

FREE MAGAZINE JUNE - JULY 2017

TACSAÍ

IRELAND'S ONLY FREE INDEPENDENT TACSAÍ MAGAZINE FOR DRIVERS & INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

FREE

ENTRY

- TO THE -

EUROMILLIONS DRAW

Dublin Bus did it. Maybe we can too!

SEE INSIDE PAGE 5

PLUS INSIDE...

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EDITORIAL

There was some good news last month as Dublin City Council opted to allow taxis use the bus and tram corridor at the proposed and controversial College Green site.

The proposals, which would see the area pedestrianised, was originally only to include buses and the Luas, however a rethink has given drivers in the capital a big boost, although some were not too pleased to say the least.

RTÉ presenter and environmentalist Duncan Stewart has slammed the move saying “once you let them (taxis) in you won’t get them out” in a heated meeting at Dublin City Council offices on Wood Quay. Stewart has opposed the decision on environmental grounds. Needless to say, Tacsai has some answers for him on pages 7 & 8.

New figures were force fed to the media again recently with the NTA releasing driver complaints numbers to great fanfare and prime time Radio One interviews. While the figures are important, of course, we here at Tacsai would like to see the NTA be a little more objective in future though and we have some proposals for them on pages 12 & 13.

MyTaxi have come out of their Hailo shell in a flurry of bus stop ads and billboards. You may have noticed?

The German company incorporated

Hailo this year and have had a rough start, with customers filling up the company’s Twitter page with everything from puzzled questions to insults. That is not the problem however for their drivers – or indeed, the industry as a whole – as Daimler, who own MyTaxi, have plans to introduce driverless cabs in the not too distant future... Blade Runner here we come.

Fellow app giants Uber have found that the Irish market is not one for bending to their will. After years of endless lobbying to the Department of Transport and the NTA it seems the head of their Irish operation is feeling the pressure. You know what they say; if you can’t stand the heat get out of the kitchen. Read all about what’s cooking in Limerick on page 38.

Meanwhile, Taxi Watch’s Derek Devoy spoke candidly in an interview with Tacsai a few weeks ago. The Kilkenny man who has helped save over 100 lives in this country opens up about his battle with depression, his own close encounter with suicide and his plans to tackle mental health in Ireland at an earlier age as Taxi Watch gear up to begin a tour of over 100 Irish schools.

We have all that, and a whole lot more in this month’s Tacsai Magazine. Enjoy. Safe travels.

Stephen Young
Editor

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ENTRY
- TO THE -
EUROMILLIONS DRAW
SEE PAGE 5

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Tacsai Magazine is stocked in each taxi firm in Dublin, Cork, Galway and Limerick. Most ranks have “Rank Reps” who have a stock of magazines. Additionally, the magazine is available in the following locations:

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.
12. South Dublin Autos.
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14. Go Service Station, Kylemore Road.
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SPSV TAXI TRAINING GOING STRONG IN ITS 25TH YEAR

We hear from Ron Duffy

Tacsáí recently caught up with Ron Duffy to hear about the new SPSV training, and the recent changes that have happened in that sector.

He said: "We are Dublin's only quality approved Taxi Training Group and have trained for over twenty years for the Carriage Office Test. Now that it has passed on to new a type of test, we have had to move on with the times and have brought our training programme completely up to date over the last five years.

"What this means is any person who may be thinking of becoming a Taxi Driver or Chauffeur Driver; you will need to do this test and pass it first before you can drive any small public or private vehicle.

"The present failure rate for this test is 95% over all for first

time applicants. We are lucky to have such a good quality training programme and we have kept up to date each month to help people pass this test.

"Our pass rate is 90% for first timers and to back it up we offer a free day mid-week to anyone who has done our course and failed. The extra day must be taken within one month of test they failed. T&Cs apply.

"Our training takes place every two weeks on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. We open at 9am and start 9.30am to 3.30pm each day in The Grand Canal Hotel, in Grand Canal St Upper Dublin 4. (Day Regulations and day two Area Knowledge) study pack and maps are included in these courses, parking is available on each day at a very special rate.

"We also run a one-day special intensive course once a month on Saturday mid month this one day special runs from 9am to 6.30/7pm this day course includes lunch and parking for the day and a study pack and maps, please call the telephone numbers below for free help and information if you intend to enter the SPSV Business, jobs are available,

"And for people who are long term unemployed please contact their Local Employment Services in your area who may be able to help fund you with their approval this is up to their decision not ours, please ask them to contact Ron at 086 608 7478. Our success has been achieved by a combination of factors, in providing you with the necessary skills and knowledge.

**For the latest dates available to book contact
085 767 9651 or 01 662 3333, ask for Ron or Paul.**

FREE ENTRY - TO THE - EUROMILLIONS DRAW

Whistle Taxi App have an enticing new offer for drivers.

In the last issue we talked about the idea of taxi drivers having their own booking app. Well, Whistle Taxi App is making things a little bit more enticing for you to join in... There is now a free entry into a Euromillions draw.

John Boyle said: "We are going to do 5 lines for 4 weeks. Try to get in touch before it's too late. Only the drivers who text in prior to a winning line will share in the jackpot."

"Who is paying for this? Your other taxi driver friends are. They believe in the idea of us having our own app. We are trying to get you in by offering this free entry into the Euromillions. Don't be left out of this Euromillions draw and don't be left out of being a part of our own app."

John added: "When you text into Whistle Taxi App, you will get monthly updates about us having our own app. We have held some meetings with drivers. You may have missed some of them."

You can still meet the managing director of the co-op, He is the same guy who came up with this idea which we at the *Tacsaí Magazine* think is fantastic.

The photos of the tickets will be posted on the Facebook page, "The Taxi Drivers of Dublin"

You know what they say, 'if you're not in you can't win!'

Meanwhile in other news, the taxi app co-op will be seeking advice from the taxi regulator.

John Boyle, Managing Director, argues it is contrary to the PSV regulations not to display the booking fee on ALL "bookings", even if that booking is an "E booking".

"If there is a discount of €2 at the end of the job, the customer must be informed that the booking fee exists in the first place, but it is not being charged. You may be breaking PSV laws by



HOW TO ENTER

You must have Viber or Whats App. Simply send your PSV ID number, for example G1222 to 085 159 1320.

Needless to say incorrect PSV numbers will not be treated as valid entries.

not displaying the €2 booking fee. It is incorrect of us to make the public believe otherwise. As you know, standards in cars are rising. You need the booking fee to save and upgrade your car. This is a business you are running not just a job. A business needs funds in the bank for all eventualities, agreed?"

"Furthermore, the NTA allow for a 5% handling fee on all card bookings. Some App companies are letting the customers away with that for free and getting you to pay for it. Our App will charge customers this 5% fee. This fee is not applicable to cash jobs. Feedback from drivers is, customers on credit card bookings rarely tip, avoid the 5% fee, do not pay the €2 booking fee and leave you 12% short on your total for your trouble. No way. Not going to happen under our watch lads."

"In some cases the App operators charge a €2 booking fee, but cheat the driver and keep it for themselves. I would like to call that a form of theft or robbery," John Boyle states.

CAB:APP

THE MONEY- SAVING APP FOR DRIVERS



Cab:app have a proud history of putting the driver first. Offering terms that are more favourable towards cabbies, cab:app is keen to reward drivers, seeing the driver as their customer and offering ZERO per cent commission.

This driver-first approach is refreshing, and we spoke to cab:app to hear how it works.

“Cab:app have come up with new approach of zero commission on all driver promoted work.

How this works is very simple, cab:app encourage drivers to promote themselves by simply giving all customers a cab:app customer card, and all fares generated to include pre-booked fares over cab:app passenger are at zero percent commission, no 12% or weekly fee. **Driver promo codes can be found in app by opening the menu.**

“If any corporate companies were to use the cab:app passenger as their choice of booking facility well that work/fares would be recycled back to a driver at 5% percent commission, still way cheaper than any current app or dispatch.

“Cab:app believe that this concept is more favourable towards the driver and can make huge savings in their weekly income up to anything from 300 euro to 500 euro a month if not more.

“We look at drivers as being all the same we don’t ask a driver to put a cab:app sign over their cars and you will receive more or better work, and you pay the company anything up to 12% for that privilege.”

Cab:app’s credit card facilities have been voted number one with drivers that use the cab:app facility on the Dublin Taxi Drivers Facebook page. Payment is virtually next day, five days a week and customers pay a transaction fee of 3.9% plus the cab:app cashback for drivers. This means that everytime a driver processes a card payment, they receive cashback of typically about 5c. This is just a little saving plan for drivers that they can redeem at end of the year, so

if a driver purchases one of our chip-&-pin devices, it goes towards your initial outlay

Cab:app added: “These taxi or app companies have lost sight of the main ingredient the driver, the service provider the one that daily picks up the passengers that gives the discount can’t charge pick-up-charge – all these changes to charges add up to a loss to the driver.

“The taxi industry has agreed between their trade organisations and the NTA charges on a fare card of what a driver can and cannot charge, and then taxi companies tell you, you can’t... Why have the agreement in the first place?

“Become part of Cabapp – a refreshing new time for drivers.”

Cab:app is also now a partner of MasterCard.

MasterCard are the proud sponsors of the UEFA Champions League and through promotion from partners cab:app, John Godfrey was the recent winner of two tickets to the Champions League final between Real Madrid and Juventus at the National Stadium of Wales. John also received a two night stay at a Four Star hotel and €250 of MasterCard spending money for the final.

For more info on cab:app go to their Twitter page www.twitter.com/cabapp





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cab:app **DRIVER**



DUNCAN STEWART BLASTS NEW TAXI PLANS AT COLLEGE GREEN

“There’s no need for them in that space, I think once you let them in it’s hard to get them out.”



Environmentalist Duncan Stewart has said that taxis have been given too much freedom in Dublin city centre.

The astonishing blast from the RTÉ presenter comes as news that taxis will be allowed to use the bus and tram corridor at College Green.

The news – which has been greeted by the taxi industry along with local business operators and no doubt by the vast majority of the Irish public too – has angered one man.

Stewart said: “You know taxis are not a sustainable form of transport, and we have to recognise that. And we’ve given too much freedom to taxis in the city centre. I’m not trying to say no to taxis, I’m not knocking taxis, they have a service to provide and they are important, but they shouldn’t be in this area. There’s no need for them in that space.”

Addressing Stewart’s concerns at a public meeting at the DCC offices on Wood Quay, Brendan O’Brien of the DCC’s traffic department said the “valuable” service provided by taxis must be considered.

“What we’ve said about the taxis on the Luas is that we would allow taxis on but we would examine it to see if it’s actually feasible,” he said.

“This space is used at different times for different purposes. Taxis in the city centre, while you could argue there are too many taxis, you can’t argue about the fact that they provide a valuable social service to people getting home and also to people’s general safety. So you can’t just ignore them.

“We could have to look to see if they would need to be restricted, whether it’s restricted during the day or permanently,” he added.

In response, Stewart said that taxis should absolutely be allowed nearby but that allowing them actually at College Green itself was unnecessary. He also wasn’t in favour of the idea of restricting them only to certain times of the day.

“Really there’s no need for them in that space, I think once you let them in it’s hard to get them out,” he added.

Last February the council appointed Dixon Jones and Paul Keogh Architects to design the plaza. Its plans published last month show a tree-lined granite paved space with a central water feature of 32 water jets or “mini fountains” which can be switched off to facilitate major public gatherings and “processional events” such as the St Patrick’s Day parade.

While pedestrians will have free reign through the space, cyclists will have a designated two-way cycle track next to the footpath on the southside – the opposite side of the road from the Bank of Ireland building.

As part of the design there will be a new “turning circle” for buses in front of the plaza at the junction of Foster Place. Buses heading towards the plaza on Dame Street will have to use this turning circle to return west on Dame Street.

Taxi ranks currently in the College Green area will be moved to adjacent streets. There will be two-way traffic routes for taxis, buses and the new Luas Cross City running in a north-south direction in front of Trinity College.

The existing trees will be removed from the plaza and 22 new trees will be planted. The Henry Grattan and Thomas Davis monuments will be restored and retained but the Thomas Davis monument will be relocated slightly



further west of its current position into the centre of the bus turning circle.

Cash-in-transit vans will still have access to Foster Place to facilitate Bank of Ireland, and the bank will also retain use its car park which faces College Green. However, Brendan O’Brien of the council’s traffic department said the council is negotiating with the bank to limit the hours of access to the car park.

The council has decided to drop previous plans to turn Parliament Street into a two-way street for buses and to reverse the direction of traffic on Church Lane, St Andrew’s Street and Trinity Street. It also plans a new right turn for buses from Dame Street into George’s Street.

The council had intended to pursue the scheme under its own “in-house” planning process and expected to have the traffic changes in place by June, ahead of the beginning of operations of the Luas Cross City line in September.

However, a public consultation process in recent months revealed significant opposition to the proposals from several prominent business interests in the city.

Following consultants’ advice, the council decided the plans needed the approval of An Bord Pleanála.

What we here at Tacsáí find odd about Stewart’s comments is this; how is it that taxis – many of whom in the fleet are now Hybrids or electric cars – are more poisonous to the environment than a bus? A bus, it seems is acceptable to this man while a taxi is not. Buses are subject to standards checks akin to an NCT but do not have to adhere to a Vehicle Age Limit. You can drive around Dublin today and see buses as old as 2002 or 2003. The emissions from a vehicle that old would surely anger those green of heart. So why direct all your anger at taxis? And let’s not forget the extra fuel usage and emissions that would splay into the atmosphere should drivers have had to make their way around a closed-off College Green, taking the long way to get to wherever they would go...

Let Tacsáí know your thoughts on Mr Stewart’s comments by emailing the Editor at stephenyong399@hotmail.com. We will publish a selection of your comments in our next edition.



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LET'S SEE SOME FAIRNESS COME “FIGURES TIME”



***We look at constant finger-pointing
from the NTA and suggest some
balance to the reporting***

If you're ever in need of some facts or figures I know some people who know some people that could help you out...

Whisper it quietly on the ranks; the NTA have some new stats for us. So let me sum them up.

Taxi drivers bad. Public says so.

The National Transport Authority say the behaviour of taxi drivers was the largest reason for complaints about the sector last year.

Of a total 998 complaints received in 2016 almost half, or 444, had to do with taxi driver behaviour.

The figures are published in the latest NTA document Taxi Statistics for Ireland.

The next largest category of complaints after conduct, at 348, was overcharging and matters relating to fares while there were 172 complaints around hiring and booking difficulties and 32 about the condition and cleanliness of taxis.

In 2014 the NTA introduced a nationwide complaints process for taxis, hackneys, limousines and dispatch operator services nationwide.

At the end of December 2016 there were 20,804 active taxi licences in Ireland. This includes taxis, hackney cars, wheelchair accessible taxis, wheelchair accessible hackney cars, local area hackney cars, and limousines. The figure is down 24 per cent from a high of 27,429 in 2008.

Last year there were 15,961 regular taxis in Ireland, 1,838 regular hackney cars, and 1,741 limousines. On top of which there were 1,185 wheelchair accessible taxis and 69 wheelchair accessible hackney cars.

According to the report 80 per cent of taxis in Ireland are more than five years old while 88 per cent of taxi drivers are over 40 years of age.

Some 3,266 regular taxis are over 10 years old, with just 1,585 under three years old.

The report shows the extent of the decline in the number of active taxi drivers. Last year there were 26,420 taxi driver licences in Ireland, of which 54 per cent in Dublin. This is a 44 per cent decline from the peak of 47,529 taxi driver licences recorded in 2009.

By age group, 32 per cent of taxi drivers are between 50 and 59 years of age, with 27 per cent in the 40 to 49-years of age group. According to the report 23 per cent of drivers are aged between 60 and 69 with just 11 per cent aged between 30 to 39.

Only 1 per cent of taxi drivers are aged between 20 and 29.

The NTA said its compliance officers carried out 90,000 checks on drivers and their vehicles in 2016, a three-fold increase on 2015.

In 12,012 cases more detailed face-to-face audits took place, which led to 1,099 fixed penalty notices being issued.

The number of wheelchair accessible vehicles has increased in recent years, to 1,254, from 916 in 2013, due to grants enabling operators buy such vehicles.

Now, while these figures are at best moderately interesting, what I as a journalist find interesting is the idea of these types of figures in reverse. What with that insane notion of being objective and hearing both sides of the story and everything. And let's say that



not such a crazy idea - that the Authority governing the taxi industry occasionally publish figures in regard to offenses carried out by the public on taxi men and women, or the complaints that drivers have?

Crazy right? I know...

We're not too long down the road from the spate of attacks last year that meant we were so stuck for space that we wedged all the news of violent incidents onto two pages when it easily could have been four, and that was at a squeeze. Attacks are still happening, of course, and for the record; the vast majority happen when a customer attacks a driver.

I've spoken to female taxi drivers, who have told me of their fears and insecurities behind the wheel, their apprehension when taking fares late at night, or working in certain areas of the city.

Where are the NTA figures on how many women drivers have had a complaint to make against a customer? You won't find them. Now, they'll say something like - and let me guess here - "that's a matter for the Gardaí if there has been some kind of incident". Ok, but what if we're talking about something like rude customers, or vomiters? Not exactly a crime, but damned if it's not going to ruin your day.

So who does the NTA serve?

They're as quick as Wyatt Earp when there's a warning or fine to hand out. They're as slow as hell to answer queries when we call up and I'm sure it's the very same for you. They seem to be heavy on the attack and slow to defend.

The taxi industry comes under their umbrella, it's on their watch. And yes they should look out for the safety and satisfaction of customers, but surely drivers could expect the same - a little consideration thrown their way from time to time?

In an era of insurance putting some out of business, rickshaws scouring the streets and trying to cross Dublin city centre something like playing the Crystal Maze, consider this NTA...

The next time a report is published, it might be worth your while taking some time to look into what drivers have to say. You know, the workers operating under your mast. How about the media be given a percentage of drivers who have suffered racial insults, or how many have had to clean vomit off the back seat? (That'll be a high number) Exactly how many drivers have been victim of an attack? The new figures from the NTA should be welcomed, but let's have a little balance here. Fair is fair.



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THE UNFORTUNATE TRUTH ABOUT MY TAXI

APP GIANT HAS SHOCK IN LINE FOR DRIVERS

Their complaints are up, we know that. The two euro pick up charge is gone, dead and buried, and that's not coming back, we're pretty damn sure of that.

Now Hailo is My Taxi. Brand new, ads glued on billboards everywhere, it's hard to pass five bus stops without seeing one of their "New Brand, It'll Be Grand" slogans.

So, will it?

My Taxi is the German taxi app that has taken over the Hailo brand here. The company suits say it will look to offer packages to drivers including better deals on their insurance, petrol and car costs as it looks to grow the Irish business.

However, the good news in the medium term for 10,000 Irish My Taxi drivers may have a sting in the tail.

Car giant Daimler, which owns My Taxi, plans to replace taxi drivers with driverless cars.

Daimler is teaming up with German engineering firm Robert Bosch to develop driverless taxis in the US and Germany within six years, according to reports. Last week, Daimler's chairman, Manfred Bischoff, told shareholders that the company needed to adjust to "fundamental changes" that are imminent in the global automotive market.

Daimler - the owner of Mercedes Benz - has acquired a raft of taxi app companies in recent years in the belief that driverless travel will come to dominate a quarter of the market within the next 10 years. It purchased My Taxi in 2014.

Daimler spent over €7bn on research and development last year, with the company one of many automakers to have entered the taxi market in recent years. General Motors has invested more than €450m in US group Lyft, while Volkswagen has taken a stake of around €280m in the Israeli-made Gett.

My Taxi says nearly all of its 10,000 Irish drivers have migrated over to the new service from Hailo already.

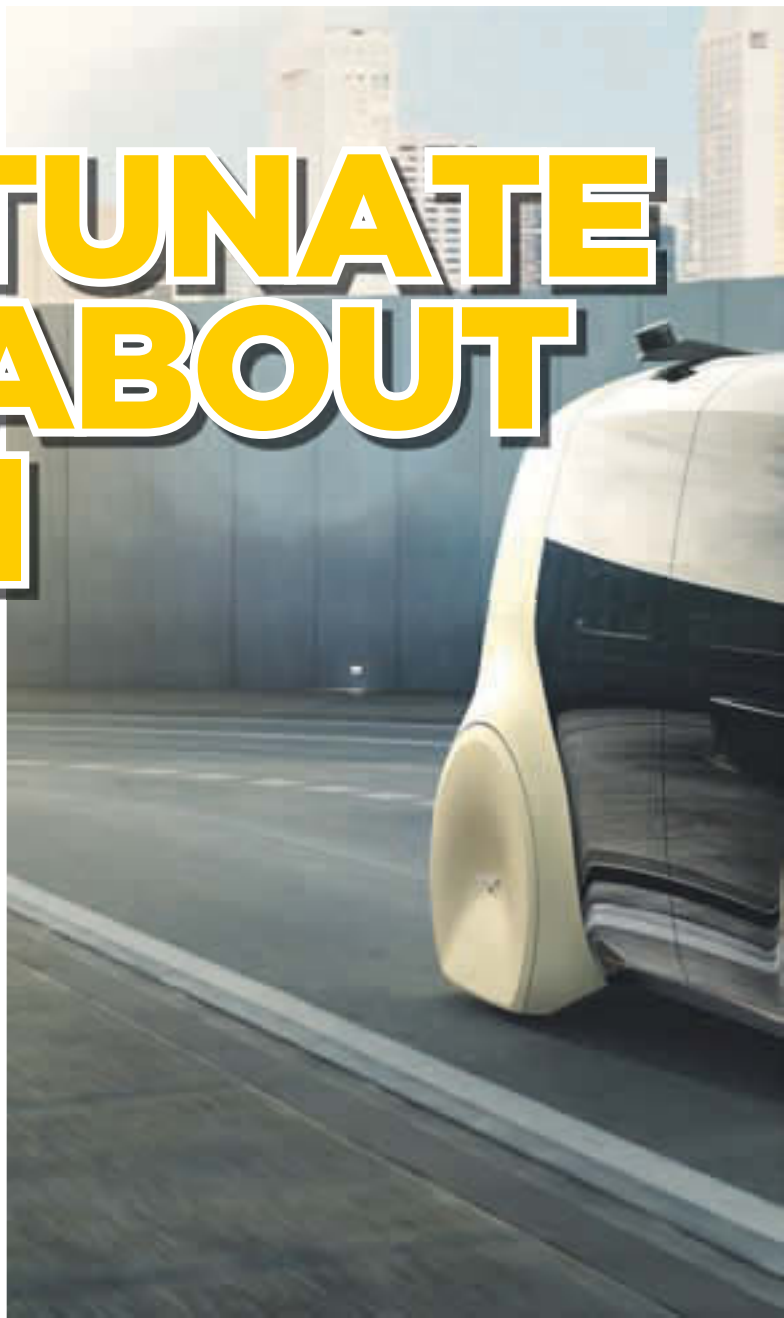
Around half of the 850,000 registered Hailo users have so far signed up to the new service. My Taxi said it will intensify its customer conversion push over the coming weeks.

My Taxi's chief marketing officer Gary Bramall told the Irish Independent that the company was looking at innovative new ways to make drivers' lives easier in the near term.

"Drivers have got specific overheads such as petrol, car and insurance-all of these things. What we are looking at the moment is to build packages that provide better deals on those costs," Bramall said.

A specialist in disruptive technology, Bramall - who previously worked at Apple, Skype and Microsoft - believes the amount of data the company has at its disposal will allow it to offer a "surgically" tailored service to its customers and drivers.

In a thinly-veiled swipe at its main competitor Lynk, Bramall said that it went against the company's ethos to charge drivers a fixed price to use the service. "You shouldn't have to pay €200 or €300 a month to use a bit of technology. We





believe if drivers don't work then we don't get any money. Our model is more flexible," Bramall added.

While Hailo has been the dominant force in the Irish market since it was launched in Ireland back in 2012, the company has come up against a formidable rival in recent years in the form of Lynk.

Founded in 2015, Lynk is led by the well-respected Noel Ebbs, a veteran of the taxi business who has acquired a sizeable number of cab firms in recent years that now operate under the Lynk umbrella. His firm has gone from strength-to-strength in the past two years, with a major expansion in the UK and the US following a successful €25m funding round.

The two companies are the undisputed market leaders in the book-a-ride space in Ireland, operating a much larger market share than the globally-vaunted Uber.

Bramall admits the decision to rebrand such a well-known app was a difficult decision.

"Hailo had become a verb here in Ireland. So it was the

biggest challenge we had from a rebrand perspective," he said.

"So it wasn't an easy decision, but we are now part of a bigger play. When you look at the footprint now, you can see that we can scale much quicker and we have a lot more resources to be able to do things and to win the hearts and minds of drivers and customers," he said.

The rebranding from Hailo to My Taxi began last month and follows the merger of the two firms which was overseen by Daimler. As part of the deal, Daimler is to invest hundreds of millions of euro across Europe as the merged company bids to compete in an increasingly fast-paced market.

While the future of the taxi business remains unclear, My Taxi is forging ahead with plans for the present.

Next on the agenda is to get the remaining 400,000 or so Irish Hailo customers to use the new app. While short-term solutions for drivers are likely to be welcomed, the inexorable rise of technology makes the future a lot more uncertain.

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CALL OUT TO DRIVERS TO GET INVOLVED IN SPECIAL CHILDREN'S DAY OUT

It's that time of year again folks... The Dublin Taxidriver's Special Children's Day Out is only around the corner and the organisers need drivers. Set for September 12th, the Day Out crew is gearing up to make this year's event the best one yet!

All the great sponsors are back on board and new drivers have signed up - but more are needed.

We spoke to Paul Matthews.

Paul said: "As usual we'll gather at Parnell Square, there'll be speeches and special guests. At midday we'll move in convoy - led by the Garda Band - to Leopardstown.

"We really want to get the message out there to ALL drivers that we want them involved. We're slowly breaking down the myth that this event is a closed shop. It isn't. And we want drivers who have never participated before to get in touch.

"Any driver that signs up will be designated pick-up locations as near to their own homes as possible. The pick-ups will be from hospitals, care homes and family homes... Come 4pm, when the event is over, the drivers will return the kids to their pick-up locations.

"If there are any drivers out there who have children themselves with special needs, or know of any child with special needs that's not involved, please let us know and where possible we'll accommodate them."

It really is a great day, for both the kids and the drivers. It's a rewarding day. And if anyone reading this has a child not already involved, and would like to get them involved, then contact Paul via the Day Out's Facebook page.

As with previous years, it really is important to get the word out to drivers that the Dublin Taxidriver's Special Children's Day Out needs you.

The event is not a closed shop, and it is also not just restricted to drivers born in Ireland either. Tacsai Magazine and the Dublin Taxidriver's Special Children's Day Out organisation hope that drivers of all nationalities feel they can get involved this year.

It's a hugely rewarding experience and a day that means an awful lot to a lot of kids.

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You can also contact us here at Tacsai Magazine for more details.



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FAIR FARES ON THE WAY FROM FETCH

Fetch, Ireland's largest on-demand delivery service provider is within weeks of launching its "Fetch Fares" app in direct competition with MyTaxi and other taxi hailing apps on the market.



Currently taking the capital by storm the concept of Fetch is simple. The firm offers to collect or deliver anything, for anybody, at anytime around Dublin city. It's a unique, low cost, express delivery service that works through an app downloaded on smartphone or tablet. Users post up collection or delivery job requests up on the app using their smartphones and locally situated "Go Getters" (independent vetted drivers) then complete these jobs and perform them for an agreed price.

The company, founded in August 2016 is the brainchild of entrepreneur James Redmond who along with friends Ben Gogan and Aidan O'Kelly spotted a gap in the market – the need for a low-cost delivery service in Dublin. These tasks are performed by people who have the use of a lorry, van, car or bike and are willing to work on a job-by-job basis earning quick instant cash.

Launched in Dublin in January 2017 Fetch has been an instant success with over 500 jobs completed so far for both businesses and personal users, with numbers increasing ten-fold every month since inception.

Regular jobs include deliveries of McDonalds and KFC for a family takeaway night, beer and cigarettes to parties, collection and delivery of furniture bought on Done Deal, breakfast rolls after a heavy night out and building supplies on behalf of a large building provider. Fetch have even delivered on behalf of a well known Dublin courier company who couldn't fulfil orders for their own clients on a very busy Friday.

"Our biggest customer is arguably Mattress Mick and prior to using Fetch for his deliveries he could only offer 2 to 3 days lead time on his products to customers now Fetch has enabled him to offer same day delivery," enthuses Redmond who went on to say that Fetch drivers also provide a welcome back-up to Mattress Mick's existing delivery service helping out during busy periods.

Shoppers using Fetch can get same day collection and delivery from anywhere including IKEA, Woodies and Homestore & More instead of waiting days and this instant on-demand capability is driving the phenomenal growth the company is currently experiencing.

A recent on-line video promoting the company recently had over 100,000 views on social media with numbers still climbing as of the time of writing. Redmond predicts that Fetch is about to go viral in the coming months and is confident that over a million people in Ireland will be using the Fetch app by the end of 2018.

But the story doesn't end there. Fetch believe that they can now disrupt current the status quo in the taxi market by offering to generate free fares for all taxi drivers through the Fetch Fare smartphone app.

Having read the April-May issue of *Tascaí Magazine* where John Boyle highlighted the need for a new taxi app, the team at Fetch team put their thinking caps on and rapidly came up with the "Fetch Fares" concept, which is an extension to main Fetch app. Redmond takes up the story – "John Boyle's article really resonated with me. I had an idea that our Fetch technology could be customised to create a new taxi-hailing app. I also believed that this app could be and should be free for all users both taxi drivers and passengers."

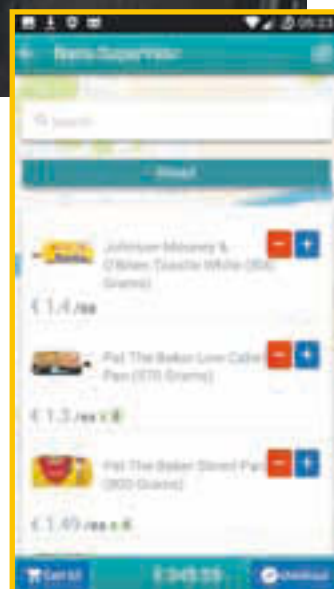
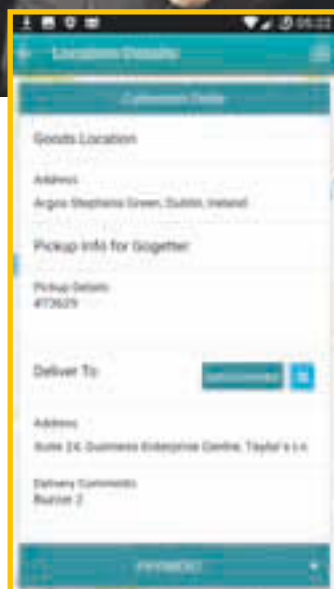
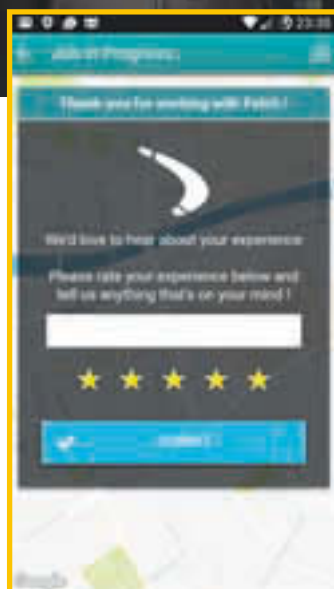
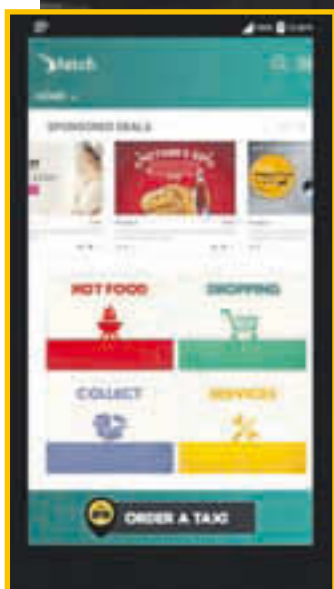
Redmond continued – "I was acutely aware of the ever-rising increases in operating costs that all taxi drivers continually face; insurance, fuel, MyTaxi (Hailo) charges and other weekly rental charges for having fares generated for them etc and I started looking at how I could address some of these charges and possible ways to get them reduced or eliminated altogether. I couldn't really do anything on insurance or fuel costs, but I believe I could eliminate the need to pay exorbitant commissions to MyTaxi, Lynk or any other firm that currently charge taxi drivers for generating fares. This type of model will now give taxi drivers back their full fares – they way it was before MyTaxi, Lynk and all those other companies came on the scene."

Asked how this Fetch Fare smartphone app would work, App Developer Ben Gogan elaborated in detail.

"A passenger needs a taxi and so presses the Fetch-A-Taxi button on their smartphone selecting their preferred payment method. The address then flashes up on screen of all local taxi drivers that are on the Fetch App taxi portal. The available driver who wants that fare then presses the accept button and travels to the stated address to take the fare. Fetch just acts as a centralised marketplace facilitating the fare and does not charge the taxi driver or the passenger for providing these fares."

In a recent interview the Fetch team repeatedly highlighted the fact that Fetch will provide this service to taxi drivers in Ireland for free. To become

From left: James Redmond,
Ben Gogan, Tom Bennett,
Aidan O'Kelly



part of the Fetch taxi drivers roster, drivers just simply download the Fetch Fares drivers app on their smartphone and fill in some basic contact details on-line (for security purposes) There is no contract between Fetch and taxi drivers and no obligation on drivers to take these fares, but the company hope that common sense will prevail in that a free fare generator app will not only succeed but thrive in both Dublin and eventually the rest of Ireland.

"It's entirely up to taxi drivers whose co-operation and support will hopefully help make Fetch fares a success and to eventually drive business away from MyTaxi who openly exploit their dominant position in the Irish marketplace by charging drivers ever increasing percentages for generating fares," claimed Redmond, who believes that taxi drivers will embrace the new app and use people-power to seize back control of their own earning power.

All that the Fetch team request from taxi drivers in return is that they allow two stickers to be posted on the back of their headrests on cars. This will promote the Fetch brand and in turn generate even more fares for drivers.

Another welcome by-product of the link up with taxi drivers is that some in turn may choose to sign up and become Fetch "Go Getters" taking on small collection and delivery jobs at times when they are idle or at off-peak periods during the day. This could provide an additional revenue stream for taxi drivers if they accept jobs and will receive the agreed payment to their bank accounts within 24 hours for all completed jobs.

"Many of Dublin's taxi drivers currently do ad-hoc collections and deliveries of parcels/letters around the city for solicitors etc and we at Fetch intend on using our app to allow small firms across the capital to get immediate access

to a fleet of vehicles to perform collection and delivery services efficiently and cheaply." Such work will supplement taxi drivers' income if they choose to be "Go Getters" in their spare time and this will be a lucrative sideline in addition to their primary source of income. Again, this works on the principal that all requested collection and delivery jobs appear on the Fetch app as they happen in real time and available drivers can choose to accept these jobs and see the price payable for completing each job. The price paid for jobs is then transferred into the taxi driver's bank account.

"Fetch Fares" is going to be a real game changer for taxi drivers. In the very near future all of Dublin's taxi drivers will have the option – continue to keep paying through the nose for MyTaxi, Lynk etc or start using the Fetch Fare app and get your fares for free and I think I know which option will be the no-brainer for thousands of Dublin's drivers," joked Redmond.

Coupled with the fact that taxi drivers could achieve significant additional income from becoming "go getters", *Tacsaí Magazine* see this as one of the single most important developments for the PSV industry in Ireland in many years.

Asked when this service will come on stream for taxi drivers, the response was "in weeks rather than months" and that the Fetch Fare element of the main Fetch smartphone app was currently under construction and undergoing testing. To get a flavour for what the guys at Fetch are doing in the marketplace you can download the Fetch app now on the app store and check out the website www.gogetfetch.com

We at *Tacsaí* await this real game changer with eager anticipation!

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CONSTRUCTION WORKER CAUGHT RUNNING UNLAWFUL TAXI SERVICE

Plus Mayo man fined for operating without an SPSV license

A construction worker has been ordered to make a donation of €200 to a children's hospital after he was caught running an unlawful taxi service.

Robert Gronczewski (31), with an address at Monastery Lawns, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, pleaded guilty at Dublin District Court to two counts of breaching the Taxi Regulation Act on October last. He was prosecuted following a joint investigation involving Gardaí and the National Transport Authority. Judge John Brennan was told.

NTA compliance officer Anthony Carey told the court that the investigation came after he observed an advert on a website. On the evening of October 7th last, he and an undercover garda were collected by Gronczewski at the Naas Road in Dublin. They were taken to Terminal 1 at Dublin Airport.

Mr Carey asked how much he owed and Gronczewski told him the charge was €25 which was handed over. Mr Carey identified himself and cautioned the driver who did not have a small public service vehicle (PSV) licence.

The accused told him, "I just put the ad, I don't know how to explain". Mr Carey agreed Gronczewski was co-operative and had no prior criminal convictions.

In pleas for leniency, the defence said the accused did not know the law. The court heard he is from Poland but working in Dublin in construction. However, he is sending money back to Poland to help his mother-in-law who is recovering from a seriousness illness. Judge Brennan noted the defenant was a hard-working man who was taking the case seriously. He said he would apply the Probation Act, sparing him a criminal record, if he donated €200 to Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin and paid €200 in costs.

The case was adjourned until a date in June with the judge warning that he would impose €500 in fines and a higher costs order if Gronczewski did not comply.

Meanwhile, a former taxi driver who was operating without a Small Public Service Vehicle (SPSV) licence appeared before Clarendmorris District Court, sitting in Castlebar.

The court heard that Mr Seamus Barnicle, with an address at 40 Luí na Gréine, Clarendmorris, had admitted he no longer had the proper licence after compliance officer Patrick J Durcan took his taxi on October 14, 2016.

Maurice Dockrell, prosecuting counsel for the National Transport Authority, told the court that Mr Durcan and another officer had ordered the taxi while at the McWilliam Park Hotel in Clarendmorris.

He told Judge Devins he gave Mr Barnicle's mobile number to the receptionist and when he arrived asked him to take a fare to Balla. There was no disc or proper SPSV licence on display and Mr Barnicle confirmed the fare was €20.

When they arrived in Balla they produced their warrants and he admitted he did not have the proper licence.

"He said he previously had been a registered driver but he had been assaulted in 2013," Mr Dockrell said.

Taking the stand, Mr Durcan said: "On the evening in question I was investigating complaints about unlicensed drivers in the Clarendmorris area."

He told Judge Mary Devins that he knew Mr Barnicle's mobile number because he had been registered previously.

Defending solicitor, Seamus O'Brien said his client was a 64-year-old separated man with four adult children.

"He was the subject of a significant assault in the course of his work late one night. He instructed me that he had taken the call [made by Mr Durcan] on the night in question because of financial difficulties," Mr O'Brien said.

Judge Devins was told that the cost of a SPSV licence was €250. She convicted and fined Mr Barnicle €200 and ordered him to pay costs of another €200.



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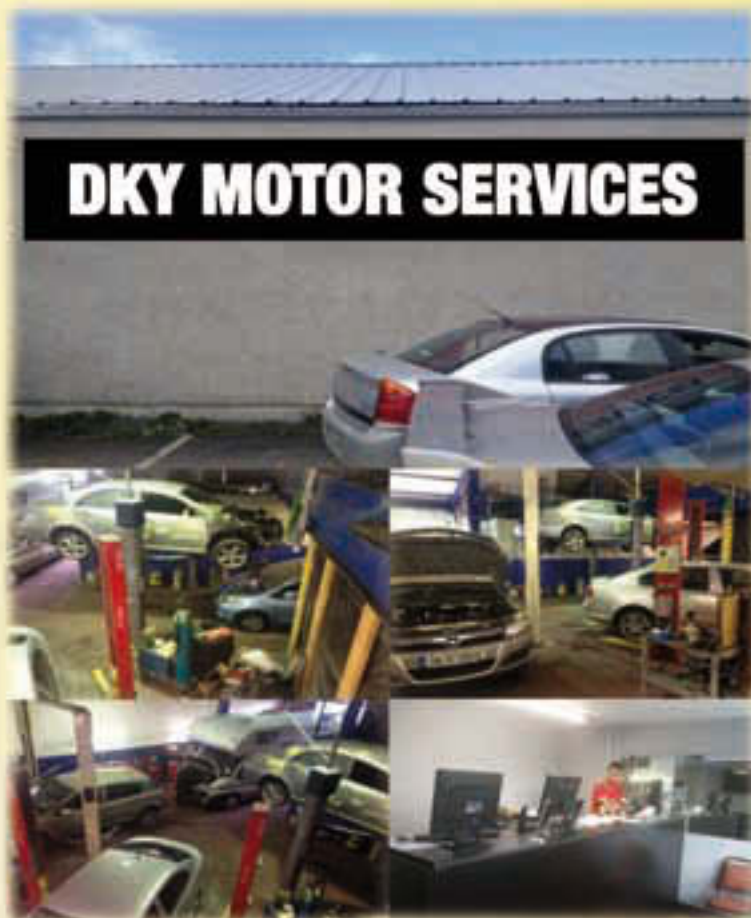
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"With regard to the Prius, it's what's known as a homogenised car, so it's only built in factories in Japan no matter where you buy them. So part for part they're identical and insurance companies have reflected that in their low prices.

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mouth from other drivers is the biggest factor. We find that taxi drivers are trading in their dirty, old diesels for Prius'. The diesel is good on fuel, of course, but it comes at a cost as well because you have certain auxiliaries of a car that run with a diesel engine that are troublesome like the EGR valves, the Diesel Particulate Filters and Turbos. You don't have any of that with a Prius. You can cut that right out of your cost base when you're running a taxi business. That's the beauty of it."

"Another advantageous aspect of the Japanese Prius in general is that Japanese cars are registered mid-way to late in the year, allowing taxi drivers to drive deep into the tenth year of its date of birth."

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Philip added: "We're keen to do business with the taxi trade. If drivers have trade-ins we're more than happy to take them in. We also have a comprehensive warranty for the drivers".

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FOSTER PLACE RESISTANCE

GERARD FARRELLY CALLS ON DRIVERS TO MAKE A STAND

This month TTnH have highlighted the enormous disruption that the ending of the Foster Place rank will cause.

We spoke to Alan Brennan, who said: "Take someone like Gerard Farrelly, who has been operating at the Foster Place Stand for 23 years. Gerard has said over 80 taxis in a 24 hour cycle use the stand.

"The current proposal will see the stand close."

"And Gerard has said drivers will resist this measure. Gerard is calling on operators to stand tall on this issue."

On the Fare Review, Alan added: "The fare review of 2017 saw drivers offered a 3% rise on taxi fares. This is due to increased insurance costs. This has been widely rejected by operators citing the cost of meter resealing as the biggest issue. It is worth

noting meter programmes installed in early 2015 have an expiry in late 2019.

"New speed limits came into effect 30/5/2017 and we would ask all operators to make themselves familiar with these new limits to avoid penalty points, fines and increased insurance costs. We are also aware of camera speeding systems becoming operational in the port tunnel.

"Also, Insurance remains a huge issue for taxi operators. The government report does little to address spiralling premiums and encourage competition into the taxi market. We will be holding an open meeting in the Red Cow Moran hotel on Saturday June 24th at 11.30 am and we would ask drivers to attend.

The following letter is a copy of the letter sent by TTnH to the DCC earlier this year.

T.T.N.H. SUBMISSION DOCUMENT IN RESPONSE TO DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL'S TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES 2016.

18/01/2017

We wish to lodge our objection to DCC's and the NTA's current proposals for traffic management measures 2016 for taxis. It is imperative that taxi drivers continue to offer services allowing carriage, both east to west and west to east from Dame St to Westmoreland St and vice versa. This access is essential to taxi drivers to reduce costs for the customer, and to allow the taxi sector service the hundreds of customers availing of bars, hotels and restaurants in the general area, without taking circuitous routes. The current proposal will severely limit taxi drivers and restrict their business practice.

We also object to the removal of the Taxi Stand at foster place. A number of prime city centre taxi stands have been removed to facilitate other public

transport service providers. This stand has provided a service in this area for decades and should not be removed. This stand provides a valuable service and discourages anti-social behaviour. A recent survey conducted by stakeholders at Foster Place college green taxi stand has shown that almost 60 per cent of carriage was west to east. Hotel customers in the area affected will see a lowering of service levels, particularly in accessing transport terminals. We strongly object to the industry and customers being subjected to extra costs, longer taxi journeys and loss of earnings as customers travelling from the South Georges St area and travelling to the north side of the city will have to travel as far as Winetavern Street to access Ormond quay upper.

We are also deeply concerned at the precedent this restriction may cause long term to taxi drivers regarding access to the city centre.

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UBER LOBBYING IS FALLING ON DEAF EARS IN IRELAND



KIERAN HARTE – “IT’S A BIT EMBARRASSING FOR ME, AS HEAD OF UBER IN IRELAND”

We may be as soft as wet bread on the bankers and the developers, but the Irish have given controversial app giant Uber the dreaded silent treatment. And there's more bad news for the San Franciscan schemers...

Uber have been dealt a body blow to their private car booking plans in Europe. In mid-May the company's plans hit a massive roadblock when a key advisor to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) said that Uber should be dealt with as a transportation company – rather than a mere intermediary.

The company has made no secret of its big plans for Ireland and last year made a sizable investment in the country when it opened its first 'centre of excellence' outside the US in Limerick.

The company already had a presence in Ireland and has both lobbied Irish politicians and filed submissions with the National Transport Authority (NTA) to argue how it can benefit the country's transport system.

At the launch of its new Limerick office last year, the company said it would wait until after the general election to reignite “meaningful” talks with the government, but little headway has been made since.

According to Uber Ireland boss Kieran Harte, there has been “limited conversation” with the NTA and a meeting with Transport Minister Shane Ross – who referred the company back to the NTA.

Harte said the company has made four submissions to the NTA that focus on how Uber can improve transport in Ireland, however the firm is yet to receive a written response.

The NTA confirmed this was the case when contacted, however it has previously advised other ridesharing companies that their operations would be in breach of Irish laws.

“The challenge for us is we don't understand what the challenge is for the solutions we are suggesting,” Harte said.

“We're not really getting a sense of why this is not moving in Ireland at all. We consider ourselves a tech country and a place for tech companies to do business, but it's a bit embarrassing for me, as head of Uber in Ireland, that a lot of international business and travellers arrive on these shores and they can't get a cheap affordable ride in an UberX.”

Harte added that the firm is also yet to receive an official response from the NTA about its plans to run a ridesharing pilot in Limerick – which has been backed by the city's council – to test the service's viability in Ireland.

Despite what Harte has described as positive feedback from current and former ministers for transport, the government has taken a very different stance in the public arena.

Last year, Ireland weighed in on the row between Uber and a Spanish taxi association that has gone to the ECJ. The Republic sided with those arguing Uber's business model should be classified as a transport service, like any regulated taxi-booking provider.

“We were certainly surprised by Ireland's involvement in that,” Harte said. “It's fair to say we haven't had a clear response to why that was or where it actually came from.”

“We would have thought it was contrary to Enda Kenny getting behind the European single digital market.”



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FROM DARKNESS INTO LIGHT



***DEREK DEVOY'S
INSPIRING JOURNEY
FROM EIGHT MONTHS IN
BED TO SAVING LIVES IN
KILKENNY***

There's a welcome revolution taking place in modern Ireland. One of the most desperately needed changes to society we've ever had. The tight lid has been loosened on the jar of mental illness, a jar that had been kept sealed for generations. No longer is it a taboo to talk about feeling down and it is partly due to the work of people like Derek Devoy with Taxi Watch that this change has come about.

Derek has spoken openly on TV and radio about a struggle with depression that left him crying in bed for eight months. His story, along with many other people's brave discussions about depression and suicide has been at the heart of the turning of the tide.

Tacsaí chatted with Derek in a candid interview last month. His frank manner is genuine, as is his colossal efforts to curb suicide attempts in his Kilkenny City.

Now those efforts have spread across the country to other towns and cities, and have even been noticed as far away as the US.

Derek said: "We're starting talks in schools now in September. We've a project set up where we'll do 100 schools from the start of the school year. I've already been visiting schools myself for talks but we're going to do a full, special project now.

"We shot a 15-minute short film last year with a crew following us around. That film is going to be translated into 19 different languages and sent around to all the different film festivals around the world

"Recently we were contacted by the taxi regulator in New York, by the commissioner. We had some talks about us going to New York and about how it would work, and would we be interested in helping out there... so that's great! We're hoping to go over now next January for some talks, but in the immediate future we're going to concentrate on the schools across Ireland and the talks we'll be giving to them first.

"The documentary premiered the other night in the town hall in Kilkenny at the Mayor's office with about 50 people there to watch it, it was great. That film will be shown now as part of the talks we'll give in schools, where I'll talk about my depression and my story and how I came through it.

"There are 178 people that we've helped now in Kilkenny alone. The work done in Clonmel as well has been wonderful. We also have Taxi Watch in Waterford, Ennis, there are a few drivers involved in Limerick, Dublin and some up in Mayo too. I'd love to expand it to every county in Ireland but you need somebody that's going to push it like myself. Dan in Clonmel has been absolutely fantastic, he's gone out his way because it takes time – it's voluntary, it's all for free but if it helps one person we said that'd be great!

"I spent eight months in my bedroom, every day. I couldn't leave the room. I just eventually got help. And the only way I got help was by talking about it with a counsellor and that's what you have to do. You have to see a counsellor, you have to talk.

"The whole thing started for me in 2010 after a car accident. A drunk driver ran into the back of me. I damaged my back which I had to get surgery on. When I came out of surgery I just felt crap to be honest and it all went downhill from there. The first surgery didn't work so I had to go back in and get a second surgery done, and after that was done it leaked and I had to go back in and get a third one done. The whole time I just kept feeling absolutely useless. I was



the main breadwinner in the house and because I was a taxi driver I had no income, no dole or anything coming in so I had no money for four years coming into my house. I felt I was a burden on everybody. 'What was the point in going on' I thought.

"So I tried to kill myself three times. I went twice to a bridge and then the third time I had planned to throw myself in front of a large vehicle. The reason I didn't do it was because the next large vehicle that came around was a school bus full of kids. Thanks be to god I didn't do it.

"F***ing frightening," Derek says with a hearty chuckle, to which he adds "I can laugh about it now but at the time it was brutal."

Taxi Watch was born on Derek's first night back at work. And the circumstances were eerily familiar to him.

He said: "The very first night I went back there was one fella standing on top of a bridge and I just couldn't believe it. So I pulled over and talked him down, got him into my car, and I said talk to me I'll help you. And then I went back to work again, shaking to be honest with you, and an hour later there was another young lad on a bridge and I managed to get him down too. I just thought to myself 'what if I had got out and said the wrong things to these two fellas?'. So I went away and I got some training in Safe Talk off the HSE – a suicide prevention course that the HSE do which is absolutely brilliant.

"I came back then and I asked some of the taxi lads would they do it with me and they said they would and I brought 25 people back to do the course in Kilkenny and it just took off from there. Out of something bad something good happened. It wouldn't have happened had I not gone through depression myself.

"We've kinda come full circle now. We haven't had anybody down by the river in Kilkenny now since last October. Every single person that comes to us looking for help gets it. If someone comes to us I'll have them sitting in front of a counsellor the next morning, or sometimes that very day. 15 sessions free of charge.

"I was in a school last week and most of the students never even spoke but afterwards I got Facebook messages from three students looking for help, and that's exactly what you want. And that's why we're putting more effort into schools now because that's where it needs to be done. It needs to be done in Transition Year and from there on."

You can contact Taxi Watch via their website www.taxiwatch.ie or you can phone Derek on 087 666 5050 to speak in confidence.



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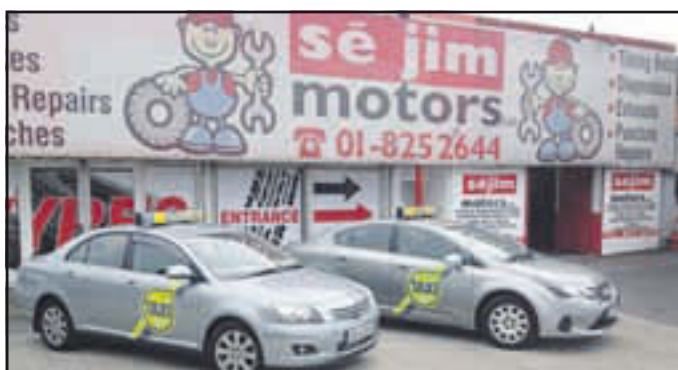
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DTA BATTLING RICKSHAW PROBLEM



Plus Barton makes argument for fare increase.

The DTA are continuing in their efforts to keep up the good fight against rickshaws.

Earlier this year we highlighted how some rickshaw operators have been flouting the law, dealing Class A drugs in Dublin's city centre, now it seems many of these vehicles are motorised – surely placing them under the strict adherence of the Road Traffic Act...

Our good friend Tommy Barton highlighted this to a number of TDs and Councillors over the last while and the response has been positive. Green Party Councillor Ciaran Cuffe and Fine Gael TD Noel Rock have both been receptive to taxi drivers' concerns on the issue.

And Sinn Féin Councillor Ray McHugh said: "I have been campaigning for sometime for the introduction of legislation to control rickshaws.

"I am concerned that the Minister of Transport Mr Shane Ross is slow in amending the 2016 legislation, I feel it could be very quick if the will to do so was there.

"I believe Rickshaws are undermining taxi drivers and horse-drawn carriage drivers who have to comply with the law and Revenue and are covered by legislation.

"I believe Rickshaws have to be; Garda vetted, tax compliant, have public liability insurance and an annual inspection of road worthiness.

"I have requested the Transport SPC of DCC to write back to the Minister expressing our disappointment at the delay in the introduction of legislation, it only needs an amendment to Section 31 of 2016 Road Traffic Act, to address the problem. I believe in the meantime the Minister should ban Rickshaws until legislation is introduced."

A ban would certainly be a popular move.

Another issue on the agenda this month is the proposed 3% fare increase.

Barton said: "The NTA has the power and legislation to review fare structure in all its context every couple of years or so, like they do with the buses and other transport sectors. Some drivers and other organisations are not happy with a 3% increase I suggest that they do their own study and review and present to



Tommy Barton



Noel Rock



Ciarán Cuffe

the National Transport Authority, surely that's what member's fees should be used for and why not?

"I suggest the members should go back to the representative bodies and ask the question; why haven't they already done a review? Before they object to an increase Before the NTA try to implement something that's already in legislation. The old saying is a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. The average earnings of a taxi driver is €500 a week. Over the year with the increase and taking into account the programming and meter sealing it still works out roughly around €750 per annum and of course the more hours you work the better benefit per annum.

"Those figures work out at roughly €26,000 roughly a year with a weekly income of €540. It works out as an increase of €800. As Gerry Mackin said – an €800 increase would pay for the insurance costs of your taxi which went up this year again?"

"Yes, members of the DTA would like a bigger fare increase but you also want to keep taxis competitive compared to other transport networks which are rising fares it is the summer season and yes the footfall is busier in the airport and across the tourism network, so a fare increase at any stage is always a good one as far as I'm concerned.

ROE WELCOMES COLLEGE GREEN CHANGES



But calls for more ranks around the city centre.

Tony Roe, in speaking to *Tacsaí Magazine* just before we went to print, has welcomed the lifting of the banning of taxis in the city centre.

The recent decision by Dublin City Council has proved a popular one with drivers, especially those who have campaigned hard to have the initial College Green proposals amended.

Tony said: "The change in the proposal at College Green is great news! We're delighted that our voices have been heard on that issue and it is something that we campaigned hard on.

"Taxi drivers protested with over 2,500 complaints made to the Dublin County Council, made to the NTA and it climaxed in a meeting in the Dáil with a government Minister where we highlighted the many complaints made by shopkeepers and service providers in that area.

"At that meeting we pointed out that the government's revenue would be affected adversely and also the safety of the travelling public would be jeopardised at night. Once the pubs and nite clubs in the area closed there would be a mass of people all looking for taxis, thronging

in one big area of the city.

"For once we're happy with the Council's rethink. It had been suggested at the meeting that there may be a congestion charge for cars in the city centre and it was pointed out that it could be the same as in London where if there is a congestion charge, that taxis be exempt. We welcomed that suggestion. We will continue to campaign and target more taxi ranks in the city. These are badly needed.

"There's a public consultation process on taxis and we have made proposals for 57 taxi ranks to be put in town, four of them on O'Connell Street. We feel that would greatly help the public interest, particularly taking into consideration that the Foster Place rank is going out of commission. We made an application that a rank be put adjacent to the region and give people more options in the area. There are an awful lot of people that use that particular rank.

"There was a rank at the Westin Hotel on Westmoreland Street. Now there's no reason why that rank can't be put back there. We need a hell of a lot more ranks. Taxi drivers are driving around town, wasting fuel at an alarming rate. We're calling on the Minister for Transport to act on this initiative."



WORLD NEWS

TOP STORIES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

LONDON

A heroic taxi driver has described how he tried to knock down three suspected terrorists during the London attack.

The unnamed man said he saw the men armed with 12-inch hunting knives, stabbing people “randomly”.

“I thought, ‘I’m gonna try and hit him, I’m gonna try and knock him down’,” the man said.

“I spun the cab round, I was about to ram one of them, but he side-stepped and three police officers came running towards them with their batons drawn.

“I was shouting at everybody, just get away from the area, stay back, just run the other way. There were a good few hundred people out there.

“He’s veered across the road towards the right hand of where Southwark Cathedral is and rammed it where the steps are.

“He just rammed it towards them, wedged it in between the lamppost and the steps and so he’s hit people there.

“They’ve jumped out of the van and started stabbing people randomly. There was a scattering of people.”

NEW YORK

As ride-sharing apps like Uber and Lyft have become more popular, ridership in New York City’s yellow taxis has dropped by nearly 30 percent in the past three years. And that means financial hardship for the people who own taxi medallions — the metal plaques that permit someone to drive a cab — along with huge losses for the financial institutions that fund them.

On 8th Avenue in Manhattan, Qudratullah Saberry is sitting in the driver’s seat of his cab across the street from a hotel.

“I’m waiting here since 12 o’clock. It’s two hour and 10 minutes. There’s no job,” he said. Saberry, who’s 63, said driving a cab used to earn him \$500 a day. Now, he said he often makes half that. He nods his head toward a stream of taxis whizzing by. “You see that? The taxis, most of them empty,” he said.

Saberry owns the cab he’s driving and its taxi medallion. He bought it for about \$300,000 in 2012. Its value spiked and he borrowed

against it. Now, with two kids to support — one in college — plus a mortgage, he said he’s not sure he’ll be able to make his loan payment this month.

“I’m short about \$1,000.”

New York City started selling taxi permits, later called medallions, around the turn of the 20th century. They gave drivers the exclusive right to pick up passengers who hail them on the street. Medallion owners could drive a cab or lease one out, taking a cut of the profits. With no competition, yellow taxis were guaranteed to bring in a steady stream of fares. Michael Woloz, from the taxi advocacy group the Metropolitan Taxicab Board of Trade, said that made the medallion valuable.

“It outpaced every index on the stock market. It was a solid investment,” he said.

Medallion prices trended up over time. In 1947, they cost about \$2,500. By mid-2013, people were paying just over a million dollars to buy one. Medallions for fleet owners cost even more. Woloz said someone could buy a medallion and cash out for retirement. And medallions could be used as collateral to buy a home, send kids to college, open a business.

“It really allowed so many people in New York, particularly immigrants that built something from nothing, to put the building blocks in place so that they can keep moving up and up and up the ladder,” he said.

AUSTRALIA

Sex creep taxi driver Jagdeep Singh is being kicked out of Australia.

Several Australian Border Force officers grabbed him at his home and put him in detention prior to his deportation back to India.

The Administrative Appeals Tribunal foiled Immigration Minister Peter Dutton’s first attempt to get rid of Singh after he pleaded guilty to indecently assaulting a female passenger in December 2015.

Singh appealed against the visa cancellation decision made by a delegate for Mr Dutton.

AAT senior member Miriam Holmes then overturned the delegate’s deportation decision in November last year and



reinstated Singh's visa. She did so despite making a formal finding that Singh committed "a significant sexual offence involving a vulnerable member of the public while the applicant was engaged as a taxi driver".

Mr Dutton last night exercised his power to overrule the AAT and ordered that Singh be detained by Australian Border Force officers and deported.

A spokesman for Mr Dutton confirmed to the Herald Sun that Singh's visa had been cancelled again.

Ms Holmes gave Singh, 34, his visa back in November last year, despite finding "it was apparent to the Tribunal that the applicant showed no remorse in relation to the criminal offence".

In her written decision outlining why she overturned the deportation decision of Mr Dutton's delegate, Ms Holmes said the cancellation of the visa had adversely affected Singh's ability to manage his psychological condition with his treating psychologist.

She also said Singh's wife had demonstrated depressive symptoms require anti-depression medication and would suffer emotional hardship if her husband's visa was cancelled.

The decision noted that if Singh's visa were cancelled he would become an "unlawful noncitizen" and might be liable for detention and possible removal from Australia.

Singh arrived in Australia from India in 2008 on a student visa as a dependent of his wife and started work as a taxi driver in Melbourne in 2011.

Singh was caught for his attack and pleaded guilty to indecently assaulting the woman and was given an 18-month community corrections order in December 2015 requiring him to do 150 hours of unpaid community service.

POLAND

Taxi drivers in Poland say those unlicensed services, such as Uber, are a threat to their livelihoods and want the government to protect their authorized businesses.

Advancing slowly in long lines, with Poland's national white-and-red flags flying on their cars, they were to deliver petitions to the office of Prime Minister Beata Szydlo and to the finance and infrastructure ministries and regional authorities. Their action drew some angry comments from bus drivers and those trying to get to work on time.

"A total failure, it took me two hours to reach the office," an angry businessman Piotr Sakowicz, told The Associated Press. It usually takes him 40 minutes to drive the distance. "I don't think it will help their cause."

Some 2,000 members were taking part in the protest, said Jaroslaw Iglowski, the head of the taxi drivers' union in Warsaw. Unlike registered drivers, unlicensed ones produce no fiscal records for the tax offices and do not have to pass psychological tests, he said.

"We want the government to react to the illegal activity of some transport groups," Iglowski told the Polish news agency, PAP.

The price of one kilometer in a licensed taxi is about 0.43 euro in central Warsaw and grows with the distance. Unlicensed services cost less.

A state office protecting competition and consumers' interests said last month it was monitoring the situation but saw no need to intervene against unlicensed services.

In addition to the demonstration in Warsaw, similar protests were staged in the cities of Wroclaw, Poznan and Lodz. Earlier this year the government said it was working on a new law to regulate transport services, but gave no deadline for implementing it.

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City's doorstep. This secluded estate boasts mature forestry, magnificent tree lined fairways and stunning views of the Dublin Mountains.

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Both Clubs are accessible to the public and visitors are welcome 7 days a week. Membership is also available with options starting from just €299 in Corballis and €350 in Elmgreen.



Knock Knock...

AN AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN goes to Japan on a business trip. He hates Japanese food, so he asks the concierge at his hotel if there's any place where he can get a pizza. The concierge tells him he will call for delivery to his room and takes his order. Thirty minutes later, the delivery guy shows up. The businessman takes the pizza and starts sneezing uncontrollably. He asks the delivery man, "What the heck did you put on this pizza?" The delivery man bows deeply and says, "Just what you ordered - pepper only."

THREE OLD LADIES sit in a restaurant, discussing their health. One lady says, "You know, I'm getting really forgetful. This morning, I was standing at the top of the stairs, and I couldn't remember whether I had just come up or was about to go down." The second lady says, "You think that's bad? The other day, I was sitting on the edge of my bed, and I couldn't remember whether I was going to sleep or had just woken up!" The third lady smiles smugly. "Well, my memory is just as good as it's always been, knock on wood," she says as she raps on the table. Then with a startled look on her face, she asks, "Who's there?"

A KERRYMAN drinks at the pub until they close. He stands up to leave and falls flat on his face. He tries to stand one more time and falls again. He figures he'll crawl outside and get some fresh air and maybe that will sober him up. Outside, he tries to stand up and falls flat again. He gives up and crawls the half mile to his house, crawls up the stairs and pulls himself into bed. The next morning, his wife stands over him shouting, "So, you've been out boozing again!" "What makes you say that?" he asks, putting on an innocent face. "The pub called - you left your wheelchair there again."

AN FM STATION HAS A COMPETITION where they ring someone up and ask them three personal questions. Then they ring their spouse or partner and ask them the same three questions. If the answers are the same, the couple wins a holiday to Bali. Last week the competition went like this:

Presenter: Hello, it's XXX-FM, do you want to play the game?

Brian: Yeah, sure.

Presenter: O.K., Question 1 — when was the last time you had sex?

Brian: Oh, mate. Well, about 8 o'clock this morning.

Presenter: And how long did it go for, Brian?

Brian: Oh, about 10 minutes.

Presenter: 10 minutes? Good one. And where did you do it, mate?

Brian: Oh, mate, I can't say that.

Presenter: There's a holiday to Bali at stake here, Brian!

Brian: Okay, okay...on the kitchen table.

Presenter: (much laughter). Good one, Brian. Now, is it okay for us to call your wife?

Brian: Yeah, all right.

Presenter: Hi Sharelle, how are you?

Sharelle: Hi. Good, thanks.

Presenter: (Explains competition again) We've got Brian on the other line, say hello.

Sharelle: Hi, Brian.

Brian: Hi, Sharelle.

Presenter: Now, Sharelle, we're going to ask you the same three questions we asked Brian and if you give the same answers, you win a trip for two to Bali.

Brian: Just tell the truth, honey.

Sharelle: Okay.

Presenter: Sharelle, when was the last time you had sex?

Sharelle: Oh, no, I can't say that on the radio.

Brian: Sharelle, it doesn't matter. I've already told them.

Sharelle: Okay. About 8:00 this morning before Brian went to work.

Presenter: Good, nice start! Next question. How long did it go for Sharelle?

Sharelle: (giggling) About 12, maybe 15 minutes.

Co-Presenter: That's close enough... Brian was just being a gentleman.

Presenter: Okay, Sharelle — final question. Where did you do it?

Sharelle: Oh, no I can't say that. My mum could be listening. No way, no.

Presenter: There's a trip to Bali on the line here.

Brian: Sharelle, I've already told them so it doesn't matter anyway. Just tell them.

Sharelle: Oh, all right. Up the a**e!

Radio Silence — Advertising

Presenter: Sorry if anyone was offended before, we're going live here, and sometimes these things happen. We've given Brian and Sharelle the holiday. Now we'll take a music break.

A MAN WALKS INTO A BAR, drinks a couple of beers, and prepares to leave. The barman tells him he owes 10 euros.

"But I already paid you. Don't you remember?"

says the customer.

"OK," says the bartender, "if you say you paid, then I suppose you did."

The man goes outside and tells the first person he sees that the bartender can't keep track of whether his customers have paid or not. The second man rushes in, orders a couple beers, and later pulls the same stunt.

The barman replies, "OK, if you say you paid, then I suppose you did."

The customer goes outside and tells a friend how to get free drinks. The third man hurries into the bar and begins to drink shots.

The bartender leans over and says, "You know, a funny thing happened tonight. Two men were drinking beer, neither paid, and both claimed they had. The next guy who tries that stunt is going to get punched in the..."

The man interrupts, "Don't bother me with your troubles. Just give me my change and I'll be on my way."



THE TACSAÍ MAGAZINE BUMPER QUIZ

General Knowledge Questions

1. In the Christian calendar what is the Sunday prior to Easter called?
2. In which Irish county is the town of Buncrana?
3. Of which US city is Beverly Hills a suburb?
4. Who wrote the novel "Our Man in Havana"?
5. In which country is the city of Fez?
6. The Spanish football team RCD Espanyol plays it's home fixtures in which city?
7. In a game of snooker how many points are awarded for potting the black ball?
8. What is the SI unit of luminous intensity?
9. Into which body of water does the river Ganges flow?
10. Which organisation has the motto "Citius, Altius, Fortius" (Faster, Higher, Stronger)?
11. In computer terminology what is meant by the acronym DNS?
12. In which musical would you hear the song "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning"?
13. What is superhero Spiderman's real name?

14. Who succeeded Winston Churchill as British Prime Minister in 1955?
15. What type of creature is an ocelot?
16. In a traditional Punch and Judy show, what is the dog's name?
17. The Apennines are a mountain range in which country?
18. What name is given to the central aisle of a church?
19. Who was the Roman God of wine?
20. Which animal's name literally means "River Horse"?

10. The Olympic Games.
11. Domain Name System.
12. Oklahoma!
13. Peter Parker.
14. Eden.
15. A Cat.
16. Toby.
17. Italy.
18. Nave.
19. Bacchus.
20. Hippopotamus.

1. Palm Sunday.
2. Donegal
3. Los Angeles.
4. Graham Greene.
5. Morocco.
6. Barcelona.
7. Seven.
8. Candela.
9. The Bay of Bengal.

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