

SUMMER TYRE CHECKS CAMPAIGN – CUSTOMER-FACING NARRATIVE 2022/23

The 2022 Tyre Checks campaign is one of the two core National Highways summer marketing activities. Running for over three weeks, this national campaign aims to move people from awareness of the need to maintain correct tyre pressure to action, reminding and motivating more road users to check their tyres before a long journey, with a secondary objective to carry out further checks while in-situ. The campaign will contribute to a reduction in the number of breakdowns and road incidents caused by tyre problems.

This narrative provides the campaign's proposition, key messages and wording for use in all customer-facing, internal and stakeholder comms, with approved supporting messaging, advice and key statistics.

Some areas may be more relevant to different teams' needs. Please use the sections appropriate to your audience, stakeholders and objectives, referencing the campaign key messages and supporting information to add detail, where needed.

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1) National Highways insight

National Highways is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving all 4,300 miles of England's motorways and major A-roads, linking towns, cities, ports and airports, and getting people to where they need to be on time – safely and reliably. This network of motorways and A-roads is known as the strategic road network (SRN).

Through the Covid-19 lockdowns in 2020 and 2021, this didn't stop.

And now, with all lockdown restrictions withdrawn, holidays and day trips at home are again expected to form a big part of the 'return to a new normal' throughout July and August. In order to prepare motorists more effectively in advance, this year's campaign is being launched two weeks in advance of the beginning of the school holidays in England.

Every year, people flock to holiday destinations and take day trips during the school, college and university holidays, making this one of the peak points of the year for vehicle volume on the SRN.

This summer, National Highways' 'Summer tyre checks' campaign looks to move people from awareness into action, to check their tyre pressure, tyre condition and tread before every long or significant journey. And, because of the importance of wider vehicle checks such as fuel, oil and lights, we will use behavioural nudges to encourage wider checks at the same time.

With safety the number one priority – and any death on our roads is one too many – this campaign forms part of the bigger picture for National Highways, to prevent both incidents and breakdowns. Our summer tyre checks campaign is an opportunity to help road users proactively make their journeys, and the journeys of other road users, safer and more reliable.

2) Proposition

National Highways' 2022 summer tyre checks campaign aims to move road users from a position of awareness into action around vehicle checks, specifically tyre checks. Specifically, we want drivers to check their tyres before long or significant journeys of around two hours.

The campaign will use direct messaging at 'point of sale' – when drivers are within close proximity of tyre inflation pumps – to incite behaviour change while the issue is front-of-mind. Due to this, the campaign will focus efforts on reaching drivers at locations such as petrol stations and supermarkets – before they set off on day trips or holidays.

What: A summer campaign designed to proactively reduce breakdowns and incidents using tyre maintenance and wider vehicle checks messaging. A key, broader aim is to improve road user awareness of how to prevent a breakdown, by reducing the number of those caused by poorly-maintained tyres.

When: From 6 – 31 July 2022.

Where: Running during July 2022, the campaign features a simple creative encompassing out-of-home advertising in urban areas within two kilometres of a petrol station or in close proximity, through to radio and social, plus search, as well as partnership activity to drive awareness. This is alongside a programme of owned and earned social media, media relations and supplementary PR activity.

Why: There are an average of 600 breakdowns per day¹¹ out of more than four million daily journeys. This campaign aims to move people from awareness to action, checking their tyre pressure, condition and tread before every two-hour-plus journey. National Highways is also looking to address any existing road user preconceptions around the unlikelihood of a tyre-related breakdown or incident happening to them, by encouraging people to undertake checks before long journey – and not leaving tyre checks solely to their annual MOT.

This is particularly important throughout the summer, with schools, colleges and universities on breaks. With continued difficulties at ports and airports, a recent [IPSOS MORI poll](#) shows that more people will be looking to holiday in the UK, as they did in the summer of 2021.

Many motorists also rely on dashboard diagnostics using tyre pressure monitoring systems. The potential danger of relying on these systems is that they may only detect a tyre deflation when there is less than 25% of the recommended pressure left in a tyre – an amount that leaves a tyre very dangerously under-inflated.

How: A national campaign, with a focus on families and young drivers – but aims to reach all road users. Families are a priority, due to the likelihood of day trips and holidays in England this summer due to the ongoing difficulties and cost of travelling abroad. This is likely to result in an upward trend in this user group travelling on the SRN in July and August than in pre-pandemic years. For young people, with TyreSafe statistics showing three-in-five admit to never having checked their tyre tread, it is important to do more to reach this section of the driving population with information on checking tyre pressure and wear and tear.

¹¹ National Highways Performance Analysis Unit 2019 data - 229,586 breakdown incidents, around 600 per day on average.

The campaign will deliver clear, concise messaging through multi-channel communications, encompassing owned, earned and paid-for marketing, as well as important vehicle maintenance advice. Engaging with partners throughout, key partners include tyre retailers, plus recovery and insurance operators.

Evaluation: A good campaign result would see more road users taking action to check tyre pressure, condition and tread at 'point of sale' – while at the same time carrying out wider vehicle checks – prior to taking a long journey. It will also tangibly reduce driver complacency around regular tyre checks and broader vehicle checks, with both factors influencing a reduction in issues related to poor vehicle maintenance on the SRN.

Longer-term, the positive messaging from the summer tyre checks campaign will contribute to improved trust in National Highways' wider safety reputation.

3. Key messages

Central campaign message

- You're more likely to be involved in a road accident or a breakdown if your tyres are incorrectly inflated. Make sure you check your tyre pressure before you go on a day trip or UK holiday this summer.

Secondary campaign messages

- Driving with under-inflated tyres – even as little as 10 per cent below makes your braking distance longer, your vehicle harder to steer, uses more fuel, more quickly, and shortens the lifespan of your tyres, forcing earlier and more frequent replacement.
- Driving with low tread tyres reduces the control you have over your vehicle, makes your braking distance longer and costs you more in fuel.
- Legally, your tyres should have a tread of at least 1.6mm. If you're stopped by the police and found with illegal tyres, you could receive a £2,500 fine and three penalty points per tyre.
- With most Covid-19 restrictions withdrawn in March 2022, families will be looking forward to getting back to day trips and holidays this summer. With most cars driven considerably less frequently over the last two years and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, vehicle checks are more important than ever.
- Poor tyre pressure and over-worn tyres cause accidents and breakdowns on the SRN.
- Anyone taking a long or significant journey, should check their vehicle before setting off, including tyre pressure, tyre tread, fuel, oil, screenwash and lights.

- For any significant or long journey, always check your tyre pressure is in line with your make and model's recommendations – found in your vehicle's manual, petrol cap or driver door – and that tyre tread is more than 1.6mm.
- It takes around 10 minutes to check tyre pressure and tread before setting off on a long journey – don't risk ruining a long-awaited day trip or holiday with a breakdown or incident caused by poorly-maintained tyres.

Key Stats

- In 2019, almost half of incidents on the SRN in which vehicle defects were a contributory factor were due to under-inflated, defective or illegal tyres.
- One in five adults, and three in five young people admit to never having checked their tyre tread depth (TyreSafe).
- 2.2 million, or 7 % of MOT failures in the UK during 2018 to 2019 were given due to tyre failures.

4. Tyre Checks Advice

Under-inflated tyres

- Driving with underinflated or overinflated tyres can make your braking distance longer, make it harder to steer, reduce fuel efficiency and shorten the lifespan of your tyres.
- To check your tyre pressure, visit most fuel and service station forecourts, which have an air machine for checking and inflating your tyre pressure.
- Each vehicle make and model has a different recommended tyre pressure – you can usually find this on the inside of the driver's door, petrol cap, in your vehicle manual, or online.
- To check your tyres, set the air machine to the recommended tyre pressure, unscrew the valve caps on each of your tyres and firmly attach the air pressure gauge to the tyre valve – you should hear a little 'hiss' as it connects – and the machine will now give you a reading.
- If the reading is lower than the recommended pressure, the machine will inflate your tyre to match. If the reading is higher, then you need to let some air out – most machines do this automatically.

Low tread/bald tyres

- In 2019, almost half of accidents on the SRN in which vehicle defects were a contributory factor were due to underinflated, defective or illegal tyres.
- If you are stopped by the police and found with illegal tyres, you could receive a £2,500 fine and 3 penalty points per tyre.
- All vehicle tyres are legally required to have a minimum tread depth of 1.6mm. National Highways advises a tread depth of 3mm.
- One of the easiest ways to check your tyre tread is to place a 20p coin into the main grooves of the tyre tread. If you cannot see the raised outer rim of the coin with the words 'twenty pence' engraved, then the tyre has sufficient tread depth.
- Make sure you check tyre tread in at least three different places on each tyre, as one part may be more worn than another.
- Look around each of the tyres and make sure that they do not have any cuts, tears, bulges or other damage to the tyre walls.
- If you are unsure whether or not your tyres are at a safe depth, seek professional advice from a tyre fitter.

5. Broader messaging

Driver safety

- **Do not** stop your vehicle to assist another vehicle that has broken down or been involved in a collision on a high-speed road. You may feel you want to help, but it is safer to call National Highways on 0300 123 5000 or 999 for assistance.
- Always carry **details of your breakdown recovery provider** with you. Put their number and National Highways' number - 0300 123 5000 - into your phone now.
- Only use an **emergency area** or **hard shoulder** in an emergency.
- **Do not put out a warning triangle on a motorway** or attempt any repairs on your vehicle, because passing traffic may collide with you or your vehicle.
- If you break down and are a disabled driver, have mobility issues, or carry a disabled passenger and are unable to follow the advice, stay in your vehicle, keep your seatbelt and hazard warning lights on, and **call 999 immediately**. Tell the operator you are, or have, disabled passengers.

Here to help

- National Highways operates, maintains and improves England's motorways and major A-roads. Our traffic officers provide support at the roadside, while our regional operations teams monitor the roads using cameras and other technology.
- We can close lanes and set signs and signals to help keep you and other motorists safe, allowing assistance to get to you as quickly as possible.

- You can call National Highways anytime on **0300 123 5000**. Add this number, as well as the number of your breakdown provider, to your mobile phone. Deaf road users can also use the freephone SignLive number - **0800 802 1125**.

Our technology

- Our technology-enhanced motorways with no hard shoulder have many features keeping you safe – red X signals telling you a lane is closed, variable speed limits, 24/7 monitoring through sensors and CCTV, bright orange emergency areas and emergency telephones.
- We're continuing roll-out of our stopped-vehicle detection (SVD) technology, which alerts our control centres to stopped vehicles within 12 seconds.
- Combining cameras that feed real-time information into our regional control centres with traffic officer patrols, we monitor motorways with no hard shoulder 24/7, 365 days a year.

Our commitment to safety

- We want you to stay – and feel – safe on England's motorways and major A roads and are always looking at how we can make travelling on them even safer.
- Motorway signs and signals are there to protect you and keep traffic moving. Always follow them, especially the red X signal or variable speed limits.
- We're constantly making changes to improve safety on our motorways which use the hard shoulder as an extra lane. This includes making emergency areas more visible, placing them at a maximum of one mile apart – or at a maximum of $\frac{3}{4}$ mile apart, where feasible, on future schemes.
- Emergency areas and hard shoulders are not for taking calls or making toilet stops in any circumstances, you must leave the motorway for these.

6.Supportive stakeholder quotes

National Highways Head of Road Safety, Jeremy Phillips, said:

“With schools breaking up for summer soon there will be more people on the roads and taking longer journeys. We know that breaking down can be a very upsetting experience, nobody wants to start off their holiday stranded at the side of the road, next to fast moving traffic.

“So, we are reminding drivers to check their vehicles, particularly the tyres, before setting off. Illegal tyres put you and others at risk as well as running the risk of attracting a hefty fine and penalty points.

“A simple check on tyre tread and pressure could prevent a breakdown and make sure you get to your destination safe and sound.”