

For immediate release

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MOST OF UK EAGER TO GET AWAY FROM THE WHEEL

- Britons overwhelmingly supportive of driverless cars and excited for their arrival -

- ***Almost two thirds (61%) of Britons welcome the arrival of fully autonomous vehicles.***
- ***90% of 10,000 drivers surveyed happy give up driving and let cars do all the work. 25% are even eagerly awaiting the day they can step away from the wheel for good.***
- ***Research forms part of a comprehensive report from insurer RSA, issued following a world-leading driverless car trial in London***
- ***26,000 road deaths and injuries happen each year, with 93% of crashes being attributed to human error. Automation set to improve the safety of our roads and efficiency of our transport***
- ***The full report can be found at www.rsagroup.com***

While the UK doesn't yet have roads populated with driverless cars – also known as autonomous vehicles - they will become a reality in the very near future. And far from being sceptical of their arrival, the clear majority of Britons (61%) will be welcoming fully autonomous automobiles with open arms. That's according to comprehensive new research by insurer RSA into the attitudes of the British public towards driverless vehicles.

The research was conducted with 10,000 UK motorists¹ (88% of whom were also car owners) and forms part of a report -“*Autonomy and Motor Insurance – what happens next?*” - painting one of the fullest pictures of driverless cars and their role in our future.

The report draws on RSA's experience as the insurance partner to the three year GATEway project: a world-leading research programme funded by government and industry, which completed in March this year in Greenwich London². The aim of the GATEway Project (Greenwich Automated Transport Environment) was to understand how automated vehicles can help to address the future transportation needs of our cities and the barriers that need to be overcome before these vehicles become a reality on Britain's roads.

Over the next decade autonomous driving technology, including advances in artificial intelligence, cameras, sensors and data analytics, is set to transform not only how we drive, but the notion of car ownership itself. While 'petrol-heads' might take longer to warm to the idea of stepping away from the steering wheel for good, 90% of the drivers surveyed said they were happy and willing to hand over driving duties once autonomous vehicles become a fully fledged reality. In fact, a quarter of Britons are very excited about the prospect of letting the car do all the work. Furthermore, one in five adults see driverless as the ideal mode of transport for all journey types, from long motorway journeys to short personal journeys under a mile.

Safety was a large motivating factor behind Britain's autonomous acceptance, with almost nine out of ten drivers wanting to see safer roads for all users. Unlike humans, driverless cars won't speed, or run a red light; they won't get distracted, fall asleep, get road rage, and they will be far less likely to be involved in an accident.

There are over 31 million vehicles on Britain's roads today, but according to the Department for Transport around 26,000 people were killed or seriously injured on the roads last year. 93% of those deaths are attributed to human error, which could be significantly reduced by automated driving technologies that have the potential to reduce incidences of traffic accidents and violations by eliminating driver error. This reduction in accident, deaths, injuries is expected to have an effect on insurance claims - a third of those surveyed believe driverless cars will make insurance premiums more affordable with the majority predicting a 25% cut in premium prices.

The chance to wave goodbye to irresponsible driving behaviours was also an influencing factor in welcoming driverless vehicles. Indeed, 67% of adults cited the eradication of drink driving as a key reason for their support of autonomous vehicles. What's more, over half (54%) are looking forward to a future without speeding and 59% yearn for the days of free-flowing traffic.

While the enthusiasm for driving's new future is clear, there are still some reservations held by British motorists about fully autonomous vehicles. Indeed, 33% worried that driverless vehicles could malfunction and cause an incident. The research also reveals that one in six (15%) don't feel comfortable handing over control to a computer, while 9% are worried of the threat of autonomous vehicles being hacked by cybercriminals.

Commenting on the report, author Ian Kemp, commercial motor underwriting director, RSA said "Autonomous vehicles are no longer a space age fantasy; they are in our near future, and have the potential to make journeys smoother, more energy efficient and safer. They will also allow people who are currently unable - due to disability, the lack of licence, or their age for instance - to 'drive' a car to do so and enable goods and freight to move around without humans at the wheel.

"It is clear from our survey that drivers have not yet fully made the connection that when we remove human error from the driving equation, the immediate impact will be safer roads with significantly less accidents, car damage, injuries and deaths for all road users.

"As driverless cars arrive within the next decade and enthusiasm grows for their introduction, car manufacturers, the insurance industry, government and the media should use the time to fully educate drivers and consumers about the advantages of a new technology that will have many benefits – but primarily offer all road users a safer future on the roads."

The full report can be downloaded from www.rsagroup.com. For more about how RSA is meeting the needs of customers not just now, but also in the future, follow [@RSAgroup](https://twitter.com/RSAgroup) on Twitter or search for [#insuringthefuture](https://twitter.com/insuringthefuture).

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Notes to Editors

1 An online survey was conducted by Atomik Research among 10,003 UK adults – made up of 9,001 drivers and 1,002 non-drivers. This included 8,842 car owners and 1,161 non car owners. The research fieldwork took place between 7th and 20th June 2018. Atomik Research is an independent creative market research agency that employs MRS-certified researchers and abides to MRS code. A full summary of the survey is at the end of the release.

2 The GATEway Project was a world-leading research programme, funded by government and industry. It aimed to demonstrate the use of automated vehicles for ‘last mile’ mobility, seamlessly connecting existing transport hubs with residential and commercial areas using a zero emission, low noise, on-demand transport system. Research findings from the project are helping guide the wider roll out of automated vehicle technology in all forms of surface transport, including cars and lorries.

GATEway based in the Royal Borough of Greenwich included the testing of a cargo pod in conjunction with grocery delivery company Ocado, trialling Automatic Valet Parking (AVP) and the development of ‘pods’ capable of operating fully autonomously and safely on the streets of London. Adapted from the automated shuttle pods used at Heathrow, the new pods will be capable of navigating UK streets without the need for dedicated tracks.

For the past three years, RSA has been one of a number of partners – but the only insurer - collaborating on the government funded GATEway project (Greenwich Automated Transport Environment) into Autonomous Vehicles.

About RSA Insurance Group plc

With a 300-year heritage, RSA is a multinational quoted insurance group. RSA operates three core business segments: Canada, Scandinavia and UK & International (including operations in Europe and the Middle East); and has the capability to write business in over 100 countries. RSA has around 12,600 employees with net written premiums of £6.7 billion in 2017. RSA is also a leading commercial insurer in the UK, providing commercial insurance services to a wide range of businesses, from small start-ups to large corporations.

About the author

Ian Kemp, Charterer Insurer, ACII, MBA, MCIHT
RSA Commercial Motor Underwriting Director

With over 30 years in the industry, Ian Kemp is an experienced underwriting professional and has been responsible for the RSA commercial motor portfolio for the past eight years.

Ian is RSA’s lead in the Greenwich GATEway autonomous vehicle project and a consortium board member. The GATEway project trialled both AVP technologies and level 5 autonomous ‘pods’ around the Greenwich peninsula testing technology, user sentiment and the interaction between autonomous vehicles and pedestrians. Ian is also a member of the CIHT and sits of the ABI committee looking at future vehicle technologies. He is a regular speaker at industry events.

Ian has a fascination for all things motor and sees an unprecedented period of disruption and realignment ahead for the industry over the next five years, driven by increasing levels of technology, automation, shift in customer behaviours and societal level changes.

General attitudes towards driverless cars

- 39% of adults surveyed do not like the idea of self-driving cars, with 27% worrying about the safety of them and 11% saying they love to drive and don’t want to give it

up. However, 27% do like the thought of autonomous vehicles as the future of cars sounds exciting. 15% say it sounds ok and 18% aren't sure as they don't understand enough about it.

- 28% of drivers think the future of driverless cars sounds exciting, compared to 20% of non-drivers.
- 35% of non-drivers worry about the safety of driverless cars, compared to 26% of drivers.
- While 67% would be happy to travel on airport mass transit systems like monorails and where pods ferry you from the car park to terminals, 24% would prefer not to, and 9% would actually avoid travelling in this way because it's driverless.
- Though nearly half of those surveyed (47%) would not enjoy traveling on a plane which uses autopilot during the flight 53% don't mind that it's driverless.
- 56% would be happy on trains like the Docklands Light Railway which run without a driver, though 32% would prefer not to and 12% would avoid travelling in this way because it's driverless.
- 61% of adults surveyed say their biggest issue with driverless cars is the technology, with 33% worried that the software will go wrong and cars will still crash, 15% don't want to hand over control to a computer – they go wrong all the time, 9% worried that the cars could get hacked and 4% simply don't understand the technology.
- One in three adults find nothing exciting about driverless cars (35%). However 14% are excited driverless cars could offer a journey without any stress, 12% look forward to not having to navigate or worry about getting lost and 12% are excited to be able to relax and have some down time.
- Only 27% of adults feel self-driving cars which would allow children, the elderly, the blind, and people with disabilities to “drive” would be a good idea. 34% did not think it was a good idea and 35% answered maybe.
- The majority (67%) of adults surveyed believe we will have driverless cars on the road within the next 10 years; while 28% think it will be over a decade away and 5% believing we will never have it.
- A third (33%) of adults think driverless cars will make insurance premiums more affordable. Of those who think it will reduce premiums, 70% expect they will drop by at least 25% in price.
- However, 36% of adults surveyed don't think it will make premiums more affordable and 31% don't know.
- 35% of people think driverless cars will significantly reduce the 1.2 million deaths on the world's roads each year. However, 32% don't think we will see a significant reduction and 33% don't know.

Vehicle preferences

- 87% of adults would like our roads to be safer for all users, including drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.
- Nearly 7 in 10 adults would like to see no more drink drivers on UK roads (67%), over half want no more speeding drivers (54%) and no more prangs or accidents

(47%). Many adults would like to see less traffic (59%) and no more traffic jams at all on UK roads (57%). Concerning the environment, 54% would like less pollution, 48% wish to see less litter and rubbish and 30% less roadkill.

- When imagining their ideal car these were the top 10 features adults would like to have:
 1. Puncture proof tyres (60%)
 2. Parking sensors (60%)
 3. Air-conditioning (59%)
 4. Power steering (59%)
 5. Satnav (56%)
 6. Electronic windows (55%)
 7. Automatic windscreen wipers (48%)
 8. Automatic parking (48%)
 9. Automatic lights (48%)
 10. Traffic jam alerts (46%)
- One in five adults did not know what they would like their cars to be powered by even if money were no object (20%). However, 54% would like their car to be powered by cleaner methods such as solar (21%), electric (18%) or a hybrid (15%).
- While one in five adults believe that driverless transportation is best for all journey types listed, including mass transportation, long motorway journeys, journeys under a mile and personal journeys, 22% believe that driverless transportation would not be better for any of these journeys.
- People are more likely to say driverless transportation would be best for mass transportation (30%) than personal journeys (14%).
- When asked about the situations that driverless cars would be most suitable for, 26% say motorways only and 21% say urban or city driving only. However, 27% think all of the above situations (including rural driving) and 21% say none of these situations.
- Despite over a quarter (27%) of adults surveyed feeling that driverless cars would be most suitable for all situations, only 20% are willing to trade their own car for a driverless car.
- Nearly 7 in 10 (68%) car owners would choose to keep their own car if given the option between keeping it and getting a driverless car.

Gender differences

- More men are swayed by the idea of self-driving cars than women – 32% of men say they like the idea of autonomous vehicles, as the future of cars sounds exciting. This compares to 23% of women. Conversely, women are most likely to say they don't like the idea due to safety concerns (33%).
- Women are more likely than men to avoid autonomous methods of travel due to it being driverless – such as in a plane with autopilot (19%) and on trains like the DLR without a driver (14%).
- The main concern that women have with driverless cars is that the software will go wrong and cars will still crash (37%).

- Furthermore, driverless cars mean children, the elderly, the blind and people with disabilities would be able to “drive” cars, which 39% of women say isn’t a good idea while just 20% think it is. In comparison, more men think it is a good idea (34%) than not (28%).
- Men are significantly more positive that driverless cars will reduce the number of road deaths per year significantly (44%) than women (26%) are.
- More men (40%) think insurance premiums will be made more affordable thanks to driverless cars than women (27%).

Age differences

- 18-24-year-olds are the most positive about driverless cars – 50% think the future of cars sounds exciting, compared to just 20% of 45-54s, and 13% of over-55s.
- Older adults are most likely to worry about the safety of these vehicles, including 40% of over-55s and a third (33%) of 45-54s.
- All age groups share the main concern of software failing and driverless cars still crashing. Yet while older adults are more likely to say they don’t understand how we can have traditional and self-driving cars on the roads together (17% of over-55s) or that they don’t want to hand over control to a computer (17% of over-55s), younger adults aged 18-24 are more likely than older adults to worry about the potential for hacking (16% of 18-24s vs 6% of over-55s).
- 57% of over-55s say nothing excites them about driverless cars.
- Imagining their ideal car, 18-24-year-olds are significantly more interested than the older age groups in Bluetooth (52%) charging points (48%), bulletproof glass (37%), on-board assistants like Onstar or Alexa (30%) and biometric entry (29%).
- Over-55s are most likely to want more practical elements, that aren’t so futuristic, such as air-conditioning (68%), automatic lights (55%), automatic parking (55%) and automatic windscreen wipers (57%).
- 52% of 18-24s and 50% of 25-44s think driverless cars will reduce road accident deaths, compared to 29% of 45-54s and 19% of over-55s.
- 18-24s (53%) and 25-44s (47%) are also most likely to think insurance premiums will be more affordable as a result of driverless cars, with a hopeful 29% of these age groups thinking they will be reduced by half / 50% and 36% thinking they could be reduced by a quarter.
- Just over half (54%) of 18-24s think driverless cars will be on the roads within 5 years, compared to 51% of 25-34s, 45% of 35-44s, 31% of 45-54s and 28% of over-55s. 35% of over-55s think it is over a decade away compared to 16% of 18-24s.
- 29% of 18-24s would trade their car in for a driverless car if they have the choice, compared to 25% of 25-44s, 20% of 45-54s and 12% of over-55s.