Vehicle idling is fuelish
Switch off for cleaner air

Vehicle idling action days
Did you know that idling your engine while stationary contributes to local air pollution and damages your health? We are running monthly events to educate people about the issues of idling and encouraging motorists to switch off when stationary.

Tweet: #NoIdling
Visit: idlingaction.london

Welcome.
This issue celebrates taxis of the past and also looks to the future. On p22 we feature some glorious vintage vehicles, while driver Ian Beeldestone describes his ideal futuristic taxi on p24.

The Capital’s poor air quality is currently a hot topic and on p12 we are asking for your views on what should be done to improve it.

Driving while tired is a factor in 10 per cent of fatal accidents and on p16 we look at how to avoid fatigue.

Using your mobile while at the wheel can also have potentially fatal consequences and we highlight the stricter penalties that came in on 1 March on p20.

The process for taking the new private hire topographical assessment is explained on p21 while we talk to the new head of the Knowledge team, Katie Chennells, on p10.

We’d love to hear your views so get in contact at OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk.
**News**

**Have your say on Heathrow**

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**Caring for the carers**

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Taxi drivers and hospitals should get in touch via Twitter @10HS @10HSTAXI

**Going that extra mile to help**

From cabbie to lifesaver

Last month, London taxi driver Steve Teague rushed into action when he saw a woman who was trying to jump off Lambeth Bridge.

Steve, who has been a cabbie for 17 years, was one of three members of the public who clung on to her, putting themselves in danger in the process. They were forced to hold each other steady so they didn’t fall until the emergency services arrived five minutes later to take care of the woman.

As a result of his selfless action, Mr Teague has been awarded a commendation by Graham Robinson, head of licensing at Taxi and Private Hire.

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Information is made available in the open data section of TfL’s website. Already, more than 10,000 developers use this to power more than 600 apps that are used by 42 per cent of Londoners.

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**The professional**

Service with a smile is all in a day’s work for this chauffeur

Getting to the final three in Pro magazine’s 2016 QSI Driver of the year awards is a highlight of chauffeur Paul Bharia’s career.

Paul has been driving professionally since the summer of 2004 and with Tristar Worldwide since 2008. He says: ‘When I found out I was a finalist my initial reaction was shock! I was happy of course, but the level of expertise among the chauffeurs here at Tristar is phenomenal. To me, I’m just doing my job, but it was an honour to have been a finalist and I’ll remember it for a very long time. Before I was a chauffeur, I worked in the catering industry. Moving from catering to chauffeuring was an enormous change, but I’ve never looked back. At the end of the day, I’m still providing a service to people.’

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**TPH licensing in numbers**

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<thead>
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The Printworks is a new entertainment venue on Surrey Quays Road, with designated taxi and private hire facilities. During events there will be a taxi drop-off area and marshalled rank that can be used by suburban taxi drivers licensed for Lewisham, as well as All London taxi drivers. However, Lewisham drivers must only pick up passengers at the rank and cannot ply for hire around the venue or outside their licence area.

There will also be a drop-off area and marshalled, pre-booked pick-up area for private hire drivers. TfL’s Compliance Team will be on hand during events. For information on events, go to www.printworkslondon.co.uk

In Print

Pick up the punters at London’s hottest new venue in Southwark

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Latest trend

These are the hot topics trending on @TfLTPH:

A couple of signage changes on bus lanes led to some confusion among followers and ended up a big talking point on the feed.

The increased compliance officer presence at King’s Cross & St. Pancras and Paddington Stations drew lots of comments.

Taxi driver, badge 63762, was thanked profusely for returning a customer’s lost bag.

The police have been tweeting about recent compliance operations using the @MPSRTPC account and the TPH Twitter team has been retweeting these.

The @TfLTPH Twitter feed now has 11,796 followers.

Saturday 18 March marks the second National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Raising Day, reminding people to speak up if they see anything suspicious. Taxi and private hire drivers are in a unique position to spot this.

The day aims to highlight the issues surrounding this form of abuse. Detective Inspector Ivan Beer of the Metropolitan Police Service said: ‘As part of Operation Makesafe we have been going to taxi organisations and private hire operators, hotels and care homes educating staff about child sexual exploitation and this day will help reinforce our message.’

Call 101 (quoting Operation Makesafe) to report any unusual behaviour. This includes interactions between people travelling together; or young people being picked up and taken to hotels at unusual times.

For more information, go to www.met.police.uk

UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR OF PEOPLE TRAVELLING TOGETHER, ESPECIALLY IF THERE ARE ADULTS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

YOUNG PEOPLE BEING PICKED UP AND TAKEN TO HOTELS, PARTICULARLY AT ODD TIMES OF THE DAY AND NIGHT

ADULTS PUTTING A YOUNG PERSON, WHO MAY BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL, INTO YOUR CAR

THIS IS ABUSE. DON’T MASK THE PROBLEM.

Report it.

Call 101, quote Operation Makesafe.

www.met.police.uk
Don't be blind to danger – keep your windscreen clear

For many drivers, using smartphones and satnavs is part of the job. And while most know it's illegal to use handheld devices while driving, it’s also important to understand the rules about where to keep them.

You shouldn’t put or fix anything on your windscreen that will obscure your view of the road ahead. While that may seem like common sense, recent operations by the City of London Police have already seen tickets issued to drivers – including some taxi and private hire drivers – for having mobiles and other devices restricting their vision.

If you place a cradled device on the area on your windscreen that is covered by your wipers (also known as the 'swept area'), you are committing an offence. At present, if you're prosecuted, you face a fine of up to £100 and three points on your licence.

Driving conditions can change rapidly and hazards, such as pedestrians suddenly stepping in front of you, mean you need to have a clear view of the road. Having a cluttered windscreen increases your likelihood of becoming distracted or not spotting potential dangers. To avoid this, you need to make sure you position any devices so that they do not obstruct your vision.

David Clark from the City of London Police says: 'The Highway Code is clear that a person must exercise proper control of their vehicle at all times and drivers should not let distractions reduce their awareness of the road.'

Inspector Neil Billany of the Metropolitan Police Service, says: 'Drivers who have multiple devices in their windscreen reduce their visibility of the road and compromise the safety of themselves, their passengers and other road users. It’s vital drivers focus on the road ahead of them and only interact with devices such as GPS systems when it is safe to do so.'

No person shall drive, or cause or permit any other person to drive, a motor vehicle on a road if they are in such a position that they cannot have proper control of the vehicle or have a full view of the road and traffic ahead.

Construction and Use Regulations 1986

Swept area of a windscreen

In Great Britain, if you use a suction-mounted cradle that intrudes more than 4cm into the secondary (blue) wiper clearance zone, or more than 1cm into the primary (red) zone, you are committing a serious traffic offence. Your vehicle would not be considered roadworthy and would fail an MOT.
What Katie did next

Katie Chennells is the new head of the Knowledge team at TfL. She answers some quick-fire questions for OnRoute.

**Q** Tell us about yourself.
**A** I come from a taxi family – my dad’s a taxi driver, as are my fiancé, uncles and cousins. I did my degree in TV production but after university I wasn’t really sure what I wanted to do, so I thought I’d do the Knowledge as being a taxi driver is nice and flexible.

I drove a cab for 18 months, then went to work for the Knowledge Point School before joining TfL as an examiner in 2015.

**Q** What shape is the Knowledge in?
**A** I don’t think there’s ever been a time when the Knowledge has been more relevant. We need people who know where they’re going and what they’re doing and who don’t need to keep pulling over to consult a map.

People see becoming a taxi driver as a great career option and our Knowledge students are really enthusiastic about it. We’ve got lots of young people coming through and private hire drivers who are crossing over to become taxi drivers.

**Q** What’s your favourite run?
**A** It has to be the ‘Batcave’, the road tunnel underneath the Savoy Hotel connecting York building and Savoy Place. When you first enter it customers think you might be kidnapping them, but when they see where they come out they give you a round of applause.

**Q** What do you always carry in your cab?
**A** A lot of float containing £1 coins and £5 notes, a book of receipts and my hands-free set for my phone. I always have a bottle of water and an emergency snack just in case I get really busy and can’t stop for lunch.

**Q** Tell us something people don’t know.
**A** I love the 1979 Thames TV drama about the Knowledge by Jack Rosenthal. My favourite character is ‘Dracula’, the really strict examiner!

Managing the Knowledge team

In her role, Katie manages 12 Knowledge examiners, making sure TPH provides a fair and transparent examination process for Knowledge of London candidates. She also monitors appearances, communicates with the Knowledge schools and responds to any complaints or queries regarding both Knowledge candidates and taxi drivers who have been accused of using a devious route.

"People see becoming a taxi driver as a great career option and our Knowledge students are really enthusiastic. We’ve got lots of young people coming through"  
Katie Chennells
The air we breathe

Last year, Oxford Street was among the top 10 sites in the Capital for air pollution, with diesel vehicles as the main contributors. And just five days into 2017, London breached its air pollution limits for the whole year.

"Safeguarding the health of Londoners from pollution is my number one priority - and we are implementing the boldest policies of any city in the world to get to grips with the awful problems we inherited.

We’re delivering the strongest emission measures to clean-up our bus fleets, charging for the dirtiest, most toxic diesels, and bringing forward and then extending the Ultra Low Emission Zone."

Mayor Sadiq Khan

Throughout 2017, the Mayor will ask Londoners for their views on his plans to tackle the Capital’s poor air quality. You can read more about this in future issues of OnRoute and can tell us what you think at OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk
Taxi advertising across the Capital is unmissable these days and it’s easier than you think to get a piece of the action.

In London, there are around 7,000 taxis carrying ads and the largest advertising operator, Ubiquitous, has almost 4,000 among its ranks. For the past five years, it has paid more than £3.5m a year to its cabbies. ‘Advertising is equally popular with owner-drivers and fleet owners and many of our drivers have been with us for years. Even now, after more than a decade of trading, new drivers and fleets sign up to carry ads each year,’ says managing director Andrew Barnett. ‘We find that owner-drivers are often referred to us by friends who have benefited from the extra money that comes from carrying advertising. It is a very real way to offset some of the expenses of running a cab, or indeed a fleet of cabs, in London.’

Different strokes

Along with owner-drivers and fleet owners, Sherbet London has another side to its business model as CEO Asher Moses explains: ‘We have our own fleet of 550 taxis we rent to drivers. Our taxi advertising deals help keep the cost of the taxi rental low and boosts their earning potential. Drivers who carry ads on their taxis are offered paid PR work and a range of rewards, from cash to free event tickets.’

A former taxi driver himself, Asher says the company is very picky about who it works with. ‘We want drivers who are well presented and professional, see driving as a career and are focused on technological change and excellent customer service.’

The full works

From Aer Lingus to eBay, lots of well-known brands use taxis to promote their products. And there are a number of ways that ads can be displayed. For instance, there’s the full wrap (or livery as it is known) and the superside, where the ad runs along the four panels on each side of the cab. Inside vehicles, companies can be plugged via posters on tip-up seats and drivers can provide campaign-branded receipts (issued on more than half of all taxi journeys).

Sarah Priseman, director of marketing at Ubiquitous, explains: ‘Liveried taxis are favoured by advertisers that want to run a straightforward brand campaign. Our most famous one was for Vodafone: it ran for five years on 1,000 taxis in London – you simply couldn’t fail to spot it. ’Supersides tend to appear in short bursts featuring products or seasonal messages. An airline might use this format to promote a flight offer, or a clothing brand to showcase a new collection.’

Money makers

Usually drivers are paid a fixed fee, but some can earn more by becoming an ‘Ambassador Driver’. This involves taking on extra activities, such as VIP journeys and product sampling.

Future reference

Verifone Media is another taxi advertising company, with 3,500 drivers on its books. The company sees tech as the way to go. Along with traditional bodywork advertising, it has 200 cabs carrying digital taxi tops in London, with more and more brands choosing to sell themselves using this low-cost, low-waste option. It’s particularly popular in busy areas.

Jim Cohen, sales and marketing director at Verifone, says: ‘There is a nice split between companies that advertise across the whole of London and those who target a particular audience. They do this, for instance, by advertising at a specific time of day, or changing the ad content to display a different message depending on where the taxi is and at what time.

‘Now, the next big step will be to get even more taxis involved to reach an even greater audience.’

More brands are choosing to sell themselves using the low cost option of digital taxi tops. It’s particularly popular in busy areas.
For drivers spending long hours on the road, fatigue can have fatal consequences.

Dead tired

Tired drivers are thought to be responsible for one in 10 fatal crashes in the UK, with a lack of sleep dramatically affecting their reaction times, attention, awareness and ability to control a vehicle.

Despite this, a survey by charity Brake and insurer Direct Line found that almost half of road users admit to getting behind the wheel after fewer than five hours sleep – the minimum required to combat tiredness.

While taxi and private hire drivers are exempt from the European Working Time Directive, which sets out the hours workers can do, it is still their responsibility to make sure they are in a fit state to drive.

Nodding off

According to the survey, more than a quarter of drivers would rather continue their journey than stop to have a break. Signs of fatigue include:

- Finding it increasingly difficult to concentrate
- Heavy eyelids and eyes starting to roll
- Excessive yawning
- Neck muscles relaxing, which makes the head droop

Drivers who ignore these warning signals risk a ‘microsleep’, where they nod off for anywhere between two and 30 seconds. In many cases, they are not even aware they have fallen asleep, although one in three admit to having experienced a microsleep at the wheel.

There are a number of factors that contribute to tiredness. For drivers, this includes irregular sleep patterns caused by shift work and modern vehicles with features that make them warm and comfortable.

Alert to the danger

Find out just how much you know about the effects of driver fatigue with this quiz. You can check your answers on the next page.
Well rested

The only real cure for tiredness is sleep and having a 15-minute nap can be more effective than pulling over and walking around. Drinking caffeine before a nap also helps as it gives the caffeine time to take effect.

Keep your vehicle well ventilated and at a moderate temperature and set your seat to a comfortable upright position. If you start to feel tired, pull over, open a window, turn up the air conditioning, listen to music or have a chat. But if you start to recognise the warning signs, it’s time to call it a day.

Highway Code Rule 91

Driving while tired greatly increases your risk of being involved in a collision. Drive when tired can have the same effect as drink-driving. People who have been awake for 17 hours will find their ability just as impaired as someone who has had 2 glasses of wine.

Did you know?

Driving when tired can have the same effect as drink-driving. People who have been awake for 17 hours will find their ability just as impaired as someone who has had 2 glasses of wine.

Answers

1. B - 20 per cent
   According to the Department for Transport, fatigue plays a part in a fifth of all road accidents. Up to a quarter (25 per cent) of fatal and serious collisions can be linked to tiredness.

2. C - 40 per cent
   Professional drivers, including taxi and private hire drivers, are particularly at risk as they typically spend longer at the wheel. Long working hours, irregular shift patterns, busy schedules and driving at night contribute to the risk of a crash.

3. B - Two hours
   Research has found that driving deteriorates after just two hours behind the wheel. After this, people become less able to concentrate and react to hazards. The longer you drive, the more time you need to recover, so it is recommended you take a 15-minute break every couple of hours.

4. A - 200 metres
   Microsleeps can last for just a few seconds, but have severe consequences. Travelling 200 metres while dozing would be enough distance to cross three lanes of traffic.

5. B - After lunch
   There is an increased tendency to sleep between midnight and 06:00, and from 14:00 to 16:00. This is because of changes to body rhythm. There is also a natural instinct to feel tired after a large meal, so avoid eating anything too heavy at lunchtime.

6. A - 20 times
   The likelihood of falling asleep at the wheel is 20 times greater at 06:00 compared with 10:00. Accidents caused by drivers falling asleep tend to be high-speed collisions because they do not brake, so there is a greater risk of death or serious injury.

Don’t be an idler

Switching off your engine can help save lives

Air pollution affects everyone who lives and works in London. Each year, around 9,400 premature deaths in the Capital are attributed to illnesses related to poor air quality. And drivers sitting in stationary vehicles with their engines running are just as affected as those out on the street.

The two pollutants of most concern in London are:

- Particulate matter (PM)
  Particles with a diameter of 10 microns or less (PM10) can be inhaled deep into the lungs, impairing their function and can lead to asthma and cancer.

- Nitrogen dioxide (NO2)
  At high concentrations, NO2 can inflame and impair the bronchial system. Long-term exposure can affect lung function and breathing.

What you need to know and do

Under the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) Regulations 2002, it is illegal to leave your engine running when stationary and you could risk a fixed penalty notice of £20. If you’re stationary and waiting more than a couple of minutes for a customer, switch your engine off. This can also save you money on fuel.

Taking action

Since October last year, 12 boroughs across London have been taking part in the vehicle idling action campaign, where drivers have been asked to switch off their engines while parked. Supported by the Mayor’s Air Quality Fund, the campaign runs until the end of this month with enforcement officers and volunteers talking to drivers and spreading the word about the effects of idling vehicles.

The campaign will finish at the end of March but there are four more action days planned: on 20 March in Tower Hamlets; 24 March at Great Ormond Street Hospital; 29 March in Cлавham; and 30 March at Peckham Rye Station.

When you keep a vehicle’s engine idling it can produce nearly twice as much exhaust emissions as it does while moving.
Pick up your phone, pick up six points

It has been illegal to use a handheld mobile while driving since 2003. But that hasn’t stopped some people from reaching for their phones.

What the law says:

- It’s illegal to use a handheld mobile when driving. This includes using your phone to follow a map, read a text or check social media. This applies even if you’re stopped at traffic lights or queuing in traffic.
- You can only use a handheld phone if you are safely parked or need to call 999 or 112 in an emergency, and it’s unsafe or impractical to stop.
- Using hands-free (where the phone is in a cradle or a Bluetooth connection) is not illegal. However, if this distracts you and affects your ability to drive safely, you can still be prosecuted by the police.
- It is illegal to use hand-held microphones or to hold your phone out on loudspeaker.

Siwan Hayward, TfL’s head of transport policing, said: “The number of people killed or seriously injured on London’s roads continues to fall, however distraction remains one of the key sources of road danger. ‘The rising trend of collisions involving the use of handheld mobile phones is deeply concerning to us. This is why we are stepping up our activity with the Metropolitan Police Service and other partners to address this issue and make our roads safer for everyone.’”

The number of people killed or seriously injured on London’s roads continues to fall, however distraction remains one of the key sources of road danger.

Martin continues: “On the day of the test we ask them to arrive at the centre an hour before their allotted time to pay any fees and go through a safety briefing. ‘My colleagues and I are responsible for setting up the assessment room ensuring we can move between the desks so we can oversee proceedings. Candidates are invited into the room and are given an atlas of London and a magnifying glass, then we talk them through the process and what our role is. We carry out ID checks against their passport or driver’s licence, which they must bring with them on the day. Only TfL’s assessors are allowed in the room while the assessment is in progress.’

Where are we going and how do we get there?

‘The first five questions all concern how to look up destinations and specific roads with their grid references. Questions two, three and four are all based on how to get from A to B from start to finish, including the postcodes candidates will go through. There are also questions about their general knowledge of London including motorways and airports and they have two hours to complete the assessment.’

Results are sent to candidates by email or letter within 10 working days. If they fail, the team will let them know what to do next.

If candidates do not pass the assessment after two attempts they must make a new licensing application. At present the pass rate is between 35 and 40 per cent.

If you have any queries, please call the topographical team on 0343 222 4444 or email tphtopo@tfl.gov.uk.

For a list of the assessment centres, go to tfl.gov.uk/tph

Only our assessors are allowed in the room while the assessment is in progress.”

Martin Mahoney

B

etween 6 April 2016 and 27 February this year there were 9,560 mobile phone offences in London, while in 2015, 22 people were killed and 99 seriously injured in accidents where a driver was using their phone. Even careful drivers can be distracted by a call or text on their phone and a split-second lapse in concentration could result in a crash.

Last year, a survey of 1,744 UK drivers by the RAC (see separate box) found 31 per cent admitting to using their mobile while driving. Now the penalties to using their mobile while driving have been increased.

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A touch of class

Classic cabs are alive and well thanks to the London Vintage Taxi Association

Watch any popular period drama and chances are you’ll spot a vehicle belonging to a member of the London Vintage Taxi Association (LVTA).

The oldest, a Unic model dating back to 1912, featured extensively in Downton Abbey and Mr Selfridge, while another member owns PEG 1, the taxi driven by Charles Haentrey in the 1963 film Carry on Cabby.

Formed in 1978, the association now has around 330 members in the UK, with affiliated members across the globe – from the US and New Zealand to Japan.

The LVTA by numbers

70 vintage London taxis owned by US members

2011 the year of the youngest TX4 taxi owned by a member

£29 annual membership fee

Enthusiasts come from all walks of life and around five per cent are, or were, taxi drivers, including the current chair, Gary Zylberszac.

Gary is the proud owner of a 1974 Austin FX4, a decommissioned Fairway and a TX1. He also has a 1985 Austin FX2 sitting in the docks in Southampton awaiting re-export. ‘I repatriated it after it was exported in 1965,’ he says. ‘I’ve taken my FX4 to our own LVTA rallies, other classic car events and shows around the UK, and even as far as the EU section rally in Holland – and I didn’t cheat using a trailer!’ Of course, you see other vehicles at these shows and they always look better than your cab, so it’s often back into the workshops to try and improve it and make it more authentic.

I think we love these vehicles because they recreate happy memories of times gone by. ‘Whenever you watch a movie about the Capital, there is always a taxi in it. It’s an icon that shouts “London”.

A tale of two taxis

Doug Cheshire, a former design and technology teacher and chair of the association for eight years, owns two 1930s taxis. My first vintage car was a 1934 Austin 12 and I used to drive it to school. I loved it,’ he says. ‘It had the old running boards on it and the kids called me Al Capone. When the chance came up to buy the taxis we have now, I couldn’t resist. My wife and I couldn’t agree on which was the blue or the maroon one – so we bought both!’

Doug earns money by renting vintage taxis, so its a good way to grab a donation.’

Doug explains: ‘People always stop to look at vintage taxis, so its a good way to grab a donation.’

As well as being easy on the eye, Doug says these taxis are pretty straightforward to drive and fairly easy to maintain. He can get most engine parts and tyres through the Vintage Austin Register or other Austin clubs, although body parts and radiators have to be hand-made.

To find out more, go to www.lvta.co.uk

A touch of class

Classic cabs are alive and well thanks to the London Vintage Taxi Association

Vintage cabs on show

9 April
London Bus Preservation Trust
Spring Gathering, London Bus Museum, Brooklands Road, Weybridge.
www.londonbussmuseum.com

7 May
Chesterfield Sunday Parade, Bushy Park, Hampton Court.
www.royalparks.org.uk

27-29 May
Enfield Pageant of Motoring, Whitewebbs Museum of Transport, Whitewebbs Road, Enfield.
www.whitewebbsmuseum.co.uk

When I’m out with the hood down, people pull up alongside me at lights and shout “I bet mine won’t be around at that age!”

Doug Cheshire

Did you know...

Taxis were called Low-Loaders in the 1930s because they were required to have a flat floor.

Before WWII, taxis came in different colours. The name ‘black cab’ arose in the late 1940s when the FX3 model was launched and there was a shortage of paint – except for black.

When the FX4 was launched in the 1950s, it was the first cab not to have an open luggage platform.

The 1966 FX4 was known as the Bunny Ear because the indicators were not on the front and back like a modern car. Instead it had a single indicator on the roof.

Vintage classification is usually anything pre-1930; after that it is technically post-vintage.
If he could design his own taxi, Ian Beetlestone would add some rather special features – but it certainly wouldn't be driverless!

The taxi of my dreams would definitely be able to fly. I couldn’t count the number of times someone’s told me I’m going the wrong way from Shaftesbury Avenue to Mayfair, as I follow a gyratory that momentarily points us away from their destination.

So yes, there’d definitely be a button I could press that would open up the roof, pop out some rotors, lift me off the road at the bottom of Shaftesbury Avenue and gently drop me back down again on the other side of Piccadilly Circus. Failing that, at least an ejector seat that could just pop the passenger out and let them land over in Mayfair without me.

There would certainly be a button that turned the wheels into jet skis and waterproofed the chassis because it would be marvellous to drive amphibiously across the river. It would have a sophisticated GPS system that uses some form of telepathy. It could tell me not only which roads are closed or gridlocked like Google does, but when someone is just setting their bill in the Ivy with the intention of stepping outside and finding the most convenient means of transportation to the other side of Piccadilly Circus.

For comfort, the cab would hover slightly above the road and handle speed bumps like minor turbulence. The seats would be richly upholstered and luxuriously stuffed, there’d be WiFi and phone charging and free drinks and treats. And a bin. Oh, and we’d be able to hear each other through the intercom. Also the windscreen wipers wouldn’t leave smears, the electric intercom. Also the windscreen wipers wouldn’t leave smears, the electric elements in the back window would clear the mist completely, and the meter lightbulb would never, ever blow.

All of this, of course, would be housed in the body of a classic 1966s Fairway, because no vehicle more beautiful has ever graced the streets of London or any other city in the world. And if it wasn’t a shiny jet black, it would have a glorious rainbow livery and spread a message of joy and love everywhere it went. Which as it happens, mine already does.

The law regarding using a handheld mobile phone while driving has not changed; it is still illegal. The Government’s ‘Think’ website makes it clear that you can only use a handheld phone if you are safely parked or need to call 999 or 112 in an emergency and it is unsafe or impractical to stop. Hands-free use (eg for navigation) is not illegal. However, it distracts you and affects your ability to drive safely, you can still be prosecuted by the police.

What has changed is the penalty – from 1 March, motorists using a handheld phone while driving will receive six points on their licence and a £200 fine.

For more advice on using mobile phones, turn to our story on p20. Our article on p8 features advice from the police on positioning cradled mobile phones in your vehicle.
Calendar

March

21 March
Emeli Sandé concert
Wembley Arena

24 March
A. R. Rahman concert
Wembley Arena

Ideal Home Show 2017
Olympia (until 9 April)

The Stranglers concert
Brixton Academy

30 March
Oly Murs concert
O2 Arena (until 1 April)

25 March
Nicky Jam concert
Wembley Arena

Craig David concert
O2 Arena (and 26 March)

April

1 April
Teenage Cancer Trust: The Who concert
Royal Albert Hall

2 April
National and Organic Products event
ExCel Arena (and 3 April)

Boat Race 2017
West London

7 April
London Golf Show
ExCel Arena (until 9 April)

8 April
World Cup of Gymnastics
O2 Arena

1 April
The Wedding Fair
ExCel Arena (and 9 April)

Parkway Drive concert
Brixton Academy

Saracens vs Harlequins rugby match
Wembley Stadium

9 April
Craig David concert
Wembley Arena

Olivier Awards 2017
Royal Albert Hall

1 April
Islington 10k Streets surrounding Emirates Stadium

10 April
Lambeth 10k run
Kia Oval

2 April
Saracens vs Bristol rugby match
Allianz Park

Frankie Valli concert
O2 Arena

13 April
Harlem Globetrotters basketball match
O2 Arena

London Marathon Exhibition
ExCel Arena, (until 22 April)

14 April
Diversity Genesis Tour 2017
O2 Arena

3 April
Boat Race 2017
West London

8 April
World Cup of Gymnastics
O2 Arena

14 April
London Marathon Central London

20 April
Middlesex vs Sussex cricket Royal London One Day Cup
Kia Oval

27 April
Middlesex vs Gloucestershire cricket
Twickenham

6 May
London Pet Show
ExCel Arena (and 7 May)

Rugby Union Cup finals
Twickenham

7 May
England vs Ireland cricket,
Lord’s

May

2 May
Surrey vs Essex cricket Royal London One Day Cup
Kia Oval

5 May
Surrey vs Middlesex cricket
Royal London One Day Cup
Kia Oval

9 May
Bob Dylan concert
Wembley Arena

2 May
Hackney Half Marathon 2017
Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Stratford

9 May
Bob Dylan concert
Wembley Arena
Conveniently, all London taxis now accept cash, card and contactless

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