

7 BRAMLEY ROAD
CHELTENHAM
GL51 7LL
21st May 2013.

To Whom It May Concern:

Re:- Michael Rodgers.

I run a small, private hire vehicle rental business in Cheltenham, licensing and renting saloon vehicles for a weekly rental. I have carried out this business for almost four years.

My business success or failure is based on the standard of vehicles provided, the aftercare support that I give to the drivers and the relationship forged between us.

A considerable number of drivers have recognized that, in difficult economic circumstances, it is a better and more manageable option to rent a vehicle at a fixed price, backed up by the maintenance support that I offer, than to own their own vehicle.

One such driver is Michael Rodgers of 'Sunnycroft' Hermitage Street, Cheltenham, GL53 7NX.

I have known Michael for almost twenty four years, so, when he approached me about renting a vehicle, I did not hesitate in assisting him. Within a few short weeks I was confident enough in Michael's driving and his recognition of his role in taking care of my vehicle as though it were his own, to give him what was at the time my newest and best vehicle, the Renault Laguna LL58 BCO, CBC PHV 071.

Michael has been driving that vehicle since it's test date of 14/05/2012. During this period of time the vehicle has been serviced and inspected every 10,000, having covered 43,000 miles between it's 2012 and 2013 MOTs. Also, the vehicles are inspected by myself on a weekly basis during rent collections. This inspection is just a brief walk round the vehicle where I ask the driver if they have any problems or issues with the car.

Services are carried out by Cheltenham Renault on Tewkesbury Road in Cheltenham. I personally oversee every inspection, the head

mechanic, Mr. Andrew Elliott will walk me round the underside of the vehicle, pointing out any wearing items, defects and, in the case of some vehicles signs of driver abuse.

In the case of Michael Rodger's vehicle, in the full twelve months, there had never been any cause for concern. Indeed, until April 2013, the only 'extra' items required by this vehicle had been front brake pads in August 2012 and rear brake pads in November 2012. The cost of these wear and tear item's replacement was covered by Mr. Rodgers, as per his rental agreement (attached)

In early April 2013, during a weekly inspection of the vehicle, Michael pointed out to me that the driver side headlight had discoloured on the inside of the lens. Having sent Michael a text message on 25/03/2013 informing him that the vehicle's MOT date was 01/05/2013, he was aware that there might be an issue with the light that needed to be sorted before that test. He also mentioned to me during this inspection that he had replaced the headlamp bulb in the same headlamp twice in the last month.

I asked Michael to take the car to Cheltenham Renault for inspection, which he did the following morning. Mr Elliott called me to say that the headlamp had a wiring fault that had caused it's socket to burn, hence the smoked appearance to the inside of the lens. He recommended that it be replaced as soon as possible.

I sourced a second hand headlamp which was fitted to the car during it's service and pre-MOT inspection on 23/04/2013.

During the 7-10 days between inspecting the car and getting the headlight replaced Michael was stopped by the police for having a defective headlight. As I understand it, the police officer walked around the car with a torch and inspected the tyres. He found that one of the rear tyres was 0.3mm below the legal limit on it's inside edge.

Michael called me the next day to explain what had happened. He was understandably upset, recognizing the fact that if the bulb hadn't blown for the third time, the police would not have stopped him and the tyre would have been spotted during it's pre-MOT inspection the following Tuesday and replaced.

Whilst we both recognize that a tyre worn below the legal limit is illegal, we would also ask committee members to recognize that a tyre that is fitted to the rear of the car with an uneven tread wear on it's inside edge of 0.3mm would be almost impossible to spot by any motorist.

Michael had the worn tyre replaced the next morning. Unfortunately, the worn tyre was left at the garage for disposal.


The tyre wear regulations for a standard car state that they should have a minimum tread of 1.6mm across 75% of the width of the tyre. I therefore wonder whether a policeman with a torch was able to gauge precisely the percentage tread depth and the exact tread depth across the entire tyre's circumference.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing and, had I seen Michael's ticket from the police earlier I would have suggested that he challenge their findings.

Michael is a good taxi driver who takes care of my vehicle well. I understand from Mr Leon Jackson at Starline Taxis that they have never received a complaint against Michael in the 16 months he has been working there.

I also recognize that had I arranged for the headlight to be replaced immediately instead of waiting until the vehicle's pre-MOT inspection Michael would not have been in this predicament and therefore feel equally responsible.

Yours Faithfully



Graham Foley