

# St Albans Licensing

## Newsletter

### February 2021

#### Travelling with confidence



Hopefully you will have received our previous communications with details about this new initiative to support the trade in St Albans which started on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020. We are providing **free online training** available to you on infection control so you can learn how best to look after yourselves, your customers and your business during the Pandemic.

Every Local Authority in Hertfordshire has/will be introducing "Travel With Confidence" for their trade so it will be publicised County Wide raising awareness of the scheme with the travelling public. The hope is that not only will the scheme help you to be safer but will also encourage more people back to using hackney carriage and private hire vehicles increasing your custom in these difficult times.

1. There is **free online training** available for every licence holder. You can just do this and then use your new knowledge to keep yourself and your passengers safer, there is no obligation to move onto any other part of the scheme if that's not what you want to do.
2. You can become **accredited** if you pass the quizzes in the training and make certain undertakings. These are not onerous and will allow you to display the scheme stickers (provided by us) and be on our website register.
3. If you become accredited and already have a screen fitted or subsequently purchase a screen you can potentially **claim back up to £100.00**.

Whilst we have the ability to provide training to all licence holders the funding we have to reimburse the cost of purchasing a screen is limited. This funding will be apportioned on a first come first serve basis so if it is of interest then please do not delay in undertaking the training and becoming accredited.

If you wish to undertake the training then please email us at:  
[licensing@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@stalbans.gov.uk) confirming your name and driver licence number.

## **Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licencing Policy**

At the Licensing & Regulatory Committee, it was agreed that the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licencing Policy would be adopted. This came into effect the day after, on 27th January 2021.

You can view the newly adopted policy at the link below;

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/licences-and-permits>

We ask all licence holders to familiarise themselves with this policy and the requirements within, as all licences issued from 27th January 2021 will need to comply with this policy, including licence requirements, the code of conduct and the updated conditions.

### **Be sure to renew your licence in time!**

We want to ensure that all drivers apply to renew their driver licence with plenty of time as we will no longer allow drivers to continue to work pending a renewal. So please ensure you have left sufficient time to have your application processed.

To avoid a break in holding a valid licence, we advise you aim to renew your driver licence at least 2 months before expiry, if not earlier. We are not responsible for delays due to the actions of external bodies such as the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will aim to send a reminder to licence holders before their licence expires, in order to assist them to submit their renewal applications promptly. Please note that we are not obliged to do this and the responsibility of ensuring licences do not expire remains with the licence holder. You must therefore allow adequate time for the processing of your renewal applications.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Update Service**

All drivers are now required to sign up to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) update service. It costs £13 per year and you can pay by debit or credit card. You will be required to sign up to the service when you apply to renew your driver licence. It is important that you sign up to the service within 30 days of receiving your DBS certificate. If you do not do this within 30 days, another DBS certificate will be required within 12 months.

### **Equality Act 2010 and Safeguarding Training**

All drivers and operators renewing their licence will need to complete a refresher course on the Equality Act 2010 and safeguarding upon every renewal. Drivers licensed at the time that this Policy is adopted must pass this training prior to the renewal of their licence, or within 12 months of the policy being adopted, if they are due to renew sooner.

This training course aims at refreshing your current knowledge as well as insuring you have all the up to date information. The course will take 2-3 hours to complete, and can be accessed at any time.

## **English Language Requirement**

An English language test is also required for drivers who do not hold a qualification in English at a grade approximately equal to level B2 on the CEFR scale. Where an applicant does not have one of these qualifications, they must complete the Versant Test.

Existing drivers must complete the Versant Test on English language (where they do not hold a qualification in English at a grade approximately equal to level B2 on the CEFR scale), prior to the renewal of their licence, or within 12 months of the policy being adopted if they are due to renew sooner.

If you have any queries with regard to this matter, or would like some clarification on certain sections of the policy please contact the licensing section on the email address above.

## **Emissions**

As you will be aware we have introduced the following section on Environmental considerations within the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licencing Policy.

Currently at first application, vehicles must meet or exceed Euro 5 emissions standards. This changes from 01/04/2022, at first application vehicles must meet or exceed Euro 6 emissions standards.

At renewal – From 01/04/2022 vehicle licences will not be renewed in respect of any licensed vehicle that does not meet or exceed Euro 5 emissions standards. From 01/04/2025 vehicle licences will not be renewed in respect of any licensed vehicle that does not meet or exceed Euro 6 emissions standards.

If you are not sure what Euro standard your vehicle meets, the below table sets out which vehicles are each Euro standard.

<b>My car newly registered from:</b>	<b>Emissions standard</b>
31 December 1992	Euro 1
1 January 1997	Euro 2
1 January 2001	Euro 3
1 January 2006	Euro 4
1 January 2011	Euro 5
1 September 2015 - but see important note below	Euro 6

## **Certificate of Compliance (COC)**

As you will have seen any vehicle licence (where the vehicle is over 7 years of age) issued after the adoption of the policy will now only be subject to 6 monthly COCs.

If your vehicle licence was issued prior to the policy adoption, the conditions attached to your licence would require you to complete 4 monthly COCs due to your vehicles age. However due to current circumstances the licensing team will not be enforcing the condition relating to 4 monthly COCs. Therefore you will only need to supply 2 COCs upon your renewal. You must ensure one of these COCs is dated within 28 days of the licence renewal.

## **New requirements for renewing your vehicle licence**

You are now required to provide a copy of your MOT with your vehicle licence application. When renewing please ensure this is submitted.

You no longer need to have a fire extinguisher as part of your vehicle application renewal.

Please take some time to review all the vehicle requirements which can be found within Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licencing Policy. The policy can be viewed here: <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/licences-and-permits>

## **Bowers way East car park - Harpenden**



We have had reports that licensed drivers have been congregating in Bowers Way East Car park in the areas circled on the photo.

We would ask you to only use the car park for parking purposes only and not to congregate.

Recently when officers did a clean-up of the carpark 10 bottles of urine were found in this area.

There is no evidence to suggest that drivers are responsible for this however we would ask our

drivers to be vigilant in ensuring this does not occur.

As we are aware that it is not just St Albans licensed driver's using this area. If you see any activity of this nature please call the Police non-emergency number 101.

## **Vehicle renewals during the Pandemic**

We have contacted drivers who have renewed their vehicle licences during this time in the coming weeks to arrange a time for them to collect their current vehicle plate.

There are still plates needing to be collected. If you have not collected your plate yet please email [licensing@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@stalbans.gov.uk) to arrange a time to collect your plate. We will be providing you with stickers for your vehicle which advise passengers must wear face coverings at all times (unless exempt), as well as an allocation of face coverings.

If your vehicle is due for renewal now, please note that we will contact you within 3 weeks of the licence being issued to collect your vehicle plates.

## **Rapid Tests for Licensed Drivers**

Rapid testing is available for all members of the public who are unable to work from home. This includes Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers. We want to make sure that all our licensed drivers are aware of this scheme.

This rapid test is for people who do not show symptoms.

Testing is free of charge and takes less than 5 minutes from arrival at the centre, and the results are received within 30 minutes of taking the test. There are sites across the county offering testing for 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. Appointments must be booked and this can be done by clicking on the following link;

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/news/coronavirus-tests.aspx#rapid>

We would suggest that drivers book a test regularly, if they are currently working.