

Hackney Carriage Tariff

Earlier in the year the initial flag fare on the tariff was increased as there had not been a tariff review for a number of years. At the time we said that later in the year we would look at possibly making changes to the yardage as well. We would love to hear your thoughts on the impact of the change to the flag rate and your suggestions in relation to a change in the yardage.

Opinions varied when the flag rate was increased and I am sure that opinions will differ regarding the yardage. Essentially there are four general options:

1. No change; or
2. Shorten the yardage travelled for the same fare; or
3. Increase the cost for traveling the same yardage; or
4. A combination of options 2 and 3.

Things become more complex the more elements that are changed but this would allow, for example, no change in the fare for shorter journeys but an increase in the fare for longer journeys. Get your suggestions in and we will give them full consideration before putting a proposal together for consideration by Licensing Committee and public and trade consultation.

Comments and suggestions should be made in writing to: licensing.taxis@eastherts.gov.uk with the subject of your email being 'Tariff'.



Taxi Ranks

The Licensing Team has some work planned regarding ranks in Ware but we would be really interested to hear your thoughts regarding ranks. If you have any suggestions for amendments to current ranks or suggestions for the location of new ranks we would love to hear them.

Comments should be made in writing to: licensing.taxis@eastherts.gov.uk with the subject of your email 'Ranks'.



New style driver badges

Those of you who have been granted a new driver licence or have renewed recently will have been issued with the new style badge. These are a huge improvement over the old laminated badges and are much more professional looking. We have listened to comments from the trade regarding the laminated badges looking unprofessional and concerns over having the driver's full name on the front of the badge. Now it will only show your first name, driver number and expiry date. On the rear of the badge your full name will appear in case confirmation of this is needed, for example when speaking to the Police.

These new badges are issued with a holder which can be attached to a lanyard and we would like to take the opportunity to remind you that your badge must be worn on your person at all times when you are working. The badge does not have to be on a lanyard but we have been supplying these with badges and will continue to do so to help you comply with the legal requirement. Your customers or an enforcement officer should be able to see that you are wearing it - hanging it from the mirror or keeping it in the glove box does not comply with the law.

For the time being we will still be providing the larger laminated badge which must be displayed in the vehicle but we will be looking to update these as well in the future.

Passport photographs

To make the issuing of the badges a quicker and smoother process we will be requesting that new applicants and renewing drivers bring in a recent passport photograph. We appreciate that there is a cost involved to drivers but as this will be only once every three years it is not considered too onerous and will allow us to issue very professional looking badges.

Please ensure that the passport photograph is recent and that it looks like you. You would be surprised at the number of drivers that used to bring in a photograph from six years ago. If the picture does not look like you at the time of the appointment then a licence will not be issued until you produce a new passport photograph.

Unmet demand survey

Included in last year's Hackney Carriage fees increase was the estimated cost of carrying out an unmet demand survey across the whole district. We are in the last stages of preparing a brief to go out to tender so that we can identify interested suppliers.

This is again the result of us listening to the trade. If the survey identifies that there is no significant unmet demand then it will allow the authority to consider limiting the number of Hackney carriage vehicle licences it will issue.

We will keep you updated with progress.



Roof lights

Recently we have been noticing an increasing trend for roof lights to be positioned further back on vehicles and this defeats part of the purpose of having the roof light on the vehicle.

You will all be aware that your plate number is on the front of the roof light and this should be visible as the vehicle is approached or approaches. With the roof light located at the rear near the boot this can often not be seen and in some cases, with larger vehicles, the roof light cannot be seen from the front at all.

The purpose of the roof light and the number being on it are related to public safety. The current policy does not stipulate where the roof light should be located on the roof of the vehicle - it just states that it should be present and working.

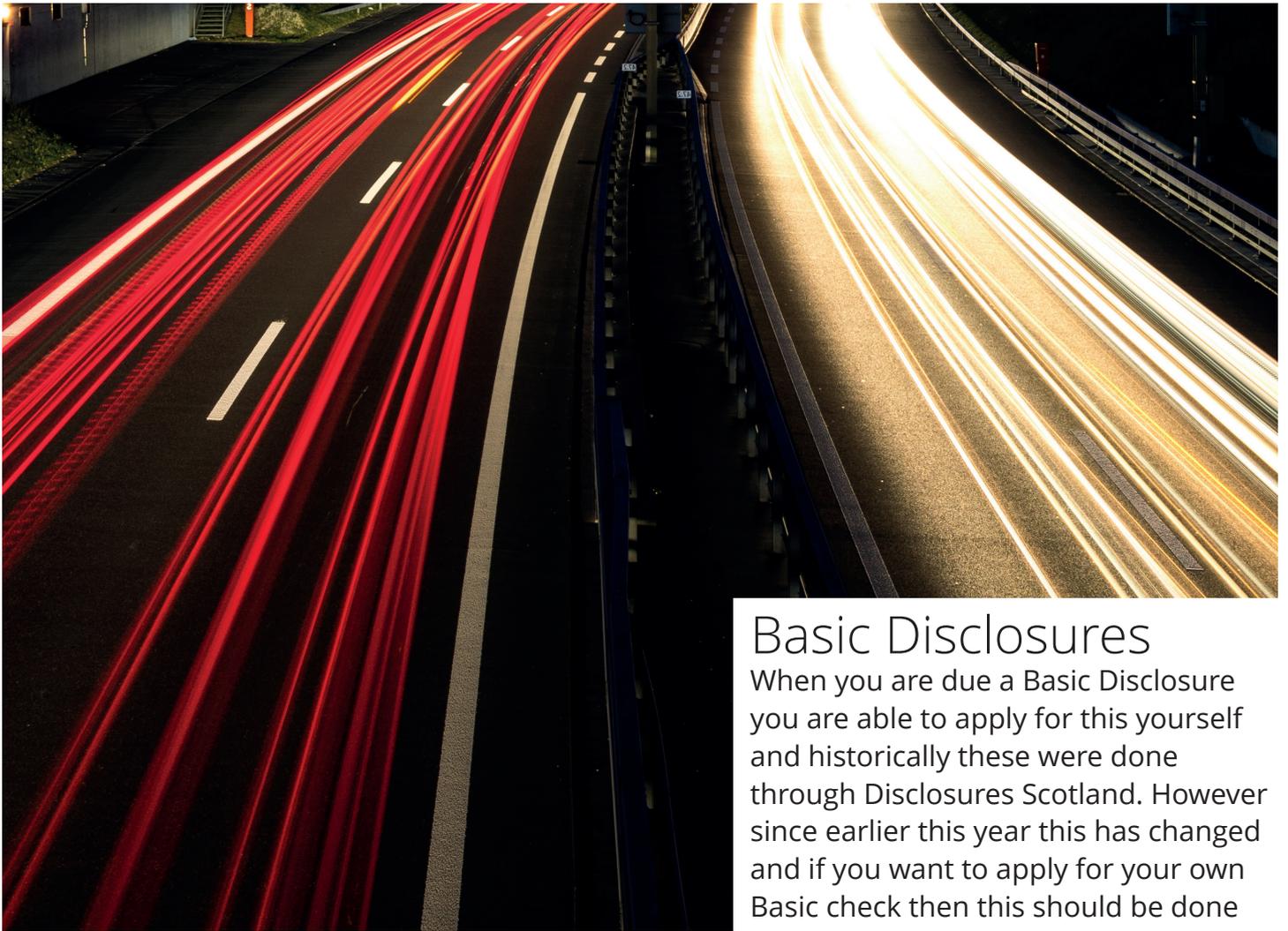
As there are implications for public safety we are looking at a number of options to address this and we would like to hear your thoughts.

1. The taxi policy is amended so that the roof light must be located with the leading edge of the roof light no more than 30 cm (12 inches) from the top of the windscreen; or
2. We introduce front plates for all licensed vehicles.

Option two would have the added benefit that the Licensing Committee may approve the more aerodynamic style of roof light which was previously not approved due to the need for the public to be able to read the number on it.

Again we would like to hear your thoughts on this matter so comments should be made in writing to: licensing.taxis@eastherts.gov.uk with the subject of your email being 'Roof light'.

A number of drivers have been spotted recently with either damaged roof lights or without them being plugged in. Please check the condition of the cover regularly and ensure that it does work, lighting up with both bulbs working when the meter is put on 'for hire'. Replacement covers, bases and bulbs are available from the Licensing Team.



HCC Highways consultations

We recently emailed you about two consultations being carried out by HCC Highways.

The consultation which related to the Mill Bridge Rank is now closed and we are awaiting the results. We will let you know as soon as we know but if you commented on the plans please forward us any response you received from HCC.

The second consultation, which is open until 25th February 2019, relates to the A414 Corridor Strategy and we were requested to contact you as stakeholders in the transport network. This is just a quick reminder that you can find the details of the strategy and share your views at: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/consultations.

Basic Disclosures

When you are due a Basic Disclosure you are able to apply for this yourself and historically these were done through Disclosures Scotland. However since earlier this year this has changed and if you want to apply for your own Basic check then this should be done through gov.uk at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/basic-checks>

You can of course still choose to book an appointment and have your checks done by the Licensing Team.

Taxi marshals

We have recently had a call from a driver regarding the taxi marshals that operate at Fore Street in Hertford. In the past EHDC were involved in this scheme but for a number of years it has been funded and operated by Hertford Town Council and Hertfordshire County Council. If you have any comments to make, whether good or bad, you should contact the Town Clerk at Hertford Town Council on: 01992 552885 or joseph@hertford.gov.uk

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Guidance

Acceptable right to work documents: an employer's guide

Information for employers on which documents can be accepted when conducting right to work checks.

The Immigration Act 2016 and Right to work checks

The Council is under legal obligation to check an applicant's right to work in the United Kingdom on any application for a New or Renewal of a drivers licence. If you cannot prove your right to work then we cannot grant you a licence.

To prove your right to work you will need to provide suitable documents. Examples of the documents that can prove you right to work in the UK include:

- A British Passport, or Passport / National Identity Card from a European Economic Area country or Switzerland
- A birth or adoption certificate issued in the UK, Channel Islands, IOM or Ireland together with an official document showing your National Insurance number.
- A current biometric immigration document issued by the Home office

- A current passport endorsed showing that the holder is exempt from immigration control, is allowed to stay either temporary or indefinitely in the UK, has right to abode in the UK, or has no time limit to on their stay in the UK. (If these are not in a current passport you will need to apply to the home office to transfer the conditions into your current passport. If you have temporary leave to stay your licence will be granted so it expires on the same date as your right to work)
- A certificate of application issued by the Home Office (If this is the case we will need to undertake Home Office verification and a licence can only be issued for a Maximum of 6 month licence)

Additional information about Right to work checks can be found on GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/acceptable-right-to-work-documents-an-employers-guide>

Christmas quiz!

It's that time of year so we thought we would have a little quiz with the winner receiving a tub of Quality Street. Below are 8 questions and your answers should be sent via email to licensing.taxis@eastherts.gov.uk by 4th January 2019 with the subject of the email being 'Quiz answers'.

The winner will be drawn at random from the correct answers by Jonathan Geall, Head of Housing and Health, and the winner will be notified on 9th January 2019.



1. Can you EVER smoke in a licensed hackney carriage or private hire vehicle?

- a) NO it is a licensed vehicle 24 hours a day 365 days a year so not even when you are not working
- b) YES if there is not a passenger on board

2. Do you have to wear your driver's badge whenever you are working?

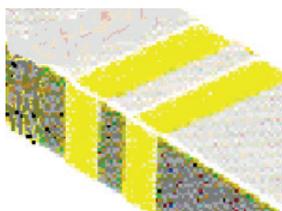
- a) NO it is ok as long as you have it with you and can produce it if requested
- b) YES the legislation requires it

3. After having your next enhanced DBS done would it save you time and money over the three years of your driver's licence to sign up for the DBS Update service?

- a) NO its more trouble than it's worth
- b) YES I would not have to visit the Licensing Team to have my basic or enhanced checks done for as long as I remained using the Update Service and it would cost £39 over three years as opposed to the £86 for your next two Basic checks then £62 for the next Enhanced.

4. What do these lines painted on the kerb mean?

- a) parking allowed at certain times
- b) loading allowed at certain times
- c) no loading
- d) no parking



5. What does this sign mean?

- a) you have a right of way
- b) no overtaking
- c) cars with smaller engines to keep in the left lane
- d) oncoming traffic has priority



6. What does this sign mean?

- a) No stopping
- b) No waiting
- c) No stopping and waiting
- d) No parking zone



7. Can you ever stop and pick up a passenger on the zigzag white lines around a pedestrian crossing?

- a) NO it would be illegal
- b) YES if you consider its safe

8. With your next driver's licence renewal what type of photograph do you need to provide?

- a) A recent passport photograph that looks like you at the time of the application
- b) A passport photograph that has been in a drawer for the last few years
- c) I do not need to provide a photograph as one will be taken as part of the renewal appointment.

9. What is the primary purpose of the taxi licence regime?

- a) To ensure public safety
- b) To issue licences to anyone that wants one
- c) Generate a profit for the Local Authority



Draft vehicle age & emissions policy consultation

(19th November 2018-11th January 2019)

Recently we emailed or wrote to every member of the licensed trade regarding the proposed Vehicle Age and Emissions policy. It's important that you read the policy and let us know your opinions as if it is adopted it will apply to every hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licensed by East Herts whether seeking a new licence or at renewal.

If after reading the policy you think it should be amended in any way then you can make your comments and give your reasoning. All responses received before midnight on the 11th January 2019 will be put before the Licensing Committee for their consideration.

The consultation page and draft policy can be viewed here www.eastherts.gov.uk/ageemissions.

Trade Meetings

It has been a while since we have held any open meetings with the trade. It has been suggested by a member of the Licensing Team that an open meeting might be welcomed by the trade so we thought we would ask you.

- Would you like a meeting?
- Just one or separate meetings in Hertford and Bishops Stortford?
- What would be the best time? Evening or day time?
- Apart from officers who would you like there? Chair of the Licensing Committee? Highways representative? Someone from parking?

Comments and suggestions should be made in writing to: licensing.taxis@eastherts.gov.uk with the subject of your email being 'Meeting'.

And Finally...

*The Licensing Team would like to wish
you all a safe, happy and prosperous
Christmas and New Year.*

Oliver, Brad, Gina, Tracy, Claire and Karen.



What do you think?

If you have any thoughts about the topics covered in TAXI TALK or a question that you would like answered, we'd love to hear from you. Please email: licensing.taxis@eastherts.gov.uk or write to us at:

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