

Respondents were asked what issues could adversely affect the taxi trade. A range of responses were received. Some felt that ownership of multiple taxi plates by individuals who rented plates to drivers, was wrong and some felt aggrieved that they could not obtain a plate in their own right.

One driver commented that as a taxi driver from another area, he could drop passengers off in Perth, but couldn't pick up passengers at the ranks in Perth, despite driving past passengers waiting at the ranks.

Several respondents mentioned lack of rank space, lack of wheelchair accessible vehicles, poor customer service by some drivers and vehicles parking on taxi ranks.

Respondents were asked what the effect would be if the number of taxi vehicle licensed were increased or decreased. The consensus was that there was not enough business to support more taxis and there was not sufficient rank space to cope with increased numbers. Some respondents acknowledged that if numbers were reduced then earnings would increase. It was also suggested that if numbers were increased, by adding wheelchair accessible vehicles then this could benefit wheelchair users.

Responses to questions regarding a need for new or improved ranks, generated several common suggestions from multiple respondents. The most common responses related to the rank on South Street near Tesco. Several respondents suggested that the rank could be moved back along South Street and extended in length. The next most common response was that the active ranks in general don't have sufficient space to accommodate waiting taxis. Parked vehicles on the ranks was cited as a common problem.

Suggestions for new ranks included a suggestion for a larger rank in Blairgowrie, Kinnoul Street to serve shopping demand, the Concert Hall, Broxden Interchange and improved marking to make it clear that a rank exists at night outside Loft nightclub.

School contract times (7:30 to 9:30 and 14:00 to 16:00 weekdays) were highlighted as times when the public may face difficulties finding a taxi.

Some suggestions were received to improve lighting at the taxi ranks and clearer road markings at ranks.

It was felt that the level of customer care from taxi drivers was generally good. But some driver offered poor levels of customer care and were not fully aware of customer needs.

Respondents were asked to identify any benefits of limiting the number of taxi plates.

Benefits included more comprehensive provision of service as with some vehicles having multiple drivers and operating shifts, drivers were less likely



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take the person home

- There used to be an issue with wheelchair users not getting clamped in properly but due to WAV training this has improved
- Occasionally taxis don't turn up and due to this people are missing NHS appointments
- A lot of members stick to the same company as they have had positive experience with them
- Many wheelchair users do not use taxi as they are confident that they will get a positive experience.
- There are many different sizes of wav taxis and wheelchairs which means that not all taxis are accessible to all taxis
- WAV's are being used for journeys that they are not always necessary for like airport runs
- You can only get one wheelchair in a taxi at a time
- Phone operators at taxi offices could benefit from disability training
- Equipment in the taxis is not checked and can look worn

With respect to transport contracts which require the use of wheelchair accessible vehicles, there are some secondary issues which became apparent during discussion. With respect to licensed vehicle contracts, there are no wheelchair accessible Taxis or Private Hire Cars based in Blairgowrie or Pitlochry. However, there are vehicles which are based in Perth. So contracts which require the use of a wheelchair accessible vehicle have to use Perth based vehicles. This results in a lot of dead mileage (and hence additional cost) and less availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles which are taken out of general availability for longer periods than would be necessary if the vehicles were based closer to the locations required.





20 February
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the public leads to the conclusion that there is **no significant unmet demand** in either Perth or in Blairgowrie.



Perth & Blairgowrie Taxi Unmet Demand Survey

In conclusion, there is no need to increase the number of licences to meet demand.

The elderly and people with mobility impairments rely more heavily on the services of licensed vehicles, than the population at large. Feedback from consultation with stakeholders and with the trade, suggested that there are issues with the availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles across Perth and Kinross as a whole. The availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles is concentrated in Perth and when vehicles are required in other areas, then they are often dispatched from Perth. This results in additional cost for the time and distance to get to the required location. In addition, the vehicles are unavailable for longer periods, for other users.

The market for providing licensed vehicle services to the elderly and mobility impaired is a growing market and in Perth and Kinross, is growing faster than for Scotland as a whole. It is recommended that the Council work with the licensed vehicle trade to help identify and quantify the potential market growth in this sector and help to encourage investment by the trade towards targeting this market. As a consequence, such measures should help to increase the level of provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles in the licensed vehicle fleets, both taxis and private hire cars.



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9 Recommendations

On the basis of the evidence gathered, our key conclusion is that there is no evidence of significant unmet demand for the services of Taxis. There is no compelling need to increase the number of Taxi vehicle licences to meet current levels of demand.

The principal issue identified is lack of availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles at some times of day and in some locations. It is recommended that the Council discuss the potential market size for wheelchair users and mobility impaired passengers, with the trade, with the objective of encouraging investment towards targeting this particular market sector.

