

# *Tendring District Council*

## *Taxi News*

*December 2021*

### **Licensing Team**

We would like to update you of a few changes that have happened within the Licensing Team recently.

Michael Cook who was temporarily filling the position of Licensing Manager and Chloe Blackwell who was providing assistance with Licensing Enforcement have both now been permanently appointed.

### **Vehicle Plates**

It has come to our attention recently that Hackney Carriage/Private Hire taxi plates are not being returned to the Licensing Office when they are no longer required.

Please ensure that if you have renewed your licence that the old plate is posted through the letterbox at the Pier Avenue offices marked for the attention of the Licensing Team within 7 days of the receipt of your new plate.

If your vehicle is off the road for any reason e.g. being repaired following an accident, your plate will also need to be handed to the Licensing Team for holding whilst the repairs take place. These will be returned to you once your vehicle is fit to be used as a taxi again.

If you are unsure if you are required to do this please do not hesitate to speak to one of the team who will clarify this for you.

### **Driver Grants**

The licensing office are accepting new driver applications with the suitability and knowledge tests being done under an appointment system only. If you have an applicant interested in applying for a Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Drivers licence then they are advised to complete and return a suitability test application form.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service**

It has come to our attention that recently there has been an increase in errors when drivers are completing the Disclosure and Barring Service application form. Please note that these forms must be completed with correct and accurate information and all sections are completed as required. If there are any errors the DBS are withdrawing the application and you will be required to resubmit a new form together with another £40. This is causing unnecessary delays and suspension of licences.

## **Hackney Carriage Fare Increase - Update**

Following the request by the Tendring Taximeter Forum for both an increase in the scale of fares, and a change in distance to the Hackney Carriage fares the consultation date with the trade and public has now passed and I thank all of those who submitted their comments to us.

Further consideration by the Licensing and Registration Committee will happen in January and we will write to you again once this has been considered with further details. The current fare tariff remains in effect until such times the Committee make a final decision.

## **Applications/Documents/Payments**

Applications should be submitted via e-mail ([licensingsection@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:licensingsection@tendringdc.gov.uk) or [taxi@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:taxi@tendringdc.gov.uk)) payments can be made over the telephone using either a credit or debit card.

Please ensure that the email document is no larger than 25mb as these are unable to pass the Council's email security system.

For drivers who still wish to post their applications/documents please ensure that these are sent via Royal Mail **and not through the post box located at Pier Avenue** as this is not monitored regularly and may result in unnecessary reminder letters being sent. All post received through Royal Mail is scanned to the team by TDC in order to reduce delay. Any paperwork you are waiting for will then be sent to you as soon as practicable and any delays should be minimal.

## **How to pay fees**

Please ensure that you either pay online using the TDC website, or phone the office on 01255 68 6565 to pay. You will need your invoice number for both methods of payment.

If you are unable to pay by credit/debit card then cheques can still be posted to the Licensing Team via Royal Mail. Please note that cheques are taking approximately 4 weeks to be processed.

With effect from 1 December 2021 Tendring District Council licensing office are no longer able to accept cash payments, we are however still able to accept cheques, postal orders and credit/debit card payments.

**Please do not post any cheques/postal orders through the post box located at Pier Avenue**

## **COVID-19 and Face Coverings**

May you be reminded that face coverings should still be worn in taxis, unless you are exempt. Even after you have received a vaccine, you should continue to follow the guidance on how to travel safely when in a taxi or private hire vehicle.

You should encourage the use of contactless payment if possible.

Where possible open windows for ventilation when in the vehicle.

Wash or sanitise your hands regularly.

Be aware of the surfaces that are touched by you and your passengers. Be careful not to touch your face. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when coughing or sneezing.

Stay up to date with the guidance for taxis by viewing the website below:



[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): taxis and PHVs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

### **Driving in adverse weather**

We want everyone to keep themselves and their passenger's safe over the winter so we hope that the tips shown below might help a little in that regard.

Driving in adverse weather conditions requires additional care and attention and you should ensure your vehicle is adequately prepared. Below are just some general notes intended to help you prepare for the winter.

We are sure that your vehicles are regularly inspected, serviced and in good working order, but in adverse weather, particular attention should be given to the following –

- \* Car batteries last approximately five years, and extra demand placed on them during adverse weather from the use of heaters, lights, and wipers can decrease their lifespan.
- \* Check the tyre pressure in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
- \* Check the tyre treads depths. For winter driving it is recommended to have 3mm of tread and certainly not less than 2mm.
- \* Ensure that there is an adequate amount of anti – freeze, in both the windscreen washer bottle and radiator.
- \* Keep lights clean and check bulbs regularly so you'll be prepared for lower visibility and shorter days.
- \* Make sure wiper blades aren't worn and the vehicle has sufficient windscreen washer fluid in the reservoir so you can keep your windscreen as clean as possible.
- \* Dirty windows and mirrors can make it hard to see as the low winter sun hits. Make sure they are kept clean and free of ice and snow in colder weather. Ensure windows are clear and de-misted before setting off.
- \* Ensure the taxi plate and registration plate are kept clean and legible.

### **Christmas Closure**

Please note that the Council Offices will be closed to the public from Friday 24 December 2021 until Tuesday 04 January 2022.

Any documents can still be email to [taxi@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:taxi@tendringdc.gov.uk), which will be dealt with once the team are back in the office.

Thank you for reading this edition of Taxi News. In the meantime, please keep safe, drive safe and always pay extra attention to the weather conditions during these dark winter months.

From all in the Licensing Team, we would like to wish you a safe and very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

