

# RACE TO BE MAYOR OF LONDON IS ON

Over the next few months, the race to be elected Mayor of London promises plenty of media attention. Taxi drivers already have their opinions about Mayor Livingstone and his policies, but now the other candidates are letting Londoners know their views and policies. As the Conservative Candidate for Mayor of London, Boris Johnson recently went to the Royal Oak to meet taxi drivers and outline his policies, as well as answering questions from them. The campaign being led by Boris says: “Back Boris for a Greater London” and he was happy to tell taxi drivers how he thinks he can help them if elected.

## I AM ON YOUR SIDE, SAYS BORIS

Boris Johnson told taxi drivers that he is on their side. He said: “Taxi drivers give London a great service – they are an institution. They work hard to earn the right to drive on the streets of the Capital and I do not believe in trying to wreck their trade in the way that Mayor Livingstone has been doing over the last eight years.”



## BANISH MID YEAR INSPECTIONS

Boris told the drivers that he has three main measures which he would enact right away if voted as Mayor of London. Firstly, he would scrap mid year inspections. He says: “These inspections are adding to the cost of the taxi drivers’ livelihood, increasing the cost of their licence, putting an unnecessary burden on drivers.” Secondly, Boris says he would scrap PCO Notice 44/06 which penalises cab drivers for stopping on Red Routes to allow passengers to use cashpoints. Thirdly, Boris promises to work with local councils to make the rules on using bus lanes the same across London, enabling cab drivers to use all bus lanes.

## DRIVERS QUESTION BORIS

Having told the drivers present what he intends to do for the London taxi trade, Boris took questions. He was asked about pedicabs and the threat they pose. He told drivers: “Pedicabs are deadly. I have first hand experience of their behaviour from cycling behind them. Proper regulation needs to be put in place.”

Boris also has strong views about bendy buses. “I want to pension them off. I am sure there will be somewhere suitable to send them, perhaps a Scandinavian airport somewhere would be the best place. Certainly not on our streets! Everyone wants a safe reliable means of transport but bendy buses should definitely be pensioned off!”

Another driver asked Boris what he would do about the Public Carriage Office and if he would reform it in any way. Boris told the audience: “We

need a less bossy regime in London. I would want to look at the PCO and how it operates and then ensure that the system is a fair one. Currently the PCO crucify drivers. I would put a representative of the taxi trade on the TfL Board to ensure fair play.”



## MINICABS WILL NOT PLY FOR HIRE

Boris is adamant that minicabs will not be allowed to ply for hire if he is elected as Mayor. “The current Mayor has made a big push to licence more private minicabs. This, on the whole, has been good for Londoners, providing more accountability,” Boris said. “However, the Mayor also wants to consider giving minicabs more rights, like plying for trade on the streets and using bus lanes. We believe the separation between private hire minicabs and London’s historic black cabs should remain. This separation reflects the differences in training and vehicle quality. Only black cab drivers have to pass the extensive and detailed ‘Knowledge’, which leaves them uniquely equipped to provide a first class service. And, only black cabs are especially designed for the job, with disabled access and cleaner exhaust systems.

“Private hire vehicles have their place, but as an addition to the cab trade, not a replacement.

We will not allow private hire minicabs to use bus lanes, or ply for hire.”



Boris Johnson with LCDC Chairman Alan Fleming