

Appendix 2c

Please reply to: Steve Cox
Safety & Licensing Team
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To All Hackney Carriage Drivers

My ref: SJC/BRE/0618190
Your ref:
Telephone: 01803 208126
Fax: 01803 208854
E-mail: Licensing@torbay.gov.uk
Website: www.torbay.gov.uk
Date: 4th December 2009

Dear

Re: Torbay Harbourside & The Strand Taxi rank and Bus bay

I am writing to you and all other Hackney Carriage Drivers to clarify the article in the Herald Express on Monday 23rd November, which you may have read. Torbay Council and Devon and Cornwall Police have been in discussions over the last 12 months to find solutions to a number of issues regarding the non-observation of Road Traffic Orders by some Hackney Carriage Drivers. This applies to all areas of Torbay, but especially on the harbourside.

In January and April 2009 I wrote to all drivers about what is expected in terms of where they queue or park up, but unfortunately many drivers have ignored my advice. This was re-enforced by the use of staff from NCP to ask drivers not to use certain areas, but again many drivers have since ignored this. These staff, who are doing our work, have often received abuse, which is totally unacceptable. This was only from a minority of drivers and these are being dealt with.

In light of drivers ignoring advice, new technology is being investigated and adopted to mean that drivers may receive fixed penalty notices without the need of any ticket being affixed to a vehicle. In the meantime evidence is being collected by Officers of Torbay Council, NCP staff and the Police of non-compliance with Road Traffic Orders. If you are generally compliant with Road Traffic Orders then you have nothing to concern yourselves about. But should you be witnessed queuing or parking in non-authorised areas you will be brought before Licensing Committee with the risk of having your drivers badge suspended. I take no pleasure in issuing this warning but due to a significant minority ignoring previous requests it has left me with no option. So you must take this as a final warning.

So why are we doing this? Firstly to ensure all road users have their fair share of the limited space. This is particularly true of Torquay harbourside, but this equally applies elsewhere on the harbourside and in Torbay generally. Before midnight taxis have 18% of allocated space on the harbourside. After midnight it is 26%. The second reason is to avoid accidents due to incorrectly queuing or parked vehicles.

What else are we trying to do?

Discussions continue between various departments and the Police to find solutions and consultation has taken place on a section of road on Torwood Street in recent months, but unfortunately again the

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objections are too strong to change the present designation. Due to this we are prepared to allow 'unofficially' that the rear of the Strand bus stop 4 spaces to be used between 9pm and midnight. This is not a permanent situation because the development of further bus routes is one of the objectives of Torbay Council and the space may be needed in the future. However it may help us all get through the recession to better times.

There are also other considerations in the pipeline, but these would be linked to harbourside developments, so are not likely to arise in the near future. However we will continue to consider any options that are presented to us.

So as one final reminder, comply with the Road Traffic Orders or run the risk of having your drivers badge suspended, or worse.

Yours sincerely

Steve Cox
Principal Safety and Licensing Officer
Safety and Licensing Section