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Motorists lack trust in garages as two thirds claim bad experience

But show fierce loyalty to good independent garages

The UK's garages are facing calls for better transparency and improved service as almost two thirds (60%) of motorists say they have had a bad experience when taking their car in for a repair, service or MOT.

The findings from research conducted for garage comparison website RAC Garage Compare will do little to allay concerns about the standard of service from local independent garages or fears that customers may be ripped off as one in 10, 11%, say they don't trust local garages at all.

Concerns raised by the survey include 38% of motorists who said their garage failed to fix the problem with their vehicle and 36% who felt they were overcharged. In addition one in four (24%), said they were very concerned about hidden costs when booking their car in for work such as a service or MOT.

However the survey, carried out among 1,400 motorists on the RAC Opinion Panel* through December 2014, also highlights that people are fiercely loyal to garages that give them good service, with 55% saying they totally trust the local garage they use most often.

Many millions of motorists rely on local independent garages to carry out regular servicing and MOTs, to keep running costs and maintenance at a manageable level.

As such more than half (56%) say reliability is most important to them when choosing a garage, with customer service second at 19% and cost actually

third in terms of priorities, with just 14% saying that was most important.

The RAC says this underlines the fact that customers are not always looking for the cheapest option, and that good service and reliability are worth more to motorists entrusting their vehicles to a local garage business.

RAC head of external affairs Pete Williams said: “For many motorists booking in their vehicle for essential work at a repair garage they haven’t used before can feel like an act of blind faith and unfortunately consumers are wary when they receive that final bill.

“It is a real concern to see a figure as high as 60% of people who say they have had a bad experience at a local garage, when we know there are thousands of good quality garages in our towns and cities.”

The findings are released as the RAC launches [RAC Garage Compare](#), a comparison and online booking website for MOT, car servicing and repairs, giving motorists access to thousands of rated independent, franchised and fast-fit garages across the UK.

Working on the same principles as comparison websites covering products such as motor insurance and other financial products, [RAC Garage Compare](#) is designed to provide motorists with absolute transparency over service standards and pricing.

Consumers simply enter their postcode and registration number plus details for the kind of services they require from a menu – choosing from three pre-defined levels of servicing with the option of an MOT. Results show the price they will pay plus ratings and reviews from customers that have previously used each garage. The customer can also see the full service schedule before booking for complete transparency. Finally, the website allows quick and easy online booking.

Pete continued: “Our research also shows that people are also willing to travel to the places they do trust with their cars, with 20% going up to 10 miles from home to the garage they use most, and one in 10, (11%), willing to go as far as 20 miles.

“But overwhelmingly the survey results highlight a lack of trust among

customers and a sense they feel garages are not being open and transparent enough when it comes to pricing. That is why the RAC has launched [RAC Garage Compare](#), in order to give motorists the full picture in terms of how customers rate their local garages, and where they can find the best value for money.

“After all, maintaining a car can already be a costly business without any more nasty surprises when it comes to the bill.”

Ends

Notes to Editors:

* Research carried out via the RAC Opinion Panel with 1,460 motorists in December 2014.

The Motorist's Organisation is the RAC's partner for RAC Garage Compare.

About RAC

With more than eight million members, the RAC 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 motorists at a national level, including advancing levels of road safety, supporting the needs of young drivers and voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring. The RAC's annual Report on Motoring survey, now in its 25th year, provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices visit our Fuel Prices Explained pages – www.rac.co.uk/advice/fuel-prices-explained. Here we detail the average UK price of petrol and diesel and give an indication of which way prices are likely to go – up or down – over the next couple of weeks based

on the wholesale price. You can also discover more about the fuel industry, what affects UK fuel prices, how they compare those in Europe, how motorists are taxed and top-tips for better fuel economy.

The RAC supports FairFuelUK campaigning for fairer taxes on petrol and diesel. Show support and find out more at www.fairfueluk.com.

Key facts:

- RAC patrols fix four out of five vehicles at the roadside and on average within 34 minutes
- The RAC has more patrols per member than any other breakdown provider
- 98% of members would recommend RAC Rescue to their friends and family

RAC press releases, news alerts and a wealth of motoring research is available from www.rac.co.uk/press-centre/.

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