

Licensed Vehicle Age and Emissions Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure taxis are as safe, reliable and comfortable as possible while at the same time minimising emissions. The policy aims to have a positive impact on emissions as it is recognised that the age of vehicles and the exhaust emission specification are critical to the level of pollutants emitted. Consequently, to improve air quality and reduce emissions from the taxi fleet, standards relating to the exhaust emissions have been introduced in addition to the requirements regarding the age of vehicles.

In order to be licensed, a vehicle must **meet both the age and emissions criteria**. Applications to licence vehicles which fall outside of the policy will be considered on their own merits.

Vehicle Age

At first application - Vehicle licences will not be granted in respect of vehicles that were first registered (or, in the case of imported vehicles, manufactured) more than 5 years prior to the date that the application is made.

At renewal - Vehicle licences will not be renewed in respect of any licensed vehicle that was first registered (or, in the case of imported vehicles, manufactured) more than 10 years prior to the date of renewal (or 12 years in the case of purpose-built or fully wheelchair accessible vehicles).

A vehicle will be considered for licensing beyond these upper age limits if it is in 'exceptional condition'. The criteria for meeting this standard are below.

Exceptional Condition Criteria

A vehicle will be considered to be in 'exceptional condition' if **ALL** of the following apply:

1. The vehicle must not have failed the council's vehicle inspection or standard MOT (or just the standard MOT if the vehicle has not been licensed previously) on any significant item within the previous five years.
2. The vehicle meets or exceeds the vehicle standards contained within East Herts policy in relation to vehicle condition.
3. The interior trim, panels, seating and carpets and upholstery are in excellent condition, clean and free from damage and discolouration.
4. The boot or luggage compartment is in good condition, clean and undamaged.
5. Passenger areas are free from damp and any unpleasant odours.

The criteria will be checked by an officer of the council and the proprietor of the vehicle must provide all the necessary documentation to support their request for a vehicle licence to be granted outside of this policy. An appointment will need to be made for this and a fee will be charged.

If the above criteria are satisfied then the proprietor of the vehicle must book and pay for the council's approved vehicle inspection from a nominated garage and produce the pass certificate to the council. This test **CANNOT** be carried out before the vehicle is inspected by a council officer.

Emissions Standards

At first application – Vehicles must meet or exceed Euro 5 emissions standards (From 01/04/2020 vehicles must meet or exceed Euro 6 emissions standards at first application.)

At renewal – From 01/04/2020 vehicle licences will not be renewed in respect of any licensed vehicle that does not meet or exceed Euro 5 emissions standards. (From 01/04/2023 vehicle licences will not be renewed in respect of any licensed vehicle that does not meet or exceed Euro 6 emissions standards.)

Where vehicles do not meet the relevant emissions criteria the proprietor may:

- have the vehicle adapted / modified to meet the standard and provide evidence of this
- change the fuel that is used to a cleaner alternative, such as bio diesel or
- replace the vehicle with one that meets the emission standard.

Notwithstanding that each application will be considered on its own merits.

When will the different criteria be applied?

If the licence of a currently licensed Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle is allowed to **EXPIRE** by its proprietor then any subsequent application will **NOT** be considered as a renewal. This means that where an existing vehicle licences expires, a subsequent application for a licence for that vehicle will be treated as a first time application and the standards and criteria relating to first time applications will be applied.

For the avoidance of doubt when a new vehicle has an existing plate transferred onto it the vehicle will be considered under the criteria for a vehicle being licensed for the first time.

Low Emission and Electric Vehicles

The Council encourages the uptake of low emission and electric vehicles in the District. The authority will seek to examine the feasibility of introducing schemes which help improve the charging network and aid drivers in testing and purchasing electric vehicles.

The Council will waive the initial vehicle licence application fee for any application to licence a fully Electric Vehicle (EV) received between 01/04/2019 and 31/03/2020.