



City of Wolverhampton Council
Event Management for Licensed Vehicles

November 2019

Executive Summary

This Report summarises the information gathered and the methodology for a review of the means by which provision can be made for licensed vehicles servicing a range of events in the City of Wolverhampton.

Observation at three different events demonstrated that it is important that licensed vehicle event management plans (LVEMP) are added to the suite of documents needed to prepare for efficient, safe and enjoyable events in the City. The observations found at least 1% of people observed arriving and departing from events did so in licensed vehicles. Further, the recent demand survey for licensed vehicles identified that for the Wolverhampton area, people tend to make 2.7 licensed vehicle trips per person per month, 22% of which are by hackney carriage. People told us that they get licensed vehicles half of the time by phone, a third of the time using an app, 14% get them at ranks and 3% hail them.

Within the LVEMP application, vehicle control supervision officers (VCSO) are very important and in fact essential to the safety and comfort of those attending events. A very clear strategy should be produced within each LVEMP and communicated with the appointed VCSO. The strategies will vary by the location, timing and details for each event. For city centre events VCSO would be required not only at key entrances and exits but also at key points where people would access the transport network and might need assistance either getting to ranks or meeting their booked vehicles.

Further, it is essential that VCSO can communicate readily with each other and they should be provided with dedicated radios, with a clear communication channel reserved for use by the VCSO to ensure it is available when required.

Portable CCTV would prove an essential assistance to being able to record, deal with and dissuade non-compliance with the arrangements put in place.



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1 General introduction and background

The City of Wolverhampton Council is responsible for the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles operating within the Council area and is the licensing authority for this complete area. Local hackney carriage and private hire service not only the day-in day-out typical demand but also provide customers ways of getting to and from the various events arranged around the City both by the Council and by private organisers.

The Council licensing section are aware that events need provision for both arrivals and departures by licensed vehicle particularly where there are road closures or other interruption to access that might usually be available outside the event occurrence. Large events tend to have event management plans, but these focus on the operation of the event itself, mainly internally, and matters related to setting up and breaking down, rather than any transport element.

This Report seeks to understand current practice around various events in the City and then provide guidance for licensed vehicle focussed event management planning.

2 Information from sample events.

At inception we were provided with a list of forthcoming events which were in scope with the preparation of event management plans for licensed vehicles. This list continues to change as time moves forward. However, from the initial list two events were recommended for observation. At the same time, a large event was planned at the Molineux, an evening concert, and it was agreed this would provide valuable experience of what might perhaps be the maximum provision for any future plan.

The two City events were the Armed Forces Day event, in the out of centre West Park, and the city centre based Festival of Food and Drink, which ran on two days and followed a similar event format to that in the previous festival. The Armed Forces Event was the first time this had been undertaken in this format at this location.

All events included some representation at entrances / exits by vehicle control and supervision officers (officers) ostensibly there to maintain security but also ensuring appropriate access controls were in place with respect to vehicles and pedestrians.

The Armed Forces Day event occurred on Saturday 29th June and was located in West Park, just outside the City Centre. The event ran from 12:00 to 17:00 and involved significant support stalls and events within the main event. The expected attendance was between two and three thousand. Observation was undertaken using video cameras at the five exits most expected to be utilised by people attending.

The table below shows the arrivals (set-downs, s/d) and departures (pick-ups, p/u) for all those observed arriving at each gate using licensed vehicles. This excludes any persons leaving or joining vehicles not in the immediate environs of the event, although attempt was made to observe the maximum amount of potential sites for arrivals and departures.

Hr start			11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	
Gate:										
Lansdowne	s/d	H	4/1							4/1
		P	3/2							3/2
	p/u	H				6/2				6/2
		P		2/1					3/2	5/3
Park Crescent	s/d	H						5/1	5/1	
		P	3/1		10/2					13/3
	p/u	H								
		P				2/1	4/1			6/2
Southgate	s/d	H								
		P								
	p/u	H						4/1		4/1
		P						4/1		4/1
Summerfield Road	s/d	H						4/1	4/1	
		P								
	p/u	H								
		P			3/1			4/1		7/2
Connaught Rd	s/d	H								
		P		11/3	1/1					12/4
	p/u	H								
		P					2/1	9/3	2/1	13/5
All arrivals	s/d	H	4/1						5/1	9/2
		P	6/3	11/3	11/3					28/9
		Tot	10/4	11/3	11/3				5/1	37/11
All departures	p/u	H				6/2		4/1		10/3
		P	3/1	2/1	3/1	2/1	6/2	13/4	3/2	32/12
		Tot	3/1	2/1	3/1	8/3	6/2	17/5	3/2	42/15

There were around 37 people arriving using licensed vehicles and some 42 observed leaving. Based on the departure numbers, this suggests in the order of 1.4 to 2.1 % of those attending chose to arrive and / or depart using licensed vehicles. 11 vehicles set people down and 15 picked them up. There were some wheel-chair accessible hackney carriages used with all private hire being saloon style, although it appeared that all departures were pre-booked. Most appeared to be local Wolverhampton registered vehicles.

Our observations suggested that there were some formal arrivals using at least two coaches and some small minibus vehicles and a moderate number of commercial vehicles and cars. There may have been some of the more formal attendees delivered using licensed vehicles, but it was not possible to identify any movements which were made entering the park.

Most vehicles entered using the Lansdown Road gate, with a smaller number (and possibly the more formal attendees) using the Summerfield Road gate, although the latter was generally closed with several official vehicles provided with parking outside the gate adjacent to the access and many vehicles seeking access turned away.

The two coaches observed parked on the main road – one waiting during the main period and another arriving towards the end of the afternoon to pick up its passengers (it was not clear if these were in fact the same vehicle or not, neither were ever seen together). The smaller minibus style vehicles all entered the park.

However, the bulk of arrivals were either on foot or using private transport parking in the large amounts of available parking space around the park. At Connaught Road we noted a reasonable number of people arriving and departing in both standard wheel-chairs and in larger motorised chairs. This entrance also saw the largest number of passing licensed vehicles.

All the observed gates were manned by security staff who were seen assisting with arrivals, departures and vetting of vehicle arrivals as appropriate.

There did not appear to be any issues arising either with access for licensed vehicles or with people seeking to find vehicles – all appeared to be booked departures where people had clearly agreed their pick-up point with the booking.

The large concert event was held at the Molineux football ground. A large area around the ground was removed from the highway network, with plenty of space made for people to walk through from the rail and other public transport provision in the city centre. Park and ride provision was made to allow people to be brought in by mass transport.

Provision was also made for people to drop off their friends and relatives, as well as arrangements for people to arrive by hackney carriage and private hire vehicles. This latter provision was made within the section of Asda car park near to the petrol station. Signing was provided on the local highway network, but not within the curtilage of the Asda car park. The arrangement was proposed to see private car pick-ups from an area in front of the Asda store (which would by then be closed for the night), with licensed vehicle passengers returning to the area near the petrol station to await either booked journeys or to await hackney carriages. Jack Hayward Way, usually a through route between Molineux and the Asda store was closed just after the bus loop and immediately beyond the principal exit from the parking for the store.

Cameras were located to ensure the actual operation was observed as far as practicable. Reality proved to be different to the plans for a number of possible reasons.

Firstly, there does not appear to have been clear notice that Jack Hayward Way was not a through route, nor was there supposed to be any location where people could drop off either private or licensed vehicle passengers on the section that remained open. In reality, many private cars were turned back at the closure point leading to issues with their delaying other vehicles entering the main car park or leaving that area. Further, a good number of licensed vehicles were able to set down their passengers in the bus loop near to the closure. Some private cars sought to set down passengers along this section as they used it to leave the Asda car park.

However, for some reason after the concert very few of the licensed vehicles that had set down passengers at the bus loop returned to that point to collect their passengers. Whilst some did go to the pick-up area, quite a few more either did that and then moved on to the area to the far side of the store exit, or directly headed towards that area as being the nearest location to where they had set down their passengers.

Whilst it was very clear that private car pick-ups matched themselves with their passengers by direct contact by mobile phone, to good effect, this did not seem to be as much the case for licensed vehicle passengers. Many went to the agreed pick-up area but left after a while, some returning whilst others ended up getting their booked vehicle from the far side of the Asda store exit, where many vehicles had gone.

Whilst most passengers waiting for friends and relatives to collect them had left well before midnight, there were a lot of passengers awaiting booked private hire vehicles until after midnight, and certainly the bulk of people observed after 23:30 were in fact people waiting for licensed vehicles. Those there to direct people spent a lot of time appearing to try to help match passengers to vehicles. Many licensed vehicles were observed being approached by several potential passengers, only then to drive off usually towards the far side of the store exit where it appears many had eventually told their passengers to wait by some unknown means.

Counts were undertaken to measure observed arrivals and departures at each location. We are aware that several other locations were almost certainly used including other parts of the Asda car park as well as along Jack Hayward Way and near other points at which the road network was closed off.

Hr start		16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	23:00	00:00	01:00
Gate:											
Jack Heyward Way	Car	-17/8	-7/5	-11/5	-7/4	-2/1			6/2		
	HC										
	PH			-6/2	-2/1	-4/2					
Bus circle far end	Car	-3/1	-24/11	-16/7	-1/1			9/3			
	HC					-3/1					
	PH	-10/4	-35/11	-16/5				4/2			
Bus circle	Car	-1/1	-5/3	-	16/7	-1/1					
	HC		-6/2	-	33/15	-2/1					
	PH	-29/12	-40/13	-	32/11	-5/3					
Main entrance	Car		-3/1	-4/1				2/1	2/1		
	HC										
	PH		-4/1	-2/1	-2/1			4/2		8/2	4/2
Set down and pick up area	Car		-30/10	-	-2/1				4/1		
	HC		-9/2	-				9/2	8/3	5/1	
	PH		-17/5	-32/8	-10/4			24/7	32/15		
Nearest parking	Car	-4/1	-7/3	-4/2	-6/2			3/1			
	HC										
	PH	-2/1	-9/2	-3/1				10/3	8/3		
Mid parking	Car		-6/2	-	-6/2			4/1			
	HC			-							
	PH		-4/1	-8/3				9/4	14/5	6/2	
Store Front	Car							/16	/30	/5	
	HC										
	PH										
Far store front	Car										
	HC										
	PH								3/2	35/15	
Totals	Car	-25	-82	-122	-38	-3	270/157	60	82	15	
	HC		-15	-21	-32	-5	73/26	9	8	5	4
	PH	-41	-109	-125	-19	-9	303/157	51	57	49	

Arrivals were spread over the period up to and covering the start of the main event, with several arrivals even in the 20:00 hour. The 21:00 hour was effectively just people visiting the Asda store. Observations saw the first patrons leave the event at 21:45, with the end of the formal event marked by fireworks at just after 22:30.

The main tide of people leaving was at 22:45 at which point it became very hard for vehicles to move in the area near the bus turning circle. This is the probable reason that so few licensed vehicles even attempted to get back to that location to pick up their passengers, heading instead towards the nearest point, which was the far side of the Asda store exit. The road closure on Jack Hayward Way was removed at 23:15. Between about 22:55 and 23:15 there was little movement of vehicles out of the main car park, the flow from the main Jack Hayward Way near the bus circle was stationary from 23:00 to 23:09 (this traffic had priority over the main car park exit towards the roundabout).

Whilst quite a number of people made their way to the designated licensed vehicle pick-up area, the actual number that met their vehicle here seemed to be small. Our estimate was that some 303 people were set down from private hire cars and 73 from hackney carriages at various points before the event. We observed 157 leave in private hire and 26 in hackney carriage vehicles, all of which appeared to be pre-booked hires. There was a high level of arrival and departure by people dropped by friends or relatives. However, even these seemed to see more arrivals overall than departures.

Observations suggests that many people walked beyond the immediate Asda car park area to be picked up away from the major congestion areas. For those being met by friends or relatives the link-up was easier as it was clear many used mobile phones to identify the meeting place.

For those with booked licensed vehicles, many did seem to attempt to meet their vehicle using their phones, but the added complexity of a licensed vehicle not always having such a direct phone link made such meetings much more difficult. We observed many passengers having to check the company name on each vehicle and then having to ask the driver if that vehicle was for their booking or not. In many cases we saw the licensed vehicle wait and then leave the area suggesting the booking had either been taken by someone else or the passengers had moved elsewhere. In some cases, this appeared to be that the passenger had moved towards the immediate front of the store as a more easy to meet place.

The officers spent a lot of time ensuring that passengers met their vehicles, waiting until all people had been taken away safely. Their presence was essential and clearly a great help to members of the public concerned about getting away from the event. It was very clear that those near the recommended licensed vehicle pick-up point ensured people had left the area safely before they ended their work.

The Festival of Food and Drink differed to the two above events in that it was centrally based and had essentially one entrance / exit and only two locations where people could interact with the local transport network. It occurred on Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th July 2019 in the area near to the Council House in central Wolverhampton. Wulfruna Street was closed near to the exit from Stafford Street, with principal goods and other access via this route. People were also able to enter or leave the event using the pedestrian route through Exchange Street. Both the Lichfield Street / Queen Square area and the Wulfruna Street closure area were observed.

The Wulfruna Street road closure was patrolled by officers allowing appropriate vehicles entry and exit. There were no staff near to the Lichfield Street point at which people returned to the main infrastructure of the City centre. The area at Wulfruna Street allowed a reasonable space to permit picking up and setting down of passengers in the remaining stub of the road. Those in control of the blockade at the start of Wulfruna Street regularly made sure that only appropriate vehicles were allowed to wait in the remaining road space, and that all others left the area promptly. There were a few cases of poorly parked waiting vehicles that could have been marginally better handled, but not many.

It was also clear a lot of attendees walked from various transport facilities to the event, including car parks, bus stops, taxi ranks and private hire drop-off locations around the City centre.

The observable licensed vehicle movements saw the following:

Private hire - 31 dropped at the Wulfruna St and 81 near Lichfield Street

Hackney carriage – 12 and 6 respectively

Picked up – private hire 11 and 54 respectively

Hackney carriage six and 9 respectively, one of the pick-ups at Wulfruna Street including a person in a wheelchair.

Sunday flows were lower, with 15 private hire set downs and 16 picks ups; 8 hackney set-downs and one pick up at Wulfruna Street. For Lichfield Street, numbers were higher with 27 phv set-downs, 39 phv pick-ups and five hcv pick-ups; for these values we took care to exclude people set down in that area but who did not immediately head towards the Food and Drink area, though they may have progressed there later.

Total arrivals and departures over the two days were therefore 154 phv set down, 110 phv pick up, 26 hcv set down and 21 hcv pick up. The actual numbers would be higher given that it was clear that many were using more distant locations to both arrive and depart, which may have included people using the ranks active on both days.

Assuming 12,000 visitors per day, 24,000 in total for the two days this gives an observable phv proportion of 0.6% arriving and 0.45% leaving and for hackney carriages, 0.1% and 0.08% respectively (again as a minimum).

It was very clear that the hackney carriage fleet was needed to provide the small number of wheelchair access needs that the event attracted. Though very small in number, this was almost certainly very important for those making use of this facility.

Further, it was also clearly essential that the officers carefully policed vehicles arriving at the closed-off road, as otherwise access and waiting would have ended up severely compromised by those wishing to use this area to park or wait.

At the Lichfield Street area, a lot of vehicles, both hackney carriage and private hire, did drive into the stub of Exchange Street to set down and pick-up. Although this would give rise to safety issues given this is a main pedestrian route, the general low level of this suggested it was not a major issue although having one marshal there would have helped safety and fairness. There were also some other movements in the pedestrianised area that would have benefitted from either being prevented or supervised, principally vehicles turning into the area and then reversing into the rank layby.

Both locations were clearly used for setting down and picking up by both hackney carriage and private hire for purposes other than those attending the event itself. However, it was also true that people attending the event clearly chose other locations to leave or join vehicles dependent on their knowledge of the area and specific preferences.

The overall conclusions from these observations are that:

- Licensed vehicles provide about 1% of arrivals and departures irrespective of event type or location
- Vehicle control and supervision officers (VCSO) are essential not only where there are access restrictions but also where people first meet public provision for licensed vehicles on the public road network
- For very large events with clear fixed all-people departure times there needs to be a clear and consistent arrival and departure strategy for licensed vehicles which needs to be policed and protected

- There may need to be other procedures in place to ensure officers can access both hackney carriage and private hire vehicles legitimately when needed
- It is essential that those likely to deal with public requests for assistance in getting licensed vehicles (or those that need assistance irrespective of if they ask directly or not), are dealt with by tabarded "Vehicle Control and Supervision Officers" so that people know who to approach
- Where an event is city-centre based, there needs to be at least one officer provided additionally at any key point where pedestrians would make arrangements to be collected, or where they might be set down, to ensure safety is maintained.

In terms of locally observed information, the recent survey of people in the streets of Wolverhampton as part of the hackney carriage demand survey identified that people interviewed in central Wolverhampton made in the order of 2.7 licensed vehicle trips per person per month, of which about 22% were made using hackney carriages, some of which may have been those operating on private hire circuits.

Half of these said they mainly made direct phone bookings for vehicles, a further third used an app, with 14% using hackney carriages from ranks and 3% hailing hackney carriages.

Where an event is distant from known main rank provision, it is likely that the proportions above would tend to increase towards bookings, with any trips made to an event by hackney carriage most likely to result in the passenger making a booking with that vehicle for return if possible, unless people were aware that the event was on a main route where they could perhaps hail a hackney carriage returning from a journey.

A further issue that needs action is to ensure that VCSO are able to quickly communicate with each other. This could be done using dedicated radios with a specific channel used to ensure it was always immediately available.

3 Outline Event Management Guidance

As already noted above, it is clear that present event management focusses on the overall operation of the site and makes no provision for transport to or from the site apart from action to protect and ensure road closures work appropriately. Whilst some areas have outline event management plans that do include transport plans, this is not the case for Wolverhampton. However, it seems essential that specific provision is made at least for licensed vehicles which are two specific groups with very specific needs in terms of how they can access their customers.

Key factors involved to consider are:

- Does the event have its own event management plan?
- Is this a repeat event or new?
- If repeat, is there any feedback from the previous event regarding licensed vehicles that needs to be taken into account?
- Is the event near key licensed vehicle facilities (i.e. ranks, kerb space, key return to city hackney carriage routes or offices)?
- Does the event have key high volume arrival or departure times?
- Does there need to be specific provision made for licensed vehicle set-downs and pick-ups?
- In the latter case, additionally for private hire is there need for specific checking that pick-ups are booked, and do people need assistance in being matched to their correct operator?
- How many access and egress points are there for pedestrians?
- Are there any slightly more distant points where people might walk to in order to get their journey home?
- Are there any internal provisions made for set down and pick up and if so, what?
- How many Vehicle Control and Supervision Officers (VCSO) are required to ensure the public get the best possible and safe, legal service from licensed vehicles?
- Ensure VCSO have dedicated radios and channels to be able to communicate promptly
- Is there need for any portable CCTV to be put in place to help with ensuring non-compliance either by private vehicles or by licensed vehicles can be dealt with and eradicated?

Tests were undertaken to produce LVEMP for the following:

The Bonfire Event at Wolverhampton Racecourse

The City Centre Light Switch on

Both were issued to relevant persons who provided comment. These have been used to modify the outline below.

4 Generic Sample Event Management Plan

Title of Event:

Location of Event:

Date of Event:

Has event been undertaken before:

Was it at this location?:

Was there any feedback re licensed vehicle service from these?:

Is event on private land, council land or public highway?:

Expected number of visitors:

Time event opens to public:

Time event closes to public:

Does the event have a key occurrence or key occurrences that might generate peak levels of arrivals or departures (provide details):

Is the event ticketed?:

Is there an event management plan available (if so append):

How many access points are there?:

Is there a traffic access point open during the event?:

If so, what are the agreed access groups allowed?:

How many access points are there:

Is there any travel plan for the event:

What local public transport is available in terms of bus stops, rail or tram stops, taxi ranks or private hire booking offices?

How many access staff are being provided by the event itself?:

How many additional Vehicle Control and Supervision Officers are required to ensure all potential licensed vehicle access points are staffed?:

Ensure VCSO are provided with separate and priority radios

Ensure event specific instructions are provided to the VCSO in regard to how to direct passengers and licensed vehicles accordingly

Are temporary rank or private hire company details needed to ensure licensed vehicle needs can be legally met for this event?:

Are any portable CCTV required to assist with ensuring non-compliance with the formal licensed vehicle provision can be dealt with and strongly discouraged?:

Any other comments?

Council contact person for this event:







Appendix 1 : List of Events for Management

Reference No.	Event	Date	Location	Expected attendance
1	Frank Skinner	29/10/19	Aldersley	
2	Halloween Market			
3	Bonfire Night	2/11/19	Dunstall Racecourse	
4	Diversity	4/11/19	Aldersley	
5	Darts	9/11/19 to 17/11/19	Aldersley	
6	Christmas Light Switch On	23/11/19	City Centre	
7	Christmas Light Switch On	24/11/19	Bantock House	
8	Christmas Light Switch On	28/11/19	Wednesfield	
9	Christmas Light Switch On	29/11/19	Bilston	
10	Christmas Light Switch On	30/11/19	Tettenhall	