

LICENSING COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Thursday 19 September 2019
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Fissenden, Fort, Garten, Mrs Grigg, Hinder, Mrs Hinder, Joy (Chairman), McLoughlin, Naghi, Mrs Robertson, M Rose (Vice-Chairman), J Sams and Springett

The Chairman will assume that all Members will read the reports before attending the meeting. Officers are asked to assume the same when introducing reports.

AGENDA

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| 1. Apologies for Absence | |
| 2. Notification of Substitute Members | |
| 3. Urgent Items | |
| 4. Disclosures by Members and Officers | |
| 5. Visiting Members | |
| 6. Disclosures of Lobbying | |
| 7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information. | |
| 8. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 11 July 2019 | 1 - 4 |
| 9. Presentation of Petitions (if any) | |
| 10. Questions and answer session for members of the public (if any) | |
| 11. Committee Work Programme 2019-20 | 5 |
| 12. Member Training For Licensing - Oral Update | |
| 13. Hackney Carriage Licence - Unmet Demand Survey 2019 | 6 - 97 |

Issued on Wednesday 11 September 2019

**Continued
Over/:**

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

If you require this information in an alternative format please contact us, call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk.

In order to speak at this meeting, please contact Democratic Services using the contact details above, by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting, i.e. by 5 p.m. on 17 September. If asking a question, you will need to provide the full text in writing. If making a statement, you will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on. Please note that slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11 JULY 2019

Present: Councillor Joy (Chairman), and
Councillors Fissenden, Fort, Garten, Mrs Grigg,
Hinder, Mrs Hinder, Naghi, Mrs Robertson, M Rose
and Springett

6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors McLoughlin and J Sams.

7. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

8. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

9. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

10. VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

11. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

12. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

13. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 MARCH 2019

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Meeting held on 28 March 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

14. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2019

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Meeting held on 21 May 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

15. MINUTES OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28 MARCH 2019

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee Meeting held on 28 March 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

16. MINUTES OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 JUNE 2019

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee Meeting held on 7 June 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

17. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Committee Work Programme and noted that the Statement of Licensing Principles for Gambling Act 2005 2019-2022 was approved and would be deleted from the Work Programme to be brought back in 2021 for review unless there are any changes to the legislation in the interim.

The item relating to Revisiting Licensing Applications – Site Visits was discussed and the following comments were made:-

- That there should be a mix of daytime and night time inspections of premises for Members to visit.
- That site visits be organised on a regular basis, at least every 9 months.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted as amended.

18. MBC LICENSING PARTNERSHIP UPDATE REPORT 2019

The Committee considered the report of the Head of the Licensing Partnership which provided an annual update on the performance and activity of the Licensing Partnership.

The Head of the Licensing Partnership advised that the performance of the Partnership had been generally high performing despite many challenges of the past year which included:-

- The Tri-annual review of the gambling policy;
- The introduction of new Animal licensing legislation (which came into effect with a very tight timescale);
- Staff turnover within the hub team

In response to questions from Members, the Head of the Licensing Partnership advised that:-

- Due to the new Animal Licensing legislation that became effective in October 2018, with very little lead in time, this had created a significant amount of work for the teams, particularly with members of the public querying the interruption of the legislation.
- A report would come to the Committee in November providing an update on activity associated with the Animal Welfare Licensing legislation, including information about the number and type of premises inspected and licences issued.
- If a breeder charged a fee for an animal, then they would need to be licensed.
- The Animal Welfare Team had an enforcement and inspection role and would respond to complaints/reports and seek out unlicensed breeders by scanning the internet and local adverts.
- Bromley Council advised that they did not want to join the Partnership for financial reasons.
- The Partnership was fairly well resourced and staff do not answer telephone calls from the public until they had been properly trained.
- The taxi driver knowledge test had been changed to make the questions clearer and was marked automatically so there was no requirement for staff to spend time marking the test.
- Charging points for electric taxis are available in Maidstone but are limited in number; at present there were only 4 taxis that are fully electric.
- Although there was an appetite amongst the Taxi trade to change to electric vehicles, it would need to work for them in terms of their business plans linked to the cost of providing their existing vehicles.

The Committee expressed their thanks to the Licensing Partnership for all their hard work.

RESOLVED: That the performance of the partnership as detailed in the report be noted.

19. AMENDMENTS TO THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE POLICY

The Committee considered the report of the Senior Licensing Manager which set out the consultation responses to the amended draft Taxi Licensing Policy for approval to the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee.

It was noted that at the meeting of the Committee on 28th March 2019 Members requested some minor amendments to be made to the policy prior to consultation and agreed on a 6 week consultation to take place. The consultation run from 11th April to 16th May 2019.

The findings of the survey resulted in almost two thirds of residents being in favour of the proposed changes to the licensing policy. The areas of greater concern appeared to be around the changes proposed to testing of knowledge and driver standards.

RESOLVED: That the Licensing Committee recommend to the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee that the amended Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy be adopted.

Voting: For: unanimous

20. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m.

LICENSING - COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Licensing Partnership Update	Licensing	Jul-19	John Littlemore	Sharon Bamborough
Amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy	Licensing	Jul-19	John Littlemore	Lorraine Neale
Unmet Demand Survey 2019	Licensing	Sep-19	John Littlemore	Lorraine Neale
Pre-Application Advice	Licensing	Sep-19	John Littlemore	Sharon Bamborough
Member Training - Refresher	Licensing	Sep-19	John Littlemore	John Littlemore
MBC Animal Licensing Legislation Update	Licensing	Nov-19	John Littlemore	Martyn Jeynes
Fees and Charges 2019/20	Licensing	Nov-19	John Littlemore	Sharon Bamborough
9 Revisiting Licensing Applications - Site Visits	Licensing	TBC	John Littlemore	John Littlemore

Agenda Item 13

Licensing Committee

19th September 2019

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENCE - UNMET DEMAND SURVEY

Final Decision-Maker	Licensing Committee
Lead Director or Head of Service	John Littlemore
Lead Officer and Report Author	Lorraine Neale
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

The report summarises the results of the Licensed Vehicle Surveys and Assessment (LVSA) part of Vector Transport Consultancy.

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That Members consider the report submitted by Licensed Vehicle Surveys & Assessment (LVSA) part of Vector Transport Consultancy indicating an absence of any significant demand, that is unmet and consider the following options.
 - maintain the current limit on numbers
 - issue any number of additional licences as appropriate
 - consider removing the limit on hackney carriage numbers with a view to commencing a period of public consultation including Hackney Carriage Operators and Drivers, and other interested parties over a six-week period and that the results of the consultation be reported back to the committee for a final decision to be taken.

Timetable –

Meeting	Date
Licensing Committee	19 September 2019

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 That Members are advised of the results of the Unmet Demand Survey carried out by Licensed Vehicle Surveys & Assessment (LVSA) part of Vector Transport Consultancy and consider the options open to the Council with regard to maintaining, partially maintaining or removing a limit on the number of hackney carriage licences that are issued.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Maidstone Borough Council is the licensing authority for the Borough in respect of hackney carriages, and for many years it has restricted the numbers of hackney carriage vehicles.
- 2.2 The limit currently stands at 48 and there is a discretion for that to continue at this figure provided the Council is satisfied there is no significant demand for hackney services in the Borough which is unmet, the power being contained in section 16 of the Transport Act 1985.
- In order that such a position can be evidenced, an independent review of demand for the service is needed, and such a survey must reflect the current position and needs and be updated at least every 3 years. The last survey carried out in Maidstone was in 2016 which recommended that no new licences be issued.
- 2.3 The Unmet Demand Survey conducted in 2013 also recommended that no new licences be issued.
- 2.4 The last survey that recommended the issue of further plates was in 2005. It recommended 9 new licences be issued over a 3-year period which was implemented, the last of the plates being issued in 2008. There have been no new plates issued since then.
- 2.5 Previous and present survey results, as well as feedback from the trade to our own survey conducted in 2018 have shown there is no significant demand, however we as a Local Authority still have the discretion to consider our options and could decide to, increase the number of licenses or delimit numbers even though survey results indicate we should retain the current limit on numbers which is 48.

The survey did not find any major issues with the Hackney trade but did identify that out of the 12 recognised ranks (10 official) 75% of all hiring's are made from the High Street Rank.

- 2.6 The data from the survey shows little evidence of unmet demand at present and the level is below that which would be considered to be significant. Therefore, the survey has concluded that there is no significant unmet demand for Hackney Carriages in Maidstone.

2.7 The Government believes restrictions should only be retained where it is shown to be a clear benefit to the consumer. The Council should be able to justify their reasons for any retention of restrictions. The Government makes it clear that Local Authorities remain best placed to determine their local transport needs and to make decisions about them in the light of local circumstances. The Council conducted its own consultation on deregulation in 2018 the results went to Committee on the 19th July 2018, the findings were:-

In response to the question "There are currently 48 Hackney Carriage vehicles licensed by Maidstone Borough. Is this number sufficient". 59% of respondents indicated that this number was about right.

In response to the question "Do you think the Council should limit the number of Hackney Carriage vehicle licenses it will issue". 50% of respondents agreed that the Council should continue to limit the number.

There were comments made to increase the numbers of plates.

"Twenty people said that the current limit should be increased, some of suggested new limits which ranged from an additional two up to 75 plates be issued, however no one commented that the limit should be scrapped altogether."

There were also comments not to increase

"Twenty one people made comment to the effect that they are against removing the limit or that they do not want/see the need for the current limit on taxis to be increased and five made comments that there are too many taxis in Maidstone"

Licensing Committee noted the results and agreed to see if the 2019 survey conducted by LVSA would highlight any significant demand.

2.8 In November 2003 the Office of Fair-Trading (OFT) issued a report which concluded that authorities that currently limit numbers of licences should end the restrictions. They were of the opinion that maintenance of limits was anti-competitive and against the interests of the consumer. Their findings concluded that restrictions could typically create circumstances that:-

- a) Reduce the availability of taxis.
- b) Increase waiting times for consumers.
- c) Reduce safety and choice for consumers.
- d) Restrict those wanting to set up a taxi business.

Also those restrictions should only be retained if there is a strong justification that removal of the restrictions would lead to significant consumer detriment as a result of local conditions.

The Government also considered that ultimately local authorities remain best placed to determine local transport needs and to make decisions about them in the light of local circumstances. Therefore it is expected that local authorities with quantity controls continue to reassess their own needs and to

publish and justify their reasons if they continue to restrict the number of taxi licences that they issue.”

- 2.9 The Law Commission report published in 2014 indicated that they would not recommend the abolition of quantity controls but that they would want the Secretary of State to review the position of the transfer of these licenses (the practice of selling onto another person the licence) where authorities have quantity controls.
- 2.10 The Department of Transport report 'Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice Guidance' recommends that quantity restrictions are not imposed but sets out guidance on what an Authority should do if it decides to have in place a regulated number of taxi vehicles .
- 2.11 The more recent report undertaken by the task and finish group in 2018 on Taxi and private hire licensing recommends giving local authorities the ability to cap private hire vehicles as well as hackney carriage vehicles where a need is proven through a public interest test.
- 2.14 Reports commissioned by Maidstone in previous years have indicated that there is no significant unmet demand although there are occasional requests from licensed drivers to obtain additional Hackney Vehicles and drivers often state that they are aggrieved that they are prevented from obtaining a hackney carriage vehicle licence due to the maintained limit on numbers.
- 2.15 The Hackney Carriage trade state that licensing more vehicles would affect their livelihoods, but whilst case law has said this must be considered if that takes place it is not in itself a justification for retaining a limit.
- 2.16 At the Licensing Committee on 1st December 2016 the Head of Housing and Community Services was asked to undertake a 12-week consultation with stakeholders on the following three options for Hackney Carriage vehicle licences and report the findings back to Licensing Committee at the earliest opportunity. The questions to be asked being whether to:-
1. Maintain the current limit on Hackney Carriage numbers; or
 2. Issue any number of additional vehicle licences as appropriate; or
 3. Remove the limit on Hackney Carriage numbers.
- 2.17 The survey run from the 5th March 2018 until 27th May 2018 and was carried out online and by email All stakeholders were asked their views on rank locations, the number of hackney licenses issued and if the limit should remain and any other additional comments.
- 2.18 The result of that survey was that the Council maintains the current limit on Hackney Carriage numbers as the survey result did not justify an increase in plate numbers and that the 2019 Unmet Demand Survey would highlight demand should there be any.
- 2.19 The principal findings of the 2019 Unmet Demand survey prepared by LVS are as follows (Appendix A:

- The public and stakeholders are generally content with the level of service provided by Hackney Carriages.
- No significant concerns or issues were raised with respect to services provided for mobility impaired passengers.
- The storage capacity of the High Street rank is insufficient to accommodate all of the hackney carriages waiting for fares.
- One or more new ranks on the High Street were suggested by several consultees.

N.B. The issue of ranks (which are known as 'stands' in legislation) and their placement has been subject to reports in the past and will be revisited once the Maidstone East regeneration is complete and is not a factor when considering unmet demand in these circumstances.

2.20 A number of mystery shopper exercises were carried out over the course of the survey which tested short fares, carriage of guide dogs and journeys for wheelchair passengers, there were no significant adverse findings for the Maidstone trade except in the case of one wheelchair passenger which will be investigated by Licensing Officers. The complete results can be found at Appendix B

3 AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 maintain the current limit on numbers
- 3.2 issue any number of additional licences as appropriate
- 3.3 consider removing the limit on hackney carriage numbers with a view to commencing a period of public consultation.

4 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To maintain the current limit on numbers, neither the Council consultation in 2016 or the recent consultation conducted by LVSA has shown any significant demand.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 N/A

6 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 N/A

7 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Risk Management	None	[Head of Service or Manager]
Financial	The cost of undertaking the consultation will be met from within existing budgets.	Interim Head of Finance (Deputy Section 151 Officer)
Staffing	None	[Head of Service]
Legal	Included in the body of the report	[Legal Team]
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	'No impact identified'	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Environmental/Sustainable Development	None	[Head of Service or Manager]
Community Safety	None	[Head of Service or Manager]
Human Rights Act	None	[Head of Service or Manager]
Procurement	None	[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]
Asset Management	None	[Head of Service & Manager]

8 REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

Appendix A - Report by Vector Transport Consultancy

Appendix B – Mystery Shopper results

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None



Maidstone – Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey

Final Report

August 2019



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key points

This survey has been conducted by Vector Transport Consultancy on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council.

The survey is intended to fulfil the requirements of Section 16 of the 1985 Transport Act and to address the questions raised in the Department for Transport (DfT) 2010 Best Practice Guidance.

The objectives of the study may be broadly defined as:

- Consultation with major stakeholders
- Consultation with the trade
- Public consultation
- An unmet need survey
- A mystery shopper survey

There were twelve taxi ranking locations surveyed in Maidstone. The locations of the ranks surveyed were as follows:

King Street
King Street at High Street (outside Lush)
High Street HSBC (informal night time rank)
High Street Lower (opposite Players)
Barker Road
Pudding Lane
St Faiths Street
Earl Street Lower
Earl Street Upper
Maidstone East
Maidstone West
County Hall (Week Street)

No activity was observed at Barker Road, Pudding Lane, St Faiths Street, Earl Street Lower and Maidstone West. The rank space at Maidstone West was persistently full of parked vehicles.

Low levels of activity were observed at King Street HSBC, High Street Lower and Earl Street Upper. For most of the rank operational time, the rank on High Street Lower was full of parked vehicles. On Saturday evening, some of those vehicles were issued with parking tickets.

The majority of Hackney Carriage hires occurred at the rank on King Street, at the junction with the High Street, outside the Lush shop. This rank accounted for 75% of all observed hires.

The taxi ranks were surveyed, using video cameras fixed to nearby lamp posts and sign posts, from Thursday morning (13th June 2019) to the following Sunday morning (16th June 2019), in order to capture the busiest periods of the week, along with quiet periods. This ensured that if there is any unmet demand that these are the days when this was most likely to be evident, as passenger waiting delays.

For most of the three days observed, passenger queuing was infrequent. There were no persistent queues which formed, to wait for Hackney Carriages at ranks.

The peak deployment of Hackney Carriages was around 80% of the fleet on Saturday night. There was adequate reserve capacity in the fleet to cope with peaks in demand and some capacity for additional demand, should it be necessary.

Public consultation was undertaken through questionnaire surveys conducted on street and online. There was little evidence of public dissatisfaction with Hackney Carriage services.

Stakeholder consultation was undertaken with the taxi trade, minority group representatives, licensed premises, the police, politicians and Council representatives..

The public and stakeholder consultation feedback indicated that:

- The public and stakeholders are generally content with the level of service provided by Hackney Carriages.
- No significant concerns or issues were raised with respect to services provided for mobility impaired passengers.
- The storage capacity of the High Street rank is insufficient to accommodate all of the hackney carriages waiting for fares.
- One or more new ranks on the High Street were suggested by several consultees.

Unmet need assessment

Data from the taxi rank surveys was used, together with any indication from the public consultation surveys, of frustration with non-availability of Hackney Carriages, to calculate an Index of Significant Unmet Demand (ISUD). The ISUD index value calculated from the survey results indicates that the level is well below the threshold which is held to indicate that the level of unmet demand is significant.

Trade Consultation

Trade representatives and drivers were consulted to seek their views on the Hackney Carriage trade in Maidstone. The principal issues which were raised by the trade were:

- Lack of space on the King Street rank
- Concern regarding poor English language skills amongst some new drivers
- The trade concentrates on the ranks at High Street / King Street (outside Lush), King Street and Maidstone East Railways station. It is felt, by the trade, that there is no demand at the other ranks and that they are effectively redundant.

Mystery Shopper Surveys

Mystery Shopper surveys were undertaken to test willingness of drivers to accept short distance fares and to survey the passenger experience using Hackney Carriages and private hire vehicles in Maidstone. The mystery shopper surveys incorporated solo passengers, wheelchair users and a guide dog user survey. Both Hackney Carriages and private hire vehicles were surveyed in the mystery shopper survey. Generally, the passenger experience was good and the Hackney Carriages surveyed were clean, in good condition and well driven. Most drivers communicated well. However, there were some drivers who appeared unhappy with accepting a short distance hire. Wheelchair test purchases were generally successful and drivers helpful. However, one driver seemed unhappy with carrying a wheelchair bound passenger and boarded the wheelchair by boarding the passenger in the wheelchair, without using ramps and failed to secure the wheelchair for the journey.

All test purchases with a guide dog were successful and in all cases, drivers offered suitable assistance.

There were no instances of refusals or over charging.

Conclusions

The primary purpose of this study is to determine whether there is evidence of significant unmet demand. The conclusion is that there is **no significant unmet demand**.

Users and stakeholders are generally content with the service provided by Hackney Carriages.

There is little evidence of unmet demand at present and the level is below that which would be considered to be significant. Therefore, the survey has concluded that there is **no significant unmet demand** for Hackney Carriages in Maidstone .

There is adequate spare capacity in the fleet to cater for short term fluctuations in demand, such as bank holidays and end of month weekends. There is adequate capacity in the fleet to cater for further growth in demand should it occur. There appears to be more Hackney Carriages in the fleet in Maidstone, than could be sustained by rank hires alone.

There is no significant unmet demand. Therefore, there is no compelling need to increase the number of Hackney Carriage Licences, on the basis of public benefit.

On this basis the authority has discretion in its hackney licensing policy and may either:

- Maintain the current limit
- Issue any number of additional plates as it sees fit,
- Remove the numerical limit

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1 STUDY OBJECTIVES

1.1 General

This study has been conducted by Vector Transport Consultancy on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council.

The study is intended to fulfil the requirements of Section 16 of the 1985 Transport Act and to address the questions raised in the Department for Transport (DfT) 2010 Best Practice Guidance.

The principle objectives of the study include:

- Consultation with major stakeholders
- Consultation with the trade
- Consultation with the public
- Taxi rank surveys

In addition, a mystery shopper survey was undertaken to test the level of service provided by Hackney Carriages at ranks in Maidstone, for various types of user and to test acceptance of short distance journeys.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Definitions

This report refers to Taxis, Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles. Both Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles are licensed to operate within the Maidstone Council area.

Hackney Carriages may be hired in three ways. These are; on street hailing, hire at a taxi rank and by telephone or taxi office booking.

Private Hire Vehicles may only be hired through advance booking. This is generally done by telephone or at a Private Hire Vehicle operator's office.

It is common for members of the public to have limited knowledge of the difference between Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles. Indeed, both types of licensed vehicles are frequently referred to collectively as Taxis. In this report, the term Licensed Vehicle(s) is used as a generic term to encompass both Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles, though where appropriate, the specific type of licensed vehicle is identified.

Licensed Vehicle operations can often include:

- Independent (often sole trader) owner drivers who only operate at times and on days of their choosing;
- 'Independents' who share their vehicle with one or occasionally more than one other licensed drivers, who do not have a vehicle of their own, meaning the one vehicle can be available up to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
- Radio / PDA booking circuits, taking bookings up to 24 hours a day, which they pass on to self-employed drivers that sign up to the circuit or sometimes drivers that join as a shareholder, where the circuit operates as a co-operative. The times drivers operate relate to the demands on the circuit. It's also possible that some drivers are members of more than 1 radio circuit;
- Limited companies operating either Hackney Carriage, PHV based services or
- Both using their own vehicles and employing drivers to operate them on their behalf.

Maidstone Council is the licensing authority for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire operators, drivers and vehicles within their area. They are able to specify the standards they require (over and above the legal minima) for operators, drivers and vehicles, they can regulate Hackney Carriage fares and specify the number of Hackney licenses they issue.

2.2 DfT guidance on Unmet Demand surveys

In 2006 the Department for Transport (DfT) issued Good Practice Guidance to licensing authorities on the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) industry. This guidance was updated in 2010. It includes advice on the measurement of unmet demand.

Significant Unmet Demand (SUD) has two components:

- Observed or 'patent' demand – that which is directly observable
- Latent or 'suppressed' demand – that which is released by additional supply.

Where a limit has been imposed, the DfT recommend that surveys be repeated every three years to confirm that unmet demand had not arisen.

2.3 Observed unmet demand

Observed, or patent unmet demand is determined from direct observation of passenger waiting times at representative taxi ranks and at representative times of day. Where the supply of taxis at a particular time and location is inadequate, intending passengers will have to wait until a taxi arrives. Where this waiting time becomes excessive there is unmet demand and where this occurs at a number of locations and for lengthy periods it constitutes Significant Unmet Demand.

2.4 Latent unmet demand

Where potential passengers are deterred from using taxis through the assumption or knowledge that waiting times will be high, these passengers may decide not to travel or use an alternative means of transport. These passengers will not feature in the taxi rank surveys. Therefore to get an estimate of this latent demand an alternative form of survey is required. This generally consists of face to face interviews with pedestrians to enquire about their experience in hiring and using taxis. Such a survey can also provide other information on taxi use.

2.5 Other Surveys

The DfT guidance also recommends that stakeholders such as taxi providers and representatives of groups which rely heavily on taxis are contacted for their opinions on the number of taxis and the possible impact of licence quantity controls.

2.6 Breakdown of the Hackney Carriage trade

Markets and hire methods typically targeted by Hackneys, in the UK, include:

- Public, private and unofficial ranks;
- Flag down/on-street;
- Telephone / radio bookings
- Contract work for statutory authorities such as for education authorities or social services;
- Commercial contract work;
- One off/occasional private hire for individuals or organisations;
- Evening leisure;
- Daytime shopping/social/business;
- Tourism
- Various combinations of the above that 'fit together' in time

Practices vary by location. For example, in some locations, a large proportion of work is serviced by radio bookings or bookings provided through pda's or mobile phone apps, whereas in other areas, work is based on rank based hire.

In some areas almost all of the trade may focus on one particular aspect of the market at the same time (i.e. school contracts) causing there to be unmet demands in other parts of the market at that time.

The market for taxis – both Private Hire Vehicles and Hackneys is therefore influenced by many factors – both on the demand and the supply side. Demand, for example, is influenced by:

- The overall population,
- The extent of car ownership,
- Availability of other transport including public, community and private transport,
- Levels of mobility impairment and disability,.
- Seasonality,

The extent and hours of the night time economy will affect demand. The market will also be influenced by the supply of Hackney and PHVs, in terms of the quality, affordability and quantity of provision – both perceived and actual.

3 BACKGROUND TO TAXI LICENSING IN MAIDSTONE

3.1 The Maidstone Borough Council area

The mid 2017 population estimate for Maidstone is 167,730. The Borough is home to 9.1 per cent of the Kent and Medway population (2015 Mid Year Estimate) and borders Swale, Ashford, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Malling Boroughs and Medway Unitary Authority.. Maidstone town centre has an active night time economy.

3.2 Council policy context

The Local Transport Plan for Tunbridge Wells (Kent Local Transport Plan 4: Delivering Growth without Gridlock 2016–2031) makes no mention of the potential role that licensed vehicles may play in local transport. However, the Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy 2011 – 2031 does mention the role that licensed vehicles play towards reducing single car occupancy.

3.3 Licensed vehicle statistics

Historic licensed vehicle numbers are presented in Table 1. This enables a comparison between Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle numbers to be made. Data has been obtained from Department for Transport Statistics. No 2009 data was available.

Year	Hackney Carriages	Private Hire Vehicles	Total licensed vehicles	Driver numbers
2005	39	320	359	450
2007	45	365	410	398
2011	48	287	335	389
2013	48	223	271	340
2015	48	254	302	426
2017	48	236	384	392
2018	48	201	249	346

Table 1 - Historic Licence information

Drivers in Maidstone Borough may be licensed to drive Hackney Carriages, Private Hire Vehicles or Dual Licensed, to drive both types of licensed vehicles. The ratio of drivers to vehicles, in 2018, was 1.39. This statistic corroborates trade feedback, that there is some multi-shift operation of licensed vehicles. It was noted that there was an anomaly in the historic data from 2007, which suggest that there were more licensed vehicles than drivers.

The number of licensed drivers had reduced in recent years. Similarly, the number of private hire vehicles had reduced, owing to fewer private hire vehicles. This factor may reduce the number of licensed vehicles available for hire in Maidstone. However, it may be the case that private hire operators fulfil more hires using licensed vehicles

The proportion of Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles, per 1,000 population (mid 2017 values), for all authorities in the South East region, is presented in Table 2 and Figure 1. Authorities are grouped by those which limit the number of Hackney Carriages and those which do not. These groups are each ordered in terms of increasing proportions of total licensed vehicles per 1,000 population. Maidstone has a relatively low proportion of Hackney Carriages per 1,000 population, compared with other authority areas which apply a limit. Maidstone, along with Aylesbury Vale, Test Valley and Havant, shares the lowest proportion at 0.3 per 1,000 population. The proportion of Hackney Carriages is lower in Maidstone, than the ratios generally observed in areas which do not limit.

Table 2 - Proportions of licensed vehicles per 1,000 population

Licensing Area	Population (mid-2017 estimate)	Hackney Carriages	Private Hire Vehicles	Total licenced vehicles	Hackney Carriages per 1,000 population	Private Hire Vehicles per 1,000 population	Total licenced vehicles per 1,000 population
Maidstone [Limited]	167,730	48	201	249	0.3	1.2	1.5
Dover [Limited]	115,803	69	139	208	0.6	1.2	1.8
West Berkshire [Limited]	158,473	180	154	334	1.1	1.0	2.1
Test Valley [Limited]	123,957	39	225	264	0.3	1.8	2.1
Tunbridge Wells [Limited]	118,061	107	166	273	0.9	1.4	2.3
Mid Sussex [Limited]	148,345	154	230	384	1.0	1.6	2.6
Milton Keynes [Limited]	267,521	206	673	879	0.8	2.5	3.3
Brighton and Hove [Limited]	288,155	570	480	1,050	2.0	1.7	3.6
Southampton [Limited]	252,359	283	695	978	1.1	2.8	3.9
Thanet [Limited]	141,337	108	446	554	0.8	3.2	3.9
Oxford [Limited]	154,582	107	533	640	0.7	3.4	4.1
Slough [Limited]	148,768	107	614	721	0.7	4.1	4.8
Reading [Limited]	163,075	216	657	873	1.3	4.0	5.4
Portsmouth [Limited]	214,718	234	1,031	1,265	1.1	4.8	5.9
Crawley [Limited]	111,664	123	657	780	1.1	5.9	7.0
Havant [Limited]	125,065	40	857	897	0.3	6.9	7.2
Aylesbury Vale [Limited]	196,020	56	1,366	1,422	0.3	7.0	7.3
Wokingham [No Limit]	164,980	88	127	215	0.5	0.8	1.3
Horsham [No Limit]	140,142	51	153	204	0.4	1.1	1.5
Arun [No Limit]	158,657	206	25	231	1.3	0.2	1.5
Spelthorne [No Limit]	99,120	79	81	160	0.8	0.8	1.6
Ashford [No Limit]	127,527	108	99	207	0.8	0.8	1.6
Rother [No Limit]	94,997	110	50	160	1.2	0.5	1.7
Gravesham [No Limit]	106,121	155	31	186	1.5	0.3	1.8
Isle of Wight [No Limit]	140,984	206	52	258	1.5	0.4	1.8
Tandridge [No Limit]	87,297	120	42	162	1.4	0.5	1.9
Swale [No Limit]	146,694	214	69	283	1.5	0.5	1.9
Gosport [No Limit]	85,509	69	101	170	0.8	1.2	2.0
Runnymede [No Limit]	86,882	119	70	189	1.4	0.8	2.2
Fareham [No Limit]	116,219	186	68	254	1.6	0.6	2.2
Basingstoke and Deane [No Limit]	175,337	69	316	385	0.4	1.8	2.2
Surrey Heath [No Limit]	88,765	106	90	196	1.2	1.0	2.2
Mole Valley [No Limit]	87,128	114	85	199	1.3	1.0	2.3
Waverley [No Limit]	125,010	218	81	299	1.7	0.6	2.4
West Oxfordshire [No Limit]	109,266	143	120	263	1.3	1.1	2.4
Adur [No Limit]	63,721	64	91	155	1.0	1.4	2.4
Bracknell Forest [No Limit]	120,377	86	207	293	0.7	1.7	2.4
Sevenoaks [No Limit]	119,429	189	102	291	1.6	0.9	2.4
Rushmoor [No Limit]	95,817	124	113	237	1.3	1.2	2.5
Worthing [No Limit]	109,632	74	204	278	0.7	1.9	2.5
Folkestone and Hythe [No Limit]	111,427	215	72	287	1.9	0.6	2.6
New Forest [No Limit]	179,590	140	329	469	0.8	1.8	2.6
Chichester [No Limit]	120,192	33	285	318	0.3	2.4	2.6
South Bucks [No Limit]	69,785	88	97	185	1.3	1.4	2.7
Hart [No Limit]	95,465	185	72	257	1.9	0.8	2.7
Medway [No Limit]	277,616	501	251	752	1.8	0.9	2.7
Cherwell [No Limit]	147,602	146	262	408	1.0	1.8	2.8
East Hampshire [No Limit]	119,392	102	234	336	0.9	2.0	2.8
Winchester [No Limit]	123,879	141	208	349	1.1	1.7	2.8
Wealden [No Limit]	158,941	160	294	454	1.0	1.8	2.9
Lewes [No Limit]	102,257	172	124	296	1.7	1.2	2.9
Chiltern [No Limit]	95,355	143	135	278	1.5	1.4	2.9
Wycombe [No Limit]	174,758	86	437	523	0.5	2.5	3.0
Dartford [No Limit]	107,516	216	111	327	2.0	1.0	3.0
Canterbury [No Limit]	164,100	267	242	509	1.6	1.5	3.1
Vale of White Horse [No Limit]	131,227	317	95	412	2.4	0.7	3.1
Guildford [No Limit]	147,777	143	330	473	1.0	2.2	3.2
Elmbridge [No Limit]	136,379	187	290	477	1.4	2.1	3.5
Eastleigh [No Limit]	130,498	102	431	533	0.8	3.3	4.1
Hastings [No Limit]	92,813	55	338	393	0.6	3.6	4.2
Tonbridge and Malling [No Limit]	128,891	209	422	631	1.6	3.3	4.9
Eastbourne [No Limit]	103,251	118	428	546	1.1	4.1	5.3
South Oxfordshire [No Limit]	139,767	689	175	864	4.9	1.3	6.2
Epsom and Ewell [No Limit]	79,451	59	466	525	0.7	5.9	6.6
Woking [No Limit]	101,129	155	541	696	1.5	5.3	6.9
Reigate and Banstead [No Limit]	146,383	117	907	1,024	0.8	6.2	7.0
Windsor and Maidenhead [No Limit]	150,140	178	1,022	1,200	1.2	6.8	8.0

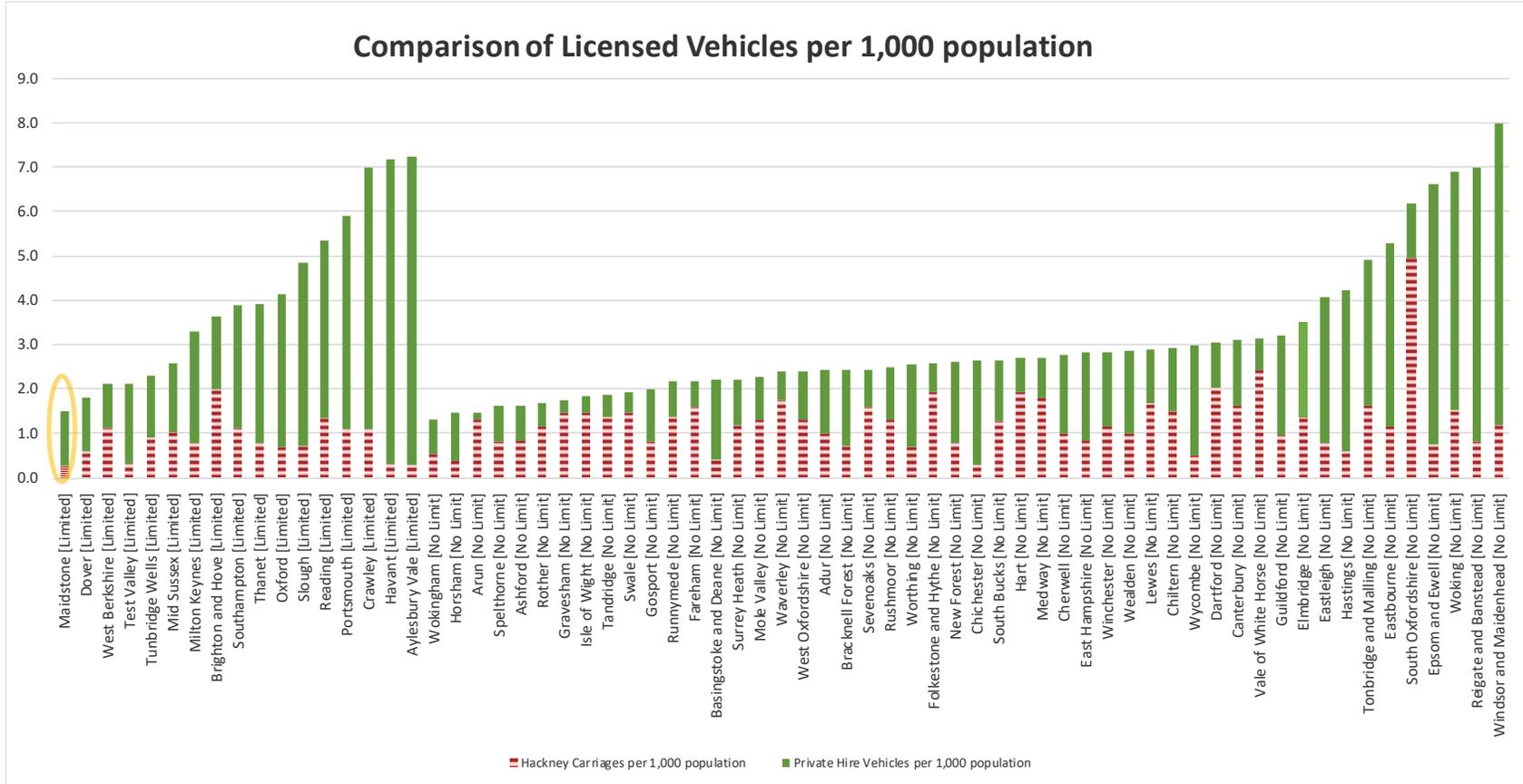


Figure 1 - Licensed Vehicles per 1,000 population

3.4 Rail Passenger growth

Interchange with rail services can be a significant generator of demand for Hackney Carriage services. Therefore, it is worth reviewing changes in rail patronage in railway stations serviced by Hackney Carriages. The two ranks in Maidstone which serve railway stations are Maidstone East Railway Station, and Maidstone West Railway Station. The volume of hires which Hackney Carriage drivers, waiting on the station ranks, can expect, would be anticipated to relate to the volume of passengers passing through the station.

Historic passenger volume trends are presented in Table 3 and Figure 2.

Total annual passenger entries and exits		
Year	Railway station	
	Maidstone East	Maidstone West
2006 - 7	1,877,269	415,298
2007 - 8	1,978,547	550,875
2008 - 9	2,088,582	562,943
2009 - 10	1,889,886	372,120
2010 - 11	1,839,396	391,745
2011 - 12	1,805,500	495,896
2012 - 13	1,343,900	834,293
2013 - 14	1,339,752	831,718
2014 - 15	1,358,356	843,268
2015 - 16	1,337,663	830,421
2016 - 17	1,363,702	846,586
2017 - 18	1,412,958	877,164

Table 3 - Historic Rail Passenger Volumes

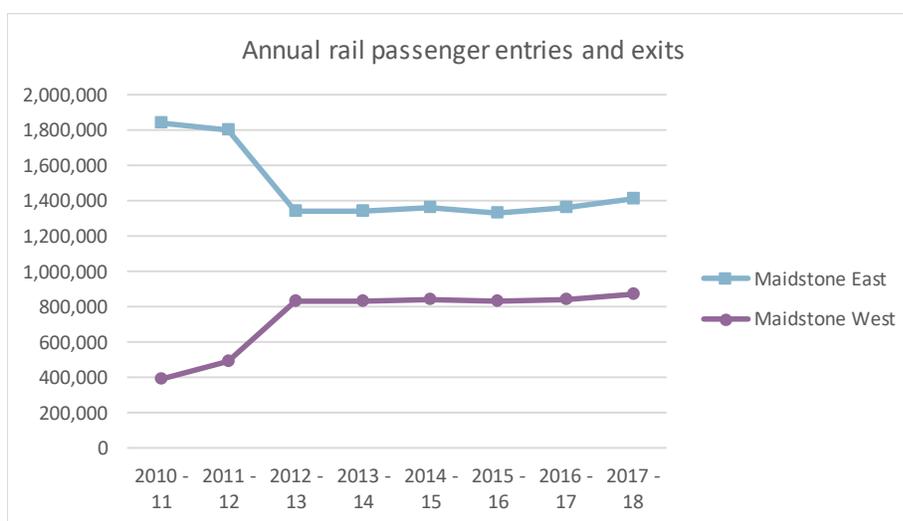


Figure 2 – Profile of annual rail passengers

The pattern of change at both stations exhibited modest growth from 2012

3.5 Fares comparison

Private Hire and Taxi Monthly magazine publish monthly league tables of the fares in Licensing Authorities in the UK. The Tariff 1 fares for a two mile journey (distance costs only) are compared and ranked. The higher the ranking, the more expensive the journey, compared with other authorities. The August 2019 table (the latest available at the time of preparation of this report) indicated that the fares in Maidstone were ranked 72 out of 363 authorities listed, with a fare of £6.50.

In terms of national fares, the highest comparable fare was £10.60 and the lowest £4.20. The mid ranked (position 181) fare was £5.90.

4 TAXI RANK SURVEYS

4.1 Current taxi ranks

There were twelve taxi ranking locations surveyed in Maidstone. The locations of the ranks surveyed were as follows:

- King Street
- King Street at High Street (outside Lush)
- High Street HSBC (informal night time rank)
- High Street Lower (opposite Players)
- Barker Road
- Pudding Lane
- St Faiths Street
- Earl Street Lower
- Earl Street Upper
- Maidstone East
- Maidstone West
- County Hall (Week Street)

No activity was observed at Barker Road, Pudding Lane, St Faiths Street, Earl Street Lower and Maidstone West. The rank space at Maidstone West was persistently full of parked vehicles.

Low levels of activity were observed at King Street HSBC, High Street Lower and Earl Street Upper. For most of the rank operational time, the rank on High Street Lower was full of parked vehicles. On Saturday evening, some of those vehicles were issued with parking tickets.

The majority of Hackney Carriage hires occurred at the rank on King Street, at the junction with the High Street, outside the Lush shop. This rank accounted for 75% of all observed hires.

The taxi ranks were surveyed, using video cameras fixed to nearby lamp posts and sign posts, from Thursday morning (13th June 2019) to the following Sunday morning (16th June 2019), in order to capture the busiest periods of the week, along with quiet periods. This ensured that if there is any unmet demand that these are the days when this was most likely to be evident, as passenger waiting delays.

For most of the three days observed, passenger queuing was infrequent. There were no persistent queues which formed, to wait for Hackney Carriages at ranks.

4.2 Rank survey results

Full details of tabulated arrival frequencies and waiting times for Hackney Carriages and passengers are presented in Appendix A. Summary results are presented below.

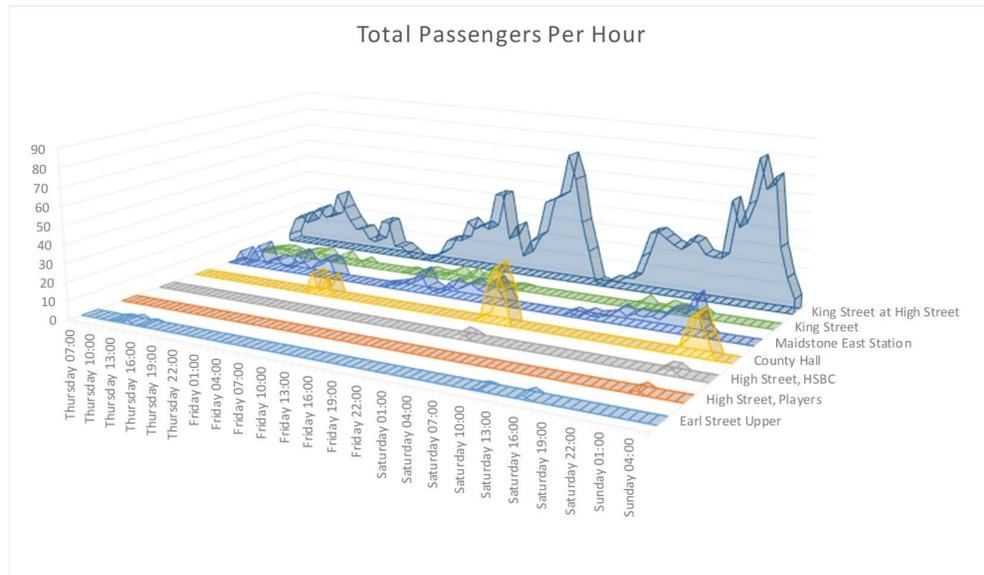


Figure 3 - Passengers per hour at each rank

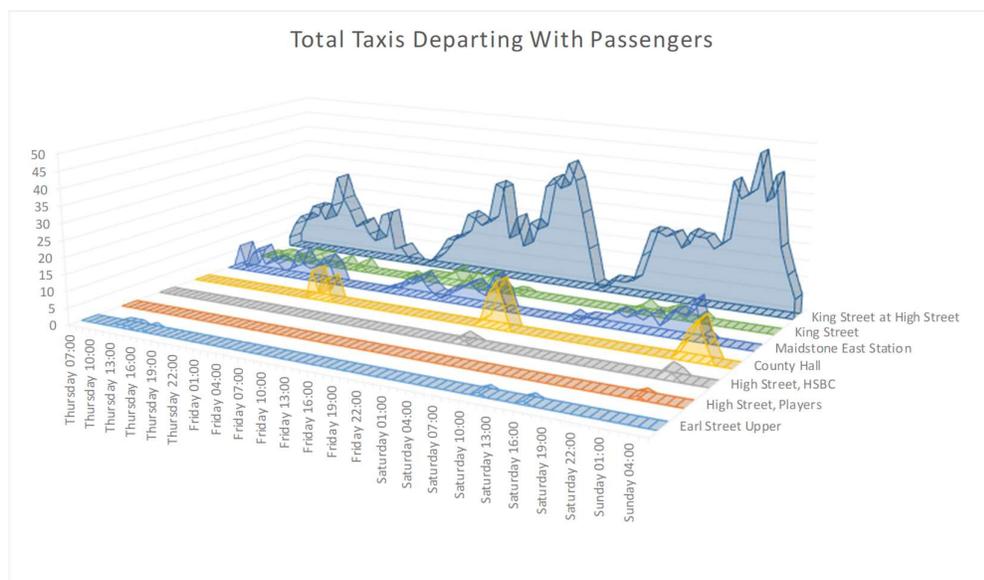


Figure 4 - Hackney Carriages per hour (with passengers)

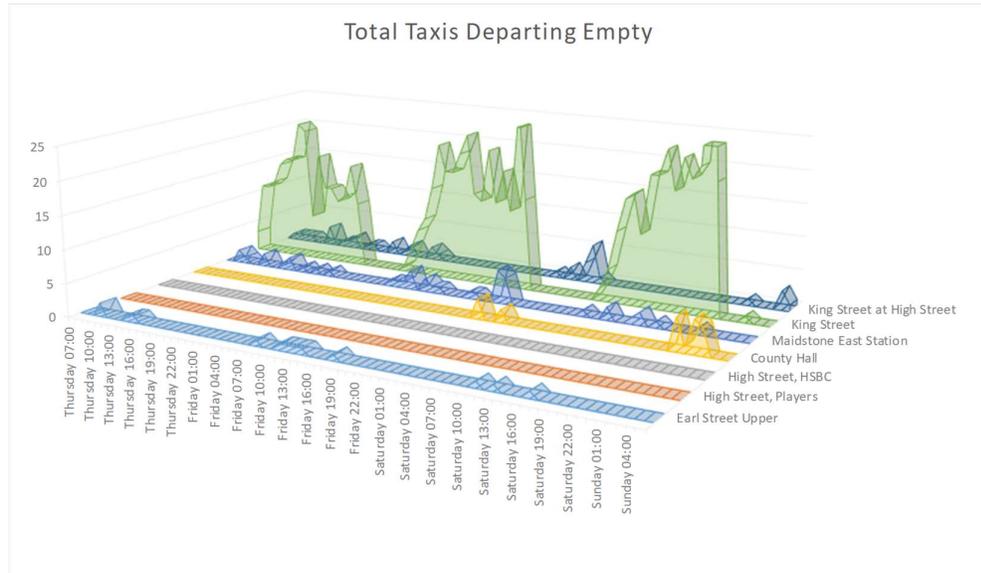


Figure 5 - Empty Hackney Carriage Departures from each rank

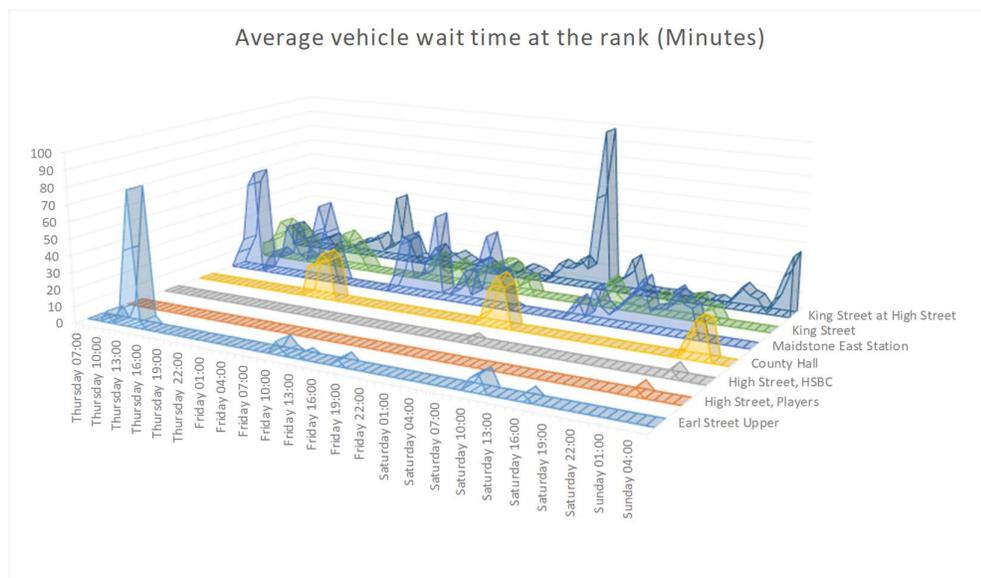


Figure 6 - Average time each vehicle spends waiting at the rank each hour

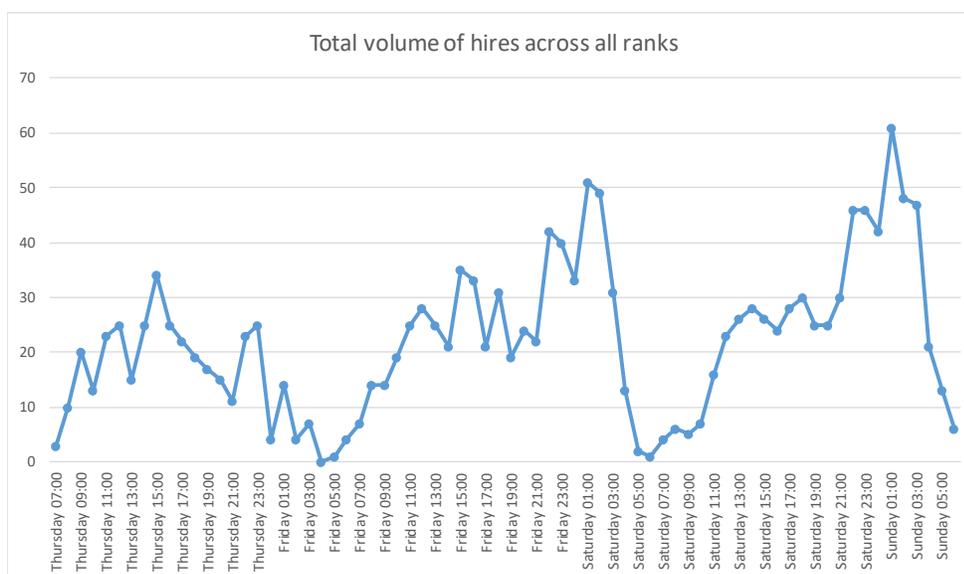


Figure 7 – Total volume of hires aggregated across all ranks per hour

Table 4 – Summary totals Thursday to Friday

Rank location	Total taxis departing the ranks empty	Total taxis departing the ranks with passengers	Total taxis departing the ranks	Total passengers departing the ranks	Average passengers per taxi	Average vehicle wait time at the ranks per taxi (minutes)
Total for all locations	258	359	617	474	1.3	13
Earl Street Upper	4	4	8	5	1.3	29
High Street, Players	0	0	0	0	0.0	0
High Street, HSBC	0	0	0	0	0.0	0
County Hall	0	18	18	24	1.3	23
Maidstone East Station	11	78	89	104	1.3	23
King Street	223	28	251	36	1.3	13
King Street at High Street	20	231	251	305	1.3	7

Table 5 – Summary totals – Friday to Saturday

Rank location	Total taxis departing the ranks empty	Total taxis departing the ranks with passengers	Total taxis departing the ranks	Total passengers departing the ranks	Average passengers per taxi	Average vehicle wait time at the ranks per taxi (minutes)
Total for all locations	311	600	911	889	1.5	11
Earl Street Upper	6	0	6	0	0.0	2
High Street, Players	0	0	0	0	0.0	0
High Street, HSBC	0	3	3	5	1.7	1
County Hall	5	33	38	74	2.2	23
Maidstone East Station	21	74	95	99	1.3	20
King Street	265	33	298	41	1.2	10
King Street at High Street	14	457	471	670	1.5	8

Table 6 - Summary totals –Saturday to Sunday

Rank location	Total taxis departing the ranks empty	Total taxis departing the ranks with passengers	Total taxis departing the ranks	Total passengers departing the ranks	Average passengers per taxi	Average vehicle wait time at the ranks per taxi (minutes)
Total for all locations	302	633	935	978	1.5	9
Earl Street Upper	3	2	5	3	1.5	5
High Street, Players	0	1	1	2	2.0	5
High Street, HSBC	0	5	5	6	1.2	2
County Hall	15	30	45	57	1.9	16
Maidstone East Station	8	76	84	113	1.5	17
King Street	271	14	285	21	1.5	9
King Street at High Street	5	505	510	776	1.5	7

Table 7 – Summary totals for all three days surveyed, Thursday to Sunday

Rank location	Total taxis departing the ranks empty	Total taxis departing the ranks with passengers	Total taxis departing the ranks	Total passengers departing the ranks	Average passengers per taxi
Total for all locations	871	1592	2463	2341	1.5
Earl Street Upper	13	6	19	8	1.3
High Street, Players	0	1	1	2	2.0
High Street, HSBC	0	8	8	11	1.4
County Hall	20	81	101	155	1.9
Maidstone East Station	40	228	268	316	1.4
King Street	759	75	834	98	1.3
King Street at High Street	39	1193	1232	1751	1.5

4.3 Commentary on results

The rank on King Street, at the junction with the High Street, accounted for 75% of all hires. The other rank on King Street functions primarily as a feeder rank for the King Street / High Street rank. Therefore, most of the Hackney Carriages departing the rank on King Street, departed the rank empty, to move on to the King Street / High Street rank.

Whilst the King Street / High Street rank has two spaces for waiting Hackney Carriages, it was common practice for Hackney Carriages to move off the rank on King Street en-masse late at night (around 23:30) each night and all then queue on the King Street / High Street rank, occupying the road space behind and opposite the rank. .

The volume of hires observed on Thursday was the lowest of the three days observed. The volume of hires on Friday and Saturday were similar. However, there was a higher peak in demand on Saturday night.

The profile suggests an active night time economy.

4.4 Fleet deployment profile

Sample observations were undertaken, during each hour that each rank was active, to estimate the average time between a Hackney Carriage leaving the rank, following a hire and returning to the rear of the rank. This information, coupled with the hourly volume of hires, enables an estimate of how many Hackney Carriages were active, but not waiting at the rank. A representative estimate of the number of Hackney Carriages active but not at the rank, was calculated for each hour, for each active rank.

To illustrate this process, the following example is used. Say the average time taken to return to a rank, following a hire, is 18 minutes. At the rank, there are 5 hires per hour. Therefore, on average, a hire occurs every 12 minutes (5 per hour). In this example, at the start of the hour, the first hire occurs. After 12 minutes, the second hire occurs, at this point, the first vehicle hired has not yet returned to the rank. So, once the second hired vehicle has left the rank, two vehicles are travelling and not at the rank. After 18 minutes, the first vehicle returns to the rank, leaving one vehicle travelling and not at the rank. After 24 minutes total elapsed time, the next hire occurs and so, once again, two vehicles are travelling and not at the rank. This process continues and the number of vehicles travelling, having been hired, varies between one and two. An average number of vehicles active, away from the rank can thus be calculated as:

$$\frac{(\text{number of hires per period}) \times (\text{average return time, in minutes})}{(\text{length of period in minutes})}$$

$$= \frac{5 \times 18}{60}$$

=1.5 Hackney Carriages (average)

This calculated number of Hackney Carriages active and away from the rank, can be added to the average number of Hackney Carriages waiting at the rank, to derive the number of Hackney Carriages working from each rank, in each hour.

The calculated number of Hackney Carriages working from each rank, was aggregated across all ranks, for each hour observed.

The number of Hackney Carriages working in each hour is presented in Figure 8
The proportion of the fleet working in each hour is presented in Figure 9.

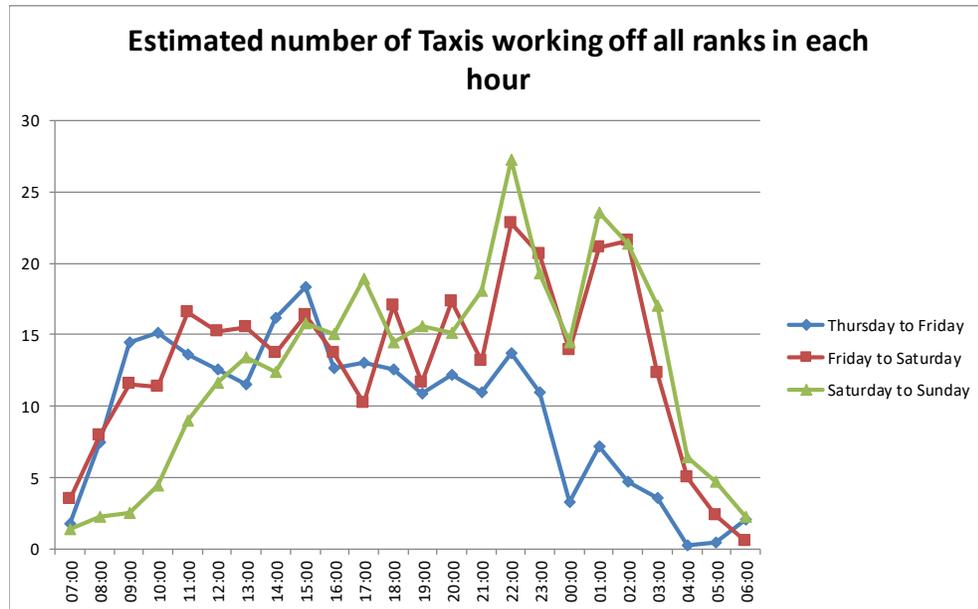


Figure 8 - Estimated number of Hackney Carriages working each hour

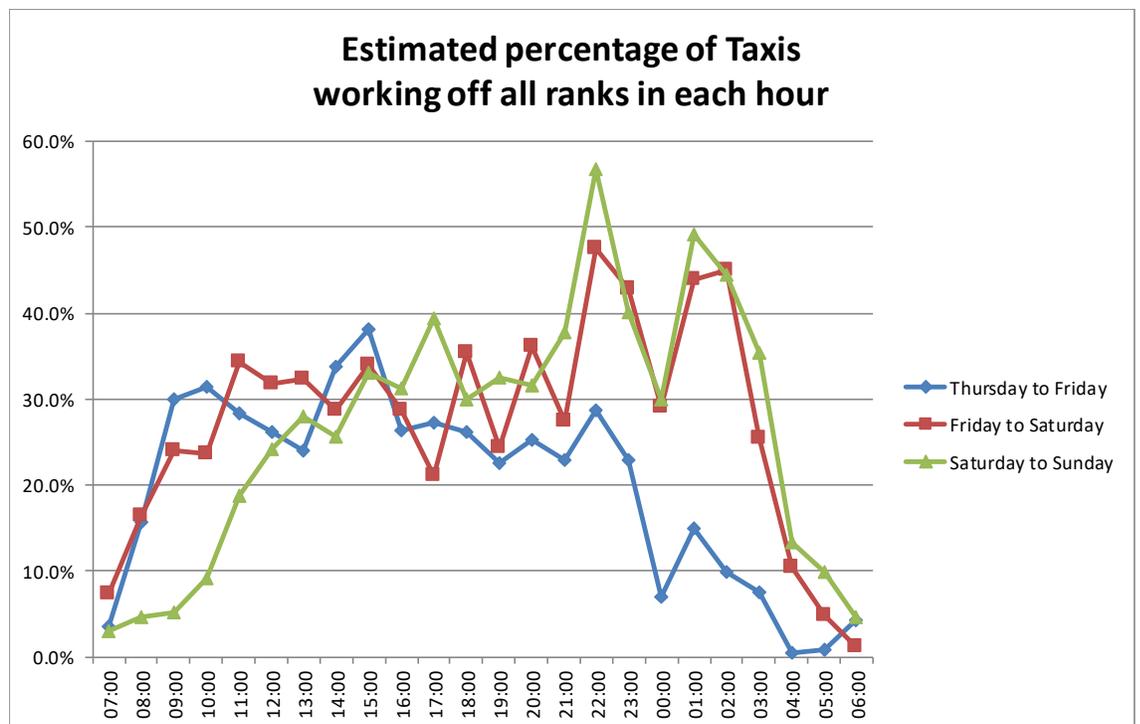


Figure 9 - Estimated proportion of the Hackney Carriage fleet working each hour

As one may expect, the greatest proportion of the fleet was operating on Saturday night. The proportion of the fleet operating during the morning and afternoon on Thursday and Friday was consistent with the responses provided by trade

feedback. The proportion of the fleet operating on Thursday day time was greater than Thursday night time, which was reflected in the trade feedback.

The proportions suggest that the fleet is operating with some multi-shifting and operating well within capacity. There would be scope for the existing fleet to cater for increased demand, through additional drivers working additional shifts, should levels of demand increase.

The total number of hires observed over the three days of survey, was 1,592. If we divide this total by the 48 Hackney Carriages in the fleet, this averages 33 hires per vehicle over three days. This level of activity (a little more than one hire per hour, assuming average shift durations of around 8 to 10 hours). This level of activity would not be sufficient to sustain the full Hackney Carriage fleet, working full time, on rank based hires alone. Therefore it is likely that either some of the trade are operating on a part time basis, or some also obtain hires through pre-booking, either directly or through a private hire operator.

Using the rank working profile, we can determine the average number of Hackney Carriages working at the ranks during each hour. If we sum these values over the whole day, we can determine an aggregate value for Hackney Carriage vehicle hours worked per day. When we compare this with the number of hires per day, we can determine the average number of hires per hour over the course of each day. These values are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 - Estimated average hourly hires per vehicle each day

Estimated total vehicle - hours of Hackney Carriages working off the ranks	230	315	306
Total hires per day	359	600	633
Average hires per hour per vehicle	1.6	1.9	2.1

The average hires per hour values are higher than would be suggested by dividing the total observed hires by the number of vehicles in the fleet, indicating that some Hackney Carriages were not operating from the ranks.

4.5 Passenger queuing

There were 70 occasions when passengers were observed waiting for Hackney Carriages to arrive at ranks. 118 passengers were affected. Passenger waiting occurred at Maidstone East Railway Station, King Street / High Street and County Hall locations.

The passenger waiting was generally individual occurrences, on isolated occasions. No large and persistent passenger queues formed at any rank.

The incidence of queuing at ranks around Maidstone is taken into account when calculating the Index of Significant Unmet Demand (ISUD).

4.6 Wheelchair users

The number of wheelchair users obtaining Hackney Carriages at ranks, was recorded. This provides a useful insight into how much reliance wheel chair users place on obtaining Hackney Carriages without pre-booking the service.

Six wheelchair user hires were observed. All of the hires occurred on the King Street / High Street rank.

5 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

5.1 Public consultation questionnaires

A public attitude survey was undertaken in Maidstone between the 3rd and 4th July 2019. 215 people were interviewed. In addition, a further 36 responses were collected via an online survey.

The terms Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle are used in relation to these specific vehicle types.

In order to engage participants in the survey, pedestrians passing by in the street were initially asked if they had made one or more trips by taxi in Maidstone in the last three months. Responses were as follows:

Yes	76%
No	24%

The responses relate to those responses from passers by who were persuaded to answer subsequent questions. Many passers by, especially those who answered 'no', to the initial question, refused to participate in the survey. Those who had used a licensed vehicle in the last three months were more inclined to answer further questions. Hence, the survey reflects the views of licensed vehicle users more than the population as a whole.

The results of the online survey indicated that 86% of respondents had used a licensed vehicle in the last 3 months.

In order to establish a level of respondents' knowledge, regarding differences between how Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles may be hired, the questionnaire included questions asking respondents to indicate the ways in which a Private Hire Vehicle and a Hackney Carriage may be hired. 14% of face to face respondents indicated methods other than pre-booking, as ways in which to hire a Private Hire Vehicle. 9% of online respondents indicated invalid means of hiring private hire vehicles. The other methods indicated included hailing a passing vehicle, hiring a Private Hire Vehicle waiting on the street or in a car park and hiring one off a rank. In comparison with other surveys, this result demonstrates a relatively good understanding of the differences between Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles.

The differences between how each type of licensed vehicle may be hired, were explained to respondents who chose ineligible means of hire.

Results of the survey are presented in the following tables.

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, was this a Hackney Carriage or a Private Hire Vehicle?

Response	Face to face survey	Online survey
Hackney Carriage	15%	68%
Private Hire Vehicle	62%	32%
Don't know	23%	

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, how did you obtain this hire? (Face to face survey)

	Last trip by Hackney Carriage	Last trip by Private Hire Vehicle	Don't know which type of vehicle used for last trip
Hired at a rank	8%	4%	
Hailed in the street	22%		17%
Booked by telephone	64%	88%	77%
Using a freephone			
Book online or via a mobile app	6%	8%	6%

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, how did you obtain this hire? (Online survey)

	Last trip by Hackney Carriage	Last trip by Private Hire Vehicle	Don't know which type of vehicle used for last trip
Hired at a rank	80%	5%	
Hailed in the street	20%	5%	
Booked by telephone		55%	
Using a freephone		35%	
Book online or via a mobile app			

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, what was the purpose of that journey? (Face to face survey)

	Last trip by Hackney Carriage	Last trip by Private Hire Vehicle	Don't know which type of vehicle used for last trip
Medical	2%	28%	3%
Leisure	64%	64%	70%
Work	22%	8%	13%
Education	3%		
Shopping	9%		14%

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, what was the purpose of that journey? (Online survey)

	Last trip by Hackney Carriage	Last trip by Private Hire Vehicle	Don't know which type of vehicle used for last trip
Medical		10%	
Leisure	67%	80%	
Work	33%	5%	
Education			
Shopping		5%	

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, what was the approximate time of day? (Face to face survey)

	Last trip by Hackney Carriage	Last trip by Private Hire Vehicle	Don't know which type of vehicle used for last trip
Morning	8%	28%	
Afternoon	20%	16%	
Evening	58%	44%	
Night	14%	12%	

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, what was the approximate time of day? (Online survey)

	Last trip by Hackney Carriage	Last trip by Private Hire Vehicle	Don't know which type of vehicle used for last trip
Morning		20%	
Afternoon	20%	15%	
Evening	40%	35%	
Night	40%	30%	

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, could you rate the following aspects of the trip with a rating of 1 to 5? With 1 being poor and 5 being very good. (Face to face survey)

Aspect	Last trip by Hackney Carriage	Last trip by Private Hire Vehicle	Don't know which type of vehicle used for last trip
Cleanliness of the interior	4.2	3.8	4.0
Cleanliness of the exterior	4.0	3.8	4.3
General condition	3.9	3.9	4.2
Driver helpfulness	4.1	3.9	4.0
Driver appearance	4.2	3.8	4.0

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, could you rate the following aspects of the trip with a rating of 1 to 5? With 1 being poor and 5 being very good. (Online survey)

Aspect	Last trip by Hackney Carriage	Last trip by Private Hire Vehicle	Don't know which type of vehicle used for last trip
Cleanliness of the interior	3.5	4.1	
Cleanliness of the exterior	3.7	4.3	
General condition	3.5	4.2	
Driver helpfulness	3.3	3.9	
Driver appearance	3.2	4.0	

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, how much was the fare paid? (Face to face survey)

	Last trip by Hackney Carriage	Last trip by Private Hire Vehicle	Don't know which type of vehicle used for last trip
Average of fares paid	£8.68	£9.55	£5.48

Regarding your last trip in a licensed vehicle, how much was the fare paid? (Online survey)

	Last trip by Hackney Carriage	Last trip by Private Hire Vehicle	Don't know which type of vehicle used for last trip
Average of fares paid	£6.15£8.47	£11.01	£7.65

Do you consider yourself to have a mobility impairment, or do you know someone who has a mobility impairment?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Yes	4%	22%
No	96%	78%

Have you or anyone you know faced difficulty with availability of a taxis or private hire vehicles, owing to a mobility impairment? For example, requiring a wheelchair accessible vehicle or an accessible vehicle, or associated with a visual impairment.

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Yes	0%	25%
No	100%	75%

Difficulties faced related to some mobility impaired people facing difficulties getting in and out of vehicles unassisted and wheelchair users experiencing drivers trying to ignore their presence, in the hope that they would go to another vehicle.

Regarding the number of Hackney Carriages in Maidstone, do you feel that there are:

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Not enough	2%	25%
About the right number	94%	31%
Too many	3%	28%
Don't know / no opinion	1%	16%

What improvements would you like to see to Hackney Carriage services in Maidstone?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Reduced cost		17%
More Hackney Carriages available		11%
Improved driver attitude		8%
More App availability		8%
More women drivers		3%
Saloon cars		3%
Tougher entry requirements for drivers	1%	
No opinion	99%	48%

Are there any locations where you would like to see new taxi ranks?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Yes	0%	16%
No	100%	42%
Don't know / no opinion		42%

If you would like to see new taxi ranks, where should these ranks be?

Bottom of the high street
 Lockmeadow at peak times
 Top of Earl Street
 Maidstone hospital
 High street Maidstone
 Near shopping centres

How would you rate the level of service provided by Hackney Carriages in Maidstone Borough? Please rate from 1 to 5 with 1 being very poor and 5 being Very good.

The average rating from the face to face survey, was 3.7 out of 5. The average rating from the online survey was 3.5.

Please choose which one of the following features would do most to improve ranks in Maidstone?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Seating	11%	17%
Lighting	16%	3%
Shelter	8%	32%
Signage	10%	29%
Don't know / no opinion	55%	19%

What would you say is the principal factor which limits your use of Hackney Carriages?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
I own a car	17%	8%
Cost	78%	28%
Don't like taxis	5%	
Prefer to use Private Hire		8%
Unreliable service		11%
Rude drivers		3%
Use buses		3%

Would you welcome the provision of taxi marshals at ranks?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Yes	68%	50%
No	25%	22%
Don't know / no opinion	7%	28%

If you would welcome taxi marshals, what location or locations would be most appropriate for taxi marshals to operate?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
High Street		6%
King Street	2%	8%
All		3%
Maidstone East Railway Station	1%	6%

Would you welcome the provision of taxi sharing scheme in Maidstone Borough?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Yes	5%	30%
No	95%	42%
Don't know / no opinion		28%

Have you wanted to hire a Hackney Carriage in the last three months at a rank and given up or made alternative arrangements for travel because none were available?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Yes	0%	34.3%
No	100%	65.7%

If the answer to the previous question is yes, could you state where you tried to hire the Hackney Carriage?

All respondents provided valid taxi rank locations.

Have you wanted to hire a Hackney Carriage in the last three months by flagging down and given up or made alternative arrangements for travel because none were available?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Yes	0%	19.4%
No	100%	80.6%

Have you wanted to book a Hackney Carriage specifically, as opposed to a Private Hire Vehicle, by telephone or online, for immediate travel, in the last three months and had to make alternative arrangements because a Hackney Carriage was not available within a reasonable time? [Remember, this relates to Hackney Carriages not Private Hire]

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Yes	0%	14.3%
No	100%	85.7%

If the answer to the previous question is yes, how long approximately was the wait time quoted?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Up to 30 minutes		40%

30 minutes to 1 hour		0%
Over 1 hour		40%
No Hackney Carriages available		20%

Do you have regular access to a car?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Yes	83%	14%
No	17%	86%

Are you a permanent resident or student in Maidstone?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Yes	90%	83%
Student	1%	3%
No	9%	14%

Is the respondent Male 1 or Female 2

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
Male	76%	83%
Female	24%	14%
Prefer not to say		3%

What age group does the respondent fall within?

	Proportion of all face to face respondents	Proportion of all online respondents
16 – 30	5%	33%
31 – 55	54%	50%
56+	41%	17%

5.2 Comments on results

The use of licensed vehicles in the last three months, by participants in the face to face survey, was relatively high. However, there were a lot of refusals by members of the public, to be interviewed. Many of those who refused to participate answered an initial question that they had not used a licensed vehicle in the last three months.

The majority of participants were aware of the differences between Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles.

For online survey respondents, the most common means of obtaining a Hackney Carriage was from a rank. However, for face to face respondents, the most

common method given, was by telephone. Face to face respondents also indicated a relatively high level of hailing as the means of hiring the last Hackney Carriage used.

Face to face respondents generally rated features of Hackney Carriages higher than the same features of private hire vehicles. However, the reverse was true for online survey respondents.

Few respondents felt that more Hackney Carriages are required.

Respondents were asked if they had any other comments that they would like to make, regarding Hackney Carriage services. The comments made are listed below:

Private hire is a far better service than hackney. This survey relates to provision of hackney services, however the bigger problem in Maidstone is the lack of private hire cars. With the number of residents in the centre of town increasing significantly at present, with insufficient parking, the emphasis should be on growing the supply of private hire drivers. This problem will become significantly worse in a very short period.

Private hire cabs should be allowed access to the high St . Not for picking up and setting but as a through route. It's pathetic that they have to go around . Sort it out.

The temporary rank at the East Station needs to be more visible, couldn't find it to begin with...

Uber should be licensed in Maidstone

Too many taxi in Maidstone

More taxi needed for Maidstone. Taxi driver shouldn't overcharge on late night trips.

6 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

6.1 Background

In order to gather information from a variety of sources and gather views of the taxi industry and levels of service from different perspectives, consultation was undertaken with a range of stakeholders. These included representatives of groups or organisations which use taxis, or undertake related activities and representatives from the taxi business itself.

6.2 Licensed vehicle trade consultation

An online questionnaire was created and links to the questionnaire distributed to members of the trade.

Not all drivers are comfortable with completing questionnaires. Therefore, additional consultation was undertaken by speaking to a sample of drivers at the ranks around Maidstone .

12 questionnaires were returned from members of the trade.

7 responses were from Hackney Carriage Drivers, 3 responses were from Private Hire Drivers. A further 1 respondent indicated that they drove both types of vehicles.

Responses have been quantified according to the respondent type.

Each respondent was asked to estimate, over a year, how many hires they picked per week.

	Hackney Drivers (Range of responses)	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
From Ranks	80 (40 – 180)	0	100
Flag Downs	4 (0 – 15)	0	0
Telephone bookings	6 (0 – 40)	65	20
Regular Contracts	1 (0 – 4)	15	50
Totals	91	80	170

The responses from Hackney Carriage drivers regarding rank hires, varied significantly. Some claimed 40 hires pre week. The average of 91 hires per week total is around the level one may expect from predominantly rank based hires. The number of hires by PHV drivers, at 80 per week, is slightly lower than one may normally expect from drivers operating from booking circuits. However, the responses also included response from chauffeur based private hire and part time drivers, which would be expected to reduce the average.

The respondents were asked **how many years they have been involved in the licensed vehicle trade in Maidstone Borough**. Results are shown below.

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
0-2 years	14%		
3-5 years		25%	
6-10 years	44%	75%	
11-15 years	14%		
16-20 years	14%		
Over 20 years	14%		100%

Do you normally subscribe to a radio circuit, or similar, for bookings:

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes		25%	
No	100%	75%	100%

What type of licensed vehicle do you drive most frequently, if applicable?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Purpose built taxi vehicle	100%		100%
Saloon car		50%	
Minibus/people carrier (wheel chair accessible)		25%	
Minibus/people carrier (not wheelchair accessible)		25%	

During a typical week, approximately how many journeys do you pick up which require carriage of a wheelchair?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
None		100%	100%
1 – 5	86%		
6 – 10			
11 – 20			
More than 20	14%		

All of the Hackney Carriage drivers indicated that they normally pick up wheelchair hires each week. However all of the Private Hire Vehicle drivers do not.

In relation to normal practice throughout the year, which of the following ranks or locations would you normally work from at different times of day?

Hackney Carriage Drivers

	Morning 7:00 – 12:00)	Afternoon (12:00 – 18:00)	Evening (18:00 – 21:00)	Night (21:00 – 07:00)
King Street	43%	57%	43%	29%
High Street	29%	57%	43%	57%
Barker Road				
Pudding Lane			14%	14%
St. Faith's Street				
Earl Street				14%
Maidstone East Railway Station	29%	29%	29%	29%
Maidstone West Railway Station				
Week Street (outside County Hall)				14%
Bottom of High Street				14%

Drivers of both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles

	Morning 7:00 – 12:00)	Afternoon (12:00 – 18:00)	Evening (18:00 – 21:00)	Night (21:00 – 07:00)
King Street	100%	100%	100%	100%
High Street				
Barker Road				
Pudding Lane				
St. Faith's Street				
Earl Street				
Maidstone East Railway Station	100%	100%	100%	100%
Maidstone West Railway Station				
Week Street (outside County Hall)				

The Hackney Carriage trade tends to focus on one or two ranks or locations at certain times of day, leaving other ranks unattended. Some ranks are rarely or never served by Hackney Carriages. Can you suggest any reasons that some ranks are not used and any measures which may be implemented to improve service at these ranks?

All the respondents felt that there was no demand at the ranks, other than High Street, King Street and Maidstone East railway station.

Is there enough rank space in Maidstone Borough?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes		25%	
No	100%		100%
Don't know / no response		75%	

Do you think new ranks are required?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes	14%		100%
No		25%	
Don't know / no response		75%	

A suggestion was made for a new rank at the bottom of Gabriel's Hill

Are there any ranks in Maidstone Borough which need more space?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes	100%		100%
No		25%	
Don't know / no response		75%	

All hackney carriage respondents felt that more space was needed on King Street.

Prior to reading this questionnaire, were you aware that Maidstone Borough enforces a numerical limit on the number of Hackney Carriages in Maidstone Borough?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes	100%	50%	100%
No		25%	
Don't know / no response		25%	

Are there sufficient Private Hire Vehicles in Maidstone Borough to meet current levels of demand?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes, too many	86%	50%	100%
Yes, generally sufficient	14%		

No, not during all periods		25%	
No opinion		25%	

Are there sufficient Hackney Carriages in Maidstone Borough to meet current levels of demand?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes, too many	7		100%
Yes, generally sufficient	6	25%	
No, not during all periods		25%	
No opinion		25%	
Don't know		25%	

If you feel there are not sufficient Hackney Carriages at certain times, at which periods are more Hackney Carriages required?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
During the daytime			
During the evening /night			
All day and night		100%	

How many Hackney Carriages should there be in the fleet in Maidstone Borough?

All Hackney Carriage drivers suggested that the total number should remain the same as current levels. One Private Hire driver suggested 250 vehicles.

Should Maidstone Borough Council remove the numerical limit on the number of Hackney Carriages?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes			
No	86%	50%	100%
No opinion	14%	50%	

Is the supply of wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages adequate for the level of demand from wheelchair users?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes	100%		100%
No		50%	
Don't know / no response		50%	

Is the supply of wheelchair accessible Private Hire Vehicles adequate for the level of demand from wheelchair users?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes	43%		100%
No	57%	50%	
Don't know / no response		50%	

If the limit on the number of Hackney Carriages in Maidstone Borough were increased, which, if any of the effects would occur?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
More work for drivers	14%	25%	
Less work for drivers	86%		100%
A drop in standards	86%		100%
Standards would be improved	14%	25%	100%
There would be safety implications	57%		100%
There would be enforcement implications	57%	25%	100%
More revenue			
Less revenue	57%		100%

Do you feel that any of the following factors limit the use if Hackney Carriages?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Cost		25%	
Security			
Public transport alternative	43%		100%
Use of mobile Apps	71%	25%	100%
The use of mobile phones to call for private hire vehicles	86%	50%	100%
Inaccessibility of wheelchair vehicles for people with mobility impairments who struggle with the high step			100%
Private hire offers a better service- they come to the passenger		25%	
Out of area cars, such as Tonbridge and Malling		25%	

What features, facilities or improvements would do most to improve taxi ranks in Maidstone?

Suggested improvements included:

Improved signage around town

Benches adjacent to taxi ranks, with shade and shelter

Remove unused ranks and increase the size of the ranks which are used.

Do any of the following issues need to be addressed?

Hackney Drivers

Issue	Yes, needs to be addressed
Increased driver training	29%
Improve driver testing	29%
Improve language skills	71%
Improve knowledge of the area	43%
Improve some drivers' attitude to others	14%

PHV Drivers

Issue	Yes, needs to be addressed
Increased driver training	50%
Improve driver testing	50%
Improve language skills	100%
Improve knowledge of the area	50%

Considering the year as a whole, on average, rank the days you normally work from busiest to quietest. (Lowest numbers indicate the busiest days)

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Monday	3	2	3
Tuesday	3.5	3	4
Wednesday	4	4	5
Thursday	3	3	6
Friday	2	2	2
Saturday	1	2.5	1
Sunday	7	2	7

Respondents were asked about how many hours they worked each day.

The average hours worked per week were as follows.

Hackney Carriage drivers 83 hours per week

Private Hire drivers 88

Drive both types of vehicle 87 hours per week

Is customer care adequate?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes	57%		
No	29%	50%	
Don't know/no opinion	14%	50%	100%

What improvements to customer care would have the largest beneficial effects for taxi drivers in Maidstone?

Suggested improvements were:

Improved spoken English amongst drivers

Improved courtesy and customer service skills amongst some drivers

More help for passengers who have mobility difficulties

In taxi camera's

Allowing of chauffeur cars with tinted windows

More MOT stations

Are any of the following criteria an issue for the licensed vehicle trade in Maidstone? – Hackney Carriage drivers

Criteria	Yes, this is an issue
Increasing expense of fuel	71%
Environmental considerations	14%
Excessive working hours	14%
Congestion	86%

Are any of the following criteria an issue for the licensed vehicle trade in Maidstone? – Private hire drivers

Criteria	Yes, this is an issue
Increasing expense of fuel	75%
Environmental considerations	50%
Excessive working hours	50%
Congestion	50%

Are any of the following criteria an issue for the licensed vehicle trade in Maidstone? – Drive both vehicle types

Criteria	Yes, this is an issue
Increasing expense of fuel	100%
Environmental considerations	100%
Excessive working hours	100%
Congestion	100%

Would you welcome the provision of Taxi Marshalls at ranks?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes	29%	50%%	
No	42%		100%
Don't know/no opinion	29%	50%	

Suggested location for taxi marshals are on High Street and King Street.

Is there a role for Taxibus services in the Borough?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes		25%	
No	42%	25%	100%
Don't know.no opinion	58%	50%	

Would a Taxi Sharing scheme be useful in Maidstone?

	Hackney Drivers	PHV Drivers	Drive both vehicle types
Yes	14%		
No	58%	25%	100%
Don't know/no opinion	28%	75%	

Respondents were asked if they drove a vehicle which was used by more than one driver. The responses were as follows:
 38% of Hackney Carriage drivers indicated that there were multiple drivers.
 25% of private hire drivers indicated that there were multiple drivers.

6.3 Other comments and inputs.

In addition to the questionnaire responses summarised above, which focussed on specific and numerical responses, drivers were also asked more open questions on a range of features and aspects of the trade. The questionnaire was structured in order to encourage open and discursive responses.

These responses have been summarised in this section together with feedback from discussion with drivers on the taxi ranks. The sentiments expressed by individuals have been aggregated and summarised.

The standard of English language skills was a commonly raised issue from both private hire and Hackney Carriage respondents.

A further persistently raised issue was the amount of space available at the ranks, for vehicles to wait.

There was some recognition that the unused ranks are effectively redundant as drivers are unwilling to wait at these ranks for fares and the public are unlikely to go to these ranks, as taxis are unlikely to be found there.

The following statements by members of the trade capture the sentiments of several respondents:

Sharing scheme would cause safety concerns at night

The unmet demand in the borough is for Private Hire, why is this not being addressed?

Why are Tonbridge and malling car allowed to operate in Maidstone, taking our work load away ??

Chauffeur companies are not a taxi service. Rules and regulations need to be adjusted to accomodate these vehicles as our customers are not the usual taxi clients

More taxis equals more pollution even if those vehicles are hybrid. Also more congestion. Too many cabs for too little rank space. Drivers do too many hours to make a living as it is. Give the trade a much greater choice of vehicle including those that are not wheelchair accessible. Wheelchair users do not use us in any great numbers. We are being put to enormous expense for a small section of the public. Those with other mobility issues struggle to get into these so called accessible cabs.

6.4 Non Trade Consultation

Views on the taxi trade and taxi services were sought from user groups, representing elderly and disabled groups, hotels and licensed premises, transport providers, police and other stakeholders that it was felt should be consulted.

The consultee groups and individuals were as follows:

Local Councillors, MP and MEP, Kent Primary Care Trust, Chamber of Commerce, Maidstone Disability Action Group, Maidstone Activity and Skills Group, Maidstone Mind, Citizens Advice Bureau, Age UK (Maidstone), SAGA, Involve, Maidstone Women's Centre, local Sheltered Housing Schemes and Care Homes, Arriva, Network Rail, Local bus and coach companies, .Council representatives for Transport, Roads and local businesses. Pubs, clubs and hotels were contacted by telephone. The businesses contacted were in a variety of locations from town centre locations to rural locations, within the licensing area.

Feedback was generated through a combination of, email and telephone contact.

Most hotels and licensed premises indicated that they or their customers generally called one of the Private Hire Operators to book a vehicle, as opposed to specifically ordering Hackney Carriages. It was normally the case that customers made their own arrangements. Generally, respondents felt that there were licensed vehicles available for customers when required. Licensed premises in rural locations indicated that customers faced some difficulty obtaining a licensed vehicle at some times. This was attributed to rural location and the distance a

vehicle would need to travel to pick up a fare. It was asserted that additional charges would be levied by any vehicle responding to a booking, to cover the additional dead mileage. Normally customers book ahead of the time they require a vehicle, to enable operators to plan for the journey. Licensed premises in urban and suburban locations did not face such difficulties and generally found that a licensed vehicle was available when required.

Supermarkets all had Freephone booking services available in the shop and had not indicated that they were aware that any customers ever faced difficulty hiring a licensed vehicle.

At the hospital, licensed vehicles could be hired through a Freephone service. No difficulties were known.

Few issues were raised on behalf of elderly users, mobility impaired users or minority groups. The only issues or comments made were regarding the cost of travel. However, availability was good and for regular users, there was often a preference to use a regular company or driver. Availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles was not raised as an issue. There is a preference by some elderly and mobility impaired users to use private hire saloon cars, rather than the larger wheelchair accessible vehicles, owing to boarding difficulties and comfort on the journey.

Councillor feedback resulted in one identified issue. This was:

There have been some issues identified with refusal to carry and assistance dog, accompanying a passenger.

Police responses indicated that there were rarely any issues with availability in Maidstone town centre at night.

6.5 Summary of trade and stakeholder consultation

The Hackney Carriage trade appear to derive the majority of trade from rank hires, rather than pre-booked hire.

The majority of hackney carriages carry wheelchair passengers fairly regularly.

Responses from the trade agree with the rank survey results that there are effectively three active rank locations, these are King Street, High Street and Maidstone East Railway Station. Only one driver acknowledged use of the layby at County Hall, despite evidence from the rank survey videos.

Whilst some drivers who generally work week days, day time hours, also work on Friday and Saturday nights, there isn't a mass concentration on these times. This ensures that there is adequate cover for day time demand as well as peak demand associated with the night time economy at weekends.

7 DETERMINATION OF UNMET DEMAND

7.1 Evaluation of unmet demand and its significance

It is first important to define our specific view about what constitutes unmet demand. Our definition is when a person turns up at a taxi rank and finds there is no vehicle there available for immediate hire. This can lead to a queue of people building up, some of who may walk off, whilst others will wait till a vehicle collects them. Later passengers may well arrive when there are vehicles there, but because of the queue will not obtain a vehicle immediately.

There are other instances where queues of passengers can be observed at taxi ranks. This can occur when the level of demand is such that it takes longer for vehicles to move up to waiting passengers than passengers can board and move away. This often occurs at railway stations but can also occur at other ranks where high levels of passenger arrivals occur. We do not consider this is unmet demand, but geometric delay and although we note this, it is not counted towards unmet demand being significant.

The industry standard index of the significance of unmet demand (ISUD) was initiated at the time of the introduction of section 16 of the 1985 Transport Act as a numeric and consistent way of evaluating unmet demand and its significance. The ISUD methodology was initially developed by a university and then adopted by one of the leading consultant groups undertaking the surveys made necessary to enable authorities to retain their limit on taxi vehicle numbers. The index has been developed and deepened over time to take into account various court challenges. It has now become accepted as the industry standard test of if identified unmet demand is significant.

The index is a statistical guide derived to evaluate if observed unmet demand is in fact significant. However, its basis is that early tests using first principles identified based on a moderate sample suggested that the level of index of 80 was the cut-off above which the index was in fact significant, and that unmet demand therefore was such that action was needed in terms of additional issue of plates to reduce the demand below this level, or a complete change of policy if it was felt appropriate. This level has been accepted as part of the industry standard. However, the index is not a strict determinant and care is needed in providing the input samples as well as interpreting the result provided. However, the index has various components which can also be used to understand what is happening in the rank-based and overall licensed vehicle market.

ISUD draws from several different parts of the study data. Each separate component of the index is designed to capture a part of the operation of the demand for taxis and reflect this numerically. Whilst the principal inputs are from the rank surveys, the measure of latent demand comes from the public on-street surveys, and any final decision about if identified unmet demand is significant, or in fact about the value of continuing the current policy of restricting vehicle numbers, must be taken fully in the context of a careful balance of all the evidence gathered during the survey process.

The present ISUD calculation has two components which both could be zero. In the case that either are zero, the overall index result is zero, which means they clearly demonstrate there is no unmet demand which is significant, even if other values are high.

The first component which can be zero is the proportion of daytime hours where people are observed to have to wait for a taxi to arrive. The level of wait used is when the average wait time for any passengers who have to wait for a taxi to arrive is greater than one minute. The industry definition of these hours varies, the main index user counts from 10:00 to 18:00 (i.e. eight hours ending at 17:59). The present index is clear that unmet demand cannot be significant if there are no such hours. The only rider on this component is that the sample of hours collected must include a fair element of such hours, and that if the value is non-zero, review of the potential effect of a wider sample needs to be considered.

The other component which could be zero is the test identifying the proportion of passengers which are travelling in any hour when the average passenger wait (for all passengers) in that hour is greater than one minute.

If both of these components are non-zero, then the remaining components of the index come into play. These are the peakiness factor, the seasonality factor, average passenger delay, and the latent demand factor.

Average passenger delay is the total amount of time waited by all passengers in the sample, divided by the total number of passengers observed who entered taxis.

The seasonality factor allows for the undertaking of rank survey work in periods which are not typical, although guidance is that such periods should normally be avoided if possible particularly as the impact of seasons may not just be on the level of passenger demand, but may also impact on the level of supply. This is particularly true in regard to if surveys are undertaken when schools are active or not.

Periods when schools are not active can lead to more taxi vehicles being available whilst they are not required for school contract work. Such periods can also reduce taxi demand with people away on holiday from the area. Generally, use of taxis is higher in December in the run-up to Christmas, but much lower in January, February and the parts of July and August when more people are likely to be on holiday. The factor tends to range from 0.8 for December (factoring high demand level impacts down) to 1.2 for January / February (inflating the values from low demand levels upwards).

There can be special cases where summer demand needs to be covered, although high peaks for tourist traffic use of taxis tend not to be so dominant at the current time, apart from in a few key tourist authorities.

The peakiness factor is generally either 1 (level demand generally) or 0.5 (demand has a high peak at one point during the week). This is used to allow for the difficulty of any transport system being able to meet high levels of peaking. It is rarely possible or practicable for example for any public transport system, or any road capacity, to be provided to cover a few hours a week.

The latent demand factor was added following a court case. It comes from asking people in the on-street questionnaires if they have ever given up waiting for a taxi

at a rank in any part of the area. This factor generally only affects the level of the index as it only ranges from 1.0 (no-one has given up) to 2.0 (everyone says they have). It is also important to check that people are quoting legitimate taxi rank waits as some, despite careful questioning, quote giving up waiting at home, which must be for a private hire vehicle (even if in taxi guise as there are few private homes with taxi ranks outside).

The ISUD index is the result of multiplying each of the components together and benchmarking this against the cut-off value of 80. Changes in the individual components of the index can also be illustrative. For example, the growth of daytime hour queueing can be an earlier sign of unmet demand developing than might be apparent from the proportion of people experiencing a queue particularly as the former element is based on any wait and not just that averaging over a minute. The change to a peaky demand profile can tend towards reducing the potential for unmet demand to be significant.

Finally, any ISUD value must be interpreted in the light of the sample used to feed it, as well as completely in the context of all other information gathered. Generally, the guide of the index will tend not to be overturned in regard to significant unmet demand being identified, but this cannot be assumed to be the case – the index is a guide and a part of the evidence and needs to be taken fully in context.

7.2 Calculation of ISUD variables

APD: The average delay is determined by calculating the total passenger delay as aggregate passenger delay minutes, then dividing by the total number of passengers, including those who did not suffer any delay. Factors are calculated as weekly equivalents by multiplying the Thursday results by 4 plus Friday, and Saturday data. The aggregate delays in passenger minutes was 414 minutes. If we divide by the total number of passengers observed, (6,772), the resultant average delay of 17 seconds equates to an APD value of 0.28 minutes. **APD = 0.29**

PF There was no sharp short term peak in demand on the days surveyed, which was several orders of magnitude greater than normal demand levels during other periods. Therefore the profile was deemed to be not highly peaked. **The PF value is 1.0.**

SSP Week day, daytime hours are deemed to be between 10.00 am and 6.00 pm. The data from Thursday and Friday observations was analysed to determine whether there were any occasions when passengers were delayed by more than one minute on average, at any rank. The calculated value was 8.9%., **SSP value = 8.9**

GID The percentage of taxi users travelling in hours where the average passenger delay exceeds one minute was assessed. The proportion of passengers travelling in hours when the average passenger wait for all passengers exceeded one minute was 9.8%. **GID = 9.8**

SF Due to the nature of these surveys it is not possible to collect information throughout an entire year to assess the effects of seasonality. Experience has suggested that taxi demand does exhibit a degree of seasonality

and this is allowed for by the inclusion of a seasonality factor. The factor is set at a level to ensure that a marginal decision either way obtained in an “untypical” month will be reversed. This factor typically takes a value of 1 for surveys conducted in September to November and March to June, i.e. “typical” months. It takes a value of 1.2 for surveys conducted in January and February and the longer school holidays, where low demand the absence of contract work will bias the results in favour of the Hackney trade, and a value of 0.8 for surveys conducted in December during the pre-Christmas rush of activity. For this study, a factor of 1.0 is assumed. **SF = 1.0**

LDF Latent Demand Factor. This is derived from the public attitude interview survey results and provides a measure of the proportion of the public who have given up trying to obtain a taxi at either a rank or by flagging down. It is measured as 1+ proportion giving up waiting. The inclusion of this factor is a response to the latest DfT guidance requiring an estimate of latent demand. The latent demand factor was derived from face to face surveys and through the online surveys. The results from the face to face surveys are normally treated as the more robust indicator of latent demand. However, it is prudent to also consider the latent demand value obtained from the online survey as a sensitivity test. The latent demand value obtained from face to face surveys was 0% The latent demand value obtained from the online surveys was 34%
LDF = 1.00

LDF (Sensitivity) = 1.34

The ISUD value was calculated as follows, using the variables derived for this study.

ISUD = APD x PF x SSP x GID x SF x LDF

ISUD = 0.29 x 1.0 x 8.9 x 9.8 x 1.0 x 1.00 = 25.3

ISUD (Sensitivity test) = 0.29 x 1.0 x 8.9 x 9.8 x 1.0 x 1.34 = 33.9

Where the ISUD value is less than 80, it is generally considered to be an indicator that there is no unmet demand for taxis which is significant. The ISUD result indicates that there is no significant unmet demand.

7.3 Consideration of wider factors.

The ISUD value of is an indicator that there is some unmet demand. However the value falls well below the level which would suggest that the level of unmet demand is significant. However, this should not be taken in isolation. Other available evidence should also be considered.

There was relatively little passenger queuing observed. There were relatively few complaints regarding availability. The online indication of latent unmet demand related principally to late night availability at the King Street / High Street rank and to a lesser extent at Maidstone East and late at night at County Hall. All of these locations and periods when passengers did have to wait, were captured during the rank surveys. There was no indication from stakeholder or public consultation, that there were any other factors which would suggest that the level of unmet demand is higher than that observed and assessed within the ISUD assessment.

The low calculated ISUD value and lack of significant passenger queuing suggests that there is **no significant unmet demand**.

8 MYSTERY SHOPPER SURVEY

8.1 Background

A mystery shopper survey was commissioned as part of the Maidstone Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey. The mystery shopper survey was undertaken in June 2019. The survey consisted of an able bodied mystery shopper survey, undertaking short distance trips, wheelchair user test purchases, guide dog user test purchases and attempts to hire private hire vehicles without being pre-booked.

Short distance journey mystery shopper surveys

Three surveyors undertook the majority of the mystery shopper test purchases. An additional surveyor, a guide dog user, assisted with the guide dog test purchases. The test purchases were undertaken at a variety of times of day, to test service during day time and at night. It is important to avoid alerting the trade that a mystery shopping survey is being undertaken, in order to sample normal levels of service. If drivers on a rank spot the same person or people undertaking multiple trips over a short period of time, then they may wonder why. If the observation is discussed with other drivers, they may be alerted to a potential mystery shopper survey. In order to mitigate the risk of surveyors being recognised or remembered, test purchases were spread amongst different ranks. In Maidstone, there are three ranks in effective operation for the majority of the time. This feature presented some additional logistical challenges

When test purchases were undertaken the Hackney Carriage vehicle license number was recorded and used to check whether the same Hackney Carriage was present at the rank for subsequent test purchases. By avoiding undertaking a test purchase when a previously sampled Hackney Carriage was present on the rank, close to the first position on the rank, the risk of raising suspicion was mitigated. On occasions when previously surveyed Hackney Carriages were further back on the rank, the risk was judged to be low and sample purchases undertaken.

A total of twenty-seven test purchases were made. A common feature to most of the purchases was that the driver number was not visible to the passenger.

One of the purposes of undertaking short distance test purchases, is to test for refusals to accept the fare. Refusals can occur if drivers have been waiting for extended periods at the rank and the prospect of a small fare as reward for the long wait, is unattractive. However, licensing conditions do not allow drivers to pick and choose such a fare purely on the grounds of the value of the fare.

The majority of hires were conducted as one would hope, with good levels of service. The drivers engaged with the surveyors satisfactorily and checked the location of the destinations given, as appropriate.

For some of the hires, drivers pointed out that the destination was a short distance away, with the implication that the passenger could just walk, or in one instance, travel in her wheelchair. Some drivers did appear to be grumpy with accepting a short distance fare. However, no drivers refused any fares.

One driver of a wheelchair accessible vehicle, didn't use the ramps to help board the wheelchair. The driver tipped the wheelchair back to raise the front wheels onto the vehicle floor then manhandled the wheelchair with passenger on board, into the vehicle. The wheelchair was not secured for the journey.

All journeys with a guide dog were completed successfully and all drivers were helpful with boarding the blind passenger and dog.

Throughout the surveys, the surveyors were on the lookout for private hire vehicles waiting at the side of the road, or in car parks, which could be approached for a hire attempt. Throughout the surveys, any private hire vehicles seen, moved on to the next hire, immediately after dropping off passengers.

At times, surveyors drove around locations where it was thought more likely that a private hire vehicle may be found waiting. However, no private hire vehicles were found available for an approach, at any time of day or night.

8.2 Summary

Almost all of the sample hires were as one would hope to encounter. The single issue which affects all of the hires undertaken, was the lack of visibility of the driver number in each vehicle. In some licensing areas, the driver number is displayed in the vehicle as a copy of the driver's badge, with photograph. In such areas, vehicles with multiple drivers display multiple badges. There may be a case in Maidstone for introducing a practice that copy driver badges are displayed in a position visible to the passengers.

There was one event which were cause for further concern, regarding the passenger experience. One driver seemed reluctant to carry a wheelchair passenger for a short fare and didn't waste time deploying ramps or properly securing the wheelchair.

9 RESPONSES TO DFT BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE 2010

Annex A of the Best Practice Guidance (BPG) provides a list of useful questions to help assess the issue of quantity controls of Hackney Carriage licences. This chapter takes the form of a response to each question based on the evidence identified earlier in this report. BPG questions are shown in bold italic with responses following in normal type.

Have you considered the Government's view that quantity control should be removed unless a specific case that such controls benefit the consumer can be made?

This report has considered benefits which the retention of quantity control can provide.

Have you recently reviewed the need for your policy of quantity controls?

Yes, this report forms a review of the need for the policy of quantity control of hackney carriages at this point in time in the Maidstone Borough Council area.

What form did the review of your policy of quantity controls take?

This current review follows the DfT Best Practise Guidance April 2010 in undertaking a full review of the current situation in regard to the policy towards hackney carriage vehicle limits. It includes:

- A review of the background policies of the Council
- A rank survey program to identify current demand and supply
- Public consultation with people in the streets of Maidstone
- Stakeholder consultation with all groups recommended by the DfT Best Practise Guidance as far as people were available and willing to comment.
- Trade consultation with representatives of the trade

Who was involved in the review?

This review was included direct discussion with the following respondents:

- Representatives of elderly and disabled groups,
- Representatives of minority groups
- Hotels and licensed premises,
- Transport providers,
- Police,
- Local supermarkets
- Local politicians
- Council department representatives.

What decision was reached about retaining or removing quantity controls?

The decision regarding quantity controls is the subject of the final chapter of this report and is a matter for decision by the committee appointed to make such decisions on behalf of the Council.

Are you satisfied that your policy justifies restricting entry to the trade?

The survey provides some justification for restricting entry and this forms part of the collection of material which is considered when deciding whether to retain a limit.

Are you satisfied that quantity controls do not:

- ***Reduce the availability of taxis***
- ***Increase waiting times for consumers***
- ***Reduce choice and safety for consumers***

At the present time, there is a good availability of hackney carriages in the Borough, for the majority of time. Demand exceeds supply for relatively brief periods within the context of overall demand.

What special circumstances justify retention of quantity controls?

The present operation adequately meets the needs of the majority of travellers requiring their service in the area.

How does your policy benefit consumers, particularly in remote rural areas?

A small proportion of Maidstone Borough can be classified as rural. However, none of these locations have taxi ranks and all tend to be served by private hire operations. Therefore, service in rural areas is generally unaffected by the policy relating to limiting hackney carriage numbers.

How does your policy benefit the trade?

Retention of a limit would retain some added value of having a hackney carriage vehicle licence which would, in turn, encourage some investment in the trade. Removal of the limit could result in more part time working in the trade and fewer experienced professional drivers working in the trade.

If you have a local accessibility policy, how does this fit with restricting taxi licences?

We are not aware of any local accessibility policy, and current evidence suggests the demand for wheel chair accessible vehicles is effectively catered for by the current Hackney Carriage fleet which is fully wheel chair accessible and capable of carrying the majority of wheelchair types in common usage.

When did you last assess unmet demand?

Unmet demand has been regularly reviewed, with this study preceded by earlier surveys.

How is your taxi limit assessed?

In this and all previous studies the limit has been assessed using industry standard techniques.

Have you considered latent demand, ie potential customers who would use taxis if more were available, but currently do not?

Yes.

Are you satisfied that your limit is set at the correct level?

This is a matter for decision by the Council committee based on evidence presented in the 2016 unmet demand survey. The results of the survey suggest that the current limit is sufficient to cater for demand at most times.

How does the need for adequate taxi ranks affect your policy of quantity controls?

The availability of rank space does not dictate the level of the limit applied, nor whether a limit should be retained.

When consulting, have you included all those working in the market, consumer and passenger (including disabled groups), groups which represent those passengers with special needs, local interest groups, eg hospitals or visitor attractions, the police, a wide range of transport stakeholders, eg rail/bus/coach providers and traffic managers?

Yes, all appropriate consultees have been taken into account.

Do you receive representations about taxi availability?

No

What is the level of service currently available to consumers including other public transport modes?

At the present time, rail, bus and licensed vehicle services in the area are generally considered to be good.

10 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Unmet demand

Analysis of the taxi rank survey data and consultation data indicate that there are normally sufficient Hackney Carriages available to cater for demand at all periods. Whilst there was some passenger queuing observed at various times this was not sufficient, in the context of all passenger volumes in a week, to be deemed significant.

The level of unmet demand is not significant, with respect to the ISUD index calculation.

10.2 Trade feedback

A concern voiced by the trade related to available space on the King Street rank. There was consistent feedback concerning the lack of English language skills amongst some of the newer drivers.

Relatively few issues were raised by the trade, when compared with other surveys in other areas.

10.3 Public and stakeholder consultation issues

In general, the public and stakeholders appear to be largely content with Hackney Carriage services. Few consultees identified any issues, which is a good indicator that services are being provided where required.

10.4 Recommendations

There is little evidence of unmet demand at present and the level is below that which would be considered to be significant. Therefore, the survey has concluded that there is **no significant unmet demand** for Hackney Carriages in Maidstone .

There is adequate spare capacity in the fleet to cater for short term fluctuations in demand, such as bank holidays and end of month weekends. There is adequate capacity in the fleet to cater for further growth in demand should it occur.

Not all of the Hackney Carriage fleet are actively seeking hires solely from the ranks. Some rely on other sources of hires to supplement income. There is not sufficient demand from the ranks to sustain the whole existing Hackney Carriage fleet solely from rank based hires.

There is no significant unmet demand. Therefore, there is no compelling need to increase the number of Hackney Carriage Licences, on the basis of public benefit.

On this basis the authority has discretion in its hackney licensing policy and may either:

- Maintain the current limit
- Issue any number of additional plates as it sees fit,
- Remove the numerical limit

APPENDIX A TAXI OBSERVATION RESULTS

Total passengers per hour

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Thursday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Thursday 08:00	0	0	0	0	1	1	14
Thursday 09:00	0	0	0	0	8	2	17
Thursday 10:00	0	0	0	0	1	3	13
Thursday 11:00	0	0	0	0	8	3	20
Thursday 12:00	1	0	0	0	13	2	23
Thursday 13:00	1	0	0	0	3	0	18
Thursday 14:00	2	0	0	0	6	3	19
Thursday 15:00	0	0	0	0	6	4	33
Thursday 16:00	1	0	0	0	3	4	25
Thursday 17:00	0	0	0	0	3	5	18
Thursday 18:00	0	0	0	0	12	0	13
Thursday 19:00	0	0	0	0	7	0	14
Thursday 20:00	0	0	0	0	4	5	8
Thursday 21:00	0	0	0	0	8	0	7
Thursday 22:00	0	0	0	0	11	0	20
Thursday 23:00	0	0	0	0	10	3	20
Friday 00:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Friday 01:00	0	0	0	12	0	0	6
Friday 02:00	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
Friday 03:00	0	0	0	10	0	0	0
Friday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Friday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Friday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Friday 07:00	0	0	0	0	1	0	6
Friday 08:00	0	0	0	0	2	2	14
Friday 09:00	0	0	0	0	3	3	15
Friday 10:00	0	0	0	0	5	2	15
Friday 11:00	0	0	0	0	5	2	27
Friday 12:00	0	0	0	0	12	3	23
Friday 13:00	0	0	0	0	4	6	26
Friday 14:00	0	0	0	0	2	1	24
Friday 15:00	0	0	0	0	2	6	45
Friday 16:00	0	0	0	0	8	0	45
Friday 17:00	0	0	0	0	5	7	20
Friday 18:00	0	0	0	0	7	6	28
Friday 19:00	0	0	0	0	10	1	11
Friday 20:00	0	0	0	0	7	0	20
Friday 21:00	0	0	0	0	6	1	24
Friday 22:00	0	0	0	0	13	1	44
Friday 23:00	0	0	0	0	7	0	46
Saturday 00:00	0	0	0	2	0	0	49
Saturday 01:00	0	0	3	22	0	0	72
Saturday 02:00	0	0	2	31	0	0	59
Saturday 03:00	0	0	0	19	0	0	35
Saturday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
Saturday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Saturday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Saturday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Saturday 08:00	0	0	0	0	2	0	4
Saturday 09:00	0	0	0	0	1	0	7
Saturday 10:00	0	0	0	0	3	0	7
Saturday 11:00	1	0	0	0	2	0	20
Saturday 12:00	0	0	0	0	3	0	34
Saturday 13:00	0	0	0	0	4	1	35
Saturday 14:00	0	0	0	0	8	5	32
Saturday 15:00	0	0	0	0	5	1	29
Saturday 16:00	2	0	0	0	7	1	27
Saturday 17:00	0	0	0	0	6	4	33
Saturday 18:00	0	0	0	0	7	3	32
Saturday 19:00	0	0	0	0	6	3	26
Saturday 20:00	0	0	0	0	11	0	25
Saturday 21:00	0	0	0	0	12	3	25
Saturday 22:00	0	0	0	0	11	0	57
Saturday 23:00	0	0	0	0	21	0	43
Sunday 00:00	0	0	0	5	4	0	56
Sunday 01:00	0	2	3	19	0	0	81
Sunday 02:00	0	0	3	22	0	0	65
Sunday 03:00	0	0	0	11	0	0	72
Sunday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	35
Sunday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
Sunday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	8

Total Hackney Carriages Departing Empty

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Thursday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Thursday 08:00	0	0	0	0	0	11	1
Thursday 09:00	0	0	0	0	2	11	1
Thursday 10:00	2	0	0	0	1	12	1
Thursday 11:00	0	0	0	0	0	15	1
Thursday 12:00	0	0	0	0	0	16	0
Thursday 13:00	0	0	0	0	2	16	0
Thursday 14:00	1	0	0	0	0	22	3
Thursday 15:00	1	0	0	0	0	21	0
Thursday 16:00	0	0	0	0	1	7	1
Thursday 17:00	0	0	0	0	2	17	1
Thursday 18:00	0	0	0	0	0	12	2
Thursday 19:00	0	0	0	0	1	12	0
Thursday 20:00	0	0	0	0	0	10	1
Thursday 21:00	0	0	0	0	1	11	1
Thursday 22:00	0	0	0	0	0	16	0
Thursday 23:00	0	0	0	0	1	10	0
Friday 00:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Friday 01:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Friday 02:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Friday 03:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Friday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Friday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Friday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Friday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	4	1
Friday 08:00	1	0	0	0	1	7	0
Friday 09:00	0	0	0	0	1	9	0
Friday 10:00	0	0	0	0	1	14	0
Friday 11:00	1	0	0	0	3	21	0
Friday 12:00	1	0	0	0	0	17	0
Friday 13:00	1	0	0	0	2	17	0
Friday 14:00	1	0	0	0	1	20	0
Friday 15:00	0	0	0	0	1	23	0
Friday 16:00	0	0	0	0	0	14	0
Friday 17:00	0	0	0	0	0	13	0
Friday 18:00	1	0	0	0	0	21	0
Friday 19:00	0	0	0	0	1	13	0
Friday 20:00	0	0	0	0	1	18	0
Friday 21:00	0	0	0	0	0	12	0
Friday 22:00	0	0	0	0	0	28	0
Friday 23:00	0	0	0	0	5	14	0
Saturday 00:00	0	0	0	3	4	0	1
Saturday 01:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saturday 02:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Saturday 03:00	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Saturday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Saturday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Saturday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Saturday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saturday 08:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saturday 09:00	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Saturday 10:00	0	0	0	0	1	5	0
Saturday 11:00	1	0	0	0	0	11	0
Saturday 12:00	0	0	0	0	0	16	0
Saturday 13:00	1	0	0	0	2	17	0
Saturday 14:00	0	0	0	0	0	11	0
Saturday 15:00	0	0	0	0	0	20	0
Saturday 16:00	0	0	0	0	1	20	0
Saturday 17:00	1	0	0	0	2	24	0
Saturday 18:00	0	0	0	0	0	18	0
Saturday 19:00	0	0	0	0	1	23	0
Saturday 20:00	0	0	0	0	0	20	0
Saturday 21:00	0	0	0	0	0	22	0
Saturday 22:00	0	0	0	0	0	41	0
Saturday 23:00	0	0	0	0	0	20	0
Sunday 00:00	0	0	0	5	1	0	0
Sunday 01:00	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Sunday 02:00	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
Sunday 03:00	0	0	0	4	0	1	0
Sunday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Sunday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Total Hackney Carriages Departing With Passengers

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Thursday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Thursday 08:00	0	0	0	0	1	1	8
Thursday 09:00	0	0	0	0	8	1	11
Thursday 10:00	0	0	0	0	1	2	10
Thursday 11:00	0	0	0	0	6	2	15
Thursday 12:00	1	0	0	0	8	1	15
Thursday 13:00	1	0	0	0	3	0	11
Thursday 14:00	1	0	0	0	5	3	16
Thursday 15:00	0	0	0	0	4	4	26
Thursday 16:00	1	0	0	0	2	3	19
Thursday 17:00	0	0	0	0	3	4	15
Thursday 18:00	0	0	0	0	9	0	10
Thursday 19:00	0	0	0	0	5	0	12
Thursday 20:00	0	0	0	0	4	3	8
Thursday 21:00	0	0	0	0	5	0	6
Thursday 22:00	0	0	0	0	8	0	15
Thursday 23:00	0	0	0	0	6	3	16
Friday 00:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Friday 01:00	0	0	0	9	0	0	5
Friday 02:00	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Friday 03:00	0	0	0	7	0	0	0
Friday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Friday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Friday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Friday 07:00	0	0	0	0	1	0	6
Friday 08:00	0	0	0	0	2	2	10
Friday 09:00	0	0	0	0	2	2	10
Friday 10:00	0	0	0	0	5	2	12
Friday 11:00	0	0	0	0	4	2	19
Friday 12:00	0	0	0	0	7	3	18
Friday 13:00	0	0	0	0	4	5	16
Friday 14:00	0	0	0	0	2	1	18
Friday 15:00	0	0	0	0	1	4	30
Friday 16:00	0	0	0	0	4	0	29
Friday 17:00	0	0	0	0	4	4	13
Friday 18:00	0	0	0	0	6	5	20
Friday 19:00	0	0	0	0	7	1	11
Friday 20:00	0	0	0	0	5	0	19
Friday 21:00	0	0	0	0	4	1	17
Friday 22:00	0	0	0	0	10	1	31
Friday 23:00	0	0	0	0	6	0	34
Saturday 00:00	0	0	0	2	0	0	31
Saturday 01:00	0	0	2	10	0	0	39
Saturday 02:00	0	0	1	14	0	0	34
Saturday 03:00	0	0	0	7	0	0	24
Saturday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Saturday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Saturday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Saturday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Saturday 08:00	0	0	0	0	2	0	4
Saturday 09:00	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
Saturday 10:00	0	0	0	0	2	0	5
Saturday 11:00	1	0	0	0	2	0	13
Saturday 12:00	0	0	0	0	2	0	21
Saturday 13:00	0	0	0	0	4	1	21
Saturday 14:00	0	0	0	0	5	3	20
Saturday 15:00	0	0	0	0	4	1	21
Saturday 16:00	1	0	0	0	5	1	17
Saturday 17:00	0	0	0	0	4	2	22
Saturday 18:00	0	0	0	0	6	3	21
Saturday 19:00	0	0	0	0	3	1	21
Saturday 20:00	0	0	0	0	7	0	18
Saturday 21:00	0	0	0	0	8	2	20
Saturday 22:00	0	0	0	0	7	0	39
Saturday 23:00	0	0	0	0	12	0	34
Sunday 00:00	0	0	0	4	2	0	36
Sunday 01:00	0	1	3	9	0	0	48
Sunday 02:00	0	0	2	12	0	0	34
Sunday 03:00	0	0	0	5	0	0	42
Sunday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	21
Sunday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Sunday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	6

Total Hackney Carriage Departures (With and without passengers)

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Thursday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Thursday 08:00	0	0	0	0	1	12	9
Thursday 09:00	0	0	0	0	10	12	12
Thursday 10:00	2	0	0	0	2	14	11
Thursday 11:00	0	0	0	0	6	17	16
Thursday 12:00	1	0	0	0	8	17	15
Thursday 13:00	1	0	0	0	5	16	11
Thursday 14:00	2	0	0	0	5	25	19
Thursday 15:00	1	0	0	0	4	25	26
Thursday 16:00	1	0	0	0	3	10	20
Thursday 17:00	0	0	0	0	5	21	16
Thursday 18:00	0	0	0	0	9	12	12
Thursday 19:00	0	0	0	0	6	12	12
Thursday 20:00	0	0	0	0	4	13	9
Thursday 21:00	0	0	0	0	6	11	7
Thursday 22:00	0	0	0	0	8	16	15
Thursday 23:00	0	0	0	0	7	13	16
Friday 00:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Friday 01:00	0	0	0	9	0	0	5
Friday 02:00	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
Friday 03:00	0	0	0	7	0	0	2
Friday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Friday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Friday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
Friday 07:00	0	0	0	0	1	4	7
Friday 08:00	1	0	0	0	3	9	10
Friday 09:00	0	0	0	0	3	11	10
Friday 10:00	0	0	0	0	6	16	12
Friday 11:00	1	0	0	0	7	23	19
Friday 12:00	1	0	0	0	7	20	18
Friday 13:00	1	0	0	0	6	22	16
Friday 14:00	1	0	0	0	3	21	18
Friday 15:00	0	0	0	0	2	27	30
Friday 16:00	0	0	0	0	4	14	29
Friday 17:00	0	0	0	0	4	17	13
Friday 18:00	1	0	0	0	6	26	20
Friday 19:00	0	0	0	0	8	14	11
Friday 20:00	0	0	0	0	6	18	19
Friday 21:00	0	0	0	0	4	13	17
Friday 22:00	0	0	0	0	10	29	31
Friday 23:00	0	0	0	0	11	14	34
Saturday 00:00	0	0	0	5	4	0	32
Saturday 01:00	0	0	2	10	0	0	39
Saturday 02:00	0	0	1	14	0	0	36
Saturday 03:00	0	0	0	9	0	0	24
Saturday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Saturday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Saturday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Saturday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Saturday 08:00	0	0	0	0	2	0	4
Saturday 09:00	0	0	0	0	1	2	4
Saturday 10:00	0	0	0	0	3	5	5
Saturday 11:00	2	0	0	0	2	11	13
Saturday 12:00	0	0	0	0	2	16	21
Saturday 13:00	1	0	0	0	6	18	21
Saturday 14:00	0	0	0	0	5	14	20
Saturday 15:00	0	0	0	0	4	21	21
Saturday 16:00	1	0	0	0	6	21	17
Saturday 17:00	1	0	0	0	6	26	22
Saturday 18:00	0	0	0	0	6	21	21
Saturday 19:00	0	0	0	0	4	24	21
Saturday 20:00	0	0	0	0	7	20	18
Saturday 21:00	0	0	0	0	8	24	20
Saturday 22:00	0	0	0	0	7	41	39
Saturday 23:00	0	0	0	0	12	20	34
Sunday 00:00	0	0	0	9	3	0	36
Sunday 01:00	0	1	3	10	0	0	49
Sunday 02:00	0	0	2	17	0	0	34
Sunday 03:00	0	0	0	9	0	1	42
Sunday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	21
Sunday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Sunday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	7

Proportion of Hackney Carriages departing empty

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Thursday 07:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Thursday 08:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	92%	11%
Thursday 09:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	92%	8%
Thursday 10:00	100%	0%	0%	0%	50%	86%	9%
Thursday 11:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	88%	6%
Thursday 12:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	94%	0%
Thursday 13:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	40%	100%	0%
Thursday 14:00	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	88%	16%
Thursday 15:00	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	84%	0%
Thursday 16:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%	70%	5%
Thursday 17:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	40%	81%	6%
Thursday 18:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	17%
Thursday 19:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%	100%	0%
Thursday 20:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	77%	11%
Thursday 21:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%	100%	14%
Thursday 22:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Thursday 23:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%	77%	0%
Friday 00:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%
Friday 01:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Friday 02:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%
Friday 03:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Friday 04:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Friday 05:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Friday 06:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	40%
Friday 07:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	14%
Friday 08:00	100%	0%	0%	0%	33%	78%	0%
Friday 09:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%	82%	0%
Friday 10:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%	88%	0%
Friday 11:00	100%	0%	0%	0%	43%	91%	0%
Friday 12:00	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	85%	0%
Friday 13:00	100%	0%	0%	0%	33%	77%	0%
Friday 14:00	100%	0%	0%	0%	33%	95%	0%
Friday 15:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	85%	0%
Friday 16:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Friday 17:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	76%	0%
Friday 18:00	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	81%	0%
Friday 19:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	13%	93%	0%
Friday 20:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%	100%	0%
Friday 21:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	92%	0%
Friday 22:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	97%	0%
Friday 23:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	45%	100%	0%
Saturday 00:00	0%	0%	0%	60%	100%	0%	3%
Saturday 01:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Saturday 02:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%
Saturday 03:00	0%	0%	0%	22%	0%	0%	0%
Saturday 04:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	19%
Saturday 05:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	75%
Saturday 06:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Saturday 07:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Saturday 08:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Saturday 09:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Saturday 10:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%	100%	0%
Saturday 11:00	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Saturday 12:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Saturday 13:00	100%	0%	0%	0%	33%	94%	0%
Saturday 14:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	79%	0%
Saturday 15:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	95%	0%
Saturday 16:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%	95%	0%
Saturday 17:00	100%	0%	0%	0%	33%	92%	0%
Saturday 18:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	86%	0%
Saturday 19:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	96%	0%
Saturday 20:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Saturday 21:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	92%	0%
Saturday 22:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Saturday 23:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Sunday 00:00	0%	0%	0%	56%	33%	0%	0%
Sunday 01:00	0%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	2%
Sunday 02:00	0%	0%	0%	29%	0%	0%	0%
Sunday 03:00	0%	0%	0%	44%	0%	100%	0%
Sunday 04:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sunday 05:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	19%
Sunday 06:00	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	14%

Average Hackney Carriage vehicle wait time at rank (Minutes)

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Thursday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	8	14
Thursday 08:00	0	0	0	0	10	10	9
Thursday 09:00	0	0	0	0	19	15	5
Thursday 10:00	7	0	0	0	56	25	7
Thursday 11:00	0	0	0	0	64	22	5
Thursday 12:00	9	0	0	0	1	21	6
Thursday 13:00	45	0	0	0	10	17	9
Thursday 14:00	80	0	0	0	15	14	4
Thursday 15:00	4	0	0	0	11	5	2
Thursday 16:00	0	0	0	0	32	1	2
Thursday 17:00	0	0	0	0	23	6	4
Thursday 18:00	0	0	0	0	15	7	8
Thursday 19:00	0	0	0	0	12	13	8
Thursday 20:00	0	0	0	0	31	22	10
Thursday 21:00	0	0	0	0	48	18	15
Thursday 22:00	0	0	0	0	32	12	5
Thursday 23:00	0	0	0	0	14	8	9
Friday 00:00	0	0	0	19	0	0	42
Friday 01:00	0	0	0	21	0	0	16
Friday 02:00	0	0	0	28	0	0	15
Friday 03:00	0	0	0	24	0	0	4
Friday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Friday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Friday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Friday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Friday 08:00	0	0	0	0	10	2	7
Friday 09:00	0	0	0	0	31	9	9
Friday 10:00	8	0	0	0	37	17	7
Friday 11:00	3	0	0	0	11	9	4
Friday 12:00	0	0	0	0	13	7	5
Friday 13:00	3	0	0	0	25	14	7
Friday 14:00	0	0	0	0	51	8	3
Friday 15:00	0	0	0	0	5	4	1
Friday 16:00	0	0	0	0	4	7	2
Friday 17:00	0	0	0	0	11	15	7
Friday 18:00	4	0	0	0	19	12	2
Friday 19:00	0	0	0	0	6	18	7
Friday 20:00	0	0	0	0	27	19	6
Friday 21:00	0	0	0	0	43	16	4
Friday 22:00	0	0	0	0	23	5	1
Friday 23:00	0	0	0	0	21	11	5
Saturday 00:00	0	0	0	6	2	0	13
Saturday 01:00	0	0	0	22	0	0	11
Saturday 02:00	0	0	3	30	0	0	11
Saturday 03:00	0	0	0	24	0	0	17
Saturday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Saturday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	58
Saturday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	99

Hour beginning	Earl Street Upper	High Street, Players	High Street, HSBC	County Hall	Maidstone East Station	King Street	King Street at High Street
Saturday 07:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Saturday 08:00	0	0	0	0	6	0	6
Saturday 09:00	0	0	0	0	13	6	10
Saturday 10:00	8	0	0	0	3	17	22
Saturday 11:00	10	0	0	0	21	9	4
Saturday 12:00	0	0	0	0	11	5	3
Saturday 13:00	0	0	0	0	7	5	3
Saturday 14:00	0	0	0	0	13	3	3
Saturday 15:00	0	0	0	0	17	8	3
Saturday 16:00	4	0	0	0	23	12	5
Saturday 17:00	0	0	0	0	30	10	2
Saturday 18:00	0	0	0	0	13	8	3
Saturday 19:00	0	0	0	0	15	9	5
Saturday 20:00	0	0	0	0	16	13	3
Saturday 21:00	0	0	0	0	27	14	4
Saturday 22:00	0	0	0	0	20	7	2
Saturday 23:00	0	0	0	0	18	9	8
Sunday 00:00	0	0	0	1	0	0	14
Sunday 01:00	0	5	0	13	0	0	10
Sunday 02:00	0	0	6	23	0	0	8
Sunday 03:00	0	0	0	21	0	0	2
Sunday 04:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Sunday 05:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
Sunday 06:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	37

APPENDIX B OBSERVED PASSENGER WAITING

Hour Beginning	Number of passengers who had to wait for a taxi to arrive	Percentage of all passengers who had to wait
Thursday 07:00	0	0%
Thursday 08:00	0	0%
Thursday 09:00	0	0%
Thursday 10:00	0	0%
Thursday 11:00	0	0%
Thursday 12:00	7	18%
Thursday 13:00	1	5%
Thursday 14:00	0	0%
Thursday 15:00	0	0%
Thursday 16:00	4	12%
Thursday 17:00	0	0%
Thursday 18:00	2	8%
Thursday 19:00	1	5%
Thursday 20:00	0	0%
Thursday 21:00	0	0%
Thursday 22:00	1	3%
Thursday 23:00	0	0%
Friday 00:00	0	0%
Friday 01:00	0	0%
Friday 02:00	0	0%
Friday 03:00	0	0%
Friday 04:00	0	0%
Friday 05:00	0	0%
Friday 06:00	0	0%
Friday 07:00	1	14%
Friday 08:00	0	0%
Friday 09:00	0	0%
Friday 10:00	2	9%
Friday 11:00	1	3%
Friday 12:00	0	0%
Friday 13:00	0	0%
Friday 14:00	0	0%
Friday 15:00	0	0%
Friday 16:00	12	23%
Friday 17:00	4	13%
Friday 18:00	5	12%
Friday 19:00	0	0%
Friday 20:00	1	4%
Friday 21:00	1	3%
Friday 22:00	1	2%
Friday 23:00	0	0%
Saturday 00:00	0	0%
Saturday 01:00	0	0%
Saturday 02:00	0	0%
Saturday 03:00	0	0%
Saturday 04:00	0	0%
Saturday 05:00	0	0%
Saturday 06:00	0	0%
Saturday 07:00	0	0%
Saturday 08:00	0	0%
Saturday 09:00	0	0%
Saturday 10:00	0	0%
Saturday 11:00	2	9%
Saturday 12:00	1	3%
Saturday 13:00	5	13%
Saturday 14:00	5	11%
Saturday 15:00	0	0%
Saturday 16:00	0	0%
Saturday 17:00	0	0%
Saturday 18:00	2	5%
Saturday 19:00	3	9%
Saturday 20:00	1	3%
Saturday 21:00	0	0%
Saturday 22:00	2	3%
Saturday 23:00	14	22%
Sunday 00:00	16	25%
Sunday 01:00	5	5%
Sunday 02:00	0	0%
Sunday 03:00	18	22%
Sunday 04:00	0	0%
Sunday 05:00	0	0%
Sunday 06:00	0	0%

Maidstone Hackney Carriage Mystery Shopper Survey

August 2019

1.1 Background

A mystery shopper survey was commissioned as part of the Maidstone Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey. The mystery shopper survey was undertaken in June 2019. The survey consisted of an able bodied mystery shopper survey, undertaking short distance trips, wheelchair user test purchases, guide dog user test purchases and attempts to hire private hire vehicles without being pre-booked.

Short distance journey mystery shopper surveys

Three surveyors undertook the majority of the mystery shopper test purchases. An additional surveyor, a guide dog user, assisted with the guide dog test purchases. The test purchases were undertaken at a variety of times of day, to test service during day time and at night. It is important to avoid alerting the trade that a mystery shopping survey is being undertaken, in order to sample normal levels of service. If drivers on a rank spot the same person or people undertaking multiple trips over a short period of time, then they may wonder why. If the observation is discussed with other drivers, they may be alerted to a potential mystery shopper survey. In order to mitigate the risk of surveyors being recognised or remembered, test purchases were spread amongst different ranks. In Maidstone, there are three ranks in effective operation for the majority of the time. This feature presented some additional logistical challenges

When test purchases were undertaken the Hackney Carriage vehicle license number was recorded and used to check whether the same Hackney Carriage was present at the rank for subsequent test purchases. By avoiding undertaking a test purchase when a previously sampled Hackney Carriage was present on the rank, close to the first position on the rank, the risk of raising suspicion was mitigated. On occasions when previously surveyed Hackney Carriages were further back on the rank, the risk was judged to be low and sample purchases undertaken.

A total of twenty-seven test purchases were made. A common feature to most of the purchases was that the driver number was not visible to the passenger.

One of the purposes of undertaking short distance test purchases, is to test for refusals to accept the fare. Refusals can occur if drivers have been waiting for extended periods at the rank and the prospect of a small fare as reward for the long wait, is unattractive. However, licensing conditions do not allow drivers to pick and choose such a fare purely on the grounds of the value of the fare.

The majority of hires were conducted as one would hope, with good levels of service. The drivers engaged with the surveyors satisfactorily and checked the location of the destinations given, as appropriate.

For some of the hires, drivers pointed out that the destination was a short distance away, with the implication that the passenger could just walk, or in one instance, travel in her wheelchair. Some drivers did appear to be grumpy with accepting a short distance fare. However, no drivers refused any fares.

One driver of a wheelchair accessible vehicle, didn't use the ramps to help board the wheelchair. The driver tipped the wheelchair back to raise the front wheels onto the vehicle floor then manhandled the wheelchair with passenger on board, into the vehicle. The wheelchair was not secured for the journey.

All journeys with a guide dog were completed successfully and all drivers were helpful with boarding the blind passenger and dog.

Throughout the surveys, the surveyors were on the lookout for private hire vehicles waiting at the side of the road, or in car parks, which could be approached for a hire attempt. Throughout the surveys, any private hire vehicles seen, moved on to the next hire, immediately after dropping off passengers.

At times, surveyors drove around locations where it was thought more likely that a private hire vehicle may be found waiting. However, no private hire vehicles were found available for an approach, at any time of day or night.

1.2 Detailed survey results

The detailed results for each of the test purchases undertaken are presented in the following tables.

Solo Mystery Shopper Survey Results

06

Maidstone	Solo mystery shopper	Solo mystery shopper	Solo mystery shopper	Solo mystery shopper
Surveyor	R	L	I	R
Date	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019
Time of boarding or start waiting	11:33	11:36	11:40	11:48
Origin location	High street (Lush)	High street (Lush)	High street (Lush)	Express taxi booking office at Maidstone West railway station
Destination location	MacDonalds Broadway	Odeon cinema	MacDonalds Broadway	Pizza Hut top of high street
Rank hire or Flag down?	Rank Hire	Rank hire	Rank hire	Hired from private hire booking office.
If rank hire, was a Hackney Carriage immediately available?	Rank Hire	Yes		No
If rank hire and No Hackneys immediately available, how long did the surveyor wait?				
If flagged, when did the surveyor start trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage				
If flagged, when did the surveyor stop trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage, either to give up or because one was hired.				
If Private Hire, how long a wait was quoted?				None
If Private hire, how long a wait was actually experienced before the vehicle arrived?				Immediately available
If a Private Hire, was a meter fitted?				Yes
If a Private Hire, with a meter, was the meter used?				Yes
Licensed Vehicles Plate No.	H45	H13	H39	P268
Driver Badge No.	No visible			No visible
Number of passengers	1	1	1	1
Was meter started only when the vehicle was ready to set off and Not before?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tarrif No.	1	1	1	1
Fare shown at start of journey	£2.80	£2.70	£2.80	£2.70
Extras on meter?				
Fare shown on arrival at the destination	£4.40	£3.70	£3.00	£5.90
Was the meter stopped on arrival at the destination?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
What was the fare charged?	£4.40	£3.70	£3.00	£5.90
Did the driver repeat or confirm the destination	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did driver communicate in a way traveller could understand	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
How Good was the driver's general level of communication (spOken English)	Ok, not great	Good	Good	Good
Politeness of driver	Standard	Good	Good	Good
What level of assistance was the assessor given when boarding & alighting the taxi (wheelchair, luggage, shopping etc)		None	Good	
Assessment of the level of helpfulness of driver	Standard	Good	Good	Good
Did the customer feel safe during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the customer feel comfortable during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ease of boarding and alighting from the vehicle	Good	Good	Good	Good
Describe the driver's Standard of driving (eg considerate to other road users, appropriate speed etc)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Cleanliness of taxi (general condition inside and outside – did the vehicle smell of cigarette smoke etc)	Clean	Good	Good	clean
Was the driver clean and tidy in appearance	Yes	Smart dress	Yes	Yes
Was the driver's badge clearly displayed	No	No	No	No
Was the vehicle licence plate clearly displayed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the driver use mobile phone during journey (other than hands free)	No	No	No	No
Was the taxi meter properly illuminated and clearly visible	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was a taxi fares table visible	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other comments	Took me to the wrong macdonalds Not confirmed address when I got in the taxi started the meter again when we got to the wrong macdonalds and ended up charging me more.		Driver was a bit grumpy about the short distance to the destination.	

Maidstone	Solo mystery shopper	Solo mystery shopper	Solo mystery shopper	Solo mystery shopper
Surveyor	L	R	R	L
Date	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019
Time of boarding or start waiting	11:49	12:02	12:15	12:19
Origin location	Maidstone West Station	High street rank (Lush)	Odeon cinema	High Street rank (Lush)
Destination location	Nando's	Odeon cinema	Pizza hut high street	Odeon cinema
Rank hire or Flag down?	Private Hire - call	Rank hire		Rank hire
If rank hire, was a Hackney Carriage immediately available?		Rank hire		Yes
If rank hire and No Hackneys immediately available, how long did the surveyor wait?		n/a		
If flagged, when did the surveyor start trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage		n/a		
If flagged, when did the surveyor stop trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage, either to give up or because one was hired.		n/a		
If Private Hire, how long a wait was quoted?	5/10 minutes	n/a	10 mins	
If Private hire, how long a wait was actually experienced before the vehicle arrived?	3 minutes	n/a	5 mins	
If a Private Hire, was a meter fitted?	No	n/a	Yes	
If a Private Hire, with a meter, was the meter used?		n/a	Yes	
Licensed Vehicles Plate No.	P658 Tonbridge	H5	H30	H24
Driver Badge No.		No visible	No visible	
Number of passengers	1	1.00	1	1
Was meter started only when the vehicle was ready to set off and Not before?		Yes	Yes	Yes
Tariff No.		1.00	1	1
Fare shown at start of journey		2.80	£2.80	£2.70
Extras on meter?				
Fare shown on arrival at the destination	£4 - on phone	3.40	£2.80	£3.20
Was the meter stopped on arrival at the destination?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
What was the fare charged?	£4.00	£3.40	£2.80	£3.20
Did the driver repeat or confirm the destination	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did driver communicate in a way traveller could understand	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
How Good was the driver's general level of communication (spoken English)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Politeness of driver	Good	Standard	Good	Good
What level of assistance was the assessor given when boarding & alighting the taxi (wheelchair, luggage, shopping etc)	None			None
Assessment of the level of helpfulness of driver	Good	Standard	Good	Good
Did the customer feel safe during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the customer feel comfortable during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ease of boarding and alighting from the vehicle	Good	Good	Good	Good
Describe the driver's Standard of driving (eg considerate to other road users, appropriate speed etc)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Cleanliness of taxi (general condition inside and outside - did the vehicle smell of cigarette smoke etc)	Good	clean	clean	Good
Was the driver clean and tidy in appearance	Smart dress	Smart dress	Yes	Yes
Was the driver's badge clearly displayed	No	No visible	No	No
Was the vehicle licence plate clearly displayed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the driver use mobile phone during journey (other than hands free)	No	No	No	No
Was the taxi meter properly illuminated and clearly visible	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was a taxi fares table visible	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other comments	Driver was on phone call when I arrived at car, he then hung up as I was getting in. Phone was on the passenger chair and at the end of journey he used phone to check fare to charge. I would guess the meter was on phone but could Not be seen from rear seat	Went most direct route.	Called Saphire taxis to book the hire.	Good chatty, medium length grey hair guy

Maidstone	Solo mystery shopper	Solo mystery shopper	Solo mystery shopper	Solo mystery shopper
Surveyor	L	R	I	R
Date	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019
Time of boarding or start waiting	12:26	12:30	12:30	12:39
Origin location	Odeon cinema	High Street	Maidstone East	Odeon Cinema
Destination location	Nandos	Odeon Cinema	Nandos	Pizza hut high street
Rank hire or Flag down?	Private hire - call	Rank Hire	Rank hire	
If rank hire, was a Hackney Carriage immediately available?		Rank Hire	No	
If rank hire and No Hackneys immediately available, how long did the surveyor wait?			3 minutes	
If flagged, when did the surveyor start trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage				
If flagged, when did the surveyor stop trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage, either to give up or because one was hired.				
If Private Hire, how long a wait was quoted?	7/8 minutes			5 mins
If Private hire, how long a wait was actually experienced before the vehicle arrived?	10 minutes			3 mins
If a Private Hire, was a meter fitted?	Yes			No
If a Private Hire, with a meter, was the meter used?	Yes			
Licensed Vehicles Plate No.	P190	H40	H47	P526 Yellow Plate (out of area)
Driver Badge No.	Lanyard around neck but could not see badge	No visible		No visible
Number of passengers	1	1.00	1	1.00
Was meter started only when the vehicle was ready to set off and Not before?	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Tariff No.	1	1.00	1	
Fare shown at start of journey	£2.80	2.80	£2.80	Non
Extras on meter?				
Fare shown on arrival at the destination	£5.00	3.20	£3.80	5.10
Was the meter stopped on arrival at the destination?	Yes	Yes		
What was the fare charged?	£5.00	£3.20	£4.00	£5.10
Did the driver repeat or confirm the destination	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did driver communicate in a way traveller could understand	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
How Good was the driver's general level of communication (spOken English)	Good	Ok	Good	Good
Polliteness of driver	Good	Standard	Good	Good
What level of assistance was the assessor given when boarding & alighting the taxi (wheelchair, luggage, shopping etc)	None		Good	
Assessment of the level of helpfulness of driver	Good	Standard	Good	Very
Did the customer feel safe during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the customer feel comfortable during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ease of boarding and alighting from the vehicle	Good	Good	Good	Very
Describe the driver's Standard of driving (eg considerate to other road users, appropriate speed etc)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Cleanliness of taxi (general condition inside and outside - did the vehicle smell of cigarette smoke etc)	Good	clean	Good	Clean
Was the driver clean and tidy in appearance	Casual shirt	Smart dress	Yes	Yes
Was the driver's badge clearly displayed	No	No visible	No	No
Was the vehicle licence plate clearly displayed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the driver use mobile phone during journey (other than hands free)	No	No	No	No
Was the taxi meter properly illuminated and clearly visible	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Was a taxi fares table visible	No	Yes	Yes	
Other comments	Called Sapphire cabs 12:24, didn't have anything for 30mins. Called Cavalier cabs 12:26. Guy with medium length grey/black hair, glasses. Company badge on side of car, silver people carrier. Lanyard around neck - with driver badge?		Walk to town centre. LoOk for private hire to book without pre-booking 12:10. H39 first in queue. Walk to Maidstone East, No taxis on rank 12:27. GX55 FMG	Called Appollo taxi to book hire. The vehicle had an out of area private hire plate, which was yellow. Could Not see which licensing authority.

Maidstone	Solo mystery shopper	Wheelchair user hire	Wheelchair user hire	Wheelchair user hire
Surveyor	IM	LM	LM	LM
Date	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019
Time of boarding or start waiting	12:42	13:14	13:28	14:23
Origin location	High Street (Lush)	High Street (Lush)	Travelodge	High Street (Lush)
Destination location	Travelodge	Travelodge	Nandos	Odeon cinema
Rank hire or Flag down?		Rank hire	Private hire - call	Rank hire
If rank hire, was a Hackney Carriage immediately available?		Yes		Yes
If rank hire and No Hackneys immediately available, how long did the surveyor wait?				
If flagged, when did the surveyor start trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage				
If flagged, when did the surveyor stop trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage, either to give up or because one was hired.				
If Private Hire, how long a wait was quoted?			25 minutes	
If Private hire, how long a wait was actually experienced before the vehicle arrived?			31 minutes	
If a Private Hire, was a meter fitted?			No	
If a Private Hire, with a meter, was the meter used?				
Licensed Vehicles Plate No.	H38	H34	P113	H43
Driver Badge No.				
Number of passengers	1	2	2	2
Was meter started only when the vehicle was ready to set off and Not before?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tariff No.	1	1		1
Fare shown at start of journey	£2.80	£2.70	£2.80	£2.70
Extras on meter?				
Fare shown on arrival at the destination	£3.20	£3.70	£3.60	£3.20
Was the meter stopped on arrival at the destination?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
What was the fare charged?	£3.20	£3.70	£3.60	£3.20
Did the driver repeat or confirm the destination	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - see comments
Did driver communicate in a way traveller could understand	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
How Good was the driver's general level of communication (spoken English)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Polliteness of driver	Good	Good	Good	Good
What level of assistance was the assessor given when boarding & alighting the taxi (wheelchair, luggage, shopping etc)	Good	Clipped wheelchair in and wheeled up ramp	Helped put W/C in boot	Little
Assessment of the level of helpfulness of driver	Good	Good	Good	Poor
Did the customer feel safe during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Average - Not clipped in
Did the customer feel comfortable during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - other than Not being clipped in
Ease of boarding and alighting from the vehicle	Good	Good	Good	Good
Describe the driver's Standard of driving (eg considerate to other road users, appropriate speed etc)	Good	Good	Good	Fast driving, quick stopping
Cleanliness of taxi (general condition inside and outside - did the vehicle smell of cigarette smoke etc)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Was the driver clean and tidy in appearance	Yes	Yes	Smart dress	Casual dress
Was the driver's badge clearly displayed	No	Lanyard around neck but badge Not visible	No	No
Was the vehicle licence plate clearly displayed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the driver use mobile phone during journey (other than hands free)	No	No	No	No
Was the taxi meter properly illuminated and clearly visible	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was a taxi fares table visible	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Other comments	GX59 HBK	W/C hire. Non W/C car	W/C hire. Called Maidstone taxis 13:23, said it was a 25 minute wait, No W/C cars, decided to try elsewhere. Called Sapphire 13:28, No W/C cars. CV16 CWF. No radio. Non W/C car	W/C hire. Driver made a comment when we asked to take us to Odeon that it was just down the road - implying we could have walked/got there outwith taxi. Driver didn't offer to push up ramp and didn't put ramp out for unloading - he wheeled me out reverse steeply out of car and onto pavement. W/C accessible vehicle. Wheelchair was not secured.

Maidstone	Wheelchair user hire	Wheelchair user hire	Guide dog hire	Guide dog hire
Surveyor	L	L	I	I
Date	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019
Time of boarding or start waiting	14:32	15:14	16:19	16:44
Origin location	Odeon cinema	Maidstone East Station rank	King Street	Asda Living
Destination location	Maidstone East Station	Burdock Court	Travelodge	Nandos
Rank hire or Flag down?	Private Hire - call	Rank hire	Rank hire	Private hire
If rank hire, was a Hackney Carriage immediately available?		Yes		
If rank hire and No Hackneys immediately available, how long did the surveyor wait?				
If flagged, when did the surveyor start trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage				
If flagged, when did the surveyor stop trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage, either to give up or because one was hired				
If Private Hire, how long a wait was quoted?	20 minutes			15 minutes
If Private hire, how long a wait was actually experienced before the vehicle arrived?	21 minutes			5 minutes
If a Private Hire, was a meter fitted?	No			
If a Private Hire, with a meter, was the meter used?				
Licensed Vehicles Plate No.	P188	H28	H26	P112
Driver Badge No.				
Number of passengers	2	2	1	1
Was meter started only when the vehicle was ready to set off and Not before?	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Tarif No.				
Fare shown at start of journey		£2.80		
Extras on meter?				
Fare shown on arrival at the destination	£4.50	£8.20		
Was the meter stopped on arrival at the destination?	Yes	Yes		
What was the fare charged?	£4.50	£8.20	£3.80	£3.10
Did the driver repeat or confirm the destination	Yes	Yes, asked for address multiple times	Yes	Yes
Did driver communicate in a way traveller could understand	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
How Good was the driver's general level of communication (spoken English)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Politeness of driver	Good	Good	Good	Good
What level of assistance was the assessor given when boarding & alighting the taxi (wheelchair, luggage, shopping etc)	Helped load W/C in boot	Good	Good	Good
Assessment of the level of helpfulness of driver	Good	Good	Good	Good
Did the customer feel safe during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the customer feel comfortable during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ease of boarding and alighting from the vehicle	Good	Good	Good	Good
Describe the driver's Standard of driving (eg considerate to other road users, appropriate speed etc)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Cleanliness of taxi (general condition inside and outside - did the vehicle smell of cigarette smoke etc)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Was the driver clean and tidy in appearance	Smart dress	Smart dress	Smart dress	Yes
Was the driver's badge clearly displayed	No	No		
Was the vehicle licence plate clearly displayed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the driver use mobile phone during journey (other than hands free)	No	No	No	No
Was the taxi meter properly illuminated and clearly visible	No - phone meter on driver window side	Yes		
Was a taxi fares table visible	No	Yes		
Other comments	W/C hire. Called Streamline 14:29, No taxis until 4pm. Called Maidstone taxis 14:32, didn't ask for name, they didn't have any W/C vehicles. Male with black, short hair, slightly coloured, short beard/stubble. Silver Hyundai. Non W/C car. Wheelchair placed in boot by driver.	W/C hire. Driver didn't really know what he was doing regarding the wheelchair. Other driver at the rank had to tell driver to move to higher pavement area for easier boarding with ramp. Tried to turn wheelchair round in car to face backwards but wasn't enough room to manoeuvre. Male, short black hair, balding, short stubble. W/C accessible vehicle. Wheelchair was properly secured, after a while.	Guide dog. No issues	Called Express cabs 16:39. Told operator passenger was blind. 15 minute wait quoted. Driver got out when taxi arrived and got passenger. Dog threw driver a little, but was Ok. GN66 VCT

Maidstone	Guide dog hire	Guide dog hire	Guide dog hire	Guide dog hire
Surveyor	IM	IM	IM	IM
Date	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019
Time of boarding or start waiting	16:55	17:24	18:17	18:35
Origin location	Nandos	Premier Inn	King Street	Maidstone West
Destination location	Premier Inn	Creams, King Street	Miller & Carter	Premier Inn
Rank hire or Flag down?	Private hire	Private hire	Rank hire	Rank hire
If rank hire, was a Hackney Carriage immediately available?			Yes	Yes
If rank hire and No Hackneys immediately available, how long did the surveyor wait?				
If flagged, when did the surveyor start trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage				
If flagged, when did the surveyor stop trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage, either to give up or because one was hired.				
If Private Hire, how long a wait was quoted?	Didn't say	10 minutes		
If Private hire, how long a wait was actually experienced before the vehicle arrived?				
If a Private Hire, was a meter fitted?				
If a Private Hire, with a meter, was the meter used?				
Licensed Vehicles Plate No.	P203	P190	H48	H17
Driver Badge No.				
Number of passengers	1	1	1	1
Was meter started only when the vehicle was ready to set off and Not before?				
Tariff No.				
Fare shown at start of journey				
Extras on meter?				
Fare shown on arrival at the destination				
Was the meter stopped on arrival at the destination?				
What was the fare charged?	£4.00	£4.00	£4.80	£4.70
Did the driver repeat or confirm the destination	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did driver communicate in a way traveller could understand	Yes	Yes	Yes	E
How Good was the driver's general level of communication (spOken English)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Politeness of driver	Good	Good	Good	Good
What level of assistance was the assessor given when boarding & alighting the taxi (wheelchair, luggage, shopping etc)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment of the level of helpfulness of driver	Good	Good	Good	Good
Did the customer feel safe during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the customer feel comfortable during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ease of boarding and alighting from the vehicle	Good	Good	Good	Good
Describe the driver's Standard of driving (eg considerate to other road users, appropriate speed etc)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Cleanliness of taxi (general condition inside and outside – did the vehicle smell of cigarette smoke etc)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Was the driver clean and tidy in appearance	Yes	Yes	Smart dress	Yes
Was the driver's badge clearly displayed				
Was the vehicle licence plate clearly displayed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the driver use mobile phone during journey (other than hands free)	No	No	No	No
Was the taxi meter properly illuminated and clearly visible				
Was a taxi fares table visible				
Other comments	Guide dog. Sapphire cabs, didn't quote how long. GL17 DLJ	Guide dog. Cavalier cabs. Driver waiting in vehicle, then got out and asked if passenger was for pick up. No problems. SF14 FBZ	Guide dog. GX07 CNE. Helpful driver, no issues.	Guide dog. SF68 JFK. Helpful driver, no issues.

Maldstone	Wheelchair user hire	Wheelchair user hire	Wheelchair user hire
Surveyor	L	L	L
Date	24/06/2019	24/06/2019	24/06/2019
Time of boarding or start waiting	19:55	20:28	20:51
Origin location	St. Andrews Park	High Street rank	Odeon cinema
Destination location	Nando's	Odeon cinema	St. Andrews Apartments
Rank hire or Flag down?	Private hire - call	Rank hire	Private hire - call
If rank hire, was a Hackney Carriage immediately available?		Yes	
If rank hire and No Hackneys immediately available, how long did the surveyor wait?			
If flagged, when did the surveyor start trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage			
If flagged, when did the surveyor stop trying to flag down a Hackney Carriage, either to give up or because one was hired.			
If Private Hire, how long a wait was quoted?	Sending one immediately		Just finishing another job and driver would be right there
If Private hire, how long a wait was actually experienced before the vehicle arrived?	12 minutes		12 minutes
If a Private Hire, was a meter fitted?	Yes, mirror meter		No
If a Private Hire, with a meter, was the meter used?	Yes		
Licensed Vehicles Plate No.	P676 Tonbridge	H6	H34
Driver Badge No.			
Number of passengers	2	2	2
Was meter started only when the vehicle was ready to set off and Not before?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tariff No.	1	1	1
Fare shown at start of journey	£2.70	£2.80	£2.70
Extras on meter?			
Fare shown on arrival at the destination	£7.30	£3.40	£7.30
Was the meter stopped on arrival at the destination?	Yes	No	Yes
What was the fare charged?	£7.30	£3.40	£7.30
Did the driver repeat or confirm the destination	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did driver communicate in a way traveller could understand	Yes	Yes	Yes
How Good was the driver's general level of communication (spoken English)	Good	Good	Good
Polliteness of driver	Good	Good	Good
What level of assistance was the assessor given when boarding & alighting the taxi (wheelchair, luggage, shopping etc)	Good, helped load wheelchair into boot	Average	Good
Assessment of the level of helpfulness of driver	Good	Average	Good
Did the customer feel safe during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the customer feel comfortable during the journey (if Not why Not?)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ease of boarding and alighting from the vehicle	Good	Good	Good
Describe the driver's Standard of driving (eg considerate to other road users, appropriate speed etc)	Good	Good	Good
Cleanliness of taxi (general condition inside and outside - did the vehicle smell of cigarette smoke etc)	Good	Good	Good
Was the driver clean and tidy in appearance	Smart dress	Casual dress	Smart dress
Was the driver's badge clearly displayed	No	No	No
Was the vehicle licence plate clearly displayed	Yes	Yes	Yes
Did the driver use mobile phone during journey (other than hands free)	No	No	No
Was the taxi meter properly illuminated and clearly visible	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was a taxi fares table visible	No	Yes	Yes
Other comments	W/C hire. Called United cars 19:40, said they had nothing until 10pm. Called Express cabs 19:43. Male, short black hair. Radio Not on. Non W/C car	W/C hire. Driver asked/shouted from car if we needed ramp, replied yes. No radio on. Male, glasses, short brown hair. Didn't stop meter when we arrived but price didn't change and he charged same amount as when we arrived/W/C accessible vehicle. Wheelchair properly secured.	W/C hire. Called Express 20:39, asked for wheelchair car, they said it was just finishing another job and will be right there. Driver wheeled me up the ramp and clipped me in. W/C accessible

Agenda Item 14

Licensing Committee

19 September 2019

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Introduction of Licensing pre-application advice

Final Decision-Maker	Licensing Committee
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	John Littlemore
Lead Officer and Report Author	Sharon Bamborough
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. To agree in principle to the introduction of charging for pre-application advice for certain types of licence applications

Executive Summary

The report requests that Members consider introducing, in principle, a fee for the provision of pre-application advice for applications relating to various types of premises licensing

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Licensing committee – consider in principle	19.09.19
Licensing Committee - annual review of fees and charges	27.11.19

Introduction of Licensing pre-application advice

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report invites Members to consider introducing, in principle, a fee for the provision of pre-application advice for applications relating to various types of premises licensing (a list of the types is attached at **Appendix A**) as well as a 'check and send' type service for volume applications which have a high rate of errors and are invalid on receipt.
 - 1.2 It is requested that Member consider this as an 'in principle' decision – and if agreed, the proposed fees will be included as part of the larger annual review of fees and charges report in the coming months.
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 We are committed to working with our customers early in the premises licence application process in order to help them to submit the best possible application which might be acceptable, to give advice on information needed (statutory and policy) and to confirm who must be consulted. Pre application advice is also helpful so that our customers know how to make a valid application. To that end we positively encourage pre application advice because it can give the customer greater clarity and reassurance about their application. We can also alert them to issues and concerns that might arise from their proposal. *Whilst this approach will be encouraged we will make it clear that it is not a requirement for an application.*
- 2.2 Our charged pre application scheme will provide customers with detailed written advice on statutory requirements and policy. There will be a template form and guidance available on our website for applicants. This will ensure that we receive all the information that we need in order to give appropriate advice. Any advice given on policy/statute will be clear as to what is a statutory requirement and what is policy or guidance, and that each case has to be considered on its own merits
- 2.3 Our proposed 'check and send' service for volume applications will provide officer time in assisting in completion of the application, advice on documentation needed and help in submitting the application.
- 2.4 Providing pre-application advice prior to an application being made is a discretionary service. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows this discretionary service as it is classed as conducive or incidental in relation to carrying out the licensing functions.

Current arrangements

- 2.5 Currently the licensing team offers pre-application advice free of charge to applicants who request this service. In the course of a year the team deals with approximately 20-25 applications for Maidstone. One hour is the

average amount of time spent on pre-application advice, excluding large scale events and these meetings take place at the Council offices and some take place on site.

- 2.6 The proposal is for the Licensing Team to recover all their reasonable costs in providing pre-application advice and use the income received to offset salary costs and make the service as far as possible self-financing. The fees proposed will be calculated based upon an average officer hourly rate and what level of officer carries out the work.
- 2.7 It is proposed that this service will cover only certain licensing regimes, mainly premises based. It will not, for example, cover hackney carriage/private hire licensing.
- 2.8 Having regard to other models adopted by other authorities, it is proposed to charge applicants on the basis of how complex the application is and therefore how much officer time will be taken up in providing the correct level of advice. (Costs of other authorities' schemes are attached at Appendix B for comparison)
- 2.9 The pre-application advice can involve carrying out a site visit, attending meetings, telephone calls, assessing plans and possible advice on drafting of proposed conditions. The Licensing Team will also provide advice on the process and the practicalities of filling out various forms so as to ensure when the applications are submitted it can be made valid. This will usually include written advice and/or a meeting with the applicant.
- 2.10 Any written advice will contain the important caveat that pre-application advice does not guarantee that their application will be successful. Neither will it exempt them from any enforcement action taken by the council.
- 2.11 For the 'check and send' service, this will relate to Licensing Act 2003 applications for transfers and variations of designated premises supervisors, because there is a higher instance of applications being submitted which are invalid upon receipt and require a lot of work for the Hub team to sort out with the applicant.
- 2.12 It is also proposed that in general, we would not charge for charitable organisations, provided they provide evidence of charitable status. Decisions on exemption from fees will be at the discretion of the Licensing Service.

Statutory functions

- 2.13 Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 introduced a general power for Best Value authorities to charge for discretionary services subject to having regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The power came into force on 18 November 2003 and at the same time the ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) issued guidance for local authorities on how to use this power: 'General power for Best Value Authorities to Charge for Discretionary Services – Guidance on the Power in the Local Government Act 2003'.

2.14 The Guidance on the Power in Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 sets out the underlying principles for the introduction of charges for discretionary services. It stipulates that such charges must not provide a new source of income and should only cover the cost of provision, i.e. not make a profit. Charges must be based on principles set out in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Best Value Accounting Code of Practice. A charge can only be made if the recipient agrees to the service.

2.15 At present the Licensing team offers this service free of charge. The team will still carry out the statutory functions in processing the applications and this function will not be included in the charges. In addition, they will still answer minor queries and enquiries.

2.16 The intent of the introduction of paid for advice is to cover the costs of:

- lengthy appointments - especially if an applicant has either chosen not to engage legal representation (and needs a great deal of guidance) or if an agent feels that a formal appointment would be beneficial to their client in order to address concerns up front and smooth the way for the application following advice from very experienced officers.

This will be provided by the senior licensing officer or licensing officer, and will include advice on the legislation and our policies.

- A 'check and send' type service (to be provided by the Hub Team) to deal with the high volume of incorrect /badly drafted applications for variation of DPS, Transfers, etc. They would offer an appointment to check the application (or provide step by step advice on completion if submitting online)

This will be provided by one of the Licensing Hub team officers, and is much more focused on whether an application has been correctly completed or is missing any required documentation.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 To approve, in principle, the introduction of charging pre-application advice and check and send service (with proposed fees to be set out and considered at a future meeting of the Licensing Committee).

3.2 To reject the introduction of paid for pre-application advice and continue to provide discretionary services free of charge.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 We currently spend a noticeable amount of time providing advice or sorting out badly completed applications which has a knock on effect to the other

day to day work of the team. Work will build up and this causes a knock on effect of pressure leading to lack of target achievement or errors, and we sometimes then need to use overtime to ensure performance deadlines are being met.

- 4.2 In order to cover the costs of this overtime caused by impact of spending time on this area of work, we are looking to introduce fees to formalize the giving of advice and ensure that it can then be covered within the costs or running the service instead of being at the expense of it.
- 4.3 The Licensing Service recommends the first option in order to cover the costs of:
- the demands on Licensing officers’ time who currently give this advice for free
 - the additional time Hub team officers spend in dealing with applicants who have a high instance of invalid applications.
- 4.4 It is hoped that this will not only cover costs but also lead to a higher number of good quality applications being submitted at first attempt.

5. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 Should the committee be minded to agree the principle of charging for pre-application advice, the proposed charges will be included in the annual review of fees and charges due to come to committee in the next few months.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal including Human Rights Act	<i>The council has statutory powers to charge for discretionary services on a cost recovery basis. This scheme is within those statutory powers.</i>	Jayne Bolas Solicitor Team Leader (Contentious) Mid Kent
Finance and other resources	<i>There are no financial implications</i>	Sharon Bamborough Head of Licensing Partnership
Staffing establishment	No impact on Maidstone Borough Council	Sharon Bamborough

		Head of Licensing Partnership
Risk Management	A risk assessment is undertaken on an annual basis regarding the service objectives and reviewed regularly	Sharon Bamborough Head of Licensing Partnership
Data Protection	No impact.	Sharon Bamborough Head of Licensing Partnership
Environment and Sustainability	No impact.	Sharon Bamborough Head of Licensing Partnership
Community Safety	No impact.	Sharon Bamborough Head of Licensing Partnership
Health and Safety	No impact.	Sharon Bamborough Head of Licensing Partnership
Health and Wellbeing	No impact.	Sharon Bamborough Head of Licensing Partnership
Equalities	No impact.	Sharon Bamborough Head of Licensing Partnership

7. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: list of licence types/regimes which would attract the charges
 - Appendix B: benchmarking with other authorities
-

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

none

APPENDIX A

LIST OF LICENSING REGIMES / APPLICATIONS WHICH WILL BE APPLICABLE FOR PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

Licensing Act 2003

New applications (The application fees range from £100 up to £1050+)

Full variations (application fees as above)

Minor variations (application fee £89)

Transfer (application fee £23) (*check and send service*)

Variation of Designated Premises Supervisor (application fee £23) (*check and send service*)

Gambling Act 2005 and Animal Welfare regulations 2018

All new applications (the application fees range from £1829 – £2932)

All variations (application fees range from £1000 – £1750)

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018

New applications (application fees range from £386 to £483)

	SEVENOAKS PROPOSED (TO PROPOSE SIMILAR FOR MAIDSTONE, TUNBRIDGE WELLS & LB BEXLEY)	Folkestone-Hythe (intention to increase within next year)	LB BROMLEY	LB OF LAMBETH	LB OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM	RB of Kensington & Chelsea	LB CAMDEN	CITY OF WESTMINSTER
Small Application- Up to one hour of advice regarding small licence applications,	£66	£24 (Basic written advice)	£74	£150	£126.50	£118.80	£153.00	£338 NOTE: Up to 3 hours of officer time.
Medium Application- Up to 2 hours advice for medium size applications including a site visit	£138	£47 (30 minute meeting with written advice)	£174	£222	£195.00	£184.80	£275.40	£677 NOTE: Up to 6 hours of officer time
Large Application- Up to 4 hours advice for large applications including	£258		SEE ABOVE	£354	£332.00	£314.40	£581.40	£1805 NOTE: For applications which need considerable

multiple (if necessary) site visits								officer time.
Extra large events - 5000 people or more- Category A - up to 7 hours advice for extra large public events includes the cost of specialist officers	Events up to 1000 capacity: £354		SEE ABOVE	£552	£527.50	£498	SEE ABOVE	SEE ABOVE
Extra large events - 5000 people or more- Category B - up to 14 hours advice for extra large public events includes the cost of specialist officers	Events up to 1999 capacity £498 Events between 2000 and up to 4999 capacity £690		SEE ABOVE	£1074	£1055.50	£996	SEE ABOVE	SEE ABOVE
Extra large events - 5000 people or more	Events over 5,000 capacity		SEE ABOVE	£1680	£1582.00	£1494	SEE ABOVE	SEE ABOVE

- Category C - up to 21 hours advice for extra large public events includes the cost of specialist officers	£1026							

Weblinks for benchmarking:

<https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/licensing/alcohol-and-entertainment-licences/pre-application-advice>

https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/200063/licences/1137/licensing_pre-application_advice

<https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/business-services-rates-and-licensing/licence-applications/pre-application-licensing-advice>

https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/sites/default/files/section_attachments/licensing_act_and_pre_applications_advice_fees.pdf

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/licensing-information/applicants-and-businesses/licensing-pre-application-advice>

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/pre-application-advice-for-licensing>

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/licensing-pre-application-advice-service>