivers can do the work for such a low price, especially when they do not even receive the full price of the journey. But they do and there are lots of trips we can offer – if you are happy to do them.**

Many of you will have experienced some longer trips being priced well below the meter and the waiting time being added on at a 'price per minute' ratio rather than the fare reverting to the meter as it used to be. We have also decided to offer trips to and from airports at the same system of fixed price. The controllers and contact centre staff will be monitoring these journeys to reduce the amount of waiting time to a minimum and making the airport a much slicker operation. This is the method of working that all the car firms offer and other circuits are following suit.

**All I want to do is offer these trips to you and you decide if you want to do them. Initially, all the economy trips will come from account clients who would normally pass these trips to a car vendor. Only the ASAP trips will be offered to you and those you do not wish to cover will then be passed on. Those account clients who are only serviced by us will not be offered low price ASAP trips, but will be offered low price longer trips and airport rides.**

The pre-booked rides will not be included in the early stages, purely because we have to maintain service levels. I see no point in accepting a pre-booked low fare trip only to find drivers do not want to do it. That will just antagonise and encourage clients to go to car companies that do guarantee a service at these costs.

There will undoubtedly be a huge balancing act needed here for us; firstly to be able to offer drivers this work and secondly, to maintain a service. If our drivers are prepared to help, then things could start to look up...



**Keith Cain**  
DaC Head of Sales

## 1990

The first taxi I owned was an FX4; it was dark green and I had been warned by everyone that it was going to be an unlucky cab. No one knew quite why, but London cabbies have never been short of an opinion or two!

It smelt of fresh polish and that black paint garages used to apply to everything they could find beneath the body! It had a very basic turny knob radio under the top light and above my head; the speaker was in a plastic housing underneath the radio. There were no pre-set stations and so when I wanted to listen to something else, I had to turn the dial until I heard something familiar.

**My favourite programme was a late night agony aunt phone-in show hosted by Anna Raeburn and a resident doctor. She didn't mess about with niceties and got straight to the point with an almost rude approach towards her phone-in fodder, but it made great night-time radio.**

However, the reception in the City was always appalling. The signal used to come and go randomly as I turned corners and crossed bridges. One night I was listening to



*Simon Scott is one of the new generation of taxi drivers whose life is captured as a blog. The continuing story of his time as a butterboy is...*

## A Blogger's Tale

a particularly graphic problem that an unfortunate listener had phoned in about; I can remember feeling very frustrated that I couldn't hear it properly! I had my fingers on the dial twiddling away trying to improve the reception when two elderly ladies put their hands up near the Bank Junction, they climbed in and off we went.

They happily chatted away in the back and my mind returned to that interesting problem Anna was dealing with. I turned up the volume slowly and carefully and angled my head so that my left ear was as close to the speaker as possible without attracting the attention of the ladies in the back. Reception was awful but I could roughly follow what the poor man's problem was. It seemed he had got his girlfriend pregnant and then dumped her for another girl. She and her family had confronted him and now his life seemed to depend upon Anna's advice! Well this was exactly what she loved; she tore into the man with gusto and was telling him exactly what she thought of him... when the reception died! I was beside myself; I twiddled the dial and fiddled with the volume - all the time

keeping one eye on the ladies in the back to ensure they couldn't hear.

Well, driving in London requires full attention and so I had to abandon the radio as I approached Ludgate Circus and of course, that was the exact moment that the signal suddenly improved and Anna Raeburn's voice boomed out back into my cab and before I could get to the dial, she had said:

"It's your fault she's pregnant, you should have kept your penis in your pants."

Well, I didn't know whether to look in the back or not! The two ladies had stopped talking and as I sheepishly peeped at the rear view mirror, I saw them both looking at me! I began mumbling my apologies and tried to explain the reception difficulties, but they were definitely not amused and were not buying my apology either. I decided the best thing was to stop talking and to get them to their destination without any further embarrassment...

*To be continued...*

**Simon Scott (040)**  
Call Sign Online

**Mayor Khan: City Hall**

Wednesday 25th May and City Hall at 10am; it was the inaugural Question Time for our new history making Mayor, Sadiq Khan; so I decided to attend and give him the once-over for *Call Sign* readers.

The previous evening, I'd heard that around 100 cabbies were rumoured to turn up. Disappointingly, just ten of us made it. Sharing the elevator up to the public gallery overlooking the Chamber, a young lady appeared enamoured with my multiple trade lanyards. In a rather sultry tone, she asked if I was going to behave myself this time! I told her that I always behaved myself and that if she was referring to the Question Time of September 16th when Boris insulted our trade by referring to us as **luddites**; it was he - previous Mayor **Boris Johnson** - that was out of order! She turned out to be head of media for City Hall!

**Sadiq Khan** entered the Chamber to polite applause from members of the **London Assembly**. He courteously acquainted himself with them all. The Assembly was chaired by **Tony Arbour**, the man who rudely put the question of "Who are these people" aimed at we London Taxi drivers last September, setting the remark into infamy - before then having the constabulary eject us!

Sadiq Khan was far more polished and engaging than the previous downish incumbent. I could not help noticing how he held his posture for the whole two and a half hour session, whereas Boris, no doubt exhausted from his cycling ride in, was always slouching. If first impressions are anything to go by, he appears more genuine and earnest compared to what we had been used to. When he announced the appointment of **Val Shawcross** as **Deputy Mayor for Transport**, all eyes were on we ten Taxi drivers as we unashamedly and zealously applauded our approval.

**There were no Taxi matters on the agenda, yet I didn't feel I'd wasted my time in going to City Hall. I'd had another look at the man who could give our trade a lifeline.**

*Call Sign's Marc Turner had a busy month; he was at City Hall to watch Mayor Sadiq Khan's first Question Time and followed it up with a meeting at the House of Lords with taxi supporter, Lord Glassman..*

# MARC TIME!



**Lord Glassman: House of Lords**

It was around two weeks later - Wednesday 8th June - when thanks to an invite from the **United Cabbies Group** that I was able to join a contingent of members and meet **Lord Maurice Glassman** aka **Barron Glassman** of **Stoke Newington**. About thirty

of us met him and chewed over the fat of how we had got into the mess we had found ourselves in. But we intend to turn it around!

Lord Glassman was ably assisted by a sprightly 75 year old **Barry Epstein**, who is on the *Call Sign* mailing list through his connection to the **Dial-a-Cab Credit Union**. He spoke highly of Editor **Alan Fisher** - well someone has to! He referred to him as a *newsbound ferret!*

Lord Glassman has a great affection for the cab trade and would like to assist our cause. He listened patiently and took copious notes. We all had a chance to say our piece and he appears well informed regarding the injustices served upon us by those in authority and power.

The tide is slowly turning with the help of friends like Lord Glassman...

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



**Sadiq Khan is well-informed about our industry; I discovered that last July when I heard him speak at Unite House. As far as we're concerned,**

**the new Mayor certainly has a massive job on his hands, but whereas Boris Johnson wouldn't listen and consequently gave the interloping disruptors the keys to the castle, Sadiq on the other hand appears more compassionate and considerate.**

I don't believe for a second that we'll have it all our own way during Mayor Khan's tenure, but I do think he will try to redress the balance by reigning the tech company in, while stabilising and promoting the London Taxi trade... fingers crossed!

## TAXI DRIVER OF THE YEAR GOLF

The Taxi Driver of the Year Charity Fund would like to thank everyone that helped to sponsor their first golf competition which took place on 8th June 2016 at the Hendon Golf Club.

The sun was shining on our 40 golfers, all trying to win a car worth £10,000 with a hole in one and the many other prizes. The day began with breakfast and at 11am the first golfers teed off, walking round this great 18 hole golf course under the blazing sun. But not one of them moaned when rain suddenly bucketed down and they just carried on in the true style that golfers do!

By 5.30 everyone had showered and was ready to sit down. The Chairman welcomed and thanked them for coming out and to enjoy their well-earned buffet dinner.

**Everyone had a great time and looked forward to next year's golf competition. We are proud to have named the overall winner's trophy after our late Vice President, Doug Sherry MBE**

Thank you all once again for your support...

**The prize winners were announced and trophies presented:**

**The overall winner was Jack Muslin who won the Doug Sherry Memorial Trophy**

**The winning team was H Bomb, second was The Old Men, with the LTDA in third place.**



**Russell (right) with two of the "Old Men" team. The other two must have gone for a sit-down!**

**Remember the dinner dance this year is on Saturday 26 November 2016. Please book early so you are not disappointed.**

**Russell Poluck MBE (T55)  
Hon Chairman LTOYCF**

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

# Brethren of the Whip



## Taxicab bandits

The arrival of the taxicab in London allowed the public faster travel across the metropolis, speeds much greater than a horse cab were easily maintained on open roads. So it was not long before taxis - with or without the co-operation of the driver - were being used as getaway cars! They became known as "taxicab bandits."

On August 24th 1911, a Mr Hopton left his home in Colvestone Crescent, Dalston and was immediately set upon by two men. They attacked him, robbing him of the £3000 worth of diamonds he was carrying. The two men then ran along the road to a waiting taxi where the driver was apparently tinkering with his engine. As the two men approached, he put the bonnet down and drove off with them at speed.

On September 7th 1911, a taxi driver was hired in Wimbledon by three men and told to go to nearby Hill Road and wait for them. They got out and walked back to a jewellers shop where they threw a brick through the window and snatched a £450 diamond necklace, a ring and a brooch! They then ran back to the taxi but as a large crowd suddenly descended on them, the taxi could not drive away. Two of the men tried to fight off the crowd but were attacked.

In court, the driver said he could only just identify the men as his passengers, such were their injuries caused by the mob. One of the men escaped, probably with the necklace which was never recovered.

On October 14th 1912, Adolphus Muir was hired by three men who got into his taxi in Spring Street, Paddington. He drove them to Aberdeen Place and was paid off. One of the men then said they would need a taxi shortly to take them to the West End and Muir agreed to wait for them. Shortly after, all three came running back to the taxi, two jumped into the back whilst a third climbed into the luggage space and pointing a gun at Muir told him to "drive like hell." He was told to drive to a pawnshop in Oxford Street where they pawned two diamond rings, their booty from the jewellers they had just robbed in Edgware Road! From there he was told to drive to Finsbury Circus.

"If you give me your address, I will send you £5," said the gunman. Muir, a large man of "Herculean build" declined to give them that information and instead he was paid 3s 6d (18p), which was more than what was on the meter.

After a brief respite on a nearby rank, Muir drove all the way to Scotland Yard before reporting his adventure. Eventually the three men were caught and received sentences ranging from 22 months to three years.

Just four days after Muir's experience, diamond merchant Meyer Goldberg of Hatton Garden was walking past a taxi in Victoria Park Road when he was suddenly attacked by four men and robbed of £1000 worth of diamonds. The men jumped into the taxi, which immediately began to drive off. Goldberg still had some fight left in him, jumped onto the running board and began attacking the driver, Henry Stanley. Goldberg punched Stanley, who punched Goldberg back. As the taxi sped up, Goldberg grabbed hold of the meter cable which broke. The four men eventually jumped out and Stanley, seeing a policeman, pulled over to get his "mad passenger" arrested.

Goldberg's English was not very good, but when he was able to relate what happened Stanley found himself under arrest. He gave a convincing story; he was told to wait for the men, which he did, and as they entered the taxi he was attacked by Goldberg. Henry Stanley was released.

The police however looked further into his background and found that he liked to gamble and that he was deep in debt; he owed a money lender £5 and was £25 behind in the instalments for his taxi. He had mouthed off to a friend that he was due money "for a nice job involving diamond merchants." When the police looked into his diary, they found on November 17th, three days after the robbery, the following entry: "Rec £100." Some people make it easy for the police!

Despite this, Stanley pleaded not guilty at his trial at the Old Bailey, which occurred the same time as the funeral of Fred Hitch, the taxi driver VC. The evidence was damning, he was found guilty and sentenced to 18 month's hard labour...

**Sean Farrell  
Call Sign Online**



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## Val Shawcross moves up!

Val Shawcross has stepped down from the London Assembly after 16 years. She has always been a friend of this trade, often speaking up for us in grilling former Mayor Boris Johnson when he was wrong! Having said that, she was never afraid to criticise us if she felt we deserved it! She has now moved across to become the Deputy Mayor for Transport and will be supporting her new boss, Mayor Sadiq Khan.



In a recent correspondence she said that the new Mayor was committed to stabilising and promoting the black cab trade, adding that there would be a substantive change of direction and that a package of measures was soon to be developed that Mayor Khan would be looking at.

She finished by saying that black cabs were an essential part of London's transport network and that the special status we have should be recognised and secured in policy, which is why the Mayor's new transport strategy would include an explicit commitment in protecting and maintaining our trade.

In welcoming the new Mayor's administration, we also welcome Val Shawcross as Deputy Mayor for Transport and sincerely hope that this is the beginning of much more cordial relations than we ever had with Boris - other than at election time!



DaC drivers all received a letter headed **The Future of your Society**. This is one response. It comes from Philip Benjamin (K20) who joined ODRTS in 1975 – 41 years ago...

# MY VIEW OF THE FUTURE

I didn't really need the Chairman's letter of the 26th April to inform me that the current level of trading is unsustainable. The weekly payment into my bank account tells me everything. My view is that those who believe business will eventually pick up are living in la-la land.

For TfL, supported by Central Government, **Uber** is a *Cash Cow* to be milked for all it is worth. For Government, an open ended employment market for the unskilled on a national basis would seem a perfect solution to massage unemployment figures. And one must take into account that **Albania** and **Serbia** will be joining the **EEC** shortly.

Once Uber's executive arm gets its claws into the lucrative commercial and corporate market and now that **BAA** has allocated them a feeder park at Heathrow, it could well be goodnight Vienna!

**The concept and principle of their service is brilliant, although the point of delivery is of course amateurish. But as a global giant with substantial backing, they will no doubt get it right. A One Stop Shop on any street corner of any town or city anywhere in the world, whether a**

**company or personal account at rates that no one else can compete with, is far too attractive to dismiss.**

Who would have thought that three of the most successful innovations of modern times - the SatNav, Smartphone and Credit Card - could be our best friend and worst enemy. Brian mentioned in his letter the option of selling off **Dial-a-Cab House** and renting or purchasing elsewhere. A prime site on the edge of Silicon Roundabout is surely a golden opportunity for any developer.

He also stated at the last AGM that **Dial-a-Cab** is not in the development business. I'm sure **Alan Sugar** said the same thing fifty years ago when he was selling car aerials from the back of his van. **Amsprop Estates** has now made him into a Billionaire.

Many will remember our old customer **Godfrey Bradman**, a chartered accountant who purchased a rundown tea trading PLC called **Rosehaugh** and used it as a vehicle to develop **Broadgate** in partnership with **Stanhope Properties**. The difference between them and us is that they didn't have a property to start with. There are many more similar to these two.

**Amazon** is scheduled to move its UK

Headquarters from **Slough** to the area in 2017, employing some five thousand staff. A new residential development of some four hundred units, ranging from £700K for a studio to £2.5 million for a three bed apartment is currently under construction nearby and is selling Off Plan. With a cash strapped Council happy to give planning permission for residential developments, the £20K estimated for each of us if the property is sold could look like pocket money if a project can be realised. Agreed, we may not be developers, nor were the aforementioned, but there are people out there who would be more than happy to engage with us to produce a model of what can be achieved. Or, of course, we can just plod along for three years, use up all our reserves and then make a desperate decision. I know the Board will never let that happen, so surely the time to act is now and we can still go off and rent elsewhere.

I do not wish to be the pessimist, but I believe things can only get worse and that is without mentioning what the Road Planners are doing to our City...

**Philip Benjamin K20**  
**Call Sign Online**

## LTFUC ON WOBURN TAXI SAFARI

Many saw the **London Taxidriers' Fund for Underprivileged Children's** latest outing where 100 taxi drivers, including several from **Dial-a-Cab**, gave up a day's work to drive 200 special needs children on this year's LTFUC **Woburn Taxi Safari**. The children were collected from **Woodfield**, **JCOSS** and **Northway** schools and treated to a fun-packed day filled with non-stop fun and laughter.

After a Woburn lunch, the children went on a road safari, marveling at the lions, tigers, bears, rhinos, giraffes, elephants, monkeys, zebras and bison, but it was the monkeys that stole the show as they jumped onto the taxis much to the children's delight - although the drivers looked rather worried!

The rest of the afternoon was spent on the great Foot Safari, where children got closer to the smaller animals, the Swan pedal boats, the Great Woburn Railway, the Avery and the Mammoth Play Ark.

**At 4pm, everyone returned to the restaurant for tea while Hon Chair, Sim Yiannikaris, was presented with a cheque for £3,000 from Inland Homes in part sponsorship of the outing. Ink Recruitment donated £2,000, which went towards the drivers' fuel.**

*The Fund expressed their sincere thanks to both companies in addition to the Management and Staff at Woburn, His Grace The Duke of Bedford for his hospitality, ITV Anglia for their coverage, Met Police for ensuring they got on the motorway safely, Bedfordshire Constabulary for getting them on and off the motorway, Hertfordshire Constabulary for keeping an eye on the outing while on the motorway, Brent Borough Police, Kavanah Motor Group, Welsh Harp Safer Neighbourhood Team, Ears Radio for providing the two way radios, Red Cross, Costco for supplying the water, Sainsbury's (Sue, Shirley and Trudy) for the tea, coffee, biscuits and cake and for helping with the children.*

Last, but not least the Fund send thanks go to the wonderful drivers for giving up a day's work in these difficult times to ensure the children had an amazing and unforgettable day, because without those drivers the outings would not be possible. They also thanked the helpers and anyone else who contributed towards the day. The children had a brilliant time and the smiles on their faces said it all.

**Their next outing is the legendary trip to Southend-on-Sea on 13th July.**



Some of the 100 taxis at Woburn (Below) Sim Yiannikaris accepts a £3000 cheque from Inland Homes





# OPERATIONS AND COMPLIANCE

**Hello Ladies & Gents,**  
**As you read this article, many will be looking forward to a summer break and a hard-earned rest. So enjoy it because you have earned it and hopefully it will be a time to recharge your batteries!**

## VAD dispatch

We are very near the final roll-out of the new dispatch system (VAD) and with the added flexibility that this will now offer, there are a number of new ideas that we can implement over the coming weeks. As I've previously mentioned, this system offers trips to a combination of taxis that are nearest to an actual pickup, but also takes into account the ones that have been available for the longest period.

Judging by your comments, it seems that most of you now agree with our fixed-price policy and with competition so fierce, it will see an increase in trips to airports as well as longer journeys. In the current climate, I do believe that the policy is working and with your support will continue to do so, while hopefully seeing our share grow. The ratio of trips to Heathrow is far higher than trips back and we will soon be offering these return journeys to clients - albeit at fixed rates - in an effort to cut down on your waiting time in the feeder park. All the fixed rate trips will be rejectable without penalty and will operate in the same way as the inward journeys.



**As some of you already in the car park at Heathrow, especially those of you that have waited for a lengthy period, may not wish to be offered these fixed price trips, they will be dispatched to a virtual rank: LHFP. These particular trips will not automatically go to Members in the feeder park but the fixed rate trip will appear in the bids immediately after working its way through all cabs booked into the LHFP rank - if there are any - but you must be able to reach the airport terminals within fifteen minutes before booking-in (LHFP). All other non-fixed price account trips will be dispatched to the feeder park (LHR) in the normal way and again you must be within the qualifying zones within the Perimeter Road or you will be unable to book into LHR. Like the current system, you cannot soon to clear when you are on the way to Heathrow and it is important to remember that you can**

**only book into one of these ranks at any one time.**

As **Keith Cain** has mentioned in his Sales article on page 13, some journeys are ultra-competitive but VAD will allow us to offer an *economy* trip - via an intelligent fixed pricing programme - to our members in the first instance, before it then hits a car. You will not be forced to accept these trips, but my thinking is that while some trips may not always suit every member, others may see the benefit.

Turning on your 'Economy Button' will give you access to these types of trips; if the button is *off* these specific journeys will not be offered to you. We may in the future be able to introduce a system in which each member can choose particular criteria on a day-to-day basis, which the present system cannot do.

The most annoying scenario is being offered a trip and because of a signal problem, you cannot *accept* or *reject* and inevitable happens... through no fault of your own you are *booked off!* The big plus on VAD is that you will still be in the global or virtual queue position, which I am sure you will agree, is a much better solution.

Almost all of you have now been upgraded to the latest version and when we go live, any earlier version will not allow you to sign onto the new system. The IT department are aiming for an early to mid-July roll out, so there's still time to pop in to **Roman Way** if you are not on the latest software (version 10).

Enjoy the summer break...

**Allan Evans**  
**DaC Operations /**  
**Compliance Manager**

## RHS Hampton Court Flower Show

The RHS Hampton Court Flower Show takes place from 5 - 10 July and this year for the first time, the RHS is also hosting a Family Saturday. There will be all sorts of new activities for children with events taking on a Rocket Science theme inspired by the RHS Campaign for School Gardening and its partnership with the UK Space Agency to discover whether space travel has an impact on the growth of seeds.



Pupils will also be able to take part in a Scarecrow Competition with creations inspired by space. Children aged 16 and under are free of charge to the show on any day.

Other highlights will include an enormous tropical Butterfly Dome filled with thousands of exotic butterflies from Indonesia and South America; live demonstrations from chefs and gardeners including **Alys Fowler** and **James Wong**; a 6,750 square metre Floral Marquee and Plant Village bursting with more floral exhibitors and specialist nurseries than ever before; a Festival of Roses marquee inspired by **Beatrix Potter's** garden at Hill Top House; new City Gardens showing just how much urban dwellers can achieve and themed gardens celebrating the 300th anniversary of 18th century landscape architect **Lancelot 'Capability' Brown**.

**The Festival of Roses will offer glorious and captivating displays, whilst around the showground there will be inspiring talks and demonstrations by celebrity gardeners, as well as fabulous shopping opportunities.**

The Ticket Hotline is on **0844 338 0338**. For information about wheelchair access, wheelchair hire or parking call **0844 581 0787**. Otherwise call the Ticket Factory on **0844 338 7502** where lines are open from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week.

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It's not everyone who can say **Lionel Bart** persuaded them to upgrade their phone. To be honest, I've tended to lag behind in what **Harold Wilson** called *the white heat of technology*. And it all goes back a long way...

My uncle, like many people, had a TV in time for the **Coronation** in 1953. I have a dim memory of watching the **Stanley Matthews Cup Final** a month earlier; however the Coronation is a bit clearer. But in our house we didn't get a set until around 1958 or so. Then at last I could see the things my school-mates talked about - **Huckleberry Hound**, **Zoo Time**, **Wrestling**...and the adverts! You'll wonder where the yellow went when you brush your teeth with **Pepsodent** - **Murray Mints**, Murray Mints, too good to hurry mints - and of course, **Omo** adds brightness!

I first saw colour TV in March 1970 at the home of **Señor Steve Shaller (ex-F34J)** - that's the home he had over here then and not his current abode over there. One thing I did embrace as soon as I heard of it was video. Imagine, you could record a programme - and in the early days that's all you could do... record one programme and watch it later or watch your favourite film whenever you wanted. Over the years we had a series of **VHS** video recorders and even fully paid-up technophobe, the good lady wife, learnt how to programme them. But there was one member of our group who became a figure of fun and ridicule. Why? He bought **Betamax** and **Ray Waxman** has never been allowed to forget it! We kept our video as long as we could but then of course we had to change to **DVD**, which is where we are today. Although I've got **BT TV**, I don't have **Sky**. The wife would like it, but when I explain how much football I'd be watching, she doesn't seem quite so keen!

My older brother has been involved in computers since the early sixties when they filled an entire room. My son had one of those **Sinclair** machines around thirty years ago when he was ten, but I resisted the urge until

Another true story from Geoff Levene...

## PHONE PROBLEMS... AND LIONEL BART!



suddenly the automatic ignition clicks on and the vehicle moves off. Meanwhile you sleep on. Somewhere nearby a man touches the Dial-a-Cab app on his mobile, the cab does a u-turn and heads towards him. He gets in and keys in a postcode on a pad in the back. Off goes the cab, while you sleep on. At the destination, the passenger touches CLJ and the cab makes its way to the next pick-up. And still you sleep on...

But what of **Lionel Bart**, you ask? The good lady wife wanted to see a tribute evening - not because she was a huge fan, but because soap star **Jessie Wallis** (aka **Kat Slater** from **Eastenders**) is a favourite of hers. So one stormy Sunday evening we drove down to the **Festival Hall**. I knew there wasn't much on-street parking but there is a carpark at **Upper Ground** where you paid about £8 to a man in a booth. Now it was pay-by-phone and to register for the new service is rather labour intensive so I decided to do it in the restaurant we'd booked; but our table was right at the back and there was no signal. So while waiting for our starters, I went outside to do the business. I should mention that a few years earlier I'd been recommended to get my **Sony Xperia**. Bad move! I think it was probably what you might call a 'Friday' phone. It was just awful and on this occasion, it was worse than ever. To cut a long story short, whatever I tried to input, something else came up. After 15 minutes of struggling, I went back to have my meal. Then I went back, picked up the car and parked elsewhere - which was closer than before.

As for the show, it was terrible! The only good thing coming out of it was that I changed to a **Samsung Galaxy** the next day. So thanks **Lionel**, I couldn't have done it without you...!

**Geoff Levene (W32)**

*Call Sign Online*

about 6 years ago. People used to ask if I had an email address, but this has now changed to asking what my email address is! And when I admitted to the snooty sales manager of the company we bought our flat from that I didn't have a computer, she looked at me as if I had just landed from the Planet Zarg.

"You don't have a computer," she sneered! I knew then it was time to meet my son in **Tottenham Court Road**. But I am glad I took the plunge, although there are times when I've been tempted to hurl the thing from the balcony of our flat! By and large it's been quite useful. There are always offers and I've probably recouped the cost of the computer just from money saved on meals and nights out! I'm still a novice, but I've learned to find my way around it not to mention the innumerable facts I've discovered and arguments settled. Who was in that film? What song was that lyric from? Who scored that goal? It goes on and on. And when I've finished this piece, one click transmits it to our esteemed Editor - who has only been on email since 1987!

So what of the future? My friend Richard reckons **Uber** will have driverless cars on the road in five years. I'm not sure about that timeline but I feel there are opportunities for us here. Just imagine...

It's 6am. The cab sits on your drive;

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## LTFUC donate sports equipment to PACE



The **London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children** receives many appeals throughout the year and on one recent occasion we were delighted to help **PACE (Play, Adventure and Community Enrichment)** purchase sports equipment to the value of £500, which will be used and enjoyed by hundreds

of 'special needs' children across their three centres.

We were also delighted to welcome children from PACE to our annual Christmas Mad Hatter's Tea Party, which we were told they all thoroughly enjoyed.

**Raymond Levy**  
 LTFUC Press Officer

# RAY BUCKLAND AT VC CEREMONY

The last issue of Call Sign contained an article about the uncle of long-time Dial-a-Cab driver Ray Buckland (P66) tracing back Ray's great, great, great grandfather, James Champion, who had fought in the 1857 Indian Mutiny with the Kings Irish Hussars, following which he won the Victoria Cross for valour in the face of the enemy. He had also traced James back to the Charge of the Light Brigade!

Ray, together with his mum, sister and several other descendants of James Champion's family, witnessed an emotional ceremony on 20th April and said it had been one of the most moving events he had ever witnessed. But in May, Ray attended a ceremony at Hammersmith Old Cemetery where James' grave that had previously been marked with just a cross was re-laid with a fully inscribed stone and his Victoria Cross was presented.

Ray told *Call Sign*: "There were three soldiers behind James' stone with the one in the middle holding the VC and several other medals. The two on either side of him had sabres



drawn and all three were in ceremonial dress with spurs on their boots to celebrate James alignment with the Cavalry.

There were current serving soldiers also present who had served in Iraq and Afghanistan with two female buglers playing the Last Post and a lone Irish Hussars piper who played

the lament as he walked away from the stone. The hairs on the back of my neck must have been sticking up and I had this feeling of enormous pride realising that the ceremony was in aid of my relative."

Ray added his thanks to The Sun newspaper for their help in getting James stone re-laid...

## Kings X Taxi Club donation to LTFUC

Kings Cross Taxi Club on Camley Street has generously donated £1,000 to the London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children. The picture shows Gavin Tresidder of the KXTC presenting the cheque to LTFUC committee member Gerry Dunn MBE.



Gavin said: "Both myself and the dedicated team here at the KXTC are delighted to make this contribution to such a worthwhile cause. We have taken the decision to make an annual donation to the LTFUC to help with their fundraising in the future. We look forward to serving hot home-made meals with a warm welcome to all drivers 24 hours a day." The Hon President, Hon Chairman and Committee of the LTFUC are very grateful to the Kings Cross Taxi Club for their kind donation and support...

**Raymond Levy**  
LTFUC Press Officer

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**"It suddenly went dark inside my Vito," Wayne Leedham (O27) told Call Sign, "not much fun on a dark and dismal night," he added!**

"I checked the owner's handbook for further information but eventually had to resolve the issue by getting it sorted with a cab electrician. There are blocks of fuses dotted about in various places on the Vito, so it's a bit of a maze locating the correct fuses speedily," he sighed.

"The problem was traced to the fuse that supplies power to the interior lighting system and once that was replaced, things came back to normal and I was able to see again at the flick of a switch because I was beginning to run low on my box of matches," he said seeing the funny side of the situation now, but clearly relieved that the matter had been resolved!

Then there was another "light" problem for a second Vito owner on **Dial-a-Cab - Michael Parkins (A62)**. Mike lost his Vito roof sign illumination.

"Finding passengers when your 'For Hire' sign is working is tough enough, but without it there is no possibility of finding anyone! Then there's the time it took before I even realised it wasn't working!"

So without wishing to make 'light' of the subject - sorry, *Call Sign* was still in jovial mood after its month off - *Call Sign* spoke to Michael Andreou at MAM Auto Electricians who generously gave his time and expertise to inform our readers of the complexities of tracing MB Vito fuses, and the trials and dexterity necessary to change the Vito 'For Hire' sign bulb.

He told us: "The fuse blocks are scattered around the cab in various places - under the hood in the engine bay and under the central console in the drivers' cabin are favourite places and the locations change with different models!"

**"As for changing the 'for hire' bulb, which in fact it is not, you'll need access equipment because the hire sign light is actually a fluorescent strip tube around 15 inches long and when I said access equipment, I was referring to ladders or scaffolding like you Dial-a-Cab drivers have at Roman Way. That's because you have to reach the roof sign light from the outside and not the inside of the cab as in the TX taxis.**

The reason is that the light can only be replaced by removing the external Hire Sign cover to gain entry to the tube. Replacing the light itself is relatively simple, but removing the 10 star-style screws that secure the roof sign cover can be a devil of a job. The originals are usually metal and can rust over time due to weather exposure; invariably they often break

# Vitos: When the lights go out...



Blocks of fuses are sited above and below the Vito battery with others in the engine bay

MAM Auto Electricians can be contacted on:  
020 7607 3915 or  
07831 222046

Unit 9 Mitre Bridge Industrial Park, Mitre Way, London W10 6AU (access from Scrubs Lane)

**Alan Green**  
Call Sign Online

off and need to be drilled out! I frequently replace them with plastic screws, which makes life easier all-round..."

## PHIL (THE LOZ) HEWSON

*I would like to pay tribute to the man that many knew simply as The Loz - Phil Hewson - who died on Tuesday 26 April 2016.*

I first met Loz nearly 30 years ago when I went for a cholesterol test at the LTDA gym. I had a shock after hearing that the reading was too high, as was my blood pressure and to make things worse, I was also overweight. All that and just a month short of my 39th birthday! So I joined the LTDA gym - one of the best days work I ever did.

**Loz put me on a diet, gave me a training schedule and in around 12 weeks my body fat dropped from 27 percent to 25 percent and then within just a few months, down to the 21 percent that is said to be ideal for a man.**

Loz was there all the way with me as I lost 25lb, my blood pressure dropped to a more normal rate of 120/80 and the best boost of all - I could now get into my 32inch waist trousers - albeit by then they were rather old fashioned and I needed to get some new ones! Phil then put me into the class known as The 'A' Team (12.30 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday) and where I met a lot of other cab drivers, many of whom I am still friends with now.

Loz also organised many charity events and was always there for anyone who needed help, never having a bad word about anybody. But he did love practical jokes and often during classes - ours in particular - he would punctuate them with jokes! It was great and I really looked forward to going!

One funny story Loz related to us occurred while he was rushing to help another cab driver who was being assaulted after hearing a message coming out on his **ComCab** radio terminal. The fight was at the top of **Bury Street St James's** and as he approached he could see that it was mayhem. He jumped out of his cab and carried out his belief that you should always go for the biggest person, get in a good thump and the crowd would spread! They certainly did - the punch was so good that the person lost three teeth. The only problem was that the person he thumped was the other cab driver! At first he wanted Loz nicked, but after time it was all smoothed over.

Loz was an ex-army PTI, an ex-professional boxer, a Black Belt in Karate, a master of Tai Chi and also of Indian martial art, Leviacol.

**Around 20 years ago, Loz was diagnosed with bowel cancer and the treatment was successful; the day after his operation, he was standing up in the ward, attached to a drip and doing the Tai Chi form. But over the past few years, the cancer sadly returned and Phil died on 26 April. He will be sadly missed by all his family and the thousands of friends he must have made.**

Rest in Peace Loz, a lovely man, a unique person and a great friend...

**Brian Marcantonio (Ex-R73)**



## COMPLAINTS MEETING RESULT

Results of a complaints meeting that took place at DaC House on Tuesday 26 April 2016...

Name / call sign	Description	Verdict
Anthony Hizer (E63)	An article was published in Taxi Globe on 16 March 2016 regarding a driver getting passengers to download the Hailo app for a financial gain. This action is in direct competition with Dial-a-Cab and the driver was actively promoting another company.	2. 4 weeks suspension 3. Expelled
		Upheld at an Appeals Hearing by the BoM on 13 May 2016. Rules 2, 3





After his deserved award in the Queen's Birthday honours list, Mike Son returns to earth...

# Battling the tide...

The offer of fixed rates for various trips, especially to and from the airport, has interested customers and a number are starting to book these journeys. But trying to offer other cost-effective journeys that will appeal to users seems too often to be falling on deaf ears, undoubtedly due to the ridiculously low rates that Uber charges. Nonetheless, we are continuing the fight.

Using different sales strategies - including collating system data of past clients and re-introducing the Dial-a-Cab Services - is creating some interest, however, obtaining correct and up-to-date contact details is proving to be time consuming.

But even after promoting all the services we can provide, it still comes down to the fact that customers consider taxis in general as being too expensive. Nevertheless, in order to attract new customers and give them the opportunity to compare our service and costs with their existing suppliers, we are offering a 3-month probationary period with no administration charge, no run-ins and no gratuities. So it would be very helpful if drivers give out our Dial-a-Cab business cards to non-Dial-a-Cab passengers - ie street hails.

So that alone makes it absolutely imperative that every single trip is covered... and quickly. Perhaps surprisingly to some, that doesn't always seem to happen, especially during the morning.

When you read messages from dispatchers virtually begging drivers to cover trips, you would assume that the licensed taxi trade was awash with work rather than facing the battle of swimming against the tide. Please, the next time you are offered a trip and are not on your way home, please push 'accept'.

What we need more than anything to put against the price problem, is for the reputation of Dial-a-Cab being ultra-reliable and the only way we can do that is by drivers pushing that 'accept' button as soon as you get an offer.

**Mike Son**  
DaC Sales Dept

## Problems...

It's been a couple of months since my last article and work for drivers has certainly decreased and seems to be continuing in a downwards spiral, however even though it sometimes feels that we are swimming against the tide, I can assure all members that the Sales team are making every effort to turn things around.

## Gary will get you fighting fit!

Gary Bedford (T39) has been on Dial-a-Cab since 2000 - fourteen years after he passed the Knowledge. Now he wants to pass on a different



type of knowledge, because for the past 40 years, Gary has been involved with boxing as a fighter, trainer and also a referee for independent semi-professional boxing circuit, the IBA. Now, from a new IBA gym in West Thurrock, Gary is passing on some of his vast boxing knowledge via fitness classes every Saturday.

He told **Call Sign**: "I love the sport and couldn't let an opportunity go to pass on my knowledge and train others interested in getting fit through boxing. As for the IBA, I have great respect for the organisation because it allows the average person to fulfil their dream and box in front of a crowd."

Gary has been training fighters ever since his amateur career of 25 bouts came to an end and says he loves training people and has also coached kids all the way up to being notable IBA fighters. But when **Call Sign** asked him who the classes were aimed at, Gary simply said anybody!

"The beauty of boxing is that anyone can do it. If you have never put a glove on before in your life, it really doesn't matter. These classes are aimed at beginners, right through to accomplished boxers. My aim is to give people from all walks of life the chance to get fit whilst working at their own pace and ability in a fun and friendly environment."

The classes are at West Thurrock Boxing & Fitness Gymnasium in Grays. He holds two classes every Saturday, the first starting at 10am through to 11.15am; the second from 11.30am till 12.45pm. Each session costs £7 and anyone over 16 is welcome.

For more information, contact Gary on 07811 965 176 and see the ad on page 12.

## Demutualisation and coverage

We are very much aware of member's thoughts on demutualising the Society, however this will take time. Although the building will be financially valuable after - and if - demutualisation is completed and a buyer is sourced, the value of the company (Dial-a-Cab) could still decrease.

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

# IT IS NOW!

Bob Woodford looks at London's long lost sporting venues

The cricket season is now in full swing and it was England's pace and swing that did the Sri Lankan team recently in the first Test Match series of the summer. The visitors are in a re-building process at present and will be a soft touch for most of the cricket playing nations until their youngsters improve by gaining much needed valuable experience against the top sides.

One top side England will not find so soft is, of course, the Australians when the two old enemies next lock horns in the 2017 Ashes series beginning in Brisbane. So, talking about Australian cricket, I wonder how many Dial-a-Cab drivers have ever driven past it and wondered how The Australian pub in Milner Street, Chelsea got its name. And talking of cricket, I wonder how many Call Sign readers are aware of the existence of other county cricket grounds in London other than Lords and The Oval?

We can now put those last 2 sentences together - because Milner Street was once the home of the Middlesex County Cricket Club and the Australian pub was named so because in 1878, the touring Australians played two matches on the old lost ground.

The Princes Cricket Ground in Chelsea was the creation of the brothers George and John Prince, both prominent members of the Princes Club that was formed in 1853 as a socially exclusive gentlemen's multi-sports club - initially for rackets and tennis.

The exclusivity of the club catered for those that were of the phrase coined "the upper ten," or "the upper ten thousand" as named by American writer Nathaniel Parker Willis when describing the higher class of society in major cities. George and John were both keen on expanding the club's facilities and in 1871 laid out a cricket field where Lennox Gardens is now. Croquet was also added to the list of sports the well-to-do of SW3 could enjoy!

The boundaries of the site of this long-lost sporting heritage are marked by Milner Street, Lennox Gardens Mews, Pont Street and Clabon Mews with the inaugural match at Prince's taking place on 3rd June 1871. It was a gentle tussle - the Household Brigade vs the Lords and Commons! You can't really imagine the public queuing around the streets of Knightsbridge and Chelsea hoping for a glimpse of this humdinger!

Middlesex CCC played home matches here between 1872 and 1876 and records reveal



The Australian Pub in Milner Street is on the site of the old Middlesex CCC Inset: An original Hans Town street bollard from 1819 now at Cadogan Place



Humphrey Hall Mansions) and eventually the Queen's Club in Baron's Court.

Hans Town had been started by architect Henry Holland and you can check out a remaining street bollard inside the gardens opposite the Carlton Tower Hotel. So

the opener was a 3-day County Championship match vs Yorkshire on 23rd to 25th May 1872. You could be forgiven for imagining fans from the north buying a drink in a Chelsea pub and then shouting "How Much!!!"

The Aussies arrived in 1878, playing 2 matches on the ground: Gentlemen of England vs Australia XI and Players XI vs Australia XI - the last first class match ever played at Prince's.

It was the increasing acquisitions of land to continue the building of Hans Town development that led to the club selling up and moving on to today's Scotch Corner site (formerly

where could you have imagined an English batsmen doing his best to prevent an Aussie tourist bowler trying to knock his block off, never mind his wicket?

The pitch would have been slap bang in the centre of Lennox Gardens and the oval shape of the surrounding roads on either side rather give the game away really - think about that next time you are short cutting through it!

For the record, cricket was much more of a gentleman's game back in the day - but you can still imagine taking your place around the boundary ropes sporting a refreshing pint of ale. Howzat!

*Be lucky*

**Bob Woodford**  
Call Sign Online

## SID GOLD STONE SETTING

The consecration to the memorial stone of long-time Dial-a-Cab driver Sid Gold (ex-E20) will take place on July 17th at Rainham Jewish Cemetery, 416 Upminster Road North, Rainham, Essex RM13 9SB. The service commences at 2.45pm.

Sid joined the Society in 1965 and left 43 years later at the age of 86, much to the sadness of the girls in the call centre! Political correctness wasn't something that Sid ever coveted and he would get away with saying the most outrageous things to them, but they loved him! Drivers held a great respect for him after hearing how he had fought off three muggers at the age of 82!

As his daughter Roberta said at Sid's funeral: "We're not here to mourn, but to celebrate a life..."

All Sid's friends from DaC are invited to the consecration regardless of which religion and also back to the house in Brentwood afterwards for refreshments. Just remember that men need a covering for their heads during the cemetery service...



**T**he London taxi trade has been around in excess of 350 years and is acknowledged as the best service of its kind anywhere in the world, whether that is via plying for hire, phoning or using an app.

Radio manufacturing rivals, **Marconi** and **Pye**, had run early experiments with two-way radio in vehicles but Marconi was first into the taxi business and used the services of a Stratford cabbie, **Alf Smith** in 1948 when putting a basic receiving / sending radio set into his cab. The signals were awful, but the experiment of being able to pass 'dummy' jobs to Alf was deemed a success.

Pye came back with a bang in 1950 when they took the fleet owner of **York Way Motors**, **Lew Levy** and his son **Wally** to New York to see how cabs there had adapted to radio. They were impressed and on returning to London put the wheels into motion that saw the capital's first radio circuit, **York Way Radio Cabs**, hitting the streets. But it wasn't for owner-drivers.

Soon after, two more radio circuits were formed; **Metropolitan Radio Taxis** - which came and then went almost as quickly - while the second circuit, **The Radio Owner Drivers Association (RODA)**, seemed to be an answer to the prayers of owner drivers. But **RODA** hit financial trouble and closed when Pye took their aerial equipment back from the office at **Townsend Yard, Highgate**.

After **RODA** closed, some drivers wanted to still continue with radio, but not necessarily with the fledgling **ODRTS** who were by now in business under **Bonnie Martyn**.

Another driver, **Joe Stern**, called a meeting at the 'Rifle Range' in **Harewood Avenue, Marylebone** and it was decided to set up an opposing circuit to **ODRTS** and call it **Radio Taxis (Southern) Ltd**. That led to an all-out battle between **ODRTS** and **RT** - one that turned dirty at times. But now, all the main circuits and indeed the trade as a whole, is struggling for survival and are joined as one in blaming the Transport for London licensing regime.

London's **minicabs** - aka **private hire** - have been around for the past 50 or so years and while our natural antagonism over those 50 years has bred an inbuilt dislike of them, many from our side of the divide will admit that firms such as **Addison Lee** and **Brunel** provide a good service for their clients. And whilst there was a time when we would have blamed them for our loss of trade, the PH firms are also struggling with the number of minicab firms ceasing to trade hitting record numbers.

**Which leaves us with two names - Uber and TFL? We all know that Uber are losing money, but with sponsors apparently queuing up to jump on their bandwagon regardless of bad publicity surrounding the cab company that Uber says isn't a cab company, money seems irrelevant and the undoubted aim is to take over the world's taxi service. Recent rumours even suggest they are looking to run bus companies too. And Tfl? Well they're supposedly running the show...**

So that takes us back to where we came in and our question to Tfl as to whether we are missing something. The trade's joint licensing authority are said to be issuing up to 700 new licenses each week. As the number of **Knowledge** candidates is dropping and will probably collapse entirely if things carry on as they are, we have to assume that the 700 figure consists almost entirely of private hire. According to Uber, all of their drivers face the

**Call Sign poses a question to Tfl's senior hierarchy and asks them a simple question...**

## ARE WE MISSING SOMETHING???



U B E R

same **DBS** check as licensed taxi drivers and in a **Freedom of Information** request **Call Sign** sent to Tfl, they confirmed that "both taxi and private hire drivers licensed by Tfl undertake the same enhanced **DBS** check and the character requirements to obtain a taxi or PHV licence are the same."

We have now followed that up with a further **FOI** request asking about the **DBS** status of those coming to this country within the past three years as refugees and with no paperwork, how they get jobs with Uber - and we know they do because we have interviewed two of them - but like all of Uber's drivers, including the one whose story we published after our **Gary Cox** spoke to him at **St Pancras**, all are scared of losing their job and won't give their names.

But that doesn't really matter, because it isn't just the taxi/minicab sides that are moaning. Facts are beginning to emerge showing exactly the type of company that Tfl have licensed because we suspect that if **DaC** gained a record such as the one Uber now has, this Society would have been closed down.

**So let's look at those figures and again ask Tfl if we are missing something.**

According to the **Daily Mirror**, a **Freedom of Information** request from 14 police forces saw the **Met Police** admit that over the past 12 months, there have been no less than 32 females making claims of rape or sex attacks by Uber drivers in **London**. In fact our police force had recorded 154 allegations that were said to

have involved taxi and minicab drivers, chauffeurs and pedicab riders. The police don't differentiate between them, but we suspect that our trade would have quickly heard had any of the attacks been by licensed taxi drivers. Hell, it would have been on the front page of the **Evening Standard** and quite probably on TV news channels. Meanwhile the **West Yorkshire** force reported four serious sex assaults and eight incidents involving violence against passengers in Uber cars.

**The Sun** also took up the cudgels in a May 19th article with its headline: 32 Uber driver sex raps in one year! It began by saying that Uber drivers were accused of rape or sex attacks nearly three times a month in London. It went on to write of Uber's world-wide record and the "string of sex assault claims" across the United States before telling its readers that Uber was banned in the Indian capital city, **New Delhi** after an Uber driver raped his passenger.

London has had 154 various allegations of which 32 were sex attacks by Uber drivers with in all probability a large majority of the other 122 also linked to Uber - we say majority because we know that one pedicab driver faced sex charges.

**So again we ask Tfl if we are missing something? How many rapes, sex attacks and/or cases of violence will Transport for London allow before they actually show some testicular fortitude and tell Uber that we do not want them in London - or anywhere else in this country for that fact. New Delhi expelled them for one rape because that is one too many. Tfl are sitting on 32 cases, yet Uber are still here and expanding in number by the day. So we must also ask if there is a purpose to Tfl?**

We sent this article prior to publication to Tfl's **Leon Daniels**, **Garrett Emerson** and **Helen Chapman**. We also sent courtesy copies to the **Transport Committee's Caroline Pidgeon** and new **Deputy Mayor for Transport, Val Shawcross**.

The Tfl response is below.

### Are we missing something? Tfl reply...

**In response, Tfl's Director responsible for Taxi and Private Hire, Peter Blake, told Call Sign:**

"Passenger safety is our primary concern and we do all we can, along with the police and other stakeholders to make our services as safe as possible. We are in the process of implementing a number of changes to private hire regulations that are focused on further improving public safety. These changes will include ensuring that candidates for private hire driver licenses meet more stringent requirements and that hire and reward insurance is in place for the duration of the vehicle's licence. Enhanced action against touting and other illegal and potentially dangerous activities is also a top priority and work is underway to improve both the quantity and quality of on-street enforcement.

All taxi and private hire drivers undergo an enhanced **DBS** criminal records check before they are granted a licence and these checks are repeated every 3 years. We take any report of sexual offences extremely seriously, revoking or suspending licenses whenever necessary and pushing for the strongest possible penalties in the Courts. The police notify us straight way when a taxi or private hire driver is charged with a criminal offence and any driver who poses a risk to public safety will have their licence suspended immediately. We will also be speaking to Uber to confirm that it is ensuring passengers are made adequately aware that they are ride sharing with strangers when they book **UberPool**."

Call Sign congratulates Dennis Heavin on his new grandson, because it's now...

# A01 AND BILLY THE KID!

After over 40 years at Dial-a-Cab, how could we say no to Dennis Heavin (A01) – even though he is a West Ham supporter!

"I just wondered if you could say a big hello to our beautiful baby Grandson, **William (Billy Our Kid) Louie Heavin**, who arrived on Sunday 5th June at Harlow Hospital weighing 10lbs 11ozs.

We are all so very happy for Mum **Hayley** and Dad **Nic** and wish all three a very healthy, happy and prosperous life as we have all been waiting so long for our first Grandchild.

Lots of love, hugs and kisses to our newest Hammers supporter."

Regards **Carol and Dennis Heavin**

*Congratulations to Dennis and the whole family from everyone at Call Sign and Dial-a-Cab...*



Welcome to William Louie Heavin!

**Professor David Begg is a former chairman of HMG's Commission for Integrated Transport and has an outstanding pedigree in transport related matters. And in a new report he says:**

## BUSES ARE CHOKING THE CITY!

Thanks to previous London Mayor, **Boris Johnson**, London's taxis have been given the blame for London's toxic fumes and made to pay with a 15 year life span on our vehicles. This has resulted in thousands of taxis being forced off the road and in the case of older drivers who were not in a position to buy a replacement, to actually put them out of work.

Very few taxi drivers would argue that our vehicles are not the cleanest around, however they are also far from being the worst and for many years taxi organisations have argued that we are being picked upon and that in reality it is London's buses that cause the most problems – partly by emissions, but also by the fact that there are far too many of them. So often, queues of the big red monsters can be seen one behind the other with just a few passengers between them all.

**Now we have support in a new report from no less a person than Professor David Begg, former chairman of the Government's Commission for Integrated Transport.**

According to the report, some bus routes were now operating close to walking speed whilst at the same time putting more toxic fumes into the atmosphere. The report named the number 11 from Fulham Town Hall to Liverpool Street as the worst with a peak hour average of just 4mph and blamed the appalling gridlock for the poor efficiency record buses now have – down 30 percent since 2000!

Professor Begg said: "Stop-start conditions caused by congestion are a key factor and lower operating speeds are bad for pollution. Congestion dramatically increases carbon dioxide emissions from vehicles. Under heavily congested conditions tailpipe emissions can be increased by a factor of three or four times."

**Commissioned by the Greener Journeys campaign group, the report also blamed Uber cars and an expansion in the number of delivery vans from online retailers such as Amazon for the deterioration in congestion. Professor Begg called for all minicabs, including Uber and other car services, to have to pay the £11.50 daily congestion charge.**

The Professor also said that the slow speeds had led to London facing one of the fastest declines in

bus use anywhere in the UK and urged new Mayor, **Sadiq Khan**, to prioritise the problem.

Responding for TfL, chief operating officer for surface transport, **Garrett Emmerson**, said: "We're doing everything possible to mitigate congestion, including deploying a team of new on-street officers to clear obstructions and move unlawfully stopped vehicles."

**Call Sign would like to make a few helpful suggestions to Mr Emmerson. Firstly, cut down the number of buses entering central London as more and more of them contain just a handful of passengers and secondly, relocate bus stops to spots where it is possible to pass them while they pick up their few people and not just before obelisks in the road such as in Fleet Street, so that it becomes impossible to pass them. A third suggestion is to**



Professor Begg's report tells us what we've always known - buses cause most traffic hold-ups!

ask Mayor Khan to remove the unfair 15 year limit from taxis...

Jamie Corum, Call Sign Online

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The London Taxi Company (LTC) has announced changes to strengthen its senior management team ahead of the launch of its all new electric taxi in 2017.

Having successfully lead the company out of administration in 2013 and secured a £300m investment from parent company Geely, Peter Johansen is stepping back from daily management duties to focus on his new role as President of the London Taxi Company.

Chris Gubbey joined LTC in May and will assume full management responsibilities as CEO of LTC from 1st July 2016. Chris brings with him decades of automotive experience gained from senior management positions he has held at Vauxhall (UK) where he was Manufacturing Director, as well as senior leadership roles at General Motors in China, Germany and Russia. Chris has also held roles at Ford, Toyota and GKN. Most recently, Chris has been the CEO of Brilliance Auto Group in China.

Peter Johansen's new role will allow him to focus on senior level advocacy and business develop-



As they head towards the company's new electric taxi launch...

# LTC STRENGTHENS ITS MANAGEMENT TEAM



2017 will see the LTC electric TX5. Inset: Chris Gubby

changes will strengthen the company at a time when it is delivering a £300m investment programme that includes the creation of a brand new research, development and production facility in Ansty,

Coventry, which will be complete in 2016. The development is the first new car plant to be built in the UK for over a decade and will focus entirely on the development and production of battery electric commercial vehicles.

ment in order to maintain the high profile the company has built up under his leadership since 2013. Peter remains a company Director.

Both Chris and Peter will report to the LTC Chairman, Carl-Peter Forster. The

## LTBAWD take old soldiers to Worthing

Midsummer's Day (June 21st) saw the London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled with 100 licensed taxi drivers, including a number from Dial-a-Cab, take around 200 brave war veterans for a day on the south coast seaside and their regular yearly haunt of The Pavilion on Worthing Pier. A large crowd of onlookers had cheered as the long parade of taxis travelled along the sea front.

Now in its 68th year, this trip is always enjoyed by veterans – many who have been going for years! LTBAWD secretary, Paul Davis, said: "We have been going since 1948 with drivers hoping to give something back to the veterans. There is a long tradition of former soldiers becoming cab drivers, so they are happy to keep this tradition going."

Former Special Air Service Sergeant Phil Campion, who made a speech during lunch, said before they all sat down: "This is something close to my heart and we have to get behind these people and support them. But I don't want to go in there and tell them war stories, because they have seen and heard it all!"

The Mayor of Worthing Council, Councillor Sean McDonald added: "It is a time-honoured tradition for the residents of Worthing to welcome these brave men and women every year to our town. We are delighted that they enjoy Worthing so much that they continue to visit us every year."

The 100 cab drivers began picking up the vets and carers from their homes across London, including the Royal Hospital, Chelsea from 6.30am. And as usual, every single soldier was ready on time!

The taxis made a pit-stop at South Holmwood Village near Dorking, where veterans were welcomed by the villagers and supplied with sandwiches and drinks for the day ahead. The convoy then drove into Worthing and arrived in time for a lunch of sausages and mash, a day of entertainment and to renew old friendships.

Many of the drivers taking part – all of whom donated the day free of any charge – said the same thing; taking the veterans was a privilege and certainly not a chore.

Never too old to enjoy an ice-cream!



The London Taxi Benevolent Association for War Disabled has been organising trips to Worthing on the South Coast since 1947. The charity counts among its patrons Dame Vera Lynn and Joanna Lumley who have both been guests of honour at previous Worthing trips. To donate to the charity, visit their website at: <http://www.taxicharity.org/>. For updates on the charity, follow on Twitter @TaxiCharity, Facebook and Instagram.



### Keith Reading

Professional Toastmaster  
Master of Ceremonies

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10% discount for DaC drivers and staff

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A few months ago, **Taxi Leaks** asked on the **TfLTPH Twitter** account if they could give a link to the legislation allowing **Uber** to operate its new ride-sharing **UberPool** service, which is attached to their smartphone app. In typical **TfL** style, I received no reply but one was finally given to another driver - although not as comprehensive as we would have liked.

It read: **@Jam55king: The Transport Act 1985 permits ride sharing in London.**

Unfortunately, what they failed to point out was that there are certain conditions that have to be adhered to for **Private Hire** to undertake shared rides with individual payments. The wording states:

**Advance booking of taxis and hire cars at separate fares.**

(1) *Where the conditions mentioned in subsection (2) below are met, a licensed taxi or licensed car may be used for the carriage of passengers for hire or reward at separate fares without thereby:*

(a) *becoming a public service vehicle for the purpose of the 1981 Act or any related enactment, or...*

(b) *ceasing (otherwise than by virtue of any proviso made under section 13 of this Act) to be subject to the taxi code or (as the case may be) the hire car code.*

Taken from the **Transport Act 1985** online where the conditions state quite clearly:

(2) **The conditions are that:**

(a) *All the passengers carried on the occasion in question booked their journeys in advance; and...*

(b) *Each of them consented, when booking his journey, to sharing the use of the vehicle on that occasion with others on the basis that a separate fare would be payable by each passenger for his own journey on that occasion.*

The **TfLTPH Twitter** account completely ignores this and has posted a tweet referring to the fact that **UberPool** only use licensed private hire vehicles and require the specific consent of each customer involved.

We tweeted **TfL** and they confirmed that all **PH** journeys in London must be pre-booked – including **Uber**. “We don’t allow **PH** vehicles to be instantly hailed, only taxis.”

We repeated the statement that each customer needs to be “pre-booked” and give their consent; we received this reply from **TfL/TPH**...

“**UberPool** services use licensed private hire vehicles and require the specific consent of each customer involved.”

Yet this is what **Uber** tell their passengers...

**Uber UK Support: @capes\_jay: Hey Jay, so sorry for any delay here. No pre-booking but we recommend opening the app 20 mins before travel to check availability.**

Then we had **TfL** Managing Director **Leon**

**UberPool** matches up passengers going in the same direction, allowing them to share the same vehicle and according to **Uber**, save 25% of the usual fare. **TfL** have allowed it, but when **Maaxi** did it with taxis, **TfL** said no! **Jim Thomas** investigated for **Taxi Leaks** and **Call Sign**...

## How can TfL allow UberPool to continue???



**Minicabs** illegally ranking at **Old Billingsgate** - apparently with **TfL**'s blessing...

**Daniels** educating **Uber**'s CEO on how to circumvent the legislation, telling her she shouldn't be putting this information out on **Twitter** – a bit like when **Admiral Lord Nelson** put a patch over his good eye and spoke the immortal words: “I see no ships!”

The email from **Mr Daniels** was addressed to **Uber**'s, **Jo Bertram**, dated 10 May last year with the subject heading: **Tweet about pre-booking**. It read:

“**Jo**, I am getting a ton of tweets, insulting as usual, about this message from your customer service to a client. If you are monitoring it then you'll know the words “no pre-booking” are being exploited. I wonder if you agree that it might be helpful to use different terminology? Since pre-booking is the rationale behind **PHVs** it really is unwise to deny you do it in this way. I accept that the phrase used is the one by the customer but is now being used to complain that we are allowing something we shouldn't.

I am not really very impressed having to try and explain long-term pre-booking vs short-term pre-booking.”

**Uber** have stated on numerous occasions that they don't do pre-bookings and in the recent **UberPool** case where a young lady was assaulted by two male passengers, it transpired that no one in the vehicle had ordered an **UberPool** journey. It is alleged that this has become common practise now as the journey on the whole is more expensive and the company draws a larger commission from the driver than on single pick-up journeys.

Once again we see **Uber** contravening regulations that should see their licence revoked, yet **TfL** turn a blind eye and bend over backwards to justify the fact that they licensed **Uber** in 2012,

knowing full well they did not comply with all the requirements necessary at that time.

a) **Uber** has never taken a pre-booking.

b) Initially, **Uber** never had a landline for bookings, a requirement under the **PHV** act 1998. **TfL**, however, continue to lie about the situation by repeatedly putting out incorrect tweets.

## Questions that need to be answered...

Why are our trade organisations allowing this behaviour to go unchallenged? Why are they not protecting the working practises of drivers from whom they take money in the form of subscriptions?

In 2012, our representative orgs sat back and did nothing about a **PH** company that was illegally issued with 12 licence variations (satellite office licences) - the same week they were licensed as an operator - without first waiting the required 12 months from initial licensing as an operator.

This same company is now allowed by **TfL** to turn up at certain venues around the **City of London**, set up private hire ranks and be fed work by openly touting clipboard men. **TfL** and their compliance teams always turn a blind eye to this particular operator, as it would seem do our representative orgs.

They can't even say they didn't know about this issue, because **Taxi Leaks** has informed them on many occasions. Unless our trade organisations get off their backsides and start taking **TfL** to task, then the whole future of Licensed Taxis in London is in danger of dying out.

**Jim Thomas**  
*Taxi Leaks and 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

Flashback  
2001

This month's Flashback goes back 15 years to a May 2001 Call Sign article by Steve Shaller

*With private hire licensing now imminent, Steve Shaller peers into the future and asks if in 2002...*

## THE END IS NIGH?

It may have been 30 years ago, but I still remember the advice freely given to me by cabbies shouting through their windows as I drove my **Honda 50** 'pop pop' through the **Knowledge** traffic: "Don't waste your time, the game's finished!" I ignored the advice from those prophets of doom and I'm glad I did, because over the years and by putting in the hours, I've earned a living.

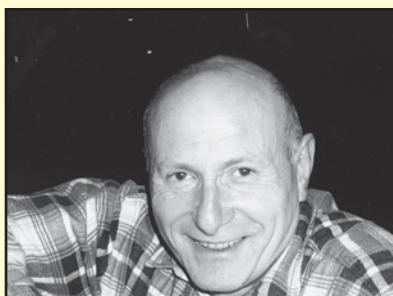
During this time, I've naturally had mixed fortunes - some highs and some lows. The lows invariably being engines and gearboxes blowing up, whereas the highs? Well my wife reads **Call Sign!** But now for the first time, I'm a worried man. I fear for the future of our trade and I fear for those about to enter it. Although not naturally pessimistic, I have observed events past and present that have, and will, affect this trade. There appears to be no indications of a healthy future; in fact there are positive signs of it being a bleak one. We all have our own crystal balls, but at this moment we can only surmise and speculate what the future will hold for London's licensed taxi trade.

Of my years driving a taxi, 23 of the 30 have been driving during the night where the wholesale touting by minicabs is unnerving. Those of you who work days no doubt see scabs at hotels, but what happens at night is akin to pure fiction. I'm not sure what I find more infuriating; touts who blatantly steal work from under the noses of the police or the idiots who get into their death boxes.

In London - and only in London - will you see this phenomenon. People from third world countries with pitiful commands of the English language, many that have no work permits and some even with criminal records, blatantly and illegally plying for hire. Could you imagine our Parisian or Roman counterparts putting up with this nonsense? There would be a blood bath. And why is it that police do so very little about the problem other than the odd raid...?

With serious crimes such as murder and rape on the increase, I do not expect touting to be at the top of the police's priority. Is it because of a lack of resources that the police take little or no interest in this crime or because they do not wish to appear racist by constantly harassing or arresting touts who in the main are either African or Afro-Caribbean? You figure that one out.

As responsible licensed taxi drivers, we



these organisations are ones of privilege, but prefer to use that privilege as a career move. It is certainly better than pushing a cab, isn't it? Over the years there have been many battles won over the enemy, but I fear the actual war may be lost. Now our generals are considering liaising and working with our one-time foes - an if you can't beat them, join them attitude.

And why? Because there's money to be made from the licensing of minicabs by some radio circuits. Private licensed cars will financially benefit the radio circuits (but not the members in the long term). Turkeys do vote for Christmas, especially if the stuffing is PLC - Parsley, Lemon and Chestnut.

With TX1 sales well down and Metrocab in receivership, can you see yourself driving an MPV with a Private Hire license? After all, to pay £1500 more for the privilege of plying for hire in the streets doesn't sound like a financially viable proposition to me.

I apologise for making an analogy with WW2, but it took many years before we embarrassed our old German enemies to become allies. What will your attitude be towards our new equally respected 'compatriots'? Will you point them in the right direction when they're lost? Will you drink tea with them or stop to help them when they break down? Why not? After all, we're all licensed now.

Birds of a feather? Perhaps your crystal ball tells a different story. Pessimist, realist or maybe just another prophet of doom? I'll let you decide...

Steve Shaller (R75)

## THE SALIERI RESTAURANT

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*We are certain that you will be delighted*



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“Yes, there was indeed only *me* so to speak, but I was not actually alone,” Steve Lederman (B54) told an increasingly confused *Call Sign* reporter.

“When I took my MB Vito to the local NSL testing station for its annual re-licencing procedure, my taxi was the only one there. All the other vehicles waiting - of which there were a number - were cars awaiting their PHV licence. In fact the service I received was quite excellent because I was in and out inside of fifteen minutes, the TfL plates already affixed to the cab and I was back on the road ready to go to work,” Steve enthused. “Pretty good stuff,” he added with a grin.

We could have wondered why taxis were so outnumbered, but didn’t want to upset ourselves heading into the summer break!

Amazingly, the following day, an eagle eyed *Call Sign* snapper caught the TfL licence number 00001 on a cab while out and about on the road! This in turn provoked a discussion around the coffee machine in the *Call Sign* office as to how the licence numbering system works and it was Daniel at NSL’s Staples Corner site who gave us a clear description of the method used to generate those numbers, making them unique to each individual cab.

“Once the taxi has been inspected by our testers and has complied with all the require-

# And then there was only me...!



Steve was in and out in no time...

ments, we enter the taxi details onto the TfL central computer database. That then generates the sequentially unique, individual num-

ber pertaining to that particular taxi and on special paper with the TfL security hologram embedded we can print out the identifier right here on our secure printer. We then encapsulate the two identifiers, the small one that screws into the carriage door and the bigger one that attaches to the rear of the taxi, fit both identifiers to the taxi and the owner/driver is then ready to go back to work on the streets of London!”

NSL’s Luke Allen then added: “The details of the taxi are updated onto the TfL database as soon as the cab is ‘passed’ so that the licence is recorded within seconds and so, for example, the taxi is safe to use bus lanes and the driver is able to return to work with the minimum of delay.”

Thanks to Daniel and Luke at NSL for their help. But we still wonder why there were so many cars? Perhaps TfL can tell us???

Alan Green  
Call Sign Online

## Uber: Taxi driver huts when you want a wee!

**W**e’ve heard it all now! In a recent memorandum to their partner/slaves, Uber were attempting to tell drivers where they could go if desperate for a wee and included the obvious ones of McDonald’s, shopping centres, railway stations and public toilets in parks before adding the following:

**“Cabbies handful of ‘green huts’ (only 13 left in London) are rest spots for cabbies that could have toilet facilities or pubs with parking, are all ideal for a quick pit stop.”**

Er no, they didn’t mention about leaving their Prius’ on the rank, putting their head around the door and saying hi in their chosen language! But no doubt LTPH can sort that out!



We don't think so...pal!!!

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Fifty year old Barnet resident, Soorriyakumar Soorriyakumar, who drives a minicab for a living, was given a suspended sentence at Woolwich Crown Court on June 14 for a sex assault on a 28-year-old female passenger.

Following an investigation by the Metropolitan Police Roads and Transport Policing Command, Soorriyakumar was given 15 months imprisonment, that was then suspended for two years! He was also given 100 hours unpaid voluntary work along with a 60-day rehabilitation order and placed on the sex offenders' programme for 100 days.

Soorriyakumar was also fitted with an electronic tag with a curfew between 7am - 7pm for 60 days. He has also been given a sexual harm prevention order which prevents him from driving or operating as a private hire vehicle driver and fined £3,500 court costs. He also has to pay £1,000 compensation to his victim.

The RTPC's Cab Enforcement Unit began their investigation after Soorriyakumar was said to have sexually touched his 28-year-old passenger late on July 31 2015. He had picked her up from a pub in Pimlico and later on in the journey she asked if she could sit in the front seat so she could play her own music through the vehicle's stereo system.

*Minicab driver's punishment for sex assault on female passenger*

# SUSPENDED SENTENCE!

Feb 2015-Feb 2016  
Reported sexual assaults including rapes in Private hire vehicles  
**154**  
32 attacks allegedly carried out by UBER drivers

I JUST WANTED TO GO HOME  
DON'T TAKE A RISK WITH UBER

Will minicab passengers as well as judges ever learn???

Soorriyakumar agreed and pulled up in the Old Kent Road. The passenger went from the back of the car, moved to the front alongside the driver and began playing her music.

Soorriyakumar then leaned over and began to touch the passenger before removing his hand and continuing to drive. It left the woman in shock.

When they reached Surrey Canal Road, Soorriyakumar stopped the minicab and leaned into the passenger. She shouted at him and told him to stop. He said he was sorry and that he must have misunderstood her signal. Nevertheless, after asking the passenger if she was ok, he asked if he could have her phone number. She agreed, she said, just to get the driver away from her and then gave him a false number. Soorriyakumar dropped her on the corner of the street where she lived; she then ran home and called the police.

The Cab Enforcement section ran the investigation and arrested Soorriyakumar in Barnet last year.

He was charged with sexual assault and

appeared before Woolwich Crown Court where he pleaded not guilty. However, the evidence against him was overwhelming and he was found guilty of the offence.

Detective Superintendent Adnan Qureshi of the Met's RTP Command said:

"This was an excellent result and I urge anyone who experiences any kind of assault or unwanted sexual behaviour to report it to the police immediately. If you commit an offence on London's transport network, we will pursue and arrest you. We will get those responsible."

TfL's director of enforcement and on-street operations, Steve Burton, added: "We take any report of sexual offence extremely seriously and push for the strongest penalties for any driver caught."

*Call Sign says: This magazine blames neither DS Qureshi nor Steve Burton for the ridiculously soft sentence placed on this disgusting minicab driver, but we would ask what a suspended sentence for a sex assault does for any female passenger thinking of using a minicab???*

## TX1 TAXIS WANTED



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# Mailshot

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

## Credit card charges

Hi Alan

I am angry after reading the Chairman's comments re credit card charges. Does Brian really think that Dial-a-Cab are doing drivers a favour by only charging a lowly £1 plus vat per day, even if we don't do any. For the first four weeks I did 8 street card jobs for a total of £112.40, for which I was charged 4 x £8.40 = £33.60. That is outrageous bearing in mind the excessive subs we already pay. The only reason credit card transactions are up on DaC is because you have forced drivers to put through the system, which is what you intended. In my opinion, the prediction that street card jobs will rise is wildly optimistic. In my experience the public were not aware there were charges. The only fair way is to charge transactions individually, as any other account job ie 7.5 percent plus vat. In case you forgot, we already pay £12 per week for renting the equipment.

Geoff Goddard (R10)

Hello Alan

I'm sorry but I think the Chairman has got it wrong re the increase in credit card jobs. The simple truth is that faced with the choice of an excessive 10% charge (even more on small fares, eg an £8 fare with £2 fee equates to an embarrassing 25% handling fee) or stopping for cash, the customer would always choose the latter. Now there is no penalty they simply choose to pay by card, which effectively works out cheaper taking into account the wait at a cashpoint. There was no sinister ulterior motive by members to use alternative methods as it would actually work out more expensive for them to process.

To use this as a reason to review charges in future is wrong, and would impose further running costs that none of us can afford to suffer.

John King (E75)

Hi Alan

After reading Brian Rice say that members must have been clearing cards through a third party as since 2nd April, credit card usage has increased so much on DaC now that changes have been made regarding the previous surcharges etc, I would like to say that I have only ever processed cards through DaC, but I must also add that I seem to be doing a lot more card transactions now that passengers are not reading the old signage in my cab that credit cards were subject to a 10% handling charge. Basically, now that passengers can pay by card at no extra cost, many more are.

Graham Negus (Y73)

Brian Rice replies: Geoff, John and Graham, I'll attempt to answer all three with one reply. Reading all three Members letters, you will note that they

have conflicting views on the issue. Geoff doesn't believe street card trips will increase, whilst both John and Graham have a differing view. I don't doubt for one moment that Graham processed all his past transactions through DaC, but I stand by my statement this was not the case with all Members. It's funny that when Members make comparisons, they always add the VAT; of course I understand that you have to pay it and it is a cost to you, but it goes to the Exchequer and not to DaC - we are just the tax collectors.

Regarding the Credit Card (CC) charges, you must bear in mind that you have been awarded 20p on every single trip you complete in an attempt for you to recover any charges you have to pay regarding the processing of Credit Cards. I wouldn't mind betting that in the vast majority of cases those 20p's will more than cover any CC charges incurred by the Member. Incidentally, talking of excessive subscriptions, I have just had a look back and in 2002 - some 14 years ago - our subs were £123.50 per month and of course that does include VAT...

## Another view...

Dear Editor

Although I am a private hire car driver, your magazine *Call Sign* often comes my way. It appears to cater just for taxi drivers and a limited sub section of that group. Naturally your views will be prejudiced to favour any policies that helps its members; may I dare to offer a different perspective?

Our drivers have clearly filled a gap in the market by providing a service that is popular, affordable to many people and remarkably easy to use. We usually get to a passenger who calls us much quicker than any radio taxi circuit is able to do. Our technology is advanced and easy for customers and drivers to use, with payment so painless it encourages passengers to use us even when they would not naturally have thought of spending extra on a shopping outing or social visit; a bit like Amazon where easy payment prompts further usage, and no bill till the end of the month.

We have completed the topographical and criminal record checks as required by the authorities. I certainly have the necessary insurance for my work, indeed I have to work very hard given that my rate per mile is so much lower than that received by your drivers. There have been complaints about congestion and calls to limit our numbers, but have you thought that from our perspective the congestion is caused by taxis cruising the Soho, Mayfair and Covent Garden areas looking for passengers? We spend less empty time and so make more efficient use of road space. We also see that some congestion is caused by unattended taxis parked for hours on ranks such as St Martin's Lane, King's Road and Aldwych to name just a few. In addition, we see obstruction caused by taxis waiting in unauthorised places such as Praed Street holding up numerous buses. It is often claimed that the



authorities have ignored the interests of taxi drivers; however they have been instrumental in looking after the interests of hundreds of thousands of would be passengers, and at the same time created employment for thousands of drivers. Since we live in a democracy, would you expect a candidate to offer a manifesto that appeals to a few taxi drivers or to many thousand private hire drivers and even more passengers? Taxi drivers have many advantages, especially from being self-employed. Working for a large impersonal organisation is no fun and I suggest you stop moaning so much and put your own house in order first.

Hugh Burr  
London W7

You are partly right Hugh, Transport for London have certainly looked after the interest of over 100,000 PH drivers. Why? Well official figures show that in 2014 TfL took in £5,249,000 for PH licensing. Within 12 months, that figure had gone up to £6,505,000! To save you getting out your calculator and then needing to read the instructions, Hugh, that is an increase of £1,256,000. And as TfL apparently say they can't stop 'passing' PH drivers, the figure will probably shoot up even further while helping to justify that authority's existence and the huge salaries of Messrs Leon Daniels, Garrett Emmerson and co. Not forgetting the Toyota Prius' and Tom-toms now sold and bodywork repair garages needed for minicab drivers more intent on following their sat-navs rather than watching where they are going.

Cruising? Well that happens to be the purpose of real taxis; it allows passengers to hail one wherever they are - something I doubt you will ever find out about. But so long as you can continue to block up the set-down area outside St Pancras while YOU hang up, then all will be well with your world. And by the way Hugh, do you have any comment re MPS statistics showing a total of 1,427 PH drivers having been charged with a crime since 2011, of which 521 were for violent or sexual offences? No? Well how about the 126 "taxi or private hire" drivers who were charged with violent or sexual offences (which can include assault, grievous bodily harm, indecent exposure and rape) in 2015... of which none were taxis! Nice hearing from you Hugh... don't bother coming back ...Ed

## TfL out of touch!

Alan

How out of touch is Transport for London? In October, Tower Bridge will fully shut for three months, yet according to our licensing authority's traffic reports, this will just have a

# Mailshot

minimal impact! There is a small matter of 21,500 vehicles a day that use Tower Bridge so you have to wonder where else they will go to cause this minimal impact???

**Jon Robinson (E88)**

Oh ye of little faith! They'll use Hammersmith of course! ...Ed

## The future of Dial-a-Cab???

Dear Alan

By the time members receive this edition of *Call Sign*, the results of the survey regarding the future of Dial-a Cab should be known. Our society has a long and respectable history, and it would be sad to throw in the towel. However, the rationale for keeping Dial-a-Cab going is based more on emotion than sound business logic. The few private accounts we have left are mainly those of more elderly customers, whilst younger people are moving in their droves to a prompt car service which has an easy-to-use credit card facility. This means that our account base as well as street work will continue to decline. I realise that all taxis will be taking credit cards by the end of this year, but other cities have had this facility for many years and it may be too late for us to catch up. Indeed our credit card facility is time-consuming compared to the competition and already relatively old-fashioned. I take no pleasure in saying it, but surely it would be in the interests of staff and shareholders to sell now and dissolve the business while property prices are high. Any feelings of loyalty are not reciprocated by many of the customers and public whom we have served well for years. The oft-repeated line that London taxis are traditional and iconic is true but counts for little when it comes to attracting new customers.

Our Chairman and Board members have worked hard for many years, but I have heard nothing new in the last eighteen months as to how we can achieve a recovery. Of course we all wish that this were not the case, but wishes alone will not bring about any change or pay the staff wages or our fuel bills.

**Laurence Kelvin (W88)**

Well, now we know the result, we await developments ...Ed

## Credit Card trips

Dear Alan

Because of the way the credit card system is set up, if you pick up a credit card job and they pay by touching the PED screen via **Contactless** and then leave the cab, it is feasible that – as happened to me – the card could be void and you have lost the fare because when you try to clear it, you can't because it has been denied. The pass has now gone and you have lost the money on the clock. The obvious answer would be for us to be able to confirm the validity of the card prior to the journey by swiping it.

**Ivor Belkin (C97)**

Allan Evans responds: Hello Ivor, I men-

tioned this in May's Mailshot. Our IT department have been in dialogue with Ingenico (the manufacturers of the payment terminal, providing secure electronic payments) for many months. The software for Pre-Authorisation is ready to go at our end, it has been for quite a while but we have to undertake a rather detailed accreditation with Barclaycard before any final implementation. In an ideal world, there would never be network problems, but in reality this is not the case, so I also mentioned that as a backup in case of signal problems, it is advisable to carry the manual receipts.

## After 50 years...

Alan

After almost 50 years on Dial-a-Cab, I cannot remember being so angry and insulted as when I read the article written by Board member **Garry White** in the *May Call Sign* in which he stated that the senior members of our Society, such as myself and other long-serving members, were only interested in gaining money for our retirement.

We have built this Society from virtually nothing. In the distant past we ran long distances to cover work in order for our Society to flourish. I covered night dispatching shifts when needed, I was a training officer on the computer dispatch system, I was night fleet operator at the beginning of data dispatch and have been a marshal. After 50 years, the Society is like family to me. How dare Garry White say that I am not interested in the Society and "...don't want to pass the Society onto the next generation of cab drivers." I would like to know what *he* intends passing on to the young drivers as the Society is now running at a loss and possibly may not even be able to continue beyond another two years in any event. Yes, by all means we have benefited through the years of blood, sweat and tears, which is the reason we senior members voted to demutualise, move to less expensive premises, be bold and "progress into the app generation." By doing so, what we senior members leave drivers is the finance for them to perhaps upgrade their taxis in addition to having some money behind them.

Long-time drivers such as **Jimmy Edwards**, **Gerry Webber** and many others also wanted it to be made known that, like me, they also felt incensed and betrayed by Garry's article. So it was no surprise to me that he was unsuccessful in his bid for Chairmanship of our Society if this is his arrogant opinion of its loyal, long-serving members.

**Patsy McCarthy (C01)**

**Garry White responds:** Hi Patsy, it was a thought-provoking article so it was nice to see you and the two named members want to respond, that's what being part of a Society allows you to do. 50 years working with Dial-a-Cab is a great achievement and I guess it's been worthwhile or you would have gone to try another circuit. You say you would like to see DaC demutualise, move to different premises and still carry on trading! However, I can't see that hap-

pening once we have demutualised because the profitable parts of Dial-a-Cab will be cherry-picked and lead to the demise of the Society that you say you love! It will be a sad day when we no longer see DaC on the side of London taxis.

You're quite right; the Members didn't choose to elect me as Chairman and opted to stay on the same path. I must add I treat all members the same – new and old – and that's how it should be in my opinion.

I don't think we adopted the fixed-price, no gratuity, no run-in business model quick enough; perhaps that was so as not to upset long-serving members like you? We should have been leaders in a driver app and of taking credit cards for the trade to create another revenue stream for the Society, rather than just being the provider of taxis for a corporate market. Hailo and Gett saw a gap in the market and now they are going after the corporate sector; we could have done that in reverse, however that's in the past now so as a Board we need to carry out the Member's wishes as per opinions sought in the recent letter...

## New Mayor

**Sadiq Khan** said on LBC before the election that he would crack down on **Uber**, cap their numbers and tighten up the regulations. He will not let this trade die like red telephone boxes. **Zak Goldsmith** and **David Cameron** tried to smear him as an extremist Muslim; he plainly isn't and really seems like a genuine bloke. Let's hope he is as good as his word anyway because he will need to be. Just look at this list of questionable Uber issues on the Teflon coated ride app. There are allegations of sexual abuse, driver employee rights court challenges, predatory lending practices allowing drivers with poor credit record to buy new Toyota Prius' leasehold with an extortionate interest rate and they are now backed by a Saudi Arabian sovereign wealth fund of \$3.5 billion – this for a car company from a country with a host of human rights issues, including not allowing women to drive! Is there no way of stopping this soul-devouring juggernaut? TfL seem content to let Uber come on stream, worsening congestion. Is this now pay-back time to London's world famous iconic black cab that has had such a fractious relationship with their regulator for so many years?

**David Heath (ex-W27)**

**Brighton, East Sussex**

After Boris, even Bonzo the gorilla would be an improvement! So Sadiq Khan has a good base to start from ...Ed





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