



May 29, 2014 09:40 BST

Is this the end of the road for the domestic garage?

Nearly half of garages not used to park cars as nation of hoarders demands more space to store household goods

Nearly half (4.6m) of Britain's 10.6m* garages are no longer being used for what they were intended for, with almost two in five (39%) of drivers saying their garages are so full of household items they can no longer fit their vehicle in.

A study conducted by RAC [Home Insurance](#)** suggests we have become a nation of hoarders with our garages capturing the overspill from our homes

which are not built with enough storage space available for today's consumers.

The death of the garage as a place to keep the car is now confirmed as it is revealed 62% of motorists no longer use their garage and more people would rather use it to house DIY and gardening equipment. What's more, 9% of those who do not keep their car in the garage said it had been converted into extra living accommodation, which the RAC estimates equates to 678,000 garages nationwide.

The research quizzed more than 1,000 car owners about their garage use and discovered of those that no longer use their garage to store their car more than three quarters (77%) use it for general storage, 36% have turned it into a workshop for hobbies and DIY and almost one in 10 (8%) use it as a gym.

And, of the 38% surveyed who still use their garage for its intended purpose, one in five (19%) say there is barely enough room to get their car in and they then have to squeeze out of the doors because of its small design.

The research revealed the top five items kept in the garage, other than a car, are:

1. DIY tools – 76%
2. Decorating kit, ladders etc – 67%
3. Gardening equipment – 64%
4. Sports and gym equipment – 49%
5. Bikes and scooters – 47%

RAC Home Insurance spokesman Simon Williams says: "It's frightening to think that nearly 5m garages are not used for the purpose they were made. The findings of our research appear to indicate that there is an issue with the design of houses as people do not have enough space to keep all their possessions in the house itself and many garages are so small that anyone in the car has to perform a contortionist act to get out.

"More than a third (37%) of the people we surveyed said they would still rather use their garage for its original purpose if possible, but for some the idea that the garage is a place to keep the family cars is secondary compared to the need for [garage storage](#) for household goods, or indeed to create

additional living space by converting it into another room in the house.

“For all those who use their garage for extra storage, security is an important issue to consider as they are relatively easy targets for thieves looking for high value items such as bikes and tools. That’s why it is essential to have the right insurance in case the worst should happen.”

Notes to Editors

* Figure based on extrapolation of 26.4m UK households (Office of National Statistics: Families and Households 2012) and 17.4m households with cars (National Travel Survey: July 2013 update) and weighted to survey sample below to establish the number of garages.

** Research conducted online among 1,006 respondents during April 2014, 98% of which were driving licence holders.

About the RAC

First formed in 1897, the RAC has been looking after the needs of its members and championing the interests of drivers for more than 120 years.

Today it has more than eight million members and is one of the UK’s most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it’s [roadside assistance](#), [insurance](#), [buying a used car](#), [vehicle inspections and checks](#), [legal services](#) or up-to-the-minute [traffic and travel information](#) – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist’s champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK drivers at a national level. This includes voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring, particularly the price of fuel and the high level of tax levied on it, advancing levels of road safety, and supporting the needs of all drivers, from young to old.

The RAC’s annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – is one of a

kind and provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#). It provides a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump - and tracks these prices daily to help drivers check if the price they pay to fill up is a fair one.

Contacts



RAC Press Office

Press Contact

press.office@rac.co.uk

Emails monitored during normal office hours. For breakdown queries, call 0330 159 0740

ISDN number on request