

21 October 2021

Dear Member,

NFDA Northern Ireland (NFDA NI)

NFDA Northern Ireland (NFDA NI) has been working on various issues affecting dealers, including MOT, Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging infrastructure and the end of petrol and diesel vehicle sales in 2030.

In this month's news, we outline some of the key issues that Northern Ireland is currently facing, plus general news and relevant updates.

MOT

NFDA NI responds to call for evidence into biennial MOT testing

Proposals to carry out MOT tests every two years in Northern Ireland were put forward in a consultation by the Department for Infrastructure earlier this year.

NFDA NI has responded to the NI Government's Call for Evidence.

The Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) claims that the UK government's recent announcement of a ban on the sale of new diesel and petrol vehicles by 2030 combined with biennial testing, if introduced, would help to address testing capacity issues.

The change would remove approximately 240,000 (24%) of cars and light goods vehicles from the vehicle testing regime in Northern Ireland each year, out of a current annual total of around 1,000,000.

Moving to biennial testing is not the correct solution to the issues currently facing the NI Testing Scheme. It very much appears that this Call for Evidence has been proposed due to the Covid testing backlog and the existing capacity in the system being unable to cope.

NFDA NI believes the importance of road safety should be the primary concern and other avenues should be sought to ensure that testing can be carried out effectively whilst maintaining the current testing periodicity. A capacity issue should not be remedied at the expense of road safety.

The move to biennial testing will undoubtedly increase defects in vehicles, cause harm to established motor repairers and local communities. We would urge NI Government to seriously rethink these proposals and take our concerns into account.

Charging points and EV infrastructure

On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme

The On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme provides grant funding for local authorities to install residential chargepoints.

For electric vehicles, charging at home usually occurs off-street in garages and driveways, a convenient and efficient option. However, in many parts of the UK off-street parking is unavailable to many residents.

By installing chargepoints on-street or in public car parks, residents without off-street parking can enjoy the convenience and value of charging their electric vehicles at home. As more residents use electric vehicles, communities will benefit from improved air quality and lower their carbon footprint.

The Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) announced the continuation of the On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS), to increase the availability of plug-in vehicle charging infrastructure for residents who do not have access to off-street parking.

[Download a full list of successful ORCS applicants up to March 2021.](#)

Coronavirus Update

The past few months have seen many Covid restrictions eased in Northern Ireland.

These new changes came into effect from Friday 15 October:

- 30 people from an unlimited number of households are now allowed to meet indoors at a private home
- Audiences at indoor venues will also no longer have to stay seated during performances
- Nightclubs are due to reopen on 31 October, with the end of indoor social distancing rules for hospitality
- Under existing rules, social distancing of at least 1m (3ft) remains a legal requirement in pubs, bars, and restaurants
- Large house parties and raves remain banned, and face masks remain mandatory in some settings, including shops and public transport - unless a person is exempt
- Northern Ireland still has the lowest rate of first dose vaccination in the UK - a factor the executive will have to take into consideration when deciding whether to ease any further restrictions.
- People in England are no longer being asked to work from home, but in Northern Ireland advice remains to work from home where possible. Similar advice remains in place in Scotland, Wales, and the Republic of Ireland. Stormont ministers discussed the issue in August, but it is understood health officials advised keeping the guidance in place

Northern Ireland car sales fall due to supply chain issues

5 October 2021

New car sales in Northern Ireland were down by 31% in September compared to the same month last year, industry data suggests.

Strong demand last year, after lockdowns eased, may account for some of the year-on-year fall.

However, the industry said that global supply chain issues were also hitting supply.

In the UK as a whole, sales were down 35% year on year.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) said the figures were "further evidence of the ongoing impact of the Covid pandemic on the sector".

[View the full article here](#)

Most NI checks on British goods to be scrapped

14 October 2021

The EU has released its plan for a reduction of post-Brexit checks on goods and medicines arriving into Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK.

Northern Ireland has a special Brexit deal which keeps it in the EU's single market for goods and allows free-flowing trade with the EU.

But it means goods arriving from Britain face checks and controls.

The UK government said it is studying the detail of the EU's proposals.

The new plan, which seeks to calm a long-running dispute over a key part of the Brexit agreement, would remove about 80% of spot checks, the EU said.

The EU said customs paperwork would also be cut by 50%.

[View the full article here](#)

NI's used car prices rocket as demand exceeds supply, with some selling for more than list price of new model

28 September 2021

There has never been a better time to sell a used car in Northern Ireland – or a worse time to buy one for a bargain price.

Prices of second-hand vehicles here have rocketed due to an acute shortage of available new cars.

Motorists who are unwilling to wait for delivery of a new vehicle, which can take well into next year if not even longer, have been plumping instead for nearly new vehicles and bumping up the prices as a result.

[View the full article here](#)

With the ongoing issues facing automotive retailers in Northern Ireland, NFDA NI will continue to increase our lobbying efforts to ensure the voice of the franchised vehicle dealer is heard.

If there are any issues that you would like added to our agenda which we were not already looking at, please let us know.

For more information or if you would like to join NFDA NI, please get in touch with us via email lana.patel@rmif.co.uk or call us on 01788 538 303.

Sue Robinson
NFDA NI Chief Executive