Taxi and Private Hire Car (Purpose Built Vehicle)

1. Safety is of paramount importance to East Ayrshire Council. Therefore, the taxi/private hire car which will conform to the latest EEC standards i.e. M1 Whole Vehicle Type Approval (Category M1: vehicles used for the carriage of passengers and comprising no more than eight seats in addition to the driver’s seat) must comply in all respects with the requirements of any Act and Regulations relating to motor vehicles and be of the orthodox type. The Council has the right to specify the number of passengers the taxi/private hire car can carry and the seating layout.

2. The vehicle must be in a proper state of repair for the use as a taxi/private hire car. Any vehicle operating as a taxi within East Ayrshire must be under the age of 8 years from the original date of registration or until deemed unfit for public service thereafter.

3. Purpose built vehicles are required to undergo and pass an inspection annually up to the age of 8 years old from original date of registration and thereafter bi-annually, until no longer deemed fit for service.

4. The Licensing Section will be advised of all test failures. Should a vehicle fail two consecutive tests a formal letter will be issued. If there are three or more failures, the matter may be brought to the attention of the Licensing Panel whereby suspension or more frequent testing would be a consideration.

5. A taxi shall have a taximeter which is incapable of multi-tariff operation and has been stamped or sealed by the Council after testing and approval as to distance and time in accordance with the approved taxi fares and charges. Once such a taximeter is fitted to the taxi the seal can only be broken if the taximeter is removed for repair. In this event the taximeter must be tested and re-sealed by the Council before the taxi is returned to service. If a private hire car has a taximeter installed then the same criteria applies.

6. The steering wheel must be on the offside of the vehicle.

7. The minimum engine cubic capacity rating must be suitable for the application as a taxi or private hire car.

8. The vehicle must have a minimum of four doors. Childproof safety locks with an automatic motion sensitive locking system of an approved design must be fitted. Driver’s door must be capable of locking independently from passenger doors.

9. The vertical distance between the point of maximum deflection of the seat cushion when a passenger is seated to the room immediately above that point must not be less than 96.5 centimetres. The width across the rear seat cushion must not be less than 1.07 metres.
10. All the passenger seats in the vehicle must have easy access and without obstruction.

11. To provide adequate knee room, the distance between the front surface of all seat backs and the back(s) in front or any obstruction must be at least 650mm.

12. Where seats face each other, the distance between the seat backs measured in a horizontal plane through the centreline of the individual seating position along the top surface of the seat cushion must be not less than 1,300mm. The distance between the front edges of the seat cushions must be a minimum of 425mm.

13. To provide adequate room for passenger's feet there must be clear floor space in front of the seat of 300mm long, 250mm wide and 80mm high.
14. The rear seat base width is a minimum of 116.5mm at rear of base and 122mm at front of base.

15. All seats should be either forward or rear facing.

16. The body must be of the fixed head type with a partially glazed safety glass or perspex partition separating the passenger from the driver. Safety glazing made from glass or plastic must be so constructed or treated that if fractured it does not fly into fragments likely to cause severe cuts. Each piece of glazing must display the relevant permanent marking applied by the glazing manufacturer, for example, E4 or 43R-002439 marking. Every cab must be provided with an approved means of communication between the passenger and the driver (where a driver/passenger intercom system has been fitted it must incorporate an induction loop for hearing aid users). When a sliding window is fitted at the rear of the driver's compartment, the maximum width of the opening must not exceed 11.5 centimetres. All glass must be made of safety glass in accordance with the British or European Standards in force at the time and be capable of affording an unrestricted view of the vehicle interior (no dark tinted glass in internal partition). The Council's decision on what is an unrestricted view shall be final.

17. The vehicle must have a luggage compartment. The luggage compartment must be sufficient in size in order to safely stow an adequate amount of luggage in conjunction with the number of passengers authorised to carry by Council. In the event of there being no separate luggage compartment, all luggage must be securely restrained by use of cargo netting or other similar approved method. The Council's decision on a similar approved method shall be final.

18. The vehicle should have a spare wheel fitted with a pneumatic tyre of the same size and type as the other tyres and wheels on the vehicle, or where a space saver wheel and tyre (as provided by the manufacturer) is used a method statement indicating limits of use must be present with the vehicle. Any spare wheel must be in such condition as to instantly replace any damaged wheel or a wheel on which the tyre has become damaged. There must also be a suitable lifting jack and a suitable wheel brace.

19. The front and rear plates must be affixed to the exterior of the vehicle by means of screws. If fitting the plates to the vehicle bumpers the plates must be affixed to either the centre or the driver's side of the vehicle, or alternatively, alongside a square registration plate. If using brackets, the brackets must be affixed to the vehicle registration plate by means of screws. The information on the plate must be clearly visible and in a vertical position on or above the bumper.

20. The Licensing Authority transfers must be affixed to the exterior of the front doors of private hire vehicles. This must be a permanent fixture.
21. Advertising the name and telephone number of the company/proprietor (self-advertising) for both taxi and private hire cars shall be permitted on the front and rear windscreen glass of a vehicle outwith the windscreen wiper pattern area and to the satisfaction of the Chief Governance Officer. Lettering shall not exceed 75mm in height and shall be contained in one line, unless smaller lettering is used, but the combined height of any lines shall not exceed 75mm in height.

22. Advertising in the form of full livery self-advertising or commercial advertising is permitted on taxis only, and is permitted on the sides, bonnet and boot of the vehicle, and each individual design must be submitted for approval by the Chief Governance Officer of East Ayrshire Council. Contravision will be permitted on the rear window and on any luggage compartment areas where no passengers are seated, following the relevant authorisation being received. There must be a clear unobscured view through the rear view mirror.

23. Tinted windows will be permitted on vehicles, however, the front windscreen must be 75% clear, and 45% clear on other passenger compartment windows. A tolerance of + or – 3% will be allowed on passenger compartment windows, and this will be absolute. This restriction will not apply to the rear window and windows on any luggage compartment areas where no passengers are seated, and these windows may be tinted, however there must be a clear unobscured view through the rear view mirror. Vehicles first licensed with the Council from 1 April 2016 must comply with this specification.

24. A wheelchair ramp at least 750mm wide and not more than 1,700mm in length is required and must be part of the vehicle’s equipment at all times. A pair of channel ramps must not be used. When the ramp is deployed onto the road, the ramp slope must not exceed 1 in 4 (25%). It must be possible to deploy the ramp onto both a level road and a 125mm kerb. When the ramp is in use, it must be securely located at the point of wheelchair entry. The surface of the ramp must have a slip-resistant finish and all outer edges must be clearly marked in a contrasting colour.

25. All passenger entrances and the area immediately outside these entrances must be well lit. All entrances must have a maximum first step height of 325mm from ground level which may be achieved with a folding or slide out step. The first step height before deployment must not exceed 325mm from ground level. All step nosing and surfaces must be of slip-resistant material and all outer edges must be clearly marked in a contrasting colour.

26. There should be an approved security arrangement for the wheelchair user to remain within their chair while using the taxi.

27. The requirements on the rear door access for wheelchairs should be a minimum of 1.170mm high and 680mm wide.

28. If operating as a taxi, the vehicle must have a “Taxi” roof sign fitted centrally to the front section of the roof, which must be illuminated when plying for hire.
The roof sign must be automatically extinguished when the “Fare Meter” is engaged.

29. All bodywork must be free of any damage, including scratches, and have professional automotive finished paintwork of the same colour and shade.

30. No fittings other than those approved may be attached to or carried upon the interior or exterior of the vehicle. These include tow bars and fittings, roof racks, roof mounted luggage containers, etc (this list is not exhaustive).

31. Should the Operator wish to install an electronic security system capable of recording and storing a record of entry or exit of passengers by way of video images, the camera must be positioned so as not to obstruct the driver’s normal view of the swept area of the windscreen.

32. The Council will approve the number and layout of passenger seats on any given taxi/phc.
Taxis and Private Hire Car
(Non-purpose Built Vehicles)
& Minibuses

1. Safety is of paramount importance to East Ayrshire Council. Therefore, the taxi/private hire car/minibus which will conform to the latest EEC standards i.e. M1 Whole Vehicle Type Approval, must comply in all respects with the requirements of any Act and Regulations relating to motor vehicles in force at the time of licensing.

2. The vehicle must be in a proper state of repair for the use as a taxi or private hire car. Any vehicle operating as a taxi or private hire car within East Ayrshire must be under the age of 8 years from the original date of registration.

3. The Operator shall require their vehicle to undergo and pass an annual or bi-annual inspection by the Council. The vehicle will be inspected annually up to the age of 5 years from the original date of registration and thereafter bi-annually up until 8 years old from original date of registration.

4. The Licensing Section will be advised of all test failures. Should a vehicle fail two consecutive tests a formal letter will be issued. If there are three or more failures, the matter may be brought to the attention of the Licensing Panel whereby suspension or more frequent testing would be a consideration.

5. The steering wheel must be on the offside of the vehicle.

6. The minimum engine cubic capacity rating must be suitable for the application as a taxi or private hire car.

7. The vehicle must have a minimum of four doors excluding any doors at the rear of the vehicle. Passenger doors must be capable of being readily open and must be of such construction so as to permit reasonably unrestricted access for passengers.

8. The vehicle must have a luggage compartment. The luggage compartment must be sufficient in size in order to safely stow an adequate amount of luggage in conjunction with the number of passengers authorised to carry by Council. In the event of there being no separate luggage compartment, all luggage must be securely restrained by use of cargo netting or other similar approved method approved by the Council. The Council’s decision on a similar approved method shall be final.

9. If the vehicle is an estate type, people carrier type or a minibus, the passengers must be protected from loose luggage by a suitable grill or other approved arrangement.

10. The vehicle should have a spare wheel fitted with a pneumatic tyre of the same size and type as the other tyres and wheels on the vehicle, or where a
space saver wheel and tyre (as provided by the manufacturer) is used a method statement indicating limits of use must be present with the vehicle. Any spare wheel must be in such condition as to instantly replace any damaged wheel or a wheel on which the tyre has become damaged. There must also be a suitable lifting jack and a suitable wheel brace.

11. The front and rear plates must be affixed to the exterior of the vehicle by means of screws. If fitting the plates to the vehicle bumpers the plates must be affixed to either the centre or the driver's side of the vehicle, or alternatively, alongside a square registration plate. If using brackets, the brackets must be affixed to the vehicle registration plate by means of screws. The information on the plate must be clearly visible and in a vertical position on or above the bumper.

12. All bodywork must be free of any damage, including scratches, and have professional automotive finished paintwork of the same colour and shade.

13. All the passenger seats in the vehicle must have easy access and without obstruction. The rear seat base width is a minimum of 116.5mm at rear of base and 122mm at front of base.

14. To provide adequate knee room, the distance between the front surface of all seat backs and the back(s) in front or any obstruction must be at least 650mm.

15. Where seats face each other, the distance between the seat backs measured in a horizontal plane through the centreline of the individual seating position along the top surface of the seat cushion must be not less than 1,300mm. The distance between the front edges of the seat cushions must be a minimum of 425mm.
16. To provide adequate room for passenger’s feet there must be clear floor space in front of the seat of 300mm long, 250mm wide and 80mm high.

17. All seats should be either forward or rear facing.

18. All passenger entrances and the area immediately outside these entrances must be well lit. The nearside entrance must have a maximum first step height of 325mm from ground level which may be achieved with a folding or slide out step. The first step height before deployment must not exceed 325mm from ground level. All step nosing and surfaces must be of slip-resistant material and all outer edges must be clearly marked in a contrasting colour.

19. All vehicles other than saloon and estate type must be provided with childproof safety locks with an automatic motion sensitive locking system of an approved design. The driver’s door must be capable of locking independently from passenger doors.

20. The Licensing Authority transfers must be affixed to the exterior of the front doors of private hire vehicles. This must be a permanent fixture.

21. Advertising the name and telephone number of the company/proprietor (self-advertising) for both taxi and private hire cars shall be permitted on the front and rear windscreen glass of a vehicle outwith the windscreen pattern area and to the satisfaction of a nominated council officer. Lettering shall not exceed 75mm in height and shall be contained in one line, unless smaller lettering is used, but the combined height of any lines shall not exceed 75mm in height.

22. Advertising in the form of full livery self-advertising or commercial advertising is permitted on taxis only, and will be permitted on the sides, bonnet and boot, and each individual design must be submitted for approval by the Chief Governance Officer of East Ayrshire Council. Contravision will be permitted on the rear window and windows on any luggage compartment areas where no passengers are seated, following the relevant permission being obtained. There must be a clear unobscured view through the rear view mirror.
23. Tinted windows will be permitted on vehicles, however, the front windscreen must be 75% clear, and 45% clear on other passenger compartment windows. A tolerance of + or – 3% will be allowed on passenger compartment windows, and this will be absolute. This restriction will not apply to the rear window and windows on any luggage compartment areas where no passengers are seated, and these windows may be tinted, however there must be a clear unobscured view through the rear view mirror. Vehicles first licensed with the Council from 1 April 2016 must comply with this specification.

24. No fittings other than those approved may be attached to or carried upon the interior or exterior of the taxi. These include tow bars and fittings, roof racks, roof mounted luggage containers, etc (this list is not exhaustive).

25. Should the Operator wish to install an electronic security system capable of recording and storing a record of entry or exit of passengers by way of video images, the camera must be positioned so as not to obstruct the driver’s normal view of the swept area of the windscreen.

**Minibus – Additional requirements**

1. Must be capable of carrying safely up to a maximum of 8 passengers including luggage.

2. Passenger seats must be minimum 425mm wide (measured at the leading edge) and 400mm deep (measured through the centre line of top cushion).

3. All seat belts must be 3-point, lap and diagonal type.

4. Main Passenger compartment to be serviced by a minimum of 2 doors (excluding rear doors).
GENERAL INFORMATION ON SUITABLE VEHICLES

The Council has the right to specify the number of passengers that any Taxi or Private Hire Car can carry and the seating layout.

The layout of seats within the vehicle will be subject to approval by an authorised council officer at time of initial inspection and no changes will be permitted unless given prior consent.

No vehicles (other than purpose built taxis) that have been the subject of major conversion or modification will be accepted, unless a Low Volume Type Approval Certificate, issued by the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) covering such conversion or modification, is presented at time of inspection of vehicle for the purposes of issuing a Certificate of Compliance.

For Purpose Built Taxis an EEC M1 Whole Vehicle Type Approval Certificate issued by the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) must be presented at time of inspection of vehicle for the purposes of issuing a Certificate of Compliance.

For vehicles fitted with passenger tail-lifts a valid Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998, (LOLER), Bi-annual certification must be presented at time of inspection of vehicle for the purposes of issuing a Certificate of Compliance.