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Jonathan Hewett says Octo is well-placed to take advantage of the telematics boom



'Perfect storm' could see the end of diesel domination

Petrol and AFVs could take over inside five years, *Fleet News* survey suggests

By Gareth Roberts

Diesel dominance of the company car market could disappear within five years, according to a *Fleet News* poll.

More than half (52.5%) of respondents believe petrol powertrains and alternatively fuelled vehicles (AFVs), including plug-ins and hybrids, will account for the lion's share of fleet registrations come 2021. This rose to four out of five (80.9%) by 2026, while just 7.2% said diesel's dominance would endure for at least the next 25 years.

However, it would require a seismic shift in fleet registrations, not seen since the introduction of the CO₂-based taxes in 2002, for diesel to lose majority market share within five years.

Figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) show that sales of new diesel cars accounted for just 14% of all new car registrations in 2000.

Today, almost half (48%) of new cars are diesel and they hold an even greater share of the company car market, thanks to the tax savings and fuel consumption benefits they offer.

Tamzen Isacsson, director of communication and international at the SMMT, said: "Diesel cars continue to be very popular, accounting for almost two-thirds of new fleet and business registrations."

So far this year, SMMT figures show that 59.4% of fleet registrations have been diesel, with petrol accounting for 36.9% of the market and AFVs 3.7%.

The split has remained virtually unchanged for the past four years. In 2012, diesel accounted for 62.7% of the company car market, petrol 35.7% and AFVs 1.6%.

Isacsson explained: "Although we have seen a rapid rise in alternatively-fuelled vehicles in recent years, the numbers are still relatively small and diesel continues to present numerous advantages for business users, including low CO₂, low tax liability, impressive fuel efficiency and ultra-low NO_x emissions."

However, proposed changes to the company car tax regime, real world testing, air quality concerns and a greater choice of alternative powertrains could provide the perfect storm.

The City of London Corporation took the decision last month to remove new diesel vehicles from its procurement process.

"We are taking responsibility for the cleanliness of our fleet and encouraging the use of low and zero emission vehicles"

Chris Bell, City of London Corporation

59.4%
of fleet registrations
are currently diesel

Like Camden Council, which announced a ban earlier in the year, it will no longer lease or purchase diesel models when replacing its 300-strong fleet, choosing instead to adopt petrol or hybrid alternatives.

Chris Bell, head of procurement at the City of London Corporation, said: "We are taking responsibility for the cleanliness of our fleet and encouraging the use of low and zero emission vehicles with our partners."

He continued: "It complements the work that we are doing to support many city businesses which are also cutting back on vehicle deliveries and using more hybrid vehicles."

It has been spurred into action by the air quality crisis facing the capital – according to the latest research, almost 10,000 Londoners die every year because of pollution.

Currently, 38 out of 43 UK geographical zones are failing EU air quality standards due to high levels of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) – the gas emitted by burning fuels, especially diesel.

'Demonisation of diesel'

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, is considering a range of measures to tackle air quality in the capital, including the expansion and earlier introduction of the ultra-low emission zone (ULEZ).

Khan also wants to add an additional premium to the congestion charge for the most polluting vehicles from 2017 and is researching the merits of a diesel scrappage scheme.

Five cities outside London – Birmingham, Leeds, Southampton, Derby and Nottingham – will also be given charging powers to tackle pollution.

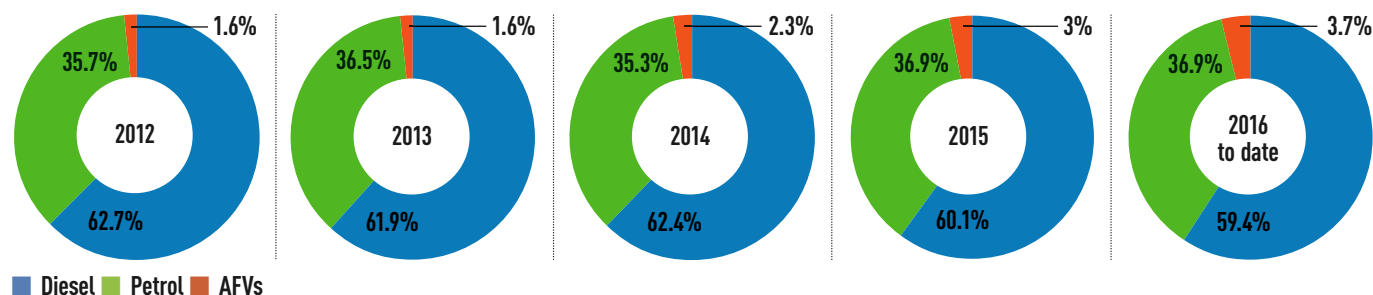
The Government wants public sector fleets to lead by example on NO_x, with minimum mandatory standards on emissions for cars, vans, buses and trucks outlined in a new national fleet procurement strategy due to be published this year (*Fleet News*: October 15, 2015).

Private sector suppliers could be forced to follow suit, if the public sector specifies the standards in tenders, as the Government suggests.

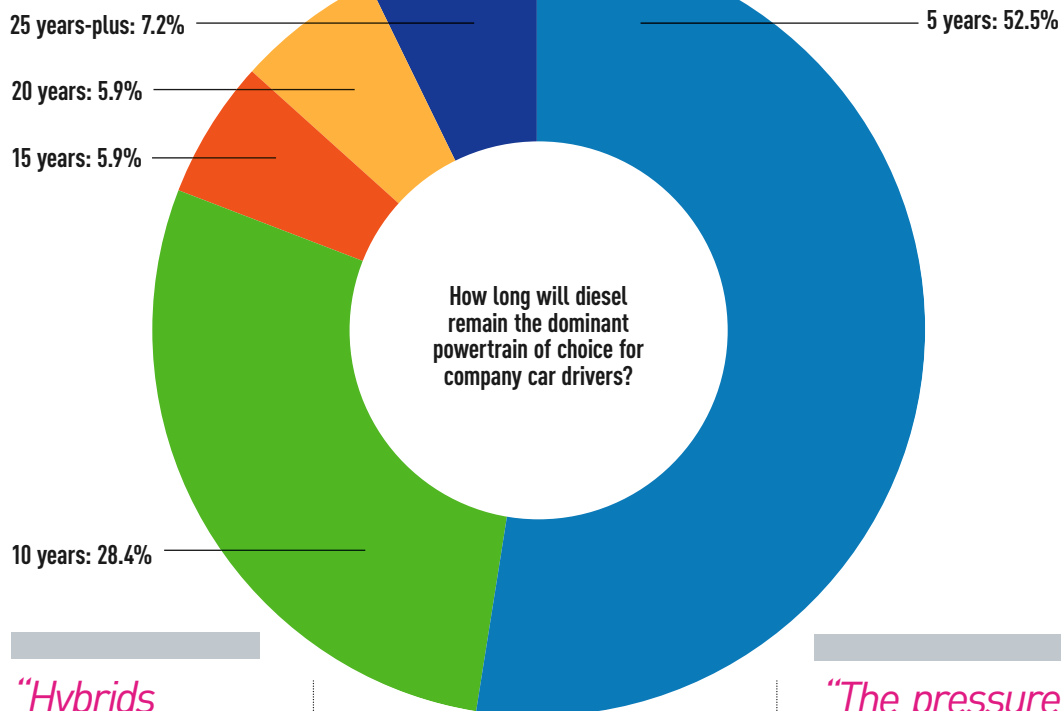
Its long-term vision is for nearly all cars and vans in the UK fleet to be zero emission by 2050. This will mean that by 2040 nearly all new cars and vans will need to have zero tailpipe emissions.

Faced with what it described as the increasing "demonisation of diesel", the SMMT launched a nationwide consumer

FUEL USAGE IN THE FLEET INDUSTRY SINCE 2012



FLEETNEWS.CO.UK POLL RESULTS



"Hybrids will eventually become the preferred choice – but that could also be diesel hybrids"

"I think that diesel may even start to lose its dominance in less than five years"

"The pressure to move away from diesel is mounting, and petrol engines are becoming more efficient"

campaign last year. It was quickly followed by a Europe-wide initiative, called the Clean Diesel Tech campaign, organised by Europe's automotive industry to coincide with the launch of the latest Euro 6 engines, a year ago.

Since 1992, the EU has introduced increasingly stricter limits on vehicle emissions through a series of 'Euro' standards. Euro 6 is the latest and most stringent of these standards, which all new cars must now meet.

It has reduced NOx limits for diesel car engines by 84% and particulates (PM) by 90% over the past 15 years.

However, the fuel was dealt a double blow last year. Volkswagen Group was forced to admit that 'defeat devices' were used during NOx emissions tests to mask the true level of pollution produced by some of its diesel engines (*Fleet News*: October 1, 2015).

The controversy was swiftly followed by an announcement that the Government would postpone April's planned removal of the benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax 3% diesel supplement – handing the fleet industry an unexpected BIK and Class 1A national insurance bill for £1.36 billion over the next five years (*Fleet News*: December 10, 2015).

Coupled with further changes to the company car tax regime, which are currently out for consultation (*Fleet News*: August 14), it could push more company car drivers towards smaller petrol engine cars, plug-in hybrids or electric vehicles (EVs).

Cars powered by the latest smaller-capacity turbo petrol engines are now offering lower P11d prices, NOx and particulate emissions than their diesel counterparts.

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

Plug-in cars are also gaining traction in the fleet market. Almost three-quarters (72%) of plug-in cars were registered to businesses in the first six months of the year which, including July's registrations, equated to more than 15,000 units – a 45% increase when compared to last year (*Fleet News*: August 18).

Here come the hybrids

A KPMG survey published earlier this year found that 79% of UK automotive executives believe that hybrid electric vehicles would be the powertrain of choice by 2030.

The Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership (LowCVP) believes the development of new powertrains could sound the death knell for diesel in the long term.

A spokesman told *Fleet News*: "Diesel's dominance of the fleet market is likely to decline in the long run, because of the range of new technologies now gaining a foothold in the market."

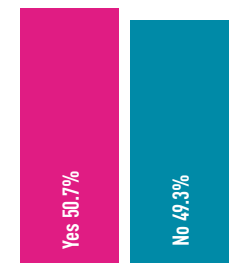
However, he added: "As we have seen in the bus and truck markets, when equipped with the right technology to be compliant with the Euro 6 standards and tested under a more robust, real world test cycle, diesel can still offer many performance and emissions advantages."

"Don't rule out diesel yet, but consider the cleanest and most efficient models alongside the new alternatives."

FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

OPINION POLL

Do you think 'zero emission' driving is a good way of deciding different company car tax rates for the cleanest vehicles?



FleetNews view:

Our poll shows that the fleet industry is divided around the merits of using the zero emission driving capability of the cleanest cars to differentiate company car tax rates.

Fleet News welcomes the consultation ahead of the Government making a decision in the autumn, but would urge it signposts any changes so fleets have the opportunity to amend their company car policies.

This week's poll: Will HMRC offer cars the same protection from salary sacrifice tax changes as pensions and the cycle to work scheme?

fleetnews.co.uk/polls

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Zenith denies sale rumours as advisers are called in

Leasing firm looking at 'corporate finance options', says boss Tim Buchan

By Gareth Roberts

Zenith has denied that it is about to be sold to new owners after it appointed a top city firm to offer financial advice.

The leasing company, which operates a risk fleet in excess of 50,000 vehicles, says it is looking at a "number of corporate finance options" after it was reportedly put up for sale for £700 million.

Chief executive officer Tim Buchan said: "Zenith continues to enjoy very strong trading conditions.

"Strong organic growth has been driven by our continued investment in innovation and our relentless focus on client service. This has been rewarded by significant client wins and our first pan-European appointment since the establishment of our Auto Alliance partnerships.

"Looking forward, there are a number of corporate finance options available to Zenith, including a refinancing, given the market's strong and longstanding support for the business."

Buchan told *Fleet News* that it was in this context the company has been working with a number of advisors, with Evercore – an independent investment banking advisory firm – taking the lead role.

However, Buchan said: "This should not be interpreted to mean a transaction is imminent. As a private equity owned asset, it is generally considered good practice to make these adviser appointments early in a business's ownership cycle to maximise the benefits of their expertise, significantly in advance of any event."

Typically, private equity owners will look to offload an investment within four to five years, which would suggest a possible sale at the end of next year or the year after.

Zenith's current owner, HG Capital, signed an agreement to acquire a majority stake holding in the parent company of Zenith Vehicle Contracts Group from Morgan Stanley Global Private Equity (MSPE) in 2014. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed (*Fleet News*: January 23, 2014).

A 60% stake in the top 20 leasing company was acquired by MSPE in August 2010.

HG Capital's acquisition of Zenith came just a few months after it became the majority shareholder of Leasedrive (*Fleet News*: November 28, 2013). It replaced LDC, the private equity house that is part of Lloyds Banking Group. LDC had paid £80m to take a 52% stake in the business in 2008.

£700m
reported potential sale
value of Zenith

54,248
risk fleet operated by
Zenith

"This should not be interpreted to mean a transaction is imminent"

Tim Buchan, Zenith

Both businesses were brought under the single brand of Zenith earlier this year (*Fleet News*: February 4).

At the time, Buchan told *Fleet News*: "The decision to become one company, with one brand, delivers a material benefit for us as a business as well as building confidence in our future strategy with our customers."

A single brand would also be a necessary step in readying the company for sale. Potential suitors would not be in short supply either, with the contract hire and leasing market considered a good investment opportunity for private equity investors, or existing suppliers wanting to grow.

Daimler's recent acquisition of European leasing rival Athlon for £940m (£1.1 billion) from the Dutch firm Rabobank was proof in point (*Fleetnews.co.uk*: July 5).

The company services around 250,000 vehicles in 11 European countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

Daimler's fleet operation currently manages 85,000 vehicles in 13 countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

Daimler plans to rebrand and integrate its 'Daimler Fleet Management' division under the Athlon brand, which is set to enter the UK for the first time.

However, Athlon does have a strategic partnership with Lex Autolease in the UK, and it remains unclear how this will be affected.

A spokesman for Lex Autolease said: "It is very much business as usual. It's still early days following the acquisition and we are talking to Athlon and Daimler Financial Services about how we will work together in the future."



For more on the UK
leasing sector, visit
fleetnews.co.uk/fn50-data



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Seat prepares for assault on SUV market with new model

Manufacturer hopes Ateca will take a 3-4% sector share



The Ateca could become Seat's second best-selling fleet model behind Leon

By Andrew Ryan

Seat is expecting this month's launch of its Ateca SUV to drive its true fleet registrations to record levels.

The manufacturer has seen sales in this market sector grow for the past three years, largely due to the success of Leon, and it expects this trend to continue.

Last year, to the end of July, Seat's true fleet registrations were 4,800: for the same period this year, they were just over 5,300, a rise of 10%.

Peter McDonald, head of fleet and business sales at Seat UK, said: "We expect to maintain that [10% increase] to the year end. These volumes are at a record level now, and the good news for us is this is before we see the impact of Ateca."

McDonald said the SUV sector is already the third largest – and fastest growing – segment in true fleet and Seat had received hundreds of orders from fleet and retail customers for Ateca even before people could drive it.

As well as its compact SUV, Seat is due to launch a small Ibiza-based SUV midway through next year, and these two models will increase its coverage of the market by vehicle type from 50% to 75%.

"This will be the most comprehensive line-up Seat has had in terms of segments," said McDonald. "We have been dependent [in fleet] on Leon – and Leon is great – but we know that the fleet marketplace requires more."



"We have been dependent on Leon but we know the fleet market requires more"

Peter McDonald, Seat UK

5,300

Seat's true fleet registrations in July

10%

increase on true fleet registrations compared to July 2015

"A fleet customer often doesn't want to deal with many different manufacturers, they want to work with a few and have deep relationships. Part of that surrounds the commercial advantages of that kind of relationship to them, but it's also the benefits through aftersales and knowing the people."

"Fleets have a lot more leverage if they work with a smaller number of manufacturers. The fact that we've been dependent on a small number of cars limits us. Ateca will grow volume but also helps us win customers where they want breadth of range, so it is really important for us."

He would not reveal Seat's specific growth ambitions for the next 18 months, but said: "We want to continue growing, we want to launch Ateca properly and take a 3-4% sector share with that."

That would make it the manufacturer's second best-selling fleet model behind Leon, which is due to undergo a mid-life refresh later this year. Seat will also launch a new Ibiza next year.

McDonald expects sales of all Seat models to benefit from Ateca, as he anticipates the SUV to win conquest sales from other brands and sectors, as well as attract new buyers to the brand.

He said: "We saw some work that was done when Nissan Qashqai launched and the majority of customers were a combination of two things: people who have migrated up from the Volkswagen Golf, so a typical hatch body style, and the other was BMW 3 Series down."

"We've got fleets that probably had a policy in the past of a Golf-sized car and Vauxhall Insignia-sized car, but they may not have that as a fleet policy going forward."

"The Volkswagen Golf/Ford Focus/Seat Leon segment is doing well, but some people are choosing an SUV instead, so that's where we see a big opportunity."

He added: "I think Ateca will help us grow more Leon customers because we can sell a bigger portfolio of models."

McDonald added that Seat's fleet growth is through good end-user and small fleet business.

The manufacturer has reduced its daily rental registrations (down 10% for the year to the end of June to 3,109 compared to last year). Motability is also down for the year to the end of June (down 45% to 923 compared to last year), although McDonald said new initiatives should mean that 2016's total will be higher than 2015's.



For a first drive report of Seat Ateca, visit fleetnews.co.uk/seat-ateca-test



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Volkswagen

Model shown Tiguan R-Line with optional keyless entry and optional metallic paint. £33,265 RRP. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Official fuel consumption figures for the new model range in mpg (litres/100km): urban 31.0 (9.1) – 48.7 (5.8); extra urban 44.1 (6.4) – 67.3 (4.2); combined 38.2 (7.4) – 58.9 (4.8). Combined CO₂ emissions 170 – 125g/km.

Levy helps Nottingham to 33% carbon cut

Investment of funds in public transport cuts emissions: is Cambridge next in line for levy?

By Gareth Roberts

Nottingham has achieved its carbon emissions reduction target four years' early, thanks in part to the introduction of the Workplace Parking Levy (WPL).

Data shows a 33% drop in carbon emissions since 2005, beating a target set by Nottingham City Council to achieve a 26% reduction by 2020. It puts Nottingham top of all the largest cities in the UK outside London, for the greatest reduction in emissions and the lowest emissions per head of population.

A significant part of the reduction – around 13 percentage points – has been down to the popularity of public transport, cycling and walking, which have received millions of pounds in funding from the WPL. The levy has raised £25.3 million in its first three years.

Bridget Fox, sustainable transport campaigner at the Campaign for Better Transport, praised Nottingham's "pioneering use" of the parking charge.

She said: "This fantastic record is one that other local authorities should follow. Councils have had these powers since 2000, and Nottingham shows how well they can work."

Employers in Nottingham that provide 11 or more workplace parking places are required to pay an annual charge for each parking space on their premises.

However, spaces used by fleet vehicles parked at an employer's premises, which are not used to travel to and from work, along with vehicles used to deliver or collect goods, are exempt from the charge. Other exemptions include customer parking and disabled spaces.

The levy, which is invested in public transport projects, is £379 per parking space for this financial year – up more than £90 since it was introduced in 2012.

A spokesman at Nottingham City Council told *Fleet News*: "In its first three years of operation, the WPL has raised £25.3 million, which is being invested back into transport improvements in the city – namely the expansion of Nottingham's tram network, the redevelopment of Nottingham train station and funding the city's Link bus network, which serves key employment sites including hospitals, universities and park and ride services."

Local business group the East Midlands Chamber (EMC)



£379

levy charge per parking space this year

33%

reduction in carbon emissions since 2005



To find out how businesses beat the charge, visit fleetnews.co.uk/nottingham-wpl

says that, while it would be a "quantum leap" to say businesses now support the scheme, they accept it as a cost of doing business in Nottingham.

"What few businesses understood at the time was that the levy is a business expense which can be offset against other tax demands, so in a way it became just a different means of collecting tax, but with the money going straight to Nottingham instead of via central Government," said an EMC spokesman.

However, four years after the parking scheme was launched, and 16 years since councils were given the powers to introduce the charge, no other local authority has followed Nottingham's lead.

Birmingham City Council's leader ruled out introducing a charge in April, after it was criticised by local businesses.

Meanwhile, Oxford County Council has included a WPL in its local transport plan – a blueprint which sets out potential work from 2016 to 2031. But, a council spokesman stressed that there was "no set timetable" for its introduction.

However, the levy has been proposed as part of an eight-point plan to tackle congestion in Cambridge by the Greater Cambridge City Deal; a partnership between three local councils, business and academia. Employers have until October 10 to provide initial feedback.

A spokesman said the WPL would be subject to a "detailed and lengthy consultation with employers to reach a solution that matches the needs and profile of the Cambridge city region" which were "very different" from Nottingham.

He continued: "A report with detailed recommendations will be submitted for a decision by the board in January 2017 – at this stage we will know whether WPL will be pursued."

However, Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce has hit out at the plan to charge employers for workplace parking spaces, labelling it a "tax on business".

The business group's chief executive John Bridge had been a Greater Cambridge City Deal board member, but quit when the parking charge plan was announced. He told *Fleet News*: "We do not support the introduction of a workplace parking levy. It is a tax on business. Council transport departments have suffered significant cuts in funding and this is purely a money-making exercise; it's about raising money to offset the money councils have lost."

"Council transport departments have suffered significant cuts in funding and this is purely a money-making exercise"

John Bridge, Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce

Stop the clocking – industry calls for action on odometer fraud

'Hundreds of millions of miles' wiped from cars across the UK

By Gareth Roberts

The Government says it will investigate whether tough new laws should be introduced to tackle the growing problem of clocking.

The number of clocked cars believed to be on UK roads has almost trebled in the past six years, from 600,000 in 2010 to 1.7 million today.



"Until every car on the road is connected, the issue of clocking needs to be addressed"

Gerry Keaney, BVRLA

460,000
miles removed from
the odometer of a former
private hire car

1.7m
clocked cars on UK roads

HPI, a car checking company, estimates that used car buyers now have a one in 20 chance of purchasing a vehicle with a mileage discrepancy.

The remarketing and leasing industries have long called for a change in the law. Currently, while it is fraud to knowingly sell a clocked car without disclosing the fact, it is not illegal to alter the odometer's mileage.

Danny Herbert, policy officer at the Department for Transport (DfT), says the Government will seek industry views on whether existing legislation is fit for purpose. It will then consider whether further action is required based on responses to the consultation.

"We are aware that some sections of the industry are in favour of outlawing the adjustment of the odometer more widely," he said in a letter to the National Association of Motor Auctions (NAMA). "However, the response to the consultation may provide a fuller picture of industry's views on this."

Welcoming the Government review of existing legislation, NAMA director Sue Robinson said: "We believe further action is essential as odometer fraud has been causing problems not only to auctions, but also to the whole industry."

Fleet News revealed four years ago that a growing number of vehicles were being handed back at the end of a contract



A PARLIAMENT OF OWLS
A JOURNEY OF GIRAFFES
A ROMP OF OTTERS



CRÉATIVE TECHNOLOGIE

Official Government Fuel Consumption Figures (litres per 100km/mpg) and CO₂ Emissions (g/km) (Range). Highest: C4 Cactus PureTech 82 manual with 15" wheels: Urban 3.5/80.7, Extra Urban 3.0/94.2, Combined 3.1/91.1, 82 CO₂. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test
CITROËN prefers TOTAL Model shown: C4 Cactus PureTech 82 manual Flair. *Calls are free of charge from all consumer landlines and mobile phones. If you are calling from a business phone, you should check with

hire or personal contract purchase (PCP) agreement, having been clocked (*Fleet News*, April 12, 2012).

Unscrupulous fleet operators and individuals looking to avoid excess mileage charges, and secure more favourable leasing terms, were turning to mileage correction companies to clock the vehicle before they returned it.

The problem has persisted, with a recent investigation by consumer group Licensed Transport Uncovered (LTU) discovering hundreds of private hire, minicab and chauffeur-driven vehicles in the north west of England, many of which were leased, operating with clocked mileage.

By far the worst case it uncovered was a private hire vehicle where 460,000 miles had been wiped from the odometer. Out of the 330 clocked cars it found in the north west of England, about 80 million miles had been removed. UK-wide, LTU believes hundreds of millions of miles must have been wiped thanks to clocking.

The Local Government Association (LGA) is calling for a proposed EU ban on companies providing mileage correction services to be retained under UK law, and to be brought forward from its planned introduction in May 2018.

It is also calling for mileage correction devices – widely available for sale online for about £120 – to be banned.

Council trading standards teams have secured several clocking prosecutions recently. They included five men from the same family who were jailed for a total of 18 years and three months for conspiring to clock more than four million miles off cars in a professional operation. Mileages on vehicles had been lowered by as much as 125,000 miles.

The British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) wants mileage adjustment companies to be licensed by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).

Gerry Keaney, BVRLA chief executive, explained: "We believe this would help protect leasing companies who may



inadvertently sell a vehicle that has had its mileage adjusted by a lessee."

The BVRLA operates its own vehicle mileage database to help protect against clocking. It contains more than 29 million records, including in-life service mileages as well as end-of-contract figures. "We believe it covers around 85% of the member fleet by volume," said Keaney.

Private buyers and traders can access the data through companies including Experian and Cap HPI, in order to verify a vehicle's mileage.

However, Keaney concluded: "Until every car on the road is a connected vehicle that sends back odometer readings at regular intervals, the issue of clocking needs to be addressed."



Councils warn of clocking surge: visit fleetnews.co.uk/council-clocking



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2016 WORLD CAR AWARDS
WORLD LUXURY CAR

Official fuel economy figures for the BMW 7 Series Saloon range: Urban: 24.8-51.4mpg (11.4-5.5 l/100 km).



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The Ultimate
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THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*



The role of a fleet manager can be lonely and isolated. Most company departments operate in teams – finance, HR, procurement – which facilitate discussion and the development of new ideas and initiatives.

Not so when it comes to the management of company vehicles. The fleet manager is – with only a few exceptions – the only expert in the business.

It makes the role of trade associations, who can bring people together, all the more important. But it also means the role of the fleet press can be so much more than simply a conduit for news and insight.

That's where we come in. *Fleet News* has a fine track record for running events that enable fleet managers to share best practice and learn from their peers and other industry experts.

“The chance to get up to speed with all the latest products on one day”

It's not often I give over my column for a bit of self-publicity, but we have two forthcoming events which have surpassed my expectations and I want to be sure you have every chance to take advantage of them.

For car and van fleet operators, we have Fleet Management Live on October 19-20 at Birmingham NEC; for van and truck managers we have Commercial Fleet Van & Truck on September 20-21 at Millbrook Proving Ground, home of CCIA.

Both events mix exhibitions, seminars, briefings and best practice sessions (Van & Truck also adds driving) to offer fleets an unparalleled opportunity to network and learn. And both events have virtually sold out of exhibition space (limited availability only at FML). It's this last point that is worth underlining: we'll have more than 100 exhibitors at FML and 35 at Van & Truck, giving you the chance to get up to speed with all the latest products and services on one day, whichever is most relevant to you. Who else can offer that?

I can't wait – and I look forward to seeing you there!

YOUR LETTERS



EMISSIONS

Congestion is the root cause

Iain wrote:

Having read 'EC calls for new car tax rules to incentivise zero emission driving' (*Fleet News*, Aug 4), while I am fairly sure we have been here before with this argument, at what point do these 'think tanks' actually start to address the root cause, which is congestion? Manufacturers are trying to play their part by producing more efficient engines and adding start-stop technology. However, this

alone will not resolve the problem, which is really all about the free flow of traffic at a reasonable speed and providing adequate parking for those who cannot use public transport, which remains overpriced and barely adequate in this century. Traffic sitting idle will always pollute, so let's get serious, address the core issue and stop imposing more regulations and costs on struggling commuters and business.

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

Bob added:

It is good to read that others are beginning to look beyond the political spin with regard to pollution and vehicle emissions. We must recognise that ALL engines that burn fossil fuels at very high temperatures will produce greenhouse gases and oxides of nitrogen. These also include

aircraft, which, by virtue of their size and fuel consumption, produce vast amounts of these pollutants, which I have never seen openly reported in the media. My guess is that it would be political suicide to bring this to the public's attention. Therefore, if we are going to point the guilty finger, at least it should be aimed at all offenders.

EYECARE

Sight tests are a small price to pay

Winston wrote:

Having read 'Specsavers sees rocketing demand for driver eyecare vouchers' (*fleet-news.co.uk*, June 19), surely it's time that an eye test, at least every two years, was made compulsory for all drivers? It's a small price to pay for safer driving, isn't it?

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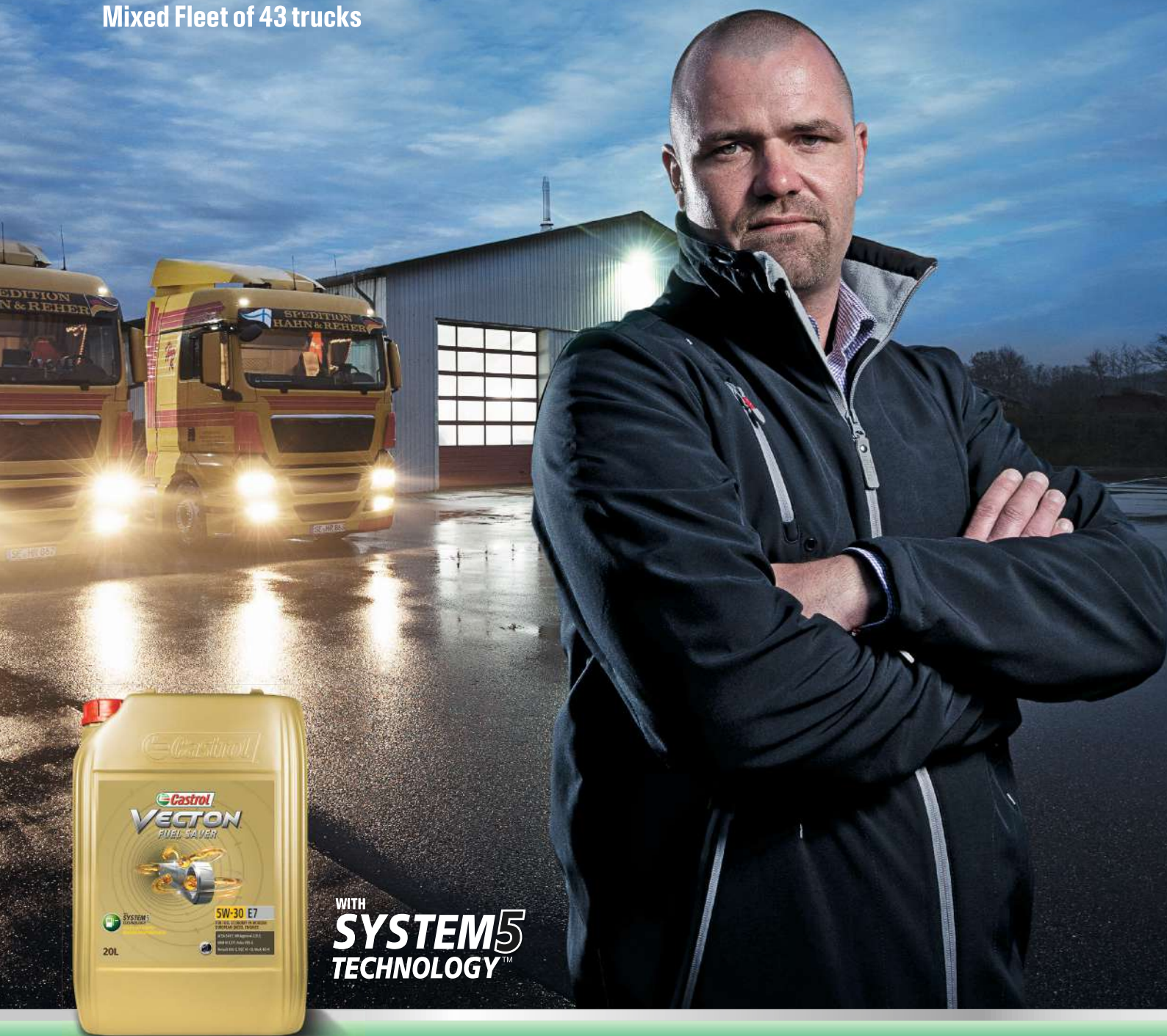
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¹ MAN Euro V trucks, Model: TGX 18.440, Engine: D20 Euro V, Transmission: AS Tronic

² Based on engine torque and fuel injection measurements over a sustained period. Actual fuel economy depends on the type of vehicle, the driving style and the driving conditions. Results may vary.

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VECTON

YOUR LETTERS

PICK-UP SPEED LIMITS

Pick-up drivers can intimidate others

Glyn Holloway wrote:

Having read 'Speed limits for big pick-ups are a "grey area"' (fleetnews.co.uk, Aug 16), the potential for big pick-ups being speed-limited is something that brings joy to my heart. Unfortunately there are a number of drivers of these vehicles that use their size to intimidate other road users.

Chris Harris added:

Having just had the pleasure of attending a speed awareness course, the guidelines given were clear. If the vehicle is used for commercial purposes – that is, it carries tools or equipment – it comes under the same restrictions as LCV. If, however, it is used for pleasure then it is governed under the same rules as a car. So in short, it is best to err on the side of caution.



Pick-ups: err on the side of caution

FUEL RATES

When will we see an AFR guide for EVs?!

Hannah Bishop wrote:

Having read 'HMRC updates advisory fuel rates' (fleetnews.co.uk, Aug 25), what we are all really waiting for is some AFR guides on electricity for EVs!

SALARY SACRIFICE

A two-tier system of cans and cannots

Supererogation wrote:

Exponents of salary sacrifice schemes, invariably those who profit from such schemes, are clearly insufficiently independent to offer a balanced viewpoint.

Irrespective of their alleged tax 'benefits', these schemes create a two-tier tax regime split between those who can and those who can't benefit from such schemes – which is clearly contrary to the aspirations of government (of whatever political persuasion).

ENVIRONMENT

Plug-ins not so good for the environment

Ben Green wrote:

Having read 'More fleets switching to plug-ins: only 28% go to private buyers' (fleetnews.co.uk, August 23): protecting the environment? How do many people charge their vehicles? By burning fossil fuel to create electricity – and nobody mentions the end life of the vehicle and disposal of the batteries. It's good for the pocket but protecting the environment? I don't think so.



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LinkedIn: [UK fleet managers group](https://www.linkedin.com/company/uk-fleet-managers-group) Twitter: twitter.com/_FleetNews

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ISSN 0953-8526.

Printing: Headley Brothers Ltd, Kent



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Where have you been on your summer holiday this year?

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FLEET OPINION

GREY FLEET

Engage employees, don't just impose

By Oz Choudhri

“ The recent report from the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA), *Getting to Grips with Grey Fleet*, highlighted the burden of mileage reimbursement on organisations. The public sector alone is spending almost £800million a year and that number rises to an estimated \$5.5billion when UK plc is added (**Fleet News**, July 21).

When we shared our experience with the BVRLA for the report, a key factor was that moving away from grey fleet expenditure isn't as simple as changing the transport policy or slashing the reimbursement rate overnight and just expecting employees to fall into line.

Understanding the logistics of your fleet's current exposure to the grey fleet – where and why your people drive for business, when and for how long – is only a first step. Understanding the psychology of why grey fleet has become the 'default setting' is equally as important when it comes to providing a viable alternative.

Particularly in the public sector, it's culturally ingrained for employees to rely on their own cars for work trips. That makes them resistant to change. We've seen cases where unions get involved if they see it as a reduction in benefits.

That's why any plan to reduce grey fleet expenditure also has to engage employees in the process. Senior management has to explain the thinking behind the change and make sure employees also see it as a positive move.

It's not just about cost-cutting. Less grey fleet means fewer employees in older, potentially less safe vehicles. Personal cars also tend to produce higher levels of CO₂, so less mileage reimbursement helps any organisation's sustainability objectives. Employees will engage with these objectives even though it requires changing behaviours and attitudes. We've often operated roadshows for businesses where we explain the thinking and personally help employees through the process. The point is that you have to engage with people with reason, rather than simply impose without consultation.

Our experience is once employees understand why change is important, they are more likely to support the decision and try something new. **”**

“It isn't as simple as changing the policy and expecting employees to fall into line”



Oz Choudhri
Head of public sector
UK & Ireland at
Enterprise Rent-A-Car



Sergio Barata
General manager at
EMEA at Telogis



MOBILE ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT

Forget telematics and embrace MEM

By Sergio Barata

“ As the tech that enables the exchange of information between fleet vehicles and managers, telematics has been billed as a game changer for any business that uses a fleet.

But while awareness of its benefits has increased significantly, telematics is not revolutionary: these technologies have been available for over a decade. And now there is a new kid on the block – Mobile Enterprise Management (MEM) – and it threatens to blow traditional telematics out of the water.

Telematics data is typically created using GPS units with on-board computers. The hardware uses cellular networks to transfer real-time data to central offices, where it is interpreted for fleet management. This gives managers a bird's-eye view of an entire field operation, checking the profitability and productivity of the fleet, while ensuring the workforce is operating the vehicle as intended.

The headline benefits include vast fuel savings through route optimisation and increased driver and vehicle safety.

But this is archaic because almost everyone now has a smartphone in their pocket and more and more organisations can use technologies such as cloud and big data to harness insights from this mobility. These two technologies, plus the power and mobility of the smartphone, can give unparalleled insight into operations.

This includes traditional telematics information, but also planning, navigation, routing and compliance data, and an unprecedented understanding about use of assets such as cranes, plants or trailers.

All constituents of a fleet can now communicate and interact with data and gain insight from it in real time. By using mobile and the cloud to connect an organisation from the front line to the back end, businesses can totally optimise their operations. This is MEM.

Telematics is the first step in using tech to help transform a business. But to be able to stay at the cutting edge by totally optimising all parts of a mobile organisation, fleet-based businesses must forget telematics, think bigger and embrace full mobility with MEM. **”**

“By using mobile and the cloud, businesses can totally optimise their operations”



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From: TRANSACTION AND EXECUTE

To: MANAGE AND IMPROVE

(AND A £2.5M ANNUAL SAVING)

Amey's Tom Lawless explains how outsourcing its fleet management to Hitachi will save money and aid strategic thinking. *Stephen Briers* reports

AmeY hit the fleet headlines last month after announcing plans to outsource its fleet management and funding to Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions in a six-year sole-supply deal. It joins an expanding group of large fleets that have handed operational responsibilities to a leasing provider.

Fleet and plant director Tom Lawless, the architect of the move, had spent eight months putting the contract together, presenting some 16 iterations of the proposal to the board before securing approval.

"It was a robust process," he says pithily.

Hitachi was already well-known to the business, funding a number of its cars and vans over the previous five years. Amey had also inked a salary sacrifice contract with the company shortly before deciding to investigate a sole-supply outsourcing agreement.

The main business motivation was cost,

although from a fleet perspective it will shift emphasis from "transact and execute to manage and improve", says Lawless.

He explains: "We were getting in the way. Supply to demand contracts were coming through Amey Fleet and Plant and it was inefficient. Our role is to optimise the supply chain to ensure they meet our requirements on safety, cost and quality of build and to improve the level of service and end-to-end management of the assets."

A large proportion of Amey's business is with central and local government, Highways England, utilities companies and Network Rail, typically over five-to-nine year contracts.

Consequently, Lawless wanted to identify a partner with whom he could work for several years to deliver benefits across that period.

"Our marketplaces are tough with austerity measures in place but we are buoyant about our direction of travel," he says.

"We have a healthy order book of work but we have to get our cost base where it needs to be in order to be successful."

There was, he adds, low-hanging fruit, such as extending car replacement cycles from three to four years, reducing the choice list to two brands (BMW/Mini and VW) and providing everyone who receives a company car allowance – whether car or cash – with a fuel card tied to their expenses to improve reporting of business mileage.

"Drivers have to report business mileage or the system assumes all their mileage is private. This quickly changed the culture around mileage reporting," Lawless says.

However, the bigger wins came when assessing the cost of overheads and future investment to keep the fleet up to date with the latest developments in technology and software. Amey wanted to plug into someone else's investment in these areas, particularly when it came to its mission critical vehicles.

Hitachi's software system platforms were already familiar and Amey was swayed by the company's commitment to





Outsourcing proposal was
presented to the Amey board
16 times before approval,
says Tom Lawless



FACTFILE

Company Amey

Fleet and plant director Tom Lawless

Time in role 12 months

Fleet size 8,500: cars 2,300; vans 3,700; HGVs 2,500

Funding method cars/vans – contract hire; trucks – outright purchase

Replacement cycle cars – four years; vans – 3-5 years; trucks 7-9 years



invest £15 million in ongoing developments over the next few years.

The outsource contract that was finally signed consisted of two key elements. The first involved a sale and lease-back of around 800 heavy goods vehicles and associated assets which took place at the end of March; the second, fleet management of all the Amey fleet including legacy supply chain, started in July.

"We had a significant owned fleet and we saw a tactical opportunity to dispose of some of these on a sale and leaseback," says Lawless. "This gave us a cash benefit and meant we could also leverage a commercial deal with a partner to fulfil all of our demand requirements from cars to heavies and mission-critical vehicles."

The decision to opt for a sole-supply deal with Hitachi required board sanction, not least because the company had a number of finance lease contracts with some of its banking partners.

The sale and leaseback proposition was a crucial element in clinching the deal as it showed Hitachi's operational management capabilities, something the existing lenders/banks could not match.

The full extent of the savings is yet to be fully evaluated, although the cost of direct delivery versus in-house management alone will knock £2.5 million per year off fleet overheads. Much of this is down to a significant reduction in headcount: Amey has more than halved its fleet team, from 85 to just under 40 people.

Additional savings will be identified during

the contract period as part of a gain share mechanism. "If we reduce cost, both parties share the savings," says Lawless. "It provides an incentive to identify new opportunities."

Removing much of the day-to-day operational duties from the fleet team has freed up time to be more strategic, for example on data analysis. The team is also responsible for O-Licences, securing daily rental and transport management accountability.

"We are swimming in data but the pace of change was diverting us from doing the basics efficiently. We have enough management information to do things better and drive material change," says Lawless.

"For example telemetry and the 'internet of things': we have 3,600 MasterNaut units and we know manufacturers are moving towards prognosis with fault codes which will help us to plan our infrastructure and

assets more efficiently to support Amey in the future."

Amey is also trialling dash cams with internal-facing cameras, with the footage triaged with telematics data to prioritise actions rather than forcing the fleet team to sift through reams of information. This will target driver behaviour, speed up first notification of loss and resolve disputed or fraudulent claims.

However, the opportunities go far beyond driver behaviour and proactive vehicle maintenance; the data will also support Amey's work with Highways England.

"We can even identify road issues if the data from our vehicle shows a reaction to a spot on the road," Lawless explains. "True vehicle prognosis solutions are the golden egg for me as an operator."

Lawless describes the fleet team as an inward-facing service provider and says he treats each business unit "as my customers".

The 8,500-strong fleet, which ranges from cars to gritters and refuse collection, is divided across four divisions: highways (the biggest in fleet terms), utilities and facilities management, consulting and rail, and environmental services. The latter has the fewest number of vehicles but they are the most complex and it is the highest risk area of the group.

"Our role is to ensure the provision of services that are delivered in a cost-effective, operationally robust and safe manner," Lawless says.

"We ensure fit-for-purpose vehicles that deliver the required outcomes and we also manage the supply chain. A lot of our focus is on how we fulfil that outcome, especially around the level of demand throughout a contract."

Fluctuating demand means Amey has a sizeable short-term hire and flexi-rent fleet ("my top-up fleet", says Lawless).

He adds: "Our decision on funding [contract hire, outright purchase, rental or flexi] is influenced by the length of a contract and whether we can utilise the asset after that contract ends."

Generally, everything above 5.5 tonnes is bought outright because the asset is depreciated over seven-to-nine years. Vans tend to be on a three-to-five year lease as long as the contract they are deployed to is secure.

"It's the variable work where the short-term hire demand kicks in," explains Lawless. "Around one-third of our fleet is on

"We can even identify road issues if the data shows a reaction to a spot on the road. True vehicle prognosis solutions are the golden egg for me"

Tom Lawless, Amey

JOINER TURNED FLEET DIRECTOR

A joiner by trade, Tom Lawless started his career in fleet in 1990 as a buyer at Lex Vehicle Leasing because it allowed him the flexibility to embrace his hobby as a semi-competitive runner.

Up until 2007 he worked across the business, from the Lombard brokerage to the acquisitions team "and most jobs in between". Lawless ran a number of large accounts, including the Ministry of Defence and Halifax fleets, before deciding to return to his joiner roots.

In 2010, he came back to fleet, waiving an opportunity to rejoin Lex (now Lex Autolease) to experience fleet from the perspective of the end user.

Lawless joined Amey, attracted by its heavy goods vehicles, initially as business development and operations director before being appointed fleet and plant director 12 months ago.

He is responsible for all road-going equipment and plant, consisting of some 8,500 assets.



Lawless: "We recognise the risks that our drivers face"

short-term or flexi; this is what helps us to flex the fleet to cope with demand."

While cost is a key fleet pillar, safety is also a priority. Lawless sits on the CLOCS (construction logistics and cyclist safety) panel and the business recently signed off a £3.5 million investment on safety-related equipment, which includes 360-degree cameras and cycle safety systems on its waste collection vehicles.

The cameras don't just identify fixed obstacles like bollards; they have facial recognition software to alert the driver to the presence of a person next to their vehicle. "We are rolling this out now," says Lawless. "It's a big investment but it's the right thing to do."

He is also in the process of developing an operational road risk programme to identify high risk drivers by analysing telematics data, accident history and job profile. The system will advise on appropriate interventions and training, such as online modules, roadshows and proactive/reactive learning.

"We recognise the risks that our drivers face and that the management and support of them is appropriate. We are freeing up resource and energy to do more to support our organisation," Lawless says.

The environment has also become a key part of the fleet function, not least because the type of tenders the business enters focus on the green agenda.

Amey's car choice list is CO₂-driven which has brought down average emissions from 123g/km to 109g/km over the past two years, with new orders averaging 103g/km. It has added plug-in and electric vehicles to the fleet, including the BMW i3 and Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV.

Internal priorities and external forces mean the Amey fleet is driven by all three pillars of modern-day fleet management: cost, safety and the environment. Lawless says his most pressing challenge is to continue managing the cost base to ensure the fleet allows Amey to make the right returns on its contracts.

"We also have to differentiate ourselves from our competitors," he says. "We have to be well positioned to maximise all of the opportunities."



For more fleet profiles, visit:
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TELEMATICS IS 'KEY ENABLER' FOR THE CONNECTED CAR

The connected car puts telematics at the forefront and Octo Telematics plans to take full advantage, Jonathan Hewett tells *Gareth Roberts*

The telematics sector is booming. The global market is expected to more than double in the next four years to an estimated £36 billion.

That growth will continue to be driven by the insurance industry, with almost 100 million vehicles insured with telematics policies by 2020. This will increase to nearly 50% of the world's vehicles – some 1bn units – by 2030, generating almost £250bn in premiums for insurers.

And with the connected car on the rise, manufacturers are beginning to factory-fit the technology, paving the way for further growth in retail and fleet sectors.

Claims about the take-up of telematics by fleets almost doubling in the past year might be incredulous (*fleetnews.co.uk*, August 16), but the general consensus suggests significant opportunities, with an expected annual growth rate of 25%.

Octo Telematics looks perfectly poised to take advantage of this burgeoning market, both in fleet and retail. The business was built from the insurance industry's perspective back in 2002, when the company was launched by its CEO Fabio Sbianchi in Rome.

It was one of the first telematics service providers to get involved in user-based insurance (UBI) and, 14 years later, it's working with 60 insurance companies across the world.

Octo has more than 4.4 million connected users and what it claims is the largest global telematics database, with more than 127bn miles of driving data and in excess of 340,000 crashes and insurance claims analysed.

Its technology, data and analytics are offered to the fleet industry by leasing giants LeasePlan and Arval, and now, having signed a deal to provide fleet and insurance services

£2BN VERIZON DEAL IS 'GOOD FOR CUSTOMERS AND INDUSTRY'

The recent sale of Fleetmatics for almost £2 billion to telecommunications giant Verizon is a good deal for customers and the industry, according to Hewett.

The deal will make the telematics provider, which has 37,000 customers and 737,000 subscribers, part of Verizon Telematics, a subsidiary of the telecoms company that focuses on fleet management.

It is part of a short spate of acquisitions that Verizon has been making lately to expand those operations; about two months ago, Verizon Telematics announced that it was buying Telogis for an undisclosed sum.

Hewett says: "When players like Verizon and the mobile network operators are moving into this market it says lots of smart people believe this is the way the market is moving.

"I think it's a good thing for the industry and I think it's a good thing for customers."



Hewett: "The complexity and art is in understanding the point of sale"

FACTFILE

Organisation Octo Telematics
Corporate headquarters London
Chief marketing officer Jonathan Hewett
Founded 2002
Global users 4.4 million
Miles of driving data collected 127bn

with General Motors (GM) via its OnStar platform, it has another route to market in the UK with Vauxhall.

"Telematics is a fascinating industry," says Jonathan Hewett, chief marketing officer at Octo Telematics. "It's transforming insurance; it's transforming the fleet market and it's a key enabler for the connected car and autonomous driving."

The GM deal was driven by the need of manufacturers to monetise connected car data, especially when consumers expect some of the services for free. Octo Telematics is providing that hub for manufacturers.

Hewett explains: "For GM, we're taking data from the OnStar platform and we're connecting it with the insurers that we work with. We're in the process now of designing that to go to market in the 13 European countries that the agreement covers and we're also provisioning the fleet services for OnStar as well."



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"It's like the aviation black box – you need to know what the point of failure was and you also need to know what happened in that moment"

Jonathan Hewett, Octo Telematics



Consumers will benefit from the insurance offering, while fleets will get a connected car with all the capabilities of telematics.

But the key will be helping drivers understand and buy in to the technology. "The real complexity and art of these things is understanding the point of sale and who is interacting with the brand and the customer," says Hewett. "We're in the process of working that through with the dealerships, the distributors and the fleet sales managers, so that it can be presented in a clear and simple way."

The deal with GM is an important move for Octo Telematics, showing how its data and analytics expertise will increasingly become its core strength, while its aftermarket offering will ultimately become redundant.

Hewett told *Fleet News* that deals with two more manufacturers will be announced soon and it is working on another deal with a major leasing company.

"As we move towards semi and fully autonomous vehicles, the data will become even more important," says Hewett. "Just as night follows day, telematics follows autonomy."

He explains: "The insurers and the automotive players are going to have some interesting conversations around what they're insuring. It's like the aviation black box – you need to know what the point of failure was and you also need to know what happened in that moment."

The data and analytics will be crucial to establishing fault and resolving claims, especially when such a mix of vehicles will be in operation.

Hewett explains: "In 50 years, there will be fully autonomous vehicles on the road, but there will also be semi-autonomous vehicles and connected cars; there will be non-connected cars; there will be bicycles and motorcyclists – it will be a very complex highway. All of that is going to need and be informed by the data that's coming from the vehicle and we're really excited about that."

But, while the connected car market develops, Octo Telematics is familiarising people with the technology through a free smartphone driving app called 'Octo U'.

Tailored for the retail market, the app uses telematics technology to monitor and score driver or rider behaviour and provides users with the option of a personalised insurance quote based on their scores. It uses GPS technology to gather journey information and rank each trip based on driving behaviour such as speeding, harsh braking and acceleration.

The app also takes into account elements such as weather, road conditions, time of day, type of road, distance, length of journey, cornering, and traffic conditions, sending drivers tips on how to improve their score.

Meanwhile, drivers with good scores are rewarded with the option of an insurance quote from a panel of insurers, which they can choose to accept at their discretion.

"It gives you entry-level telematics," says Hewett, but it is also familiarising people with the technology and its benefits. "It's becoming the new norm," he adds, which can only go to help fleets get the buy-in of their drivers if they choose to adopt the technology.

127bn

miles of driving data evaluated

340,000

crashes analysed



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COST REDUCTION KEY TO INCREASED UPTAKE

Four years ago, the senior management team at Octo Telematics conducted a strategic review to help it understand the barriers to adoption.

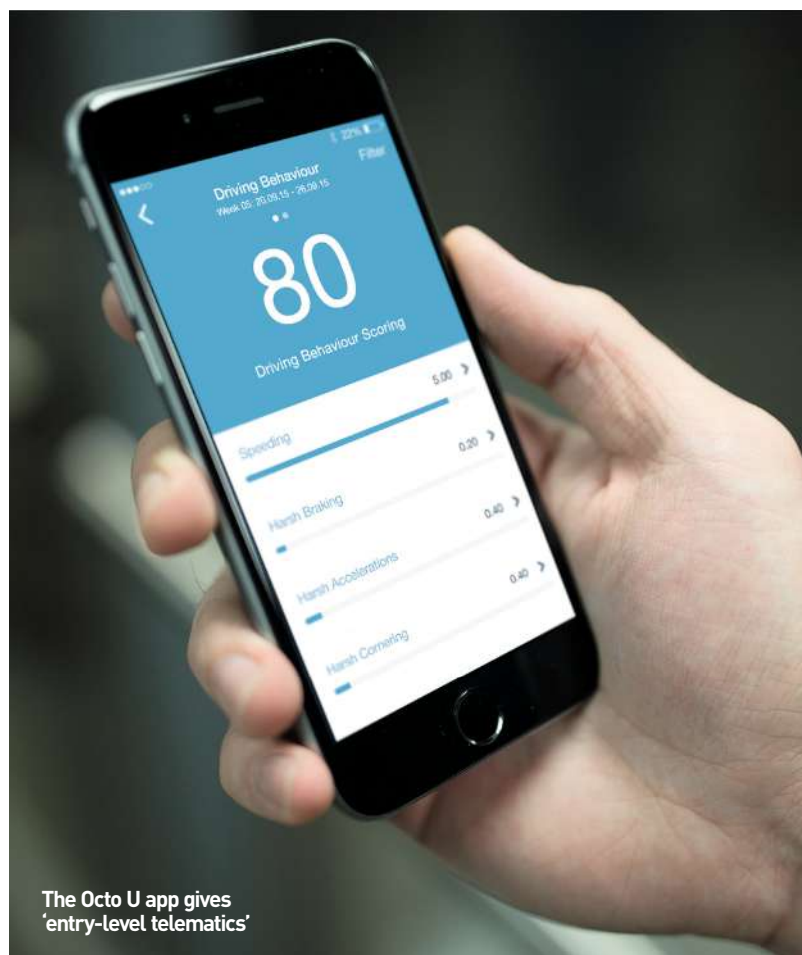
Telematics had been embraced by the truck industry for some time and it was gaining traction with van fleets, but there wasn't the same pull for cars.

Octo Telematics talked to the insurance industry and fleet operators to ascertain the problem. Hewett explains: "We said 'we all agree this is a great idea – having more information to make roads safer, to reduce accidents, to gain operational efficiencies – so what's the problem?'"

The problem was digesting the cost of the technology. The more sophisticated telematics devices could have a unit cost of £100 or more. "You needed a high-cost asset to justify the cost," says Hewett. Cars didn't fall into that bracket so it was important to get the cost of the device down.

Octo Telematics invested around £1million in developing a device roadmap. "One technology stack that could fit in any kind of form factor," explains Hewett.

It gave the company 17 different devices based on the same technology platform and brought the cost tumbling down to around £20 for an entry level device. "You can then start making the case," says Hewett.



The Octo U app gives 'entry-level telematics'



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OVERCOMING THE BIG FLEET CHALLENGES

The solutions being employed by the UK's largest fleet operators present a blueprint for the industry. *Jonathan Manning* reports

If there's one factor that unifies Britain's largest and most diverse fleets, it's a relentless quest for efficiency.

The business and operational demands of each fleet are unquestionably unique – even different divisions within the same organisation can have highly individual fleet requirements – but the overarching drive for higher productivity levels at lower cost is common to all.

With thousands of vehicles on the road, these big fleets have the economies of scale to drive real change through the entire industry.

Achieving savings of just a few pounds per year per car or van, when multiplied by a thousand-plus vehicles, can make major contributions to corporate bottom lines. Conversely, failure to tackle seemingly minor issues, when multiplied by thousands of vehicles, can become dauntingly expensive.

Keeping a lid on costs, maximising value from contracts, forging strategic partnerships, seizing opportunities presented by new technology, preparing for a zero emission future, managing occupational road risk, and forecasting the ramifications of Brexit and the long-term future of business travel mean there's no shortage of challenges resting in the in-trays of fleet managers.

And these are not challenges that can be tackled by fleet departments in isolation. Effecting change across companies and organisations of this size is a huge management undertaking.

New initiatives demand the involvement of several internal departments, as well as drivers, trade unions and suppliers.

But it's those learnings from which all fleets can benefit, whether it's cost reduction or tackling driver safety.

VALUE FOR MONEY

If pound signs dominate their spreadsheets, it's the need to deliver best value that preoccupies the managers of the UK's biggest fleets.

As austerity maintains its vice-like squeeze on UK plc, there's a constant focus on achieving greater value from vehicles.

Utilisation rates are under the microscope as fleets "use technology to analyse how we use our fleet and how we could better use it to sweat the assets more", says Dale Eynon, head of Defra Group Fleet Services, where he is responsible for 6,000 vehicles.

At Anglian Water, telematics data is providing the statistical evidence for Stewart Lightbody, head of fleet services, to identify under-utilised vehicles among its 1,800 vans. These LCVs can then be taken out of service or redeployed, allowing the company to grow without increasing fleet size.

VALUE FOR

The same data source is also delivering bigger, business-wide wins as the telematics system integrates with Anglian Water's work scheduling system for field-based staff.

In broad brush terms, the integration gives the company the 'granular detail' to dispatch the operative, with the right skills, right vehicle and the right parts on board, rather than default to the nearest engineer.

"Let's make the journey we have to make the most effective one we can," says Lightbody.

Setting ambitious annual targets for cost savings, Paul Tate, commodity manager at Siemens, puts the ball firmly in the court of suppliers to the company's 4,500-vehicle fleet in the UK.

"We are looking for a 5% saving from the supply chain this financial year on a £40 million PVO (purchasing volume)," he

says. The economy drive is even more of a stretch because savings are measured only on initiatives introduced in the current year – reductions that continue from programmes started in previous years are excluded.

Tate acknowledges that it would be unrealistic to rely on price cuts to achieve the target savings, but to ensure Siemens is securing best value, he is planning a retender process for its leasing supplier.

"We are challenging the status quo," he says. "We have been with our strategic partner [Lex Autolease] for a long time. We are going to market to challenge what we are getting from them and to see if this is the right solution for Siemens in the UK, or do we want to consider a new model? We are looking to see if Siemens in the UK is utilising the right mechanisms for procuring its vehicles and for managing its vehicles," he says.



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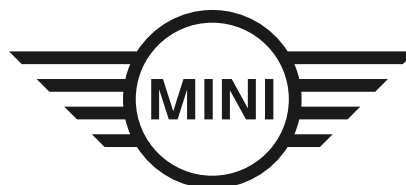


The MINI 3-door Hatch was relaunched in 2001, bringing the original MINI model into the 21st Century. It has since been a runaway success, winning a whole host of industry awards, including BusinessCar Supermini of the Year for 14 years in a row.

Following the launch of the latest generation of this iconic model in 2014, the 5-door Hatch was made available for the first time. This new addition enhanced the practicality of the MINI Hatch with two extra doors, opening it up to new customers who needed the extra space, but still wanted to enjoy distinctive MINI handling and styling.

Shortly after, in 2015, the MINI Clubman was reintroduced to the roads. The premium feel of the MINI Clubman's impressive design follows through to the interior space, where a host of innovative equipment is included as standard, such as MINI Navigation, Bluetooth® connectivity, Cruise Control and more. Getting more from the MINI Clubman doesn't stop there; you can also pack more into it. Seats for five and 360 litres of luggage space round off this model as a practical, stylish choice for fleets. The MINI One D Clubman is the most fuel-efficient and tax-friendly Clubman available, with CO₂ emissions from just 99g/km and a combined fuel consumption of 74.3mpg.

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THE GREAT FUEL DEBATE

If it comes as no surprise that fuel is a significant element of vehicle wholelife costs, the news that one of the UK's largest fleets is considering a move away from diesel will cause ripples – especially when the majority of its vehicles are vans.

The combination of benefit-in-kind tax rules and environmental considerations has led construction services company Wates to reconsider its diesel-only policy.

"Although the reversal on the decision to remove the 3% diesel tax penalty from 2016/17 will have a relatively small direct impact on company costs (in terms of the Class 1A NIC), the impact on the driver population will be quite significant," says Ted Sakyi, group fleet manager of Wates.

"Drivers of cars ordered or delivered pre the tax change announcement may find themselves in difficulty in three years' time when the tax impact really starts to hit home."

Factor in the impact of NOx emissions on local air quality, and Wates has decided that for lower mileage vehicles, which are not trundling up and down motorways, the choice of a diesel vehicle is being withdrawn.

"Petrol is cleaner and cheaper to run. The only problem is trying to find petrol vans, in particular. It's proving very, very difficult," says Sakyi.

Clean petrol is only a short-term solution, though, and the prospect of operational vehicles paying heavily to enter ultra-low emission zones, or even being excluded from certain urban areas, is pushing Sakyi to focus on the future-proofing of his fleet, "not just for now, but for way, way beyond 2020".

"We are looking at electric vehicles, and installing charge points in all our key sites where there are a large number of vehicles, not just for company vehicles but to encourage members of staff who have their own private electric or hybrid vehicles to tap into that power," he says.

Zero emission adoption, however, is subject to the availability of appropriate vehicles in the marketplace.

"The problem with electric vehicles is always range," he says. "Our vehicles are racked out, kitted out and loaded with equipment. So we are looking at what vehicles are suitable, working closely with Renault and Nissan to see what options are available, and putting in place an infrastructure of charging points. If the vehicles are there, I will get them."

But analysis of which Wates vehicles are suitable for a switch to electric is very difficult, given the different mileages and lifestyles of staff, particularly on a fleet of this size.

"Petrol is cleaner and cheaper. The only problem is trying to find petrol vans, in particular. It's proving very, very difficult"

Ted Sakyi, Wates

FUEL DEBATE



An employee whose work profile might be ideal for an electric car, for example, may not have off-street parking for overnight recharging, scuppering the plans.

"At the moment our commercial vehicle fleet does very low mileage in some parts of the company, because we are very local to where we work," says Sakyi. "I am currently working with Drivelectric to research which operatives are suitable for driving electric vehicles."

By the very nature of the organisation it serves, Defra Group Fleet Services is wholeheartedly committed to green fleet practice. And its ambition to go 'ultra low' in terms of its environmental footprint extends significantly further than the selection of the lowest emission vehicles.

"We have a travel hierarchy whereby before people get in a car they need to decide whether they need to have a meeting in the first place, and then if they do, can they attend by public transport; and their last option is to look for a vehicle that is available," says Eynon.

"When you get to that point, you need to make sure the journey is the greenest one possible, and that we are getting it at the lowest cost. We need to make sure we are going green and not increasing our cost – we think going green is cost-effective, and should be a better option in terms of how much it costs to run a vehicle."

Looking further into the future, there's a question of whether the installation of a comprehensive recharging infrastructure for electric vehicles will be overtaken by alternative communication and transport solutions.

Will high-speed broadband see more staff work from home? Will tele-conferencing replace meetings? And will fleet departments be replaced by mobility departments?

At Siemens, Tate asks: "Are company cars going to be the future or do we get a mobility allowance and just seek the best way of getting from A to B?"

"If congestion charging comes in, and town charges mean you can't go into certain areas, is the company car going to be a viable option? It all depends on the strategy of the Government, the strategy of local towns and the technologies that the future employee base accepts and wants to live with."

DUTY OF CARE

A deep sense of responsibility towards employees driving for business has become ingrained in the UK's largest fleets.

The days of a cursory licence check have long gone, as new technology delivers priceless information to the desk of the fleet manager.

Online risk assessments, and in particular telematics data that highlights incidents of excessive speed and harsh braking, are now giving fleets the tools to tackle road risk head-on.

Anglian Water started installing telematics trackers across its commercial vehicle fleet two and a half years ago, based on a business case of lowering fuel bills by 10% through improved driving styles. The benefits, however, have extended well beyond fuel economy, reducing accident rates to the point where the firm's annual insurance premium has tumbled by £60,000.

And it's this success in improving its fleet's safety record that is leading the utility to roll out telematics tracking throughout its 650-strong car fleet.

"We are having half as many speeding convictions in our vans as we do in our cars, but the van fleet is three times the size of our car fleet," says Lightbody, adding that Anglian

Water's car drivers are twice as likely as its van drivers to have an accident.

"We have had a positive impact in managing our commercial vehicle driver risk, and now it would be remiss of me not to apply the same attention and process to our car drivers," he says.

"And I really want to demonstrate to our van drivers that there is an absolutely level playing field. We treat driving at work the same, whether it be in a car or a van."

Drivers and their line managers are emailed their driving record for the previous week, with their performance ranked in a team league table.

This relentless attention to safety is paying dividends, but it does require constant reinforcement from the fleet department.

"You have got to be prepared to do something with the data when you get it. As a business, we said we are going to see what the data tells us, and then commit to doing something about it, and that's where we have delivered our savings," says Lightbody.

Determined to make Wates 'the safest fleet in the UK', Sakyi is converting 600 of the company's 1,300 cash allowance drivers back into company car drivers.

All staff in receipt of a cash allowance, "need to be treated as company car drivers", he says.

Across the company, every driver will have their licence checked and will undergo an online risk assessment.

For commercial vehicle drivers, this is reinforced by telematics data from vehicle tracking systems (fitted to more than 800 commercial vehicles and specified for all new additions to the fleet).

"Those who are identified as high risk drivers are then put on a road risk assessment to make sure they realise their behaviour. And we are looking to roll this out to any member of staff who drives," explains Sakyi.

"We have a duty of care to all of our employees,



DUTY OF CARE





Honda's award-winner that ticks all the right boxes

The Civic 1.6 i-DTEC is strong on the road – and the balance sheet

Efficiency is at the heart of what makes a good company car. Strong performance on the road and on the balance sheet is essential to keep both a business and its drivers happy.

The Honda Civic 1.6 i-DTEC is built using the firm's Earth Dreams technology and ticks all the efficiency boxes.

The figures from the 120hp engine are impressive. CO₂ emissions start from 94g/km on the Civic Hatch, with fuel economy of up to 76.3mpg combined, and BIK from £680 for 20% tax payer.

After its 2014 launch, the Civic won two Green Apple Automotive awards – gold in the smaller family car sector and silver in the overall automotive category. Judges said the car was a 'superb all-rounder' that 'surprised drivers with its real world fuel economy'. The Civic Tourer also received the Honest John Award in 2015 for Best Real MPG Performer.

In submissions recorded and uploaded by Honest John readers, the Civic Tourer in 1.6 i-DTEC diesel form returned 93% of its official economy rating, with a real world driving average of 68mpg.

The Civic won the 'SME Company Car of the Year' award in 2014, while *What Car* and Warranty Direct named Honda the

UK's most reliable car maker for the ninth year in a row in 2014.

Award-winning economy, reliability and efficiency aren't at the cost of comfort or technology. Every Civic includes a high level of standard specification, essential for the business driver.

"Judges said the car was a superb all-rounder"

Comfort and convenience comes from climate control, DAB radio, stop start, and automatic lights/wipers, but that isn't the end of the Civic's technical playbook.

Honda's 'Connect' infotainment system offers a clean and simple navigation system from Garmin, with full postcode support and live traffic.

The Civic is available with a host of safety technology too, dependent on trim level. Traffic Sign Recognition gives dashboard indications of road speed limits – even recognising temporary speed limits and roadworks. Blind Spot Indicator provides an extra check to ensure overtaking and changing lanes is done safely, while Lane

Departure Warning ensures the driver stays alert and safely in lane at all times.

In addition to simply sensing day and night, High Beam Assist detects oncoming traffic, or a lack thereof, and turns high beam on or off accordingly.

A high-resolution reversing camera eases parking, with active city braking reducing the risk of low-speed impacts.

Away from the dash, the car is packaged practically and includes Honda's 'magic seats' – an array of folding and locking mechanisms to simplify load lugging.

A flat floor space in the rear seats is made easily accessible by seat squabs that fold up against the backrests and lock into place to give a large, usable area for storage and transportation. If you need to combine space with the boot, then the magic seats allow a large, flat load bay. The seats also split, meaning you can carry passengers and loads together.

17" alloy wheels, a range of metallic paints and striking exterior design all add to driver appeal. When you combine storage, safety and economy, the Honda Civic is the perfect choice for a company car driver. With excellent reliability and running costs, fleet managers are sure to be pleased as well.



irrespective of whether they drive a company vehicle or not."

The message is reinforced by safety briefings and the inclusion of fleet risk in staff team talks, as well as Wates investing in its new vehicles to make them as safe as possible – all new LCVs are specified with air conditioning, electric mirrors, reversing sensors and twin airbags; and the company is considering the installation of forward facing cameras to mitigate its risk.

But Sakyi has already identified further dangers on the horizon.

"As technology develops, fleets face new risks and opportunities around the rise of streaming while driving, connected vehicles and autonomous technology," he says.

"It is important that fleets keep up to date with how technology is changing the driving environment and how it can be best utilised together with mitigating the evolving risks."

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Any analysis of the evolution of fleet language over the past 15 years would highlight the rise of key themes.

Chief among these is a sense of drivers becoming 'customers', and suppliers being viewed as 'partners'. For the former, fleet managers are now focused on automating processes, so that drivers have the convenience and efficiency of booking all their service and maintenance work online.

There is also considerable attention being paid across LCV fleets to the van as an ergonomic workplace, with cab, racking and layout assessed to create a safe and efficient place to work.

Neither of these developments will be achievable, however, without fleets working in partnership with key suppliers.

At Siemens, Tate identifies the principal achievement of the past few years as, "getting the supply chain to be the face of the Siemens fleet department so we have seamless service provision to our employees which mirrors the historic internal fleet management approach".

Failure to provide a consistent service leads to confusion and undermines compliance with central policy, in a business as diverse as Siemens.

"We use our partner as a sounding block on a lot of our procedures and policies. We ask them for guidance on potential pitfalls"

Paul Tate, Siemens

"The supply chain has to understand the strategy of the business to provide a service to match that," says Tate.

"We have to make sure both strategies are aligned. We have had to put in place various channels which will assist our leasing company to truly understand the direction in which Siemens was going."

While this requires the company and its fleet to communicate openly and regularly with key strategic suppliers, it also demands open-mindedness from Siemens.

"There may be something which we want to do with fleet where our strategic partner can come back and say that's not really feasible, or say, if you go that route it's going to cost you X, Y or Z," says Tate.

"We use them as a sounding block on a lot of our procedures and policies. We ask them for guidance on potential pitfalls and we benchmark our strategy against other businesses' strategies."

At Wates, Sakyi echoes the need to forge genuine partnerships with suppliers, and has rationalised the number of leasing companies supplying the 1,300-strong fleet from eight to three since he joined at the start of the year.

"All our supply chain, whether they are leasing, rental, fuel, bodyshops or service centres are all an extension of the fleet department," he says.

"They are our partners, and they need to be seen as partners. There is no point in having a supplier that you can't trust."

Likewise, adds Sakyi, there is no point in making undeliverable demands or driving down price to unworkable levels.

"An unhappy supplier is not worth having," he says. "It's a two-way street, we are all

in this to be profitable and to have a long-term working relationship.

"You cannot have a long-term relationship if you are driving down cost to the point where it becomes unrealistic, because that supplier either will not be there in 12 months' time or will walk away from your business, and then you start all over again.

"We are engaged with them, and we want them to be open and honest, and brutal, if needs be, with us; to say, this is not the right way. They do it day in, day out, so why would I not want to listen to them?"

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP



Fiat Tipo Elite Edition: Amore for less

If you value value, then this is your new car

The FIAT Tipo Elite Edition has been designed specifically with the business user in mind. It takes the brilliant Tipo package – fuel-efficient, comfortable, exceptionally roomy and draped in stylish Italian bodywork – and refines the features that matter to those who use their vehicles for work as well as leisure.

The FIAT Tipo Elite Edition has a powerful 1.6-litre turbo-diesel engine, producing 120hp and 320Nm of torque as standard, and is available with a six-speed manual as well as an optional six-speed double-clutch transmission (DCT) for those drivers who spend more time in stop-go traffic than on the open road. Both offer near-identical performance, economy and CO₂ emissions figures so – as is common with the FIAT Tipo – there is no need to compromise performance or low running costs for comfort

and convenience. For the Elite Edition, additional fuel-saving technologies improve its economy and emissions still further – with CO₂ emissions from just 89g/km, the BIK liability is just 18% (2016-2017) for both the manual hatchback and Station Wagon, while its official combined-cycle fuel economy figure is from 80.7mpg.

“It takes the Tipo package – fuel-efficient, comfortable, roomy and draped in stylish bodywork – and refines the features that matter”

In terms of practicality, the new FIAT Tipo hatchback is deceptively roomy, being capable of accommodating five six-feet-plus adult occupants thanks to its class-leading rear legroom and outstanding headroom. And it can fit in their luggage too – its boot capacity is also best-in-class with an outstanding volume of 440 litres. And yet, at 4.37m long, 1.79m wide and 1.50m tall, it's still easy to find a parking spot in the company car park.

The Station Wagon

Just 20cm longer than the hatchback, the Station Wagon version adds an additional 110 litres of boot space – at a total of 550 litres, it is also class-leading. It's capable of carrying loads of up to 1.8m in length and its flip-and-fold 60/40 split rear seats provide a completely flat load floor. The Station Wagon body style has a height of 1.51m thanks to the standard-fit longitudinal roof bars. Loading the boot of the Station Wagon is aided by a low load sill with reconfigurable components, such as an adjustable load floor and removable side storage panels, to further increase the width of the luggage compartment. Everything has been designed and engineered with the busy business user in mind.

Above and beyond

In addition to being powerful, efficient and exceptionally roomy, the FIAT Tipo Elite Edition is also incredibly well-equipped.

As well as all the things you would expect in a modern hatchback and Station Wagon – air conditioning, electric windows front and rear, Bluetooth and DAB radio and a leather-trimmed steering wheel with audio controls – the FIAT Tipo Elite Edition goes above and beyond. You will find a five-inch touchscreen UConnect system with satellite navigation and Uconnect LIVE services, combining with a smartphone app (available via App Store



The interior is incredibly well-equipped

TIP0

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ent feature



or Google Play) to offer music streaming with Deezer and TuneIn, news from Reuters and the ability to stay in touch with friends via Facebook Check-in and Twitter – not to mention the ability to monitor performance, efficiency and maintenance status with eco:Drive and my:Car. In addition, the Elite Edition is fitted with 16-inch alloy wheels to set it apart from other Tipo models.

Keeping you safe

The FIAT Tipo Elite Edition is also equipped with a comprehensive suite of safety features, including advanced ESP, six airbags, rear parking sensors, AEB (Autonomous

Emergency Braking), speed limiter and adaptive cruise control – which uses radar technology to maintain a safe distance to the vehicle in front – all as standard.

And then there are the details, the small things that can make such a huge difference. The standard front central armrest and electrically-adjustable driver's side lumbar support and height adjustment, for example, not to mention the numerous cabin compartments with a variety of shapes and capacities totalling no less than 12 litres, as well as the conveniently located USB port for charging and connecting devices. And if you go for the Station Wagon, you'll find the

roller cover can be removed conveniently with one hand and stored under the floor panel, while two lights, two bag hooks and four load-retaining hooks positioned on the floor provide added convenience.

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of the FIAT Tipo Elite Edition is not that FIAT has managed to pack all that practicality and technology into a family hatchback and Station Wagon, it's that it has done so while keeping its P11D price at an incredible £16,940, with the Station Wagon priced just £1,000 more at £17,940. The DCT transmission can be added to either body style for an additional £1,000.

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THE GREAT SMR DEBATE

Fleet managers can use franchised main dealers or independent garages when it comes to service, maintenance and repairs. But should they choose between them or opt for both? *Ben Rooth* investigates

Should fleet managers use franchised dealers or independent garages for their service, maintenance and repair (SMR) requirements – or both?

These are the choices facing them as they aim to keep their vehicles on the road in the most cost-efficient and effective way.

Traditionally, it is perceived that independent garages provide cost savings as they don't have large overheads, while franchised garages provide greater peace of mind – not least that manufacturer-approved parts will be fitted in order to maintain warranties.

Consequently, many fleets will ensure they take vehicles to franchised garages for the duration of the warranty before heading to more cost-efficient independent outlets once that runs out.

Last year's FN50 listing of the country's largest leasing companies found that around three-quarters of their SMR business for cars and vans was with franchised dealers and one-quarter with independents.

Industry figures expect this ratio to change, but are split on whether this will favour independent garages or franchised dealers.

Stuart James, director of the Independent Garage Association (IGA), predicts that business will move away from franchised dealers in the future.

One of the main reasons for this is because a new European-wide industry legislation, known as security-related repair and maintenance (SERMI), is set to be implemented, and this will allow independent garages access to all areas of manufacturer technical information.

"We believe that the independent share of the fleet maintenance and repair market can only increase – it has already grown from around 15% to around 26% over the last few years," says James. "The introduction of the SERMI standard is the last step in the introduction of a truly level playing field for independent garages."

"There will no longer be good and bad garages, there will just be those that have proven their integrity and those that have not"

*Stuart James,
Independent Garage
Association*

"As well as ensuring that independent garages have 'access all areas' to the information required to maintain and repair modern vehicles, accreditation to this ISO-level standard will provide fleet managers with reassurance that they are dealing with a company that has proven its integrity as a business as well as its technical competence.

"There will no longer be good and bad garages, there will just be those that have proven their integrity and those that have not."

Conversely, Chris Mitchinson, director of in-life services at fleet management company CLM, has seen a shift towards fleets using franchised dealers for SMR.

"Since the end of the credit crunch and the last recession, more companies have bought new vehicles," he says. "These tend to be serviced within the manufacturers' networks, especially during the warranty period.

"The growth of manufacturer service packs now available also means that more vehicles are retained within the franchise networks to take advantage of the manufacturers' offers.

"This ratio is now circa 80:20 in favour of franchised dealers on our managed fleet of around 14,000 vehicles, which is up slightly from the more historic 75:25."

CLM has "both ends of the spectrum" on its fleet with some clients having 100% of their vehicles serviced by franchised dealers, while others are 100% independent, says Mitchinson.

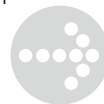
"The choice of vehicle service profile depends on what the customer wants," he adds.

"When we take on a new client, during the implementation phase and then again at our regular review meetings, we look at their service profile and discuss their preferences with them, making our recommendation as required.

"But our standard recommendation is always to use a number of independents within the servicing mix because we firmly believe that this is most cost-effective option for the client."



Service plans may help swing your SMR decisions. Visit fleetnews.co.uk/service-plans





THE CASE FOR INDEPENDENT GARAGES

PROS:



- Better value for money
- Most garages warranty-approved
- More personalised service

CONS:



- Not all are "quality assured"
- Unable to carry out some warranty work
- Potentially lack knowledge around new or prestige vehicles

Lower cost is arguably the main reason for using independent garages ahead of franchised dealers.

"There is no difference in the technical competence of independent garages and franchised dealers, but the lower overheads of independent garages mean they can offer better value," says Stuart James, director of the IGA.

"They also tend to be multi-brand, giving them a wide understanding of diagnostic principles and avoiding the need for potentially expensive 'diagnosis by substitution' solutions.

"The small size and individuality of often family-owned businesses provides the kind of flexibility and personal service to fleet drivers that larger corporate organisations struggle to match."

He feels there is "no downside" when it comes to using an independent garage for routine maintenance and repair work, although he acknowledges that they still cannot undertake some warranty work, historically due to the lack of technical information being made available by manufacturers.

However, Vincent St Claire, commercial director of Fleet Assist, which provides contract hire and leasing companies with a nationwide network of more than 8,000 SMR outlets, says it is important for fleets to choose the right independent garage.

"There are many very good independent garages which have invested heavily to ensure they are capable of matching the service levels offered by the franchised dealer," he says.

"Conversely, there are many poor independents out there who simply do not have the required knowledge or equipment required to meet the standards needed when working on a modern vehicle.

"While there can clearly be benefits of utilising an independent garage for certain types of job, the consequences of choosing the wrong garage can very quickly negate any savings.

"It is therefore essential that fleet managers have access to a network of quality assured and vetted garages before making a decision either way."

Kwik Fit has witnessed demand for its range of SMR services increase in recent years.

"Demand for mechanical work across the fleet sector is being driven by a range of factors, but notably our price competitiveness, our customer service levels and an extended opening hours policy at centres when compared with franchised dealers," says Peter Lambert, fleet director at Kwik Fit.

"The rising fleet demand for mechanical services is reflective of the progress we are making in creating an image of the company where the acceptability among company car drivers and fleet decision-makers of using Kwik Fit is the same as it is for tyre repair and replacement."

However, despite the advances made by the independent garage network, some leasing and fleet management companies still feel that the expertise doesn't exist in the sector to handle the SMR requirements of prestige and high-performance fleet vehicles.

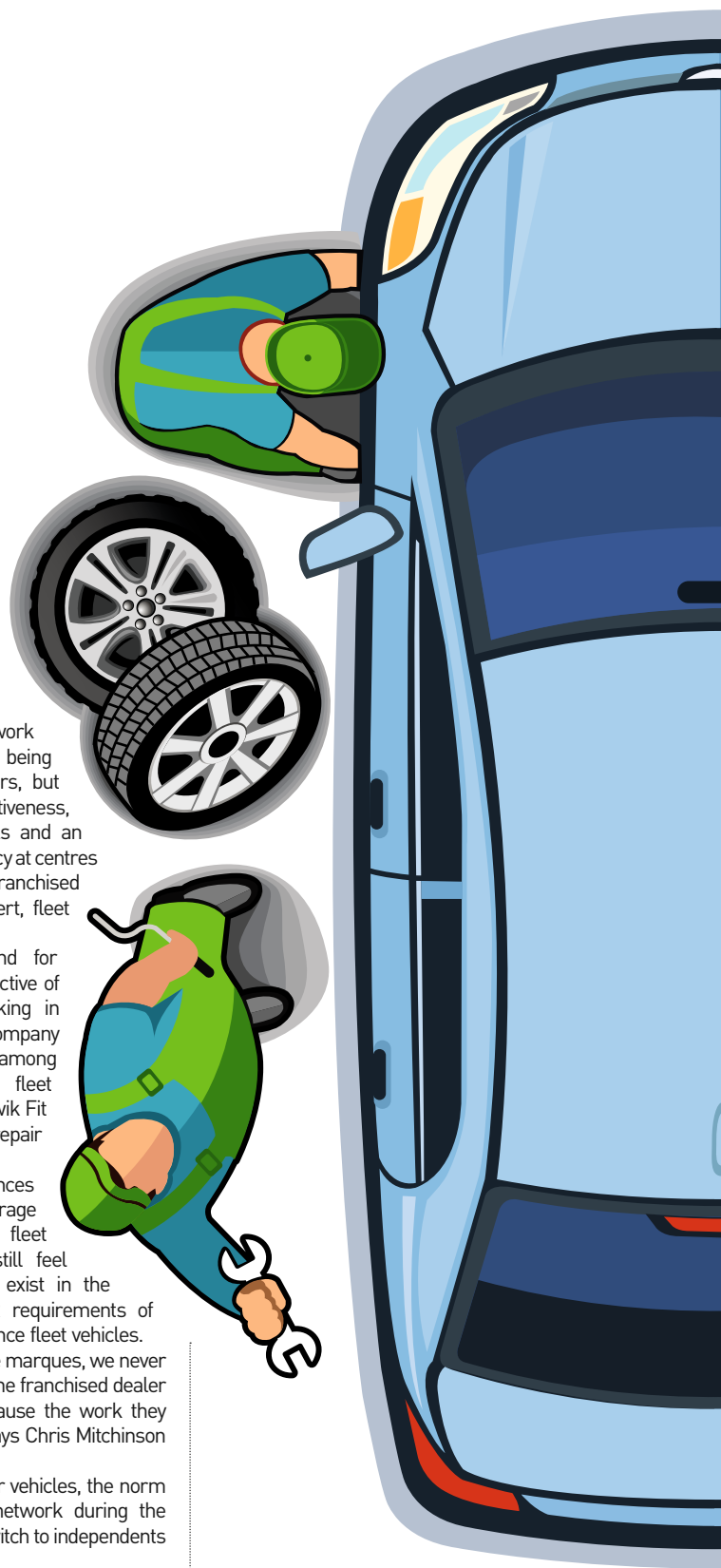
"For exclusive and prestige marques, we never take the vehicle away from the franchised dealer network during its life because the work they require is so specialised," says Chris Mitchinson of CLM.

"But for the majority of our vehicles, the norm is to use the franchised network during the warranty period and then switch to independents after that.

"However, a hybrid viewpoint is to use the franchised network for the first 12 months of the vehicle's life and for all warranty work, and then switch to independents for the rest of our servicing needs – providing this is not contrary to our clients' wishes.

"A minority of our clients adopt the independent service route completely from new.

"We've found that these are very robust in their processes and procedures and, if we do have a poor experience with one outlet, we are able to 'switch off' that particular branch for any future bookings and make alternative arrangements."



"There are many very good independent garages which have invested heavily"

Vincent St Claire, Fleet Assist



THE CASE FOR FRANCHISED DEALERS

PROS:

- Manufacturer-trained skills and diagnostic equipment
- Warranties maintained
- Residual values bolstered



CONS:

- More expensive
- Can be more impersonal
- Less convenient than the 'local' garage



The most obvious reason for choosing franchised dealerships is that work will be carried out to manufacturer-approved standards, which maintains the vehicle warranty.

Using a franchised dealer ensures that components are certified by manufacturers themselves, while technicians have access to the most up-to-date diagnostic equipment.

"The headline figure that everyone looks at is the labour rate and there can be significant savings on labour costs by utilising an independent," says Vincent St Claire, commercial director of Fleet Assist.

"However, other factors such as vehicle type, job type, warranty, diagnostic capability and courtesy vehicle availability often need to be taken into consideration.

"Often a combination of these factors will mean that while an independent may be cheaper, a franchised dealer is better placed to deliver the end result."

These sentiments were echoed by David Baddeley, customer service director for Volvo Cars UK.

"Today, maintaining a car in peak condition is as much about software as it is the traditional elements of a service programme," he says.

"All franchised dealers have real-time links to the manufacturer's systems to ensure that any required software or product updates are done at the time of servicing and don't result in additional downtime.

"Technicians today need to be skilled electrical and system engineers with access to the latest diagnostic equipment and processes.

"Without those skills and resources, the likelihood of expensive periods of vehicle downtime or sub-optimum performance – in areas such as fuel efficiency – are significantly increased."

Kevin White, aftersales fleet manager at Kia Motors (UK), adds: "No-one knows a Kia better than the Kia network. Every Kia dealership has experts who have the latest Kia training and access to our advanced tools and technology.

"This is becoming increasingly important as more complex technology is incorporated

into cars and conventional internal combustion drivetrains are complemented by hybrid, plug-in hybrid, and electric variants.

"In addition to a courtesy car and collection and delivery service, with around 75% of all jobs completed in an hour or less customers are increasingly enjoying the convenience of the customer lounges, refreshments and wi-fi in their Kia dealership, facilities rarely offered by independent repairers."

White added Kia, like most major manufacturers, has a service plan and fleet charter to help ensure vehicles stay within the Kia network by offering "significant customer benefits".

"Customers with the Kia Care-3 Service Plan enjoy a competitive fixed price package which helps them budget for servicing costs, while our fleet charter provides fleet specific service level agreements (SLAs) with transparent and competitive labour, parts, and fluid pricing, to help fleet operators budget for and manage their operating costs," he adds.

Volkswagen UK told *Fleet News* its fleet package pricing programme is used by the majority of Britain's leasing companies to provide "reassurance" surrounding SMR quality and costs.

It fixes SMR prices for many regular tasks – from routine servicing to MOT tests – on a regional basis to ensure that it consistently offers value for money in those areas.

James Dower, senior black book editor at automotive analysts Cap HPI, adds that vehicles maintained by franchised garages tend to sell better when deflected.

"While the data makes no distinction between a full service history from a franchised workshop or authorised independent, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that franchised dealers will choose the car with a main dealer service history over the one without," he says.

"Undoubtedly, a full dealer service history within the prestige market will have a greater effect on value and desirability, especially at lower mileage. Volume, higher mileage, and more price point cars are less affected. One significant benefit of main dealer servicing is that the diagnostic equipment will automatically pick up on any outstanding service or safety recalls."

"A full dealer service history can have a greater effect on value and desirability"

James Dower, Cap HPI

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Fleet News Buying Group has partnered with leading leasing companies and dealer groups who will provide competitive pricing for your cars and vans.

When you register your company with FNBG you just need to provide information about your vehicles and when you are intending to procure. This is called the Customer Action Plan (CAP), which is a non-binding agreement between you and FNBG.

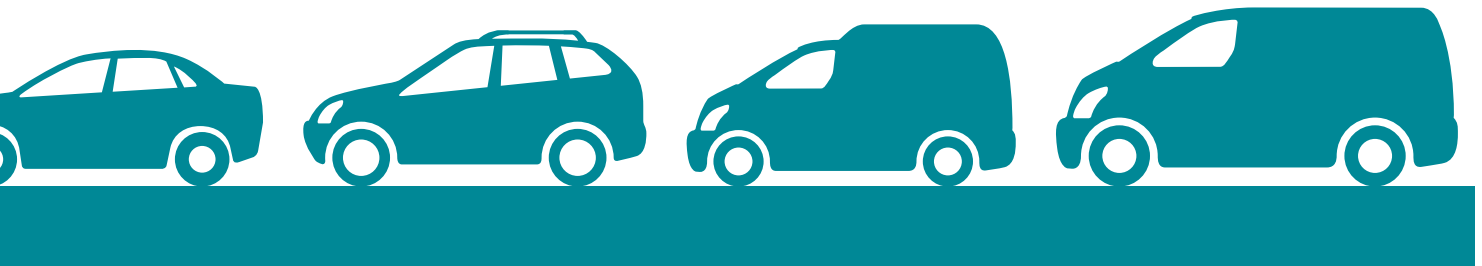
When the time comes to make the transaction, FNBG has created a simple five-step process:

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2. We help you specify the vehicle and provide real quotations, simply and quickly from our vehicle suppliers.
3. We show you how much money you can save.
4. We confirm your order and you authorise it.
5. We check that you're happy with our service.

Once you have a vehicle shortlist (3 or 4 choices), you can start the buying process.

Once the order is placed, the supplier will let you know when you can expect to take delivery. Your personal FNBG account manager will always be on hand to help you with any queries.

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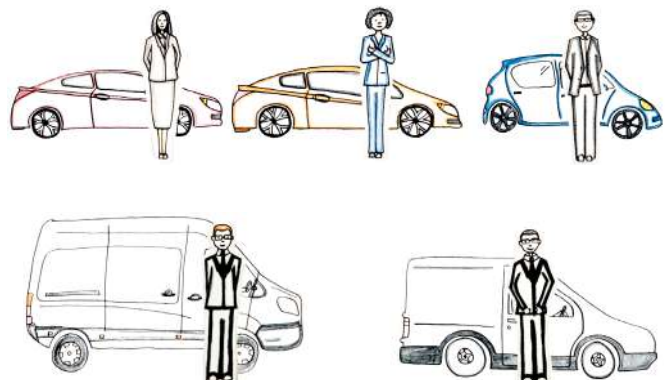
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AWARDS
2015

TOYOTA

'We are the catalyst for hydrogen and for the Government'

Toyota's unerring commitment to the environment saw it win the green manufacturer award for the second time

By Stephen Briers

Some manufacturers pay lip service to the environment; others have a solid commitment to addressing green concerns. For Toyota, it is a way of life, something that has underpinned its corporate strategy for the past quarter of a century.

A trailblazer when it launched the Prius in the UK in 2000 – when no-one was talking about CO₂ emissions – now every manufacturer offers their own hybrid options.

However, where Toyota differs from every other manufacturer is in its long-term vision, according to Neil Broad, Toyota and Lexus fleet series general manager.

"We have a 2050 global vision to be zero CO₂ in the manufacture, distribution and disposal of vehicles," he says. "It's about doing the right thing; if you continue to do that, then legislation will eventually catch up with you."

That level of commitment saw the company named *Fleet News* green manufacturer of the year, the second time it has collected the trophy since it was introduced in 2010.

Fleet News: There are differing views about the future for alternative fuels; what's Toyota's take?

Neil Broad: We are less about electric and more about hydrogen as the next step. We need to get beyond pricing and infrastructure, but it's the right thing to do. Hybrid is the best case scenario for the real world today, but the refuelling structure is limited because it still draws from

the national grid. We see ourselves as the catalyst for hydrogen and for the Government as well. There are more grants being released which could see more Mirais [Toyota's hydrogen car] in the market.

FN: How much interest is there in the Mirai?

NB: We have 12 on fleet and we are speaking to a lot of people. But it is a gradual process. The Prius wasn't mass market when it was launched; now it is no longer niche. The Mirai is just the start; we see more hydrogen opportunities with Lexus. If Toyota believes that it is the right thing, then it will continue to go down that route and everyone will eventually catch up.

FN: Toyota and Lexus fleet sales are up this year across all the key fleet channels except rental. What's been the strategy in 2016?

NB: We are quietly attacking on all fronts which is a healthier place to be. We are about sustainability, not giant leaps. We are also getting more involved in used cars. That value is as important as the new car; if we cut our prices it affects the residual value and that just moves the price differential down. We want customers to pay more for cars and have a higher residual value, which reduces the overall cost.

FN: What are you doing to improve your used car proposition?

NB: We are about to rebrand our used car offering as Toyota Plus and re-engineer our used vehicle locator to make it easier to find a used car and improve back office functionality for dealers. For the past 18 months we have been trialling repatriation with selected customers where we are offering our auction facilities to fleets as a third way to remarket their cars. It's assisted buyback without the obligation. Ultimately the best price for a car is where the demand is, so if a dealer needs a car that's a better option [for fleets] than going out to a wider auction.

26,883

Toyota's total fleet sales
(H1 2016)



Neil Broad, general manager, Toyota & Lexus Fleet Services (right), is presented with the award by Stephen Briers, editor-in-chief, *Fleet News*

"We have a 2050 vision to be zero CO₂ in manufacture, distribution and disposal of vehicles"

Neil Broad, Toyota and Lexus



Here we are again! Toyota
Lexus celebrate another
Green Fleet award

FN: What role can the internet play in speeding up the return of cars to market?

NB: Our missing link is capacity. We have a finite number of dealers so our next evaluation is to develop the network to increase our capacity for used cars. That will be either physical or digital. We are focusing on stock rotation but the internet gives us an opportunity to sell cars that aren't at the dealership. We need to develop quicker in this area because it helps our new models – we have to be 360-degrees of new-used-new-used.

FN: How important is the dealer to the fleet experience and what can they do better?

NB: We need a better brand experience and that's through more localisation. At present the customer experience is often with a delivery driver. We are working with the contract hire industry on localisation to offer a concierge service for the fleet. We are encouraging them to talk to us not the dealer and we will work it through with our network. We are asking our network which ones want to be contract hire centres and in future we will have a two-tier network for local supply and contract hire supply with 12-15 super hubs. This will stop dealers competing for business and ensure the right car is delivered to the right person with the right experience. It's good for contract hire companies and also helps us to retain the customer by them having a relationship with their local dealer. That can't happen if the supplying dealer is 200 miles away. Our ambition is to delete fleet targets if we can next year to stop this; we are in discussions now.

FN: What are you doing to persuade leasing companies and fleets that your products are right for them?

NB: We are working with contract hire companies to change their view of the viability and sustainability of Toyota Lexus products and get them more interested. We have discounted servicing pricing but we want to promise fixed pricing and formalise it in to the SMR systems to give a more accurate view of the long-term cost of a Toyota or Lexus.

FN: You have reduced your supply to rental this year after a couple of years of rising registrations in this channel. What's your view of rental?

NB: Rental has its place; it is good for experiencing the product. We will be targeting early rental of the new CH-R [Coupe High-Rider] in our marketing mix, but we don't want to pump out volume into the market because it affects RVs. It has to be controlled so it sets the tone for RV pricing. We are also talking to the rental companies about where their cars go – we want less leakage outside our network. Then we can control the wholelife cost: price, SMR, used car and second life SMR as well.

FN: Toyota is seen as a brand focused on the environment and one that is dependable and reliable, but not one with emotional appeal. Do you see the CH-R (due to launch in Q4) changing that?

NB: The criticism of Toyota is that it doesn't excite. But the CH-R is a radical looking SUV and marks a new approach for us, one more focused on design language. Our new global platform means we will also have a chassis that will improve the driving experience. CH-R is hatch handling in an SUV and it's also a sub 90g/km hybrid SUV – it's a great opportunity for future fleet penetration.

Broad believes CH-R registrations will initially be divided 55-45 retail-to-fleet, but he forecasts “decent volumes” for end-user fleets and user-choosers.

It will be, he adds, a “demand-led sales proposition” which will enable Toyota to attract new customers to the brand.

“We have to challenge perceptions of those people who buy the same cars as they always did,” Broad says. “We will do this through technology, quality and, now, through design as well. If we add in our worthiness, it's a winning combination.”

FACTFILE

Organisation Toyota
General manager, fleet series

Neil Broad

Total sales (2016 HY) 54,504
(up 1%)

Total fleet sales 26,883

Rental 5,359 – down 14.5%

Captives 1,983 – up 66.6%

Motability 1,817 – up 3.6%

True fleet 17,724 – up 9%

Judges' comments

“The environment is not a trendy ‘like to have’ for Toyota – it's been a core value ever since the company launched its Earth Charter back in 1992. Fully committed to hybrid technology, Toyota is now leading the way on hydrogen fuel cell with the production-ready Mirai. The company is constantly developing ways to reduce its impact on the environment, with a holistic approach that encompasses manufacturing, use of materials, recycling and a driver intelligence programme.”

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- How to influence driver training to reduce collisions and traffic violations -
Stuart Gemmell, Gallagher Bassett International Ltd
- How to run the safest fleet possible -
Alison Moriarty, Skanska - Safe Fleet of the Year winner at the Fleet News Awards
- Fuel efficiency: The next generation of trucks, including cleaner and more fuel efficient engines and developing fuel efficient technology with quick ROI -
Richard Pearson, BP
- Brexit : What are the ramifications for the industry?
James Hookham, FTA
- Delivering London: The challenges of driving for work in London and how TfL will manage congestion in a growing city -
Tim Ward, Transport for London

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- System Edstrom
- Rhino Products
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- Imperial Commercials
- FTA
- Licence Bureau
- ARI
- Fiat Professional **(Test Driving)**
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- Crystal Ball
- Venson
- Northgate
- Fleet ID
- Fleet Source
- DAF Trucks **(Test Driving)**
- Strongs Plastic Products
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TESLA MODEL S

An EV that refuses to compromise in space, performance and range

NEED TO KNOW

- New entry-level variant at reduced cost
- Around 210 miles realistic range from full charge
- Free charging at Tesla Supercharger sites

By Simon Harris

For a low-volume car manufacturer, Tesla has gained a disproportionate share of exposure online and in print over the last few years.

Not all of it has been positive, but its drive to transform how we use cars has been evident throughout. Its growing line-up of all-electric premium cars seeks customers who are technology-savvy, enjoy high performance and are perhaps a little weary of the traditional choices from BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Audi and Jaguar.

The Model S was introduced a couple of years ago, nominally fitting into the upper end of executive car category on size, price and performance, with an extra element to its EV appeal in having a much greater travelling range on a charge than cars such as the Nissan Leaf and Renault Zoe. Close to 300 miles was a realistic possibility in everyday driving, while the potential, according to the official figures, was there to achieve more.

There has been a major update to the range in 2016 with the introduction of a new entry-level variant with a 60kWh battery. While it reduces the maximum range available on a charge, it comes in at a lower price point, starting at £57,900 on the road for rear-wheel drive variants.

Rear wheel drive variants produce 315hp, but our all-wheel drive test car has two motors rather than one, producing slightly less power individually, but combined reaching 328hp and 387lb-ft of torque. This gives our 60D model designation (all dual-motor versions have the suffix D) a 0-60mph time of 5.2 seconds.

5.2

Seconds to go from
0-60mph



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

"Tesla's all-electric premium range seeks tech-savvy customers who enjoy high performance and are perhaps weary of the traditional choices"

More powerful (and more expensive) versions are available with higher battery capacity, and in fact the 60kWh car has an identical battery to the more expensive 75kWh model, but it's restricted by software. It also means that someone choosing the 60kWh version could later pay to upgrade it to a car with a greater range: 253 miles versus 304 miles, according to the official test cycle.

All versions come with a 17-inch touchscreen in the dashboard that accesses all functions of the vehicle apart from window and mirror controls, while there are small dashboard buttons for the glove compartment release and hazard warning lights. While it might be expected to adjust audio, climate control and navigation via a touch-screen, it's unusual to find sunroof, bonnet and boot release in there too.

The interior is spacious, with room for five adults to sit comfortably – more than in a Jaguar XF or BMW 5 Series saloon – and the Model S is a hatchback offering more practicality. It can also be specified with two rear-facing child seats that fold flat in the boot. Leather upholstery is extra, but probably essential for resale after defleeting.

All versions come with 'autopilot' safety features as standard, which include technology for maintaining a safe distance from the vehicle in front, lane and blindspot monitoring, cruise control and emergency braking. Customers can pay to have autopilot convenience features as an option, which can allow a degree of autonomous driving on motorways – although the driver is reminded to keep his or her hands on the wheel and remain in control of the car.

There is also the ability to 'summon' the car using a smartphone app, so it can pull forward from a tight garage or parking space, allowing the driver and passengers to get in, or the process can be done in reverse, with the car manoeuvring itself fully into a space without a driver.

Tesla recommends charging the battery to the level expected for daily use, and advises charging to full capacity only for long journeys. This is easily managed in the charging settings via the touch-screen.

Tesla's supercharger network, where cars can be charged for free and in a fraction of the time of other



There's a price to be paid for such comfort – but it's worth it





All the usual touchscreen controls – plus sunroof, bonnet and boot release

charging points, continues to grow with several locations in the UK, mainly around major cities. Other points can be used with the correct adaptor, but take longer.

Tesla's recommended home charging point would allow the 60kWh Model S to be charged in less than six hours from empty, while charging directly from the mains would take around 30 hours. It's unthinkable that anyone choosing a Tesla wouldn't also install a home charging point.

Setting aside the price for a moment, the Model S is an EV that carries the fewest compromises in terms of space, performance and range. It feels like a spacious, hi-tech luxury car. Of course, there's a price to be paid, which is higher than high-performance diesel and hybrid versions of executive cars, although significantly lower than a Porsche Panamera plug-in hybrid. BIK tax is also relatively low.

For those using the London congestion charge zone, there's a benefit in using the Tesla (as for any EV). And if you have access to a nearby Supercharger, then it would be possible to reduce running costs further than the fuel cost shown in our data. Ultimately, it's a case of ensuring the Model S is fit for purpose as a company car, and carries a cost benefit for the business.

COSTS

P11D price	£62,680
BIK tax band (2016/17)	7%
Annual BIK tax (40%)	£1,755
Class 1A NIC	£605
Annual VED	£0
RV (4yr/40k)	£22,608/36%
Fuel cost (ppm)	4.5
Running cost	114.02ppm

SPEC

Power (hp)/torque (lb-ft)	328/387
CO2 emissions (g/km)	0g/km
Top speed (mph)	130
0-62mph (sec)	5.2
Range	253

KEY RIVAL

BMW 535d Gran Turismo M Sport	
P11D price:	£52,450
BIK tax band (2016/17)	30%
Annual BIK tax (40%)	£6,294
Class 1A NIC	£2,171
Annual VED	£185
RV (4yr/40k)	£16,833/32%
Fuel cost (ppm)	10.66
AFR (ppm)	12
Running cost	106.89ppm

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

THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

cap hpi



Wednesday Ever since I was a lad and sold cars in the early 1970s, pre-registering has

always gone on – it is nothing new, and is just part of the motor industry.

But this year it just seems to have got slightly out of control, and much more is being done. Our analysis of used vehicles advertised on digital platforms showed a 46% year on year increase in 16-plate volumes in June. Today I have been doing some dealer visits and they all back up the theory that pre-reg is rife.

They are reporting that they are desperate to sell the 16-plate stock before 66 is introduced – but they are selling 16 plate used stock at the expense of selling new cars. This will inevitably reduce the amount of new cars they sell, and consequently they will not hit their targets, so – guess what? – they will have to pre-reg cars to make up the numbers and get their bonus money, on which they desperately depend. It has been interesting to see this week a national dealer group advertising pre-reg cars in a well-produced, expensive TV advert, which shows the scale of this issue.

“They are selling 16 plate used stock at the expense of selling new cars”

Thursday/Sunday Flew down to Cornwall. It took 42 minutes with FlyBe to get from Manchester to Newquay, which is better than the typical 10-hour drive, then I got a rental car. We went to Land's End, and I was very surprised to see an Ecotricity Charging Point. 'Is this a good place to put one or not?' I thought to myself, while looking at it and shaking my head.

If it didn't work when you got there, or there was a long queue, you could be in a bit of a mess. But it's handy to know it's there, just in case. While in Cornwall I did not see one EV, so the chance of a queue is very low. Charging points need to go somewhere, but Land's End?

The 'SUV estate' – the XLV is a longer and more spacious version of the Tivoli



1.6 XDI ELX

SSANGYONG TIVOLI XLV

Longer, diesel-only version of the model that brought SsangYong into the mainstream

NEED TO KNOW

- One tax band higher than the existing Tivoli
- Extended body means more luggage space
- Available with four-wheel drive and auto options

By Simon Harris

SsangYong, like other Korean car manufacturers several years ago, is on a journey towards the mainstream, and models such as the Tivoli have been critical in making the brand more visible.

Timing, of course, has also been fortunate. Growth in the SUV and crossover sector in the last few years has presented this 4x4 specialist with a strong opportunity.

Representing a high-value retail-focused proposition, the Tivoli was the catalyst that injected some real mainstream appeal into the brand. It helped SsangYong more than double its UK sales in 2015, and so far in 2016 the brand is running at 50% higher than last year (when it reached almost 3,500 registrations).

SsangYong still isn't a major player in fleet, but a number of its models, including the Tivoli, look to have good credentials for Motability, while the Tivoli in particular could be a vehicle with which dealers would target local businesses.

A year on from the introduction of the Tivoli comes the Tivoli XLV, a longer version with a more spacious luggage compartment, which is available now. SsangYong calls it an 'SUV estate'.

Unlike the standard Tivoli, which has petrol and diesel variants, the XLV is diesel-only and has the option of four-wheel drive and automatic transmission. CO₂ emissions for the manual are 117g/km, one tax band higher than for the Tivoli as a result of the extra weight (around 50kg) in the rear.

The benefit, however, is a substantial increase in luggage volume from 423 litres in the Tivoli to 576 in the XLV with the rear seats in place, and 720 up to roof height.

A puncture repair kit is fitted as standard, although the

COSTS

P11D price	£18,195
BIK tax band (2016/17)	23%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£837
Class 1A NIC	£578
Annual VED	£0 then £30
RV (4yr/80k)	n/a
Fuel cost (ppm)	n/a
AFR (ppm)	9
Running cost (4yr/80k)	n/a

SPEC

Power (hp/torque (lb-ft))	115/221
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	117
Top speed (mph)	109
0-62mph (sec)	12.0
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	62.8

KEY RIVAL

Skoda Yeti 2.0 TDI 110 SE
P11D price: £20,050
BIK tax band (2016/17) 23%
Annual BIK tax (20%) £922
Class 1A NIC £636
Annual VED £0 then £30
RV (4yr/80k) £4,975/25%
Fuel cost (ppm) 8.1
AFR (ppm) 10
Running cost (4yr/80k) 30.89ppm

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



Sat-nav and leather are standard on ELX trim

spacesaver spare wheel is optional, and this would sacrifice a little luggage space under the floor.

ELX specification means the XLV is very well equipped, and includes leather seats, touch-screen sat-nav, dual-zone automatic climate control, rear privacy glass, automatic headlights and windscreen wipers and 18-inch alloy wheels.

The car comes with a six-speed manual gearbox as standard, with a six-speed auto option. Customers can also specify optional four-wheel drive with manual or auto transmissions.

The interior looks sophisticated, although the dashboard and door panels are moulded in hard plastics, which is becoming less common in mainstream small cars, but still evident in some at the budget end of the price spectrum.

It drives well enough with plenty of pull from the 115hp diesel, although other cars offer better insulation from engine noise intrusion, and the ride is a little choppy over undulating surfaces – maybe standard 18-inch wheels weren't such a good idea.

Overall, though, the Tivoli XLV has plenty of agility in urban areas as well as decent motorway refinement.

JEEP RENEGADE

The abilities of a large Jeep distilled into a compact package



The Trailhawk is an authentic off-roader

NEED TO KNOW

- Trailhawk spec adds maximum all-terrain ability
- Most capable compact SUV off road
- Available with 170hp 2.0-litre diesel

By Simon Harris

The name Jeep conjures up visions of tackling the great outdoors by car – almost limitless ability over all kinds of terrain.

The first Jeep went into production 75 years ago, and it was one of the original Willys Jeeps that inspired the first Land Rover. Since then the off-roader has enjoyed a place in car markets across the world, with a number of manufacturers creating their own versions.

In the last 20 years, we've seen growth in 'soft roaders' and 'crossovers' – cars with the appearance, style and practicality of SUVs, but with limited off-road ability. These have perhaps successfully retained the position of SUVs among user choosers in the wake of ever-tightening demands on CO₂ reduction.

Jeep has those models in the two-wheel drive versions of the Cherokee and the compact Renegade. But, of



Leather, heated seats and nav come as standard

"There would be kudos in driving probably the most capable off-roader of its size"

course, with all that 4x4 heritage there are still versions that perform like a true Jeep.

The Renegade shares its platform with the Fiat 500X, and in many four-wheel drive versions, there'd be little to choose between the capability of the Fiat and the Jeep.

But there's a version that should do all the things a more authentic off-roader will do, called the Trailhawk.

When the Renegade was introduced in 2015, this version came with only a 170hp 2.4-litre petrol engine, but now it's offered with a more frugal 170hp 2.0-litre diesel.

The Trailhawk's ground clearance is raised by 30mm over the standard Renegade, and, as well as on-demand 4WD, there is a selectable low-range function, while the car comes with the ZF nine-speed automatic gearbox as standard, as well as all-terrain tyres.

So perhaps in the same way that you can see a likeness between a kestrel and an eagle, the Trailhawk has the abilities of a large Jeep distilled into a compact package.

There isn't too much of a price to pay in its on-road behaviour, with little cause for concern when cornering, despite the relatively high centre of gravity.

The engine and transmission work well together, while the Trailhawk specification is very well-equipped, with leather, heated front seats and nav. Our test car had the optional visibility pack (£750) which has xenon headlamps, auto-dimming rear view mirror, automatic dipping headlights, plus auto headlight and wiper activation.

While there is a price to pay on CO₂ emissions and fuel consumption compared to other models (though emissions are by no means prohibitively high), for fleets with a more flexible policy for user choosers there would also be kudos in driving probably the most capable off-roader of its size.

THE RIVALS

- Mini Countryman 2.0 Cooper SD All4 Chili + Media auto
- Mitsubishi ASX 2.2 DI-D 5 auto
- Mercedes-Benz GLA 220d 4Matic Sport auto

P11D PRICE

ASX	£28,399
Countryman	£28,520
Renegade	£28,760
GLA 220d	£32,105

BIK TAX AND CO₂

GLA 220d	130g/km/26%
ASX	152g/km/30%
Renegade	155g/km/31%
Countryman	161g/km/32%

FUEL COSTS

GLA 220d	9.00ppm/£7,200
ASX	10.44ppm/£8,352
Renegade	10.44ppm/£8,352
Countryman	10.99ppm/£8,792

DEPRECIATION

GLA 220d	25.91ppm/£20,728
Renegade	26.56ppm/£21,248
Countryman	26.65ppm/£21,320
ASX	26.76ppm/£21,408

SMR

Renegade	4.72ppm/£3,776
Countryman	5.00ppm/£4,000
ASX	5.81ppm/£4,648
GLA 220d	5.88ppm/£4,704

RUNNING COSTS

GLA 220d	40.79ppm/£32,632
Renegade	41.92ppm/£33,536
Countryman	42.64ppm/£34,112
ASX	42.81ppm/£34,228

VERDICT

The Renegade comes second in overall running costs to the GLA, which has a higher P11D with lower CO₂. But none of the rivals can match the Renegade's off-road ability, if that's a reason for choosing one as a company vehicle.

Winner: Jeep Renegade

Running cost: KeeResources (4yr/80k)

Honda Jazz 1.3 I-TEC Ex Navi

As I hand over the yellow Jazz to colleague Andrew Ryan, I thought it worth pointing out some of the quirks I've discovered.

Every visit to a petrol station requires you to remember to pull the fuel filler flap in the driver's footwell – many times I have forgotten.

The lack of power that becomes apparent on a first drive improves on discovering much of the power from the non-turbocharged engine is available at higher revs. Change gear slightly later than you would in a diesel-powered vehicle, and the car begins to make better progress – without a noticeable decrease in fuel economy.

Over my 6,000 miles, I averaged 48-51 mpg, and my right foot is on the heavy side. City braking is useful, though at times too sensitive when snaking past parked cars. It beeped at me several times, though did not apply the brakes.

Like many new vehicles, it doesn't have a spare wheel – and looking at the configurator, it's not an option. Apart from the paint job, our car doesn't actually feature any optional extras. The option list is mostly cosmetic, with trim, boot storage and the odd bit of lighting making up the list. We wouldn't spec the car differently – except for a more conservative choice of paint!

Christopher Smith

Škoda Superb 2.0 TDI SE Business

When a sunny day turned into a downpour recently, any complaints I might have had about the Superb disappeared in an

instant. We were spared a drenching by the umbrellas Škoda subtly hides in the front two doors – a brilliant idea given the UK's weather.

That said, there are few complaints at all. The Superb has one of the best sat-navs on the market (though my one quibble is with the extra screen on the dashboard behind the steering wheel. It minimises eyes-off-road time, but the graphics are confusing) and an easy-to-use SmartLink multimedia system which controls functions, including phone, via the touchscreen.

After reading experiences of trip computers differing from actual fuel consumption, we did our own test on the Superb. The difference was far less than most: the 59.5mpg trip average was overstated by only around 3mpg, or 6%.

In general, the trip is averaging just over 60%, rising to high 60s on longer journeys, against the official consumption claim of 68.9mpg. It suggests our real average is just under 60%, which is reasonable for such a large car.

I'm convinced that with some efficient driving, the official figure can be achieved. The gauntlet has been laid down; find out the results in the Superb's final test next month.

Stephen Briers

See extended long-term tests at fleetnews.co.uk/cars/car-reviews/

1.0i TURBO 105 ECOFLEX ELITE NAV**VAUXHALL ASTRA**

Putting petrol to the test in the real world

The three-cylinder engine gives a surprisingly strong performance

**COSTS***

P11D price £20,110

BIK tax band 17%

Annual BIK tax (20%) £684

Class 1A NIC £472

Annual VED £0 then £20

RV (4yr/80k) £5,100/25%

Fuel cost (ppm) 7.86

AFR (ppm) 10

Running cost (4yr/80k) 29.61ppm

SPEC

Engine (cc) 999

Power (hp) 105

Torque (lb-ft) 125

CO₂ emissions (g/km) 102

Fuel efficiency (mpg) 64.2

Max speed (mph) 124

0-62mph (sec) 10.5

Test mpg 48.7

Current mileage 2,532

By Andrew Ryan

Air quality concerns over diesel and the development of increasingly-efficient powertrains have moved small-capacity turbo petrol cars up the fleet agenda.

The petrol models produce fewer NO_x and particulate emissions than diesel counterparts, while lower P11D prices also add to their appeal.

Earlier this year (*Fleet News*, February 18), we looked at the viability of small-capacity petrol models compared to their diesel counterparts. We reported that BCF Wessex research found that over a three-year/60,000-mile cycle, diesel was the "marginal" financially astute option for costs, but drivers would pay more benefit-in-kind tax due to higher P11D prices and the 3% BIK diesel supplement.

We found there were cost advantages of choosing the latest generation of petrol cars for low-mileage drivers. So to give us the chance to find out what a small-capacity petrol car is like in the real world, Vauxhall replaced our long-term Astra 1.6 CDTi 136 SRi with an Astra 1.0i Turbo Ecoflex Elite Nav.

First impressions are favourable: the three-cylinder engine gives a surprisingly strong performance, with plenty of power delivered low down the rev range. Noise from the engine is subdued in everyday use, adding to the refined feel, but when worked harder it produces a distinctive, pleasant thrum.

The Astra's fuel economy has impressed, too, with each tank of fuel achieving between 47.2mpg and 49.9mpg. Its official combined figure is 64.2mpg.

Elite Nav is the top trim in the Astra range, and standard equipment includes 17-inch alloy wheels, leather seats, electrically-adjustable and heated front seats, heated steering wheel, electronic climate control, electrically-folding door mirrors and two USB chargers for rear-seat passengers.

Vauxhall's impressive sat nav system with an eight-inch touchscreen is also fitted, while Elite Nav also provides Bluetooth and OnStar connectivity technology.

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

"Noise from the engine is subdued in everyday use, adding to the refined feel, but when worked harder it produces a distinctive, pleasant thrum"

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RUTH SPRATT

SALES DIRECTOR, NORTHGATE VEHICLE HIRE

She goes on holiday in a touring caravan and wouldn't mind a time machine in the garage, too. But Ruth Spratt won't agree to foot the bar bill at a media event again in a hurry

If I were Prime Minister for the day I'd introduce a policy to encourage young, intelligent people to get involved in politics. The majority of young people have no interest in politics and don't see how they can influence their future – I think that is quite sad.

I would tell my 18-year-old self to enjoy everything in both private and professional life. If you can take pleasure from things you can transfer that to work. I'd also say to persevere and look forward to challenges – they make life interesting.

My first memory associated with a car would be sitting on my dad's knee driving his car on the sands in Southport, but probably my proudest was buying my first car – a D-reg yellow Ford Fiesta that cost me £400.

The three vehicles I would like in my garage are a time machine, my old Fiesta and I'm sure the kids would love a spaceship so something from *Star Wars* would probably go down well.

My pet hate is people suffering from road rage – it's not good for anyone, plus you don't get anywhere any quicker by yelling.

My favourite film is *Life is Beautiful*, the story of an Italian Jew who is sent to a concentration camp and does everything he can to shield his son from the horror of what is going on around them.

I love holidays. I try to use all my holiday to go away with the family; we have a touring caravan which my friends find hilarious but the kids love it. We try to go skiing once a year and see as many places as possible.

I have had lots of great experiences and, like everyone, some not so great, but I see them more as part of the journey than life-changing.

The book I would recommend is 'Lean In' by Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg, a good insight into women in the workplace. It's a great read for both men and women.

I want to be remembered as being a great mum.

First fleet role This is my first role in the fleet industry, but I've known for years the sector is competitive, interesting and full of opportunities. Six months working in the industry has proven that to be the case and – with Northgate's fantastic offering to its customers – I feel very fortunate indeed.

Biggest career influence During former roles with EasyJet and Guardian Media Group I worked under the leadership of Carolyn McCall, a completely authentic leader with a genuine passion for people and customers. My husband also has a real influence – mainly telling me to get a grip if I start to get things out of proportion!

Career goals To grow Northgate's position within the sector while maintaining the high levels of service our customers have come to expect. I also hope to develop the sales team to be world-class, as well as nurturing my own personal development.

Biggest achievement in business One of the biggest achievements has been balancing my career with family life with my husband and three children. It hasn't always been easy. I started an executive MBA in October 2000 and got pregnant with my first child during the first year – completing that while having a full-time job and going through childbirth was interesting, but it was great when my daughter came to my graduation in 2004.

Biggest mistake in business When I signed off on a free bar at a media event – I never knew a bar tab could grow so much in such a short time!

Leadership style Direct, fair, open.

If I wasn't in fleet I've been with Northgate for only six months and I love it – I couldn't picture myself working anywhere else.

Childhood ambition Until I was five I wanted to be a princess, probably the ambition of most little girls.

Next issue: Richard Baird, ACFO director and new business development director, Marshall Leasing



The Kuga Vignale SUV is the latest model in the Vignale range

Ford Kuga Vignale announced

The new Ford Kuga Vignale upscale SUV will expand the Vignale range, joining the new Ford S-MAX Vignale and Ford Edge Vignale this year and Ford Mondeo Vignale, launched in 2015.

The Kuga Vignale's range of 1.5-litre EcoBoost petrol and 2.0-litre TDCi diesel engines includes:

- 150PS EcoBoost six-speed manual
- 182PS EcoBoost six-speed automatic and Intelligent All Wheel Drive
- 150PS TDCi six-speed manual
- 180PS TDCi six-speed manual or six-speed Powershift automatic, both with Intelligent AWD

All Ford Vignale models feature a standard SYNC3 communication and entertainment system with 8-inch touch screen enabling pinch and swipe gestures for the first time. Drivers can find nearby cafés, petrol stations or car parks, as well as train stations, airports, and hotels, simply by pushing a button and asking the question.

Ford Vignale models also offer a premium audio system and front and rear ambient lighting. The Ford S-MAX Vignale offers tri-zone climate control and a full-length opening panoramic sunroof.

Front Wide-View Camera technology for the S-MAX Vignale and Edge Vignale can

see around corners even when drivers cannot. Adaptive Cruise Control uses radar to enable S-MAX drivers to maintain a set distance from the vehicle ahead.

Other technology offered for the S-MAX Vignale, Edge Vignale and Mondeo Vignale includes Ford Active Noise Control, which monitors engine noise in the interior, and directs opposing noise-cancelling sound waves through the audio system.

Ford Vignale models also deliver driver assistance technologies including Blind Spot Information System, Traffic Sign Recognition, Lane Keeping Alert, Lane Keeping Aid and Driver Alert.

'VERY SPECIAL' FOCUS RS STARS IN CLARKSON'S TOP 10

The all-new Ford Focus RS and Ford Mustang 5.0-litre V8 GT feature in "Jeremy's Star Cars" – a rundown of Jeremy Clarkson's top 10 drives of the past year, revealed in the *Sunday Times*.

Ford was the only manufacturer to have two entries in the top 10 list, which reflects the success of the company's performance vehicles in recent years, following the recent



launch of the right-hand-drive Mustang, and the exciting four-wheel-drive Focus RS.

"With the new Focus RS, you know that after about 100 yards [of driving it] that Ford has created something very special," said Clarkson. "Its 345bhp is enough to provide a meaty shove in the back when you accelerate and a growly 40-a-day rumble from under the bonnet."

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SEARCH **VAUXHALL ECOFLEX**



VAUXHALL

Vauxhall ecoFLEX range fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km): Urban: 40.9 (6.9)-83.1 (3.4), Extra-urban: 64.2 (4.4)-94.2 (3.0), Combined: 54.3 (5.2)-91.1 (3.1). CO₂ emissions: 120-82g/km.

Fuel consumption information is official government environmental data, tested in accordance with the relevant EU directive. Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. New Astra hatchback 1.6CDTi (110PS) Start/Stop ecoFLEX SRI model shown above is for illustrative purpose only and features optional Lava Red brilliant paint and IntelliLux LED matrix headlights, with CO₂ from 91g/km, fuel consumption up to 83.1mpg, range up to 872 miles and power up to 110PS. * = Terms and conditions apply and vehicles are subject to availability. Please call 0870 240 4848 for full details. All figures quoted correct at time of going to press (September 2016).