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Spotlight: Europcar

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Caroline Parot;
she is focused
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The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience. Model shown is Kuga ST-Line X.

BIK values were correct at the time of printing and are based on taxation rates for 2017/18 tax year. P11D value is the sum of RRP (plus VAT) and number plate charge (£25). Options available at additional cost.



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FLEETS INFORMED

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Majority of newly-elected metro mayors will back CAZ proposals

But no plans are announced for any outright ban on diesel vehicles

By Tom Seymour

New mayors for the West Midlands, Liverpool City Region, Greater Manchester and the West of England (so-called metro mayors) all back the introduction of clean air zones (CAZs) in their respective regions.

A CAZ framework set out by the previous Government suggests Euro 4 petrol, Euro 6 diesel or Euro VI for large commercial vehicles as minimum standards.

While the framework does encourage cities and towns to go further than the minimum standards and says that they will be updated "periodically", the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) says it won't change its minimum standards before 2025 in order to give businesses a level of certainty.

The new mayors were appointed in May and have devolved powers and a budget of millions to introduce their own strategies for tackling air quality and the rise in urban transport.

forecast for UK local authorities, which have one or more roads with concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) above statutory limits (40 micrograms per cubic metre), and for how long they would be above the threshold if no additional measures were taken (see panel).

The Government's figures for the largest urban areas in each region show Manchester, Birmingham, Middlesbrough, Liverpool and Bristol all have illegal levels of NO₂ until at least 2020.

Peterborough has the lowest level of pollution and will be below the 40mg limit as quickly as next year.

Cambridge was not included in the figures. While the finer details are still to be determined, Andy Burnham, Greater Manchester mayor, says he will focus on high-polluting vehicles, like older HGVs, if he can introduce a CAZ.

Burnham told *Fleet News*: "We need to have the ability to introduce a CAZ so we can protect those most vulnerable from the high-polluting vehicles.

But we also need a broader plan to reduce congestion, increase cycling and make public transport a clean, reliable and affordable alternative to the car."

West Midlands mayor Andy Street is planning to implement a CAZ for commercial vehicles, but is also considering including cars in the scheme.

Street supports a taxation scheme on the most polluting vehicles, but also wants a "carrot" in the form of a scrappage scheme to encourage people to change.

A spokesman for Street said: "There are areas still to be discussed but it will form part of the work of the portfolio holder." Street is expected to agree an action plan on issues with regards to transport within his first 100 days of office.

Meanwhile, a CAZ is being developed for Bristol, with West of England Mayor, Tim Bowles, supporting the scheme and wanting to provide new strategic roads to take goods vehicles away from towns and cities.

CLEAN AIR ZONES

Looking at the cities under the mayors' control, Birmingham, like London, has already been ordered to implement a CAZ before the end of 2020, while both Manchester and Bristol are actively pursuing zones of their own.

Liverpool has not ruled out introducing a CAZ and is currently researching hot spot areas for air pollution and how it is going to address them.

Liverpool City Region mayor Steve Rotheram wants the area to be "zero-carbon by 2040".

Of the six combined authority areas who voted in May, only Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is not considering introducing a CAZ.

Tees Valley failed to comment and the combined authority's transport plan makes no mention of CAZs, diesel or truck bans, congestion charges or electric vehicles (EVs).

Defra has set out its "best available" emissions

NO₂ EMISSIONS FORECAST FOR METRO MAYOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities with roads with concentrations of NO ₂ forecast above legal limits based on initial modelling (subject to change) and assuming no additional measures. All figures are provided in micrograms per cubic metre and 40 µg/m ³ (micrograms per cubic metre) is the statutory annual mean limit value for NO ₂ .	2017	2018	2019	2020
Manchester City Council	51	49	47	46
Birmingham City Council	60	59	58	57
Liverpool City Council	47	45	44	42
Bristol City Council	50	47	45	42
Peterborough Council	42	40	38	36
Middlesbrough Borough Council	60	56	51	47

Government figures for the largest urban areas in each metro mayor region show Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Bristol and Middlesbrough all have illegal levels of more than 40mg NO₂ until at least 2020.

Note – excludes any roads managed directly by Highways England, Transport Scotland, Welsh Government and Transport Northern Ireland

Source: Defra



Considering a clean air zone and says he wants to focus on high-polluting vehicles, like older HGVs

Andy Burnham, Greater Manchester



Planning to implement a clean air zone for commercial vehicles, but also considering including cars in the scheme

Andy Street, West Midlands



Has not ruled out the introduction of a clean air zone and wants the area to be zero-carbon by 2040

Steve Rotheram, Liverpool City Region

CITIES MUST CO-ORDINATE PLANS, SAYS CAP HPI

Cap HPI has said cities and towns across the UK must co-ordinate their efforts to policing clean air zones in the future.

Dylan Setterfield, Cap HPI international forecast manager, said: "We're all very familiar with the schemes being put into place in London over the next couple of years. Individual cities are all doing their own things. Unfortunately it's not co-ordinated and in some cases it doesn't make a lot of sense."

Setterfield added: "The Government has done the right thing by publishing a framework for the introduction of CAZs, but what we really need is a genuine system of taxation that drives all the right behaviour."

"What is the full environmental impact of each different type of vehicle? We need to get the older most polluting vehicles off the road and encourage people into newer, less polluting vehicles."

Setterfield said there is "nothing wrong" with modern diesels. He explained: "They are world away from what they used to be five years ago. If we do have a scrappage scheme it will be an expense and investment in the environment."

"It has to focus on the most polluting vehicles and that is certainly not today's modern diesel cars."

CONGESTION CHARGES AND VEHICLE BANS

There are currently no plans to implement an outright ban on HGVs and diesel vehicles across the six combined authorities, or to introduce congestion charges.

While Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is exploring the possibility of a £7.50 daily charge for zones in Manchester, Bolton and Bury, Burnham has said he doesn't support the idea and does not want to "punish drivers of diesel vehicles".

Street has also ruled out any "universal" congestion charge in Birmingham and wants to create an incentive scheme rather than a ban for HGVs to encourage them to use the M6 Toll road at peak times, relieving congestion on the M6.



Developing a clean air zone for Bristol and wants to provide new strategic roads to take goods vehicles away from towns and cities

Tim Bowles, West of England

Rotherham confirmed there are currently no plans for a congestion charge in the Liverpool City Region. He also said there is mixed evidence as to whether a diesel scrappage scheme would have the required impact to improve air quality.

Rotherham said: "We know transport is the main cause of our air pollution challenge, but some of the causes may not be the obvious ones."

"For example, cruise liners' idling engines are a contributory factor in central Liverpool, not just road transport."

James Palmer, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough mayor, doesn't support a congestion charge currently until the option to choose public transport as an alternative is more viable. While Palmer supports the intention to introduce a targeted scrappage scheme for diesel vehicles, he said he does not foresee something specific for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.

ELECTRIC AND AUTONOMOUS FLEET

Specifics on EV plans were lacking in all of the new mayor's manifestos, although there appears to be backing for the technology.

Street has pledged to support the development of electric and autonomous vehicles in the West Midlands by allowing companies to test vehicles there and said he will bid to improve infrastructure.

Burnham's manifesto gives no mention of EVs, while Rotherham said he will work with the private sector and local authorities to deliver more charging points across the Liverpool City Region. He also confirmed free parking for EVs is not envisaged as a way of increasing adoption.

Part of Rotherham's electric fleet plan focuses on re-regulating buses and he has pledged to only buy clean electric or hydrogen buses from 2020.

Both Burnham and Street have said they also want to re-regulate the buses in their respective areas.

Palmer would not commit to an electric bus fleet in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. However, he said: "New roads will include charging points for electric vehicles."

Tim Bowles, West of England mayor, said he supports incentivising EVs further than they are currently but hasn't said how.

He is also supportive of autonomous vehicle technology. A three-year autonomous vehicle trial is already underway in the Bristol area as part of three projects by Innovate UK.

Coventry in the West Midlands also has its autonomous vehicle trials running as part of the UK Autodrive project.



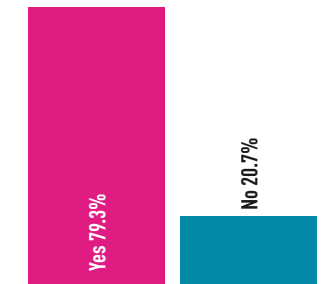
No need to introduce congestion charges as his area is expected to fall within NO₂ limits as early as next year

James Palmer, Cambridge and Peterborough

FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

OPINION POLL

Do you think charges for clean air zones should include a real-world component, rather than just the Euro emissions standard?



FleetNews view:

Clean air zone compliance looks set to be based on Euro emissions standards, yet our poll shows that four out five readers believe real-time emissions should be playing a role. Fleet News believes whatever measure is used to police clean air zones, suitable, affordable alternatives must be available to fleet operators and they must be given time to adjust to the rules.

This week's poll: Would you give up your car for a cash alternative if there was a more convenient way to resolve your transport needs through a mobility solution?

fleetnews.co.uk/polls

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Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. 2017/18 tax year. General Motors UK Limited, trading as Vauxhall Motors, does not offer tax advice and recommends that all Company Car Drivers consult their own accountant with regards to their own tax position. New Insignia Elite Nav 2.0 (260PS) Turbo 4X4 auto model illustrated (P11D of £27,155) features Dark Moon Blue two-coat metallic paint (£555), VXR Styling Pack (£850) and Driving Assistance Pack Four (£595), optional at extra cost. * = Terms and conditions apply and vehicles are subject to availability. Please call 0330 587 8221 for full details. ** = Includes 12 months of OnStar services from date of first registration and a 3 month/3 GB Wi-Fi free trial period (whichever comes first) effective from the date the customer accepts the nominated network operator Wi-Fi Ts&Cs. OnStar services and 4G Wi-Fi Hotspot require activation and are subject to mobile network coverage and availability. Wi-Fi Hotspot service requires account with nominated mobile network operator. Charges apply after free trial period. The OnStar subscription packages could be different from the services included in the free trial package. Terms and conditions apply. Check vauxhall.co.uk/OnStar for details of availability, coverage and charges. Vehicles purchased without OnStar cannot have the required technology retro-fitted. Destination download only available on vehicles with factory installed navigation systems. All figures quoted correct at time of going to press (June 2017).

Connected car data proposals could threaten fleets' SMR choice

Manufacturer-only access to real-time data gives 'unfair advantage' says BVRLA

By Sarah Tooze

British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) chief executive Gerry Keaney has labelled proposals for car manufacturers to collect and store data from connected vehicles in their servers, and release it only to third parties if there is an agreement, "very dangerous".

The proposals, known as the Extended Vehicle Concept, could restrict choice over where a vehicle is repaired and could "curtail innovation" in the independent repair sector, in Keaney's view, affecting those leasing companies and fleet managers that use independents to reduce service, maintenance and repair (SMR) costs.

Under the current draft proposals only the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) has access to real-time data, potentially giving them an "unfair advantage", Keaney said.

"If our members own an asset it is up to them where they get that asset repaired or serviced and if they choose to go to an independent repairer they should be fully enabled to do that, and the independent repairer should be fully enabled to make the level of repairs that needs to be done to that vehicle," he told delegates at the International Auto Finance Network (IAFN) spring conference.

However, car manufacturers have expressed concerns about safety and security issues if third parties are given direct access to vehicle data.

They believe it is neither feasible nor reasonable for them to test, validate and approve all third party applications, devices and services available on the market.

They also believe that data consent rests with the company car driver and not the registered keeper (typically the leasing company).

Who should have access to data has been an ongoing dispute, resulting in some company car drivers taking delivery of vehicles without access

"I think some OEMs will be prepared to negotiate (on data sharing)"

Gerry Keaney, BVRLA



to connected services after leasing companies refused to agree to manufacturers' terms and conditions (*Fleet News*, June 9, 2016).

Keaney pointed out that access to vehicle data has been discussed in the EU for more than a year with no agreement, resulting in OEM trade associations, including the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), "stepping into that void".

The SMMT's recent Connected and Autonomous Vehicles Position Paper states that unless vehicle manufacturers have entered into a specific legal agreement with each of the registered keepers and/or have a contractual obligation to do so, the vehicle user data i.e. personal data is only ever used or shared with the express and prior consent of the vehicle user not the registered keeper. It states vehicle manufacturers do not, by default, have an obligation to provide vehicle data to registered keepers.

It believes that the company car driver registering for the connected vehicle services, and agreeing to the terms and conditions associated with these, "must be put at the heart of any data consent process".

Representatives of both Arval and ALD Automotive, who also spoke at the IAFN conference,

acknowledged the need to provide services that drivers want in order to gain their consent to share data.

Arval products, services and platforms director Angela Montacute said that with increasing regulation, particularly General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which comes into effect on May 25, 2018, "we cannot take for granted that end users will give us this data".

She said Arval has worked with car manufacturers in relation to telematics and is now looking to work with them on connected car services "to be able to provide a combined experience to our end-user".

"It is a tricky subject but I think many of us have started to operate in that space and certainly the relationships we have with a number of the OEMs are looking very positive in terms of collaboration in this area," she said.

Keaney said that some OEMs "are much more willing" to discuss data sharing and to "find workarounds to satisfy the needs of our sector".

"I think some OEMs will be prepared to negotiate, they are prepared to recognise the value chain that is the fleet sector and is a core part of the business in the UK market," he said.

Factors outside car manufacturers' control may also mean connected vehicle data is shared in the future. "I would forecast with some degree of confidence that anybody that wants to drive a vehicle into the centre of London, certainly in the next 10 years, and into any other major European city in the next 10 years, will only be allowed to drive that vehicle into the city if they are prepared to share data on that car in terms of its location, its route and its planning," Keaney said.

Autonomous vehicles will "depend upon data being made available", he added.

For those reasons, Keaney believes manufacturers will ultimately release the connected data.

■ **More on connected vehicles, turn to page 25.**

Confusion reigns over the correct use of emergency refuge areas

Driver education crucial as more motorway hard shoulder running introduced

By Gareth Roberts

Safety concerns over hard shoulder running on so-called 'smart motorways' remain as a *Fleet News* poll shows that just one in three think it's a good idea.

It comes in the wake of new research which revealed that half of motorists are not familiar with emergency refuge areas (ERAs).

The study, conducted by the RAC with more than 2,000 motorists, found that in excess of half (52%) of those surveyed did not know what an ERA was.

Furthermore, there was also confusion about how to use an ERA, with two-thirds neither knowing what to do after stopping (64%) nor how to re-join the motorway (65%). And, even of the 1.5% who had actually used an emergency refuge area, only one respondent knew they should contact Highways England to facilitate getting back on to the motorway if the hard shoulder was operating as a running lane for traffic.

Everyone else thought they should just wait for a gap in the traffic and then accelerate as quickly as possible to motorway speed.

There was, however, good awareness of when it is appropriate to stop in an emergency refuge area. Almost every motorist (98%) said they should be used in a breakdown and 90% stated they should be used after an accident, but 40% also thought it was appropriate to use an emergency refuge area for medical reasons such as needing to take medication. Worryingly, 27% thought they could be used for either the driver or a passenger to be sick.

Lesley Slater, operations and business development director at LeasePlan UK, said: "It is important for drivers to take responsibility for their own safety by staying up to date with any new laws introduced."

However, she added: "Confusion around what



is and what is not legal on the motorway is compounded by the fact that drivers are not allowed to drive on the motorway until passing their practical driving test. This is right from a driver safety perspective but as it isn't mandatory to have an additional motorway driving lesson, this can lead to gaps in knowledge, confidence and experience."

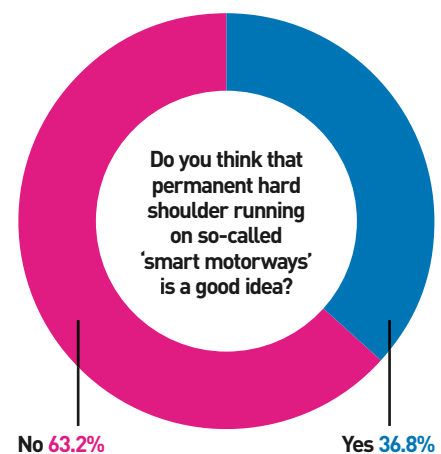
Highways England ran a radio advertising campaign reminding people of the correct use of ERAs and is currently conducting a review, the findings of which are expected to be published soon.

The RAC has been working closely with Highways England and is backing work to improve the motoring public's understanding of ERAs and how to use them.

RAC chief engineer David Bizley said: "Even though the first smart motorway was created more than 10 years ago and more schemes have come into operation in the past few years there will still be many people who have not driven on one purely as a result of where they live and drive."

"It is essential motorists understand how and when to use an emergency refuge area so they do not put their own safety and that of other road users at risk."

Vehicles should pull up to the indicated mark on the tarmac or the emergency telephone and then the occupants should leave the vehicle from the passenger side. Everyone should stand behind the barriers and should use the emergency roadside telephone provided to speak to a Highways England representative.



The road safety charity Brake supports the introduction of smart motorways and praised Highways England for the work it has done to improve safety.

However, a Brake spokesman said: "It does concern us that there appears to be a lack of awareness among drivers of what an emergency refuge area is for. We would encourage Highways England to continue with an advertising campaign explaining the benefits of ERAs."

The Government is investing £3 billion to upgrade existing motorways to become smart motorways by 2020 and have already added more than 472 extra lane miles of capacity to the strategic road network through their implementation.

"It is essential motorists understand how and when to use an emergency refuge area"



David Bizley, RAC



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The tests will see the robots operating on quieter footpaths in the South London borough of Southwark

Hermes hopes to revolutionise home delivery with last mile 'bots

Quiet suburban footpaths form testing ground following success of food deliveries

By Tom Seymour

Starship Technologies has said its autonomous delivery robots, currently on trial with Hermes in London, will act as "one of a raft of solutions" rather than a replacement for the entire delivery industry in the UK.

Hermes has started trialling the robots in Southwark to act as an alternative to vans and drivers for last-mile delivery in the suburbs.

Henry Harris-Burland, Starship Technologies vice president of marketing, told *Fleet News*: "We're not suggesting these robots will replace the entire delivery industry. This is strictly for last-mile delivery in suburban locations and it is part of a raft of solutions companies can use in addition to their traditional fleet of vehicles."

Starship estimates that its robots (first revealed in sister magazine *Commercial Fleet* in May 2016) can reduce shipment costs by up to 93%, although Harris-Burland said data from trials in

the UK would be used to inform cost savings for companies based here. He would not confirm how long the trial will be running for or how many robots are part of the shared fleet.

However, having seen first-hand the success the robot fleet is having with food delivery trials for Just Eat in London, Carole Woodhead, Hermes UK chief executive, said: "We are excited to team up with them in a bid to revolutionise the home delivery marketplace."

Initially, the trial will allow Hermes to offer 30-minute time slots for the collection of parcels, either for items being returned, or for items being sent by small businesses or consumers.

Woodhead said: "We will use the testing period to better understand how the robots could enhance the company's ability to offer an increased range of on-demand solutions."

Starship owns all the robots and handles management, operation, maintenance and charging (see panel below).



"It is part of a raft of solutions companies can use in addition to their traditional fleet"

Henry Harris-Burland, Starship Technologies

Access to the fleet is through a subscription service. This can either be per delivery or a monthly fee, dependent on a company's needs.

The technology company says this allows subscribers to use the service according to seasonal peaks and troughs. However, Starship preferred not to reveal its prices.

During the Hermes trial in London, the robots will be accompanied by a member of Starship's team to monitor their journeys and gather data.

If Starship's trials with UK companies are successful, the plan is to have one operator monitor several robots at the same time working from a control centre where they will be able to take direct command of the robots if necessary.

Harris Burland said the robots will operate primarily in suburban locations where footpaths are not used as much as in city centre locations. Permission has been gained from local authorities and police have been informed of the trial.

Harris-Burland admits the likelihood of the security-protected robots being tampered with is high, but so far, there have been no problems.

HOW DO THE STARSHIP ROBOTS WORK?

Each six-wheel Starship robot is just over half a metre high and less than a metre long with a secure compartment for parcels up to a maximum weight of 10kg. They can travel up to a walking speed of 4mph and consumers can unlock the robot through a link generated by a smartphone app.

The robots can be used within a two mile radius from a control centre where they can navigate autonomously 99% of the time but

can also hand back control to a human operator for extra help if needed.

A single charge can last for three hours. However, batteries are swapped when robots return to base to minimise downtime. The batteries are slightly bulkier in size than a modern smartphone and are being swapped manually during the trial phase. The battery swap process will eventually be automated.

Call for more road investment as pothole-related breakdowns rise

Few signs of improvement although RAC Pothole Index is at its lowest for years

By Gareth Roberts

Fleets endured a winter of discontent, with pothole-related breakdowns on the rise, according to newly released figures. Despite mild and comparatively dry winter conditions, the RAC's patrols attended 63% more pothole-related breakdowns in the first quarter of 2017 than they did over the same period in 2016.

In total, it dealt with more than 6,500 breakdowns between January and March which were likely to be attributable to poor road surfaces. The last time so many pothole-related breakdowns were recorded was in the first quarter of 2015, when patrols were called out to nearly 6,900 such breakdowns. That quarter, however, saw both more frost days and rainfall than the equivalent period this year.

Nine out of 10 respondents to a recent *Fleet News* poll said they had not seen any improvement in the state of roads in the UK despite more funding being allocated to pothole repairs.

One reader told *Fleet News*: "On average I have to replace two tyres and have one alloy repaired each winter."

Another said: "The roads are worse than ever. I seriously believe that if it continues we will need caterpillar-tracked vehicles soon. My suspension is rattling again – looks like another £400 bill is coming. It's a disgrace."

The previous Government announced that £70 million would be shared across local highway authorities in England, outside of London, earlier this year (fleetnews.co.uk, January 13). The investment was in addition to a £50m pothole repair fund which was announced in the 2016 spring budget.

However, the Annual Local Authority Road



"I shudder to think what the actual costs are when you factor in the driver's downtime and lost productivity"

Nick Hardy, Ogilvie Fleet

Maintenance (ALARM) survey, published by the Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA), reported that local authorities need more than £12 billion to bring the network up to scratch (fleetnews.co.uk, April 3).

Nick Hardy, sales and marketing director at Ogilvie Fleet, told *Fleet News*: "We would prefer to see more investment in the road infrastructure which would help reduce the problems and costs of potholes."

"It isn't just the actual damage caused, it's also the time lost in downtime for the driver and everyone else associated with the incident. I shudder to think what the actual costs are when you factor in the driver's downtime and lost productivity."

When considered in the context of all RAC breakdowns, the share of pothole-related call-outs in Q1 2017 equated to 2.7% of all RAC jobs – this is the largest quarterly figure seen since

the RAC's pothole analysis began in 2006.

However, the latest figures do also offer a glimmer of hope for fleets as the longer term picture is an improving one.

The RAC Pothole Index, a rolling average of pothole-related breakdowns which is corrected to remove unrelated longer term effects of weather and improving vehicle reliability, currently stands at 2.08, its lowest value since the last quarter of 2008 (see graph below). This suggests that – looking at breakdowns over a much longer time period – the overall quality of the UK's road surfaces is beginning to get better, though still well short of their condition a decade ago.

Indeed, the ALARM survey shows the maintenance backlog is largely unchanged over the past year. This suggests that the slow improvement is a result of a combination of favourable weather and the dedicated pothole repair fund from central government.

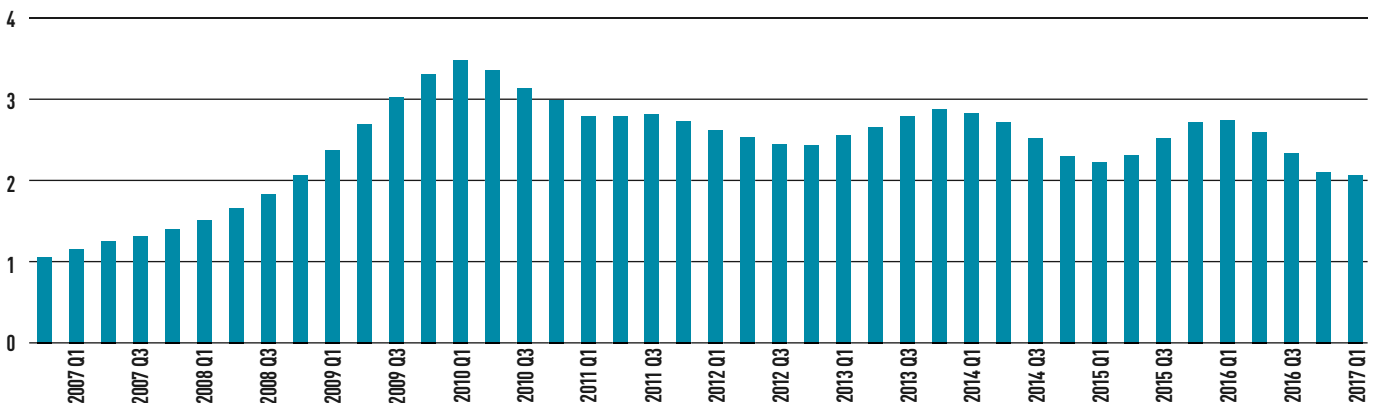
However, AIA data indicates most local authorities still cannot afford to make in-roads into the backlog of preventative maintenance that would stop potholes forming in the first place.

RAC chief engineer David Bizley said: "Anyone that has experienced a breakdown as a result of hitting a pothole will know just how frustrating that can be – not to say dangerous and expensive if damage to their vehicle is sustained."

"Local authorities still have a huge funding gap in their roads budget and until central government is willing to ring-fence sufficient funding to bring local roads back into a state that is fit for purpose, their condition will be subject to the whims of the weather and they will continue to be the poor relation in the nation's transport infrastructure."

QUARTERLY AVERAGE OF POTHOLE-RELATED BREAKDOWNS

Source RAC



The seasonally adjusted RAC Pothole Index offers a glimmer of hope for fleets as the longer term picture is an improving one.

Ambulance Trust will roll out a new vehicle weight programme

With crew and patient on board Secamb vehicles run close to legal maximum

By Andrew Ryan

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (Secamb) is to roll out a new vehicle weight programme after identifying a potential issue with 18 of its 301 vehicles.

On April 1, as part of its fleet maintenance and testing processes, it found that 18 of its 301 ambulances were potentially close to their gross vehicle weight limit when fully equipped and with a crew and patient on board.

There have been no reported accidents or incidents related to the issue, but it has meant no family members of patients or extra medical staff could legally also be transported.

This led Secamb to announce a review of the equipment carried by the Mercedes-Benz ambulances, with John Griffiths, head of fleet and logistics at the organisation, telling Brake's Fleet Safety Conference on Thursday, May 25, that the process is ongoing.



"Programme roll-out is taking about three months"

John Griffiths, Secamb

He said: "Operating crews were put in the poor position of, for example, saying to someone 'I'm sorry but your husband is very ill, we've got to take him to hospital, but I can't take you, you'll have to find another way to get there.'

"We are rolling out a new whole vehicle weight programme, but that is taking about three months."

Secamb is asking Mercedes-Benz whether

the vehicles could be re-classified so the maximum gross weight would increase to 5.3 tonnes. "If we can do that, all our problems go away," Griffiths added.

■ Brake also announced that its annual Road Safety Week will take place from November 20 to 26, with the theme 'Speed Down, Save Lives'.

Brake corporate fund-raising manager Richard Coteau, said: "Road Safety Week is a fantastic opportunity for fleet operators to talk about speed within their own organisation, whether that's launching a new campaign or just reaffirming the policies they have in place."

The messages it will focus on include:

- Speed causes deaths and serious injuries
- Rural roads are not race tracks
- 20mph is the only safe speed in heavily built-up areas used by pedestrians and cyclists
- Going slow equals stopping in time
- Speed cameras work. They save lives.

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'Dirty diesel' media reports may accelerate fall in residual values

Smaller cars and pre-Euro 6 models may see biggest decline, says Cap HPI

By Tom Seymour

Residual values of diesel cars in some sectors are likely to fall more sharply than those of their petrol counterparts on the back of negative press about the fuel, says Cap HPI. The company has seen diesel values slide "for a number of years", according to senior forecasting editor Andrew Mee.

He expects this trend to continue but predicted the way the fuel has been portrayed as 'dirty diesel' in the national media is likely to increase the rate of deflation, particularly for smaller diesel vehicles and pre-Euro 6 cars.

However, large vehicles "where diesel engines make sense" might not be affected, said Mee.

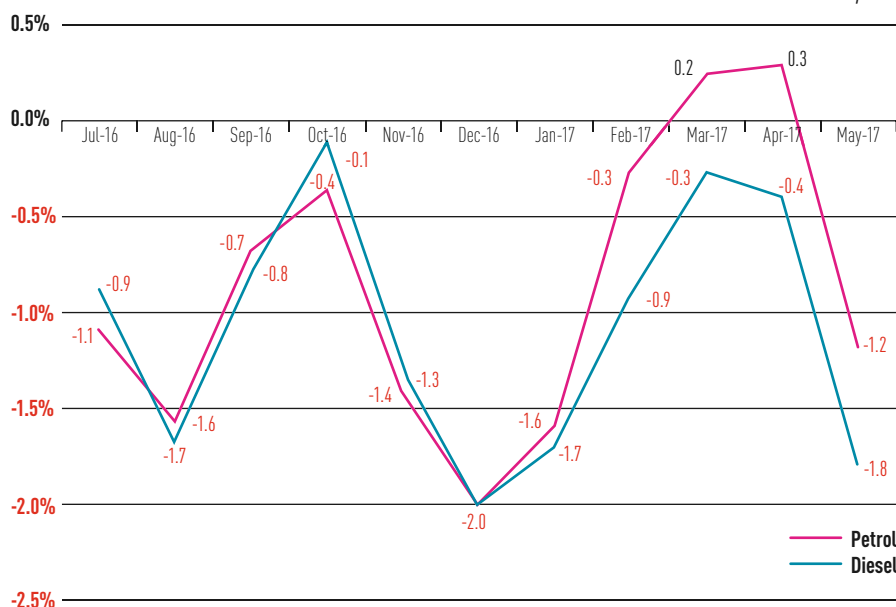
Cap HPI data shows the rates of deflation of diesel and petrol values were identical (both -2%) at the end of last year, but diesel has experienced a greater fall than petrol during the start of 2017 (see graph, right).

The company's Gold Book reports that over the past six months, a typical three-year-old diesel vehicle has seen a slightly larger reduction in value than its petrol counterpart.

The document shows diesel values at three years/60,000 miles have fallen by 6.4%, compared to a petrol car decrease of 4.8%: a difference of 1.6 percentage points.

AVERAGE MOVEMENT OF DIESEL AND PETROL VALUES AT THREE YEARS/60,000 MILES SINCE JULY 2016

Source: Cap HPI



"There are still significant volumes of diesel [cars] being registered and there's still significant demand for them"

James Dower, Cap HPI

The average performance over the past five years would imply an overall fall of 4.7% over the period.

The increased rate of deflation of diesel in certain model segments is taken into account by Cap HPI in its Gold Book forecasting. Mee said the company will keep the situation "under constant review as and when any legislation may change".

The Euro 6 standard was introduced in September 2015 and Mee added: "We have to consider that with pre-Euro 6 diesels there probably is an increased risk on values.

"They will be prone to impact on future legislation and various actions.

"They could lose their value slightly more quickly and we'll take that into account with our forecasts.

"However, pre-Euro 6 vehicles are worth less anyway, so there's less money to lose if they are impacted."

James Dower, Cap HPI Black Book senior editor, said diesel values over the past six months at one year/20,000 miles have depreciated by 6.3%, and petrol cars by 4.9%.

He said: "Average performance over the past five years would imply an overall depreciation of 5.7% at this age over the same period.

"However, in this case, the difference is due to a combination of reduced supply of nearly new

petrol cars and reduced demand for diesel."

Gold Book forecasts have been assuming increased deflation for diesel relative to petrol, across most vehicle sectors, for some time.

Larger diesel SUVs, upper medium and executive cars are likely to continue to be a more attractive proposition than their petrol equivalents, in most cases.

In the most recent data referenced above, diesel executive cars fared better than their petrol equivalents by 1.4%.

Dower said that the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders' figures reflect diesel's share of the market declining due to private buyers moving towards petrol more than they did before, in addition to alternative fuel vehicles starting to eat into the diesel market.

He said: "In reality we are seeing [diesel car values] slip.

"But let's not be too worried as there are still significant volumes of diesels being registered and there's still a significant demand for them."

Much of the negative sentiment attached to diesel relates to older and less refined diesel power units.

Dower said the modern day diesel is something of a different proposition and manufacturers have made significant investments in new engine and post-combustion technology to significantly reduce NOx levels.

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BMW	5 Series 520i Steer 2.0 306 SS Luxury AB 15.5kW	179g/km	72	17.7	25.4	£45,190
BMW	5 Series 520i Steer 2.0 306 SS M Sport Professional Models AB 15.5kW	179g/km	72	16.7	25.4	£46,480
BMW	5 Series 520i Steer 2.0 112 SS M Sport AB 15.5kW	148g/km	100	18.4	24.8	£40,940
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THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*



What does mobility mean to you? To a new generation it's about getting from A to B using the most convenient, cost-effective and environmentally-friendly methods possible.

Car share, car clubs, electric vehicles, on-demand transport, cost of usership, ride hailing, drones – there is an ever-growing list of multi-modal developments and they all hang on one thing: technology.

Technology, whether apps, software, autonomous vehicles, robots, etc., is the big facilitator for future mobility. And fleet managers will need to evolve, adding new skills to ensure they are able to introduce the best solutions for employees.

“Manufacturers are snapping up technology businesses to be at forefront of new wave”

We are in the era of early adopters, typically members of the public rather than business, who are using apps to access car share solutions and ride-hailing services. Although the likes of Alphabet have been offering mobility services to UK fleets for a while (and, others, such as LeasePlan have established services in other European countries).

But the car manufacturers have woken up to the opportunity and are now snapping up technology businesses to be at forefront of the new wave.

Car ownership will become the thing of the past; flexibility and convenience will become the key selling points.

Not everyone agrees: some leasing companies believe mobility is about how much money someone wants to pay and how much commitment they want to give, in other words the cost versus convenience of offering cars from one day to several years. On-demand transport and autonomous cars are too far away to make an impact on their business strategies today.

Nevertheless, investment in such services continues at a pace and fleets are advised to stay up-to-date. We're doing our bit to help you at Fleet Management Live (Oct 3-4) with our Intelligent Fleet Technology Zone.

Also see our mobility feature on page 38.

YOUR LETTERS

MAINTENANCE

Timely access to full history is required

EDITOR'S PICK



Sage & Onion wrote

Having read 'Don't assume vehicles leased with maintenance are being maintained, warns FleetCheck' (fleetnews.co.uk, May 22), I think this is why it is absolutely vital that all leasing companies give their customers full live visibility of the maintenance histories.

They should allow them view-only access to all of their maintenance database for their vehicles, including visibility of all engineers' notes and conversations that have taken place with garages.

Sadly, this is very much lacking in some (dare I say a lot of) leasing companies and only maintenance reports are available after the event (usually a month afterwards when invoicing has been run).

The other problem is that a lot of vehicles are on variable servicing dependent on the driving conditions etc. This is so much harder to plan and we have often had vehicles turned away from garages saying a service is not needed yet, when the prediction report sent the vehicle into the garage in the first place. So much downtime is wasted with this.

I insist that all vehicles get at least an annual safety inspection even if the service isn't due yet. I also provide the leasing company with monthly mileage updates so they can update their system and make service predictions much more accurate; although I can't guarantee that they actually do anything with the information, especially if it's a manual task for someone to undertake.

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

Tom added:

So important for companies to have a company car policy in place to ensure drivers understand their responsibilities. This will protect all parties involved and lead to a safer vehicle that is worth more at the end of its contract.



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YOUR LETTERS

TYRES

Safety trumps environmental concerns

Bob Saynor wrote:

Having read 'Changing tyres at 3mm is unnecessary, costly and harmful to the environment, says Michelin' (fleetnews.co.uk, May 18), I am unconvinced by this. If no study directly links changing tyres early with reduced accident rates that's probably because no one has done such a study.

The article quotes Michelin saying worn tyres are more fuel efficient, which is presumably because they have less grip. And it says some premium tyres maintain their grip as they wear – in other words some premium (and most non-premium) don't. So why encourage people to take the chance?

I'm an environmentalist but safety benefits have to

trump environmental. Plus there are big environmental costs associated with crashes and repairs – though they're hard to measure.

The Engineer added:

Define 'wet' roads. Our weather has changed over time; we now get more erratic weather with torrential downpours causing deeper standing water for periods. Yesterday was like that and on the M42, even at very modest speed, it was pretty alarming with the steering becoming light often and I have more than 3mm of tread. Having driven on sub-2mm it's dreadful. This is the real world not Millbrook with its controlled sprinkler surface.

SUZUKI

Size matters

Field Guy wrote:

Having read 'Suzuki: Sanity not vanity – we have to make a living' (fleetnews.co.uk, May 24), it is making good value and efficient vehicles without doubt, but size is going to be an issue.

Vitara is small and the roomiest is the S-Cross but even that is only previous generation Qashqai size, 75-100-litres of boot is too small for me. Look at the Seat Ateca, Hyundai Tucson, Kia Sportage, Peugeot 3008 etc.

Suzuki needs a bigger model for fleet. Something like a super-efficient Grand Vitara with decent refinement would be bang on what people want at the moment.

The bigger platform would probably give Suzuki more scope to upscale the light hybrid tech a notch to help with efficiency and BIK, thus helping fleet sales progress considerably.

Using an engine front and just an electric motor for the rear axle gives the opportunity for it to keep its four-wheel drive heritage but with low emissions.

Suzuki, you can borrow that idea for free.

GREY FLEET

Defining driver population

Alastair Kendrick wrote:

Having read 'More than half of fleets feel grey fleet management is unimportant, survey finds' (fleetnews.co.uk, May 17), while this is worrying I think there needs to be a debate on what is the grey fleet.

Seeing some of the numbers being produced for the grey fleet makes me think some are including any employee who does not have a company car and does some business travel.

Many of that population may over the course of the year do negligible business travel. These occasional users are in a different league to those employees who are essential car users but drive their own car on business.

I clearly accept there needs to be controls in place and checks for those who are using their own car on an essential basis. But is it necessary to have those same controls for someone doing, say, less than 1,000 business miles a year? Possibly no.

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Burning question:

Where are you going on holiday (or have recently been) this year?

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Regrettably, I am not going on holiday this year because I have no joy in my life

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Portugal... then maybe Nurburgring

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Thailand to see friends ... oh, and my wife

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Cork – the fillet of Munster

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Sorrento, Italy, for my sister's wedding

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FLEET OPINION

CONNECTED CARS

Let's keep the car 'private'

By Derek Webb

I am increasingly concerned about the 'real' uses of connected and driverless cars and will continue to raise the issue, because there needs to be an alternative voice.

These progressive inventions have very little to do with the car driver, it is all about the supplier.

We can get mechanical and technical information about our cars now and have been able to do that for years. On-board computers are very sophisticated, easy to use and private.

The stuff that business wants from cars of the future is data: where the car goes, where and what fuel you buy, where you shop, your employer, your customers, your age, if you have kids and on and on.

The strong likelihood is that there will be two-way talking/listening devices – for our help of course – and they will be switched off when not broadcasting, won't they?

It is possible that people won't mind car manufacturers, employers and so on having that information but it is what is done with the data that is the interesting question.

The arguments about who owns the data, who owns the customer and how best to utilise the data collected are the issues. Why are there 'fights' already? Because it is very valuable and it is also very controlling.

People will work in their autonomous car or their shared car instead of driving it. We will all travel at the same speed; we will not do a bit of shopping or visit anyone in work time. We will be told what we have done rather than report it ourselves.

All this only applies to the law-abiding and easily traced; those that are capable of computer hacking and computer fraud will have a field day.

There will be all sorts of assurances about the security of on-board connected cars, but there will not be enough, and the usual excuses will be rolled out when misdemeanours or hacks occur.

We have Facebook, Google, Twitter, LinkedIn and loads of officialdom all collecting 'stuff' about us and the car is currently the most private place in your world, let's try to keep it that way.

"The car is currently the most private place in your world, let's try to keep it that way"



Derek Webb,
managing director of
Nicholas Recruitment



Ian Hill,
managing director,
Activa Contracts



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MOBILITY

'Human satisfaction' key to MaaS success

By Ian Hill

Generation Y – those born in the 1980s and 1990s (also called millennials) – are entering the workplace and starting to assume management positions influencing business and corporate mobility.

Allied to their familiarity with digital and electronic technology, business mobility is shifting from a way of exercising social status – the traditional hierarchical company car – to a method of streamlining efficiency. This means employers are analysing the 'total cost of mobility' which is replacing the long-established fleet-based 'total of cost of vehicle ownership' model.

Mobility as a service (MaaS) is here. Common mobility features – on-demand transport, car-pooling, car-sharing, smart parking etc – are all part of the Generation Y-adapted market landscape.

Some say the emergence of Generation Y in the workforce is triggering the fourth industrial revolution with its focus on digitalisation, while embracing sharing, corporate social responsibility, connectivity and autonomy.

Employees are driving change but how it is delivered is a more complex question. It is one that contract hire and leasing companies must address – and quickly.

Flexible working and employee efficiency is business-critical. That drives technology development with the aim of creating efficiencies outside the scope of human capability. Such platforms then drive the on-demand effect, the need for real-time questions and results to deliver maximum output. Finally, that pushes the data effect: the need for reliable and accurate information to make constant improvements.

Fleet managers must morph into 'mobility managers' to drive efficiency. For contract hire and leasing companies, it means becoming the conduit between these managers and utilising 'new age' suppliers to deliver a 'total mobility solution'.

However, it is critical to understand the focal point will be people, because new technologies and processes are aimed solely at improving the human experience. In the age of MaaS the 'must have' is human satisfaction. Without that, no amount of data, technology or planning is going to have a positive impact.

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ASK NIGEL

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

DISPUTED FINES

Q All parking fines are automatically paid by our leasing provider and then re-charged to the driver with an admin fee. One of my drivers is furious because they wanted to appeal the fine and now they can't. How should I handle this and also dissuade other drivers from complaining? I do not want the admin burden of managing parking fines.

A Parking and other travel-related fines must be one of the most frustrating aspects of the fleet manager's role. In most cases they represent unnecessary 'avoidable' cost and effort as a result of a driver acting in a way that they should not – whether that is driving too fast, using a mobile phone when driving or parking in the wrong place.

In the vast majority of cases, therefore, they are justified and the decision to pay them in order to avoid cost escalation is pragmatic and easy for the business to justify.

However, we all know that there are occasions when this is not the case.

I well remember a situation from my Whitbread days where a particular driver appeared to be accumulating regular congestion charge fines in their new BMW. This puzzled us, as the driver was based in the north of England and never drove in London.

It took a different type of fine – one which was camera-based – to solve the mystery. The BMW was captured driving in a bus lane in London at the same time as the car could be proved to have been in the car park at one of our offices in the north. It transpired that the number plate had been cloned and placed on an identical vehicle. It took several months before this was all unravelled and the fines refunded.

This, admittedly, extreme case does show there will be occasions when a driver can legitimately challenge a fine (all right this time it was not a parking fine) and, as fleet managers, we need to be sensitive to this.

However, in the case of parking fines, if this has been paid by the fleet provider, there is no opportunity to appeal – a particularly sensitive area where any fine costs (and related administration charges) are recovered from the driver rather than charged to their cost centre.

A number of fleet providers now offer early notice of any fine prior to them paying it. In today's world this is relatively easy given the speed of electronic communication – and many providers now scan the original notification as part of their own processes. This

“There will be occasions when a driver can legitimately challenge a fine and, as fleet managers, we need to be sensitive to this”

allows them to send a copy direct to the driver providing them with an opportunity to challenge if they wish. If this is available from your fleet provider, I suggest you ask them to provide you with this service, especially as it allows you to avoid getting too involved.

However, if this is not a service currently available to you and you do want to get involved in managing fines, your only real option is to make it very clear in your policy that the company has taken the decision to pay the fine to avoid escalation of costs. As stated already, there is a strong logic for doing this and overall it is more cost-efficient for the business.

From the driver's perspective, the best advice that any of us can give is 'think before you park' – if you park in the right place and follow the right payment processes, then there will be no fines to dispute in the first place.

■ The next Ask Nigel will be in the July 6 issue.

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

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

Formerly he was secretary of ACFO Midlands and was an ICFM board member.

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

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

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(7.4) – 83.1 (3.4). CO₂ emissions 171 – 88 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.



Corporate mobility strategies in focus at FML

How fleets can benefit from combining a wide range of travel options

Corporate mobility programmes have the potential to change the shape of business travel for many companies.

In addition to the traditional company car, businesses are investigating how they can combine a wide range of alternative travel options under a single policy.

This would allow employees to choose the best option for their journey, from car rental and car-sharing, ride-hailing or taxi services to trains, buses and even bicycles.

However, a shift to a multi-mode mobility set-up requires a clear strategy and an understanding of the

issues that need to be considered.

Experts at Fleet Management LIVE, which takes place at the NEC Birmingham on October 3-4, will be available to guide decision-makers through the complexities of corporate mobility programmes to unlock potential efficiencies and savings.

Exhibitors from fleet consultants, leasing companies, rental suppliers and fleet management companies will be on hand to provide their perspective on how they can support a mobility programme.

In addition, experts will be looking at the specific challenges facing different business departments, ranging from HR to procurement

and finance, while best practice sessions will include a review of the opportunities to introduce corporate mobility services.

One speaker at the event who has successfully challenged the traditional perception of business transport is Alan Asbury, a fleet consultant with CLS Energy who is also fleet and energy consultant for Aylesbury Vale District Council.

He has pioneered a car-sharing solution at the council, with staff booking access to a pool of vehicles for a set time in the same way they might book a meeting room.

Asbury, who will present a session for small businesses in the Discover

Fleet Theatre, said: "We have developed a travel hierarchy system which starts with not travelling at all and using other solutions such as conference calls, through to public transport and then renting one of the pool cars or using your own car."

"Drivers can book anything from 15 minutes to eight hours. If it is more than eight hours or an agreed distance, we would recommend taking a daily rental vehicle as from that point it is more cost-effective."

Utilisation of the car-sharing fleet is at 80% as changes to reimbursement rates mean there is little incentive for drivers to cover business mileage in their own vehicles.

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FLEET MANAGEMENT LIVE



Expert speakers add value to FML

More than a dozen speakers will provide essential advice and expert insight to delegates visiting Fleet Management LIVE.

The show will include presentations from experts who represent every aspect of vehicle management.

Fleet Management LIVE includes several best practice theatres which will focus on key issues such as innovations in vehicle sourcing, telematics, funding, risk management and legislation.

There will also be a Discover Fleet Theatre, which is designed to provide advice and support for executives who are involved in vehicle management, but are based in external departments, such as finance, HR and procurement.

New Bluelight and Public Sector Fleet Zone unveiled

The unique demands of bluelight and public sector fleets will be catered for with a dedicated area at Fleet Management LIVE this year.

An all-new Bluelight and Public Sector Fleet Zone, developed in association with the National Association of Police Fleet Managers, will provide displays and best practice suggestions that reflect the sector's specialist requirements.

This includes stands and advice on everything from cars and vans to lightbars and high-visibility vehicle markings.

Exhibitors will provide specialists who can talk the language of the public sector and emergency services fleets. They will be ready to brief visitors on subjects ranging from tendering processes and framework agreements to

standard equipment requirements and employee training.

The development of the Bluelight and Public Sector Fleet Zone is the latest enhancement to the NEC, Birmingham show.

Chris Lester, event director, said: "Bluelight and public sector fleets play a critical role in delivering public services and the creation of this special zone reflects their importance.

"Fleet Management LIVE has been designed by the industry, for the industry. Managers from every area of the market visit to assess, evaluate and learn, in areas from fleet management to finance, procurement and HR. Our growth reflects the interest shown by fleet operators who attend this event and benefit enormously from what it has to offer."

Exhibitor listing so far

BMW
Honda
Jaguar
Land Rover
Lexus
Mini
Seat
Toyota
Vauxhall
Volvo
Agility Fleet
AID Fuel Oils Group
ALD Automotive
Alphabet
Appy Fleet
Arnold Clark Vehicle Management
Arval
AssetWorks
Autoglass
Bott
BP Oil
BT Fleet
Carbaya
CC Keys
Chevin Fleet Solutions
CVM Fleet Management Solutions
Daimler Fleet Management
Dash Witness
Drive Software Solutions
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O2
Parksafe Automotive
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OCTOBER 3-4, 2017 NEC BIRMINGHAM

TELEMATICS CUTS COLLISIONS BY 43%

A safe-driving fleet focus fuelled by the introduction of telematics has helped cut collisions and protect residual values, Charlie Wren tells *Gareth Roberts*



Living Service (HILS).

The not-for-profit, charitable social enterprise, which provides meals on wheels and support services for thousands of elderly, frail or disabled people in Hertfordshire, operates a 68-strong vehicle fleet.

HILS began testing a telematics system at the end of 2014, before deciding to fit all of its vehicles with the technology in June 2015, after signing a three-year deal with Green Road.

"Almost instantly, we began to see an improvement in how vehicles were being driven," says Charlie Wren, support services manager at HILS.

Despite a 50% increase in the size of its fleet in the past 18 months, resulting in a greater exposure to risk with more miles being driven, the organisation saw a 43% reduction in collision/damage incidents and a "significant" reduction in speeding ones.

The vehicles have a dashboard display which gives instant feedback through a traffic light system on driver performance. Drivers can also view their scores via an online portal or mobile phone application.

In addition, they are given access to a range of resources online to resolve any issues, such as harsh cornering or excessive braking

which, says Wren, has helped them become more self-sufficient and take more responsibility for their actions on the road.

"We chose our telematics system because it was driver focussed and drivers can access the same information we can," he explains. "They can go online and have a look at the route they've just driven and see if there were any problems, where those problems were, what they were and what caused them."

He continues: "It's not distracting to the driver, but equally it isn't silently recording their every move. We don't want to create an Orwellian work environment. We just want people to know how they're performing."

There was an initial reluctance from some drivers to the system being installed but, says Wren, it is all about communication.

"We did initially provide drivers with a league table [based on driver performance], but we had problems over whether somebody who was driving for 30 hours, and had three safety events, was better than somebody who drove 10 hours and had one," he says. "There were arguments both ways so we just decided to withdraw that feature."

Good driver performance can still be rewarded, however. Wren explains: "We have quarterly awards for employees – the 'Value Awards' – and one of those values is conscientiousness so drivers can be nominated based on their driver score."

A consistently poor safety score, speeding events or a combination of both will be investigated and, if deemed necessary, will be taken further.

One of the organisation's charitable objec-

tives however, is helping people back into work. Wren explains: "We often try to recruit people who find it hard to find work elsewhere."

It means there are no predetermined restrictions on prospective employees who might drive in the course of their work. "We deal with people on a case-by-case basis," says Wren. "We don't stipulate if you have this many points on your licence we won't employ you."

Nevertheless, for duty of care purposes licences are checked through a licence checking company at the start of employment and regularly thereafter.

Wren continues: "We would similarly employ somebody who has been driving for less than 12 months and we employ people under the age of 25 to drive; we don't have any restrictions like that. We want to give them the opportunity, to trust people unless they give us reason to do otherwise."

Naturally, that would suggest a lofty insurance premium to pay, with the organisation's potential for greater exposure to risk. But, its use of telematics has more than helped keep that in check. Wren says: "We had a huge reduction in our insurance premium."

Wren told *Fleet News* it had seen a 26% fleet insurance premium saving from 2015/16 to 2016/17, reduced car damage as a result of fewer collisions, which has cut vehicle downtime resulting in HILS providing an even more reliable service, and more accurate arrival times being given to customers as managers can check the exact location of





HILS support services manager
Charlie Wren just wants drivers
to know how they are performing



FACTFILE

Organisation Hertfordshire Independent Living Service
Support services manager Charlie Wren
Fleet size 64 cars and 4 vans
Operating cycle 3-4 years
Brands on fleet Hyundai, Škoda, Ford and Nissan



drivers via the telematics service and drivers can advise of any delays.

Importantly, it now also has the ability to track lone drivers while they are working on behalf of HILS.

Wren joined the organisation in January 2015, initially as team leader for IT and stock before becoming support services manager, with responsibility for fleet, IT systems and facilities in July 2016.

He admits that if the organisation grows much larger they may consider a full-time fleet manager, but as it stands his time is split equally between his three areas of responsibility and he has an assistant who also fulfils a fleet role.

The 68-strong fleet, which is made up of 47 Hyundai i10s, nine Hyundai i30 Tourers, seven Nissan Micras, four Ford Transit vans and one Škoda Roomster, operates out of four sites in Hemel Hempstead, Letchworth, St Albans, and Ware. They deliver about 500,000 meals a year, seeing up to 2,000 people daily.

Wren says: "I spend a lot of time putting systems in place that better enable everyone in the organisation to help themselves and make things run as smoothly as possible."

He has launched a ticket management system which is accessed online. Users are able to prioritise the ticket according to

"We deal with people on a case-by-case basis. We don't stipulate if you have this many points on your licence we won't employ you"

Charlie Wren, Hertfordshire Independent Living Service

predefined guidelines which is sent electronically to a dedicated email address. "Something which is considered critical is dealt with straight away," he says.

It has also enabled Wren to monitor their own performance by assessing how fast they respond to problems and, now the system has been up and running for more than a year, it has given HILS a rich data stream for vehicles so any particular trends can be identified.

"It gives us a history of our cars," he explains. "If somebody says the battery has



SERVICE PROVIDES MORE THAN JUST MEALS ON WHEELS

Hertfordshire County Council supported the establishment of Hertfordshire Community Meals as an independent, not-for-profit, organisation to deliver meals on wheels across the county back in 2007.

The service began with one site in Letchworth, two vehicles, and a team of volunteers delivering meals in the north of the county.

By 2013, the remaining nine districts in the county transferred their clients to Hertfordshire Community Meals and three more sites were established across the area in Hemel Hempstead, St Albans and Ware.

Hertfordshire Community Meals underwent a rebrand in April 2015, and began operating as Hertfordshire

Independent Living Service (HILS) to reflect it was now doing more than just delivering meals.

Other services include: community transport, security services and dementia support.

A charitable social enterprise, it has a contract from Hertfordshire County Council to deliver meals on wheels on the council's behalf, and receives some money from other organisations.

It only uses paid staff to deliver its meals, while volunteers provide support to deliver its other services.

A number of HILS's staff have found it difficult to work elsewhere for a range of reasons but, with training and support, the organisation has helped them to thrive in the workplace.

just died then you can very quickly look through the history of that car and see if it has been raised before."

The system's introduction has been fuelled by a desire to give visibility and transparency to the organisation's fleet.

"All the data I have access to is also available to everybody else," he says. "If the team leader on site has a particular problem with one of their cars, as has happened before, they've raised the issue but also looked [at the vehicle history] and seen this has been a problem before."

The introduction of daily vehicle maintenance checks by drivers supplemented by weekly checks by nominated members of staff have also boosted the overall measurable standard of roadworthiness of cars and reduced breakdown risk.

Wren says: "When I introduced the daily checks they were more in-depth than they are now. For example, we used to get drivers to perform the 20 pence test on the tyres, but it was too involved, drivers became



Charlie Wren says HILS defleet cars while part of the warranty remains current to increase their RV

worried it was some sort of test and we were asking them to do more than they thought was reasonable.

"I decided to scale that back and instead introduce the more detailed weekly tests."

The checks, combined with the improvement brought about the use of telematics, helped HILS achieve 'Champion' status through the Driving for Better Business scheme earlier this year.

They have also helped boost residual value (RV) performance, important when vehicles are funded through hire purchase agreements.

Vehicles are kept for a maximum of three to four years and sourced through a local dealership. Wren says: "The [Hyundai] vehicles have a five-year warranty so we like to move them on before that expires as it gives us a better resale value."

There is no mileage threshold due to the local nature of the deployment of vehicles and the distances covered – about 10,000 miles per year.

Hire purchase is not a typical fleet funding mechanism, but Wren says that the business enjoys the "flexibility" it offers compared to leasing.

He explains: "We like to own the asset at the end of the agreement and we move quite fast as an organisation so having complete control is an advantage."

"When we leased our vehicles we found every little thing equated to a huge loss in the [residual] value of the vehicle, resulting in high end of contract charges."

Hire purchase, according to Wren, removes the unforeseen costs, with HILS taking the RV risk instead.

"In the end, the walk-around checks and the use of telematics help us maintain the value of our assets," he says. "We want to encourage people to treat our vehicles as if they were their own."

Having achieved a range of improvements in the performance of the fleet in such a short time, Wren has no intention of resting on his laurels, however.

Operating a fleet which is currently powered by a mix of petrol and diesel, a detailed assessment of the potential of plug-in vehicles is next on the agenda.

"Electric vehicles fit our model really well, with none of our vehicles doing huge mileages," says Wren. "It is something we want to do and could potentially save us money, as well as being good for the environment."

Wren admits however, that in buying their vehicles they need to consider that higher initial outlay and the potential RV risk.

"It is now coming to the stage where more or less you can't call it new technology; it's tried, it's tested and it works," he says. "We're just not quite there yet, but as more and more vehicles become available, it makes more sense."



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

'SHARING IS THE NEW BUYING' SAYS EUROPCAR CHIEF EXEC

French-based company no longer content with simple car hire. Now it is setting its sights on being major player in 'new mobility', reports [Matt de Prez](#)

Traditional car rental is no longer enough for Europcar. Its new CEO Caroline Parot has set her sights on re-defining the company as a 'new mobility' provider.

Her ambition for the business is simple – Europcar should be able to provide adequate transport for anyone, in any situation. She calls it 'new mobility' (rather than simply 'mobility') because "we are already a mobility company - car rental is mobility".

The initiative is largely technology-based. Parot, who has led Europcar since November

2016, said the business already had the logistical setup and vehicle fleet to support new mobility but it was the technology that needed greater development and adoption in order to succeed.

To showcase its vision the company has opened a flagship mobility centre in Brussels. Further stations are due to be opened in key cities over the next 12 months.

At the launch event, Parot told *Fleet News*: "The mobility need is accelerating everywhere – we are in a world where people want to do more and more but the way of doing it is changing."

In response to the growth of technology, the new mobility centre is equipped with digital kiosks to give customers quick access to practical information, alongside personal support from dedicated branch staff.

The mobility centre concept came from the Europcar Lab – a team of people responsible for innovation. The Lab's goal is to design solutions that can meet every mobility need – from rental to car-sharing – for daily and occasional requirements.

At the Brussels site it is possible to book a traditional or electric vehicle, access a car-sharing solution with Ubeeqo (a Europcar Group subsidiary) or rent a scooter with Scooty (a partner of Europcar in Belgium which provides access to electric scooters).

Parot confirmed that Europcar will continue to acquire or partner with businesses offering mobility solutions in cities around Europe, when opportunities arise.

Apps are at the centre of the solution. Currently, 20% of Europcar customers are using mobile apps to make reservations with the company. In 2015 it acquired Ubeeqo, a mobility start-up, which is 100% app-based. Now the focus is to integrate that digital experience into the wider business.

Parot explains: "Technology has already come a long way and is one of the key pillars to making new mobility a success. In-car technology provides fleet operators with far more detailed information regarding their vehicles and allows customers to book and access vehicles with their smartphones."

Future branches are likely to be unmanned or at least have fewer customer-facing staff, but currently 30% of bookings are still made on the phone – a number that has remained

CEO Caroline Parot is looking well beyond traditional car rental in her plans for Europcar

FACTFILE

CEO: Caroline Parot

Group headquarters: Voisins-le-Bretonneux, France

Revenue: €350 million (UK 2016)

UK fleet size: 60,000

Average Vehicle age: <5 months

Number of UK locations: 270





Europcar has opened a flagship mobility centre in Brussels

static for the past three years and highlights a need for human interaction.

"We don't push for the call," says Parot. "People still want to call because they want very specific cars, or need a very specific location."

"We would love it if everybody used the mobile app, but the reality is we are not yet able to decrease this portion that calls."

"For the ones who are using digital [the website] already, we are pushing them more towards the app."

It could be feasible for Europcar to operate unmanned branches in the future as the new mobility centre has self-service terminals, plus car share vehicles can be accessed using a mobile phone app.

Europcar's acquisition of Ubeeqo was the first step in the journey towards new mobility. The app-based business allows users to rent a car, book a taxi or access a car-sharing scheme from one portal. The service has more than 2,000 vehicles available across Europe and Europcar is keen to expand this as new-mobility gains popularity.

"Ubeeqo customers see no employees, all the staff are at back end," Parot explains.

"It is a challenging business to operate; you need intelligent people who understand the issues on the streets – because the customer is alone."

"Ubeeqo is growing in the B2B space because the B2B customer likes this kind of mobility. We are testing it in big cities and new mobility is already working in places like Paris, Brussels and London," she adds.

Europcar is only pushing the app in these urban areas. Parot says the service it is not really working outside of big cities where there is less demand for new solutions.

"To facilitate further growth, one of the key factors will be a fully developed public transport infrastructure, as most business models in the era of new mobility cannot

"Your car will spend as much as 95% of its time parked up ... why not realise that asset?"

Caroline Parot, Europcar

work on a stand-alone basis and need to be integrated as part of a wider eco-system," says Parot.

To complement the app, a new chat service is being developed which will allow customers to book and amend rentals using the popular smartphone messaging app WhatsApp – negating the need to visit the website or make a call.

Corporate travel makes up 45% of Europcar's total business and this is expected to grow as employers realise the advantages of new mobility.

Parot explains: "Companies want one single invoice for a trip. If there is an airport transfer, hire car during a trip and taxi to return the employee home, this should all be on one bill. By integrating our solutions, we can become a travel manager for companies."

"There are more travellers and they are travelling more. We need to capture the start and end of those trips rather than just being part of the journey."

Car clubs provide access to both rental and car sharing options, giving businesses and employees a real alternative to grey fleet.

As well as reducing the number of older vehicles in their fleet and eliminating grey fleet usage, they help businesses to run more fuel efficient and environmentally-friendly vehicles.

"Businesses can only benefit from further growth in public car clubs," says Parot.

"Those signing up to our services and looking to further reduce the cost of their own fleet have the option of making their vehicles available to the public or their employees outside of working hours which, in turn, creates a new source of revenue as well as benefiting the local community."

Parot believes that corporate customers are likely to include new mobility alongside a traditional leasing model, rather than total adoption.

"The balance between rental and leasing will be influenced by a number of factors including the relative cost of each service and the customer's need for flexibility over the hire period," Parot says.

However, Europcar is hoping that it can eradicate the need for car ownership altogether in the private sector.

"Sharing is the new buying," says Parot. Smartphone usage is expected to double in the next five years and Europcar believes now is the time to tap into millennials who are looking for newer and more affordable ways to get from A to B.

Peer-to-peer car sharing provides the customer with a long-term rental vehicle, with a fixed price, inclusive of insurance. The customer can then choose to offer the car back to the sharing network during periods when they don't need it and receive money as payment.

"Your car will spend as much as 95% of its time parked up while you are at work, home or on holiday," says Parot.

"Why not realise that asset by letting other people use it?" she asks.

Europcar is trialling the model in France with car-sharing partner GoMore. The pilot has found it takes around 10 days of sub-letting to totally cover the monthly hire cost of the vehicle.

GROWTH OF MOBILITY

THE MARCH OF MOBILITY SOLUTIONS

Compelling evidence from mainland Europe indicates that the future of business travel is multi-modal. *Jonathan Manning* reports

Compelling evidence from mainland Europe indicates that the future of business travel is multi-modal. *Jonathan Manning* reports

Standard, deluxe or premium; glossy, matt, or linen; soft touch or 650gm ultra-thick; rounded corners or metallic finish? If the variety of choice for a new business card seems bewildering, deciding the most appropriate job title for a fleet decision-maker is going to be even more difficult in the coming years. Transport planner, travel architect, mobility manager...?

The only certainty is that the days of a silo approach to corporate travel, which separates company cars from other modes of transport, accommodation and travel expenditure, are numbered.

Jens Diehlmann, global automotive finance leader at Ernst & Young, suggests that in future vehicle manufacturers will sell access to a car in terms of miles, rather than the vehicle itself.

Following this scenario to its logical conclusion, traditional car fleets will shrink dramatically to be replaced by a multi-modal combination of public transport, car sharing solutions such as Zipcar and Co-wheels, ride-hailing services like Uber, and even Boris-style bike hire.

Dizzying levels of investment in new mobility providers reveal how

the boardrooms of car manufacturers are braced for this brave new world. GM paid \$500 million (approx £400m) for a stake in Lyft and Volkswagen has bought a \$300m (approx £240m) share of Gett, both rivals to car-hailing giant Uber. Ford, meanwhile, has launched Ford Smart Mobility with a mission statement to design, build, grow and invest in emerging mobility services.

"We're expanding our business to be both an auto and a mobility company," said former president and CEO of Ford Mark Fields, when announcing the new strategy. The manufacturer defines mobility as, "accessibility for people, goods and services to go where they need or want safely, efficiently and affordably".

Volkswagen has declared its mobility solutions business unit to be the group's 13th brand, and expects its sales revenues to reach the billions by 2025. "In future, many people will no longer own a car. But they can all be a Volkswagen customer in one way or another – because we will serve a much broader concept of mobility than is the case today," says Matthias Müller, CEO of the Volkswagen Group.



Mobility costs vs wholelife costs

The challenge for employers with company car fleets is to determine how the cost and convenience of mobility solutions compare and compete with established vehicle wholelife figures.

Businesses also need to identify a way to manage and control travel expenses from multiple sources, calculate any benefit-in-kind implications (BIK), and allocate spend to appropriate internal cost centres. Or they can find an outsourcing partner to perform these tasks.

Adrian Bewley, head of business rental UK & Ireland at Enterprise Rent-A-Car, says: "Many fleet departments are moving towards a more holistic view of mobility, including taking a single view of travel costs and budgets. That enables them to access mobility services and 'pay as they go'. It allows them to design travel budgets accordingly and unifies several modes of transport."

Car pools or clubs, for example, give employees the chance to hire a vehicle during the day for as short a period as an hour (Zipcar offers business customers a Ford Fiesta from £4.75 per hour, with fuel, insurance and the London Congestion Charge included, and a cap of 60 miles per day).

Not only are car clubs resource-efficient, but the process can be automated so drivers reserve the car via an app, unlock it with their smartphone, and the invoice is automatically coded to the relevant internal department.

Several case studies confirm that the availability of these cars means employees are more likely to leave their own car at home and commute by public transport or bike, which frees up precious parking spaces at workplaces and reduces the volume of grey miles.

"Flexibility is key," says Bewley. "A true total cost of mobility requires

drivers to be able to access any type of vehicle, on demand, for any period of time. This means fleet and transport managers need to plan for every eventuality. That approach is forcing both fleets and their suppliers into new, more flexible ways of working. Ensuring employees can access the right type of mobility at the right time usually means combining a range of options."

BMW-owned Alphabet already describes itself as a provider of 'business mobility', a service in which the traditional company car fleet is just one element of a travel solution.

The company sees scant evidence so far of UK company car drivers swapping their car keys for a mobility allowance, but markets such as the Netherlands and Belgium are further along the road to corporate mobility solutions, it said.

"We are trying to support customers with moving their employees, beyond just their company car drivers, from A to B by whatever mode of transport is most effective and efficient," says Mark Gibson, Alphabet's head of marketing and business development. "For us, it's not a replacement for the company car, but working in additional parts."

The groundwork for this, however, is extensive. Few organisations maintain a centralised record of their transport expenditure to serve as a cost benchmark against any aggregated package of mobility solutions.

"The start point is for customers to analyse all business travel costs," says Gibson. "The majority of major corporates have a good view on their official company car fleet, but when it starts getting into the realms of people who are booking taxis, or going by train or using their own vehicle, gathering that information can take time."

"As soon as you have got visibility of all those costs you can then start to analyse how to manage your overall travel costs."

An indication of the preparation required to switch to a mobility solution comes from Dutch bank ABN Amro, which last month installed a fleet of electric BMW i3s at its Eindhoven office.

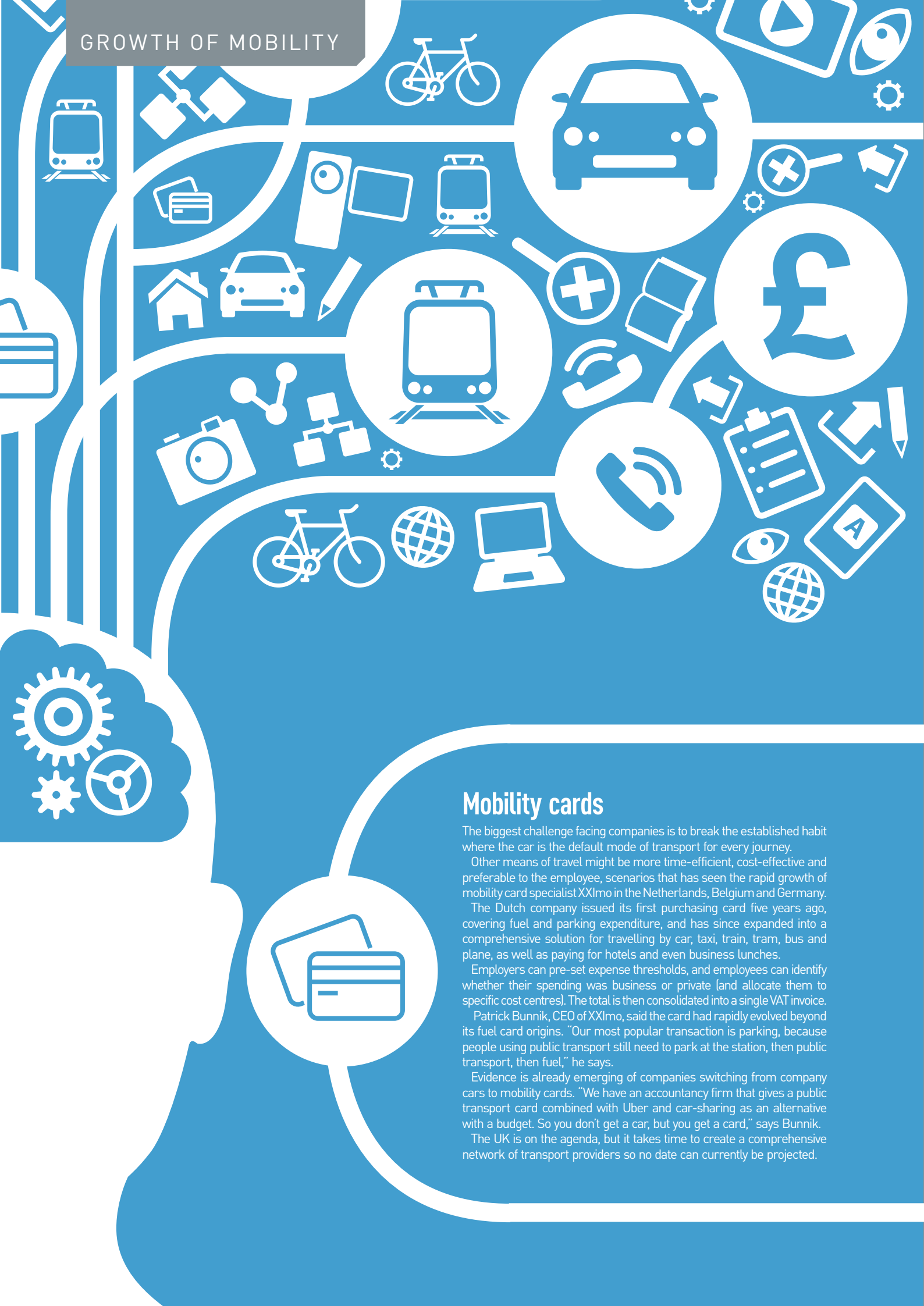
The initiative followed several months of using GPS trackers to record every business journey made by staff in their own cars.

This information was then analysed by mobility startup Amber, and combined with real-time data to predict where, when and how many electric cars will be required to facilitate ABN Amro's business travel. The Amber app guarantees ABN Amro's people mobility when they need to make business trips.



"Total cost of mobility requires drivers to be able to access any type of vehicle, on demand"

Adrian Bewley, Enterprise Rent-A-Car



Mobility cards

The biggest challenge facing companies is to break the established habit where the car is the default mode of transport for every journey.

Other means of travel might be more time-efficient, cost-effective and preferable to the employee, scenarios that has seen the rapid growth of mobility card specialistXXImo in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.

The Dutch company issued its first purchasing card five years ago, covering fuel and parking expenditure, and has since expanded into a comprehensive solution for travelling by car, taxi, train, tram, bus and plane, as well as paying for hotels and even business lunches.

Employers can pre-set expense thresholds, and employees can identify whether their spending was business or private (and allocate them to specific cost centres). The total is then consolidated into a single VAT invoice.

Patrick Bunnik, CEO of XXImo, said the card had rapidly evolved beyond its fuel card origins. "Our most popular transaction is parking, because people using public transport still need to park at the station, then public transport, then fuel," he says.

Evidence is already emerging of companies switching from company cars to mobility cards. "We have an accountancy firm that gives a public transport card combined with Uber and car-sharing as an alternative with a budget. So you don't get a car, but you get a card," says Bunnik.

The UK is on the agenda, but it takes time to create a comprehensive network of transport providers so no date can currently be projected.



Multi-model transport solution

This month will see MaaS Global (Mobility as a Service) launch its aptly-named Whim app in the West Midlands, following a successful trial in Helsinki.

Whim offers access to all modes of transport either via a pay-on-use model, or various monthly subscription plans.

In Helsinki, for example, €89 (£78) per month bought unlimited travel on public transport as well as two taxi trips of up to 10km (6.2 miles), while €389 (£399) per month upgraded this to 10 taxi trips and five days of car hire, as well as free public transport.

The Whim model exposes how the perceived value of a company car can differ widely between two similar grade employees due to different lifestyles.

It's easy to see how an urban millennial with nowhere to park the car at home and an easy commute by public transport might use a cash allowance to subscribe to Whim; while a rural-based worker

who relies on a car both to get to work and for weekend travel would stick with a company car.

"There is a huge interest among businesses to take MaaS as an alternative to lease cars and car ownership," says Kaj Pyyhtiä, co-founder and chief executive officer of MaaS Global.

"Lease cars are a long-term commitment and a lot of their benefits are left unused – car utilisation is fairly low, they're used about 4% of the time, so they're not really offering that good a benefit to employees."

Corralling diverse public transport providers into a coherent network for Whim users was an uphill struggle, but most suppliers now understand the 'disruption' that is going to hit the travel market, says Pyyhtiä.

"Transport companies will get better utilisation of their fleets. They will have new customers who did not use buses or trains before; car rental companies did not see people rent a car in their home towns, but our customers do."

Chris Lane, head of smart travel at Transport for West Midlands, says the authority had acted as a 'matchmaker', introducing Whim to public transport operators, car hire firms and taxi aggregators.

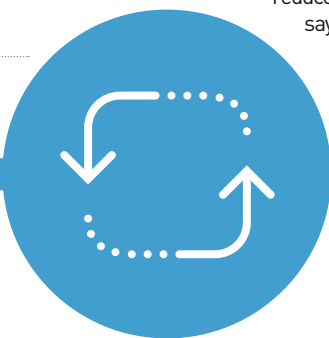
No public money has gone into supporting the launch of Whim, and Lane said the real test will be when users feel confident enough to give up their own cars.

From the authority's perspective, "we want to see congestion reduced, improved air quality and sustainable transport", says Lane.



"Lease cars are a long-term commitment and a lot of their benefits are left unused"

Kaj Pyyhtiä, MaaS Global



Established mobility solutions

If you are inclined to consider mobility schemes to be the domain of hip, urban millennials, it may come as a surprise that one of Britain's oldest employers committed to this type of travel philosophy nearly a decade ago.

Prompted by financial austerity and environmental commitment, Gateshead Council moved away from running company cars, and instigated a travel plan that aims to achieve more active and sustainable work journeys, reduce the need for journeys and encourage walking, cycling, car-sharing and the use of public transport.

A fleet of 18 pool cars run by Co-wheels has dramatically reduced grey fleet mileage, and its cost is offset by making the cars available for private hire out of hours to both employees and members of the public.

"Analysis shows that there has been a reduction of more than 33% of annual grey fleet miles travelled per year by Gateshead authority drivers from 2007/08 to 2015/16. That equates to in excess of 800,000 fewer grey fleet miles per year," says Graham Telfer, fleet manager, Gateshead Council.

The council has also negotiated discounts with public transport

providers, and staff can take advantage of discounted prices, spreading the cost over monthly salary deductions.

"Council employees are encouraged to look to public transport before using a low-carbon pool vehicle," says Telfer.

Gateshead Council has had to forge this comprehensive travel solution on its own.

The mission for industry suppliers is how to join the various elements of travel, payment, invoicing and control into a single, seamless package.

"For travel management, the killer-app is one which will allow staff to put in a start point, an end point, that provides a door-to-door multi-transport mode solution, using a single form of payment," says Lukas Neckermann, managing director at Neckermann Strategic Advisors, a consultancy with a focus on emerging mobility trends.

He adds: "Or a single swipe card that can be used from car to bus, to bike, to ferry, to train, and from city to city."

"Employers, fleet managers, travel companies, car makers, public transport bodies, IT companies, financial services companies, and credit card issuers are all competing toward the same goal."

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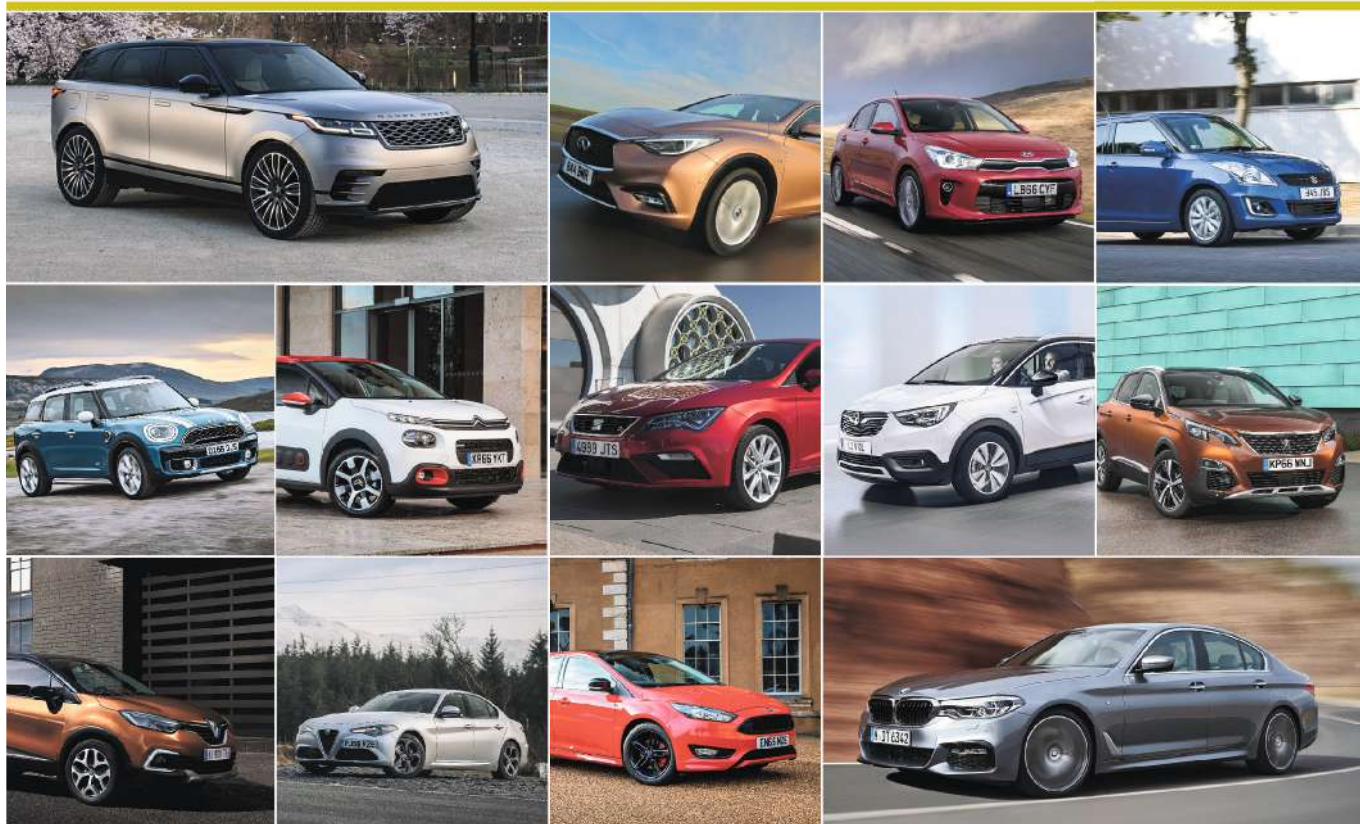
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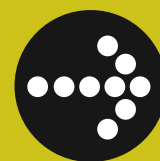
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**Tuesday 10.30am – Fuel choices
– taking fleets beyond diesel**

The debate is raging about the future of fuel choices for companies; this session will look at the key questions facing the market and consider how fleet managers need to respond to maintain an efficient and effective car fleet.

**Wednesday 10.30am – Technology and safety
– managing connected cars and autonomy**

Technology is transforming business, and it is crucial that fleets safely embed this within an effective risk management policy. This debate will consider the essential strategies needed to benefit from the best of modern technology, while mitigating potential risks.



EV/Hybrid Review Zone

Discover the key models that will be arriving on your fleet in the coming years at the EV/Hybrid Review Zone. The models on show will be:

- Citroën E-Berlingo Multispace
- Ford Mondeo Hybrid Titanium
- Kia Optima PHEV
- Mini Cooper S E Countryman All4
- Nissan Leaf Tekna 30kWh
- Renault Zoe R90 Dynamique Nav
- Tesla Model X
- Toyota Prius Plug-in
- Volkswagen Passat GTE
- Volvo XC90 T8 Twin Engine

See inside the Driving Guide for full details

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THE OFF ROAD COURSE

Put the latest 4x4s through their paces on this purpose built off-road course to get a true feel for a vehicle's all-terrain ability.



Strong line-up from BMW and MINI at CCIA event

Award-winning new BMW 5 Series Saloon just one of many models available to test drive

BMW and MINI Fleet & Business Sales offers a strong range of products and services thanks to highly specified models and comprehensive options, combined with low running costs as a result of fuel and emission-saving technology. Extensive aftersales packages and solid residual values at defleet time mean BMW Group delivers the complete commercial package.

Our latest models, the new BMW 5 Series Saloon and the new, bigger MINI Countryman, are the result of our ambition to improve comfort for both driver and passengers, while cutting emissions and fuel consumption. In fact, the new BMW 5 Series Saloon has made such an impact that it was named *What Car?* Car of the Year 2017.

“Our latest models are the result of our ambition to improve comfort for both driver and passengers”

Key reasons to visit the BMW stand

BMW and MINI Fleet & Business Sales will have a strong presence at this year's Company Car in Action. The BMW iPerformance range will be on display, with informative product sessions held throughout the two days to introduce the model range – the largest range of plug-in hybrids on the market. The new BMW 5 Series Saloon and the new MINI Countryman will also be available to test drive, along with a variety of other vehicles from the BMW and MINI models line-up.



To set up a meeting to discuss the advantages of BMW and MINI for your fleet, please contact BMW Group Corporate Support on 01252 920800 or email corporatesupport@bmwgroup.co.uk



Empowering the drive

Infiniti – the UK's fastest growing automotive brand in 2016



Infiniti launched in the United States back in 1989 and since then has expanded into more than 50 markets worldwide.

With its headquarters located in Hong Kong the international brand is now consistently breaking new company sales records month on month.

Reasons to visit the Infiniti stand

- 1** The all new Q60, a stunning looking two-door coupe available with two petrol engine derivatives.
- 2** Sunderland-produced compact Q30 and QX30
- 3** Q50 saloon with diesel and petrol hybrid options
- 4** The fleet team on hand to give the unique Infiniti experience

Infiniti Centre Reading opened in 2009 to launch Infiniti into the UK market.

Today, a network of Infiniti centres and service partners are covering key UK areas.

Under the brand tag of 'Empower the Drive' Infiniti features a model line-up of premium saloons, coupes, SUVs and compacts featuring seductive styling, attitude, exhilarating performance, emotive design and intuitive technology.

All models have a Q or QX classification. QX represents either a SUV or crossover.

In 2016 the all-new Q30 and QX30 started to roll off the Sunderland production line. These two new compact vehicles introduced a new segment for the brand and since entering the UK market has established Infiniti as the fastest-growing

"A range of performance diesel, petrol and hybrid engines"

"Both the Q30 and QX30 are produced in the UK production facility, based in Sunderland"

automotive brand in the UK, throughout the whole of 2016.

For 2017 the new Q60 two-door coupe enters the range providing the UK consumer with a true alternative to the traditional and more established brands.

Its stunning and highly praised looks provide a presence on the road many others fail to emulate. Add in the new 3.0-litre V6 400hp engine and performance more than matches its appearance.

With these new products added the brand now offers attractive options to all company car and fleet purchasers.

At CCIA the Infiniti UK fleet team, including head of corporate sales Jonathan Reynolds, will be there to answer questions.

SEAT's ever-increasing fleet popularity is easy to gauge

Confident manufacturer introduces a four-day test drive to attract businesses

As the fastest growing manufacturer in the fleet sector, more businesses and fleet drivers than ever are choosing SEAT. SEAT's outstanding quality, technology and style is placing the brand at the forefront of fleet decision-makers' minds.

SEAT knows that the company car is about more than getting to meetings on time, and that, as well as being fun to drive, business vehicles must be affordable to buy and run.

This is why the SEAT range, from the multiple award-winning Ateca SUV and New Leon, to the cavernous Alhambra and hotly anticipated all-new Ibiza, is proving to be such a desirable choice for fleets. Real-world efficiency, delivered through new engine technology and other innovations, combined with robust residual values strengthen the commercial proposition.

While the car itself is front and centre of



any decision, SEAT likes to make the process as easy as possible. That is why it has introduced its four-day test drive scheme, allowing business to access cars

more easily while testing their suitability thoroughly.

With a host of model variants set to be showcased at the Company Car in Action event, business users will be able to see for themselves how the brand's investment in quality and technology has resulted in a class-leading range of vehicles.

"Business users will be able to see for themselves how the brand's investment in quality and technology has resulted in a class-leading range of vehicles"



Five reasons to visit us at Company Car in Action:

1 Company Car in Action is an ideal opportunity to experience the SEAT range. With fleet interest at an all-time high, SEAT offers a highly desirable, affordable line-up of vehicles boasting craftsmanship and style in equal measure.

2 Attendees can also experience a SEAT virtually courtesy of a collaboration with Samsung UK which is offering exciting VR test drives.

3 The Spanish brand's multiple award-winning Ateca SUV will star alongside the New Leon and, as order books open, the all-new Ibiza. The cavernous Alhambra completes the cast. All models can be driven on a special test route. To demonstrate its all-wheel-drive

capability, the Ateca will also tackle the off-road course.

4 Guests can test Ateca models in both two- and four-wheel drive form powered by efficient petrol or diesel engines. The New Leon can be experienced in five-door and ST guise; while those looking for all-out performance can audition the New Leon CUPRA. Among the first examples in the UK, the all-new Ibiza sporting the highly efficient 1.0TSI petrol engine will also be available to drive.

5 SEAT's fleet experts will be on hand to answer any queries. From model advice, contract hire and leasing insight, through small or large fleet guidance, SEAT is able to provide solutions.

For more information please contact T: 0800 975 7844
E: support@gfbcseat.co.uk W: seat.co.uk/fleet



Suzuki means business at Company Car in Action

Small car and 4x4 specialists line up full range and expert team for show debut



Suzuki GB is making its first appearance at Company Car in Action (CCIA), and is showcasing its entire "Fit for Fleet" product range. The vehicle manufacturer's compelling line-up for the corporate market spans the nimble Celerio city car to the dynamic Vitara

compact SUV. It combines BIK values starting from only 17% with frugal running costs and emissions as low as 84g/km CO₂. This comes courtesy of a suite of high-performing and fuel-efficient engines which feature Suzuki's SHVS mild-hybrid system and Boosterjet technology. Owners equally benefit from a

comprehensive level of specification, practicality and safety.

Launched on June 1, Suzuki is also formally unveiling the all-new Swift to the fleet sector. The ever-popular supermini will be available to test drive at the Millbrook Proving Ground alongside the five other models on display which include the recently-introduced Ignis compact crossover, the Baleno hatchback and the spacious flagship S-Cross.

Decision-makers, fleet managers and company car drivers will equally have unlimited access to senior members of the brand's highly-experienced and approachable corporate sales team, including head of fleet, Graeme Jenkins and contract hire and leasing manager, Lee Giddings. They will be on hand throughout the event to ensure that the diverse needs of today's businesses, no matter how big or small, are met with Suzuki's tailor-made and affordable plans.

We look forward to meeting you at Millbrook and introducing your business to the Suzuki product range.

Five reasons to visit us at Company Car in Action:

- 1** This is the first time Suzuki is exhibiting at the show, thereby bringing a completely new and attractive corporate proposition to visitors
- 2** Suzuki's entire "Fit for Fleet" product line-up will be on display and available for test drive during the two-day event on June 13-14. Visitors can get behind the wheel of practical cars powered by engines featuring Suzuki's high-performing and fuel-efficient mild hybrid system and Boosterjet technology which offer CO₂ emissions as low as 84g/km and fuel consumption of up to 65.7mpg
- 3** The all-new Swift supermini is being formally launched to the corporate market during the two-day event after going on sale on June 1
- 4** Members of Suzuki's senior corporate sales team will be on hand throughout CCIA to discuss individual business requirements, no matter how big or small
- 5** The brand's approachable and highly-experienced corporate sales team is easy to do business with, making the order-to-delivery process as simple as possible

To get in touch with Suzuki's Corporate Sales team, T: 01908 336130
E: businesscars@suzuki.co.uk W: cars.suzuki.co.uk/business





"We know from feedback that connectivity in our cars is seen as a major positive"

Steve Oliver,
BMW Group UK

FACTFILE

General manager corporate sales

– Steve Oliver

BMW fleet sales (YTD)

– 37,884 (up 7%)

BMW fleet market share (YTD)

– 7.8%

Mini fleet sales (YTD)

– 8,259 (up 6.28%)

Mini fleet market share (YTD)

– 1.7%

WINNER: BMW i3 RANGE EXTENDER

BMW aspires to give 'best experience' to fleets and their drivers

Company car drivers who feel they have to pretend to be retail customers in a dealership 'is not acceptable', says Steve Oliver

By Stephen Briers

Last year, BMW leapfrogged its rivals to become the biggest manufacturer in true fleet, as measured by the official registration figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). The company increased corporate sales by 17% to 86,202, and growth has continued into 2017, with first-quarter true fleet registrations up almost 8% year-on-year.

BMW has worked hard to create a product line up that appeals to fleet decision-makers and company car drivers alike, which includes simplifying its trim line-up. Gone is the fleet-targeted Business Edition, made obsolete by the improvements in standard equipment at entry-level.

Its challenge now is to improve driver and fleet awareness of the vast and growing array of technology embedded into each car. This was recently brought into sharp focus for BMW Group UK general manager corporate sales Steve Oliver in conversation with a fleet customer.

"He said that BMW's best-kept secret was the usability of its technology – that's something we have to address to make it more widely known," says Oliver, who was appointed in December 2016.

Fleet News: Six months in, what's your assessment of the BMW fleet business?

Steve Oliver: I expected it to be a strong, robust organisation and that's there every day – it's reassuring. With the volume we are delivering, there is not a mass of things that requires big change. We just have to refine what we do as the market moves.

FN: What key refinements need to be made?

SO: One example is the company car driver experience. We are looking at how we develop the in-retailer experience and how we measure it. We have a cross-functional team with people from different departments to take a rounded view on how to improve the experience. Across the industry, many company car drivers go to the retailer and pretend to be a retail customer – from my point of view, that's not acceptable. So we are looking at standards, measurements and how we tailor the online offering.

We have the virtual handover with click and watch [a video sent to the customer two weeks before delivery to familiarise them with the key safety, technology, comfort and performance features]; for any company driver that's a massive benefit. Also from a fleet manager perspective, you can ensure a proper handover and all the safety features can be understood and used properly. In a world where the fleet manager can't necessarily facilitate that, we can help.

We aspire to be the best fleet brand which means the experience for the fleet manager and how they are informed and how we listen. Because of our success in recent years, our business has a better understanding of corporate than even two years ago.

FN: Where do you see the opportunities for growth in the fleet sector?

SO: We have clear channel split: key accounts and public sector; leasing; SME programme with retailers; and specialist sales function (rental, chauffeur, diplomatic sales). The market is challenged, but I see lots of opportunities to talk to new people. There will be growth in our SME programme – it increased by 20% last year – and we can do a better job looking after the local business person. Also, there is more scope with larger corporates. Leasing is increasing nicely and the public sector increased by 25%.



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



Steve Oliver (seated middle, wearing glasses) celebrates with members of the BMW team at the Fleet News Awards

last year. We have taken a different approach here. Previously it was through one person but that was not feasible so now public sector is spread across the wider key account team. We have the right products with our iPerformance range, especially i3e with NHS trusts and public authorities, for example. We see growth [in the public sector] continuing this year.

The market will have a bit of a pause with the election but it will be reasonably strong for the rest of the year, especially for premium brands. The UK is a premium brand market; we see corporates increasingly moving in this direction.

FN: What about Mini and the cross-sell opportunities?

SO: We are starting the journey in corporate sales with Mini. We have a job to do but now we have clarity of product range, including a plug-in Countryman coming this year. For some fleets, it [cross-selling] is a no-brainer to look at both brands. People want to explore Mini more. It fits well now we are in different parts of fleet – it gives a real alternative. We do long-term loans; the impact of seeing a Mini in the car park with a business specification works really well.

FN: Last year you increased rental sales by 20% to 14,000 units; in the first quarter this year, volumes have remained static on 2016. How does rental benefit BMW?

SO: We set internal targets and we cap rental. We are fixed on our rental partners and they are focused more on B2B. So we see rental as [delivering] 400,000 test drives last year. It's about balance – we have a sustainable and disciplined approach.

FN: With so much of the fleet sector dominated by diesel, how is BMW reacting to the current emissions debate?

SO: The media reaction to diesel is the biggest surprise I've had [since joining BMW]; it gained momentum more quickly than I thought it would. There is a pressure point: we are seeing more interest in our petrol and plug-in hybrid range. I see [plug-in] cars as a corporate focus. We have talked to our retailers about how iPerformance [as BMW badges its plug-in range] needs to mean as much as M Performance. M delivers a massive halo for traditional company car drivers, but with iPerformance we can make real inroads. With the diesel-petrol debate, we can feel confident that we have the products to match the

marketplace, and we can increase supply to mirror demand. We have put on more iPerformance demonstrators than before but we have reasonable lead times because demand is so strong. But with that comes responsibility: we have to make sure we advise on the right model and powertrain to suit the company car driver's requirements. There is less focus on Euro 6 diesel versus older cars or trucks [in the press reports] but fleet managers are professional enough to know the story on Euro 6.

FN: The leasing sector has major concerns about connected cars and data ownership. How is BMW addressing those concerns?

SO: We have good data share with leasing; we have agreements with many of the top 50 leasing companies on data share that they are happy with. It's the customer's data so with the leasing companies we have been open and looked to facilitate, not control. There are collective benefits for leasing companies. Their customers want it – we know from feedback that connectivity in our cars is seen as a major positive, for example, real traffic updates for a company car user is a real bonus.

We supply [leasing companies] with information on ongoing maintenance issues, for example, tyre problems that the driver is ignoring. From a CSR view, that's a bigger, holistic view for the company car driver. They do high mileages in a stressful job so if in partnership with the leasing company we can find a way to enable safety-conscious decisions to be made, such as maintenance done earlier, that's a great thing. I sense that the leasing companies we speak to appreciate our front-foot approach.

Despite its sales successes in fleet over the past few years, Oliver is determined there will be no room for complacency.

"We have to improve dialogue and listen to what people want," he says. "We have to raise our profile as a corporate team, for example, talking to the product guys on WLTP [real-world testing]. We are trying to shape our future to have the right products for the market."

Oliver adds: "We have set a clear direction with our team and our retailer network."

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.

ŠKODA KAROQ

Medium-sized SUV expected to find traction with user-choosers

By Simon Harris

The Škoda Yeti is no more. The quirky, yet practical, crossover had served the company well over the past eight years, so the decision to replace it with the Karoq could be controversial.

But the Czech company thinks it will be a bigger draw for user-choosers. First UK deliveries are expected in January 2018.

DESIGN

The Karoq's shape is as conventional in modern SUV design language as the Yeti was distinctive. But, according to Škoda chief executive Bernhard Maier, the Yeti's van-like proportions were a sticking point for many women.

The new Karoq certainly doesn't look anything like the Yeti, but its silhouette is very similar to the Fleet News Award-winning Seat Ateca. In fact the doors look interchangeable and the wheelbase (2,638mm for front-wheel drive variants, and 2,630mm for 4x4s) is identical.

But most of the details echo cars in the current Škoda line-up, including the Kodiaq large SUV launched earlier this year, and the Superb.



CHASSIS AND OFF-ROAD ABILITY

The Karoq's suspension has been designed mainly for on-road agility, but with a degree of sophistication that allows it to perform off road, too.

Four-wheel drive is optional on some versions, and standard on the 190PS diesel. The 4WD versions can be chosen with an off-road mode. To improve traction with this feature activated, the traction control

system permits a greater slip and the electronic differential lock reacts more sharply and quickly.

Where necessary, hill-hold control and hill-descent control functions are also activated – the latter keeping speed constant during steep downhill manoeuvres. The optional dynamic chassis control shock absorbers change their characteristics, and the accelerator responds more gradually.

Those who feel the Karoq is destined for rougher terrain can choose the 'rough road package', which protects against mechanical damage when grounding and prevents dust, sand or mud from getting into the engine bay or cable harnesses.

The electronic differential lock provides additional ride stability. It allows the driver to pull away smoothly and comfortably on road surfaces with varying grip.



SAFETY AND TECHNOLOGY

Blindspot alert, autonomous emergency braking with predictive pedestrian protection and 'emergency assist', which monitors driver activity and can stop the car safely if it senses the driver is unwell and unable to continue, are all available on the Karoq.

It's also available with lane-keeping assistance, parking assistance and traffic jam assistance.

The latter can automatically keep pace with low-speed driving on stop-start traffic, accelerating and braking according to the position of the vehicle in front.



ENGINES AND TRANSMISSIONS

Five engines – two petrol and three diesel – are available on the Karoq. And with the exception of the most powerful diesel, all powertrains are available with a choice of a six-speed manual transmission or a seven-speed DSG. For diesel there is a 115PS 1.6-litre, and a choice of 150PS and 190PS 2.0 TDI engines.

The 2.0 TDI with 190PS comes with all-wheel drive and a seven-speed DSG transmission as standard.

The entry-level petrol engine is a 125PS turbocharged 1.0-litre, while a new 150PS 1.5 TSI offers cylinder deactivation technology, which can save fuel under light throttle loads or when coasting. CO₂ emissions are expected to start at below 120g/km.

INTERIOR

The Karoq has a versatile interior with three individual rear seats that can be folded or removed to boost its flexibility.

It is also available with a power tailgate, which can be activated from inside the car, while an electronic parking brake helps reduce clutter in the centre console.

The Karoq can be specified with four audio and infotainment systems, the higher two incorporating sat-nav.

The highest Columbus navigation infotainment system is optional from the medium grades upwards, and has an internal 64GB flash memory.

The optional LTE module offers a superfast internet connection. Its 9.2-inch glass screen provides a resolution of 1280 x 640 pixels. Destinations are requested by text entry or voice command in the vehicle.

The Karoq has a gesture control feature for selected functions (available for the Columbus navigation infotainment system). A camera detects and identifies defined hand movements that the driver makes around the centre console. This allows the driver to scroll through the infotainment menu using hand gestures, without taking their eyes off the road.

THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

cap hpi

Monday Went to a meeting with a manufacturer down south and was surprised to see three or four people from the same company had made the 150-mile journey there separately. There could be a number of reasons: they don't like each other, they don't like how the others drive, or more likely, they have to clock up more miles on their company cars. Or likelier still, they could make money by travelling in their own cars. There are several downsides to this. It costs the company more money than it should, it doesn't help pollution and it further clogs up our already overcrowded roads. I can understand why employees do it, but it just isn't right, is it?

"I am a little confused as to where Crossland X sits in the Vauxhall range"

Tuesday Down to the Cotswolds to drive the Vauxhall Crossland X (see also page 55), which is slightly shorter than the Mokka X. This car is built at the PSA plant in Zaragoza, Spain, and shares the same platform as the forthcoming replacement for the Citroën C3 Picasso.

The Crossland X looks like a 'pumped-up' Adam and is quite cute. It drives really well and is well put together. A 1.2-litre petrol and 1.6-litre diesel engine are available, and both are quiet and refined, though the petrol is likely to be the most popular. I am a little confused as to where it sits in the Vauxhall range because it's such a similar size to the Mokka X. Mokka X is available with four-wheel-drive, while Crossland X isn't, but I'm not convinced that's enough of a differentiator.

Thursday/Friday Over to Stockholm for the world premiere of the Škoda Karoq (see review alongside). Like all Škodas, it is so well built. It has loads of standard spec and will be priced to sell. We got on a boat in Stockholm and arrived an hour later at the event on a pretty island. A well organised event, so slick and coordinated. The Karoq (car-rock) will replace the popular Yeti. It will be available to order around October, with first UK deliveries next January.

MERCEDES-BENZ E 350E

It shapes up well on BIK, delivers on performance and ticks many boxes



Distinctive brake calipers and other more discreet markings give clues to the E 350e's eco credentials

NEED TO KNOW

- Plug-in petrol-electric hybrid system
- All the merits of the existing E-Class
- Don't expect to reach the claimed mpg figure

By Matt de Prez

Mercedes-Benz has already won two *Fleet News* awards for the new E-Class and the E 350e serves to increase its desirability in a market plagued by concerns over air quality and rising taxation.

It's a plug-in hybrid which emits just 49g/km of CO₂. This means it commands attractive company car tax rates.

The car doesn't shout about its eco-warrior status like a Toyota Prius, though. The only giveaway that a battery lurks under the boot floor of the E 350e is the charging point cover on the back bumper and some discreet wing badges. Those with a keen eye will notice the brake calipers have also been finished in 'electric' blue.

The car starts in silence and can reach speeds of up to 80mph on the electric motor alone, although achieving this will require ballerina-like footwork as the petrol engine is eager to assist. On a constant run the battery will manage around 14 miles on a single charge – against the quoted 21.

An intelligent hybrid system balances powertrain use with regenerative braking and charging, but to get the most out of the E 350e you have to adapt your driving style.

Those covering shorter trips should have no problem running on battery alone, provided they have access to sufficient charging points.

Mercedes-Benz claims the car can return an average 134.5mpg, but, realistically, this isn't the case. For starters the on-board computer only measures up to 99.9mpg and the best we managed was 53mpg.

That is still an impressive number for a petrol-powered two-tonne luxury saloon that packs 286PS.

COSTS

P11D price	£47,995
BIK tax band (2016/17)	13%
Annual BIK tax (40%)	£2,496
Class 1A NIC	£861
Annual VED	£15 then £440
RV (4yr/80k)	£14,200
Fuel cost (ppm)	9.75
AFR (ppm)	14
Running cost (4yr/80k)	58.90ppm

SPEC

Power (PS)/torque (Nm)	286/550
CO₂ emissions (g/km)	57
Top speed (mph)	155
0-62mph (sec)	6.2
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	134.5

KEY RIVAL

BMW 530e M Sport	
P11D price:	£47,230
BIK tax band (2016/17)	9%
Annual BIK tax (40%)	£1,700
Class 1A NIC	£587
Annual VED	£0 then £440
RV (4yr/80k)	£14,175
Fuel cost (ppm)	12.12
AFR (ppm)	14
Running cost (4yr/80k)	59.48ppm

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



Two 12-inch displays sit atop the dashboard providing digital instruments and infotainment

Where the E 350e really delivers is performance. Zero to 62mph is reached in just 6.2 seconds and the combination of instant torque from the electric motor and high-revving turbo engine means the car never feels sluggish.

Using the power reserve does somewhat dampen the fuel economy though, as does the on-board charging system. Over a week of mixed driving a figure of 42mpg was achieved.

Compare this to an E 220d and the diesel car is still going to be the most efficient for most business users.

Our test car was a fully kitted-out AMG Line with a list price of £50,000+ but the E350e can be had for as little as £44,000 and that's before the £2,500 Government incentive.

SE models command just a 9% BIK rate meaning drivers will pay £136 per month, less than if they took a 1.4-litre Vauxhall Astra. The AMG line is more at £207 per month (40% taxpayer) but still a significant £100 less per month than the diesel E-Class.

The E 350e certainly ticks all the boxes – in the same way as a conventionally-powered E-Class – and it only has one real rival. Unfortunately for Mercedes it's the BMW 530e. In SE trim both cars are evenly matched but, against the AMG Line, Munich's M Sport has the Merc beaten in all ways.



The Crossland X is derived from PSA's small car platform

1.6 TURBO D 99PS TECH LINE NAV

VAUXHALL CROSSLAND X

Compact newcomer will broaden Vauxhall's appeal in the crossover market

By Simon Harris

Long before the announcement that Peugeot and Citroën parent company PSA would be buying Opel and Vauxhall from General Motors, two joint projects had already been agreed between the organisations.

One, the Grandland X, will appear later this year, but the compact Crossland X is arriving in UK showrooms now.

Opel/Vauxhall understood it was lacking depth in its crossover range at a time it could ill-afford. The SUV sector continues to grow across Europe, and the Mokka X, which underwent a nip and tuck to keep it fresh last autumn, is very popular.

Vauxhall's other crossover to date, the Antara, has underperformed compared with the likes of the Ford Kuga and Nissan Qashqai. It'll be the job of the Grandland X to invigorate the appeal of Vauxhall's medium crossover, while the Crossland X sits just below the Mokka X in the line-up.

The Crossland X is derived from PSA's small car platform and has much in common with the Peugeot 2008 and forthcoming Citroën C3 Aircross, including engines and transmissions.

It has more of a Vauxhall look and feel, of course, with a conventional round steering wheel instead of Peugeot's lowered elliptical one, and familiar-looking instruments.

The Crossland X range includes SE, SE Nav, Techline Nav, Elite and Elite Nav equipment grades, and is available with the option of full LED headlamps and a head-up display. Key safety features offered include a 180-degree rear-view camera, parking assistance, forward collision alert with autonomous emergency braking, lane departure warning, speed limit sign recognition and a blindspot warning.

Vauxhall is planning to cut back on its volume in daily rental and Motability in 2017, and the Crossland X will be key in ensuring there is strong appeal for retail customers and user-choosers.

Vauxhall expects almost two-thirds of Crossland X sales

COSTS

P11D price	£18,635
BIK tax band (2016/17)	20%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£745
Class 1A NIC	£514
Annual VED	£120 then £140
RV (4yr/80k)	£5,525/30%
Fuel cost (ppm)	6.97
AFR (ppm)	9
Running cost (4yr/80k)	27.61ppm

SPEC

Power (PS)/torque (Nm)	99/187
CO2 emissions (g/km)	93
Top speed (mph)	112
0-62mph (sec)	12
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	78.5

KEY RIVAL

Ford Ecosport 1.5 TDCi 95 Titanium
P11D price: £18,480
BIK tax band (2016/17) 25%
Annual BIK tax (20%) £924
Class 1A NIC £638
Annual VED £160 then £140
RV (4yr/80k) £5,475/30%
Fuel cost (ppm) 8.53
AFR (ppm) 9
Running cost (4yr/80k) 28.65ppm

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



The Crossland X has a round steering wheel rather than Peugeot's elliptical one

to be retail, although there is some fleet appeal in the 99PS diesel which has CO2 emissions of 93g/km.

It comes with a five-speed manual transmission (from PSA with a rather lumbering shift), and performs pretty decently for the entry-level diesel. There is also a 120PS version of the engine with 105g/km, and a much slicker six-speed gearbox. Petrol engine options are 1.2-litre three-cylinder motors in various states of tune, with a normally aspirated 81PS version, and turbocharged 110PS and 130PS options.

With a two-wheel drive-only range – and without the Grip Control enhanced technology that Peugeot offers on the 2008 – the Crossland X has off-road limitations.

But Vauxhall still offers the Mokka X with a four-wheel drive option and the Crossland X has a similar maximum towing capacity. It's mostly a case of whether customers prefer the more rugged looks of the Mokka X to the slightly softer Crossland X.

Being a compact car, the Crossland X is nimble and agile around town, but is refined on the motorway, fitting the bill of an all-round small car with extra practicality and style.

RENAULT MEGANE 1.5DCI DYNAMIQUE S NAV



Refinement is one of the least appreciated aspects of modern car development. Huge efforts have been made to keep us calmer, safer and more comfortable as we drive along.

The Megane is a great example of these developments. It rides as smoothly as the premium saloons produced just a few years ago, while there is very little road noise and, thus far, no rattles.

For the paltry sum of £21,000 I can waft along in the Megane while the adaptive cruise control maintains the throttle and braking required to flow with motorway traffic, the navigation tells me when to turn and what jams lie ahead and the climate control ensures I maintain an optimal 21.5 degrees at all times.

Ten years ago this type of luxury would be reserved only for those in the most premium of vehicles. Even then, it's likely they would have come as costly options.

The seats are wide and offer adjustments to suit any shape or size of driver. Unlike its German rivals, the French Megane offers more than adequate cushioning for the rump. Even after a lengthy stint to Leeds I was still feeling supple.

However, comfort often comes at the expense of dynamics. The Megane isn't a particularly bad car to steer but enthusiastic drivers will be left feeling a little bit disappointed compared with a Ford Focus or Seat Leon.

There are five driving modes: Comfort, Sport, Eco, Natural and Personal. This is far too many for a car that hasn't got adaptive dampers or a reasonable power output.

The most noticeable difference between them is the colour of the ambient lighting. According to the handbook the throttle response and steering is also altered.

I've covered almost all of my 5,000 miles in Comfort mode as I prefer the blue hue to the others.

Matt de Prez



The Civic looks more sporty than rivals in its sector

HONDA CIVIC

1.0 VTEC TURBO SR

First impressions good and we're averaging 45.5mpg

COSTS

P11D price	£20,125
BIK tax band	22%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£886
Class 1A NIC	£611
Annual VED	£160 then £140
RV (4yr/80k)	£6,250/31%
Fuel cost (ppm)	9.75
AFR (ppm)	11
Running cost (ppm)	30.55

SPEC

Engine (cc)	988
Power (PS)	129
Torque (Nm)	200
CO₂ emissions (g/km)	117
Manufacturer mpg	55.4
Real-world mpg*	39.2
Test mpg	45
Max speed (mph)	126
0-62mph (sec)	10.9
Current mileage	1,453

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

By Sarah Tooze

The newest addition to our long-term fleet, the Honda Civic, has to compete in one of the most important segments for fleet operators, the lower-medium sector, with the Ford Focus, Vauxhall Astra and Volkswagen Golf among its main rivals.

So how does it stand out? By looking distinctly more sporty than the other models, with its aggressive styling, low stance and sloping roofline.

It won't be to every business's or company car driver's taste but will certainly appeal to those wanting a change from more sedate looking company cars.

The Civic's engine line-up is only petrol for the moment – a 1.6-litre DTEC is expected later in the year – but they are new turbocharged units (a three-cylinder 1.0-litre with 129PS and a four-cylinder 1.5-litre with 182PS).

We're testing the 1.0-litre VTEC Turbo in SR guise, which is expected to be the most popular version. Its

17-inch wheels (as opposed to the standard 16-inch on the entry level SE trim) push CO₂ emissions up from 110g/km to 117g/km but arguably the difference in benefit-in-kind bills of £12 a month is worth it for the extra equipment.

Among the additional features are a rear parking camera, a seven-inch touchscreen, dual zone climate control, and power folding door mirrors.

Honda's safety technology – called Honda Sensing – is standard across the range and includes autonomous emergency braking, lane departure warning, traffic sign recognition and adaptive cruise control.

However, blind spot information and cross-traffic monitor are only available on the EX grade.

On the road, first impressions are good. The six-speed manual gearbox is a delight and it's surprisingly relaxing to drive (rather than sporty).

We're averaging 45.5mpg after 1,453 miles. That's 10mpg below the official figure but 6mpg better than shown on the Equi Index.

"Honda Civic will certainly appeal to those wanting a change from more sedate looking company cars"

TEST TIMELINE



End

FORD S-MAX

2.0 TDCI AWD TITANIUM

MPV's ability to pack in a lot means it's in big demand



Room for four large alloy wheels needed by our staff writer

COSTS

P11D price £31,140

BIK tax band 29%

Annual BIK tax (20%) £1,806

Class 1A NIC £1,246

Annual VED £200 then £140

RV (4yr/80k) £9,900/32%

Fuel cost (ppm) 10.47

AFR (ppm) 11

Running cost (ppm) 41.81

SPEC

Engine (cc) 1,997

Power (PS) 150

Torque (Nm) 350

CO₂ emissions (g/km) 139

Manufacturer mpg 52.3

Real-world mpg* n/a

Test mpg 40.6

Max speed (mph) 122

0-62mph (sec) 12.1

Current mileage 5,629

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

By Andrew Ryan

As with any seven-seat MPV, one of the biggest assets of our Ford S-Max long-term is its practicality.

And it is this quality which has seen it in demand from my colleagues over the past month.

First, our editor-in-chief Stephen Briers borrowed it for its passenger-carrying ability.

Then staff writer Matt de Prez made the most of its large load space which rises from 285 litres with all seven seats in place, to 965 litres (five seats), to 2,020 litres with just the front seats. He wanted to carry four large alloy wheels.

Finally, as our test model came with a £750 optional detachable towbar (the S-Max has a maximum towable weight of 2,000kg braked and 750kg unbraked), head of publishing Luke Neal borrowed it to tow a caravan to Wales for a holiday.

Fitting the towbar was simple and quick: two clips needed to be undone to remove a cover, and then the towbar was easily slotted into its

holder. A key is used to lock it in place, preventing it being stolen.

The S-Max's practicality is enhanced by the design of the cabin. There are plenty of useful storage compartments dotted around, including a number of cupholders, a large cubby hole underneath an armrest between the front seats. Plus there is an overhead console near the rear-view mirror which includes a sunglasses compartment and child observation mirror so the driver can keep an eye on passengers in the second and third rows.

The family-friendliness of our car has been further increased by the additional of the £400 Titanium family pack.

This includes a cargo floor net, retractable rear-door sunblinds, a 220V power outlet, foldable trays fitted to the rear of the front seats and power fold-flat third row seats.

All are useful additions and the pack is an option well worth considering. Without it, the S-Max is a very good family car. With it, it becomes an excellent one.

LAND ROVER DISCOVERY SPORT



We managed to nudge 9,000 miles before the Discovery Sport's diesel exhaust fluid light flashed on, warning that a top-up of AdBlue was required within the next 1,500 miles.

That's an impressive distance – most of our test cars seem to reach 5,000 miles or so – even more so when you consider Land Rover's official expectations in the handbook. It predicts an average distance of 5,400-6,050 miles from the 13.7-litre tank, using one litre every 500 miles; we used one litre every 766 miles.

So the options: go to dealer – recommended cost of £29.99; buy 1.5-litre spill-proof containers, which screw into the filler spout, for £10 apiece; or buy a 10-litre container with a basic funnel for £20.

Actually, we found a fourth option: borrow the remainder of a colleague's AdBlue, some five litres. While that has only filled the tank to around 60% (taking the three-litre reserve into account), that should be good for a few thousand more miles.

Unlike some of the other cars we've tested, which have the AdBlue filler next to the fuel cap or in the boot, the Discovery Sport's is positioned under the bonnet, next to the bulkhead. Access is straightforward and resulted in no spillages.

At £2 per litre, AdBlue increases costs by £156 over a 60,000-mile lifecycle based on our experience. Worth knowing for budgeting, although these savings can be more than off-set by some frugal driving.

We're averaging 40.8mpg; our colleagues on Car averaged 33.8mpg during their long-term test – although they hit 11,000 miles before filling up with AdBlue. The difference over 60,000 miles is worth £1,617 (£7,791 versus £9,408) at today's diesel prices.

Cost-wise, it's Fleet News 1, Car 0!
Stephen Briers

TEST TIMELINE



AT A GLANCE – THE REST OF OUR FLEET



Fiat Tipo 1.6 Multijet

The Tipo has spent a tidy amount of time with our photographer this month. The huge boot easily holds all of his camera equipment.



Vauxhall Zafira Tourer Sri Nav 1.6CDTi

This seven-seater has plenty of flexibility, allowing leg room and load space to be adjusted with comparative ease.



Mazda6 2.2D 150 SE-L Nav

The 2.2 diesel engine provides plenty of punch, but fuel economy may suffer as a result.

SEAN WOODVINE

ASSISTANT FLEET MANAGER, RYDON

This former ICFM training achiever of the year says he would tell his 18-year-old self to calm down and take time yet he concedes his biggest mistake in business is being impatient

The advice I would you give my 18-year-old self would be calm down and take your time, it will all work out as it's meant to.

If I were made Prime Minister for the day I would remove beer duty.

My first memory associated with a car is my first car, a MK3 VW Polo which I crashed and repaired too many times to remember.

My favourite film is *Gladiator* – Russell Crowe is brilliant.

My pet hate is tardiness.

The three vehicles I would like in my garage would be a Ferrari F430 Coupe, 1967 Ford Mustang and an MV Augusta F4CC.

The book I would recommend others read would be *D-Day Through German Eyes* by Holger Eckhertz.

The pivotal moment in my life was starting work straight from school. I had to grow up quickly.

My hobbies/interests are fishing, running, cycling, travel and eating.

I would like to be remembered as a fun, fair and honest man.

First fleet role I started at the age of 17 as an apprentice vehicle technician with BMW. The fleet industry is fast paced and is always changing – therefore it offers exciting new challenges all the time.

Career goals at Rydon To offer a cost-effective, robust and customer-focused solution to fleet management.

Biggest achievement in business Winning the training achiever of the year award during the ICFM Certificate training in 2016

Biggest career influence My parents who have always had a brilliant work ethic.

Biggest mistake in business In a general sense, impatience. Good things come to those who wait...

Leadership style Open, honest and happy to embrace new ideas.

If I wasn't in fleet I'm an absolute 'foodie' so anything in that line of work.

Childhood ambition To travel the world, I love adventure and nature.

Most memorable driver moment Many, but the one that springs to mind is the chap who drove a high-roofed van into the same height restriction barrier twice in one week.

"My memorable moment is the chap who drove a high-roofed van into the same height restriction barrier twice in one week"



Next issue: Richard Boreham, managing director, V4B

Need SMR? Ford Mobile Service will come to you



Ford is rolling out its Ford Mobile Service programme nationwide following a successful trial around Greater London.

More than 100 Ford Mobile Service vans with Ford qualified technicians on board, will operate from in excess of 90 Ford Transit Centres across the country.

Ford Mobile Service has been designed to ensure minimum disruption to fleet operators by reducing vehicle downtime with on-site maintenance, which also improves service lead times in Transit

Centre workshops.

The liveried Ford Mobile Service Transit vans will be equipped to handle a wide range of servicing, maintenance and repair (SMR) needs including warranty work.

They will be manned by Ford-qualified technicians trained at the Henry Ford Academy to ensure they are fully equipped to operate from the mobile units.

The Transit vans will be fitted with a specially-designed Edstrom racking system, including custom shelving,

storage and compartments to hold all tools required to carry out a comprehensive service.

Equipment includes a 2.5-tonne jack and axle stands to allow technicians easy access to the underside of vehicles, as well as a 4G-enabled on-board diagnostic system, allowing state-of-the-art servicing of all Ford vehicles, from KA+ to Transit.

Each Ford Mobile Service van will be able to service up to four vehicles per day, and with the potential to undertake multiple services at any location.

SERVICE CENTRE OPENING HOURS DESIGNED TO REDUCE DISRUPTION

Ford's nationwide network of specialist Transit Centres are RAC-certified and independently audited by RAC Inspection Services to ensure quality and consistency of customer care.

They are open from 07.30 to 18.30 every weekday as a minimum and from 08.00 to 17.00 on Saturdays, with

late-night servicing on Thursdays.

They offer a comprehensive service promise, Transit24, designed to ensure minimum disruption while vehicles are off the road – and 95% of the UK is within 45 minutes of a Transit Centre.

Servicing can be booked online, and there is the option of vehicle collection

and delivery, alternative transport to keep clients on the move and, for while-you-wait service, free Wi-Fi is provided in the waiting areas.

There is a maximum recommended pricing plan for fleets with more than 25 vehicles, ensuring the best price for routine servicing and fixed jobs.



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Richard Green and Russell
Sidebottom, Give the dog a bone



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INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY

Wherever you take Discovery Sport, a suite of forward-thinking tech will assist you. It's infotainment system, Touch, keeps drivers seamlessly connected with the vehicle and the world on an 8" touchscreen*. The intelligent Park Assist** option makes the process of parking a pleasure. Then, for easy access, a powered gesture tailgate** opens with a wave of the foot under the rear bumper.

VERSATILITY AND CAPABILITY FOR YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE

5+2 seating^ means your drivers are always ready to load up – with friends or camping gear. 1,698 litres of load space is available when all rear seats are folded flat. The option of Wade Sensing allows weekend adventures to be pushed further, with confidence.

Land Rover Business Centre 0845 600 2214.

DISCOVERY SPORT

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Official fuel consumption figures for the Discovery Sport range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 44.1 (6.4) – 50.4 (5.6), Extra Urban 60.1 (4.7) – 62.8 (4.5), Combined 53.3 (5.3) – 57.7 (4.9). CO₂ emissions 139–129g/km. Official EU Test Figures. For comparison purposes only. Real world figures may differ. All information correct for 17MY only.