

BOILERPLATE: Licensed Vehicle Age and Emissions Policy

This is a boilerplate Policy. It has been designed to either:

- stand alone for those local licensing authorities who wish to adopt the text in its entirety, or
- to provide sections which can be extracted to augment existing licensing work , or
- to be modified to suit the licensing policy context.

Licensing Teams should take steps to satisfy themselves as to the suitability of materials they wish to adopt. HCCSP and Herts Licensing Officers Group do not warrant the contents of this boilerplate to all local licensing authority contexts.

We will be happy to discuss locally proposed modifications with a senior licensing officer from any Hertfordshire LA.

BOILERPLATE LICENSING 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, this Council is working to improve air quality and reduce emissions from the taxi fleet, by cross-county alignment of standards relating to the exhaust emissions in addition to the requirements regarding the age of vehicles.

Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership recognises that there is a current and future climate change emergency that requires urgent planning and action. One of the agreed plans of the Partnership is to support businesses to make the maximum possible impact in challenging the extent and causes of climate change.

In order to be licensed, a vehicle must **meet both the age and emissions criteria of the Local Authority in which it is licensed**. 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 in ‘exceptional condition’ if **ALL** of the following apply:

1. The vehicle must not have failed the council’s vehicle inspection (where applicable) or standard MOT on any significant item within the previous five years.
2. In the previous 5 years any MOT advisory in relation to tyres or brakes has been rectified before the vehicle was retested.
3. The vehicle meets or exceeds the vehicle standards contained within the local authority’s policy in relation to vehicle condition.
4. The interior trim, panels, seating and carpets and upholstery are in excellent condition, clean and free from damage and discolouration.
5. The boot or luggage compartment is in good condition, clean and undamaged.
6. Passenger areas are free from damp and any unpleasant odours.

Items 1 & 2 will only apply for the period the vehicle has been owned by the applicant. Vehicle proprietors should have regard to the MOT history of a vehicle they wish to purchase as it is an indication of how well a vehicle has been maintained by the previous owner and whether there is likely to be significant issues going forward.

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.

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Emissions Standards

At first application – Vehicles must meet or exceed Euro 6 emissions standards

At renewal – From 1 April 2024 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 **CANNOT** be considered as a renewal. This means that where an existing vehicle licence 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. If you are struggling to transition to a low emission vehicle, please contact your Licensing Authority for the latest guidance on support and funding available.