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Air quality debate

Birmingham councillors rule
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Spotlight: Drive Software Solutions

'Easy-to-use software' gives
Drive small fleet proposition

Insight: Tyres

All-season treads are the
summer and winter solution

Fleet in focus: Aviva

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Opting for one leasing partner frees up time to focus on strategy, says Ryan Coles





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The Ultimate Driving Machine



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In the spotlight: Drive Software Solutions

To date, Drive has concentrated on the bigger operators. But now it is launching 'simple and easy-to-use software' for SMEs

Driver Name: John Smith
Number: 00586

UK DRIVING LICENCE

VALID DRIVING LICENCE

PERFORMANCE RATING: 4.5
BRAKING: 4.5
SPEED: 4.5

POLICY DOCUMENT



18 Debate: CAZ roundtable

Birmingham City Council is resisting Government pressure to make its Clean Air Zone proposals known. Councillors say they plan to wait until after local elections in May to make an announcement, though they will hit a September deadline for publishing the full business case

UK undeterred by autonomous car death in Arizona

Government remains committed to helping develop self-driving vehicles on British roads

By Gareth Roberts

Self-driving vehicle tests will not be halted in the UK after a pedestrian was killed by a fully autonomous car operated by Uber in the US.

A 49-year-old woman was struck by the vehicle as she crossed the street in Tempe, Arizona.

The cause of the incident is being investigated. The Department for Transport (DfT) told *Fleet News* that safety remained paramount to UK tests, which is why it said it was investing more than £250 million to support the industry with "full and proper trials and safe testing environments".

"We will continue to work closely with industry to ensure the UK remains one of the best and safest places in the world to test self-driving vehicles," said a Government spokesman.

Uber has suspended all North American tests of its autonomous vehicles after the fatal collision on March 18. Its partner, chipmaker Nvidia, said it has also suspended all self-driving tests.

Arizona state governor, Doug Ducey, has also ordered officials to suspend Uber's right to operate autonomous vehicles on local roads pending the outcome of inquiries by national transport safety regulators.

Here, roads minister Jesse Norman had already announced a three-year review of driving laws by the Law Commission of England and Wales and the Scottish Law Commission to enable autonomous cars to be developed and tested in the UK (fleetnews.co.uk, March 6).

The Government spokesman said the "extensive regulatory reform programme" would make sure that "the right laws are in place before the widespread use of these vehicles on UK roads".

In the meantime, UK on-the-road testing will continue, but operators stressed that safety continued to be their number one priority.

UK TEST LOCATIONS

UK Autodrive has been conducting tests in Milton Keynes and Coventry, Venturer in Bristol and the Greenwich Automated Transport Environment (GATEway) Project in Greenwich, London.

The GATEway Project, led by TRL (Transport Research Laboratory) is funded by Government and industry and aims to demonstrate the use of automated vehicles for 'last mile' mobility.

Camilla Fowler, head of risk management at TRL, said: "Safety has been a key focus throughout the GATEway trials. In the absence of formal safety standards, we have developed a safety case that demonstrates the risks to all affected parties have been identified, managed and reduced to a tolerable level."

Fowler explained that they have "trained and competent safety stewards" in all pods who monitor other route users and vehicle functionality.

"Safety stewards are ready to either reduce the speed of the vehicle to walking pace or stop the vehicle entirely if a hazardous situation arises or the vehicle is not operating as expected," she said. "We are also fully aware of fatigue and distraction and have taken measures to minimise these risks."

"The mitigations we have put in place were reviewed by an expert panel to provide additional assurance that the safety case is fit for purpose."

"We cannot be complacent and must learn as much as we can from this incident"

Camilla Fowler, TRL

Venturer's trials have taken place in the laboratory and on the roads of the University of the West of England (UWE, Bristol) campus.

A spokesman told *Fleet News*: "We believe the UK Government's approach, which we support, underlines the need for rigorous testing and a step-by-step process to safely integrating connected and automated vehicles in the UK."

"For this reason, it is important that investment in research and development activities continues to support the robust testing and safe introduction of such vehicles."

Manufacturers involved in developing self-driving vehicles, including PSA and the VW Group, also appeared undeterred by the incident.

VW Group, which plans to launch fully autonomous electric cars, vans and trucks in controlled environments in 2021, said it had no reason to rethink its plans.



Uber has suspended all trials of its Volvo XC90 autonomous vehicles

PSA, which has been testing self-driving technologies on French roads, also said the Uber incident would not change its current self-driving tests.

Toyota, however, has suspended US tests of driverless cars on public roads following the fatality. The manufacturer said it was concerned about the "emotional effect" the incident might have on its test drivers and did not have a timeline for re-starting the trials.

LESSONS WILL BE LEARNED

US police said the Uber crash, which involved a modified Volvo XC90, happened at night while the car was in autonomous mode. A human monitor was also behind the wheel.

The death came a year after Uber took its self-driving cars off the road following an accident that left one of its Volvo vehicles on its side in Arizona. The programme was later reinstated after it was deemed to be at-fault.

Uber agreed in November, 2017, to buy 24,000 Volvos on to which it planned to install its own sensors and software to permit pilot-less driving.

Bloomberg reported that Uber had disabled the standard collision-avoidance technology in the Volvo which struck and killed the woman in Arizona, according to Aptiv, the auto-parts maker that supplied the vehicle's radar and camera.

Aptiv's radar and camera system uses chips and sensors to help power the Volvo XC90's driver-assistance system, which provides collision avoidance, lane-keeping aid and other safety features.

Uber has declined to comment, while Volvo said the company would not speculate on the cause of the incident and is awaiting a full investigation report.

Fowler said: "Lessons will be learned for the industry as a whole from the US fatality and we are very interested to hear the findings from the investigations."

Volvo announced in December that it was developing its own autonomous cars with help from a small number of Swedish families who will test its XC90 on the public roads of Sweden's second-largest city, Gothenburg.

Three more families are set to follow suit, and over the next four years up to 100 people will be involved in the project called Drive Me (fleetnews.co.uk, December 12, 2017).

During the first stage of the project, the families will keep their hands on the steering wheel and supervise the driving at all times when using their cars.

But, over time, all participants in the Drive Me project will gradually be introduced to more advanced assisted-driving cars, after receiving special training.

Even then, testing these more advanced cars will initially take place in controlled environments with supervision from a Volvo Cars safety expert. No technology will ever be introduced if there is any question over its safety, it said.

Volvo Cars plans to have a fully autonomous car commercially available by 2021, and the data derived from the Drive Me project, it says, will play a crucial role in the development of these vehicles.

Volvo Cars chairman Li Shufu, the head of Volvo owner Zhejiang Geely Holding, said that it was important for automakers and governments to look at regulations and what sort of standards were needed to keep people safe.

"The accident reminds us that no matter how fast we develop, safety is the number one priority," he said. "If safety cannot be guaranteed, no automated cars [should be allowed]."

CHALLENGES REMAIN

Dr Jenifer Baxter, head of engineering at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IME), believes the US death serves to draw attention to the challenges of incorporating autonomous vehicles into an incumbent system operating with manned vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and other road users.

In 2016, the IME published a case study on autonomous and driverless cars that raised the need to address societal questions before highly and fully automated cars are both accepted and legally able to be positioned on UK roads.

"This will include having the right regulatory framework in place," said Baxter. "Engineers will need to create an environment where connected autonomous vehicles can operate safely with or without an operator during the transition period to a fully autonomous vehicle system. This transition period could last for several decades."

It remains to be seen how far the death in the US will also damage public perception of the technology.

Fowler said she didn't know whether the incident has damaged perception of the technology, but she had not seen a reduction in footfall or interest in the GATEway trials.

However, she concluded: "We cannot be complacent and must learn as much as we can from this incident to benefit society as a whole."

"No entity or organisation should seek to gain a competitive advantage from knowledge acquired from incidents involving their own vehicles – it must be a 'duty of care to share' such evidence to prevent future tragedies on our roads. This open approach will certainly, in my opinion, help to reassure the public and overcome any negativity."

■ For more comment on the Uber crash, see page 17.

FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

OPINION POLL

Will you upgrade vehicles to comply with clean air zones or continue to operate more polluting vehicles and pay the fine?



FleetNews view:

Almost a third of respondents to our poll say they are prepared to pay a fine if their vehicles fall foul of clean air rules rather than upgrade their vehicles. Our view is it is important that fleet decision-makers understand where air quality restrictions could impact their operations and plan to mitigate any resulting costs.

This week's poll: What will your next company car be?
fleetnews.co.uk/polls

MOST COMMENTED ONLINE

Road pricing may be way to ease congestion for city motorists

fleetnews.co.uk/news

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Unleaded (ppL) 119.71 ↓

fleetnews.co.uk/costs/fuel-cost-calculator

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New emissions labelling doesn't consider future taxation issues

Changes reflect new diesel supplement, but don't include WLTP data for 2020

By Matt de Prez

The Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) has updated the environmental label for new cars to highlight which models will be hit by diesel tax supplement rises this month.

From April 1, any new diesel company car will attract a 1% increase in benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax, unless it meets the latest Euro 6d standard (RDE2). Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) will also increase by one band for new models that fail to meet the standard (no cars do to date).

The new label, which went live last month, identifies which of the three current emissions standards (Euro 6c, Euro 6d Temp and Euro 6d) the car meets and whether the diesel tax supplement will be payable.

Further changes to the label are proposed for April 2020, when taxation will switch from NEDC (New European Driving Cycle) emissions to WLTP (Worldwide harmonised Light vehicle Test Procedure) figures.

Until this time, there is no requirement for manufacturers to publish WLTP test data, but this could have a significant impact for fleets and company car drivers when the tax rules are changed.

"Fleet managers need to be fully aware of the potential threats of not having these data now," said Stewart Whyte, director of Fleet Audits. "They should start badgering their suppliers – be it a leasing company, a dealer or a manufacturer, to get these data out there so that policies can be planned in good time."

"It will also allow HMRC to set proper revised thresholds and limits for CO₂ translating into the relevant percentages."

The Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership (LowCVP) had an integral role in developing the new label. LowCVP director Andy Eastlake told *Fleet News*: "The label features the official figure and we want to make it clear to consumers that the figure presented is the one their taxation is based on now."

"We think WLTP data should be available but it should be presented somewhere else (rather than the label). We are working to see how this data can be presented in a common format."

New car models are already being tested under WLTP and all existing models must be re-tested by September this year. However, the resulting CO₂ figures are being converted to an NEDC equivalent, meaning fleets don't know what the future tax implications of a vehicle will be.

Whyte added: "There are three major tax issues hanging on this data – BIK implications, VED implications and Corporation Tax CO₂ thresholds – all of which need to be embedded into company policies in good time."

"There are only two years to go until this starts to hit people in the pocket and companies on the balance sheet."

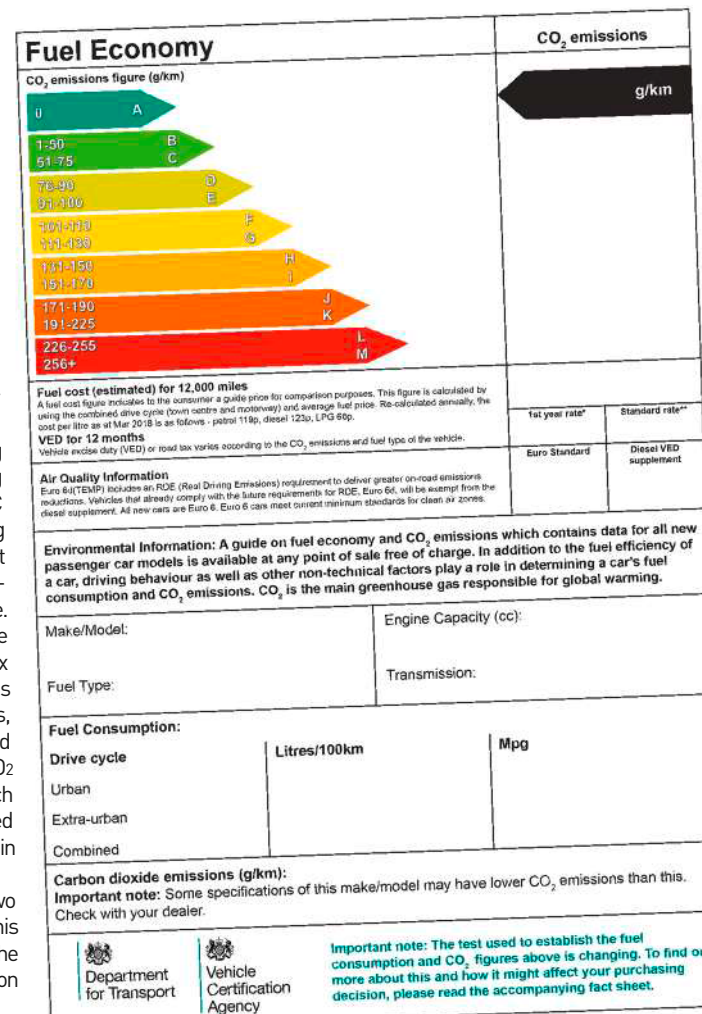
The Treasury has not yet defined how future taxation will be changed as a result of WLTP.

"What we do know is that the bands will have to change," said Eastlake. "Treasury has said it will look to transfer the existing numbers to a WLTP-based regime."

Eastlake confirmed there is a commitment to re-align taxation with the new WLTP CO₂ figures but that still leaves a conundrum for how to tax vehicles that ended production before the WLTP deadline.

"WLTP figures should be available for every new vehicle from September this year," continued Eastlake.

"Once we have that data we can look at what levels we need to set the taxation bands around to make sure vehicles slot into the same tax bands as they were before. At the moment we have so little data, we can't make a fair



"There are three major tax issues hanging on this data"

Stewart Whyte, Fleet Audits

prediction of what those figures should be."

A consultation document from the Department for Transport (Road Vehicles: Improving Air Quality and Safety) suggests that mpg data derived from WLTP testing should be published by January 2019.

Eastlake said: "Ultimately we are working to a schedule to revise the label for January 2019. The label will change in two steps – real world mpg first then, when the taxation changes in 2020, we will change the CO₂ and tax bandings."

In response to the consultation, Whyte said: "It is essential that the data is provided by September 2018."

He told *Fleet News*: "The data has to be available by law – anything that is new since September last year has to have WLTP fuel consumption data, so let's get it published."

Hydrogen-fuelled vehicles on a roll as new filling station is set to open

The Met plans to adopt 11 Toyota Mirai hydrogen fuel cell cars to replace diesels

By Simon Harris

Adoption of hydrogen-fuelled vehicles could be reaching a new phase with the opening of new refuelling points at conventional filling stations and new money to support the purchase of 'greener' vehicles for some fleets.

Shell announced it would a new hydrogen filling station at an existing site in the UK at the end of March (as *FN* went to press), while the Government has injected £8.8 million into a project to help fund 200 new hydrogen police cars and taxis (fleetnews.co.uk, March 27).

The grant will be matched by a further £13.1m investment including support from a consortium of companies and other sources. The project will involve the procurement of new vehicles, construction of new stations and upgrades to existing ones.

Shell is a member of the consortium that has won the funding, managed by Element Energy, alongside ITM Power (which specialises in installing hydrogen filling stations), Honda, Hyundai and Toyota.

Toyota also recently announced a deal to supply the Metropolitan Police with 11 Mirai hydrogen fuel cell cars, as the force commits to dramatically reduce the proportion of diesel vehicles on its fleet (fleetnews.co.uk, March 13).

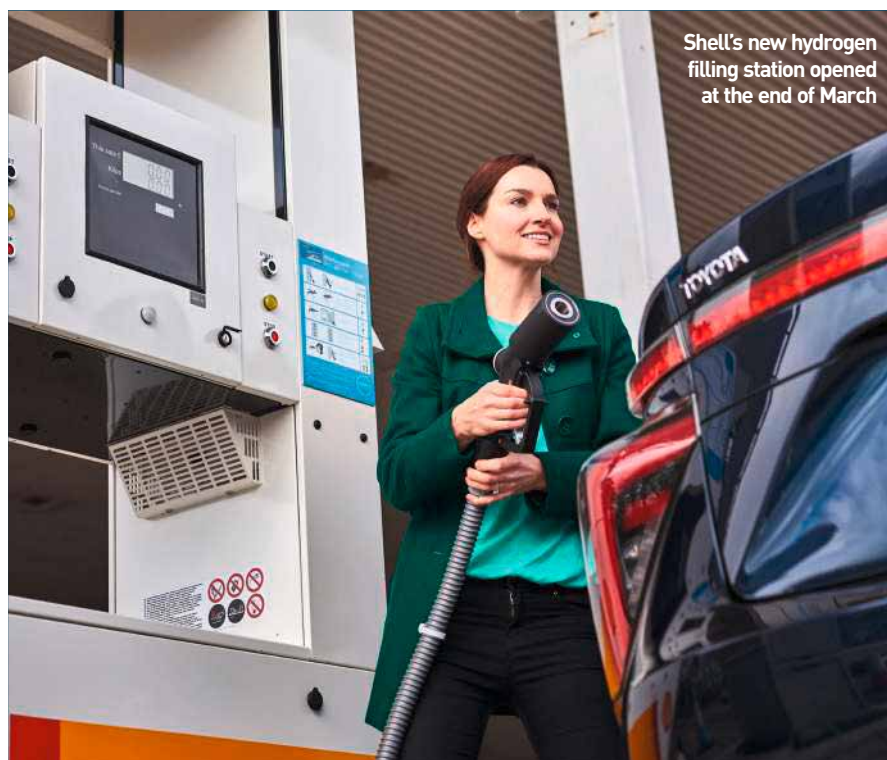
The latest hydrogen filling station is at one of the UK's busiest service stations, Shell Beaconsfield on the M40, and will be the first site in the UK to bring hydrogen under the same canopy as petrol and diesel.

Furthermore, the hydrogen is generated on-site using an electrolyser that requires only water and electricity to generate the hydrogen gas – which is more environmentally friendly than creating the hydrogen from methane gas



"Hydrogen has huge potential, especially for those making longer journeys and clocking up high mileage"

Jesse Norman, Department for Transport



Shell's new hydrogen filling station opened at the end of March

and transporting it to sites around the country.

The water used at the site to create the hydrogen gas is put back into the atmosphere from the exhaust of the hydrogen vehicles, which emit only heat and water.

Hydrogen cars are driven by an electric motor, with energy produced within the fuel cell stored in a battery, and have a typical range of more than 300 miles. They take a similar time to refuel as a petrol or diesel car.

The hydrogen station at Beaconsfield is the fifth hydrogen refuelling site in the UK to be supplied by ITM Power and will be the first to be opened as part of the Hydrogen Mobility Europe (H2ME) project.

The initiative has been partially funded by the European Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking (FCHJU), and the UK's Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV).

Mike Copson, hydrogen business development manager at Shell, said: "We're delighted to be opening a new refuelling site at Shell Beaconsfield, demonstrating our commitment to hydrogen as a vital part of the UK's future transport system."

"Bringing hydrogen under the canopy for the first time is a fantastic step towards making it a convenient and viable fuel choice for UK drivers."

Copson told *Fleet News* the roll-out of new hydrogen filling stations can only take place with

fuel providers, Government and vehicle manufacturers working together.

He said planning as part of a consortium will lead to fuelling points in key areas and clusters vehicles that use them. The longer range of a fuel-cell vehicle compared with battery electric cars would also help create a network that connects major cities.

However, he said he didn't want to estimate the rate of growth of hydrogen refuelling points in the future.

Police cars and taxis will be among nearly 200 new hydrogen-powered vehicles switching to zero emission miles, thanks to the multi-million pound Government boost.

The Metropolitan Police expects to see a 60% reduction in the number of diesel vehicles on its fleet by 2020. A spokeswoman for the Met said: "The hydrogen Mirais will be used as emergency frontline response vehicles in both a marked and unmarked capacity. We expect these to travel approximately 50 miles per day."

As well as the Mirais, the force also has in service 11 BMW C Evolution scooters, 30 Nissan Leafs and seven Suzuki Bergman hydrogen scooters on trial. It has also recently begun taking delivery of 50 Nissan e-NV200 vans.

Roads Minister Jesse Norman said: "Hydrogen has huge potential, especially for those making longer journeys and clocking up high mileage."

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ICFM chairman Paul Hollick addresses the annual members' conference



Troubling times, but the ICFM still strives to be 'required' qualification

Quarter of a century on, training organisation says decision-makers 'need to adapt'

By Gareth Roberts

Population growth, pollution, congestion and increased connectivity mean fleet decision-makers need to adapt to a changing world.

That was the message from ICFM chairman Paul Hollick at the fleet training organisation's annual conference, held last month at The British Motor Museum, Warwickshire.

The unprecedented list of issues confronting the fleet industry included, said Hollick, the continuing "demonisation of diesel" and the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) on May 25.

He said: "The future is approaching faster than we think. The time to act is now. The challenges faced by fleet managers are of a level the like of which we have not seen before. These are troubling, but also exciting, times."

A record 250 fleet professionals attended the conference, which celebrated 25 years of the training organisation and looked to its future amid a massive state of flux.

Hollick said: "The ICFM is well placed to support this changing climate – we will always adapt to ensure our members and students are the most equipped, most specialised and most informed – whatever the area they come from."

"Skills will change. Manual tasks will cease to exist in their current form and our creative sides will come to the fore. The ICFM is ready. As a progressive organisation, we will adapt training courses to suit the future."

"The challenges faced by fleet managers are of a level the like of which we have not seen before"

Paul Hollick, ICFM

ICFM RECOGNISES MEMBERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

ICFM members who had achieved a qualification in the past year were recognised for their hard work at the organisation's annual conference.

A total of 55 people gained the Introductory Certificate in Car and LCV Fleet Management, with a further 12 fleet professionals receiving the Certificate in Car and LCV Fleet Management.

Another 11 trainees received the Diploma in Fleet Management.

The work of Steve Hook, ICFM training manager since the organisation launched in 1992, was also recognised when he was one of two recipients of an ICFM Honorary Fellowship.

The award recognises services to the

fleet industry and the second recipient was Professor Colin Tourick, a leading figure in the fleet industry for almost 40 years.

Meanwhile, the Peter Moxon Award for the Training Achiever of the Year was won by Maria Williams, a fleet administrator at Bristol-Myers Squibb. She had successfully completed both the ICFM's Introductory Certificate in Car and LCV Fleet Management and Certificate in Car and LCV Fleet Management courses.

The winner of the ICFM's Career Development Award, which recognises personal advancement of their career or helping others advance theirs as a result of ICFM training, was Brian Hardwick, head of operations, Fleet Operations.



Now in its 26th year, the goals of the ICFM had not changed, said Hollick: "We continue to focus on our vision. To become the qualification required to be a fleet decision-maker."

"The de facto stamp of approval that you can do the job and to make fleet management a fully recognised vocation. Employers then search out this qualification when employing a new fleet manager just as they would do for an accountant, an architect or a lawyer."

Membership of ICFM has grown more than 9% in the past 12 months to almost 900 people and it is also training more employees than ever before, including staff from the leasing sector, motor manufacturers and franchised dealerships, as well employees with fleet responsibility working in company procurement, HR, finance and travel departments.

Hollick said: "We are closing in on 1,000 members."

Demand for used diesels remains buoyant as brakes go on new sales

Petrol, particularly small cars, also benefits from interest in the used market

By Simon Harris

Diesel resale values are expected to remain stable during 2018, despite fears that consumers could be driven towards choosing petrol or electrified alternatives.

While diesel new car registrations fell by 17% in 2017, and were more than 20% lower year-on-year for the first two months of 2018, used diesel car sales have been more resilient, with no signs of falling demand for either Euro 6 or older Euro 5 models.

Diesel new car sales have been hurt by negative news stories around the Volkswagen diesel emissions scandal in 2015, and further reports of diesel cars producing higher than advertised NOx emissions in real-world driving.

London has introduced an additional charge for older diesel cars entering the congestion charging zone, and some local authorities have seen diesel as a target to increase revenue from parking charges based around the effect of emissions on local air quality.

Diesel company cars also face a higher tax burden from this month with the supplement over a petrol model with the same level of CO2 emissions increasing from three percentage points to four.

But market analysts have reported sharp contrast in the fortunes of diesel cars at auction compared with the new car market.

Derren Martin, head of current valuations at

Used diesel car sales show no signs of falling demand



Cap HPI, told *Fleet News*: "Diesel cars seem to be performing in line with expectations, while petrol cars have been appreciating slightly, particularly small cars."

"For example, if someone had bought a used Škoda Citigo a year ago and driving 10,000 miles in it, it's possible they could make money by selling it now. This isn't what you would expect for something regarded as a depreciating asset."

"For now, it seems both petrol and diesel cars have stabilised in the used market and are performing in line with expectations."

"For certain uses, such as high motorway mileage and people driving 15,000-20,000 miles a year, we think diesel still has a role, particularly in executive cars and upper-medium cars."

His views were echoed by Jayson Whittington, chief editor for cars and leisure vehicles at Glass's, who remarked that the current crop of diesel cars are cleaner than ever.

He said: "The new car market appears to be experiencing a shift away from diesel. Negative messages being conveyed by sections of the media, as well as a change in direction by the UK Government has had a big effect, and is driving people away from buying what are among the cleanest vehicles currently available."

"In the used market, too, there has been a change. Petrol models have increased in popularity, which has led to stronger demand from trade buyers in wholesale channels."

"As a result, auction hammer prices and conversion rates have strengthened. What is interesting, however, is that the price perfor-

mance of diesel cars hasn't been significantly impacted."

He pointed to the fact that there is no tax penalty for choosing a used diesel car, and for those with CO2 emissions up to 100g/km and registered before April 2017, they are not liable for vehicle excise duty (VED).

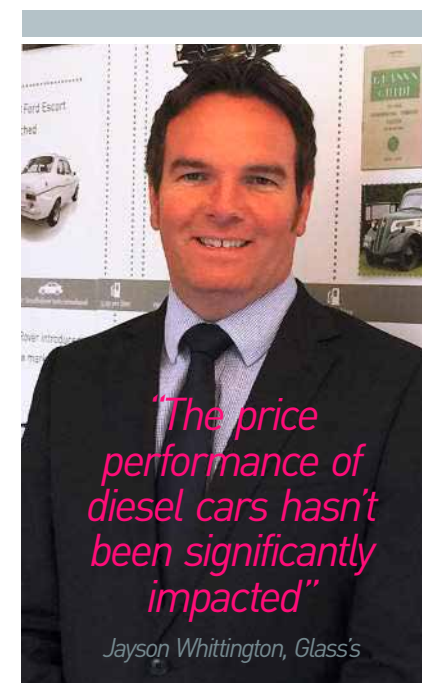
"Add to that significantly better fuel economy and it is clear why diesel is still considered to be excellent value for money and continues to be a good used proposition for dealers, traders and consumers alike, which should protect against a crash in RVs," said Whittington.

The decline in new diesel sales will also help to ensure residual values remain strong for some time to come as fewer ex-fleet models will be returning to the market in three years' time. If demand remains strong, this supply shortage could strengthen used prices.

Martin agreed that diesel used car values should remain stable for the foreseeable future, noting that for forecasters, the current state of the market would have been impossible to predict three years ago – before the diesel emissions scandal broke.

He also pointed to changes in behaviour among car buyers and diesels that have shored up demand for used vehicles.

"As new car sales have declined," said Martin, "and some of the current retail offers and deals don't appear as attractive to consumers in the past, more dealers are taking an interest in used car sales, so this is why we have seen increased activity."



"The price performance of diesel cars hasn't been significantly impacted"

Jayson Whittington, Glass's



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THE BIG PICTURE

By Stephen Briers, editor, *Fleet News*



Manufacturers are packing more and more autonomous ADAS systems into their models, such as lane keeping, emergency braking, adaptive cruise control and automatic parking.

As vehicles become increasingly capable of controlling key driving elements, it seems only a matter of time until full autonomy becomes the final, 'small' step.

But will these systems, introduced piecemeal, work well enough together for that ultimate step to be taken or will a completely new piece of technology be required?

"This is one instance where greater government intervention is advisable"

Current ADAS is easy to fool. We've had countless experiences of cars applying the brakes when bags fly in front. Our own Volvo S90 long-term has a habit of touching the brakes while passing parked cars on narrow stretches of road or on bends – it's a weekly occurrence. The software appears unable to predict movement (or lack of it) of our car or others and reacts.

These (support) systems have some way to go. And, as sadly shown by the recent Uber fatality, so have some of the autonomous software systems under development.

But that's not to say that progress isn't being made.

Google-owned Waymo will roll out a self-driving ride-hailing service in the US within the next few months after announcing a tie-up with Jaguar Land Rover. Its cars have driven five million miles since launching in 2009 on public roads; now they are operating with no one in the driver seat.

Its predictive software identifies how cyclists, pedestrians and other cars might behave and what that means for its own actions.

Waymo has a good track record, but there are unanswered questions around regulation keeping pace with the rapid development of this technology.

This is one instance where greater government intervention is advisable.

YOUR LETTERS

WLTP INTRODUCTION

Wholelife costs are still the best approach

EDITOR'S PICK



Shaun Sadlier, head of consultancy, Arval wrote:

Having read 'Should I abandon wholelife costs?' on the letters page (*Fleet News*, March 22), Sage and Orion suggested it might be advisable to use monthly lease rates as the basis for company car choice lists until WLTP has become universally adopted by manufacturers.

While we recognise the logic in this, we strongly believe wholelife costs remain the best approach, simply because they present a much more comprehensive – and therefore useful – picture of how suitable a vehicle is.

It is clear there will be challenges

in the short term where fleets end up working with a combination of WLTP and NEDC information.

However, it looks as though this situation will only last a matter of months. We are already starting to see the new CO₂ data come through and, usefully, the major fleet manufacturers are among the earlier adopters.

As a business, Arval is already using WLTP in its wholelife cost calculations for fleet customers and, where there is only NEDC data available, we are introducing a degree of flexibility over choice list construction. Our view is very much that this is the best solution while the transition takes effect.

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

GEORGE REID, RIP

A pleasure and a privilege

David Kershaw wrote:

Having read 'Sgffleet fleet operations manager George Reid dies' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 27), I had the pleasure and privilege to work with George for many years. George was a great asset to the business and indeed the automotive industry. RIP my friend and colleague.

ROAD SAFETY

Headlight dazzle not helped by poor roads

Wayne Burnett wrote:

Having read 'Motorists left dazzled by modern vehicle headlights' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 23), headlights, dipped or not, are without doubt the most commonly encountered hazard for drivers. This applies whatever type they are, although more modern Xenon and LED are the worst.

The problem is exacerbated by road topography and the poor quality of road surfaces that most of us have to drive on, both of which can counteract the intended effect of dipped headlights.

And, as for drivers who park on the wrong side of the road and leave their headlights on, don't get me started.

Nigel Witherick added:

I find that dazzling can also be caused when car owners retrofit illegal headlamp upgrade kits, have poorly aligned headlamps or incorrectly fitted bulbs.

Too many vehicles have poorly aligned headlights, caused by heavy payloads, poor maintenance, and knocks to the front of the vehicle.

These I find are far more dazzling than Xenon and LED lights which are at least (in most cases) pointing in the correct direction.

DAMAGE RECHARGES

Fleets should pay for 'unreasonable' damage

Caz wrote:

Having read 'BVRLA guides to clarify what is fair about wear and tear charges' (*Fleet News*, March 22), the fleet manager is being unreasonable expecting to "work vehicles hard for a living" yet not expecting to pay for unreasonable damages to the vehicle which are outside the fair wear and tear policy of the BVRLA.

Leasing prices are calculated on a vehicle being returned with wear and tear – not with damages



Shouldn't it be a regular check that your headlights are working to the correct standards more often than once every year for the MOT?

Mr Bean continued:

I agree with Nigel, retrofit units are now illegal and should fail during any MOT test. These units are in many cases brighter than allowed and don't have the benefit of having the auto adjustment like Xenon or LED system.

Xenon and LED factory units should be adjusted when a service is taking place, these aren't adjusted during the MOT.

LEDs are the future and have more benefits than negatives, less pressure applied to your eyes, increased safety for the driver and pedestrians on the road and so on. The only really negative thing is the cost of replacing the Xenon bulb or LED elements.

If you have an accident the cost of replacing each headlight can range from £500 to £1,500, while bulbs cost around £150.

caused by "working the vehicle hard".

Fleet managers drive leasing prices very low and they don't tell the full story when taking out a lease or about how much abuse a vehicle may receive when "working the vehicles hard".

If they did, then the rental industry could give them a rental price that would reflect the "hard work" and possible damages which are expected from the "hard work" he describes.

HAVE YOUR SAY Email: fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk Comment online: fleetnews.co.uk
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Burning question:
Name three things that really annoy you

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COMMENT

FLEET OPINION

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Follow Norway's green example

By Richard Lowden

Everyone knows the future of driving lies in electric vehicles (EVs), but in the UK we're still struggling to make the change.

In 2017, plug-in vehicles accounted for just 2% of new car sales, while in Norway pure-electric as well as a few hydrogen-powered cars accounted for 20.9% of total sales over the same period. And hybrid vehicles accounted for 31.3% of the market, including 18.4% for plug-in hybrids.

So what's behind this massive shift in the Norwegian mindset? It's possible the eco-friendly message is gaining more traction in Norway, but the real reason is likely to be more prosaic; a green taxation policy that makes plug-in car ownership attractive to Norwegian pockets as well as hearts.

The Norwegian government has scrapped VAT and import taxes on new plug-in cars, vastly reducing the upfront cost.

Not only that, Norwegian electric car owners are exempt from the ferry fees, road tolls and emissions charges that drivers of petrol and diesel cars pay.

Owners of plug-ins are also entitled to free parking in some areas and the right to bypass traffic jams in favour of gliding quietly along bus lanes.

Here in the UK the situation is rather different. Like Norway, we have targets for lowering emissions. As part of this plan, there are Government grants available to buyers of ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs), as well as some tax benefits, including exemption from the London Congestion Charge.

And, while the good news is that sales of electric and hybrid vehicles are on the rise in the UK, the fact that the figures are still so low is a clear indication that far more needs to be done to persuade consumers to make the change.

With this in mind, I believe Brexit represents a great opportunity for the UK Government to emulate the success of our fellow non-EU country Norway, taking decisive action to help reduce emissions by putting policies in place that will make plug-in vehicles the norm rather than the exception.

But for this to happen, we need to make it financially viable as the cheaper running costs of plug-in cars alone are not enough to make most people swallow the initial higher cost of buying one.

"The Norwegian government has scrapped VAT and import taxes on new plug-in cars"



Richard Lowden,
founder and CEO of
Green Motion



Paul Singh, founder and
CEO of SmartWitness

AUTONOMOUS CARS

More distractions with automation

By Paul Singh

The recent Uber self-driving car fatality in the US has brought home the critical issue of driver distraction. As cars become more automated, it's inevitable drivers will become switched off from the most important thing in front of them – the road.

Every driver should always be in charge of their vehicle, and constantly alert to danger but, as technology moves forwards and the car takes over more control of the vehicle, this tends to make the driver less alert to danger, not more so.

Driver distraction is the biggest cause of road accidents on British roads. Our insurance partners have told us that more than 80% of road accidents are caused by distracted drivers. And this issue is only going to get worse as greater automation is brought into cars, vans and trucks.

It is apparent from the video footage in the Uber car that the driver was distracted by something. She looked down away from the road for just over three seconds, looked up briefly and then down again for just over five seconds.

She was travelling at 40mph at that time, which means in the last five seconds she travelled nearly 100 yards without being aware of the road and in low visibility conditions.

Uber has stopped its self-driving car programme indefinitely, but this incident won't end the move towards autonomous vehicles, just as Bridget Driscoll's death in 1896, the first pedestrian killed by a motor car, didn't put a stop to the automobile industry.

Clearly, there are serious questions for the Uber system. Why did the car not realise there was a pedestrian approaching the front of the vehicle, why did it not slow down until it was too late? No doubt there will be lengthy and expensive legal cases in the US to extract reparations for these failings of the Uber technology.

Thankfully, there was a forward-facing camera and also a driver-facing camera in place. These will assist with insurance claims and with driver education in the future, which will, hopefully, reduce the possibility of this happening again.

The tragedy has shown us that professional drivers are needed now more than ever and that safe, driverless vehicles are still a long way off.

"It is apparent from the video footage that the driver was distracted by something"



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The latest Air Quality debate was held at Birmingham's town hall

Birmingham councillors rule out revealing CAZ plans before June

Despite pressure from Government, the city authority will not confirm plans until after its local elections, but will submit full proposals by the September deadline

By Stephen Briers

The Government has renewed its pressure on Birmingham City Council to publish its clean air zone (CAZ) proposals after the local authority missed the March deadline to provide its preferred option.

Therese Coffey MP, under-secretary of state for the environment, wrote to the council in February criticising the delays, stating "it would appear the council is not giving this matter the urgency it requires".

Councillors reject this accusation but, nevertheless, insist that they will not confirm their plans before local elections take place in May. Consequently, fleets will not learn about the clean air option they will have to comply with until June at the earliest.

At the latest Air Quality debate, hosted by Birmingham City Council at the town hall and organised by British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA), Energy Saving Trust (EST), ACFO and *Fleet News*, delegates were invited to provide feedback and guidance about how clean air zones would affect their businesses, which the council promised to take into consideration during its CAZ discussions.

The council also committed to providing the full business case for its proposals by the Government's September deadline.

Councillor Lisa Trickett, cabinet member of clean streets, recycling and environment, who will be responsible for the implementation of the CAZ, said tacking air quality was not simply to satisfy the legal requirements; it was "the right thing to do".

However, she added: "It is a hugely stretching timetable and we are conscious of the pressures this places on fleet operators. It requires change at a speed at which we've not had to think about transport policy and strategies before."

Trickett promised to feed back to Government the views of fleet operators to ensure successful implementation of the Birmingham CAZ.

Embracing air quality solutions could have financial benefits for fleet operators, according to Andrew Benfield, group director of transport at EST.

He estimated that if all van operators in the West Midlands switched to electric vehicles, it would save £250 million a year in fuel costs.

Benfield urged fleet operators to take into consideration their grey fleet cars, describing

them as "the dirtiest fleet, highest CO₂ emissions, oldest vehicles and travelling at the busiest times of day".

EST worked with Birmingham City Council on its grey fleet seven years ago, putting in place new practices and policies that enabled the council to halve its annual £4m expenditure.

Royal Mail operated its first electric vehicle way back in 1970 – "they are not new to us," said head of supply and internal accounts Lorna McAtear. But it is struggling to incorporate them into its modern fleet due to lack of model availability and issues with local charging infrastructure and capacity.

The council said this was something it was addressing via its Connected Strategy with community hubs for those without off-street charging facilities. It was also making it a prerequisite for future planning permission to include EV charging.

Fleets raised their concerns – shared by the city council – that they were making decisions today for vehicles that might be kept for more than 10 years based on guesswork around current clean air zone proposals.

"A Euro 6 vehicle might be compliant now with the proposed clean air zones, but will that change in a few years' time?" asked one fleet operator.

Birmingham City Council, like the other four cities required to implement a CAZ, is basing its proposals on the Government framework. However, it is possible the European Commission will introduce Euro 7 diesel regulation

FLEET SECTOR'S POLICY PROPOSALS

1 Incentivise fleets to make collections and deliveries outside times of heavy traffic to minimise congestion, a major contributor to air pollution. For example, fleet vehicles could be allowed to enter the Birmingham CAZ without charge between 11pm and 5am. This proved successful in London during the Olympics.

2 Consistent methods of charging between CAZ cities is key. A single site or portal could be developed centrally that would allow commercial fleets to pay at the same time for any non-compliant vehicles entering several CAZs in one day.

3 Ex-fleet vehicles are typically lower in emissions than the average counterparts on UK

roads. A council portal or website could be developed to enable BVRLA members to sell vehicles directly to local businesses in Birmingham, thereby moving the greenest vehicles to businesses requiring road transport.

4 Provide mobility credits, redeemable on public transport, car rental, car clubs, or other forms of greener travel, to drivers giving up older, more polluting diesel vehicles. Funding could be provided by the Government's Clean Air Fund.

5 Encourage/require landlords to allow charging points to be installed and property developers to include them in their plans for new residential and commercial buildings.

"It is an opportunity for us to bite the bullet on the measures we believe can make a difference. We have to find ways to ensure business can run"

Lisa Trickett, Birmingham City Council

within the next two-to-three years, reverting the focus to CO₂ emissions, which might become the new minimum standard.

At the moment, this is all 'might do' and 'possibly'. The only known is Euro 6 by the end of 2019 (April 8, 2019, in London).

Birmingham councillors recognise that the city has to achieve the air quality standards as quickly as possible and in a manner that will maximise the likelihood of compliance. They also recognise that the Government framework focuses on NO_x, but there is a broader issue on air quality with particulate matter.

"Over the next three-to-five years, we have to shape our cities in a very different way than we have in the past," said Trickett. "But it is an opportunity for us to bite the bullet on the measures we believe can make the difference."

We have to find ways to ensure business can run and the city can grow without affecting the population."

Birmingham's biggest challenge is with the sheer volume of traffic travelling through the city, resulting in congestion and excessive idling. The council's research shows that 47% of all freight traffic goes through Birmingham without stopping to collect or deliver goods.

"We are a short-cut when the M6 is clogged up," said Trickett.

The council is therefore looking at ways to encourage operators to bypass the centre.

Another solution under consideration is to look at the times of day heavier vehicles can travel within the city boundary.

One fleet operator suggested flipping bus lanes outside of the usual 7am-7pm hours of operation to become specialist truck lanes overnight. This would shift the behaviours of freight operators, but would also require changes to the working patterns of retailers to accept deliveries out of normal office hours.

"Plus, if you do this overnight, you have to find a way to enable people to get to work to accept those deliveries when public transport isn't running," added another.

The city councillors were urged to communicate their intended zone borders as quickly as possible, as well as payment plans to enable companies to plan ahead. Fleets called for a single portal to pay for all CAZ charges in one go rather than by individual city.



This is pertinent when considering that, for example, the A38 links Birmingham to Derby to Nottingham – three CAZ cities.

Birmingham faces additional challenges in its private taxi fleet, an important source of employment for many of its Muslim residents.

With a diesel taxi costing £20,000 and an electric model £50,000, few can afford to invest unless they borrow money – something that is generally not allowed under Sharia law where interest is involved.

Yet taxis are included under all four classes for CAZ.

Several fleets and leasing companies raised concerns over residual values for Euro 5 diesel.

One said: "We need a strong value to be able to invest in Euro 6. But, the reverse is happening with the CAZ push to Euro 6 – no one wants to buy our vehicles. So, we might as well run our Euro 5s into the ground."

"The timescale we have been left with is too short unless there is a staggered approach with tapered charging for the different Euro classifications."

Compounding the issue, according to delegates, are fears that manufacturers do not have production capacity to satisfy a wholesale market switch to Euro 6 trucks and vans.

However, councillors indicated that the Government's national framework did not allow any flexibility for staggered charging.



BVRLA's Toby Poston discusses air quality issues with Birmingham city councillor Lisa Trickett

SYLVIA BROADLEY, BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL AIR QUALITY MANAGER – TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY

Transport is responsible for 80% of NOx emissions in the areas affected by air quality, according to Sylvia Broadley, while high emissions are a contributory factor in 900 premature deaths a year in Birmingham.

The council has started discussions with a number of sectors and "fleet is one of our priority groups".

Broadley said that 60% of the transport issue was down to diesel vehicles, adding: "We are focusing on the 7.5 tonne-plus as a real issue."

However, she sympathised with fleet operators struggling to adopt alternatives to diesel due to the lack of options.

"We recognise that the hire and lease of vehicles is a key issue for business. It's the same for the city council as well – we have 1,000 on our fleet, including bin wagons and tippers," she said.

The city council has modelled traffic flow using number-plate recognition data, which identified that the majority of vans and trucks are Euro 4 and Euro 5, making them non-compliant under the Government's national framework. In addition, not one of its Hackney-licensed taxis is Euro 6.

"Whichever clean air zone option we go for, it will include trucks, taxis, buses and coaches," said Broadley. "We are already underway with an LPG solution for taxis. But there has to be a degree of additional

"We recognise that the hire and lease of vehicles is a key issue for business. It's the same for the city council as well"

Sylvia Broadley, Birmingham City Council

measures, for example, signage and re-routing.

"We have to mitigate against relocation, so we are looking at retrofit, scrappage schemes and grants to assist in the purchase of new vehicles."

The council is also considering last mileage deliveries in zero emission vans, the EV refuelling infrastructure, road improvements and controlled parking zones.

Its priorities during the feasibility planning stage are to take into consideration economic impacts, health and business perspectives.

"We want to work with fleets to support the transition," Broadley said.

Birmingham has already started working on a delivery and servicing toolkit for

freight and logistics, assessing out of hours delivery and a reduction in personal deliveries to city centre addresses by encouraging local pick-up. It is also working with operators on how to reduce the number of failed deliveries.

"We are engaged with Transport for London (TfL) on how they dealt with it during the Olympics, and their learning points," Broadley said.

"We want business in the city, but it has to be more coordinated and we have to work with business managers in the districts."

The clean air zone projects falls under a wider air quality initiative called the Birmingham Connected Strategy. It is looking at ways to encourage fewer journeys, greater uptake of rail and bus, priority lanes and driver training to improve how vehicles are used.

Supporting initiatives include investment in hydrogen buses. The council hopes to begin a pilot shortly, and plans to have 20 on the road within the next 12 months. It is working with TfL and Aberdeen on a procurement framework.

"We are looking at our own fleet and also electric vehicle recharging," said Broadley.

"We have just approved the appointment of an EV partner to look at the infrastructure and we are anticipating charge points of up to 150Kw (the average home charger is 7Kw).

"But we also have to look at behavioural change so we are working with schools and other partners on a clean air campaign. Everyone has to be part of the solution."

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Ryan Coles and his team have delegated a lot of the day-to-day workings to LeasePlan

'WE TOOK AN EGGS IN ONE BASKET GAMBLE'

And it paid off for Aviva where leasing its fleet from one supplier means Ryan Coles's team can concentrate on bigger picture. *Andrew Ryan reports*

Walking into Aviva's Surrey House office in Norwich, it is clear this is a company steeped in history.

Built in 1905 to be the headquarters for Norwich Union – now part of Aviva – its spectacular entrance hall is decked out in marble originally destined for Westminster Cathedral.

But beyond Marble Hall – one of the 12 major heritage buildings in the city – lays a modern office complex, which is also home to a thoroughly modern fleet operation.

Headed by group travel and fleet manager Ryan Coles, the team of three looks after a fleet of 771 cars in the UK and 80 in Ireland, all on contract hire agreements from LeasePlan (UK: three years; Ireland: four years).

It is also responsible for all transient business travel for Aviva, predominantly in the UK, as well as the group's corporate global travel contracts which are mainly with American Express Global Business Travel.

"Moving to American Express as a travel management company enabled us to implement an awful lot of digital and technology solutions rather than it being more human-interaction based, and we are doing a similar

thing with our fleet now," says Coles. "We have rolled out apps from LeasePlan and RAC Telematics (see panel, page 24). LeasePlan Drive allows our drivers to book everything they need to do via the app, whether it's breakdown recovery – there are GPS locators to help give your exact location – or tyres.

"The RAC telematics app is a replication of the online dashboard, so drivers can go on and toggle their journey between business and private mileage, run reports and have a look at their own driver behaviour."

Aviva's partnership with LeasePlan, which it extended in Q3 2016, has enabled it to streamline its fleet operations, says Coles. The leasing company looks after the day-to-day functions, as well as services such as accident management, breakdown and vehicle rental.

"We've built up a really good relationship with LeasePlan and this has allowed us to have a much smaller, more focused contract management team within Aviva," he adds.

"It allows us to focus on the right elements of delivering a holistic and complete service solution rather than having to get involved in the nitty-gritty day-to-day workings, because that's what we employ LeasePlan to do.

"It's using the expertise within our supplier and strategic partner base. We manage that contract to allow them to get on and do what they do best and we do what we do best."

Coles cites one example of having access to that knowledge pool within LeasePlan: "If a vehicle is going to be off the road for a long period of time, rather than stick its driver in a hire car we can give them a vehicle from the reallocation pool, saving us money."

He adds: "It also gives us the visibility of total off-road costs, off-road time and – with the metrics that come through in our monthly and quarterly reviews – it allows us to identify any hotspots, whether it is a particular service within that contract or whether it is a particular driver who has suddenly become more high risk.

"There's always the saying that you should never put all your eggs in one basket, but we took a gamble on a proposal five or six years ago about bringing it all in together, and it's worked really well."

Coles has also overseen the challenge of amalgamating another fleet into the operation after Aviva agreed a £5 billion takeover of Friends Life in December 2014. The pensions company had employees on a cash allowance programme.

"We didn't want to put anybody at a disadvantage, so it was a case of working with individuals and group HR because if an employee was on a cash allowance with Friends Life, it doesn't mean they met the requirements of the criteria to be on a

FACTFILE

Company Aviva
Group travel and fleet manager Ryan Coles
Time in role five years
Fleet size UK 771 cars, Ireland: 80 cars
Funding method contract hire with full maintenance and repair
Operating cycle UK: three years, Ireland: four years
Average CO₂ UK: 106g/km, Ireland: 112g/km



cash allowance or to move on to the company car programme here," says Coles.

"It worked seamlessly. It was obviously a very emotional time for our Friends Life colleagues who were coming across to Aviva, but I'd like to think we made it as easy as possible."

Certain staff grades, such as 'heads of' are entitled to a cash allowance, but Aviva's company car drivers are all essential users, such as engineers and insurance assessors, and have access to seven "high-mid to high-end" manufacturers on the choice list, says Coles.

This helps Aviva in two key areas: staff recruitment and retention, and the safety and security of employees.

"The brands we offer are at the top end of driving plug-in hybrid and full-electric technology, autonomous emergency braking, adaptive cruise control: all of those things that are ways of helping to safeguard our drivers who are doing a lot of miles," says Coles.

"It's also good for staff recruitment and retention. Financial services and insurance is a cut-throat business.

"We've got some pretty good brands on our company fleet, so you would like to think that if one particularly good candidate was looking at ourselves and another potential employer and it comes down to the benefits

"It is not about being low cost. It is not about being cheap. It is about value for money"

Ryan Coles, Aviva

package, then the options they have within our company fleet programme is something that will sway them.

"Also, if it is an existing employee and they are unsure if they still want to be here, they can think 'do you know what, I might be having a bad day, but when I look at my salary, my work-life balance, my benefits, the company car package, maybe things aren't so bad'."

Despite having a CO₂ cap of 130g/km on new car orders, the average CO₂ emissions of Aviva's UK fleet is 106g/km, with Ireland at 114g/km.

This is set to drop further, as more than 50% of new car orders are plug-in hybrids, with the fleet team working to make sure they can be utilised correctly.

Twenty electric vehicle charging stations have so far been installed at six key office locations, and Coles says his team is working hand-in-hand with facilities management to ensure coverage matches the locations of plug-in hybrid – or full electric – car drivers.

"We are making sure that the drivers who take on plug-in or electric vehicles have the ability to charge their vehicles within our company car parks," he adds.

"We are a carbon-neutral company so we offset our emissions. Anything we can do to bring down our CO₂ levels and help to make a reduced payment is good for our shareholders, it's good for reinvesting back into the company and is good for our growth plans."

Coles says the company car policy also helps Aviva's focus on staff safety.

"Whether our employees are using vehicles that have got market-leading safety systems, or through using reputable hotels and airline partners booked through our travel management company, our focus, regardless of whether it's fleet or global travel, is on safety and security," he says.

"However, you have to balance that against the cost to both the business and to the individual, particularly in light of the changes to the company car benefit-in-kind charges and NIC company liability as well.

"Those two work hand in hand: safety and security, along with the cost to the business.

"There is a mantra within Aviva that you treat the company's money as if it was your own.

"That's been going round for many years and you do see that people are very wary about what they are spending the money on and making sure it is for the right reason.

"This also boils down into their personal choices when it comes to their company car because they are looking at 'if I am doing 20,000 miles, is a 1.6-litre petrol any better for me than taking a 2.5-litre diesel?'

"It just goes down to the fact that it is not about being low cost. It is not about being cheap. It is about value for money and about that balance between what is acceptable and right for Aviva and its shareholders, and what gives the best value to a driver."



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



Ryan Coles encourages colleagues to follow the Aviva mantra of treating the company's money as if it's their own

TO TRAVEL OR NOT TO TRAVEL – THAT IS THE QUESTION

Trust forms an important part of the relationship Aviva has with its employees, and they are able to make their own decisions on how to travel to meetings and appointments.

"There has been a huge investment within Aviva on internal meeting rooms and Skype, so our first point of direction would always be 'do you really need to travel?'," says fleet boss Ryan Coles.

"Is it an internal meeting that you could do through Skype? Is it external? Can you car share? If you are going from Norwich to London, we are linked in with Trainline and some of the train operating companies to make it easy for staff.

"We also have a ticket machine on site so you can print tickets here, but the travel choice is down to the individual.

"If three of you are going down to London, from a travel point of view it is better that you all get in a car and travel down together and save a lot of money, but if it means you are getting in the car at 5am we'd much rather the three of you are on a train.

"This goes back to believing that everybody is going to do the right thing, and giving them the right tools to do that."

FLEET LIVE

PLAN YOUR FLEET LIVE VISIT
WHEN? 9-10 October, 2018
WHERE? NEC, Birmingham
ENTRY? Free to fleet managers
DETAILS? www.fleet-live.co.uk

With a raft of difficult challenges approaching, Fleet Live gives fleet decision-makers the chance to speak to experts and peers about how they are preparing for the future

At times of dramatic change the opportunity to hear from experts and discuss issues with colleagues facing similar challenges is priceless.

A wave of new legislation and regulation is hurtling towards the fleet sector, some of it vehicle-specific, some more general, but all demanding compliance. Clean air zones (CAZs), the new WLTP vehicle emissions testing regime, and the fresh set of data protection rules encapsulated by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will all have an impact on fleet decisions made today.

These issues, and many more, will be addressed in detail at Fleet Live.

The event gives fleet decision-makers of all levels of experience a chance to listen, learn and share their thoughts and actions on the topics influencing the fleet sector. Focused on executives from a fleet, purchasing and finance background, Fleet Live will deliver insight and advice on how to run an effective, efficient fleet.

Take, for example, the introduction of CAZs in certain cities in the UK, which will debut in 2020 (2019 in London). With some councils considering a charge of up to £100 per day on any non-compliant vehicle entering a CAZ, companies need to adapt their purchasing decisions on new vehicles and find solutions for their legacy fleets.

"Unless your vehicle is Euro 6, which many fleets won't have because of the lifecycle of vehicles, you are going to get caught out," said Lorna McAtear, fleet supply manager, Royal Mail and a member of the Fleet Live Advisory Board.

"Most people know about London, but not so many realise quite how many other cities are potentially going to be affected and how many are proposing a levy."

How easy is it for fleets to reallocate their non-compliant vehicles away from cities introducing CAZ? How will businesses react if their company drivers face a daily charge

for driving to work? How can fleets apply pressure on hire firms to have Euro 6 vehicles available to rent?

"If you take a big fleet like us, I do not want to trunk between four cities and pay four different penalty fines," said McAtear. "So what are the national solutions?"

For David Oliver, procurement manager, Red Bull, any knowledge and tips he can gather that help to "run a more efficient, safe and compliant fleet" are welcome. With rising driver noise levels around benefit-in-kind tax and the new real world WLTP emissions testing due to come into force, Oliver is looking forward to presentations that "will address forthcoming changes in taxation and legislation, what you need to consider and how best to plan for that".

The opportunity to learn from bigger fleets that have already taken action or assessed a range of options is high on his agenda for Fleet Live.

"Plus the debate on fuel between hybrids, petrol and diesel, and whether can you make a decision on a three- or four-year cycle when there is so much uncertainty. Anything that takes away uncertainty or gives me actual tools to use with my own fleet and thinking, would be hugely valuable," he said.

Reflecting on previous events, Caroline Sandall, vice-chair, ACFO, said: "As a general rule some of the most valuable sessions I have sat in on have been at points of time when there has been a major regulation change, and understanding the impact of it. Sometimes it can be difficult to look at a piece of legislation, particularly when it's bigger than just car-related, and distil that down to its impact for fleet."

The implications of GDPR on how fleets capture and store data provides a highly relevant example of a wider issue with which fleet decision-makers need to keep abreast.

"I would be going to every GDPR session available, because while I know it's about data protection, what does that mean in terms of my data?" asked Sandall.

REGISTER NOW for Fleet Live at fleet-live.co.uk



How to extract maximum value from Fleet Live

At one end of the scale, spending a day or two at Fleet Live could be an interesting diversion from time in the office. At the other end, it could lay the foundations for a new approach to fleet management.

So, if you have ever left an event thinking it was useful but unsure why, it's time to make a plan. Check out the exhibitors and identify those with the potential to become a supplier.

"We went to Fleet Live with the sole intention of evaluating our current driver licence checking service," said David Oliver, procurement manager, Red Bull. "We had read there were smarter ways of doing it, and sure enough, we visited two or three exhibitors and, having spent 15-to-20 minutes with each, we changed our provider."

As for assessing potential new partners... "Are they prepared to listen to what your business does and what you think you need before diving in with what solution they can provide?" said Oliver.

For Lorna McAtear, fleet supply manager, Royal Mail, last year's event provided an opportunity to gain a second opinion on suppliers outside the confines of a tender process.

"WE WENT TO FLEET LIVE WITH THE SOLE INTENTION OF EVALUATING OUR CURRENT DRIVER LICENCE CHECKING SERVICE"

DAVID OLIVER, PROCUREMENT MANAGER, RED BULL

"I had a good look around to see who was there and what they were offering, and to find out how knowledgeable they were when they didn't realise I was out to tender," she said. "You get a feel of what is genuinely on offer rather than what they write in tender responses."

At Fleet Live delegates expect far more depth than a brochure and friendly chit-chat on a stand.

"If I were speaking to people I didn't know, I would be looking for them to highlight what is different about them," said Caroline Sandall, vice-chair, ACFO. "I'd be looking for basic levels of competency; are they working for fleets and companies like mine? Is there something particular about my company or fleet that I would want them to demonstrate they could manage?"

"You also get a general feel about an organisation – how innovative they are, would you be comfortable working with them, what is coming up next and what are they doing for clients to help them navigate their way through. You want to probe the competency of the people on the stand. You want an informed conversation with someone who knows their stuff."

**EXHIBITORS
BOOKED
SO FAR**

Abax Agility AID Fuels Group Alphabet Arval Ashwoods Lightfoot Limited Aquarius IT AssetWorks LLC AutoGlass Axle Weight Technology Ltd BMW/MINI Bott Ltd BP Oil UK Ltd CanTrack Chevin Fleet Solutions Chevronshop DAC Beachcroft LLP DriveTech, part of The AA Enigma Telematics FleetCheck Fleet Operations Free2Move Lease Fuelgenie Gefco Halfords Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions Intellidrive Interactive Fleet Management Jaama Ltd Jaguar Land Rover Joyce Design LeasePlan Lex AutoLease Licence Bureau Licence Check Ltd Matrix Telematics Mercedes-Benz Financial Services UK Ltd Mileage Count Nexus Vehicle Rental NFE Group Ltd Pertemps Ltd Reflex RingGo Corporate Scorpion Automotive Selsia Vehicle Accident Centre Telogis TCH Leasing Tevo Ltd Toyota & Lexus TTC Group Venson Automotive Solutions Volkswagen Financial Services VMS Fleet Management Ltd

MAKING SOFTWARE 'REALLY SIMPLE AND EASY TO USE'

Since its launch, Drive Software Solutions has been concentrating on big fleet operators. Now it has a solution for one vehicle upwards. *Tom Seymour* reports

Drive Software Solutions launched in 2002 to provide funding and vehicle management solutions to owners of large fleets and complex assets.

Now available in 55 countries worldwide, the business has remained true to its original strategy of partnering major leasing companies and global fleet operators with hundreds of thousands of vehicles.

Until now, that is. Two years ago, Drive began restructuring its operations to focus on a broader customer base.

Simon West-Oliver, Drive Software Solutions director of sales and marketing, believes the time is right for the company to expand its offering. It had been receiving a growing number of enquiries from people who were managing vehicles where it was just one part of a broader job function.

"The technology wasn't really there to do it properly 10 years ago in the global way we are planning," West-Oliver says.

Drive's 'Business Unit 1' continues to target multi-national leasing companies and global fleets; Business Unit 2 extends the fleet management solution into mid-market

leasing companies (in the UK, this is the FNS0 minus the top eight).

This year, Drive has opened a third Business Unit, Odo, which is aimed at small-to-medium enterprise (SME) fleets upwards, from those operating just one vehicle to those with several thousand.

"Fleet managers are important to us and there are still those out there that don't have proper software to manage their vehicles," West-Oliver says. "Odo is targeted on a single vehicle upwards model, but we're also looking at the world of HR, personnel, accounting and general business management."

Odo has been in pilot stage with 20 fleets since last autumn, but the new project officially went live on January 18.

The software is intended to be a simple-to-use fleet management tool that incorporates online dashboards, a mobile app and telematics. Importantly, it is based in the cloud, enabling it to be used by any size of business to manage vehicles.

It has three entry levels – Start, Pro and Expert – making it ideal for the smallest fleets but also with sufficient management capability for the largest. Some may not have even heard the term fleet management before.

Start includes the fleet dashboard, driver

and vehicle details, document storage and licence details; Pro adds acquisition, disposal and funding management; Expert also incorporates servicing, maintenance and repair (SMR) management, fines, licence checks and grey fleet.

Yves Manoukian, Drive chief executive, says the business understands that the approach to implementing fleet management software is vastly different between the three markets it is now operating in.

Large- and mid-sized operations need consultative support and Drive has its own consultancy team to help with that. However, the majority of small business might not have the money available to pay for this additional cost and Odo has been designed so it does not need any consultancy support.

"The platform is Drive, that's the core of everything we do and it's been developed for more than 25 years," Manoukian says. "Starting Odo from scratch would be very difficult, but it is backed up by all those years of development."

"We have a vision where Drive is the core for the large corporates, it's customised for the mid-sized players and it acts as the engine for Odo for the SMEs."

While Manoukian would not share projections for volume or market share, or how many customers Drive currently has in the UK, he says that within two to three years Odo will have "thousands of customers".

SMEs represent a potential market of 750,000 businesses in the UK, compared with the small number of large corporates and 20-to-30 mid-sized fleet operators.

Despite its potential appeal to fleets of all sizes, the primary target market for Odo is those with fewer than 100 vehicles who need IT support without the frills. Key are simplicity of use, the right pricing and the ability to improve efficiencies.

The goal is to democratise fleet management software for any small business that uses vehicles.

West-Oliver says: "It's very easy for larger businesses to outgun smaller rivals on an IT basis. The cost of buying software can be many thousands of pounds and then you have a potential £10,000- or £15,000-worth of consultancy fees to put the software into the business."

Driver
Name: John Smith
Number: 00586

UK DRIVING LICENCE

VALID DRIVING LICENCE

FACTFILE
Name Drive Software Solutions
Key products Drive, Odo
Head office Stevenage
Number of staff 65
Key customers Arval, TCH Leasing, Sandiccliffe Motor Contracts

PERFORMANCE RATING
BRAKING 4.5
SPEED 4.5

POLICY DOCUMENT

ODO CAN BE TRIALLED FOR FREE

While Drive's software is aimed at large corporate clients and comes with the sophistication they need, Odo has been given a consumer-style interface aimed at complete beginners.

There is a team of 65 developers for Drive and Odo has had a team of 10 full-time. This was scaled up to 27 people before launch.

Odo pulls in Cap HPI data automatically, so vehicle details will be filled out after inputting a registration number. Fleet managers are notified to problem areas using a red, amber green system.

The company is hoping to attract SMEs that have never considered fleet

software with a 30-day free trial.

There are three levels to Odo. The Start version is free for (and only available to) companies with up to 10 vehicles, and features core functionality.

A Pro package is priced at between £2 and £3 per vehicle (dependent on fleet size) while the fully featured version called Expert is priced between £3.50 and £5 a vehicle.

Grey fleet cars are costed at an additional 20p per vehicle for fleets with more than 10 vehicles.

There is no minimum contract so fleets can take it month by month if they wish.

Those typical costs mean many SME fleets are not willing or able to invest in software.

"This means many businesses are muddling along with Excel spreadsheets and losing track of who's driving what vehicle and forgetting to check licences," says West-Oliver.

"What we're doing is taking a sophisticated fleet management offer and making it really simple and easy to use. Catching one nefarious tyre purchase or avoiding excess mileage charges can pay for access to the system many times over."

The next stage of Odo development will be the launch of its own agnostic telematics system as well as a fully integrated telematics offer, plus a mobile app for drivers with iOS and Android versions by June.

Odo has partnered with telematics provider Transpoco, but West-Oliver says it is more than just a white-label exercise as it has been customised and fully integrated with Odo and Drive.

The telematics system will be offered as an onboard diagnostics option or hardwired, dependent on customer requirements.

The forthcoming app will also offer a GPS alternative for the telematics install. Called Odo on the Go, it will track all driver journeys and their business expenses can be sent with a swipe to sync up to the system.

While the launch of Odo is a big focus for Drive this year, it does not mean the business is losing focus on its larger and mid-sized clients.

Martin Drake, co-founder of Drive and its product director, says significant disruptors to the traditional leasing market, such as



"There are still those out there that don't have proper software to manage their vehicles"

Simon West-Oliver,
Drive Software Solutions

electric vehicles, autonomous technology, mobility as a service and connected cars, are going to require changes in IT infrastructure.

"There is a lot of work going on within Drive to develop IT systems that are ready for how the leasing model is going to change," Drake says.

He believes these changes will be driven

by the onset of electric vehicles (EVs) and the winners in the UK leasing market will be the ones that can adapt their IT systems to cope.

While EVs will still need many of the same asset management features as traditional combustion engine vehicles, like SMR costs etc., Drake says a tighter integration of telematics is going to be necessary.

"We are seeing EV contracts on shorter terms and you have got to closely manage the asset and telematics data for a fleet is going to be key as the market moves towards this new technology," he says.

"Tracking usage data on traditional combustion engines is important but it's going to be even more crucial for fleets with EVs due to the driving style and charging infrastructure having to be closely monitored to keep a fleet running efficiently."

Drive has been developed in a way that it can be adapted to leasing companies switching to new business models. Leasing companies that have older legacy systems may find it more difficult to pivot their IT infrastructure to adapt, claims Drake.

The partnership with Transpoco on telematics with Odo will have benefits for Drive's other client bases, too.

While Drive has offered telematics in the past, Drake says the new system with Odo is a much more integrated solution, rather than being a plug-in to an existing system. Developments in this area will naturally filter through to Drive's other customers.

"We're already having conversations with clients about telematics and how important that is going to be to the future model," says Drake.

WHEN IT MATTERS MOST.



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WHATEVER THE TIME OF YEAR.

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT: TYRES AND THE WEATHER

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ALL-SEASONS FOR ALL REASONS

The new generation of all-season tyres could offer fleets all the benefits of winter tyres but without the drawbacks.

Andrew Ryan reports

The concept of changing tyres dependent on the season has never really caught on among UK fleets. The theory seems sound. Winter tyres are designed to cope with the kind of conditions the so-called 'Beast from the East' threw at the country last month, improving safety and keeping vehicles on the road: particularly desirable for bluelight fleets, utilities engineers and delivery companies.

When the warmer weather comes, they can be switched for summer tyres which offer greater grip, reduced wear and improved fuel economy in temperatures above 7C, giving fleets the best of both worlds.

But the reality is complicated: the downsides of switching tyres include the cost, increased vehicle off-road time and whether winter tyres are really needed for the UK's comparatively mild winters.



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These factors have deterred the vast majority of fleets from adopting the technology.

However, a new generation of 'all-season' tyres, such as the Michelin CrossClimate+ and Continental AllSeasonContact, could offer fleets an appropriate all-year round solution.

Both CrossClimate+ and AllSeasonContact, as well as the Yokohama BluEarth-4S AW21 – the first all-season tyre the manufacturer has launched in Europe – are winter certified for use on snowy roads.

CrossClimate+ has the 3PMSF (Three Peak Mountain Snowflake) certification, with both the AllSeasonContact and BluEarth-4S AW21 bearing the equivalent 'snowflake mark' awarded by ASTM International (American Society for Testing and Materials).

This winter capability, coupled with strong performance in the warmer and drier months, could prove to be the final nail in the coffin for dedicated winter tyres in the UK.

"In about 80% or 90% of the tyre sizes where we have CrossClimate+, it has virtually killed the winter car tyre demand off in the UK," says Jamie McWhir, technical manager at Michelin. "It's a more simplified product offer: you've always got the right tyre on the car."

McWhir says that internal Michelin testing has shown that CrossClimate+'s winter performance is within 5% of its Alpin dedicated winter tyre, almost rendering Alpin irrelevant for the UK market.

"Unlike some European countries, we don't have legislation where motorists need to fit winter tyres for part of the year and we don't have a market where consumers are used to buying winter products," he adds.

"The Beast from the East was fairly unique, but other parts of Europe have that sort of weather every year and they have it for months.

"In those countries having that extra 5% of grip is impor-



tant, so they will run a winter product. But for us, we never have that bad a winter."

CUTTING INCONVENIENCE

One fleet which has made the switch from alternating between winter and summer tyres to fitting all-season tyres is South Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

It now fits CrossClimate+ to its 200-strong fleet of Škoda Octavia rapid response vehicles.

"We only take vehicles off the road for safety inspections or maintenance, and the six-week transition period previously required to swap our summer and winter tyres twice a year was incredibly inconvenient," says Kevin Bartholomew, fleet operations manager at the trust.

"We can now keep the same tyres on the Škodas year-round, saving time and money.

"Lives depend on ensuring safe mobility for our fleet, so we simply can't afford for tyre-related downtime or lack of grip in snow, ice and rain to delay us on a call-out.

"Fitting CrossClimate+ tyres means we can supply expert lifesaving care, whatever the UK's unpredictable weather throws at us."

British Gas also made the switch to all-season tyres for its small vans around three years ago.

Since 2010, it had fitted winter tyres to its 12,500-strong van fleet for three reasons: driver safety, the extra mobility which meant it could attend customer call-outs in adverse weather conditions and the company's total cost of ownership (TCO) model around four-wheel drive vans.

"We were paying for four-wheel drive vans all year round for the benefit they would bring us for the couple of weeks when they really needed to be used," says Steve Winter, head of



HOW DO SUMMER AND WINTER* TYRES PERFORM?

COMPARISON OF BRAKING FROM 62MPH TO A STANDSTILL IN TEMPERATURES OF MORE THAN 15C

BRAKING ON DRY ROADS

SUMMER TYRES	36.6m
WINTER TYRES	44.1m (4+ BUS LENGTHS)

BRAKING ON WET ROADS

SUMMER TYRES	51.3m
WINTER TYRES	57.3m (5+ BUS LENGTHS)

COMPARISON OF BRAKING TO A STANDSTILL IN TEMPERATURES BELOW 7C

BRAKING ON WET ROADS (FROM 62MPH)

SUMMER TYRES	70.5m
WINTER TYRES	65.7m (6+ BUS LENGTHS)

BRAKING ON ICE (FROM 20MPH)

SUMMER TYRES	68m
WINTER TYRES	57m (5+ BUS LENGTHS)

BRAKING IN SNOW (FROM 30MPH)

SUMMER TYRES	43m
WINTER TYRES	35m (3+ BUS LENGTHS)

Source: Uniroyal/Halfords Autocentre

* No figures are available for all-season tyres. Internal testing at Michelin shows CrossClimate+'s winter performance is within 5% of its Alpin winter tyre. Performance in warmer conditions will be comparable to that of summer tyres.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SUMMER, WINTER AND ALL-SEASON TYRES?

Compared to summer tyres, winter tyres (also known as cold weather tyres) have rubber compounds which remain soft under low temperatures. The softer they are, the more the tyre is able to interlock with the road surface, improving grip and handling.

In comparison, summer tyres have a relatively hard compound which softens in milder temperatures to be able to adapt to dry as well as wet roads.

However, as they use less natural rubber than winter tyres in their construction, their compound begins to harden at temperatures below 7C, reducing grip.

Summer and winter tyres also feature vastly different grip patterns. Summer tyres tend to have a simple block-shaped tread pattern providing a large footprint on the road, which improves grip and can have a massive impact on the braking distances on dry roads.

Winter tyres, however, have a deep tread pattern and feature thousands of tiny grooves (known as sipes) in their tread blocks which bite into the snow, slush and ice, improving grip.

All-season tyres aim to provide the best of both worlds. For example, Michelin says its CrossClimate range uses an 'intelligent new mix of compounds' to create a tyre that is soft enough for summer, but doesn't harden when the temperature drops below 7C.

It also says its V-shaped tread pattern with self-locking sipes maximises grip whatever the weather conditions.

Continental says the traction silica compound used in its AllSeasonContact range ensures the tyre always stays flexible, whatever the temperature.

WINTER

SUMMER

ALL-SEASON

SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Jonathan Layton, head of fleet, Michelin



Back in 2010, after a particularly bad cold spell, fleets began to take a serious look at the notion of changing tyres in winter to increase safety and mobility.

Yet today, thanks to the arrival of the Michelin CrossClimate

range, winter tyres can almost be considered unnecessary for many fleets.

What makes the latest generation Michelin CrossClimate+ fitments unique is that they are NOT all-season tyres... or 'no-season tyres' as some have been known to call them (given most sacrifice top-level performance to work only marginally well year-round).

CrossClimate+ tyres stand apart for offering the benefits of a summer tyre for dry and wet braking, energy efficiency and total mileage, while boasting the braking and traction of a winter tyre on cold, wet or snow-covered roads.

Rigorous tests

They have even been heralded as "exemplary" after triumphing in rigorous, competitive tyre tests carried out last year in Germany by *Auto Bild* magazine – further elevating their reputation for unrivalled long-lasting performance.

Auto Bild staged what it believes were the first published in-depth tests comparing the performance of different tyres as they wear. It pitted CrossClimate+ against all-season fitments from five competitors* at three tread depths – 8mm (new), 4mm and 2mm.

Commenting on the wet braking results, *Auto Bild* testers said: "It's remarkable that the 2mm Michelin brakes better than most candidates with 4mm remaining tread." And when it came to winter handling, they said "only the Michelin delivers safe handling with 2mm of tread".

Michelin is committed to expanding its CrossClimate range, with car and car-derived van fitments available from 14-to-18 inches, expanding to 19 inches later this year. CrossClimate SUV tyres are available in 16-to-19-inch sizes, and soon increasing to 20 inches. From May, we'll be introducing the first Agilis CrossClimate tyres for vans – bringing a new level of safety and mobility to these fleets, and without the costs or downtime of running two sets of tyres.

* Tested by *Auto Bild* magazine alongside Michelin CrossClimate+ 92 V were the following tyres – Goodyear Vector 4Seasons Gen-2 88 T, Pirelli Cinturato All Season 88 H, Hankook Kinergy 4S 88 T, Vredestein Quattrac 5 88 T & Nokian Weatherproof 88 T. Tests measured tyres' performance in the following handling disciplines: Snow – traction, slalom, braking and handling; Wet – aquaplaning, skid pan, braking and handling; and Dry – handling, braking, drive-by noise and rolling resistance.



MICHELIN



fleet at Centrica. "We also had to hire 4x4s as well, so we would pre-rent them from hire companies on the understanding it might snow and we might need that 4x4 ability."

This was expensive, says Winter, and as its tyre supplier Michelin had winter tyres available, it trialled these on a number of vehicles.

"We found we could take that tyre as an option from the OEM, so we took the decision to fit everything with winter tyres," he adds.

"We decided that we run the winter tyres all year round and not hotel (store) tyres at all because it would be costly, as well as avoid having to go from summer tyres to winter tyres and back again.

"We found the cost of winter tyres was actually comparable to summer tyres. The deal you can negotiate for 20,000 tyres a year made the cost difference minimal."

The extra traction afforded by the winter tyres allowed British Gas to reduce the number of four-wheel drive vans on its fleet. "We don't hire anything unless it's very arduous conditions," adds Winter.

When Michelin launched the original CrossClimate in 2015, British Gas fitted these extensively to its Volkswagen Caddy fleet. CrossClimate was succeeded by CrossClimate+ last year.

"As well as having the advantages of a summer tyre and winter tyre in one, it was actually cheaper than a dedicated winter tyre, so we moved on to that when it became available," says Winter.

"The longevity of that tyre also outperforms any other on the fleet – the winter tyre, no doubt, but the summer tyre as well."

WINTER TYRES ALL-YEAR ROUND

However, while it now fits CrossClimate+ across its Caddy and Ford Transit Connect vehicles, it still fits winter tyres to its larger vans such as Transit Customs and Vauxhall Vivaros as the CrossClimate technology was not available in the right tyre sizes.



Many fleets have also adopted the practice of running winter tyres all year round on vans as they consider the benefits of the extra grip in bad weather to outweigh any penalty of increased tyre wear and fuel consumption in the warmer months.

One of those fleets is online supermarket Ocado, which fits its home delivery fleet of more than 1,500 Mercedes-Benz Sprinter vans with Bridgestone Blizzak winter tyres.

"Staying with a tyre all-year round was desirable, following our own reviews and the nature of the journeys we make," says Graham Thomas, fleet service manager at Ocado.

Traditionally, operating winter tyres in the warmer months has led to a noticeable drop-off in performance and fuel economy, while wear is also accelerated, but McWhir says developing technology means these penalties are reduced.

"The tyre compound is obviously more suited to colder temperatures, so if it is 20C in July, the wear is a little faster than a summer tyre, but not at such an accelerated rate as it used to be," he adds.

"There was never a compromise from the point of view of safety and manoeuvrability from running a winter tyre in the summer, it may be just slightly increased wear."

However, some fleets have had different experiences. One has seen a 30% reduction in tyre wear across its 1,600-strong fleet of CVs, while British Gas saw no increase in wear when it fitted winter tyres all year round to its vans.

Nevertheless, British Gas plans to switch to the van version of CrossClimate – called Agilis CrossClimate – after it is launched in the UK in May.

"I wouldn't go back to summer tyres now," says Winter. "Our TCO model is saying we need to alter our tyre policy because budgeting for winter tyres is no longer relevant because CrossClimate+ means we are spending less on tyres than we were."

Winter says the main issue British Gas has experienced with CrossClimate+ is that the vehicle manufacturers will not supply their vans with them fitted.

"We have put a lot of pressure on manufacturers to supply the tyres as OEM, but this has not been possible," he says. "We have to fit winter tyres from new and as soon as they are due for replacement, we put them on CrossClimate+."

Tea company Ringtons fits Michelin CrossClimate+ tyres across its fleet of 230 Volkswagen Caddy vans and 30 company cars to improve employee safety and mobility.

The business delivers tea, coffee, biscuits, gifts and homeware from 35 sites to homes throughout the UK, as well as supplying wholesalers, hotels, businesses and restaurants.

"Safety is a big thing for us and we need to ensure our drivers are as safe as possible," says Stephen Killinger, operations manager of Ringtons.

"A lot of bluelight fleets are fitting the CrossClimate because they do make a difference.

"Yes, they are costing us a few pounds more than the tyres we fitted previously, but we feel it is worth it because you can't put a price on safety and the ability just to get around in the weather that we have seen over the past few weeks.

"The weather was pretty harsh for a short period of time and the tyres were fantastic – that's the feedback that's come back to me from our guys around the business. They said those tyres really do make a difference."

Killinger says the all-season tyres were also proving to be more durable than the Michelin summer tyres they had previously used.

Its previous tyres needed to be replaced after 6,000 to 7,000 miles, while CrossClimate is lasting

CASE STUDY: RINGTONS

for around 10,000. Killinger says the company had previously trialled dedicated winter tyres, but concluded that they wouldn't be cost-effective because of the cost of storing the sets of tyres which weren't being used.



A member of the tea company's team makes a delivery in a Caddy fitted with Michelin CrossClimate+ tyres



DRIVING THE FUTURE

Want to see the future? One place was this year's Geneva International Motor Show where Kia displayed an exciting trio of new models giving fleet car managers a 'heads-up' – and time to plan their strategies.

'OPTIMA' SAFETY

The upgraded Optima range has a choice of all-new powertrains plus a host of advanced safety features including Driver Attention Warning (DAW), Forward Collision-avoidance Assist (FCA) and more. Available with a 7.0 or 8.0 inch touchscreen infotainment system and Kia Connected Services powered by TomTom®, the Optima also offers Apple CarPlay™ and Android Auto™ to keep your company connected.

FUTURE CLASSIC

Making its world debut was the All-New CEED Sportswagon with futuristic styling and a touch of the Stinger about it. 600 litres of storage space, 'ice cube' LED lights and 'floating' touchscreen infotainment system are just part of the package. With new petrol or diesel engines paired to six speed transmissions, GPF and SCR systems, the CEED Sportswagon is set to be a future fleet car classic.

MORE STYLE WITH RIO

The future isn't only about safety and ecology, though – image always matters for fleet buyers. Cue Kia's all-new sports-inspired Rio GT Line. Head turning styling, 17-inch alloys and twin exhausts look the part, whilst 325 litres of luggage capacity and a turbo-charged T-GDi engine deliver the goods. The Rio is the latest model from Kia to be available in GT Line spec, including the Sportage, Picanto and Sorento models. It's also one of the safest B-segment cars Kia has ever made, with five-star Euro NCAP safety rating.



GREEN FUTURE

With business increasingly looking to adopt PHEV/EV technology, Kia, PHEV Manufacturer of the Year (GreenFleet Awards, 2017), is well ahead of the curve. The All-New Niro and Optima Sportswagon Plug-In Hybrids are at the cutting edge of technology but also have the looks to overcome any lingering prejudices over PHEV styling. Both vehicles have been well received. The Optima Sportswagon is a Next Greencar winner in the PHEV estate car category for economy and low emissions and the Niro PHEV, gained a Diesel Car & Eco award and a Next Greencar award in the SUV category.

Bringing the future ever closer is the Kia Soul, a purely electric four door compact SUV with cheeky looks and plenty of room for four people. Zero emissions mean it will avoid the growing trend for emissions surcharges in British cities. All in all, Kia is pointing the way to a greener, more stylish future, and one that makes business sense too. So if you're planning your fleet car strategy for the future, let Kia hold out a hand.



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THE DRIVING EXPERIENCE



CITY COURSE

The three-quarter mile City Course is a purpose-built facility allowing vehicles to be tested in a simulated urban environment. You can check out driver assistance systems such as low-speed collision mitigation and automatic parking as well as manoeuvrability. The course has parking bays, bus stops, complex junctions, speed humps and varying speed limits.



ALPINE ROUTE

Familiarise yourself with vehicle braking, acceleration and handling on this challenging route which features three loops, totalling more than four miles, with gradients from 6.5% to a challenging 26%. Here, cars can be put through their paces on a circuit that replicates the most demanding country lanes in a safe and controlled environment.



HIGH-SPEED BOWL

Millbrook's five-lane, two-mile, banked High Speed Bowl, is where realistic motorway driving can be simulated in a safe and secure setting. You can test lane-keep assist, adaptive cruise control and other driver aids at motorway speeds as well as comparing road and wind noise intrusion and fuel economy at cruising speeds.



OFF-ROAD

Test your driving skills and car performance on the off-road course, which offers a range of terrains to replicate almost every scenario. Fleet decision-makers have the opportunity to really test the latest 4WD models and see how they cope. The course includes sections of gravel, mud, sand and rocks plus a range of inclines to test traction, power and ride quality.

THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE



EV/HYBRID ZONE

Some of the cleanest cars on the market will be on show with a focus on plug-in cars that could slash emissions and running costs. Experts will be on hand to discuss the vehicles and the technology behind them, as well as the charging infrastructure and give advice to those looking to make the switch.

DEBATES

Open forum debates will encourage interaction with fleet operators, helping to inform and educate on two of the hot topics facing fleet managers in their roles.

**DAY 1 - 10:30-12:00
TUESDAY JUNE 12**

■ How fleets can adopt electric vehicles; factors to consider; choosing the correct fuel type; and the practical experiences from fleets that have made the EV investment- help is at hand.

**DAY 2 - 10:30-12:00
WEDNESDAY JUNE 13**

■ The funding available to fleets looking to invest in electric vehicles, from plug-in grants to charge points plus the whole-life argument, to give the full financial picture.

Latest manufacturers to confirm attendance



PORSCHE

Following its CCIA debut last year, Porsche is back and will bring a range of hybrid models including the Panamera E-Hybrid Sport Turismo and the 680PS Panamera Turbo S E-Hybrid.



VAUXHALL

Vauxhall will be using CCIA to demonstrate its new SUV range to fleet decision-makers. The new Grandland X will take centre stage, alongside the recently launched Crossland X and Mokka X.

Visitors can also be among the first to see the new Volvo V60 and Jaguar I-Pace in the flesh.

At CCIA 2018 you will be able to drive recently launched models such as the Range Rover Velar, Volvo XC40, Suzuki Swift Sport and Jeep Compass, to name just a few.

There will also be a whole host of key fleet models available for back-to-back comparison drives as well as the opportunity to enjoy some of the more exciting models from various manufacturers, including Seat's 300PS Ibiza Cupra.

PURETECH 110 FLAIR

CITROËN C4 CACTUS

Roll out the magic carpet – this ride takes the smooth with the rough



By Matt de Prez

When Citroën launched the C4 Cactus in 2014 it was like nothing we had seen before. Opinions were divided and the Cactus was very much a love it or leave it proposition.

The new model is expected to win more fans. So much so that Citroën is axing the regular C4 hatchback, giving the quirky crossover a place among key C segment rivals as well as SUVs.

Disappointingly (for some) this has meant the concept car styling has been toned down and the new Cactus now looks a lot more like the C3 Aircross and a lot less like something NASA would leave behind after a moon mission.

Gone are the large contrasting Airbumps that provided a shield against day-to-day scrapes and dings.

Citroën says the new car still offers 360-degree protection, despite its downsized Airbumps, but there are clearly a lot more painted surfaces on show.

The front end has been updated to reflect the look of Citroën's revised SUV line-up, which includes the upcoming C5 Aircross.

55%
of top-spec Flair model
sales will be fleet



For full running costs,
visit fleetnews.co.uk/running-costs

The large Airbumps
have gone, giving the
car a cleaner look



Quality enhancements
but no total redesign
of the interior

"Official figures (for diesel) suggest an average of 76.3mpg is achievable and the motorway pace from the 100PS unit is noticeably better"

sees the re-introduction of the famous 'magic carpet ride' that was coined in 1955 at the launch of the original Citroën DS.

Using technology developed by Citroën's motorsport division, a hydraulic cushion is fitted at the top of the spring to absorb the sharp jolts caused by potholes and rough roads.

Even on the worst examples of Tarmac, the Cactus was simply sublime. Our only criticism was the lack of dynamic capability that the car has on faster, smoother roads.

There are three models: Feel, Feel Edition and Flair. All get digital radio, Bluetooth and parking sensors. The Feel Edition comes in a choice of exclusive colours and has black alloys and red interior details.

Range-topping Flair offers larger wheels, sat-nav, a glass roof and electric folding mirrors, plus a host of safety tech including autonomous braking and lane departure warning.

The engine line-up includes three-cylinder Puretech petrol engines offering 82PS (Feel Edition only) and 110PS or a new 130PS version.

There is one diesel, the BlueHDI, which is also the most frugal with CO₂ emissions from 94g/km.

Citroën expects the top-spec Flair model with the 110PS petrol engine to be the best seller, with an overall fleet split of 55%.

The 1.2-litre unit is punchy and quiet, with the promise of 62.8mpg and CO₂ emissions of 104g/km.

We also tried the diesel and believe it will be the economy champion for higher mileage drivers. Official figures suggest an average of 76.3mpg is achievable and the motorway pace from the 100PS unit is noticeably better.

Driving back-to-back with a new Kia Stonic, the Cactus is noticeably ahead in terms of comfort. However, while both have chic styling, the ergonomics of the Kia are better and it is far more engaging to drive.

We did prefer the Citroën's more efficient petrol engine though, which is quieter and more refined.

COSTS

P11D price	£19,690
BIK tax band (2017/18)	19%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£748
Class 1A NIC	£516
Annual VED	£140
RV (4yr/80k)	£4,625
Fuel cost (ppm)	8.96
AFR (ppm)	9
Running cost (4yr/80k)	31.36ppm

SPEC

Power (PS)/torque (Nm)	110/205
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	105
Top speed (mph)	117
0-62mph (sec)	9.9
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	61.4

KEY RIVAL

Kia Stonic 1.0T GDi First Edition	
P11D price	£19,480
BIK tax band (201/2018)	22%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£857
Class 1A NIC	£591
Annual VED	£160 then £140
RV (4yr/80k)	£6,075
Fuel cost (ppm)	9.66
AFR (ppm)	9
Running cost (4yr/80k)	29.50ppm

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

THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer
relationships manager

cap hpi

Monday To a Kia press launch near Marlow to drive the Stinger. What a great name for Kia's first rear-wheel drive car in the UK. It is a fastback-style five-door gran Turismo and is grand looking, attracting attention while we were driving it.

It has a 3.3-litre twin-turbo V6 petrol engine, but also has more fleet-friendly 2.0 petrol- and a 2.2 diesel-powered cars.

It is loaded with goodies, encompassing technology, safety and connectivity systems. The interior is very modern and, as we keep saying, every Kia introduced is much better than the last in terms of quality, fit and finish. Kia does say it has the 'Power to Surprise', and nobody was more surprised than I when this original GT Concept made it into showrooms. Prices for the Stinger start from £31,995 and go up to £40,495.

"The Stinger is grand looking, attracting attention while we were driving it"

Wednesday Down to London for the annual Fleet News Awards. This event just seems to get bigger every year, so well done to all in the events team for doing a great job. The winners were announced, and no doubt those who picked up a prize might have had bad heads Thursday morning, but probably worth it. For those who didn't win, I have to say that most of the categories were very close, and picking a winner is not an easy task. Judging gets more difficult every year.

Friday Talking to a friend who was robbed while in his motorhome in Europe. They were not disturbed, not even the dog, so the conclusion is that they were 'gassed' by the robbers, and were unconscious while everything was taken. This doesn't happen according to the authorities in Europe, just the British getting drunk and falling into a deep sleep. But it appears this is a regular occurrence, so campers beware, take extra precautions at night. My mate is going to start fastening his two front doors together by using a sturdy strap or rope, and has fitted an extra alarm.

VOLVO XC40

Refined, quiet and easy to drive, pity about the fuel consumption



A premium entry into the small SUV segment

By Matt de Prez

Within a week of seeing the all-new Volvo V60 in Sweden, we were behind the wheel of the new XC40 in the UK.

Volvo's product offensive shows no signs of slowing down and the quality of what we have seen has impressed.

The XC40 is the first car we've driven that is based on the brand's new smaller platform, which will underpin the new V60/S60 and eventually the V40.

Our top-of-the-line D4 First Edition test car came with a price tag of almost £40,000 and we should point out now that the XC40 is not a cheap proposition – prices start at £29,000 on the road for the entry-level Momentum.

However, it isn't meant to compete at the cheaper end of the SUV market, like a Seat Ateca or Kia Sportage. The XC40 is a premium entrant to the small SUV segment, taking aim at Jaguar's new E-Pace and the recently launched BMW X2.

In keeping with its price tag is a suite of premium features such as heated steering wheel, seats and windscreen, Pilot Assist semi-autonomous driving technology and a Harman Kardon speaker system.

Other highlights are the panoramic glass sunroof, 360-degree camera system and keyless entry.

The Swedish brand has a renewed focus on making



A heated steering wheel is just one of many welcome features

D4 AWD FIRST EDITION

THE RIVALS

■ Audi Q3 2.0TDI Quattro S Line Tech
■ BMW X2 xDrive20d M Sport X
■ Jaguar E-Pace AWD D180 R Dynamic HSE

P11D PRICE

Q3	£36,240
X2	£38,120
XC40	£39,050
E-Pace	£44,195

CO₂

X2	126g/km
XC40	135g/km
Q3	139g/km
E-Pace	147g/km

MPG & FUEL COSTS

X2	58.9mpg/9.47ppm
XC40	56.5mpg/9.88ppm
Q3	53.3mpg/10.47ppm
E-Pace	50.4mpg/11.07ppm

DEPRECIATION

XC40	30.66ppm
X2	31.03ppm
Q3	31.18ppm
E-Pace	34.21ppm

SMR

XC40	5.57ppm
Q3	5.74ppm
X2	5.83ppm
E-Pace	6.67ppm

RUNNING COSTS

XC40	46.11ppm
X2	46.33ppm
Q3	47.39ppm
E-Pace	51.95ppm

VERDICT

The XC40 has already been named European Car of the Year 2018 and even in range-topping trim it offers the best choice for fleets against its key rivals.
Winner: Volvo XC40

Running cost: KeeResources (4yr/80k)

MAZDA 6

2.2D 150PS SE-L NAV

Pain-free year with this under-rated fleet contender



After the next facelift our SE-L Nav will be the base model

COSTS

P11D price	£24,100
BIK tax band	23%
Annual BIK tax (20%)	£1,109
Class 1A NIC	£765
Annual VED	£140
RV (4yr/80k)	£6,475
Fuel cost (ppm)	8.10
AFR (ppm)	13
Running cost (ppm)	35.1

SPEC

Engine (cc)	2,191
Power (PS)	150
Torque (Nm)	380
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	107
Manufacturer mpg	68.9
Real-world mpg*	53.1
Test mpg	53
Max speed (mph)	130
0-62mph (sec)	9.1
Current mileage	12,700

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

By Matt de Prez

It has been a year since we welcomed the Mazda 6 onto our long-term test fleet and, at the time, it was a recently facelifted model.

Now, as it goes back, Mazda has announced another facelift for the car, which will be available later in the year.

The biggest change is in specification. Where our SE-L Nav model was ranked third out of the four available trims, on the new car SE-L will be the base model.

It gains LED headlights and a host of assistance features such as lane keep assist, blind spot monitor and adaptive cruise control – things we would have liked to have had fitted on our car.

Prices have increased by around £1,000 (like-for-like) but the new model promises greater refinement and greater luxury.

We covered 12,000 pain-free miles in our car. It never let us down or needed any maintenance.

Our average fuel economy was on par with the Equa Index at 53mpg, although a period of regular town

driving saw the figure plummet to the low 40s.

The 6 is most at home on the motorway where its 2.2-litre diesel engine has plenty of torque and makes for an effortless cruise.

On country lanes, the 6 is more adept than its rivals with impressive dynamics making for an enjoyable driving experience.

We were disappointed by the its halogen headlamps, which were too dim for unlit country lanes, and found its heating system struggled to de-mist the windows on a cold morning.

The sat-nav system was more impressive, with speed camera alerts and live traffic updates.

One thing that really stood out was just how quiet its diesel engine was at idle and the flexibility of the engine on the move made it feel like a petrol, with a broad power range.

The Mazda 6 is under-rated and should be a serious contender for those considering rivals such as the Ford Mondeo and Vauxhall Insignia.

If the new model builds on the already excellent package, it should be a no-brainer choice for many.

RENAULT KOLEOS
1.6DCI SIGNATURE NAV

Car running costs for the Renault Koleos suggest it compares well with its nearest rivals and would be top of the pile if it wasn't for the residual value (RV) performance of the new Skoda Kodiaq.

With a P11D value of £30,085 for our test model, the 1.6dCi Signature Nav, the Koleos is cheaper than comparable five-seat models of both the Nissan X-Trail and the Kodiaq.

The Kodiaq 2.0TDi SE L has a slightly higher P11D price of £30,720, while the X-Trail 1.6dCi Tekna is higher still, with a P11D price of £32,555.

The Koleos again outperforms its rivals in terms of CO₂ and fuel economy, with the Renault emitting 128g/km, compared to 131g/km for the Kodiaq and 133g/km for X-Trail.

Meanwhile, the claimed combined for the X-Trail is 55.4mpg, 56.5mpg for the Kodiaq and 56.7mpg for the Koleos. In our tests, however, the Koleos has been returning about 42mpg.

Comparing running costs, using the Fleet News Car Running Cost Calculator, the Koleos has a fuel cost of 9.69 pence per mile (ppm), cheaper than both the Kodiaq (9.88ppm) and the X-Trail (10.07ppm).

Based on a four-year/80,000-mile operating cycle, the Kodiaq is the best performer in terms of service, maintenance and repair (SMR) costs at 4.68ppm. The Koleos (5.15ppm) costs the most after the X-Trail (4.94ppm).

The Koleos also misses out to the Kodiaq in terms of RV performance. The Kodiaq is expected to be worth £11,800 after four years/80,000 miles, compared to £8,750 for the X-Trail and £8,700 for the Koleos.

That equates to 26.73ppm in depreciation for the Koleos, 29.76ppm for the X-Trail and just 23.65ppm for the Kodiaq.

Gareth Roberts

AT A GLANCE – THE REST OF OUR FLEET (go to fleetnews.co.uk for reviews)

Volvo S90



Vauxhall Insignia



Jaguar XF



Seat Ibiza



Škoda Octavia

LISA SPONG

SALES DIRECTOR, REFLEX

Had Spong not become absorbed in vehicle rental she would have liked to have been a high flyer of another kind ... in aviation. Helping the young is a subject very much close to her heart

If I were Prime Minister for the day I would concentrate on helping children that live in poverty. There are 3.7 million children living in poverty in the UK and I would make sure they have the same opportunities as the fortunate. Children are our next generation and should be looked after as they could become our next country leaders, directors or fleet managers.

A book I would recommend others read is *Ultra-Marathon Man*. It inspires me to push myself to my limits, so much so I completed my first half marathon with no training in just over two hours. Running helps me to focus and keeps me fit.

My favourite film is *Matilda* because she is fearless, determined and an inspiration to other youngsters. She makes good out of a bad situation by helping herself to read and learn.

I want to be remembered as an influencer. I'd like to think I have influenced somebody at some stage in their life, whether it be work or personal.

My interest is cooking. I love it. It motivates me to eat healthy. Preparation is key.

The advice I would give to my 18-year-old self is to keep your head down, take your time, put in as much effort as you physically can and never give up. That's exactly what I have done.

The pivotal moments in my life have been the births of my three beautiful children. Everything I work for is to make sure they have a good outlook on life and become successful in the journeys they choose.

The three vehicles I would like in my garage are a Maserati Levante (I hear there is a hybrid on the way), a convertible to drive in the summer and a camper van because with three children and a dog, it would be very handy.

My first memory associated with a car was when my dad came home in his brand new bright red Ford Escort XR3. All the kids on my street thought we were cool.

My pet hate is pessimism. It affects your way of thinking.

First fleet role I started out as a hire desk administrator at Arriva Vehicle Rental in 1999. Within 18 months, I had been promoted into a sales role and my career has developed over time. I want to be part of a safety-first vehicle culture so I feel it is important to help educate fleets in all industry sectors that they are professional drivers as well as doing the job they are employed to do.

Career goals at Reflex To be part of a highly regarded senior management team capable of building and running a market-leading vehicle rental business.

Biggest achievement in business The creation and development of our flexi-family suite of telematics which focuses on driver behaviour and intervention. Recent award wins from Brake and Commercial Fleet affirms our commitment to being a safety-first vehicle rental partner.

Biggest career influence My parents. At the age of 13, I had three paper rounds and was encouraged from an early age to work hard, pay my way and, in time, recognition would come.

Biggest mistake in business You make hundreds of decisions every day, so a few of the choices and actions are bound to be wrong. I have learnt not to be influenced by others. The moment somebody is able to provoke you into thinking, they already have a slice of you.

Leadership style Democratic. To create a highly innovative business requires ideas and communication from not only our employees but our customers.

If I wasn't in fleet A job in aviation, maybe leasing aeroplanes. In fact, when I worked for GE there was such a role.

Childhood ambition To be a pilot. For my 18th I flew a Cessna 152. That's as close as I have got. I love flying, especially take off.

Next issue: Ryan Coles, operations manager, distribution, Aviva

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