

Air quality high on drivers' agenda, as 97% noticed improvement during lockdown, survey finds

Submitted by: Smart Home Charge

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- Survey into lockdown driving behaviours and attitudes finds overwhelming support for electric cars and a potential Government scrappage scheme.
- 72.5% of survey respondents said local air quality was “very important” to them.
- 66% say they would get a fully electric car in bid to improve local air quality.
- 50.4% say a Government scrappage scheme would encourage them to switch to an EV in the next year.
- 88% also noticed less noise pollution.

The overwhelming majority of drivers have noticed a positive improvement in local air quality according to a survey into driver attitudes and behaviours during lockdown.

The survey*, carried out by nationwide electric car charge point installer Smart Home Charge (<https://www.smarthomecharge.co.uk/>), found almost all respondents noticed less congestion and noise pollution (99.3% and 88.3% respectively), with 98.3% agreeing that electric cars would help reduce noise pollution if they replaced petrol or diesel vehicles.

When asked about air quality, 72.5% of respondents said this was “very important” to them and 97% said the lockdown has had a positive effect on local air quality.

In addition, 68.4% pinpointed petrol/diesel vehicles and too many cars on the road as having the most negative impact on local air quality.

In response, 66% of those surveyed said they would be willing to get a fully electric car when asked what they would most likely do to improve local air quality.

Other options included walking or cycling more (14.4%), car sharing (2.1%), avoid driving into town (3.1%) and getting a plug-in hybrid (7.6%).

Danny Morgan, editor at Smart Home Charge, said the lockdown had given people the chance to see what zero-emissions vehicles could bring to their local area:

“Air quality and noise pollution have always been quite abstract things to discuss. We know we want less pollution, but we’ve never really experienced what it would be like in our towns and cities. Plus, driving is part of the fabric of everyday life, so we don’t always make the connection between the two.

“However, one positive from the lockdown has meant far fewer cars on the road and, for the first time in a long time, people have experienced the benefits of quieter roads and less pollution from car tailpipes.

“Clearly, electric cars won’t solve the congestion problems we have, but the knock-on effect has been people are more willing to consider a fully electric car because their priorities have changed – better

air quality and less noise are both something to strive for and EVs can help with that.”

Government scrappage scheme gets backing from survey respondents

Over 50% of survey respondents also said they would be more likely to buy a new or used electric vehicle in the next year if the Government introduced a scrappage scheme for petrol and diesel cars.

Rumours have been circulating that the Government is poised to announce a scrappage scheme to help the UK's struggling automotive industry and encourage drivers to switch to zero-emission vehicles.

The survey found that 50.4% of drivers said they would either “definitely” or be “more likely” to buy a new or used EV within the next year if such a scrappage scheme was rolled out.

Just under 10% said the scheme would not encourage them to make the switch to an electric car and 7.3% said they would prefer to lease or rent an electric car rather than buy one.

The survey also explored driving attitudes and behaviours to see what changes had occurred during lockdown.

73.5% of respondents said their driving lifestyle had changed “dramatically” since lockdown began in March, but only 39.2% said this would continue after lockdown and 31.1% suggested their habits would revert to pre-lockdown behaviour.

Although, 26% said they would try to drive less often and another 19.2% would walk or cycle into town or to the shops.

Danny Morgan added that a scrappage scheme would give people the extra push they need to switch to an electric car:

“Our survey has shown that most people understand how petrol and diesel cars can negatively impact their local environment. It also shows many people are willing to do something about it, including the 66% of respondents who wanted to switch to an EV.

“But buying any brand new or used car can be a significant investment, so a Government contribution in the form of a scrappage scheme to encourage electric car ownership would not only be a boost to the UK automotive industry but would also be a big step in helping this country achieve its net-zero carbon economy target by 2050.”

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Editor's notes

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*Survey respondents: 291

About Smart Home Charge

Charging your electric car shouldn't be complicated. Smart Home Charge aims to keep things simple, help customers choose the right EV charger and start saving money on their car running costs.

Smart Home Charge is an OLEV-approved and nationwide installer of home charge points for electric cars. We sell and install a range of chargers to suit every need and budget without bamboozling customers with unnecessary jargon.

We want every UK driver to realise the benefits of driving an electric car and experience the convenience of "fuelling" it at home.

But too often car dealers, manufacturers and other installers make car charging seem really complicated. Nobody wants to decipher kWh, charging speed or wade through energy tariffs.

Instead, we focus on down-to-earth advice and the facts to help customers make the right choice so they can get to the exciting bit – being able to charge their electric car at home and start saving money!

This is why we created a place where people could learn about electric cars, charging and more. Then, when someone is ready to have a home EV charger, we're ready.

Our dedicated editorial team focus on bringing the latest news, reviews, and tips on EVs and charging through our website, social media, and growing YouTube channel.