

I name this car...Rooney

Rooney, Angelina and Prince William are among the bizarre names Brits give their cars, a study revealed today.

The wacky monikers emerged in a study of 3,000 drivers by NCP car parks which found millions have called their four wheels after celebs as well as more 'normal' names.

Sheila, The Beast, and Gaga also proved popular, as did Babes, Archie and Herbie – after the famous Volkswagen Beetle.

The 'NCP Car Names Report' quizzed 17-45 year olds on their car-naming habits and found six in 10 have named their car at some point.

Almost half (43%) of people thought it was 'perfectly normal' for people to name their cars and 12% of Brits said it was 'cute'.

While Betty, Bertie and Bob emerged as the most common names motorists give their cars, many of the names chosen appear heavily influenced by the biggest female celebrities of the past 5 years including Cheryl COLE, Holly WILLOUGHBY and Kate MIDDLETON.

In addition, the likes of David Beckham, Alan Carr and Arnold Schwarzenegger also made an appearance in the list.

The study found famous names appear a big influence in car naming.

Almost a quarter (24%) of drivers said they liked to name their cars after celebs, film stars or pop stars, while 11% name them after cartoon characters, 4% after footballers and even 3% after politicians.

Perhaps most bizarre though is that 3% of us name our cars after work colleagues!

There were plenty of weird and wonderful names too, including The Chariot, Bullet, Babe Mobile and Destroyer of Cars.

The study found there are many reasons people give for naming their cars - four in 10 said that having a name encourages them to look after it more, 11% said their 'partner put them up to it' and one in 10 did it for the kids.

To better understand the relationship customers have with their cars, NCP also looked into alternative theories around the naming of our cars.

One concept put to the test was the idea, initially suggested in the book 'Freakonomics' (Levitt & Dubner, Penguin Books, 2006) and originally in reference to parents naming of children, was that choosing a car's name was built on a subconscious need to climb up the social ladder.

And the research suggests the theory might just hold water.

Almost one in seven people (14%) did agree that the name they gave their car was an attempt to appear 'a bit clever' within their group of friends and family.

Commenting on the NCP study, Top Gear favourite and Fifth Gear presenter Tiff Needell said: "I completely understand the need to name a car, and many famous petrol-heads have been known to do it too. Top Gear's Richard Hammond has Oliver, his yellow Opel Kadett, while Formula One World Champion Sebastian Vettel has 'Kate's Dirty Sister', 'Luscious Liz' and 'Kinky Kylie'. I named my son's Ford KA 'The Kpod' but it's since become 'Karen'! It's just something you have to do!

He continued: "This is a fun study and confirms what I've always known – that we love our cars at least as much as we love our pets and our partners. Good thing too or I might just be out of a job!"

It also emerged drivers of BMWs, Land Rovers and VWs are most likely to name their car. And purple, green and yellow cars are more likely to be named than any other colour car on the road.

NCP carried out the research to better understand the relationship customers have with their cars. Jo Cooper, CEO of NCP said: "It's important to us to understand our customers as best as we can, especially when it comes to the relationship they have with their cars as it helps us plan our car parks.

Ms Cooper continued: "Our research highlights how creative us Brits are when it comes to naming our cars. Historically, sailors would always name their ships and pilots often named their planes, so it follows that many people name their cars too."

However, car naming isn't for everyone. One in five said they are 'too embarrassed' to admit to people they have named their car, and one in six said they refuse to call their partner's car by its name. Furthermore, one in five said people who name their cars are 'sad' and a quarter believes it is 'weird'.

Of those who haven't named their car, half said they never would. When asked why, four in 10 said 'it's a car and it gets them from A to B' and one in five said they 'don't name inanimate objects'.

It also emerged Brits are most likely to give their car a female name and while the average adult has also owned four cars during the life, they have named half of these.

Three quarters were in agreement they are most likely to name their first car.

Most common names brits give their cars

1. Betty
2. Bertie
3. Bob
4. Percy
5. Susie
6. Dave
7. Boris
8. Freddie
9. Cheryl
10. Rosie
11. Betsy
12. Holly
13. Archie
14. Bella
15. Stephen
16. Herbie
17. Chloe
18. Daisy
19. Kate
20. Molly

Famous, weird & wonderful names brits give their cars

(Prince) William
David Beckham
Cheryl (Cole)
Rooney
Angelina
Alan Carr
The Beast
Gaga
Holly Willoughby
Jordan
Babe Mobile
Arnold Schwarzenegger
Petal
Rustbucket
Batmobile
Hercules
Bullet
Mr Lightning
Destroyer of cars
The Chariot
Betty Boop