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KOL - THE ROAD TO SURVIVAL

STEVE KENTON Pages 12 & 13

TAXI CHARITY FOR MILITARY

VETERANS WELCOMES NEW TRUSTEE

Pages 24 & 25



4<sup>th</sup> March 2025 #581

# TARIFF INCREASE APPROVED

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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

Produced By  
CPL One  
Alban Row, 27-31 Verulam Road,  
St Albans, Hertfordshire AL3 4DG  
T: 01727 893 894  
E: info@cplone.co.uk  
www.cplone.co.uk

Advertising Sales Executive  
James Martin T: 01727 739 185  
E: james.martin@cplone.co.uk

Creative Director  
Peter Davies

Designer  
Sean McNamara

Printed by  
Manson Group, St Albans

Published on behalf of the LTDA by



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## TFL AND ENFIELD COUNCIL TO RAMP UP SPEEDING ENFORCEMENT ON A10

The existing average-speed safety camera system on the A10 is to be extended, covering the southern section from Southbury Road to the A406. Transport for London (TfL), working alongside Enfield Council and the Met Police, is introducing a range of measures to reduce road danger and tackle road-related anti-social behaviour on the A10. This includes extending the existing average-speed camera system, new lane markings, and an injunction prohibiting 'car cruising'. These new measures are being introduced in response to "sustained community concern and levels of extreme speeding, particularly overnight." This will replace the 'spot speed' cameras that are already in place on this stretch of road and "will ensure a more joined up enforcement approach along both sections of the road." Be careful out there.



## HOME CHARGING COSTS SET TO INCREASE AS ENERGY PRICES RISE

Drivers with electric taxis will likely see the cost of charging at home increase from April when energy prices increase. Ofgem, the energy company regulator, has confirmed new energy price cap rates for April 2025. The current rate is set at 24.86p per kWh, but from April it will increase to 27.06p per kWh. For users on a standard variable tariff, the cost of charging a typical EV (60kWh battery) will rise from £14.90 to £16.20. Plug-in hybrid drivers will also spend more. With a typical model requiring around 15kWh of energy per charge, the cost will increase from £3.70 to more than £4.

## SUPPORT 77-YEAR-OLD CABBIE RUNNING THE LONDON MARATHON FOR CHARITY

Mohamed Ewasha, a green badge driver for 43 years, is running the London Marathon this year to raise money for an important charity. Mohamed took up running at the age of 70 and ran the London marathon to celebrate the milestone birthday. He has since been running regularly, raising funds for various charities. Two years ago, he was recognised for his charity work when he was nominated for a parliamentary award at FREENOW's Parliamentary Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Drivers Awards. This year, he will be running the Marathon again in aid of Independent Age, a national charity supporting older people facing financial hardship. If you would like to support him you can sponsor him by scanning the QR code above. Good Luck Mohamed!



## TFL FINANCE COMMITTEE APPROVES TARIFF INCREASE

Following the consultation on The Review of Taxi Fares and Tariffs last year, TfL brought forward a number of recommendations, which were approved at a meeting of the Finance Committee last week. The Committee, made up of TfL Board Members, many of whom are newly appointed to the role, accepted recommendations to increase the minimum fare – the flag fall – by 40 pence to £4.20, increase Tariffs 1, 2 and 3 by 5.05 per cent and keep the Tariff 4 rates the same as the Tariff 2 rates. It was felt this increase was required to help drivers meet increasing operating costs and inflationary pressures, and to ensure driving a taxi remains an attractive career.

The Committee also approved a reduction in the Heathrow extra from £2.00 to £1.60 in response to plans by Heathrow Airport Ltd (HAL) to reduce the Taxi Feeder Park Entry Fee. They also agreed to an increase in the Heathrow drop off charge from £5.20 to £6.00 to ensure drivers are not left out of pocket by any changes made by HAL.

The fixed-fares for shared-taxis from the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) to central London will also increase by £1.50 and some changes will be made to the locations where the shared taxis scheme operates during the Championships.

During the Committee meeting concerns were raised by some of the new TfL board members about the ongoing decline in the number of licensed taxis and licensed drivers. One member, Zoë Billingham CBE noted that based on the current trends in the numbers, eventually we would reach zero, which needed to be addressed. Another member, Deborah Harris-Ugbomah shared similar concerns and asked how the trade was being supported by TfL and the Mayor. In response, TfL reps including Helen Chapman, Director of Licensing, Regulation and Charging and TfL Transport Commissioner, Andy Lord noted that there was work being done to try to support the trade and encourage more people to join the ranks, including looking at the Knowledge and how to streamline it whilst maintaining the gold standard. They also noted that the update to the Mayor's Taxi and PHV Action Plan would look to address some of these issues as the Mayor and City Hall have strategic responsibility over the trade, where as TfL's responsibilities are primarily



## 38,000 POTHOLES 'STILL WAITING TO BE FIXED'

Figures obtained by insurer, Zurich Municipal, have shown that there are more than 38,000 potholes waiting to be fixed by local authorities, amid a mounting

backlog of repairs. Zurich Municipal, which obtained the figures through a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, is calling for the government to increase local authority funding to improve the local road network and improve road safety. According to its own claims data, Zurich Municipal saw a 19% increase in pothole-related claims in 2024, now totalling 10,648. Zurich's analysis also shows that defects in roads caused more than £2.6 million worth of damage to drivers' cars in 2024, with the average cost being around £600.



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# Witness for the Defence

I have spent a fair bit of time sitting around in all types of courts and unfortunately, in that time I have seen them go from slow and inefficient to barely functioning.

## Steve's comment

**A**s ours is a bit of a unique business, I regularly get called as a witness in court on behalf of LTDA members to give evidence on a variety of taxi related matters, such as taxi procedures, licence requirements, etiquette, dealing with passengers and most commonly why a cabbie might have done this or that.

### Expert witness

Because of this, over the years, I have spent a fair bit of time sitting around in all types of courts. Unfortunately, in that time I have seen them go from slow and inefficient to barely functioning.

The buildings are all the same but upon entering the level of airport type security and questioning from security staff is an indicator or foretaste of what can be expected inside.

Magistrates' courts are the worst. Gone are the days when defendants wore shirts and ties and sat around nervously looking at their shoes waiting for their case to be called. Street wear is the order of the day, and shouting and swearing, either at someone, or more regularly into a mobile phone is the new norm. Strutting, gesturing and trying to look intimidating has replaced sitting down quietly. In short, all respect has gone, and it's now a regular occurrence to see some sort of altercation with either another member of the public or the security staff. Quite incredibly it is actually rare to see any police officers in the courts and those who are there tend to hide away, in side rooms.

### Inefficiency

All of this is made worse by the inefficiency of the system, where cases are regularly adjourned time and time again, often after defendants and witnesses have been sitting there all day, adding to the frustration and the mood. The reasons given for adjournment are many and numerous but overbooked courts, failures by the CPS



**"We continue to put pressure on them to deliver a new Taxi Action Plan that takes concrete steps to support the trade and isn't just more empty words."**

to be ready for trial, reports not written for sentencing or procedural rules not followed, are amongst the favourites.

Don't get me wrong sometimes these delays and adjournments work massively in our favour. In recent weeks, we have seen prosecutions against members discontinued, withdrawn or no evidence offered. This was after our barristers challenged adjournments requested by the CPS after delays caused by their, or the court's inefficiencies. On other occasions, a simple motoring prosecution can drag on through two or even three court dates before the case is heard.

### Simple solution

It's not rocket science to see that something needs to change. The solution is simple but unlikely ever to happen - separate minor motoring offences from the rest of the court's business. Do what they do in the states, have separate traffic courts, use the

court buildings and courts but hold them in the evenings, they call it 'Night Court'. If necessary, recruit more magistrates, and put the whole system online, Most US Traffic Courts have clear easy online portals to book a court hearing, submit your evidence, and look at any evidence supplied by the police. The reason it will never happen here is that the 10am to 3pm culture of our courts system works for everyone involved, except the public, and the public purse!

### Plug-in Taxi Grant extended

As many of you will have seen, the Plug-in Taxi Grant (PiTG) was extended last week but unfortunately from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2025 it will reduce to £4000. It will then be available until 5<sup>th</sup> April 2026 or until the funding runs out, whichever comes first. We are waiting to hear exactly what this means for the cost of the cab from 6<sup>th</sup> April onwards, but it will likely need to increase so we will keep you updated.

This isn't great news. We called for it to be extended and it's positive that they haven't just closed it from April leaving drivers completely alone in making this

transition, with little warning. But £4000 isn't much of an incentive for drivers to make the huge investment required to purchase a new cab. At £7,500, the grant was 10 per cent of the purchase price and that truly made a difference. Demand had already decreased when it was reduced to £6000 last year and sales of new cabs pretty much collapsed after April 2024, although that all could have been a coincidence, we have very real concerns about the impact this may have, particularly on those drivers considering their options with cabs due to come off the road in 2026 and 2027.

We are ramping up our efforts to get the government to introduce tax free loans for drivers similar to a scheme which currently runs in Scotland which makes buying a new cab a more affordable and manageable proposition. We will also be asking the Mayor and TfL to ask the government to provide such a scheme or at least pilot one in London to keep drivers in cabs and in the trade they love.

We also continue to put pressure on them to deliver a new Taxi Action Plan that takes concrete steps to support the trade and isn't just more empty words. **LTDA**



# Social Media Strikes Again



**Kipper season fuels the doom and gloom on socials, but you shouldn't believe everything you hear, particularly when it comes to the electric rickshaws we're being told will take over our streets.**

## On Point

**I've recently been made aware of a certain amount of hysteria on social media regarding the possibility of TfL licensing electric rickshaws and how this will affect our business.**

### Rickshaw realities

The Doom and Gloom merchants are suggesting that the possible licensing of pedicabs, or as I prefer to call them rickshaws, will lead to thousands of them all over the streets. Now I'm not as arrogant as some on the socials but it's my opinion that if TfL do their job right then the amount of hurdles their riders will have to jump over (like we do), to obtain a licence will make it not worth it.

Remember there will be a DBS search, HMRC Tax Codes to get and maybe a medical and the licencing fee. The ridiculous charges they make will also soon be a thing of the past. I can only guess how much these electric rickshaws will cost and what distance they can travel without stopping for a charge. Add to all of that the amount of money one of these things will cost and it seems unlikely we will be swamped with them.

The D and G mob will still argue that then there are these driverless rickshaws which will then lead to driverless cars, swiftly followed by the extinction of our trade. It remains to be seen when driverless cars will become common place on our streets in London, but it's got to be at least 20 years down the line. I know that they are used in certain cities in America, but their cities are generally on a grid system with very wide roads. I cannot imagine them working in London.

### Not practical

These driverless cars are full of sensors that bring the car to a halt if anything comes within feet of them. Can you imagine one of these things crossing a major junction (or any junction) and the public just walking

out in front of them knowing it will stop? I know the traffic is bad, but it would take hours to get anywhere. I guess that Jay walking would have to be made a criminal offence in the UK, as it is in America and how would that work with the amount of people crossing roads in London? I also wonder if any company would be prepared to insure them.

Time will tell and we will see what the future holds but remember the Kipper is the D and G happy time. Idle hands and all that...

### Not a standing order

First, let me apologise as I'm aware of how many articles have been written in TAXI magazine regarding the DBS update service, but here goes. One thing

that I am realising seems not to be common knowledge is that when you set up the original payment of £16 (with either a credit or debit card) you are NOT setting up a standing order. Some cabbies are under the impression that they are but in fact you are basically setting up a yearly payment to be taken from that card.

If that card you use is due to or has expired, then a month or so before payment is due the DBS will send you an email informing you that the card has expired and they cannot take the £16. They then direct you to go on their website and update your card details. If for some reason you miss that email and the payment isn't made, then you will have to do another DBS application and start again. Something to keep an eye on as

it could end up costing you more time and money. As always, if you're not 100 per cent sure then please call us at Taxi House.

### Don't be fooled

I was out doing my weekend walk last week and must have heard the company who shall not be named, the American Mini Cab service's (I refuse to use their name) radio advert at least four times an hour urging cabbies to sign up to their app. They have even thrown into the advert how they can make us money through Kipper. The bare faced cheek of it. I nearly pulled my ear off snatching the earphones out.

Any way let them waste their investors' money on very expensive adverts. I still maintain that (although they quote 500) there are no more than 70 cabbies on it. **LTDA**





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# Rules of the Route

In the Orwellian state we currently inhabit, camera enforcement is used for more and more minor offences and taxi drivers are ending up paying through the nose...

## M4 musings

**T**his is your periodic reminder not to stop on a red route for any reason other than to pick up or drop off, or you could end up with a hefty fine.

### Red routes

We are still seeing far too many members getting tickets by camera because they have stopped briefly to go in a shop or use the toilet on a red route. You are also not allowed to wait for a passenger, e.g. for an app booking or if the passenger wants to go in a shop.

As far as we cab drivers are concerned, the major difference between a red line and a yellow one is that you can be issued a PCN by camera immediately on a red route, if you stop and don't pick up or drop off.

Now I'm obviously not advocating parking on yellow lines but it's a fact that you can only get a ticket from a human being on yellow lines, these are not enforced by camera, which is a lot fairer in my opinion. In the Orwellian state we currently inhabit, camera enforcement is used for more and more minor offences and taxi drivers are paying through the nose for stopping to go in a shop or to the toilet.

This is understandable as in our job we are under pressure to always be working, but taking a few minutes to find somewhere decent to park can save you a lot more in the long run.

As always, if you receive a PCN that you don't think you should have had, give the LTDA a call for advice before paying.

### A cab driver in a cab

I had a cab driver in the cab the other day - if he's reading, you know who you are.

I was planning to have a look at Victoria Coach Station rank but two empty cabs turned in before me, so I went straight on and was rewarded by a hand near Boisdale's.

They asked for Charing Cross, good stuff. Normally, I would've



headed for the Park but it was Saturday and it was closed, and this was further complicated by there having been some sort of run that day. I wasn't sure the exact details but Whitehall was definitely closed so I headed for Grosvenor Place and Hyde Park Corner; in retrospect, a wide line and I maybe should have said something.

We waited quite a while at the horrendous temporary light at Eaton Square, and then sure enough as I turned up Grosvenor Place a voice piped up from the back:

*"You know we're going to Charing Cross..?"*

I was jolted out of my stupor and replied, *"You've been to London before then?"* and the lady replied that the fella was a cab driver, so we had the discussion and it was fine, but it got me thinking about when or how we decide whether to ask a customer about a route.

### Route preference

The thing is, I find half the time when you ask someone about a route it turns into an even more complicated conversation than if you'd just left it alone. When I first got out I'd be doing it all the time and sure sometimes

they appreciate it. Likewise, sometimes it's obvious you should give a customer the choice because it may turn out more expensive. But mostly, I think customers choose a cab because you have that expertise of having made all these journeys a lot of times and are going to make an informed choice.

The only sign I've ever really been tempted to have in the cab is the one about a preferred route. If I take a cab and I want to go a certain way, I'll tell the driver, otherwise it's up to them. I trust the Knowledge, and the experience of the person driving me.

Good luck out there.

### Documents

Members who have recently renewed their licence will be aware that the process has become very fiddly in recent times. At the moment there are far too many 'moving parts' in the application that can trip a driver up if they're not careful. It's really important to keep all your documents up to date and in a safe place, especially around renewal time.

I always tell members that you're better off having a valid passport and photocard DVLA licence whether you need one or not, it just makes the whole process easier. If you move or change your name then also make sure you update the relevant documents, this can save a lot of hassle at renewal time.

All this being said, some of the reasons members renewal applications are held up are simply not good enough. It is unfair that drivers can end up unable to work due to a hyphen or apostrophe in their name that the 'system' doesn't recognise.

The best remedy for all this as a driver is to get on with your renewal as soon as the pack comes in, which should be around four months before your current licence expires. This leaves plenty of time to clear up any errors or obstacles and guarantee continuity of licensing.

LTDA

## MAYOR LAUNCHES CONSULTATION ON HIS PLANS TO "TRANSFORM" OXFORD STREET

The Mayor of London has launched a public consultation asking Londoners whether they support his latest plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street.

The consultation which opened on Friday 28th February will run for nine weeks until Wednesday 2nd May.

The consultation is the Mayor's latest attempt to pedestrianise the street. His previous attempt in 2018 was blocked by the then Conservative-run local authority amid concerns from local residents, business owners and other stakeholders including taxi drivers.

Sir Sadiq revived the plans last year following the general election, after the Labour government gave City Hall planning powers to create a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) around Oxford Street, which would allow the Mayor to take control of the area away from Westminster City Council.

Commenting on the launch of the consultation, the Mayor said: "Oxford Street has been known as the nation's high street but the area has suffered in recent years.

"My proposals are designed to unlock the true potential of Oxford Street and deliver a world-class, accessible, clean, avenue.

"These proposals would help to restore this famous part of the capital and support good businesses, while creating new jobs and boosting growth."

As part of the plans, Sir Sadiq aims for Oxford Street to be redesignated as a Transport for London road, though this could be blocked by Westminster Council and would require parliamentary approval.

The City Hall press release announcing the consultation included a supportive statement from the Labour leader of Camden Council, but tellingly did not include anything from Westminster Council Leader, Adam Hug, suggesting Westminster Council still has reservations.

The plans would pedestrianise a stretch of the Western end of Oxford Street between Oxford Circus and Selfridges, however the consultation focuses on the establishment of the Mayoral Development Corporation. Detailed proposals have not yet been developed to enable the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street, however



the consultation notes that "there would be a need to divert some or all sections of the existing bus routes along Oxford Street."

With regard to taxis the consultation notes that "taxis and private hire vehicles are important parts of London's transport network. They are particularly important for those people with restricted mobility, shoppers and tourists, with the black cab trade an iconic feature of London and the West End. If any pedestrianisation were to go ahead, the restriction of taxi and private hire vehicle access along some or all of the street itself would be carefully considered, along with planning continued access routes through surrounding streets." You can respond to the consultation using the QR code above.

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# The Knowledge - Road to Survival

Now some would ask the question, so what if the workforce is shrinking, that means more work for those driving a taxi, right? I am here to tell you that's wrong.



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## Man in black

Recently, whilst luxuriating in an over-filled tub of bubbles, quaffing a vintage glass of flavoured meths (well vintage as in December 2024 - but it all counts) and indulging in some easy listening, courtesy of Rammstein, I began pondering the fate of what may become of the licensed London taxi industry - widely regarded as the best taxi service on the planet. I became a little saddened at the fact that we are witnessing net workforce losses within this proud industry, at a rate that we have never seen before. I decided to do a little digging and some number-crunching - unfortunately, I really wasn't surprised at what I found.

## The numbers

Here are some of the official Transport for London (TfL) figures. As of 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2025 there were 15,124 Green badge taxi drivers and 1,732 Yellow badge cabbies - a grand total of 16,856 drivers across London. Now, compare this to 2009/10 grand total figure of 24,914 and 2013/14 figure of 25,538 (our highest figure over a 16 year period). 2020/21's figure was 20,786. In just over 10 years the taxi industry's numbers have dropped by 8,682 drivers.

There have in the recent past been workforce increases, with the biggest increase occurring in 2011/12. 266 new drivers earned their badges during that period. The biggest decrease came, unsurprisingly in 2020/21 with a drop of 1,551 drivers. It should be noted that the UK was still under Covid restrictions during

that period. However, not far behind, we see a net loss of 1,423 drivers between late 2022 and 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2025.

Another telling stat reveals that in 2009/10 there were 59,191 private hire drivers in London. As of 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2025, there are 107,921 PH drivers. This represents an 82.33% increase in drivers in just 16 years. In the same time period, the taxi industry lost 32.34% of its workforce. It really does make for grim reading.

Part of the taxi industry's problems lie in the fact that there is an ageing demographic. As of 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023, there were 6,739 taxi drivers between the ages of 24 and 53. This figure is dwarfed by the 10,953 drivers over the age of 54. Now interestingly, there are approximately 12,300 cabbies living within, or just outside London's Metropolitan

boundaries. Now that isn't exhaustive as the figures are correct and available as of June 2023, but it's a rough idea of where we are, from a demographic standpoint.

## Say's Law

Now some would ask the question, so what if the workforce is shrinking, that means more work for those driving a taxi, right? Wrong.

Before starting to rub those clammy little hands with glee at the prospect of less drivers and more work, let me introduce you to something called "Say's Law". Now this little pearl or profundity comes from the 18<sup>th</sup> century quill of French economist, Jean-Baptiste Say. Its basic premise is that production is the source of demand. Say wrote:

*"A product is no sooner created, than it, from that instant, affords*





*a market for other products to the full extent of its own value."*

He theorised that, "As each of us can only purchase the productions of others with his/her own productions - as the value we can buy is equal to the value we can produce, the more men can produce, the more they will purchase.

To break this down into basic terms which apply to most industries, including the taxi trade, if you shrink production or in the taxi industry's case, coverage, your market shrinks - ergo, less cabs equals less work because demand can't be met, leaving the consumer looking elsewhere for service.

### Stopping the rot

The long and short of the problem is that there need to be more candidates undertaking the Knowledge - not to increase workforce numbers but simply to equalise the amount of drivers that the industry is haemorrhaging. According to TfL figures (as of 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 - 2024 figures are yet to be collated). There are 1009 people on The Knowledge.

With a two to three year gestation period from signing up to completion and discounting any drop-out rate, that equates to 337 passing every year over the next three years. Factor in the traditional 3 in 10 drop-out rate, you are looking at 112 candidates per-annum passing-out. Now look at the stats over the last 20 months, we see a drop of 1441 drivers since June 2023 - an equivalent of 72 per month leaving the trade. In short, if we continue with a net loss of between 6 and

**"The long and short of the problem is that there need to be more candidates undertaking the Knowledge."**

700 drivers per annum, it won't take the economics' genius of Jean-Baptiste Say to work out that we will reach a point where we can no longer service the public efficiently.

Everybody knows what the issues are within the trade itself, you certainly don't need me to reiterate what everybody is fully aware of. What does need to be recognised is that if the rot can be stopped, the industry will survive.

The road to survival starts at grass-roots level - The Knowledge. If new blood can be encouraged to undertake The Knowledge, it will certainly improve the industry's chances of flourishing again. More cabbies, means more coverage and an expanding market, meaning a decent living.

The taxi trade is very good at accentuating the negatives but seems to have a problem accentuating the positives. The freedom, the potential income, the respect (yes, it still exists), the ability to diversify and drive a cab on a part time basis (subject to circumstances). Encouragement and recruitment is now key - failure to do this could see the industry staring further down the muzzle of oblivion than it would ever wish to. **TAXI**

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# The Waters of Hampstead



Money was to be made from this rich source of water which lay under the greenery of Hampstead Village.

## Footprints and Foundations

**T**he days are getting longer, and Spring will soon be upon us. Nature is awakening and a process of rebirth begins to transform the landscape. I am certain you have seen the flora and fauna emerge from its deep sleep. I hope the quieter months of the cab trade are behind us and the footfall begins to pick up.

As nature revives, you can also embark upon a new challenge over the coming year. I know I continue to express my opinions on further education. I consider it an imperative to improve one's knowledge of this historic city. If you have been contemplating a tourist guide course, this may be the time to begin a period of study. Please feel free to contact me on the email address below, I can direct you to the course that is suitable for you.

I hope you enjoyed the first instalment on Hampstead's early history. In this article, I reveal the healing powers of Hampstead's underground medicinal waters.

## Holistic waters

It can be a real pleasure to visit a Spa for some detoxification of the mind body and soul. The Spa is not a new phenomenon and can trace its origins back to the Roman period two thousand years ago. There are many towns in the Great Britain that have the title spa or wells in their name. Indicating the purity of waters discovered below ground. Hampstead's landscape provided not only streams but also purified springs. They were exposed in the early 1700s. The location of these springs was in the aptly named Well Road and Well Walk area. The healthy air combined with the medicinal waters stirred the entrepreneurial spirit. Money was to be made from this rich source of water which lay under the greenery of Hampstead Village.



Well Walk in Hampstead.





The Flask Tavern today.



The site of the Chalybeate Well.

**“A tavern and pleasure grounds (now Gainsborough Gardens) provided shady walks and arbours.”**

### The Wells Trust

The land surrounding the Springs was owned by The Earl of Gainsborough, the Lord of the Manor of Hampstead. He granted six acres of swampy waste land for the sole use for the purpose of helping the poor in the Parish of Hampstead. The Earl set up the Wells Trust, which administered the enterprise.

The spring below ground contained iron and was thought to be an antidote for the treatment of many diseases. Gout and gravel were alleviated, shingles and scrofula banished, bladders and kidneys improved – so said the spa doctors at the time. The cynical sneered at these miraculous cures and for those who claimed they were vastly improved, it was said to be pure fantasy. From the 1700s the Trustees of the Wells Trust had the water bottled at a hostelry which became known as the Flask Tavern off Hampstead High Street. The bottled water was also sold at an apothecary in Fleet Street at three pence a bottle. From these modest beginnings an entrepreneur named John

Duffield invested in the spring’s potential as a more lucrative business, and so the Spa was inaugurated.

### The Spa comes to Hampstead

Duffield developed a ninety foot Long Room in Well Walk, it was divided into a small Pump Room with a fountain and a large Assembly Room for entertainments. Here visitors could recover from bathing and drinking the water and enjoy the recreations provided. The numerous activities included concerts, dancing and gambling. In close proximity to the Long Room, a tavern and pleasure grounds (now Gainsborough

Gardens) provided shady walks and arbours. This retreat proved popular for romantic dalliances in the greenery of the pleasure garden.

The Long Room seated five hundred and Duffield was soon promoting concerts by renowned composers. The Spa proved popular and attracted large gatherings to Hampstead. Lodging houses were erected in the New End area for travellers to the Spa who stayed overnight. New residential terraces were constructed in the area surrounding the Spa, thus increasing the population of Hampstead. Unfortunately, the Spa became too successful and attracted insalubrious characters

to its facilities. Loose women were seen wondering around the Spa, which kept ladies of repute from visiting the Spa.

### The end of the spa

1719 Duffield was heavily in debt and soon afterwards the Spa closed down. The Long Room was taken over and used as a chapel-of-ease for the parish church. The building remained a religious house for a long period and then was leased to the Hampstead Volunteers as a drill hall. It was finally demolished in 1882. The site is now marked by the entrance to Gainsborough Gardens. Opposite, a Victorian fountain commemorates the famous Chalybeate Well. A second Spa existed in Well Walk which also had a Long Room. This building had many purposes, including a courthouse and ball room. It was demolished as late as 1944. The council flats called Wells House, were erected on the site. The next time you are passing through Hampstead, divert to Well Walk and take a stroll around the area. By reading my articles you are increasing your Knowledge of London. Taking time to actually explore the locations I have mentioned will increase your interest. **TAXI**



**If you have any questions on London's history or contemplating a tourist guide course. Please contact me via [journeythroughtime@hotmail.com](mailto:journeythroughtime@hotmail.com)**



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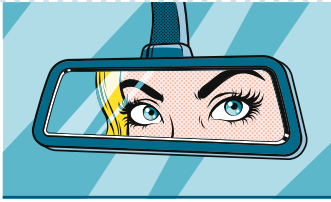


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# A No Way-cation

Mr Meg and I do try but I confess we have never had a good time on holiday.

## A woman of words

**Y**ou going anywhere nice on holiday this year? It's not even midday and I've had four fares ask me that today already. Plus, a David Mellor look-alike asked me if I wanted to go on holiday with him. Occupational hazard. I dropped him to a first-floor establishment in Brewer Street quick smart.

A cabbie at the Warwick Avenue tea hut enquired as to my holiday plans, and my hairdresser also shouted the same question over the noise of the hairdryer while I was having a blow dry.

## Holiday disasters

Mr Meg and I do try but I confess we have never had a good time on holiday. Even our honeymoon was a disaster. We were super skint so headed off to Lyme Regis for one night travelling on Mr Meg's Honda CB500 motorbike.

Previously, I had only ever done local trips on the back of the bike. By the time we arrived in Lyme Regis after a 4-hour journey, I was crippled with pain because I'd used my knees and thighs to grip on to the pillion all the way, I'd pulled every muscle below my waist. This meant I could not close my legs, cross my legs or walk without looking like a bad female John Wayne impersonator. Not the best honeymoon pose, especially at breakfast the next morning where I had to sit with my legs akimbo. The other guests, who knew we were just married, looked mortified.

A few years after that my husband declared we should be adventurous and go on a camping trip to Portugal. It was August and 110 degrees in the tent at night. Laying there feeling like a chicken roasting in an oven other holidaymakers would pee or puke against out tent, and always on my side, the one that wasn't fully waterproofed.

More recently we took a trip to a holiday home in the Loire. The cottage, recommended by friends, was in a lovely spot with beautiful



**"It was August and 110 degrees in the tent at night."**

views. The problem? When we arrived, there was another couple staying in it and enjoying the space we had paid for. It seemed we'd booked through [www.letusscamyoud.com](http://www.letusscamyoud.com).

## Paradise

Yesterday, I dropped a pair of silver surfers at Paddington Station. They were bound for the Heathrow Express and then flying to Thailand. 'The land of milk and honey' they cooed together, "It's Paradise!" The pair

described how they enjoy freshly squeezed fruit juice (without pips) from coconut shell cups and luxuriate in head, neck and feet massages that cost less than a cup of coffee from Starbucks.

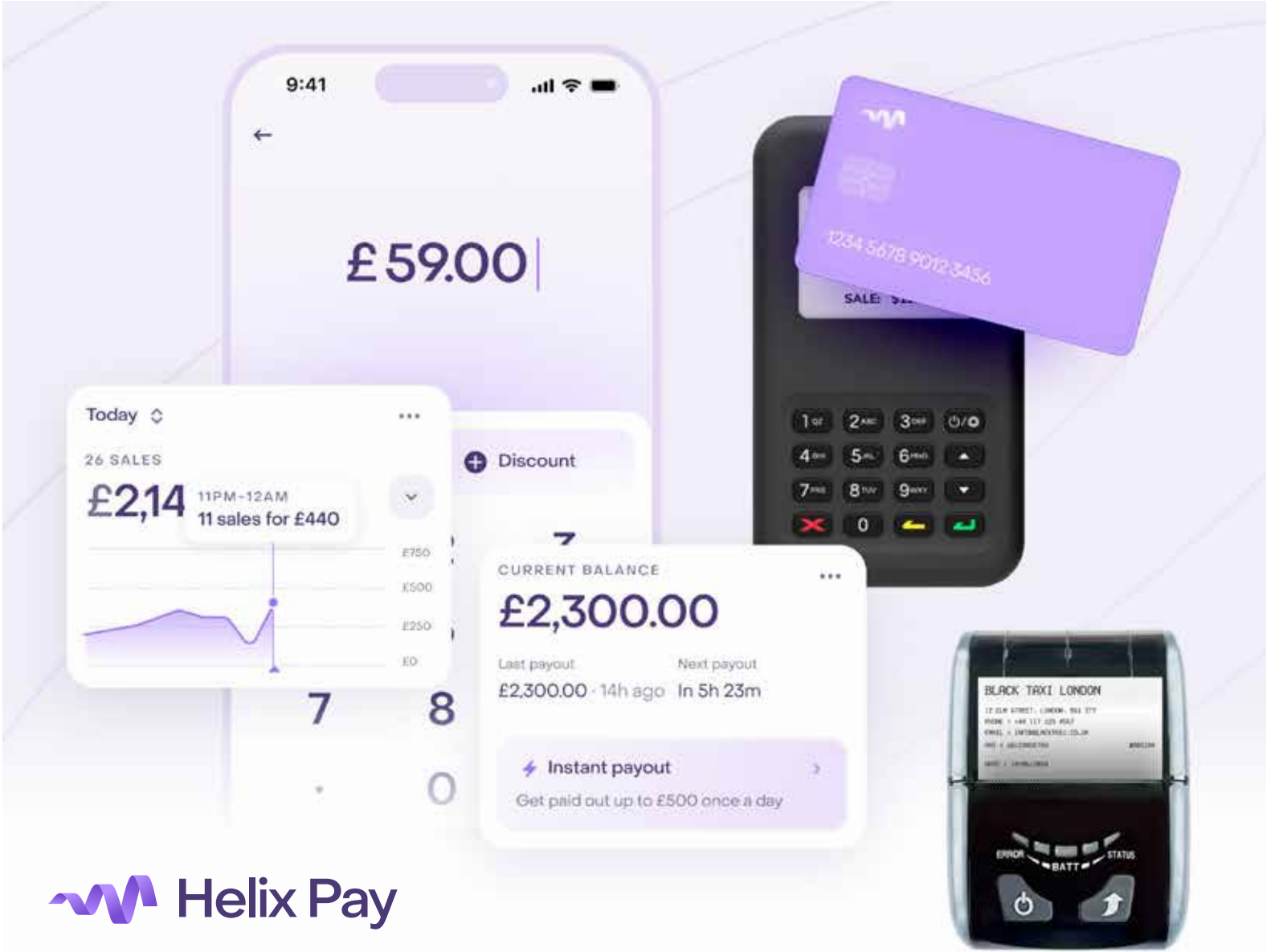
Their chat brought back memories of the exotic spa we tried, about six holidays ago. We've been there, done that.

Mr Meg and I spent most of the day fighting for the only cool spot on the bed directly under the aircon. And we were feasted on by mosquitoes all night so were

sleep starved. Mr Meg availed of one house fruit cocktail on arrival, and after that ate only Imodium tablets for the rest of our stay. His bottom was like the fountain of Versailles.

And on the way home we exited the plane using the emergency chute because of a safety incident.

So, the next time a fare asks me "Going anywhere nice for your holidays this year?" I am going to reply, "Yes. Meg Towers." ■ **TAXI**



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# Welcoming a New Trustee

London Cab driver Daren Parr has been invited to become a Trustee for the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans.

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for MILITARY  
VETERANS

**D**aren Parr who has been volunteering and fundraising for the Taxi Charity for several years has been elected as a Trustee for the charity. A cab driver for 10 years, Daren loves a challenge and with the 'Cabbies Do' group is a prolific fundraiser.

Daren's first fundraising challenge resulted from a tweet directed at London's cab drivers in 2018, asking if anyone wanted to lose weight, improve their fitness, change their lifestyle and climb Kilimanjaro to raise money for the Taxi Charity.

Having successfully lost weight through diet and a strict exercise regime, Daren headed to Africa to climb the 19,340 feet Kilimanjaro in October 2019. Daren reached the summit in six days, suffering from debilitating altitude sickness as he made the ascent.

He summited at 7.07am on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019 with fellow cab driver John Dillane and said at the time - *"This is one of the proudest moments of my life, helping the Taxi Charity, making my family and friends proud and putting London black taxis where they belong, on top of the world."*

Successfully achieving this challenge might have been enough for some people but not Daren. After raising £18,000 for the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans in 2019, Daren and John, put together a much bigger challenge for 2020.

The challenge was to involve a group of 30 London licensed taxi drivers, who would attempt to lose 52 stones, get fit and then travel to Tanzania where Daren and John would climb the 4,562 metre Mount Meru before joining the rest of the cabbies to climb 5,895 metres to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro. Thwarted somewhat in the planning process by Covid 19, plans kept changing as the world shut down, but on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022 the



Daren Parr.

challenge was completed.

Daren said, *"The world shut down, people stopped going to work, and the tourist trade was decimated. So not only did the volunteer cabbies who had joined 'Cabbies Do' have the massive task of trying to survive financially with the worse level of trade they had ever experienced but they needed to be ready for the biggest physical and mental challenge of their life too. The events of the pandemic certainly took their toll with more than half of the original number of cabbies who had signed up dropping out. It's a very hard challenge and some underestimated the fitness and stamina level they*

*needed, some suffered injuries that put them out of action but most upsetting of all were those who had to drop out as they couldn't afford the cost of travel to Tanzania and their kit."*

But despite everything that was thrown their way, Daren and John successfully climbed Mount Meru reaching the summit on 3<sup>rd</sup> February and then immediately joining their fellow cab drivers to climb Kilimanjaro. The challenge raised £8,000 for the London Taxi Drivers' Charity for Children.

With two incredible challenges under his belt Daren decided that he wanted to go bigger. The next challenge was to row across the Atlantic. A challenge that only

1793 ocean rowers/explorers have completed. Daren was joined in the boat by cab drivers Bob Barber and Stuart Lockhart and after 60 days rowing 3200 miles across the Atlantic ocean, they rowed into Antigua. During the row the trio lost a combined total of seventy six pounds in weight but raised a further £4000 for the Taxi Charity.

Daren said, *"The reception we received at Jolly Harbour at the end of the row was an absolutely wonderful moment. Both the feeling of completing the world's toughest rowing race combined with an unforgettable welcome is something that made it all worthwhile. Nothing*





John, Bob and Daren rowed the Atlantic.



Daren Parr in Normandy.

could prepare us for this! It was an experience that is very hard to put into words. We are just three ordinary guys doing an extraordinary thing and this challenge demonstrates what can be achieved with determined spirit and mental fortitude. We likened the experience to doing *The Knowledge* – it was very tough but is worth doing, it doesn't discriminate between anyone and no one ever fails, you either complete it or you give up."

"We were rowing for an hour with two hours off 24/7 for 60 days and the weather was awful. At one stage we were on a para-anchor for three days just waiting for which of the waves (some the size of London town houses) would capsize us."

Daren learnt a valuable lesson on this challenge, "no matter how hard things get, no matter how tough the task seems you can get through it."

He has taken this as his life's

mantra and recently filmed a new TV show hosted by Rob Brydon, which he says, "was a cross between *Race Across the World* and *The Traitors*." Unable to give anymore away we will have to wait to watch it when it airs.

Daren is delighted to have been invited to become a Trustee for the Taxi Charity and is looking forward to support the rest of the committee as they plan for the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of Dutch Liberation, VE and VJ Day.

"I have met some incredible people volunteering for the Taxi Charity and it will be my pleasure to support them as a Trustee. I have already begun to see the dedication and hours that the volunteers put in to support our veterans and I can't wait to get stuck in."

**To find out more about the support the Taxi Charity offers to veterans or to donate visit [www.taxicharity.org](http://www.taxicharity.org)**



The Cabbies Do Killmanjaro Team at the Summit.

### About the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans

The Taxi Charity is run by volunteer London black taxi drivers and has been supporting thousands of veterans since 1948. It is the only Forces charity that focuses on providing fun and entertainment and arranges free trips (for veterans from all conflicts) to the Netherlands and France for acts of commemoration and days out to museums, concerts, or social events across the UK.

The charity received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2021 and celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2023, a remarkable milestone for a small, niche charity peopled by enthusiastic volunteers.

In 2024, the charity took veterans to Normandy for the 80th anniversary of D-Day and commemorated the 80th anniversary of Operation Market Garden in the Netherlands in September.

In May 2025 the charity will be returning to the Netherlands for the 80th anniversary of Dutch Liberation.

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

[www.taxicharity.org](http://www.taxicharity.org)



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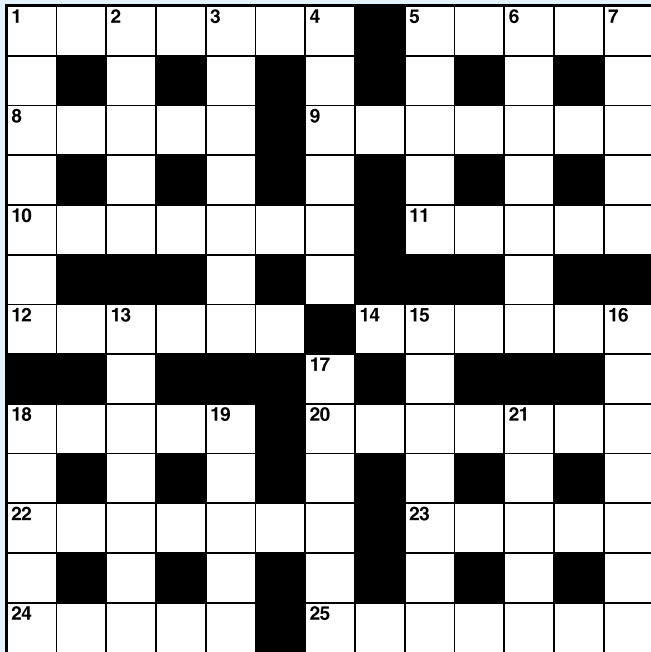
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# Puzzler Page

## Crossword



### ACROSS

- 1 Provide with a new home (7)
- 5 Break open (5)
- 8 Male cows (5)
- 9 Tool for removing ice from windscreens (7)
- 10 Based on written words (7)
- 11 Lax (5)
- 12 Not any person (6)
- 14 Consider it correct (3,3)
- 18 Loud eager cry (5)
- 20 Ask for (7)
- 22 \_\_\_ and brush, cleaning equipment (7)
- 23 Drive forward (5)
- 24 Children's nursemaid (5)
- 25 Relating to heavenly bodies (7)

### DOWN

- 1 Harp on about something (3,2,2)
- 2 Spiral shape (5)
- 3 Faulty, illogical (7)
- 4 Without effort or difficulty (6)
- 5 \_\_\_ Cook, artist renowned for painting fat ladies (5)
- 6 Censure (7)
- 7 Triangle's number of sides (5)
- 13 Light jacket with gathered waist (7)
- 15 Courtesy form of written address (7)
- 16 Being such in name only (7)
- 17 Unmanned aerial vehicles (6)
- 18 Make broader (5)
- 19 Whelp (5)
- 21 Kick out of school (5)

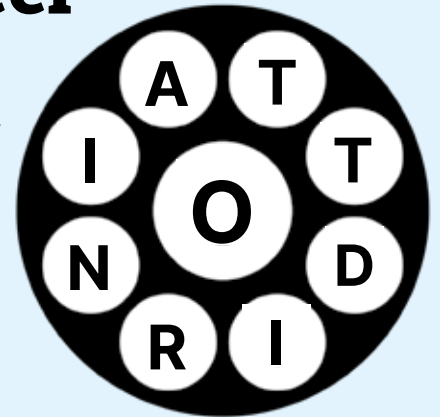
## Sudoku

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.

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

## 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 13 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.

<input type="text"/>	>	<input type="text"/>	>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	3
<input type="text"/>	<	<input type="text"/>	>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	<	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

All answers to puzzler on p30



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- Low mileage tx4's and Euro 5's wanted. Earn more by selling outside London. NOT BEATEN ON PRICE. John 07866580070
- All de-commissioned TX4s wanted. Instant decision, cash paid. We come to you. Call - 07973 335 739
- Euro 5 about to be decommissioned, Cabs wanted, TX4's and Vito's. Top Price paid. Call John 07866580070
- Cabs wanted, London based buyer, same day collection, cash or bank transfer, sell + rent back also available. Call Danny - 07877093866
- All cabs wanted. Tx4, euro 4, 5 & 6 also TXE wanted We come to you, any condition, very quick decision. Cash paid instantly. 07866580070

**CABS FOR RENT**

- A Better Deal. Euro5&6 vitos for rent, full backup, prices starting from £230 please call – 07956211478
- TX4's for rent, no adverts, based north west London (Kingsbury) RAC backup, from £240 per week. Call - 07956 422 658
- New '25 plate, TXe Vista+ available March, N. LDN, No Ads, Supaguard paint, RAC, 4 wks Hols, £360/wk, Chris 07897-009036 Email: tappa4london@gmail.com
- TXE's available for rent, from £310 per week. Call 07951 843663
- Rent Taxis, Euro 6 and also LEVC Cabs from £250 - £335. We also do repairs on cabs, call Nick 020 7700 1045 / 07951 661 430
- TXEs, TX4s and Vitos available from £260 per week contact Sabri – 07958973944
- TXEs for hire, Full back up, loan cab available, no ads – 07980 288 333

**CABS FOR SALE**

- 2018 TXE Comfort plus, pearlescent night sky blue, 170k miles, plated till July 25, extended warranty Jul 26. FSH, £26,000 Call - 07427197807
- TX4 Euro 6 – 87,900 Miles, 66 Plate, Date of 1st Registration 21/10/2019, Owned from new, VGC, Single Use, Full A/C, FSH with E1 Taxis (LTI approved), Next M.O.T. due 15/4/2025, Currently plated till 15/10/2025 - £24,000 o.n.o. Tel: 07956305930
- Cabs for sale. Main Dealer service history. Non-fleet cabs, trade sales. New stock daily. Cabs also wanted. Finance Paid 07957 465423
- LEVC Elegance, 69 reg, 42k miles, plated until July, FSH. Webcam included. £45,000 ONO. Call - 07979987163/01707642536
- Black TX4 Vista Comfort Plus, 85k miles, 64 plate, £7,999. Call - 07905643997



# LTDA APPLICATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_

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?

Do you have any motoring or other prosecutions pending? Yes  No

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

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 \_\_\_\_\_

## LTDA Basic Direct Debit Instructions

### Instructions to your Bank/Building Society to pay Direct Debits:

Please complete parts 1 to 5 to instruct your branch to make direct payments from your account. Then return the form to LTDA, FREEPOST, London, SE1 1PP

To the Manager of \_\_\_\_\_

Bank/Building Society Address \_\_\_\_\_

### Service User Number

9 1 4 4 2 8

### For Office use only

1. Please write the name and full postal address of your branch in the box (left)
2. Name of account holder \_\_\_\_\_
3. Account Number
4. Bank Sort Code  -  -   
Banks/Building Societies may not accept instructions to pay Direct Debit from some types of account.
5. Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_



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.



You can now also apply to join the LTDA online, simply scan here to complete an online application:



Fleetwood Assessors can be of assistance with all your accident circumstances regardless of whether they are fault or non fault and discounts offered to LTDA Members

- Accident Damage Assessments
- Consistency Reports
- Desktop Reports
- Low-Velocity Impact Inspections
- Repair Costing
- Salvage Valuation
- Total Loss Negotiation
- Vehicle Valuation
- Total Loss Post Inspection Report
- Mechanical faults



**FLEETWOOD**  
Consulting Automotive  
Engineers & Assessors Ltd



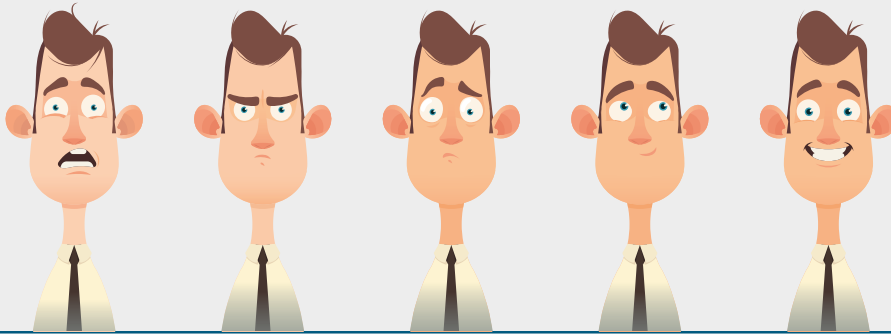
✉ [info@fleetwoodassessors.co.uk](mailto:info@fleetwoodassessors.co.uk) ☎ 01702 597370 🌐 [www.fleetwoodassessors.co.uk](http://www.fleetwoodassessors.co.uk)

We provide consultancy and deal with resolutions of disputes that occur within the industry, this being not only London Taxis but the automotive industry

We are proud of our association with the Black Cab Trade, with over 20 years experience. We have excellent knowledge of the TfL (Transport for London) and outer London Councils procedures, conditions of fitness, which is extremely important when involved in an accident or vehicle dispute. Over the years we have built up a good relationship within the industry, which is beneficial when dealing with these types of incidents.

We have regular contact with recovery agents / fleet owners / body shops / mechanical repairers / taxi finance companies

# PUZZLER ANSWERS



R	E	H	O	U	S	E	B	U	R	S	T
U	E	N	A	E	E	H					
B	U	L	S	S	C	R	A	P	E	R	
I	I	O	I	Y	R	E					
T	E	X	T	A	L	L	O	O	S	E	
I		N	Y								
N	O	B	O	D	Y	S	E	E	F	I	T
	L			D	S						I
W	H	O	O	P	R	E	Q	U	E	S	T
I	U	U	O	U	X	U					
D	U	S	T	P	A	N	I	M	P	E	L
E	O	P	E	R	E	A					
N	A	N	N	Y	S	T	E	L	L	A	R

## Crossword

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### Sudoku

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

### Futoshiki

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

### Wordwheel

**SOLUTION:** TRADITION

**All words:** Adorn, adroit, ditto, idiot, inroad, into, iota, iron, ordain, radio, radon, ratio, ration, riot, road, rota, tarot, toad, torn, tort, trio, trod, trot, TRADITION.

**Word targets:** Excellent: 21, Good: 17, Target: 13, Kids: 8





# NEED TO RENT A CAB?

**TX4s  
AVAILABLE  
TO RENT  
FROM £240  
PER WEEK**

**TXEs  
AVAILABLE  
TO RENT  
FROM £335  
PER WEEK**



**FACING A  
NASTY BALLOON  
PAYMENT?  
WE CAN HELP.  
CALL US FOR AN  
INSTANT QUOTE  
AND GET CASH  
NOW!  
ON ALL  
TXEs**

# LOOK NO FURTHER

**CONTACT US TODAY OR CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE TO  
SEE HOW WE CAN DELIVER YOU THE BEST DRIVING EXPERIENCE IN LONDON TODAY**

**HOLIDAY SCHEMES AVAILABLE  
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**Unit 7, Dominion Business Park, Goodwin Road, Edmonton N9 0BG**

**FREENOW** ✓  
The Mobility Super App

# WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

WE'VE PARTNERED WITH **ONSI** TO  
PROVIDE **FREENOW** BLACK CAB DRIVERS  
ACCESS TO A UNIQUE INSURANCE  
PACKAGE AND DAILY PAY.

FEEL FREENOW **FEEL FREENOW** FEEL FREENOW

## BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- ✓ **ACCIDENT  
AND SICKNESS  
INSURANCE**
- ✓ **COMPASSIONATE  
AND PARENTAL  
LEAVE**
- ✓ **DAILY PAY**



SCAN THE CODE



**DRIVE  
WITH FREENOW**

\*Conditions apply