EVs are changing maintenance and repairs, says Partsinmotion.co.uk

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Partsinmotion tells us…

For years, one of the biggest selling points of electric vehicles (EV) has been the promise of lower maintenance. No oil changes, no spark plugs, no cambelt to worry about. But as the UK's electric car parc matures – with the earliest mainstream EVs now approaching a decade on the road – PartsinMotion.co.uk, says a different story is emerging: EVs don't need less looking after, they need looking after differently.

The award-winning online distributor, which stocks over 250,000 parts from trusted brands in the sector, has seen demand for EV-specific components grow steadily as more electric vehicles pass out of warranty and into the hands of independent garages and DIY owners.

It now lists at least one part for virtually every vehicle on UK roads, electric included, and has built a dedicated range of 16,439 part numbers specifically for electric vehicles, rising to 47,884 when hybrid and mild-hybrid models are included.

Regenerative braking is often assumed to make brakes almost redundant, since the electric motor does much of the slowing down by feeding energy back into the battery rather than relying on friction alone. In reality, PartsinMotion.co.uk says this shifts wear rather than removing it.

Matt Gates, Managing Director at PartsinMotion.co.uk commented: "Regenerative braking genuinely does reduce wear on pads and discs, because the motor is doing a lot of the work that friction brakes would normally handle. But that's created a new problem: brakes that are used less often are more prone to corrosion, sticking calipers and seized components, especially in a wet British climate.

We're seeing EV owners who assume their brakes will simply last forever, when actually they need checking just as regularly – if not more so, because problems can build up quietly."

Because friction brakes on an EV do less routine work, discs can corrode and pads can glaze

or stick in their calipers even while there's plenty of material left, meaning a brake system can fail an inspection due to condition rather than wear.

Electric vehicles remove the traditional engine, gearbox and exhaust wear items that make up the bulk of a typical petrol or diesel parts list. But they introduce their own set of demands elsewhere in the vehicle.

These include tyres and suspension as EVs are typically heavier than their combustion equivalents due to battery weight and instant torque delivery puts additional strain on tyres, bushes, wishbones and suspension components. Wheel bearings as the extra weight and torque can also accelerate wear here, an area PartsinMotion.co.uk says is one of the least understood among EV owners.

Gates added: "The message we want to get across is that EVs aren't maintenance-free, they're maintenance-different. The parts that wear fastest have shifted away from the engine and towards the chassis, the tyres and the braking system's condition rather than its material thickness. Owners and independent garages who understand that shift are going to get a lot more out of EVs."

With the UK's zero-emission vehicle mandate pushing EV sales higher each year and the average age of the electric car parc climbing, PartsinMotion.co.uk expects demand for EV-specific parts to accelerate, particularly as vehicles begin to fall out of manufacturer warranty and dealer servicing.

"As more EVs come off warranty, drivers are going to be looking for the same value and choice they've always had with petrol and diesel cars. And that's exactly what we're building towards." Gates finished.