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# CONTENTS

It is with heavy hearts that we learned of the tragic passing of Ian McDonnell a staunch taxi driver who courageously died while trying to prevent a crime.

Ian has been a friend to Tacsai magazine going on ten years. It is with deep regret and bewilderment that we have learned of his Passing. Ian was a true gentleman.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Ian's family and friends at this difficult time.

RIP Ian. You remain an honorary member of the Tacsai family.

All the team at Tacsai magazine.

*On behalf of our drivers the national taxi forum are calling on the N.T.A. and to whom it may concern to act on behalf of our industry and introduce a temporary stopgap of 1 euro to all metered fares during an extremely difficult period for all taxi operators .our members have seen a substantial increase in fuel costs at this time and may struggle to operate thier business with further increases estimated. With our proposal there will be no need for ammendments or calibration to our members meters as this would only incur more costs . Our industry is slowly becoming unsubstantiatable and more operators may seize to continue because of this..we ask you to please intervene on behalf of all concerned. T.I.A. Andrea Boccarossa N.T.F.*

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# TAXI DRIVER ON THE FRONT LINE

**Tony Roe, Chairperson of the National Transport Assembly Committee (NTAC) and Spokesperson for Taxis has spoken out about the great work being done by taxi drivers in Ireland.**

**T**axi drivers presented one the best responses to the Covid-19 virus by acting as ambulances and continue to do so today. This has been life saving work in many cases,” said Roe, adding that taxis also provided transportation to many frontline workers who are dependent on them to get to work.

“A lot of drivers at the height of the pandemic brought doctors and nurses to work for half price fares and this has not really been picked up by the media except in Tacsai magazine. Taxi drivers have



shown great resilience and consistency serving all major hospitals with the shortage of ambulances, and it is only now that it is being documented and appreciated. At the start we had shortages of personal protection equipment, and we also had shortages of screens, and this did not stop drivers from servicing every major hospital in the country,” said Roe.

He went on to question whether the National Transport Authority (NTA) is fit for purpose.

“We have been receiving more and more complaints and it’s being seen that drivers are being driven out of the industry due to the pressures of the NTA. These pressures were never there when the Garda Carriage Office was in charge. The Garda Carriage Office did a great job. They were very hands on and did a great job for both the drivers and the public. The Garda Carriage office had access to the Pulse system and knew what everyone’s background was. Whereas with the NTA we have checkers going around checking taxis for bandages and fire extinguishers. There is more to policing the taxi industry than a bandage, which I have never known a driver to use, out of all the thousands of drivers I have known. When the Garda Carriage Offices were there what was a great deterrent was that the Gardai issued you with a personal ID badge. This badge was visible on you, and you were also given ID cards for your car, and it highlighted everything that was on view as regards prices. We don’t know why this has been removed, but it would be more to the advantage of everybody to have this back in place. Now we’re hearing from drivers that this is a backwards step which is after happening, and we would like to see this backwards step removed. Now, it’s great for people to come along from organisations like the NTA to criticise taxi drivers, and yet not offer any solutions.” said Roe.

He went on to explain that the NTAC has brought these issues up with the European Union (EU).

“We got in touch with the EU, because we wanted them to investigate the allegations of a cartel that was operating within the insurance industry in Ireland. When that happened; the European Commission came in and actually got on to various insurance companies and raided insurance offices. Coincidentally, after the raid taxi insurance began to go down somewhat and new people came into the industry. Do we have to do this all of the time? Do we have to run to the EU and highlight stuff? We are bringing various motions before the Government and we want to have some progress on this, and

some results that are beneficial to everybody. Taxi drivers at the moment are investing in the industry, they are bringing vehicles onto the roads that are contamination free to reduce carbon emissions. Drivers are investing in this themselves. As it stands at the moment, these cars that are coming on stream as the legislation stands, will have to be changed every nine years under this old draconian law that they have in place. Yet you can have vans that are diesel or petrol and you can drive these vans because they are wheelchair accessible and they can carry on until they are 15 years old. Now, it’s crazy to have clean, uncontaminated vehicles on the road that are not releasing any emissions that are killing people, not adding to pollution that under this legislation will have to be removed. This is idiotic, it’s moronic and it will have to be looked into, and we want the Government to act more effectively and efficiently with this in conjunction with the NTA, because it’s a no-brainer; if a car is contamination free and you have to exchange it (bear in mind that these electric cars at the moment can cost over €40,000) and the grant that is in place for this at the moment probably won’t be there in nine years time and it will be impossible for drivers to invest back into the industry. We need parity on this. We need these vehicles that are contamination free to come under this 15 year rule. This contamination problem is not going to go away, and if the incentives aren’t there for drivers, you will have less drivers that are prepared to invest. We all want to see purer air, it’s a goal everybody is looking for. Taking these taxis off the road because of their year is absolute lunacy.” said Roe.

He went on to highlight a particular safety issue drivers in the republic have, which their British counterparts do not, namely; the seat belt rule.

“Isn’t it time now for drivers to be protected like elsewhere in Europe; we don’t even have to go very far. 49 miles up the road in Newry taxi drivers are exempt from wearing seat belts. The reason for this is that seat belts have been used in so many assaults over the years. Over here at the moment; if you don’t wear a seat belt you get points on your licence. How many more attacks do we have to see happen? If it is common practice everywhere else, how different could it possibly be here? The seat belt has been used as a weapon to be put around drivers’ necks and they are assaulted, and yet drivers over here are stopped and fined for not wearing a seat belt. We need a re-think here because it’s actually jeopardising the safety of drivers, particularly elderly drivers,” said Roe.



# cab:app - we asked & you said...

In 2020 we issued a survey to over 12,000 taxi drivers registered on cab:app across Ireland and the UK, so you could tell us what services you needed in future to run your taxi business more efficiently by helping to reduce costs and grow your income.

Below is a summary of the key services and we are pleased to announce that in addition to card payments and share ownership being live, in **March** we will launch 'Paysme' our new **€ business current account** with VISA debit card for drivers in Ireland that also offers automated accounting to make life easier – see features on the next page.



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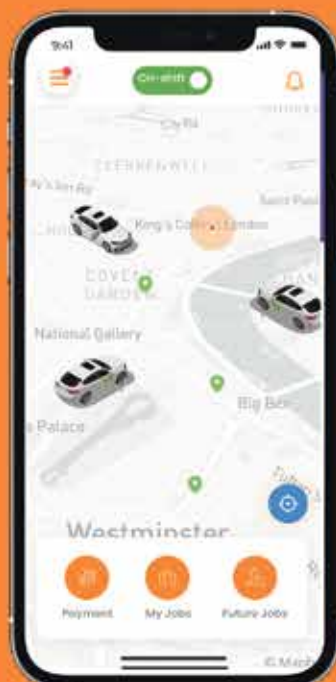


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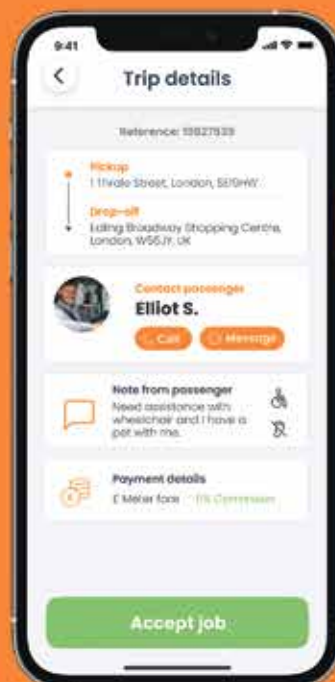
The new booking app is 70% complete and we know this is the number one priority for drivers, so we are working hard behind the scenes to make this a reality ASAP, with other services to follow.



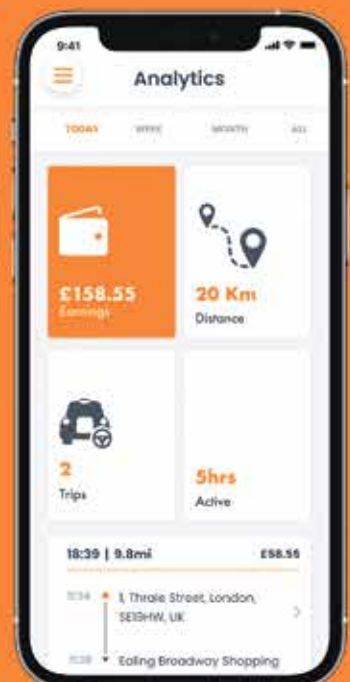
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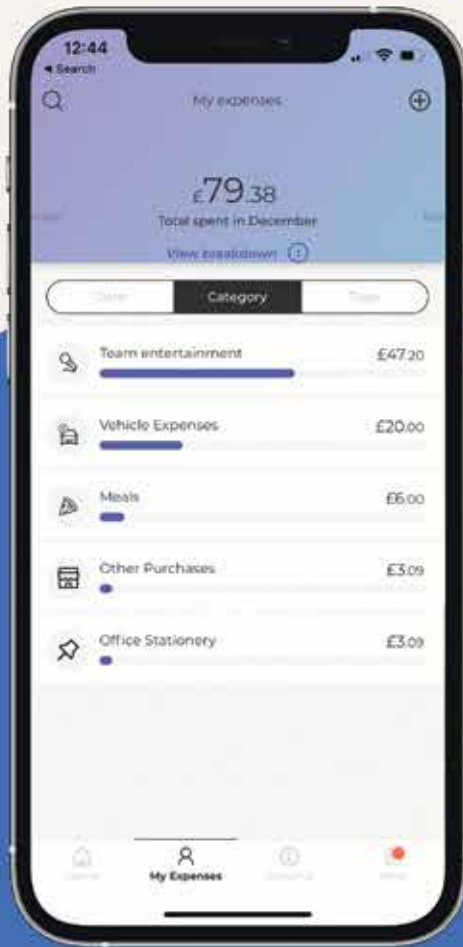


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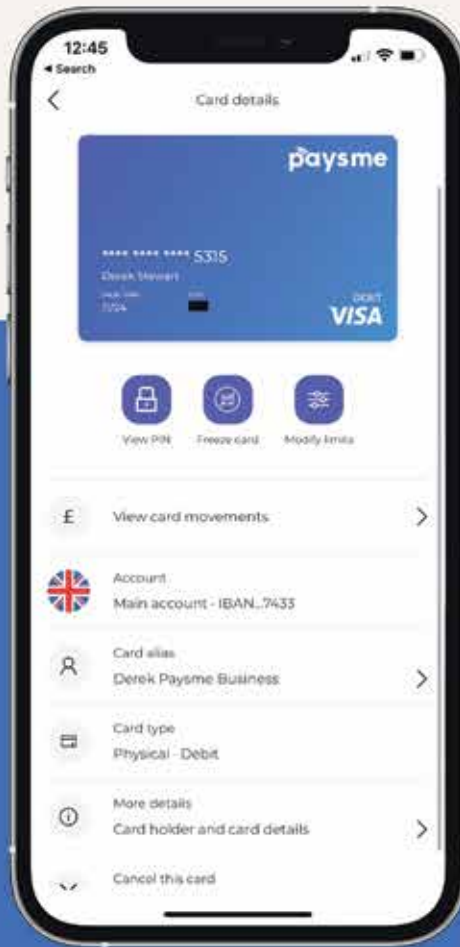


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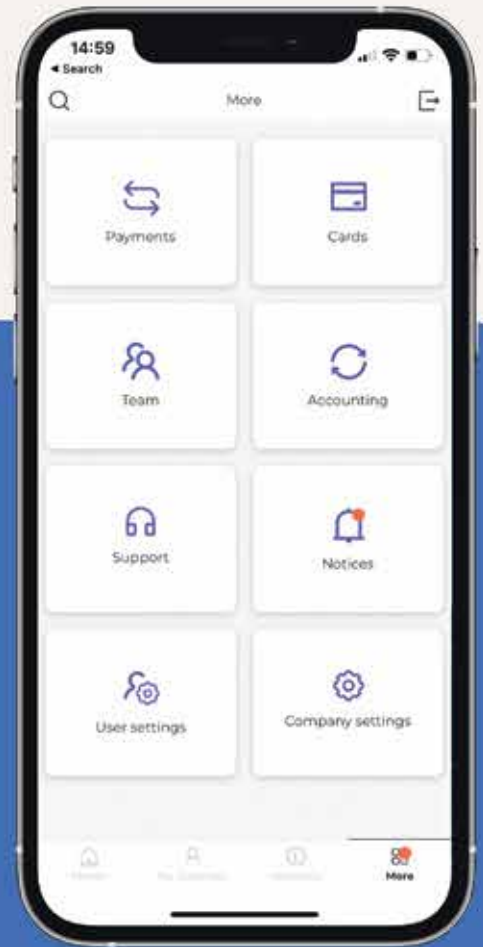




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# Taxi Driver Shortage

Calls are growing to temporarily change pub and club opening hours to help prevent tens of thousands of people spilling on to the streets at the same time, with operators warning: “We can’t afford to wait a year.”

**H**our-long waits at taxi ranks in Dublin city centre are common as trams and trains finish up before the rush, sparking safety fears as people are often forced to walk home.

On the busiest weekend nights, punters are attempting to hail eight taxis per second.

Cabbie Alan Cooley told *The Irish Sun*: “Everybody is being dumped out at the same time.

You’re looking at thousands of people on a Friday or Saturday night being dumped out onto the road.

“It comes down to the closing times being all at the same times. It’s a recipe for disaster.

“It doesn’t matter if you were to put three times the amount of the taxi fleet out there, for those two or three hours, it’s just pandemonium.”

Alan warned that Dublin’s ageing taxi drivers are staying away from the city centre in the early hours of the weekends, citing fear or the hassle of crowds.

Colleague Jim Waldron agrees: “The city has become a little bit more violent. Taxi drivers are more reluctant to work what we call the ‘mad hours’.

“There’s no shortage of taxis. There’s a shortage of taxis between midnight and 2am on a Friday and a Saturday night.”

In Ireland pubs, restaurants and nightclubs are currently operating under dated laws, some of which were created in 1833.

Under Justice Minister Helen McEntee’s lead, the Government held a public consultation on changes that would modernise nightlife allow for extended opening hours.

These new licensing laws would allow clubs to close later if they wanted to, rather than booting all punters out at 2:30am.

This would mean a more staggered closing would be seen across the city — but the updated laws are unlikely to come into effect until at least the end of the year.

## 24 HOUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Nightclub operators are impressed with efforts to refresh laws but insist they can’t wait for new legislation to be finalised or for 24-hour public transport dreams to come true.



Dublin promoter Buzz O'Neill told us: "This has been something we have been banging our heads about for 20 years now, the campaign for sequential closing and try ease the surge of people onto the streets.

We are probably one of the only European capitals left that operate this way. Nitelink services came back there about three weeks ago. It's not enough. It's not acceptable.

"Even the Luas running an extra hour or hour and a half even just on Friday and Saturday night would take people off the streets. We're putting the burden on taxis to get people home in 2022 — it's just not acceptable anymore.

"Sequential closing hours won't fix it over night, but what it would do is put people in a different mindset about going out and what times they go out. If you look at any other city in Europe, people don't all go out at the same time."

DJ Sunil Sharpe, a member of the Give Us The Night campaign group, said: "It doesn't appear that we are going to see a staggered - closing system implemented in the coming months."

He added: "Pre-pandemic it was very easy to get a taxi home and people didn't have to think about it. Now it's a lot more difficult.

### PUNTERS WALKING HOME

"A lot more people are finding that they're walking a lot of the way home until they get to a quieter area, a little bit outside the city centre, and then they might get a taxi that's on their way back into town.

"When you add the fact that people have been without nightlife for so long and just want to go out and meet their friends and socialise again, people of any age, I think we've now reached a point where the demand for nightlife is just simply not going to be adequately served by the amount of public transport and taxis at the moment.

"We find it very frustrating that now when the industry

and the public need these changes that the Government is unable to make those changes."

Punters are trying to hail eight taxis per second on the busiest weekend nights, according to taxi app Free Now.

The cabbie service said they have seen a massive surge in demand since pandemic restrictions eased.

But while demand is up 25 per cent compared to pre-pandemic times, the driver base has fallen by ten per cent since 2019.

General manager Niall Carson said the grand reopening of the country on January 22 saw app requests surge by a record-breaking 250 per cent more.

He added: "Demand over the last few weekends has continued to be high with peak times being 9pm to 2am in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford."

Former Dublin Lord Mayor Hazel Chu was part of the Night time Economy Taskforce which recommended better public transport — including 24-hour bus routes — to the National Transport Authority.

She told The Irish Sun: "Having proper transport at night would mitigate against people feeling unsafe and stop people having to pay an arm and a leg for a taxi.

"Certain lines of Nitelink aren't enough and I know with BusConnects there's going to be more. There's going to be 24-hour routes as well but I think there should be a Nitelink across the board in all routes."

For the cabbies picking up the slack in the meantime, the job is becoming increasingly difficult.

Alan explained: "The taxi fleet at the moment is nowhere near where it was pre-Covid because there are a lot of guys who have retired and have moved on to do different jobs, there was no work for them, and they haven't come back.

"There are a lot of social problems as well and there's a lot of racial attacks on drivers — especially our non-national drivers.

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# BOLT TAXI APP LAUNCHES IN CORK

The mobility app, which includes services such as e-scooter and e-bike rental, already operates in Dublin. NEW mobile app for ordering taxis has been launched in Cork City.

**B**olt is a mobility super-app that already operates in Dublin and in over 45 countries around the world.

Its ride-hailing services also include shared cars, e-bikes, and e-scooters, with food and grocery delivery also available in some areas.

As of today, passengers in Cork City and surrounding areas can now download the app on their phones and use it to order taxis.

A spokesperson for the company said that a large number of Cork taxi drivers have already been recruited to its platform.

Bolt is also engaging in active discussions with local authorities to launch its other mobility services, such as e-scooters and e-bikes, in Ireland next year.

"After a hugely successful year in the Dublin market, we're

excited to launch our ride-hailing service in Cork," said Bolt Operations Manager for Ireland James Bowpitt.

"Bolt's mission is to reduce the need for private car ownership and Ireland seems an ideal target, with recent studies showing that just 1 in 10 Irish car owners felt they could give up their private vehicle with the alternative options currently available to them."

In order to try to get more taxis on Cork roads during busy periods, the company has been trialing incentives for drivers, such as commission-free trips.

"Simply put, Cork needs more taxis. The total registered SPSV Taxi fleet in Cork is just 1,216, as of 28 February 2022, down 30 vehicles from 2020," Mr Bowpitt said.

"The appetite for socialising is back across the country but we are aware of the concerns some might have around the availability of taxis, especially at night," he concluded.

# Northern Ireland Fare Increase

Northern Ireland taxi journeys set for further increase following last year's 7.6% rise in maximum fares.



**T**he costs of taxi journeys in Northern Ireland could be on the rise again, with the Infrastructure Minister launching another review of fares.

In November last year, Nichola Mallon announced a 7.6% increase in the maximum fare as part of a post-Covid support package for the industry, and to encourage new drivers.

The minister said she had taken "account of views expressed in a targeted consultation on taxi fares and the rise in fuel at that time and other running costs".

She had also then committed to initiating a further fare review in Spring 2022, based on updated data, which has commenced as of March 14.

These new calculations will take account of the increase in cost to parts, labour and insurance, which occurred over the course of the health pandemic.

Taxi firms have previously warned the industry here is in crisis due to a range of factors, including the introduction of tougher entry requirements for drivers in 2013 and the impact of the coronavirus crisis.

A consultation with the industry over measures was held by the Department for Infrastructure in September 2021.

It came after one of Belfast's biggest firms fonaCAB told the Belfast Telegraph they had to turn away 3,000

fares on one day in the summer due to a shortage of drivers.

At the time owner William McCausland said the taxi industry has been losing drivers here since 2013 and said "this issue has only gotten worse because of the pandemic".

"We, like most other companies, are working with far fewer drivers at present than before the pandemic started and this has meant that demand for taxis outstrips supply at evenings and weekends," he had added.

The taxi boss has also previously called for a 50% increase on weekend night fares and said the company only has 900 drivers, a fall from 1,400 before the pandemic.

The targeted consultation process on the proposals from the taxi fare review will go forward in the new Assembly mandate. I am committed to helping the industry recover from the pandemic and also to operate during these current difficult times," said Ms Mallon in a statement on Monday.

Last year, she further promised free taximeter tests for drivers and operators who applied between the operational date and the end of February 2022, as well as financial support to cover the DVA fees for new drivers who successfully obtain their taxi driver and vehicle licences from April 21 to March 22.





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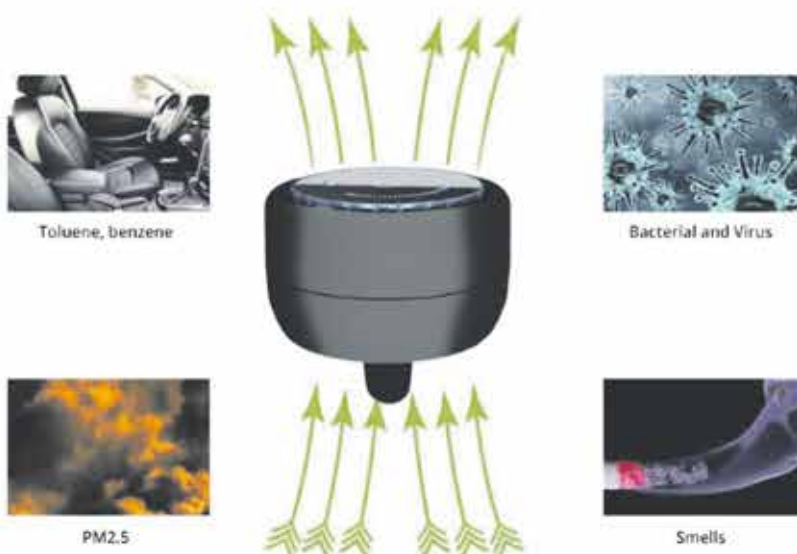
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# Driver Jailed for Theft

Taxi driver who netted almost £27K after stealing drunk passengers PIN numbers and cards jailed for seven months.

**A**north Belfast driver who “fleeced” bank cards from drunk passengers which were then used to withdraw money from their bank accounts was jailed yesterday for seven months.

Belfast Crown Court heard that Gareth Taggart (32) from York Park used the same modus operandi against over 50 passengers.

Over a year and a half from February 2018, Taggart targeted drunk passengers by watching what PIN number they used to pay their taxi fare.

He failed to give some customers their cards back, then used their PINs to withdraw cash from their accounts.

Taggart repeated this process 60 times and netted just under £26,800 from the fraud.

When he was arrested in July 2019, Taggart made the case that he was acting under duress after racking up

gambling debts with paramilitary loan sharks ordering him to pay back.

The court heard police launched an investigation regarding the loss of bank cards and concluded that there was a common factor that they had been out in Belfast drinking and socialising.

The matter was investigated and police identified Taggart, who at the time worked as a taxi driver, as a possible suspect.

He was arrested at one of the ATMs used in the fraud, and when apprehended he was in possession of four bank cards and £1,000 in cash.

Defence barrister John O'Connor said his client maintained he was acting under duress.

Sending Taggart to jail, Judge Richard Greene QC spoke of the large number of victims and said instead of getting them home safely “he fleeced them.”

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# FUEL SAVING HACKS



## How to make your car's tank of fuel last as long as possible

Want to keep the cost of driving down while fuel prices continue to rise? Here are some useful tips

**W**ith the price of petrol and diesel rising to unprecedented highs, many drivers are concerned about the cost of getting from A to B. When walking or cycling is not an option, a car can be a crucial mode of transport, particularly for those living in rural areas, people living with disabilities, and parents.

The Cabinet has agreed to cut excise duty by 20 cent per litre on petrol and 15 cent per litre on diesel, and we can also take steps to make our cars more fuel-efficient so you get further on as little as possible. Here are some tips that could stop that needle dipping too low.

### Remove excess weight from the car

A heavy car uses more fuel when being driven. If you're using your boot to store anything that is not needed on the journey, now is the time to remove it. Items you may not need include your hold's buggy if they are not joining you on the journey, and heavy tools you might be keeping in there too. Similarly, if your car has a toolbox, remove it. It is excess weight but additionally it creates additional drag. Items like these create wind resistance and a car has to work harder – and use more fuel – to simply move it through the air.

### Maintain and service your car

In both the short and long-term, a well-maintained car will use less fuel than one with any untreated issues. A car service is an expense in itself but it is a necessary one to ensure you don't spend even more on excess fuel. Similarly, ensure your tyres are properly inflated. If you're driving around with the wrong tyre pressure, you're wasting additional fuel.

### Don't use your air conditioning

If your car has air conditioning, don't be tempted to turn it on unless absolutely necessary. It puts an additional strain on your engine, resulting in more fuel being used. Other electrical add-ons will have a similar effect, including heated seats or steering wheels.

### Plan your journeys

It sounds obvious, but mapping your route from A to B can be the most effective way to avoid using too much fuel. Avoid any areas that you know are traffic black spots: sitting in traffic, you'll be wasting precious fuel. Similarly, if you don't need to reach your destination at a certain time, avoid travelling at rush hour. Not only will you get there faster, but a smooth, obstacle-free drive is the best way to use as little fuel as possible: stopping and starting frequently will burn it up.

### Gravity is your friend

If you live in a hilly area like Cork, make sure you pay attention to the aspect of the road you are driving. If you are going downhill, ease off the accelerator. Similarly, maintain a constant speed rather than speeding up and braking over and over to be as efficient as possible.



# Driver Jailed for Injuring Tourists

**Taxi driver who hit German couple as they crossed road, leaving husband with severe brain trauma, is jailed.**

**A** taxi driver has been jailed for careless driving causing serious harm after he hit two pedestrians crossing a Dublin city centre street.

Dublin Circuit Criminal Court heard that Tajudeen Balogun (64) failed to look ahead into a junction before turning right from Dame Street onto Trinity Street on the night of September 6, 2018. He drove straight into a young German couple who had begun crossing Trinity Street before he had begun turning into the street.

One eye witness later told gardaí that the car came out of nowhere. Balogun did not apply the brakes and his lawyers said that he clearly didn't see the couple.

Verena Schneider was glanced by the side of the car and received minor bruising. Her husband Benjamin Schneider was behind her and took the full brunt of the impact and was thrown onto the road.

The back of his head hit the ground and he suffered multiple skull and spinal fractures and severe brain trauma. While he can now walk and talk again, he is left with significant cognitive deficits.

Balogun stayed at the scene and was upset. There was no evidence of intoxication or speeding being factors in the incident.

Last November Balogun of Rosscourt Grove, Balgaddy, Lucan, Co Dublin, was due to go on trial when he pleaded guilty to careless driving causing serious harm.

In a victim impact report Mr Schneider said that he and his partner had married in 2018 and had intended to start a family but their lives and plans were now destroyed. He said his injuries left him with the mental state of a preschool child.

His wife said what previously was a partnership of equals has been destroyed and she has had to give up her chosen profession as a teacher, and her hobbies of violin playing and carol singing, to look after her husband.



Martin Dully SC, defending said his client was a father-of-four who was absolutely devastated that his actions resulted in the appalling outcome.

“Not a day goes by that he doesn't consider and think about the injured parties and what has befallen them,” he said.

He said a forensic collision expert contracted by the defence identified a blind spot in the driver's model of Peugeot which restricts ability to see when turning right.

Judge Melanie Greally said that it was abundantly clear from CCTV of the collision that Balogun would have seen the pedestrians if he had been looking at the roadway ahead of him.

She said he didn't alert them to his approach, didn't slow his car and he didn't apply his brakes until after impact.

She said after his arrest he suggested to gardaí that the couple had run to beat his car and had run in front of the car, and that they were intoxicated. She said these assertions were all “manifestly inaccurate” and it was very clear that the injured parties were in no way responsible for the collision. Judge Greally said Mr Schneider's wife now has a life-long role to her dependant husband.

She noted Balogun's lack of other convictions, his good character references, his good record as a taxi driver and his genuine remorse.

“Notwithstanding his good character and lack of previous convictions, a custodial sentence is necessitated,” she said.

The maximum sentence for this offence is two years. Judge Greally set a headline sentence of 21 months, but reduced this to 14 months to take the mitigating factors into consideration. She suspended the final six months and disqualified Balogun from driving for four years.

# IN MEMORY OF IAN McDONNELL



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# All-New KIA EV6 is truly inspirational



The all-new Kia EV6 brings long-range, zero-emissions power, high-tech ultra-fast charging, and distinctive crossover styling to the all-electric vehicle market.

**T**he EV6 is Kia's first car to be based on the company's highly advanced and dedicated architecture designed specifically for battery electric vehicles (BEVs). Kia has offered electric models such as the e-Niro and Soul EV for several years now but the EV6 is their first zero-emissions car designed from the ground up, rather than sharing a platform with petrol and diesel-engine models. The EV6 was designed under Kia's new design philosophy, which comprises a new visual identity evoking positive forces and natural energy with contrasting combinations of sharp styling elements and sculpted shapes. As a result, the sleek, funky, and undeniably modern look of the EV6 provides terrific visual appeal to the mix.

#### High-Tech Charging Capability

The EV6 is powered exclusively by electric energy, while the high-tech 800V charging capability means the EV6 can go from 10 to





80 per-cent battery charge in just 18 minutes. To help preserve energy in the battery, the EV6 is fitted with energy-recuperation technologies to maximise driving range. This smart regenerative braking system is operated by paddle shifters behind the steering wheel so drivers can quickly and easily slow the car and recuperate kinetic energy to maximise driving range and efficiency. Drivers can choose from six regenerative braking levels (none, 1 to 3, 'i-PEDAL', or auto mode), depending on the desired level of energy recuperation. The system's 'i-PEDAL' driving mode also allows the car to harvest the maximum amount of energy from its brakes and enables the driver to bring the car to a gentle halt without needing to push the brake pedal.

#### Earth & GT Line Trim Options

The Kia EV6 is offered in two highly-specified trim levels – EV6 Earth and EV6 GT Line – both of which are driven by the rear wheels. The Earth model sits on 19-inch alloy wheels and has a full charge range of 528kms, while the GT Line comes with 20-inch alloy wheels and can achieve up to 506kms from a single charge. Both models feature a 77.4 kWh long-range battery pack paired with a 229PS (226bhp) electric motor, while a heat pump also comes as standard. The EV6 Earth comes with a host of comfort, convenience and safety features as standard including Dual 12.3-inch Curved Driver Display Screens, UVO Connect, charcoal grey vegan leather upholstery with Premium Relaxation Seats (electrically operated and heated in the front), memory driver's seat, Android Auto & Apple CarPlay, rear privacy glass, flush door handles, satellite navigation, adaptive cruise control, LED headlamps and a Smart Power Tailgate. Upgrading to the GT Line brings with it a panoramic sunroof, remote smart parking, ventilated front seats, heated rear seats, GT styling pack, adaptive LED lights, blind spot monitoring system, head-up display, suede/vegan leather interior, and a 360-degree surround view monitor. The generous 2.9-metre wheelbase in the EV6 ensures excellent head, leg, and elbow room for front seat occupants and, with no need to house a central transmission tunnel, the EV6's flat floor provides exceptional space and comfort for rear seat occupants too. Premium materials are used throughout the cabin of the EV6 for a welcoming feel, while their selection has also been chosen for utmost durability. Sustainable materials have been used, from vegan leather trims to seat fabrics and floor carpet made using recycled plastics, equivalent to 111 plastic 500ml water bottles.

Boot space in the EV6 measures in at an impressive 490-litres, but this can be expanded easily by dropping the rear seat backs when the need arises.

#### Vehicle-To-Load Function

The charging system in the EV6 is more flexible than previous generation BEVs thanks to an Integrated Charging Control Unit (ICCU). The ICCU enables a new vehicle-to-load (V2L) function, which can discharge up to 3.6kW of power from the vehicle battery via a simple adapter that turns the exterior charging plug into a power socket. This ingenious function enables the EV6 to help charge anything from external domestic appliances to other electric vehicles. For example, the V2L function can operate a 55-inch television and air-conditioning unit simultaneously for more than 24 hours. Inside the cabin, a convenient charging port located under the rear seats allows passengers to charge devices from the vehicle's battery without the need for additional adapters.

#### Car on Review

My EV6 GT Line review car, which was finished in Aurora Black Pearl paintwork, impressed me greatly from the moment I set eyes on it. The striking exterior of the EV6 is complimented by an equally striking interior design that oozes style, comfort, and refinement in equal measure, while cutting-edge technology and a suite of advanced safety systems provide terrific peace of mind for all occupants. The rear-wheel drive EV6 is capable of sprinting from 0-100km/h in just 6.2-seconds and does so in a super- smooth manner, while it remains as composed on bumpy and twisty back roads as it does on smooth motorway road surfaces. Customisable drive modes provide the driver with the option to switch between Sport, Eco and Normal modes to suit their individual driving style, while the sporty handling and steering characteristics of the EV6 transform it into a highly accomplished all-rounder.

#### Verdict & Pricing

The new Kia EV6 delivers the very best characteristics and attributes of a fully electric car without compromise. As a result, the EV6 blends excitement with efficiency, responsive dynamics with rapid charging, and swift performance with zero-emissions driving. With the EV6 Earth and EV6 GT Line priced at €50,000 and €54,345 respectively (after SEAI Grant & VRT relief) outstanding value for money is guaranteed, while a 7-year/150,000km warranty comes as standard.

# Taxi driver hits the jackpot as punter pays for Paddy's Day trip from Dublin to Donegal

The demand for taxis in Dublin was up 3.5 times last night from a regular Thursday, according to data from one hailing platform.

One person enjoying the St Patrick's Day celebrations took a taxi from Dublin to Letterkenny, clocking up a total of 250km. The demand for taxis in Dublin was up 3.5 times last night from a regular

Thursday, according to data from one hailing platform.

They were still kept going at 5am, bringing home any last stragglers from the night out.

The most popular destinations, according to Bolt, included Temple Bar, Harcourt Street and the airport. The most popular pick-up points were Baggot Street, Temple Bar and Harcourt Street.

Operations Manager for Bolt, James Bowpitt, said: "As expected, St. Patrick's Day resulted in huge demand for taxis throughout the day with peak demand at midnight."

He pointed out that the amount of taxis in Dublin is down, despite high demand after lockdown restrictions.

Nonetheless, it's plain that Dublin county needs more

taxis," he said.

"The total registered SPSV Taxi fleet in Dublin is just 9,517, down 235 vehicles from 2020.

"So although the customer demand has come back, there has actually been a reduction of registered SPSV taxi vehicles."

This is not something that has gone unnoticed by passengers, either. One Tweeted last week: "The taxi situation in Dublin is absolutely horrendous at the moment. It now feels like you have won the lottery when you manage to get a taxi home. This is beyond an inconvenience now, it's a safety issue.

"There aren't good enough public transport options available beyond 11pm/midnight between the DART/Luas/nightlink. Only safe option for a lot of people is a taxi."

Another said: "Honestly at the stage you'd be put off leaving your house on a Saturday night in Dublin considering it'll take 4 hours to get a taxi."

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# The dominance of cultural communication is affecting all industries including the future of the Taxi functions in public transport

By Derry Coughlan of the Cork Taximens' Association

“Transport policy is at the cross-roads”, under review and legal protection update, says the European Commission’s recent Green Paper on the role of transport. Various environmental and social problems arising from transport and from road transport in particular, are becoming more serious almost by the day; and transport policy makers and scientists face great challenges finding ways to deal with them.

**T**here is uncertainty in the taxi future and support to cope with demands, due to the contingency approaches to organisation and management in our towns and cities, neglect of assignment to the dual functions, which should be available to taxi drivers and intending passengers, operational laws are required for taxi rank site locations and legal technology communication for advanced booking by the hirers, etc. Taxi hiring stations must be made available in our cities for the public transport performance – the nature of a taxi must be retained in our streetway developments, improving the public travel needs and interconnecting services available, etc.

Visitors to our city are confused and it is obvious as how to hire a taxi and where do you get one, they then wonder are they official and can you trust them, you see the authorities bringing in their own standards, which is now wrecking towns and cities! Changes must be introduced and occupants set out standards, trading, entertainment, curfew of operations, parking, deliveries, ban the ugly scenes with strict Law and Order enforcement, including street policing, etc. Helping to bring people into the city, there are bus shelters all over the place, why not the same for Taxis, after all we are the Licensed Street Service Vehicle, recognised everywhere and are universally patronised as most useful and agreeable conveyances for the public accommodation.

As we move into a survival era in this Taxi World, every taxi driver wants to upgrade and stay in business, therefore we must return to old support systems of regulating licences and entry to make progress with our area controls and efficient demand supply service to the intending passengers requiring public transport, etc. Again, taxi drivers will operate through dangerous times, but it requires that special vehicle in worldwide use to achieve its business turnover and to fulfil the requirements of public transport available in public areas and hiring stations for distribution, transport terminals also need promotion. Now the World Public Transport Organisation will have to provide Taxi Education for all operators, attached business interests and the Licensing Authorities who control the individual taximeter areas.

The Taxi Industry worldwide must supply its service and standards to our communities in view of the forthcoming agendas of the UN New World Order and NATO Master Plan for War exposed by their recent conferences, etc. The old fashioned and silly appearance of the Mini-Cab introduced into taxi vehicle provisions for the “Single Fare Charge” transporting purposes, will no longer

survive in the alternative supply market and engine power drive forthcoming changes, therefore the Motor Vehicle Manufacturing Companies will come under special pressure to construct and supply a Hydrogen engine special SUV motor wagon for the Worldwide Taxi Public Transport Organisations. At present there is a supplement being supplied in the form of Electric Power Drive Car, this will not survive and is a pure waste of raw materials now in an energy survival world. As you are aware, Taxi Services are in the Worldwide Health Protection demand services, mobility would not survive without them. Hence, in the survival world, “human technology” (brain, mind, hearing, sight, speech and learning ability, etc) was there before the Social Network Trafficking that has cascading effects on our daily lives, human breeding and our health issue, such as developing diseases, which trigger your life’s health and living span of time, no wonder the European Union wants the large technical websites to be broken up? We taxi drivers worldwide are taking precautions with our future developments to save the planet, its population of 7,904,000,000 will not in total survive with all this electronic technology being supplied by the use of our planet nature to human being and their interaction on land, etc.

As the headline states, the “Dominance of Cultural Communication”, as you are aware the Abuse of Event Management and the interpretation twist of the English language, sends our populations into error of wellbeing, achievement, and survival healthy on the planet, the artificial mechanism nowadays disturbs the planet’s natural wavelengths so much, it causes human determination in the sense of a so-called pandemic with its death signals given different titles and its delivery can be distributed to suit your climate or human behaviour – wars usually control a lot of wrongdoing in civilization, but when they take over with the runaway dangerous systems, hence you have the present day worldwide damage to civilization and its living standards and life span healthy wellbeing, etc. Wavelengths you use for phones, radio, television, fax, e-mail, credit cards and other mechanical devices in transmission, now can also transmit air poison, viruses, diseases, human senses and deformity leading to an unprepared human death, etc. This discovery system can be used instead of wars, without material damages, to reduce population also! So much for all the mobile networks, which can also destroy human nature! Medical tablets taken by human beings to cure or assist the human body – how does the tablet know what direction to go in the human body – need I say anymore!





So now we, as taxi drivers, must be prepared for the Industry Survival and expansion worldwide, therefore we, in Cork, are preparing a Taxi Network Design for Cork's future, upgrading the carriage vehicles, the hiring branches, the presentation and availability on the streets and transport terminals with simplified fares with the advantage of extra "Bus Corridors" being provided, thus upgrading the frequency to the public passengers, etc. In order to support the commercial aspects of our City, street amenities must be provided: parking, bus stops, loading bays, cyclist controls, street clearance with time tables, visitor and operational rules, with above all selective Taxi ranks in the important areas of the city, producing full availability for a 24 hour permanent supply and part-time night time Taxi Ranks for crowd removal; all without interference from other motorists as obstructions on Taxi Ranks is a big problem nowadays throughout the Republic of Ireland, meaning that we have lost a lot of good and older taxi drivers due to this aggravation, very stressful and not a good public image for visitors trust and intending passengers.

We are calling on all town and city Councils to address this matter urgently as it is an ongoing problem, being reported several times. The National Transport Authority is revising the New Cork Bus Network Plan for our future travel arrangements, but it is neglecting the most important public travel service, giving door to door with goods and passenger dispatch, that a bus or tramway cannot deliver, so you see, the importance of public protection in our industry. Street preparation is important to our city and resolving traffic congestion is another issue, delays and traffic lights, pedestrian crossings abuse, narrow long street difficulties should be made one way outbound, like the ongoing problem on Blarney Street, etc. Street closures encroaches on the rights of traders and property owners who pay taxation for operating their business methods, plus the dangers that they have posed. Taxi movement in the city centre is disrupted following these unnatural changes in a city, we must all protest about these changes and let

our elected City Councillors know the damage these people have done to a city that once was hailed in glory to support, enjoyment and business methods, etc.

Project Ireland 2040 in advancing public transport arrangements and vehicles, should also incorporate our taxi services nationwide, special vehicles should be promoted with discussions with the vehicle manufacturers in Europe. The Small Public Service Vehicle Licenced Taxi mostly hired in all parts of your country, will need Government Support and Investment to cope with future developments and demands, a 24Hr service on-site, app, phone or online, etc. Our appearance in a city is very important, plus the availability with Saloon, Wheelchair and Minibus Taxis, distinguishable with the door emblem and our standard, original Taxi roof sign, therefore the specification for this roof sign should be retained and the alternative that some merchants supplied should be discontinued; we need a standard appearance at all times. Under the present environment we should keep away from fare increases, too costly to recoup, could damage the marketplace, but the Government should reduce the taxation charges on our motor fuel, plus the garages should reduce their profits for transport merchants, etc. There are complaints and objections coming in from taxi drivers about the Licensing Rules extension, all taxis should get the 15 year benefit for a good condition vehicle (sample of irregularity – 2009 car gets 2024 - 2012 car gets 2022 - 2011 car gets 2021). The 15 years-old taxis also got 1 year bringing them to 16 years-old. There are discrepancies, but the 15 year rule should apply to all good quality taxis, who support the industry, etc.

The Cork City Appointed Taxi Stands Bye-Laws 2020 must be updated and improved correctly, i.e. Ground Extensions are needed, "No Parking" signs displayed and a special fine increase of 150 Euro for the workplace lawbreakers with clamping reintroduced to solve this ongoing problem in our towns and cities. The Washington Street Night Ranks must return to their former public demand positions with the Grand Parade Night Ranks (NGP2) moved across to the other side of the street that was agreed. The South Mall (NSM1 & NSM2) Night Ranks will have to be relocated due to new road designs there, with one area on the South Mall needing a permanent Rank. The bus station Parnell Place Rank (PP2) directly outside the terminal needs an extension for five Taxis by demand with no parking, etc. The Cornmarket Street Taxi Rank needs clarification with restrictions, no parking enforced. The important seven car Taxi rank outside Opera Lane must be urgently extended by public demand – bus congestion on this street must also be resolved and the "public transport only" hours extended in everyone's interest and safety.

The taxi drivers in our cities must be supported and protected by all the relevant authorities – now is the time to unite and act in the interest of future generations and stop this cultural vandalism, which needs a lot of attention nowadays. The Law Society will have to play its part also, in revising Regulations, Statutory Instruments and Bye-Laws for our towns and cities; give your support and representation now, but keep in touch with the Taxi College for further progress until we get change and a legal programme with our PSV Drivers Licence and Taxi Vehicle Operational Rules, etc. Support for the Taxi Industry in future developments is badly needed nationally?

Emergency orders, I must appeal and encourage every taxi driver in the Republic of Ireland to make representation to your local politician about the obstructions on our Taxi Rank "Ply-for-Hire" kerbside spaces, law changes needed urgently, introducing a parking fine of 150.00 Euro enforced by Gardai, Traffic Wardens and N.T.A. Enforcement Officers, that will apply to all vehicles stopping or parking on taxi ranks, including unattended taxi vehicles. Street policing is also needed on our streets, plus clamping for foreign registered vehicles and return to the "ZZ plates" when entering the Republic of Ireland for security and legal check-out, etc. Loading Bays should close at 12 noon every day, with the car parking meter system taking over for the benefit of our city and the productive arrangements required. – Thank you!

# DO DUBLIN'S TAXI DRIVERS NEED A FARE HIKE TO KEEP THEM ON THE ROAD?

Already struggling with rising living costs, taxi drivers now fear it may be the end of the road for the industry as fuel costs spiral out of control.

## So why might taxis soon be getting more expensive just like almost everything else?

Because many of the country's 26,000 cabbies fear that the energy crisis caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine will devastate their already struggling industry – and only a fare increase can save them from a complete breakdown.

Despite the Government's slashing of excise duty on petrol and diesel, even Transport Minister Eamon Ryan has admitted it "won't cushion the full blow". As Fianna Fail Dublin South-West TD John Lahart warned earlier this week, Covid had "a profound impact" on the taxi business and "it will be some time before drivers see their earnings return to pre-Covid levels".

This is bad news for everyone concerned – with cabbies either cutting down hours or giving up altogether and customers not getting the service they want.

## Taxis aren't exactly cheap now, so why can't drivers make a decent living?

Taxi rates here are set by the National Transport Authority (NTA) and among the highest in Europe, more expensive than London, Paris or Rome. However, drivers point out that fuel, insurance and other expenses are a huge drain on their earnings. Another problem is the rapid rise in payments by card, which costs them 4.8pc of the fare.

Cabbies make an average of €21,372 in a normal year (which 2020 and 2021 obviously weren't), roughly 50pc lower than the national average salary. Another important statistic is that 23pc of drivers are over 66, 15pc over 70 and just 1pc under 30 – showing just what an unappealing profession it has become.

## Covid obviously made that situation even worse, right?

Yes. Taxi drivers' customer base is 60pc private journeys, 21pc corporate business and 19pc tourism. Lockdowns took a big chunk out of the first category and almost destroyed the other two. An NTA survey last month found that 42pc of cabbies have not returned to work yet – and those that have reported a drop of 61pc in their income.

If Covid leads to a permanent increase in people working from home, then taxi drivers' losses will be permanent too. As another indication of how bad morale is, almost a quarter say they intend to quit the business within three years.

## Does this explain why finding a taxi seems to be getting harder at weekends?

It's a bit more complicated than that. The problem was captured by a widely shared tweet from Dublin woman Cara Spillane last month: "Leaving an event in city centre this eve, I've made 17 attempts to use a taxi app. 15 failed attempts and 2 cancelled fares...How are we meant to get home safely?"

According to the National Private Hire and Taxi Association's spokesperson Jim Waldron, however, the real problem is that most pubs and nightclubs close at the same time, instantly creating massive taxi rank queues.

"I wouldn't say it was an attractive job," he told Newstalk radio. "It's not financially viable unless you're willing to work the Friday night and Saturday night and put up with all the hassle that's out there."

As for the apps that should in theory make booking a cab easier than ever, many drivers reportedly turn them off at weekends when streets are relatively busy – because they don't want to pay the 15pc commission.

## Why does Ireland's taxi industry seem to be in a state of almost permanent crisis?

Because we've never found the right balance between supply and demand. Back in 1978, taxi drivers won a landmark court case to restrict their numbers. The industry became seen as a cosy cartel, with only a tiny number of new licenses issued every year.

A 1990s Carlsberg ad showed a fantasy of revellers emerging from a Dublin nightclub and being amazed to see a row of taxis, emphasising just how scarce they were.

## How did we end up going full circle?

When the Celtic Tiger started roaring, more people were willing to splash out on taxis and the shortage became unsustainable. Bertie Ahern's government responded by deregulating the industry in 2000, selling plates for €5,000 to anyone with a roadworthy vehicle.

License numbers duly exploded, from 3,913 to 21,177 by 2008 – a rise of 541pc. This was great for passengers, not so much for drivers who had paid up to €100,000 for a plate shortly before deregulation.

"A lot of people sold their homes in Dublin, uprooted their children and moved to cheaper houses in the country so they could pay off loans they had taken out to buy a now useless asset," the former National Taxi Drivers Union president Tommy Gorman said. "There were suicides and a lot of marriage break-ups."

Following the 2008 crash, demand for taxis fell again and an indefinite ban on new licenses was introduced. The resulting situation seems to have pleased almost nobody.

## Why might the Government be nervous about a row with taxi drivers?

Because history shows that their public demonstrations can often turn edgy. In 1985, cabbies disrupted traffic and boycotted Dublin Airport in protest at CIE introducing a shuttle bus service there.

Some of them broke through police lines during a march over deregulation in 2000, dubbed the 'Battle of Nassau Street'. Last April a planned demo at Merrion Square was cancelled, leading



to false claims in the Dáil that Garda Commissioner Drew Harris had banned it.

“Are we going back to the Nazis or Hitler’s time?” Independent TD Mattie McGrath asked. “What the hell is going on here?” An An Garda Síochána insisted taxi drivers had actually taken this decision themselves on public health advice and the protest happened in May instead.

#### **What sort of price increase might we be looking at if taxi drivers get their way?**

Around 5pc. The NTA actually recommended a 4.5pc increase in 2019, but then Covid-19 arrived and their decision was put on the long finger. Another review is now under way. With inflation rocketing, however, the Government’s current priority is to reduce people’s transport costs instead – bus and rail fares will be cut by 20pc next month.

Green Party leader Mr Ryan unveiled a €6.5m support package for taxi drivers last June, but it was dismissed as a sticking plaster and his advice this week that you can reduce fuel costs by driving slower isn’t much use to them either.

For now, the only certainty is that Ireland’s journey towards a healthy taxi industry seems to be taking forever – and our meter is still running.

## Major Surge in Trips Following Lifting of restrictions

Following the easing of almost all Covid-19 restrictions, the number of taxi trips taken over the weekend recorded a year-on-year increase of 250 per cent.

**A**ccording to Free Now, one Saturday in January was the busiest on record for the company, with a 60 per cent uplift in ride-hailing requests compared to the previous weekend.

Cork experienced the largest increase in service demand. Requests for taxis almost doubling compared to the previous weekend, as the county also recorded the latest nights with 2am being the most popular time to hail a taxi.

City centres proved to be the most popular drop-off locations, with Dublin, Limerick and Galway ranking just behind Cork.

On Sunday, 1am was the most popular time to hail a taxi, with six requests being made per second, according to Free Now

The company expects bookings to continue to increase as the week goes on.

Niall Carson, general manager of Free Now said: “The past 20 months of the pandemic and national restrictions have weighed heavily on every aspect of life in Ireland



– but it is uplifting to see the country opening back up again and regaining a sense of normality.

“Free Now and our driver partners are committed to keeping the nation moving with flexible transport in the coming weeks and months as they get from A to B – whether it’s their workplace, local pubs and restaurants or various other destinations that we will be returning to in 2022.”

# Knock Knock

**Me: Would you like to be the sun in my life?**

**Her: Awww... Yes!!!**

**Me: Good then stay 92.96 million miles away from me**

**Teacher: How much is a gram?**

**Tyrone: Uhhh. depends on what you need**

**Some guy called me a tool. So I got hammered and nailed his girlfriend. Guess he was right.**

I went down the street to a 24-hour grocery store. When I got there, the guy was locking the front door. I said, "Hey! The sign says you're open 24 hours." He said, "Yes. but not in a row!"

**Mr. And Mrs. Brown had two sons. One was named Mind Your Own Business & the other was named Trouble. One day the two boys decided to play hide and seek. Trouble hid while Mind Your Own Business counted to one hundred. Mind Your Own Business began looking for his brother behind garbage cans and bushes. Then he started looking in and under cars until a police man approached him and asked, "What are you doing?" "Playing a game," the boy replied. "What is your name?" the officer questioned. "Mind Your Own Business." Furious the policeman inquired, "Are you looking for trouble?!" The boy replied. "Whv. yes."**

A woman gets on a bus with her baby. The bus driver says, "That's the ugliest baby that I've ever seen. Ugh!" The woman goes to the rear of the bus and sits down, fuming. She says to a man next to her, "The driver just insulted me!" The man says, "You go right up there and tell him off - go ahead. I'll hold your monkey for you."

An elderly couple are in church. The wife leans over and whispers to her husband, "I just let out a long, silent fart. What should I do?" The husband replies, "First off, replace the batteries in your hearing aid!"

**There was an elderly couple who in their old age noticed that they were getting a lot more forgetful, so they decided to go to the doctor. The doctor told them that they should start writing things down so they don't forget. They went home and the old lady told her husband to get her a bowl of ice cream. "You might want to write it down," she said. The husband said, "No, I can remember that you want a bowl of ice cream." She then told her husband she wanted a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream. "Write it down," she told him, and again he said, "No, no, I can remember: you want a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream." Then the old lady said she wants a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream and a cherry on top. "Write it down," she told her husband and again he said, "No, I got it. You want a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream and a cherry on top." So he goes to get the ice cream and spends an unusually long time in the kitchen, over 30 minutes. He comes out to his wife and hands her a plate of eggs and bacon. The old wife stares at the plate for a moment, then looks at her husband and asks, "Where's the toast?"**

One day Jimmy got home early from school and his mom asked, "Why are you home so early?" He answered, "Because I was the only one that answered a question in my class." She said, "Wow, my son is a genius. What was the question?" Jimmy replied, "The question was 'Who threw the trash can at the principal's head?'"



# THE TACSAÍ MAGAZINE BUMPER QUIZ

## General Knowledge Questions

1. Who sang 'Like a rhinestone cowboy'?
2. Which Gordon Ramsay TV show won the BAFTA for Best Feature at the 2005 British Academy Television Awards?
3. Who plays Tony's therapist in the Sopranos?
4. How many wisdom teeth do humans have?
5. How many Nolan sisters were there? (Bonus points for names)
6. 'The lighter way to enjoy chocolate' was an advertising slogan for which Mars product?
7. What do you call a group of flamingos?
8. How many weeks are there in a year?
9. What was Elton John's first number one song?
10. Who wrote the Famous Five book series?
11. What does 'c'est la vie' mean in English?
12. Who is third in line to the throne in England?
13. Who played Trigger in Only Fools and Horses?
14. When did the smoking ban come into force in the UK?

15. When is the Queen's official birthday?
16. In what film does Tom Cruise play business student Brian Flanagan?
17. Who was British Prime Minister before Theresa May?
18. What is Kylie Jenner's make-up company called?
19. What's the biggest city in the UK?
20. What is the smallest planet?

- ANSWERS**
1. Glen Campbell
  2. Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares
  3. Lorraine Bracco
  4. Four
  5. Five: Linda, Coleen, Maureen, Denise, Anne and Bernie
  6. Maltasers
  7. Flamboyance
  8. 52
  9. Elton John and Kiki Dee's Don't Go Breaking My Heart in an official planet)
  10. Enid Blyton
  11. 'It's life'
  12. Prince George of Cambridge
  13. Roger Lloyd Pack
  14. July, 1 2007
  15. The second Saturday of June
  16. Cocktail
  17. David Cameron
  18. Kylie Cosmetics
  19. London
  20. Mercury (Pluto is no longer an official planet)

# Taxi driver's careless driving trial collapses

Woman hit by Sinéad Roche's car in Crumlin in 2016 now has dementia and could not testify

**T**he trial of a taxi driver who hit an elderly woman who was crossing the road has collapsed after a judge ruled there was a lack of evidence to convict her of careless driving.

Dublin Circuit Criminal Court heard that Sinéad Roche (43) continued to drive after she heard a bang on her car and dropped a passenger off nearby before driving back to the scene and speaking to gardai.

The passenger told the trial that Ms Roche was driving normally before they heard the bang, but "panicked" after that.

Ms Roche, of Rutland Grove, Crumlin, Dublin, had pleaded not guilty to careless driving causing serious bodily harm to Margaret Rooney at Sundrive Road, Crumlin on December 4th, 2016. She also pleaded not guilty to three related charges – failing to offer assistance after her car was involved in causing an injury, failing to stay at the scene and failing to report to gardai.

The trial has heard that Ms Rooney, who was 77 at the time, suffered serious injuries to her head and ankle and was hospitalised. She now suffers from dementia and was not in a position to give evidence during the trial.

During legal argument in the absence of the jury, Ms Roche's counsel Philip Sheahan SC submitted to Judge Elma Sheahan that there was no evidence that his client was driving carelessly and that the charge should be withdrawn.

"The circumstances of the accident are completely unclear on the evidence, we have no idea if she was crossing the road, or indeed if she was adjacent to the footpath on the left hand side, in circumstances of darkness," he said.

'Eyes on the road'

He said there was no evidence that Ms Roche "failed to pay proper attention and failed to see someone crossing the road" and said in fact that "there is evidence that Ms Roche had her eyes on the road".

Counsel said there was "no evidence of any element of careless driving, no crossing white lines, no evidence of someone being asleep at the wheel, or on their phone, or driving while intoxicated".

Ruling on the defence application, Judge Sheahan said there was no evidence of where Ms Rooney was at the moment of impact or prior to it. She said that without more evidence of the circumstances of the collision, the court would be inviting the jury to speculate on "whether there was carelessness" on Ms Roche's part.

Judge Sheahan noted that Ms Rooney was not in a position to give evidence and nobody else was in a position to give evidence on her behalf about her position on the road. She ruled that she would direct the jury to find Ms Roche not guilty of the careless driving charge.

As a result of further legal applications it emerged that the return for trial to the circuit court was invalid and that Judge Sheahan did not have jurisdiction to make any orders in the case.

Accordingly she brought the jury back out and informed jurors that the case could no longer proceed.

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