

# eBay UK Car Parts & Accessories

The impact of used car parts and accessories  
on the UK automotive industry

## Foreword

This white paper investigates how Certified Recycled parts, and used parts more generally, could be utilised across the entire automotive industry to lower costs for consumers, reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and divert waste from landfill. It also looks at how switching from new replacement parts to used items could deliver greater benefits, by reducing time delays and solving parts availability issues.

As well as motorists shopping for parts for privately owned vehicles, the research also considers how the wider industry – including bodyshops, insurers and independent and franchised workshops – could benefit from adopting the use of such parts. It examines the challenges faced by each of these parties when moving away from fitting brand new parts, and how such challenges could potentially be overcome.

## Executive summary



The automotive industry is currently dominated by two major factors, which are impacting both the new and used car segments of the market: the cost-of-living crisis and emissions targets.

While the pressure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is driving the energy transition towards electric vehicles in the new car market, this shift doesn't address the problem for older vehicles. Vehicles beyond three years of age make up 84% of the 40,506,971 vehicles in the UK car parc<sup>[1]</sup> and this is dominated by petrol, diesel and, to a lesser extent, hybrid powertrains.

At the same time, with consumers finding their finances being squeezed harder and faster in all areas of their lives, many are having to live with their vehicles for longer – resulting in increased wear and tear and the need for more repairs to keep them running.

With an increasing number of parts required and an ever-greater focus on the environmental impact of everything we do and buy, Certified Recycled parts available through eBay deliver cost savings of up to 70% compared to Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) parts RRP\*, as of 2021. They also help reduce the amount of matter going to waste, as well as the emissions associated with the production and distribution of brand new replacement parts.

As a significant pull factor for consumers when buying products – 16% of motorists in the UK said they would consider buying used parts to save on costs<sup>[2]</sup> – there is also a strong business case across the wider industry for their use, from insurers through to bodyshops and independent garages.

Following changes in procedures and processes after the UK's exit from the EU and the supply complications created by the COVID pandemic and lockdowns across the globe, the industry continues to face a disruption to the supply of new parts, which creates a knock-on effect to businesses.

This is another key benefit of Certified Recycled parts. With such parts available from vehicles no longer considered roadworthy, businesses whose focus is to reduce the amount of time a vehicle is off the road are able to expedite the repair process where there is a lead time for a new alternative.

While the cost-effective nature of these parts is, for some businesses, the key focus, the sustainability they bring is also an important selling point. This, at a time when all businesses, be they small, medium or large, are having their long term environmental impacts assessed more than ever as the UK pursues its 2050 net zero ambitions.

The following white paper presents key research findings and case studies which demonstrate how both private consumers and businesses throughout the industry can benefit both financially, and in terms of reduced carbon emissions, by buying used parts for their vehicles.

**Dr Tony Tong**  
**Head of eBay Automotive UK**

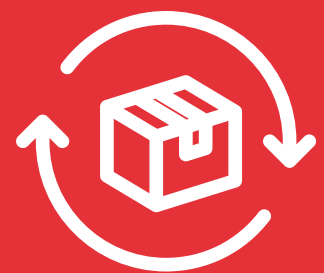
May 2023

# Key Data



**2020**

First Certified Recycled part listed on eBay



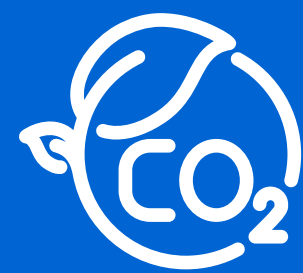
**70%**

Cost saving on used parts compared to OEM parts RRP\*, as of 2021



**£99m+**

Saved purchasing used parts over new in 2022



**16,000 tonnes**

CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions avoided (used car parts vs new)



**3,000,000 kg**

Waste to landfill avoided by purchasing used parts over new



**12 months**

Warranty on all Certified Recycled vehicle body parts



**>10%**

Increase in sales of Certified Recycled parts YoY 2021 vs 2022



**81**

VRA Certified vehicle recyclers in the UK

## eBay Certified Recycled: Decarbonising the UK repair sector

The automotive industry needs to move towards a more sustainable and circular approach to the purchase and use of parts, especially at a time of continued parts supply shortages.

All parts of the automotive industry are striving to meet carbon reduction targets as part of the UK's goal to reach Net Zero by 2050.

It means all businesses need to rethink how their operations and supply chain can be made more environmentally friendly.

eBay is doing its part by helping to increase the volume of repairs that are undertaken using recycled parts and helping to create a trusted network of 81 Vehicle Recycle Association (VRA) accredited recycled parts specialists.

eBay's own marketplace data shows that the cost of recycled parts is approximately 70% compared to OEM parts RRP\*, as of 2021. So while greater adoption can help reduce carbon emissions, it can also significantly reduce costs for insurers, repairers and motorists too.

This is particularly important as the UK experiences a cost of living crisis, which has seen increased pressure on household budgets caused by an [inflation spike to nearly 10%](#)<sup>[3]</sup> and [around one-in-three adults finding it difficult to afford rent or mortgage payments](#)<sup>[4]</sup>.

The difficulty with sourcing brand new parts has also highlighted the increased need to focus on sustainability and alternative options.

The latest data from the [Auto Body Professionals Club \(ABP Club\)](#) shows that 38% of bodyshops are suffering a shortage of parts for up to 20% of jobs<sup>[5]</sup>.

More than three quarters (79%) of UK bodyshops are now turning to recycled parts to fill the gap<sup>[5]</sup>.

Marc Trent, chief executive at one of eBay's largest Certified Recycled parts sellers, said the UK automotive industry is still experiencing long lead times and shortages for new parts.

He said: "We were all led to believe the supply issue would become a thing of the past but there seems no end in sight. As an alternative parts supplier, this phenomenon continues to drive the uptake of recycled parts."

More than three quarters (79%) of UK bodyshops are now turning to recycled parts to fill the gap<sup>[5]</sup>.



"The UK has for many years lagged in the recycled parts market compared to the US, Australia, Canada, France and Sweden."

"The difference is the UK is still a very fragmented market, but I think that is changing. I predict within five years the UK will be on par with those nations."

Markets like France, for example, have already committed to always offering recycled parts by insurance companies and garages for non-safety related repairs.

The first Certified Recycled part was listed through eBay in 2020, and sales continue to increase year-on-year on eBay, with an increase of more than 10% when comparing 2022 to 2021 (across Car Parts and Accessories).

Insurers, bodyshops, independent repairers and dealerships can all help to address with greater education on the safety and reliability of Certified Recycled parts and by buying through VRA Certified sellers.

## Consumers

**Regular maintenance is an essential part of keeping a vehicle in good condition, but it can also be expensive, particularly with household budgets under pressure during a cost-of-living crisis.**

Savvy car owners are already saving up to 70% compared to OEM parts RRP\*, as of 2021, by sourcing recycled parts through eBay compared with buying new.

There are many that are perfectly confident and capable with servicing or improving their own car.

For those that have the tools, expertise and the time, servicing older used cars, classics, or just preparing any vehicle for MoT day is a budget friendly way of avoiding a garage's labour costs.

As one of the largest digital marketplaces in the world, sales of used parts through eBay continued to strengthen through 2022, including almost one million exterior parts and accessories (which features items such as wing mirrors, bumpers and door handles), over 400,000 lighting and bulbs parts and over 130,000 engines and engine parts. Thanks to making the swap from new to used on parts like these, shoppers on eBay UK save £99 million in 2022 across all car parts and accessories.

Not only is sourcing used parts an economical choice, it's better for the environment too with 16,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e saved through eBay's used car parts and accessories in 2022 alone (CO<sub>2</sub>e accounts for carbon dioxide and all other emitted gases), a figure that increases to 20,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e when bikes and van parts are accounted for too.

DIY technicians sourcing their own parts can also have the confidence they are getting a part that has been supplied by a seller certified by the Vehicle Recyclers Association (VRA). Every Certified Recycled part is covered by a warranty and has been professionally graded, tested and checked by the recycling specialists.

This includes a 12-month warranty on vehicle body parts and three months on any mechanical parts.

It means those drivers looking for best possible price a cost saving vs OEM RRP can feel confident they won't need to buy twice as all Certified Recycled parts meet a high standard.

### Building consumer trust with eBay Certified

Despite the clear benefits of choosing recycled parts, research by eBay found that over a quarter of UK motorists (27%) would still rather buy new<sup>[1]</sup>.

It shows there is still a big communications drive needed by the entire automotive industry to engage car owners about the sustainability and cost savings to be made by using recycled parts.

However, eBay's consumer research of 1,535 UK drivers in January 2023 shows there is a growing awareness and acceptance of recycled parts, with 16.1% stating they often buy recycled car parts to save on costs<sup>[1]</sup>.

A further 14% of respondents said buying recycled car parts was particularly appealing for sustainability reasons<sup>[1]</sup>.

Half of drivers feel confident they would change a windscreen wiper and over two-thirds would change a vehicle light bulb or tyre.

This confidence then drops off to under 20% for installing items like wing mirrors, changing brakes or more complex rewiring jobs. Just 8.5% of respondents felt confident with fixing and installing engine parts<sup>[1]</sup>.

Garages and mechanics also have a part to play in helping boost consumer confidence around recycled parts, with 12% of respondents saying they would prefer to buy recycled parts from a professional service centre<sup>[1]</sup>.

A quarter said they would never do maintenance themselves, so even if consumers are buying recycled parts there are still a proportion turning to professional repairers to help get parts fitted<sup>[1]</sup>.

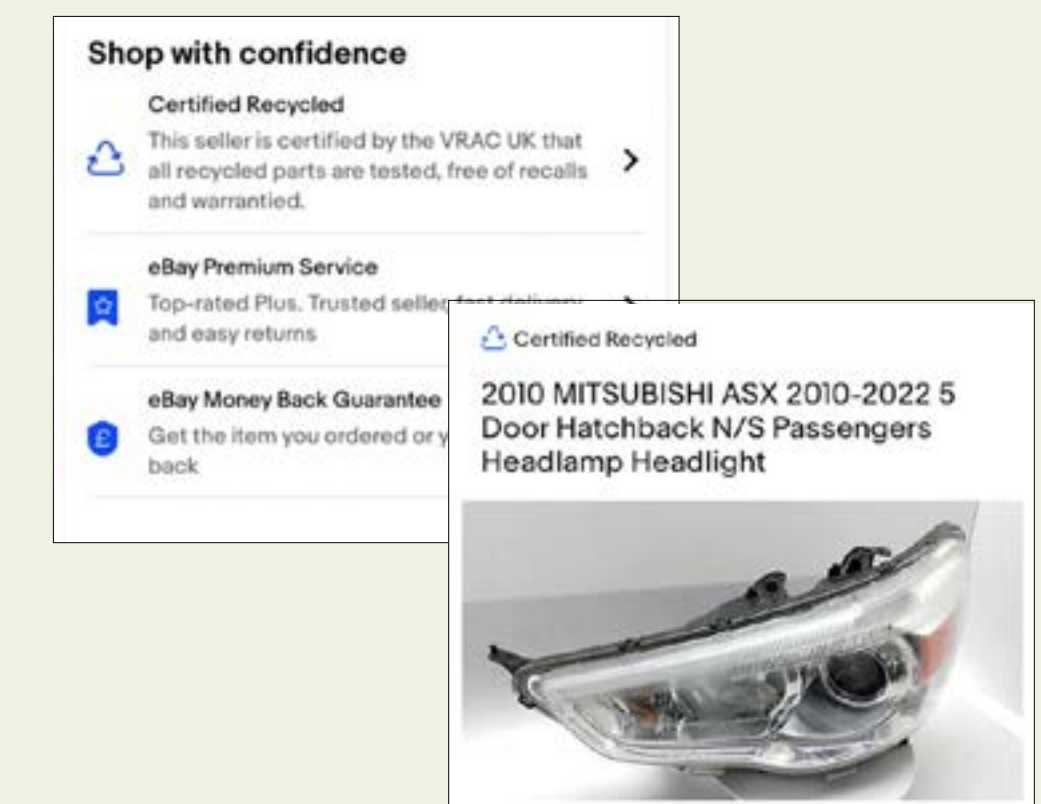
## Explore Certified Recycled parts with confidence

eBay has made it even easier for customers to find and purchase Certified Recycled parts through its marketplace.

Customers searching for vehicle parts can shop with confidence with badging which clearly labels that the recycled part a customer is viewing is of a lower carbon intensity than a new part and the seller is certified by the VRA.

Each Certified Recycled part advert offers information about the quality assurance, warranty and money back guarantee available to increase consumer trust and further boosts the adoption of salvaged parts in the UK.

<https://pages.ebay.co.uk/2022/certified-recycled/index.html>





## Net Zero by 2050

**The UK government has set the target of decarbonising all sectors of the UK, to be net zero by 2050.**

Net zero means that the UK's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would be equal to, or less than, the emissions the UK removed from the environment. This can be achieved by a combination of emission reduction and emission removal.

The entire UK automotive industry is focussed on decarbonisation with the energy transition to electric vehicles taking the majority of the focus and spotlight.

Transport is the largest source of emissions in the UK, accounting for 28% of all recorded emissions, [according to the latest Office for National Statistics \(ONS\) data](#)<sup>[6]</sup>.

The automotive industry has been working to respond to that challenge.

According to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders' (SMMT) latest [2022 Automotive Sustainability Report](#), the sector continues to improve on its ambitions to reduce carbon emissions, reducing energy use, sourcing more responsibly and increasing recycling.

The latest SMMT data showed average new car emissions were at the lowest level ever recorded in 2021, down -11.2% on 2020, as car manufacturers brought an ever-wider choice of low and zero emission vehicles to market<sup>[7]</sup>.

As of 2015, the industry also committed to ensuring that 95% (up from 85% previously) of the vehicles, by weight, going through its takeback network are re-used, recycled or recovered.

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## Scoping out emissions with the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol

Large UK businesses are already reporting their emissions by following the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol, which sets the standards to measure and manage a company's carbon output.

There are three main elements covering how companies report their emissions:

- **Scope 1** covers direct emissions from owned or controlled sources.
- **Scope 2** covers indirect emissions from the generation of purchased electricity, steam, heating and cooling consumed by the reporting company.
- **Scope 3** includes all other indirect emissions that occur in a company's value chain, including commuting to work. This includes things like vehicles and parts distributed by the automotive industry.

The reporting of Scope 1 and 2 emissions are mandatory for large businesses in the UK, but Scope 3 is also expected to be made mandatory in the near future.

The UK government is also encouraging all businesses [to voluntarily report their carbon emissions](#)<sup>[8]</sup>.

Scope 3 is particularly challenging because even though smaller businesses may not be recording and reporting their carbon emissions voluntarily right now, the sustainability of the supply chain they operate in will be called into question when working as part of the wider automotive ecosystem.

Car manufacturers and large UK automotive businesses will all be reporting on their carbon emissions and thinking more closely about the sustainability of the aftersales and parts businesses as a result.

Recycled parts and the circular economy will play an increasingly important role as part of the decarbonisation of the entire automotive industry.



## The Certified Recycled process

**An independent certification and grading process forms the backbone of the recycled automotive parts industry in the UK and is essential to its continued success.**

The eBay UK team brought multiple industry stakeholders together (recyclers, body shops, trade associations and insurance companies) to form an industry committee to remove the customer perception of inconsistency, quality and trust of provenance associated with used car parts.

The VRA developed the VRAC (Vehicle Recyclers Accreditation Certification) process as part of this initiative, to assess a recycler's policies and procedures. It is aimed at ensuring every reclaimed vehicle part has been accurately identified, recorded, tested and graded.

There are now 81 VRA Certified vehicle recyclers in the UK.

To develop its Certification process, the VRA worked with industry experts and stakeholders to establish a set of criteria that recycled parts must meet to be certified.

This includes:

1. Parts must be sourced from a reputable supplier who can provide traceability of the part's origin and ensure it has not been stolen or illegally obtained.
2. Parts must be inspected and graded to ensure they meet the VRA's standards for quality and safety.
3. Parts are checked to be free of recalls.
4. Parts must be tested to ensure they are fully functional and meet Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) specifications.
5. Parts must be cleaned and refurbished as necessary to ensure they are safe and reliable.
6. The supplier must have a robust quality management system in place to ensure consistent quality and safety of their recycled parts.

There are now 81 recyclers who have passed their audit to remain certified. I think it demonstrates that the certification process requires high standards, as you would expect.

Chas Ambrose, Vehicle Recyclers Association (VRA) secretary

Once a supplier meets these criteria, they can apply for VRA certification.

The VRA then conducts an audit of the supplier's facilities, processes, and documentation to ensure compliance with the VRA process. If the supplier meets all the requirements, they are granted VRA Certification and can display the VRAC logo on their recycled parts.

The VRA carries out an annual audit and review of a vehicle recycler's policies and procedures to ensure they continue to meet the UK standard for reclaimed parts from end-of-life vehicles.

Chas Ambrose, Vehicle Recyclers Association (VRA) secretary, said: "One of the big reasons we started certification was traceability on parts, you know the seller is certified and they're getting the parts from a genuine source.

"There are now 81 recyclers who have passed their audit to remain certified. I think it demonstrates that the certification process requires high standards, as you would expect.

"It means those current 81 certified recyclers are really keeping their nose to the grindstone to make sure they're complying with everything asked of them. That includes investing in the audit process, as well as training and the working practices they need.

"There is a lot of talk about the circular economy, but I'd really like to see the Government step in and put mandatory targets in place to increase the volume of recycled parts used as part of repairs in the UK."



## Warranty and durability

Bodysshops, repairers and consumers need to know that the recycled parts they are buying are high quality to ensure peace of mind.

This is why all Certified Recycled parts come with a seller warranty and are also backed by eBay's moneyback guarantee.

The parts are usually the original equipment part that was supplied with the car, so they are already manufactured to a high quality.

All vehicle body parts are covered by a 12-month warranty and all mechanical parts are covered by a three-month warranty.

Charles Trent, one of eBay's top sellers for Certified Recycled parts and a VRA Certified recycler, goes beyond the standard warranty and now offers lifetime warranty on body parts and up to 12 months on mechanical parts too.

Certified Recycled parts are sourced from independently certified automotive recyclers, tested for quality and then graded, as well as checked for any recalls by the seller.

There is still a lot of confusion from consumers about whether using recycled vehicle parts voids their car manufacturer's warranty.

The only time a warranty may be voided is if the parts used to fix a vehicle cause issues or damage to other car parts that previously worked fine.

This is only likely to happen if an unqualified vehicle repairer installs the parts incorrectly, or they aren't inspected thoroughly enough. Consumers should always make sure to check the warranty of their vehicle to fully understand the terms and conditions of their policy.



## Testing and grading

All Certified Recycled parts are tested for correct operation by the seller before they are dismantled and graded.

Engines, transmissions and drivetrains are given a visual inspection to look out for any external cracks or defects.

All vehicle body parts are covered by a 12-month warranty and all mechanical parts are covered by a three-month warranty.

Vehicle recyclers will also carry out hydrocarbon and compression tests in addition to evaluating all fluids and oils. Every part is then graded to help vehicle recyclers accurately and consistently describe the condition of parts to potential buyers.

VRAC accreditation is about the journey of the part from the car to the consumer. Every part needs to be identified correctly, tested, removed, cleaned, imaged and packaged for warehousing.

In many cases, buyers won't physically be able to see the part before they purchase it, so it is important that garages and customers clearly understand the grading and condition of a recycled part before fitting or buying.

The idea is that as many vehicle recyclers as possible use the same grading system, so both buyers and sellers have a good understanding of the condition of parts being offered for sale. This will help avoid confusion, disappointment and dispute.

Cosmetic parts like a bumper or a door are graded on their external appearance, while mechanical components like engines or gearboxes are graded based on the mileage of the vehicle it was removed from and the part functioning.



### Grading of engines and other mechanical components

Grade	A	B	C	D
Mileage	<60,000 miles	60,000 -100,000 miles	>100,000 miles	
Quality criteria	Parts function correctly as intended by the original equipment manufacturer. No visible or audible damage or malfunction such as a crack, distortion, oil leak, or contaminated oil or coolant.			Parts may not be tested or may not function correctly as intended by the original equipment manufacturer.

### Grading non-appearance sensitive electrical parts

Grade	A	U
Quality criteria	Parts function correctly as intended by the original equipment manufacturer.	Parts may not be tested or may not function correctly as intended by the original equipment manufacturer.

### Grading of engines and other mechanical components

Grade	A	B	C	D
Quality criteria	<b>Prep &amp; Paint</b>  Surface scratches & scuffs  Small dents, scrapes or gouges  No damage to swage lines  No damage to mounting/ fixing brackets  No damage to integral textured parts  No cracks, splits or holes	<b>Minor repair &amp; Paint</b>  Total area of damage 1-2 units  No damage to mounting/ fixing brackets  No damage to integral textured parts  Small damage on swage lines permitted  No cracks, splits or holes	<b>Significant repair &amp; paint</b>  Total area of damage >2 units of repair	<b>Major repair &amp; paint</b>  Substantial damage requiring specialised repair such as welding  Not generally suitable for body shops
Maximum area of damage	<1	1-2	>3	>>>>2

## Case study: Charles Trent Ltd

Since its establishment back in 1926, Charles Trent Ltd (known simply as Trents or Charlie Trents to many), has grown to become one of the UK's leading experts in vehicle recycling.

The fourth-generation family run company is one of eBay's Certified Recycled trusted sellers and has a team of over 200 across its two sites in Poole, Dorset and Rugby, Warwickshire.



The business recovers and sells circa 3,000 recycled parts per week and around 156,000 each year.

Charles Trent Ltd is a fully licenced and regulated member of the Vehicle Recyclers Association and e2e Total Loss Vehicle Management network that aims to raise the standard of vehicle recycling in the UK and salvage buying respectively.



The company's locations feature specialist vehicle dismantling and depolluting equipment enabling it to recycle over 95% of each and every vehicle that arrives on site. The business counts some of the UK's largest insurance companies as its clients.

Trent described the VRA accreditation as a significant step forward for the automotive recycling industry.

He said: "VRAC provides consumers wishing to purchase used car parts confidence in quality (fit for purpose) and provenance. Being VRA Certified has certainly helped us grow our business."

Marc Trent, Charles Trent Ltd chief executive, said: "We have made significant developments to position ourselves at the forefront of the vehicle recycling industry, continually investing in our sites, staff, processes and services to increase the scale of our operation."

"Our goal as a business is to continue to invest in our sustainable operations, make business decisions that positively impact the environment and drive sustainability throughout our entire business function."



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Marc Trent, Charles Trent Ltd chief executive



## Insurance sector

**The UK car insurance industry is one of the largest and most profitable in the world and pays out nearly £47 million in motor insurance and property claims every day in the UK<sup>[9]</sup>.**

However, despite the industry's size, it is facing significant challenges from both environmental and economic perspectives.

The majority of motor vehicle collision damage is minor, affecting only the exterior – damage to windscreens, side panels and headlights, for example.

For all these damaged parts, repair methods exist, but all too often, damaged parts are disposed of and replaced with brand new components. This comes at a higher cost in terms of landfill waste and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but also at a higher cost for the customer.

According to the latest Association of British Insurers' (ABI) Motor Insurance Premium Tracker for Q4 2022, energy inflation is adding £71.75 to each repair. Average paint and material costs have increased by nearly 16% and an estimated 40% of all work is now being affected in some way by parts delays<sup>[10]</sup>.

Those insurers adopting a recycled parts strategy can reduce claims inflation, cut average repair costs and maximise customer retention.

The [ABI Climate Change Roadmap](#) was developed last year as a joint project between 10 leading insurance companies that, between them, have over £1.26 trillion of invested assets<sup>[9]</sup>.

Since the Roadmap's launch, the ABI has been actively working to support the wider sector's adoption of its recommendations, one of which is to encourage customers to accept repaired or recycled items as part of their settlement, rather than automatically offering brand-new items after a claim.

As a result, insurers like Allianz, LV= and Aviva are openly embracing the use of recycled parts as one of the innovative solutions to help reduce their impact on the environment and lower their costs.

In fact, according to the recent [2023 e2e Reclaimed Parts Report](#) produced by the Auto Body Professionals Club (ABP Club), 100% of the 18 insurers that took part in that survey said they are either actively promoting the use of recycled parts or are intending to do so in the next 12 months<sup>[11]</sup>.

Further consumer education is needed to reassure and reduce policyholder resistance to the use of recycled parts, with the vast majority of insurers that took part in the e2e survey (87%) saying it is their responsibility, either solely or jointly with bodyshops<sup>[11]</sup>.

The e2e report shows the decision on whether to use recycled parts is primarily made solely by the repairer (39%) or jointly with the insurer and policyholder (20%)<sup>[11]</sup>.

Only in 22% of jobs is the decision made solely by the insurer<sup>[11]</sup>.

A spokesperson for the ABI said: "There are some parts of the insurance market which already encourage repair and replace – for example, the ABI Salvage Code is designed to ensure that when a vehicle is 'written off', there is clear criteria that allows vehicles and parts to be repaired and then safely returned to the road – with only vehicles that are classified as structurally unsafe removed entirely from the road.

"However, there is much more that we can do. ABI members will work in partnership with manufacturers and suppliers to achieve this – by utilising the key decision touchpoints that follow from an insurance claim, customers who would benefit from being given these choices can be identified and sustainable markets can develop."

### Environmental benefits

Using recycled car parts can reduce the environmental impact of manufacturing new parts. The production of new car parts consumes a significant amount of energy and resources and contributes to carbon emissions. By using recycled parts, insurers can help reduce the carbon footprint of repairs.

### Cost savings

Insurers can save up to 70% vs OEM parts RRP\*, as of 2021, by using recycled parts in order to reduce the cost of repairs. This is a significant amount, considering that the cost of repairs is one of the biggest expenses for insurers.

### Quality assurance

Certified Recycled car parts undergo a rigorous quality control process to ensure they meet strict quality standards. This means that insurers can be confident the warranty covered parts they are using are of high quality and will perform as expected.

### Shorter repair times

Using Certified Recycled parts can also help reduce repair times. Since the parts are readily available, often with next day delivery, repair shops can complete repairs faster, which reduces the amount of time a vehicle is off the road. This is especially important for commercial fleets, where vehicle downtime can significantly impact operations.

### Meeting customer demands

Increasingly, customers are demanding more sustainable options from businesses. By using recycled car parts, insurers can demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and meet customer demands.

## Case study: LV= General Insurance

LV= General Insurance (LV= GI), is one of the UK's largest insurance companies and is part of multinational financial services company Allianz.

It has an overall goal to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) emissions by 70% by 2030.

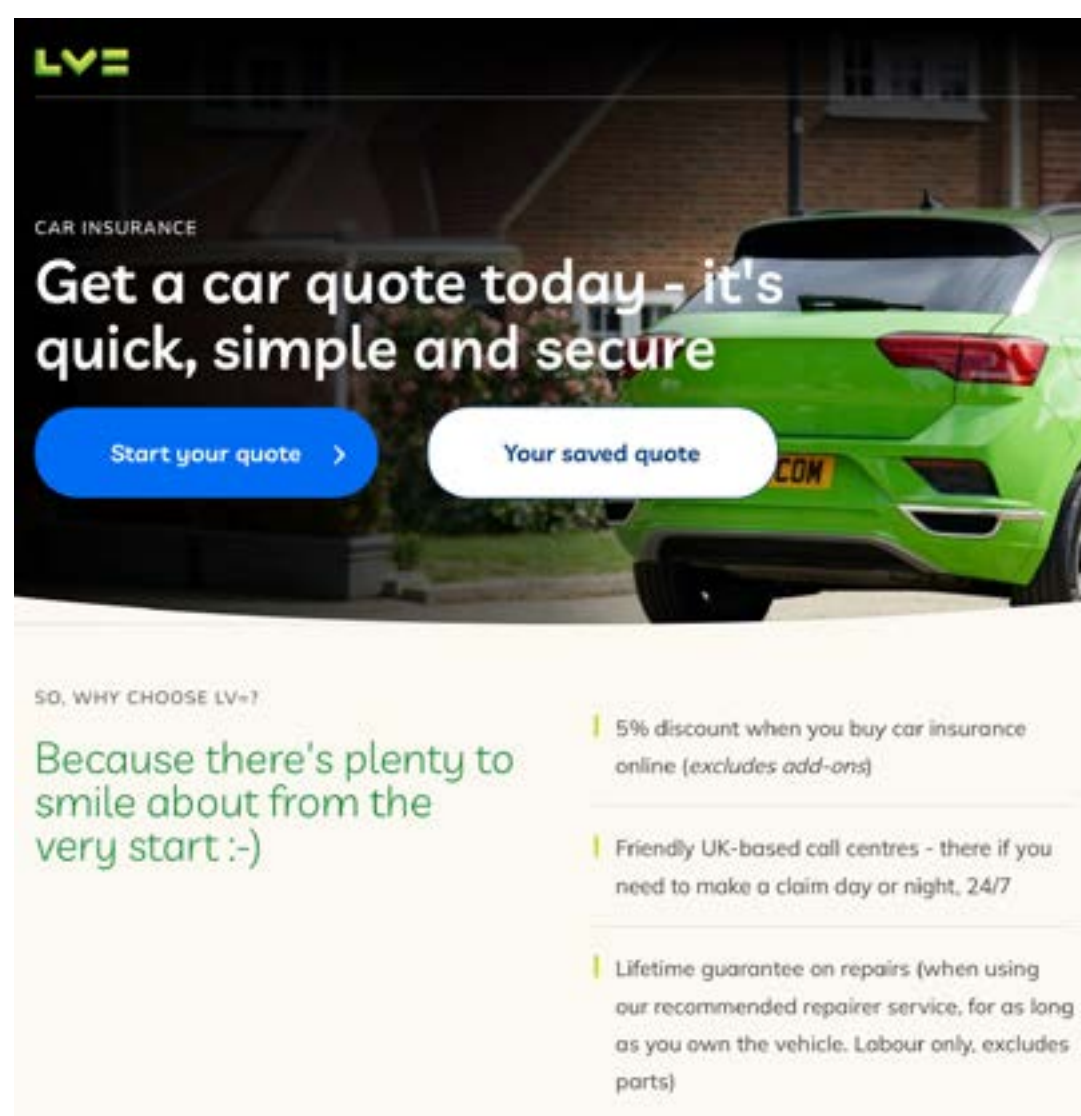
As part of this commitment to have a positive influence on society and be environmentally responsible, LV= GI launched an ethical standard two years ago for its branded bodyshop repair network called the Green Heart Standard.

The standard was established to make sure suppliers within the LV= repair network meet its corporate social responsibility goals and also become a 'greener' supplier.

The use of VRA Certified recycled safe and traceable parts is a key part of LV='s commitment to facilitating an environmentally aware repair service.

LV= GI has been working in partnership with all 33 of its "Sole Site" body shops around the UK to implement six new principles which align with its Environment and Sustainability, Diversity and Inclusion, Wellbeing and Responsible Business goals.

There are 17 body shops in LV='s network that have already achieved the carbon neutral BSI PAS2060 standard and approximately 67% of all the insurer's work goes through these sustainable repairers.



Michael Golding, LV= GI motor network manager, said: "There are actually a lot of body shops that are still working towards PAS2060 and they're close to being able to claim that standard but in order to do so they need to collect 12 months of CO<sub>2</sub> data.

"So the number of sites that are carbon neutral will start to increase further in the coming months."

All the non-safety related original equipment (OE) green parts that are used in LV's repairs have to be sourced through a Vehicle Recycler Association (VRA) Certified seller.

Golding said: "We keep things quite open and try to encourage our repairers in our guidance to consider green parts.

"As part of the Green Heart Standard we ask that our repairers talk to customers about whether they would prefer their repair to be sustainable and how as an insurer and repair network we're committing to reduce the emissions impact by the parts repairers are choosing."

Golding said that buy-in from customers on using recycled parts has never been an issue, but increasing the number of green parts used in repairs has to go hand in hand with increasing the number of recyclers that achieve the VRA standard.

He added: "Increasing the volume of recycled parts in UK vehicle repairs is the right thing to do for the environment, but as an industry there is more work to be done to make sure the recycled parts supply chain can sit in parallel with the OE and non-OE market.

"That will come in time, but there has to be the supply, which has already come on in leaps and bounds in the last years with the help of initiatives like eBay's Certified Recycled business."

Christoph Lauterwasser, managing director of the Allianz Centre for Technology, applauded LV='s Green Heart Standard in the UK as an example across Europe of how a change in approach can successfully move the dial on sustainability for the insurance and repair sector.

Lauterwasser said: "In most cases, after a customer submits a claim, it's over to our experts to work with partnering bodyshops to ensure a quality solution at a fair and reasonable cost, and it is here that we can exert most influence.

"That said, customer expectations still play a role in the background, and it is important that customers are aware that sustainable repair options exist.

"It is through our work with our partnering body shops that Allianz is exerting the most influence on the use of recycled parts. Here we are working with the industry to create future standards for sustainability. These standards are crucial and will ultimately determine who we work with."

## Bodyshop industry

**In recent years, the UK body shop industry has been increasingly turning to recycled car parts as a way to reduce the cost of repairs for clients and customers.**

This is in part due to rising costs of new car parts, as well as a growing concern for the environment and the need to reduce waste.

Parts availability has pushed up the use of recycled parts, with repairers and insurers both finding ways to repair vehicles for customers at a time of parts shortages.

Their use can help bodyshops avoid parts delays, free up workflow congestion, reduce customer waiting times and mobility costs, and potentially improve profit margins.

The recent [2022 Auto Body Professionals Club State of the Industry Report](#)<sup>[13]</sup> has shown the highest level ever recorded (79%) of bodyshops saying they use recycled parts, with 74% using more recycled parts than the previous year.

e2e Total Loss Vehicle Management, the UK vehicle recycling network, has also put together its own report to dig further into the detail on the views of UK bodyshops on recycled parts.

The [2023 e2e Reclaimed Parts Report, produced by ABP Club](#), surveyed 70 bodyshops and 18 insurers<sup>[11]</sup>.

The report reveals the huge potential for recycled parts to be used in the majority of jobs, but currently only two thirds of bodyshops are using them on less than 10% of jobs<sup>[11]</sup>.

### Availability is key driver for recycled parts adoption

The key driver as to where bodyshops obtain recycled parts is availability (60%). The next biggest reason is ease of sourcing (39%), with cost and work provider instruction (both 32%) coming a close third<sup>[11]</sup>.

New parts continue to be easier to source than recycled parts, however 74% of bodyshops would welcome a seamless platform for the sourcing / costing / ordering of recycled parts.

Only 63% of the bodyshops that took part in the research believe there is a cost benefit to them fitting recycled parts<sup>[11]</sup>.

The majority (68%) feel they would require a change in their contract terms with work providers to help increase the use of recycled parts<sup>[11]</sup>.

In contrast, 78% of the insurers say that they are incentivising their repairers to use recycled parts wherever possible<sup>[11]</sup>.



Jim Loughran, chief executive at e2e, said: “In 2022, our members re-invested more than £20 million in facilities and infrastructure supporting the supply of recycled parts, and our clients benefit from a return rate of under 3%.

“We believe for the recycled parts market to mature effectively and deliver maximum efficiencies and mutual benefits to insurers and bodyshops, the sourcing and supply process must be better integrated across all parties.”

David Cresswell, chairman at the ABP Club, said gaining a deeper insight into all aspects of recycled parts from bodyshops and insurers is vital to ensuring their future growth.

He said: “Understanding the benefits, and challenges of reclaimed parts in the accident repair industry and sharing this information with everyone will hopefully help to shape the way this important element of the repair process is managed in the future.”

## Case study: Steer Automotive Group

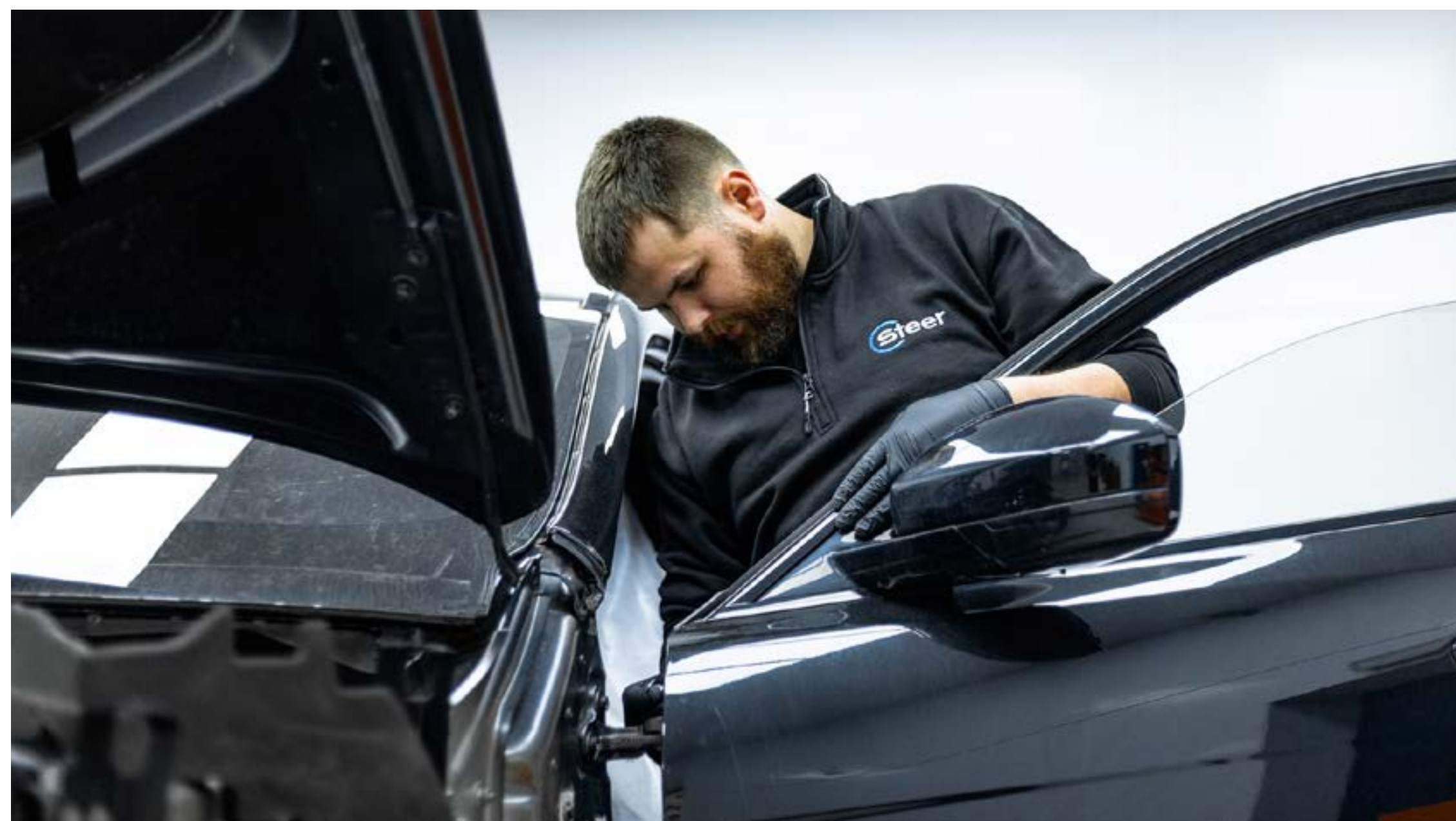
Steer Automotive Group is a 62-site bodyshop business that is continuously evaluating its repair processes and how their environmental impact can be improved.

The vast majority of Steer’s business is client-led for insurance, accident management and credit hire repairs.

The company, which is the largest independent repair group in the UK, has trebled in size in less than two years and a major goal of the group is to achieve a net zero repair process across the consolidated business.

Jonny Bowers, Steer Automotive Group strategy and development manager, said: “We pride ourselves on having a robust and well developed ESG strategy, with sustainability a leading consideration in everything that we do.”

Increasing the use of recycled parts fits into Steer’s broader sustainability strategy as a whole, which is all about reducing waste and being more efficient with what it does use as part of a repair.



This also includes the policy of “repair over replace” wherever possible too. This means using increasingly sophisticated techniques to repair materials such as plastic on bodywork rather than having to order and replace parts.

However, in cases where a part is needed, Steer wants to make sure it is able to consider recycled parts wherever they can be legitimately used.

Bowers said: “We’re investing in process and system changes across the group that will facilitate an increase in the number of estimates and repairs that use recycled parts.

“We are also actively working with our clients and customers to increase the acceptance of recycled parts within our repair process. The sentiment to embrace recycled parts is there across the industry, now it is all about how we can deliver that change to be more sustainable.”



We are also actively working with our clients and customers to increase the acceptance of recycled parts within our repair process.

Jonny Bowers, Steer Automotive Group strategy and development manager



## Independent and franchised garages

### Independent garages

One of the biggest growth markets for Certified Recycled parts is the independent garage sector.

These are businesses that are focussed on servicing customers with typically older vehicles of five years old or above, considered to be car parc 2 (from four to six years old) and car parc 3 (aged between seven and nine years old).

Umesh Samani, Independent Motor Dealer Association (IMDA) chairman, said that while sustainability is a consideration for his members, the price of parts and their availability are the main factors when independent dealers consider ordering recycled parts.

He said: “Some new parts are on backorder with no delivery times, so it’s not an option to just keep customers waiting – especially if we’re repairing vehicles so they’re ready to retail and the car is a sold unit.”

Samani, who also runs and owns his own used car dealership, Specialist Cars in Stoke, said that IMDA members will regularly consider recycled parts purely on a cost basis.

He said: “I’ve had a personal case where a vehicle’s media display screen was cracked and a new one from the main dealer would have been around £2,400 plus VAT.

“A quick search for recycled parts found three units. At £250 it was a bargain. Next day delivery was available and so the car was back on the road and ready to sell at a fraction of the cost compared with new parts.”

Samani said there are some pitfalls with second hand parts where sellers have not always tested items, but his advice to IMDA members is to check that sellers are VRA Certified before committing to buy.

Marc Trent, chief executive at Charles Trent, said: “Body parts, lamps and mirrors are the biggest selling items today.

“For many years, the end user purchased the parts and took those parts to their local garage, independent mechanics or bodyshop for fitment.

“Today the use of technology, warranties and the service delivery of a good quality auto recycler has helped the industry re-engage directly with garages, independent mechanics and body shops as the primary source for the supply of used parts to their customers.”

### Franchised dealer garages

Franchised dealer aftersales departments are facing multiple pressures that are prompting a rethink on how they approach service and repair.

Overhead absorption rates have been consistently falling as franchised dealers struggle to have their aftersales departments cover the cost of their new and used car sales departments with service, maintenance and repair revenues.

The industry benchmark has fallen from 100% of costs absorbed, down to 80% with some dealer networks now seeing the rate drop as low as 50%<sup>[4]</sup>.

There is a further challenge facing franchised dealers as greater numbers of electric vehicles (EVs) filter through into the UK service parc.

General maintenance costs and labour time is lower on EVs, which have fewer moving parts. This is expected to create another reduction in aftersales department revenues.

Data from 850,000 fleet cars and vans, using Fleet Assist’s 5,200-strong franchised and independent garage network in August 2022, [shows the average transaction value of an EV service is around 22% less<sup>\[5\]</sup>](#) than an equivalent internal combustion engine (ICE) car.

Much of this can be put down to reduced labour times, which are currently 33% shorter for EVs than internal combustion engine (ICE) cars, according to Fleet Assist.

Franchised dealers have traditionally focussed on servicing and repairing younger vehicles that are covered by the original equipment manufacturer’s (OEM) warranty.

However, many main dealer groups are increasingly focussing on establishing their own used car supermarket operations and expanding the age range and make of vehicles they target for sales and servicing as a way to offset any drop-off caused by EVs.

This means franchised dealers should be considering all the ways in which they can reduce costs, capture servicing work for older vehicles and compete against the independent garage sector for work.

The cost of servicing and repairs remains a consistent barrier for many car owners that avoid the main dealer purely on cost.

Offering recycled parts as an option for customers can not only be more sustainable, but it can reduce time off the road and deliver significant savings to help franchised dealers compete with the independent garage sector and attract a wider demographic of service customers.



## Key findings

### Quality assured, genuine parts

Every Certified Recycled part goes through a vigorous testing and grading process and is covered by seller warranty, ensuring peace of mind for customers.

### Save up to 70% vs OEM parts RRP\*, as of 2021

eBay's customers have already saved £99 million in 2022 by choosing used parts compared with replacing with brand new.

### Better for the environment

Choosing used car parts and accessories through eBay has already helped save 16,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e and 3,000,000kg of waste going to landfill in 2022.

### Available for immediate delivery

Listed for ordering and processing allowing customers to circumvent issues and delays in the new parts supply chain.

### Certified Recycled parts sellers

Every Certified Recycled part bought through eBay is sourced from Vehicle Recyclers Association (VRA) Certified businesses that have passed rigorous annual quality assurance standards.

## References

1. [SMMT registrations data - May 2022](#)
2. Consumer research was undertaken on behalf of eBay by Censuswide, with fieldwork conducted between 9th and 11th January 2023.
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4. [Office for National Statistics cost of living data](#)
5. [Trend Tracker Snapshot report: Repair Market ABP State of the National Special Edition](#)
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For more information on Certified Recycled parts, [click here](#)

If you have any further questions, please contact: [pressoffice@ebay.com](mailto:pressoffice@ebay.com)



# eBay UK Car Parts & Accessories

The impact of used car parts and accessories on the UK automotive industry