



HACKNEY CARRIAGE & PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE SPECIFICATION & EMISSION STANDARDS POLICY

A vehicle must meet the following standards to be considered for licensing either as a Hackney Carriage or a Private Hire Vehicle. These standards define the type of vehicle that is suitable for licensing.

Before embarking on the purchase of a vehicle for use as a Private Hire Vehicle or Hackney Carriage you should check that it meets this specification you are advised to discuss the areas of difference with a Licensing Officer before making the purchase.

HACKNEY CARRIAGE SPECIFICATIONS

APPLICATION

1. These specifications and conditions set out the requirements that the Northampton Borough Council expects all hackney carriages to meet. The decision to introduce these specifications and conditions will be made by the Licensing Committee on this basis. However, each case will be decided on its own merits and, if justifiable reasons exist, the Licensing Committee may decide to licence a vehicle that does not comply fully with the conditions, or not to licence a vehicle that does meet the conditions.

2 AGE

From 1st January 2016 no age limit will be applicable

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

- 3 Every Hackney Carriage must comply in all respects with the requirements of any Acts and Regulations relating to motor vehicles in force at the time of licensing including the Motor Vehicle (Type Approval) Regulations 1980, and the Motor Vehicles (Construction and use) Regulations 1984. It must also comply fully with all other Test Requirements and Conditions imposed by Northampton Borough Council and in force at the time of licensing.
- 4 Every Hackney Carriage must be type approved to the requirements of the M or M1 Category of European Whole Type Approval 70/156/EEC as amended. Those taxis (e.g. Van conversions) which have not been type approved must be presented with approved certification that the specific vehicle meets the requirements of one of those categories.

STEERING

- 5 The steering wheel must be on the offside of the vehicle.

BRAKING SYSTEM

- 6 All vehicles must be fitted with an ABS braking system.

ENGINE EMISSIONS

- 7 See table at Appendix A

ENGINE SIZE

- 8 In order to encourage cleaner and alternative fuel types and the recognition that a larger engine is not necessarily as efficient as a smaller engine, the requirement that the minimum cc should be 1.9 litre has been removed. The vehicle must be fitted with a manual or automatic gearbox.

INTERIOR LIGHTING

9. Adequate lighting must be provided for the driver and passengers. Separate lighting controls for both passengers and driver must be provided. In the case of the passenger compartment an illuminated control switch must be fitted in an approved position. Lighting must also be provided at floor level to every passenger door and be actuated by the opening of the door.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

10. Any additional electrical installation to the original equipment must be adequately insulated and be protected by suitable fuses.

BODY DESIGN

10. The body must be of the fixed bulk head type with a partially glazed partition separating the passenger from the driver. A suitable means of offering payment must be available to the passenger without the need to first alight from the vehicle.
11. The partition and an intercom must be fitted as part of the vehicle.
12. The overall length of the vehicle must not exceed 5 metres.
13. The overall width of the vehicle exclusive of driving mirrors must not exceed 2 metres.
14. The clear height of the doorway must be a minimum of 1.195 metres.

15. The vehicle must be provided with at least two doors, other than the driver's door for the use of passengers. Each door must be able to be opened by passengers.
16. The internal footprint size of the interior of the vehicle must be a minimum of 1200x700 millimetres.
17. If sliding doors are fitted as standard to the vehicle they can be electric or manual. There must be some form of approved visible warning system to inform other motorists and pedestrians that a door is open and a passenger may be alighting.
18. An approved type of automatic door locking device must be fitted to passenger doors. When the vehicle is stationary, the passenger doors must be capable of being readily opened from inside and outside the vehicle by one of the latch mechanisms. The interior door handle must be easily identified so as not to be mistaken for any other control.
19. Suitable means must be provided for carrying and securing any luggage within the vehicle. External luggage racks are not permitted.

STEPS

20. The top of the tread for any entrance must be at the level of the floor of the passenger compartment and must not exceed 0.53 metres above ground level when the vehicle is unladen.
21. The outer edge of the floor at each entrance must be fitted with non-slip treads. If a colour contrast is used to aid a partially sighted person it must be of an approved type.
22. A suitable step or runner, if necessary, either fixed or retractable should be fitted to assist entry into or exit out of the vehicle. This step must be of such construction, if extendable, so as to not cause danger to any foot passengers on the public highway.

WHEELCHAIR FACILITIES

23. The vehicle must be wheelchair accessible with a minimum of 0.75 metre width opening on each passenger door. The angle of the door when open to its maximum must have a minimum angle of 90 degrees.
24. Loading of wheelchairs must be enabled on all Hackney vehicles. Side loading and/or rear loading will be licensed.
25. Approved anchorages must be provided for a wheelchair. These anchorages must be either chassis or floor linked and capable of withstanding approved dynamic or static tests. Restraints for wheelchair and occupant must be independent of each other. Anchorages must be provided for the safe stowage of a wheelchair when not in use, whether folded or otherwise, if carried within the passenger compartment.
26. A ramp or ramps for the loading of a wheelchair and occupant must be available at all times and an adequate locating device must be fitted to ensure that the ramp/ramps do not slip or tilt when in use. The

ramp/ramps must be capable of being safely stowed when not in use. Incline on the ramps when in use must be of such a percentage incline as to not cause unnecessary strain on either the driver or passenger.

SEATING/INTERIOR

27. There must be no de-mountable seats, although movement on a fixed runner will be acceptable.
28. There must be unobstructed egress from all seats.
29. Grab handles must be fitted at all points of passenger entry to assist the elderly and disabled.
30. There must be an acceptable level of comfort for all passengers. The measurements from the upholstery at the back to the front edge must be at least 0.40 metres and for each adult person carried a minimum of 0.40 metres must be available when measured along the front parallel edge of the seat cushion.
31. The width of each front seat must not be less than 0.40 metres and such seats must be at least 0.355 metres when measured from the back to the front of the upholstery.
32. Front seats must be so arranged as to raise automatically and must not obstruct any doorway when not in use.
33. All forward and rearward facing seats must be fitted with suitable head restraints.
34. Windows must be provided at the sides and at the rear.
35. The passenger door windows must be capable of being opened easily by the occupants when seated. The control for opening the window must be easily identified so as not to be mistaken for any other control.
36. An adequate heating and ventilation system must be provided, for both driver and passengers and be able to be controlled independently by both driver and, in that compartment, the passenger.
37. Approved seatbelts must be fitted to all seats.
38. The flooring of the passenger compartment must be fitted with non-slip material, which can be easily cleaned.
39. The windscreen must be of a laminated construction and not be tinted unless that tint is part of the vehicles original construction. All other windows must be of an approved safety type.

FARE TABLE AND IDENTIFICATION PLATE

40. A frame must be provided for the Tariff Card (Fare Table) and the interior identification plate and fitted in an approved position.

TAXIMETER

41. A taximeter of an approved type must be fitted in the position approved by the Council.

'TAXI' SIGNS

42. A 'Taxi' sign of an approved pattern, clearly visible by day and by night when the cab is not hired, must be fitted.

MAINTENANCE

43. Hackney Carriages, including all fittings, advertisements etc., must be well maintained at all times, kept clean and in good working order. The vehicle will at all times be subject to test and inspection. Should it be found that a cab is not being properly maintained or that any part or fitting is not in good working order, a notice will be served on the owner prohibiting him/her from using the vehicle until the defect has been rectified.
44. The Hackney Carriage must be provided with a securely stored spare wheel and tyre, jack and wheel brace, or other means to re-inflate a flat tyre as approved by the Council.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

45. There must be provided and maintained in the vehicle at all times, when it is in use, or available for hire, a suitable and efficient fire extinguisher and a suitable first aid kit. This equipment must be carried in such a position in the vehicle as to be readily available for immediate use in an emergency.
46. The fire extinguisher must be securely clamped and easily accessible by the driver. The fire extinguisher must be of the rechargeable, multi purpose dry powder type. It must have a minimum 13a/70b as defined in European Standard EN3 and have been manufactured to comply with that standard. It must be serviced annually in accordance with British Standard 5305, Part 3 and permanently legibly marked with the licensing plate number of the vehicle.
47. The first aid kit must conform to the specifications set out in the Hackney Carriage Condition Booklet.

FITTINGS

48. No fittings other than those approved may be attached to or carried upon the inside or outside of the cab.

ADVERTISEMENTS

49. Suitable advertisements may be allowed on the inside and outside of the cab subject to the approval of the Council.

50. Such advertisements, printed matter, mark or sign must be, non-racist, non-sexist, non-disablist, should not refer to tobacco products unless as part of a Health Education or similar campaign. Should not cause offence to the general public or any section of the community, and should be non-political.

51. Inside advertisements may be displayed only on the base of the occasional seats or along the bulkheads on top of the passenger/driver partition. All such adverts must be encapsulated in clear non-inflammable plastic.

52. Applications for approval of advertisements must be made in writing to the Licensing Team Leader for approval.

NEW ADOPTED VEHICLES

53. All newly adopted vehicles must satisfy all of the above conditions before first plating.

PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES SPECIFICATIONS

There are many different makes and styles of vehicle on the road today.

Not all vehicles would be suitable for use as a private hire vehicle and the Council has therefore approved certain standards to guide proprietors on the type of vehicle considered suitable bearing in mind public comfort/safety and the legal requirements previously mentioned.

The specifications we apply to vehicles are as follows:

1. That your vehicle is in an immaculate condition both mechanically and cosmetically. There is no age limit on this type of licence, but vehicles are expected to remain in a first class condition.
2. That your vehicle is right hand drive. We will not accept any "conversions" from left to right hand drive under any circumstances. The vehicle must not have less than four road wheels. They will still need to pass the Council test.
3. That your vehicle (if a car) has a minimum of 4 doors giving adequate access and egress from the vehicle. The design of the car can be saloon, hatchback, estate, or MPV.
4. That your vehicle has a back seat width (when measured in a continuous line from edge to edge) of at least 1220mm (48 inches).
5. That your vehicle provides easy access from a door to any passenger seat.
6. That your vehicle is constructed or adapted to carry a minimum of 4 passengers in comfort.
7. That your vehicle (if a minibus or "people mover") has sufficient doors of sufficient size to allow passengers to get in and out quickly and safely.
8. It is a requirement of the Council that seat belts be provided for all persons, irrespective of age, and according to the licensed capacity of the vehicle.
9. The licence number shall be displayed on the outside of the vehicle on the official plates provided.
10. Engine Emissions – See table at Appendix A

APPENDIX A

	A. Taxi licensing type and compliance dates	B. Emission standard
1.	<p>All new registrations (i.e. vehicles which have not previously been licensed by the Council)</p> <p>From: 3rd May 2018</p>	<p>ULEV</p> <p>Petrol Hybrid Euro 5 +</p> <p>Petrol Euro 5 + (Any vehicle registered from 1st Sept 2009 onwards)</p> <p>Diesel Euro 6 + (Any vehicle registered from 1st Sept 2014 onwards)</p> <p>(will not apply to existing proprietors whose vehicle is taken off the road due to unforeseen circumstances. Existing licensed vehicles that need to be replaced must be either an equivalent, or an improved euro standard)</p>
2.	<p>All licence renewals (i.e. renewal of a licence for a vehicle which was previously granted by the Council)</p> <p>From: 31st December 2021</p> <p>(as amended 13/10/2020)</p>	<p>ULEV</p> <p>Petrol Hybrid Euro 5+</p> <p>Petrol Euro 5 +</p> <p>Diesel Euro 6 +</p> <p>(including vehicles adapted with a retrofit to an agreed approved standard & hackneys only may apply for departure from policy)</p>
3.	<p>All licence renewals (i.e. renewal of a licence for a vehicle which was previously granted by the Council)</p> <p>From: 31st December 2025</p>	<p>ULEV</p> <p>Petrol Hybrid Euro 5+</p> <p>Petrol Euro 6 +</p> <p>Diesel Euro 6 +</p>
4.	<p>All licence renewals (i.e. renewal of a licence for a vehicle which was previously granted by the Council)</p> <p>From: 31st December 2028</p>	<p>ULEV</p> <p>Petrol Hybrid Euro 5+</p>
<p>+ Includes all vehicles that will meet a higher standard than the euro emission standard specified ULEV = Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (<75g/km and 10km zero emission capability)</p> <p>1.NBC will consider & implement incentives to promote the cleanest technologies - less than 75 g/km and at least 10 km zero emissions</p> <p>2.NBC carried out an Ultra Low Emission Taxi Feasibility Study with potential for infrastructure funding and ULEV taxi (WAV) total plug in taxi grant of £7.5k, including Plug-in Car Grant (office for Low Emission Vehicles)</p> <p>EMMISSION STANDARD ADOPTED AT LICENSING COMMITTEE 03.05.2018</p>		

Table: Delegation of Functions

	Matters to be dealt with	Sub Committee	Licensing Manager	Licensing Officer
1.	<p>Hackney Carriage Vehicle Renewal –</p> <p>Application to Depart from Policy</p> <p>1 April 2018 – 31 Dec 2025</p> <p>(as amended 13/10/2020)</p>		v	
2.	<p>Existing Licensed Replacement Vehicle (i.e. those vehicles taken off the road due to unforeseen circumstances)</p> <p>1 April 2018 – 31 Dec 2020</p>			v
3.	<p>Private Hire Exemption Certificates</p> <p>1 April 2018 – 31 Dec 2025</p>		v	
4.	<p>ULEV Vehicle Manufacture Problems</p> <p>1 April 2018 – 31 Dec 2028</p>		v	