

[Press release: Safety warning following seven gritter crashes in North West](#)

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Motorway drivers are being urged to take extra care around gritters this winter following seven collisions in the North West.

Highways England has issued the warning after 36 of its vehicles were struck on motorways and major A roads across the country last winter.

Gritter driver Garry White was spreading salt on the M57 near junction 6 at Kirkby in March this year when his vehicle was struck from behind by a Ford Focus travelling at high speed. The car was written off and the back of the gritter also received extensive damage, requiring repairs.

Garry, 43 from Runcorn, suffered minor injuries and was off work for several days following the collision. He said:

The psychological impact was quite bad to be honest and I didn't want to get back in a wagon for a few weeks after it happened. Experience prevails, and you push on and you get back in, but both me and the car driver were lucky not to have sustained much worse injuries.

I'd ask drivers to give us as wide a birth as possible this winter and to stay behind us until we've finished our treatment if they can as it's much safer. Usually you'll find a gritter will only be doing a few motorway junctions before pulling off anyway.

Gritters have flashing amber beacons, are 2.5 metres wide and are bright orange but causes of collisions have included drivers misjudging the amount of space needed to overtake them or driving too close to them when they are

spreading salt.

The vehicles, which each weigh up to 26 tonnes, usually travel at 40mph in the middle lane to ensure the right amount of salt is spread to all lanes.

The back of a gritter is the most vulnerable area as it is where the salt spreading equipment is located. If it is struck then it can mean the gritter has to be taken off the road to be repaired, which is costly and could affect critical services in extreme weather conditions.

Andrew Olive, Highways England's North West severe weather manager, said:

The vast majority of drivers support our gritter drivers by leaving a sensible distance and only passing when it's safe to do so, but we do have occasions when people misjudge the situation and end up colliding with one of our vehicles.

The driver of the Ford Focus was lucky not to be more seriously injured in the incident on the M57 earlier this year, and gritter drivers like Garry should be able to do their job without having to worry about whether other vehicles might strike them.

Our gritter drivers perform a vital role to keep motorways and major A roads moving during the winter so I'd urge drivers to take extra care when travelling near them.

During severe winter weather drivers are urged to follow this advice:

- In snow and ice: Drivers should stick to the main roads where they can and only travel if necessary. Drivers are also encouraged to make sure they have a winter kit in their vehicle, including an ice scraper and de-icer, warm clothes and blankets and sunglasses to cope with the low winter sun.
- In high winds: Drivers should slow down and avoid using exposed sections of road if possible. Lorries, caravans and motorbikes are at particular risk.
- In heavy rain: Drivers should keep well back from the vehicle in front, gradually ease off the accelerator if the steering becomes unresponsive, and slow down if the rain and spray from vehicles makes it difficult to see and be seen.
- In fog: Drivers should switch on their fog lights and not use lights on full beam as the fog will reflect the light back. If drivers really cannot see, they should consider stopping until it is safe to continue.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Press release: Search to find Cyber Security experts of the future](#)

Success of Cyber Discovery scheme will see programme extended to Scotland and Northern Ireland

[Press release: Search to find Cyber Security experts of the future](#)

An online programme designed to inspire teenagers to think about a career in cyber security will continue for a second year after a successful pilot across England.

Over 23,000 young people aged between 14 and 18 have already taken part in the Cyber Discovery programme which uses interactive games to teach teenagers about cyber security in an accessible and fun way. Those who perform at the highest levels, will also have the opportunity to attend a special summer camp to hone their skills and meet industry leaders.

The scheme sits within Cyber First, the government's cyber security skills programme, which is part of the £1.9 billion investment through the National Cyber Security Strategy to transform the UK's cyber security and ensure we build skills in the workforce of the future.

Minister for Digital Margot James said:

We need to inspire young people and show them a career in Cyber Security can be exciting and rewarding, not only to give them more opportunities but also help build a talented workforce for the future. The Cyber Discovery programme has been a great success so far. I hope more teenagers will take part and learn that those working in cyber security can come from any walk of life, and have studied any subject.

The £20 million Cyber Discovery programme teaches students about subjects including digital forensics, defending against web attacks and cryptography. It is being delivered by IT security training company the SANS Institute.

The programme is also a key part of the government's modern Industrial Strategy – a long term plan to ensure that businesses have the skilled workers they need here in Britain.

Head of Research and Development for SANS Institute James Lyne said:

Based on the success of last year's Cyber Discovery programme, it's clear there's both the appetite and the aptitude to learn about cyber security in the UK. Before taking part in Cyber Discovery 40.4% of female students and 35.5% of male students hadn't even considered a career in cyber security. This dropped to 9.6% and 6.3% respectively after these students took part in the programme. And many of the club leaders who are also Computer Science teachers, told us they used Cyber Discovery last year to complement their lesson plans. We hope to extend this enthusiasm and passion for cyber security across the the UK in year two.

Any young person between the ages of 14 to 18 can take part. Registration and completion of the first assessment phase closes on 7 January 2019. Find out more on the [Cyber Discovery website](#).

Further Information:

1. The Government is committed to ensuring that the UK has a sustainable pipeline of cyber security talent supporting a workforce that meets current and future cyber security demands and supports the UK's prosperity by keeping the economy and the country safe from cyber threats.
2. The [National Cyber Security Strategy](#) commits to developing and implementing 'a self-standing skills strategy that builds on existing work to integrate cyber security into the education system. This will continue to improve the state of computer science teaching overall and embed cybersecurity into the curriculum. Everyone studying computer science, technology or digital skills will learn the fundamentals of cyber security and will be able to bring those skills into the workforce. As part of this effort, we will address the gender imbalance in cyber-focused professions, and reach people from more diverse backgrounds, to make sure we are drawing from the widest available talent pool.
3. SANS Institute was established in 1989 as a cooperative research and education

organisation and is now the largest provider of cyber security training and certification to practitioners at governments and commercial institutions worldwide. The SANS curriculum spans more than 60 courses across multiple cyber security disciplines. SANS has successfully run programmes for school age students and is passionate about encouraging young people to pursue a career in cyber security.

[Press release: UK House Price Index for September 2018](#)

The September data shows:

- on average, house prices have not changed since August 2018
- there has been an annual price rise of 3.5%, which makes the average property in the UK valued at £232,554

England

In England, the September data shows on average, house prices have not changed since August 2018. The annual price rise of 3.0% takes the average property value to £249,408.

The regional data for England indicates that:

- the East Midlands and West Midlands experienced the greatest monthly price rise, up by 1.1%
- the Yorkshire and the Humber saw the most significant monthly price fall, down by 1.1%
- the West Midlands experienced the greatest annual price rise, up by 6.1%
- London saw the lowest annual price increase, down by 0.3%

Price change by region for England

Region	Average price September 2018	Monthly change % since August 2018
East Midlands	£194,803	1.1
East of England	£294,027	-0.1
London	£482,241	-0.4
North East	£132,049	0.8
North West	£162,915	-0.8

Region	Average price September 2018	Monthly change % since August 2018
South East	£328,059	-0.2
South West	£260,142	0.3
West Midlands	£199,763	1.1
Yorkshire and the Humber	£162,009	-1.1

Repossession sales by volume for England

The lowest number of repossession sales in July 2018 was in the East of England.

The highest number of repossession sales in July 2018 was in the North West.

Repossession sales	July 2018
East Midlands	43
East of England	10
London	38
North East	80
North West	127
South East	69
South West	31
West Midlands	50
Yorkshire and the Humber	64
England	512

Average price by property type for England

Property type	September 2018	September 2017	Difference %
Detached	£382,714	£365,228	4.8
Semi-detached	£233,050	£223,502	4.3
Terraced	£201,818	£195,140	3.4
Flat/maisonette	£225,757	£228,595	-1.2
All	£249,408	£242,041	3.0

Funding and buyer status for England

Transaction type	Average price September 2018	Annual price change % since September 2017	Monthly price change % since August 2018
Cash	£234,743	3.0	-0.1
Mortgage	£256,801	3.1	0.0
First-time buyer	£208,497	2.5	-0.4
Former owner occupier	£284,022	3.6	0.3

Building status for England

Building status*	Average price July 2018	Annual price change % since July 2017	Monthly price change % since June 2018
New build	£308,859	5.2	2.5
Existing resold property	£244,482	2.8	1.2

*Figures for the two most recent months are not being published because there are not enough new build transactions to give a meaningful result.

London

London shows, on average, house prices have fallen by 0.4% since August 2018. An annual price fall of 0.3% takes the average property value to £482,241.

Average price by property type for London

Property type	September 2018	September 2017	Difference %
Detached	£943,905	£913,220	3.4
Semi-detached	£598,120	£578,519	3.4
Terraced	£504,774	£496,318	1.7
Flat/maisonette	£418,919	£428,892	-2.3
All	£482,241	£483,833	-0.3

Funding and buyer status for London

Transaction type	Average price September 2018	Annual price change % since September 2017	Monthly price change % since August 2018
Cash	£507,955	0.0	-0.4
Mortgage	£474,396	-0.4	-0.3
First-time buyer	£419,925	-1.0	-0.7
Former owner occupier	£547,515	0.5	0.1

Building status for London

Building status*	Average price July 2018	Annual price change % since July 2017	Monthly price change % since June 2018
New build	£503,215	1.4	1.8
Existing resold property	£484,584	-0.7	1.1

*Figures for the 2 most recent months are not being published because there are not enough new build transactions to give a meaningful result.

Wales

Wales shows, on average, house prices have risen by 0.5% since August 2018. An annual price rise of 5.8% takes the average property value to £162,089.

There were 62 repossession sales for Wales in July 2018.

Average price by property type for Wales

Property type	September 2018	September 2017	Difference %
Detached	£247,289	£231,555	6.8
Semi-detached	£156,185	£147,039	6.2
Terraced	£125,360	£118,443	5.8
Flat/maisonette	£111,678	£111,226	0.4
All	£162,089	£153,227	5.8

Funding and buyer status for Wales

Transaction type	Average price September 2018	Annual price change % since September 2017	Monthly price change % since August 2018
Cash	£157,510	5.4	0.6
Mortgage	£164,805	6.0	0.4
First-time buyer	£139,661	5.5	0.2
Former owner occupier	£188,343	6.0	0.8

Building status for Wales

Building status*	Average price July 2018	Annual price change % since July 2017	Monthly price change % since June 2018
New build	£212,902	9.4	2.5
Existing resold property	£155,711	5.0	1.1

*Figures for the two most recent months are not being published because there are not enough new build transactions to give a meaningful result.

[Access the full UK HPI](#)

UK house prices rose by 3.5% in the year to September 2018, up from 3.1% in the year to August 2018.

The [UK Property Transaction Statistics for September 2018](#) showed that on a seasonally adjusted basis, the number of transactions on residential properties with a value of £40,000 or greater was 98,400. This is 2.7% lower compared to a year ago. Between August and September 2018, transactions fell by 0.5%.

House prices grew fastest in the West Midlands region increasing by 6.1% in the year to September 2018, followed by the East Midlands region which increased by 6.0% over the year. House prices in London fell by 0.3% in the year to September 2018. London house price have been falling over the year since March 2018.

See the [economic statement](#).

Notes to editors

1. The UK House Price Index (HPI) is published on the second or third Wednesday of each month with Northern Ireland figures updated quarterly. The October 2018 UK HPI will be published at 9.30am on Wednesday 19 December 2018. See [calendar of release dates](#).
2. We have made some changes to improve the accuracy of the UK HPI. We are not publishing average price and percentage change for new builds and existing resold property as done previously because there are not currently enough new build transactions to provide a reliable result. This means that in this month's UK HPI reports, new builds and existing resold property are reported in line with the sales volumes currently available.
3. The UK HPI revision period has been extended to 13 months, following a review of the revision policy (see [calculating the UK HPI](#) section 4.4). This ensures the data used is more comprehensive.
4. Sales volume data is also available by property status (new build and existing property) and funding status (cash and mortgage) in our [downloadable data tables](#). Transactions involving the creation of a new register, such as new builds, are more complex and require more time to process. Read [revisions to the UK HPI data](#).
5. Revision tables have been introduced for England and Wales within the downloadable data. Tables will be available in csv format. See [about the UK HPI](#) for more information.
6. Data for the UK HPI is provided by HM Land Registry, Registers of Scotland, Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and the Valuation Office Agency.
7. The UK HPI is calculated by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. It applies a hedonic regression model that uses the various sources of data on property price, in particular HM Land Registry's Price Paid Dataset, and attributes to produce estimates of the change in house prices each month. Find out more about the methodology used from the [ONS](#) and [Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency](#).
8. The [UK Property Transaction statistics](#) are taken from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) monthly estimates of the number of residential and non-residential property transactions in the UK and its constituent countries. The number of property transactions in the UK is highly

seasonal, with more activity in the summer months and less in the winter. This regular annual pattern can sometimes mask the underlying movements and trends in the data series so HMRC also presents the UK aggregate transaction figures on a seasonally adjusted basis. Adjustments are made for both the time of year and the construction of the calendar, including corrections for the position of Easter and the number of trading days in a particular month.

9. UK HPI seasonally adjusted series are calculated at regional and national levels only. See [data tables](#).
10. The first estimate for new build average price (April 2016 report) was based on a small sample which can cause volatility. A three-month moving average has been applied to the latest estimate to remove some of this volatility.
11. Work has been taking place since 2014 to develop a single, official HPI that reflects the final transaction price for sales of residential property in the UK. Using the geometric mean, it covers purchases at market value for owner-occupation and buy-to-let, excluding those purchases not at market value (such as re-mortgages), where the 'price' represents a valuation.
12. Information on residential property transactions for England and Wales, collected as part of the official registration process, is provided by HM Land Registry for properties that are sold for full market value.
13. The HM Land Registry dataset contains the sale price of the property, the date when the sale was completed, full address details, the type of property (detached, semi-detached, terraced or flat), if it is a newly built property or an established residential building and a variable to indicate if the property has been purchased as a financed transaction (using a mortgage) or as a non-financed transaction (cash purchase).
14. Repossession sales data is based on the number of transactions lodged with HM Land Registry by lenders exercising their power of sale.
15. For England, this is shown as volumes of repossession sales recorded by Government Office Region. For Wales, there is a headline figure for the number of repossession sales recorded in Wales.
16. The data can be downloaded as a .csv file. Repossession sales data prior to April 2016 is not available. Find out more information about [repossession sales](#).

17. Background tables of the raw and cleansed aggregated data, in Excel and CSV formats, are also published monthly although Northern Ireland is on a quarterly basis. They are available for free use and re-use under the Open Government Licence.
18. HM Land Registry's mission is to guarantee and protect property rights in England and Wales.
19. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. It operates as an executive agency and a trading fund and its running costs are covered by the fees paid by the users of its services. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.
20. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth in excess of £4 trillion, including around £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 25 million titles showing evidence of ownership for some 85% of the land mass of England and Wales.
21. For further information about HM Land Registry visit www.gov.uk/land-registry
22. Follow us on Twitter [@HMLandRegistry](https://twitter.com/HMLandRegistry), our [blog](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#)

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