

Letter from Mr T Hill

I make this application with the others listed on the attached pages and request that it is considered as a matter of urgency.

I have recently spoken to Bryan Roland of the NPHA who informs me that many councils are now granting emergency increases in fares due to the recent large rises in fuel prices and ask that you do the same.

Since our last increase in May 2005 fuel has increased by at least 17p per litre (a 20% rise) as well as all other associated costs including licensing fees and the twice-annual MOT test which increased by 30% this year. The cost of fuel is expected to continue to rise due to crude prices and the current political situation with the Middle East.

Many drivers are now suffering hardship due to these increases and I feel this is reflected in the support that this application has had from all drivers (with the exception of drivers employed by Tonbridge Taxis who have been forbidden by their employer to sign) including those from the north of the borough.

It is often quoted at these meetings that drivers in the north of the borough have to compete with lower fares in Medway, this is not the case and the Medway fares have been higher than ours for some time. The attached comparison table will confirm this.

The attached table also shows how we have fared in the national fares league since 1999. As it illustrates we have long been the poor relation to our other local boroughs, at least since 2002 when we appeared to lose parity with our neighbours. Since that time we have progressively slipped further away from them despite our costs being on a par with theirs. As you will see Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks (our nearest neighbours) fares have consistently been in the top 24 places for the past 5 years whereas our best position in that time is 74 and we are currently no 114.

When you consider that they are all permitted to charge Time and Distance as well, our real position would be far lower, in fact this would put Tonbridge and Malling in the lowest one third of fares charged in the UK!

The fares that we request are as usual the maximum fares that can be charged and if any operator wishes to charge a lower rate they are quite entitled to, although I feel this is unlikely.

Our proposal is for the **£2.80** flag rate to stay but for a distance of **1281 metres (0.8 mile)** (This will give us a rate of £3.20 for the first mile, still 15p below our neighbours)

Thereafter the rate be **20p** for each 145.6 metres equating to £2.20 per mile.

(This will bring us into line with our neighbours)

We also request that we be permitted to charge for Time and Distance in line with all other authorities

Thank you
T Hill

FACTS AND FIGURES COMPARISON WITH OTHER LOCAL BOROUGHGS

Borough	Flag	1 Mile	Last increase	Nat League Pos (Oct 07)	8 yr. Rise	Time & Distance	<u>Position in National League of fares since 1999</u>									
							2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	
Tunbridge Wells	£3.40	£3.40	June 2007	13	£1.60	YES	13	14	24	13	8	19	68	8	7	
Sevenoaks	£3.00	£3.42	April 2006	15	£1.72	YES	15	8	23	12	7	11	4	28	19	
Dartford	£2.00	£3.40	October 2007	11	£2.10	YES	11	26	76	34	49	49	56	77	55	
Maidstone	£2.60	£3.60	January 2007	25	£1.50	YES	25	19	16	10	19	17	7	14	10	
Medway	£2.40	£3.80	July 2007	26	£1.70	YES	26	67	17	17	52	56	23	42	27	
Ton and Malling	£2.80	£3.00	May 2005	114	£1.20	NO	114	74	94	111	77	40	17	33	22	

The National Average 1 mile rate is now £3.09

TMBC £3.00

The National Average 8 year rise is £1.50

TMBC £1.20

The South Average 1 mile fare is now £3.35

TMBC £3.00

The South Average 8 year rise is £1.56

TMBC £1.20