



***Better for London* campaign launched to champion black taxis**

London MPs today showed their support for the Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA) (15/12) as it launched the *Better for London* campaign in Westminster, which is calling for Government to give Transport for London (TfL) the power to cap the number of Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) in London.

The campaign champions the benefits of taxis while raising awareness of the longer-term impact of unfettered growth in PHV numbers in London. Central to it are three key positive messages about why black cabs are the better long-term prospect for London:

- **Better for the environment** – All new taxis to be zero-emissions capable from 2018. We think all other vehicles in inner London must match or exceed our emission standards from the same date so we can all breathe cleaner air.
- **Better for access** – Black cabs remain the only form of public transport in London which is 100% wheelchair-accessible and guide dog-friendly, with drivers trained to support passengers with access requirements.
- **Better for passengers** – Unlike PHVs, taxis have to prove at all times that they are comprehensively insured – so passengers and other road users know they are covered in the event of any incident – and driven by a professional who knows the streets of London.

Steve McNamara, General Secretary of the LTDA, said, *“London is becoming more congested as the number of Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) on its streets has now surpassed 90,000 – up 20,000 in the last year alone. London already tends to register the highest of NO2 of any city in the world, and accidents involving PHVs are on the rise. Taxis are taking the lead in becoming greener and 100% debit and credit card-friendly, whilst being properly insured and fully accessible. We need TfL to take action in the interests of all Londoners and improve air quality, reduce congestion and ensure London continues to benefit from a world-class taxi service.”*



McNamara added: *“As the regulator for transport in the capital with responsibility for the environment, accessibility, passenger safety and reducing congestion, TfL should be able to decide where the line is drawn.”*

Simon Birkett, Founder and Director of Clean Air in London, said: *“The next Mayor needs to introduce emissions-based road charging to address the problems of diesel pollution and traffic chaos in our streets. TfL needs to be given the power to cap minicab numbers to keep London moving. 92,000 minicabs should start paying the congestion or emissions charge in full.”*

As the LTDA will indicate in its response to the TfL consultation, cabbies also want TfL to ensure all vehicles available for private hire in the capital meet high standards that ensure passenger safety. This includes displaying evidence that they are appropriately insured, and that operators give customers the option to contact them by a landline in order to discuss bookings, trace lost property or make a complaint.

The campaign will run until the Mayoral Election in May 2016. All 11,000 LTDA members will be encouraged to display a window sticker highlighting the benefits of black cabs, with a number featuring wrap-arounds promoting the benefits of taxis. The LTDA will also be pressing the Government and the Mayor to act through its response to TfL’s proposed Private Hire Regulations.

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