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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 CO_2 emissions 170 – 125g/km.

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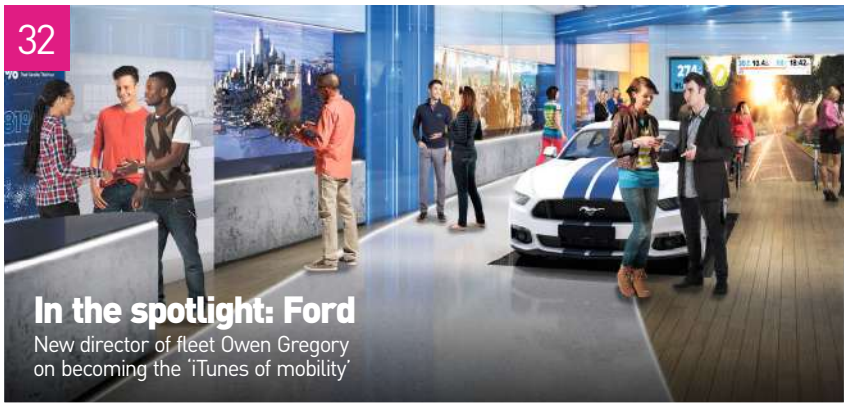

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From green fleet champions to carbon offsetting, and Go Ultra Low cities to the future of fuel, we look at the big environmental topics in a 10-page special

Will more fuel stations set up EV charging points?

Increased network could help encourage company car drivers to make the switch

By Tom Seymour

Electric vehicle (EV) charging points could become a familiar sight on fuel station forecourts after Shell confirmed it hopes to start introducing them from next year.

The availability of charging points has long been a barrier to the wider uptake of plug-in vehicles, especially for higher mileage company car drivers.

However, by placing charging points alongside petrol and diesel, more drivers could be persuaded to make the switch.

Karl Anders, Nissan GB national EV manager for corporate sales, said the increase of supermarkets and petrol forecourts or "destination charging" would markedly boost the ability of EVs to perform a wider range of journeys.

He said: "While EVs can already cover most journeys, this helps 'normalise' full EVs and gives added peace of mind.

"The UK actually has a very comprehensive charging network although it is crucial that it is always dependable, accessible and cost-effective in order to shift more drivers into real world low-emission vehicles."

According to Zap Map, a website which tracks charge point location and information in the UK, there are 693 rapid chargers and 11,700 trickle charge points available to EV owners in the UK.

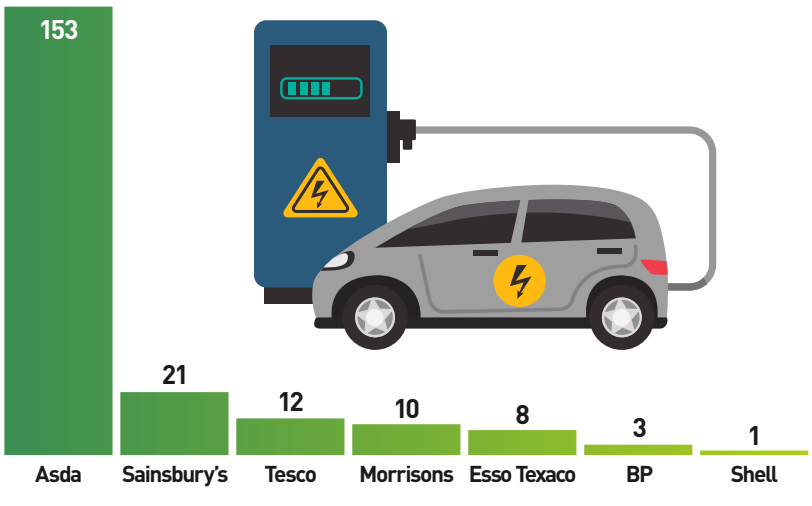
Shell currently has just one charge point location available, but has a network of 1,002 fuel stations across the UK. It told *Fleet News* it is "examining the potential to introduce EV charging points across some parts of our UK retail network from 2017 onwards".

However, it refused to comment on how many EV charging points will be installed and how much it will charge drivers to recharge their vehicle's battery.

693
rapid chargers in the UK

11,700
trickle charge points

EV CHARGING POINTS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE AT FUEL STATIONS



Poppy Welch, head of Go Ultra Low, the UK Government and auto industry-backed campaign group for ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs), welcomed the fact Shell is exploring EV charging across its network.

She said: "The addition of charge points at destinations such as fuel retailers will enable quick top-ups that fit around owners' lives, boosting range and providing further consumer confidence as the growth of the electric car market accelerates."

Welch said the majority of charging will still take place at home but a public network acts as a useful reassurance to drivers to give them the opportunity to top up on longer trips.

She said: "The UK also has the best rapid charger network in Europe, with the fastest chargers available at 96% of motorway service stations."

Fleets have been driving the uptake of plug-in vehicles, with just one in four registered to private buyers (*Fleet News*: August 18).

The lion's share – 72% of plug-in cars – was registered to businesses in the first six months of the year which, including July's registrations, equates to more than 15,000 units – a 45% increase when compared to last year.

However, MPs on the Environmental Audit Committee say

Shell is considering installing more charge points in some of its 1,002 service stations

Government projections into ULEV adoption show it will miss the target for them to make up 9% of all new car and van sales by 2020 (*Fleet News:* September 15).

Alphabet believes the UK's charging network is a critical issue for the future of EV sales.

David Bushnell, Alphabet product manager – mobility, said: "If the Government wants to hit its target for vehicles to be zero emission by 2050 the infrastructure will be a barrier to overcome."

It is not clear, however, that other fuel retailers will follow Shell's lead. BP declined to comment on whether it was considering installing EV charging points and Texaco, which does not own its fuel stations outright, said it would be up to each retailer to decide whether they wanted to install EV charging points.

Of the 1,100 Esso-branded service stations around 500 are owned by the fuel retailer. It told *Fleet News* it would be up to the independent owners of fuel stations to install charging facilities, while it had "no plans" to install them at Esso-owned facilities.

In terms of the supermarket fuel retailers, Asda offers more than 150 charging points across its network, but the others trail much further behind (see table).

Bushnell told *Fleet News* that, although there have clearly been increases in the UK's vehicle charging network, a lot of this has been concentrated in and around London, rather than across the whole of the UK.

"If the Government wants to hit its target for vehicles to be zero emission by 2050 the infrastructure will be a barrier to overcome"

David Bushnell, Alphabet

He said: "While it's positive that supermarket and fuel retailers are looking to increase the amount of EV charging points available, it also depends on how many points will be installed at each location.

"We are already seeing problems where charging points are being used as a free parking space at supermarkets or a single space is taken up by one EV owner for around 30 minutes at a time."

Bushnell said the industry also needs to discuss whether plug-in hybrids should be using the UK's charging network at all, with the majority of plug-in hybrids able to reach their final destination to charge up. He thinks the industry needs to explore whether charging points should only be used for pure EVs.

He also said focusing on sheer numbers of charging points is irrelevant if they don't work. "There needs to be a clearer picture of whether the charging point you are going to is open to the public, whether it is working and how much it will cost you to charge. All these things are not very clear at the moment for EV drivers," he said.

"We also need to see whether petrol retailers are completing a box ticking exercise or whether they're actually ready to invest in the direction transport is heading."

Both Nissan and Alphabet want to see more Government financial support for workplace charging to help EV drivers charge their vehicles at either end of their journey.

Anders said: "There is a gap at the other end of the commute as workplace charging is not supported unless a fleet pays the full cost to install charging without grants. Assisting fleets with charger support or allowing drivers to use their grants at workplace would assist fleets."

Bushnell said a lot of drivers, particularly in built-up areas where EVs are more prevalent, don't have access to off-street parking to install their own charging point at home so a lot of them will be charging at work.

He said: "The Government needs to do more to incentivise this. Employers also need clarification on how EVs will be treated in term of future taxation, how long the grants will be in place, whether they will be reduced, and further details on electric fuel reimbursement.

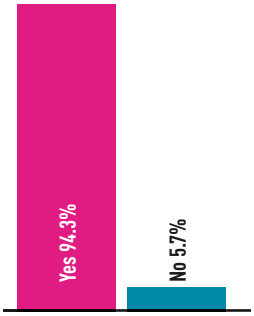
"A universal charging format should also be agreed by all vehicle manufacturers and the ability to rapid charge your vehicle should be standard on all plug-in vehicles, rather than an upgrade."

For more on how fleets are driving ULEV adoption visit www.fleetnews.co.uk/EV-uptake

FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

OPINION POLL

Do you think the penalties should be increased for dangerous driving and causing death by dangerous driving?



FleetNews view:
The current penalty for causing death by dangerous driving is a minimum one-year prison sentence and an obligatory two-year driving ban. But, the Government has suggested it could introduce stiffer penalties amid concerns penalties are too lenient. Our view is that toughening these laws will both encourage drivers to be extra vigilant, as well as providing justice for those at the receiving end of dangerous driving.

This week's poll: Should the drink-drive limit be lowered?
fleetnews.co.uk/polls

MOST COMMENTED ONLINE

Fleets disappointed UK market bypassed by longer range EV

fleetnews.co.uk/news

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Climate change committee urges rethink on new excise duty levels

Fleets face increased costs when new VED regime is introduced next April

By Tom Seymour

The Government is being urged by MPs to review Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) to better incentivise electric and other ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs). VED was reformed in the 2015 Budget, moving from a multi-tiered system where payments were scaled in line with CO_2 emissions to a simplified, three-level approach (see panel, right).

The changes will have a big impact on fleets. A new car, with CO_2 emissions of 90g/km and a list price of £40,000 or less on a four-year cycle, would pay nothing if registered today. After April, 2017, it will cost £520 over four years.

The reform, according to the Treasury, is aimed at making VED "fairer for motorists and reflect improvements in new car CO_2 emissions".

If left unchanged, more than three-quarters of new cars would pay no VED at all in the first year from April 2017.

MPs on the Energy and Climate Change Committee said they regretted the Government's changes to VED, which reduce incentives for ULEV uptake and may be interpreted as "wavering commitment to road electrification".

The committee said: "The Government should reconsider abolishing the tiered system. In the future, fiscal incentives for ULEVs must be maintained with greater consistency."

A spokesperson for the Treasury told *Fleet News:* "The new VED system still clearly favours the lowest emission vehicles, and the new first-year rates ensure the cleanest cars benefit the most."

However, the Treasury said, the Government keeps all taxes under review.

Denis Naberezhnykh, Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) head of ULEVs and energy, said: "We fully agree with the committee's assessment. The VED system is not adequate to help the Government meet its zero emission targets."

Naberezhnykh said there are a wide range of vehicles for customers to choose including plug-in hybrids or ultra efficient diesel and petrol models and the current system presents a binary choice.

He said: "Key stakeholders across the industry need to get together to push for a review. We're a company that bases decisions on clear evidence and as far as we're concerned the Government has not provided the evidence to show that this new taxation structure will work to properly incentivise sales of all ULEVs."

Models such as the Mitsubishi's Outlander PHEV will be most affected by the changes. Under the new scheme, a customer will need to pay £290 over a three-year period in VED on an Outlander PHEV (and £910 on high-specification versions) compared to nothing under the current scheme.

Toby Marshall, Mitsubishi Motors UK director of sales and marketing, said: "The VED changes from April next year will have a disproportionately negative impact on PHEVs.

"Government support has undoubtedly helped the segment to grow, but mainstream adoption of this technology is still very much in its infancy and therefore it is too still far early to reduce the financial incentives in place."

Marshall said the financial benefits of owning an ULEV have been "significantly narrowed" by the Government's new VED system.

He concluded: "This will result in a slowdown of growth in the segment with buyers opting instead for vehicles with higher emission conventional petrol and diesel engines."

VED: THE THREE-LEVEL APPROACH

Cars registered on or after April 1, 2017, will have a first-year rate according to the vehicle's CO_2 emissions, but will also be split into three bands for the subsequent standard rate: zero emission, standard (cars up to £40,000) and premium (priced above £40,000).

Zero emission cars pay no VED, unless priced more than £40,000 when they are hit with the premium rate of £310 for five years after the initial zero first-year rate.

Standard cars pay the first-year rate according to their emissions banding and then the standard rate of £140.

Premium cars also pay the first-year rate according to their emissions banding but are then hit with a £310 supplement for the next five years, taking the total VED to £450.

£520

increase over four years on a new car with emissions of 90g/km and a list price of £40,000 or less

For the new VED bands, visit www.fleetnews.co.uk/VED-tables

EXTRA COSTS WILL BE PASSED ON IN 'FAIR AND TRANSPARENT WAY'

Fleet managers will face increased daily rental costs as a result of the new VED regime.

Enterprise Rent-A-Car, which owns and operates 95,000 vehicles in the UK, is consulting its largest customers about the best way to pass the cost on.

At an ACFO East Anglia and Midlands meeting, Andy Bland, Enterprise head of sales, West Midlands, said: "We can't yet put an exact number on how it is going to impact us, we just know it certainly is. We know it is going to be in the millions, we know we will have to pass this cost on but we also know we will do it in a fair and transparent way."

Enterprise is looking at two options: customers that use low emission vehicles could pay a fee based on what they use or they could take advantage of Enterprise's average fleet and pay a flat fee.

"VED changes will have a disproportionately negative impact on PHEVs"

Toby Marshall, Mitsubishi Motors

Research links number of UK road accidents with air pollution

Analysis suggests 30% drop in nitrogen dioxide levels could cut accidents by 5%

By Gareth Roberts

Air pollution could be the root cause of hundreds of road accidents, new research suggests. Analysis by Lutz Sager, a PhD student at the London School of Economics (LSE), has found that small increases in the level of nitrogen dioxide in the air relate to a rise in the number of accidents on UK roads.

Sager's results, based on data for the period between 2009 and 2014, show that a rise in the average concentration of nitrogen dioxide of just one microgramme per cubic metre is sufficient to increase the average number of accidents each day by 2%, with the biggest effect occurring in cities.

Previous studies have shown air pollution to negatively affect the productivity of agricultural workers and leave students struggling to concentrate on their studies.

Sager told *Fleet News*: "Although it has already been shown that air pollution adversely affects human health and the ability to carry out mental tasks, this is the first published study that assesses the impact on road safety."

The analysis identified a causal effect of air pollution on road accidents, but Sager admitted he can only speculate about what triggers the link.

"My main theory is that air pollution impairs drivers' fitness," he said. "However, other explanations are possible such as air pollution causing physical distractions, perhaps an itching nose, or limiting visibility."

Air pollution can result from many pollutants, including carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, small particulate matter and ozone. Many of these pollutants are caused by the same source.

Sager said: "My analysis suggests that the causal effect of air pollution on road traffic accidents measured in this study more likely stems from nitrogen dioxide or other pollutant gases rather than particulate matter."

He divided the UK into a grid of 32 areas each covering about 3,000 square miles. He calculated that in the area containing west London, which suffers from some of the highest levels of air pollution, a cut of about 30% in the concentration of nitrogen dioxide could reduce the number of road accidents every day by almost 5%.

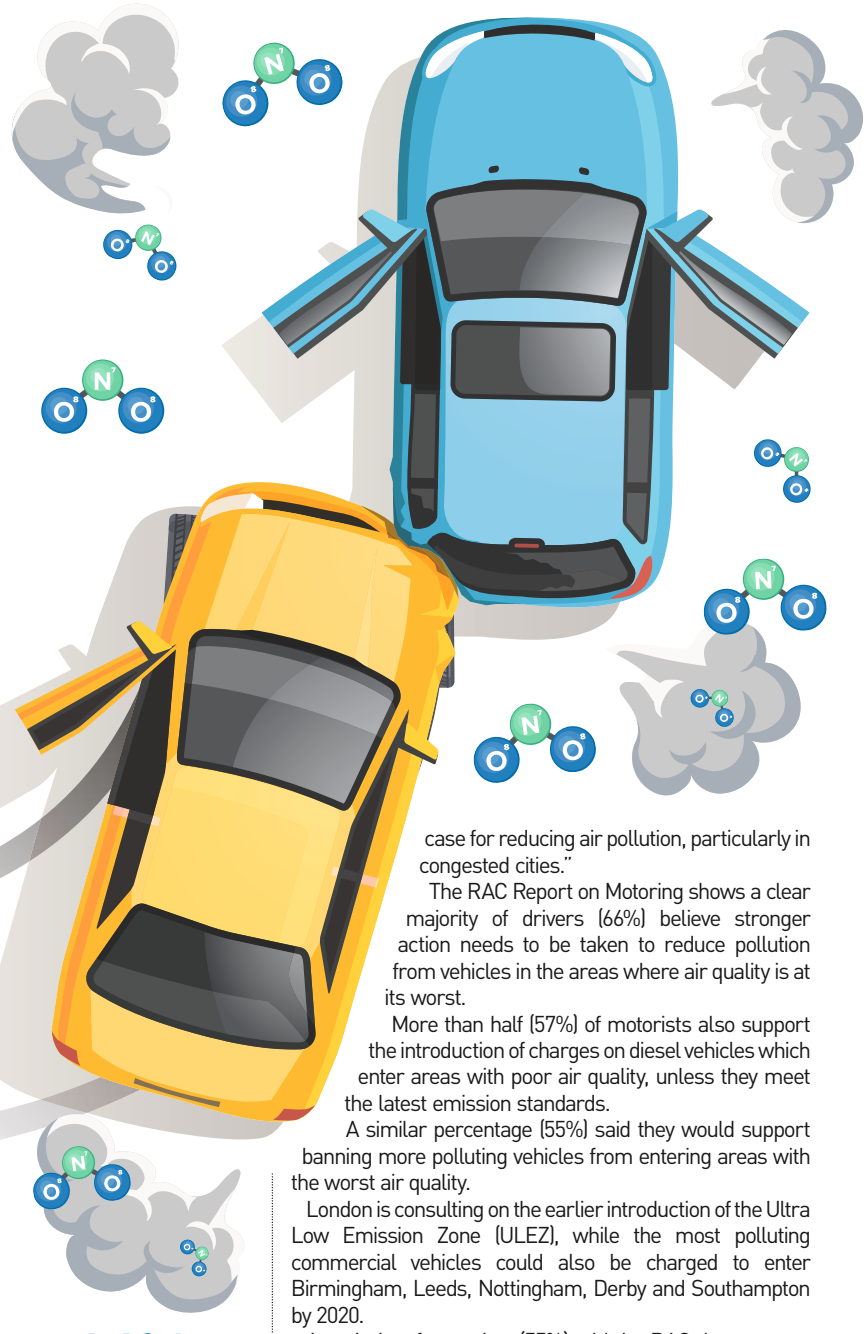
Sager's research comes as road casualty statistics, issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) show there were 1,730 deaths in 2015, a decrease of 3% compared with 2014. The number of people seriously injured in reported road traffic accidents also fell by 3% to 22,144 in 2015.

The DfT estimated that the total cost of all road accidents, including unreported casualties, was £35.5 billion.

Sager said: "These additional costs only strengthen the case for reducing air pollution, particularly in congested cities."

"My main theory is that air pollution impairs drivers' fitness"

Lutz Sager, LSE



66%
of motorists believe stronger action needs to be taken to reduce pollution

1,730
road deaths in 2015

The RAC Report on Motoring shows a clear majority of drivers (66%) believe stronger action needs to be taken to reduce pollution from vehicles in the areas where air quality is at its worst.

More than half (57%) of motorists also support the introduction of charges on diesel vehicles which enter areas with poor air quality, unless they meet the latest emission standards.

A similar percentage (55%) said they would support banning more polluting vehicles from entering areas with the worst air quality.

London is consulting on the earlier introduction of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), while the most polluting commercial vehicles could also be charged to enter Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, Derby and Southampton by 2020.

A majority of motorists (55%) told the RAC they support such proposals – only 12% said they were against them. However, the introduction of charges for 'all diesel vehicles' entering areas with the poorest air quality received the least support. Only 42% of drivers thought this was a good idea versus 30% who did not.

Interestingly, more than half (51%) said they expected their next car to be petrol, compared to 53% in 2015, while 28% will opt for diesel. Four in 10 (41%) say they will avoid diesels, and of this group more than a third (35%) cite pollution as the main reason.

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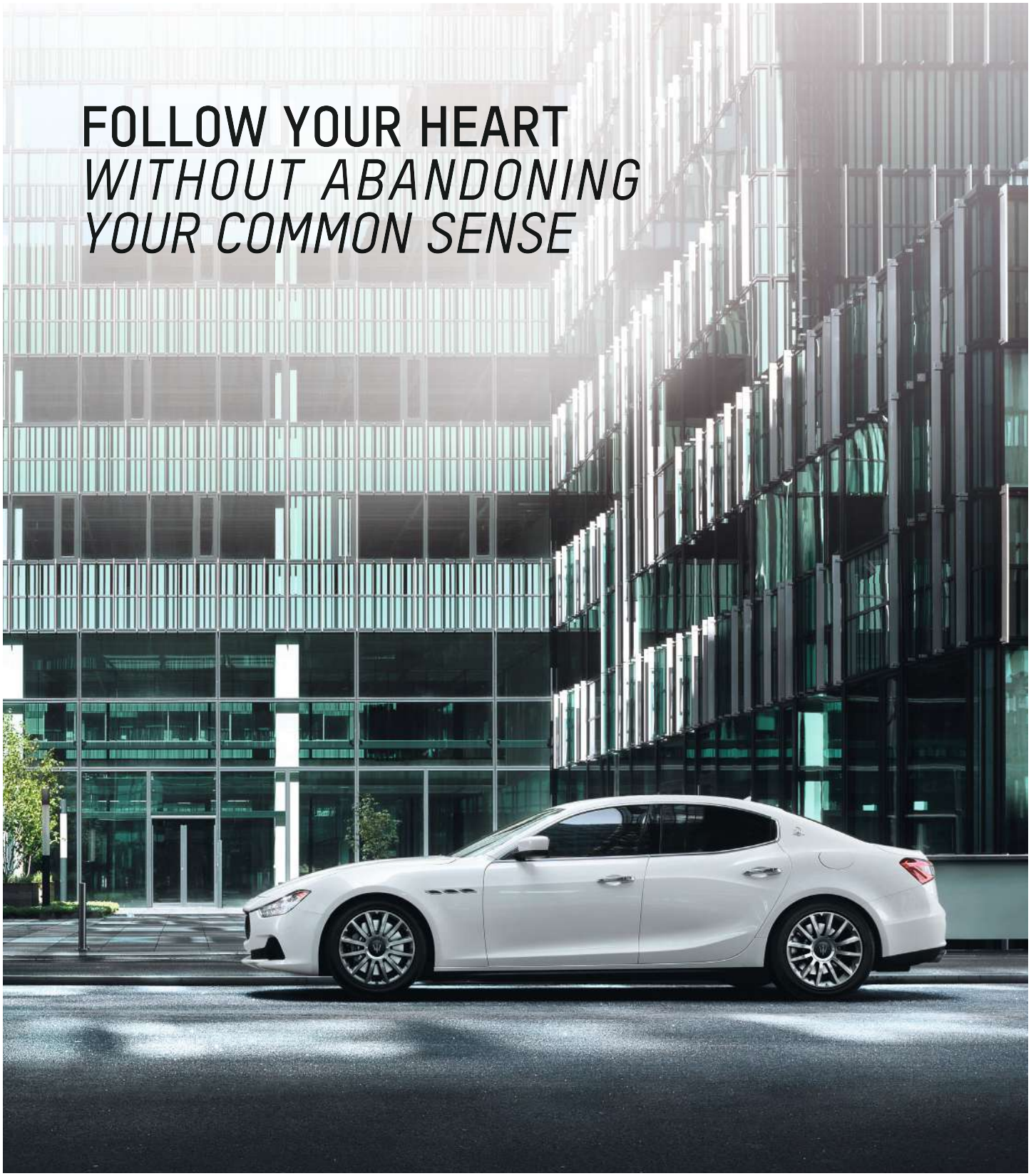

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Official fuel consumption figures for Maserati Ghibli Diesel in mpg (l/100km): Urban 36.7 (7.7), Extra Urban 57.6 (4.9), Combined 47.9 (5.9). CO_2 emissions 158 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures are based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Model shown is a Maserati Ghibli Diesel MY17 at £49,860 On The Road.

Renault makes lower mileage drivers its immediate EV priority

Balance has to be struck between battery size and price on longer range vehicles

By Matt de Prez

Renault expects the tipping point for widespread acceptance and uptake of electric vehicles (EVs) to happen in 2020, but its immediate priority isn't high mileage company car drivers.

By increasing the range and reducing the price of its EV line-up over the next four years, the company is hoping to attract a high number of urban drivers who cover lower mileages.

Eric Feunteun, Renault global EV programme director, told *Fleet News:* "At this stage the priority is not the customer that drives 600 miles per week; 75% of Europeans drive less than 31 miles per day, so let us focus on those first."

A family-sized car capable of covering 500 miles on a single charge is at least five years away, according to Feunteun. Although the battery technology is available, it is currently too expensive for the market.

He said: "Longer range is a bigger challenge and Renault is about affordable technology – therefore we have to find the right balance between the size of battery and the price."

He added: "EV growth will occur in two stages and the first is incentive."

Once demand increases the industry will benefit from economies of scale, whereby the cost of the technology will fall – making longer range EVs more affordable for the average buyer and fleets.

"When we talk about incentive, we have to separate the money [grants] and the physical incentive – which are both very important," he explained.

"Financially we are still seeing growth [in grants]. The UK is the only example which has cut them back. Most countries offer around £5,200. I think this is the right level to offset the cost gap and make sure that we are at the same price point as a non-EV."

But it's the non-financial incentive that is critical, according to Feunteun.

He said: "In everyday life the question should be is your life easier or not when you drive an EV. That's key for the customer – and it's much easier for governments because it's usually free or very cheap."

He wants legislation to be introduced which offers EVs access to bus lanes, free access to city centres (low emission or congestion zones), free parking in cities or airports and better spaces in shopping centres.

250
miles range of new Zoe

For more on the Zoe, visit www.fleetnews.co.uk/renault-zoe

"In everyday life the question should be is your life easier or not when you drive an EV"

Eric Feunteun, Renault

"All these small benefits will make customers think their EV does make life easier, beyond the question of 'green' or if it's a pleasure to drive. This is very important and needs to increase very much," Feunteun said.

To date, EV sales are significantly less than first anticipated for Renault. In 2010 the Renault-Nissan alliance set a target of selling 1.5 million EVs by the end of 2016, but, despite being the market leader, it has managed just 350,000.

The company revealed an updated battery for its Zoe city car at the Paris motor show, which boosts range to 250 miles. It goes on sale next month and the battery is no bigger than the existing unit, but has double the capacity.

Prices are yet to be released in the UK but in France the car will demand a £3,000 premium – the current Zoe costs from £17,795 including the Government's plug-in car grant.

Feunteun said: "This is an important breakthrough; the research we have carried out with our customers and by looking at what our competitors can offer showed that the 190-mile range barrier is a significant threshold for buyers."

Feunteun would not say if there were plans to fit the battery to other models in the alliance, such as the Nissan Leaf, but he did confirm that the entire line-up of EVs at Renault-Nissan will be subjected to a number of upgrades over the next four years.

Renault wasn't the only manufacturer at the Paris show to indicate its EV intentions for the future, though. The Volkswagen Group outlined its strategy to offer a range of 30 EV models by 2025 including a city car with a 350-mile range.

For more on the Paris motor show, see page 69.

The battery in the new Zoe is no bigger than the existing unit, but has double the capacity

Average-speed cameras lead to significant reduction in collisions

Increased camera rollout helped by installation costs falling dramatically

By Gareth Roberts

The use of average-speed cameras has been found to cut the number of crashes resulting in death or serious injury by more than one-third.

Research for the RAC Foundation by Road Safety Analysis found that, in mean terms, the number of fatal and serious collisions decreased by 36% on a stretch of road after average-speed cameras were introduced. The average reduction in personal injury collisions of all severities was found to be 16%.

Steve Gooding, director at the RAC Foundation, said: "There is cause for optimism about the overall collision reduction benefits of average-speed cameras.

"Taking account of overall trends, permanent average-speed camera sites were found to, on average, reduce injury collisions, particularly those of highest severity."

Speed-limit enforcement, in particular the use of camera-based prosecution systems, has been a contentious issue for some years. Cameras were originally introduced at speeding or crash hotspots, but are now increasingly installed for other reasons, such as tackling traffic flow, air quality and vehicle noise.

Gooding said: "In 2010, the RAC Foundation published a report which analysed the effectiveness of speed cameras. The report focused on the use of 'spot' cameras, the most widely used camera technology at the time, finding that cameras could be a valuable part of the road safety armoury.

"Technology has now moved on and more authorities are looking to average-speed cameras – systems that measure the speed of a vehicle over a stretch of road – to ensure speed limit compliance. It therefore seemed timely to commission a similarly rigorous look at how these systems are performing."

By the end of 2015 there were at least 50 stretches of road in Great Britain permanently covered by average-speed cameras, keeping a total of 255 miles under observation.

The 50 stretches range in length from less than half a mile in Nottingham to 99 miles on the A9 between Dunblane and Inverness in Scotland. Many of these sections of road will be monitored by several sets of cameras.

The first stretch of road to become permanently managed by average-speed cameras was the A6514 ring road in Nottingham in 2000.

MPs on the Transport Committee have suggested that more average-speed cameras should be deployed to catch motorists who drive too fast (www.fleetnews.co.uk: March 22). At least 12 systems were installed last year alone.

Speed cameras, said the Transport Committee's report on road traffic enforcement, are an "important and effective part of the technology toolkit" and, if enforcement is going to be effective, greater use of technology is essential.

It said that average-speed cameras are generally "better received by motorists than traditional fixed-speed cameras", but existing schemes should be assessed for their long-term effectiveness and, based on this, Highways England should develop best practice for their deployment.

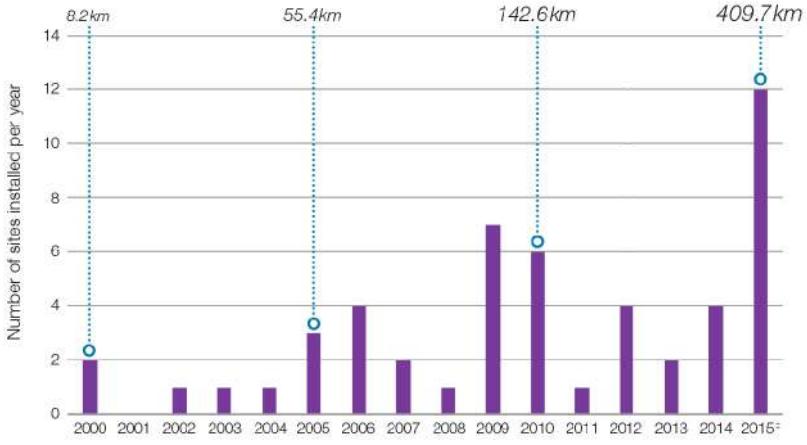
One reason for the increase in usage has been the cut in installation costs of permanent average-speed cameras. The figure is now typically around £100,000 per mile, compared with around £1.5m per mile in the early 2000s.

Some of the older spot speed cameras – commonly known as Gatso cameras – have been around for 25 years and still use 35mm film. As they come to the end of their operating lives they are starting to be replaced, in some cases with average-speed systems.

In August this year, for example, West Midlands Police turned on average-speed camera systems on eight stretches of roads in Birmingham and Solihull. This was three years after the old-style, wet-film, Gatso cameras were turned off.

The wider roll-out of speed cameras could prove costly for some company car drivers. Nine out of ten (88%) admitted to speeding on motorways, according to the RAC Report on Motoring (www.fleetnews.co.uk: October 6).

TOTAL LENGTH OF ROAD COVERED BY AVERAGE-SPEED CAMERAS



‡ To June 2015

Source: RAC Foundation report

36%
average reduction in fatalities

16%
average reduction in injuries

For more on the speed risk of company car drivers, visit www.fleetnews.co.uk/speeding

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Model shown is the Alfa Giulietta 1.6 JTD_{M-2} 120 hp Tecnica at £19,250 OTR including Alfa White Paint. Range of official fuel consumption figures for the Giulietta Tecnica range: Urban 55.4 – 60.1 mpg (5.1 – 4.7 l/100km); Extra Urban 74.3 – 88.3 mpg (3.8 – 3.2 l/100km); Combined 65.7 – 74.3 mpg (4.3 – 3.8 l/100km). CO_2 emissions 113 – 99 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures are obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with EC directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions. Factors such as driving style, weather and road conditions may also have a significant effect on fuel consumption.

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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). CO_2 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. Insignia hatchback 2.0CDTi (170PS) Start/Stop ecoFLEX BlueInjection** Elite model shown above is for illustrative purpose only and features optional Mineral Black metallic paint, Premium Nappa Leather Pack, keyless entry and start, 20-inch multi-spoke alloy wheels, with CO_2 from 118g/km, fuel consumption up to 62.8mpg, range up to 967 miles and power up to 170PS. * = Terms and conditions apply and vehicles are subject to availability. Please call 0870 240 4848 for full details. ** = Please note: Vehicles with BlueInjection technology will need regular AdBlue® top-ups also between servicing requirements. An indicator integrated into the on-board computer will warn you when you need to top up. More information under www.vauxhall.co.uk/blueinjection. In accordance with regulations R (EC) No. 715/2007 and R (EC) No. 692/2008 (in the versions respectively applicable). All figures quoted correct at time of going to press (October 2016).

An artist's impression of how Nottingham's Eco Expressway will sit alongside lanes for conventional vehicles

Electric vehicles-only lane in Nottingham will be a UK first

Eco Expressway is just one of a range of initiatives aimed at driving EV uptake

By Gareth Roberts

Electric vehicles (EVs) will have their own lane for the first time in the UK when a multi-million pound road improvement plan is completed next year.

The new lane will form part of the six-mile Nottingham Eco Expressway, which will be adapted from an existing route into the city.

Running in each direction of the road, the EV lanes, which will also be used by electric buses, will be accompanied by a cycleway and lanes for conventional vehicles.

EV-only lanes are common in the US, where plug-in and hybrid vehicles are permitted to use high-occupancy vehicle lanes. But, the £6.1m project in Nottingham is the first of its kind in the UK.

It has been funded by the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership – a consortium of 19 district, city and county councils, as well as universities and colleges, and local business groups.

The aim is to encourage more people to travel sustainably around Nottingham after it was named a Go Ultra Low City, along with Bristol, London and Milton Keynes (www.fleetnews.co.uk: January 25).

The city secured a £6m share of the £40m of Government funding on offer by pledging to help drive the uptake of plug-in vehicles through a range of innovative ideas.

As it stands, data from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) shows the number of plug-in vehicles in Nottingham has grown from 11 four years ago to 164 today. In the wider county, the rise in electric car ownership has been faster – up from 11 to 536 in the same four-year period.

However, it still falls some way short of the city council's commitment to help deliver an additional 8,000 ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) on the region's roads by 2020.

It was a key pledge from Nottingham's Go Ultra Low City bid and it aims to overcome the barriers to uptake by encouraging local businesses and public sector organisations to make the switch.

It has proposed a range of incentives and awareness programmes targeted at businesses, including: a business EV grant scheme to help part-fund charging infrastructure at business premises; opportunities to meet with existing EV fleet users and learn about their experiences; and a 'try before you buy' loan scheme in conjunction with local dealers to give small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) the opportunity to trial a ULEV.

It will also provide access to a dedicated support programme, operated by the Low Carbon Hub, to provide SMEs with help to assess potential cost savings through the incorporation of ULEVs in their fleet operations, along with ULEV fleet management and driver training support.

Councillor Nick McDonald, portfolio holder for growth and transport at Nottingham City Council, said: "The city council is putting in place infrastructure and support to grow the use of electric and other low-carbon transport in Nottingham."

The city is no stranger to radical thinking. It achieved its carbon emissions reduction target four years' early, thanks in part to the introduction of the Workplace Parking Levy WPL (www.fleetnews.co.uk: September 14).

Data showed 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 the largest cities in the UK outside London, for the greatest reduction in emissions and the lowest emissions per head of population.

However, air quality remains a concern. Nottingham was one of 10 UK cities and towns identified for failing to meet World Health Organisation (WHO) standards for air pollution earlier this year. The others were Port Talbot, Stanford-le-Hope, Glasgow, Leeds, London, Scunthorpe, Eastbourne, Oxford and Southampton.

McDonald believes that the road plan will help drive down pollution in Nottingham "The Eco Expressway is an exciting new development that grows our commitment to low-emission transport further," he said. "It will provide quicker and cleaner travel and help to improve the city's air quality."

Work on the Eco Expressway began last week and the scheme is expected to function towards the end of 2017, with the first phase of works completed by March next year.

■ **Nottingham takes the lead on EVs, see page 44.**

"It will provide quicker and cleaner travel and help to improve the city's air quality"

Councillor Nick McDonald, Nottingham City Council

£6.1m

cost of Nottingham Eco Expressway

THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*

At the time of going to press, *Fleet News* was meeting a number of fleets and leasing companies in a tripartite debate with BVRLA and ACFO to discuss the Government's proposed changes to salary sacrifice and cash allowance taxation policies.

The discussion is a revival of the Fleet Manifesto meetings we held in 2015 prior to the general election which culminated in a presentation to then transport minister John Hayes in a gathering of industry and MPs at the House of Lords.

"It's a blatant attempt to use company car drivers as a soft target for raising revenue"

The salary sacrifice/cash allowance tax debate will follow similar lines: we will collate opinions and prepare a response to Government ahead of the consultation deadline on October 19.

While not wishing to pre-empt the outcome of the discussions, it's fairly safe to say that fleets and leasing companies will be pushing for the Government to remove vehicles from the salary sacrifice discussions and – equally, if not more importantly – drop any intention to begin taxing company car drivers the rate of income tax on a cash alternative should the amount be higher than the benefit-in-kind they are paying on the car.

At best, the proposals are misguided, taking no account of the impact on payroll systems or a potential rise in the grey fleet; at worst it's a blatant attempt to use company car drivers as a soft target for raising revenue.

In this week's packed edition we have our annual focus on the environment and all the things that fleets can do to limit their emissions and fuel consumption.

We also have the first instalment of the 2016 Fleet200, which we are reproducing in the magazine over the next six issues. Part one includes an overview of the 200 big fleets plus the list of the top 100 (page 51).

YOUR LETTERS

AMPERA-E

'Teasing' Vauxhall will get left behind in the EV stakes

EDITOR'S PICK

Tim wrote:
Having read, Fleets disappointed UK market bypassed by game-changing longer range EV, (*Fleet News*, September 29), based on a product life-cycle of six years, when/if Vauxhall decide to introduce a right-hand drive version for the new Ampera-e replacement, every other manufacturer will probably have had a head start on EVs in the UK, leaving Vauxhall behind once again. By showing their clients a LHD version, surely this is some sort of twisted 'TV's Bullseye' tease with "this is what you could have had".

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

Richard D added:
Tesla do not seem to have had problems producing right-hand drive electric cars, so surely GM should be capable – especially as electric vehicles have a lot less going on under the bonnet.

DavidMG added:
Vauxhall/GM's decision should help Renault with its recently announced 250 mile range version of the Zoe which will be available in the UK.

RAISING SPEED LIMITS

Poor road capacity is just the limit

Petrol Paul:
Having read, Speeding company car drivers want 80mph limit, I feel the biggest improvement in journey times would not come by increasing the speed limit to 80mph but by addressing capacity issues enabling an average speed nearer to 70mph to be achieved. Often when driving from Kent to Birmingham my average speed is little more than 40mph and on some of my worst journeys round the M25 it falls well below 30mph (where getting out and cycling would be quicker).

SAFETY

It is no use cyclists being right – and wronged

Dave wrote:
Having read, Fleet operator says cycling groups should stop playing the victim, (fleetnews.co.uk, Sep 28), as a cyclist, fleet manager and road safety practitioner I see far too many cyclists putting themselves in legal, but dangerous situations, then shouting or remonstrating with drivers about who is right or wrong.

So cyclists please put safety first, it's not good to be righteous and dead. You can be absolutely certain you are not going to knock a car or truck out of the way even if you have a legal right of way. So as our fathers all told us when we were learning to drive, treat every other road user as an idiot and make sure you give way to stay safe.

If you get into a dangerous situation on your bike, before shouting at anyone else, have a good look at how you could have prevented getting yourself in that position. Are you trying to make a point like Jeremy Vine was doing in the recent high profile video clip? Speed up, apologetic wave and pull over as soon as possible would have removed the heat of the situation, deliberately stopping to prevent progress of the car was inflammatory and completely unnecessary confrontation which created danger where there simply shouldn't have been any. In my view it was as much his fault as the impatient driver. Many cyclists will probably disagree with this and to those, good luck in staying safe, but it is no good having grieving relatives prove you right in court when you are dead.

Alex C added:
Should people using cycles for work have to commit to training of some sort? There are hundreds of couriers on London's roads, many of whom I have witnessed putting themselves in very dangerous situations. Maybe some sort of training should be compulsory for them?

JCG added:
I have no problem with cycling. It is a great mode of transport. But the fleet industry has stepped up to the plate and made numerous contributions to cycle safety, so it is time for the cycling industry to do the same.

HOME WORKING

End needless commuting

Darren wrote:
Having read, Commute is wasted time for 31% of workforce, (fleetnews.co.uk, Sep 27) I would say that it takes me anywhere between 45 minutes and an hour and a half to drive 20 miles each way to my employment – for a job which is 90% online based.

Even on my motorbike I struggle to get this journey down to 30 minutes. This is 'my' time as it isn't part of my working day, but is just dead time I can't do anything with.

My company runs a large office with air-cond, heating and the like. It beggars belief the fuel wasted, the pollution created and the energy the office consumes all because we are not allowed (trusted?) to do our jobs from home.

If the government was serious about cutting congestion and pollution in the UK, they would encourage companies to employ a work-from-home ethos.

VIVA LAUNCH

Viva Las Vegas? Wouldn't bet on it

Simon Wells wrote:
Having seen, Vauxhall launches rugged Viva Rocks edition, (fleetnews.co.uk, Sep 29), I can't wait for the blinged out version, which will presumably be the Viva Las Vegas.

HAVE YOUR SAY Email: fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk Comment online: fleetnews.co.uk
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Burning question:
What theme park ride do you remember most – whether for good or scary reasons?

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Oblivion at Alton Towers – I may have accidently screamed ...
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Getting soaked on the log flume at Alton Towers
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Back to the Future at Universal Studios
Photos Chris Lowndes

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The Black Hole at Alton Towers. It was the first proper rollercoaster I ever rode
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Twilight Zone Tower of Terror at Disney
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FLEET OPINION

ULEV 'REVOLUTION'

Tax ruling crucial to clean vehicles uptake

By Andy Eastlake

At this year's Paris Motor Show, manufacturers such as Mercedes-Benz, General Motors, Renault, Toyota and Volkswagen were showcasing the largest range of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) ever in what is being called the year of the electric car revolution.

The growth in sales of ULEVs has been rapid. Whether this yet merits the tag 'revolution' is debatable, but these vehicles are certainly becoming mainstream choices. Plug-in vehicle registrations reached a record high in 2015 as more than 28,000 arrived on UK roads – exceeding the total for the previous five years combined.

However, a significant shift in what powers the vehicles on UK roads will create a challenge for the Exchequer. The Treasury is consulting on the design of new ULEV bands for company car tax, seeking to explore how best to incentivise the cleanest cars. We will be working with a wide range of stakeholders to find agreement and provide input to the Government's consultation.

One aspect we will be considering is how best to ensure the fiscal regime encourages not only the uptake of plug-in electric vehicles, but also the proportion of electric miles driven.

One of the clearest trends in 2015 was that buyers – particularly fleet buyers – are increasingly favouring plug-in hybrid vehicles (up 137% in 2015 versus 2014 to more than 18,000) over pure electric vehicles (up 47% to nearly 10,000).

With a limited electric range, vehicles like the Mitsubishi PHEV can do an excellent job in the right circumstances, but we need to ensure that the number of miles such vehicles travel on electricity is maximised compared with their use of petrol or diesel. This is a challenge for policy makers – in designing appropriate support mechanisms and fiscal implements – and for fleet managers in making sure users understand the true potential of the vehicles and actively cooperate with the aim of maximising electric mobility and minimising carbon emissions.

The answer to this challenge is not straightforward, but it is an important one of several the LowCVP will be working to navigate the best path through as the ULEV 'revolution' gathers momentum.

"The Treasury is consulting on the design of new ULEV bands for company car tax"

Andy Eastlake, managing director of the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership

Chris Chandler, principal consultant at Lex Autolease

For more fleet opinion from the industry, visit fleetnews.co.uk/opinion

FUEL CHOICE

Be cautious about new technologies

By Chris Chandler

Orders for plug-in electric vehicles across the fleet market have shot up over the past 18 months, fuelled on one side by tax incentives, grants and potentially significant fuel cost savings, and on the other by the increasing availability of models from manufacturers.

With wholelife cost always front of mind, fleet managers have been early adopters of new technology and cleaner vehicles. Added to this, there is a real environmental need for fleets to buy ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs).

Increasingly both public and private sector organisations want to demonstrate a 'hearts and minds' approach to adopting sustainable, environmentally sensitive policies to build credibility and loyalty with customers and employees alike. A green fleet can be a key element of an on-going corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy, enabling organisations to manage carbon footprints.

However, caution is needed. A move from traditionally-fuelled vehicles to new technologies requires new thought processes. Decisions must be based on the type of driving to ensure the most appropriate vehicle technology is selected.

Pure electric cars are best suited to lower mileage urban driving conditions, although improving battery performance is changing this. Plug-in hybrids must be charged at every opportunity to maximise the amount of time driven in electric-only mode. If a plug-in hybrid is not regularly charged and just driven in the diesel or petrol mode, few potential environmental or fuel cost savings will be realised.

While battery electric cars will provide mid- to long-term fixes as ranges increase, the future will see a range of new fuel types launched to meet different transport needs, from pure electric vehicles to gaseous-powered vehicles, such as hydrogen. One of our hydrogen vehicles, a Hyundai ix35, is now used daily by the University of Birmingham.

Rather than jump on board with a new technology to reap short-term rewards, fleet managers should ask themselves what type of vehicle will best suit future needs. Raising awareness will be vital and suppliers, manufacturers and industry bodies must work together to help companies make the right decisions.

"Fleet managers should ask themselves what type of vehicle will best suit future needs"

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ASK NIGEL

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

SALARY SACRIFICE SCHEMES

Q We are a small company with about 25 employees some of whom wish to explore the benefits of the salary sacrifice for cars scheme. We have had a few quotes but the difference between the personal lease monthly payments and salary sacrifice net monthly payment is pretty high (even if you add the maintenance and insurance components). Why is that so?

A Your question is a timely one, given that the taxation of company car provision and other benefits are currently in the news. It also illustrates some of the challenges of adopting the right funding method for any business as many of those responsible for fleets may not fully understand how such schemes work.

In fact, the funding decision can be one of the most challenging for anyone with fleet responsibilities, because in my experience there is never one particular solution that fits every driver and their circumstances.

When I first came into fleet, employee car ownership schemes were being heavily promoted as a means of saving money for the business, and a number of companies adopted them.

However, when we came to look at the detail for my own large fleet, the benefits would have been limited and the potential increase in administration challenging. Suffice to say we made no change. In later years, I came across several such schemes which were clearly not working as intended, and one which was technically illegal. The key message here is that a funding decision is not just for today, but for a period of many years – so getting it right is vital!

In some ways, the recent increase in adoption of salary sacrifice has been similar, with those promoting the solution enjoying significant success – which may be one of the reasons HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) has announced that it is reviewing the tax treatment.

A number of fleets have successfully implemented salary sacrifice schemes for cars, usually as part of a wider benefits package that also uses salary sacrifice. Where they have been successful, it is the result of a properly planned approach where the business has understood the benefits and implications for them and communicated well with their staff.

Even the supposedly 'simple' approach – giving employees cash to fund their own car is by no means straightforward. Indeed the recent announcement that this approach will also be reviewed as part of the current consultation indicates that it could become even more problematic.

"This is not a good time to change – wait for the outcome of the HMRC review before you even think about it"

My advice therefore would be that this is not a good time to change – wait for the outcome of the current HMRC review before you even think about it! Then get some independent advice that will compare your current approach with the various options available.

Most of the major fleet management providers have access to independent software that provides accurate cost analyses of the various funding approaches. Share these with your finance director (who should welcome this detail) and you should not go too far wrong.

One final thought, for the fleet as small as yours there is a lot of benefit in keeping things like funding as simple as possible.

- **The next Ask Nigel will be in the October 27 issue.**
- **Ask Nigel to solve your fleet challenge at Fleet Management Live on October 19-20 at the NEC, Birmingham**

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

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

He entered the *Fleet News* Hall of Fame in 2013.

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

Do you have a fleet challenge you would like Nigel to answer?
Visit fleetnews.co.uk/asknigel or email fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk

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- Caroline Sandall, Barclays/ACFO
- Justin Wand, London Ambulance Service
- Sarah Millward, The AA

Supplier Awards
- Sarah Tooze, *Fleet News*
- Liz Hollands, FTA
- John Pryor, Arcadia/ACFO
- Debbie Floyde, Bauer Media
- Stewart Lightbody, Anglian Water
- Sue Blair, Serco
- Linda Blake, Diageo
- Graham Short, Zip Water (UK)

Manufacturer Awards
- Stephen Briers, *Fleet News*
- Simon Harris, freelance motoring journalist
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FLEET AWARDS

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2016 winner: Portsmouth City Council

Fleet of the Year – 251-1,000 vehicles
2016 winner: South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust

Fleet of the Year – 1001-plus vehicles
2016 winner: Kelly Group

Most Improved Fleet of the Year
2016 winner: Kent and Essex Police

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2016 winner: Skanska
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Green Fleet of the Year
2016 winner: South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
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2016 winner: Vauxhall Astra

Best Upper-Medium Car
2016 winner: Škoda Superb

Best Compact SUV
2016 winner: Mazda CX-3

Best Mid-size SUV
2016 winner: Nissan Qashqai

Best Large SUV
2016 winner: Volvo XC90

Best Compact Premium Car
NEW CATEGORY

Best Premium Car
2016 winner: Audi A4

Best Executive Car
2016 winner: Jaguar XF

Best Plug-in Car (up to 50g/km)
NEW CATEGORY

Green Fleet Manufacturer of the Year
2016 winner: Toyota

Most Improved Fleet Manufacturer of the Year
2016 winner: Hyundai Motor UK

"All awards are important but there is something special about these awards. Fleet News has gravitas among fleet professionals; being recognised for our work in safety was an important moment."

Alison Moriarty, road risk manager, Skanska UK

SUPPLIER AWARDS

Leasing Company of the Year – up to 20,000 vehicles
2016 winner: Grosvenor Leasing
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Leasing Company of the Year – more than 20,000 vehicles
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Best Rental Company of the Year
2016 winner: Thrifty Car and Van Rental
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Customer Service Award
2016 winner: BT Fleet
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Most Innovative New Product or Service
2016 winner: Michelin Tyre

Fleet Dealer of the year
2016 winner: TrustFord

Fleet Specialist Services Solution of the Year
2016 winner: FMG

HEADLINE AWARDS

Fleet Manager of the Year
2016 winner: Justin Wand, South East Coast Ambulance Service
Sponsored by Fiat Chrysler Automobiles

Fleet Supplier of the year
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'WE WANT TO BE WAY AHEAD ON EMISSIONS'

London-based private hire company Green Tomato Cars plans to become even more eco-friendly by trialling electric and hydrogen fuel. *Andrew Ryan* reports

Incorporating the word green into the name of a company brings with it a certain pressure. And if that implied environmentally-friendly promise is not kept, then that business could end up with a red face.

However, this is not something London-based Green Tomato Cars is in danger of receiving.

The company was founded a decade ago with a fleet of four Toyota Prius hybrids to provide an eco-friendly private hire service in the capital.

Ten years later this has grown to a fleet of a little more than 500 vehicles, and the company has remained true to its principles as almost all of these are Prius models.

Despite the environmental benefits these have over diesel vehicles, the company is keen to further its green credentials and switch to emission-free vehicles as soon as it becomes feasible.

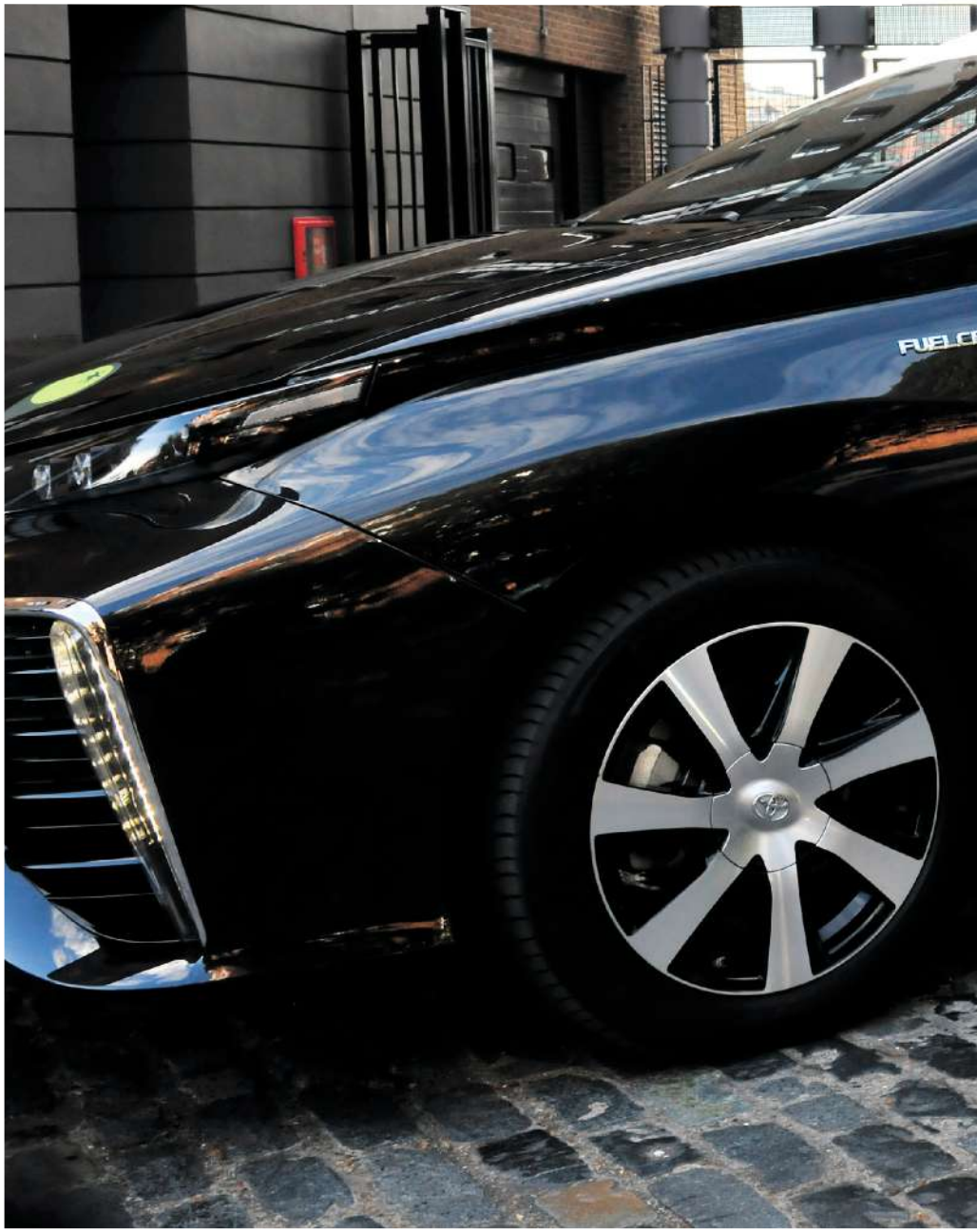
"We have a history of innovation," says James Rowe, finance director and head of fleet for Green Tomato Cars.

"We were the first all-hybrid private hire fleet when we launched in 2006 and we were the first to have Wi-Fi across our cars, but our challenge now is to push that forward to the next step: how can we go cleaner?

"Two years ago we became the first private hire company to use a Tesla and in November last year we became the first one to take on hydrogen fuel cell cars when we introduced two Toyota Mirais.

"We need to test out these technologies. Clearly they are different and we can't gamble on which one is going to get to the mass market quicker."

Pure electric vehicles (EVs) are becoming more widely available, but Rowe says the current crop is not suited to its needs, either through range, cost or practicality: Green Tomato Cars needs its cars to seat five people, including the driver, in comfort.



James Rowe, Green Tomato Cars's finance director and head of fleet, with head of service delivery Sophie Jacobsen

FACTFILE

Finance director James Rowe
Head of service delivery Sophie Jacobsen
Fleet size 500
Funding method leasing
Operating cycle cars – four years; MPVs – two years

The Tesla Model S, which has a range of more than 250 miles, fulfils two of these requirements but remains too expensive in Green Tomato Cars's view. However, it is providing invaluable pointers as to how the technology may work for the company in the future.

"With the Tesla we need to look at how often the driver has to charge the battery and how long that takes, so we can move quickly on EVs if that turns out to be the best technology," says Rowe.

"It's the same with the Mirai. We want to be ready if hydrogen turns out to be the best option."

The average annual mileage of a car on the Green Tomato Cars fleet is 35,000: equivalent to around 175 miles a day, says Rowe.

This is just out of reach of the claimed maximum range by the best of the mainstream EVs currently available.

"The charging infrastructure is much better than it was a few years ago, but given our requirements we would still have to tell our drivers they will potentially have to stop somewhere twice a day. There's no option to say 'we're busy now, let's move that back an hour-and-a-half'," says Rowe.

"We obviously don't want cars off the road any longer than necessary, and the drivers don't want to be waiting around when they could be earning money."

The Green Tomato Cars's experience with the Mirai, which can travel up to 300 miles on a tank of hydrogen, has been positive so far, Rowe says.

"I don't know if it's because we were reasonably well prepared, but for us it has been really quite simple," adds Rowe.

"There are four refuelling stations in London we can use and there have been times where one has been closed for a while, but it just means we need to be selective with the routes we send the cars on to make sure they can refuel.

"It's a massively exciting vehicle for us as it takes about the same time to refuel as a petrol car so it doesn't mean you are off the road for the 35-40 minutes an electric car needs to charge.

"The Mirai and Tesla are pretty much at the same price point and match our Mercedes-Benz S-Class, but we want to get to the stage where we can get that type of technology into a car at the same price as our Prius hybrids.

"There are many debates about which one of these technologies is best, but from our viewpoint that's irrelevant because we don't know what is going to happen.

"That is why we have got to keep an open mind, back both horses and see which way the technology in the market goes."

The requirement for London private hire companies to adopt new technology is being driven by Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) regulations, which dictate that from 2018 all newly-licensed taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) are required to meet new emissions standards.

From January 1, 2020, new vehicles (those up to 18 months old) licensed for the first time as a PHV must have CO_2 emissions below 50g/km with a minimum zero emission range of 10 miles, or up to 75g/km of CO_2 with a minimum 20-mile zero emission range.

"The regulations look like they are moving towards plug-in hybrids, but from our point of view they are the worst of both worlds," says Rowe. "They are still petrol and you still need to charge them.

"Clearly, your CO_2 will improve, but do you need that stepping stone to go emissions-free, or could you go straight there?"

He says Green Tomato Cars wants to continue to be "way ahead of the market" and meet these emissions requirements well before 2020.

"We have a lot of leases ending in September 2018 and, if the functionality is there, we would love to be putting something quite dramatic on the road in comparison to the hybrid by that point," says Rowe.

"We are keeping a close eye on the market and there seems to be a number of vehicles coming out in the next year or two which will be pretty well emissions-free or certainly a more viable plug-in option."

However, while the vast majority of its fleet is hybrid, a lack of alternatives means Green Tomato Cars is obliged to continue to run diesel MPVs.

"That's been a particular problem with the six- and eight-seaters," says Rowe.

"Theoretically, running the diesels is a green option if you look at the passengers you are getting in viewed against the CO_2 you are giving off, but there aren't any viable alternatives to diesel available to us at the moment.

"We normally commit to four-year leases on our vehicles, but for our MPVs we've halved that to two because we feel there's

Toyota Prius hybrids form the backbone of the Green Tomato Cars fleet of 500-plus vehicles

"The regulations look like they are moving towards plug-in hybrids, but from our point of view they are the worst of both worlds"

James Rowe, Green Tomato Cars

got to be something better coming on to the market than is currently available."

While its fleet is the most visible sign of Green Tomato Cars's environmental ethos, Rowe says its commitment stretches beyond its vehicles.

For example, last year it offset 1,000 tonnes of CO_2 – double the amount its fleet produced – through investment in a wind electricity generation project in India.

The company's dispatch software is set up to minimise the distance its drivers travel without passengers on board, while it also introduced a GreenRoad telematics system this year to improve driver behaviour and reduce collisions.

"The telematics has had a massive impact on our accident costs," says Sophie Jacobsen, head of service delivery.

"Last year our accident costs were £3,200 per active driver over the course of a year, but now we are looking at £2,300."

Across the fleet, this means an annual saving of around £250,000.

"This is partly because of telematics, but also because we have completely changed the way we manage our drivers," she adds (see panel, right).

Employees also directly feel the benefit of improved driver behaviour.

"They are responsible for their fuel, so the more economical they are and the better they drive, the more money they earn," says Rowe.

The company has also improved its procedures in the event of a collision by appointing accident management company Kindertons.

"If a driver has an accident, rather than go through their driver handbook to find who to call, they can now click on a smartphone app," says Rowe.

"This will alert Kindertons to the fact that something has happened, the company will then call the driver and talk them through what to do.

"This helps us look after the driver a little bit more and also reduces our downtime by allowing Kindertons to manage the process and sort out a replacement car as soon as possible."

For more fleet profiles, visit: fleetnews.co.uk/fleetprofiles

ENCOURAGING DRIVERS TO FEEL MORE INVOLVED

Making drivers feel valued and a greater part of the company was behind a restructuring programme at Green Tomato Cars in April.

The initiative saw three divisions which managed drivers merged into one larger team to increase efficiencies, with four agents each responsible for 80-100 drivers.

"The big step change for our drivers this year was to make them feel more of a member of the company rather than just somebody we only see now and again," says James Rowe.

"Now they have only one port of call if they have an issue. Historically they had to go to different people dependent on what the issue was.

"The new system means we have a closer relationship with drivers. We feed back to them more than we did before, and we get feedback from them too, which is good."

The initiative also involves giving starters a two-day induction into the company and its values.

"They are fully prepared when they go out on the road," adds Rowe. "It makes it easier for them to do their job when they know what the expectations are.

"After two months we have a review where we go through all the stats, the telematics score and their accident history if there is one."

A performance plan is put in place if improvements are needed.

Sophie Jacobsen adds: "It's all about optimising drivers' earnings, happiness and effectiveness, and, for us, optimising how we use cars on the road and how long they are on the road. The more efficient we can make our drivers, the more money they can earn."

Employees are also incentivised to drive well, says Jacobsen. "Each driver can get a £25 weekly bonus if they have a low telematics score and a high customer rating," she adds.

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FORD'S NEW PLATFORM TO BE THE 'iTUNES OF MOBILITY'

New fleet director Owen Gregory outlines how Ford is aiming to meet customers' needs of tomorrow. *Sarah Tooze reports*

Owen Gregory is just a few months into the top fleet job at Ford and can already see big changes on the horizon. The manufacturer intends to expand its business to be both an automotive and a mobility company and has moved from what Gregory describes as "an experimental phase" (Ford has run 20 different mobility projects globally in the past two years, including London car sharing project GoDrive) to "something much more solid".

"It became apparent that to be successful in this space we needed to create a separate company [Ford Smart Mobility] to ensure it is responsive and dynamic and nimble enough to address how fast paced this market is," Gregory says.

A team, called City Solutions, now sits within Ford Smart Mobility and is responsible for working with cities to help find mobility solutions. Last month, the company made its first purchase: a commuter ride-sharing service in San Francisco called Chariot.

The next step is FordPass, a platform which brings together different mobility apps and is due to be launched in the UK by the end of the year.

"Our aspiration is that it becomes the iTunes of mobility; the go-to place for what you want to know about mobility," Gregory says. "The content of that will grow over time.

"If you're a Ford owner today there is lots of functionality we can incorporate quite early on but the objective is that FordPass is available and is useful and is used by people that own and drive Fords and those who don't."

There are four parts to FordPass: FordPass Marketplace (which provides information about the vehicle and allows it be booked in for a service), FordGuides (essentially a number a driver can call to seek mobility advice), FordPass Perks (a reward scheme with selected partners) and FordHubs ('experience' centres in urban areas).

While FordPass is arguably more of a consumer than a fleet product, Gregory believes there is growing interest from fleet managers in mobility.

"Smart mobility is such a huge term," he says. "Do I think there is interest from fleet managers for efficient and effective operations of car sharing schemes within the company? Yes, absolutely. Do I think they are going to become increasingly interested and aware of what smart mobility will mean in the future? Yes, absolutely.

"But that will all be completely dependent on their individual circumstances – the segment they are operating in and physically where they are operating. If you're in a major city then chances are your challenges are very different than if you are operating on a large industrial estate in a semi-rural location. The answer is 'yes' there is interest in smart mobility but in what form is going to be as individual as every customer's needs."

10
years is the time Ford has spent developing autonomous vehicles

2021
is when Ford expects to have a fully autonomous vehicle operational

Below: FordPass will have four elements to it and the company has high hopes it will be a go-to product

Ford has put another marker down by saying it will have a fully autonomous vehicle at volume in a ride-sharing or ride-hailing operation by 2021.

"We've been working on autonomous cars for 10 years and I think it's quite helpful to be concrete in terms of 'this is our aspiration, this is what we're working towards'," Gregory says. "It helps us in the company and it helps those outside understand where our real direction of travel is."

The vehicle will be 'level four' automation meaning it will not have a steering wheel or pedals. "This is not some fancy driver aid, this is a fully autonomous vehicle operating in an urban area," Gregory says.

However, he acknowledges that there are a number of challenges that have to be overcome.

"There are the technological issues to overcome – things that you need in place for level four automation. You need high quality mapping, the lidar sensors and the radar, and we've invested in manufacturers of those systems. You also need quite advanced software and machine learning to understand how to process that information in a way that is reliable.

"The other challenges are legislative in terms of liability and responsibility of a vehicle in operation and those are very much on-going discussions we need to be part of with regulators and legislators to make sure we are all aligned."

Gregory believes autonomous vehicles have the potential to "take driver behaviour out of the equation" for fleet managers but that is "much longer term" as many company car drivers don't just work in an urban environment and "centimetre accurate mapping" would be needed for the other areas.

"You need to be at level five automation and that's when you completely replicate the human brain," he says.

Ford's more immediate fleet challenge is getting customers to consider other models in the company line-up.

"There is a tendency for some customers we have been

The manufacturer is introducing FordHub experience centres in urban areas as part of its FordPass offering

FACTFILE

Company: Ford
Director of Fleet Operations: Owen Gregory
Sales: fleet cars 133,916 YTD (down 8.7%); fleet vans 80,331 YTD (up 17.3%)

"There is so much strength in my team that I really don't want to be changing things just for the sake of it"

Owen Gregory, Ford

dealing with for a long time to go, 'OK, what's the next one of these?'. And one of the challenges we've got is to say, 'well, have you thought about different opportunities?'. Because a procurement team in a large business may not be aware of what the potential cost of ownership model might look like on an SUV and they are often surprised – in a good way."

Gregory is keen to point out that the Edge is "second only to Land Rover on residual values in the SUV segment".

The new ST Line, which "brings the essence of Ford performance to more customers" is currently available on the Fiesta, Focus and Mondeo and will be introduced to the new Kuga.

ST Line represents a big opportunity with user-choosers, according to Gregory. "It has got great styling but married to engines that are very affordable from both a running cost and tax perspective and the feedback so far on residual values has been really strong so it does form a strong proposition in terms of affordability and monthly rentals," he says.

Ford is also getting more and more fleet enquiries about the Mondeo Hybrid. "It's good because it's quite new," he says. "A lot of product launches can take time to filter down into people's awareness and I think it will build over time."

Gregory has spent the first few months in the job meeting fleet customers and dealers, and listening to his team.

"At the moment I'm very much into understanding each of the channels in terms of where do I think we are performing strongly and where do I think we've got opportunity. I am very much of the 'if it isn't broke don't fix it' mentality and there is so much strength in my team that I really don't want to be changing things just for the sake of it," he says.

"What I am finding is actually there are many things we are strong today and very well placed to continue to be strong over the next four or five years, which is great.

"I think there are some opportunities in the car side of the business on contract hire and we need to think through what the best way of unlocking those opportunities is. We've got some great [contract hire] partners we work with to access that channel and it's about listening to them, working with them and understanding what we need to do to grow together."

As well as the strategic review of Ford's fleet operation, Gregory is keeping a close watch on the recent Government consultations on tax policy (*Fleet News*, August 18). In Ford's experience, salary sacrifice cars replace older, grey fleet vehicles and Gregory believes it will be interesting to see how the Government balances salary sacrifice schemes with its wider policy objective of getting more people into modern, safer, more fuel-efficient vehicles.

"We're watching in a very interested way to see how that discussion plays out and what the implications might be for us," he says.

Brexit has yet to cause "any significant issues", although "this uncertainty isn't what we would have chosen", according to Gregory. "We did see a week or two where some of our customers were waiting to see what happened [before placing orders] but actually very quickly, along with most of us, they have realised the world keeps turning and we need to continue to do business and drive the economy," he says.

"We're here to help our customers grow their business, whether it is inside or outside the EU. That's what gets me up in the morning, gets my team up in the morning, to keep those wheels of business turning."

OWEN GREGORY ON...

Vans: "We've been particularly strong on commercial vehicles this year and we are building a lot of momentum. We've been really pleased with how the Courier has been accepted. The segment isn't massive but we're doing very well in it. Custom continues to be incredibly strong and customers are asking for higher specification because that is 'their office' in many cases and they want something that is increasingly comfortable and car-like."

AdBlue: "We made a conscious decision to locate the AdBlue filler next to the fuel one on Ranger, Transit Custom and Transit [the vehicles that require AdBlue] to try to make the operation of AdBlue as easy as we can. And, with the combination of Easy Fuel on the fuel filler cap, that means you don't have misfuelling issues. We've got regular reminders in the instrument cluster to fill up and for those fleet operators who want to have a good handle on it then our Ford telematics can give real time data on AdBlue levels. We're also anticipating more pump-side availability of AdBlue so it should make the whole process much easier for van operators."

For latest developments in the mobility sector visit fleetnews.co.uk/mobility

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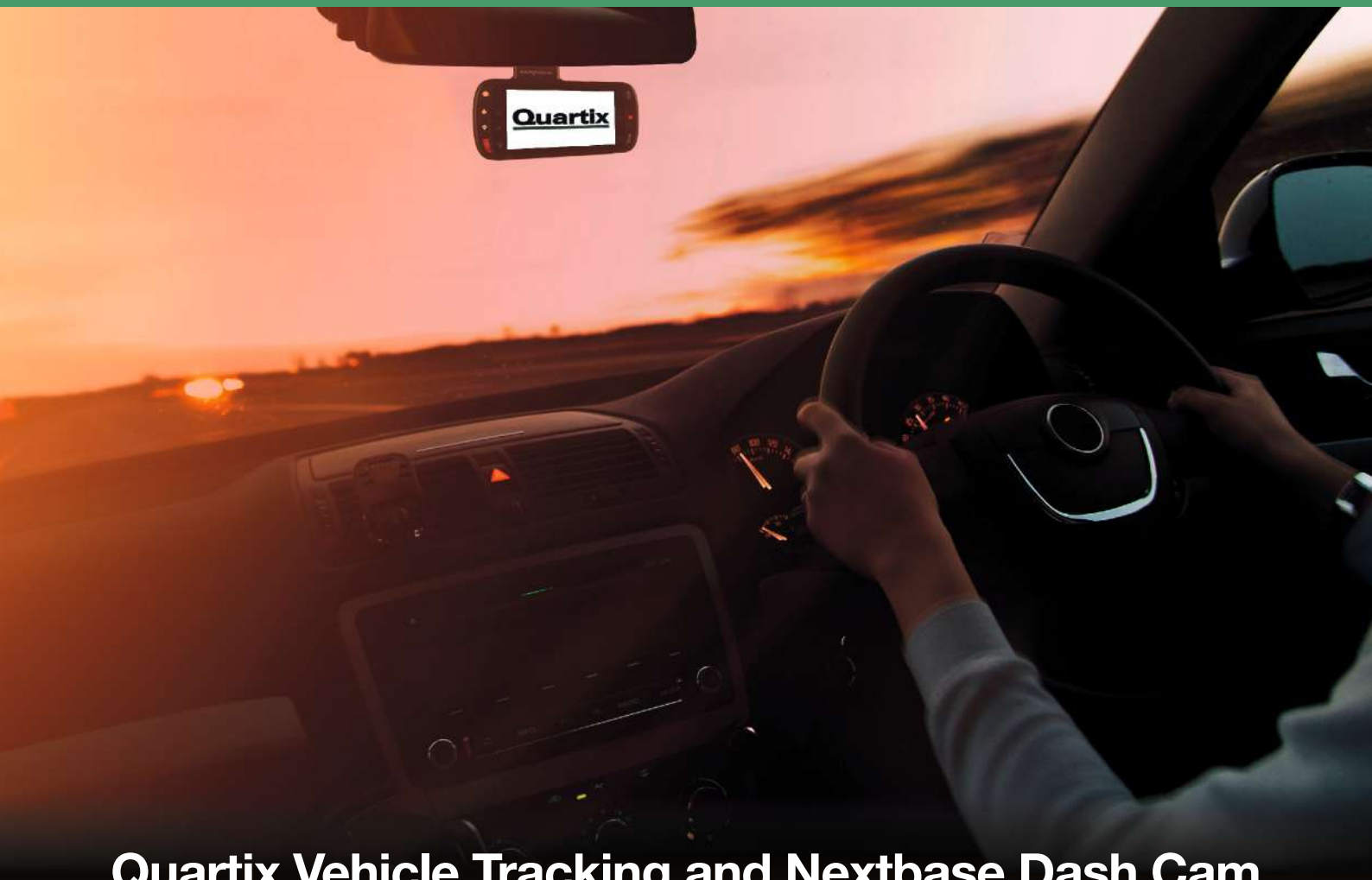

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FLEETS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The desire to reduce the environmental impact of fleets is an ever-present consideration. In this 10-page guide *Fleet News* describes some of the initiatives being undertaken

INSIDE

GREEN FLEET CHAMPIONS

The Go Ultra Low Companies scheme was launched earlier this year to recognise organisations that commit to using electric vehicles. *Andrew Ryan* looks at how six fleets achieved the standard

Fleets are adopting electric vehicles in ever-increasing numbers. Up to the end of July, SMMT figures show they acquired more than 15,000 EVs: a 45% increase compared to the previous year.

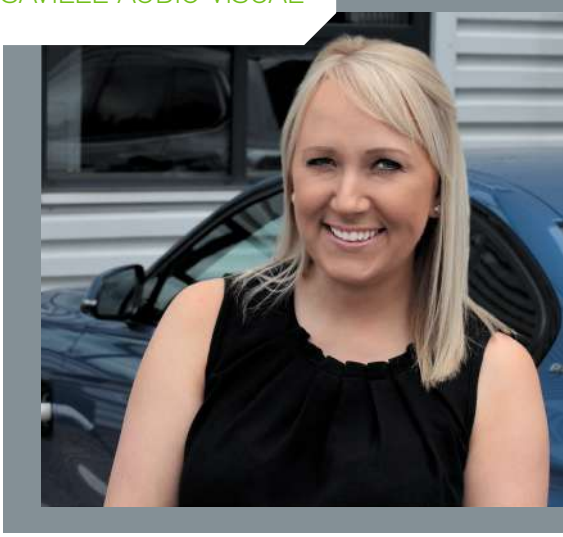
This is largely down to lower fuel cost and CO_2 emissions, as well as the opportunity to enhance a company's environmental credentials.

To further encourage organisations to adopt EVs, the Go Ultra Low campaign launched its Go Ultra Low Companies initiative earlier this year.

The scheme is open to public and private sector companies which already have a 5% share of electric vehicles on their fleet, or commit to achieve this figure by 2020.

So far more than 60 organisations have achieved the status.

SAVILLE AUDIO VISUAL



CORNWALL PARTNERSHIP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is saving around £8,000 a year in fuel costs following the introduction of 15 Renault Zoe electric vehicles.

The organisation added the cars to its pool fleet in 2013 after securing £500,000 of funding from the Department of Health's Energy Efficiency Fund and £75,000 from the Office for Low Emissions Vehicles (OLEV).

At the same time, the trust installed 15 fast and overnight charge points at five locations and built solar panel farms to offset the electricity the cars use.

The funding was also used to introduce an online booking system for its pool fleet.

"We are a community NHS Trust where delivery of care to clients across Cornwall is required," says Neil Hudson, transport manager at Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. "To provide these services in a sustainable method, EVs were chosen as an excellent way of providing zero tailpipe emission travel."

The Zoes, which form part of a 92-vehicle pool car fleet, travel a combined 80,000 miles a year (around 100 miles each per week) and are used by clinical staff to carry out their visits within the county.

The trust has calculated the EVs cost around 2p per mile to fuel whereas its conventionally fuelled cars cost around 12ppm, creating a total cost saving of nearly £8,000 a year.

The organisation has pool cars based in 26 locations, with the electric vehicles at five of these.

"They sit pretty much through the spine of Cornwall," says Hudson. "We've got them at sites in Penzance, Redruth and Liskeard, as well as at two sites in Bodmin.

"We've got plans to add 15 more EVs – Nissan Leafs – to our fleet by the end of the year and it is my long-term aim to convert as much as 75% of our pool fleet across to EVs.

"A small number of conventionally-fuelled vehicles will remain for long distance travel and for teams who have occasional high travel requirements."

Each of the five EV bases has a 43kw fast charging point, so a car can be driven 50 or 60 miles in the morning, plugged in over lunchtime and then be used again in the afternoon.

Hudson says the main benefits the trust has found of introducing the Zoes is the zero tailpipe emissions, the relaxed driving experience and regenerative braking efficiencies.

The EVs also promote sustainable travel and increase awareness of the technology to the 1,200 staff who are registered to use them.

"Staff buy-in was initially slow, but this is explained relatively easily," says Hudson. "We have introduced the EVs to staff who predominantly own and drive conventionally fuelled vehicles, which means they have a lower acceptance towards the charging requirements of the vehicles compared to private drivers who are early adopters themselves and are willing to embrace EV charging.

"However, through good education this has improved and we tried to explain to them that they need to adhere to the rules so the car is ready for whoever the next driver may be."

Hudson says drivers also receive training before using a Zoe to ensure the transition to an electric vehicle is as smooth as possible.

"They have a number of differences to our conventionally-fuelled pool cars," he adds."They are automatic with one forward gear, near silent in driving and operate via a key card rather than a traditional ignition key.

"These cause a level of uncertainty for the drivers when using a Zoe. To overcome this we undertook a programme of awareness training and continue to invest heavily in training new employees to remove the barriers of unfamiliarity.

"Staff are strongly encouraged to choose an EV over a conventionally fuelled car."

The trust chose Renault Zoes as the first EVs to join its pool fleet

Saville Audio Visual includes the exact cost of electricity used while charging plug-in hybrids to calculate the sum their drivers are invoiced for private use.

The systems integrator currently has 11 plug-in hybrids on its fleet of 80 company cars.

These are five Mitsubishi Outlanders, four BMW 330e models, an Audi A3 E-tron and a BMW i8. It also operates 40 vans.

"Our drivers have fuel cards and the rate we charge mileage back for personal use is the actual cost of fuel," says Sarah Waller, fleet controller at Saville.

The business has charging points at its office in York and, when a driver has charged their car, the amount of electricity used is noted on a spreadsheet.

Together with data reported from the fuel cards, this is used to calculate the mileage reimbursement rate.

"It's accurate," says Waller. "Because people live varying distances away from the office and use their cars differently, it seemed like the only fair way we could do it across the board.

"The better our drivers are with their recharging, the cheaper it is going to be for them and us. So, if they want to benefit from a lower reimbursement rate, that will benefit us as well."

"The better our drivers are with their recharging, the cheaper it is going to be"

Sarah Waller, Saville Audio Visual

The plug-in hybrids are expected to travel around 60,000-miles over three years, and the main benefits of using them has been reduced fuel and tax bills, as well as lower CO_2.

"I'm sure we will be ordering some more plug-in hybrids before the end of the year," says Waller. "We didn't just go out and say we were going to replace diesel vehicles with electric vehicles. It's been very driver-led.

"We can show employees what they could be driving and how much they could save, but the biggest influence has probably been that our drivers have seen how colleagues have benefited from the technology."

LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

London Fire Brigade's entire frontline car fleet will consist solely of plug-in hybrid and range extender vehicles by the end of the year.

This will be the result of a managed process to introduce electric vehicles by head of sustainable development Nicole Fletcher (pictured).

This process began in 2012 with an Energy Saving Trust analysis to produce a cost benefit analysis for EVs.

"At the time, the cost difference to conventionally fuelled vehicles wasn't close enough for us to consider," says Fletcher.

The adoption of EVs was also hindered by a charging infrastructure that was not mature enough.

However, in 2014, the brigade spotted an opportunity to make progress in this area.

"We were able to apply for charging point installation funding from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV), which was encouraging the installation of these facilities on public sector estates, for use either by staff or the public," Fletcher says."We wanted to get those charging facilities into as many sites as possible."

The £790,000 project – 75% funded by OLEV, with the remaining 25% funded by EV charging-point specialist Chargemaster – was able to provide charging points by 2015 at 73 of the brigade's 103 locations.

A follow-up to the original EST exercise took place in March 2015, using journey profiles and actual mileages from vehicles.

"We were finally at a point when the cost of the vehicles and the technical capability of vehicles on the market met our minimum requirements," says Fletcher.

The brigade was able to apply for further OLEV funding to introduce its first five EVs on to fleet – two Volkswagen Golf GTEs and three Mitsubishi Outlander plug-in hybrid EVs (PHEVs).

By the end of this year, the organisation will have completed the transformation by replacing its Vauxhall Astras with 52 BMW i3 range-extender models.

The brigade has more than 50 BMW i3 range extenders in service

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND – BRISTOL

A desire to improve air quality for students has helped drive the uptake of electric vehicles at the University of the West of England (UWE Bristol).

The university has a fleet of 45-50 vehicles dependent on the time of the year, with 13 of those full electric or plug-in hybrids.

"It was the local air quality which really started selling the benefits of EVs to us," says Chris Donnelly, head of travel and access at UWE Bristol (above).

"A lot of our fleet use is fairly short distance: we've got a big campus environment and they are also used locally between different areas so we would have vans buzzing around campus all day, chugging out diesel fumes and we would have students breathing in that air.

"We realised that zero tailpipe emissions had to be better for them, and then you see that the economic case really stacks up because the EVs have low fuel costs.

"The other unseen benefit is the maintenance. For example, I've just serviced two e-NV200 vans and spent £99 on each of them. Even if you were doing your first service on a normal van, you are probably going to be talking a couple of hundred pounds at least, so there are big savings to be made.

"EVs also have fewer oily bits so there's less to go wrong."

The electric vehicles on the UWE Bristol fleet are a mixture of Nissan Leafs, e-NV200s, Mitsubishi iMievs and a Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV. These vehicles are either on the pool fleet or allocated to particular staff.

"We run our pool vehicle fleet almost like a car club," says Donnelly. "People can book the cars through a web portal and they are activated with staff cards. One of the reasons we brought in pool car usage is because we've got 30-odd thousand students but only 3,000-4,000 parking spaces, so not everyone can park here.

"What we say is that if you need a vehicle as part of your day-to-day study or work, there is no need to bring your own in, there will be one here for you."

UWE Bristol has 16 publicly available charge points which are free to use, although all cars, whether electric, petrol or diesel, are charged a small fee for parking, says Donnelly.

The organisation's commitment to electrification also extends outside its vehicle fleet: its utility vehicles used by ground staff are all electric, as are their tools such as lawnmowers and strimmers.

"We are also investing heavily in the green infrastructure on site, and on one of our buildings we've got the largest roof-mounted solar array of any UK university, which will create more than 400MWh per year of electricity – equivalent to the power created by nearly 200 homes with solar panels," says Donnelly. "We've also invested in a combined heat and power (CHP) system, while all the electricity we buy off grid is now on renewable tariffs, so all the energy we use on site is from renewables."

The CHP will operate like a small power station and will burn gas to generate electricity for use on the university's Frenchay Campus. The heat generated by burning the gas will be captured and distributed to buildings on campus through underground pipes.

The university hopes the solar panels and CHP will save 1,300 tonnes of CO_2 a year.

"I'd love to get to the point where at least 50% of our fleet is electric by 2020," he says.

"We brought in pool car usage because we have 30-odd thousand students but only 3,000-4,000 parking spaces"

Chris Donnelly, University of the West of England, Bristol

GALLIFORD TRY

Taking on more than 100 plug-in hybrids has helped Galliford Try lower the average CO_2 emissions of its 1,850-strong company car fleet to 102g/km.

The housebuilding and construction group currently has 124 plug-in hybrids – Volkswagen Golf GTE models and Mitsubishi Outlander PHEVs, which make up the vast majority of them – which is nearly 7% of its car fleet.

It also operates two fully-electric Tesla models and 160 hybrids such as the Toyota Prius and Auris.

"Drivers benefit from electric cars in terms of lower tax and fuel savings while they also enable us to meet our carbon reduction commitments, so they make sense all round," says Alan Baker, fleet manager at Galliford Try.

Maximising a plug-in hybrid's efficiency relies on drivers ensuring their batteries are charged before use, and Galliford Try has changed its fuel reimbursement policy to encourage this.

Drivers of diesel cars have a fuel card but pay for any private miles they do, meaning the cost of fuel used on company business is reimbursed.

However, drivers of the plug-in hybrids do not have a fuel card but claim back their business mileage at a fixed pence per mile rate.

"Effectively, you get a lower reimbursement from the company to reflect the fact that it is providing electric chargepoints," says Baker.

"This means that charging the vehicles has become self-policing because if you are going to be doing high mileage then you are likely to be paying for the fuel out of your own pocket and you won't get the full reimbursement for the fuel cost unless you are charging the battery.

"This has put some people off the plug-in hybrids because they are obviously doing the maths and are realising that it will cost them some money, but on the other hand they would be benefiting from lower benefit-in-kind tax."

The company has installed charging points at five of its sites – Uxbridge, Newton Abbot, Hinckley, Coventry and Solihull – and is looking to add them at bases in Exeter and Edinburgh.

Alan Baker thinks EVS make sense all round

"You get a lower reimbursement from the company to reflect that it is providing electric chargepoints"

Alan Baker, Galliford Try

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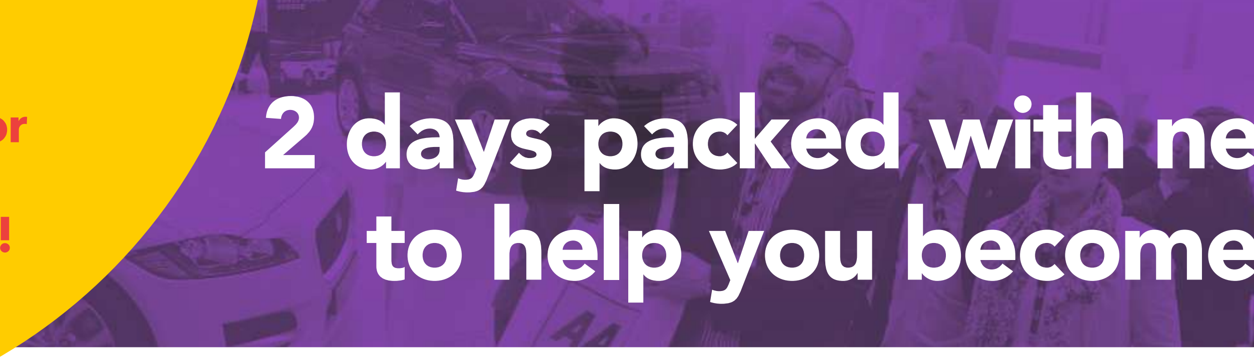

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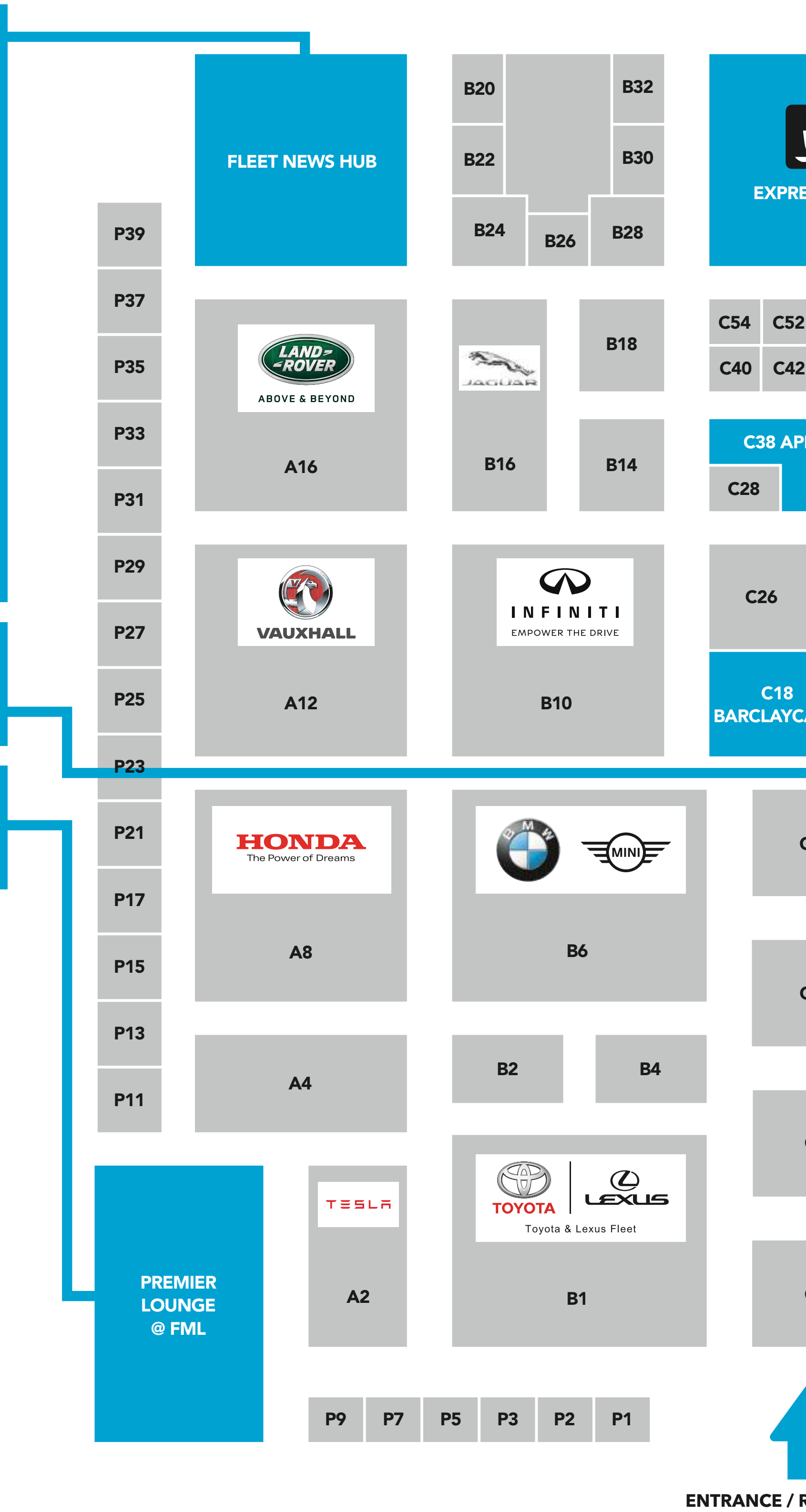

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Agility Fleet	E14
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Allstar	D4
Alphabet	F20
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FleetCheck	C32
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Fleet News Buying Group	B18
Fleet Operations	E28
Fourways Vehicle Solutions	E20
Fuelmate	C46
GEFCO	P33
Go Ultra Low	C26
GreenRoad	P51
Halfords & Halfords Autocentres	D11
Honda	A8
HR Grapevine	P43
IAM Road Smart	P3
ICFM	P47
Idrive	P7
Ignition Risk Management	P63
Infiniti	B10
Insight 2 Value	P29
Interactive Fleet Management	C10
Jaama	E3
Jaguar Land Rover	A16 & B16
JCT600 Vehicle Leasing Solutions	P27
Keytracker	B32
Knowles Associates Total Fleet Management	D12
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Licence Bureau	P23
Licence Check	P5
Listers Group	D14
Lookers Fleet Services	P31
Marshall Leasing	P61
Motiva Group	P55
Movex	D13
Multileasing Contracts	P35
NAPFM	D20
Nationwide Vehicle Assistance	E24
Nationwide Windscreen Services	E32
O2	A4
One Call Group	C40
Pendragon Vehicle Management	P11
PJM Logistics	C14
r2c Online	P57
Repair Link	P40
RingGo Corporate	P13
Robinsons Motor Group	C28
Rolec	P41
RoSPA	E10
Scorpion Automotive	P2
SEAT UK	D26
Selsia Vehicle Accident Centres	E18
Simple Solutions (Electronics)	P17
Stoneacre Motor Group	F28
TCH Leasing	E22
Telogis	D16
Tesla Motors	A2
The AA	P67
Total Motion Vehicle Management	E34
Toyota Lexus	B1
Trakm8	B14
TTC DriverProtect	P1
UBEEQO	P9
Vauxhall	A12
Venson Automotive Solutions	C2
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GO ULTRA LOW CITY TAKES LEAD ON ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Nottingham proposes to share fleet review findings to encourage businesses and local authorities to use EVs. *Andrew Ryan* reports

Nottingham wants to "lead by example" to encourage businesses to adopt electric vehicles (EVs) after it was named as a Go Ultra Low City.

Nottingham City Council, together with Nottinghamshire County Council and Derby City Council, secured £6.1 million funding earlier this year from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles after achieving the status.

This will be used to develop a vehicle charging network, introducing rapid charging hubs and supporting businesses to invest in EVs – something the authority is already doing.

"We need to be leading by example," says Rasita Chudasama, Go Ultra Low programme manager at Nottingham City Council, which has 11 EVs – Nissan eNV200 vans and Nissan Leafs – with more on order.

"If we want to open doors to businesses and individuals to make the shift to electric vehicles we need to practice what we preach.

"We have got charge points at work places where those vehicles might be based and have also put together a training programme for our pool car users so they can understand how to use those vehicles, where to charge them and who to speak to if there are any issues."

Chudasama says the council has employed not-for-profit, low carbon consultancy Cenex to carry out a fleet review into the potential use of EVs. The findings are due to be released this month (October).

"This will help us understand what the financial case is and what the opportunities are," she adds.

Nissan Leaf in front of a building on Nottingham University's Jubilee Campus, which has free electric vehicle charging points

£6.1m
funding made available to Midlands-based councils earlier this year

> *"We need to get to the root of how they (businesses) can justify EVs to their accountants"*
>
> *Rasita Chudasama, Nottingham City Council*

"We can distribute this to other local authorities to help make the case for EVs and develop an understanding of what the benefits might be from financial and environmental aspects.

"While a local authority may be looking at air quality, businesses might be looking at their profit margin, so we need to get to the root of how they can justify EVs to their accountants, what information they need and how they can overcome any problems."

Funding the council has received will support initiatives to:

- Develop an electric vehicle network to support charging for commuters and visitors at park and ride sites and other key destinations.
- Introduce rapid charging hubs for cars, taxis and vans within the Nottingham and Derby urban areas.
- Support business to invest in ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) through grants and take a leading role in supporting the public sector to convert its fleet to ULEVs.
- Support alternative fuel technologies research and trials and create opportunities for training and education.

The funding will also be used to convert one of Nottingham's busiest routes into an Eco Expressway, giving priority to buses, bikes and electric vehicles.

Work on the six-mile route began at the beginning of this month and is due to be completed by March next year.

OTHER CITIES AT FOREFRONT OF SCHEME

Nottingham was one of four cities named as a Go Ultra Low City earlier this year, each winning funding to encourage the uptake of EVs.

The other winners were London, Milton Keynes and Bristol.

Under the scheme:

- **London was awarded £13 million to create 'neighbourhoods of the future', prioritising EVs in several boroughs across the capital. Proposals included more than a dozen streets in Hackney going electric, with charging infrastructure such as car-charging street lighting. Harrow will develop a low emission zone, offering parking and traffic priority to owners of plug-in vehicles.**
- **Milton Keynes will receive £9m to open an electric vehicle experience centre to provide consumer advice and short-term vehicle loans.**

EV owners will also be able to park for free in the city's 15,000 car parking spaces, while bus lanes will be co-branded as 'low emission lanes', meaning plug-in vehicles can enjoy the same priority at traffic lights as local buses.

- **Bristol will get £7m to offer free residential parking for ULEVs, more than 80 rapid and fast chargers across the city, and a scheme encouraging people to lease a plug-in car for up to four weeks to give them experience of using an EV.**

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CAN'T SEE THE WOOD FOR THE TREES?

Carbon offsetting schemes help green-minded fleets to see the bigger picture and fulfil their corporate social responsibility obligations. *Christopher Smith* reports

Fleet decision-makers are facing continual pressure to reduce emissions and the environmental impact of their vehicles.

Latest Fleet200 research shows that the average CO_2 emissions from some of the UK's largest fleets fell 4.1% compared to 2014, from 121g/km to 116g/km. This is equivalent to 10 tonnes per year of CO_2 for a fleet of 100 cars.

Some fleets have achieved average emissions as low as 97g/km.

Carbon reduction can often be achieved through improving vehicle technology and adopting car procurement policies which are incentivised by the CO_2-based company car tax regime.

But, if fleets want to go beyond adopting cleaner vehicles, what else can they do to reduce their impact on the environment?

One option is to participate in a carbon offsetting scheme. These have been in existence for a number of years and usually 'offset' the carbon footprint of a business through issuing credits, which are then spent in projects and schemes designed to support the environment and capture carbon, such as planting trees.

For fleets, the majority of carbon offsetting programmes work by calculating the CO_2 produced based on the amount of fuel bought.

Mike Capper, business development manager at BP Target Neutral, says: "We would always encourage businesses to reduce their emissions as a first plan of action."

He says monitoring emissions is the first step to effective reduction and the introduction last year of the Energy Saving Opportunities Scheme (ESOS) for large private sector businesses is helping many become more aware of their environmental impact and how they can reduce it.

"But carbon offsetting has its place where business and economic reasons make it difficult to reduce your footprint further," adds Capper.

Toni Robinson, compliance manager at waste management firm Grundon, instigated a move to offset carbon emissions from the company's car and truck fleet as part of an ongoing emissions reduction process.

"We feel like we have a connection to the community we are supporting"

Toni Robinson, Grundon

"We started monitoring the carbon footprint of the whole business in 2000 to understand our environmental impact. By 2013, we'd managed to cut our emissions by 78%," she says.

"You reach a point where the easy wins are no longer there – that's where offsetting came in. The area with one of the most visible impacts to our customers was our fleet."

Grundon, which operates around 490 vehicles – 80 of which are cars – provides fuel reports to offsetting firm CarbonNeutral, which then calculates the amount of carbon that needs to be offset.

"We chose to go with CarbonNeutral because of the people we dealt with and the variety and type of projects we could choose to support," Robinson adds.

Grundon puts its credits towards a tree planting scheme in Uganda which has been in operation since 2003.

More than 4.5 million trees have been planted in 691 villages since its launch, reducing soil erosion and improving wildlife. "We made a decision to invest in a single project," says Robinson.

Robinson and a representative from CarbonNeutral visited the project in 2014, six months after Grundon began supporting it. "We became one of the largest backers, and feel like we have a connection to the community we are supporting," she said.

BP has recently launched its fuel card offsetting programme in the UK, which calculates the cost of carbon on a pence per litre basis. This is then added to a fleet's monthly invoice.

Capper says: "We have to make it as simple as possible for our customers to take action and reduce their carbon footprint.

"By calculating the impact in this way, fleets can also choose to partially offset their emissions if they wish."

The company operates its programme on a not-for-profit

basis, and fleets will generally contribute collectively to a portfolio of projects the fuel giant has chosen to support.

Capper adds: "Choosing the projects is not just about CO_2. We measure and select based on environmental, economic and social impact in the areas the projects are based in."

Fuel card company Allstar partnered with Forest Carbon to deliver its scheme, named Ecopoint. The programme launched in early 2015 and now has around 160,000 cardholders subscribed – a little more than 10% of the company's customer base.

Susannah Todd, product manager at Allstar, says that fleets have the choice to offset 50% or 100% of their CO_2.

"We calculate the amount of fuel used per month across the fleet, then average that out to determine a monthly charge per card," she says.

Stephen Prior, director at Forest Carbon, adds: "We then take the pooled contribution and invest this in woodland projects around the UK.

"All the projects are quality assured and we can calculate the amount of trees that need planting dependent on the species mix."

Since its launch, the Allstar programme has allowed 1.3m trees to be planted in the UK, with a further 250,000 planted abroad – in total covering nearly 2,800 acres.

Allstar customers can also receive a certificate every year, which shows how many trees their carbon contribution has been responsible for planting – and can help a company with its corporate social responsibility obligations.

For those operating salary sacrifice vehicles, car provider Tusker has integrated carbon offsetting into its offering.

All salary sacrifice vehicles on the leasing company's risk fleet are now carbon neutral, with no additional cost to the customer. The firm calculates the amount to be offset from the mileage profile and vehicle CO_2 emissions, rather than actual fuel usage.

Candice Oosthuizen, Tusker head of marketing, says that over the three years most vehicles are on fleet, the company will offset seven tonnes of CO_2.

"Our online portal lets the driver choose one of three projects to offset their mileage against. All are in developing countries such as Indonesia, Chile and India, and include wind, landfill reduction and hydropower projects," she adds.

Oosthuizen echoed the views of Grundon's Robinson, saying that when drivers and businesses feel a connection to a project it is easier to understand its positive impact.

To date, Tusker's programme has offset 107,000 tonnes of carbon.

The scheme, which has been in place for the past three years, means the staff benefit reduces emissions by offsetting as well as moving drivers into more efficient vehicles.

Tusker logs emission reduction from the previous vehicles run by its salary sacrifice drivers – the average sees a 31g/km reduction in vehicle emissions.

It is not just fuel usage that can be offset – with vehicle manufacturers looking to reduce emissions and CO_2 at every stage of the supply chain.

For example, since 2007, British car manufacturer Jaguar Land Rover has offset 100% of emissions generated from the manufacturing process in its UK facilities.

The company offset 364,696 tonnes of carbon emitted in the manufacturing process in 2014/15, and has also worked to reduce the emissions generated per vehicle. They now stand at 0.73 tonnes per vehicle built, a 30.5% reduction on the figure emitted when the offset programme began nine years ago.

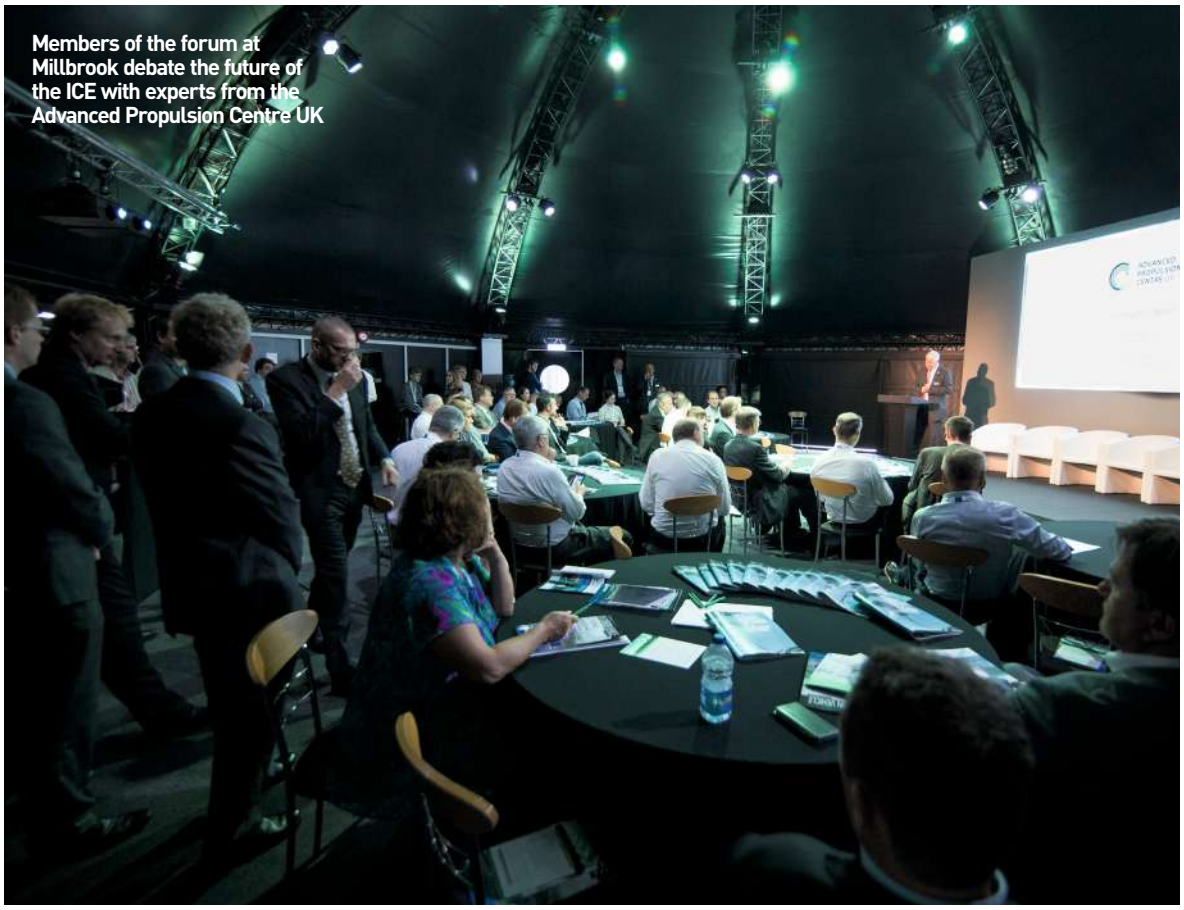
The rise of ultra-low emission vehicles means that, over time, fleet emissions are likely to continue falling – so the level of carbon to be offset will also reduce.

That said, it is likely to be a while until fleets are zero emissions. Carbon offsetting is set to have its place for many years to come.

1.3m
trees planted in the UK under the Allstar programme

364,696
tonnes of carbon offset by Jaguar Land Rover in 2014/5

To see how more fleets implemented offsetting, visit fleetnews.co.uk/carbon-offset



Members of the forum at Millbrook debate the future of the ICE with experts from the Advanced Propulsion Centre UK

The speakers are introduced at the Low Carbon Vehicle 2016 event

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR THE INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE?

With electric power tipped to become the dominant form of propulsion by 2027, experts from the Advanced Propulsion Centre UK debate the implications this will have on diesel and petrol engines. *Andrew Ryan* reports

Internal combustion engines (ICEs) have been the dominant form of propulsion for cars since the start of the 20th century. However, their status is under threat as demands for greater efficiency and lower emissions has accelerated the development and availability of electric vehicles.

The Go Ultra Low campaign has forecast that electrified powertrains could overtake ICEs as early as 2027, with more than 1.3 million electric cars registered each year.

Will this shift spell the end of the ICE? Its future was debated by experts from the Advanced Propulsion Centre UK at last month's Low Carbon Vehicle 2016 event, held at Millbrook Proving Ground in Bedford.

What does the future hold for internal combustion engines?

Chris Brace: The ICE is in the incumbent technology. It's what we've all grown up with and it dominates the market so it's easy to point the finger and highlight all its shortcomings. But the main reasons why it dominates are that the technology is intrinsically affordable while the engine is made from easily available, low-cost materials that are readily recyclable.

> *"I don't think there will be one dominant fuel type by 2030, we will have multiple options"*
>
> *Byron Mason, Loughborough University*

The ICE is accessible to a very large part of the market and it has changed the way we live in the west and it is changing the way that people live in the developing world. Another part of it is the versatility of the technology. I use the term 'general purpose passenger car' quite often to describe vehicles such as the Ford Focus. You can do everything in that: you can commute to work, you can go on holiday, you can go shopping. You can drive for five minutes or you can drive for 1,000 miles very easily.

That means that you only need to invest once in the car and it will do pretty much everything you need it to do, and the importance of that is not to be underestimated. Probably more important than those reasons, though, is the fuel. Hydrocarbon fuel is one of nature's best ways of storing energy in a nice, energy-dense, compact form. It's easy to store and transport: it's still the most effective energy carrier

we have. I'm not going to say which hydrocarbon, but hydrocarbon is going to be the most efficient way of moving energy around with us in a mobile application. This is true now and will remain true, and that's the real difficulty we need to overcome if we seek to replace the ICE.

James Widmer: If you look at electric motors now and compare them to some of the best ICEs on the market then there really isn't any comparison. For example, if you take the 4.0-litre engine in the BMW M3, the manufacturer says it produces something like 1.5kW per kilogram of engine mass.

Back in Newcastle, I have an electric motor that will do at least three times that. It will also produce twice the torque density and it delivers torque in a way that the ICE can only dream about – full torque from zero speed. In addition to that, it is just so much more efficient than an ICE, so much cleaner and will produce 90% peak efficiency.

That petrol engine will be something like 30%, so they are incomparable. There's a lot of work going on to get more out of motors, to increase their power densities, efficiencies and improve the way they integrate into vehicles and, indeed, to make them cheaper and better all-round.

Rob Morgan: ICEs are great, but they are inefficient. We waste two-thirds of the energy we burn through the exhaust and as heat into the radiator, so the question is: could we do more? I think the answer is yes, and that's why the research we are doing is relevant: how can we turn the ICE into a more efficient device? Why haven't we done that to date?

Well, it's really economics. Fuel is cheap, it just doesn't invite investment into the engines and powertrain to make the system more efficient. That's going to change as fossil fuels become a more valuable commodity and we perhaps move on to using manufactured fuels, either biofuels or synthetic fuels, so improving how we use that fuel and how we convert that into motor power will become more important.

If we can make a sustainable fuel in a cost-effective, sustainable way, then the ICE will be with us for some time yet. It is a great technology and it's got a long way to go.

WHAT IS THE ADVANCED PROPULSION CENTRE UK?

The Advanced Propulsion Centre UK was formed in 2013 following a commitment between the Government and the Automotive Council.

Its role is to position the UK as a centre of excellence for low carbon propulsion development and production.

As part of the APC's formation, the APC Spoke Network was created and this brings together academic and industrial communities from six specialist areas to support the delivery of low carbon technologies.

Petrol or diesel? Visit fleetnews.co.uk/smallcapacity

REPRESENTING THE APC SPOKE NETWORK AT THE DEBATE WERE:

ICE System Efficiency Spoke:
Chris Brace, professor of automotive propulsion, University of Bath

Electric Machines Spoke:
James Widmer, director of the Centre for Advanced Electrical Drives, University of Newcastle

Digital Engineering and Test Spoke:
Byron Mason, senior lecturer in advanced propulsion, Loughborough University

Power Electronics Spoke:
Mark Johnson, director of the EPSRC Centre for power electronics, University of Nottingham

ICE Thermal Efficiency Spoke:
Rob Morgan, reader at Advanced Engineering Centre, University of Brighton

Electrical Energy Storage Spoke:
Mark Ellis, principal engineer, WMG, University of Warwick

Chris Brace: Zero carbon hydrocarbon fuels are really important and zero carbon liquid fuels are not so far away: there are laboratories making methanol directly from sunlight, while Audi has a biomethane plant in Germany.

What technology will you be driving in 2030?

Mark Ellis: The conciliatory view would be a plug-in hybrid. In terms of carbon reduction, vehicles will have some level of electrification to overcome the difficulties with emissions from ICEs. The range provided by battery electric vehicles is one of the key challenges. It works for most journeys that people make in their private cars, but we use our cars in many different ways and therefore the plug-in hybrid offers the best of both of those.

Byron Mason: It is not actually technology that drives the technology, it is the legislators that drive it, so when cities like London say "we are not having polluting vehicles and noxious gases put into the cities" then we have got to seriously consider that we have to use pure electric vehicles.

In the past, certainly within Europe, we have been able to choose between petrol and diesel. Now we also have various options such as hydrogen and electrification.

I don't think there will be one dominant fuel type by 2030 so we will have multiple options. In terms of mainstream technology, it is very much likely to be plug-in electric hybrids vehicles.

James Widmer: I expect that by 2030 every vehicle will have some kind of electrical machinery which will make them more efficient and better to drive. However, in terms of energy storage, I think there will be a variety of different technologies.

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Fleet 200

2016

The UK's BIGGEST FLEETS

Analysis and insight into the UK company car and van sector

FleetNews

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For well in excess of 100 years Ford has been changing how the world moves and, as the pace of change in the industry accelerates, we are focussed on continuously responding to ensure we continue to be a key driving force behind the UK economy.

Our Transit and Transit Custom commercial vehicle range now benefits from an all-new EcoBlue engine that meets Euro 6 emissions requirements and also ensures we are well placed for future legislation.

Our car and SUV ranges are adapting to meet the changing aspirations of drivers and they retain compelling fuel economy and emissions along with a great range of technology to improve safety and connectivity.

We have been a backbone of UK business for many years and this continued presence is rooted in understanding, anticipating and meeting the needs of our customers including, of course, the Fleet200 members who, in many cases, we are privileged to enjoy working with.

Owen Gregory, Director of Fleet Operations, Ford

With the UK's political and economic landscape going through a period of change, we are all facing many new challenges and fluid business environments. During this time, we remain committed to our customers and our people, and to delivering best in class products, services and opportunities.

This investment in people is at the heart of our strategy, and underpins customer, driver and employee satisfaction, irrespective of market conditions.

In this context, we are delighted to continue our sponsorship of the Fleet200 which allows us to regularly engage in meaningful two-way communication with the UK's leading business fleets.

This has never been more important than it is today, as our customers look to us for stability, certainty and ambitious solutions through a changing, but exciting, period for our industry.

Andy Fuller, Corporate Sales Director, Arval

From mail to Marmite, teabags to telecoms equipment, commercial vehicle fleets underpin almost all everyday activity in the UK.

Yet the complexity of managing a vehicle fleet never diminishes. Shifts in legislation can mean fleet-wide changes. There is a constant pressure to control costs. Fleet operators have responsibilities towards the environment and their employees, as well as their customers.

BP's involvement with Fleet200 over the past two years is part of our commitment to understanding – and supporting – the opportunities and challenges of the largest fleets in the country. Our knowledge and insight has enabled us to tailor our products to best meet the needs of the UK's vast range of fleets and help them handle the complexities they face.

Our fuel card offer goes further than simply fuel price and network. We recognise the strategic benefits fleet operators can gain from areas like cost control, fleet insight, legislative compliance, driver satisfaction and businesses' goals.

We view Fleet200 as a critical part of this process and look forward to continuing our work engaging with the UK's largest fleets.

Andy Allen, UK Fuel Cards Manager, BP

Powered by Sewells research&insight

Volumes dip as 24 companies enter the 2016 Fleet200 table

Total cars, vans and trucks fall slightly, although 64 companies register year-on-year rises while proportion of perk cars increases, bucking expectations

NEED TO KNOW

- Fleet200 accounts for 27% of the UK's company cars
- Companies exiting Fleet200 operated 29,326 vehicles
- Companies joining Fleet200 operate 17,113 vehicles

By Stephen Briers

The Fleet200 has undergone its biggest change in representation in its seven-year existence: 24 companies have entered the listing this year after changes to the rules (a normal year sees around 10 new entrants).

The Fleet200 still consists primarily of the companies and organisations operating the largest fleets of cars and vans in the country. However, this year, we have stripped out some older data from companies which do not wish to provide information about fleet sizes and policies, replacing them with organisations that do, in order to improve the accuracy of trends analysis.

Some of these companies exiting have chosen to outsource their fleet functions to a leasing company and no longer have an in-house fleet decision maker. They claim that only their leasing partner has the data on fleet size.

Consequently, there has been a shake-up in some categories, particularly public sector which has five newcomers, although the overall numbers of cars and vans operated by the Fleet200 is largely unchanged.

The Fleet200 car and van total is 503,619 (2015: 506,627), consisting of 254,087 cars (255,719) and 249,532 vans (250,908). In addition, the 200 operates 52,508 trucks (63,513).

In market terms, the Fleet200 accounts for more than one-quarter (27%) of the UK's company cars – those where benefit-in-kind (BIK) is paid, according to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) records. And with an average van replacement cycle of five years, these 200 companies are also responsible for buying almost 50,000 light commercial vehicles each year - 14% of the total registered.

The Fleet200 is an excellent barometer of the UK market with its mix of job-need and perk cars, and light commercial vehicles; growth is a direct reflection of economic strength. And, on balance, it has grown.

"A move by many companies to improve utilisation levels by removing under-used cars might explain the reduction (in the number of job-need vehicles)"

The companies exiting the Fleet200 operated 29,326 vehicles, in excess of the 17,113 brought in by the new entrants. This 12,213 difference is much greater than the actual 3,008 year-on-year decline in the Fleet200 number, which suggests that many of the 176 companies which remain in Fleet200 have increased their fleet size.

In fact, 64 have, while 68 recorded no change and 44 reduced. Four sectors registered a noticeable rise: architecture/construction/building, bluelight/NHS Trusts, insurance/banking/finance and IT/software.

Unsurprisingly, Government/public sector fell, faced with pressure to cut costs, as did heavy industries/engineering, with many companies affected by cheaper foreign competitors.

The reduction in company cars might be seen as an indication of business moving away from perk offerings – something forecast by a number of analysts. However, that isn't the case: the ratio of job-need to perk has shifted slightly towards perk, which now accounts for 25% of volume, up from 22% in both 2015 and 2014.

Sectors like IT/software/leisure and insurance/banking/finance have spearheaded the rise in perk cars as they bid to encourage more employees into company cars. They also use car schemes to attract new recruits – and keep existing staff – by widening the range of vehicles they offer to make them more attractive. These two sectors – together with the public sector – are also more heavily involved in salary sacrifice: in total 13 companies say they offer a scheme.

Job-need still dominates the overall numbers, albeit in a lower quantity. A move by many companies to improve utilisation levels by removing under-used cars might explain the reduction, although it remains to be seen what impact the forthcoming changes to the lease accounting rules – which will require leased assets, including cars, to be put on the balance sheet – will have when they are introduced in January 2019.

Utilisation has been the priority at BT Fleet, whose vehicle replacement initiative has stripped 2,034 vans from its fleet. It is also operating 1,013 fewer cars, but says this unintentional reduction is being addressed through a new company car scheme.

The UK's second largest operator now has 3,047 fewer vehicles than a year ago.

Natural downsizing of the employee population has seen Royal Bank of Scotland reduce its car fleet by more than 1,600, although Barclays, Lloyds and HSBC are unchanged.

FLEET SIZE BY SECTOR

Sector	2016	2015	% change
Transport/Communications/Distribution	110,938	114,741	-3.3
Utilities/Energy/Water/Forestry/Fishing	63,237	63,271	-0.05
Architecture/Construction/Building	61,889	61,501	-0.6
Business Services	54,276	59,625	-9.0
Insurance/Accountancy/Banking/Finance/Other	47,451	45,888	3.4
Wholesale/Retail/Food/Medical	38,083	38,210	-3.3
Bluelight/NHS Trusts	37,151	30,914	20.2
Government/Public Sector/Education/Health	31,861	32,145	-0.9
IT/Software/Leisure/Media	30,842	30,177	2.2
Heavy Industries/Mining/Engineering/Other industries	27,891	30,155	-7.5

WHO'S IN

Organisation	Sector
Spie UK	Architecture/Construction/Building
Wates Group	Architecture/Construction/Building
London Ambulance Service	Bluelight/NHS
South East Coast Ambulance Service	Bluelight/NHS
Connell's Estate Agents	Business Services
Pelican Rouge	Business Services
Agrii	Business Services
Southwark Borough Council	Government /Public Sector/Education/Health
Glasgow City Council	Government /Public Sector/Education/Health
Hull City Council	Government /Public Sector/Education/Health
Nottinghamshire County Council	Government /Public Sector/Education/Health
London Borough of Hackney	Government /Public Sector/Education/Health
ABB	Heavy Industry/Mining/Engineering
Legal & General	Insurance/Accountancy/Banking/Finance
Royal National Lifeboat Institution	Insurance/Accountancy/Banking/Finance
Inspired Gaming	IT/Software/Leisure/Media
Thales	IT/Software/Leisure/Media
Yodel	Transport/Communications/Distribution
Hermes Europe	Transport/Communications/Distribution
Southern Water	Utilities/Energy/Water/Forestry/Fishing
South West Water	Utilities/Energy/Water/Forestry/Fishing
Astrazeneca	Wholesale/Retail/Food/Medical
Magnet	Wholesale/Retail/Food/Medical
Imperial Tobacco	Wholesale/Retail/Food/Medical

WHO'S OUT

Organisation
NG Bailey
Ringway Group Limited
Tees Esk and Wears Valley NHS Trust
Police Service of Northern Ireland
GSH
Enterprise
OCS
Essex County Council
Birmingham City Council
City of Edinburgh Council
Suffolk County Council
Manchester City Council
Shell
RSPCA
Ernst & Young
Northgate Information Sysytems
Local World
Wincanton
EE
Northumbrian Water
Scotia Gas Networks
Home Retail Group
Ocado
Morrisons

TOPICS LOOMING LARGE IN BUSINESS MINDS

Brexit casts a long shadow over the fleet sector, bringing economic uncertainty and a renewed focus on cost efficiency, according to the Fleet200.

When asked about their challenges over the next 12 months, the UK's decision to leave the European Union and the issues it could present in the lead up to exit was a recurring theme.

However, fleets also named cost reduction, safety and compliance, and plain simple 'management' as their priorities, as shown in this word cloud.

More specifically, telematics is set to have a growing influence on the way fleets operate, with several companies now looking to introduce systems to their car drivers after seeing the benefits of the technology on their van operations.

Despite the low oil prices, fuel costs are still a concern, while driver behaviour is something that many businesses continue to grapple with. Telematics should help fleets gain control in both these areas.

Mobility, a popular buzzword with leasing companies, is not mentioned by any fleets, with just one company getting close when saying a major challenge would be "travel planning and on-site office parking charges".

FLEET200 BY NUMBERS

6,500
SIZE OF BALFOUR BEATTY FLEET AFTER OUTSOURCING

503,619
THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VEHICLES IN FLEET200 FOR 2016

9,500
THE KIER FLEET HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED IN SIZE

6,700
BIGGEST YEAR-ON-YEAR INCREASE FOR NHS SCOTLAND

AVERAGE MILEAGE FOR TRUCKS HAS SOARED – UP FROM 115,000

181,000

2,034
NUMBER OF VANS STRIPPED FROM THE BT FLEET

A rise in the uptake of cash allowances has meant a reduction in Serco's car fleet while Pfizer has seen some senior managers opt out in favour of cash, leading to a 200-vehicle dip in its cars.

Cash allowances and salary sacrifice have come under the gaze of HMRC which has released a consultation proposal to change the tax system from BIK to income tax. This would affect companies offering salary sacrifice and also those who give the option of cash or car.

In the Fleet200, 76 companies said they offer a cash alternative with approximately 64,000 employees taking this option (a handful of companies did not know the number). If the BIK paid by a driver choosing the car is less than the income tax they would have paid had they taken cash, then HMRC proposes levying the higher amount.

Fleet News, together with the association of Car Fleet Operators (ACFO) and British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA), is lobbying the Government for the idea to be dropped. The trio contends the HMRC proposal will result in unnecessary complexity in admin and will potentially impact adversely on both future company car uptake and the flexibility for companies to offer staff cash or car.

The other noticeable decline in fleet size among the largest operators is Balfour Beatty, which signed a contract to outsource its fleet management operations to Lex Autolease in 2014. Its fleet has reduced from 10,870 to 6,500; cars are down 2,500 and vans 1,800. Consequently, Balfour Beatty drops from fifth to 12th.

Heading in the other direction is Kier after its acquisition of road maintenance group Mouchel last year. It moves from 22nd to sixth after more than doubling its fleet size, from 4,500 to 9,500. The figure also includes May Gurney for the first time, which it bought in 2013. Cars and vans are both up, as are trucks, from 200 to 2,200.

Two places lower sits NHS Scotland with the largest year-on-year increase in fleet size. The organisation now manages all health service vehicles in Scotland, not just those for the ambulance service, after the launch of a new National Fleet Support Unit which became fully operational in August.

As a result, its fleet has expanded by 6,700 vehicles to 7,500 making it the biggest in the bluelight sector; albeit following a utilisation project that has already trimmed the combined figure of 10,500 vehicles initially reported by *Fleet News.*

The home delivery sector is still expanding rapidly. Tesco.com added 1,000 vans and Sainsbury's increased by 750 vans. John Lewis added 342 vans (as well as 500 cars) and Asda 200 vans, while Ocado – no longer in the Fleet200 due to a lack of submission – is also known to have increased its delivery fleet.

The 10 biggest companies operate 142,993 cars and vans, 28% of the total, which compares to 147,544 and 29% last year. Little change there, despite some new faces.

At the opposite end of the listing, the smallest fleets in the Fleet200 have reduced their overall share, although this is largely due to companies exiting the list. As the 200 consists of the biggest 20 in each of the 10 industry segments, some industries operate smaller vehicle fleets. They now operate 3,139 vehicles (2015: 6,940) for a 0.6% share (2015: 1.4%).

In contrast to architecture/construction/building, where the 20th company operates more than 1,000 vehicles – indeed the number with four-figure fleets extends well into the twenties – in bluelight/NHS, government/public sector and IT/software/leisure, a large number of companies in the top 20 have fewer than 1,000 vehicles.

In the latter two categories, nine companies do not hit the four-figure threshold with electronic systems company Thales the smallest (70 vehicles, the only organisation not hitting the hundreds).

Across the Fleet200, 52 companies run three-figure fleets, up four on 2015, with nine of the 10 categories finishing with fleets operating hundreds of vehicles.

In 2010, the first year of Fleet200, just 33 companies operated fewer than 1,000 vehicles.

The trend is clear: companies are operating fewer vehicles overall, with all investment requests scrutinised to ensure they meet business objectives.

Average replacement cycles remain largely unchanged, at four years for cars, five for vans and seven for trucks. Cash-strapped public sector fleets keep vehicles the longest: five years for cars and six for vans.

What has changed is average mileage for trucks, which has soared to 181,000 miles, up from 115,000, perhaps coinciding with the big reduction in numbers in the Fleet200. Fewer trucks, working harder.

So what of the future? Fleets are close to evenly split on future expenditure, with 28% predicting it will rise, 27% decrease and 39% no change.

They forecast their van fleets will, on balance, rise (35% increase, 19% decrease), while cars will broadly stay at 2016 levels (30% increase, 26% decrease).

Interestingly, despite the claims from daily rental companies that the economic uncertainty caused by the Brexit vote (acknowledged as a challenge by many Fleet200 companies) would result in a much greater uptake, fleets predict their rental expenditure will actually fall – 39%, compared to 11% expecting an increase.

The one category bucking this trend is transport/distribution, with 29% forecasting a rise versus 14% decrease. That might be down to the contract insecurity and seasonality aspect of this sector.

Construction/building, the sector that historically accounts for the greatest amount of short-term hire, is looking to reduce expenditure, according to 57% of respondents. Not one company expects to spend more next year.

"The trend is clear: companies are operating fewer vehicles overall, with all investment requests scrutinised to ensure they meet business objectives"

THANKS FOR TAKING PART

Thanks to all the companies that completed the Fleet200 survey – and look out for your exclusive invites to our quarterly Fleet200 events. If your figures are incorrect or your company is missing, please email the editor (details on page 17).

HELLA GUTMANN SOLUTIONS

NOW, EVEN DUMMIES CAN'T IGNORE ADAS

With Advanced Driver Assist Systems (ADAS) becoming a common feature of many modern cars, independent garages are facing a new challenge.

Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) and Lane Departure Warning (LDW) are already standard on models from Ford, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen and Volvo.

What's more, from 2016 only cars equipped with AEB will qualify for a 5 star Euro NCAP safety rating. Combine this with the fact that many insurers are already offering big discounts for AEB-equipped cars and even a dummy can see that ADAS will soon be the norm.

With an ADAS-equipped vehicle, the camera and sensors must be accurately calibrated after many everyday workshop procedures including wheel alignment, axle geometry or windscreen replacement. Until now, this vital procedure could only be carried out by main dealers.

However the new CSC-Tool from HELLA GUTMANN SOLUTIONS is a universal calibration tool for camera-based ADAS. It's compatible with a wide range of vehicle models, easy to use and integrates with mega macs diagnostic devices, so results can be saved and printed as a permanent record that calibration has taken place.

So don't listen to the dummies who say that ADAS won't take off, invest in the CSC-Tool now.

To find out more call 01295 662402 or email hgs.support@hella.com

www.hella-gutmann.co.uk

Host of innovative features gives Ford the edge in SUVs

Ford Edge sets new standards in its class for interior space

SUV

The all-new Ford Edge tops the company's SUV range, delivering premium levels of comfort, sophisticated driver assistance features and class-leading driving dynamics.

It is available in Zetec, Titanium and Sport series, and with a choice of 180PS 2.0-litre TDCi diesel engine with six-speed manual transmission or 210PS bi-turbo 2.0-litre TDCi diesel with six-speed PowerShift automatic transmission; both engines deliver 48.7mpg, with 149 g/km CO_2 emissions.

Ford intelligent all-wheel drive, Active Noise Control, Pedestrian Detection, Ford DAB audio with SYNC connectivity, privacy glass and 19-inch alloy wheels are among the standard features.

The new Kuga is available with the latest SYNC 3 system

Other innovative features available for the Ford Edge, which sets new standards in its class for interior space, include Adaptive Steering, which automatically optimises the steering response according to vehicle speed, making it easy to manoeuvre at low speeds, while remaining precise and intuitive at higher speeds; and Front Wide View Camera, which makes restricted visibility junctions or parking spaces easier to negotiate.

Arriving in Q4 2016, the New Ford Kuga will see a series of major enhancements over what is already one of the top 20 best-selling vehicles in the UK. It includes a host of exterior changes, such as a completely resigned front end, which gives the New Kuga the unmistakable face of Ford SUVs.

The New Kuga is also full of advanced technologies, such as the latest SYNC 3 entertainment system, keyless entry and an electronic parking brake and sees the addition of an efficient 1.5 TDCi 120 PS engine, which combines great performance with economical running costs, emitting only 115g/km, while achieving a combined mpg of 64.2.

For further information on any Ford Fleet products or services call the Ford Business Centre on 03457 23 23 23, email flinform@ford.com, or visit ford.co.uk/fordfleet

ST-LINE

Inspired by the Ford Performance range, the new ST-Line delivers all the practicality of the Ford range with the eye-catching aesthetics of a performance-line vehicle.

Focus ST-Line, Fiesta ST-Line and Mondeo ST-Line, deliver bold exterior and interior styling including unique alloy wheels, sport seat designs and a sports chassis with tuned suspension and steering, underpinned by a range of powerful and efficient EcoBoost petrol and TDCi diesel powertrains.

The new Ford Kuga ST-Line, the latest addition to Ford's exciting ST-Line model range, features an assertive full body styling kit and dark machined alloys on the outside and unique ST-Line seats, steering wheel and trim on the inside.

Kuga ST-Line's powertrains include Ford's 120PS 1.5-litre TDCi diesel engine offering 64.2mpg and up to 115g/km CO_2.

Also available will be a 2.0-litre TDCi with 150PS and either front-wheel drive or Ford Intelligent AWD, offering from 60.1 mpg and 122g/km CO2; and 180PS with Intelligent AWD homologated to 54.3mpg and 134g/km CO_2.

Ford's 1.5-litre EcoBoost petrol engine in 120PS or 150PS front-wheel drive form is expected to achieve from 45.6mpg and 143g/km CO_2; and a 182PS Intelligent AWD version from 38.2mpg and 171g/km CO_2.

Both Focus ST-Line and Fiesta ST-Line are offered with a range of powerful engines including Ford's multi-award-winning 1.0-litre EcoBoost petrol engine.

This year Ford expects to sell 40,000 performance cars in Europe, a 50 per cent increase compared with 2015, which in turn saw performance car sales rise by 61% compared with 2014.

Ford Kuga ST-Line features an assertive full-body styling kit.

Fuel and AdBlue fillers sit alongside each other

ECOBLUE

The all-new, state-of-the-art 2.0-litre Ford EcoBlue diesel engine which powers Ford's new Transit and Transit Custom offers far more than just improved cost of ownership and performance.

The four-cylinder EcoBlue engine – developed and built in Britain with an investment of £475 million and creation of more than 300 new jobs – is the first diesel commercial vehicle powertrain from Ford to achieve passenger car noise, vibration and harshness criteria, contributing to enhanced driving appeal.

The all-new engine – in 105PS, 130PS and 170PS power outputs – goes into Transit Custom, Tourneo Custom, Transit Van and Transit Chassis Cab.

Key customer benefits include:

- Fuel consumption and CO_2 emissions cut by up to 13 per cent
- Improved performance with low-rpm torque increased by 20 per cent – key for commercial vehicle operators
- Ultra-low exhaust emissions in line with Euro 6 standards, with NOx emissions reduced by 55 per cent
- Service intervals up from two years/30,000 miles to two years/36,000 miles

To aid ease of operation, Ford has introduced a new double filler, with the fuel filler and AdBlue filler behind the same flap, to future-proof models in anticipation of greater AdBlue pump-side availability. This combines with Ford EasyFuel technology, which prevents misfuelling, to make the design both practical and reliable.

Ford

Go Further

Powered by Sewells research&insight

Position (2015)	Company	Total car and LCV fleet	Cars	LCV	Trucks, Lorries	Replacement cycle (years)			Funding method cars and vans*
						Car	Vans/ LCV	Trucks/ Lorry	
1 (1)	Royal Mail Group	38,000	2,000	36,000	8,300	3	7	8	CH, FL
2 (2)	BT Group	29,253	4,287	24,966	2209	5	7	n/a	CH
3 (3)	Centrica	15,850	3,350	12,500	n/a	4	6	n/a	CH, FL, SS
4 (4)	Ministry of Defence	10,591	7,424	3,167	n/a	5	7	n/a	CH
5 (6)	Lloyds Bank	10,000	10,000	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	CH
6 (22=)	Kier Group Limited	9,500	4,000	5,500	2,200	4	4	5	CH, OP, FL
7= (8)	Network Rail	7,500	1,500	6,000	314	4	4	7	CH, OP
7= (167=)	NHS Scotland	7,500	6,000	1,500	800	4	4	7	CH, OP, OL
9 (7)	Scottish & Southern Energy	7,499	2,286	5,213	254	4	5	8	CH
10 (12)	National Grid Company	7,300	4,200	3,100	250	3	5	8	CH, SS
11 (10)	Mitie Group	6,748	2,466	4,282	33	4	4	n/a	CH, FL, OP, ECO
12 (5)	Balfour Beatty Fleet Services	6,500	3,500	3,000	900	4	4	8	CH, OL, SS
13 (11)	Carillion	6,460	3,800	2,660	150	4	4	5	OP, CH, FL, OL, FR
14 (13)	The AA	6,040	3,100	2,940	210	3	4	5	CH, FL
15 (48)	Amey plc	5,600	2,300	3,300	2,000	4	5	9	CH, FR
16 (14)	APC Overnight	5,500	500	5,000	300	3	5	5	CH, OP, FL, ECO
17 (15)	Metropolitan Police	5,470	4,500	970	30	4	4	7	OP
18 (18)	Addison Lee	5,300	5,000	300	0	3	3	n/a	OP, FL
19 (16)	G4S	5,217	1,847	3,370	1,230	4	7	n/a	CH, OP, FL
20 (26=)	Tesco.com	5,000	0	5,000	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	OP
21 (19)	Mears Group	4,964	748	4,216	75	3	4	n/a	CH
22 (17)	Environment Agency	4,955	3,638	1,317	54	4	6	8	CH, FR
23 (21)	Countrywide Estate Agents	4,856	4,800	56	0	4	7	n/a	CH, OP
24 (26=)	Vauxhall	4,550	4,550	0	0	1	n/a	n/a	ECO
25 (170)	Siemens	4,500	3,300	1,200	5	4	5	5	CH, ECO

*** Key to funding method abbreviations:** CH **contract hire,** FL **finance lease,** OL **operating lease,** OP **outright purchase,** SS **salary sacrifice,** ECO **employee car ownership,** FR **flexible rental,** O **other**

Sewells research&insight For a presentation of the results of this year's Fleet200 research, co

Position) (2015)	Company	Total car and LCV fleet	Cars	LCV	Trucks, Lorries	Replacement cycle (years)			Funding method cars and vans*
						Car	Vans/ LCV	Trucks/ Lorry	
26 (24)	Western Power Distribution	4,400	1,000	3,400	130	3	5	n/a	OP, ECO
27 (25)	Geopost (DPD)	4,350	350	4,000	1,150	3	5	n/a	CH, OL
28 (34)	Walgreens Boots Alliance	4,100	1,100	3,000	3	4	4	n/a	FL
29 (29)	IBM	4,005	4,000	5	0	4	3	n/a	CH, SS
30= (30)	Sky	4,000	800	3,200	0	4	5	n/a	CH, FL
30= (38)	E.ON	4,000	1,000	3,000	93	4	5	5	CH
30= (9)	Vinci	4,000	3,000	1,000	2	3	4	10	OP
33 (39)	Sainsbury's	3,900	1,650	2,250	0	4	4	n/a	CH, FL
34 (31)	Capita Plc	3,700	3,000	700	6	4	4	7	CH
35 (32)	Saint-Gobain Building Distribution	3,681	2,811	870	2,500	3	5	8	CH
36= (33)	Virgin Media	3,600	900	2,700	0	4	5	n/a	CH
36= (84)	Volkswagen	3,600	3,600	0	0	1	n/a	n/a	CH, FL, ECO
38 (36)	Asda Group	3,500	1,500	2,000	3,000	4	4	4	CH, OP, OL
39 (43)	Police Scotland	3,360	2,960	400	90	4	4	10	CH, OP
40 (40)	Travis Perkins	3,100	2,000	1,100	2,400	5	8	9	CH, FL
41 (41)	Veolia Environmental Services	3,097	1,512	1,585	4,000	4	8	8	CH, OP, FL
42 (42)	Barclays Bank	3,090	3,089	1	0	3	6	n/a	CH, OP, SS
43 (44=)	ADT Fire and Security	3,000	2,000	1,000	0	4	4	n/a	FL
44 (46)	UK Power Networks	2,975	1,200	1,775	200	4	6	n/a	OP, FL, FR
45 (77=)	John Lewis Partnership	2,842	1,500	1,342	760	3	8	8	OP
46= (59)	CitySprint	2,800	0	2,800	0	n/a	3	n/a	FR
46= (47)	HSBC	2,800	2,800	0	0	4	n/a	n/a	CH, SS
48 (49=)	DHL Supply Chain	2,600	2,100	500	8,200	4	n/a	n/a	CH
49 (61)	Morrison Utility Services	2,567	765	1,802	187	4	4	6	CH, OP, SS
50= (77)	ISS	2,500	1,000	1,500	4	3	4	5	CH

Powered by Sewells research&insight

Position) (2015)	Company	Total car and LCV fleet	Cars	LCV	Trucks, Lorries	Replacement cycle (years)			Funding method cars and vans*
						Car	Vans/ LCV	Trucks/ Lorry	
50= (52=)	KPMG	2,500	2,500	0	0	3	n/a	n/a	CH, SS
50= (52=)	Rentokil Initial	2,500	600	1,900	20	4	5	5	CH
50= (35)	Serco	2,500	1,400	1,100	700	4	4	8	CH, OP, FL
54 (58)	Tarmac Ltd	2,489	1,432	1,057	0	4	4	n/a	CH
55= (56)	Fujitsu	2,450	2,200	250	0	3	3	n/a	CH
55= (55)	Rolls Royce PLC	2,450	2,350	100	0	3	4	n/a	CH, SS
57 (49)	Laing O'Rourke	2,440	2,025	415	11	4	4	n/a	CH
58 (57)	Chiltern Transport Consortium	2,406	1,964	442	73	4	6	10	CH, OP
59 (91)	Vodafone	2,400	1,950	450	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
60 (60)	Skanska UK	2,380	1,888	492	251	4	4	7	CH, OP
61 (26=)	The Royal Bank of Scotland	2,354	2,354	0	49	4	n/a	n/a	OP, FL
62= (37)	Muller Milk and Ingredients	2,300	500	1,800	1,000	4	5	7	CH, OP
62= 165)	ScottishPower	2,300	1,000	1,300	80	4	4	7	CH, FL, ECO
64 (62)	Anglian Water	2,225	625	1,600	100	5	6	6	CH, OP
65 (68)	Celesio (AHH Pharmaceuticals)	2,220	620	1,600	200	4	4	5	CH
66 (63=)	PHS Group	2,209	609	1,600	375	3	4	7	FL
67 (65)	UPS Limited	2,180	250	1,930	120	3	n/a	n/a	CH, ECO
68 (66)	Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS	2,134	1,878	256	14	3	5	3	CH
69 (151)	Aviva	2,130	2,100	30	0	3	3	n/a	CH
70= (93)	Essex and Kent Transport Services	2,000	1,700	300	13	5	6	n/a	OP
70= (71=)	Ford	2,000	1,000	1,000	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	CH
70= (71=)	Integral UK	2,000	1,100	900	0	4	4	n/a	CH
70= (71=)	PwC	2,000	2,000	0	0	3	n/a	n/a	CH
70= (44=)	UK Mail	2,000	0	2,000	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
75 (76)	Greater Manchester Police	1,981	1,689	292	109	8	8	8	OP

*** Key to funding method abbreviations:** CH **contract hire,** FL **finance lease,** OL **operating lease,** OP **outright purchase,** SS **salary sacrifice,** ECO **employee car ownership,** FR **flexible rental,** O **other**

Sewells research&insight For a presentation of the results of this year's Fleet200 research, co

Position) (2015)	Company	Total car and LCV fleet	Cars	LCV	Trucks, Lorries	Replacement cycle (years)			Funding method cars and vans*
						Car	Vans/ LCV	Trucks/ Lorry	
76 (79=)	Wolseley UK Ltd	1,925	1,500	425	500	4	4	7	CH
77 (78)	HM Revenue & Customs	1,911	1,800	111	50	4	6	n/a	OP
78 (79=)	Keepmoat UK	1,900	1,200	700	0	4	3	n/a	CH, FR
79 (89)	DHL International (UK)	1,870	520	1,350	155	4	5	6	CH, SS
80 (85)	Kelly Communications	1,862	211	1,651	9	4	5	n/a	CH, OP
81 (82)	Morgan Sindall	1,858	1,208	650	83	4	3	4	CH, OP, FL, FR
82= (51)	BP International	1,850	1,800	50	0	3	4	n/a	CH, ECO
82= (83)	RAC	1,850	250	1,600	55	4	5	5	CH, FL
84 (167)	Severn Trent Plc	1,820	420	1,400	250	5	7	7	CH, OP
85= (86)	J Murphy & Sons Limited	1,800	600	1,200	500	4	7	n/a	CH
85= (100)	Surrey and Sussex Police JTS	1,800	1,300	500	300	5	5	5	CH, OP
85= (101=)	Yorkshire Water Services	1,800	700	1,100	65	4	7	9	CH, OP, FL
88 (96=)	Thames Water Utilities Limited	1,750	250	1,500	40	4	5	7	CH, OP
89 (122)	Compass Group	1,739	1,198	541	10	3	4	n/a	CH
90 (92)	The Co-operative Group	1,700	1,200	500	1,500	4	4	n/a	CH, OP
91 (94)	Autoglass	1,687	187	1,500	0	3	4	n/a	CH
92= (87)	Willmott Dixon	1,679	718	961	0	3	n/a	n/a	CH, OL, FR
92= (96=)	Clancy Docwra	1,650	400	1,250	130	5	5	7	OP
92= (96=)	Interserve	1,650	1,250	400	60	3	4	n/a	CH
92= (168)	Sheffield Insulations	1,650	1,200	450	750	5	4	n/a	CH, OP
92= (108=)	National Crime Agency	1,650	1,450	200	n/a	5	5	n/a	CH, OP
97 (90)	Northern Powergrid	1,620	800	820	60	3	7	7	CH, OL
98 (106)	Nationwide Building Society	1,600	1,600	0	0	3	n/a	n/a	OP
99 (174)	Babcock Rail	1,565	765	800	30	4	4	n/a	CH
100 (103)	Welsh Water	1,561	497	1,064	497	4	4	n/a	CH

*** funding methods are drawn from a combination of survey responses and the *Fleet News* database**

Masternaut investing in bringi

Telematics company is investing heavily in people and processes to improve customer experience

"Telematics thrives by improving business efficiency for customers. But customers in our industry don't always enjoy a first-class experience," says Dhruv Parekh, chief executive officer of Masternaut.

"At Masternaut, we now deliver a superior customer experience after significant investments in our processes and our people. In the end, it's important that our people at Masternaut come to work each day motivated to make our clients' fleets safer, more efficient, and more productive."

Dhruv, who was appointed CEO in April last year, had previously worked across the world, helping technology companies drive major growth programmes. He brings a fresh and user-first perspective to the challenges that telematics providers need to overcome to drive adoption.

"We're turning the fleet customer experience into almost a consumer one," says Dhruv.

"When you buy something from Amazon you expect to know what you bought, when it's going to get delivered, and you can change the delivery date if you're not home that day. All that functionality exists in the consumer world, but in the B2B world, not many companies are providing that type of great customer experience. So our focus for the past year has been building all the capability to do that.

"For instance, we've rolled out new online customer portals. So, if you're a new customer who needs to install telematics devices in 20 vehicles, you can log into our portal, give us your three preferred installation dates and the address for each vehicle, and we'll do the rest," Dhruv says. "There has historically been lots of headache in this process and we have brought modern-day technology to it."

The customer portal also helps with the day-to-day maintenance of the telematics technology, as a customer can raise an issue directly via the portal and track its progress.

"Customers have been quite excited by the shift in the processes and the technology, as well as the access to the self-service portal," Dhruv says. "Though we acknowledge we are still working out all the kinks you would expect with any new platform launch."

The customer portal is supported by a new, dedicated technical team which manages everything from installation to proactively monitoring the devices, fixing issues over the air "before the customer even notices", and developing ways the customer experience can be improved.

This new dedicated team, alongside a call centre that aims to respond to customer emails within 24 hours, has led to a reduction in complaints and a marked improvement in customer satisfaction.

"These big changes would not have been possible if it weren't for the people in and around Masternaut. We are investing heavily in talent," Dhruv explains.

Masternaut is growing its customer service, R&D, and sales and marketing teams by promoting people internally and attracting talent from outside the company, including many graduates from top-tier universities such as Harvard and Cambridge.

"We have the biggest R&D team in Europe. We have doubled the size of our R&D team in the past year and we are convinced we are going to continue to be well ahead of the rest of the telematics market in terms of new, innovative developments."

With this focus on the customer and investment in innovation, Masternaut believes even more strongly in the value that it delivers. It's a confidence that Dhruv believes the rest of the industry should share.

"We've conducted controlled studies to compare spend before and after our customers install our products, and we find they consistently save three-to-five times what they pay for the solution. This value is what customers should focus on, not just price," he says.

"Pricing something too low is not good for your client if you end up losing money or not being able to service them.

"In this exciting time for the telematics industry, we're overhauling our internal processes to truly delight our customers"

Dhruv Parekh, Masternaut CEO

Masternaut's Leeds office is in a converted historic almshouses building in Aberford

To find out more please email: field@masternaut.com

ng B2C practices to telematics

"The customer has spent all this money, time, and energy installing these systems – only to find out two or three years later that the supplier can't serve them anymore because the system was under-priced and the company has gone belly up."

Dhruv says that, in contrast, Masternaut's focus is to make ongoing investments in its future. In particular, Masternaut's increase in R&D investment strengthens a unique, industry-leading technology platform.

"Our patented technology gives birth to the unhackable connected car," he says.

"We can read all of the detailed information from the vehicle computer, but our contactless device has no electrical connection to the car, so it can't write anything. This means even if you access our telemetry device, you can't affect the car – a huge security advantage."

Security and privacy are an important consideration for many Masternaut customers. "Because we are pan-European, we've dealt with lots of the data privacy issues in continental Europe, and we have a much more comprehensive product from a privacy perspective," Dhruv says.

Masternaut's Connect platform is modular with customers able to pick and choose the features most useful for them, from a list that keeps growing. In the past few months Masternaut has launched a new fuel module, which enables customers to collect, manage and analyse data on fuel spend from multiple fuel card providers, and a maintenance module, which provides automatic and real-time information on servicing and vehicle faults. Further products are set to be launched next year.

Recently, Masternaut has announced a new partnership with PSA Group where Masternaut's services will be available to some European Peugeot, Citroën and DS connected cars and light commercial vehicles from early 2017.

Dhruv concludes: "I truly enjoy coming to work every day. In this exciting time for the telematics industry, we're overhauling our internal processes to truly delight our customers, and we are investing in our people. We've got new partnerships with interesting companies that will help us grow. And finally, we've got really innovative products in the pipeline that we are excited to be taking to market, all designed around making it easier and lower cost to manage your fleet."

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masternaut

FleetNews AWARDS 2016

Sponsored by FCA FIAT CHRYSLER AUTOMOBILES

As a supplier to the NHS, we at Fiat Chrysler Automobiles understand the importance of implementing new technologies and practices, when managing large commercial fleets. That is why the Fiat Professional range of light commercial vehicles feature specially developed software such as eco:Drive Professional, which, together with the new low-emissions EcoJet engines, offer significant fuel savings and reduced emissions for fleet managers like Justin.

His previous fleet department has seen a massive modernisation programme aimed to make it commercially viable, while remaining supportive of the requirements placed upon it by the Trust. He showed innovative fresh thinking and was prepared to take risks on new initiatives which have saved money, improved services, tackled environmental concerns and improved safety. Justin is doing everything you'd want from a professional fleet manager and so much more.

We are honoured to sponsor this award and congratulate Justin on his well-deserved achievement.

JUSTIN WAND, LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE

'Let me invest £10m and I'll save you £28m'

That's the claim award winner Justin Wand made when he joined LAS, the 'jewel in the crown' of the ambulance service

By Stephen Briers

Less than three months after collecting the *Fleet News* fleet manager of the year award, among several trophies that night for his South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb) fleet, Justin Wand received a call from an agency representing London Ambulance Service (LAS).

Word had travelled fast; LAS had a vacancy for a deputy director, fleet and logistics – was he interested?

"There's no doubt my profile had been raised by the *Fleet News* Awards; it was great recognition within the ambulance service," Wand says.

He took the job, and after just five weeks was able to identify significant opportunities for his new organisation with a clearly defined view about the immediate future for the fleet operation. When questioned by superiors for his feedback, in addition to an outline summary, he told them, "let me invest £10 million and I'll save you £28m of clinical time that can be reinvested back into frontline services".

It was a compelling argument; £7m has already been made available for investment in new vehicles, new processes and a new structure.

Fleet News: What did you think when you joined LAS?
Justin Wand: LAS is the jewel in the crown for the ambulance service – it's the busiest one in the world and everyone wants it on their CV. It was a big step to move here; it has the profile but it hasn't been through a lot of the changes we've seen elsewhere, leaving a great opportunity to improve the fleet operation.

FN: What are your initial plans?
JW: I have a clear mandate to modernise the fleet and logistics support functions. We will introduce a version of the 'make ready' process we had at SECAmb [where vehicles are cleaned, restocked and checked before and after every shift, with planned preventative maintenance taking place at the same site] and that will help return a massive proportion of the planned efficiency savings, a fair segment of which will be in the first year. We will establish 14 vehicle preparation 'hubs' across our patch that will support day-to-day frontline operations, logistics and maintenance of the vehicles and the equipment – a one-stop shop. We will also change our production functions, which will benefit staff and patients, by having the right equipment in the right place, produced and maintained to standard in a safe, clean, infection-controlled, compliant environment.

FN: You are also investing in new vehicles; what changes are you planning here?
JW: The fleet has grown organically in recent years, so we have to standardise this as much as possible to remove variation. We operate around 20 different platforms; I want to get this down to two or three key ones that will reflect the specialist nature of the staff roles but minimising the range for the maintenance team. It's about redesigning the system to be sustainable, efficient and replicable to remove variation – variation is the enemy of quality.

FN: You operate long replacement cycles: how cost-efficient is this?
JW: Currently we have a seven-year operating cycle for ambulances across the service and five years for rapid response cars. Predominantly this has been dictated by public sector funding of fleet replacements of this type. But, by understanding wholelife costs, we start to see a dramatic increase in running costs around year five, so we have to look at the opportunities. We need a fleet that reflects the spend profile throughout the whole life of the asset as well as the right vehicle for the right role. We may see some modular-build ambulances, which are bigger and more fuel hungry, replaced by van conversions as we reconfigure the fleet. Do we buy cheaper vehicles more often and ultimately spend our money in a different way? Or do we look at a mid-life refresh of the chassis and

Justin Wand (seated, centre) celebrates with his former team at SEACamb

Francis Bleasdale, fleet and remarketing director, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles UK (second right), presents the award to (from left) Lee-Ann Witney, Stewart Neve, Justin Wand and Mike Bowran, the fleet team at South East Coast Ambulance Service

"It's about redesigning the system to be sustainable, efficient and replicable to remove variation – variation is the enemy of quality"

Justin Wand, London Ambulance Service

remount the boxes on a new vehicle? We've got into a habit of doing what's easiest, not necessarily the most efficient, but that's all part of the challenge.

FN: Is there an opportunity for greater collaboration within the ambulance service, similar to the police fleets?
JW: Undoubtedly; we have national frameworks for buying vehicles and equipment which gives us great economies of scale. But we have to recognise that there are configuration differences – geographically, equipment, skills-set, treatment regimes and in back office support, too – all of which may influence different layouts in our vehicles. There is also a push to work more with other services and there are real opportunities with police and fire services for potentially sharing support functions, workshops and processes. First though we have to understand where the real alignments are – vehicle maintenance, stations, call centres or back office support? It's all about strategic planning.

FN: When you have drivers rushing to get to a call, with time-led targets, how do you instil a safe driving culture?
JW: We have to do our jobs more smartly; there is more congestion and patients' expectations are increasingly changing. We can improve systems within the vehicle, introducing car safety technology on commercials, and we are working with Transport for London (TfL) to identify priority routes at certain times of the day. But we also have to re-educate drivers and managers to make more informed decisions when responding. Staff also have to recognise that a crucial part of the patient experience is how they are transported. Making the link to clinical outcomes is the real key to success. Mark Crouch, an ex-Met police officer, has also recently joined LAS and we will be working closely to increase our driver profiling, performance and education.

FN: What's the key to being a successful fleet manager?
JW: You have to understand the business intimately and apply a lot of the corporate language to the operation, reflecting it back to the wider organisation so they understand the efficiencies and effectiveness a good fleet management team can provide. I use the language from the frontline operations in our teams and it is reflected in our key performance indicators and our wider business planning

FN: You still work as a paramedic – how does that help?
JW: It reminds me why we are all here and it also gives me credibility with the staff. Previously this approach has allowed me to change the culture of the technical support teams so they understand the crucial role they play in saving lives every day. They are often hidden away and often undervalued. At SECAmb we put the fleet function front and centre in terms of the criticality of the services they provide the frontline and I don't see why that be any different here. It changes the way we'll engage the wider organisation and it changes the view of the senior management team around fleet considerations.

Wand's role as a paramedic also gives him first-hand experience of customers' needs and changing requirements. He believes LAS's role is changing from an emergency response service to a mobile healthcare provider, fulfilling a need in the community for more holistic care provision.

"That transition provides us with an opportunity to consider the future design of services and what that means for vehicles and equipment," he says. "It is our role to provide the best vehicle and equipment support we can to enable the frontline staff to fulfil their crucial roles and focus on their goal – committed, clinically excellent patient care."

FACTFILE

Fleet size 1,084 vehicles, of which 460 ambulances, 218 rapid response cars, 84 major incident vehicles, 86 patient transport, 236 other cars and support vehicles
Operating cycle ambulances – 7 years; rapid response cars – 5 years
Funding method Outright purchase and contract hire
Annual mileage 17 million
Annual fuel spend £6 million
Number of emergency calls a year 1.8 million, rising 5% year-on-year

Judges' comments

"Justin is a complete fleet manager. He shows innovative fresh thinking and is prepared to take risks on new concepts which are well delivered. He has introduced a number of initiatives which have saved money, improved services, tackled environment concerns and improved safety. Justin is doing everything you'd want from a professional fleet manager and so much more."

“When your business is care, you know when you’re not being looked after.”

Rob Flexer – Cleeve Care

Rob cares passionately about care. He needs to. He provides a lot of it. 32,000 hours a week to be exact. So good is his company at providing care that they are one of the leading providers of elderly care, care for adults with complex needs and childrens care to the NHS and local councils across much of the Midlands and the South West.

His team of mobile carers are always on the road, covering thousands of miles a year. His fleet was uneconomical and unreliable. Breakdowns weren’t just costing him money, they meant his clients weren’t getting the care they needed. Rob wanted

to find a solution. Before our Fleet Operations Manager met Rob, he spent time getting to know his business. Finding out what it needed, not just to make it work better, but to make it work smarter too.

Our suggestion was a fleet of i10’s; small and practical, with boots big enough to fit a wheelchair in. They also provided Rob with the economy and reliability he craved, and slashed his servicing costs.

By putting ourselves at the centre of Rob’s business we made ourselves invaluable and showed we understood and more importantly cared. All proof enough we think, that business works better with US at its heart.

To find out more about our multi-award winning fleet service and vehicles visit hyundai.co.uk/business

HYUNDAI | NEW THINKING. NEW POSSIBILITIES.

SUVs and EVs dominate the battle for attention in Paris

We look at the key models coming to a showroom near you. *Stephen Briers, Simon Harris and Matt de Prez* report

The past two motor shows (Geneva 2016 and Frankfurt 2015) have been dominated by SUVs and Paris 2016 continued the theme, showing there is no let-up yet in this part of the car market.

Represented were Seat Ateca (driven in the June 23 issue), BMW X2 and Peugeot 3008 (which discards its people carrier origins), plus next-generation models from Citroën, Land Rover, Audi, Renault and Vauxhall.

However, Paris was also about electric vehicles, with a number of concept or production models shown.

This will be the battleground for the next few years as legislation and taxation combines with local level air quality rules to force makers to seek alternative powertrain options.

SMALL FAMILY

HYUNDAI i30

On sale: early 2017
Pricing: from £15,000 (estimate)
Key fleet engine: 1.6 CRDi
CO_2 emissions: less than 100g/km (est)

Hyundai i30 represents 'the core of the brand' in Europe, according to the company, so a new model is a signpost of what to expect for the next generation of models.

As well as current engines being carried over, there will be a new 1.4-litre turbocharged petrol engine, although the 1.6-litre diesel will most likely take the biggest share of fleet sales.

The i30 comes with technology such as Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, wireless smartphone charging and live services.

The car should be more engaging to drive, too, with more direct steering than its predecessor, and it will be available with autonomous emergency braking.

It will launch as a hatchback in 2017, with an estate version likely to follow.

KIA RIO

On sale: February 2017
Pricing: from £11,000 (est)
Key fleet engine: 1.4 CRDi
CO_2 emissions: 110g/km (est)

Kia describes the new Rio as a more mature model than its predecessor, and one which addresses three issues: interior space, quality of interior materials and infotainment features.

Exterior dimensions are unchanged, but there is more space for passengers and a larger boot. The interior is a leap forward, according to Kia Motors UK president and CEO Paul Philpott, while a raft of sat-nav options and systems, such as Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, will increase driver appeal.

"We have also considered the car's urban environment and technology," Philpott says. "For example, autonomous emergency braking now has pedestrian recognition for the first time."

The new sub-100g/km three-cylinder 1.0-litre GDI petrol engine is added to existing 1.4 diesel and 1.25 petrol and is likely to account for a growing share, although Kia says diesel is still the dominant choice for fleets.

Rio will be slightly dearer than the car it replaces, but Kia feels additional product features should offset the higher price.

Philpott is expecting a sales uplift, with user-choosers, public sector and leasing companies being targets. But he is wary of forcing the market. "We have to establish it in the segment with a strong residual value. The impact of a strong RV on Sportage and Ceed has been dramatic," he says.

SMALL FAMILY CONTINUED

HONDA CIVIC

On sale: early 2017
Pricing: from £18,500 (est)
Key fleet engine: 1.6 i-DTEC
CO_2 emissions: from less than 95g/km (est)

Honda's 10th-generation Civic will be built at the company's plant in Swindon, and, the company says, customers will benefit from the most extensive single model development in its history.

Honda has set itself the target of a best in class ride and handling combination – a tough achievement given the ability of rivals from Ford and Volkswagen.

A repositioned fuel tank helps reduce the car's centre of gravity and a new suspension set-up front and rear is expected to deliver significant improvements in how the Civic feels on the road.

High specification versions will also be offered with an adaptive damper system.

There will be two new turbocharged petrol engines: a 129hp 1.0-litre and a 182hp 1.5-litre.

Both are expected to offer competitive CO_2 emissions and fuel consumption, although there will be a 1.6-litre diesel engine offered, expected to be in 120hp in the entry-level version.

Honda hasn't provided any data on the diesel engine yet, as its focus is promoting the new petrol engines, which are being deployed for the first time

However, it's likely the diesel will offer CO_2 emissions well under 100g/km, as the current car already achieves 94g/km.

Many dimensions inside have grown, so it should feel roomier, and the Honda Sensing suite of active safety and driver-assist technologies will be specified across the new Civic range.

NISSAN MICRA

On sale: March 2017
Pricing: from £8,000 (est)
Key fleet engine: 1.5 dCi
CO_2 emissions: 82g/km (est)

Nissan is setting its sights on the all-new Micra going straight to the top of the B segment.

The car is a far cry from the outgoing model which, Nissan concedes, was not right for the market. Design has been carried out in continental Europe and production will take place in the Renault-Nissan factory in Flins, near Paris.

"This is a European car for the European market," says Micra engineering manager Norman Snowdon.

Powertrains include a 0.9-litre turbocharged three cylinder petrol and a 1.5-litre diesel.

RENAULT ZOE

On sale: November 2016
Pricing: from £14,000 (est)
Key fleet engine: 89PS electric motor
CO_2 emissions: 0g/km

Renault has doubled the capacity of the Zoe's battery, meaning the city car now has a range of 250 miles.

The updated battery pack is the same size and weight as the previous version and offers hope that the technology can continue to be developed, leading to larger and cheaper electric vehicles.

Charging times remain the same with a standard power socket giving 50 miles of range in 30 minutes.

Priced are yet to be announced but the current car costs from £13,995 including the Government's £4,500 grant but excluding the battery hire.

TOYOTA C-HR

On sale: Late 2016
Pricing: from £20,995
Key fleet engine: 1.8 hybrid
CO_2 emissions: from 86g/km

Toyota's C-HR was shown in final production form before going on sale, despite looking much like the concept car of last year's Tokyo motor show.

There will be two engine choices, with a 116hp turbocharged 1.2-litre three-cylinder motor as the entry point to the range, or a 1.8-litre hybrid with 122hp.

The hybrid has CO_2 emissions from 86g/km and fuel consumption of up to 74.3mpg on the combined cycle. It is currently unique among medium crossovers. The 1.2-litre is more of a retail proposition with CO_2 emissions above 130g/km.

CITROËN C4 PICASSO/GRAND PICASSO

On sale: now
Pricing: from £19,635
Key fleet engine: 1.6 BlueHDi 120PS
CO_2 emissions: 100g/km (Picasso)

The five-seat Picasso and seven-seat Grand Picasso, launched in 2013 and 2014 respectively, were based on Citroën's EMP2 (efficient modular platform). However, at the time, the platform was capable of embracing more technology than Citroën had available.

It has now rectified this with the facelifted cars, adding active lane keeping, speed limit recognition, automatic tailgate, voice command and a new high resolution sat-nav screen. Citroën has also brought a common family face to the two cars (previously they had some subtle design differences) and introduced new 3D-effect rear lights, 17-inch wheels and two additional colour options.

Platform, engines and running gear remain unchanged, although a 1.2-litre PureTech 130PS petrol has been added with a six-speed automatic gearbox. It will help petrol take a larger share of sales.

Trim levels have also been renamed – Touch, Feel and Flair – to fit with the rest of the range.

AUDI Q5

On sale: spring 2017
Pricing: from £32,000 (est)
Key fleet engine: 2.0 TDI 190PS
CO_2 emissions: 130g/km (est)

The second-generation Audi Q5 puts the emphasis on new connectivity features, driver assistance, refinement and an improved feel on the road.

It's up to 90kg lighter than its predecessor, and will benefit from new engines with improved fuel efficiency, also aided by claimed best-in-class aerodynamics.

The interior is roomier than before, and it will come with three driver-assistance package options, including lane-keeping technology, and piloted parking.

The Audi Q5 will launch in the UK with a 190hp 2.0 TDI and improved fuel consumption over its predecessor.

Soon after the launch a 2.0 TFSI engine will also be available, with an output of 252hp, 41.5mpg on the combined cycle, and CO_2 emissions of 154g/km.

It will also be offered with a revised 3.0 TDI V6, with increased output of 286hp and 457lb-ft of torque.

LAND ROVER DISCOVERY

On sale: spring 2017
Pricing: from £43,495
Key fleet engine: 2.0-litre Ingenium diesel
CO_2 emissions: 171g/km

Land Rover is confident the new Discovery will open up fleet channels thanks to the addition of the 2.0-litre Ingenium diesel engine which combines fuel efficiency of 43.5mpg and CO_2 emissions of 171g/km with 240PS and 500Nm.

With pricing starting at just a little more than £43,000 and residual values of 60% over three years/36,000 miles, UK managing director Jeremy Hicks believes the Discovery will provide a good fleet proposition, especially for user-choosers.

The new Discovery is a full-size, three-row, seven-seat SUV with a lightweight aluminium construction which reduces weight by 480kg.

Towing capacity of 3,500kg is claimed to be best-in-class while a semi-autonomous Advanced Tow Assist enables the driver to guide a trailer, horsebox or caravan into position without using the steering wheel.

New technology includes side-assist blindspot monitoring, which brings the car back into lane if it starts to stray, and an activity key, which enables locking and unlocking and can be worn as a wristband.

In addition, a pedestrian detection system has been added to the autonomous emergency braking system.

The rear seats now fold flat (and unfold) at the touch of a button and they can be adjusted remotely or via the touchscreen display. Land Rover has dispensed with the split tailgate. Instead, it has created a fold-down section for seating which also doubles as a load restraint.

Hicks forecasts the six-cylinder 258PS diesel will take a large share of sales – "our UK buyers are very traditional" – but adds that the new 2.0-litre Ingenium diesel, paired to the eight-speed auto gearbox, will account for the majority of newcomers and will be around 40% of sales.

Conquest targets include drivers of other SUVs, such as the BMW X5, Audi Q7 and Volvo XC90. The car has received a strong response during customer clinics, particularly on its styling, says Hicks.

All engines will be available from launch, although the car will go on sale with a limited first edition of 600 models. Fleets can place orders now. Land Rover has already received more than 4,000 expressions of interest.

Land Rover does not "rule in or out" a hybrid option in future, says Hicks. "We are looking at alternative drive technology but the most important thing is the four-cylinder motor that answers a lot of the questions drivers have today," he adds.

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SUV/MPV CONTINUED

PEUGEOT 3008 AND 5008

On sale: 3008 January; 5008 March
Pricing: from £21,750 (3008)
Key fleet engine: 1.6 BlueHDi
CO_2 emissions: n/a

Peugeot has revolutionised the look of the 3008, moving from MPV to SUV. With the new car it is looking to double the registrations of the outgoing 3008, which sold 6,500 in 2015. Peugeot expects 60% to go to fleet.

David Peel, Peugeot UK managing director, says: "Our ambition is to use the 3008 as a tool to put Peugeot back on the map with leasing and company cars users. Today they ignore us."

A new marketing campaign has seen a series of UK-made TV adverts, starting with the 3008 followed by the 2008 and 4008 for a consistent message.

That message, says Peel, is about interior quality, build, technology and design. A key element is the new iCockpit 2 which features digital interaction, personalisation and a touchscreen. The seats can give massages while drivers can select different scents dependent on their mood.

The biggest seller will be the 1.6-litre 130PS BlueHDi diesel with auto transmission and in Allure trim, although customers can also choose a 1.2-litre PureTech petrol.

Peugeot is positioning the car between the Nissan Qashqai and Ford Kuga at one end and the Volkswagen Tiguan at the other. Pricing is in the middle, starting at £21,750 – around £700-£800 more than the outgoing model.

The 5008 is part of the same SUV family, with much of the same technology and engines as the 3008, although it is targeted more on families with its seven-seat capacity.

BMW X2 CONCEPT

On sale: 2018
Pricing: n/a
Key fleet engine: 2.0-litre diesel
CO_2 emissions: 110g/km (est)

It was perhaps inevitable that at some point an X2 would arrive given BMW has already used two even numbers in its SUV range – the X6 and X4.

The X2 Concept made its debut in Paris, marking a shift in design direction for BMW. When it arrives as a production car in 2018, it will share the front-wheel drive architecture of the latest X1, introduced in 2015.

There will, no doubt, be four-wheel drive versions, befitting its SUV status (although BMW will insist on calling it a sports activity vehicle), and the styling, while rather more subtle than the X6 and X4, still has a distinct coupé-like profile.

The X2 is likely to share engines and technology with the X1, which means a choice of 2.0-litre petrol and diesel engines with outputs ranging from around 150-231hp.

But, given the X2 will appear in 2018, it's possible it could feature some new technology ahead of a facelift for the X1.

"The BMW X2 Concept combines the fast-moving body language and low-slung proportions of a coupé with the robust construction of an X model," says Karim Habib, head of BMW design.

"This is a sporty vehicle with a bold character, and it allows us to open up some fascinating new design possibilities for the BMW brand."

He adds: "It means we can expect more of these design cues in BMWs over the next few years."

RENAULT KOLEOS

On sale: summer 2017
Pricing: from £22,000 (est)
Key fleet engine: 1.6 dCi
CO_2 emissions: n/a

The UK market's recent obsession with SUVs has led Renault to re-introduce the Koleos, although the new model won't arrive in dealerships until next summer.

The five-seat SUV sits in the segment above the Kadjar, offering a more premium finish with styling cues and technology derived from the new Megane.

With the seats up there is 624 litres of boot space and Renault has hinted at a seven-seat version.

The Koleos shares its roots with the Nissan X-Trail so the same line-up of engines is expected, alongside the option of selectable four-wheel drive.

LARGE FAMILY/MPV

VAUXHALL ZAFIRA TOURER

On sale: now
Pricing: from £18,615
Key fleet engine: 1.6 CDTi
CO_2 emissions: 119g/km

Technology enhancements is the key story for fleets for the Zafira Tourer, which has a new exterior and interior look. Among the new features is the latest IntelliLink infotainment system with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, as well as OnStar. The car is also a Wi-Fi hotspot.

Safety technology includes adaptive forward-lighting head-lamps, adaptive cruise control and FlexRide for continuous damping control. The Zafira Tourer can carry a load volume of 710 litres, rising to 1,860 when the second-row seats are folded.

Vauxhall says it has optimised the car for fleet appeal with the introduction of SRi and Elite Nav models, following a strategy launched on the Insignia and Astra, plus a new touchscreen.

Residual values are up £625 versus the old model over three years/60,000 miles.

Three engines are available: 1.4 140PS petrol, 2.0CDTi 170PS diesel and 1.6CDTi 134PS diesel. The latter, when chosen with stop/start, offers CO_2 emissions from 119g/km and fuel consumption of 62.8mpg.

MERCEDES-BENZ E-CLASS ALL-TERRAIN

On sale: spring 2017
Pricing: from £40,000 (est)
Key fleet engine: 2.0-litre 194PS diesel
CO_2 emissions: 137g/km

Mercedes-Benz is encouraging drivers to take its E-Class off-road with the launch of an all-terrain model, a rival for the Audi A6 Allroad.

The E-Class All-Terrain blends SUV styling with estate car space. It features 4Matic all-wheel drive as standard and 29mm increased ground clearance over the E-Class estate thanks to bigger 19- and 20-inch wheels with higher sidewalls and air suspension.

An SUV-style two-fin grille with a star integrated sits above underride guard-look panelling, electroplated in silver-chrome. Further features typical of an SUV include robust outer load sill protection.

Available as standard in Avantgarde trim, Mercedes-Benz will also offer Exclusive and Designo models.

The E-Class All-Terrain will be launched as an E220d 194PS four-cylinder 4matic diesel. A six-cylinder diesel will follow. Both have new nine-speed automatic transmission as standard.

Dynamic Select enables drivers to choose between five driving programmes with different engine, transmission, stability control and steering characteristics.

A special model-specific feature is the all-terrain driving programme, which offers settings for off-road driving and was derived from the GLE.

AUDI A5 SPORTBACK

On sale: orders from mid-October for 2017 delivery
Key fleet engine: 2.0 TDI
CO_2 emissions: Less than 110g/km (est)

The A5 Sportback follows the launch of the second-generation two-door A5 Coupé this summer, but it is the five-door coupé (some might suggest it's a hatchback) that will be of interest to user-choosers.

Sharing technology with other A5 models and the A4 range launched in 2015, the Sportback is up to 85kg lighter than its predecessor and is expected to deliver improved efficiency, a better drive, and new features.

It will be available with traffic jam assistance, able to take control of steering, braking, and also temporary control of the steering in heavy traffic.

There is also a predictive efficiency assistant linked to the navigation system.

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CONCEPTS

CITROËN CXPERIENCE

The CXperience is Citroën's vision for a new generation of D-sector car styling and design.

It is a concept with a plug-in powertrain – although its concepts have a habit of becoming reality within a couple of years – but hints at the company's aspirations to be in all segments from A to D.

The emphasis is on comfort, Citroën's manifesto and brand differentiator as part of its 'be different, feel good' promise, but with a modern take. This means usable space, light interior and use of colours and materials, as well as seats clad in memory foam and supple suspension which filters out bumps in the road.

MITSUBISHI GT-PHEV

Mitsubishi's next-generation plug-in hybrid powertrain made its debut in the Ground Tourer concept.

The large SUV points to the styling direction of future products from the brand, which will be mainly SUV-focused and feature electrified powertrains.

The next plug-in hybrid system will be able to travel up to 75 miles on a charge, compared with the current Outlander PHEV's 30 miles.

The concept has three electric motors (Outlander has two).

LEXUS UX CONCEPT

The next chapter for Lexus was identified by the UX concept. This compact SUV will form the basis of a replacement for the CT hatch.

Some of the technology, such as the hologram dials, may not make production and there is no information on powertrains yet, but Lexus says the design is a statement of what we should expect from the brand.

INFINITI VARIABLE COMPRESSION ENGINE

Infiniti introduced the world's first production-ready variable compression ratio engine, available from 2018.

Promoted as one of the most advanced internal combustion engines ever created, it combines the power of a high-performance 2.0-litre turbo petrol engine with the torque and efficiency of an advanced diesel powertrain, but without the equivalent emissions.

SSANGYONG LIV-2

The styling direction of Korean brand SsangYong has alaway been a matter of personal taste – it's not for everyone But the Liv-2 concept is proof the company knows how to make an attractive car.

Luxury SUV is a lucrative market to crack and competition is strong, but SsangYong says this car can compete. The Liv-2 features a lounge-like interior with wifi, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

Two engines could be fitted, a 2.2-litre Euro 6 diesel engine or a newly developed GDi 2.0-litre turbocharged petrol.

The car is equipped with advanced safety equipment such as an autonomous emergency braking, traffic safety assist and high beam assistance.

MERCEDES-BENZ GENERATION EQ CONCEPT

The Generation EQ concept vehicle, with the appearance of a sporty SUV coupé, gives a preview of a new generation of Mercedes-Benz electric vehicles.

The drive system features two electric motors, with an output that can be increased up to 300kW thanks to scalable battery components, and permanent all-wheel drive. Mercedes-Benz claims a range of up to 310 miles.

The four-seat interior has touch-based controls and no traditional switches except for the electric seat adjustment.

The new EVs will be based on an architecture developed specifically for electric models. It will be scalable and usable across all models; the wheelbase and track width as well as all other system components are variable thanks to the modular building-block system.

VW I.D CONCEPT

Volkswagen has given us a glimpse into the future with its I.D concept. It is based on the brand's new electric vehicle platform and utilises a rear-mounted motor reminiscent of the original Beetle.

Range is claimed to reach 370 miles, a figure which significantly sets higher targets for other EVs in this sector.

The concept also hints at Volkswagen's intentions for full autonomy by 2025, featuring a retractable steering wheel.

In the meantime, the first of 30 new Volkswagens to sit on this platform is due in 2020 and is set to shake up the industry with an 80% recharge time of 30 minutes.

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FORD FOCUS

No shortage of rivals in the C-segment

Win some, lose some – the Ford Focus fares better in some comparisons than others

COSTS

P11D price:	£21,490
BIK tax band:	19%
Annual BIK tax (20%):	£836
Class 1A NIC:	£577
Annual VED:	£0
RV (4yr/80K):	£5,550/26%
Fuel cost (ppm):	6.60
AFR (ppm):	8
Running cost (4yr/80K)	29.93ppm

SPEC

Engine (cc):	1,500
Power (hp):	120
Torque (lb-ft):	270
CO2 emissions (g/km):	99
Fuel efficiency (mpg):	74.3
Max speed (mph):	120
0-62mph (sec):	10.5
Test mpg:	59.3
Current mileage:	6,924

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

By Sarah Tooze

The Ford Focus competes in the heartland of company cars – the C-segment – with a host of rivals including the Vauxhall Astra, Volkswagen Golf, Honda Civic, Hyundai i30, Kia Ceed, Peugeot 308 and Renault Megane.

Company car drivers may also be considering premium hatchbacks such as the Audi A3 and BMW 1 Series.

But for a fair comparison we've taken a look at how the Focus stacks up on cost against the Astra 1.6 CDTi, Golf 1.6 TDI and 308 1.6 BlueHDi, which are all sub 100g/km.

The Astra, Golf and Focus are all in the 19% benefit-in-kind (BIK) bracket (taking into account the 3% diesel supplement, with CO_2 emissions of 91g/km for the Astra and 99g/km for the Golf and Focus) but the Peugeot 308 achieves 84g/km and 18%.

For 20% tax payers the Astra attracts the lowest BIK (£753) thanks to having the lowest P11D value with the 308 close behind (£789). The Focus and Golf cost £800-plus (£836 and £847 respectively).

For employers the Astra has the cheapest Class 1A National Insurance at £519 with the 308 costing £26 more (£545). The Golf is once again the most costly (£585) with the Focus close behind (£577).

However, when it comes to running costs the Golf fares better (£24,176 over four years and 80,000 miles, compared to £25,056 for the Focus and £25,376 for the 308). The Astra is the clear leader by more than £1,000 (with running costs of £22,928.

So on paper the Astra is the best bet and has the accolades to go with it as it was named best lower medium car at this year's *Fleet News* Awards as well as gaining the European car of the year title.

The Astra has been a firm favourite on our long-term fleet although in a direct comparison I've found the Focus engine quieter while packing more oomph.

"The Astra has been a firm favourite on our long-term fleet although I've found the Focus engine quieter while packing more oomph"

Mazda CX-3 1.5D SE-L NAV

Fleets are spoilt for choice when it comes to choosing a compact SUV which means the Mazda CX-3 has a long list of potential rivals. Among those worthy of consideration are the Nissan Juke, the Mini Countryman and the Renault Captur. But how do they compare to the CX-3?

In terms of emissions, looking at variants with similar specifications, the Captur 1.5dCi has the lowest emissions at 98g/km, putting it in a benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax bracket of 19%. That compares to 105g/km (21%) for the Mazda CX-3 1.5D, 104g/km (20%) for the Nissan Juke 1.5dCi and 111g/km (22%) for the Mini Countryman 1.6D.

The Countryman also has the highest P11D value at £21,220, marginally higher than the CX-3 at £20,940, with the Captur and Juke priced at £19,730 and £18,970 respectively.

That means a 20% taxpayer will have an annual BIK tax bill of £750 for the Captur and £759 for the Juke, while the higher P11D value and BIK tax bracket of the CX-3 and Countryman equates to £879 and £934 respectively.

For the employer, Class 1A NICs start at £517 for the Captur and £524 for the Juke, with the CX-3 costing £607 and the Countryman £644.

However, looking at costs and depreciation, there is little to choose between the four.

Gareth Roberts

Seat Alhambra 2.0TDI SE Ecomotive

Last month I complained about the Alhambra's poor fuel consumption figures.

While I remain dissapointed, it does seem to at least be in line with its rivals. I recently drove the Ford Galaxy which, during my week-long test, was near identical on fuel to the Seat returning an indicated 39mpg on my regular work journey and 45mpg on a longer motorway run.

While the Alhambra fails to impress on fuel it is impressing with its load carrying ability.

The interior is cavernous with ample legroom for adults in all three rows. With all seats up there is still 267 litres of boot space, close to the size of that in the Seat Ibiza.

With all seats folded flat (a process which takes just seconds) the people carrier is transformed into a van-like load lugger with a level load floor and 2,297 litres of available space. By comparison the Ford Transit Courier has just 1,900 litres.

A recent furniture-buying trip put all that space to the test with the Alhambra accommodating two chests of drawers, a wardrobe and a flatpack double-bed frame with ease. The sliding rear doors are perfect when operating in a tight space or loading bulky items.

Luke Neal

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

ON SALE : Q1 2017

VOLVO V90 CROSS COUNTRY

Volvo reverts to 'Cross Country' name for its XC70 replacement

By Simon Harris

Volvo did not exhibit at this year's Paris motor show, but it revealed a new model in Sweden last month.

Volvo's first 'Cross Country' model was introduced in 1996. The V70 XC was developed as a more elegant alternative to SUVs (a couple of years after Subaru launched its Legacy Outback in North America), combining all the practicality of an estate car with raised ground clearance and all-wheel drive.

It evolved into the XC70 in 2002 following the launch of the first XC90, in the interests of consistency in the line-up.

But for 2017, with the Volvo V70 already replaced by the V90, the name has reverted to V90 Cross Country. XC90 is already well established as a purpose-designed SUV.

The fourth generation of this multi-terrain estate car is the last model in Volvo's '90' family, and Volvo hopes it will be popular as a business purchase, whether as a bluelight fleet car or perhaps a rural-base vet practice.

Competition is likely to be from the Audi A6 Allroad, Volkswagen Passat Alltrack, and the recently revealed Mercedes-Benz E-Class All-Terrain, and possibly more rugged versions of the Skoda Superb estate should the Czech manufacturer continue the Outdoor versions into this generation.

ENGINES

The V90 Cross Country will be produced with four engine options: a 190hp D4 and 235hp D5 diesel, plus T5 and T6 petrol.

The petrol variants are important for North American customers, as well as in the domestic market, but it's likely that in the UK the V90 Cross Country will only be sold as a diesel.

Expect CO_2 emissions of around 135-140g/km, with the lower figure for the manual D4 and the higher figure for the automatic variants.

Although a 'Twin Engine' plug-in hybrid will be offered in the S90 saloon and V90 estate, there are no plans for a PHEV in the V90 Cross Country.

Volvo has also ruled out a more sporty looking R-Design variant, which has been popular in other models.

The company says it is important not to dilute the purity of the Cross Country concept, and customers could choose an R-Design variant in the standard V90 with all-wheel drive.

TRANSMISSION

Most people will choose the V90 Cross Country with an eight-speed automatic transmission, with gear ratios to be tailored for the Cross Country's expected use in a wider variety of environments over the standard V90. An entry level D4 is likely to be offered with a six-speed manual gearbox.

DESIGN

"The V90 Cross Country takes the elegance of the V90 and transforms it into an all-road car that delivers safety, comfort and performance in a capable and adventurous package," said Håkan Samuelsson, president and CEO, Volvo Car Group.

Volvo says a car that is expected to be taken off road has to be capable of standing up to more punishment than a conventional road car. But as it isn't an authentic SUV, it also has to provide the level of comfort and agility on the road that customers would expect from a conventional car. The company says that Sweden offers the perfect environment for conceiving this type of car, with almost 80% of the country covered in forest and lakes, with contrasts of harsh winters in the north and warm summers in the south.

The suspension is raised by 60mm over the standard V90, and the Cross Country features a new tyre design with a more rounded profile, which provides improved grip as well as better ride comfort on uneven surfaces. More than 200 different chassis characteristics were retuned versus the standard V90.

"The V90 Cross Country takes the elegance of the V90 and transforms it into an all-road car that delivers safety, comfort and performance"

EQUIPMENT AND PRICING

Like other recent Volvos built on the new 'scalable product architecture', the V90 Cross Country comes with a large central touch-screen, which houses many of the car's functions, and can be configured to the driver's preferences.

Volvo says the V90 Cross Country combines all the benefits of the connectivity and entertainment features that were launched with the new S90 and V90, including a high-end sound system by Bowers & Wilkins. It will feature parking assist systems, hands-free tailgate opening and other functionality.

Prices will be revealed later this year, but expect the D5 variant to start from around £45,000, with the D4 to start comfortably lower than the £40,000 mark.

Slippery road alert is one of the many innovative features on the V90 Cross Country

TECHNOLOGY

The V90 Cross Country has a range of technology to assist in off-road driving as well as the increased ground clearance.

It has all-wheel drive to optimise traction on loose surfaces or in poor weather on normal road surfaces, and hill descent control to aid safe travel down steep slopes.

Continuously controlled damping offers improved stability when off-road, as well as on-road, while other systems work in harmony to ensure the Cross Country keeps moving in difficult terrain.

THINKING CAP

By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

cap hpi

Monday Just over the hills to drive the Seat Ateca, not for the first time. The last time we drove it was in sunny Barcelona and now in 'sunny' Manchester. This SUV is such a good looking car. It drives so well, looks good value and is well put together. No doubt it will be popular with fleets, it just offers so much. We drove the 1.0-litre three-cylinder, and was surprised with it, so smooth, so quiet and well worth considering. We got nearly 50mpg.

Tuesday Up the road to York for the annual SMMT test day north, where 28 makers turned up with their latest models. This event is well organised with plenty of journalists there. All the manufacturers sit at tables with keys ready to hand out, and cars are constantly going out and coming back. A good and worthwhile day.

"The Seat Ateca drives so well, looks good value and is well put together"

Wednesday/Thursday To Toyota Europe HQ in Brussels, then a 1.5-hour drive to its manufacturing plant across the border in France where the Yaris is produced. The most fascinating thing I found at this particular place was the Yaris Bi-Tone. These cars are painted as normal, then masked-up and go through the paint-shop again to get the second colour. This process is meticulous and very labour intensive.

Friday Over to Chester to pick up the 'major-facelift' Suzuki S-Cross, with its new bold front end and other changes. The new grille is impressive. We drove the car fitted with the new 1.0-litre three-cylinder Boosterjet petrol engine. Like the Ateca earlier in the week, this engine was brilliant, but you do have to wonder about the future of diesel. This Suzuki is available with AWD or front wheel drive, manual or automatic and priced from £14,999 to £24,349.

PAUL HOLMES

MANAGING DIRECTOR, FLEET MANAGERS FRIEND

A sporty type who values gaining knowledge and sharing it with others. Overcoming adversity is a theme in the books and films Holmes likes which has a resonance in his private life

My most piviotal moment was when my second eldest child was born with a severe disability. At the time this was the worst thing to ever happen to me and my family. Being the parent of a child with a disability has its challenges. But the greatest joy is when those challenges are overcome and my son benefits from the efforts of all who help deal with the obstacles he/we face every day.

Away from the office I like to spend time with my children (all four) and now the grandkids (two). I have been known to sneak in a round of golf and a bit of fly-fishing now and then. I am football mad and follow Sheffield United – "come on you Blades".

I would tell my 18-year-old self, don't think you are always right and understand you don't know every thing about every situation/scenario. Be prepared to listen and learn. There are people out there you can learn from. Identify these people and listen and learn!

My favourite film is *Zulu* (circa 1965). This film shows how a small team of people can overcome circumstances that are overwhelming, by the delivery of an organised and passionate response to terrible circumstances.

One of my earliest car memories was when my dad bought a Ford Zephyr (1962 reg) in 1970. This car was magnificent with its column shift gear and front bench seat. It was why I fell in love with all things car related.

The book I recommend is Alex Haley's *Roots*. It describes the struggles of an individual and his wider family and how they overcame the oppression of slavery. A true inspiration and very motivational.

My pet hate is individuals who only ever see the negatives in a situation. I am a person that looks at a glass half full rather than half empty. I try to avoid negative people as they usually don't achieve their objectives.

If I were Prime Minister for the day I would try to deliver a framework of policies that took into consideration the views of the people who contribute positively to society.

I'd like to be remembered as Paul H, a solid guy who got things done to the best of his ability with a smile on his face.

The three cars I'd like most are a Mercedes-Benz S350D for long drives and family trips. Ford Zephyr 1962 to bring back happy family memories and an Audi R8.

First fleet role My first fleet role was as an apprentice motor technician at British Gas. I have grown up in fleet and over the years my appreciation of what is required to run one successfully has been developed/enhanced by hands-on experience and taking advice from the many great people I have had the pleasure to work with.

Career goals at Fleet Managers Friend (FMF) I want to transfer my experience, plus the knowledge of the other seven FMF associates, to people who are responsible for the delivery of a fleet management function.

Biggest achievement in business The creation of my own fleet management consultancy, FMF. It as been running more than two years in its present format and it has delivered in excess of £4m in cost savings for clients. Plus, we have helped one of our key clients deliver record income levels.

Biggest career influence The people that have had biggest influence are the ones I can trust and are prepared to share their knowledge and experience. This is the essence of my business ethos.

Biggest mistake in business In the early days I did not always voice my opinion – probably an age/respect thing. I should have been more vocal as I had some ideas that never took off. I have learnt from this and now if I need to say something I do. Always positively!

Leadership style Inclusive. It is my belief that the best decisions are based upon consultation with people "in the know".

If I wasn't in fleet I am very sporty and if I had the skills, I would have liked to be a sports professional, with a view to becoming a manager/coach later, so I could pass on my experience.

Childhood ambition To have my own home – which I achieved.

Next issue: Darren Bell, managing director, Fleetvolution Consulting

Members of the Transit family will have the new SYNC 3 communications system available

Six-speed auto version added to the Ford Transit line-up

Ford is about to launch a new six-speed automatic transmission variant of the Transit, Transit Custom and Tourneo Custom, together with the new SYNC 3 communications system on Transit.

Two years on from completing the renewal of its Transit line-up, Ford is firmly established as Europe's fastest-growing commercial vehicle brand.

Over the past 24 months, Ford has seen its market share across Europe grow from 10.8% to 12.9% as it rose from fourth in the market to become the No. 1 selling brand.

The growth in Ford CV sales is continuing in 2016, with demand for the expanded four-model Transit family and Ranger pickup increasing by 18 per cent in the eight months to the end of August.

Transit front-wheel drive and Transit Custom customers will be able to choose a six-speed SelectShift automatic transmission in place of the standard manual gearbox, for delivery in early 2017.

The new transmission can be specified in combination with the 130 PS and 170 PS versions of the Ford EcoBlue engine, and Auto-Start-Stop is standard on all variants.

Ford's latest Transit, Transit Connect and Ranger models can now be specified with the new SYNC 3 communications system, which allows drivers to control their connected smartphones, audio and navigation functions (where fitted) with more conversational voice commands.

SYNC 3 has a redesigned touchscreen that features larger, easier-to-operate buttons, and can be used just like a smartphone with pinch-to-zoom and swipe gestures. With a more powerful processor, the system also delivers faster and more responsive performance.

FIVE-DOOR FORD FIESTA ST NOW AVAILABLE TO ORDER

The Ford Fiesta ST is for the first time available to order in five-door body-style alongside the three-door model.

It offers additional practicality with easier access to the rear seats, while retaining the performance and class-leading driving dynamics that earned the Fiesta ST more than 20 awards around the globe during its first year on sale.

The 1.6-litre EcoBoost petrol engine delivers 182PS and 240Nm of torque,

enabling 0-62mph acceleration in 6.9 seconds with 46.3mpg and 141g/km CO_2 emissions. A Ford Performance-tuned chassis features optimised suspension, steering and brakes, supported by enhanced Torque Vectoring Control – which applies brake force to the inside front wheel when cornering to improve road holding and reduce understeer without affecting speed – and three-mode Electronic Stability Control.

For further information on any Ford Fleet products or services call the Ford Business Centre on 03457 23 23 23, email flinform@ford.com, or visit ford.co.uk/fordfleet

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IN BUSINESS, ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS EVERYTHING

MEET THE S-MAX VIGNALE

- FORD SYNC 3 WITH 8" TOUCHSCREEN
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P11D	BIK	CO2	COMBINED MPG
£34,090 - £36,845	33% - 25%	180-129g/km	35.8 - 56.5

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VIGNALE

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Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for Ford S-MAX range: urban 27.4-50.4 (10.3-5.6), extra urban 43.5-61.4 (6.5-4.6), combined 35.8-56.5 (7.9-5.0). Official CO_2 emissions 180-129g/km.

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