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Insight: to bundle or not to bundle?
 That's the question facing companies when deciding how best to manage fleet

Interview: Volkswagen UK
 WLTP tardiness hit sales, but fleet demand for models remains high



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CONTENTS

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NEWS

- 6 Defra approves city's 'no-CAZ' plans
- 9 Affordable telematics for SMEs
- 10 Fleets urged to protect cyclists
- 13 Škoda to simplify its fleet approach
- 14 New app turns downtime to profit
- 16 Gig economy firms appeal rulings

REGULARS

- 20 Letters and editor's Big Picture
- 23 Opinion: hybrids/alternative fuels
- 32 Award winner: Volkswagen UK
- 58 Last word: Elaine Pringle

CAR REVIEWS

- 52 Citroën C5 Aircross
- 54 Honda CR-V Hybrid
- 55 Ford Focus Estate
- 56 Long-term reports



30

In the spotlight: Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

RoSPA consultants John Greenhough (left) and Rick Wood explain how the safety group 'pulls no punches' when it comes to addressing road risk

26



Cover feature Fleet in focus: AD Bly

Fleet manager Andy Gamlin was 'thrown in at the deep end' when he landed the role. Fortunately, help was at hand and he soon discovered that it's good to talk

35

To bundle, or not to bundle?

That is the question facing companies when weighing up how to get the most out of their fleet



32

Award winner: Volkswagen

WLTP tardiness hit September sales, but fleet demand remains high for Volkswagen's award-winning cars, testament to their high quality



Defra approves Nottingham's 'no-CAZ' anti-pollution plan

Sheffield becomes the latest city to consider introducing a CAZ

By Gareth Roberts

Government approval of Nottingham City Council's air quality plan shows the diversity of tasks fleets face when negotiating the different measures employed to tackle pollution.

The city became the first to have its pollution plan rubber-stamped by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), last week.

Nottingham was one of five cities (the others were Birmingham, Derby, Leeds and Southampton) earmarked to have a clean air zone (CAZ) three years ago in an effort to meet emission limits for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).

To meet the Government directive, Nottingham had been planning to introduce a Class B CAZ – which would have affected HGVs, buses and taxis.

But the city's newly-approved plan steers clear of charging vehicles to drive into the city centre.

Instead, other moves being made by the local authority include retrofitting buses with technology to cut emissions and changing the age and emissions policy for taxis. Now the city is expected to be within legal limits of NO₂ within two years.

However, its approach contrasts with Oxford, which achieved legal levels of NO₂ at its two continuous monitoring stations last year. It wants to keep pressure on emissions by introducing a zero emission zone (ZEZ) in the city centre.

The phased ban starts with certain vehicle types on a small number of streets in 2020 and, as vehicle technology develops, will extend to all vehicle types across the whole city centre in 2035.

Oxford has highlighted how other air pollution monitoring locations in the city still registered NO₂ levels above the legal limit and argues there is no safe level for the pollutant.

Detailed proposals are now being developed for the ZEZ, which are expected to be released for public consultation in the New Year.

Councils 'know best'

The Government said that due to the highly localised nature of pollution, local knowledge is crucial in solving pollution problems in these hotspots. This is why local authorities take the lead on developing air quality plans, with support and funding from central government, it said.

However, that local approach is leaving fleets facing a potential myriad of rules and regulations imposed in towns and cities across the country.

Nigel Base, commercial vehicle manager at trade body the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), said: "While Defra has issued guidelines and boundary conditions for

vehicles, it looks like charges and emission criteria may vary in each zone leading to a complicated process for operators and users travelling between cities."

London, for example, will introduce its ultra-low emission zone (ULEZ) from April 2019. There will be two ULEZ charge levels for vehicles which do not meet the latest emission standards: £12.50 a day for cars, vans and motorbikes and £100 a day for lorries, buses and coaches.

However, Base said: "We are now seeing individual boroughs in the capital developing their own plans that go even further. Islington, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham and the City of London all have plans for ULEV streets."

The City of London's first ever transport strategy is expected to include a potential 15mph speed restriction.

Base continued: "While we recognise the need to improve air quality and have invested billions in vehicle technology, an un-coordinated approach will undoubtedly lead to confusion for drivers, particularly in the delivery and service sector.

"A coordinated approach is needed so drivers are clear on their responsibilities and can travel, knowing which charges are in place and where."

Defra says that final air quality plans have also been received from Birmingham and Leeds, while 33 other local authorities are still working to develop theirs.

Leeds City Council favours a charging system for non-compliant buses, coaches, HGVs, taxis and private hire vehicles (pre-Euro 6 diesel and pre-Euro 4 petrol).

If approved by Government, the proposed scheme would come into force in 2020.

The local authority revised the boundary of its clean air zone after listening to the concerns of businesses and fleet operators at debates hosted



Nigel Base, SMMT

"A coordinated approach is needed so drivers are clear on their responsibilities"



by Energy Saving Trust, *Fleet News*, British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association and ACFO.

In Birmingham, the council has set out plans for a zone covering the area inside its Middle Ring Road – smaller than the city-wide zone that had been feared by those responsible for deliveries to businesses within the centre of the city.

However, its proposals will cover all vehicles not meeting the latest emissions standards, including cars.

Southampton is considering a plan to charge buses, coaches, HGVs, taxis and private hire vehicles that do not meet the latest emissions standards. Southampton City Council and New Forest District Council, which both serve the affected area, are yet to submit final plans to Government.

Derby, like Nottingham, has ruled out introducing any charges for road users, instead preferring to focus on traffic management measures to address pollution hotspots. A further consultation is planned on more detailed measures.

More clean air zones

Sheffield City Council became the latest local authority to announce its plans to create a CAZ, including charges for vehicles using the inner ring road (fleetnews.co.uk, November 14).

Feasibility study findings suggest that a CAZ within the inner ring road, similar to ones proposed in Leeds, Glasgow and Southampton, will be needed to bring the city's air quality in line with legal levels by January 2021.

It will mean buses, coaches and HGVs not meeting the latest emission standards could

have to pay £50 a day, while taxis, private hire vehicles, light goods vehicles (LGVs) and vans would also face a £10 daily charge – a Class C CAZ.

The council will launch its consultation in early 2019 to get the views of residents, businesses, taxi drivers and bus companies on the proposals.

Meanwhile, Bristol told *Fleet News* it was likely to launch a consultation in the New Year. It is considering a Class C or Class D CAZ in the centre of the city, with the latter charging cars which do not meet the latest emission standards, alongside trucks, taxis and vans.

Workplace parking levies

However, a leading transport academic claims local authorities should focus on bringing in workplace parking levies (WPLs) rather than introducing a CAZ.

Speaking at the ALD Automotive Clean Air Zone Conference in Bristol, Professor Graham Parkhurst of the University of the West of England said that CAZs are unlikely to reduce transport use in city centres. He claimed that WPLs were far more likely to change behaviour.

"We have really ended up with a crisis and clean air zones are an example of crisis management," Parkhurst said.

"WPLs... target people who are going to the city centre. If they have a free parking space, then they are going to say, 'well, it would be stupid not to use it'. Putting a small charge on that will help them to make the right decision."

He cited Nottingham's WPL – the only such

scheme in the country – as a success, raising £10 million a year by charging £375 annually per space. Nottingham claims it is an efficient way to raise revenue from businesses for alternative transport schemes.

Glasgow has taken notice of Nottingham's success, with the city council now considering introducing a WPL to complement a LEZ, the first phase of which comes into force in the city at the end of this year.

"Somebody has got to pay for all of this," said Parkhurst. "To deliver clean air projects for city centres that deliver results, such as trams, electric shuttles or underground trains, requires revenue."

Sheffield City Council, for example, is calling on the Government for £40m to fund air quality measures, including charging infrastructure.

A Defra spokesman told *Fleet News* that final air quality plans from councils will be assessed by the Joint Air Quality Unit and wider government before being agreed by ministers. This process will consider the evidence provided by local authorities in support of their recommendations.

Once plans are approved, the Government says it will ensure sufficient funding is in place for the agreed measures.

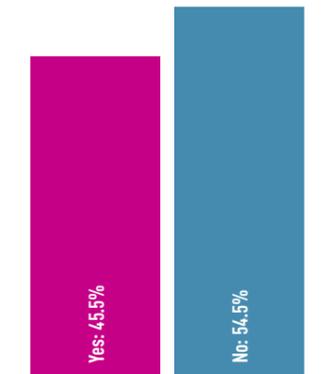
The spokesman also said that the final version of Defra's Clean Air Strategy will be published later this year.

■ The latest air quality plans for towns and cities across the UK, can be found via our interactive map in the FAQ section on the *Fleet News* website (fleetnews.co.uk/fleet-FAQ).

FLEET FACTS AND FIGURES

OPINION POLL

Do you have workplace charging for electric vehicles?



FleetNews view: Fewer than half (45.5%) of the respondents to our poll have employers who provide workplace charging for electric vehicles (EVs). However, with more company car drivers choosing plug-in hybrid EVs and pure EVs, the need for workplace charging will increase. Our view is fleet decision-makers need to be speaking to facilities management teams to start planning for the future now.

This week's poll: What do you think is the biggest blocker to EV vehicles?
fleetnews.co.uk/polls

MOST COMMENTED ONLINE

Fleet drivers failing to charge plug-in hybrids could risk Government backing

fleetnews.co.uk/news

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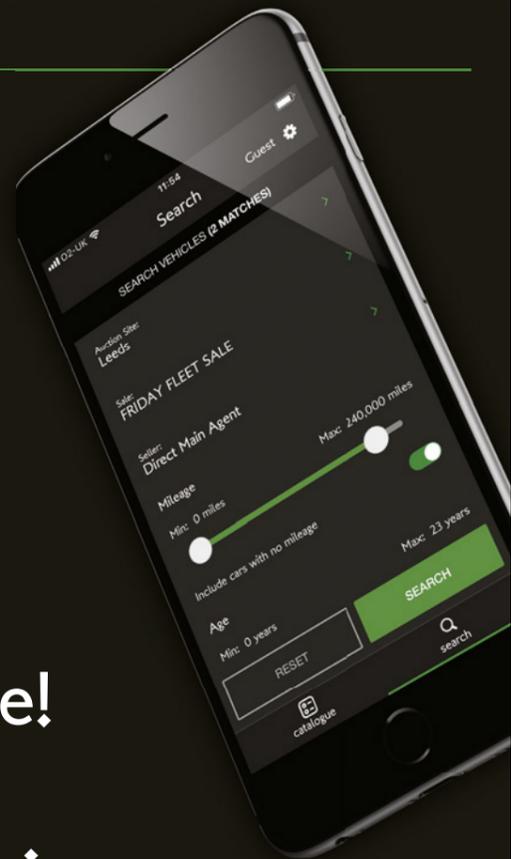
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Easy-to-install plug-in system offers SMEs affordable telematics

EE launches new service following eight-month trial with potential customers

By Tom Seymour

EE, part of BT Group, is targeting small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) with a new plug-in telematics service that aims to give small fleets more control over their vehicles.

The EE Auto Mate service works by plugging a device into a vehicle's OBDII (on-board diagnostics) port, which then collects data, ranging from overall health and fuel efficiency to location, speed and traffic routes.

This information is then interpreted by BT's own big data platform and relayed back to the driver or fleet manager through the Auto Mate app or an online portal.

Auto Mate will be a rival to other companies focusing on the SME telematics market including ODO and Trakm8 which partners with The AA. The AA also has the Car Genie app which analyses telematics data to predict potential breakdowns.

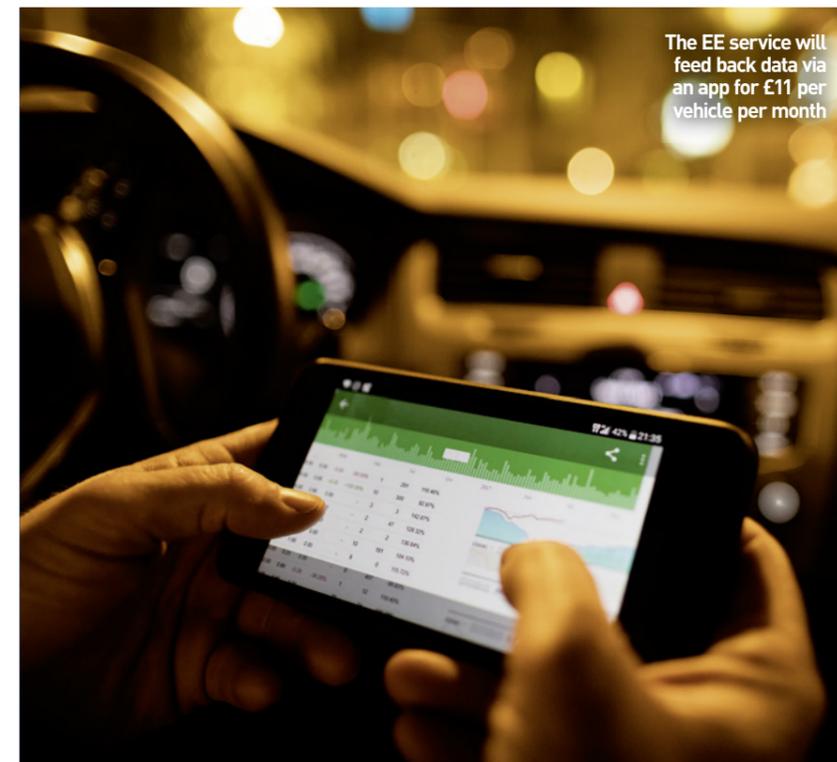
It is thought EE's consumer-focused brand, made prominent in UK television adverts fronted by Hollywood actor Kevin Bacon, will be a good fit to help attract SME customers.

EE ran trials for eight months to get feedback from customers before launching in November and Auto Mate forms part of the internet of things (IoT) strategy which sits within BT Group's Enterprise unit.

BT Fleet Solutions, BT Group's fleet management division, is already using the same technology that underpins EE's Auto Mate, but it is part of a different package for larger corporate fleet customers that was launched in April 2016. Both will continue using the same telematics technology.

BT Fleet Solutions, which is reportedly up for sale, has responsibility for BT's own fleet – the second largest in the UK at 32,000 vehicles – while providing fleet management services to a further 90,000 cars, vans and trucks.

Chris Sims, managing director of strategy, marketing and digital at BT Enterprise, said: "EE Auto Mate forms part of our plan to create faster,



The EE service will feed back data via an app for £11 per vehicle per month

safer, smarter businesses – underpinned by the Internet of Things and our fixed and mobile network in the UK.

"We're helping SMEs improve their bottom line performance by harnessing and interpreting fleet data, empowering them to make better decisions about their business.

"We believe companies such as couriers, hauliers, estate agents, plumbers and electricians will find the service really appealing."

Auto Mate allows fleets to track the location of vehicles, as well as monitor driver behaviour and to create automated mileage reports to help track fuel expenses. The system will also feed data relating to the vehicle's speed and braking patterns and dispense driving tips.

If the built-in sensors detect that the vehicle has been involved in a collision, the service will automatically alert the fleet manager.

EE is also planning a future enhancement where the emergency services will automatically be contacted in the event of an incident.

The app helps drivers to better manage their expenses by producing automated mileage reports and can also alert the user when the vehicle is due for a service or MOT. It costs £11 per month per vehicle, with a £49 upfront charge.

The plug-and-play device is fitted to a vehicle's OBDII port. Within the Auto Mate app and the online portal, EE said customers will be shown where the OBD port is for their specific video, along with a video demonstration of how to plug it in.

EE said the process to install the device takes around 90 seconds and it is transferable between cars, so if a vehicle is off lease, it can be switched out to different vehicles.

It said this would help reduce the standard costs seen with fully installed telematics devices.

The target market is fleets with between one and 99 vehicles, however EE says there has been some interest from larger fleets.

EE is not currently working with any car manufacturers to make Auto Mate a standard factory-fit option.

Manufacturers like Ford are already planning on launching their own factory-fit telematics offering early next year, for example.

However, EE will be working closely with leasing companies directly to make deals to fit the Auto Mate technology into vehicles that are offered on contract hire, although it would not say which leasing companies it was currently working with.



"We believe companies will find the service really appealing"

Chris Sims, BT Enterprise

Report calls for fleets to do more to protect vulnerable road users

Major concerns for fleet managers include speed limits on rural roads

By Gareth Roberts

Fleets could do more to protect vulnerable road users by raising awareness among drivers, a new report released to coincide with Road Safety Week suggests.

The Fleet Survey Report 2018, from Brake Professional and the Licence Bureau, reveals that many fleet managers are aware of their responsibilities towards cyclists and motorcyclists. But, more than a third (38%) of fleet respondents said that the fleet industry is not doing enough to look after them.

Last year, 6,043 motorcyclists, 5,604 cyclists and 1,801 pedestrians were killed or injured per billion road miles they travelled. This compares with just 238 car occupants and 61 truck drivers.

New analysis by road safety charity Brake for Road Safety Week (November 19-25), which calls for drivers to be 'Bike Smart', has found that, on average, those on two wheels are 63 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured on British roads, per mile travelled, than car drivers.

Brake campaigns director Joshua Harris said: "Raising awareness about the safety of those on two wheels, who face much higher risk of death and serious injury than those in cars, is absolutely vital."

Brake Professional believes fleets can do more, despite three-quarters (74%) of respondents claiming that their organisation has the right policies in place to protect cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians.

Fleets believe the Government can do more. Fewer than four in 10 (37%) respondents believe that it is doing enough to protect vulnerable road users, with a similar number (36%) saying there is scope for further action to be taken.

Major concerns for fleet managers include

speed limits on rural roads, with 42% claiming these are too fast to keep cyclists safe.

Department for Transport (DfT) statistics show that rural roads pose more than three times the risk of a fatal crash for both cyclists and motorcyclists compared with urban roads.

Harris explained: "Rural roads, with their high speeds, blind bends and few cycle routes, pose particular danger to those on two wheels, with the risk of a fatal rural road bike crash now at its highest since 2010."

He welcomed the Government's announced focus on rural road user safety and said Brake is calling for ministers to look at rural road speeds and consider segregated cycle lanes, in its plans.

Malcolm Maycock, managing director of Licence Bureau, said: "Clearly, there is an awareness around the issues related to vulnerable road users, but fleets need to ensure they document policies on the subject and make them a core component of their driver handbooks and education pathways."

Nine out of 10 respondents to the fleet survey (92%) said cyclists could do more to protect themselves on the roads.

"Raising awareness about the safety of those on two wheels is absolutely vital"

Joshua Harris, Brake

Just 4% disagreed with this statement, and not a single respondent claimed that drivers are always at fault in collisions between cyclists and motorised vehicles.

The fleet findings suggest that fleet managers generally recognise the importance of road safety, with 84% of respondents agreeing that their directors and senior management teams support their organisation's commitment in this area, says the report.

Almost three-quarters (72%) claim they set realistic schedules to allow drivers to complete their journeys without being tempted to speed, and 61% tell them they will not be penalised for journeys running over time if they are delayed.

Speed is a factor in many crashes and contributes to a large number of road deaths and injuries. Encouraging drivers to travel at slower speeds will help reduce their risk of being involved in a collision, says Brake.

However, it is clear that some organisations have not implemented important road safety policies and procedures. Less than a third (29%) set routes for their drivers that deliberately avoid town centres, residential areas, schools and roads known to be regularly used by cyclists wherever possible. These are locations where dangerous collisions occur, and planning routes around them could help to reduce the number of crashes that involve vulnerable road users.

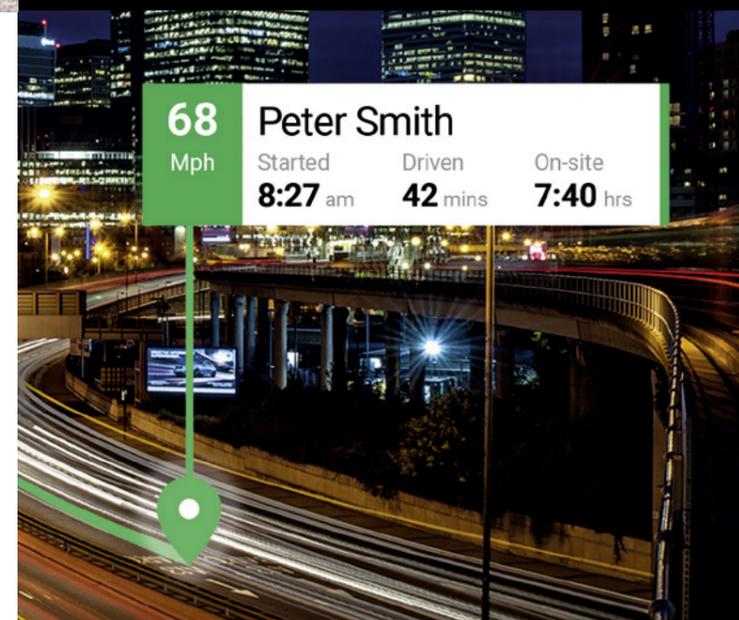
A quarter of respondents (25%) said they felt that their organisation prioritises delivery schedules and sales targets over road safety, and only 65% said they felt enough time and money was being invested in road safety activities.

The road safety charity said it is worrying to see that just 52% of organisations have driver handbooks that include guidance on protecting vulnerable road users.

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Škoda will simplify its 'overly complex' approach to fleets

Carmaker plans 20-25 business centres to put expertise 'in one place'

By Sarah Toozie

Skoda is revamping its fleet dealer network with the launch of 20 business centres, which will cater for small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) and major corporates, from January 1, 2019.

Currently, Škoda has a two-tier system for fleet customers: sub-25 vehicle fleets are served by the brand's local business development manager (LBDM) programme, while fleets of 25 vehicles or more are handled by Škoda's premium agency partners. These are dealers who supply to major contract hire and leasing companies and who meet set criteria such as having a dedicated administrator for dealing with leasing companies, using the same procurement systems as leasing companies and having a minimum of three fleet-specific demonstrators.

However, this approach is "overly complex", according to Škoda head of fleet Henry Williams. He wants each new Škoda Business Centre to have a local business development manager and to be equipped to handle major corporates and "top flight" contract hire and leasing companies putting Škoda's fleet expertise "in one place".

In addition, Škoda will allow its business centres to "make some decisions as if they were the manufacturer" in order to "speed up the process for customers", Williams said.

For example, Škoda Business Centres will be able to offer five-day test drives from Škoda's central fleet of about 250 cars and to specify and order their own fleet-relevant stock to meet customer demand.

It will also be easier for sub-25 fleet customers who do not fund their vehicles through Volkswagen Financial Services (VWFS) to get the right level of support.

"We'll be giving Škoda Business Centres their own set of discount levels they can go to for supporting any business that is not done through VWFS," Williams said.

Fleet customers will be able to find a Škoda Business Centre on the brand's fleet website (set to re-launch next year) and will also be made aware through marketing material.

Williams said that there are no plans to change Škoda's fleet training programme or any of the measurements it currently has in place. However, regular feedback from dealers will be essential to ensure the success of the new business centres, particularly given Škoda's failed 'Fit for Fleet' initiative (which ran from 2011-2013).

The problem with 'Fit for Fleet', according to Williams, was that it was a central programme across the whole of Europe, whereas the fleet dealer initiatives in place now are UK-specific.

"We'll be checking with the Škoda Business Centres on a regular basis to make sure it's working for them and to see whether we need to do anything differently," Williams said.

"I have a business development group of five or six dealers who I meet with on a regular basis to refine our strategy but that will broaden to 20 different dealers (the business centres) so we'll be getting a much broader spectrum, a much more inclusive approach, from the dealer network into what we're doing, which is really key."

Dealer response so far has been positive. "They see it as being much simpler," Williams said. "We're offering some additional benefits

for them and from their perspective it's about ease of doing business."

Williams envisages the business centre network growing to around 25 dealers by January 2020 but it will not be open to all 128 dealers.

"We don't really need any more (than 25) for the supply of volume," he said.

"If we have some really talented dealers who can offer a great level of service to [fleet] customers and who can achieve the KPIs we set and go through a rigorous process of giving us business plans for the year then, of course, they are welcome to join us.

"But, I wouldn't say it's open to everybody. We could go to 60 and find 40 of them are not really engaged or focused on what they need to do.

"I'd rather have 20-25 that are really good at what they do."

"We'll be giving Škoda Business Centres their own set of discount levels"

Henry Williams, Škoda head of fleet



Turo looking to undercut rival rental giants by up to one third

'Airbnb for cars' will allow owners to earn extra when they are not using vehicle

Tom Seymour

A company that is describing itself as the 'Airbnb for cars' is looking to offer daily rental prices up to 35% below traditional operators and will build its fleet with the help of motorists and smaller daily rental companies.

Turo, a US-based peer-to-peer marketplace, has launched in London and puts owners of vehicles in contact with a network of potential customers looking to rent a car or van.

It also features a peer-to-peer service, enabling owners to earn money from their vehicles.

While Turo has launched primarily focusing on the consumer market in the UK, Xavier Collins, Turo UK director, said fleet is a focus too. Fleets that outright purchase their vehicles could add vehicles to the Turo service to earn money, for example on pool cars that may be underutilised.

Collins confirmed that Turo can also add cars that are either leased through contract hire, or bought through personal contract hire agreements, provided they have the permission of the lessee to do so.

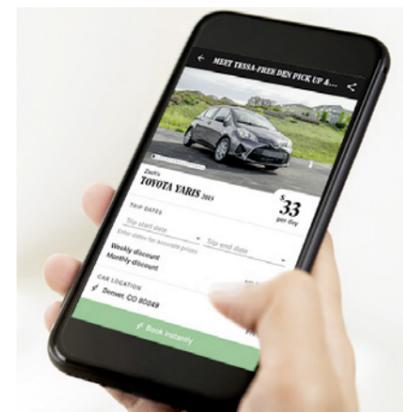
In the US, Turo's Business Class offers corporate customers access to what Collins calls a curated fleet of five star vehicles with the highest rated hosts (vehicle owners) and added benefits like delivery of the vehicle to a destination of their choosing, like an airport or train station.

Business Class is not available yet in the UK, but it is something Collins is looking at.

The Turo service is delivered via an app, with Turo taking a percentage share of the daily rental cost.

Collins told *Fleet News* that it is hoping to build up its fleet of vehicles with the help of smaller operators to rival rental giants like Hertz and Enterprise.

These 'commercial hosts' will gain access to a



An app will allow potential renters to access vehicles more cheaply, says Turo



Turo's offering will allow private 'hosts' to hire out their vehicles

wider reach of customers by adding their vehicles to the Turo app, but will cover the deal with their own commercial insurance and customer service. Turo takes a 10% slice from each daily rental cost.

For the peer-to-peer service, Turo takes a 25% cut as it arranges customer support and insurance cover through its partner Allianz. It has built up a fleet of 1,000 vehicles over the past 12 months following a soft launch in London.

Turo's own research shows the average UK driver spends less than nine hours per week behind the wheel. For the remaining 8,304 hours each year, cars are sitting idle.

Collins said: "We've had a strong start and I hope this growth continues. The mission of the company is to empower those with vehicles to make better use of that asset."

"I don't want to put a number on what we're looking for in terms of fleet size to make this scalable, but the signs from launch are positive. Our plan is to offer Turo across the UK."

Collins said US customers are seeing the average monthly earnings from Turo at around £500 based on nine days of rental.

The company says there will also be a Turo Go telematics offering launched in the next six months to provide data on mileage and driver behaviour. This will be used to give information back to vehicle owners and to help monitor drivers using the service.

Turo provides a pricing guide based on its own



"Our plan is to offer Turo across the UK"

Xavier Collins, Turo

algorithm that suggests how much to charge per day for the vehicle, but this is not mandated and owners of vehicles can set prices at any level they like.

The age of the vehicles that can be added to the Turo service is limited to 10 years.

Hosts and drivers will be monitored through a five-star review system. Drivers are pre-screened with driver licence checking software and Collins says Turo has multiple data points to operate background checks.

There have been no incidents since Turo launched, but Collins acknowledges that as the rental miles go up with the company growing, a vehicle will be involved with an incident at some point.

He said: "We will make sure that peer-to-peer host has access to a replacement vehicle and everything will be covered by our Auxillis insurance."

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Protesters marched to the Court of Appeal during the Uber hearing



Photo: Jack Saville

Crunch time approaching as gig firms dispute employee rulings

Union says Uber appeal is just delaying tactics to slow back payments to drivers

By Tom Seymour

The rights of drivers operating in the gig economy (where there is a prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs) are again being considered in the courts in a major test for the employment practice.

Companies like Addison Lee, Uber and Hermes have been at the centre of legal challenges from their gig drivers who contend they are workers, rather than being self-employed.

In the latest case to pass through the courts, Addison Lee lost its appeal at an employment tribunal after an earlier hearing decided a group of drivers were entitled to national minimum wage and holiday pay rights.

Uber, which is contesting a similar decision at the Court of Appeal, argues that the courts have misunderstood the nature of its relationship with the drivers.

A previous employment tribunal ruled that drivers using the ride-hailing app were entitled to employment rights like holiday pay and guar-

anteed minimum wages (fleetnews.co.uk, October 31, 2016).

Uber appealed against the decision, but the original ruling was upheld in November last year (fleetnews.co.uk, November 13, 2017).

Dinah Rose QC, acting for Uber, told the Court of Appeal drivers had a contract with Uber to use the Uber app, but the drivers entered into separate contracts with individual passengers when providing rides, with Uber acting as an agent for drivers.

An Uber spokesman told *Fleet News* that if drivers were classed as workers, "they would lose some of the freedom and flexibility that comes with being their own boss".

Uber has introduced an insurance policy to cover sick pay and maternity leave, but maintains it is an app, not an employer or taxi company.

If Uber is unsuccessful in its appeal, it is expected to then take the case to the Supreme Court. This would constitute the ride-hailing company's last method of appeal.

The Court of Appeal's judgement is expected later this year. Addison Lee said it would review the employment tribunal's decision before deciding whether to lodge a further appeal (fleetnews.co.uk, November 15).

GMB, the trade union that worked with legal firm Leigh Day to win the original employment tribunal case, said Uber was employing delaying tactics by appealing the earlier ruling.

Sue Harris, GMB legal director, explained: "Their decision to appeal means Uber continues to delay changing their employment practices. However, once the appeal process is over then Uber will need to make payment for the period from the date of the judgement in October 2016 as well as the period prior to the judgement

when they denied our members an entitlement to holiday pay and national minimum wage."

GMB has been involved in claims against several other operators. "We are keen to engage with companies on how their working practices need to be changed to reflect the judgements we have achieved," explained Harris.

The Independent Workers Union of Great Britain (IWGB) organised a march protesting against the gig economy at the Court of Appeal while the Uber case was being heard.

Hundreds of protesters assembled at Transport for London (TfL) and marched to the Royal Courts of Justice, where IWGB members and co-claimants in the Uber employment rights case James Farrar and Yaseen Aslam attended the proceedings at the Court of Appeal.

Peter Lawrence, director and human resources specialist at Human Capital Department, the Kings Lynn-based HR company, told *Fleet News* it has seen a recent surge in the number of clients looking to move from self-employed status to employees.

He said: "I can't really say whether this change has been due to increased requests from individuals, or whether it is more employer-led."

"We do have one client, for example, who is keen to move long standing self-employed workers on to 'the books' as PAYE employees, but these individuals don't want to change. So there is still some resistance."

Lawrence said there is more awareness of workers' rights due to high profile cases in the media, but substantial change will need to be driven by HMRC enforcement. He said: "I don't see that happening as the Government is pro the gig economy and freedom of regulations in the employment market, which is a pity as some individuals are getting a raw deal."



"Some individuals are getting a raw deal"

Peter Lawrence,
Human Capital
Department



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Model shown New Combo L1 Limited Edition Nav with optional offside sliding side-access door and Night Blue metallic paint. [#]Fuel consumption data and CO₂ emission data are regulations R (EC) No. 715/2007, R (EU) No. 2017/1153 and R (EU) No. 2017/1151. The values do not take into account in particular use and driving conditions, equipment or options and CO₂ emissions of new passenger cars¹ freely available in all points of sale or at www.vauxhall.co.uk/WLTP Correct at time of print (November 2018).

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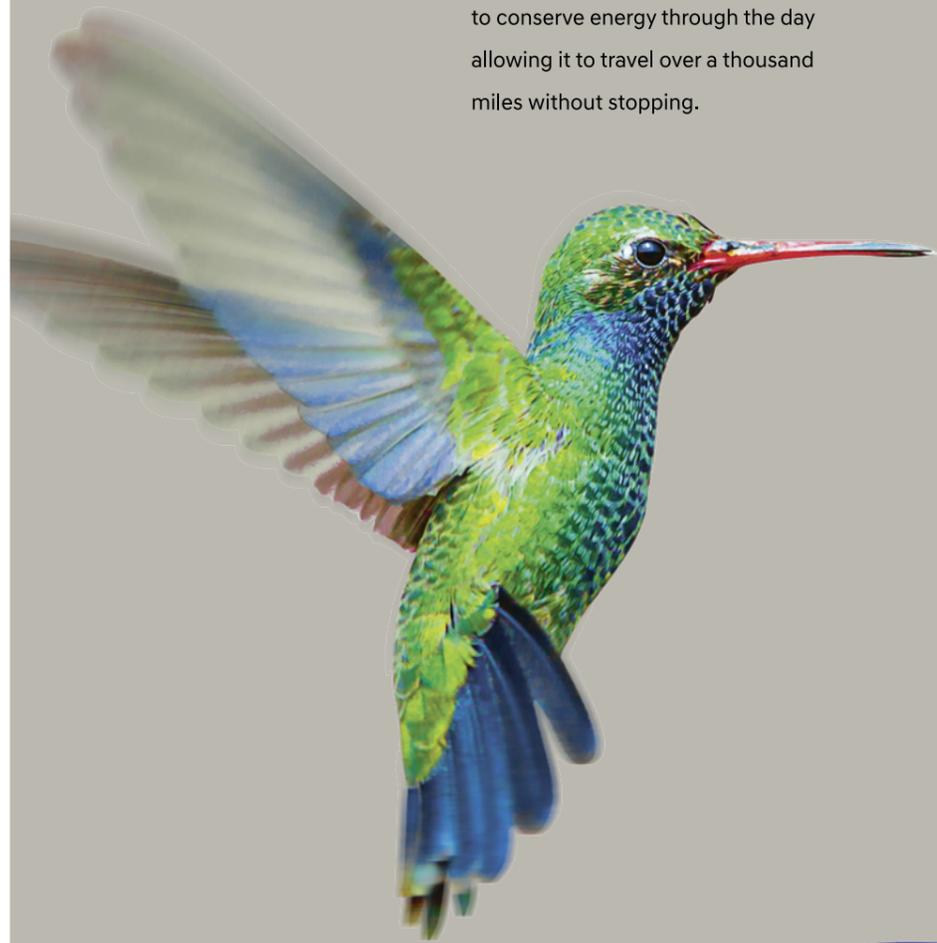


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WE HAVE REDUCED DOWNTIME BY 80%

AD Bly fleet manager Adam Gamlin was 'thrown in at the deep end' when he landed the role. Fortunately, help was readily at hand. *John Maslen reports*

Networking is a powerful resource in the fleet manager's toolkit, particularly when they are new to the role. It can unlock savings, efficiencies and safety improvements that could otherwise have remained out of reach.

The value of shared knowledge is the driving force behind several industry associations, such as the ICFM (formerly the Institute of Car Fleet Management), fleet managers' association ACFO, the Freight Transport Association (FTA) and countless other formal and informal gatherings.

The common element that connects them is the recognition among members that a problem shared is a problem halved and the solutions discussed during meetings can deliver significant savings for fleet operators.

Adam Gamlin, fleet manager of Knebworth-based firm AD Bly Construction, would be the first to agree, after he unlocked savings worth tens of thousands of pounds based on advice from other fleet operators.

His initiatives have reduced downtime, improved safety, made vehicles more effi-

cient and have improved fleet oversight – all from seeking advice.

Gamlin says: "We have met some very interesting people through networking and it has helped with new ideas for savings and also improving risk management."

AD Bly is a groundworks company working on around 40 sites covering the UK housing and commercial property sectors.

It has around 600 employees and operates a fleet of nearly 180 vehicles, a quarter of which are cars, with more than 130 commercial vehicles.

Fleet vehicles have a wide range of roles, from executive cars through to transporting ground-working teams and moving goods.

DIFFERENT ROLE

Gamlin was tasked with overhauling the fleet in 2016 and had to adapt to a very different role from his previous positions at the company, where he spent the past 11 years, including eight as a lorry driver.

He says: "This was my first fleet role. There was a bit of a structure change within the business and I got approached to take over the fleet. You could say I was thrown in at the

deep end. There was internal training to help because we train people all the time, but I also looked for advice in the industry."

As he reviewed the fleet, he was presented with the challenge that most systems for managing vehicles were manual and paper-based.

He added: "There was not a clear understanding of how much was being spent on the fleet or what was costing money."

After reviewing the fleet to identify key issues, Gamlin was keen to seek advice and among the discussions with the industry, he was approached by Auto Electrical Services (AES).

AES runs its own small fleet of eight vans and four cars and raises awareness of best practice, having achieved key industry standards, including becoming the smallest fleet to achieve the FTA's Van Excellence certification in 2013.

The company has expanded into consultancy to share its fleet knowledge and it is also an agency for suppliers including telematics giant TomTom and fleet software company FleetCheck.

Gamlin adds: "We spoke to AES and they explained how they could help us."



Adam Gamlin inherited manual and paper-based systems when he was asked to overhaul the fleet

FACTFILE

Fleet size: 182 – 141 vans, 23 cars, 16 4x4s and 2 HGVs
Replacement cycle: 3 years/75,000 miles
Car manufacturers: Open choice
Van suppliers: Ford, Vauxhall, Peugeot
Key suppliers: Auto Electrical Services, TomTom, FleetCheck, Northgate, AFL Group

He met two Auto Electrical Services team members Richard Stansfield, a director, and Nicky Francis, project manager, to discuss his issues.

“I explained our situation and Richard’s reaction was to write that I needed help in large letters across his notebook. We were working with loads of spreadsheets and paperwork in a cupboard at the time,” Gamlin says. “Because we did not have a fleet management system, it was quite hard working through various areas of spending and issues like MOT and servicing. You just could not find information, because you had to work through someone else’s way of filing information.”

Francis said: “When we first met Adam, he was in a room with loads of boxes. The problem with boxes and filing cabinets is that they don’t tell you anything unless you go into them.”

A transformation plan for the fleet was developed, which included the introduction of FleetCheck software and TomTom vehicle tracking to automate key aspects of record keeping and enable proactive management of key issues such as mileage monitoring and service requirements.

Gamlin says: “We arranged a meeting with our managing director, along with AES, to explain what we wanted to do and we got support for the project.

“The change has saved hours of work per week and made us more efficient. The administration was a headache, so it has worked well to have something in place.”

A key benefit of the FleetCheck system is its automated data retrieval. A licence number is all that is needed to import a wealth of DVLA data and other vehicle information.

It provides reminders on key issues, such as MOT dates and can also hold other important information, such as records of medical checks and licence checks.

Gamlin adds: “I am still learning the system, but it makes sure our vehicles are safe, compliant and efficient.”

The TomTom telematics system can integrate with FleetCheck, meaning service schedules can be managed based on up-to-date information drawn from the vehicle, including mileage readings.

This ensures Gamlin can proactively manage the fleet by planning vehicle servicing, rather than reacting to calls from drivers or manual vehicle checks. Histori-

cally, mileage updates were recorded by the time-consuming process of ringing individual drivers.

Telematics has also improved mileage reporting and allowed the company to cut down on out-of-hours use of vehicles, which has reduced total fleet mileage, while reports on driving time, mileage and a range of safety parameters, including speed, allow Gamlin to have greater control of the fleet.

DRIVER DEBRIEFS

Reports can also identify incidences of speeding, harsh steering and harsh braking across the fleet, which can then be used during driver debriefs to reduce risk and improve vehicle efficiency.

Gamlin adds: “For car and van drivers, the telematics data helps with insurance, but also obtaining vehicle data and identifying issues with driver behaviour.

“Since introducing the system, accidents have become less frequent across the fleet. Bringing different data streams together in one place has helped to change the way we work and allowed us to gain greater insights into the operation of our fleet. The transport department is better able to support the growth aims of the wider business.”

The benefits of the combined system are still being reviewed, but AD Bly estimates it has achieved up to £100,000 in savings through reduced maintenance bills, improved driver behaviour and lower mileage.

Gamlin adds: “The technology keeps us compliant and ensures we are proactive in areas such as vehicle maintenance. Overall, I

“Our fleet size has increased and you would think that our operating costs would also go up, but they have actually gone down”

Adam Gamlin, AD Bly Construction



Fleet manager Adam Gamlin is considering long-term hire as an alternative to flexible hire

estimate downtime has been reduced by 80%.

“With accidents and maintenance, the focus is on prevention. Small changes can make a big difference, such as speaking to drivers after each incident, so they know why safety is important.

“Before we had systems in place, it was difficult to know where the fleet had problems. For me, this has been about safety and compliance.”

The fleet overhaul has stretched beyond the introduction of new technology, with a vehicle renewal programme that has enhanced specification levels on the commercial vehicle fleet.

Car and van suppliers include Northgate and broker AFL Group, whose brands include Car Leasing Made Simple and Van Leasing Made Simple.

Replacement cycles for both cars and vans are three years/75,000 miles.

A number of vans were originally funded

through a flexible hire arrangement, but he is looking at long-term hire as an alternative, as there is now more certainty about vehicle demand and usage.

Key changes in the renewed van fleet include the addition of steel bulkheads to protect the driver from being hit by equipment if there is sudden braking or a collision.

Gamlin also believes the updated fleet is important in presenting the right image for the business, as well as improving safety levels and reliability for drivers.

He adds: “We aren’t limited by vehicle brand, but people do perceive companies by the state of their fleet and we wanted to be seen as a professional outfit when vehicles were on site.”

Fleet car brands include Audi, BMW, Jaguar and Range Rover. The van fleet is predominantly Ford, but also includes Vauxhall and Peugeot models.

Gamlin aims to keep vehicles in peak

condition with driver incentives for good performance, based on the newly-available telematics data.

He has also created a new policy that drivers must sign up to, while future initiatives could include pre-use checks, either using forms or smartphone-based apps.

CHEAPER FILLING STATIONS

Another future initiative is directing drivers to refuel at cheaper filling stations, by monitoring data from its AllStar fuel cards.

This will generate further savings, but already the impact of the new policy has been felt as the business has grown.

Gamlin says: “Our fleet size has increased and you would think our operating costs would also go up, but they have actually gone down.”

Another future initiative is to follow in the footsteps of partners that inspired the

changes in the fleet by signing up to the Van Excellence recognition scheme.

He continues: “We are looking at completing Van Excellence through the FTA. I want AD Bly to become one of the few groundworks companies that meet the FTA standards for van fleet management.

“I have also met some more fleet experts now and they have all been really helpful.”

Francis added: “We keep looking at how we can help transport managers, because they are the ones who end up in the dock if they are not compliant and something happens. Adam has done really well for the company with the changes and in addition he has saved the business a lot of money.”

RoSPA 'PULLS NO PUNCHES' WHEN IT COMES TO ROAD RISK

Persuading companies to act before they have accident-related problems has always been a challenge for RoSPA. *Andrew Ryan* reports on progress

Prevention is better than cure is an often-used saying, but one that the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) – unsurprisingly given its name – swears by.

If a fleet driver has a collision then “the horse has already bolted”, says John Greenhough, fleet consultant at the charity.

“We need to be able to get in before that problem occurs.

“We are the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. And it’s the prevention bit that is quite powerful.”

However, convincing organisations that they need to take action before any collisions occur is a challenge, and one which has led the charity to significantly evolve its offering to fleets in recent years.

This has included splitting its fleet safety department into consultancy and training sections, each offering a range of products which can be tailored to an organisation’s needs.

It has also evolved its flagship Managing Occupational Road Risk (MORR) product to make it more accessible to small- and medium-sized companies.

This product advocates tackling road safety within an organisation’s pre-existing framework for managing health and safety at work through identifying risks, recommending actions, and targeting solutions such as driver training to facilitate continuous improvement.

“We wanted to make MORR more accessible to SMEs, so, instead of having a one-

size-fits-all product, we now have various levels – essential, advanced and premium – which can make it cheaper dependent on what suits the customer,” says Greenhough.

“This means that we can do a desktop review of policies and processes with a report and recommendations: we don’t have to come out for an on-site audit and take up all of a customer’s time.

“For big companies that wouldn’t work, they need the face-to-face, they need someone to kick the cans. But that is not what a small- or medium-sized company would necessarily need: they need guidance and support.

“SMEs haven’t got to spend a fortune on this, but they need to do something because at the moment if they have an accident that leads to prosecution, they can’t hide behind a barrier of assumed ignorance and do nothing because that dissolves in a court.

“It also dissolves under the weight of people looking at their company as they may have their name splattered all over the side of the vehicle which will be in the local paper, and that’s going to hurt.”

It is estimated that 25% to 33% of road casualties are work-related, and in 2016 work-related crashes resulted in 529 deaths and 5,269 serious injuries.

While some directors and senior managers may not understand why they have a responsibility for the road safety of their employees, they need to be aware of the potential consequences if something goes wrong.

To help do this, RoSPA has launched a MORR course targeted at directors and senior managers to hammer home the reasons why they need to take road safety

seriously, which includes the risk of criminal prosecution if the correct policies and procedures are not in place.

“There are no punches pulled on this,” says Greenhough. “The directors have got busy lives, they have got decisions to make.

“They don’t want someone to come in and start saying ‘ok, can you get a couple of sticky notes and start putting them over the wall about what you think’. They want the information they need quick and dirty, so it is quick and dirty.”

This MORR course also acts as an example of how RoSPA has shifted its fleet safety strategy in recent years.

Traditionally, training would focus on the drivers as part of a bottom-up process, says Greenhough. “It was fix the driver, not the cause,” he adds. “For us now, it is a top-down process.

“If an organisation had 5,000 drivers, we used to train all of them in the same things, but what was the quality of the training? Was it targeted to the driver that needed it?”

“There is no point going to a driver and teaching him to drive forwards when his problem is going backwards, but the problem is a lot of companies don’t identify issues like that.”

RoSPA now works with organisations to help them use technology such as telematics to identify areas of risk, while it also encourages companies to record near misses in order to gain a greater understanding of any issues.

The driver training RoSPA gives to employees has also evolved. Rick Wood, who previously worked as the charity’s head of fleet safety and is now a consultant, says it

used to focus on teaching people how to control a car at a time when they did not have electronic safety aids, power steering and disc brakes.

“The reality now is most people who we train are perfectly capable of controlling a modern car,” he adds.

“They know the Highway Code, they know how to deal with traffic, yet they still crash. Most of that comes from the decisions they make, so the courses we deliver now are aimed much more at working with the driver.”

“They [company directors] want the information they need quick and dirty, so it is quick and dirty”

John Greenhough, RoSPA consultant

Courses include defensive driving to minimise risk, eco-driving to reduce fuel use and vehicle familiarisation.

It also provides a vulnerable road users workshop which is designed to address the growing problem of collisions involving cyclists and pedestrians.

Additionally, RoSPA is looking to develop a new e-learning product, and it is working with an insurer to provide on-road interventions with young drivers who trigger telematics alerts from the devices fitted to their vehicles as part of their insurance product.

RoSPA consultants John Greenhough (left) and Rick Wood say the content of courses is evolving



FACTFILE

Organisation: Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)
Fleet safety manager: Keith Bell
Fleet consultant: John Greenhough
Consultant: Rick Wood
Key fleet product: Managing Occupational Road Risk (MORR)
Headquarters: Edgbaston

ROSPA'S KEY ROAD SAFETY TIMELINE

Since the first campaign by RoSPA's founders, the London Safety First Council, was launched in 1917 to change the pedestrian rule so that walkers faced oncoming traffic, the charity has been involved in a number of key issues.

Fatal accidents caused by pedestrians stepping into the path of vehicles fell 70% in the following 12 months.

Since then, the charity's work has expanded to include safety in the workplace, leisure, home and schools, but road safety remains a key focus.

Here are some of the charity's other achievements:

1924
RoSPA published a safety code for road users. The first Highway Code produced by the Government did not come out until 1931.

1933
Analysis of the causes of road accidents began after pressure from RoSPA on the Government.

1942
RoSPA devised the kerb drill for children. This lasted for decades until the Green Cross Code was developed.

1947
The charity launched the cycling proficiency scheme, and this became a national scheme in 1958 at the request of the Government.

1961
RoSPA launched the Tufty Club in 1961 to highlight road safety to children.

1964
The charity began to campaign for drink-drive legislation, and this was enacted in 1967.

1981
Lord Nugent, RoSPA's president, secured compulsory wearing of seatbelts with a late amendment to a Transport Bill.

1996
RoSPA published its first ideas on the management of occupational road risk.

1999
Lord Davies of Oldham, RoSPA's president, introduced a Bill in the House of Lords to ban the use of hand-held mobile phones while driving.

2005
RoSPA Driver Profiler – an online tool to measure strengths and weaknesses of employees driving won a British Safety Industry Federation product innovation award.



WINNERS: Volkswagen Golf and T-Roc

Volkswagen remains a brand 'important to fleets and their drivers'

WLTP testing tardiness resulted in a sluggish September but rapid release of results is improving VW's competitive position

By Stephen Briers

Dieselgate and WLTP: neither will be remembered as Volkswagen's finest hour. Yet, despite the extensive media coverage, neither has dented demand for Volkswagen's models, from fleets or company car drivers.

As glowing brand endorsements go, it doesn't get much better – how many other manufacturers could suffer such high profile setbacks relatively unscathed?

Quality-wise, Volkswagen's cars remain among the segment leaders. At the 2018 Fleet News Awards, the Golf and T-Roc drove away with the best lower medium car and best compact SUV trophies respectively, while other models in the range were commended and shortlisted by the judging panel. And, up until the start of September, registrations were soaring in the true fleet sector.

Michael O'Shea, Volkswagen UK head of fleet, says that for the first eight months of the year, the company was "significantly over-performing, up 8,000 in true fleet".

The brakes came on in September, as a failure to test in time core models under the new WLTP fuel testing regime meant they could no longer be sold.

Consequently, Volkswagen's UK registrations dropped by 55%, more than any other mainstream brand.

They recovered in October to be on a par with October 2017, but the picture was masked by strong sales of T-Roc, not available a year ago, and Tiguan.

Fleet mainstays Golf and Passat were down 32% and 56% respectively due to lack of supply.

However, VW's market share remains up year-to-date and, while O'Shea describes the month of September as "disappointing", it was nevertheless "consistent with our expectations".

He is confident that, come the year-end when "we will have almost all of our technical data in the system – more than 90% of our sales mix", Volkswagen will retain its 10% share of the true fleet sector.

"We will end the year as we started the year," says O'Shea.

Fleet News: Now that your WLTP results are coming out, how are you performing against other brands?

Michael O'Shea: There has been a very modest move in our CO₂ versus our competitors. We recognise fleets are frustrated but also that Volkswagen as a brand is important to them and their drivers. In the vast majority of cases, they are willing to wait for the data and it's coming through quickly now. The figures will improve our competitive position from a CO₂ perspective with BIK and wholelife cost benefits as well.

FN: How much pent-up demand are you seeing?

MO'S: We have experienced customers delaying so there will be an increase in orders – they are building up now. We have significant growth in our order book versus the same period last year.



Claire English, national contract hire and leasing manager, Volkswagen UK, picked up the award from chairman of the judges Christopher Macgowan OBE



Michael O'Shea (seated with trophy) celebrates the double win with members of the Volkswagen team

FN: Fleets have been complaining about long delays on e-Golf. How are you sorting out that situation?

MO'S: We will have a significant increase in [production] volume in 2019 on e-Golf so that situation will change [VW has announced its plants at Emden and Hannover will join Zwickau in switching to EV production]. We already have two or three significant volume orders with fleets going through. The range extension from the old car to the new one has opened up the market and made it a more realistic proposition for customers.

FN: What are your plans to extend your electric model range further?

MO'S: e-Golf starts the conversation and gives the credibility; it's a bridge to the ID range in 2020. This will be a massive step-change. ID will be available to order from autumn 2019 with the first deliveries in spring 2020. There is a lot more interest in truly exploring electric vehicles due to the extension of the range. From 2019 into 2020, we will see a big increase. The ID range is a game-changer regarding affordability and availability. It [the first model to go on sale] has 250-300 miles range, the total cost of ownership of a Golf diesel and is the size of a Passat, with innovative design and functionality. Passat and Golf are 85% of my true fleet mix, so it's compelling.

FN: Will demand for electric be supplementary for Volkswagen or will customers simply switch from your diesel cars?

MO'S: There will be an element of both. Some will be fleets that we are not dealing with today that have EVs. Equally, there will be an opportunity for us to conquest from ICE [internal combustion engine] fleets as well as changing fleets within our customer base. As well as ID, we will have ID Buzz [a minivan] and ID Crozz, an SUV.

FN: Where else do you see the opportunities in the coming year?

MO'S: As we come out of 2018, the industry is facing legis-

lative changes. 2019 has to be about consolidating the Volkswagen model range with the WLTP data. It's a fantastic opportunity for us with the strength of our core product range and also our SUV investments [Volkswagen will have five models by next year]. From nowhere, we are now the most considered brand in SUV [according to a YouGov survey] on the back of significant investment within the past three years. Our investment reflects the fact that 40% of the UK market is buying SUVs and we are outselling our allocation every year. So, with our SUV range and our electric range, plus our hatchback heritage on Golf and a Passat facelift midway through the year, the timing is perfect.

FN: Do you have the right balance of fleet, rental and mobility, and how are you preparing for the expected rise in cash takers?

MO'S: We have a clear channel strategy that works well. We have been prudent in the way we distribute our product to protect the long-term residual value of the brand. We see a relatively stable corporate customer base. We have seen growth in our SME PCH [personal contract hire] channel. My expectation is that the Government legislation will steer the consumer and the channel shift and we have the ability to respond to that.

Volkswagen is "quietly confident" but not complacent about the future, something O'Shea is at pains to stress.

However, he can't hide his excitement about the forthcoming ID electric family, with 30-minute rapid charging times and extended range removing any trace of anxiety. Most drivers, he points out, will only need to charge once or twice a week.

By 2025, Volkswagen expects one million of its six million-plus global registrations to be electric – that proportion in the UK would result in around 30,000 sales.

"Until now, it's been a toe in the water," O'Shea says. "We are now chin deep for our products – it's all in!"

FACTFILE

Company: Volkswagen UK
Head of fleet: Michael O'Shea
Time in role: Five years eight months
Total sales (year-to-Oct): 171,351 (down 4.34%)
Market share: 8.3% (2017: 8.05%)
Fleet sales (year-to-Oct): 90,815 (down 3.73%)
Market share: 8.61% (2017: 8.25%)

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Golf is a car for everyone – it has a huge range of models, engines and powertrains, including plug-in hybrid, that suit every fleet and company car driver need. It bridges the gap between job-need and user-chooser and remains the benchmark in this category.

The T-Roc is a good all-round car, offering high build quality, plenty of space and strong driver appeal. It has excellent petrol and diesel engines and is competitive on costs. Its stylish look makes a real statement in this sector.

Key2 software evolves to keep pace with continual changes

Jaama focuses on product development to enable customers to further drive efficiency, compliance and cost savings

Jaama continually adds new functionality to its industry-leading, multi award-winning Key2 asset management system to improve its customers' fleet operating efficiency, ensure increased compliance management along with providing additional cost controls.

2018 has seen a complete overhaul and significant improvement in the Compliance Manager area of Key2, a new Tyre Data Import Module to enable systemised validation of incoming tyre costs against pre-agreed costs matrices to ensure correct charging for tyres, and significant enhancements to enable the importing of vehicle details that are the subject of a motor manufacturer recall along with the ability to capture the related rectification work.

This new functionality works alongside the current manual entry system, streamlining the process and significantly reducing administrative intervention.

Jaama managing director Martin Evans said: "Jaama is renowned for the continued evolution of Key2. Fleet management software technology is fast-moving and the compliance and operational requirements of customers change over time and are driven by legislation.

"Feedback from our rapidly-growing customer base is encouraged because those at the sharp end of fleet management are able to deliver critical insight which is vital for Jaama to deliver enhancements to Key2 that will bring real benefits to fleets.

"The improvements introduced to Compliance Manager are among the latest examples of where we have worked with our customers to benefit the product."

Additional functionality enables users to utilise the data available following introduction of the Worldwide harmonised Light vehicles Test Procedure (WLTP), the vehicle emissions and mpg protocol.

WLTP test results have been applied to all



"Feedback from our rapidly-growing customer base is encouraged"

Martin Evans, Jaama

new car and lighter van models (Class I up to 1,305kgs) since September last year.

From September 1, 2018, all cars and lighter vans (Class I up to 1,305kgs) must be tested under WLTP rules along with new types of heavier vans (N1 Class II 1,305-1,760kgs and III above 1,760kgs). The transition period for this finishes on January 1, 2019, therefore functionality to retrieve data from data providers on the exact specification of the asset and its options is critical.

Evans added: "Introduction of WLTP is one of the most significant developments to impact on the UK company car and van

market since the turn of the century.

"In an era when the focus of government, local authorities and business is on improving air quality, reducing vehicle emissions and limiting a fleet's carbon footprint, it is critical that fleet decision-makers have comprehensive emissions and mpg data at their fingertips.

"Jaama is renowned for ensuring its Key2 system is at the cutting-edge of fleet management. So, it is important we continue to invest in updating functionality to ensure users have access to all the information to make decisions."

Jaama invests more than £2 million per year in Key2 and 'MyVehicle App' product development to ensure both remain at the cutting edge of fleet and asset management and the exciting product road map for 2019 cements Jaama's position as the most innovative fleet software developer in the marketplace.

TO BUNDLE OR NOT TO BUNDLE?

That is the key question facing decision-makers when weighing up how to get the most out of their fleet.

Catherine Chetwynd reports

There are two ways to handle the many elements of operating a fleet: to bundle services with a leasing provider – if that is your chosen funding method – or to unbundle them.

Bundling pulls together funding, SMR and management services under one supplier, and is the approach favoured by most companies that lease vehicles.

FN50 data shows that 61% of cars and 59% of vans are on a 'with maintenance' contract. However, those proportions are in slight decline: three years ago, they were 63% (cars) and 62% (vans).

A number of companies have opted to unbundle their fleet services. But is it the right option for your business?

"The benefit (from bundling) for the business is it has a one-stop shop for all the services, one contact point and one supplier invoice, which frees up the time to be strategic," says Sean Bingham, consultant at ERA Fleet Cost Management.

"All the information is in one place and there is comprehensive management information.

"You can also negotiate better terms and conditions when you package everything together because a leasing company has extra revenue coming in on ancillary services. But, if a leasing company doesn't provide a servicing and maintenance charge, there may be a higher cost on finance."

Conversely, unbundling allows the appointment of a number of suppliers for requirements that include finance,

servicing, maintenance, repair, tyres and so on. Services can be divided into lots with suppliers bidding, according to their strengths. This does not have to be a fragmented approach; it could mean a company unbundles funding and appoints a panel of providers, whose contracts are run by one overarching contractor such as a fleet management company.

The client retains control because contracts are awarded based on its criteria and the fleet management company gathers information from the contracts to present a complete picture to the client.

They derive best cost for each vehicle because they are paying only for the cost incurred for the servicing work (pay as you go/PAYG), provided they can negotiate competitive labour rates, parts pricing, etc.

However, Bingham says that companies which unbundle services to manage suppliers directly need to keep up-to-date because the market is ever-evolving.

"They need to know what is a reasonable price for everything; they would need service level agreements (SLAs)," he adds.

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Bundling fleet services is most popular where the role of fleet manager sits in procurement or finance.

Matt Dale, head of consultancy for ALD Automotive, says: "Procurement, typically, increases the weighting on cost over service. So, sole supply is still prevalent, as it can attract the short-term financial and administrative gains required."

"However, large fleets may also opt to engage one supplier for fleet management services and use the supplier's purchasing power to unbundle funding to a panel of providers competing for each order. This can provide savings over the longer term."

With everything bundled into one place, the benefit of working with one supplier is ease of administration, simplified processes and consistency of management information.

Andrew Goodwin, sales director of BT Fleet Solutions, says: "For customers with more complex car policies and a wider choice of vehicles and extras, working with one supplier enables full outsourcing of the driver quote, order and management process."

"In addition, customers choose single-source relationships because of the perceived added value in areas such as developing policy with a chosen partner and working to deliver strategic projects like cost reduction."

PD Hook (Hatcheries) has 120 cars and 180 vans, all on contract hire with one of two leasing companies. "I get a quote and balance them out, so have roughly half and half, on full service," says Nigel Boyle, its administration and technical director.

Drivers use garages approved by the leasing company and tyres are handled by Kwik Fit Mobile, which turns up on the agreed day with the appropriate set. Costs for contract hire are set, one figure for finance, one for service, maintenance and repair (SMR), and the leasing company keeps the records.

"The advantage of having it all with a leasing company is that we vary the term of contract hire according to the mileage covered – drivers send the mileage in each month, so we know what they are doing," Boyle says.

Fleet management companies cite the advantages of unbundling as having greater transparency, control and the ability to take a holistic view in order to find efficiencies.

"Historically, organisations would bundle services into one place in the knowledge that everything was wrapped into that one rental," says Jason Chamberlain, sales and marketing director of ARI. "But you don't get true visibility of what makes up that cost, which removes any option to provide efficiencies or cost savings."

"Our customers demand every line item of cost because they want to track trends and individuals' behaviour, so they can see how to mitigate expenditure and shape strategy."

For some organisations, a fixed fee per vehicle per month is preferable, particularly where they are working on contracts through central government and need to write in their overheads.

ARI attempts to give the best of both worlds. "For example, if we billed for SMR for a vehicle aged more than 48 months and the vehicle incurred only two-thirds of that cost, we can refund 100% of underspend. That's unique and gives a budgetary tool when costs are allocated to cost centres," Chamberlain says.

The converse is also true. "While contract hire offers the



benefit of risk transfer and monthly budgets, these bundled lease arrangements are not always equitable at the end of the contract as many fleets do not benefit from profit share arrangements for residual values (RVs) or underspent maintenance budgets," says Goodwin.

The alternative is pay-as-you-go (PAYG), but that can present its own challenges. "There could be a need for a fleet to manage a one-off high expense such as an engine blowing up, which has a bigger impact on a small fleet of less than 100," says Bingham.

"PAYG is often cited as cheaper. When you put a new vehicle on the road, the running cost is lower than in subsequent years – the replacement cycle of vehicles is an important factor in that. But, steadily, costs start to increase, not just servicing but tyre wear and tear, drive-chain requirement, etc. Critical is the internal skill resource to manage in-life operation and a lot of corporate UK does not have dedicated resources."

Nevertheless, maintenance management is one area fleet management company CLM recommends for unbundling.

"Our analysis shows that savings of around £800 per vehicle contract are possible by switching from fixed cost maintenance to PAYG," says managing director John

Lawrence. "Between May 2017 and May 2018, we saved one client more than £40,000 on maintenance alone."

CLM gives drivers access to a national network of preferred garages, which combine franchised, non-franchised and mobile repairers. Costs are pre-authorized against agreed labour and parts charges and are validated, consolidated and analysed. "We can also make a strong case for unbundling vehicle acquisition and employing several contract hire suppliers to provide all new vehicles, which ensures the most competitive solution," Lawrence says.

In the past, unbundling largely worked for fleets of more than 500 vehicles but, more recently, companies have seen the advantages start at around 100, particularly where vehicles are a tool of the trade.

Organisations are having to do more with less but still need the copious amounts of data supplied by telematics and repair records in order to see vehicle compliance, fuel figures, accident data and more.

"They are looking for technology to aggregate and harmonise all that information and provide them with insight, so in the past five years we have invested in the technology to do that and allow companies to build a fleet strategy to align to their business plans," says Chamberlain.

"Bundling allows companies to concentrate their human assets on core business and not devote too many resources to managing supply chains"

John Webb, Lex Autolease

ARI recently won the business of a large utility company with more than 4,000 vehicles, which had been with one provider for 10 years and moved to breaking services into lots with a central contractor to "glue together all the requirements of end-to-end service delivery".

A long-standing agreement with one supplier often raises a problem: rental creep.

"With one leasing company tied into a lengthy contract, there is no measure," says Jayne Pett, sales and marketing director for Fleet Operations. "It is creating a rental when requested and if it is putting in extra profit, there is no evidence."

"Where companies want to remain with a sole provider, we mark the homework of that leasing company. We check invoices and when it comes to quoting, although we wouldn't be placing orders with other leasing companies, we would measure the rate they would have quoted for the same vehicles."

Putting the bid to a number of suppliers has the advantage of injecting competition.

"Every time a quote goes out for a vehicle, a vendor looks at it as a new business quote," Pett says. "We do see an 8% to 10% saving if we look at a panel of vendors."

Even for organisations not looking to unbundle their fleet management, certain elements lend themselves to it. Pett recommends risk and compliance.

"They are a huge thing for businesses and with the best will in the world, a leasing company's core day-to-day practice is about finance, funding vehicles. It is rare to find expertise in managing risk and compliance, but, by unbundling, you pick up those skillsets," she says.

The cost implication of bringing in a fleet management company is the management fee per vehicle per month but "if you look at the return on investment, the savings far outweigh the fee", says Pett. "Part of the fleet management cost covers ongoing consultancy and negotiations; they manage your contracts."

John Webb, principal consultant for Lex Autolease, is a protagonist of bundling. "It is about organisational strategy and support services," he says.

"Bundling allows companies to concentrate human assets on core business services and not devote too many resources to managing supply chains; there is a lot to be done in an unbundled environment."

And more tasks associated with fleet management means a requirement for more internal resources.

"In a bundled environment, a first tier supplier and strategic partner manages the rest of the supply chain, so all activity is being channelled through them," he says.

"The obligation is then on the buyer to make sure that the tender, contractors and SLAs give value for money and the level of service they are looking for."

"With organisations like Lex Autolease, buyers get economies of scale – it's our area of expertise. In a fully outsourced environment, typically, one or two people look after the relationship and handle as many as 10,000 vehicles."

Data and management information (MI) are another reason for bundling services because a leasing company with hundreds of thousands of vehicles can benchmark cost, so customers can see when they are out of line.

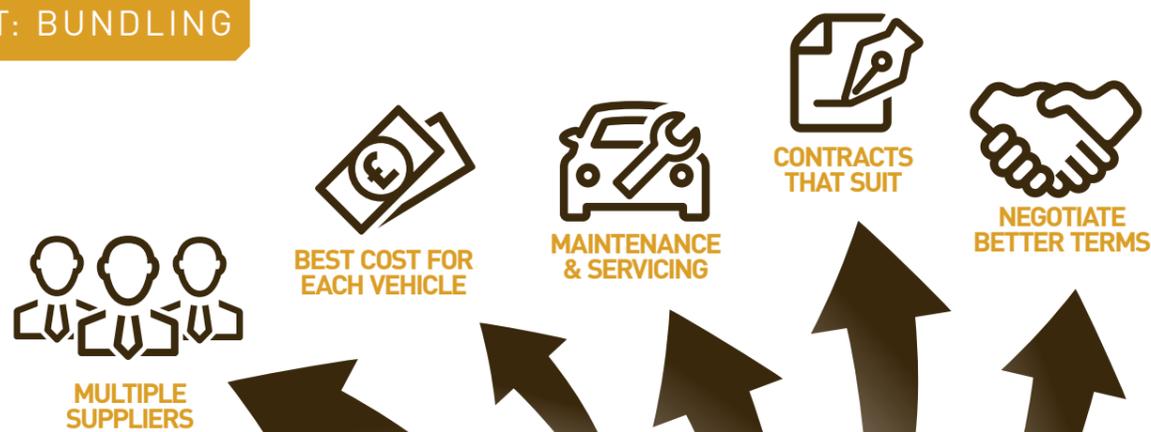
Having a bundled, one-stop-shop arrange-

"Large fleets may also opt to engage one supplier for fleet management services and use the supplier's purchasing power to unbundle funding"

Matt Dale, ALD Automotive

£800
per vehicle contract can be saved by switching to PAYG, claims CLM

8-10%
saving can be achieved from a panel of vendors, claims Fleet Operations



ment does not preclude competition and gives companies one contact number and a central repository for management information.

But unbundling does not have to be a scattergun approach if the component parts are managed by one principal supplier.

There are financial and administrative advantages to both methods. Often, the choice comes down to company culture.

CASE STUDY: AVIVA

Aviva identified an opportunity to get better value out of disparate contracts like hire cars, pool car management and lease vehicles by bundling them when it went to tender.

"This meant suppliers were acting more as strategic fleet partners; it was all part of the contract for total fleet provision: accident management, breakdown recovery, telematics, daily rental, reallocation of pool car management and their bread and butter, lease vehicle provision and how they source that," says Ryan Coles, group travel and fleet manager, Aviva.

"This arrangement allowed us to get more control over daily rental car damage, where it is very difficult to prove liability; we instructed LeasePlan and (incident management specialists) FMG to investigate that on our behalf.

"We have negotiated a rate across our daily rental programme that reflects our volumes and the value of our lease programme. We still want to make sure that the service we get for that money is top notch; we are not penny pinching, we want value for money.

"We also asked them to create a risk profile of our drivers. This requires taking data feeds from LeasePlan daily rental, FMG accident management and telematics to understand what the true cost of a particular driver is to Aviva.

"Our drivers have a low risk profile. We have an essential user programme and with the manufacturers we have on the programme, our drivers are proud to be in those vehicles, so they tend to look after them particularly well.

"Bundling allows us to take that behaviour from lease and put it into our daily rental and this has reduced expenditure.

"We used to have a fleet team in the UK of around five

people and now we have a UK & Ireland travel and fleet team of 2.8 FTE (full-time equivalent), including me in a global role.

"It has allowed us to reduce internal resource requirement and use the relationships with LeasePlan, the manufacturers and Jardine Matheson Lancaster Group to be our subject matter experts; we are the relationship and contract management team that makes sure they are delivering to our customers what they should be as a total fleet management solution.

"Giving LeasePlan responsibility for operational requirements allows us to operate more strategically with our lease partner to give the best advice to our drivers in terms of vehicles that are available, the impact of WLTP and the unknown element of 2021 tax rate."

"We still want to make sure that the service we get for that money is top notch; we are not penny-pinching, we want value for money"

Ryan Coles, Aviva

INCREASED APPEAL OF THE CR-V

Advanced powertrain puts SUV at the forefront in terms of efficiency and refinement



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Phil Webb has been 'blown away' by the reaction to the Urban EV

Going Platinum is paying off

Having specialists in showrooms is hitting the right note with corporate clients

Honda is a brand renowned for innovation. In 1999, it was one of the earliest pioneers of hybrid technology, with the launch of the original Insight.

While it is about to re-enter the alternative fuel sector with the new CR-V Hybrid, it has also been innovating behind the scenes to improve its fleet and corporate offering.

Its Virtual Account Manager, which was named best innovation in sales at the UK Professional Sales Awards last year, offers support to small- and medium-sized business who do not have a dedicated fleet manager and have limited time to dedicate to vehicle procurement.

This forms part of an internal programme to help the brand provide improved service to corporate customers as well as making it easier to deal with.

"We are never going to be a huge player in the fleet market because there are only certain sectors that our car range is applicable to," says Phil Webb, head of cars at Honda UK.

"Corporate will continue to be completely integral to us, but what we do want is to be in certain sectors of the fleet market at a consistent level, selling quality cars into quality sectors.

"We do around 16,000 corporate units a year, and we are looking to make sure those are the right types of units for our dealer network and our product range."

Honda UK began looking at how it could improve its offering to the corporate sector around three-and-a-half years ago. It launched its Honda Platinum Programme 18 months later.

The initiative, which is currently taken up by around 110 of

16,000
units a year sold in the corporate market

110
dealers are taking part in Platinum Programme

Honda's 150 dealers, aims to ensure that its network is better equipped and informed to deal with corporate customers.

This involves offering advanced training for dealer principals, sales managers and sales advisors, allowing them to better understand the needs and wants of their fleet and corporate customers.

It also enables participating dealers to have specialists in their showrooms who can talk to user-choosers about which vehicles and powertrains would be most suited to their requirements, as well as explaining the tax implications of different choices.

Dealers are also able to provide corporate demonstrators, as well as allowing the customer to borrow the vehicle on an extended test drive if required.

Webb said part of the programme involves changing the mindset of dealers towards potential corporate customers if they intend to acquire a vehicle via another channel and not through the dealership.

"Some dealers would shy away from that naturally, but we are trying to help them be engaged and therefore be capable with regards to a specialist person in the showroom," he adds.

"That's been received well by our corporate customers as it means they are being treated in a way that really helps them."

Honda UK has also restructured its corporate team to make it an easier and simpler company to deal with.

This has seen it introduce its virtual account management programme which offers expert fleet management support

to businesses by telephone and video conferencing, as an alternative to solely face-to-face meetings.

The restructuring of the team saw a number of new roles being created.

"We now have the right roles looking at the right areas that fit our business and our strategy on corporate, and that has enabled us to be consistent in the marketplace because we have got specialists in place now, and that includes both people based in the office and out in the field," says Webb.

"We now have definitive people performing definitive roles, for example, the sales team, pricing team and public sector teams.

"Corporate is an area where people-to-people business is still very important, and some of the big fleet customers need to speak to the right people at the right time and get the right information. We've worked with that very strongly over the past couple of years, and that has helped us and given us a much stronger position.

"We feel we now have a structure that will enable us to continue with what we have started to achieve and improve our focus for fleet through our dealer network."

Honda UK's improved fleet offering also extends to its car range. Jazz is traditionally strong with public sector fleets, a new Civic – Honda's main fleet model – was launched last year, while the CR-V and H-RV offer choices in the growing SUV sectors.

Civic, which is manufactured in Swindon, launched last year in a petrol version. A 1.6-litre i-DETEC diesel – offering official combined fuel economy up to 83.1mpg and CO₂ from 91g/km – followed earlier this year, despite continuing negative press about the fuel.

"There was quite a lot of questioning on why we were bringing the diesel to the marketplace, but we were adamant that diesel was always planned through the lifecycle of the latest Civic, and it will be a very important part of our offering," says Webb.

"It has already been well received. We know that there is still an opportunity on diesel, especially for Civic, because it will be the right car and fuel choice for many customers."

Honda has announced that two-thirds of its cars sold in



The fully-electric Urban EV will go on sale at the end of 2019. See page 12 for more details of Honda's electrification strategy

Europe by 2025 will feature electrified powertrains, and the CR-V Hybrid will be the first step towards that when it is launched early next year.

The Honda Hybrid Performance system features intelligent Multi-Mode Drive (i-MMD) technology comprising two electric motors, an Atkinson-cycle petrol engine and a direct transmission delivering high levels of efficiency and refinement.

Rather than using a conventional transmission, a single fixed-gear ratio creates a direct connection between moving components, resulting in a smoother transfer of torque.

"Our target is that we will get CR-V Hybrids into our dealerships and into potential fleet customers in February, leading up to the March plate change," says Webb.

"We can't wait to get people trying the car because it is the first hybrid with the latest Honda technology and we see it as a great opportunity.

"Our challenge is to make sure we get that USP of how the powertrain works across to customers, both retail and fleet, so we are going to do a lot of work with our customer-facing staff to enable us to talk about not only facts and figures, but what it also means in terms of how it drives.

"If you look at that fact that Honda is known for its innovation, CR-V Hybrid will be a massive launch for us because technology counts."

He adds: "People forget that Honda was at the forefront of hybrid technology and now we feel it is the right time to start reintroducing that technology.

"At the end of September year-on-year, alternative fuel vehicle sales were up by about 22%. Those are still quite small numbers in the UK, but you can't ignore the trend and the focus they are now getting."

Webb says that from now on all full model changes will include a hybrid version.

However, the next new model to feature an electrified powertrain is the fully-electric Urban EV, which has been seen at motor shows around Europe, and will go on sale at the end of 2019.

"The reaction we've had from that car has, well, blown me away quite honestly," says Webb.



"If you look at that fact that Honda is known for its innovation, CR-V Hybrid will be a massive launch for us because technology counts"

Phil Webb, head of cars, Honda UK

Meet the corporate team

Honda UK has restructured its corporate team to ensure it delivers a high level of service. Here we look at team members and their responsibilities

Marc Samuel, fleet sales operations manager



Marc Samuel took responsibility for leading Honda UK's corporate team in January last year. He has vast experience of the fleet and wider automotive sector, and was previously national sales manager for Honda UK. He took the fleet sales operations manager role to help shape Honda's renewed focus on corporate business and promote its range of new and relaunched cars, along with its dedicated fleet and corporate service.

Jacqueline Rowe, fleet engagement section manager



Jacqueline Rowe has more than 25 years' experience of working in the automotive sector and joined Honda to set up and manage the Virtual Account team, which is responsible for account management of SME customers. Rowe is also responsible for Honda's contract hire channel, as well as ownership of the corporate customer journey with the corporate website, PR and marketing. She also manages, on behalf of Honda, relationships with automotive bodies such as BVRLA and ACFD.

Angela Hall, national leasing manager



Angela Hall was appointed to her role in January 2016 and is responsible for the relationships with the major leasing companies within the FN50. She has worked for Honda UK for more than 15 years in a variety of roles including corporate sales manager, major corporate sales manager and regional sales manager.

Simon Barrett, national leasing manager



Simon Barrett has 18 years' experience working in the automotive industry and worked with two of the UK's largest leasing companies before joining Honda fleet department in 2007. He has held his current role since 2016 and is responsible for relationships with a number of FN50 leasing companies.

VIRTUAL ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

Honda UK's corporate team restructuring also saw the creation of a virtual account management programme aimed at small- to medium-sized businesses who do not have a dedicated fleet manager. Virtual Account Manager, which was named Best Innovation in Sales at the UK Professional Sales Awards last year offers expert fleet management support to customers by telephone and video conferencing as an alternative to solely face-to-face meetings.



Josh Latham, Business Centre Manager

Other team members are:



Phil Gidion, Virtual Account manager – Midlands and South Wales



Jacob Duffield, Virtual Account manager – north of Manchester, Scotland and Northern Ireland



Jack Horrocks, Virtual Account manager – South (Kent-Cornwall including London)



Michael Barlow, Virtual Account manager – Midlands and North Wales

Kevin Parsons, pricing and wholelife cost manager



Kevin Parsons joined Honda from pricing experts Glass's Guide in 2016 and manages the relationship with key guides and influencers such as Cap HPI and KeeResources, as well as the leasing companies' pricing and risk teams. He works closely with the SMMT and is a member of their environment policy committee, WLTP task force and electric vehicle working group.

David Bolwell, national major account manager



David Bolwell joined Honda a little more than 12 months ago but has nearly 20 years' experience in the automotive industry, with the majority of those in various manufacturer fleet sales roles. He also maintains responsibility for sales to the public sector, daily rental and Honda dealer local business channels.

Dave Lythgoe, major account manager north



Dave Lythgoe has worked in the automotive industry for 22 years, 18 of which have been spent in corporate sales. This has included working for several large manufacturers and a multi-franchise dealer group.

Ben Morris, major account manager south



Ben Morris looks after the major accounts in the south of the country. He has wide experience of the automotive industry and lists working for funders, dealers and manufacturers on his CV.

Jennifer Hindle, car sales operation graduate



Jennifer Hindle joined Honda on the graduate scheme in September 2017 and recently joined the fleet sales operation team.

Chris Vallance, dealer programme – south



Chris Vallance works with the Honda dealer network to ensure it provides fleet, leasing and procurement customers a guaranteed level of service. He also supports the Honda network in maintaining corporate standards.



Fleet sales may not grab the headlines, but they are vital

More than 100 dealers sign up to improve their corporate sales skills

Car dealers are trained in all manner of disciplines, from personal skills such as building a rapport with customers, to more specialised practices like using complex dealer management databases.

All this is well documented, and a quick browse of the internet will find a host of businesses offering courses and seminars to build proficiency among sales staff.

But there's an aspect of dealer training that gets less exposure – working with the specific wants and needs of fleets and corporate customers.

Perhaps it's strange that outside these pages, there's very little mention of the way in which car dealers treat fleet customers (which, let's not forget, make up more than half the new car market) when there are so many stories, both good and bad, about their behaviour towards private buyers.

Honda wants to change the record slightly, though, and the company is immensely proud of its fleet-centric Platinum Programme.

Devised to train site managers and their sales executives in dealing with the specific needs of fleet customers, it has now seen more than 100 of Honda's franchised dealers sign up.

Once enrolled on the scheme, these retailers will be able to offer fleet customers a more bespoke service, with face-to-face sales assistance, such as helping them choose the best vehicle for their mileage or explaining taxation and contract terms.

But as well as offering customers a more knowledgeable and tailored service, the scheme also provides corporate

100+
Honda dealerships are signed up to the Platinum Programme

“Creating a programme that will allow us to enhance our engagement with fleet and corporate custom is pivotal”

Marc Samuel,
Honda UK

48-hour test drives, which allow fleet managers to live with the car for a few days and better understand how it would fit with their needs and requirements.

It sounds like a simple fix – almost too much of a common-sense solution to merit mentioning – but Honda says the approach is crucial to its success in the huge fleet market.

With the introduction of this scheme across its network Honda can prevent its dealers losing valuable fleet customers through a lack of understanding, and also ensure it retains customers throughout the vehicle lifecycle and beyond.

After all, customers who receive solid information and guidance are more likely to put their faith in the dealer's aftersales service and will probably return when the time comes to renew their fleet.

And from the fleet manager's point of view, the promise of better information from more knowledgeable sales staff, as well as continued dealer support, will take some of the stress out of fleet renewals and maintenance.

Marc Samuel, fleet sales operations manager at Honda UK, said the dealer engagement with the scheme was not just positive news for fleet customers, but was also vital to Honda's future success.

“Having 100 dealerships signed up to the initiative is testament to our network's commitment to delivering the best service to customers across our various offerings,” he said.

“Fleet and corporate custom is pivotal to our success, so creating a programme that would allow us to enhance our engagement with them is paramount. The fact that the majority of the dealer network has backed the incentive is extremely encouraging to see.”



Honda sets new standards with its Civic investment

Extensive real-world testing marks biggest outlay in carmaker's history

Joining the all-new tenth generation Honda Civic line-up is an efficient new diesel model. It features a comprehensively revised 1.6-litre i-DTEC diesel engine, offering an outstanding combination of performance and efficiency. The Civic range comprises of a five-door hatch and four-door saloon, available with a range of powertrains from the entry-level three-cylinder turbo petrol to the high performance Type R.

PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY

The new i-DTEC diesel engine has been engineered to provide athletic response, greater refinement and lower levels of NOx emissions.

It provides maximum power of 120PS and maximum torque of 300Nm. The Civic diesel can accelerate to 62mph in just 10.5 seconds.

CO₂ emissions are as low as 93g/km in the hatch (91g/km saloon) and drivers can expect average fuel economy of up to 83mpg.

A six-speed manual gearbox is fitted as standard. Customers can also specify a nine-speed automatic, designed specifically for the diesel engines.

Alongside the diesel, the Civic is available with a 1.0-litre VTEC TURBO that develops 126PS and emits from just 107g/km of CO₂, with combined fuel economy from 60.1mpg.

There is also a 1.5-litre VTEC TURBO engine (hatch only), which develops 182PS.

CHASSIS AND HANDLING

The Civic benefits from the largest single model global development programme in the company's history.

Under the skin, the tenth-generation Civic features the

10.4
seconds to achieve 60mph
on CVT-equipped model

519
litres of luggage space
available

“Under the skin the 10th generation Civic features the most sophisticated chassis dynamics set-up in the model's history”

most sophisticated chassis dynamics set up in the model's history. The design team set themselves the target of achieving class-best handling and ride comfort.

During its development, Honda engineers conducted extensive real-world benchmark testing, including assessment of European luxury vehicles, in setting the targets for ride, handling, steering and NVH, as well as interior quality and overall refinement.

The new Civic has been engineered from the ground up to fulfil the promise of agile and rewarding dynamics. A light-weight, highly rigid bodyshell – the product of innovative new engineering and construction techniques – complements the lower centre of gravity and a sophisticated new suspension system in contributing directly to an engaging and fun driving experience.

The Civic's development team sought to achieve the most aerodynamically efficient body in the compact class, balancing low aerodynamic drag with high-speed stability. It achieved this through careful management of airflow over and under the car to minimise lift.

To improve driveability further, the driving position is lower than in the previous generation Civic, creating a more secure, enveloped feeling for the driver and front passenger. Visibility has also been improved.

The variable-ratio electric power-assisted steering has been specifically tuned for the new model to reflect its secure handling. The system was pioneered on the 2016 Civic Type R performance hatchback and is conventionally deployed only on premium or performance vehicles.

PRACTICALITY

Boot space for the Civic hatchback remains class-leading in terms of volume (478 litres), as well as ease of access and versatility. The folding rear seats have a 60:40 split and the

low sill height (679mm) and wide boot opening (1,120 mm) combine with the flat boot floor to make the loading of large, heavy items easy.

In the Civic saloon, luggage volume is 20% greater than before, with 519 litres of space available.

TECHNOLOGY

At the top of the centre console sits the seven-inch Honda Connect colour touchscreen display. It controls the infotainment and climate functions.

Honda Connect gives rapid access to internet-based services such as web browsing, real-time traffic information, news and weather, social media, and internet music stations. It features pre-installed apps, with others available for download from the Honda App Centre for owners to personalise their connected experience.

The touchscreen displays vehicle information – such as trip information and fuel economy – and images from the rear-view parking camera.

Honda Connect can be specified with Garmin satellite navigation, with pre-loaded maps, photo-real junction views, lane guidance, real-time traffic avoidance, 3D building and terrain views, and Eco Routing. Free map updates are provided for five years, a benefit unique to Honda.

Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are also both included, so occupants can seamlessly integrate Honda Connect with their smartphone.

In front of the driver, a new seven-inch colour TFT-LCD Driver Information Interface (DII) display includes a large digital tachometer – with analogue or digital rev needle, dependent on the model grade – and a digital speedometer readout.

SAFETY AND SPECIFICATION

All grades of Civic feature the Honda SENSING suite of active safety and driver-assist technologies.

Model	Grade	Transmission	CO ₂	P11D price	MPG
Hatchback					
1.6 i-DTEC	SE	Man	93	£20,250	80.7
1.6 i-DTEC	SR	Man	93	£22,095	80.7
1.6 i-DTEC	EX	Man	93	£24,955	80.7
1.6 i-DTEC	SR	Auto	109	£23,745	68.9
1.6 i-DTEC	EX	Auto	109	£26,605	68.9
Saloon					
1.6 i-DTEC	SE	Man	91	£20,750	83.1
1.6 i-DTEC	SR	Man	91	£22,595	83.1
1.6 i-DTEC	EX	Man	91	£25,455	83.1
1.6 i-DTEC	SE	Auto	108	£22,415	68.9
1.6 i-DTEC	SR	Auto	108	£24,245	68.9
1.6 i-DTEC	EX	Auto	108	£27,105	68.9

It includes Forward Collision Warning, Lane Departure Warning with Lane-Keeping Assist, Intelligent Adaptive Cruise Control and Traffic Sign Recognition.

The new Civic hatch diesel is available in three grades. The entry-level SE grade is generously equipped and includes automatic headlights, adaptive cruise control and the Honda SENSING suite of advanced active safety technologies.

The SR benefits from the Honda Connect infotainment suite, front and rear parking sensors, rear parking camera and dual-zone air conditioning.

Range-topping EX versions feature leather upholstery, LED front headlamp clusters, smart keyless entry and start, power tilt panoramic sunroof, premium audio system and Dynamic Damper Control system and Blind Spot Monitoring.

CR-V has big corporate appeal

Advanced hybrid powertrain is coupled with numerous safety features

Honda's all-new CR-V will become the first SUV hybrid launched in Europe by the brand when it goes on sale at the start of next year. Its advanced hybrid powertrain features intelligent Multi-Mode Drive (i-MMD) technology comprising two electric motors, a 2.0-litre petrol engine and an innovative direct transmission delivering high levels of efficiency and refinement.

The compact SUV will offer CO₂ emissions of 120g/km and official fuel economy of 53.3mpg under the WLTP-derived NEDC-correlated combined cycle, and will join 1.5 VTEC Turbo petrol-engined models – which went on sale in September.

The 1.5 VTEC Turbo engine was first seen in the latest Civic and has been adapted to include an exclusively-designed turbocharger.

It produces 173PS when equipped with the six-speed manual gearbox and 193PS for CVT models.

Official CO₂ emissions are 143g/km for the manual front-wheel drive model and 162g/km for CVT-equipped cars, which are fitted with all-wheel drive as standard.

Fuel economy on the NEDC combined cycle is 44.8mpg for the manual front-wheel drive model and 39.8mpg for the CVT AWD car.

The new engines are one of the many advancements the new CR-V offers over its predecessor.

The new model raises the bar in terms of interior quality, sophistication and spaciousness, including – for the first time – the option of seven seats.

It is slightly larger than its predecessor with a 30mm longer wheelbase but retains the familiar silhouette of its predecessor. It features broader wheel arches and sharper contours on the bonnet and rear quarters, as well as the latest Honda signature headlight graphic.

The larger dimensions have enabled Honda to increase interior room for passengers, while the boot now has the biggest loading bay 'footprint' in the CR-V model line's history.

The 160mm increase in width and a maximum loading length of 1,830mm – is up 250mm on the previous model (1,800mm for the seven-seater vehicle).

The interior of the new CR-V has a more premium feel

"The new model raises the bar in terms of interior quality sophistication and spaciousness"

than before, while Honda has also rationalised the screen layout compared to the previous generation CR-V.

It now features just one central touchscreen in addition to the seven-inch driver information interface (DII), which includes a large digital speedometer and linear tachometer, visible through the steering wheel.

The second-generation Honda Connect software offers enhanced intuitive operations and full smartphone integration via both Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

The CR-V is based on Honda's latest chassis design, which is lighter and more rigid than before. It features a new generation of ultra-high tensile steel for improved dynamics and crash-worthiness.

The new platform contributes to the class-leading interior quietness and refinement, as does extensive sound sealing and insulation techniques.

Minimised generation of engine noise is aided by the first application of Active Noise Cancellation (ANC) in a CR-V. This system uses two in-cabin microphones to monitor noises from the engine, and can then create precisely timed 'reverse phase' audio signals to cancel them out.

CR-V is available in four trim levels, ranging from entry-level S grade to SE, SR and the top of the range EX.

Standard across all grades is parking sensors and a rear view camera as well as Honda's suite of safety features, including collision mitigation braking system, forward collision warning, lane-keep assist, lane departure warning, road departure mitigation, adaptive cruise control and traffic sign recognition.

SR and EX will also feature blind spot warning and cross-traffic monitoring, while the CVT version will feature low speed follow.

SR grade also adds smart entry and start, leather interior, active cornering lights and front windscreen de-icer.

EX further includes a heated steering wheel, head up display, hands-free access power tailgate, heated rear seats and panoramic glass sunroof.

120
g/km CO₂ emissions

The CR-V has a bigger interior for passengers and an increased boot space

Civic diesel is one of the most cost-effective choices for fleets

RV setters Cap HPI say it will hold up to 37% of its value after 36 months

Class-leading residual values (RVs) will provide fleet customers choosing a new Honda Civic diesel with substantial savings in wholelife costs when compared to the car's key rivals.

Following the positive reception the new Honda Civic 1.6 i-DTEC diesel has received since launch, the hatchback is now claiming best-in-class RVs.

Industry experts and RV setters Cap HPI forecast the British-built Civic diesel will hold up to 37% of its value after 36 months and 60,000 miles.

That means the Civic diesel offers a 4% higher RV than the equivalent Volkswagen Golf.

Marc Samuel, fleet sales operations manager at Honda UK, said: "These RVs once again re-emphasise why the Civic diesel is an impressive offering for fleets.

When compared with key competitors, the Civic comes out on top in RVs and its market-leading emissions performance, highlighting Honda's commitment to making its cars even more affordable and efficient. Coupling this with the Honda Sensing safety features as standard in the Civic, it is a highly competitive choice for fleets."

Data from KeeResources shows savings of almost £1,500 can be expected across a typical three-year contract by choosing a Civic 1.6i-DTEC SR over, say, the Volkswagen Golf 1.6TDI SE NAV. That equates to more than £40 per month on a single car.

Opting for the Civic instead of a Ford Focus 1.5TDCi Titanium sees savings of more than £900 over the same three year period.

"These RVs once again re-emphasise why the Civic diesel is an impressive offering for fleets"

Marc Samuel,
Honda UK

Companies will also be £415.22 better off when opting for the Civic over the Mazda 3 Hatch 1.5 Skyactiv-D.

On-the-road prices for the Honda Civic start at just £19,100, with the diesel SR model costing from £22,295.

Samuel added: "Driving down wholelife costs is a priority for Honda and the new Civic diesel really delivers. For fleets looking for a diesel option, a saving of £1,485.65 over a contract period of 36 months is hugely significant and this, coupled with the Civic's safety, performance and drive, makes it a compelling choice for fleets."

The savings are also due to the Civic's competitive finance and lower overall running costs – including class-leading fuel economy of more than 80mpg. Compared to the Golf, the Civic is more than 1p per mile cheaper to run on fuel. It also offers competitive SMR costs.

Featuring a revised i-DTEC diesel engine, the latest Civic is a result of Honda's largest global development programme for a single model. It emits just 93g/km, making it one of the cleanest diesels in the segment.

It is also among the cheapest for benefit-in-kind tax.



The Civic diesel has improved RVs, competitive finance and lower running costs

	Honda Civic Hatch 5Dr 1.6i-DTEC 120 StopStart EU6 SR	Volkswagen Golf Hatch 5Dr 1.6TDI 115 StopStart EU6 SE Nav	Ford Focus Hatch 5Dr 1.5TDCi 120 StopStart EU6 Titanium 19MY	Mazda 3 Hatch 5Dr 1.5 SKYACTIV-D 105 StopStart EU6 SE-L Nav
P11D price	£20,745	£22,440	£22,320	£21,595
WLC per month	£741.59	£782.99	£766.85	£753.13
Residual value (3yr/60k)	37%	33%	30%	35%



Brinn Bevan was one of the first gymnasts to receive a Civic

The drive to be medal winners

Honda in ninth year of supporting Britain's gymnasts on the road to Games glory

Gymnastics is not necessarily the first discipline that comes to mind when you talk about elite sport – the likes of football and athletics often take those plaudits – but a host of Olympic successes and the uncanny ability of reality TV to cement a personality's reputation has brought the sport to the fore.

Throw in the ongoing interest shown after the 2012 Olympics and sizeable medal hauls at the heavily televised Commonwealth Games and World Championships, and there's no doubt that it's a sport that's on the up.

But, as the influence and participation levels in gymnastics have grown, the governing body, British Gymnastics has built up a raft of partners to help it deliver on its mission – namely bringing gymnastics to a wider audience.

From sponsors to merchandise retailers and from equipment suppliers to music providers, there's no shortage of teams working to help the organisation succeed.

But while all these aspects are, of course, crucial to British Gymnastics' success, few are as involved as Honda, the Japanese brand with a strong connection to the UK thanks to its Swindon manufacturing plant.

The company is British Gymnastics' sole vehicle supplier, and has been for the past 10 years. After winning a further three-year contract in 2017, Honda has spent the past 12 months supplying around 45 vehicles to the organisation, helping the team stay mobile and carry out the behind-the-scenes tasks that are crucial to the athletes' sporting success.

As news of the extended partnership was announced last

"We're looking forward to building this relationship further and continuing to enjoy its benefits"

Nigel Hill,
British Gymnastics

year, Dave Lythgoe, a major account manager at Honda UK, said the company would do all it could to support the team and help it replicate the success of the past few years.

"We're extremely proud of our relationship with British Gymnastics as it enters its ninth year," he said.

"It's a huge honour for us to be associated with the success that the team is enjoying and to support it in some way. We hope we can continue to support the team both in and out of the gym."

British Gymnastics chose Honda for the role in light of the safety features fitted to the vehicles, which the organisation hopes will protect the athletes as they make their way to and from training, competitions and media engagements.

Other key factors in the decision included the low carbon dioxide emissions and fuel consumption of Honda's diesel products.

Among the first to receive their vehicles were gymnasts Brinn Bevan and Kelly Simm, who were each handed a 1.6-litre diesel-powered Civic at British Gymnastics' Shropshire base by local dealer JT Hughes Honda.

Nigel Hill, commercial director at British Gymnastics, said Honda's support of the organisation was "fantastic" and that the cars the company had provided were helping staff and team members fulfil their roles effectively.

"The support we continue to receive from Honda UK is fantastic," he said. "The cars continue to be invaluable in getting athletes to their various engagements safely. We're looking forward to building this relationship further and continuing to enjoy its benefits."

Honda to launch its interactive whole lifecycle costs calculator

Web-based tool will make it easy to compare Honda prices with those of rivals

Honda UK is taking action to make purchasing decisions easier for fleet managers with the pending launch of its unique, interactive whole lifecycle costs (WLC) calculator.

The tool will be accessible from January 19 through the recently launched new Honda Fleet website. It will enable users to calculate and compare how much a vehicle will cost throughout its entire lifespan.

Fleet operators will be able to compare key metrics such as service, maintenance and repair (SMR) costs and residual values (RVs) on Honda models with rival vehicles from other manufacturers, to see the potential real-life savings available when choosing a Honda.

Company car drivers should also benefit, by seeing the comparative benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax payable on different models – providing total clarity before they make a final choice on their next car.

The tool will form part of the brand's strategy to engage more effectively with fleet customers and end users.

The aim of the new website is to significantly improve the customer experience for fleet managers, enabling them to more effectively judge vehicle costs and get closer to Honda's growing range of fleet solutions.

In addition, the website now includes an option for fleet customers to book a 48-hour test drive of their preferred model, helping drivers and fleet managers gain full confidence and peace of mind in their choice.

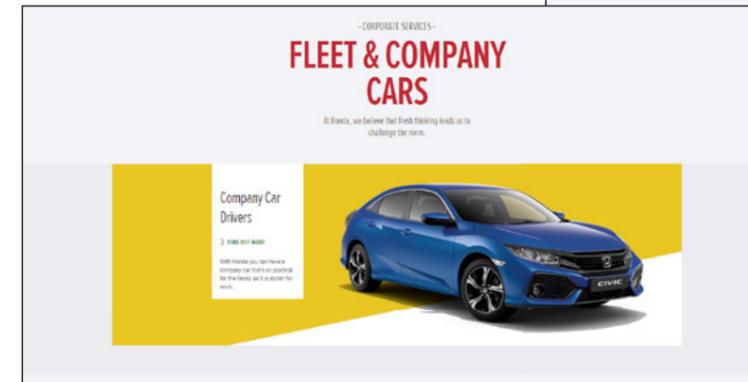
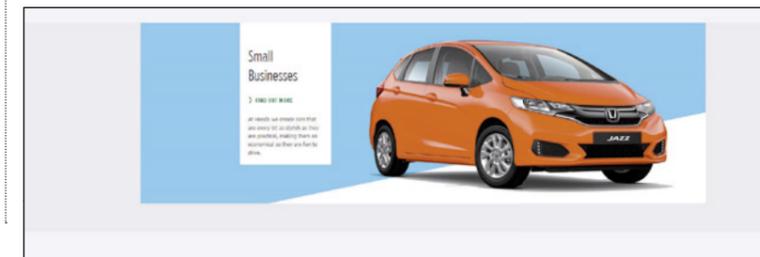
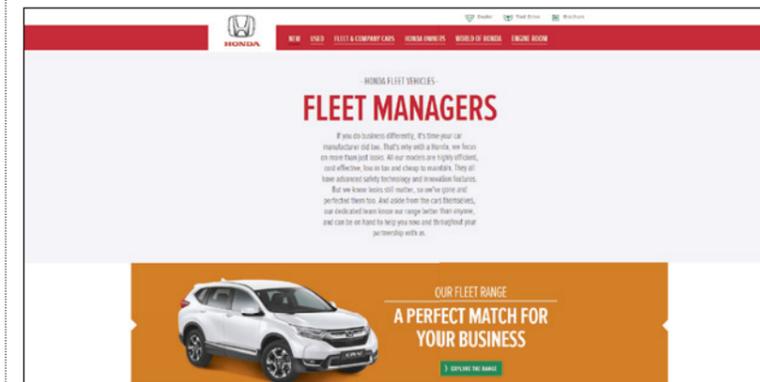
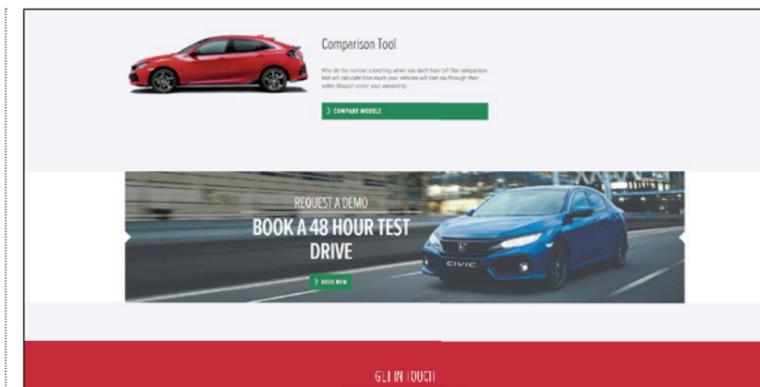
Marc Samuel, fleet sales operations manager, Honda UK, commented: "We recognise that businesses are repeatedly focusing on individual repair prices and transactions when looking at vehicle costs.

"Wholife costing gives a more accurate method of effectively judging vehicle expenditure.

"Our soon-to-be-available interactive calculator will enable fleet managers to understand the fuel costs, SMR costs and insurance. User-choosers will be able to compare their BIK alongside national insurance contributions (NICs).

"That way, corporate customers protect any investment they make in a Honda vehicle."

Honda has already been recognised in the fleet sector for being a competitive force in the C-segment market, with the Honda Civic demonstrating the lowest wholelife costs compared with key competitor models.



"We recognise businesses are repeatedly focusing on individual repair prices and transactions when looking at vehicle costs"

Marc Samuel, Honda UK



Where electric fits in Honda mix

Two-thirds of European sales to comprise electric, hybrid or hydrogen vehicles



All too often, advancements in the motor industry go unnoticed by the outside world. Ask the people down your local high street about autonomous vehicles, for example, and you can bet that most of them won't really understand where the technology has reached.

But even the most disinterested of observers is aware that the way we fuel our cars is going to change dramatically over the coming years. Everywhere we look, government, big business and media tell us that petrol and diesel are old hat, soon to be replaced with a wave of high-tech, low-emission vehicles.

The big car manufacturers have responded, revealing a tidal wave of new models with electric this and hybrid that. And, perhaps unsurprisingly, given the brand's history of innovation, Honda has positioned itself once more at the sharp end of this green revolution.

Even before the demonisation of diesel, Honda had cracked the hybrid conundrum, bringing out a hybrid version of the evergreen Jazz and the svelte CR-Z coupe. Then, in 2016, the new NSX hybrid supercar was rolled out, providing proof – were it needed – that electrified cars don't have to be boring.

And let's not forget the firm's pioneering work on hydrogen-powered cars.

The FCX Clarity was introduced to the US market 10 years ago, becoming the first hydrogen car ever to be unleashed on the general public.

More recently, a second-generation Clarity has arrived, offering a claimed range of more than 400 miles on the



ABOVE AND RIGHT: Honda's Urban EV concept was unveiled at the Geneva Motorshow

"We will leverage Honda's global R&D resources to accelerate the introduction of a full portfolio of advanced, electrified powertrains"

*Katsushi Inoue,
Honda Europe*



now-defunct New European Driving Cycle (NEDC), while there's movement on the hybrid front, too. The introduction of a new "two-motor" hybrid system for the CR-V SUV earlier this year showed us that hybrid power is a very viable option for mainstream family cars.

Honda, then, has hardly been a shrinking violet in the pantheon of low-emission car manufacturing, and the company wants to ensure that remains the case.

At last year's Geneva Motor Show, the company announced its intention to push forward with its 'Electric Vision', which will see a host of hybrid, electric and hydrogen-powered cars introduced across Europe.

The overall aim? By 2025, Honda wants two-thirds of its European sales to be made up of electric, hybrid or hydrogen vehicles.

It's a plan that drips with ambition, but one that the Tokyo-based business says is well within the capabilities of its massive global team.

Speaking as the Vision Electric scheme was unveiled, the boss of Honda's European division, Katsushi Inoue, said: "We will leverage Honda's global R&D resources to accelerate the introduction of a full portfolio of advanced, electrified powertrains for the European customer."

As Inoue's words suggest, Honda has an electric vehicle offensive in the pipeline. Over the next few years, we can look forward to a deluge of new models and powertrains that offer us cleaner, greener ways of getting around. And, if the British Government plays its part on the taxation front, they ought to be cheaper to run for both fleet managers and company car drivers, too.

LEFT: A second-generation Clarity claims a range of 400 miles

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CITROËN C5 AIRCROSS

Advanced Comfort programme helps produce a real easy rider



We tested the C5 Aircross on some very tough terrain

By Andrew Ryan

At a time when car manufacturers are looking to boost sales and the desirability of their products by offering sporty trim levels, the approach Citroën has taken with its new C5 Aircross SUV is a refreshing one.

Often these 'sport' models come with bigger wheels and stiffer suspension, meaning that while the driving experience feels more dynamic, ride quality can suffer.

Citroën, however, is taking a different approach: it is banking on comfort to set its C5 Aircross apart in the hotly contested C-SUV segment.

This is the second model launched under the Citroën Advanced Comfort programme – the first was the C4 Cactus earlier this year – which puts the focus on areas such as ride quality, practicality and refinement.

Perhaps the most important individual part of this programme is the new suspension technology in which the bumpstops of a normal system are replaced by hydraulic cushions to give greater damping.

The result is impressive. The European media launch took place in Morocco and on the pothole-riddled, rock-strewn roads around Marrakech and in the Atlas Mountains, the results were pretty remarkable.

Following another C5 Aircross, it was noticeable just how hard the suspension was working to keep the car's body impressively still. This transferred into a comfortable ride on difficult terrain, while not feeling wallowy on smoother roads.

However, ride quality is far from the C5 Aircross's only attribute which will appeal to fleet customers: it also has impressive efficiency figures for the sector.

NEDC-correlated CO₂ emissions range from 106g/km for the 130PS BlueHDi automatic diesel model (combined fuel economy: 68.9mpg) to 132g/km for the 180PS PureTech automatic petrol (49.6mpg).

When it goes on sale in the UK in February, it will also be available with two other engines: a 180PS BlueHDi and a 130PS Puretech.

The 130PS engines are available with either six-speed manual or eight-speed automatic gear-

boxes, while the 180PS units are available as automatics only. All models are front-wheel drive.

A plug-in hybrid version, offering up to 31 miles (50km) pure-electric range, CO₂ emissions of less than 50g/km under the WLTP test procedure and a combined petrol and electric power output of 225PS, will be available in 2020.

Customers can choose from three trim levels – Feel, Flair and Flair Plus. All models are generously equipped, with the entry-level Feel featuring, as standard, autonomous emergency braking, blind spot monitoring, lane departure warning, dual zone climate control, digital radio and automatic headlights and windscreen wipers.



An eight-inch infotainment screen is standard on all models



Suspension works hard to keep the body still

FLEET PICK MODEL
BLUEHDI 130 FLAIR MANENTRY MODEL
PURETECH 130 FEEL MANRANGE-TOPPER
BLUEHDI 180 FLAIR PLUS AUTO

SPECIFICATIONS

	FLEET PICK MODEL BLUEHDI 130 FLAIR MAN	ENTRY MODEL PURETECH 130 FEEL MAN	RANGE-TOPPER BLUEHDI 180 FLAIR PLUS AUTO
P11D price	£26,605	£23,005	£32,465
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	108	121	124
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	68.9	53.3	60.1
BIK	26%/£1,383	25%/£1,150	29%/£1,883
Annual VED	£165 then £140	£165 then £140	£205 then £140
Class 1A NIC	£955	£794	£1,299
Fuel cost (ppm)	9.02	11.13	10.34
Running cost (4yr/80k)	36.15ppm	34.15ppm	44.25ppm
AFR (ppm)	10	12	12
RV (4yk/80k)	£8,175/31%	£7,400/32%	£9,350/29%

FLEET PICK RIVALS



FORD KUGA 1.5TDCI 120 TITANIUM



HYUNDAI TUCSON 1.6CRDI 136 SE NAV



NISSAN QASHQAI 1.6DCI 130 N-CONNECTA

SPECIFICATIONS

	FORD KUGA 1.5TDCI 120 TITANIUM	HYUNDAI TUCSON 1.6CRDI 136 SE NAV	NISSAN QASHQAI 1.6DCI 130 N-CONNECTA
P11D price	£26,880	£27,435	£26,590
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	137	125	116
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	54.3	58.9	64.2
BIK	£1,720	£1,646	£1,489
Annual VED	£205 then £140	£205 then £140	£205 then £140
Class 1A NIC	£1,187	£1,136	£1,027
Fuel cost (ppm)	11.45	11.00	9.68
Running cost (4yr/80k)	40.63ppm	39.33ppm	37.51ppm
AFR (ppm)	10	10	10
RV (4yk/80k)	£7,375/27%	£7,900/30%	£7,325/28%

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

Flair adds front parking sensors, reversing camera, advanced comfort seats, Citroën Connect Nav, voice recognition, 18-inch alloy wheels, electric, heated door mirrors and rear privacy glass.

The range-topping Flair Plus models add auto dipping main beam headlights, motorised rear tailgate, keyless entry and start, active cruise control and opening panoramic glass roof.

In total, Citroën expects to sell 9,000 C5 Aircross models in the UK in 2019, with 48% of those going to fleet customers.

The manufacturer also expects the 130PS

BlueHDi Flair manual to be the most popular model among fleets. Its P11D price of £26,605 makes it competitive, while it has CO₂ emissions of 108g/km and fuel economy of 68.9mpg.

This means the C5 Aircross scores highly for its comfort, costs and efficiency, but it is also one of the most practical choices in the sector.

It is available only as a five-seater – there are no plans to introduce a seven-seat version – but the cabin impresses for its roominess, versatility, design and quality.

The interior feels plush, with a 12.3-inch instrument cluster and eight-inch infotainment screen as standard on all trim levels.

All passengers have plenty of room, while the rear features three individual full width seats which can be slid 150mm forwards or backwards independently. The backs can also be reclined.

The boot is among the biggest in the class, while a false floor provides a flat loading area when the rear seats are folded, enabling items up to 1.9m long to be carried.

We drove the car in both 180 BlueHDi and 180 Puretech Flair Plus trim levels.

Performance from both engines was smooth and refined rather than explosive, suiting the cossetting character of the C5 Aircross perfectly.

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

THINKING CAP



By Martin Ward, manufacturer relationships manager

cap hpi

Tuesday Over to Harrogate for the Mazda regional test drive day. The carmaker made available the latest versions of all of its cars, including recent facelift models. When all are lined up, the range does look impressive.

We were told the all new Mazda 3 is due early in 2019 and we understand it will be quite different. Also due soon is the all-new SkyActiv-X revolutionary petrol engine which turns current thinking and technology upside-down.

Mazda also told us it predicts that by 2035 84% of all new cars sold will still be petrol or diesel, but there will be an element of mild-hybrid, hybrid or some sort of electrification. Maybe the good old internal combustion engine (ICE) isn't going anywhere, anytime soon.

"Maybe the good old ICE engine isn't going anywhere, anytime soon"

Thursday/Friday Down to Seville for the first drive of the facelifted Honda CR-V.

It's not just a makeover. The cars we drove were powered by the all-new hybrid system which works as follows. The 2.0-litre petrol engine goes directly to a generator which produces electricity. This is then stored in lithium-ion batteries under the floor. The batteries power electric motors which, in turn, power the wheels.

The engine, we were told, will only power the wheels directly in exceptional circumstances. But I'm not sure what these are.

The CR-V is well built, and standard spec is up to a high level. The cabin has loads of room and there is a huge boot.

The hybrid is only available with auto, but you do get a choice of 2WD or 4WD.

Prices start around £29,000 and go up to £35,000. The hybrid auto is around £800 more than the 1.5 non-hybrid CVT auto, so looks to be well priced.

It should make a good fleet choice.

The CR-V has little body roll after adjustments to the chassis weight and increased rigidity



HONDA CR-V HYBRID

Engine is 'most important' launched by Honda in more than 10 years

By Matt de Prez

Declining diesel sales have led Honda to abandon the fuel for its all-new fifth generation CR-V.

David Hodgetts, the company's UK managing director, said the new petrol hybrid engine in the CR-V is the "most important engine the company has launched in more than 10 years".

The new motor is expected to make up half of all CR-V sales in the UK. It is priced from £29,105 on-the-road.

Using a 2.0-litre petrol engine and two electric motors, the powertrain setup in the CR-V Hybrid operates differently compared with most hybrids currently on sale.

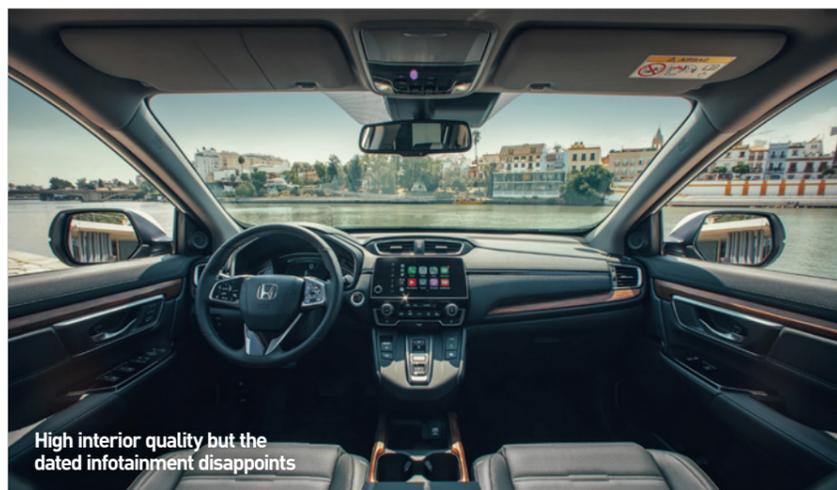
Power is delivered to the wheels by an electric motor almost all of the time. The engine is used to power a second generator, providing energy to keep the drive motor going.

A battery allows for zero-emission driving over short distances and the engine can drive the wheels directly when it is more efficient.

The concept is all about keeping the engine in its efficiency 'sweet spot'.

FLEET PICK MODEL HONDA CR-V HYBRID SR

SPECIFICATIONS	
P11D price	£33,150 (estimated)
BIK	25%/£1,657
Class 1A NIC	£1,143 (estimated)
Annual VED	£155 then £140
RV (4yr/80k)	N/A
Fuel cost (ppm)	N/A
AFR (ppm)	15
Running cost (4yr/80k)	N/A
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	120
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	53.3



High interior quality but the dated infotainment disappoints

CO₂ emissions for the CR-V Hybrid are measured at 120g/km for the front-wheel drive models and 126g/km for the all-wheel drive versions. While not class-leading for a hybrid, they are significantly lower than the standard petrol CR-V.

Official combined fuel economy is rated at 53.3mpg. During our testing we found 42mpg to be more realistic.

The CR-V Hybrid does not feature a gearbox, as the engine is mainly used as a generator. Although, at certain speeds a special clutch can connect the engine directly to the driveline.

In order to provide a more typical feel and sound to the car, Honda has engineered the system to increase the engine speed as you accelerate. There are also steering wheel-mounted paddle shifters that activate the regeneration function, to simulate engine braking.

The engine's operation is fairly noticeable, it's not too different to driving a CVT-equipped car – so expect a high-revving engine note when accelerating.

Around town, the car does well to utilise its zero emission capability – with a maximum range of around 1.2 miles. When more power is needed, or the battery becomes depleted, the engine fires into life.

It's a clever system and allows company car drivers to experience a more powerful car with lower benefit-in-kind (BIK) payments.

The CR-V Hybrid is available in S, SE, SR and EX grades. All models come equipped with a suite of safety technology as standard.

Honda expects the range-topping EX model to be the most popular.

In developing the CR-V, the Japanese brand reduced chassis weight and increased rigidity to improve drivability.

As a result, the CR-V drives well, has little body roll and a refined cabin.

Interior quality is high with the only disappointment being the infotainment system, lifted from the Civic. It is dated and uses a smaller screen (seven inches) than most rivals.

The Focus estate is a good-looking car with a cavernous boot.



FORD FOCUS ESTATE

Ford's 'most attractive estate ever' is expected to hold up well in terms of RVs

By Christopher Smith

Estate cars have been usurped by SUVs for many perk car drivers. However, they remain important as job-need cars and that's enough for Ford to continue bringing estate models to market.

Launched earlier this year in hatchback form, the Focus is now available in estate form, with a £1,100 premium in ST-Line trim, as tested here.

Focus product manager David Calder told *Fleet News*: "Of the Focuses sold, 10-11% are in estate form, and a high percentage of those are in the fleet market."

"The residual values we've seen already on the estate are very encouraging, and we think it will hold up well in the market. I think it's the most attractive estate we've ever made."

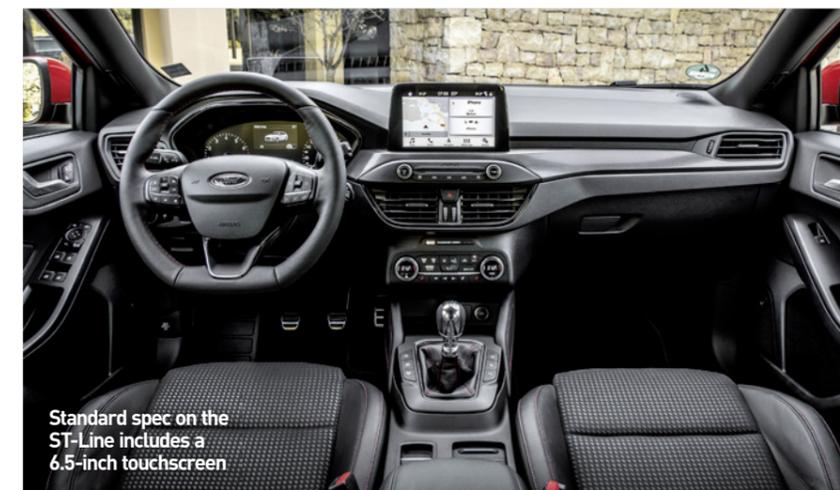
It's certainly a good looking car that bears its extra length well. The boot space is cavernous in comparison to the standard hatch and larger than that of a Golf estate.

The Focus trim selection has shifted upmarket, with ST-Line and Titanium now, effectively,

FLEET PICK MODEL 1.5 TDCI ECOBLUE 120PS ST-LINE

SPECIFICATIONS	
P11D Price	£23,400
BIK	24%/£1,123
Class 1A NIC	£775
Annual VED	£145 then £140
RV (4yr/80k)	£5,725/24.5%
Fuel cost (ppm)	8.15
AFR (ppm)	10
Running cost (4yr/80k)	34.4p
CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	97
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	76.3

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



Standard spec on the ST-Line includes a 6.5-inch touchscreen

becoming the mid-range variants, distinguished by comfort (16-inch wheels in the case of the Titanium) and sportiness (with larger, charcoal 17-inch alloys and sports suspension on the ST-Line).

Style and Zetec sit below, with Vignale now added as the range topper. The Active, high-riding, plastic-clad edition, will follow next year – giving drivers more choice.

The interior quality is the same as the hatch – a significant improvement on the last generation, though the closer to the carpet you get, the more 'functional' the plastics become – good quality it most definitely is, but that does not necessarily equate to premium.

Standard specification on ST-Line includes a 6.5-inch touchscreen with Apple CarPlay. Built in satellite navigation is £350 extra (with an eight-inch screen upgrade).

Safety technology includes lane-keep assist, pre-collision assist and pedestrian detection. Adaptive cruise control and traffic sign detection come as part of a £500 option pack.

In terms of seating, the standard ST-Line seats are adequate, though Calder tells us fleets have been ordering vehicles based on the strength of the adjustable 'comfort seat', a £300 option that allows 18-way adjustment

The 1.5-litre 120PS diesel we drove at the launch event, paired with a six-speed manual, will likely be the strongest seller – it is capable and comfortable, if a little noisy. CO₂ emissions sit at 97g/km, with combined fuel economy of 76.3mpg.

Ford has also introduced a new 2.0-litre diesel, available across the top end of the range. With 150PS on offer, this engine is smooth, refined and quiet when paired with a new eight-speed auto.

With emissions of 121g/km, it's not as economical or BIK efficient – but has user-chooser appeal.

Whatever the engine, the Focus estate doesn't lose any of the driving ability of its hatchback sister. Our test route included plenty of motorway – perhaps its natural home. The Estate proved handling, steering and driver engagement are as good as you'd expect from the Focus nameplate.

VAUXHALL GRANDLAND X 1.5 TURBO D TECH LINE



Since a house move in April I've become a commuter. I've gone from a seven-minute journey between home and work to an hour's trek. As my partner pithily noted (after we'd exchanged contracts): "We're more likely to die in a road accident now."

While she has her eye on my life insurance policy, I've become sensitive to the comfort, economy and safety features of the cars I drive.

So, it's been reassuring to learn that in 2017, the Grandland X achieved a five star safety rating from Euro NCAP. It scored 85% and 84% for adult and child occupant safety, respectively. The latter being among the best-in-class at the time of testing.

The Vauxhall benefits from standard safety features such as speed sign assistance and lane-departure warning. There are six airbags and a seatbelt alert system for the front and rear seats.

Our Tech Line version has a host more. An inclusive safety pack provides side blind spot alert, which helps prevent collisions by illuminating a light in the door mirror if there is a car that may be hidden from view.

Lane-keep assist provides gentle steering inputs to keep the car in lane at speeds above 40mph.

The safety pack also comprises of driver drowsiness system, forward collision alert and automatic emergency braking.

Our car additionally features the Park and Go Pack 2, costing £550. It includes an autonomous parking system and a rear view camera.

The P11D value of our car is £24,210, cheaper than the entry-level SE at £24,585, making the Tech Line a compelling fleet choice.

Jeremy Bennett

"I've become sensitive to the comfort, economy and safety features"



A premium feel in terms of build quality

VOLKSWAGEN E-GOLF

Savings on fuel and the quiet ride will be sorely missed

COSTS

- P11D price £32,675
- BIK tax band (2018/2019) 13%
- Annual BIK tax (20%) £850
- Class 1A NIC £586
- Annual VED £0
- RV (4yr/80k) £8,200/25%
- Fuel cost (ppm) 3.32
- AER (ppm) 4
- Running cost (ppm) 35.97

SPEC

- Power (PS) 136
- Torque (Nm) 290
- CO2 emissions (g/km) 0
- Range (miles) 186
- 0-62mph (sec) 9.6
- Final mileage 6,211

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

TEST TIMELINE



By Andrew Ryan

Our long-term e-Golf has returned to Volkswagen after six months and more than 6,000 miles, and – much like its driving experience – our time with it couldn't have gone much smoother.

Thanks to the installation of a 7kW Pod Point charging unit at home, the car slotted seamlessly into my day-to-day life.

With an official range of 186 miles, I could do my 76-mile commute to work and back with, typically, an indicated 70 miles left.

It was then just a case of plugging into my home charger and within a few hours the battery was full again.

As it was my first fully-electric long-term, I did initially suffer from slight range anxiety. However, a couple of 134-mile round trips left me with around 20 miles remaining and soon after I completed a 150-mile journey with three miles of range left, which quelled any further nervousness.

After that, I'd happily use it for trips

of up to 130 miles without a second thought.

I also made significant savings in fuel costs: I charged the car almost exclusively at home which increased my electricity use by around £10 a week, whereas I would usually be spending around £45 a week on petrol or diesel.

Other aspects of the 'ownership' experience also impressed. The fact it is based on a 'normal' Golf gives it an advantage over its direct rivals as it offers a more premium feel, both in terms of its build quality and driving experience.

The electric powertrain allowed for near-silent running, meaning refinement is high, while the car's impressive ride comfort ensured it was excellent to live with.

Any downsides? Apart from the fact it's gone back, the e-Golf's official range is less than that offered by cars such as the Hyundai Kona Electric (up to 300 miles) and Nissan Leaf (up to 235 miles), but apart from that, any drawbacks are few and far between.

"I completed a 150-mile journey with three miles of range left, which quelled any further nervousness. After that, I'd happily use it for trips up to 130 miles"

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

TEST TIMELINE



ŠKODA KAROQ

1.6TDI SE

Karoq's features make it a safe bet for business users



Our test car offers the best balance of power and running costs

COSTS

- P11D price £22,690
- BIK tax band (2018/19) 29%
- Annual BIK tax (20%) £1,316
- Class 1A NIC £908
- Annual VED £205 then £140
- RV (4yr/80k) £8,450
- Fuel cost (ppm) 10.13
- AFR (ppm) 10
- Running cost (ppm) 31.40

SPEC

- Engine (cc) 1598
- Power (PS) 115
- Torque (Nm) 250
- CO2 emissions (g/km) 120
- Manufacturer mpg 61.4
- Test mpg 49.7
- Max speed (mph) 116
- 0-62mph (sec) 10.7
- Final mileage 10,150

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

TEST TIMELINE



By Luke Neal

By the time you read this our Karoq will have returned to Škoda HQ after six months and 10,150 miles with *Fleet News*. The time has flown.

The Karoq is a good car, but for a private buyer, lacks anything to spark an emotional connection.

However, for a business purchaser, the Škoda ticks many boxes to make it a sound choice.

The model on test – a 1.6 TDi SE 115PS – has a P11D price of less than £23,000, with a residual value forecast of £8,450 after four years and 80,000 miles, which would give a 37% return at defleet time.

Our car has emissions of 120g/km, and a claimed combined fuel economy of 61.4mpg. Real-world fuel economy has struggled to get beyond 50mpg, although this is still a respectable figure.

The Karoq range offers a 1.0- and 1.5-petrol engine and a 2.0-litre diesel along with our 1.6-litre diesel. It is also available with two-wheel and four-wheel drive powertrains

and a choice of six-speed manual or seven-speed automatic gearboxes.

The 1.6-litre diesel 2WD manual offers the best balance between power and running costs and is likely to be the popular fleet pick.

There are no gripes in the comfort and handling department, the car is agile, good to drive and has a decent turn of speed. The ride is comfortable and it feels relatively balanced when cornering.

It also has some useful driver aids, including auto on-off handbrake, adaptive cruise control with speed limiter, front- and rear-parking sensors, tyre pressure monitor and automatic headlights.

It is a safe car to drive. Advanced safety systems are fitted including driver fatigue sensor, ESC, pedestrian monitor, emergency brake signal, front assist radar with automatic braking, and it has achieved five stars in Euro NCAP crash-testing.

The Škoda line-up has achieved record UK fleet sales (10,642 cars) in the first six months of the year with 1,300 Karoqs delivered.

AUDI A6 40 S LINE



A stand-out feature of the Audi A6 is its intelligent lighting, which we briefly mentioned in our first review.

Audi has been investing heavily in lighting technology for many years and, as a result, it has the best systems around. The carmaker believes maximising available high beam at night will improve safety by improving visibility.

Given that 40% of collisions occur at night – a time when road volume is at its lowest – the logic is sound.

The system on the A6 features Audi Matrix technology. It uses information from multiple sources, including the interior mirror camera and navigation system, to identify the appropriate lighting configuration for the individual LEDs. This provides maximum and precise illumination without dazzling other road users.

Individual lighting diodes are lit or dimmed as oncoming cars approach, or upon entering urban areas, in 64 stages, with several million possible patterns. As a result, a corridor of lights is illuminated around the object to maintain maximum visibility of the road and surrounding environment.

It is fascinating to watch (ideally as a passenger as it can be a bit hypnotic) and seems to work perfectly, as the reaction to other traffic is instantaneous.

Adding to the night-time visibility are the dynamic rear indicators which sweep from inside to out and help other road users to clearly see the direction in which it is turning.

It's clever stuff and makes night-time driving a pleasure.

Also worth a mention (an excited friend insisted I tried them) are the fog lights – 'all-weather lights' in Audi-speak. They are integrated into the main light housing and provide better illumination than traditional fog lights, but with less glare. Another win for the Audi lighting engineers!

Stephen Briers

AT A GLANCE – THE REST OF OUR FLEET



MINI COUNTRYMAN COOPER SE ALL4 PHEV



FORD FIESTA 1.0 ECOBOOST 125 ST LINE

ELAINE PRINGLE

VEHICLE OPERATIONS MANAGER, SCOTTISH WATER

As a youngster Pringle wanted to be a teacher, but discovered that she 'hated it'. Now she revels in her role in fleet having negotiated a steep learning curve

The advice I would give to my 18-year-old self is to not be scared of trying new things and don't worry about planning everything to the last detail. Live for the moment.

The pivotal moment in my life was building my house. It's next door to my mum so we are always there for each other. Family and friends are important to me.

My first memory associated with a car was when I locked myself in my mum's car while she was in a shop and her keys were in the car – the emergency services weren't too happy!

My main interest is travelling. I get teased a lot by friends, family and colleagues for how often I go on holiday.

I want to be remembered as caring – I would do anything to help a friend in need.

It is difficult to recommend a book others should read as I never get the time to read. I wish I had the time.

My pet hate is people who drive too close behind you.

If I were Prime Minister for the day I would introduce free public transport.

My favourite film is *The Green Mile* – it gets me every time.

The three vehicles I would like in my garage are/is an Audi R8 in three different colours!



First fleet role I had recently completed my MBA when an opportunity for a vehicle operations team manager came up within our fleet department. The team was going through significant change and it was a great time for me to get involved. Before joining the team I had no previous knowledge of fleet, so this was a steep learning curve.

Career goals at Scottish Water I want to continue to improve the way Scottish Water manages risk across its fleet to improve driver safety and performance.

Biggest achievement in business Creating the Driver Safety and Performance team. We have implemented a number of safety initiatives including driver training, vehicle audits and incident investigation. I am proud of the achievements we have made. We recently received two industry awards: Fleet of the Year (Utilities) from *Commercial Fleet* (in 2017) and highly commended in the *Fleet News* Safe Fleet category (in 2018).

Biggest career influence Our fleet manager, Ross Shepherd, came from Scottish Power where he managed a similar sized fleet, so it has been great to learn from his experiences. I am fortunate that the company had the opportunity to build a strong team. I would like to thank all of the team for their help and support over the past four years – we would never have achieved such success without you.

Biggest mistake in business Moving jobs. It needs to be a job you will enjoy and that gets you out of bed in the morning.

Leadership style I empower my team and trust them to make the right decisions.

If I wasn't in fleet I thought I wanted to go into teaching but when I tried it, I hated it. I never dreamt of working in fleet... who knows what the future holds?

Childhood ambition Teaching! My business studies teacher was a big influence.



The Edge ST-Line is perfect for drivers seeking a sporty image

Most advanced SUV has cutting Edge technology

The new Ford Edge, the company's most technologically advanced SUV ever, is now available in three entities, Titanium, ST-Line and Vignale, each with distinct exterior and interior styling.

Each series has a version of Ford's 2.0-litre EcoBlue diesel engine with eight-speed e-shifter automatic transmission. The Dagenham-built EcoBlue engine delivers the power, torque and driving performance of a larger capacity engine alongside the optimised fuel-efficiency and low CO2 emissions synonymous with a smaller engine capacity. Edge Titanium has a 150PS EcoBlue

engine and front-wheel drive, while both Edge ST-Line and Edge Vignale are powered by a 238PS version with a bi-turbocharging system that optimises low-end torque, refinement and fuel-efficiency. Both have intelligent all-wheel drive as standard.

All have standard LED lighting and interior upgrades, including a leather interior added to Edge Titanium, with additional features over the model it replaces such as 10-way power driver's seat, power heated and cooled front seats, adaptive cruise control and optional 20-inch wheels.

Edge ST-Line – designed for customers who aspire to the sporty image of Ford's

ST models – delivers styling inspired by Ford Performance alongside its powerful powertrain options.

Its sports-inspired interior now has a black headliner, red stitching to trim, heated steering wheel, variable heated rear seats and – like the Edge Vignale – FordPass Connect with eight-inch touchscreen and B&O Play premium audio system.

The luxury Edge Vignale adds matrix LED headlamps and LED fog lights.

Technology across the Edge range includes Post-Collision Braking, Evasive Steering Assist, and Adaptive Cruise Control with Stop-and-Go and Lane Centring Assist.

FORD FOCUS SAFETY MEASURES FURTHER COMMENDED BY EURO NCAP

Sophisticated technologies designed to make the all-new Ford Focus driving experience more comfortable, less demanding and safer have been commended by the Euro NCAP independent crash test authority following its first-ever automated driving assessment event.

The Focus, already awarded a five-star safety rating by Euro NCAP this

year, received this further recognition as part of a new initiative designed to deliver a greater understanding among consumers of the benefits of advanced driver assistance technologies.

It was selected for testing after introducing a wider range of advanced driver assistance features than any Ford vehicle before, enabled by three radars, two cameras and 12 ultrasonic

sensors. Ford Co-Pilot360 technologies enhance protection, driving and parking.

Euro NCAP evaluated the Adaptive Cruise Control with Stop & Go, Speed Sign Recognition and Lane-Centring technologies available and found that Focus delivered a good balance between supporting the driver and enabling the driver to feel in full control of the vehicle.

Next issue: Gareth Wilsher, international fleet manager, AT&T Global Fleet Operations



ALL-NEW FOCUS

TOGETHER WE GO FURTHER



YOUR FLEET'S FINANCES TOTALLY TRANSFORMED

To keep running costs at a minimum the All-New Focus range delivers highly competitive low emissions from 91g/km CO₂. Plus, you and your drivers will benefit from a combined fuel economy of up to 80.7mpg.

Discover more at ford.co.uk/new-focus or contact the Ford Business Centre: 03457 23 23 23 | flinform@ford.com

P11D

£30,390 - £18,100

BIK

28% - 22%

CO₂

137-91g/km

COMBINED MPG

46.3-80.7



Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the All-New Ford Focus range: urban 36.7-74.3 (7.7-3.8), extra urban 55.4-85.6 (5.1-3.3), combined 46.3-80.7 (6.1-3.5). Official CO₂ emissions 137-91g/km.

The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU 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.