

Ad-van-tage to Surrey

DESPITE all the old jokes about Essex being the home of the white van man, Romford just managed to scrape fourth place in a national poll.

New research shows that white van man is more likely to live in leafy Surrey and be a self-employed plumber.

In the survey by consumer and lifestyle analysts, Wegener, Romford comes fourth with 7.02 per cent of businesses relying on the use of a white van. Top spot went to Sutton, Surrey, which boats 7.13 per cent.

Truth about White Van Man: he's likely to be from Surrey

BY DAVID WILLIAMS

Motoring Editor

HE IS one of the most hated drivers on the road, forever cutting you up at the lights with complete disregard for his own paintwork — or yours.

Today, however, two of the myths surrounding White Van Man were finally exploded. He is not always from Essex and he is not always a builder.

New research shows he is most likely to be based in leafy Surrey and be running his own business as an electrician or plumber. The study pinpoints Sutton as having more white vans than anywhere else in Britain.

A total of 7.13 per cent of businesses in the area rely on the white van compared with just 5.88 per cent in Ilford, the town that has the least.

The survey by Wegener, the leading provider of consumer and lifestyle data in Europe, shows that the borough of Enfield is second, with 7.07 of businesses using a white van, often a Ford Transit or Mercedes Sprinter. Third most likely place to spot WVM is Dartford (7.06).

Essex does not make an appearance in the league table until position number four with Romford — where 7.02 per cent of businesses run a white van.

Contrary to popular opinion, the van will not be full of labourers travelling to the building site, the survey of two million businesses shows.

The tradesman most likely to buy and run a white van is the electrician who can use it as a mobile workshop, complete with bespoke benches and lighting. Plumbers favour it for carrying copper piping and radiators and bulky gear. Third on the list of tradesmen is the mechanic. Steve Cook, com-

WHITE VAN COUNTRY



AREA	Percentage of businesses that use white vans
Sutton	7.13%
Enfield	7.07%
Dartford	7.06%
Romford	7.02%
Southend	6.35%
Chelmsford	6.16%
Bromley	6.15%
Medway	5.97%
Watford	5.93%
Ilford	5.88%

mercial director of Wegener Business Data Solutions said: "It will comfort those who like stereotypes to find that four of the top locations for white vans are in Essex. However, leafy Surrey has the highest number of the vehicles."

NEWS IN BRIEF

★ ILFORD has the second highest number of white van drivers.

A study carried out by Wegener, a leading provider of consumer and lifestyle data in Europe, showed 5.88 per cent of self-employed electricians, plumbers and mechanics drive white vans.

Sutton came top in the poll with 7.13 per cent.

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top locations for white vans are in Essex. However, leafy Surrey has the highest number of the vehicles."

★ COMPUTER hacking and fraud is increasing and smaller businesses urgently need to ensure their IT systems are secure, warns a leading pressure group.

There has been a surge in "phishing" emails, which aim to trick computer users into logging on to a fake, or "mirror", banking website that looks similar to the bona fide site. Once visitors log on, the site records passwords and other sensitive bank

account details, which can later be used by fraudsters.

The Forum of Private Business is urging owners of smaller business to ensure anti-virus software is kept up-to-date.

★ THE Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales has issued a statement warning members of the public and businesses in Redbridge to note that Kalista Joseph, of Hamilton Avenue, Barkingside, is not a member of, and does not have, any connections with the organisation.