

The RAC 2017 Motoring Manifesto

The General Election will be fought on many areas of public policy, not least Brexit, but the RAC believes the following six issues, which motorists and business have told us are among the most important for them, should command Government action in the new Parliament. They will bring real benefits to our eight million members and indeed all the UK's drivers and serve to make motoring more affordable, easier, safer and more enjoyable.

The value of motoring and road transport to the economy cannot be underestimated. The link between jobs and road transport is indisputable with 75% of journeys to work across the UK undertaken by bus or car and 76% of all freight moved by road. In addition, 77% of motorists tell us that they would find it very difficult to adjust their lifestyle to being without a car.



1 A commitment to not raise fuel duty and Insurance Premium Tax (IPT)

The cost of motoring is one of the biggest concerns for motorists and the RAC calls on the next government not to alienate or penalise motorists by increasing motoring taxes. In 2014, a Treasury report indicated that lower levels of fuel duty help boost economic growth. Any increase from the current rate of 57.95p a litre could therefore prove damaging to the UK economy and so the RAC urges the next government to commit to no further increases for the duration of the new Parliament. Similarly, the increase in IPT from 6% in 2015 to 12%, due in June, has significantly increased the costs for all motorists, but especially those who pay the highest premiums, notably younger and older drivers. The RAC urges next government should commit to no further increase in IPT and actually use IPT rates to incentivise and encourage safer driving – for example by a reduced rate for drivers who have ‘black box’ telematics-based insurance.

2 An air quality plan that is both fair to motorists and delivers much needed improvement in those areas with the poorest air quality

The RAC believes a solution will have to target all sources of air pollution and not just road transport; it must address the worst polluting vehicles as a priority including buses, taxis, lorries, vans; and it must be fair, particularly to owners of diesel vehicles who were encouraged to buy diesel by previous governments to help tackle global warming. The next government should offer greater incentives for the take-up of ultra-low emission vehicles by: extending the plug-in grant scheme; reviewing and changing the recently amended Vehicle Excise Duty so as not to discourage ‘green choices’; provide a bigger and better charging infrastructure; and update guidance on traffic calming measures to improve traffic flow and reduce pollution caused by congestion and idling.

3 Continued investment in the strategic road network funded by ring-fencing Vehicle Excise Duty

The RAC welcomed the Road Investment Strategy (RIS1) which launched in 2015 and aims to increase capacity and improve journey times on the UK's busiest motorways. This has led to a number of major road construction projects including work on major congestion pinch points and the roll-out of new smart motorway schemes. **The RAC wants the next government to commit to delivering RIS2 effective from 2020 to fund future investment in our major roads to cope with the rising demand on the network and to ensure that we have a roads infrastructure which will support long-term economic growth.**

4 A long term investment plan and funding to bring our local roads up to a state that is fit for purpose

The state of local roads is one of motorist's biggest concerns and it is important to remember that virtually all journeys start and finish on local roads. The Government has committed a £6bn dedicated fund for local road maintenance between 2015 and 2021 and a £50 million-a-year Pothole Action Fund. **The RAC calls on the next government to recognise the importance of local roads to the economy as an essential component of the UK's transport infrastructure by ring-fencing a proportion of motoring tax receipts to create a dedicated fund to tackle the maintenance backlog and fund future local improvement schemes. Such action should mirror that taken to develop and fund Road Investment Strategies for strategic roads in England.**

5 Action to reduce spurious whiplash claims and a reform of personal injury discount rates to bring rising insurance premium costs back under control

Insurance premiums are rising and are now at their highest levels since the Association of British Insurers started collecting data. Since February 2017, average motor insurance premiums have increased by £50 after the Government made a change to the calculation which determines the level of compensation paid out in life-changing personal injury settlements. **The RAC believes that this needs to be reversed immediately while the approach is reviewed to be fair to all parties. The RAC also wants clarity from the next government on how it will review whiplash claims and ensure that the £40 anticipated saving on each policy arising from tougher guidelines will be passed back to motorists.**

6 A commitment to introduce better regulation of the largely unregulated private parking sector

Motorists have strong views about the poor practices of private parking companies. **The RAC is calling on the next government to urgently bring forward proposals that improve motorists' experience and confidence including minimum standards of conduct for parking operators and a fair and effective appeals process, guidance on maximum penalties and minimum standards of conduct for recouping penalty charges which will discourage aggressive debt management.**

Find out more: Read the [detailed RAC Motoring Manifesto](#).

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