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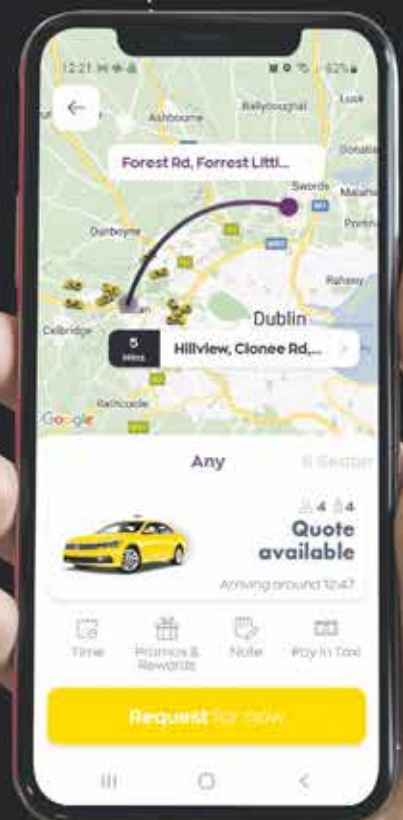
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EDITOR LETTER

Thank you for picking up the second edition of Tacsai magazine for 2023. We have a number of interesting pieces for you this time around.

A filling station has been ordered to pay a taxi driver €7,500 compensation after a staff member called him by the N word. At the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), Adjudicator, Janet Hughes found that XYZ Retail Ltd, which operates the filling station and store in Galway, is vicariously liable for the discriminatory treatment of cabbie Daniel Asari in March/April 2021.

Tony Roe, Chairperson of the National Transport Assembly Committee (NTAC)

and Spokesperson on Taxis speaks out on serious issues effecting taxi drivers.

There are plenty more stories of interest but we are always keen to get stories and articles from our readers.

Kind Regards

Tacsai Magazine

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Designer: Patrick Browne Design

Tel: 086 831 9322

Email: hello@patrickbrownedesign.com

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01. Skan Taxi centre, Tolka Valley Business Park.
02. Emo Station (*Mount Brown*), Kilmainham.
03. Discount Till Rolls
04. TTnH Offices, Santry Hall Ind. Est.
05. Fonthill Motor Factors.
06. Harbour Radiators.
07. The Kesh at Dublin Airport.
08. Fonthill Autoparts.
09. Hailo, 12 Upper Mount Street.
10. Dublin Corporate Cabs, Ballymount Ind Est.
11. Phoenix Motors, Prussia Street.
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John Hume

Continuing in the vein of celebrating the lives and achievements of Nobel Laureates from our little island we have decided on the only man in history to score the most important hat-trick in Irish history the peacekeeping hat-trick (Gandhi Peace Prize, Martin Luther King Award, co-recipient of the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize with David Trimble; John Hume. With the upcoming anniversary of the peace agreement and inexplicable return of Bertie Ahern; it seems like a timely piece.

John Hume KCSG (Order of St. Gregory the Great Ordo Sancti Gregorii Magni (Latin), born 18 January 1937 and sadly passed on 3 August 2020) was an Irish nationalist politician from Northern Ireland, widely regarded as one of the most important figures in the recent political history of Ireland, as one of the architects of the Northern Ireland peace process.

Native of Derry, he was a founding member of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), and served as its second leader from 1979 to 2001. He also served as a Member of the European Parliament, and a Member of the UK Parliament, as well as a member of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Hume was co-recipient of the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize with David Trimble, and also received both the Gandhi Peace Prize and the Martin Luther King Award. He is the only person to receive the three major peace awards.

In 2012, Pope Benedict XVI made Hume a Knight Commander of the Papal Order of St. Gregory the

Great. He was named “Ireland’s Greatest” in a 2010 public poll by Irish national broadcaster RTÉ to find the greatest person in Ireland’s history.

Early life and education He had a mostly Irish Catholic background; though his great-grandfather was a Presbyterian immigrant into County Donegal from Scotland. Hume was a student at St Columb’s College and at St Patrick’s College, Maynooth, the leading Catholic seminary in Ireland and a recognised college of the National University of Ireland, where he intended to study for the priesthood. Among his teachers was the future Tomás Cardinal Ó Fiaich, a future Primate of All Ireland.

Hume did not complete his clerical studies but did obtain an M.A. degree in French and history from the college in 1958, and then returned home to his native Derry, where he became a teacher. He was a founding member of the Credit Union movement in the city and was chair of the University for Derry Committee in 1965.

Hume became a leading figure in the civil rights movement in the late 1960s along with people such as Hugh Logue. Hume was prominent in the unsuccessful fight to have Northern Ireland’s second university established in Derry in the mid-sixties. After this campaign, John Hume went on to be a prominent figure in the Derry Citizens’ Action Committee. The DCAC was set up in the wake of 5 October march through Derry which had caused much attention to be drawn towards the situation in Northern Ireland. The purpose of the DCAC was to make use of the publicity surrounding recent events to bring to light grievances in Derry that had been suppressed by the Unionist Government for years. The DCAC, unlike Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA), was aimed specifically at a local campaign, improving the situation in Derry for everyone, and maintaining a peaceful stance. The committee also had a Stewards Association that was there to prevent any violence at marches or sit-downs.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE CREDIT UNION MOVEMENT

Hume, a founder member of Derry Credit Union, became the youngest ever President of the Irish League of Credit Unions at age 27. He served in the role from 1964 to 1968. He once said that “all the things I’ve been doing, it’s the thing I’m proudest of because no movement has done more good for the people of Ireland, north and south, than the credit union movement.”

POLITICAL CAREER

Hume became an Independent Nationalist member of the Parliament of Northern Ireland in 1969 at the height of the civil rights campaign. He was elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1973, and served as Minister of Commerce in the short-lived power-sharing Executive in 1974. He stood unsuccessfully for the Westminster Parliament for the Londonderry constituency in October 1974, and was elected for Foyle in 1983.

In October 1971 he joined four Westminster MPs in a 48-hour hunger strike to protest at the internment without trial of hundreds of suspected Irish republicans. State papers that have been released under the 30 year rule that an Irish diplomat eight years later in 1979 believed Hume supported the return of internment, however the SDLP have strenuously denied this.

In 1977, Hume challenged a regulation under the Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act (Northern Ireland) 1922 which allowed any soldier to disperse an assembly of three or more people. The Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, Lord Lowry, held that the regulation was ultra vires under Section 4 of the Government of Ireland Act 1920 which forbade the Parliament of Northern Ireland to make laws in respect of the army.

A founding member of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), he succeeded Gerry Fitt as its leader in 1979. He also served as one of Northern Ireland’s three Members of the European Parliament and served on the faculty of Boston College, from which he received an honorary degree in 1995.

Hume was directly involved in ‘secret talks’ with the British government and Sinn Féin, in an effort to bring Sinn Féin to the discussion table openly. The talks are speculated to have led directly to the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985.

The vast majority of unionists rejected the agreement and staged a massive and peaceful public rally in Belfast City Centre to demonstrate their distaste. Many Republicans and nationalists also rejected it, as they had seen it as not going far enough.[22] Hume, however, continued dialogue with both governments and Sinn Féin. The “Hume–Adams process” eventually delivered the 1994 IRA ceasefire which ultimately provided the relatively peaceful backdrop against which the Good Friday agreement was brokered.

REPUTATION

Hume is credited as being the thinker behind many political developments in Northern Ireland, from

the power-sharing Sunningdale Agreement to the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the Belfast Agreement. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1998 alongside the then-leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, David Trimble.[23]

When David Trimble became First Minister, it was expected that Hume would take the role of Deputy First Minister, being the leader of the second largest party, the SDLP. Instead, this role was handed to Séamus Mallon, also of the SDLP. Some political journalists cited a bad working relationship between Hume and Trimble, despite the two men collecting the Nobel Prize together.

On his retirement from the SDLP leadership in 2001, Hume was praised across the political divide, Hume held the Tip O’Neill Chair in Peace Studies at the University of Ulster, currently funded by The Ireland Funds.

RETIREMENT

On 4 February 2004, Hume announced his complete retirement from politics and was succeeded by Mark Durkan as SDLP leader. He did not contest the 2004 European election (when his seat was won by Bairbre de Brún of Sinn Féin), nor did he run in the 2005 general election, in which Mark Durkan retained the Foyle constituency for the SDLP.

Hume and his wife, Pat, continued to be active in promoting European integration, issues around global poverty and the Credit Union movement. He was also a supporter of the Campaign for the Establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly, an organisation which campaigns for democratic reformation of the United Nations. In retirement, he continued to speak publicly, including a visit to Seton Hall University in New Jersey in 2005, the first Summer University of Democracy of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 10–14 July 2006), and at St Thomas University, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, on 18 July 2007. A building added to the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, was named after him. Hume held the position of Club President of his local football team, Derry City F.C., which he supported all his life. He was a patron of the children’s charity Plan International Ireland.

During his final years Hume suffered from dementia, which first started displaying symptoms in the late 1990s.

DEATH

John Hume died in the early hours of 3 August 2020 at a nursing home in Derry, at the age of 83. On his death, former Labour leader and Prime Minister Tony Blair said: “John Hume was a political titan; a visionary who refused to believe the future had to be the same as the past.” The Dalai Lama said on Twitter: “John Hume’s deep conviction in the power of dialogue and negotiations to resolve conflict was unwavering... It was his leadership and his faith in the power of negotiations that enabled the 1998 Good Friday Agreement to be reached. His steady persistence set an example for us all to follow.”



ID.5 is VW's Sleek New SUV-Coupé.

With powerful electric performance and a flowing silhouette, the new VW ID.5 successfully achieves a modern association of SUV and coupé. With Over-the-Air Update capability, along with a whole host of advanced onboard tech, the ID.5 is ready to redefine electric mobility. The sole battery option in the ID.5 is a 77kWh unit that can power one of three different drivetrains. Entry spec 'Pro' features a 174hp single motor while 'Pro Performance' benefits from 204hp - sent to the rear wheels in both cases. Above them, the 'GTX' gets a second, front-mounted motor for a total of 299hp, with the added benefit of all-wheel drive capability.

Ultra-Modern Styling. The ultra-modern ID.5 benefits from smooth lines, large alloy wheels, and coast-to-coast front and rear lights, while trendy SUV-style plastic wheel arches and side skirts provide terrific visual drama. The ID.5 is underpinned by the same MEB platform as the ID.3 hatchback, but it has been extended to suit its more generous proportions – as is the case with the ID.4 too. The ID.5 shares all of its important mechanical parts with its ID.4 sibling, but its sloping coupé roofline adds a dash of sportiness to the mix.

Other exclusive ID.5 styling features include a new rear-end treatment with redesigned C-pillars, and a new boot lid incorporating a rear wing. There is no gear-lever in the ID.5 but, in a similar fashion to a BMW i3, you simply twist a large gear selector attached to the right hand side of the instrument binnacle in order to choose your direction of travel, and engage regenerative braking, while a push-button parking brake function is also present. The instrument binnacle is attached to the multi-function steering wheel so that the information display is constantly in the line of sight of the driver.



Multiple Trim Options.

There are eight trim levels available in the new ID.5 – Business, Style, Family, Tech, and

Max in rear-wheel drive guise, and GTX, GTX Business and GTX Max in all-wheel drive format, with a WLTP battery range of up to 530km available (depending on the model chosen). A terrific energy recuperation system in the ID.5 makes it easy and fuss-free to extend the range of the battery. For instance, when the driver approaches a slower moving vehicle, the ID.4 can automatically use the slowing effect of regenerative braking to align with the vehicle in front. Additionally, there is a selectable 'B' mode which increases braking effect in normal driving.

Review Car.

My review car was an ID.5 Tech 77kWh which looked super-stylish and sporty in equal measure. Producing 204hp, and a hefty 310Nm of torque, the car can complete a 0-100km/h sprint in just 8.4-seconds. Key standard features in Tech trim include an augmented reality head-up display, power seats with massage function, Easy Open electric tailgate, Trained Parking function, and a 450W Output Speaker sound system with subwoofer. As is the case with all electric cars, the ID.5 picks up speed briskly and smoothly, and cruises with the utmost of serenity, while an impressively tight turning circle is a terrific benefit when parking or negotiating narrow city streets. The ID.5's driving dynamics are helped by the low centre of gravity of its battery, and the rear-wheel drive car I tested has an ideal weight distribution between the front and rear. With its impressive body control and road manners, the ID.5 is a joy to drive, while well-weighted and precise steering

provides great driver confidence behind the wheel. Supple suspension soaks up most road imperfections with ease, but it also adequately controls body roll through bends when required.

Spacious Cabin & Boot.

The impressively spacious cabin of the ID.5 feels very well built and nicely designed. Comfortable seats, lots of useful storage cubbies, and a minimalistic design provide the cabin with a real sense of airiness. The lack of a centre tunnel in the rear provides occupants with lots of space for feet, while the comfortable rear bench seat sits higher up to offer passengers a cinematic view, with ample head and leg room on offer – despite the cars' sloping roofline. Generous boot space also comes as standard across the ID.5 range, with 549-litres available behind the rear seats, or 1,561-litres with them folded down. Under-floor storage in the boot can be used to accommodate charging cables, so that available boot space is maximised at all times. The ID.5 can be charged in 7 hours and 30 minutes from a wall box charger (0-100% charge), and in just 29 minutes (5-80% charge) at a DC fast charge station.

Verdict & Pricing.

The Volkswagen ID.5 is easy to live with, engaging to drive, practical, well-equipped, spacious and it offers a decent range too, with the option of rapid charging on longer journeys. On-the-road pricing starts at €62,695 for the 174hp Business variant, with my 204hp test car specification priced at €70,760.

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Blonde Jokes

A guy took his blonde girlfriend to her first football game. They had great seats right behind their team's bench. After the game, he asked her how she liked the experience. "Oh, I really liked it," she replied, "especially the tight pants and all the big muscles, but I just couldn't understand why they were killing each other over 25 cents." Dumbfounded, her date asked, "What do you mean?" "Well, they flipped a coin, one team got it, and then for the rest of the game, all they kept screaming was, 'Get the quarterback! Get the quarterback!' I'm like, hello? It's only 25 cents!"

There are 11 people hanging onto a rope that comes down from an airplane. 10 of them are blonde, and one is a brunette. They all decide that one person should get off because if they don't, the rope will break and everyone will die. No one can decide who should go, so finally the brunette delivers a very touching speech, ending with the words, "I'll get off." The blondes, all moved by the brunette's speech, start clapping. Problem solved.

A blonde, a redhead, and a brunette were all lost in the desert. They found a lamp and rubbed it. A genie popped out and granted them each one wish. The redhead wished to be back home. Poof! She was back home. The brunette wished to be at home with her family. Poof! She was back home with her family. The blonde said, "Awwww, I wish my friends were here."

A guy was driving in a car with a blonde. He told her to stick her head out the window and see if the blinker worked. She stuck her head out and said, "Yes, No, Yes, No, Yes..."

A blonde and a redhead have a ranch. They have just lost their bull. The women need to buy another, but only have \$500. The redhead tells the blonde, "I will go to the market and see if I can find one for under that amount. If I can, I will send you a telegram." She goes to the market and finds one for \$499. Having only one dollar left, she goes to the telegraph office and finds out that it costs one dollar per word. She is stumped on how to tell the blonde to bring the truck and trailer. Finally, she tells the telegraph operator to send the word "comfortable." Skeptical, the operator asks, "How will she know to come with the trailer from just that word?" The redhead replies, "She's a blonde so she reads slow: 'Come for ta bull.'"

There was a blonde, a redhead, and a brunette. They were all trapped on an island and the nearest shore was 50 miles away. The redhead swam trying to make it to the other shore she swam 15 miles, drowned, and died. The brunette swam 24 miles, drowned, and died. The blonde swam 25 miles. got tired. and swam back.

There was a blonde who just got sick and tired of all the blonde jokes. One evening, she went home and memorized all the state capitals. Back in the office the next day, some guy started telling a dumb blonde joke. She interrupted him with a shrill announcement, "I've had it up to here with these blonde jokes. I want you to know that this blonde went home last night and did something probably none of you could do. I memorized all the state capitals." One of the guys, of course, said, "I don't believe you. What is the capital of Nevada?" "N," she answered.





General Knowledge Questions

1. To which sport does the adjective "Halieutic" refer?
2. Which D H Lawrence novel is set in Australia?
3. What is the real name of US rapper Busta Rhymes?
4. In the TV series, who was the pilot of Thunderbird 1?
5. Which songs with "America" in the title were UK top twenty hits for the following artists, [a] Madonna (2003), [b] Idlewild (2002), [c] Green Day (2003), [d] James Brown (1986) and [e] David Bowie (1975)?
6. Who preceded Justin Welby as the Archbishop of Canterbury?
7. What is the name of the straw basket in which bottles of chianti were traditionally covered?
8. Who played Agent J in the 1997 film, "Men in Black"?
9. Formerly the New Hebrides, by what name is this Pacific state now known? Vanuatu
10. What first name is common to members of both Enid Blyton's Famous Five and Secret Seven?
11. What features in architecture are called hypostyles?
12. What was the title of Natasha Bedingfield's first UK number one?
13. Phoebe is a personification of which astronomical feature?
14. Which English monarch founded Eton

THE TACSAÍ MAGAZINE BUMPER QUIZ

College?

15. What type of cheese is produced in the Yorkshire town of Hawes?
16. In which Buckinghamshire village would you find the Roald Dahl Museum?
17. The story of Samson and Delilah features in which book of the Bible?
18. Which gland in the human body is affected by Addison's disease?
19. The Belgian beer Kriek Lambic is flavoured with which fruit?
20. Which Victorian architect designed the Houses of Parliament?

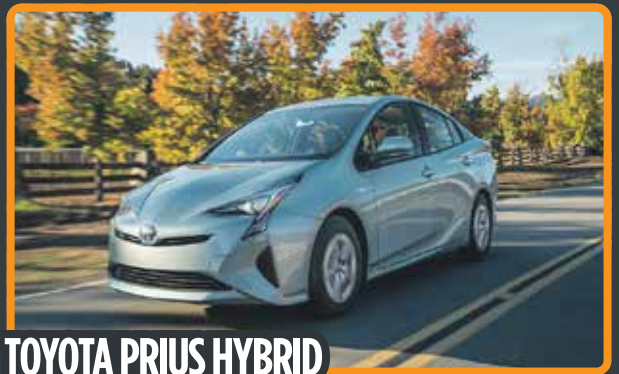
- ANSWERS
1. Angling
 2. "Kangaroo"
 3. Trevor Smith
 4. Scott Tracey
 5. [a] "American Pie", reached no 2, [b] "American English", no 15, [c] "American Idiot", no 3, [d] "Living in America", no 5 and [e] "Young Americans", no 18.
 6. Rowan Williams.
 7. Fiasco.
 8. Will Smith.
 9. Vanuatu
 10. George.
 11. Pillars supporting a roof.
 12. "These Words"
 13. The moon
 14. Henry VI.
 15. Wensleydale.
 16. Great Missenden.
 17. Judges.
 18. Adrenal.
 19. Cherry.
 20. Charles Barry

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A woman with glasses and a light-colored jacket is driving a car. She is looking forward and has her hands on the steering wheel. The interior of the car is visible.

Uber Taxi

Taxi passengers caused €600 damage in New Year fare row, court told

Their case was adjourned for victim impact evidence to be sought when they appeared in Dublin District Court.

THREE drunken taxi passengers trashed a cab on New Year's Eve, causing €600 worth of damage in a dispute over the fare, a court heard.

The driver called gardaí after the men started the argument, then got out and smashed a window and struck the door and bumper. They shouted aggressively at the investigating gardaí, who had to call for urgent assistance.

Their case was adjourned for victim impact evidence to be sought when they appeared in Dublin District Court.

Lasha Chokolashvili (31) and Davit Ergulashvili (32), both of Cabra Park, Cabra and David Chokolashvili, with an address at the Red Cow Hotel in west Dublin, all pleaded guilty to charges of criminal damage, public intoxication and threatening, abusive and insulting behaviour.

Garda Sergeant Michelle Lynch told Judge Bryan Smyth gardaí received a call for urgent assistance at an incident at St Peter's Road, Phibsborough at 10.40pm on December

31 last year.

Three men were acting in an aggressive manner, shouting at the gardaí, she said. A silver Toyota Prius taxi was at the scene with a smashed driver's window and damage to the driver's side door panelling and rear bumper.

The driver told gardaí the three had started an argument over the price of the fare and damaged his taxi. When arrested, the accused were highly intoxicated, smelled strongly of alcohol and were slurring their words. None of the three had previous convictions.

Judge Smyth queried whether the victim suffered any other losses, saying he presumed the taxi would have been off the road. A defence lawyer said the accused had compensation in court.

Judge Smyth said the victim would have to be asked if he wished to make an impact statement before he could finalise the case.

He adjourned it to a later date.

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Irish filling station must pay taxi driver €7,500 compensation after worker called him the N-word

A filling station has been ordered to pay a taxi driver €7,500 compensation after a staff member called him by the N-word now struggling to sleep, and having flashbacks of the vicious ordeal.

At the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), Adjudicator, Janet Hughes found that XYZ Retail Ltd, which operates the filling station and store in Galway, is vicariously liable for the discriminatory treatment of cabbie Daniel Asari in March/April 2021.

In her findings, Ms Hughes stated that she was satisfied Mr Asari was discriminated against on grounds of race and or colour under the Equal Status Act in the early hours of the morning of March 31st 2021 when he was ignored and denied service.

Ms Hughes also stated she was satisfied that in the early hours of the following morning Mr Asarai was subjected to racial discrimination by the now departed employee in the form of abusive language over his race and or colour.

Ms Hughes said she took into account “the pattern of humiliating treatment of Mr Asari by the former employee compounded by the employer’s response to Ms Asari’s complaint”.

As part of the order, Ms Hughes has directed that the firm - which operates a number of retail outlets - amends its staff policies to include specific references to forms of discrimination under the Equal Status Act.

In evidence, Ms Asari told the WRC that on March 31st 2021, he went to get fuel for his car.

When he put the nozzle into his diesel tank, the same employee was looking at him but did not activate the pump.

Ms Asari waited about 30 minutes and was embarrassed because others who came in were served, but he had to get fuel from another taxi driver instead.

Mr Asari said that before that night, he had no previous dealings with that particular employee.

He said he was then denied service in the early hours of April 1st 2021 for a second time at the fuel station by the same employee.

Mr Asari described the employee as becoming angry, saying that he would meet him in court.

Mr Asari alleged that the employee started name calling using the “N” word.

The employee said that he was going to call the Gardaí, but Mr Asari was the one who rang them.

Mr Asari said that they came and took details and told him they were not in a position to make a decision, that he should get a lawyer.

In his formal complaint lodged with the WRC, Mr Asari wrote: “I believe that from my first interaction with the cashier, and subsequently the supervisor, that because of my race including my colour and accent, and despite my fluency in English, I was treated differently than I would have been had I been a native Irish customer.

“I was left humiliated and was forced to seek out the help of a colleague to assist me by bringing me enough diesel so that I could go to a different garage to fill my tank.

“The staff member treated me with obvious contempt, using a crude and prejudicial racist slur when speaking to me. They threatened to call the Gardai, insinuating that I had done something illegal, when I was merely seeking a service; a service which I believe would not have been denied to me were I native Irish customer.

“I believe that if I had been a native Irish customer, I would have received a follow up call from senior management.”

At the WRC, the retail outlet and petrol station stated that Mr Asari was a valued customer and that they would take a dim view of any incident of the kind described.

It claimed the matter on the second night was investigated, and the employee was interviewed and reprimanded by way of a warning and at the end of his probation he was let go in June 2021.

The firm stated that it was their understanding that the incident was about sandwich at the deli and the employee asked Mr Asarai to leave.

If there was an incident, the firm wanted to apologise for what had happened.

In clarification to Ms Hughes, the firm stated that the former employee was reprimanded for failing to provide a service to Ms Asari, and his description of what occurred related to an insistence on receiving a sandwich from the deli which was closed.

DARREN O'ROURKE TD

SPOKESPERSON ON TRANSPORT

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Sinn Féin





In conversation with Kieran Harte - General Manager Uber Ireland

Uber

How was Uber Ireland's 2022?

Last year was really significant for Uber in Ireland. We've grown significantly in Dublin and have launched in Limerick, Cork and Galway, and made the app available for taxi drivers everywhere across the country.

Why the change of strategy?

We have been working globally on building our taxi product for drivers. We now have Uber Taxi in major markets like Paris, New York, San Francisco, Brussels and across the UK to name a few. Globally, we are aiming to have every taxi in the world on the app by 2025. Our world class engineering teams are heavily invested in creating the best user experience for drivers and we think we can provide a safe and reliable place

for drivers to connect with more passengers and boost their earnings.

From an Irish perspective, 2022 saw our most significant investment into the market. We rolled out branded taxi campaigns which are generating great demand from local riders, all of which benefits local drivers.

Why are more Irish taxi drivers choosing to work with Uber?

I generally hear the same things from drivers both old and new to the industry. Safety and reliability is key. Drivers appreciate that Uber is cashless, which means payment is guaranteed with every trip on the app (no runners, no credit card chargebacks) and gets paid into driver accounts at the



same time every week.

Uber also provides such a big passenger base. More than 90 million people have the Uber app on their phone around the world, and all these passengers have verified mobile, email and credit card details. I think this is why drivers tend to say that Uber passengers are more easy to deal with. In Ireland we have the benefit of so many international passengers who are opening the Uber app as soon as they arrive.

Uber also has an extremely competitive service fee amongst the apps and has regular incentives for drivers to earn more at busy times. Also, being cashless means that drivers don't waste time at the end of every trip facilitating payments. This can really add up if you are doing tens of trips a week.

How does Uber's driver support compare?

During covid when our office was shut, we invested in our driver phone line and in-app support channels so drivers wouldn't need to come into the office. This means that drivers can now get onboarded and contact support from anywhere in the country at any time. There's no need to make a booking to get started. We're extremely proud of the 400 staff we have in Limerick who do a great job of supporting drivers in Ireland and further across Europe.

What are your plans for 2023

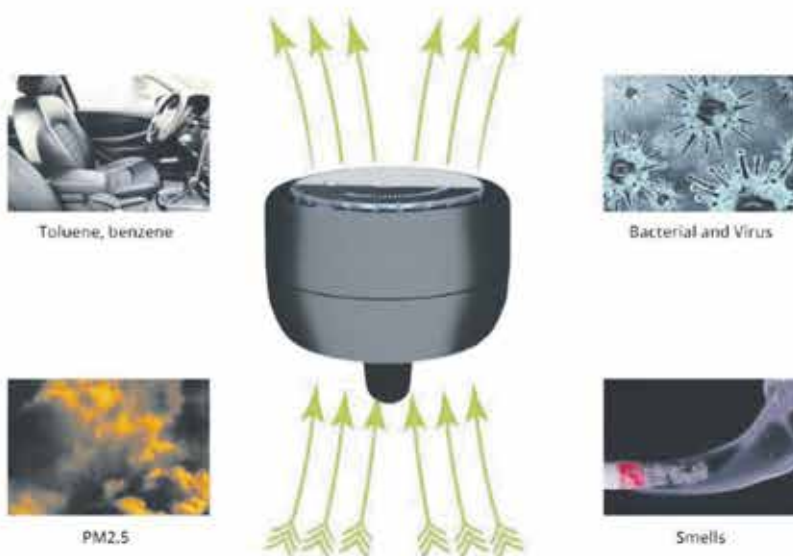
We are really excited about bringing taxi drivers from every city and town across the country onto the app to meet the demand of our growing passenger base across Ireland.

How do new drivers find out more?

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About Ireland taxi Tours is a new business built on the great foundation of About Cork Taxi Tours for well over 10 years we have been the number 1 Taxi tour operator in Cork on TripAdvisor, in the Last year we moved from being a regional business to a national business with 11 driver hubs already in place Bantry Belfast Cork Dublin Donegal Galway Limerick Kilkenny Kerry Sligo & Waterford and more to open over the next year. This year has started well for us with several tour days already completed by drivers around Ireland and bookings are coming in for all our locations around the country. While we have a great team the indications are that we will need more drivers not just in several of our driver hubs but in

many more locations around the country

What people want from a tour depends on what they enjoy doing asking a few simple questions at the start of a day will determine not only how they enjoy the day but how they perceive you and builds a trust in you from the very start, which is one of the most important things you need between you and your clients as a driver guide

Over the next few months we will be partnering with a number of local authorities and local tourism groups to work with local taxi drivers to promote taxi tours in their locality to visitors & guests. This process has already starting and we are currently working with one local authority and tourism groups in the area on a tour guide for drivers in their area.



About Ireland Taxi Tours operate tours and intercity transfers all across Ireland and we are now actively recruiting new team members.

What are we looking for in a driver?

Drivers who know the places that visitors want to visit in their area and can tell the stories and history of their locality.

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DRIVER REQUIREMENTS

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Judge jails ‘monster and predator’ for sexually abusing three young girls in 1980s

Former taxi driver and former Shannodoc driver, Fintan (Vinny) Ryan of Clooney, Quin had sexually abused the three young girls, said judge.

A judge has jailed a 61-year-old ‘monster and predator’ for eight years and 10 months for the sexual abuse of three young girls in the 1980s.

At Ennis Circuit Court, Judge Francis Comerford said that former taxi driver and former Shannodoc driver, Fintan (Vinny) Ryan of Clooney, Quin had sexually abused the three young girls “for his own sexual gratification”.

Imposing the eight years and 10 month prison sentence for the indecent assault on the three girls at locations in Clare between 1983 and 1989, Judge Comerford said that “huge damage was done by Mr Ryan to each of his victims”.

Judge Comerford said that Mr Ryan’s offences were “attacks on children”.

Two of the complainants, sisters-in-law of Mr Ryan, Angela Patalano and Geraldine Finnegan said that they had no relationship with their own parents after first reporting Mr Ryan’s offences to gardaí in 2014.

All three complainants each waived their right

to anonymity in order that Mr Ryan be named and the third complainant is Ms Patalano’s and Ms Finnegan’s cousin, Maeve Behan, now aged 47.

A married father of two grown up children, Fintan Ryan has not been named before now and has been on remand in custody since last November when a jury at Ennis Circuit Court found him guilty of 34 counts of indecent assault.

Younger sister

Seven of the offences concern the indecent assault of Ms Finnegan, 23 counts relate to her younger sister, Angela Patalano and the remaining four counts relate to Ms Behan.

In her victim impact statement, Angela Patalano described Mr Ryan as “a monster and a predator”.

Ms Patalano read out her victim impact statement in court and stated that “the abuse I suffered as a 12-year-old child has deeply impacted by life”.

She said: “I have had no relationship with

both my parents and some of my siblings since 2014 solely because of him. They stopped speaking to me after I reported the crime to the Garda in 2014.

Ms Patalano said: "My father passed away in 2018 without ever speaking to me again. This still breaks my heart. I only ever wanted to protect my nieces and keep them safe from him (Fintan Ryan).

She said: "The hurt and pain that he has caused our whole family is unforgivable. He has completely divided our family. The emotional trauma that he has put me through has sometimes been unbearable.

She added: "I feel immense relief since he was found guilty and taken into custody. I can now move forward with my life without all the silence and secrets. My nieces are safe and that is all I never wanted."

In her victim impact statement, Geraldine Finnegan told the court that she has "suffered and paid a high price" for reporting Mr Ryan's offences.

She said: "I have suffered unimaginable betrayal, hurt, pain and grief."

She said that she was "disowned by my parents after reporting to the Gardai in 2014; unable to attend my father's funeral; some of my siblings no longer engage with me since I reported to the Gardai; laughed at publicly on the streets of Ennis and my son never got to know his grand-parents."

Ms Finnegan said that "finding out that my sister was also impacted hit me like a bolt of lightning. This actually nearly broke me. I blamed myself. I thought this was all my fault. If I had spoken up all those years ago, maybe this hell would not have happened to another family member. My sister does not blame me. There is nothing I can do about the past now - this is a cross I have to carry and still carry."

Ms Finnegan said that "the hell of abuse never goes away". She said: "It is hell on earth."

On her decision to report Mr Ryan's offences, Ms Finnegan said that "other people had to be protected. This had to stop and it was time for me, the now adult, to stand up to do the right thing, protect others and also protect the young girl, me, who has suffered so much."

In her statement, Maeve Behan said: "Secrets protect paedophiles like Fintan Ryan and he doesn't deserve protection. He is a vile human being who intentionally harms children.

Children need to be protected from him.

Recalling the sexual abuse perpetrated on her by Mr Ryan when she was 13, Mr Behan said: "Fintan Ryan literally ruined my life and every dream that I ever had and he continues to do so. What he inflicted upon me affected every cell in my body and I will never heal."

She said: "The little abused girl will always live with me. Fintan Ryan is the monster lurking under my bed."

Ms Behan told the court that she first learned of Mr Ryan's other sex abuse victims when she went to her uncle's funeral in 2018 and saw that her cousins and the deceased man's daughters, Angela and Geraldine weren't there.

Ms Behan said that she went into shock after Angela explained she and Geraldine had suffered abuse at the hands of Fintan Ryan.

Ms Behan said: "I was shaking in disbelief. I couldn't believe that he had done it to others before me."

In his sentencing, Judge Comerford said that he was "given a sheaf of letters and testimonials on behalf of Mr Ryan".

He said: "I'm not sure if any great weight should be placed on them if they are just handed in and the victims don't hear the contents."

He said: "I did read them and they are really an indication that Mr Ryan has had the benefit of strong family support and has also provided some family support to other brothers and sisters and the children of brothers and sisters and has that strong family life."

Judge Comerford remarked that "that is precisely what he deprived his victims of and took away from them".

The court was told that Mr Ryan - who has no previous convictions - has suffered a heart attack while on remand in custody last month and required four days hospitalisation where he required stents to be inserted.

Judge Comerford said that in discussion with the Probation Service Mr Ryan "has made extremely limited admissions of wrongdoing that don't bear any real relation to the extent of the offences that he has been convicted of". He said: "That is not a good sign with regard to rehabilitation and future conduct."

Judge Comerford said that Mr Ryan "doesn't accept the vast majority of what was found by the jury but that he doesn't intend to appeal".

Judge Comerford backdated the jail sentence to November.

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Taxi driver speaks out after being choked unconscious during attack

Eddie was choked until he became unconscious and robbed in East Belfast last weekend, and is now struggling to sleep, and having flashbacks of the vicious ordeal.

A taxi driver who was brutally attacked on a late evening shift has spoken of the horror he felt during and after the incident.

With 25 years of experience, working within the taxi industry, 'Eddie', which is not his real name, speaks with pride about his career.

Eddie was choked until he became unconscious and robbed in East Belfast last weekend, and is now struggling to sleep, and having flashbacks of the vicious ordeal.

Speaking to Belfast Live, Eddie, who is part of the FonaCAB team, described how a normal shift turned into a nightmare.

"I have been driving for FonaCAB coming up four years now," he said.

"But I first started as a taxi driver in the 90s, so I would be a 25 year veteran. I love the job, that's why I have been doing it for so long. But

after the attack, things have changed for me. "We are out there, we know how difficult it is to get a taxi - we are doing our very best to provide a service. That is what I was doing on the night of the incident. I answered the call and went to collect the guy.

"He was standing outside the address, which would be fairly normal. He got in the car and I confirmed the address for it. He said he wanted to stop round the corner, and he got out and knocked on the door of a house. He then tried to kick it in.

Eddie added: "At that point I thought, I need to be away from this but the door was open and as I tried to move away, he got back in. I said to him 'this journey is over' and I pulled the car to a stop.

"He lunged from the back seat, grabbed the dash-cam and pulled it from the windscreen. He then put me in a choke hold and choked

me until unconsciousness. He was choking me from behind my seat. The head rest stopped me from going anywhere.

“He kept telling me he wanted me dead. That I was going to die. I blacked out and when I came back round, he was still choking me. I don’t know where the fight came from, but I managed to get out of his grip and get out of the car.

“While I was out, trying to get my breath back, he very boldly got in through the driver’s door and took my wallet, my float and every loose piece of paper he could get his hands on.”

Eddie had picked up the man in the Heatherbell Street area shortly after 2.50am.

The vehicle came to a stop in the Clara Street area, and that is when Eddie was attacked and robbed.

The passenger made off in the direction of the Castlereagh Road.

He told Belfast Live that he was able to alert people in nearby properties that he was in danger by repeatedly hitting his car horn.

He also hit the FonaCAB panic button, which saw the team in contact with Eddie eight seconds after the button was pressed, and with the police 10 seconds after the incident was reported.

“Police brought me home because they wanted my clothes for forensics,” Eddie added. “I haven’t been back to work and it has been tough. This is always in the back of my mind now. I can’t sleep. We didn’t leave our house for days.

“FonaCAB has been absolutely brilliant. Right away, I had dispatchers on to me asking what help I needed, what they could do for me. The next day, the driver manager phoned me and asked me how I was. He was great. He said anything that FonaCAB could do, it would be done.

“They offered me financial and legal help. They offered me counselling support too and other medical support. Since then, I have been in contact with someone from FonaCAB every single day. One particular driver has been brilliant and has checked in on me constantly.

“As a driver, if you got in my car and were in bother, I would help. Genuinely. If you didn’t have the fare and you needed to get home, I would take you home and worry about the

money after, or not worry about it at all, as long as you got home safely.

“That is what this job is about. I am a human being, and I try to be good to the people around me because I would like to think that if it was my child getting in a taxi, the driver would be good to them.”

In a statement issued following the attack, a spokesperson for FonaCAB said: “We are aware of the reported incident involving one of our drivers. We have been in regular contact with him and have provided assistance in whatever areas he requires. We will continue to provide support in whatever form necessary for as long as it is needed.

“We hold the safety of all of our drivers and passengers in the highest regard and do everything we can to both mitigate risk, but to also deal with any incidents should they occur. While drivers who work the more anti-social hours may be more likely to encounter behaviour such as drunkenness and minor anti-social behaviour, thankfully serious incidents such as this are very rare.”

FonaCAB says regardless of infrequency, it has systems and policies in place to assist drivers should they occur.

Court hears taxi driver choked unconscious by a customer who robbed him in east Belfast

Belfast Magistrates’ Court heard police called to the scene discovered the driver with visible neck injuries and bleeding from his face and nose

A taxi driver was choked unconscious and had clumps of his hair pulled out by a customer who robbed him in east Belfast, a court has heard.

The passenger repeatedly declared he was going to kill the victim before seizing £700 in takings and personal belongings from his car.

Details emerged as Jamie Love (22) was remanded in custody accused of carrying out the attack at Clara Street in the early hours of February 12.

Love, of Airport Road in the city, faces charges of robbery, attempted choking with intent, criminal damage, assault occasioning actual bodily harm and making threats to kill.

Belfast Magistrates’ Court heard police called to the scene discovered the driver with visible neck injuries and bleeding from his face and nose.



A detective said: “He also had hair pulled from his head, clumps of it were found in the passenger seat of his taxi.

“The victim was extremely upset, stating that he had been choked until he passed out.”

“He stated that approximately £700 in cash, as well as his wallet and sentimental items were stolen from inside his taxi.”

The driver had collected a man from Heatherbell Street following a telephone booking and took him to another address where he got out and banged on the property until the residents shouted out ‘he’s not here Jamie”.

The passenger, who police claim was the defendant, returned to the taxi. The driver pulled over on Clara Street after challenging him about how he planned to pay for the journey.

Love then allegedly lunged forward, pulled the dash camera from the front of the vehicle and grabbed the victim with both arms around his neck.

“He held him, choking him against the head rest until he momentarily lost consciousness,” the detective said.

“When he came round he was still being strangled, but managed to remove the seatbelt and slid out of the taxi onto Clara Street.

“While the attack was being carried out the defendant was continually telling the victim he was going to kill him.”

The passenger climbed into the front of the taxi and seized a tub containing □700 in takings, five bank cards and items of sentimental value. As local residents responded to the driver’s

cries for help, the defendant allegedly made a further threat to kill him before fleeing.

Love is linked to the attack by a telephone number attributed to him which was used to make several taxi bookings in the preceding days, the court heard.

He was also named in a witness statement, with further information provided by another member of the public.

Clothing recovered from his mother’s house matched CCTV evidence and descriptions given of the robber.

Love was arrested and charged after he voluntarily attended a PSNI station on Wednesday.

During interviews he provided no comment to all questions.

Opposing bail, the detective said: “This was a sustained, violent and completely unprovoked attack on a taxi driver trying to carry out his job.

“The nature of choking the driver from behind would suggest a mindset to assault the victim whilst not in a position to defend himself.”

Defence solicitor Ciaran Maguire argued that no-one has named his client as the alleged perpetrator.

“There is no dispute that what the victim has said is correct, it’s a serious case and this man was assaulted,” he said.

“The question is the identity of the person who did that, and none of the witnesses said that was Jamie Love, a person known to them.” Refusing bail, however, District Judge Anne Marshall cited concerns about potential further offences.

Love was remanded in custody.



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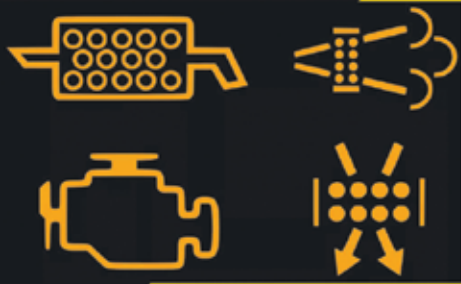
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CHINA

Cabs Without a Chatty ?Or Any ?Driver Are Expanding in China
Baidu is adding more driverless ride-hailing in major cities, and the journeys are reassuringly drama-free.

Across a sprawl of streets in southern Beijing, China's answer to search engine giant Google is charting the path for driverless cars in the world's biggest electric vehicle market.

Baidu Inc.'s Apollo program, which allows customers to hail and ride a fully autonomous robotaxi, has racked up more than 1.4 million public journeys, and is expanding a network that already covers dozens of square miles across 10 key cities that also include Wuhan and Chongqing. By next year, the company wants to have the largest autonomous service area in the world an ambitious target considering it needs to compete with General Motors Co.'s fast-expanding robotaxi unit Cruise and California-based Waymo. Baidu is also being challenged in China by competitors like WeRide and Pony.ai.

The pace of development is on display at a company showroom in Yizhuang district, where an early autonomous model—a boxy red compact 4x4—rigged with steel beams to hold a camera and lidar sensors—contrasts with a sleek, white SUV that's slated to launch next year. Nearby, a room out of Willy Wonka's factory is wallpapered from floor to ceiling with QR codes that are used to train and test vehicle systems and equipment.

While the technology behind the cars is thrilling, taking a ride in one across Beijing is surprisingly standard. Using Baidu's white-and-green app to book a ride on a recent afternoon had a driverless cab arrive within minutes, and the fare, which included a promotional discount, was low: 4 yuan (65 cents) for a 10-minute journey.

The company's robotaxi fleet uses the mass-produced Arcfox model aT—that's souped up with an array of sensors. The vehicle follows the speed limit diligently, merges early in traffic and turns smoothly on the broad, mostly empty avenues surrounding its facility. When a cyclist abruptly darts from a sidewalk, the robotaxi taps the brakes until he's well across.

Because Baidu is currently using regular models designed for a human motorist, riding in the back does offer the unnerving vision of a steering wheel turning as if being spun by a ghost.

Monitors in the rear cabin add to effect, displaying the same images the car interprets—pedestrians, vehicles, bicycles, buses and trains all rendered into figures that look more like Monopoly game pieces. Another 10-minute ride across town is similarly smooth, quiet and drama-free.

For China's operators, however, there is a potential hurdle ahead. In October, the US imposed tighter controls on exports of some chips and chipmaking equipment to the nation to stop it from developing capabilities that could become a military threat, such as supercomputers and artificial intelligence.

That could impact the autonomous driving industry, which trains its artificial intelligence on cloud platforms that rely on the advanced chips impacted by the controls, said Bao Linghao, an analyst with Trivium China Ltd. If Chinese companies have their computing power limited, that could eventually hamper efforts by Baidu and local rivals to keep pace with Alphabet Inc.'s Waymo, which already leads in terms of vehicle miles tested. "Over the long term, it's going to be a big problem," Bao said. "If China's AI computing power is being capped, that would put Chinese AI companies at a disadvantage at a starting line."

Baidu, which has nearly triple the road test miles of its key domestic competitors, sees a limited immediate effect. Ultimately, the firm expects China's auto sector to become less reliant on imports.

"For the part of our businesses that need advanced chips, we have already stock enough in hand actually to support our business in the near-term," Robin Li, Baidu's president, said during an earnings call last month.

For the time being, Baidu—which is increasingly shifting its focus to artificial intelligence and autonomous vehicles after its core advertising revenue shrank—sees robotaxis as the best near-term opportunity. It's preparing to ramp up production of the Apollo lineup, and has won contracts with cities like Guangzhou to build digital infrastructure for city streets. Investors can also expect to see "meaningful revenue contributions" from Baidu's auto solutions businesses, which mainly involves selling driving-assistance software, starting in 2024, Li said.

AUSTRALIA

Taxi drivers threaten Australian Open boycott. A cohort of taxi



drivers have threatened to boycott the Australian Open amid claims of extreme price gouging and long queues.

Enforcement officers have been deployed to reign in a bad batch believed to be charging up to \$100 up front.

In a sign the bad blood is boiling over, a message has been sent in a taxi driver message group advocating for a boycott. "Bro we have 319 team members in the group," the message began. "Let's start from here. Please do not go (to) the tennis. It will make (an) impact.". One taxi driver replied: "Let's do it but all 319 have to promise". Another posed the question "boycott the tennis?" which was acknowledged by some with thumbs up replies.

The state government is skeptical about the move. "If a small number choose not to work that is a matter for them," Public Transport Minister Ben Carroll said. "It's absolutely important that people can get home safely, whether that's at the Australian Open (or) right across Victoria," Liberal MP Jess Wilson said.

Some drivers have already avoided the tennis as they are sick of waiting in line. Countless tennis spectators have reported being charged excessive amounts for a ride home. The public transport minister said there was another option for spectators. "We also encourage people to use public transport," Carroll said.

UK

DON'T CHANCE IT!? Liverpool Council warns PHV drivers of plying-for-hire after driver found guilty. Liverpool City Council (LCC) Licensing officers warned private hire vehicle (PHV) drivers to not chance it?when it comes to the temptation of plying-for-hire.

Enforcement officers reported a Sefton licensed PHV driver

for plying-for-hire and in turn having no insurance. The driver was found guilty on Thursday 9 March after attending Wirral Magistrates Court.

The driver was handed a £695 bill covering fines and costs, plus eight penalty points to their drivers licence.

A LCC Licensing spokesperson said via social media: Sefton PHV driver summonsed by Liverpool Licensing Authority for plying for hire and no insurance was found guilty after trial yesterday at Wirral Magistrates Court. £695 fines/costs and 8 penalty points on DVLA licence. Don't chance it - it's not worth the risk!

CANADA

Taxi drivers glued to every minute of \$215M lawsuit against city. Drivers watching live on their phones, breaking down testimony in WhatsApp groups

At travel hubs, hotels and malls across the city, taxi drivers waiting for fares are watching and breaking down the long-awaited industry lawsuit against the City of Ottawa.

The \$215 million lawsuit alleges the city did not take reasonable steps to protect taxi plate owners when it approved Uber as its first ride-hailing company to legally operate in September 2016.

Plates, issued by the city, are required to drive a cab. Their numbers are limited, so plate owners planned their retirement on the idea they could sell them for a considerable sum. That changed after Uber entered the market.

Now, more than six years after the parent company of Capital Taxi filed the lawsuit, the case is finally being heard.

Four weeks into the case that's expected to last at least seven weeks, taxi drivers are tuning into the court proceedings on Zoom, dropping into the actual courtroom when they have time



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See www.taxifair.ie for further details or call the team on 01 485 1996

Exact dates and locations to be confirmed in advance of our visit in late April 2023

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