

## **Brits need to step into gear as 1 in 10 admit accidents caused by footwear**

- **3 in 10 drivers think it's illegal to drive barefoot**
- **Over a quarter think it's illegal to drive in heels**
- **Yet a third admit to having driven in both**

To mark the start of Road Safety Week, the UK's biggest road safety event, a new study by car insurance specialist 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL has revealed that 11% of British drivers admit to having an accident from driving in inappropriate footwear (e.g. high heels, flip flops or bare feet). The research also revealed that men are more than three times as likely as women (21% compared to 6%) to be involved in an accident from driving in the wrong shoes.

Brits are not only clueless when it comes to the rules of the road; they are also knowingly breaking them. Nearly a third of British drivers (28%) wrongly believe driving barefoot is illegal, and of these, 7% didn't think their insurance would cover them if they did. Despite this, a fifth (20%) owned up to driving barefoot anyway. Similarly, over a quarter of motorists (27%) incorrectly think it's illegal to drive in high heels, but nearly a third of drivers (29%) said they still drive in them.

Britain is a nation of shoe hoarders with half of drivers (50%) keeping shoes in their cars and one in 10 (10%) confessed to keeping four or more pairs kicking about. Of these, half (48%) said they kept spare pairs in their cars to make sure they were safe and comfortable for driving.

The most common type of shoe to be left in the car are trainers, with more than half of motorists (56%) keeping a pair stored away. This was followed by wellies (29%) and pumps (21%). The Scottish were found to be the biggest region of wellington boot wearers with two in five (38%) keeping one or more pairs in their boots.

Andy James, UK CEO of 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL said: "It's important to ensure safe driving at all times, even if this involves changing your footwear. Whilst it is not illegal to drive in heels or barefoot, rule 97 of the Highway Code does state that clothing and footwear should not prevent you using the cars' controls in the correct manner. At 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL we'd recommend drivers take the necessary precautions to ensure that they can maintain a safe driving environment at all times."

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**Notes to editors**

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\*Survey of 2000 UK drivers conducted by One Poll on behalf of 1st CENTRAL between 6<sup>th</sup> August and 10<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

**About 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL**

1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL is an online car insurer founded by Ken Acott, Pat Tilley, Peter Creed and Mike Leonard. 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL Insurance has enjoyed incredible growth since its launch in 2008, saving more than one million UK policyholders money on their car insurance and servicing more than £0.5bn of premium in its first five years of trading. 1<sup>ST</sup> 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. 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL has also recently been awarded Counter Fraud Initiative of the Year - Personal Lines and Young Fraud Investigator of the Year at the Insurance Fraud Awards 2014. In February 2015 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL was awarded the 5 Star Rating from the independent financial research company Defaqto.

1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL is a trading name used by the First Central Group companies. 1<sup>ST</sup> 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. 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL is a proud sponsor of Brake, working with the charity to promote road safety awareness across the UK.