



LAM BUNKER NEWS

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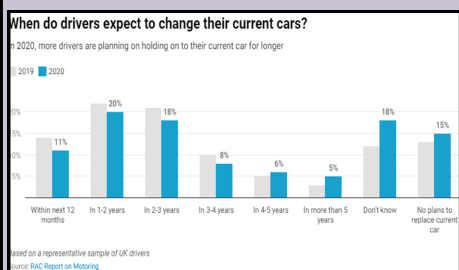


More drivers than ever plan to 'go electric' but think upfront costs are still too high

Nearly eight-in-10 drivers (78%) think that pure electric cars are still too expensive when compared to conventional vehicles of a similar size.

Although a steadily increasing proportion are planning to choose one when they next change their car, research from the latest RAC Report on Motoring shows.

Nine per cent of the 3,000 respondents to the study said they intended to 'go electric' next time around, up from 6% in 2019 and 3% a year earlier, clearly highlighting drivers' growing willingness to opt for a zero-emissions model.



When do drivers expect to change their current cars?

With the current retail price of new pure battery electric vehicles significantly higher than their petrol or diesel-powered equivalents, they remain out of many drivers' price ranges, prompting most to say they would like more financial help from the Government.

More than half of drivers (53%) said they would like to see VAT on zero-emission vehicles either cut or abolished entirely, with a slightly smaller proportion (48%) favouring a scrap-page scheme to make switching from a conventionally powered one to a battery-electric model affordable.

Three-in-10 motorists (30%) favour an increase to the current Plug-in Car Grant (PiCG) of £1,000, taking it up to £4,000, which is arguably the most straightforward policy change the Government could implement if it chose to.

Making vehicles more affordable for drivers is not the only thing that could entice drivers into a pure electric model next time around. Motorists also want to know they can charge these vehicles easily when they are away from home, something that will be vital for the estimated third² for whom home-charging is not an option.

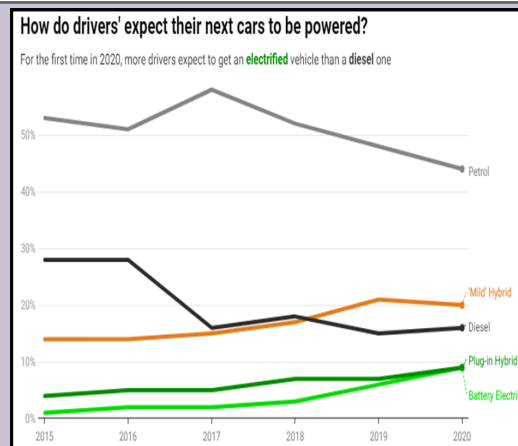
More than four-in-10 drivers (43%) say they want the Government to set a binding national target for access to public chargepoints, such as ensuring 95% of the population live no further than five miles from the nearest chargepoint.

Three-in-10 (28%) meanwhile believe the price of charging at public chargers should be capped.

The RAC Report on Motoring research also found the extent to which drivers believe the average range of battery-electric vehicles needs to increase before they will choose one over a petrol or diesel model – or rather how drivers' expectations about the sort of distance they need to be able to go on a single charge might need to change, given that more than half (58%) of car trips are under five miles in length and the average car trip is just 8.4 miles long.

Continues....

For the second year running, drivers said they would want a car to have a range of some 375 miles – roughly the distance from Cambridge to Edinburgh – yet RAC analysis shows the average stated basic range of the top 10 pure electric cars sold in the UK stands at 235 miles. Only one model offers a range of 375 miles and upwards on a single charge. More broadly, the pandemic appears to have left its mark on the car-buying public, with only one in every 10 motorists (11%) expecting to upgrade to another vehicle in the next 12 months – a sharp fall on the 14% recorded in 2019 and 18% a year earlier.



But perhaps even more telling is the finding that just over half of drivers (51%) do not expect to change their current vehicle within the next three years – well up on the last year's 43%, and 35% in 2018. Meanwhile, a third of drivers (33%) in 2020 either don't plan to get a new car, or do not know when they will replace their current vehicle, up from 25% a year ago.

RAC data insight spokesman Rod Dennis said: "With 2030 now clearly set as the date for the end of the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans, momentum behind getting more of us into electric vehicles ('EVs') is building – and it's clear that an increasing proportion of drivers are responding, with nearly one-in-10 now planning to opt for a pure electric next time they change their car.

"But the single biggest barrier to a driver choosing an electric car over one powered by petrol or diesel has to be cost." Although good finance leasing deals and offers such as free home charging for a set period can help, it appears to be the case that the price of many new EVs remains prohibitively high for a lot of people, with most drivers keen to see more financial help from the Government to bring costs down. "If the Government really wants to stimulate demand for electric vehicles quickly, then it either has to boost the Plug-in Car Grant or remove, or cut, VAT for a fixed period of time. "While removing VAT would lead to lower list prices, it would also cost the Government a lot more and may be more favourable to people choosing more expensive models.

"The current grant scheme is already in place so increasing it may be the easier option to implement. Either scheme may need to be more heavily incentivised over the next few years until such time as the list prices of electric cars fall of their own accord, as a result of manufacturing costs dropping.

"More important will be ensuring the network of public chargepoints keeps pace with EV take-up so drivers are never far away from a fast, reliable place to charge – something especially important for all those people who won't be able to charge at home. "The price of charging is crucial too: it needs to be transparent and fair. With so many of us used to seeing fuel prices on forecourt 'totems', there's currently nothing comparable for drivers seeking to charge up away from home."

In order to give peace of mind to drivers who have, or want, to go electric, the RAC has become the first UK breakdown assistance organisation to introduce EV Boost technology to its vans. The lightweight mobile charging units, which are fitted to conventional RAC vans, are designed to be the equivalent of a fuel can for a petrol or diesel vehicle.

Weird & Wonderful Facts About UK Roads - Traffic for days: 40-mile traffic jam

Is there anything worse than being stuck in a traffic jam? Being sat on a road, surrounded by other cars, waiting to be able to move is incredibly stressful, especially when you are desperate to get to wherever it is you are going.

The UK has seen some incredible traffic jams, from roadblocks caused by farm animals on the loose to horror crashes leading to a road being closed for hours, there have been some truly terrible traffic jams in the UK, many of which have made it into the world record books.

According to the Guinness World Book Of Records, the worst ever traffic jam to date was on the 5th of April in 1985 when there was a 40-mile hold up on the M1, which snaked all the way from junction 16 to 18, leaving hundreds of motorists trapped in their cars for hours.



Road rage - don't be a victim

In this week's driving tips IAM RoadSmart head of standards Richard Gladman talks about how to avoid becoming a road rage victim, and what to do if it does escalate.

- If someone is being confrontational or aggressive, don't make eye contact and don't react visibly.
- Let the other driver go on ahead. You might feel wronged, but letting the other party go will make no difference to the rest of your day.
- Name and shame! If you or better, your passengers, can film any behaviour on your mobile phone it will help in terms of evidence, including the registration number of the other vehicle involved.
- If the conflict is more serious and other processes aren't working; call the police, especially if you feel there is a threat or possibility of violence against you.
- Sorry helps. If you were at fault, admit it and apologise. If you feel upset or emotional pull over and get some fresh air or walk around if you need to before resuming your journey.
- Again find some distraction, like listening to the radio - move your mind deliberately onto something else - deliberately driving well would be a good example - but don't dwell on the incident.

Richard said: "Road rage does not affect everyone every day. If you're finding it is happening very often, you might want to think about how you engage with other road users."

He concluded: "No-one need experience road rage, but it is up to each of us to ensure it stays that way."

NEW TO ADVANCED DRIVING?

Forget the myths about teaching an old dog new tricks - you can achieve a high standard in a new skill by consistently working at it.

As fitness coach Adrienne Herbert points out in the latest edition of Waitrose's Health magazine, we can shake off old bad habits and enjoy new experiences to the full.

All we need, she says, is a growth mindset, which scientists call neuroplasticity. Wow - a big technical word, maybe, but all we have to do is simply work at any new skill. And learning to become an advanced driver is one of the most satisfying and worthwhile skills we can learn.

Our team of observers is keen to help you, so keep an eye on our website and our emails. Happy and safe motoring!

by John Watson - Chief Observer

Our next end of month online meeting is on Sunday 30th May 2021. 10.00am

After the success of our online April meeting where our guest speaker, Sue White spoke on 'the challenges of getting back into driving after Covid', we welcome all LAM members to join us on the above date for a talk by John Watson on 'Marvellous Motoring Mysteries'.

An email has been sent to all members with the Zoom invitation. Contact **lichfieldadvancedmotorists@gmail.com** for copy of invitation or details on how to join by telephone.