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Motorists overwhelmingly back private parking industry code of practice bill

An overwhelming majority of motorists are supportive of the private member's bill to introduce better regulation of private parking companies which gets its second reading in the House of Commons on Friday.

Ninety-three per cent of 1,429 drivers surveyed by the RAC think [Sir Greg Knight MP's Parking \(Code of Practice\) Bill](#) is a good idea, with a further 81% saying private parking firms have a bad reputation.

The top reason cited by motorists for this poor reputation is that the level of fines, or parking charge notices as they are properly known, is disproportionate to the contravention with 84% claiming this to be the case. Nearly three-quarters (72%) said car park signs, which contain the all-important terms and conditions, were often hard to read or hidden, and 69% believe the fees they charge for parking are too high. In addition, nearly two-thirds stated that the companies operate aggressive debt collection policies.

The RAC, [which has repeatedly called on the Government to introduce better regulation of the largely unregulated private parking sector](#), welcomed Sir Greg's bill when it was first put before Parliament in July 2017. Now, however, the bill looks certain to become law after [Communities Secretary Sajid Javid confirmed earlier this week](#) that the Government would support its passage through Parliament.

Asked what they would most like to see the bill deliver, 81% of motorists cited a national standard on signs outlining parking rates and consequences of breaking the rules. Seventy-eight per cent want a parking regulator which enforces a code of practice and three-quarters (74%) want fines, or parking charge notice amounts for contraventions, to be capped. And, 72% would like

to see the introduction of a national system to appeal against parking charge notices, regardless of which operator issues them.

RAC roads policy spokesman Nicholas Lyes said: “The motorists we questioned expressed very strong views about the practices of private parking companies, presumably based on numerous unfortunate experiences so it is excellent news that the Government will support Sir Greg Knight’s bill into law. The RAC has long campaigned for such a code to be introduced so we are hopeful this will lead to a better experience for everyone who uses car parks run by private parking companies.

“Importantly, this bill will facilitate a set of national guidelines which we hope will make the appeals’ process simpler, tighten access to the DVLA database and bring higher standards to a sector which clearly has a poor reputation among motorists.”

In order to raise consumer confidence the RAC believes the bill should enable a minimum set of standards of conduct for all private parking operators, covering the following areas:

- A set of enforcement standards
- Improved conditions for access to the DVLA database
- A ban on ‘shop a motorist’ style practices that incentivise ticketing
- A fair and an effective national appeals’ process
- A ban on so-called ghost ticketing and incentivising ticketing
- Guidance on the size of penalties to ensure that they are proportionate to the amount of time overstayed and subject to an overall cap
- Minimum standards of conduct for private parking companies when attempting to recoup penalty charges, to discourage over-aggressive debt management
- Clear and consistent signage for drivers when they park so they can see what they are agreeing to

For advice on how to appeal and avoid private parking penalty charge notices visit the [Drive](#) section of RAC website.

Notes to Editors

* Survey carried out with 1,429 members of the RAC Opinion Panel from 24-28 January 2018

About the RAC

First formed in 1897 the RAC has been looking after the needs of its members and championing the interests of motorists for 120 years.

Today it has more than eight million members and is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's roadside assistance, insurance, buying a used car, vehicle inspections and checks, legal services or up-to-the-minute traffic and travel information – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist's champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK motorists at a national level. This includes voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring, particularly the price of fuel and the high level of tax levied on it, advancing levels of road safety, and supporting the needs of all drivers, from young to old.

The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#) or follow [#racfuelwatch on Twitter](#). RAC Fuel Watch is a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump. RAC Fuel Watch analyses how prices changed through the previous month and compares the most recent prices with those from three, six and 12 months before.

Key facts:

- RAC patrols fix four out of five vehicles at the roadside and on average within 30 minutes

- RAC vans carry more than 500 parts and tools to get members' vehicles going again
- 92% of members would recommend RAC Rescue to their friends and family

Contacts



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