TAXI DRIVERS CAN’T WORK FROM HOME

London is our office

More than 3300 iconic black cabs have been lost from London since June, as a result of the pandemic, and the livelihoods of more than 21,500 cabbies are at risk.

Taxi drivers rely on a busy central London to earn a living. They are experiencing a catastrophic collapse in demand exacerbated by measures such as the 10pm curfew and tier two restrictions. The latest lockdown will see this fall further and even beyond December the situation is unlikely to improve significantly, at least in the short-term.

At the same time, new traffic schemes to promote active travel introduced by Transport for London and the London Boroughs are limiting where taxis can go, denying drivers access to their office — central London — and undermining the important service they provide.

Black cabs are the lifeblood of London, providing a vital accessible, door-to-door form of public transport. Before the pandemic, the trade was thriving and drivers were investing heavily in electric taxis to make London’s fleet the greenest in the world. This bright future is in jeopardy.

WITHOUT ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND ACCESS TO LONDON’S ROADS THE TAXI TRADE WILL DIE

Since June, 156 black cabs a week on average have been lost from the fleet.

On 1st June 2020 there were 18,553 licensed black cabs, on 31st October there were just 15,036.

There are now just under 21,518 licensed drivers down from 22,441 in February 2020.

Drivers are reporting fare income just 20-25% of what it was pre-pandemic.

The number of taxis passing through the Heathrow taxi feeder park—London’s biggest taxi rank — was down 96% on last year’s figures during the first lockdown (April to June) and remained 85% down in October.
To support taxi drivers the government should:

- Provide additional targeted financial support for taxi drivers, similar to that provided for the hospitality sector, to ensure the viable taxi trade is not put out of business permanently by the pandemic.
- Further increase the level of support provided through the extension of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) and provide support for those who have been unable to claim, such as those claiming capital allowances on a new ZEC taxi.
- Encourage the safe use of licensed taxis where appropriate and introduce an incentive scheme for passengers as restrictions ease and alert levels reduce.

Transport for London (TfL) and the London Boroughs should:

- Stop removing taxi access to key routes and important thoroughfares and give licensed taxis the same access as buses to London’s roads.
- Better promote the role of taxis as part of the public transport system and a way to travel for those less able to walk and cycle during the pandemic.
- Use funding provided by government to support businesses forced to close to support taxi drivers, following the example of other local authorities and regions.

Find out more about the campaign and how you can support it here:

www.ltda.co.uk/CantWfH
@[TheLTDA]

About the LTDA

The Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA) has been the professional and authoritative voice of London taxi drivers for nearly 50 years. Representing more than half of London’s black cab drivers, we are dedicated to maintaining the high professional standards that London taxi drivers are known for and ensuring taxis can continue to play a role as a key part of London’s transport mix, now, and in the future.