# UK fuel affordability varies sharply with regional incomes, study finds



A recent study conducted by Chicksx.com sheds new light on the varying impact of fuel costs on UK households, revealing that residents of the London borough Tower Hamlets spend the smallest proportion of their income on fuel compared to anywhere else in the country. This analysis examined fuel prices in conjunction with average weekly incomes across various regions, underscoring how affordability is shaped not just by pump prices but by the interplay of local earnings.

Despite not boasting the cheapest raw petrol prices, Tower Hamlets benefits from a relatively high average weekly income of £1,243. This financial advantage means that the cost of filling a full 50-litre petrol tank, which averages £66.98 there, accounts for only 5.39% of weekly earnings—the lowest share nationwide. Following Tower Hamlets, Southwark, Camden, Islington, and Lambeth also rank as the most fuel-affordable areas, with residents spending between 7.06% and 7.34% of their weekly income on a full tank. These boroughs share a common trait: while their fuel prices are not the cheapest, their residents’ higher incomes mitigate the cost burden.

In contrast, regions such as Merthyr Tydfil in Wales represent the opposite end of the spectrum. Residents here spend an average of 11.85% of their weekly income, which is about £590, on fuel priced around £69.93 for a 50-litre tank—more than double the proportion paid in Tower Hamlets. Other closely affected areas include Oadby and Wigston in Leicestershire and Bolsover in Derbyshire, where fuel costs consume nearly 12% of weekly income. The study highlights that households in areas with lower average earnings shoulder a disproportionately heavy fuel cost burden. For example, Pendle, which features the lowest average weekly income in the analysis at £575, sees residents spending 11.54% of their earnings on petrol.

The research also identified locales offering the lowest raw fuel prices regardless of income levels. Dundee City provides the cheapest petrol at £1.26 per litre, while Ashfield in Nottinghamshire has the lowest diesel prices at £1.33 per litre. These findings suggest that geography plays a role in the baseline fuel price but that affordability ultimately hinges on purchasing power.

Within London, further price disparities are evident. An exploration of petrol prices across the capital's 32 boroughs reveals that South London areas like Croydon, Merton, and Sutton offer some of the cheapest fuel, with petrol prices averaging around 150.7p per litre. Meanwhile, wealthier and more central locations such as Westminster face higher prices—up to 172.9p per litre for petrol. These variations reflect broader economic divisions within London and underscore the complexity of assessing fuel affordability based solely on price data.

For drivers looking to economise, several tools and resources provide valuable assistance. Apps like PumpWatch track thousands of UK petrol stations in real time, offering updates on the cheapest fuel prices across cities and towns. Websites such as Petrol Map and the UK Fuel Station Price List by the Walking Club compile extensive databases of current fuel costs, enabling motorists to pinpoint cost-effective filling stations nearby. Additionally, local guides highlight specific stations offering lower-than-average rates, such as Texaco Albert Embankment in Central London, which has recently been noted for competitive pricing.

Together, these efforts underscore a key takeaway from the study: while raw fuel prices fluctuate across regions, the critical factor in fuel affordability is how these prices relate to local incomes. Policymakers and consumers alike must consider this dynamic to fully understand and address the challenges faced by motorists in different parts of the UK.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article), [[2]](https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article), [[2]](https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article), [[2]](https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article), [[2]](https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article)
* Paragraph 5 – [[3]](https://www.cargiant.co.uk/blog/motoring-news/london-borough-petrol-prices-league-table/), [[4]](https://www.londonworld.com/news/fuel-price-rises-where-can-i-get-cheapest-petrol-and-diesel-in-london-near-me-3434219)
* Paragraph 6 – [[5]](https://www.pumpwatch.app/), [[6]](https://petrolmap.co.uk/petrol-prices/london), [[7]](https://maps.walkingclub.org.uk/fuel-prices/list.html)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article), [[2]](https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/uk-roads-where-drivers-spend-the-most-on-fuel/article> - A study by Chicksx.com analysed UK motorists' fuel expenditure relative to income, revealing that Tower Hamlets residents spend the least proportion of their income on fuel. Despite higher petrol prices, Tower Hamlets' average weekly income of £1,243 means a full 50-litre tank (£66.98) accounts for just 5.39% of earnings. Southwark, Camden, Islington, and Lambeth follow, with residents spending between 7.06% and 7.34% of their weekly income on a full tank. Conversely, areas like Merthyr Tydfil, Oadby and Wigston, and Bolsover have residents spending over 11% of their income on fuel, highlighting the impact of fuel costs on lower-income households. The study underscores the importance of considering local earnings when assessing fuel affordability.
3. <https://www.cargiant.co.uk/blog/motoring-news/london-borough-petrol-prices-league-table/> - An analysis of petrol prices across London's 32 boroughs reveals significant variations. Croydon, Merton, and Sutton offer the cheapest petrol at 150.7p per litre, while Westminster has the highest at 172.9p per litre. Sutton also provides the lowest diesel prices at 167.9p per litre. The data indicates a divide between more affordable fuel in South London and higher prices in affluent areas like Westminster, reflecting the broader economic disparities within the capital.
4. <https://www.londonworld.com/news/fuel-price-rises-where-can-i-get-cheapest-petrol-and-diesel-in-london-near-me-3434219> - A guide to the cheapest petrol and diesel prices in London highlights several stations offering lower rates. For instance, the Texaco Albert Embankment station offers petrol at 138.9p per litre and diesel at 143.9p per litre. The article provides a comprehensive list of stations across Central and North London, assisting drivers in finding more affordable fuel options amid rising prices.
5. <https://www.pumpwatch.app/> - PumpWatch is a UK-based app that helps users find the cheapest fuel prices by tracking over 5,700 stations nationwide. Updated hourly, it offers real-time data on petrol and diesel prices, allowing users to search by city, town, or postcode. The app also features a map of the top 10 cheapest petrol stations in each city, aiding drivers in saving on fuel costs.
6. <https://petrolmap.co.uk/petrol-prices/london> - Petrol Map provides current petrol prices across London, with an average price of 137.7p per litre. Users can select specific towns to view local fuel prices, and the site offers weekly fuel price alerts for local petrol stations, helping drivers stay informed about the best deals in their area.
7. <https://maps.walkingclub.org.uk/fuel-prices/list.html> - The UK Fuel Station Price List by the Walking Club offers a comprehensive directory of fuel prices across the UK. The list includes details such as brand, petrol and diesel prices, postcode area, address, and supplier, providing users with up-to-date information to find the most affordable fuel stations in their vicinity.