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ISSUE 759

- THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE CAB TRADE -

29 April 2015



## OPEN LETTER TO THE LICENSED HACKNEY CARRIAGE TRADE

See page 10

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## OXFORD STREET GO SLOW DEMO HELD BY UCG

On 21st April, the UCG held their organised go slow demo in Oxford Street. Before the demo, a UCG spokesperson said: "The UCG say "enough is enough" and the demo was being held to highlight a number of issues." THE UCG press release listed the reasons:

- The abject and continued lack of enforcement by TfL
- TfL's incompetence in their role as a regulatory body for the licensed trade
- TfL's blind eye policy, has allowed Illegal touting to flourish, completely out of control
- Attacks on lone females are increasing year after year through lack of meaningful enforcement
- Minicabs driving without hire and reward insurance are now common place
- The most regulated taxi service on the planet, is currently under threat, due to the woefully inadequate standards of TfL
- As chair of TfL, Boris has led the Licensed Taxi Trade to its knees

On the day taxis were driving east to west and west to east on Oxford Street from 14:00hrs to 16:00hrs in a go slow protest. During the day the BBC were to be making a documentary about Oxford Street and so there were expected to be cameras up and down the street. The United Cabbies Group was handing out leaflets explaining their action to members of the public. These will be given out by drivers on foot. The protest brought parts of central London to a standstill.

UGC chairman Len Martin told reporters: "This

demonstration was born out of the frustration that a lot of drivers are feeling.

"We all went through years of knowledge, missing time with our family and friends so we could become one of the elite, the best in the world. Since the Olympics we've seen a steady erosion of our business. TfL are desperately trying to deflect attention but this is about their woeful performance. Times are very hard for taxi drivers it's causing health problems because they are having to work such long hours, and affecting their family life. If TfL enforced the law, there would be plenty of work on the streets." Another issue the UCG have is that of pedicabs. Len Martin said: "We have unsafe uninsured and unregulated rickshaws ripping off members of the public and overseas visitors." The issue of satellite offices for private hire bookings is also a concern; the UCG say that TfL and the police turn a "blind eye" to illegal touting particularly outside nightclubs, this poses a serious threat to public safety.

Garrett Emmerson, TfL's chief operating officer for surface transport said that the number of people picked up by illegal minicab drivers at night had fallen from 66% in 2003, to 15% this year, and the number of sexual assaults recorded in unlicensed cabs had fallen by 38 per cent over the same period. "As the GLA's Transport Committee recently heard - the capital's taxi licensing and regulatory process is the envy of the world. Customer satisfaction rates are high and our robust enforcement work with police colleagues continues to bear down on touting and bogus cabs."



## NEW RANK FOR 6 TAXIS APPOINTED OUTSIDE HAKKASAN, BRUTON STREET

A new (time restricted) standing for 6 licensed Taxis has been approved kerbside directly outside the restaurant in Bruton Street. The rank will be active from 6:30pm and runs till 8:30am. It is not marked in the traditional fashion; the solid yellow

line has been extended from the bus stop, along a six cab length of kerbside, to two parking bays just before the zig zags of the pedestrian crossing. The notice on the parking board is quite small but clearly states; "These bays are for taxis only, 6:30pm-8:30pm everyday"





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# ASA ADJUDICATION ON TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

Three issues were investigated by the Advertising Standards Authority, of which one was upheld and two were not upheld. An advert in the Evening Standard, from the Mayor of London, for the proposed Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) in central London stated: "... To improve Londoners' health and quality of life, we are proposing an Ultra Low Emission Zone which will operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in central London. All cars, motorcycles, vans, minibuses and heavy vehicles will need to meet the new emission standards or pay an additional daily charge to travel within the zone. Taxis and private hire vehicles will also need to meet new emission standards and buses will need to be hybrid or zero emission when driving. Introducing the zone in 2020 will encourage the use of newer, cleaner vehicles to reduce vehicle pollution by half ...".

Clean Air in London challenged whether the following claims were misleading and could be substantiated:

1. the claim that taxis would need to meet new emission standards, because they understood that the standards would only apply to newly licensed taxis;

2. the claim "buses will need to be hybrid or zero emission when driving", because they understood that around 10% of buses would be exempt; and

3. the claim "Introducing the zone in 2020 will encourage the use of newer, cleaner vehicles to reduce vehicle pollution by half", because they understood that this was based solely on computer modelled projections of reductions in exhaust emissions only and excluded other major polluting elements.

Transport For London t/a Mayor of London (TfL) said the aim of the ad was to enable owners of vehicles affected by the proposals to understand that they may be affected and to encourage them to view the detailed information on the TfL website. They said, because the consultation proposals were very detailed, the ad focused on the salient points of the proposals, but did not explain in detail the different emissions requirements for each vehicle category, because that information was published in detail on their website and in their leaflet. TfL maintained that all vehicle types referenced in the ad would need to meet new emissions standards. They said that, as part of the proposal, all taxis would need to meet the emissions standards based on whether they were newly licensed from January 2018 or were licensed prior to that date. They said if they were newly licensed, they would need to be zero-emission capable, but that if they were licensed before January 2018, they would need to comply

with a reduced age limit, going from 15 years old to ten years old from 2020.

They said that vehicle emissions had reduced with each new Euro emissions standard introduced by the European Union (EU). The standards set limits for maximum emissions of air pollutants for new vehicles sold within EU member states. They provided data which showed the stricter emission standards for Euro Standards 1 to 6, which had come into effect between 1996 and 2015. They said that not introducing the reduced age limit would have meant the emissions savings would have been far smaller, which they said demonstrated that the age limit policy constituted a new emissions standard.

They said as part of the consultation they wrote to every taxi and private hire driver licensed in London to explain the proposal in detail. They said the ULEZ proposal had been tailored to reflect the different vehicle types used as taxis and private hire vehicles, their contribution to emissions in the proposed ULEZ and the likely development of the vehicle market for each sector.

TfL said that the ad did not claim that all buses would be affected by the same standards. They said all of their double decker buses would be required to be hybrid and single decker buses would be required to be zero emission when driving. They said existing 'New Routemaster' buses were 'Euro V' emission standard and newer ones would be 'Euro VI'. They understood the 10% of buses referred to by the complainant related to the New Routemasters. They said approximately 300 New Routemasters, which were already hybrid and had emissions standards closer to Euro VI than other Euro V buses, would continue to operate in the ULEZ, without modification, at 2020.

TfL said that, when assessing the likely impact of future schemes, they used modelled projections, given that monitoring data of actual pollution levels was only available for present and past years. They said that that was a recognised standard approach for assessing the impact of future proposals of that type. They believed the projections had been produced in a robust way using established modelling methodologies and bespoke modelling of how drivers would respond to the scheme. They said the work was undertaken by King's College London, who they said were the leading providers of air quality expertise in the UK. They said robust estimates of traffic change were incorporated into a recognised air quality assessment framework, and that the modelling took account of the pollutants that were considered harmful to human health and the environment. They said that information on

the technique used to model projections was published on their website.

TfL said the UK Air Quality Standards Regulations 2000 set standards for a variety of pollutants that were considered harmful to human health and the environment, and that the majority of those pollutants were now, within London, at levels which did not affect human health. However, the pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) was well above the European limit in London, and was subsequently their primary focus. They said the level of NO<sub>2</sub> and nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) vehicle emissions in central London were projected to reduce by 50% and 51% respectively as a result of the ULEZ proposal, which in turn would lead to a reduction in NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations. They said there was a complex 'atmospheric chemistry' relationship between emissions of NO<sub>2</sub>/NO<sub>x</sub> and NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations.

They said the Supplementary Information (which was available on their website) also provided more data on the estimated change in particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) because that was another pollutant of concern. However, for the purposes of the press ad, they felt it was acceptable to avoid technical jargon and instead use the term 'vehicle pollution'. They provided an extract of the information contained in their Supplementary Information showing the impact of the ULEZ proposal on exhaust emissions and pollutants.

## ASSESSMENT

### 1. Not upheld

The ASA understood that 'taxis' referred to 'black cabs' licensed by TfL, which were distinguished from Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) in the proposals. Although taxis which were newly licensed from 1 January 2018 would have to be zero emission capable, those taxis which were not newly licensed would not have to meet new standards relating specifically to their emissions. Instead, they would have to comply with a reduced maximum age limit when the zone was introduced in 2020.

The ASA understood that, under current rules, in 2020 taxis would be able to have been manufactured as early as 2005, which would mean that they would be subject to the Euro 3 standard of emissions. However, if the zone was introduced, in 2020 taxis would only be able to have been manufactured as early as 2010, which would mean they would be subject to the stricter Euro 4 emissions standard. There were also Euro 5 standards introduced in 2012, and Euro 6 standards, which would come into effect in 2015, which would further affect the maximum emissions of taxis in subsequent years.

The ASA considered that, because taxis were



subject to Euro emissions standards based on the year they were manufactured, the introduction of the reduced age limit would mean that taxis would, in effect, have to meet new emissions standards, and therefore concluded that the claim was not misleading.

On that point, the ASA investigated the ad under CAP Code (Edition 12) rules 3.1 and 3.3 (Misleading advertising), 3.7 (Substantiation), and 11.1 (Environmental claims), but did not find it in breach.

## 2. Not upheld

The ASA noted that the ad separated the claims relating to taxis, PHVs and buses from those relating to other vehicles, which we considered gave the impression that there was a difference in how the ULEZ would apply to different categories of vehicle. The ad clarified that buses would need to be hybrid or zero emission when driving. They understood that the ULEZ would include proposed new exhaust emission standards (ULEZ Standards) which were based on European standards that defined the limits for exhaust emissions in EU member states. Euro VI standards were the most recent standards, and were stricter than Euro V standards.

They understood that 300 New Routemasters and 400 non-New Routemasters, all 700 of which were 'Euro V' buses, made up the 10% of buses to which the complainant referred. They also understood that all 700 were hybrid buses. They noted that the ad did not include any reference to the specific standards which the ULEZ would require, and also noted that it was made clear on TfL's website that they would seek to retrofit the 400 non-New Routemasters to make sure they reached Euro VI standards by 2020. The website also made clear that the 300 New Routemasters would not meet the standards required by the ULEZ, but would not be modified because they were much closer to Euro VI standards than other Euro V buses.

The ASA noted that consumers who wished to seek further information could find further, qualifying details online, which would make clear the exact standards required. They considered that it was sufficient for that supporting information to appear on TfL's website. Because the ASA considered that consumers would understand from the ad that buses in the zone would have to be hybrid or zero emission, and because that was the case, they concluded that the claim was unlikely to mislead.

On that point, they investigated the ad under CAP Code (Edition 12) rules 3.1 and 3.3 (Misleading advertising), 3.7 (Substantiation), and 11.1 (Environmental claims), but did not find it in breach.

## 3. Upheld

The ASA acknowledged that, when attempting to assess the impact of a proposal such as the ULEZ, there would be some inherent uncertainty, and that modelling was likely to be seen as an acceptable way of predicting the likely outcome. They considered that consumers would be aware that the predicted reduction of "half" would not be able to be demonstrated beyond doubt, and were likely to interpret the claim as a prediction, although the ASA would expect to see relevant support for that outcome from the modelling. They also acknowledged TfL's intention to avoid technical jargon so the claim would be more easily understood.

Nevertheless, they considered that the claim that vehicle pollution would be reduced by half was likely to be interpreted by consumers as relating to all types of vehicle pollution, unless it was made clear that it related only to certain types. The ASA considered, for example, that consumers would expect carbon dioxide (CO2) to be included in the figure.

They noted that the reduction in pollution figures related to reductions within the zone only. They understood that CO2 was predicted by

TfL to be reduced by 15% in the zone, and that reducing CO2 emissions from road transport was one of the stated objectives of the ULEZ. TfL provided figures showing the predicted reduction in PM10 and PM2.5 exhaust emissions as 64%. However, the ASA understood that exhaust emissions were only a part of the overall PM10 and PM2.5 emissions, and that the figures given in TfL's supplementary information for total road transport emissions in central London had been 14% for PM10 and 21% for PM2.5.

Because the claim related only to NO2 and NOx vehicle emissions, and excluded, for example, the figures for CO2, and total PM10 and PM2.5 emissions, the ASA concluded that the claim was misleading. On that point, the ad breached CAP Code (Edition 12) rules 3.1 and 3.3 (Misleading advertising), 3.7 (Substantiation), and 11.1 (Environmental claims).

## ACTION

The ASA told Transport For London to ensure that they made clear in future that claims about reductions in vehicle pollution referred to specific types of pollution rather than vehicle pollution as a whole.

Simon Birkett, founder of Clean Air in London which complained to the ASA about the advert, said: "It is deeply troubling that the Mayor and TfL made such a seriously misleading statement in a formal advertisement that encouraged responses to the public consultation on the Mayor's flagship policy to tackle air pollution."

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## HUNTER 486 AT THE ARCH LONDON

**H**unter 486, the restaurant located within boutique hotel The Arch London in Marylebone, is proud to announce the launch of a brand new restaurant menu concept. The new menu has been carefully developed by Head Chef Gary Durrant at Hunter 486, with Henrietta Green; food and hospitality consultant, award-winning food writer and broadcaster. Henrietta is also a well known advocate of the local food movement, and author of the much loved book 'A Food Lover's Guide to Britain'.

The new menu is inspired by 'best of British' recipes, ingredients and produce, with hearty dishes featuring quality ingredients prepared honestly and simply. Dishes include delights such as: Salad of crispy oxtail with cream of horseradish; Potted duck with fruit chutney and sourdough; Peppered loin of venison with beetroot puree, turnip and potato gratin; Homemade hamburger with onion marmalade in a brioche bun with Hunter ketchup and hand cut chips; and Sticky toffee pudding with caramelised banana ice cream.

The crowning glory of the new menu is the use of the stone oven. As it operates at a very high heat, meat and fish are produced with astonishingly succulent results. So try a whole Roast Norfolk Black Free Range chicken, cooked

to tender perfection and served with roast garlic, roast potatoes, aioli, parsley & caper sauce and gravy, for two or four to share, just one of the many stone oven specialities. The new menu also introduces Plates, Pots, Boards and Bowls for one or two share, either at the bar over a cocktail, or in the restaurant as a starter or main course, and include homemade crisps with sage, lemon & sea salt made freshly every day. The Fish board comes loaded with potted shrimps, cured salmon, mackerel pate, smoked eel and prawns; and the Cheeseboard with British farmhouse cheeses, quince jelly and homemade oatcakes.

Named after the 1950s dialling code for Marylebone, Hunter 486 has been designed with an air of nostalgic London glamour fused with contemporary touches. The restaurant features gleaming leather booths, blown glass chandeliers and statement artwork, plus an adjoining chic Salon de Champagne bar.

The kitchen is delightfully open plan and airy, allowing guests to watch the skilled chefs at work amongst the gleaming selection of copper pots and pans suspended from the ceiling. Light streams through the large windows, treating guests to a charming view of the neighbourhood mews, and come the evening, the softly lit restaurant is an intimate and romantic setting for dinner and drinks.

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*Closing date for entries is 13th May 2015.*



## CLAMPDOWN ON ILLEGAL TOUTING AT GATWICK AIRPORT

**R**ecent media reports say police at Gatwick Airport are clamping down on unauthorised minicab drivers "loitering" in restaurant car parks and garage forecourts waiting for potential fares. The report says that there has been a rise in this type of toutting recently and it could be due to the use of the Uber app. A Sussex Police spokesman said: "Police at Gatwick are clamping down on unauthorised taxis picking up fares from the airport. A growing practice has been identified where taxi drivers, predominantly from London, drop off customers at the airport and then park up close by to await a return fare generated by a mobile phone app. Gatwick by-laws only permit authorised private hire vehicles to ply their trade from the airport and unauthorised drivers found to be using the app and unable to prove that they have a pre-booked fare are being dealt robustly, but fairly."

Gatwick-based police have been carrying out proactive patrols of the airport boundaries and have forced many drivers to move on. On April 1, ten drivers caught on Gatwick land were told to leave, a further five were moved on during an operation on April 7 and eight were asked to leave

on April 9. Sergeant Darren Taylor, from the airport's community safety team, said: "Taxi drivers are loitering and clogging up areas of the airport used by the public. We have found drivers parked up in the car park for the McDonald's drive through and also in petrol station forecourts. Many of these drivers come down from London and they wait there for an Uber request to come through on their phone. We first became aware of the issue when we were getting calls from BP and Shell garages saying there were drivers who just sat in the forecourts for long periods of time. The forecourts are not designed for that purpose. We don't want to stop people from earning a living but there are by-laws in place on who can operate at Gatwick Airport. We are actively discouraging this practice by giving any drivers we catch words of advice and asking them to leave. If we catch the same person frequently breaking by-laws we will be forced to contact the local authority where they are registered to raise a complaint and enforce exclusions."



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#Source TfL Survey 2014

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## LTC CONTINUES TO IMPROVE AFTER SALES NETWORK

The London Taxi Company continues to put customers first by improving its After Sales network, with the appointment of two new dealers. Witham Vehicle Solutions, who operate from in Essex, and Bristol-based Chandler Motor Company have joined LTC's UK network of fully trained and approved after sales repairers, and both businesses are keen to welcome the trade for servicing and warranty work, as well as retail part sales.

### WITHAM VEHICLE SOLUTIONS:

Essex-based Witham Vehicle Solutions (WVS) is a privately run business, who are already a SsangYong franchise and independent used car centre. They have a large fully equipped workshop, as well as a body-shop. Commenting on their appointment, WVS owner Darren Cox said, "We recognised an opportunity for growth within our business and a family member, who is an owner of a London Taxi, helped identify the need for a service in the Essex area where taxi drivers could be offered priority slots within our workshop. We fully understand the cost of downtime for drivers and want to minimise this."

### CHANDLER MOTOR COMPANY:

Bristol-based Chandler Motor Company (CMC) is a family run business, which services and repairs Citroen, Peugeot, Renault & LPG vehicle. They have a large fully equipped workshop, as well as collection and delivery services within the Bristol & Bath area.

To find out more about LTC's Approved Service Dealers, including their services, contact details and opening hours visit [www.london-taxis.co.uk/approved-service-dealers](http://www.london-taxis.co.uk/approved-service-dealers).



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## OPEN LETTER TO THE LICENSED HACKNEY CARRIAGE TRADE

**April 2015**

Last month, our parent company Geely announced that it was investing £250 million to build a new factory at Ansty, near Coventry, to put into production the next generation of the iconic London Black Cab. The new TX5 will be a plug-in, range extended electric hybrid vehicle and will be available before 1st January 2018 in order to meet the requirements set by The Mayor of London for all new taxis to be Zero-Emissions Capable (“ZEC”) by that date.

Geely would not have had the confidence to make this investment had it not been for the strong support that we have received from the Licensed Hackney Carriage Trade. Last year we sold more TX4’s in London than in any year since its launch in 2007. The Chairman of Geely, Li Shufu, has asked me to send you his personal thanks for the confidence and loyalty that you have shown in the iconic London Black Cab. In recognition of this loyalty, he has decided that everyone who has purchased a new TX4 since Geely acquired The London Taxi Company (“LTC”) in February 2013 should receive a voucher which will entitle them to £1000 off the price of a new TX5. Furthermore, this offer will extend to anyone who buys a new TX4 between now and the TX5 launch date in 2017. This is our way of saying a big thank you for supporting us.

Two years ago, I set out the priorities for LTC to put customers first in everything we do, focus on improving the quality of our goods and services and, if we achieve these objectives, then we will have created a sustainable, profitable business. This strategy has proved successful and customers realise that we are treating them as the most important aspect of our business. I am delighted to announce that LTC has made significant progress in 2014 towards its aim of becoming a sustainable, profitable business. In 2014 we made a £1.2m trading profit before tax and other deductions and the UK group has a net worth in excess of £25 million.

The build quality of our current TX4 is the best it has even been with improved handling, electronic stability control, greater ride comfort and lower noise levels. If you don’t believe me, pop in for a test drive and see for yourself; I promise you that you will not be disappointed. In recognition of this improvement in quality, we have increased the comprehensive manufacturer’s standard three year warranty from 100,000 to 120,000 miles to give you more peace of mind; another example of putting our customers first.

The mission of The London Taxi Company is to support the provision of safe, accessible, durable and professional taxi services throughout the world and our vision is to see the

iconic London Black Cab on the streets of major cities in the world. London should be rightly proud that it is recognised as having the best taxi service in the world. This accolade is derived from a combination of the quality of the London Cabbies with their famous “Knowledge”, the iconic London Black Cab itself, and stringent consistent regulation from Transport for London (“TfL”). If any of these three elements were missing, the crown would swiftly slip from London’s head.

We live in a rapidly changing world and one thing is for certain, the world will continue to change and we must all adapt to the new challenges that this will bring. We must protect and expand the loyal and passionate base of customers that our trade relies upon by continuing to move with customer tastes and adapting to their changing demands. The private hire trade continues to expand unchecked both in London and the Regions and the Licensed Hackney Carriage Trade needs to unite and find a way to respond by using technology to attract more business; a dedicated national “Black Cab Only App” for smartphones might be the way forward.

As an industry, the Licensed Hackney Carriage Trade faces many threats to its livelihood, but there are also opportunities that should not be missed and we must face up to these challenges together and speak

with one voice to government and the public. This is the only way to ensure that the licensed taxi trade is shaping its own future, rather than having it shaped for us. In the coming year, I intend to work closely with the LTDA, LCDC, Unite and RMT unions, The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers and other similar groups to formulate a cohesive consensus of opinion to drive forward those issues that directly affect our industry both in London and in the Regions.

The uncertainty over taxi age limits and how the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (“ULEZ”) will operate in London is adversely affecting confidence in the future. In our submissions to the ULEZ consultation, and in subsequent representations to TfL, we have strongly opposed a ten year age limit under any circumstances and said that we would not accept any changes to the age limit without meaningful compensation for every owner affected. We put forward an alternative proposal of a 15 year age limit for Euro 6 taxis and a 12 year limit for older vehicles but we do not know if this proposal will be acceptable to TfL. It is our view that the debate on age limits misses the key point because the best way to improve air quality is to encourage drivers into new ZEC vehicles. That’s why I’m pleased to say that LTC has lead a successful campaign on taxi grants which has resulted in







the government more than doubling the funding available to drivers who want to invest in a ZEC taxis when they become available in 2017, with an additional £25 million specifically earmarked for London drivers.

Unfortunately, until TfL announce their final decision later this year over taxi age limits and ULEZ, there will continue to be unhelpful uncertainty over these important changes. However, there is already a way for taxi owners to protect their investment now, ahead of any pronouncement on age limits or changes to emissions rules. There is currently a shortage of second hand taxis in London and consequently the value of these vehicles is at an all-time high. This means that there has never been a better time to trade in your vehicle, cash in on the equity that you have in it, and enter into a £145 per week Personal Contract Purchase (“PCP”) to buy a cleaner, greener new TX4. This PCP deal will give you a guaranteed future value for your new TX4 that protects your investment regardless of any change to the age limits. What’s more, you will also receive a voucher worth £1000 off the price of a new TX5. Don’t delay, visit Brewery Road today!

We are already getting enquiries from taxi drivers who want to put their name down for the new TX5. In order to be fair to everyone, we are launching our “Get to the Front of the Rank Campaign”. We anticipate that there will be an unprecedented demand for the new TX5 when it becomes available in late 2017 so

those drivers who have bought a new TX4 since February 2013 will have the first opportunity to buy a new TX5. We are creating a “virtual taxi rank” based on when you have bought your new TX4; those that bought one in February 2013 will be served first with others ranked by the date of delivery. So don’t be the last cabbie in the rank; buy a new TX4 today to reserve your space in the TX5 virtual taxi rank.

Thank you once again for your continued loyalty and support.

**Peter Johansen**  
**Executive Vice-President**  
**The London Taxi Company**

# OUR MISSION:

To support the provision of safe, accessible, durable and professional taxi services throughout the world



# OUR PRIORITIES

## OUR VALUES:

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2. By continually improving the **QUALITY** of our products & services
3. Which will generate **PROFITS** to create a sustainable business

## OUR VISION:

To see the iconic London Black Cab on the streets of major cities around the world

# QUALITY IS KEY TO SUCCESS





## MOTORING MATTERS *by Anthony Goodwin*

### ROAD TRIPS INTO THE BIZARRE

The British public are nothing if not unpredictable, and when it comes to test driving a new car, it can sometimes lead to all manner of strangeness. That's the opinion of a nationwide car leasing company, which asked car salesman for their favourite test drive stories, and found accidents, disappearing customers and shopping trips forming part of their workaday lives. According to the Flexed.co.uk whether the drive is accompanied or unaccompanied, for a full day or just a spin around the block, the world of car sales is never short of surprises. "In fact, anybody who has worked in retail has tales of strange customer behaviour," says Flexed.co.uk spokesperson Mark Hall, "But when your product is selling for somewhere between 10 to 20 thousand pounds, there's just that little bit more edge to things."

Flexed.co.uk asked over 200 car sales people about their most surprising test drive stories, and virtually all of them had a tale to tell. Here are ten of the finest:

\* Dave: "Our dealership does 24 hour test drives for our top-notch ranges, and one guy managed to

put 1,200 miles on the clock in that time. We asked where he'd been, and he said 'Scotland'. We're based in Essex."

\* Stefan: "I'm not quite sure what happened. One minute we were at a road junction, the next the customer was out of the car arguing with the driver in front. It was a case of full-on road-rage, and I insisted she sit in the passenger seat on the way back to the dealership."

\* Amir: "He pulled over at the side of the road, told me he wouldn't be a minute, and went into a shop. I sat there for three hours, and I never saw him again. We didn't get a sale."

\* Jess: "I got in the car with the customer, and he stank. Really stank, like he hadn't washed in a month. I took him on the shortest route possible with the window down and my head virtually out of the car. I'm pleased to say he bought the car on the spot."

\* Brian: "I've had customers pulled over for speeding a few times, but that's what you get when you sell sports cars. One chap, a sober-looking middle-aged man in a business suit, actually

said 'I always wanted to do that', like we're some sort of Make-A-Wish-Come-True organisation."

\* Mohammed: "Customer asked if we could stop off 'to pick something up from a shop'. It turned out it was B&Q, and we ended up driving back to his house where I helped him unload a boot-full of paving slabs he just bought. That explains why he wanted to test drive the estate version, I suppose."

\* Stacey: "Shortest test drive ever. Off the forecourt, straight into the side of a bus. I didn't get the sale, either – they said they didn't like the brakes."

\* Martin: "Yeah. I suppose it was when the car went into a hedge on its side that I realised that this elderly chap probably wasn't a very good driver. Nobody hurt, except the customer's pride, and the demo car was a write-off."

\* Greg: "What looked like a routine test drive turned very weird when the customer's two mates got in the back. They both looked like gorillas and that put me on edge from the start. Then the customer kept ignoring my directions, and we ended up

miles off my test drive route. It was when we got in the queue for Dover Ferry Terminal that I genuinely thought I was being kidnapped, and thought about quietly calling the police. It turned out he thought my directions were only 'suggestions', and he wanted to try a bit of motorway driving. And yes, they bought the car, and I never dialled the third '9' on my mobile phone."

\* Jane: "I did a test drive for a whole family in an SUV. Dad took us through the drive-thru at McDonald's 'too see if it would fit' and they bought me lunch!"

Flexed.co.uk says that – as in any customer-facing industry – car salesmen need to take the rough with the smooth while retaining good manners, a cool front, and a good sense of humour. But sometimes, Mark Hall says, this can be stretched to the limit. "Interacting with the public can be at times frustrating, hilarious and incredibly satisfying," he says, "And while we've seen many strange things in our time, we've never been kidnapped nor had a burger bought for us. We're open to offers on the latter."

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## FIRST BRITISH BUILT LONDON TAXI EXPORT SINCE 2009

The London Taxi Company (LTC) in Coventry has produced its first export vehicle since the company became part of the Chinese Zhejiang Geely Holding Group in February 2013. The taxi, purpose-built for Melbourne in Southern Australia, will undergo inspections on arrival to ensure compliance with Australian authorities. After approval, a further order of several hundred vehicles is expected from the main Australian distributor, The London Taxi Company Australia, into the city of Melbourne. The Taxi Services Commission has already approved the London Taxi for use as a conventional taxi in the state of Victoria.

Since 2009 the Coventry based London Taxi Company production site has produced vehicles solely for the UK domestic market with its Chinese sister company, Shanghai London Taxi International (SLTI), producing vehicles for the international markets including South East Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. Peter Johansen, Vice President of UK Operations commented “The production of Melbourne’s London taxi here in Coventry is a ground breaking step for us as a global business. It’s our vision to see our iconic black cab on the streets of all major cities around the world and our team here are fully equipped to contribute to that. We’re excited by the opportunity this offers us here at the Coventry plant. Britain has a lot of great exports to Australia, including some cab drivers who have already shown interest in driving the cabs over there! We’re proud to add our iconic London Taxi to the list of great British exports.”

The London Taxi has been customised for the Melbourne market to include a hot climate specification and other features, as specified by Australian Design Rules. An Australian radio station recently hosted a poll in which listeners chose their London Taxi’s colour of choice, in which the iconic black was the winner.

Western Australia is already home to 100 ~~ewhite~~ London Taxis which have been trialled in Perth since December 2013.



The LTC team involved in developing the Australian London Taxi included specialists in Development, Engineering, Production and Sales & Marketing

## OVERHAUL OF ELEPHANT & CASTLE NORTHERN ROUNDAABOUT BEGINS

Elephant & Castle is one of TfL’s priority locations to deliver improved safety for all road users. The £25m overhaul of the northern roundabout has been designed to significantly upgrade facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers by converting it into a peninsular, creating a new, more open and accessible public space, with the road around it converted to two-way traffic. Subways will also be replaced with new pedestrian crossings and new dedicated cycle routes will also be created through and around the junction to improve safety for cyclists.

Elephant & Castle is a residential area and, while some necessary work will be carried out at night and during weekends, the majority of work will take place on weekdays between 08:00 and 18:00. The main highway work is scheduled to be fully completed by summer 2016, with work on the public space within the new peninsula to be carried out after the upgrade to the Northern line station is completed in the early 2020s.

Sophisticated traffic signal technology, which allows better management of traffic depending on differing conditions at any given time, will be used to ensure that key routes and junctions are controlled in real-time to help keep traffic moving.

During this work, drivers are strongly advised to plan alternative routes where possible to avoid delays, particularly during peak travel times. The construction of the redesigned Elephant & Castle northern roundabout forms part of the wider work being carried out across London as part of TfL’s Road Modernisation Plan. With a budget of more than £4 billion from now until 2021/22, this overarching plan represents the biggest investment in London’s roads in a generation, including hundreds of transformational projects within the existing road network.





## COMMUNITY ORDER FOR MINICAB DRIVER

**M**inicab driver Abdul-Muhib Hannan pulled up in a silver saloon car alongside a 14-year-old girl, who was walking along Turpington Lane at around 3.30pm on January 14. The 26-year-old threatened her in an attempt to get her into his vehicle but two women waiting at a nearby bus stop in Brosse Way intervened.

Officers arrested Hannan on suspicion of attempted kidnap but he was later charged with a public order offence. He pleaded guilty at Bromley Magistrates' Court to using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards another person intending to cause them harassment, alarm or distress. He was sentenced at the court on March 20 to a community order requiring him to undertake 150 hours of unpaid work and ordered to pay a £60 victim surcharge and £85 court costs.

## ADDISON LEE BUYS CYCLONE VIP CARS & COURIERS

**T**he company said buyout of Cyclone, which was formed in 1985 and has about 100 drivers, would strengthen its position in the London private-hire market. "We are very pleased to announce Addison Lee's acquisition of Cyclone - a company that, like ourselves, prides itself on offering customers a premium service alongside assured performance," Liam Griffin, chief executive of Addison Lee, said.

## LONDON STILL NEEDS A SECOND EMERGENCY MEDICAL HELICOPTER

**L**ondon's Air Ambulance will, for the first time in its history, be flying longer hours during the summer months. Until 2 September the charity will be delivering its advanced trauma team to critically injured people in London via helicopter every day until sunset. At its peak the helicopter can be used until 21.21 whereas previously, due to aviation resources, the service had to stop flying at 18.45 each day.



Graham Hodgkin, Chief Executive Officer, London's Air Ambulance, said: "If someone has fallen from height or under a train getting our advanced trauma team to their side as quickly as possible can be the difference between life and death. When we can fly, we can get to them up to eight times faster than in a rapid response car. When daylight hours are longer people are out and about more – kids playing, after work

drinks, BBQs, festivals - London is full of things to do. Previously, due to affordability, we couldn't contract the additional pilots and fire crew needed to cover the summer months but thanks to those who have donated to the Your London, Your Helicopter campaign so far, we have now been able to do that. That said, our biggest stumbling block is having access to a second helicopter if the current one is offline for maintenance. I urge the people and businesses in London to keep donating at yourhelicopter.london to help us get a second helicopter for London airborne later this year."

## SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL by Alan Fleming

**S**outhwark Cathedral, on the south bank, close to London Bridge, is surrounded by railway lines and buildings, including the historic Borough Market. The churchyard on the south side of the Cathedral is an oasis of calm. It is the mother church of the Anglican Diocese of Southward and has been a place of Christian worship for over 1000 years, but only became a cathedral in 1905. The present building is mainly gothic and is surrounded by four imposing spires. It stands overlooking the river and is a most impressive sight on this part of London's Skyline.

The site houses an impressive history dating back to the ninth century, when nuns built the first church where the Cathedral now stands. 60 years later, a college for priests was also built there by St Swithun. In 1106 a new church was founded by two Norman Knights. Unfortunately, fire badly damaged the church 100 years later and only a few examples of the work survived. The rebuilding of the church began in 1220 and in 1385 when it was nearing completion; it was badly damaged by fire again. The early church suffered many setbacks and one can only marvel at the dedicated perseverance of all those people



who helped to complete it. To the left of the main entrance are the remains of the 13th century arcading and directly opposite, a Norman door. The roof of the nave is supported by magnificent Gothic arches and is a most impressive view.

By the north transept, is the Harvard Chapel;

dedicated to Sir John Harvard who was born in Southwark in 1607. His parents are said to have sold the George Inn, which they owned, to pay for his education. He later emigrated to America where he founded Harvard University. The Cathedral contains a 19th century stained glass window dedicated to William Shakespeare, who buried his brother Edmund there in 1607. The window depicts scenes from all of the plays he wrote and sits behind a statue of the great playwright himself, holding a quill.

It is generally believed there has been a church on this site since AD 606. There may well have been a church here even earlier. Southwark Cathedral is the oldest cathedral church building in London, and archaeological evidence shows there was Roman pagan worship here well before that. Significantly, Southwark stands at the oldest crossing point of the tidal Thames at what was the only entrance to the City of London across the river for many centuries. It is not only a place of worship but also of hospitality to every kind of person: princes and paupers, prelates and prostitutes, poets, playwrights, prisoners and patients have all found refuge here.



## GLOBAL NEWS



### CAB DRIVERS ATTEMPTED MASS SUICIDE IN CHINA

The resurgence of the London Taxi Company, with the invaluable assistance of Geely in Shanghai, has been nothing short of amazing! However, China and taxis have come up in an unconnected news story to the above, but as shocking as any taxi story anywhere in the world has ever been. Over the years, Global News has reported on many awful incidents taking place in or around taxis, including South Africa where an all-out war with guns was declared at one time between taxi companies. But we think this was even worse!

It occurred recently when Chinese taxi drivers from Suifenhe – close to the Russian border – were protesting over the requirements needed to lease their cabs. To put across how depressed they were over their treatment, some travelled to Beijing in their cabs while others travelled by train. Joining up in the capital, they then attempted a mass suicide. Reports claimed that at least 30 cabbies collapsed after swallowing poison in the busy Wangfujing shopping centre, bottles of pesticide lying beside them. Fortunately, all the cab drivers later recovered in hospital, but several were then arrested by police.

One protester told the Caixin news agency that they had travelled to Beijing to petition against the 2011 reform affecting Taxi Company leasing renewals. "We arrived by train on Monday but got no response after taking our complaint to both the State Bureau for Letters and Calls and the Ministry of Transport," he said, before police halted the conversation. The reform required taxi drivers to join government-appointed taxi operators or leave the industry in return for compensation. Taxi drivers in China cannot be self-employed. They had previously petitioned to the State Bureau for Letters and Calls, which usually send cases to the relevant authorities. However, some petitioners end up taking radical action because of feeling threatened



A bystander captures the shocking mass suicide attempt of Chinese cab drivers

or abused by local government officials who try to stop petitions reaching the attention of the central government, because it could harm the careers of local leaders. But a mass suicide was surely over the top.

### RHONDA: I'M NOT TOO BIG TO FIT IN A CAB?

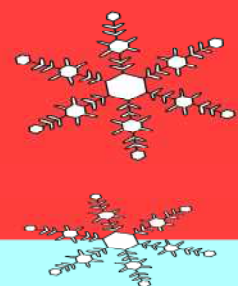
Despite weighing in at almost 30 stone, Tulsa (Oklahoma) resident Rhonda Newton claimed that getting in and out of cabs had never been a problem. "I get in vans, cruisers, big cars and little cars and until I ordered a taxi from Yellow Checkered Cabs and met that cab driver, there had never been a problem. He arrived with a van but wouldn't even let me get inside saying that I was too fat! He said he'd get a car to come get me. That showed up just a few minutes later but that driver then drove off, and left me there after saying that the first cab should have taken me and that it was discrimination." Ms Newton reiterated that she had never been refused service because of her size before, adding that she didn't want it to ever happen to anyone else her size – or even bigger – because not only was it an insult, but it was humiliating. According to Yellow Checkered Cabs manager, Rod Saleh, he had spoken to the driver in question. "He didn't refuse her, he was just trying to accommodate her," he claimed.

Mr Saleh said drivers worked as independent contractors and made decisions based on what they believed was the best situation for customers, adding that the driver denied calling Ms Newton fat. He had claimed it was more of a misunderstanding than an insult. "We apologise if we caused her any embarrassment or delay for the time," The YCC manager Saleh says. Rhonda Newton responded by saying that the company had lost a customer forever.

### NEW ZEALAND TAXI BODY ANGERS WOMEN'S GROUPS!

New Zealand women's groups in Wellington are said to be outraged at comments by the NZ Taxi Federation that women should be responsible for their own protection by not making "untoward suggestions" to drivers or behaving in a "loose" manner! The controversial comments follow several alleged assaults on women passengers by Wellington taxi drivers. In recent months, four taxi drivers have appeared in the Wellington District Court on charges of assault or improper conduct toward passengers. The police are also investigating complaints against another two drivers.

A Taxi Federation spokesperson told us that both taxi drivers and women needed to protect themselves. "Women" he said, "should not make untoward suggestions in any way towards taxi drivers and most definitely not make any suggestions that they were loose in their behaviour. If women behave in that way, there is the possibility that drivers could be tempted." A spokeswoman for the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges said that the comment was typical of victim blaming and comparable to remarks about women being raped because they were wearing short skirts.

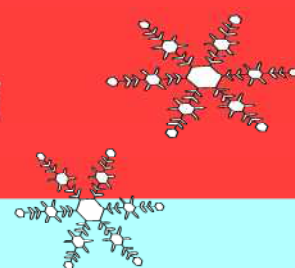


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Taxi drivers Legal Protection (TLP) members can now benefit from highly specialised legal protection, which protects the livelihoods of London's licensed taxi

drivers through our Legal Expenses Insurance Policy. Our Policy of Insurance provides cover to defend members in a Court of criminal jurisdiction against endorseable motor prosecutions and prosecutions, which could result in the loss of a member's Hackney Carriage or proprietors licence.  
Cover also provides representation for members on a reconsideration of or an appeal to a Magistrate's Court from the decision of a licensing authority to suspend or revoke a member's taxi or taxi driver's licence.  
If a member's case goes to Court, representation is provided by our appointed Legal Representatives. However, we are unable to provide representation retrospectively. If you are not a member on the date of an offence or complaint we are unable to provide any legal cover. Join now before you need our support. Additionally, we also represent members at the PCO or their licensing authority in the event of a complaint being submitted by a taxi passenger or member of the public. Many complaints can be malicious, mischievous or simply submitted due to passenger failing to understand traffic conditions and suspecting that their driver has taken a devious route. Our success rate in dealing with PCO complaints is second to none with the vast majority being defended successfully. Box junctions. You must not enter the box until your

exit road or lane is clear. However, you may enter the box and wait when you want to turn right. Please observe the rules as we are finding that a high number of our members are receiving PCN's for obstruction. Finally, when executing U-turns always take extra care and watch out for road-users on two wheels. Especially, during the hours of darkness.  
**Dave Cohen**  
Taxi drivers Legal Protection Ltd.  
[www.taxidriverslegalprotection.co.uk](http://www.taxidriverslegalprotection.co.uk)  
Follow us on twitter @tdaoprotection

**TAXI DRIVERS LEGAL PROTECTION LTD**  
**APPLICATION FORM TO JOIN**  
Please complete this form in BLOCK CAPITALS. The annual subscription rate is £108.00. If you are unable to make a single payment, please make one cheque payable with the current date for £36.00 and two post-dated cheques dated one month apart for the same amounts. Make all cheques payable to:  
**TAXI DRIVER LEGAL PROTECTION LTD.**  
**Return this form to: The Secretary, TOPS, PO Box 439 Stanmore, HA7 9EY**  

Mr/Mrs/Miss	
First Names	Surname
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
Badge No	Shift Worked
I also agree that the above information will be retained by Taxi drivers & Owners Legal Protection Ltd in a computer system under the terms of the Data Protection Act.	
Signed	Date



# C & S TAXIS (LONDON) LTD

**130 Three Colts Lane, London, E2 6JN**

**C & S TAXIS  
(LONDON) LTD**



**C & S TAXIS  
(LONDON) LTD**

## STOP AND LET US HELP!

HAVE **YOU** HAD AN ACCIDENT THAT WASN'T YOUR FAULT?

## LOOK NO FURTHER

**OUR SPECIALIST ADVICE MANAGEMENT TEAM CAN HELP YOU**

- |   |  |
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|  New TX4 loan cab (no fees to pay) |  Low bakes oven for the very best results   |
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|  All work guaranteed               | <b>DON'T LOSE OUT!</b>   |

**C&S Taxis London Ltd - have now purchased SIX brand new TX4s, specially allocated for their crash repair body shop - *A Class of Their Own***

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Low bakes spray for the best results • TX4 cabs for rent

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It really is our best ever TX4. The improvements we've made in quality mean that as well as more confidence, we can now give you more cover. Every new TX4 now comes with an extra 20,000 miles protection – that's a 3 year, 120,000 mile vehicle warranty, as standard.

At LTC, we aim to protect what's most important to you: your investment in your business. That's why we offer taxis that offer real value, with a year's free road tax and 12 month's RAC cover included in the price.

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Book a test drive today.**

**TX4: The London Taxi from LTC – the people who only make taxis.**

**The London Taxi Company**  
39-41 Brewery Road  
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0207 700 0888  
[london-taxis.co.uk](http://london-taxis.co.uk)  
[london@london-taxis.co.uk](mailto:london@london-taxis.co.uk)

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### Terms and conditions

**Business users only.** Finance offer available on Personal Contract Purchase, figures based on TX4 Elegance (automatic) at £39,195 OTR with a £2,995 deposit followed by 48 monthly payments of £625.04 (equivalent weekly payments of £144.24) plus an optional final payment of £15,725 based upon an annual contracted mileage of 30,000 (120,000 over term). Excess mileage charge of 6.0 pence (+VAT) per mile applies. If the vehicle is in good condition and has not exceeded the allowed mileage you will have nothing further to pay. Finance is subject to status and is only available to UK residents aged 18 and over. Finance is provided by Black Horse Taxi Finance a trading style of Black Horse Ltd, St William House, Tresillian Terrace, Cardiff CF10 5BH. Other models are available.

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