

From: Shujamumtaz52 Baraki
Sent: 27 April 2022 15:32
To: Licensing (TWBC) <Licensing@TunbridgeWells.gov.uk>
Subject: The proposed variation/increases

Thank you for your email. Increasing fares is a step in the right direction. However, the suggested increase is not enough to keep our businesses afloat. We are all well aware that recently the energy prices have risen sharply and affected us all in more ways than we could ever imagine.

Firstly, the fuel prices, energy prices, supermarket prices and general cost of living has increased and in some cases the soaring increase is up to 70%. It is also an increase in the cost of our licences, the MOT... While the prices are increasing in all aspects of our lives, our jobs still remain 30% lower than pre-pandemic highs. People are still afraid of covid and useless public transport. All of our drivers work an extra 2h per shift to make the difference and still have difficulty paying their bills.

Tunbridge Wells' hackney carriage association welcome and agrees that fare has to change in order to lower our pressure.

From the table of the proposed charge, an increase of 80p/run (from £4.00 to £4.80): Even though this 80p increase will not cover even our fuel costs, we are still happy and accept the increase as we cannot tell our customers of the sudden increase.

After the initial charges, there is no proposed change/variation for the weekend hire. However, we request to increase at least 20p/mile for all the days of the week. Due to same above reasons, so we cover our fixed costs.

In regard to additional passengers proposed charge/variation, I must say, I have been a taxi driver in Tunbridge Wells for many years, and I have never asked my customers to pay an extra 20p per person when there are more than 4 passengers. It is too embarrassing to ask. If you do a survey, beside a couple of drivers, the majority will say they can never ask for this extra 20 p per person.

Furthermore, regarding the larger taxis with disabled access, we all agree that their cost is double that of a smaller taxi and consumes double the fuel of a saloon car. For example, as a saloon car can take 4 passengers, one can buy it for up to £20,000 where as the larger taxi with disabled access (similar to mine and a few others), the price difference is double, and We can't afford to buy a newer car in this circumstance. Therefore, we were left with no choice but to drive the older taxi with higher fuel consumption.

Our suggestion is like other cities and towns, as we hear, to have a fixed price when there are more than 4 passengers. This is easily understandable for passengers too instead of calculating the increase per person. Our suggestion for this fixed price is £2 when there is an excess of 4 passengers. Keep in mind that our passengers come with their multiple large languages, and we do not charge any extra for those.

Hackney carriage prices are very reasonable compared to the private hire as they charge a fare and a half if there are more than five passengers.

I hope you consider our suggestion These suggestions are requested from all the hackney carriage drivers of the Tunbridge Wells.

Tunbridge wells Hackney carriage association.

Sincerely,

Shujaullah Baraki

The head of Tunbridge wells Hackney carriage association.