

# Our Service Promise

**Thank you for choosing Northgate, the hassle free light commercial vehicle hire provider.**

**We take a fair, honest and open approach to supporting your business and vehicle needs. Read on to discover how we will do this for you and the things we need in return to ensure we get you on the road quicker and keep you on the road longer.**

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## Getting you on the road

### Making a booking

The best way to book a vehicle is to contact your preferred Northgate branch.

If you want to discuss a specific requirement before you book, you can do this directly with the hire desk at the branch or alternatively you can also contact your Business Development Manager.

You'll need to let us know the vehicle type you want, the date and time you need the vehicle from and to, along with some contact information. Don't worry if you're not sure how long you need the vehicle for, just let us know and we'll create your booking on a 'to be advised' basis and it will stay on hire until you tell us you want to return it.

If you need to supply a unique reference or purchase order number, please do so at the point of booking. We will issue you with a booking confirmation number for the hire in return.

### How long will it take to get a vehicle?

Our standard vehicles are Car Derived Vans (CDV), Short Wheel Base (SWB) and Long Wheel Base (LWB) panel vans. We will provide these vehicles as long as you've given us at least 4 working hours' notice and your delivery address is within 25 miles of one of our branches.

Availability and delivery lead times for any other vehicle types will be advised when you book. It's likely we'll be able to supply you with what you need the following working day, unless you're after a specific vehicle or require extra equipment installed.

Should you have a specific requirement for additional equipment on your rental vehicle you'll need to let us know when you make your booking. We'll confirm delivery dates with you on a case-by-case basis depending on the specification requested and the appropriate charges will be applied in line with the terms outlined in our pricing agreement.

The more notice you can give us for these types of requests will help us to get you the vehicle you need, to the standard you need, when you need it.

### Delivery and collection service

Our standard branch opening hours are 8.00am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 12noon on Saturdays so we can deliver and collect vehicles for the standard each way charge during these times.

If you need a vehicle delivered or collected outside of these hours, this can be arranged on request. You should know this is a chargeable service and an out of hours charge will apply in addition to the standard delivery or collection charge.

We prefer you to be available when we deliver and collect. This is so our driver can inspect the vehicle with you, ensure you are familiar with how to operate the vehicle, sign the necessary paperwork and handover the keys. Our drivers use the latest PDA technology to complete electronic rental agreements and vehicle condition reports (including taking some photos of the vehicle), so don't be surprised if you get asked to sign on the digital line instead of a piece of paper.

If you are picking a vehicle up from one of our branches, we'll ask to see a copy of your driving licence so please remember to bring this with you.

## What if I can't be available to sign for the vehicle delivery?

We know you are busy running your business and sometimes you may not be available to take receipt of the vehicle, so unattended deliveries can be arranged on request. We prefer these to be under exceptional circumstances and you should know that the liability for the vehicle will transfer to you at the date and time we deliver the vehicle to the agreed location.

A vehicle condition report will be completed at the point of delivery and either left in the vehicle or emailed to you. You need to make sure you check this over and contact us if there is anything you don't agree with either before you use the vehicle or by 9am the day after delivery, whichever is soonest.

## Fuel policy

Every hire vehicle, including courtesy and replacement vehicles, will leave the Northgate branch with a full tank of fuel so you are ready to get on the road as soon as we deliver. As long as you hand the vehicle back to us with a full tank of fuel when you've finished, you won't receive any bills for refuelling.

You're busy and we understand that you might not always have time to refuel before you return the vehicle. No problem, we will take care of this for you, although you should know you will be charged for the litres to refuel. We review our pence per litre each month and the current recharge rate can always be found displayed in our branches.

## What if I need to cancel a booking?

As a flexible rental provider, we understand things change in your business and you may no longer need a vehicle you had booked. If this happens, just let us know as soon as you can. Providing the vehicle wasn't subject to specific terms and if our driver hadn't started the delivery, you won't be charged anything. If we were on route, then a failed delivery charge will apply.

If the vehicle or equipment fitted was subject to specific terms, then we'll let you know the charges that apply.

## Returning the vehicle (off hire)

With no contract tying you in, you have the flexibility to return vehicles should your business needs change. All you need to do is contact the hire desk at your preferred Northgate branch and let us know the date, time and address to collect from, along with some contact information so we can action the off hire.

Please note we can't process requests to back date off hires. We will provide you with a unique off hire reference number to confirm your instruction has been processed.

If the vehicle or equipment fitted was subject to specific terms and you're returning it early, then we'll let you know what charges apply.

We know it's sometimes easier for you to drop vehicles off at one of our branches. There is no problem with this and all we ask is that you wait while we complete the off hire checks with you, including the vehicle condition report. Sometimes you may also need to return a vehicle to us outside of our opening hours and we ask that you only do this where you have made prior arrangements directly with the relevant Northgate Branch Manager.

## Collection

There are just a couple of extra things you need to know about collection. We will come and collect vehicles within two working days of the off hire request, during which time it's still your responsibility to ensure the vehicle and keys are safe and secure and the appropriate insurance is still in place.

You should empty the vehicle of any materials and equipment to avoid charges associated with the disposal of materials. We can't accept any liability for any equipment or possessions left in vehicles.

If the vehicle isn't available when we come to collect then we'll have to put it back on hire to you and a failed collection fee will be charged. If you've issued an off hire instruction and then realise you need the vehicle a little longer, no problem, just let us know and we'll only apply failed collection charge if our driver is on route.

## Keeping you on the road

### Vehicle maintenance

We understand a vehicle is 'mission critical' to running a successful business. To maximise vehicle uptime we operate a range of maintenance solutions through our national network of workshops and mobile technicians for service, maintenance and repair. Whatever your needs, our dedicated Driver Support Team are on hand to help on 0843 208 7507.

	We contact you	You need to contact us
Service due based on miles		✓
Service due based on time	✓	
MOT due	✓	
Tail lift inspection due	✓	
Tachograph inspection due	✓	
HGV compliance	✓	✓
Any damage (Body, tyres, glass)		✓
Worn tyres		✓

Planned maintenance due dates and mileage intervals are displayed in the cab of your hire vehicle.

It's really important you help us keep the vehicle maintained to plan to keep you on the road longer. This will also help avoid any associated recharges to you for failure to maintain. As we need to contact you to book some maintenance jobs, it's a big help if you can keep us up to date with contact information, especially for the driver.

Once we've got you booked in for a maintenance event, you can expect to receive either a text message or email confirming the date, time and location. We'll also send you a reminder the day before your booking.

### Overnight flexible servicing

We have a number of workshops across the UK that can service vehicles overnight. This choice allows maintenance to be completed when you aren't using the vehicle. We'll advise at point of booking if this is an option for you.

## Network of mobile service technicians

We also have a fleet of mobile technicians operating across the UK and we'll let you know at the point of booking if the event can be completed by one of our team. You should know our technician will need to make sure the working area is safe before work starts. Major servicing however needs to be completed in a workshop so we can get the vehicle up on the ramps and give it a good comprehensive inspection.

## Courtesy vehicles

If the maintenance event is scheduled to take two hours or less, you shouldn't expect to receive a courtesy vehicle. If we're going to need the vehicle for more than two hours, then we can offer you a courtesy vehicle subject to availability. We need you to return your courtesy vehicle within one working day of receiving notification your maintenance is complete.

## Breakdown assistance

All vehicles are supplied with nationwide breakdown cover 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you need emergency assistance, the number is 0800 716418 and this is also displayed in the cab of the vehicle.

To ensure drivers are assisted at the roadside, our national breakdown partner handles breakdown requests on the basis that the vehicle is attended and either made safe or brought to a place of safety as a minimum requirement.

We resolve 80% of issues roadside, meaning you can get back on the road with minimum disruption. Where we can't resolve the problem roadside, you will be recovered to the nearest Northgate branch with a workshop where you will be supplied a replacement vehicle. We can't guarantee a like for like replacement but we will make every effort to ensure you are supplied with a similar size vehicle to get you moving.

All charges associated with breakdown, including replacement vehicles, are supplied free of charge unless the root cause is driver fault, abuse or damage.

## Tyres

It's good practice to conduct daily checks on your rental vehicle whilst you have it on hire. Part of the checks should include checking tyre tread depth and pressure on all tyres.

The minimum legal tread on tyres is 1.6mm throughout a continuous band in the centre three quarters of the tread and around the entire circumference. Your safety is important to us so we are happy to replace tyres as worn when they are at 3mm of tread remaining.

You should know that puncture repairs and damaged tyres are rechargeable to you along with any associated call out and recovery charges. You can find details of call out charges and tyre costs on our website.

If you need on site or roadside tyre attendance you will be charged a call out fee, even for worn tyres. All you need to do to avoid this cost is run the vehicle into your nearest Northgate branch with a workshop and we'll also do a vehicle health check to keep you safe and on the road longer. You can find your nearest Northgate workshop on our website or give our Driver Support Team a call and they'll be happy to advise.

## Damage and recharge management

When it comes to damage, our aim is to fix the vehicle as quickly as possible and to minimise the cost to you. We achieve this by managing all aspects of the repair either through our own network of workshops or by using our approved network of body shops. We have dedicated repair management teams in place across our network of locations, as well as in-house engineers, to support you step by step through the repair and recharge process. This way we can minimise the vehicle downtime and guarantee repairs are completed to our quality standards, ensuring rentable standards are met for the next hirer. You can find our rentable standards on our website.

### Repair and recharge

We'll keep you informed at each stage of the process in the unfortunate event you have a damage recharge. To ensure transparency, we provide you with an estimate detailing costs for parts, labour, paint and materials where appropriate.

#### Body Damage Repairs under £2,000

We automatically get repairs up to the value of £2,000 underway as soon as possible in order to minimise the vehicle off the road time, and associated costs, to both you and us.

#### Body Damage Repairs over £2,000

If the repair is estimated to cost more than £2,000, we'll send you a full claim pack and give you a call within two days to make sure you have received everything you need.

You have up to seven days from the point the claim pack was issued to raise a query, involve your insurers or give us approval to proceed before we start the repairs. Unless you tell us not to, then we get repairs underway after this seven day to minimise downtime and associated costs for both you and us.

### Loss of use

Vehicles that require repair cannot be hired out. We call the cost of lost hire days attributed to this reason loss of use. As a fair provider, we breakdown loss of use into two categories;

1. Repair loss of use – calculated solely based on the estimated labour hours to repair the vehicle.
2. 2. Authorisation loss of use – the time between us issuing you with a claim pack and you issuing your instruction to proceed with repairs.

#### How is loss of use calculated and charged?

We use the recognised industry standard of six labour repair hours equating to one day's hire charge.

	Repair loss of use applies?	Authorisation loss of use applies?
Repair Under £2,000	Yes	No
Repair Over £2,000	Yes	Yes



You should know we don't charge loss of use for any other reason, including if it's our fault things have been delayed. We also won't charge you for any more than twenty eight days loss of use. Loss of use charges will be on your final repair invoice.

## Replacement vehicles

Replacement vehicles are supplied free of charge unless the root cause is driver fault, abuse or damage.

## Reporting an accident

It is critical you report accidents to your insurance provider and Northgate either immediately or as soon as possible after the incident.

## Written off and stolen vehicles

In the event of a total loss (written off and stolen vehicles), it's your responsibility to report the incident to your insurer, to Northgate and to the appropriate authorities as soon as possible.

You'll need to obtain a crime reference number for a stolen vehicle and you should supply this to both your insurer and Northgate. We need you to comply with any reasonable request for assistance in recovering a stolen vehicle and we may ask you to provide us with a copy of the police report to help with that.

As soon as you make us aware of a total loss, we'll start preparing a claim pack that will include the last known mileage, a copy of the V5 and a settlement figure based on the current market value less the salvage value where applicable.

You'll be liable for any inherited charges relating to recovery or storage of the total loss vehicle, along with any independent assessment of costs, or disposal of waste materials within it.

If you need a replacement vehicle for the total loss, we can supply this but it will be chargeable and we'll treat this as a new rental booking to keep things clear.

## Other things you need to know

### Opening hours

All our branches are open at least between 8am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 12noon on Saturdays. We also have a number of branches that are open longer. Check out our website to see if your local branch operates extended opening hours.

### Rentable standards

We take pride in maintaining a high standard of vehicles on our fleet. You can check out our rentable standards in branch and on our website.

### Vehicle insurance

You need to ensure all vehicles supplied by Northgate, including any replacement vehicles, are comprehensively insured for the duration of the hire and added to the Motor Insurance Bureau's database ([www.mib.org.uk](http://www.mib.org.uk)). The insurance needs to remain in force until the vehicle has been off hired and collected.

We need you to supply us with a copy of your current insurance certificate before we can supply vehicles to you and you'll need to let us have a copy of your renewal certificates as appropriate. We hold the copy on file and load the details into our systems. Without these records, we can't supply vehicles to you.

### Operator's Licence, including Public Service Vehicle

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is empowered to impound all vehicles over 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight if they are being used in connection with your business without a valid operator's licence in place.

It's your responsibility to ensure that valid operator's licences are in place, where applicable, for any vehicles hired from Northgate (vehicles over 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight) and you will need to supply us with a copy of the relevant licence before you can hire.

If the vehicle is detained by the DVSA for illegal use due to a lack of a valid operator's licence, you are responsible for any charges incurred in restoring the vehicle, and any loss of income incurred by us.

### Mileage

We've calculated your hire rates based on what you told us your expected annual mileage is going to be and this information is noted in our pricing agreement. We understand your business needs may change, so we monitor your actual mileage on a quarterly basis to project your annualised mileage.

If you're doing more miles than we based your pricing on, we reserve the right to retrospectively bill for excessive mileage and to adjust your rate to reflect your actual mileage going forward. Just so you know, we call excessive mileage anything over 10% of annual mileage you estimated. We'll be upfront with you and talk to you about what we've found before charges are applied.

## Call out fees

We don't charge you call out fees unless the root cause is driver fault, abuse or damage, or the call out is to replace a worn tyre. You can avoid call out fees for worn tyres by bringing the vehicle into one of our workshops. Some examples where you would be charged call out fees are; misfuelling, flat battery due to lights left on and accident attendance.

## No smoking policy

Northgate do not permit smoking in any of our rental vehicles. If evidence of smoking is found, we reserve the right to pass on the charge to valet the vehicle and any other associated charges.

## London Congestion Zone and Dartford Crossing

All Northgate supplied vehicles are liable for the London Congestion Zone and Dartford Crossing charges.

If you request delivery to an address within the London Congestion Zone, we pay the charge for the day of delivery and add to the first rental invoice. You are then required to notify Transport for London and pay for any subsequent days the vehicle operates in the congestion zone during the hire period, including the final day of hire. You are also required to pay for any Dartford Crossing fees during the vehicle hire period.

If you register your Northgate supplied vehicle on your London Congestion Zone or Dartford Crossing account, it is your responsibility to remove the vehicle from your account at the end of the hire period. Northgate will not be responsible for any additional charges incurred if you don't carry out this action.

## Fines

We pay all fixed penalty charge notices that are notified to us by the issuing authority. Fixed penalty charges are things like parking fines, bus lane fines, congestion zone fines etc. We'll pass on the cost of the fine plus an administration fee in each instance.

For all other penalty charge notices, for example speeding fines, we have to supply the hirer's details to the issuing authority so they can trace the driver. If we receive any of these types of fines for the period you were responsible for the vehicle, we will nominate you and then the issuing authority will contact you direct to trace the driver. We charge you an administration fee for handling this type of fine.

## Vehicle Tax

We take care of taxing all vehicles operating on our fleet. If you have any concerns about a vehicle's tax status you can check validity online via the DVLA enquiry service [www.vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk](http://www.vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk). This service also provides a brief summary of the vehicle including the date of first registration, MOT status, engine size and Co2 emissions.

## Lost keys

We hold on to all sets of spare keys for our vehicles. If you lose the keys to your rental vehicle, let us know as soon as possible and we'll get a spare set dispatched to you. Dependent on the circumstances, we might want to replace the full lock set for security reasons, so we reserve the right to do so. All charges incurred in these instances, including costs to get another set of spares made, will be passed on to you plus an administration fee.

## European travel

We know that you sometimes might need to take your Northgate rental vehicle out of the UK. You need to ask us for permission before you travel so we can validate your request as we have some conditions that need to be met before we can authorise. If we can authorise, we'll need to see copies of the vehicle insurance certificate and European breakdown cover for the time the vehicle is abroad, including recovery back to the UK.

We'll need to know your travel dates so we can prepare the VE103 document that allows you to legally take a Northgate vehicle out of the UK. This document needs to stay with the driver of the vehicle at all times whilst abroad. We charge an administration fee for producing this document and a 25% rental surcharge will also be applied to your hire rate for the duration of your time abroad.

## Invoicing and payment

Subject to the availability of credit facilities, rental invoices (including associated charges such as delivery and collection) are raised in arrears at the end of each calendar month and become payable by Direct Debit on the last working day of the following calendar month. For example an invoice dated 31st March is due no later than 30th April.

Damage, fines and other ad hoc charges are invoiced as and when the extent of the charge(s) become known, subject to the provisions of this document, and are also payable by Direct Debit on the last working day of the following calendar month.

Please note, should any invoice become overdue for payment and in the absence of any valid dispute, the full balance of the account will also become immediately due and payable. Any invoice notified as being in dispute at least seven calendar days ahead of the Direct Debit date will be excluded from the Direct Debit claim until the dispute is resolved, providing sufficient details have been given to enable investigation.

We will confirm any variance to these credit facilities when we open your account.

## Get in touch

<b>Hiredesk</b> Rental bookings, extensions and off hires.	We'll confirm contact information for your preferred Northgate hire desk when your account is opened
<b>Driver Support</b> Service, maintenance and repair, including tyres	<b>t:</b> 0843 208 7507 <b>e:</b> <a href="mailto:schedulingcompliance@northgate.co.uk">schedulingcompliance@northgate.co.uk</a>
<b>Breakdown</b> Roadside Assistance 24/7/365	<b>t:</b> 0800 716 418
<b>Damage And Recharge</b> Vehicle repair and recharge management	<b>t:</b> 0843 208 7515 <b>e:</b> <a href="mailto:incident.management@northgate.co.uk">incident.management@northgate.co.uk</a>
<b>Credit Control</b> Invoicing and payments	<b>t:</b> 0843 208 7530 <b>e:</b> <a href="mailto:ar@northgatevehiclehire.co.uk">ar@northgatevehiclehire.co.uk</a>
<b>Invoice Query Handling</b> Invoice query investigation and resolution	<b>t:</b> 0843 208 7530 <b>e:</b> <a href="mailto:invoicequeries@northgatevehiclehire.co.uk">invoicequeries@northgatevehiclehire.co.uk</a>
<b>Fines</b> Administration of fines for parking, speeding, etc	<b>t:</b> 0843 208 7511 Option 1 <b>e:</b> <a href="mailto:fines@northgate.co.uk">fines@northgate.co.uk</a>
<b>Customer Services</b> Complaint investigation and resolution	<b>t:</b> 0843 208 7521 <b>e:</b> <a href="mailto:customer.services@northgate.co.uk">customer.services@northgate.co.uk</a>

## Queries, complaints and disputes

We are committed to providing you with a great service every time you deal with Northgate. We recognise the fact that sometimes things can go wrong, so we make it our priority to start fixing the issue as soon as you tell us.

Please notify the Damage and Recharge team if you have a question or concern about a claim pack within two working days of receipt so we can get you the information you need.

Invoice queries should be notified within ten working days of invoice receipt. We can't cancel and re-raise invoices, so if we've made a mistake and need to give you some money back, we'll do this by issuing a correcting credit note.

If you are dissatisfied with how a query or concern you've raised with one of the Northgate team has been handled, our Customer Service team are on hand to assist, either by telephone, email or post.

We will try our best to resolve your complaint as soon as you contact us. Where this isn't possible, we will agree a course of action with you as well as provide you with clear timeframes for next steps and update points for the resolution of your complaint. We want to resolve things as quickly as we can and certainly aim to fix things within twenty-eight days of receipt of the complaint or dispute.