



IR Work Experience at Northgate Mobility: Delivering for Customers

Our investment case foundations are our network scale, technical expertise and reputation for outstanding customer service, providing key competitive advantages and barriers to entry.

To explore in more detail how this is delivered, I spent a day working in my local Crawley branch (south of Gatwick Airport), experiencing first-hand what makes customers choose Northgate for light commercial van (LCV) rental and why we achieve such high feedback scores.

From attending the **7.30am** drivers' meeting to working on a busy front desk after a bank holiday weekend, it was clear how central our people are to the customer experience. Drivers and front-desk colleagues are often the first point of contact at stressful moments, such as delivering a replacement vehicle after an incident. I also noted how open the drivers' meeting was – all views listened to, KPIs discussed and open discussion around how to resolve situations. I won't be putting a dog into a hire car again, now I understand the challenges in cleaning them to rental standards!

There were 3 customer vehicles awaiting the branch opening at **8am**, and a further 3 arrived within 30 mins, a mixture of pre-bookings and 'walk-ins' with issues ranging from warning lights to a recovery vehicle arrival with accident damage. Two requests also came in by phone from other branches for vehicles; and a same-day drop-off agreed for an electric e-LCV nearby. Despite the volume of activity, the care, professionalism and safety-first mindset the team bring was evident throughout my 90 minutes here - and this was just the start of their day.

The branch's 4.9 Trustpilot score was easy to understand and the feedback on the noticeboard rang true, as Paul and Alika calmly handled everything from accident replacements and walk-ins to pre-booked servicing and tactful billing conversations, while maintaining rigorous vehicle and documentation standards.



9.30am, sat in on the weekly branch managers' meeting, which offered a fascinating insight into leadership across the SE region. Discussions ranged from vehicle availability and operational challenges to colleague wellbeing and engagement, with real pride shown in teams going above and beyond for customers and each other. This is a close-knit team of branch managers, learning from each other and always ready to support.

A monthly review with a key fleet customer **at 12pm** highlighted the depth of our partnerships, the level of engagement, the complexity of keeping vehicles on the road, and the value our mobile service solutions bring in minimising disruption. Workshop and rental manager are key to this 140-fleet account keeping mobile, managing complex scheduling of servicing and returns and at least two MOTs on average a week. Clearly an excellent relationship, demonstrating the value of the rental offering.

Spending the afternoon out on delivery and collection rounds reinforced one of Northgate's key differentiators. The structured, transparent process, from proactive customer communication (we arrived on time having called ahead) to detailed condition checks supported by extensive photographic records (using a PDA, a minimum of 44 photographs are logged across the collection and delivery process: 11 at each stage) makes it clear why insurers and fleet customers trust our approach, transparency and processes.

Dropping a van off at the MOT centre highlighted the attractions of rental: our pre-MOT workshop removes operational risk and stress for customers by anticipating and resolving issues before they become problems at MOT – we had loaned the driver a vehicle that morning so he was back at work within 30 mins of arriving at the branch. I could see this being a very different situation for a fleet manager with limited flexibility or spare vehicles, and drivers needing to manage the MOT process.



When I think of my investment case takeaways from the day:

Network scale: The significant benefits of multi-depot support for larger customers and seeing the regional team work closely together to provide a seamless service

Technical expertise: Our in-house fleet management, servicing and bodyshop expertise as a unique and key differentiator – trusted and highly valued by customers

Outstanding customer service: Commitment and passion was on display throughout the day, and reassuring to know that this level of service is delivered across our network, every day.

My thanks to **Marc Camfield** and the Crawley Northgate Mobility branch team for such a warm welcome. It is very different to the 'holiday rental' which was my nearest proxy experience and I left with a far deeper understanding of the "real world" of our branch network and the teamwork, care and customer focus that keeps more than 30 vehicles a day moving for customers.