

Last night when the second last train from London pulled into Tonbridge Station, there were probably about 12 taxis at the Taxi stand.

By the time I was next in line, I asked each taxi driver if they accepted Card payments. Each and every one declined even though they had a card machine in their car (those I knew because they answered with "where you're going to" and I then said "it doesn't matter where I'm going to. Do you have a Card payment machine or not").

They are purposely not taking small rides on Card machines.

This is actually illegal and by the beginning of February they will all have to have Card machines fitted.

If they don't they can't use the taxi stand at the station

I ended up having to walk home after asking up to 12 taxis if they had Card machines

I was a female travelling on my own having to walk 45 minutes home.

Think the taxi drivers in Tonbridge are rude 😞 we went ice skating the other day me and my 3 boys. Ask 3 taxis at the rank if they would take us home. Most of them declined because it was a short journey. When we finally got a taxi he was rude and told my boys to shut up cause they were excited to see the lights on the way home. I just think there rude wheres there Christmas spirit

I tried getting a taxi home a little while ago from the station and I asked 5 taxi's to take me to the north end of the town and each said no, they were all waiting for a better paying fare or one which took them to a better location.

I never feel brave enough to get moody, take down their details and then walk home alone with them knowing I have their details down. I don't even try to get a cab now. Irony is, if they took the small fares it would be a vibrant and busy rank turning over more fares ...

I had the same a couple weeks ago. Asked every taxi on the rank if they took card and they all said no and also asked where I was going.

I walked home in the end late at night

This has happened to me too on numerous occasions, in the rain and dark, walking over an hour. It's really frightening as a lone woman.

They tried to charge me n my boyfriend £170 once for a 25 minute drive way before midnight! Ridiculous

My husband tried to get one around midnight and was refused by 3 drivers as journey was to short!!

I reported a driver 2 years ago. A young girl only had £50 on her and a bank card. Driver wouldn't accept either of them and refused to stop at a cash point. The cash point at station was out of order. My partner and I took her with us in our taxi.

When my husband has been out and comes back late on the train, I always ask him to get a taxi home safely. He was driven to a cash point (to get cash out for the driver but it wasn't working) the driver begrudgingly took a card payment!!

I live at the top of Deakin Leas and only get a cab when it is late but no try to avoid at all costs due to my past experiences of hostile and rude drivers making me feel so guilty and also I feel I have to pay extra as they are acting so pissed off. Making the whole experience uncomfortable so I now avoid.

When I was pregnant in 2017 and in 2021 I was on crutches both times and was repeated made to feel like I was a huge inconvenience to them as my journey wasn't far (up by Leigh academy) but far enough on crutches and heavily pregnant, it was awful I dreaded every train journey knowing I was going to be met with utter disdain. I was never refused but comments were made eyes were rolled and I was made to feel truly awful

I had a really hard time in 2019 when I was pregnant getting a taxi to the drs for my appointments from the station no one wanted to take me because it was a short distance this happened regularly and more recently I was eye rolled because my destination was not far enough to warrant the taxi drivers time but I and my luggage were already in the car so the driver begrudgingly took me it made me feel very awkward

I have tried 3 times to get a taxi over the years and have now given up. Yes I want a taxi home so the demand is there. But I'm not inclined to face laughter or an angry man. Taking their number and complaining is not an option. I just want to get home. I'm often willing to pay double for the short journey. This shouldn't be the case either. I have been refused, told to go further down the rank and one guy took me moaning the whole time and drove like a maniac in anger

Journey last week. Driver really shirty about taking card payment for "short" £14 journey despite the sign saying could pay via card.

Before we got our car I once called one of the taxis based at the station if they could pick me up from outside icelands Iceland's I mentioned I had shopping n a young child in a buggy n take me to paddock wood , wen the taxi come he said to me couldn't I have walked up to the station to get one !!! No words was said in the whole journey home n he didn't even help to get pram or shopping out of car only opened the boot for me x

The way they park on the taxi rank they take up 2 lanes, they don't indicate just pull out in front of u once the light changes to green, and standing around on pavement smoking and spitting on pavement is disgusting loads of school kids and people walk past. I was asked to go to the cab behind as I needed a short distance then that cab got out and shouted and the cab I originally asked. I just wanted to walk away but the cab that took me was rude and said he had been sat there for an hour and these little jobs are pointless because now he gotta go and sit bk in the queue, I will never use them again.

I'd like to share an encounter I had yesterday evening with a taxi driver, in hope that we can advocate for change in Tonbridge. I have also written to: licensing.services@tmbc.gov.uk, and would encourage anyone else having a similar experience to write to them so we can stop this behaviour (I've read previous posts on Tonbridge Mums, so I know it's not just me!)

As I approached the taxi rank, I realised there was a mini bus at the front, so mentioned that it was just me and was that okay? His response was unbelievably rude, and made me feel very uncomfortable: *'I can see you are one person, I'm not blind'*. He then asked me where I was going, to which I replied my address, which is a short journey, to which he laughed and threw his hands up in the air. I then asked if he would take card, and he declined and said he would not take me.

There was then a kerfuffle where the cars behind were not happy with the said driver not taking me, because it wasn't fair on them.

For context, I'm 8 months pregnant, and I'm just trying to get home safely in the evening after working late, in the dark and cold - and there is also a huge hill that I have to walk up. So, this was extremely distressing for me. I cannot help that I'm a short journey.

One of the taxis did end up taking me and taking card, but the whole encounter made me feel so uncomfortable and actually quite put off getting taxis in the future, despite really needing one after work at the moment, especially when I'm working late.

I cannot help being a short journey, and I know that a lot of other people have had the same issues with taxis in Tonbridge waiting at the station.

I know it's not all taxi drivers, but PLEASE can I re-iterate that we're just trying to use a service, and are not just your 'bad luck' if we are a short journey. It's incredibly uncomfortable, and we should all be able to happily get a taxi, especially on a cold evening!

If it's the mini bus it maybe the same guy I had issues with last year.

The taxis at the station have been horrid for a while I always advice people to stay clear. Castle cars are always helpful and friendly also can highly recommend Steve taxis. He is very busy man but will always try and fit in people where he can.

My husband had a similar incident when he was on crutches after knee surgery. To be honest I often just walk at night even if it's late because I can't face the eye rolling and rudeness I have sometimes encountered over the short journey... even though my other half would rather I jumped in a cab. I believe it's a few drivers only making it difficult for the others. x

same for me. I will always walk home. Sick of it

Same for me. Just couldn't face the stress of if your gonna get a good taxi driver or a annoyed one

I am so sorry to hear about so many bad experiences. I'm a local councillor at TMBC and one of the committees I sit on deals with the taxis. I personally have had some bad experiences with the taxis at the station rank and would like to bring this up to the committee. It certainly feels as though I am not alone. Please let me know if you are happy for me to share what has been included here (anonymous or named - just let me know), or if you feel there is anything else the council should know. As an issue, it is so

linked to the safety of women and is so important that we have a service we are confident to use

Common decency and manners should dictate how you treat people regardless of the situation.

When at a rank you have to accept the good jobs along with the not so good ones so it's fair and even for everyone - if they don't want to accept that then they shouldn't be on a rank and only accept jobs via booking xx

I thought the taxis that sit at the station are there to take any fare, if they are gonna be that rude then I'd take a photo of their number plate and licence number and expose them, there are plenty of taxis willing to help anyone so why should these nasty ones ruin it for them.

I'm so sorry you experienced this - especially when pregnant it's absolutely outrageous. There seems to be no common sense thinking when the eye rolls happen. There could be a million reasons (often not visible) why people need to take taxis for short journeys - everything from having been assaulted in the past to a disability or to simply not wanting to walk that day. All of which are nobody else's business and shouldn't have to be justified by the customer. Why the drivers think commuting customers are likely to have long journeys is confusing anyhow - most people get a train to nearby where they live I would think?!

I was pregnant and on crutches and the daily abuse I faced was outrageous, this was a few years ago now, but still makes my blood boil!

I've had numerous incidents with taxis at the Tonbridge rank. I emailed Tom Tugendhat but didn't get a response. I agree with some others on here, it's best to call castle cars en route instead of using the rank.

My husband had an incident in December too. Again a short journey and wanted to pay by card, the driver took him to the shell garage ATM to get cash out (as preferred cash!!) but it wasn't working. He wasn't happy about taking the card payment.

The taxis at the station are the rudest ever. (Have had a couple of nice ones) I have felt so uncomfortable on occasions.

They are always rude. Never use them for this reason.

I had operations on both my feet a few years ago, so crutches and surgical boots on both feet. Whenever I tried getting a taxi home from the station (about 10-12 minute walk for a healthy person) the drivers used to try haggling a price first or would even ask if I'd be tipping 😞😞 awful.

I'm sorry, but I'm so, so fed up with taxi drivers getting fed up because of a short journey from the train station. I didn't choose the location of my house based on taxi prices, and I still would like to have a guilt free taxi home on a cold night.

I've been refused nearly 10 taxis before in a row because I wanted to pay card once, too. Too much of a short journey for card. It's ridiculous.

Even when I have cash I am met with reluctance.

Rant over.

Reasonable priced taxis? I've been quoted £168 for a return journey for 5 from
Tonbridge to The Mansion House Tunbridge wells and back again 😞 I've never booked
a taxi before 🤔 so I wouldn't have a clue 🤔

They do charge you more if you don't pay cash i was charged 2 pounds extra yes castle
cars are fantastic ive never had problem with them I don't like getting a taxi at station but
sometimes have no choice xx book castle cars in advance and you won't have problem
xxx

Although really supportive of this as I never have anyone willing to take my fare. tbh I've
given up on taxis now. I just dont know how safe I'd feel taking down all this info and
then walking home. The rank is frankly male dominated and intimidating

My autistic 14yo daughter had to get a taxi home as I couldn't collect her one night. first
off she got shouted at as she didn't understand that the first taxi at the rank who was
talking to someone through his passenger window wasn't actually taking them as a fare
& was told to get out of the car she got into. then was made to feel uncomfortable about
the short journey. The driver wasn't too happy about me paying her fare by card when
she got home, but he explained what had happened & I pointedly said "not a great
experience for a first taxi ride for an autistic girl then". He did have the good grace to
then say to her "well done for doing it", but I was pretty disappointed that any child would
get shouted at by a grown man when she clearly wasn't sure what to do

I went to get a taxi home after work yesterday and because my journey wasn't far was made
to feel uncomfortable and driver definitely didn't want to take me.
I could of walked but was rushing to get back for the children as I was running late.
I may be wrong but surely money is money and driving someone somewhere no matter the
distance is better than just sitting at the side of the road.
Some of the drivers near the station can be very rude and unhelpful defiantly needs to
change or they need to change careers!

I would just like to say a massive thank you to the young taxi driver who has just
dropped my daughter home from the station rank. She was £3 short but offered
immediately to run in and grab the money. He said it wasn't a problem as often takes her
home and understands a student etc and refused the extra money.
shame on other taxi drivers who have often suggested at 1am can't she walk home as
just a 10 minute walk and very rude to her !
I understand we all need to make a living and she uses the rank 4 times a week as I
insist she arrives home safely but so lovely there's decent people out there who are
genuinely lovely kind people.

Another woman on her own was refused by 2 taxis at the station because she only had
card to pay. We let her come with us and my partner did take a photo of the number
plate.

Feeling disheartened tonight 🙄. At quarter past midnight I tried to get a cab home from the station. My card wouldn't work in the station card machine so I asked the 1st cab in the line if he'd take card.

I walked the line til the 7th or so cab, all of which said no cards taken for a £6.50 fare (except one who said he'd take me, but I'd have to pay £3.50 more than the cash fare, and by the time I went back to that driver he'd taken another customer). I then had a 20min walk home in the dark alone. All the drivers were men (not sure if that's relevant or not).

I get that drivers have to pay a fee for taking card payments - but feeling sad that womens safety doesn't come first. Keen to know if anyone else has found themselves in this situation in Tonbridge?

My husband had exactly this last Friday night. The whole line wouldn't accept cards for a fare that's usually c £10 and he couldn't get cash out. When he asked if they'd stop at a cash point they said no. He ended up walking home too. While it obvs wasn't a women's safety issue, I still worry about him out late at night - I don't see why anyone should have to walk when there are taxis available and a passenger has the means to pay them.

I have had this bur at the end of the journey when the driver wouldn't let me out of the cab because I refused to pay £10 rather than the £5 fare because I tried to pay by card even though he had a card machine. (I paid in the end just to get out) TMBC do have a policy for Hackney Carriages and a complaints service but it helps to have the badge number. Sorry, I know how scary it is - hope you are ok!

I'm equally worried by stories of girls & women who are kicked off trains for wrong fares & left at night in dangerous locations. Talk of other passengers not being allowed to buy them a ticket. Cases of lost tickets / catching an earlier train home than time on ticket etc. I feel there needs to be legislation which protects us. A fine you can pay later is acceptable, being dumped out on a dark unstaffed station is not.

I experienced the same. The whole line of cabs wouldn't take card - when all shops would only take card. I walked home. I'd taken the whole train journey home psyching myself up to get a taxi and then this so back to doing everything I can to avoid them again.

Yes, most taxi drivers in this area just care about the money, not the aspect of their actual jobs!

I had the same experience last night at 11.30pm. The first driver said "no card", I told him I had £7.80 in cash which I found in my bag, he then raced like a demon to get me to my destination before the meter went too high. I felt unsafe and the driver was very grumpy. Who carries cash these days! It's hit and miss with that taxi rank. Mostly miss.

I've been refused outside the station before because I wasn't going very far. I had to get the taxi at the back of the queue to take me

I've had drivers refuse my journey at the station off the last train. Worried they'll be at the back of a huge line when they get back. I now don't bother and walk home, 15m of barely lit paths and past a churchyard. I've overpaid a tenner in gratitude when someone did accept my journey once. Its shocking really.

My husband would always give me money and insist I take a cab home when I came home late at night even though I live between 5 or ten minutes from the train station but I started refusing in the end because I received such hostile behaviour from the cabbies for wasting their time with such a short fare if they didn't flat right out refuse that I felt so embarrassed and uncomfortable. I couldn't bring myself to keep asking... sorry you experienced this x

I've had this late at night where I only lived about ten mins walk away from the station but asked for a taxi to take me, purely because it was 1am at night and I didn't feel safe. Major grumps about such a small fare and raced like his profession was a rally driver!

I've had multiple drivers in the taxi rank moan my journey isn't far enough for them when I'm literally a woman trying to get home by myself in the evening (would be a half hour walk even though it's only a 5 min drive!) All they do is cheat themselves out of a tip

And they want to make us a cashless society!!!! Machines dont always work. I think it's disgusting that men would allow a woman to be stuck by themselves. Would they do that to their children, wives or mother. No, they want someone to help them. Sad state, when money means more then welfare.

Yes, I had exactly the same - had to walk the line and none of them would take a card payment - luckily the cash machine was working then so I was able to get some - otherwise I would have been walking home also!! 😞

see - you aren't alone. always problems at that station unfortunately. And this is why we always take our alarms out because we would rather walk than get these taxis. I actually feel safer walking 🙄 😞

Same thing and I've experienced serious attitude when I've asked to be taken to top end of brookstreet as its not worth there journey and they have to go to the bottom of the rank on returning!

guessing there weren't any Castle Cars on the rank 😞

sadly not, they're my go to! If I hadn't lost my rag by this point, I would've called one 😊 I'm lucky to have my husband at home - who I phoned to wake up - to share my live what's app location with as I walked back. (2 little kids asleep so I didn't make him come and get me). Shouldn't have to be like that though. 😞 It's brilliant we have a great firm like castle cars in town, but I wish women (and men) could just walk up to the rank and easily and safely get a cab home.

I have a spare £5/ 10 kept all the time in case I need cab home. I live quite close by so it's not great for drivers I get it. But I've been in a taxi where they have actually shown me their unhappiness when I mention my address and also use the cash thing to avoid my business. 😞

Looking for some advice... got a taxi from outside the station last night. My partner left his phone in it. This morning we tracked the phone and it had been to several places around

Tonbridge then was turned off at around 11.30pm. This morning we drove to where the tracking was turned off and there was a taxi parked there. Later we went to the taxi rank and found the same taxi and it was the driver who dropped us home last night. He has denied all knowledge of having the phone and has been very cagey giving us a number which goes straight to answerphone.

We know he must have the phone as the tracking took us to his car but he clearly would rather sell it than give it back. It is my partners work phone and has everything on it and we need it back urgently. We offered him a reward and he still is saying he doesn't have it.

Any thoughts on what we can do to get it back other than report to the police which we will do tomorrow or contact the council as he is registered with them?

My husband tried to get one around midnight and was refused by 3 drivers as journey was too short!!

Yes!! I live at the top of Deakin Leas and only get a cab when it is late but no try to avoid at all costs due to my past experiences of hostile and rude drivers making me feel so guilty and also I feel I have to pay extra as they are acting so pissed off. Making the whole experience uncomfortable so I now avoid.

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Can I also say not just ladies. When my husband has been out and comes back late on the train. I always ask him to get a taxi home safely. He was driven to a cash point (to get cash out for the driver but it wasn't working) the driver begrudgingly took a card payment!

When I was pregnant in 2017 and in 2021 I was on crutches both times and was repeatedly made to feel like I was a huge inconvenience to them as my journey wasn't far (up by Leigh academy) but far enough on crutches and heavily pregnant, it was awful I dreaded every train journey knowing I was going to be met with utter disdain, I was never refused but comments were made eyes were rolled and I was made to feel truly awful

Thank you Anna for raising this I had a really hard time in 2019 when I was pregnant getting a taxi to the drs for my appointments from the station no one wanted to take me because it was a short distance this happened regularly and more recently I was eye rolled because my destination was not far enough to warrant the taxi drivers time but I and my luggage were already in the car so the driver begrudgingly took me it made me feel very awkward

Thanks for looking at this **Anna**. I have tried 3 times to get a taxi over the years and have now given up. Yes I want a taxi home so the demand is there. But I'm not inclined to face laughter or an angry man. Taking their number and complaining is not an option. I just want to get home. I'm often willing to pay double for the short journey. This shouldn't be the case either. I have been refused, told to go further down the rank and one guy took me moaning the whole time and drove like a maniac in anger

Journey last week. Driver really shirty about taking card payment for "short" £14 journey despite the sign saying could pay via card.

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station to get one !!! No words was said in the whole journey home n he didn't even help to get
pram or shopping out of car only opened the boot for me x

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shouted and the cab I originally asked, I just wanted to walk away but the cab that took me
was rude and said he had been sat there for an hour and these little jobs are pointless because
now he gotta go and sit bk in the queue, I will never use them again.

think this is a really important issue too, so thank you for raising it. I've not personally had any
bad experiences using the taxi rank but that's because I never use it. I've heard lots of stories
about taxis refusing women, so I'd rather not risk it. I'd rather have a sober night out and drive
myself home.

