The Motor Ombudsman forecasts a busy time ahead for MoT bookings

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The Motor Ombudsman is expecting increased use of its online

Garage Finder system as MoT bookings rise towards the autumn…

• With nearly 1.3 million more MOTs set to expire in September and October than what would ordinarily be seen during these two months (pre-pandemic), The Motor Ombudsman is expecting a significant rise in searches on its online Garage Finder, as motorists look to book their vehicle's annual test

• The tool allows motorists to locate and contact nearby garages, repairers and dealer workshops across the UK that are accredited to The Motor Ombudsman's Service and Repair Code

• As one of the most visited pages on The Motor Ombudsman website (TheMotorOmbudsman.org), the popular Garage Finder has already witnessed a 60% increase in searches during the first half of 2021 compared to the same period last year

The Motor Ombudsman, the Ombudsman dedicated to the automotive sector, says that it is expecting a significant increase in searches by consumers on its online Garage Finder tool during the coming weeks, as millions of motorists look to secure a booking at an MOT station for their vehicle's annual test. According to the latest figures released by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), nearly seven million MOTs are due to expire across England, Scotland and Wales* during September and October, which is around 1.3 million more, or a 22% overall rise, compared to what would ordinarily be seen during these two months in a typical year (i.e. pre-pandemic in 2019).

A busier end to the year for the mandatory tests for vehicles that are aged three years and over, is a knock-on effect of the six-month MOT exemption introduced between 30th March and 31st July 2020 in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. With 9.58 million drivers choosing to take advantage of this opportunity to postpone the annual assessment, this has subsequently altered the peaks and troughs in testing volumes that would normally be witnessed across a calendar year.

The Garage Finder is accessible via the blue button situated at the top of every page of The Motor Ombudsman's website (TheMotorOmbudsman.org), and lists thousands of independent garages, body repair centres and franchise dealer workshops across the UK, that are following the Ombudsman's Motor Industry Code of Practice for Service and Repair. The tool allows motorists to search for their nearest accredited business by location and make of car, amongst other criteria, submit booking enquiries, and read the latest ratings and reviews left by other consumers on the profiles that are listed on the portal.

During the first six months of the 2021, more than 160,000 searches were conducted on the Garage Finder, a 60% increase versus the same period last year. It is also one of the most frequented pages on The Motor Ombudsman website, thereby highlighting the Garage Finder's status as a "go-to" resource for drivers when looking for a vehicle repairer or retailer.

Bill Fennell, Chief Ombudsman and Managing Director of the Motor Ombudsman, said: "After a small uptick in the number of MOTs forecast to expire during August, there is a notable acceleration in the volume of MOT certificates due to come to an end in September and October. This means that it's going to be an extremely busy period for MOT stations up and down the country during the next few weeks."

Bill added: "For drivers looking to book in their vehicle's annual test, which can be done up to a month (minus a day) earlier than the deadline, there is no better starting point than our Garage Finder. Using a business accredited to our Service and Repair Code gives consumers the all-important peace of mind that they are adhering to the comprehensive guidelines laid down by the Code, and have committed to the very highest standards of work and service."



The Motor Ombudsman's Garage Finder can be accessed at: TheMotorOmbudsman.org/Garage- Finder.

*The Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) is the body responsible for licensing and testing vehicles in Northern Ireland.

Expiry of MOTs by month (Source: DVSA)

Month	Total typical volume of MOTs expiring per month (2019)	Total MOTs forecast to expire per month in 2021	Difference (forecast v typical)
August	2,238,189	2,347,757	109,568 (+ 5%)
September	3,088,075	3,607,357	519,282 (+ 17%)

October	2,592,125	3,345,097	752,972 (+ 29%)
OVERALL TOTAL (SEP / OCT)	5,680,200	6,952,454	1,272,254 (+ 22%)

About The Motor Ombudsman

The Motor Ombudsman is the fully impartial Ombudsman dedicated solely to the automotive sector, and self-regulates the UK's motor industry through its comprehensive Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Codes of Practice. Thousands of businesses, including vehicle manufacturers, warranty product providers, franchised dealers and independent garages, are accredited to one or more of the Codes, which drive even higher standards of work and service, and give consumers added protection, peace of mind and trust during the vehicle purchase and ownership experience.

For more information on The Motor Ombudsman, visit www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org.