

Derby City Council

Draft Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2020



Derby City Council



Foreword from Richard Antcliff, Director of Public Protection and Streetpride

Earlier this year, Derby City Council (DCC) published a draft Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy for the consideration of the public and taxi trade.

The strategy is ambitious, but necessary. It aims to thrust Derby into the 21st century by embracing new technology, improving services and safety, and modernising the fleet.

The draft document forms the basis for a conversation that we want the people of Derby, and our taxi and private hire drivers and operators, to be involved in.



Why do we need a strategy?

Taxis and private hires (TPH) are an integral part of our city. There are around 270 taxis, and 1,000 private hire vehicles licensed in Derby, that make an average of 10,000 trips a day. TPH are the gateway to our city; often a person's first experience of Derby. Despite this, the need for change is undisputed.

The TPH market locally and nationally is facing some tough challenges. Changes to city centres, night time economy and shopping habits have contributed to a decrease in passenger numbers, while declining standards and outdated business models impact business even more. This is coupled with the increasing demand for a high quality service and excellent value for money.

It is clear that in order for TPH businesses to not only survive, but thrive in these challenging climates, change needs to happen. This leaflet will provide you with information about what is proposed in the TPH strategy, and detail some of the key points, so that you can provide informed feedback through our consultation derby.gov.uk/taxistrategy2020, and help to shape Derby's TPH strategy.

I should point out that to date, no decisions have been made, other than to consult on the strategy. The original strategy contains three key dates for changes – 2020, 2025 and 2030; these are the earliest possible dates for changes to be enforced, but are entirely subject to change based on the consultation results.

Ensuring the survival of Derby's TPH trade is something that we are very serious about, and that we are committed to getting right. That will happen if you work with us to achieve positive change.

Our promise

DCC is committed to improving the city's transport offer, while also supporting the trade to meet the demands for smarter, safer and cleaner TPH vehicles and cleaner air.

We will do this by supporting drivers to develop new business models, independent financial advice and investment in infrastructure.

..... **As a Council we will ensure:**

- A fairer and properly enforced system
- Consult on a range of policy changes to enable the trade, not to remain resilient and independent
- We will work with trade representatives, private hire operators and other key stakeholders to ensure a higher quality service provision for customers
- Standards are maintained and the TPH fleet is regularly checked and remains cutting edge in line with technological advancements
- Cleanliness, customer service sampling, fair and honest pricing will be maintained. The service should be affordable, accessible and safe for anyone choosing to use a TPH
- Good levels of compliance and enforcement where necessary, working in conjunction with Derbyshire Police and other agencies
- Over ranking, traffic and parking violations will be tackled, as well as dedicated illegally plying for hire operations.

About the strategy

The draft strategy has been developed with a number of challenges and opportunities in mind; these have been identified by passengers, drivers and operators, as well as local organisations and businesses. These include;

- Better quality service for the public
- Personal safety issues for **both** passengers **and** drivers
- Driver behaviour
- The need to improve air quality
- The need to reduce carbon emissions
- Compliance with license conditions, particularly ensuring that private hire observe the requirements for pre-booking
- The challenging business climate facing drivers
- Supporting drivers to become ambassadors for the city and thus enhance the city's reputation.

The strategy focusses on four overarching aims. Ultimately, the aim is to see a TPH fleet that is:

Safer	More modern vehicles, free from defects that provide passengers and regulators with confidence. An enhanced taxi booking application that allows both passengers and drivers the ability to rate one another and geographically track, share and record all journeys.
Cleaner	We will incentivise the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV) through investment in charge of infrastructure, new dedicated Electric Vehicle (EV) only taxi ranks and subsidised licensing fees. We will provide access to specialist advice on 'total cost of ownership' modelling, a taxi ULEV try before you buy scheme and dedicated EV workshops.
Modern	Newer taxis with the latest technology and smoother journeys. Guaranteed to be accessible for all with front facing wheelchair support and easy access ramps. Vehicles will be equipped with FREE Wi-Fi, contactless card payments and climate control. Whether short or longer journeys, an experience that meets traveller's needs.
Focused	Drivers will be expected to provide the highest levels of customer care. Assistance getting in and out, help with luggage and shopping or ensuring wheelchair users are anchored appropriately shall be standard practice. Drivers will be expected to take the most efficient route.

Why focus on these areas?

Safer

● Vehicle age limits

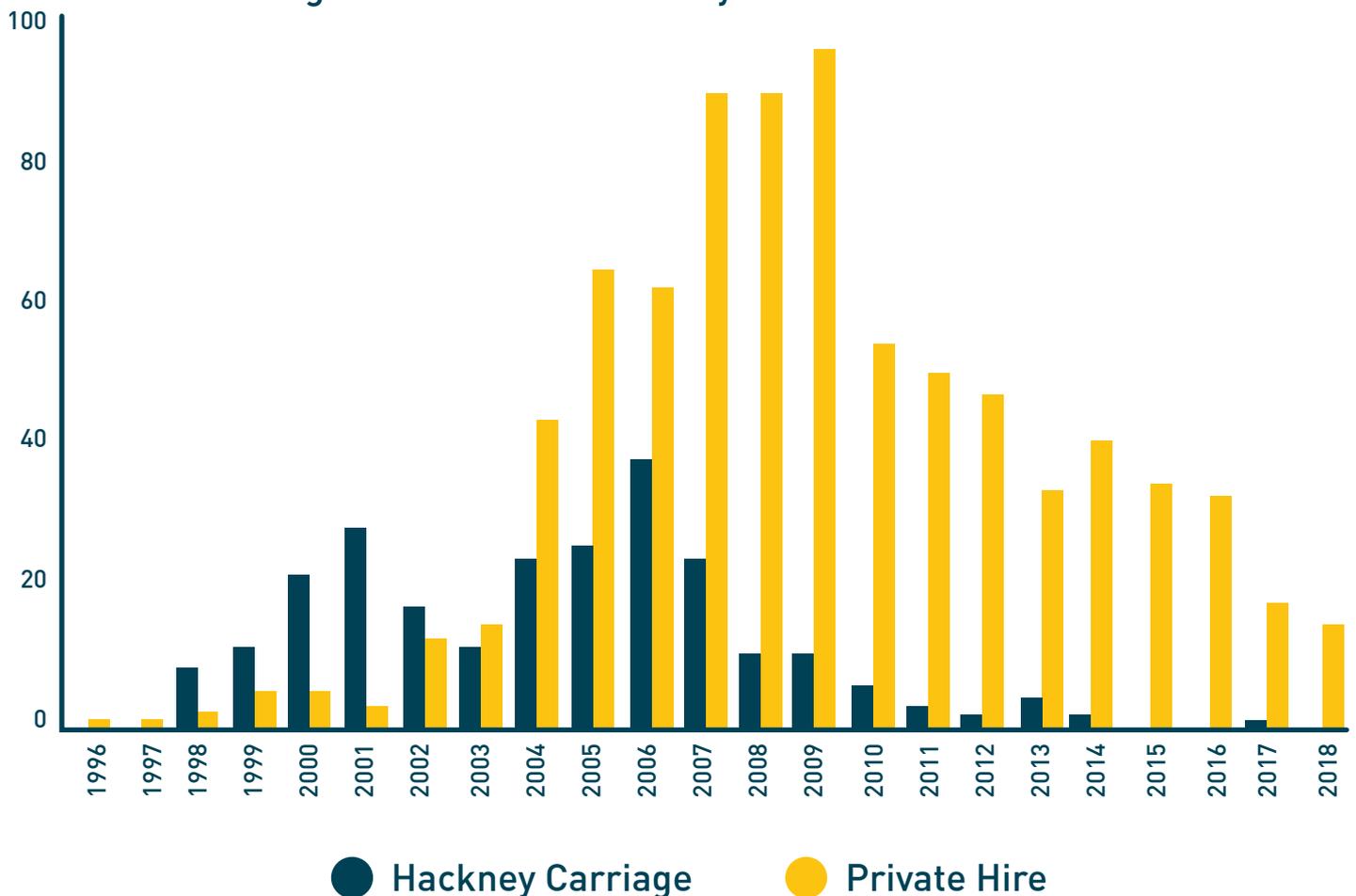
Safety is a key driver for the implementation of a TPH Strategy. Vehicle defects can largely be attributed to the age of vehicles, so part of the strategy focusses on implementing an age limit on vehicles.

Currently, there is no limit on how old Derby's hackney carriages or private hire vehicles can be, which means that the fleet of vehicles are – generally – old, in poor condition and subsequently have high emission levels.

Derbyshire Constabulary has raised real concerns about the overall condition of Derby's licensed vehicles. In response, DCC in conjunction with Derbyshire Constabulary regularly work to safety check vehicles, which has ultimately led to many vehicles being taken off the road immediately.

Of course there are exceptions, and some vehicles are well maintained. However we do not want a city where we play pot-luck with the vehicle we get into. Both passenger and driver deserve to feel safe in the vehicles they are using, with no exception, which is why this is included in the consultation.

Age of licensed Vehicles by Year of Manufacture





● Journey tracking

The introduction of new technology – like the mytaxi app – allows passengers travelling in a mytaxi cab to share journey details and ETAs within the app, through a range of platforms such as WhatsApp, meaning passengers can always keep others informed of their movements whilst on the go. It's not just passengers who will benefit from increased safety – for drivers using the app, passenger details are recorded. This means that for the first time (for Hackney carriages), should there be any sort of incident; passengers will be identifiable, and contactable.

● Identification and complaints

A requirement for large photographic name badges to be present in licensed vehicles has also been proposed, as well as a clearly displayed customer feedback email address. These additions may appear minor; however such add-ons go a long way to improving customer trust, and in-turn, can increase business.

Cleaner

The draft strategy sets out the earliest possible date for the introduction of ULEVs. These are part of the consultation, and therefore subject to change based on results. Key dates;

- Not issuing licenses to petrol/diesel vehicles older than five years that do not meet a minimum Euro 6 standard from 2020
- 25% of the Hackney fleet to be ULEV by 2020 and 50% by 2025
- 25% of private hire fleet to be ULEV by 2020 and 50% by 2025
- all licensed vehicles be Zero Emission by 2030

It is recognised that the proposed strategy contains some big changes, and so we are working towards a number of incentives, finance schemes, and 'try before you buy' schemes, so the benefits of the new Hackney vehicles can be seen by drivers first hand.

● Air quality

Improving air quality is a motivator for the TPH strategy, however the strategy is one piece of a large puzzle when it comes to air quality. As a local authority, we are working across the board to improve Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels and air quality in the city.

There are over 1,200 TPH vehicles licensed in Derby. Of that, all Hackney Carriages are diesel.

DCC has been liaising with DEFRA since December 2015, after being informed that Derby was required to reduce NO₂ emissions from vehicles.

Initially, government planned to make it a legal requirement to charge drivers for driving 'non-compliant' vehicles through designated Clean Air Zones. However in July 2017 DCC was given the opportunity to reduce NO₂ without implementing a charging zone.

DCC doesn't want to see a charging zone in Derby. It will ultimately cost residents and the licensed trade a significant amount of money, and so we have been working hard to make sure that doesn't happen – this strategy is part of that work.

A number of schemes are already in place, or planned to improve Derby's air quality, including encouraging drivers to take up incentives for electric vehicles and work on improving DCC's vehicle fleet. Once the legal limit is reached, we want to continue to lower the amount of NO₂ in the air, as far as possible.

A few examples on the projects we're working on include...

● Traffic Management

Many people will already have heard about traffic management measures planned for Stafford Street. You can find out more by visiting derby.gov.uk/airquality

● Sustainable travel

Active and sustainable travel is another important part of reducing roadside emission levels. At least 5km of new or improved cycling facilities has been provided over the past few years, with plans for further schemes in place. There are also a number of eBikes located around the city which have been extremely successful – Derby has the UK's largest electric cycle scheme – and there are plans to roll these out further.



● Greener buses

We are working with bus companies in the city to provide greener fleets. DCC successfully won £2m of funding in order for bus operators to retro-fit vehicles which reduces omissions. Trent Barton, for example, has also launched a number of electric buses with our help.

● Electric Vehicle charging points

We know that we cannot encourage the uptake of electric vehicles without suitable infrastructure. DCC won a bid for £640k in order to develop charging infrastructure solely for the use of electric taxis, that's in addition to funding granted to Derby and Nottingham to bring 230 charging points to the cities over the next few years, which are available for all vehicles to use.



● Government grants

DCC was successful in obtaining air quality grant funding to undertake a taxi fleet emission improvement study and engagement programme, which was undertaken in 2017/18.

Further funding has been received from the Government's Early Measures Funding aimed at delivering:

- The implementation of various electric vehicle charging hubs in the city for hackney carriages
- Phased introduction of electric hackney carriages only to the existing ranks
- Changes to the TPH licensing policies to further support the air quality agenda.

These are just a few examples of the work we're doing to improve air quality in Derby. Ultimately, if we can't future proof the city's N02 emissions, the government could impose sanctions on the Council, which would more than likely land Derby with a charging zone.

Modern

The whole draft strategy is about moving with the times; becoming more modern and thrusting the trade into the 21st century. We plan to do this through a number of measures.

● Re-branding

For newly licensed low emission Hackneys, we plan to introduce a 'Back to Black' colour policy, with a flash of 'Derby Yellow' wrap. Additionally, it's proposed that the Derby crest is included on all vehicles, offering a refreshed, professional look for vehicles.

The use of wrapping is significantly cheaper than spraying the vehicles. Wrapping rather than spraying will also allow greater opportunity for drivers when it comes to reselling vehicles, as being able to maintain the manufacturer's original colour helps to maintain the resale value.



● Cashless payments

Whilst there would still be the option to pay by cash, it is proposed that all new Hackney carriages would have to accept card payments (at zero cost to passengers). In a world where your passengers carry less cash, cashless paying options makes sense; having this option as standard would make vehicles more accessible and increase flexibility for passengers.

● Free WiFi

DCC plans to launch free WIFI in all new Hackney carriages through a third party provider. This again allows drivers to increase their offer for customers; improving customer experience, thus growing their business in a successful way.

● App technology

We have already successfully launched a Hackney booking app in Derby; mytaxi launched on 4th March 2019, with over 100 drivers signing up in the first week.

Such advances in technology are only beneficial to the trade, and we will continue to encourage similar apps to the area. Doing so will offer increased ease of access for passengers, while allowing drivers to become less rank-reliant, and gain added income.

Focussed

● Improved customer service

The TPH market locally and nationally is facing a number of challenges to the way they run their businesses. With the internet the quality of the service offered to customers has never been more important, or public, and so we believe it is more important than ever to provide outstanding customer service.

The reality is that other forms of transport are available to passengers; buses for example, are more accessible than ever, and are upgrading their customer offer through WiFi, excellent customer service and new vehicles, not to mention the introduction of autonomous vehicles in the not-too-distant future. These are just a few examples – it is imperative that TPHs find a way to compete.

The strategy aims to combat these challenges, by setting out standards and expectations of drivers, as well as an English test.

● Driver Excellence Award

Loyalties can (and do) change if anything about the service they receive is less than satisfactory. In addition to setting out standards for drivers, we are proposing the introduction of a Driver Excellence Award. The hope is that by recognising and rewarding hard workers in the trade, drivers feel empowered to go above and beyond for their passengers.

We aim to deliver...

Within the four key pillars (safer, cleaner, modern and focussed), there are a number of actions that we believe are necessary to achieve these ambitions.

These actions are draft, and subject to consultation.

1. Creation of measures to facilitate the uptake of low emission vehicles

Changes to existing city centre ranks to prioritise low emission vehicles.
This may include permitted access arrangements.

Introduction of other measures to support the air quality agenda including working with the trade to facilitate the early uptake of low emission vehicles, including consideration of options for vehicle lease hire, try before you buy, considering demand for charging facilities and making key stakeholders aware of other grant opportunities.

The designation of taxi ranks within the city as ULEV vehicle only.

For newly licenced low emission taxi vehicle licences, the introduction of a 'Back to Black' colour policy and 'Derby Yellow' wrapped roof requirement.

Review of the existing advertising policy for Taxi vehicles.

2. Clean fleet

A policy will be introduced to require that all licensed vehicles are Zero Emission by 2030.

Target of 25% of Taxi fleet to be ULEV by 2020 and 50% by 2025.

Target for 25% of Private Hire fleet to be ULEV by 2020 and 50% by 2025.

Licences will not be issued for petrol/diesel vehicles older than 5 years that do not meet a minimum Euro 6 standard.

Provision of a mandatory eco driving course as part of obtaining a licence will be considered.

The Council will actively seek funding to incentivise the trade to renew and upgrade the fleet.

For a limited period of time, consideration will be given to offering vehicle licenses at a reduced rate for those who take up ULEV.

At some point in the future, the Council will consider undertaking an unmet demand survey.

The Council will investigate opportunities to develop a Taxi ULEV leasing scheme following a 'Try before you buy' scheme.

The Council will reduce the maximum age of licensed vehicles to 10 years for petrol/diesel and 12 years for ULEV (10 years for ULEV from 2025).

3. Work with neighbouring districts to develop a coherent TPH licensing and enforcement policy

The Council will work with other neighbouring local authorities to develop a licensing framework to which all licensed vehicles will adhere too.

The framework could give the Council and other partner local authorities the right to enforce against licensed vehicles within their boundary, which are not adhering to licensing requirements.

4. Improving customer experience and the services offered by the trade

Develop a code of conduct setting out expected standards of driver and customer behaviour.

Following on from previous work undertaken, the Council will consider implementing a Driver Dress Code, to improve upon Derby's existing taxi industry reputation by ensuring all relevant licensed drivers adhere to a minimum standard of dress to help promote a smart and professional TPH services for citizens and visitors to Derby.

There will be a requirement of a large photographic name badge to be present in the vehicle to make driver identification easier.

Improved signage in the vehicle to provide better information to passengers and aid drivers.

A complaints number and customer feedback email address will be displayed clearly in all vehicles.

A Driver Excellence Award will be implemented in recognition of outstanding customer service – this will focus on drivers who provide quality services for disabled and elderly passengers.

Commencement of a series of TPH related campaigns around disability awareness.

The Council will ensure all new drivers pass an English test before being granted a licence.

5. Safeguarding

Review the existing mandatory safeguarding training requirement and consider the introduction of a requirement to undertake refresher training at periodic intervals.

Driver and vehicle identification will be improved through new driver display cards.

Work will be undertaken with licensed businesses to improve operational safeguarding practices.

Launch a TPH Safety Awareness Campaign in partnership with Derbyshire Police, University of Derby, Derby Live and the BIDS to understanding of the potential dangers of using unlicensed vehicles.

6. Technology

The Council will co-develop and launch a taxi booking app to ensure greater passenger safety, cashless payment and operator quality rating system to drive up standards.

Incentives will be placed around drivers regularly receiving high quality ratings from customer for example increased priority if grants become available for vehicle purchase.

Introduction of a TPH E-Newsletter to improve communication between the Council, the trade and its patrons.

Mandatory card (contactless) payment will be made available in every Taxi as an alternative to cash.

Each Taxi will be provided with FREE (to driver and passenger) in cab Wi-Fi through a third party supplier.

Taking part in the consultation

You can read the full Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy online, by visiting news.derby.gov.uk/tph-strategy/

The consultation is available online at derby.gov.uk/taxistrategy2020
This can be completed on a laptop, computer, tablet, iPad, or phone.

Computers can be booked at any of our Derby Libraries, and there are also computers available at the Council House that can be used to complete the consultation.

If you would like to complete a paper version of the questionnaire you can pick one up from the reception of the Council House.

Alternatively you can email yourcityyoursay@derby.gov.uk, or call **01332 64000** (Minicom 01332 640666) to request one. If you require the consultation in a different language, please use the same number or email address to request one.



