

Extract from Breckland Council hackney carriage and Private Hire Procedures

PART A –

All Vehicles

Breckland Council will not grant or renew a licence unless satisfied that the vehicle is suitable to be a licensed vehicle, is in a suitable mechanical condition, safe and comfortable.

Duration of Licence

A vehicle licence, once granted, will be for one year.

Insurance

A vehicle must have a current certificate of insurance or cover note which complies with the requirements of Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1972 and which clearly covers the use to which the vehicle is to be put.

Excise Licence (Road Tax)

There should be a valid excise licence for the vehicle.

Vehicle Registration Document (V5)

A vehicle registration document must be produced at the grant or renewal of a licence.

Age

Breckland Council will licence vehicles up until the vehicle is **8 years** of age from the date of first registration with the DVLA subject to the passing of the Council's annual inspection and mechanical test at a Council approved testing station.

Once a vehicle exceeds 8 years of age from the date of first registration with the DVLA, the vehicle will be considered for licensing subject to passing a 6 monthly vehicle inspection and mechanical test at an approved Council testing station.

Exceptions to Age Requirement

The exception to this are:-

- Limousines/Specialist Vehicles

The Authority will not re-licence this type of vehicle if it is more than 10 years old.

Vehicle Specifications

- a. The vehicle shall have four side opening doors (designed for the purpose of permitting persons access to/from the interior) - any lift-up tailgate shall not be included; or a vehicle shall have three side opening doors (designed for the purpose of permitting persons access to/from the interior) and two rear opening doors (designed for the purpose of permitting persons access to/from the interior).

Any seat adjacent to the nearside door of the passenger compartment of a vehicle must be removed to permit clear and unobstructed entry to and exit from the back row seating of the compartment. No person entering or exiting from a vehicle should have to remove or dismantle any seat or other obstacle, or to climb over any person being carried in the vehicle, or have any other person leave their seat to facilitate them entering or exiting the vehicle.

Any vehicle's suitability for licensing will also be determined by the positioning of its seating, fittings and fixtures for the ingress and egress of passengers and their safety.

- b. The vehicle is right-hand drive.
- c. The vehicle must have EU Type Approval
- d. If c. cannot be satisfied then a Department of Transport Certificate of Single Vehicle Approval must be produced.
- e. In the case of Hackney Carriages a vehicle should not be of such a length which takes up excessive space on a taxi rank and in any case the vehicle must not be in excess of 5 metres in length.
- f. In the case of a Private Hire vehicle its appearance must not lead people to believe it is a Hackney Carriage.
- g. No vehicle will be licensed unless it can accommodate at least four passengers.
- h. The vehicle must have seats with a minimum width of not less than 400mm (15-17 inches) per person.
- i. The vehicle shall be fitted with appropriate seatbelts to the front and rear seats of the vehicle. The number of seat belts fitted to the vehicle shall correspond with the number of passengers the vehicle is licensed to carry plus the driver.
- j. All wheelchair accessible vehicles shall be properly equipped with properly mounted fittings for the safe securing of a wheelchair and a passenger seated in it, when carried in the vehicle.
- k. If a mechanical hoist is fitted to the vehicle this will be required to be inspected annually by the manufacturer or his approved agent and a certificate produced to that effect.

Passenger Limits

Vehicles capable of carrying up to eight passengers but without an aisle or free access to a door for each passenger, will be licensed to carry four passengers on safety grounds.

Vehicle Test Standards

- a. The Authority will not grant/renew a vehicle licence unless the person examining it (for the Authority) has confirmed that it meets the standards specified in Breckland Council's Manual of Inspection Standards for vehicles at Appendix A and, at the same time, the vehicle has been certified roadworthy to MOT standard and has a current MOT certificate. Vehicles of a class that are not subject to 'EU Type approval' and are being tested for the first time will be additionally tested to ensure tyres and any other aspect of the vehicle are safe and mechanically sound as possible for the passenger.

Costs of such testing must be paid by the person wishing to licence the vehicle. In addition the history of the vehicle will be taken into consideration when determining whether the vehicle should be licensed.

- b. A vehicle may be required to be re-examined, when the licence has been in force for six months, to ensure that it continues to meet the standards referred to in (a) above
- c. A vehicle which fails an inspection/safety check during the currency of a licence with Breckland Council will have the fault(s) rectified and the vehicle re-inspected within 2 months of the original inspection – failure to do so will lead to the automatic revocation of the vehicle licence.
- d. A vehicle may be inspected by an authorised officer of the Council or a Police Officer, at all reasonable times. If the person inspecting the vehicle is not satisfied as to the fitness of the vehicle he may give written notice to the proprietor/operator to make the vehicle available for further inspection and testing at such reasonable time and place as may be specified and the vehicle licence may be suspended until the authorised officer or police officer is so satisfied. If the authorised officer or police officer is not satisfied within two months of the initial inspection the Vehicle licence shall be deemed revoked. An authorised officer or police officer may permit other persons to examine the vehicle on their behalf (e.g. VOSA).

Vehicle Inspections

All vehicles being presented for testing at the approved Council testing station shall be in clean condition. The under chassis should have been cleaned to allow the tester to inspect the vehicle. The tester will refuse to test a vehicle that does not conform to this requirement.

Exterior Bodywork and Wheel trims

The bodywork of the vehicle shall be in good condition and shall be as originally fitted by the manufacturer. Wheel trims must be fitted to all road wheels where part of the manufacturer's original specification.

Upholstery

All upholstery shall be clean and in a well maintained condition. No tear, crack, hole or burn will be acceptable. Upholstery includes seats, headrests, armrests, carpets and other trim.

Fittings

All fittings shall be properly maintained and in good working order. Fittings include ashtrays, clocks, interior lights, sun blinds, door surrounds, grab handles, other equipment provided for passenger comfort and any equipment in, on or forming part of the vehicle including

wheelchair ramps and securing fitments where the vehicle is to be licensed to carry wheelchair bound passengers.

Roof and Floor Coverings

These should be clean and in good condition, with no tear or other damage.

Fire Extinguishers

A fire extinguisher must be provided in an easily accessible position capable of being reached without delay. Identification tags will be provided for each extinguisher.

Vehicles Powered by Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG)

An applicant for a licence involving a vehicle which has been converted to run on LPG will be required to produce, prior to a licence being issued, a certificate issued by a member of the LP Association confirming that the LPG installation conforms with the Association's Code of Practice and is therefore considered safe.

The vehicle will be required to undergo an annual service by a person competent in LPG powered vehicles in addition to the Councils Manual of Inspection Standards.

If an LPG conversion involves installation of an LPG fuel tank in a vehicle's boot space (and possible relocation of the spare wheel) it shall be a requirement that an amount of space shall remain free for the storage of a reasonable amount of luggage and any spare wheel displaced as a result must be stored in a location that does not impinge on the passenger carrying area of a vehicle.

Tinted Windows (Without prejudice to the Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986)

The Authority will not licence a vehicle if any window, other than stated by VOSA, which states the windscreen must have 75% of light is transmitted through it, the rear window and side windows must have 70% of light is transmitted through it, unless the following criteria can be met:

- a. The vehicle is a limousine or luxury type (see below for definition of limousine) and
- b. The vehicle will not be engaged at all in any contract for the carriage of school children or based around the carriage of children/young persons.

The Operator must, unless such a vehicle has been specifically requested, inform a hirer that such a vehicle will be supplied.

Taximeters

All Hackney Carriage vehicles licensed or to be licensed shall have a taximeter fitted unless an exemption has been approved. Private Hire vehicles, licensed or to be licensed, may have a taximeter fitted. Any vehicle fitted with a meter shall be tested on the road by reference to a measured distance to establish that the taximeter is accurate. In relation to Hackney Carriages the test shall be to establish that the meter does not produce a fare in excess of the maximums prescribed the current Hackney Carriage Fare Tariff approved by the Council.