



News releases

Potholes & roads

Council pothole claims rise by 90% in three years

But 40,000 requests for reimbursement turned down in 2024 alone

29/12/2025



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7 local authorities have jumped by in 2021 to 53,015 in 2024, new data

cils across England, Scotland and n (246,510) miles of local roads – shire County Council reported the 2021 to 3,307 (up 3,083) in 2024.**

e claims more than doubled from 1,140 ordshire County Council third with 024 (up 1,453).

ne number of claims has thankfully thorities that responded to the RAC's

request for data received a total of 56,655 claims in 2023, meaning compensation requests have dropped by six per cent to 2024's number (53,015).

Only a quarter of claims settled in the space of a year

Although the data indicates a substantial increase in claims over a three-year period, 173 councils settled only a quarter (26%) in 2024, paying 13,832 of the 53,015 submitted by drivers.*** The RAC estimates this amounts to around £3,564,824 being paid out by councils in just a single year, at an average of £390 per claim. But this is less than the £590 average repair bill drivers of family cars can expect if their vehicle suffers any damage more serious than a puncture after hitting a pothole.****

Of all the councils that paid out to drivers in 2024, Merton Borough Council paid the highest average sum per claim – £2,267 for each of the five claims it paid, leading to an estimated total of £11,335 paid to drivers in claims.***** Meanwhile it's estimated that Derbyshire paid out the highest amount of total compensation – based on an average of £257 for each of the 2,355 claims it paid out, the council is thought to have spent around £605,235 compensating drivers for pothole-related vehicle damage in 2024.

In Scotland, the authority that paid the most per claim was Glasgow with an average of £253 paid for each of the 611 claims it paid, leading to an estimated £154,724 paid out to drivers in total. In Wales, Wrexham paid the most at £2,026 for each of its 38 claims, amounting to an estimated £76,991 in total.

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6) surveyed by the RAC said they'd

to £500 – less than the cost of

pothole claims in 2024

suggests drivers have a slim chance of
sation. Of the 172 councils that shared
paid in 2024, 45% (77) refused more
ved.

oucestershire, Worcestershire,
turned down 99% of claims received in
requests refused.

Bridgend was the only council to pay out 100% of a much smaller number of compensation claims last year at 52 claims.

Claims per mile of road

When it comes to the number of claims per mile of road, Glasgow City received 2,794 last year – more than double the size of its 1,203-mile network.

Four local authorities – Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Edinburgh and Bury Metropolitan –received the equivalent of one pothole claim for every single mile of their road network.

Meanwhile Surrey – which topped the list for the highest number of claims per mile in 2023 – had a pothole claim for every two miles of its 3,415-mile network, at 1,513 claims in total.

RAC head of policy Simon Williams said:

“The massive three-year rise in pothole compensation claims made by drivers shows what a huge task it is returning the roads to a respectable standard. But it’s far from an even picture across the country, with just a handful of councils receiving the lion’s share of claims from beleaguered motorists.

“Drivers are still suffering the consequences of years of neglect to Britain’s local road network. But even if you submit a compensation claim the odds aren’t good, with just 14,000 claims out of 6 million potholes closed down in 2024 alone.

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request for data, there’s every chance when it comes to the claims that have slightly fewer pothole compensation

to shift as highways authorities in by the Government for road n required to show how much vital ut to stop potholes forming in the first

ounced multi-year settlements which n and deliver better maintenance

programmes. This can only be a good thing.

“So, while the figures we’ve analysed are a cause for concern, we hope pothole compensation claims will begin to decline as local authorities increase the amount of preventative surface dressing work on their roads.”

Pothole-related vehicle damage claims made to councils

Tap or click a column to sort

	2021	2024	Change 2021 to 2024 ▼	Claims per mile of road 2024
Derbyshire	224	3,307	3,083	0.90
Glasgow City	1,140	2,794	1,654	2.30
Oxfordshire County	488	1,941	1,453	0.70
East Sussex	451	1,521	1,070	0.70
Nottinghamshire County	588	1,654	1,066	0.60
Wiltshire UA	157	1,179	1,022	0.40
Essex	1,238	2,206	968	0.40
West Sussex County	690	1,609	919	0.60
Surrey	681	1,513	832	0.40
Cambridgeshire County	606	1,423	817	0.50

Table: RAC press & policy team • Source: FOI requests sent by RAC to local authorities • [Embed this graphic](#)



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to councils in January 2025. The
any claims for pothole-related damage
2022, 2023 and 2024. 179 councils

RDL0102

asked: “How many claims resulted in
er of successful pothole-related

damage claims recorded)?” in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. 179 councils provided data for this question

**** According to [RAC garage data from January 2025](#)

***** Based on the same FOI request. Question asked: “What is the average sum that was paid out to drivers per claim?” in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. 161 councils provided data for this question

***** Research for the RAC Report on Motoring was carried out from 4-21 April 2025; 2,395 drivers. Results rim-weighted to be nationally representative of UK motorists

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Diesel dips below £2 a litre

RAC head of policy Simon Williams said: "While it's positive to see the average cost of a litre of diesel dipping back below £2 a litre, we're a long way from being out of the woods when it comes to high fuel prices. Diesel remains around 57p a litre higher than before the US/Iran conflict, and petrol 42p higher – meaning households are paying £31 and £23 more respectively every time they fill up a family-sized car. And as things stand, this year is still set to be the second most expensive year on record for..."

 media.rac.co.uk



Diesel tops £2 a litre for first time ever

RAC head of policy Simon Williams said: "This is a pump price threshold that no-one wanted to cross – the average price of a litre of diesel has risen to a record 200.01p and is showing no signs of slowing, heaping..."

 media.rac.co.uk



Price of diesel reaches record high

RAC head of policy Simon Williams said: "The average price of a litre of diesel has now reached the highest level in UK history at 199.18p, in... w to households and businesses that use the..."

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The RAC is an iconic British driving services brand and has been championing drivers since 1897. Today it is one of the UK's most trusted names, providing complete peace of mind ® to over 15 million drivers across [breakdown cover](#), [insurance](#), and [mobile servicing and repairs](#).

Its nationwide patrol force attends more than two million breakdowns every year, while its position as the UK's leading independent insurance broker helps motorists find the right cover for their needs. The RAC is also a leading provider of vehicle servicing, maintenance and repair market with its fleet of mobile mechanics at drivers' homes or workplaces. The RAC is also a leading provider of roadside assistance, with mobile EV charging technology for electric vehicles. The RAC's solutions that make motoring easier and safer. The RAC's services come together in [myRAC – the RAC app](#) for finding and breakdown assistance.

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