



News releases

Potholes & roads

Pothole pain persists: Vehicle breakdowns where poor roads were to blame rose 15% last year

RAC patrols attended an average of 71 breakdowns a day because of potholed roads, up from 62 in 2024

16/02/2026



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of drivers suffering pothole-related
injuries.*

5,048 breakdowns in 2025 – the
shock absorbers, broken suspension
3,345 from the 22,703 logged in the

owns during the last three months of
case was also observed – 4,999
is 290 more instances of drivers
2024, an increase of 6%.

for both the last quarter of 2025, and the
long term of average of 4,883 and

25,309 breakdowns respectively.**

The figures are a further sign of the work that remains to be done to bring the country's roads up to an acceptable standard. They follow the Government's new 'traffic light' ratings system, published earlier this month, which helps drivers see what condition their local roads are in, how councils are spending their funding, and whether they are following best road maintenance practice.

Analysis of these ratings shows that fewer than one-in-five (17%) councils in England are currently rated 'green' for road conditions, with 7% in the worst 'red' condition and the rest 'amber'. When it comes to how much councils are following best practice in looking after their roads, 14% are classified as 'green' - doing the right thing and investing for the future - while more than one-in-10 (12%) are at the opposite end of the scale and rated 'red'. The vast majority – 74% - are 'amber' and still have more to do to make the most of the government funding they receive. Just three councils – Portsmouth, Rotherham and West Berkshire – currently score 'green' in all categories.

RAC head of policy Simon Williams said: "Record levels of funding from central Government and a requirement for councils to demonstrate how they're making best use of it – to stop potholes appearing in the first place, not just to patch them up – should spell the end of the woeful roads many drivers are sadly used to. But as our latest data shows, drivers are still breaking down in their thousands as a direct result of potholes. So, while there's light at the end of the tunnel, it's still a frustratingly long

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nd of December and into the New Year
iling highways. Wet roads, followed by
oles to form – especially on roads that

f campaigning, we're extremely pleased
voices within the road maintenance
use techniques like surface dressing to

risingly simple: ensure water always
ly as possible, seal roads against water

ingress through preventative maintenance, and resurface those that have gone beyond the point of no return.”

The RAC estimates the cost of pothole repairs to a typical family car is up to £590 for anything worse than a puncture.

Road Surface Treatments Association chief executive Mike Hansford said: “If we had continued to surface dress even at levels experienced in 2012, we would have sealed approximately 37,000kms of additional roads (almost 10% of the UK road network) for another 10 to 15 years, making more of the network more resistant to the sort of damage that leads to potholes.

“The recent cold and then very wet spells of weather have highlighted the fragility of the road network, so it’s important that while the immediate safety issues associated with potholes are managed, we must also focus on longer term repair solutions - including preventative treatments to roads currently in a good or fair condition to protect them from future damage.”

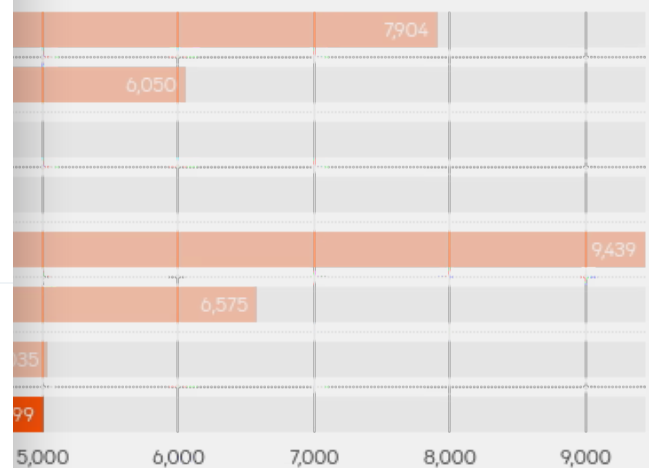
For drivers who have suffered pothole-related breakdowns, the RAC’s nationwide team of mobile servicing and repairs technicians can save the need to get booked into a garage – by replacing suspension springs at drivers’ homes or workplaces instead. To book with an RAC Mobile Mechanic, visit www.rac.co.uk/mobile or use the [myRAC app](#).

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last year than in 2024

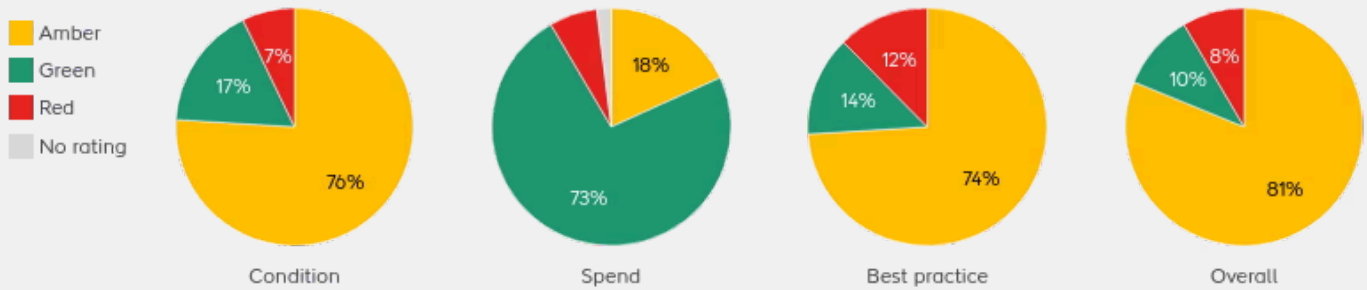


oles

RAC
Mobile Mechanics

English councils' performance in fixing roads

Based on government 'traffic light system' launched January 2026



Based on 154 councils in England

Chart: RAC press & policy office • Source: [UK Department for Transport \(LINK\)](#) • [Embed this graphic](#)

RAC



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measure of the share of pothole fault
seasonal weather effects and improving
collected by the RAC since 2006. Data
of these could be something unrelated
(nails and screws)

** Average pothole-related breakdown volumes since 2006

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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 is still higher than before the US/Iran conflict, and working households are paying £31 and £23 more to fill up a family-sized car. And as things stand, this is the second most expensive year on record for...

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...for first time ever

Williams said: “This is a pump price threshold ... – the average price of a litre of diesel has ... and is showing no signs of slowing, heaping...



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 what will be a financial blow to households and businesses that use the..."

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s outlets with the latest motoring-related

and has been championing drivers since 1897.

giving 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 with confidence. The RAC has also reshaped the service, maintenance and repair market with its [Mobile Mechanics](#), who carry out servicing and repairs at drivers' homes or workplaces.

Committed to innovation, the RAC is fully electric ready with mobile EV charging technology for stranded drivers, and a suite of digital and data-led solutions that make motoring easier and more affordable for consumers and fleets. These services come together in [myRAC – the all-in-one app for vehicle maintenance, cheaper fuel finding and breakdown assistance](#).



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