Breathe easy
taking action on air quality

‘Tis the season
London’s festive attractions

Parking lot
pull over and take our quiz

Healing retreat
dealing with diet and diabetes

24-hour London
The past few months have been busy ones for the taxi and private hire trades, with the introduction of the English language requirement for private hire drivers (p19), the mandating of contactless and card payments in taxis, and the launch of the Mayor’s Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan.

Now the Capital is gearing up for the season of goodwill and you can read Ian Beetlestone’s take on the festivities on p28. Check out our guide to late night London from p11.

We also take a peek inside the historic cabmen’s shelters (p26) and test your knowledge of parking restrictions in the Capital (p16).

Everyone at OnRoute would like to wish you a very prosperous and safe holiday season and if you have anything you’d like to talk to us about, just get in contact at OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk
Have your say

There are four remaining suburban taxi forums in the current round where drivers can discuss any concerns they may have and make suggestions for improving services in their area. The Sector 6 forum takes place on 11 December, Sectors 8 and 9 on 12 January 2017, and Sector 7 on 2 February 2017.

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News

All ablaze

With darker nights drawing in, Santander Cycles have been fitted with Blaze Laserlights in a bid to make them more visible to motorists. The lights only come on when it is dark and project a symbol of a bicycle on to the ground six metres in front of the bike, which helps them to be seen when they are in a vehicle’s blind spot. The new technology will be fitted to all 11,500 Santander Cycles over the next eight months. The roll out follows a successful trial, which saw overwhelmingly positive feedback and strong results in independent tests. In September 2015, 250 Santander Cycles were fitted with the technology. An on-street survey of cyclists riding them revealed that around three-quarters felt more confident. Almost half said they would be more likely to use Santander Cycles at night with the new lights fitted. The announcement was made as Santander ambassador and Olympic gold medallist Jessica Ennis-Hill led a women’s night ride along the East-West Cycle Superhighway to show how the new lights are making them feel more confident that they will be seen by drivers.

A tale of three bridges

Watch out for maintenance work across London

Since 21 October, there has been a series of closures of a section of the A1 to work on replacing the century-old Upper Holloway Bridge. The latest closures are on the A1 between Fairbridge Road and Wedmore Gardens and will take place on Friday 25 November, and Friday 21 November, and Friday 18 November from 22:00 until 05:00 on Monday 21 November, and Friday 25 November from 22:00 until 05:00 on Monday 28 November. On both occasions the road will be closed to all vehicles in both directions. This will be followed by the pre-planned full closure between 24 December 2016 and 16 January 2017, when the bridge will be demolished and replaced. To help ease congestion, TFL is working with the surrounding boroughs to ban all non-emergency roadworks on nearby roads. It has also put in place plans to swiftly remove any vehicles blocking key surrounding routes to help reduce disruption. There will be variable messaging signs on the A1 advising drivers of the closure.

For up-to-date information, go to the @TfLTrafficNews Twitter feed or tfl.gov.uk/upper-holloway-bridge

Waterproofing and other work is currently being carried out on the A123 Ecclestone Bridge westbound between Bridge Place and Buckingham Palace Road. Because of this, the lane widths have been reduced so drivers should avoid stopping on the bridge to drop off passengers. Five spaces have been put aside for taxi use in the Bullied Way AVOA car park and these can also be used for dropping off. The restrictions will be suspended between 14 December and 8 January, with the work scheduled to continue until May 2017.

For updates on roadworks, go to @TfLTrafficNews

Also, until Friday 30 December, Towner Bridge will be closed to all traffic. A signed diversion route is in place, via London Bridge northbound and via Southwark Bridge southbound.

For full details, please visit tfl.gov.uk/tower-bridge-closure

A great display

Road closures on New Year’s Eve

This year, New Year’s Eve falls on a Saturday and the hugely popular annual firework display could see as many as 500,000 people trying to enter central London. The event has been ticketed since 2014 and 110,000 ticket holders are expected to gather in the viewing areas, which have their own entrance and exit routes. Many roads in the area will be closed, some from as early as 14:00, and a number of taxi ranks will not be accessible. The closures will remain in place once the firework display has finished and won’t be removed until it is safe to do so.

Road closure timings will be available closer to the date at tf.gov.uk and on the @TfLTrafficNews Twitter feed.

TPH licensing in numbers

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Latest trend

These are the hot topics trending on @TfLTHP

The English language requirement for private hire drivers was a big talking point on the Twitter feed, with taxi and private hire licensees and applicants asking lots of questions (see page 19 for more details).

There were also some interesting exchanges between cyclists and taxi drivers, expressing their differing views about the Cycle Superhighways.

Other major topics included the Tower Bridge closure, access for taxis to more London bus lanes, the new enhanced topographical test for private hire drivers, cross-border hiring and the implementation of the recent private hire regulations.

@TfLTHP now has 10,506 followers.

Open all hours

New taxi ranks open to serve Night Tube stations

Night Tube services are now running on the Central, Victoria and Jubilee lines, with the Northern line from High Barnet and Edgware to Morden (Charing Cross branch) going live on 18 November.

The following stations have new taxi ranks to help customers make the final leg of their journey home:
- Northern line: Brent Cross; Olipham South; Cockfosters; East Finchley; Finchley Central; Heathrow Central;
- High Barnet; Mornington Crescent; Tooting Bec and Tooting Broadway & Whetstone
- Jubilee line: Dollis Hill; Kilburn; Neasden; Queensbury; West Ham and Willesden Green
- The Piccadilly line will become the fifth Night Tube service when it opens on 20 December. Trains will run through the night on Fridays and Saturdays.

For more information on Night Tube taxi ranks, see the map on page 32.

Cabbie looks out for cyclists

Taxi driver Gary Thatcher has launched an innovative product that could help make London’s roads safer for cyclists. The Signum is a reflective wrist band that works like an indicator light when triggered by the cyclist.

Gary was inspired to create the product after a near miss with a cyclist who was trying to make a turn. He couldn’t see the cyclist’s arm because of poor light. ‘I’ve seen that situation numerous times,’ he says, ‘and so I thought, as a trained electrical engineer, I’d come up with a solution to the problem’.

After talking to several cyclists he found a great deal of enthusiasm for the idea and has since launched a company in the UK to manufacture the Signum, which also has a watch function.

For more information, go to www.brighterindication.com/

A City for All Londoners

Mayor Sadiq Khan has published a new vision for London: A City for All Londoners. The document, which is now out for consultation, outlines how he plans to respond to pressures on growth and celebrate diversity in the Capital, ensuring people from all walks of life are healthy and live well alongside each other. It covers everything from transport and housing through to land use and policing. You can comment on the document until 11 December. Have your say at yourviews@london.gov.uk

View the document at www.london.gov.uk/cityforall

Heathrow parking spreads its wings

Heathrow Airport opened an Authorised Vehicle Area in the summer to give private hire drivers somewhere to wait for passengers and ease pressure on local roads. It’s proving popular already.

After people expressed concerns to Heathrow about the number of private hire vehicles parking in local residential streets, the airport opened the area in June. It operates and is staffed seven days a week from 05:00 until midnight.

No wonder it has found favour with the drivers – 3,000 vehicles use it each day – as alongside its parking spaces it also has toilet facilities, vending machines, refreshments and a covered smoking area. There are litter bins specially designed to stop birds, which can cause a hazard to planes.

There is no need to book and access to the area costs £3 an hour for up to five hours, after which the cost rises to the same rate as the short-stay multi-storey car park in Terminal 3 (£6 for the first hour).

So far the response has been encouraging, with fewer vehicles using local roads while waiting. Drivers have been impressed, even asking for additional facilities such as car washing.

‘The way that private hire vehicles operate at Heathrow requires them to enter a short-stay car park prior to passenger pick-up, but many drivers have been parking in the local roads around the airport instead,’ said Chris Joyce, head of surface access at the airport. ‘The result of this parking has had a negative impact on our local residents and Heathrow has listened to their concerns and is now providing somewhere within the airport where they can wait for passengers to arrive.’

The area is for the use of private hire vehicles and taxis only, and staff operating within it are Security Industry Authorised (SIA) trained. They are also given extra training by TFL and the Metropolitan Police to understand private hire licensing, as Heathrow works with both bodies to ensure private hire companies comply with regulations.

Drivers’ licences are regularly checked for the safety and security of everyone at the airport.

The area has been designed as a waiting zone only, and passengers are not allowed to be picked up from there. When picking up customers from the terminals, private hire vehicles must use the short stay terminal car parks and meet passengers at an agreed location in the terminal, or they could be given a £40 Fixed Penalty Notice.

Heathrow also operates a taxi feeder park from which taxis are dispatched to wait for passengers at ranks located in every terminal forecourt. The park provides driver facilities including a canteen and toilets and acts as a meeting point for the trade as well as drivers who wish to catch up on airport news.

The Authorised Vehicle Area is on Northern Perimeter Road, Hounslow TW5 2EO.
If spending days behind the wheel leaves you out of the loop, there are plenty of options for staying connected. From email to social media, you are never alone in the digital world.

You've got mail

Email addresses became a mandatory part of taxi and private hire licence applications last May. It means TfL can provide drivers with essential information, quickly and efficiently. If you don't have email you're missing out – it's vital in our increasingly digitised world. It also means you can get weekly TPH news on things like road closures, changes to regulations and important consultations that may affect you, as well as links to the electronic version of this magazine.

Creating an account is easy and free

First, you need to find an email provider to register with. There are plenty to choose from including Google (Gmail), Microsoft (Outlook.com) or Yahoo!

Once you’ve selected your provider, just go to its webpage on the internet and click on ‘Log in’ or ‘Sign up’. You’ll then have to come up with a unique user name and password (something you will remember easily but which other people will find hard to guess). If your chosen user name is already taken, you will need to select an alternative. You will then be set up with your email account where your user name becomes part of your email address.

The social club

Twitter is a great way to receive live information and updates, and TfL has a whole range of feeds covering everything from taxi and private hire news to the Tube.

Sign up for @TfLTPH for information on all aspects of taxi and private hire. Other accounts, including @TfLTrafficNews and @TfLTravelAlerts could help you stay on top of transport issues across the Capital.

Another advantage of social media is that it is a two-way conversation. As well as being alerted to incidents or receiving information, you can join the discussion, share advice or flag traffic trouble to other drivers. You can even use it to send in ideas for articles you want to see in OnRoute.

Get it while it’s hot

There are WiFi hotspots across the Capital that you can hook up to when you are between jobs. The Cloud from Sky, BT WiFi and O2 are three of the biggest providers and access could be free. In most cases your phone will automatically alert you if it recognises a WiFi hotspot in range. Just make sure you have your WiFi enabled on your device – and, of course, that you’re safely parked beforehand!

If you are not currently receiving the weekly TPH email or a digital version of this magazine, contact tph.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk
Million dollar man

For a chauffeur, knowing your routes, and getting passengers from A to B without going through X, Y and Z, is just part of the job

‘I want to make my passenger feel like a million dollars,’ says Ajeet Ahuja as he parks his car in the elegant Belgrave Square in west London. Ajeet, and other limousine drivers like him, provide a specialist, personal service to their customers in top of the range vehicles. Almost immediately after being picked up, passengers will be offered a bottle of water, and that day’s Financial Times will be within reach, along with a selection of magazines. Then it’s a case of sitting back and enjoying the comfort as London passes quietly by.

It soon becomes apparent how happy Ajeet is to be at the wheel. ‘I thoroughly enjoy it – I can’t stop telling my passengers that. For me, driving is fun and not a chore,’ he explains. ‘I also get to drive this beautiful car, which is fitted with every device one could wish for. I take pride in it. The other reason is that I enjoy being in the company of my passengers.’

Ajeet works for Carey Chauffeur Services, which has a fleet of 260 executive cars in London and 232 drivers. He is one of 39 VIP-passed drivers who have had the highest level of training. He says: ‘I always wait for passengers to initiate a conversation; within the first few seconds of meeting someone you can make a judgement on whether they’re going to want to chat. A passenger is just that – a passenger, not a friend.’

A number of celebrities have ridden in Ajeet’s car, but to him, everyone’s the same. ‘You must treat your passenger respectfully, that’s almost as important as knowing your routes. If you do that, they’ll have respect for you.’

Now until the end of November is the busiest time of the year for Ajeet, with a decent chunk of his work involving airport pick-ups and drop-offs. Business passengers like to slow down in December, so Christmas is a quiet time. But happily for Ajeet, normal service resumes after the festivities. ‘I never wake up and think, “Oh no, I’ve got to work”. Every day’s different, but every day’s a pleasure.

‘You meet new people. You take the stress out of their travel. After I’ve dropped my passengers off, they’ll hopefully look me in the eye, shake my hand and say, “It’s been nice meeting you”. And that makes it such a joy.’

Do you want to share your view from the wheel? Email OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk and you could appear in a future issue of the magazine.

Open all hours

With the Night Tube now running on the Central, Jubilee and Victoria lines – and the Northern and Piccadilly lines set to follow – London is welcoming even more night owls and early birds.

If you’re out working late or need a bite to eat in the early morning, it’s good to know where you can get a treat that really hits the spot, or something healthy to keep you going through your shift. There’s plenty of choice in the Capital, so here’s our guide to some of London’s late-night cafés, restaurants and grills.
City slickers
The grill is on the go 24-hours a day at Polo Bar near Liverpool Street station (57 Bishopsgate), offering everything from a double egg sarnie to crowd-pleasers like fish-finger sandwiches.

A couple of miles northwest, Tinseltown (44-46 St John Street) is famous for its milkshakes – the Oreo’s Go Nuts, made with Oreo cookies, peanut butter and ice cream, is a naughty but nice midnight snack – and it’s also open for takeaways. Get everything from wings, burgers and wraps to a portion of cheery chips until 04:00 Monday to Saturday, and until 03:00 on Sundays.

Other branches include Tinseltown Rayners (57 Westbourne Grove), which opens its doors until 01:30 on Fridays and Saturdays, 01:00 Monday to Wednesday, and midnight on Sunday.

At Ranoush Juice (43 Edgware Road) you can get your five a day. Open from 07:00 in the morning until 23:00, they serve up a range of juices and Lebanese sweet treats until 03:00 every night. Or grab similar nave delights, including traditional lentil soup with Lebanese bread, at their sister eaterie at 86 High Street Kensington, open until 02:00.

Catering for a central crowd
Soho has always rung to the sound of late-night revelers and is a great place to grab something at any time of the day or night.

If it’s on the menu at Balans Soho Society (60-62 Old Compton Street) you can pretty much have it all day, from falafel to double-dipped chips. They close at 06:00 then open again for breakfast at 07:00, after a swift hour cleaning up.

Bar Italia (22 Frith Street) has been the late-night coffee shop in Soho for more than 60 years and still serves drinks made to your particular order. It’s open until 05:00, Monday to Saturday.

Spice up your life with the Mexican menu at El Camion (25-27 Brewer Street), which is available until 03:00, Monday to Saturday. Wake yourself up with the signature quesadillas, which come with chorizo, tinga (shredded) chicken or spiced pork.

Healthy options
Eating out doesn’t have to mean fried fast food; there are plenty of venues offering healthy soups, salads, juices and lean grilled meat and fish. London also has some great vegetarian and vegan restaurants ensuring you get your five a day. Open from 08:00 until 23:00 each day, the Mediterranean Café at 31 Burwick Street, Soho specialises in Italian and Turkish veggie dishes.

Mildred’s vegetarian restaurant started out as one small venue in Greek Street in the late 1980s. It proved so popular there are now three outlets at 48 Lexington Street W1, 9 Jamestown Road N1 and 200 Pentonville Road N1, which are all open from midday to 03:00, fillings at the Happening Bar Italia (22 Frith Street).

The pubs around Smithfield Market have historically opened early to welcome the meat traders – perfect if you’ve just come off the night shift. Traditional breakfasts are available from 07:00 at The Hope (94 Cowcross Street) and the Fox & Anchor (13 Charterhouse Street). Head further east and there’s Hul’s Café (317-319 Cambridge Heath Road), where breakfast starts at 06:00.

Keeping it East
Top seller at 24-hour The Bagel House (2 Stoke Newington High Street) is salmon and cream cheese, while salt beef goes down a storm anytime at Beigel Bake (258-260 Brick Lane). Between 05:00 and 02:00, fillings at The Happening Bagel Bakery (264-266 Seven Sisters Road) include minted lamb and halloumi, and there’s a wide range of other favourites and pastries such as samosas and Jamaican patties.

First meal of the day
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For more information on the Night Tube, including maps, go to tfl.gov.uk/nighttube

Got a top tip for a late-night cuppa or a healthy snack? Let us know at OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk

Acccording to Tony Ellis, operations manager for London taxi marshals, you can tell how much people love the city’s night life by looking at the late night ranks. The ones at both Liverpool Street and Victoria stations keep moving throughout the night. At the O2 things can really get busy when a big event coincides with people leaving the venue’s clubs.

You can find out which of these ranks are moving quickly and where more taxis are required by following @LDNTaxiMarshall on Twitter.

Late night marshalled taxi ranks

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<td>Berkeley Street (Novikov)</td>
<td>Friday and Saturday</td>
<td>22:00-03:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarence Street, Kingston</td>
<td>Wednesday and Friday and Saturday</td>
<td>23:00-02:30</td>
</tr>
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<td>Charing Cross Road, Westminster</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>23:30-02:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalston (birthday’s)</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>23:00-03:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of London (Liverpool Street station)</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>22:00-02:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cornhill (The Forge)</td>
<td>Thursday and Friday</td>
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<td>Market Square, Bromley</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>22:30-02:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Street, Hackney</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>23:00-03:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regent Street (Swallow Street), Westminster</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>22:30-02:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria station (Terminus Place)</td>
<td>Every night</td>
<td>00:00-04:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widmore Road (Bibas), Bromley</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>00:30-02:30</td>
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</tbody>
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Join the conversation...

Got a top tip for a late-night cuppa or a healthy snack? Let us know at OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk

Correct as of 8 November
Christmas nights and twinkling lights

After dark is a magical time to experience Christmas in the Capital with glittering lights, inviting market stalls and exciting visitor attractions.

On the south bank

From Friday 11 November until Wednesday 25 January 2017, the Southbank Centre’s Winter Festival will feature some spectacular Christmas shows including rock and roll musical Million Dollar Quartet. There’ll also be a big top where circus company NoFit State will perform above a standing audience.

www.southbankcentre.co.uk

Light up your life

Everybody loves Christmas lights and some of the locations below have already turned on their illuminations. For the past 57 years, Oxford Street’s lights have been a big draw. This year’s display consists of 1,778 decorations and 750,000 LED lightbulbs and is in aid of the NSPCC’s Little Stars charity campaign. For a donation of £5 people can dedicate one of the star-shaped lights to a loved one.

Duke of York Square has a Santa’s Grotto along with its illuminations. In Carnaby Street the lights are shining down on loads of on-street and in-store activities, while the 2016 display on Regent Street is a throwback to its first set of Christmas lights, which went up in 1954. The decorations will form part of a wider display that will run all the way from Oxford Circus to Waterloo Place via Piccadilly and St James’s. The star-studded switch-on event is on Thursday 17 November and will see the street go traffic-free.

Further out of town, Kingston’s lights have a ‘Christmas Carol’ theme. Staying south, Eltham High Street will be lit up this Saturday (19 November), accompanied by street performers plus side shows, music and entertainment.

At Kew Gardens, beautiful illuminations will light up the buildings, trails and planting. The mile-long trail will lead visitors past two Christmas trees, a scent garden and all kinds of nature-inspired lights. There’s also Santa’s Snowflake Grotto and a vintage carousel. Christmas gifts and traditional festive nibbles and drinks.

Heading north, the Hampstead Christmas Festival opens on Tuesday 29 November when the Christmas lights will be turned on by the BBC’s Fiona Bruce. The High Street will be lined with stalls selling gifts, food and drink, and there will be children’s activities. Other great places include Covent Garden and Trafalgar Square (with its famous giant Christmas tree).

For more information on Christmas lights, go to www.visitlondon.com

Kew’s light show is a ticketed event and will be open from 17:00 to 22:00 each evening from Wednesday 23 November to Monday 2 January. Taxi and private hire should drop customers off at Kew’s main entrance at Victoria Gate. For more information, visit www.kew.org and go to the what’s on page.

Christmas markets

Alongside the usual Christmas shopping hotspots such as Oxford Street, Regent Street and Covent Garden, there are plenty of Christmas markets taking place around the Capital. Check out Notting Hill, Shoreditch, London Bridge, Canary Wharf and Camden.

Walking in a Winter Wonderland

Now back for its tenth year in Hyde Park, Winter Wonderland has added lots of new festive activities alongside firm favourites. It boasts the largest open-air ice rink in the UK, lots of spectacular shows and stalls, plus you can take in panoramic views across London from the giant observation wheel.

Winter Wonderland runs from Friday 18 November until Sunday 2 January 2017. Gates open at 10:00 and close at 22:00. Entrance is free but activities are individually priced. The closest taxi rank is on the northbound carriageway of Park Lane. The nearest entrance/exit is Brook Gate. www.hydeparkwinterwonderland.com

Pop in to a pop-up Christmas

Winterwonderland returns to Victoria Park this year and it’s bigger than ever with an extra 20 Christmas market stalls. This pop-up town has everything from an ice rink to a circus.

Winterwonderland runs from 26 November until 3 December, 11:00 until 22:00. Entry is free, but you pay for the individual shows. Taxis and private hire should use the entrance at Crown Gate at the junction of Old Ford Road and Grove Road E3 5TB.

Christmas markets

Alongside the usual Christmas shopping hotspots such as Oxford Street, Regent Street and Covent Garden, there are plenty of Christmas markets taking place around the Capital. Check out Notting Hill, Shoreditch, London Bridge, Canary Wharf and Camden.
Understanding your parking rights is important to keep the Capital moving and help you avoid a ticket.

Whether waiting for a fare or dropping off passengers, there are many laws and some exemptions around how taxi and private hire drivers use London’s roads. Taxi drivers also have access to taxi ranks, as they are able to ply for hire.

**Read between the lines**

Taxis and private hire vehicles are allowed to pick up or drop off on single and double yellow and red lines, as well as parking bays, bus lanes and places where loading is not permitted. However, as with other areas with waiting or parking restrictions, drivers cannot stop for longer than the passenger needs to safely get in or out of the vehicle.

Drivers waiting at a time and place where there are restrictions could be given a penalty charge notice (PCN) if they are not picking up or dropping off a fare. This applies even if the driver has arrived early for a booking, the passenger is late, or a customer asks the driver to wait while they use a cashpoint.

Also make sure you don’t fall foul of the law by stopping somewhere that could cause an obstruction or safety hazard, such as zigzag lines near a pedestrian or school crossing.

**In the bus lane**

Only taxis can drive in bus lanes, but both taxis and private hire vehicles are allowed to pick up or drop off a passenger in a bus lane. The only exceptions are stretches of red route where stopping is not permitted because of the disruption this would cause to already busy roads.

Drivers should enter and leave the bus lane in the most direct and safe way when dropping off or picking up.

While taxis and private hire vehicles are also permitted to pick up and set down at most London bus stops, it is best avoided as it can cause disruption to the buses and their timetables.

Customers should never be set down in the middle of the road, even if the vehicle is stopped owing to traffic. The driver must always get close to the kerb to ensure the passenger can safely exit the vehicle.

Any requests?

If a passenger asks to stop and wait in an area where waiting is not permitted, then drivers should advise them where they will be allowed to wait for them.

You should suggest alternative locations nearby so that you will not be penalised and the customer can be confident you will be waiting for them.

**Make sure you don’t fall foul of the law by stopping somewhere that could cause an obstruction**

Test how much you know with our parking quiz. There are no winners, but it might just stop you collecting an unwanted parking ticket.

Tick the box next to the answer you think is right. You can check your answers on the next page and see if you’re right.

---

**Q1 When can a private hire vehicle stop or wait in a taxi rank?**

- A. Only when picking up or setting down a passenger
- B. Only if the hazard lights are on
- C. Never

**Q2 When can you stop on double yellow or red lines?**

- A. When picking up or dropping off a passenger
- B. When waiting for a passenger
- C. Never

**Q3 Taxis and private hire vehicles can pick up and set down passengers on most red routes, with two exceptions, which are marked with a wide red line. Can you name them (one point for each)?**

- A. Eastbound Euston Road in front of King’s Cross station
- B. Northbound Bishopsgate between Liverpool Street and Middlesex Street
- C. Southbound Upper Street between Cross Street and Essex Road

**Q4 When can a driver stop on a red route to allow a passenger to use a cash point?**

- A. Always
- B. Between 22:00 and 06:00
- C. Never

**Q5 When can a private hire driver use a bus lane?**

- A. Only if there is a passenger in the car
- B. After 22:00
- C. Never

**Q6 When can a driver leave their engine idling?**

- A. Never
- B. When waiting in stationary traffic
- C. While waiting for a passenger in a designated rank

---

Now turn the page to see how you did...
An English language requirement now applies to all renewal and new applications for private hire drivers’ licences.

In October the new English language requirement for all private hire drivers was introduced, as communicating with passengers and being able to understand and respond to information sent by TfL is crucial. Anyone applying for a new or renewal licence on or after 14 October has until 31 March 2017 to satisfy TfL they meet the new requirement. From 1 April, all applicants must provide evidence they meet the English language requirement as part of their application before a licence will be issued.

Applicants must now meet this requirement by providing either:

- A certificate from a TfL appointed test provider confirming that their English language is at level B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)
- Evidence of a qualification that satisfies TfL their proficiency in English is equivalent to the level B1 on the CEFR (for example, a UK qualification that has been taught or examined in English, such as a GCSE at grades A* to G, or equivalent)

If you don’t have suitable evidence that you are proficient in English to the B1 level, you will need to take a test with one of the providers who administer it on TfL’s behalf. The test will examine your ability to read, write, speak and listen in English.

For more information on the test and guidance, including examples of evidence TfL will consider as being equivalent to taking the test, is available online at tfl.gov.uk/ph-language.
Clearing the air – have your say

Londoners have another chance to comment on plans to clean up the Capital, as the next phase of the Mayor’s air quality crackdown is now under way.

A total of 15,000 people aired their views in July – the highest number ever seen for a City Hall consultation. They offered overwhelming support for Mayor Sadiq Khan’s bold measures including a new Emissions Surcharge (dubbed the ‘T-charge’) and launching the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) a year early.

The ULEZ will initially cover the same area as the current Congestion Charging zone and operate 24/7.

In the zone

All cars, motorcycles, vans, minibuses, buses, coaches, HGVs and private hire vehicles driven in the ULEZ will need to meet specific exhaust emission standards, or be subject to a daily charge.

What is the Emissions Surcharge?

This is a daily £10 charge for the oldest, most polluting cars, vans, minibuses and HGVs driving in central London. It is in addition to the Congestion Charge, and would apply to all vehicles with pre-Euro 4 emission standards. Taxi and private hire vehicles are exempt.

Following the July consultation, the Mayor has already introduced air quality alerts. They are displayed on road signs, bus stops and at station entrances on the day before high and very high pollution levels are expected.

From 2017, a rapid charging network will be developed to enable drivers to maximise fuel savings and operate vehicles mostly in zero emission mode. By 2018, 150 should be in place, with 90 of these being on-street ‘taxi dedicated’ rapid chargers.

As well as backing the main proposals, people supported the Mayor’s call to Government for a diesel scrappage scheme to help Londoners switch from high polluting cars.

At a glance

81 per cent
Backed the proposed Emissions Surcharge

79 per cent
Supported plans to bring forward the ULEZ

87 per cent
Wanted the ULEZ to be extended further

71 per cent
Agreed it should be expanded to the North and South Circular

Next stage

Now a second 10-week consultation will run until 18 December, with the Mayor specifically seeking views on:

- Introducing the Emissions Surcharge on 23 October 2017
- Launching the ULEZ in 2019, rather than 2020
- Expanding it London-wide for HGVs, coaches and buses
- Extending it to the North and South Circular for motorcycles, cars, vans and private hire vehicles

The Mayor is taking urgent action to help end the Capital’s ‘public health emergency’ – 443 schools are in areas that exceed safe air quality levels.

He said: ‘The equivalent of 9,500 Londoners die each year as a result of the air they breathe in our city. I refuse to sit back and do nothing.

‘A record number of Londoners responded to our consultation, which demonstrates they feel just as strongly as I do that cleaning up the Capital’s killer air has to be a major priority.’

Visit tfl.gov.uk/airquality-consultation, email airqualityconsultation@tfl.gov.uk, or write to Freepost, TfL Consultations – ULEZ before 18 December.

The results will be considered in detail before the next steps are decided.

The equivalent of 9,500 Londoners die each year as a result of the air they breathe in our city. I refuse to sit back and do nothing. Sadiq Khan
Proposals to tackle the Capital’s poor air quality featured in the Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan, launched in September.

These include:

- From 2017, up to £6,000 will be available to drivers of the oldest taxis who choose to no longer license their vehicle in London, with the exact amount depending on the age of the vehicle.

- Requiring that, from 1 January 2018, newly registered taxis in London to be Zero Emission Capable (ZEC).

- Reducing the cost premium of new vehicles by providing a £3,000 grant towards the first 9,000 ZEC taxis licensed in London and lobbying Government to guarantee the plug-in car grant for these vehicles, enabling up to £7,000 in total.

The newest taxis today will be the last remaining diesel vehicles in the fleet.

For more information, visit tfl.gov.uk/ranks, regulation and policy.

The consultation ends on Sunday 18 December.
At the start of 2016 chauffeur Milton Johnson, 47, was diabetic and overweight. But in just a few weeks, he achieved a massive U-turn in his health.

Viewers of the BBC 2 series ‘The Retreat: 28 days to change your life,’ which aired in September, will recognise him as, along with presenter Nick Knowles, he took part in a healing retreat in Thailand. The results were truly amazing. The 18-stone, type-2 diabetic Milton had reversed his condition after less than a week. By the end of the retreat, he'd also dropped two stone in weight.

He explains: ‘I had heard type-2 diabetes could be reversed by following a certain diet, but while I was working so hard in London I didn’t get around to doing anything about it. In Thailand, I had so much support because everyone was doing the diet as well, which made it much easier for me.’

He took part in the show as he knew Shakti, the retreat’s Reiki practitioner. She suggested a regime of fasting followed by a strict vegan diet, yoga, meditation and other treatments. ‘At first, I was a bit reluctant because I didn’t know if it was my kind of thing,’ he admits. ‘Then I thought “just go for it, it’s an opportunity. Who else is going to give you a month in Thailand with treatments for free?”’

However, he does admit the first days of the fast – when he had just a bowl of soup and a coconut to keep him going – were really hard, but he had massive moral support from Cathy, one of the other retreaters. She would get up at 05:00 to accompany him on the two hour walk to the hospital for his regular blood tests.

‘I was absolutely shocked that after just five days I’d gone from being diabetic to not being diabetic. In fact all my test levels including blood pressure and cholesterol had returned to normal and I’d lost two stone by the end of the retreat. That’s not bad for 28 days.’

Although he decided Reiki was not for him, Milton did take to other parts of the regime. Walking is now his favourite form of exercise and he regularly practises the 10-minute yoga programme that teacher Luke designed for him at the retreat. ‘I’ve also kept up some of the meditation because I’m really into that, it gets you ready for the day,’ he says.

Milton has made a conscious decision to change his diet, shunning the unhealthy food he used to eat on the road and cooking more at home, including some vegan recipes he brought back from Thailand. Now he wants to share the healthy lifestyle message with other drivers. ‘Make time in the mornings to put on your shorts and trainers and go for a walk,’ he urges. ‘Even 10 or 15 minutes walking a day sorts you out. I take a container of healthy snacks, such as cashew nuts and fresh and dried fruit, in the car as this keeps me feeling full, so I’m not tempted to eat unhealthy things. I also drink a lot of water, which is so important.’

The whole experience has been an amazing opportunity. ‘I would definitely do it again,’ he adds. ‘Eating healthily and doing exercise is something I am going to keep up. I have a beautiful 20-year-old daughter and I’m not getting any younger – I want to stay around for a long time and get even fitter.’

Do you regularly practise yoga or meditation? Or are you planning a health kick in the New Year? Share your story at OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk

Fasting fit
In our last issue we looked at ways to improve your wellbeing. Here we talk to one driver who transformed his life in under a month.

“Make time in the mornings to put on your shorts and trainers and go for a walk” Milton Johnson

Orion Healing Centre is a Thailand detox retreat located in Srithanu Bay, Koh Phangan. As well as offering yoga in Thailand, it is a health retreat and since its creation in 2005 it has provided life-changing experiences to thousands of people from across the world. Its experienced therapists combine methods based on ancient Thai and Indian knowledge with a blend of modern techniques and diet expertise.
Traditionally, it was illegal for drivers to leave their horse and carriage or Hansom cab unattended. If they wanted a hot meal, they had to pay somebody else to mind their horse while they were away from the rank.

Captain George Armstrong, the editor of the Globe newspaper, realised the inconvenience of this when he couldn’t find a cabman during a January blizzard – they’d all retired to the warmth of a pub. So he came up with the idea of shelters. In 1876, the first ones were introduced, and with the help of the 7th Earl of Shaftesbury, so was the Cabmen’s Shelter Fund. Between 1875 and 1954, 61 shelters were built, all within a six-mile radius of Charing Cross. By law, they had to be located directly on the cab ranks, traditionally, it was illegal for drivers to leave their horse and carriage or Hansom cab unattended. If they wanted a hot meal, they had to pay somebody else to mind their horse while they were away from the rank.

Gimme shelter

Across the Capital a number of green, hut-like buildings have oozed the scent of fresh coffee and food for more than 100 years.

The shelters are all Grade II-listed so are protected from redevelopment and every effort is made to preserve them. Although not part of the Cabmen’s Shelter Fund scheme, in 2012 a new cabmen’s shelter was built at the Haven Green rank at Ealing Broadway – the first in a century. Fittingly, it adopted the traditional design of its predecessors. The historic structures are now run by tenants who pay a contribution to the Cabmen’s Shelter Fund for their maintenance and upkeep.

Cooking for the cabbies

Tracy Tucker has been dishing out food and advice to cabbies for 13 years. Today, 13 are still standing and 11 numbers dwindled as many were away from the rank.

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Pining for the kipper

It may be the busiest time of year for taxi drivers, but some gifts are more welcome than others, explains Ian Beetlestone. Bah humbug!

Ah, Christmas in London. Heart-warming carollers and carol bands. The twinkling lights in Oxford Street. The magnificent Norway Spruce in Trafalgar Square. The smiling faces of excited children as they enter the wonderland of that famous toy store. And that sound of Christmas carols.

roasting chestnuts and the sound of Christmas carols.

It’s a time of joy, love, giving, goodwill and merriment.

Or, festive office- goers in reindeer antler Alice bands, stumbling all over Shaftesbury Avenue and looking worse for wear in Charing Cross Road.

We cabbies are well-known for enjoying a good moan, and there can’t be a better topic for a bit of bah humbug than Christmas, can there?

Don’t get me wrong, we’re all glad of the extra business. Of course, when I say all, I mean all – every man and his dog is out plying the streets as much as he can in December – but then it’s a time of sharing, isn’t it? And it can feel very festive driving an iconic London cab with the lights and the shops and the buskers and the revellers and all that.

But I’ll admit that some time around early December I start longing for the clear, sleepy streets of January, and then get annoyed with myself when I realize I’m pining for the kipper, that part of the year during which I pine for the time of year I’m in now. Rather than enjoying, I’m willing away, and that’s no way to let the season pass, is it?

It’s all that, combined with the fact that everybody else is out making merry, drinking mulled wine and every other night friends are saying ‘come for a drink, it’s Christmas’, and I’m in the cab.

Ah, Christmas in London. The best, busiest time of year to be a cabbie, and yet the time of year that makes me long for the worst, quietest time of year to come back around. There’s just no pleasing some people, is there?

Five hotspots for Christmas cabbing

1. Oxford Street
The classic Christmas destination. It’s a story heart that isn’t moved by the lights and the happy crowds, the smell of roasting chestnuts and the sound of Christmas carols.

2. Covent Garden
Always decked out beautifully, the quaint streets a good mixture of shops, bars and restaurants to keep the work coming all day and night.

3. The stations
There’s constant rail traffic in and out of the city at this time of year, and the station ranks are a nice spot to briefly come up for air before diving back into the chaos.

4. Winter Wonderland

5. Old Street

Letters

Star letter
Bus barminess

Around the first week of September, while driving eastbound on Bloomsbury Way, I observed seven number 38 buses in the space of five minutes travelling westbound towards New Oxford Street. Between them they could not have had more than a dozen people on them. It is not an uncommon sight during the day in central London to see many empty buses.

Given the levels of congestion in central London it seems ridiculous that so many buses operate in the period between the morning and afternoon rush hours. Does TFL have any say, or can they regulate these numbers of empty vehicles?

Ronnie Franklin

We do regulate the numbers of buses around central London and we also stipulate the number of bus services that run on each route and their frequency. Although it may seem that buses are empty at certain times, we do carry out extensive passenger checks on all our routes to ensure there is enough capacity for our customers.

The 38 is the third busiest bus route in central London, and we know the key stops for boarding are Hackney, Angel Islington and Victoria.

We are reviewing all bus services in the Capital and will be checking we have the right amount of services to meet passenger demand.

We also make sure environmentally-friendly buses, which produce less harmful emissions, run on high frequency routes.

Tony Aliber, head of Bus Operations, TFL

Letters

Fixed card readers

I am writing with concerns regarding the permanent fixing of the credit card machine in the rear of the taxi. As a woman who works all different hours, I have experienced situations where I have needed to help with the process of paying by card both verbally and physically, especially when the customer has had a bit too much to drink.

In the past I have been able to assist and pass the pinpad through the cabin window, but now this is not possible and I am too concerned for my own safety to get out and enter the passenger compartment.

I would like to know why TFL feels that the machine has to be fixed in the rear and what suggestions you have for me when I encounter a payment problem.

Jo Good

From 1 January 2017, the payment device must be installed in the passenger compartment of all taxis in order to allow passengers to be in control of their card details at all times.

We would not expect a driver to leave their cab, should a problem with payment arise, if they do not feel safe to do so. We advise passengers to firstly, ask the passenger to try their payment card again. If the issue persists, ask the passenger whether they have another payment card or cash to pay for the fare, or offer to take the passenger to the nearest ATM.

If a passenger refuses to pay and an amicable agreement cannot be found, then consider contacting the police.

If the driver experiences any problems with their card payment device, they should contact the provider of the card payment system in order to rectify the issue as soon as possible.

Tom Moody, head of Taxi and Private Hire Policy, TFL

Letters

From our Twitter feed

We say...

- Please ensure you declare all names, including middle names, when applying for your disclosure certificate and check all your details are correct.
- On which London bridge is there a sign ordering troops to break stride as they cross it?
- Where and when was the world’s first traffic light installed?
- Where in London are vehicles required by law to travel on the right-hand side of the road?
- The traffic island at the junction of Marble Arch and Edgware Road was once the location of what?
- On which London bridge is there a sign ordering troops to break stride as they cross it?

Yes, or you can collect them from any of the inspection centres.

@_Danny_J_Smith_

You say...

- Trippped & ripped my hamstring running. Huge thanks Black Cabble Cabin who got me home & carried me in @MartinLevin
- Hi Martin your fav cabble Cabin. Glad you’re ok mate good excuse to put feet up & be waited on cheers Colin @combingamer
- Hi, I need more credit card stickers. Can I collect from your counter service? @Danny_J_Smith

Do you know?

- Outside the House of Commons in 1868. It blew up the following year.
- London's public gallows.

Email us at OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk. We will print a selection of emails every issue – and there’s a £20 Amazon voucher on offer for the best.
Calendar

November

15 November
Catfish and the Bottlemen concert, Wembley Arena

22 November
Rod Stewart concert, O2 Arena

23 November
Ideal Home Show at Christmas 2016, Olympia (until 27 November)

LUX LIVE, ExCel, Arena (and Thursday 24 November)

24 November
Alter Bridge concert, O2 Arena

29 November
The Gadget Show, ExCel, Arena

December

1 December
Pete Tong presents Ibiza Classics concert, O2 Arena

3 December
The Levellers concert, Brixton Academy

4 December
London Santa Dash, Clapham Common

5 December
Black Friday shopping event, across London (until 27 December)

8 December
Poppy match (rugby), Twickenham

9 December
Richard Ashcroft concert, O2 Arena

10 December
Madness concert, O2 Arena

11 December
Status Quo concert, O2 Arena

13 December
Pete Tong presents Ice, Twickenham

15 December
Placebo concert, Wembley Arena

16 December
The 1975 concert, Wembley Arena

17 December
Fatboy Slim concert, O2 Arena

18 December
Jess Glynne concert, Wembley Arena

19 December
Andrea Rieu concert, Wembley Arena

21 December
Disney on Ice presents Frozen, O2 Arena

22 December
Opeth concert, Wembley Arena

23 December
Ideal Home Show at Christmas 2016, Olympia (until 27 November)

24 December
LUX LIVE, ExCel, Arena (and Thursday 24 November)

26 December
England vs Jamaica (netball), Copperbox, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

31 December
New Year’s Eve fireworks, central London closed to traffic

January

1 January 2017
New Year’s Day Parade, central London

7 January
Impractical Jokers, O2 Arena

8 January
London International Boat Show, ExCel, Arena (until 13 January)