



Expensive half-term for motorists

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It's going to be an expensive half-term break for families this week.

Brian Madderson, Chairman of the Petrol Retailers Association, warned that the record pump prices of 142ppl for petrol and 148ppl for diesel set in April 2012 are almost certain to be eclipsed before the end of October. Experian Catalist UK averages for 19 October were 141.35ppl and 144.84ppl respectively.

The primary reason is the rise and rise of crude oil costs which recently hit \$US 85/barrel for Brent Crude. This involves more than a 50% increase since January 2021 and has been caused by a cutback in production from OPEC countries and Russia at the same time as the global economies are staging a rapid economic turnaround from the global pandemic.

There is no immediate sign of a change to this position and some analysts have talked about further oil price rises to \$US100/barrel by Christmas.

Current average pump prices across the UK are being softened by some of the largest retailers who typically benefit from a 3 or even 4-week lag to their delivered fuel prices.

Only last week, two major grocery retailers in Belfast were vying for business by offering fuel at below standard wholesale cost with pump prices as low as 125.9ppl for petrol and 130.9ppl for diesel.