



Licensing Fees For 2008

Following consideration of all of the comments received during the transport licensing fees setting process and the constructive meeting between Officers of the Council and representatives of the trade, chaired by Cllr Steven Nelson, Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety, we are now able to announce the new transport licensing fees. (see table overleaf)

The fees have been changed from the original proposals to take into account the views of the trade, whilst allowing the Council to enable the transport licensing function to be appropriately funded.

In order for this to happen the Council will adjust the start date of the licensing period during this year. In future Hackney Carriage Vehicles proprietors will renew their licence at the end of September each year and Private Hire Vehicle proprietors at the end of October each year.

This will have the added benefit of allowing more time for consultation on fee setting with the trade in the future and for all the information used in setting the fees to be readily available to all.

The transport licensing function will be the subject of review during the course of the year by one of the Council's Scrutiny Committees. The trade, as well as members of the general public, will be able to give their views on how they would like to see the trade operate and be supervised in the Stockton area.

Cllr Steve Nelson, Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety, said "I hope the trade will see how we have listened to their comments and how we have attempted to address their concerns in setting the fees at this level. The trade have requested that we consider having an independent consultant look at how we licence and police the trade in the Stockton area. The cost of

such a report would have to be funded through the licensing fees so we will be discussing this further with the trade before undertaking such an exercise."

It is our intention to hold regular meetings with the trade and you will receive your invite to the first meeting in due course.

Vehicle Licence Renewals

Application forms for renewals can be collected from this office or downloaded from our website at www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/stockton

To enable us to have your licence and plates available before your current licence expires your application should be submitted by Wednesday 23rd April 2008 for Hackney Carriage Vehicles and by Wednesday 21st May 2008 for Private Hire Vehicles.

If you do not have your new licence and plates before your current ones expire you will not be able to trade.

Proprietors who submit their applications by the requested date will be able to collect their new licences and plates between the hours of **5.30pm and 8.00pm on Wednesday 30th April 2008** for Hackney Carriage Licences and between the hours of **9.30am and 3.30pm on Saturday 31st May 2008** for Private Hire Licences.

Please remember your old plates must be returned at the same time.

Please note our offices will be closed on

- Monday 5th May 2008
- Monday 26th May 2008

Have Your Say

We would welcome your views on any of the issues raised in this newsletter. Please contact us at the address above.

Important Information From Stockton Police Regarding The Issue Of Metal Theft

Detective Chief Inspector Darren Best of Stockton Police would like to make you aware that theft of metal is a National Problem that is affecting Stockton in a similar way to many other parts of the Country.

However what people are probably not aware of is the amount of damage that can be caused when thieves steal metal from private houses and business premises. The two biggest areas that we investigate are theft of copper piping from internal heating systems where thieves often leave water running into a house and theft of lead where thieves rip flashing from the outside of buildings leaving them open to poor weather conditions, both of these crimes often create huge repair bills for home owners where the damage bill is often much greater than the cost of replacing the metal itself.

The police believe that taxi companies and individual drivers can assist in tackling this crime by refusing to accept fares to scrap dealers.

Detective Chief Inspector Best said, 'in most cases it is likely that the person asking to be taken to a scrap dealer is going there to weigh some metal in for cash, intelligence that we have indicates that criminals are regularly using taxis to transport stolen metal in the belief that they are less likely to be captured by the police. We have mounted several operations and have more planned for the future and I wanted to use this opportunity to give fair warning that if taxi drivers are knowingly allowing stolen property of any kind to be transported in their vehicles they will leave themselves open to criminal charges and are also likely to breach the conditions of their licence thereby putting their livelihoods at risk.

In relation to stolen metals in particular, I believe that there is also a Health and Safety issue that needs to be considered, stolen metal objects can be hazardous in a moving car, not designed to transport such items, simply because of their weight and often jagged edges and also because in some cases the metals are coated in substances that could put the health of the driver and his or her future passengers at risk.

I recognise completely that taxi drivers are not responsible for this crime and are simply going about their business, however they may not realise that by accepting these fares they are assisting criminals to exchange stolen property for cash that in a lot of cases is then exchanged for illegal drugs and in doing so are unwittingly allowing this crime to flourish at the expense of decent people whose homes and businesses are being wrecked by the thieves'

V5 Documents

At a recent meeting of the Licensing Committee members considered the current procedures regarding Vehicle Registration documents (V5C) following the consultation last year, which resulted in two responses on the issue of V5C documents.

Members were reminded that current practice, which was the subject of the original report from the Ombudsman, was that an application for a private hire vehicle or hackney carriage vehicle licence would be accepted without production of a V5C document in the proprietors name but the licence and identification plates would not normally be issued, unless there were exceptional circumstances, until the V5C document is produced showing him as being the registered keeper. This practice has been in place since April 2005 without difficulty or complaint.

After full consideration of the report and the consultation responses that had been presented to them, Members felt that the current procedures on DVLA vehicle registration documents (V5C) were working well and that the procedure should remain the same.

Insurance Certificates

Following a recent court case before a district judge at Teesside Magistrates Court insurance certificates produced by the vehicle proprietor were criticised for not being well drafted regarding the use it covered in respect of private and or public hire and was not sufficiently explicit in its terms so that all drivers were fully aware of their legal obligations.

It is proposed therefore that all proprietors will be required to produce certificates at their next insurance expiry that includes a proviso that drivers should hold the appropriate Hackney Carriage and or Private Hire Drivers licence and certificates in respect of Private Hire Vehicles should also specifically exclude Public Hire use.

Transportation Licensing Fees 2008

	Fees With Effect From 11th April 08
New Grant of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle (including plates, bracket, roundels etc)	
a) Wheelchair Accessible (Licensed until 30 th September 2008)	£80.00
b) Wheelchair Accessible (Licensed from 1 st October 2008 until 30 th September 2009 and for subsequent years)	£210.00
c) Other Vehicles (Licensed until 30 th September 2008)	£155.00
d) Other Vehicles (Licensed from 1 st October 2008 until 30 th September 2009 and for subsequent years)	£425.00
New Grant of a Private Hire Vehicle (including plates, bracket, transfers etc)	
a) Licensed until 31 st October 2008	£125.00
b) Licensed from 1 st November 2008 until 31 st October 2009 and for subsequent years	£425.00
Renewal of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle (including plates)	
a) Wheelchair Accessible (Licensed until 30 th September 2008)	£80.00
b) Wheelchair Accessible (Licensed from 1 st October 2008 until 30 th September 2009 and for subsequent years)	£190.00
c) Other Vehicles (Licensed until 30 th September 2008)	£145.00
d) Other Vehicles (Licensed from 1 st October 2008 until 30 th September 2009 and for subsequent years)	£395.00
Renewal of a Private Hire Vehicle (including plates)	
a) Licensed until 31 st October 2008	£115.00
b) Licensed from 1 st November 2008 until 31 st October 2009 and for subsequent years	£395.00
Change of Hackney Carriage Vehicle	£115.00
Change of Private Hire Vehicle	£115.00
Transfer of Ownership	£100.00
Charge For Refer to Drawer/Bounced Cheques	£45.00
Private Hire Driver Renewal Badge	£70.00
Hackney Carriage Driver Renewal Badge	£70.00
Combined Driver Renewal Badge	£85.00
Grant of Private Hire Operator Licence (price bands of 5 beyond 2 vehicle as follows)	
1 Vehicle	£175.00
2 Vehicles	£250.00
3-7 Vehicles	£645.00
8-12 Vehicles	£920.00
13-17 Vehicles	£1195.00
18-22 Vehicles	£1470.00
23-27 Vehicles	£1745.00
28-32 Vehicles	£2020.00
33-37 Vehicles	£2295.00
38-42 Vehicles	£2570.00
43-47 Vehicles	£2845.00
Every additional 5 vehicles or part a further fee of £275.00	
Renewal of Private Hire Operators Licence (price bands of 5 beyond 2 vehicles as follows)	
1 Vehicle	£120.00
2 Vehicles	£240.00
3-7 Vehicles	£590.00
8-12 Vehicles	£875.00
13-17 Vehicles	£1150.00
18-22 Vehicles	£1425.00
23-27 Vehicles	£1700.00
28-32 Vehicles	£1975.00
33-37 Vehicles	£2250.00
38-42 Vehicles	£2525.00
43-47 Vehicles	£2800.00
Every additional 5 vehicles or part a further fee of £275.00	