

SUPERTOOTH LAUNCHES 'BUDDY'

The Buddy is a compact Bluetooth device which sits on the sun visor. It is compact (128 x 49 x 13 mm) and offers 20 hours talk time and 1000 hours standby time. Taxi Globe tried a Buddy and found it easy to use; it auto pairs with the latest Bluetooth 2.1 enabled handsets, although if your phone has previous Bluetooth specifications, it can still be paired by initiating the standard pairing process. This Buddy is also intelligent – the auto connect function means that if you can leave the device switched on and when you return to your vehicle a short time later, Buddy will instantly recognise and reconnect to your mobile as soon as you open your vehicle's door. The Buddy also allows 2 mobiles to be connected at the same time, great for those who have a "work" mobile and a "private" mobile too.

The sound quality is good and crisp. The magnetic clip makes attaching it to the sun visor easy and there is also a USB cable to charge it from your computer or an in car charger. The product is priced at £49.00. For further information please visit www.supertooth.net



POLICE APPEAL

In the early hours of Tuesday 19th January a female took a black cab from central London to the Plumstead area. Police are appealing for details of the driver who picked up this white female. The female was drunk and passed out in the back of the cab. The driver took her to Plumstead police station and quite correctly sought assistance from officers there.

The cab concerned was silver in colour.

Anyone with information is asked to contact DS Summers
on 020 8284 9395

BLACKFRIARS UNDERGROUND STATION CLOSES

On 2nd March, Blackfriars Tube station closed. It will remain shut until late 2011 while the main railway station is rebuilt. Originally opened on 10 May 1886, the mainline railway station at Blackfriars was opened as St Paul's. It was renamed on 1st February 1937 and the station was later rebuilt, along with the underground station, in the 1970s.

CITY MAKES A SPLASH FOR LORD MAYOR'S APPEAL

Swimmers from across London dived into action at the Golden Lane Leisure Centre to raise money for this year's Lord Mayor's Appeal, Pitch Perfect. The City of London's annual charity event, City Dip, was opened by Lord Mayor Nick Anstee who swam with his Mansion House team, said: "The City Dip is a terrific event that brings together people from across London for two inspirational charities have joined forces under the banner of my Appeal to create Pitch Perfect. I am passionate about how sport and music can help to transform the lives of young people for the better. The Cricket Foundation and the London Symphony Orchestra both do fantastic work and I want to thank all the City Dip participants for helping to support this year's Lord Mayor's Appeal."

The City Dip is a 5,000 metre (three miles) swim, which can be completed either by an individual or by a team of up to 6 people. Every swimmer receives a commemorative City Dip certificate and medal.

LIMO COMPANY LICENCE SUSPENDED

Taxi drivers regularly see stretch limos in the West End, particularly at night. But for one limo company, a pre-booked trip has cost them their licence. A group of women had booked their trip to Harrods in December; there were 15 of them and they were expecting two limos. But only one arrived and the fifteen women all crowded into this one limo, which was only licensed to carry eight.

Chapel Hill Limousines was licensed by the local council in July 2009 for 12 months. David Crow (41) from Stone Road, Broadstairs, was granted the operator licence and was also granted a private hire vehicle driver's licence in June 2009, which was valid for 12 months. The licence covered a white Ford Excursion stretch limo to take up to eight passengers. In January 2010, the council's Licensing Department received a complaint from a member of the public that 15 women had booked two limousines with Chapel Hill to take them on the shopping trip but only one limo arrived to pick them up. The driver was Mr. Crow and he told them that only one vehicle would be taking them and all 15 were taken to London and back in one vehicle. There were not sufficient seats or seatbelts in the vehicle, with some of the women having to sit on the floor. In particular, one woman described how four of them sat on the floor in the rear of the vehicle. It was so uncomfortable that they had to stop at Farthing Corner Services on the M2. She moved to the front of the vehicle beside the driver, but again had to sit on the floor because there was no seat.

Booking records were obtained from Chapel Hill Limos and photographs taken of the vehicle. Mr. Crow was interviewed under caution and confirmed that he was the driver and that the booking records were not up-to-date. If the vehicle had been involved in an accident, any insurance covering the vehicle would have been invalid. As a result, both the operator and driver licences were suspended by the council on 28 January 2010. This was subject to a right of appeal to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days, now expired.

Councillor John Kirby, Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services and Ramsgate Marina, said: "This is a case where the council had no choice but to take action. It's no overstatement to say that people's lives were potentially being put at risk here. There can be no excuse for taking passengers in a car where they don't have enough seats or seatbelts. Imagine what could have happened had there been an accident. The consequences are too terrible to consider."