



Taxi and Private Hire Newsletter February 2020



Welcome to February's Taxi and Private Hire Newsletter. It has been a busy month or so since January's newsletter, with the world in the midst of being gripped by Coronavirus and the Country having been battered by successive storms, Ciara and Dennis which brought flooding to parts of Guildford:



Flooding in Guildford after storm Dennis

Despite the recent weather, there are a number of local and national updates and the usual plea that if you have a good news story or have any ideas about the content you would like to see in the newsletter then we would be very pleased to hear from you. Please send any suggestions by email to: regulatoryservices@guildford.gov.uk.

TAG meeting

We are pleased to advise that the next Taxi and Private Hire Advisory Group (TAG) meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 22 April at 7pm in Room 6 at Guildford Borough Council. We would welcome all members of the trade along to come and discuss relevant issues. New members with new contributions are especially welcome.

Removal of Taxi Rank at Guildford Park Road

The consultation on plans to remove the Taxi Rank at Guildford Park Road (outside the station) has closed with one objection being received.

The Council's Executive will make a final decision on 21 April as to whether to revoke the rank.

Taxi and Private Hire Fees and Charges 2020-21

On 6 January 2020, the Licensing Committee approved the fees and charges below for consultation. Following the statutory consultation, as no objections were received, the fees will take effect from Saturday 15 February 2020:

	Fee for 2020/21
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles	
Hackney Carriage Vehicle (new/renew)	£196.04
Private Hire Vehicle (new/renew)	£172.62
Hackney Licence Vehicle Change	£32.04
Private Hire Vehicle Change	£32.04
Hackney carriage temporary vehicle (3 months)	£80.08
Private Hire temporary vehicle (3 months)	£74.22
Replacement Vehicle Licence Plates	£22.32
Private Hire Vehicle signs (pair)	£21.93
Vehicle Test	£58.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers	
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers Licence (new/renew)	£454.69
Hackney Carriage Driver Knowledge test	£44.60
Private Hire Driver Knowledge test	£24.82
Convert from Private Hire Driver to Hackney Carriage Driver	£18.60
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Replacement Badge	£13.66
Private Hire Operators	
PH Operators Licence (new/renew)	£970.97

New 'online' knowledge test to launch in May

As part of our digital transformation work to improve efficiency, the Council's Taxi and Private Hire Knowledge Test for perspective licence applicants will be changing from May from a paper based to an electronic test.

The test has been updated for both hackney carriage and private hire driver applicants so that the questions can be answered electronically. The test still covers the highway code, taxi legislation, customer service, local policy and requirements and knowledge of the Borough.

Arrested development?

The Council would remind all licensed drivers that it is a requirement to inform us within 3 working days if you are arrested. This includes being arrested for any reason, and is regardless of whether you are subsequently charged.

We have become aware recently of a couple of drivers who have been arrested and their failure to notify us of the arrest, in addition to the circumstances of the arrest itself, may contribute to any decision we take regarding their licence.

Major Works on Quarry Street

Major gas mains replacement work in will take place in **Quarry Street, Guildford** from 17 February.

Over the coming 16 weeks engineers will be working in Quarry Street in four phases as follows:

Phase one – Quarry Street and High Street – between the Millbrook and Mill Lane

- From Monday 17 February and lasting approximately four weeks.
- High Street and Quarry Street from Millbrook to Mill Lane will be closed.
- Mill Lane from Quarry Street to Millbrook will also be closed, with signed diversions will be in place for motorists via Millbrook, Pilgrims Way, Echo Pit Road, Warwicks Bench, South Hill, and Castle Street.
- The one-way restriction on Castle Street will be reversed to maintain access to Quarry Street.

Phase two – Quarry Street – between Mill Lane and Castle Street

- For safety the High Street, Quarry Street and Mill Lane will remain closed for approximately four weeks.
- Signed diversions will be in place for motorists via Millbrook, Pilgrims Way, Echo Pit Road, Warwicks Bench, South Hill, and Castle Hill.
- A section of Castle Street at the junction with Quarry Street will be closed. Castle Street will become two-way to maintain access for residents and businesses via Sydenham Road and South Hill.

Phase three – Quarry Street – between Castle Street and Castle Hill

- Works will continue along Quarry Street between Castle Street and Castle Hill for approximately four weeks.
- Quarry Street will remain closed between these junctions. Signed diversions will be in place for motorists via High Street, Quarry Street, Castle Street, South Hill and Castle Hill.
- Mill Lane will be re-opened to motorist and Castle Street will resume the one-way restriction northbound.

Phase four – Quarry Street – between Castle Hill to Racks Court

- Works will continue along Quarry Street, working between Castle Hill to Racks Court for approximately four weeks.
- Quarry Street will be closed around the work area. The no entry signs at the Millbrook junction will be removed to maintain access for Racks Court.
- Castle Hill will be closed between Quarry Street and South Hill, access to Castle Hill will be maintained for residents only from South Hill.
- Signed diversions will be in place for motorists via Castle Street, South Hill, Warwicks Bench, Echo Pit Road and Chantry View Road.
- Temporarily multi-way lights will be installed at the junction of Millbrook and Quarry Street.

Abolition of Petrol and Diesel Cars moves forward

A ban on selling new petrol, diesel or hybrid cars in the UK will be brought forward from 2040 to 2035 at the latest, under government plans. The change comes after experts said 2040 would be too late if the UK wants to achieve its target of emitting virtually zero carbon by 2050.

Clean Air Zone Checker

A new online service has gone live to help drivers and businesses to prepare for the introduction of clean air zones with charges in Birmingham and Leeds. The vehicle checker will allow drivers to find out if they will be affected by the change which will charge the most polluting vehicles to drive in the cities.

<https://www.gov.uk/check-clean-air-zone-charge>

Department for Transport Questioned on Statutory Guidance

The Department of Transport has been questioned on the status of the statutory guidance. During the Topical Questions sessions on transport in the House of Commons on 30th January 2020, Wes Streeting, Labour MP for Ilford North asked the Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Transport, Nusrat Ghani MP:

“Given that nearly three years have passed since the all-party parliamentary group on taxis laid out the case for reform of legislation governing the taxi and private hire industry, and a year has passed since the Government accepted that case, when can we finally expect them to legislate for the reform we need?”

In response, Ms Ghani said: “We put together a task and finish group to ensure that taxi services up and down the country are far more equal in their service, while providing security and safety for passengers. We will be issuing statutory taxi and private hire standards shortly. Having had many conversations with the hon. Member, I think he can be quite confident that most of the issues raised will be addressed.”

New £20 Note Launched

The third plastic polymer bank notes entered circulation on 20 February. The note, said by the Bank of England to be the most secure ever, features Economist Adam Smith as the face of the £20 note, replacing artist JMW Turner, which has been in circulation since 2007.

It includes two see-through windows and a two colour foil to help beat forgers. The Bank reckons half of all ATMs across the UK to be dispensing the new notes in just two weeks' time.



The new £20 note

The new £20 is the third plastic banknote to be issued by the Bank of England after the fiver featuring Winston Churchill - launched in 2016 - and the tenner featuring Jane Austen, which was first issued in 2017.

The 'old' notes still remain legal tender for many months to come and the Bank will give six months' notice ahead of its legal tender status being withdrawn.

May Bank Holiday

As you may be aware, the early May bank holiday this year has been moved from Monday 4 May to Friday 8 May to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day which takes place on 8 May. This is to enable people to pay tribute to those who served in one of the most significant events in our country's history.

The government announced the decision to move the bank holiday in June 2019, and drivers and proprietors of taxis with clock/calendar controlled meters calibrated before this date must ensure that their meter is correctly calibrated if they intend to work Monday 4 May or Friday 8 May.

It is possible that clock/calendar controlled taxi metres calibrated after the government announcement have been setup to take the changed bank holiday date into account, however drivers/proprietors should make the necessary enquiries with their own meter fitter to ensure that correct charges will be shown. Whilst we expect all drivers will ensure they charge no more than the maximum shown in the fare table, however in the event that overcharging is identified then appropriate enforcement action by officers should be expected.

The Government has also confirmed that pubs, clubs and bars in England which are licensed to trade until 11pm, will be allowed to open for an additional two hours, on Friday 8 May and Saturday 9 May until 1am the following morning, to mark the anniversary.

Tell us what you think about Guildford's nightlife

We are the only town in Surrey to be awarded Purple Flag status for our vibrant and safe evening and nightlife.

If you've ever been into Guildford for an evening's entertainment, we would like to hear what you thought about it – and your opinion could even be worth £100!

Complete this short survey (link below) for a chance to win a £100 voucher for one of several fantastic Guildford companies!

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PurpleFlag/>

Coronavirus

Finally, it would not be a news bulletin without some reference to Coronavirus which is in the national and international news currently. The current advice is that the risk to the general population is low. There are measures in place at airports to screen travellers arriving from certain destinations. There no specific instructions to the general public (other than good hygiene) and as such currently the licensed trade should not need to take any precautions.

Further and regularly updated information is available via the NHS and Gov.uk official sites below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public#situation-in-the-uk>