

LTI SCRAP OLDEST TAXI TO DATE

A 20 year old Fairway, which had clocked up over 600,000 miles, was taken in by M&O London under the Government's Scrappage Scheme. This is the oldest taxi to date to be scrapped under the scheme. The taxi, owned by Sheldon Posner of Cricklewood Carriers, has meant a £5,000 discount on a brand new TX4. This fantastic deal was made possible thanks to the £2,000 scrappage incentive and a further £3,000 price reduction.

Commenting on the scheme, Sheldon said: "I buy cabs regularly from M&O as the older they get the more expensive they are to re-license, so this initiative is most welcoming. In my professional opinion, the TX4 London taxi is the best taxi ever made. No other vehicle is built quite like it. Purpose-built by securing the cab body directly onto the chassis, the taxi is strong and durable. It's this feature, which gives the vehicle its unrivalled longevity that's so important to me. It also has an envious turning circle that can spin on a sixpence, making it quicker than any van conversion. This makes the vehicle so agile.

"The TX1 had only just come out when I fondly recall my four year old



daughter shouting taxi and pointing at a TX1 parked up at Tesco. This proves just how recognisable and distinctive the traditional London Taxi is and is so across the world."

Peter Rigden, General Manager at M&O London, said: "We're delighted that fleet operators such as Sheldon are taking advantage of this offer to clean up London's taxi fleet. We now open up the challenge to see if we can scrap an even older vehicle. However, in today's current climate scrapping an old taxi is not the only way to

grab a great deal. With excellent part exchange values and competitive finance rates, there are a number of offers always available which we can tailor to our customers needs if they are considering upgrading to a new or used taxi".

"With the added advantage of the lower rate of VAT, our £5,000 scrappage offer means now is the time to buy and we would urge drivers to come and talk to us before the Government's limited budget to support the scheme runs out."

PEDICABS & PANDORA'S BOX

by John Kennedy

Yes it seems the taxi trade is once again split on the issue of the dreaded pedicab/rickshaw. It appears the largest trade organisation the LTDA and the union UNITE wish to seek a ban but are prepared to allow a bill to pass unchallenged through parliament which will allow the London Borough's working with the Mayor and transport for London to introduce a "VOLUNTARY" registration scheme. Now because the scheme is "VOLUNTARY" there is no compulsion and therefore no sanction for not placing a registration plate on a pedicab.

Now as I have explained in previous articles, I have read all the minutes from the opposed Bill Committee in the House of Lords, it is clear and it is recorded for you all to read and see, that Martin Lowe of Westminster City Council sees this "VOLUNTARY" registration scheme as a stepping stone to a licensing regime. However, two of the trades organisations who had the ear of the previous Mayor have chosen to state publically they wish to see pedicabs banned but they are happy to allow a "VOLUNTARY" scheme to be put in place which will give the pedicabs waiting areas (RANKS) on the public highway (up to 30 which will hold approx 50 pedicabs).

Nothing contained in Clause 19 of the London Local Authorities & Transport for London (no.2) Bill will improve the situation outside bars, theatres and venues where pedicabs presently operate because those who chose not to register will just carry on without fear of fine from those in authority. In the latest edition of Cab Trade News an article appears on page 2 regarding this issue & the writer implies I'm uniting with the pedicab operators. Incorrect - they are petitioning against the Bill because they want no control at all, I'm seeking to ban these objects from the public highway and that task will be much easier if they don't have waiting areas (RANKS) in the heart of the West End. We may well be just about to open

Pandora's box because if we agree to this scheme and allow waiting areas (RANKS) for pedicabs we shall see applications for waiting areas for mini-cabs springing up all over the place. In fact this is mentioned by a Mr Jeroen Weimar Chief Operating Officer, Enforcement & Compliance Surface Transport in a recent meeting of the Surface Transport Panel (a sub-committee of the main TfL Board) held on the 19th May 2009, item 7 on the agenda under the title "Private Hire Strategy Proposals 2009-2014", section 4.7 subtitled "Incentivising the Industry" states they (tfl) wish to work with borough partners to identify waiting areas for PHV's!

So yet again we see plans are afoot to decimate our right to ply for hire, pedicabs are a Trojan Horse and this issue is a dangerous one and those who presently negotiate on your behalf need to raise their game (read Hansard) and certainly think ahead a little and stop looking at issues in isolation but look at the implications of what they seek to agree to. Let's be totally honest here how can you state publically you wish or want to ban pedicabs and then state you think it is ok to allow a "VOLUNTARY" registration scheme to walk through parliament which will give some pedicabs registration plates and all of them access to waiting areas (RANKS) on the public highway especially after reading that Westminster City Council see this scheme as a precursor to a licensing regime.

The General Secretary of the LTDA knows what was said in parliament by Mr Martin Lowe and others because you were there Bob watching the proceedings but not petitioning.

John Kennedy, Ltcpr...

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