



**Walsall
Council**

LICENSING NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Licensing Newsletter Volume 17 / August 2024

**CONTACT INFORMATION: PLEASE MAKE SURE WE HAVE YOUR UP TO DATE
EMAIL ADDRESS AND MOBILE TELEPHONE NUMBER
IF WE DON'T YOU MAY NOT RECEIVE ANY IMPORTANT COMMUNICATIONS AND YOUR
APPLICATIONS MAY BE DELAYED**

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WE ARE MOVING!

From **3 September 2024** both Taxi Licensing and General Licensing are moving to a new office located at the Environmental Services Depot.

Some of taxi trade may already be familiar with the Brownhills depot as Taxi Licensing have been based there for some years. However, Licensing will now be based from a new office around the corner, next to the MOT bay. There will be clear signage explaining where to go, should you struggle to find us.

All post should now be addressed to our new location which is:

**Licensing Office, Walsall Council, Environmental Services Depot,
200 Pelsall Rd, Brownhills, Walsall, WS8 7EN**

In the interim, any post which arrives at the Civic Centre will be redirected to the depot, however this may cause a delay in the service receiving your correspondence.

Our opening times are **Monday to Thursday 08:45 – 17:15 and Friday 08:45 – 16:45.**

Vehicle Licence Applications - Important Reminder

Vehicle licence applications (New/Renewal/Replacement) should be made online at least 5 working days BEFORE the MOT Test to enable the application to be verified. When the vehicle passes the MOT you can then collect your new plates from the Licensing Office located on the same site. If you unable to submit the application BEFORE the MOT then as per the vehicle licence conditions you must submit your application within 5 working days of the MOT. If you fail to obtain the licence within 5 working days of the MOT you will be required to undertake and pass another MOT test before a new licence is issued.

Driver licence Document checks – Important Reminder

If you have applied for a Private Hire/Hackney Carriage driver licence then you will be required to attend an appointment to validate your documents for the DBS, Right to Work checks and qualification certificates. You will receive notification of the appointment date, time and location by email or text. You must bring along your original Passport and DVLA photocard and any further identification documents you have provided on your application.

If you are renewing your licence, we are unable to issue your new ID badge without the Old ID badge being returned.

Response time for emails received by Licensing

We aim to respond to email enquiries within 10 working days.

Emails are dealt with more quickly if you have included your full name, address or badge/vehicle plate number and full details of your enquiry, please allow an officer enough time to contact you.

Our business opening hours are **Monday to Thursday 08:45- 17:15 and Friday 08:45 – 16:45**. Emails are NOT MONITORED at the weekend or outside of business hours therefore emails received at these times will not be viewed until the next business day.

Vehicle Interim Tests

Vehicles that are over 3 years old from the date of first registration are required to be tested by the council's garage twice a year. Failure to comply with the Vehicle licence condition may result in the vehicle licence being suspended. You must ensure that a 6 monthly inspection has been carried out and the vehicle has passed the test to ensure compliance.

Incorrect Payments

Please wherever possible do not make duplicate payments. Processing refunds can be a lengthy process undertaken by the Council's Finance Department. If you believe you may have overpaid please contact taxilicensing@walsall.gov.uk **before** you make any other payment or if you are not sure if the application or payment has gone through. For a refund to be processed you will need to complete a BACS form which must be signed by yourself (in ink and not electronic), this will include your bank details. Please be aware we no longer issue cheques as part of the refund process.

Vehicle Licence Identification

All Licensing identification including badges and licence plates remain the property of Walsall Council. Upon expiry of the licence or when asked for you should ensure that the identification is returned to the Licensing Office. Identification can be handed in or returned by post (at your own risk), to Taxi Licensing Office, Walsall Council, Clean & Green Depot, 200 Pelsall Road, Brownhills, WS8 7EN. If you have applied to renew your vehicle or driver licence an appointment will be arranged for exchange of identification and the issue of the new licence.

We are unable to hand out any new identification without the previous one being returned.

If your licence is suspended or revoked you should also return your licence identification to the Taxi Licensing Office as above or as advised on the suspension/revocation notice within seven days.

Compliance Failure

A high number of licensed vehicles are failing the vehicle tests for incorrect ID or not having a fire extinguisher or first aid kit, this includes having an inadequate kit with missing or expired items. It is a condition of your licence that you have correct identification, a first aid kit and fire extinguisher.



You can now purchase First Aid Kit's and Fire Extinguisher's from the MOT Depot at the time of your test for £20 each so no further appointments or tests would need to be carried out, saving time and money re-attending.



Please remember to check your First Aid kit and Fire Extinguisher before attending ensuring the vehicle passes first time!

Online Applications

When renewing or applying for a licence, please ensure you allow plenty of time for your application to be processed.

If your licence has expired you will not be able to work as a licensed driver or use your vehicle for work until the licenses are issued.

MOT Depot Information

Any **cancellations** or **changes** made to your **MOT Booking** needs to be done **via email only** motdepot@walsall.gov.uk. **No amendments** will be made over the telephone.

Please note that it is your responsibility to inform the MOT depot of any changes such as new ownership details, vehicles that have been involved in an accident, handing plates back, suspensions etc, if you fail to do so and miss your booked MOT appointment then you will need to pay the Failure to attend (FTA) charge.

If you amend or cancel your appointment you **MUST** give us a reason why before you make the required changes. Any appointment changes must also be completed with more than 24 hours notice.

Failure to attend (FTA) All vehicles who fail to attend their MOT appointment or cancel their MOT appointment with less than **24 hours' notice** will be charged the Failure to attend Fee which is £45.00. This **MUST** be paid before you book a new MOT appointment.



If you have tried to call the MOT depot and no-one has been able to answer please leave us a voicemail with your name and number, and we will contact you back as soon as possible.

Retest Procedure

Any vehicles that have booked a retest but fail to attend the appointment or cancel with less than 24 hours notice will be charged the Retest FTA fee £25.00.

If you fail your MOT test, you are required to get the repairs done before you book your retest whether it is a partial retest or a fast track retest.

Once all failures have been repaired, give us a call on 01922 654254 and we will book you in for your retest. Please leave a voicemail if no one answers.

Driver Assessments – Practical Tests

You will need to contact the MOT garage by email to book this test.

Please email drivingassessments@walsall.gov.uk and request a call back, this will be within 5 working days. You will need to provide your name and contact number.

This test will be at a cost to yourself, it is your choice if it is undertaken before or after taking part in the Driver Training Course as no refunds will be given.

The test takes approximately 1 hour and it is at a cost of £75.

Once completed and passed please email the certificate into taxilicensing@walsall.gov.uk.

ChatBot - WALIS

Walsall Council's ChatBot (WALIS) has recently had a revamp to include some great new features. Previously, WALIS could only return information on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and if customers wanted more information, they had to either call or email us. The FAQ's have now expanded to include much more information, however, should they not find the answer that they are looking for, they are now connected to the Customer Service Centre (CXC) for a real-time interaction with an advisor via Live Webchat.



The advisors have access to a bespoke knowledge base which allows them to look up the information while chatting to the customer on-line, ensuring that the customer is provided with the correct and most up to date information.

There is also a real-time translation service, offering 100s of languages, ensuring that we can communicate effectively and seamlessly with non-English speaking residents when using Live Webchat.

Street Trading Consultation

The council is conducting a public consultation on the proposal to re-designate all the streets as consents. The consultation is open to all residents and stakeholders who live, work or visit the borough, and who have an interest or opinion on the use of the street space. The consultation aims to gather feedback on the proposal, and to identify any issues, concerns or suggestions that may arise from the proposal.

The consultation will run from 22 July 2024 to 30 August 2024. You can take part in the consultation by completing an online survey, which is available on the council's website at [Re-designation of Streets Consultation](#).

Alternatively, you can request a paper copy of the survey by contacting the council's Licensing Team at streettradingreview@walsall.gov.uk. You can also submit any comments or queries by email.

The council will analyse the responses to the survey and produce a report summarising the findings and recommendations. The report will be published on the council's website and presented at the council's meeting for a final decision.

Disclosure and Barring (DBS) Update Service



Disclosure & Barring Service

We are advising all members of the Taxi Trade to join the DBS update service. By joining the service it not only saves money, but also speeds up the time it takes to process a driver licence renewal.

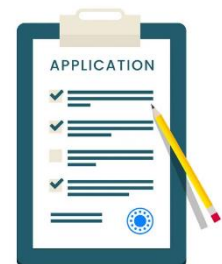
The cost to join the DBS Update Service is £13 a year which equates to £39 over a 3 year period. It currently costs £52 to apply for a new DBS every 3 years, therefore there is a saving of £13.

To register for the update service, you can do so directly on the Gov.uk website through this link [DBS Update Service](#).

Gov.uk Licensing Applications

From September 2024 we are stopping using Gov.uk for licensing applications. We ask that all customers now use the portal through the Walsall Council website ([Alcohol and entertainment licences and permits | Walsall Council](#)) rather than going through Gov.uk. Instructions on how to make an application are clearly outlined on our web pages.

If you are having problems submitting an application, please email Licensing@walsall.gov.uk for assistance.



Customer Safety In Taxis

The Private Hire trade have reported over a period of time that Private Hire Vehicles are being targetted by members of the public when driving through certain areas of the borough. Violent attacks have taken place involving bricks and stones being thrown at vehicles, which is not only putting the driver in danger, but also members of the public.

We are asking that any victims of these attacks come forward and report the incidents with West Midlands Police so that appropriate action and support can be put in place. It is vital that these incidents are reported immediately.

Licensing Annual Fee Scam

We have recently been made aware of a scam involving individuals impersonating Licensing Officers from the council and requesting payment for unpaid annual fees over the phone. Please be advised that any unpaid annual fees should be paid using the payment methods detailed on the back page of your invoices.

If you do not have a copy of your invoice, you can request one by emailing Licensing@walsall.gov.uk with your premises licence number and address. We will then email you a copy of your invoice.

An authorised officer will NEVER call you asking for your bank account details over the telephone. Please be vigilant when receiving these phone calls.

Razorblades Behind Stickers

It has been reported that National Front Stickers (see image below) are being placed in locations across the UK with razorblades stuck behind them with the purpose to injure those who try to remove the stickers. You are unable to see the razorblades until you start to remove the stickers. If these stickers are found, please proceed with caution. Do not attempt to remove the sticker unless absolutely necessary, using protection to prevent injury.

If you have any information regarding this, please report it to the Police on 101.



If you have any questions regarding anything you have read in the newsletter, please email: Licensing - Licensing@walsall.gov.uk or Taxi Licensing - Taxilicensing@walsall.gov.uk