



# NEWS

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## **Council protects residents from untrustworthy taxi driver**

An Irthlingborough taxi driver was fined nearly £4,000 for a number of offences including lying and driving without a licence.

Mr Shahid Ahmad, owner of Easy Cars, was licensed with East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) to run a private hire business from an address in Irthlingborough.

In May, a member of the public made a complaint when Easy Cars failed to fulfil a booking she had made.

This instigated an investigation by ENC officers which led to proof that Mr Ahmad did not operate his business from Irthlingborough but instead from his home address in Wellingborough.

Mr Ahmad had lied to obtain the correct licences required to run his taxi business. He was operating illegally, putting the public at risk and so an ENC licensing panel revoked Mr Ahmad's licences (his operator licence, private hire vehicle licence and driver's badge).

Given the seriousness of the offences uncovered during the investigation and the fact that Mr Ahmad misled officers at ENC to obtain his operator's licence, ENC decided to prosecute.

On 28 November at Northampton Magistrates Court, Mr Ahmad was found guilty under the Local Government (miscellaneous provisions) Act 1976.

He was fined £750 for lying to obtain an operator's licence, £500 for operating a vehicle without a valid operator's licence and £500 for failing to keep correct paperwork. He was also ordered to pay £2,000 towards costs and a £75 victim surcharge.

Leader of ENC, Councillor Steven North, said: "The safety of our residents and visitors is important to the authority and where that safety is compromised, as it was in this case, it was important to ensure all enforcement measures were utilised. We hope this serves as a warning to all who believe they can lie to get a licence.

"With the festive period upon us, we would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone to only get into licensed taxis and ensure your journeys are planned in advance."

You can find out if a taxi is properly licensed by checking the ENC public register at [www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/taxi](http://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/taxi)

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