

Parents spend £383 million visiting freshers in their first year of uni

- And drive 1.5 billion miles

- And spend more than 35 million hours in the car

As the end of the first term of university approaches, the experts at 1ST CENTRAL have found that parents across Britain will spend nearly £96 million* driving to collect their kids this December. Over the course of their child's first year, British parents will spend an estimated £383 million driving them to and from university and a total sum of £1.15 billion over their child's entire degree.

The study found that on average parents drive to visit their child four times a year and nearly a quarter (23%) admit to getting in the car more than seven times annually. With the average drive for each parent being 246 miles and 5 hours and 45 minutes for a return journey, this equates to nearly 1,000 miles travelled in their child's first year of university alone, and almost an entire day (23 hours) spent sitting in the car.

Parents from Plymouth were found to travel the furthest distances to collect their children from university (373 miles for a return trip), followed by Aberdeen (361 miles) and Norwich (339 miles). On average parents spend £62.60 on fuel to collect their children and Scottish parents were found to spend the least, with parents from Aberystwyth spending 68% less than the national average for a return trip (£20.00), Glaswegian parents spending 39% less (£38.12) and those from Edinburgh spending the most at 28% less (£44.90).

With long and expensive car trips on the horizon for parents, 1ST CENTRAL has shared its top tips to a safe and comfortable university drive:

1. Setting off. With many parents getting behind the wheel, people should set off early to avoid heavy traffic.
2. Plan ahead. A third of parents (32%) incur additional costs when driving to universities including overnight hotel stays. Parents planning on staying overnight should book in advance to get the best price possible.
3. Tyre tread. Check that tyres are fully pumped before getting on the road. The legal tread depth is 1.6mm and worn tyres give an extra chance of skidding. Parents should remember that the extra baggage in the car once students have been collected could weigh the car down and affect tyre grip.
4. Check your insurance. Breakdowns are fairly common on long drives so it's advisable that insurance policies are checked before setting off to know what you're covered for.

5. Know the roads. If possible, avoid routes with road tolls. 16% of parents have extra costs associated with collecting their children because of them.
6. Avoid overloading your car despite the urge to do so. Maintain adequate visibility and ensure items are appropriately secured so they don't move - particularly if you have to brake suddenly.

Andy James, UK CEO at 1ST CENTRAL said: "It's staggering to see how expensive driving to and from university to collect students can be, but with a child at university myself, I too share their pain. With many parents set to take to the road this December, we would advise that they plan ahead and drive as safely as possible to ensure that this cost doesn't rise even higher."

- ENDS-

Notes to editors

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Survey of 2000 UK drivers conducted by One Poll on behalf of 1st CENTRAL between 15th September and 12th October 2015.

*Based on HESA figures that the total number of HE undergraduate enrolments at UK HEPs from UK domiciles stood at 1,528,720 in 2013/14

About 1ST CENTRAL

1ST CENTRAL is an online car insurer founded by Ken Acott, Pat Tilley, Peter Creed and Mike Leonard. 1ST CENTRAL has enjoyed incredible growth since its launch in 2008, saving more than two million UK policyholders money on their car insurance and servicing more than £0.5bn of premium in its first five years of trading. 1ST CENTRAL provides employment for 600 staff and has been awarded Employer of the Year two years in a row at the 2014 and 2015 Gatwick Diamond Business awards. 1ST CENTRAL has also recently been awarded Fraud Intelligence Team of the Year at the Insurance Fraud Awards 2015. In February 2015 1ST CENTRAL was awarded the 5 Star Rating from the independent financial research company Defaqto.

1ST CENTRAL is a trading name used by the First Central Group companies. 1ST CENTRAL is now firmly established as a top 10 provider in the UK motor aggregator market and is ready to move into its next phase of sustained growth and



expansion. 1ST CENTRAL is a proud sponsor of Brake, working with the charity to promote road safety awareness across the UK.