

Taxi and Private Hire Newsletter

Spring 2023

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Taxi and Private Hire Newsletter Spring Edition 2023

Message from Councillor Philip Page, Chair of the Statutory Licensing Committee and Regulatory Committee.

“This Spring edition of our newsletter contains important information including driver safety enclosures, tyre safety advice and efficient driving to save money.


In Wolverhampton, safety is our number one priority. We understand that drivers have a particularly responsible job, working with all members of our society. Drivers are on the road 24 hours a day, every day of the year. That’s why we’ve been working with trade representatives to understand what help is needed.

I take the safety of drivers extremely seriously and that is why I am very proud to

announce that the Regulatory Committee has approved a policy on driver safety enclosures.

In addition, upon successful inspection, every vehicle will now be given a personal safety alarm for its drivers to use. Every driver has also been sent a safety guide, with helpful tips from the trade.

The full story can be read in the ‘Driver Safety Enclosures’ section of this newsletter.”



**Councillor
Philip Page**



City of Wolverhampton Council works to protect taxi drivers

City of Wolverhampton Council is helping to protect taxi drivers by providing personal safety alarms in every vehicle and safety guides for every driver.

The Secured by Design alarms, part of a national police security initiative, have a powerful 140 decibel siren and will help drivers raise the alarm if they feel threatened or unsafe.

The alarms will be rolled out across the council's fleet of 20,000 licensed vehicles as drivers attend their annual inspections.

To offer further protection, the authority's regulatory committee has approved the option of installing driver safety enclosures which separate drivers from passengers. Drivers may choose to install these if they wish. Prior approval from the Licensing Authority is required in order to ensure the quality and safety of the enclosures being fitted.

In addition, the council has worked in partnership with West Midlands Police to produce a 'Safety Tips for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers' guide.

The guide gives helpful information about subjects such as vehicle condition, accepting and collecting passengers, best ways to communicate and what to do if a problem arises. The guide is available free and is available to download at [Taxi licences | City Of Wolverhampton Council](#).

To help taxi journeys go smoothly, council officers are also sharing the following advice for customers using hackney carriages and private hire vehicles:

- wait for your taxi in a place where your driver can safely park while you get in the vehicle
- give the driver the exact address of your destination in advance. If you're not sure, you can use the [Royal Mail Postcode Finder](#)

Councillor Philip Page, chair of City of Wolverhampton Council's statutory licensing committee and regulatory committee, said: "We deal with licences for a lot of taxis in Wolverhampton and the safety of both passengers and drivers is our top priority. Everyone has a right to feel safe in a taxi.

"As a licensing authority we constantly review driver and passenger safety and ways this can be improved. Providing personal alarms is a great initiative to reassure and protect our drivers.

"Being a taxi driver is a very important job as so many people rely on them for getting to appointments, travelling to work or enjoying leisure time. For this reason, I am also pleased that we have worked with West Midlands Police to develop a helpful guide full of useful pointers to make journeys safer and more comfortable for everyone."



Councillor Philip Page, chair of City of Wolverhampton Council's statutory licensing committee and regulatory committee, with a personal safety alarm and copy of the taxi drivers' safety guide.

Driver safety enclosures

The City of Wolverhampton Regulatory Committee approved a policy on driver safety enclosures on 8 March 2023.

Aftermarket driver safety enclosures may reduce the risk of attack from passengers. However, there are risks which arise from these products, particularly those which are not approved or correctly installed. Changing or adding to the interior of the vehicle can alter the 'type approval' of the vehicle and have consequences as to what might happen inside the vehicle in the event of a collision.

If you wish to install a driver safety enclosure:

1. Notify your insurer of your intention to install a driver safety enclosure.
2. Choose a product from the approved list available at <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/licences/taxi-licences/DSE>
3. Check that the product will meet the requirements in the section above, relevant to your vehicle.
4. Contact vehicle.lic@wolverhampton.gov.uk, advising which product you intend to purchase, your vehicle licence number and your availability for a vehicle inspection.
5. Once you have received confirmation from Vehicle Licensing, purchase the product and arrange for it to be professionally installed. Please note that you should arrange for installation shortly before your vehicle inspection as you are not permitted to conduct any paid-for journeys in-between installation and inspection.
6. Attend your inspection, bringing proof of updated insurance and professional installation.
7. The vehicle must contain the written authorisation from Licensing Services that the

enclosure is permitted, as well as proof that the insurance policy covers this modification.

The website has been updated, with the approved policy included in the 'Vehicle Licence Requirements Policy' in the downloads section of [the taxi licence webpage](#).

If you are a manufacturer or supplier of a product and wish for it to be considered on this approved list, please visit <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/licences/taxi-licences/DSE>

The enclosure:

- Must be professionally installed by a competent person in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Must be fitted within the vehicle accordance with regulations UN ECE R43.00 and R21.01 and Section 12 of the M1 category DVSA IVA manual.
- Must not be modified from the original manufactured design, without the manufacturer's confirmation that this will not cause any safety issues or noncompliance with the relevant UK and/or EC safety legislation.
- Must not negatively affect any safety equipment, such as airbags, or escape from the vehicle.
- Must be maintained to a high standard of cleanliness, be 100% transparent and free of marks, graffiti or stickers.
- Must permit clear conversation between the driver and passengers.
- Must be notified to the vehicle insurer as a modification to the vehicle. Proof of insurance cover including the enclosure is required at all times.

The Council also permits the installation of CCTV in licensed vehicles, provided the systems comply with the Council's [Taxi CCTV Policy](#).

Private Hire Vehicle insurance

Drivers are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring their Private Hire Vehicle insurance policy is valid.

If an insurance policy is purchased via a third party, it is advised that drivers check directly with the insurer to ensure the policy is valid and fit for purpose.

The certificate of insurance or cover note needs to show cover for public or private hire purposes, as appropriate.

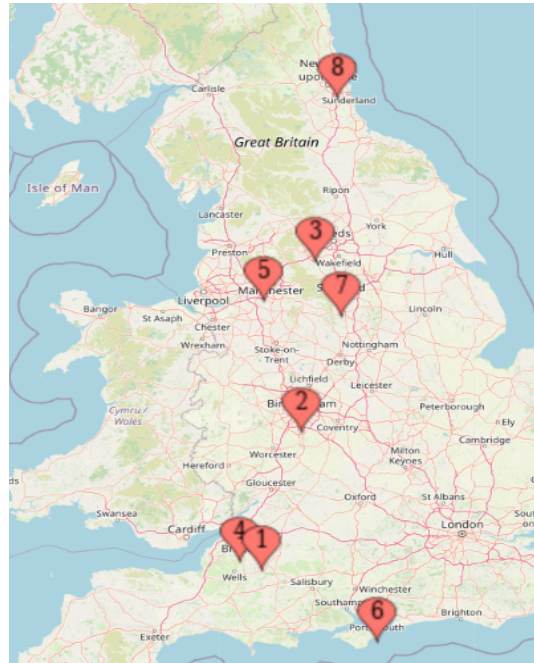
Drive efficiently to save money

Efficient driving is a driving style that reduces fuel bills, cuts carbon emissions and lowers accident rates. It is about becoming a better driver, rather than sacrificing the performance or enjoyment of driving. For electric vehicles (EVs), efficient driving also brings greater vehicle range.

Save on fuel, reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality by following our driving tips and thinking about your vehicle choice. Driving efficiently also has safety benefits due to its strong focus on better anticipation. More information can be found at [Reduce emissions through efficient driving](#) and the [Energy Saving Trust's Ecodriving Guide](#).

Drive in a clean air zone

Private Hire Vehicle Drivers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the eight clean air zones.



Clean air zones are in place for Bath, Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol, Greater Manchester, Portsmouth, Sheffield and Tyneside – Newcastle & Gateshead.

You may be required to pay to drive in a clean air zone if your vehicle does not meet emissions standards.

Please go to the following link for more information [Drive in a clean air zone - GOV.UK](#)

Tyre safety advice

Drivers are being warned to take care after a mystery shopping exercise in the city found old and unsafe part worn tyres for sale. Officers from City of Wolverhampton Council's Trading Standards team joined forces with Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) Market Surveillance Unit to carry out the test purchases.

A total of 11 part worn tyres were bought from a number of traders. Two were found to be selling tyres with nails embedded in them. The nails were clearly visible and should have been spotted during pre-sale checks. Other issues included the age of the tyres on sale, with some being up to 12 years old, and the fact some tyres were not marked with the warning 'Part Worn' which is a legal requirement.

Trading Standards officers will now be considering what action to take against each of the businesses.

The mystery shopper exercise built on work started last year when city businesses selling part worn tyres were visited by Trading Standards and DVSA and advised of their legal obligations.

As a result of the test purchases, officers from Trading Standards are giving the following advice to motorists looking to buy part worn tyres:

- Check tyres carefully for any damage. Tyres deteriorate with age, which increases the risk of failure.
- Look for the age of the tyre. This is a 4 digit code: the first 2 figures represent the calendar week in which it was made (from 1 to 52) and the second 2 figures are the year of manufacture. Therefore, a code of 1320 would mean the tyre was made between 28 March and 3 April 2020.
- For a part worn tyre to be legally sold, it must have a minimum tread depth of 2mm all round, be free of large cuts and bulges and not have any plies or cord exposed.
- Tyres should be permanently marked as 'part worn' in lettering 4mm high and have passed an inflation test prior to sale.

Councillor Steve Evans, cabinet member for city environment and climate change at City of Wolverhampton Council, said: "We are all watching our money at the moment and tyres can be expensive, so it is understandable that people may consider buying part worn to keep cost down.

"It is legal to buy part worn tyres, but motorists need to be confident that the tyres on offer are safe. Old or damaged part worn tyres are a serious danger to all road users and are not worth the savings if they end up costing you your health or damaging your vehicle.

"The mystery shopper exercise has brought some important issues to light and we will return to these businesses and continue to work with them to ensure they are aware of the legislation to prevent the sale of unsafe tyres."

Further advice on buying part worn tyres can be found from the DVSA [here](#).

Better Health

As Private Hire Drivers, you probably spend most of your working time sat in your Private Hire Vehicle and eating a well-balanced diet and drinking water can help with your health as well as your mental wellbeing.

The NHS have launched the "Better Health" campaign - [Better Health - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk).

Drivers are encouraged to have a read through of advice if you are thinking about making healthy changes or just want some help or advice.

Whether you want to lose weight, get active or quit smoking, Better Health is here with lots of free tools and support. You can also [find simple ways to lift your mood](#) with Every Mind Matters.

Reporting an accident

All drivers are reminded that if you are involved in a road traffic accident, these should be reported via the My Licence Portal and not emailed to us. Any emails received will not be accepted. You must report all accidents through the My Licence Portal.

If you need to register for the My Licence Portal, we have provided a guide below.

The email address you use to register with the portal must be the same email address on your Driver/Vehicle records. Register your email address here: [Signup](#)

You must Verify the email address before you can log in - check your junk/spam folder for a verification email from "IAPPLY"

Once you have verified your email address you can log in [here](#) - if you are having issues on your mobile device, try a laptop/PC.

If you have forgotten the password that you have used and verified previously then use the "Forgot Password" - again please check your junk/spam folder for password reset as this email will be from "IAPPLY"

Success story



A taxi driver from Wolverhampton who came to the aid of a student police officer as she was trying to detain a suspect has been commended for his bravery.

Ranjit Singh was presented with a Chief Constable's Good Citizen Award at a special ceremony.

The 50-year-old was in Wolverhampton city centre on the morning of 14 March last year when he saw the lone officer attempting to apprehend a man who was responsible for a crime that had been reported to her that day.

Seeing the suspect break free from the officer's grasp, Ranjit came to her assistance, blocking the offender's path as he tried to run off and holding onto him until more police officers arrived on the scene. The man was subsequently arrested and taken into custody.

Well done Ranjit!

Your FAQs answered

Why hasn't my licence been granted for a full year?

Driver Licence

This could be due to the expiry of your medical or right to work status. Applicants with a short term DVLA driving licence will receive a licence to driver a private hire vehicle valid until the expiry date of their driving licence.

If you have not provided consent for Licensing Services to check your information against the DBS Update Service, you may only be issued a six-month licence.

Vehicle Licence

This could be due to the age of your vehicle. If a vehicle is over 10 years old and you have applied for a 12 month licence, your licence is granted for 6 months initially, you are then required to attend a 6 month compliance check appointment with a new MOT (dated within 10 working days of your appointment) to collect the remaining period of your vehicle licence for no additional cost.

Contact us

For driver enquiries –

driver.lic@wolverhampton.gov.uk

For vehicle enquiries –

Vehicle.lic@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Please make sure to include your name and badge/plate number in all correspondence. If you are a new applicant, please include your WTP reference number in all enquiries.

Please note, we no longer operate from out of the Hickman Avenue, Wolverhampton, WV1 2HS. All operations are now at Loxdale Street, Bilston WV14 0PH.