

Dear Cllr Knowles,

## **TAXIS – ALLOWING TINTED WINDOWS**

Please accept this letter as my formal request that Waverley Borough Council change their Licensing rules regarding tinted windows in taxis.

### Tinted Windows Direct from the Manufacturers

- If vehicles, with manufactured tinting, are not licensed this greatly reduces the choice of vehicle available for taxi drivers to buy and, therefore, limits the choice of vehicles available for the travelling public too.
- Many of the more 'up market' vehicles are sold with tinting as standard. Therefore the Council not licensing these vehicles results in a lower class of fleet and thus a poor image of the Borough.
- Research shows that 90 - 95% of all new cars are now manufactured and sold with tinted windows as standard.
- The Tinting that Manufacturers apply is set at legally specified levels and will, therefore, meet the laws of this land.

### After Market Tinting

- Taxi driving is not a particularly well-paid occupation. Some driver are not in a position to buy brand new vehicles and can only afford to purchase second-hand vehicles which may have after-market tinting already fitted.
- I have checked with my colleagues and we, as taxi drivers, would be willing to seek written confirmation, from an approved After-Market Tinter, that the tinting conforms to 35% (plus or minus 2%).

### Reasons for Tinting (both pre- and post manufacture)

- We are experiencing increasingly hot summers. Tinting helps to keep the vehicle cool, aiding passenger comfort.
- Most vehicles do have air-conditioning but running the engine, whilst on the ranks, or outside a customer's premises is not good for the environment.
- During winter tinted windows help prevent fogging and condensation.
- Less fogging and condensation gives the taxi drivers better all round vision which increases safety and reduces blind spots.
- Less condensation prevents passengers drawing or writing rude and/or offensive words or pictures on the windows (Drivers sometimes arrive at their next pick-up point before having chance to check the rear windows).

- The surrounding Boroughs of Guildford, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath allow tinted windows and having asked around I am unable to find any instances of tinting causing problems for passengers.
- Some passengers have special needs and some are 'light sensitive' and tinting makes their journey more comfortable.
- I have made enquiries and find that other local Boroughs allow 'school runs' to be carried out by vehicles with tinted windows.
- Having checked with other taxi drivers in neighbouring Boroughs I find that Hampshire County Council allows 'school runs' to be done by vehicles with tinted windows.

## MOT

Whilst writing about the tinting of windows may I ask why you will only allow us to use Atkinsons in Guildford for our MOTs.

Travelling to Guildford is a substantial distance from Farnham and not only causes difficulties for Taxi Drivers but also, I feel, adds unnecessarily to pollution to the environment with the excess mileage that the drive entails.

May I respectfully suggest a selection of MOT stations authorised by Waverley Borough Council. Perhaps four or five authorised MOT stations spread round the area? Maybe one in Farnham, one in Aldershot, Atkinsons in Guildford, plus one or two more?

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

I am told that I need to formally ask if you would you be kind enough to ensure every Member of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee receives a copy of my letter.