

Key changes to New Forest taxi Policy 2024

Reference	Addition/change/replacement wording in the policy/Appendix <i>Rationale for change or addition</i>
<b>Drivers</b>	
Appendix A	<p><b>Drivers are required to sign up for the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency) online check service and submit the check code with the driver application.</b>  <b>For both new and renewal applicants officers will verify the driving entitlement and note any penalty points awarded, applicants are required to sign a mandate to permit such checks to take place.</b></p> <p><i>An initial check on the DVLA driver licence will be made and then repeated on renewal.</i></p>
Appendix A 1.2 policy	<p><b>DBS</b>  <b>Checks must be made to ensure that applicants and drivers can be considered as fit and proper and suitable to hold a driver licence.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All drivers must be signed up to DBS update service</b></li> <li>• <b>Six monthly enhanced DBS driver checks will be carried out</b></li> <li>• <b>The licence may be suspended if the update service check cannot be carried out because the registration has lapsed or the driver has not signed up to it.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Licensing Services do not take any responsibility for incorrectly completed DBS requests, that incur an additional charge.</b></p> <p><i>Drivers have an overall responsibility for completing the form correctly. Statutory guidance requires drivers sign up and maintain their registration to the DBS update Service. This will allow the licensing authority to carry out more frequent mid-term checks on the driver’s DBS record, instead of the current three yearly, on renewal frequency.</i></p> <p><i>This is to ensure the authority is aware of any new convictions, occurring during the period of the licence.</i></p>
Appendix A	<p><i>Requirement for applicants to register their Tax Conditionality with HMRC added to application process.</i></p>
Appendix B	<p><i>IOL Convictions Policy</i></p>

	<p><i>The council has adopted the majority of “<b>The Institute of Licensing’s “Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants and licences in the hackney and private hire trades”</b> as attached as Appendix B.</i></p> <p><i>The original has been amended and adopted by other authorities and gives a clear indication of the standards the authority expects from applicants and drivers to ensure that they are fit and proper and safe and suitable to drive a licensed vehicle.</i></p>
Appendix B	<p><i>Addition of cautions which must be disclosed on application and also during the licence period. These may be relevant to the decision on the applicant’s or driver’s fitness and propriety.</i></p>
Appendix B  1.6 and 1.16 Policy	<p><b>National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) NR3S database</b></p> <p><b>Details for all drivers that have been refused a licence or had a driver licence revoked or a licence suspended will be held on the National Register of Refusals and Revocations (NR3S database). This information is shared in order to protect the public and ensure that authorities have all the information required to make a decision on the fitness and propriety of a driver/applicant. It also prevents unsuitable drivers from obtaining licences with other authorities and withholding information.</b></p> <p><b>Licensing authorities will retain the reasons for any refusal or revocation and provide those to other authorities as appropriate, under the terms and conditions of the database.</b></p> <p><i>Additional statutory measure to assess the fitness and propriety of a driver/applicant, to ensure that the applicant has been truthful about previous licences held with other authorities and any enforcement action that has been taken against them. To ensure that licensing authorities are in possession of all the facts before a licence or enforcement action is determined.</i></p>
Appendix B  1.16 Policy	<p><b>Where this Licensing Authority has refused to grant a driver licence to an applicant, or has had a licence revoked or it has expired during a period of suspension, no new application will be considered for a minimum period of three years from the date of refusal, revocation or expiry.</b></p> <p><b>Any application subsequently received, application will be determined by members of a Licensing Sub-Committee and all the applicant’s history and background considered. Where the application is refused the fee will not be returned in lieu of administration costs.</b></p> <p><i>Addition and clarity on how to address drivers who have been previously revoked.</i></p>

Appendix C	<i>Explanation of what applicants can expect from a NFDC driver knowledge test which will assist with preparation and research prior to the test.</i>
Appendix C	<p><b>The file will be closed six months after the date of the last driver knowledge test, (whether a negative or positive result) if no communication or application has been received by Licensing Services.</b></p> <p><i>Once an applicant has passed the driver knowledge test we will limit the length of time that applicants can wait to apply, to keep the momentum of the application and ensure that files are not kept for a long period.</i></p>
Appendix D  1.11 policy	<p><b>Exemption Certificates</b>  <b>The notice of exemption must be displayed inside the vehicle where it can be seen by passengers. This can either be in the internal plate pouch or on the dashboard. This confirms that the driver is exempt from certain duties.</b></p> <p><b>The exemption will expire on the same date as the dual driver licence. If the driver wishes the exemption to continue on renewal, current evidence must be provided before the exemption can be re-issued.</b></p> <p><i>Clear policy on the issue of exemptions for drivers that cannot perform certain duties. Enhanced requirement for drivers under the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022).  Display of Exemption Notices to provide confirmation for passengers that the driver is exempt from certain responsibilities.</i></p>
Appendix D  1.8 policy	<p><b>No licence shall be issued until medical clearance (if required) has been established. This applies to new applications and renewals.</b></p> <p><i>Clear wording confirming to drivers that a medical certificate must be received before a new or renewal application is considered. This ensures that the Council receives a positive medical clearance for all applicants/drivers that are licensed by NFDC and that they have been medically assessed as such by a medical practitioner.</i></p>
Appendix D	<b>Licence holders must notify Licensing Services of any deterioration or other change in their health that may affect their driving capability within seven days of the change. This includes any accident-related injury. A list of conditions which</b>

<p>Driver conditions</p>	<p><b>must be notified to the DVLA is provided on the DVLA website at <a href="https://www.gov.uk/driving-medical-conditions">https://www.gov.uk/driving-medical-conditions</a>. However, if a driver is in any doubt, they should contact Licensing Services for advice.</b></p> <p><b>Drivers who have a major medical event or diagnosis that may impact on their medical fitness to drive professionally, will have their licence suspended.</b></p> <p><b>In order to have their licence re-instated they must undergo a group 2 medical with their doctor to ensure that they are fit to drive in a licensed capacity. In most circumstances we will also request a letter and/or further information from their consultant.</b></p> <p><i>Clear requirements for drivers who have a change in their health. As professional drivers it is vital that health is maintained and changes treated accordingly to protect the safety of the driver, passengers and other road users.</i></p>
<p>Appendix D Driver conditions</p>	<p><b>Licensed drivers must inform the licensing department within seven days, of any change in their health, or any injury, that may affect their ability to drive or to meet the Group 2 standard.</b></p>
<p>Appendix D Driver conditions</p>	<p><b>Diabetic applicants</b></p> <p><b>This is a specific Policy in respect of diabetic applicants whose treatment carries a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia, such as insulin treatment or certain types of tablets.</b></p> <p><i>Clear guidance for drivers who are diabetic, or newly diagnosed in relation to their condition. The Licensing Authority must ensure that drivers are fit to drive in a professional capacity and enlist the expertise of the medical profession to evidence this. Particularly when a person is transitioning from tablet controlled medication, to insulin.</i></p>
<p>Appendix E</p>	<p><b>Idling engines</b></p> <p><b>Idling engines contribute to air pollution problems and running the engine while a vehicle is stationary pollutes the environment. It is also illegal on a public road. When a vehicle's engine is idling it can produce nearly twice as much exhaust emissions as it does whilst moving. This affects the quality of the air that we breathe.</b></p> <p><b>Engine idling and the law</b> It is illegal to leave your engine running when stationary and you could also risk a fixed penalty notice, under the Road</p>

	<p><b>Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002.</b>  <b>It is not illegal to have an idling vehicle engine if you are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Waiting at traffic lights</b></li> <li>• <b>Moving slowly through congestion</b></li> <li>• <b>Getting a repair or defrosting a windscreen</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Our compliance officers regularly advise drivers of idling taxi or private hire vehicles to move on or switch off their engine.</b>  <b>What to do:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>If stationary and waiting more than a couple of minutes for a customer, switch your engine off to avoid idling</b></li> <li>• <b>Restarting an engine causes less pollution and uses less fuel than keeping the engine idling. Modern batteries don't need as much engine time to remain charged</b></li> <li>• <b>Avoid an idling engine and you'll help to lower air pollution, improve air quality and save yourself money on fuel</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Included in code of conduct to address driving behaviour. To assist with improving air quality particularly outside schools, train stations and areas where the public congregate.</i></p>
Appendix F	<p><b>Licensed drivers must not smoke cigarettes, e-cigarettes or vaping devices in their vehicles at any time, or allow passengers to do so. This applies whether the vehicle is carrying passengers or not.</b></p> <p><i>Clear instructions for drivers and operators</i></p>
Appendix F	<p><b>Code of conduct</b>  <i>New Appendix to address professional responsibilities for licence holders and to confirm the expectations of the Licensing Authority. To promote and maintain standards in addition to the requirement to treat officers, garage staff and Police officers correctly. Zero tolerance to abuse.</i></p> <p><i>Also addresses the standard of behaviour expected with regard to interaction with passengers. Clear guidelines.</i></p> <p><i>Dress code-New Appendix to promote a professional image for the trade in the New Forest District, particularly as this is a tourist destination.</i></p> <p><i>Inclusion of working with vulnerable passengers to assist in setting and maintaining standards within the trade.</i></p>

<p>Appendix G</p> <p>Driver conditions</p>	<p><b>Drivers must cooperate fully with requests from Police Officers, authorised officers and authorised Officers from other Licensing areas.</b></p> <p><i>Compliance with statutory guidance with regard to compliance with authorised officers when drivers are working in other districts.</i></p>
<p>Appendix G</p> <p>Driver conditions</p>	<p><b>The licence holder is required to provide disabled passengers with reasonable mobility assistance and carry their mobility aids at no extra charge.</b></p> <p><b>Drivers must assist with identification of the vehicle, if this is requested by the disabled passenger.</b></p> <p><i>Addition to comply with the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022, there are new requirements for drivers and Operators.</i></p> <p><i>The requirement for drivers to assist with identification may arise if a driver is picking up a passenger, who has sight issues.</i></p>
<p>Appendix O</p>	<p><i>New Appendix to reflect who, why and when we share our customer data with.</i></p>
<p>1.2 policy</p>	<p><b>New driver applicants are required to present an enhanced DBS certificate and all drivers/applicants must register for the DBS update service. Every licensed driver will then be subject to annual DBS checks. The result of each disclosure will be used to assist the licensing authority in deciding the fitness and propriety of the applicant/driver.</b></p> <p><b>As the DBS check is of an enhanced standard, all new applicants must declare all convictions, cautions or fixed penalty notices they have ever received. Should an applicant fail to disclose this information on the application, this may result in rejection of the application on the grounds of fitness and propriety of the applicant. All licence holders must notify the licensing authority of any conviction, caution, fixed penalty notice or motoring offence received during their licence period. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in suspension or revocation of the driver licence.</b></p> <p><b>Renewal applicants must apply in a timely manner, as renewal letters are issued in order to allow sufficient time for drivers to obtain the DBS and a medical if required. This may take longer than expected in some cases and Licensing Services cannot assist with the progress of a DBS enquiry.</b></p>

	<p><b>We will not issue any licence (either full or temporary), without receipt of a DBS certificate, or information from the update service.</b></p> <p><i>Statutory requirement for the authority to check if a driver has incurred any convictions or cautions during the licence period. The driver must be registered with the DBS update service (and continue to maintain the registration), as annual checks are required. If the driver is not registered then they will have to submit a full application each time and this will incur the full fee to the DBS. In addition this may lead to suspension of the licence as the authority are statutorily required to ensure the driver's conviction/caution status.</i></p>
1.14 policy	<p><b>All new and renewal applicants are required to undertake and pass the external safeguarding training provided by the Blue Lamp Trust. This is to ensure that driver's knowledge is kept current and safeguarding of the public and passengers remains a high priority for drivers.</b></p> <p><i>Protection of customers and awareness of safeguarding matters. Also required by statutory guidance. This is also a requirement for new driver applicants.</i></p>
1.15 policy	<p><b>LAPSED Drivers</b>  <b>Any driver whose licence has expired will be treated as a new driver and must present all documents, in addition to undertaking a medical examination and passing the driver knowledge test and safeguarding assessment. An application must be received before the expiry date if the driver wishes to renew.</b></p> <p><i>Clear guidance for applicants and encourages timely renewal applications.</i></p>
1.17 policy  Appendix G	<p><b>Changing operators</b></p> <p><b>If a licensed driver begins working for another operator, the driver must notify the Licensing Authority (in writing) within seven days of the change.</b></p> <p><i>Current information is required, as the authority may need to contact the driver, or should a complaint be received the operator may also be contacted to assist.</i></p>
1.18 policy	<p><b>Applicants must complete forms accurately. Failure do so may be considered as a deliberate act to defraud the department and mislead decision makers.</b></p>

	<p><i>Failure to declare all relevant information will cause the fitness of the applicant into question. The declaration must be signed to confirm that the applicant has completed the form honestly. If information is subsequently received to the contrary, this indicates that the applicant cannot be regarded as fit and proper and the application is likely to be refused.</i></p> <p><i>Licence holders must also ensure that all convictions, cautions, pending actions/investigations and motoring convictions are declared.</i></p>
1.19 policy Appendix G Driver conditions	<p><b>Licensed drivers must report (in writing) any police investigations to the authority within 48 hours of police contact and provide updates if required.</b></p> <p><i>The authority may need to make further enquiries with regard to the driver's continuing suitability to hold a licence with this authority. (Fit and proper criteria).</i></p>
2.10 policy	<p><b>A high visibility vest or jacket must be kept in the vehicle at all times to assist in the case of break down or emergency.</b></p> <p><b>Large sections of the Forest are unlit and night -time breakdowns pose a high risk in such areas. High visibility wear is also required to be worn by all visitors to the Council's garage facilities.</b></p> <p><b>Failure to wear a hi-vis vest/jacket when attending the garage facility for a vehicle test will result in a failed test and a re-test must be booked and a further fee required.</b></p> <p><i>Drivers and passengers are at risk in the dark and unlit areas, of the New Forest district should a vehicle break down. In addition, all visitors to the Council's garage facilities and must wear a high -vis vest or jacket. Should they fail to do so, their test will be counted as a failure and will require a re-booking and further payment. If a hi-vis vest remains in the vehicle at all times, this will assist the driver at the vehicle test and also afford some protection in the case of breakdown or incident.</i></p>
2.12 policy	<p><b>Card machines</b> <b>It is advisable for all licensed vehicles to carry a device that is capable of accepting a payment for a journey by a credit or debit card.</b></p> <p><i>To improve safety and access to licensed vehicles. To ensure that travelling by taxi is easier and a more attractive option to customers, keeping pace with technology and improving safety for drivers as they will carry less cash.</i></p>



	<p><i>Also improves customer access for passengers with disabilities who may not carry cash on a regular basis for reasons of security. Not mandatory as there is lack of signal and coverage in some areas, which makes this difficult.</i></p>
2.13 policy	<p><b>Drivers of Private Hire Vehicles shall not stop on, or near an appointed Hackney Carriage rank at any time, in circumstances which could give the impression that the vehicle is being used to ply for hire.</b></p> <p><i>To provide clear guidance for driver as to where they are not permitted to wait. To assist customers who may inadvertently hail a private hire vehicle.</i></p>
5.2 policy	<p><b>Warnings may be issued for minor or first time infringements. A warning letter will remain on file for a period of three years and will be referred to in the event that the licence holder is brought before the Sub-Committee for any other reason.</b></p> <p><b>If a third incident/complaint is received, the driver will be invited to attend a Licensing Sub-Committee hearing to explain their actions and pattern of behaviour. Members will consider if they can be considered fit and proper and may continue to hold a driver licence.</b></p> <p><i>Provides a clear framework for the trade and officers when dealing with transgressions.</i></p>
5.3 policy	<p><b>Drivers may be required to undertake further training should their behaviour or driving skills be called into question, following a single or multiple complaints. A suitable course and time-scale will be identified by the authority and taken at the driver's own expense.</b></p> <p><i>An additional measure to assist in keeping a suitable standard of driving in the fleet.</i></p>

<b>Vehicles</b>	
Appendix A	<p><b>Licensing authorities should require a basic DBS disclosure from a proprietor of a vehicle if they are not a driver licensed with NFDC. This should be checked annually</b></p> <p><i>Required under statutory guidance</i></p>
2.11 policy Appendix F	<p><b>Vehicles that are five years and older from the date of first registration must undertake an additional test six months after the licence grant date.</b></p> <p><b>Should the vehicle fail the six-monthly test, the Council's vehicle examiner may issue a notice to suspend the licence</b></p>

	<p><b>until the fault(s) has been rectified and the vehicle re-tested successfully. If a vehicle is suspended and the reason for failure is not rectified within two months, this will result in automatic revocation of licence.</b></p> <p><b>A vehicle may be mechanically inspected, at any time up to a maximum of three times per year. If a vehicle fails to meet the required standards the licence may be suspended or revoked.</b></p> <p><i>Additional provision to address a poor-quality vehicles presented for test. This will result in freeing up test appointments for drivers/proprietors and therefore decrease the waiting period for appointments. This also assists with the quality of vehicles in the fleet and ensures that unsuitable vehicles are not being used.</i></p>
2.2 policy	<p><b>Vehicle licences will only be issued on the condition that the vehicle is not licensed by another licensing authority as either a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle.</b></p> <p><b>If a new vehicle has a licence with another authority it must be surrendered before NFDC issue a vehicle licence. We will require proof of the surrender from the previous authority</b></p> <p><i>Dual plating not permitted. Makes enforcement difficult and Clean Air database requires all authorities to submit their fleet information weekly.</i></p> <p><i>There are varying vehicle standards and livery required by Councils across the UK. Vehicles that are licensed by different authorities may compromise NFDC standards and this can cause issues when vehicles are presented for testing.</i></p>
2.3 Policy Appendix F	<p><b>All petrol or diesel vehicles must be less than five (5) years from the date of first registration, at the time of initial licensing.</b></p> <p><b>All hybrid vehicles must be less than seven (7) years from the date of first registration, at the time of initial licensing.</b></p> <p><b>No change for current fleet, but after 1 January 2026 only those vehicles less than ten (10) years old will be renewed. The age policy does not apply to fully electric vehicles.</b></p> <p><b>Twice yearly testing of vehicles for those that are five (5) years and older (currently eight (8)).</b></p> <p><i>This is to ensure that NFDC do not have a policy favouring vehicles older than other neighbouring authorities. Falls in line with</i></p>

	<p><i>other authorities and assists our clean air strategy (currently in development) and climate change targets in relation to tailpipe emissions . Maintains a professional fleet for local customers and visitors to the area and raises standards.</i></p>
Appendix F	<p><b>Seating</b>  <b>The vehicle must have sufficient seating capacity to carry not less than four and not more than eight passengers in addition to the driver. (The seating capacity is determined on the assumption that allowance is made for a rear seating width of approximately 400 mm(16”) per passenger measured laterally along the widest part of the seat and where arm rests are positioned over such seats the measurement shall be taken between arm rests.)</b></p> <p><b>Access to every passenger seat must be unobstructed and be easily accessible to passengers and without the need for more than one passenger to move.</b></p> <p><b>Head rests must be fitted to all forward or rear facing seats.</b></p> <p><b>Seats must be properly and securely bolted in place, on smoothly operating runners as applicable. Coverings should be clean and not worn, damaged or split.</b></p> <p><i>Removal of rear legroom and seat height dimensions to accommodate a variety of vehicles.</i></p> <p><i>Should an application be made for a vehicle that carries less than 4 passengers then this will be determined by Members of a Licensing Sub-Committee or the Licensing Manager.</i></p>
Appendix F	<p><b>Luggage</b>  <b>The boot or luggage compartment must be of sufficient size to carry a reasonable amount of luggage relative to the seating capacity.</b></p> <p><b>The boot or luggage compartment must be separated from the passenger compartment by a suitable barrier without obstructing any emergency exits.</b></p> <p><i>Dimensions/capacity not given as there are many different types of vehicles.</i></p>
Appendix F	<p><b>Engine size</b>  <b>Remove this requirement</b></p> <p><i>Remove all references to engine size, as newer vehicles are being manufactured with smaller engines (cc),which provide economic</i></p>

	<p><i>and environmental benefits, whilst still providing the same capability.</i></p> <p><i>Vehicle specifications have improved and evolved to enable those vehicles with smaller engines to perform adequately as licensed vehicles. Hybrid and electric vehicles are also acceptable.</i></p>
<p>Appendix F</p> <p>2.7 Policy</p> <p>Appendix H</p> <p>PHV conditions</p>	<p><b>Private hire vehicles-door stickers</b></p> <p><b>Unless an individual exemption has been granted for the vehicle (executive vehicles only, working solely on contracts with specific conditions attached to the licence), self-adhesive identification signage must be affixed to each of the rear passenger door panels of the vehicle. Only signage approved and supplied by the Authority may be used, as they identify the licensing authority and the legal requirement for all journeys undertaken in the vehicle to be pre-booked.</b></p> <p><b>These must displayed at all times and NOT altered in any way or removed at any time whilst the vehicle is licensed. These signs must not be fixed using magnets, Velcro or adhesive tape.</b></p> <p><b>Failure to display the council door stickers in the approved manner may result in suspension of the vehicle until the matter is rectified.</b></p> <p><i>NFDC door signage further identifies licensed vehicles to the public and supports safeguarding. It confirms that the vehicle may only be hired through a booking with a licensed operator and not hailed on the street. The addition of door signage increases recognition and identification of NFDC private hire vehicles for police, other agencies and the public.</i></p> <p><i>They must be fixed using the adhesive on the signage, so that they cannot be taken off the vehicle and used on bogus vehicles. All vehicles used for private hire purposes depreciate due to high mileages and licence plate fixing requirements. Installation of further identification on doors provides Safeguarding and compliance advantages due to increased visibility especially if NFDC vehicles are operating outside the District.</i></p> <p><i>Vehicles granted a signage exemption may only carry out contract and executive work and not standard private hire work. All other private hire vehicles must display door signage and licence plates.</i></p> <p><i>The Council's identifying signage may be removed using the manufacturer's instructions when a vehicle ceases to be licensed.</i></p>
Appendix F	<p><b>Unless an individual vehicle exemption has been granted for a private hire vehicle, Council licence plates must be securely affixed to the licensed vehicle using Council supplied brackets</b></p>

<p>2.7 Policy Appendix H and I Vehicle licence conditions</p>	<p><b>at all times. Magnetic, adhesive or Velcro fittings must not be used.</b></p> <p><b>The internal plate MUST also be fixed to the inside of the front windscreen using the clear pouch provided. The internal plate must be placed in the bottom left corner of the windscreen where it can be easily read by passengers and those outside the vehicle.</b></p> <p><b>Failure to attach a licence plates in the approved manner may result in suspension of the vehicle, to allow the proprietor to correctly fix the issue.</b></p> <p><b>A sign must also be affixed to the vehicle indicating that smoking is not permitted in the vehicle.</b></p> <p><i>This is to prevent plates from being stolen from vehicles or drivers failing to replace the plates if they have removed them. A licensed vehicle remains a licensed vehicle at <b>all</b> times and the removal of a plate does not “un-licence” the vehicle, (unless an authorised NFDC Officer suspends the vehicle and removes the plate). There are also major safety consequences that may arise from the use of stolen plates on non-licensed vehicles.</i></p>
<p>Appendix F</p>	<p><b>Only windows tinted during the build of the vehicle (factory fitted) are permitted to be used on a licensed vehicle and only rearward of the driver. Film added post manufacturer must be removed.</b></p> <p><b>Any window tint must comply with relevant UK legislation.</b></p> <p><i>Clear guidance on what is acceptable</i></p>
<p>Appendix F</p>	<p><b>Where a vehicle is designated and licensed as a wheelchair accessible vehicle, the proprietor shall ensure that any driver of that vehicle has received sufficient training to load and convey wheelchair passengers. The driver of such vehicle must pass the accredited course identified by NFDC. An enhanced driver badge will then be issued to confirm that they have received the required training.</b></p> <p><i>Vehicles designated as Wheelchair Accessible must be driven by drivers that have received training to ensure that they are competent in moving, securing and carrying such passengers safely. They will also be confident in their responsibilities and the equipment used.</i></p>
<p>Appendix F</p>	<p><b>Tyres</b></p>

**Due to the considerable mileage licensed vehicles accrue, the maintenance of tyres is paramount to the safety of the vehicle. Therefore, all tyres must be of the correct size, in good condition with no bulges, cracks, cuts or steel showing. All tyres fitted to the vehicle must have at least 2 mm tread depth throughout a continuous band in the centre 3/4 of the tread and around the entire circumference of the tyre.**

**All tyres must be 'first life'. Re-treaded, re-moulded or second-hand tyres must not be fitted to a licensed vehicle.**

**Should a vehicle be presented at the Council's testing facility with a tyre over 6 years old, on any axle, it will fail the vehicle test. In addition, any tyre not displaying a date code will also fail.**

**All vehicles must be equipped with one of the provisions below, as provided by the manufacturer.**

- **a spare wheel of full or space saver design above the legal tread requirement, inflated to the correct pressure and the tools required to change a wheel, or**
- **an emergency puncture repair kit (with compressor / inflation pack), or**
- **run flat tyres.**

**In the event of a space saver tyre, run flat tyres (when punctured) or puncture repair kit, these must only be used in an emergency to complete a passenger journey and must comply and be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Any such defective wheel should be replaced before taking another fare to ensure passenger safety.**

#### **Wheels**

**The vehicle must be right-hand drive and have a minimum of four approved road wheels and spare tyre provision as provided at vehicle manufacture stage. Replacement alloy wheels are not acceptable.**

**Wheels should be correctly aligned, joints and bearings free from abnormal wear. All mounting points should be in a sound condition with no undue wear in any associated bushes.**

*Clear information re standard of tyres expected at all times. This will clarify the standard expected at vehicle test and prevent unnecessary test failures.*

*The correct upkeep and replacement of worn tyres is vital for*

	<p><i>the protection of the public. The safety of licensed vehicles, carrying passengers for thousands of miles over their period of use, is paramount.</i></p>
<p>Appendix F 2.14 policy Appendix I HCV conditions</p>	<p><b>Calibrated and sealed meters must be fitted in hackney carriages and that at this time GPS/phone devices are not acceptable alternative, as they may be altered.</b></p> <p><i>The Licensing Authority do not consider GPS devices as suitable replacements for taxi meters for use in Hackney Carriages.</i></p>
Appendix F	<p><b>Windows – should operate to specification. Windscreens should not be cracked, starred, or have any visual deformity, so as to impair driver vision.</b></p> <p><i>Detailed specifications address issues that have been raised during the currency of the previous policy. This provides a clear defined requirement for the trade, officers and testing facilities.</i></p>
Appendix F	<p><b>Insurance write offs</b> <b>For reasons of public safety this Council will not licence or re-licence any vehicle that has been written off by an insurance company, regardless of the category of write-off.</b></p> <p><i>This provides clear guidance to support public safety and eliminates doubt for proprietors and passengers.</i></p>
Appendix F 2.9 policy	<p><b>A licensed vehicle which has suffered major accident damage or requires substantial mechanical repair may be replaced by a hire vehicle, provided:</b></p> <p><b>(i) the damage to, or defect in, the vehicle has been reported;</b> <b>(ii) application is made in the usual way for a change of vehicle (albeit temporarily);</b> <b>(iii) the replacement vehicle meets the licensing criteria and is suitable to be used for hire purposes;</b> <b>(iv) the hiring of the hire vehicle is organised and paid for by the affected licensed owner or operator.</b></p> <p><b>Following appropriate repairs to the vehicle, it must undergo and pass a mechanical inspection by the Council testing facility before it may be permitted to be used as a licensed vehicle. The appropriate fee for a new licence and test will be charged.</b></p> <p><i>New addition to ensure that accidents are reported and dealt with in a consistent and timely manner and that vehicles that have been repaired and safe to be driven again</i></p>

Appendix F	<p><b>Good quality seat covers may be used, providing that each is a matching set, in keeping with the colour of the vehicle. They shall be properly affixed to the seat so as not to become loose during use and kept clean and devoid of any kind of damage. They must not interfere with the mechanism of seat belts or airbags.</b></p> <p><i>Guidance for those that wish to use seat covers. Seat covers can be washed regularly to maintain cleanliness.</i></p>
Appendix F	<p><b>Cleanliness and condition – exterior should be clean and polished. It must not have visible dents, tears, flaking paint, rust or scratches. Number plates, vehicle licence plates and the internal windscreen plate must be securely and correctly fixed to the vehicle.</b></p> <p><i>Clear advice on expectations of vehicle test. Prevents vehicles from being presented in an unacceptable condition and resulting in a test failure.</i></p>
Appendix F	<p><b>Every vehicle presented for testing must be clean and fit for passengers to be carried in. The following will be checked during the inspection and is the standard expected for daily use for passengers.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The upholstery, carpets, seats, trims and other interior fitments should be free from damage (including stains and burns) and significant wear.</b></li> <li>• <b>The floor of the vehicle must be covered with a suitable carpet, mat or other covering which can be readily cleaned.</b></li> <li>• <b>All plastic fascia, door linings, roof linings and trim to be kept free from marks, stains and damage.</b></li> <li>• <b>All interior lights and facia illumination to be maintained in good condition.</b></li> <li>• <b>All windows must be free of dirt, grime and marks.</b></li> <li>• <b>All door locks, levers and window winders to be operating efficiently.</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Specific requirements to ensure that vehicle proprietors are aware of the standard expected in our vehicles for passengers at all times and to prevent failures when the vehicle testing is carried out.</i></p>
Appendix H and I  Vehicle licence conditions	<p><b>At all times the licensed vehicle may only be driven by a person who holds a New Forest District Council driver licence.</b></p> <p><i>Once licensed, a private hire vehicle or a hackney carriage is licensed until it is surrendered or expires. Therefore, even if the vehicle is used for social and domestic use, it may <b>only</b> be driven</i></p>



	<p>by a driver licensed by the same council that licences the vehicle. Therefore family members or friends, may not drive the vehicle at any time, unless they are licensed as a driver with NFDC.</p>
Appendix H	<p><b>Private hire vehicle conditions</b>  <i>Wording of conditions modernised, to provide clear and meaningful requirements , addresses compliance requirements. This will assist proprietors, drivers, officers and the travelling public.</i></p>
Appendix I	<p><b>Hackney carriage licence conditions</b>  <i>Wording of conditions modernised, to provide clear and meaningful requirements , addresses compliance requirements. This will assist proprietors, drivers, officers and the travelling public.</i></p>
Vehicle conditions  REMOVE	<p><b>Requirement to carry a fire extinguisher</b>  <b>REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT FROM POLICY</b></p> <p><b>Rationale for removal</b></p> <p><i>Advice given by fire officers is to get out of the vehicle, get passengers out, call the fire service out and maintain a safe distance from the vehicle in case it explodes.</i></p> <p><i>Drivers are not trained in how to use a fire extinguisher and could place themselves and their passengers in greater danger, whilst trying to use the extinguisher and cause further delay in evacuation of the vehicle.</i></p> <p><i>Dry powder extinguishers settle after a while and form a cake which renders the extinguisher inoperable.</i></p>
Appendix K	<p><b>Any private hire vehicle exempted from licence plate display (executive vehicles) may only carry passengers on the appropriate executive contracts.</b></p> <p><i>Once exempted, the licensed vehicle may <b>only</b> convey passengers under the type of contracts outlined above. Should the operator wish to cease using the vehicle exclusively for such work, the exemption may be cancelled. They may not use the vehicle on a non-contract basis for non-contract passengers.</i></p> <p><i>Rewrite of Appendix to provide clear restrictions that vehicle exemptions are granted under.</i></p>
2.14 policy  Appendix L	<p><b>Hackney carriage licences numbered 1-88, with grandfather rights, MUST remain licensed at all times. If a licence expires, the plate must be returned, the licence will lapse and may no longer be allocated to a vehicle.</b></p> <p><i>Ensures that vehicles are available on the fleet.</i></p>
2.11 policy	<p><b>Interim inspections</b></p>

	<p><b>A vehicle may be mechanically inspected, at any time up to a maximum of three times per year. If a vehicle fails to meet the required standards the licence may be suspended or revoked. If a vehicle is suspended and the reason for failure is not rectified within two months, this will result in automatic revocation of licence.</b></p> <p><i>Clear indication of what can happen if the standard of the vehicle is not maintained.</i></p>
2.14 policy	<p><b>Hackney carriages</b>  <b>Since 2006, the licensing authority will only issue new hackney carriage licences to those vehicles that are fully wheelchair accessible (WAVs).</b></p> <p><b>These wheelchair accessible vehicles must be accessible for the carriage of passengers in their wheelchairs at all times. To clarify, the vehicle must be able to transport a passenger in a wheelchair immediately, upon request, whilst the vehicle is plying for hire or waiting at a rank and must carry the appropriate equipment to safely convey the person.</b></p> <p><b>If a WAV is not carrying suitable equipment to allow the carriage of a wheelchair passenger, use of the vehicle may be suspended until the correct equipment is re-instated.</b></p> <p><b>Existing hackney carriage vehicles licensed with a licence number of 1 to 88 (inclusive) were granted an exemption for the requirement to be wheelchair compliant.</b></p> <p><i>All vehicles licensed as WAVs must be able to carry wheelchair passengers at any time. New policy wording is clear and prevents a proprietor from obtaining a hackney carriage licence, when they do not intend to carry wheelchair passengers.</i></p>
2.14 policy	<p><b>The table of fares (taxi tariff) will be reviewed following a request for a review, if the review is supported by at least 70% of proprietors. Any review is subject to public consultation and will take into account feedback received.</b></p> <p><b>Any review of fares will be subject to a 14 day consultation period, as required by the relevant legislation and approval by the Council's General Purposes and Licensing Committee.</b></p> <p><b>The review of fares will take into account feedback from the public, trade and other bodies, review of motoring costs such as fuel prices, licensing fees, and a comparison with fares set by other Local Authorities.</b></p>

	<i>To be fair to all parties it is important that any upward change in tariff is supported by the majority of the trade as they and their passengers will be affected by any change. Any review of fares is complex and involves consultation with a number of organisations and the public.</i>
Appendix O	<p><i>New guidance on the standards expected for any CCTV installed in vehicles. It is proposed that the installation of CCTV in vehicles is not mandatory for this Licensing Authority, but optional.</i></p> <p><i>However, this does not preclude future consultation and consideration.</i></p>

<b>Operators</b>	
Appendix M	<i>In line with statutory guidance, amended operator licence conditions highlighting the requirement for record keeping, communication with the authority, appropriate naming conventions and requirements for the safe and secure operation of the business. Includes the requirement for controllers (staff who take phone calls) to have a basic DBS. In addition, the conditions address the statutory obligations for disabled customers.</i>
Appendix M	<p><b>The Licensee shall immediately after the termination of any hiring of a licensed vehicle, or as soon as practicable thereafter, carefully search the vehicle for any property which may have been accidentally left there; and</b></p> <p><b>Any property accidentally left in a licensed vehicle must, (within 48 hours) be handed in to the private hire operator if the journey is booked through an operator, or handed in at a Police Station.</b></p> <p><i>Amendment to address lost property and operator's responsibility.</i></p>
Appendix M 3.3 policy	<p><b>Any change of address will require a new application to be made, to allow for consultation with the planning authority to ensure that the necessary permissions are in place to allow the business to operate from the new premises.</b></p> <p><i>This removes ambiguity and also involves the planning authority in the process for an operator's premises. It will also alleviate issues from neighbours and ensures the premises are fit for the purpose of running the business.</i></p>
Appendix M	<b>Transfer of operator licence</b>

3.6 policy	<p><b>The licence is not transferrable to another person nor does authorise the licence holder(s) to operate from any address other than that specified on the licence.</b></p> <p><i>Addition to policy to provide confirmation to operators who wish to change their operating address or sell their business to another. The operator licence is granted to a person or persons who must meet the fit and proper criteria at all times.</i></p>
Appendix M	<p><b>The operator must accept a booking for, or on behalf of any disabled person if they have a suitable vehicle available.</b></p> <p><i>To comply with the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022, there are new requirements for drivers and Operators.</i></p>
Appendix M	<p><b>The licence holder shall notify the licensing authority in writing within 48 hours of an arrest, charge, receipt of a summons or fixed penalty notice, ASBO, conviction or police caution for any offence.</b></p> <p><b>In addition, all motoring convictions must be reported to the Licensing Authority within 48 hours of receiving written notification of the penalty.</b></p> <p><i>In line with statutory guidance. Ensures the licence authority has current information with regard to the licence holder's fitness and propriety.</i></p>
3.1 policy	<p><b>All new Private Hire Operator applicants are required to provide relevant background information as outlined on the application form. Contact details for two referees must be provided who can vouch for the applicant in a business capacity and have known the applicant for at least two years and can support the application.</b></p> <p><b>During the one-month consultation period where background checks will be made, the applicant will also be required to attend Appletree Court for an interview with the Licensing Compliance Officer to explain their application.</b></p> <p><i>Enhanced application process for new Private Hire Operator applicants to ensure background checks provide suitable fit and proper information. Requirement for detailed answers from business referees. The interview with the Compliance Officer will ensure that the applicant is made aware of the expectations and standards that the authority require for licensed operators.</i></p>
3.3 policy	<p><b>The Council will not grant an operator's licence for an operator with an operating base that is outside the New Forest District</b></p>

	<p><b>Council area. This is to ensure that proper regulation and enforcement measures may be taken by the licensing authority and is in no way intended to be a restraint on trade.</b></p> <p><b>Applicants must ensure that the property they intend to operate from has the correct planning permission.</b></p> <p><b>If the operator moves their base to another location within the District, a new application must be submitted. The new application will be subject to a pro-rata fee and consultation with the planning authority, to ensure permission has been granted and the premises are suitable.</b></p> <p><b>Nuisance must not be caused to neighbours from vehicles operated from a base. Operator must consider the location of their base and the nature of the operation, together with the number of vehicles that are likely to visit the premises. If this is a domestic premises this may cause issues.</b></p> <p><b>The compliance officer will expect records to be produced at the location stated as the business address on the licence.</b></p> <p><b>To meet the requirements of the Licensing Authority, the business address provided on the application form (which will subsequently form the licence address) must have recognised office facilities, a regular postal service and be widely acknowledged as a site that provides office space. The site must also be suitable for compliance inspections and meetings with officers.</b>  <b>A PO Box address is NOT acceptable.</b></p> <p><i>Clear guidance for NFDC operators and what is expected with regard to where the operator may be licensed from.</i>  <i>Prevents operators from using unsuitable address for their NFDC licensed operation.</i></p>
3.7 policy	<p><b>Licensed operators must ensure that all vehicles linked to the business are maintained and road-worthy at all times. It is expected that vehicles presented for tests have been given a visual check by the driver or operator prior to the test, to prevent test failures. Customers have a right to be carried in vehicles which are clean and well maintained and the operator responsible for the booking and despatch of the vehicle must bear a level of responsibility for this.</b></p> <p>Operators are expected to ensure that drivers who fulfil journeys booked through the operator are courteous and professional at all times when carrying passengers. In addition, professional behaviour is expected at all times whilst communicating with authorised officers (Licensing, Police or Council mechanics).</p>

	<p><i>Operators must provide safe and road-worthy vehicles at all times. Operators have a responsibility to ensure that vehicles presented for tests must also meet the test criteria. This should result in less failed vehicles.</i></p> <p><i>The policy also outlines the responsibility on Operators to ensure their drivers treat officers professionally and courteously, in addition to the Operators themselves.</i></p>
3.8 policy	<p><b>We will not licence a private hire operator with the same or similar name as another existing operator. This causes confusion for the public, with potential safeguarding issues. It also creates identity problems for each business.</b></p> <p><b>Prior to submitting an application, please check the online public register for current operators and ask officers for advice.</b></p> <p><b>In addition, you cannot use the same name that has previously been used in this area by an operator and has been registered with Companies House.</b></p> <p><b>Unless your fleet has at least one NFDC licensed hackney carriage, the business cannot have the word 'taxi', 'cab' or any word of a similar meaning or appearance in the licensed name of the business.</b></p> <p><b>Email addresses used by customers and this Licensing Authority must reflect the name of the New Forest operator, to prevent confusion.</b></p> <p><b>If the operator also holds an operator licence with another Authority, all bookings, customers information and communications should be kept separate and easily identifiable.</b></p> <p><i>Prevents problems for customers with identifying companies and prevents safeguarding issues.</i></p>
3.9 policy	<p><b>Operators and those that despatch vehicles under the terms of the operator licence are privy to a significant amount of personal information including contact information for customers and holiday dates when properties are empty. It is important for employers to ensure that their staff are suitable to be in receipt of this information.</b></p>

**Operators should ask their employees to obtain basic a DBS disclosure prior to employing them and consider the background of the proposed employee.**

**In addition Operators must keep records of all their drivers, their NFDC licence details, (ensuring they are aware of the expiry date of each driver) and check their DVLA status using the online check facility before employment and periodically throughout. This will ensure that the driver is properly licensed by the authority and the DVLA.**

**The licensing authority requires that the operator hold a record of such checks.**

*Checks on employees limit the possibility of issues with data or security. Driver licences should also be checked periodically as a driver may not report the loss or suspension of their DVLA driver licence to the operator. Employment by the operator of an incorrectly licensed driver will risk the operator licence and/or prosecution. This will also affect the insurance of vehicles.*