

APOTHECARY STREET RE-DEVELOPMENT

The highly popular taxi driver car wash and canteen site in Apothecary Street EC4 has now closed due to the owners of the site, Network Rail, re-developing the location. The site had been earmarked for redevelopment as part of the Thameslink extension for some time and in early January the site was closed to taxi drivers.

The centrally located canteen and car wash had proved enormously popular in the 11 months it was operational providing ample parking and excellent facilities in the heart of the City.

Computer Cab plc also had a small office on site and Malcolm Paice, Head of Operations for the firm said: "It's a great shame this site now has to be re-developed because it proved just how much the taxi trade needs a City based location where cabbies can take a break without struggling to find



a parking space. We really made the most of Apothecary Street over the past year and we are now actively looking for an alternative site to try and take its place. The availability of cabs in the City was really helped by this site, especially on weekday evenings, because it made it easier for drivers to stay in the City rather than head off home. There is great demand for centrally based driver locations like this one."

A number of sites across the City are currently under review as possible replacements for the Apothecary Street facility.

STOP PRESS...

As this newspaper was about to go to press, we learned that Steve, who had been running the café at Apothecary Street, has now re-located to the Brights site in Great Suffolk Street.

LATEST LTI SPONSORSHIP DEAL 'TRIES' EVEN HARDER

As LTI Vehicles is based in Coventry, they are hoping its latest sponsorship deal will 'convert' supporters of the city's rugby team in to fans of one of the world's most iconic vehicles. LTI is sponsoring Coventry Rugby Club in a deal which sees the LTI brand being displayed around the club's Butts Park Arena stadium. The deal continues a long standing relationship between the two Coventry based organisations.

"As an integral part of Coventry's business community, we felt it was important to show our support to another of the city's well known institutions," comments Peter Shillcock, Managing Director for LTI Vehicles. "LTI has developed a strong bond with Coventry RFC over the years and we are pleased that this latest sponsorship deal is continuing that relationship."

Coventry RFC has a history going back to 1874. The club which moved to its new home – the Butts Park Arena in 2004, has established itself as strong division one side this season. "This latest deal is great news for Coventry RFC," comments Andrew Green, Chairman of Coventry RFC. "We are always looking to develop our links with the local community and as LTI Vehicles is so closely associated with the city, it is great for the team to be able to carry such a world renowned name." Peter Shillcock concludes: "This year's world cup put rugby in the international spotlight, so it is fitting that the manufacturer of one of the world's most recognisable vehicles should be once again associated with this exciting sport."



Peter Shillcock alongside players from Coventry RFC

PEDICABS TO GO TO COURT

Back in 1998, Bugbugs Ltd started operating pedicabs in central London. Today, it is just one of several companies operating pedicabs around the West End. The campaign by the LTDA to get the pedicabs banned has been on going and the decision as to whether TfL will licence the vehicles as hackney carriages has not yet been resolved. On 21 December 2007 Bugbugs Ltd failed in an attempt to stop the question being re-opened.

The Public Carriage had sought a High Court declaration that a pedicab is a hackney carriage. Bugbugs had asked that the application be struck out. The Institutue for Licensing reports that Counsel for Bugbugs told Mrs Justice Swift that the issue had been decided in favour of Bug-Bugs by courts in 1999, and twice in 2003. The matter was therefore settled law, they argued, and TfL were abusing the process of the court to reopen the matter.

The judge held that the master was however entitled to dismiss the application to strike out the application. She said it was generally agreed a system of regulation was necessary for the safe and efficient operation of pedicabs. TfL had decided the best way was through an



amended form of hackney carriage licensing regime. This could not occur unless there was an authoritative decision as to whether, in law, a pedicab was a hackney carriage.

This was not a case where there were purely private issues at stake. TfL's application for a declaratory judgement was founded on the state's responsibilities towards potential passengers of pedicabs and other road users, as well as their riders and operators. She rejected the notion that TfL's conduct was 'unjust harassment' of Bug-Bugs. TfL has a duty to consider the interest of parties other than Bugbugs, she said. It had considered the effect of the case by agreeing to a pay a substantial sum towards the cost of opposing TfL's application, and had embarked on a wider process of consultation about pedicab licensing. This had started in 2006, at the time TfL had embarked on its application for a declaratory judgement.

This judgement means the case can now go for a full hearing for a ruling on whether pedicabs are to be classed as hackney carriages.