**SMMT NEW CAR REGISTRATIONS**  
5 June 2023 (data for May 2023)  
**Hi-res charts available via Dropbox:** <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lckahx9v3swojji/AACrjsqZpuP-6lf2hLbk_4uZa?dl=0>

**New car market maintains momentum with tenth month of growth**

1. New car registrations rise 16.7% to deliver 10th consecutive month of growth as supply continues to improve.
2. Market records longest uninterrupted period of growth since 2015 – but remains -21.0% down on 2019.
3. Drivers continue switch to electric vehicles as BEV volumes grow 58.7% to take 16.9% market share.

**Monday 5 June, 2023** The UK new car market has posted its longest uninterrupted period of expansion for eight years, as registrations grew 16.7% in May to reach 145,204 units according to the latest figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).1 The performance marks 10 consecutive months of growth, although registrations remain -21.0% below pre-pandemic 2019 levels.2

Large fleet registrations continued to drive the growth, up by 36.9% to 76,207 units, reflecting a regularisation of supply following challenging supply issues in 2022. Registrations to private buyers fell slightly by -0.5% to 65,932 cars, while smaller business fleets registered 3,065 units, a year on year rise of 22.5%.

Petrol-powered cars remain Britain’s best sellers, accounting for 57.1% of all registrations.3 Alternatively powered vehicles, however, continue to make up an ever-larger share of the market, with plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) rising 23.0% to reach a 6.2% market share and hybrids (HEVs) growing 22.2% to comprise 12.3% of all registrations. Reflecting the dramatic transformation of the market over the last three years, May saw battery electric vehicles consolidate their position as the UK’s second most popular power train. A further 24,513 joined the road during the month, up 58.7% on May last year to secure a 16.9% market share.

Of the new cars registered in May, lower mediums, superminis and dual purpose were the most popular, comprising 86.3% of the market. There are now zero emission options available in every single segment of the market, with more than 80 models – around a quarter of all new car models available – from which to choose. Furthermore, these new BEVs have an average battery range of 236 miles, well in excess of UK drivers’ average weekly mileage of around 100 miles.4

While billions of industry investment is delivering choice and growth, however, the speed of the shift needs to accelerate. From January we expect to see the Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate in force, which will set a minimum quota for new battery electric vehicle registrations for every brand. While the models and volumes will be available, ensuring the market demand is there will require action from every stakeholder. A supportive fiscal framework, simplified planning processes, faster grid connections and the provision of a nationwide network of reliable, affordable and sustainable charge points will give drivers considering the switch the confidence to purchase. Investments are coming but regulated public charger targets commensurate with those for new vehicle registrations would give drivers greater confidence and help accelerate the UK’s zero emission transition.

**Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive,** said, “After the difficult, Covid-constrained supply issues of the last few years, it’s good to see the new car market maintain its upward trend and the fact that growth is, increasingly, green growth is hugely encouraging. Transforming the market nationwide, however, and at an even greater pace means we must increase demand and help any reticent driver overcome any concerns about electric vehicles. This will require every stakeholder – industry, government, chargepoint operators and energy companies – to play their part, accelerating investment to drive decarbonisation.”

**Notes to editors**

1 December 2014-September 2015  
2 May 2019 registrations: 183,724  
3 Petrol and MHEV petrol  
4 SMMT news release: [Britain’s new car market boosted by battery electric vehicle choice](https://media.smmt.co.uk/battery-electric-car-choice/)

**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 in the UK. It supports the interests of the UK automotive industry at home and abroad, promoting the industry to government, stakeholders and the media.

The automotive industry is a vital part of the UK economy and integral to supporting the delivery of the agendas for levelling up, net zero, advancing global Britain, and the plan for growth. Automotive-related manufacturing contributes £67 billion turnover and £14 billion value added to the UK economy, and typically invests around £3 billion each year in R&D. With more than 182,000 people employed in manufacturing and some 780,000 in total across the wider automotive industry, we account for 10% of total UK goods exports with more than 130 countries importing UK produced vehicles, generating £77 billion of trade.

More than 25 manufacturing brands build more than 70 models of vehicles in the UK, plus an array of specialist small volume manufacturers, supported by some 2,500 supply chain businesses and some of the world's most skilled engineers. Many of these jobs are outside London and the Southeast, with wages that are around 14% higher than the UK average. The automotive sector also supports jobs in other key sectors – including advertising, finance and logistics.

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/)

**Broadcasters:** SMMT has an ISDN studio and access to expert spokespeople, case studies and regional representatives.

**SMMT media contacts**  
Paul Mauerhoff                       07809 522181            [pmauerhoff@smmt.co.uk](mailto:pmauerhoff@smmt.co.uk)  
James Boley                           07927 668565            [jboley@smmt.co.uk](mailto:jboley@smmt.co.uk)  
Rebecca Gibbs                       07708 480889            [rgibbs@smmt.co.uk](mailto:rgibbs@smmt.co.uk)  
Scott Clarke                            07912 799959            [sclarke@smmt.co.uk](mailto:sclarke@smmt.co.uk)  
Emma Butcher                        07880 191825            [ebutcher@smmt.co.uk](mailto:ebutcher@smmt.co.uk)