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(4.1), Extra Urban 56.5 (5.0) – 76.3 (3.7), Combined 47.9 (5.9) – 72.4 (3.9). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 134 – 103g/km. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures are obtained consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures correct at time of print [February 2017]. More information is available on the Audi website at [www.audi.co.uk](http://www.audi.co.uk) and at [www.dft.gov.uk/vca](http://www.dft.gov.uk/vca) Choice of wheels and other options may affect Model shown is the Audi A3 Sportback S line 2.0 TFSI 190PS with optional metallic paint (£550.00), black roof rails (£250.00), privacy glass (£375.00). The What Car? Car of the Year 2017 winning model is the

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# Councils face £12bn bill to get on top of the pothole problem

Survey points to bleak future if adequate funding is not found to meet the needs of 21st century Britain

By Gareth Roberts

**O**ne in six local roads in England and Wales will need to be repaired, or even closed, within the next five years, says this year's Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance (ALARM) survey.

The cumulative effect of an ageing network, decades of underfunding, increased traffic and wetter winters has taken its toll, leaving 17% of all local roads in poor structural condition, with less than five years of life remaining.

The ALARM survey, which is produced by the Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA), reports that local authorities need more than £12 billion to bring the network up to scratch.

The shortfall has remained largely unchanged for four years – and the gap between the amount councils received this year and the amount they say they need to keep carriageways in reasonable order is almost £730 million.

Alan Mackenzie, chairman of the AIA, said: "Local authority highway teams do not have enough resources to arrest the terminal decline in the condition of our local roads and the network is not resilient enough to meet the challenges ahead."

## EFFICIENCIES APPLAUDED

Despite this, the AIA believes the efficiencies councils have achieved in recent years through adopting an asset management approach should be applauded.

"Working smarter, greater collaboration and improved communication are all contributing to their ability to do more with less – though, of course, there will come a point when there are no further efficiency savings to be found," Mackenzie continued.

A large number of local authorities (England: 43%; London: 53%; Wales: 56%) say they have also been hit with unforeseen costs primarily as a result of structural failures caused by adverse weather and increased traffic, which have put additional pressure on resources.

Potholes continue to be major problem for fleets, with 90% of respondents to a recent *Fleet News* poll saying they had not seen any improvement in the state of roads in the UK despite more funding being allocated to pothole repairs.

The ALARM survey shows that the number of potholes filled over the past year has dropped again for the second successive year, but is still

high at 1.7 million – one every 19 seconds.

"Potholes are a symptom of poorly maintained roads and can have a serious effect on road users but spending money fixing them in isolation, although essential, is wasteful," said Mackenzie.

"The most efficient way to deal with our crumbling roads is to fix them properly and stop potholes forming in the first place.

"It is time we had a rethink about the future funding of our roads otherwise we will end up with a network that is just not fit for purpose."

While the ALARM survey highlights a funding shortfall on local roads, a report from the National Audit Office (NAO) has called into the question the affordability and deliverability of improvements to the strategic road network.

It says the Department for Transport (DfT) and Highways England need to take decisive action before the summer if they are to deliver optimal value from their Road Investment Strategy.

The first Road Investment Strategy, which covers the five years between April 2015 and March 2020, is an important step towards better long-term planning of England's strategic road network.

But, the NAO says the speed with which it was put together has created risks to deliverability, affordability and value for money which could be carried forward into future road investment periods.

Amyas Morse, head of the NAO, said: "The department and Highways England need to agree a more realistic and affordable plan if they are to provide optimal value from the Road Investment Strategy."

In 2013, the Government committed £11.4bn of capital funding to improving motorways and A-roads during road period 1 (2015-20), with £7.7bn for 112 major enhancement projects and other projects designed to, for example, promote cycling, improve air quality and encourage economic growth. The remainder was allocated to the renewal of the existing network.

The DfT planned the strategy in 17 months, in order to publish it before the May 2015 General Election.

As a result of this, the NAO claims that the DfT selected projects without knowing whether they would be the best value and 54 of the 112 projects are currently scheduled to start in 2019/20, which could cause significant disruption to motorists.

Highways England is also facing challenges in recruitment of staff to cope with the increased workload. It plans to procure contracts for 57



projects in 2017, compared to six in 2016, but is 19% below its target headcount for procurement and commercial specialists who are in high demand.

Gaps have been filled with consultants and interim staff, who cost on average three times more than permanent employees.

The Government road improvements company is now reviewing the portfolio of enhancement projects to improve value for money, and has so far identified 16 projects which present a risk.

Managing that risk could include revising project design, cancelling projects or delaying projects to



**72,544**  
potholes filled in in London

**16%**  
of local roads in London  
reported as having less than  
five years' life remaining

**£85.7m**  
per authority – estimated one-time  
catch-up cost in England to get  
roads back into reasonable  
condition

enable further assessment of benefits. It has also developed options to bring forward the start dates of up to 10 projects and to delay up to 19 to reduce the number of projects due to start in 2019-20 to establish a smoother delivery profile and reduce disruption to the road network.

While this may mean that some stakeholder expectations are not met, value for money depends on the DfT and Highways England proceeding, in this and in future road periods, with a realistic and affordable plan, says the NAO.

Morse continued: "Highways England has been working to address the risks to deliverability,

*"The most efficient way to deal with our crumbling roads is to fix them properly"*



Alan Mackenzie, Asphalt Industry Alliance

affordability and value for money that were present in 2015, but we are now nearly two years into the five-year road investment period.

"Decisive action needs to be taken before the updated delivery plan is published in the summer if shortcomings in the current strategy are not to be carried over into future road investment periods."

The NAO has recommended that the DfT and Highways England should agree an updated delivery plan for the remainder of the road period, including a clear statement setting out the impact of this updated plan on any work undertaken in the next road period.

Graham Cookson, chief economist at traffic data firm Inrix, said: "Delaying, or even worse cancelling, these road improvements will strip the economy of billions, hamper business efficiency dramatically, and waste drivers' time and money."

## NOT TACKLING CONGESTION

However, new research published by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) suggests that road building is failing to tackle congestion.

The CPRE report claims that traffic was found to increase much more in road corridors with new schemes than background traffic in the surrounding area.

It says schemes completed eight to 20 years ago demonstrated a traffic increase of 47%, while traffic more than doubled in one scheme, and all new schemes put pressure on adjoining roads, while there were negligible reductions in journey times.

Ralph Smyth, head of infrastructure and legal at the CPRE, said: "We are seemingly stuck in an ideological traffic jam from which we cannot escape. Building ever bigger roads should be the last resort – not the default choice."

However, the Road Haulage Association (RHA) labelled the report "misguided".

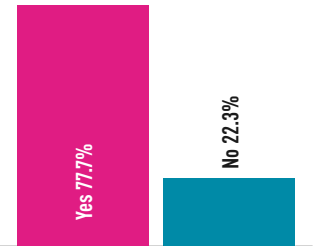
RHA chief executive Richard Burnett said: "Only by ensuring a road network that is fit for use can the competitiveness and productivity of the UK be maintained."

"The UK needs transport infrastructure that meets the needs of UK people and businesses in the 21st century. Limiting our infrastructure's ability to meet demand will result in more delays, more congestion, more pollution and unnecessary waste."

## FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

### OPINION POLL

Will a change in the tax treatment of diesel vehicles make you less likely to choose the fuel type?



### FleetNews view:

The Government says it will look at the tax treatment of diesel vehicles before announcing any changes in its first Autumn Budget later this year. Any change could have a dramatic impact on the popularity of the fuel choice, with three quarters of respondents saying they would be less likely to choose the fuel type, according to our poll. Fleet News looks forward to seeing the detail, but believes any changes should take into account improvements made by engine manufacturers.

This week's poll: Do you think Scotland should follow the lead of England and Wales and introduce a zero tolerance approach to drug-driving?  
[fleetnews.co.uk/polls](http://fleetnews.co.uk/polls)

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BP may follow the lead of its pilot scheme in Holland where multiple fast-charging systems were introduced

# It's on the cards – charge points on forecourts is a 'logical move'

## Increasing adoption of pure electric and hybrid vehicles drives oil giant's thinking

By Gareth Roberts

**B**P fuel cards could be used to pay for charging plug-in vehicles on UK forecourts within two years. The availability of charge points has long been a barrier to wider uptake of plug-in cars and vans, especially for higher mileage company car drivers.

However, the head of BP Fuel Cards in the UK, Andy Allen, told *Fleet News* that the introduction of charge points, and using its fuel card to pay for the electricity, is a 'logical step' for the fuel giant.

Currently, there are 6,648 electric vehicle (EV) public charge points in the UK at 4,343 locations, including 1,005 rapid chargers, according to Zap Map, a website which tracks charge point location and information.

But, the Government is keen to grow the network further and set out its plans in the

Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill (previously the Modern Transport Bill), last month (*Fleet News*, March 16).

It includes possible powers for the Government to force large fuel retailers and motorway service operators to provide EV and/or hydrogen refuelling facilities on their forecourts.

Speaking to *Fleet News* prior to the bill's publication, Allen said: "EV charging is a logical move and it will happen within the next year or two."

BP, which operates a branded network of 1,300 sites, has already launched a similar scheme in the Netherlands after multiple fast-charging systems were introduced at some of its service stations in 2011, as part of a nationwide trial.

The Dutch have been early adopters of the technology, with plug-in vehicles achieving a record 9.7% share of the country's new car market in 2015. That compares to 1.1% of the market in the UK. But, while EV uptake here has lagged behind the Netherlands, the increasing adoption of both pure electric and hybrid vehicles is now driving BP's thinking in the UK.

The latest figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) shows that plug-in registrations for January and February were up by 12.6% year-on-year – 3,822 units compared to 3,395 units. It means there are now some 87,000 plug-in cars registered in the UK, compared to more than 113,000 on Dutch roads.

It is worth noting, however, that according to BP's long term energy outlook, the introduction of 100 million electric cars on the road globally by 2035 will only reduce global oil demand growth by 1.2 million barrels.

Allen says that the continued growth in light goods vehicle (LGV) sales has driven demand for diesel and he does not think that will change.

However, he said: "Over the past couple of years we have seen a couple of percentage points drop in petrol demand every year, but I think we may now see that change as people switch from diesels to petrol hybrids."

BP is not the only fuel provider which is recognising the need to change its forecourt offering. Shell previously told *Fleet News* it was "examining the potential to introduce EV charging points across some parts of our retail network from 2017 onwards".

However, so far it has refused to say how many EV charging points will be installed and how much it will charge drivers to recharge their vehicle's battery (*Fleet News*: October 13, 2016).

Meanwhile, Total is said to be working on a similar move in a bid to capitalise on the emerging electric car market 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.

Esso also 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. Of the 1,100 Esso-branded service stations around 500 are owned by the fuel retailer.

Allen concluded: "From a fleet manager's perspective, what they want is consolidated invoicing. It doesn't matter if you're lifting petrol, diesel or electricity."



*"It will happen within the next year or two"*

Andy Allen,  
BP Fuel Cards

# Finance Bill gives clarity to fleets on revised salary sacrifice rules

Tax specialist says the additional cost will be marginal – a few pounds a month

By Gareth Roberts

**N**ew rules around the tax treatment of salary sacrifice and cash allowance drivers have now been confirmed in the Finance Bill. Giving further detail around measures announced in the Autumn Statement and the Budget, the bill also includes new benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax bands for 2020/21 (see panel).

Under the old rules drivers obtaining a car via a salary sacrifice scheme were taxed on the BIK of their chosen vehicle.

The new rules, outlined in the Finance Bill, will see them taxed on the higher of either the BIK or the sacrificed salary – unless they choose an ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV) in which case the rules are unchanged until 2021.

The legislation aims to ensure that benefits provided under what it calls 'Optional Remuneration Arrangements' (OpRA) no longer have the income tax and NICs advantages previously available under salary sacrifice arrangements.

It also confirmed that the changes will apply to BIK with a cash allowance option and flexible benefits packages with a cash option.

Company car tax specialist Alastair Kendrick told *Fleet News*: "For a salary sacrifice car scheme not involving a sub-75g/km car, the new rules for vehicles entered into prior to April 5, 2017, will not bite before April 5, 2021.

"For those with a cash or car alternative the new rules apply from April 5, 2018, unless the



*"For those with a cash or car alternative the new rules apply from April 5, 2018"*

Alastair Kendrick, company car tax specialist

## BILL CONFIRMS 15 NEW BIK TAX BANDS FOR 2020/21

Car (g/km of CO <sub>2</sub> )	Appropriate percentage from April 2020	Appropriate percentage (2019/2020)
0	16%	
1 – 50		
■ Car with electric range of 130 miles or more	2%	16%
■ Car with electric range of 70-129 miles	5%	16%
■ Car with electric range of 40-69 miles	8%	16%
■ Car with electric range of 30-39 miles	12%	16%
■ Car with electric range of less than 30 miles	14%	16%
51 – 54	15%	19%
55 – 59	16%	19%
60 – 64	17%	19%
65 – 69	18%	19%
70 – 74	19%	19% (up to 75g/km)
75 – 79	20%	22%
80 – 84	21%	22%
85 – 89	22%	22%
90 – 94	23%	22%

**\* Add 3% for diesels up to a maximum of 37%**

The Finance Bill introduces 15 new bandings, of which 11 are for ultra-low emission vehicles (sub-75g/km). From 2020, the appropriate percentages for zero emission cars will drop from 16% to 2%, while those for cars with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions between 1g/km and 50g/km will vary between 2% and 14% dependent on the number of zero-emission miles the vehicle can travel. The measure also increases appropriate percentages by one percentage point to a maximum value of 37% for cars with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 90g/km and above.

contract is changed after April 6, 2017. The new rules when would then take effect from the date when the change occurred or from April 5, 2018, whichever is the sooner."

While the legislation does introduce an added degree of complexity, Matthew Walters, head of consultancy services at LeasePlan UK, believes it is about providers supplying drivers, whether salary sacrifice or those who have the option of cash or car, with "the right degree of transparency in their quotation tools".

He also does not expect it to have a big financial impact on employees. He explained: "The fact of the matter is that, while the vast majority of new salary sacrifice car drivers will see an increase in costs, this is marginal and in most cases this is a matter of a few pounds a month.

"Salary sacrifice for car schemes, where available, still represent a cost-effective way of driving a brand new, insured, fully maintained vehicle."

Leasing companies have been preparing for the change to help drivers understand the new rules, but Colin Tourick, professor of automotive management at the University of Buckingham, believes some may struggle.

He said: "Leasing companies haven't been given enough time to modify their quoting systems to show drivers the amount of tax they'll be paying on their new cars, which will now be based on their chosen car BIK tax or their cash allowance.

"Most leasing companies don't even hold details of employees' cash allowances."





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# GreenRoad partners with Smith Systems to offer driver training

Companies stay independent but cooperation extends to other areas of expertise

By Tom Seymour

**G**reenRoad has entered into a strategic partnership with Smith Systems to offer driver training for its fleet customers. The arrangement will see the telematics company offer training to its existing network of 100 fleets in the UK, while Smith Systems will also be offering its customers telematics technology through GreenRoad's mobile telematics app.

Smith Systems is a global driver training company and has its UK headquarters based in Wembley. It works with 30,000 fleet drivers each year across 98 different countries, offering Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) training and improvement courses on the road and in the classroom. It already provides training for UK fleets including BOC, Hoyer, DHL, First Group and ExxonMobil.

GreenRoad has been in the UK market since 2009 and claims to have a 20% market share of the telematics market for the coach and bus industry. It works with 100 fleets in the UK,

including car and van fleets, but around 75% of its business is with coaches and buses.

Zeev Braude, GreenRoad chief executive, said fleet managers can use telematics technology to improve driver behaviour for around 90% of drivers, but the final 10% may need further training to help improve and this is where the partnership with Smith Systems can help.

Braude said both companies will remain separate and there are no plans for an acquisition.

The driver training provided through Smith Systems will be an additional cost to a fleet's existing GreenRoad telematics package. Braude said the cost will depend on the type of service customers may need. This can start from a one day session to a retained service, but these are agreed directly between Smith Systems and the customer.

Meanwhile, Smith Systems will also be offering the GreenRoad app to its customers either as an add-on or as part of a training package for customers.

Braude told *Fleet News* the new deal marks the start of a transition for the company as it looks to move the majority of its customers across to mobile app telematics solutions, rather than a hardwired OBD port option.

He said: "Offering our technology through the mobile app opens up what I think is an untapped market for the 14 million grey fleet vehicles in the UK. This is a huge change to our business model. It will also help us access more car and van fleets."

"Hardwired telematics are quite rigid in what they offer and they have a lower gross margin."

"While some of our customers will not be ready to transition to the mobile app and some may stay with the hardwired option, mobile is the direction we are heading in as a company."

Braude said telematics from a mobile app lowers the cost of entry and makes it easier for fleets to introduce the system to any car.

The company offers the mobile app technology from £10 a vehicle a month. However, Braude said this can be adjusted dependent on the volume of vehicles. There is no minimum commitment contract for fleets that take the technology.

Moving to a mobile telematics strategy will help GreenRoad stay ahead of changes in the market as manufacturers look to either remove the OBD port entirely from new models, or at least limit access to it.

New vehicles from manufacturers like BMW are already on sale that can share fault codes and diagnostic data wirelessly, so moving to a mobile telematics strategy helps sidestep any future issues around gaining OBD access.

Braude believes there will still be room for third-party telematics providers as more manufacturers look to move into the space.

He said: "I think manufacturers are looking at what technology they can offer drivers and telematics is low hanging fruit."

"More and more vehicles will be connected in the future but I think the challenge for manufacturers will be around becoming service providers. This business is complex and it's 24/7. You can't offer the technology as a standalone, there has to be the support that comes with it."



*"Mobile is the direction we are heading in as a company"*

Zeev Braude, GreenRoad



# Lords committee urges research into impact of autonomy on drivers

Safety, behavioural and ethical questions need to be answered says report

By Tom Seymour

**T**he House of Lords Science and Technology Committee is urging the Government to prioritise research into the social, behavioural and ethical questions relating to autonomous cars that still "largely remain unanswered".

The Committee's 'Connected and Autonomous Vehicles: The future?' report suggests autonomous vehicles have the potential to lower the number of road fatalities, but it says that "the eradication of human error will only be realised with full automation which could take decades".

Furthermore, the report noted that autonomous cars could have negative implications for drivers' competence, making drivers complacent and overly reliant on technology.

It continued: "This is of particular concern in emergency situations, where a driver may react slowly to taking back control of a vehicle."

"The Government should give priority to commissioning and encouraging research studying behavioural questions and ensure it is an integral part of any trials it funds."

Chairman of the committee The Earl of Selborne said: "Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAV) is a fast-moving area of technology and the Government has much to do, alongside industry and other partners, to position the UK so that it can take full advantage of the opportunities that CAV offers in different sectors."

Selborne wants the Government to broaden its focus to make sure it is not so heavily focused on road vehicles.

He said: "Early benefits of automation are likely to come in sectors such as marine and agriculture therefore the Government must not allow media attention around driverless cars to cause it to lose sight of the many potential benefits that



The car explains its actions to the hands-off driver

CAV can provide in areas outside the roads sector."

The report recommends that mobile coverage on UK roads will need to be improved in order to take full advantage of the possibilities of connected vehicles. This would mean widely available 4G and next-generation 5G signal for cars and the road network's connected infrastructure to use.

## UK TRIALS

Public trials will play a leading role in feeding back research to the Government to inform future legislation.

UK Autodrive, the largest of three publicly funded trials in the UK, will be taking the lead with testing autonomous vehicles on public roads. The project is running alongside others in Bristol and Greenwich, south London.

There are five accepted technology levels which distinguish between differing levels of capability for autonomous vehicles. A level 4 vehicle can do the complete driving task but only under certain boundary conditions. A level 5 vehicle is a vehicle that does all the driving all the time, and is capable of doing any driving that a human driver is capable of.

Evidence given to the committee suggests level 4 vehicles are not expected to be widely available on UK roads for at least another five

years, while Level 5 vehicles will be 2030 at the earliest.

Jaguar, Land Rover and Ford are part of UK Autodrive's 16-member consortium and each will have autonomous saloons on the road at the start of next year.

The tests will take place on public roads around Milton Keynes and near Coventry on the M1. The trial will use 12 cars travelling across the same routes to gather data.

The vehicles will demonstrate their level 4 capabilities, with a professional test driver ready to take over should anything happen.

TRL (Transport Research Laboratory) also gave written evidence as part of the report and addressed the potential negative impact autonomous vehicles could have on the UK employment market. It said the role of delivery taxi, lorry and public transport drivers could be those that may be redundant, but said the transition would not happen overnight.

TRL's written evidence said: "It is often the case that emerging technologies change the employment market."

"While a new system may make workers redundant, it also creates opportunities in new areas. This can be expected with the growth of automated vehicles and their potential to replace driving jobs across the transport sector."

It said businesses employing drivers will have time to "adjust, retrain and redeploy employees where possible".

*"The Government should give priority to commissioning and encouraging research studying behavioural questions and ensure it is an integral part of any trials it funds"*

Science and Technology Committee report

# Select committee supergroup to oversee Whitehall clean air plans

Fleets await draft proposals as four Government bodies cooperate on NO<sub>2</sub>

By Gareth Roberts

**T**he Government is coming under increasing pressure to introduce a range of measures which will effectively tackle urban pollution hotspots.

A new draft air quality plan is due to be published in the next few weeks, after it lost two court cases in the space of 18 months regarding previous proposals to tackle the key pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>).

The High Court has ordered the Government to publish a draft new clean air plan to tackle NO<sub>2</sub> by April 24, with a final plan by July 31.

But, while fleets wait to learn how the new measures will impact operations, MPs have launched an unprecedented super inquiry into air quality ahead of their publication.

Four Commons select committees – Environmental Audit, Environment Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA), Health, and Transport (TSC), have joined forces to examine whether the new proposals will go far enough to cut pollution “not only to meet legal limits but also to deliver maximum health and environmental benefits”.

Neil Parish, chairman of the EFRA committee, explained: “The solutions to cleaning up our air are not the responsibility of just one minister. That’s why we have taken the unprecedented step of convening four select committees so we can scrutinise the Government’s efforts from every angle and look for holistic solutions that are good for health, transport and the environment.”

There has been increasing public and professional concern about the health and environmental effects of air pollution over the past decade, with special emphasis on NO<sub>2</sub> and particulates.

Sarah Wollaston, chairman of the Health Committee, said: “Poor air quality is affecting the health of millions of people across the UK because of the impact of invisible particulates and other pollutants.

“Our joint inquiry will include an examination of the scale of the harm caused and the action necessary to tackle it.”

The Government has acknowledged that pollution causes up to 50,000 early deaths – 9,000 of them in London. It is also estimated to cost the country £27.5 billion each year, with 38 out of 43 UK air quality zones in breach of legal limits for air pollution.

Road transport is a major source of air pollution and the use of ‘defeat devices’ in the US by the VW Group, along with an inadequate vehicle emission testing regime, has put cars, vans and trucks firmly in the spotlight.

Louise Ellman, chairman of the TSC, said: “The UK economy depends on an efficient and flexible transport system but emissions from vehicles are a significant problem and the standards that Governments have relied on have not delivered the expected reductions.

“We will be asking what more can be done to increase the use of cleaner vehicles as well as

to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport.”

The four committees will be considering the following questions in cooperation:

■ How effectively do Government policies take account of the health and environmental impacts of poor air quality?

■ Are the Government’s revised plans for tackling nitrogen dioxide levels sufficient to meet the High Court and European Commission requirements for urgent action?

■ Does the revised plan set out effective and proportionate measures for reducing emissions from transport?

■ Is there sufficient cross-government collaboration to ensure the right fiscal and policy incentives are adopted to ensure air quality targets are achieved?

Tony English, CEO of telematics provider Isotrak, believes the transport industry has a major role to play in the development of a holistic solution to the air pollution problem.

He said: “Fleet owners must play their part, and can do so by taking measures to increase efficiency, reduce fuel consumption, and optimise fleet size.

“A fleet that takes full advantage of improving driver behaviour not only reduces costs but also helps the UK meet its pollution target.

“Fleet operators have made great strides in improving their record on pollution, but further improvements in strategy can also make a real impact on environmental performance.”

The Budget revealed that the Government will look at the tax treatment of diesel vehicles before announcing any changes in its first Autumn Budget later this year (*Fleet News*, March 16).

But, the new air quality plan is also expected to include measures which target diesel use and road transport in general. Chief among those will be the introduction of so-called Clean Air

*“Fleet owners must play their part, and can do so by taking measures to increase efficiency”*

Tony English, Isotrak



A Foggy Day (in London Town) may be the title of a popular standard but the Government is under pressure to introduce measures to stop it happening

## BLUELIGHT FLEETS FEAR EARLY INTRODUCTION OF ULEZ

All three emergency services in London are concerned about the financial and logistical impact of a 2019 introduction of an ultra-low emission zone (ULEZ).

That's according to information obtained by London Assembly member and Conservative environment spokesman Shaun Bailey.

The ULEZ will require all vehicles – including those run by the emergency services – travelling inside the zone to meet exhaust emission standards or pay a daily charge of £12.50.

The previous Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, proposed to introduce the ULEZ in 2020 but Sadiq Khan has pledged to bring forward the date to 2019 and wants to widen the zone to the North and South Circular.

Responses by all three emergency services to the current public consultation, obtained through freedom of information requests, showed the Metropolitan Police would have to replace 82% of its 4,000 vehicle fleet and by 2020 it will still have 800 non-compliant vehicles facing daily charges.

It recently announced that it is to introduce



More than 800 ambulances don't comply

250 electric or plug-in hybrid cars to its fleet after ditching its diesel-only policy in response to air quality concerns (*Fleet News*, March 2).

Jiggs Bharij, head of fleet at The Met, said: "Our aim is to make the fleet as clean as we can while maintaining operational capability."

London Ambulance says it needs to replace 828 diesel vehicles and 27 petrol vehicles before the fleet is ULEZ compliant, and it will have to modify its replacement programme if the deadline is brought forward.

London Fire Brigade will have 52

non-compliant vehicles on the road facing daily charges – potentially costing a quarter of a million pounds per year.

However, the fire service is making great in-roads in 'greening' its fleet. Electric vehicles (EVs) might seem a little impractical for the fire service given their limited range and charging requirements. However, by the end of last year, London Fire Brigade's entire liveried frontline car fleet comprised plug-in hybrid and range extender vehicles (*Fleet News*, July 7 2016).

In total, 52 BMW i3 range-extender models joined five existing EVs, replacing Vauxhall Astras, and it is also looking at how it can develop a low-carbon fire engine.

Bailey concluded: "It seems unbelievable that our emergency services are not exempt from this pollution tax given their whole reason for driving in London is to save lives.

"Of course it makes sense that over time they should introduce more modern vehicles to their fleet but the financial pressures the early deadline is placing on their already tight budgets could put at risk the ability to do their jobs."

Zones (CAZs) in the UK's most polluted cities.

The Euro 6 vehicle emission standard has been required for newly registered vans and minibuses since September 2016 (2015 for new models).

The Government's draft CAZ framework proposed that only the latest Euro 6 diesel vans and minibuses are allowed to be driven in a number of UK cities without incurring a charge.

Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, Derby and Southampton are required to have a CAZ in operation by 2020, while London could introduce an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) from 2019.

However, it is estimated around 55% of vans and minibuses driven in London on an average day in 2019 would not comply with Euro 6 standards.

Information obtained by London Assembly member and Conservative environment spokesman Shaun Bailey, shows that all three emergency services in the capital are concerned about the financial and logistical impact of a 2019 introduction (see panel).

*"We will be asking what more can be done to increase the use of cleaner vehicles"*



Louise Ellman,  
Transport Select Committee

The Freight Transport Association (FTA) similarly believes that many fleets will struggle to adopt compliant vehicles before 2019.

FTA's head of national and regional policy Christopher Snelling said: "We stated before that the central ULEZ starting in 2019 and expanding

in 2020 would cause significant issues – especially in the van sector where there will only be two-and-a-half to three years' worth of compliant vehicles in the fleet.

"Those using, or relying on, vans in inner London will now face a situation where there are no secondhand vehicles available to purchase."

FTA estimates that to comply with these proposals will cost the average small operator with five vans more than £100,000 extra up front – more than 150% of the company's annual turnover.

Therefore, the FTA claims that the regulation could lock some small businesses out of the London market altogether (*fleetnews.co.uk*, October 11 2016).

Snelling concluded: "No one disputes the need to improve air quality. Once again what we do object to is the one-sided nature of these measures – all burden and no support."

Written submissions can be made to the committees involved in the air quality inquiry by 5pm on Friday, May 12.

**BMW** Fleet & Business Sales



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Official fuel economy figures for the new BMW 4 Series Gran Coupé: Urban 31.0-60.1mpg (9.1-4.7l/100km). Extra Urban 49.6-78.5mpg (5.7-3.6l/100km). Combined 40.9-70.6mpg (6.9-4.0l/100km). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 159-106g/km.

Figures are obtained in a standardised test cycle. They are intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not be representative of what a user achieves under usual driving conditions.





**The Ultimate  
Driving Machine**



# THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*



Like our *Fleet News* Awards winners (coverage starts page 31), our website is constantly innovating and growing; it's one of the reasons why we have a 90%-plus share of fleet traffic according to the independent monitor Hitwise.

Now we have teamed up with Emissions Analytics to launch a new real-life fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions tool on our website based on its Equa Index.

We know from our own long-term tests just how difficult it is to get close to the manufacturers' official figures. In fairness, the manufacturers recognise this too – the official tests are for guideline comparisons between models rather than a guarantee of efficiency.

Nevertheless, it is easier to draw close to the figures for some models than others.

*"Official fuel economy figures are 41% higher than those achievable in the real world"*

This will change in September with the introduction of the new worldwide harmonised light vehicles test procedure (WLTP). Some manufacturers such as Peugeot and Citroën have already started publishing their own 'real-world' test data alongside the official mpg and CO<sub>2</sub> figures.

The WLTP, while more realistic than the current test cycle, is not real-world. Good news for fleets is that the Equa data, powered by Emissions Analytics is. You will be able to use the figures in your own total cost of ownership calculations to produce more accurate and meaningful comparisons between models.

The Equa Index covers more than 70,000 models and shows that, on average, official fuel economy figures are 41% higher than those achievable in the real world.

Go to [fleetnews.co.uk/cars/co2-emissions-calculator/](http://fleetnews.co.uk/cars/co2-emissions-calculator/) to start searching.

**HONOURS FOR FLEET NEWS JOURNALISTS**  
Congratulations to *Fleet News* deputy editor Sarah Tooze for being named automotive business journalist of the year in the Newspress Awards, which recognises journalists in the motoring sector, and news editor Gareth Roberts for being highly commended in the commercial vehicle writer category.

## YOUR LETTERS

### SCRAPPAGE SCHEME

## Don't tar all diesels with the same brush

EDITOR'S PICK



#### Petrol Paul wrote:

Having read 'Two-thirds of diesel drivers 'happy' to consider scrappage deal' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), March 7) I believe that as fleet we need to be careful when talking about diesels generically.

There is absolutely no point scrapping a newer Euro 5 or Euro 6

diesel with stop-start technology and comparatively low NO<sub>x</sub> emissions. All diesels are not the same.

What we do need to focus on with scrappage is getting older, less efficient and more polluting diesels (not just cars but vans, trucks and buses) off our roads and replacing them with clean technology.

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

### TAXATION

## Review fleet policies regularly

#### IainB wrote:

Having read 'Review vehicle policies now after Budget hints at diesel tax rise' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), March 22) fleet policies should always be reviewed on a regular basis, but they should definitely be looked at closely after any significant announcements around fiscal policy.

It's not clear what the Government may have in mind in terms of diesel vehicles, but I wouldn't expect company car tax to change dramatically. I also wouldn't expect the Government to introduce a hike in fuel duty when its popularity might be suffering in the midst of difficult Brexit negotiations.

A change in diesel taxation is more likely at a local level, where pollution is

at its worst and measures can be introduced to target it more effectively.

#### Clive wrote:

Having read 'BVRLA calls for a re-think on planned VED changes' ([fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk), March 8) I currently own two new Land Rovers which cost £44,000 each, however the ridiculous £310 per annum [VED charge] on a car costing £40,000 and more means it's game over on principle. It will be a modest or pre-April 2017 secondhand vehicle in the future.

Perhaps the Government presumes that if someone has an expensive car they won't mind the extra costs. Wrong. The second hand market will be the beneficiaries in this fiasco.



## FUEL

# Risk of clogged DPF

### Sage & Onion wrote:

Having read 'Which fuel is right for your fleet?' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 13) one issue to consider with Euro 6 diesel is the impact on operations and maintenance costs from clogged diesel particulate filters (DPFs) if the cars are used mainly in slow, stop-start or short journeys in town where exhausts can't run up to the required temperatures to trigger the regeneration cycle.

## DRUGS

# Law change makes sense

### TommyC wrote:

Having read 'Brake calls for ban on drug driving in Scotland' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 17) I presumed, perhaps like many others, that the same rules applied for drug-driving in Scotland as they do in England. As they clearly don't, it's high time they followed suit and took a zero tolerance approach. Not employing the same penalties north of the border is tantamount to turning a blind eye to what is a serious and widespread problem.

## EMISSIONS

# Environmental impact

### Iain wrote:

Having read 'Emergency services 'struggling to comply' with earlier ULEZ deadline' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 20) when will common sense be applied? The environmental impact is surely much less hazardous than a lack of emergency services – and less costly. It's bureaucratic claptrap driven by Europe and the Labour left.

## H M R C

# Advisory fuel rates don't add up

### Chris Byrne wrote:

Having read 'HMRC makes change to advisory fuel rate after original update' (fleetnews.co.uk, February 27) this makes me laugh. I have a 1800cc petrol-engined car. I have receipts for petrol dated December 6 2016, and fuel was 109.9p per litre. A receipt I have for petrol, from the same filling station on February 18 2017, was for 115.9p per litre.

This is an increase of 6p per litre for every litre of fuel I use, but there is no increase in the rates for petrol-engined cars below 2000cc.

## TYRES

# Good car management

### KennyR wrote:

Having read 'Low tyre pressures put millions of drivers at risk' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 15) getting drivers to regularly check tyre pressures can prove very difficult for most fleets.

I know many drivers who never check their tyre pressures which, as this article highlights, is very dangerous, let alone detrimental to the ride and fuel efficiency of your car. Line managers and fleet professionals should continue to bang the drum for regular checks and perhaps use the potential of savings at the pump as a lever to change behaviour.

As the article says, checking tyre pressure is the bread and butter of car management.



**HAVE YOUR SAY** Email: [fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto:fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk) Comment online: [fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk)  
LinkedIn: [UK fleet managers group](https://www.linkedin.com/company/uk-fleet-managers-group) Twitter: [twitter.com/\\_FleetNews](https://twitter.com/_FleetNews)

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ISSN 0953-8526.  
Printing: PCP, Telford



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Email – [fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto:fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk)

### Burning question:

We give/send cards for all sorts of occasions. Which one would you scrap or introduce?

### Editorial

#### Editor-in-chief

Stephen Briers 01733 468024  
[stephen.briers@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto:stephen.briers@bauermedia.co.uk)

**Valentine's Day. We have already scrapped it in our house**

#### Deputy editor

Sarah Tooze 01733 468901  
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**I would scrap cards from your cat/dog**

#### News editor

Gareth Roberts 01733 468314  
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**I'd ditch Valentine's Day**

#### Features editor

Andrew Ryan 01733 468308  
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**I would scrap anything to do with Halloween**

#### Head of digital

Jeremy Bennett 01733 468655  
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**Valentine's Day**

#### Staff writer

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[matt.deprez@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto:matt.deprez@bauermedia.co.uk)

**Introduce: Congratulations on your new car**

**Photos** Chris Lowndes

### Production

#### Head of publishing

Luke Neal 01733 468262

**I'd get rid of them all in favour of a text, a meeting or a phone call**

#### Production editors

David Buckley 01733 468310

**Can't see the point of Father's Day**

Finbarr O'Reilly 01733 468267

**Scrap them all. Send a text**

#### Designer

Erika Small 01733 468312

**Apart from birthdays, everything else can be scrapped**

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## THE ART OF PERFORMANCE

Official fuel consumption for the Jaguar XE range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 24.4-64.2 (11.6-4.4); Extra Urban 46.3-83.1 (6.1-3.4); Combined 34.9-75.0 (8.1-3.8). CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 194-99 (g/km). Official EU Test Figures. For comparison purposes only. Real world figures may differ.

\*All in car features should be used by drivers only when it is safe for them to do so. Drivers must ensure they are in full control of the vehicle at all times.



## FLEET OPINION

## SAFETY POLICIES

## Switch phone off when on the road

By Scott Chesworth

“Driving is one of the most dangerous activities employees can be involved in. However, one of the biggest risks affecting road safety could easily be eliminated. Mobile phones – whether they are used to make calls or play music – are a key contributor to driver distraction and research has found that those drivers who use them (even hands-free) are four times more likely to be in a crash.

As employers have a duty under health and safety law to ensure staff and others are not put at risk by work-related driving activities, it is essential that businesses put policies in place to prevent dangerous driving, including the use of mobile phones.

While an outright ban might seem like an appropriate solution, in practice, it is unlikely to work as it is very difficult to police and monitor. Instead, employers should look to utilising other tools, such as communication, management and technology, to create substantial behavioural change.

When it comes to communicating with staff, it will not be sufficient to simply remind them of the dangers of using a phone while driving – it is likely they already know this. Ideally, employers should be aiming to find out why employees would reach for their phone when on the road, to discover the root of the problem and offer alternative solutions if possible.

Management should be championing the no phone rule and therefore under no circumstances should they be contacting staff when they are driving. However, they also need to recognise they should be realistic when encouraging employees to ‘switch off’ when driving.

Many workers rely heavily on their devices for work purposes. Therefore creating safer journeys, which involve designated times and places to stop and check emails or return calls, should be considered.

Finally, other technology, such as vehicle tracking software, can play a role in preventing motorists using mobiles when on the road. Telematics systems use GPS technology to relay the real-time location and information of a vehicle, removing the need for drivers to call or text managers or customers with their location.”

*“Under no circumstances should management be contacting staff when they are driving”*



**Scott Chesworth**  
Operations director  
at RAM Tracking



**Graham O'Neill**  
CEO at ACIS

## REDUCING DOWNTIME

## Smarter ways to keep cars running

By Graham O'Neill

“To paraphrase post-war Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, the fleet sector ‘has never had it so good’. Macmillan was talking about Britons benefitting from post-war prosperity, but I am describing fleet managers now having choices never enjoyed previously when it comes to keeping company vehicles on the road – the so-called ‘sweating of the assets’.

Accident-induced downtime is the scourge of the fleet sector with profitability being impacted as costs escalate for every day a fleet car is off the road.

Key-to-key times in bodyshops average 17 days, but new technology can compress this by at least 10 days despite the fact there are fewer accident repair centres to choose from.

In the 1990s there were more than 12,000 bodyshops nationwide, but today, as a result of consolidation and the exacting standards of the insurance sector, there are fewer than 4,000.

So how does the service improve if there are fewer bodyshops? The answer is simple: technology and smarter working practices, plus a sweeping culture of excellence across the bodyshop sector that today resembles high-tech surgical wards rather than the grimy ‘under the arches’ garages of the Macmillan era.

New working practices and stringent online inventory controls means greater repair volumes are passed through bodyshops with less waste, meaning greater profitability for the accident repair centre and greatly reduced vehicle off road times for fleet managers.

Smart (small to medium area repair technology) repairs is another game-changer for the fleet sector both in terms of on-going regular repairs when the vehicles are in for service or routine maintenance, but also at the end of lease life as the vehicle is being de-fleeted and prepped for re-sale.

The range of products available means repair businesses can add value by offering further incremental services to their customers and benefit from additional, high margin sales.

In short, the benefits are no longer one way, flowing against the interests of the fleet manager, but working for them by keeping cars and their drivers on the road longer and costs under control.”

*“Repair businesses can add value by offering further incremental services to their customers”*



For more fleet  
opinion from the  
industry, visit  
[fleetnews.co.uk/  
opinion](http://fleetnews.co.uk/opinion)

# Fleet News Awards winners line up for FML



From best SUV manufacturers to the best customer service provider ... the event will cover all interests

A string of award-winning companies has signed up to exhibit at this year's Fleet Management LIVE (FML).

Suppliers that recently received the highest industry accolade at the *Fleet News Awards* will be at the show, ranging from manufacturers to service suppliers.

Among the carmakers is Seat, which was awarded best mid-size SUV for its Ateca at the fleet awards, along with Jaguar, which took the best large SUV award for its stunning F-Pace.

Fleet favourite Vauxhall will also be at the NEC to showcase its range, including the Astra, which was named best lower-medium car.

Volvo was highly commended in several categories – best large SUV for the XC90, best executive car for the S90/V90 and most improved fleet manufacturer of the year. Visitors will be able to see for themselves at the show why it was so praised.

Visitors to the Toyota stand will also see the range that saw it highly commended in the green fleet manufacturer of the year category.

Elsewhere in the record-breaking show will be the easing company of the year (more than 20,000 vehi-

cles) Zenith, with Marshall Leasing, highly commended in the leasing company of the year (up to 20,000 vehicles) category, also attending.

The year's best rental company, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, will provide award-winning advice on mobility and FleetCheck will be revealing why its fleet management solutions won the fleet specialist services supplier of the year award.

Customer service award winner The Automobile Association will be there in the form of driver training and risk management specialist AA DriveTech while the Freight Transport Association, a Fleet Management LIVE partner, will be updating fleets on its Van Excellence Driver Certificate of Competence training course, which won the most innovative new product or service prize. BT Fleet will also be on hand to give FML visitors an insight into the services that saw it named Fleet Supplier of the Year.

Chris Lester, event director, said: "The *Fleet News Awards* are designed to recognise the best in fleet and I am delighted that so many award winners will be showcasing their services at this year's Fleet Management LIVE to provide the maximum level of benefit to visitors attending the show."

## More than 150 exhibitors

Fleet Management LIVE has moved to a new, larger hall at the NEC as part of a record-breaking year for the event.

It has grown to incorporate the *Commercial Fleet Van & Truck Show* to cover every area of the industry, with space for more than 150 exhibitors in total.

The expansion reflects the wishes of vehicle operators, many of whom manage both cars and commercial vehicles. Managers with a combined fleet of more than 500,000 vehicles are expected to attend this year's show.

Fleet Management LIVE has been designed for fleets by fleet experts and covers car, van and truck fleets, both large and small.

It is also designed to deliver value to managers from every area of the fleet sector, including fleet management, HR, finance, risk management, procurement and mobility management.

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# FLEET MANAGEMENT LIVE



## Technology to keep fleets safe on the road

Suppliers will be providing expert support and advice on the fast-developing sector of telematics and in-vehicle cameras at the show.

Companies ranging from risk management specialists to vehicle suppliers will be briefing fleets on the options available and how they can be effectively introduced to their fleets.

Companies attending the event include Dash

Witness, *Fleet News* Award-winner FleetCheck and O2.

The companies will provide expert guidance on strategies for implementation of equipment and practical advice on in-life use.

Reflex Vans will also be asking if fleets are 'driving blind' when vehicles are hired. It provides telematics and dash cameras with every vehicle it hires.

## Briefings for non-fleet managers at the Discover Fleet Theatre

The Discover Fleet Theatre will offer insight to people who have management involvement with vehicles, but who are outside the core fleet role.

### The sessions will cover:

- **SME:** fleet essentials; an SME blueprint for running vehicles that saves time and money
- **Procurement:** driving efficiencies in fleet purchasing; benchmarking and best practice for better fleet buying

■ **Finance:** funding a cost-effective fleet; flexible strategies to enhance return on investment

■ **HR:** balancing risk and reward; maintaining an attractive vehicle offering and protecting drivers

On the first day of the show, there will be sessions for HR, procurement and finance, while on day two, there will be sessions for finance, SMEs and HR.

Each session will last just over half an hour, with plenty of time at the end for visitors to seek face-to-face guidance on specific issues.

## Exhibitor listing so far

BMW  
Honda  
Jaguar  
Land Rover  
Lexus  
Mini  
Seat  
Toyota  
Vauxhall  
Volvo  
AA DriveTech  
Agility Fleet  
AID Fuel Oils Group  
ALD Automotive  
Alphabet  
Appy Fleet  
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Arval  
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Bott  
BP Oil  
BT Fleet  
Carbaya  
CC Keys  
Chevin Fleet Solutions  
CVM Fleet Management Solutions  
Daimler Fleet Management  
Dash Witness  
Drive Software Solutions  
FleetCheck  
Fleetcor  
Fleet Evolution  
FORS  
Fourways Vehicles Solutions  
Fuelmate  
GEFCO  
Interactive Fleet Management  
Jaama  
Keytracker  
Lex Autolease  
Licence Bureau  
Lookers Leasing  
Marshall Leasing  
Nexus Vehicle Rental  
O2  
Parksafe Automotive  
Probuild Transport Systems  
Reflex Vans  
RingGo Corporate  
Scorpion Automotive  
Selsia Vehicle Accident Centres  
Sortimo  
TCH Leasing  
Total Motion Vehicle Management  
Venson Automotive Solutions  
vGroup International  
Volkswagen Financial Services | Fleet  
Zenith



# OCTOBER 3-4, 2017 NEC BIRMINGHAM

# "DIESEL WOULD BE UNTHINKABLE"

Farmdrop operates an all-electric fleet which suits its environmental ethos and saves money, but it has had to overcome challenges. *Sarah Tooze* reports

**F**armdrop, a London-based online food delivery company which operates a 100% electric van fleet (14 Nissan e-NV200s) is, arguably, ahead of the curve.

The business has used EVs since it launched in 2012, principally for environmental reasons, earning it Go Ultra Low Company status in July 2016 and a Fleet Hero award for Ultra Low Emission Fleet in November.

Unlike other fleet operators, it did not have the headache of switching from diesel to electric – something which its director of supply chain Phil Eaves believes more businesses will soon need to do.

"I anticipate we'll see a lot of operations moving to electric vehicles for multi-drop deliveries in central London. Not because of the environmental agenda necessarily for them, albeit it was quite a big one for us, but I think they will just end up being financially penalised [for operating diesel vehicles]," he says, referring to the planned introduction of the Ultra-low Emission Zone (ULEZ) in London, which Mayor Sadiq Khan wants to bring forward to 2019.

The Mayor has also recently announced that a £10 emissions surcharge (T-charge) for vehicles that do not meet Euro 4 standards – typically diesel and petrol vehicles registered before 2006 – will start in central London in October this year and has put forward his proposals for a national diesel scrappage scheme.

Eaves and his colleague Gemma Matthews, head of operations, welcome any moves which may remove older, more polluting vehicles from London's roads.

Farmdrop's mission, Matthews says, is to "fix the food chain" by bypassing supermarkets so customers can buy directly from local producers, enabling both to get better deals – and deliveries are an important part of that mission.

"Part of fixing the food chain is getting rid of diesel delivery vans because there are so many on the road, particularly in London where we know there are massive air quality issues," she says.

Matthews has calculated that Farmdrop is saving around 33 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> by running e-NV200s rather than diesel vans and they are 37% less expensive (taking into account the Congestion Charge saving of £11.50 per vehicle per day and electricity being cheaper than fuel).

Farmdrop claims its food is five times fresher than food sold at supermarkets because it travels far fewer miles and goes through fewer touch points – it doesn't sit in consolidation points and distribution centres or at the back of the store or on the shelf.

"It just comes here, gets picked and gets delivered to customers," Eaves says.

Farmdrop delivers in the North Circular and South Circular – essentially within a 10-mile radius of its hub in Southwark.

"I have no doubt electric vehicles will develop greater range and therefore we might stretch that to 12 or 15 miles but we won't be driving into deepest Kent from London as other online providers do, we'll always stick in the fairly densely populated urban areas," Eaves says.

Farmdrop plans to launch in Bristol in September with an eye on other cities, such as Manchester, Edinburgh and Birmingham, in future years.

"We don't feel the need to go out to the countryside because what makes the business model work is having customers in reasonable density and that enables us to pay producers the greater share of the retail price and make the whole thing sustainable," Eaves explains.





# IN Season

English Yorkshire  
Crabapple  
Black Eggs -  
Blue Potatoes  
Ducks  
Home

TEAM

Farmdrop's Gemma Matthews and Phil Eaves want to "fix the food chain" by using electric delivery vans





## FACTFILE

**Company** Farmdrop  
**Director of supply chain** Phil Eaves  
**Head of operations** Gemma Matthews  
**Head of fleet** Jonathan Stansfield  
**Fleet size** 14 vans  
**Funding method** monthly rental  
**Brand on fleet** Nissan



Using electric vehicles fits with Farmdrop's sustainable ethos. "It's embedded in the culture of Farmdrop so switching to diesel would be an unthinkable shift in terms of what Farmdrop stands for, both internally and for our customers, so we're EV to stay now," Eaves says.

Matthews adds: "What's been good about that is we've built everything. All of our delivery propositions and all the processes are built on the fact that we use electric vehicles so it's been a lot easier than I'd imagine if you were using diesel and then you started to try to use electric vehicles."

Initially, Farmdrop outsourced its deliveries to Gnewt Cargo, which has also built its business model on an entirely electric fleet, but in April last year it started delivering to customers seven days a week and decided to bring it in-house to have more control over the customer experience.

The day-to-day running of the 14 vans (up from eight in April 2016 and soon to rise to 20 as the business grows) is now handled by head of fleet Jonathan Stansfield, who previously worked as an HGV transport manager at Asda, with Matthews responsible for fleet strategy.

"Electric is an interesting new area to be working in," Stansfield says. "It has its challenges but it has massive perks for us in terms of our Farmdrop brand."

As part of the Farmdrop brand the vans have animal livery (see panel) and its delivery drivers, which Stansfield is responsible for recruiting and managing, are known as Farmdroppers.

"One of the things that has been really successful is our Farmdroppers love driving them," Eaves says. "You've got no gear changes so to speak, you can just cruise along in peace. They drive really nicely and the drivers are very positive about being in them."

The vehicles are on monthly rental from Fleetdrive as Farmdrop does not want to be tied in to long-term contracts or to own its vehicles when the electric van market is still developing.

Matthews keeps abreast of the EV market through her involvement in LoCity – an industry-led programme to reduce the emissions of London's freight and fleet operators, which launched last year.

She sits on the van working group, which is made up of van manufacturers, fleet

## "WE COULDN'T HAVE WHITE VANS"

**Farmdrop's in-house design team is responsible for creating the vans' cow, pig and hen designs, with the wrapping itself outsourced to Auto Wrap.**

"They [the design team] wouldn't ever let us drive around in a white van. It's just not Farmdrop," Phil Eaves says.

However, the 3D effects, such as the ears and tail, have proved impractical for everyday use and they now "only exist for photoshoots", according to Eaves. "Families have their photo taken with the vans," he says. "They have become part of our brand."

operators and charging companies, and meets every couple of months to discuss ways to break down barriers for other fleet operators to start using ultra-low emission vehicles.

"I'm quite happy to speak to other companies that want to use ultra-low emission vehicles and about the challenges we have," Matthews says.

"We have spoken to councils to get them to change their vehicles and I think it's really important to do that because we're trying to lower emissions in London, and in general. It's great that we've got 14 vans but there is a lot more work that needs to be done."

Matthews and Eaves acknowledge that they have faced multiple challenges running EVs: the lack of a market-ready refrigerated electric van, the size and range of the

e-NV200, and problems with the public charging infrastructure.

Farmdrop has had to adapt the way it keeps food chilled as a refrigerated electric vehicle would take up too much energy, and therefore reduce the vehicle's range, as well as taking up precious space in the vehicle.

"We have to have cold food because we're delivering fresh food so it needs to be kept at a chilled temperature. The solution for that is we use thermal packaging so we don't need to have a refrigerated van and it just helps the van travel further," Matthews says.

The e-NV200's real-world range is about



*"Electric is an interesting new area to be working in. It has its challenges but it has massive perks for us in terms of our Farmdrop brand"*

Jonathan Stansfield, Farmdrop





Only for photoshoots – 3D effects on the vans such as ears, tails and hen's combs have been found to be fun but impractical



70 miles and Farmdrop's average route is 60 miles meaning the drivers could risk running out of charge. However, Farmdrop has overcome this by using route planning software that enables it to set maximum mileage and ensure the vans don't go beyond their range.

Farmdrop also chose the software because its routes were logical, the system was easy to use and it had a driver app (although its Android developers are now looking at building their own app so it is bespoke to their needs).

The vehicles are charged overnight at the hub. Farmdrop had to upgrade its electrical infrastructure once it had more than 10 vans so it was able to charge them all simultaneously overnight.

During the day there is gap in the drivers' schedules to allow the vehicles to be rapid charged, ready for afternoon deliveries, but this has not been without its challenges.

The public charging network is "inadequate", according to Matthews.

"They [the rapid charging points] don't often work and there are not enough of them," she says. "Ideally I would love to have route planning software that recognises working rapid charging points."

Eaves adds: "It's quite complicated. You can park diesel vehicles anywhere and go to the fuel station and off you go.

"With electric vehicles you need somewhere to park but you also need somewhere to charge them. You need to be quite precise about that charging because if you're not there long enough they won't be sufficiently charged to do the trip."

The other major challenge is the size of electric vans.

Matthews says: "There isn't that perfect vehicle that is big enough, with the right payload and the right range and that is under 3.5 tonnes. There are things starting to come to the market but at the moment there is nothing on the market, readily available, that we could use tomorrow."

However, as soon as the right size vehicle does become available Farmdrop intends to change its fleet so that it can fit more deliveries onto one van.

Driver training and telematics is also being considered.

"The vast majority of our training is focused on the delivery experience, little of it is focused on the vehicle," Eaves says. "We could undoubtedly look to optimise that in the

future because the greater the amount of charge a vehicle comes back with the less amount of electricity needs to go in to charge it back up which is cheaper for us, better for the environment, and charges faster."

He adds: "Some drivers take quite a lot of pride in returning a vehicle with a huge amount of mileage having been very efficient in the middle of winter; others are a bit more inclined to put the heaters on and get home as fast as possible so one of the things we've looked at doing is some performance-related incentives."

Farmdrop doesn't rule out running other alternative fuels, such as hydrogen, in future if the technology and infrastructure develops.

"The alternative fuels either still emit a level of emissions or they're not commercially available, viable vehicles. They are still a science experiment frankly," Eaves says. "We're not closed to alternatives but electric feels like the best, viable option right now."



For more fleet profiles, visit:  
[fleetnews.co.uk/fleetprofiles](http://fleetnews.co.uk/fleetprofiles)

# KIA DRIVES UP ITS NUMBERS WITHOUT FORCING MARKET

Manufacturer won't hit a registrations number 'at any cost' so batch deals avoided and no pushing cars into daily rentals. *Andrew Ryan* reports

**K**ia is a fleet success story that shows no sign of ending. Last year, the manufacturer registered 44,024 cars into the sector: 16.4% more than 2015 and a "more than 500%" increase on 2010. This was a new record for Kia and although the new Sportage SUV played a starring role – the model range accounted for 23,346 fleet registrations (20,983 'true fleet') during 2016 – the manufacturer's progress can be attributed to much more than that.

"We have made a real effort to engage with all the major leasing companies," says John Hargreaves, head of fleet and remarketing at Kia Motors (UK).

"Five or six years ago we had tenuous links with them: they didn't really want to have 4% or 5% of their fleet being Kia because they considered that to be rather a high risk profile, whereas now they are really quite content to hold that number of our cars.

"In fact, a lot of leasing companies are actually trying to increase the number of our cars they have got: they feel it is a good risk to have rather than something they would have shied away from in the past."

Hargreaves says this has been made possible by the brand's "strong residual values", which means the monthly leasing rates offered to fleets are becoming "more and more competitive".

"What we haven't been doing with contract hire companies is batch deals where, if they buy 500 cars, then we give them a super deal and then they find homes for them, so they've been wanting to take the cars on and sell them at normal rates rather than us forcing the market there," he adds.

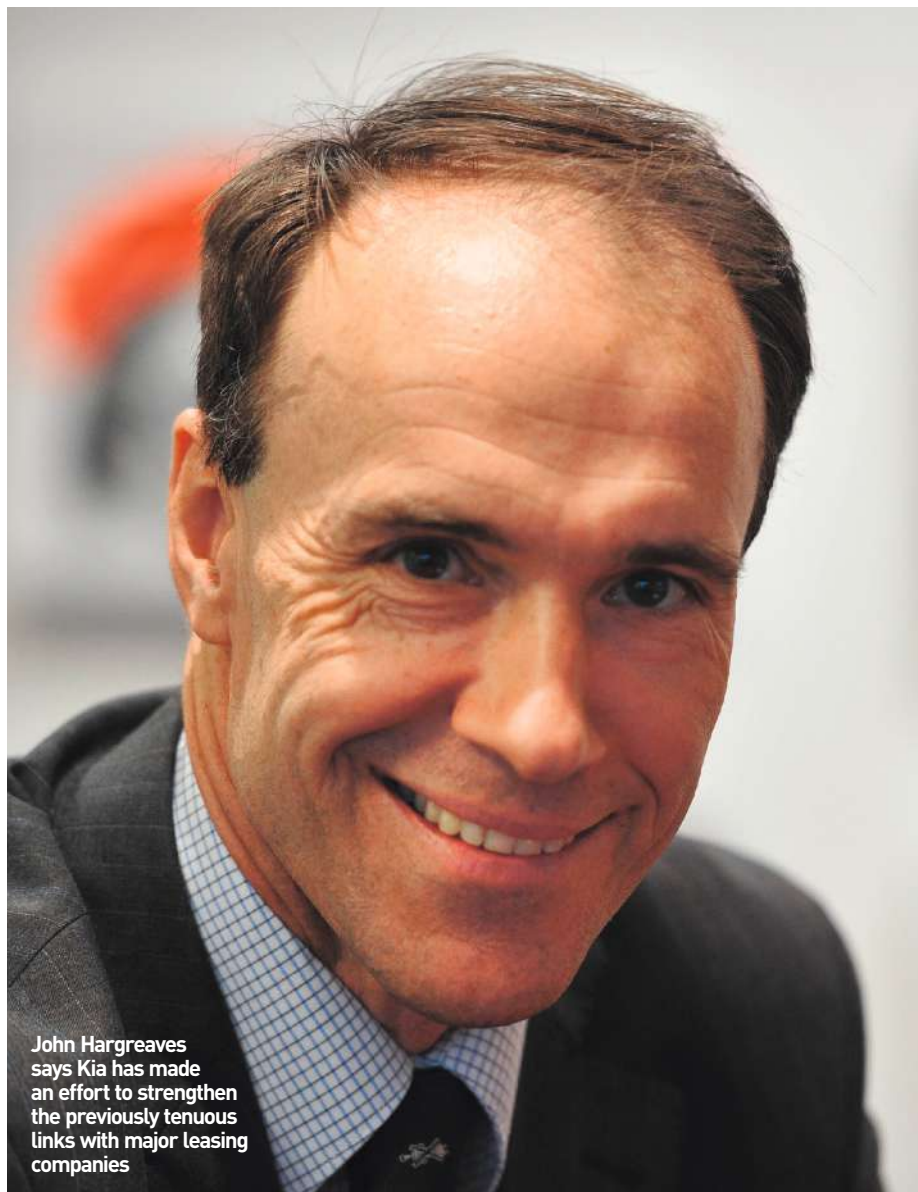
Kia has also seen growth through Kia Contract Hire, its own internal contract hire company, and has taken a controlled approach with leasing brokers.

"We have just a very limited number of brokers and give them small incentives to sell our products rather than going out to the broker network in general and just doing price-led deals," adds Hargreaves.

The work has paid off. Figures from the Society of Motor

*"What we haven't been doing with contract hire companies is batch deals where, if they buy 500 cars, then we give them a super deal"*

*John Hargreaves, Kia Motors (UK)*



John Hargreaves says Kia has made an effort to strengthen the previously tenuous links with major leasing companies

## FACTFILE

**Organisation** Kia Motors (UK)

**Commercial director**

Simon Hetherington

**Fleet and remarketing director**

John Hargreaves

**Fleet registrations 2016** 44,024

**Fleet market share 2016** 3.19%

**Total registrations 2016** 89,364

**Total market share 2016** 3.32%

**Key fleet models** Ceed, Sportage, Optima

Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) show Kia last year sold 21,429 vehicles into leasing, an increase of 92.4% compared to 2015.

Another key aspect of Kia's fleet strategy is not to force the market by pushing cars into channels such as daily rental, says Hargreaves.

In fact, the manufacturer has reduced the number of cars it puts into short-cycle business, he adds.

"We operate generally on the principle that we don't want to do any more than 10% of our total volume through rental channels and actually we were generally doing a lot less than that," says Hargreaves.

"If you look at Rio, lots of manufacturers put several thousand of those types of small cars into rental, but we are going to do a few hundred – about 5-6% of registrations – which is a very healthy position to be in.



## JOHN HARGREAVES ON....



Simply red – the unmistakable exterior of a Kia dealership

### Kia's dealer network

Kia currently has a 187-strong dealer network, with 20 business centres among them.

"Our medium-term target is to have 30," says John Hargreaves, who hopes to be near that target by the end of this year. "To be a business centre dealer you do have to invest fairly heavily and, most notably, you do have to have a dedicated person just to do fleet."

"You have to run extra demonstrators

and you have to invest in local advertising, so for a lot of our dealers it isn't viable. We are also embarking on an initiative so all dealers have a basic level of expertise in business sales.

"We don't want experts, but if someone comes in and wants to talk about business finance, contract hire and the pros and cons thereof, we want someone trained in each dealership who can give them practical business advice."

### Future of diesel

"Diesel is still our dominant fuel," says John Hargreaves. "We are seeing more demand for petrol at the lower end of our model range in small cars, but looking at Ceed and Sportage – our two fleet staples – diesel is still very much the dominant source of power for us."

The proportion of diesel models sold across Kia's model range grew fractionally last year to 54%, driven by the success of Sportage.

"The main thing I'm seeing is a difference in petrol and diesel residuals," adds Hargreaves. "Traditionally, diesels have been the more expensive cars to buy, but they also had higher residual values."

"We are now getting to the stage of parity or, in certain cases, you get a higher petrol residual value than diesel, and, eventually, that will feed through into wholelife costs and then into fleets."



Sportage is a staple fleet offering

"Of the rental we do on Rio, almost all of them will be on buy-back, so they will come back to us and we can control the RVs on those."

Hargreaves says the manufacturer is also limiting Motability registrations. SMMT figures show that Kia registrations into rental fell 21.3% to 7,486, although Motability sales rose 5.6% to 7,287.

He adds: "We've started to do reasonably regular and significant volumes of public sector business, both through block orders and auction functions, but also orders of ones and twos with small cars like Rio and Picanto where they've been competitively placed against key competitors."

"We've done small business sales at a steady level, and we want to improve that and get the dealers further engaged in these [see panel above]."

"Five or six years ago we had active fleet terms with about 500 individual companies. Now we have active fleet terms with about 3,000."

"Obviously you don't know how many vehicles each of those companies buy, but we now have six times as many people who have got agreements with us to what we used to have, so it's changed a lot."

Kia's record year in fleet was reflected in the retail sector, giving the manufacturer total UK registrations of 89,364 units, a year-on-year rise of 13.9% in an overall new car market which increased 2.3% to 2.69 million.

The manufacturer expects the market to shrink this year by about 5.5% to 2.54m vehicles, but Simon Hetherington, commercial director at Kia, is confident his brand will buck this trend.

"We have set ourselves ambitions to grow in this market by 3%-4%, so we will break through into more than 90,000 units this year," he says.

Much of Hetherington's confidence is due to the freshness of the manufacturer's model range. Last year it launched Sportage, Optima saloon, plug-in hybrid and Sportswagon, and Niro.

This year's launches will be Rio, Picanto and Stinger, while



*"We want a sustainable, profitable business model. We want to have ambition throughout our whole organisation. We want our network to grow and to deliver more"*

Simon Hetherington, Kia Motors (UK)

plug-in hybrid versions of Optima Sportswagon and Niro will also be introduced.

The anticipated growth will help Kia meet its objectives set out in its Vision 100 strategy, which it announced five years ago.

Under this, the manufacturer targeted annual registrations of 100,000 this decade to become a top five volume manufacturer. "Reaching 100,000 units a year feels within our grasp based on the recent rate of growth," says Hetherington.

Fleet will have a major part to play in this achievement: Hargreaves feels a 4% market share is realistic in the medium term, growing from 3.19% last year and 1.5% in 2011.

"However, we do not want to get into chasing volume for volume's sake," adds Hetherington.

"We want a sustainable, profitable business model. We want to have an ambition throughout our whole organisation. We want our network to grow and to deliver more, but not to hit a number at any cost."

# Fleet manufacturer of the year



## Carmaker's comments

The prestigious Fleet Manufacturer of the Year title rounds off a busy year for Audi.

A number of new models were introduced in the past 18 months that have found particular appeal as fleet cars, with the A3 winning Best Compact Premium Car and the A4 named Best Premium Car.

In their new guises, both Audi A4 and A3 offer refined cabins and an exceptional drive. Both have advanced technologies to keep the business driver connected. And both offer a line-up of tax-efficient engines with competitive running costs.

As manufacturer, meanwhile, Audi has focused on nurturing its relationships with fleet at every level. From corporate to local business, the emphasis has been delivering outstanding service – which makes this win all the more gratifying.



Plenty to celebrate – the Audi team enjoyed several successes on awards night

## Judges' comments:

*A busy 2016 saw Audi introduce the latest generation A4 and launch a car into a new sector with the Q2, as well as make important updates to the A3 range maintaining its desirability over rivals. They have ensured the company continues to offer one of the most appealing product line-ups for fleets and their drivers. Audi remains competitive on running costs while relationships with fleets have improved with a real focus on customer service at both a corporate and local businesses level.*



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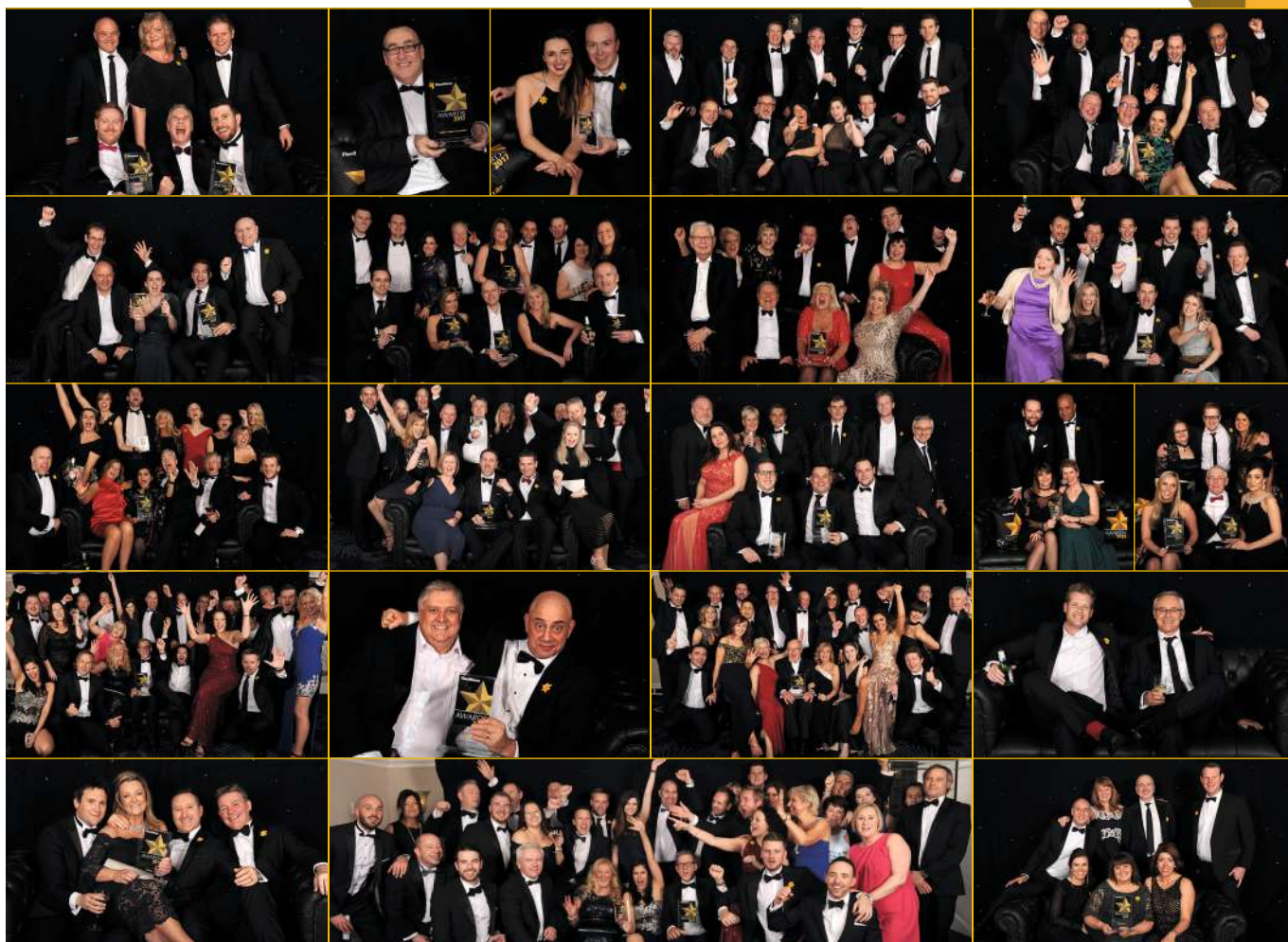
FleetNews



# A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

AWARDS  
2017

Your 51-page souvenir guide to the winners, finalists and highly commendeds at the 2017 awards



**FleetNews**



**AWARDS  
2017**

## THE AWARDS

- 39** Fleet News Hall of Fame
- 41** Fleet manager of the year
- 43** Fleet manufacturer of the year
- 45** New company car of the year
- 46** Fleet supplier of the year
- 47** Fleet specialist services supplier of the year
- 48** Fleet of the year – 1,001-plus vehicles
- 49** Fleet of the year – 251–1000 vehicles
- 50** Fleet of the year – up to 250 vehicles
- 51** Green fleet of the year
- 53** Safe fleet of the year
- 55** Cost-saving initiative of the year
- 56** Most improved fleet of the year
- 57** Green fleet manufacturer of the year
- 59** Most improved manufacturer
- 61** Best small and lower-medium car
- 63** Best upper-medium and compact SUV
- 64** Best mid-size and large SUV
- 65** Best executive car
- 67** Best compact premium and premium car
- 69** Best plug-in 0g/km and 1-50g/km car
- 71** Leasing company of the year – more than 20,000 vehicles
- 73** Leasing company of the year – up to 20,000 vehicles
- 75** Best rental company of the year
- 77** Customer service award
- 79** Best new product or service
- 81** Fleet dealer of the year

## THE JUDGES



**Christopher Macgowan OBE**  
former chief executive, SMMT  
Chairman



**Stephen Briers**  
Editor-in-chief,  
*Fleet News*  
Fleet/manufacture  
categories



**Caroline Sandall**  
Barclays/ACFO  
Fleet categories



**Justin Wand**  
London Ambulance  
Service  
Fleet categories



**Sarah Millward**  
The AA  
Fleet categories



**Sarah Tooze**  
Deputy editor,  
*Fleet News*  
Supplier categories



**Sue Blair**  
Fleet manager,  
Serco  
Supplier categories



**Linda Blake**  
Fleet manager,  
Diageo  
Supplier categories



**Graham Short**  
Zip Water (UK)  
Supplier categories



**Simon Harris**  
Motoring journalist  
Manufacturer categories



**Martin Ward**  
Relationships manager,  
CAP  
Manufacturer categories



**Andy Cutler**  
UK car editor – forecast  
values, Glass's  
Manufacturer categories



## WELCOME



More than 1,400 people attended the *Fleet News* awards this year to celebrate the 174 finalists, 32 winners and 25 highly commended companies, people and cars.

I believe the awards is the greatest night of the year in the fleet sector, bringing together more people than any other event. It is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the very best of our industry, but also for networking and socialising. And there was plenty of that!

This year's awards were hosted by the incomparable Huw Edwards, anchor of the BBC's News at 10 O'Clock, who did a fantastic

job keeping some of the rowdier sections of the audience in check.

In one memorable moment, Huw, licking his wounds due to Wales's sub-par performance in the rugby Six Nations, claimed that he'd be casting aside the script and announcing his own winners – and they'd all be Welsh! He also said he would be treating the award-winning cars as his recommended shortlist when he came to selecting his next model.

The judges were once again impressed with the fleet finalists' level of innovation and their very real focus on reducing cost, improving safety and the process of continuous improvement – none of them is content to simply rest on their laurels; they are all outstanding companies and people who are always seeking to do things more efficiently and effectively.

**Stephen Briers, editor-in-chief, *Fleet News***



My role is to provide an independent view of the process adhered to by the judging panels as they consider the sometimes lengthy list of entrants for each of the categories.

I support the chairman, Christopher Macgowan OBE, on points of procedure and to ensure consensus around the table with regard to the final conclusions. What I do not do, however, is vote at any stage in the proceedings.

I ensure that not only are the reasons for the winners and shortlists considered, but that the reasoning for non-inclusion is given the same level of importance.

Deloitte has always ensured that its representative works within its national automotive group which enables that representative (me this year) to raise relevant questions during the consideration of the entrants and to assist in keeping the debates flowing.

When it comes to the final voting, it is Deloitte who records the voting and advises the panel of the outcome.

**Darren Hattersley, Deloitte**



**Liz Hollands**  
Fleet and facilities manager, Freight Transport Association  
**Supplier categories**



**John Pryor**  
Chairman, ACFO/fleet and travel manager, Arcadia  
**Supplier categories**



**Debbie Floyd**  
Fleet manager, Bauer Media  
**Supplier categories**



**Stewart Lightbody**  
Head of fleet services, Anglian Water  
**Supplier categories**



**Mark Jowsey**  
Director, manufacturer liaison, KeeResources  
**Manufacturer categories**



**Steve Jones**  
General manager of asset risk, LeasePlan  
**Manufacturer categories**



**Steve Winter**  
British Gas  
**Manufacturer categories**



**Shaun Sadlier**  
Arval  
**Manufacturer categories**

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## FLEET NEWS AWARDS IN NUMBERS AND PICTURES



**1**

mile length of cable  
required to connect  
all the lighting and  
sound

**75**

horse powers'  
worth of audio  
amplification



**32**

number of winners

**1,441**

number of guests



**25**

number of highly  
commended – the same  
as last year

**1,000+**

bottles of wine drunk  
during the evening



FOR MORE PICTURES VISIT [FLEETNEWS.CO.UK/GALLERIES](http://FLEETNEWS.CO.UK/GALLERIES)





**365**

pictures taken  
by Fleet News  
photographer  
Chris Lowndes



**8ft**

height of the centre  
stage star built by  
production company  
Eclipse Presentations

**282**

photos taken in the  
Toyota photo booth



**703**

Fleet News Awards  
tweets with 345,293  
impressions

**3.48**

the time (am) when  
the final events  
team stragglers  
called it a night



FOR VIDEOS VISIT [FLEETNEWS.CO.UK/VIDEOS](http://FLEETNEWS.CO.UK/VIDEOS)





**166,263**

number of picture views on  
fleetnews.co.uk the day after the event

**£14,624.30**

money raised for awards charity Marie  
Curie – thanks to everyone who  
generously contributed



**10**

number of years since  
Huw Edwards last  
hosted the awards

**400+**

companies in the room,  
networking, socialising  
and dancing



**9**

the incomparable *Fleet  
News* events team who  
put on the UK's biggest  
and best fleet awards.  
Our thanks to: Sandra  
Evitt, Chris Lester, Kate  
Howard, Luke Clements,  
Nicola Baxter, Paige  
Phillips, Jane Hill,  
Cristina Melenchon  
plus photographer  
Chris Lowndes



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5

the most dress options brought by one person to the awards (by Bauer Media's own fleet manager Debbie Floyd)



9

The *Fleet News* commercial team responsible for all the sponsorship. Great work by: Carlota Hudgell, Sarah Crown, Sheryl Graham, Sean Hamill, Lisa Turner, Stuart Wakeling, Liam Sancaster, Karl Houghton, Kate Atkinson



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\*Source: Mintel – UK vehicle recovery report, September 2015.

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# HALL OF FAME

Winner: **Colin Marriott**

**PICTURE CAPTION**

Colin Marriott (right) is welcomed into the hall of fame by Stuart Thomas, head of fleet services and SME at The AA

Attention to detail is one of Colin Marriott's greatest assets. It was forged in the naval dockyards in Portsmouth, where he was apprentice of the year for two consecutive years, and developed as he moved to the then VOSA and the vehicle inspectorate.

While there, Marriott carried out numerous accident investigations which fuelled a lifelong passion for road safety.

His first fleet role was as fleet engineer at the gas board, which became British Gas in 1986. For the past 26 years, he has headed the British Gas fleet.

During that time, he has championed the development of many road safety initiatives and provided advice to other large fleets, helping them to reduce their own road risk. He has sat on a number of committees where he has actively campaigned for a safer fleet industry.

Numerous fleet firsts include the roll-out of speed limiters in 2006 on the van fleet, the introduction of winter tyres and electric vehicle trials which lead to the creation of the UK's biggest EV fleet. One of his last tasks as fleet

manager was to implement a complete ban on the use of mobile devices while driving.

Marriott also created a Young Driver Academy, realising the high risk young drivers pose to a company, to give them greater levels of support in their early driving years.

Away from fleet, Marriott is an active supporter of Cancer Research having lost family and close friends to the disease. He also supports the poppy appeal and managed to get the whole fleet adorned with the poppy appeal livery on the rear doors.

Colleagues describe him as "a true pioneer and enormous credit to our industry" and say that his retirement means the fleet sector has lost a true "legend".

Marriott, a *Fleet News* Awards judge for several years, is typically humble about his achievements. "I am an engineer by trade and at heart," he says. "British Gas has taught me how to lead and develop a team and that is hugely rewarding. Encouraging staff to explore new avenues is very satisfying. I also take that attitude with suppliers and treat everyone fairly and effectively."

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*La meccanica delle emozioni*



Range of official fuel consumption figures for the Alfa Giulia range: Urban 33.6 – 53.3 mpg (8.4 – 5.3 L/100km); Extra Urban 61.4 – 80.7mpg (4.6 – 3.5 L/100km); Combined 47.9 – 67.3 mpg (5.9 – 4.2 L/100km). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 138 – 109 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures are obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with EC directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions. Model shown is the Alfa Romeo Giulia 2.2 Turbo Diesel 150hp Tecnica at £32,590 OTR including metallic paint at £695.

**FCA FLEET SERVICES**  
United Kingdom





# FLEET MANAGER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Jo Hammonds, Mears**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Fleet manager of the year Jo Hammonds, group fleet manager for Mears Group (left), collects the award from Fiat Chrysler Automotive fleet and remarketing director Francis Beasdale

## FINALISTS

- Helen Brislane, Momentum Instore
- Jo Hammonds, Mears Group
- Stewart Lightbody, Anglian Water Services
- Julie Madoui, Skanska
- Rory Morgan, Iron Mountain

Since joining Mears Group in 2000, Jo Hammonds has overseen a near 10-fold increase in fleet size (570 vehicles to 5,000) both through organic business growth and acquisition.

Barely a year goes by without the need to absorb or integrate more vehicles – and their drivers – into the fleet policy, yet, despite all the potential disruption, Hammonds has been able to keep a close control on costs as well as introduce a number of initiatives.

Among his recent projects are the introduction of speed limiters which are saving 5% on fuel and reversing sensors which have reduced reversing incidents by 75%; an improved accident repair process which has reduced downtime and cost recovery through claims handling; fuel bunkering, another 10% saving on fuel; bespoke body builds for light commercial vehicles; and the roll-out of telematics to manage driver behaviour and the vehicles themselves through fault-code reporting.

Three years ago, Hammonds outsourced key elements of the fleet operation which has reduced the headcount of his central fleet team. The decision, he says, was based on the need to invest in IT, increase scalability, improve management reporting and benefit from a broader knowledge base to identify new ideas.

His priority now is to own the fleet policy, manage manufacturer relationships, make the major decisions on cost and order vehicles based on future contract demands.

Those demands have been evolving, resulting in a change to the fleet profile, with a rise in cars for managers and a reduction in vans as maintenance work gives way to management services contracts.

Fleet management accounts for around 50% of Hammonds's time, with related responsibilities including management of all insurance provisions – including vehicles – and management of group property leases and premises.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Despite a near 10-fold increase in fleet size since Jo Hammonds joined Mears, he has been able to handle new integrations while implementing a multitude of initiatives. He displays outstanding command and ownership of his fleet, from managing external suppliers to influencing internal stakeholders.

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# Best premium car: Audi A4



Looks of a winner – the A4 with enhanced aerodynamics

## RANGE COSTS

**P11D** £26,895-£45,645

**CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)** 99-139

**Annual BIK tax (20%/40%)**

£1,146/£2,291-£2,230/£4,460

**RV % (4yr/80k)** 27-31

## FLEET PICK SPEC

**A4 2.0 TDi 190 Ultra S Line**

**P11D price** £33,445

**Running cost (4yr/80k)** 63.91ppm

**CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)** 107

**Mpg (combined)** 72.4

**Annual BIK tax (20%/40%)**

£1,405/£2,809

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

## Fleet News says:

*“Interior quality is the new class benchmark, while refinement and noise suppression are excellent. The new A4 is perhaps the most competitive it has ever been.”*

Fleet News First Drive, July 2015

## Carmaker's comments

You could say the A4 was tailor-made for the business user. Launched late 2015, it's been enhanced in every way.

The changes begin with an overall weight reduction of up to 120kg, making it more agile and efficient than its predecessor.

The A4 also led the way in the introduction of new connectivity and driver assistance technologies, such as Smartphone Interface and Virtual Cockpit.

Enhanced aerodynamics and a refined cabin contribute to an exceptional drive; fleet drivers will also appreciate the new engine line-up.



The quality of the interior sets a new benchmark in its class

Audi Fleet Sales Team, Audi UK

0870 241 5663 [audifleetsales@audi.co.uk](mailto:audifleetsales@audi.co.uk) [www.audi.co.uk/business](http://www.audi.co.uk/business)







# FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Audi**

## PICTURE CAPTION

KeeResources chief executive officer Denis Keenan (left) presents the Fleet Manufacturer of the Year award to head of Audi UK Fleet James Douglas

## FINALISTS

- Audi UK
- BMW UK
- Ford Motor Company
- Jaguar Land Rover
- Mercedes-Benz Cars UK
- Škoda
- Toyota/Lexus
- Volkswagen UK
- Volvo Cars UK

**A**round 30 years ago, Audi was still trying to establish itself as a premium car player alongside BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Jaguar. It has succeeded, and is now as aspirational a brand as its German rivals, as all have seen rapid sales growth.

Audi's focus on getting its products and fleet strategy right has been paying dividends. Long regarded as a benchmark for interior quality, and with a reputation for innovation that has seen many models in its range become 'must-have' cars for user-choosers, *Fleet News* readers have voted the brand Fleet Manufacturer of the Year.

No longer the preserve of senior executives or the wealthy, compact hatchbacks have been democratising premium badges since the introduction of the Audi A3 in 1996. The latest A3 was a category winner in this year's awards, a feat matched by the larger A4.

Audi also produces desirable SUVs with its

heritage in 'quattro' all-wheel drive contributing to their appeal, and many sit very comfortably on company car choice lists because of their low emissions and running costs.

Also core to Audi's desirability among company car drivers is offering some of the best diesel engines on the market combining performance, refinement and low fuel consumption.

Its reluctance to chase volume as hard as some rivals has ensured residual values of its latest models remain among the best in class.

With design features and attention to detail that make some of its cars appealing as technological showcases in their own right, Audi continues to set high standards with each new model introduction.

Audi's achievement in a year when so many manufacturers were targeting fleet business to help shore up overall market share is testament to the depth of the allure of the cars and the support of the corporate sales team.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Audi's busy year saw it introduce the latest generation A4 range and launch a car into a new sector with the Q2, as well as make important updates to the A3 range maintaining its desirability over rivals. They have ensured the product line-up still has plenty of appeal for fleets.

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A woman with long brown hair, wearing a grey blazer, is smiling and looking towards a man whose back is partially to the camera. They are sitting at a wooden table in what appears to be a cafe or office setting. There are glasses of beer on the table. In the background, there is a large window and some architectural details.

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# NEW COMPANY CAR OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Mercedes-Benz E-Class**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Mercedes-Benz Cars UK head of fleet Rob East (left) collects the award from LeasePlan managing director Matt Dyer

## FINALISTS

- Audi A3
- Audi A5 Coupe
- BMW 7 Series
- BMW i3
- Jaguar F-Pace
- Kia Sportage
- Mercedes-Benz E-Class
- Toyota CH-R
- Volkswagen Tiguan
- Volvo S90/V90

**W**ith a category win under its belt awarded by our judging panel, it's pleasing to see the views of our industry experts are in sync with fleet manager readers of *Fleet News*.

The E-Class is always an important car for Mercedes-Benz. It's a technological showcase of all Mercedes-Benz can do in a car that's intended to appeal to the driver as well as passengers.

As a company car, it's a sign of the status of an employee, demonstrating the value of the driver to the company, but it must also be capable of thousands of trouble-free business miles every year in complete comfort.

The driving environment in the new E-Class takes a major step forward for the executive car sector, with two optional 12.3-inch screens. This 'wide-screen cockpit' contains a large display with virtual instruments in the direct field of vision of the driver as well as a central display above the centre console.

Touch-sensitive control buttons ('Touch Controls') on the steering wheel made their first appearance in a car in the E-Class.

Like a smartphone interface, they respond to horizontal and vertical swiping movements, allowing the driver to control the entire infotainment system using finger swipes without having to take their hands off the steering wheel.

An extended heated seat passage warms the centre armrest in addition to those on the doors.

New optional assistance systems set the E-Class on the path to autonomous driving, with assistance from the steering available, as well as camera-detected speed limits feeding into the cruise control.

Safety systems can also take evasive action in various situations to reduce the likelihood of crashes, or reduce the severity of impact.

Mercedes-Benz has set the bar exceptionally high for the company car market, and *Fleet News* readers agree.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

The E-Class's technology makes it one of the safest and greenest cars in its class. Refined drivetrains, comfortable seats and an enhanced chassis combine for a smooth ride with pinpoint handling. High residuals and fuel efficiency result in low running costs in a highly competitive sector.

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# FLEET SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **BT Fleet**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Toyota & Lexus Fleet general manager Neil Broad (left) presents the award to BT Fleet managing director Henry Brace

## FINALISTS

- All Fleet Services
- BT Fleet
- Holdcroft Group Fleet
- TrustFord
- The Automobile Association
- vGroup International

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- The Automobile Association

**B**T Fleet has greatly expanded its range of products and services over the past year, and made significant investments in technology and training. It launched a telematics service in April, with customers able to choose from a hardwired or plug-and-play option, dash cameras and real-time driver feedback.

The system is fully integrated with BT Fleet's fleet management accident and service maintenance and repair (SMR) platforms.

It records real-time accident information and triggers contact with the driver to ensure they capture third party details at the roadside, helping to reduce claims costs by up to 60%.

BT Fleet is also able to perform 'over-the-air' diagnostics to pre-empt breakdowns and understand underlying vehicle issues to reduce downtime by up to 12%.

Downtime has the potential to be reduced further through mobile servicing, following a successful trial last year.

BT Fleet has also introduced a new online SMR booking system, which draws diary data from workshops and enables appointments to be confirmed in real-time. It texts or emails fleet managers if appointments are missed.

Its accident management system is being overhauled to give customers online access to incident documents, images and reports.

It has also invested heavily in staff training and development over the past year with a programme to upskill existing staff, a paid apprenticeship scheme and an increase in the number of permanent technicians it employs.

BT Fleet is now leveraging the skills and services of sister companies BT Supply Chain and EE. The latter means it can now offer customers 4G, in-vehicle WiFi hotspots, which allows drivers to receive jobs in areas with limited mobile phone reception.

A partnership with the UK's biggest leasing company, Lex Autolease, has enabled BT Fleet to offer "a rounded funding proposition".

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

BT Fleet has broadened its offering by utilising the skills and services of its sister companies and forming new strategic partnerships with leasing, rental and SMR providers. It has made significant investment in technology and training, and expanded its apprenticeship scheme.

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Toyota & Lexus Fleet





# FLEET SPECIALIST SERVICES SOLUTION OF THE YEAR

Winner: **FleetCheck**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Chairman of the judging panel Christopher Macgowan OBE (left) presents the award to FleetCheck managing director Peter Golding

## FINALISTS

- FleetCheck
- Ignition Risk Management
- Nationwide Windscreen Services
- r2c Online
- South Central Fleet Services
- The Miles Consultancy

Software may be its core business, but FleetCheck ensures system reliability is accompanied by an exceptional support strategy, ensuring it builds a clear understanding of its clients' fleet needs.

It will never favour a one-size-fits-all approach for the licence checking, fuel and driver management and telematics services it offers. This belief has contributed to the Wiltshire-based company achieving a high customer retention rate, sustained over 10 years.

An example of the company's reputation is the fact it was selected by the Freight Transport Association to provide a software platform for its Van Excellence Small Fleet programme.

And FleetCheck technology has helped transform the management of North Somerset Council's 110-vehicle fleet. "The system is so effective," its fleet manager Carl Nicholson said. "We have been able to free up time and resource equivalent to two full-time

employees." The resource has saved about £40,000 per year in back office costs.

FleetCheck has expanded its services to help clients manage relationships with garages. The garage portal means fleets can forge stronger links with their service, maintenance and repair networks. And the garages can maintain a more active involvement with the management of service schedules and advisory repairs.

From 2016 drivers can also carry out regular safety checks. An app provides the ability to carry out a walk-around check of their car. It's easy to use – and is a ready-made audit trail.

FleetCheck is also working with a national legal advice provider to create a series of health and safety material to support SMEs in their fleet management compliance.

"We listen, we respond quickly and intuitively to the evolving industry and to the changing and demanding needs of our clients," says the company. "We are fanatical about delivering pioneering fleet management solutions."

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

FleetCheck's senior management team understands the needs of its fleet customers and reacts to requests. Its fleet compliance portal was borne out of a need for legal help, particularly among SMEs. FleetCheck proactively contacts customers it believes need additional training or support.



# FLEET OF THE YEAR 1,001-PLUS VEHICLES

Winner: **Environment Agency**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Dale Eynon, head of Defra group fleet services (left), collects the award from Neil Broad, general manager, Toyota & Lexus Fleet

## FINALISTS

- Anglian Water Services
- Environment Agency
- Mears Group
- Network Rail
- Royal Mail
- Speedy Hire

The large fleet category is always the most fiercely fought, with highly skilled and experienced fleet managers constantly undertaking new initiatives to drive greater cost efficiencies and operational effectiveness.

Environment Agency is no exception. Yet, it has continued to innovate while also rapidly expanding its operations. It has started to provide a fleet service to the Defra Group of 34 Government organisations. This has been both a challenge and an opportunity as the agency begins integrating some 7,000 additional assets.

At the same time, head of fleet Dale Eynon has overseen a number of projects, from extending replacement cycles from 48 to 54 months on cars, saving around £1 million, to implementing telematics across the van fleet, which has resulted in fewer harsh driving events and a 10.7% reduction in fuel consumption.

He has also reviewed the car choice list with a target of reducing average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to

less than 100g/km this year and to 85g/km by 2020. A similar process is under way with the van fleet, where the goal is to reach 170g/km within three years.

But it's not all about carbon reduction: Environment Agency has become one of the first UK fleets to implement NO<sub>x</sub> targets as it reacts to concerns over air quality.

Eynon expects to realise additional savings on service, maintenance and repair (SMR). He has already cut costs by more than a third through proactive cost control of specific spend, particularly on mechanical repairs, inspections and tyres, and is now moving to a blended SMR solution for leased cars, mixing pay-on-use with traditional 'with maintenance'. Vans are already on pay-on-use, which has delivered a 10-15% reduction in costs.

As a leading fleet manager, Eynon has been selected to chair a new Fleet Innovation Group across central Government, which has an initial objective of tackling the grey fleet issue.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Environment Agency owns the blueprint for running a highly complex fleet efficiently and effectively. It is constantly innovating with a robust system for analysing the impact of new initiatives and is never afraid to trial new ideas.

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Toyota & Lexus Fleet





# FLEET OF THE YEAR 251-1,000

Winner: **Enserve Group**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Paul Brown, head of group fleet, Enserve Group (left), picks up the award from Neil Broad, general manager, Toyota & Lexus Fleet

## FINALISTS

- Britvic
- Enserve Group
- Tristar

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Britvic

**A** tight grip on costs, a focus on safety and a fleet review focused on flexibility helped Enserve Group win Fleet of the Year for 251-1,000 vehicles at this year's awards.

With a mixed fleet of some 600 vehicles, including 135 cars and 465 vans, Enserve has left no stone unturned in its quest to run an efficient and compliant fleet.

A full fleet review focusing on what makes and models would best fit operational needs was undertaken. It looked at vehicle layout, operational capability, reliability, manufacturer and supplier support in the event of a breakdown and the vehicles' environmental impact.

It resulted in its commercial vehicle contract for all vans under 3.5 tonnes being awarded to Northgate Vehicle Hire after it tendered for the business.

Enserve said Northgate could offer the same vehicles, at the same price and with the same contract hire and leasing suppliers, but with the

added benefit of flexibility. That's important for a business where winning new contracts can require additional vans being added to the fleet at short notice.

Enserve is also reducing its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by employing telematics software and speed limiters to help measure and control fuel consumption.

The availability of driver data has enabled the fleet department to advise employees on smarter driving techniques, with a 'driving league' highlighting the best and worst performers.

Cost savings have been made as the reduction in undesirable driving behaviours has led to fewer repairs and replacement parts.

In addition, reversing/parking sensors have been fitted to all vehicles, the company has become a member of the Freight Transport Association's Van Excellence scheme and it has set up a Critical Risk Group to look at all fleet-related issues.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Paul Brown shows a solid understanding of the fleet and has introduced a number of new initiatives, which are robustly measured to display clear results. An extremely well-run operation.

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Toyota & Lexus Fleet



# FLEET OF THE YEAR UP TO 250 VEHICLES

Winner: **London & Quadrant  
Housing Trust**

## PICTURE CAPTION

L&Q fleet manager Maurice Elford (left) collects the award from Neil Broad, general manager, Toyota & Lexus Fleet

## FINALISTS

- London & Quadrant Housing Trust
- Nationwide Window Cleaning
- Momentum Instore
- Zip Water UK

**L**ondon & Quadrant Housing Trust (L&Q) recognises the importance of having a dedicated fleet manager. When it decided to bring its property maintenance work back in-house it knew it would need to expand its van fleet and appoint its first fleet professional.

Since experienced fleet manager Maurice Elford joined the housing association in May 2014, the fleet has nearly trebled from 80 vehicles (17 cars and 63 vans) to 230 (18 cars and 230 vans) and Elford spends all of his time managing the operation.

The vans are split into three operating areas: direct maintenance (responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of L&Q's properties), care-taking services (refurbishing empty properties between tenants) and Quadrant Construction (the construction arm of L&Q).

Previously the vehicles were racked similarly, irrespective of trade but, with Elford's guidance and input from the drivers, the organisation has

introduced 12 combinations of vehicle and fit-out, dependent on specific job functions.

Elford has introduced a number of other changes, including fleet management software, a vehicle walkaround check app, online modules and fitting telematics to its vans to improve fleet safety and lower costs (helping L&Q to also be named 'most improved fleet', see page 60).

But, where appropriate, Elford has maintained the status quo. The vehicles continue to be on contract hire with maintenance agreements as it allows L&Q to invest money in new housing rather than depreciating metal. However, he has extended the contract term as the vehicles do low mileage, resulting in significant savings.

L&Q has reduced its environmental impact through the use of hybrids (almost half of the car fleet is petrol hybrid) and Elford is open to the idea of replacing diesel vans with electric for certain sites in London.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

L&Q has undertaken a thorough review of employee needs and how they translate into the fleet policy. It has designed solutions that meet their requirements and has the buy-in at a senior level. Diversity, inclusion and engagement are the key themes at L&Q.

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TOYOTA



Toyota & Lexus Fleet





# GREEN FLEET OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Panasonic Europe**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Panasonic Europe senior manager Jason Plummer (right) receives the award from Steve Oliver, general manager, corporate sales, BMW Group UK

## FINALISTS

- Britvic
- London Fire Brigade
- Panasonic Europe
- Speedy Hire
- Z-Tech Control Systems

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Z-Tech Control Systems

Panasonic's drive to cut its fleet emissions is motivated by its ambition to be the greenest innovation company in the world. The company uses CO<sub>2</sub> as its key performance measure for its worldwide fleet, and each territory is expected to reduce vehicle emissions every year.

This has created an informal competition among its local fleet managers to achieve the most progress: it is a challenge UK fleet manager Jason Plummer has met head-on.

He evaluates emissions using a combination of manufacturer figures and calculations from Panasonic's mileage capture process, which last year gave its UK fleet of 160 cars an average CO<sub>2</sub> of 106g/km, falling from 119g/km in 2015.

Average real-world fuel economy across the fleet is 68.4mpg. Plummer leads by example here: in 2015, over 9,231 miles, he achieved fuel economy of 337mpg from his company plug-in hybrid, equating to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 20g/km. He spent just £129 on fossil fuel.

Plummer is one of many company car drivers operating an alternatively fuelled vehicle, with nearly 20% of Panasonic's UK drivers operating PHEVs or standard hybrids.

Those who do drive plug-in hybrids can recharge their vehicles at the company's head office in Bracknell via solar panels.

This generates up to 50kWh – enough charge for up to 25 cars a day. Four cars at a time can hook up to the charging system.

Panasonic's commitment to reducing emissions goes much further than vehicle choice. For example, the company has extended its video conference systems and has also installed them at some key customers and suppliers.

This has reduced mileage, given staff better communication tools and given them back time, as has an 'agile working' policy which allows office-based staff to consider working from home: removing the journeys to and from the office has made a big difference to mileage for some employees.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

A range of environmental initiatives in a well thought-out policy. The judges praised Panasonic's travel plans, home working policy, active buy-in from drivers and the clever use of solar panels – it's not just about running low emission vehicles.

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# SAFE FLEET OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Skanska**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Skanska head of fleet Julie Madoui (centre) and fleet risk and compliance manager Alison Moriarty collect the award from Andrew Brown-Allan, group marketing director, Trak Global Group

## FINALISTS

- Anglian Water
- Gateshead Council
- Iron Mountain
- Royal Mail
- Skanska
- Speedy Hire

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Iron Mountain
- Royal Mail

**A** continuing focus on reducing collisions both in and beyond its own fleet has led Skanska to retain the award for safe fleet of the year.

The company leaves no stone unturned in its mission to reduce incidents: all drivers, including grey fleet, are subject to an online risk assessment that includes hazard perception and attitudes to driving.

All, too, undergo regular licence checks. Commercial drivers are checked every three months with all other drivers every six, unless they are identified as 'high risk'. In these instances, licences are checked every three months.

Training is carried out throughout a driver's career, employing a mixed programme to ensure it is relevant and proportionate.

An example of this is that all LGV drivers are put through the Fleet Operators Recognition Scheme (FORS) safe urban cycling course.

In future, Skanska will extend this to all van and HGV drivers as it feels they will benefit from

a greater understanding of how cyclists and other vulnerable road users feel when in traffic.

The company's initiatives have seen the incident rate – for all vehicle use including commuting and personal use accidents – fall by 11 percentage points between 2015 and 2016.

Skanska has also trained a number of Brake ambassadors across the business to enable them to take the safety message to their own contacts and the wider community.

Although the company has again made great strides to reduce risk and incidents, it is not content to rest on its laurels.

Last year saw a bigger reduction in the number of collisions involving commercial vehicles than cars, due to the fact it concentrated its management of occupational road risk more towards commercial vehicles.

This year, however, it is targeting car drivers and trialling telematics in cars to replicate the beneficial effect this has had on commercial vehicle incident rates.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Skanska has a holistic approach to running a safe fleet. It identifies the gaps and finds the best solutions. In addition to its own strong track record of reducing incidents, Skanska is also active in the wider market in helping other organisations to improve the safety of their own fleets. Comprehensive and admirable, said the judges.

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# COST SAVING INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Royal Mail**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Royal Mail fleet director Paul Gatti (left) collects the trophy from Zenith commercial director Ian Hughes

## FINALISTS

- Advantage Smollan for myFleet
- Royal Mail for its workshop projects
- Speedy Hire for BMW i3 van project

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Speedy Hire for BMW i3 van project

Last year's winner in this category makes it a double success after further improvements plus a number of innovations which have combined to make additional savings in 2016.

Royal Mail's preventative maintenance programme has continued to achieve a 26% improvement year-on-year for mean time between failure on vehicles. It equates to a 3% reduction on total workshop visits – vehicles now visit six times a year on average instead of eight.

In a further extension of its workshop insight, maintenance data on expenditure for the past 10-15 years is now loaded into a new module on Royal Mail's fleet management system to advise which vehicles to replace and when based on a number of criteria, including future spend forecasts and current market resell values.

Adding to the savings on service, maintenance and repair are a number of other new

workshop programmes, including a green parts project which involves extracting body, engine and gearbox parts from vehicles due for decommissioning to use as spares.

Meanwhile, additional analysis of maintenance expenditure and equipment reliability enabled Royal Mail to reduce investment on workshop listing equipment in 2015/16.

Royal Mail also appointed a warranty manager to ensure its claims numbers increased. One of his first initiatives was to introduce warranty champions in each region. They visit every workshop in their area, prioritising the lowest performers first, to complete an audit on the processes being used to claim warranty.

Subsequent improvements in performance has more than doubled the number of warranty claims, with a near five-fold rise in income.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Royal Mail has made savings by taking a holistic view of the fleet and identifying how it could do things differently rather than simply adapting existing policies. It is a massive organisation but that doesn't hold it back when it comes to implementing new ideas; it is constantly trialling and testing solutions.

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# MOST IMPROVED FLEET OF THE YEAR

Winner: **London & Quadrant Housing Trust**

## PICTURE CAPTION

L&Q fleet manager Maurice Elford collects the award from Lisa Spong, head of sales at Reflex

## FINALISTS

- Anglian Water
- Interserve
- London & Quadrant Housing Trust
- Rexel
- Wates

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Wates

Managing a fleet of 200-plus vehicles, predominantly vans, is a world away from Maurice Elford's former role as group fleet manager at Royal Bank of Scotland, where he presided over 4,000, mainly perk, salary sacrifice cars.

But Elford has relished the challenge of running L&Q's vans, and has taken what he describes as a "scientific" approach to the way they are kitted out.

Instead of ordering vans with racking included in the lease rental (as L&Q previously did), he has chosen to buy the racking, enabling it to have a second life, and has tailored the vehicle and fit-out to the specific job-function, recognising that a plumber's requirements can be different to an electrician's.

Specifications for the 12 different vehicle/racking combinations, including tippers, double-cab dropsides and panel vans, were determined

by talking to the drivers about their needs.

When planning the racking for the plumbers' vans, for example, Elford learned he needed a gap down the middle of the van to accommodate the width of a standard bath.

Elford has also generated significant cost savings by extending the fleet's replacement cycle and introducing mobile servicing to minimise downtime – a van is now unavailable for an hour and a half rather than a day.

Technology has played a part in transforming how the fleet is run; Elford has introduced fleet management software, a vehicle check app and online modules on the company's policies (covering issues such as mobile phone use and what to do in the event of accident), which all new drivers have to complete before they are handed the keys to a company vehicle.

Telematics has been fitted to vans to improve road safety and lower costs, with anticipated fuel savings of 7-10%.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

From a standing start, Maurice Elford has delivered outstanding results by understanding the role of the fleet and the needs of its drivers. He has secured buy-in to new initiatives and can show measurable outcomes. The judges were impressed by the appointment of a garage which helps disadvantaged people back into work.

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# GREEN FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Hyundai**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Hyundai national fleet sales manager Paul Williams (left) receives the award from UK transport minister John Hayes CBE

## FINALISTS

- BMW (UK)
- Hyundai Motor UK
- Nissan Motor (GB)
- Peugeot Motor Company
- Renault (UK)
- Toyota (GB)

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Nissan Motor (GB)
- Toyota (GB)

**H**yundai has broken new ground as a green vehicle manufacturer in recent years. Its Ioniq features the world's first dedicated vehicle platform that supports three distinct low-emission powertrains – electric, hybrid and plug-in hybrid – while its ix35 Fuel Cell was the first mass-produced hydrogen fuel cell vehicle.

Making these cars available to business users on highly competitive terms, as well as supporting them with award-winning aftersales services, is a crucial aspect of Hyundai's long-term commitment to reducing the environmental impact of its fleet vehicles.

The manufacturer is investing heavily in low-emission technologies.

By 2020 it will introduce 28 low emission vehicles, including 10 new hybrid models, eight plug-in hybrid models, eight electric vehicles

and two dedicated fuel cell vehicles.

However, Hyundai knows there is much more to being a green car manufacturer than just producing low CO<sub>2</sub> vehicles.

As a pioneer of hydrogen fuel cell technology, it is working with the Greater London Authority, the London Hydrogen Project and a range of other bodies across the world to develop a hydrogen fuel infrastructure.

Its environmental ethos is also apparent in its manufacturing process. ISO 14001 certification of Hyundai plants indicates that the environmental aspects and impacts of the production process are formally managed to meet its environmental objectives and policies.

Inside the Ioniq, a variety of trim is manufactured using eco-friendly materials – the interior door covers, for example, are made from recycled plastic and powdered wood.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Hyundai is bringing alternative fuels into the mainstream in an innovative way with the Ioniq three-in-one car. It is committed to hydrogen as well as electrified platforms and its sustainable energy is evident in its Korean factory where surplus electricity produced by solar panels is fed back into the grid.

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# MOST IMPROVED FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Fiat Chrysler Automobiles**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Fiat Chrysler Automotive fleet and remarketing director Francis Bleasdale is presented with the award by Thrifty Car & Van Rental fleet director Elliot Scott

## FINALISTS

- Fiat Chrysler Automobiles UK
- Honda UK
- Renault (UK)
- Škoda UK
- Volvo Car UK

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Volvo Car UK

The FCA Group has scooped the title of Most Improved Fleet Manufacturer at this year's *Fleet News* Awards after changes to its product line-up and fleet team.

Driven by an ambition to strengthen its fleet offering, FCA Group overhauled the structure of its UK fleet team. A number of key appointments created expert teams focussed on specific areas, including a revised corporate and contract hire team. It has more than doubled in size and now incorporates commercial vehicles and has appointed a dedicated total cost of ownership (TCO) specialist.

There was also an expansion of the dedicated fleet and contract hire team at FCA Financial Services, where a greater focus on fleet has led to improved fleet and financing arrangements.

In addition to the significant changes within its

fleet team, the manufacturer's desire to strengthen its fleet offering has also been reflected in its product line-up.

Business-focused editions of the Alfa Romeo Giulia and Fiat Tipo, Technica and Elite respectively, have been available from launch. The models were developed in close partnership with leasing companies and residual value experts, who were given early sight of them on a special visit to the group's design centre.

Appealing to both fleet operators and company car drivers, the manufacturer said the special editions gave FCA Group a more compelling fleet proposition by delivering improved specification levels, low CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and P11D.

The changes have combined to contribute to a 53% increase in overall fleet sales and helped FCA Financial Services climb seven places to 24th in the FN50.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Fiat Chrysler is much more engaged with fleets, leasing companies and pricing guides and restructuring its business and making a number of key appointments. It has also launched fleet-specific models and taken numerous actions to reduce costs for fleets, particularly on SMR.

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## FINALISTS

- Audi A1
- Citroën C3
- Ford Fiesta
- Mini Hatch
- Peugeot 208
- Vauxhall Corsa

HIGHLY  
COMMENDED

- Audi A1
- Ford Fiesta

## PICTURE CAPTION

Matt Gurney, PSA Group director – fleet and used vehicles (left), is presented with the award by Elliot Scott, fleet director, Thrifty Car & Van Rental

## BEST SMALL CAR

## Winner: Citroën C3

Citroën seems to have rediscovered its reputation for quirky-yet-appealing affordable cars. Following the C4 Cactus in 2014, the new C3, launched late in 2016, taps into that approach. Larger and lower than its predecessor, the C3 is sharp and assured where the previous model was bland and unappealing.

It stands out from the crowd in a sector when manufacturers can afford to be a little more adventurous with design, but does so with characteristic Citroën distinctiveness, making the C3 both instantly recognisable and attractive.

The C3 is well equipped with safety features. Lane departure warning, blindspot monitoring and driver attention alert are all available on the C3, and, uniquely, a built-in dash-cam called ConnectedCam that can upload fun location shots to social networks via an app, also doubles to automatically record video footage before and after an accident.

Citroën's recent models have emphasised comfort and simplicity inside, and the C3 is no exception.



## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Citroën has reinvented the C3 with fresh and adventurous styling inside and out, giving real drive appeal. With the latest technology including the option of a built-in dash-cam, the C3 is a versatile and accessible small car with plenty of room and low running costs.

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## BEST LOWER-MEDIUM CAR

## Winner: Vauxhall Astra

A second successive *Fleet News* Awards win for the Vauxhall Astra shows there's great depth to its ability. There are versions that suit job-need drivers as well as those with strong user-chooser appeal, while prices and running costs remain competitive.

A long-time sparring partner of the Ford Focus and Volkswagen Golf, the Astra is assured enough to hold its own in an intensely competitive sector.

The Astra's resale value forecasts are also proving resilient to the typically high volumes sold in the lower-medium sector, although Vauxhall has also been careful to maximise more profitable fleet business with the latest version.

It has a strong line-up of petrol and diesel engines, with some fleet-focused motors twinned with appealing equipment grades delivering low benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax bills, but Vauxhall has also offered less sophisticated engines with slightly higher emissions, for more price-sensitive channels where BIK tax is less important.



## FINALISTS

- Ford Focus
- Honda Civic
- Renault Megane
- Škoda Octavia
- Vauxhall Astra
- Volkswagen Golf

HIGHLY  
COMMENDED

- Ford Focus
- Škoda Octavia

## PICTURE CAPTION

James Taylor, fleet sales director, Vauxhall (left), collects the award from Elliot Scott, fleet director, Thrifty Car & Van Rental



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## JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Astra has a wide range of engines that balance performance with good real-world economy. It is a great all-rounder for fleets, with good looks, strong driver appeal and the latest technology combining with robust residual values and low running costs in a job-need dominated category.

# Best mid-size SUV: SEAT Ateca



The SEAT Ateca takes on the everyday confidently with distinctive and dynamic styling



## RANGE COSTS

**P11D** £17,935 - £30,340

**CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)** 113 - 135

**Annual BIK tax (20%/40%)**

£717 / £1,435 - £1,638 / £3,277

**RV% (4yr/80k)** 35 - 44

## FLEET PICK SPEC

**Ateca SE Technology 1.6 TDI  
Ecomotive 115PS**

**P11D price** £24,115

**Running Cost (4yr/80k)** 3038ppm\*

**CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)** 114

**MPG (combined)** 64.2

**Annual BIK tax (20%/40%)**

£1,061 / £2,122

\*48/80,000 term, information from  
CAP Automotive Ltd March 2017.  
The total cost of ownership does not  
include fuel costs.

## Judges' comment:

*"Excellent value for money for fleets and drivers, the Ateca has a high quality interior, good range of diesel and petrol engines and attractive looks. SEAT has a winner in this category"*

## Carmaker's comments

Having taken the fleet sector by storm since its release in September, the Ateca has revitalised the segment with a stylish and practical SUV – being named Best Mid-size SUV establishes it as the class-leading option for fleets.

The Ateca delivers a company car which exudes quality and is packed with technology and design flair. Among the most affordable vehicles in the segment, it has a low P11D value while offering class-leading RVs.

Running a successful fleet relies upon driving appeal as much as affordability. Design, driving dynamics and leading technology combine to provide a vehicle made for fleet drivers who need every journey to be comfortable, connected and enjoyable.



The SEAT Fleet Business Centre

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## FINALISTS

- Ford Mondeo
- Hyundai i40
- Mazda 6
- Škoda Superb
- Volkswagen Passat

## BEST UPPER-MEDIUM CAR

## Winner: Škoda Superb

It's perhaps ironic that a brand once famous for producing budget cars has managed to bridge the gap between mainstream and premium in the upper-medium sector arguably better than any other.

The Škoda Superb has ability to spare in a sector that is shrinking, squaring off against highly regarded stalwarts such as the Ford Mondeo, Vauxhall Insignia and Volkswagen Passat.

Offering a range of engines from fuel-efficient diesels starting with the 1.6 TDI up to the high-performance all-wheel drive petrol 280PS 2.0 TSI, the Superb has a variant to suit the needs of anyone whose job requires a car of this size or status.

Offering greater comfort and more room inside than its rivals, the Superb is also well equipped and competitively priced. The estate version has more carrying capacity than any other car at this price, but is no less elegant than the Superb hatchback.

It's a good car to drive too; responsive enough to keep driving enthusiasts happy while ensuring long motorway trips pass with the minimum of effort.



## PICTURE CAPTION

Škoda head of fleet Henry Williams (left) is presented with the award by Elliot Scott, fleet director, Thrifty Car & Van Rental

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Pound-for-pound one of the best cars on the road today. Unbelievable running costs, strong residuals, the most space in class, attractive looks, good build quality and very reliable, the Superb is the stand-out car in this category.

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## BEST COMPACT SUV

## Winner: Nissan Juke

It's testament to how many ingredients of the Juke Nissan got right when it launched in 2010 that our judging panel from across the industry chose it as 2017's best compact SUV.

It helped popularise compact crossovers in the same way the Nissan Qashqai did three years earlier, and with a major update two years ago the Juke's appeal remains strong – it's the biggest seller in its segment.

Its distinctive design and agility around town give it strong appeal among user-choosers, while its low running costs, whether choosing petrol or diesel variants, ensure it can justify its inclusion on many fleets.

The 1.5 dCi diesel, which produces 110PS, provides the Juke with a performance advantage over many similar sized rivals, while fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are still low.

But there are frugal petrol choices too, and selecting a small turbocharged petrol engine in the 1.2 DIG-T could be a better choice for urban environments where the Juke is in its element.



## FINALISTS

- Audi Q2
- Jeep Renegade
- Mazda CX-3
- Nissan Juke
- Vauxhall Mokka X

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Audi Q2

## PICTURE CAPTION

Elliot Scott, fleet director, Thrifty Car & Van Rental (left), hands over the award to Adam Connelly, Nissan national corporate sales manager



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## JUDGES' COMMENTS

In a sector where price accessibility and running costs are key factors, the Juke emerges as a clear winner. Broad appeal for both fleets and drivers, the Juke is an enduring car that is equally at home as a salary sacrifice car as it is fulfilling a job-need function.

## FINALISTS

- BMW X1
- Kia Sportage
- Peugeot 3008
- Range Rover Evoque
- Seat Ateca
- Toyota CH-R
- Volkswagen Tiguan

HIGHLY  
COMMENDED

- Peugeot 3008

## PICTURE CAPTION

Peter McDonald, Seat UK head of fleet & business sales (left), picks up the award from Elliot Scott, fleet director, Thrifty Car & Van Rental

## BEST MID-SIZE SUV

Winner: **Seat Ateca**

Seat has been eyeing up the crossover sector for a while, with relatively capable four-wheel drive versions of existing models with raised ground clearance, but in 2016 it took the plunge with its first authentic SUV.

And the Ateca is a very impressive first attempt, offering substance to back up its obvious style.

Derived from the same platform as the new Tiguan, comparisons are inevitable, but it's the Ateca that looks and feels a smarter choice. The entry-level and mid-grade versions are well equipped for the money, but Seat also offers a high-grade version allowing it to compete with premium players for technology and materials.

And, unlike some otherwise exceptional cars in this sector, the Ateca is also available with four-wheel drive.

Seat offers two petrol variants, ranging from 115PS to 150PS, and three diesels, with power from 115PS to 190PS, the latter coming only with four-wheel drive.



## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Excellent value for money for fleets and drivers, the Ateca has a high quality interior, good range of diesel and petrol engines and attractive looks. Seat has a winner in this category.

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## BEST LARGE SUV

Winner: **Jaguar F-Pace**

The F-Pace is the most important Jaguar to be launched in years, taking the brand famous for luxury saloons and sports cars into a new sector.

With a footprint that's somewhere between the XE and XF saloons, the F-Pace takes advantage of the seemingly insatiable current appetite among consumers for SUVs, as well as offering something different for people who have had several premium saloons, estates or SUVs.

The F-Pace launched with the same engine line-up as the Jaguar XF, which included a choice of four-cylinder or six-cylinder diesels, and a supercharged V6 petrol.

Acknowledging that not everyone who buys an SUV needs to travel off road, and perhaps with extra appeal for tax-conscious company car drivers, the F-Pace is also available with rear-wheel drive in the entry-level diesel engine, bringing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions down to 129g/km.

Jaguar is marketing the F-Pace as a 'practical sports car' rather than an SUV.



## FINALISTS

- Audi Q7
- BMW X3
- Jaguar F-Pace
- Land Rover Discovery Sport
- Mercedes-Benz GLC
- Volvo XC90

HIGHLY  
COMMENDED

- Mercedes-Benz GLC
- Volvo XC90

## PICTURE CAPTION

Jon Wackett, UK fleet and business general manager, Jaguar Land Rover (left), receives the award from Elliot Scott, fleet director, Thrifty Car & Van Rental



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## JUDGES' COMMENTS

The fastest selling Jaguar ever, the F-Pace blends sports car and SUV into one compelling package for fleets and drivers. Equally at home on- or off-road, the F-Pace delivers unbelievable value for such a well-appointed car.



## FINALISTS

- Audi A6
- BMW 5 Series
- Jaguar XF
- Mercedes-Benz E-Class
- Volvo S90/V90

HIGHLY  
COMMENDED

- Volvo S90/V90

## PICTURE CAPTION

Mercedes-Benz Cars UK head of fleet Rob East (left) collects the award from Elliot Scott, fleet director of Thrifty Car & Van Rental

## BEST EXECUTIVE CAR

Winner: **Mercedes-Benz E-Class**

**L**aunched in spring 2016, the latest E-Class marks a huge step forward for Mercedes-Benz in the executive car sector, bringing new levels of comfort, technology and efficiency to market.

Available with diesel, petrol and plug-in petrol hybrid variants, as well as in saloon or estate body styles, the E-Class already has the important bases covered when it comes to choices for company executives.

Importantly for real-world emissions performance, the new 2.0-litre diesel engine, available in 150PS and 195PS power outputs, has been designed for future regulations, and contains features to ensure NOx treatments work efficiently even after cold starts or when ambient temperatures are low, and emissions are minimised.

The E-Class features next-generation driver assistance systems. While autonomous emergency braking with pedestrian detection is standard, there is more sophisticated technology on the options list.



## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Innovative technology ensures the E-Class offers low real-world emissions, while comfortable seats and a smooth ride make it perfect for long distances. With refined drivetrains, low running costs and high residuals, the cavernous estate tips the balance in favour of the E-Class.

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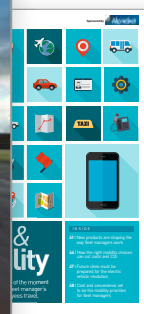
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# Best compact premium car: Audi A3



The sharp new design typifies the advances the A3 has made



## RANGE COSTS

**P11D** £19,770-£38,265

**CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)** 99-163

**Annual BIK tax (20%/40%)**

£672/£1,344-£2,129/£4259

**RV % (4yr/80k)** 30-34

## FLEET PICK SPEC

**A3 1.6TDI S Line Sportback**

**P11D price** £26,340

**Running cost (4yr/80k)** 51.41ppm

**CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)** 108

**Mpg (combined)** 68.9

**Annual BIK tax (20%/40%)**

£1,106/£2,213

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

*Fleet News says:*

*"It seems that with a recently updated A-Class and BMW 1 Series on the market, the A3 has improved by enough to secure its position as a class benchmark."*

*Fleet News First Drive, June 2016*

## Carmaker's comments

A sharp new design, a refined interior and the best of Audi technology: the Audi A3 has been reimagined. With infotainment, connectivity and driver-assist technologies available throughout the range, business drivers especially will benefit from the advances the A3 has made. Smartphone Interface comes as standard on all models, with the fully-digital Virtual Cockpit as an option. A broad range of new, tax-efficient engines is also available, including a 115PS, 1.0 TFSI with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 104g/km and a 1.6 TDI as low as 99g/km – making the A3 the perfect addition to your fleet.



The A3's refined interior establishes a benchmark for its class

Audi Fleet Sales Team, Audi UK

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## FINALISTS

- Audi A3
- BMW 1 Series
- Mercedes-Benz A-Class
- Mini Clubman

## BEST COMPACT PREMIUM CAR

## Winner: Audi A3

Audi invented the modern compact premium hatchback when the A3 was launched in 1996, and now its main rivals have followed suit with the BMW 1 Series and Mercedes-Benz A-Class.

Other car manufacturers, too, have understood the appeal of an upmarket compact premium car, and have introduced their own. But none seems to hit the mark in the same way as the Audi A3.

Revised and updated in 2016 with a range of new technology and impressive safety features, the A3 range includes a three-door, five-door Sportback and four-door saloon.

Last year's refresh added new-to-the-segment traffic jam assist, which works with adaptive cruise control and Audi's Stop&Go feature.

The optional system keeps the car at a safe distance from the vehicle in front and, in combination with the S-tronic transmission, automatically sets the vehicle in motion again after a short stop.



## PICTURE CAPTION

Head of Audi UK Fleet James Douglas (left) with Elliot Scott, fleet director of award sponsor Thrifty Car & Van Rental

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Spacious, with a wide range of engine and trim options and best-in-class residuals, the A3 offers low overheads for fleets and low benefit-in-kind tax for drivers. It does everything well so it's no surprise that company car drivers tend to be repeat purchasers.

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## BEST PREMIUM CAR

## Winner: Audi A4

The Audi A4 wins its category for the second consecutive year, despite no longer having the benefit of being the newest car in its sector.

It fought off the challenge of the BMW 3 Series, Mercedes-Benz C-Class and Jaguar XE, as well as the exceptional new Alfa Romeo Giulia seeking to renew the Italian marque's appeal to user-choosers.

The A4 is still top of the class, however, creating a compelling case through its breadth of range with a choice of body styles and a choice of fuel-efficient petrol and diesel engines, as well as high-performance versions.

Fuel-saving technology has reduced consumption in automatic variants, which are now capable of equaling or bettering that achieved by manual versions.

Standard specification is impressive with 17-inch alloys on both SE and Sport models, while these also gain xenon headlamps and LED signature daytime running lights. S Line models come with full LED headlamps as standard.



## FINALISTS

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

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Alfa Romeo Giulia

## PICTURE CAPTION

Head of Audi UK Fleet James Douglas (left) collects Audi's second award from Elliot Scott, fleet director of Thrifty Car & Van Rental



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## JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Audi A4 is well equipped with a broad range of engines. Running costs are very competitive, while the quality of the build and the interior are class leading. Overall, the A4 has the most driver appeal of any car in this category.

# Best plug-in car (1-50g/km): BMW i3 with Range Extender



Drivers can also enjoy standard specification that includes BMW Business navigation, real time traffic information and rear park distance control

## RANGE COSTS

P11D £35,635-£37,635

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km) 12

Annual BIK tax (20%/40%)

£499/£998-£527/£1,054

RV % (4yr/80k) 29-30

## FLEET PICK SPEC

i3 REX 170 Lodge eDrive Auto

P11D price £37,135

Running cost (4yr/80k) 43.74ppm

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km) 12

MPG (combined) 470.8

Annual BIK tax (20%/40%)

£520/£1040

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

## Fleet News says:

*"By far the most powerful compact EV on sale with 170PS, and using carbonfibre construction to reduce weight, the rear-wheel drive i3 has been very much the driving enthusiasts' choice among plug-in cars."*

Fleet News First Drive,  
November 2016

## Carmaker's comments

With sustainability at the core of everything that BMW i represents, the BMW i3 was designed purely around electric power.

Every element of the car has been carefully considered to achieve a combination of lightweight engineering and premium quality, from the modular LifeDrive architecture to the carbon fibre reinforced bodywork.

With its high capacity battery, coupled with a small petrol-powered generator, the BMW i3 with Range Extender can take you up to 206 miles on one charge. What's more, it can repower to 80% capacity in as little as 40 minutes thanks to DC Rapid Charge, which is offered as part of the standard equipment.



Low weight and a powerful motor give it a good turn of speed



Hands-off approach to sat-nav by using voice commands



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## FINALISTS

- BMW i3
- Hyundai Ioniq
- Nissan Leaf
- Renault Zoe
- Tesla Model S
- Volkswagen e-Golf

HIGHLY  
COMMENDED

- BMW i3

## PICTURE CAPTION

Hyundai national fleet sales manager Paul Williams (left) was presented with the award by transport minister John Hayes CBE

## BEST PLUG-IN CAR (0G/KM)

Winner: **Hyundai Ioniq**

**H**yundai set itself apart from other manufacturers when it introduced the Ioniq this year offering customers the choice of three electrified power-trains in one car.

But it's perhaps the Ioniq Electric pure EV that impresses most, with competitive pricing as well as a potential driving range of 174 miles – among the best of mainstream EVs in 2016.

And with some public charge point suppliers now levying fees for using them, those extra miles could prove valuable.

Prices start from £24,495 (inclusive of the Government Plug-In grant of £4,500) for the Premium specification. This includes specific equipment such as automatic windscreen wipers, 16-inch alloy wheels, LED headlamps and rear combination lamps and 'advanced smart cruise control'.

Sat-nav is standard across the Ioniq Electric range, while customers can also choose a higher specification Premium SE for an extra £1,800.



## JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Ioniq offers one of the longest ranges of any electric vehicle. With ample space and a high-tech interior wrapped in an attractive body, its low price results in a very competitive running cost and brings electric motoring to the mass market.

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## BEST PLUG-IN CAR (1-50G/KM)

Winner: **BMW i3  
Range Extender**

**B**MW has got all the ingredients right for its i3 electric car, despite its quirky looks.

Although the fully electric version lost out to the more affordable Hyundai Ioniq in the zero tailpipe emissions category of our awards, members of our judging panel had plenty of praise for the Range Extender (REX) version of the i3, which has a small motorcycle engine to charge the battery when the plug-in range has depleted.

Made available with revised battery chemistry last year to boost its range, the i3 can now reach up to 195 miles on the official test cycle, or up to 243 miles with the Range Extender.

The i3 has played its part in the past three years to draw greater attention to EVs and make them desirable and aspirational. By far the most powerful compact EV on sale with 172PS, and using carbonfibre construction to minimise weight, the rear-wheel drive i3 has been very much the driving enthusiasts' choice among plug-in cars.



## FINALISTS

- Audi A3 e-tron
- BMW i3 Range Extender
- BMW 330e
- Mercedes-Benz C350e
- Mercedes-Benz E350e
- Volkswagen Golf GTE
- Volvo XC90 T8

## PICTURE CAPTION

Transport minister John Hayes CBE hands the award to BMW Group general manager, corporate sales Steve Oliver



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## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Practical and with a striking design, the i3 Range Extender offers a decent range with the added security of the range-extender petrol engine. It is great to drive and has competitive running costs thanks in part to the clever use of carbon fibre technology for low-cost repairs.

# *Leasing company of the year – more than 20,000 vehicles: Zenith*



## *Supplier's comments*

Zenith is the UK's leading independent leasing, fleet management and vehicle outsourcing company. At the heart of the business is a focus on innovation and great customer service, which has delivered industry-leading levels of customer satisfaction.

Its award-winning technology, wide range of funding solutions and an experienced in-house consultancy team all combine to deliver an outstanding customer experience.

Innovation underpins an integrated digital strategy which delivers world-class reporting, offering customers valuable, real-time insights about their fleet and drivers.



Tim Buchan, chief executive officer, Zenith (holding award), celebrates with members of the team after picking up the trophy

## *Customer testimonial:*

*"From the moment we started the implementation process the service provided by Zenith has been first class. Its team is extremely easy to communicate with and everyone is completely open and honest which has allowed us to build very positive working relationships. The team is always professional and helpful and nothing is ever too much trouble."*

Harry Koumourou, Benefits and Recognition Manager at Royal Mail Group



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# LEASING COMPANY OF THE YEAR – MORE THAN 20,000 VEHICLES

Winner: **Zenith**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Jaguar Land Rover fleet and business general manager Jon Wackett (left) presents the trophy to Zenith chief executive officer Tim Buchan

## FINALISTS

- Alphas GB
- Arval
- Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions
- LeasePlan UK
- Lex Autolease
- Zenith

A customer-centric approach in the development of its digital platform helped Zenith win Leasing Company of the Year for more than 20,000 vehicles. The culmination of several years' work, its dedicated customer service platform enables it to provide a common and consistent approach no matter which office or department interacts with drivers.

It also allows workflow analysis so customer service levels can be quickly analysed and it can show where drivers raise the most queries, enabling recommendations around policy or service delivery.

Zenith operates a fleet of more than 85,000 vehicles and focuses on serving blue-chip customers, principally as sole supplier. It is ranked 7th in the FN50's list of the UK's top 50 contract hire companies, with a risk fleet of 58,392 vehicles.

Its key focus is to deliver best-in-class service to its customers.

A dedicated account executive and customer relationship manager are on hand to provide advice, while bespoke real-time information about fleet performance and service levels is available to customers at any time.

This is backed-up with quarterly review meetings with every customer.

In the past year, its consultancy team has completed 10 projects achieving a total annual saving of £8.5 million or £1,330 per unit.

Service level agreements are also constantly monitored, with feedback provided to key fleet decision-makers on how well it is performing.

Zenith was recently sold to private equity firm Bridgepoint for £750m and says that investment from its new majority shareholder will give it five years to build an "automotive superpower".

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Zenith's approach to innovation sees it work with fleets of all sizes to develop products and services. Its new customer service platform, Accelerate, has boosted query resolution and helped Zenith identify areas for improvement. It is trialling weekend and evening working to meet the needs of different drivers.

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# Leasing company of the year – up to 20,000 vehicles: Activa Contracts



## Supplier's comments

"We are so proud to receive this award. It is a testament to the effort and commitment of our team of true service champions who work tirelessly to develop and deliver our quality fleet solutions. Our industry continues to face many new challenges, but we have absolute confidence in the ability of our people to innovate and adapt, while keeping the interests of our customers at the forefront of their minds in everything they do."

Ian Hill  
Activa Contracts  
Managing Director



Ian Hill, managing director (fully seated), with the team from Activa Contracts

## Customer testimonial:

*"I am responsible for fleets across 23 countries. Activa only operates in the UK, but if they were to expand to new markets, I would without question enlist their services as they have the inherent cultural integrity to deliver. We genuinely feel that working with Activa is on a true 'partnership' basis where both parties are working to a common goal"*

Gareth Wilsher – AT&T International  
Fleet Manager



Tel: 01908 288400 Fax: 01908 288411

Activa Contracts, Winchester Circle, Kingston, Milton Keynes, MK10 0BA





# LEASING COMPANY OF THE YEAR – UP TO 20,000 VEHICLES

Winner: **Activa Contracts**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Activa Contracts managing director Ian Hill (left) is handed the award by Jaguar Land Rover fleet and business general manager Jon Wackett

## FINALISTS

- Activa Contracts
- Grosvenor Leasing
- Marshall Leasing
- Tusker

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Marshall Leasing

**A**ctiva Contracts is aware that end of contract charges can be a bone of contention between leasing companies and their suppliers and takes steps to help minimise charges.

From the outset it helps its customers to develop a robust driver policy. It recognises that line managers have an important part to play in monitoring and enforcing the policy, particularly for geographically dispersed fleets.

It also provides customers with an app, created by its in-house software development team, allowing them to send digital images of vehicles prior to end of contract. Activa then indicates whether recharges are likely – and to what extent – so customers can arrange for refurbishment work to be carried out independently before the vehicle is returned.

Activa says once a client is notified of a

proposed charge it will not repair the vehicle, move it, sell it or raise an invoice until full approval is obtained from the client.

Its software team has also created a mileage capture app, which automatically records business journeys using GPS, as well as modelling tools to provide clients with analysis and comparison of wholelife costs and fuel policy.

Other new products include fleet insurance, which is provided through Activa's in-house insurance division, and a mini lease to bridge the gap between daily rental and contract hire.

An in-house daily rental team provides customers with a full nationwide service with the majority of vehicles being sourced from within Activa's own group resources.

Activa operates a 24/7 call centre to support drivers out-of-hours operated by its staff rather than a third party.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Activa Contracts has expanded its digital offering with a number of in-house-developed apps for capturing mileage and vehicle condition, along with wholelife cost modelling and fuel policy tools. The judges praised its end-of-contract process and fines admin policy, along with its "broad offering" and long-standing partnerships.

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# BEST RENTAL COMPANY OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Enterprise Rent-A-Car**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Giles Bolton, head of finance at award sponsors Grosvenor Leasing, presents the award to Joanne Vickers, national sales manager – fleet and leasing, Enterprise Rent-A-Car

## FINALISTS

- Avis
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- Europcar
- Hertz UK
- Reflex
- Thrifty Car & Van Rental

Enterprise Rent-a-Car aims to provide any type of vehicle over any time period through its fleet of more than 97,000 vehicles and puts business mobility at the heart of its strategy.

The company operates from 420 branches, with locations in 17 of the UK's largest airports. Its Car Club operates round-the-clock, seven days a week, with 1,500 cars ready for use at any time in 19 major cities.

Last year Enterprise invested in a customer engagement programme to pinpoint its fleet challenges. The outcome was a new accident management system which allows for three-way communication between it, repairers and fleets. The goal is to reduce downtime and improve key-for-key time for all vehicles off the road.

Customers can access all of Enterprise's services through one online booking platform,

be it car, van or HGV and the tool can ensure employees only rent vehicles under a particular emissions threshold.

To fulfil customer requirements effectively, Enterprise's internal booking system, ECARS, allows branches to see the available stock in neighbouring sites and move vehicles where required. During high-demand seasons, business customers also get priority.

Due to its extensive network, Enterprise is able to offer fixed price delivery and collection or a free-of-charge pick-up service.

Fleet customers enjoy an enhanced service level. All vehicles are valeted and undergo a 25-point safety check before being delivered. A graduate management trainee will attempt to meet the customer to perform a full handover.

Last year 95% of customers were 'satisfied' or 'completely satisfied'.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Enterprise Rent-A-Car has integrated its car club services with its daily rental branches so fleet customers can be advised when an hourly rental might be preferable to a daily one. It has also broadened its commercial vehicle range and developed a new accident management system in response to customer feedback.

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# Customer Service Award: The Automobile Association



## Supplier's comments

The AA is delighted to have been judged as *Fleet News* Customer Service award winner for 2017. The combination of our unrivalled strengths, brand and values has enabled us to continue to deliver consistently high standards of service to customers in the fleet sector.

We are committed to providing service that goes above and beyond expectations. This especially applies at the roadside, where investment in diagnostics, mobile technology and operational innovation has enabled us to significantly improve our already excellent roadside repair rate and to bring reassurance to the working lives of our customers' customers.



Stuart Thomas, head of fleet services & SME at The AA (seated, centre) joins staff in punching the air after their win

## Customer testimonial:

*"We're delighted to be working with The AA. Roadside is a naturally crucial part of our overall mobility offering. We have chosen The AA because, after careful consideration of the available suppliers and the services they provide, we feel they can provide the best service for our customers."*

Tim Porter, Managing Director, Lex Autolease



Online: [theAA.com/business](http://theAA.com/business)

Email: [fleetenquiries@theAA.com](mailto:fleetenquiries@theAA.com) Phone: 0800 55 11 88





## CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

### Winner: The Automobile Association

#### PICTURE CAPTION

Stuart Thomas, head of fleet services and SME at The AA (left), receives the award from Škoda UK head of fleet Henry Williams

#### FINALISTS

- Alphabet GB
- Arval
- The Automobile Association
- Thrifty Car & Van Rental
- Vic Young (South Shields)
- Zenith

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Thrifty Car & Van Rental
- Zenith

The AA is the UK's largest breakdown provider and is a long-standing fleet supplier in the UK motor industry. Through its manufacturer contracts it services 65% of all new vehicles sold in the UK as well as providing support to a number of FN50 leasing companies, including the biggest, Lex Autolease.

In 90% of cases The AA can fix a broken down vehicle at the roadside. It will attend call-outs anywhere in the UK and has partners across Europe. On one occasion a minibus broke down near the Arctic Circle, and The AA was able to recover the vehicle and get the customer to their destination within two hours.

Its average SME customer is retained for around 10 years, while overall retention is 82%.

To ensure customers are satisfied The AA undertakes telephone research with major

fleet customers after breakdown incidents to establish an NPS score. More than 93% of those surveyed say they would recommend The AA to a friend.

To stay one step ahead the company works with industry bodies like the FTA and car manufacturers, so it can provide technology and services suited to the latest requirements.

This year The AA launched a range of new services and solutions including an online customer portal and a multi-fit wheel for fast puncture repairs.

Stuart Thomas, The AA head of fleet services, said: "We understand the needs of our fleets and work hard to deliver exceptional customer service at a price that suits customer requirements. We can achieve this through our efficiency of scale, our competitive terms and our deep understanding of the fleet market."

#### JUDGES' COMMENTS

The AA impressed the judges with its "anywhere, anytime capability" – it was even able to respond to a call out close to the Arctic Circle. Its customer satisfaction scores are consistently high despite it facing a challenging customer service environment. The judges also praised its use of technology and its wide range of services.

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**ŠKODA**



# Award winning **ŠKODA SUPERB**

**DRIVEN BY SOMETHING DIFFERENT**

Model shown is ŠKODA Superb Estate L&K 2.0 TDI 190 PS 4x4 DSG at £36,310 OTR with optional metallic paint at £555, Roof rails £242 RRP and bike racks £107 each. Price correct at time of publication. Bike not included.

Official fuel consumption for the ŠKODA Superb range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 31.4 (9.0) – 65.7 (4.3); Extra Urban 45.6 (6.2) – 85.6 (3.3); Combined 39.2 (7.2) – 76.4 (3.7). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the ŠKODA Superb range are 164 – 96 g/km. Standard EU test figures are for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.





## MOST INNOVATIVE NEW PRODUCT OR SERVICE

Winner: **Freight Transport Association**

### PICTURE CAPTION

Freight Transport Association head of vans Mark Cartwright receives the award from Fleet News Buying Group operations director Jayne Pett

### FINALISTS

- Bulweria
- Fleet Assist
- Freight Transport Association
- Paragus t/a CheckedSafe
- VisionTrack

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Fleet Assist

**F**TA's Van Excellence Driver Certificate of Competence is the only nationally recognised driver qualification for van drivers. It was developed in partnership with a number of Van Excellence-accredited van fleet operators with two goals: to address work-related road risk and create a learning pathway for driver development.

By improving driver engagement the scheme can help fleets improve mpg, reduce collisions and improve retention.

The training is flexible and can be carried out by the FTA, by third party providers or in-house via a train-the-trainer programme. It covers eight topics: fitness to drive, pre-use inspections, legal and safe loading, the ambassadorial role of the driver, rules of the road, safe and green driving, other road users and breakdown and collision procedures.

Training materials are modular, enabling the course to be split over a number of sessions or delivered in a single day. Each part is designed to be 30 minutes to one hour in duration.

Once the training has been completed, drivers must sit a multiple-choice exam to pass. The award lasts for three years and drivers receive a certificate, qualification card and 'Driver Ambassador' pin badge.

So far more than 500 drivers have been trained and the FTA is confident a further 10,000 drivers could take the qualification in the next 12 months.

Early adopters include Network Rail, Balfour Beatty, AAH Pharmaceuticals, Bott, SG Gaming and Kelly Group who have committed to train more than 8,000 drivers between them.

The FTA says the training is closely aligned to its Van Excellence code of practice.

### JUDGES' COMMENTS

The FTA's Van Excellence Driver Certificate of Competence puts a new twist on driver training. It gives van drivers a professional qualification and recognises that driving is an at-work activity. Big name fleets are among the early adopters and the judges said the certificate will "raise standards" and has the potential to have "a significant impact".

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# *Fleet Dealer of the Year: Swansway Group*



## *Supplier's comments*

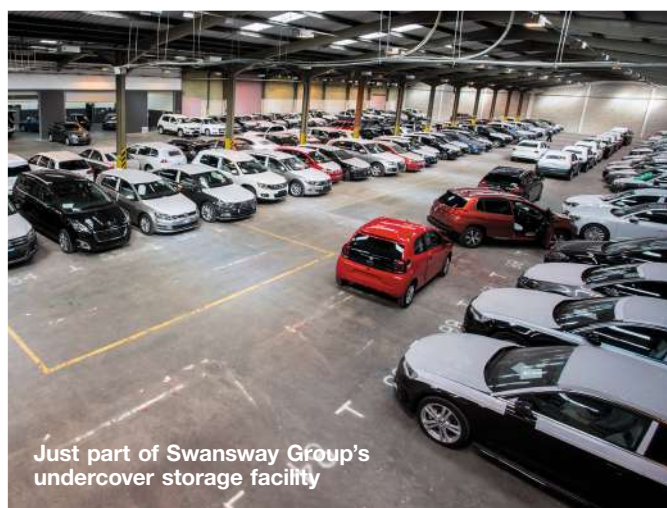
Delighted Sarah Eccles, Swansway Group Fleet Sales Director commented: "Wow! I'm absolutely thrilled to have won this award. It's the top award that any fleet dealer group can aspire to and we've won it! The whole team needs to take a bow."

She added: "Our obsession is customer service. As a team we're all determined that the leasing companies and end users we supply, have simply the best experience and our CSS scores show that we're definitely doing something right."

## *Customer testimonial:*

*"Swansway Group Fleet consistently provides a fantastic service in all areas of vehicle supply. The team members are always friendly and a real pleasure to deal with."*

*Felice DiCello, Tactical Supply Manager, ALD Automotive UK*



Just part of Swansway Group's undercover storage facility



Contact Sarah Eccles on : 01270 848986  
or email [s.eccles@swanswaygarages.com](mailto:s.eccles@swanswaygarages.com)





# FLEET DEALER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Swansway Group**

## PICTURE CAPTION

Sarah Eccles, group fleet director, Swansway Group, is handed the award by *Automotive Management* associate editor Jeremy Bennett

## FINALISTS

- Holdcroft Group Fleet
- Johnsons Fleet Services
- Norton Way Motors
- Snows Toyota
- Swansway Group
- Vic Young (South Shields)

Being a control freak pays off – or to put it more diplomatically, Swansway Group's determination to offer a holistic service to end-user fleets and contract hire companies saw it win significant new business in 2016.

It was a culmination of a number of factors.

Swansway has its own fleet service KPIs, to ensure it gives all its customers the highest level of service "above and beyond the requirements of their individual service level agreements".

The Swansway KPIs include: a response to a quotation request within 20 minutes, time from receipt of order to order placement of three hours; a 1:100 delivery-to-complaint ratio and complaint resolution within 24 hours.

The group's two online brokerage businesses – Uchoose and Stable Contracts – prevents competitors taking business ("why give profit to a third party?"), and with the traditional company car driver increasingly searching the net, Swansway is in the market to help.

All brands' vehicles come direct from Swansway dealerships, ensuring consistent process and positive relationships. A dedicated team arranges 800 demos a year.

And finally, for the business to be able to continue its growth and to sustain high levels of customer service, a dedicated space was needed for the team and vehicle storage.

So, the group's fleet division has benefited from a £500,000 investment, funding a new home for the fleet sales team, key account and administration teams, brand specialists, five-ramp PDI team, a logistics operation, 350-vehicle storage and automated car-wash and valeting team.

The stand-alone fleet facility has contributed to vehicle turnaround time reducing from four days to less than 48 hours.

The dedication saw Swansway win contracts with Canon, Cummings and GAP fleets in 2016, among others. Leasing company contract wins in 2016 included LeasePlan and Tusker.

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

Swansway has invested heavily in fleet with a standalone group fleet centre which has reduced vehicle turnaround times. It sets high customer satisfaction standards for vehicle handover. It has strong partnerships with leasing companies and fleet sales director Sarah Eccles is involved with a number of working parties.

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Many fleets are interested in implementing telematics, but can face opposition in the boardroom. *Andrew Ryan* looks at how fleet managers can win the argument

Used correctly, telematics technology can have a transformational effect on many fleets. The potential impact of its data is far-reaching: businesses which use it often report significant savings in areas such as fuel and insurance, while others talk about the positive reduction in risk and increased productivity.

But some company directors remain reluctant to introduce the technology, sometimes through a fear of drivers rebelling against 'big brother spy' in the



CASE STUDY:  
GREENTOMATOCARS

A desire to significantly reduce its annual accident costs of £1.2 million through better driver behaviour was the focus of the Greentomatocars business case for telematics.

The West London-based private hire company took the decision to fit a GreenRoad telematics system across 300 vehicles following a period in which it had a high number of collisions.

This resulted in a saving of £600,000 last year following an annual spend on the technology of between £35,000 and £40,000.

"The saving was not only due to the telematics. It was also due to performance management of the drivers following an internal reorganisation, but it did have a huge impact on us," says Sophie Jacobsen, head of service delivery at Greentomatocars.

The company self-insures, so accident spend was the obvious area to target for savings, she says, particularly as its drivers are self-employed so are responsible for fuel.

"The system we use has a traffic light display on the dashboard, so if it is green everything is okay, if it flashes yellow then please be careful, and if it flashes red, then the driver is doing something wrong," adds Jacobsen.

"We trialled it with eight drivers for three months as we found that when you sat with a driver or we had driver trainers coming out, they performed very well, but then could go back to bad behaviour when there was not a trainer with them.

"The telematics was able to show us how the drivers were driving when they were alone, what we had issues with and then we could start tackling them."

To incentivise drivers to improve, Greentomatocars also introduced a bonus system, which gives the drivers an extra £25 a week if they have a telematics score of less than seven events in 10 hours of driving and an average rating of more than 4.75 out of five from customers.

This could total £1,300 a year – an amount which the cost-saving has paid for several times over, says Jacobsen.



cabs', sometimes over concerns about how unions will react, and sometimes through a suspicion that finding the money will fail to deliver a sufficient return on investment (ROI).

While benefits such as fuel savings may be an easy sell as it can be simple to demonstrate how it will impact the company's bottom line, others, such as the potential improvement in duty of care to drivers, are harder to put a figure to.

So how can a fleet manager best make a compelling case to win the necessary investment? The starting point should be to understand fully why they want the technology.

"For most fleets, telematics will typically deliver 15 to 20 different areas of benefit, but it will be three or four that deliver around 90% of the value," says Steve Thomas, sales director at Ctrack.

"The challenge for fleet managers is to understand the biggest opportunities that should be focused on immediately and possess the flexibility to adapt priorities along the way.

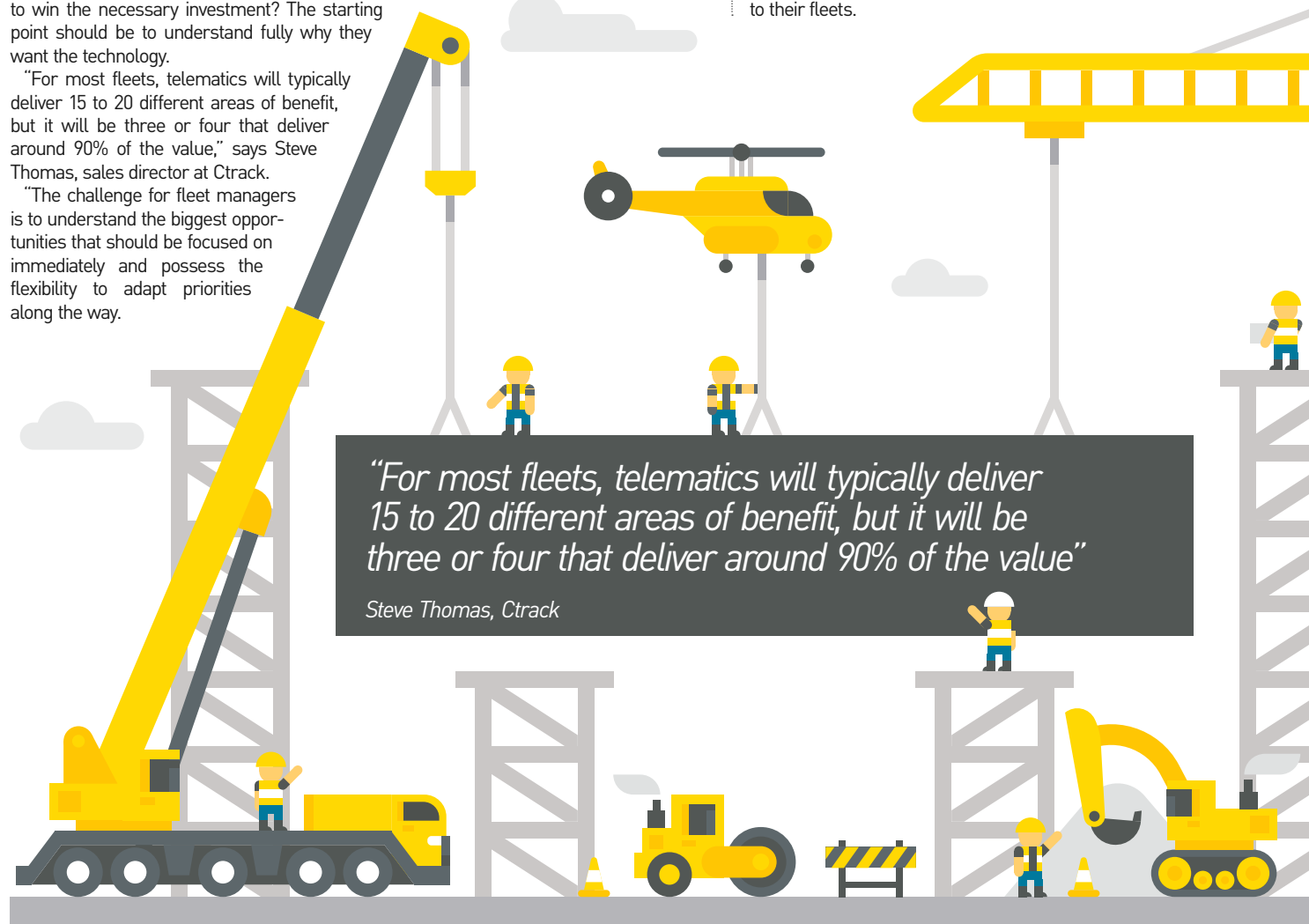
"For example, a fleet we have been working with initially wanted to target a reduction in vehicle idling, but analysis of the early data showed that any savings were nominal.

"However, it instead found that drivers were making excessive mileage claims by an average of 28%, which represented a much more significant cost to the business."

The RAC Telematics Report 2016 found that businesses which use telematics cite benefits such as lower fuel costs (55%), fewer collisions (43%) and a reduction in maintenance costs among the top reasons for introducing the technology to their fleets.

*"For most fleets, telematics will typically deliver 15 to 20 different areas of benefit, but it will be three or four that deliver around 90% of the value"*

*Steve Thomas, Ctrack*





**£60,000**  
annual insurance saving  
at Anglian Water

**55%**  
reduction in fuel costs  
according to RAC  
Telematics report 2016

"Fuel is an obvious area to focus on, but it will vary by business," says Stewart Lightbody, head of fleet services at Anglian Water which has saved £650,000 in fuel after installing telematics in its fleet of 1,640 vans.

The organisation's programme was carried out in three phases: the first saw the technology fitted to 750 vans in 2014, the second to 500 in 2015, with the remaining vehicles last year as the savings justified the investment.

"Our original business case was based around making a 10% saving on fuel; we also knew it was going to have an effect on health and safety, but that was difficult to quantify," Lightbody says.

"For me, it was kind of disappointing that fuel was the sole objective because I know telematics can do so much more, but the fuel savings grabbed the attention and since then we've been able to demonstrate significantly more benefits than that."

As well as a typical 10-13% increase in fuel economy across the fleet, telematics has also enabled Anglian Water to reduce its insurance premium by £60,000 a year and tyre costs by £10,000 a month.

"If there's enough opportunity on fuel alone to cover the cost of telematics, keep it simple and go for the low hanging fruit that is fuel, but know that you'll also have a positive impact on other areas," adds Lightbody.

"If you think making the case on fuel alone sounds borderline, add that if you drive up fuel efficiency then you will absolutely reduce wear and tear costs and accident costs: think about all of the opportunities."

As fleet manager at Bristow & Sutor, Andrew Wearing introduced telematics in June last year after making the business case on health and safety grounds, as well as fuel savings.

"We've all got a duty of care to drivers," says Wearing. "You've got to make sure they drive safely, so that was a key element of our process, but that doesn't give you obvious financial savings and sometimes management may not want to spend money unless they can see some tangible benefits in their pocket."

"I'd been amassing data from fuel cards over a period of time and that gave me the economy of every vehicle on the fleet."

"I could see that we'd improved fuel economy up to a point, but found we couldn't go any further."

"For example, I had some Peugeot 2008s on the fleet and some were doing 40mpg and others were doing 65mpg, so clearly the difference was down to the way the vehicles were being driven."

## REVERTING TO OLD HABITS

Wearing says driver coaching and encouragement can often deliver an improvement, but this may only be short-lived before drivers revert to their old habits.

"If you go for the right telematics system you can get a step change in your fuel consumption. We introduced the technology last June and by July we'd seen a 10% improvement in fuel consumption data – it was almost instantaneous."

Wearing says this saving alone more than paid for the cost of the technology, as the company's annual fuel bill for its 157 cars and light vans has fallen by £100,000, with the telematics system costing £28,000 a year.

However, while both Bristow & Sutor's and Anglian Water's business cases focused largely on fuel savings to win boardroom investment, fleet managers need to have a clear understanding of their own objectives, according to Sam Footer, head of international business and strategic development at Intelligent Telematics.

"This will enable them to establish what return on investment is achievable and how best to use the technology within their own business environment," he says.

Peter Millichap, director of marketing at

# SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Mark Chessman, CEO, FMG



While the cost-saving benefits of vehicle telematics have never been clearer, a strong business case must recognise that the telematics market can seem like a minefield. Fleet operators need to cut through the 'noise' to find the ultimate telemetry solution for their business requirements.

Fleet operators from all industries can feel bewildered by the ever-growing choice of devices, data, software and suppliers. They have similar concerns around which device to use, how to employ the data gathered, justifying the return on investment and allaying fears of a driver revolt. To build a business case for telematics, much of that confusion can be alleviated by focussing on software capability prior to assessing hardware options.

Firstly, identify the core reason for which you intend to implement telemetry within your fleet. Driver safety may not be the first area identified when planning a healthy return on investment, yet driver safety is one of the best approaches to achieve the financial benefits associated with fleet telemetry. A focus on driver safety can lead to a subsequent reduction in incident frequency and severity, significant fuel savings, a potential reduction in car insurance premiums and accuracy of mileage expense reporting.

Secondly, consider your software requirements and look at the market to evaluate potential providers. The ideal software platform will be capable of importing vast amounts of data from various hardware devices and then consolidating it to provide usable and actionable information for the fleet manager and driver. A flexible software solution is central to future-proofing a telemetry solution, since software is considerably easier than hardware to update. With the above in place, it is easier to identify the hardware solution that meets these requirements.

Finally, once the software and hardware solution have been identified, driver engagement must be factored in. Winning the hearts and minds of drivers from day one, with specialist implementation support and dedicated account management throughout the lifetime of the contract, is pivotal to a scheme's success.

**FMG**  
THINKING AHEAD



Teletrac Navman, adds: "It's important companies identify where they believe telematics can add value before building a business case. Some indicators are easy to identify and report on in terms of ROI, such as reducing fuel usage, increasing business capacity and improving business efficiency.

"However, fleet managers should also consider how their company is evolving – will some technological advancements in telematics provide greater business benefits a few years down the line?"

For some fleets, improving productivity may be a high priority. Potential gains may be difficult for a fleet manager to quantify in a business case, but Quartix uses the example that if an extra job is charged at £300 and the marginal cost for materials is just £50, then with a telematics solution costing £15 per unit per month or 75p per day, the company has made profit.

Wearing says one concern Bristow & Sutor's directors had over installing telematics was that drivers may not be able to do as many jobs in a day if they had to drive more slowly.

"They were concerned that one lost call per day would more than wipe out any savings we would make on fuel and that while I was saying we would make savings, they were worried telematics would cost them more money," he says.

"I said that was not the way it was going to work out because people will be doing what they should be doing, when they should be doing it and not be sitting in McDonald's for an hour because we would be tracking them.

"That's certainly the way it transpired. We haven't lost any productivity whatsoever, and people are driving much more sensibly than they were before because we've seen the difference in the fuel spend.

"Not only that, then you get the benefit of less tyre wear and fewer brake disc and pad changes on the vehicle.

"The mechanics of the vehicle are getting less stressed, so there are a lot of plus points as well as the health and safety issue where guys are actually safer on the road."

While putting together a business case for telematics, it is critical to engage and consult other departments in the business as some of the data may help their daily activities as well.

"For instance, telematics can be highly beneficial to the financial department in terms of providing feedback and reporting on mileage or producing invoices and quotes for customers," says Millichap.

"The HR department and mechanics would also benefit from the vehicle analytics and performance reports, showing how much time drivers are spending behind the wheel and monitoring both the health of the driver and the vehicle."

MasterNaut has conducted studies on more than 10,000 commercial vehicles to benchmark average reductions in cost.

Mike Hemming, its UK professional services director, says these studies showed that businesses save £55 per vehicle per month in fuel, personal, vehicle and asset costs, and incident and insurance costs.

## PUTTING TELEMATICS ON TRIAL

One potential way to strengthen a business case for telematics could be to trial the technology in a limited number of vehicles for a set period.

"Piloting telematics today is becoming less of a necessity as the evidence and information from existing users is often enough to convince a new customer that telematics will work for them," says Mike Hemming, of MasterNaut.

"However, if potential customers are expecting resistance or still have concerns, a pilot phase to a complete rollout is often an excellent way to gather momentum.

"The initial pilot will often focus on the driver behaviour and fuel savings aspect of telematics, as these areas give the quickest win to any business.

"If you can prove that the system is self-sustaining on fuel savings alone,

then customers often find that resistance to the system diminishes.

"This then allows a customer to focus on the larger opportunities of improving safety, optimising the fleet and proving they are a sustainable business."

However, not all telematics suppliers agree that a trial is useful in producing meaningful data.

"The greatest challenge to running a trial for driver behaviour is the lead time involved in gradually changing behaviour," says Harvey Stead, commercial director at FMG.

"In addition, the most successful trials require a large number of vehicles, covering a full cross-spectrum of a particular fleet, as opposed to the small number of vehicles often volunteered for a trial."

"Telematics system prices vary widely, dependent on system quality and a customer's specific requirements," he says. "Regardless of price, however, returns are very high: based on in-depth studies across hundreds of deployments, our customers typically earn an ROI of three to five times the amount invested, though some achieve much more."

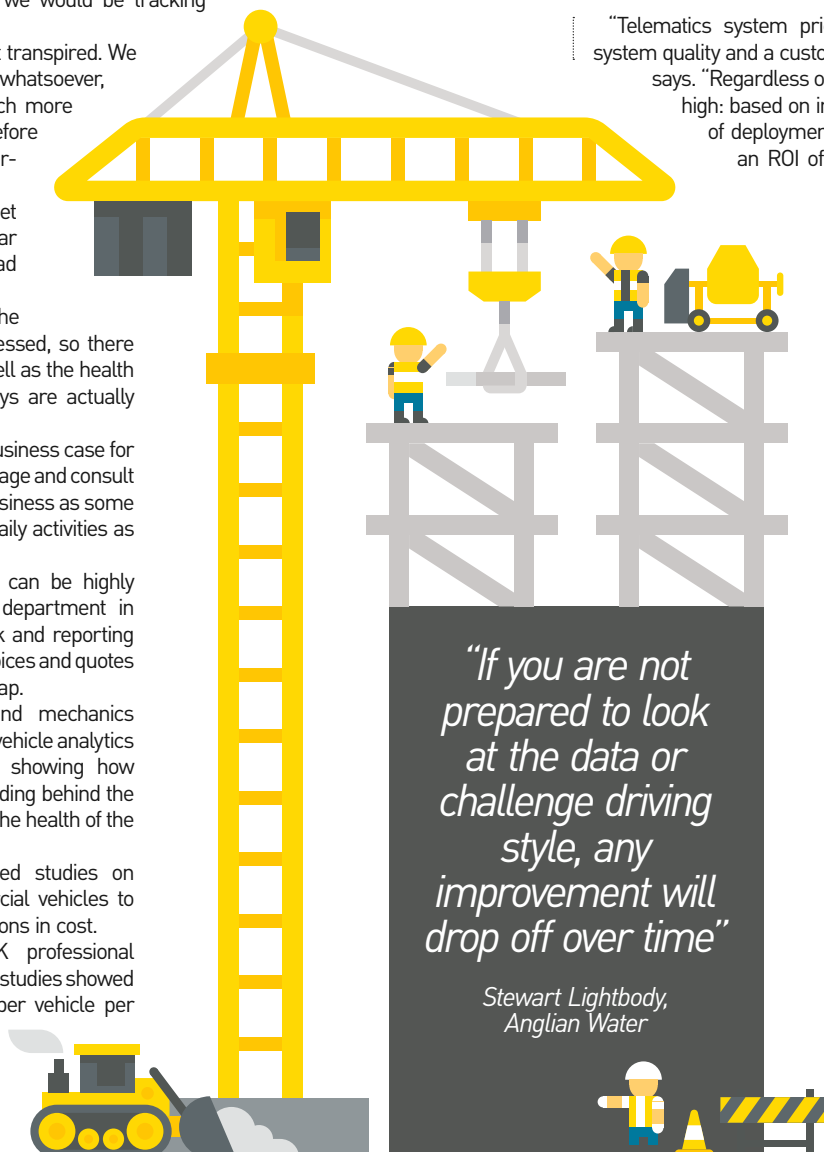
Telematics suppliers are usually keen to share case studies of customer success stories to strengthen a business case, as many may feature organisations similar to those the fleet manager works for.

However, while these examples can help form a persuasive argument which the board cannot ignore, Lightbody warns that the hard work doesn't end with winning the investment.

"The danger is when it comes down to the culture of the business looking to employ telematics. If you are not prepared to look at the data or challenge driving style, any improvement will drop off over time," he says.

"Drivers will invariably revert to type and go back to their old driving habits, and then it will cost you money because you've invested in the units and nothing has changed.

"If a company is not brave enough or doesn't know how to act on the information created by the telematics, then effectively they are going to waste money because the technology (by itself) will deliver nothing."



*"If you are not prepared to look at the data or challenge driving style, any improvement will drop off over time"*

Stewart Lightbody,  
Anglian Water



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Fuel consumption figures for Nissan LEAF – CO<sub>2</sub> while driving: 0. MPG: N/A.

2p per mile calculation is based on British Gas Clear and Simple Economy 7 unit rates for a Customer paying by Direct Debit as at 20 March 2017, assuming seven hours of charging at the night rate using 16A HCU and one hour on daytime rate using 16A HCU, 95% charging efficiency and a 155 mile range. Based on European Driving Cycle. Actual consumption and range may vary. Models shown are LEAF Tekna, e-NV200 Tekna Rapid and e-NV200 Combi Acenta. Nissan Motor (GB) Ltd, The Rivers Office Park, Denham Way, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 9YS.

# FLEETS MUST ASK CRITICAL EV QUESTIONS

As increasing numbers of fleets investigate electric vehicles it is important to ask the right questions before deciding to join the trend. *John Maslen* reports.

**F**leets are switching on to the potential benefits of plug-in cars, with demand soaring more than one-third last year. The number of cars involved is still relatively small, with 35,000 registered that qualified for the Government's plug-in car grant in a car market of nearly 2.7 million. Around 70% of plug-in cars went to businesses.

However, the next few years could prove a watershed as supply increases significantly, with dozens of new plug-in models arriving from mainstream car manufacturers, both plug-in hybrids and pure EVs.

At the same time, awareness is increasing, with more than two-thirds (69%) of company car drivers saying they would consider driving an electric vehicle (EV) if they were offered one by their employer.

But before fleets introduce EVs or plug-in hybrids, there are a number of issues they need to consider. Questions fall into three key categories – the fleet, the driver and the journey.

## THE FLEET



**Q1**

*Is there support for change?*

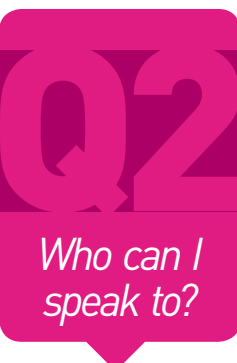
**A** For any initiative to be successful it needs the support of senior management and the same is true with the introduction of plug-in vehicles.

Fleet managers need to set out their proposals, the resource implications of introducing vehicles and the potential benefits to the business from making the change.

It is important to start the groundwork early, as it is likely other senior executives in the business will be asking the fleet similar questions about the benefits of choosing plug-in vehicles in the coming years.

Andrew Benfield, group director of transport at the Energy Saving Trust, says: "Companies need to think about business motivation and whether there is support to move toward adopting ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs).

"This includes the organisation's ethos and image and benefits ranging from cost savings to gaining a commercial advantage, for example when tendering for contracts."



**Q2**

*Who can I speak to?*

**A** There are a wide range of expert sources that can guide decision-makers during the journey towards introducing plug-in vehicles.

These include Government-funded organisations such as Go Ultra Low and the Energy Saving Trust, which has produced a guide to ultra-low emission vehicles for fleet managers and offers a fleet review service.

Suppliers may also have experts on hand to provide advice.

David Bushnell, product manager for Alphabet, says: "We are helping customers either to try these vehicles to see their benefit, or work with those customers who have dipped their toe in but need further support."

Companies can also speak to other managers who have direct experience of running plug-in fleets.

Poppy Welch, head of Go Ultra Low, says: "Talk to consultancy services and other fleet managers using EVs to ensure you fully understand the technologies and can make well-informed decisions."

A spokesman for Nissan adds: "Understanding the fleet and how it works, to provide proper fleet analysis before trialling or deploying vehicles, is crucial. Support from leasing companies and the Energy Saving Trust is vital as they can identify where to deploy electric vehicles and, almost as importantly, where not to."





## THE FLEET (CONTINUED)

## Q3

What financial support is available?

**A** For fleets that invest in electric vehicles, up to £4,500 is available (for cars; £8,000 for vans) as a Government grant to reduce up-front purchase costs, with a maximum limit of 35% of the vehicle cost.

The amount that can be claimed depends on certain conditions and covers the full purchase price for the basic vehicle including number plates, VED and VAT, but it doesn't include delivery charges, the first registration fee or any optional extras.

Fleets need to be aware that the grant depends on the emission-free range of their vehicle and the official CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, so there are six potential levels of funding available.

Category	CO <sub>2</sub> emissions	Zero emission range	Grant	Max grant
1	Under 50g/km	At least 70 miles	35% of cost	£4,500
2	Under 50g/km	10 to 69 miles	35% of cost	£2,500
3	50 to 75g/km	At least 20 miles	35% of cost	£2,500
Motorbikes	0g/km	At least 31 miles	20% of cost	£1,500
Mopeds	0g/km	At least 19 miles	20% of cost	£1,500
Vans	Under 75g/km	At least 10 miles	20% of cost	£8,000

## Q4

How will plug-in vehicles affect my running costs?

**A** It is important for companies to consider the whole-life costs of plug-in vehicles.

Costs to consider include depreciation, fuel costs (electricity), SMR spending and insurance.

Poppy Welch, head of Go Ultra Low, says: "Look beyond the initial list price or monthly rental. Typically, fleets can save more than £800 a month on a fleet of 10 EVs when using a whole-life costs model."

EVs tend to suffer from higher depreciation, but this is offset by lower fuel and servicing costs.

The *Fleet News* Running Cost Calculator provides detailed cost per mile information on a range of electric vehicles, which can be benchmarked against petrol and diesel equivalents.

In addition, companies need to consider external factors, for example the distance to the nearest garage that can service a plug-in vehicle.

*"Fleets can save more than £800 a month on a fleet of 10 EVs when using a whole-life costs model"*

Poppy Welch, Go Ultra Low

## Q5

How should I adapt my fleet policy?

**A** Initially, companies may just trial EVs to ensure they meet their expectations about performance and suitability for the fleet.

However, if vehicles are to become a permanent offering for drivers, then it will require a policy review.

Having EVs and hybrids as an option on some job grades may be the best starting point, says John Kelly, managing director at CLM Fleet Management.

He adds: "A carefully structured approach to green fleet management and vehicle selection can lay the foundations for a fleet which not only delivers lower costs all round, but also provides significant motivation for employees."

Companies may also need to consider providing incentives for staff that choose low-emission cars, such as improved vehicle specification.



## Q6

Should I lease or buy?

**A** Experts suggest that leasing may be a less risky proposition than buying, both for the car and the battery itself.

John Kelly, managing director of CLM Fleet Management, says: "Leasing removes some of the uncertainty about the resale value after three to four years. The leasing company bears the RV risk rather than the fleet which gives buyers peace of mind that they will not be left with a number of vehicles that are difficult to sell on the used vehicle market."

Companies should also consider how they would reallocate EVs if employees leave. As they are a relatively niche choice, it may be difficult to hand a vehicle to another driver. That said, if a vehicle is leased, the early termination fee may be significant.

An alternative for fleets to consider is corporate car sharing schemes, where drivers share a pool of vehicles and book use in the same way they might reserve a meeting room.

Aylesbury Vale District Council operates three Nissan Leaf EVs on its corporate car sharing fleet.

Alan Asbury, senior energy and fleet consultant, says: "There is a learning curve, as drivers were anxious about range and we had to make sure drivers always plugged in cars when they were returned, but we have educated them to make sure they do it."

*"Leasing removes some of the uncertainty about the resale value after three to four years"*

John Kelly, CLM Fleet Management

## THE DRIVER

**Q7**

*What do I need to tell employees?*

**A** Communication and education are key when introducing electric vehicles. Companies need to engage with employees and managers to help them understand how much EVs have developed and what modern cars are capable of.

To some extent, the success of Tesla is changing perspectives, but there may still be resistance to adapting to a new way of driving and refuelling, particularly when it comes to the range limitations of pure EVs.

Poppy Welch, head of Go Ultra Low, says: "Make sure employees understand how to run an electric car efficiently and responsibly – particularly in relation to when and how to re-charge the battery."

This is particularly important to avoid cases where drivers opt for plug-in hybrid cars because they currently incur lower benefit-in-kind tax charges, but then just run them without charging the battery.

**Q8**

*What will happen to employees' tax bills?*

**A** Tax bills may prove one of the most difficult conversations relating to plug-in cars.

From April 2017, cars with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 0-50g/km will pay benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax at 9%, with a charge of 13% for cars emitting 51-75g/km and 17% for cars in the 76-94g/km band.

By 2019/20, the rates will be as high as 16% for vehicles emitting 0-50g/km, 19% for cars in the 51-75g/km band and 22% for those producing 76-94g/km.

These increases will undermine the substantial tax savings drivers used to enjoy compared to the bill for using petrol and diesel vehicles.

2017/18		2018/19		2019/20	
CO <sub>2</sub> g/km	BIK%	CO <sub>2</sub> g/km	BIK%	CO <sub>2</sub> g/km	BIK%
0-50	9	0-50	13	0-50	16
51-75	13	51-75	16	51-75	19
76-94	17	76-94	19	76-94	22

However, from April 2020, new rules are being introduced based on how many zero emission miles a car can drive in addition to its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, which could slash BIK rates to 2% for some vehicles.

Critics of these changes suggest that they are a disincentive to buy or lease EVs for another three years.

Furthermore, new rules for Vehicle Excise Duty will see EVs and plug-in cars taxed for the first time (fleetnews.co.uk/2017VED).

**Q9**

*How do I account for mileage expenses?*

**A** This is another complex area for businesses. Currently, HM Revenue and Customs suggests companies should use the "actual costs" of charging a vehicle.

Fleets can calculate their own reimbursement mileage rate using manufacturers' data for miles per kWh and electricity cost data.

If a driver is using their own electric car, companies can use the Approved Mileage Allowance Payments system, which provides a tax and national insurance-free amount that can be paid to employees for covering business mileage in private cars.

Poppy Welch, head of Go Ultra Low, says: "The lack of Advisory Fuel Rates should not stop fleets from including EVs on choice lists."



## SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Karl Anders, national EV and public sector manager, Nissan Motor (GB)



Nissan is at the forefront of the electric revolution having already sold more than 275,000 electric vehicles around the world with the 100% electric LEAF and the e-NV200 Van.

Being a pioneer and market leader, Nissan's UK fleet sales team has the knowledge and experience to change perceptions and work closely with new customers that choose electric.

With this support many businesses are seeing the raft of benefits that driving electric brings.

These include ultra-low running costs from as little as 2p per mile, more environmentally friendly driving and lower service, maintenance and repair (SMR) costs.

*"Many businesses are seeing the raft of benefits"*

Charging is easily done and most motorists who own an electric vehicle usually charge the battery at home or at work, easily fitting around a busy work schedule. This is also helped by the great driving range on Nissan's electric vehicles when fully charged.

Furthermore, analysis by Nissan suggests there will be more public locations to charge electric vehicles in the UK than there are petrol stations by the summer of 2020. There are currently more than 12,000 available across the country today.

Nissan's batteries are proven in service and their reliability is why we offer up to eight years' warranty on batteries and electric drivetrain.

So, as more and more businesses aim to reduce their carbon footprint, while also lowering their running costs, Nissan is able to support by providing the solution.

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## THE JOURNEY

*“Careful consideration needs to be made for company drivers’ requirements and the type of driving they do”*

John Kelly, CLM Fleet Management



### Q10

*How will vehicles be used?*

**A** Companies need a very clear understanding of how vehicles are used and how far they travel before introducing plug-in vehicles.

John Kelly, managing director at CLM Fleet Management, says: “Careful consideration needs to be made for company drivers’ requirements and the type of driving they do. EVs should not be introduced arbitrarily across job grades. Short distances in urban environments may be the ideal scenario rather than long motorway distances, for example.”

In addition to companies matching the mileage and use profile of drivers with the charging capabilities of the vehicle, they also need to prioritise the use of EVs in areas where there is maximum benefit, such as in congestion charging or low-emission zones.

Sam Clarke, founder of EV-based delivery company Gnewt Cargo, says: “There is an increasing interest in EVs among businesses. Our solution works because we did not have any legacy systems that we had to mould the EV operation into, but this may be a big step for some other companies.

“Our business is also relatively predictable in terms of mileage requirements compared to companies in some sectors that don’t know where they are going to be sending vehicles each day or how far they will have to go.”

A spokesman for Nissan adds: “Fleet analysis has to focus on individual vehicles, not averages across a fleet as this does not identify the real opportunities to adopt electric vehicles.”

### Q11

*What charging issues do we need to consider?*

**A** Companies need to ensure charging facilities are flexible and cost-effective so they can expand as demand increases. This may involve discussions with the landlord about development of parking areas, or negotiations with other local businesses about sharing resources to develop a recharging network.

It is also important to explore the grant support that may be available, using sources such as the Energy Saving Trust.

As demand rises, resource management becomes an issue, such as monitoring usage so fully-charged vehicles are not left taking up valuable charging space.

For home charging, Go Ultra Low recommends that employers help staff sign-up to the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme, which provides a grant of up to £500 towards the cost of installation.

When travelling further afield, employers need to ensure drivers have access to the network of more than 11,000 public charge-points across the UK.

Easy access to charging points is an important incentive when encouraging drivers to change. London Fire Brigade said the introduction of charging points at its stations was a key element in 10 lease car drivers switching to plug-ins.

### Q12

*Will drivers need training?*

**A** Drivers may need to be supported in their transition to plug-in cars, particularly pure EVs.

They may be unused to using automatic transmissions and they may be unaware of issues to consider, such as pedestrians being oblivious to the car moving slowly in urban areas, because there is no engine noise.

Furthermore, they may need initial support when it comes to using the charging network for home, office and on-the-road.



For more on electric vehicles, visit [fleetnews.co.uk/electric-vehicles](http://fleetnews.co.uk/electric-vehicles)

# FleetNews PORTFOLIO

WHAT WE DO IN YOUR INDUSTRY

## Fleet News magazine

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

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## Fleet events

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



## Driving Business magazine

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

## Websites and newsletters

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

## Fleet Leasing magazine

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

## Bespoke publications

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



# RANGE ROVER VELAR

Sleek newcomer fills the 'white space' between Evoque and Range Rover Sport

By Simon Harris

Land Rover has identified what design director Gerry McGovern described as "white space" between the Evoque and Range Rover Sport. Three years ago, the company set about adding a new model to the range, taking the name Velar from the original Range Rover prototypes of 1960. The car is now available to order, with deliveries starting this summer.

*"It is the most aerodynamically efficient Land Rover to date which also helps with refinement and fuel economy"*

## DESIGN

The Velar is a sleeker design than we're used to seeing in a Range Rover. Although sitting between the Evoque and Range Rover Sport, it's only slightly shorter than the latter, which no doubt helps accentuate its slimmer profile.

The shape is familiar, and is generally lacking in clutter, with a focus on clean panels apart from a few vents in the wings.

Like the Jaguar F-Type, the Velar has flush, deployable door handles, which remain hidden in the bodywork until needed. It is the most aerodynamically efficient Land Rover to date, which also helps with refinement and fuel economy.

Every Velar features LED headlights as standard. As well as superior illumination and energy efficiency compared to bi-xenon lights, LED technology has also enabled the designers to create the most slender headlight clusters ever fitted to a production Land Rover. Rear light clusters are also LED, and have a 3D effect.

Designed as a car with clear off-road capability, the Velar has maximum ground clearance of 213mm for coil-spring versions, and up to 251mm for cars with air suspension (standard on V6 engines).



The most slender headlight clusters ever fitted to a production Land Rover

## EQUIPMENT

Velar – automatic transmission, Terrain Response, adaptive dynamics, 18-inch alloys, LED headlights, deployable door handles, Luxtec and Suedecloth seats, heated front seats, cruise control, autonomous emergency braking, lane departure warning, heated windscreen, keyless entry, DAB radio, InControl Touch Pro Duo.

S – 19-inch alloys, auto-dimming exterior mirrors, premium LED headlights, auto high-beam assist, powered gesture tailgate, perforated grained leather seats, 10-way powered front seats, Meridian sound system (380W), SSD navigation, InControl Pro services and WiFi hotspot, rear-view camera.

SE – 20-inch alloys, matrix LED headlights, intelligent high-beam assist, Meridian

sound system (825W), 12.3-inch TFT instrument panel, 360-degree parking aid, blindspot monitor, traffic sign recognition, adaptive speed limiter, reverse traffic detection, driver condition monitor.

HSE – 21-inch alloys, Windsor leather seats, 20-way powered front seats, massage and ventilated front seats, steering wheel bezel and paddle shifts in satin chrome, power-adjustable steering column, adaptive cruise control with queue assist and intelligent emergency braking, park assist, blind spot assist, lane keep assist.

First Edition R-Dynamic exterior pack and other interior and exterior styling upgrades. Air suspension is standard on six-cylinder models, and optional on others except D180.







## TECHNOLOGY

The big technology showcase in the Velar is the Touch Pro Duo infotainment system. It features two high-definition 10-inch touchscreens that form the centrepiece of the cabin.

The upper touchscreen's menu is divided into three panels for navigation, media and phone. Interaction is by swiping across the screen to change between menus, pinching to zoom in and out. The upper screen can tilt through 30° to ensure optimum visibility.

The lower touchscreen is integrated within the centre console and manages features including the climate control and Terrain Response functions. There are no moving images and no complex menus – the touchscreen provides direct inputs to seat temperature controls, for example.

Two rotary controllers are reconfigurable to enable them to perform several functions, such as adjusting cabin air temperature, optional massage seat settings or the Terrain Response mode. Between them is a dial for controlling the audio system.

Micro SIM 4G connectivity, standard from S grade, allows the



driver to use the online search to find destinations. The system can also calculate fuel range for the journey, alerting to filling stations on the route that are within range shown on the map – tapping on one is all it takes to set it as a waypoint. Fuel prices can also be shown, as can the filling station brand.

When delayed in traffic, the destination ETA can be shared via contacts either by text or email, automatically sending updates if necessary. Commute Mode learns daily drive routines so that, using both historical and real-time traffic information, it can suggest alternative routes and help reach the destination on time.

## ENGINES/TRANSMISSIONS

The entry point to the Velar range is the 180PS 2.0-litre Ingenium diesel, with two higher-powered diesel options. Customers can also choose a 240PS version of the 2.0-litre or a 300PS 3.0-litre V6 diesel.

The Velar also comes with an in-house four-cylinder petrol engine:

a 250PS 2.0-litre. The range-topping model is a 380PS supercharged V6 petrol. They are all equipped with an eight-speed ZF automatic gearbox.

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the 180PS four-cylinder diesel are 142g/km, increasing to 154g/km for the 240PS 2.0-litre, with 167g/km for the V6 diesel.



Two high-definition touchscreens help keep the dashboard uncluttered

## INTERIOR

The clean lines of the Velar's exterior are reflected in the simple design of the cabin. The instrument panel is set in a horizontal beam that stretches across the width of the car, and in the centre are two high-definition touchscreens that accommodate most of the controls and help keep the dashboard uncluttered. The lower screen allows various controls to be accessed and operated by touch.

In front of the driver are twin-analogue dials with a five-inch TFT display between them or, as standard from SE specification and above, a 12.3-inch info display.

While it might be expected to see leather upholstery in a luxury car, the Velar is also offered with a premium textile finish on standard models, with leather as standard on higher models.

The Velar is a five-seater and the rear bench has a 40:20:40 split. Its 2,874mm wheelbase provides a great deal of interior space, while the luggage compartment also looks quite generous.



# VAUXHALL INSIGNIA

Great looks and many pleasing features but the engine choices are a letdown



## NEED TO KNOW

- Seats certified by the Campaign for Healthy Backs
- Much improved space for rear seat occupants
- Like-for-like prices reduced by up to £2,500

By Stephen Briers

**F**rom the moment you clasp eyes on the all-new Insignia, it's clear that Vauxhall has made a concerted effort to move the car upmarket – something it has attempted to emphasise by adding the 'Grand Sport' moniker.

We were always a fan of the underrated Insignia's exterior and the new car retains its position as one of the best looking in its class. The coupe-swooping roofline is even lower, while styling cues suggest a wider, athletic stance.

Vauxhall has upsized the Insignia Grand Sport, pushing it closer to the *Fleet News* Award-winning Superb, by

**175**  
kg weight reduction  
thanks to use of lightweight  
materials



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

extending the length 55mm to almost five metres and wheelbase by 92mm. This greatly improves the space for occupants, especially in the rear.

However, boot space has been sacrificed – 490 litres is actually 40 down on the Insignia. Those requiring more luggage room will need to wait for the Insignia Sports Tourer, due in late summer.

The premium cues continue as you approach the car. The door handles have a high quality feel and a smooth, refined action. Step inside, grasp the leather-wrapped arm rest and pull the door to with a satisfying thunk. It's a promising start.

It gets even better with the seats, which have been certified by the Campaign for Healthy Backs: they are supportive with multiple movements to find the ideal driving position and have the best lumbar support we've encountered. Perfect for the Insignia's starring role as a high mileage company car cruiser (fleets will account for around 80% of registrations).

The interior on our test model – the high-spec Tech Line which is popular with fleets – is a mix of leather and soft-touch materials accented by smart metallic detailing.

Most of the interaction takes place on the eight-inch touchscreen, complemented by a handful of flush-flat buttons for the more regular tasks, such as air-con, wind-screen heater and a 'home' button for instant access to the menu page. Stereo volume, trip computer and cruise control sit on the steering wheel.

Infotainment and connectivity are class-leading thanks to the latest generation Vauxhall OnStar (Wi-Fi, SOS crash response and stolen vehicle assistance) and IntelliLink, which incorporates Bluetooth, Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and speech recognition.

So far, so good. But there are disappointments. The temperature control switches protrude incongruously from the otherwise refined centre console while the elec-



Flourishes include a prominent 'sweepspear' – a deep crease that starts near the sill at the front wheel and broadens to the rear wheelarch



The six-speed manual gear-shift is slick and the lever has a wide dome which nestles pleasingly in the palm.

## "Infotainment and connectivity are class-leading thanks to the latest generation Vauxhall OnStar"

tronic parking brake is reluctant to release automatically as you move away (and doesn't apply automatically when you switch off the ignition). This could, however, simply be an early-production model flaw.

The biggest criticism – certainly on paper – is the engines: the most efficient model is the 1.6 110PS turbo diesel with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 105g/km (70.6mpg). It's just 4g/km lower than the outgoing model, even with the use of lightweight materials which have helped cut the weight by up to 175kg.

Compare that to rivals such as the Mondeo (94g/km), Škoda Superb (96g/km) and Volkswagen Passat (95g/km), which comfortably dip beneath 100g/km.

Has Vauxhall missed a trick? Not according to Vauxhall fleet sales director James Taylor. He told *Fleet News* that the last Insignia was set up to perform well on the NEDC test, but this car was set up for the new WLTP tests which are introduced in September.

"My feeling is that the Insignia will look very good when all cars are on this testing in 2018," Taylor said.

Our Tech Line test car is the 136PS 1.6-litre diesel – CO<sub>2</sub> of 114g/km, combined fuel efficiency of 65.7mpg – which feels a little under-powered but is comfortably hitting a 'decent real-world' 58mpg on longer journeys and mid-50s on a stop-start morning commute.

Noise levels are low, particularly at motorway speeds and, with pricing from £21,580, Vauxhall believes it will be a popular choice for fleets, although demand will also be high for the 110PS and the SRI and Design trims.

New safety kit includes rear cross-traffic alert to help when reversing, lane keep assist with departure warning and adaptive cruise control.

Vauxhall has reduced like-for-like prices by up to £2,500. This is part of its strategy of offering best-in-class wholelife costs and should help to reduce discounting and, therefore, improve residual values.

### COSTS

<b>P11D price</b>	£21,580
<b>BIK tax band (2017/18)</b>	24%
<b>Annual BIK tax (20%)</b>	£1,036
<b>Class 1A NIC</b>	£715
<b>Annual VED</b>	£160, then £140
<b>RV (4yr/80K)</b>	£5,600
<b>Fuel cost (ppm)</b>	8.46
<b>AFR (ppm)</b>	9
<b>Running cost (4yr/80K)</b>	31.99

### SPEC

<b>Power (PS)</b>	136
<b>CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)</b>	114
<b>Top speed (mph)</b>	131
<b>0-62mph (sec)</b>	9.9
<b>Fuel efficiency (mpg)</b>	65.7

### KEY RIVAL

<b>Volkswagen Passat 1.6TDI</b>
<b>BMT120 SE Business</b>
<b>P11D price:</b> £24,355
<b>BIK tax band (2016/17)</b> 23%
<b>Annual BIK tax (20%)</b> £1,120
<b>Class 1A NIC</b> £773
<b>Annual VED</b> £140, then £140
<b>RV (4yr/80k)</b> £6,325
<b>Fuel cost (ppm)</b> 7.87
<b>AFR (ppm)</b> 9
<b>Running cost (4yr/80k)</b> 34.21

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

## THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

### cap hpi

**Tuesday** Over to Geneva for the day for the press day at the annual motor show, and there's plenty to see. Geneva has become the place to launch new vehicles.

The new Ford Fiesta is every bit a Fiesta and is easily recognisable from 200 yards away. This will remain a firm fleet favourite and a popular used car.

Jaguar showed the all-electric I-Pace Concept, that will no doubt come to market and will have a range of more than 300 miles. Also from JLR was the strangely named Range Rover Velar, but we did say at the time the Evoque was an odd name, but that hasn't affected its sales, has it?

The French showed their upmarket DS 7 Crossback, a car they hope will go head-to-head with the premium German SUVs.

## "Geneva (motor show) has become the place to launch new vehicles"

Mercedes-Benz showed the Concept X Class, a huge double-cab pick-up that will sell well if it does go into production.

The all-new Volvo XC60 seemed to attract a lot of attention, and so it should given it looks brilliant from every angle.

The new Kia Picanto looks a solid small car, and at the other end of the scale, McLaren showed the 720S, can't wait for the press drive of this super Supercar.

The Alfa Stelvio made its European debut, and a great looking Italian SUV it is.

VW showed the Arteon, another odd name. It is bigger than the Passat, and will replace the CC, and it is a very stylish five-door coupe.

The Alpine name is making a comeback in the shape of the A110, a stunning-looking mid-engined coupe, producing 255PS, due in the UK early 2018.

Nissan showed the new Qashqai which gets a new nose and bonnet, along with other design changes.

Vauxhall/Opel showed the Insignia Grand Sport hatch and Tourer, and what a cracking looking duo they are, such a massive step up on the current car (see alongside).



## FORD S-MAX

2.0 TDCI AWD TITANIUM

Biggest fleet addition is not a cumbersome newcomer



A seven-seat people carrier, the Ford S-Max merits its popularity

## COSTS

P11D price	£32,735
BIK tax band	27%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£1,768
Class 1A NIC	£1,220
Annual VED	£130
RV (4yr/80k)	£10,450/32%
Fuel cost (ppm)	10.63
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (ppm)	43.28

## SPEC

Engine (cc)	1,997
Power (PS)	150
Torque (Nm)	350
CO <sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)	139
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	52.3
Max speed (mph)	122
0-62mph (sec)	12.1
Test mpg	39.9
Current mileage	1,824

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

By Andrew Ryan

**T**he latest addition to the *Fleet News* long-term test fleet is also the largest vehicle on it. Offering plenty of room and seven seats, Ford's S-Max has consistently been one of the best-selling large MPVs, and it is easy to see why.

As well as its huge practicality, it is one of the better looking people carriers and is good to drive.

We've been loaned a 2.0 TDCi 150PS AWD Titanium model and while the all-wheel drive technology obviously offers greater traction in tricky conditions than its front-wheel drive counterpart, it comes at a price: its P11D value of £32,735 is £1,370 greater than its sibling, while efficiency suffers, too.

Our test model has CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 139g/km and an official combined fuel economy of 52.3mpg. In comparison, the two-wheel drive model offers 129g/km and 56.5mpg.

Together with the 2.0 TDCi 120PS, it is the most efficient powertrain in the S-Max.

Standard equipment on our test model's Titanium trim includes keyless entry and start, front and rear parking sensors, lane keeping aid, heated front windscreen, and privacy glass.

Our S-Max has also been fitted with a number of options. As well as the Titanium X Pack (included in the costs panel), which adds adaptive LED headlights and leather heated seats for £2,225, other extras include a panorama roof (£400), front wide-view camera and rear view camera (£400), Sony DAB premium audio with navigation (£450), Active Park Assist (£150) and blind spot information system (£500).

It is also fitted with the £400 Titanium Family Pack, which includes a cargo floor net, rear sunblinds, 220V power outlet, power/easy fold third row seats and a reversible load mat.

As expected, the S-Max is spacious, hugely practical and comfortable. Although there is no disguising its size, it doesn't feel overly cumbersome or unwieldy to drive.

MAZDA CX-3  
1.5D SE-L NAVFINAL  
TEST

During its year with *Fleet News*, the Mazda CX-3 has been driven by several colleagues before I took the keys for its final road test.

My first impressions were positive as both the exterior and interior styling give it a pleasing, sporty appearance. Its rugged looks are similar to the CX-5. Inside, the leather trim dashboard with contrast stitching and red gloss insets on the fan heaters add a superior look.

The infotainment system features a seven-inch colour touchscreen which has a familiar feel to other Mazdas.

Sadly, however, the Mazda CX-3 just isn't practical for me and this is an opinion shared by some colleagues throughout the year.

Two days after taking the keys I was away on holiday. This car, however, sat at home on the drive. It simply wasn't up to the job. It would have been a struggle to get two suitcases in the small boot let alone the three we had, along with hand luggage.

Even part of the weekly food shop sometimes has to go in the backseat footwell. The high level boot, however, does make it easy to load.

Inside, cabin space is also snug. This is not a problem when I am on my own or only with a front seat passenger but add two kids into the mix and it is not long into a journey before the complaints start and you can feel legs and feet banging at the back of your seat.

The Mazda CX-3 was voted *Fleet News* compact SUV of the year in 2016.

What is apparent is that it will not suit all lifestyles. It has a great deal to offer, but for those who require more leg and luggage space, the bigger CX-5 is the ideal choice.

Leanne Patterson

## TEST TIMELINE



End

## AT A GLANCE – THE REST OF OUR FLEET

read more here [fleetnews.co.uk/car/reviews](http://fleetnews.co.uk/car/reviews)

Fiat Tipo 1.6  
multijetSeat Ateca SE 1.6  
TDi EcomotiveMini Clubman Cooper  
2.0D 150Vauxhall Zafira Tourer  
SRI 1.6CDTiLand Rover  
Discovery SportRenault Kadjar 1.5  
DCi 110 S Nav

# STUART HOULSTON

COMMERCIAL AND IT DIRECTOR AT LEASEPLAN UK

Being a good dad is high on the list of priorities for Stuart Houlston to the extent that *The Lion King* ranks as his favourite film. Away from the cinema he hates tardiness and loves rugby

The most pivotal moment in life is just a series of learned experiences all of which lead us to the current point in time. Nothing is possible without everything so we are just the sum of these experiences.

My favourite film is *The Lion King* – I love sitting with my kids and watching it. Also, the *Toy Story* films. When I get a bit of “me time” though, it’s action films all the way.

Away from the office I love sports and coach football and rugby. I am a ‘hopeful’ golfer, in that one day I hope to get better!

The book I would recommend is *Speed of Trust* by Stephen Covey and *NLP at Work* by Sue Knight.

If I was Prime Minister for the day I would seek lots of advice.

My earliest memory associated with a car was my mum had a Ford Anglia that had rusty holes in the floor. We used to hide on the back seats so no one could see us in it.

My pet hate is I can’t stand being late for anything. The kids constantly tease me that we are always hours early at the airport when we travel.

The vehicles I’d like most in my garage are a VW Caravelle, Range Rover and Aston Martin DB11.

I’d tell my 18-year-old self to enjoy the ride. The journey is the fun bit – not the destination.

I’d like to be remembered as a great dad.



**First fleet role** In the late 1990s I worked with BMW on the development of a new dealer management solution. My first fleet role was as director of customer operations with Lombard Vehicle Management. I love the complexity of the business, bringing together the financial services, automotive and business services disciplines to build solutions for customers.

**Career goals at Leaseplan** I have been involved with technology for most of my career and it is essential we develop capabilities that enhance our customers’ businesses. We don’t want to get caught developing solutions and only then trying to find the problem.

**Biggest achievement in business** A bit twee maybe but my biggest achievement will always be my next one as it will be based on the successes and failures of all the rest.

**Biggest career influence** I am indebted to Sue Knight, a brilliant NLP (neuro-linguistic programming) coach who helped me begin a journey of understanding through the use of NLP. However, the person who I turn to most, who has given me insight and support, has been my stepfather, Brian. He helped me understand the power of developing people and creating an environment of high support and high challenge.

**Biggest mistake in business** There are times when I’m keen to get on with things and want to operate at a pace that can be quite daunting. My mistake has been moving on too quickly without spending the time to celebrate and recognise the achievements already gained.

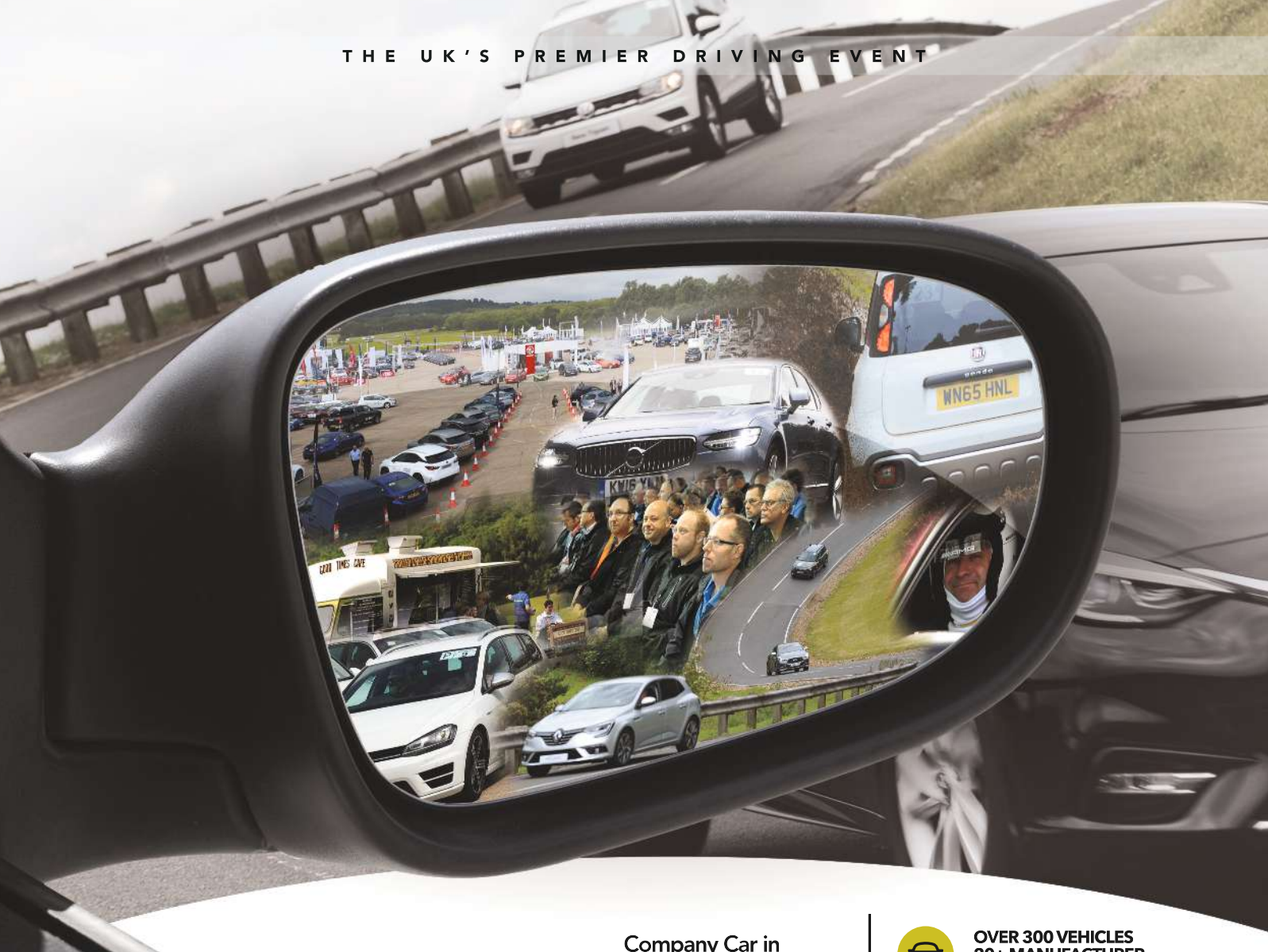
**Leadership style** Enthusiastic and committed.

**If I wasn’t in fleet** I’d probably be a leasing broker.

**Childhood ambition** To play rugby for England. I have loved the game all of my life; the camaraderie and physicality can’t be matched.

**Next Issue:** Gary Smith, managing director of Europcar UK Group





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