



...seeing red...

Back in June The LPHCA was contacted by Platinum member Jimac Radio Cars who have been operating in Lower Clapton Road Hackney since 1971 (34 years).

Many years ago they were consulted about a Red Route being put outside their office and in their response they pointed out that they needed to pick up many passengers from their base.

Jimac are located very fortunately in the widest part of their road where there are three car widths to the centre of the road. So it was no surprise that a mixture of parking and loading bays were put in for a considerable distance either side of their office.



Lower Clapton Road is affectionately nicknamed 'the murder mile' by some locals as there is a high level of serious street crime, so it was no surprise that a sign was put up on a nearby lamp post mentioning that a surveillance camera was in operation.

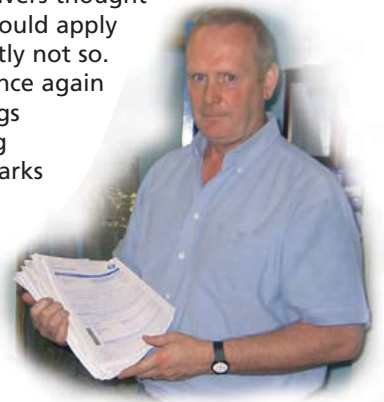
However the big camera that was located looking straight towards their office wasn't what they thought, it was a Red



Route Enforcement Camera. Little did Jimac drivers know but it was about to issue them with a £50 fine every time they picked up a member of the public from their base. Some drivers were apparently there for a matter of seconds.

Within a few weeks nearly £5,000 worth of tickets had been issued to drivers.

Reasonably Jimac and their drivers thought that loading and unloading would apply to human beings but apparently not so. A box yes – a human no! So once again the bureaucrats have got things woefully wrong when drafting legislation as with the Royal Parks fiasco.



Guess what - licensed taxis are exempt licensed Private Hire Vehicles (minicabs and chauffeurs) are not!

As a result of this fiasco Jimac Cars owner drivers have to meet passengers after they cross the busy Lower Clapton Road – unaccompanied and at risk. High Street minicab offices are a tremendous service to the travelling public and a place of safety especially in high street crime areas.

Many, including the police, find Licensed Private Hire offices located in High Streets of great service to their local community. This ticketing situation is a shambles – Licensed by one part of TfL, ticketed by another!

Since Jimac contacted us Graded members Alan's Cars of Tottenham and Greyhound Cars of Streatham drivers have received a bundle of tickets like Jimac. The LPHCA is fighting this for these members and has alerted The PCO and The Mayor's Office. We will also be writing to The Department for Transport and The Greater London Assembly.



Any other Operators who have similar problems please let us know ideally by fax, email or on our message forum board on our website at www.LPHCA.co.uk as we are co-ordinating and supporting members with the problem.

Please warn your drivers that if they stop in a Red Route box to set down a passenger a camera high up may be lurking to start the driver on the road to a £50 fine.

There will be more on red routes and the problems of picking up and setting down for Private Hire Drivers in the next issue. ●

