

COVER STORY

STEVE MCNAMARA Page 5

SECRETS OF LONDON

TAXI TALKS TO

MARK MONROE Page 24



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4th October 2022 #526

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LTDA
Taxi House 133 Great Suffolk Street,
SE1 1PP
T: 020 7286 1046 | www.ltda.co.uk
@TheLTDA

Editor
Katie Combes
E: editor@ltda.co.uk

Commissioning Editor
Mike Williams
E: taxieditor@centuryone.uk

Produced by
Century One Publishing Ltd
Alban Row, 27-31 Verulam Road
St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 4DG.
T: 01727 893 894, F: 01727 893 895
E: hello@centuryone.uk
www.centuryone.uk

Advertising Sales Executive
Loren Wedderburn T: 01727 739184
E: loren@centuryone.uk

Creative Director
Peter Davies

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DATE FOR BOND STREET STATION OPENING ANNOUNCED

TfL has announced that the Elizabeth Line's delayed Bond Street station will open on 24th October. It was decided back in 2018, that the line would open before Bond Street was completed following major construction problems, which caused significant delays. The station, serving the West End and busy shopping areas, will now open five months after the rest of the cross-London line, which began operating in May.



TFL COMMISSIONER QUILTS

Transport for London boss, Andy Byford, has resigned from his role and will be leaving the organisation at the end of October. A TfL press release stated that Mr Byford was leaving "to resume life in the United States with his wife, having delivered against the priorities he set at the start of his tenure - to get the Elizabeth line opened without any further delay, and to lead TfL out of the financial crisis caused by the pandemic." Chief Operating Officer, Andy Lord, will be taking on the role of Transport Commissioner on an interim basis. Lord is currently responsible for the operation of all of TfL's rail services, which include London Underground and the Elizabeth line, along with London's strategic road network, bus services, cycle hire, river services, London Cable Car and trams.



GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES NET ZERO REVIEW

New Prime Minister, Liz Truss's Government has launched an independent review of the UK's efforts to become net zero. The review will ensure that delivery of the net zero by 2050 target is achieved "in a pro-growth and pro-business way." It is being led by former energy minister, Chris Skidmore MP, who will report to the Government with a set of recommendations by the end of this year. There had been suggestions that Truss might water down the net zero commitment, but the terms of reference for the review and appointment of Skidmore, a big supporter of the target, suggests otherwise.

AWARD FOR CABBIE WHO LED UKRAINE RELIEF MISSION



Matt Westfall, the cabbie who earlier this year led a group of other cab drivers on a mission to deliver aid to the Ukrainian

border and transport Ukrainian refugees to safety across Europe, has received a prestigious award from the International Association of Transportation Regulators (IATR). Matt was presented with the award for Humanitarianism and Heroism, and going above and beyond, at TfL's headquarters in Endeavour Square, by Helen Chapman, TfL's Director of Licensing, Regulation and Charging. Matt also recorded a video message, which was beamed into the IATR's Driver of the Year Awards ceremony, held in Graceland, Memphis on 24th September. He was told by the organisers that his video received a standing ovation.

Since making the trip to Ukraine, Matt has also worked with a nurse to raise £12,000 to purchase an old ambulance to help those in need in Ukraine. Unfortunately, the first ambulance they purchased broke down as Matt was driving it to the ferry, but they were able to get the money back. Eventually, they found an old ambulance to buy in Poland, which they organised to have delivered to the Ukrainian Army and it is now being used on the ground. Matt is now taking a well-earned break, but he already has some ideas of what he can do next to help more people.



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Stealth Drop in Speed Thresholds

Met dropped speed limit threshold by 1mph to boost prosecution figures.

Steve's comment

It seems that the changes to the speed limit in places like Park Lane and the Victoria Embankment were not enough to enable the Met to reach its much-publicised target of a million speeding fines this year, as it's now been revealed that they have secretly reduced the threshold for triggering a prosecution.

259% increase

The National Police Chiefs Council recognise that a level of discretion and leeway should be provided for when issuing tickets and set a formula of 10% plus 2mph. This means that driving at 24mph in a 20, 35 in a 30 or 79 in a 70 should not automatically trigger a penalty, but anything over that would. Now, in a stealth move, the Met have reduced theirs to 10% plus 1mph, meaning that they now prosecute at 23mph in a 20mph zone. This has made it even easier to make a simple mistake and find yourself with a notice of intended prosecution. This change no doubt accounts for the majority of the 347,000 tickets issued between January and June this year, up from 97,000 in the preceding 6-month period, which is a 259% increase in the number of fines given out in London.

If the changes are, as the Met maintains, on safety grounds, why would they keep them a secret? Surely, if you want to encourage an even greater awareness of the dangers of speeding, the more people that know the better. The only explanation for keeping it quiet, or what might better be described as sneaking it in, can have been to generate more prosecutions and more revenue.

Room for error

The Met has argued that no one should be going faster than the speed limit. Of course, that is true, but the whole point of the thresholds was to give people the benefit of the doubt and room for error. This is especially important for professional

drivers, who by the very virtue of their work and the fact that they spend so much time on the road, are more likely to make mistakes or get caught out by an unexpected lower speed limit.

At 20mph, all it takes is a little too much pressure on the accelerator for a second to reach 24mph. This is a particularly easy mistake to make for a cab driver driving on Park Lane, whose every instinct and muscle memory is telling them to speed up as they join the wide, dual carriageway that used to allow them to travel at 40mph.

A failing service

Remember this is from a police service in special measures. One that sends crime references to burglary victims rather than a detective. A police service that has lost control of many of our streets to the extent that a phone, camera, or bag snatch by gangs on electric bikes is so commonplace, that few people bother to report them. With no expectations of ever getting their property back, people now invariably just want a crime number for an insurance claim.

Scotland Yard, once a byword for the very best in policing around the world, is now home to a new breed of senior police officer. In fact, many of them are police officers in name only and have never walked a beat, but have transferred in from other occupations, under what was known as the direct entry programme.

Proof of the poor quality of leadership, if it were needed,

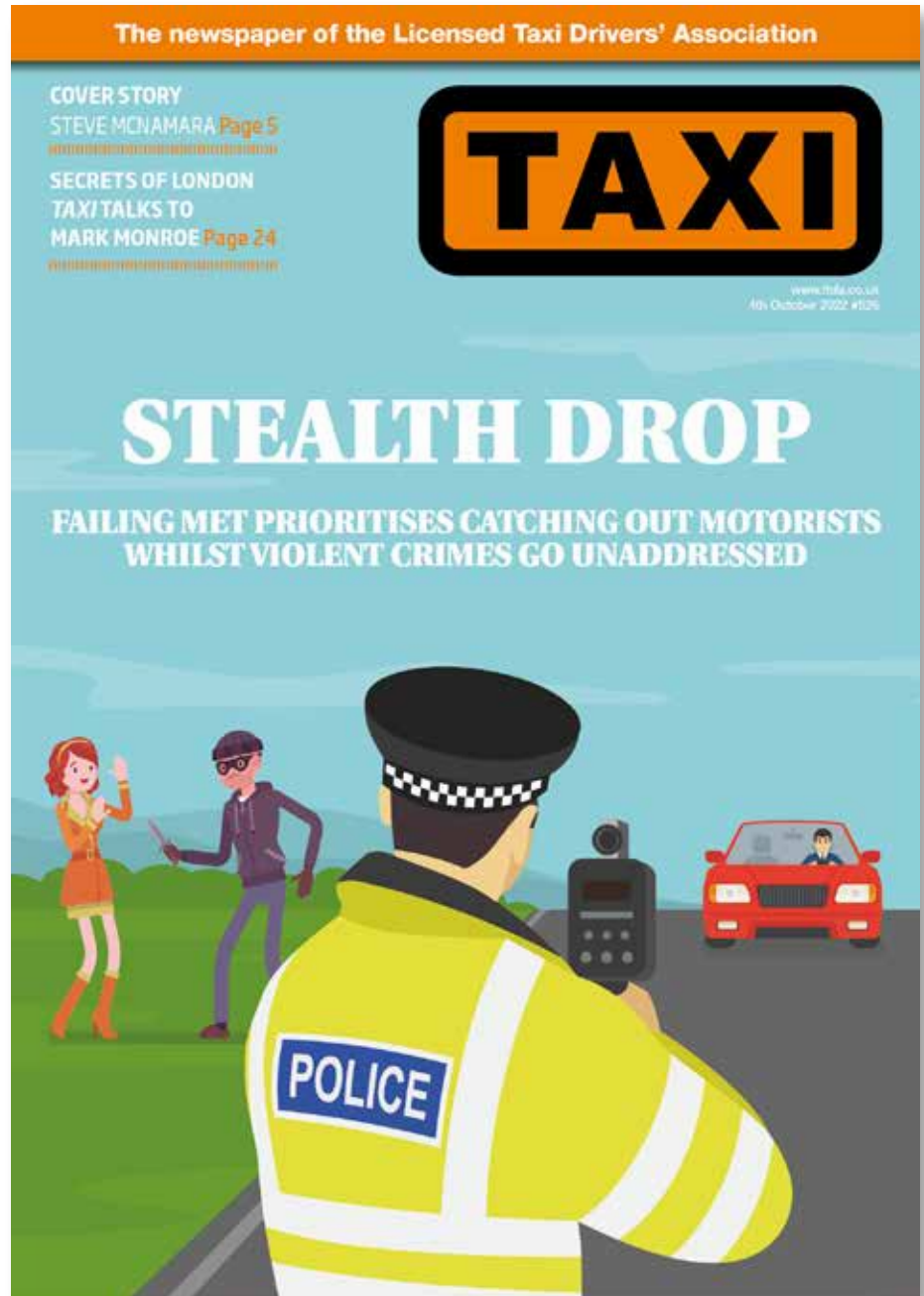
can be seen any day almost directly outside Scotland Yard and in clear sight of most of its office windows, as gangs of con artists working the three-card monte, or trick, fleece the tourists on Westminster Bridge. Protecting tourists is obviously not as high on their list of priorities as catching the real criminals in their cars, vans and cabs who get caught by the cameras outside Scotland Yard, as they accidentally drive past at 23mph in the 20 zone.

Policing by consent

A report on the Met's performance, which makes

for sorry reading, published last week by His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, found the Met was inadequate in responding to the public and required improvement in investigating crime, protecting vulnerable people, managing offenders, and making good use of its resources.

It's often repeated that the Police in the UK do so 'with the consent of the population.' With the Met seemingly ignoring gangs of crooks operating outside its headquarters, whilst vigilantly pursuing passing motorists, I have to wonder how long they will keep that consent? ■ LTDA





A No-Go Zone

The City used to be a 'go-to' destination for cabbies. It was a place we could go certain of finding a good fare and seeing lots of hands going up, wherever we went.

Top rank

As part of our recent members' tariff survey, undertaken to get a more complete understanding of what our members believe is the right course of action with regards to next year's tariff uplift. We also took the opportunity to ask our members if the changes at Bank Junction and those to Bishopsgate and Gracechurch Street had affected their working patterns. I asked for these questions to be included (even though I knew the answers) to help me highlight the problems these schemes are causing. The results will help me to explain the situation to the various businesses, at or near these locations, that have asked why they are finding it harder and harder to get a taxi for their staff and visitors in the Square Mile.

A clear verdict

Of course, I tell these businesses exactly why this is, whenever I am asked, but I'm not sure they truly understood the scale of the problem, which is that a large number of drivers now hate going anywhere in the City.

We asked members four simple questions. The results were extremely telling and all too clear. In short, the restrictions have affected working patterns and drivers are actively avoiding an area that has become practically impassable. Here is what drivers told us...

Bank Junction

The first question we asked was, 'since the introduction of the timed restrictions at Bank, have your working patterns changed in relation to that area?' **87% of respondents said that the restrictions had affected how they work in the area.**

We then asked these respondents how their working patterns had changed? 30% of these drivers said that they 'avoid the Bank area completely' if they can. A shocking further 35% said that they 'avoid the



"80% of drivers whose working patterns had changed as a result of the restrictions are avoiding the Bishopsgate and Gracechurch area completely."

City of London altogether and never ply for hire there'. **That's 65% avoiding some or all of the City of London completely.** That means fewer cabs available, longer waits for passengers and a poorly served and increasingly inaccessible Square Mile.

A10 corridor

We asked the same questions about the A10 Bishopsgate Corridor. When asked, 'since the introduction of the timed restrictions on Bishopsgate and Gracechurch Street, have your working patterns changed in relation to that area?' **89% of survey participants answered 'yes, it has affected how I work in that area.'**

Of these 89%, 29% said they 'avoid the area completely' and 36% 'avoid the City of London and never ply for hire there'. **Again that's 65% avoiding working in the area and broader City of London altogether and fewer taxis plying for hire.**

A further 15% 'avoid the area at certain times', which we take to mean during the restricted hours, so from 7am to 7pm. If you add these drivers to the 65% avoiding some or all of the City all the time, then the picture is even worse. It shows that at certain times (likely during the peak 7am to 7pm period), the majority of drivers, 80% of those

who said their working patterns had changed as a result of the restrictions, are avoiding the Bishopsgate and Gracechurch area completely.

The figures for Bank show the same, with a total of 79% avoiding the area in some way, at some point, during the day.

What this means

The City used to be a 'go-to' destination for cabbies. It was a place we could go certain of finding a good fare and seeing lots of hands going up, wherever we went. Now, we are forced to drive along congested back streets and take those passengers, who we do manage to pick up, on long, time consuming and costly detours, which prove frustrating for all involved. It's no wonder so many are choosing to avoid it.

But more importantly, these findings should be a stark warning to the City of London planners, who must take note of the impact on taxi availability and accessibility. Perhaps even more so, they should consider the impact on the City of London itself, a destination and its ability to remain an attractive and competitive place to be for businesses, retail, hospitality, as well as for tourists and other visitors. There is a real danger that it could start to lose out to areas like Canary Wharf, where a more sensible and measured approach has been adopted, which more effectively balances

the needs of different road users and groups.

Just the other day, I spoke with a representative from 22 Bishopsgate, London's newest and second tallest building, who was concerned about not having enough available taxis and was asking for a rank outside the building. I also know that earlier this year, when the City of London Corporation passed its motion calling for a review of access to Bank Junction, that hundreds of businesses, including a number of big banks and law firms in the area supported the need for a review. I assume it was for this very reason.

The future of both schemes is currently under review, and we will be including these findings in our consultation responses and correspondence with key decisionmakers. Thank you to the 2000 LTDA members who took the time to respond to this survey, it is very much appreciated. ■ LTDA

EDITOR'S NOTE: On page 6 of the last edition of TAXI #525 under 'Our figures' the text stated incorrectly that the Park Lane cycle counts conducted by the LTDA, were carried out between 12noon and 2pm on the days indicated. This should have read between 7am and 7pm. The article has been amended in the online version accordingly.

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Change at the Top

What used to take just one phone call or email to solve a problem, is instead now taking five or six.

Streets ahead

The recent announcement that the current TfL Commissioner, Andy Byford has decided to step down, after such a short period in charge, has come as a bit of a surprise to many. As always, the rumour mill is in full swing as to why he made the decision. Some say he didn't get on with Mayor Khan, others believe he didn't rate the senior managers at TfL, whilst the more kind amongst us believe it was a decision made for personal reasons.

Whatever the reason, I wish him well. He has been neither a particular help, nor a hindrance for us. But as things go, and with the four wheels bad, two wheels good philosophy that seems to emanate from every corner of TfL towers, not being a hindrance is very much a win right now. He gave us a fair hearing when we had an issue, but his focus was always elsewhere, and from what I can tell he spent all his time getting the Elizabeth Line up and running and arguing with the government about funding.

Get back to the office

What Byford's successor must focus on is getting people back to the office. The big boss, Mayor Khan has actually stated that people should return to the office, yet most of TfL's employees seem to be doing the absolute opposite. Now, I know that TfL have got rid of a lot of office space and in what is left, the staff have to 'hot desk'. I understand that is office speak for playing the old children's game of musical chairs – only without the fun dancing around the chairs to music bit and just the mad dash to grab a chair and not be the one left standing. The staff seem however to have decided to stamp their feet and say 'we're not playing' and have stayed at home instead.

The problem with this for us, is that now everything seems to take five times as long. What



used to take just one phone call or email to solve a problem, is instead now taking five or six. The odd document going missing between the office printer and support staff desk, has now turned into a tidal wave of missing documents. Each of these is a source of delay and anxiety for the driver, who can in some circumstances find themselves off the road and out of work, through no fault of their own, whilst new documents are submitted and verified.

So my message to the new commissioner, whoever that may be (or perhaps the outgoing one before he rides off into the sunset) is get rid of the hot desks, give all your staff somewhere to work and get them back in the office.

Credit card choices

Choosing a credit card provider is always a big decision for a cabbie. We all want to make sure we are getting the best deal and keeping as much of our hard-earned money as possible! The credit card provider market for the taxi trade is increasingly competitive. Cabbies have more options than ever before, with lots of different systems and different rates available. Picking the right one for you can be a minefield, but there are some

great deals out there if you do your homework. Many are advertised in this very paper.

The LTDA have been approached by *Viva Wallet*, which for a short time, is offering a free TfL certified system exclusively to our members, with no installation cost and very competitive rates. There are also other benefits, including an offline transactions feature to ensure you don't get

caught out by poor signal and the money in your account next day. You can also essentially pay 0% acceptance fees, as you have the chance to earn them back by using a Viva Wallet Debit Card to pay for your business expenses. So when you stop to buy fuel or grab a coffee, you earn that money back. It's worth taking a look, if you haven't already heard of them. ■ LTDA

The Shine Night Walk 2022

As we have done previously, the LTDA marshals once again operated a taxi rank at Old Billingsgate Market to serve the annual Shine Night Walk, in aid of Cancer Research. This year over 10,000 walkers put themselves through their paces to complete one of three distances – a 10K, half marathon and the full 26-mile marathon. All the participants started on the evening of Saturday 24th September, crossing the finish line throughout the night and well into Sunday morning.

At the end, the walkers were totally exhausted and so were over the moon to be greeted by a rank of London's Finest. The drivers were more than happy to support such a great cause and to transport the walkers and their supporters, wherever they needed to go. These journeys spanned from trips to local hotels a few hundred metres away, for those with the biggest blisters, to the Suburbs and beyond. There were some great roaders throughout the night. The LTDA would like to thank all the drivers who, once again, helped make it a success and especially those drivers, who came back many times.





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MEMORIAL FOR PETER ROSE

A reminder that the memorial for Peter Rose will be held on Tuesday 25th October between 2 and 5pm at the Poplar Rowing Club, Ferry Street E14 3DT. Please feel free to drop in and say a few words. Light refreshments and drinks will be served. RSVP to Adrienne and Alex by telephone on 07980 978621 or email adrienne.rose@ntlworld.com



HUGE RISE IN EV CHARGING COSTS

According to the *RAC Charge Watch*, public rapid EV charging costs have risen 42% in the last four months. The cost to charge an electric vehicle, on a pay-as-you-go basis, at a public rapid charging point has increased by 18.75p per kilowatt hour since May. It has now reached an average of 63.29p per kilowatt hour.

REGISTER FOR SELF ASSESSMENT BY 5 OCTOBER

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) are reminding customers who need to complete a tax return for the 2021 to 2022 tax year to register for Self-Assessment by 5th October. Before customers can complete their first tax return, they need to register with HMRC to receive their Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR). The UTR is required to file a tax return. The tax return deadline for the 2021/2022 tax year is 31st October 2022 for those completing paper forms, and 31st January 2023 for online returns.



10



TAXI and LTDA Member Mail

Subject: A great kindness by a black cab driver

Dear LTDA,

On Friday 16th September, near Marylebone High Street, I fell off my Brompton bicycle, hurt my leg and couldn't put any weight on it. A black cab driver put me and my bike into his cab and took me to my flat in Fulham. He carried my bike into the flat. Then, as I was unable to move or walk, he said he could not leave me there on the pavement and so very kindly took me to Charing Cross A&E and found a hospital worker, plus wheelchair to look after me. As it turned out, my leg was broken.



When I tried to pay the driver (it must have been circa. £60 - £70) he would not accept it, which was extraordinarily generous. I was so 'out of it' that I did not note his number, but I was truly grateful for his great kindness, and would like to stress my thanks. I very much hope that he sees this message.

I would also like to make a donation and would welcome suggestions of some charities that LTDA members' support. (Editor's note: Ms Bell was directed towards the Taxi Charity and London Taxi Drivers' Charity for Children.)

Louisa Bell

Subject: Letter of thanks

Dear Sir or Madam,

I would like to express my most sincere thanks to the taxi driver who very kindly told me to put my money away, when I tried to pay my cab fare home from Her Majesty's Lying-in-State on the evening of Wednesday 14th September 2022.



The journey was from Vauxhall Embankment to Battersea, and I think he must have looked kindly upon me, owing to the fact that I was wearing my military uniform. I served as staff in Her late Majesty's Household for four years until her sad passing, as well as being a member of Her Royal Navy, so was understandably upset.

I didn't think to take the driver's name or registration, nor do I even know if he is a member of the LTDA. I didn't say a great deal at the time, purely because I was so bowled over by the gesture. However, I can think of no other way of expressing my gratitude for his kindness, so if there is any way that you can include this comment in any upcoming communications to your members, it may reach him.

I shall remember his actions for the rest of my life, as an example of the very best of British, and shall endeavour to pay it forward at the next available opportunity. God Bless London Cabbies!

With my thanks and best wishes,

Midshipman Emily Clifton Royal Navy

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LTDA Member Fares Survey

Agreement that fares should increase but drivers split on by how much.

The annual fare increase for London's licensed taxi drivers is applied, where appropriate, in April, however the work to prepare for this begins now. Various calculations are done to understand what increase, if any, should be considered and Transport for London (TfL) makes the final decision via its Finance Committee.

As part of this process, decision makers look at both a 'cost basket' of various items, such as the price of fuel, insurance and vehicles, as well as outside factors such as average earnings. The calculations

show the figure for next year's potential increase would be 11.64% (when rounded up). This is comprised of an average wage increase of 4.02% and taxi operating costs increase of 7.61%.

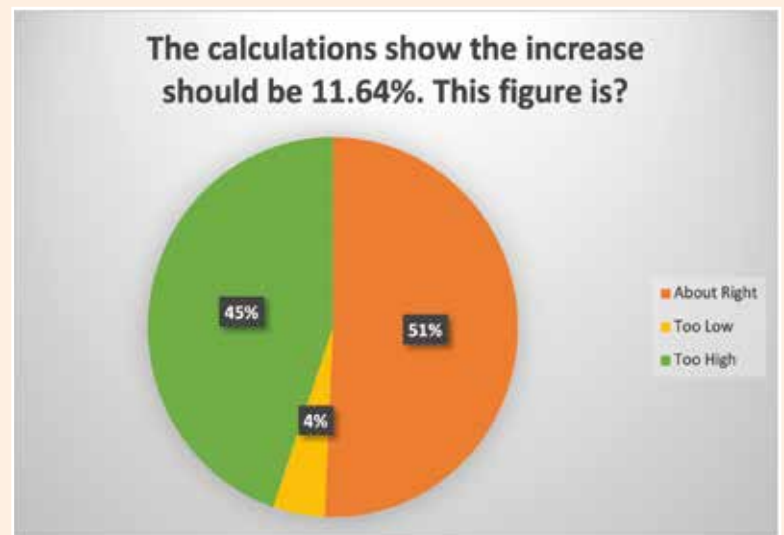
The LTDA conducted a survey of members to get their views on taxi fares and tariffs to understand what members would like to see and feel would be appropriate in the current climate. Over 2000 drivers responded to the survey conducted between 12th and 26th September. The results reveal a few points of clear agreement amongst respondents, as well as some clear lines of division on how to proceed.

Key Findings

- 78% of respondents said taxi fares are generally 'about right'.
- 51% of drivers responding felt that the projected 11.64% increase, was 'about right'.
- 45% thought the projected 11.64% increase was 'too high'.
- 49% of LTDA members who responded supported applying the full 11.64% increase to fares.
- 51% did not agree that the full 11.64% increase should be applied, the majority of these people favoured applying an increase of 7.61% instead.
- Nearly half of the respondents believed that the flag fall should remain at £3.80.
- The majority of respondents said that any increase should not be applied to Tariff 4.
- The majority of respondents felt that any increase should be applied equally across tariffs 1, 2 and 3.

Fares increase

51% of respondents felt that the projected 11.64% increase, was "about right" and presumably reflected the increased costs they are facing. 45% thought it was "too high".

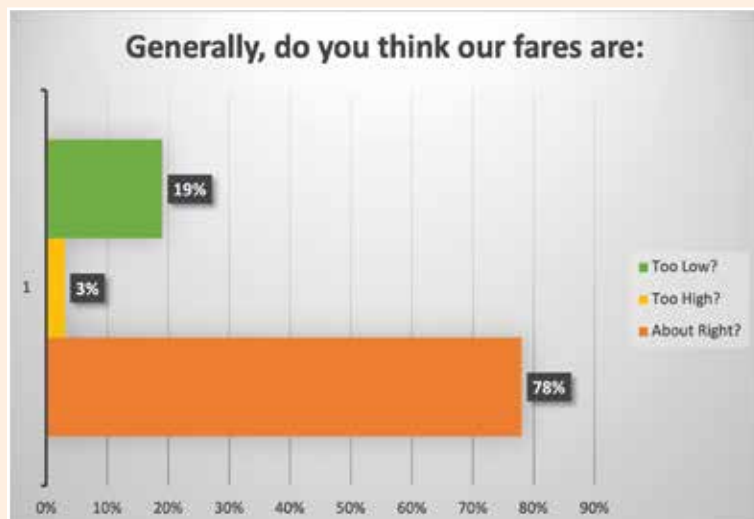


Survey results

The survey asked drivers for their general views on taxi fares and where they sit currently. It then looked to understand drivers views on what level of increase they felt would be appropriate, if any.

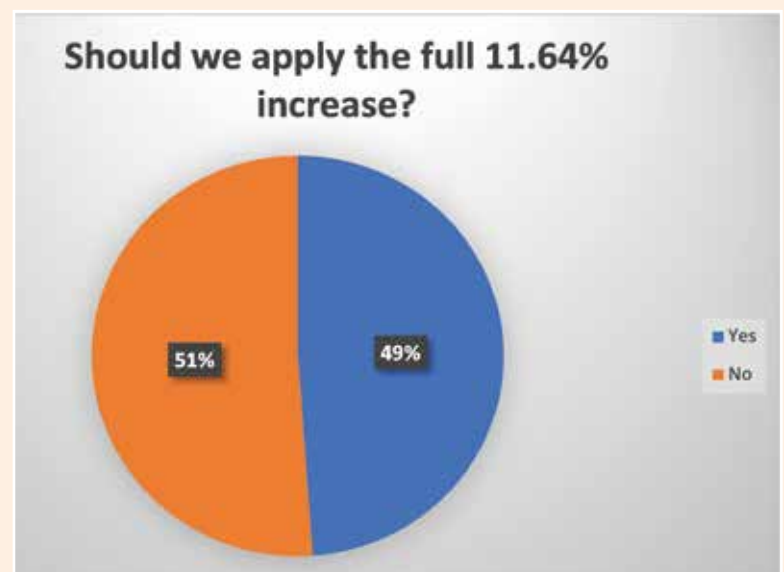
Current fare levels

The vast majority of drivers who responded (78%), felt that current taxi fares are generally 'about right'. However, in the face of the figures for inflation and cost increases across the board, the majority also believe that there should be some level of increase, to ensure taxi fares keep pace with rising costs.



The LTDA members responding to the survey were split down the middle on whether the full 11.64% increase should be applied with no clear way ahead evident from the responses.

51% of respondents felt that the full increase should not be applied to fares next April, whereas 49% believed the whole increase should be applied.

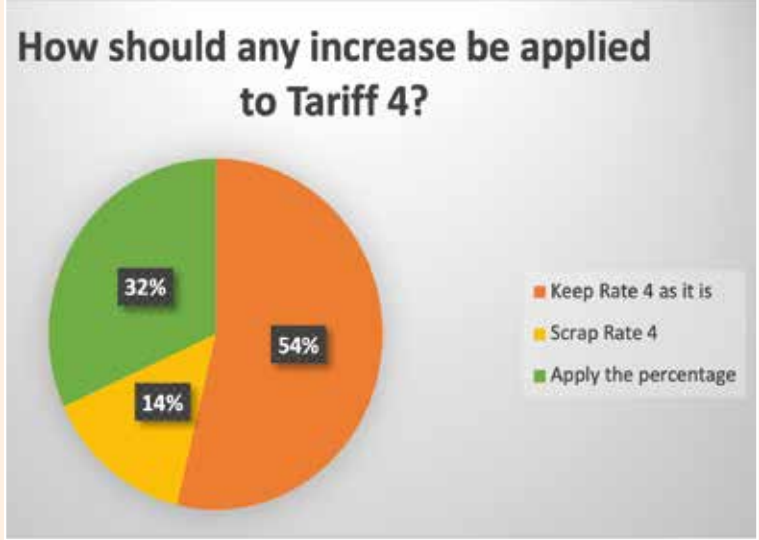
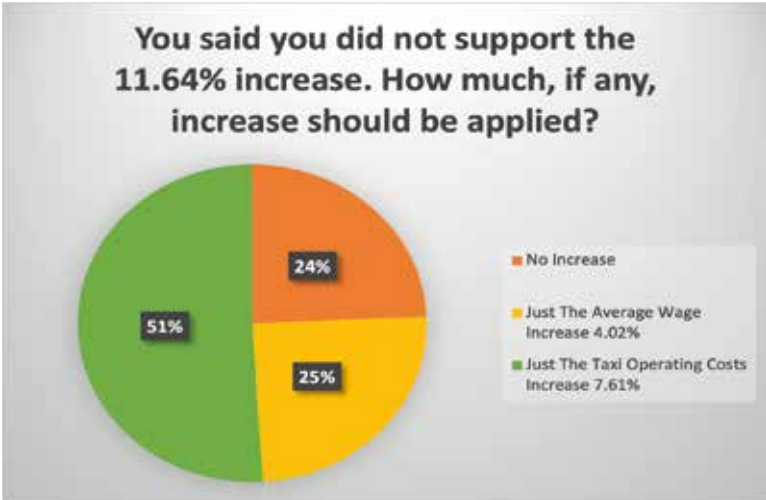




"Nearly half of the respondents believed that the flag fall should remain at £3.80."

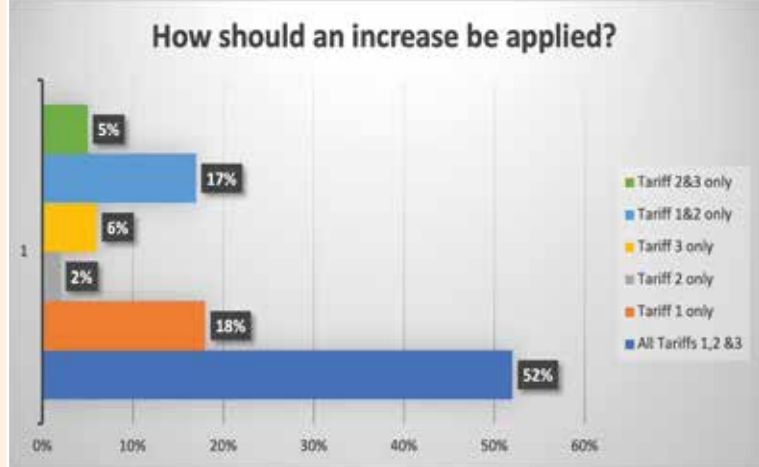
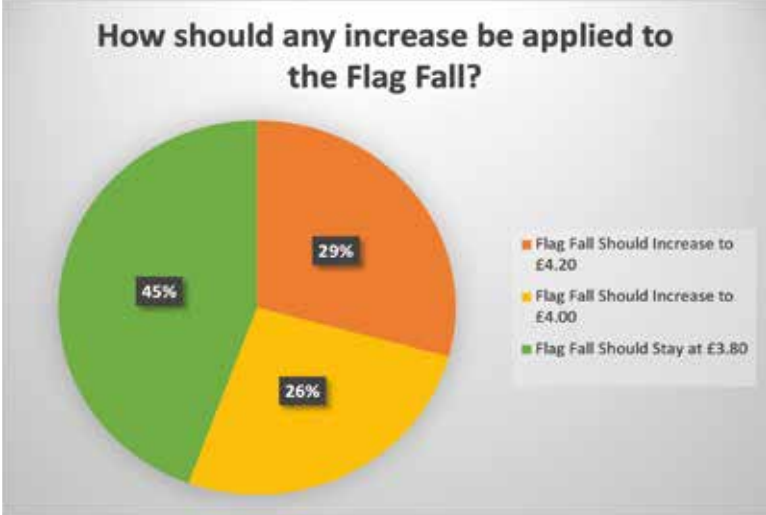
The 51% of respondents who stated that they do not believe that the full 11.64% increase should be applied were then asked what level of increase, if any, they believed should be applied next April. Over three quarters of these drivers (76%) agreed there should be an increase just at a lower level. There was less agreement amongst this group on the level of increase. Just over half of these people (51%) favoured applying the taxi operating costs increase of 7.61% instead of the full 11.64%, nearly a quarter (24%) felt that the average wage increase of 4.02% would be the more appropriate option.

There was broad agreement from a majority of respondents that any increase should not be applied to Tariff 4.



How should any increase be applied?
 Nearly half of the respondents (45%) believed that the flag fall should not increase and should remain at £3.80.

The majority of respondents (52%) felt that any increase should be applied equally across tariffs 1, 2 and 3.





The Zombie Government

As more of us are forced into what'll be a tough winter, adjustments need to be made.

A man in black

It is fair to say that the last few weeks have been a traumatic and turbulent right-of-passage for a lot of people in the United Kingdom. Boris Johnson's resignation as Prime Minister left the UK with a non-functioning 'zombie government', meandering around parliament like the cast of *The Walking Dead*.

We then had to endure one of the longest Conservative leadership campaigns in history: one that had arguably descended into nothing more than an exercise into narcissistic sociopathy; leaving two of the party's poorer options as a potential leader. Finally, Liz Truss' eventual leadership victory was overshadowed by the tragic passing of the Queen. To coin a phrase from Her Majesty, 2022 really could be annus horribilis, but prevail we must.

As current events now pale into the annals of history, several major problems still remain: one being the energy crisis. To be fair to Liz Truss, whether your politics is to the left, right or centre, it's evident the new PM has not just been thrown into the deep-end, she's been tossed in with an anvil chained to her legs. While her reaction to the crisis in holding the current price cap until the next General Election, and retaining the £400 energy grant for every household in the UK is welcome, it's not nearly enough.

Heat or Eat

With businesses across the UK seeing their energy bills multiply, Britain is rapidly descending into the worst energy crisis in living memory. When combined with the backdrop of a major European conflict, many fear that we could be slipping into the worst economic crisis since the Second World War. And, for many, this really could boil down to a case of heat or eat.

To put the price cap into perspective, the national average wage in the UK is just under £26,000, and the average household energy cost makes up around 10% of a



household's financial outgoings. Unbelievably, energy costs now equate to 35% of the state pension, for millions this really is a case of going cold or hungry. It is inevitable that people will die as a direct result of the continuing increases. It has also been predicted that because of the rising fuel costs, 70% of the UK's restaurant industry could be closing its doors this winter. And to add insult to injury, Goldman Sachs have predicted inflation to hit 22% by the end of next year. In the meantime, with the explosion of fuel and energy prices the Government is making a rather substantial sum via VAT on fuel and energy.

The numbers game

There is no easy way out of this situation unless, of course, you are relatively wealthy in the first place. So, to assist you in your hour of need, here's a little price guide (per hour) on various domestic appliances that will help you manage better from the effects of cost of living.

Heating and electric

- 1-2 kWh fan heater/electric radiator - 52p-£1.04
- 3 kWh immersion heater - £1.56
- 5w LED light bulb - 0.26p
- 40w electric blanket - 2p
- 60w light bulb - 3.12p
- 7.5-10.8 kWh electric shower - 6.5p-9.3p per min

Kitchen appliances

- 8Kg Washing machine - 26p-55p per cycle
- Tumble Dryer - Heat Pump/Condenser - £1.13-£2.33 per cycle
- Dishwasher Slimline/Full size - 39p-49p per cycle
- Oven - 52p
- Electric hob halogen/induction per ring - 85p-£1
- Microwave 900w - 47p
- 200w slow cooker - 10p
- American style Fridge Freezer - 2.5p
- Freestanding fridge freezer - 1.45p
- Under counter fridge - 0.6p
- Electric kettle - 2p per min
- Toaster 2/4 slices - 2.2p-4.5p per 3 mins
- Air Fryer - 52p-67p

Entertainment

- 42-inch TV - 6p
- Computer monitor - 1p
- Amazon Echo Dot - 0.2p
- Laptop - 2.5p
- Xbox One S - 6p
- PS4 - 7p

Now, for those of you who drive an LEVC taxi, it will probably come as no surprise that the tipping point at which running on electric becomes more expensive than using petrol is approximately £0.665 per kWh. And therein lies a small silver lining. As the cost of electric rockets, petrol and diesel is starting to decrease.

One final point, avoid cancelling the direct debit for your energy bills. As a DD payee, you receive a discount in comparison to paying quarterly. Therefore those cancelling a DD could see their energy bills increase even further. You can also negotiate DD costs with your provider. ■ TAXI



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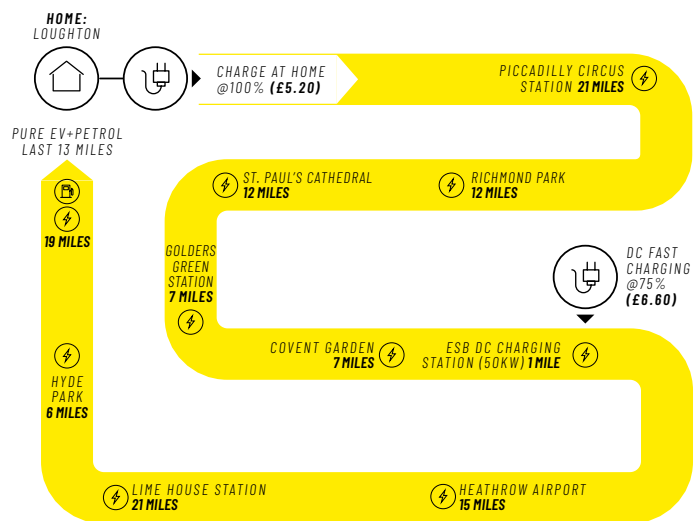
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The Plot Against Princess Anne

Looking at the impressive security on display at Queen Elizabeth II's funeral, it's easy to assume that the Royal Family are untouchable.

Rob's history tips

It's hard to fathom, but there were times in the past when security around certain Windsors was very lax, as demonstrated on the evening of 20th March, 1974, when 26-year-old Ian Ball made an audacious attempt to kidnap the Queen's daughter, Princess Anne.

The dramatic events unfolded at 8pm when Anne and her husband, Mark Phillips, were being chauffeured home in a maroon Rolls Royce, unaware that, since leaving a charity event, they'd been tailed by Ian Ball in his white Ford Escort.

On the Mall, by the junction with Marlborough Road, Ball swiftly overtook the royal party and swung his car in front to form a roadblock. He then leapt out, brandishing a pistol in each hand.

At first, Inspector Beaton, who was the only bodyguard assigned to Anne and Mark, assumed the man was an irate motorist. He too got out, and was promptly shot in the shoulder.

Beaton was armed and fired back, although his injury impacted his aim and after managing to fire just once, his gun jammed.

Despite being wounded, Beaton managed to make it back to the Rolls Royce, leading Ball to shoot twice more, striking the bodyguard in the hand and torso.

Chauffeur Alexander Callender now tried to apprehend the attacker but he too was shot, taking a bullet to the chest.

With two men down, Ball began wrenching at the car's doors, shouting that he'd shoot if they didn't open.

Anne and Mark fought back, but before long Ball managed to force his way in on Anne's side, ordering the Princess out, to which she replied, "Not bloody likely."

Unsurprisingly, this commotion quickly began to attract the attention of passersby, the first being 22-year-old PC Michael Hills.

Believing the aggravation was the result of a car accident, Hills went to place his arm on



Ball's shoulder in an attempt to calm him, but when he did, Ball turned and shot the Constable in the liver. Despite this, PC Hills managed to radio for help as he crumpled to the ground.

Next on the scene was Ronald Russell; a 6'4" former boxer from Bethnal Green. He was driving home from work, and when he saw PC Hills being shot at, his pugilistic instincts kicked in: Ball "needed sorting," he'd later tell reporters.

As Russell marched towards the chaos, another motorist intervened, parking his vehicle in front of Ball's Ford Escort to prevent escape, whilst John McConnell, a Daily Mail journalist who recognised the Royal car, also became involved, saying to Ball, "Don't be a silly boy; put the gun down," a comment for which he too was shot.

With four men now collapsed and bleeding, Ball returned his attention to Anne, not noticing Russell approaching. He did soon enough though, when the ex-boxer punched him in the back of the head.

This gave Anne time to escape, and as she climbed out of the Rolls Royce, her would-be kidnapper spun around and fired at Russell. The bullet missed,

striking a taxi's windscreen. Russell then whacked Ball square in the face.

Despite being stunned by two hefty punches, Ball managed to stagger away and took off through St James's Park. He was soon apprehended by Detective Constable Peter Edmonds, who threw his coat over Ball's head before tackling him to the ground.

Following his arrest, a ransom note was discovered on Ball, which was addressed directly to the Queen, and revealed that he was going to ask for £3 million (approximately £23 million in today's money) and a pardon for Anne's safe return.

It also transpired that he'd rented a property in the town of Fleet in Hampshire where he planned to hold Princess Anne, keeping her drugged on Valium.

It was ascertained that Ball, who claimed he'd intended to donate all of the ransom money to the NHS, suffered from severe mental health issues, and as such was detained in Broadmoor Hospital where, now in his 70s, he remains to this day.



Fortunately, all of those who were shot in the incident recovered from their injuries, and those involved received bravery awards from the Queen.

For his part, former boxer Russell was handed the George Medal and, upon receiving it from Queen Elizabeth II, was told, "The medal is from the Queen, but I want to thank you as Anne's mother." ■ TAXI

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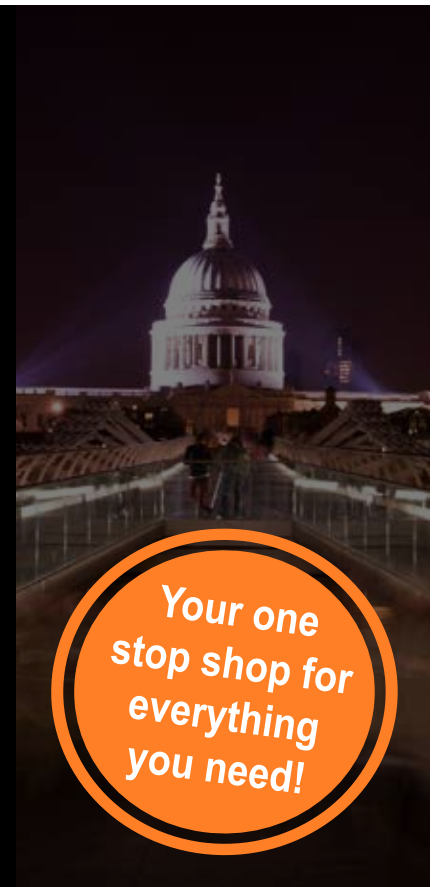
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A Passage Through Time

The city you drive through during your working day is known as the great metropolis.

Footprints & foundations

During the last 14 months, I have been documenting the City of London's ancient heritage. The city you drive through during your working day is known as the great metropolis.

The landscape of London encompasses many distinct environs where development and social history define each location. I'll take you on a journey of discovery beyond the Square Mile and uncover the mystery of this historic place. It is important to walk through the timeline of history and have a physical presence. The view from the street is a very different experience from behind the windscreen of a cab.

In the concluding article on the City of London, the focus is on the post-war period. This refers to the end of World War II. London, during the war years, became a place of devastation. Fires, craters and rubble dominated the landscape, where a huge loss of life endured. For Germany to invade England they would need the command of the skies. In the Blitz of 1941, there was a sustained effort by the German air force to bomb the capital into submission. Thankfully, the Royal Air Force's brave pilots had the advantage of a superior fighter aircraft, namely 'the Spitfire.' Remarkably, against the odds, the RAF was victorious. This did not prevent the further destruction of the capital, as bombing continued unabated.

Out of the Ashes

On 1st September, 1945, the Second World War ended. Germany had surrendered to the allied forces and the war in Europe was over. Londoners came out en masse to celebrate. Colourful scenes of joy and melancholy at Piccadilly Circus and Trafalgar Square. Amongst the weary population there was a realisation that six years of terror had finally ended. The bombardment of the capital had left a place of fallen bricks and dust. An observer at the top of St Paul's Cathedral inspected the landscape; as he looked out in



The Barbican

every direction, he saw graphic images. Familiar buildings obliterated from the skyline.

The city rose from the ashes, although this was a slow process. Britain had sacrificed everything to defeat the Nazis in Europe. The country was exhausted and bankrupt. By the end of the 1950s, the government encouraged architects to advance grand schemes of avant-garde designs. The bombed-out neighbourhoods of the capital now had an opportunity to rebuild with conviction.

Barbican

One of the first major developments was the Barbican, located on the northern perimeter of the City of London. This area was completely flattened in the Blitz and was ready for construction. The unusual name 'Barbican' is derived from the Latin word 'Barbecana', which referred to a fortified outpost or gateway, where a guard could keep watch over the surrounding city and countryside.

When the Barbican was first built its architectural design became an extremely contentious

issue amongst the general public. To the observer looking at the new structure for the first time, they may conclude that it is a concrete carbuncle and the character is completely out of touch with the city's ancient buildings. The Corporation of London and the London County Council owned the land. Together they took a bold move creating a futuristic residential development in the Square Mile.

In 1956, the Minister for Housing, Duncan Sandys, proposed that the site north of London Wall would form a residential neighbourhood, incorporating schools, shops, open spaces and amenities. Within the complex, a cultural centre was created; devoted to the arts that would rival Europe's artistic hubs. The architects Chamberlin, Power and Bon were commissioned to prepare a plan. The construction got underway in 1965 and was completed in 1976. The three tall towers that dominate the estate (Lauderdale, Shakespeare and Cromwell Towers) were once the tallest buildings in Europe. The flats started out as rentals for

professionals although they are mostly private now. The average price of a flat there today stands at £900,000. Office buildings are also located in the Barbican, where lawyers and financial services are most prevalent. The Barbican Arts Centre is one the capital's most popular venues.

The Concrete Maze

Whilst conducting my research I took a walk through the Barbican. Even though I have meandered through this location several times, I have to admit I got slightly lost. I realised that I was not alone, as many tourists were gazing at maps trying to assess where they were. A few engaged with me and asked if I knew the way out. One referred to the Barbican as a concrete maze; I could not disagree with him. The Barbican, although thought of as a misguided construction when built, has become popular in the present day. Londoners are downgrading from houses to move into Grade II listed residences. Contact Phil at journeythroughtime@hotmail.com **TAXI**

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Movie Corner

Amon Warmann returns to review the latest film releases in the UK.

Reel Talk

New Line Cinema



Don't Worry Darling (15) ⓘ

Olivia Wilde announced herself as a director to watch with 2019's *Booksmart*, a coming-of-age buddy comedy powered by two great performances. But while her sophomore effort earns points for ambition, showcases some impressive directorial craft, and is anchored by another sensational central turn, some script issues hold it back from eclipsing her debut.

It all starts off well enough, as we're introduced to a world in which Alice (Florence Pugh) and Jack (Harry Styles) are happily married and madly in love; living in the remote and apparently idyllic community of Victory. Slowly but surely, however, Alice starts to realise that something is off. The build-up is ultimately much more satisfying than the (easily guessable) reveal, which feels rushed and doesn't follow through on the many interesting themes at play. Additionally, characters like Kiki Layne's Margaret are utterly wasted.

But even though the film doesn't reinvent the wheel, Pugh's terrific performance ensures that we're never bored. And while Styles' turn is fine if forgettable, Chris Pine is magnetic in his own right as Victory's founder, Frank. A tense scene set at a dinner table in which he matches wits and words with Pugh's Alice is easily the highlight of the movie. If only there were more moments like this to speak of.



Don't Worry Darling is in cinemas now.



Apple Studios

Sidney (12A) ⓘ

Pioneer is a word that is overused, but it absolutely applies to Sidney Poitier. The actor and civil rights activist became Hollywood's first Black superstar in the 1950s and 1960s, opening doors that many a Black entertainer has since walked through. His legacy is unassailable. And so the task for director Reginald Hudlin was to honour all the incredible things that Poitier had accomplished, while also humanising him.

It's a mission that is mostly successful. Along with the titular man himself – who recorded two days worth of interviews for the project before he passed – talking heads like Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman, Oprah Winfrey (who is also a producer on the film), Spike Lee, Halle Berry, Robert Redford, and more are all on hand to help tell Poitier's story. Some time is dedicated to some of the mistakes he made with his personal life, as well as some of the "Uncle Tom" pushback he received from the Black community. That helps ensure that Sidney isn't a complete hagiography, but make no mistake – even if you already knew much of his story, you'll still walk away from this documentary with renewed appreciation for the game-changing impact Poitier had. And that is exactly as it should be.



Sidney is in cinemas now.

20



TriStar Pictures

The Woman King (15) ⓘ

Gina Prince-Bythewood has made a career out of spotlighting dark-skinned Black women like Sanaa Lathan in 2000's *Love & Basketball*, or Gugu Mbatha-Raw in *Beyond the Lights*. And with *The Woman King*, she gets to do that on her biggest canvas yet in telling the story of the Agojie, an all-female unit of warriors that defends the West African kingdom of Dahomey in the 1820s. Led by General Nanisca (a phenomenal Viola Davis), the battle sequences are energetic and hard-hitting, with the skill and fearsomeness of Dahomey's defenders leaping off the screen.

Seeing this many dark-skinned Black women kicking ass at the same time is not something we've ever really witnessed in a movie, and for that revolutionary fact alone *The Woman King* is worth watching. But it's also about much more than that. The revisionist stance on the Dahomey's part in the slave trade is welcome, and plays a key role in the narrative. There are also themes of sisterhood and mentorship – the interpersonal dynamics between Davis' Nanisca, Agojie lieutenants Amenza (Shiela Atim) and Izogie (Lashana Lynch), and rookie-in-training Nawi (Thuso Mbedu) is where Prince-Bythewood's writing shines brightest. Here's hoping it helps to inspire many more stories with Black women at the forefront.



The Woman King is in cinemas now.

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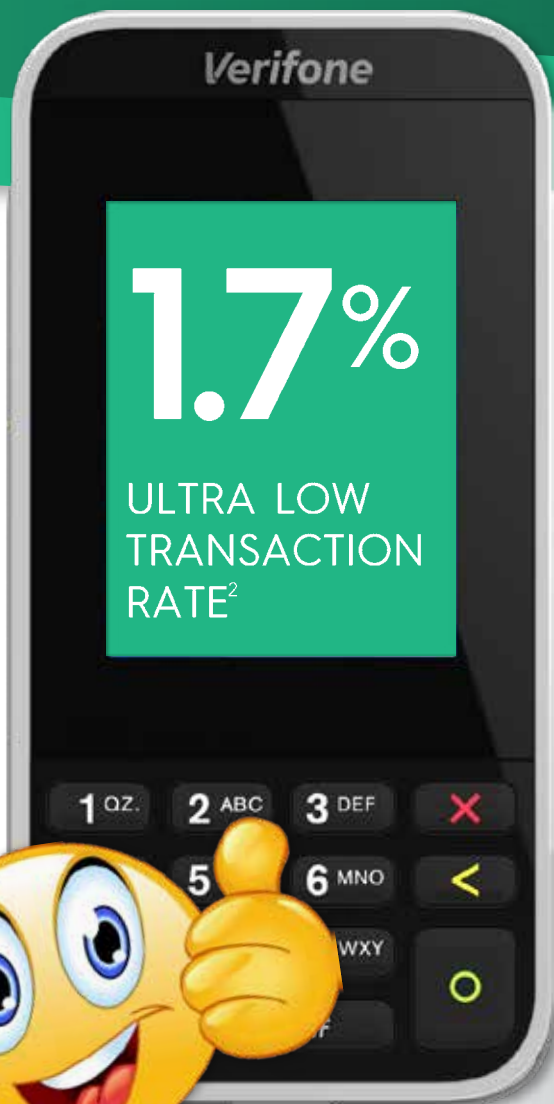
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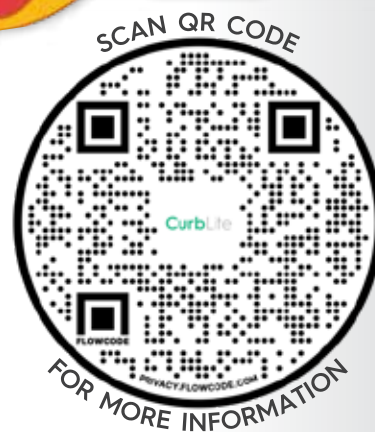


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Mark Monroe - TAXI Talks

Working as a cabbie, Mark Clayton, known more widely by his stage name, Mark Monroe, discovered a passion for learning about London and the people and places that reveal its rich history.

In 2019, Mark decided to set up a *YouTube* Channel, Secrets of London, to share his passion for London with others. It later became a series on *London Live* and you may have seen him on TV, clad in his infamous brown leather jacket, revealing one of London's hidden gems or untold stories. *TAXI* spoke to Mark about what inspired him to do this and how it fits alongside his day-to-day life as a London licensed taxi driver.



Becoming a cabbie

Mark came to the cab trade by chance. He was in-between jobs and staying with a friend, who owned a pub. Helping out behind the bar one night, he got chatting with a cabbie and he thought "it sounded like a great job." Like most people, Mark loved the idea of being his own boss. He was also intrigued by "this little thing called the Knowledge", that the cabbie told him was a pre-requisite to become a London black taxi driver.

At the time, Mark didn't quite realise what the Knowledge entailed. When he went to find out more, he realised what a big undertaking it was and the level of commitment required, but as he explained "if I decide to do something, I am going to do it." And he did. He set himself clear goals and three and half years later, he was out.

He has been driving a cab since 2005. He says that the cab trade has been good to him. He notes that, "there are ups and downs in any job," but he wouldn't change a thing. For him, London's cab trade will always represent "the gold standard," and he seems proud to be part of it. He also welcomes the fact that driving a cab gives him the freedom and time to pursue his media work.

Unlocking London's secrets

Driving the cab, Mark found he had the opportunity to discover "hidden parts of London," and he would always try to find out the story behind little things like a plaque or doorway, which many people might simply walk past and not give a second thought. As he discovered these 'secrets,' he wanted "to find a way to document all of them." Eventually, he told *TAXI* that he thought, "hey, I know, I'll do the YouTube thing."

Mark's *YouTube* channel, Secrets of London is designed to be a kind of "living document" of everything he has learned in 15 years in the trade. "My videos are all about showing people the small, unique, quirky bits and discovering new points." This could be anything from the story behind a little noticed statue to a popular pastime being embraced by Londoners, with historic roots. He said, "it's about sharing all these things through the lens of a London cab driver." One of his recent videos looked at Mudlarking, which is when people scavenge on the river mud of the Thames for items of value. It was a way of life in late 18th and 19th century London and is now an increasingly popular hobby, requiring a special permit.

As Mark's channel explains, it's not about rehashing the same old tourist attractions. "I won't be taking you to Buckingham palace or the London Eye, however if you want to discover a London that isn't in the guidebooks, then this is the channel for you, and the best thing about it, all the places I'll take you to are totally free!" He explained further, "if I can introduce someone to something new, I've done my job."

to Secrets of London Star

SECRET LONDON

WITH MARK MONROE



Learning the ropes

When he first started making videos in 2019, Mark tells me he didn't know what he was doing. Looking back, he remarks that "his early attempts were awful." He explains that he felt awkward presenting and had plenty of technical difficulties, as his tripod kept falling over! Once he got the right equipment and a bit of practice, it started to come more naturally.

Mark may not have been a natural at the beginning, but his flair for presenting and videography are now clear to see. He films ninety percent of the content alone. He uses various bits of kit and a lot of long shots and cutaways to make it feel like a more professional, TV-style video, which most people would assume has been filmed by a camera man. This is what made it a good fit for TV.

As he became more confident and his videos more professional, Mark gained a substantial following. Over 2500 people currently subscribe to his channel and each video receives hundreds, if not thousands of views. This resulted in his videos being picked up by *London Live*, which has now run two seasons of *Secrets of London*, to a great reception from viewers.

Inspiration everywhere

Now, whenever he is driving the cab, Mark is always on the lookout for new ideas worth filming. Once he spots something, he does his research and speaks to others, who might be able to give him more information and help him develop a good story. "It's all about the back story", he explains. Sometimes he said it doesn't work out, as there isn't enough to go on to make it interesting.

He is currently researching Marble Arch, after visiting the disastrous (now closed), Marble Arch Mound. Looking down from the mound, he noticed sky lights in Marble Arch and wondered what they were for. He has since been trying to gain access to top of the Arch and hopes to tell its story. He thinks he has located the right door and is now trying to get his hands on a key, working with the Royal Parks and Met Police.

A lot of Mark's videos are also inspired by people's lives and experiences. As Mark said "people make London." Other cabbies are also a great source of ideas and intel. As he explains, every cabbie has their own unique take on and Knowledge of London, "if you got ten cabbies in a room, imagine how much they would know!" He also gets many ideas from customers, who make suggestions of unique places he could feature.

Thanks for sharing your stories Mark. We can't wait to see what's next.

You can subscribe to *Secrets of London* on YouTube

www.youtube.com/c/MarkMonroeSecretsofLondon.

You can also follow Mark on Twitter @MarkMon79093040 and

Instagram @secretlondonpics.



Mark said he particularly enjoys it when he finds something, which links back to the cab trade. He shared some examples he thought our readers might be interested in.

Ray Holmes – Saviour of Buckingham Palace

Ray Holmes was a British Royal Air Force fighter pilot, who fought fearlessly to protect King and country in the Battle of Britain, during the Second World War. He is famous for a notable act of bravery, in which he reportedly saved Buckingham Palace from being bombed by the Germans on 15th September 1940. Ray took out two of three bombers making an assault on London. His attempts to shoot down the third, which looked to be heading towards the Palace, had failed and he had run out of ammunition. Unwilling to give up, Holmes is reported to have used his own plane, a Hurricane, to ram the German Dornier bomber, destroying it, before it could drop its payload. The Dornier crashed in the forecourt of Victoria Station. Holmes was then forced to bail out of his own plane, which was damaged and crashed on Buckingham Palace Road. After landing safely under his parachute, Ray reportedly hailed a taxi, which took him back to RAF Hendon to re-join his squadron. The remains of his plane were excavated 63 years later, as part of a *Channel 5* documentary, *Fighter Dig Live*. Ray, who was then 79 years old, was there to see it. He subsequently passed away in 2005, at the age of 90.

Frederick Hitch – The Cabbie Hero

Frederick Hitch was born in Southgate in 1856. At the age of 20, he enlisted with the 24th regiment foot, and headed off to South Africa to fight in the British Empire's war against the Zulus. He was stationed at Rorke's drift medical post, which as portrayed famously by Michael Caine in the film *Zulu*, was the site of an epic battle in January 1879. During the battle, Private Hitch kept up vital communications between the defences and the hospital. Whilst holding a position and drawing fire from a nearby hillside, he was wounded and had to be rushed to hospital. He was patched up by a surgeon and immediately went back out to help other wounded people and ferry ammunition to the front lines. Following the battle, he was sent back to England to recover from his injuries. Upon his return, he was awarded the prestigious Victoria Cross, one of the highest awards a British soldier can receive. Back in London, Hitch struggled to find and keep work, as his battle wounds caused him lifelong problems. Eventually, he found his way to becoming a London horse drawn taxi driver. He had his own two horses and was able to make a good living, before later switching to a motorised taxi. During this period, he lived and later died in Chiswick. You can see the English Heritage plaque on his former home. He is buried in St Nicholas' Church Yard, just down from Chiswick mound.

■ TAXI

Selfridges

The world famous Selfridges department store can be considered as big a part of the capital as Tower Bridge or London cabbie. Situated on the western end of Oxford Street, it is the second largest department store in the UK with a current turnover exceeding half-a-billion pounds across this and its other three stores. Founded in 1908 by Henry Gordon Selfridge, this tourist destination and monument to high-end shopping carries the honour of a rather unusual first.

Selfridge inadvertently became a trend-setter and started a design feature which is in use to this very day. The conscientious department store owner, who lived by the maxim 'the customer is always right', identified a problem which could have affected footfall into the store - manure.

At the turn of the 1900s, London's streets were a mixture of open sewers and depositing grounds for horse manure, meaning the streets stank. Selfridge, not wishing his clientele to endure such suffering in his store, situated the perfume counter directly at the front and centre of the ground floor. This was no hardship for the department store owner, as he was a lover of fine fragrances. However, this was all part of the American's masterplan to create a fun and pleasurable shopping experience.

With it an interesting quirk also emerged. Despite it being the height of fashion, very little red lipstick was sold in-store; it was also sold very discreetly. There is no explanation to this curiosity, however, this did not detract from the perfume and makeup counter's popularity.

As a result of Selfridge's policy surrounding his perfume counter, almost every major department store subsequently adopted the same idea - a policy which continues to this very day.



Electric Avenue

For many, the name Electric Avenue is nothing more than a street in Brixton immortalised in the titular song by Eddy Grant in 1982, reaching number 2 in both the UK and US charts. It was also the scene of a bomb explosion that injured 39 people. However, did you know that it was the first market street to be illuminated by electric light?

Following the opening of the railway in 1862, the population started to expand in the area, as Brixton had become a middle-class suburb. As a result of this more infrastructure was developed to accommodate the burgeoning masses. Part of this infrastructure was a major shopping area.

In 1870, Brixton Market was opened. The area quickly became a major shopping hub and, in the 1880s, Electric Avenue was developed. This development saw the street's iron canopy bedecked with an array of lights. This attracted people in their droves, making an already popular shopping area even more popular.



By the turn of the century, the market had gone into decline as the middle-classes moved away from the area. However, the market has survived and is still a popular area for locals to shop, although the elegant cast iron canopies have long since gone.

In 2016, as part of a £1million refurbishment, Eddy Grant was invited to switch on a new illuminated street sign. After the event, Grant was given one of the previous signs as a keepsake.

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW

LONDON?

Buckingham Palace

With the sad passing of the Queen, both Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle became major focal points for the general public during the period of mourning for the beloved monarch. But did you know that Buckingham Palace was not built specifically as a royal residence?

Built in 1703, on a site that had been in private ownership since the mid 1550s, the palace was originally known as Buckingham House. John Sheffield, later to become the first Duke of Buckingham and Normanby, purchased the site of the palace in 1698, from Mary Davies, the great grand-niece of money-lender and lawyer Hugh Audley.

Sheffield commissioned William Winde to design the property, which originally consisted of a large three-floor central block flanked by two service wings. Upon Sheffield's death, the property passed to his illegitimate son, Sir Charles Sheffield, who subsequently sold the property for £21,000 to King George III, in 1761.

The King purchased the property so that it could be used as a private residence for Queen Charlotte. It then became known as the Queen's House, and she bore 14 of her 15 children there. The name Buckingham Palace was then used from 1791 onward.

Since its original construction, numerous renovations and extensions have taken place on the building and eventually became an official London residence to the monarchy in 1837.



■ TAXI

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‘The Professionals’

– What sets those with ‘The Knowledge’ apart from the rest?

What does it mean to be a professional in 2022? When does an occupation or a job become professionalised? What makes those with ‘The Knowledge’ different from other “... suppliers of transportation services...?”

A brief background search produces suggestions as to what the make-up of a ‘professional activity’ might involve. Modern definitions include notions of ‘accountability; integrity; competency; knowledge and qualifications’ – deprive a Knowledge Boy or Girl of a 5G network and these skills would still exist, though some other ‘suppliers of transportation services’ might well struggle!

Some of the key ingredients of ‘professionalism’ involve:

‘The deployment of formal certified learning’

Can other ‘suppliers of transportation services’ really claim to be engaged in doing this? Possibly, though that might depend on the depth and quality of learning involved in order to be accredited. In what world can those that pass ‘The Knowledge’ be compared to the learning involved to obtain other road-based transportation service operator licenses?

‘A professional owns the power, skills and freedom to problem solve.’

It’s pretty certain that an individual having the means to purchase and blindly follow a mobile device with a sat-nav app doesn’t meet this threshold. ‘Knowledge Boys & Girls’ have in-built ‘chips and processors’ that deploy real knowledge, in real time. Out on the roads, real professionalism isn’t dependent on the battery life of a mobile device or if that device knows that the football kicked off late or is going to penalties - which will impact on both journey time and route choice.

‘A professional possesses the ability to make decisions in the best interests of others.’

We know that this level of responsibility is based on the use of specific, localised, operational expertise - rather than hoping a digital device can provide an AA graded Knowledge rating of a route selection in line with

traffic conditions, whilst ensuring a disabled passenger arrives at the entrance to their hotel which has suitable wheelchair access and porter assistance.

Those who possess ‘The Knowledge’ and have responded to the strength of the calling to the highest standards of the profession don’t just know the optimum route within an ever-changing landscape, they know its history too. If the formation of a professional identity is also about ‘**providing a specialised service to society**’, those professionals with the ability to share that learning with their passengers are actually, inter-generational custodians of present-day and historical London knowledge. Black cab drivers are trusted ‘old school influencers’ in relation to the sites, attractions, facilities, services and cultural traditions of the capital - including being ambassadors of a historic trade, which is known as the best taxi service in the world.

All this, whilst transporting passengers in the most direct and safest manner, in accordance with codes, ethics and the standards of a professional community of operators.

Those with ‘The Knowledge’ have often picked up and are moving before a passenger has informed them of their destination - professionals are not sat around backing up traffic, typing postcodes into gadgets, in the hope a device can professionalise their practice and make them what they are not.

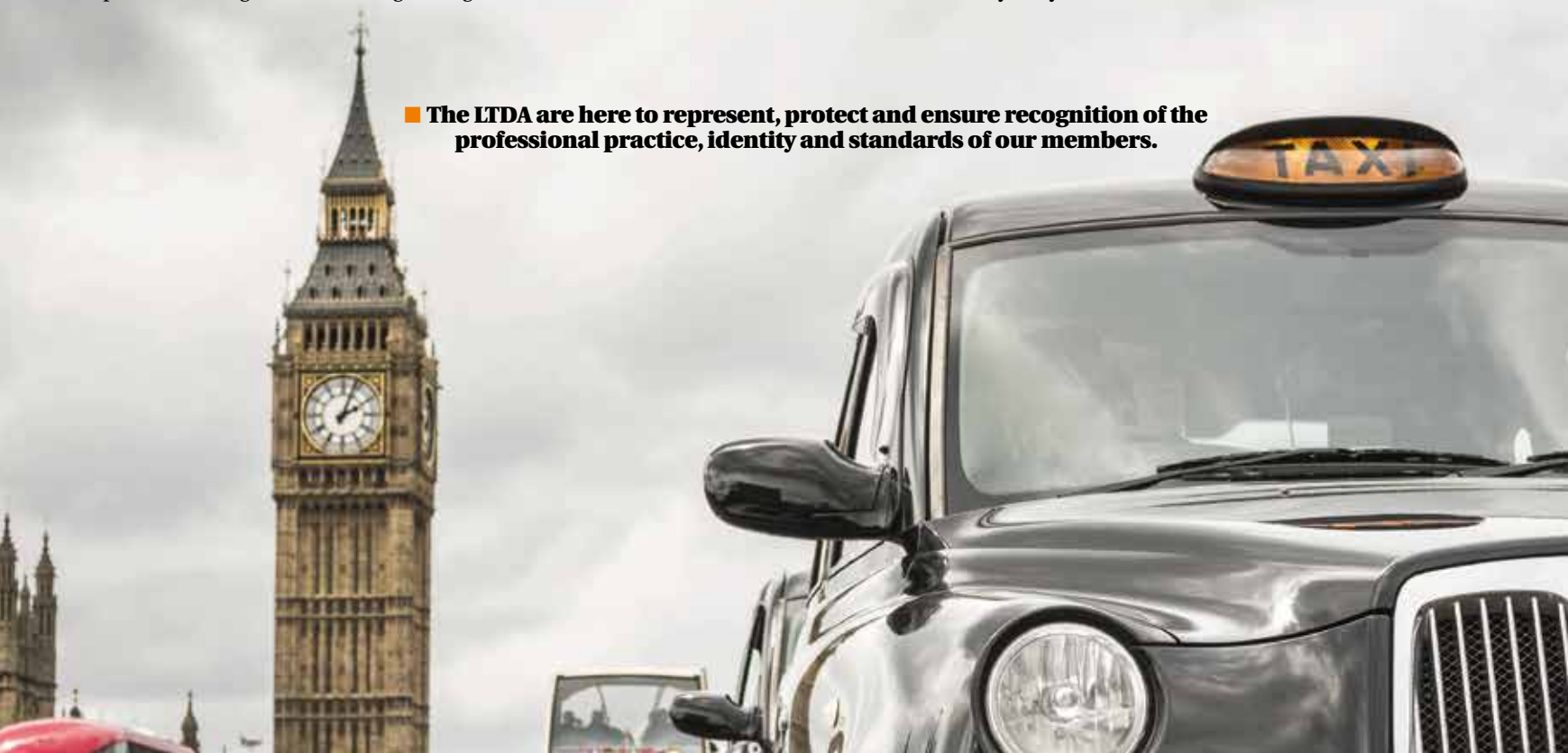
When people are lost - a professional finds them and gets them where they need to go. When they are too tired to go on - a professional takes the reins and when they are late for what’s important to them, professional road craft and knowledge get them to their destination safely and quickly.

So how are those with ‘The Knowledge’ valued and whose responsibility should it be to promote the identities and activities of such professionals, in turn separating them from other “suppliers of transportation services...?”

You are professionals. We know it.

Let’s ensure everybody else knows it and values it too.

■ **The LTDA are here to represent, protect and ensure recognition of the professional practice, identity and standards of our members.**



LTDA APPLICATION FORM

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone..... Mobile.....

Email..... Twitter

Date of Birth..... Badge No.....

Badge colour (Please state whether green or yellow)..... Year badge obtained.....

Suburban badge sector numbers.....

Have you ever been a member of the LTDA before? (please tick) Yes No

Do you currently have points on your DVLA driving license? (please tick) Yes No

If Yes how many points do you have?

Please tick if you **DO NOT** wish to receive information from the LTDA and other related organisations in the future?

I understand that my application for membership of the Association must be approved by the Council of Management and that until this is confirmed I am not eligible to vote in relation to any form of Association matters. I agree that all benefits prior to approval of membership shall be at the discretion of the Council of Management.

Please note: We do not provide assistance for any matters that have occurred prior to you joining LTDA.

Signed..... Date

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5 Signature(s)

Date

30



This guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer

The Direct Debit Guarantee

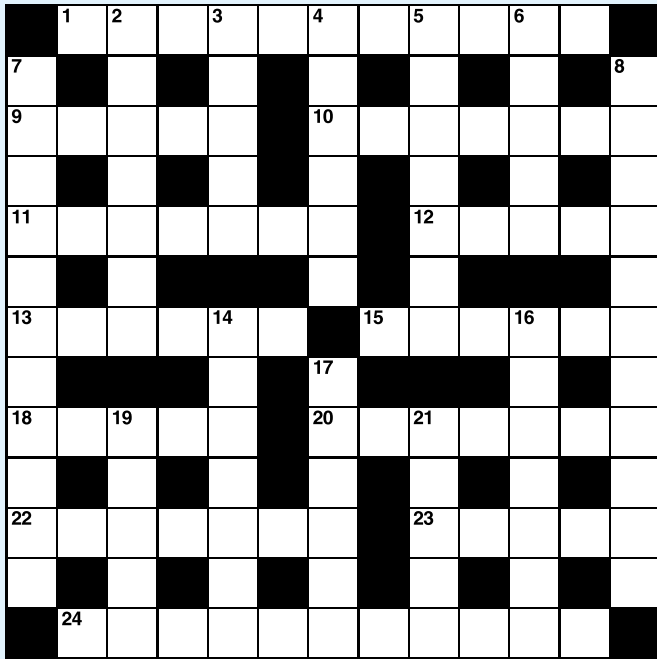


- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit LTDA will notify you (10 working days) in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request LTDA to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by LTDA, or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
 - If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when LTDA asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.



Puzzler page

Crossword



ACROSS

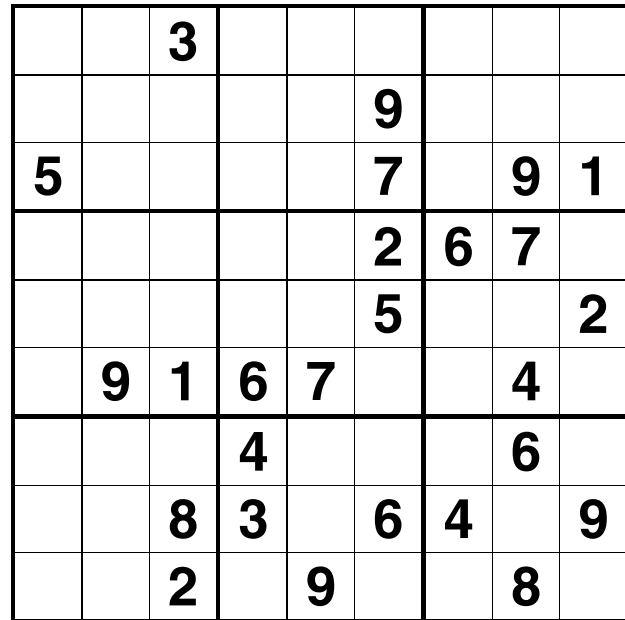
- 1 Form a co-ordinated set (3, 3, 5)
 9 Ring or stadium (5)
 10 Learn new skills (7)
 11 Badly raised (3-4)
 12 As the need arises (2, 3)
 13 Voracious (6)
 15 Less fresh (6)
 18 Belly (5)
 20 Bridge roll with a sugary topping (4,3)
 22 Bitterness (7)
 23 Balls of fluff on fabric (5)
 24 Sophisticated drinking venue (8, 3)

DOWN

- 2 Implicate (7)
 3 Only venomous snake in Britain (5)
 4 Mock (6)
 5 Draw (a crowd) (7)
 6 Single-decker comfy bus (5)
 7 Good beginning (6, 5)
 8 Thing appropriate to another time (11)
 14 Place for fixing boats (3, 4)
 16 Annual bedding plant (7)
 17 Rugged mountain range (6)
 19 Fruit often pickled to make chutney (5)
 21 Ban from school (5)

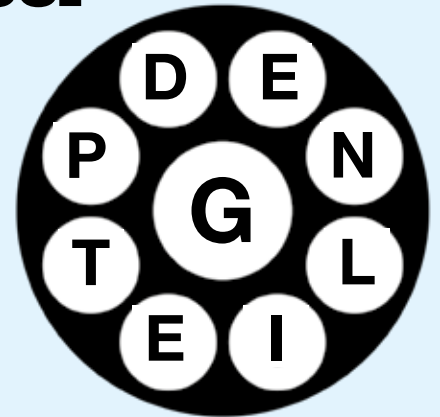
Sudoku

Have a go at this medium level Sudoku puzzle. Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 just once.



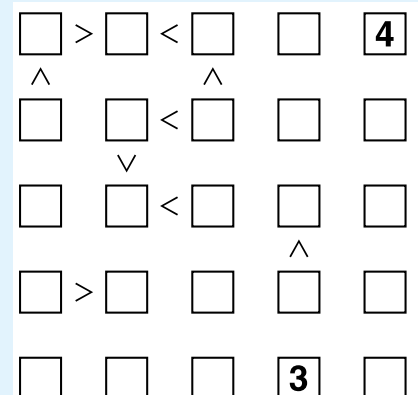
Wordwheel

How many words of four letters or more can you make from this Wordwheel? Each word must use the central letter, and each letter may be used once only. At least one nine-letter word can be found. We found 39 words - can you do better?



Futoshiki

Fill in the blank squares so that each row and column contains all the numbers 1 - 5. Use any given numbers and the symbols that tell you if the number in the square is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.



All answers to puzzler on p30

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miles 1 owner £10,000 – 07956 124487

● white tx4 64 reg. VGC. 104.000 miles £18.000 contact only Whatsapp 07397513634 MARK.

● TX Vista comfort plus 2019, LEVC Alpine white 7.5 year 150k warranty from 2019, very low mileage of 4000 miles owing to full time caring needs of mother, plated until March, £47,000 ONO call Dennis – 075254 37944

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LTDA CENTRAL BRANCH MEETING

Wednesday 26 October at 7pm.
The meeting will take place at
St Luke's Hall, St Luke's Street
SW3 3RP.

TAXI Charity Interview: A London Cabbie's Poignant Journey to the Netherlands

TAXI chats with driver Micky Harris about visiting the region for Wandeltocht.

TAXI Hi Micky, tell us a bit about yourself

Micky: I'm 61 and a widower from Gravesend. I retired from teaching after 25 years and am now a 'Butterboy' driving a TXE around London having got my bill in 2020.

TAXI So, how did you get involved with the Taxi Charity?

Micky: I had heard all about the Taxi Charity while I was doing the Knowledge and as soon as I could I volunteered to help, and have been fortunate to go on trips to the Netherlands and Normandy. What started as my involvement very soon became my late wife's as she loved joining me on trips and meeting the other cabbies, veterans and carers. Knowing about my recent bereavement, the charity group was so supportive and rallied around me to talk and spend time with me. It was very comforting.

TAXI We hear you've just returned from a trip. What was it like?

Micky: I can honestly say it was magical. I have only just lost my wife but the warmth and support from everyone on the trip was so very compassionate and really helped as I adjusted to life without Barbara.

TAXI We understand you had a very special veteran in your cab...

Micky: I did indeed! I was paired with Arnhem veteran Bill Larder, from Melton Mowbray, who served with the 11th Battalion Parachute Regiment and had not returned to the Netherlands since he parachuted in as part of Operation Market Garden in 1944.

TAXI Why had he not been back?

Micky: Like many veterans who fought at the Battle of Arnhem, he felt embarrassed that not only had the fighting destroyed the towns and villages, but they had failed in their objective and had left with the Dutch facing even more repercussions and hardship from the Germans. Bill felt like a failure and that he had let the people down.

TAXI What happened when Bill was located?

Micky: Nobody, including the Arnhem history experts, knew of his existence until recently. When they found Bill was alive and well, arrangements were made for him



and his two daughters to return to the Netherlands with the Taxi Charity for the Airborne celebration march also known as Wandeltocht.

TAXI What did his itinerary look like?

Micky: Our first appointment, when we got off the overnight ferry at the Hook of Holland, was to drive with the other cabs to The Hague to the Ambassador's residence, where we were welcomed by HM Ambassador Joanna Roper CMG. We then left the main group so that Bill could have a personal tour by Arnhem military expert Gerrit Pijpers, a retired Lt. Colonel in the Dutch Air Force. The following day, we drove to the Airborne Hartenstein Museum where the Director and Gerrit gave him a personal tour. The Museum is very informative as it houses not only memorabilia, uniforms, and weapons from the soldiers but also artefacts from the people who lived through the war.

After a stop at The Hotel Dreyeroord, also known as the White House, which was the heart of the northern defence, we travelled to join those cheering on the estimated 32,000 walkers, who participated in the Airborne commemorative march, called Wandeltocht. This was an amazing day for the Taxi Charity, as not only did we have London cab

driver Seb Philp and Taxi Charity volunteer and former Paratrooper Chris Wilmott walking the 40km route as part to their fundraising Market Garden Challenge, but a group of cabbies and volunteers walked a 15km section.

Afterwards we took Bill to Drop Zone Y on Ginkel Heath, where he had parachuted in on 17th September, 1944. Then, with Gerrit directing our route, we followed the path taken by Bill's unit towards the bridge at Arnhem and the point where, due to the strength of the German forces, they were pushed back and had to make an escape across the Rhine.

On Sunday morning, we had a very emotional visit to the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Oosterbeek. Gerrit took us to the section where the

graves of Bill's unit were positioned. In what was an overpowering moment, he looked for the first time at the grave of his friend.

TAXI How did Bill take to being interviewed by the media?

Micky: He spoke to several TV crews and newspapers over the weekend. It did make me smile when he was asked if this was his first time in the Netherlands and he said, "No, I was here in 1944."

TAXI What was Bill's overall experience?

Micky: I don't think any words or descriptions of the atmosphere can prepare you for the reception veterans get from Dutch people. Children, parents, and grandparents treat these people with such respect and want to shake their hands, shower them with thanks and have pictures with them. What they did will never be forgotten, as each generation tells the next of the sacrifice these men made.

TAXI Did you notice a change in Bill?

Micky: Being together seems to give them a tonic; they seem to walk taller, their shoulders lift as they smile and engage so much more. Bill's daughter, Jan, tells me that her father has been "transformed by this visit in a good way and was even singing a song that they used to sing whilst waiting to jump."

TAXI And finally, what does it mean (to you) to volunteer?

Micky: I never realised that part of being a cabbie meant there was this incredible bonus of being able to volunteer your time for an amazing charity and feel like your small contribution is making a real difference.

About the Taxi Charity

The Taxi Charity is run by volunteer London black taxi drivers and has been supporting thousands of veterans of all ages since 1948. The charity arranges free trips to Belgium, France and The Netherlands for acts of commemoration and days out to museums, concerts, or fundraising events across the UK, to catch up with friends and comrades.

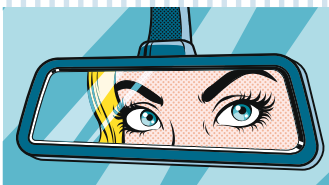
The charity was awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in June, 2021.

In 2023, the charity will be celebrating its 75th anniversary.

To fund and facilitate their work, the charity is reliant on generous donations, grants, and sponsorship.

www.taxicharity.org

■ TAXI



Please and Thank You

I know Paddington Bear said it first, and cuter, but my gratitude to this so, so special Monarch was heartfelt and very sincere.

A woman of words

“Thank you, Ma’am” is what I said to Her (late) Majesty as, after a nine-hour wait, I filed past as she lay in state in Westminster Hall in Westminster.

Standing in the queue was, I believe, time well spent so I could pay my respects. And big love to every cabbie who lined up on The Mall after her death. That was a seriously beautiful tribute.

I know Paddington Bear said it first, and cuter, but my gratitude to this so, so special Monarch was heartfelt and very sincere. I could not have admired the woman more.

But saying thank you seems to be going out of fashion.

Let’s start with my very own Rude Boy: the 20-month-old mini mini Meg. He has been

a little ray of sunshine since the day he arrived and now he has skidded, too early, into the terrible twos. He used to say “Tankoo Nana” whenever I handed him something nice; maybe a chopped-up piece of mango or a bubble to play with. Lately, no matter what I offer him, he shakes his head, wags a finger and shouts, “No! No! No!” Then he makes a grab for the goodies and runs off with them.

How is it that I can sort out a stropy punter in Acton Central at midnight when she’s not keen on paying her fare from Goldhawk Road, but I can’t handle a knee-high cutie monster?

Manners-wise, I was certainly bested last week when I popped into Waitrose, Mill Hill. I couldn’t be bothered to make a packed lunch when I left home for my shift, so I chose a lazy lunch of an egg sandwich in a plastic packet (sorry Greta), a banana and a lemon and lime

flavour sparkly water. At the till I put them on the belt and had my card out all ready to tap.

And then another customer swooped in front of me. She used her hand to push my shopping back into second place and thumped down her basket that contained a bottle of champagne, some chocolate sauce and a packet of 12 Durex.

This woman, tall, red-haired (from a box of Nice’n Easy, not home-grown) and high-heeled, didn’t say, “Excuse me, please” or “Do you mind?” or even “Look, sorry, I’m on a promise! He’s on his way over and I can’t wait in line”. In taxi language, she cut me up. Then turned and stared me out.

I am a strong believer in justice, fairness, and treating your neighbour as you would like to be treated yourself.

But did I want to roll around on the floor of a supermarket aisle to assert my right to buy



an egg sandwich? Apart from anything else, I was wearing a new cream cable stitch jumper from the Next Autumn collection. So, I gave in and waved my hands at her and said in a very magnanimous tone, “Please, go right ahead.”

And she did, but without a thank you so as she walked away, I blurted, “Thank you so much!” to the back of her head.

She turned and answered in a voice dripping with sarcasm, “You’re welcome, love!”

I hope her champagne, and everything else about her evening, was as flat as a pancake. ■ **TAXI**

LTDA A selection of our numerous Distribution Points

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- ◆ Abacus Accounts, Southbrook Road, Lee, SE12
- ◆ Astral Café, Regency Place, SW1
- ◆ Bubbles Car Wash, E2
- ◆ C & S Taxis, Dunbridge Street, E2
- ◆ Cabsurance, Seven Kings
- ◆ Camberfield Taxi Services
- ◆ Computer Cab, Mitre Way, W12
- ◆ Coney Allen, Dunbridge Street, E1
- ◆ CP Beehive Service Station, Beehive Lane, Gants Hill
- ◆ Cricklewood Carriers, Cricklewood
- ◆ Dial A Cab, City Road, N1
- ◆ Edgware Station Rank
- ◆ Euston Station Rank
- ◆ G & L Taxis, Crayford Road, N7
- ◆ Globe Transmissions, Cudworth Street, E1
- ◆ The Ham, Brentford
- ◆ Heathrow Airport Canteen
- ◆ Hexagon Garage, Lukin Street, E1
- ◆ Jet Garage, Clipstone Street, W1
- ◆ Knowledge Centre, Caledonian Road
- ◆ KPM, Hemming Street, E1
- ◆ London City Airport Canteen
- ◆ LP Motors, Dunbridge Street, E2
- ◆ Martin Cordell, Thomas Road, E14
- ◆ Paddington Station Rank
- ◆ Putney Bridge Taxis, The Arches, Putney Bridge Station, SW6
- ◆ Richmond Road Taxi Centre, E8
- ◆ Safewise Supermarket, Harrow
- ◆ South Bank Service Station, Great Suffolk Street, SE1
- ◆ TAXI HOUSE, Great Suffolk Street, SE1
- ◆ Taxi & Private Hire, Blackfriars Rd, SE1
- ◆ Temple Place Shelter
- ◆ Turbo Accessories, Three Colts Lane, E2
- ◆ Ubiquitous Ltd, E1
- ◆ Waterloo Station
- ◆ Wimbledon Station Rank
- ◆ WizAnn Knowledge School, Watts Grove, E3

PUZZLER ANSWERS



Crossword

	M	I	X	A	N	D	M	A	T	C	H	
F	N	D	E	T	O	A						
L	I	V	I	D	R	E	T	R	A	I	N	
Y	O	E	I	R	C	A						
I	L	L	B	R	E	D	A	D	H	O	C	
N	V	E	C	H								
G	R	E	E	D	Y	S	T	A	L	E	R	
S	R	S	O									
T	U	M	M	Y	I	C	E	D	B	U	N	
A	A	D	E	X	E	I						
R	A	N	C	O	U	R	P	I	L	L	S	
T	G	C	R	E	I	M						
	C	O	C	K	T	A	I	L	B	A	R	

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SUDOKU

9	2	3	1	8	4	7	5	6
8	1	7	5	6	9	2	3	4
5	6	4	2	3	7	8	9	1
4	8	5	9	1	2	6	7	3
7	3	6	8	4	5	9	1	2
2	9	1	6	7	3	5	4	8
3	5	9	4	2	8	1	6	7
1	7	8	3	5	6	4	2	9
6	4	2	7	9	1	3	8	5

Wordwheel

SOLUTION: DEPLETING

All words: Deign, deleting, edge, glen, glide, glint, glinted, ledge, legend, peeling, pelting, piglet, ping, pledge, teeing, tinge, tinged, tingle, tingled, DEPLETING.

Word targets: Excellent: 31, Good: 26, Target: 19, Kids: 14

Futoshiki

2	>	1	<	3	5	4
	^			^		
3		4	<	5	1	2
			v			
1		3	<	4	2	5
				^		
5	>	2		1	4	3
4		5		2	3	1



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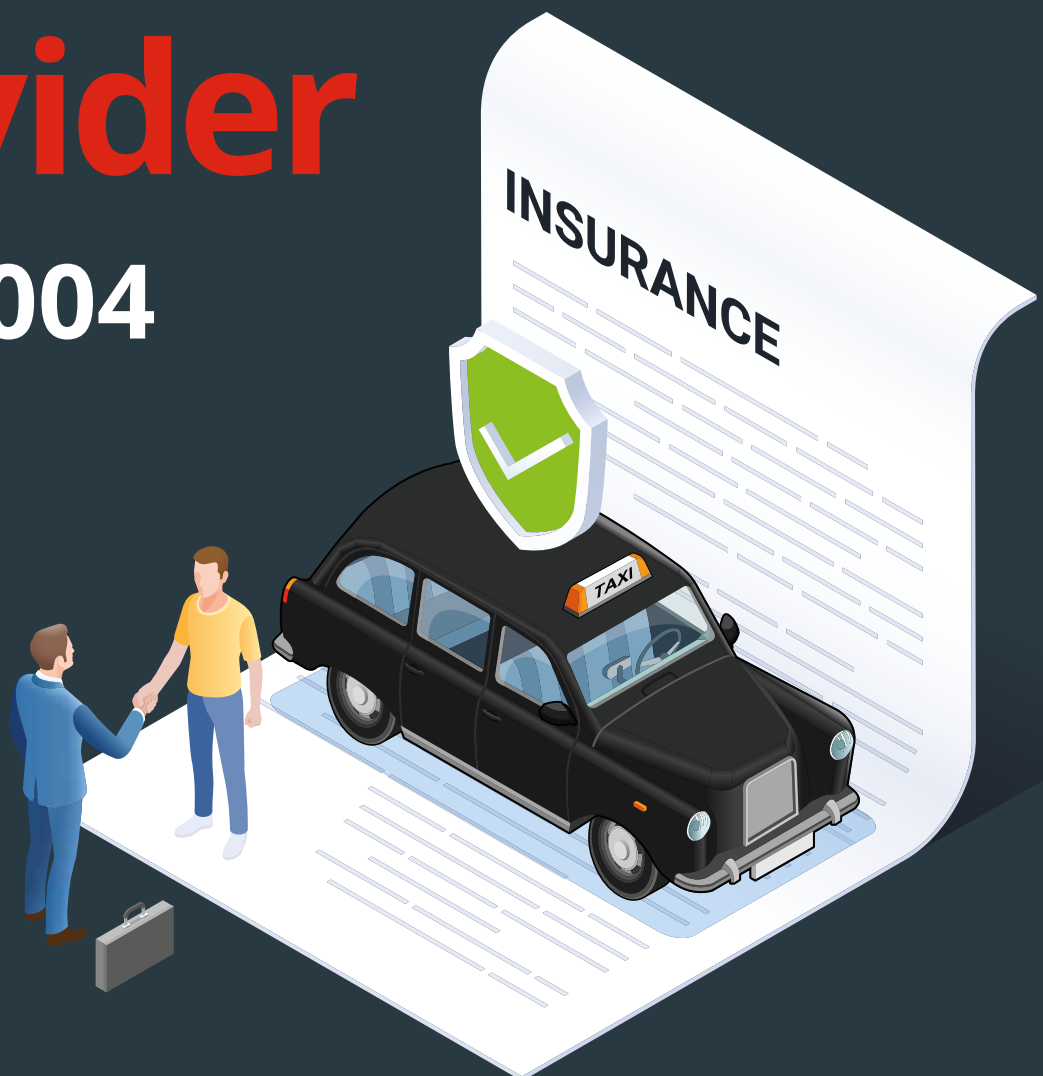
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