



Thefts from Taxis

The Public Carriage Office has been asked by the City of Westminster Police Vehicle Crime Unit to bring to the attention of taxi drivers a number of recent thefts from licensed taxis.

These offences are focused around an area in the north of Westminster, predominantly near to Marylebone Station at Harewood Avenue, Hayes Place, and Baker Street, although other venues nearby have featured.

The method undertaken in these offences is to observe an unattended taxi, the driver of which will have taken a break away from his taxi and then force entry to the vehicle and steal from within. Items taken include cash bags and drivers badges.

The method of entry is crude with a front window usually being broken to allow access, although access has also been gained through sliding down a rear window, entering and breaking the partition to permit the offender to remove items from the driver area.

In an effort to reduce the risk of being targeted, drivers are asked by the police to consider the following points:

- Be vigilant: are there any persons paying obvious attention at ranks or when parking up?
- Remove property: cash bags hidden under seats and badges in glove boxes have been taken, as well as property such as mobile phones left openly on display
- Remove the sat-nav: think to remove the cradle too. It shows a thief there may be a sat-nav inside the car
- Ensure the vehicle is secure: insufficiently locked rear windows have allowed access in some cases

Unfortunately there may still be occurrences of this kind despite the proper precautions being taken. In these instances the police ask that the driver makes the vehicle available for a forensic examination. Whilst the police appreciate that there may be a requirement for repairs to be carried out as quickly as possible to enable the vehicle to be placed back into service, they ask that they are given every opportunity to gather evidence.

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