

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## "I see it every week": mechanic warns summer road trips could expose hidden pothole damage

Fixtyer urges drivers to check tyres, wheels and suspension before holiday journeys, and to keep evidence if pothole damage is found.

**UNITED KINGDOM** — As families load up their cars for summer trips, an independent West Midlands mechanic is warning drivers to check for hidden pothole damage before setting off on long journeys.

Elliot Wheeler, a City & Guilds Level 3 qualified mechanic with more than 15 years of experience, says summer driving can expose damage that drivers may have dismissed months earlier, particularly to tyres, wheels, steering and suspension.

The damage that costs people the most is almost never the damage they can see straight away. They hit a pothole in winter or early spring, the car still drives, so they assume it is fine and forget about it. Then they load the car up, get it hot on a motorway for three hours, and that is exactly when a weakened tyre or tired suspension component can become a much bigger problem. I see it every week.

— Elliot Wheeler, Your Local Mechanic

Wheeler says the most [commonly missed damage](#) includes tyre sidewall bulges, tracking and alignment problems, cracked or buckled wheels, broken suspension springs and worn or damaged shock absorbers.

People often check the tread and think the tyre looks fine, but pothole damage can show up on the sidewall. You are looking for a bulge, almost like a blister in the rubber. That can mean the tyre structure has been damaged. It is a serious safety issue, and it is exactly the kind of thing drivers do not want to discover at 70mph with a fully loaded car.

— Elliot Wheeler

He is urging drivers to carry out a simple pre-trip check before any long journey:

- look carefully at both the inner and outer tyre sidewalls, not just the tread
- set tyre pressures for a fully loaded vehicle using the manufacturer's guidance
- listen for knocking over bumps
- watch for pulling to one side, steering vibration or uneven tyre wear

- get the vehicle checked if it has taken a hard pothole impact, even if it still feels driveable

The warning comes after a sharp rise in pothole-related breakdown reports at the start of 2026. According to the RAC, 11,396 drivers mentioned potholes when logging breakdowns in January and February 2026, an average of 193 a day. In February alone, 6,290 drivers mentioned potholes, compared with 1,842 in the same month in 2025.

In 2025, RAC patrols attended 26,048 breakdowns involving damaged shock absorbers, broken suspension springs or distorted wheels, faults the motoring organisation says are most likely to be caused by wear and tear from poor road surfaces. The RAC estimates the cost of pothole repairs to a typical family car can be up to £590 for damage worse than a puncture.

Wheeler says the safety risk is not limited to the damage itself.

**What really worries me is what people do to avoid potholes. Drivers tell me they had to swerve into the other side of the road to miss one. A hole in the road should not be forcing someone towards oncoming traffic, but that is what is happening. One day it will not just be a bent wheel.**

— Elliot Wheeler

Self-service pothole claims platform **Fixtyer**, which is working with Wheeler to help drivers understand the practical signs of pothole damage, says motorists should also think about evidence before they repair the vehicle.

**If a summer check reveals damage from a pothole you remember hitting, do not just repair it and throw the paperwork away. Photograph the damage, record where the impact happened, keep the invoice or quote, and check whether the pothole had already been reported. Those details can make a major difference if you decide to submit a claim.**

— Fixtyer spokesperson

Fixtyer helps drivers prepare their own pothole damage claim packs, including evidence checklists, professional claim documents, [authority-specific guidance](#) and [checks for previous public reports](#) of the same defect. Drivers submit the claim themselves and keep 100% of any compensation recovered.

**Elliot sees the damage. We help drivers organise the evidence around the cost of that damage. A good claim is not built on frustration alone. It is built on location, photographs, repair evidence and a clear link between the pothole and the damage.**

— Fixtyer spokesperson

Wheeler's message to drivers before they set off this summer is simple.

If you took a hard knock from a pothole earlier in the year, get the car checked before a long trip. Two minutes looking properly at the tyres, wheels and suspension could save you from a roadside emergency, and if the damage was caused by a road that should have been maintained, it may also help you recover the repair cost.

— Elliot Wheeler

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## Notes to editors

### About Fixtyer

Fixtyer is a self-service platform that helps UK drivers prepare and submit their own pothole damage claims, without solicitors and without commission, so drivers keep 100% of any compensation. Fixtyer also analyses published Department for Transport and council data and publishes a road maintenance rating for every highway authority in England.

### About Elliot Wheeler

Elliot Wheeler is the founder and lead mechanic of Your Local Mechanic, an independent mobile mechanic service covering Dudley, Stourbridge, Halesowen, Brierley Hill, Kingswinford and the wider Black Country. He is City & Guilds Level 3 qualified and has more than 15 years of experience. Your Local Mechanic has more than 370 customer reviews across Google, Trustpilot and other review platforms, according to its website. Quotes attributed to a named expert reflect that individual's professional view and are not legal advice.

### Data sources and attribution

Where this release cites council or DfT figures, please attribute them as: Fixtyer analysis of Department for Transport and council data. Underlying public-sector figures (pothole counts, road-condition percentages, maintenance spend and DfT scorecard ratings) are sourced from published Department for Transport releases and councils' own transparency reports, used under the Open Government Licence v3.0. National statistics cited are drawn from published RAC pothole data.

### Not legal advice

Fixtyer provides documents, guidance and information only. It is not a law firm, does not provide legal advice, does not act on behalf of drivers, and does not guarantee compensation.

## Sources

- [RAC Pothole Index \(pothole breakdown statistics\)](#)

## Media assets

High-resolution images, spokesperson quotes and local council data are available on request via the [Fixtyer media enquiries page](#).

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Interviews with Elliot Wheeler and a Fixtyer spokesperson are available on request. High-resolution images are available.