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# Mayor's air quality plans could form UK blueprint

Sadiq Khan considers expanding ULEZ and diesel scrappage

By Tom Seymour

**T**he new mayor of London will canvass fleet operators on measures to tackle the capital's air quality, including the expansion, and earlier introduction, of the ultra-low emission zone (ULEZ).

The world's first clean air charging zone is due to come into force from September 2020, but it could now be introduced from 2019, and could more than double in size.

Sadiq Khan is proposing a new ULEZ stretching from north to south circular roads. Under existing plans it was due to only apply to the current congestion charge zone, with drivers of non-compliant cars having to pay £12.50 per day to enter.

However, Khan now wants to add an additional premium to the congestion charge for the most polluting vehicles from 2017, and begin to research a diesel scrappage scheme for the city.

"I have been elected with a clear mandate to clean-up London's air," he said. "The previous mayor [Boris Johnson] was too slow on this issue and the Government has been hopelessly inactive. We need to speed up our efforts."

Almost 10,000 Londoners die every year because of pollution, according to the latest medical research. London does not currently meet the legal requirements for pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>).

Transport accounts for around 60% of NO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the capital, of which cars contribute 28%, vans 9%, HGVs 18% and buses/coaches 16%.

New research published by the World Health Organisation showed that London breached safe levels of pollutant particles known as PM10.

Fleets operating outside the capital are also being urged to look carefully at the new mayor's clean air proposals, as they could form a blueprint for how vehicles are targeted in other major UK cities.

Ashley Sowerby, managing director at fleet management

software specialist Chevin, said similar air quality problems to London affected many other places in the UK and solutions adopted were likely to serve as a model for other areas.

"A key point to note is that the new suggestions are envisaged as happening much more quickly than previously," said Sowerby. "The additional congestion charge could happen in 2017 and the extended emissions zone by 2019."

He highlighted the recent naming of the UK's first four Go Ultra Low cities – Nottingham, Bristol, Milton Keynes and London – as evidence of a general trend towards central and local government working to improve air quality.

"This is something that fleets across the country will undoubtedly be encountering more and more," Sowerby said.

"We could soon reach a point where they have to address the issue operationally, especially as the timings being discussed will add impetus."

Khan is expected to launch a consultation in the next few weeks, when further details on his proposals will be made available, but it is clear he is prepared to radically overhaul existing plans to clean-up the capital's air quality.

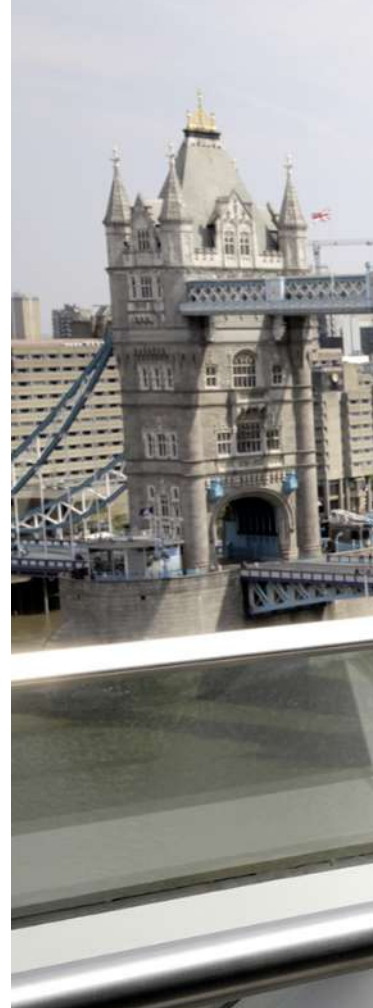
"We need big, bold and sometimes difficult policies if London is to match the scale of the challenge," he said.

However, the potential scale and speed of change is a major cause of concern for the fleet industry.

"These last-minute adjustments to the ULEZ scheme would not give businesses time to prepare," said Gerry Keaney, chief executive of the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA).

"They could punish a large number of companies who have already planned their vehicle requirements based on the scheduled 2020 introduction date."

"It took years of planning, research and consultation to come up with the current ULEZ proposals and rushing through with any changes could have major unforeseen repercussions."



10,000

Londoners die every year because of pollution

£23m

Government funding to improve EV charging infrastructure in London

## GOVERNMENT SHOULD SPEED-UP EV CHARGE POINT INSTALLATION, SAYS PRIVATE HIRE FIRM

Addison Lee is urging the Government to help speed-up the installation of the electric vehicle (EV) charging network in London if it is to successfully switch to a plug-in hybrid fleet.

Sadiq Khan has committed to facilitating a step change in EV charging infrastructure, including support for residential areas and a rapid charging network with dedicated sites for taxis. The Government has committed £23 million to fund the scheme.

There are around 850 charging points across London, with plans to install a further 4,500 over the next two years.

However, Mike Galvin, head of regulatory affairs at the private hire company, told *Fleet News* that, even with that increased capacity, the speed of installation and number of charging

points won't be enough to support his company's fleet of 5,000 vehicles, let alone other operators in the city.

Galvin said the Addison Lee fleet operates to a three-year cycle and the deadline for ordering the next wave of vehicles is approaching.

"The mayor needs to find money from central government to increase the amount of charging stations across the city," he said. "We are going to have to start replacing vehicles and what we don't want to happen is that we buy them as plug-in hybrids, but are not actually able to use the electric power because we can't charge them."

"Instead you're going to end up with businesses just running on petrol or diesel instead and that's not going to help deliver these air quality targets."



Addison Lee says current EV charge infrastructure plans won't be enough for its fleet of 5,000



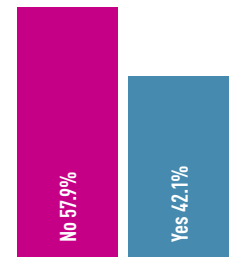


Sadiq Khan: 'I have been elected with a clear mandate to clean-up London's air'

## FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

### OPINION POLL

Would a diesel scrappage scheme persuade you to ditch diesel in favour of another fuel?



### FleetNews view:

Fleets are divided over the merits of a diesel scrappage scheme. The new mayor of London has said he will look at the costs and challenges of implementing a scheme as part of a wider national programme delivered by the Government. However, with analysis from the RAC Foundation suggesting a scrappage scheme would have to be on a huge scale to have any significant effect, *Fleet News* needs to be convinced if it could be an effective way of tackling air quality concerns.

This week's poll: Will you vote to remain in the EU?

[fleetnews.co.uk/polls](http://fleetnews.co.uk/polls)

### MOST COMMENTED ONLINE

Company drivers have a woeful lack of road knowledge, says E-Training World

[fleetnews.co.uk/news](http://fleetnews.co.uk/news)

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*"These last-minute adjustments would not give businesses time to prepare and could punish a large number of companies"*

Gerry Keane, BVRLA

The current proposals set rules for cars, vans and trucks:

- Diesel cars and small vans will need to be Euro 6-compliant (registered from September 1, 2015; five years old or less in 2020) and Euro 4 for petrol powertrains (registered from January 1, 2006; 14 years old or less in 2020).
- Large vans and minibuses will be required to be Euro 6-compliant for diesel engines (registered from 1 September 1, 2016; four years old or less in 2020) and Euro 4 for petrol (registered from January 1, 2007; 13 years old or less in 2020).
- Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), meanwhile, will have to be Euro 6-compliant (registered from January 1, 2014, six years old or less in 2020).

There are already plans in place to make all new London taxis zero-emission from 2018 and to increase the number of hybrid-electric buses ahead of the introduction of the ULEZ in 2020.

Hackney Council corporate fleet manager Norman Harding said that any changes introduced without sufficient time to adapt fleet replacement strategies would create a problem.

"While a five-year replacement cycle for LCVs may be acceptable in most cases this is usually too short a window for HGVs or PCVs," he said.

Green campaigners have called for HGVs to be banned from central London altogether, but the Freight Transport Association (FTA) wants to make sure its concerns are heard before any policy decisions are made.

Khan has previously said banning HGVs from central

London during rush hour periods would be considered.

Natalie Chapman, FTA head of policy for London, south east and east of England, said: "Freight in London has gone up the agenda, which is good.

"However, we want to make sure we're not just treated as part of the problem with restrictions and bans.

"We haven't been contacted by the mayor's department yet, but we have written to him to request an early meeting.

"It's important we can start discussions early to talk things through before policy is decided."

Harding labelled any potential restriction or ban of HGVs in London as "incredibly naïve".

"The mayor will also need to progress house building for an ever increasing population and the materials required can only be delivered by HGVs," he said.

"Many things that we take for granted such as shop stock, food and beverage outlets, petrol stations and much more needs to be delivered by HGV.

"Not much can be delivered by the use of 'final mile' type alternatives.

"Banning HGVs would bring London to a standstill."

Khan, however, has said he will continue the LoCity programme, working with manufacturers, operators and businesses to reduce emissions from HGVs and vans.



Fleets switch to hybrids following emissions scandal: [fleetnews.co.uk/hybrid-switch](http://fleetnews.co.uk/hybrid-switch)



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Smart Light Assist



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# Epyx: customer data was 'never under threat' during 1link outage

Findings from full investigation of three-day failure will be shared with fleets

By Christopher Smith

**F**leet systems company Epyx has vowed to investigate what caused the three-day outage it suffered last week and ensure it does not happen again.

Thousands of fleet customers were left unable to book services or MOTs for vehicles during the outage, while dealers, independent garages and fast-fit centres could not receive any bookings, send invoices or get authorisation for service, maintenance and repair work undertaken.

Issues were first reported by customers of Epyx's 1link service network system on May 16, and continued until mid-afternoon on May 18. The company said an issue in its database, which required filtering and searching through to find the problem, caused the downtime.

Epyx was bought by payment and systems giant Fleetcor from private equity firm HG Capital in 2013. Fleetcor is also the parent company to fuel card firm Allstar.

Managing director Steve Greene said the strength of its parent company helped with extra resources to resolve the problem, which it says was the first outage of its kind in almost 15 years of operation.

He told *Fleet News*: "Since Fleetcor acquired the business more than two years ago, Epyx has seen considerable investment, with IT headcount doubling and IT capital expenditures trebling.

"We are now able to call on not only local resources in the UK but also on Fleetcor consultants and engineers on a global, 24-hour basis. They all worked round the clock to bring about a successful resolution."

Greene assured customers that all customer data remained secure and was never under threat, with back-ups in multiple locations.

The company thanked its customers for their patience and understanding, and said it communicated updates throughout the downtime.

Greene said: "We sent out regular emails to advise of progress to the designated contacts and our account management team was in constant contact with fleet customers and dealers. A large volume of calls were placed to our support team and they were able to give one-to-one advice."

Epyx said it would be reviewing procedures and providing its customer network with details of what happened in the interests of transparency.

"We will then share that report with customers in the interests of transparency and in order to gather their feedback," said Greene.

"We expect the 1link service network customer forum, the independent user group that represents our customers, to play a key role in this process."

Epyx believes the action plan will further strengthen its disaster recovery and communication plan.

"We are confident that the likelihood of similar episodes in the future is very low, but we intend to look very closely at the lessons that we can learn for the future," said Greene.

The 1link service network, introduced in 2003, facilitates bookings and service authorisations between vehicle users and vehicle repair centres.

It is used by the majority of FN50 leasing companies, many other fleet management companies and end-user fleets.



Steve Greene: 'We expect the customer forum to play a key role in the review process'

*"We intend to look very closely at the lessons that we can learn for the future"*

Steve Greene, Epyx

3m

Number of vehicles registered on the platform



Time to update your fleet software? [fleetnews.co.uk/update-software](http://fleetnews.co.uk/update-software)

More than three million vehicles are registered on the platform, with around 18,000 fast-fits, franchised dealers and independent garages using the system to get digital bookings from fleets, or receive authorisation for work carried out.

In addition, the system generates automatic cost estimates and provides electronic invoices from workshop to customer.

The company's other networks, which provide services such as vehicle procurement, daily rental and disposals, remained unaffected by the issues.

Suppliers in the chain need to ensure that they are adequately prepared in case of failure higher up, warned Gary Hibberd, managing director of business continuity firm Agenci Information Security.

"Businesses need to know what they will do if they can't access a critical system," he said.

"While your suppliers need very clear crisis plans that do not negate the need for a plan further down the chain if systems go offline.

"You cannot wholly outsource the risk and responsibility for your business on to your suppliers, and you need to have your own contingency plans in place if their systems fail."

Road Safety Experience Centre: safety education in a 'fun, interactive way'



# First road safety experience will help improve risk management

Centre hopes to aid in the reduction of people killed or injured on UK roads

By John Charles

**B**usinesses are being urged to improve their occupational road risk management following the opening of the UK's first interactive Road Safety Experience Centre.

The complex has been opened by Kent Fire and Rescue Service and, while it is predominantly aimed at 14 to 25 year olds, it is hoped that employers will use the facility.

One of the first corporate events to be held at the centre will be a summer breakfast briefing, targeted at local small and medium-sized businesses.

It will mark the start of a new occupational road risk management initiative aimed at helping Highways England achieve at least a 40% reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured on the roads by the end of 2020.

The Highways England Driving for Work Initiative, which involves fire and rescue services across the country and a number of other partners, will be delivered nationally by the team behind the Driving for Better Business campaign.

Led by RoadSafe, it aids the Department for Transport's ambition to support and promote good practice in safer fleet management and occupational road safety.

Reflecting a national trend, Kent Fire and Rescue Service attends more road traffic accidents than house fires.

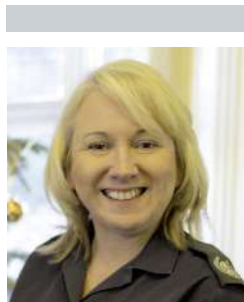
It believes fire officers have a key role to play in improving road safety, thus reducing the toll of death and injury.

The Service's road safety and safeguarding manager Alexa Kersting-Woods said: "We have been involved in delivering road safety education in schools for a number of years.

"Opening the centre will allow us to expand the work that we do.

"It will provide an all-round experience with interactive learning zones providing thought-provoking insights around risks and responsibilities, to help young people to develop the essential skills they need to make informed decisions as a driver or passenger."

Viewed as a hub for road safety, the initial target audience is schools, colleges and youth groups but, with no upper age



*"We are looking to work with companies to support their road safety strategies"*

Alexa Kersting-Woods,  
Kent Fire and Rescue  
Service



For more tips on  
managing road risk, visit:  
[fleetnews.co.uk/roadrisk](http://fleetnews.co.uk/roadrisk)

limit, Kersting-Woods said: "We are looking to work with companies to support their road safety strategies."

About a quarter of road crashes involve someone driving for work, according to Department for Transport figures.

"The ultimate aim of the Road Safety Experience is to create a visitor centre specifically focused on activities that will contribute, alongside key multi-agency campaigns, to a reduction in the disproportionately high number of young people killed and seriously injured on the roads," said Kersting-Woods.

Particular employer targets could include businesses that employ many young people, such as call centres and pizza delivery firms, but Kersting-Woods added: "Most of the Service's work with employers is supporting them to run safe businesses, and that includes road safety.

"We don't have any legal powers in terms of road safety so employers tend to engage with officers' when they visit and inspect premises."

The Road Safety Experience Centre, on the same site as the new Rochester Fire Station, is a purpose-built facility aimed at delivering road safety education in a fun, interactive style. The experience combines film, practical demonstrations and technology.

The aim is to encourage visitors to look at the potential consequences of a road accident from all perspectives – for themselves, their passengers, other drivers and their families – and by learning from the experience of others, improve their safety and give them the skills they need to make better informed decisions when behind the wheel.

Kersting-Woods said: "There is plenty in the centre for corporate drivers to benefit from, such as hazard identification and understanding issues around drink-driving.

"It is a visitor centre supporting behavioural change, not by preaching, but by building on individuals' existing road safety awareness and knowledge."

Although the centre has been built and is being run by Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Kersting-Woods said employers wishing to use the centre could be located outside the county.



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# 'Software MOT' needed for cars with autonomous technology

Concerns over three-year lag before systems are protected from hackers

By Gareth Roberts

**T**he Government is being urged to introduce a 'software MOT' for driverless cars after it paved the way for greater investment in the technology.

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) said the Modern Transport Bill, announced during the Queen's Speech, is an important step to improving road safety and reducing congestion.

However, it added that the Government also needs to introduce legislation to improve cyber security in autonomous vehicles.

IET cyber security expert Hugh Boyes said: "We must ensure that cyber security is carefully considered. It is not just about the threat of a car being hacked, it also relates to the overall security and safety of the vehicle's operation."

"For that reason it will be crucial that the Government introduces proper regulations for autonomous vehicles, which should include the need for a software MOT to be performed on a regular basis."

"This should help to assure the ongoing trustworthiness of the vehicle software and systems."

The operation of an autonomous vehicle will be heavily dependent on software embedded in the vehicle.

This will provide complex functions that are currently performed by the driver, including interpreting potential hazards, changes in vehicle direction and speed and responding safely to vehicle faults or malfunctions.

"It will be vital to ensure that this software runs smoothly so, in the same way as we take our cars for annual MOTs at the local garage today, in the future we will need to include a check on the software to ensure defects and vulnerabilities are addressed," explained Boyes.

"How these checks happen, and who is responsible for them, is something we should be thinking about now."

The warning from the IET comes in the wake of a study revealing major concerns over the security of connected cars.

In a poll of 1,000 drivers across the UK and Germany, online security company Veracode found that 50% of respondents were concerned about the security of driver-aid applications such as adaptive cruise control, self-parking and collision avoidance systems.

"What we're seeing happen in the auto industry is a microcosm of what's happening in financial services, healthcare and virtually every other sector – applications are not created with security in mind, creating a major area of risk," said Chris Wysopal, chief technology officer at Veracode.



*"It will be crucial that the Government introduces proper regulations for autonomous vehicles"*

Hugh Boyes, IET

50%

Proportion of drivers concerned about autonomous app security

200m

Number of lines of code in a connected car

Findings from its recent report indicated that there could be a lag of up to three years before car security systems are protected from hackers.

Jonathan Hewett, vice president of Octo Telematics, is similarly concerned. "The need to protect data in the shift to connected, driverless and autonomous cars is implicit and those behind the connected car movement must operate to the highest levels of system security standards," he said.

Against this backdrop, Hewett says an announcement about the winners of a multi-million pound research grant from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Innovate UK to fund developments in user-centric autonomous vehicle technology, including research to address security risks associated with connected cars, is a significant boost for the industry.

Paul Farrington, senior solution architect at Veracode, said: "With over 200 million lines of code in today's connected car, not to mention smartphone apps linked to the car, we must ensure they are developed with security at the heart of the strategy, rather than as an afterthought."

The Government says the Modern Transport Bill will help cut red tape and put the right framework in place to allow innovation, which it claims will put the UK at the forefront of driverless vehicle ownership and use.

Transport secretary Patrick McLoughlin said the Bill will "pave the way for the technologies and transport of tomorrow".

"We are already developing a charging infrastructure for electric and hybrid vehicles," he said. "Driverless cars may seem like science fiction to some. But the economic potential of these new technologies is vast and we are determined that Britain will benefit by helping to lead their development."

"Driverless cars will come under new legislation so they can be insured under ordinary policies. These new laws will help autonomous and driverless cars become a real option for private buyers and fleets."



Toyota's £680m driverless research: [fleetnews.co.uk/toyota-driverless-cars](http://fleetnews.co.uk/toyota-driverless-cars)

AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE SECURITY SOFTWARE UPDATE



COMPLETION TBC

# Telematics apps increasingly replacing 'black box' hardware

Smartphone based systems put data directly in the driver's hand while removing the need for vehicle downtime during installation

By Christopher Smith

**A**n increasing number of telematics firms are targeting fleets with app-based systems rather than a traditional 'black box'.

Providers argue that using an app instead of hardware removes the need for vehicle downtime to allow fitting to take place.

Fitting a telematics unit generally takes between 30 and 60 minutes, but a vehicle and driver may need to be out of service for half a day to wait for the engineer.

Trak Global, the latest company to launch an app-based mobile telematics system, is convinced that the removal of downtime will appeal to many fleets.

Its system, called Appy Fleet, uses a mobile phone to both record and display driver behaviour data. "The system focuses far more on management of people than management of metal," said Andrew Brown-Allan, marketing director at Trak Global.

"It places visibility of data right in the hands of the driver. If they can see how they are scoring, and there is relevant feedback, they are more likely to act on it."

In addition to driver scoring, the system incorporates a mileage capture and export function to allow easier expense claims.

Brown-Allan continued: "We expect the service to be as useful to a company with six vehicles that has never had telematics, as it will be to those who are looking for a lower cost solution."

He is expecting strong interest from the company car sector due to the easier set-up process. Trak Global says it will target "tens of thousands" of users in the next 18 months, which it added was a "low ball" forecast.

Brown-Allan said: "You only have to look at the industry at the moment, and you see we are not the only company saying apps are the future of fleet telematics, and they will be saying that for all the same reasons we are."

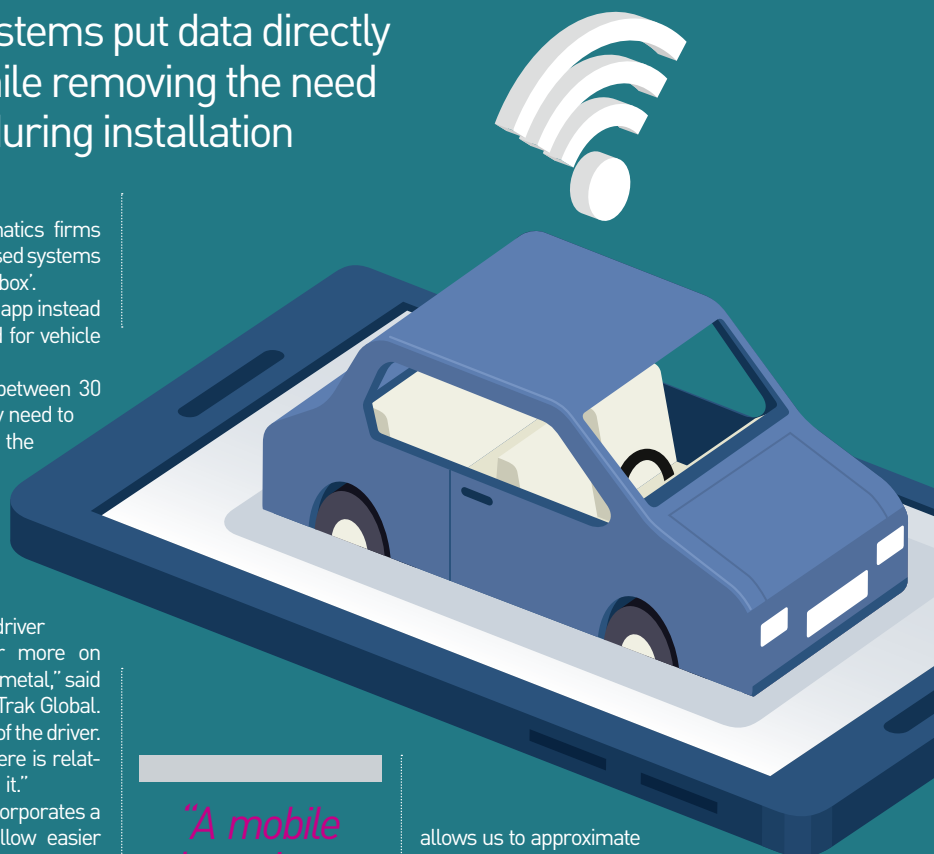
Aldo Monteforte, chief executive at The Floow, which provides consumer app-based telematics systems to insurers including Direct Line, explained that using an app isn't ideal in all cases, but it has a number of benefits.

"If you're interested in the behaviour of your end user, and not in the collection of every single journey made, the smartphone will give you a very good representation," he said. "Statistically, it will sample a very high proportion of relevant journeys."

"If what you are after is the unequivocal collection of any journey undertaken in a particular vehicle, we would definitely advise the installation of an embedded telematics system."

Monteforte says the technology is capable of detecting different journeys undertaken across different modes of transport.

"We have created a lot of powerful data science that



*"A mobile phone is not built for recording driver data, you are also reliant on that device being present and working all the time"*

Paul O'Dowd,  
In Car Cleverness

allows us to approximate the relevant journeys," he said.

"The software can already identify journeys on a train, aeroplane and bicycle or when someone goes for a jog," he added.

Trak Global's system identifies when the correct vehicle is being driven by monitoring Bluetooth pairing with the car's multimedia system, which avoids some of the confusion that could be caused by passenger journeys.

However, despite the lower cost of entry and driver benefit engagement, some claim a data gathering app isn't the best solution.

Paul O'Dowd, head of sales at In Car Cleverness, said that although the technology had advanced, fleets should investigate an app-based data capture system with caution.

"A mobile phone will rely on GPS, for which there are still blackspots where you are not able to get a signal from a satellite to give you that data," he explained.

"An OBD-based device that plugs into the vehicle directly is constantly recording speed. You may otherwise not have any data from a moment in time where there was a severe accident and the police want to use the information to investigate."

O'Dowd said that recording driver data with an app was better than capturing no data at all, but said it was best suited to viewing and accessing data from a device installed directly in the vehicle.

"A mobile phone is not built for recording driver data," he said. "You are also reliant on that device being present and working all the time."



More telematics news  
at: [fleetnews.co.uk/telematics](http://fleetnews.co.uk/telematics)





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Read Nick's story at  
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\*Saving based on switching original VW diesel fleet to Toyota and Lexus hybrids.



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# Transport conference speakers clash during EU exit vote debate

But opponents miss opportunity to discuss likely effects of Brexit on fleets

By Andrew Ryan

**M**ore than twice as many transport operators say a Brexit would have a negative effect on the transport and haulage industry than positive.

However, a greater share of the 1,000 delegates asked at the Microlise Transport Conference, at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry on May 18, said they will vote for the UK to leave the EU than remain.

When asked in a Brexit debate what impact leaving the EU would have on the UK's haulage industry, 43% said 'negative', 21% 'positive', 7% 'no impact' and 29% of respondents were not sure.

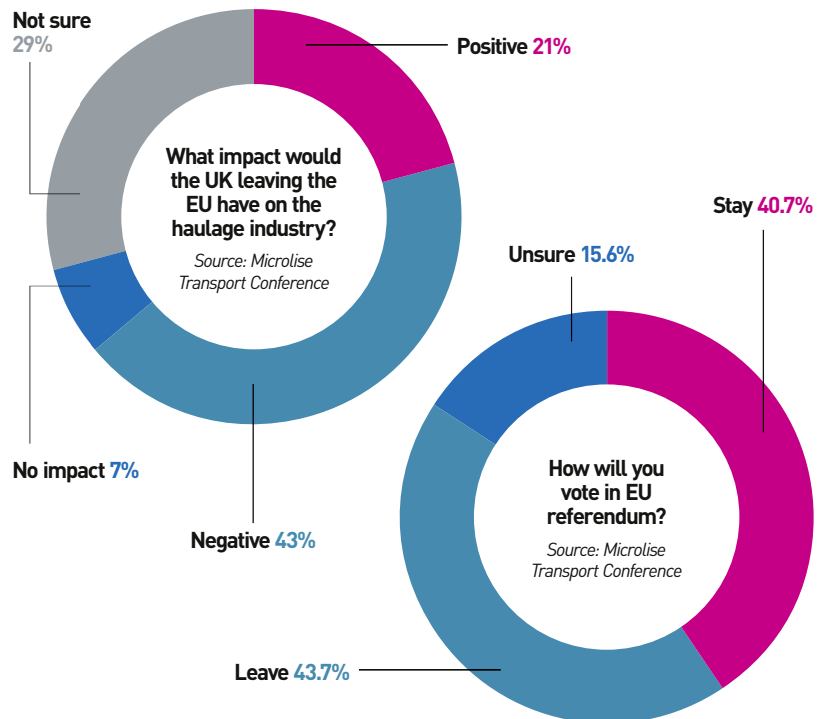
However, 43.7% of delegates said they would vote 'leave' in the referendum, with 40.7% voting 'stay' and 15.6% unsure.

Their views are important as many have businesses that operate across EU borders, so potentially will be affected most by the Brexit decision.

Vote Leave was represented by Andrew Baxter, managing director of Europa Worldwide Group, a freight operator that employs 600 people and has a turnover of £100 million.

Construction business owner and former Tory MP Paul Uppal represented the Britain Stronger in Europe campaign.

During the debate, neither speaker directly addressed how the outcome of the EU referendum, which will take place on June 23, would affect the transport industry.



Fleet industry divided on EU exit vote:  
[fleetnews.co.uk/fleets-divided-brexit](http://fleetnews.co.uk/fleets-divided-brexit)

## LEAVE



Andrew Baxter told the conference: "75% of my turnover is related to the transport of goods between the UK and the EU. So why do I think it is in the interests of our country that we leave the EU? The answer is this: the leadership of the EU is

seeking to create a superstate.

"Not only is it seeking to create a superstate, it is doing so without the democratic consent of the people.

"The very least it should do is ask the people of Europe through referendums in every country if they want to remain an independent country or become part of a single European state.

"The reality is it will never ask that question. Why? Because if it does, it knows many countries will vote against it.

"Therefore, it is seeking to combine all those elements of a single state, such as single currency, combined armed forces, single immigration policy, etc. until it has effectively created a single state.

"That, in my view is a naive, misguided concept. Not only is it undemographic, but it is fundamentally immoral.

"It is certain to end in tears, with huge social and economic consequences. We have nothing to fear from leaving the EU. Don't believe the scare stories that are being put about."

## REMAIN



In reply, Paul Uppal said: "There is no secret here. Post world war two, it has always been an aim for a closer European union.

"One important point which is often missed is that, when the PM came back from the EU reform talks, he came back with an

opt-out of ever closer union.

"If we leave, we are going to go through a period of great uncertainty, I don't think anyone can deny that.

"We pretty much know what we have at the moment. It may not be fantastic, but at least we know what we have.

"When I was an MP I met with representatives of Tata Group around the decision whether to open an engine plant in Wolverhampton, or keep it in India.

"It was made very obvious to me that the reason it opened the Jaguar Land Rover engine plant in Wolverhampton was very much because of the trade agreements we have with our European partners because we are members of the EU.

"That was a £1.5 billion decision and, when you put the multiplier effect of that into the supply chain, thousands of jobs were created on the back of that.

"Despite the EU's faults, we should be at the centre of it and we should be driving the agenda and the debate."

# Earn up to £1,000 per vehicle by 'selling' EV battery power

Nissan scheme trials start in September, with electric storage plan also revealed



By Stephen Briers

**N**issan is looking for fleets and company car drivers to join a trial for a new 'vehicle-to-grid' initiative later this year.

The trial, in partnership with energy provider Enel, will enable up to 100 drivers of Nissan Leaf and e-NV200 to give energy from their vehicle battery back to the UK grid, providing a sustainable source of power, while helping the drivers to save and make money.

The initiative assesses the energy levels in the vehicle and, depending on the power requirements, will either suck electricity from the grid or transfer it back. Drivers would be paid for contributing to the grid.

Jim Wright, Nissan Motor (GB) managing director, told *Fleet News*: "This could make the running of the vehicle free – it's an illustration of the technology that is available today."

The trial is due to start in September. National Grid will be closely monitoring the process to help it to understand the implications on demand if a significant proportion of the vehicle parc is run on electric power.

Wright moved to allay fears that customers' cars could be left without any charge if the electricity is pulled back into the grid at peak hours.

"Grid balancing can only be a matter of seconds, not over a long period of time," he said. "For example, you charge the car overnight and the grid automatically takes power from the car when it needs it during the day."

According to Wright, grid-to-vehicle (G2V) "could be worth £600 per year" to drivers. With a Leaf costing 2p per mile to run, £600 equates to 30,000 miles a year. On average Leaf drivers travel 11,000 miles a year, so the rest would be profit.

However, fleets might need to take earnings into consideration when reimbursing for business travel to ensure the driver is not being paid twice for the electricity.

The potential to earn money is even greater for vans which are parked at the depot overnight; the money would then be returning direct to the company rather than the driver.

They could make as much as £1,000 a year per vehicle if G2V was used every night. The only issue to consider is the effect of the continual use of rapid charging for the batteries, which could reduce their life by up to five years (from 20).

Nissan has also revealed details of a new residential energy storage system called xStorage which can complement the G2V process or simply act as a way for consumers to store cheap energy to use to power their homes at peak times.

xStorage is a partnership with Eaton. It uses recycled Nissan batteries and will be sold from September at an installed cost of £3,000 with the promise of saving at least £6,000 over a 10-year period. The box lasts up to 15 years – although that reduces if it is in continual use.

In theory, it could also be used to power any electric vehicle (EV) not just Nissan Leafs. Eaton estimates sales of 100,000 across Europe within five years.

The financial model works by charging the car at night using cheap, off-peak electricity which can then be used to power the home – potentially for a couple of hours – or fed back to the grid during peak-price times. Homes with solar power can also store that energy in the xStorage box.

Eaton also makes a larger industrial box for business use, costing around £5,000.

Both xStorage and G2V will provide Nissan and its partners with insight into the changing use of vehicles. National Grid, in particular, is keen to understand the role EVs could play in supporting the power infrastructure.

"As the company that has sold the most EVs, we are demonstrating how we have thought about this in an innovative way," Wright said. "It goes beyond the car."

## UK SIGNIFICANT MARKET FOR NISSAN EVS

The UK is Nissan's third biggest market for EVs; last year it sold around 5,100 Leafs and 900 e-NV200s and it expects volume to grow by 10% this year. Jim Wright said the company currently had more e-NV200s out on demonstration than any other car or van in its line-up.

"Fleets were buying [EVs] in their ones and twos," he said. "Now it's in the 10s and 20s. A lot of the interest is from public sector and large corporates."

Wright said Nissan had other EVs models in the pipeline. They would not come to market within the next year although they were "not that far away", he added.

## £600

Potential value of 'grid-to-vehicle' initiative to drivers

## 100,000

Predicted sales of energy storage system over the next five years



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Optional equipment, maintenance, driving behaviour, road and weather conditions may affect the official results. \*\*With 17" wheels.  
\*\*\*Model shown is an Infiniti Q50 2.2d Sport AT at £37,420 OTR inc VAT including metallic paint at £660 and 19" wheels (CO<sub>2</sub> 123 g/km).

\*Optional extra on some models. Terms and Conditions apply – see [www.infiniti.co.uk/q50-in-touch-in-control](http://www.infiniti.co.uk/q50-in-touch-in-control)



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# THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*



What is the fuel cost of the future? According to Nissan, there won't be one.

Within the next 10-15 years, many of us will be connecting our electric cars to our homes

and businesses or to charging points in smart streets with the cars autonomously driving onto and off charging pads overnight.

And, as a solution to concerns over national grid capacity as the EV car parc grows, the vehicle would become part of the grid by feeding back electricity when required at peak times.

*"Nissan believes wireless charging will be viable within three years"*

Nissan held a 'Futures' event in London recently to provide glimpses into its vision of a "decade of disruption" (see page 16). It includes home and business storage boxes which would capture solar energy to help power the home, office and car (making better use of all those solar panels), and the much talked about wireless charging road network.

The technology exists, and governments around the world are looking at such solutions in bus lanes and at traffic lights, but it needs a number of parties to work together. Nissan believes wireless charging will be implementable within three years.

The event also showcased ingenious innovations like Pavegen, which converts tremors from footsteps into electricity via a triangular tile embedded below the surface. Six footsteps can power two street lamps for 70 seconds, so just imagine the energy created at an airport, train station or sports stadia. Could it also work with vibrations from cars? Certainly one to watch.

■ Correction: In the Fleets Informed feature in the May 12 issue of *Fleet News*, Nationwide Windscreen Services senior partnership manager Steve Greenway's surname was misspelt. We apologise for the error.

## YOUR LETTERS

### DRIVER TRAINING

## Readers not shocked by lack of road knowledge

EDITOR'S PICK

#### Sam McIndoe wrote:

Having read 'Company drivers have a woeful lack of road knowledge' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), May 18), I think this article is very true. I am carrying out toolbox talks with all my trades over the next few months to highlight Highway Code changes and rules of the road. I'm going to carry out an interactive quiz to get them thinking and will be handing out new copies of the Highway Code to all.



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

#### Busterrabbit added:

Most company car drivers are just drivers, and so no different to any other drivers – that is to say not very good. Many seem to think because they drive a lot they are more experienced and so somehow automatically a 'better driver'.

Playing a guitar for years doesn't turn you into Eric Clapton any more than driving a lot makes you a better driver.

You have to work to be a good driver, most people just accept driving as a right and just want to get from A to B. Most have no real interest in driving or being a good driver and put no effort into it at all.

#### Trevor Roach added:

Having read the findings of this report I believe that many transport managers are already aware of this fact but know that to openly acknowledge the issue means that they would then have to spend time and money to address the road risk, so prefer to turn a blind eye to it.

#### Bianca Castafiore added:

It's not a surprising statement, coming as it has from a driver training company.

After all, if they announced that most were good drivers, their market for business would be significantly reduced.

### REMARKETING

## Usage history a good idea in theory

#### Denis Keenan wrote:

Having read 'Fleets could improve resale values by providing usage history' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), May 12), while the idea is admirable, it is difficult enough to describe the asset properly coming out of a lot of systems going into whatever remarketing route applies. Poor descriptions, options not listed etc are widespread issues; and a lot of sales systems are unable to deal with very good/detailed data feeds when it is available, so adding another layer of data

on is near impossible to get out to the eventual buyers (even if folks were happy to disseminate, which most would not be today).

#### Jon added:

I already do this but would be further encouraged if there were more benefit to my company (from the lease company) to collate this information and provide it. It has to be worth something, but I don't get any financial credit or even a "thank you".



## OBSTRUCTED VIEW

# Mirrors, sat-navs and phones are all dangerous

### Scott wrote:

Having read 'Sat-nav positioning on windscreens a "safety threat"' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), May 10), similarly, we encountered problems with a rear-view camera which was positioned above the driver, in the upper part of the windscreen. A routine inspection pointed out it was obscuring the view, and therefore illegal. If a large stone chip in the windscreen can fail an MOT, and therefore the vehicle unroadworthy, a larger sat-nav is definitely obscuring the driver's view.

### Bob the Engineer added:

I often see something like a Mini with small windscreen and a tall driver with a six-inch sat-nav right in the middle of the windscreen, easily a 'child sized' dead spot. It's also common to see phones stuck to windscreens, I know some use them as



sat-navs or music players, but often you see both and the phone is a bad idea because it's a risk that people will be tempted to read, or even send, messages. I would ideally like to see the police able to enforce a clear view with penalties.

## AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE TRIALS

# Driverless cars don't mean people will be out of a job

### Fran wrote:

Having read 'Registration opens for UK's first public driverless vehicle trials' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), May 16), horses thought they would be put out of a job when the car got invented. They still have jobs; just not pulling carts.



## VEHICLE CHARGING

# Cumbria EV costs too high

### Richard wrote:

Having read 'Cumbria now open to EV drivers' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), May 7), this is very good news, but the cost of using these new chargers is far too high, at 30p/kWh and a £20 membership fee. This will put local electric vehicle drivers off as they will use home chargers – and Ecotricity on the M6 – although it will put off tourists as they will not want yet another high price card for what may only be one or two trips a year. The cost will put running an EV up to a similar figure per mile as a Volkswagen Golf diesel.

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## FLEET OPINION

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES

## EVs will be big but we'll still need Government help

By Erik Fairbairn

“The recent Institute of Motoring (IoM) report outlined that the electric vehicle (EV) industry could be worth £51 billion a year in the UK. To me, this is both likely and not very far away. But we nevertheless need the Government to continue its support for EVs.

The automotive industry in the UK is currently worth about £64.1bn, and the rapid growth trajectory of EVs means that a likely 10% of new vehicles will be electric by 2020, rising to 85% by 2030. So, over the next 15 years, the UK is going to have to transition its entire automotive capability to EVs.

On this analysis alone, the IoM forecast looks reasonable, – conservative, even.

If we add in the UK's growing position in EV charging, then we can see a very exciting picture for UK Plc and the EV revolution.

The Office of Low Emission Vehicles supports the market through the plug-in vehicle grant, but it is already beginning to scale back this support.

In this country, we're only at around 1.5% of new cars being electric. This means that now is the time when the UK should be accelerating its support for EVs, not scaling back. To put this in perspective, in Norway about 22% of new vehicles are electric.

We can achieve this with zero cost to the taxpayer: we simply implement a long-term strategy of incrementally increasing tax on inefficient vehicles, and then apply all that additional revenue to support the roll-out of EVs.

The vehicle purchaser would be able to buy any vehicle they choose. But it would become more and more expensive to buy a highly polluting vehicle, and cheaper and cheaper to buy an EV.

The driver would still have a choice, there is no net cost to the taxpayer and we would take a massive step forward in reducing the UK's carbon emissions.

Simple.

*“Now is the time when the UK should be accelerating its support for electric vehicles, not scaling back”*



**Erik Fairbairn**  
Pod Point CEO  
and Founder



**Ashley Sowerby**  
Managing director,  
Chevin Fleet Solutions



## SOFTWARE

## Make your fleet more like Leicester City football club

By Ashley Sowerby

“First, let me declare an interest. I am a Derby County fan, so seeing Leicester City do quite so well this season has been a bittersweet experience, bearing in mind the east midlands rivalry.

However, I have been reading closely about the Foxes' exploits for most of the season and something became very clear to me: part of their success is that they are like a well-run fleet.

How so? Well, one of the secrets of Leicester's success has been an embracing of technology, notably GPS and heart rate monitors, ahead of most other premiership clubs. These have enabled the club to track players in almost every way possible.

How has this helped? By using software to work through the data collected, the club has been able to see who is in peak condition, who might need resting and who could be heading towards an injury or much more.

If this sounds familiar, it is. It's just like employing modern technology for your fleet. Using tools such as fleet software and telematics, you can track the status of drivers and vehicles in a huge amount of detail.

In football and in fleet management, the important thing is what you then do with the information gathered by these systems. Claudio Ranieri has garnered plaudits this season for his decision to stick with a stable squad, but also for making inspired substitutions that have turned games around. He appears to be reading the data well.

This kind of carefully interventionist approach might work well for your fleet, but there is also a whole host of other strategies that you could adopt. The key is to ensure that you have the right software tools to interpret the large amount of data you receive.

Next season, I hope to follow up this piece with another on the advantages of emulating Derby County. Please, let me dream.

*“Using software, the club can see who is in peak condition, who needs rest and who could be heading towards an injury”*



# HANDLING AND GRIP TESTING COMFORT AND NOISE TESTING OFF-ROAD AND 4X4 TESTING EFFICIENT DRIVING TESTING

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**JUNE 14-15, 2016, MILLBROOK PROVING GROUND, BEDFORDSHIRE**

In a little over three weeks, around 300 of the latest cars and vans will be available for testing by fleet decision-makers at Company Car In Action.

While the list of UK premieres and first drives continues to grow, the opportunity for attendees to familiarise themselves with recent updates also expands.

The event, on June 14-15, will be held at Millbrook Proving Ground in Bedfordshire, enabling fleet decision-makers to assess cars and vans on routes that replicate real-world driving conditions.

Unlike a racing circuit, Millbrook was purpose built for appraising vehicles during development, and will allow attendees an unrivalled opportunity to try the latest cars and vans back-to-back.

There is a hill route, to measure handling, grip, steering response and engine performance. The high-speed bowl allows cars to be driven at up to 100mph to test comfort at speed, revealing issues such as noise intrusion from the road, engine or wind.

The city route allows cars to be manoeuvred at low speed in various directions to assess their suitability in city driving. The off-road route is for testing how four-wheel drives tackle various obstacles.

Attendees have the opportunity to drive vehicles without a manufacturer representative looking over their shoulder, but they will also be able to discuss various aspects of the cars with experts at the stands.

## CONFIRMED Ford Edge

Ford enters the large SUV sector with the Edge, a rival for the Hyundai Santa Fe and Kia Sorento, in a market that will grow in the next few years as Renault and Skoda join. The Edge is all-wheel drive-only and diesel-only in the UK, with a choice of 180hp and 210hp 2.0-litre diesel variants. The higher-power model comes with Ford's Powershift dual-clutch automatic as standard, for smooth gearshifts. It will join the recently revised Ranger pick-up and Kuga in the range.



## CONFIRMED Peugeot 2008

The 2008 will be one of the newest vehicles at Company Car In Action, recently refreshed and with deliveries commencing in June. It comes with more of an SUV-like appearance, new engines, colours and equipment as well as a new GT Line equipment grade. It also has its 'grip control' enhanced traction technology available on automatic transmission variants, as well as manual.







### CONFIRMED Nissan Leaf 30kWh

Nissan's upgrades to the Leaf over the past five years have let to improvements in the distance it can travel between charges. New for 2016, the Leaf comes with a 30kWh battery, with different chemistry from the standard car, allowing it to travel up to 155 miles between charges instead of 124. It is offered alongside the standard model, and will be available to drive at Millbrook, making its first appearance at Company Car In Action.



### CONFIRMED Volvo XC90 Excellence

A super-luxury version of the new Volvo XC90, the Excellence has four seats, making it suitable as a car for chauffeur-driven executives. The car, which will be on static display only, will be rolled out to selected markets in the near future, currently online, but eventually through the dealer networks. Its appearance at Company Car In Action will be to gauge UK desirability and, with enough interest, could see it introduced here.



### CONFIRMED Alfa Romeo Giulietta

A significant refresh for 2016 gives the Giulietta greater fleet appeal than ever, with more equipment as standard, an automatic gearbox option on the 120hp 1.6-litre diesel, and the introduction of sub-100g/km versions (with manual or automatic transmissions), helping reduce driver tax liability and employers' national insurance contributions. The Giulietta revisions come ahead of the new Alfa Romeo Giulia, which will arrive in the UK in October.

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### CONFIRMED BMW X1

All new late in 2015 the second-generation BMW X1 comes to Company Car In Action for the first time. Taller and wider than before, with a little extra ground clearance, the new X1 ticks more boxes and offers greater appeal for user-choosers. It's also more fuel-efficient than before and comes with more equipment as standard, including sat-nav, while two-wheel drive versions are driven at the front axle rather than the rear.



### CONFIRMED Kia Sportage

New in 2016, the Sportage is already proving to be one of Kia's most successful new model introductions, with sales running at higher than expectations. Kia will offer a mix of variants to drive at Millbrook, including the fleet-favourite 1.7-litre CRDi, and new 2.0-litre diesel and a 1.6-litre T petrol engine. It also comes with a new GT Line specification, which enhances its look with sporty styling details, expected to give it more user-chooser appeal.



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**INFINITI**  
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**RENAULT**  
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**VAUXHALL MOTORS**  
**VOLKSWAGEN**  
**VOLVO CAR**





# Operators debate the best ways to drive down costs

Debundling services, vehicle funding options and driver training top the agenda

By Andrew Ryan

**C**ost-saving continues to be a major priority for fleets, with many companies taking different approaches to achieve the same end result. Methods utilised by the fleet managers who attended the *Fleet News* roundtable, sponsored by Alphabet, have included debundling services, looking at vehicle funding options and running driver training courses.

## How have you reduced fleet costs?

**Eric Bristow:** Together with our fleet management company, I debundled everything to find out the true cost of things such as tyres and glass, so we could look at how we could reduce that cost. We even looked at what we were being charged for labour and what different repairs cost. We regularly compare our prices with a list of items. When I initially started to do it I went back three years so there was a lot of data, but now we do it on a monthly basis so it is not too time consuming. One advantage is that when we come to the table to talk to suppliers, they realise we do it: if you happen to let them charge what they want to charge they will.

**Jon Burdekin:** If you don't know what every part of a fleet costs, you might want to break down the costs of, for example, maintenance, repairs and all the component parts and put them into a pie chart. Then you can start to understand the larger picture. It may be that insurance takes up a large part of your spend and that can give you a priority area to address. The more you can break down your costs, the more you can try and control them.

## 30%

Drop in accidents seen by Genus from use of rear parking sensors

**Adrian Davies:** It's also about giving drivers a vehicle that's fit for purpose. When I started this role three years ago I analysed the costs and accidents, and it just cried out for parking sensors. It's a three- or four-year project to get the whole fleet changed, but something cheap, like rear parking sensors, can cut 30% of accidents. When you are on a farm at 4am where it's pitch black and that silo that wasn't there yesterday is there today, a parking sensor is going to help your driver. It doesn't matter what role our drivers are doing, I have basics that all the vehicles must have if they come on to my fleet. One of them is parking sensors. When you're approaching manufacturers or dealerships, it's worth asking them what they can do to help you.

**Jon Burdekin:** There are three areas to reducing costs. One is the vehicle – you need to get the vehicle right. The second is to get the driver right, because you can do all you like to get people in the most appropriate car, but if their behaviour is not right then all your good work can be undone. The third

*"You can do all you like to get people in the most appropriate car, but if their behaviour is not right then all your good work can be undone"*

Jon Burdekin, Alphabet



## DELEGATES



**Mark Dickenson**  
Fleet manager,  
Compco Fire Systems



**Nabeel Sheikh**  
Deputy director of  
operations and fleet  
manager, Carey Worldwide



**June Furlonger**  
Fleet coordinator,  
Ceuta Healthcare



**Andrew Wearing**  
Fleet manager,  
Bristow & Sutor



**David Whitaker**  
Operations director,  
Warren Board



**Julie King**  
Fleet manager,  
Emcor UK



**Adrian Davies**  
Fleet manager,  
Genus



**Eric Bristow**  
Fleet manager,  
Hobart



**Jacob Telemacque**  
Fleet manager,  
Kings Security



**Graham Ruddick**  
Group distribution manager,  
Cogent UK



**Mark Edwards**  
Head of training and  
development, NFE Group



**Jon Burdekin**  
Head of product  
development, Alphabet

is the journey. Is it necessary? That's from a safety perspective and also the cost of the journey.

**Adrian Davies:** I would add a fourth to that, and that's the service around the vehicle. It's all well and good getting a vehicle with all the bells and whistles on, but we have had problems with vehicle off-road time because the extra parts that are not standard or normal for that vehicle are not in stock.

#### Do you lease or outright purchase your vehicles?

**Andrew Wearing:** We outright purchase our vehicles. We keep them their whole lifespan, so we'll take a car from brand new to 160,000-plus miles, and a van to 250,000-odd miles. We've got our own auction business where we sell them on site.

**Graham Ruddick:** We tend to lease everything. I'm trying to have a debate with our people to say maybe it's not always good to lease vehicles. Apart from the bells and whistles that can break, you can get 200,000 miles out of a diesel if it's serviced correctly. You can spend a lot of money on a two- or three-year lease for a vehicle and when you give it back the leasing company can say 'by the way, that's got to be fixed and that's got to be fixed', so you have to wonder what the actual true cost of the vehicle would be if you bought it first.

**Andrew Wearing:** When we take cars up to 160,000 miles I don't get any more issues with them than I would with a new car. Because we tend to buy the same kind of vehicles, we get to know the potential problems so can forestall those issues before they arrive.

**Adrian Davies:** We've had conversations with the management and releasing the capital is the issue. [Buying vehicles through outright purchase] is a nice theory to have, especially for larger fleets, but if you've got 600 vehicles that you privately own, all the capital is tied up and the business and its shareholders are not going to like that.

#### How successful have you found driver training to be, and what method works best?

**Andrew Wearing:** When a driver starts with us we do an online test, and to me it's worthless. It's a tick-box to say you've given them some analysis of their driver behaviour and they get a score, but in reality it doesn't tell you if they're good or bad. You can bend your answers to fit the questions

*"If you've  
got 600  
vehicles that  
you privately  
own, all the  
capital is  
tied up"*

*Adrian Davies, Genus*

to a certain degree. You're not going to give the wrong answer deliberately and an on-road driving experience with a professional driver has got to be the way forward. We provide training to drivers that we perceive to be a problem. If a driver does the online test initially and it identifies a problem, then we look at that and perhaps go on the road with them. We also look at accident history and driving style in terms of the fuel efficiency data we've got that might say this driver has a heavy right foot, he's had a couple of accidents, or he would benefit from some type of training.

**Mark Edwards:** Our organisation believes in a holistic type of approach to the driving task. We have something in the order of 21 different courses and they will quite often kick off with an online profiler. Then we get the drivers to order a series of e-learning modules in terms of which one they would like to get first. So for them, if town driving is the most concerning aspect of their driving, that will go to the top of the list and, at a predetermined time, each driver in the scheme will receive a module that relates to that preference.

**Julie King:** You need to change behaviour, don't you?

**Mark Edwards:** Part of that is awareness. People become unaware of how at risk they are out on the roads. Workshops are a good way of raising awareness of issues.

**Graham Ruddick:** We recognised that driving was in the top three high risk areas within our business: we handle bulls, but driving was up there in the top three. We then tailored packages around it.

We've got a driving policy and we make sure everybody reads it before they join the business. We've just got into online training in the past 12 months; before people are allowed to drive a vehicle they have an assessment. If there are any areas – for instance, hazard perception – that are highlighted, then there is a module you can take. If the driver is still struggling with that then we will look to do one-to-one training.



Everything you need to  
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# 'I HAVE AN AVERSION TO GREY FLEET'

That's what Kevin Inns told his new employers when plotting to convert cash takers to company cars. It's saved thousands of pounds he tells *Stephen Briers*

**T**he statement "here's a clean sheet of paper, now go and create a fleet policy" would fill some with dread, while others would eagerly grasp the opportunity to shape a fleet to their own blueprint.

Kevin Inns sits firmly in the latter camp. When he joined Barchester in 2005, he brought to the care home provider a career spent entirely in fleet, with experiences ranging from job-need to perk cars and from manufacturer to leasing company. The chance to employ those skills to establish something from scratch was a central reason he joined the organisation.

"Barchester had no transport manager before; they inherited a fleet from an acquisition which tripled the size of the fleet and they didn't know what to do with them," Inns says.

"Their philosophy was to have a car allowance and then they wouldn't have to worry about it. I told them at the interview that that was not the case and it needed to change. I have an aversion to grey fleet."

His strong words clearly had an impact; Inns was hired and left to get on with the job at hand. At the time, the fleet numbered 160, with around 170 cash-takers.

The cash scheme was highly attractive to staff so Inns put together a spreadsheet for the board showing the cost to the business and the potential savings from bringing them into the company programme. It ran into tens of thousands of pounds per year.

The benefits ran deeper than the bottom line savings, however. "It also enabled us to have greater control over what they were driving," Inns explains. "This is important for a business [in a sector] that is often criticised for the amount of money it charges to look after people, even though that money is justified if we are to look after them properly."

As a result, Inns created a car policy that contained good quality, reliable cars. He then set about educating staff about the advantages of company cars.

"A lot of people didn't appreciate how cost-effective a company car could be for them," he says. "So we put together a range of car options, with tax burdens, and it opened their eyes to see how much they could save, plus the convenience factor if the car is off-road."

Initially, staff were given the choice to opt into the company scheme – except new starters who were no longer offered the cash alternative. Over the next few years, almost all decided to move across, testament to the effectiveness of Inns's communications strategy.

The choice of vehicle has been key to the successful migration. Inns selected cars from Audi, Ford, Nissan, Toyota, Škoda and Volkswagen (including all-electric Leafs and hybrid where available) for their





Kevin Inns: 'We put  
together a range of car  
options, with tax burdens. It  
opened the eyes of staff'



## FACTFILE

**Company** Barchester

**Transport manager** Kevin Inns

**Fleet size** 465, including 280 cars and 35 vans

**Funding** Contract purchase and outright purchase

**Operating cycle** Three to four years/80,000 miles on contract purchase; up to eight years on outright purchase

**Brands** Audi, Ford, Nissan, Toyota, Škoda and Volkswagen



"quality, value for money, good reputation – and they promote our business as being safe, secure and sound".

Nissan and Audi are the most popular, followed by Volkswagen, which has been unaffected by the emissions scandal.

Inns also implemented a 130g/km CO<sub>2</sub> emissions cap, which remains unchanged because "everyone is of a mindset that they want to reduce emissions for tax purposes".

He fostered this culture by heavily promoting the tax implications of each model to encourage staff to plan for full terms.

"We say the choice you make now is the choice you stick with," he says.

Just 16 people remain on the cash list, primarily senior management and a handful who require a type of car for personal reasons which is not offered by Barchester.

However, each has to sign up to the same rules governing the fleet; they are treated the same when driving on company business.

In creating a car fleet policy, Barchester has bucked the trend in the care home profession, where few organisations offer company vehicles. Consequently, it is seen as a more attractive employer, helping it to appeal to new recruits.

As a result of the changes, the fleet has grown almost three-fold, to 465 vehicles, including 280 cars and 35 vans (the mobile maintenance team).

The balance consists of people carriers, minibuses and pool cars, based at one of Barchester's 200-plus care homes across the UK.

Funding is a mix of outright purchase and contract purchase, the latter exploiting the care home's VAT position. Following a tender at the end of 2014, Alphabet was appointed as the funder, including maintenance.

"They were the best option because of their size, services and rebates," Inns says. "Price is a driver but I do a lot of hand holding with our people, so I also wanted a provider that would work with us in helping us to operate the fleet."

Inns willingly acknowledges his preoccupation with near micro-management. On average he receives around 80 emails and 50 phone calls per day from drivers.

Would this type of admin not be better handled by Alphabet? "In many cases it is straightforward. But I would sooner answer a question today than have someone do it wrong, requiring me to spend time putting it right," he replies.



"I believe in providing a service to our people. They are not transport minded – I am, so this is the role I fulfil."

While the majority of the fleet is on contract purchase, Barchester owns 130 vehicles, including all its vans which are bought at around two years old via auction. This is a legacy dating back to when the company launched its care home maintenance division.

Inns explains: "When we started the maintenance business, we didn't know if it was going to work so we decided to buy some vans at auction rather than risk being left with vans on contract for a business that didn't work."

The approach stuck; Barchester operates the vans until they "start to cost us money", he says, generally at around eight years old. It also owns some people carriers due to the reluctance of leasing companies to provide

## 'NOTHING BUT FLEET' LEADS TO CURRENT ROLE

Kevin Inns has known nothing but fleet during his career. He began repairing commercial vehicles from school before joining the fleet team at former retailer GUS.

While there, Inns had, he says, "the best teacher ever" in Sid Iredale. As a former driving examiner who had spent time in the army, Iredale had "the right background".

Inns says: "He nurtured me. In the '70s he insisted on driver training before someone could get in a car. That was ingrained in me right back then."

From there, Inns ran the fleet at Safety-Kleen for five years before exchanging job-need drivers for perk at a computer business.

In the early '90s, his career took a left turn when he was poached by Nissan to head its company car fleet and its press

and demonstrator fleet. Inns also set up the used car disposals scheme at the company, which earned him his first appearance in *Fleet News* in 1992.

"It was great working with likeminded people in fleet," he says. "Often fleet is way down the list of priorities – it's not a core business – but at the manufacturer, vehicles were everything."

After a stint running the fleet operations at a business managing waste contracts for local authorities, Inns took another diversion, following a well-trodden path into leasing by joining Velo (now part of Zenith) as remarketing manager.

In 2005 he was approached to head the fleet at care home provider Barchester where he was presented with a clean sheet of paper to create a fleet policy from scratch.





funding for more than five years.

"They are very low mileage so we lease them for five years and then we buy them and run them for another two or three years," Inns says.

He takes care to ensure that every home knows what it is paying each month for budgeting purposes. Where vehicles are bought outright, the home pays a monthly maintenance fee into a central pot which covers any repairs.

"This means they still have a fixed monthly cost which is key because they are on tight budgets," Inns says.

An important priority when creating the new fleet policy was driver safety, not least considering the statements about the grey fleet made by Inns during his job interview.

All training is undertaken by AA Drivetech, with one-to-ones taking place over several

*"Our people are not transport-minded – I am, so this is the role I fulfil"*

*Kevin Inns, Barchester*

days to minimise the impact on the care homes. Additional training aids cover wheelchair safety, use of tail-lifts, health and safety and first aid.

As a general rule no one under the age of 25 is allowed to drive for business. In addition, regular eyesight checks are man-

datory as many drivers are past the age of retirement.

All incidents must be reported and, if necessary, investigated. This also enables insurance partner Aviva to tackle uninsured loss recovery, which has saved the company a lot of money.

Driver buy-in is achieved through persistent communications on Barchester's intranet system, reinforced by regular meetings and events. "We also ensure that drivers take residents' needs into consideration in how they drive," Inns adds. "Everything is designed with safety in mind."



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# 'THE TIMING IS NOW RIGHT FOR THE ATECA'

Late to the SUV party, the Ateca should build on the success of the Leon, but there are no plans for a Seat sports car anytime soon says chief executive Luca De Meo. *Simon Harris* reports

**T**he popularity of SUVs has been growing in Europe for many years, and you would be forgiven for wondering why it has taken until now for Seat to get in on the action.

The Ateca SUV is derived from the same platform as the Leon, and UK deliveries will begin in September. But it is likely to be the first of a family of crossover models from Seat, with a smaller Nissan-Juke rival due in 2017, and a larger SUV expected by 2020.

The Leon X-Perience, introduced last year with raised ground clearance and some off-road ability in a high-specification version of the Leon ST, has given us a taste of what to expect.

Chief executive Luca De Meo sees SUVs as crucial for boosting user-chooser interest in the brand. He has headed Seat for seven months, following a management restructure within the Volkswagen Group in the aftermath of 2015's emissions scandal.

De Meo has experience at a number of other manufacturers outside the group (including Renault, Toyota and Fiat), which many see as beneficial to taking the newly profitable Seat into fresh market sectors, and creating vision.

## SHIFT IN PERCEPTION

"I've been here six months," says De Meo, who was previously sales and marketing director at Audi. "I had a certain perception of the brand; a certain expectation. But I have to say, it feels like there is a clear mismatch between the brand and its perception.

"My predecessors did a good job giving me a solid base from which to work. We're now making a profit and hopefully there will be a snowball effect. Previously, we hadn't made money for seven years.

"The company is at the start of a big change in its product portfolio. Sometimes you need to be lucky, and I'm optimistic we can move the company forward."

He said the timing is now right for the Ateca, pointing to a shift in perception delivered by the current Leon after it was launched three years ago. Its popularity has enabled the brand to boost sales and increase its C-sector price point, enlarging its "centre of gravity", as De Meo puts it.

"The Ateca is a way of consolidating the step we took with the Leon," he says. "From a financial perspective, an SUV gives us a healthier margin and can contribute further to our profits. We also see it as a user-chooser opportunity, and our partners will see we are offering products for the market right now."

Once described as a 'Spanish Alfa Romeo' – attributed to former Volkswagen Group chairman Ferdinand Piech – De Meo, a former Alfa chief, is quick to quash talk of likening

Seat to other car manufacturers. "We are not the 'Spanish Alfa Romeo'," he says. "That doesn't say the right thing about us. Alfa Romeo has a very different history from ours, and history is the only thing you cannot recreate. I see the charm of the idea, but we must go our own way.

"People should expect emotion and warmth from Seat, but likening us to other brands is the wrong approach."

One element clearly missing from the line-up of a brand that plays on emotion and performance is a bespoke sports car. De Meo says we are unlikely to see one anytime soon, if at all.

"We can't afford sports cars," he says. "We'd rather bet on models that bring profitability. Sports cars only tend to sell well in the UK.

"From a brand position, the Ateca will move us to the centre. The 'boy racer' positioning of some of our other products kept us in a corner. An SUV can be sporty. I believe it's a modern interpretation of a high-performance car – and it's also a global trend."

This raises the idea that, as a differentiator from other Volkswagen Group SUVs, it's possible that Seat could create a niche for affordable high-performance variants wearing Cupra badges. But Seat has also succeeded in making older segments work, such as in the Alhambra large MPV, strengthening its case for a position in the Seat of the future.

"There is still a future for the Alhambra," says De Meo. "We didn't really expect it to continue to have such a strong business case. One of the reasons could be that a lot of rivals have abandoned the segment, so we see a place in our line-up for it for the foreseeable future.

"However, there is potential for having a seven-seat SUV in the future.

UK deliveries of the Ateca will begin in September



## FACTFILE

**Company** Seat  
**Chief executive** Luca De Meo  
**Time in role** Seven months  
**2015 fleet sales** 8,568 (2014: 8,315)  
**2016 fleet sales to date** 3,042  
**Key fleet models** Leon, Ibiza, Ateca, Alhambra





Luca De Meo: 'We can't afford sportscars. We'd rather bet on profitability'

"You will have seen the 20V20 concept at Geneva. It shows the direction we are planning to go in the next five years.

"But we also need to consider how far we can stretch the brand in terms of our price point. We have to ask ourselves if we are credible in that price range [£30,000-£40,000 in the UK] today. Right now it's an idea that's on the table," he adds.

De Meo's point on credible pricing also influences his view on adopting alternative fuels, potentially delaying the appearance of fully electric Seats.

"Emissions regulations are evolving and it's forcing us to think seriously about it," he says. "The targets for 2020 and 2025 will have to be achieved using alternative fuels.

"But because of our market position, we have to ensure our prices are reasonable in the segment. Seat probably won't be a front-runner in electric vehicle technology, but we still have a target to meet."

The introduction of Seat SUVs marks a higher level of confidence in the brand within Volkswagen Group. Sales across Europe had been declining from 2006 (385,000) to 2012 (261,000). Although in the UK it has always performed better than in Europe as a whole, the company overall spent seven consecutive years without making a profit.

The current Leon marked a turning point in the brand's fortunes, which is now being rewarded with greater independence and investment.

But this also requires a better definition of what Seat stands for, and De Meo is working on establishing that.

"We have been able to make these developments because of the work done by my predecessors," he says. "When we deliver on our promises it gives the management more

*"We see Ateca as a user-chooser opportunity, and our partners will see we are offering products for the market right now"*

Luca De Meo, Seat

confidence in us. We gain credibility within the group and we are able to fund projects from our own profits.

"We are in a strong position, being able to use group technology. After a period of strong centralisation, there has been a decision to give the brands a bit more independence.

"For me, it's a big opportunity, but also a big responsibility. We are trying to make Seat more unique. When we've asked 'what is the purpose of Seat?' there hasn't been a compelling answer. Now it's time to answer that. We have ideas and can afford the luxury of thinking about our purpose. And the group wants us to find it.

"Up to now, the reasons people usually chose a Seat were, to put it bluntly, because it's a Volkswagen that was cheaper and had a sportier design. That can work maybe for selling 400,000 cars a year, but it doesn't stick in the minds of consumers.

"We need to find this distinctive proposition across the whole business so it can come out from the shadow of the other brands," he adds.

8,568

Fleet sales in 2015



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# GET SUPPLIERS TO WORK FOR YOU

Fleet managers say they want five things from their supplier partners. *Catherine Chetwynd* looks at how you can get them



## 1 A TRUE PARTNERSHIP

### Why is this important?

A true partnership ensures suppliers respond quickly and efficiently when clients need something in a hurry. This means they can help fleet managers develop and implement strategies.

To do this effectively, suppliers need to get under the skin of a clients' business to understand exactly how it works.

"If they can't grasp that, they are going to be offering the wrong sort of solutions," says Liz Hollands, fleet and facilities manager for the Freight Transport Association (FTA).

A good cultural fit is also important, as is the right range of products and services to meet buyers' and drivers' requirements. This is so that the latter group can do their job – driving – most effectively and also so they can have the vehicle that best fits their reward package or job needs.

Fleet is not just about moving people and goods around, adds Ted Sakyi, group fleet manager for Wates Group.

"It is about motivating and rewarding drivers," he adds. "Company cars and LCVs are emotive objects; we spend a lot of time in them, which is why you need a partner who thinks beyond the car as just an asset."

### How can a fleet manager achieve this?

"You need to understand suppliers are in business to make some money," says Hollands.

"You get a much better result if you respect that and, with a stable, long-term relationship, you can build a lot more trust and more

knowledge of each other."

Clearly stated objectives from the outset, supported by ongoing communication, mean that buyers and suppliers know what has been achieved and what has still to be achieved.

**"With a stable, long-term relationship, you can build a lot more trust and more knowledge of each other"**





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Knowledgeable  
support

Prompt  
resolution of  
complaints



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"Fleet managers benefit from mapping out their exact requirements before speaking to a business rental provider, so that instead of adopting a universal solution to their needs, the supplier can work with them to deliver best value, a bespoke service and ensure the expected service levels are exceeded," says Yvonne Findlay, head of supply chain at Nexus Vehicle Rental.

Mark Ashpole, head of operations for BT Fleet, agrees. He says: "A fleet manager should agree a set of contractual key performance indicators (KPIs) and a regular review process.

"This can include driver satisfaction, time to get vehicles back on the road and how quickly phones are answered. All

these measures give a barometer how well the partnership is working."

Suzanne Ford, head of customer service at Arval, adds: "When selecting a supplier, a fleet manager should try to assess its service culture.

"Everyone will tell you that they are focused on service but try to tease out tangible evidence such as service-related awards and recognition, customer and driver satisfaction scores, how they invest in the training and development of their employees, and the structure they use."

THE SUPPLIER'S  
VIEW



## 2 OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY

### Why is this important?

Transparency is key to trust and, if something is opaque or unnecessarily complicated, people instinctively distrust it.

Suppliers should show clients how they have saved them money and be able to demonstrate that they have not charged for things they might have or, where they do make charges, why it is a fair charge.

### How can a fleet manager achieve this?

If both parties show integrity, suppliers are more likely to be clear about what they have and have not charged buyers.

Setting up clear, shared objectives from day one is essential, so that suppliers know what they are expected to deliver, whether that is

service level agreements or overall fleet and mobility goals such as reduced CO<sub>2</sub> output, greater operational efficiency or increased customer satisfaction.


Regular, ongoing communication at all levels is essential – not just focusing on what is not working, but also celebrating successes.

“Too often, key people involved in the relationship aren’t aware of how they are contributing to successes. You need to talk about the progress made so far and also what else you need to do next,” says Ted Sakyi, of Wates Group.

Discussion and feedback in your organisation are a useful gauge of the pulse of the relationship, but it is easy to be distracted by verbatim comments or one-offs – the

important thing is to have ongoing measures such as customer satisfaction surveys with drivers, especially if these take place after a key touchpoint in the relationship with the supplier such as a service, breakdown, new car delivery or glass and tyre replacement.

**“Regular communication at all levels is essential – not just focusing on what is not working”**

**“All procedures and processes should be discussed with clients to ensure a complete understanding of each other’s business, so that potential problems can be identified and addressed prior to commencement of the contract,”** says Caroline Gallagher, sales director of Thrifty.

**“This develops trust between the customer and the supplier. Companies should have an account manager assigned to their business**

**who, by conducting regular review meetings, will keep the lines of communication open and guarantee the customer’s voice will always be heard.**

**“Regular, transparent reporting should also be a given, and should be aligned to the KPIs that are most important to that customer,”** she adds.

**“This will demonstrate how the leasing company is performing, and how the fleet is performing.”**

## 3 STREAMLINED AND EFFICIENT PROCESSES

### Why is this important?

The relationship between buyer and supplier should involve quick, simple, easy and well structured processes, whether through technology or people.

Some of these will develop organically, but regular questioning of them will lead to greater efficiencies for buyer, supplier and drivers, saving time and money.

Ted Sakyi, of Wates Group, says: “The more complexity there is, the more things can go wrong, so you need to keep processes as straightforward as possible.”

The FTA’s Liz Hollands advocates meaningful reports, preferably online and instantly available to the customer, who should

**“The more complexity, the more things can go wrong. You need to keep processes straightforward”**



be able to pull off what they need and interpret it their way.

“There is no point in them giving you their standard suite of reports if that’s not what you need, nor if you have to ask for it and wait for someone to produce it at the other end,” she

says. “And I want instant access to real people, I don’t like going through phone menus. I’m lucky in that the team I deal with at Marshall Leasing is very stable, the people have been there a long time and I know who to go to.”

### How can a fleet manager achieve this?

It is, however, a two-way street. “For them to provide us with meaningful reports, we have to provide them with accurate information,” says Hollands.

“If we don’t tell them when drivers change cars or don’t provide them with changes of address, the information they supply to us is less efficient.”

**“The best suppliers will have cohesive flat structures with seamless processes throughout every customer touchpoint and with staff empowered to make decisions and provide solutions,”** says Caroline Gallagher, of Thrifty.

**“Numerous layers of management within a company will only delay deployment of initiatives and query resolution.**

**“Using companies who employ all staff rather than use agency drivers and staff allows total consistency in procedures at every touch point.”**

Mark Ashpole, head of operations for BT Fleet, adds: “Fleet managers should continually review their processes and, if they feel there is a way to do something better, this should be shared with their supplier.

**“It’s very easy for suppliers to become complacent, so it’s imperative to challenge them to deliver efficiency and innovation throughout the contract, not just at the beginning or at the end when it’s up for renewal.”**





# What makes the best customer service?

At Thrifty we want to provide more – we want to be legendary

## How do we achieve this?

- By having a 'can do' attitude, along with a willingness to find effective solutions and innovations for our customer base.
- By acknowledging customers' questions in a timely manner, answering calls promptly and having a person customers can converse with rather than an automated system.
- By having the knowledge to respond swiftly and efficiently to questions asked and being honest if we don't know the answer.
- It's about the personal touch, knowing your customer and their business, which is why each customer is allocated an account manager and a reservations team. We have never lost a customer on service.
- It's about getting it right first time, every time. What some may perceive as "going the extra mile" we consider normal practice, and all our staff share this vision.

## Go with a company you can trust

When we say we are going to deliver we do just that. Delivering the right vehicle in the right place at the right time, full of fuel, clean and roadworthy.

Complete customer satisfaction is an integral part of our business. This is what we have built our reputation on and it is driven from the top down. We have never lost a customer on service and this is due to communication, flexibility, listening to our customers and finding solutions. Nothing is set in stone and we adapt to accommodate our customers' needs.

As winners of the *Fleet News* Award for best rental company in both 2015 and 2016, we now lead the way in daily rental.



Roger Hancock is presented with the award for best rental company of the year



**"We strive to provide the best customer service within our industry. The customer is at the very heart of everything we do and at Thrifty we have a simple philosophy: "Get it right first time, every time." We are delighted to be continually recognised for our outstanding level of customer service – something we are all extremely proud of"**

**Roger Hancock, managing director, Thrifty Car & Van Rental**

"Thrifty is the most reliable rental supplier, offering exceptional, consistent service combined with being the most flexible to assist LeasePlan in achieving our goals to grow our rental business. They display all the core values that LeasePlan require in a supply partner"

**Neil Dixon, head of procurement & supplier management, LeasePlan UK Limited**

"It is imperative that we deliver a seamless branded experience putting the needs of the customer first and leaving them with a positive impression. We believe it is not just the car, it's the people that make a difference and Thrifty help us achieve our goals through their total focus and passion to deliver the best customer service"

**Avril Hargreaves, group mobility manager, Volkswagen Group UK Ltd**



## THE NEW ALFA GIULIETTA TECNICA. GEARED TOWARDS BUSINESS.

The New Alfa Giulietta Tecnica has plenty to catch the eye. Its evolved, sporty exterior includes free metallic paint and privacy glass, while the new stylish interior is now even more refined.

The long list of standard features include dual zone climate control, front and rear parking sensors and the new Uconnect™ LIVE service that keeps you connected to your world with real-time traffic reports, music, news and the latest social network feeds.

**CO<sub>2</sub> from 99g/km**

**BIK from 19%**

**MPG up to 74.3**

**P11D from £19,195**

For more information, call our Business Centre free on 0808 168 7188 or email [alfaromeo.fleet@alfaromeo.com](mailto:alfaromeo.fleet@alfaromeo.com)

*La meccanica delle emozioni*



Model shown is the Alfa Giulietta 1.6 JTD<sub>M-2</sub> 120 hp Tecnica at £19,250 OTR including Alfa White Paint. Range of official fuel consumption figures for the Giulietta Tecnica range: Urban 55.4 - 60.1 mpg (5.1 - 4.7 l/100km); Extra Urban 74.3 - 88.3 mpg (3.8 - 3.2 l/100km); Combined 65.7 - 74.3 mpg (4.3 - 3.8 l/100km). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 113 - 99 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> 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.



## 4 ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGEABLE SUPPORT

**Why is this important?**

Fleet managers appreciate a swift response to changes in legislation. What will compliance require? How will it affect them? How is the leasing company going to implement changes? What will it cost?

The supplier needs to have comprehensive information about the client at its fingertips and supply regular reviews with valuable data.

"You're buying in knowledge that you don't have within your business, as well as the operational scale, which means they can take care of issues for you – enabling you to concentrate on the day job," says Ted Sakyi, of Wates Group.

"Our role then becomes more strategic in terms of steering suppliers and driving the fleet/mobility strategy within the business."

In addition, where fleet managers are making long-term decisions that can have a significant financial and operational impact, the input of trusted experts is imperative.

**How can a fleet manager achieve this?**

"I get the leasing company to understand the business they are supporting," says Simon Binks, fleet manager for Innserve.

"We do this after we have got down to a shortlist of three to five potential suppliers, to give them a very detailed insight into our business and our customer requirements.

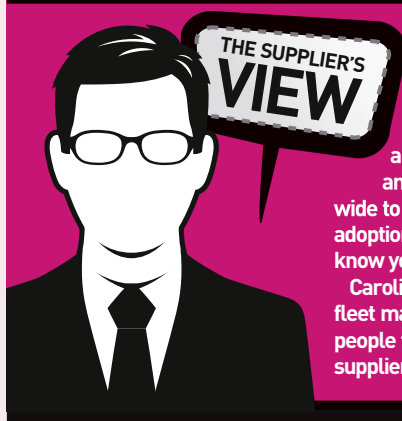
"We can then drill down to the details to get the best possible support from any supplier we select. While it is a big investment in our time to undertake this with our chosen few, it pays dividends in the long run.

**"You're buying in knowledge that you don't have within your business, and operational scale"**



"A key issue is to know and understand the Innserve business," says Binks. "We operate a large van fleet but a small car fleet, which is unusual as most are large car, small van. So we select a partner who has a large van fleet."

He also has pre-agreed processes for issues that have come up in the past.



**"Make sure you have selected a supplier that has resilience and breadth of resources,"** says Mark Ashpole, of BT Fleet. **"You should aim to partner with an industry leader that has a culture of analysing and sharing knowledge company-wide to make improvements. With the increasing adoption and use of self-serve portals, it's good to know you can still speak to a team of experts."**

Caroline Gallagher, of Thrifty, says: **"The fleet manager should endeavour to meet senior people from different departments within the supplier's company."**

**"This will provide comfort that the various departments can deliver the service being sold by the sales person."**

**"It may require additional time at the beginning, but will more than make up for it further down the line if the fleet manager knows the fleet team is operating in the client company's best interest, the reservations team understands all the nuances of the organisation's rental requirements or if something does go wrong, there is a team in place who understand how to address the issue."**

**"Communication is always the key."**

## 5 PROMPT RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS

**Why is this important?**

"If something goes wrong, I like my supplier to ring me up, tell me and present a solution at the same time and then see it through, whether it is something a contractor has done or they have done," says Liz Hollands, of FTA.

"They should talk to the driver and make sure they are happy. They could also add a bit of value, add something extra as well to make up for the trouble or problem that happened.

"I don't want to have to beat them up to do it, it should be something they do as part of their customer service ethos."

**How can a fleet manager achieve this?**

Do not be afraid to challenge suppliers if things are not right. But it is a two-way street:

**"It's amazing the turnaround in attitude if people handle complaints in the right way"**



as the buyer, it is important to make it clear that there is a problem, so you give suppliers the opportunity to put it right. And if they don't, follow it up robustly.

Dialogue is crucial, ideally discussing issues early, before they become a complaint. Fleet managers and suppliers need a strong working relationship so that people know each other well enough to pick up the phone and deal with it personally.

"It is important to have a partner that takes a driver complaint seriously and treats it forensically," says Ted Sakyi, of Wates Group.

"It's amazing the turnaround in attitude you can achieve if people handle complaints in the right way. From a relationship perspective, they are important as an opportunity to see where you can make improvements in a process and improve the experience and satisfaction of your drivers."

**"Fleet managers should always ask to review a rental company's internal service failure reporting, which must be monitored and progressed through to resolution; all of which must be auditable and available to the client,"** says Caroline Gallagher, of Thrifty.

**"The information should be used proactively to identify trends and recognise where training or indeed system changes may be required."**

**"A rental company should never be afraid to share this information, which could also be used by the client to better educate the end user and manage their expectations realistically."**



# FleetNews

## PORTFOLIO

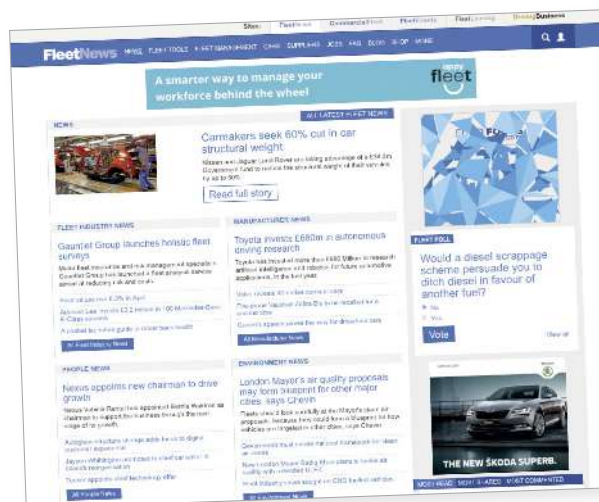
WHAT WE DO IN YOUR INDUSTRY

### Fleet News magazine

The leading business publication for the fleet sector, offering insight, analysis, best practice and in-depth profiles of fleets and suppliers every fortnight. But don't take our word for it: 96% of readers say *Fleet News* is the most useful fleet publication (*Fleet News* reader survey). Every issue is packed with information that helps companies to run efficient and effective fleets – and our readership of 16,000 is restricted to named decision-makers, running fleets of 10-plus vehicles.

### Commercial Fleet magazine

*Commercial Fleet* offers insight into the world of light commercial vehicles and trucks to provide operators with detailed analysis on key topics such as operations, safety, remarketing and the environment. Case studies in every issue provide best practice advice to help you to improve your efficiency. The magazine is supported by the [commercialfleet.org](http://commercialfleet.org) website and events.



### Driving Business magazine

This quarterly magazine is sent to managing directors and finance directors at 25,000 small to medium enterprises (SMEs) that are running fewer than 50 vehicles. Focusing on the key elements of running cars and vans, *Driving Business* provides practical advice to reduce cost and improve safety with a minimum of time and effort.

### Websites and newsletters

The *Fleet News* website is an extensive library of best practice advice, fleet case studies, news and tools. Compare car and van running costs, check how much tax employees will pay and find out which models use the least fuel with our easy-to-use tools. We also send *Ignition*, a monthly newsletter which contains car reviews and interviews not included with our print magazine.





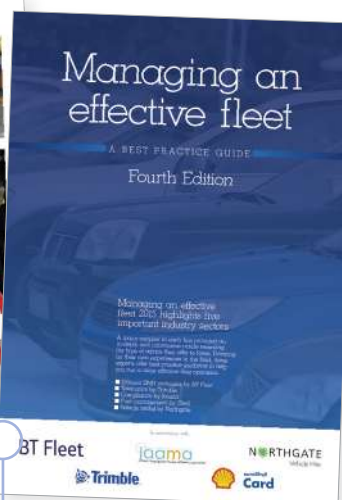
## Fleet events

Fleet News events are the biggest and best in the sector. Our annual awards night attracts more than 1,500 people; the FN50 Dinner sees 950 leasing, manufacturer, rental and supplier companies networking; Congress and Commercial Fleet Summit provide insight into key areas of fleet operation; monthly roundtables enable 10-15 fleets to discuss issues and share solutions.



## Fleet Leasing magazine

Fleet Leasing provides insight and analysis to board level executives, senior management and regional sales staff at contract hire and leasing companies. Its objective is to inform and educate about fleet trends, new models and technological developments, once a quarter, supported by a website regularly updated with the latest leasing news.



## Bespoke publications

Magazines, supplements, brochures and digital products are produced for commercial partners. These bespoke publications inform fleets about companies and topics relevant to their business. They include manufacturer and supplier reports, in which Fleet News journalists interview key personnel to unearth the developments of interest to fleet operators.

## Best practice guides

Special supplements that complement the magazine, our best practice guides look at areas that are core to fleet management or which are topical, such as electric vehicles. They provide you with the knowledge you need to make the right decisions. We also publish reports into the Fleet200, which analyse the UK's biggest fleets, and the FN50 contract hire and leasing sector.

FleetNews

AWARDS  
2016

VOLVO XC90

# 'Our absolute aim is to keep the momentum going'

With a new 'Fleet Hub', a one-million EV sales target and the award-winning XC90, Volvo has laid out some ambitious plans

By Sarah Tooze

**P**roduct, people and momentum are the three things that will drive Volvo's growth over the next few years as it seeks to sell 60,000 cars in the UK by 2020 and up to one million pure electric and plug-in hybrids worldwide by 2025.

"There are lots of things that will contribute to that growth," says Selwyn Cooper, head of business sales at Volvo Car UK. "To summarise: it's product, it's people and it's momentum."

"As a brand we have got momentum at the moment, and momentum is infectious. It's the old adage: what's the best restaurant to go to? Well, a busy one. Our absolute aim is to keep that momentum going."

That momentum is evidenced by the flurry of announcements from Volvo last month: a new online 'Fleet Hub' (offering fleet factsheets, tools and industry news), the

desire to sell up to one million electrified cars by 2025, and the news that Volvo will launch a semi-autonomous car trial on public roads in the UK next year, initially with a limited number of cars but set to expand to up to 100 cars in 2018, with 'real families' testing them.

Cooper believes that autonomous cars will "revolutionise our roads".

"From a fleet perspective, this technology will mean fewer accidents and injuries, and all the associated cost savings that implies, along with potentially cheaper insurance," he says. "Autonomous driving technology should also help to ease congestion, saving drivers time and, ultimately, improving their wellbeing while at work."

**Fleet News: What are your fleet sales expectations this year and what products will be key to your fleet growth?**

**Selwyn Cooper:** We're looking to sell between 47,000 and 48,000 cars this year and close to 38-40% of that will be business sales sold through the dealer network, excluding things like rental. Last year it was 35%, so it's slightly up because some of the models coming out are quite business-orientated. This year we have got XC90 for a full year and the T8 twin engine variant delivers 49g/km of CO<sub>2</sub>. We have also introduced a second PHEV within the V60 range, a D5 twin engine, and that will deliver 48g/km of CO<sub>2</sub>, which converts to £89 a month in benefit-in-kind, so we've got some growth expectations around that. We've got S90 and V90 being launched and we are using CCIA (Company Car in Action) as the driving launch bed of the S90 for us.

We've also made some enhancements to V40 this year. There are some design changes at the front end. We have introduced some LED headlamps which give the car a modern look, very much in line with XC90, S90 and V90. But what we've also done is taken the chance to amend the specifications of the car to make them slightly more business-orientated. V40 is an important car to us in fleet; it's a big player. These changes help us maintain our growth aspirations.

**FN: How important is it to have fleet managers driving the S90 early on at CCIA?**

**SC:** Over the past few years CCIA has been a fantastic tool for us to give drivers the first drive of cars. It times well with when our first model year cars come through. So when we had the V60 Plug-in Hybrid three years ago they were literally just off the boat, turned round and brought to Company Car in Action. For us, it's the ideal platform to give current and potential drivers of Volvo product a very early taste of what our cars drive like in a highly profes-

48,000

Sales target this year

43,364

Number of plug-in hybrids sold worldwide since 2012

*"Autonomous technology means fewer accidents for fleets, and all the cost savings that implies"*

Selwyn Cooper,  
Volvo Car UK







Jon Wakefield, sales director, Volvo Car UK (right), is presented with the award by Stephen Briers, editor-in-chief, *Fleet News*

sional, well-organised event. We don't just give people the keys to the cars, we take it as an opportunity for a professional handover. So we will have product experts there to give people enough information, so when they go out and drive the car they are able to test and use the technology and the features in the car to get more out of the test drive than just driving round the track.

**FN: Is your target of up to one million electrified car sales realistic? How are you going to achieve it?**

**SC:** Those are corporate statements as opposed to detailed plans of how we get there at this stage but that's a real firm illustration to me of where this brand is going in terms of our environmental credentials and the use of technology to deliver environmental savings, efficiency savings. But that twinning with electrification is key. Our SPA [Scalable Product Architecture] and CMA [Compact Modular Architecture] platforms are designed for electrification from the start and every model range within those will have at least one plug-in version. Now, if you take into account that the company is growing at such a rate that we will get to 800,000 sales worldwide over the next few years, and we've already sold 43,364 plug-in hybrids globally since launch in 2012, getting to that million figure by 2025 is genuinely a realistic prospect if you take into account the plug-in hybrid as well as the fully electric. From what I can see from the XC90 T8 and the way that has taken off in my sales channel, it is a very positive growth opportunity for me.

**FN: So that's 'product'. How do 'people' fit into your plans?**

**SC:** We've got the Business Centre programme and we've upgraded the dealer training that we're doing. Sarah Symcox, our strategic partnerships manager, is part of that induction training now where we train across all the channels. We've also put some extra resource into our Volvo Business Centre – we've gone from 12 to 15 people. That is about delivering enhanced customer service to existing and potential Volvo drivers, as well as supporting my team in the field.

**FN: How did it feel to be highly commended in the fleet manufacturer of the year category?**

**SC:** We were pretty proud of that internally. We win lots of awards for safety and the XC90 has been picking up lots of awards, which is great, and when I go back to my people and say 'we've won' they get excited. But it's about the product rather than the people. So it was a real positive for my team to get some recognition for the work they have done. Volvo UK's sales director, Jon Wakefield [pictured], collected the best large SUV award for the XC90, and I collected the highly commended honour for the fleet department, but I'll be doing everything I can to make it the full fleet prize next year.

**FN: Are you still offering free training to SMEs through Co-Pilot?**

**SC:** The training offer ended last year. Hundreds of drivers went through it, but is it the role of Volvo to train drivers? Probably not. We decided mid-way through last year to evolve Co-Pilot into providing information and advice on safer driving within Volvo's main digital experience, which is the Fleet Hub mentioned earlier.

**D**igital will grow in importance for Volvo next year when customers are able to use an app on their smartphone to access their car rather than having a physical key. Volvo is conducting a pilot with car-sharing firm Sunfleet at Gothenburg airport in Sweden. Volvo says that there will need to be proper process in place to de-register the vehicle and make sure data is wiped when the car is defleeted and that will have to be "worked through". However, there is "demand for the feature" and "with the right checks and balances in place it will be a real benefit to customers".

Access to data is becoming a key battleground among manufacturers and leasing companies.

Cooper says: "We're respectful of leasing companies and we want to work with them to find ways to give the clients – the drivers of the car – the benefits of connected cars."

## FACTFILE

**Organisation** Volvo

**Head of business sales**

Selwyn Cooper

**Fleet sales (2015)** 27,577 (up 0.8%)

**Overall registrations (2015)**

43,432 (up 5.76%)

**Fleet market share** 2.09%

**Total market share** 1.65%

## Judges' comments

“With massive improvements in safety through the introduction of innovative technology, the XC90 is a game-changer – not just for this sector, but also for Volvo. It redefines the brand, with excellent build quality, superior interior and an intelligent infotainment system, while the 49g/km hybrid option gives a new dimension to CO2 emissions for large SUVs.”

## ALFA ROMEO

'Make or break' rival to premium leaders impresses



## NEED TO KNOW

- Rear-wheel drive BMW 3 Series rival
- Sub-100g/km versions available with Eco pack
- UK versions will be auto-only

By Simon Harris

It's probably true to say that Alfa Romeo has never launched a car as important to the company as the new Giulia. As well as giving it a much needed volume boost in Europe, the car will reintroduce Alfa Romeo to North America, after a long absence.

It means the Giulia needs to be competent enough to take sales from Jaguar, Audi, Mercedes-Benz and BMW, the latter being touted as a pricing benchmark for the Giulia in the UK.

Alfa has been without a D-sector car in the UK for five years since the 159 was discontinued, and the programme to develop a successor has been delayed many times.

109g/km

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in both 150hp and 180hp versions



For full running costs, visit: [fleetnews.co.uk/running-costs](http://fleetnews.co.uk/running-costs)

When asked if the Giulia is a 'make or break' car for Alfa Romeo, chief executive Harald Wester simply told the group of assembled journalists "yes".

The range will launch in September, with a line-up of 150hp and 180hp 2.2-litre diesels, a 200hp 2.0-litre petrol and a range-topping 510hp 2.9-litre V6 available only in Quadrifoglio Verde specification.

We're not quite sure of UK pricing and specification yet, so Alfa's operation here already seems to be going down to the wire when it comes to making leasing companies aware so the car can be added in time for first deliveries.

And the UK will only come with automatic transmission variants. Alfa says this was a decision based on its claim that the sector (which includes the Audi A4, Mercedes-Benz C-Class, Jaguar XE and BMW 3 Series) is already split 70:30 in favour of automatic transmission and growing further in that direction.

You're less likely to be told that it would have involved a costly re-engineering exercise to enable manual transmission to be combined with right-hand drive.

Entry-level cars will come with 16-inch alloy wheels, daytime running lights, LED rear lamp clusters, dual-zone climate control, cruise control with speed limiter, Connect infotainment system and new Alfa DNA selector – which gives the driver access to three modes, one of which prioritises performance, and one that keeps the Giulia rather more calm. Collision alert, autonomous emergency braking, pedestrian detection and lane departure warning are also standard.

The next spec level is the Giulia Super, which has 17-inch alloy wheels, part-leather seats, steering wheel paddle shifters and enhanced interior trim.

The top-of-the-range Giulia Quadrifoglio is equipped with the 510hp 2.9-litre bi-turbo petrol engine and has a sports styling kit, 19-inch alloy wheels and bi-xenon headlights with active lighting, as well as leather and alcantara sports seats, a sports steering wheel with red power button and the Alfa DNA Pro selector with race mode.



Collision alert, autonomous emergency braking and lane departure warning all standard





*"Alfa Romeo will launch an 'Eco pack' variant, with CO<sub>2</sub> cut to 99g/km, matching the BMW 320d ED auto"*

There are luxury pack and sports pack options available on the 2.2-litre diesel.

As few auto versions were available on the launch event, we took our first drive in the 180hp manual. Although seeming to perform well enough, the six-speed shift was rather underwhelming, and engine noise was rather intrusive.

The auto is the ZF eight-speed transmission now used by a number of premium car manufacturers (including BMW and Jaguar), and this was a much better demonstration of the work Alfa has done on the Giulia.

Acceleration is rapid and smooth in the 180hp car, while the slick shift allows the Giulia to ride the wave of torque and slip into the next gear before the engine makes too much noise.

The steering is super direct, as we've come to expect from Alfa, which makes the drive seem more engaging, and on that note the ride is as firm as expected, although we were on optional 18-inch wheels.

The Giulia is competitive on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Both 150hp and 180hp models have 109g/km with the auto gearbox, although Alfa will be launching an 'Eco pack' variant, which will bring down CO<sub>2</sub> to 99g/km, matching the best-in-class BMW 320d ED auto.

Interior quality seems to be the best we've seen in an Alfa, and we hope this is sustained into its production life.

It's rewarding to drive, like the best rear-wheel drive cars should be, and for some retail customers that will be enough.

But Alfa will also need to ensure its fleet support steps up to the level the Giulia and its customers deserve.

## COSTS

<b>P11D price</b>	£33,500 (est)
<b>BIK tax band (2016/17)</b>	21%
<b>Annual BIK tax (20%)</b>	£1,407 (est)
<b>Class 1A NIC</b>	£971
<b>Annual VED</b>	£0 then £20
<b>RV (4yr/80K)</b>	n/a
<b>Fuel cost (ppm)</b>	n/a
<b>AFR (ppm)</b>	11
<b>Running cost (4yr/80K)</b>	n/a

## SPEC

<b>Power (hp)/torque (lb-ft)</b>	180/332
<b>CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)</b>	109
<b>Top speed (mph)</b>	143
<b>0-62mph (sec)</b>	7.1
<b>Fuel efficiency (mpg)</b>	67.3

## KEY RIVAL

<b>BMW 320d Luxury auto</b>	
<b>P11D price:</b>	£33,965
<b>BIK tax band (2016/17)</b>	23%
<b>Annual BIK tax (20%)</b>	£1,562
<b>Class 1A NIC</b>	£1,078
<b>Annual VED</b>	£0 then £30
<b>RV (4yr/80k)</b>	£9,100/27%
<b>Fuel cost (ppm)</b>	7.64
<b>AFR (ppm)</b>	10
<b>Running cost (4yr/80k)</b>	43.44ppm

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

# THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

**cap hpi**



**Monday / Tuesday**

A flight to Dubrovnik, then we were taken over the border from Europe, into non-EU

country Montenegro, where we picked up a fleet of Jaguar F-Paces. We drove them up into the hills. And when I say hills, I mean hills, with plenty of hairpin bends, and hair-raising drops. This new SUV looks great, and drives even better. It is more of a car-like ride than a high-seated off-roader.

*"It was on normal surfaces that the F-Pace really was at home"*

Talking of off-road, we took the F-Pace on an off-road section of around seven miles and it went over anything put in front of it: mud, slippery grass, rocks and water-logged ruts, and went down some of the steep inclines with ease using the 'all-surface progress control' – very impressive. But it was on normal surfaces that it really was at home: so quiet, so comfortable, so refined.

**Friday** So much data is collected on vehicle computers these days, and so much talk recently about who exactly owns this valuable data. When you connect your phone through Bluetooth or many of the new systems fitted, you are not exactly sure just how much data is being transferred from your phone to the car, and where it goes after that.

There are many from different sectors of the industry who are very uncomfortable about the whole situation, and I'm sure the debate will continue for some time yet.

Fleet managers and drivers need to be aware that by connecting their phone many of these systems will record everywhere they go, how they are driving and their driving styles.

Is this a benefit or Big Brother? I don't know. But I do intend to find out more over the coming weeks.

# SUZUKI BALENO

Hybrid system helps achieve 94g/km CO<sub>2</sub> in well equipped and spacious new model



Radar-assisted braking as standard on SZ5 trim

## NEED TO KNOW

- RVs expected to be among highest in segment
- 1.0-litre turbo or 1.2-litre mild hybrid available
- Longer service interval than non-hybrid model

By Simon Harris

**T**he current Suzuki Swift has been one of the company's most successful cars, still recording UK growth in 2015, despite being in its fifth year.

Although the brand's total sales fell by almost 8% during 2015, at just under 35,000 units (of which fleet accounted for 8,853), last year was still its second most successful year in the UK. And it has ambitions to reach 50,000 in the next few years, helped by new models and new technology. Next year, it aims to pioneer a new niche with an A-sector crossover. Before that, it is launching the Baleno.

The new model competes in the same B-sector as the Swift, but Suzuki has rationalised this decision by ensuring the Baleno has a different set of attributes. Slightly larger, although still less than four metres long, the Baleno's pricing starts at the same level as high-grade versions of the Swift.

In the UK, it will be offered with a turbo-charged three-cylinder 1.0-litre engine, producing 111hp, or a 1.2-litre four-cylinder with a (very) mild hybrid system producing 90hp.

Suzuki thinks it will sell 3,500 Balenos in a full year, with around 700 to fleet customers. The 1.0-litre Boosterjet engine is likely to be the biggest seller but, with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 105g/km for the manual, it's possible that the 1.2-litre SHVS will have a disproportionately higher number of fleet sales. This will be because of its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 94g/km – three benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax bands lower and compliant with any business that sets a 100g/km cap.

Prices start at £12,999 on the road for the 1.0-litre T SZ-T, with the 1.2-litre SHVS SZ5 at a £500 premium, both with five-speed manual transmissions. A six-speed automatic option is available for £1,300 on the 1.0-litre T.

## COSTS

<b>P11D price</b>	£13,444
<b>BIK tax band (2016/17)</b>	15%
<b>Annual BIK tax (20%)</b>	£403
<b>Class 1A NIC</b>	£278
<b>Annual VED</b>	£0
<b>RV (4yr/80k)</b>	£3,250/24%
<b>Fuel cost (ppm)</b>	6.97
<b>AFR (ppm)</b>	10
<b>Running cost (4yr/80k)</b>	23.94ppm

## SPEC

<b>Power (hp)/torque (lb-ft)</b>	90/88
<b>CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)</b>	94
<b>Top speed (mph)</b>	111
<b>0-62mph (sec)</b>	12.3
<b>Fuel efficiency (mpg)</b>	70.6

## KEY RIVAL

<b>Ford Fiesta 1.0 Titanium nav 5dr</b>	
<b>P11D price:</b>	£15,840
<b>BIK tax band (2016/17)</b>	16%
<b>Annual BIK tax (20%)</b>	£507
<b>Class 1A NIC</b>	£350
<b>Annual VED</b>	£0
<b>RV (4yr/80k)</b>	£3,825/24%
<b>Fuel cost (ppm)</b>	7.49
<b>AFR (ppm)</b>	10
<b>Running cost (4yr/80k)</b>	25.84ppm

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



Nicely-designed interior, with large touchscreen

While the Swift is intended to appeal to a sense of fun – and, according to Suzuki, the more emotive aspects of choosing a vehicle – the Baleno is meant to be a more rational purchase. It's spacious for a small hatchback and, with 320 litres of luggage space, it's among the best in its class. It's well-equipped too, with adaptive cruise control and radar-assisted braking as standard on the SZ5 trim.

The interior is nicely designed and there's a large dashboard touchscreen. But the dashboard and door panels are all hard plastics and feel less sophisticated.

The hybrid system offers limited assistance when setting off or under strong acceleration, and can regenerate energy on the move, but it was designed to be low-cost and lightweight. It helps with the CO<sub>2</sub>, and is the only Baleno with stop-start technology.

The peppery 111hp 1.0-litre T feels stronger, but comes with higher BIK tax. That car has a 9,000-mile service interval, compared with the hybrid's 12,500. RVs are expected to be among the best in this segment.



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# BMW i8

Can radical PHEV supercar see off more conventional rivals?



Three-cylinder engine plus electric motor offer 362hp

## NEED TO KNOW

- Plug-in hybrid reduces performance tax liability
- Carbon fibre construction helps keep weight down
- Lower running costs than competitors

By Simon Harris

**H**igh-performance cars have gradually been removing themselves from contention as an acceptable company car for directors or company chiefs.

CO<sub>2</sub>-based company car taxation, rising fuel costs and the recession of 2008, which forced many businesses to pare back costs, have all played their part in making flashy cars funded by the company seem an unnecessary and inappropriate expense.

However, with recent advances in technology it's reasonable to assume there are choices out there that could fit the bill for a cautious company, and perhaps be less costly to run than expected.

BMW would suggest its i8, the second member of its 'i' plug-in car family, and one that has brought the most radical change to powertrains in performance cars.

Using lightweight carbon fibre construction, which helps keep weight down, the i8 has a small, but powerful, petrol engine, in conjunction with a potent electric motor.

The 231hp 1.5-litre three-cylinder engine has two turbos to ensure it punches well above its weight. It is mid-mounted and drives the rear wheels, while a 170hp elec-



Carbon fibre construction keeps weight down

*"The i8 is well balanced and responsive, but perhaps feeling a bit less emotive and more clinical than its rivals"*

tric motor sits forward of the cabin and drives the front wheels.

Combined, these can deliver 362hp, giving the i8 the kind of performance (and pricing) offered by rivals such as the Mercedes-Benz AMG GT, Porsche 911 and Aston Martin Vantage.

The i8's interior feels hi-tech, and there's room in the rear for a couple of children – or extra space for luggage.

It takes 4.4 seconds to reach 62mph from rest, has a top speed limited to 155mph and, perhaps crucially, has CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 49g/km.

Most of the time, the i8 can be driven on electric power alone, until its plug-in charge is depleted – usually good for around 15-20 miles, although officially 23 – but the engine can be woken up by more deliberate use of the accelerator pedal, or by engaging sport mode. The latter will also recharge the battery while driving.

And despite being powered by a three-cylinder engine, which would usually sound off-balance and unrefined, BMW has succeeded in giving it a sound more befitting a high-performance car. It wails like the best six-cylinder engines under hard acceleration, and the extra boost of the electric motor's instantaneous maximum torque is welcome.

The i8 is well balanced and responsive on the road, although perhaps feeling a bit less emotive and more clinical than conventionally-powered rivals.

Although it's a £100,000 car, the significant benefits listed in our cost comparison and a discount on the London congestion charge make it a worthwhile choice as a business purchase.

In that respect, the i8 is a unique supercar proposition.

## THE RIVALS

- Aston Martin Vantage V8 S auto
- Mercedes-Benz AMG GT auto
- Porsche 911 Carrera 4S PDK

## P11D PRICE

911	£93,231
Vantage	£99,995
GT	£100,700
i8	£104,485

## BIK TAX AND CO<sub>2</sub>

i8	7%/49g/km
911	33%/180g/km
GT	37%/216g/km
Vantage	37%/229g/km

## FUEL COSTS

i8	8.19ppm/£6,552
911	13.74ppm/£10,992
GT	16.19ppm/£12,952
Vantage	21.85ppm/£17,480

## DEPRECIATION

911	79.82ppm/£63,856
GT	83.94ppm/£67,152
i8	86.95ppm/£69,560
Vantage	86.97ppm/£69,576

## SMR

i8	8.61ppm/£6,888
911	16.86ppm/£13,488
GT	16.97ppm/£13,576
Vantage	17.63ppm/£14,104

## RUNNING COSTS

i8	103.75ppm/£83,000
911	110.42ppm/£88,336
GT	117.10ppm/£93,680
Vantage	126.45ppm/£101,160

## VERDICT

For a company director who lives within 20 miles of his or her office, with charging at both locations, the i8 offers major savings in tax and costs in a styling package. The 911 would be a more rewarding choice for most others.

**Winner: BMW i8**

Running cost: KeeResources (4yr/80k)



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## 1.5 TDCI TITANIUM

## FORD FOCUS

A good start, but slightly disappointing mpg

Titanium trim has CO<sub>2</sub> emissions at 99g/km

## COSTS\*

P11D price:	£21,490
BIK tax band:	19%
Annual BIK tax (20%):	£817
Class 1A NIC:	£53
Annual VED:	£0
RV (4yr/80K):	£5,550/26%
Fuel cost (ppm):	6.60
AFR (ppm):	8
Running cost (4yr/80K)	29.93ppm

## SPEC

Engine (cc):	1,500
Power (hp):	120
Torque (lb-ft):	270
CO <sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km):	99
Fuel efficiency (mpg):	74.3
Max speed (mph):	120
0-62mph (sec):	10.5
Test mpg:	56
Current mileage:	1,033

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

By Sarah Tooze

**A**fter saying goodbye to the Mondeo last month we've welcomed another Ford fleet staple to our test selection: the Focus.

We've opted for the 1.5-litre diesel in Titanium trim, which has CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 99g/km and a combined fuel economy of 74.3mpg.

I've clocked up around 1,000 miles in the Focus over the past four weeks and I'm slightly disappointed to report that my average fuel economy is 18mpg below the official figure at 56mpg.

My driving style isn't the cause of the mediocre return – at least not if Ford's eco mode data is to be believed. The system assesses how eco-friendly your driving is, based on gearshifts, anticipation and speed, and gives a score for each in the form of petals on a flower (similar to Honda's eco guide). It rates my anticipation and speed as five 'petals' each (the maximum rating), while my gear-changing gets four.

Over the next month I'll be monitoring how the Focus's mpg fares on longer journeys, and whether following the gear shift indicator more closely results in five petals.

Fuel economy aside, the Focus has made a good first impression. It handles well and is as good a drive as the Golf GTD we had on long-term test last year – minus the sporty exhaust note. The interior is smart with blue-lit instruments and leather seats (at £1,150 extra), while active city stop, which helps prevent low speed rear end shunts, and rear parking sensors are standard.

We've added two safety packs: the 'convenience pack' for £450 which includes parallel, perpendicular and 'park out' assist, and the 'driver assistance pack' for £350, which features lane departure warning, lane keeping aid, traffic sign recognition, driver alert and auto high beam.

Blind spot monitoring is not included in the packs and costs £525. We've also added a rear view camera (£250) and adaptive cruise control (£550).

Seat Leon 1.6 TDI ST SE  
Technology Business

Our Seat Leon ST is fitted with Seat's 'media system plus with navi and full-link' as part of the technology pack. In the centre

of the dashboard sits a 6.5-inch touchscreen colour display which controls navigation, Bluetooth, vehicle settings and audio sources.

The digital radio has operated faultlessly with no loss of signal, even in more remote areas. It also has Bluetooth audio streaming, USB connectivity, an SD card reader and an auxiliary input and a single CD player in the glovebox.

The headline feature, however, is the full-link. It allows a smartphone to be connected via USB using Android Auto, Apple Carplay or MirrorLink – although I can't see any practical day-to-day use as there are already ways to play music and the built-in navigation is competent.

Having covered 2,000 miles during the past two weeks, the Leon has been returning an average 61.7mpg – just 7mpg below the official combined figure of 68.9mpg.

This is our last review of the Business edition as it is being discontinued. Instead, Seat offers the SE Dynamic, which "gives customers greater flexibility and choice", said Peter McDonald, head of fleet and business sales. The Dynamic is also £255 cheaper, at £20,395 OTR (against £20,650).

Matt de Prez

## Volvo V60 D2 Geartronic SE Nav



Remember when dashboards had so many switches and buttons that drivers felt they were at the flight deck of a Jumbo jet?

Things are much different now: all unnecessary switchgear has been banished and minimalist fascias are promoting less complicated car control.

For all that, a fresh button is finding its way on to many instrument panels as part of the quest to improve fuel efficiency, an example of which in our V60 certainly proving its worth. Pressing it puts the 2.0-litre powertrain into Eco+, which shuts down the engine to idle speed each time the driver eases on the accelerator.

The idea isn't new – Rover offered an option that allowed its models to coast while still in gear 60 years ago. But Volvo's system works only with automatic transmission, to slip out of drive and re-engage with remarkable smoothness. It also remaps the gearshift change pattern, brings auto-stop into action before the car comes to rest and alters climate control settings to produce potential fuel savings of 5%.

This button is paying dividends, with an average return of more than 50mpg – a satisfactory figure indeed for a load-lugger of this size.

Maurice Glover

See extended long-term tests at  
[fleetnews.co.uk/cars/car-reviews/](http://fleetnews.co.uk/cars/car-reviews/)

*"The Focus has made a good first impression. It handles well and is as good a drive as the Golf GTD we had on long-term test last year"*

# MARCUS BRAY

HEAD OF SALES, FLEET SERVICE GB

He would like to bring back national service, and once crashed his stepmum's car. But Marcus Bray always wanted to be a professional football player – a dream now realised in his son.

If I was Prime Minister for the day I would reintroduce national service. It's time our society started to realise that you should get out what you put in, and that nothing is for free. Discipline, respect and hard work appear sadly lacking in too many cases now.

Away from the office, I will give any sport a go, and often do. But in particular I enjoy watching my son Alex living my dream: he made it as a professional footballer and is on the books of Premiership Swansea City.

My favourite film is *We Were Soldiers*, with Mel Gibson. The film demonstrates the power of leadership by example and that through dedication, commitment and absolute belief you can overcome anything, no matter what.

One of my earliest memories associated with a car was crashing my stepmother's car into a wall, then going off on a school trip for a week, leaving a note on the dashboard about what I had done.

The three cars I'd like in my garage are: a Range Rover, an Aston Martin Vanquish Volante (national lottery dependent) and a Nissan Navara – which would be the all-rounder.

The book I'd recommend is Alan Sugar's autobiography, *What You See is What You Get*. He has been there, seen and done it and is the kind of person that says it as he sees it.

I'd like to be remembered as someone you can trust and respect, who understands the industry, and makes everything he does personal.

I would tell my 18-year-old self to engage the brain before opening the mouth.

My pet hates are poor attitude and people who are workshy.



**First fleet role** I worked in a control centre as a call handler, making client bookings for a national mobile service and repair business. I love the industry which appears to be in constant change, even though in reality nothing changes.

## Career goals at Fleet Service GB

To establish Fleet Service GB as an industry leader in fleet management, by making our service personal, while at the same time creating a legacy business that brings with it a reputation unrivalled in our industry.

## Biggest achievement in business

I was part of the team that built Fleet Support Group into the largest independent fleet management company in the UK.

**Biggest career influence** My father, Geoffrey Bray. Always a calming influence, when all around are not.

## Biggest mistake in business

Trusting people in business who I thought were friends. It helped me to realise that if it appears too good to be true, then it probably is.

**Leadership style** Direct, but I would never expect people to do what I couldn't do myself.

**If I wasn't in fleet** Professional footballer. Starting when I was 15, I played around 500 games at the highest standard of non-league, but never quite made it. Suffering three serious knee injuries finished me off by the time I was 28.

**Childhood ambition** To be a professional footballer, because I was ultra-competitive, had a great attitude, was very driven and thought I was good at it – but obviously not that good! When I was at school I wrote to the top 50 football clubs in the UK, telling them how good I was. Over half wrote back, with four taking me on trial for various periods (Birmingham, Luton, Norwich and Southampton). I loved every moment of it.

**Next issue:** Keith Townsend, managing director, Agility Fleet



UK specification  
Transit and Transit  
Custom include left  
hand side loading  
door



# Ford Transit: better costs – and a lot less noise

**F**ord's new Transit and Transit Custom powered by the all-new, state-of-the-art 2.0-litre Ford EcoBlue diesel engine offer more than just improved cost of ownership and performance.

The four-cylinder EcoBlue engine is the first diesel commercial vehicle powertrain from Ford to achieve passenger car noise, vibration and harshness criteria, contributing to enhanced driving appeal.

The all-new engine – in 105PS, 130PS and 170PS power outputs – goes into Transit Custom, Tourneo Custom, Transit Van and Transit Chassis Cab, but not

Transit Minibus, which retains the 2.2-litre HDT6 engine.

Key customer benefits of the EcoBlue engine include:

- Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions cut by up to 13%.
- Improved performance with low-rpm torque increased by 20% – key for commercial vehicle operators.
- Enhanced refinement with radiated noise at idle reduced by 4 decibels.
- Ultra-low exhaust emissions in line with Euro Stage VI standards (NO<sub>x</sub> emissions reduced by 55%).

The EcoBlue engine, developed and manufactured by Ford in Britain with

an investment of £475 million and the creation of 318 new jobs, has been engineered to meet Ford's rigorous commercial vehicle durability standards, powering Transit vehicles through the equivalent of 3.4 million miles of punishing durability testing, including 250,000 miles of testing at the hands of real-world Transit customers.

"The challenge was to take our best-selling Transit and make it cheaper to operate, improve performance, cleaner in terms of emissions, quieter in the cabin, safer and even more durable," said Pete Reyes, Ford of Europe's head of commercial vehicles.

## SAVE UP TO £1,250 WITH TRANSIT'S IMPROVED FUEL EFFICIENCY

Ford anticipates a fuel cost saving of up to £1,250 over 80,000 miles for the operator of a new 105PS Transit Custom van compared with the previous 100PS model.

Scheduled maintenance costs are also reduced, with the extended variable service intervals of up to two years/36,000 miles offering up to an additional 6,000 miles between services on both Transit and Transit Custom.

Lower running costs are supported by significantly improved fuel efficiency.



New  
engine's  
fuel  
economy  
from  
42.2mpg

Transit models equipped with optional Auto-Start-Stop achieve CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 174g/km and average fuel consumption from 42.2mpg – a 10% improvement over the equivalent outgoing model.

Transit Custom models fitted with optional Auto-Start-Stop deliver CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 157g/km with average fuel consumption from 46.3mpg – 13% better than the equivalent outgoing model.



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### BIK

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### CO<sub>2</sub>

231-173g/km

### COMBINED MPG

32.1-43.5

Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for New Ford Ranger range: urban 24.8-38.7 (11.4-7.3), extra urban 38.7-49.6 (7.3-5.7), combined 32.1-43.5 (8.8-6.6). Official CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 231-173g/km.

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.



**Go Further**