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REVISED TAXI LICENCE FEES

From 2 July 2007, the annual taxi licence fee increased to £71 - an increase of £36 to provide for the cost of mid-year safety inspections to be introduced with effect from October 2007. The new fee for the Taxi Drivers Licence has decreased by £25. The fee is now £199 for three years, a reduction of just over £8 per year.

For the private hire trade there are no increases in fees but all private hire vehicles which are more than one year old will now be required to have an MOT test twice a year.



Public Carriage Office

PAUL HAILS NEW ROLE WITH TAXI FIRM

Paul Kelsey has joined LTI Vehicles as Market Development Executive. Paul, 45, lives in Warwickshire, comes from a background of sales and management in the Birmingham area. The new post at LTI Vehicles, based in Holyhead Road, will see him looking at new business markets for the iconic black cab.

Paul began his career as a mechanic with the Co-operative Society. He said: "It is very exciting for me to join a world-renowned company with such a distinctive and unique product.

"The purpose-built taxis produced by LTI Vehicles are not just a familiar sight on roads in the UK but also, and increasingly, abroad in places as diverse as Germany, China, USA and South Africa. I am looking forward to the challenges ahead and pushing further the success of the company."



ASA GETS TOUGH ON ADVERTISING GREEN CLAIMS

Consumers are being warned by The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is about advertising 'green' claims which turn out to be little more than hot air. Coinciding with the Trading Standards Annual Conference, where this issue is high on the agenda, the ASA is raising consumer awareness of misleading ads, reminding advertisers of the rules and why it is not always easy being green.

Over the last few months the ASA has investigated and upheld seven complaints against advertisers who have made unsubstantiated environmental claims, including car manufacturers, a low cost airline and an energy supplier. From carbon offsetting targets by

energy providers to improved pollution figures by car manufacturers, green claims are becoming noticeably more prevalent in ads. The ASA rulings send out a clear message to advertisers about what is and is not acceptable under the advertising codes.

ASA Director General, Christopher Graham says: "Advertisers have every right to promote their green credentials and many have been quick to reassure consumers about the efforts they are making to be greener. However the ASA needs to see robust evidence to back up any eco-friendly claims. We will continue to ensure that the public are not misled and that advertisers are operating in a climate of truth."

CARBON EMISSIONS CUT WITH BRIGHT IDEA

Westminster City Council is the first in the country to install pioneering lamps, known as Furyo, to cut carbon emissions. These lamps alter the way light is reflected, maximising the strength of the light bulb, enabling the council to swap ultra-powerful bulbs for those with lower wattage.

The move, which has been trialled since May 8, 2007 on Harrow Road has saved the council up to 40% in carbon emissions along this high-street. The scheme has proved such a success the council is soon to roll out the new technology near Embankment Gardens. To bolster the amount of energy being saved, the council has also installed solar pec micro-chips on these lamps. These super chips can detect levels of light and switches on the street lamps when it starts to get dark – saving 30 minutes a day.

The installment of both devices on the Harrow Road street lamps means that on an average day enough energy has been saved to light a household for two days - 1.8KWH. With this energy saving combination the council expects to save massive 2,737,500 hours and £20,000 if the scheme was rolled out across the rest of the city.

Councillor Alan Bradley, Westminster City Council's Cabinet Member for Street Environment said: "Westminster Council is always looking for ways to save energy as part of our drive to make the city greener. Not only will these lights make a significant difference to the environment, but saves money too. These changes are vital and will help preserve our heritage and the city for everyone to enjoy for generations to come."

