

Taking a TAXI

in Rushmoor

TYPES OF TAXI VEHICLES IN RUSHMOOR

Private Hire Vehicles

(Minicabs)

Hackney Carriages

(Taxis)



The most easily recognised type of taxi is the “London style” black cab. These are known as Hackney Carriages (taxis). There are a number of variations to the typical hackney carriage including MPV type vehicles.

All hackney carriages have top lights on the roof that say “TAXI”.

These vehicles may sit on taxi ranks to wait for customers and can be hailed in the street.



The other type of vehicle is a Private Hire Vehicle (minicabs). There is a wide variety of private hire vehicles. In Rushmoor, they are generally hard top salons, estate cars and MPVs. Stretch Limousines also fall into this category and must also be licensed private hire vehicles.

Private hire vehicles do not have top lights on the roof and are not allowed to sit on a taxi rank, ply for hire or pick up customers who may hail them in the street.

These vehicles must be booked in advance with a private hire operator (usually found in the telephone book, Yellow Pages etc). If you fail to book in advance it may mean that the driver, his vehicle and the passengers are uninsured.

Taxi Vehicle Safeguards

All vehicles (both hackney carriage and private hire) must be licensed by a local authority. Different local authorities may have different requirements. However, vehicles licensed by us must pass an MOT test. Some that are eight years old or older are mechanically tested twice a year. We also check a number of other taxi requirements such as the accuracy of their meters, cleanliness, access, and the availability of certain facilities e.g. the provision of disabled access ramps. In addition, we check the ownership of vehicles and ensure they are covered by appropriate insurance.

We repeat these checks when vehicle owners renew their vehicle licence. A vehicle licence is valid for a maximum of one year.

We also carry out spot checks on vehicle roadworthiness several times a year in conjunction with the Police and the Vehicle Inspectorate. In addition, we carry out regular spot checks on various other requirements each year.

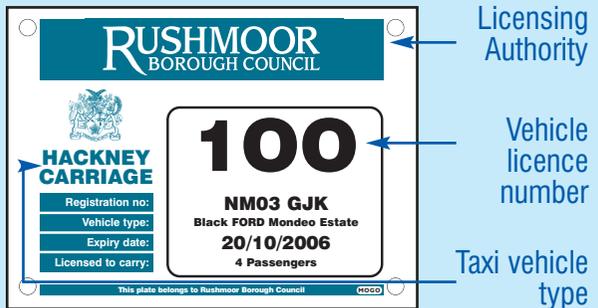
Recognising a Rushmoor Licensed Taxi Vehicle

Once licensed, both types of cab are usually fitted with a 'hard plate' on the back of the vehicle. The plate displays key details about the taxi and the conditions of its licence. Importantly, the plate identifies each vehicle by its vehicle licence number.

At the beginning of this year, we changed the type and nature of the licence plates we issue. Our new style taxi licence plates incorporate security features to increase public confidence. As taxi vehicle licences are valid for 12 months, this

means that until 1st January 2009, there will be two types of plate design in use in the borough while we phase in the new style plates across the taxi fleet.

New style plates are shown for reference, we aim to have all licensed taxis carrying the new, modern style licence plates within a year.



Hackney carriage plates will be teal in colour while private hire vehicle plates will be teal and magenta.

Some private hire vehicles do not have to fit a 'hard plate' to the back of their vehicle. This is because they are used for chauffeur and contract hire work or other specialised purposes, such as stretch limousines. Instead, these vehicles may be permitted to display a 'soft plate' in the windscreen of the vehicle. This looks like a rectangular tax disc. A 'soft plate' displays the same details as a 'hard plate'.



TAXI DRIVERS

Taxi Driver Safeguards

As with their vehicles, taxi drivers (both hackney carriage and private hire) must be licensed by a local authority. Different local authorities may have different requirements. However, before we issue a driver's licence, we check all applicants through the Criminal Records Bureau to ensure that they are suitable. We also check that they are medically fit to drive. Each applicant will also have to pass a local 'knowledge test' and be familiar with the area. Applicants must also have appropriate insurance.

We periodically repeat these checks when drivers renew their licence to ensure they continue to be suitable. Driver licences are generally valid for three years at a time.

Recognising a Rushmoor Licensed Taxi Driver

Drivers licensed by us are issued with a driver's badge which (s)he must wear and display at all times. This badge must be made available for inspection to anyone on request and bears a unique number that can be used to identify the taxi driver.

The badge also has a picture of the driver and displays the driver's licence number and the expiry date of the licence. Some drivers are



eligible to drive both hackney carriages and private hire vehicles. The driver will have two separate badges - one for each vehicle type that (s)he is permitted to drive.

To help prevent fraud, the rear of the badge will also be marked with the signature of the licensing officer who issued the licence.

We are currently changing the type and nature of the driver badges we issue. Since February 2007, we have been issuing new style driver badges that incorporate security features to increase public confidence. As driver licences are valid for up to three years, there will be two types of badge design in use in the borough until February 2010, while we phase in the new style badges for all licensed drivers. New style badges are shown for reference, we aim to have all licensed taxi drivers carrying the new, modern style badges within this three-year period. These badges are teal in colour and incorporate a hologram.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM A LICENSED TAXI DRIVER AND VEHICLE

We attach standard conditions to every driver and vehicle licence we issue. These set out the acceptable standards of vehicle maintenance, conduct and behaviour that all drivers should maintain and follow. These include:

- *Drivers should be presentable and behave in a civil and orderly manner at all times.*
- *Drivers should take reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of their passengers. This includes as they are getting in and out of the vehicle.*
- *Drivers should carry a reasonable quantity of luggage and provide reasonable help in loading and unloading.*
- *Drivers should carry a guide dog or assistance dog belonging to a passenger, free of charge.*
- *Drivers should not sound the horn of their vehicle to alert intending passengers of their presence between the hours of 11.30 pm and 7.00 am. They should not use the horn excessively at other times.*

- *Only fare-paying passengers are to be carried by the driver. However, where approved by us, trainee drivers may be carried in the front seat with the permission of the passenger.*
- *Vehicles, including all fittings, must be well maintained in good working order and must be kept clean.*
- *No vehicle can carry more passengers than the number specified.*

Where a driver or vehicle owner does not comply with the terms and conditions of their licence we will, if appropriate, investigate the matter to try and prevent it from happening again. In serious cases, a driver could be suspended, prosecuted and/or have his/her licence revoked. Similarly, a vehicle could be taken off the road.

How many passengers can a taxi carry?

The maximum number of passengers a taxi can carry is specified on its taxi plate; this can usually be found at the rear of the vehicle. The maximum number of passengers must not be exceeded.

However, in the interests of safety and/or security, the driver of a taxi may refuse to carry a passenger who, for example, is being threatening or abusive. Similarly, a driver may also restrict the maximum number of passengers to be carried where, for example, there is a lot of luggage to be carried.



Will they carry wheelchair users?

All **hackney carriages** licensed by us are wheelchair accessible vehicles. Drivers of a hackney carriage must also help disabled people to get in and/or out of the vehicle.

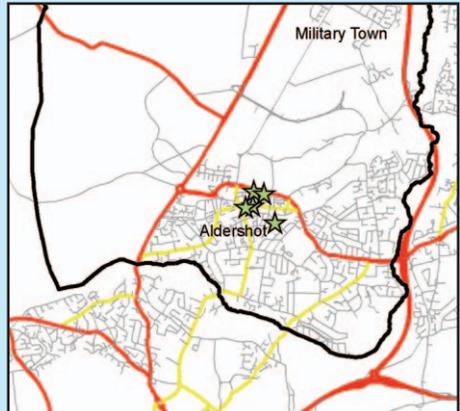
Since some electric wheelchairs are bigger than others, it is always advisable to let the operator know, so that a suitably sized hackney carriage can be arranged for you.

TAXI RANKS

There are a number of taxi ranks located throughout Rushmoor. Only **hackney carriages** are allowed to sit and ply for hire on these ranks. The ranks can be found at the following locations:

Aldershot

- Aldershot railway station
- Victoria Road next to the Wellington Centre entrance
- Frederick Street
- Court Road
- High Street next to the High Street multi-storey car park



Farnborough

- Farnborough main railway station
- ASDA in Princes Mead car park
- In Queensmead next to the Iceland store
- Fernhill Road outside Thresher's off-licence.
- Lynchford Road near the North Camp Public House



Private hire vehicles are **NOT** allowed to sit on a taxi rank, ply for hire or pick up customers from a rank (unless booked in advance).

Private hire vehicles must be booked in advance with a private hire operator. If you fail to book in advance it may mean that the driver, his vehicle and the passenger are uninsured.

FARES

How much will I be asked to pay?

Every **hackney carriage** is fitted with a calibrated and 'calendarised' meter. This means the meter rate changes automatically according to the time and date.

There are three meter rates on the current table of fares. Each vehicle must display a table of fares inside and this should be clearly visible to passengers at all times.

For a journey that starts and remains in the borough of Rushmoor, the fare charged must be the fare shown on the meter at the end of the journey. The only exception will be where the driver and passenger have agreed **before** the start of the journey on a fare less than that shown on the meter.

For a journey that goes outside the borough boundaries, the driver must charge according to the table of fares unless (s)he has agreed with the hirer **before** the journey starts on a **greater or lesser** fare than that shown on the meter.

All taxi fares include VAT, charged at the standard rate. A taxi driver should provide a receipt for the cost of a journey, on request.

Private hire vehicles do not usually have a meter. The fare charged should therefore be negotiated and agreed with the driver or operator at the time of booking and/or **before** the journey begins. If a private hire vehicle is fitted with a meter, the fare charging arrangements are the same as those for hackney carriages.

HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES effective from 1st November 2007	
<small>A table of fares made by Rushmoor Borough Council under 505 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 Subject to the following, the owner / driver of a hackney carriage is entitled to charge a fare in line with this table for the hire of the hackney carriage. Fares are based on a combination of time / distance and are automatically calculated / displayed by the taximeter. The extra charges below may also be added to the metered fare, if appropriate.</small>	
METER RATE 1 - Day time Any hiring on a weekday between 07:00 and 17:00 (unless Rate 4 or 5 applies instead); First 1232 yards or uncompleted part £2.40 For each subsequent (or part) 175 yards up to 8 miles £0.20 Thereafter, for each subsequent (or part) 140.8 yards £0.20 Waiting time (per 40 second period) £0.20	METER RATE 6 - Christmas New Year Any hiring on Christmas Day (25 December) or Boxing Day (26 December); or Any hiring on Christmas Eve (24 December) or New Year's Eve (31 December) between 21:00 and 23:59; or Any hiring on New Year's Day (1 January) between 00:00 and 06:59. First 1232 yards or uncompleted part £4.00 For each subsequent (or part) 175 yards £0.40 Waiting time (per 40 second period) £0.40
METER RATE 2 - Evenings and weekends Any hiring on any day between 18:00 and 22:59 (unless Rate 4 or 5 applies instead); or Any hiring on a Saturday or Sunday, between 07:00 and 17:00 (unless Rate 5 applies instead); First 1232 yards or uncompleted part £3.00 For each subsequent (or part) 175 yards up to 8 miles £0.20 Thereafter, for each subsequent (or part) 140.8 yards £0.20 Waiting time (per 40 second period) £0.20	EXTRA CHARGES For each additional passenger in excess of five passengers At rate 1 or 2 (per person) £0.60 At rate 3, 4 or 5 (per person) £0.60 Any hiring booked by telephone or radio At rate 1 or 2 £0.60 At rate 3, 4 or 5 £0.90 Any hiring if the journey starts or finishes outside the Rushmoor boundary At rate 1 or 2 £0.60 At rate 3, 4 or 5 £0.90
METER RATE 3 - Night time Any hiring on any day between 23:00 and 06:59 (unless Rate 5 applies instead); First 1232 yards or uncompleted part £3.60 For each subsequent (or part) 175 yards up to 8 miles £0.20 Thereafter, for each subsequent (or part) 140.8 yards £0.20 Waiting time (per 40 second period) £0.20	FOULING CHARGE Any fouling to the interior of the cab making 2 units for further hiring (at the discretion of the driver). Up to £10.00
METER RATE 4 - Bank holidays Any hiring on a bank or public holiday between 07:00 and 22:59 (unless Rate 5 applies instead); First 1232 yards or uncompleted part £3.00 For each subsequent (or part) 175 yards £0.20 Waiting time (per 40 second period) £0.20	<small>NB: Passengers may be charged a maximum of four extras, i.e. at rate 1 or 2, the total of extras shall at no time exceed £2.40 and at rate 3, 4 or 5, the total of extras shall at no time exceed £3.60</small>
COMPLAINTS AND COMMENTS - Where possible please quote the Cab / Driver Number Please contact the Head of Environmental Health at Rushmoor Borough Council, Council Offices, Farnborough Road, Farnborough, Hampshire.	
	

MAKING A COMPLAINT AND REQUESTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have a complaint or query about any taxi driver, vehicle or operator or wish to pass on your thanks for a job well done, please contact us at:

Rushmoor Borough Council, Environmental Health Services,

Council Offices Farnborough Road, Farnborough, Hampshire. GU14 7JU

Telephone: 01252 398 855 ■ **Fax:** 01252 524 017 ■ **Minicom:** 01252 371 233

E-mail: licensing@rushmoor.gov.uk ■ **Doc. Exchange:** DX 122250 Farnborough 2

To identify the driver, vehicle or operator, it would help us if you make a note of:

DRIVERS - please make a note of the taxi driver's licence number. Alternatively, please make a note of the vehicle licence number and/or vehicle registration index of the vehicle (s)he was driving, together with the date and time.

VEHICLES - please make a note of the vehicle licence number and/or vehicle registration index.

OPERATORS - please make a note of the name, address and telephone number of the taxi company you used. Alternatively, please make a note of the taxi driver's licence number, the vehicle licence number and/or vehicle registration index of the vehicle (s)he was driving, together with the date and time.