

VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS

Private Hire (Special Event) Vehicle



General vehicle suitability

This document sets out to provide vehicle proprietors with the minimum standards a vehicle must satisfy in order to be licensed as a Private Hire (Special Event) Vehicle (SEV) by Plymouth City Council. In general all vehicles must seat no more than 8 passengers, must have M¹ classification from the Vehicle Certification Agency, be of fixed head design (i.e. no convertible vehicles) and fully comply with all aspects of the Vehicle Testing Compliance Manual.

The Council wishes to maintain a clear separation between hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, therefore certain vehicles are prohibited from being licensed as a Private Hire Vehicle, if they resemble a Hackney Carriage or are currently licensed as such. Any prospective vehicle purchaser is strongly urged to seek advice from the Licensing Section, **before** purchasing any vehicle which they intend to licence.

All vehicles must have European Whole Vehicle Type Approval (EWVTA), Low Volume Type Approval or Individual Vehicle Type Approval from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA).

A vehicle intending to be licensed as Private Hire (SEV), must be presented to a Council appointed vehicle testing station and pass the vehicle compliance test, before any licence can be granted. Further information on the Vehicle Compliance Test can be found in the vehicle Compliance Test Procedures document, and the Vehicle Testing Compliance Manual.

Vehicles that have been categorised by insurance companies as a Category A or B insurance write offs will not be accepted as suitable for a licence.

The vehicle shall have no significant signs of damage, or corrosion and paintwork must be of a 'professional' finish and of one colour scheme for the whole vehicle. The passenger compartment and upholstery must be clean and free from damage that may affect its suitability for the carriage of passengers.

Categories of special event vehicle

The following categories of vehicle are what the Council consider to be private hire special event vehicles;

- Stretched limousines
- Decommissioned emergency services vehicles
- Vintage vehicles
- Other similar classifications

Stretched limousines

Stretched limousines are vehicles that have undergone an increase in length by extending the wheelbase after the vehicle was manufactured. Where a stretched limousine has been constructed or adapted to seat up to 8 passengers, the following original documentation must be provided to the Council before a vehicle licence can be granted:

- Individual or Single Vehicle Approval certificate
- Documentary evidence that the vehicle stretch has been performed by the manufacturer or by a coachbuilder approved by the manufacturer i.e. Imported American limousines must have been built by an approved coachbuilder under the Lincoln (Ford) vehicles Qualified Vehicle Modifier (QVM) programme or the Cadillac Master Coachbuilders (CMC) programme for Cadillac vehicles.
- DVSA vehicle registration document (V5)
- Valid MOT certificate.

Decommissioned emergency service vehicles

Vehicles falling into this category consist of decommissioned Fire Engines and Ambulances. Each vehicle falling into this category must fully satisfy the Council as to its suitability for licensing purposes. Therefore each vehicle proprietor must provide the Council with full information relating to the specification of each vehicle to enable an application for licensing to be considered. Each application will be considered on its own merits and may require the proprietor to perform modifications to the vehicle in the interests of public safety and or passenger comfort.

Vintage vehicles

Vehicles qualifying under this category of vehicle must not have been constructed after 1 January 1973. This is in accordance with the DVLA taxation class for Historic Vehicles. Each vehicle falling into this category must fully satisfy the Council as to its suitability for licensing purposes. Therefore each vehicle proprietor must provide the Council with full information relating to the specification of each vehicle to enable an application for licensing to be considered. Each application will be considered on its own merits and may require the proprietor to perform modifications to the vehicle in the interests of public safety and or passenger comfort.

Licensing legislative framework

Plymouth City Council is the regulatory Licensing Authority for vehicles operating as either Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicles within the city. The Council obtains its powers for licensing purposes from the Plymouth City Council Acts of 1975 and 1987, and the Town Police Clauses Act 1847. This legislation enables the Council to determine the characteristics and specifications that vehicles must satisfy in order to be granted a licence. In order to assist vehicle proprietors the Council has produced separate vehicle specifications for each vehicle licence category. These specifications provide the general requirements that vehicles must satisfy, for them to be considered for licensing purposes by the Council.

Licensing section contact information

Licensing Office,
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PL6 5UF

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E: taxi.licensing@plymouth.gov.uk

www.plymouth.gov.uk

Vehicle Specifications - Private Hire (Special Event) Vehicle

Steering

1. The steering wheel and drivers controls may be fitted to the nearside of the vehicle, i.e. left hand drive, provided such steering and controls would have been fitted in that position at the time of manufacture.

Doors

1. All vehicles must have a minimum of two passenger doors at the rear of the vehicle, with a door situated on each side of the vehicle. Rear opening tailbacks are not to be counted for the purpose of this specification.
2. There must be a separate driver's door and front passenger door situated to allow convenient egress from the vehicle.

Windows

1. Windows must be provided in each passenger compartment and the driver compartment. Windows must be capable of being opened or adjusted by passengers when required.
2. Windscreens must achieve at least 75% light transmittance.
3. All front side windows must achieve at least 70% light transmittance.
4. Mirrored tints will not be permitted.

Seating

1. No vehicle shall have more than 8 passenger seats (excluding the driver seat)
2. Where separate forward facing seats are provided, a seating position will be counted where a properly functioning seatbelt is provided.
3. Where a continuous forward facing seat is provided, each seating position shall be counted where a properly functioning seatbelt is provided.
4. Where vehicles are fitted with continuous seating which is placed along the length of the vehicle (sideways facing) then a minimum seat width of 41 cm shall be calculated for each seating position. Properly functioning seatbelts must be provided for each seating position.

Heating and lighting

1. An adequate heating system must be provided in the passenger compartment which must be capable of being controlled by any passenger.
2. An adequate heating must be provided within the driver compartment.
3. Adequate lighting must be provided within the passenger compartment, and must be capable of being controlled by the passenger.
4. Adequate lighting must be available in the driver compartment.

Wheels and tyres

1. All vehicles must have a minimum of 4 road wheels fitted to the vehicle.
2. Tyres must be suitable for use on the vehicle when it is fully laden, and meet all legal requirements for use.

Emission Standards and Fuel

1. The Council's Vehicle Emissions Policy does not apply to Special Event Vehicles.

These specifications are made by virtue of Section 5(1) of the Plymouth City Council Act 1975.

These vehicle specifications apply to all private hire (special event) vehicles licensed on or after the effective date and supersede all previous vehicle specifications.