

RAC

Report on Motoring 2024



The convenience of
RAC mobile car maintenance





Servicing and repairs –
at your home or work





Indy,
RAC Mobile Mechanic since 2022,
West Midlands

Contents

RAC Report on Motoring 2024

Foreword	6	Our work for drivers	66
1 What's on motorists' minds?	8	Our message for government	70
2 The state of our roads	14	Drivers and their vehicles at a glance	76
Local roads: from bad to worse	16	Research methodology	78
Shortfalls in local road maintenance	20	Company overview	80
High-speed roads	22	Advisory panel	82
3 The cost of driving	24		
Rising insurance costs bite	26		
Fuel costs remain high	28		
The cost of servicing and repairs	30		
Parking	34		
4 Choice of next vehicle	36		
Drivers' plans to replace their vehicles	38		
A further electric car slowdown	40		
Charging challenges?	44		
5 The dangers on our roads	46		
Handheld mobile phone use	48		
Distractions beyond mobile phones	50		
Drink and drug-driving	52		
Speed limit compliance	54		
A culture of speeding?	56		
6 Car dependency and mobility	58		
A driving need	60		
Attitudes to public transport	61		
Drivers' use of buses and trains	63		
Drivers as cyclists	64		





Foreword

Dave Hobday, RAC Chief Executive

With research for this year's RAC Report on Motoring showing there are few realistic transport alternatives to the car for many people, it's worrying to see 2024 is once again shaping up to be a turbulent year for drivers.

The high costs associated with running a car are a prominent feature in this year's report. While fuel prices aren't anywhere near the record levels of 2022, they remain stubbornly high which is why many drivers still list them as one of their biggest motoring concerns. With car insurance premiums having increased dramatically this year we have, for the first time ever, seen the cost of insuring a vehicle appear as drivers' second greatest concern, behind only the condition and maintenance of local roads which remains the top bugbear.

The pressure on household finances, perhaps together with the Conservative Government's decision to push back the end date for the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 to 2035, has led to a big drop in those that say their next car will be fully electric. Even though 22% of all the cars manufacturers sell this year have to be electric, the high upfront costs, along with continued concerns about range and charging, are undoubtedly holding people back from making the switch. And, the change to 2035 has perhaps prompted drivers to say there's still time for at least one more petrol car.

In addition to big increases in car insurance, research for this year's report also shows that

more drivers are complaining of higher servicing, repair and MOT costs. What's more, many are even avoiding servicing their vehicles to save money, something which often leads to a breakdown and unexpected repair bills. Worryingly, a fifth of all drivers admit to avoiding necessary repairs and scheduled maintenance altogether.

For those keen to keep their vehicles in good working order, we – as the UK's leading driving services provider – are on a mission to make routine servicing and repairs as convenient and affordable as possible. Our Mobile Mechanics service, launched last year, now covers the whole country. This enables customers to have their vehicles serviced or repaired on their drives or at their workplaces, saving them from having to get to and from a garage. Importantly, RAC Mobile Mechanics can also fix broken suspension springs which our breakdown data shows are often caused by the thousands of potholes that plague our roads. The damage inflicted on vehicles by potholes is yet another cost drivers could well do without, particularly as RAC data estimates the cost of a repair to a typical family car for anything more than a puncture can be up to £460.



In a first for the Report on Motoring, a record number of drivers surveyed are dissatisfied with the state of the UK's roads, both local ones maintained by councils and motorways and high-speed dual carriageways. We believe it is crucial the new government gets to grip with this issue and ensures local councils are given long-term certainty of funding, not just to fix dangerous potholes, but to carry out sufficient preventative maintenance to avoid them appearing in the first place. Unfortunately, government data shows this is now a thing of the past with 60% of councils in England not doing any preservation or surface dressing work on their roads in the last financial year.

We will continue to campaign on this most important of issues, especially as findings for the Report on Motoring show that the country is as dependent as ever on its vehicles. Eight-in-10 drivers – a proportion that has barely changed in the report's 36-year history, say they would struggle to adjust their lifestyle to being without a car.

Knowing how important cars are to our lives – from commuting, to doing the shopping and visiting family and friends – we are determined to be there for drivers, whether that's fighting

for better roads and fairer fuel prices, coming to their rescue when they break down, allowing them to book an RAC Mobile Mechanic service or repair at home or at work, or find the cheapest fuel – all things that can be done with the utmost ease via the myRAC mobile app.

While serving members has been at the heart of everything the RAC has done since it was founded 127 years ago, adapting and innovating is in our DNA. This is as true today as it was when cars were first mass produced and numbers on our roads grew exponentially. We have not only come up with high-tech solutions at the roadside to fix increasingly sophisticated vehicles, we have fully embraced digital technology for the benefit of our members and all other motorists alike. So, from logging a breakdown quickly and easily right through to booking an RAC Mobile Mechanic to conveniently carry out a service or repair at home, we have the solution.

'Adapting and innovating is in our DNA'





1

What's on motorists' minds?

The ongoing lack of funding for maintenance works have served only to worsen the dire state of the UK's local roads. It is no surprise, therefore, that this issue remains by far the top concern among Britain's drivers.

What is perhaps surprising, however, is the sheer level of dismay shared by drivers. This year, for the first time, a majority of drivers (56%) say that the condition and maintenance of local roads in the UK – those that councils are responsible for – is one of their top motoring-related concerns, up sharply from the 49% recorded in 2023. This is the highest level of concern about the issue in the 10 years it has been raised, and a clear indictment of Britain's long-term failure to invest adequately in the maintenance of its local road network.



'The **condition and maintenance** of local roads in the UK is a **top concern**'

But this increase in concern is not limited to local roads. In 2024, 16% of drivers say the condition and maintenance of motorways and high-speed dual carriageways is a top concern, a rise on the 11% recorded in 2023. Similarly, this is the highest level of concern relating to this issue in its 10-year history.

In Chapter 2, *The state of our roads*, we examine in further detail drivers' views on Britain's dismal road conditions, ranging from potholes and inadequate drainage to litter and poor signage visibility, and look at the vehicle damage that crumbling road surfaces increasingly appear to be causing.

While the rate of inflation in the wider UK economy has slowed over the past 12 months, increases in the cost of motoring continue to plague the country's drivers. Although there has been a fall in the number of drivers who say the cost of fuel is a top concern, it is still

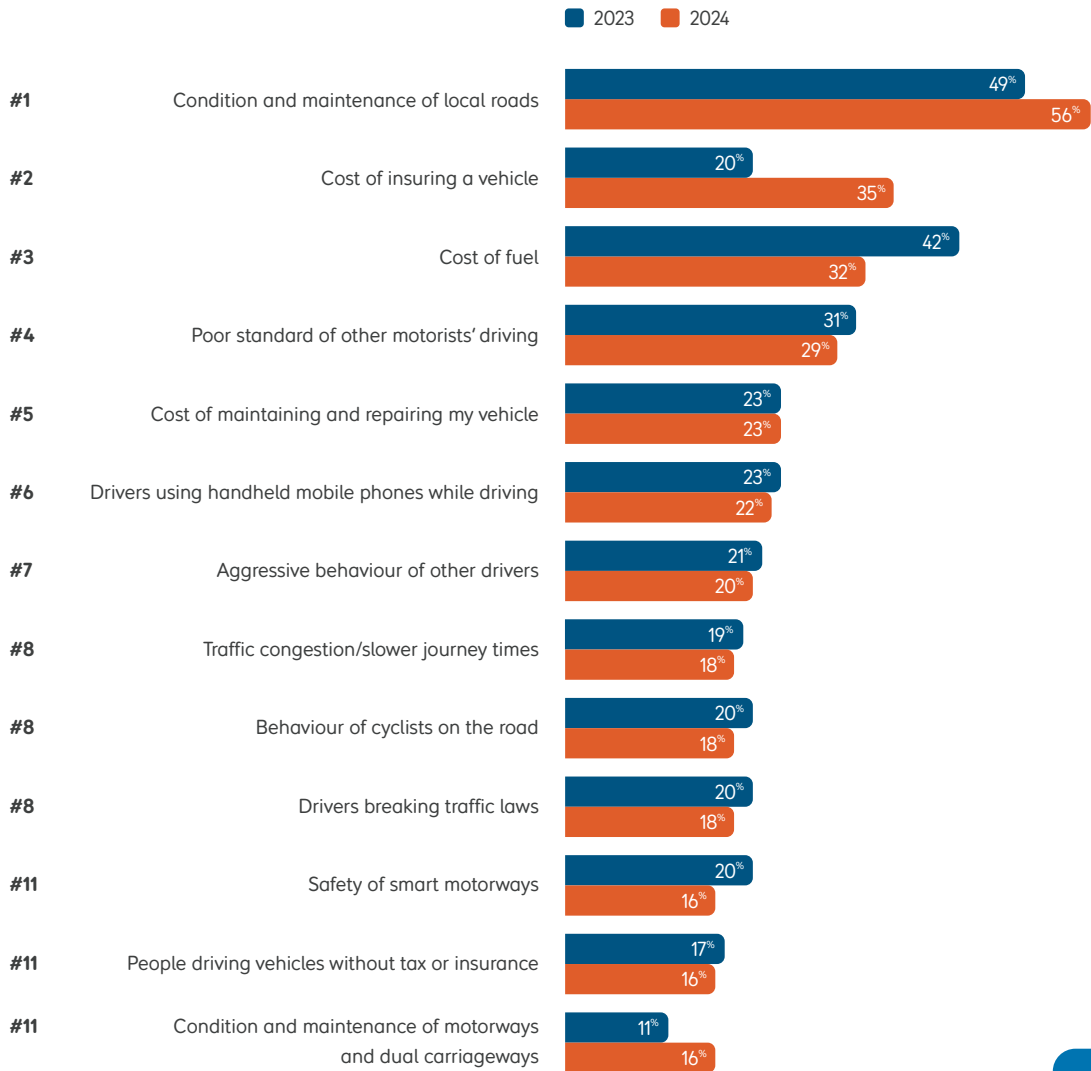
the third most widespread issue, down from second place last year. In its place, and the second biggest concern of drivers overall this year, is the cost of insuring a vehicle. While just 20% of drivers said insuring their car was a top motoring issue in 2023, the proportion this year has shot up to 35%. Industry data shows there has been a sharp rise in premiums over the past 12 months, largely as a result of steep increases in insurers' repair costs. Relatedly, rising prices at the nation's garages are having a direct impact on drivers, with 23% saying that the cost of maintaining and repairing their vehicle is a top concern in 2024.

56%

of drivers say the condition and maintenance of local roads is a top concern – the highest figure ever recorded

Drivers' top concerns for 2024 and how they've changed

Figures represent proportion of all drivers that said the issue was a top concern to them



35%

of drivers say the cost of insurance is a top motoring concern – up from 20% in 2023

The expenses associated with owning a car are a far bigger problem for younger drivers than for other age groups: among those aged between 17 and 24, the cost of insurance is the most significant motoring concern in 2024 (cited by 44%), followed by the cost of fuel (41%) and maintenance or repair costs (32%). However, it is worth noting that, among drivers aged 65 or above, concern about rising insurance costs is higher than the average across all age groups (38% versus 35%). These figures reflect the fact that insurers can view younger and older drivers as more of a risk on the roads.

Despite the increasing price of insurance and general cost-of-living pressures, there has been a small fall in concern about other people driving without tax or insurance, from 17% in 2023 to 16% this year. Meanwhile, 12% say the cost and/or availability of parking is a top issue for them.

In Chapter 3, *The cost of driving*, we explore the wider impact of rising costs on driver behaviour and look at the risky steps many drivers say they are taking to reduce their car-related expenditure.

There has been a slight decline in overall concern about the poor standard of other motorists' driving, with 29% of drivers naming this a top problem compared with 31% last year. Concern about other drivers' use of handheld mobile phones at the wheel has remained steady (22% versus 23% in 2023). So too has worry about other drivers' aggressive behaviour (20% in 2024 versus 21%) along with drivers breaking traffic laws such as speed limits or running red lights (18% versus 20% in 2023).

Concern about drink-driving has continued to fall, in line with the long-term trend seen in previous editions of the Report on Motoring. In 2024, only 13% of drivers say this is a top issue compared with the peak of 28% recorded in 2019. Meanwhile, 14% say they consider drug-driving to be a problem, a figure that is in line with the 13% seen in 2023, and 11% say the use of e-scooters on the road is a concern (down from 13%). We take a more detailed look at many of these subjects, as well as at other hazards such as speeding and driver distractions, in Chapter 5, *The dangers on our roads*.

Among other issues, 18% of drivers express concern about traffic congestion and slower journey times, down from 19% in 2023, while just 8% say the impact of vehicles on health and the environment is a problem. However, there has been a notable fall in concern about the safety of smart motorways, from 20% in 2023 to 16% this year. This no doubt reflects the Government's decision in 2023 to cancel plans for future smart motorway projects, citing a lack of public confidence and cost pressures due to inflation.¹



1. www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/infrastructure/is-this-the-end-for-smart-motorways-in-the-uk/







2

The state of our roads

Dissatisfaction with the state of the UK's roads has reached a new peak in 2024. The RAC Report on Motoring has found that, for the first time, more than half of drivers (56%) say the condition and maintenance of local roads across Britain – those which councils are responsible for – is one of their top motoring-related concerns. This represents the highest level of concern about this issue in the 10 years the question has been put to drivers, and it is far and away the most widespread concern in 2024 – more than 20 percentage points ahead of the next biggest issue, the cost of insurance.

2.1 Local roads: from bad to worse

Drivers who live in either suburban or rural areas are considerably more likely to say local road conditions are a top concern (61% and 66% respectively) than those who live in towns or cities (35%). Meanwhile, as has been the case in previous editions of the report, the poor state of local roads is an even greater problem for older drivers: our research shows that 60% of those aged between 45 and 64 say local roads are a top concern, while among drivers who are 65 or older this figure rises to 68%.

A chronic, long-term lack of investment in maintenance and repair work have led to further deterioration of the UK's local road network. In 2024, 73% of drivers say the condition of the local roads they regularly use is worse than a year ago. This figure has risen steadily since 2019, when only 49% of drivers said conditions had deteriorated in the previous 12 months. Meanwhile, just 6% of drivers currently believe local road conditions have improved since last year.

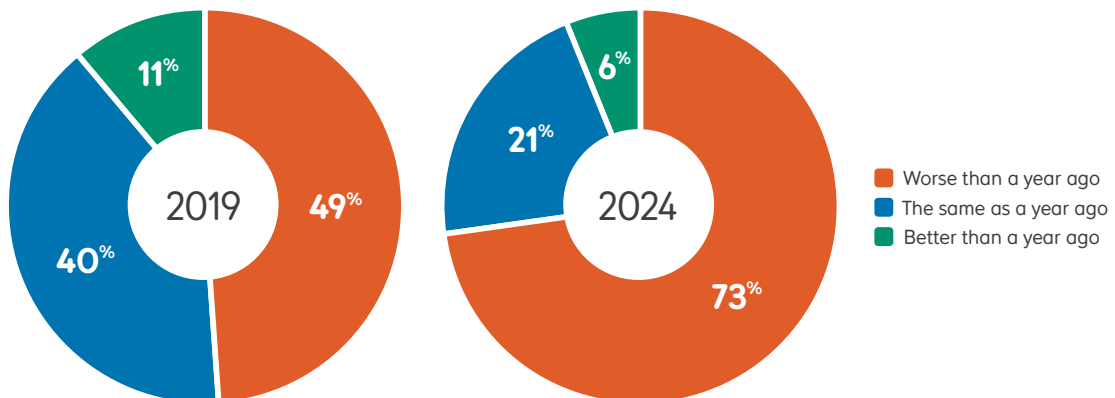
In rural areas, 81% of drivers say conditions are worse in 2024 than in 2023, while in the suburbs the proportion is only slightly lower at 78%. Both figures are record highs. By comparison, 53% of town- or city-dwellers say local roads have deteriorated, down a little from 55% in 2023, and 14% say conditions have actually improved, compared with 10% in 2023.

27,205

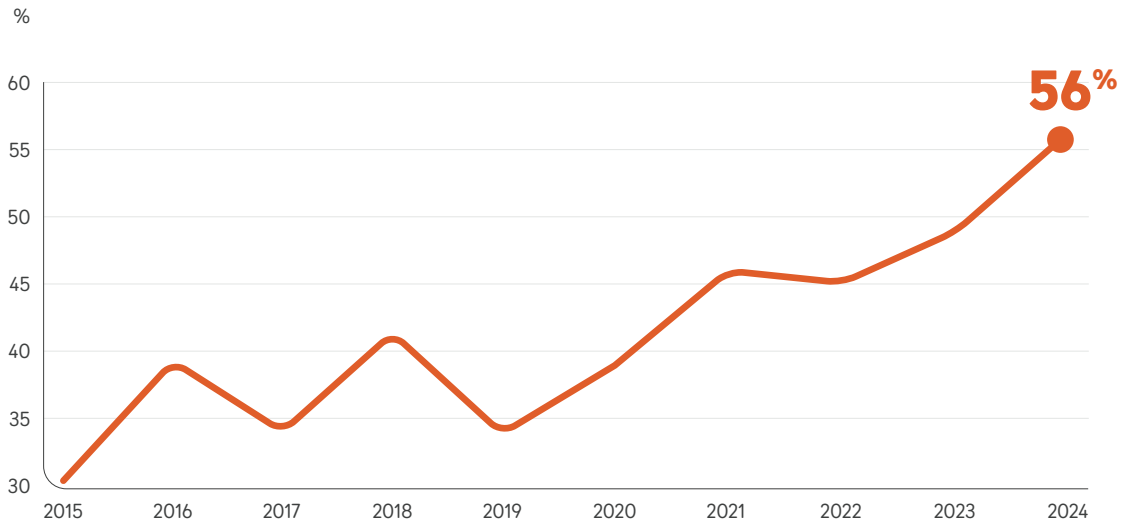
pothole-related breakdowns attended by RAC patrols in the 12 months to March 2024 – up 9% on the previous year

The deteriorating state of local roads

An increasing proportion of drivers say local roads are in a worse condition than a year ago



More drivers than ever are saying the condition of local roads is a top concern



Potholes and other surface defects are the main problems affecting local roads, cited by almost all drivers (98%) who say conditions have worsened. But poor drainage and a lack of adequate run-off in wet weather are also significant issues, noted by 61% of drivers, with 58% noticing faded road markings and 34% poor signage visibility.

The fact that many roads are slow to drain in wet weather may be exacerbating the dangers facing road users, especially if potholes are hidden by standing surface water. This is backed up by the fact that 86% of drivers see potholes as the road defect that poses the greatest safety risk, followed by 50% who say it is poor drainage. Four-in-10 respondents (38%) believe faded road markings are one of the biggest hazards.

27%

of drivers say they have suffered vehicle damage due to a pothole or other road defect in the past 12 months

The latest RAC data shows that its patrols attended 27,205 pothole-related breakdowns in the 12 months to the end of March 2024, a rise of 9% on previous year! This is all the more concerning given that last winter, while wet was not as cold as 2022-23, with the lack of freezing conditions potentially limiting the number of new potholes created. Nonetheless, drivers today are still nearly twice as likely to experience pothole damage than they were 18 years ago.

1. <https://media.rac.co.uk/pressreleases/rac-pothole-related-breakdowns-spring-forward-by-50-percent-in-2024-3318244>

69%

of drivers think their local authority takes too long to fix dangerous potholes

In the 2024 report, 27% of drivers say they have suffered vehicle damage due to a pothole or poor road surface in the past 12 months, a figure that rises to 32% among those who live in villages or rural areas. Punctures (47%) are the most common problem followed by wheel damage (43%) and broken suspension springs (29%).

The report shows a strong degree of dissatisfaction with local council road maintenance and roadworks, with more than two-thirds of drivers (69%) saying their local authority takes too long to repair dangerous potholes. A similar figure (66%) say they don't mind the presence of roadworks that are intended to repair or improve roads, although 47% express frustration with roadworks that are repeatedly carried out in the same place, and 38% believe that roadworks regularly overrun.

There is a clear sense among drivers that something needs to change. An overwhelming nine-in-10 (88%) believe the quality of roads should be better given the amount they pay in motoring taxation, with 86% wanting to see a proportion of tax ring-fenced to fund local road maintenance. In a similar vein, three-quarters (77%) do not believe their motoring taxes are sufficiently reinvested into local roads.

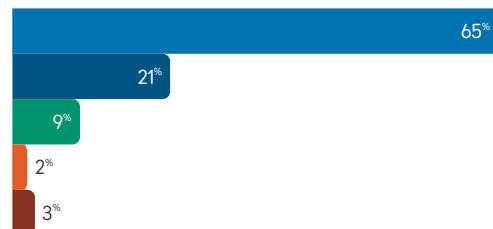
Drivers' views on taxation and the standard of roads

- Strongly agree
- Slightly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Strongly disagree

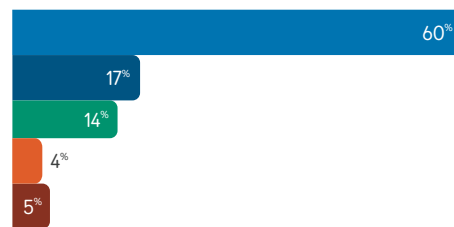
The quality of roads should be better considering the amount I pay in motoring taxes



I would like to see a proportion of motoring taxation ring-fenced to fund local roads



I don't believe the taxes I pay are sufficiently reinvested into local roads





EXPERT VIEW

Steve Gooding, director, RAC Foundation

"It's no surprise to see concern over the state of local roads continuing to rise. Already suffering from years of inadequate maintenance, months of wet weather have taken their toll on aging networks that were simply never designed to cope with the torrential downpours now becoming commonplace."

2.2 Ongoing shortfalls in local road maintenance – some context

According to figures published by the Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA) in early 2024, the amount of investment now needed to clear the backlog of road repair and maintenance work in England and Wales alone has risen from £14bn in 2023 to over £16bn. The AIA's Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance (ALARM) report, the most recent edition of which was published in March 2024, estimates that even if sufficient money was available, it would take 10 years to bring the road network in England and Wales up to an acceptable level.²

The RAC's own research found that the amount of road maintenance work carried out by local authorities in England fell 45% in the five years from 2017-18 to the 2022-23 financial year.³ Only 764 miles of A roads were strengthened, resurfaced or preserved in 2022-23 compared with 1,222 miles in 2017-18. For minor roads, the number fell from 6,288 miles to 3,380 miles over the same period.

45%

drop in road maintenance work carried out by councils in England between 2017/18 and 2022/23

Worryingly, just 4% of the 17,853 miles of A roads maintained by councils in England were resurfaced or given life-extending preservation treatment in the 2022-23 financial year. This lack of maintenance has been a significant factor in the decline in the standard of road surfaces.

Looking at specific types of road maintenance, 1,223 miles of all road types were entirely resurfaced by councils: a small 9% increase on 2021-22 but 22% less than six years ago. Meanwhile, preservation treatments – such as surface dressing and micro surfacing used to extend the life of roads – fell to their lowest level in five years. Just 2,698 miles of roads were given preservation treatment in 2022-23, a 50% dip on the 5,345 miles treated five years ago and a 25% year-on-year drop compared to 2021-22.

These figures reinforce the AIA's findings and suggest that road maintenance in England has reached a new low point. While the Conservative Government announced plans to give councils an additional £8.3bn for road maintenance over the next 11 years following the cancellation of the northern leg of the



'37% of councils in England, Scotland and Wales say they take a risk-based approach to making pothole repairs'

HS2 rail project, the RAC has calculated this would only be sufficient to resurface 5,000 miles of roads – the equivalent of just 3% of all local roads in England.

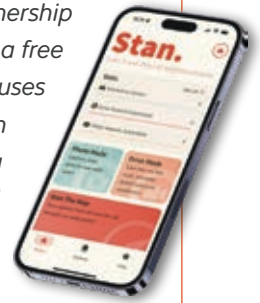
Meanwhile, analysis carried out by the RAC and Channel 4's *Dispatches* has highlighted the inconsistent approach taken by local authorities across Britain when it comes to fixing potholes. It found that three-in-10 (29%) councils in Great Britain have no public criteria for when a pothole should be repaired, while 35% list specific depth and, in some cases, width requirements that need to be met before a repair is authorised.⁴ Some 37% – 76 of the 206 councils in England, Scotland and Wales – say they take a risk-based approach to making pothole repairs. The RAC is calling on all local authorities to publish their criteria for fixing potholes, to provide members of the public with a phone number to report pothole emergencies, and to set out timelines for how quickly such reports will be acted on.

4%

of council A roads in England were resurfaced or given life-extending preservation treatment in the 2022-23 financial year

Empowering drivers – using technology to help get roads fixed

The RAC has entered a partnership with Metricell, developers of a free mobile app called Stan that uses smartphone cameras to scan the roads for defects making it easy for local councils and highways authorities to see where problems are.⁵



Stan uses a smartphone's camera together with cutting-edge computer vision technology to automatically identify road defects such as potholes with remarkable accuracy. All of this is done safely with the phone in a cradle, meaning there is no need for drivers to interact with the app while they are at the wheel. The data is then passed to councils, while the RAC uses the information collected by the app to put pressure on local authorities to carry out additional road maintenance, as well as to support our calls for greater levels of government spending on road repairs.

Stan.

2. <https://www.asphaltuk.org/wp-content/uploads/ALARM-survey-2024-NATIONAL-press-release.pdf>

3. <https://media.rac.co.uk/pressreleases/council-road-maintenance-in-england-drops-to-lowest-point-in-five-years-3306063>

4. <https://media.rac.co.uk/pressreleases/when-a-pothole-isnt-a-pothole-analysis-uncovers-major-disparities-in-how-road-defects-are-actioned-by-councils-3324571>

5. <https://www.stantheapp.com/>

2.3 High-speed roads – a similar picture

Views on the condition of the UK's high-speed dual carriageways and motorways appear to be following the same negative trend as local roads. Concern about this issue has risen from 11% in 2023 to 16% this year, while half of drivers (50%) say the condition of these roads that they regularly use has deteriorated in the past 12 months.

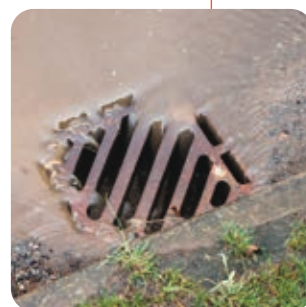
Problems with road surfaces are the most common reason for drivers to take the view that the state of these roads has worsened (cited by 82%), while poor drainage and a lack of adequate run-off in wet weather are an issue for 43% of drivers. Other issues include faded lane markings (42%), litter (37%) and the visibility of road signs (26%).



EXPERT VIEW

David Leibling, transport and motoring consultant, and founder of the Report on Motoring

"Motorists have clearly identified the continued deterioration in the condition of local roads due to the failure of local authorities to maintain them adequately, and it has been their major concern for most of the past decade. A quarter of motorists have suffered damage from potholes and this is now becoming a significant safety risk. Motorists are clear that more dedicated funding from central government is needed for road maintenance."









3

The cost of driving

While the rate of consumer price inflation in the UK has dropped sharply over the past 12 months, drivers continue to face significant financial pressures, not least from high fuel prices and insurance costs. The sharp rises in premiums throughout 2023 makes insuring a vehicle the second most widespread motoring concern in this year's report, with the issue cited by 35% of drivers – a huge increase on the 20% recorded 12 months ago and 17% in 2022. And while worry about the cost of fuel has slipped back to some degree, with 32% of drivers saying this is a top concern this year, down from 42% in 2023, it still represents the third biggest issue on drivers' minds.

The rising cost of a vehicle repairs is also a major concern for drivers, especially given a majority have been faced with having to fork out for unexpected repair costs over the last 12 months. And when it comes to another essential motoring cost – parking – it's clear just how much of a role cash still plays for many drivers.

3.1 Rising insurance costs bite – with young drivers hit hardest

The emergence of insurance costs as the second largest concern in 2024 follows a period when premiums have risen at their fastest rate in several years. Figures from the Association of British Insurers (ABI) show that the average annual premium for comprehensive cover rose from £478 in March 2023 to £635 a year later – an increase of a third. According to the ABI, the rising cost of parts and repairs has been the main reason for the surge in prices, although the organisation points out that, following a fall in premiums during the pandemic, current prices are only slightly higher on average than the previous peak in late 2017.¹ Again, younger drivers are far more likely to be adversely affected by the cost of insurance: more than four-in-10 (44%) under-25s say the cost of insurance is a top concern, making it the

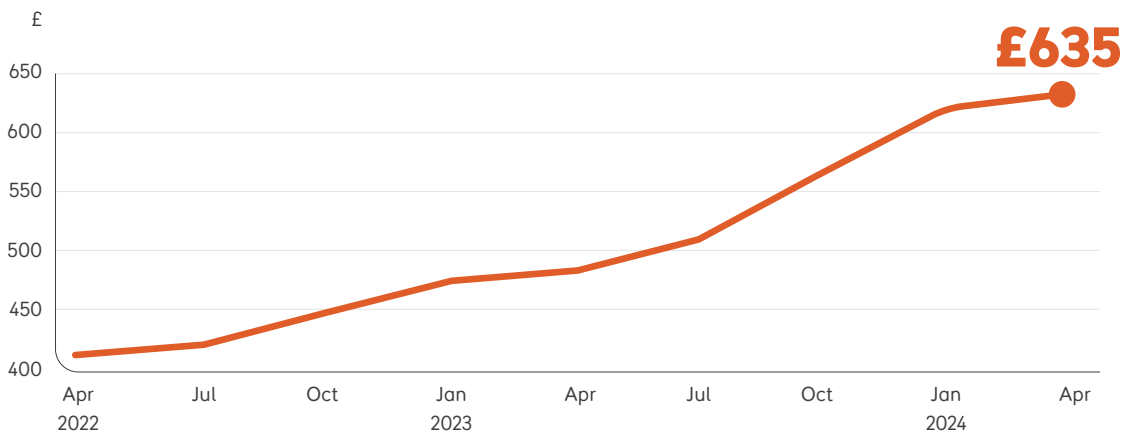
44%

of drivers aged 17-24 say the cost of insurance is a top concern – making it this group's biggest motoring worry

biggest issue for this age group. This reflects the higher premiums young drivers typically face due to the greater level of risk they present. In 2023, only 28% of under-25s said insurance costs were a top concern, and this year's figure is the highest in the report's history. Interestingly, drivers aged 65 or older are more likely to list insurance costs as a top concern (38%) than those in the 25-44 (34%) or 45-64 (33%) age groups.

The cost of insuring a car has been rising significantly

Based on comprehensive annual motor insurance premiums



Source: ABI Motor Insurance Premium Tracker

1. <https://www.abi.org.uk/news/news-articles/2024/4/motor-premiums-stabilise-but-cost-to-insurers-mount/>

Nearly nine-in-10 drivers (87%) say their premiums have increased in the past year, compared with 69% in 2023. Around one-in-five (22%) say they have tried to keep insurance costs under control by switching to a cheaper provider, up from 19% in 2023.

'Insuring a vehicle is the second most **widespread motoring concern**, cited by 35% of drivers – up from 20% in 2023'



EXPERT VIEW

Tony Kildare, chief executive, IAM RoadSmart

"Increasing insurance premiums not only pose a cost-of-living challenge for consumers, but they also risk a rise in the number of uninsured drivers on the roads. It's within the gift of government to take steps to ease this, both from a taxation point of view and by engaging with the industry, as well as taking further action to improve road safety."

3.2 Fuel costs remain high but domestic electricity prices decline

Although the price of petrol and diesel has eased from the all-time highs experienced in 2022 following the start of the war between Russia and Ukraine, fuel costs in the UK remain well above the prices seen for much of the past two decades. However, the fall in concern about fuel costs recorded in this year's report most likely reflects the fact that pump prices during this year's fieldwork period – late March and early April – were slightly lower than they were 12 months earlier. At the end of March 2024, the average price of a litre of unleaded stood at 146p, while diesel was 153p. At the same point in 2023, the equivalent figures were 148p and 167p.

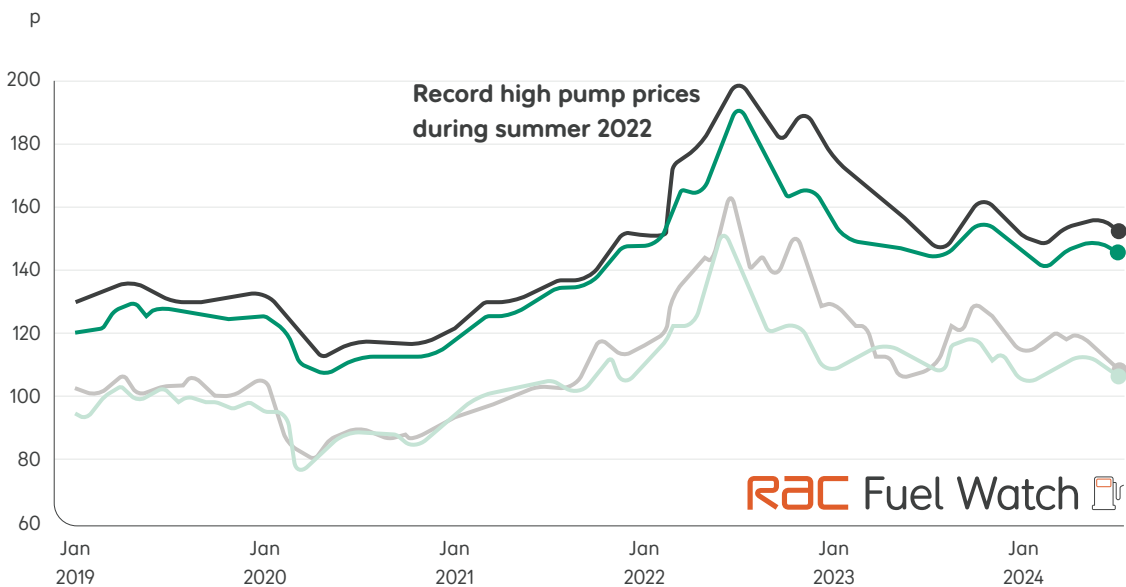
Accordingly, fewer drivers in 2024 say their expenditure on fuel has increased in the past year – the proportion has fallen to 73% from 87%. In 2024, only 51% of electric vehicle drivers say they have spent more on charging their cars in the past 12 months, compared with 83% in 2023. This is perhaps a reflection of the fall in domestic electricity prices since their peak in early 2023.

41%

of drivers aged under 25 say the cost of fuel is a top concern

Average UK pump and wholesale prices over time

■ Diesel pump (inc VAT)
 ■ Diesel delivered wholesale
 ■ Unleaded pump (inc VAT)
 ■ Unleaded delivered wholesale



Concern about fuel costs is inversely correlated with age: 41% of drivers aged under 25 say this is a top concern in 2024, a figure that falls to 37% among those aged between 25 and 44, 31% among those between 45 and 64, and just 24% among drivers who are 65 or older. Almost a quarter of drivers (22%) say they have been driving less over the past 12 months in order to save money, including 30% of the under 25s.

Although fuel costs are not as high as they were in 2022, RAC analysis indicates petrol and diesel prices have, once again, been more expensive than they should have been given falls in wholesale costs. In May, the RAC wrote to the Energy Secretary to point out that retailer margins remained 'unreasonably' high.² This was despite ongoing scrutiny of the industry by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), as well as the Government's proposals to force sellers to make prices publicly available through the forthcoming mandatory Pumpwatch scheme.

In mid-May, the average margin on a litre of diesel rose above 18p, while it was nearly 12p on petrol. The long-term average margin on both is just 8p. While the RAC has welcomed the planned introduction of Pumpwatch, the organisation believes the new price monitoring body must have the power to take action against retailers who don't lower their prices sufficiently when wholesale costs fall significantly. The RAC also takes the view that fairer margins would lead to an end of the current postcode lottery, which can see the same retailer charge dramatically different prices for petrol and diesel across the various forecourts it operates.

On the subject of fuel price transparency, this year's report found that a relatively small proportion of drivers – just 16% – use a smartphone app like myRAC or a website to find the cheapest source of petrol or diesel, although the figure rises to 21% among the under-25s.

Finding the cheapest fuel in seconds with the myRAC app

The free myRAC mobile app, available for Apple and Android devices, brings everything a driver needs to make owning a car cheaper and easier together all in one place. This includes being able to find the cheapest fuel at any location at just the touch of a button.

But it offers so much more besides – drivers can log a breakdown, book a service or MOT, see the MOT history of all their vehicles and set maintenance reminders – all from one place.



² <https://media.rac.co.uk/pressreleases/rac-raises-issue-of-high-retailer-fuel-margins-with-energy-secretary-3323198>

3.3 Coping – or not – with the cost of servicing and repairs

Drivers are facing significant rises in repair and maintenance costs for their vehicles, with 74% saying the cost of servicing their cars has increased since last year, an increase on the 69% recorded in 2023. Over the past 12 months, 59% of drivers have faced unexpected repair

costs for their main vehicle. While the majority of this group (63%) managed to cover these additional expenses comfortably, that still means a sizeable 37% faced difficulties in doing so, a figure that rises to 45% among the under-25s. The average total amount spent on these unexpected repairs is an incredible £617.

59%

of drivers have faced unexpected repair costs for their main vehicle in the last 12 months

The 2024 Report on Motoring also found that 50% of under-25s say they would struggle to meet a repair bill of £500 compared with just 25% of drivers aged 65 or older.



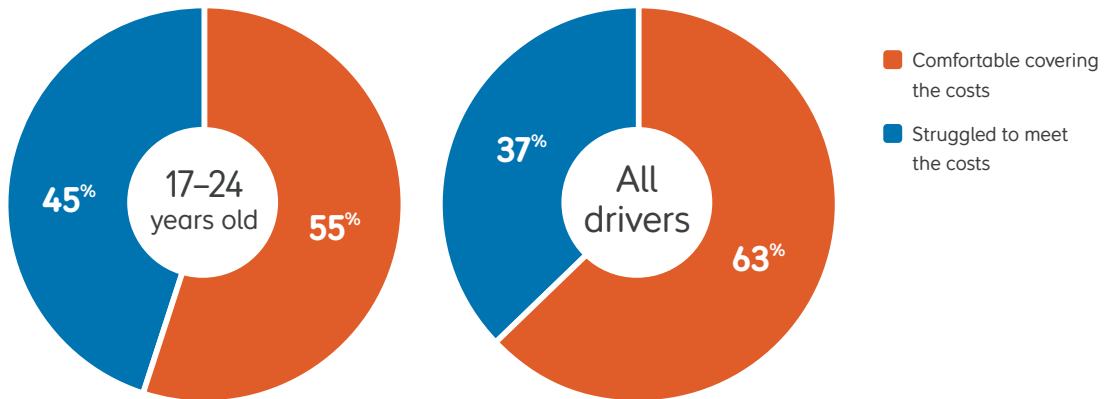
EXPERT VIEW

**Mike Hawes OBE, chief executive,
Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders**

“The rapidly escalating cost of insurance is rightly a major concern for motorists and the industry. This cost is particularly acute for those considering an electric vehicle so all parties must find ways to drive down these costs – and urgently – else the decarbonisation of road transport will be seriously delayed.”

Coping with the cost of unexpected repairs

Young drivers are far more likely to struggle with repair costs compared to the average driver



Based on drivers who have had to pay out for unexpected vehicle repair costs in the last 12 months

'Three-in-10 young drivers are **deliberately driving less** to try to save money'

Around a fifth of all drivers (19%) this year say they have delayed necessary repairs, or either reduced or stopped servicing their vehicles altogether due to cost, a figure that rises enormously to 36% among the under-25s. Worryingly, 10% of all drivers (including 21% of under-25s and 19% of those aged between 25 and 44) say they have either deliberately avoided having their vehicles put through the MOT – a legal requirement – or decided not to buy new tyres even when needed, on financial grounds.

36%

of under-25s say they've delayed repairs or reduced or stopped servicing their vehicles to save money

Mobile Mechanics

RAC Mobile Mechanics take the hassle out of vehicle servicing and repairs

Following last year's launch, the RAC has Mobile Mechanics working nationwide who can complete interim and full vehicle servicing at a driver's home or workplace – removing the hassle of having to get to a garage.

And it's not just about servicing. Mobile Mechanics can also replace springs, brake pads and discs as needed, as well as run vehicle diagnostic checks to help pinpoint what's wrong with a vehicle in the first place.

Find out more at:
rac.co.uk/mobile



Hugh,
RAC Mobile Mechanic since 2019,
South West



Mobile Mechanics
and repairs

Mobile Mechanics
RAC We bring the garage to you

W.R.C.

3.4 Parking: cash still king, plus support for pavement bans

The cost and availability of parking is a top concern for 12% of drivers in 2024, and 76% say the general parking charges they face have increased in the past 12 months, up from 71% in 2023. Meanwhile, 16% of drivers say they have deliberately avoided paying for parking in order to save money, including 20% of under-25s. Most drivers (65%) feel that parking is too expensive in their local high street, and 55% say they have been deterred from visiting their local town or city centre as a result.

The favoured method of payment for parking remains cash via a machine (40%), with 28% preferring to pay by card or contactless payment and 19% favouring a mobile app. The over-65s have a clearer preference for cash (56%), while 44% of under-25s say they would rather pay by card or using contactless technology. Two-thirds of drivers (65%) think there should always be a cash payment option, while almost half (48%) say motorists should never be restricted solely to payment via a phone app.

In late 2024, the National Parking Platform (NPP) is due to be rolled out across the UK following a series of local pilot schemes.³ The service is designed to improve the parking experience by enabling drivers to pay for parking through a single smartphone app rather than having to download a variety of different ones for different locations. The NPP should also enable car parks to more easily communicate space availability and pricing to drivers.

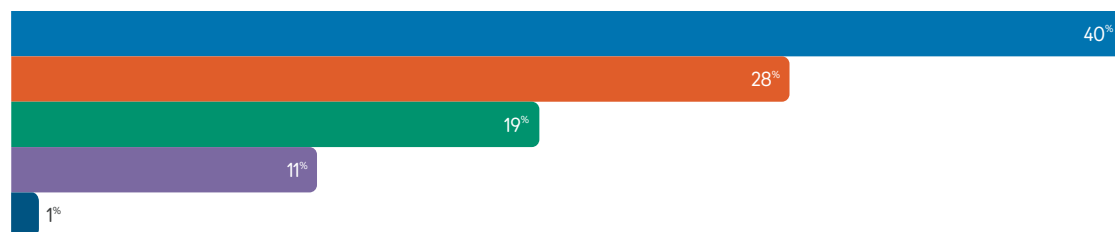
16%

of drivers have deliberately avoided paying for parking in order to cut costs



How drivers prefer to pay for parking

- Cash at a machine
- Contactless or PIN via bank card or mobile phone
- Mobile app
- No preference
- Ringling to pay



48%

say motorists should never be restricted solely to paying for parking using a mobile app

The 2024 report also looked at wider attitudes to parking among the UK's drivers in light of Scotland's pavement parking ban introduced in December 2023. Seven-in-10 (71%) of drivers say they regularly see cars parked on pavements that are blocking space for other pavement users, and two-thirds (67%) believe the rest of the UK should follow Scotland's example and outlaw the practice. Support for such a policy is reasonably high across the UK, but highest in Scotland (81%) and Northern Ireland (75%), while it is backed by 69% of drivers based in Wales and 65% of those in England.

At present, the Welsh Government is consulting on a possible ban on pavement parking,⁴ while there have been no notable developments relating to a pavement parking ban in England since the Government consulted on the matter in 2020.⁵

Finally, 73% of drivers say they regularly see other vehicles taking up more than one space in car parks, and 22% say they struggle to park near their home.

Drivers' support for pavement parking bans

Support Oppose

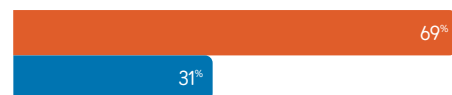
Scotland



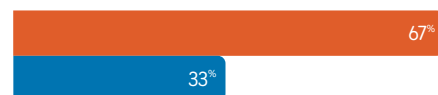
Northern Ireland



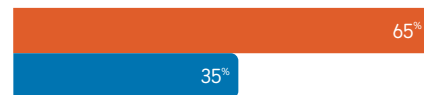
Wales



Whole of UK



England



3. <https://npp.org.uk/about/>

4. <https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-pavement-parking-proposed-legislation-unnecessary-obstruction-road>

5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/managing-pavement-parking>





4

Choice of next vehicle

Consistent with previous years, a relatively small proportion of drivers intend to replace their current vehicles in the short term.

However, this year sees a slight rise in the likelihood of drivers opting for a petrol model for their next car and a drop in those planning to get a battery-electric vehicle – with financial pressures and the Conservative Government’s decision to delay the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles two likely factors.

4.1 Drivers' plans to replace their current vehicles

The 2024 report has found that 37% of drivers have no plans at present to replace their current car, slightly less than the 39% in 2023 but higher than the 33% in 2020 and 2021, prior to the cost-of-living crisis. And in 2024, only 45% of drivers intend to change their vehicle in the next three years. Almost a third of drivers (31%) say the rising cost of living has prevented them from changing their vehicle sooner than they may have otherwise (down from 34% in 2023), whereas 15% blame economic conditions such as concerns over job security and 11% cite recent hikes in interest rates as a deterrent.

These financial constraints are much more likely to affect younger drivers. For example, among the under-25s, 56% say the rising cost of living has stopped them changing their vehicle despite the fact only 21% are happy with their current car. Conversely, just 15% of drivers aged 65 or older say rising costs have stopped them upgrading, with 74% comfortable remaining in the vehicle they currently have.

31%

of drivers say the rising cost of living has prevented them from changing their vehicle sooner

Just 13% of drivers plan to move to a new car in the next 12 months, although this figure rises to 27% among owners of vehicles between two and three years old. This most likely reflects the fact many of these drivers will be on personal contract purchase (PCP) or leasing plans, many of which run for three years.





EXPERT VIEW

**Mike Hawes OBE, chief executive,
Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders**

"It is, perhaps, no surprise that consumers seem to be more reticent about their next car being an EV. Cost-of-living constraints, unnecessarily negative media coverage, and mixed messaging from government have combined to soften demand. This must be reversed if road transport decarbonisation – and hence net zero – is to be delivered on plan."

4.2 A further electric car slowdown

According to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), the UK's one millionth new pure electric vehicle (EV) was sold at the start of 2024¹ as the overall market continued to grow, reaching 17.6% of new car registrations in May this year². However, this does not tell the whole story. The SMMT points out that recent rises in EV sales have been driven almost entirely by business buyers rather than private sales, largely due to the lower rate of benefit-in-kind tax for company cars and those chosen as part of workplace salary-sacrifice schemes.

In 2023, the Conservative Government delayed its deadline to end the sale of all new petrol and diesel vehicles from 2030 to 2035, potentially influencing drivers' choice of next vehicle, although the relatively high upfront cost of EVs is also likely to be a factor. This year's report shows one-in-10 (11%) drivers now intend to buy an EV as their next vehicle, dropping from 13% in 2023. Interest in plug-in

hybrid vehicles has also dropped, with those saying they will opt for one reducing from 11% in 2023 to 9% this year. Meanwhile 44% of drivers say their next car will be petrol, up from 41% 12 months ago, making it by far the most popular powertrain, followed by conventional hybrid (18%, down from 19% last year) and, perhaps surprisingly, diesel (15%, up from 14% last year). Planned uptake of EVs is highest among drivers aged between 25 and 44 (19%), while it has fallen among those aged 65 and older from 10% to just 5%. Looking at the vehicles currently owned by the UK's drivers surveyed

1m

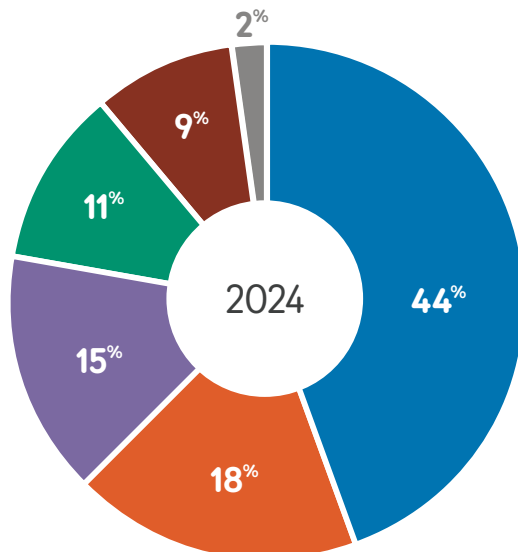
The UK's one millionth battery-electric vehicle was registered in January 2024

Source: SMMT

Drivers' choice of next vehicle

A greater proportion of drivers say they will opt for a petrol model next time around, with a slight fall in desire for battery-electric vehicles compared to last year.

- Petrol
- Conventional hybrid
- Diesel
- Battery-electric
- Plug-in hybrid
- Other



1. media.rac.co.uk/news/uk-hits-one-million-electric-vehicles-milestone-rac-reaction-478989
2. smmmt.co.uk/2024/05/new-car-market-growth-continues-despite-declining-private-demand/

236 mi

the average range of a new battery-electric vehicle, as of May 2024

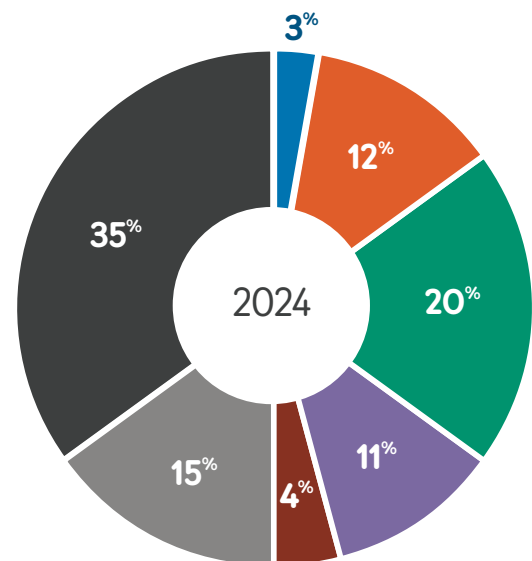
Source: SMMT

for this year's report, 61% have a petrol car, a proportion that has remained relatively constant over the past five years. However, there has been a steady decline in diesel ownership, from 32% in 2020 to 27% this year, and a corresponding rise in the proportion of drivers who have a conventional hybrid, from 3% in 2020 to 7% in 2024.

Overall, there appears to be little propensity among drivers to move away from the type of car they have at the moment when they next change vehicles. Two-thirds (64%) of current petrol drivers say they will stick with petrol, while 16% of this group intend to opt for a conventional hybrid. Just 8% of petrol drivers plan to get an EV next time around, while 7% say they will choose a plug-in hybrid car. Half of diesel owners (50%) will stick with diesel, and 19% of this group will choose petrol. Only 8% of diesel drivers will plump for an EV next. More than half (59%) of conventional hybrid drivers will stick with their current vehicle type, while 15% will upgrade to a plug-in hybrid and 16% an EV. Among those who presently drive a plug-in hybrid, most (56%) will choose the same type of vehicle next but 21% plan to acquire an EV. The figures suggest that plug-in and conventional hybrid vehicles are popular stepping stones to battery-electric models with zero tailpipe emissions.

When do drivers expect to get a battery-electric vehicle?

- Within the next 2 years
- 2 - 5 years
- 5 - 10 years
- 10 - 15 years
- 15 - 20 years
- More than 20 years
- Don't know



'Plug-in and conventional hybrid vehicles are **popular stepping stones** to battery-electric models'



Looking at the reasons given by the 91% of drivers who do not plan to buy an EV next, while a perceived lack of public charging points is the most common (56%, down from 61% in 2023), the high cost of EVs compared to petrol, diesel or hybrid cars is cited by an almost identical proportion (55%) – an enormous rise on the 36% recorded in 2023. Meanwhile, 51% worry they would not be able to make long journeys as easily (up slightly from 50% last year).

More than a third of drivers (35%) expect to get an EV in the next 10 years, almost unchanged on 2023 (36%), with expected take-up of EVs considerably higher among drivers who live in the UK's towns and cities: here, half (51%) believe they will become an EV driver in the next decade. By contrast, in rural locations the proportion is just 26%.

On average, drivers say they would need an EV to be able to travel almost 400 miles on a single charge before they considered buying one, a figure that has increased significantly this year in comparison to previous reports, where the total has generally been between 360 to 370 miles. At present, very few EVs on sale in the UK can achieve this range with the current average standing at 236 miles,³ although the situation is changing.⁴ However, it important to note that the average length of a car trip according to government data is under 10 miles.⁵

55%

of drivers who don't plan to get an EV next cite the high cost of such vehicles as a reason

Although fewer drivers this year plan to switch to an EV next time around, satisfaction with this type of vehicle among current EV owners appears high. Of those drivers who already have an EV, almost nine-in-10 (86%) say they will opt for an EV again when they next come to change their car. Among drivers who plan to buy an EV next, the main reason given by 52% is they can charge an EV at home, followed by 51% who say they are concerned about the environmental impact of conventionally fuelled vehicles (down from 52% in 2023). Almost half (48%) cite lower running and tax costs, although this number has declined since the 64% recorded in 2022, in line with rises in electricity costs over the last two years. Interestingly, this year a much smaller proportion (17%) of drivers would choose an EV because there are fewer mechanical parts that can go wrong in the car compared to 2023 (35%). This may reflect recent unfounded negative media reports about EVs, something which the RAC and EV campaign group FairCharge have been working together to counter.



3. [smm.co.uk/2024/05/brits-enjoy-best-ever-ev-choice-with-more-than-a-hundred-models-now-available/](https://www.smm.co.uk/2024/05/brits-enjoy-best-ever-ev-choice-with-more-than-a-hundred-models-now-available/)
4. ev-database.org/uk/cheatsheet/range-electric-car
5. assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f277748fa8f57ac683d856/national-travel-survey-2019.pdf



EXPERT VIEW

**Melanie Shufflebotham, chief operating officer
and co-founder, Zapmap**

"Low running costs is one of the key reasons people switch to electric – and cost per mile remains much lower than running a petrol or diesel car for those who are able to charge at home for the majority of the time. However, the cost of charging on the public network has increased, particularly on the high-powered en-route chargers and it is hoped a combination of more local charging and an eventual equalisation of VAT will help reduce the disparity."

4.3 Charging challenges?

As noted above, a perceived lack of charging points and worries about travelling on long journeys are two of the most common reasons given by drivers who have decided against opting for an EV next time they change their vehicles. While considerable sums are being invested in the UK's EV charging network, some drivers may be questioning whether charge points are being rolled out quickly enough to meet expected demand. For example, the Government missed its target of having a minimum of six rapid or ultra-rapid chargers at every motorway service area in England by the end of 2023.⁶

However, numerous other data points to a much more positive picture. Figures from Zapmap found that more than 5,500 new charge points were added in the first three months of 2024 as the rate of new installations increased.⁷ And in March 2024, the Government announced that its Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Capability fund, which was introduced to subsidise public charge point installations by local councils, had so far issued over £185m to 49 local authorities in England.⁸ Meanwhile, the number of UK supermarkets now offering charge points rose by 59% in 2023 to 1,616 stores (13% of all supermarkets), with a 69% increase in the total number of charger installations.⁹ This saw stores adding 1,195 new charging devices last year, bringing the total number up from 1,721 at the end of December 2022 to 2,916 12 months later. Of these 1,195 additional chargers,

67%

of drivers would only acquire an EV if they had a private driveway or garage where they could charge it



'13% of all supermarkets now offer EV charging'

1,107 units installed were rapid or ultra-rapid, marking a huge increase of 145% from the 451 rapid chargers installed in 2022. Fortunately for electric car drivers, this means that over half (55%) of all supermarket EV locations now offer higher-powered charging capabilities.

The 2024 Report on Motoring found that 79% of drivers who do not currently own an EV say they would not worry about local journeys in an EV but would be concerned about travelling longer distances. Two-thirds (67%) say they would only opt for an EV if they had a private driveway or garage where they could charge it. Seven-in-10 (68%) say they would be able to charge an EV at home, either because they have a driveway or garage, or a designated off-street parking space.

While the Conservative Government delayed the ban on new petrol and diesel car sales to 2035, through the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Mandate it committed to an annual increase in the proportion of new car sales that must be made up of EVs – in 2024, the mandated rate is 22%. Given the recent slowdown in private EV sales, it is clear that more needs to be done to promote EV uptake if sufficient progress is to be made. The RAC urges the new Government to reintroduce a form of the plug-in car grant aimed at the more affordable end of the EV market, and supports calls to reduce the rate of VAT on public chargers to 5%, in line with the domestic electricity rate, to make charging significantly more affordable to those who cannot charge at home or who need to recharge on long journeys. Indeed, the 2024 report shows that most drivers (61%) think it is unfair that the lower 5% VAT rate on domestic electricity does not also apply to public charge points, where the full 20% rate is imposed.

6. media.rac.co.uk/pressreleases/government-fails-to-hit-motorway-services-high-power-ev-charger-target-by-end-of-2023-329512

7. evfleetworld.co.uk/more-than-5500-uk-public-charge-points-added-in-q1-2024

8. gov.uk/government/news/boost-for-drivers-as-millions-delivered-for-ev-chargepoints-across-the-country

9. media.rac.co.uk/pressreleases/super-charged-more-than-one-in-10-uk-supermarkets-now-offer-ev-charging-3312424



EXPERT VIEW

Quentin Willson, motoring journalist and founder of FairCharge

"This year's data shows that a combination of factors – higher interest rates, the pushback to 2035 and misinformation – have slowed EV adoption. While pressure on consumer spending is being seen globally, the UK has faced an unprecedented tide of factually false narratives against EVs and electrification. We're at a stage where carmakers, EV owners and even government need to counter the torrent of misinformation with fact-based evidence. The UK's anti-EV narrative is now one of the greatest threats to electrification."

CAMERA ENFORCEMENT UNIT





5

The dangers on our roads

The dangerous behaviour of other road users remains a significant worry for UK drivers. A third (29%) say the poor standard of other people's driving is a top concern this year – making it the fourth biggest issue – while fear about others' use of handheld mobile phones stands at 22%, almost unchanged on last year (23%).

A higher proportion of young drivers admit to using handheld mobile phones while at the wheel, despite a recent tightening up of the law, and a shockingly high percentage of this age group admit to either recording or listening to voice notes on their phones while driving. Incidents of drink and drug-driving are also higher among the under-25s.

Meanwhile, there has been an increase in drivers across all ages who admit to speeding, particularly on motorways and on 20mph roads. The overwhelming majority of drivers say they regularly witness 'excessive' speeding on all types of roads, and more than half believe there is a culture among UK road users that deems it acceptable to exceed the speed limit.

5.1 A pressing need to dial down handheld mobile phone use

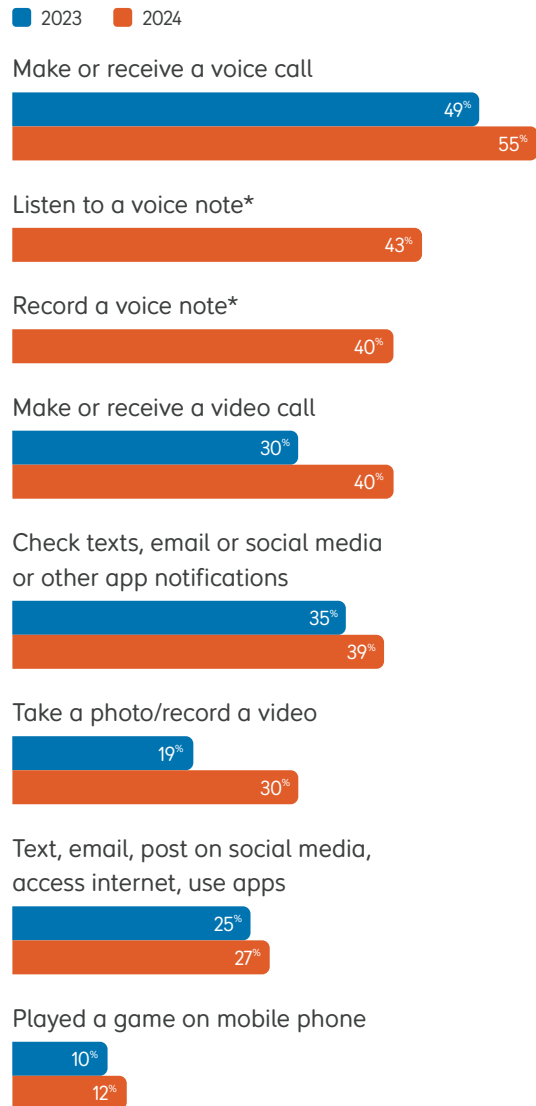
While a smaller proportion of drivers are concerned about other motorists using handheld mobile phones this year, the issue is still the sixth largest overall and there has been an increase in those who admit to making or receiving voice calls on a handheld phone themselves. In 2024, 14% of drivers say they make or receive calls in this way 'all of the time', 'most of the time' or 'sometimes', up from 12% in 2023 and 10% a year earlier. A further 13% of drivers this year said they do so 'rarely'. Meanwhile, only 73% of drivers say they never use their phone for calls, down from 75% last year and 77% in 2022.

Younger people are much more likely to make and receive calls while driving. Over half of those under 25 (55%) say they do so at least occasionally, compared with 27% of the overall driving population and just 16% of those aged 65 or older. This represents a significant increase on recent years: in 2023, the rate among the under-25s was 49%, while it was 34% in 2022.

40% of under-25s say they have made or received a video call while driving, up from 30% in 2023 and 17% a year earlier

Young drivers' mobile phone use while driving

A greater proportion of drivers aged 17 to 24 admit to illegal mobile phone use in 2024, compared to last year



*Question new for 2024, so no 2023 figure available

Looking at other types of handheld phone use, 15% of all drivers have checked messages on their phones, and one-in-10 (10%) say they have used their phones to write texts, emails or social media posts while driving. There has been a particularly notable increase in drivers taking photos and/or recording videos: in 2024, 8% of drivers admit to having done so in the past 12 months, up from 5% in both 2023 and 2022.

Once again, non-compliance with the law is significantly higher among young drivers: 40% of the under-25s say they have made or received a video call while driving (up from 30% in 2023 and 17% a year earlier), and 39% have checked messages, up from 35% last year and 22% in 2022. Almost a third (30%) have taken a picture or recorded a video, a steep increase on 2023's 19%. Meanwhile, 43% of under-25s have listened to a voice note while driving and 40% have recorded such a message. The corresponding rates for the overall driving population are just 14% and 9% respectively.

77%

of drivers would like to see the widespread use of cameras that can detect illegal phone use at the wheel

When it comes to what to do to curtail dangerous handheld phone use, more than three-quarters of all drivers (77%) say they would like to see the widespread introduction of cameras designed to detect illegal phone use at the wheel, a rate that falls slightly to 67% among the under-25s. At the start of 2024, trials of such cameras, which use artificial intelligence technology to identify illegal phone use as well as drivers who are not wearing a seatbelt, were introduced by 10 police forces in England ahead of a possible national roll-out! Meanwhile, 91% of all drivers agree there is 'never any excuse' for using a handheld mobile phone – other than to call 999 in an emergency when it is not safe to stop, as is legally permitted.

Government figures published in April 2024 showed that the number of penalties issued for handheld mobile phone use rose 80% from 15,427 in 2021 to 27,756 in 2022, largely as a result of a change in the law in 2022 that broadened the scope of the offence.²



1. <https://fleetworld.co.uk/mobile-phone-detection-cameras-could-be-rolled-out-nationwide/>
 2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/other-pace-powers-year-ending-march-2023/police-powers-and-procedures-other-pace-powers-england-and-wales-year-ending-31-march-2023>

5.2 Distractions beyond mobile phones

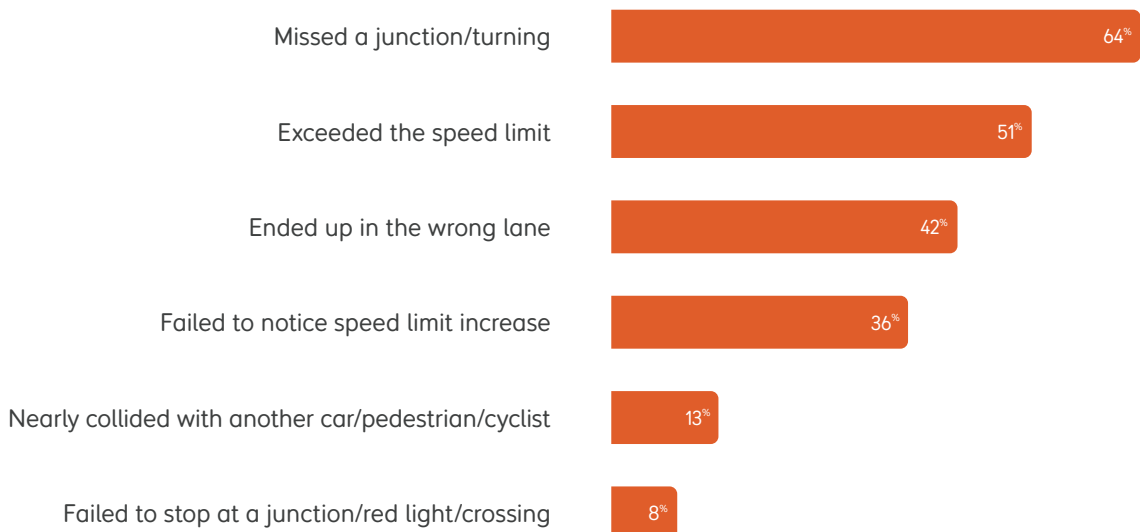
This year's report also asked drivers about the biggest driving distractions. While use of a mobile phone was seen as most distracting (by 46% of motorists), other distractions include applying make-up or shaving (42%), picking up an item dropped in the vehicle (35%) and adjusting car controls via a touchscreen (30%) – with this likely to become an even greater issue in the future as more people acquire cars with these systems.

30%

of drivers consider adjusting car controls via a touchscreen to be the most distracting thing while driving

Of those who have been distracted while driving, two-thirds (64%) say they have missed a junction as a result, while 51% say they have exceeded the speed limit. More than four-in-10 (42%) say they have ended up in the wrong lane due to a distraction, 36% have failed to notice an increase in the speed limit, and 13% have had a near miss with another car, a pedestrian or a cyclist. The specific distractions most often blamed for these failings are talking to other passengers (50%), thinking about topics unrelated to driving (44%) and looking at something outside the car that is unrelated to driving (38%). Only 9% blame talking on the phone, although this number is significantly higher (23%) among the under-25s, no doubt as a consequence of the significantly higher levels of illegal phone use among this age group.

The result of distractions – what drivers admit to doing



Base - those drivers who say they have been distracted while driving



EXPERT VIEW

Jo Shiner, chief constable, Sussex Police, and Roads Policing Portfolio lead, National Police Chiefs' Council

"The RAC Report on Motoring 2024 provides a valuable insight into attitudes towards driving and motoring issues. From a policing perspective, I am really concerned to see the findings on speeding. We must try to get to a position where we accept speed limits are one of a number of measures in place to keep all road users safe and compliance with them is not seen as controversial or, detrimental, to drivers in particular."

5.3 Drink and drug-driving

The proportion of motorists who admit to drink-driving in the past 12 months has increased slightly, from 7% in 2023 to 8%, but remains below pre-pandemic averages (for example 19% of drivers said they had driven while under the influence in both 2018 and 2019). However, as is the case with handheld mobile phone use, levels of compliance with drink-driving laws are far lower among the under-25s, with 24% of this group saying they have driven while over the limit, either on the same night they have been drinking (15%) and/or the morning after (13%). Only 3% of those aged 65 or older admit to drink-driving.

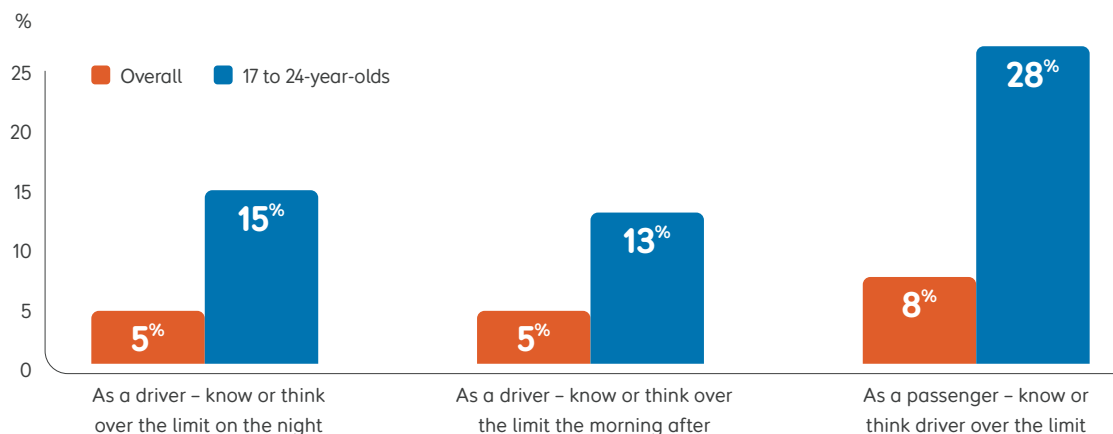
While 8% of all drivers say they have been a passenger in a car driven by someone they either suspected of being over the drink-drive limit or knew was over the limit in the past year, this number very concerningly rises to 28% among the under-25s.

Looking at possible policy changes to reduce drink-driving, 38% of all drivers support tougher sentences for drink-driving, 34% reducing the blood-alcohol limit to zero and 33% giving the police powers to immediately disqualify drink-drivers at the roadside. The idea that convicted drink-drivers should have alco-locks fitted to their vehicles to prevent them driving if over the limit (32%) and an increase in roadside testing (31%) also receive backing.

Levels of admitted drug-driving remain very low. Only 2% of drivers say they have driven after taking drugs – legal or illegal – that could negatively affect their performance at the wheel, although among the under-25s this number is 8%. Among this group of younger drivers, 13% say they believe they have been a passenger in a car where the driver has taken drugs that could impair their driving. Among the overall population, this figure is just 4%.

Drink-driving and younger drivers

Drivers aged 17 to 24 are much more likely to admit to either drink-driving themselves, or being a passenger when they knew or suspected driver was over the limit



two-thirds of all drivers (64%) support tougher sentencing for drug-drivers, while 56% would like to see greater levels of roadside testing. Just under half (49%) want the police to be able to immediately disqualify drug-drivers at the roadside. In March 2024, Chief Constable Jo Shiner, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) lead for roads policing, called for officers to be given such new powers.³ Chief Constable Shiner said if police were able to instantly disqualify people either for drink or drug-driving by the roadside, this would mean they could "immediately take that risk off the road".

13%

of young drivers believe they have been a passenger in a car where the driver has taken drugs that could impair their driving

Increasing the safety of young drivers on the roads

The RAC believes graduated licensing could play an important role in increasing safety by reducing the number of serious and fatal crashes younger drivers are involved in, which is disproportionately higher than other age groups. As a result, the RAC supports the introduction of a graduated driver licensing scheme in the UK.⁴ Such a scheme could set a minimum number of learning hours, restrictions on how many passengers could be carried by newly qualified drivers and possibly also a stricter drink-drive limit for young drivers.

Top three measures drivers support for reducing drink-driving

■ % of drivers in support

1. Tougher sentences for anyone convicted of drink-driving

38%

2. Reducing the drink-drive limit to zero

34%

3. Police given powers to immediately disqualify drink-drivers they stop at the roadside

33%

Top three measures drivers support for reducing drug-driving

■ % of drivers in support

1. Tougher sentences for anyone convicted of drug-driving

64%

2. More roadside drug testing

56%

3. Police given powers to immediately disqualify drug-drivers they stop at the roadside

49%

3. <https://www.ukroad.org.uk/cc-shiner-calls-for-roadside-drink-and-drug-disqualifications/>

4. <https://media.rac.co.uk/news/calls-for-government-to-introduce-a-graduated-driving-licence-scheme-rac-statement-483367>

5.4 Speed limit compliance

The 2024 Report on Motoring shows a small increase in the number of drivers who admit to exceeding the speed limit on all categories of roads in the UK. This is a particularly worrying finding given the most recent road safety statistics, which indicate that the number of deaths caused by road traffic accidents remains unacceptably high. While provisional figures published in May 2024 showed there was a year-on-year fall of 4% in the number of fatalities in 2023, when 1,645 were recorded, this nonetheless is still 6% higher than the 1,558 deaths that occurred in 2021.⁵

Government figures relating to 2022 show that 'exceeding the speed limit' was a contributory factor in 20% of all reported road fatalities.

On motorways, 58% of drivers admit to speeding 'frequently' or 'occasionally', up from 57% in 2023. However, this figure remains below the highs of 70% recorded in both 2015 and 2016. Speeding on 60mph roads has risen to 47% from 45%, and on 30mph roads to 42% from 40%.

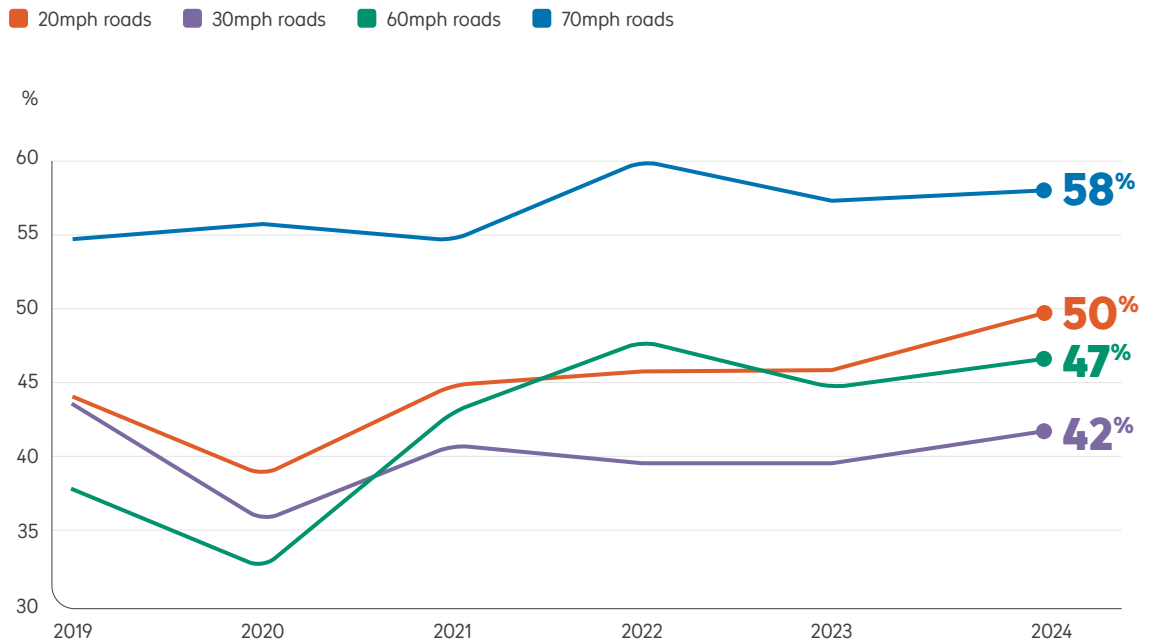


EXPERT VIEW

Claire Evans, consumer editor, What Car?

"While missing a turning or ending up in the wrong lane may seem like small mistakes, they could result in an accident with serious consequences. The RAC's findings chime with our research, which shows that it can take 10 times longer to do simple things like change the temperature using a touchscreen instead of physical buttons. So, carmakers really do need to consider the safety implications of touchscreen technology when designing car controls."

Proportion of drivers who admit to frequently or occasionally speeding



The sharpest increase has been recorded on 20mph roads, where 50% of drivers say they have exceeded the limit, up from 46% a year ago. This reflects a trend over a longer period, with 36% of drivers in 2018 saying they frequently or occasionally broke the 20mph limit. In September 2023, the Welsh Government introduced a 20mph limit on a large proportion of 'restricted' roads in residential and urban areas. However, ministers in Wales are currently consulting with a range of stakeholders to ensure the policy has been applied appropriately, and it is widely expected that the 30mph limit will be reinstated on a large number of roads.⁶ This follows the news that a petition

opposing the 20mph limit had attracted a record number of signatures. Meanwhile, official figures published in June 2024 showed there had been a year-on-year decline of almost a third in the number of people injured on 20mph and 30mph roads in the final three months of 2023, with the Welsh Government attributing the fall to its 20mph policy.⁷

This year's Report on Motoring research shows that support for consistent 20mph limits on restricted roads is lowest in Wales itself, where only 14% of drivers think it is a good idea compared to 24% across the whole of the UK. Support is considerably greater in Northern Ireland (44%).

5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-provisional-results-2023/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-provisional-results-2023>

6. <https://www.gov.wales/introducing-20mph-speed-limits-frequently-asked-questions#144147>

7. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cjee04vlglo>

5.5 A culture of speeding?

The 2024 report also asked drivers for their views on other motorists' compliance with speed limits as well as their own. Frighteningly, the overwhelming majority (eight-in-10) say they regularly see people 'excessively speeding' on all types of roads. Eighty-two per cent report this on motorways and high-speed dual carriageways, whereas on roads with 30mph or 20mph limits the proportion is only very slightly lower at 80%. Many drivers also appear to see the speed limit as something of a target with seven-in-10 drivers (72%) saying they try to drive as close to the speed limit as possible. Shockingly, more than half of all drivers (55%) believe there is a culture among UK road users that it is acceptable to break the speed limit. Only 23% disagree with this assertion.



Top three measures drivers support for reducing speeding

■ % of drivers in support

1. Greater use of average-speed cameras

39%

2. More use of radar-activated signs that display speed limit alongside a driver's actual speed

36%

3. Better speed limit signage

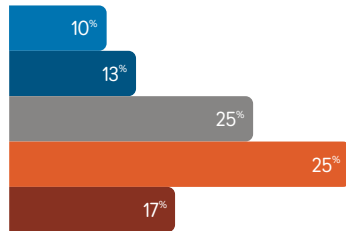
31%

The most popular policy to reduce speeding is the increased use of average-speed cameras, backed by 39% of drivers. The introduction of radar-activated signs that display the relevant speed limit against drivers' actual speed is supported by 36% of all drivers and 49% of those aged 65 or older. Almost a third of all drivers (31%) would like to see better signage for speed limits, and 30% say sat-navs or in-car systems should alert drivers when they are exceeding the limit. Only a quarter of drivers (26%) would like to see more extensive use of mobile speed cameras, while 21% support more severe sentences for those who drive above the speed limit.

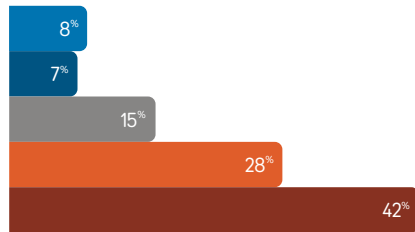
Drivers' attitudes to breaking the speed limit

- Strongly disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Neither/don't know
- Slightly agree
- Strongly agree

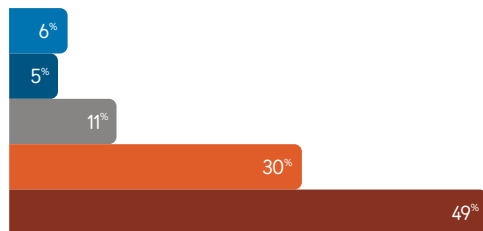
There is a culture in the UK that it's okay to break the speed limit



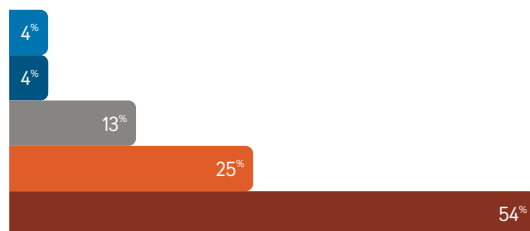
I try to drive as close to the speed limit as possible whenever I can



I regularly see people excessively speeding on 20/30mph roads



I regularly see people excessively speeding on motorways and high-speed dual carriageways with 60/70mph limits





A close-up photograph of a person's hair being styled with a red curling iron. The person is wearing a denim jacket. The background is blurred, showing green foliage. The image is partially obscured by a white, rounded rectangular overlay that contains text.

6

Car dependency and mobility

The role the car continues to play in drivers' lives is abundantly clear, the 2024 Report on Motoring has found. This year, 81% of drivers say they would find it very difficult to adjust their lifestyle to being without a vehicle, a proportion that has remained largely constant since the first Report on Motoring in 1989, apart from a drop to 73% in both 2008 and 2019.

Drivers' dependency on their cars increases even further with age: while two-thirds (65%) of under-25s say they would struggle to adjust to life without a vehicle, this proportion rises to 77% among those aged between 25 and 44, 84% among drivers between 45 and 64, and 86% among those aged 65 and older.

6.1 A driving need?

No feasible alternatives to the car

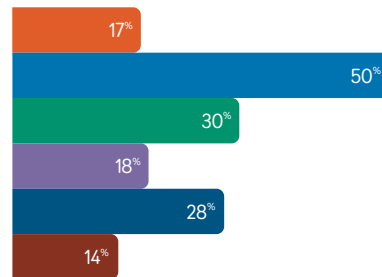
Nearly two-thirds of commuters (63%) always take the car when making these trips, while 57% of motorists always drive when shopping for groceries. In addition, 42% who need to transport their children to school, nursery or clubs always drive, 40% always do so if they need to get to or from an airport and a quarter (26%) always use the car when accessing a mainline railway station. In comparison the proportions that walk, cycle or use public transport instead is tiny – just 8% of commuters do, while the proportion of those who do so when main grocery shopping is just 3%.

Looking specifically at commuting options, 40% of all drivers say they have no feasible alternatives to the car when it comes to commuting, a figure that rises to 43% for those who live in suburban locations or on the edge of towns, and 70% for those in rural areas who are least served by public transport. Taking the bus to work is only seen as a viable option for three-in-10 (31%) drivers, with this proportion only rising to half (50%) of drivers who live in town and city centres – a somewhat surprising finding given this tends to be where public transport provision is supposed to be at its best.

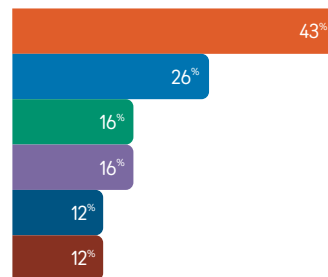
Getting to work – feasible options other than driving

- I have no other feasible options to travel to and from work
- Bus
- Train
- Walking
- Taxi/Uber or another on-demand service
- Bike/cycling

Drivers residing in city or town centres



Drivers residing in suburbs/edge of towns



Drivers residing in villages/rural locations



6.2 Attitudes to public transport

Last year's report showed a significant increase in the percentage of drivers who would use their vehicle less if public transport was more convenient, reliable and affordable, from 46% in 2021 and 48% in 2022 to 55% in 2023. This year, the proportion has fallen slightly to 53%, still well above levels seen prior to 2023 but not as high as 2019 when it peaked at 59%. Younger drivers would be much more willing to use public transport if it was better: among the under-25s, the rate is 64% compared with 46% among those aged 65 or older.

52%

of drivers walk or cycle for short journeys, rather than take the car

Only a minority of drivers believe public transport is an attractive alternative to driving, although there has been a rise this year to 29%, from 26% in 2023 and 23% the previous year. The rate among the under-25s is 41%, falling to 25% among those aged between 45 and 65, and 29% among drivers who are 65 or above.

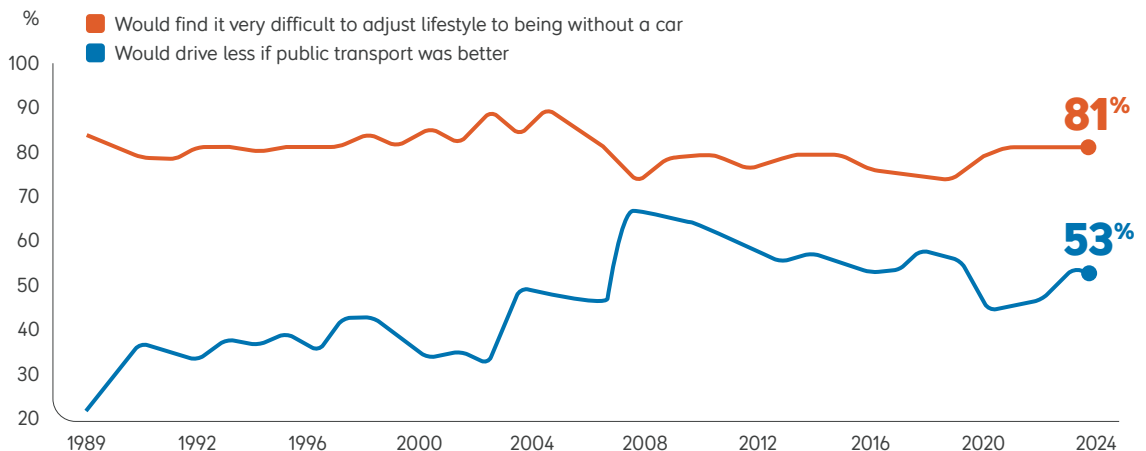
53%

of drivers say they would use their vehicles less if public transport was better, a figure that rises to 64% of under-25s

There has been little change in the proportion of drivers who say they generally walk or cycle rather than take the car when making short journeys: in 2024, the figure is 52%, which is in line with 2023 (53%), 2022 (also 52%) and 2021 (54%).

Drivers' views of using their vehicles less

In 2024, a majority of drivers say they would drive less if public transport was better





EXPERT VIEW

Steve Gooding, director, RAC Foundation

"Driving continues to be hugely important for access to work. While that is not a journey all car commuters are making every day – over a third doing so for no more than three days per week – it means the car will be a tempting and convenient option for other trips."

6.3 Drivers' use of buses and trains

This year, slightly fewer drivers say they regularly take buses compared to 2023, but research for this year's report shows overall usage remains higher than it was both during and immediately before the Covid-19 crisis. In 2024, 24% use a bus at least once a month compared to 26% 12 months ago, although the figure was 17% in 2022 and 21% both in 2021 and in the 12 months leading up to the pandemic. It is also the case that the proportion who say they never take a bus for any purpose is at its lowest level in recent years – down to 39% in 2024 from 51% in 2021.

These increases in bus use may be at least partly due to the Conservative Government's continuation of subsidies for bus travel in England: this programme originally capped fares at £2 per journey from 1 January to 31 October 2023¹, but was subsequently extended to 31 December 2024. However, the latest government domestic transport use data shows bus usage is still only 89% of pre-Covid levels, and is unchanged on the 12 months before the price cap was introduced.^{2,3}

There has been a jump in bus use among young drivers in the past 12 months: in 2023, 42% of under-25s said they used a bus at least once a month, a proportion that has increased to 55% this year. The rising costs of motoring covered elsewhere in this report may be factors behind this shift. Those in the 45-to-64 age group are least likely to use a bus on at least a monthly basis, with only 14% doing so – down from 20% in 2023.

24%

of drivers ride the bus at least once a month, rising to 55% of under-25s



1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-extends-2-bus-fare-cap-and-protects-vital-services>

2. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/2-bus-fare-cap>

3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/transport-use-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic>

There has been a very gradual increase in train use among drivers since the pandemic. In 2021, 16% took a train at least once a month, a figure that has risen to 19% in 2024. Again, the under-25s are the group most likely to use a train (39% do so once a month or more), while among those aged 65 or older, only 10% regularly make train journeys. Interestingly, a third of drivers (33%) say they never take the train, down significantly from 42% in the 12 months before the Covid pandemic.

'A third of drivers never take the train'

The Government's latest domestic transport use data shows that train usage since the start of 2024 only averaged 83% of pre-Covid levels, whereas car use is almost back to normal at 96%.⁴



6.4 Drivers as cyclists

The percentage of cyclists among the driving population has remained steady at 22%, which is in line with the 23% recorded in 2023. One-in-10 drivers (10%) use their bikes at least once a month, down from 12% in both 2023 and 2022. Cycle use is highest among the under-25s, with 22% of this group using their bikes every month. The proportion falls to 15% among drivers aged between 25 and 44, 7% among those between 45 and 64, and just 5% of those aged 65 or older.

'22% of drivers are also cyclists'



4. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/transport-use-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic>



EXPERT VIEW

**David Leibling, transport and motoring consultant,
and founder of the Report on Motoring**

"Motorists remain highly dependent on their cars, with more than 80% saying they would find it very difficult to adjust their lifestyle to being without a car, with only around one-in-10 saying they use a bus or train once a week or more – although over half would use public transport more if it was improved. Yet annual mileage has fallen slightly again this year, so motorists may be abandoning the marginal journey by car and walking more on short journeys because of higher running costs."

The RAC's work for drivers

Fuel duty rate kept down

Ahead of the 2023 Spring Budget, we called on the Government to extend the 5p fuel duty cut until at least 2025 to support drivers with the cost of filling up. The Chancellor confirmed in his Budget to Parliament that the reduced duty rate of 52.95p per litre would remain until March 2025.

Fuel price transparency scheme becomes law

Analysis of wholesale and pump price data by RAC Fuel Watch helped trigger a market review by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) in 2022, which found drivers had been overcharged by £900m when filling up. The RAC was pleased to see a law enabling the creation of a Pumpwatch scheme passed shortly before the UK's 2024 General Election which will mandate all retailers to publish their petrol and diesel prices. It will also see the creation of a formal fuel price monitoring body. In time, this should lead to fairer forecourt prices for drivers.

Regularly holding retailers to account on fuel prices

The RAC has regularly raised the flag about unfair pricing tactics employed by major retailers when they take far higher than normal margins on the fuel they sell, an issue it discussed directly with the Energy Secretary. The RAC is also the only national motoring organisation to be monitoring pump price data being provided by retailers to the CMA, and highlighting major price disparities – both between different forecourts run by the same company, and between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.

More money for councils to repair local roads

Following the cancellation of the northern leg of HS2, the Conservative Government committed an extra £8.3bn for councils to spend on fixing their roads over the next 11 years, with a specific focus not just on fixing potholes but on carrying out preventative maintenance that keeps roads in a better condition for longer. This followed repeated calls by the RAC for local authorities to be given more long-term certainty of funding to end the decline in road standards.





Changing the narrative on fixing local roads

For too long, central government has focused solely on the number of potholes that can be repaired with public funds. Working with the Road Surface Treatment Association and the Road Emulsion Association, we moved the road maintenance debate on by emphasizing potholes were the result of a lack of sufficient preventative surface dressing works. The RAC also successfully changed the Department for Transport narrative from just filling potholes to the need for resurfacing.

Keeping MOTs annual

Following a consultation to which the RAC responded in the strongest possible terms, the Government agreed not to increase the interval between scheduled MOTs from one a year to every two. The RAC was concerned that road safety would be compromised and that drivers would end up paying more for repairs if their vehicles were checked less often.

Breakdown vehicles to be permitted to use red flashing lamps

The RAC has long called for roadside assistance workers and recovery drivers to be allowed to use red flashing lamps, alongside the customary amber ones, to alert motorists to their presence at breakdowns. It raised this important safety issue again with the Secretary of State for Transport in 2023, and in October the Government said it would permit their use in England, Scotland and Wales.

Government commitment to investigate headlight glare

The RAC first raised the issue of dazzling headlights and driver discomfort in 2018. Following further high-profile media activity in early 2024, which sparked widespread public concern, followed by concerted political engagement, the Government agreed to launch an independent study into the issue and evaluate ways of mitigating against it to protect road users. The RAC is now a member of several working groups designed to help bring about a positive change.

Holding government to account on its electric vehicle charger target at motorway service areas

Understanding the increasingly important role that motorway service areas play in helping drivers of electric vehicles travel longer distances beyond the range of their vehicles, the RAC analysed data to uncover the fact the Government had missed its own target of having at least six high-powered chargers at all sites by the end of 2023. It has used these findings to press the Government for faster progress in installing chargers going forwards.

Publishing the UK's first electric vehicle public charging charter

Working in partnership with campaign group FairCharge, the RAC created the UK's first charter for electric vehicle public charging with the aim of improving the reliability, transparency, accessibility and usability of the UK's rapidly growing charging network. The charter is effectively a minimum set of standards for Government, local authorities, landowners and charge point operators, designed with drivers in mind.

**Scan here
to read
the charter**



House of Lords Committee backs RAC's electric vehicle policy suggestions

The RAC provided written evidence to the House of Lords' Environment and Climate Change Committee on policy changes that could increase the uptake of electric vehicles in the UK. On publishing its report in February 2024, the committee agreed with two of the RAC's recommendations: introducing a new targeted grant to make EVs more affordable and adopting the RAC and FairCharge Electric Vehicle Public Charging Charter.

Our message for government

Road conditions

Deliver a step change in the condition and maintenance of local roads

For the first time ever a majority of drivers (56%) listed the condition and maintenance of local roads in the UK as their top motoring concern, making it the number-one issue in 2024. The RAC calls on the Government to support cash-strapped councils by guaranteeing increased funding for road maintenance over a long-term period – at least for the duration of the next Parliament – and commit to ringfencing some general taxation to pay for this.

Figures from the Asphalt Industry Alliance show the amount of investment now needed to clear the backlog of road repair and maintenance work in England and Wales alone has risen from £14bn in 2023 to more than £16bn. We urge the new government to honour its predecessor's commitment to invest £8.3bn from the cancelled northern leg of HS2 into local roads over the next 11 years. In addition, we call for 2p per litre of fuel duty revenue to be ring-fenced, which would secure £4.7bn additional funding over a five-year period.

With official data showing council road maintenance is at its lowest point in at least the last five years, we urge the Government to commit councils to significantly increasing the levels of proactive road maintenance – surface dressing and resurfacing – and move away from the symptomatic approach of merely filling in potholes.

Cost of living

Urgently introduce Pumpwatch scheme to deliver fairer pump prices

The RAC calls on the Government to ensure the Pumpwatch scheme and price monitoring body, which was enabled by an Act of Parliament prior to the General Election, is up and running as soon as possible. This should be used to ensure retailers quickly pass on savings to drivers from significant drops in the wholesale price of fuel, as well as bring an end to the current postcode lottery which leads to prices for petrol and diesel being wildly different from place-to-place.

Reduce the motor insurance tax burden

With average insurance premiums up by 33% over the last 12 months, we call on the Government to reduce Insurance Premium Tax from its current 12% rate as it is compounding the recent rises in motor insurance. This not only increases the risk of people driving uninsured, it also unfairly places an even greater burden on younger and more inexperienced drivers who already pay the highest premiums.



Road safety

Reintroduce casualty reduction targets

We urge the new government to reintroduce formal road casualty reduction targets, which were scrapped in 2010, giving the issue of road safety the national focus it deserves.

Reinstate the hard shoulder on smart motorways

The RAC calls on the Government to convert all-lane-running stretches of smart motorway to either controlled motorways, with hard shoulders permanently restored, or to dynamic hard shoulder schemes – where a hard shoulder is in place for much of the day and night. RAC research shows ongoing driver dissatisfaction with all-lane-running smart motorways, with most drivers deliberately avoiding driving in the inside lane that used to be the hard shoulder.

Introduce a Graduated Driver Licensing scheme

Launch a consultation on introducing a Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) scheme to keep new drivers safe. Young drivers, especially young men, are statistically far more likely to be involved in serious or fatal collisions. The RAC has previously supported a Bill by an MP to bring forward a GDL scheme.

Understand the true causes of headlight glare

The RAC, which is leading a campaign to address the issue of overly bright headlights dazzling drivers, secured a commitment from the outgoing government to conduct independent research to find out why so many drivers suffer with glare. We urge the new government to ensure this research is carried out quickly so that the findings can be used to improve road safety.

Clamp down on excessive speeding

We encourage the Government to work with police forces and road safety organisations to introduce a crackdown on drivers who speed excessively, which presents a disproportionate risk to the safety of all road users.

Commit to EU-wide vehicle safety standards

We continue to call on the Government to follow suit with the EU which has mandated all new vehicles to be fitted with advanced safety systems, including intelligent speed assist and autonomous emergency braking. We strongly believe these technologies will improve road safety.



Civil enforcement

Ensure councils enforce yellow box junctions fairly

A study commissioned by the RAC has shown many yellow box junctions are too large which leads to drivers being fined unnecessarily. The new government should update guidance for councils and ensure they follow it correctly so that moving traffic offence powers are always used fairly.

Finally introduce the Private Parking Code of Practice

The RAC calls on the Government to finally publish the revised Private Parking Code of Practice to prevent drivers being unfairly fined by private parking operators. Despite the code becoming law in 2019, it has been delayed by legal challenges from private parking operators and debt recovery companies. Meanwhile, drivers continue to be issued excessive numbers of fines, with many simply paying up rather than contesting penalty charge notices even if they are in the right. It is vital the code is introduced as it will put caps on parking charge notices and debt recovery fees, as well providing drivers with a single independent appeals system.

Mandate minimum of two parking payment methods

We urge the Government to ensure drivers can always pay for parking by at least two different means, including contactless bank cards/via mobile phone. Research for this year's RAC on Motoring found that 57% of drivers think car park operators should always provide a minimum of two different payment options and two-thirds of drivers (65%) still want to be able to pay with cash – the most popular payment method of all.

Roll out the National Parking Platform

To make life easier for drivers who prefer to pay for parking via a mobile phone app, we call on the Government to roll out its National Parking Platform at the earliest opportunity. This will enable drivers to pay with just one app, instead of having to download and use a myriad of different ones depending where in the country they are parking.





Glen,
patrol since 2018,
Northern

Electric vehicles

Reintroduce a plug-in car grant aimed at cheaper models

With research for this year's Report on Motoring and Society of Motor Manufacturer and Traders' data showing a slowdown in private registrations of new EVs, the RAC calls on the Government to reintroduce a plug-in car grant aimed at stimulating the cheaper end of the new car market to make going electric more affordable.

Reduce VAT on public chargers

This year's Report on Motoring shows a third (32%) of drivers would not be able to charge an electric vehicle where they live. For this reason, it is vital the Government reduces the VAT rate at public chargers from 20% to match the 5% levied on domestic electricity as it will ensure those who can't charge at home are able to run a zero-emission vehicle cost effectively. This would significantly speed up adoption of EVs by making public charging more affordable. Six-in-10 drivers questioned as part of this year's research feel the VAT rate discrepancy is unfair.

Meet high-powered charging targets at motorway services

The RAC urges the Government to ensure the target of having six high-powered chargers at every motorway services in England is met this year, as the original deadline to achieve this by the end of 2023 was missed. Being able to recharge an electric vehicle quickly and easily on a long journey is essential to consumer confidence in zero-emission driving.

Adopt the UK's first public charging charter

We call on the Government and charge point operators to adopt the RAC and FairCharge Public Charging Charter so that chargers are accessible and safe for all, charger locations are clearly signposted, kWh prices are displayed prominently for drivers to see and all chargers work at least 99% of the time. The charter, the first of its kind in the UK, was referenced and recommended to the Government by a House of Lords' committee as part of its recent EV inquiry.

**NET
ZERO**



Drivers and their vehicles at a glance

Below is a summary of survey respondents' vehicles and usage against figures for the 2024 Report on Motoring:

Approximate number of miles driven over 12 months¹

Miles driven	%
5,000 miles or fewer	29
5,001 – 10,000 miles	50
10,001 miles or more	19

Number of cars per household

Households with	%
One car	50
Two cars	34
Three cars	11
Four cars	3
Five or more cars	2

Age of vehicles²

Motorists who own a car	%
Less than a year old	7
1 – 2 years old	8
2 – 3 years old	9
3 – 4 years old	13
Between 5 and 10 years old	36
More than 10 years old	27

Average number of cars

In household	1.7
--------------	-----



1. All who personally drive a vehicle at least once a month (QS11H)

2. Age of vehicle driven most often



Research methodology

The RAC Report on Motoring 2024 is based on a large-scale online survey carried out by Online95 on behalf of the RAC. In total, Online95 interviewed 2,691 UK motorists (i.e. those who hold a full, current UK driving licence, drive at least once a month and have a motor vehicle in their household). The survey was conducted from 23 March to 15 April 2024, with the questionnaire taking around 30 minutes to complete. Responses were rim weighted to be nationally representative of UK motorists in age, gender, socio-economic groups and all UK regions. The data in the report was analysed and reported by Ragdoll Research and Planning.

Statistical reliability

Any figures taken from a sample of a population should not be taken as a precise indication of the actual figures for that population. The reported figures are estimates, within a small margin of error, of the actual figures. The margin of error varies with sample size – the larger the sample is, the lower the error will be. It also varies with the proportions answering: the margin of error is smaller for a 90% or 10% result than for a 50% result. In order to illustrate the use of varying sample sizes and their effect on the statistical significance of results, the table below outlines the degree of statistical error broadly associated with an example sample size of 1,000, and the effective sample size of the weighted survey data, 1,925.



Sample size	Reported percentage at 95% level of confidence				
	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
1,000	±1.86%	±2.48%	±2.84%	±3.04%	±3.10%
1,925	±1.34%	±1.79%	±2.05%	±2.19%	±2.23%

How to read the above table: Assume the reported percentage, with an effective sample base of 1,925, is 23%. The closest column to this reported percentage is the '20% or 80%' column. The significant difference on the table shows ±1.79%. This means that 95 out of 100 surveys (reflecting the 95% level of confidence) with an effective sample size of 1,925 will produce a percentage of 23%, plus or minus 1.79%, or within the range of 21.21% and 24.79%.

Please note that the margin of error will be marginally different for each reported percentage, however, the above table can serve to find the closest estimate.



Company overview

The RAC provides complete peace of mind to 14m UK personal and business members. Whatever the need, we have a growing range of driving and mobility-related services and solutions covering everything from breakdown assistance to vehicle insurance, and from car maintenance to servicing and repairs – all increasingly enabled by digital platforms, data and our colleagues.

Headquartered in the West Midlands with around 4,000 staff, the RAC operates from three bases – Walsall, Bristol and Salford – with its vehicle and breakdown services underpinned by its nationwide, branded patrol force. Last year, the RAC patrols attended 2.6m breakdowns.

We provide individual members and small business owners with breakdown cover and a broad range of exclusive optional extras on either an annual or flexible monthly subscription basis. Through our partnerships with leading motor manufacturers, banks, insurance companies and fleets, we also provide breakdown and accident assistance to individuals and technical and customer support services. In insurance, we offer primarily motor and telematics insurance policies, many of which are available through price comparison websites.

For the one-in-five vehicles our patrols are not able to fix, the RAC has a growing nationwide network of RAC Mobile Mechanics capable of repairing vehicles at customers' homes or workplaces, as well as carrying out routine servicing and diagnostic checks.

Appointments can be booked on rac.co.uk or via the myRAC mobile app, available for Apple and Android devices. The myRAC app brings everything a driver needs together in one place to make running a car cheaper and easier. Drivers can log a breakdown, book a service or MOT, see the MOT history of all their vehicles, set maintenance reminders and find the cheapest fuel at any location.

Our fleet of breakdown vans is already well-equipped to cater for the needs of EVs. We can give emergency charges to depleted EVs and, if needs be, tow them with all four wheels off the road without the need for a separate flatbed recovery vehicle. In addition, the RAC was the first national roadside assistance company to put a zero-emission electric patrol van into service.

The RAC also offers drivers an online shop, legal services, vehicle history checks and inspections, a new and used car buying website, a nationwide network of used car dealerships and more than 900 approved garages providing the highest standards of service under the trusted RAC name.

Using our research with drivers, the RAC campaigns at a national level on the biggest motoring issues, including the condition and maintenance of the country's roads, the cost of filling and charging up, and road safety.





Indy,
mobile mechanic since 2022,
West Midlands

Contact

For all enquiries related to the RAC Report on Motoring, or for specific data requests, please contact the RAC press team:

Email: press.office@rac.co.uk

Advisory panel

This report was guided by the expert contributions of the RAC Report on Motoring advisory panel:

Claire Evans

Consumer editor, What Car?

Steve Gooding

Director, RAC Foundation

Mike Hawes OBE

Chief executive, Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT)

Tony Kildare

Chief executive, IAM RoadSmart

David Leibling

Transport and motoring consultant, and founder of the Report on Motoring

Jo Shiner

Chief constable, Sussex Police, and Roads Policing Portfolio lead, National Police Chiefs' Council

Melanie Shufflebotham

Chief operating officer and co-founder, Zapmap

Quentin Willson

Motoring journalist and founder of FairCharge



➤ Daniel,
patrol since 2022,
Eastern

You can access this report, as well as
those from previous years, online at:
rac.co.uk/report-on-motoring

Scan here to download

