

Taxi Licensing Newsletter

June 2026

1. Annual update for last financial year (1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026)

(A) Statistics

The chart below shows that whilst there has been some variance in HC and PH numbers, the total number of drivers and vehicles has increased slightly since the last financial year;

	2024/25	2025/26	% difference
Hackney Drivers	53	52	2% decrease
Hackney Carriage Vehicles	41	38	7% decrease
Private Hire Drivers	42	47	12% increase
Private Hire Vehicles	37	45	22% increase
Private Hire Operators	23	26	13% increase
TOTAL DRIVERS	95	99	4% increase
TOTAL VEHICLES	78	83	6% increase

(B) Suspensions, refusals and revocations

There were the following cases of suspensions, refusals and/or revocations in the past two financial years;

	2024-25	2025-26
Refusal	1	0
Suspension	1	4
Revocation	1	0

Detail of Suspensions in 2025 – 2026:

Date	Licence	Issues / Evidence	Decision	Outcome
May 2025	PH Driver *	Driver had not subscribed to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) update service.	Suspension with immediate effect	Licence re-instated July 2025 as Driver provided a valid DBS certificate and subscribed to the DBS update service. Written warning regarding disregard of licence conditions.
Sept 2025	PH Driver	Driver failed to produce the appropriate DBS and DVLA information.	Suspension with immediate effect	Driver confirmed they were not trading as a licensed driver and would not provide the documents/info requested, but wanted to keep their licence available until expiry on 30/8/2027. Licence not re-instated until such time as info received as requested.

Feb 2026	HC Driver	Complaint of improper conduct – investigated, interview under caution with Driver and witness statements from complainants alleging licence holder not demonstrating appropriate professional conduct; unacceptable behaviour. Regulatory Committee Hearing held to determine case.	Suspension - additional training required to address behavioural concerns	Licence re-instated once training was completed and proof submitted to the Licensing Authority. Written warning issued.
March 2026	PH Driver * (<i>same driver as May 2025</i>)	Driver submitted an incomplete medical assessment form whereby the GP noted the driver does not meet elements of the DVLA Group 2 medical.	Suspension with immediate effect	Licence re-instated April 2026 following updated Medical Assessment. Final written warning regarding persistent disregard of licence conditions.

(C) Complaints received about Runnymede drivers

There were 6 complaints received in relation to RBC drivers, compared with 7 in the last financial year that were investigated and dealt with in accordance with the Departmental enforcement procedures. Issues complained about were in relation to;

- 2x complaints of improper conduct by two drivers trying to access a Taxi rank on private land (argued, yelled/shouted at, intimidated, verbally abused and swore at members of staff and physically moved barriers that were placed in the car park by staff).
- Driving dangerously with no regard for cyclists and then became rude, abusive and aggressive.
- PH Driver touting at St Peters Hospital.
- Drivers behaviour - shouting, abusive and aggressive after road traffic collision alleged to have been caused by driver.
- Touting for business at Egham Station - alleged parking opposite the rank then calling out to prospective customers encouraging them to use their services.

(D) Enforcement

Two multi-agency joint enforcement operations were organised by Runnymede Officers and took place in May and September 2025. These were both held at the Runnymede Pleasure Grounds carpark, along with internal and external partners. These included Surrey & Sussex Police Commercial Vehicle Unit, Safer Neighbourhood Police Teams, HMRC mobile enforcement team and compliance teams from Transport for London (TfL).

In May, other urgent matters meant Surrey Police didn't have the resources to fully support the Operation, which resulted in far fewer vehicles being stopped. There were 12 taxis stopped, mostly licensed with TfL, which resulted in a number of warnings given. There were also 10 commercial vehicles stopped, of which 3 were given fines for various offences.

In September, in excess of 70 vehicles were stopped and drivers were spoken to by four different agencies as follows;

- 35 Transport for London licenced vehicles - dealt with by TfL Compliance Officers. Offences included not wearing/displaying drivers badge and not carrying proof of insurance. Two vehicles were taken off the road.
- 25 Trade waste vehicles - dealt with by Runnymede Environmental Health and Police.

Police made 1 arrest for no licence/illegal working, seized one vehicle and there were other various offences (overweight, MOT, index plate, driving documents).

- 9 Surrey local authority licensed vehicles - dealt with by Police and Licensing Officers. Police issued a prohibition for condition of a tyre, other minor issues (dirty, condition of vehicle, no smoking signage, plate not properly displayed, no plate dispensation letter) – the relevant Councils were informed.

2. Local Government reorganisation in Surrey

From April 2027, the existing Surrey County Council and the 11 district and borough councils will be replaced by two new unitary councils – East Surrey and West Surrey.

Runnymede, Guildford, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Waverley and Woking, along with Surrey County Council services will become West Surrey Council.

During the current shadow period the focus is on making arrangements for the new Council so that services can transfer smoothly and continue without disruption. How licensing will be organised and function in terms of aligned policies and procedures over a greater geographical area, fares, fees and areas where HC's can ply for hire, are all being worked on currently. Some changes will not happen immediately on 1 April, but will be phased in over time.

The existing county, borough and district councils will operate as normal until 1 April 2027. Drivers and Operators will be kept informed as there will be a significant impact on the trade.

3. New and proposed legislation

Name	Summary	Status
The Automated Vehicles Act 2024	Establishes a legal framework for self-driving vehicles on UK roads. By late 2027, a full implementation of the Act is expected.	Received Royal Assent May 2024.
Automated Vehicles (Permits for Automated Passenger Services) Regulations 2026	New secondary legislation under the above Act was published in April 2026 governing APS permits. Before any APV may operate as a taxi in a given area, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) must seek consent from the relevant local licensing authority. The regulations do not replicate taxi or PHV licensing controls, but they do require Local Authorities to assess and determine whether to consent to the operation of relevant automated services within their areas.	Came into force 15th May 2026.

<p>English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026</p>	<p>The new Act represents a structural shift toward unitary local government and greater regional autonomy, aligned with ongoing local government reorganisation (LGR) proposals across England.</p> <p>Key measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles: Establishes a national framework for taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) licensing in England by empowering the Secretary of State to set binding national minimum standards that local licensing authorities must apply when granting, renewing, suspending, or revoking licences. <p>It aims to promote consistency, safety, and passenger protection across different areas while retaining local authorities' role in administering and enforcing the licensing regime. Councils across England have immediate new powers to suspend taxi and private hire licences issued by other authorities, in a move aimed at strengthening public safety.</p>	<p>Received Royal Assent 29 April 2026.</p>
<p>Kings Speech May 2026: Draft Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Bill</p>	<p>Reforms will look to modernise HC and PH legislation, setting out the most significant overhaul of the legislation in more than a century. Ministers say the reforms will modernise an outdated and fragmented system, strengthen public safety and ensure passengers receive consistent, reliable services wherever they travel in England.</p> <p>Major safeguarding reviews have repeatedly highlighted vulnerabilities in the current system – particularly, inconsistent oversight, weak cross-border enforcement and barriers to information sharing. The Bill's proposals for a mandatory national database (of all licensed vehicles, drivers and operators) and stronger enforcement powers to ensure safety standards are intended to address these structural risks.</p> <p>This Bill aims to provide a single, consistent national framework for England, improving accessibility for disabled passengers and regulating modern booking apps.</p>	<p>The draft Bill will be put forward for pre-legislative scrutiny, which will allow the Government to seek expert views from a range of stakeholders.</p>

4. Automated passenger services (APS) pilot scheme

From May 2026, Operators can apply to run self-driving taxi-style services on public roads. The Department for Transport scheme is designed to test how self-driving vehicles can be safely integrated into the existing taxi market and regulated alongside traditional licensing frameworks. The pilot will run alongside ongoing work to develop national licensing, permitting and safety standards for automated passenger services, with the first approved services expected to begin operating later in 2026.

5. Assistance Dogs – what you need to know

Runnymede Borough Council fully supports the rights of assistance dog owners to access services when accompanied by their guide dog or other assistance dog. These specially trained assistance dogs help to keep disabled people safe and support them to live independently.

Guide Dogs UK have [useful information to help drivers feel more confident](#) when helping passengers with sight loss and guide dogs.

Assistance dogs help people with a wide range of impairments including vision impairments, hearing difficulties, epilepsy, diabetes, mobility impaired and more. Most are instantly recognisable by a harness or dog jacket they wear. However, the law does not require a dog to wear a harness or jacket to identify it as an assistance dog.

If you are a driver or operator the service you provide is vital to disabled people, who are unable to drive and often face barriers when using public transport.

Under the Equality Act 2010, drivers have a duty to carry assistance dogs at no extra cost. Drivers that cannot carry assistance dogs must carry a certificate of exemption confirming they have permission to refuse on medical grounds. Guide dogs are trained to sit with their owner at all times, not to bother other people and not to climb on seats.

Drivers and booking staff should be “disability aware” and make reasonable adjustments, which can include:

- The driver guiding the passenger to the vehicle and assisting with entry into the vehicle.
- Assisting the customer to exit from the car and guiding them to a safe location/destination point before departing.

The Welsh Government video below gives practical advice to drivers on assisting vision impaired passengers, including guide dog owners and wheelchair users:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHBVoCVw4XZSNQKFPCOuP2XtKtiPnA9LD&si=H1KasJV8JlrrQ>