

**LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE  
31 JANUARY 2008**

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**GUIDANCE NOTES AND CONDITIONS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND  
PRIVATE HIRE OWNERS, OPERATORS AND DRIVERS  
(Director of Environment & Leisure)**

**1 PURPOSE OF DECISION**

- 1.1 The Council has issued guidance notes on an annual basis to owners, drivers and operators of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles. These notes are intended to set out the legal requirements, licence conditions and give guidance to the trade on issues associated with the licensed activity.
- 1.2 The guidance notes are updated annually to reflect changes in law, Council policy and to clarify matters where there has been confusion.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 That the Committee:**

- i) notes the changes made to the Guidance Notes and
- ii) provides comment on the proposed changes to the Licensing Team Leader by 8 February 2008 and
- iii) agrees that the Guidance Notes are issued following consultation with and agreement of the Chair of the Licensing and Safety Committee.

**3 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

Borough Solicitor

- 3.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 3.2 There are no significant financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Impact Assessment

- 3.3 Not applicable.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 3.4 There are no issues to consider.

## **4 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 Attached to this report as Annex A are the re-drafted guidance notes with changes marked.
- 4.2 In addition to giving guidance to members of the trade, it is intended that the booklet will form a reference document for members who may find themselves sitting on a Licensing and Representations Panel for a Taxi Licensing matter.
- 4.3 It is planned that the new guidance will be published by 1 April 2008 and should members have any comments on content or layout, officers would ask that they contact Laura Driscoll prior to 8 February 2008 so those comments can be considered and, where appropriate, included.

### Background Papers

Guidance Notes and Conditions for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Owners, Operators, and Drivers – April 2007

Committee papers:

Taxi Best Practice Guidance, 1.2.07

Road Safety Act 2006, 19.4.07 and 31.1.08

Manual of Inspection Standards, 4.10.07

### Contact for further information

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### Doc Ref

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**Environment & Leisure Department  
Trading Standards & Services**



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**Guidance Notes and Conditions for  
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire  
Owners, Operators, and Drivers  
April 2007**

[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

[licence.all@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:licence.all@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

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**Guidance Notes for Hackney Carriage,  
Private Hire Owners, Operators, Drivers  
and the Processes involved in the Licensing Procedure  
1 April 2007**

**1. 1. General**

The legislation relating to Hackney Carriages and Private Hire licensing is contained in the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, as amended by the Transport Act 1985.

This legislation applies throughout the whole of Bracknell Forest Borough.

In these Guidelines, the following abbreviations have been used:

|         |   |  |
|---------|---|--|
| TPCA    | - | The Town Police Clauses Act 1847                                   |
| LG(MP)A | - | The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (Part II) |
| TA      | - | The Transport Act 1985   |
| RTA     | - | The Road Traffic Act 1991  |
| DDA     | - | Disability Discrimination Act 1995                                 |
| BF(LC)  | - | Bracknell Forest Licence Conditions                                |
| BF (G)  | - | Bracknell Forest Guidance  |

These notes are issued to define and offer guidance on the legislation in relation to the provision of Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles within the Borough of Bracknell Forest. Any requirements stated as BF(LC) must be regarded as conditions of the relevant licence.

Public Records

Information held by the Council is Data Protected, however there is a requirement for a 'Public Register' to be kept available for the free public inspection of licences granted. This should only give information in respect of:

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Hackney Carriage Vehicles: | Details of all licences granted<br>Proprietor's name and address<br>Offences committed by proprietor<br>Offences committed by driver |
|----------------------------|--|

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Private Hire Drivers | Name to whom granted (but no address)<br>The date and period for which it is granted<br>The licence number |
|----------------------|--|

Enforcement Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to help your business comply with legislation in a manner that is equitable and without placing an unreasonable burden on anyone.

The 4 guiding principles enshrined in this Policy are as follows:

- Fairness: to ensure a fair and even-handed approach.

- Proportionality: to ensure that action taken relates directly to the actual or potential risk to health, safety, the environment, or economic disadvantage to the consumer or business.
- Transparency: to ensure that the reasons for taking any form of enforcement action are understood by those having to comply, and that clear distinctions are made between legal requirements and advice or guidance.
- Objectivity: to ensure that decisions are not influenced by the gender, ethnic origin, religious or political beliefs or sexual preferences of the offender, victim or witnesses. Sensitive consideration will be given where persons involved are children, elderly, infirm or suffering from a mental disorder.

A copy of the Enforcement Policy is available from Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD.

## 2. 2. Types of Licence

Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence  
 Private Hire Vehicle Licence  
 Home-to-School Vehicle  
 Dual Driver Licence – licensed to drive both Hackney Carriage  
 and Private Hire Vehicles  
 Private Hire Driver  
 Home-to-School Driver  
 Private Hire Operator

Please note if a driver's licence has lapsed for a period exceeding 2 months then the application will be treated as a new application.

## 3. Fees

Only the alteration to vehicle and operators' fees are required to be advertised by Notice in a local newspaper.

*LG(MP)A s70 (3)*

The notice will be displayed in the Council's office for at least 28 days generally during October to February to allow for any objections to be made. **These fees will apply to all licences due on or after 1 April.** No increase in fees can take place until the Notice period has expired. As the Council bases its fees on the provision of the service, no refunds shall be made except in exceptional circumstances.

*BF(G)*

The Council reviews all fees periodically and the current scale of fees is available from the Licensing Team or on the website [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/licensing](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/licensing) .

Fees can be paid for by cash, cheque, or credit/debit card at the Environment & Leisure Reception or by ringing 01344 352000 for credit/debit card payment only.

*BF(G)*

## 4. How to Apply

Details are available from the Environment & Leisure Reception at Time Square. Information and application forms are also available on the internet at [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/licensing](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/licensing).

*BF(G)*

### **3. 5. Driver's Licence – Requirements**

All new applicants will be required to complete a form from the Criminal Records Bureau to enable an enhanced check to be made for any criminal convictions recorded against them.

*LG(MP)A s59*

Existing drivers will be required to submit a new CRB check every 3 years or as required by the Hackney Carriage Officer. There is a fee to be paid for checks made by the Criminal Records Bureau.

*BF(LC)*

An applicant may be in possession of an enhanced CRB through another process. If it is current, ie dated within the last 12 months, it may be accepted as part of the application process. Any CRB presented at time of application which is more than 12 months from date of issue will not be accepted.

*BF(LC)*

If a CRB was issued more than 3 months but less than 12 months prior to the date of application, the applicant will be required to sign a declaration regarding convictions or pending cases since the issue of the CRB.

*BF(G)*

All licensed drivers are required to report details of any convictions, cautions or fixed penalty fines imposed, to the Hackney Carriage Officer in writing within 28 days of the conviction, caution or fixed penalty.

*BF(LC)*

All applicants who do not hold a UK passport and have not been resident in the UK for the previous 5 years are required to obtain a certificate of good conduct or equivalent from their relevant Embassy or High Commission.

*BF(LC)*

Applicants must have held a full DVLA/EU/EEA driving licence for at least 1 year prior to application. Driving licences and photo-cards (if applicable) must be produced on initial application and renewal of driver licence. Photocopies will not be accepted.

*BF(LC)*

All new drivers will be required to complete a DVLA licence check (DQ3). For existing drivers, a DQ3 will be required to be completed at the same time as your Criminal Record Bureau check is renewed and then every 3 years after that.

*BF(LC)*

Section 57(2a) requires applicants to produce a certificate signed by a registered medical practitioner to the effect that they are physically fit to be the driver of a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle.

*LG(MP)A s57(2a)*

A medical certificate on the prescribed BFBC form must be supplied with the first application. On attaining the ages of 50 years, 55 years, 60 years and 65 years of age, and thereafter at yearly intervals a further certificate must be supplied and at any other time that the Council's Medical Adviser shall direct. (Medical Criteria taken from: Medical Aspects of Fitness to Drive.) Group II Medical Standards apply. In the



case of insulin-treated diabetics, the DVLA Group 2 Standards for drivers of category C1 vehicles apply.

*BF(LC)*

A medical will only be viable as part of the application process for a period of 12 months from its date of issue. Should an application not be completed within that period of time, a new medical declaration must be obtained.

*BF(LC)*

All new applicants for driver's licences must take and pass the Driving Standards Agency practical test specifically designed for either (i) Hackney Carriages (including loading and unloading of wheelchair users) or (ii) Private Hire drivers.

*BF(LC)*

All new Dual and Private Hire Drivers are required to attend a First Aid Course run by the Council, unless they can provide documentation stating that they have passed a recognised First Aid course within the last 5 years.

*BF(LC)*

A driver is also required to attend a refresher course 5 years after the date of their initial course or when their current certificate expires. Drivers licensed prior to 1 August 2001 are not presently required to participate in First Aid training, although the Council is keen for those drivers to undertake training. At present the Council has set aside free places for drivers licensed prior to August 2001 and would like to see an improved take-up of this opportunity. It is an aim of the Council to have all drivers trained by 2010, and it is hoped that this can be achieved through the co-operation of the trade and provision of free training opportunities.

*BF(LC)*

Where a new driver fails to attend and pass a First Aid course within 12 months of the issue of their licence, their licence will be suspended until the course is passed.

*BF(LC)*

**Failure to attend a booked course will mean a further fee is required to be paid to enable a new booking to be made.**

*BF(LC)*

All licensed drivers are required to wear or display his/her driver's badge in a prominent position such that customers can easily read it.

*LG(MP)A s54*

Any change of details (name/address) must be submitted in writing to the Hackney Carriage Officer. Failure to do so could result in suspension of a licence. There is no fee to be paid for this process.

*TPCA s44*

## **6. Knowledge Test**

All new drivers will be required to take and pass a written knowledge test.

*LG(MP)A s51*

All drivers will be tested on the laws relating to the licence that they have applied for, the conditions laid down in the Guidance Book, and their geographical knowledge of street locations in the area. In addition, Hackney Carriage drivers will be given a location test of specific routes to destinations in the Borough. If the applicant fails

this test, they may re-take it but will be charged for any subsequent test. A pass mark of 70% applies to all sections, except the Highway Code which is a pass mark of 80%.

*BF(LC)*

Any driver who may require assistance in reading or understanding the test should notify the invigilator at the beginning of the test.

#### **4. 7. Driving Disqualifications**

Where any applicant for a **new** licence has been disqualified from driving (whether for a single offence or under the “totting up” provision), a licence will not be granted until the applicant has (since the period of disqualification has ended) held a full driving licence for a continuous period of 2 years (3 years for a conviction involving alcohol or drugs and 5 years for more than one conviction or after completion of treatment for alcoholism or drugs).

*LG(MP)A s59  
BF(LC)*

Where any licensed driver is disqualified from driving under the “totting up” provisions, providing the period of disqualification does not exceed 12 months, upon the restoration of the applicant’s driving licence, the Council will re-issue a dual or private hire driver's licence. In the event of the applicant being convicted of any further endorsable offence or issued with any confirmed warning within a period of 12 months, the Council may take action to revoke or suspend the licence.

*BF(LC)*

Where a conviction is in relation to driving whilst over the legal limit of alcohol or has resulted in a disqualification of 12 months or more, the Council will refuse to issue a licence for a period of up to 3 years from date of restoration of DVLA driving licence.

*BF(LC)*

Where any licensed driver is disqualified from driving for any such reason, he/she shall immediately return his driver’s licence and badge to the Council.

*LG(MP)A s61(2)*

#### **5. 8. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licence – Requirements**

All vehicles must be passed as fit by a Vehicle Inspector at an approved garage.

*LG(MP)A s68*

Vehicles submitted for inspection **must** be in a clean condition throughout including the underside and engine compartments. The Vehicle Inspector has the right to refuse inspection if he is of the opinion the vehicle is not in a clean condition. In such circumstances the vehicle will require a new inspection appointment which will necessitate a new inspection fee. See also section 13, Vehicle Inspections.

*BF(LC)*

**Drivers are reminded that Licensed vehicles are smokefree at all times.**

***The Smoke-free (Vehicle Operators and Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007***

#### **6. 9. Age of Vehicle**

A vehicle submitted for initial licensing must be less than 5 years old or, if wheelchair accessible, less than 4 years old from date of first registration. The maximum age of a vehicle that may continue to be licensed is 8 years from date of first registration for saloon and estate-type vehicles, and 10 years for a purpose-built Hackney Carriage.

*LG(MP)A s47 and 48  
BF(LC)*

In cases where a vehicle has done an abnormally low mileage and is in exceptional condition, it may, on application, be granted an extension on the age limit. Such an extension may be subject to certain conditions.

*BF(LC)*

An application will need to be received in writing by the Hackney Carriage Officer at least 3 months prior to the date upon which the vehicle becomes 8 years old.

*BF(G)*

The vehicle shall be subjected to a visual inspection by the Hackney Carriage Officer and it is the responsibility of the owner to submit the vehicle on the date at the place as arranged with the Hackney Carriage Officer.

*BF(LC)*

The vehicle owner will receive a decision in writing from the Council within 10 working days after the inspection.

*BF(G)*

## **7. 10. Type of Vehicle**

All replacement Hackney Carriages must be wheelchair accessible, with an engine capacity of not less than 1550cc. Licensed Hackney Carriage vehicles replaced prior to 31 December 2001 with swivel seats fitted are required to have those seats retained until such time as the vehicle is replaced by a wheelchair accessible type. Vehicles with twin telescopic wheelchair ramps must also have a winch fitted to assist entry/exit. The internal measurement must allow not less than 16" (40.64 cm) per passenger along the narrowest part of the rear seat.

*LG(MP)A s47*

*BF(LC)*

Private Hire Vehicles shall be of the four-door saloon or five-door estate type, with an engine capacity of not less than 1550cc and must be capable of carrying not less than 4 passengers. The internal measurement must allow not less than 16" (40.64 cm) per passenger along the narrowest part of the rear seat.

*LG(MP)A s48*

*BF(LC)*

Where the vehicle is an estate car, a guard must be fitted to prevent luggage entering the passenger compartment in an emergency stop. Roof racks may only be used when excess luggage is to be carried. Please see item 14 regarding the use of a trailer.

*BF(LC)*

### Passenger Seating – Vehicle Type

A vehicle can only be licensed to carry up to a maximum of 8 passengers. Any licence issued relates to a number of persons to be carried regardless of weight, age or size, and to exceed that number is an offence. Babies and young children are persons for the purposes of this licence.

*LG(MP)A s30*

Some purpose-built vehicles can carry up to 8 passengers including those seated in wheelchairs. In this case, each seat and person seated in a wheelchair count in respect of seating capacity.

*LG(MP)A s80*

A Private Hire vehicle must not be of such design or appearance as to lead any person to believe it is a Hackney Carriage.

*LG(MP)A s48*

### Stretched Limousines

A vehicle modified and issued with a certificate under either the

- (i) Lincoln Qualified Vehicle Modifier Scheme or
- (ii) Cadillac Master Coachbuilder Scheme

would be acceptable for presentation and licensing as a Private Hire vehicle.

### Tinted Windows – Type of Vehicle

The front, driver and passenger windows are required to meet the legal requirements under the Road Traffic Regulations.

*(RTA)*

For safety reasons, it should be possible to observe the driver and passengers being carried. Many vehicles are used for the carriage of children and vulnerable persons, and for this reason tinted windows, which prevent clear vision into the vehicle, are not permitted.

*BF(LC)*

Any vehicle which is submitted for licensing after 1 April 2006 will not be permitted to have tinted windows. However, vehicles which have been granted a dispensation licence may be granted an exemption from this requirement.

*BF(LC)*

## **8. 11. Carriage of Goods or Packages**

The driver of a vehicle is under a duty of care to the passengers to ensure that they travel safely. The carriage of goods or packages in the interior of the vehicle may put passengers at risk and in some instances drivers if they are not properly secured. Ideally they should be located in an area outside the passenger compartment, ie: the boot or in the vehicle with a separate driver area in the foot well adjacent to the driver. If goods are carried in the passenger compartment and a passenger suffers harm due to the presence of the goods, the driver may be liable to pay damages to the passenger. Drivers are strongly advised to check out liability with their insurance company, to avoid carrying any loose goods in the passenger compartment, and to clearly make known to passengers the risk they face in having such goods in the compartment.

*BF(G)*

### Picking Up and Disembarking Passengers

All rear access wheelchair-accessible vehicles are to only stop to pick up or disembark wheelchair passengers in a location where, given the condition and traffic movement, it is safe to do so.

*BF(G)*

## 12. Insurance and Test Certificate

It is the responsibility of the owner of the vehicle to ensure that a current insurance certificate and MOT certificate are in place for a licensed vehicle.

*LG(MP)A s57*

Insurance cover must be for a minimum period of 4 weeks. On the expiry of the insurance, a cover note or Certificate of Insurance renewing cover must be produced to the Hackney Carriage Officer prior to or on the day of expiry of the previous certificate.

*BF(LC)*

Photocopies of the original can only be made by Environment Department Reception staff.

*BF(G)*

A valid MOT certificate must be presented with each initial application for a vehicle licence, if the vehicle age requires. A valid MOT certificate must also be presented with each application for renewal of a vehicle licence, if required by vehicle age. The MOT certificate must be made available for inspection upon request by an authorised officer.

*BF(LC)*

Faxed copies will not be accepted; original certificates must be produced.

*BF(G)*

## 9. 13. Vehicle Inspection

Vehicles up to 5 years old from first date of registration at DVLA will be subject to an annual inspection. Once a licensed vehicle reaches 5 years old from first date of registration, it will require an inspection within the next 6 months, and will be subject to 6-monthly inspections thereafter. For a vehicle solely engaged in home/school transport, the same regulation applies, unless it is demonstrated that the vehicle is covering less than 8000 miles per year. The owner of the vehicle is responsible for ensuring that these inspections are carried out. Details of the testing garages are available on the Bracknell Forest Borough Council website in the Licensing section, or they can be obtained from the Environment & Leisure reception desk.

*LG(MP)A s68*

*BF(LC)*

The vehicle owner will be advised in writing one month prior to the month in which an inspection is due. It is then the responsibility of the owner to make the necessary arrangements to ensure the inspection is carried out. **If an inspection is not carried out by the due date, the licence will be suspended until such a test has been passed.**

*BF(LC)*

Any failure for an MOT matter will be an immediate failure. Non MOT matters and MOT advisories will be reported to the Licensing Officer who will contact the licence holder and decide on a course of action on a case by case basis.

*BF(LC)*

It is a requirement that a spare wheel must be carried at all times, unless all 4 wheels are using 'run flat' tyres which have been approved by an authorised officer of the Council.

*BF(G)*

#### **10. 14. Trailers**

Trailers can only be used in connection with Private Hire bookings and cannot be used for plying for hire on a rank.

*LG(MP)A s48  
BF(LC)*

Trailers must comply with the following standards:

- Unbraked trailers shall be less than 750kgs gross weight.
- Trailers over 750kgs gross weight shall be braked acting on at least two road wheels.
- The towing vehicle must have a kerb weight at least twice the gross weight of the trailer.
- A suitable lid or other approved means of enclosure shall be fitted to secure the contents within the trailer whenever in use.
- The maximum permissible length of the trailer shall be 7 metres including the drawbar and coupling.
- The width of the trailer shall not be greater than the towing vehicle subject to no trailer being wider than 2.3 metres.
- The maximum length for braked twin axle trailers is 5.540 metres.
- The trailer must at all times comply with all Road Traffic legislation requirements in particular those as laid down in the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986.
- The vehicle insurance must reflect cover for towing a trailer.
- Trailers must not be left unattended anywhere on the highway.
- The speed restrictions applicable to trailers must be observed at all times.

*LG(MP)A s48  
BF(LC)*

## 11. 15. Equipment

Every licensed vehicle shall be fitted with a 1kg BC dry powder type fire extinguisher, which must be kept full and ready for immediate use. It should be securely restrained to prevent damage or accidental discharge.

*LG(MP)A s48(2)*  
*BF(LC)*

**NOTE:** Extinguisher must comply with BSEN3 (European Standard). It must be serviced in accordance with BS5306 on an annual basis, and a record kept for inspection by the Hackney Carriage Officer.

*LG(MP)A s48(2)*  
*BF(LC)*

Every licensed vehicle shall carry a first aid kit in such a position as to be readily visible and available for immediate use in an emergency.

*LG(MP)A s48(2)*  
*BF(LC)*

The First Aid kit shall at a minimum contain the recommended contents for a travelling worker as suggested in the HSE Guidance leaflet L74 "First Aid at Work".

- HSE leaflet "Basic Advice on first aid at work"
- 6 individual wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted sizes).
- 2 individually wrapped triangular bandages (preferably sterile).
- 2 safety pins.
- 1 large (approx 18cm x 18cm) individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings.
- Individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes
- 1 pair of disposable gloves.

It is advised not to include ointments or painkillers in the first aid kit.

*BF(LC)*

## 12. 16. Radio

**Only one two-way radio with a single frequency may be operational at any one time** and this shall be an approved radio used exclusively for the hackney carriage/private hire trade and properly licensed with an effective radio power (ERP) **NOT** exceeding 25 watts.

*Wireless Telegraphy Act 1949*  
*BF(LC)*

## 13. 17. Use of Microphones and Car Telephones

A hand-held microphone or telephone handset must not be used whilst the vehicle is moving. A driver can also be prosecuted for using a hands-free device if they are not in proper control of their vehicle when using the device. Drivers must not stop on the hard shoulder of a motorway to answer or make a call unless it is to dial 999.

*RTA*

**You are reminded that it is a criminal offence to use a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving and any such offence may impact upon the driver's fitness to hold a driver's licence with BFBC.**



## 18. Signs

All licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles must display No Smoking signs in each compartment.

Smoke-free (signs) Regulations 2007.

Private hire vehicles must not display any roof sign. They may display door signs.

- The sign shall not exceed 50cm length and 25cm height
- It shall contain the following: "Name of operator " + "Operator telephone number" + "Advance Bookings Only"

No other words, devices or logos are permitted.

LG(MP)A s48(2)  
BF(LC)

The sign may be attached by means of transfer or magnetic catches, and **must be submitted for approval of the Hackney Carriage Officer before being used.**

BF(LC)

Hackney Carriages must display a roof sign with the word "TAXI", which **must** be illuminated when plying for hire. Door signs may be displayed complying with the conditions listed above, but excluding the words "Advance Bookings Only". **The TAXI roof sign may only be removed with permission of the Council or when working outside the Borough.**

BG(LC)  
LG(MP)A s47(2)

## 14. 19. Identification Plates/Screen Stickers/Badges

The licence is issued in respect of a specific vehicle and cannot be transferred to another vehicle without notice to the Council.

LG(MP)A s49(2)

For both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire, the licence backing plate must be securely fixed to the rear of the vehicle either by directly fixing it to the bumper or **on a secure bracket**. The screen stickers **must** be displayed in the **lower**, nearside corner of the front windscreen. It is an offence not to exhibit the licence plate and screen stickers.

TPCA s41  
BF(LC)

**No other Council shall license the licensed vehicle as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle.**

The vehicle licence must be carried by the driver within the vehicle and be available for inspection by an authorised officer.

BF(LC)

## 20. Taximeter

Licensed vehicles equipped with a taximeter of approved design (compulsory for a Hackney Carriage, but optional for a Private Hire car) must be submitted for testing before operating in the Borough, and are subject to further tests as and when required by the Council.

*BF(LC)*

Meters are tested over the “measured mile” by the Hackney Carriage Officer. The tariff meter **must not** incorporate any other licensing authority’s fare structure.

*BF(G)*

If a meter has to be re-submitted for testing, a charge will be made.

*BF(G)*

Where a meter is fitted to **any** licensed vehicle, that meter must be used for the charging of any journeys that start and finish within the Borough. A current tariff card must be displayed within the vehicle.

*BF(LC)*

All new or replacement vehicles licensed must have a programmed calendar date meter fitted. It must not be possible to change the tariff by manual operation.

*BF(LC)*

#### **15. 21. Private Hire Vehicle Dispensation**

The Council may grant a dispensation to certain executive vehicles, licensed as private hire, but engaged **solely** in chauffeur/corporate work.

*BF(LC)*

A licence plate will not be required to be fixed to the vehicle; however, the licence and dispensation certificate must be carried at all times.

*LG(MP)A s75(3)*

The vehicle shall be of the 4-door executive class with an engine capacity of not less than 1950cc, and be approved by the Council as being eligible for dispensation. The internal measurement must not be less than **52” (132cm)** across the narrowest part of the rear seat. All other conditions shall apply.

*BF(LC)*

*LG(MP)A s48(1ai)*

The screen sticker must still be displayed in the front windscreen at all times. Failure to comply will result in the loss of the dispensation.

*LG(MP)A s48(2)*

*BF(LC)*

#### **16. 22. Home to School Transport Provisions**

All vehicles and drivers operating for hire or reward must be licensed by the local authority.

*LG(MP)A s46(1a)*

For drivers and vehicles engaged **solely** in the transport of children from home to school, a specific Home to School transport licence is available.

*BF(G)*

The Council has discretion to allow vehicles that do not conform to certain private hire vehicle requirements to be licensed as Home to School transport vehicles.

*LG(MP)A s48  
BF(G)*

Drivers and vehicles must comply with all other requirements for licensed persons and vehicles as stated in this document.

*BF(LC)*

### **17. 23. Unauthorised Drivers**

It is an offence under the LG(MP)A 1976 Act to allow an unlicensed driver to drive a Hackney Carriage or a Private Hire vehicle. A licensed vehicle is licensed for 365 days of the year and can only be driven by a licensed driver.

*LG(MP)A s46*

### **18. 24. Transfer of Business**

Any owner transferring a licensed vehicle to a new owner must inform the Hackney Carriage Officer in writing within 14 days of the transfer.

*LG(MP)A s49(1)  
BF(LC)*

It is the responsibility of the new owner to ensure that an application is made, and provide documentation as required for the issue of a new licence.

*LG(MP)A s49(2)*

It should be remembered that each licence granted is specific to a particular vehicle.

It is the responsibility of the vehicle owner to ensure the vehicle is only sold to a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire licensed driver, or for the plate and licence details to be withdrawn from this vehicle.

*LG(MP)A s49(2)  
BF(LC)*

### **25. Accidents to Vehicles**

Whenever a licensed vehicle has been involved in an accident, even if it has only minor damage to the vehicle, the proprietor must inform the Hackney Carriage Officer in writing within **72 hours** to allow the vehicle to be inspected and the damage assessed.

*LG(MP)A s50(3)  
BF(LC)*

A vehicle licence will be suspended where major works are required. These repairs must be completed before the expiration of 2 months otherwise, by virtue of Section 68 of the 1976 Act, the vehicle licence shall be deemed to have been revoked.

*LG(MP)A s68*

With regard to minor damage, repairs should be effected within a period of 28 days of the incident otherwise the vehicle will be subjected to a Stop Notice until repairs have been completed to the satisfaction of the Hackney Carriage Officer or vehicle inspection officer.

*BF(LC)*

Temporary replacement vehicles will generally be required to be of a similar specification and standard as the vehicle it is replacing.

*BF(G)*

A temporary replacement vehicle will only be plated under the original vehicle licence plate for a maximum of 2 months, after which the licence will be revoked. The usual application process applies.

*BF(LC)*

**19. 26. Authorised Table of Fares – Hackney Carriages (and Private Hire where fitted)**

Under Section 65(1) ‘a district council may fix the rates or fares within the district as well as for time as distance, and all other charges in connection with the hire of a vehicle or with the arrangements for the hire of a vehicle, to be paid in respect of the hire of hackney carriages by means of a table made or varied in accordance with the provisions of this section’.

*LG(MP)A s65(1)*

In the case of journeys ending outside the Borough where a prior agreement has been reached with the hirer, a lesser fare may be charged. **Any fares charged MUST NOT be higher than that which would have been authorised in the Fares Table.**

*LG(MP)A s66*

If a Hackney Carriage is used under a contract for private hire, it must not charge more than the fixed rate in the authorised fare table.

*LG(MP)A s67*

A charge is to be calculated from the point in the controlled district where the hirer commences his/her journey.

*LG(MP)A s67*

Setting Hackney Carriage Fares

In order for fares to be set for Hackney Carriage Procedures a notice will be published in a local newspaper, stating the proposed fares or variation of the fares. The notice will specify a date not less than 28 days from the date of the notice to allow any objections to be lodged.

*LG(MP)A s65(2a)*

A copy of the notice will also be available at the council offices for inspection, free of charge during council opening times.

*LG(MP)A s65(2b)*

If no objections have been received when the 28 days have expired, the new fares will take effect.

*LG(MP)A s65(3)*

If objections are made and not then withdrawn, the Licensing and Safety Committee will consider the objections before setting the fare.

*LG(MP)A s65(3)*

**20. 27. Plying for Hire – Hackney Carriages**

The penalty for plying for hire without a Hackney Carriage licence applies to the owner and person in charge of the vehicle.

*LG(MP)A s45*

“Plying for Hire” means either standing at a duly authorised rank in a street, railway station or on railway premises, on private property or driving within the Borough, exhibiting to the public that the vehicle is available for hire. Only licensed Hackney Carriages may “ply for hire”.

*TPCA s45*

## **21. 28. Guide and Assistance Dogs**

It is an offence for a driver to refuse to carry guide and assistance dogs unless they have a medical exemption certificate.

*DDA s37(4)*

These certificates are issued by the Council and details upon how to apply are available by visiting the Customer Service Centre at Time Square or speaking to the Licensing Officer on 01344 352000. A fee is payable for the application.

*BF(G)*

Drivers, in making an application for an exemption, will need to provide medical evidence to support it.

*DDA s37 (5)*

This must be provided by a medical practitioner other than the applicant’s general practitioner. If the exemption is being applied for on the grounds of a chronic phobia to dogs, the report must be provided by a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist.

*BF(LC)*

A driver may also commit an offence if they:

- do not accept bookings made by or on behalf of a disabled person who is accompanied by a guide, hearing or other assistance dog;
- make an additional charge for the carrying of the dog.

*DDA s37*

## **29. Carrying Disabled Passengers**

Under Section 36 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, a wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriage must carry a wheelchair using passenger if requested to do so. Assistance as may reasonably be required should be provided at no extra charge. Failure to comply with this section will make the driver, on summary conviction, liable to a fine not exceeding level 3 (£1000) on the standard scale.

*DDA 1995 s36*

## **22. 30. Supervision**

An authorised Officer of the Council has the power at all reasonable times to inspect and test for fitness any Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licensed by the Council or any taximeter affixed to the vehicle. If he/she is not satisfied as to the fitness of the vehicle or as to the accuracy of the taximeter, he/she may, by notice, require the proprietor or driver to make the vehicle or taximeter available for further inspection and testing and may suspend the vehicle licence until such time as he/she is satisfied as to its fitness.

*LG(MP)A s68*

If the vehicle is not made fit within 2 months, the vehicle licence will be automatically revoked.

*LG(MP)A s68*

A vehicle and driver will be subject to spot checks carried out by an authorised Bracknell Forest Borough Council officer.

*LG(MP)A s68*

It is an offence to wilfully obstruct an authorised Officer or fail to give such assistance or information as may be required or to comply with any reasonable requirement. It is also an offence to give false information.

*LG(MP)A s73(1)*

### **31. Operator Licences**

An Operator's Licence is required for the purpose of making provision for the invitation or acceptance of bookings for a private hire vehicle.

*LG(MP)A s55*

An Operator can only use vehicles and drivers licensed by the same authority as himself/herself.

*LG(MP)A s46*

All bookings must be made through an Operator with a fixed base holding the required Private Hire Operator's licence (not through a mobile phone number).

*LG(MP)A s55*

*BF(LC)*

### **Insurance**

Under health and safety legislation, employer's liability insurance is required. Any premises that provide access to members of the public should be covered by public liability insurance. As a rule of thumb, if the operator supplies the tools of the trade, for example the supply of a vehicle to a driver, or in the case of office-based personnel the radio equipment, they have a liability. On the grant of a licence the operator should ensure that adequate insurance in respect of public and employer's liability, if applicable, are held. These should be available for inspection at any reasonable time by an authorised officer.

*LG(MP)A s55*

*BF(LC)*

Please contact the Hackney Carriage Officer for further guidance.

### **23. 32. Responsibility of Proprietor or Operator**

The Council will hold the owner or proprietor of a licensed Hackney Carriage or the owner or Operator of a Private Hire vehicle responsible for the general condition and roadworthiness of his/her vehicle, and for ensuring that his/her drivers are familiar with all conditions, legislation and by-laws regulating the operation of vehicles.

*BF(G)*

In certain instances therefore the proprietor or operator may be subject to enforcement action as a result of an offence committed by their Driver.

*LG(MP)A s50*

The Council will take into account the circumstances of such offence and how far the proprietor has carried out his/her obligations in deciding whether to take any action against the proprietor.

*BF(G)*

### Records

The records required to be kept by the operator shall be kept in a manner, whether written or on a computer, which enables them to be examined or audited. The operator shall enter or cause to be entered therein, before the commencement of each journey, the following particulars of every booking of a private hire vehicle invited or accepted by him:

*LG(MP)A s56*

*BF(LC)*

- a) The time and date of booking.
- b) The name of the hirer.
- c) How the booking was made (ie: telephone, personal call, etc).
- d) Price quoted for booking.
- e) The time of pick-up.
- f) The point of pick-up.
- g) The destination.
- h) The time at which a driver was allocated to the booking.
- i) Driver's badge number or call sign of the vehicle allocated to the booking.
- j) Remarks (including full details of any sub-contract).

*LG(MP)A s56(2)*

*BF(LC)*

All records kept by the operator shall be preserved for a period of not less than 6 months following the date of the last entry.

*BF(LC)*

Should the operator use a computerised record system at the end of each daily working period, hard copies of all records as required above are to be made and kept in accordance with the above.

*BF(LC)*

The operator shall also keep the following records of the particulars of all private hire vehicles operated by him, and supply to the Hackney carriage officer an up to date list upon reasonable request.

- a) Owner and all drivers of each licensed vehicle.
- b) Registration and plate number.
- c) Insurance certificate/cover note expiry date.
- d) MOT expiry date (copy to be held at operating base).
- e) Radio call sign used.

Any changes in drivers or vehicles shall be notified to the Hackney Carriage Officer in writing within 48 hours.

*LG(MP)A s56 (3)*

*BF(LC)*

### Standards of Service

The operator shall provide a prompt efficient and reliable service to members of the public at all reasonable times and for this purpose shall in particular:

- Ensure that when a private hire vehicle has been hired to be in attendance at an appointed time and place, the vehicle shall (unless delayed or prevented by sufficient cause) punctually attend at that appointed time and place. Where possible, contact customer and inform of any delay.

*BF(G)*

- Keep clean, adequately heated, ventilated and lit any premises which the operator provides and to which the public has access whether for the purpose of booking or waiting.

*BF(G)*

- Ensure that any waiting area provided by the operator has adequate seating facilities.

*BF(G)*

- Ensure that any telephone facilities and radio equipment provided are maintained in a sound condition and that any defects are repaired promptly.

*BF(G)*

- The use of Citizen Band Radio transmitter/ receiver will not be permitted in a licensed vehicle.

*LG(MP)A s55(3)*

### **24. 33. Suspension, Revocation or Refusal to Renew Licences**

Any contravention will be dealt with in accordance with the Enforcement Policy (see Appendix E).

*BF(G)*

### Vehicle Licences

The Council may suspend, revoke or refuse to renew a vehicle licence on any of the following grounds:

- The licensed vehicle is unfit for use as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle.

*LG(MP)A s60(1a)*

- Any offence under, or non-compliance with, the provisions of the 1847 or 1976 Acts by the proprietor, operator or driver.

*TPCA  
LG(MP)A s60(1b)*

- Any other reasonable cause.

*LG(MP)A s60 (1c)*

### Driver Licences

The Council may suspend, revoke or refuse to renew a driver's licence on any of the following grounds:

- That he/she has since the granting of the licence:



- been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty, indecency, violence, or driving with excess alcohol;
- been convicted of an offence under or has failed to comply with the provisions of the 1847, 1976 and 1991 Acts as amended; or
- any other reasonable cause.

*LG(MP)A s61*

### Operator Licences

The Council may suspend, revoke or refuse to renew an operator's licence on any of the following grounds:

- any offence, misconduct under, or non-compliance with, the provisions of Part II of the 1976 Act as amended;
- any material change since the licence was granted in any of the circumstances of the operator on the basis of which the licence was granted; or
- any other reasonable cause.

*LG(MP)A s62*

### **25. 34. Appeals Procedure**

Where a new licence application is refused, an appeal is available to the Magistrates Court, Crown Court for Hackney Carriage vehicle. Where an existing licence is suspended or revoked, the applicant or licence holder has a right of appeal to a court of summary jurisdiction (Magistrates Court). An appeal must be lodged with either Court within 21 days of notification of the refusal, suspension or revocation.

*LG(MP)A s52*

The applicant/licence holder may also within 21 days make an application to appeal to the Council's Licensing Panel. Upon receipt of an application, the Director of Environment and Leisure will decide if the matter is to be referred to the Panel. If referred, the applicant will be informed in writing of the date and time, and will receive information on their rights and the process of the hearing.

*BF(G)*

### **26. 35. Return of Licences**

#### Vehicle Licence

On the suspension, revocation or expiry of a vehicle licence, the proprietor must return the licence plate and screen sticker to the Borough Council within 7 days of receipt of notice. Failure to do so can render the proprietor liable on summary conviction to a fine. **Any authorised officer of the Council or a Police Officer shall be entitled to remove and retain the licence plate or screen sticker in such cases.**

*LG(MP)A s58*

#### Driver's Licence

On the suspension, revocation or expiry of a driver's licence, the driver must return the badge and licence to the Borough Council on demand. **Any authorised officer**

**of the Council or a Police Officer shall be entitled to retain the licence in such cases.**

*LG(MP)A s58*

The badge, plate and licence remain the property of the Council at all times.

*BF(LC)*

### **36. Offences**

As well as the suspension or revocation of licences, it may be that the circumstances amount to a criminal offence. In such a case a prosecution for these may also be appropriate.

*LG(MP)A  
TPCA*

### **37. Seat Belts and Child Seats**

Hackney Carriage drivers are exempt by virtue of Regulation 5(h) of the Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts) Regulations 1982, providing they are seeking hire, answering a call for hire or carrying a passenger for hire, and the vehicle is carrying a plate showing it is a licensed Hackney Carriage.

A similar exemption applies to a Private Hire Vehicle **provided it is being used to carry a passenger for hire.**

New regulations governing the use of child car seats came into force on 18 September 2006. The law is summarised in the following table:

|  | <b>Front seat</b>                            | <b>Rear seat</b>   | <b>Who is responsible?</b> |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|
| <b>Child up to 3 years old</b>   | Correct child restraint <b>MUST</b> be used. | Correct child restraint <b>MUST</b> be used.<br><br>If a restraint is not available in a licensed taxi/private hire vehicle, the child may travel unrestrained.  | <b>Driver</b>              |
| <b>Child from 3rd birthday up to 135cms in height (approx 4' 5") (or 12th birthday whichever they reach first)</b> | Correct child restraint <b>MUST</b> be used. | <b>Where</b> seat belts are fitted, the correct child restraint <b>MUST</b> be used. The child must use adult belt if the correct child restraint is not available as follows:<br><br>- in a licensed taxi or private hire vehicle; or<br>- for a short distance in an unexpected necessity; or<br>- two occupied child restraints prevent fitment of a third.<br><br>A child 3 years and over may travel unrestrained in the rear seat of a vehicle if seat belts are not fitted in the rear. | <b>Driver</b>              |
| <b>Child over 1.35 metres (approx 4' 5") in height or 12 or 13 years old</b>                                       | Seat belt <b>MUST</b> be worn if available.  | Seat belt <b>MUST</b> be worn if available.  | <b>Driver</b>              |

|  |   |   |                  |
|--|---|---|------------------|
| <b>Passengers aged 14 years old and over</b> | Seat belt <b>MUST</b> be worn if available. | Seat belt <b>MUST</b> be worn if available. | <b>Passenger</b> |
|--|---|---|------------------|

Notwithstanding the above legal requirements, where vehicles are fitted with a front air bag, the driver must be aware of any manufacturer's instructions in relation to the age and height of the person sitting in the front seat. A failure by a driver to take account of those instructions may be regarded as a breach of their duty of care to customers.

*RTA  
BF(G)*

**27. 38. Complaints**

Complaints received from members of the public regarding the service and conduct of drivers/vehicles and operators will be considered, and where appropriate, investigated by the Licensing Officer.

*BF(G)*

**28. 39. Service Standards**

**29.**

**30.** Within 2 working days of receipt of all documentation necessary to make a decision upon a licence application, we aim to:

- provide you with all the necessary documents, badges or plates; and
- make contact with you to make an appointment when these can be collected or fitted to your vehicle; or
- advise you of the reason for a delay or, in some cases, the reason for refusal.

Some applications require us to make enquiries of other agencies and they may take over 4 weeks to supply the necessary information.

When making an application, you are required to provide information and documentation as detailed on the application form. A failure by you to provide this will unnecessarily delay the decision on your application. Certain documents must be provided together at the same time and unless they are received as required, they will be returned to you and the application will be delayed until they are provided as requested.

*BF(G)*

How to contact the department:

Write to:

Licensing Officer  
Trading Standards & Services  
Environment & Leisure Department  
Time Square  
Bracknell RG12 1JD

Email: [licence.all@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:licence.all@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01344 352000

Visit: Environment & Leisure Department Reception, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell.

The offices are open from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday.

If you have any questions on your application or licence, please visit the office or phone and speak to a member of the Customer Service Team. In the vast majority of cases they will be able to answer your questions, but if they cannot they will make arrangements for you to speak to a member of staff best able to deal with your enquiry.

Information provided on application forms is held on a database and will only be disclosed to other agencies where there is a legal requirement to do so.

Payments can be made by cash, cheque or credit card at the Customer Service Reception, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, or online by debit/credit card.

**Guidance on the Relevance of Criminal Records  
in respect of Applicants for a Licence to drive  
a Hackney Carriage, Private Hire Vehicle or to be an Operator**

Unless otherwise specified, all applicants must complete a Criminal Records Bureau Check form prior to the granting of a licence and re-submit the same every **3 years**.

**Refusal to complete the form will mean no licence will be issued.**

All past convictions will be considered against the following Guidelines and other relevant guidance including decided cases. In every case the individual facts will be considered with the overriding consideration being the protection of the public. Where multiple convictions of a similar type have occurred, a minimum period of 5 years free from conviction may be required.

Examples of the relevance of past convictions in relation to the issue, revocation or refusal to grant a licence are detailed below. It must be stressed that these examples are for guidance only and every case will be judged on its merits with the overriding principle being that of the protection of the public, both customers and other road users.

1. Minor traffic offences

Convictions for minor traffic offences, eg: obstruction, waiting in a restricted street, speeding etc, should not prevent a person from proceeding with an application.

However, if sufficient penalty points have been accrued to require a period of disqualification of the applicant's DVLA driving licence, then a licence may be granted after its restoration, but a warning will be issued as to future conduct.

2. Major traffic offences

An isolated conviction for reckless driving or driving without due care and attention etc will normally merit a warning as to future driving, and advice on the standard expected of licensed drivers. More than one conviction for this type of offence within the last 2 years should merit a refusal. No further application should be considered until a period of 3 years from the last conviction has elapsed.

3. Drunkenness

With Motor Vehicle

A serious view is taken of convictions of driving or being in charge of a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol.

Where there is a single conviction for this offence there will be a refusal to the applicant. At least 3 years should elapse (after restoration of DVLA driving licence) before the applicant will be considered for a licence. Any suggestion that the applicant is an alcoholic will require a special medical even before the application is entertained. If an applicant is found to be an alcoholic, or where there is more than one conviction of this type a period of 5 years from completion of treatment or restoration of the licence should elapse before a further application is considered.

## Not in Motor Vehicle

An isolated conviction for drunkenness need not debar an applicant from gaining a licence. However, more than one conviction for drunkenness could indicate a medical problem necessitating a critical medical examination (see above). In some cases, a warning may be sufficient.

## Drugs

An applicant with a conviction for a drug-related offence will be required to show a period of at least 3 years free of convictions before an application is entertained, or 5 years after detoxification treatment if he/she was an addict.

### 4. Indecency offences

Applicants with convictions for indecent exposure, indecent assault, importuning, or any of the more serious sexual offences, will be refused.

### 5. Violence

Any convictions for violence such as grievous bodily harm, wounding or assault, will be refused until at least 5 years has elapsed from the expiry of any sentence.

### 6. Dishonesty

- Single conviction for minor incident – refusal for a period of one year free from conviction.
- Two convictions for minor incidents – refusal for a period of 3 years free from conviction.
- More than 2 convictions for minor incidents or one or more convictions for significant act of dishonesty – refusal for a period of 5 years free from conviction.

## **Information**

In clarification of the above, the recorded date of the court conviction is to be taken as the period to remain free of conviction from, unless a sentence of imprisonment or corrective training exceeding 30 months has been imposed, whence the period is to commence from the date of release from imprisonment.

## **Licence Conditions**

Where new licence conditions are being considered, the Council will look to consult the Trade. Where conditions are revised in line with new legislation, every effort will be made to advise the Trade.

Where a new condition is applied to a licence, the licence holder is entitled to appeal to a court of summary jurisdiction within 21 days of that application of the condition.

### Advice for Drivers when dealing with People with Disabilities

Taxis are an important, and sometimes the only means of transportation for many people with disabilities.

It may be that you drive or operate a vehicle designed to make travelling easier for disabled people, but an accessible vehicle is only part of the answer. Your attitude and understanding of the problems that may be faced by people with disabilities is very important.

Disability comes in many forms – not always visible. Never make assumptions, always ask what help (if any) a passenger may need from you. **Make sure that you are familiar with any access and safety equipment in your vehicle.**

The following is some basic advice to assist you in giving the best service to your passenger.

#### Wheelchair Users

If you drive a saloon car, you may still be able to take wheelchair users provided that the passenger is able and willing to transfer. In those circumstances, you should ask the passenger what help they require, listen to their response, and act only as advised. Take care when loading the wheelchair into the boot. Wheelchairs can be expensive to repair or replace and without it the passenger may be totally immobile. Some wheelchairs are collapsible and some parts, such as handles and plates may come away easily, so care needs to be taken when folding or loading collapsible wheelchairs.

#### Ambulant Disabled

Whilst some ambulant disabled may use crutches or sticks, many disabled people who have mobility difficulties will not. People, with arthritis in particular, may be unable to walk using a stick or crutches due to painful upper limbs. If the passenger appears to have walking difficulties, or is frail or elderly, always:

- Offer to fit the additional step if there is one – this reduces the first step and makes it easier to get into vehicles. If in an MPV, ask whether pulling up as close as possible to the kerb would be helpful. For saloon cars this may not be useful because it increases the height the passenger has to drop down to the seat and may make it more difficult for them to get out of the seat at the end of the journey.
- Offer the use of a swivel seat (if you have one).
- Be ready to help, but do not insist on helping. If you are asked to help, listen carefully to the information given, or ask what is the best way to assist.
- If you have used a swivel seat, make sure it is locked back in position once inside the vehicle.
- Always ask the customer to make sure that the brakes of the wheelchair are on.

- Secure the wheelchair and suggest that the passenger uses the seat belt provided.
- Avoid sudden braking or acceleration.
- Leave the passenger in a safe and convenient place which enables them to move away independently.

### Visually Impaired Passengers

If a passenger is blind or partially sighted, ask what assistance they require and always:

- Look out for the “TAXI” sign which may be held out by some visually impaired people in order to hail a cab.
- If you are knowingly collecting a visually impaired passenger from a pre-booked location, knock at the door on arrival – do not remain in the cab and hoot your horn.
- If your customer would like to be accompanied to or from the entrance of a building, offer them your arm (gripping just above the elbow will enable them to be guided more easily).
- Tell your passenger whether they are entering a saloon car or purpose-built cab.
- Demonstrate which way the doors open where appropriate.
- If possible, place a visually impaired person’s hand on the open door and indicate the position of the roof.
- Make sure the passenger(s) know which way the vehicle is facing.
- Make sure the passenger(s) are seated and have secured the seat belt (where applicable) before you move off. They may require assistance with the belt.
- Tell passenger(s) if you are taking a different route from that which they might expect, or if there is a hold-up or diversion.
- Tell passenger(s) the fare and count out the change.
- Set the passenger(s) down in a safe place and make sure they know where they are going.
- Remember guide dogs are trained to remain on the floor of a vehicle and will not abuse your vehicle. Refusal to carry a guide dog without a medical exception is an offence under the Disability Discrimination Act and is in contravention of the conditions of your licence. In saloon cars, there is more room for the dog on the floor in the front of the vehicle.

### Hearing Impaired Passengers

If a passenger’s hearing is impaired, always:



- Look at them when you are speaking. Speak clearly, but do not shout and do not use your hands to gesticulate in front of your face.
- Have a pad of paper and pen handy, as it is sometimes easier to communicate in writing.
- Make sure that they are aware that you have understood their instructions and that you know where you are going.

#### Maintenance of Vehicles

- Keep door handles, locks and hinges well oiled. This reduces the amount of physical (often painful) effort required to operate them.

**ADVICE FOR DRIVERS AND OPERATORS  
when dealing with 'Difficult Passengers'**

It is recognised that taxi drivers do on occasions have to deal with customers who, due to the influence of substances such as alcohol and possibly drugs, can be difficult and dangerous. These passengers can exhibit aggressive and sometimes violent tendencies, which can threaten the safety and welfare of the driver. If the vehicle is in motion, then this behaviour can distract a driver and may lead to the loss of control of the vehicle, with serious consequences for the occupants and other highway users.


To assist drivers in dealing with these situations, the following guidelines have been issued:

1. Upon arrival to collect passengers, a driver may make a judgement as to whether the intended passengers are fit to travel in the vehicle. If a person is judged by the driver to represent a risk by their behaviour to the driver or other passengers, the driver may make the decision to refuse entry to the vehicle. The driver must inform the person of the reason for refusal and consider if this action has induced a change in that behaviour. If no change is evident, the driver must inform his base of his decision as soon as possible.
2. If passengers during a journey exhibit behaviour which is likely to threaten the safety or welfare of a driver, the driver must stop the vehicle at the earliest possible moment in a safe location. In deciding upon the location, the driver must take into account the possible risks to the passengers and themselves whilst stationary in that location. For example, is the stopping place likely to be hazardous to other traffic, or should the passengers leave the vehicle will they be at risk from traffic? The driver should not attempt to continue on the journey until the behaviour has modified.
3. There may be occasions when the threat to the driver's safety is at such a level that it is necessary to stop the vehicle immediately. In doing so, the driver must be aware of the risks to other traffic in taking such action. The driver should take account of the Highway Code, in particular the sections on 'Waiting and Parking' and 'Breakdowns and Accidents', in making his/her decision. The driver must advise passengers on how and when to leave the vehicle and, if appropriate, where to stand in line with the guidance in the Highway Code.
4. Where the behaviour of passengers has resulted in a refusal to carry or in the stopping of a journey, the driver should contact his operator and advise him/her of the circumstances and location. The operator or driver should consider if the incident requires Police attendance and, if deemed necessary, request it. A record should be kept by the driver or operator of any incident that occurs which they should produce at the request of an authorised Officer of the Council or a Police Officer.
5. In vehicles where the driving section is separate from the passenger section by a partition, the driver should consider driving directly to a Police Station or to a public place, such as his/her operating base. At these locations, the risk to the safety and welfare of the driver can be limited.

6. In cases where the passenger(s) showing threatening behaviour are female, it is advised where possible to take the passenger(s) to a well lit area which is covered by CCTV, preferably a 24 hour petrol station.

### Recording on Contraventions

The Council has agreed a system whereby infringements of the law or licence conditions by a licence holder can be recorded and given a value dependent upon the nature of the infringement. Any licensed person who in the opinion of the Hackney Carriage Officer has committed an infringement will be issued with a notice as shown below.

| <b>BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL</b><br>Environment & Leisure Department<br>Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD<br>01344 352000   |        |   |  |        |   |
|--|--------|---|--|--------|---|
|  |        |   |  |        |   |
| Contraventions   | Points | ✓ | Contraventions   | Points | ✓ |
| No valid insurance   | 10     |   | Failure to report accident   | 2      |   |
| No valid MOT   | 10     |   | Contravene Stop Notice   | 10     |   |
| Illegal tyres  | 10     |   | Unattended on rank   | 2      |   |
| Horn misuse  | 2      |   | Private Hire parked on rank  | 5      |   |
| Civil orderly manner   | 2-4    |   | Private Hire plying for hire   | 10     |   |
| C & U regulations  | 2-4    |   | Failure to display badge   | 2      |   |
| Too many passengers  | 8      |   | Failure to notify change of details  | 3      |   |
| Overcharging   | 5      |   | Other licence requirements   |        |   |
| Vehicle cleanliness  | 3      |   | Using unlicensed vehicle   | 10     |   |
| Removing plate   | 3      |   | Driving not licensed   | 10     |   |
| Using bus lane   | 5      |   | Smoking in vehicle/incorrect signage   | 5      |   |
| Plate no: ..... Driver's name: .....<br>Vehicle reg no: ..... has been inspected as indicated above.<br>The contravention(s) above mean(s) that you have acquired ..... points.<br>The vehicle must not be used until the contravention(s) above have been rectified and the vehicle is presented to the Hackney Carriage Officer by .../.../... or the vehicle may be used.<br>Failure to comply with this Notice could lead to the revocation or suspension of your licences and does not rule out further proceedings when this matter is considered along with driver/ vehicle history.<br>Date: ..... Signed: ..... |        |   |  |        |   |

The licence-holder has a right of appeal in writing to the Director of Environment & Leisure Department at Time Square within 14 days of receiving the notice, and will receive notification of the decision of the appeal within 30 days of receipt of the notice of appeal.

The issue of a notice does not prevent the Department from taking any other action in line with its published Enforcement Policy including prosecution where this is felt to be appropriate.

Where 20 or more points are issued to a licence holder within a 12-month period or where 30 penalty points are issued to a licence holder within a 24-month period, a report will be submitted to the next meeting of the Licensing Panel.

The Panel will receive the report from officers and invite representations from the licence holder

The present list of infringements and scores will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Points will be applied in the event of failure to notify the Licensing Team of change of address details. Please note following representation from the Trade, there is no longer a charge for notification of these changes.

**Enforcement Table  
Town Police Clauses Act 1847**

| <b>Section</b> | <b>Offence</b>   |
|----------------|--|
| 40             | Giving false information on application for HC proprietor's licence        |
| 44             | Failure to notify change of address of HC proprietor                       |
| 45             | Plying for hire without HC proprietor's licence                            |
| 47             | Driving a HC without HC driver's licence                                   |
| 47             | Lending or parting with HC driver's licence                                |
| 47             | HC proprietor employing unlicensed driver                                  |
| 48             | Failure by HC proprietor to hold HC driver's licence                       |
| 48             | Failure by HC proprietor to produce HC driver's licence                    |
| 52             | Failure to display HC plate  |
| 53             | Refusal to take a fare   |
| 54             | Charging more than the agreed fare   |
| 55             | Obtaining more than the legal fare   |
| 56             | Travelling less than the lawful distance for an agreed fare                |
| 57             | Failing to wait after a deposit to wait has been paid                      |
| 58             | Charging more than the legal fare  |
| 59             | Carrying other person than the hirer without consent                       |
| 60             | Driving HC without proprietor's consent                                    |
| 60             | Person allowing another to drive HC without proprietor's consent           |
| 61             | Drunken driving of HC  |
| 61             | Wanton or furious driving or wilful misconduct leading to injury or danger |
| 62             | Driver leaving HC unattended   |
| 64             | HC driver obstructing other HCs  |

**Enforcement Table  
Hackney Carriage Provisions  
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976**

| <b>Section</b> | <b>Offence</b>  |
|----------------|---|
| 49             | Failure to notify transfer of HC proprietor's licence                           |
| 50(1)          | Failure to present HC for inspection as required                                |
| 50(2)          | Failure to inform local authority where HC is stored if requested               |
| 50(3)          | Failure to report an accident to local authority                                |
| 50(4)          | Failure to produce HC proprietor's licence and insurance certificate            |
| 53(3)          | Failure to produce HC driver's licence  |
| 57             | Making false statement or withholding information to obtain HC driver's licence |

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| 58(2)    | Failure to return plate after notice given after expiry, revocation or suspension of HC proprietor's licence |
| 61(2)    | Failure to surrender driver's licence after suspension, revocation or refusal to renew                       |
| 64       | Permitting any vehicle other than HC to wait on an HC stand  |
| 66       | Charging more than the meter fare for a journey ending outside the district, without prior agreement         |
| 67       | Charging more than the meter fare when HC used as private hire vehicle                                       |
| 69       | Unnecessarily prolonging a journey   |
| 71       | Interfering with a taximeter   |
| 73(1)(a) | Obstruction of authorised officer or constable   |
| 73(1)(b) | Failure to comply with requirement of authorised officer or constable  |
| 73(1)(c) | Failure to give information or assistance to authorised officer or constable                                 |

**Enforcement Table  
Private Hire Provisions  
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976**

| <b>Section</b> | <b>Offence</b>  |
|----------------|---|
| 46(1)(a)       | Using an unlicensed PH vehicle  |
| 46(1)(b)       | Driving a PH vehicle without a PH driver's licence  |
| 46(1)(c)       | Proprietor of a PH vehicle using an unlicensed driver   |
| 46(1)(d)       | Operating a PH vehicle without a PH operator's licence  |
| 46(1)(e)       | Operating a PH vehicle when the driver is not licensed as a PH driver   |
| 46(1)(e)       | Operating a PH vehicle when the driver is not licensed as a PH driver   |
| 48(6)          | Failure to display PH vehicle plate   |
| 49             | Failure to notify transfer of PH vehicle licence  |
| 50(1)          | Failure to represent PH vehicle for inspection as required  |
| 50(2)          | Failure to inform local authority where PH vehicle is stored if requested   |
| 50(3)          | Failure to report an accident to local authority  |
| 50(4)          | Failure to produce PH vehicle licence and insurance certificate   |
| 53(3)          | Failure to produce PH driver's licence  |
| 54(2)          | Failure to wear PH driver's badge   |
| 56(2)          | Failure by PH operator to keep records of bookings  |
| 56(3)          | Failure by PH operator to keep records of PH vehicles operated by him   |
| 56(4)          | Failure to produce PH operator's licence on request   |
| 57             | Making false statement or withholding information to obtain PH driver's or obtain PH driver's or operator's licence |
| 58(2)          | Failure to return plate after notice given after expiry, revocation or suspension of PH vehicle licence             |
| 61(2)          | Failure to surrender driver's licence after suspension, revocation or refusal to renew                              |
| 67             | Charging more than the meter fare when HC used as PH vehicle  |
| 69             | Unnecessarily prolonging a journey  |
| 71             | Interfering with a taximeter  |
| 73(1)(a)       | Obstruction of authorised officer or constable  |
| 73(1)(b)       | Failure to comply with requirement of authorised officer or constable   |
| 73(1)(c)       | Failure to give information or assistance to authorised officer or constable  |