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RESEARCH

Regional Fuel Affordability

Where fuel takes the biggest bite out of household income - November 2026



PETROL, MOST STRETCHED

5.4%

of income - North East

PETROL, LEAST STRETCHED

3.1%

of income - London

DIESEL, MOST STRETCHED

7.6%

of income - North East

UK AVERAGE, PETROL

4.3%

of income per head

PROVISIONAL - MONTH IN PROGRESS

Prepared by findpetrol.co.uk Research

Provisional edition, as at 24 November 2026, from 4 weekly regional snapshots

Methodology: findpetrol.co.uk/reports/methodology

Price data: Open Government Licence v3.0. Income data: Office for National Statistics.

Executive summary

A typical petrol car - 6,200 miles a year at 42 miles per gallon, the averages for the UK fleet - burns 671 litres a year. Across the UK that costs about £1,119, or 4.3% of average disposable household income. But the same car costs nearly the same in pounds wherever it is filled: between £1,058 and £1,130 in every region of the country. What separates the regions is not the pump; it is the income behind it.

In the North East, where average disposable income is £20,562 a head, fuel takes 5.4% of income - the largest share in the UK. In London, incomes of £36,487 keep the same running costs to 3.1%. That is a 1.7-to-1 difference in how hard fuel bites, driven almost entirely by income: the two regions' pump prices differ by 2.6p a litre, their incomes by £15,925.

Diesel drivers feel it more: a typical diesel car - 8,300 miles a year at 47 mpg - uses 803 litres, and in the North East the annual bill is £1,567, or 7.6% of income. Northern Ireland, meanwhile, has the UK's cheapest petrol at 157.6p - yet still sits mid-table on affordability, because cheaper pumps do not outrun lower incomes.

The edition's figures

Measure	Figure	Detail
Region where fuel bites hardest, petrol	North East	5.4% of income
Region where fuel bites least, petrol	London	3.1% of income
UK average, petrol	£1,119 a year	4.3% of income
Region where fuel bites hardest, diesel	North East	7.6% of income
UK average, diesel	£1,571 a year	6.1% of income
Cheapest pumps, petrol	Northern Ireland	157.6p a litre
Most expensive pumps, petrol	South East	168.4p a litre
Income basis	ONS GDHI per head, 2024	provisional; UK £25,965
Price basis	4 weekly snapshots	November 2026, provisional

Affordability by region - petrol

A typical petrol car doing 6,200 miles a year at 42.0 mpg uses about 671 litres. The table shows what that costs in each region - pump prices from this edition's 4 weekly snapshots, set against ONS gross disposable household income per head (2024, provisional). Ranked by the share of income fuel takes, most stretched first.

Income basis: ONS gross disposable household income per head, 2024 (provisional).

Region	Petrol avg (p/l)	Annual spend	Income per head	Share of income
North East	164.8p	£1,106	£20,562	5.4%
Wales	166.2p	£1,115	£21,469	5.2%
West Midlands	167.9p	£1,127	£22,064	5.1%
Yorkshire and The Humber	165.7p	£1,112	£21,913	5.1%
North West	166.9p	£1,120	£22,523	5.0%
East Midlands	168.0p	£1,128	£22,761	5.0%
Northern Ireland	157.6p	£1,058	£22,258	4.8%
Scotland	168.0p	£1,127	£24,283	4.6%
South West	168.1p	£1,128	£25,924	4.4%
East of England	168.0p	£1,127	£26,795	4.2%
South East	168.4p	£1,130	£29,577	3.8%
London	167.4p	£1,123	£36,487	3.1%
United Kingdom (average)	166.8p	£1,119	£25,965	4.3%

The pattern is consistent: the Midlands, the North, Wales and Northern Ireland carry the largest shares, the South and East of England the smallest. Pump prices vary by only 10.8p a litre between the most and least expensive regions - incomes vary by £15,925 a head.

Affordability by region - diesel

A typical diesel car doing 8,300 miles a year at 47.0 mpg uses about 803 litres. The table shows what that costs in each region - pump prices from this edition's 4 weekly snapshots, set against ONS gross disposable household income per head (2024, provisional). Ranked by the share of income fuel takes, most stretched first.

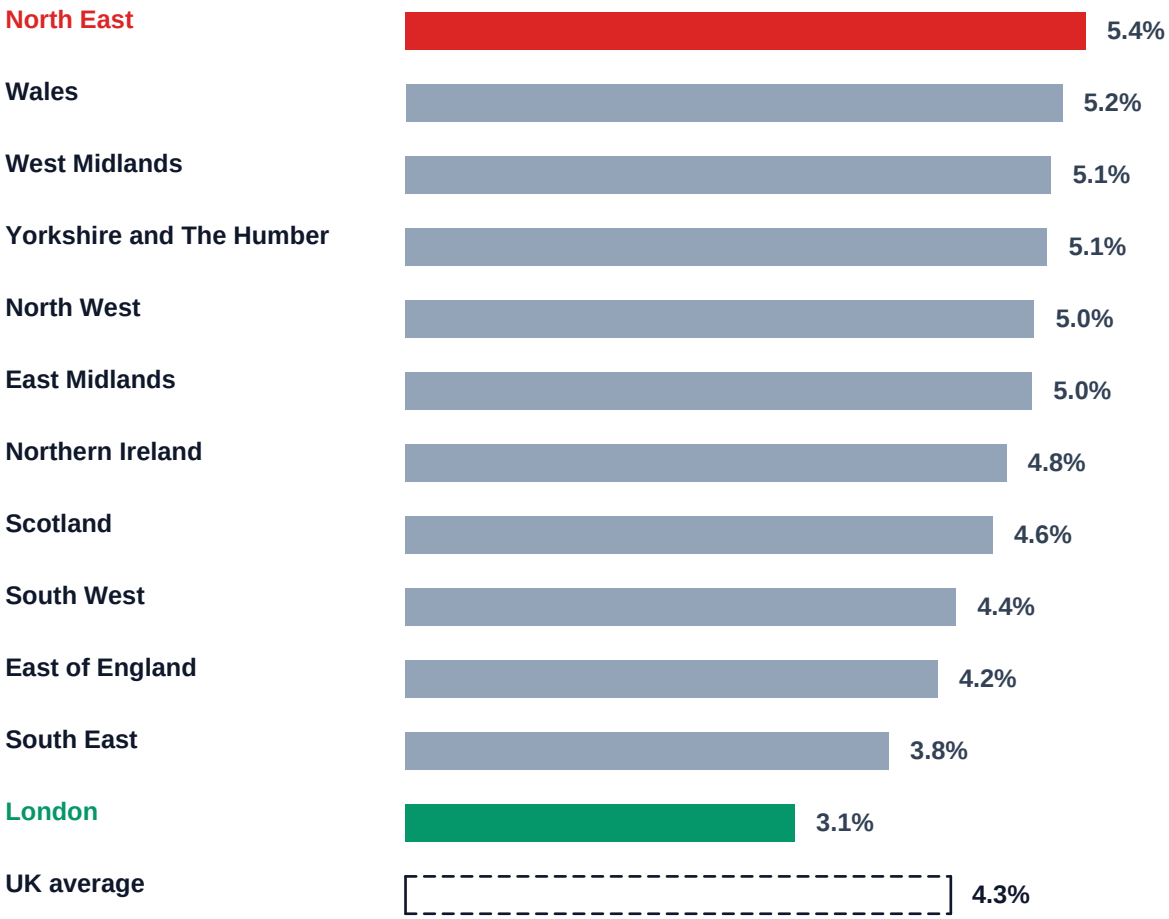
Income basis: ONS gross disposable household income per head, 2024 (provisional).

Region	Diesel avg (p/l)	Annual spend	Income per head	Share of income
North East	195.2p	£1,567	£20,562	7.6%
Wales	195.4p	£1,568	£21,469	7.3%
West Midlands	196.3p	£1,576	£22,064	7.1%
Yorkshire and The Humber	195.2p	£1,567	£21,913	7.2%
North West	195.2p	£1,567	£22,523	7.0%
East Midlands	196.1p	£1,574	£22,761	6.9%
Northern Ireland	187.1p	£1,502	£22,258	6.7%
Scotland	197.4p	£1,585	£24,283	6.5%
South West	196.9p	£1,580	£25,924	6.1%
East of England	196.6p	£1,578	£26,795	5.9%
South East	197.2p	£1,583	£29,577	5.4%
London	197.0p	£1,582	£36,487	4.3%
United Kingdom (average)	195.7p	£1,571	£25,965	6.1%

Diesel stretches every region further, because a typical diesel car covers more miles: the same income supports a bill roughly a third larger. The ranking barely changes - which is the point: affordability is set by income, not by the pump.

Where fuel bites hardest, petrol

Share of disposable household income spent on petrol by a typical petrol car, by region. The dashed bar is the UK average of 4.3%.



Every bar is a similar number of pounds - between £1,058 and £1,130 a year. The chart shows what those pounds weigh against £20,562 of income in the North East against £36,487 in London.

Where the pumps are dearest

Every region our collection covers this edition, cheapest petrol first, with the station count behind each average and the number of weekly snapshots it rests on. Our regional series began in late July 2026; areas with fewer weeks joined the collection during this month, and their averages cover the weeks shown.

Region	Nation	Weeks	Stations	Petrol (p/l)	Diesel (p/l)
Greater Belfast	Northern Ireland	**4**	201	**157.6p**	186.0p
East of Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland	**4**	319	**157.7p**	187.9p
North East England	England	**4**	307	**164.8p**	195.2p
South Wales	Wales	**4**	353	**165.6p**	194.9p
Yorkshire and the Humber	England	**4**	671	**165.7p**	195.2p
North Wales	Wales	**4**	103	**166.0p**	195.6p
South of Scotland	Scotland	**4**	109	**166.2p**	196.6p
North East Scotland	Scotland	**4**	107	**166.7p**	196.0p
North West England	England	**4**	845	**166.9p**	195.2p
Greater London	England	**4**	518	**167.4p**	197.0p
West Midlands	England	**4**	707	**167.9p**	196.3p
Central Belt	Scotland	**4**	422	**167.9p**	196.9p
East of England	England	**4**	753	**168.0p**	196.6p
East Midlands	England	**4**	590	**168.0p**	196.1p
South West England	England	**4**	782	**168.1p**	196.9p
South East England	England	**4**	1,065	**168.4p**	197.2p
Mid Wales	Wales	**4**	49	**170.2p**	197.9p
Highlands and Islands	Scotland	**4**	145	**170.6p**	200.5p

Methodology

Prices

Regional averages are the mean of this edition's weekly regional snapshots from our own collection, which begins in late July 2026 and covers 18 areas. This edition uses 4 weekly snapshots (October 2026). A site is one observation regardless of how much fuel it sells. Northern Ireland's average aggregates its areas, station-weighted; Scotland and Wales use their nationwide series.

Income

Gross disposable household income per head, 2024 (provisional), from the Office for National Statistics release of 19 August 2026 - the money households have available to spend or save after taxes and benefits. GDHI per head includes everyone in the population, drivers and non-drivers alike, which is why it is described as a share of income per head rather than of a driver's budget.

Why not earnings?

The newest earnings release - the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings for April 2026, published 22 October 2026 - is two years fresher than the income figures above, and it corroborates rather than contradicts them: full-time pay grew in every UK region, from 4.0% to 8.2% (UK 5.8%, London fastest). A year of broad growth does not reorder the regional income hierarchy this report rests on. We still use GDHI as the basis, because it measures the thing an affordability share needs: all the income households have to spend after tax and benefits - pensions, benefits and self-employment income included, everyone counted - rather than the gross pay of employees only, which is pre-tax and leaves out pensioners and the self-employed. When ONS publishes GDHI for 2025, expected autumn 2027, the next edition of this report will move to it.

Consumption

A typical petrol car is assumed to cover 6,200 miles a year at 42 mpg (DfT National Travel Survey 2024 mileage for petrol cars; Which? combined real-world economy), burning about 671 litres. A typical diesel car: 8,300 miles at 47 mpg, about 803 litres. These are stated assumptions - a heavier foot or a thirstier car scales every figure in this report proportionally.

What this is not

This is not a household expenditure survey: it compares a fixed typical consumption with regional average incomes and prices. It does not model who drives how far in each region, vehicle mix, or the share of households with a car at all. Regional income figures are provisional for 2024 and will be revised. Price figures for a month still in progress are provisional and move as readings arrive.

Rounding and revisions

Pump prices are rounded to 0.1p, income to the nearest pound, shares to 0.1%. Rankings use unrounded values and can differ from the rounded table order where two regions are within 0.05% of each other. When a month closes its figures are final and this PDF is archived unchanged.

Using this data

These figures are free to use in articles, research and reporting. We ask only that you credit findpetrol.co.uk and link to this report, so readers can see the current figures and the method behind them.

Suggested citation

> Regional Fuel Affordability Research - FindPetrol.
>
> https://www.findpetrol.co.uk/reports/regional-fuel-affordability

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