

SHDC SPECIFICATION FOR VEHICLES TO BE LICENSED AS HACKNEY CARRIAGES.

1. Vehicle Type

- i. Any new vehicle to be licensed must accommodate a passenger with a disability confined to a wheelchair. The vehicle shall have been tested, or retested, to meet the European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval standards in the M1 category.

Certification from the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) shall be required in all instances together with the relevant drawings/photographs bearing the VCA authentication stamp. The relevant certificate(s) and documentation must be produced before such a vehicle can be licensed.

There will be no specified external or interior colour.

- ii. All vehicles including purpose built taxis shall be subject to the following additional requirements:

4 doors (excluding rear doors/tailgate unless accessible without the need to move seats);

Minimum 1560 cc engine capacity;

Right hand drive;

All vehicles must comply with the Euro Emissions 3 Standard at the time of first licensing and will be expected to remain at this standard throughout its licensing life.

All existing licensed vehicles shall not be licensed after 1 January 2011 unless they meet the Euro Emissions 3 Standard and fully comply with this policy.

All vehicles shall be subject to an initial compliance inspection and then at 6 monthly intervals.

A vehicle will only be licensed on:

a) Presentation of a Valid Certificate of Compliance

b) Valid Insurance Certificate (as deemed by this Authority)

c) Presentation of a valid Vehicle registration document and/or proof of ownership.

Vehicles must be less than 5 years of age on first licensing. Once licensed, a vehicle licence may be renewed up to and including 10 years of age provided there is no break in licensing; Only vehicles of exceptional condition will be considered beyond this age

- iii. Once a vehicle has been approved it must remain in that form and no change in the specification, design, condition or appearance of the vehicle shall be made throughout its licensing life without prior written approval from the Council.

- iv. It is a requirement that all drivers of accessible taxis are able to demonstrate that they are competent at loading and securing disabled passengers and wheelchair users safely. Drivers of accessible vehicles must specify what training they have received.

Seating Capacity

- v. The vehicle shall have a minimum seating capacity of 4 passengers up to a maximum of 8 passengers and be capable of accommodating at least one passenger confined to a wheelchair. A vehicle where a wheelchair occupant reduces the overall capacity shall be permitted, subject to fulfilling all other requirements.
- vi. Only forward and/or rearward facing passenger seats shall be fitted.
- vii. All passenger seats and the devices used to secure them to the vehicle shall comply to the relevant M1 standards contained in European Directive 74/408 EC (as amended).
- viii. All passenger seats shall be permanently fixed to the vehicle. Demountable seats that are capable of being removed for the purpose of providing space for wheelchair passengers shall not be allowed. Fold-away tip-up type seats, shall be permitted providing they remain attached to the vehicle and comply with the requirements of 2.iii above.
- ix. Each passenger seat shall have a minimum cushion size of 350mm front to rear and 400mm side to side.
- x. All passenger seats shall be fixed such that a minimum leg room of 660mm is provided, measured from the face of the backrest to the nearest part of the seat in front, measured in a horizontal plane, excepting that where seats face each other, ie conference seating, the distance between the faces of opposing backrests shall be not less than 1300mm and the gap between the front edges of opposing seat cushions shall be not less than 425mm.
- xi. All seats shall have a minimum headroom of 900mm measured from the central point of the seat cushion where it meets the backrest, measured in a vertical plane.
- xii. All seats shall have a minimum cushion height of 305mm measured from the floor of the vehicle to the top of the seat cushion at its forward edge.
- xiii. Every passenger seat shall have the forward edge highlighted in a contrasting colour so as to assist passengers with visual impairment.
- xiv. A swivel facility may also be fitted to the nearside rear tip seat to assist disabled passengers.

2. Seat belts

- i. All passenger seats shall be provided with a lap and diagonal 3 point seat belt which comply with the strength requirements specified in European Directive 76/115 EC (as amended by Directive 96/38 EC) and Regulations 46 and 47 of the Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, whether or not those Directives or Regulations apply to that particular seat or the vehicle.
- ii. Each passenger confined to a wheelchair shall be provided with a disabled persons seat belt which fastens to the structure of the vehicle either permanently or temporarily by use of approved fixings appropriate to the position of the wheelchair as laid down in European Directive 76/115 EC (as amended by Directive 96/38 EC) and Regulations 46 and 47 of the Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, whether or not those Directives or Regulations apply to that particular seat or the vehicle.

- iii. All seat belts fitted and available for use shall comply with European Directive 77/541/EC (as amended).
- iv. All seat belts shall be fitted to the vehicle with the number of anchorage points appropriate to the type of seat belt. All anchorage points shall comply with M1 standards laid down in European Directive 76/115 EC (as amended by Directive 96/38 EC) or ECE Regulation 14 whether or not those requirements apply to that particular anchorage or vehicle.

3. Wheelchair Restraint(s)/Passenger Safety Equipment

- i. A system for the effective anchoring of wheelchairs shall be provided within the vehicle for all spaces designated as wheelchair spaces in accordance with 5 below. The system and the devices used to secure the wheelchair to the vehicle shall comply with the strength requirements for M1 standards laid down in European Directive 76/115 EC (as amended by Directive 96/38 EC) whether or not those Directives apply to those devices or vehicle. Wheelchair(s) must only face forward or rearward when the vehicle is in motion.
- ii. A full set of restraints shall be available in the vehicle for each wheelchair capable of being carried as permitted by the vehicle licence.

4. Wheelchair Space

- i. The vehicle shall have a designated space capable of accepting a reference wheelchair, of at least 1200mm by 700mm (measured front to back and side to side) with a minimum headroom of 1350mm measured from the floor of the vehicle for each passenger confined to a wheelchair. The space(s) shall be immediately adjacent to a vehicle door fitted with the wheelchair access equipment (see 6 below) so as to allow the passenger confined to a wheelchair to board the vehicle and use the anchoring equipment with the minimum of manoeuvring.

5. Wheelchair Access Equipment

- i. The vehicle shall be fitted with the following form of wheelchair access equipment.

RAMP: A purpose-designed wheelchair single-plate access ramp which must be permanently installed in the vehicle and be lightweight and easy to deploy. An add-on removable section would be deemed to meet this requirement. The ramp must provide a continuous surface of not less than 700mm in width and shall not exceed 1900mm in length when fully deployed. On level ground the ramp shall have a maximum gradient of no more than 20% in the fully deployed position. The installed ramp must have a minimum safe working load of 300kgs and shall be tested to 10% overload and a certificate obtained from the manufacturer/installer. Ramps and fittings must comply with British Standards 6109.

- ii. The wheelchair access equipment shall only be fitted to the nearside access doorway of the vehicle i.e. kerbside on a normal two-way road. Rear loading of wheelchairs will not be permitted.
- iii. The wheelchair access equipment shall be fitted such that it terminates at the interior floor level so as to allow for smooth ingress/egress without the need to negotiate any step etc.
- iv. The aperture of the door into which the access equipment is fitted shall have a minimum clear headroom in its central third of 1200mm. The measurement shall be taken from the upper centre of the aperture to a point directly below on either the upper face of the fully raised lift platform, or the upper face of the ramp when fully deployed on level ground.

- v. The aperture of the door into which the access equipment is fitted shall have a minimum width of 750mm at and below window height so as to allow the easy ingress/egress of a reference wheelchair.
- vi. A mechanism shall be fitted that positively holds the access door in the open position whilst in use particularly if the vehicle is on a slope and such that requires a deliberate effort to close.

6. Bulkhead/Drivers Safety Screen

- i. A bulkhead/drivers safety screen must be fitted and it shall be a full width, full height screen fitted in the vehicle directly behind the drivers seat. The upper section of the bulkhead/safety screen shall consist of a clear vision panel sufficient for the driver to be able to see a substantial amount of the passenger compartment which must include vision of all access doors. A means of payment shall be incorporated into the screen to enable payment to be made from within the vehicle. The bulkhead/safety screen shall have no discontinuities such that a passenger could reach into the driver's compartment from the passenger compartment.
- ii. The vision panel section of the bulkhead/safety screen shall be constructed of safety glass without tint to the standard required for windscreens laid down in Regulations 30,31 & 32 of The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 or any clear material with at least the same impact resistance and safety qualities as that of safety glass eg polycarbonate.
- iii. In addition to 7.i and 7.ii above, where seats are mounted onto the bulkhead or a wheelchair is secured against it, the remainder of the bulkhead shall have been subjected to a separate static pull-test consistent with the number of seats and seat belts fixed to it. Certification to this standard must be produced at the time the application is made for a licence.
- iv. Any bulkhead/safety screen system must allow verbal communication between the driver and passenger by way of an intercom system which can be operated by the passenger.

An induction loop facility must be installed and clearly signed for the use of passengers with hearing aids.

7. General Entry and Exit Requirements

- i. The vehicle shall have a minimum of 2 means of exit from the passenger compartment behind the driver for use in emergency situations. The means of exit shall be free of any obstructions, reachable from all parts of the rear passenger compartment. Any gap through which a passenger can be expected to pass shall be of a minimum width of 400mm through which an adult can pass freely in a normal manner without undue difficulty.

8. Floor Height, Steps and Handrails

- i. At the main access door into the passenger area of the vehicle, steps shall be provided to aid ingress/egress as follows:
 - a. Where the internal floor height of the vehicle exceeds 380mm an intermediate step shall be fitted every 250mm from road level up to the internal floor height. All steps must be capable of supporting a minimum weight of 150kg.

- b. The tread area of all steps must have a minimum depth of 150mm and shall have a slip resistant surface. All steps, both internally and externally, shall have all open edges highlighted in a contrasting high-visibility colour to match handrails and seat markings.
- c. Handrails must be fitted in appropriate positions in all passenger access doors so as to assist (intending) passengers and to facilitate the use of steps where provided. All handrails fitted shall be highlighted in a contrasting high-visibility colour to match seat markings as shown at 2.ix above and be of a non-slip finish.

9. Windows/Ventilation

- i. The vehicle shall have windows fitted throughout on both sides of the vehicle and to the rear of the passenger compartment. A minimum of one window on each side shall be capable of being opened for the purpose of ventilation and passenger comfort.
- ii. All windows shall comply with European Directive 92/22/EC (as amended).
- iii. Only original manufacturers approved glazing shall be permitted. Aftermarket additions, eg film or spray coatings, shall not be permitted. All windows and glazing must achieve a minimum of 70% light transmission except where otherwise required by the Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986.

10. Floors and Passageways

- i. All floor areas and passageways between seats through which passengers may be expected to pass shall be free of all steps, encumbrances or trip hazards and shall have a slip resistant surface securely fitted to the floor. Integral step(s) at doorways will not count towards this requirement.
- ii. Any gap through which a passenger can be expected to pass shall be of a minimum width of 400mm through which an adult can pass freely in a normal manner without undue difficulty.

11. Interior Lighting

- i. The vehicle shall have interior lighting fitted in the passenger compartment sufficient to illuminate the whole of that compartment. The light(s) shall be switched such that they may be turned on and off from both the driving and passenger compartments and shall operate automatically when a door is opened.
- ii. A means of illuminating the entrance steps at all access doors into the passenger compartment shall be fitted and switched such that they operate automatically when a door is opened.

12. Rear Doors and Mandatory Rear Lights

- i. Rear door(s) must not obscure any mandatory rear light when luggage is being loaded or unloaded
- ii. Rear door(s) when in the open position must not be a hazard to other road users.
- iii. When in the open position the aperture of the door(s) must have a minimum width of 780mm at and below window height so as to allow for easy access.

- iv. A mechanism shall be fitted that positively holds the door in the open position whilst in use such that requires a deliberate effort to close.

13. Luggage Space

- i. There shall be a luggage compartment situated at the front or rear of the vehicle. If at the front it must be forward of a bulkhead/safety screen and on the opposite side of the driving compartment. The luggage compartment must be divided off by a barrier capable of preventing any luggage from entering the driving compartment or rear passenger compartment.
- ii. The luggage compartment shall have sufficient capacity to accommodate a reasonable amount of luggage for each of the maximum number of passengers that can be carried.
- iii. Unoccupied wheelchairs etc carried as luggage shall be securely loaded outside of the main passenger compartment.
- iv. A suitable restraint system shall be provided so as to minimise any movement of luggage whilst in transit.
- v. The luggage compartment shall have a permanently fitted light for illumination which operates automatically on opening the door/boot lid.

14. Taximeter and Fare Card

- i. The vehicle shall be equipped with a calendar-controlled taximeter that is fully activated and calibrated to the correct fare rates (as amended) so as to be capable of charging no more than the permitted rate of fare at anytime.
- ii. The taximeter shall be securely fitted in a position such that the fare can be easily and clearly read by any passenger inside the vehicle.
- iii. The current fare card shall be displayed in the vehicle so as to be easily and clearly read by any passenger.

15. Fire Extinguisher

- i. The vehicle shall have securely fitted in the driving compartment an appropriate fire extinguisher approved for use in a motor vehicle, so as to be readily available in an emergency. Proprietors are recommended that all drivers attend a relevant training course provided by the Fire and Rescue Service or other service provider in the use of such equipment.

16. First Aid Kit

- i. The vehicle shall have available in the driving compartment an appropriately stocked first aid kit, so as to be readily available in an emergency. Proprietors are recommended that all drivers attend a relevant training course provided by St John's Ambulance, British Red Cross or other service provider and obtain a First Aid Certificate.

17. Spare Wheel

- i. A spare wheel shall be fitted and carried at all times the vehicle is licensed. The spare wheel shall be to manufacturers original equipment specification. Both the spare wheel and tyre shall be serviceable and legal for road use at all times.
- ii. The spare wheel shall be stored in accordance with the original design of the vehicle in its purpose-designed carrier and in all cases outside of any contact with passenger(s) travelling in the vehicle or ingressing/egressing from it. Where this necessitates an alternative locating point, it shall only be with the prior consent of the Council in writing.

NOTES

- i. **Any vehicle approved and licensed by the council, in addition to the above requirements, will also be subject to conditions attached to licences (as amended) and to byelaws in respect to hackney carriages (as amended).**