

Motorists highlight their pre-election concerns

Submitted by: Green Flag Group

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British motorists have delivered a clear message to politicians on the issues that would influence their voting in any forthcoming general election.

According to a survey of motorists people carried out for Green Flag Motoring Assistance, reducing drink- and drug-driving, tackling uninsured drivers and car crime were the issues that the parties need to address in pre-election campaigning. Completing a top five were reducing road deaths and injuries and maintaining the standard of roads.

In a wide-ranging survey by the breakdown and recovery provider, motorists were asked to score the key issues out of ten.

Surprisingly, the cost of fuel and traffic congestion were given a lower priority by motorists than safety concerns such as reducing casualties on the roads and eliminating use of hand-held mobile phones behind the wheel. Ranked even lower were greater regulation of private wheel clampers, improving driver training standards and raising penalties for motoring offences.

Commenting on the results, Green Flag spokesperson Melanie Denny said: "The scoring for key issues such as drink- and drug-driving and road safety suggest that drivers are concerned about broader social issues and the welfare of other road users, although they remain concerned about issues such as car crime and the state of our roads.

"With around 30 million* UK motorists and more than 70 per cent of households having access to at least one car, the parties cannot afford to ignore motorists' views on the issues that concern them."

Green Flag commissioned YouGov to gauge motorist's feelings and influences. Drivers were asked to rate key issues out of ten. Their responses are revealed in the following list.

Rating Issue

- 1st Reducing drink/drug driving
- 2nd Reducing the number of uninsured drivers
- 3rd Reducing car crime
- 4th Reducing road casualties/fatalities
- 5th Improving the maintenance of our roads
- 6th Reducing congestion
- 7th Protecting the environment
- 8th Improving public transport services
- 9th Eliminating hand-held mobile phone use
- 10th Reducing fuel costs
- 11th Regulation of private wheel clampers
- 12th Improving driver training standards
- 13th Increasing penalties for motoring offences

14th Reducing speeding

Other findings in the survey

Cost of motoring too high and congestion charging rejected

On fuel prices, nine out of ten motorists said the current prices were too high. Congestion charging, rejected recently in Edinburgh, was given similar treatment in the survey with more than half of those questioned (54 per cent) against the idea.

Mixed message on speed cameras, roads 'more dangerous'

The survey revealed a mixed view on the use of speed cameras with more than two-thirds (69 per cent) calling speed cameras as a 'revenue generating exercise' while just over a quarter (26 per cent) said they were essential to road safety.

Three-quarters of people questioned supported a reduction in speed limits to 20mph around schools and despite high-profile public education campaigns, 41 per cent felt that the roads in their area were more dangerous now than five years ago. Only 14% said they felt that their local roads were now safer.

Public transport considered 'poor' by more than a third of motorists

The quality of their public transport did not provide an incentive for motorists to leave their cars at home. Over a third (38 per cent) polled felt that their public transport services could be described as poor with only 17 per cent feeling positive about the quality of buses and trains in their area.

Melanie Denny added: "There are 30 million motorists in the UK and nearly three-quarters of households have access to a car, so it's clear that politicians need to take on board the views and concerns of this influential group of voters."

Notes to editors

The research was conducted March 11-14, 2005. YouGov interviewed a sample of 2002 adults representative of the population of Great Britain. The survey was carried out online.

Contact the press office for interviews / further regional information

Green Flag Motoring Assistance provides roadside rescue and recovery to almost 5m customers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

There are 26.4m privately owned vehicles in the UK (source SMMT/Mintel). 73% of households have regular use of at least one car (source: General Household Survey and Family Expenditure Survey, Office for National Statistics; National Travel Survey, Department for Transport; Continuous Household Survey, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency).

Press calls

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