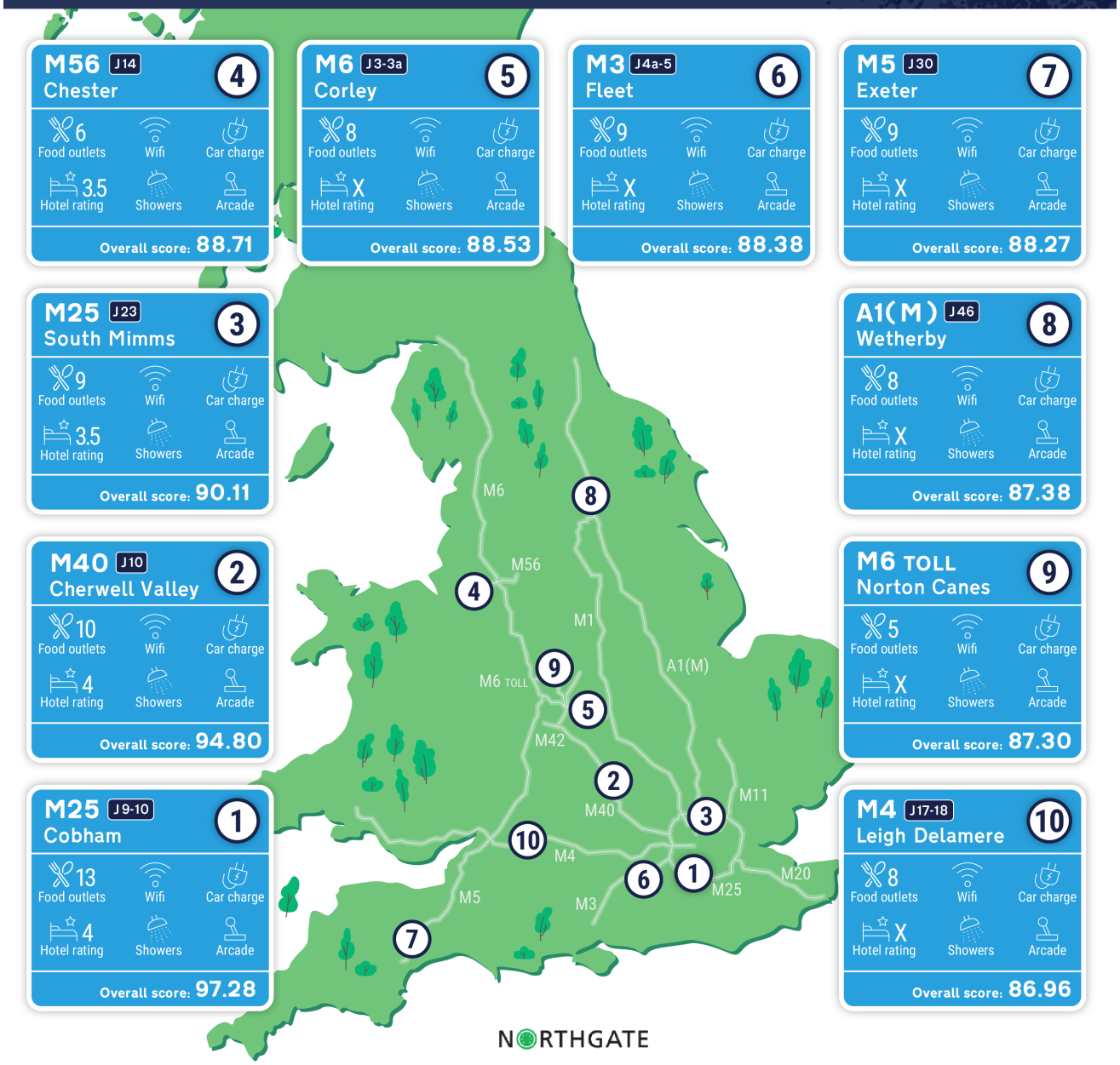
Motorway service station survey – some definitely better than others!

Published: April 9, 2019

Author:

Online version: https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/motorway-service-station-survey-some-definitely-better-than-others/

THE TOP Motorway Services IN THE UK



BEST TO REST? The UK's best and worst motorway service stations…

Taking a break at a motorway service station isn't always convenient, just necessary. If you're bursting for the loo, need to grab some lunch, or been driving for a long period of time, it's vital to take a break.

But where should you stop?

New research from Northgate Vehicle Hire reveals the UK's best and worst motorway service stations, giving them a definitive score out of 10.

Looking at the number of amenities and the quality of the service, including restaurants, parking spaces, bathroom facilities, and hotels, the data shows Cobham to be the best service station in the UK, with 13 restaurants – including a Nando's.

Take a break

If you're heading to Heathrow or Gatwick, Cobham is between junctions nine and 10 of the M25. There are 4260 parking spaces, showers, and even a launderette.

Chester services also scored high, along with Corley on the M6 and Cherwell Valley hidden away on the M40.

Make a U-Turn? (NO, please don't actually do this on a motorway; carry on to the next junction!!)

The award for the UK's worst service station goes to Todhills (south) on the M6, near Gretna Green, with just a BP garage and a small Wild Bean Café on site.

Interestingly, Todhills (North) at the opposite side of the M6 also ranked at the bottom of the pile, along with Happendon on the M74 and Gloucester on the M5.

The best and worst motorways

If you're travelling on the M11 today then you're in luck – with an average score of 85 points, this motorway ranked the best for available service stations. This was thanks to a solid score from Birchanger Green services, which boasts 8 different food outlets. London's M25 placed eleventh on the list, and the M1 came in ninth. Motorists hitting the M23 in Surrey, however, aren't in for a good stop, with an average score of 63.

There's more...

The full data set and visuals can be found here:
https://www.northgatevehiclehire.co.uk/blog/find-the-best-service-stations

Kim adds:

Fascinating information. However, two aspects not covered in this survey, yet which infuriate most motorists we have spoken to, seem to apply pretty much across the board at nearly all service areas:

1. Rip-off fuel prices... Typical unwarranted price hikes of around 15 per cent (often, more than this!) apply to many service areas. Disgraceful. Wheels-Alive suggested answer: Refuel before getting on the motorway. Don't waste your hard-earned money on service area profits.
2. Parking charges beyond a two hours stay... Road safety/consumer organisations advise taking a break from driving to avoid potential dangers from 'driving tired'. Yet most service areas apply charges for parking beyond two hours. So if you take a break to avoid feeling tired, yet happen to nod off for a while, you will be hit with a charge. It's called profiteering – yet this is a safety issue and should not happen. Even more disgraceful! Wheels-Alive suggested answer: If you think that you will need to stop for more than a couple of hours to rest and recuperate, if possible find a safe parking area away from the motorway. Again, save your hard-earned cash!