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The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

Vehicle shown is the Ford Kuga Titanium X Sport in Magnetic at extra charge.



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FLEETS INFORMED

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Police chief renews calls for tougher phone use penalties

Suzette Davenport believes business drivers should face higher fines and short-term bans to act as a better deterrent

By Tom Seymour

A top traffic cop has called for business drivers to face stiffer penalties for using a mobile phone while driving.

Suzette Davenport, chief constable of Gloucestershire and the Association of Chief Police Officers' lead officer on road policing, believes that company car and van drivers should receive higher fines, more points and short-term bans for flouting mobile phone ban laws.

She told the *Daily Mail* that business drivers face greater pressure from employers to make phone calls on the move and she believes higher fines will act as a better deterrent (fleetnews.co.uk, February 1).

It is the second time Davenport has called for tougher tactics having outlined a case for stiffer penalties in 2015. However, the focus on business drivers is a new development.

She said: "I am looking at people running up and down the motorways. These are often young men aged 20 to 35. They are professional drivers.

"If these people are driving as part of their business and they are taking more risks as a result, in return they should face higher enforcement."

However, when she was contacted by *Fleet News*, Davenport declined to talk specifically about singling out company car and van drivers.

She said: "It is the role of police officers to enforce the law and protect the public. Changes to legislation and how they are implemented are a matter for Parliament.

"All drivers have a responsibility not to put other road users at risk by driving while distracted and we are unequivocal in



"People are driving as part of their business and they are taking more risks as a result, in return they should face higher enforcement"

Suzette Davenport, Gloucestershire Police

our determination to keep the roads safe."

The fleet industry labelled the suggestion of a two-tier penalty system "ridiculous". More than three-quarters (78.1%) of respondents to a *Fleet News* poll were against the move.

John Pryor, chairman of fleet representative body ACFO, said the existing penalties were sufficient. "To single out any particular driver or type of driver and issue different penalties is ridiculous," he said. "The law should apply to all equally.

"Companies should have a clear policy in place if a request is made after an incident, but it can only be for the offences that are on the books."

As the law stands, it's illegal to drive using hand-held phones or similar devices. The rules are the same if a driver has stopped at traffic lights or is queuing in traffic.

Drivers that are caught will get an automatic fixed penalty notice, three penalty points and a fine of £100.

Cases that go to court could see drivers disqualified from driving and get a maximum fine of £1,000.

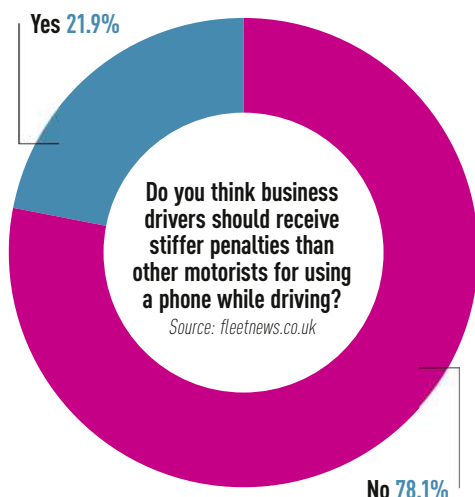
Drivers of buses or goods vehicles could get a maximum fine of £2,500.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has opened a public consultation on proposed changes to increase penalties for using a hand-held phone while driving (fleetnews.co.uk, January 29).

The consultation is seeking feedback on proposals for increasing the fixed penalty notice (FPN) level from £100 to £150 for all drivers.

It is also inviting views on increasing the penalty points from three to four points for non-HGV drivers, and from three to six points for those that hold a large goods vehicle (HGV) licence and commit the offence while driving an HGV.

Pryor would not comment on whether ACFO supports a higher penalty for all drivers who flout the ban.



£100

Penalty for using a hand-held phone while driving

£150

New penalty sought in consultation

£1,000

Potential penalty if case goes to court



Should mobile use be banned completely while driving? fleetnews.co.uk/mobile-ban



An expert said you are four times more likely to have an accident while using a mobile

However, Ellie Pearson, professional engagement manager for road safety charity Brake, is supportive.

"We need stronger penalties for every driver caught using a mobile," she said. "A crash caused by someone distracted on a work call is no more or less devastating than one caused by a distracted parent on the school run."

"While we support calls to increase fines, we strongly feel the proposed sum of £150 isn't a strong enough deterrent."

Brake wants all fleets to implement total bans for mobile phones, including hands-free calls.

Pearson said: "Whether it's handheld or hands-free, you are four times more likely to crash if you use a phone behind the wheel."

"Ultimately, the best way to make sure no one uses a phone while driving is to toughen up the laws for everyone."

Rory Morgan, Iron Mountain head of logistics support – Western Europe, also supports the idea for a hardline approach to the mobile fine ban, but insists that it must include all drivers, not just those that are on business.

He said: "The risk and danger remain the same if it's an executive in a Mercedes-Benz or shop assistant in a Fiat 500."

POLL COMMENTS

"Why should anybody get harsher or more lenient punishments for committing the same crime?"

"I believe business users should be more aware of the law"

"Surely the risk is the same regardless of the reason for driving"

"There are too many drivers disregarding the law and taking huge risks through distraction when they should be concentrating on the road."

"I see countless drivers texting and often it's quite apparent when following them as the vehicle is not being controlled correctly."

Eric Bristow, Hobart UK fleet manager – service division, agrees that it will be difficult to determine a business driver from another and the solution is better policing of the law.

He said: "How will the police identify if the journey is a business one or not, particularly in a car? There appears to be very little policing on the use of handheld devices currently."

"Every day I see at least one person using their phone and it isn't just business users."

James Firth, Freight Transport Association (FTA) head of licencing policy and compliance information, said the organisation agrees better enforcement is needed before penalties are increased.

FTA members have a zero-tolerance approach to using a handheld mobile device while driving; a single offence and they will lose their job. This applies to van fleets as well as HGV drivers.

Firth said: "What businesses really need is a reliable system from the DVLA which informs them when one of their drivers incurs penalty points and they can start to manage the problem within the company."

The DfT's most recent statistics show that in 2014, 1.6% of all drivers in England and Scotland were observed using a hand-held mobile phone while driving.

Drivers were more likely to be observed with a mobile phone in their hand rather than holding it to their ear.

In 2014, 1.1% of drivers in England and Scotland were observed holding a phone in their hand compared with 0.5% observed holding the phone to their ear.

This suggests more drivers are using apps or texting.

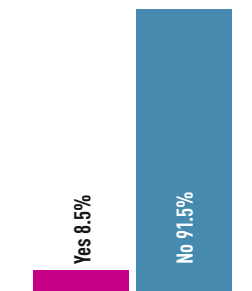
A higher proportion of drivers in England and Scotland were observed using a hand-held mobile phone when stationary (2.3%) than in moving traffic (1.6%).

The proportion of car drivers observed using a hand-held mobile phone in England in 2014 (1.5%) was relatively unchanged from the 1.4% observed in 2009, when the previous survey was carried out.

FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

OPINION POLL

Do you think that the removal of white lines improves road safety?



FleetNews view:

Engineers are arguing that the removal of the white centrelines on UK roads will improve safety in certain circumstances. However, our poll shows that the overwhelming majority of respondents remain to be convinced. Small trials have been conducted with some interesting results, but *Fleet News* believes more detailed studies are required before their removal becomes more commonplace.

■ See page 14 for more on this story.

This week's poll: What will power your next company car?
fleetnews.co.uk/polls

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fleetnews.co.uk/news



Diesel (ppl) 100.96 ↑
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"To single out any particular driver or type of driver and issue different penalties is ridiculous – the law should apply equally"

John Pryor, ACFO



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VW emissions: fleets will be able to cancel orders

Affected customers will also be able to swap to another model without penalty

By Gareth Roberts

Fleets and company car drivers facing a rise in CO₂ figures for certain Volkswagen, Audi and Seat models will be able to cancel their order.

Customers will also be able to choose a different model but, if they decide to proceed with their order, they will have to acknowledge notification of the new value.

Volkswagen Group brands – Volkswagen, Audi, Škoda and Seat – had previously told fleets they could not guarantee the CO₂ emissions of certain vehicles, with quoted figures labelled “provisional” (fleetnews.co.uk, November 12, 2015).

It had discovered what it called “irregularities” in CO₂ figures while investigating NO_x emissions, after admitting fitting cars with a software device to cheat pollution tests.

The most significant CO₂ revision was to the automatic Seat Leon X-Perience four-wheel drive estate. At launch, emissions were 129g/km, and have since increased to 139g/km (fleetnews.co.uk, February 10).

The increase means a two percentage point increase in benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax for drivers, costing a 20% taxpayer an additional £120 a year, as well as the loss for businesses of the 18% write-down allowance, because emissions are above 130g/km. The manual car emissions remain below 130g/km, at 125g/km.

The Audi A1 and certain variants of the new A4 have seen increases of 2–4g/km, with the majority adding an extra percentage point onto a driver's BIK tax bracket.

An Audi spokesman said: “As the revised figures were made available before the start of production, customers who placed an order based on the preliminary data in the pre-sales phase were informed of the changes and were able to amend or cancel their orders.”

Meanwhile, figures for three of the six Volkswagen models affected in the UK have been released, with revisions affecting 2.0-litre 150hp diesel manual Golfs, rising from 106 to 109g/km and 109 to 112g/km dependent on trim.

One Jetta and one Golf cabrio model are also affected, with the cabrio seeing a 6g/km rise.

Customers have again been offered the option to accept the changes, cancel the order or swap to another Volkswagen vehicle without penalty. The company said it has received around 100 orders for affected cars.

“Customers who are already driving these vehicles are not affected by these restated figures as their cars’ CO₂ values remain unchanged,” said a Volkswagen spokesman. “There are no retrospective consequences.”

The manufacturer also claimed that fuel consumption

“Customers who are already driving these vehicles are not affected”

Volkswagen spokesman

Seat Leon X-Perience has had ‘most significant revision’ in CO₂ emissions



10g/km

CO₂ rise on Seat Leon X-Perience 4x4 estate

25%

New BIK tax level due to Leon X-Perience CO₂ rise



To find out which cars have seen CO₂ figures rise, go to fleetnews.co.uk/co2-revisions

figures were not affected, despite the CO₂ change.

Škoda told *Fleet News* none of its vehicles were affected.

The revision comes as Volkswagen begins the roll-out of a fix for vehicles fitted with software to cheat NO_x tests.

The manufacturer was given the go-ahead by German authorities to begin the “remedial” fixes required for European cars affected by the software at the end of last year (fleetnews.co.uk, December 16, 2015).

The 1.2-litre and 2.0-litre versions of affected EA189 diesel engines will get a software update, while 1.6-litre engines will get a software update in addition to a ‘flow rectifier’ being fitted in front of the air mass sensor.

“The fixes are being rolled out as the software becomes available according to a schedule that enables our retailers to maintain a regular service to our customers for routine service and repair,” a Volkswagen Group spokesman told *Fleet News*.

Fleets that outright purchase vehicles will be contacted directly by the manufacturer for the work to be scheduled, while fleets that lease their vehicles will be contacted by their contract hire provider.

Volkswagen said it had begun updating software on affected Amarok models and says the fix will be rolled out on other models from March.

The spokesman continued: “Although the number of affected engine types is small, when multiplied across the number of brands, models, model variants, power outputs and transmission options, the number of software versions becomes large.

“Our overall plan is to phase in the updates smoothly over the year.

“The precise timings for the introduction of the fixes for individual models will be firmed up as we move forward.”

Government updates its advice on working hours

Additional types of journey added to definition could 'impact contracts and costs'

By John Charles

The Government has updated its advice on contracts of employment and working hours as employers get to grips with a travel-to-work verdict.

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled that employees without a fixed or habitual office – so-called peripatetic workers – should include the time spent travelling between their homes and the premises of their first and last jobs as part of their working hours (fleetnews.co.uk, September 21, 2015).

Government advice on calculating working hours has now been updated to explain what a working week includes.

It says job-related training, time spent travelling as part of your job, working lunches, time spent working abroad, paid overtime, any unpaid overtime you're asked to do, time spent on call at the workplace, any time that is treated as 'working time' under a contract and travel between home and work at the start and end of the working day (if you don't have a fixed place of work) should all count as work.

However, a working week does not include: time spent on call away from the workplace; breaks when no work is done; travelling outside of normal working hours, unpaid overtime that's volunteered for, such as staying late to finish something off, paid or unpaid holiday and travel to and from work if you have a fixed place of work.

The TUC said the judgement could have implications for many of the 951,000 employees who use home as a base.

But it will have the biggest impact on some 250,000 workers, including 37,000 skilled tradesmen, 13,000 professional drivers who take their vehicles home and 12,000 mobile carers.

The ECJ ruling relates to the working time directive.

It gives workers the right to a minimum 28 days of paid holidays each year, a 20-minute rest break after six hours of work, rest of at least 11 hours in any 24 hours, 24 hours off after seven days of work, and provides for a right to work no more than 48 hours per week over a cycle. It also restricts excessive night work.

However, TUC policy officer Paul Sellers said: "To ensure changes comply, it is important to remember that individual opt-outs from the 48-hour week do not provide complete protection against this judgement, as it also affects the rest



951,000

Number of employees potentially affected by travel-to-work ruling

250,000

Number of workers likely to be most affected

break entitlements in the directive. In addition, the 48-hour limit opt-out cannot be used by night workers."

Employers impacted by the judgement include the likes of The AA, British Gas and RAC, while many local authorities could also be affected.

Paul Grafton, southern regional organiser at the GMB union, which represents many AA patrols, said: "We have discussed the issue and the patrols I have spoken to across the country are happy with the current position."

Meanwhile, an RAC spokesman said the issue remained "under consideration".

He added: "We are currently agreeing with our recognised trade union [Unite] the principles of how this will work within the RAC for colleagues, the aim being to have an agreement in place later this year, possibly Q2."

Neither The AA nor British Gas would comment, but it is understood that unions have been working through their agreements to make sure that employers are complying.

In some cases that work is still going on as it is being considered as part of the annual pay negotiating round.

However, the process has not been about trying to negotiate higher pay – rather, it has been about ensuring that working patterns are consistent with minimum standards of health and safety.

Grafton said that there were concerns that some organisations across the public and private sectors may have negotiated service delivery contracts that "could come back to bite them".

Grafton said: "If an employee's last job is 60 or 90 minutes away from their base it could have a huge impact on contracts and costs."



"It's about properly valuing staff by ensuring their patterns of work are safe"

Paul Sellers, TUC



More on legislation at:
fleetnews.co.uk/fleet-management/legal/

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Model shown: New i30 SE 1.6 CRDi 110PS Blue Drive manual, with 94g/km CO₂, combined fuel economy of up to 78.4 MPG and 16% BIK.



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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the All-New Renault Kadjar Dynamique S Nav dCi 110 are: Urban 67.3 (4.2); Extra Urban 74.3 (3.8); Combined 72.4 (3.9). The official CO₂ emissions are 103g/km. EU Directive Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO₂ may vary according to driving styles, and road conditions and other factors. Model shown is All-New Renault Kadjar Dynamique S Nav dCi 110.

New eligibility rules will not hit RVs, says Motability

Revised disability scheme has resulted in 14,000 cars taken away and remarketed

By Simon Harris

Motability has dismissed fears that new eligibility rules which have resulted in thousands of early terminations of car leases will have an impact on used car values.

The switch to a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in 2013 from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) has seen tens of thousands of disabled people reassessed for their benefit with almost 14,000 having their Motability cars taken away.

The new scheme meant new applicants for disability benefit, as well as those reassessed, would have a face-to-face interview with an outsourced private company and need to meet a points tally to qualify for PIP.

More than 30,000 people on higher rate DLA have been reassessed for PIP, and 13,900 have been made to give up their vehicle.

Damian Oton, head of vehicle remarketing at Motability Operations, said: "To put the PIP transition into context, 60% of customers are of working age and will be reassessed – the current DWP time lines are that this will be before the end of 2018; 40% of customers are not of working age and therefore will not be affected.

"Currently, there are around 55,300 new PIP recipients with live agreements on the scheme – this is people who have become newly eligible for the Motability scheme by receiving PIP. Around 13,900 customers have been unsuccessful in their PIP application.

"The company remarkets in excess of 173,000 vehicles a year direct to trade, via a network of 5,500 dealers through our online remarketing platform, mflirect.co.uk. The mix of vehicles remarketed is vast and varied, both in terms of makes and models and vehicle age.

"The significant volumes of cars already remarketed each year, and the relatively low volume of those currently impacted by PIP, means there are no major challenges."

Orton's view has been supported by pricing guide Cap HPI. It said any early termination of Motability vehicles since 2013 did not appear to have had an affect on residuals.

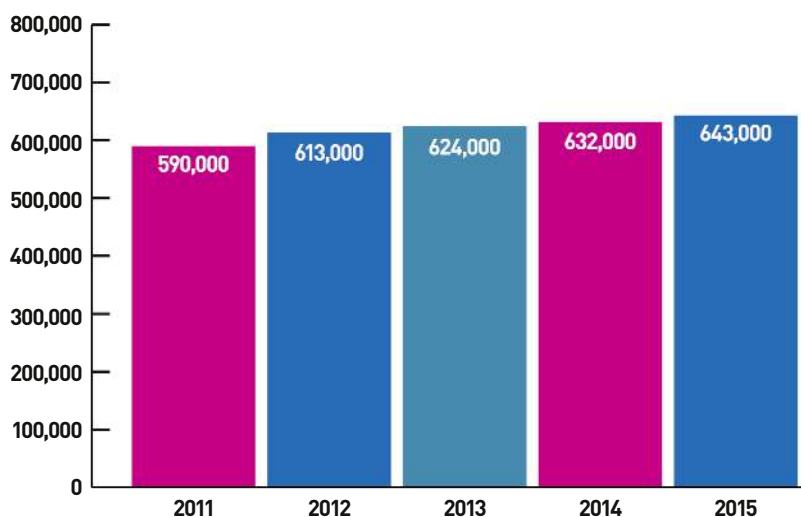
Motability Operations runs the car scheme under contract to the charity Motability. It is seen by manufacturers as a low-profit but genuine source of sales. They benefit from steady supply of three-year-old cars returning to the market, generating interest in their brands.



"The mix of vehicles remarketed is vast and varied, in terms of models and vehicle age"

Damian Oton, Mobility Operations

MOTABILITY CAR SCHEME IN FLEET NUMBERS



MOTABILITY TOP 10 BY CAR BRAND

- 1 Ford – 50,313
- 2 Vauxhall – 44,720
- 3 Nissan – 23,662
- 4 Volkswagen – 17,095
- 5 Citroën – 13,138
- 6 Peugeot – 12,971
- 7 Renault – 9,037
- 8 Hyundai – 7,924
- 9 Kia – 6,903
- 10 Škoda – 5,865

All carmakers have a presence in this sector, although the 10 biggest by volume account for almost 82% of sales.

The biggest, Ford, registered 50,313 cars last year, for a 21.5% share. Five other carmakers hit five figures: Vauxhall (44,720 – 19%), Nissan (23,662 – 10%), Volkswagen (17,095 – 7.3%), Citroën (13,138 – 5.6%) and Peugeot (12,971 – 5.5%).

Customers who have been told they no longer qualify for a car are entitled to appeal, and they will continue to receive the Motability allowance for a further four weeks. Motability Operations allows the customer to keep the car for a further three weeks, and offers a support package of £2,000, which is intended to help with their immediate transport needs or help fund a replacement car.

Oton said around 10% of customers have used the money to help buy the Motability car they had been using.

He added: "Anyone who doesn't qualify for PIP will receive a 'Staying Mobile after Motability' guide and details of a range of insurance companies, such as broker Autonet Mobility, who has a panel of 21 insurers, all of whom will take into account customers' claims histories, provided by RSA."

Motability has already provided £16m in support through this transitional package.

Despite the rule changes, and the addition of a £25,000 value cap to Motability cars in 2011, the scheme has continued to grow over the past five years (see graph).

Oton added: "We have consistently increased the vehicle choice available to Motability customers, culminating in the current price list which includes over 2,000 cars.

"As a result, MFL Direct now offers a wider choice of low mileage, franchise-serviced vehicles to trade buyers than ever before, supporting strong residual values that are then reinvested into the business, to provide great customer pricing."



Motability's e-learning platform: fleetnews.co.uk/motability-elearning

New proposals to remove white lines 'fatally flawed'

Trials suggest removing white lines improves safety by reducing vehicle speeds

By Gareth Roberts

Calls for the removal of white lines from UK roads have been met with caution by the fleet industry and criticised by road safety experts.

The Road Safety Markings Association (RSMA) labelled the move misleading and "fatally flawed", rubbing salt in the wound by claiming that erasing markings from busy roads has the effect of slowing motorists down.

George Lee, chief executive of the RSMA, said: "There is little or no proof that removing road markings makes roads safer or that drivers confused by a lack of clear guidance are somehow safer drivers."

Respondents to a *Fleet News* poll agreed, with nine out of 10 unconvinced that their removal would improve road safety.

"We can all only hope that for the sake of innocent road users it does not turn out to be fatally flawed," said Lee.

It's almost 100 years since the first white lines were painted on a Birmingham street to improve road safety.

Following complaints by residents over reckless driving and several collisions, the Sutton Coldfield Corporation decided to paint the white centreline on the hazardous corner, in 1921.

Gradually, they have become a standard feature on almost all roads in the UK, with official guidance recommending they only be omitted when the carriageway is rural and not more than 5.5 metres wide.

However, Transport for London (TfL) and others have argued that, in some instances, the removal of centre lines could be good news for road safety.

A study conducted by Wiltshire County Council between 1997 and 2003 found that not reinstating the centrelines on a number of resurfacing sites led to a reduction in collisions and traffic speeds.

This in turn built on referenced research by TRL (the Transport Research Laboratory), which concluded that there are safety benefits to be gained by removing centrelines in 30mph zones.

More recently, sections of three roads – one in central London and two in Croydon – were the subject of a trial by TfL in 2014.

It concluded that the study and analysis showed there was a "statistically significant reduction" in vehicle speeds.



Critics say white line studies look at average speed, not crashes



"We remain unconvinced by the evidence that removing white lines will make our roads safer"

Dave Nichols, Brake

However, Dave Nichols, professional engagement officer at Brake, said: "We remain unconvinced by the evidence that removing white lines will make our roads safer."

"While crashes at lower speeds can mean fewer deaths and serious injuries, this data only seems to look at a possible reduction in average speed and not the number and nature of any collisions."

The idea of removing road markings follows the principles of so-called 'shared space' schemes, where physical boundaries such as kerbstones and railings between the carriageway and footpaths are removed to slow down drivers.

About 100 roads have been adapted in Britain, but a survey last year found that two thirds of people rated their experience as poor.

Addison Lee, which operates a fleet of some 5,000 private hire cars in London, was equally cautious about rolling out the removal of white lines.

"White central lines are an extremely important road safety feature in certain environments," said Catherine Faiers, Addison Lee's chief operating officer.

"There has been some interesting research, however it needs to be fully assessed and further research carried out before it [the removal of white lines] is more widely adopted."

A report by TfL on the London trial suggested that white lines gave drivers a "sense of confidence" that no vehicles will encroach on 'their' side of the road.

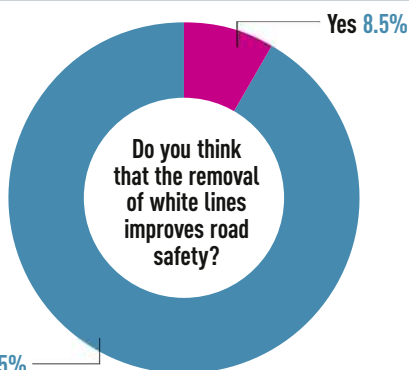
"Centre line removal introduces an element of uncertainty which is reflected in lower speeds," it said.

"Speeds of individual vehicles appeared to be particularly lower when they were passing other vehicles travelling in the opposite direction."

This, it claims, supports the theory that "uncertainty and additional cautiousness" is responsible for the speed reduction.

Lesley Slater, business development director at LeasePlan, says evidence suggests that removing not only central white line markings, but other traditional safeguards, from road signs to traffic lights and even pavements, reduces the accident rate and improves traffic flow.

"These studies demonstrate the need to review this thinking and we would welcome any changes that ensure the roads are a safer place for all its users," she said.



1921

First centrelines painted on a road in Birmingham



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fleetnews.co.uk/accident-management



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Run Your Fleet to launch own contract hire product

On-the-rise fleet management firm aims to convert outright purchase vehicles

By Gareth Roberts

Run Your Fleet is aiming to launch its own contract hire product in April after seeing its managed fleet reach 20,000 vehicles within five years.

It has been a meteoric rise for the fleet management specialist and, having secured the funding lines required, it can now also start building its risk fleet.

Steve Whitmarsh, managing director of Run Your Fleet, said: "We estimate that 95% of our customers are outright purchase.

"It's an ageing fleet, with an average age of about 4.6 years the last time we did the analysis."

It suggests an opportunity for Run Your Fleet to convert existing customers from outright purchase to contract hire.

However, Whitmarsh doesn't expect to replicate the levels of growth seen with the company's fleet management offering.

He told *Fleet News*: "We're forecasting 420 vehicles on contract hire within the next 12 months."

Nevertheless, if that year-on-year growth continues, it

95%

Proportion of customers on outright purchase

420

Number of vehicles forecast for contract hire in next 12 months

could result in Run Your Fleet knocking on the door of the FN50 within the next three years.

Contract hire has historically been offered by Run Your Fleet via a third-party arrangement with Lex Autolease.

The product was good, but Whitmarsh admitted that being a third-party agreement it wasn't necessarily a priority for the business and had only resulted in a "handful of cars" being funded each year.

However, he said: "It's a service we should be offering to our customer base and now we've got the funding lines in

"It's a service we should be offering to our customer base"

Steve Whitmarsh, Run Your Fleet



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place we will look to convert this ageing fleet.”

Run Your Fleet has secured success in the fleet management sector by targeting small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating up to 150 vehicles.

Its suite of products include: breakdown cover, service, maintenance and repair, tyres, windscreens, daily rental and vehicle telematics via its Run Your Tracking sub-brand.

Whitmarsh, a former head of fleet services at the RAC, admitted it had been a “bit tough” when he first launched the business in 2011.

Private equity funding was secured from Forward Group, which has more than £100 million of assets under management.

It is also the majority shareholder in Fleet Hire, a contract hire company with a risk fleet of some 6,000 vehicles which is ranked 25th in the FN50.

It gave Whitmarsh the platform to set about targeting the SME sector, which he says had been largely ignored by the big operators.

“Our concept was to come up with something that helps an SME regardless of how and who you get your vehicle from,” he said.

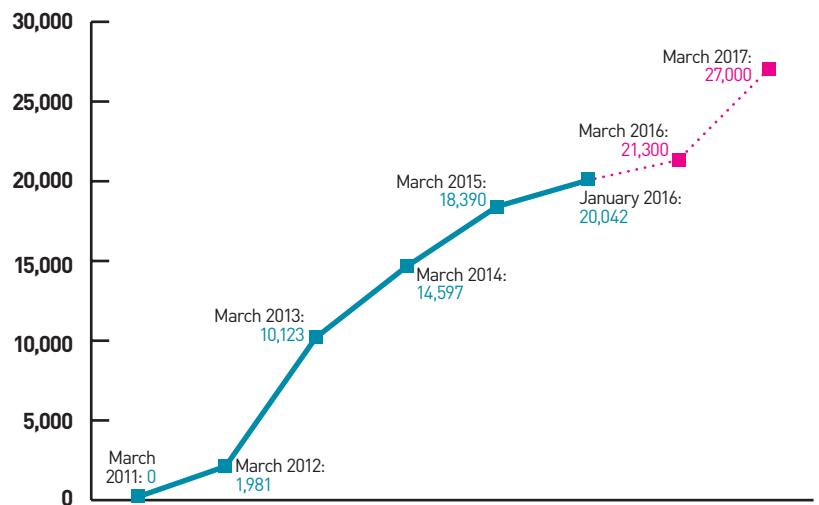
Within a year, Run Your Fleet’s managed fleet had grown to almost 2,000 units and, as of January this year, it had reached 20,042 units – a rise of more than 900%.

Between March 2012 and March 2013 it achieved year-on-year growth of 8,142 units, with a further 4,474 units the next financial year and 3,793 units added between March 2014 and March 2015. By the end of the calendar year, it expects to be managing more than 25,500 vehicles, with average monthly growth of around 450 vehicles.

Whitmarsh says growth has been thanks in part to the business keeping overheads low by using systems-led solutions.

“We’re a very low margin business and the only way we can

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make that viable is to ensure overheads are low,” he said.

“It’s a pound a month for basic fleet management and everything is consolidated into a single, monthly, rolling contract, with customers able to give just 28 days’ notice if they wish to terminate the agreement.”

It’s a precarious relationship, but five years after it launched the service, more than 98% of the fleets that opened an account with the company remain on its books.

Whitmarsh said: “It keeps us on our toes and it makes sure we’re always investing in our offering.”



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Combined 38.2 (7.4) – 83.1 (3.4). CO₂ emissions 171 – 88 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and

THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*



The judges have deliberated and cogitated, and the decisions are now set in stone: as you can see on pages 26-27, the finalists have been chosen for the 2016 *Fleet News* Awards.

Across 28 judged categories, the discussions were impassioned and occasionally heated as the judges made their cases for their preferred winners.

Everything took place as ever under the watchful eye of Christopher Macgowan, referred to by one judge as "the most honest person I know".

"Some winners wowed the judges with innovative fleet solutions"

And our auditor Neil Marshall, from Deloitte, ensured complete integrity and transparency of the process – ensuring the right companies and people will collect the coveted trophies on awards night at Grosvenor Hotel on March 10 (a handful of tables are still available if you want to be at the fleet sector's biggest night of the year).

The quality of entries was extremely high this year. Some winners wowed judges with innovative fleet solutions. They are operating in the vanguard of fleet excellence.

Likewise the supplier and manufacturer categories, where we saw the broadest spread of winners for years. With numerous new and facelifted cars vying for honours, company car buyers are becoming spoilt for choice. More manufacturers than ever supplied additional information, emphasising how important this sector is to their businesses.

To reserve your ticket, please call Sandra Evitt on 01733 468123 or email sandra.evitt@bauermedia.co.uk

Correction: In the Chevin spotlight published on February 4 issue, the company's FleetWave software was mistakenly referred to as FleetWise in several instances. We apologise for the error.

YOUR LETTERS

TAXATION

Reform company car tax? Careful what you wish for

EDITOR'S PICK



Cliff Sherwood wrote:

Having read 'Government urged to reform company car tax system' (*Fleet News*, February 4), I would urge company car drivers to be careful what they wish for. How many times has a change to the taxation system resulted in lower taxes? The norm is to rob from Peter to pay Paul. It was the same with going metric: who knew that 4.546 litres of petrol would

be more expensive than a gallon?

It seems crazy that a driver is paying more benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax on a company car the week before it is sold than when it was new. How could the benefit of a three-year-old car, worth £12,000, be worth more than a new car at £25,000?

A fixed rate over the term of ownership would be fairer than the current year-on-year hike.

■ The editor's pick in each issue wins a £20 John Lewis voucher.

Derek Webb added:

While I agree that the current BIK system is inflexible and, in very many cases, unfair, like most 'reviews' of taxation this will probably mean an increase in tax in one form or another. I do wonder if salary sacrifice car schemes will fall under perceived BIK and suffer in this review.

Edward Handley added:

The primary purpose of any form of taxation is not fairness, but to raise money for the Government. Fairness, when achieved, is purely incidental to that primary purpose. The Chancellor may state that he wants to cut taxes, but the taxes he wants to cut are the ones that will win votes.

Company car tax does not feature high on his list, so a root and branch review will be likely to result in

a considerable hike in the revenue raised.

Environmental benefits are wonderful camouflage, raising extra revenue – and the general effect of such green taxes is to push company car drivers towards vehicles which are seen as more environmentally friendly.

That's fine if you want to drive a Mitsubishi plug-in hybrid that actually does nearer to 35mpg in real life than the claimed 160-odd mpg, or a Prius that does less mpg than a Volkswagen Polo Bluemotion.

A fairer company car tax regime would result in your next company car being a Renault Twizy – a fun and amusing little car for local journeys, but not much fun at all with the weather we have been enjoying recently.

EMPLOYEE SCHEMES

Company cars have become too expensive

Ken Davis wrote:

Having read 'Company car to remain king, but value should be priority' (fleetnews.co.uk, February 5), we are finding businesses looking at other ways of providing vehicles to their employees. Employees have become reluctant to go down the cash-for-cars route due to the amount of money they have or are receiving – because the amount does not cover the cost of running the vehicle. We have found, where there is a proper car scheme in place, where both the employee and employer gain, interest is there. Company cars have become far too expensive and a lack of knowledge by both parties is where people fall down.

ROADWORKS

Lack of planning leads to congestion misery

Glenn wrote:

Having read 'Roadwork rules change aims to reduce congestion' (fleetnews.co.uk, January 28), I question why we have to suffer this pain at this time every year? It is simply because councils and companies are not capable of budgeting properly and spend all their money in the last few months leading to the April cut-off. They'll frequently schedule road works on every road leading in, out and through towns, causing the most inconvenience. One other throwback is that there are only so many able crews out there to do the work, meaning that at least half the jobs done will be substandard and need doing again pretty quickly. We're already miserable by this stage of winter, without these morons making our travel a nightmare too.

T Y R E S

Dealers partly to blame for tyre-change inability

Judith Olsen wrote:

Having read 'More than half of drivers don't know how to change a tyre, new survey finds' (fleetnews.co.uk, February 2), I'm absolutely flabbergasted by these results. As someone who's worked in delivering fleet units for over 20 years, I'm completely at a loss as to how this can happen if the handover by the dealership has been carried out properly. Perhaps it's not just the drivers that need to learn from this research but the dealerships too. Does it not raise questions with regard to duty of care by the dealership? How very disappointing for the dealership fleet departments and their driving team.



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ISSN 0953-8526.
Printing: Headley Brothers Ltd, Kent



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¹Subject to model variant specification and option fitment. Model shown is the Leon SE 1.6 TDI 110PS from P11D £19,345 with the following options: Nevada White paint at £575 RRP, Technology pack at £1,085 RRP, Appearance pack at £500 RRP, electric sunroof at £775 RRP, Park Assistance Pack at £500 RRP and Winter Pack at £360 RRP. Option prices inclusive of VAT. Prices correct at time of printing.

FLEET OPINION

CONNECTIVITY

Data is changing field services – fast

By John Cameron

“The ‘internet of things’ has been on field service companies’ radar for a while and it is fast becoming industry best practice. More and more businesses are looking to connect their equipment with technicians’ mobile devices and the back-office to capture diagnostics and performance metrics. This ensures an intelligent and preventive, instead of reactive, approach to field service.

With the predictive power of connected devices, field service businesses are not only taking a more predictive and proactive approach to service, they’re beginning to automate field processes too. For example, equipment sensors can now automatically trigger a service call when a vehicle needs to be repaired, or is due for maintenance.

With technology development moving so quickly, and companies continually having to modernise their solutions to keep up with the competition, more field service organisations are looking to entrust one provider to deliver all the functionality and modularity they require to manage their work, workers and assets out in the field.

This has initiated a need for greater integration between back-office, telematics and workforce management systems, with mobility devices to allow for seamless data exchange and sharing. Opportunities to increase efficiency and productivity from all of this are significant: technicians can use their mobile devices to pull up on-demand, critical information from the back-office, such as work orders, warranty, parts inventory, service contract information and individual customer data.

What’s more, making sense of the vast amount of data that is captured in the field to become more efficient and productive continues to trend as a must-do activity. Advanced analytics tools are helping field service organisations to achieve this. Data gathered from smarter mobile apps and equipment sensors will provide insights on performance, tasks, service quality and new products that will enable field service managers to not only keep up with the competition but to step ahead. Analytics are embedded and pervasive. In the end, the value of analytics is in the answers, not the data.”

“Making sense of the vast amount of field data to become more efficient is a must”



John Cameron,
general manager,
Trimble Field Service
Management



Dirk Schlimm,
executive vice
president, Geotab



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VEHICLE DATA

Ask who can use your information

By Dirk Schlimm

“The advent of the advanced connected car means the question of who owns the data such vehicles produce has come to the fore. The answer, unfortunately, is far from straightforward — especially in the context of the company vehicle market. There are a number of nagging complexities.

One of these is that there are hundreds of national and state jurisdictions in the world. Even among the more prominent legal traditions, there are significant differences when it comes to data privacy.

The slogan ‘my car, my data’ may be gaining popularity in the consumer market but, in the commercial fleet space, there are more stakeholders who may consider the vehicle theirs — in the broadest sense. Drivers, fleet operators, leasing companies, car manufacturers and fleet solution providers may all see it this way. It is important to also note that the difference between individual vehicle data and a separately created database of multiple vehicles and fleets adds to the complexity.

Contracts are a third variable to consider. Here, a fair balance of interests becomes subject to economic dependencies and bargaining power. An often overlooked problem related to contracts is that one or more stakeholders (whose input or consent may be required) were not at the negotiating table or acceptance screen.

The expectation of a universal answer to the question of data ownership is simply unrealistic, and points towards a paradigm of mutual exclusion and zero-sum thinking. One beautiful aspect of data is that it can be used appropriately, legitimately, and productively by more than one party, enabling innovation and providing benefits such as improved road safety and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

So the better question is: “Who can use the data and for what purpose?” If we are prepared to answer it creatively, collaboratively, and transparently, we can continue with the business of innovation and advance the interests of all stakeholders.

After all, creative problem solving often starts with simply asking the right question.”

“The slogan ‘my car, my data’ may be popular, but in fleet there are more stakeholders”



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ASK NIGEL

In our regular feature, Nigel Trotman, *Fleet News* Hall of Fame member and two-time *Fleet News* Award winner, gives advice on your fleet challenges and queries.

FLEET CAREER

Q "I have been a fleet manager for 10 years with 160 cars on my fleet and would like some advice on how to progress my career. I have passed the ICFM Certificate and Diploma, plus I am a member of ACFO. Are there any other qualifications that would be useful? Could you suggest anything else I could do to increase my knowledge and experience in the fleet world?"

A Building a career in fleet is probably harder now than it has ever been, with an ever-reducing number of fleet manager opportunities as companies choose to outsource. Very often a fleet specialist is seen as an expensive luxury rather than an essential – as I know from my own experience.

That is not to say that there are not still opportunities – you just need to understand what they are and how to seize them when they arise. If I were you, I would use every networking opportunity and industry conference to identify potential roles that interest you, even if they may not currently be available. Also, pay close attention to sources such as LinkedIn. Build as strong a network as possible and ensure you pay close attention to any opportunities placed there – this has become a good source for fleet roles as recruitment agencies now use LinkedIn as a standard tool.

You also need to identify any gaps in your fleet knowledge and experience that might prevent you progressing. In my case, I had limited LCV experience in my role at Whitbread, and used my network of contacts to learn from those who had LCV fleets.

Another area where it is worth investing some time is company mobility – understanding the current trends in wider business travel and alternatives to the conventional company car. Individuals with a good grounding in this area will have an advantage in the years to come.

However, don't forget that it may be possible to develop your career with your current employer. The sound principles that you apply every day in fleet management are equally applicable to other areas. On the basis of my own success in fleet I was given the opportunity to manage other services such as mobile phones, business travel and facilities management.

If you do want to progress outside your current company, I would advise you to build your industry profile. Put your fleet forward for awards such as the

"On the basis of my fleet success, I was given opportunity to manage other services such as mobile phones, business travel and facilities management"

Fleet News Awards, get involved in industry forums, see if you can get yourself into the fleet press. As I know, this can help you to progress – both to other fleet management roles, or in a move to the supplier side, which is also a potential option. There has been an increasing trend in recent years for fleet suppliers to recruit successful fleet managers – and, with the increase in outsourcing, this is likely to continue.

While this advice is about the future, remember that your success will depend on continuing to deliver real value and innovation in the way you run your fleet. I wish you every success.

■ The next Ask Nigel will be in the March 17 issue

Nigel Trotman has more than 25 years' experience in the fleet industry.

As fleet manager at Whitbread, he scooped two *Fleet News* awards – fleet manager of the year (large fleets) and UK fleet of the year – before making the switch to consultancy at major leasing companies Lex Autolease and Alphabet. He entered the *Fleet News* Hall of Fame in 2013.

He is secretary of ACFO Midlands and is an ICFM board member.

Do you have a fleet challenge you would like Nigel to answer?

Visit fleetnews.co.uk/asknigel or email fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk

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Fleet News Awards 2016: the contenders

FleetNews



AWARDS
2016

The industry's most prestigious awards take place on March 10. Find out here who's in the running

Four days of judging and hours of sifting through 220 entries – including more than 50 from fleets – has led to this point: the reveal of the *Fleet News* Awards 2016 finalists.

Congratulations to all the companies and people that have made it this far – many didn't, emphasising the achievement in simply getting onto the shortlist.

Winners will be announced at the *Fleet News* awards ceremony at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London on March 10.

FLEET NEWS AWARDS 2016 JUDGING PANEL

Auditor: Neil Marshall, Deloitte
Chairman: Christopher Macgowan OBE

Manufacturer categories
Stephen Briers, *Fleet News*
Simon Harris, motoring expert
Martin Ward, CAP
Andy Cutler, Glass's
Mark Jowsey, KeeResources
Steve Jones, LeasePlan

Colin Marriott, Centrica
Paul Tate, Siemens
Keith Cook, Computacenter
Anita Sanderman, Deloitte

Supplier categories
Sarah Tooze, *Fleet News*
Liz Hollands, FTA
John Pryor, Arcadia/ACFO
Peter Jardine, Countrywide Estate Agents

Debbie Floyd, Bauer Media
Stewart Lightbody, Anglian Water
Sue Blair, Serco
Linda Blake, Diageo

Fleet categories
Stephen Briers, *Fleet News*
Caroline Sandall, ACFO/Barclays
Dale Eynon, Environment Agency
Sarah Millward, The AA

MANUFACTURER CATEGORIES

Best city car

Citroën C1
Fiat 500
Hyundai i10
Peugeot 108
Vauxhall Viva
Volkswagen Up

Best small car

Audi A1
Ford Fiesta
Mini Hatchback
Peugeot 208
Seat Ibiza
Skoda Fabia
Toyota Yaris
Vauxhall Corsa

Best lower medium car

Audi A3
BMW 1 Series
Ford Focus
Peugeot 308
Skoda Octavia
Vauxhall Astra
Volkswagen Golf

Best upper medium car

Ford Mondeo
Skoda Superb
Vauxhall Insignia
Volkswagen Passat

Best compact SUV

Citroën C4 Cactus
Fiat 500X
Jeep Renegade
Mazda CX-3
Nissan Juke
Renault Captur
Vauxhall Mokka

Best mid-size SUV

Audi Q3
BMW X1
Nissan Qashqai
Range Rover Evoque
Renault Kadjar
Skoda Yeti

Best large SUV

Audi Q7
Jeep Cherokee
Land Rover Discovery Sport
Lexus RX
Mercedes-Benz GLC
Mitsubishi Outlander
Nissan X-Trail
Volvo XC90

Best seven-seat people carrier

BMW 2 Series Gran Tourer
Citroën Grand C4 Picasso
Ford Grand C-Max

Ford S-Max
Volkswagen Touran

Best premium car

Audi A4
BMW 3 Series
Jaguar XE
Mercedes-Benz C-Class

Best executive car

Audi A6
BMW 5 Series
Jaguar XF
Mercedes-Benz E-Class

Green fleet manufacturer of the year

BMW (UK)
Ford Motor Company
Peugeot Motor Company
Renault UK
Toyota

Most improved fleet manufacturer of the year

BMW (UK)
Ford Motor Company
Hyundai Motor UK
Renault UK
Vauxhall Motors
Volvo Car UK



SUPPLIER CATEGORIES

Leasing company of the year – up to 15,000 vehicles

Grosvenor Leasing
Marshall Leasing
Motiva Group
Ogilvie Fleet
Sponsored by Jaguar Land Rover

Leasing company of the year – more than 15,000 vehicles

Arval
LeasePlan
Lex Autolease
Zenith
Sponsored by Jaguar Land Rover

Best rental company of the year

Enterprise Rent-A-Car
Europcar UK Group
Hertz UK
Reflex Vans
Thrifty Car and Van Rental
Sponsored by Interactive Fleet Management

Best new product or service

cap hpi
CheckedSafe
Fleetdrive
Michelin Tyre
R2C Online
RAC Business
TomTom Telematics

Fleet dealer of the year

Inchcape Retail
Johnsons Fleet Services
Minstergate Holdings
Swansway Group
TrustFord
Tunbridge Wells Hyundai
Sponsored by EDAM Group

Fleet specialist services supplier of the year

Chevin Fleet Solutions
FMG
GreenRoad
Ignition Risk Management
National Windscreens
Nationwide Windscreen Services
RAM Tracking
The Miles Consultancy

Customer service award

Arval
BT Fleet
Lex Autolease
National Windscreens
Nationwide Windscreen Services
Thrifty Car and Van Rental
Tuskerdirect
Zenith
Sponsored by ŠKODA UK

HEADLINE CATEGORIES

Fleet manager of the year

John Gorton, Kent and Essex Police
Norman Harding, Hackney Council
Ted Sakyi, Wates Group
Graham Telfer, Gateshead Council
Steve Thompson, West Yorkshire Police
Mike Vickers, Portsmouth City Council
Justin Wand, South East Coast Ambulance Service
NHS Foundation Trust
Sponsored by Fiat Chrysler Automobiles UK

Fleet supplier of the year

FMG
Masternaut
RAC Business
The Automobile Association
Sponsored by Toyota & Lexus Fleet Services

New company car of the year

Voted for by Fleet News readers
Sponsored by LeasePlan UK

Fleet manufacturer of the year

Voted for by Fleet News readers
Sponsored by KeeResources

Fleet News Hall of Fame

Editor's decision
Sponsored by the Automobile Association

FLEET CATEGORIES

Fleet of the year – up to 250 vehicles

Gateshead Council
Millers Vanguard
Portsmouth City Council
Radian Group
University of Birmingham
Z-Tech Control Systems
Sponsored by Renault UK

Fleet of the year – 251-1,000

Britvic
Gentoo Group
PJ Carey Plant Hire (Oval)
Rugby Football Union
South East Coast Ambulance
Service NHS Foundation Trust
Sponsored by Halfords Autocentres

Fleet of the year – 1,001-plus

Kelly Group
Kent and Essex Police
Vodafone
West Yorkshire Police
Sponsored by Techron Fuel System Cleaners

Most improved fleet of the year

Kent and Essex Police
Millers Vanguard
South East Coast Ambulance
Service NHS Foundation Trust
Tarmac
Vodafone

Safe fleet of the year

British Gas
Gateshead Council
Kelly Group
Skanska
South East Coast Ambulance
Service NHS Foundation Trust

Green fleet of the year

Gateshead Council
Kent and Essex Police
Portsmouth City Council
South East Coast Ambulance
Service NHS Foundation Trust
University of Birmingham
Sponsored by BMW (UK)

Cost saving initiative of the year

Balfour Beatty Plant and Fleet Services for its Build to Last programme
Kent and Essex Police for its collaborative cost savings
SGN for its driver self-improvement programme
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust for its innovative approach to reducing cost
Sponsored by Zenith

Sponsors to date



ONE FLEET ONE POLICY

Chris Haynes is targeting emissions and driver behaviour by rolling out telematics across the fleet, including cash-takers. *Stephen Briers* reports



A

question: how do you influence choice and exert control over drivers when the company policy offers everyone a cash option, irrespective of job-need

or perk eligibility?

That was the challenge facing Chris Haynes when he joined Ricoh UK in May 2014. The imaging and electronics company has a leased fleet of 1,081 vehicles – 1,026 cars, 55 vans – but another 559 eligible staff have opted to take cash.

Haynes's solution was to roll-out a fleet policy that applied equally to the leased fleet

and the cash-takers – in fact, in some ways, the cash fleet faces an even tighter regime than leased.

His reasoning? "They are all company cars; it's just that the cash allowance person has chosen to procure it themselves with money from the company," Haynes says.

"We still have a responsibility, from a safety and brand point of view, over the way that they act behind the wheel."

The first step was to introduce licence checking and a system for mandating insurance, V5 and MOT submissions for the cash fleet (which has an age cap of eight years). Ricoh uses Driver Intelligence to run the programme, which also extends to risk assessing all company drivers.

The system takes into account mileage, licence points and at-fault accidents to create a score which determines training need, typically e-learning, seminars or in-vehicle. Once the relevant training session is completed, the score is reduced.

"We can pull everything together now; before it was simple driver data reports," Haynes says. "Now we have the confidence to go to drivers and say 'your licence is out-of-date' and they know they have to give us their information. Our fleet isn't the primary role of Ricoh so it can be seen as not important – but it is."

Driver Intelligence has enabled Ricoh to reduce its risk rating by 20%, which has led to lower insurance premiums. The new strategy gives the company much greater control over behaviour and compliance for the car and cash fleets. The next step was to address environmental concerns.

Cash-takers tend to choose cars with much higher levels of CO₂ emissions than company cars. At face value, therefore, allowing staff free choice over car or cash appears to conflict with Ricoh's key commitment to environmental conservation and corporate social responsibility.

The company recognised the apparent contradiction and implemented a robust policy to tackle CO₂ emissions. In April 2014, it introduced a levy of £1 per gramme for all cash cars with emissions between 196-250g/km and £2 per gramme for cars above 250g/km. The cash was used by Ricoh to pay for offsetting schemes, such as planting trees.

However, as Haynes points out: "This didn't drive the right culture from a fleet management perspective, because the person driving those types of cars could easily afford a few extra pounds per month. We wanted to deter them and change the culture."

Consequently, he introduced a reducing limits policy last year.

With effect from April 2015, all cash cars with CO₂ emissions up to 165g/km are exempt from any additional fee. Staff who opt for a car with emissions between

Chris Haynes: 'Now we have the confidence to go to drivers and say "your licence is out-of-date"'





FACTFILE

Fleet and business travel manager Chris Haynes

Time in role 21 months (one month with travel)

Fleet size 1,640: cars – 1,026, vans – 55, cash-takers – 559

Funding Contract hire with maintenance

Operating cycle Benchmarked at four years/90,000 miles

Partners Lex Autolease, Arval, Driver Intelligence, Ctrak,

Brands Vauxhall, Renault, Nissan, Infiniti, BMW, Mini and Audi



166-200g/km are charged a levy of £1 per gramme of CO₂, while staff with cars above 200g/km are charged £2 per gramme.

From April 2017, the thresholds drop to 145g/km, 146-165g/km and more than 165g/km respectively and, from April 2019, they will be up to 130g/km, 131-145g/km and more than 145g/km.

"Our objective is to give cash-takers a conscious decision to choose a green vehicle to align them with the Ricoh core values," says Haynes. "They have a clear idea of what they pay per month."

There was some initial resistance to the change, but the company publicised to staff its commitment to the environment, in particular its target to reduce carbon output by 88% by 2050 (compared to 2000), with an interim target of 30% by 2030.

As vehicle-related activity (including commuting) is responsible for 75% of CO₂ emissions, it clearly has a major part to play in achieving the goal. Haynes's target is to cut emissions by around 40% over the next five years from the cash allowance fleet.

He has yet to measure the full impact of the latest threshold on average emissions, although the monthly contribution to the green fund has not increased, which suggests cash-takers are choosing lower emitting cars that sit under the new caps.

With ticks against driver behaviour and environmental concerns, the final challenge is to make the company scheme more attractive, to persuade cash-takers to join.

The fleet is selected on a strict total cost of

ownership calculation. It adds fuel, national insurance, accident damage, insurance, end-of-contract charges and hire car costs during servicing to the leasing/service, maintenance and repair rate. CO₂ is capped at 135g/km, although Ricoh maxes out at 129g/km for its Vauxhall Combo vans.

The car policy is based on being 7% lower than the cash allowance in terms of cost to the business. "We need to sell our scheme by putting the most attractive cars on to deter cash," Haynes says.

He has extended the list to include Vauxhall, Renault, Nissan, Infiniti, BMW, Mini and Audi. They include plug-in options, such as the X5, i3, 3 Series and A3 e-tron, with three on order to-date.

Armed with the more attractive choice lists, Haynes began to educate employees about the cost to the business of providing cash. "It impacts everyone," he says. "They still have a choice [on the lease fleet] but it's an informed one that benefits the business."

"On my first day, I had a conversation about telematics. I trawled through papers on it all night"

Chris Haynes, Ricoh UK

Ricoh is taking part in a pilot with Lex Autolease, where the leasing provider will speak to potential cash-takers about the benefits of being on the company scheme versus taking cash and buying a car via a dealer. It expects this approach will persuade some to join the scheme.

One variation between cash and car concerns fuel. Company car drivers must have a fuel card (prices are based on Platts), while cash-takers have the choice. However, while company cars drivers have their fuel paid for, with any private mileage deducted from their wages at the end of the month, cash-takers are charged for all their fuel upfront and are paid back their business mileage when the claim is submitted.

With a robust policy now in place to ensure better controls in the cash fleet, Haynes is now turning his attention to the next phase in the risk management programme with the introduction of telematics.

The initiative is being pushed at European level with the UK leading the way.

"On my first day at the company I had a conversation about telematics," Haynes says. "I spent that night trawling through papers to get up to speed."

Ricoh has now completed two trials and opted to implement a system from Ctrak after it showed clear savings.

While the system has been adopted on a compliance rationale, for mileage analysis and working time directive rules, Haynes will also use the data for driver behaviour. His challenge was to condense the reams of data to identify information that was relevant and useful.

COST-CUTTING CREDENTIALS ENDORSED WITH EXPANDED NEW ROLE

Self-proclaimed "poacher turned game-keeper" Chris Haynes started his career on the graduate scheme at Enterprise Rent-A-Car.

"I owe a lot to them," he says. "They developed me. I learned that it's not necessarily about what you do, it's how you do it."

He left as a branch manager to join Ricoh. "It was closer to home; nothing more exciting than that," he says of the decision to apply. "I came in to make an

impact and there were some easy wins. It was a case of having a plan: where we are now, where we need to be in the next few months and what is the 'holy grail'."

That was in May 2014. Haynes's role was extended last month to include travel. Responsibility previously sat with the expenses team, which has since moved from finance to HR. "We manage all business travel, from car hire to flights to hotels," says Haynes. "We are looking to reduce spend and environmental impact."

In 2014, Ricoh covered sufficient mileage to travel to the moon and back more than eight times. It is now encouraging video conferencing and has created a travel portal which requires staff to select a reason for not using such facilities when they book. A monthly report is produced outlining the most common reasons.

Action can then be taken, such as training. It also allows group bookings for hire car for multiple people, rather than each person booking their own car.



Chris Haynes is aiming to roll-out telematics to his entire fleet in the next few months

Key stats focus on harsh braking, accelerating and cornering, but also lateral and vertical movements to identify speed bumps and potholes. "The data feed will allow Driver Intelligence to mould the behavioural information with risk assessments and licence checks," says Haynes. "For example, harsh braking – we can identify learning to help address that behaviour. Regional service managers will also have visibility of their team's data; their local knowledge will be key."

However, he adds: "The aim isn't necessarily to reduce cost, it's duty of care. It is my name above the door – if something goes wrong, the first person they speak to is me. I have to be sure we have done everything we can to be compliant."

That said, the cost savings helped to reinforce the case for investment. The trial recorded an average improvement in fuel efficiency of 3-4mpg, with some drivers achieving an additional 8-9mpg.

Full roll-out, initially to the engineering fleet of 700 vehicles but ultimately to all cars including cash-takers, will take place over the next few months. Once up and running, Haynes will consider further developments around job scheduling by integrating the telematics with back-office systems. He believes that allocating jobs more appropriately and allowing sufficient time between appointments will reduce driver stress, improve efficiencies and, ultimately, lead to better customer service.

Haynes, who was promoted to fleet and business travel manager at the start of 2016 (see panel, page 30), leases the majority of the fleet via Lex Autolease under a pan-European agreement. The balance is with Arval. In addition to funding, Ricoh uses Lex Autolease for servicing, accident management and glass. For non-Lex vehicles, it uses National Windscreens for glass.

"We call our suppliers partners because we work with them to affect our costs," Haynes says. "The most important thing is the relationship, which we create through openness, honesty and having dialogue."

"If I have an issue, I speak to them and they will sort it out – that's all I expect."



For other fleet profiles, visit fleetnews.co.uk/case-studies

FleetNews



AWARDS
2016

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) designs, engineers, manufactures and sells passenger cars, light commercial vehicles, components and production systems worldwide. It is currently the seventh-largest automaker in the world but has ambitious goals for 2016 and beyond, driven by a vast array of new productions and innovations across all brands and underpinned by focused and enthusiastic national sales centres across the world.

No country is more determined to maximise the potential of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles' investment than the UK.

A key element of this will undoubtedly be the fleet sector, particularly as FCA rolls out more fleet-oriented Fiat, Alfa Romeo and Jeep models and expands and revitalises its range of award-winning commercial vehicles. Already, FCA UK is making impressive inroads – 2015 was a record year for fleet business with 23% growth, driven by the timely arrival of the Fiat 500X crossover and Jeep Renegade SUV in the fastest growing segment in the UK.

Underpinning 2016's ambitions is a further expansion of FCA UK's dealer fleet specialist network, extended aftersales fleet support and the launch of an all-new approved used car programme across all our brands.

SPONSOR PROFILE

FCA

FIAT CHRYSLER AUTOMOBILES

New FCA range

FIAT

2016 represents the first full year of sales for the New FIAT 500.

Launched in September 2015, it offered a new look, new personalisation options and more technology, including state-of-the-art connectivity and integrated sat-nav with live traffic and weather updates.

It has picked up two significant fleet awards since it was launched and the range has now been bolstered with two additional business-friendly models: the FIAT 500 1.2-litre Eco and the 500 1.3-litre MultiJet II turbo-diesel, both offering improved economy, lower CO₂ and reduced BIK.

The FIAT 500X continues to make inroads in the growing family-sized SUV segment, thanks to its low running costs, high specification, stylish and distinctive exterior and strong residual values. In 2016 FIAT UK expects to see increased fleet interest as new versions arrive in showrooms with even lower running costs and enhanced specifications.

Later this year, three brand new models join the range – the FIAT Tipo, the Fullback pickup truck and the 124 Spider. The FIAT Tipo will be of particular interest to fleet managers as it not only marks the company's return to the all-important C-segment, it represents the very best that FIAT has to offer in terms of design, equipment and, crucially, value for money. With impressive interior space,



FIAT Tipo: range of proven, reliable and efficient engines

high standard specification and a range of proven, reliable and efficient engines, running costs will be extremely competitive for users and operators alike, undoubtedly making the Tipo a popular choice for fleets large and small.

The new Fullback pick-up marks FIAT's first foray into the growing pick-up market in the UK and will allow FCA UK to offer an even broader range of vehicles to its diverse and varied customer base.

Being able to satisfy a fleet manager's every need under one umbrella equates to a more streamlined operation and consistency in managing their fleets, while also helping introduce Fiat to a broader range of customers than ever before. The new FIAT 124 Spider marks the company's return to another segment it was once well-established in,

and serves a dual role of broadening FIAT's product line-up and adding to the brand's overall sales total, while also serving as a halo vehicle to the rest of the range, reminding people that FIAT has a long history of making affordable, fun and desirable cars across every

vehicle segment imaginable and will continue to surprise and delight its customers in 2016 and beyond.



FIAT Fullback: first foray into growing pick-up market

For more information contact our Business Centre

is fleet-friendly and stylish

ALFA ROMEO

With the launch of the Alfa Romeo Giulia in the autumn, fleet users will finally have an exciting, dynamic and truly desirable alternative to the predictable D-segment choices, a car that drivers and fleet managers can happily choose with their heads and hearts. While full details have yet to be officially announced, Alfa Romeo has promised the Giulia will offer best-in-class weight and fuel efficiency combined with the most agile chassis and impressive performance relative to its nearest rivals, all wrapped up in a spacious and seductive package that's been engineered with the driver at its heart.

The rest of the Alfa Romeo range also benefits from a refresh in 2016, with the MiTo and Giulietta adopting a look which is closer to that of the Giulia with enhanced engine and transmission ranges, revised equipment specification and a firm focus on the fleet sector, as seen in the current Alfa Romeo Giulietta Business Edition

"Fleets will have an exciting alternative to the predictable D-segment choices"

Jeep Renegade: distinctive and appealing



which offers a standard Uconnect system with voice-operated sat-nav 3D mapping, digital radio, a 6.5-inch touchscreen, alloy wheels, cruise control, dual-zone climate control and many more features at a great value price, resulting in low company car payments.

The Alfa Romeo 4C supercar remains the brand's sporting flagship, losing none of its performance or tenacious dynamics even in open-top Spider form. With astonishing fuel economy and low emissions, one could even make a solid case for adding it to the company car list.

Alfa Romeo Giulia: best-in-class weight and fuel efficiency



JEEP

Following on from a record-breaking 2015, the Jeep brand celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2016 with a host of commemorative special editions across the range as well as new Jeep Cherokee and Renegade Night Eagle limited editions, both offering a distinctive night-themed styling motif in combination with high standard specifications including black alloy wheels, bespoke darkened detailing, sat-nav, dual-zone climate control, cruise control and unique upholstery.

These distinctive and appealing vehicles offer fleet users the opportunity to stand out from the crowd, a message FCA UK's dealer fleet specialist network intends to bring to fleet managers and drivers all over the country.

Much of Jeep's sales success in 2015 was driven by the demanding private market, indicating that there is an appetite for these unique, high-quality vehicles. In 2016, Jeep UK will work to tell fleets that a rugged, high-specification Jeep on the driveway is more attainable than they may have thought, due to competitive pricing, efficient powertrains and strong demand.

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Model shown is the Alfa Giulietta 1.6 JTDM-2 120 hp Business Edition at £19,080 OTR¹ including Luna Pearl Metallic Paint. Range of official fuel consumption figures for the Giulietta Business Edition range: Urban 42.8 – 60.1 mpg (6.6 – 4.7 l/100km); Extra Urban 65.7 – 88.3 mpg (4.3 – 3.2 l/100km); Combined 55.4 – 74.3 mpg (5.1 – 3.8 l/100km). CO₂ emissions 119 – 99 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures are obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with EC directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions. Factors such as driving style, weather and road conditions may also have a significant effect on fuel consumption.

¹On the road price includes 12 months' road fund licence, vehicle registration fee, delivery, number plates and VAT. Figures and prices are correct at time of publishing. *Excludes Alfa 8C red.

La meccanica delle emozioni



PROCUREMENT 'SUPER DEAL' TO SAVE POLICE FLEETS UP TO £7M

Vauxhall Special Vehicle Operations will handle 2,000 bluelight conversions over two years in a contract worth £100m.

Christopher Smith reports



There has been a significant change in the way the public sector procures items, including vehicles, over the past few years. The introduction of the Crown Commercial Service buying framework has narrowed the market for some, but brought with it a standard set of procurement terms that have allowed the introduction of big 'group buying' deals.

The bluelight sector has been one of the keenest to take advantage of this, with two 'super-deals' being hammered out over the past few months. In total, 48 UK police forces will buy almost 6,000 new vehicles over the next two years (fleetnews.co.uk, December 9, 2015).

Vauxhall is one of the manufacturers to benefit most from these deals, with just over 2,000 vehicles heading out to 28 bluelight fleets over the course of the contract. The 'southern' consortium, arranged by West Midlands Police, sees forces from Cornwall to Northumbria club together to take advantage of standard, unified specifications and make savings.

The forces, primarily based in the south and east of England, agreed on a standardised fleet specification before going out to tender, ensuring cost reductions and a more straightforward supply chain.

Dick Ellam, manager at Vauxhall's Special Vehicle Operations, believes there has been a fundamental shift in bluelight procurement policies. "Two large tenders have taken place, replacing procurement that was previously done across 13 regions. This, and the standard specification, have been a significant step forward," he says.

More than 1,200 Astras, 450 Corsas, 240 Insignias and 130 Vivaro vans are part of the arrangement, and the vehicles will see varying degrees of customisation for use by the emergency services. They will all pass through Millbrook in



"The Vehicle Conversion Centre is a significant facility for us, as it allows complex upfits at the factory"

*Dick Ellam,
Vauxhall Special
Vehicle Operations*

Bedfordshire, the home of the Special Vehicle Operations conversion facility. It is estimated that the overall spend resulting from the contract is in excess of £100 million, taking in to account the wholelife costs of the vehicles. The group will make savings of between £6-£7m.

Established in 2007, the conversion centre offers a selection of options specific to bluelight fleets, including blue lights, livery and communications.

"The options are developed and tested to industry standards to make sure they're safe," says Ellam. "Once the customer selects the option, the vehicle will arrive at our facility, for the component upfit. It can range from quite a small conversion, right up to a significant upfit depending upon the role of the vehicle."

"The police are trying to standardise specification, to be more efficient and save money, but we are seeing variations in vehicle requirements depending on the forces."

Vivaro vans require the most work, with the procurement deal supplying turnkey cell vans, built and fitted at the Millbrook facility.

With the vans built down the road in Luton, Vauxhall has recently established an in-house commercial vehicle conversion facility at the Vivaro factory. But, for now, the bluelight process remains separate.

"The Vehicle Conversion Centre is a significant facility for us, as it allows complex upfits to be done at the factory," says Ellam. "We are looking at ways of improving links, with pre-installation work an area we're looking at."

The Vehicle Conversion Centre is opening up manufacturer-fit conversion opportunities. Part of its appeal is the fact that Vauxhall can deliver a completed vehicle with a single invoice.



VAUXHALL VEHICLES INCLUDED IN THE DEAL



Astra
hatchback



Corsa



Insignia sports tourer



Vivaro prison cell van



The service has been well received by customers, according to Vauxhall fleet marketing and Mobility manager Paul Adler.

"We have won some contracts on the back of this facility," he says. "Logistics-wise it takes the cost out for the customer and it shortens lead times because everything is in one place rather than the vehicle going to a converter."

He adds: "We can control quality and also offer a warranty for the whole job."

Key to bluelight procurement is a commitment to after-sales and servicing. The tender requires each manufacturer to submit a costed-up basket of regular servicing and vehicle body parts, but the commitment extends beyond that.

"The majority of forces have their own workshops, but we also give them the ability to use the dealer network – they have that flexibility," explains Ellam.

"We offer workshop accreditation, to allow them to conduct warranty repairs in-house."

That type of arrangement is not new, but the deal brings a number of conquest fleets to Vauxhall. Forces including Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Norfolk and Suffolk are adding the brand to their fleet for the first time.

"It's great conquest business for us," Ellam says. "In this case, we've offered these fleets the best mix of product, wholelife cost and support."

The tender win for 2,000 vehicles over two years isn't likely to cause a problem for the facility. "We have the ability to convert 220 vehicles a month – 2,500-3,000 vehicles a year is well within our capability at the facility," says Ellam.

When production fully ramps up, the centre will be processing up to 180 vehicles a month.

Although the primary focus of the tender are the 28 police forces, a number of fire and rescue services have also taken advantage of the buying power offered by the bid.

"Those few fleets that came together to join the bid had exactly the same requirements as the police, other than the livery. The cost and specification is the same," adds Ellam.

East and West Sussex, Surrey, and Northamptonshire

"Anything we can do to support bluelights to reduce their capital budget we will do"

Dick Ellam, Vauxhall Special Vehicle Operations

were among the fire services involved in the procurement programme. The Special Vehicle Operation also plays a role at the end of the vehicle's life, offering a full remarketing service, if the operator desires.

Ellam explains: "We will take back a police vehicle, defleet it, remove any equipment that has a second life, and then dispose of that vehicle at auction."

"There is continued pressure on public sector budgets, and anything we can do to support them to reduce their capital budget we will do."

Several customers are starting to take advantage of a facility to swap bluelight parts such as lightbars from deflected vehicles to their replacements.

While new parts are also available, the chance to re-use those with operating life remaining is proving a successful way to reduce expenditure.

"We will collect the old vehicle, defleet and swap out the high value components – and those that aren't impacted by general wear-and-tear – and then fit them to the new vehicle," Ellam says.

Vauxhall will refurbish the parts where necessary, and offer an extended warranty on the second-life equipment.



To find out how bluelight fleets are addressing cost and safety challenges, visit: fleetnews.co.uk/fleetprofiles

TECHNOLOGY OF THE FUTURE

Like many drivers, police forces are seeing an ever-increasing need to stay connected. Vauxhall has been working with the Centre for Applied Science and Technology (CAST) and the Applications Catapult to develop a seamless communication system.

If a bluelight vehicle is in an area with good 3G or 4G signal, and goes into an area of poor signal, the system will switch to a satellite signal.

"That system has been perfected, and demonstrated at the ICS World Congress," says Dick Ellam.

"As all of our range rolls out OnStar, the vehicles now come with a solid 4G connection, and this system can bolt onto it."

"We think it will be particularly useful for rural forces. You've got both options – mobile communication and satellite – so officers anywhere will never be out of contact."



OnStar technology, with 4G connectivity, will provide 'seamless communications' for the police

FACTFILE

Business Vauxhall Special Vehicle Operations

Manager Dick Ellam

Location Millbrook, Bedfordshire

Established 2007

Capacity 2,500-3,000 vehicles a year

Client base Bluelight fleets

Conversion capacity 220 a month

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*Saving based on switching original VW diesel fleet to Toyota and Lexus hybrids.

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Fleet & Fuel

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FUEL

FREE?

ADBLUE TOP-UP HERE

AUTOGAS AVAILABLE

REDUCE
FUEL
HERE





Small capacity: big future?

Reduced-size turbo petrol engines offer comparable running costs and are less polluting than their diesel counterparts, but fleet uptake remains low. *Andrew Ryan* reports

Diesel, so long the dominant force in the fleet sector, is a fuel under fire. Last year, worsening air quality in UK cities led environmentalists to point the finger of blame at diesel transport, highlighting the amount of NOx and particulate matter it produces. This forced the Society for Motor Manufacturers and Traders to fight back against this "unfair demonisation" with a campaign to highlight the environmental credentials of the latest Euro 6 engines.

However, the fuel suffered another blow in September when the Volkswagen Group emissions scandal broke. This saw the manufacturer admit that 'defeat devices' were used during NOx emissions tests to mask the true level of pollution produced by some of its diesel engines.

The controversy was swiftly followed by Chancellor George Osborne's announcement that the Government would postpone April's planned removal of the benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax 3% diesel supplement – handing the fleet industry an unexpected BIK and Class 1A national insurance bill for £1.36 billion over the next five years.

It is widely expected that the future of vehicles will heavily feature electrification, whether it is pure-electric or plug-in

23%

Proportion of FN50 fleets taken up by petrol cars

50%

Proportion of Ford Fiesta sales taken by Ecoboost petrol version



More on fuel management at:
fleetnews.co.uk/fuel

hybrid models: a KPMG survey published at the beginning of this month found that 79% of UK automotive executives believe that hybrid electric vehicles would be the powertrain of choice by 2030.

At the moment, though, they are held back through either their lack of suitability for fleets or the limited range of models available for choice lists.

However, with cars powered by the latest smaller-capacity turbo petrol engines offering lower P11D prices, NOx and particulate emissions than their diesel counterparts, as well as ever-improving efficiency, should fleets start considering petrol a viable alternative to diesel?

Running cost calculations figures suggest there is a case. Comparisons using the *Fleet News* online running costs tool show how competitive the smaller-capacity petrol-engined cars are against their diesel counterparts (see table, below).

For example, the Vauxhall Astra 1.0i Turbo 105 Tech Line has a P11D price of £16,640 – £1,000 less than its 1.6-litre CDTi 110 Tech Line diesel counterpart, and has CO₂ emissions of 99g/km (diesel: 95g/km) and official combined fuel economy of 65.7mpg (70.6mpg).

Over a four-year/80,000-mile replacement cycle, the petrol model will have running costs of £20,120 (25.15ppm), just £184 more than the diesel model's £20,032 (25.04ppm). However, the lower P11D price and BIK band of the petrol model means the driver will pay £134 less in annual BIK tax (£466 compared to £600) and the employer will also pay £93 less (£321 compared to £414) in Class 1A NIC. Worth bearing in mind for fleets which pay advisory fuel rates (AFRs) is that the petrol comparisons cost 2p per mile more than diesel, equivalent to an additional £1,600 over 80,000 miles.

Venson Automotive Solutions last year commissioned vehicle finance and tax advisor BCF Wessex to research smaller-capacity petrol cars versus diesel.

It found that, over a three-year/60,000-mile cycle, diesel was the "marginal" financially astute option for wholelife costs. "Fuel price volatility, reducing annual fleet mileage and improvements in the fuel economy of petrol-engined company cars mean diesel power may not always make the most cost-effective fleet choice," says Simon Staton, director of client management at Venson. "However, all fleets are

PETROL v DIESEL

Running cost data supplied by KeeResources (4yr/80k)



Vauxhall Astra



Volkswagen Golf



Ford Mondeo

	Petrol	Diesel	Petrol	Diesel	Petrol	Diesel
	1.0i Turbo 105 Tech Line	1.6 CDTi 110 Tech Line	1.0 TSI 115 Match	1.6 TDI 110 Match	1.0T Ecoboost Zetec Nav	Ford Mondeo 1.5 TDCi 120 Zetec Nav
P11D	£16,640	£17,640	£20,680	£21,905	£20,440	£22,340
CO ₂ emissions	99g/km	95g/km	99g/km	99g/km	119g/km	94g/km
BIK (20% taxpayer)	£466	£600	£579	£745	£736	£719
Class 1A NIC	£321	£414	£400	£514	£508	£493
Annual VED	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0 then £30	£0
Residual value	£4,100/25%	£4,550/26%	£4,925/24%	£5,272/24%	£4,750/23%	£4,940/22%
Fuel cost	7.07ppm	6.14ppm	7.07ppm	6.48ppm	8.38ppm	6.34ppm
AFR	11	9	11	9	11	9
Running cost (4yr/80k)	25.66ppm/£20,120	25.04ppm/£20,032	29.66ppm/£23,728	30.25ppm/£24,200	32.75ppm/£26,200	32.39ppm/£25,912

different and that means decision-makers should not always assume that the dominance of diesel as the company car of choice over many years should remain."

A recent *Fleet News* online poll showed a possible change in attitude. It found that almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents would consider replacing their diesel car with one of the latest small-capacity petrol-engined cars.

Another sign of fleets becoming more receptive to petrol models comes from Simon Hill, managing director of Total Motion, who expects half of his company's customers to remove their diesel-only policies over the next two years.

Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions has seen one of its largest customers add additional petrol models to choice lists as a result of the diesel supplement U-turn.

"Wholelife cost is still the ultimate deciding factor," says Suzanne Phillips, national fleet consultant at Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions. However, with fleets looking for cost savings, any improvement in wholelife cost of petrol is not significant enough over a diesel engine to drive real change.

"Wholelife cost has also become a key factor for perk drivers who are becoming more savvy when researching a new car," adds Phillips. "But this has resulted in the adoption of other technologies aside from petrol engines."

"The move by some large corporates to add petrol back into the mix is a good representation of the market: petrol can be considered a credible alternative to diesel."

"However, given the choice, fleets don't appear to be moving away from diesel engines in favour of smaller-capacity petrol engines any time soon."

Manufacturers confirm this is the case.

"We've had a lot of interest in terms of fleets wanting to assess our 1.0-litre turbo petrol – more than we would normally have expected for a petrol engine – but the truth is that, so far, registrations are no more than we would have expected, so it is still very modest," says Paul Adler, fleet marketing and motability manager for Vauxhall. "However, there has been lots of discussion and lots of praise for the 1.0-litre engine in terms of driveability."

Ford reports a similar experience with its 1.0-litre Ecoboost engine. "Ecoboost has certainly put smaller-capacity engines on the shopping list of customers, including fleet buyers, since its introduction in 2012," says a Ford spokesman.



"We've had a lot of interest in terms of fleets wanting to assess our 1.0-litre turbo petrol"

Paul Adler, Vauxhall

64%

Proportion of *Fleet News* poll respondents who would consider replacing diesel with petrol

ELECTRIFICATION THREAT TO PETROL

One factor potentially restricting the uptake of smaller-capacity petrol engines is the continuing development of electrified powertrains.

"Small capacity petrol engines are under pressure from technology such as hybrids and electric vehicles," says Carlos Montero, commercial director of FleetEurope.

"For vehicles operating predominantly in an urban environment, an EV could be a more suitable solution. In the same vein, hybrids can offer all the benefits of an EV without the drawback of limited range."

John Pryor, chairman of ACF0, says the increasing range of fuel options could mean that fleets operate a vehicle mix that includes diesel, electric and petrol.

"All decisions related to vehicle choice should be based on total cost of ownership/wholelife cost data while always taking account of the operational requirements of each individual vehicle," he says.



"The key effect has been with smaller family cars, especially Fiesta where it now accounts for 50% of sales. There has been less of an influence in larger vehicles and CVs where diesel engines remain a default option."

Last year's FN50 listing of the country's 50 largest leasing and contract hire companies reported that 73% of risk fleet cars were diesel, with 23% petrol.

The research also found that petrol cars made up 20% of new car orders, meaning there was no significant rise for most companies over the previous year.

LeasePlan says that, generally, low mileage suits smaller-capacity petrol engine vehicles, while high mileage suits diesels.

"One important factor to bear in mind when choosing diesel is the increasing use of diesel particulate filters (DPFs)," says Matthew Walters, head of consultancy services at LeasePlan.

"In mixed driving, these filters work fine but, if your driving is mainly town-based, you should think carefully before buying a DPF-equipped car. A diet of low-speed urban motoring will clog DPF filters."

Walters says Automotive Leasing, LeasePlan's public sector specialist brand, has found petrol is a 'natural fit' for local authorities and NHS trusts which operate lower mileage fleets within fixed geographical regions.

"The public sector has been 'switched on' to the cost benefits of petrol versus diesel for many years, with petrol making up 30% of our car fleet," he says.

"We have begun to see interest changing. As the additional costs associated with diesel cars rise and their environmental impact is noted, fleet managers are becoming more aware of the possibility that other vehicles such as electric or hybrid can be considered."

Citroën C4 Grand Picasso		Škoda Octavia	
Petrol	Diesel	Petrol	Diesel
1.2 Puretech 130 VTR+	1.6 BlueHDI 120 VTR+	1.2 TSi 110 SE	1.6 TDi SE
£21,440	£22,655	£17,580	£19,595
115g/km	105g/km	114g/km	99g/km
£772	£861	£598	£666
£533	£594	£412	£460
£0 then £30	£0 then £20	£0 then £30	£0
£4,375/20%	£5,050/22%	£4,050/23%	£4,825/25%
8.22ppm	6.97ppm	8.05ppm	6.48ppm
11	9	11	9
32.76ppm/£26,208	32.36ppm/£25,888	27.70ppm/£22,160	27.68ppm/£22,144

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AdBlue: how it affects fleet operations

Many vehicles use the additive to comply with the Euro 6 emissions standard, but top-up intervals and costs can vary. *Christopher Smith* reports



Fleet operators and their drivers are being stung by the frequency and cost of AdBlue top-ups, with some diesel vehicles needing a top-up every 3,000–4,000 miles.

That's effectively every six tanks of fuel (assuming 500 miles per tank), with costs varying. A DIY approach costs around £15 but take it to a maintenance supplier and you could be looking at twice that figure. We were quoted £75–£100 by one dealer (see page 73).

This is a scenario most fleets will have to face.

AdBlue is a brand name for an additive that is 32.5% urea and many manufacturers are using it in their diesel powertrains to meet Euro 6 emissions regulations [all diesel cars and vans registered after September 1, 2015 have to emit a maximum of 80mg/km of NOx – less than half the previous cap – with many vehicles sold before this date already complying with this rule].

The clear liquid is injected into the selective catalyst reduction (SCR) system in the exhaust chain, where it triggers a chemical reaction which converts NOx into nitrogen and water vapour. It has already been used for a number of years in commercial vehicles, but is something fleet managers and car drivers may not have experienced until a warning light comes on signalling a top-up is needed.

Therefore, it is important that drivers are aware of the process so it doesn't come as a shock. If the warning light is ignored and the AdBlue runs out, the vehicle stops and will not restart until it is replenished. When this happens will depend on the car and how it has been driven.

Peter Jardine, group fleet manager of Countrywide, has a number of Audi A6 Ultras on his fleet and has found that drivers are having to get the AdBlue tank topped up every 3,000 to 4,000 miles – at the company's expense.

"When we first spoke to manufacturers about AdBlue, they suggested top-ups would just be done when the cars were serviced, so we decided not to charge drivers," he says. "We're now having to order vehicles with bigger AdBlue tanks."

Peugeot and Citroën say their vehicles will require a top-up every 12,500 miles (fitting with the service interval of some, but not all, models), while some Vauxhall and Volkswagen vehicles could require refilling every 3,000 miles.

Consumption will also vary from car to car. Mike Cooke,

"If the service schedule states the fluid needs to be completely changed, we will take care of it"

Simon Pilcher, LeasePlan

fleet operations manager at fleet management firm FleetEurope, says: "You could have two identical cars with identical mileages but, while one might be used over a long distance once or twice a day, the other may be completing numerous short journeys. The total distance could be comparable, but AdBlue usage will differ massively."

Jardine has agreed a rate of £32.50 per fill with his maintenance provider. "If we fill up 13 times per contract, this is a cost of £422 per car," he says.

Another issue is deciding on who pays for the top-ups. Russell Adams, commercial vehicle engineer at Lex Autolease, suggests a relatively simple solution.

"We consider AdBlue a consumable, similar to fuel," he says. "As such, the onus is on the operator of the vehicle to ensure it is adequately topped up and cover any costs incurred."

However, Simon Pilcher, supplier manager at LeasePlan, adds: "If the service schedule



SETTING YOUR FLEET'S ADBLUE POLICY

- 1 Identify the vehicles on your fleet that require AdBlue**
Many Euro 6 diesel vehicles require AdBlue top-ups, but in many cases it won't immediately be apparent. Ensuring you and your drivers know which vehicles require the additive eliminates surprises.
- 2 Decide who pays for AdBlue top-ups**
The majority of leasing companies don't include AdBlue in maintenance policies. Ensure your drivers are aware they are responsible for payment if you decide this should be the case.
- 3 Suggest a recommended refilling process**
Particularly if your company is covering the cost of top-ups, it is essential your drivers understand your policy for refilling to avoid excessive charges. They need to know if they should take the car to a dealer and recharge the cost to the business, pay for it on their fuel card, or submit it for payment as a business expense.
If drivers are to pay themselves, ensure AdBlue fill-ups are disabled on their fuel card system.



ADBLUE MODELS, RANGE, AND DEALER TOP-UP COSTS

Brand	Audi	BMW	Jaguar Land Rover	Mercedes-Benz	Peugeot Citroën	Volkswagen	Vauxhall
Affected models	All Euro 6 diesels excluding A1, A3 and TT	5 Series, 7 Series, X5, X6	All Euro 6 diesels	Most Euro 6 diesels, excluding A-Class	All Euro 6 diesels	Most Euro 6 diesels excluding Polo, Golf, Beetle, Scirocco	Zafira Tourer/Insignia 2.0-litre Auto
Estimated range	n/a	9,000 miles	5,000 – 17,000 miles	9,000 – 17,000 miles	12,500 miles	3,000 – 7,000 miles	3,000 – 7,000 miles
Dealer top-up price outside scheduled service	£1.50 per litre	Fixed charge of £24.99	Included in JLR service plans between services	Top-up before first service free, then free labour	Fixed charge of £9.99	£1.50 per litre	Prices vary for AdBlue, but free labour for fleets



states the fluid needs to be completely changed, we will take care of it," he adds.

While it is now becoming accepted that the additive is not included as a service, maintenance and repair (SMR) expense covered by a leasing company, it remains unclear whether a fleet operator should cover the cost or pass it on to the driver.

Fleets have a number of options when it comes to sourcing AdBlue. The first, and potentially most costly, is to use the dealer network. Costs vary considerably, with some brands having a fixed price policy, either for a full top-up or per litre. Peugeot and Citroën offer a top-up of up to 10 litres for £9.99, while BMW charges £24.99. Volkswagen, Audi and Seat are among those charging on a per-litre basis, with a fixed price of £1.50 per litre. Outside these fixed price policies, for other brands the results are likely to be similar.

Jaguar Land Rover vehicles on a service plan receive a free top-up but, for those outside a service plan, prices are "at retailers' discretion so may vary".

Vincent St Claire, commercial director of service management company Fleet Assist, which manages SMR networks for leasing companies including Alphabet, Ogilvie and Pendragon, says dealer charges are a minefield.

"The big issue is managing the costs from the garage," he says. "The AdBlue fluid can be purchased in bulk for as little as 30p per litre but we are seeing garages charge anything up to £15 per litre and 30 minutes' labour to top up the tank."

The company is negotiating terms with garages and plans to offer a fixed price top-up for clients.

The second option is for a driver to obtain a refill kit from a dealer's parts department. The majority of brands offer a 1.89-litre refill container, which has a special valve to make filling up easier. Costing between £6 and £8, it's not the cheapest way to fill up, and several containers may be required for a full top-up, but it is straightforward.

The practical process of a driver refilling AdBlue varies significantly depending on the type of container, and the location of the filler on the vehicle. Models that have been designed with AdBlue in mind, such as the new Audi A4 and Volkswagen Passat, will often locate this under the fuel filler flap on the side of the car. Others – where the tank has been added to the vehicle midway through its life, including many Citroëns, Peugeots, and the Volkswagen Tiguan (see long-term test, page 72) – will locate the filler cap under the boot floor.



"AdBlue fluid can be purchased in bulk for as little as 30p per litre but we are seeing garages charge anything up to £15 per litre"

Vincent St Claire, Fleet Assist

£9.99

Price of a 10-litre AdBlue top-up from Peugeot and Citroën

80

Euro 6 NOx limit (mg/km) for new diesel cars and vans



The special refill containers offered by dealers click into place, meaning there is no spillage. The 10-litre capacity containers available from motor factors, some dealers and many petrol stations, are perhaps one of the cheapest ways for a car driver to top-up, but are not without their issues.

In cars where the filler cap is located in the boot floor, a funnel may be required to reduce the risk of spillage. The containers are supplied with a tube, but these may not be long enough for easy refilling.

The 10-litre containers cost between £10 and £18, and should be large enough to reduce the frequency of top-ups.

Some fleet managers are wary about allowing drivers to top-up the additive themselves. "I won't go down the DIY route," Jardine says. "My drivers would be putting it in the fuel tank or washer bottle – you name it."

Fleet managers can enable or disable the ability to pay for the additive on their fuel cards, with Allstar and BP among those offering the functionality.

Drivers may be tempted to use the considerable number of AdBlue pumps available at motorway filling stations, but Paul Norman, manager at chemical company Air1, explains that the pumps cannot be used for passenger cars. "Cars will have onboard AdBlue tanks a fraction of the size of a truck's and the pump flow rate would result in overfilling in a matter of seconds," he says.

Cooke adds: "It is worth pointing out buying in bulk as a consumer is not advised. AdBlue is a bio-product and therefore has a use-by date. You shouldn't use AdBlue past its use-by date."



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Fuel consumption figures for the Civic range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 37.2 – 70.6 (7.6 – 4.0), Extra Urban 54.3 – 85.6 (5.2 – 3.3), Combined 46.3 – 78.5 (6.1 – 3.6). CO₂ emissions: 145 – 94 g/km. Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results, are provided for comparison purposes and may not reflect real-life driving experience.

Model Shown: Civic 1.6 i-DTEC SR Manual in Brilliant Sporty Blue Metallic.



5 WAYS FLEETS ARE REDUCING FUEL BILLS

Fuel remains one of the biggest costs associated with operating a fleet of vehicles, but operators can make significant savings through introducing the right initiatives. *Andrew Ryan* reports on five of the best



DOWNSIZING VEHICLES

Z-Tech has reduced its fuel spend by 22% by downsizing from Ford Transits to Fiesta vans where possible.

The engineering services provider decided to take this action following a review by the Energy Saving Trust in 2009.

"Drivers that just carry technical equipment and don't have a lot of weight in the back of their vans can quite easily use a Fiesta van and save on fuel," says Sudhanva Rajashekara, fleet manager at Z-Tech.

Arval has previously estimated wholelife cost savings could reach £10,000 for businesses that move from a heavy van to a light van across a four-year vehicle lease, while moving from a heavy van to a medium van could save up to £3,000.

The downsizing trend coincides with many manufacturers introducing model ranges that optimise the use of available space, while simultaneously improving fuel consumption.

Z-Tech is also increasing its car allowance for hybrid and electric vehicles to incentivise company car drivers to make the switch from diesel.



Sudhanva Rajashekara:
'downsizing reduced
fuel spend by 22%'



ENSURING PLUG-IN HYBRIDS ARE CHARGED

Ensuring vehicle batteries are charged before use is key to getting the most out of plug-in hybrid electrics (PHEVs).

For example, the Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV has an official combined fuel economy of 156.9mpg. But if its battery is not charged, this drops dramatically: drivers report real world fuel economy of 40-50mpg. Conversely, if the car is used for short journeys and the battery is kept topped up, then very little petrol – if any – is used.

One driver at Vital Energi, who clocked up 2,600 miles between April and October last year, recorded average running costs of just 1.48 pence per mile, excluding electricity costs. Paul Carberry, group fleet manager at the sustainable energy company, has recorded an average running cost of 2.48ppm (excluding electricity costs) for his Mitsubishi PHEV, and less than 6ppm when electricity costs are taken into account.

"I am achieving more than 200mpg," he says. "It's about making sure you charge all the time. I take every opportunity to charge at supermarkets and on the motorway."

Vital Energi also reduces fuel costs by using electricity generated by solar panels on the roof of its headquarters to charge its plug-in hybrids.



Paul Carberry: 'I
am achieving more
than 200mpg'



ADOPTING ALTERNATIVE FUELS

Leeds City Council is expecting to save £1.5 million on diesel and AdBlue costs over a five-year period by converting its 70 refuse collection trucks to run on compressed natural gas.

The trucks will be the first vehicles converted by the council – at a cost of around £2,400 per vehicle – which will then consider making the same modifications to its 200 vans.

Its van fleet is currently made up of Ford Transits, Fiesta vans and Peugeot Partners. The council also has a fleet of 21 Ford Galaxy and Peugeot Expert Tepees, as well as 29 cars. However, the council was unable to share its projections on fuel savings or how much it would cost to convert its van fleet.

It has gained funding approval to build and run one of the UK's biggest filling stations for the alternative fuel, and this is expected to be operational by summer next year.

The total cost for the project, including building the filling station, is expected to reach £5m, with funding provided in the form of a loan from Northern Gas Networks.



Leeds City Council: switching to compressed natural gas



ELIMINATING UNNECESSARY IDLING

Gas distribution company SGN found it was wasting 13,000 litres a month through unnecessary idling.

The business, which has 2,000 vans and 700 cars, underwent a rebrand in 2014 and when the new vehicle livery was applied an updated telematics system was also installed.

"One of the biggest initial surprises for us was the level of idling," says Chris Stone, head of finance at SGN. "When we first started monitoring, we realised we wasted 13,000 litres of fuel in one month."

"All the vans are now fitted with heaters to dry drivers' coats, with the latest additions to the fleet also capable of heating the cabs. We've worked hard with the team leaders and the drivers to change habits."

Telematics has also led to smoother, more efficient driving, which saw economy improve by 2.5mpg – or around 11% – in a sample pool of 89 vehicles.

If the same results are seen across the business, Stone estimates an annual saving of up to £1m, made up primarily of an estimated £600,000 saving through fuel economy and reduced idling, reduced maintenance and vehicle repair, and a lower spend on tyres and brakes.



Chris Stone: estimates annual saving of £1m from reduced idling and consumption



SWITCHING FUEL CARD PROVIDER

Switching from a pump price fuel card to a fixed priced one is saving Gamestec between £5,000 and £6,000 a month.

The company switched cards in 2014, but fleet manager Peter Kowalczyk was apprehensive about the change. "We were very much focused on using supermarket forecourts," he says. "We were achieving 99.5% supermarket fill-ups, month-on-month. Our big fear of switching was having to move away from that."

Gamestec did not want to remain with its then fuel card provider Allstar and continue paying a transaction fee every time its 530 drivers filled up: that charge was adding up to £2,500 to £3,000 a month. It considered a number of alternative providers and resellers before selecting a Shell card provided by Juice Fuel Management.

The company opted for a fixed price fuel card, based on Platts price, which can be used at any Shell station.

"It's making a huge saving for us compared to the national diesel average, which is what we have always tracked our prices against," Kowalczyk says.

"We were always 2p under the national diesel average and, since we moved to Shell, we're 5p under."



Peter Kowalczyk: 'Since we switched, we're 5p under the national average'



Reduce the pain of taking away drivers' 'free' fuel

Ending fully-expensed fuel is likely to be met with resistance from your employees, but there are ways to ease the process. [Andrew Ryan](#) reports



Removing fully-expensed fuel from drivers is a financial no-brainer for employers – it saves them hundreds of pounds per employee per year in fuel bills and taxes.

But the situation is not always so clear-cut for the staff losing the benefit. For them, taking away 'free fuel' results in both winners and losers.

The winners will have been paying more in tax than the value of the fuel they use for their private mileage, so will benefit financially.

The losers, however, would be left out of pocket – and as the calculations are usually based on a vehicle's official combined fuel economy, the number of people who will be worse off increases if the real world figures are used.

For example (see table, page 49), using official test results, a 20% income tax payer who drives a BMW 320d ED Plus would have to travel 13,002 miles a year before they are better off through receiving fully-expensed fuel.

If the real world figures – achieved by a *Fleet News* long-term test car – are used, this falls to 9,030. This will increase to 9,546 when changes to both the BIK bands and the fuel benefit charge multiplier come into force for the 2016/2017 financial year, which begins in April.

Some fleet suppliers, however, do tailor their calculations to real world conditions.

"We have developed our own cost comparison tool which, on a driver-by-driver basis, evaluates the situation and includes a feature where you adjust the official fuel consumption figures by whatever percentage you wish, to reflect the

"In this day and age, it's not an efficient taxation scheme for an employer or employee to have"

Paul Hollick, TMC

real world," says Ian Hill, managing director of Activa Contracts. "Our default is about 15% lower because, on most cars, this seems to be about right."

Paul Hollick, commercial director of The Miles Consultancy, estimates that the average saving for an employer taking staff out of fully-expensed fuel, even taking any compensation into account, works out at just over £800 per employee, per year.

"In this day and age, it's not an efficient taxation scheme for an employer or employee to have, so the employer may as well work out a mechanism that means the employee moves away from it," he says.

The first step towards removing the benefit is to collect and analyse data.

This can be done electronically through mileage capture systems, apps or spreadsheets, or by recording business and private mileage on paper.

"One thing that people find attractive about fully-expensed fuel is that they see that it is very easy to administer," says Hill.

"Drivers don't have to keep mileage records, which they see as a bit of a bind so you have to overcome that, but the savings are so significant in most cases that it's worthwhile introducing a system."

Once an employer has analysed the data, there are a number of options available to them which could allow it to remove the benefit.

This analysis usually shows that the majority of employees will be better off without the fully-expensed fuel, so it should

be quite straightforward to remove their benefit, says Nick Davies, director – employer consulting at BHP.

"You can demonstrate to drivers quite clearly that they are paying more in tax than they would in fuel costs," he says.

"Every employee is most interested in the bottom line, so the art of communication is not to overcomplicate it, but keep it simple and demonstrate the degree to which they would be better off. Producing dummy payslips is great for that, but similarly it could be as simple as doing the calculations and saying 'by having private fuel, you are worse off by £450' or whatever it might be."

The analysis will also identify drivers who will be worse off through losing their free fuel, and therefore need to be compensated for the withdrawal of the benefit.

"The savings that the company makes in total far outweigh any compensations they have to pay, so they don't have to be mean and stingy," says Hill.

One way to compensate drivers for the loss of their fuel benefit is through a one-off payment.

"This can be difficult to communicate because you would be compensating a driver for essentially a fixed period of time," says Davies.

"An employer can calculate the annual benefit a driver receives, so what they can do is say 'OK, having private fuel is saving you £300 now, but in the next tax year it is not saving you anything because of the increase in fuel benefit. Therefore, to compensate you up to the period when it ceases to be a benefit we will pay you this sum of money.'

"How that works in an employee's mind is less clear."

Davies says many employees see fully-expensed fuel as a "never-ending" benefit as there is no set date when it finishes, while a single compensation payment brings a definite finish to it.

One way around this mental barrier is to replace the fully-expensed fuel with a monthly fuel allowance.

"You can say 'ok, you are £200 better off this year by virtue of having private fuel.

"What if we withdraw private fuel but we give you a fuel allowance, so we gross up the £200 for tax and national insurance and pay that as a multi-allowance through the payroll?," Davies says.

"It doesn't have to be pensionable pay – you can make clear it's not, it's purely a fuel allowance – so you are putting them in the same position that they were in when they had the fuel benefit.

"The selling point there is that if you remain with private



"Every employee is most interested in the bottom line, so the art is not to overcomplicate it"

Nick Davies, BHP

£800

Average per employee saved by employers from cutting fully expensed fuel

11,375

Breakeven mileage of Citroën C4 Cactus using 'free' fuel (2016/17 tax year)



Fuel cost calculator:
fleetnews.co.uk/costs/fuel-cost-calculator/

fuel it will deteriorate year-on-year, so we are protecting you against these ongoing tax increases by doing this."

Compensating an employee for the loss of the benefit can also be done by adjusting their salary, says Hollick.

"An employee could be bought out of it by giving them a salary engrossment, or you could give them a one-off bonus every year," he says.

There are also more gradual ways of removing the benefit which do not include paying compensation. These include approaches such as continuing to provide fully-expensed fuel to existing employees, but not offering it to any new members of staff.

"However, depending on staff turnover, you could take 20 years to fully remove the benefit," says Davies.

"If I was doing that I would combine this with still offering the existing workforce the option to withdraw from private fuel as the likelihood is that the majority is not benefiting from private fuel."

Another alternative is to leave free fuel in place, but review it when an employee's car is about to be replaced, says Hill.

"Some people would say to an employee 'the next time your car lease comes up in two years' time, we'll review your fully-expensed fuel situation'.

"That will give the driver the opportunity to select a more fuel efficient car if they so wish which you benefit them."

But there remains the issue of those drivers who refuse to give up their benefit.

"There's a small proportion, maybe 2-3%, where it probably works for them, so therefore keep them in the scheme – it's not the end of the world," says Hollick.

"It's still annoying because the employer is still paying for the fuel and the employee is still paying the tax, but the overall savings are far greater than any benefit you will continue to pay."

FULLY EXPENSED: HOW THE FIGURES STACK-UP

				2015/2016				2016/2017			
Employee				Cost to 20% taxpayer (double for 40%)				Cost to 20% taxpayer			
Model	CO2	Official mpg	Actual mpg*	BIK band	Tax	Fuel bought (gallons)	Breakeven mileage**	BIK band	Tax	Fuel bought (gallons)	Breakeven mileage**
Citroën C4 Cactus 1.6 Hdi Feel	90	88.3	65	16%	£707	155	10,075	18%	£799	175	11,375
Ford Mondeo 2.0 TDCi 180 Titanium	117	62.8	45.3	21%	£928	203	9,196	23%	£1,021	223	10,101
BMW 320d ED Plus	99	74.3	51.6	17%	£795	175	9,030	19%	£844	185	9,546
Peugeot 2008 1.6 BlueHDI 120 Allure	97	76.3	51.4	17%	£751	164	8,430	19%	£844	185	9,509
Volkswagen Tiguan 2.0 TDI 150 Match	130	56.4	45.6	24%	£1,060	232	10,579	26%	£1,154	252	11,491

Fuel price based on UK average diesel price of 100.61 pence per litre (£4.48 per gallon) on January 29. The fuel benefit charge multiplier increases from £22,100 in 2015/16 to £22,200 for 2016/17 calculations. *Calculations based on actual mpg. **Gained from Fleet News long-term test cars.

*'We save around
£1,200 per vehicle a
year by using LPG'*

Noel Roberts, Isle of Anglesey County Council

Despite the potential to cut fuel bills by 40% and offering environmental benefits over diesel and petrol, LPG has never caught on.

Andrew Ryan investigates why



Name Paul Beesley
Role Marketing manager
Organisation Autogas Limited

On paper, LPG has the cost and environmental qualities to be a mainstream vehicle fuel. It is more than 40p per litre cheaper than petrol or diesel, while research by the German Federal Motor Vehicles Agency found that NOx emissions are generally lower than petrol and substantially lower than diesel. LPG also generates no recordable particulate matter.

And it creates less CO₂ on a well-to-wheel basis as it is a byproduct of the crude oil and natural gas industries.

However, the 28 leasing companies which provided details of vehicle fuel types in last year's FN50 ran just 23 cars and 31 vans. LPG was dealt a near-fatal blow in 2005 when the Government scrapped the Powershift grant scheme, but despite that, there appears to be a clear argument for greater uptake. So why don't more fleets use it, and what does the future hold for the fuel?

We asked Noel Roberts, fleet and driver manager at Isle of Anglesey County Council, which operates 71 LPG vehicles, John Pryor, chairman of ACFO, Simon Hill, managing director of Total Motion – the FN50 leasing company with the most LPG vehicles (six cars and 31 vans) – and Paul Beesley, marketing manager of LPG supplier Autogas Limited.

What are the benefits of using LPG?

Paul Beesley: The main benefit is the fuel cost. Savings of up to 40% are a significant driver. LPG also enhances a business's environmental credentials by using a proven cleaner fuel. The likely introduction of further Clean Air Zones brings the possibility of further vehicle restrictions in city centres.

*"Government
policy towards
LPG led to
manufacturers
dropping LPG
models from
lists"*

John Pryor, ACFO



More on fuel
management at:
fleetnews.co.uk/fuel

Simon Hill: We've got two customers who use LPG. One is a construction business and the other is a service engineering company. Their overriding motivation is cost. Their vehicles have really good wholelife costs, they are reliable, the drivers are happy with their performance and CO₂ and NOx emissions are good.

Noel Roberts: The main factors our councillors looked at when deciding to adopt LPG were the fuel costs and CO₂ emissions. We have our own LPG tanks and today's price is 32p per litre, so we make considerable savings from running LPG: around £1,200 per vehicle, which is more than £80,000 a year.

Why do so few fleets use it?

Paul Beesley: Primarily it's all down to education and breaking the duopoly of diesel and petrol. More than 10 million drivers in mainland Europe use LPG and have done for more than 40 years, while more than 14 vehicle manufacturers offer LPG-powered models directly from their showrooms, some of which are even manufactured in the UK. But there is no OEM offering an LPG option in the UK.

Simon Hill: My feeling is that it was the right place at the wrong time for LPG. I think it just didn't get the push it needed and I don't think the Government helped massively [in 2005 it ended its Powershift grant scheme, through which drivers could get up to 75% of the extra cost of their LPG back]. It's going to be one of those fuels that will forever be on the periphery, but never mainstream. People still feel nervous about aftermarket conversions and, because of this, they want to stick with diesel. It's unfortunate, because if more

LPG IN NUMBERS

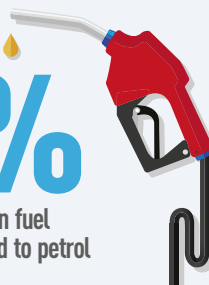
55.4

Average price for a litre of
LPG (source: fleetnews.co.uk)



20%

Average increase in fuel
economy compared to petrol



£1,400

Typical price of
vehicle conversion



Name Simon Hill
Role Managing director
Organisation Total Motion



Name John Pryor
Role Chairman
Organisation ACFO

people saw the benefits then more would use LPG. If companies do not have the facility to bunker the fuel, the number of sites where you can buy it is limited.

John Pryor: Government policy towards LPG as a viable fuel for road-going cars and vans led, some years ago, to mainstream motor manufacturers largely dropping LPG models from their price lists. Today, ACFO's understanding is that vehicle conversion to LPG is typically an aftermarket issue.

As a general rule, fleets have vehicle sourcing relationships with mainstream motor manufacturers, franchised dealerships and third-party suppliers such as contract hire and leasing companies. Best practice dictates that fleet managers should consider the viability of such vehicles on a total cost of ownership/wholelife cost basis. Only then will they know whether LPG vehicles have a place on their fleets.

Are there any issues with reliability?

Simon Hill: In the past 10 years, we've not had a single problem with a conversion and every single LPG vehicle we've had on fleet has performed as well, if not better, than their diesel or petrol equivalent on reliability.

Noel Roberts: We have got vehicles here – the original ones – which have covered 180,000 to 190,000 miles without any problems. The LPG system needs to be serviced every 12 months, but our mechanics have been trained to carry out the work.

What does the future hold for LPG?

Paul Beesley: Interest levels have been increasing in recent

months, given the publicity around poor air quality in the UK, with much of the criticism levelled at road transport as one of the biggest contributors. The news that London breached annual pollution limits just one week into 2016, and that the Government has announced plans to introduce Clean Air Zones in 38 areas (five by 2020), with the possible banning of diesel vehicles, provides a timely opportunity to consider the benefits offered by LPG.

Simon Hill: I wish we would see an increase, but I don't think we will. What will happen is we will probably live out LPG and then go to hybrid or full electric and then on to hydrogen. That's my gut feeling. I think a possible increase in interest for it could be the move back to petrol. Over the next two years I am expecting half our customers, if not all, to remove their diesel-only policies and reintroduce petrol. When we see that, we are ready to promote LPG to those that it might be relevant to.

We are planning to say "here are your wholelife costs for diesel, petrol, LPG and plug-in hybrids", but we will make sure we reinforce the position around LPG because we think it's a viable option. It has to be the right circumstances, but we think it's viable. I don't think we will increase our LPG fleet massively, but I don't think we'll lose any either. I think we'll just continue until the time there is a better alternative; but at the moment there isn't one.

Noel Roberts: LPG has given us good service and massive savings – we've got no regrets. Council policy is to purchase dual fuel (both petrol and LPG) vehicles where possible. We will continue to do that until our policy changes.

LPG FAQs

Q How are the residual values of LPG vehicles?

A "Exceptional," says Simon Hill.

"Every single vehicle we get we can sell five times over."

"It's one of our best-performing vehicles in terms of RVs. We get farmers, we get taxi drivers, we get all sorts of people interested in our used LPG vehicles. I would say they probably get back the cost of the conversion."

Q How does an LPG conversion affect a manufacturer warranty?

A "The manufacturer's warranty still exists," says Hill. "We have an exclusion list of certain parts which are not covered by the manufacturer's warranty, but we have a warranty contract in place to cover these."

Rob Beesley says approved conversion specialists will offer an additional warranty that covers the LPG system being fitted and the powertrain.

Q How often does the LPG system need to be serviced?

A "It should have an annual inspection and service through one of the industry-approved specialists," says Beesley. "This should cost in the order of £55."

Q Does the after-market conversion affect benefit-in-kind tax?

A "It does not affect BIK as it is an aftermarket conversion," says Beesley. "As such, the CO₂ used would be for the petrol engine. If an OEM were to offer LPG then the additional cost for the LPG option would be included for BIK, but the reduced CO₂ figure for the LPG would be used. Vans do not attract BIK."



40%

Estimated saving on fuel bill by using LPG



1,400
Number of LPG filling stations in UK



54
Number of LPG cars and vans on the FN50 risk fleet, said respondents

FleetNews

AWARDS
2016

LeasePlan UK, a member of LeasePlan Corporation NV Group, is part of the largest vehicle management group in the world. Collectively, we operate a fleet of 1.55 million vehicles and provide innovative leasing and fleet management solutions in 32 countries, across five continents.

The UK division of the company operates a serviced fleet in excess of 165,000 vehicles, including more than 50,000 commercial vehicles.

At LeasePlan, we know that every customer is different and so we've organised our business into four distinct brands. So, whether you know us better as LeasePlan, Automotive Leasing, LeasePlan Go or Network, you'll know that we are committed to putting the needs of our customers at the very heart of everything we do. It's an approach which is best summed up in our brand promise: it's easier to leaseplan.

From simple funding to full outsourcing, and everything in between, our fleet management and driver mobility solutions will help you achieve your goals. In fact, whatever sort of business you're in – small, large, private or public sector – you can be confident that fleet isn't just part of what we do, it's everything we do. No distractions, no complications, just expert advice, solutions that really work and 100% commitment to service.

SPONSOR PROFILE



It's easier to leaseplan

Continuous innovation to meet changing customer needs

Recently, there's been a lot spoken about working smarter and being more efficient. Sensible goals, of course, but for many it simply means juggling an ever growing list of tasks across a wide variety of responsibility areas.

In fact, recent research shows that while many companies employ a dedicated fleet specialist, it's a role that's increasingly being picked up as just one part of an individual's overall remit.

With less time, resource or internal expertise to call on, there's clearly a demand for leasing companies to be more creative in how they support the needs of modern business fleet operators.

For LeasePlan this has meant taking a step back and, through in-depth customer research and analysis, we've looked at how we can do even more to put these changing needs at the very heart of everything we do. The result has been unprecedented levels of investment in our



"Our team is constantly working on a cycle of developments that will deliver"

To find out more visit: easiertoleaseplan.co.uk call:

people, ongoing customer research, new technology and innovation. We've also been reaching out to a wider range of contacts now involved in mobility management, using new digital channels.

The ongoing drive for greater efficiency

The drive for greater efficiency and reduced costs remains at the forefront for fleet operators and, while it comes as no surprise that technology has a major role to play, it does mean that the solutions provided need to continually adapt to the changing face of business mobility.

Telematics is a classic example of an underused technology. Despite the fact that it's proven to reduce costs through a drop in accident rates, lower insurance premiums, reduced fuel consumption and environmental impact, these benefits are only possible if the data collected is translated into genuine insight and made readily accessible to decision-makers wherever they might be.

In 2015, as a part of our Digital Transformation programme, LeasePlan UK undertook the biggest investment in

technology in its history. The resulting driver and fleet manager apps and portals, delivered as part of this initiative, empower drivers to manage their own vehicles and provide on-demand insight, on any device, to fleet decision-makers. Combined with an enhanced telematics solution, such as LeasePlan's UPTIME, you get a powerful set of tools delivering genuine efficiency gains.

Finding the best deal in a crowded marketplace

Customers now have near unlimited access to product and pricing information and are under increasing pressure to shop around to get the best possible value. The fact that they are often time poor means that trawling the market to find the best deal is not always an option.

This is particularly true when it comes to vehicle insurance. With the AA recently reporting that the average cost of car insurance has soared by more than £100 a year, something needs to change.

February 2016 will see a pilot vehicle insurance product being launched to selected customers in the UK. Developed in partnership with a long established and trusted partner, this will allow organisations to include insurance costs within the leasing package in much the same way that

maintenance costs are currently included.

This new approach will not only mean our customers save all the time involved in managing different suppliers and generating multiple quotes, but with an expert intermediary doing all the leg work, they're more likely to find the best deal.

More flexible mobility solutions

Over recent years, there's been increasing global interest in the concept of 'usage', with products being shared rather than owned, or leased for long periods of time.

This demand for greater flexibility has driven us to develop a range of new solutions, such as LeasePlan Flexible, which allows customers to rent specific vehicles, according to their precise specifications, for periods of just three months or more.

However, research also shows that an increasing number of customers need mobility solutions that deal with hours and days, rather than months and years.

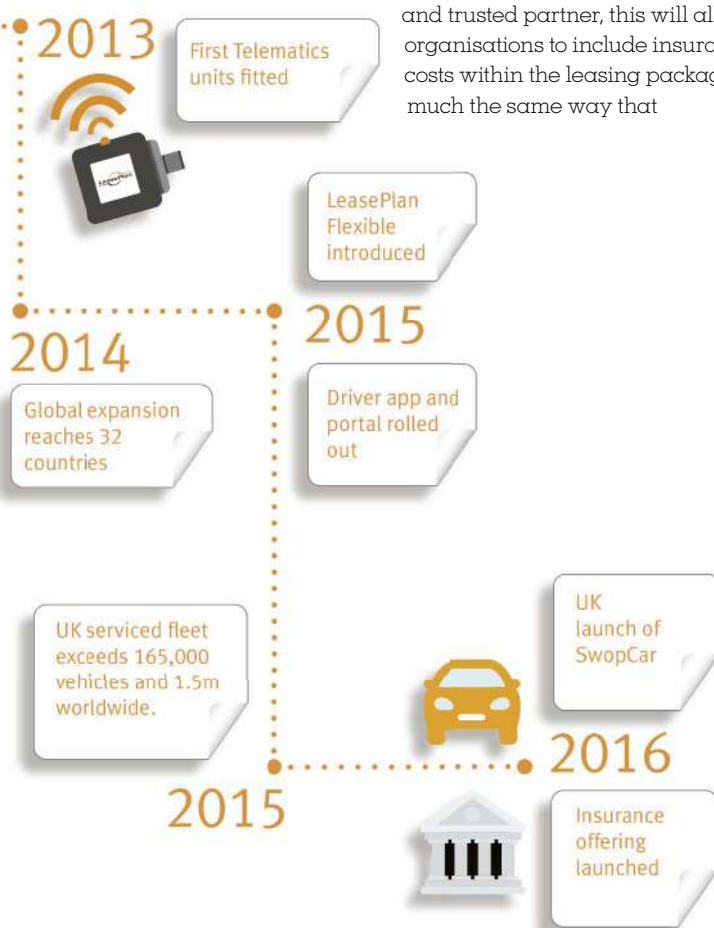
LeasePlan's SwopCar, due to launch in the UK this Spring, promotes the creation of a community of drivers within an organisation who use an online reservation system to access a vehicle for a specified period, based on their needs or desires.

The smart technology behind the scenes tracks each vehicle, monitoring its fuel level, maintenance and cleanliness, automatically booking and carrying out relevant services as and when they're required. From the fleet manager's perspective, usage data and other insights are played back, with costs allocated to specific departments or employees.

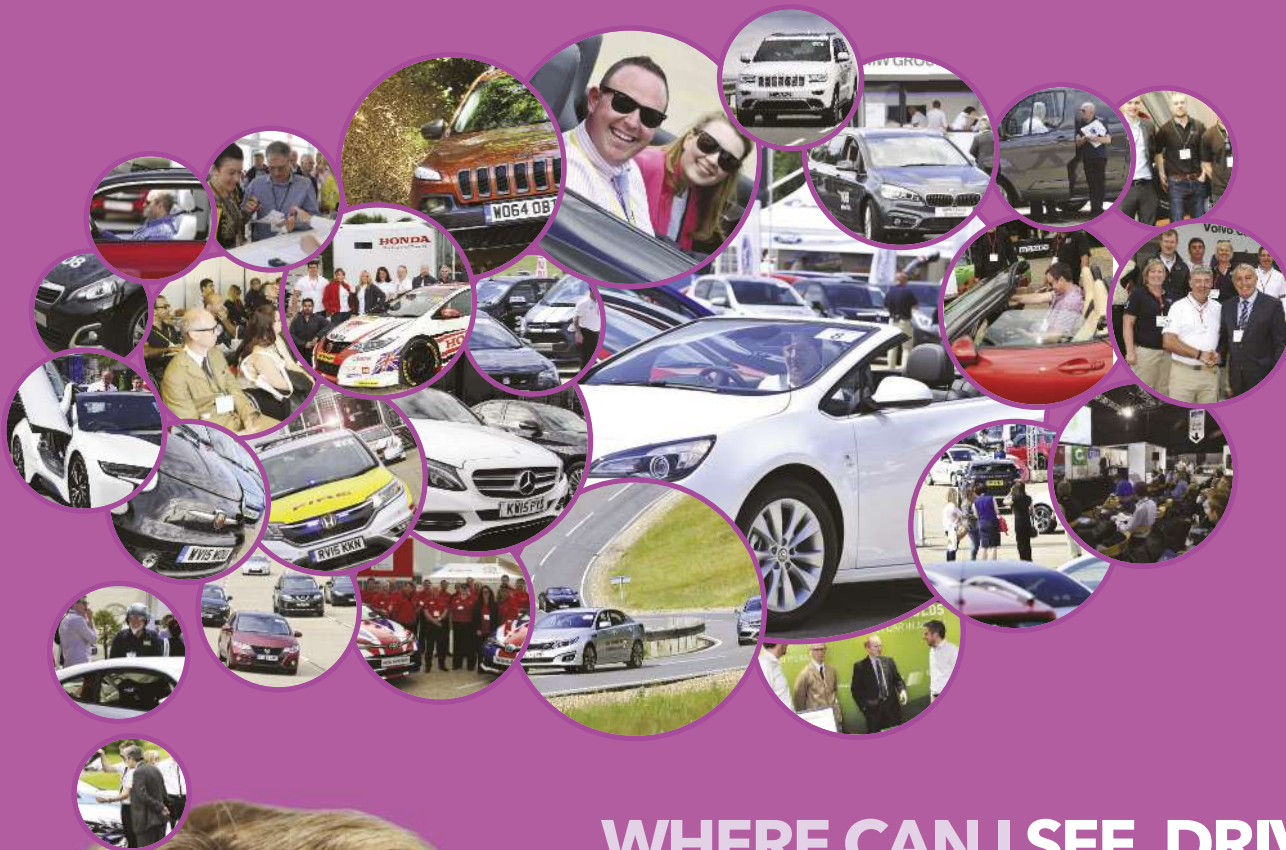
This new, more flexible approach to mobility offers a significant improvement in vehicle utilisation and, with it, a reduction in overall fleet costs. And as an additional upside, there's improved health and safety switching employees out of their own vehicles for business use – as well as environmental benefits and improvements in employee engagement.

While these new products and services go a long way to addressing the challenges facing our customers today, they're far from the end-game for LeasePlan's innovation aspirations. Our team is constantly working on a cycle of developments that will deliver new and enhanced products and services on a regular basis. Business is constantly evolving and, with the right people and continued investment, LeasePlan intends to stay at the forefront of mobility services.

11



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The *Fleet News* Fleets Informed programme is designed to deliver comprehensive advice and knowledge to fleet decision-makers. Here is an introduction into the eight Fleets Informed partners and their topics

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Driving a better business

AA DriveTech offers a complete driver education service for fleets that includes auditing, validation, assessment and training

By David Richards, head of marketing, AA DriveTech

Why act? Driving for work involves significant risk. This was confirmed by the Department for Transport's British Road Safety Statement, published in December 2015, which stated "around a third of road traffic collisions involve a person at work". Employees are in danger; employers need to act.

For employers, the challenges are managing:

■ **Fleet running costs:** minimise damage to vehicles to avoid hikes in insurance premiums and other on-costs.

■ **Safety of employees:** reduce impact on driver, either physically or psychologically.

■ **Compliance:** ensure duty of care and minimise your exposure under health and safety and corporate manslaughter legislation.

■ **Brand reputation:** maintain the reputation and brand.

Driver risk management programmes can ensure that you're both minimising risk and driving a better business; that's the essence of what AA DriveTech does.

Starting your journey

For over 25 years, AA DriveTech – the business driver education division within the AA – has been working with many organisations to reduce occupational road risk. As a result, we have refined a five step holistic approach to driver risk management called 'The Journey'. It comprises five key components: Audit, Validate, Assess, Train and Manage.

Audit

Firstly, we will take an in-depth look at the organisation's current policies, procedures and practices from a legal, financial and operational standpoint. This culminates in a detailed report highlighting areas of risk.



"With many years of experience in this area, we operate a speedy, highly cost-effective driver licence-checking service"

Validate

Driving licence validation is a crucial early step in effective driver risk management. With many years experience in this area, we operate a speedy, highly cost-effective driver licence-checking service, which can accommodate the needs of small, medium and large fleets alike.

Assess

It is a legal requirement to assess employees' exposure to risk in the workplace and driving is no exception. The most effective approach is to use an online driver risk assessment tool. This can be completed at any time that is convenient to the employee. The level of risk exposure identified will then suggest recommendations for appropriate remedial action to be taken.

Train

Whether it is online e-learning, interactive group workshops or traditional one-to-one personal coaching, we have some of the most experienced and highly qualified defensive driving trainers in the UK. We can also provide specialist training for foreign drivers, minibuss drivers, LGV and PCV drivers as well as 4x4 off-road drivers.

Manage

Driver risk management should be viewed as an ongoing, evolving process but the only way to ensure you have control is to ensure that you have relevant, accurate data and information at your fingertips. This can now be achieved, thanks to our FleetRiskManager portal, an online management tool which gives a real-time picture of assessment results, training outcomes, licence status, vehicle service records and driver-declared information.

Key benefits

Many hundreds of organisations have benefitted from this holistic approach and achieved both compliance and real business advantage. We pride ourselves in delivering driver risk management programmes that make a difference.

For more information, email tellmemore@AAdrivetech.com, call 01256 495732 or visit AAdrivetech.com



Who owns driver & vehicle data?

New campaign group calls for authorities to heed concerns over privacy on telematics information and produce legislation

By Rhys Harrhy, telematics product manager and future mobility solutions expert, ALD

It seems like only yesterday that ALD launched its first in-vehicle telematics solution and yet, over the past 12 years, the industry has seen a seismic shift.

Initially greeted with concern over the costs involved as well as drivers' own 'big-brother' suspicions, telematics technology has become an integral part of the fleet management industry, enabling fleets to cut operating costs, enhance CSR credentials, reduce risk and improve business efficiency.

Meanwhile, drivers have also overcome their privacy concerns and embraced benefits including reduced fuel bills and simple expense reporting, helped by developments such as ProFleet2's driver consent controls.

But it's now, as we fully enter the era of the connected car, that the benefits are really becoming apparent. According to a study published by management consultancy Oliver Wyman, as many as 80% of all vehicles sold worldwide will be 'connected' in 2016 and the latest research from over 500 of our customers' company car drivers has already shown a huge appetite for such technology.

Over one third of respondents saw the main benefits as being traffic updates, dynamic route guidance and accident alerts, with message narration, local amenities reporting and vehicle service reminders/booking facility seen as other primary benefits.

But while connected cars represent huge opportunities for the automotive industry, they also bring huge challenges, including cyber security – the past year has brought several instances of security experts deliberately hacking into vehicles to expose vulnerabilities and force the car industry to take action.

Dominating the headlines of late though has been the issue of how data on driver



"90% of respondents, in 12 EU countries, said vehicle data belongs to the owner or driver"

and vehicles is being collected and who owns it, as highlighted by the My Car, My Data campaign launched by global automotive body FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile).

The campaign follows a public survey that found 90% of respondents, covering 12 European countries, said that vehicle data belongs to the owner or driver of the vehicle.

The biggest concerns were over the disclosure of private information (88%), commercial use of personal data (86%), as well as vehicle hacking and unauthorised vehicle tracking. In fact, 95% of people surveyed believed that there was a need for specific legislation to protect their rights to their vehicle and driver data.

In response, My Car, My Data is looking to raise public awareness on the issue

and to call for privacy legislation and a fair after-market for connected vehicle services.

Already, manufacturers in Europe have taken action, with umbrella organisation ACEA setting out five principles of data protection for the industry to adhere to.

The BVRLA has also called for action, including fair and lawful processing of data in advance of the introduction of new EU data protection laws, due out this year.

As a key player in the telematics industry and a strong advocate of driver privacy, we believe there is an urgent need for action to be taken.

Putting vehicle owners and drivers in charge of their data will help reinforce confidence in a technology that will revolutionise the fleet industry and the car market in general.

For more information call 037000 111 81,
email rhys.harrhy@aldautomotive.com
or visit profleet2.com



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By Barry Watts, group operations director, Aston Barclay

Aston Barclay is the leading independent supplier of auction and remarketing services in the UK. We operate from four strategically placed centres in Essex, Shropshire, Wiltshire and Yorkshire, as well as via our online channels.

We recognise the need to combine traditional auction services with modern remarketing techniques, providing a flexible, personal approach. We are continuously investing heavily in personnel, facilities and IT to provide customers a range of complementary services and additional routes to market. We sell vehicles for a variety of fleets, including the majority of those in the FN50 top 10.

What we do

Aston Barclay provides leading methods of vehicle disposal to the right buyers at the right place and price, allowing optimum returns for sellers. We provide full vehicle de-fleet services, on-site and remotely, using industry-leading practices and grading, giving buyers and sellers peace of mind, while ensuring vehicles are in optimum condition. This includes end-of-contract inspections, repair, refurbish-

ment, tailored grading, reconditioning, document handling and sale preparation.

All centres offer national door-to-door collection and delivery, necessitating cost-effective transport solutions. Our new transporters use state-of-the-art telematics, ensuring complete visibility of vehicles in transit, also helping to improve our environmental impact, reduce fuel costs and enhance overall efficiency. We also provide movement of vehicles without an MOT, transportation of non-running vehicles and inspection on collection, helping to provide a full end-to-end service.

Our cloud-based Inventory Management System allows buyers and sellers to control and monitor activities in a fully bespoke and transparent way, providing detailed, real-time reports. Trade buyers can also utilise our LIVE online service, allowing them to bid on physical sales in real-time, if unable to attend an auction.

Industry-leading expertise

Aston Barclay has significantly invested in all four centres to provide a state-of-the-art environment for buyers and sellers, with our main Chelmsford site recently

refurbished alongside our Prees Heath and Westbury centres. Group investment in our national network is due to be finalised in Leeds later this year.

Our senior management team have more than 25 years' experience in the industry. Aston Barclay is headed by Glenn and David Scarborough, both of which have extensive knowledge of fleet and remarketing. Group operations are headed by Barry Watts, bringing over 20 years of experience to his role, while we also boast 40 years of auction experience with remarketing directors Lisa Grimsley and Martin Potter, based in Yorkshire and Essex respectively.

We realise people are at the heart of any business and constantly work to ensure our staff work efficiently and to the highest standards. We also recognise the importance of bringing new talent into our industry by significantly investing in apprenticeship programmes.

Our approach, combining vastly experienced experts with state-of-the-art facilities and leading online platforms, allows us to provide wide-ranging, industry-leading support to our fleet customers.

"Aston Barclay provides leading methods of vehicle disposal to the right buyers at the right place and price, allowing optimum returns for sellers"

Aston Barclay Plc, Barry Watts, group operations director
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Outsourcing can be good for you

Fleet Operations has been at the forefront of bespoke fleet solutions for 15 years and is motivated by individual client needs

By Ross Jackson, CEO, Fleet Operations

Underpinned by record growth in 2015, Fleet Operations is now firmly established as the UK's leading independent outsourced fleet services provider. For 15 years we have been at the forefront of fleet outsourcing best practice providing bespoke solutions to a growing number of UK and international businesses.

How are we different?

- We deliver cost and time efficiencies. We understand the entire fleet landscape – the market and how it works, the manufacturers, the leasing companies – and our expertise covers every fiscal, operational, health and safety, procurement and HR factor associated with the complexities of fleet management. In addition:

- We operate a transparent fee-based model, resulting in an unique solution that provides a guarantee of absolute integrity.
- We have a considered and consultative approach to everything that we do, providing pragmatic, commercially balanced recommendations.
- We're a business that delivers on our promises.

And as we represent our clients' businesses, we operate in a manner that they would expect from their best people.

Why outsource?

Businesses outsource to Fleet Operations for a variety of reasons including:

- Cost efficiency and simplicity
- Improved service, expertise, focus & systems
- Removal of non-core business area
- Independence & transparency
- Supply chain management

Organisations working with Fleet Operations achieve transformational cost, time and administration benefits, enabling them to focus on strategy and drive real change through their businesses.



"Outsourcing to Fleet Operations gives you the ability to select the best fit suppliers covering every aspect of your corporate fleet requirements"

OUTSOURCING: WHAT REALLY MATTERS?

Fleet policy management

At Fleet Operations we focus solely on the provision of fleet management and outsourcing services, allowing our team to ensure that you achieve 100% policy compliance. The company car is as important as ever in the battle to attract and retain high quality staff. Using benchmarking and supplier negotiation, we help our clients ensure that choice lists are both attractive and fit for purpose.

Appointing and managing suppliers

Outsourcing to Fleet Operations gives you the ability to select the best-fit suppliers covering every aspect of your corporate fleet requirement. In addition:

- We manage a wide range of tender processes to secure the most attractive terms from the UK's leading fleet suppliers.
- We significantly reduce time and resource associated with appointing new suppliers.
- Our extensive fleet management expertise protects clients from contractual

pitfalls that often have negative impacts on the supplier/client relationship

Satisfying your clients

A replacement vehicle is OK in theory, but only if it allows your employee to carry out the full extent of their duties.

- We understand the important and often vital role that fleet plays in delivering the product/services of our clients.

- We impartially evaluate price versus operational efficiency and make recommendations that are solely in our clients' best interests.

Cost efficiency and control

Consistency of lease costs is an issue for all businesses. Most fleet outsourcing contracts tend to be with a sole leasing company supplier whose ability to deliver consistently competitive rates has to be taken on trust.

- Multi-bid leasing achieves a competitive price on every vehicle, every time, typically saving 4-10% over sole supply.

- Why use sole supply, when you can choose from a panel of leading providers?

Fleet Operations Limited, Fleet House, Maries Way, Silverdale Business Park, Newcastle, Staffordshire, ST5 6PA

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fleetoperations.co.uk

FLEET OPERATIONS
consult • manage • deliver

Effectively manage your fleet

Jaama's Key2 is a totally integrated fleet management solution

By Martin Evans, managing director, Jaama

Regulatory compliance is essential for all fleets but the right solutions need to be in place to efficiently and effectively manage company and 'grey fleet' vehicles and drivers.

Jaama is the UK's leading provider of fleet and asset management software and driver risk management services – and an ever-growing number of public and private sector organisations are turning to Jaama to provide world class internet-based fleet management solutions to help control and maintain their vehicles and meet their driver health and safety responsibilities under occupational road safety regulations.

Jaama's market leading, multi-award winning Key2 software is a totally integrated vehicle, asset and driver management solution proven to help drive down operational costs, ensure legislative compliance, reduce risk and significantly improve operating efficiencies.

Key2 is fully scalable and is used by a complete spectrum of companies, from those with a handful of vehicles through to those with thousands of vehicles, assets and drivers.

From a compliance perspective, Key2 comprehensively covers vehicle, driver and journey management.

Key2 vehicle management

Core functionality includes intelligent event management and proactive notification and exception management so vehicles never miss scheduled maintenance or compliance related events, thus ensuring maximum compliance.

Information, including defect and vehicle inspection reports, can be used to shape vehicle defleet strategies which potentially delivers savings as fleets can

dispose of vehicles prior to an imminent costly maintenance event, meeting compliance obligations and using information to tightly manage expenditure.

Key2 Risk Profile

This area provides the flexibility to configure driver risk definitions, which can be weighted by factors such as driver age, length licence has been held, road traffic accidents (cost, frequency, blameworthiness etc.) and business miles per annum.

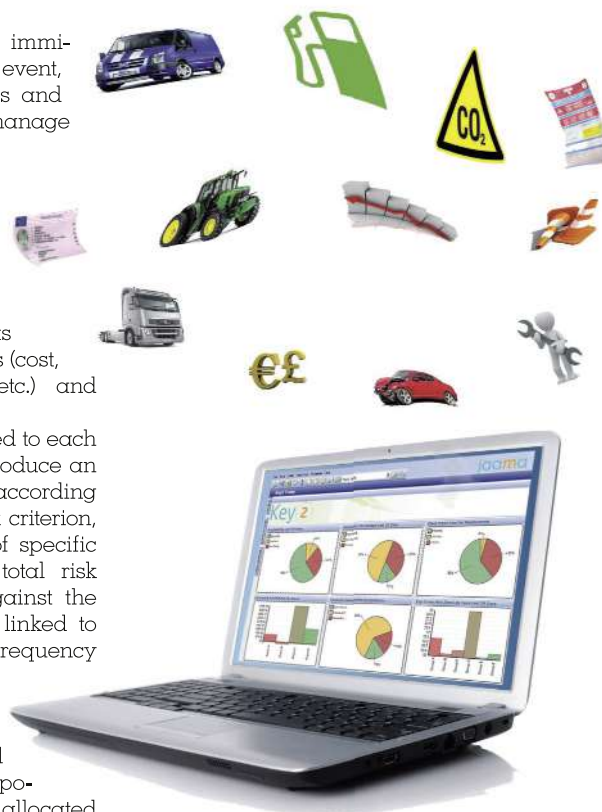
The weighting points associated to each area can be accumulated to produce an individual total risk profile score according to an individual company's risk criterion, enabling the implementation of specific actions to reduce a driver's total risk profile. The score is stored against the driver record and intelligently linked to an associated licence checking frequency dependant on risk.

Key2 produces a consolidated view of not only driving history, including accidents and endorsements, but also incorporates data from the driver's allocated vehicle in terms of mpg and maintenance costs against budget to provide essential meaningful information that will identify where action needs to be taken.

Driver licence checking

Jaama is an active member of the Association for Driving Licence Verification (ADLV), established to promote and encourage best practice when driver licence checking.

Jaama's 'real time' online licence checking service (Access to Driver Data, formally known as EDECS) seamlessly and securely links direct to the DVLA's database to validate individual driving licences.



Functionality also includes eConsent, enabling an efficient and secure online driver licence checking authorisation. The comprehensive licence checking service ensures all driver and vehicle data is held in one central database, building an intelligent profile and highlighting exceptions.

ESOS reporting

The Government's Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme requires companies to report on consumption data, including all company vehicles as well as privately-owned vehicles driven for work. Key2 is an essential tool for efficiently processing fuel and mileage data and compiling reports to show CO2 emissions and energy consumption for individual or groups of vehicles or the entire fleet for any specific period. Key2 differentiates between work and private journeys.

"Key2 is proven to drive down costs, ensure compliance, reduce risk and improve efficiencies"

For further information: web: jaama.com
email: enquiries@jaama.co.uk telephone: 0844 8484 333



We understand our customers' needs

NWS provides a full and comprehensive vehicle glazing service

By Stuart Sole, managing director, NWS

Nationwide Windscreen Services (NWS) was established in 2006 by the current directors with belief, passion and a can-do attitude. This has seen NWS grow significantly, year-on-year.

NWS centres are located throughout the UK; all are equipped to carry out repair and replacements in the centre or mobile. All carry their own glass stocks, and each centre is supported by our approved supply partners.

Understanding of customer requirements, our bespoke system design and outstanding service delivery have earned NWS an unrivalled reputation throughout the industry. Market awareness of the NWS brand has improved dramatically, with increasing relationships in the major fleet and insurance sectors.

Objectives

Our strategy revolves around our desire to provide informed exceptional service to fully satisfy the needs of all customers. We strive to provide accuracy, relevance and specific information.

Our customers range from the major corporate to the small and medium-sized business. As we continue to grow, it is important this is achieved without compromising service delivery, by communicating with our customers and suppliers to ensure relevant market knowledge for today and future planning. We will continue to build our management and technical teams and have the right people in the right place at the right time to ensure controlled and sustainable growth.

Innovation

NWS has technology at the very cornerstone of our business thinking. Our technicians are the best in the industry, capable at evaluating any technical risks before working on customer vehicles.

In 2016 we are rolling out a competency-based re-evaluation process to ensure

"Our strategy revolves around our desire to provide informed exceptional service to satisfy customer needs"

technicians are skilled to the expected high level to work on the current UK vehicle car parc.

NWS will continue to grow its locations throughout the UK. The complexities involved in current and future automotive glazing means this approach will allow NWS to offer both mobile and workshop options for replacements and repairs, allowing work to be undertaken competently and safely.

Workshops and ADAS recalibration centres

Windscreens are no longer just a piece of glass protecting occupants from the elements and providing structural support for the vehicle. Safety systems continue to be developed with driver aids to avoid collisions. Advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) manage cruise control, automotive braking, adaptive lighting, GPS, smartphone, lane departure cameras and collision avoidance system.

Technology continues to influence vehicle design at increasing pace with more advanced systems being introduced onto new vehicles.

NWS were first to install ADAS recalibration systems and already have 10 fully equipped centres with a further 20 more planned during 2016. We continue to invest in future technology within the automotive glazing industry, ensuring that our customers continue to receive the market leading product now and in the future.

Our success is a symbol of our passion to deliver products and services the customers need.

NWS lead the way in providing a full and comprehensive automotive glazing solution in the UK.



NWS sales and marketing team
Tel: 01509 410752
Email: admin@natwin.co.uk



A reliable video and tracking solution

VisionTrack's latest in-vehicle camera technology can help to fight against fraudulent claims and improve driver behaviour

By Simon Marsh, managing director, VisionTrack

VisionTrack is a leading supplier of in-vehicle camera technology, offering fleets the most advanced, innovative, reliable and cost-effective solutions on the market. Our technology helps protect drivers and businesses, while improving driving standards by transmitting vital, real-time event footage, along with a vehicle's location and speed. This information gives fleet managers an insight into each employee's driving style, allowing them to engage effectively with the driver and improve driving habits and behaviour.

With 180,000 reported casualties on the road in Great Britain from June 2014 to 2015 alone*, the need for a robust and scalable vehicle camera and tracking solution is clear. 3G cameras are not new, but because of the size of the video files, which can be as large as 12,000kB for a ten-second clip, transmitting and storing footage has up to now been cost prohibitive for mass deployment.

Our flagship VT2000 3G, full 1080p model is an industry leader, with a high-quality, super-wide angle lens that delivers real-time HD video before, during and after an incident. The camera uses both GPS and GLONASS for highly accurate positioning and has a built-in world-class 3G module for instant remote cloud upload. It easily streams footage using advanced technology that reduces the amount of data needed to send video, meaning a ten-second clip can be transferred in under 350kB.

Fleet managers therefore benefit from increased volumes of driving footage, not only aiding proactive driver monitoring and training programmes but also giving faster access to vital video and telemetry data in the event of an incident.



"The VT2000 3G is an industry leader, with a high-quality lens that delivers real-time HD video"

Where an incident occurs, fleet managers receive first notification of loss (FNOL) through our camera with a ten-second clip at 350kB and we have seen the video become available on our platform in as little as five seconds.

Furthermore, the camera will stay live for five minutes, even with the ignition off, in order to protect against claims from 'ghost passengers'.

If needed, this can be remotely streamed back to our platform.

This enables quick access and helps protect against exaggerated and fraudulent claims.

Alongside its recording and transmission capabilities, the VT2000 platform gener-

ates reports on vehicle location, speed, impact force and driving style, allowing fleet managers to monitor drivers at all times.

Drivers can be additionally supported through real-time audible notifications, warning of speeding and erratic behaviours, allowing them to alter performance and encouraging safer driving.

At VisionTrack, we are constantly re-investing in research and development to provide a sustainable vehicle camera and tracking solution.

We truly are at the forefront of our industry and are in a strong position to meet this need, effectively combining both elements to provide invaluable insight into fleet operations and enable total visibility of activities and driving standards.

*Data source: Department for Transport's road casualty report, released November 2015.

For more information, call 0800-051-9396
or email info@visiontrack.com

VISIONTRACK.com

A variety of funding solutions

Whatever your fleet's situation or size, Zenith can offer a wide range of management, leasing and outsourcing services



BMW 3 Series Gran Turismo

By Ian Hughes, commercial director, Zenith

Zenith knows all about funding, whether it's for company cars, commercial vehicles or flexible benefits schemes. We offer a wide range of solutions to meet the demands of every business including contract hire, contract purchase, employee car ownership, sale and leaseback and salary sacrifice car schemes.

Zenith is the UK's largest independent leasing, fleet management and vehicle outsourcing businesses. Our customer base includes many household brands and some of the biggest organisations in the country. As well as expert funding advice, we also offer fully outsourced fleet management services including commercial vehicle management, accident management, breakdown and recovery, daily rental, real-time reporting and more.

Changing environment

We understand that the environment is constantly changing and that the ideal funding method for fleets is changing with it. We have carried out extensive

"We understand that the environment is constantly changing and that the ideal funding method for fleets is changing with it"

funding analysis for a diverse range of fleets and are keen to share our insight through this programme. Insight such as how switching from a single to a blended funding method could save your business up to 10% of its fleet costs.

While there are still many fleets on single funding methods, we are seeing an increase in businesses choosing to take a blended approach. We will look at the ways fleets are adapting funding methods to keep up with the changing environment.

Innovative funding tools

We get results for our customers by carrying out real-time online calculations on a whole life cost basis across different funding methods. We include many variables in our calculations such as purchase price, depreciation rates (including NI), fuel, maintenance, repair costs, disposal costs and more. This industry-first whole life cost analysis software means that we can provide a detailed and bespoke

analysis of our customers' fleets in seconds. This allows them to set accurate budgets and establish attractive yet cost-effective vehicle choice lists.

New legislation

Funding is in the spotlight this year after the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) published a final standard, IFRS16, which changes the way leases are reported in company accounts. This will impact on operating leases such as contract hire.

We know that there is no typical fleet and through this programme we will help you to find the best solution for your business by giving you the advice you need to save money, reduce administration and allow for wider economic tax and legislation changes.

We will bring our advice to life using case study examples to illustrate how our innovative approach to funding has led to cost-effective results for our customers.

For more information about Zenith go to zenith.co.uk, email fleet@zenith.co.uk or call 0344 848 9327.

FleetNews



Sponsored by



Zenith's focus on customer service makes it a deserved winner of the *Fleet News* award.

The team at Zenith clearly recognise that great customer service is key to long-term success and that the service provided is the crucial part of the relationship fleets value with their suppliers. A great product can be overshadowed because of poor or inadequate customer service, while the right support can transform a relationship. Many congratulations to Zenith on their win.

ZENITH

'Being two brands caused confusion'

A multi-million pound investment in its digital strategy will help Zenith maintain its customer focus under a new single brand identity, say Tim Buchan and Ian Hughes

By Gareth Roberts

Customer confusion and a desire to digitally transform the business were behind Zenith Leasedrive Group's decision to rebrand as Zenith. The independent leasing and fleet management company had been trading as two separate brands, Zenith and Leasedrive, since HG Capital acquired both businesses in 2014.

It was quick to merge back office functions to drive efficiencies, moving all non-customer facing roles, such as accounts and vehicle disposal, to its Leeds office. However, the customer service and account management teams remained unchanged and continued to run under the two brands.

Any customer re-tendering was handled by the incumbent brand, while Zenith's new consultancy team decided on the most appropriate business to go for new tender opportunities.

But, as Zenith's chief executive officer, Tim Buchan, explains: "Transacting as two brands was causing confusion and working against our desire to have a fully-integrated framework."

"The decision to become one company, with one brand, delivers a material benefit for us as a business, as well as building confidence in our future strategy with our customers."

Customer satisfaction has always been central to the success of Zenith and Leasedrive, with both putting great emphasis on their ability to react quickly to fleet needs.

It saw Zenith win the customer service award at last year's *Fleet News* Awards – a year after Leasedrive achieved success in the same category.

And, according to Buchan, that same customer-centric approach will take centre stage as the newly merged business embarks on a digital transformation.

It has recognised that consistency in its approach to customers will be key and has developed a service platform called Accelerate, which will interrogate every single transaction that comes into the business.

"It's been very important for us to understand, when we have three offices, how to approach our customers in a consistent way," says Buchan. "Accelerate allows us to do this."

Fleet News: How is technology helping you engage with employees?

Tim Buchan: We recognise in today's service model the individual person that delivers that service makes all of the difference.

The job of our service teams has changed significantly and a lot of the process we do within the company, which is handled by Accelerate, shows us the job today isn't so much about managing the asset, it's more around managing the policy and the employees of our corporate customers.

In order to deliver that, and to communicate that to our employees, we've now got a new web platform for our intranet which brings the company together.

FN: Does the new platform help reinforce that new single identity?

TB: Yes, it absolutely does and it reinforces the fact that this is a company that's reinvesting heavily in its sector.

We need employees residing in here all the time, because that's the way they learn about what's happening to our company, what's changing and what's in the news.

FN: As well as your new intranet and processing plat-

"We wish to be judged on the value of what we're delivering in technology and in our new platforms, rather than the name above the door"

Tim Buchan, Zenith

Ian Hughes (holding trophy) with the Zenith team





Tim Buchan, chief executive officer, Zenith (left), is presented with the award by Patrick McGillicuddy, then head of fleet, Škoda UK (now VW Group head of fleet services)

form, you've also launched a new website as part of your digital strategy. How important was the rebrand to their success?

TB: The digital transformation we're going through is very difficult under multiple brands. You need to have one single destination brand and everything follows off the back of that. We chose the Zenith brand, which was a larger brand than the Leasedrive brand, not in terms of its performance – both companies were high performing companies – but in terms of the destination brand. Zenith was the stronger.

FN: How will you manage the loss of the Leasedrive brand when it is so familiar to fleets, especially within the public sector?

TB: We have explained to our customers that we've invested heavily and we wish to be judged on the value of what we're delivering in technology and our new platforms, rather than the name above the door.

Ian Hughes: In fact, customers have been more interested in seeking clarity around our strategic direction. We have done a number of surveys and we have conducted a number of interviews with them directly to ensure they are part of this journey. That's where our customer-centric strategy was born; they've always been the major consideration in everything we've done.

FN: Your three offices in Leeds, Solihull and Birmingham will provide a regional service offering, why is that important?

TB: The most important thing is to make sure that, as an organisation, you have no barriers to [customers] dealing with you and sometimes geographic location can be a barrier. It shouldn't be, in today's world, but it can be.

FN: Will each office have a particular focus outside of that regional offering?

TB: The centre of excellence for LCVs is in Leeds; the centre of excellence for white labels is in Solihull; and the centre of

excellence for rental is in Crowthorne. But all three sites are centres of excellence for customer services on the core competencies of contract hire, salary sacrifice and fleet management.

Rather than spending time changing the structure of our offices, we've invested all of our time in launching new digital platforms to retool people, to add more value. That's where the value is coming to the customer in terms of this integration; the ability as a combined company to invest more in technology.

FN: How much have you invested in your digital strategy to help drive your new branding?

TB: It's a multi-million pound investment that will also include moving all of our services into the cloud which will be what is required to service all of our driver population in the future.

Zenith is also developing a European data portal, which is currently being piloted by one of its customers. It will allow a fleet manager to look at all of their vehicles, irrespective of location and agnostic of supplier. And, to enable it to support its pan-European customers, Zenith has developed a network of suppliers with a similar ethos that covers 11 European countries.

Buchan says: "We believe that we are a true contender to providing a pan-European solution through best-in-class independence in each market."

At the same time, it is also developing a new digital platform called the Total Mobility Gateway to ensure it has the size and scale for future transactions.

Buchan continues: "Our strategy is to look towards 2020 and ensure Zenith remains relevant for company car, salary sacrifice and any other services that may be appropriate. We've completed the integration, we've made all of the structural changes to the teams within our organisation and we've introduced a platform to bring all our employees together."

FACTFILE

Organisation Zenith (formerly Zenith Leasedrive Group)

Chief executive officer Tim Buchan

Commercial director Ian Hughes

Risk fleet 54,248 (45,405 cars and 8,843 vans)

Under management Circa 90,000 vehicles

Judges' comments

"Zenith's customer service has remained outstanding, especially during the uncertainty caused by the merger with Leasedrive – a perfect example of how to integrate two large organisations. It has excellent two-way communication with fleets, while its quality staff are fully engaged with the business, which is reflected in high levels of customer satisfaction."

FleetNews

AWARDS
2016

As the UK's largest breakdown provider, the AA attends more than 3.5 million breakdowns per year – equivalent to one every nine seconds. A third of these breakdown calls are made by fleet and business drivers.

A full range of services for fleets

The AA's award-winning services are designed to help keep vehicles on the road and to assist with driver safety.

AA Business breakdown cover

- Roadside assistance
- Relay (National Recovery)
- Relay Plus (Onward Travel)
- Specialist vehicle and minibus rescue cover
- Fleet Europe
- Breakdown Repair cover
- Pay for Use breakdown assistance
- Truck and commercial breakdown

Driver Assist services

- 60 specially equipped mobile Fuel Assist technicians
- 97% of all vehicle misfuel faults rectified by Fuel Assist technicians at the roadside (June 14 – July 15)
- Dedicated Battery Assist patrols offer further support for customers
- 40 different batteries available
- Fleet of dedicated, fully equipped Key Assist vans, plus a 60 strong fully audited partner network

Accident management

Risk management (via AA DriveTech)

SPONSOR PROFILE



The AA: investing

AA patrol vans
carry nearly
1,800 parts



Throughout its 110-year history, The AA has been at the forefront of motoring innovation, consistently striving for excellence through investment in technology, systems and people. Most recently, the introduction of Bosch diagnostics to the patrol fleet has led to significant improvements in fault diagnosis and roadside fix rates. Further investment over the next 24 months will see huge advances in digital connectivity and management information capability for the AA's unique deployment system, AA Help. The icing on the cake for business and fleet drivers this year will be the introduction of access to the AA Breakdown App, allowing drivers to report a breakdown and track the progress of the attending patrol, all on their own smartphone and in real time.

“Drivers will be able to report a breakdown and track the progress of the attending patrol”

The right tools for the job

AA patrol vans carry nearly 1,800 parts, tools and consumables to help get drivers on their way. These include onboard electric trailers that fold out from under the tailgate, affording towing functionality to regular patrols and preventing the need for deployment of a secondary resource. This year, the AA will also roll out its ground-breaking multi-fit spare wheel to cater for the growing number of vehicles sold without a spare tyre or space-saver.

Award-winning services for fleets

The AA's award winning business breakdown cover is available to businesses of all sizes and their commitment to customer service was rewarded in 2014 with the accolade of Britain's most trusted brand. In March 2015, The AA was named fleet supplier of the year in the *Fleet News* Awards and, later the same year, the organisation celebrated its 10th consecutive year as a Which? recommended provider.

A recent clean sweep at the Business Car Awards 2016 (with wins in the Service Supplier, Vehicle Recovery, Accident Management and Risk Management categories) is further testament to The AA's commitment to fleet.

For more information please call 0800 55 11 88, visit

y in breakdown innovation



The AA: an award-winning service for fleets of all sizes

Focus on... the AA Breakdown App

The AA's consumer breakdown app has gone from strength to strength since its launch in 2010. With over one million



downloads and more than 50,000 customers engaging with the app every week, more than one in 10 personal membership breakdowns are now reported via smartphone.

In 2016, fleet customers and drivers will be able to benefit from new key features. Primary amongst these is the ability to report a breakdown using a smartphone, without the need to make a call. GPS tracking pinpoints the vehicle location accurately and the progress of the attending vehicle can be tracked in real time.

Further useful functionality includes The AA's renowned route planner, a parking space locator, fuel price checker and traffic updates.

The AA has also compiled details of more than 1,000 dashboard warning lights, enabling drivers in an unfamiliar vehicle to get quick access to guidance if a warning light comes on unexpectedly.

Max Holdstock, AA patrol of the year, says: "The AA app is a quicker and smarter way for drivers to check what their warning lights mean.

"Although most warning light symbols are standardised, many are not, and with some car dashboards resembling the Starship Enterprise, it's no wonder that some drivers are left bewildered. If it's a new vehicle or a pool car, it's often that they're not familiar with a warning light."

The AA expects rollout of the app to fleet customers by the end of the year.

KIA SPORTAGE

Comfort, refinement and agility – but AEB is only on top spec version 4

NEED TO KNOW

- New look with more upmarket feel
- Revised engine choices and better fuel efficiency
- GT Line grade expected to appeal to user-choosers

By Simon Harris

The last generation Sportage was the car that broke down barriers for Kia in the fleet market. Although earlier Kias had been able to carve out niches as low-cost workhorse estates, job-need hatchbacks or compact pool cars, the Sportage had genuine appeal for user-choosers.

Launched in 2010, it was the first Kia to have realised the vision of Peter Schreyer, the company's then chief designer, with the so-called 'tiger nose' grille, swept-back headlamps and elegant proportions.

Schreyer, who had the original Audi TT and other models at the premium brand on his CV, thereafter gave models in the Kia range more of a personality. The Sportage, in particular, seemed to have the right ingredients to win over fleet drivers, as well as making the, at the time, market-leading Qashqai look a little frumpy.

Schreyer has since been promoted, overseeing design at Kia's sister brand Hyundai and taking on a role as one of the company's three presidents.

The Sportage was popular among retail and fleet buyers although, with more recent crossovers offering lower CO₂ emissions (the outgoing Sportage was never able to sink below 130g/km), its star had begun to wane.

The new Sportage, on sale this month, tackles that issue, and brings with it greater comfort, a more upmarket interior and a broader choice of engines.

The fleet-favourite 1.7-litre CRDi diesel remains, with 115hp as before, but with CO₂ emissions now at a class-competitive 119g/km, down from 135g/km. Kia is also offering a 136hp 2.0-litre diesel with four-wheel drive as standard, as well as a range-topping 185hp version.

A new turbocharged 1.6-litre petrol engine is also offered, in front-wheel drive only. The 2.0-litre diesel has a six-speed auto option, while the petrol engine comes

119g/km

CO₂ emissions
on 1.7-litre diesel
version

23%

BIK tax band

"Sharper steering responses are due in part to a motor fixed to the steering rack"

with a seven-speed dual-clutch auto as an alternative to the standard six-speed manual.

Key features fitted as standard across the range include alloy wheels, LED daytime running lights, digital radio with Bluetooth and USB/aux connectors, as well as two 12V power sockets, trailer stability assist, hill-start assist and downhill brake control – the last four of which are designed to help with towing.

Stepping up from entry-level to variant 2 means upgrading to larger alloys (17-inches), a seven-inch touchscreen, rear parking sensors and dual-zone automatic climate control.

The new GT Line variant is between 2 and 3 in the line-up and comes with exclusive design 19-inch alloys, LED rear combination lamps, front parking sensors, heated front



For full running costs,
visit [fleetnews.co.uk/
running-costs](http://fleetnews.co.uk/running-costs)



Stiffer bodyshell improves stability



Digital radio and Bluetooth as standard



and outer rear seats and a 4.2-inch TFT instrument cluster. There are also interior and exterior styling elements unique to GT Line models.

Four-wheel drive variants are identified by the KX prefix on the equipment grade, and are offered on all but the 1.7-litre CDRi variants.

A stiffer body shell and a number of new specifications for suspension and steering systems make the Sportage feel more connected with the driver and the road, improving stability and responsiveness.

The sharper steering responses are due in part to a motor fixed to the steering rack, rather than on the steering column. Kia likens it to trying to steer a blindfolded person: directing them by the waist rather than by the shoulders allows them to follow a more precise path.

Ultimately, as with all the best crossovers, there's a decent balance of comfort, refinement and agility with the Sportage, and a noticeable improvement over its predecessor.

There are new safety systems offered on the Sportage, although, sadly, key examples are only available on the range-topping 4 and KX-4 variants.

All models from grade 2 and KX-2 have Lane Keep Assist, to alert a tired driver who may be about to stray into the path of an approaching vehicle; high beam assist, to switch between full and dipped beam automatically when there are other vehicles in the vicinity; and a speed limit information function within the instrument cluster.

But only 4 and KX-4 versions are fitted with autonomous emergency braking, blind spot detection, and rear cross traffic alert to warn a driver who is about to reverse out of a parking bay that there is a vehicle approaching.

Given that we know some big fleets are saving money from autonomous emergency braking on their company cars, it's a shame Kia doesn't offer this as an option lower down the range.

COSTS

P11D price	£24,695
BIK tax band	21%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£1,037
Class 1A NIC	£716
Annual VED	£0 then £30
RV (4yr/80k)	£8,750/35%
Fuel cost (ppm)	7.48
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (4yr/80k)	32.21ppm

SPEC

Power (hp)/torque (lb-ft)	115/207
CO₂ emissions (g/km)	119
Top speed (mph)	109
0-62mph (sec)	11.1
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	61.4

KEY RIVAL

Nissan Qashqai 1.5 Tekna
P11D price: £25,775
BIK tax band 18%
Annual BIK tax (20%) £928
Class 1A NIC £640
Annual VED £0 then £20
RV (4yr/80k) £7,100/28%
Fuel cost (ppm) 6.05
AFR (ppm) 9
Running cost (4yr/80k) 33.76ppm

Running cost data supplied by KeeResources (4yr/80k)

THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

cap hpi

Monday to Tuesday Down to Nice for the Kia Sportage UK press event, where we drove UK-registered right-hand drive cars. This new SUV is slightly longer than the current car, so has a bit more interior space. It drives so much better, and looks a whole lot better, too. A new front and rear end make its styling almost perfect, and the interior has improved in both quality and layout. Engines include a 1.6-litre petrol and a 2.0-litre diesel that produces either 134 or 182hp. But my choice would be the 119g/km 1.7-litre CDRi 114hp in the 2 spec, at a cost of only £22,050 – a bargain. Prices start from £17,995 and go up to £31,495. It's a great looking car, with loads of standard



goodies, and at a reasonable price. My guess is it's going to be a fleet favourite.

"One subject that got my attention was the amount of data now held in cars"

Wednesday To Peterborough, for the annual *Fleet News* Awards judging for cars. After doing this for fifteen years, you'd think it would get easier. Well, it doesn't. So many great cars to choose from – and selecting the winner takes some debating. All will be revealed on March 10. I'll take my tin-hat.

Thursday To MG in Longbridge for the BVRLA technology conference. Some interesting speakers, but one subject that got my attention was the amount of data now held in vehicle systems, and who exactly owns it. We know that drivers can store all sorts of things on a car's computer: e.g. phone numbers and sat-nav destinations. And, as time goes on, there will be much more, such as how the vehicle has been driven. Is it for the driver to dispose of this data? Or, if it is a returning hire car, does the car rental company have the power to wipe it? This is an ongoing debate, and the BVRLA will no doubt keep its members well informed – but I had no idea just what a problem it potentially is.

LEXUS GS 300H

Exclusivity, class-leading costs and only a few niggles give this car fleet appeal



NEED TO KNOW

- Significant BIK savings against rivals
- Executive Edition aimed at fleet market
- 64.2mpg claimed fuel economy

By Mark Nichol

Consider that Lexus sold just 450 GS cars through 50-odd dealerships in the UK in 2015, then frame that against 26,000 Mercedes-Benz E-Class sales, 21,000 BMW 5 Series sales, and 15,000 for the Audi A6.

That in mind, it's almost miraculous that the Lexus GS has such prestige and renown, but it does. And now it's a bit better, updated for 2016 (four years after its launch) with some design, equipment and safety improvements, all aimed at taking those 450 sales up to a heady 750 in 2016.

Compared with other executive cars, the GS will save the average 40% taxpayer hundreds of pounds per year in benefit-in-kind (BIK) payments alone.

A Mercedes-Benz E220d driver will, for example, pay £2,785 in annual BIK compared to £2,006 in the GS 300h, says Lexus. CO₂ emissions of just 104g/km (assuming your GS is a base model on 17-inch wheels) mean a 15% BIK rating, £20 in annual VED and 64.2mpg average.

Two models are available in the UK, the 220hp 300h and the 341hp 450h, both petrol-electric hybrids, but we'll concentrate on the former because it makes up the vast majority of sales – about 95%, in fact.

It mates a 178hp four-cylinder petrol engine to a 141bhp electric motor for a mathematically anomalous 220hp total output. It will transition between electric-only driving and firing up the petrol motor almost seamlessly, which is a testament to the refinement on offer here – at times the GS is as calm and quiet as saloon cars come, at any price.

On smooth roads and with light throttle, external noise is all but eradicated and the GS is a truly luxurious companion: the grumble of a diesel engine is notably absent, the ride quality is supple and the chairs are soft.

COSTS

P11D price	£33,440
BIK tax band (2015/16)	15%
Annual BIK tax (40%)	£2,006
Class 1A NIC	£692
Annual VED	£0 then £10
RV (4yr/40k)	£11,571/35%
Fuel cost (ppm)	7.71
AFR (ppm)	21
Running cost (4yr/40k)	£7,111ppm

SPEC

Power (hp/torque (lb-ft))	223/n/a
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	104
Fuel economy (mpg)	64.2
Top speed (mph)	118
0-62mph (sec)	9.2

KEY RIVAL

BMW 520d 190 SE Auto	
P11D price	£34,110
BIK tax band	19%
Annual BIK tax (40%)	£2,592
Class 1A NIC	£894
Annual VED	£0 then £20
RV (4yr/40k)	£9,738/28%
Fuel cost (ppm)	6.66
AFR (ppm)	13
Running cost (4yr/40k)	£4,291ppm

Running cost data supplied by
KeeResources (4yr/40k)



The GS is festooned with a CVT automatic gearbox that, when called upon to deal with full throttle, results in an unwavering drone.

And because you're hauling about an electric motor and battery pack, the weight pressing down into the chassis makes the ride harsh on poorer roads, blunts the handling and sends fuel consumption skyward.

The GS simply doesn't have the cabin ambience of any German rival. It feels high-tech but without much sparkle, and the point-and-click Remote Touch Interface for the media screen is still horribly counterintuitive and vexing.

Executive Edition is aimed very much at the company car driver and offers the sort of equipment levels that will have a BMW 520d SE driver spluttering out his Costa Express.

Leather and Lexus's shiny new widescreen navigation system are both standard, which they weren't with the old SE trim, while pedestrian detection, automatic braking, adaptive cruise control and traffic sign recognition make the cut too. And it's all wrapped up in a shell that's been sharpened up nicely, with triple-LED headlamps and a more pronounced grille.

Despite its faults, this car has exclusivity, class-leading running costs, a standard equipment list that shames rivals and a dealer network regarded as one of the best.



Positioned as Toyota's entry-level hybrid SUV

2.5 BUSINESS EDITION PLUS

TOYOTA RAV4

Petrol hybrid offers 12% reduction in BIK tax and comprehensive specification

NEED TO KNOW

- Class-leading economy, at 57.6mpg
- Upgraded performance, with very quiet engine
- BIK savings of up to £4,500 over outgoing model

By Maurice Glover

Substantial reductions in tax liability, comprehensive specifications and high-value pricing are being used to persuade company car drivers to opt for hybrid power instead of diesel when they buy the latest SUV from Toyota.

Backed by potential savings of up to £4,500 in benefit-in-kind tax (BIK), the new Rav4 range is expected to underpin further expansion in petrol-electric vehicles to keep the Japanese firm on track for hybrid power to be driving 50% of the cars it produces in four years' time.

"We reached the half-way mark last year and the Rav4 should take our hybrid proportion to 31% of the 110,000 total volume we aim to achieve this year," Toyota GB vehicle marketing general manager David Hilbert told *Fleet News*.

"But I expect the fleet star performer to be the Business Edition Plus version – compared with the outgoing 2.2-litre diesel automatic, this 2.5-litre petrol hybrid offers a 12% reduction in BIK.

"That's a particularly strong message, that should help get the car onto more chooser lists – we're convinced this version will play a key part in the migration from diesel to hybrid."

Positioned as Toyota's entry-level hybrid SUV, the Business Edition Plus offers official fuel economy in excess of 57mpg economy with 115g/km emissions and is being made available to small companies under the firm's Business Drive three-year contract hire package at £1,380 deposit and £230 monthly. "Our experience with the Auris and Yaris models shows that the introduction of hybrid variants attracts more new customers to the brand than conventional powertrains and we expect this trend to continue with the Rav4, particularly in light of the about turn on the diesel surcharge. It's a good proposition," said Hilbert.

COSTS

P11D price	£26,140
BIK tax band (2016/17)	18%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£941
Class 1A NIC	£649
Annual VED	£0
RV (4yr/80k)	£6,600/25%
Fuel cost (ppm)	8.05
AFR (ppm)	13
Running cost (4yr/80k)	36.62

SPEC

Power (hp)/torque (lb-ft)	195/151
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	115
Top speed (mph)	112
0-62mph (sec)	8.4
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	57.6

KEY RIVAL

Honda CR-V 1.6i-DTEC 2WD 120
P11D price: £27,175
BIK tax band (2016/17) 21%
Annual BIK tax (20%) £5,707
Class 1A NIC £788
Annual VED £0 then £30
RV (4yr/80k) £8,300
Fuel cost (ppm) 7.15
AFR (ppm) 13
Running cost (4yr/80k) 34.36ppm

Running cost data supplied by
KeeResources (4yr/80k)



'Tidy' handling, considering vehicle bulk

Extremely quiet off the mark, thanks to its electric motor, the car accelerates in a crisp and smooth fashion – and retains a refined air when its new engine cuts in, irrespective of speed.

Though the engine reaches peak revs in overtaking manoeuvres, a fresh focus on mapping means it remains muted in the higher rev ranges – a significant development that allows the noise it does generate to be more closely aligned to progress than is generally the case with other vehicles using continuously variable transmission systems.

Substantial revisions to dampers and front suspension make for a smoother ride, and handling is tidy considering the bulk of a vehicle that provides more than 500 litres of luggage space and has a potential load volume of 1,633 litres.

The improvement in handling stems from greater body rigidity while an interior that allows stretching space for five adults is also quieter, particularly so in the rear after improved sound insulation under the floor and in the doors.

Together with a new instrument cluster and centre console design, fresh dashboard and door panel trims and ambient lighting lend an upmarket air to the fourth generation of a versatile and practical family vehicle that that effectively created the compact SUV sector, back in 1994.

Ford Mondeo 2.0 TDCI 180 Titanium



The importance of ensuring drivers understand the need to check the roadworthiness and safety of their vehicles was brought home to me during a brief spell in the Ford Mondeo at Christmas.

Coming out of a Mazda2 into the Mondeo took some getting used to – the difference in engine response and performance, handling and all-round awareness required of the much larger vehicle was to be expected.

However, I was less than impressed with the steering response. It seemed sluggish – a little less precise than expected. Naively, I put this down to the physical differences in the two cars and thought I'd just get used to it.

A subsequent journey from Peterborough to Southwold – a distance of more than 100 miles, taking more than 90 minutes – did little to reassure me this was the reason. A walk around the vehicle on arrival revealed what looked to be an underinflated tyre.

While driving to the nearest garage, the tyre pressure warning light came on. A pressure check revealed it to have less than half the required psi level. Staff at the John Grose Ford dealership I visited advised me to overinflate it slightly to ensure the car's tyre pressure gauge was reset. I checked the remaining three tyres and all was well – but not for long. The dash light came on again on the way home and, while another inflation allowed me to get home, it was clear the tyre had been damaged.

A Kwik Fit inspection confirmed a slow puncture, and that all four tyres had 2-3mm tread depth (the legal limit is 1.6mm). The car has only done 12,000 miles, but it's clear this isn't a reason not to carry out tyre checks.

But for the puncture, when would I have become aware my tyres really needed changing in order to be safe for myself and other road users? My experience has been shared with the *Fleet News* team and the tyres replaced. Salutory lesson learned.

Jeremy Bennett



See extended long-term tests at fleetnews.co.uk/cars/car-reviews/



Attractive design, but less boot space than rivals

2.0 D2 SE NAV GEARTRONIC

VOLVO V60

For fleet drivers who prefer sportswagon looks

COSTS*

P11D price	£30,375
BIK tax band	20%
Annual BIK tax (40%)	£2,430
Class 1A NIC	£838.35
Annual VED	£0 then £30
RV (4yr/80k)	£6,900/23%
Fuel cost (ppm)	6.82
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (4yr/80k)	41.18ppm

SPEC

Engine (cc)	1,969
Power (hp)	120
Torque (lb-ft)	206
CO₂ emissions (g/km)	111
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	67.3
Max speed (mph)	121
0-62mph (sec)	11.7
Test mpg	55
Current mileage	400

*Running cost data supplied by KeeResources (4yr/80k)

By Maurice Glover

After decades of being synonymous with big and boxy styling, Volvo pulled off a major surprise when the V60 hold-all rolled into showrooms.

Low and sleek, the mid-range load carrier shed plain Jane looks in favour of fresh, eye-catching lines. Subtle changes are allowing the Swedish line-up to be more competitive in the premium sector, where kerbside appeal is all-important.

A roofline that slopes gently toward the rear in a design shaped to appear more like a coupé than an estate means the most attractive Volvo yet has less space behind its rear seats than in the 3 Series Touring or A4 Avant.

However, bootspace big enough to accommodate large cases allows the V60 to be a practical solution for the growing number of fleet and family drivers who prefer sportswagon looks over maximum load potential.

In base form, the D2 is keenly priced and comes with standard equipment that includes lumbar-adjust front seats with whiplash protecting head restraints, hill-start assist, an electric parking brake, speed-sensitive steering and a rear parking sensor.

Our car comes with £5,500-worth of options which include a £1,900 driver support pack offering collision warning with auto braking, blind spot information, road sign display, auto headlights and a clever adaptive cruise control.

Then there's auto transmission (£1,485), keyless drive (£550) and an active crystal driver's information display (£550). Given present weather conditions, the heated front seats, windscreen and washer nozzles and headlight cleaning system in the £525 winter pack might be particularly useful.

"The Volvo V60 D2 has a roofline that slopes gently toward the rear in a design shaped to appear more like a coupé than an estate"

VOLKSWAGEN TIGUAN

DIY approach brings results for AdBlue issue



Buying a plastic funnel helped to avoid spilling any AdBlue

COSTS*

P11D price	£25,465
BIK tax band	24%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£1,222
Class 1A NIC	£843
Annual VED	£0 then £110
RV (4yr/80k)	£6,959/27%
Fuel cost (ppm)	8.84
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (4yr/80k)	36.11ppm

SPEC

Engine (cc)	1,968
Power (hp)	150
Torque (lb-ft)	251
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	130
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	56.5
Max speed (mph)	123
0-62mph (sec)	9.8
Test mpg	46.4
Current mileage	6,500

*Running cost data supplied by KeeResources (4yr/80k)

By Sarah Tooze

The Tiguan has faced a number of maintenance issues recently. First, the coolant warning light came on unexpectedly – something which has never happened to me in a test car before.

I discovered the coolant had dropped below the minimum level, so I put a call into the Volkswagen press office. Their workshop manager said it was “quite normal” for a new car to need coolant topping up after a relatively short period of time, due to possibly having had air trapped in the system and the levels then settling down as the car is ‘run-in’.

A few days later, a second maintenance issue occurred: an AdBlue warning popped up on the information screen, telling me I had a range of 1,500 miles before it would run out. The car had done 5,400 miles at the time – better than the 3,000-4,000 miles Volkswagen suggests it might manage before needing a top-up. I contacted Robinsons Volkswagen in Peterborough to arrange one, but was quoted an eye watering £75-£100.

Cue another phone call to the Volkswagen press office.

It turned out that Robinsons had “missed the bulletin” about the company’s pricing matrix (a fixed price of £1.50 per litre of AdBlue). Although the press office assured me I would now be quoted the right price, we decided to go for a DIY approach and purchased 10 litres of AdBlue from Euro Car Parts for £15.88.

The AdBlue tank is in the boot in the Tiguan, so we had to take the boot carpet out and remove the packing around the spare wheel to get to it. The height of the boot lip also meant we needed to buy a plastic funnel to pour the AdBlue in without spilling it. Other than that, it was straightforward.

As for the coolant, I went to Robinsons Volkswagen in Stamford to check there wasn’t a leak. The technicians confirmed all was well.

■ Turn to page 43 for our AdBlue feature.

Nissan Pulsar 1.5 N-TEC DCI



The Pulsar is a car that’s unlikely to offend and, while not entirely inspiring, is pretty good to live with. However, we’ve encountered a few issues this past month, with a couple of quirks sent to add some fun to my otherwise ordinary daily commute.

The LED headlights are incredibly good, bright and white, with the main beam giving an illuminated view of the road for what seems like miles. Fitted as standard on our N-Tec trim level car, they’re now a £500 option on its N-Connecta replacement – but they’re thrown in for free on the top-line Tekna.

However, the twisty bit at the end of the indicator stalk that controls the lights seems to have a mind of its own. You should be able to leave the lights on auto but, rather more frequently than I would like, a flick on the indicator has seen the dial change position to manual dipped beam.

This is fine at night but, when you get in the car the following morning, you find the instrument binnacle is rather dimmer than you’d like. On one occasion, I caught the indicator at the wrong angle, and momentarily flicked the lights off for a second, worryingly.

On the other side of the wheel, the automatic windscreen wipers have been a little erratic, too. A light rain shower proved the perfect occasion for them to have an energetic little boogie in front of my eyes. Sadly for them, I spoilt their fun, and popped them back onto manual mode.

To complete the trinity, a dashboard light has begun to flash up intermittently, warning of a ‘key system fault’.

A quick call to our local Nissan dealer informed us that it’s likely the battery is getting flat – it appears the drain of the intelligent key’s constant communication of the car is beginning to show.

We’ll replace it and report back next month.

Christopher Smith



See extended long-term tests at fleetnews.co.uk/cars/car-reviews/

“The Volkswagen dealer had ‘missed the bulletin’ on the company’s fixed price of £1.50 per litre for AdBlue – and tried to charge £75”

LISA GRIMSLEY

REMARKETING DIRECTOR (NORTH), ASTON BARCLAY

A fan of *Dirty Dancing*, Lisa Grimsley hates dishonesty – which is something she could have dealt with if her childhood ambition to be a police officer had been fulfilled.

If I was made Prime Minister for the day I'd introduce a law stating that everyone must operate a fleet/company car.

The three vehicles I would like in my garage are an Aston Martin DB7, Porsche 911 GTS and a Mercedes-Benz G-Class.

I'd tell my 18-year-old self not to be scared to make changes and grab opportunities.

My favourite film is *Dirty Dancing*; the soundtrack is brilliant.

The pivotal moment in my life was becoming a proud mum to Thomas.

The book I would recommend others read is the self-help book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

My first memory associated with a car was with my first car, a Yugo.

Away from the office, I enjoy walking and spending time with my family.

I would like to be remembered as honest, hardworking and loyal.

My pet hate is dishonesty.



First fleet role As a part-time fleet assistant, which included updating V5 documents and taking calls on the reception desk at Central Motor Auctions. In my current role, I deal with people from a variety of backgrounds, from private individuals, to car supermarket owners, fleet buyers and remarketing disposal managers. No two calls or meetings are ever the same.

Career goals at Aston Barclay To continue to contribute towards the growth of Aston Barclay Vehicle Remarketing and ensure we are firmly placed as a viable alternative, with a reputation for market-leading results and a service which is second-to-none.

Biggest achievement in business Becoming remarketing director (north) for Aston Barclay and growing the Leeds and Prees Heath sites into outstanding fleet and manufacturer auctions, allowing Aston Barclay to offer a national end-to-end remarketing service to our clients regardless of their needs.

Biggest career influence Les Scarborough, founder of Chelmsford Car Auctions, now known as Aston Barclay Chelmsford. He gave me the self-belief and encouragement to believe in my decisions and encouraged me to be independent, with his full support.

Biggest mistake in business Being overlooked in a previous role and not having the courage to make changes sooner.

Leadership style Firm, honest and fair.

If I wasn't in fleet I'd like to pursue a career in social work. I would love to make a difference to the lives of children and change their path in life, for the better.

Childhood ambition I wanted to become a police officer, as it would allow me to make changes for the better.

Next issue: Chris Horbowyj, UK director of sales, GreenRoad

Ford Fiesta: Active City Stop available on most models



Advanced technology in Ford's 2016 range of cars

Beside their acclaimed style, fuel efficiency and class-leading driving dynamics, Ford's 2016 range of cars all offer advanced driver assistance technologies, convenience features and higher levels of comfort and safety. For instance, Active City Stop is either standard or available on most Ford cars. It can help reduce the severity of rear-end collisions by automatically braking if a driver does not respond to slowing traffic ahead.

Active City Stop detects if a low-speed collision is imminent and automatically

applies the brakes, which can potentially save fleet operators the cost of damage and vehicle downtime, cut insurance claims and save the traumatic effects of an accident.

More than one in three Ford cars in Europe is fitted with Active Park Assist, which uses sensors and the vehicle's steering system to help drivers identify a suitable space and steer in to it.

Adaptive Cruise Control enables drivers to maintain a set distance from the vehicle in front, even if the vehicle is travelling at a slower speed. More than half of new Ford cars in Europe are

equipped with some kind of cruise control technology.

Lane Keeping Aid detects an unintentional lane departure and applies steering torque, alerting drivers to provide the necessary steering correction.

From first being introduced in Europe in 2012, Ford's voice-activated connected systems have quickly found their way into most new cars. SYNC 2 can enable drivers to talk to their car using simple, conversational language to operate phone, entertainment, climate and navigation systems, even bringing up a list of local restaurants by saying "I'm hungry".

FORD'S TRANSIT RANGE NOW OFFERS CAR-LIKE COMFORT AND SAFETY

There was a time when even a heater was considered a luxury in a van, but how times have changed.

Ford's Transit range now offers car-like comfort, with similar levels of technology to cars.

The latest Transit Custom has a whole raft of safety technologies offered for the first time in 2016: both Side Wind Mitigation and Roll Stability Control are standard, while Adaptive Cruise Control,



Pre-Collision Assist with Auto-Braking, and Traffic Sign Recognition are all options.

Sharing a global platform with cars like the Ford Focus and Ford Kuga, the sophisticated Ford Transit Connect benefits from the company's advanced technologies such as Traffic Sign Recognition, Active City Stop, Blind Spot Information System, Lane Keeping Aid and Auto High Beam.



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The Ultimate
Driving Machine



THE NEW BMW 330e SALOON.

Combining the reduced emissions and instant performance of eDrive with the aesthetics of the BMW 3 Series Saloon, the new BMW 330e Saloon offers company car drivers the best of both worlds. Designed with fleets in mind, it boasts a generous standard specification that includes BMW Business Navigation, 17" alloy wheels and a Sport leather steering wheel. And, with tailored driving modes and an 8-speed automatic transmission, this model represents the ultimate combination of fuel efficiency and driving pleasure.

PLUG-IN HYBRID ELECTRIC VEHICLES



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COMBINATION ELIMINATES
RANGE ANXIETY.**



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THE NEW BMW 225xe ACTIVE TOURER.



FROM:

46g/km

CO₂ emissions

5%

BIK

UP TO:

141.2

MPG (combined)

Dynamic design, compact dimensions and everyday practicality combined with efficient BMW eDrive technology; meet the new BMW 225xe Active Tourer. In pure electric mode, the car can travel up to 25 miles and reach up to 78mph, emission-free and with zero fuel consumption. For longer journeys and higher speeds, the petrol and electric engines work together to achieve a remarkable 141.2mpg (combined) while emitting as little as 46g/km of CO₂.



THE NEW BMW X5 xDRIVE40e.



Every inch a BMW X5, the new model features xDrive, the intelligent BMW four-wheel drive system, plus a lavish and beautifully crafted interior, a high level of standard equipment and versatility on and off the road. The only difference is that the BMW X5 xDrive40e features innovative BMW eDrive hybrid technology, providing up to 85.6mpg (combined) and a pure electric range of 19 miles. This means company car drivers will benefit from a BIK of only 13%, placing them in the attractive VED Band A.

FROM:

77g/km

CO₂ emissions

13%

BIK

UP TO:

85.6

MPG (combined)

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Official fuel economy figures for the BMW range: Urban 19.2-72.4mpg (14.7-3.9l/100km). Extra Urban 31.4-91.3mpg (9.0-3.1l/100km). Combined 25.4-47.8mpg (11.1-0.06l/100km). CO₂ emissions 259-0g/km. Figures may vary depending on driving style and conditions.

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