

St Albans Licensing Newsletter

August 2022

New licence fees now live

As you are aware the licensing department undertook a fee review earlier this year. The proposed fees were presented to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee on Tuesday 05 July 2022. The committee approved the fees in full.

You can view the minutes/decision here:

<https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=113&MId=10650&Ver=4>

As per the legislation these fees were then advertised for comments, and did not come into effect until after a period of 28 days.

Any applications made from Friday 19 August will be subject to the new license fees. Please find the new fees below:

Driver Licences	New Fee
New Driver	£481.00
New Driver 1 year licence pro rata	£161.00
Driver renewal	£468.00
Driver renewal 1 year licence pro rata	£156.00
Additional Chargeable	
DBS	£69.00
Versant Test	£66.00
PH Knowledge test	£46.00
HC Knowledge test	£67.00
Driver Training Day (New Drivers)	£90.00
Driver Training (For Renewal Applications)	£40.00
Change of address Vehicle and Driver licence	£10.20
Replacement Driver Licence Activity	
Replacement Driver Paper Licence	£10.20
Replacement Driver Licence Badge	£16.90

Operator Licences	New Fee
Operator (5 year)	£680.00
Additional Chargeable	
Duplicate paper licence	£10.20
Operator Training Day (New Operators)	£90.00
Operator Training (For Renewal Applications)	£40.00

Vehicle Licences	New Fee
New Vehicle	£253.00
Vehicle Renewal	£238.00
New Electric Vehicle	£193.00
Electric Vehicle Renewal	£178.00
Transfer of ownership	£82.00
Application to change plate details	£45.00
Transfer of vehicle	£106.00
Plate Deposit	£108.00
Bracket	£10.00
Replacement Vehicle Licence Activity	
Replacement Vehicle Paper Licence	£10.20
Replacement Vehicle Licence Plates	£26.50
Change of address Vehicle and Driver licence	£10.20
Livery	
Full set cost	£32.00
Stripes cost	£24.00
Crest costs	£14.00

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022

The new Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022, which came into force on 28 June, is the most significant change to taxi accessibility legislation since the Equality Act was introduced 12 years ago.

The 2022 Act amends the Equality Act 2010 to place duties on hackney carriage drivers and private hire drivers and operators, so any disabled person has specific rights and protections to be transported and receive assistance when using any hackney carriage or private hire without being charged extra.

The main changes are as follows:

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers will be required to:

- Accept the carriage of any disabled person, provide them with reasonable mobility assistance, and carry their mobility aids, all without charging any more than they would for a non-disabled passenger.
- Provide any disabled passenger who requests it with assistance to identify the vehicle, at no extra charge.

Private Hire Operators will be required to:

- Accept bookings for or on behalf of any disabled person, if they have a suitable vehicle available.

As part of the amendments, hackney carriage drivers and private hire drivers could face fines of up to £1,000 if they fail to provide reasonable mobility assistance to disabled passengers taking a pre-booked vehicle.

The measures will apply to drivers in England, Scotland and Wales and will help to provide consistency of experience for affected passengers.

Mogo direct fulfilment

The licensing authority has recently taken on the services of Mogo direct fulfilment. As such, all license (driver badges and vehicle plates) will be posted out to you.

As a result of this change, licence plates and badges will no longer be made at the Council. Licence plates and badges are now made by Mogo, this will ensure that licence holders will receive their licences sooner and direct to their home address.

While the majority of time this is quicker and more efficient, new vehicles will not receive their plates at inspection. Instead they will be dispatched on the same day of vehicle inspection and sent to your home address.

If your plate or driver badge has been lost or stolen you will need to contact the Licensing Team to arrange for a replacement. Once we have received all necessary details and replacement fee, we will arrange for a new plate/badge to be posted to you.

Reminders

Airport Parking

We received some complaints recently of St Albans licenced vehicles parking outside the ibis hotel by Luton Airport. This is a rank which is designated for use by Luton Licensed hackney carriage vehicles. No other vehicles, private hire or hackney carriages should be using this space. If you are picking up passengers from Luton airport please make sure you park lawfully.

Short journeys

There have recently been an increasing number of reports about passengers being left stranded by licensed hackney carriage drivers who refused to take them on short journeys.

S.53 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 states:

“A driver of a hackney carriage standing at any of the stands for hackney carriages appointed by the commissioners, or in any street, who refuses or neglects, without reasonable excuse, to drive such carriage to any place within the prescribed distance, or the distance to be appointed by any byelaw of the commissioners, not exceeding the prescribed distance to which he is directed to drive by the person hiring or wishing to hire such carriage, shall for every such offence be liable to a penalty not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale.”

A driver of a hackney carriage can only refuse to carry passengers within a controlled district if he has reasonable excuse to do so. What constitutes “reasonable excuse” is ultimately a matter for a court of law to determine.

Refusing a fare based on the fact that the journey is too short will not pass the reasonable excuse test. Drivers of taxis are under a duty to provide local public transport services. Anyone who wishes to undertake a journey in a hackney carriage (provided it is within the controlled distance) is entitled to do so and this right is protected in law. Any drivers who refuse a fare due for the reason of ‘a short journey’ will be investigated by the Licensing team and as a result could be prosecuted/lose their licence if found guilty of this offence.

Raising awareness amongst taxi drivers in Hertfordshire about suicide prevention

We have been contacted by the Director of Public Health (East Sussex) to raise awareness of increased suicides at Beachy Head.

East Sussex, are seeing a concerning increase in suicides at Beachy Head – 12 since the beginning of May, with half aged 25 & under. There have been 503 deaths since January 2004, 24 to 50 deaths annually since 2018. Figures that are hugely shocking. Well over 80% of these deaths were not local residents. They travel from all over the UK and abroad.

Surprisingly not everyone is aware of its notoriety as a place of multiple suicides. Taxi drivers from all other the UK transport passengers to Beachy Head, who then attempt or complete suicide. Some drivers have sadly witnessed their passenger jumping.

We would also like to increase awareness of suicide prevention within all our taxi companies and drivers in Hertfordshire. If taxi companies would like to access suicide prevention training, please can they contact Manawar Jan-Khan
Manawar.Jan-Khan@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Wheelchair Accessible Contact List

Wheelchair users are very dependent on our licensed trade. Having the ability to contact a Hackney Carriage Driver directly, to book a wheelchair accessible vehicle, is very beneficial to them.

We have a list of hackney carriage drivers with wheelchair accessible vehicles on our website, this list provides contact details so that members of the public are able to contact them and book them directly.

If you would like to be included on this list, and you have a wheelchair accessible vehicle, please contact us on the following email:

licensing@stalbans.gov.uk

Please include the following within your email:

- Your vehicle licence number
- Contact number
- Booking availability (days of the week, hours)
- Do you need 24 hours' notice for a booking

Newsletter Distribution

The licensing team are look at ways we can be more environmental friendly. One change we are making is the way we will distribute our Licensing Newsletters. All future (and past) newsletters will now be available to view on our website:

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/taxi-licensing>

If you would like to subscribe to the Newsletter and receive an email copy, please email us on the below email:

licensing@stalbans.gov.uk

Driver News

If there is anything you would like to see included within our next newsletter please get in touch with the Licensing Team on

licensing@stalbans.gov.uk