

# Taxi and Private Hire Newsletter

March 2021

issue **2**

## Taxi and Private Hire Newsletter Spring Edition 2021

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### **Message from Councillor Alan Bolshaw, Chair of the Statutory and Non-Statutory Licensing Committee.**

In response to the pandemic, we will continue to do everything that we can to help you during this difficult period, within the rules allowed by legislation, such as keeping our licensing fees at their record low throughout 2021-2022.

We are also delighted to include a special 'good news story' in this edition concerning a safeguarding issue.

I would personally like to thank Mrs. Janice Crawford for playing a vital role in the safe discovery of a missing pensioner during a major search operation in Kent.

It is a source of immense pride that I feel when I learn of instances such as these. I am adamant that some of the best private hire vehicle drivers in the country are those licensed by City of Wolverhampton Council. Our standards are rigorous and the training we require drivers to undertake is first-class.

Taxi drivers are in a unique position of trust and can act as our eyes and ears on safeguarding issues. This incident highlights the extremely important role that taxi drivers hold within the community and the importance of our safeguarding training.

### **Councillor Alan Bolshaw**



## Are you eligible for financial support?

Councils have been given money by the Government to support their local businesses. Taxi and private hire drivers living in Wolverhampton might be eligible for a one-off £2,000 payment under the new business support grant, regardless of which authority they are licensed with. Further information can be found [here](#).

If you live outside Wolverhampton, you should contact your local council to ask how they are helping drivers in their area.

You may also be eligible for further support if you are self-employed and getting less work as a result of the pandemic. For more information, please click [here](#).

If you are told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, you may be entitled to a payment of £500 under the [Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme](#).

## Covid-19: Taxi and Private Hire Webinar

Our Covid-19: Taxi and Private Hire Webinar is now available to view by clicking [here](#). The webinar features expert advice from Environmental and Public Health about how to reduce transmission of the virus and operate safely under current government guidance.

## Lateral Flow Testing

Rapid testing is available for people without symptoms of Covid-19 who haven't been instructed to self-isolate by NHS Track and Trace. These tests are the most effective at picking up on Covid-19 infections in people who are not yet displaying symptoms.

For Wolverhampton residents, the following test sites are available to you:

- The Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, WV1 1SH.
- Jamia Masjid Bilal, 58 Newhampton Road, WV6 0AA
- St Joseph's Catholic Church, Stow Heath Lane, Wolverhampton, WV1 2QN.
- Pendeford Library, Whitburn Close, Wolverhampton, WV9 5NJ
- Ashmore Park Hub, 82 Griffiths Dr, Wolverhampton, WV11 2LH.
- Bilston Community Centre, 1 Prouds Lane, Bilston, WV14 6PW

For opening times and further information, please click [here](#).

For those based out of Wolverhampton, we encourage you to make use of the Rapid Testing sites available within your local authority. You can find your local test centre by clicking [here](#).

**TRAVEL SAFE**

**Coronavirus advice:**  
Using taxis and private hire vehicles

- ✓ **Wear a face covering** in taxis or private hire vehicles. You could be refused entry if you do not wear a face covering.
- ✓ **Maintain a 2 metre distance** if you are queuing for a taxi.
- ✓ **Follow the driver's advice.** You may be asked to sit in the back of the vehicle.
- ✓ **Open windows** for ventilation where possible.
- ✓ **Use contactless or online** payment.
- ✓ **Be aware** of the surfaces you touch and use a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- ✓ **Sanitise or wash your hands** for 20 seconds after your journey.

**PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS**

wolverhampton.gov.uk/travelsafe

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL

## Upcoming Changes

Members of the Non-Statutory Licensing Committee recently met to review the fees and charges for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Functions for 2021-2022.

The committee agreed that no fees will be increased during 2021-2022, to help support the trade which has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic. This follows on from the mid term reductions agreed last May to reduce fees to assist drivers.

From 1 April 2021, the following changes will also be implemented:

- Right to Work checks for renewal applicants will be reduced from £125 to £25.
- Three-year licences will be available to new driver applicants, costing £120.
- Three-year dual driver licence renewals will be reduced from £240 to £200.



**APPLY TO THE  
EU SETTLEMENT SCHEME  
BEFORE THE DEADLINE ON**



**30  
JUNE  
2021**

**Find out more and apply now:  
[gov.uk/eusettlementscheme](https://gov.uk/eusettlementscheme)**

## DBS Update Service

From 1 April 2021, all driver licence applicants purchasing an enhanced DBS certificate will be required to subscribe to the DBS Update Service at a cost of £13 per year. Existing drivers will not be required to subscribe to the update service until their current DBS certificate expires, three years after its issue date.

Applicants have 30 days from the issue date on the DBS certificate to apply for the Update Service.

If you are already signed up to the service and want to provide your Update Service details, you can do so [here](#). Alternatively, you can subscribe to the DBS update service by clicking [here](#).

The DBS certificate must be for an enhanced check for the position of 'Other Workforce - Taxi Licensing' or 'Other Workforce - Taxi Driver'.

If you do not subscribe to the Update Service and your licence is granted or renewed after 1 April 2021, you will be required to purchase a new DBS certificate every six months. Six monthly DBS checks are now required by the [Department for Transport](#).

## EU Settlement Scheme

We would like to remind you that 30 June 2021 is the deadline for EEA and Swiss citizens to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.

We encourage EEA and Swiss citizens, and their family members, to apply now to protect their rights in the UK. Click [here](#) for more information.

## Keen Eyed Driver Saves Pensioner

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We would like to extend our thanks to one of our licensed drivers, Janice Crawford, for her help in safely locating a missing pensioner in Kent.

Mrs Crawford played a vital role in a major search operation which led to the arrest of two individuals.

Police were tipped-off after Mrs Crawford recognised the missing man as a previous fare, in response to a missing person post circulated from her base.

The full story can be read [here](#).



Do you have a story for us? Email [jessica.rowley@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:jessica.rowley@wolverhampton.gov.uk).

## CCTV Consultation

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We are launching a consultation on a voluntary CCTV scheme, where vehicle proprietors can install inward-facing cameras. The consultation closes on 18 April 2021 and any feedback will be used to shape the recommendations made to committee. Click [here](#) for more information.

## Your FAQ'S answered

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### **I've changed address. How can I report this?**

You can change your address online by completing our [change of address form](#). If you have registered for 'My Licence Portal', you can also change address via this.

### **I've changed my operator. How do I report this?**

You must notify Licensing Services in writing not less than 12 hours prior to commencing work with a new operator. Please contact [driver.lic@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:driver.lic@wolverhampton.gov.uk) stating your old and new operator, making sure to include your badge number in all correspondence. If you have registered for 'My Licence Portal', you can also change operator via this.

### **What are Clean Air Zones?**

To improve air quality, some local authorities are introducing [clean air zones](#).

Bath's Clean Air Zone (CAZ) starts on 15 March 2021. For information, please click [here](#).

Birmingham's Clean Air Zone (CAZ) is due to launch on 1 June 2021. The scheme will see certain high-polluting vehicles charged to drive within the A4540 Middleway. For information, please click [here](#).

## Contact Us

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For driver enquiries – [driver.lic@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:driver.lic@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

For vehicle enquiries – [Vehicle.lic@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Vehicle.lic@wolverhampton.gov.uk)