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Quietest Spring bank holiday on the roads in at least seven years expected

Drivers are planning just under 10m separate leisure journeys by car this coming bank holiday weekend, half the number compared to last year and the fewest for the long weekend since the RAC first started tracking trips, new research suggests.*

Around two-thirds of drivers (68%) say they don't expect to get in the car at all for recreational purposes over the weekend. Among drivers who do plan on taking the car out, half of the trips taken won't be more than 10 miles in

length – suggesting the weekend will be one more characterised by trips to local parks, garden centres and stay-at-home barbecues.

The research also suggests interest in using the car to visit beaches, national parks and other beauty spots is considerably lower than just a week ago. Last weekend, drivers said they were planning in the region of 15m separate trips – a figure that has fallen to just 9.4m for the forthcoming weekend, even when bank holiday Monday is taken into account.

Fifteen per cent of respondents said they plan on driving no more than 10 miles this weekend, with about half that proportion (8%) expecting to take a trip of between 11 and 30 miles. The appetite for a lengthier leisure journey of more than 30 miles was even smaller, with just 3% of respondents keen on doing this.

After fears last weekend that national parks and other traditionally popular tourist destinations could be swamped by day trippers, the research provides an indication that the vast majority of drivers remain very cautious about heading further afield for recreation – not least with the vast majority of amenities, including public toilets, remaining shut.

Analysis of [RAC 'black box'](#) driving data confirms that more cars are on the road now than before the lockdown in England was eased – on average 4% more per day last week compared to the week before, with vehicles travelling 12% more daily miles. The number of breakdowns attended by the RAC also rose by around a fifth over this period.

RAC spokesperson Rod Dennis said:

“This weekend will be anything but a traditional sunny bank holiday weekend, and in fact nationally it could turn out to be the quietest on the motorways and major roads ever, with our research indicating people are much keener to stay at home than pack the car up for a day trip. Of course, there will still almost certainly be jams on local roads leading to beaches, country parks and other beauty spots, probably made up of people who live within very easy reach of these destinations.

“While it’s true that some car parks in popular locations were quick to fill up last weekend, it was positive to see that many of the fears around people

swarming to tourist destinations thankfully didn't translate into widespread problems. Tourist boards and the police will be hoping for something similar this coming weekend.

“Despite the promise of more good weather in the coming days, our research suggests the appetite among drivers for longer day trips appears to remain relatively weak at the moment – possibly due to most tourist amenities being closed, or even perhaps because of fears about the difficulty in maintaining social distancing where there are crowds. So this weekend looks more likely to be one more dominated by barbecues at home and short trips to local parks than lengthy traffic jams on major roads – although anyone who does venture out will have the peace of mind of knowing that we're only a phone call away if they're unfortunate enough to break down.

“For those planning on driving this weekend, it's crucial they run through some quick checks to ensure their car doesn't let them down – especially if it's been laid up for long periods through the lockdown. Oil and coolant levels, as well as tyre tread and pressure, should all be looked at before setting out.

“Our own data confirms that more cars are on the road now than before the lockdown was eased in England, with the number breakdowns also up, but with the possibility of some movement restrictions being lifted in other parts of the UK we will be looking closely at whether this trend continues in the coming weeks, or whether road traffic remains below normal for the foreseeable future.”

Notes to Editors

* Research conducted among UK drivers between 14 and 19 May 2020 on behalf of the RAC. Sample: 1,500 UK drivers. Spring bank holiday research was first conducted by the RAC in 2014.

About the RAC

The RAC provides complete peace of mind to 12m UK private and business drivers, whatever their motoring needs. Its services include:

- **[Breakdown assistance](#)**. Its highly-skilled, 1,600-strong branded patrol workforce attends more than two million breakdowns every year, fixing on average four out of five vehicles at the roadside. The RAC's patrol fleet is one of the most advanced in the world, and was the first to roll out both an [All-Wheels-Up recovery system](#), allowing the vast majority of vehicles to be recovered from a single patrol van, and [EV Boost](#) mobile electric vehicle charging units
- **[Insurance](#)**. The RAC is a top-five [car insurance](#) broker having surpassed the 500,000 policies-in-force milestone in 2018. It also offers '[black box](#)' [telematics policies](#), as well as home and travel insurance
- **Other motoring services**. The RAC leads in the development of new solutions for business, fleets, electric vehicles and future car technology. Its additional products and services include a [personal loans offering](#), a [used car buying website](#), [vehicle inspections and checks](#), [legal services](#) or up-to-the-minute [traffic and travel information](#). It also has a network of [Approved Dealers](#) and [Approved Garages](#) which combine the trust of RAC brand with local service and convenience

The RAC also works to support the interests of its members and UK drivers on the most important motoring issues which it identifies via the annual [RAC Report on Motoring](#) and the [RAC Opinion Panel](#). The Report on Motoring is the longest running analysis of driver opinion in the UK having been published every year since 1989.

For more information about the RAC, visit the [RAC website](#).

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