

# Taxi and Private Hire News

*Worthing*  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

April 2010

## Rumour Control—Official

Most of you will be aware that Adur Council and Worthing Council are working together much more closely. This has probably led to at least a dozen rumours about what is going to happen to Taxi licensing so to try to set out the facts, here is what we know:

Nothing has been decided yet!

It is possible that the Taxi Licensing section will return to Commerce Way. It is also still possible that we may stay at

Portland House. Any move will probably happen at some time during the summer or autumn.

A new Licensing Officer has been appointed at Adur, and is currently working from the Civic Centre.

Teresa Bowley has been working in Licensing at Brighton and Hove for many years, and she will soon be working more closely with the Worthing Licensing team.

Wherever we end up, once the two teams are working together, we will be working on

gradually harmonizing the two sets of licence conditions. As you can imagine, this will be a huge job and will involve consultation with all parties concerned. Nothing will change in the immediate future, except possibly our address and phone numbers.

The two Councils have no plans to amalgamate at the moment, so will remain as two separate licensing areas. As far as the taxis are concerned, Adur taxis will stay in Adur, and Worthing taxis will stay in Worthing.

## Door Plates

Some vehicles have been seen running around without door plates. There have been shortages in the past whilst we changed suppliers, but we now have the plates in stock, including many that have **not been collected**. These plates are now an integral part of public safety, including the protection of the licensed trade, so please come and collect your door plates if you do not have them displayed. These are official plates and we have deliberately not included Registration number or expiry

date, so they must be securely attached. They can be moved from one car to another fairly easily, but do have to stay on the car.

**Magnetic Plates** are strictly NOT ALLOWED and are subject to immediate confiscation. You will need to buy another set. If you need to do this, please ask. It will be far better than getting caught with magnetic plates, and much better than losing your plates to a stranger walking past your car.

**Web Site.** The address is given on the back page. If there is taxi related information you would like to see on the site please let the Licensing Officer know, and we will consider it.

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### New Licence Fees from 1st April 2010.

- HD and PD, £87.00
- Second licence, £26.00
- HV, £212.00
- PV, £180.00
- Small Op, 1-3 vehicles £86.00
- Medium Op, 4-15 vehicles, £347.00
- Large Op, 16-30 vehicles, £1483.00
- Extra Large Op, 31+ vehicles, £1732.00
- Vehicle Inspection, £53.00
- Inspection and MoT, £69.00
- Vehicle change or Transfer, £56.00
- PV door plate £12.50 each
- HV door plate £6.00 each
- Replacement badge £10.00

## Don't be late.

In spite of repeated reminders, we are still getting some renewal applications left until the very last minute. There is a reason we send the reminders out so early, and that is to let you apply for a renewal of a licence in plenty of time. If you do not have all the paperwork you need, bring in what you do have as early as possible, with the rest to follow when you have it available.

In spite of our best efforts on your behalf, if you bring an application in at the last minute, you may end up off the road. If you help us out, we will do what we can to help you out.

## ISA Registration??

The date for the start of registration for the Independent Safeguarding Authority is getting closer. This is the scheme through which people who work with vulnerable adults and/or children in certain circumstances will have to register with the Vetting and Barring Service, (VBS). At the moment it seems that unless you work on a contract you will not have to register. If you have a contract with the County Council, a school or a nursing home, sheltered housing, etc, you probably will have to register. There is a one-off charge, and registration can be combined with an enhanced CRB Disclosure. If you are an Operator with a relevant contract, you will need drivers who are registered to service the contract. You must ensure that ALL the drivers on the contract are registered. Even those who only fill in once! You may want to get some "spares" registered in advance.

Unfortunately, registration does not remove the need for regular CRB checks, but it is only needed once.

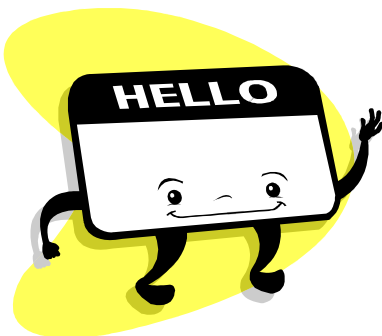
Needless to say, there is a new form which we will be using from June or July. **It is essential that all forms are returned promptly during this period, as the CRB are changing over on 26th July. If you try to submit the wrong form on the wrong date it may be rejected.**

More information can be found on the ISA website at <http://www.isa-gov.org.uk/>



## Photobadges.

Many of you will now have one of the new type photo badges. Once you have a badge with your photo printed directly on it, you will not need to supply a new photo unless specifically asked, or you want to change, improve or update the picture on your badge. We will also be issuing a "dashboard badge" on request. This is a freebie, but it will NOT replace the ID badge, in a holder, on a neck cord, which you MUST wear whilst driving a licensed vehicle. Please take note as many drivers seem to have forgotten this legal requirement. Getting caught out without your badge is viewed very seriously by the Licensing Unit, and formal action could follow.



## Reminders: Smoking and Seat Belts

### Smoking.

You are all aware that smoking in any licensed vehicles has been completely prohibited since 1st



Smoking is banned at all times in all licensed vehicles.

July 2007. Reports

are still being received that some individuals are lighting up inside their cars. Please be aware that Licensing Officers and Environmental Health Officers all have the authority to issue you with a fixed

penalty notice if you are caught. You may not be spoken to at the time, especially if you are driving past, but you may then get the notice through the post.

### Seat Belts.

Private Hire drivers are only **exempt** from having to wear a seat belt whilst carrying **fare paying passengers**. Taxi drivers are also exempt whilst **plying for hire**.

**BUT...** No-one is exempt from the laws of motion, at any time. Being exempt from having to wear your seat belt will not save you in an accident. Seat belts do save lives and injuries. The decision is yours.



**Congratulations:** Comments have been received from members of the public about the excellent service that was being delivered during the awful weather we had during January.

Also to John Sharp, who spent the whole of one day and a lot of his own salt, clearing and gritting the Guildbourne Steps.

Well done to all concerned. It makes a nice change from the usual phone calls.

### Courtesy:

A private hire driver was seen to give a pedal cyclist a generous amount of room in the narrow section of Teville Road by a Councillor who was so impressed that he called in to the office.

Well done, guys.

### Don't forget:

If you get a conviction or caution, (that includes a fixed penalty notice), you **MUST** report the facts to the Licensing Officer, in writing, within **SEVEN DAYS**.

Many of you seem to have forgotten this requirement applies to SP30s, as well as any other conviction. Forget in the future and you could find yourself explaining to the Commit-

tee why you were speeding, as well as your terrible loss of memory.

### Vehicle Inspection:

As well as the fitness test, the Licensing staff **WILL** visually inspect your car **BEFORE** a new or renewed licence is issued. It should be in the condition it will be when you are working.

We also need to see the MoT failure reports, (if any), and advice notices.



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For copies of all application forms,  
etc, try the website,  
[http://www.worthing.gov.uk/  
worthings-services/  
environmentalhealth/licensing/  
taxilicensing/](http://www.worthing.gov.uk/worthings-services/environmentalhealth/licensing/taxilicensing/)

“The only reason for licensing is to ensure the safety of the public.”

That is what the Licensing Unit is here for. Above is a quote from the Taxi and Private Hire Handbook. We are here to protect the public, and we can do this best with your co-operation and assistance.

You know who is letting you and your colleagues down. Their bad actions reflect on the whole trade. Help us to help them and you.

A dissatisfied customer will tell ten friends, but a satisfied customer will tell one. Let us spread the good news. Tell us about anything special that you know someone has done. They may be shy, so speak up for them and we will put it in the newsletter. (No names will be published, if you insist).

**WAV Hackneys:** If you would like your contact details added to the WAV list maintained for the public by WBC, and included on the website, please drop us a note in writing, stating what contact information you would like to be included. Wheelchair PHVs are automatically included under the Operator’s name.

## Qualifications for new drivers. Could this include you?

Any one who has applied for a new licence since 1st January 2010 now has to pass the DSA Taxi Driver Assessment, (a driving test for experienced drivers), plus gain the BTEC in taxi driving before they can be granted a driver’s licence. They also have to pass their NVQ before they can renew their licence for the second time.

The Licensing and Control Committee have let it be known that if a driver is called before them because of driving incidents or any matter which could be considered “customer care related” they reserve the right to require that driver to pass the same tests.

The NVQ is still available for licensed drivers and is still being paid for by Government funds. There are signs that the money is starting to dry up, and there is no way of knowing how much longer the NVQ will be funded.

The BTEC is no longer available “free” and new applicants are being charged around £300.00 for this qualification.

If anyone needs the address of PDM or the phone number of Steve Hunt, the local assessor, please give the office a call.

### More Congratulations

To all those drivers who have **now qualified with the NVQ**. Don’t forget that you should bring the Certificate to the office to get your £20.00 discount off your next driver’s licence renewal. One question: Why are there so many private hire drivers and so few hackney drivers?

To **Operator A2B** who have been voted “Splash FM Business of the Year 2010” by their customers, who should know what they are talking about.