



# 2022 Indicator Report

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the classic vehicle industry



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# Foreword



I have been in love with cars ever since I can remember.

I played with toy cars, I watched Bond films for the cars and my Barbie had a Ferrari. As a kid I wanted to customise, decorate and re-style everything - nothing was safe! I even tried to convince my Dad to let me chop off the roof on his work van. Creativity and a magnetism for four wheels have been part of my life since day dot and these are two inherent traits, I'm eminently grateful to my Dad, Michael, for.

So, I was never going to settle for a 9 to 5 and fortunately my creativity has taken me where I want to go in life. Through my experiences in fashion, social media, car customisation, art and television I've been fortunate to meet the most fascinating groups of people. Inspiring collectives full of passion, fuelling each-other and inspiring those around them. But the space I've seen this the most is the car industry; especially with customs and classics. There are so many car sub-cultures, each impacting and contributing to society through their lifestyles. Thanks to social media, we can all share in the dedication and camaraderie - experiencing the influence and significance of our extraordinary car community of far reaching tribes with a variety of views surrounding the same core interest.

The world is changing fast and with technology evolving, it's important not to lose sight of how important classics, modern classics and future classics are within this big scene. I own a small collection of classic cars, of varying ages, and I'm confident they are an investment culturally, creatively, and financially. I feel extremely proud to be part of such a vibrant movement, an evolving industry with so much love.

Footman James, through this insightful report, provide invaluable information; facts to back-up what some of us know and to valuably inform a wider audience. After all, our tribes, within sub-cultures, and then within the vehicle industry, are bringing a lot to the table and there's plenty of room at this party for all of us. We need to stick together and carry on with our classics; never losing sight of the significance our vehicles have had, and continue to have, on life.

## Helen Stanley

Artist, TV Presenter and Car Girl

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# The Owners

Our starting point is with the owners, we wanted to look at the people behind the classics and find out more about them. What's on their minds? What are the current hot topics? As well as understanding what attracted them to their classic of choice in the first place.

25% of the general public expressed an interest in owning a classic vehicle in the future <sup>(1)</sup>

## Page 5

Birmingham and Coventry are home to roughly 8% of the UK's classic and historic vehicles <sup>(2)</sup>

## Page 7

73% of enthusiasts stated that their classic was used for social and domestic use <sup>(3)</sup>

## Page 10

60% of enthusiasts say they run a vehicle for £1,000 or less annually <sup>(3)</sup>

## Page 11

Classic cars deliver a predicted return of 97% on investment over ten years <sup>(4)</sup>

## Page 14



(1) Driving the Future Survey by 7th Sense Research Ltd (October 2021)  
(2) Footman James Client Profile as of March 2022  
(3) FJ Indicator Survey (October 2021)  
(4) Vanarama Survey (2020)

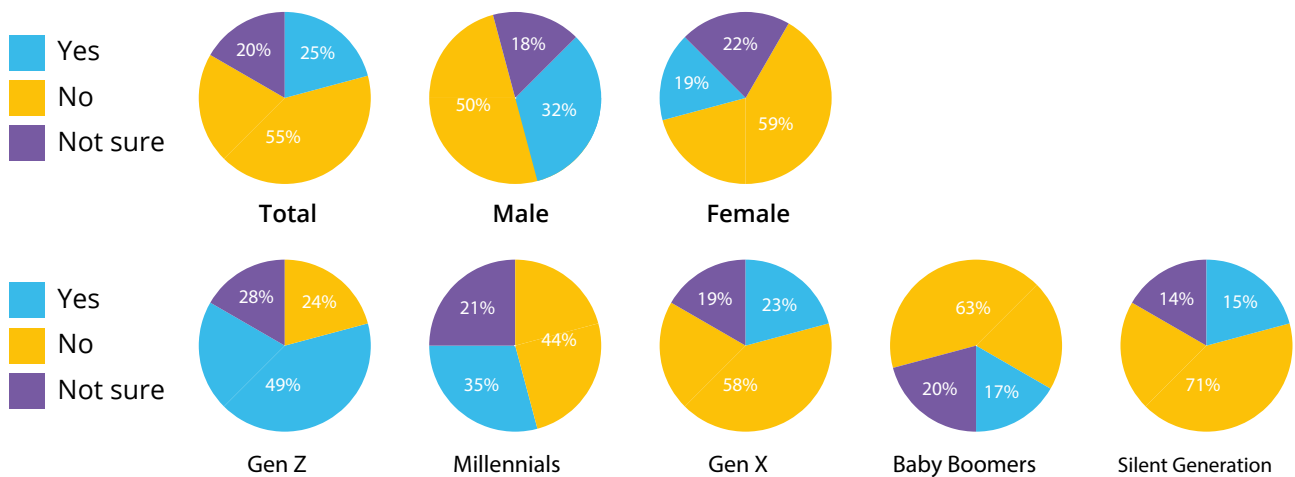
# What do the public think about classic vehicles?

It's safe to say that Footman James clients are fans of classic vehicles and representative of classic enthusiasts in general but what does the wider population think?

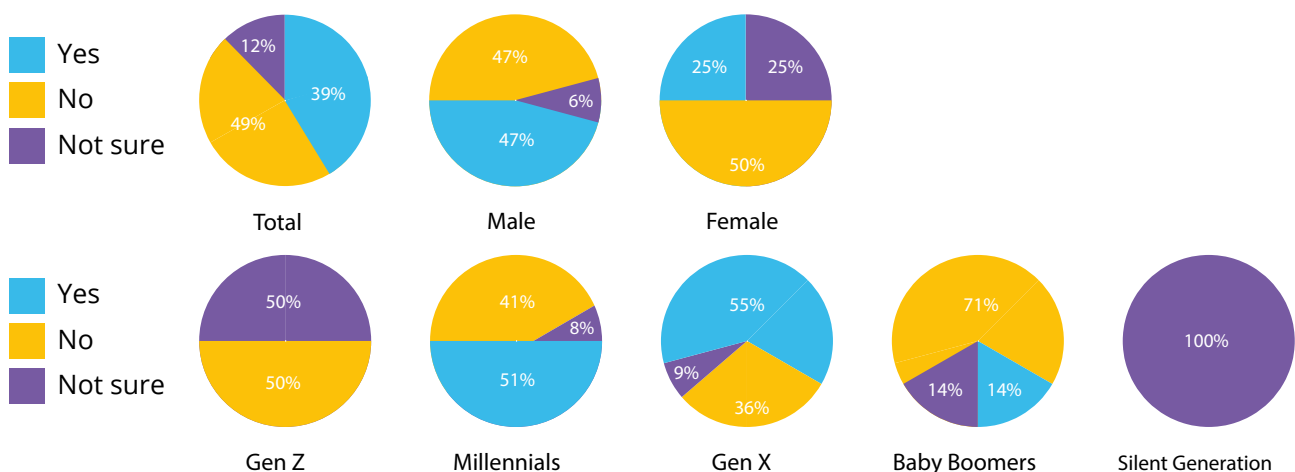
To provide a wider context for this report, FJ commissioned exclusive data from consumer and market insights specialist 7th Sense Research UK Ltd in October 2021. As part of its Driving the Future survey it elicited views from 2,943 UK residents with a roughly even split of male to female across all age ranges. 81% described themselves as regular vehicle users.

We wanted a look into the future, to understand what these average motorists felt about classics, and if they might be interested in taking the plunge.

## Would you consider owning a classic vehicle in the future?



## Would you consider joint ownership of a classic vehicle in the future?



**Gen-Z:** Born 1997-2012

**Millennial:** Born 1981-1996

**Generation X:** Born 1965-1980

**Baby Boomers:** Born 1946-1964

**Silent Generation:** Born 1928-1945



Nearly half of Gen Z, surveyed, born between 1997 and 2012, say they'd like to own a classic in future

# Who are classic owners?

Spend any time at a classic vehicle event and you'll probably get a good idea of the profile of a typical owner. Yes, many fit into a stereotypical profile, but things may be changing

Footman James' client profile of 83,082 as of March 2022, shows that 91% are male and 9% female, with the majority in their 50s and their 60s. In total, 11% are in their 40s and 8% in their 20s or 30s. Interestingly, older age is no barrier to enjoying a classic: just under 6% of policyholders are in their 80s and FJ has hundreds of drivers in their 90s. The oldest customer is 99 years old.

It follows that these people will probably have time on their hands to enjoy their vehicles, and 31% of policyholders classify themselves as retired or not employed. Looking at the occupations of the remaining 69%, there's no one profession with a penchant for classic vehicle ownership over any other, but engineering, the construction industry and the motor trade rank highest.

However, despite the limited diversity of owners, there are some signs that there is change afoot, as data commissioned by FJ from the 7th Sense Driving the Future survey (page 5) found that 25% of those questioned would consider owning a classic vehicle in the future and a further 20% weren't sure.

This may mean a shift to younger owners. Auction house Barrett-Jackson has reported that Gen X and millennial buyers made up 44% of all '80s and '90s vehicle auction sales in 2019 - reflecting a definite interest amongst those demographics.

“ 9%  
Just  
of survey respondents  
are female

## Charlotte Moseley

Head of Marketing, Footman James

“As a sector, we need to ensure we're more inclusive. For example, there have been many reports of steady growth in the number of female classic owners in the media, but stats have yet to prove that to be true.”

“From talking to enthusiasts and holding meets like Coffee & Chrome, we can see that the audience is slowly changing, and we know we need to continue to appeal to a wider spectrum of owners. This includes not only how and where we promote the FJ brand, but also in the way we support the community as a whole. We also need to look at our product offering to ensure we're able to cover vehicles, that are more appealing to a broader range of enthusiasts.”

Name - Georgia

Vehicle - 2005 Mitsubishi Evolution VIII

Age - 26

Job - Chef

Location - North Lincolnshire

“I chose to buy my Evo because it was completely standard and unmessed with. I use it throughout the summer for leisure drives, car shows with friends and just general day-to-day use.”





# Where do classic and historic vehicle owners live in the UK?

Classic vehicle owners are spread out from one end of the UK to the other, and Footman James really do have clients from Land's End to John O' Groats, so where are the hot spots of classic vehicle ownership on FJ's database?

It's hardly surprising that the more affluent and more densely populated regions of the UK are typically where classic vehicle ownership is higher, but the results are not consistent. Ownership is considered a hobby and not about saving money (as covered on page 8) so it follows that a greater disposable income will lead to more classics on driveways and in garages.

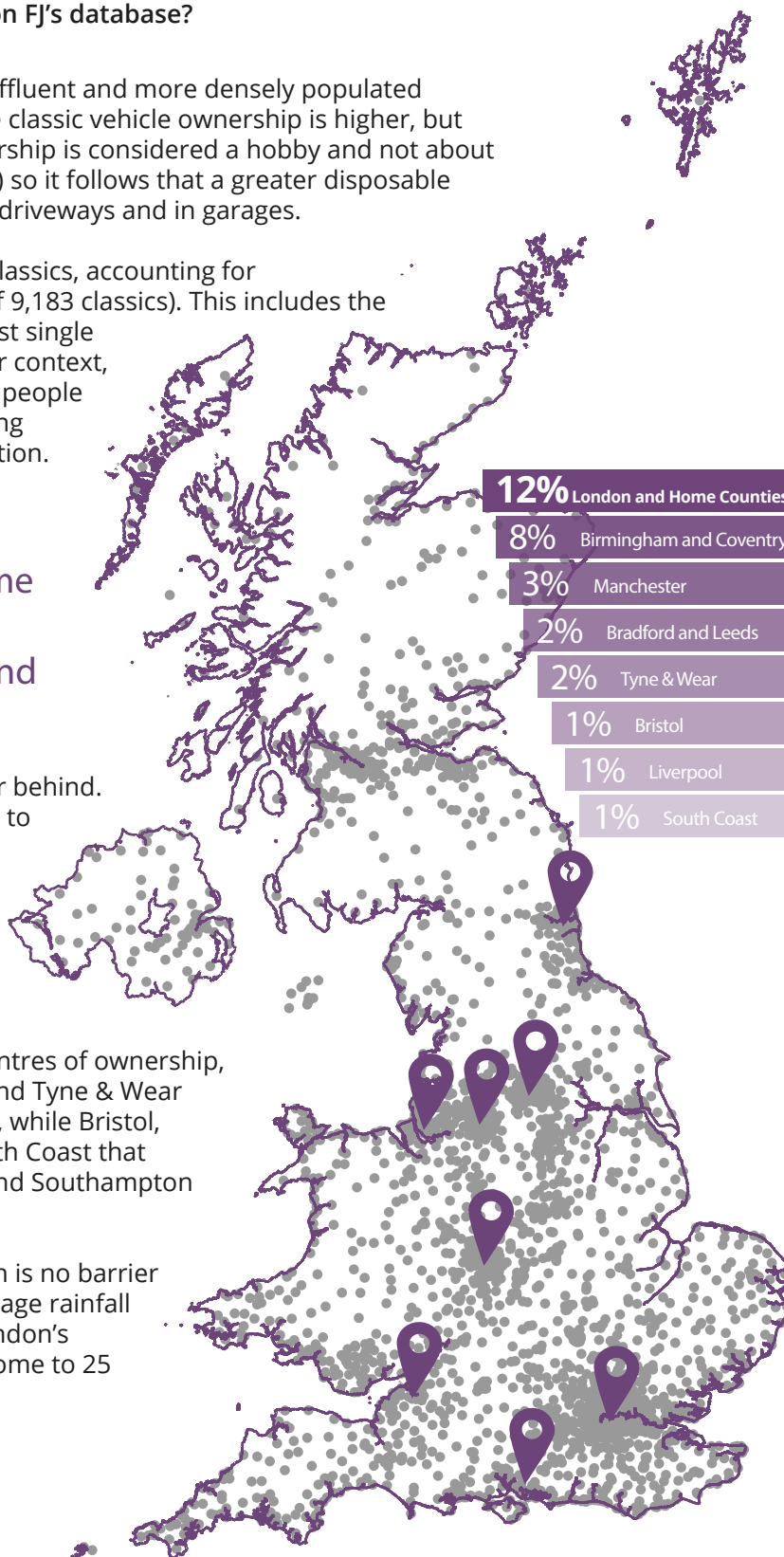
London is the UK's top hot spot for classics, accounting for roughly 12% of vehicle ownership (of 9,183 classics). This includes the area within the M25 and is the biggest single area of ownership in the country. For context, it's estimated that around 11 million people live in this part of the UK, representing about a fifth of the UK's total population.

“Birmingham and Coventry are home to roughly 8% of the UK's classic and historic vehicles

The UK's second largest city is not far behind. Birmingham and Coventry are home to roughly 8% of vehicles. This feels appropriate as the region was once the home of the country's automotive industry, producing many of the vehicles we consider essential classics.

After that it becomes hard to find centres of ownership, with Manchester, Bradford, Leeds, and Tyne & Wear accounting for between 3%-2% each, while Bristol, Liverpool and the section of the South Coast that covers Portsmouth, Bournemouth and Southampton account for about 1% each.

It does appear that a remote location is no barrier to enjoying a classic. Despite an average rainfall of 1,200mm a year (compared to London's 700mm), The Shetland Islands are home to 25 FJ policy holders.



# Why do people choose to own a classic?

All sorts of convoluted conclusions could be reached as to why people choose to buy and run a classic, but the answers are not as complex as you might think

Enthusiasts in the *FJ Indicator* survey had varied reasons as to why they have chosen to own a classic, but by far the most common was simply because it is 'fun'. A sizeable 64% stated it's simply because it was deemed a hobby; the opportunity to indulge in something that gives pleasure over time and maybe even allows you a degree of mindfulness. This was reinforced by comments that maintaining and restoring vehicles formed an important part of the pastime for many.

This was by far and away the strongest response, but 20% also stated that nostalgia was a prime motivator in their choice. This was backed up by statements that talked about the need to preserve and enjoy older vehicles, and let people see them in action, as well as stating that a classic is just more engaging to drive.



Only 3% of those questioned said that owning a classic was deemed an investment, which shows that enthusiasts don't consider their vehicles an asset akin to money in the bank

Only 3% of those questioned said that owning a classic was deemed an investment, which shows that enthusiasts don't consider their vehicles an asset akin to money in the bank. This is in contrast with the *Driving the Future* survey data, where 30% of those with classics viewed them as investments. Perhaps most surprisingly, only 1% responded by saying that low running costs were a motivator.

Also at the bottom of the result was style, and it appears that for enthusiasts, vehicles are not about following a fashion or trying to portray a certain type of image. Owners appear to be self-confident in the courage of their own convictions, rather than drawing the admiring glances of others.



Name - Jake  
Vehicle - 1953 Ford F100  
Age - 26  
Job - Mechanical Engineer  
Lives - Worcester

"I own a classic vehicle due to the pleasure involved in keeping them on the road and the possibilities to customise and or adapt to be modern vehicles are endless."



# How many classics do people own and what are they?

Some practice motoring monogamy, while others lavish their love on a collection

Just over 45% of those questioned for the *FJ Indicator survey* possess a single classic, while just over 36% have policies in place for between two and three vehicles. FJ does cater for the more committed collector, and 18% have four or more. This obviously covers the full range of classics, from motorbikes to buses.

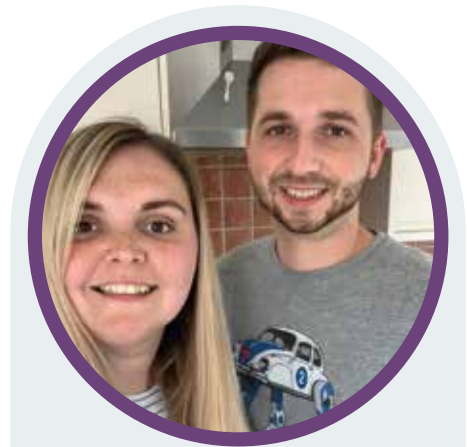
As an average, an enthusiast owns 1.9 vehicles in total. These numbers are slightly higher than average, as defined by the data from the *Driving the Future survey* (page 5). Of those questioned who were classic vehicle owners, 78% owned a single classic, while just 14% possessed between two and three. Only 8% said they owned four or more vehicles.

Footman James does cater for the more committed collector, and 18% have four or more vehicles

Multi-vehicle policies are popular. Currently 55% of policy holders have cover for more than one vehicle and the trend looks like it will continue on an upward trajectory, according to FJ.

Cars are more popular than bikes, accounting for 57% of vehicles insured with FJ, while bikes make up 37%. The remaining 6% contains a real mishmash of vehicles, ranging from ice cream vans to military trucks, as well as competition and kit cars, wedding hire vehicles, etc.

Further on in this report we tackle the thorny question of what constitutes a classic vehicle (page 21). At FJ, a vehicle can be deemed a classic when it's 20 years old or older. However, this is not always the case and can reduce for certain marques, subject to certain club membership, rarity or how the vehicle is being treated by the owner. This allows people to build collections around a particular marque or type of vehicle and this inevitably means that something newer, and maybe more practical or reliable, can live comfortably alongside one that's kept for high-days and holidays.



Name - Aimee

Vehicle - Lots

Age - 28

Job - Head Chef

Lives - Worcester

"We own five classics, all VWs, spanning 38 years in total.

The oldest is a 1972 Type 2

Westfalia while the newest is a

2010 Scirocco, but our

collection also includes an '80s

pick-up and a '90s hatchback."



# What do owners actually do with their classics?

There's no point in owning a heritage vehicle unless you're prepared to drive it, and it appears that day-to-day use is part and parcel of classic vehicle ownership

The first thing to understand is that classic vehicles really don't cover many miles a year. It turns out that 49% of enthusiasts who responded to the *FJ Indicator Survey* do about 2,000 miles a year. 24% manage up to 3,000 miles, while just 17% make it to 5,000 miles a year. At the higher end of the spectrum, just 2% of enthusiasts covered 10,000 miles a year in their classic.

The average mileage for enthusiasts is around 3,000 miles a year each, which makes them a little more active than most. This is possibly set to increase as vehicle use increases in the wake of lockdown.

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) 2020/21 report analysed the DVLA data and found that classics generally average 1,200 miles per year. In total, FJ clients drive 188 million miles a year, which is further than the distance to the Sun (147 million miles).

The spectre of unreliability doesn't appear to be a worry since the highest scoring response for reason for use, at 73%, was simply for social and domestic purposes.

This means that classics do some of the day-to-day driving that you'd expect more modern cars to undertake and that many owners don't consider their vehicle a 'garage queen'. Commuting with a classic doesn't appear to be an option, however, with only a handful (less than 6%) stating that was even a consideration.

Attending shows and events was cited as the prime motivator for 13% of those questioned, but 34% stated that social and domestic use as well as event attendance was important. It's not too hard to see how the rise in popularity of smaller, more informal car meetings, including FJ's own *Coffee & Chrome* gatherings, has made it easier to get out and meet like-minded individuals.

Despite owners' ambitions to use classics for general driving, long distance trips are not important to them. 22% cited touring as a consideration, comfortably ahead of those with motorsport ambitions: just 3% of those surveyed used their vehicles for competition or racing.



Name - David  
Vehicle - 1935 Sunbeam Lion Sidevalve  
Age - 63  
Job - Artist  
Lives - Nottinghamshire

"We should enjoy experiencing classics while we can. We have little idea of how proposed legislation might limit and curtail their continued use on our roads."

# Running costs and maintenance

It could cost you an arm and a leg to maintain your pride and joy, but who do enthusiasts trust and what does it cost them?

We know that a big part of owning a classic vehicle is about the love of the hobby (page 8), and it follows that DIY maintenance may be high on the agenda. When asked how they maintained their vehicles as part of the *FJ Indicator Survey*, 34% of enthusiasts said they were willing to tackle maintenance themselves, with a further 26% stating that they would attempt some tasks but seek support from a specialist workshop for more complicated jobs.

Taking a slightly different route, 16% of those questioned would undertake some form of maintenance, but then farm out to non-specialist workshops as needed. There was also a relatively small contingent that stated that they had no intention of getting their hands dirty, with 13% deferring all work to specialised workshops and 5% to non-specialised garages.

According to The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC), owners are quite prepared to put their hands in their pockets to keep their vehicles on the road. The *FBHVC 2020/21 National Historic Vehicle Survey* revealed that historic owners spend an average of £4,223 on their vehicles – a not insubstantial £351 a month.

Enthusiasts who responded to the *FJ Indicator Survey* are a little more frugal than that, with 60% saying that they can run their vehicle for £1,000 or less a year. In fact, as many as 40% reckoned they can keep the wheels on the road for less than £750. At the other end of the scale, those with bigger budgets were not afraid to spend when needed, and roughly 4% of those questioned said that running costs were more than £5,000 a year per vehicle.

Of course, there are always unexpected costs and many of the people spoken to talked of unexpected bills and restoration work – there were plenty of comments like: ‘too much,’ ‘scared to add it up,’ and ‘whatever it takes!’



60% of enthusiasts reckon they run a vehicle for £1,000 or less a year



Name - Margaret  
Vehicle - 1971 Morris 1000 Traveller  
Age - 88  
Job - Retired  
Lives - Surrey

“I keep Kate, my Morris Traveller, clean and polished, but my husband cares for the engine. The car is regularly serviced by a specialist, however.”

# Is the writing on the wall for classics?

Classic vehicle owners are determined to fulfil their motoring passions but concerns do exist

As a motor-mad nation we have been owning, fixing and driving our vehicles for decades and for many it's become a way of life. However, the future for classic vehicles is uncertain as the modern world makes its transition to 'greener' pastures.

Change is around the corner and around 49% of enthusiasts in the *FJ Indicator Survey* said the main challenge they expect to face over the next decade is environmental pressure; the majority highlighting what is clearly a concern. Around 11% cited parts availability as a future challenge, while only 4% selected market uncertainty as a reason for worry.

A quarter of those surveyed were concerned about government legislation alone being a barrier, which could signify concerns about wider social issues. Will driving a classic become unfashionable as we head towards net-zero carbon emissions? It's a thorny subject, and it's covered in more detail in the Business and Environment section of this report (page 37).

Enthusiasts also said they're worried about the availability of suitable fuel, a concern brought to life when E10 became the default petrol on the UK's forecourts last year.

The bigger environmental picture is discussed in more detail on page 36, but currently, the future looks bright and it's clear that the Department for Transport is aware of the concerns.

Rachel Maclean, the Conservative MP and minister responsible for transport decarbonisation, is on record stating that the Government is supportive of the classic vehicle community and understands its importance. In an interview with Autocar last year, she explained that there are no current plans to ban the use of classics.



Name - John  
Vehicle - Jaguar XK140 & Jaguar E-type  
Age -76  
Job - Retired  
Lives - North West

"My questions going forward are whether we're going to be able to continue running our cars, and are they going to slump in value? It takes a lot of money, time and effort to restore these cars. The classic industry is quite large now and if it disappeared there would be a lot of unemployed people."

## “ Rachel Maclean

MP and DfT minister responsible for transport decarbonisation

It's important to be clear that while we're phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles, at this stage we don't have any plans to actually ask people to remove existing or classic cars or older cars from the road

# How do owners purchase their classic vehicle?

Owners clubs, forums, magazines and dealers all help in the decision-making process, but advice from friends and family does have some sway in the purchase of a classic vehicle

There may be some logical reasons for buying a classic vehicle but, in many cases, it tends to be a 'heart' decision rather than a well-thought out 'head' decision.

It seems enthusiasts underlined that when they were probed on what prompted their decision, as part of the *FJ Indicator Survey*.

When asked the question 'When buying a classic vehicle, what influences your decision?' 11% said that input from family and friends was the sole influencing factor, but a further 15% augmented that with insight gained from magazines and forums. Owners clubs and forums were seen as useful in their own right with 11% of people citing them as the sole guiding influence.

Most telling were the 31% of respondents who ticked the box 'other' as the reason for their purchase, which were many and varied. It is clear that these acquisitions are based on feeling rather than reason – maybe not surprising as classics are an emotive subject.

The ability to own the car or bike of their childhood dream was a recurring theme, while others bought on impulse, having seen a specific car and wound up love-struck. Owners' comments included: 'It's the car I always wanted as a young man'. Another said, 'I bought this car because it doesn't tell me what to do', citing the joy of owning an 'analogue' vehicle.



Name - Keith

Vehicle - 1949 MG TC & 1961 MGA coupe

Age - 60

Job - Company director

Lives - Merseyside

"When choosing a replacement or additional car I look for something unusual or different. A car must be the best available and restored to the highest standard. I don't usually get influenced by anything other than whatever takes my fancy at the time, but I do consider the investment value but mainly to know I am not just throwing money away."



In many cases this is a 'heart' decision rather than a well-thought out 'head' decision, and the *FJ Indicator Survey* underlines this

A number of respondents pointed to the community aspect of owning a classic and the fact that they were 'buying a piece of history'. And then there are those who love to get their hands dirty with one respondent declaring, 'I enjoy the older technology and appreciate the workmanship'. In some cases, cars had been inherited and were seen as a family heirloom, so the decision-making process was bypassed.

# The next ten years

**Who will be making the move into classic vehicle ownership and why? The 2030 ban on traditionally powered vehicles will play its part**

The 2030 ban on vehicles solely using an internal combustion engine has presented something of an opportunity for investors. Note the word 'investor' rather than 'enthusiast', and it will be those with their eyes on the numbers who will most likely join the fray in terms of ownership of classic vehicles, be they cars, vans, motorcycles or buses.

In the '80s classic film *Wall Street*, lead character Gordon Gekko, proudly proclaimed 'greed is good' and although greed may not be an entirely appropriate description for the less vulgar machinations of the UK classic vehicle sector, people do tend to follow the money - and the internal combustion engine (ICE) ban presents something of a gilt-edged opportunity as more conventionally powered vehicles find their way to the scrapheap.

If you look outside the classic vehicle sector, there are signs that attitudes are shifting. A report done in 2020 by lease company Vanarama pitched classic car purchases against other traditional investments such as stocks, property, art, gold and savings accounts. Classic cars performed particularly well, with a predicted return of 97% on investment over ten years. Only stocks, at 107%, outperformed classic cars as a better long-term investment option.

It follows, then, that more investors will enter the market. Already, mainstream media outlets such as *This is Money* and the *Daily Mail* are detailing future classics and what the likely returns might be. Stories such as this are regular fodder for the likes of *Auto Express*, *Autocar*, and *Parkers*, but when generalist and financial publications are detailing sound investments to a broader, non-enthusiast audience looking for imaginative ways to make money, expect more unlikely classic owners to gate-crash the party.

The stereotypical classic owner, a white, middle-aged, middle-class male with an investment portfolio, will not disappear, but there are signs that another group is keen to get in on the act - young people. While many don't have the same financial means, they may have enough in their back pocket to purchase more affordable examples that have the potential to make money, rather than lose it. These somewhat savvy operators can see an opportunity that others have missed.

There are plenty of avenues open to those who want to buy future classics going cheap, be it *Auto Trader*, *Gumtree*, or *eBay*, but there are other more approachable online communities that provide ways to bag a bargain.

All that's required is a limited budget, and a bit of courage, to realise the joys of owning a low-mileage R-plate Volkswagen Gold GTI, a 1988 Ford Sierra, or a '90s Volvo 340. It sounds ridiculous, but people who preserve these quite ordinary vehicles could well be making sound investments, while indulging a passion that ticks all their automotive boxes.

 **Mike Duff**  
European Editor, *Car and Driver*

I predict the end of internal combustion will create a rise in interest in modern classics. This will likely take place at the very top of the market - where electric supercars are already proving a hard sell on emotion.



# Shared ownership: The perfect solution?

We wanted to know if enthusiasts would consider the shared ownership of a classic in the future. The results were resounding

As part of the *FJ Indicator survey*, only 22% of respondents said they'd be open to the idea of sharing a classic vehicle in the future. However, it's possible that existing vehicle owners are locked into their current mindset, and those that currently don't own a classic would be more receptive. When the *Driving the Future survey* (page 5) asked people if they would consider joint ownership, 49% were dead set against the idea, with the remainder keen or unsure.



Matt and Georgia say that sharing their Mitsubishi Evolution VIII has helped ease relationship tensions, by spending time in the workshop together

Despite the landslide verdict, we found there are still people out there practising the model successfully. With the cost of motoring on the rise, could dividing the costs of classic ownership be the answer?

Father-and-son team Ian and John both look after a pre-war Austin 7 Ulster replica. As a car they'd both wanted for years, it made sense to go 50-50.

"As long as you have a certain level of trust, sharing a classic can work just fine," says Ian. "Find someone who's like-minded in their approach towards maintenance, driving and vehicle use. If one member of the syndicate isn't as sympathetic or mechanically minded, disagreements can happen."

"We rarely have to consider who's going to use the car and when. We tend to use the car together. Classics often act as tickets to events, and shared ownership can be a great way of having experiences you might not otherwise get the opportunity for."

It can work for couples, too. Matt and Georgia say that sharing their Mitsubishi Evolution VIII has helped ease relationship tensions, by spending time in the workshop together.

"We've already bought a house together, so a classic car seemed like the next sensible investment," says Georgia, who usually completes any vehicle maintenance or modifications herself. "Matt and I usually head down to our storage facility on a Saturday morning and spend the full day together."

Matt and Georgia's Evo also gets a lot of track action, with the couple splitting driving duties and the event entry fee.

If you've found a classic you love but can't afford, shared ownership can present the perfect proposition – as long as you find the perfect partner.

# It's all about 'community'

Is it possible for enthusiasts indulging in their passion to inspire others, kickstart initiatives and maybe even open the door to a new genre of classic ownership?

The impact of COVID-19 and lockdown affected many, and in response Reverend Adam Gompertz founded a rather unique, award-winning online community called REVS.

"The story of REVS really starts when I was at theological college in 2011, having left the automotive design world to become a Vicar. I had felt a sense of grief as I left the sketch pads and clay models to start writing essays. The two worlds just seemed so different, but it was at college that I was inspired and challenged to think about what 'church' could mean and whether those disparate worlds could be brought together. REVS is the result."

"What started life as an annual car show to bring members of the church and local community together has now grown into a community of over 7,200 followers on Facebook, a YouTube channel with 1,600 subscribers, and three local REVS cars and coffee-style groups that meet in various locations across the Midlands."

"The local groups began in 2017. REVS Shrewsbury, REVS Enville, and REVS Wellesbourne are held each month, and are designed to be a place people can gather to share their passion for cars. They are also spaces where people can find a listening ear if they are struggling, and even the offer of a prayer. They are designed to be places of restoration, restoring people as well as vehicles, and can be accessed by people of faith, no faith, and everything in between."

"It was during lockdown when people could not meet that REVS seemed to find its place within the wider automotive world. Faced with isolation, and an end to live events, we started the REVS Limiter online community."

"May 2020 saw our first 'virtual' event, a weekend of streamed video content provided by motoring celebrities, members of the automotive media, car designers and everyday enthusiasts. It served as a point of contact for people who felt alone as they could interact with the content, as much was streamed live. Facebook proved to be an ideal medium for the event as many people already used it. That first weekend saw the total number of people engaging approach 3,000."

"This led to a further five such events, the highlight being REVS Refuelled and Ready which was presented live at Bicester Heritage and even featured track tests of various vehicles. Again, it included media professionals such as Alex Goy, Mike Brewer, Jimmy de Ville, as well as designers Peter Stevens, and Julian Thompson. There were also specialists such as Aston Martin Works, Morgan Motor Company, Blue Diamond Riley Services, and Classic Performance Engineering in attendance."

"REVS is not the product of just one person. What makes it work is the team of people from different walks of life who want to get involved, to provide content, to share their vehicles and to tell their story. We are not a club, but rather a community where each person can feel included, whether they own an Aston, an Austin or have just a poster on their garage wall."



Adam Gompertz (left) and some of the REVS community

# From one man and a computer to a million followers

Dave Edmonston, founder of Pistonheads, describes how he built a massive community from humble beginnings

Just over 20 years ago, David started a motoring revolution in his spare bedroom and he's never looked back.

"PistonHeads was created to address the need for daily motoring news," said Dave. "It sounds far-fetched now, but in 1999 publishers were very reluctant to publish content online. Fears of it being copied or consumed without direct recompense all seemed very real."

"As a consumer however, it was frustrating to enjoy all the chat on newsgroups and email lists but have to wait a week or a month to get the 'official' version of the news."

"Adding some structure to the chat and titbits of news seemed like a relatively simple thing to do," added Dave. "An 'online magazine' that could be updated daily was an exciting prospect. Dial in a slightly disrespectful editorial tone and PH soon found a foothold."

"The community aspect came some months later. Experimentation with allowing users to discuss the topics of the day led to a bit of an epiphany. By blurring the software lines between news and forums, I could create a fully integrated website the likes of which simply didn't exist elsewhere. Other opportunities for users to submit content in the form of their virtual garage, video upload, integration with the classifieds etc, made PH truly unique in that era."

"All this came at a time when the internet was connecting people in a manner never seen before – you could find fellow enthusiasts online now and go enjoy some tyre-kicking without joining a one-make owners club. The zeitgeist... Timing was everything."



By blurring the software lines between news and forums, I could create a fully integrated website the likes of which simply didn't exist elsewhere



Dave Edmonston



# The changing role of social media

The exponential growth of social media has transformed the way we communicate with fellow enthusiasts

On page 17, we discussed the power of social media as a force for good; the ideal tool for bringing like-minded people together. There's now a Facebook group for almost any niche of the classic scene, regardless of how rare or exclusive your vehicle is. Many enthusiasts now use social platforms to ask for advice, hunt for rare parts or advertise their vehicle for sale, with most traditional message board forums now suffering a decline in users as a result.

Instagram, which typically favours aspirational visual content, has evolved from a photo sharing app into a bona fide retail platform. Classic dealers are now using social media platforms to entice customers – even high-end 'blue chip' specialists are utilising Instagram to engage with potential clients.

In the recent Driving The Future survey (page 5), millennials and Gen Z'ers were far more likely to seek advice from YouTube, and the amount of user-generated content available to watch on the platform continues to expand. Footman James partner Harry Metcalfe has used YouTube to build an engaged audience for his Harry's Garage series, which takes his 500,000+ subscribers (at the time of writing) on journeys in some of the most exciting classics ever made.

But while classics are a constant, social media platforms are anything but. In the decade since Instagram was acquired by Facebook, several new platforms have arrived on the scene. The incredible pace of technological change means it's impossible to predict how we'll be consuming content in 2032 – the platform may not even exist yet.

“ John Lomas  
Blue Diamond Riley Services

“As a specialist business, with over 40 years' experience maintaining repairing and restoring pre-war vehicles, it would be easy to ignore social media in the belief that our typical customers don't use it. However, that's not the way we think.”

“Social media has massively changed over the seven years we've owned the business. It is now a key channel in promoting our business and more importantly keeping in touch with our customers and keeping them up to date with what we are doing. We're not doing anything revolutionary but understand how we separate the different channels and use them to best effect.”

“We see Facebook as the best channel for talking directly with customers, especially the live aspect. We used it for our Monte Carlo Classique rally in 2019 and 2020, and quick Facebook Live posts over the four-day event allowed our customers and followers to experience the event all the way from Glasgow to Monaco, without the need to leave the comfort of their armchair!”

“Instagram is all about strong visuals, and we are learning. We plan to develop what we offer, as we're mainly using it as an extension of Facebook. Twitter is different and we see it as a more industry-related platform. It allows us to interact with journalists, key industry figures and influencers.”

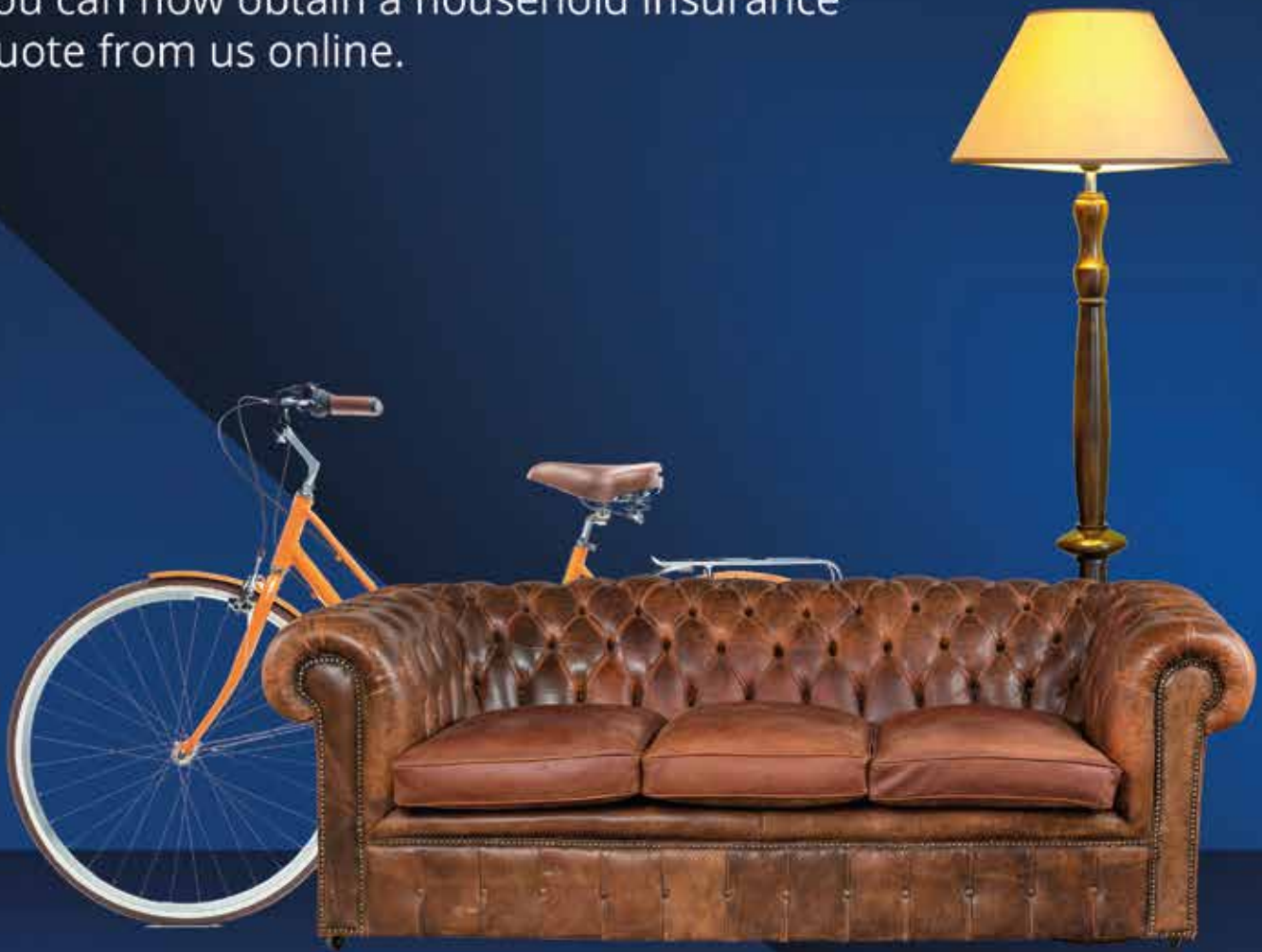
“Social media does have its pitfalls - you have to be careful what you post, especially what's in the background of a workshop shot. There have been some unexpected benefits and, in addition to advertising via Facebook and Instagram, we have also filled our last two job roles via Facebook.”

“I don't think that social media will fully replace printed material like magazines, or the physical car and coffee meets, but it is now a key part of both our PR and advertising. Ignore it at your peril!”



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# The Vehicles

The term 'classic vehicle' covers a lot of ground, from the everyday to the exotic, the beautiful to the brutal. For this section we wanted to find just what's on the road, is the number of classics in use rising or falling and even explore how you can define what a classic vehicle is.

Only 10% of enthusiasts would identify a classic vehicle by age alone <sup>(1)</sup>

## Page 21

There are nearly 180,000 classic cars off the road at any one time - that's roughly 36%, more than one in three <sup>(2)</sup>

## Page 23

"We have first-hand seen the surge in interest for '80s/'90s/'00s hot hatches and European performance cars, and we see this carrying on for a long time."

## Page 26

The way that enthusiasts enjoy their classics is changing, too, with younger owners, in particular, increasingly making use of groups on social media

## Page 28

"The general classic scene really needs to work out how to attract young people, but it's in a great position to do that..."

## Page 30



(1) FJ Indicator Survey (October 2021)  
(2) DVLA Database as of 2021

# What defines a classic?

We may not achieve a definition we all agree on, but isn't it time we set some clearer parameters?

The wider automotive scene is a rich tapestry of different vehicles and owners, and the fact is, that's what makes it so appealing. To each of us, our pride and joy means something different. Whether it's sentimental value, investment potential, or ultimate driving pleasure, one owner's definition of a 'classic' can be very different from the next. For many, it's our classic that defines us, rather than vice versa.

More vehicles than ever before are now entering the fringes of classic consideration. Examples of everyday models from the '80s and '90s are now reaching new heights at auction. Vehicles once considered automotive 'white goods' seem to have disappeared from our roads faster than you can say 'my dad had one of those'. Could value and rarity be the defining factors of classic status?

In the recent *FJ Indicator Survey*, we asked enthusiasts for their opinion. The results were far from binary: only 10% of respondents would identify a classic vehicle by age alone, and less than 1% selected rarity or value. A clear majority told us that the defining factors of a classic are a combination of age, rarity and design.

FIVA, the *Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens*, defines a historic vehicle as 'a mechanically propelled road vehicle which is at least 30 years old, preserved and maintained in a historically correct condition, not used as a means of daily transport, and which is therefore a part of our technical and cultural heritage.'

The DVLA define it differently, granting 'historic' (classic) status to vehicles built or first registered more than 40 years ago.



Traditional definitions risk excluding more modern heroes from the nineties and noughties

Herein lie the grey areas. Both of those definitions would mean excluding more modern heroes from the nineties and noughties, many of which are now regarded as bona fide classics. Does the stipulation that a vehicle must be 'mechanically propelled' mean it is no longer a classic if converted to run on electricity? And who says you can't use it every day?



Name - Kevin

Vehicle - 1971 VW Bay Window Camper

Age - 56

Job - Motor trade

Lives - Surrey

"When I started driving cars, a newish car was too expensive so I got an old VW Beetle. My friends had much more modern vehicles than me, but I very quickly realised they could not fix or maintain them as they needed to be plugged in for scheduled servicing and fault finding. My old Beetle was so easy to maintain and fix, and so my enjoyment of classics began."



# Is classic vehicle ownership on the rise?

Are there more classics on UK roads? That's surprisingly difficult to answer, and not just because a 'classic' is famously difficult to define, as we've seen



Name - Clair

Vehicle - 1962 Ford Galaxie 500 XL

Age - 40

Job - Intellectual property administrator

Location - Berkshire

"Owning a classic has been a dream of my husband's for a very long time. We both love cars and moving house gave us the ideal opportunity to invest. We discussed what style of car we liked and wanted: a V8, and something big, but that was it. She popped up local to us and five and half hours later she was on the driveway."

The DVLA's database\* includes 247,618 cars whose build date is unclear. Looking at the manufacturer of those vehicles – a roll call of automotive greats from times past, from Austin Healey to Wolseley – it's clear most, if not all, are likely to fall within the DVLA's definition of a classic, so have therefore been incorporated into our numbers.

By trawling through the latest complete dataset and comparing it with the previous years' data we discover that, yes, there are indeed more classics on the road.

To some extent that might sound obvious. No matter whose definition you use – whether it's the DVLA's rolling 40-year rule, or FIVA's 30-year regime – with each passing year, a new tranche of old iron gets inducted into the historic category.

In 2019, the DVLA recognised 457,918 classic cars (154,817 of which were SORNed), a figure that rose to 479,975 in 2020 as those registered up to 1980 came into the fold. In 2021, as we awaited the arrival of the class of 1981, that figure stands at 496,477 – nearly 1.4% of all registered cars in the UK.

By FIVA's 30-year definition, the numbers are more impressive, rising from 679,516 in 2019, to 739,848 in 2020 and 803,478 today.

To some enthusiasts, anything over 20 years old is potentially worthy of classic status, opening the door to nearly 1.7m cars in 2019, 1.9m in 2020, and more than 2.2m in 2021.

The attrition rate is commendably low, too. While some classics no doubt succumb to the scrapheap, their loss is more than made up by the arrival of fresh imports. In fact, the 457,918 classic cars the DVLA recognised in 2019 had grown to 461,859 a year later, an increase of 3,941.

Whichever yardstick you prefer to use, it's clear the number of classic cars on our roads is only set to increase.



In 2019, the DVLA recognised 457,918 classic cars (154,817 of which were SORNed), a figure that rose to 479,975 in 2020. In 2021, as we awaited the arrival of the class of 1981, that figure stands at 496,477

\*Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), VEH0126: Licensed vehicles by make and model and year of manufacture, VEH0127: Vehicles with a Statutory Off Road Notification by make and model and year of manufacture. Analysis conducted in January 2022.



# How many classics are not on the road and why?

Despite the availability of free historic vehicle tax, the number of classics declared as SORN appears to be increasing

While classic ownership is clearly on the rise, so too is the number of vehicles declared as SORN, the subject of a Statutory Off-Road Notification.

The reasons vary widely for each individual vehicle – whether laid up in storage, parked in a showroom, patiently awaiting restoration, or abandoned in a field, rusting into oblivion.

The numbers of each are impossible to quantify. The DVLA data\* shows that just over 94,613 cars built before 1981 (the DVLA's 40-year definition of a classic) are declared as SORN. If we apply FIVA's 30-year definition of a classic, that figure jumps to 331,809.

However, neither of these figures consider the number of vehicles for which the DVLA has no recorded date of manufacture. Today, that number stands at a nice round 85,000. If we assume most of these are old enough to qualify as classics – a reasonable assumption looking at the list of marques – then it seems safe to say that nearly 180,000 classic cars are off the road at any one time. That's roughly 36% of all classics; more than one in three.

Then there's the growing number of vehicles that spend their lives in classic race, rally, and competition guise. Most are not required to be road legal, confined instead to historic race circuits and hillclimbs, and therefore have no need to be registered. Some have perhaps never been near a DVLA database in their lives if they were borne solely out of competition.

For these, we have no data. But what we can say is that the number of cars declared as SORN has been increasing, rising from 154,817 in 2019, although the spectre of the pandemic may have played a hand here.

Given that classics can now apply for historic vehicle tax exemption rather than the bi-annual dance of SORning at the end of a show season, this rise may point to a growing trend of long-term disuse.



Name - Julie

Vehicle - 1958 Simca Aronde Plein Ciel

Age - 54

Job - Manufacturing

Location - Hampshire

"I have always been into classic cars and I like something different to drive. I'm very lucky - my brother is an engineer and maintains my car, but I also love helping him in his garage, which is what I'm doing at the moment as my classic car is being restored."



There are nearly 180,000 classic cars off the road at any one time – that's roughly 36%, more than one in three

\*Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), VEH0126: Licensed vehicles by make and model and year of manufacture, VEH0127: Vehicles with a Statutory Off Road Notification by make and model and year of manufacture

# What are the most popular classics?

There's a mind-boggling variety of classic vehicles on the UK's roads but, even if you own something quite common, you don't have to follow anyone else's theory of what it should or shouldn't look like

Whichever way you cut it, the Morris Minor is Footman James' most insured vehicle for their personal lines clients, at 2% of their vehicle database of 134,126. Including the standard saloon, Traveller, and convertible, it's the winner hands down. Maybe this isn't too surprising – its production run lasted 23 years and over 1.6 million were produced in total. Second place goes to that other bastion of British motoring, the MGB (including the GT and roadster), while third place is taken by its baby brother, the MG Midget.

The top ten insured vehicles list is almost an even split of cars and bikes, which is interesting because Footman James insures roughly 40% more cars. The Lambretta Li is the most insured bike on the books, with the Honda CB Series close behind. That covers a lot of variations, but the focus is firmly on the older models. Interestingly, the third most popular is the Honda CBR series, representing a more contemporary sports bike audience.



Name - Jordan  
Vehicle - Morris Minor 1000  
Age - 22  
Occupation - Bar worker  
Lives - West Midlands  
"I use my classic daily, for going out to work, events or even just scenic trips. I maintain it at home, on the drive or in the garage, depending how big the job - every week I check it over, grease components, and top up oil and water when needed."

Name - Nigel  
Vehicle - Morris Minor 1000  
Age - 70  
Occupation - Retired  
Lives - Kent  
"I own classic cars and bikes because I like working on them - they have a soul, unlike today's vehicles. I'm a retired engineer, so I restore and maintain all my vehicles myself in my own workshop. It keeps me active and I enjoy it."



## Everyone's different

Putting your own mark on your classic makes things much more interesting, and although the Morris Minor is Footman James' most insured vehicle, that doesn't mean they all look the same.

Both Jordan and Nigel own examples of the iconic Morris, but the two cars are worlds apart. Jordan's reflects his interest in restomod and custom cars, while Nigel's stays traditional: it's a car that's been in his family for nearly 60 years. Interestingly for both owners, the Minors are just one of several vehicles they have access to. Jordan's other drive is a Mazda RX8, but his family own some early generations of the VW Golf, while Nigel enjoys two classic motorbikes and is currently restoring a Sunbeam Alpine.

# An ordinary world

Beauty, as they say, is in the eye of the beholder. That's certainly true in the classic scene - exemplified perfectly by the growing popularity of a new type of 'undesirable' cherished vehicle

Between 1980 and 1998, British Leyland and Rover sold over two million examples of their supermini for the ages - the iconic Metro. It's a car that once seemed to line every street in Britain. But when did you last see one on the road?

Welcome to the wonderful world of vehicles where ordinariness and rarity combine to create a growing niche section of the classic community. Here, cars like the Metro reign supreme, and carry far more weight than your common-or-garden Italian supercar.

For a vehicle to qualify, it must meet a few loose parameters. AMGs or RS models need not apply; the lower the specification, the better. If a search on HowManyLeft.co.uk delivers results of fifty or less, you may well have hit the jackpot.

Owners often don't plan on taking their 'undesirables' to concours events, choosing instead to use them every day, enjoying the nostalgia generated. A usually-dull commute is often brightened by a car you used to see on every street corner, but has now faded into obscurity.

Welcome to the wonderful world of vehicles where ordinariness and rarity combine



Name - Chris  
Vehicle - 1993 Renault 19  
Age - 29  
Job - Electrician  
Lives - Doncaster

"When I was growing up, I spent a lot of time with my Grandad, and he always had Renaults," says Chris, proud owner of a recently-acquired 1993 Renault 19 hatchback. "Earlier this year I started searching for a Renault 11, a car that holds fond memories for me. It turned out that finding one was pretty much impossible, and when I saw the 19 for sale locally, I just went for it. Sitting in the interior brings back so many memories. It's given me a lot of joy for the money I spent, and I haven't passed another on the road yet. If I do decide to get rid of it at any point, my dad has already claimed first refusal."



# Values and trends – what’s on the horizon?

Online auction company, The Market, has first-hand knowledge of classic vehicle prices and a wealth of data at its fingertips. Lead Consignment Specialist David Hayhow describes what’s in store

“After speaking to energetic and passionate buyers and sellers on the phone every day, or directly with them in person at our HQ or at the shows we’ve attended this year, I can only see the market continuing to thrive. From our own perspective (and considering everything that’s happened politically and socially), if the next five years in the marketplace are as good as the five we’ve just had, then we are very much looking forward to them.”

“The main things a classic should do is make you smile, get you twitching the curtains to see it on the driveway and get you up early on a Sunday for a 30-mile drive to get the newspapers. If you lose some money when you come to sell, then so be it. You’ve enjoyed owning and using it. After all, if you have a great holiday, you don’t come home and ask the travel agent for your money back.”

“Buy something you love first and foremost, but good marques, how many were made, did the factory compete with the car, and specification differentials are just some of the indicators of how safe an investment can be.”

“Look for upcoming landmark anniversaries (the XJS has its 50th in 2024, for example), and think about what the key buying demographic (35-65) had as posters on their bedroom walls when they were 10 to 15 years old.”

“Following on from the above, we have first-hand seen the surge in interest for ‘80s/’90s/’00s hot hatches and European performance cars, and we see this carrying on for a long time.”

“E-Types have also had a great couple of years, dovetailing with the 60th anniversary. The E-Type market will always be solid and stable.”

“Over the next ten years, we expect real change. You see at the shows and in the media lots of companies retrofitting and ‘modding in’ batteries and electric motors. I think there’s a place for this but ultimately for Europe and other built-up areas hydrogen cells and bio-fuels will be the answer - the latter being more key to the ongoing enjoyment of classics. I expect to see more vehicles come through the market with these types of modifications made.”

“We have first-hand seen the surge in interest for ‘80s/’90s/’00s hot hatches and European performance cars, and we see this carrying on for a long time

Name - Dan

Vehicle - 1985 MG Metro 6R4

Age - 50

Job - M.D. of an IT Company

Location - Lincoln

“I chose the 6R4 as an enthusiast, it wasn’t something I knew much about owning or running costs, etc. and I bought it to enjoy and use. I think having an emotional connection is a great way to buy a classic making the ownership experience much more than a financial transaction or investment.”



# The rise of the modern classic

In Europe, they're known as 'youngtimers'. The UK prefers 'modern classic'. Whichever label you prefer, the stars of the '80s, '90s and '00s are increasingly sought-after

In 2017, a well-known classic vehicle auction house witnessed a new world record price for a certain French hot hatch. The consignment in question: a 1988 Peugeot 205 GTI 1.9. The winning bid? £38,475.

The result helped to set a new high water mark for values of Peugeot's pocket rocket, a car that embodies the true essence of the modern classic. Brilliant to drive, simple enough to work on, but with the relative reliability and practicality of a more modern machine. Find the right one, and it may even reward you with a profit in the future.

Just a decade ago, examples of the finest modern classic heroes were changing hands for peanuts. But times are changing. Enthusiasts who grew up with Gran Turismo and lusted after Skylines and Supras from their sofas can now afford the real deal. Devotees of Max Power, Redline and REVs are reliving their youth – just look at the growing demand for the humble Saxo VTS. Blue oval enthusiasts have also felt the effects; £91,000 Escort Cosworth, anyone?

The astronomical appreciation over the last decade is a simple case of supply and demand. Poor modifications, rust, and scrappage schemes have cannibalised many vehicles at the bottom of their depreciation curve. Today, as '80s and '90s favourites enjoy their time in the sun, the stars of the noughties have also entered the fold; think Alfa Romeo 147 GTA, Porsche Boxster and E39 5-Series.

“ Gran Turismo enthusiasts who lusted after Skylines and Supras from their sofas can now afford the real deal



Name - Ben

Vehicle - 2002 Renaultsport Clio V6 Ph.1

Age - 32

Job - Risk Management

Lives - Edinburgh

“I bought my Clio because it was a car I'd coveted growing up as a petrol head.

I collected car brochures as a teen, and it was something that caught my attention as soon as I saw it.”

The question is, what effect will the 2030 ICE ban have on the next generation of modern classics? Will the final production petrol vehicles be lauded as the last hurrah? Will values of simple, enjoyable, and usable ICE vehicles continue to rise, or will demand begin to fade? At what point will these vehicles lose their 'modern' prefix?



# Digital marketplace for classics is booming

The world of classic ownership may be changing, but there are still magazines catering for enthusiasts and their passion - and they've got an eye on the future

*Classic Car Weekly* is the leading title for the latest classic cars for sale, but Editor David Simister explains how they're not resting on their laurels.

"There's still plenty of demand from classic car owners for their favourite weekly read, and we'll continue to report on all the latest news stories in print for as long as there's a viable audience asking us to do so, but I recognise that there have been some big changes in the rapidly growing digital marketplace for classics."

"Since the start of the pandemic the increase in people buying and selling classics online has accelerated, and we've seen both traditional businesses moving quickly to adapt and new operations being launched to cater for this demand."

"The way that enthusiasts enjoy their classics is changing, too, with younger owners, in particular, increasingly making use of groups on social media and informal morning and evening meets, as well as the more traditional shows and car clubs."

"It's also increasingly important for classic owners to ensure their place on Britain's roads as the infrastructure and legislation becomes increasingly geared towards sustainable motoring."

“ Since the start of the pandemic, the increase of people buying and selling classics online has accelerated



Name - Lindsay  
Car - 1986 Citroen 2CV  
Age - Fifty-something  
Job - Geologist  
Location - North West England

"My concern for the future of classics is of fossil fuels, and the internal combustion engine, becoming so out of fashion as to be considered toxic upon society (like tobacco). The recent pledge by most G20 governments to have their countries become 'carbon neutral' in the coming decade is wholly unrealistic, but is nevertheless a potential death knell, societal-wise, for anything petrol driven."

"*Classic Car Weekly* has already responded to a rapidly evolving hobby by recently launching on Apple News, and has some exciting developments in the pipeline for those who want to catch up with their classic news online as well as in print. Rest assured, however, that no matter how you stay up to date with Britain's booming classic car movement, CCW's experts will be there to bring you all the latest."



# The next ten years

Without a crystal ball, predicting the future of the classic vehicle sector is an inexact science... We spoke to two expert motoring writers to get their take on what the next decade has in store



## Jason Barlow

Freelance Automotive Writer, GQ & Top Gear

"The next 10 years? It's something I've been pondering a lot recently – both as a writer in the automotive sphere but more because I own two historic cars. Clearly, there's a major move towards replacing internal combustion engines (ICE) with electric powertrains. This is an interesting response to macro trends and rapidly growing awareness of the climate crisis, but my personal view is that this is more for fashion types and the casual car fan than any serious collector."

"I co-own a Ferrari F355 and the thought of replacing its 3.5-litre V8 and manual gearbox with an electric motor and batteries is borderline heretical. My car does barely 750 miles per year, so its emissions are negligible. I would far rather run an electric vehicle as my daily driver and enjoy the 'classic' on other – rare – occasions. Not to mention the fact that maintaining an old car is more sustainable than buying a new one every three years."

"But I do wonder what Generation Y will make of that in the years to come. I hope that ICE cars will be appreciated as the emotional and artful creations that many of them are, regardless of their reliance on fossil fuels. There's a risk, though, that they'll simply become socially unacceptable. People of 10 say that classic cars will become like horses: once used by everyone, before becoming the playthings of the wealthy. On which basis, the most valuable and coveted cars will maintain their status, while the lesser ones fade away..."

"I'm excited to monitor the progress of synthetic fuels. It's a significant development, but I suspect the fuel will be exorbitantly priced. I'll only be able to afford 750 miles per year."



## James Elliott

Editor, Octane

"It's never been more difficult to predict the future for the classic car world, because it has never felt more under threat from legislation, environmental restrictions and political limitations on use. That said, as is annually demonstrated by the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, ours is a hobby (and industry) that is incredibly resilient and has previously overcome all obstacles, so there is no need to panic."



"Naturally, enthusiasts do find it unsettling when it feels as if the only option being considered by the authorities is a headlong plunge into an all-electric future, but that is not a situation that I expect to continue. As soon as a more considered approach is taken, and alternatives such as synthetic fuels are given a proper hearing, it should start to calm the nerves. After all, sustainability is a far more long-term message than wholesale replacement and this will inevitably come to the fore."

"At the end of the day, all enthusiasts want to hear is that we will continue to be able to use our cars and that our industry and hobby will continue to thrive. Being a powerful lobbying group and an industry that is extremely valuable to the economy, one whose importance is acknowledged and accepted in the corridors of power – there is no reason to expect that to change."



# Keeping the dream alive

Attracting new members is essential for classic communities. We heard how two very different car clubs are encouraging the next generation of owners



## David Murphy

Founder, Retro Rides

In 2004, David Murphy founded an online forum that would grow into a thriving community and become the host of two popular events on the show calendar. Retro Rides has bucked the trend experienced by many online forums, having had more new members than ever over the last three years.

“We don’t try and compete with social media groups – an online forum offers something different, allowing a greater depth of communication and a more cohesive community. Retro Rides is a particularly inclusive group, so there’s a depth of interest from all eras – whether that’s Japanese stuff, Ford, Triumph, VW, or daily-driven almost-retro cars.”

The cross-pollination of different groups and mindsets has been a key part of the group’s success, helping to boost interest in the group’s popular events at Goodwood and Shelsley Walsh in 2021. David thinks more events will be the secret to engaging with younger audiences, helping to knock down barriers to entry and make it as straightforward as possible to get involved in the hobby.

“The general classic scene really needs to work out how to attract young people, but it’s in a great position to do that. Young people like things that are different to the norm, and there’s nothing more ‘different’ than old cars – they’ll bring in their own influences, tastes and attitudes to the scene. People have been modifying cars since they’ve existed, it will always carry on and evolve. Someone who was hot-rodding in the 1940s would still have plenty in common with enthusiasts today.”

“Family-friendly events are the key,” he says. “We want to talk to people about buying your first retro car, how to look after it. They’re not scary, but it’s easy to be intimidated if you don’t know how... Some scenes can be a little insular, but that only creates barriers for the next generation. We want to democratise classic ownership – we believe that’s the only way.”



## David Roxburgh

Club Secretary, Talbot Owners Club

We’ve discussed the changing nature of the classic community at length in this report – so here’s a club that’s weathered plenty of storms in its time. Describing itself as the ‘home of pre-war Talbots’, the Talbot Owners Club was established in 1934 and is still working hard to keep the long-defunct manufacturer alive.



“Lots of people don’t know what a Talbot is,” says David, who thinks educating the public is the most effective way of attracting new interest. “We’ve significantly updated our club magazine and website recently, with the latter being the best available repository of information on Talbot cars.”

By building a mine of information online, the club aims to futureproof the prospect of Talbot ownership, increasing interest and maintaining values. The club is also proactive with events and shows to increase exposure, including a static display on Regent’s Street where the public could see the cars and owners.

“I personally think we’re about to experience a period of substantial change, and I know of a few longstanding members now considering selling their cars. It’s important for us to get younger people involved, those aged 40-50 are more likely to have the leisure time and money required to own a pre-war Talbot.”





## Gary Gordon

Chairman of Afro Classics Register

Gary is Chairman of Afro Classics Register, a club that prioritizes the friendships, relationships and community that comes with owning a classic, at the heart of everything they do. We asked him for his thoughts on the industry today, how things may evolve in the future and how we all, as an industry, can be more welcoming and inclusive.

"We are seeking to set an example for the next generation by creating an open environment where they can appreciate that a car does not define the owner. Our membership is a diverse and unique set of individuals with a variety of talents that can be harnessed to improve social and economic outcomes for the world. We want the next generation to be encouraged to come to our events and educate our members about their projects (car related or otherwise) and we will assist them through the development and growth stage of their projects, and they may teach us something new too."

"Our members find the classic car industry very fragmented and skill levels highly variable. It is difficult to find reasonably priced and reliable technicians as experience and skills dwindle. I think that the industry will become more sustainable and inclusive when it begins to help small businesses to understand and implement customer centric service, and minimum service expectations. Customers can then select a garage based on the breadth of the service expectation, which can only be acceptably met by businesses that employ technicians with the relevant experience, skills and competency."

"I think electrification will be pursued by classic car owners for the less desirable marques in the future, however, I believe that electrification of itself will not make classic cars future proof given the need for interconnectivity with other vehicles on the road. The availability and cost of fuel will also be a significant influence and affect conversion rates."



## Cammie Sturch

Automotive Artist and Racing Pride ambassador

"The industry needs to step out from its safe space of secluded meet ups and bring their cars to big events including motorsport events and even e-sport racing events.", says Cammie, Automotive Artist and Racing Pride ambassador. We asked them what the industry could be doing to be more inclusive and welcoming to all.

"Kids these days can discover cars like the Ford Escort Cosworth on Forza Horizon but if they're in a city and don't own a car, it's not likely they can get to a classic car meet. By being at these events they can capitalize on 'Do you love the car in the game? well here is the real thing, listen to this engine!'"

"Racing Pride is an initiative to promote positive inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in and around motorsports. What brings us together in this business is our love of cars which has been a very traditionally masculine environment - we just want to make it an open and friendly space for people no matter their sexuality or gender identity."

"Racing Pride sponsored me through my time at Ford's Official Esport team; Team Fordzilla and helped me attain my National B UK racing licence. These days, I help promote Racing Pride and its values through e-sport events as well as working with other LGBTQ drivers such as W-Series Sarah Moore & Abbie Eaton, who was also The Grand Tour's test driver."



Racing Pride is an initiative to promote positive inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in and around motorsports.

# Appealing to younger audiences

How do you get younger generations interested and engaged with classic vehicles?

As a global motoring lifestyle magazine, *Paddock Life* is in contact with collectors all over the world and present at many of the classic car events. Craig Blake-Jones, Editor in Chief, founder and CEO of Paddock Life, explains why.

“The biggest observation, which is staggeringly obvious, is the age of the classic car driver/enthusiast/collector. Unless the industry welcomes, embraces and encourages a new generation of enthusiasts, our world will diminish very quickly.”

“This inspired the *Paddock Speedshop*. Using our brand and our collective knowledge, we created a TV show within the existing car restoration genre. The main difference is that our presenters are 23 years old and classic vehicle and motorsport enthusiasts.”

“Ethan and Lucy (our presenters) are competent amateurs and the show format sees them seeking help from experienced experts in a ‘practise what you preach’ way. Proving that ownership of classics can be an achievable prospect and keeping them on the road is not just for specialist garages.”

“The format of the show borrows from the existing shows but twists the formulaic genre to cater for a much younger audience, an audience that doesn’t consume TV or entertainment in the way previous generations have.”

“*Paddock Speedshop* looks at accessible classics with achievable goals, it is aimed at encouraging a younger generation to buy classics and use them. The show is all about modifications, taking the character of an old car, but using modern techniques and components to enhance the performance and safety of the vehicle, bringing it more in line with its modern alternative.”

“So, what are the classics? Affordable classics such as an MGB or Morris Minor, but also the new classics of the 1980s like Lucy’s Ford Escort RS Turbo, and even newer cars like Metros and Rover 100s. Cars that are accessible and appealing - once a few mods are done - to a younger generation, and vehicles that offer the driver a social life around their cars with car clubs and events.”

“The Speedshop team is a collective of enthusiasts from 19 to mid-30s, bound by a love of classics, helping each other get their cars to where they imagine them. They create head-turning restomods, perfectly restore some cool classics and even build and compete a hill climb car.”

“Like it says on the tin, the Paddock Speedshop is Restoration by a New Generation.”

“The format of the show borrows from the existing shows but twists the formulaic genre to cater for a much younger audience, an audience that doesn’t consume TV or entertainment in the way previous generations have



# Business and the Environment

With internal combustion engines on their way out, and electric vehicles on their way in, it's uncertain what the future holds for classics. How are companies gearing up for this sea change? We spoke to those looking to engage with, educate and entertain existing and future generations of enthusiasts.

"Investment in the right people with the right skills in the right environment remains a priority for us"

**Page 34**

57% of survey respondents were likely to pay their preferred specialist dealer a visit when purchasing their next vehicle <sup>(1)</sup>

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"Let's get one thing straight, classic cars are here to stay."

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"Our cars change the world and remain iconic to this day."

**Page 42**

"Having a strong forward-looking heritage plan, linked to today's product, reinforces our experience and enhances the trust which consumers place in us."

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(1) Driving the Future Survey by 7th Sense Research Ltd (October 2021)

# Staying alive

There's no sure route to success and every business in the classic and heritage sector needs to carefully think about how it invests in the future. Here are four typical stories



“ Jane Mossop  
XK Engineering

“From our perspective, it is important to embrace both new and old technologies and methods. We continue to preserve the traditional methods of restoration whilst investing in the latest technology to allow us to cater for the ‘modern classics’. Diversification whilst remaining true to one’s roots is critical to survival in the classic and prestige automotive repair sector.”

“Investment in the right people with the right skills in the right environment remains a priority for us. We dovetail staff training on the latest prestige manufacturer vehicles with investment in apprentices using the Heritage Skills Academy to ensure that those traditional methods and skills are preserved for the future. This allows for succession planning and a consistency of excellent service and quality that preserves our place in the classic and prestige repair industry.”

“ John Shields  
JJ Performance Engineering and Restoration

“When our previous landlord forced us to leave, we turned what felt like disaster into a hugely positive step for the business. By thinking differently about what we really wanted, rather than replacing like with like, we converted a space into a bespoke workshop that’s boosted our business and work profile as well as staff morale.”



“We’ve now a great looking space for vehicles undergoing restoration or regular service and repair work, and a separate space for fabrication, machining, paint and storage. It really lets clients see the quality of what we do and give great peace of mind. This means they’re prepared to commit to bigger projects and it’s driving more repeat business as they bring more vehicles to us. It’s also a great place to work and the staff love the atmosphere. It’s turned out to be an amazing move in every respect.”



“ Alan Needham  
Needham’s Motorcycles

“As a business we service and retail modern motorcycles and cannot be totally reliant on working with classic machines. One thing we see is that people tend to rediscover bikes from their younger days or become interested in smaller brands or a particular model which was only briefly made.”

“For example, a 1989 Suzuki RG500 ‘Gamma’ was a recent successful project and marques like Laverda or Germany’s MZ retain small numbers of followers but who tend to be really passionate. We enable customers with a pretty wide range of budgets to follow their passion and the overall value of the motorcycle and the work done is varied.”



Sukhi Clark

Envisage Group

"Today's classic car industry is a very competitive market, with many classics reimaged through both power and electrification. With Envisage and our new sub-brand Caton, we have set out to make our mark on the industry, and set a high standard for quality with Healey by Caton. I feel the industry is entering a new phase, with interest in classic cars having steadily risen over the past decade. Manufacturers and constructors could go one of two ways; reproduce classic vehicles in extremely limited numbers for niche clientele using modern, bespoke manufacturing methods, or invest further in electrification embracing new sustainable manufacturing methods of classic cars to breathe new life into these very special vehicles."

"The industry has made significant steps in terms of inclusivity but still has some way to go. Encouraging younger people and investing in more student or apprenticeship schemes would go a long way to attract more diversity, both in age, gender and ethnicity. Equipping our younger generations with the necessary skills would ensure the industry's survival and allow a perfect way to be more welcoming and inclusive."

## The generation game

In our *Driving the Future* survey of UK residents, 25% said they would consider owning a classic vehicle in the future. Among those, the intention was stronger in the younger age groups (49%) – meaning good news for the future of the classic car industry

In October 2021, we commissioned a survey of 2,926 people, by 7<sup>th</sup> Sense Research UK Ltd, to understand how the land lies for the future of the classic sector. The results were positive; around 40% of those interested in owning a classic were aged between 18 and 29.

Overall, people were likely to pay their preferred specialist dealer a visit when purchasing (57%), while the good old classifieds came in second (44%). The bravery of youth meant Generation Z was happy to have a punt pretty much anywhere, while millennials were more likely than anyone to stick their hand up at an auction.

Our respondents cited running costs (32%) and vehicle reliability (24%) as key barriers to their ownership of a classic, although risk of theft (17%) was a worry for the younger generations, but largely them alone. Among those who already owned a classic, rust and degradation (35%) ranked equally with reliability.



Matt Durling

Durling Specialist Cars

Matt, 29, began his classic car retail business around two years ago, after realising his long-term hobby was a viable business opportunity. In its first period of trading, he's attracted a varied demographic of customers, including many first-time buyers.



"Modern classics in particular are popular with younger customers," says Matt, who told us that Japanese performance heroes have been among the most attractive.

"The Subaru Impreza has filled the gap left by hugely appreciating fast Fords, which are now out of reach for a lot of younger enthusiasts."

"Nineties stuff seems to be in fashion, and you can see why – the cars are often more reliable and affordable, but still engaging to drive, so a great compromise. Even obscure cars like the Punto GT are attracting lots of attention, whereas older models from the '60s and '70s have plateaued. I can't see the bubble bursting, personally – a lot of these cars are becoming rarer by the day and beginning to appreciate pretty savagely as a new generation of enthusiasts enter the fold."

# Meet the influencers

As more classic enthusiasts gravitate toward social media platforms, a new group of motoring authorities are building a captive audience online. Here, we meet three automotive influencers and hear their thoughts on the future of classics

## “ Zoe Whittaker

“It’s true that classic car ownership is seen as a hobby for the rich and famous. But through my Sunday Lane guided drives I’m meeting more young drivers with a desire to own a classic car. Too often they’re put off by the perception that classic cars are expensive and fuel-guzzling, making them a morally bad choice. Yet you can find classic cars that cost the same as a five-year-old first car. Maintenance needn’t be an issue if you’re willing to get your hands dirty...”



“While the environment is a consideration, classic cars are the ultimate in recycling. The environmental cost of new cars in terms of raw materials, production energy and delivery miles is huge, yet well-maintained older cars can be surprisingly fuel-efficient, and you’re preserving a piece of history, too. Personally, I think there will always be a desire for classic cars, but like anything it will evolve. No doubt we’ll be talking about the Nissan Leaf as a classic car in 50 years’ time.”



## “ Harry Metcalfe

“Let’s get one thing straight right from the start, classic cars are here to stay, whatever restrictions are placed on new ICE car production. I say this because demand for good classics continues to increase, which is a bit of a shame because I’d love to be able to buy a Ferrari 288 GTO for £150,000 again. Today, there’s much talk of the environmental impact of private car use yet, globally, they only contribute 9% of total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and the amount classic cars contribute to this total figure is so small it’s immeasurable, as the total mileage classics do is so tiny. Next, the appeal of classic cars is increasing year on year as more enthusiasts discover driving an EV is a pretty soulless experience. EVs make for a fantastic city or commuting car, but even after sampling plenty over the last few years, I’m still not convinced they make for great sports cars.”

“But the ace classic cars have up their sleeve is sustainable fuels, or E-fuels, which I predict will be the salvation for motorsport over the coming years. Running a classic car on carbon-neutral fuel is a distinct possibility within this decade and combined with their low mileage usage and the fact a fully restored classic has the potential to last indefinitely (something you can’t say about an EV due to battery degradation), could well make our hobby highly sustainable well into the future.”

## “ Becky Evans

“I have always considered classic cars to be an opportunity. They can be a fantastic investment, a learning experience, interesting content, totally nostalgic - all at the same time. I was drawn to classics from a young age because I romanticised about ‘80s German car design - and not much has changed in my car choices since! I have always wanted to show that classic cars are more accessible than a lot of younger people think.”



“A lot of my interest comes from the aesthetics of the earlier cars, making content is so much easier when the subject was designed to be beautiful not efficient. I think with the way the second-hand car market has seen such growth, coupled with people’s refreshed outlook on life after lockdowns, cars that always seemed like a ‘maybe one day’ are becoming reality. I would be delighted to see more classics bought, restored or cared for. These time capsules are finite and must be protected.”

# The Bigger Picture: Classic vs Modern

As we become ever more conscious of our environmental footprint, indulging our predilection for old metal can begin to feel a little wanton. But are we right to feel this way?



A battery-electric car creates  
26 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>  
during its production,  
emissions that would take a  
typical classic more than  
46 years to achieve

We could abandon our enthusiasm for keeping our automotive heritage alive and on the road, and opt for something more modern, more efficient. A brand-new hatchback will almost certainly use less fuel and produce fewer emissions from its tailpipe, but once you consider the environmental cost of building a new car instead of using an existing one, the picture becomes more complex.

A classic car notching up the national average of 1,200 miles<sup>1</sup> emits 563kg of CO<sub>2</sub> a year<sup>2</sup>. By comparison, a new Volkswagen Golf has a carbon footprint of 6.8 tonnes<sup>3</sup> of CO<sub>2</sub>e the day it leaves the factory, a figure it would take our average classic 12 years to match.

For an electric vehicle, the footprint is even greater. A battery-powered Polestar 2 creates 26 tonnes<sup>4</sup> of CO<sub>2</sub> during its production, emissions that would take a typical classic more than 46 years to achieve. By which time, the EV's cutting-edge lithium-ion battery would have long since lost its ability to hold a charge and been consigned to the nearest recycling facility.

Our classic, meanwhile, may very well still be out there, trundling from one village fête to another, its life extended by a succession of devoted and enthusiastic owners who, data suggests, are already an environmentally-conscious lot.

In a recent survey, 66% of enthusiasts<sup>5</sup> said they were concerned about climate change to some degree, with 77% believing they were already contributing to combating its effects in some way. To that end, 40% have used carbon offsetting in the past, while 52% of enthusiasts would consider contributing to a fully-vetted scheme to offset their classic's emissions.

Name - Carter

Vehicle - 1995 Kawasaki ZX9R Ninja

Age - 27

Job - Metering Support Manager

Location - Lincolnshire

"On the hunt for my first bike, it was all about trying to keep insurance costs low. The cost to insure a '95 ZX9R meant I was looking at quotes up to £600 cheaper than newer bike. The purchase price was also lower too. I've accidentally stumbled onto a great bike, it's extremely comfortable on long rides."



<sup>1</sup> The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs, National Historic Vehicle Survey 2019

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Economics and Business Research, The Economic and Environmental Impact of the Historic and Classic Motor Industry in the UK 2020

<sup>3</sup> Volkswagen AG, Sustainability Report 2020

<sup>4</sup> Polestar, Sustainability Report 2020

<sup>5</sup> Footman James Climate Change Survey 2022

# Sustainability and offsetting in style

It turns out that 47% of enthusiasts say they feel the pressure of increased environmental scrutiny, but what are the options in cutting your classic's carbon footprint?

Environmental pressures are not new: the arguments for replacing a classic car with a modern equivalent have been around for years. However, the reality is that keeping a classic on the road is already an exercise in sustainability.

From the new breed of vehicle dismantlers who carefully rescue and recondition parts that would otherwise end up in land fill, to the committed and enthusiastic cottage industry offering an eBay-shaped window into a world populated by new-old stock.

But this isn't an industry solely the preserve of the shed-based hoarder with a lifetime's collection. Today, even big business is keen to bask in the warm glow that comes from keeping a classic on the road. Bosch Classic, for example, remakes old parts to the same specifications as the originals, but often with modern technologies and sustainable manufacturing principles. Even modern classics are supported, with the repair and remanufacture of electronic control units, ABS components, and navigation and display systems.

Should a part prove too elusive, the UK's thriving aftermarket scene – keen to embrace new technologies such as 3D printing – may already have the answer. Some may even make your classic more efficient, from tyres with a lower rolling resistance to bolt-on fuel injection kits, some promising a healthy uptick in reliability, too. Synthetic fuels, meanwhile, offer the promise of reduced emissions for everyone, without even needing to trouble a spanner.

But if all of that fails to satisfy the pub bore who suggests your historic pride and joy is about as green as a bush fire, carbon offsetting offers the opportunity to minimise your classic's environmental impact without sending it off to the crusher.

By buying green credits with a value equivalent to your vehicle's carbon footprint, the revenue raised can be invested in a portfolio of projects designed to reduce emissions around the world, often in emerging countries where there's also a societal benefit. For the price of a pint of beer or two a month, platforms such as Chrome Carbon and Net-Hero can help to deploy biodigesters across Cambodia, protect the critically-endangered rainforests of the Amazon, develop renewable energy sources in Brazil, or even rewild former arable land in the depths of Nottinghamshire.

Every time you drove your classic, you would be literally making the planet greener.



Name - Lee  
Vehicle - 1970 Leyland Mini 850  
Age - 45  
Job - Bricklayer  
Lives – Nottinghamshire

"The biggest environmental impact of owning a classic is obviously fuel consumption and I've opted into Shell Go+ via the app, which means I scan every time I fill up and Shell offset my carbon emissions from my fuel purchase."



# Is the future of classic vehicles electric?

To many, the idea of ripping out your pride and joy's reciprocating heart and substituting it with the guts of a freshly-crashed Tesla is tantamount to sacrilege, but there are a number of reasons why you might consider it. Here are four tales of electrification

## The Pioneering Approach

Richard Morgan is notable for two things – his pointed sideburns and his 1965 Volkswagen Beetle. One of his first conversions and, perhaps, one of the first electric classics to grab the public's attention, Richard's red 'Voltswagen' is surprisingly modest. A 22kW (30hp) electric motor takes the place of the original flat-four engine, and a 22kWh battery pack is split front to back to even out the weight distribution. The result is a range of about 100 miles and 0-60mph in around 10 seconds.

Soon other classic owners contacted him, to ask if he could convert their cars, and now Richard's company, Electric Classic Cars (ECC) based in Powys, can name-drop Hollywood actors among its clientele. The back-catalogue of conversions includes Porsche 911s, Fiat 500s, Range Rovers and even a Ferrari 308.

ECC's use of off-the-shelf components allows them to adapt installations to suit a client's requirements, which usually boils down to a trade-off between range, performance, and budget. Which, by the way, is typically around £25-30k. However, Richard's follow-up Beetle, a blue 1973 model, uses a repurposed Tesla powertrain and is said to be capable of 0-60mph in around 2.6 seconds. If you're brave enough.



## The High-end Approach

"The Lunaz mission is to define the future of classics. We preserve the past by embracing the future," says David Lorenz, Founder of Lunaz.

An admirable sentiment, but one reserved for the well-heeled. The company's cheapest conversion, a classic Range Rover, kicks off at £245,000 excluding taxes, while a Rolls-Royce Phantom V will need a discussion that starts by writing a cheque for more than half a million pounds. Perhaps that's why David Beckham took a 10% stake in the company.

When you see the scope of work involved, the stratospheric prices begin to make a little more sense. Each car is disassembled, weighed, inspected and scanned in 3D before being meticulously restored and converted to electric power, complete with discreet upgrades such as air conditioning, electronic heating, and navigation systems.

From their base at Silverstone's Technology Park, Lunaz's team of engineers – some of which hail from Formula One, Aston Martin, Ferrari and McLaren – have created a proprietary electric powertrain that forms the basis for their conversions, the precise details of which are a closely-guarded secret.

Their conversions range from Jaguar XK120s to Aston Martin DB6s, classic Range Rovers to a Bentley Flying Spur. Recently they've diversified, and are now also electrifying, er... bin lorries. Upcycling and recycling, all under one roof.

# The Techie Approach

Electrogenic describe themselves as a team of technologists – Steve Drummond’s background in renewable energy joins Ian Newstead’s experience with classic cars, while Steve Heath’s expertise with software and embedded systems drives the development of their own technology that forms the backbone of their conversions.

Their creations are borne out of the confluence of these three perspectives, a romantic, misty-eyed desire to keep our motoring heritage on the road while acknowledging electrification as the most viable solution, with technology as an enabler.

As with many conversion specialists, ElectroGenic rely on largely off-the-shelf components. Integrating motors, batteries, controllers and chargers into one cohesive system is something of a challenge when each part is made by a different manufacturer and designed in isolation. Where the nuances lie is in the electronic glue that holds them together, and that’s where ElectroGenic deploy their own solutions.

By developing their own proprietary vehicle management system (VMS) and battery management system (BMS), their set-up delivers precise control over the entire powertrain with room for customisations in response to customer demand. There’s even a dedicated ElectroGenic smartphone app.

Embracing the modular approach also allows customers to upgrade parts of the system as new technologies become available, and all their work is designed to be reversible, with no cutting of the car’s body. You could even decide to reinstate the original engine.



# The OEM Approach

“If Alec Issigonis could design the classic Mini again today, the iconic small car would have an electric motor,” so reckons MINI UK. And so, putting their money where their mouth is, they’ve kickstarted a project that aims to offer original Mini owners an officially-sanctioned conversion.

Out comes the venerable A-series engine – to be boxed-up and stored should the owner later decide to revert to petrol power – and in goes a 90kW electric motor and a battery pack said to hold enough charge for 100 miles. Performance is expected to be ‘brisk’ with 0-62mph in around nine seconds.

Many of the Mini’s original styling details are preserved, with the fuel filler neck repurposed as an electric charge port, while the central instrument cluster gains motor temperature and charge level gauges.

As Bernd Körber, Head of the MINI Brand puts it: “With MINI Recharged, we are connecting the past with the future.”

# Plight of the museums

The motor car, at 130 years old or so, is relatively new in the grand scheme of things. But in the next two decades, the car will potentially undergo as radical a change as it did in the first two decades following its invention. How will museums handle this shift?

“ Stephen Laing  
British Motor Industry Heritage Trust

“The British Motor Museum doesn’t have a crystal ball, but our most frequent conversations are about what we should record and collect to capture those changes. And museums aren’t solely about acquiring objects; they’re about giving context, a chance to interact and respond and finding new perspectives. By sharing and listening to stories, in our case it’s about making the history and impact of the car both technically and socially relevant and accessible to everyone, regardless of background.”

“Increasingly, in order to make those connections, what we do is not confined to the museum itself. We take our heritage and our conversations out into the community, both physically with events and outreach but also more and more often, digitally.”

“The classic car world is evolving and the museum must evolve with it. For example, 25 years ago cars from the 1920s and ‘30s had a very strong following. Today, cars of the ‘70s, ‘80s and ‘90s have a much stronger audience. People naturally take the greatest interest in cars with which they have the most personal affinity, whether they’re a classic car fan or not. The way they express that interest is changing, too. We see more of our audience wanting unique experiences or preferring a more informal approach to classic car gatherings, such as our own Gaydon Gatherings or the Footman James *Coffee and Chrome*.”

“ People naturally take the greatest interest in cars with which they have the most personal affinity, whether they’re a classic fan or not

“As we enter the next era in motoring progress, the museum will have an even greater part to play as the keeper of both the most significant cars from times gone by and the skills to preserve and explain them. It will also be the guardian of the millions of voices who have been touched by the motor car, its role in society and the industry that made it, which will spur on conversations of future generations.”



# Plight of the museums

Great British Car Journey is a classic car visitor attraction where you are more likely to hear “we had one of those” than “I had a poster of that” as visitors recall their own experiences

Opened in May 2021 by Richard Usher, former owner of Auto Windscreens and Blyton Circuit, Great British Car Journey celebrates the ordinary – the British marques and models of cars that were on every driveway, street corner and carpark for nearly 100 years but have disappeared over the last 30 years.

“My vision for the attraction was for it to look like a motor show and not a car museum. As well as an exhibition of around 150 cars which illustrate the history of British car design and production between 1905 and the present day, Great British Car Journey features original adverts and posters. Preservation is an integral part of Great British Car Journey, not just the cars but also the history of the industry and the people who made it.”

“In the exhibition we introduce you to Austin, Morris, Rootes and plenty of other people,” says Usher. “Many who visit Great British Car Journey will not have a clue who Billy Rootes was, it’s a disappearing history but it’s a story we’re preserving. It’s an important piece of Britain’s motoring heritage.”

“Having been a member of numerous clubs, I have noticed that younger enthusiasts and even oldies like me have become less fixated on a single make and that enthusiasm for old cars now covers a very broad spectrum of makes and models and I wanted to create a club that represented this.”

“From the beginning I wanted to make Great British Car Journey accessible. That’s why we created a driving experience. Our cars changed the world and remain iconic to this day. They were distinctive in their design and, love them or loathe them, simply getting behind the wheel of these cars evokes a wave of nostalgia. It’s what Great British Car Journey is all about.”



Name - Dave

Vehicle - Racing motorcycles ('78-'00)

Age - 66

Job - Retired

Location - London

“My collection consists entirely of racing motorcycles covering the period from 1978 to 2000. All of these have a distinguished racing history. The bikes are used at various events, either as static displays or ridden at events such as the Classic TT and the Goodwood Festival of Speed. Sadly, we have not been able to display over the last two years.”



# The value of heritage

Most car manufacturers have a heritage collection that features a panoply of classic vehicles, but if you sell new cars why collect and protect your old models?

“ Johnny Burn  
Product Affairs Manager, Audi

“Audi has a rich and vibrant history, and our heritage fleet is a brilliant way to help showcase how the company has evolved through the ages. Our collection includes more than 25 vehicles and includes everything from a fleet of original quattros to the first RS model – real icons of the automotive landscape.”



“ Martin Harrison  
Press Fleet Manager, BMW

“BMW Group UK has an eclectic mix of almost 20 cars ranging from the beautiful 507 Roadster to various key M models, including the BMW M1, and more modern classics such as the BMW Z8. The fleet complements and supports a very wide range of PR and marketing activities from product launches and key media loans to company and retailer showroom displays. They are also used regularly at major events such as The Goodwood Festival of Speed, The Revival and other national shows.”

“ Oliver Rowe  
Product Affairs Manager, Ford UK

“Trust is a major consideration for buyers. We are not just building and selling cars and vans, we are providing service, maintenance, parts and, now with EVs, app-based connectivity. Ford also needs to be a tech company, which our heritage and innovation successes prove we are too. In 1967 Ford launched a small electric city car, called the Comuta, promoted by Twiggy. We've since also had the Think! city car, the Ecostar Van, the Focus BEV, all showing we have history with EVs – and some represented in our collection. Having a strong forward-looking heritage plan, linked to today's product, reinforces our experience and enhances the trust which consumers place in us.”



“ Alun Parry  
Head of Press & PR, Suzuki

“Suzuki GB has two or three cars and at least eight classic motorcycles that have either been restored by us or are totally original. Our historic vehicles always attract a lot of interest when on display and recently formed an important part of our 100th Anniversary media event. It is always well worth showcasing our history and the evolution of the brand. Our first motorcycle was introduced in 1952 and our first car in 1955.”

# The next ten years

What does the future look like for the classic car industry and can it withstand pressure from governments and the climate change debate?

There is no doubt that the classic car industry is a money spinner for UK PLC. According to The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Club's (FBHVC) 2020/21 National Historic Vehicle Survey<sup>1</sup>, the estimated total spending in the sector is £7.2bn, up from £5.5bn in 2016.

The report also states that the annual value of foreign spending with British firms on historic vehicle products and services amounts to £946m.

Although it is apparent from these numbers that things are moving in the right direction, key figures are so worried about the future of this industry that they are joining forces make sure it maintains and improves on its position in the UK.



There is misunderstanding about the 'dirtiness' of classic cars, though. According to a report<sup>2</sup> by HERO-ERA, classics emit just one sixth of the total annual emissions of a modern car. The report found that, on average, classic cars are used a mere 16 times a year, totalling 1,200 miles or less.

The CO<sub>2</sub> produced by a classic car over this distance is equivalent to 20% of the CO<sub>2</sub> output by a person's annual computer and phone usage, according to the Historic & Classic Vehicle Alliance<sup>3</sup> (HCVA).

It is also true that a classic represents the epitome of 'recycling', ensuring that there is no need to plunder the Earth's already depleted resources to build new vehicles.

The tensions are apparent. The industry is still in good health, and the immediate signs look good. However, climate change and classic cars appear to be unlikely bedfellows. There is no doubt that sensible government policy and understanding from both sides will be in each other's interests.

<sup>1</sup> The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs, National Historic Vehicle Survey, 2020/21

<sup>2</sup> HERO-ERA, The Economic & Environmental Impact of the Historic & Classic Motor Industry in the UK, December 2020

<sup>3</sup> Historic & Classic Vehicle Alliance, Octane Magazine, February 2022

“We know the reality of enthusiasts owning and enjoying old cars has a minimal impact on the environment - but as 2030 nears, perceptions from others could begin to shift

“Richard Aucock  
Motoring Research, RetroMotor GOMR Chairman

“The classic car industry needs to get on the front foot. We know the reality of enthusiasts owning and enjoying old cars has a minimal impact on the environment - but as 2030 nears, perceptions from others could begin to shift. Get there before Extinction Rebellion does!”

# Community

How does an owners' club, that's been going for the best part of a 100 years, ensure it stays popular when its very name implies exclusivity?



## Gemma Price

General Manager,  
Bugatti Owners' Club

"The Bugatti Owners' Club was founded in 1929, so it's easy to view us as a very traditional organisation – especially as we're centred on such a historic marque. I think we do, unfairly, have a reputation for being a bit old and stuffy, but we're working hard on changing that."

"I joined two years ago, and at that time we knew that the club had to evolve and refresh itself. If you have an ageing membership, you have to start to appeal to a younger audience in order to survive and stay relevant."

"It's believed that up to 8,000 cars were built during the company's first incarnation, and there's obviously also the more modern Bugattis but, although we do have members who are owners, you don't need one to join. Despite the name, we're far from a traditional one-marque club."

"We're fortunate enough to have Prescott as our home and owning such a famous hill climb course and venue means we can be inventive in hosting events. Last year we organised our first Minifest, an event solely about the original and iconic Mini as designed by Sir Alec Issigonis. This appealed to a far wider audience, including both young and old, and proved a big success. We're hosting the second Minifest in May this year, which will include some improvements on last year."

"Like many clubs, the impact of COVID forced us to reconsider what we do and, when we realised that we couldn't have crowds attending the hill climb competitions, we took the step of streaming them over the internet for anyone to see. This proved a big hit and, even though we've hosted events normally again, we still streamed live and will continue with this year's events. It really opened us up to a whole new audience. In fact, it was responsible for TV celebrities Craig Revel Horwood and Bruno Tonioli visiting us for their Great British Road Trip series."

"This year we're also planning an event that will bring a wide variety of classic enthusiasts together, and really allow them to mix and experience other genres of ownership. The Prescott Historique meeting in May will gather pre-1990 vehicles together, including Edwardian cars, single seat racers and even motorbikes. There will be vehicles in action on the hill and we want the 4,000 guests to really appreciate something new."

"However, as well as all of this, we do provide support for the members with original cars, and that includes helping source period and new parts for their vehicles – some of which are unique to the marque."



# Community

It may feel like historic motoring is a pastime under threat, but all is not lost. There are organisations prepared to tackle key issues before they become terminal problems



**Garry Wilson**

CEO, Historic & Classic Vehicle Alliance

“The biggest problem for classic vehicles going forward could well be ambivalence. Many in the classic and historic industry believe that the sector is too big to be forced out of business. That’s not our view and, although new laws and government policy may not directly target the vehicles we own and love, we could find ourselves eliminated simply because we weren’t paying attention.”

“The Historic and Classic Vehicles Alliance (HCVA) was established in 2021 to support the countless owners and thousands of businesses that operate within the industry, and ensure they get a voice when it comes to parliamentary debates, policy generation and legislation. We believe the sector is worth more than £18bn per annum, and that we contribute £3bn to the exchequer every year, but unless we act together that probably won’t be enough.”

“The biggest single issue is environmental pressure, and although classic vehicles don’t generate that much pollution they are easily labelled as damaging and unsustainable. We’re working towards net-zero for the sector, but legislation that’s designed to tackle pollution on a large scale may sweep up classic and historic vehicles by default. We need to build-in exclusions and point out the limited impact these vehicles really have.”

“Generations Y and Z are very environmentally conscious, and vocal about how we can cut pollution, but if they don’t understand how interesting and enjoyable classic vehicles can be, they won’t appreciate them and understand the value of their heritage. We know we need a different approach, and use social media, to reach this audience because we want those who are currently ambivalent to be far better informed.”

“We’re also supporting areas like the import and export of vehicles from the UK, as that affects not only businesses, but related areas like motorsport. We are seeing a wide range of post-Brexit challenges, which range from the timely movement of parts to the increases in prices due to cross-border taxes. This is damaging as the UK is globally recognised as one of the primary classic vehicle restoration centres, and many European owners look to send their cars to the UK for work to be completed. We’re in discussion with the UK Government though this will take time to reach the desired outcomes.”

“Ultimately, we believe in strength in numbers when it comes to these discussions and are looking for members who are prepared to stand up and be counted. It’s in our own interests.”





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# This is just the beginning...

We didn't know what to expect from the first *Indicator Report*, as its purpose was to discover the hopes and fears, and possible icebergs, around classic ownership going forward. There were some surprises, as well as some predictable results. However, what we hoped for and found was positivity and enthusiasm.

It may be a cliché, but it's the truth: we are nothing without our clients. As one of the largest insurers of classic and heritage vehicles in the UK, we need to understand and support the sector going forward.

We look after the full gamut, from single vehicle owners to multi-vehicle and collectors, as well as countless trade and business accounts, so we need to be conscious of how things need to evolve for there to be any future for classic ownership. That's not just the people who want to own vehicles but also the businesses that have the skills and services to keep them on the road.



It is obvious that the profile of enthusiast is going to have to change. As it stands, the stereotypical classic vehicle owner doesn't reflect the social demographic of the UK and, for classics to stay on the road, new generations will have to see their benefit. This isn't about alienating one group, but rather being inclusive and allowing different types of enthusiast to attend the same events and discover more about others' interests.

Understanding how you can broaden appeal is also going to be important going forward, whether you're a museum, car club or even a YouTube channel. Learning to properly engage with your audience will ensure you'll continue to be relevant, which is something that we're especially mindful of as a business.

One thing that has become apparent through the *Indicator Report* is that the lines are blurring – there's less focus on marque-specific activities, and more on regional, scene-specific events, or even getting together over a coffee. Some of the most exciting events just require you to turn up and enjoy what's there on the day, and those post-COVID-19 gatherings with friends are considered essential.

And this really is just the beginning - the start of the conversation. We want the topics covered in the *Indicator Report* to continue to ignite conversations, fuel discussions and show where we should be heading. After all, if we haven't a clear direction, we're lost.

David Bond  
Managing Director, Footman James

# About the Indicator report

To understand the views of classic vehicles owners in the UK, in October 2021, Footman James surveyed 1,058 of its clients and prospects using a set list of questions around their vehicles and their use. This was augmented with anonymised data covering the profile of clients. In addition, in October 2021 the Driving the Future survey carried out by 7th Sense Research UK Ltd. canvassed the views of 2,943 members of the public and asked specific questions around their attitudes towards classic vehicles.

Cover illustration and artwork by Cammie Racing.

## Thanks to:

Mike Duff, Adam Gompertz, Dave Edmonston, The Market, David Simister, Zoe Whittaker, Harry Metcalfe, Becky Evans, Blue Diamond Riley Services, Ben Oliver, David Murphy, David Roxburgh, Paddock Speedshop, XK Engineering, JJ Performance Engineering and Restoration, Down & Out Motorcycles, Matt Durling, Dominic Taylor-Lane, Ralph Hosier, Great British Car Journey, British Motor Museum, Audi UK, BMW UK, Ford UK, Suzuki UK, Richard Aucock, Bugatti Owners' Club, Historic & Classic Vehicle Alliance.

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## 2022 Indicator Report

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