

PROUD OF OUR PAST, OUR PRESENT AND FOR OUR FUTURE

LICENSING NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Licensing Newsletter Volume 19 / April 2025

**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**

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

Our current opening times are:

Monday to Thursday 09:00 – 12:30 & 13:30 – 17:00

Friday 09:00 – 15:00.

PRIVATE HIRE/TAXI LICENSING

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 failure to do so may result in a delay in your identification and licence being issued. 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.

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

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MOT Bay 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 be notified giving 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 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 of £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, please call us on 01922 654254 and we will book you in for your retest. Please leave a voicemail if no one answers.

Disclosure and Barring Service Price Increases



Disclosure & Barring Service

We have been advised by the Disclosure & Barring Service that the cost of an enhanced DBS check is now £59.50, and the cost of joining the DBS Update Service is now £16. Both increases have been introduced by the Disclosure & Barring Service themselves and came into effect from 02/12/2024. We still encourage all members of the Taxi/Private Hire Trade to join the DBS Update Service, because doing so will mean paying £48 over 3 years rather than £59.50 every 3 years. Joining the update service not only saves money but also speeds up the time it takes to process the driver licence application. You can register for the update service here: [DBS Update Service](#)

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Grants available for switching to electric vehicles

Thinking of going green? The government offers various incentives for private hire/taxi drivers to switch to electric vehicles. For more information go here:

[Government Grants](#) | [Taxi Grants](#) | [The Taxi Centre](#)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT NOT CHARGING WHEELCHAIR USERS EXTRA

Our Community Protection Team have been in receipt of complaints recently about some Private Hire Operators and drivers charging extra for wheelchair users. Our Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Information and Licence conditions document states the following about Passengers with Disabilities: -

- All Private Hire Operators should have the facility to carry guide dogs/working dogs, when required to do so by a member of the public at no extra charge.
- Private Hire Operators must ensure that at all times the level of service they provide to people with disabilities is identical to the service they provide to able bodied passengers, both in terms of price and level of service.
- Any discrimination in relation to less able passengers is unacceptable. Discrimination will be considered as behaviour/that is inappropriate to a Walsall Licence holder and will be considered by the Licensing Committee or Magistrates Court.

You cannot charge extra for a wheelchair user. Such discrimination could lead to the suspension or even revocation of your licence.

A summary of The Equality Act 2010 Section 164a-5

Disabled passengers: duties of drivers



- a. to carry the passenger;
- b. if the passenger is in or has with them a wheelchair, to carry the wheelchair;
- c. if the passenger has with them any mobility aids, to carry the mobility aids;
- d. to take such steps as are reasonable to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort;
- e. to give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required;
- f. not to make, or propose to make, any additional charge for complying with a duty mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (e).

If you have a physical disability that means you cannot carry out these duties you MUST report it to the Local Authority, once confirmed you may receive an exemption.

You can read more about equality legislation in the Equality Act 2010 in this link :-

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<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Taxi/Private Hire Trade Representatives

There are 3 trade representatives for the taxi/private hire sector in Walsall, who can raise issues brought to their attention at the Liaison Group meetings. For contact information, please email taxilicensing@walsall.gov.uk

Private hire reps:



Kabal Hussain



Zulfqar Ali

Hackney Carriage rep:



Mohammed Munir Khan

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ALCOHOL, GAMBLING, AND OTHER LICENCES

Changes Made to Street Designation to Encourage More Trading in Walsall

Changes to the way streets are designated for street trading purposes have been agreed by Walsall Council.

Previously, streets in Walsall were designated as one of three types: prohibited, licensed or consent streets.

Under the new designation, all streets in the borough will be designated as consent streets, allowing traders - subject to a full application and consultation process - to apply for consent to trade on any street.

It is hoped that designating all streets in the borough as consent streets will encourage more entrepreneurs to trade in Walsall, while providing the local authority additional powers to scrutinise applications, taking into account the needs of the borough.

Councillor Adrian Andrew, Associate Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Regeneration, said "These changes are in response to requests from prospective street traders and enable the council to act in a more flexible way to promote economic and commercial growth.

"A large percentage of Walsall streets are already consent streets, which has proved to be efficient and effective.

"Removing prohibitions allows the council to continue to make informed decisions about the suitability of locations following internal and partner consultations."

A consultation for these changes closed on Friday 30 August 2024, feedback from which has been used to inform the decision to move ahead.

Any concerns or complaints about street traders in the borough should be reported to the enforcement team communityprotection@walsall.gov.uk

Gov.uk Licensing Applications

From September 2024 we have ceased 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.



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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.

JOIN

WALSALL PUBWATCH
FOR A SAFER NIGHT OUT

FOR A SAFER WALSALL

EXCHANGE INFORMATION
IDENTIFY TROUBLE MAKERS
EXCLUDE FROM ALL MEMBER VENUES
REDUCE RISK OF VIOLENCE

DEVELOP GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH:
POLICE, LICENSING AND OTHER AGENCIES

BECOME A MEMBER

WALSALLPUBWATCH.CO.UK
info@walsallpubwatch.co.uk 0843 886 5072

In Association with
Walsall Council West Midlands POLICE NATIONAL PUB WATCH

You can find more information about Walsall Pubwatch by clicking [Home | Walsall Pubwatch](#)

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GENERAL NEWS AND ADVICE

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.

Modern Slavery Update

Modern slavery is a pressing issue affecting the West Midlands, with vulnerable individuals often exploited for forced labor, sexual exploitation, and domestic servitude. Victims can be individuals of any age, gender, or nationality, and they are often coerced through violence, threats, or manipulation. A significant number of cases involve people trafficked from overseas, but there are also instances of local residents being exploited. The impact on victims is profound, leading to severe psychological trauma, physical harm, and long-term health issues. The West Midlands authorities are committed to tackling this issue through awareness campaigns, support services for victims, and robust law enforcement efforts to dismantle trafficking networks.

If you suspect any form of modern slavery, you are encouraged to report it to local authorities or contact the Modern Slavery Helpline on 08000 121 700 for assistance and support. If there is an immediate risk to you or another person call 999. You can also:

- [download the modern slavery awareness booklet](#)
- visit the [West Midlands Anti Slavery Network website](#) for more information about modern slavery

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Specific indicators for trafficking for the purposes of Sexual Exploitation

- Movement between brothels, sometimes different cities
- Sleeping on work premises
- Limited amount of clothing and a large proportion of sexual clothing
- Subjected to abduction, assault or rape
- Someone other than the person receives payment for the services.

Grooming for Sexual Exploitation / Internal Sex Trafficking

- Child going missing/truancy/secretive
- Unexplained money/presents
- Experimenting with drugs, alcohol
- Grooming/association with older males
- Social activities without any plausible explanation
- Low self-image/self-harm/eating disorder
- Seen entering or leaving vehicles with unknown adults.

Forced Labour

- Withholding of wages or excessive wage reductions
- Excessive hours/overtime, few breaks
- Not having the right tools/clothing for the job
- Fabricated employment levels, no labour contract
- Poor and/or abusive working conditions
- Threat of revealing irregular immigration status to authorities.

Criminal Activities

Cannabis Cultivation

- Windows of property are permanently covered from the inside
- Unusual noises and pungent smells coming from the property.

Benefit Fraud

- Difficult to establish/prove relationship between adult and children
- Single adult is contact for a large number of children/families
- Helped to complete benefits claim form but no money.

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Debt Bondage

Debt bondage, also known as debt slavery or bonded labour, is a person's pledge of labour or services as security for the repayment of a debt or other obligation, where there is no hope of actually repaying the debt. The services required to repay the debt as well as the duration may be undefined, traffickers will add extortionate interest to the debt to ensure the debtor has no means of ever repaying the monies perceived to be owed.

Forced or Sham Marriage

- Status of the groom
- Lack of "courtship"
- Little or no knowledge of each other's family
- No bride's family at wedding
- No photos, reception, honeymoon.

Domestic Servitude

- Living and working for a family in a private home
- Not eating with the rest of the family
- No private space, bedroom or proper sleeping place
- Forced to work excessive hours, on call 24 hours a day
- Never leaves the house without the employer
- Reported as criminal if attempts to escape.



West Midlands Anti Slavery Network

The West Midlands Anti Slavery Network unites and enables partner organisations to work in collaboration to end modern slavery, human trafficking, and exploitation.

We do this by identifying gaps in service provision, influencing change, and facilitating solutions in order to protect and advocate for the vulnerable in society.

Concerned about Modern Slavery?

Report it Now

Modern Slavery Helpline

08000 121 700 24/7

If you feel threatened or there is an immediate risk to you or another person call 999

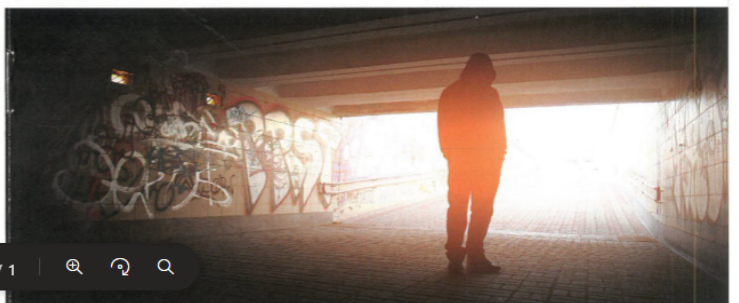
For more information about modern slavery including resources please visit our website by either scanning the QR code on the right with your smartphone or by visiting

<https://westmidlandsantislavery.org>



Modern Slavery

**WEST
MIDLANDS
ANTI SLAVERY
NETWORK**



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Landmark 2 Snowhill, Birmingham B4 6GA
Charity Registration Number: 1200309