

# Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

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## 12.0 DEFINITIONS, SPECIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS

- 12.1 The main difference between Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles is that Hackney Carriages can be hailed in a public street or hired from a taxi rank.
- 12.2 Private Hire vehicles must be pre-booked in advance through a licensed Private Hire Operator and are not permitted to wait on a rank or be booked directly from a public street.
- 12.3 Should a Private Hire vehicle driver accept a fare which has not been pre-booked through an Operator, he is committing an offence and, if caught, will be subject to relevant enforcement action by the Licensing Authority.
- 12.4 Anyone being conveyed in a Private Hire vehicle which has not been pre-booked may not be covered by the drivers insurance. Proprietors are required to ensure that they fully understand their individual insurance policy.
- 12.5 Once a vehicle is licensed as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle, every driver of that vehicle, whether it be used for business or pleasure, must possess the appropriate City Council driver licence.
- 12.56 Local Licensing Authorities have a wide range of discretion over the types of vehicle that they can licence as Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicles.
- 12.7 Cambridge City Council will not grant a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle Licence for any vehicle that is already licensed by another authority. Obtaining a vehicle licence from another authority will invalidate any vehicle licence granted by Cambridge city Council.
- 12.68 Government guidance suggests that best practice is for local licensing authorities to adopt the principle of specifying as many different types of vehicle as possible. Licensing Authorities are encouraged to leave it open to the trade to put forward vehicles of their own choice that can be shown to meet basic criteria. In that way, emerging designs for vehicles can be taken into account.
- 12.79 Licensing Authorities are asked to be particularly cautious about specifying only purpose-built Hackney Carriages, with the strict constraint on supply that implies. There are at present only a small number of designs of purpose-built Hackney Carriages. They are, however, encouraged to make use of the “type approval” rules within any specifications they determine.
- 12.810 The Licensing Authority will only license a vehicle as a Hackney Carriage or a Private Hire Vehicle if it complies with European Whole Vehicle (M1) type approval, M1 Low Volume Type Approval or UK National Small Series Type Approval and Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA). These approvals related to wheelchair accessible vehicles/ converted vehicles and not saloon vehicles.
- 12.911 A vehicle will only be licensed as a Private Hire vehicle if it is not of an appearance or design that is considered likely to lead the public to think it is a

licensed Hackney Carriage vehicle.

- | 12.102 The Licensing Authority is empowered to impose such conditions as it considers reasonably necessary in relation to the grant of a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence. Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles provide a service to the public, so it is appropriate to set criteria for the external and internal condition of the vehicle, provided that these are not unreasonably onerous.
- | 12.143 This will also apply to Private Hire vehicles unless they are treated as a “special vehicle”.
- | 12.142 The ‘Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Handbook’ sets out the specification and minimum standards in respect of Hackney Carriages and minimum standards for Private Hire Vehicles. All vehicles presented to the Licensing Authority for licensing and all vehicles whilst licensed must comply with the Authority’s current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire policy, handbook and vehicle testing standards specification.
- | 12.135 The Licensing Authority reserves the right to carry out or require any form of test, examination or assessment as it sees fit to determine the suitability of a vehicle for licensing or to remain a licensed vehicle.

## 18.0 SIGNAGE, LIVERY AND ADVERTISING

- 18.1 It is essential that the public should be able to identify and understand the difference between a Hackney Carriage and a Private Hire vehicle.
- 18.2 Within Cambridge City Council’s area, both Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles will be required to display licence plates on their vehicle. This is a key feature in helping to identify vehicles that are properly licensed:
  - i) Hackney Carriage Vehicles have a crest on the side of the vehicle bearing the words ‘Cambridge Hackney Carriage’. They also display a pale blue identification plate on the rear of the vehicle and have a ‘Cambridge Licensed Taxi’ yellow roof sign on the top of the vehicle.
  - ii) Private Hire Vehicles do not have a taxi sign or crests. They display pale green front and rear identification plates and must display door signs which detail the name and contact information of the Operator fulfilling the booking along with notification of ‘Private Hire: Pre-booked only’.~~bear a company door sign stating ‘Private Hire – Pre-booked Only’.~~
- 18.3 The external licence plate supplied by the Licensing Authority shall be securely fixed to the outside of the vehicle, no temporary fixing is allowed.
- 18.4 Private Hire vehicles are not be permitted to display roof mounted signs or any signs that include the words “taxi” or “cab” or “for hire”.
- 18.5 Roof signs fitted to Hackney Carriage vehicles shall be illuminated at all times when the vehicle is available for hire. The sign bearing the word “TAXI” in black lettering on a yellow background on the front and “Cambridge Licensed Taxi Cab” in black lettering on a red background on the back is at all times to be prominently displayed on the roof of the vehicle except:

- i) when the vehicle is on hire for a wedding
- ii) when it is necessary to accommodate passengers luggage by use of a roof rack
- iii) when the vehicle is being used for social, domestic or pleasure purposes.

18.6 The roof sign can also be removed when the vehicle is undergoing maintenance work or is being cleaned, but must be put back on the vehicle before the vehicle is used again for hire and reward.

18.7 In order to ensure that the crests remain prominent and are not compromised by any other advertising the crests should be a minimum of 9.5 inches in diameter if circular in size and 10 inches width and height if square with no background colour, and attached to both the nearside and offside front doors of the vehicle.

18.8 Private Hire vehicles do not permit the display of advertisements. However, limited internal and external advertising may be permitted on hackney carriages in accordance with the Advertising Standards Agency code of practice and provided that the advertising leaves a 20 cm distance from the door crests. Any permission to display advertising will be subject to the prior written approval of the Council although advertisements concerning the following subjects will not normally be approved: -

- i) Political, ethnic, religious, sexual or controversial subjects
- ii) Escort agencies, gambling establishments or massage parlours
- iii) Nude or semi-nude figures
- iv) Tobacco or alcohol
- i) Anything likely to offend public taste

18.9 On 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017 Members agreed to the addition of a livery requirement for all Hackney Carriage Vehicles. Further guidance can be found in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Handbook.

## **39.0 KNOWLEDGE**

39.1 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers need a good working knowledge of the area for which they are licensed, because vehicles can be hired immediately, directly with the driver at hackney carriage stands or on the street in the case of Hackney Carriages and by prior booking through a Private Hire Operator in the case of Private Hire Vehicles. Additionally, it is expected that drivers should be able to communicate with their customers and be able to carry out the basic arithmetic associated with the paying of fares.

39.2 In order to commence the new driver application process an applicant must first register to take a Cambridge City Council Knowledge Test. Only once the Knowledge Test has been passed may they continue with the application process.

39.3 The test can only be attempted ~~three~~four times within 12 months, and then it is recommended that if applicants wish to reapply, they do so after a break of six months. Additional guidance on the Knowledge Test can be found in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Handbook.

