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Updated: 11:59 BST, 25 June 2021 New research has uncovered the UK's illegal vehicle modification hotspots, based on the number of offences reported in the last year. It found that the most common illegal alteration to cars, motorcycles, vans and trucks was to be the number plates. And while many may think people regularly get away with iffy plates, responding police forces said they had slapped 13,720 drivers with fines in 2020, which was more than half of all modification offences last year. It was Gloucestershire that topped the list of locations with the highest proportion of these offence types. Most common illegal vehicle modifications: Altered number plate, such as this example of incorrectly spaced characters, are the number one type of modification offence in the UK Drivers in the county - which has a population of 637,100 - racked up 925 illegal modification offences in 2020. That an equivalent to 1,492 per million people and more than any other part of the country. Norfolk was second with 1,241 offences per million people with Northern Ireland in third spot with 1,179 offences per million people last year, according to the responses from 36 forces across the UK. Went was at the bottom of the list. The Welsh county, which has a population of 542,200, saw only four illegal car modifications in 2020, equivalent to seven cases per one million people. Incorrect lights (5,723 offences), illegally tinted windows (4,183 offences) and modified exhausts (776 offences) were the remaining common illegal vehicle modification offence types in the UK behind altered number plates. Illegal number plates can include drivers displaying number boards with reflective coatings that prevent speed cameras from identifying the characters or those that have been tampered with so that they don't show up clearly. They also include those that have been changed to look like they're from another country. Top 10 UK HOTSPOTS FOR ILLEGAL VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS Rank Locations Total offences Total offences (per million people) 1 Gloucestershire 925 1,452 2 Norfolk 1,136 1,251 3 Northern Ireland 2,232 1,179 4 Suffolk 873 1,147 5 London 9,373 1,047 6 Surrey 930 777 7 Northamptonshire 501 665 8 Dyfed-Powys 320 616 9 Greater Manchester 1,518 535 10 Leicestershire 494 449 Source: Comparethemarket.com FOI request to 36 UK police forces Police issue drivers with fines of £100 if they're found to have an illegally modified number plate. One common case is drivers using tape to alter characters so the car isn't detected by ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) cameras when stealing fuel from filling stations. Altering the characters of a number plate - usually with black tape - or the act of duplicated plates of legitimate motors to escape automatic number plate recognition cameras when breaking the law is becoming an increasing problem, and one the authorities want to bring to an end. The Home Office announced late last year that it plans to crackdown on dodgy number plates, amid concerns that sellers are enabling criminals to clone other vehicles freely without having to provide evidence of ownership as part of their efforts to dodge the police. The surveillance camera commissioner, Tony Porter, said in November that the trade is resulting in innocent motorists being wrongly accused of road traffic violations, and other offences committed by criminals using vehicles with cloned number plates. "It's a bit of a wild west out there and needs closer control," Porter told The Telegraph in 2020, explaining that there are as many as 40,000 businesses selling number plates, with many showing total disregard for the law. He added that the current system is "outdated and inefficient". The new regulations will require all number plates to be made to British Standard BS AU 145e. Number plates MUST have the following features: They must be the correct size as specified in the rules. The background of front plates must be the prescribed reflective white colour and rear plates must be the prescribed reflective yellow colour. They must have reflective properties complying with British Standard BS AU 145e. They must have physical resilience properties complying with British Standard BS AU 145e. They must display solid black characters in the prescribed Charles Wright typeface that comply with the rules governing size, spacing, grouping and positioning. They must bear the supplier's name and postcode and the manufacturer's mark. They must bear the current British Standard number, BS AU 145e. They MUST NOT have any of the following: Any background colour, pattern or texture except the plain reflective colours specified in the rules and the British Standard; Any font or typeface except the regulation Charles Wright typeface; Any character colour, shading, effect or texture except solid black; Any text, except that which is required or is specifically allowed by the rules; Any badge, emblem image or graphic element not expressly allowed by the rules; Any coating, treatment or another measure that may affect the reflective properties or legibility of the number plate, either visually or by number plate recognition technology; Any screws, bolts or other objects that alter the appearance of characters or interfere with legibility. Plates MAY optionally have the following: Raised 3D characters of plain black colour (known as "4D" number plates) provided that they meet all requirements of British Standard BS AU 145e; A coloured border as allowed by the rules; A national flag/emblem as specifically permitted by the rules; A raised 3D character of plain black colour (known as "4D" number plates) provided that they meet all requirements of British Standard BS AU 145e; A coloured border as allowed by the rules; A national flag/emblem as specifically permitted by the rules; A raised 3D character of plain black colour (known as "4D" number plates) provided that they meet all requirements of British Standard BS AU 145e; A coloured border as allowed by the rules; A national flag/emblem as specifically permitted by the rules; A raised 3D character of plain black colour (known as "4D" number plates) provided that they meet all requirements of British Standard BS AU 145e; A coloured border as allowed by the rules; A national flag/emblem as specifically permitted by the rules; 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