

Appendix A – AGE LIMIT & EMISSIONS POLICY FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGES & PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

It is the policy of Cambridge City Council that all Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles must be less than 4 years old when first licensed but a Licence may be renewed until the vehicle is 8 years of age. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that vehicles are reliable, safe and less polluting.

Local authorities are legally required to carry out measures to improve air quality where it is below certain standards and this is currently the situation in central Cambridge. The two air pollutants that are of concern are Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM). Levels of Nitrogen Dioxide are above the health-based National Objectives in the central part of Cambridge by about 20-25%. Some improvement has been seen in the area near the Bus Station in the last two years. Levels of Particulate Matter are below the National Objectives but any level of Particulate Matter is harmful to health as there is no 'safe' limit.

Cities rely on good transport systems for continued economic success but growth in transport inevitably impacts on the environment and public health. High quality licensed vehicles with low emissions are therefore essential. With in excess of 500 Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles licensed by Cambridge City Council, it now seems appropriate to review the age limit policy to improve the licensed fleet and reduce emissions.

Cambridge City Council's Scientific Team has prepared a [background paper](#) to this consultation and as part of this, they have analysed the existing licensed fleet.

Proposed Options

This consultation is on the proposals for an accelerated vehicle replacement plan for licensed vehicles. The proposed options are set out below.

The term 'new vehicle licence' refers to the grant of a new licence where:

- i) the vehicle has not previously been licensed by Cambridge City Council;
or
- ii) an existing Licence has been surrendered and an application is being made for the grant of a licence.

Option 1 - Do not change the existing age limit policy:

“A new vehicle licence will not be granted in respect of a vehicle unless it is less than 4 years old and a vehicle licence will not be renewed unless the vehicle is less than 8 years old.”

Under the 8 year rule, Euro 3 standard vehicles would be phased out completely in 2013 and Euro 4 vehicles would be phased out by 2017. Removal of Euro 3 vehicles from the taxi fleet and replacement with Euro 4 vehicles would lead to a 14% reduction in emissions of both PM and NO_x. This will lead to a small improvement in air quality.

Option 2 – Improve the standard of new vehicles by requiring that they meet the Euro 5 standard or higher:

- “i) A new vehicle licence will not be granted in respect of a vehicle unless it is less than 4 years old, but as and from 01 September 2012 a new vehicle licence will not be granted in respect of a vehicle unless it is less than 4 years old AND it meets the Euro 5 standard or higher.***
- ii) A vehicle licence will not be renewed unless the vehicle is less than 8 years old.”***

This would have a small improvement in air quality and as Euro 5 Standard became a mandatory requirement in September 2009 (i.e. three years ago), the improvements in air quality would only be accelerated by one year. It should be noted that as the Euro 5 standard only became mandatory for vehicles manufactured in September 2009 onwards, it will not be until September 2013 that all 4 year old vehicles will meet Euro 5 standard. Applicants will need to be mindful of this when acquiring vehicles to be licensed for the first time between September 2012 & September 2013 and ensure that any vehicle over 3 years old meets Euro 5 standard or higher.

Option 3 – Keep the current age limit policy and include the requirement that by 01 January 2015, a vehicle licence will only be renewed if the vehicle complies with the Euro 5 standard or higher:

- “i) A new vehicle licence will not be granted in respect of a vehicle unless it is less than 4 years old.***
- ii) A vehicle licence will not be renewed unless the vehicle is less than 8 years old, but as and from 01 January 2015, a vehicle licence will not be renewed unless the vehicle is less than 8 years old AND it complies with the Euro 5 standard or higher.”***

Removal of Euro 3 and Euro 4 vehicles from the taxi fleet and replacement with Euro 5 vehicles would lead to a 96% reduction in emissions of PM and 40% reduction in emissions of NOx.

Option 4 - Improve the standard of new vehicles by requiring that they meet the Euro 5 standard or higher and include the requirement that by 01 January 2015, a vehicle licence will only be renewed if the vehicle complies with the Euro 5 standard or higher:

- “i) A new vehicle licence will not be granted in respect of a vehicle unless it is less than 4 years old, but as and from 01 September 2012 a new vehicle licence will not be granted in respect of a vehicle unless it is less than 4 years old AND it meets the Euro 5 standard or higher.***
- ii) A vehicle licence will not be renewed unless the vehicle is less than 8 years old, but as and from 01 January 2015, a vehicle licence will not be renewed unless the vehicle is less than 8 years old AND it complies with the Euro 5 standard or higher.”***

As Euro 5 Standard became a mandatory requirement in September 2009 (i.e. three years ago), the improvements in air quality from new vehicles would be accelerated by one year. As with Option 1, applicants will need to be mindful when acquiring vehicles that are over 3 years old and will be licensed for the first time between September 2012 & September 2013, that the vehicle

meets Euro 5 standard or higher. The removal of Euro 3 and Euro 4 vehicles from the taxi fleet and replacement with Euro 5 vehicles would lead to a 96% reduction in emissions of PM and 40% reduction in emissions of NOx.

Note - Cambridge City Council has not proposed an option to increase the maximum age limit for vehicles (e.g. to 10 years) as this would amount to lowering the emissions standards and therefore a reduction in air quality.

Consultation

Do you prefer Option 1, Option 2, Option 3 or Option 4 as set out above, and what are your reasons for your preference?

Can you suggest any other amendment to the age-limit policy that would lead to an improvement in air quality?

Do you have any constructive comments or recommendations on the policy?

Please let us know what you think about the proposed Age Limit and Emission Policy for Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles by e-mailing licensing@cambridge.gov.uk no later than **08 May 2012**.