

Guild of Professional Chauffeurs

The idea of forming a Guild of Professional Chauffeur's came from a thread on the Chauffeur Network UK Facebook page, and it's a suggestion that's certainly gained momentum over the past couple of weeks.

Sadly, there's a feeling amongst many of us that the 'craft' of chauffeuring has been lost and the proud profession it once was has become watered down as a result of the industry becoming saturated. This dilution has resulted in a significant drop in standards which needs to be addressed in order to protect our future livelihoods.

It's clear that the vast majority of licensing authorities aren't equipped to treat us as a separate entity to the private hire fraternity so the only way forward is to help ourselves by attempting to come up with an industry body consisting of those chauffeurs who want some kind of recognition for their professional qualifications and experience, and to try to regain the proud standing our industry once enjoyed. In addition, the hope is that such an organisation would encourage both existing chauffeurs and those coming into the industry to invest in themselves by undertaking chauffeur-specific training to gain recognised certification, both raising professional standards and making their services much more attractive to potential employers and customers alike. Indeed our vision is that membership of such an organisation would eventually become the benchmark for standards within the industry and act as an 'elite' club for professional chauffeurs to take pride in being part of. The criteria for inclusion would obviously need to be strict to make such an organisation successful and respected but this is one of the many things that we'll be discussing going forward.

A further purpose would be for such an organisation to become a mouthpiece for its membership, perhaps by linking up with larger trade bodies so that professional chauffeurs finally have an effective voice. There's considerable disillusionment with our lot at the present time so there needs to be a way to channel that discontent in the right direction.

To gauge enthusiasm for this proposed organisation, we have arranged an exploratory meeting to enable all those interested in such an idea to put forward opinions and suggestions. We will also be looking for expertise and practical help in taking this idea to the next step if the desire is such. We've chosen a location which we hope is as accessible for as many chauffeurs as possible and we'd like to thank everyone who have offered both venues and funding towards venue hire, we've been quite taken aback the amount of operators who have already come forward with offers of assistance.

The meeting will take place on Saturday 12th November at 11am and the venue will be the Parkers European HQ, which is just off junction 10 of the M40, north of Oxford.