**SMMT NEW CAR REGISTRATIONS**  
5 September 2024 (data for August 2024)  
**High-res charts and data available via Dropbox:** [**https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/c5c11yo3tzwy7w5q1x1ci/ADFRW4BWhD8zag1KkZ\_dfD4?rlkey=7u63ok6y6tp28wl7pnr5bcue8&st=1tted8oj&dl=0**](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/c5c11yo3tzwy7w5q1x1ci/ADFRW4BWhD8zag1KkZ_dfD4?rlkey=7u63ok6y6tp28wl7pnr5bcue8&st=1tted8oj&dl=0)

**August new car market holds steady ahead of critical plate change month**

* New car market stable in traditionally quiet month of August, dipping -1.3% to 84,575 units.
* Battery electric car demand up 10.8% in month as buyers respond to summer of heavy discounting.
* Sector calls for renewed focus on measures to help more buyers to go electric as crucial plate change month begins.

**Thursday 5 September, 2024**The UK new car market remained stable in August, down just -1.3%, according to the latest figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). In what is traditionally one of the quietest months of the year for new car sales, with many buyers preferring to wait until September’s new number plate, 84,575 units were registered, just 1,082 fewer than in the same month last year.

Continuing the recent trend, fleet purchases drove the market, accounting for six in 10 cars registered last month, or 51,329 units, despite a -1.2% drop compared with the same month last year, Registrations by private buyers, meanwhile, were flat, up 0.2% units to 32,110. Business registrations were down by -30.3% to 1,136 units.

Petrol and diesel uptake fell by -10.1% and -7.3% respectively, but together these fuel types still represented more than half (56.8%) of all new car uptake in August. Plug-in hybrid (PHEV) registrations declined -12.3%, with a 6.8% share, but hybrid electric vehicle (HEV) uptake increased, by 36.1%, to take 13.8% of the market.

Battery electric vehicle (BEV) registrations, meanwhile, rose 10.8% thanks to heavy discounting by manufacturers over the summer and a raft of new models attracting buyers. Market share in August reached 22.6%, the highest for a month since December 2022, when BEVs commanded 32.9% of all new cars reaching the road.1

Year to date, BEV market share has edged up to 17.2% and is expected to rise further to 18.5% by the end of the year thanks to increasing model choice – with some 364,000 BEVs registrations forecast for the year.2 Despite this growth, this will still be shy of the 22% required by the Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate.

Ahead of the Autumn Budget due on 30 October, the industry is calling for urgent action to bolster the market for new EVs, including binding targets on public chargepoint provision commensurate with those placed on industry, the reintroduction of incentives for private buyers and removal of disincentives, including the Vehicle Excise Duty expensive car supplement, set to be introduced in 2025.

**Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive,** said, “August’s EV growth is welcome, but it’s always a very low volume month and so subject to distortions ahead of September’s number plate change. The introduction of the new 74 plate, together with a raft of compelling offers and discounts from manufacturers, plus growing model choice, will help increase purchase consideration and be a true barometer for market demand. Encouraging a mass market shift to EVs remains a challenge, however, and urgent action must be taken to help buyers overcome affordability issues and concerns about chargepoint provision.”

**Notes to editors**

1 <https://media.smmt.co.uk/december-2022-new-car-registrations/>

2 SMMT Market Outlook – July 2024 - <https://www.smmt.co.uk/2024/08/uk-new-car-and-van-forecast-july-2024/>

**About SMMT and the UK automotive industry**  
The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) is one of the largest and most influential trade associations, representing the automotive industry in the UK.

The automotive industry is a vital part of the UK economy, integral to growth, the delivery of net zero and the UK as a global trade hub. It contributes £93 billion turnover and £22 billion value added to the UK economy, and invests around £4 billion each year in R&D. With 198,000 people employed directly in manufacturing and some 813,000 across the wider automotive industry. Many of these automotive manufacturing jobs are outside London and the South-East, with wages that are around 13% higher than the UK average. The sector accounts for 12% of total UK exports of goods with more than 140 countries importing UK produced vehicles, generating £115 billion of trade in total automotive imports and exports.

The UK manufactures almost every type of vehicle, from cars, to vans, taxis, trucks, buses and coaches, as well as specialist and off-highway vehicles, supported by more than 2,500 component providers and some of the world's most skilled engineers. In addition, the sector has vibrant aftermarket and remanufacturing industries. The automotive industry also supports jobs in other key sectors – including advertising, chemicals, finance, logistics and steel.

More detail on UK Automotive available in SMMT's Motor Industry Facts publication at [www.smmt.co.uk/reports/smmt-motor-industry-facts/](http://www.smmt.co.uk/reports/smmt-motor-industry-facts/)

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