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## **RAC predicts busiest late May bank holiday traffic for four years as temperatures rise**

**Sixteen and a half million leisure journeys will be taken by car this coming bank holiday weekend, the highest number in four years and up one million on last year, data from RAC Traffic Watch suggests.\***

Based on the travel plans of over 2,000 UK motorists, the RAC is predicting a late spring surge on the roads, with leisure traffic on motorways and major A-roads peaking on bank holiday Monday at nearly 5m journeys. Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May is also expected to see a significant number of journeys by road –

around 4.3m in total – but it may well be Friday 26<sup>th</sup> that will be most hectic as getaway traffic mixes with normal commuter traffic.

The prospect of some early summer heat for much of the country this weekend is also going to contribute to the queues. The RAC's research was conducted before the weather looked so promising – meaning if anything the roads could be even busier come Friday.

As the last bank holiday before the end of August, the late May bank holiday weekend is always a busy one on the roads, but this year's figures indicate that 2017 will be especially hectic with more than 1m additional leisure journeys expected compared to last year, and nearly 2.5m more than in 2015.

RAC traffic spokesman Rod Dennis said: "The late Easter has meant there's been something of a bank holiday bonanza this year, with up to four days off in the space of just six weeks. But that's not stopping UK drivers from taking to the road for a leisure trip this coming weekend, especially as the weather at the start of the weekend at least is set to be dry, sunny and very warm for much of the country.

"While we're expecting leisure journeys to reach a peak on bank holiday Monday – families setting off for a half term trip or taking a day trip to the coast – drivers should be warned that the roads are likely to see significant congestion on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May as getaway traffic and everyday commuter traffic combines. We're expecting it to be bumper-to-bumper from Friday lunchtime onwards on some of the country's most popular routes.

"We expect the vast majority of roadworks on motorways and major A-roads to be either put on hold or completed in time for the weekend which is good news for drivers but sometimes it only takes a single incident for delays to develop on parts of the road network that are prone to congestion.

"Motorists can dramatically cut the chances of being a breakdown statistic this long weekend by completing some quick pre-drive checks – check your oil and coolant levels, the latter being especially important in warm weather, ensure your tyres have plenty of tread and are inflated correctly, and top up your screenwash. If you're completing a longer drive, keep yourself alert and your passengers comfortable by planning in regular rest stops."

The RAC has also put together a [comprehensive guide to how to avoid breakdowns experienced in warmer weather](#) to help drivers.

Met Office Deputy Chief Meteorologist Dan Harris said: “We’re expecting lots of warm and sunny weather for the start of the bank holiday weekend with a chance temperatures may top 30C in places. If you’re planning a trip then make sure you plan for the hot weather, don’t forget sun cream as UV levels will be high, and plenty of water.

“By bank holiday Monday, it looks like it will be less hot and cloudier for many with the chance of some rain which could be heavy and thundery at times. Keep up to date with the latest forecast using our weather [app](#).”

### **Late spring leisure journeys by car this year**

Friday 26 May	3.4 million journeys
Saturday 27 May	4.4 million journeys
Sunday 28 May	3.7 million journeys
Monday 30 May	5.0 million journeys
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.5 million journeys (up from 15.3 million in 2016)</b>

### **Anticipated worst times to travel on the roads**

Friday 26 May	Between 1pm and 8pm
Saturday 27 May	Between 11am and 4pm
Sunday 28 May	Between 11am and 4pm
Monday 29 May	Between 1pm and 6pm

### **Anticipated traffic hotspots**

- M5 Almondsbury Interchange and from Bristol to Taunton
- A303 Andover to Ilminster
- A30 and A38 Exeter to Cornwall

- M4 between Cardiff and Swansea
- M25 between Gatwick and M1
- A23/M23 to Brighton
- A34 and M3 south and south west to the south coast
- A47 Swaffham to Great Yarmouth
- A11 Thetford to Norwich
- M55 between Preston and Blackpool
- A14 between the Midlands and the east coast
- A590/A591 between the M6 and the Lake District
- A66 between M6 and the coast
- M53 between Liverpool and Chester

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## **Notes to Editors**

\* Data provided to the RAC by Ragdoll Research. Base: 2,072 motorists, surveyed between 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017. All years' data based on combined volume of getaway traffic between Friday before the bank holiday and bank holiday Monday itself, inclusive.

## **About the RAC**

With more than eight million members, the RAC 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, including advancing levels of road safety, supporting the needs of young drivers and voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring. 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](#). This 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



##### **RAC Press Office**

Press Contact

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