



**LVSA**

# **Bath and North East Somerset Council Taxi unmet demand survey**

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**Licensing Committee  
Bath and North East Somerset Council  
Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024**



## **Aim of this survey**

- Identify any significant unmet demand (or otherwise)
- Provide committee evidence of current position regarding unmet demand and its significance at this point in time

## **Study timetable**

- Undertaken February to mid March 2023
- Rank observations early February 2023
- On street interviews mid-February 2023
- All driver survey February - March 2023
- Key stakeholders consulted but few responses





## Definitions (1)

- **Hackney carriages – hcv**
- Vehicles that can be taken from a rank, hailed or booked
- Bath has two sets – one for the Bath area, whose vehicle numbers are limited, and the outer area that have no limit on numbers of vehicles
- Have more regulation on basis of protecting the passenger who has to relate to the vehicle they take
- **Private hire vehicles – phv**
- Vehicles that can only be booked, many now use apps allowing much more immediate booking often based on proximity of vehicle
- Less regulation as passenger has relationship with company
- **Drivers** - for Bath any driver can drive any hackney carriage or private hire as they see fit
- Driver numbers not limited (for any type of vehicle)

## Definitions (2)

- **Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV)**
- Vehicles that can carry a passenger travelling in their wheel chair – a range of types but all have to be approved locally.
- Not all ‘London style’ and certainly not all can take every wheel chair
- Can exist in either hackney carriage or private hire fleet
- **Unmet demand** – someone arrives at a rank and there is no hackney carriage that could be available for immediate hire
- Excludes waiting for vehicle to move up to front of rank (geometric delay)

## Definitions (3)

- **Private Ranks**
- Ranks on private land often with extra controls from land owner or its tenant or agents
- Bath Station rank is private
- Needs extra permit from agent of rail operating company
- Station has private hire pick-ups from rear of station whilst only hackney carriage can be taken from forecourt rank
- Passengers have lots of choices of how to get licensed vehicles, which council cannot influence or control in detail
- General industry trend to be more available to customer in more ways, e.g. using 'apps'





## Definitions (4)

- **Significant unmet demand (patent demand)**
- Unmet demand at a level whereby its reduction can only be achieved by adding extra hackney carriage vehicles
  
- **Latent demand**
- Less easily observable as people have changed their behaviour for lack of available vehicles
- but Court case defined how this should be measured, as undertaken in our survey by asking people specific question



## **Fleet / Industry issues**

- 120 hackney carriages zone 1
- Plate issues 2004 / 2007 / 2014
- Phv numbers reduced strongly in pandemic
- Current numbers at 2007 level
- Drivers (all dual) stunted by no new driver applications March 2020 to November 2021
- Very close link now between no. drivers and no. vehicles
- 12% zone 1 hcv are WAV, one WAV hcv zone 2, small number of phv WAV
- Strong e-scooter trial in area
- 8-9% of their trips formerly licensed vehicles



## Rank activity

- 178 hours observed early February
- Bath Spa rank 59% of average weekly level, Abbey rank 40%
- Westgate rank unused
- Est of 6,446 pass per week, 40% less than 2020
- Two hours with no passenger at rank during period
- Sat peak 3.8 (was 5) times average rank passenger level
- 6% of all hours had APD a minute or more
- Despite 40% less passengers, overall delay increased
- 61% (73%) of vehicles seen active on busiest day
- More of veh seen at Abbey but also most reduced share (68% 2020, 51% now)
- 9% (10%) of total estimated station passengers leave in a hcv
- Rail flows at 64% of pre COVID at time of survey





## Public consultation

- 33% (60%) had used licensed vehicle (lv) in area in last 3 months – strong reduction. 4% hc only 14% hc phv 16% phv
- 0.7 (1.3) lv trips per person per month, 0.3 (0.5) hcv
- 95% of booked trips by app, 85% to main company, 10% to international app, 5% shared four other apps
- 5% (3%) could not remember seeing hcv
- 58% (44%) could not remember when last used hcv
- Main two ranks known about, 43% said they used (47%)
- Service well appreciated with high standards
- Reduced latent demand (1.15 to 1.05)
- 50% felt there were enough hcv (80% in 2020)



## **Stakeholder consultation**

- Just one response, typical national lack of response
- Their main issue was with phv and app surge pricing
- Not a major issue as overwhelming picture is lack of any unmet demand of significance
- Even strong views from key stakeholders would not overturn the conclusions



## Trade consultation

- 13% response (16%, 7% last two surveys)
- 43% (62%) from private hire
- 91% (86%) owned own vehicle
- 7% said someone else drove (14% and 20% last two surveys)
- 70% hcv respondents independent
- 31% (23%) used Bath Spa station rank, 43% (34%) for Abbey
- 75% (80%) agreed with limit
- Includes many private hire respondents
- 20% (35%) felt benefit ensures high standards
- 28% (22%) said it reduced pollution and congestion

## Disability

- Low usage of WAV at ranks (one at station, two at Abbey)
- But this is one more than in 2020
- 14% (18%) at ranks appeared to be WAV cf 13% in fleet



## Unmet demand evaluation

- Flow profile is peaky in 22:00 hour Saturday (same as 2020)
- Index of significance of unmet demand (ISUD) increased from last time (to 13.18 council, all ranks 73.53)
- Still not at level of significance (80)
- seasonality set to 1.2, to allow for Feb surveys
- Overall suggests less vehicles active now than in 2020 given that overall demand is reduced



## Key conclusions

- Continued overall reduction in rank-based demand
- No evidence of any unmet demand that is significant
- Covers both latent and patent demand
- Current limit policy can be retained
- Provides stability to trade and strongly supported by trade (phv and hcv)
- Should therefore be retained
- Spare plates available but no demand for them



## Final key comments

- Repeat survey with fresh surveys at any point up to February 2026
- Unmet demand much closer to becoming significant than in 2020 so three-year review could be too long







**Thank You.**

**Any Questions?**