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CONTENTS

NEWS AND OPINION

- 4 Imminent ULEZ prompts renewed calls for state aid
- 6 Comment: Lack of clear Government guidance on CAZs is unacceptable
- 9 Fleets in limbo as Chancellor avoids clarifying tax position
- 10 Surge of interest in EVs not matched by battery supply
- 11 Safety concerns delay recovery of crashed EVs
- 12 The past month's news headlines
- 16 Have your say
- 98 Last word: Alison Bell

TOMORROW'S FLEET: STRATEGY

- 20 Workplace parking levies – four things fleets should know
- 24 Easy money? The profit potential of vehicle to grid

FLEET NEWS AWARDS 2019

- 31 A 39-page special celebrating the very best in fleet



**PARKING
LEVIES
P20**

**FLEET
NEWS
AWARDS
COVERAGE
P31**

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

- 70 Wex sets out its growth plan for Esso fuel cards

TODAY'S FLEET: OPERATIONS

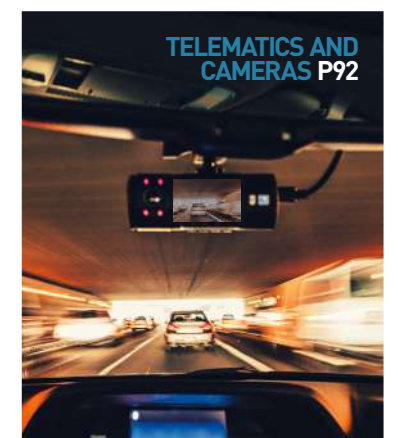
- 72 Policy benchmarking highlights a possible costly problem
- 74 Techniques for developing relationships with suppliers

IGNITION

- 76 **Toyota Corolla**
Corolla is 'performing' again
- 79 **Lexus UX**
Tax savings increase its popularity
- 81 **Our test fleet**



TOYOTA COROLLA P76



**TELEMATICS AND
CAMERAS P92**

COMMERCIAL FLEET

- 84 'Shocking' lack of infrastructure is holding back electric trucks
- 87 Kangoo ZE 33 uptake hampered by battery supply delays
- 88 Keeping a grip on the budget is not an easy ride for TMs
- 91 Compliance advice from FTA
- 92 Dashcams give fleet managers greater control
- 96 **Vauxhall Combo Cargo**
First van since PSA took over
- 97 **Renault D-Range 6x2**
Unsung hero has safety features in abundance

London's imminent ULEZ prompts renewed calls for Government aid

Birmingham receives £38m to help businesses adapt to CAZ, but there's no consistency

By Gareth Roberts

With just a matter of days to go before the launch of London's Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), the fleet industry has again called for more support to help businesses comply with clean air zones (CAZs).

More than 60 towns and cities are currently considering new measures to tackle pollution, including the introduction of CAZs.

As a result, almost every corner of the UK will be implementing some form of air improvement strategy within the next few years, leading to further calls for a consistent approach to how rules are applied.

The Freight Transport Association (FTA) says it would like to see more support for those who will struggle most to comply with CAZs, such as small businesses and operators of specialist fleets.

Natalie Chapman, FTA head of urban policy, explained: "The difficulty is that for some fleets they are locked into lease agreements that will be expensive to get out of or they may struggle to get replacement vehicles in time, especially if they require significant after-market bodywork."

AIR POLLUTION THREAT TO HEALTH

The warning comes as Public Health England (PHE) said 28,000 to 36,000 deaths in the UK each year could be attributed to long-term exposure to air pollution (fleetnews.co.uk, March 11).

The organisation's report describes air pollution as the biggest environmental threat to health in the UK, and outlines a series of recommendations for improving air quality, including stopping cars idling near school gates, promoting car pool lanes, providing priority parking for electric cars and employing low emission or clean air zones.

As it stands, the vast majority of

company cars will escape charges, where levied, due to their relatively short replacement cycles of, on average, three years.

However, vans and trucks can have much longer replacement cycles, increasing the likelihood of mixed fleets running non-compliant vehicles, and incurring charges.

Vans, on average, are typically replaced every four years, but some fleet operators may sweat their assets for much longer, for up to eight years, while trucks can stay on the fleet for 10-12 years.

City Hall is expected to publish new figures on how many vehicles could be impacted by London's new zone, which comes in force from April 8, in the next few days. Previous research suggested that around 45% of all cars, 40% of light goods vehicles (LGVs) and more than one-in-three (38%) trucks will need to pay the charge.

Around a fifth of the total LGV fleet is still expected to be non-compliant in 2025, while virtually all HGVs are expected to meet the required Euro VI standard.

Transport for London (TfL) has suggested that up to 60,000 vehicles could fall foul of the London's new ULEZ charge, which will operate 24 hours a day, seven

days per week. With fees for non-compliant vehicles to enter the ULEZ starting from £12.50 for a car or a van to £100 for a truck, that would equate to more than £750,000 per day or more than £270 million per year in charges.

Alex Williams, TfL director of city planning, said: "We have been working hard to ensure drivers are aware that their vehicle needs to be compliant if they are to avoid paying the charge. We have also been supporting businesses in their preparations – with many already making the move to comply."

TfL ADVICE TO FLEETS

TfL says it has engaged with more than 6,000 fleets to advise them of their options and has worked with London's business groups to reach "thousands more".

Recycling firm First Mile, which services more than 25,000 businesses in London with a fleet of 70 vehicles, has consolidated collections to reduce vehicle movements and uses cargo bikes to deliver waste bags.

Bruce Bratley, First Mile CEO, said: "It makes sense to operate with the lowest possible impact on air quality; it would be futile to solve one environmental issue at the

expense of another." However, he admitted it had cost his business £3m to make sure it was "ULEZ ready".

To help micro-businesses – defined as those with 10 or fewer employees – and charities adapt to the new zone in London, a van scrappage scheme has been launched with £23m available. A further £25m has been earmarked for a separate car scrappage scheme, which will launch later this year.

The van scrappage scheme offers qualifying businesses £6,000 to buy an electric van or £3,500 towards the purchase or lease of a Euro 6 diesel.

Caroline Sandall, director at ESE Consulting and deputy chair of fleet representative body ACF0, said fleets will be "running the numbers" to see whether, in the short term, paying the charge or replacing the vehicle makes most financial sense.

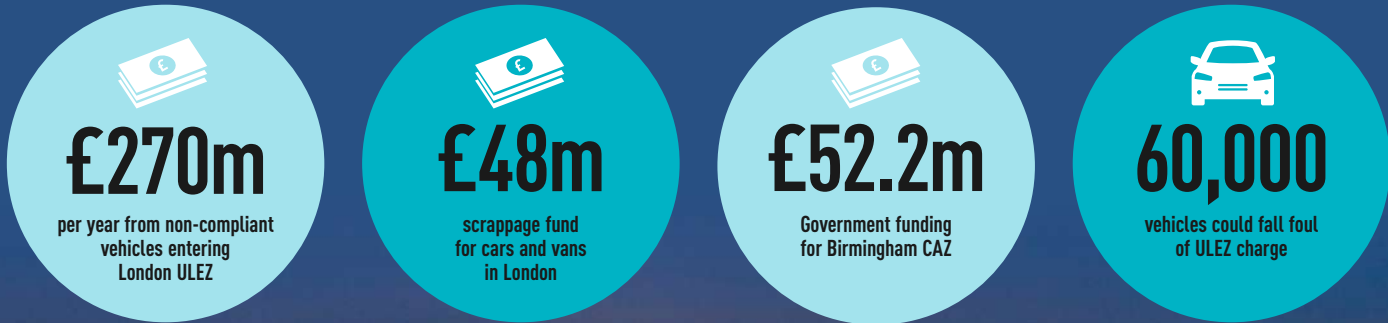
"For some businesses, especially the smaller ones, this does create a burden over and above what one could expect to be part of normal business planning," added Sandall.

To qualify for London's van scrappage scheme, businesses and charities will have to be registered in London or have entered the existing Congestion Charging Zone 52 times in the past six months and provide a certificate of destruction for a non-compliant vehicle.

Micro-business Clean Cover operates three non-compliant vans within the ULEZ, with the business based outside the capital. Owner Sharon Lloyd welcomed the help offered through the van scrappage scheme.

However, she said: "As a small business, I feel like we're being priced out of the capital. Upgrading vehicles, even with this support, will be a struggle."

The level of support available to fleets will vary from one zone to



Birmingham had sought close to £69m in Government aid for its CAZ, but, instead, received a little more than £52m

“GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE WORKING MORE CLOSELY WITH CITY COUNCILS AND PROVIDING MONETARY SUPPORT LIKE SCRAPPAGE SCHEMES”

CAROLINE SANDALL, ACF0 AND ESE CONSULTING

the next. Birmingham, which has just had its CAZ approved by Government, will also charge cars, vans and trucks that don't meet the latest emission standards to enter the city.

It will cover all roads within the A4540 Middleway ring road and is due to come into effect from January 2020.

Non-compliant cars, taxis and vans will pay £8 per day to enter the zone, while HGVs and buses will be charged £50.

Birmingham councillors had requested Government funding to introduce £68.7m of mitigation measures, including a car scrappage scheme, but have instead received £52.2m from the Government (fleetnews.co.uk, March 14).

It has allocated £38m to support businesses and individuals who might be impacted by the zone and £14.2m to install signs, cameras and other infrastructure.

There will be one-year exemptions for commercial vehicles registered within the zone and one-year exemptions for those registered in the Birmingham area and travelling into the zone, with vehicles that have an existing lease beyond 2020.

Both exemptions will be limited to two vehicles per business.

Councillor Waseem Zaffar, cabinet member for transport and environment at Birmingham City Council, said: "In light of the reduced funding for a scrappage scheme, we will continue to work with other council leaders and combined authorities across the country to lobby the Government for a national diesel scrappage scheme."

Sandall said that any support to accelerate the replacement of older, more polluting vehicles should be welcomed and urged other cities to follow suit where CAZ charges were being considered.

She added: "Government should be working more closely with those city councils and providing monetary support like scrappage schemes."

BENEFITS 'SHORT-LIVED'

However, while CAZs are being considered by councils, Chapman argues that they are not necessary to deliver improved air quality, nor do they provide an ongoing air quality benefit.

"They do not set new standards, they aim to simply accelerate the vehicle change that is coming

anyway," she said. "The benefits of CAZs will be short-lived. The Euro VI/6 vehicles that will be required, will enter the vehicle fleet on their own accord as part of the natural fleet replacement cycle."

She continued: "When businesses buy new vehicles, it is not just the purchase price they need to consider, but how long they plan to run them for and what they will sell them for when they are finished."

"The introduction of CAZs means that for many businesses, the time-frame in which they had planned to sweat their assets has reduced and the residual values of their Euro

V5 vehicles have plummeted. So not only do they need to obtain financial resources for new vehicles sooner than they had planned, they have the double whammy that they have also lost out financially on the vehicles they are replacing."

CONSISTENT APPROACH

In July 2017, the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Department for Transport (DfT) published the 'Air Quality Plan for nitrogen dioxide (NO2) in the UK 2017'.

This plan, and subsequent iterations, have required local authorities to take action to bring NO2 air pollution levels within statutory limits in the shortest possible time.

But, by leaving councils to draw up their own plans, fleet operators face inconsistencies in how they are being applied.

For example, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council have developed plans that would see all non-zero emission vehicles banned from parking and loading during certain hours from 2020, while individual boroughs in London have been drawing up their own plans, with tougher standards than those stipulated by the ULEZ.

Martin Brown, managing director of Fleet Alliance, has called for greater clarity from ministers so companies can plan green fleet policies with more confidence.

"If you ran a fleet of, say, 500 vehicles on a national basis, you could be faced with drivers driving from one city to another, Leeds to Glasgow for example, where they might fall foul of a different set of rules covering low emission zones through no fault of their own," he said.

Government's lack of clear guidance and coordination on CAZs is unacceptable



DOMINIC PHINN
BUSINESS
ENGAGEMENT
CO-ORDINATOR,
CLIENTEARTH

The article alongside clearly shows what a sorry state the Government's plan to tackle air pollution in our towns and cities is in.

Responding to successive Government failures to deliver a lawful air quality plan, ClientEarth has launched and won three legal challenges over the past eight years.

But, instead of implementing a national network of clean air zones (CAZs), accompanied by central funds to help businesses make the switch to cleaner vehicles, ministers decided to pass the buck to local authorities, so now businesses are facing a confusing patchwork of schemes.

It is unacceptable that the Government has failed to take proper action to tackle this problem. CAZ proposals are trickling in, but their roll-out lacks central government coordination and support, and we are seeing some local authorities doing all they can to avoid such measures.

These CAZs are needed now and, despite claims from the FTA, Defra's own evidence shows they are the most effective way to bring air pollution to within legal limits in the shortest possible time, as required by law.

As local authorities across the country follow cities like London and Birmingham in taking ambitious and necessary measures to clean up their polluted air, disruption to businesses with fleets of vehicles is unavoidable.

The FTA is absolutely right in highlighting the need for CAZs to be complemented by help and support, particularly for small businesses if they are to move to cleaner forms of transport.

In London, the £23m for a van scrappage scheme and £25m earmarked for a separate car scrappage scheme are essential to help smaller businesses adapt to the ULEZ and exactly the kind of commitment we need to see.

They need to be matched by national support, however.

As restrictions come into force to meet legal limits for air pollution, funding for a means-tested scrappage scheme on a national scale will be needed. This should be part-funded by the car industry.

Along with help and support to shift to cleaner vehicles, we need to see tax changes to bring zero emission vehicles closer to cost parity to help businesses buy these vehicles now.

The months ahead will be crucial and attention will be focused on all levels of government to make sure that plans submitted are effective in finally protecting people's health and are accompanied by measures to help individuals and business make the necessary shift to cleaner vehicles and more efficient transport systems.



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Figures shown are for comparison purposes only; you should only compare these fuel consumption and CO₂ figures with other cars tested using the same technical standard. The fuel consumption you achieve, and CO₂ produced, in real world conditions will depend upon a number of factors: including the accessories fitted (post registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test WLTP (Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicles Test Procedure) used to measure fuel consumption and CO₂ figures. The CO₂ figures shown are NEDCeq (New European Driving Cycle Equivalent), calculated using an EC correlation tool which converts WLTP figures to NEDC. These NEDCeq figures are based on the outgoing test cycle and will be used to calculate tax for the first registration. CO₂ and fuel economy figures may vary according to wheel fitment and optional extras fitted.

NEWS: COMPANY CAR TAX

BIK/VED uncertainty not resolved by the Spring Statement

Chancellor says response will be made 'in the coming months', leaving fleets in limbo

By Gareth Roberts

Fleets have delivered a clear message to the Government: 94.5% of respondents to a *Fleet News* poll believe the delay in publishing new company car tax rates is damaging the industry.

Fewer than one in 20 believed the uncertainty was not having a long-term negative effect on the market.

The fleet industry has been growing increasingly frustrated with the Government's handling of the new emissions testing regime – the Worldwide harmonised Light vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP) – and its impact on company car tax and Vehicle Excise Duty (VED).

HMRC launched a consultation late last year to better understand the problem, but hopes of hearing its response were dashed in the Spring Statement (fleetnews.co.uk, March 13). *Fleet News* understands that the cause of the delay is the protracted Brexit negotiations.

The Chancellor simply said in a written statement that the Government would issue its response to the review into the impact of the WLTP on VED and company car tax "in the coming months".

Company car tax tables are known up until 2020/21. The rates were published in 2016, which gave fleets advance notice of their liabilities for the next four years. They now have just two years, which is taking its toll on the company car market.

One fleet manager told *Fleet News*: "I've had drivers in long-term hire vehicles for almost a year now while WLTP was being sorted out and now that they are allowed to order a new car, many are reluctant to do so until they have certainty of their tax liability in years three and four of ownership."

Another respondent said all vehicle

orders had been put on hold until the Government decides its approach to future benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax tables.

WLTP testing has been required for all new models from September 2017, and all new car registrations since September 2018.

In the Autumn Budget 2017, it was announced that cars registered from April 2020 would be taxed based on WLTP. Cars registered before April 2020 would maintain their current tax treatment, paying emissions-based taxes according to correlated-NEDC figures under the EU's CO₂MPAS equation.

Matthew Walters, head of consultancy LeasePlan UK, says WLTP's "staggered integration" into the tax system has created a lot of confusion and concern for fleets and their

drivers.

"The use of NEDC-correlated figures means that some motorists are facing unexpected tax hikes," he said.

NEDC-correlated figures, which were not considered in the consultation, have resulted in an uplift of CO₂ emissions of 10%, on average, equating to some 10-15g/km.

However, fleets and company car drivers could face a further increase in costs when they start using WLTP CO₂ values from April 2020.

Initial evidence provided by manufacturers suggests that more than half of cars will see an increase in emissions from correlated values of between 10% and 20%.

Ashley Barnett, head of consultancy at Lex Autolease, believes it's a major issue for the industry. "The lack of long-term company car tax tables is holding the fleet market back," he said.

"Before fleet decision-makers can build a strategy based around the average 48-month contract, and before employees can commit to what is, essentially, a four-year investment, they need assurance that the associated costs are not going to increase over its lifetime."

Orders of diesel vehicles from Lex Autolease are being delayed, according to Barnett, in case further tax increases are announced that

IS THE DELAY IN PUBLISHING NEW BIK RATES HAVING A LONG-TERM NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THE COMPANY CAR MARKET?

Yes: 94.5%

Unsure: 1.4%

No: 4.1%

Source: fleetnews.co.uk



FLEETS AND MOTORISTS CANNOT PROPERLY PREPARE FOR THE YEARS AHEAD

MATTHEW WALTERS, LEASEPLAN UK

could make them "prohibitively expensive".

Similarly, he says that questions remain over the future tax treatment of electric vehicles (EVs), which makes it difficult to forecast the cost of transitioning to an ultra-low and zero emission fleet.

The VED and company car tax consultation, which was launched in December 2018, closed on February 17, so it was perhaps wishful thinking to believe Government could respond to the submissions in the Spring Statement, less than one month later.

Matthew Walters, head of consultancy LeasePlan UK, believes Brexit played its part, but said that was "no excuse" for the lack of rates beyond the 2020/21 tax year.

"It's outrageous that we weren't told these rates years ago," he said. "This means that fleets and motorists cannot properly prepare for the years ahead, which is particularly worrying at a time of such economic uncertainty."

"The Chancellor needs to reveal the rates as soon as possible – preferably even ahead of this summer's draft Finance Bill."

Surge of interest in electric vehicles not matched by battery availability

Now car manufacturers are bidding to establish battery cell production in Europe

By Gareth Roberts

Longer-range electric vehicles (EVs) and more hybrid models are expected to transform the company car parc, but carmakers may struggle to meet the growing demand.

This was the sentiment at the 2019 Geneva Motor Show, where electrification was a key theme, as was the new subscription or short-term rental models that will deliver new plug-in vehicles (fleetnews.co.uk, March 6).

However, carmakers also made clear that demand for alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) is outstripping supply and the situation may not improve anytime soon due to a lack of supply of the batteries.

Peugeot chairman and chief executive officer Carlos Tavares has been urging the European Parliament to provide the necessary support to instigate production in the EU for the past year.

There are lithium-ion battery factories in Europe, such as the Daimler-owned Deutsche Accumotive. However, they do not make the cells, which are supplied by Asian



The European Commission says Europe will need 10 to 20 'gigafactories' – large-scale battery cell production facilities

companies, such as Samsung, Panasonic, CATL and LG Chem.

Peugeot anticipates that 12% of 208 registrations next year, some 2,400 units, will be the full electric version – the e-208 – as it starts planning for a future where every car and van model will have an electric option within four years.

Deliveries of the new small car will start at the end of the year or the beginning of 2020, with reservations opening in March and orders from summer.

However, UK managing director David Peel said: "We are confident we will have the supply that we need to meet our forecast demand."

But, battery supply is one of the main reasons why orders for Kia's full electric e-Niro has outstripped its UK allocation. The carmaker hopes the situation will improve for 2020 as it prepares for the new Soul EV (fleetnews.co.uk, March 6).

Kia has taken just more than 1,000 orders for its allocation of 1,000 e-Niros, deliveries of which will begin in the next couple of months. Dealers are telling customers that they are looking at quarter one 2020 if they order now.

"We have to be upfront with them,

although we are trying to secure more production," Paul Philpott, Kia Motors UK chairman and chief executive officer, told *Fleet News*.

"It's a global supply chain, not just Europe or the UK and battery supply can't keep pace with demand, which is growing at a significant rate. We have to manage the situation but we can't say when it will free-up. Our customers are prepared to wait."

European carmakers are working hard to bring battery supply closer to home. Germany has earmarked €1 billion (£860 million) to support a consortium looking to produce EV battery cells. There are also plans to fund a research facility to develop next-generation solid-state batteries. More than 30 companies have applied, including BMW and the Volkswagen Group.

The latter recently announced plans to make 22 million EVs within the next 10 years – seven million more than its original ambition (fleetnews.co.uk, March 13).

The number of new electric models it plans to launch within the same timescale has increased from 50 to 70.

Volkswagen will start taking reservations for its first ID model –

the manufacturer's new family of electric cars – in May, almost six months before the car is unveiled at autumn's Frankfurt Motor Show.

The hatchback will start from less than €30,000 (£25,700) and it will have a range of up to 342 miles.

However, the manufacturer's board member for sales, Jurgen Stackman admitted: "Given the interest in the ID family shown by our dealers, I think it is possible the launch edition will already have sold out before we unveil it in September."

Recognising a growing demand for EVs and the batteries to power them, the European Commission set up the European Battery Alliance (EBA) in 2017.

Its objective is to create a competitive manufacturing value chain in Europe, with sustainable battery cells at its core, and to prevent a technological dependence on the block's competitors.

It also wants to capitalise on the job growth and investment potential of batteries, which could be worth up to €250bn (£214bn) a year to the EU from 2025 onwards.

■ See 'Kangoo ZE 33 van uptake is being hampered by battery supply delays' on page 87

Crashed EVs 'take longer to recover'

Extra safety requirements for high-voltage systems complicate electric vehicle collection

By Matt de Prez

Electric cars and plug-in hybrid cars could take longer to recover in the event of a collision than a regular petrol or diesel car, due to safety concerns over the battery.

In many cases, a crashed electric vehicle (EV) cannot be towed as the driven wheels remain locked unless the car can be switched on to put it in neutral.

To reduce the risk of battery fires or electrocution, most EVs use circuit breakers that disconnect the high-voltage system if an impact is detected.

The emergency services will also seek to disconnect any high-voltage components on electric vehicles if they are required to attend.

These added complications mean recovery firms can have a tougher job of collecting these often heavy vehicles.

When a BMW i3 operated by Speedy Services was involved in a collision, it took 15 hours for the vehicle to be recovered by the company's appointed recovery agent, the AA.

"When the first AA man turned up, he said he didn't know anything about electric vehicles," said Gareth Jones, transport compliance manager at Speedy Services.

"A second man arrived later. He was concerned that the battery was damaged and there could be a health and safety issue around transporting hazardous materials."

The i3 was immobile because there was no power to it. Jones said they couldn't disengage the hand-brake and the electric motor was locked, so the wheels wouldn't turn.

A third AA vehicle – a flatbed truck with a winch – was able to recover the car. But the operator first had to work out the weight of the car and the angle it would need to be pulled at, to see if the winch was powerful enough.

"The operator had to literally drag the car up onto a flatbed truck. It was the most annoying day," said Jones.

Speedy Services has been operating three BMW i3s, which have been converted into vans, for the past two years. This incident was the first the fleet encountered.

"We were flabbergasted that companies like the AA seemed unaware of how to deal with it," said Jones.

"I don't think the UK is geared up to recover vehicles of this type yet. It hasn't put us off EVs though. We've all got to move forwards and embracing new technology is a core part of our business. What we have to do is look at how we are going to stop it happening again."



"I DON'T THINK THE UK IS GEARED UP TO RECOVER VEHICLES OF THIS TYPE YET"

GARETH JONES, SPEEDY SERVICES

In a statement, the AA said all its patrols are trained to work safely on EVs. However, it did point out that where EVs suffer damage in the event of an accident, there could be additional health and safety considerations before recovering the vehicle. This may require further risk

assessments or equipment. In order to make the scene safe, it may also include specialist support for road traffic collisions.

The Institute of Vehicle Recovery (IVR) delivers specialist training to enable recovery firms to handle electrified vehicles correctly. It has seen a lot of demand for its EV course.

Mark Hartell, vice-chairman of the IVR, said: "It is vital that all technicians, and those responsible for sending them out, appreciate the hazards and specialist knowledge required to recover this type of vehicle."

Jones advises fleet operators to ensure that recovery firms are aware they are being called to deal with an electric vehicle, whether directly or through an accident management provider.

Pete Williams, RAC road safety spokesman, said: "Our approach to EVs and hybrids is consistent with how we deal with conventional petrol and diesel vehicles. In the event of an accident, if requested to recover an EV vehicle by the fleet manager, we would send a flatbed lorry."

"EVs present a particular challenge as most cannot be towed normally and should be transported with all wheels off the ground. It is a similar situation with many other modern vehicles, including crossovers, SUVs, 4x4s, pick-ups, vans and automatics."

"In response, we have developed our new All-Wheels-Up equipment that effectively brings flatbed recovery capability to our standard long-wheel based orange patrol vans. To date, 600 have been equipped with this new kit. So a single van can recover an EV – saving the driver valuable time."

The total number of fully electric cars registered in the UK rose by 59% last year, accounting for about 1% of total sales. Plug-in hybrids are more popular, making up 2.8% of sales.

A recent survey by Kia found that 87% of fleet managers have encountered increased demand for electrified vehicles, but the majority feel that the cars won't be suitable for another two to five years.

Kia's Fleet Green Perspectives Report found that 65% of fleets operate plug-in vehicles, an increase of 27% in the past year.



EVs cannot be towed normally and should be transported with all wheels off the ground



"IT'S A GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN. BATTERY SUPPLY CAN'T KEEP PACE WITH DEMAND"

PAUL PHILPOTT, KIA MOTORS UK

WHO'S DRIVING RISK IN YOUR BUSINESS?

You may have some hidden risks if your employees are driving their privately-owned cars for work.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

The past month's news head lines from fleetnews.co.uk

FEB

28

POLESTAR 2 REVEALED WITH 300-MILE RANGE

MOST READ
Polestar has revealed its second model, the Polestar 2. A fully-electric five-door fastback that is predicted to cost £35,000 and to have a 300-mile range.



MAR

1

NEW GREEN NCAP HIGHLIGHTS REAL-WORLD EMISSIONS PERFORMANCE

Safety rating organisation Euro NCAP has launched a new green car assessment programme called Green NCAP in conjunction with European Governments, motoring clubs and other organisations. It aims to promote cars that are less polluting and more fuel- and energy-efficient.



5

AVERAGE CO₂ EMISSIONS RISE AS PETROL SALES BOOM

The average CO₂ emissions across all cars sold in Europe reached a four-year high of 120.5g/km in 2018, according to Jato Dynamics. Its analysis found that CO₂ emissions had been steadily reducing year-on-year, reaching a low of 117.8g/km in 2016, but a fall in demand for diesel cars from 2017 has led to a reverse in this trend.

6

GENEVA MOTOR SHOW COVERAGE

Interviews, pictures and all the key fleet cars revealed – fleetnews.co.uk/geneva2019

6

ALL HONDAS TO BE 'ELECTRIFIED' BY 2025

Honda has pledged to electrify every car it sells in the UK by 2025 as part of a Europe-wide commitment. This exceeds a global promise to electrify two-thirds of its cars by 2030 and will require a rapid flow of new product over the next six years as Honda phases out sole internal combustion engine vehicles.



8

SMART MOTORWAY RED 'X' SIGNS IGNORED BY ALMOST ONE IN FOUR

Almost one quarter (23%) of drivers have driven in a lane on a smart motorway closed by the red 'X' sign in the past year, RAC research suggests. The roadside recovery company says there is still some way to go to ensure near total compliance.

11

TRANSPORT COMMITTEE LAUNCHES INQUIRY INTO GOVERNMENT'S ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

The Transport Committee is launching an inquiry to scrutinise the Government's approach to road safety. The inquiry will investigate which changes would be most effective at reducing the number and severity of road traffic accidents.



INFINITI TO CEASE EUROPEAN SALES

Infiniti, Nissan's luxury arm, has confirmed it will stop producing cars in the UK in July, as part of its plan to withdraw from the European car market by 2020.

WLTP CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO BE PUBLISHED IN 'COMING MONTHS'

MOST COMMENTED
In papers accompanying the Spring Statement, the Government says it will issue its response to the review into the impact of the WLTP on Vehicle Excise Duty and company car tax "in the coming months".



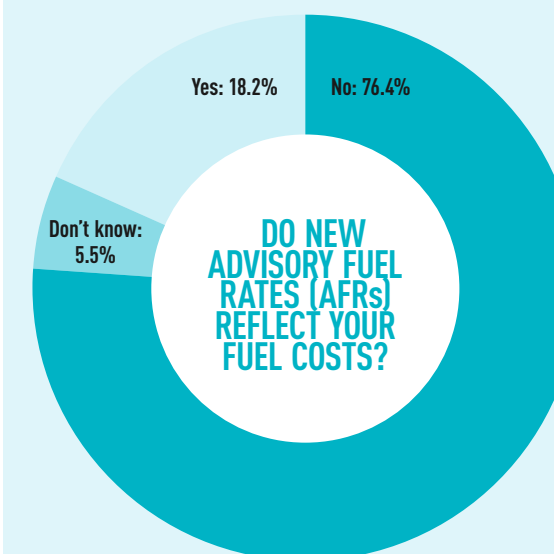
ARVAL AIMING TO GROW BUSINESS AFTER SUCCESSFUL 2018

MOST SHARED
Arval's leased fleet grew by 8.2% last year, reaching 1,193,910 vehicles and the number of vehicles ordered increased by 9% year-on-year to 353,302 units. It reported growth of 5% in France and the UK, 8% in Italy and 19% in Spain.

NEW LAW TO TACKLE ROGUE PRIVATE PARKING FIRMS

Fleets will have greater protections against bogus parking penalties as new measures to clamp down on rogue private parking firms become law. The new Parking (Code of Practice) Act, which received Royal Assent on March 15, brings in greater regulation of the private parking industry.

FLEET NEWS POLL



Source: fleetnews.co.uk

THIS ISSUE'S POLL: What is the longest time you typically drive without a break?

FLEET NEWS VIEW:

More than three-quarters (76.4%) of respondents to our poll do not believe that new advisory fuel rates (AFRs), published in February, adequately reflect the fuel costs they incur. Our view is employers may wish to set rates which better reflect their particular circumstances. For example, where the cars in the fleet are fuel efficient, employers may prefer to reimburse at a lower rate. However, where an employer can demonstrate that the cost of business travel in company cars in the fleet concerned is higher than the guideline mileage rate, AFRs are not binding.

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THE BIG PICTURE

Congratulations to all our winners at last week's Fleet News Awards. The celebrations went on long into the night, as did the networking and conversation.

There was a real buzz around the Grosvenor Hotel's Great Room, even though our numbers were down slightly (1,300, with the usual mix of fleet decision-makers, manufacturers, leasing, rental, dealers and suppliers – still the biggest and best night of the year in our industry).

Despite all the uncertainty, it's clear that there are still plenty of good news stories, and plenty to discuss and debate in a relaxed environment surrounded by colleagues and friends.

I was personally delighted to invite Graham Telfer into the Hall of Fame. He has been a great supporter of *Fleet News* – as well as the fleet sector as a whole – over his many years in charge of the Gateshead Council fleet, and it was a joy to be able to properly recognise his achievements, particularly in the company of his wife, Alison. The look on her face said it all.

Not everything was an overwhelming success. We introduced a new fleet category, 'best travel and mobility initiative', but received just two entries. However, a number of fleets told me on the night that this would become more popular in the coming years as the sector migrated away from vehicle management towards mobility management.

I was also surprised by the lack of entries in the 'leasing company – up to 20,000 vehicles' category. We introduced it a few years ago to encourage smaller leasing companies to enter. Perhaps the vehicle threshold is still set too high, but there is a real fracturing within leasing between the big (100,000-plus), medium (anywhere from 10,000) and small (below 10,000, although many are below 5,000), so it's difficult to know where to best set the benchmark. Suggestions welcomed.

I would also welcome your suggestions about any other awards category. As the fleet sector evolves, so we have to evolve to stay relevant. The awards are important, but so is the evening that accompanies them. Fleet simply wouldn't be the same without it.



Steve Briers

Stephen Briers,
editor-in-chief,
Fleet News

EDITOR'S PICK

ROAD SAFETY

Education and enforcement needed



Rosco wrote:

Having read 'Transport Committee launches inquiry into Government's road safety strategy' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 11), the theory is that the rise in distracted driving as a result of smartphone use is counteracting the improvements in safety as a result of better vehicles and greater adoption of driving aids.

The problem is that the majority of distracted driving convictions come following a fatal or serious injury accident when the police will use forensic technology to determine if a smartphone was in use at the time.

The roll-out of undercover cameras on buses and lorries, which film drivers in the act, is a practical way to improve conviction rates and send a clear message to those drivers.

However, why is there a shortage of public safety messages from Government? In years past, the TV was awash with them and surely this would be a relatively low-cost way to get the message out there.

Every journey I make, there are scores of people using smartphones while driving. That this results in greater fatalities and serious injuries is obvious. But these people will very rarely be convicted, because there are no police on the roads. The result is the UK roads are becoming a free for all.

• THE EDITOR'S PICK IN EACH ISSUE
WINS A £20 JOHN LEWIS VOUCHER

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Fleets want plug-in model now

Devon Guy wrote:

Having read 'Seat to launch 260-mile El-Born EV in Q3 2020' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 6), the race is on to get battery electric vehicles (BEVs) into the mainstream.

Last year, we saw more premium BEV model launches, like the impressive i-Pace. The middle of the sector now seems to be rising to the challenge, with the £35,000 300-mile range Polestar 2 announced this week.

Kia has also announced it is producing a new 280-mile range Soul. Expect to see some competitive pricing here.

Other manufacturers are no doubt racing to get their efforts to market, fearful of risking losing valuable sector domination. This shows an impressive pace of innovation.

However, all these cars are available this year so it feels like Seat's announcement of a 260-mile concept that could be in production next year is too little, too late.



PARKING FINES

New parking fines law welcomed by fleets

A Fleet wrote:

Having read 'New law to tackle rogue private parking firms' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 18), this has been a long time coming.

I deal with the fines for our company cars and all too often we receive escalation letters before the original fine or the fine comes in on the day, or after the reduced rate time period is due to finish.

With some parking companies you cannot speak to anyone and they don't respond to emails so it makes it really difficult to understand what we need to do to transfer liability from us to the drivers etc. Some companies also escalate the fines before the appeal process has finished as well.



VEHICLE EMISSIONS

Let's not confuse charging for congestion and emissions

Gordy wrote: Having read 'Congestion charging should be imposed in cities across UK', it would be better if subject matter experts separated discussions about congestion charging and low emissions zone charging. London has got it right. Let other cities and towns consider London as a blueprint, but keep the schemes separate, as there is good reason to.

SMART MOTORWAYS

Notify drivers of red 'X' earlier



Michael Heenan wrote:

Having read 'Smart motorway red "X" signs ignored by almost one in four' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 8), Highways England should make the first 'X' a mile out from the approach a flashing amber to give time to move lanes.

After that, use the cameras to issue fixed penalty notices like a bus lane. When it costs money, people learn fast. We all know what the signs mean so there is no excuse as it is for everybody's safety.

Companies should also address this as a failure of their employees driving their vehicles to observe the Highway Code with possible disciplinary measures being put in place.

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Burning question:
Are you known, or have you ever been known, by a nickname other than a contraction of your real name?

EDITORIAL

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My [sort of] initials – MDP

Photos Chris Lowndes

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I have one friend who calls me Teawig. We saw it graffitied on an underpass once

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People called me Garfield more due to looking like a fat cat rather than a love of lasagne

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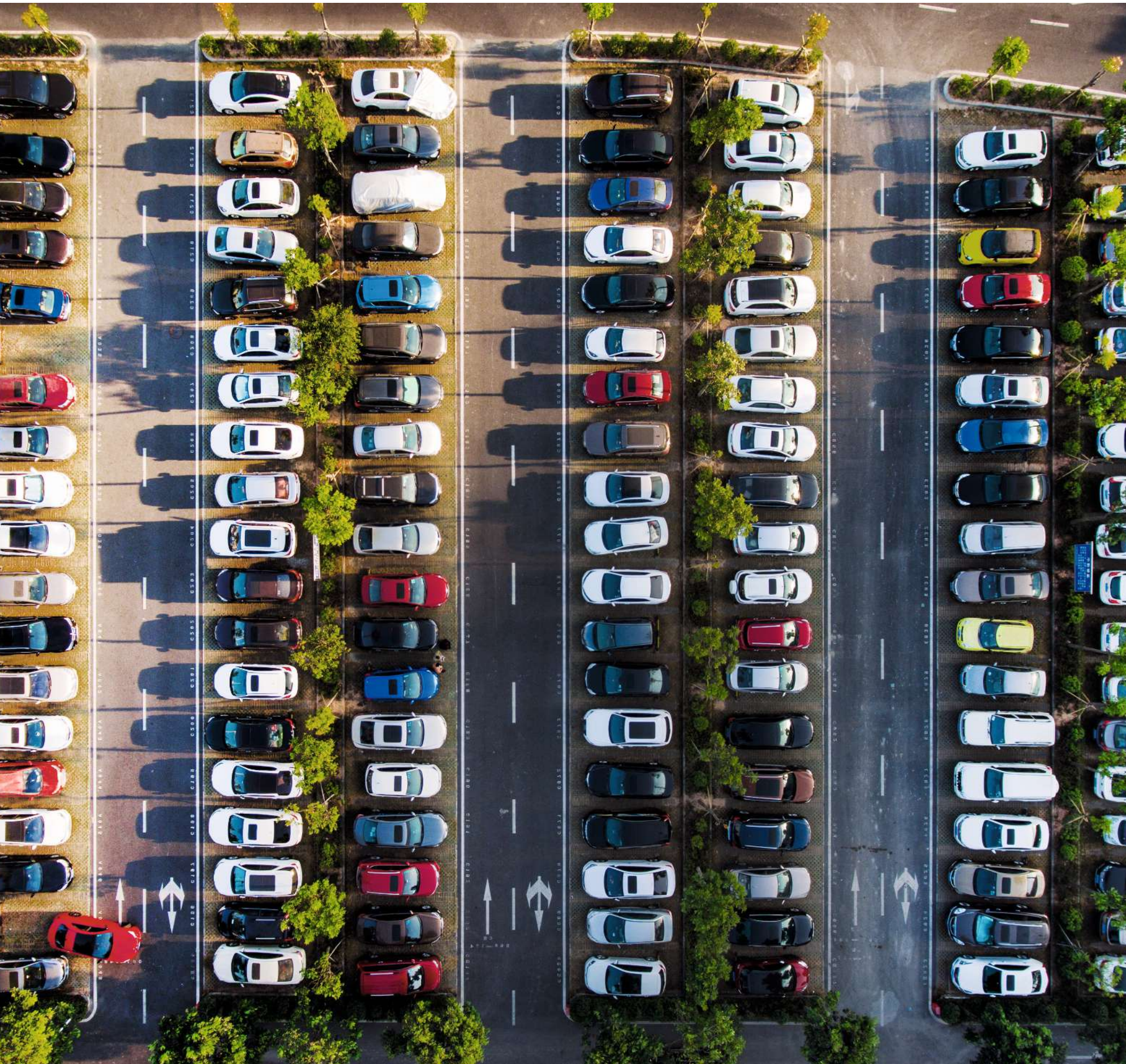
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CO₂ Emissions 168 – 130 g/km. The figures provided are as a result of official manufacturer's tests in accordance with EU legislation. For comparison purposes only. Real world figures may differ. CO₂ and fuel economy figures may vary according to factors such as driving styles, environmental conditions, load and accessories. of their vehicle at all times.



4 THINGS FLEETS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT... WORKPLACE PARKING LEVIES

A number of cities are planning WPLs seven years after Nottingham launched its pioneering scheme. *Andrew Ryan* looks at what fleets can learn from the city's experiences

Seven years after Nottingham City Council introduced the UK's first – and only – workplace parking levy (WPL), the introduction of similar charges is now on the agenda for a number of other local authorities.

Councils in Edinburgh and Glasgow plan to go ahead with a similar charge, while Reading, Oxford, Bristol, Cambridge and the London boroughs of Merton, Brent and Camden are at the consultation stage.

"It is essentially a tax on something that nobody likes – congestion," says Anthony Breach, analyst at research and policy institute Centre for Cities, which is dedicated to improving the economic success of UK cities.

"By encouraging commuters to car pool or switch to public transport, it reduces congestion and its costs to businesses and residents.

"The reduction in traffic also improves carbon emissions and air quality."

Under the Transport Act 2000, local authorities in England and Wales, with sign off from the Secretary of State, have been able to introduce a parking levy licensing scheme on employers, which requires them to pay a charge for each parking space they provide to employees.

Although this Government bill did not cover Scotland, local authorities there can now introduce them under amendments to the Transport (Scotland) Bill agreed between the Scottish Government and Scottish Greens as part of a budget deal earlier this year.

In all cases, WPL revenue is ring-fenced by law and has to be spent on transport initiatives contained within the local authority's local transport plan.

Nottingham's charging scheme, which began in April 2012, has seen use of public transport soar in the city, helped cut CO₂ emissions, and constrained congestion growth.

While details of other WPL schemes have not been released, here we look four things fleet decision-makers can learn from Nottingham's experience. ➔

1 NOT ALL ORGANISATIONS AND VEHICLES FACE THE CHARGE

Under Nottingham's scheme, a number of organisations and vehicles are exempt from paying the WPL, which will be £415 per space for the 2019/20 tax year.

These are employers with 10 or fewer spaces, while there is also a 100% discount given to emergency and NHS frontline services, as well as bays occupied by vehicles used by disabled blue badge holders.

"Fleet vehicles which aren't used for commuting are outside the scope of the levy – they are not even required to get a licence," says Nigel Hallam, WPL service manager at Nottingham City Council.

"For example, Nottingham City Council has a fleet of, say 100 bin lorries, that might be working all day, but as they are not taken home by employees at the end of the day they are completely exempt.

"If, however, you have employees who drive vans and take them home each night and then bring them back in, they are contributing to congestion, so those fleet vehicles will be subject to the levy because the levy, fundamentally, is a congestion charge."

The exemptions mean 75%-to-80% of employers do not pay the levy.

Nottingham City Council figures show the number of liable workplace parking places decreased by 17.5% from just more than 33,000 prior to the WPL being introduced as employers sought to limit their liability, or introduced parking management schemes that passed on the cost to employees (see page 23).

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TOMORROW'S FLEET: WORKPLACE PARKING

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2 EMPLOYERS CAN PASS ON THE COST OF THE LEVY TO EMPLOYEES

While the charge is payable by the employer, they are able to pass on all or some of the cost to employees.

Research by Nottingham City Council found that 53% of organisations who have to pay the WPL do pass the charge on in some way to employees, with Hallam saying this probably includes eight out of the 10 largest employers in the city.

"Others have said for example if, as a factory, we hit our carbon emission target this year we will pay the cost of the levy and won't pass the cost on to employees," he says.

When the scheme was introduced, Imperial Tobacco offered to pay the cost of the parking levy for those employees who carried out

unpaid charity work wearing tabards with their employer's logo on.

"That was good PR for Imperial Tobacco and a great many of its staff did that," says Hallam. "Some employers have just passed on the cost, and Nottingham City Council is one of those."

"We have a car park management scheme where our over-riding principle is that if you park on council premises then that is your choice and you will pay for the privilege of doing so because Nottingham has a good public transport offering."

"We have a slightly cheaper tariff in the areas which are not so well served by public transport."

The WPL also allows the local authority to

spend £250,000 each year to support employers to better manage commuter travel through travel planning and parking management.

Around one-third of large employers now have travel plans, while they can also take their own action to help employees. For example, E.on promotes car-sharing at its sites in the city, including through the use of:

- Priority parking for vehicles carrying at least one passenger.
- A car-sharing register on the company's intranet to make it easier to match lift offers and requests.
- A special rate negotiated with a local bus company for employees.



3 WPL LED TO A SURGE IN THE NUMBER OF COMMUTERS USING PUBLIC TRANSPORT

During the life of Nottingham's scheme, the council expects to raise an average £12 million each year, with the WPL designed to raise less in the early years and more in the future.

The WPL has helped Nottingham bring in funding to more than double the size of its tram network through a £570 million extension, carry out a £60m redevelopment of the city's railway station, and support its Link bus network.

Hallam says a number of major employers such as VF and Experian also opted to move into, or consolidated to, city centre locations with good public transport links to remove the need for the provision of parking as well as to improve accessibility.

These measures have helped increase the proportion of people travelling by public transport in the morning by 2%, meaning – for the first time – more than 40% of commuters now use it.

Loughborough University research found that 8.6% of commuters who either cycled or used public transport in Greater Nottingham said the WPL and the package of measures it has funded played an important part in their decision to switch from the car.

"The two new tramlines are now carrying 20 million passengers a year," adds Hallam. "We have seen a modal shift where 20% of people who used their cars are now using the trams."

Hallam says the WPL also allows the council to offer a number of grants to employers. "We have a cycling structure grant which employers can apply for if they want a cycle rack, or infrastructure around cycling, such as showers or drying cabinets, and we put about £100,000 aside each year for that," he adds.

4 WPL HAS POSITIVELY IMPACTED CONGESTION AND AIR QUALITY

The objective of Nottingham's WPL was not to reduce congestion, but to constrain the growth of it, as a city that does well is almost certainly going to have a degree of congestion.

Hallam says: "Nottingham's objective was to reduce the growth in congestion from 15% to 8% by 2021, and although it is still relatively early days, research shows it looks like it has been successful."

Loughborough University research found that from July 2015, congestion rose less in Nottingham than the average of four comparable English cities (Newcastle, Liverpool, Sheffield and Leicester) and, at 2.1% it was 0.7 percentage points lower than the country as a whole.

The WPL package of measures also helped Nottingham beat a CO₂ reduction plan well ahead of its target. It had aimed to reduce carbon emissions by 26% by 2020 compared with 2005 levels, but in 2016 the council announced they were already 33% below that level. However, the scheme does have its critics.

"Nottingham City Council will tell you (WPL) has led to it achieving its clean air goals four years ahead of schedule, but it would be wrong to think it had improved traffic around the city," says Andy Hibberd, media and communications manager at East Midlands Chamber.

"Nottingham's trams are quite good today, but it still takes an hour to drive the six miles to the motorway in the evening rush and it's now almost impossible to find parking spaces at park-and-ride stations of the periphery of the centre."

"The city centre might have achieved clean air goals, but it is possibly because the congestion has been moved to suburbs."

V2G: EASY MONEY?

Vehicle to grid technology has the potential to earn electric vehicle operators money, but it is not without some risks. *Andrew Ryan* reports

Company cars and vans tend to earn a business money while they're out on the road, but could electric vehicles (EVs) also be a source of income when they're parked?

That's one of the potential benefits of vehicle-to-grid (V2G) technology, which allows EV operators to sell electricity stored in their vehicles' batteries back to the grid when they're plugged in, enabling the network operator to make up the shortfall when demand outstrips supply.

A recent trial in Denmark carried out by Nuvve found that, over two years, a fleet of 10 Nissan e-NV200 electric vans each performed 100 hours of V2G, selling a total of 130,000kWh to the grid. This saw each van generate €1,860 (£1,600) per year.

"Multiplied by a couple of million vehicles, you could be looking at a US\$20-70 billion (£15-53bn) industry by unlocking these resources," Paige Mullen, European project manager at Nuvve, told a recent V2G workshop arranged by Level (Low Emission Vehicle Enterprise and Learning) in Nottingham.

"The great thing about using a vehicle in this way is that somebody has already bought it as they've made the financial decision to electrify their fleet, so V2G allows them to tap into a resource that's already


been financed and use some of those revenues to offset the cost of that vehicle."

V2G has already attracted significant interest and investment – the UK Government last year awarded £30m in funding to 21 V2G projects to explore and trial both the technology and commercial opportunities.

Among the reasons for this is the expected growth in the number of EVs, which will increase the demands on the grid, as well the rapid growth in renewable energy generation sources such as wind and solar which deliver a more unreliable and intermittent electricity supply than fossil-fuelled power stations.

Ofgem figures show that in 2006, wind and solar generated 1.2% of Great Britain's electricity.

In 2017, this had risen to 19% and it is expected to increase further.

Last November, the capacity of renewable energy overtook that of fossil fuels in the UK for the first time, research from Imperial College London has shown. 

WILL BATTERIES BE ABLE TO TAKE THE STRAIN?

The long-term effect of using V2G technology on an electric vehicle battery is unknown, although early signs are that any degradation will be minimal.

"A lot does depend on the type of service you

are doing, so if you are doing full charge followed by full discharge, then that cycle is going to put more strain on the battery," says Paige Mullen, European project manager at Nuvve.

"But typically if you are working in areas such

as frequency regulation, you are doing a small charge followed by small discharge, so even over eight-10 hours, the battery's state of charge is not changing much. You are not putting that full cycle impact on your batteries.

"In our trial in Denmark we have seen negligible degradation in our batteries."

In some cases, V2G technology can improve the life of an EV battery.

"Some of the feedback we have had is that actually storing your battery fully charged can be more damaging than what you are doing with V2G," says Chris Cox, head of energy systems and infrastructure at Cenex.

"Everyone likes to fully charge their phone 'just in case', but that is not the best way to store or maintain the battery, and that actually has quite a negative impact on it.

"V2G can regulate that and sometimes even improve battery life compared with leaving it fully charged all the time."

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In the past five years, the amount of renewable capacity has tripled, while that of fossil fuels has fallen by a third, as power stations reached the end of their life or became uneconomic.

However, while fossil fuel power stations can change output to meet demand, renewable energy sources are unable to do this, says Chris Cox, Cenex head of energy systems and infrastructure.

"The growth of low carbon decentralised electricity generation means the grid system will need to change," he adds. "Smart charging and V2G really do offer part of that solution."

Smart charging enables energy companies to incentivise vehicle owners to opt into a programme that allows the supplier to curtail charging when energy demand is particularly high.

With V2G technology, when demand exceeds supply, the electricity stored in vehicle batteries can be returned to the grid, with the batteries charged when supply outstrips demand.

This currently provides two main streams of income through selling electricity back to the grid: firm frequency regulation (FFR) and arbitrage.

The purpose of FFR is to maintain the stability of the system-wide alternating current (AC). It does this by supplying extra electricity to the grid when not enough is being generated, and drawing electricity from the grid when there is a surplus.

BUY LOW, SELL HIGH

Arbitrage refers to the application of energy trading strategies within an electricity market environment, where the operator aims to buy energy from the grid at a low price (such as on an Economy 7 tariff) and sell it back to the grid at a meaningfully higher price.

At the moment, FFR is the most lucrative of the two revenue streams, according to Greg Payne, modelling and simulation lead at Cenex.

This currently pays around 50p per kWh. To earn £100 a year, a battery would have to discharge the equivalent of 950km (594 miles) of driving.

Through arbitrage, however, an EV could currently earn 3.8p per kWh, meaning that to generate the same amount of revenue a battery would have to discharge the equivalent of 12,500km (7,812 miles) of driving.

This, obviously, could have ramifications on



THE IDEAL IS THAT YOU WANT THE VEHICLE PARKED FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE

PAIGE MULLEN, NUVVE

"It is never going to be a £5 box, but I don't think cost will be the biggest barrier if the business case for V2G can really be set out."

OPTIMUM PARKING TIME

The potential revenue will also be affected by the length of time a vehicle is plugged into the grid. In Nuvve's trial in Denmark, the EVs were typically being driven between 7am and 4pm, and plugged in outside these hours.

"The ideal is that you want the vehicle parked for as long as possible," says Mullen. "V2G is not necessarily for you if you are using your car except for one or two hours a day, because you need that dwell time."

While an organisation could make a business case for the technology based on current figures, adopting V2G for its earning potential is not without its risks.

A number of companies are developing stand-alone electricity storage batteries specifically to smooth out the supply/demand peaks on the grid, but Cox says a bigger threat comes from saturation of the market.

"FFR is not fixed price, it's a competitive market," he adds. "And so if every vehicle becomes electric and then every vehicle is plugging in at similar times, you are not going to earn the same money."

"FFR will drop to a relatively negligible value. We've seen that in other grid services already, and you will have to start looking at other less lucrative value streams."

"However, for the first adopters, there is a huge opportunity. If you look at the business cases, I think we will see there are niche customer types that are able to offer services like frequency regulation much more effectively, and therefore access that vacuum."

"Others with more intermittent or more variable driving patterns will not be able to access the higher values, so will get lower values from it."

Payne adds: "V2G only makes sense currently if you include grid services. If you don't include grid services, then actually smart charging will give you what you want and will give you better values, particularly as there is quite a large jump in the price between a smart charger and a bi-directional V2G charger."

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Fuel consumption in mpg (l/100km) for the model shown: Combined 42.8 (6.6), CO2 emissions 133 g/km. MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. The figures shown here are for limited comparison purposes; fuel consumption is tested using WLTP and CO2 emissions are NEDC equivalent. Only compare fuel consumption, CO2 and electric range figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. For more information about WLTP please refer to kia.com/uk. Model shown: All-New ProCeed 'GT-Line S' 1.4 T-GDi 138bhp 7-speed auto DCT ISG at £29,235 including premium Infra red paint at £550. All-New Kia ProCeed range available from £23,835. Specification varies across the range and is subject to change without notice. 7 Year /100,000 miles manufacturer's warranty included.

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FleetNews



AWARDS 2019

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Your 39-page souvenir guide to winners, finalists and those highly commended at the 2019 awards



FleetNews

AWARDS
2019

THE AWARDS

- 34 Fleet News Hall of Fame
- 35 Fleet champion award
- 36 Fleet manager of the year
- 37 New company car of the year
- 39 Fleet manufacturer of the year
- 41 Fleet supplier of the year
- 45 Fleet of the year up to 1,000 vehicles
- 47 Fleet of the year 1,001-plus vehicles
- 48 Safe fleet award
- 49 Ultra-low emission fleet
- 51 Best travel and mobility initiative
- 52 Most improved fleet of the year
- 53 Green fleet manufacturer of the year
- 55 Best zero-emission car
- 55 Most improved fleet manufacturer of the year
- 56 Best small car
- 56 Best lower medium car
- 57 Best upper medium car
- 57 Best company SUV

- 59 Best premium car
- 59 Best executive car
- 60 Best mid-size SUV
- 60 Best compact premium car
- 61 Customer service award
- 63 Leasing company of the year – up to 20,000 vehicles
- 65 Leasing company of the year – 20,000+ vehicles
- 67 Best rental company of the year
- 69 Fleet dealer of the year

CHAIRMAN



Christopher Macgowan OBE
former chief executive,
Society of Motor
Manufacturers
and Traders

WELCOME



More than 1,300 people attended the Fleet News Awards this year to celebrate the finalists, winners and highly commendeds.

There are many fleet awards imitators, but we believe our awards mean the most to you.

They are unquestionably the most robust, with a judging panel of experts from across the fleet sector chaired by former SMMT chief executive Christopher Macgowan OBE and monitored by Ernst & Young. Transparency is vital.

The awards evening is the greatest night of the year in fleet, bringing everyone together. It's a wonderful opportunity to celebrate, network and socialise. And there was plenty of all three!

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

The judges were once again impressed with the finalists' level of innovation and their very real focus on reducing cost, improving safety and the process of continuous improvement.

Stephen Briers, editor-in-chief, Fleet News



The role of Brian Cooper, senior manager at Ernst & Young (EY), left, at the Fleet News Awards is to provide an independent view of the process adhered to by the judging panels as they consider

the sometimes lengthy list of entrants for each category.

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

Cooper ensures that the reasons for non-inclusion are given the same level of importance as the winners and those shortlisted or highly commended.

When it comes to the final voting, EY records the voting and advises the judging panel of the outcome.

Thank you to our sponsors:



THE JUDGES



Stephen Briers
Editor-in-chief,
Fleet News
Fleet/manufacturer
categories



Caroline Sandall
Deputy chairman,
ACFO
Fleet categories



Chris Connors
Head of facilities & fleet,
Countryside Properties
Manufacturer categories



Dylan Setterfield
Global senior
forecasting editor,
Cap HPI
Manufacturer categories



Sarah Tooze
Deputy editor,
Fleet News
Supplier categories



David Oliver
Procurement manager,
Red Bull
Supplier categories



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



Debbie Floyd
Fleet manager,
Bauer Media
Manufacturer
categories



Graham Short
Fleet manager,
Zip Water (UK)
Supplier categories



Stewart Lightbody
Head of fleet services,
Anglian Water
Supplier categories



Ryan Coles
Group global travel
and fleet lead, Aviva
Supplier categories



Liz Hollands
Facilities manager, FTA
Supplier categories



Matt de Prez
Staff writer, *Fleet News*
Manufacturer categories



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



Mark Jowsey
Director, manufacturer
liaison, KeeResources
Manufacturer categories



Julie Madoui
Head of fleet,
Kier Fleet Services
Fleet categories



Shaun Sadlier
Head of consulting,
Arval
Manufacturer categories



Matt Curtis
General manager, asset
risk, LeasePlan UK
Manufacturer categories



Paul Hollick
Chairman, ICFM
Fleet categories

Stuart Thomas, director of fleet and SME services at hall of fame sponsor The AA (right), presented the award to Graham Telfer, fleet manager, Gateshead Council (centre) as *Fleet News* editor-in-chief Stephen Briers looked on



HALL OF FAME

Inductee: **Graham Telfer, Gateshead Council**

The 2019 inductee into the Fleet News Hall of Fame has long been a pioneer of low emission and safety initiatives.

Long before air quality hit the headlines, he was trialling electric vehicles. As far back as the 1990s, his fleet was running vehicles on biodiesel and liquefied petroleum gas.

And he continues to monitor and trial new and emerging technologies in a never-ending search for carbon

reduction and minimisation.

His career in fleet started back in 1974 as an apprentice at the National Bus Company. Over the years, he built up substantial knowledge in fleet working, among other jobs, at the Opel franchised dealer in Newcastle.

During almost 30 years with his local authority, he's been no stranger to awards ceremonies, collecting trophies from Fleet News, Brake, Commercial Fleet and Energy Saving Trust, among many others.

He's seen numerous changes to the way fleet is managed.

The early days saw the use of rotadex flip files and thousands of coloured squares to detail service intervals, while the first computers were view-only for vehicle data. To interrogate it you had to write your own programme!

Today, he employs myriad technology solutions to improve safety.

But more than that, he shares his experiences with other fleets – directly, through Driving for Better Business and via Fleet News roundtable discussions.

He is also an advisory panel member on the Department for

Transport's Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Programme.

His mission is to engage the wider business community in safer and cleaner driving.

"My role," he says, "is to work with the public in both an advisory and partnership role."

Away from fleet, our new inductee enjoys mountain climbing, cheering on Newcastle United on the rare occasion there's something to cheer, and caring for his beloved Dolomite Sprint.

He becomes the 30th person to enter the Fleet News Hall of Fame.



London Borough of Hackney's Norman Harding (centre) was presented with the award by *Fleet News* editor-in-chief Stephen Briers (right)



FLEET CHAMPION AWARD

Winner: **Norman Harding, London Borough of Hackney**

Taking steps to improve the environmental performance of its fleet is nothing new for London Borough of Hackney.

Under corporate fleet manager Norman Harding, the local authority's fleet department has a long history of innovation.

Since 2008, the council has run vehicles on fatty acid methyl ester biodiesel from waste cooking oil, saving hundreds of tonnes of CO₂.

Since then, it has tested hydro-treated vegetable oil (HVO) on cycles designed to repre-

sent multi-drop and refuse collection operations, achieving NO_x reductions of up to 69%.

The council has 47 electric vehicles and their introduction typifies Harding's innovative approach. In 2016/17, the borough installed 45 charging points for council use, but to overcome a lack of depot space which restricts charging facilities, it initiated a home charging trial to enable staff that take vehicles home to home-charge and easily reclaim costs.

The council, which has signed up to the Go Ultra Low Company commitment and become a LoCity Champion, will also explore the possibility of operating electric

HGVs, but Harding realises this is a longer term project. In the transition period, he intends to operate his HGV fleet on HVO.

Over the past two years, Harding has collaborated with LoCity and LowCVP to conduct formal emissions testing of HVO which has shown the fuel can produce NO_x reductions at the tailpipe of 69% and 28% dependent on the operating cycle.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Norman Harding has taken a trailblazing approach to the adoption of low carbon solutions. He is happy to nurture, support and educate others in the industry and has substantially added to the fleet DNA for future generations, especially in London where he threw out the rule book to pioneer a range of environment initiatives.

CO₂ emissions at the tailpipe fell 10%, and because it is made from waste vegetable oil, the fuel is already more than 80% CO₂ efficient.

Harding's out-of-the-box thinking has also seen the borough introduce 30 bikes for staff to use for business purposes.

Additionally, as an incentive to switch from the car, staff are paid a pence per mile rate when using a privately-owned bike for work.



Stewart Lightbody, head of fleet services at Anglian Water (centre), collected the award from Nickie Hunt-Mason, sales director, Trakm8, watched by host Huw Edwards



FLEET MANAGER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Stewart Lightbody, Anglian Water**

Cultural change can be a fleet manager's toughest task and Stewart Lightbody has demonstrated how to successfully work with stakeholders from across the business to introduce initiatives and achieve environmental and commercial goals, alongside the operational efficiency of the fleet.

Having launched a new car policy for senior managers in 2017, with an average CO₂ of 94g/km, Lightbody set about changing Anglian Water's essential user fleet, which had historically been outright

purchased on a solus manufacture deal.

Working with HR, Lightbody has introduced an aspirational policy which gives employees wider choice yet meets the organisation's environmental goals, delivered through a wholelife cost model with an external provider.

Staff are incentivised to select a sub-75g/km vehicle by being offered a lower mileage term (48 months/80,000 miles rather than 48 months/100,000 miles) and the uptake of electric vehicles (EVs) has been encouraged through a proactive approach to charging infrastructure, with a network in place before the choice list was opened.

The scheme has proved successful despite the challenges surrounding the new WLTP fuel testing regime.

Having tackled the car fleet, Lightbody has turned his attention to vans, using telematics data to identify individual journey plans by vehicle type and mapping the on-site movement of vehicles. This has allowed him to identify a number of vehicles that could, in

theory, be replaced by full EVs.

Through his discussions with the wider business, Lightbody has also identified that some Anglian Water sites generate their own power and has made electric vans part of the integral infrastructure plans of the business from now on.

Lightbody recognises the importance of his fleet team in delivering change and coaches and supports them.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Stuart is embedded into the culture and strategy of the company to understand how his fleet can work with each operation to deliver wider benefits. Fleet managers need to be transformational not transactional and Stewart has demonstrated how to transform his fleet through data and sheer will to deliver best-in-class solutions.

FINALISTS

- Justin Patterson, Addison Lee
- Stewart Lightbody, Anglian Water
- Graham Telfer, Gateshead Council

- David Fisher, Rexel UK
- Sarah Gilding, South Yorkshire Police & South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue



Steve Beattie, head of business sales, Volvo Car UK (centre), collected the award from Pete Marden, fleet director, Halfords Autocentres (right)



NEW COMPANY CAR OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Volvo XC40**



Reflecting the changing dynamic of the car market, this year's New Company Car of the Year is an SUV for the first time.

The segment has enjoyed unprecedented growth in the past few years and the XC40 is one of three new Volvo SUVs launched since 2015.

It takes the coveted title of New Company Car of the Year, having been exclusively voted for by fleet-decision makers.

A range of powertrain options are offered in the XC40 range, from the frugal D3 diesel with front-wheel drive, to

the high-performance T5 petrol with all-wheel drive.

The most efficient models emit 127g/km of CO₂ and have average fuel consumption up to 59mpg.

Later this year, a more efficient plug-in hybrid powertrain is expected to be announced alongside a fully electric version.

Utilising Volvo's new common platform, the XC40 is fitted with a wide range of safety and technology features from larger Volvos.

Pilot Assist provides adaptive cruise control and lane keeping assist, giving semi-autonomous driving ability. There is also blind-spot monitoring, rear cross-traffic alert and a 360-degree camera.

A large touchscreen takes the place of regular switches and controls on the dashboard, providing sat-nav, infotainment and connected services.

The XC40's combination of premium build quality, low running costs and fashionable styling make it an ideal fleet choice that offers high levels of driver satisfaction. On motorways it is quiet and refined, providing excellent visibility and great comfort.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Distinctive styling and competitive running costs make the new XC40 highly desirable. With a range of petrol and diesel engines, there is a model to suit all needs. Even entry-level models come highly equipped and the XC40 is among the safest cars ever tested by Euro NCAP.

FINALISTS

- Audi A6
- Ford Focus
- Mercedes-Benz A-Class
- Mercedes-Benz C-Class
- Nissan Qashqai
- Volvo XC40

Members of the BMW UK team celebrate their win



FleetNews



AWARDS 2019

WINNER

FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR: BMW UK

Carmaker's comments

BMW UK is delighted to regain its position as Fleet Manufacturer of the Year, an award we are always immensely proud of. Our strong sales performance in 2018 was a testament to our model range and our pro-active approach to WLTP. This ensured revised figures were published well ahead of the deadline and our customers were fully supported with the latest information.

Worldwide, BMW Group delivered more than 140,000 electrified vehicles to customers in 2018. From the all-electric BMW i3 to the latest addition to the plug-in hybrid range, the BMW X3 xDrive30e, BMW Group is the European market leader in electromobility. By 2025, BMW Group will have 25 electrified models in its range including at least 12 all-electric models.



Rob East, general manager – corporate sales, BMW Group UK (centre), collected the award from Denis Keenan, chief executive officer, KeeResources (right)



FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **BMW Group (UK)**



BMW has regained its position as fleet's favourite manufacturer, having last held the coveted title of Fleet Manufacturer of the Year in 2016.

The German brand has endured a challenging year, in which its fleet director Steve Oliver stepped down in April and other key fleet personnel changed roles.

Despite this, it managed to continue satisfying fleet needs through excellent customer service, product availability and strong residual values.

Rob East, previously head of fleet at last

year's winner, Mercedes-Benz, was announced as the brand's new fleet director in January. His goal will be to give fleet customers and leasing companies the best possible service in order to grow BMW's share of the premium car market.

Last year, the brand achieved a stronger performance than its key rivals, with year-on-year sales declining by just 1.7% in a market that fell by almost 6%.

BMW (and its sister brand, Mini) was among the first to re-homologate its model range under WLTP, with revised emissions figures published months ahead of the deadline.

The brand also made a conscious effort to help fleet customers

understand WLTP, what the new figures mean and how they would be affected.

Only a handful of model lines were axed as a result of the new emissions regime, so it was business as usual for most BMW customers.

CO₂ emissions across the range remain competitive and whole-life costs for key fleet models are among the best in class.

The brand's line-up of plug-in

models includes the fully-electric i3, which now has a new longer-range battery. There is also the i8 hybrid sports car, 225xe plug-in hybrid MPV and plug-in hybrid versions of the 5 and 7 series saloons.

By 2025, BMW expects to have 25 electrified vehicles available including 12 fully-electric models.

The brand has introduced two new lines – the X2 and X7. It also replaced its mid-size X3 SUV.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

An ever-expanding model range has given BMW a car to compete in almost every segment. It continues to offer improved performance and reduced emissions across its ranges, with no adverse effect on drivability. Attractive BIK and running costs help keep BMW at the top of choice lists.

FINALISTS

- Audi UK
- BMW Group (UK)
- Ford Motor Company
- Kia Motors (UK)
- Mercedes-Benz Cars UK
- Volvo Car UK



Double award winners – the AA was voted tops for customer service in addition to its fleet supplier of the year award

FleetNews



AWARDS 2019

WINNER

FLEET SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR: THE AA

Winner's comments

We are absolutely thrilled to be recognised once again by our peers as the Fleet News Fleet Supplier of the Year. We know this success is no accident; we ensure our core values of Courtesy, Care, Collaboration, Dynamism and Expertise shine through in everything we do, and our pedigree in supporting road users is unique, unrivalled and unquestioned. From roadside assistance to downtime management solutions via digital and technological innovation, the AA will always go the extra mile in providing the seamless levels of service for which we are renowned.



Customer testimonial:

"Since the appointment of the AA as Arval's breakdown partner last year, we've been incredibly impressed with the service that both we and our customers have received from it. Throughout the implementation process, the AA team demonstrated flexibility and commitment to meeting our very specific requirements. The transition was well managed and we've seen a positive impact on service and driver experience, a key principle for both our brands – whether at the roadside, in the contact centre or through the account support and management"

Amanda Smutek, Aftersales Manager – National Accounts, Arval UK



Stuart Thomas, director of fleet and SME services, The AA (centre), picked up the award from Michael Stewart, fleet director, Hyundai Motor UK (right)



FLEET SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **The AA**

With responsibility for some 70% of all new vehicles on UK roads and a laser-sharp focus on future mobility, The AA is uniquely placed among fleet suppliers to deliver a business-to-business-to-consumer offering.

A company that prides itself on refusing to rest on its laurels, The AA has contracts in place with nearly two-thirds of the companies in the Fleet News FN50 list. It has recently partnered with BP in the area of fuel discounting and Charge-master to meet servicing needs of electric vehicle users.

It appointed two people in the in the past year with significant fleet and manufacturer experience, a move that underlines its strategic approach to meeting and understanding the needs of fleet customers.

A spokesperson for The AA said: "When so many of the UK's leading fleet companies put their trust in The AA to look after their vehicles, it's a clear demonstration of our prowess and ability to meet the needs of this sector."

In keeping with its drive to assist fleet managers, the 'drowsy drivers' campaign was launched to encourage fleet operators to take a best practice approach to tired driving. A combination of advice

from an independent sleep expert and digital content saw the campaign receive national and B2B title coverage.

Environmental issues are "critical" for many of The AA's customers, and in response to the clean air debate and alternative fuels it released a focused Operational Fleet Report.

The report and research gave a voice to industry frustrations and

challenged the Government's approach towards air quality improvements, with managers reporting their struggle to plan for a potentially fragmented clean air policy which differs from city to city.

Following these findings, The AA is developing a series of workshops to put fleet managers in touch with experts to help make the transition to cleaner and alternative fuels.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

The AA has won the fleet supplier of the year award four times in the past five years, demonstrating its outstanding performance. Its innovative approach and ability to look to the future was praised. It has enhanced its repair capability through connected services and is focused on 'keeping customers moving' with its new hire car product, Agile. It has also invested in staff and infrastructure.

FINALISTS

- ALD Automotive
- FMG
- Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions

- Jaama
- Reflex Vehicle Hire
- The AA

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions



24hrs

the time it takes Eclipse Presentations to load in, rehearse, perform and de-rig

5,232,640

pixels used over the screen surface for content



8

miles of cable

84

moving fixtures



3.30am

the time when the final events team stragglers called it a night

1,000+

bottles of wine drunk during the evening



400+

different companies in the room, networking, socialising and dancing

348

pictures taken by Fleet News photographer Chris Lowndes



£10,821

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

167

total posts from 50 users for #FNAwards, which gained 589,781 impressions



1,287

number of guests

4

selfie requests with editor of Fleet News (the world has gone mad)

1

lost trophy



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FLEET NEWS AWARDS

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Sarah Gilding, head of vehicle fleet management, South Yorkshire Police & South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (next to Huw Edwards) picked up the award from Lisa Spong, sales director, Reflex Vehicle Hire (right) with colleagues Joanna Buckley and Ian Kemp



FLEET OF THE YEAR UP TO 1,000 VEHICLES

Winner: **South Yorkshire Police & Fire and Rescue**

South Yorkshire Police (SYP) and South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) decided to merge their fleet departments last year to create a "high performing, affordable and sustainable service".

The new combined fleet of 849 vehicles (599 cars and 250 vans) is headed by Sarah Gilding, who was previously solely in charge of SYP's fleet of 650 vehicles.

Gilding had already introduced a number of cost-saving initiatives to the SYP fleet, earning it the fleet of the year – 251-1,000 vehicles

honour at the 2015 awards, and now provides strategic oversight and management of all aspect of both organisations' fleet services to help progress their objectives.

A joint strategy is in place which outlines how she intends to ensure vehicles and equipment are procured, maintained and replaced to meet current and future operational needs.

The strategy sets out the current position, short-, medium- and long-term plans.

A number of innovations are already in place, underway and/or in the pipeline.

Gilding's environmental strategy

focuses on increasing the number of low emission vehicles within the fleet wherever possible.

Having added a number of Vauxhall Ampera range-extendors to SYP's fleet in 2014 she successfully trialled five pure electric Nissan e-NV200 vans between September 2017 and March 2018 as part project with the Energy Saving Trust and Highways England.

As a result, SYP has taken

delivery of 11 new e-NV200s (10 of which are being used by the facilities management fleet, with the remaining vehicle being used by the driver services unit), bringing financial and environmental benefits.

Gilding expects to save £9,900 in wholelife costs and more than 24,700kg of CO₂ per vehicle over four years, bringing total savings of £108,900 and 271,907kg.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

South Yorkshire Police and South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue has a structured strategy with completion dates and thorough, detailed action plans. Sarah Gilding is bridging the culture between two fleets and employing strategies relevant to both, with a clear understanding of all the key fleet issues. A first class example of fleet management.

FINALISTS

■ Dundee City Council
■ Momentum Instore
■ Radian

■ South Yorkshire Police & South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue

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FLEET NEWS AWARDS



Justin Patterson, head of operations at Addison Lee (centre), celebrates with Zenith managing director Ian Hughes (right)



FLEET OF THE YEAR 1,001-PLUS VEHICLES

Winner: **Addison Lee**

Addison Lee has long been an innovator, picking up trophies at the Fleet News Awards in recent years for its commitment to environmental initiatives that focus as much on the use of technology to minimise dead mileage as they do using low emission cars for its private hire and courier work.

With one of the country's biggest car fleets (4,825, plus 407 vans), small improvements can result in big savings. However, in the three years since Justin Patterson's appointment as head of

operations, progress has been substantial and wide-ranging.

From implementing a new funding structure, which pitched the competitive lending rates of banks against the more bullish view on residual values held by leasing companies on a standardised master hire agreement, to writing a four-year environmental strategy that will conclude with a zero emission fleet, Addison Lee is examining every element of fleet policy.

Savings run into the millions with more to come as it tenders for new vehicles following a review of its holding cycles and total cost of ownership modelling. Replacement cycles have been linked to

Cap HPI actual and future monitor values and SMR forecasts, all combined with KeeResources software for a complete overview.

The company has introduced 90% utilisation targets with vehicle-off-road, pool car, hire and accident repair objectives, resulting in a leaner operation.

No stone is left unturned. Grey fleet has been minimised via a travel hierarchy which promotes the use of public transport via busi-

ness Oyster cards, while Addison Lee is part of a Government-led project to assess the potential for autonomous vehicle technology.

With a mix of self-employed and employed drivers, Addison Lee has taken the decision to manage most of its services in-house, including workshops and driver training, to ensure it has full control over cost, efficiencies and operational effectiveness.

It works.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Managing a complex fleet inside and outside of London gives Addison Lee some unique challenges. The business demonstrates exceptional cost savings and is implementing a strategy that takes into consideration, and finds solutions to, current and future legislation and fleet pressures.

FINALISTS

■ Addison Lee
■ Murphy Plant

■ Schneider Electric
■ Scottish Water

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Scottish Water



Mark Woodworth (second left) and Gareth Jones (far right) from Speedy Asset Services collect the award from Verizon Connect's Enterprise sales partner Dan Lancaster (second from right)



SAFE FLEET AWARD

Winner: **Speedy Asset Services**

'S'afety is a core value at 'Speedy.' This statement was made several times in the company's awards entry and it's clear from the extent of its market-leading initiatives that these are not empty words or platitudes.

Speedy's safety strategy is grounded in its own training academy which offers more than 250 courses for internal and external delegates, including almost 50 that are driver and vehicle focused. They range from vehicle familiarisation and load safety to cycle safety and ADR awareness. It has also introduced e-learning for all drivers, such as safe urban driving and counter-terrorism.

No van driver is allowed on the road until they have completed a half-day load security course, which is refreshed every two years.

An individual driver's e-learning training plan is designed via Speedy's risk index profiler.

Meanwhile, any incident is thoroughly investigated, including root-cause analysis, at the weekly post accident review group meeting, which consists of senior management, HR, road risk manager and head of transport.

Drivers are interviewed with supporting evidence from the insurance company, including accident records.

At-fault drivers will then undergo appropriate training, from online risk assessment to classroom or on-road coaching.

Telematics and cameras are deployed in all light commercial vehicles, with weekly depot score-cards and speed reports sent to transport managers for review and action.

The safety policy also takes in the grey fleet. Use of vehicles is strictly limited, but those with permission to use their own cars can have their vehicle spot-checked at any time for roadworthiness and compliance. All documentation is checked and logged, while a new

mileage capture app requires drivers to confirm their car is road legal with no changes to their licence every time they log on.

Speedy doesn't just prioritise its drivers, it also focuses on members of the public.

Consequently, it is one of the first fleets in the county to address concerns about vulnerable road users by fitting a near-side glass door panel to all new vehicles where the base of the windscreen is two metres above ground level.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Safety is clearly in the Speedy DNA and the results provide clear proof of its culture. Its depth of policies and robust structure with weekly meetings, embedded into a post-accident review group with representatives from across the business, ensures full engagement within the business from top to bottom. Never content, Speedy is constantly looking for new ways to improve safety.

FINALISTS

- Altrad Services
- Gateshead Council
- HTS (Property & Environment)
- Momentum Instore
- Scottish Water
- Speedy Asset Services

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Gateshead Council



ALD Automotive corporate sales director Ian Turner (centre), picked up the award from Rob East, general manager - corporate sales, BMW Group UK (right)



ULTRA-LOW EMISSION FLEET

Winner: **ALD Automotive**

Amyth-busting plug-in hybrid trial and a holistic approach to driving down emissions have helped ALD Automotive slash CO₂ and travel further for less.

Over a six-month period, the company achieved a 24% uplift in mpg performance and cut the average CO₂ emissions of its 124-car in-house fleet by 28%, from 103g/km to 74g/km.

A real-world PHEV trial involved 20 ALD company car drivers, chosen because of their unique driving profiles.

They swapped petrol and diesel cars for Mercedes C350e PHEVs, fitted with telematics devices to accurately monitor performance.

The PHEV fleet managed an overall average of 54.48mpg, which rose to 56.44mpg after the first month. The best recorded mpg was 110.54 by a driver averaging 7,000 miles per annum (mpa) resulting in an annual fleet saving of £200.

The highest mileage recorded was 14,000mpa, delivering 84.67mpg and resulting in an annual fuel saving of £500.

Across the final 68,000 miles of the 145,000 miles covered during the trial, more than 50% of journeys were completed in 'engine off mode' in which the hybrid's petrol engine was disengaged.

ALD calculated a total reduction in CO₂ emissions of 14.8 tonnes across the PHEV fleet versus the diesel equivalent.

It also concluded that drivers of

a Mercedes-Benz C220d 2.1 Sport Premium Auto (diesel) could make tax savings of around £6,000 in benefit-in-kind (BIK) by switching to the comparable C350e PHEV.

Meanwhile, running these vehicles for 15,000 miles a year for either three or four years, it found it could save up to £2,000 for every vehicle replaced by a PHEV version.

The success of the trial, and its myth-busting effect, led to a dramatic rise in employees

ordering plug-in hybrids, up from 13% in 2017 to 67%, last year.

To support the switch to PHEVs, ALD doubled the number of EV charge points at its Bristol head office, from six to 12, and fitted six each at its Innovation and Development Centre and Milton Keynes offices.

Leader boards were introduced to record mpg and the maximum distance achieved on electric-only power. Drivers charged vehicles more regularly and applied more efficient driving techniques.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

ALD employed a thorough methodology with the necessary groundwork to understand what was required to achieve its environmental objectives. The process of fitting people to the right vehicle, running a pilot, accessing the data, engaging the workforce and then creating the right strategy for the business is a best practice approach to creating and adopting a low emission fleet strategy.

FINALISTS

- ALD Automotive
- Dundee City Council
- Leeds City Council
- London Borough of Hackney
- OVO Energy

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Dundee City Council



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a 4% decrease in braking distance on wet roads*.

* When compared to its predecessor, based on internal tests.



BEST TRAVEL AND MOBILITY INITIATIVE

Winner: **ALD Automotive**

ALD Automotive is committed to helping all employees choose the best mobility option to suit their needs on a journey-by-journey basis. Its focus on promoting alternatives to the car has increased productivity and improved employee well-being, while helping it better manage costs. Its policies also aren't just aimed at company car drivers; grey fleet drivers – employees who drive their own car for work purposes – and those who simply commute, benefit from its focus on mobility. Ad hoc drivers are given use of a pool car, a demo car or a car

hired by ALD, if it is deemed the most suitable option for their journey. Employees are also encouraged to join the company's 'cycle to work' scheme, which is offered as a healthier alternative to driving. However, in order to encourage more employees to use public transport, the leasing company, which has 124 company cars on its fleet, also conducted a public transport trial with its staff. They were surveyed both before and after making their journey to better understand the impact of making the switch from car to bus or train. ALD also offered incentives to use public transport by introducing a policy where an employ-

ee's travel time counted as working time. It meant that the working day started on the train and not when they arrived at the office or at a meeting. The trial was a success. It illustrated that employees were able to plan journeys better, particularly around predicting arrival times, which they found much easier than by car.

Having avoided congestion normally experienced in making their journey by car, they felt they were much more productive and arrived feeling fresh. They also reported feeling much less stressed than they typically would if travelling by car. ALD has recognised the need to move away from the traditional fleet model towards a bespoke, optimised mobility solution.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:
ALD's data-driven and holistic approach to travel, which focuses on the optimum way to move from A to B, is best practice from a fleet perspective. The company has looked at the detailed travel needs of each employee and engaged staff for a true bottom-up approach. It engaged hearts and minds with a strong well-being element to the strategy. The judges praised ALD's policy of including train commuting time as part of the working day.

FINALISTS
■ ALD Automotive
■ Gateshead Council

HIGHLY COMMENDED
■ Gateshead Council



MOST IMPROVED FLEET OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Schneider Electric**

Schneider Electric has achieved significant cost savings after switching its lease scheme to a new blended employee car ownership (ECO) scheme.

The scheme is HMRC-compliant and was restructured last year following the optional remuneration arrangement (OpRA) tax changes. The cars are funded through AMAP (approved mileage allowance payment) rates and a loan.

Drivers in each grade are able to choose from a basket of five benchmark cars, with the option to trade up or down.

Schneider Electric has worked closely with manufacturers to maximise the discounts to get the best spec vehicles possible into the benchmark grades, giving the drivers a better choice.

A CO₂ emissions cap of 130g/km is in place with average CO₂ emissions of 114g/km last year (down from 125g/km in 2015) and plans to reduce this further this year.

Schneider Electric has also achieved savings on the commercial vehicle fleet thanks to a dual badge deal and switching 52 drivers from small vans to small cars after conducting an audit to ensure the operation was fit for purpose.

To improve vehicle off-road time smart repairs are utilised where possible and tyre replacements (tread wear) are set to be pre-booked and done at site rather than needing to visit a tyre provider.

Schneider Electric's approach to risk management is also comprehensive, earning it a RoSPA Gold Award last year. It is now adopting the ISO 39001 Road Traffic Safety Management standard and has set a number of objectives

including: improving its analysis of incident reporting and utilising the data from driver training more effectively; raising awareness of road safety through a communications plan; embedding a road safety culture by issuing a Safe Driving Charter for completion by all drivers; continuing to improve driver competence; and improving the monitoring of vehicle safety by conducting an annual inspection of ECO and contract hire vehicles.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Innovation should be at the heart of the fleet manager's DNA. Schneider has innovated by changing its lease scheme to ECO but it has also demonstrated huge savings in multiple areas of its fleet which makes the company a worthy winner.

FINALISTS

■ Altrad Services
■ Momentum Instore

■ Schneider Electric
■ Scottish Water

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Scottish Water

Stuart Ferma, general manager, Toyota & Lexus Fleet (centre), collected the award from Ashley Crookes, director of sales – northern region, Ogilvie Fleet (right)



GREEN FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Toyota (GB)**

With almost half of all alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) sold last year wearing a Toyota or Lexus badge, the brand's commitment to reducing emissions is hard to ignore.

Since 1997, Toyota has pioneered the self-charging hybrid powertrain and now offers it across almost all of its model range.

Diesel engines have been removed from the entire passenger car line-up, with all new models offered with a hybrid or petrol engine.

Toyota believes the self-charging hybrid is the most cost-effective path for fleets to quickly transition to greener motoring, requiring

no charging infrastructure or charging delays. Data from more than 17,000 test drives shows Toyota & Lexus hybrid models operate on electric power for an average of 50% of the journey.

Globally, Toyota has a long-term manifesto to reduce its environmental impact, addressing every single area of vehicle manufacture and use through to disposal.

It is working on more environmentally-friendly designs that use lower carbon raw materials and fewer parts, enable greater use of biomaterials from renewable sources and make vehicles easier to dismantle and recycle.

Alongside its hybrid powertrains, Toyota is investing in the development of hydrogen fuel cell and battery technology.

The Toyota Mirai was the first mass-market hydrogen-powered vehicle to be launched. With a range of 300 miles it emits nothing other than water.

Hydrogen technology is being used for further sustainability projects, such as supporting the Japan 2020 Olympics with hydrogen buses and using fuel cells to power forklift trucks within Toyota plants.

This year, Toyota is revitalising its line-up with an all-new Corolla, Rav4 and Camry – all of which feature hybrid power. The Corolla

is the first car to be offered with a choice of two self-charging hybrid engines, providing customers with greater choice.

The Lexus range was enhanced with the hybrid-powered RX and LS in 2018 and this year sees the introduction of the new ES luxury saloon and UX crossover.

To date, Toyota and Lexus has sold more than 12 million low emission and plug-in vehicles. It estimates that these have saved more than 90 million tonnes of CO₂ from being emitted, versus conventionally powered vehicles.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Now fully committed to hybrid, Toyota has always been an environmental pioneer but continues to introduce new initiatives every year. It has never wavered from its objectives, with long-term planning for a greener future. Think environment, think Toyota.

FINALISTS

■ BMW Group (UK)
■ Hyundai UK
■ Nissan Motor (GB)

■ PSA Group
■ Toyota (GB)

Members of the Honda UK team celebrate their award

MOST IMPROVED FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR: HONDA UK

FleetNews

AWARDS 2019

WINNER

Judges' comment

Throughout the past 24 months, Honda has evolved its entire fleet service offering in conjuncture with its dealer network, ensuring it is truly engaged with all aspects of the fleet market, at all levels.

Due to a comprehensive offering of cars and Honda's enhanced service delivery levels, the carmaker has seen fleet sales as a proportion of overall sales increase to 37% in 2018. This is due, in part, to an all-new business website, an award-winning virtual account manager tool for time poor, larger fleets and development of Honda's personalised Platinum Programme for smaller, local businesses.

Honda's focus is on delivering the right vehicle for the driver's individual driving needs, using a consultative approach to provide guidance and advice to all fleet customers. The addition of the CR-V Hybrid will offer an even more efficient option for fleet customers and is expected to have a significant impact on sales.

HONDA



BEST ZERO-EMISSION CAR



Michael Stewart, director of fleet, Hyundai Motor UK (left), was presented with the award by Ashley Crookes, director of sales - Northern Region, Ogilvie Fleet

Winner: Hyundai Kona Electric

Few cars are more representative of the current needs of the fleet sector than the Kona Electric.

The small SUV is the first electric car to provide long-range travel at an affordable price. It is also wrapped in a modern, desirable package with a high level of standard features. No wonder demand is so high.

Until now, higher mileage fleet drivers have had no option but to choose diesel through fear of running out of power.

The 64kWh Kona Electric can comfortably

achieve 250 miles (279 WLTP) before it needs to be plugged in.

It also provides excellent performance, accelerating much more quickly than an equivalent petrol or diesel vehicle.

For those who don't need so much range, the cheaper 39kWh version can still cover 180 miles between charges.

Despite the current supply constraints caused by restricted battery availability, judges felt the Kona Electric deserves recognition for upping the bar in the electric car segment.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Nissan Leaf

FINALISTS

■ BMW i3
■ Hyundai Kona Electric
■ Jaguar i-Pace

■ Nissan Leaf
■ Renault Zoe
■ Volkswagen e-Golf

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Kona offers outstanding electric range at an affordable price wrapped up in the practicality of an SUV. A great looking vehicle that changes the game in its segment.



MOST IMPROVED FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Winner: Honda UK

A total restructure of Honda's fleet service offering has seen it become truly engaged with all aspects of the fleet market, led by head of fleet Marc Samuel.

Its Platinum Programme encourages the Honda dealer network to interact with company car drivers by offering test drives and aftersales services, giving a first-class customer experience from the moment they interact with the brand.

Dealer principals, sales managers and

sales advisors have been trained to "talk the language of fleet", ensuring they understand the needs of fleet customers and can answer all enquiries.

A virtual account manager programme enables time-stretched fleet managers with smaller fleets to make enquires through digital channels.

This frees up time and reduces the need for face-to-face meetings.

Larger fleets benefit from the support of an account management team that has doubled in size.



Marc Samuel, fleet sales operations manager, Honda (UK) (left), received the award from Ashley Crookes, director of sales - Northern Region, Ogilvie Fleet

JUDGES' COMMENTS

Honda has been proactively seeking opinions and knowledge from fleets to improve its business propositions and support. The team has worked hard to strengthen relationships with fleets and the leasing sector, which resulted in strong growth last year.

FINALISTS

■ Honda UK
■ Nissan Motor (GB)
■ Suzuki GB

BEST SMALL CAR



Winner: Ford Fiesta

Following its first full year on sale, the eighth-generation Fiesta continues to lead its segment for driver appeal and running costs.

It was the UK's best-selling car in 2018, amassing almost 100,000 registrations.

Classy styling and great driveability make it popular among fleet drivers. New technology, better refinement and efficient engines mean the Fiesta is just as at home on the motorway as it is around town.

All versions come with lane departure

warning and air conditioning as standard, while the popular Zetec model features a heated windscreen and an eight-inch touchscreen infotainment system with smartphone compatibility.

The Fiesta is available in three- and five-door body styles. There is also an Active small SUV version.

Both the Ecoboost petrol and TDCi diesel engines provide good performance and efficiency, with CO₂ emissions from 96g/km. The most frugal models can achieve more than 70mpg.

FINALISTS

- Audi A1
- Citroën C3
- Ford Fiesta
- Seat Ibiza
- Škoda Fabia
- Volkswagen Polo

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Fiesta is a fleet staple – it's the small car everyone else compares with – with competitive running costs and low CO₂ emissions. An excellent car to drive, with high driver appeal, it's a great all-rounder.



BEST UPPER MEDIUM CAR



Winner: Škoda Superb

The Škoda Superb has been named the best upper medium car in fleet for the fourth consecutive year, fending off a host of newer rivals.

The Superb provides executive car levels of style, comfort and quality, at a price point that no other car in this segment can match.

It has a gigantic boot and generous cabin space, which could place it in the segment above.

The build quality and fit and finish are equally as impressive.

The addition of a new Sportline trim gives

the Superb refreshed appeal in the user-choser market, offering a credible alternative to models in the premium car category with lower BIK payments.

There is also a fleet-friendly SE Technology version that features sat-nav, blind spot monitoring, leather upholstery and heated front seats.

When fitted with the 2.0-litre TDI engine, the Superb emits from just 113g/km and can exceed 65mpg.

The Estate offers the largest load space in the segment, making it ideal for families or work-related cargo.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Peugeot 508

FINALISTS

- Ford Mondeo
- Kia Optima
- Peugeot 508

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Superb continues to be the best because it delivers more in every area than the other cars in this segment. It's comfortable, spacious, looks great, appeals to drivers and offers real value for money making it a key fleet car.

BEST LOWER MEDIUM CAR

Winner: Ford Focus

The all-new Focus launched in the middle of last year and it has already become a popular fleet model.

It offers higher equipment levels with lower P11D values than the previous generation Focus.

Sleek styling complements the car's agile handling and its spacious interior provides a refined and quiet ride.

The new 1.5-litre Ecoblue diesel engine offers best-in-class CO₂ emissions of 91g/km, with the promise of more than 80mpg.

Petrol models are also efficient, with the

1.0-litre Ecoboost providing the lowest whole-life costs in the range.

All versions of the new Focus are fitted with lane-keep assist and pre-collision autonomous emergency braking as standard, providing greater safety and confidence for drivers.

Sporty ST Line models provide a more desirable look without sacrificing efficiency, while Titanium and Vignale trims provide greater luxury.

Strong residuals complete the package, making the Focus the clear winner in this category.



Ford of Britain director for Fleet Operations Owen Gregory (left), with sponsor Richard Lane, commercial director, VisionTrack

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Focus is the benchmark car in this segment. Great to drive, packed with technology and with low CO₂ emissions and competitive costs, it appeals equally to drivers and employers. It's close to being the perfect company car.

FINALISTS

- Ford Focus
- Honda Civic
- Kia Ceed
- Seat Leon
- Toyota Prius
- Volkswagen Golf

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Kia Ceed

BEST COMPACT SUV

Winner: Hyundai Kona

Demand for small SUVs is soaring and the Kona is a stand-out product in what is currently the most hotly-contested segment.

The addition of affordable all-electric versions won it favour among judges, as did its striking looks and low running costs.

Fleet customers can choose from a range of frugal diesel and petrol engines, plus two electric models.

With a range of up to 279 miles, the Kona Electric 64kWh is the first affordable electric

car that could be considered by higher mileage fleet drivers.

Specification levels are high across the range, with a number of features usually reserved for larger luxury cars available; including ventilated seats and a head-up display.

The Kona's compact and robust exterior houses a spacious interior and generous boot, while driveability is among its top attributes.

Four-wheel drive is optionally available for those that need it, making the Kona range one the most flexible in the sector.



Michael Stewart, director of fleet, Hyundai Motor UK (left), collected the award from Simon Dicks, director of Insurance, VisionTrack

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Kona is an excellent all-round car, which has proved popular with fleets and their drivers. Roomy and versatile, it is also available as an electric version with two battery packs, giving plenty of choice at competitive prices.

FINALISTS

- Citroën C3 Aircross
- Hyundai Kona
- Kia Stonic
- Seat Arona
- Toyota C-HR
- Volkswagen T-Roc

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Toyota C-HR



Sporty design helped the BMW 5 Series to its best executive car win

BEST EXECUTIVE CAR BMW 5 SERIES

Carmaker's comments

The BMW 5 Series is a game-changer for fleet drivers. An innovative and stunningly designed model, the BMW 5 Series Saloon has previously won many awards and BMW is delighted to win, yet again, the 'Best Executive Car of the Year'. The BMW 5 Series is an outstanding combination of driving dynamics and sporty design, delivering impressive efficiency alongside standard features such as BMW Navigation with Real-Time Traffic Information. It maintains ample interior space, ensuring optimum comfort. This car makes travelling for business and leisure an effortless experience and, with optional Driving Assistant Plus, drivers are more connected than ever.



Fleet News says:

"How the car combines the firmness for engaging, sharp handling on meandering roads with the suppleness and comfort to cushion the roughest of ruts is, frankly, engineering genius"

Fleet News long-term test review, December 2017

FleetNews



AWARDS 2019

WINNER



RANGE COSTS

P11D £36,715-£54,870
CO₂ emissions (g/km) 49-180
Annual BIK tax 16%-37%
Running costs (ppm) 44.51-69.44

FLEET PICK SPEC

BMW 520d M Sport
P11D price £41,325
Running cost (4yr/80k) 49.47
CO₂ emissions (g/km) 119
Mpg (combined) 48.7

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

FleetNews



BEST PREMIUM CAR



Rob Morris, national fleet operations manager, Mercedes-Benz Cars UK (left), picked up the award from Jim Hannah, operations director, Ogilvie Fleet

Winner: Mercedes-Benz C-Class

While the latest C-Class may not look that different to the car that came before it, Mercedes claims there have been more than 6,500 changes.

These include an entirely new line-up of engines, including the brand's latest 2.0-litre diesel unit that debuted in the E-Class.

It's more refined and achieves better fuel economy than the C-Class's previous diesel engine.

A new petrol engine in the C 200 features mild-hybrid technology, a first for the C-Class.

The 48v system provides a power boost and enables engine-off coasting to reduce emissions.

Other noticeable enhancements include a new, larger, infotainment screen, digital instruments and revised switchgear.

The model range is organised into SE, Sport and AMG Line trims, with key options combined in handy packs to simplify ordering.

The changes make the new C-Class more luxurious and more efficient than ever before, cementing its place at the top of this segment.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Audi A4

FINALISTS

■ Audi A4
■ BMW 3 Series
■ Jaguar XE

■ Lexus IS
■ Mercedes-Benz C-Class
■ Volkswagen Arteon

JUDGES' COMMENTS

A mid-life refresh has turned a good car into a great car. Competitive running costs and excellent to drive, the C-Class epitomises everything a premium fleet car should be.



BEST EXECUTIVE CAR

Winner: BMW 5 Series

For the second consecutive year, the BMW 5 Series has remained at the top of its class – having won the same award in 2018.

Driveability was the key reason for its success. Judges felt that nothing else in the segment offered the same combination of engagement and refinement, making it a favourite with drivers.

CO₂ emissions are among the lowest in the category, which means favourable benefit-in-kind tax for drivers and low running costs for fleets.

The standard-fit infotainment system is intuitive and features a brace of connected services, giving drivers access to traffic updates and online entertainment services.

A comfortable and spacious interior makes the 5 Series ideal for long journeys, with ample power coming from the range of turbocharged petrol and diesel engines.

The option of a plug-in hybrid further increases the car's appeal.

Simply put, the 5 Series is BMW doing what BMW does best.



Rob East, general manager – corporate sales, BMW Group UK (left) collected the award from Jim Hannah, operations director, Ogilvie Fleet

JUDGES' COMMENTS

By far the best driver's car in this category, the 5 Series also has competitive running costs and low CO₂ emissions. With a strong range of engines and drivetrain, it's the executive car that everyone wants.

FINALISTS

■ Audi A6
■ BMW 5 Series
■ Jaguar XF

■ Mercedes-Benz E-Class
■ Volvo S/V90

BEST MID-SIZE SUV



Martin Gurney, director fleet and used vehicles, Peugeot Citroën DS Automobiles (left), collected the award from Simon Dicks, director of Insurance, VisionTrack

Winner: Peugeot 3008

Spearheading Peugeot's fleet revolution, the 3008 was relaunched as a crossover in 2017.

It has since proved its worth in the corporate sector as a reliable, cost-effective and desirable model.

Its sporty looks are reflective of a nimble chassis that provides excellent driveability, winning favour with drivers.

There is no shortcoming when it comes to efficiency, with the 3008 range emitting from 106g/km of CO₂.

Performance is strong, thanks to a variety

of petrol and diesel engines providing upwards of 131PS.

All models are equipped with a digital i-cockpit instrument cluster, autonomous emergency braking and dual-zone climate control.

The 3008 has an interior like nothing else in its class. The driver-centric cockpit features a small steering wheel that is mounted below the instruments, giving a clearer view and go-kart-like feel.

Premium materials are used throughout and passenger space is generous. There is also more than 500 litres of boot space.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Škoda Karoq

FINALISTS

■ BMW X1
■ Kia Sportage
■ Peugeot 3008

■ Seat Ateca
■ Škoda Karoq
■ Volvo XC40

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The 3008 equals happy drivers and a happy fleet manager. Packed with technology, it is great to drive, has stylish looks and a high quality premium interior. This is the car that put Peugeot back in the fleet game.



BEST COMPACT PREMIUM CAR

Winner: Mercedes-Benz A-Class

Replacing a model as important to the fleet sector as the A-Class was a big step for Mercedes-Benz, but the new model has exceeded expectations.

With driver-assistance technology borrowed from the flagship S-Class luxury saloon, the new A-Class is a small car with big car personality. It's refined and efficient, but still great to drive.

The new model introduced a more upmarket interior, while retaining the sporty hatchback bodystyle that made the previous A-Class such a success.

The most frugal A 180 d can return excellent real-world fuel economy.

Judges were also impressed by the new A 220 d, which is one of the first new cars to achieve RDE2 compliance – removing the 4% benefit-in-kind surcharge and making it considerably cheaper for drivers.

An all-new infotainment system features 'Hey Mercedes' voice control, an in-car virtual assistant that can control various car functions and search for information online.

There is also an augmented reality sat-nav system that overlays real road images with navigation instructions.



Tom Brennan, head of fleet, Mercedes-Benz Cars UK (left), picked up the award from Simon Dicks, director of Insurance, VisionTrack

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The new A-Class showcases segment-leading safety and connected technology. Enjoyable to drive, particularly over longer distances, it is roomy and has great engines. Faultless.

FINALISTS

■ Audi A3
■ BMW 1 Series

■ Mercedes-Benz A-Class
■ Mini Clubman

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Audi A3



Stuart Thomas, director of fleet and SME services, The AA (centre), received the award from Laura Moran, automotive sales director, Copart



CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

Winner: The AA

Customer service for The AA is core to its business, whether that's fixing a vehicle on the roadside or petitioning Parliament on behalf of fleet.

Investment in both people and technology ensures it delivers a level of support that exceeds customer expectations.

There is a continual conversation with customers before, during and after a breakdown, helping the AA to understand and anticipate their needs.

And, by recognising the unprecedented period of change the industry is facing, ensuring customers are aware of these changes has been central to its

engagement strategy.

For many years, The AA has also worked with BT Fleet to conduct an industry-wide survey exploring the most topical development for fleets. Its purpose is to build an understanding of what fleets see as their most pressing challenges, as well as mapping their perceptions on how the industry will change in the future.

Last year, it surveyed 505 fleet managers on a number of key areas, including ultra-low emission zones (ULEZs) and alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs).

The resulting report, not only gave an insight into the way the industry is changing, it provided customers with a voice, supporting them in driving future change.

It is a level of customer service

shown by high customer loyalty and retention.

Almost a third of SME customers, for example, have been with the business for more than five years, some one-in-six for more than 10, while during the past 12 months the retention rate for large fleet customers was 100%. There have also been major contract wins for the company.

But, as customer strategies change, The AA's strategy also continues to evolve. This is illustrated by how it's developing a breakdown service to meet the

future needs of fleets.

It is looking at the predictive and preventative applications of data for fleet managers. For example, a smart breakdown solution will track journeys, analyse driving style and fuel use, and keep vehicles running by advising when there is a technical issue, helping to prevent up to one-third of breakdowns.

It believes that good customer service goes beyond reacting to a customer's needs, it's about going beyond their expectations, both now and in the future.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

The AA goes beyond its role as a breakdown provider, getting to the heart of industry issues and raising awareness through its campaigns. It has excellent customer retention, particularly of large fleets, and has invested in frontline staff to meet high service demand.

FINALISTS

■ Alphabet (GB)
■ Auto Windscreens

■ Jaama
■ Lex Autolease
■ Nexus Vehicle Rental

■ Ogilvie Fleet
■ Reflex Vehicle Hire
■ The AA



The Ogilvie team with the leasing company of the year award

LEASING COMPANY OF THE YEAR: OGILVIE



Winner's comments

An unwavering customer-focus and a string of industry-leading IT developments has seen award-winning Ogilvie Fleet established as one of the UK's fastest-growing and trusted, independent vehicle leasing and management companies. A firm favourite with a growing number of clients, we can boast that 9 out of 10 would have no hesitation recommending our services to others.



Customer testimonial:

Without a shadow of doubt I would recommend Ogilvie Fleet. For us, value for money is key, but Ogilvie has also made a significant positive impact on Colas Rail Ltd and within my team. Ogilvie has not only met my expectations, it has completely raised the bar to new levels.

Ed Pidduck, Senior Manager - Fleet & Travel, Colas Rail Ltd



Nick Hardy, sales & marketing director, Ogilvie Fleet (centre), was handed the award by Christopher Macgowan OBE, chairman of the judging panel (right)



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

Winner: Ogilvie Fleet

Despite the challenges and uncertainty that exist in the industry such as WLTP, benefit-in-kind and Brexit, Ogilvie Fleet has refused to stand still and continued to invest in its products. Ogilvie has increased its leased company cars and van fleet to almost 16,000 units in the past 12 months with a further 2,500 units under fleet management, up almost 500 units on a year ago. In 2018, the number of direct supply corporate customers increased by 72, totalling 797 thanks to new customer wins –impressive in a chal-

lenging market, the judges said. Its continual investment in products, such as its Happy Drivers app, and its newly-launched APPraisal has helped fleet managers and drivers overcome end-of-contract damage charges, in a bid to avoid having a pleasurable leasing experience "tainted". Ogilvie reacted to WLTP by providing a constant stream of digital information to customers, alongside client-facing staff who have been fully trained on new legislation and its effects. It also introduced initiatives to help clients make informed decisions, such as contract flexibility, short-term rental discounts and

client seminars with industry experts. Its reactive and positive approach to change led to a number of clients placing orders before the plug-in grant deadline, thanks to a campaign outlining changes. Ogilvie prides itself on customer satisfaction, and claims it has become the "cornerstone of all we do to differentiate ourselves in the

UK fleet and leasing market", and this has been reflected in ExpertEye's FleetEye Customer Service Index (CSI). The scores are collated in four key areas of account management, management of fleet, driver satisfaction and overall satisfaction, for which Ogilvie has scored a minimum of 4.6 out of 5 in every category for the past five years.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Ogilvie Fleet is strong all round and has achieved good business growth in a challenging market. The judges praised Ogilvie's use of technology, electric vehicle proposition and support for customers on key issues such as WLTP. Strong testimonials and satisfaction measures demonstrate that Ogilvie is as passionate as ever about customer service.

FINALISTS
■ Ogilvie Fleet
■ TCH Leasing

GROSVENOR GROUP

A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Expert panel, OZone and Technology

At the Grosvenor Group, we not only have an award winning contract hire company (Grosvenor Leasing), we have an award winning Fleet Management business too (Interactive Fleet Management).
You'd have thought the combination of the two would be a recipe for success alone.

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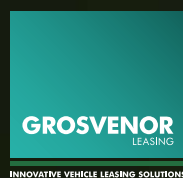
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FLEET NEWS AWARDS

Sponsored by **SalesMaster**



Jon Lawes, managing director, Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions (centre), received the award from Chris Stott, managing director, SalesMaster (right)

LEASING COMPANY OF THE YEAR – 20,000+ VEHICLES

Winner: **Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions**

Putting the customer at the heart of innovation has helped Hitachi Capital Vehicles Solutions to launch a number of ground-breaking products.

One of the major reasons the company has been able to do this is because it has started to survey clients on how they feel rather than what they think.

This is a small, but crucial, difference and one which Hitachi says has helped it develop products and services to meet customer needs as a result of changes in the market that will either affect

them now or in the future.

One of its significant new launches is the Essential Business-user Mileage Scheme. It says this protects employers and employees from rising costs associated with traditional company cars by giving them the choice to own one.

Cars can be funded using the most suitable product for each employee, giving consideration to their business mileage, tax position and whether an electric vehicle could be used as opposed to a diesel or petrol company car. The tax efficiencies give a significant average saving, says Hitachi.

The leasing company has also launched CarSelect, which is

aimed at employers who find it difficult to offer an attractive car scheme to their employees.

As part of this product, the leasing company builds bespoke microsites for customers to navigate a choice of four funding options – salary sacrifice, personal leasing, personal loans and used ex-lease cars.

Hitachi has also taken action to reduce downtime – vehicle avail-

ability is now 99.4% – improve customer service and help customers adopt EVs, while it has also launched an app which analyses driver behaviour.

All this innovation is reflected in the growth it has experienced: the 2017 FN50 report found that it had a risk fleet of 52,841 cars and vans. Twelve months later, this figure stood at 59,074, an increase of 12%.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions has introduced a wide range of initiatives including using connected car data to maximise vehicle availability, with demonstrable cost savings for fleet operators. It is taking a leading role on electric vehicle infrastructure and provides support for fleet operators to assess EV suitability and uptake.

FINALISTS

- ALD Automotive
- Alphabet (GB)
- Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions
- LeasePlan UK

- Lex Autolease
- Volkswagen Financial Services | Fleet
- Zenith

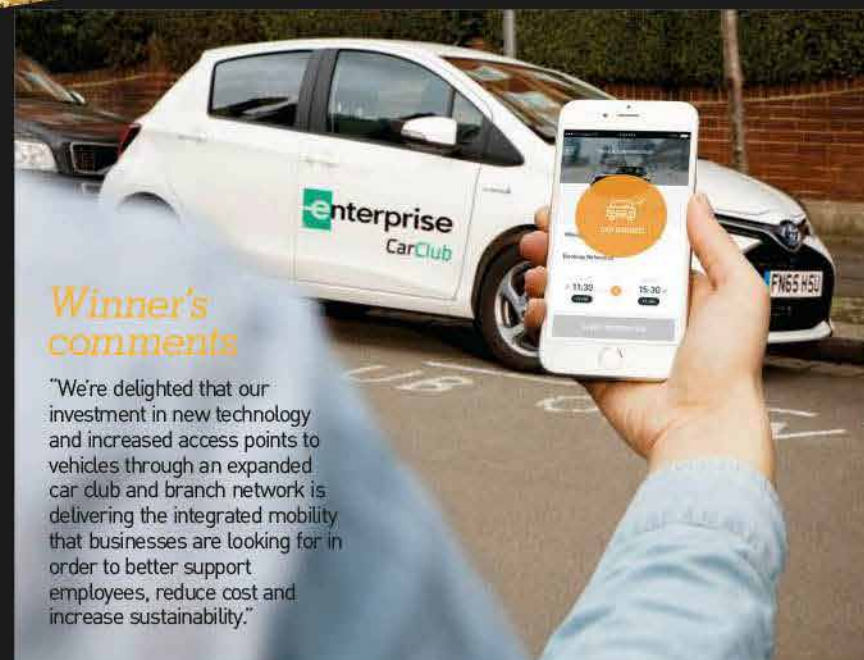
HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Alphabet (GB)



Three in a row – the Enterprise team has plenty to celebrate

RENTAL COMPANY OF THE YEAR: ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR



Winner's comments

"We're delighted that our investment in new technology and increased access points to vehicles through an expanded car club and branch network is delivering the integrated mobility that businesses are looking for in order to better support employees, reduce cost and increase sustainability."

Customer testimonial:

"Enterprise was able to analyse the data of how/why our employees travel and use it to design a more efficient, tailored programme to help us move away from the grey fleet. It has helped us to change employee behaviour so they reduce business mileage and travel more efficiently and sustainably"

Will Spendlove, Commissioning Officer, Gloucestershire County Council



Joanne Vickers, national sales manager – fleet and leasing, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, received the award from Shaun Barritt, group chief executive officer, The Grosvenor Group (right)



BEST RENTAL COMPANY OF THE YEAR

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

Enterprise Rent-A-Car has completed the hat-trick – it has been named best rental company of the year for the third consecutive year.

With a rental fleet of more than 100,000 vehicles, and more than 500 locations across the UK, customers are able to hire vehicles for any period from an hour to five years or more.

Corporate customers made up almost half of its business in 2018, with this number increasing by more than 10% compared to the previous year, while a dedicated business

account support team helps identify cost savings, efficiencies and environmental benefits throughout the life of a contract.

A major contributor to this growth is Enterprise's desire to develop and offer businesses new mobility services. It has established Enterprise Car Clubs across the UK, with car club bays already integrated at more than 50 Enterprise locations. This number set to rise to 170 by the summer.

It has also worked with local councils to introduce car clubs and/or daily rental to replace their grey fleets.

The company says establishing a car club using Enterprise-

supplied technology and vehicles can increase pool fleet utilisation by as much as 40%.

Over the past year, Enterprise has invested in improving access to mobility and providing tools to enable motorists to make the right transport choices.

Following a 12-month pilot in partnership with several large public sector fleets, it has launched Enterprise Travel Direct (ETD).

This has been developed to help

organisations better manage how their employees travel for work, especially by reducing the reliance on grey fleet vehicles.

It is a free journey assessment and booking platform that enables customers to compare the actual cost of daily rental, hourly car club and grey fleet based on a specific planned journey at a determined time, and shows the rental cost and the location of the nearest available vehicle in real-time.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Enterprise Rent-A-Car is working with mobility-as-a-service providers and train operators, has integrated its car club offering, and has launched a new booking platform, enabling businesses to compare travel costs. It's a holistic, well thought out service offering.

FINALISTS

- County Car and Van Rental
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- Europcar
- Northgate Vehicle Hire
- Reflex Vehicle Hire
- Thrifty Car & Van Rental

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Europcar
- Reflex Vehicle Hire



FLEET DEALER OF THE YEAR: TRUSTFORD

FleetNews



AWARDS 2019

WINNER

Winner's comments

This award celebrates all aspects of our fleet and CV business, recognising our great service throughout the sales and aftersales process.

Winning the award for the third time is testament to the team's hard work. They drive the standard in customer care every day through their unwavering support for customers, and deliver real value through this.

We are continuing to invest in our Aftersales infrastructure, in our Fleet Distribution Centre at Long Marston and more widely across the UK. We look forward to building on this success to make sure we are always best in class.



Customer testimonial:

"TrustFord has been an established partner of Thrifty Car & Van Rental for more than 10 years. It has consistently excelled in its field, meeting all KPIs and looking for ways to develop our trading relationship in key and alternative areas. The knowledgeable, reliable and helpful team is the significant factor in ensuring TrustFord continues to enjoy our business and we would not hesitate in recommending its services"

Elliot Scott, Director, Fleet Operations, at Thrifty Car & Van Rental

TrustFord

Mark Wilkie, Fleet and CV Director, email: mark.wilkie@trustford.co.uk



Stuart Foulds, chairman and chief executive, TrustFord (centre), picked up the award from Christopher Macgowan OBE, chairman of the judging panel (right)

FLEET DEALER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **TrustFord**

TrustFord's investment in its fleet operation and the determination to ensure it stands out from other dealers has led to further UK expansion, with a focus on its mobile division.

As part of its dedication to "minimising downtime and maximising ease of operation" TrustFord appointed aftersales representatives within its fleet team to its expanded mobile servicing operation, which now consists of 50 units.

This has led to the appointment of an aftersales development manager and an assistant manager who sit within the sales division.

TrustFord said: "This unusually joined-up approach has won us

business, so we know it's working for our customers."

A crucial part of this expansion was extending business to Scotland, with a singular intention to support its fleet client base.

Alongside this expansion, TrustFord invested and developed its own logistics booking system, allowing all of fleet operations to interact electronically with transport providers to minimise workload. The success of this initiative has seen the system rolled out across the wider TrustFord Group.

Operating 60 dealership sites across the UK, with nine dedicated business centres and compound and preparation centres across the country, TrustFord offers a holistic solution to customers of all sizes.

Its continued investment in infra-

structure has seen its Long Marston site expand to 33 acres from seven, with the ability to prepare more than 30,000 vehicles per year. In what TrustFord calls a "blueprint for success" it will use the Long Marston example when developing other UK sites, including a three-acre one in London and a 16-acre site in the north of England.

Close collaboration with its Ford parent has seen TrustFord assume management of its direct sales admin team and responsibility for all UK direct sales, which enables

its ability to "offer seamless partnership with no distinction between franchise and manufacturer".

TrustFord achieved this by attending joint site visits and collaborative meetings. In addition, both teams share respective fleet marketing plans to ensure a joined up and consistent message is delivered to customers.

It is also now working in partnership with Ford of Europe to bring expertise on future developments in alternative fuel and smart mobility.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Last year's winner, TrustFord continues to increase its support for fleets with an expanded mobile servicing offering, a growing central logistics team, significant investment in infrastructure, and improved systems. The judges also praised the quality of its testimonials.

FINALISTS

- Johnsons Fleet Services
- Norton Way Corporate
- TrustFord

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Johnsons Fleet Services

WEX SETS OUT ITS GROWTH PLAN FOR ESSO FUEL CARD

The Wex fuel card will operate at 1,300 Esso fuel stations

Relative newcomer has financial might of US parent and fleet management know-how of partner Radius. *Stephen Briers* reports

With around a quarter of a fleet's budget consumed by fuel, decision-makers are on constant look out for products and services that offer a pain-free way to lop substantial sums off their annual bill.

So it is with fuel cards. No one disputes their value: in addition to the financial savings, they can reduce fraud and simplify admin processes.

But, fleets can enter a minefield when deciding which supplier to select. Do you go for the one with the extensive fuelling network? Or do you prioritise the potential greater savings of a small card provider? Do you opt for pump price discounts, hedging, Platts pricing or fixed pricing models?

Indecision can leave company car drivers with wallets bulging with cards as fleets look to cover all the bases.

One relative newcomer believes it can cater for all options with its card proposition. Wex may not be a household name, but it's one of the world's largest fuel card companies with a substantial presence in its American home market.

It entered the UK four years ago with the

purchase of Esso Card from ExxonMobil, forming Wex Europe Services in a joint venture with payment and fleet services company Radius. Last year, it started to invest significant sums in its field team, network and online account management tools in preparation for an assault on the fleet sector.

The process to get to this stage has been protracted. Wex acquired the customer base, staff, incumbent systems and licences across Europe, and spent the first couple of years getting to understand the business.

In an honest appraisal, commercial and marketing director Peter Dore says the card was "not attractive" due to a lack of fuel stations compared with rivals. It was also not well resourced. Both issues have been addressed.

"We now have a branded wholesale network with 16 reseller partners," Dore says.

A game changing moment was when BP came onto the network in a reciprocal deal: Wex now has 1,300 Esso, 1,000 Shell and 1,200 BP sites on its fuel card, which represents 45% of the UK fuelling network.

The number of cards in circulation across Europe has risen from 1.1 million to 1.4 million while, in the UK, the number of litres sold has increased by 6-10% each year since the acquisition to around 225,000 in 2018.

"We have also increased our headcount in the UK which has led to more direct sales and our resellers are also expanding their networks which makes it an easier sell," says Dore.

Almost half its fuel volume is sold through resellers, a falling proportion (it was 60% a few years ago) as Wex grows its direct business, currently at 8,000 accounts.

The customer profile in the UK is also evolving. Exxon had focused on corporates with large fleets but they are also the businesses now restructuring their benefits policies to offer cash which is reducing their fleet sizes.

Consequently, Wex is now concentrating on a more diverse customer-base. Much of its growth over the past two years has been with SMEs, particularly courier and home delivery businesses.

Like all fleets, they have two defining priorities

HELPING FLEETS TO USE LESS FUEL

Wex has added a telematics proposition to its fuel card through partner Radius which it hopes will boost loyalty levels by reducing the price elasticity.

Targeted primarily at smaller fleets, it comes as either a 'plug and play' solution or – Wex's preferred option – a fully integrated hardwired product.

David Holdcroft, Wex European group sales director, says: "All the data is presented to the fleet through a web portal that is overlaid with our fuel card data. This will show fuel spend versus driver behaviour and highlight within set parameters the behaviour that can be changed to make fuel savings, such

as speeding, idling and use of air-con."

He adds: "It might seem counter-intuitive for a fuel company to help fleets reduce their fuel, but we have to be focused on what the customer wants because that creates stickiness and loyalty. They will be less likely to leave for a fraction of a penny on fuel."

The system, already installed into more than 5,500 vehicles, also offers real-time location tracking, while Radius is developing daily vehicle checks as part of a roadmap of new releases.

One future solution could see the telematics talking to the pump so the driver can fill up and leave without making a physical payment.

when looking for a fuel card partner: network coverage ("always the first question") and price.

"Esso is now the largest network in the UK by number of sites so when fleets look at mapping, location and route planning, we can prove the business case," says Dore.

When added to the Shell and BP outlets, it's a tick for the network then, despite being half the size of Allstar. So, what about pricing?

"When the pump price is high, there is more focus on pricing," says Dore. "But it also depends on the segment size and the customer's main driver."

"For example, large companies are often linked to Platts pricing on the wholesale but smaller business owners just want the convenience of fuel cards and the ease of admin. They are less interested in the wholesale price; they just want the discount on the pump price."

"We also offer fixed pricing across the Esso network for the week ahead which can offer good savings if you have a fleet which uses a lot of motorway services."

One pricing model Wex doesn't offer is hedging. "I've seen too many examples of customers being caught out," says Dore. "The upsides are high but so are the downsides and we are a low margin, high volume business – the risks are too high for everyone."

BEST PRICE OPTIONS

While Wex has no influence over the pump price, its data enables it to advise fleets about the best pricing options by geographic location.

In London, for example, prices are higher which suits a fixed price model; Bristol is cheaper which suits pump pricing. Regardless of the method, the UK is fortunate to have a stable pricing structure – a claim which might surprise those who believe prices are constantly fluctuating.

"In Germany, prices can change 10 times a day," says Dore. "Here, there is always a lag up and down."

The UK is the most mature fuel card market in Europe, with an estimated 80%-plus penetration on vans. Sales calls unearth a non-user less than 10% of the time and those are primarily smaller businesses and sole traders.

"When it's companies with five vehicles or more, it is hard to find one which doesn't have a fuel card," says Dore.

Growth, then, comes primarily from conquest, not expanding the market.

MILEAGE MONITORING

However, there is one area where Wex has identified an opportunity: cars. Most of its business is with van operators and it wants to plug a hole in its product portfolio with a new mileage monitor product which will ease the measuring of business and private mileage.

It is in talks with potential partners and expects to launch the service this year, strengthening its proposition for car fleets.

Dore also points to the online account management tool which includes an app for users, enabling fleets to order and cancel cards, view usage and for drivers to identify their nearest fuel station.

Wex also has some HGV customers, which is the most volatile of markets. Truck fleets tend to have a number of fuel card partners and will select the cheapest one on a weekly basis. It's a low margin business.

In contrast, corporates are increasingly likely to plump for one primary fuel card, sometimes with an emergency back-up option. Few have contractual obligations which makes it easier to win business.

Future product developments will see the cards link to toll transactions, including the M6, Dartford and Severn Crossing, with clean air zone and congestion charging under consideration. Wex is also looking at adding other payment options, such as full travel solutions with hotel payments, food and secure parking – all items required while travelling for business.

Meanwhile, over in the US, the company is assessing how smartphones can link to the car to identify vehicle location, mobile location and the pump location. When the three match up, the card is released for payment, preventing fraud. "All that technology will start to drip into the UK," says Dore.

■ For Dore's view on pre-payment cards please visit fleetnews.co.uk/wexfuelcards

COMPANY Wex
UK HEAD OFFICE Crewe
KEY EXECUTIVES David Holdcroft, European group sales director; Peter Dore, commercial and marketing director
NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS (UK) 8,000 direct accounts
FUEL VOLUMES (UK) 225,000 litres
FUEL NETWORK 3,500 sites (Esso, BP, Shell)



“WHEN FLEETS LOOK AT MAPPING, LOCATION AND ROUTE PLANNING, WE CAN PROVE THE BUSINESS CASE”

PETER DORE, WEX



BENCHMARKING HIGHLIGHTS POSSIBLE COSTLY PROBLEM

Policies and processes are lagging behind expectation, says DfBB's *Simon Turner*

In January we looked at the four broad sections within the Driving for Better Business online risk assessment and noted that the current user average fell short of what was required in each of those areas.

The area with the biggest shortfall was company fleet policies and processes with a user average score of just 63% against what we believe should be a target score of at least 87%. The reason for the higher target being that many of the 15 questions in this section relate to actions that should be central to how fleets handle their duty of care.

This month, we're going to look at some of these issues in more detail because analysis of

the questions with the poorest results may be highlighting a costly problem for fleet risk and safety managers.

The first of those questions is: "Are all directors and managers in the business aware of their legal obligations to manage work-related road safety, including vehicle maintenance and driver behaviour?" And the answer is surprising.

Only 63% of users said yes, their directors were fully aware, while 7% said No and 30% were 'working towards' this.

Now, remember, this question is about understanding legal obligations and the 30% who marked 'working towards' is a puzzle. It implies that a knowledgeable fleet safety manager who understands these obligations is struggling to get

his directors to take them seriously, despite warnings and evidence that they need to sit up and take notice. Maybe they pay lip service but don't put the required actions into practice, leaving them, and the business, exposed.

When asked: "Do you have a documented HSE-compliant 'Driving at Work' road safety policy?" only 59% answered yes – leaving a staggering 41% who don't currently have a policy in place with just over half of those 'working towards' it.

Having helped many organisations write and implement Driving at Work policies, we know first hand just how hard this can be when the person in charge of managing the risk is trying to push something through against others in the company who feel it will hamper their ability to

operate as usual, or are simply focused on other things they think are more important.

When asked if a named director had overall responsibility for this policy, 30% said 'no' betraying a lack of high-level ownership of the issue.

The next two questions we'll look at are: "Is there clear demonstration of top-level commitment to work-related road safety within your company?" and "Do you have an adequate system in place to record all fleet activity, thereby building a robust audit trail that could be referred to in the event of an investigation?"

The responses are virtually identically with just 57% answering 'yes' to each. As with the first question on legal obligations, almost 30% state they are 'working towards' this.

It's hard to understand how any company can be 'working towards' management commitment – surely, when the issue is explained to your MD or CEO, they either get it or they don't?

If they do 'get it' then they'll have no problem supporting it, if they don't, they'll simply focus on something else. To be 'working towards' again implies a frustrated fleet safety manager banging their head against a brick wall trying to get the message through and not being listened to.

As we go through these questions, the news gets worse. Just 55% of companies feature their Driving at Work policy as part of their induction process, meaning some have created a policy that their staff have never seen.

How on earth do these companies then expect staff to follow policies and guidelines? This is a clear case of pointless 'box ticking' with no benefits for the company.

The remaining three questions lead us further towards the real issue. Two are closely linked.

When asked: "Do directors and managers understand the true costs to the business from poor management of drivers and vehicles, and the subsequent benefits that come from managing it well?" and "Is driver performance/behaviour monitored to make sure your road safety policy is effective?" the responses were almost identical with less than half answering 'yes' and approximately a quarter each responding either 'no' or 'working towards'.

The first of these again implies that not enough directors are aware of the impact that poor management of those who drive for work has on operational efficiency and, ultimately, the company's bottom line. The image is once again of frustrated fleet safety professionals trying in vain to convince directors to listen properly.

It follows that if directors don't understand the costs, they won't see the need to monitor driver performance because they won't see the bene-

"SURELY, WHEN THE ISSUE IS EXPLAINED TO YOUR MD OR CEO, THEY EITHER GET IT OR THEY DON'T"

fits. As everyone reading this article knows, the cost benefits can be easier to achieve than trying to increase sales or profit margins by the same amount, which is probably where the misinformed director is focusing their attention.

The question with the lowest positive response, and the last one we're going to look at here is: "Are all personnel issued with a handbook explaining how these standards are to be achieved?" Just 42% answered 'yes' and it leads

PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Driving for Better Business will be inviting leaders from some of the UK's top businesses to a private sector summit with the theme of leadership. It will be held at the new McLaren Thought Leadership Centre in Woking and you may wish to encourage your CEO or a board director to attend.

The event is being held on May 8 as part of the United Nations Global Road Safety Week and features contributions from Highways England, HSE, DVSA, and a panel discussion with some of the UK's leading fleet safety and risk management professionals chaired by *Fleet News* editor-in-chief Stephen Briers. The event will conclude with a McLaren tour.

To register interest in attending, or to receive further information, visit www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com



us to the ultimate problem because the wording of this question is important.

The word 'standards' is included for a reason – it's not about following dictates or instructions, it's about drivers and employees being professional, having pride in their work and being respected by their peers and managers.

The main challenge from these combined results is that at least a third of those companies completing our online risk assessment appear to have poor leadership.

Some fleet safety professionals who 'get it' – who understand what needs to be done and the benefits for the business that will come from doing so – are struggling to convince those above them to give fleet risk management the attention it demands.

How else do we explain the large number of fleet safety professionals 'working towards' convincing their directors something needs to be done when the risks are obvious and the benefits are clearly documented in the Driving for Better Business case studies and the regular features on successful fleets that appear in *Fleet News*?

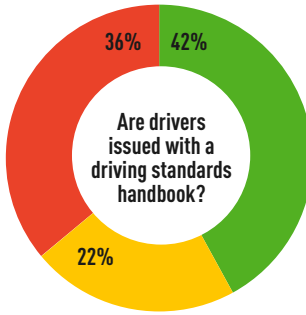
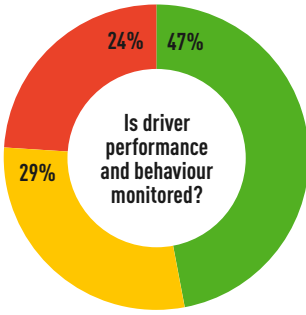
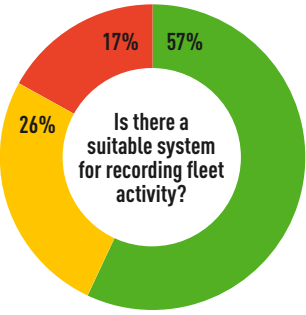
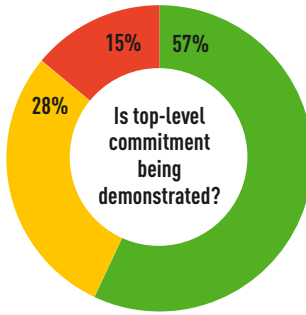
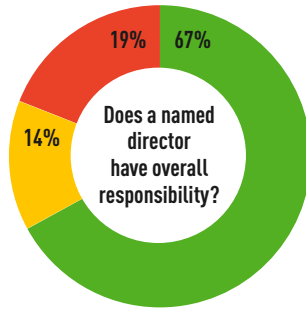
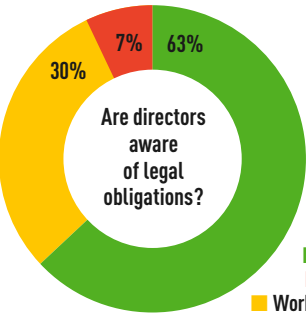
Leadership is the ability to influence or inspire people to achieve an objective. Strong leadership creates cultures where the desire to achieve those goals becomes ingrained in the workforce. It is also shown by clearly communicating a vision that others can buy into and ensuring those in charge lead by example. Yet it is clear that some leaders don't buy into the vision themselves so it doesn't get communicated to drivers.

All the best-run fleets have driver handbooks and regular driver communications. Not having a handbook explaining the standards expected of drivers is indicative of a management that doesn't really care about the message, or it would ensure it was communicated effectively.

For those companies below the average benchmark in this area, the key to improvement seems to be getting directors to clearly understand the true costs to the business.

Poor driving, or poor management of drivers, leads to increased costs for repairs, maintenance, fuel and fleet insurance – all very significant overheads.

Directors need to understand these aren't just the everyday costs of operating a fleet – they are directly influenced by the quality of leadership in fleet risk management. Once the costs are truly understood and being monitored, strong leadership and a clearly communicated vision of higher standards can bring significant improvements.



Techniques FOR SUPPLY CHAIN RELATIONSHIPS

A step-by-step guide to the key questions that need to be addressed – with specific focus on the supply chain. *By Peter Eldridge of the ICFM*

The traditional methods of developing relationships within customer and supplier frameworks has evolved significantly since the inception of supply chain management (SCM) back in the mid-90s.

In today's world of e-commerce and globalised supply chains, managing the customer relationship requires strict adherence to the key principles involved. These include:

- Maintaining effective lines of communication.
- Understanding the stages of customer loyalty.
- Adapting the business model to suit the end user client.
- Providing excellent customer support.

These principles will enhance the trust factor and build a platform for longer-term customer/supplier relationships.

The process must, by its very nature, now operate on a cooperative rather than adversarial arrangement and the days of the latter are perhaps progressively being confined to history.

It is now more commonly accepted that an increasingly beneficial relationship can be developed through cooperation with potential suppliers, plus a greater understanding of their businesses and the range of goods/services that they can supply.

In an adversarial relationship, there are much higher risks, with an unsatisfactory contractual position often the inevitable result. The overall

value of the relationship may well be brought into question.

There is a commonly accepted principle that 'people do business with people' and fleet stakeholders on both sides of the corporate relationship will generally operate more efficiently with those that they trust, understand and respect.

SO WHERE SHOULD YOU START?

Supplier appraisal, which is undertaken at the pre-contract stage, should be considered as the natural start point since it is vital in developing solid business relationships.

It is also important to understand the difference between this stage and the vendor rating stage, which is undertaken after the contract has been awarded.

Before starting supplier appraisals, it is important to strike a balance regarding the extent to which the suppliers are 'vetted' and apply the right level of proportional time and effort in line with the type of goods or services being acquired.

There is also a need for both the customer and

supplier engaged in the process to recognise that relationship management is significantly enhanced by the provision of informative and pertinent information, covering all elements of pricing, service delivery and quality.

The most successful customer/supplier outcomes are built on price, delivery and quality (PDQ for short) and, typically, they could include the following examples.

1: PRICING

Competitive pricing prices quoted should be comparable to other suppliers providing similar product and services.

Price stability check for evidence that costs will be reasonably stable over time.

Price accuracy evidence that with other clients there has been a low number of price variances from purchase order to invoice.

Price updates Advance notice of price changes that could negatively affect cashflow.

Cost sensitivity what to look for here is a supplier's ability to demonstrate respect for their customer's bottom line, coupled with an insight into proven cost-saving techniques.

Billing seek evidence of invoice submission accuracy and creditor days' performance.

2: DELIVERY

Time does the supplier have a good reputation for delivering products and services on time – are requests for information, proposals and quotes swiftly answered?

Quantity does the supplier also have a good reputation for delivering the correct items or services in line with the contracted quantity?

Lead time is the average delivery time comparable to that of other suppliers for similar products and services?

Documentation can the supplier furnish evidence of robustness with documentation (delivery notes, technical documents, invoicing etc.)?

Walking the talk Does the supplier have a good track record for meeting/exceeding agreed SLA/KPI targets?

3: QUALITY

Compliance does the supplier understand your expectations? Can they show compliance to recognised standards in all required areas – environmental, safety, information security, quality control, etc.

■ Any statutory requirements?

■ Can the supplier comply with your required terms and conditions?

■ Conformity to specifications – measure each supplier's ability to conform to the specifications identified in your initial request for information.

Reliability is there evidence of a high rate of service or product failure?

Durability what brand awareness exists for the specific supplier's products?

Support is there evidence of high-quality support available from the supplier?

Warranty the length and provisions of warranty protection offered should be compared and measured against all other supplier products

Innovation does the supplier offer products and services that keep pace with industry progress?

This list is purely indicative and the actual content should, of course, be structured to meet individual requirements for specific businesses.

This is where the process of supplier rating comes into its own and the obvious objective is to select suppliers that can work in partnership and assist in determining mutually satisfying goals and developing a business relationship platform that is built on solidity and reliability.

A balanced scorecard is a sound basis on which to establish a strategy for potential supplier assessment performance management. This approach primarily refers to a performance management system that highlights two elements:

- The comparison of a common range of products or services.
- Weighted measurements against each product or service.

The weighting applied should be linked to the requirements of a customer and include a mix of financial and non-financial elements.

Simply, a business might have a 95% weighted target for the cost of the service required and a 5% weighting for the timescale involved, as compared to another business where the timescales are of greater importance and therefore weighted differently (say 65%/35%).

It is important to exercise care when weighting specific elements of supply chain requirements to ensure they meet precise business needs.

BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN RELATIONSHIPS

The key to success is a commitment by both customers and suppliers, regardless of size, to a long-term relationship based on clear mutually-agreed objectives to strive for best in class capability and competitiveness.

While this may sound like a highly principled idea that has little practical significance in developing relationships with suppliers of motor vehicles and motor trade services, the principles are sound and of particular relevance where the services to be provided are of a complex and wide-ranging nature.

By developing an effective customer/supplier relationship, transactional knowledge will result that will improve efficiency and reduce costs.

“IT IS IMPORTANT
TO STRIKE A
BALANCE
REGARDING THE
EXTENT TO WHICH
THE SUPPLIERS
ARE 'VETTED'”

CUSTOMER RESPONSIBILITIES

Should ensure they treat their suppliers fairly and with respect and support their efforts to seek continuous improvement.

Invitations/meetings to discuss/resolve supply difficulties are helpful in building confidence.

Ensuring suppliers are paid correctly and on the agreed terms is also a key element, particularly where high capital costs are involved.

Include suppliers on corporate publications/newsletters circulation, which, while intended primarily for staff, would also improve a supplier's understanding of a buyer's own business.

SUPPLIER RESPONSIBILITIES

Should work diligently to build rapport and establish valued connections with their customers.

Communicate and act with professionalism at all times and manage their customers and clients efficiently.

Understand and manage client expectations and be creative in finding sophisticated solutions.

Manage conversations with flare and nuance and be flexible in their approach to client needs.

Finally, all that now remains is to award the contract, but remember, this is only half of the overall equation.

Now comes the more in-depth task of managing the vendor rating process.

Would you like to know more? For expert help and advice consider joining the ICFM. Contact administration@icfm.com for more information.

WHO IS PETER ELDRIDGE?



Peter Eldridge joined ICFM in 1993, making him one of its longest-serving members. The ICFM was founded in 1992 and remains the UK's only independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to furthering the education, recognising the achievements and advancing the profession of car and light commercial fleet management.

Eldridge joined the ICFM steering committee in 1996 and became a full council member in 1997. He was appointed a director in April 1999 and is regarded as one of the institute's strongest lead tutors. In 2011, he was inducted as an honorary fellow.

Eldridge now focuses his time on the ICFM. He has enjoyed a successful fleet industry career which started at Fiat Auto UK in 1963. It included spells as fleet manager of a large blue-chip fleet operation and senior management positions within the franchised motor trade.

- For information about ICFM leadership and management training, go to www.icfm.com



TOYOTA COROLLA

Back and proud! After years out of the limelight, the Corolla is ‘performing’ again. But this stylish car doesn’t look destined to become a one-hit wonder. *Matt de Prez* reports

Guess who’s back? Like all good ‘90s pop bands, the Toyota Corolla is making a comeback. But this isn’t some one-hit wonder, the new car is a significant improvement over the outgoing Auris. It sits on an all-new platform, offering hatchback, estate and saloon bodystyles.

The Corolla’s stylish exterior houses a neatly designed cockpit, which is a refreshing departure from the dated and often messy interiors of old Toyotas. Also, there’s a noticeable step up in quality and driveability, making it a true contender in the C-segment.

Three engines are offered. A 1.2-litre turbo petrol powers the entry-level car, while two ‘self-charging’ hybrids are available – a first in the segment.



The Corolla has a neatly designed cockpit

The 1.8-litre hybrid has 120PS and the lowest CO₂ emissions in the range of 76g/km. A more powerful 2.0-litre hybrid offers up 180PS, yet still emits just 89g/km.

As a fleet proposition, the Corolla is hard to ignore. It packages great refinement and build quality with agile handling and class-leading running costs.

It comes at a price, though. The cheapest hybrid has a P11D value of £23,600, –£2,350 more than an equivalent Ford Focus. The more powerful version of the Corolla starts at almost £28,000.

Toyota says the wholelife costs make it more competitive, due to improved fuel consumption and better residual values. Drivers will also pay less

benefit-in-kind tax, thanks to the lower emissions. All versions of the Corolla come well equipped. The entry-level Icon features heated seats, LED headlights and a reversing camera.

Icon Tech is the predicted best-seller, adding sat-nav and parking sensors.

You have to opt for a Design grade before you can spec the 2.0-litre engine. It comes with rain-sensing wipers, folding door mirrors and rear privacy glass.

Range-topping Excel grade features 18-inch alloys, keyless entry and part-leather sports seats. The infotainment system uses an eight-inch touchscreen, which, unfortunately, is the car’s biggest weakness.

It has dated graphics and a complex menu system that is difficult to use on the move. There is also no Apple Carplay or Android Auto, so Google Maps and Waze fans will need to revert to using an old-fashioned phone holder.

The digital experience is also affected by the instrument cluster, which marries analogue dials



A true contender – the Corolla has a stylish exterior

	FLEET PICK 1.8VVT-H ICON TECH	ENTRY LEVEL 1.2VVTI ICON	RANGE TOPPER 2.0VVT-H EXCEL
SPECIFICATIONS			
P11D Price	£24,650	£21,080	£28,920
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	76	128	89
Monthly BIK tax (20%)	22%/£90.3	29%/£101.8	22%/£106.1
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	60	43	55
Fuel cost (ppm)	TBC	TBC	TBC
Annual VED	£100 then £135	£170 then £145	£100 then £135
Class 1A NIC	£748	£843	£878
RV	£8,225/33.3%	£5,500/26.1%	£9,075/31.3%
AFR (ppm)	15	12	15
Running cost	TBC	TBC	TBC

RIVALS



RIVAL 1
FORD FOCUS
1.5 ECOBLUE TITANIUM



RIVAL 2
VAUXHALL ASTRA
1.6 CDTI 110 SRI



RIVAL 3
VW GOLF
1.6 TDI MATCH

	FLEET PICK 1.8VVT-H ICON TECH	ENTRY LEVEL 1.2VVTI ICON	RANGE TOPPER 2.0VVT-H EXCEL
SPECIFICATIONS			
P11D Price	£22,665	£23,710	£22,575
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	93	110	108
Monthly BIK tax (20%)	26%/£98	30%/£118	29%/£109
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	62.8	58.9	58
Fuel cost (ppm)	7.25	8.69	8.49
Annual VED	£145	£165 then £145	£165 then £145
Class 1A NIC	£813	£981	£903
RV	£5,825/25.7%	£5,150/21.7%	£5,850/25.9%
AFR (ppm)	10	10	10
Running cost (ppm)	32.19	35.28	32.85

“THE COROLLA PACKAGES GREAT REFINEMENT AND BUILD QUALITY WITH AGILE HANDLING AND CLASS-LEADING RUNNING COSTS”

and a seven-inch display. The layout isn’t as crisp as the fully digital cockpits offered in rival cars.

Improvements to the ride and handling are a welcome addition. While it is not an all-out driver’s car, the Corolla has direct steering, a smooth ride and minimal body roll.

Both hybrids come with a CVT, meaning there is the usual high-revving engine drone when you want to accelerate.

Toyota has worked hard to reduce the effect and most drivers should find it perfectly adequate, but the setup means it will never appeal to those who want a more engaging experience.

Fuel consumption, tested under WLTP, is rated

at 55–65mpg for the 1.8 and 50–60mpg for the 2.0. This is much higher than you can expect from similarly powered conventional petrol cars.

During our test, we averaged around 60mpg on a gentle cruise in the lower-powered car.

Toyota says the electric motor powers the car for around half of a typical journey, despite only having a very limited battery range.

Both engines offer adequate performance, with the 2.0-litre showing its extra grunt at higher speeds. It can reach 60mph in 7.9 seconds – three seconds faster than the 1.8-litre car.

Cabin space is comparable with rival vehicles, although the 2.0-litre car has a smaller boot.

The saloon has the most refined ride and comes exclusively with the 1.8-litre hybrid. It’s only expected to achieve around 5% of UK sales, though. The hatchback is anticipated to be the top seller at 60%.

For those that need more space, the Touring Sports – or ‘estate’ – provides almost 600 litres of boot space, which is more than both the Focus estate and Vauxhall Astra Sports Tourer.

There is additional sound proofing to ensure that road noise intrusion is kept to a minimum.

As rising taxation becomes an increasing barrier to company car adoption, the Corolla offers all the benefits of a conventional rival, but with lower operating costs and little compromise on driveability.



THINKING CAP

By Martin Ward, Cap HPI manufacturer relationships manager

This month I’ve been...
...at the Geneva motor show

The focus was on electric vehicles, with many manufacturers showing off their latest and future models. Some interesting ones there, too. But also great to see some ‘heavy’ cars, real muscle vehicles, with large powerful engines, just to prove they are still being produced. All the cars at Geneva were relevant, and most have a place in the market, just some are more green than others, and some are more desirable than others – take your pick. For FN’s coverage of the show visit www.fleetnews.co.uk/2019gms

...driving the VW T-Cross

The T-Cross is Volkswagen’s first compact SUV, which sits nicely between the bigger brother, T-Roc and the smaller Polo. Initially, it will only be available with a 1.0-litre, three-cylinder petrol engine producing either 95PS, and coupled to a five-speed manual, or a 115PS with either a six-speed manual or seven-speed DSG auto.

This Spanish-built car is versatile and practical and has the added advantage of a sliding rear seat to give more boot space or more rear legroom.

We drove both engines extensively over two days, and I was torn between the 95PS and 115PS. There is only around £700 difference in price. The smaller output was far better than expected but the six-speed manual was a delight. A great small car with fantastic and clever lines. It is the right car at exactly the right time. *Fleet News* will review the T-Cross in its next issue.

...puzzled by other drivers’ attire

Our winter has been nowhere as cold as last year. But it always amazes me to see what other drivers wear while sitting behind the wheel. I regularly see them with big coats, hats, scarves and gloves trying to drive. Most will have the heating set at 23 degrees and must be roasting. If they were on a beach in Spain with the same temperatures they would be in shorts and T-shirts, so why do they insist on heavy clothes while sitting in a car?

cap hpi

Jaama is number one choice for contract hire and leasing

Nine of the top leasing companies in the FN50 opt for Jaama's Key2 solutions

Key2 Contract Hire and Leasing, the award-winning technology platform from Jaama is the operating system of choice for many FN50 contract hire and leasing companies.

Jaama's Key2 is highly configurable, making a very attractive proposition for leasing companies as it negates the need to spend vast amounts of time and money developing in-house systems.

Numerous initiatives have been brought to market by Jaama as a result of collaboration with customers, including:

- A customisable Customer Dashboard – providing leasing companies' clients with a real-time comprehensive overview of their own fleet including a suite of reports.
- A V5C on demand service – developed in the wake of digitalised vehicle registration certificates. The related information is now managed online.
- The award-winning 'MyVehicle App' integrates in real-time with Key2. It includes defect managing, accident logging and provides drivers with self-service information (telephone numbers, policy information etc.).

Andy Stephen, business support director, Ogilvie Fleet (Key2 user since 2007), commenting on the benefits of working in partnership with Jaama, said: "Delivering the best customer service in the industry is key for Ogilvie Fleet. Part of that is using technology to provide management information, which is what fleet decision-makers and drivers require."

Stephen added: "We have an industry-leading system that through continual collaboration on enhancements and new developments ensures we remain at the cutting-edge. System development has been the engine room of underpinning Ogilvie's business growth in recent years."

The most recent Key2 enhancement – eSignature – enables a document to be sent, signed electronically, and instantly returned into the system, negating any process that requires documents to be printed, signed



"Embracing new technology is something we pride ourselves on and identifying solutions for our clients using innovative ways of being able to improve the operation of their fleet is part of our ongoing partnership with Jaama"
– Aled Williams, Days Fleet

and returned. New vehicle handovers and daily rental agreements are prime examples. Brian Kirby, systems director, JCT600 Vehicle Leasing Solutions (Key2 user since 2011) said: "We have pushed for development of eSignature and believe it is the first application of electronic signatures in the fleet industry."

"We plan to roll out eSignature for customers' master hire agreements, quote acceptance and order acceptance documents. Ultimately, it will be used for all documents that require a client's signature. It is the latest initiative as we continue working towards a paperless environment." Days Fleet (Key2 user since 2009) worked

with Jaama to introduce both a client dashboard and internet-based Quotation Module. The company has also been involved in the development of eSignature.

Managing director Aled Williams said: "Collaboration is key to Days Fleet being able to continue offering alternatives in the market. We aim to provide solutions to our clients that further drive cost-saving and compliance rather than simply being a pure vehicle leasing company."

"Embracing new technology is something we pride ourselves on and identifying solutions for our clients using innovative ways of being able to improve the operation of their fleet is part of our ongoing partnership with Jaama."

An increasing number of vehicle leasing companies have decided to opt for Jaama's Key2 system. Jaama currently has nine customers within the Fleet News FN50.

Jaama attributes its success to the perpetual investment of £2 million a year in the development of Key2. Many of these enhancements are as a result of collaborative working with customers who are focused on ways to reduce manual intervention and improve their customers' experience."



IGNITION: FIRST DRIVE



LEXUS UX

Significant tax savings should make this Lexus popular with user-choosers

By Andrew Ryan

Lexus is a brand full of confidence. It has an ambitious sales target for the UK and a freshness to its model range, while its hybrid technology gives it huge tax appeal to company car drivers. Its newest model is the UX urban crossover, with the manufacturer expecting the premium compact SUV to become its biggest seller with 6,000 registrations annually.

The business sector will account for 43% of these, with user-choosers and small businesses its major customers.

A key part of the UX's appeal is its cost of ownership, according to Lexus. Available only with the manufacturer's fourth-generation hybrid system, the car is powered by a 2.0-litre petrol engine together with an electric motor to produce a combined 184PS.

The range is available in three trim levels – UX, sporty F-Sport and the luxury-oriented Takumi – with two- and four-wheel drive variants. Five



Controls are angled towards the driver to give a cocooning feel

options packs costing between £1,400 and £6,000 are also offered.

Combined fuel economy on the WLTP cycle ranges from 46.3mpg to 53.3mpg, with CO2 emissions on the NEDC-correlated model – the measure on which benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax calculations are currently based – between 94g/km and 103g/km.

P11D prices range from £29,730 for the entry-level UX 2WD to £40,160 for the Takumi 4WD before options, which means that 20% taxpayer company car drivers will pay a monthly BIK of between £94 and £141.

This gives it a sizeable tax advantage over rivals. For example, the entry-level Volvo XC40 D3 150 Momentum has a similar P11D price of £29,650, but its driver would face a monthly BIK bill of £148.

While this tax saving is likely to attract the attention of company car drivers, the UX's appeal stretches far beyond this.

It looks striking, with its sculpted lines and prominent grille helping it stand out from rivals. The interior nicely complements this design

philosophy. It's unlikely to be mistaken – either inside or out – for any of its German rivals.

Materials and build quality are high, while the dashboard and important controls are angled towards the driver, giving it a pleasant cocooning feeling. Interior space, too, is competitive.

The only bugbear is the touchpad which controls the infotainment system. The screen – seven-inch in UX and F Sport trims and 10.3-inch in Takumi – is positioned out of reach of the driver so has to be operated through a touchpad positioned by the gearstick. It gives a clean look to the console, but is fiddly to use compared to the rotary controllers in some rival SUVs.

Standard specification across the range is also good. All models feature Lexus's Safety System+ suite of active safety technologies, which includes adaptive cruise control, lane-keep assist pre-collision system with pedestrian detection and intelligent high-beam headlights.

Overall, the UX impresses. It offers an accomplished and head-turning alternative to the more established premium C-SUVs, as well as significant tax savings for drivers.

SPECIFICATIONS	
P11D price	£29,730
BIK band 20%/40% (monthly)	22%/£109/£218
Class 1A NIC	£902
Annual VED	£115 then £135
RV	£11,725/39.4%
Fuel cost	7.94ppm
AFR	15ppm
Running cost	34.92ppm
CO2 emissions	94g/km
Fuel efficiency	53.3mpg

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IGNITION: OUR FLEET



VAUXHALL GRANDLAND X

1.5 TURBO D TECH LINE

By Andrew Ryan

Practicality is a key attribute for any SUV, and our Grandland X Tech Line fares well in this area.

It offers plenty of headroom and legroom for passengers, the interior has ample storage and the boot is a good size, too. At 514 litres with the rear seats up, it is larger than that of the Nissan Qashqai (430) and Seat Ateca (510). Its capacity grows to 1,652 litres with seats down.

Disappointingly, though, this does not create a flat loading area, with a step of about 10cm up from the boot floor to the top of the folded seats.

Better news is that the Grandland X has a powered electric tailgate, which can be opened either by a button just above the numberplate or remotely by using the key. It's been a useful feature on many occasions and helps give the car more of a premium feel.



MERCEDES-BENZ C200

AMG LINE ESTATE

By Luke Neal

Practicality is a key consideration in an estate car and the C-Class Estate is pretty much on a par with its nearest rivals, the Audi A4 Avant and the BMW 3 Series Touring.

The Mercedes C-Class Estate is longest of the three, with a wheelbase of 2,840mm compared with the Audi's 2,820mm and BMW's 2,810mm.

Boot size is down by comparison. Our C200 Estate has 440/1,460 litres (seats up/down) losing 20 litres against its diesel stablemate due to the extra room needed for the EQboost technology. The Audi A4 Avant has 505/1,510, while the BMW 3 Series Touring has 495/1,500. Less premium models such as the Volkswagen Passat Estate offer much more space (650/1,780).

Practicality may be somewhat lacking on the Mercedes' electronic tailgate, which lacks the auto open function on our test model.

VIEW EXTENDED REPORTS AT fleetnews.co.uk/longtermreports



FIRST TEST

NISSAN LEAF

TEKNA

By Sarah Tooze

We're testing the second-generation pure electric Nissan Leaf, which recently picked up a highly commended in the Fleet News Awards (just missing out to the Hyundai Kona Electric) thanks to its pricing, spaciousness and level of equipment.

Our model is the top-of-the-range Tekna, which has a P11D price of £33,335. However, the entry-level Acenta has the lowest P11D price of the pure electric cars in its segment (£30,135, compared with £30,695 for the Kona and £33,185 for the Volkswagen e-Golf).

The Kona has the edge for WLTP range, at

180 miles, with the Leaf promising 168 miles and the e-Golf 144.

A longer-range Leaf, called the e+, was recently launched, with deliveries expected in summer. It has a 62kWh battery (compared with the 40kWh battery in our Leaf) and a range of 239 miles. Following heavy pre-order demand, Nissan has put the previously limited edition e+ into full production.

When we first took delivery of our Leaf, it showed an available range of 142 miles, fully charged. This has since risen to 155 miles, although we are yet to do a long motorway journey.



MERCEDES-BENZ VITO

116 SPORT COMPACT

By Trevor Gehlcken

The rear of the stylish Mercedes-Benz Vito rather unusually features a tailgate in place of the typical 'barn door'.

On the plus side, the occupants have something to stand under in the event of a downpour, but the driver needs more space at the back to open the hatch. Care has to be taken as the door weighs a ton and could do some damage if you don't get out of the way when it's on the way up.

Our cargo area is very sensibly ply-lined, which is a £270 option, but will pay for itself and more if you intend to use the van in a dirty environment. At selling time, you simply strip

out the plywood to reveal a pristine interior.

The Vito has a non-slip floor, too. On previous test vans with bare floors, I have placed shopping bags carefully away in the back of my van, only to find them scattered the length and breadth of the cargo area when I got home, eggs smashed and milk sloshing about.

The spare wheel is rather unusually placed on the inside wall rather than stowed away underneath the van. It means that, in the event of a burst tyre, the driver can locate the spare without getting covered in filth, but it rather encroaches on the space available - a point potential buyers may find important if they intend to fill this van to the brim.



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Infrastructure holding back electric trucks

Concerns as European CO₂ reduction targets are agreed

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'Shocking' lack of infrastructure is holding back cleaner trucks

EU agrees CO₂-reduction targets for heavy vehicles, but trade body isn't happy



Volvo Trucks's FL Electric has a range of 186 miles and can be recharged in less than two hours

By Tom Seymour

Truck makers have to cut CO₂ emissions by 15% for new vehicles by 2025 and 30% by 2030 but say a "shocking" lack of infrastructure is stifling the switch to alternative fuels.

This is the first time a binding CO₂-reduction target for trucks has been agreed at EU level and trade body the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA) has labelled it "highly demanding".

According to EU figures, CO₂ emissions from heavy-duty vehicles including lorries, buses and coaches, represent around 6% of total CO₂ emissions in the EU and 27% of total road transport CO₂ emissions. The remaining 73% for road transport comes from vans and cars.

Erik Jonnaert, ACEA secretary general, said: "The shocking fact is that there is not one single public charging point for long-haul trucks available today. What is more, a standard for the high-power plugs doesn't exist yet."

ACEA estimates show there will need to be 20,000 DC 150-500kW

charging points installed over the next six years in Europe.

Furthermore, it says there needs to be at least 6,000 high power 500kW+ chargers, 500 CH₂ (compressed hydrogen) and LH₂ (liquefied hydrogen) stations, 500 CNG (compressed natural gas) stations and at least 1,000 LNG (liquefied natural gas) stations.

Figures are not available for the UK, and the Freight Transport Association (FTA) was unable to offer estimates.

Becki Kite, FTA environment policy manager, explained: "No-one has settled on a technology choice yet. Will it be heavy battery and overnight charging? Will it be lighter battery and opportunity charging? Or will it be gas, which many believe will be a bridging technology? Alternative fuel vehicles are expensive and many are waiting to see what the Government will back as a fuel option."

Currently, it takes up to two hours for high output 150kW chargers to charge a truck to 100%.

The first 150kW are only now being installed around the North Circular in London while there are currently

only 40 gas filling stations in the UK and one with both LNG and CNG.

The new CO₂ reduction targets are binding, and truck manufacturers which do not comply will have to pay a financial penalty in the form of an excess emissions premium.

The provisional agreement reached by the EU still requires endorsement by member states. It also needs to be confirmed through a vote by the European Parliament.

Once these steps are completed, the formal adoption by the European Council can take place – this is likely to happen by the end of May. The baseline for CO₂ emissions is expected to be set from July 2019 to June 2020. The UK already has signalled it will follow EU vehicle emissions targets after Brexit.

The need for national governments to implement an EU-wide infrastructure action plan is all the more urgent in light of the mandatory sales quotas for zero-emission trucks that the EU has agreed to introduce from 2025 onwards, said the ACEA.

Jonnaert said: "We cannot expect transport operators to suddenly start

buying electric or other alternatively-powered trucks if there is no business case for them and it is not possible to easily charge the vehicles along all major EU motorways."

Commercial Fleet asked the European Commission how fleets could switch to alternative fuel trucks by 2025 with no public infrastructure to support them.

A spokesperson said: "The legislation gives a clear signal that investment is necessary to drive the decarbonisation of this sector and be consistent with the EU long-term climate objectives, including the deployment of alternative fuel infrastructure."

She added that the increase in LNG truck deployment across Europe would be compatible with the existing 1,000 fuelling stations.

MAN Truck and Bus has its eTGM 26 tonne electric truck and CitE 15-tonne electric truck already operating with customers in Austria and Germany.

However, MAN said there is a "huge amount of investment and development" needed in infrastructure.

"We're supporting our European

customers with their own electric infrastructure plan for depot-to-depot charging," said a spokesperson. "This will come to the UK."

"It's really going to come down to whether you're doing low speed, relatively low mileage into urban



A huge amount of investment and development is still needed, according to MAN



"THERE IS NOT ONE SINGLE PUBLIC CHARGING POINT FOR LONG-HAUL TRUCKS AVAILABLE"

ERIK JONNAERT, ACEA

locations with recharges between depots or if you're doing motorway miles where you will be very reliant on public infrastructure."

Volvo has also delivered its first FL Electric trucks to customers in Europe. The GVW 16 tonne FL Electric has a range of up to 186 miles and can be recharged in less than two hours on a 150kW DC fast charge or overnight on a 10-hour 22kW AC charge.

Lars Mårtensson, Volvo Trucks director of environment and innovation, said the business is in close dialogue with energy companies, cities and other stakeholders in order to support the development of the "significant investment and infrastructure needed".

He added: "Infrastructure is important, but there is also a need to support transport companies who want to invest in new technology and reduce CO₂ emissions. Good incentives can speed up the introduction."

Meanwhile, Henrik Henrikson, chief executive and president of

Scania, called for an integrated approach to tackle the problem that focuses on alternative fuels, but also on driver training and efficient logistics to reduce emissions.

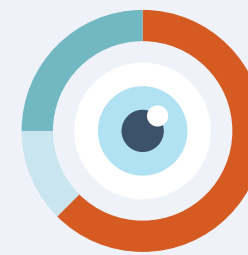
He said: "Although Scania strongly believes in electro-mobility to reach lower CO₂ emissions, the technology is not yet mature, there is an uncertain customer demand, and there is no public charging infrastructure."

Mercedes-Benz Trucks has been running 20 electric eActros for the past six months with customers in Germany as part of its 'innovation fleet'. The two-year trial focuses on short-radius distribution operations.

Mercedes wants to start selling the emission-free trucks by 2021, but recognises a number of challenges still need to be resolved.

"Alternative technologies are still very costly and not yet economically feasible," said a spokesperson.

"At the same time, customers will only opt for alternatively powered vehicles, if the necessary infrastructure is set up swiftly."



PUBLIC EYE

In our regular column, an experienced fleet manager gives his take on the burning issues facing the public sector. This month, he looks at clearing the air.

I fully support reducing emissions but the ultra-low emission zone (ULEZ), which comes into effect in London on April 8, and forthcoming clean air zones (CAZ) in other cities are causing a headache.

Many public sector fleet operators buy vehicles on 10-year cycles and are still operating Euro 3/III, 4/IV and 5/V diesel CVs. To expect fleets to replace them before the ULEZ or CAZs take effect isn't realistic.

London's van scrappage scheme doesn't help. It only applies to micro-businesses and charities (see commercialfleet.co.uk, February 22) and I don't think it is sufficient for fleet operators to switch to electric.

Scrapping vehicles also doesn't make sense if you're still paying back the loan on them.

Some authorities are proposing a two-year grace period, but are restricting how many vehicles each operator can have 'grace' for.

All this means that public sector fleet operators will have to reorganise their vehicles and ones that don't meet a certain zone's requirements will be redeployed outside the zone.

But that just shifts the problem elsewhere. And there may still be instances where a non-compliant vehicle has to enter a zone and will face a charge – even if it enters for a short period.

The second-hand hire market for specialist CVs will also bear the brunt as they still have Euro 3/III, 4/IV and 5/V vehicles. There will be an uplift in rent because they will need to improve the age range of their vehicles.

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The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 715/2007 and 692/2008 as last amended), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience. Information correct at time of going to print.

COMMERCIAL FLEET: NEWS

Kangoo ZE 33 van uptake is being hampered by battery supply delays

Latest model can travel 50% further than its predecessor – up to 125 miles, says Renault

By John Lewis

Battery suppliers have been struggling to keep up with rising demand for Renault's electric Kangoo ZE 33. Production has suffered as a consequence and a shortage of vehicles has hit sales.

"We sold 306 electric Kangoo ZE 33s in 2018 – long-wheelbase Maxis accounted for around 60% of registrations – and we could have sold a lot more if we'd had better availability," said Renault Pro+ brand manager, Steve Wilson.

The situation had yet to ease at the time of writing. "Order a ZE 33 today and it could be six months before it is delivered," Wilson admitted.

However, availability should improve over the next few months.

"We have a healthy order bank and if we get the vehicles then we should be able to double UK sales by December," Wilson added.

The shortage is especially frustrating for Wilson and his colleagues because Kangoo ZE 33, which was launched in 2017, can travel 50% further than its predecessor before its battery needs recharging. "We're talking about a total range of up to 125 miles," he said.

That should address any anxieties that power will run out halfway through a delivery run that some fleets may still harbour, he believes.

Another area Renault has addressed is battery life.

These days all ZE 33s are supplied with the battery – it no longer needs to be leased separately – and it is guaranteed to retain at least 70% of its performance for five years/60,000 miles; whichever comes first.

If the battery's performance falls below an acceptable level once out of warranty, any of the cells – there are 48 of them – can be restored by replacing those that have deteriorated. There is no need to change it entirely.

Van payload is below that of the equivalent diesel models, but nonetheless ZE 33 offers a respectable carrying capacity of up to 625kg. Charging time varies from six to 17 hours dependent on where the vehicle is plugged in.



Shortage of batteries for the latest Kangoo ZE is putting a damper on the sales process



“WE HAVE A HEALTHY ORDER BANK AND IF WE GET THE VEHICLES THEN WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO DOUBLE UK SALES BY DECEMBER”

STEVE WILSON,
RENAULT PRO+

Fleets eager to cut their emissions are driving the demand. In many cases they are doing so at the behest of clients who want goods delivered in environmentally-friendly vehicles.

Fleet managers are also aware that restrictions on vehicle emissions in urban areas are getting tighter. That said, Euro 6 diesels will not be barred from accessing central London's Ultra Low Emission Zone or the clean air zones that are being rolled out across the country.

Fleets are discovering that ZE 33 has an attractive cost-of-ownership story to tell, Wilson said.

Government subsidy has reduced its front-end price, he pointed out, and the electricity it needs to travel 120 miles costs a modest £3-£4.

Send a diesel van on the same run and the fuel will cost three to four times more.

How soon before an electric Trafic appears? "There's nothing we can confirm at present," Wilson replied.

"However, the first UK deliveries of Master ZE should take place in April/May time," he added.

Grossing at 3.1 tonnes, and with one fleet that has trialled it achieving a range of 75 to 80 miles on multi-drop work, says Wilson, it is appearing ahead of right-hand-drive electric

versions of Mercedes-Benz's Sprinter and Volkswagen's Crafter.

The former is scheduled to appear in the UK in the first quarter of 2020. The latter will not arrive until early 2021.

Facelifted versions of both Trafic and Master are scheduled to break cover in the summer.

Despite the fact that Vauxhall is now owned by PSA, Citroën and Peugeot's parent company, it will continue to market Master under the Movano banner, Wilson said.

Formerly a re-badged Trafic, Vauxhall's Vivaro is, however, being replaced by a new Vivaro based on Citroën's Dispatch and Peugeot's Expert which are being assembled in Luton.

Renault is also keen to promote the last-mile delivery advantages offered by the electric Twizy Cargo.

With a 13kW motor and a 115kg payload capacity, it has a range of up to 56 miles.

Sightings of Twizy Cargo outside central London are likely to be rare, and a van version of the battery-powered Zoe hatchback would have a far broader appeal. However there are no plans to launch one in Britain, according to Wilson.

■ Read 'Crashed EVs "take longer to recover"' on Page 11

KEEPING A GRIP ON THE BUDGET IS NOT AN EASY RIDE FOR TMs

Logistics consultant *Terrence Jumble* offers a three-step guide to help TMs control their costs

Accounting and budgeting is not the forte of the transport manager (TM): businesses employ them for their skills in leading supervisors and drivers, co-ordinating training, managing the fleet and providing a reliable delivery service.

However, there's no escaping the fact that TMs need a certain level of financial astuteness to perform their duties effectively. They are big money spenders in their businesses, signing off expenses and managing large budgets.

Following a simple three-step process can make the tortuous task of budgeting easier.

The three steps are:

- Establishing cost assumptions ■ Determining budget line costs
- Managing and controlling the budget



1. ESTABLISHING COST ASSUMPTIONS

Inflationary indices for the upcoming year are widely and, often, freely available. These are the expected rises in costs. If accounts can't provide them, you can find them online from the Office for National Statistics or industry bodies such as the FTA, RHA, IoT and CILT.

Next, forecast volume. This involves working closely with the sales team to gain an understanding of promotional initiatives and seasonal patterns all of which will impact transport activity.

It's a CPC (Certificate of Professional Competence) requirement that transport managers keep updated on industry issues. Nowhere is this more important than in budgeting. It's not great if you get caught out by transport issues you did not budget for.

Brexit, ECMT permits, specialised heavy goods vehicles coming into scope for plating and annual testing, driver shortage, Earned Recognition, smart tachographs, and ultra-low emission clean air zones are some of the issues currently affecting the industry.

Any assumptions made should be documented so they can be revisited when analysing actual cost performance against budget.

Terrence Jumble runs a logistics consultancy helping restricted licence operators with transport planning and compliance solutions. An authorised audit provider for the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme, he has 22 years' experience working in courier, industrial B2B, FMCG and large retail chain environments.

2. DETERMINING BUDGET LINE COSTS

Your budget should contain enough line items to give good cost visibility but not so many that it becomes arduous. Lines include vehicle depreciation, fleet leasing and management, agency hours, overtime, training and development expense, subscriptions, fuel, vehicle maintenance, fleet insurance, resale value adjustment, software fees, tolls and parking.

Resist the temptation to use the 'x per cent rule', simply adding a percentage to the previous year's line costs. The recommended approach – zero-based budgeting – involves building costs up for each line from zero justifying every pound to be spent.

During this procedure, important tactical decisions are made for the different budget lines. For example, vehicle maintenance: in-house workshop or external maintenance contractor. If you opt to use an external maintenance provider, do you take out a repair and maintenance contract which covers scheduled safety inspections and servicing only or do you also include repairs? Do you take out an R&M contract with the manufacturer, often the most convenient choice, or do you seek better value from an independent provider?

What is your approach to planning daily routes; fixed or dynamic? The system used can affect operational costs significantly. Are you running cost-effective routes that minimise fuel expenses and driver hours? All the line costs can then be summed up to establish the total budget required to run your department.

3. MANAGING AND CONTROLLING THE BUDGET

The budget must be broken down into weeks or months so timely action can be taken if actual costs start to go wayward. Most of today's accounting systems have the capability to produce daily, even live, reports at no extra expense or effort.

Fixed costs such as utilities, insurance and software fees, can simply be divided by the number of reporting periods, that is, 52 for weekly targets and 12 for monthly. Variable costs such as spot hire rentals, agency hours and fuel will have to follow volume patterns.

Next, keep a close watch over actual cost performance against the budget noting cost lines where you are under- or over-budget. This variance needs to be investigated so the causes can be addressed.

Only a thorough root cause analysis will ensure the true cause of each budget variance is identified. If this is not done, resources will be wasted treating symptoms rather than underlying problems.

For example, a quick investigation into excessive spend on driver agency hours might suggest high agency rates and lead to seeking a cheaper agency. This may work in the short term, but market pressure may eventually force the new supplier to increase rates to be able to pay wages that attract a good calibre of drivers, then you're back where you started.

Ask 'why' repeatedly to get to the core issue. Writing down all the causes, known as variance documentation, is important as it provides reference for future budgets.

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). New Combo Cargo Van Range: Urban: 57.6 (4.9) – 62.8 (4.5), Extra-urban: 67.3 (4.2) – 70.6 (4.0), Combined: 62.8 (4.5) – 67.3 (4.2). CO₂ emissions: 116 – 109g/km.[#]

Model shown New Combo Cargo L1 Limited Edition Nav with offside sliding side-access door (optional at extra cost) and Night Blue metallic paint (no-cost option). [#]Fuel consumption data and CO₂ emission data are determined using the WLTP test cycle, and the relevant values are translated back to allow the comparability into NEDC. The values do not take into account in particular use and driving conditions, equipment or options and may vary depending on the format of tyres. For more information contact your local Retailer. Vauxhall Motors Limited reserves the right to change, amend or withdraw this offer at any point in time. Correct at time of print.



PEUGEOT

Commercial vehicles, cyclists and road safety

A person wearing a teal jacket and dark pants is riding a bicycle on a city street. The person is seen from behind, and their shadow is cast onto the pavement. The street has white painted markings, including a large 'B' and a smaller 'B' with a cross inside. A small square sign is visible on the right side of the road.

BLAME GAME: DASHCAMS ARE GREAT FOR SETTTLING DISPUTES

Combining telematics with dashcams is enabling fleet managers to exercise greater control. *Matt de Prez* reports

Telematics systems have become an integral part of fleet management over the past 10 years but now fleet managers are embracing video for total fleet visibility.

Dashcams provide an easy way to establish blame in the event of a collision. But, when combined with telemetry data, it gives fleet managers a complete picture of what a vehicle is doing and when.

Not only can it record footage in the event of a collision, but also when the telematics system detects an anomaly, such as harsh braking or swerving.

Some systems even provide the driver with a live feed of the blind spots around the vehicle.

Fleet transparency can be enhanced significantly with the use of such systems. The most popular functions are vehicle tracking, accident reporting and managing driver behaviour.

Telematics systems – which started out as fairly rudimentary GPS data loggers – have evolved rapidly and now provide more than 60% of fleets

with vital information, according to Teletrac Navman, by monitoring a wide range of parameters and feeding back data in real-time.

There are countless suppliers of telematics systems, with a wide range of options to suit different fleet sizes and requirements.

The first dashcams required video footage to be uploaded manually from the device. But, since the introduction of high-speed mobile internet across the country, many suppliers now offer real-time data transfer through a telematics system or connected camera.

The metrics available are enabling fleet operators to make significant savings in fuel and time. Accident rates are also reduced through improved driver behaviour and a reduction in fraudulent claims, which improves insurance costs and vehicle off-road time.

Effectively, fleet managers can now get as much data about a vehicle from their computer screen or mobile device as they could from being in the vehicle at the time.

“Advances in technology include everything

from single, forward-facing dashboard cameras to multi-camera configurations, which continuously capture video footage with live streaming capabilities, enabling fleet managers to access data and footage in real-time,” says Teletrac Navman vice president of sales Scott Hutchins.

“Now, not only are the benefits of adopting a camera system much more apparent – with the ability to improve driver behaviour through training and secure evidence in the event of an incident topping the list – but there are also many more sophisticated options available to meet the specific needs of the operator,” he adds.

Footage of near misses, collisions and harsh driving events is what fleet managers generally extract, enabling them to evaluate driver behaviour and identify training opportunities to promote better practice, which will ultimately result in fewer claims and lower premiums.

Textiles supplier Elis (formerly Berendsen) has a mixed fleet of 750 commercial vehicles and uses a TomTom telematics system with cameras. Group transport compliance and optimisations

manager Peter Kelly chose the system for two key reasons: the data was easy to extract from the system and the ability to monitor emails to make sure the company's transport managers were looking at them.

“We wanted something that would give us the information and, from a governance perspective, we know that using the information improves the behaviour of the drivers. With better carbon emissions and fuel efficiency, we have cut emissions by 2,000 tonnes,” Kelly says.

If the system senses something out of the ordinary it creates an event rated from zero to five, dependent on the g-force. “Anything from four and above we classify as a near miss because chances are, it was; either the driver acted on the brakes or accelerated very quickly,” Kelly explains.

“The transport manager automatically gets a video so he can look at what has happened and talk the driver through it. We are anticipating going down to Level 3 within a couple of months and we will keep dragging it down.”

The TomTom system used by Elis can be used

DRIVER BUY-IN

In most cases the investment in vehicle cameras is through a ‘grudge’ purchase, following a claim that a fleet couldn’t defend, although the belief was that it was not liable.

Under these circumstances, the initial capital cost can be a challenge, but the buy-in from the drivers is usually a positive one as they want protection from liability.

If the business wants to install cameras to help reduce its overall road risk and gain a potential saving, the drivers may push back, thinking that the cameras are only being installed to watch them and catch them out, rather than to protect them and the asset.

One public sector fleet manager says he wanted to install cameras but was unable to due to the threat of union action.

Camera Telematics recommends fleet operators look for a supplier that provides a consultative approach to understand what they are hoping to achieve.

“In many cases, we offer driver question times, and open forums to address any concerns. We also talk and demonstrate to unions the benefits of the technology to their members, we have always received positive feedback,” says Mark Stamper of Camera Telematics (see overleaf).



“THERE ARE MANY
SOPHISTICATED
OPTIONS AVAILABLE
TO MEET SPECIFIC
NEEDS”

SCOTT HUTCHINS, TELETRAC NAVMAN

with a navigation device or an in-vehicle tablet.

Kelly decided to opt for the tablet because it gets automatic upgrades from TomTom. He says: “The software coaches the driver and tells him if he’s speeding. When he has had an event over four, it sends alerts.

“Before we put the telematics in, we trained the drivers and initially, we installed the telematics without the tablets to get a feel for the drivers’ behaviour. Then we gave them tablets and told them that the system was for their own safety and for improvement of the environment by making them slow down and so they were comfortable in their driving environment.

“Once we installed the tablet the difference was unbelievable,” says Kelly.

When he put the proposals for the camera telematics system to the Elis board, he said it would probably make between a 5% and 6% improvement in fuel economy: it is currently around 12%, saving the company £1 million.

TomTom’s ability to interface with other systems was another deciding factor. Elis uses FTA Vision for tachograph infringements and TomTom interfaces with Vision, allowing vehicles to download data automatically to transport managers every day, which helped get buy-in from them.

Communications with customers are also improved as an ETA is speedily transferred from



telematics to transport manager to customer.

The next stop for Kelly is to add an app to the tablet, so that in the event of an incident, drivers can press a first notification button to inform the insurance company.

"It will also guide them through what they should do at the scene. One of the biggest issues we have is with spurious claims but now, when we settle a claim, as soon as we look at video, we know who's in the wrong and who's in the right."

Investing in camera technology has enabled Kings Security Systems to more than halve its incident rate year-on-year.

The company has installed dashcams across its fleet of 190 cars and vans, at a cost of £30,000.

"As part of our risk management strategy we deployed dashcams across the fleet. It was a massive investment, but we were able to get a contribution from our insurance company towards the installation," says Jacob Telemacque, the company's fleet manager.

In the first year, the fleet's incident rate was reduced by 30%, leading to a reduction in insurance premiums of £10,000.

"Even if we didn't get the contribution from our insurer, the system would pay off within a year just in reduced accidents," Telemacque adds.

Auto Windscreens is predicting a 10% drop in its annual fleet insurance and fuel bill following the installation of VisionTrack cameras to its 285 vans.

The cameras integrate with TomTom Webfleet, the company's telematics and fleet management system.

"Being able to see exactly what has happened in any incident helps the team to respond quickly and efficiently to better safeguard our drivers – dispatching recovery trucks, calling the emergency services or hiring replacement vehicles, for

“BEING ABLE TO
SEE EXACTLY WHAT
HAS HAPPENED
HELPS THE TEAM
RESPOND QUICKLY”

SHAUN ATTON, AUTO WINDSCREENS

example, in a matter of minutes," says Shaun Atton, fleet manager at Auto Windscreens.

Claims costs are reduced through the rapid and reliable identification of the incident details needed for insurance claims.

"Knowing the vehicle speed and g-force severity at the precise point of impact has also given us indisputable evidence to refute personal injury claims, helping to reduce our loss ratio with our insurer," explains Atton. "It also gives our insurer the information they need to be able to offer rapid settlement without having to go through protracted and expensive court proceedings."

A COMPLETE PICTURE

The technology will also help improve driver behaviour by highlighting dangerous or inefficient driving, such as harsh braking, sharp cornering or speeding, with associated video evidence for each event, creating a complete picture of where positive intervention, such as driver coaching, is needed.

Managing large amounts of data effectively can be a real challenge for fleet managers.

Fleet operators will often find their vehicles have multiple devices – historic and current – delivering various pieces of information. This can include manufacturer systems, aftermarket telematics and even connected tyres. Finding the right information at the right time is often a manual process, which is both time consuming and costly.

"The Internet of Things (IoT) has promised all things to all men, but in reality, it is early days and is a portal to place multiple devices," says Camera Telematics group managing director Mark Stamper. "This is great having the one platform to view data, but the challenge is still around the manual and human intervention required to obtain the right data at the right time for the right person."

The company's latest system, Street Angel, does a lot of the false negative filtering automatically, through the remote configurable capability. It means that fleet managers only get notified of the clips they need to see.

"Linked with the user configuration, our cameras deliver real-time data, to the right person at the right time without human intervention," Stamper adds.

As the technology continues to accelerate, operators can look forward to more sophisticated functionality, for example, inward-facing cameras that look at what the driver is doing, ensuring they're not falling asleep, using their mobile phone, eating, or being distracted in some other way.

Hutchins says 5G connectivity has huge potential in this space, promising much faster data download and upload speeds, wider coverage and more stable connections "which means fleet managers can become more efficient through this wireless network technology".

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Behaviour-based targeted training

Telematics can be important in helping fleet operators improve safety, productivity and profitability. TTC Group Business Development Director Andy Wheeler explains how this technology offers a powerful ROI when combined with tailored driver training

Powerful solution

Telematics is all about staying safe behind the wheel and appreciating the risks drivers face and how they can be mitigated. We believe telematics used in isolation is not always effective. A more powerful and effective solution is to link the telematics results to personal driver development, where telematics data can be used to provide a training programme such as e-learning to on-road training for serious cases.

Consultative approach

At TTC, we provide a consultative approach to supporting our customers and have

relationships with many telematics providers. So, essentially, we remain agnostic and can recommend the most appropriate solution based on technical requirements and budget.

Tailored training

We receive telematics data through our Continuum platform which automatically provides a tailored training solution based on the data received.

Continuum uses digital technology to take in data and push and pull the data to any relevant party. For example, if the telematics algorithm detects numerous triggered

driving events, Continuum will automatically push the relevant training intervention to support the driver – and alert their line manager.

Drivers 'on-side'

Telematics can make a real difference to running costs and safety. However, any business introducing it must consider how it intends to deploy the technology. Having drivers 'on-side' is a real benefit, but the important thing to remember is what appropriate training solution will reduce the number of triggered events and the rewards available to top-performing drivers.

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VAUXHALL COMBO CARGO

Combo replacement is first Vauxhall-branded van since it became part of PSA Group

By Matt de Prez

The first commercial vehicle to result from PSA Group's ownership of Vauxhall is a replacement for the Combo.

It launched last year, at the same time as the Peugeot Partner and Citroën Berlingo. It shares a platform with both. There are few differences between the three, and all share the same PSA Group mechanical parts.

The steering wheel, headlight switch and dials are the only Vauxhall parts on the interior.

The Combo Cargo is the cheapest of the three, with prices starting at £16,663. That's £200 less than the French-badged models.

Cheaper petrol engines will be offered later in the year, but for now there is a selection of diesels. We tested the mid-range 100PS version. The entry-level van uses a 75PS engine and there is a more powerful 130PS version, but we doubt many operators would need it.

With 250Nm of torque, there is plenty of power

COMBO CARGO LE NAV 100PS	
SPECIFICATIONS	
CV OTR	£19,938
Power/torque	100PS/250Nm
Payload	668kg
Gross vehicle weight	1,975kg
Load volume	3.3 cu m
Fuel cost	8.92ppm
SMR	3.52ppm
Running cost	31.61ppm
Combined fuel economy	65.6mpg



The Combo has a modern, comfortable interior

to shift the Combo. It does so in a refined and relaxed manner, with the PSA-derived five-speed gearbox the only niggle. It's notchy and imprecise. We were impressed to see that our test van had averaged 48mpg over the past 2,000 miles it had been driven and we managed to exceed 50mpg on one trip.

The underpinnings come from Peugeot and Citroën's latest road cars, which gives the van precise handling. The new Combo is also available as a small MPV, called Combo Life.

Ride comfort and refinement were better than we expected, given the Combo Cargo's low list price.

Access to the rear is provided by two barn-style doors and a side sliding door.

Dependent on model, payloads reach up to one tonne. Our version could handle a 668kg payload, with a 3.3 cu m load area – enough for two euro pallets.

The longer XL version has a 4.4 cu m load area and is available with a second row of seats.

One clever innovation that comes as standard on the Combo Cargo is an overload warning sensor. It can alert the driver if the van has exceeded its maximum payload, a crucial safety benefit.

The Combo is available with an array of driver assistance technology, including lane departure warning, autonomous braking and blind spot monitor.

For £150, the winter pack adds heated seats and a heated steering wheel.

Air conditioning is standard on all but the entry level Edition model.

The infotainment system (£300) provides an eight-inch touchscreen with smartphone connectivity, Bluetooth and digital radio. A sat-nav system is also available for £700.

The Combo Cargo has a modern and comfortable interior, great efficiency and competitive running costs. It is a significant step up from the last Fiat-based version and is now a front-runner in the small van segment.

RENAULT D-RANGE 6X2

'Unsung hero' has safety features in abundance and much more to commend it

By Tim Campbell

Renault Trucks has been making great strides in recent years into the heavy truck tractor unit market with its T range which has attracted a number of loyal followers and possibly reflects the recent main focus of the manufacturer.

Of course, there's more to the UK truck market than tractor units and perhaps the distribution sector has been under-represented. Although there's no reason why, given it offers a full range of product under the D banner.

With this in mind, we thought it worthwhile to look at one of the unsung heroes of its product line-up, the three axle 6x2.

As many know, Renault Trucks shares its engine line-up with parent company Volvo Trucks. Consequently the DTi8 7.7 litre Euro VI engine can also be found in Volvo trucks such as the FE. Power ratings for the engine start at

RENAULT D26 R320 6X2	
SPECIFICATIONS	
Price as tested	N/A
Gross vehicle weight (kg)	26,000
Engine	DTi 8 235kW
Output (PS)	324
Torque (Nm)	1,200
Payload (kg)	18,222
Warranty	Two year unlimited mileage



We test the top of the D8 power range

253PS with 950 Nm, followed by the 284PS with 1050Nm and finally the top of the D8 power range the 324PS and 1200Nm.

The three-axle models feature the latter engine which is certainly the most suitable for a vehicle rated at 26 tonnes. The six-cylinder in-line diesel engine has four valves per cylinder and a common rail high-pressure direct fuel-injection working at 2,000 bar.

The engine also features Renault's Optibrake system which is a combination of exhaust brake and valve compression braking which via an electronic management system develops 231PS coupled to the service brake.

Behind the 7.7 litre engine is a single-plate 430mm diameter clutch matched to an AT 2412F Optidriver automated gearbox with 12 forward gears.

Within the D range there is more than 100 variants so it no surprise the 26 tonne gross vehicle weight (GVW) features 13 wheelbases starting at 3.25m to 6.5m measured between axle one and axle two.

As far as axle suspension is concerned, the front steered features a standard leaf spring with the second a single reduction drive axle while the third single wheel axle is steered as well as lift-able via an airbag.

The front axle is plated at eight tonnes and the second rated at 11.5 tonnes. Just behind is the third

steered single wheel lift axle rated at 7.5 tonnes.

As mentioned, there's an effective engine brake system already on the D26 but the safety features do not stop there.

The electronic braking systems consists of the normal suspects such as anti-lock braking system (ABS), anti-slip regulation (ASR), electronic stability control (ESC), trajectory control and anti-rollover system, emergency brake assist (EBA), emergency brake lights (EBL) and Hill Hold. There's also the option of drag torque control which controls the amount of torque input during downshifting.

While the D range has, in theory, a 2.1m and 2.3m cab, as far as the three axle models are concerned, only the latter is available although it does have four cab configurations – Day, Global, Night & Day and Sleeper.

The hydraulically tiltable steel cab has a standard mechanical four-point suspension with the option of air suspension with a ride-height control system.

As well as the normal heated remote-control rear view mirrors, there is a practical and great safety feature – the passenger vision door with deep glazed window at the bottom of the door.

Inside the cab is a group of upper storage cupboards, two storage compartments with lids, a sliding side sun screen on the driver's side and a television shelf with 24V provision and four fixing rings. Ambient lighting gives the cab a nice quality feel and there are a series of spotlights along the cab roof.

The infotainment system features an analogue and digital radio with audio playback via USB and streaming via Bluetooth 4.0 with hands-free function and steering wheel-mounted controls.

The cab is a not flat floor and therefore has a pronounced raised engine tunnel which is handy for placing items such as delivery sheets etc. It also houses the park brake.

Renault Trucks' distribution range could be considered a real unsung hero of its type. This three-axle variant has a lot to commend it and while the market for three-axle, rear steered rigids is not as great as the tractor unit sector, a few more on UK roads would not be a bad thing.



The instrument panel is in a semi-wraparound style



The vision door has a deep glazed window at the bottom of the passenger door.

THE LAST WORD

ALISON BELL

MARKETING DIRECTOR, VENSON AUTOMOTIVE SOLUTIONS

Bell joined Venson on a two-week assignment and has stayed for 12 years. She sees no harm in doing a little daydreaming – “it can be when the best ideas show themselves”, she says.

The advice I would give to my 18 year-old self is that it's okay not having a life plan or a career mapped out. Go with what interests you and trust your instincts and be open to opportunities. As long as you can pay your way and don't put your health at risk, it'll be worth the experience.

The song I would have on my driving playlist is *Love Shack* by the B52s. Unique sound with lots of energy. Turn it up, seat dance and sing along.

My first memory associated with a car is having a boyfriend push my first car, a Vauxhall Viva, up a hill while I steered. He offered to do it and I definitely got the better deal.

My favourite movie quote is “some dreams come true, some don't. But keep on dreamin'” from *Pretty Woman*. In our online world it's good to escape technology for a few minutes and allow yourself to daydream. It can be when the best ideas show themselves.

If money was no object, the car I would own is a Jaguar F-Type SVR Coupe, in red. Style, speed and sheer fun.

A book I would recommend others read is *Ten to Zen* by Owen O'Kane. A simple, effective guide to help start your day in the right head-space and prepare for any challenges.

My hobbies and interests are holistic health, arts and crafts.

My pet hate is not being true to yourself. Don't be scared to ask questions. Don't just agree because it means an easy life. If someone asks for your opinion give it. If someone annoys or upsets you, tell them. I'm a great believer in openness and clear communication.

If I were made Transport Minister for the day I would close the M25 and take the Jag F-Type SVR for a spin! Aside from that, I would remove all roadworks that aren't actually being worked on.

Why fleet?

I didn't choose it, it chose me. The opportunity presented itself and I said yes. I was a self-employed marketing consultant and someone recommended me to the MD of Venson to implement the results of a market research project. It started as a two-week assignment and it's become a 12-year relationship.

Latest products, developments and achievements

This may seem strange coming from a marketing director, but I'm not being drawn on this. The one thing (note to self another pet hate) I really dislike is selling, in disguise. If you're interested, call me, it's good to talk.

My company in three words

Approachable, accountable, hardworking. Hopefully, says it all.

Career influence

There's no one person. I have been very fortunate to work with some very talented, wise and big-hearted individuals. Early in my career I also worked for some “interesting” people. All these experiences shape you.

My definition of a good MD

Someone with tenacity, drive, vision and when it matters, empathy.

Advice to fleet newcomers

Understand your audience, whether that be people you support within your own organisation or those outside the business, your customers. Always think, what can I do to help them to do their job better, make their life easier, help their business and mine be more successful.

If I wasn't in fleet

Growing up I always hankered after driving steam trains. But then my head was turned in my teens by clothes. So now I would say my first love would be being a designer, with the Flying Scotsman as the backdrop for my first collection. I couldn't make anything myself, but I'd have plenty of ideas for those who have the amazing skill to turn what is on paper into a reality.

Next issue: Paul Singh, managing director, SmartWitness

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