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### Tomorrow's Fleet

Manufacturer priorities shift from autonomous vehicles to safety technology

### Electric Fleet

Why charge times needn't be a barrier to fleet electric vehicle uptake

### Today's Fleet

How targeted training of EV drivers improves safety and efficiency

FleetNews



AWARDS  
2020

*shortlist  
announced  
inside*

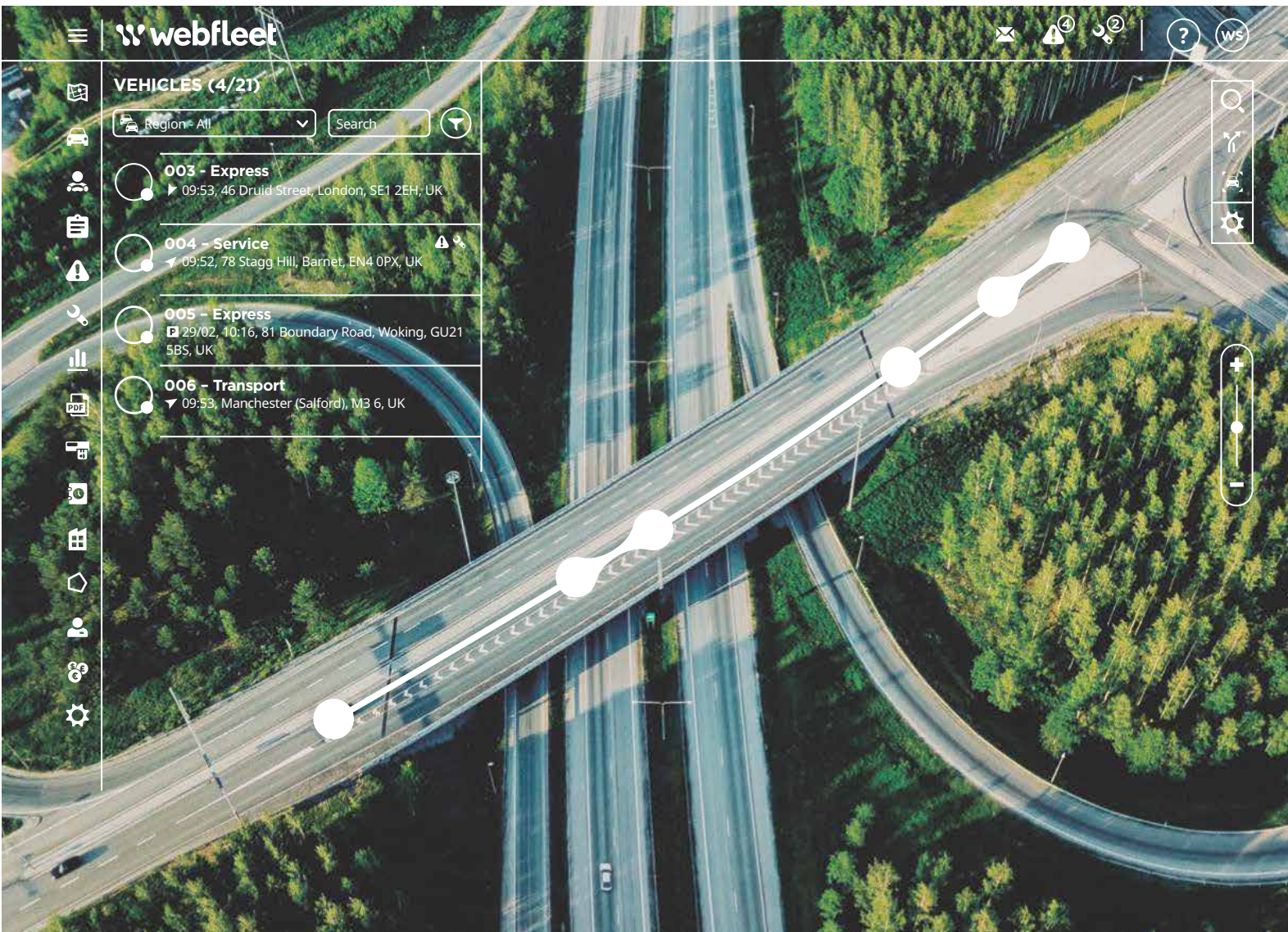


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P11D	BIK	CO <sub>2</sub>	COMBINED MPG
£23,415 - £20,635	24% - 23%	101-96g/km	48.7-50.4



Model shown is a New Puma ST-Line X 1.0 155PS Mild Hybrid Electric Vehicle. Petrol 6-speed manual with optional LED Headlights and Driver Assistance Pack. Fuel economy mpg (l/100km) (Combined): 49.6 (5.7). \*CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 101g/km. Figures shown are for comparability purposes only; they only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. \*There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures. The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown, however, are based on the outgoing test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration.

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# Gaps in manufacturers' CO2 data 'remains difficult' for leasing sector

Employers urged to speak to lease providers to assess impact on fleet policies and procurement

By Gareth Roberts

Gaps in vehicle CO2 data held by leasing companies are causing a headache for fleets with less than two months to go before emissions results from the new WLTP test start being used for tax purposes. Many manufacturers, including Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Volkswagen Group, have published CO2 values derived from the new test, but others have yet to reveal their full results. One leasing company suggested it only had the new CO2 data for 75% of the cars it offered, while trade association the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) says members only have data for around 80% of base (pre-option) models. Fleet News understands that several manufacturers have supplied less than a third of their emissions data. It means some fleets and company car drivers are ordering vehicles now with no way of knowing exactly how much tax they could pay until their car is registered. Leasing companies, which typically

receive the CO2 data from third-party providers, are estimating emissions for vehicles in some cases or trying to bring forward deliveries to ensure they are registered before April. "It's really challenging," said Nick Hardy, sales and marketing director at Ogilvie Fleet. "We've got some [CO2 data], but we haven't got all the data we need." He said Ogilvie Fleet has tried to identify those vehicles on order "most at risk" of seeing an increase in CO2, under the new emissions testing regime, and trying to bring the delivery forward. However, he said: "You can't do that in every case."

**'NO CONDITIONS' ON CO2 DATA**

The Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP) laboratory test, used to measure fuel consumption and CO2 emissions, was introduced for all new cars from September 2018. The new CO2 rating derived from the test will be used to determine vehicle excise duty (VED) from April 1 and company car tax calculations for vehicles registered from April 6. Manufacturers have been

compelled to provide fuel economy figures based on the WLTP test from January 2019, but no similar conditions were placed on the CO2 data. Instead, manufacturers have been left to publish the new emissions values at their own choosing. Mike Coulton, EV consultant at VWFS Fleet, told *Fleet News*: "Ideally, it would have been mandated by Government that WLTP CO2 emissions were published alongside WLTP fuel economy and NEDC-correlated emissions figures long before April 6, 2020. This would, he said, "allow for lead times on orders and help fleets and their drivers make informed company car choices". With April fast approaching, David Bushnell, principal consultant at Alphabet GB, believes it is now vital manufacturers provide all the data "as soon as possible". He says that the absence of some CO2 data "has been difficult and remains difficult" for the leasing industry. He continued: "It's widely understood that WLTP is around a 10-20% increase on correlated [NEDC CO2

values] and you can take a best guess on where they are going to be." However, he said: "It astounds me that we have got to this stage and they [manufacturers] are still reticent to publish some of the results." Like Ogilvie Fleet, Alphabet is trying to bring forward deliveries where possible. "Anything we can get delivered before [April], we're trying to bring forward," said Bushnell. "We're having to look at our order bank; work with the manufacturers to nail down a delivery date and liaise with the driver. We're looking at it on a driver-by-driver, order-by-order basis." The country's biggest vehicle leasing company, Lex Autolease, said it was keeping drivers and fleets with vehicles on order informed of any potential changes. Chris Chandler, principal consultant at Lex Autolease, explained: "Where vehicle quotes have been based on NEDC data, but delivery won't be until after April 6, we are revising quotes and explaining the cost implications to customers, keeping them fully informed throughout the quote-to-delivery process."

However, he added: "It has been challenging to get the emissions data required from OEMs. This is an industry-wide issue – we're working hard to ensure we're in the best possible position for our customers by April 6." VWFS Fleet says each quote and subsequent order it receives includes a disclaimer that highlights the potential impact of WLTP and associated timings. Coulton added: "Our WLTP pull-forward proposition also offers customers advice on a quote-by-quote basis, including early termination fees and various options to minimise the cost impact associated, allowing customers to order and bring forward their delivery." Mike Hawes, chief executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), said that due to the complexity of the data "a single standard industry approach to the supply of WLTP CO2 values to fleets is no longer possible". He added: "Each manufacturer will have its own commercial arrangements to facilitate data sharing and will be working with


stakeholders, including leasing companies, to determine bespoke solutions. An individual customer wishing to purchase a vehicle can obtain the necessary data direct from the relevant manufacturer." Jaguar and Hyundai are among some of those manufacturers that have yet to publish WLTP CO2 values.

**'GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE'**

Hyundai told *Fleet News* it intends to publish its WLTP CO2 data on April 1, in line with "Government guidance", while Jaguar said that the

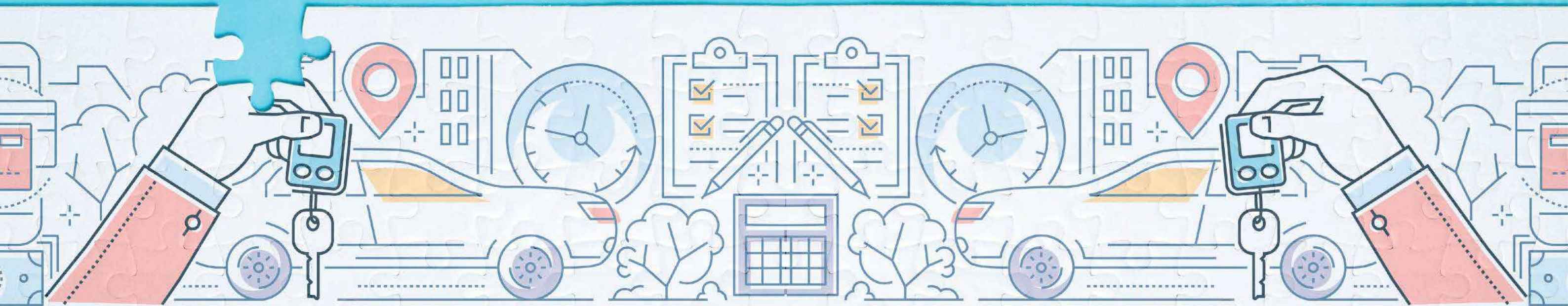
release of its data would be "timely with the April changes" but could not give a specific publication date. Henry Williams, head of fleet at Škoda, which published results for its vehicles in October 2019, said it was "incredible" some manufacturers have yet to release all their WLTP CO2 data. He said: "If you're a leasing company (not having the data) gives you quite a substantial problem, because you have cars on order that you don't know what the CO2 values for those

cars will be if they're delivered post April 6. "We're really conscious that we don't want to let customers down, which is why we come out as early as we can with things like this that could potentially affect a customer's tax bill or, for the leasing company, VED rate as well." He continued: "It's not fair to the end user if they get a car arrive on April 7, that has a BIK tax bill for the driver of x% more than they thought they were going to pay." The BVRLA is urging companies to review their fleet policies now, because of the gaps in data. BVRLA chief executive Gerry Keaney said: "The introduction of WLTP-based motoring taxes is adding yet another layer of complexity and confusion to a fleet sector that is already having to cope with a deluge of new automotive technology and local authority air quality measures. "The BVRLA and its members are working with OEMs and third-party data providers to bridge this gap, but in the meantime, we would recommend customers consult their



IT HAS BEEN CHALLENGING TO GET THE EMISSIONS DATA REQUIRED FROM OEMS

CHRIS CHANDLER, LEX AUTOLEASE





Lease providers to assess the impact on fleet policies and procurement."

## IT SYSTEMS UPDATED

The challenge of leasing companies having timely access to all the vehicle emissions data has been matched by the industry's need to adapt its systems to meet the new benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax tables.

Industry-wide, millions of pounds have been spent upgrading software in readiness for the new regime and, while leasing companies are appealing for gaps in the data to be addressed quickly, their IT systems, they say, are ready for the new regime.

Chandler explained: "The most complex part of the transition to WLTP is the testing of accessories and the near-infinite combinations of features that must be quotable on each make and model.

"This has created a huge amount of upfront work for vehicle manufacturers and means that our quoting systems need to hold significantly more data than before."

The fleet industry was asked at the start of last year to respond to a series of questions around whether vehicle tax changes were required once WLTP CO2 data is adopted to determine VED and company car tax from April.

Manufacturers had acknowledged that more than 50% of cars they make would see an increase from NEDC-correlated CO2 emissions values to

WLTP of between 10% and 20%.

For company car drivers and fleet operators choosing a new car from April, this would have resulted in an increased tax liability, compared with an identical model that had already been registered.

As a result, last summer HM Treasury published two new sets of BIK tax tables and binned the previous rates for 2020/21, (fleetnews.co.uk, July 7, 2019).

They included a table for those driving a company car registered after April 6, 2020, and one for those driving a company car registered before the same date, reflecting the impact WLTP will have on CO2 values.

Publishing the appropriate rates for both BIK tax tables for the next three years, up to April 2023, HM Treasury said rates thereafter would be realigned.

Hardy told *Fleet News* that the cost of upgrading its IT systems to be able to quote against the new rates had run into tens of thousands of pounds.

"We've had to spend hours and quite a lot of money making sure our systems can cope with all these changes," said Hardy. "You just hope and pray you don't have to undo the work you've done."

The new BIK rates are expected to be adopted into law in the Finance Bill after being confirmed in the March Budget (fleetnews.co.uk, January 7).

**To read how new WLTP CO2 data could see some cars disappear off choice lists, see page 13.**

**80%**  
of data for base  
(pre-option) models  
is available

## Data is the key to managing change



**JON CLAY**  
HEAD OF VEHICLE  
IDENTIFICATION AT  
CAP HPI

The industry has raised concerns about the availability of WLTP data, and the BVRLA recently warned that it could hamper efforts to work out tax, which, in many cases, could be much higher than before (under WLTP).

A great deal of work has gone on behind the scenes to ensure that fleets have the data they need to operate efficiently and profitably. By working across the industry, Cap HPI will be ready for the introduction of WLTP-based motoring tax in April 2020.

The team at Cap HPI has already achieved an 85% fill-rate across all manufacturers. We have worked closely with partners across the industry to ensure that our fleet customers have the data they need to navigate the transition to WLTP CO2 emissions values from April.

Data for both NEDC and WLTP values are available, and support is on-hand to advise on using the new vehicle data. The requirement for the supply and consumption of the new values from manufacturers has impacted the whole industry, and Cap HPI has developed a dual solution to support our customers through the change to the new values.

Our new vehicle data contains static WLTP values and, following discussions with manufacturers, it's expected the fill-rate will continue to rise over the coming weeks.

If options are added to a derivative, then the WLTP CO2 emissions values will change. It can have a significant impact on its tax band. Our new WLTP Emissions Service API for dynamically configured vehicles handles these scenarios, and it is also on track to be ready with real-time WLTP CO2 data by April.

WLTP comes into force in the UK on April 1 for VED and April 6 for company car tax. Vehicles registered after this date will be taxed using the new WLTP CO2 emissions values. The values will relate to the specific configuration of an individual vehicle, taking optional equipment fitted to the vehicle into account for the first time.

The requirement for the supply and consumption of the new values from manufacturers has impacted the whole industry, with manufacturers and downstream customers having to make significant changes to systems and business processes.

Work continues with a significant number of OEMs to integrate with their APIs. We are also launching new internal systems that provide the Cap HPI new vehicle data team with enhanced capability to accurately capture the data that operates the WLTP Emissions Service API.



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Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO2 figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. <sup>†</sup>There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO2 figures. The CO2 figures shown however, are based on the outgoing test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration. Figures shown are for comparability purposes. Only compare fuel consumption, CO2 and electric range figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. <sup>\*\*</sup>These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the starting charge of the battery, accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. Models shown MG ZS EV Excite in Pimlico Blue and MG HS Excite in Brixton Blue. <sup>†</sup>Applies to MG ZS EV Excite. Business users only. T&Cs apply. Subject to availability at participating dealers on vehicle orders received between 01.01.20 and 31.03.20. Figures based on 6 advance rentals of Initial rental £1,530.00 +VAT followed by 35 monthly rentals of £255.00 +VAT. Based on 8,000 miles p.a. Excess mileage charges apply. **You can never own the vehicle.** <sup>^</sup>Applies to MG HS Excite 15T GDI. Business users only. T&Cs apply. Subject to availability at participating dealers on vehicle orders received between 01.01.20 and 31.03.20. Figures based on 6 advance rentals of Initial rental £1,368.00 +VAT followed by 35 monthly rentals of £228.00 +VAT. Based on 8,000 miles p.a. Excess mileage charges apply. **You can never own the vehicle.** Finance subject to status. Guarantee may be required. 18s and over. MG Motor Financial Services Contract Hire RH1 1SR.





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NEWS: GRANTS

# Future of plug-in car and van grant expected to be revealed in Budget

Trade bodies call for support measures to help achieve the 2035 zero emissions goal

By Gareth Roberts

**P**ressure is mounting on the Government to unveil a package of incentives in the Budget if it wants to achieve its ambitious electric vehicle (EV) target.

However, the lead up to the Budget, scheduled for March 11, has been disrupted by the shock resignation of Chancellor of the Exchequer Sajid Javid and his replacement by 39-year-old former chief secretary to the Treasury Rishi Sunak.

Ministers want every new car and van sold by 2035 to be zero emissions, ending the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles five years earlier than previously announced and including hybrids for the first time.

Grant Shapps, secretary of state for Transport, has since suggested that the date could be brought forward to 2032, subject to consultation.

While broadly welcoming the Government's ambitious environmental target, the fleet and leasing industry believes it will only be achieved with the right support.

A key enabler, it says, is the plug-in car and van grant, which offers up to £8,000 off the cost of an electric van and up to £3,500 off an electric car.

However, its future remains unclear, with Sunak expected to make an

announcement in his first Budget.

The level of funding, and to what vehicles it applies, has been changed since it was launched in 2012.

The plug-in car grant was cut by £1,000 in 2018 and fleets were told it would no longer apply to hybrid cars with a range of less than 70 zero-emission miles.

The Government said the reduction in funding – from £4,500 to £3,500 – for the cleanest cars, and withdrawing the grant completely for the likes of the Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV and the Toyota Prius plug-in, was a sign of success.

Now, the grant could be cut again or ditched, exactly when fleets are calling for it to form part of a package of much-needed measures.

British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA), whose members own and operate more than five million cars, vans and trucks and buy nearly half of all new vehicles sold each year, is urging fleets to write to their local MP to get support for the "vital grants". It has set up a campaign page on its website.

BVRLA chief executive Gerry Kearney said: "Fleets are being asked to invest billions of pounds in electric vehicle technology and infrastructure.

"To achieve these goals, the Government must provide a clear support package through to at least 2025. It must preserve the plug-in car and van grants, maintain a strong set of tax incentives and tackle the huge and often arbitrary costs associated with fleet charging infrastructure."

In 2019, sales of battery electric vehicles (BEVs) saw the highest-level market penetration to date at 37,850 cars, which was 1.6% of the 2.3 million cars sold.

In January, alternative fuel cars (AFVs) continued to grow in popularity. Hybrids increased by 20.6%, at 8,941, and plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) demand more than doubled, up 111.1% to 4,788 units.

BEV registrations, meanwhile, surged 203.9% to 4,054 units and a 2.7% market share. Combined, AFV registrations secured a record 11.9% of the market in January, up from 6.8% in the same month last year.

A new zero per cent benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax rate for pure electric company cars is one measure that is expected to be ratified in the Budget.

But, fleet trade body ACFO says the Government must do much more to help fleets begin to make the switch. It

Trade bodies will be seeking continued commitment to EV grants in the Chancellor's March Budget

**37,850**

battery electric  
vehicles registered  
in the UK in 2019

is calling for charge points to be interoperable, a long-term commitment to the plug-in grant and a longer-term view of company car tax rates.

ACFO chairman Caroline Sandall said: "More support is also required for fleets with significant commercial vehicle operations to transition to the new technology – both electric and hydrogen – as adoption is barely registering and vehicle manufacturers seem to be struggling to deliver workable solutions to meet real-world operational demands."

In fact, the Freight Transport Association (FTA) believes that unless the Government takes urgent action to solve the challenges around power supply and the availability of EVs, the 2035 target for vans will fail.



THE  
GOVERNMENT  
MUST PROVIDE  
A CLEAR  
SUPPORT  
PACKAGE  
THROUGH TO  
AT LEAST 2025

GERRY KEANEY, BVRLA



# Electric Vehicle Energy Taskforce publishes its landmark report

Cross-sector collaboration aims to remove barriers and accelerate EV adoption

By Andrew Baxter

**T**he Electric Vehicle Energy Taskforce, commissioned by the Government, Ofgem, and Innovate UK, has published a landmark report aimed at enabling the successful nationwide transition to electric vehicles (EVs).

Its *Energising Our Electric Vehicle Transition* report is the result of a wide-ranging collaboration between the energy supply, transport and mobility sectors along with Government.

Following 2018's Zero Emission Vehicle Summit, the taskforce was established to find solutions to maximise the benefits arising from the EV transition for motorists, the energy industry and "broader society by capitalising on innovations".

More than 350 organisations have been involved in the taskforce.

Among the group were: Aviva Investors, BMW UK, BP Charge-master, British Gas, BT, Centrica, Charge Point, EDF Energy, Energy Systems Catapult, Honda, Lex Autolease, National Grid, Nissan Motor GB, Npower, Office for Low Emission Vehicles, Ofgem, RAC Foundation, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, The AA and Zenith.

The report was facilitated by the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership (LowCVP).

Philip New, chief executive of Energy Systems Catapult and EV Energy Taskforce chair, said: "The proposals set out in this report are the result of the engagement, cooperation and goodwill of hundreds of organisations. Attention has been paid to international developments, prior research and the work of other related taskforces.

"Three key priorities have emerged: the urgency of developing standards and codes of practice to enable interoperability and the sharing of data within the EV sector and with the electricity system; the need for effective local and national planning and coordination to enable efficient investment, mediating the balance between future-proofing and asset stranding; and the criti-



cality of smart charging, underpinned by a resilient network and clear market signals, to reduce the cost of supplying millions of EVs."

These three priorities underpin the 21 proposals made in the report. According to New, the key defining principle is that "EV transition is best served by always aligning with the best outcome for the consumer – typically the EV driver".

He added: "The most important question used to test the proposals has always been 'is this in the best interest of the EV driver?'"

"Our belief is that if a positive experience cannot be provided to the EV driver, the potential development of this new market and its ability to contribute to our net zero ambition will be compromised.

"This report focuses on steps to remove barriers and reinforce actual enablers. It provides a focus on key issues and states when important questions have to be resolved.

"The proposals are not just for Government. Success will need collaboration and compromise from all stakeholders, both in the energy and the automotive sectors. We hope the report will catalyse action: agreeing standards, establishing new governance mechanisms, testing new propositions, developing implementation pathways. Pathways that

bring us closer to net zero, unleash the innovation we need, and have the consumer at their heart," said New.

George Freeman, Conservative MP and then minister for the Future of Transport, said: "Government commissioned the Taskforce to advise how we can best work with industry to make sure the energy system is ready for the transition to

electric vehicles. This report provides important evidence to shape the next stage of our Road to Zero roadmap.

"We are 100% committed to decarbonising the UK's road network. Our £1.5bn Road to Zero strategy is supporting a thriving electric vehicle market; last year in the UK a battery electric vehicle was sold every 15 minutes."

Speaking at the report launch, Freeman stated that at COP26 (being held in the UK in November) he wants Government to be able to "announce a series of tangible, specific measures that we're putting in place to drive the acceleration of our decarbonisation of transport".

Freeman also announced the upcoming "integrated decarbonisation plan" by the DfT and that he is "working on hard on how we lead as a department on digitalisation of transport".

"By 2024 I'd like to think about more than doubling the number of rapid charge points to more than 5,000 through our work to stimulate infrastructure investment," he said.

"I know that industry has set itself demanding targets too. So, we've got momentum, we've got know-how, we've got industry commitment.

"We have to decide a way of setting ourselves some really ambitious goals."



“THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION HAS ALWAYS BEEN ‘IS THIS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE EV DRIVER?’”

PHILIP NEW, EV ENERGY TASKFORCE



Introducing the Audi plug-in hybrid range.  
Search Audi hybrid

Official WLTP fuel consumption figures for the Audi Q5 TFSI e Range in mpg (l/100km) from: Combined 104.6 (2.7) – 117.7 (2.4). NEDC equivalent CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 54 – 49g/km. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other vehicles tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures (known as WLTP). The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown, however, are based on a calculation designed to be equivalent to the outgoing (NEDC) test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration. For more information, please see [audi.co.uk/wltp](http://audi.co.uk/wltp) or consult your Audi Centre. Data correct at 17 October 2019. Figures quoted are for a range of configurations and are subject to change due to ongoing approvals/changes. Please consult your Audi Centre for further information. Image for illustrative purposes only.



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Official fuel consumption for the SEAT range mpg (litres/100km) combined: 29.7 [9.5] – 61.4 [4.6]. Combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 98 – 168 (g/km).

Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other vehicles tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures (known as WLTP). The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown, however, are based on a calculation designed to be equivalent to the outgoing (NEDC) test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration. For more information, please see [seat.co.uk/wltp](http://seat.co.uk/wltp) or consult your SEAT Retailer.

NEWS: WLTP ASSESSED

## WLTP results have taken several favourites outside choice list limits

Impact of new testing regime on car policies could be comparable with 2002 tax change



Emissions figures for the Volvo XC40 R Design have increased under WLTP

By Gareth Roberts

**S**ome company cars could disappear from choice lists as new emissions test results put them beyond CO<sub>2</sub> thresholds used by fleets.

Data published by manufacturers show some vehicles that were below 130g/km or 110g/km, using the NEDC-correlated CO<sub>2</sub> figure, now fall outside those key benchmarks, thanks to the tougher testing regime.

The new CO<sub>2</sub> values, derived from the Worldwide harmonised Light vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP), will be used for tax purposes for all new cars registered from April.

However, as manufacturers begin to publish the data, fleets are finding that the new test has seen CO<sub>2</sub> values for some cars increase.

For example, the BMW 520d M Sport originally had a NEDC-correlated CO<sub>2</sub> figure of 108g/km, but under WLTP it has risen to 131g/km.

It's a similar story for the Volvo XC40 D3 R Design, which will increase from 127g/km to 144g/km, and the Volkswagen Tiguan 2.0 TDI SE L, which will rise from 122g/km to 156g/km.

"We're seeing a lot of vehicles breaching the 110g/km and even the 130g/km cap," said David Bushnell, principal consultant at Alphabet GB.

It means some familiar models on today's choice lists will have to be replaced by more tax-efficient, hybrid or fully electric versions.

Bushnell says the impact of WLTP

on fleets will be comparable to the "re-set" of company car policies in 2002, when taxation moved from mileage to CO<sub>2</sub>.

Emissions caps for vehicles used by some fleets have followed the downward trajectory of the threshold for capital allowances and lease rental restrictions.

The main threshold for capital allowances and lease rental restrictions was reduced from 130g/km to 110g/km in 2018, after originally being cut from 160g/km in 2013.

Under capital allowance rules, cars bought by companies that emit up to 50g/km are eligible for 100% write-down in the first year; for those emitting 51-110g/km, it's 18% a year; and for more than 110g/km it is 6% a year.

Under the lease rental restriction, new cars with emissions of 110g/km or less are eligible for 100% of their lease payments to be offset against corporation tax. For those with emissions of 111g/km or more, only 85% is claimable.

The Government refused to consider the impact of WLTP on capital allowances and the lease rental restriction when last year it launched a consultation on what it should do to mitigate its effect on company car tax and vehicle excise duty (VED).

Bushnell called for their inclusion at the time, but says Treasury "weren't prepared to talk about the [110g/km] derogation and now we're seeing a lot of vehicles impacted".



**"WE'RE SEEING A LOT OF VEHICLES BREACHING THE 110G/KM AND EVEN THE 130G/KM CAP"**

**DAVID BUSHNELL, ALPHABET**

Fleets have used the CO<sub>2</sub> thresholds to benchmark their emissions cap to ensure they are as tax efficient as possible.

Nick Hardy, sales and marketing director at Ogilvie Fleet, says 130g/km became the norm for many companies, with an increasing number choosing the lower 110g/km cap.

Faced with some cars potentially falling outside company car policies, because of an increase in CO<sub>2</sub>, he urged fleets not to be tempted to increase their cap to simply maintain vehicle choice.

He explained: "It's not the right thing to do; it completely defeats what we're all trying to achieve."

However, in the short term, while WLTP CO<sub>2</sub> data is still missing on many models (see page 4), Bushnell thinks fleets could consider a temporary removal of CO<sub>2</sub> caps.

He said: "It's not exactly palatable, but the issue is we could be delivering a car that we perceive is below the cap, but then by the time it's configured and registered, it's actually over the cap."

Not only are large swathes of CO<sub>2</sub> data missing for base models, but the impact of vehicle options on the final figure is also an issue for fleets.

Bushnell urged fleet operators to allow wholelife costs to guide vehicle choice.

Wholelife costs take account of several factors, including fuel, employer Class 1A National Insurance Contributions, service, maintenance and repair, and insurance, as well as any cash allowances paid to employees.

Bushnell said: "You've got to be looking at your choice list on a wholelife cost basis, but there are still a lot of businesses that don't."

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) has previously reported that just 32% of employers offering company cars use wholelife costs to determine the vehicles available.

■ For more from Bushnell on wholelife costs, visit [fleetnews.co.uk](http://fleetnews.co.uk) and register for the Fleet News webinar on Tuesday, February 25 at 11am.



# Opening of more smart motorways halted as safety concerns increase

Number of near-misses rockets on M25 and experts condemn 'hotchpotch' situation

By Gareth Roberts

**H**ighways England insists safety is its 'number one priority' after near-misses on a stretch of smart motorway increased by 2,000%.

The number of near-misses on part of the M25 jumped from 72 in 2014 to 1,485 last year, following the removal of the hard shoulder.

Around 200 miles of the strategic road network have been converted to some form of smart motorway, including stretches of the M1, M4, M6 and M62. But their safety has been called into question, with fleet and road safety groups calling for a major rethink on their design.

The Government ordered a review into smart motorway safety in October 2019. It is being led by the Department for Transport (DfT) and is expected to publish its findings, and recommendations, imminently.

Transport secretary Grant Shapps told MPs last month, the review had "uncovered a range of issues" that he was not content to "brush over".

He also announced no new smart motorways will be opened until he had the "outcome of the stocktake".

Those due to be completed this year include stretches of the M62, M20, M23 and M6.

A Highways England spokesman said it expected the results of the stocktake to be published soon to give the "most up-to-date assessment of



Around 200 miles of the strategic road network have been converted to some form of smart motorway

200

miles of smart motorway

2006

first smart motorway opened

the safety of smart motorways".

"We are committed to implementing any new recommendations as part of our ongoing work to make our roads even safer," he said. "Any death on our roads is a tragedy, and safety is our number one priority."

Highways England has previously claimed evidence indicates smart motorways help to improve safety.

Last September, its chief highway engineer, Mike Wilson, said smart motorways were "good for drivers" and made journeys "safer and more reliable".

He also claimed that the first nine of the latest generation of smart motorways had reduced casualty rates by more than 25%.

The first smart motorway was conceived in 2006, on a 10.5-mile section of the M42 near Birmingham.

Originally called a 'managed motorway', the hard shoulder was deactivated at peak times; it had variable speed limits to keep traffic flowing and emergency lay-bys up to half-a-mile apart. After being open for six months, journey times had dropped by a quarter.

A revised concept, based on the permanent conversion of the hard shoulder to a vehicle lane – so-called

all-lane running – and with greater distances between the emergency refuge areas, was developed in 2010.

The first sections of smart motorway where the hard shoulder was removed permanently and lay-bys were spaced further apart was between junctions 5-7 and 23-27 on the M25. They opened in 2014 and are now the smart motorway blueprint.

RAC head of roads policy Nicholas Lyes said: "The decision to make all-lane running the default type of smart motorway happened without proper consultation, despite the concerns of the breakdown industry and emergency services. Troublingly, in 2020 we now have a hotchpotch of different schemes designed to different standards – a complicated and unsustainable situation. A rethink in the design of smart motorways is clearly needed to bring consistency and reduce risks in breakdowns."

The road safety charity IAM RoadSmart says that must start with a programme to deliver the right detection technology and more frequent refuge areas. It is also calling for a new campaign to educate drivers and greater enforcement of Red X violations across the network.

Neil Greig, IAM RoadSmart director of policy and research, said: "The focus must now be on establishing what can be done to make existing smart motorways much safer."

The Road Haulage Association (RHA) believes better refuge areas and clearer signage are essential if smart motorways are to be made safer. Chief executive Richard Burnett said: "Smart motorways undoubtedly increase capacity, but they are not as safe as they should be. They need bigger and more frequent refuge areas and better signage to ensure drivers understand when hard shoulders are closed to active running."

THE DECISION TO MAKE ALL-LANE RUNNING THE DEFAULT TYPE OF SMART MOTORWAY HAPPENED WITHOUT PROPER CONSULTATION"

NICHOLAS LYES, RAC

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The Corsa-e is a battery electric vehicle requiring mains electricity for charging. Range data given has been determined according to WLTP test procedure methodology. Figures are intended for comparability purposes only. The range you achieve under real life driving conditions will depend upon a number of factors, in particular: personal driving style, route characteristics, exterior temperature, heating/air conditioning, pre-conditioning and battery condition. The charging time depends in particular on the power of the charger on board the vehicle, the charging cable and the type and power of the charging station used. Please contact your local Vauxhall Retailer for further information. \*Fuel consumption figures are determined according to the WLTP test cycle. †CO<sub>2</sub> emissions figures are determined according to the WLTP test cycle however, a Government formula is then applied to translate these figures back to what they would have been under the outgoing NEDC test cycle, which WLTP replaces. The correct tax treatment is then applied. Figures are intended for comparability purposes only. The fuel consumption you achieve under real life driving conditions and CO<sub>2</sub> produced will depend upon a number of factors, including the accessories fitted after registration, variations in driving styles, weather conditions and vehicle load. Only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> with other vehicles tested using the same technical procedures. For more information contact your local Vauxhall Retailer. \*\*3 Day Test Drive terms and conditions apply and vehicles are subject to availability. Please call 0330 587 8220 for full details. †Zero % BiK applies to all vehicles registered after April 2020. Registrations prior to this date will be 16% BiK. Vauxhall Motors Limited does not offer tax advice and recommends that all Company Car Drivers consult their own accountant with regards to their own tax position. ^2019/2020 tax year. For general Vauxhall Fleet enquiries please call 0330 587 8221. All figures quoted correct at time of going to press (February 2020).



# Fleet News Awards 2020: the finalists

The industry's most prestigious awards take place on March 11. Find out here who is in the running

**F**our days of judging and many hours of sifting through 200-plus entries from fleets, manufacturers and suppliers have led to this point: the reveal of the *Fleet News* Awards 2020 finalists.

Congratulations to all the companies and people that have made it this far – many didn't, emphasising the achievement in simply getting onto the shortlist.

Thanks to my judges and our sponsors for your support.

## FLEET NEWS AWARDS 2020 JUDGING PANEL

**Auditor:** Brian Cooper, Ernst & Young  
**Chairman:** Christopher Macgowan OBE

### Supplier Awards

Stephen Briers, *Fleet News*  
Graham Short, Zip Water (UK)  
Ryan Coles, Aviva  
Liz Hollands, FTA  
Jo Coffey, Anglian Water  
Peter Weston, Arcus  
David Oliver, Red Bull

### Manufacturer Awards

Stephen Briers, *Fleet News*  
Matt de Prez, *Fleet News*  
Martin Ward, Cap hpi  
Andy Cutler, Glass's  
Mark Jowsey, KeeResources  
Matt Curtis, LeasePlan  
Shaun Sadlier, Arval  
Debbie Floyd, Bauer Media  
Chris Connors, Countryside Properties

### Fleet Awards

Stephen Briers, *Fleet News*  
Caroline Sandall, ACFO  
Stewart Lightbody, M Group Services  
Paul Hollick, ICFM

### Headline Awards

Judges as above, relevant to the category

## MANUFACTURER CATEGORIES

*Sponsored by Athlon International*

### Best Small Car

Audi A1  
Ford Fiesta  
Peugeot 208  
Renault Clio  
Vauxhall Corsa  
Volkswagen Polo

### Best Lower Medium Car

Ford Focus  
Hyundai Ioniq  
Mazda 3  
Toyota Corolla  
Vauxhall Astra

### Best Upper Medium Car

Ford Mondeo  
Peugeot 508  
Škoda Superb  
Toyota Camry  
Vauxhall Insignia  
Volkswagen Passat

### Best Compact SUV

Ford Puma  
Hyundai Kona  
Peugeot 2008  
Renault Captur  
Škoda Kamiq  
Toyota C-HR

### Best Mid-size SUV

BMW X1  
Ford Kuga  
Peugeot 3008  
Toyota Rav4  
Seat Ateca  
Škoda Karoq  
Volvo XC40

### Best Compact Premium Car

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

### Best Premium Car

Audi A4  
BMW 3 Series  
Jaguar XE  
Lexus IS  
Mercedes-Benz C-Class  
Volvo S/V60

### Best Executive Car

Audi A6  
BMW 5 Series  
Jaguar XF  
Lexus ES  
Mercedes-Benz E-Class  
Volvo S/V90

### Best Zero Emission Car

Audi e-tron  
Hyundai Kona Electric  
Kia e-Niro  
MG ZS EV  
Renault Zoe  
Tesla Model 3

### Green Fleet Manufacturer of the Year

BMW Group UK  
Mercedes-Benz  
Toyota GB

### Most Improved Fleet Manufacturer of the Year

Hyundai UK  
Mercedes-Benz  
Suzuki GB  
Toyota GB

All winners will be announced at the *Fleet News* awards ceremony at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London on March 11.

FleetNews

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2020

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## FLEET CATEGORIES

### Safe Fleet Award

Altrad Services  
FM Conway  
Iron Mountain  
Princebuild  
Speedy Asset Services

### Environmental Fleet Award

Active Building Centre - Swansea University  
Defra Group Fleet Services  
Nottingham City Council  
Royal Mail  
University of Birmingham

### Best Travel and Mobility Initiative

Active Building Centre - Swansea University  
Bath & North East Somerset Council  
Highland Council  
Red Bull  
Siemens

### Most Improved Fleet of the Year

ABM  
Altrad Services  
Auto Windscreens  
Close Brothers  
*Sponsored by Northgate Vehicle Hire*

### Fleet of the Year – up to 1,000 vehicles

ABM  
Auto Windscreens  
CLC Contractors  
Close Brothers  
Eric Wright Group  
Princebuild  
*Sponsored by Reflex Vehicle Hire*

### Fleet of the Year – 1,001-plus vehicles

British Gas  
Police Scotland  
Royal Mail  
Schneider Electric  
Siemens  
Vodafone  
*Sponsored by Zenith*

## SUPPLIER CATEGORIES

### Best Rental Company of the Year

Enterprise  
Europcar Mobility Group  
Northgate Vehicle Hire  
Reflex Vehicle Hire  
Thrifty Car & Van Rental

### Customer Service Award

Activa Contracts  
Arval UK  
Fleet Service GB  
Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions  
Ogilvie Fleet  
Reflex Vehicle Hire  
The AA  
*Sponsored by Copart UK*

### Fleet Dealer of the Year

Johnsons Fleet Services  
Swansway Group  
TrustFord  
*Sponsored by Leasys UK*

### Innovation in Mobility Technology Award

Allstar Business Solutions  
CameraMatics  
Enterprise  
Fleetondemand  
The AA  
Vanvas

### Leasing Company of the Year – up to 20,000 vehicles

ARI  
Daimler Fleet Management  
Grosvenor Leasing  
Ogilvie Fleet  
TCH Leasing  
*Sponsored by Jaama*

### Leasing Company of the Year – more than 20,000 vehicles

Alphabet (GB)  
Arval UK  
Free2Move Lease  
Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions  
LeasePlan UK  
Zenith  
*Sponsored by SalesMaster*

## HEADLINE CATEGORIES

### Fleet Supplier of the Year

ARI  
Fleet Service GB  
FleetCheck  
FMG  
Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions  
Reflex Vehicle Hire  
The AA  
TMC

### New Company Car of the Year

BMW 1 Series  
BMW 3 Series  
Land Rover Discovery Sport  
Mercedes CLA  
Range Rover Evoque  
Škoda Superb  
Tesla Model 3  
Toyota CH-R  
Toyota Corolla  
VW Golf  
*Sponsored by Dealer Auction*

### Fleet Manufacturer of the Year

BMW Group UK  
Ford Motor Company  
Toyota  
Vauxhall Motors  
Volkswagen  
Volvo Car UK  
*Sponsored by KeeResources*

### Fleet Champion Award

Editor's decision  
*Sponsored by VisionTrack*

### Fleet Manager of the Year

Matthew Hammond, Altrad Services  
Shaun Atton, Auto Windscreens  
Steve Cuddy, Close Brothers  
Stewart Taylor, Police Scotland  
Sarah Gilding, South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue and South Yorkshire Police  
Mark Woodworth, Speedy Asset Services  
*Sponsored by Trakm8*

### Fleet News Hall of Fame Award

Editor's decision  
*Sponsored by the AA*

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\*WLTP cycle, 2019 standard, corresponding to 206 miles WLTP. The fuel consumption or electric range you achieve, and CO<sub>2</sub> produced (where applicable), in real world conditions will depend upon a number of factors: including the accessories fitted (post registration), the starting charge of the battery (electric only), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. The all-new e-2008 SUV is a battery electric vehicle requiring mains electricity for charging. There is a new test (WLTP) for fuel consumption, CO<sub>2</sub> and electric range figures. The estimated electric range and CO<sub>2</sub> figures are achieved using a new test procedure. The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown are NEDC equivalent, calculated using EC correlation tool which converts WLTP figures to NEDC. \*\*figures and will be used to calculate tax for first registration. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; you should only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> and electric range with other vehicles tested using the same technical standard. †WLTP – Worldwide harmonised Light vehicles Test Procedure. °NEDCeq – New European Driving Cycle. °°The vehicle will rapid charge at a rate of up to 100kW, depending on the power of the rapid charging station used and will take longer to charge at a lower power. Rapid charging stations are available across the UK at various locations and their power rating varies, typically from 50kW and sometimes up to 350kW. For further information on public charging stations across the UK, please visit [www.zap-map.com](http://www.zap-map.com). Model shown is all-new PEUGEOT e-2008 SUV GT Line Electric 50 kWh 136 in optional Vertigo Blue paint. °0% rate will apply to company cars registered from April 6, 2020, with emissions from 1-50g/km and a pure electric mile range of 130 miles or more. Both will then increase to 1% in 2021/22 and 2% in 2022/23. °°Figures based on all-new e-2008 SUV electric 50 kWh 136 powertrain. Information correct at time of print. Visit [peugeot.co.uk/2008](http://peugeot.co.uk/2008) for full specification details.

## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

JAN

20

### BATH CAZ EXPECTED TO LAUNCH IN NOVEMBER

Bath is planning to introduce a clean air zone (CAZ) by November, if the final business case is approved by Government. HGVs, buses and coaches will incur charges of £100 per day while taxis, minibuses and vans will have to pay £9 per day. Private cars and motorbikes will not be charged, regardless of their emissions.

21

### JAGUAR I-PACE OFFERED VIA NHS SALARY SACRIFICE SCHEME

The Jaguar I-Pace will be available to NHS staff through NHS Fleet Solutions on a new salary sacrifice agreement. A fleet of 700 vehicles has been secured for the scheme, which is available to staff in more than 200 organisations across the UK. The vehicles are being offered on a three-year lease.



23

### IAIN MONTGOMERY APPOINTED FCA FLEET AND BUSINESS SALES DIRECTOR

Montgomery's new role is one of a raft of changes to senior management at Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), with Damien Dally and Francesco Vanni joining the UK team to take on the roles of country manager for Jeep and Alfa Romeo, and Fiat and Abarth respectively.

### LEX AUTOLEASE TO CLOSE BIRMINGHAM AND AYLESBURY OFFICES

Both offices will close by the end of the year, with employees at the Birmingham office being offered new roles at its Cheadle operation. However, with just 60 new roles being created at Cheadle, that will result in a net reduction of approximately 40 jobs.

24

### NISSAN AND UBER SIGN DEAL FOR UP TO 2,000 ELECTRIC LEAFS

The fleet of 2,000 40kWh pure electric Nissan Leafs will be offered to drivers as part of Uber's Clean Air Plan.



28

### EMISSIONS ON NEW VAUXHALL GRANDLAND X HYBRID4 FROM 34g/KM

Vauxhall has revealed its new Grandland X Hybrid4 all-wheel drive (AWD) plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) will have CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 34g/km and offer 35 miles of zero emission driving.

29

### MOT TESTING FOR CARS AND VANS SUSPENDED

The Driver Vehicle Agency (DVA) in Northern Ireland suspended all MOT testing for cars and light vehicles after finding cracks in vehicle lifts in the country's 15 Government-run MOT centres.

31

### CARMAKERS WILL BE FORCED TO RECALL VEHICLES

The Government is seeking new powers in the Environment Bill to compel vehicle manufacturers to recall vehicles when they do not meet the relevant environmental standards.

IN DETAIL



To view the full story go to [fleetnews.co.uk/news](http://fleetnews.co.uk/news)

FEB

4

### HYBRIDS INCLUDED IN NEW 2035 PETROL & DIESEL BAN

The Prime Minister Boris Johnson announces that the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans will be brought forward to 2035 and will now include hybrids, subject to a consultation.

### VOLKSWAGEN GOLF MK8: PRICES, SPECIFICATIONS AND CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS

The most efficient model of the Golf Mk8 currently available to order is the 115PS TDI, which emits from 113g/km of CO<sub>2</sub> under WLTP (effective from April 2020) and promises up to 65.7mpg.

### ONLINE VEHICLE CHECKER TO HELP FLEETS PREPARE FOR CLEAN AIR ZONES

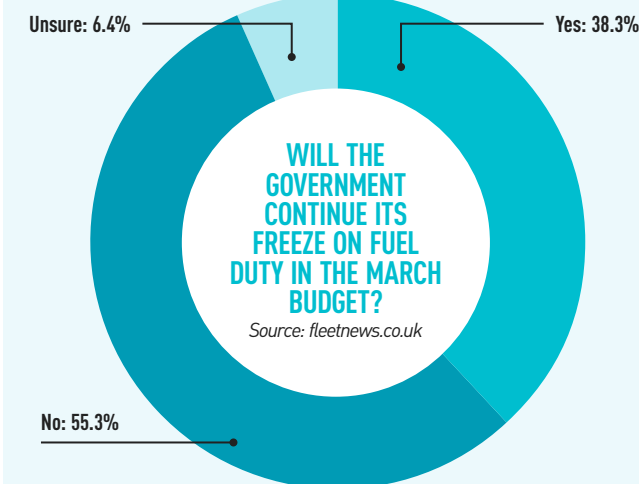
A new online vehicle checker has been launched to help drivers and businesses prepare for clean air zones in Birmingham and Leeds. (The Birmingham one has since developed errors which could delay the CAZ)

### ZENITH AND LEX JOIN EV100; PLEDGE TO REDUCE CO<sub>2</sub>

Lex Autolease says it will achieve net zero emissions across its customer fleet by 2030 and will switch the entire Lloyds Banking Group fleet to electric vehicles (EVs) by the same date. Zenith wants to switch its entire internal fleet to EV by 2025 – five years ahead of the date required by the EV100.



## FLEET NEWS POLL



### FLEET NEWS VIEW:

Our poll shows that just over a third of respondents (38.3%) believe the Government will maintain the freeze on fuel duty in the March Budget. Reports last summer suggested the Government was considering cutting fuel duty, but against a backdrop of petrol and diesel being phased out, and an emissions-cutting agenda, that now seems highly unlikely. More than half expect the freeze to thaw.

**THIS ISSUE'S POLL:** Are more incentives needed to improve electric vehicle adoption rates?



# THE BIG PICTURE

We're only two months into the new parliament and already the Government is giving confusing signals about its view of the future.

Early this month, it announced the 2040 deadline for the end of sales of new diesel and petrol cars and vans would be brought forward to 2035, adding that hybrid and plug-in cars would also now be included in the ban.

Just as the industry and business was getting to grips with those implications, the transport secretary then said he was considering bringing forward that deadline to 2032.

For many fleets, that new date is three car change cycles and, potentially, just two van change cycles away. Policies will need to be rewritten now to protect businesses from any possible fall in residual values as we get closer to the ban – although some believe there will be a rush of interest in diesel and petrol just ahead of the deadline. I'm not so sure.

The latest a company should be buying only electric cars and vans is 2028, allowing for a four-year wash-out of diesel and petrol vehicles.

However, the ease with which fleets can make this change will depend of the speed with which manufacturers bring through electric product.

So far, the signs aren't good. Supply remains limited as manufacturers shift production lines away from conventional fuels to electric. And, those supplies are, in many cases, going to the retail market.

This is because private buyers can put down deposits; corporates cannot. What does this mean for company car drivers looking to change their vehicles soon? If they are unable to get the electric car they want, to take advantage of the zero BIK, do they opt out and take cash? And with that cash, buy used? If so, it could wreck the company car market this year, unless carmakers ringfence EVs for fleets.

It's something to be aware of for any driver changing their car this year; come 2021, as EV-dedicated production lines open up and manufacturers anxiously look to bring down average emissions to meet the CAFÉ regulations, supply is likely to increase substantially.

Until then, fleets will need to manage driver expectations carefully.



*Stephen Briers*

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

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**Burning question:**  
When you retire, in which location would you like to live?

### EDITORIAL

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## TRANSPORT EMISSIONS

### 2035 ICE ban easier for cars than vans

EDITOR'S PICK

#### John David wrote:

Having read 'Hybrids included in earlier petrol and diesel ban' ([fleetnews.co.uk](https://fleetnews.co.uk), February 4), it strikes me that this transition may be much easier for cars than vans.

Van payloads and duty cycles are much more demanding, plus operators are concerned around power supply and the availability of electric vehicles.

According to the Freight Transport Association, the key issue is power supply; the depots and homes where vans are currently stationed do not have sufficient power supply to charge the vehicles.

The fleet industry recognises the need to cut emissions and improve air quality, but imposing an outright ban on certain technologies is not the right way to go.



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

#### Edward Handley added:

We are all waiting for the big breakthrough in battery or fuel cell technology, but so far it has proved elusive.

Without a technological breakthrough, banning petrol and diesel is not practical because the supply of the rare earths and metals is limited and, without them, the huge number of batteries needed are not going to be available – and certainly not at reasonable cost.

Instead of petrol and diesel being burned in clean engines in the UK and Europe, it will get used in old – and much more polluting – engines in the third world.

#### Capt Slow continued:

Completely impractical and another knee jerk reaction from the Government. The UK does not have the infrastructure to cope with going full electric in 15 years' time.

Maybe had they directed the HS2 budget towards building the required support network to go fully electric, they might have had a fighting chance.

## ROAD SAFETY

### Celebrate UK's road safety record

#### Lee Jones wrote:

Having read 'UK road casualty statistics labelled disgraceful' ([fleetnews.co.uk](https://fleetnews.co.uk), September 27, 2019), the UK has among the lowest fatality rate of any developed country (as a function of population, car ownership and distance travelled) and is well below neighbouring European countries like Germany, France, Belgium and Spain.

The United States has a per-capita fatality rate four times higher than the UK. Only Norway, Sweden and Switzerland have lower per-capita fatality rate than the UK does.

Perhaps for once we can forgo the constant bashing and put downs and recognise that, as far as minimising road traffic casualties go, the UK is well ahead of the global (and even European) curve.



## PERSONAL TAX

### No benefit as an essential user



#### Field Engineer wrote:

Having read 'Uncertainty over new company car tax rates' ([fleetnews.co.uk](https://fleetnews.co.uk), December 12), being a field engineer is now financially crippling, especially as my company only offers diesel car options.

It makes me laugh when they call it benefit-in-kind, there is absolutely no benefit in a company car even when it's an essential tool of the job.

We've become easy pickings for the Government's tax coffers.

## HYBRID CARS

### 'Poor choice' for business drivers



#### Rob Chisholm wrote:

Having read 'BMW 330e first drive - does PHEV make more sense than diesel?' ([fleetnews.co.uk](https://fleetnews.co.uk), January 21), emperor's new clothes comes to mind.

A poor choice for the business if the driver is travelling much more than 10,000 miles per annum. I predict that hybrids will suffer more, RV-wise, than any other sort of propulsion option. Either full electric or internal combustion engine will still perform better in the long term.

What happens when the battery part of a hybrid has outrun its useful life? Will second-hand car buyers go and spend significant sums to keep it running? I doubt it – they will simply run it on fossil fuel only. Of course, the MOT will try to outlaw that.

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\*\*\*Compatible smartphones only.



# REALITY BITES FOR FULLY-AUTONOMOUS CARS

The 'myopic aspirational drive' for self-driving cars was put on the backburner at the recent Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. *Andrew Ryan* reports

**F**or the past few years, much of the buzz at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas has surrounded fully-autonomous vehicles (AVs).

However, there was a marked difference in the attitude towards self-driving cars at this year's event, with vehicle manufacturers instead focusing on improving safety and convenience.

This is because autonomous vehicle developers have moved beyond the technical hype as they begin to tackle the immense challenge of putting self-driving vehicles on public roads, according to Mike Vousden, automotive analyst at data and analytics company GlobalData.

"Attitudes to autonomous have shifted in the past year," he said. "Following a classic 'hype cycle', many notable developers of AVs have come to realise that their previous timelines for deployment

were far too optimistic and are adjusting their expectations to a more realistic trajectory."

At the event, Melissa Ruhl, senior transportation planner at infrastructure specialist Arup, said she is frequently asked 'when are AVs coming?'.

"That question is always really hard," she said. "We just don't know. Companies put out all these bullish predictions, only to walk back."

As an example, Mercedes-Benz has changed its development targets so fully autonomous commercial vehicles (which can operate in more stable, restricted conditions) are now its priority, ahead of self-driving passenger cars.

Ola Kallenius, head of Mercedes-Benz Cars, said: "At CES three or four years ago, people were saying 'we're going to have massive adoption of autonomous driving within the next two years'."

"That has now been replaced by some sober

realism. We're putting trucks first for a reason: we think it's the one you can make money on first."

At an investor event in London in November, Kallenius had said creating vehicles which operate on public roads with zero input from a human driver has been more difficult than anticipated.

Stuart Carlaw, chief research officer at ABI Research, added: "A healthy dose of reality and a notion of 'let's focus on what's going to move the needle now' has emerged."

"In the auto market, the historic myopic aspirational drive to fully autonomous vehicles was replaced with a more realistic pursuit of EV concepts, enhanced infotainment and integration of the car into adjacent markets such as the smart home or the smart city."

Here we look at some of the technologies and concepts showcased at the event.

## MERCEDES-BENZ VISION AVTR

Mercedes-Benz joined forces with the team behind science-fiction movie *Avatar* to develop its Vision AVTR concept car.

While it doesn't preview any specific upcoming production model, the manufacturer says the electric vehicle (EV) sets out to showcase the ideas engineers and designers think could encourage closer interaction between people, machines and nature.

Underneath the eye-catching exterior is a battery technology developed with graphene-based organic cell chemistry that is free of rare earths and metals.

The materials of the battery are compostable and completely recyclable.

Inside the cabin, the Vision AVTR uses a hologram-based interface system that, in combination with autonomous driving technology, removes the need for the steering wheel and conventional controls.

Instead it projects a menu selection on to the palm of the hand to allow the passenger to choose between functionalities, while a multi-functional control element in the centre console allows the driver to control the vehicle.

Conventional round tyres are also replaced by spherical tyres for increased manoeuvrability and less impact on surroundings.

The new concept has been conceived to move sideways at 30 degrees in a 'crab movement' to increase agility. This is possible as it can drive the front and rear wheels in the same or opposite direction.



## AUDI AI:ME

Audi displayed its AI:ME fully-autonomous car, describing the vehicle as an "empathetic mobility partner".

The manufacturer says the vehicle represents a personal "third living space" alongside its occupants' homes and workplaces, with passengers able to use eye tracking to communicate with the car for features such as ordering takeaways.

The concept car is also equipped with a pair of VR goggles to provide the occupants with a 'wellness experience' of a virtual flight across a mountain landscape, with the technology adapting the content to the movements of the vehicle in real-time.

Audi also exhibited its Audi Intelligence Experience technology, which uses artificial

intelligence to get to know a car's passengers and combines this with intelligent functions to increase their safety, well-being and comfort.

The technology will be able to conduct a precise analysis of the functions and settings that its user prefers, ranging from the seat position, media, route guidance and temperature to the fragrancing of the interior.

After a short time, the technology becomes familiar with the user's preferences and implements them autonomously.

Audi also introduced a 3D mixed reality heads-up display developed in cooperation with Samsung.

Among its features is the projection of an arrow on the windscreen pointing exactly at the side road the driver needs to turn into.

## SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Stuart Thomas, director of fleet and SME at The AA



While service, maintenance and repair (SMR) costs for electric vehicles (EVs) could potentially be around 35-50% lower than the petrol or diesel equivalent,

research from The AA and Rīvus Fleet Solutions, carried out for the 19/20 *Operational Fleet Insight Report*, suggests the SMR-effect isn't yet a big part of EV decision-making – although it's certainly on the horizon.

More than one-in-10 fleet managers (and 17% of the largest operators) stated a perceived lack of experienced EV engineers has put them off investing. In addition, analysis by some of the larger fleets suggests predicted SMR savings may not be realised, as much of the work which comes through their network is not associated with the powertrain.

The AA's own analysis suggests many of the same components require maintenance and repair, whether the vehicle is petrol, diesel or electric. Indeed, analysis of EV breakdown incidents identified issues related to tyres, brakes and the 12V battery were consistent across all powertrains.

The 19/20 report also suggested, while many operators may believe EVs to be more reliable and require less maintenance, engine servicing and repairs are a relatively small proportion of the wholelife cost (WLC) equation.

However, while it may not be enough of a saving in isolation to convince fleet managers, the relative cost benefits of EV SMR are stacking up alongside other upsides including emissions reduction, increased uptime and fuel cost benefits.

In the meantime, we're continually investing in upskilling our mechanics and scaling EV capability within our servicing network to ensure we're ready when operators significantly increase the proportion of EVs in their fleets.

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### HYUNDAI UAM-PBV-HUB

Hyundai showcased three mobility solutions: urban air mobility (UAM), purpose-built vehicle (PBV) and Hub, a place for mobility transfer and community activities.

UAM combines personal air vehicle and urban air mobility services to make airspace available for transportation, while PBV is a ground-based environmentally-friendly mobility solution that provides customised spaces and services for passengers in transit.

As part of this, the manufacturer announced a partnership with Uber to develop Uber Air Taxis for a future aerial ride-share network.

In this partnership, Hyundai will produce and deploy the air vehicles, and Uber will provide airspace support services, connections to ground transportation and customer interfaces through an aerial ride share network.

At the show, the manufacturer exhibited its electric prototype S-A1 air vehicle, which is designed for a cruising speed up to 180mph, a cruising altitude of around 1,000-2,000ft, and to fly trips up to 60 miles.

The four-seater model, which would require about five to seven minutes to recharge, is designed to take off vertically, transition to wing-borne lift in cruise, and then switch back to vertical flight to land.

Jaiwon Shin, executive vice-president and head of Hyundai's urban air mobility (UAM) division, said: "Our vision of urban air mobility will transform the concept of urban transportation.

"We expect UAM to vitalise urban communities and provide more quality time to people."



### BOSCH VIRTUAL VISOR

Bosch unveiled its digital Virtual Visor technology designed at blocking sun glare from a driver's eye without obscuring their view of the road.

The system links an LCD panel with a driver or occupant-monitoring camera to track the sun's shadow on the driver's face.

The system uses artificial intelligence to determine the landmarks on the face – including where the eyes, nose and mouth are located – so it can identify shadows on the face.

An algorithm analyses the driver's view, darkening only the section of the display through which light hits the driver's eyes.

The rest of the display remains transparent, no longer obscuring a large section of the driver's field of vision.

Bosch says the use of liquid crystal technology to block a specific light source decreases dangerous sun glare, driver discomfort and accident risk; it also increases driver visibility, comfort and safety.



**SONY VISION-S**

One of the major surprises at CES was Sony's Vision S electric car. Not intended to go into production, the electronics manufacturer was using the vehicle to showcase its expertise in imaging and sensor technology, as well as on-board software.

The prototype vehicle incorporates imaging and sensing technologies that contribute to safer and more reliable autonomous driving and the latest in-car entertainment experience.

Cameras and Lidar create a 360-degree 'safety cocoon' around the vehicle, enabling it to detect and evade risk.

Thirty-three sensors are embedded within the vehicle, in order to detect and recognise people

and objects inside and outside the car and provide highly advanced driving support.

Some can detect who is inside the vehicle and tailor in-car entertainment services accordingly.

There is also a new 360-degree reality audio system, which allows passengers to each listen to different music.

The dashboard features three widescreen displays, plus two additional screens for the digital rear-view mirrors. A further two displays are installed for rear-seat passengers.

The Vision-S also introduced software made in collaboration with Bosch, Qualcomm, Nvidia and BlackBerry that notifies sleepy drivers to keep their eyes on the road using a complex biometric system.

**HARMAN VEHICLE-TO-PEDESTRIAN**

Harman, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Samsung, unveiled its Vehicle to Pedestrian (V2P) system, which alerts drivers and pedestrians to potential dangers.

In the car, V2P can work on low latency 5G peer-to-peer signals to identify objects in the vehicle's path through proximity scanning.

Similarly, pedestrians or cyclists with a Cellular Vehicle to Everything (C-V2X)-enabled mobile phone will also receive an alert that a vehicle is entering their path.

As a result, vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists can be alerted to potential safety conflicts around corners or through parked vehicles – areas which cameras can't see.

**NISSAN ARIYA**

Nissan's Ariya fully-electric crossover gave visitors a glimpse of the manufacturer's new design direction, but it also showcased a new material which could increase vehicle efficiency.

The lightweight sound-insulation material, known as acoustic meta-material, controls air vibrations to limit the transmission of road and engine noise.

Currently, most materials used to isolate this frequency band of sound consist mainly of heavy

rubber board, but Nissan says its new material weighs one-quarter as much as these while providing the same degree of sound isolation.

It adds that because of its simple structure, the material will cost almost the same as, or possibly less than, current materials when put into mass production.

Therefore, says Nissan, the material can also be applied to vehicles where the use of sound insulation materials is currently limited due to cost or weight.

Lowering the weight of a vehicle also reduces the environmental impact of driving by improving energy efficiency, while Nissan says the new material will also enhance enjoyment, as a quiet vehicle cabin makes driving more comfortable.

The Ariya, which uses twin electric motors, has been designed to offer a range of 300 miles and features a driving assistance system which provides hands-off single-lane driving capabilities.



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# Name changed, but we haven't missed a beat

**D**espite having a new name and new parent company, Webfleet Solutions (formerly TomTom Telematics) has not taken its foot off the pedal with numerous new products and launches rolling out over the past 12 months.

Bridgestone bought the company last April and the new name for the business was launched on October 1, 2019, to reflect that the company is much more than just a "track and trace" solution.

Beverly Wise, sales director at Webfleet Solutions, said: "We're not just telematics, we're the digital hub that sits at the heart of fleet and mobility management. We want to be an integral part of your business and to add value with our solutions. Fleets want to see improvements in efficiency. Driver wellbeing is a really key area in how we want to provide support."

Wise said Webfleet Solutions will be operated as a stand-alone business, but there will be benefits from being part of the Bridgestone family with access to a scaled-up IT infrastructure and research and development (R&D).



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**BEVERLEY WISE,  
SALES DIRECTOR,  
WEBFLEET SOLUTIONS**

She said: "In the process of being bought we could have stopped projects until everything had gone through, but we have been delivering new products through that acquisition. These have included a new mileage logbook app, routing and scheduling and asset tracking solutions."

"The latest generation of the WEBFLEET fleet management platform was launched in 2018. This has enabled the faster development and deployment of connected partner applications.

"In addition, it has been supported with quarterly updates that roll out as part of the service for subscribers. It can work on any device and offers dashboards, maps, reporting and integration with a fleet's third party software.

Releasing updates means the service is continually improving and Wise said there is more of a collaborative process with customers able to provide feedback to roll-out improvements on a regular basis.

Integral to the platform's workflow optimisation capability is a ruggedised driver terminal. The latest version of this connected touchscreen device, which was released in August 2019, can be used for navigation.

This seven-inch tablet-style device is linked with the WEBFLEET platform and provides a touchscreen device that can be used for navigation, mapping, order and delivery information, camera functionality, e-signatures and order fulfilment.

The terminal can be loaded up with other applications through its Android operating system, like temperature controls for a refrigerated vehicle.

## Mileage Logbook App and driver wellbeing

Latest to launch (December 2019) was Webfleet Solutions' next-generation driver app, the Mileage Logbook App. It offers enhanced functionality and is built around the driver.

The car fleet sector is ripe for growth and Wise sees this coming from medium-sized corporate fleets of between 100 to 500 vehicles. But Wise is keen to stress that, whether a fleet has five or 15,000 vehicles, Webfleet has the scale and breadth of technology to provide a solution.

The app will specifically target fleets with sales forces doing between 10,000 and 20,000 miles a year and companies that would like to put more controls in place to monitor their grey fleet.

The Mileage Logbook App can help monitor business and private mileage, it has a private mode for when drivers want to switch it off from work, but it can also be used to help give tips on driving style and it is fully GDPR-compliant.

Drivers can look at their own



WEBFLEET applications allow companies to review individual driver performances

behaviour score through the app.

Companies have control over how they manage the data they receive from the driver app, whether they want to see individual performance or whether the data from drivers is anonymised.

Wise said: "Whereas before the driver app we had tracked the vehicle, this is based on the driver profile and it will follow the driver between vehicles. It means that, even if you're starting on a contract in pool vehicles, you can start a driver profile and build on that."

Wise believes driver wellbeing has always been important to fleets, but it is becoming higher on the agenda as more companies see the stresses of the workplace extending beyond the office.

Wise said: "The vehicle is very much an extension of that workplace. Can you alleviate pressure on drivers by helping them avoid delays and congestion?"

Webfleet Solutions offers training sessions to talk fleets through its technology. This can be through face-to-face training, training a depot's own trainers so they can take drivers through the technology themselves, or through webinars and YouTube videos.

WEBFLEET has a modular approach to its products so fleets can start with something more basic and then build on top of

that on a subscription basis.

The company can offer trials of up to three months in 10 vehicles and then fleets can review return on investment (ROI) as a proof of concept.

WEBFLEET hardware options can be plug and play through the vehicle's on-board diagnostics (OBD) port, or there are fixed LINK box options that offer a greater range of functionality.

The company's software and apps all interact with these core OBD or fixed installations.

Peter Kelly, group compliance and fleet manager at Elis, the textile rental and laundry services company, has combined telematics, cameras, mileage auditing and fleet data reporting with WEBFLEET's help.

This has led to fuel cost savings of nearly 13% or £1.8 million, a carbon emissions saving of more than 2,000 tonnes, a reduction in fleet incidents by 58%, speeding fines down to almost zero and a £1.2m saving on insurance claim mitigation.

Elis' fleet of 750 vehicles makes around 5,000 deliveries a day to restaurants, hotels, hospitals and manufacturers.

Kelly said: "We initially had three telematics providers, with each business division having their own solution. But there was no central control and no way of reporting ROI to the board."

Kelly wanted to improve the way the footage was taken off cameras in vehicles, as well as improve driver safety and fleet sustainability with one integrated solution.

WEBFLEET's Optidrive 360 stats are used to risk profile drivers which Kelly said protects them as well as the company.

A traffic light system highlights which drivers need some attention around improvement. Each Elis depot is incentivised to improve driver scores.

Kelly added: "We're future-proofing with WEBFLEET because we get free updates for life. It's one of the best investments we've made. The figures speak for themselves."

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# CHARGING ON

The length of time a battery electric vehicle takes to charge is cited as a major obstacle to uptake. But it doesn't need to be. *Andrew Ryan* reports

Vehicle downtime is one of a fleet decision-maker's worst nightmares and battery electric vehicles (BEVs) present a new challenge in this area – the time taken to charge a vehicle.

For some fleets, this won't be an issue. Their vehicles' duty cycles and journey patterns will mean they are operated within their battery range and then parked up overnight at a depot or home allowing sufficient time to charge before being used the following day.

But many organisations with vehicles doing higher mileages – or company car drivers making personal journeys – may need their vehicles to be charged during the day, and numerous surveys have found charging time remains one of the barriers to wider BEV uptake.

A Mintel industry report identified charging time as the number one obstacle, while research by ZapMap found 36% of respondents consider the time taken to charge batteries to be the main barrier to EV ownership.

"Do electric drivers expect charging to be something like refuelling? It does seem like this is the case," says a spokesman for EV charging solution specialist EVBox, after its survey found fast

charging was the most requested feature for a public charging station.

Of the current EV technology available, hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles offer the closest refuelling and range experience to petrol or diesel vehicles, but the cars and refuelling infrastructure are still in their infancy and remain restricted.

BEV advocates argue the Highway Code recommends that drivers take a break of at least 15 minutes every two hours and drivers could use the time while their BEV is recharging to eat or do some work.

The Highway Code recommendation ties in with ZapMap research which suggests the average maximum amount of time drivers would be willing to wait in order to charge in transit is 13 minutes, but current BEV technology means this is generally insufficient to add any meaningful range.

Data from BP Chargemaster shows that, in 10 minutes, a 3kW slow charger can add up to two miles of range, a 7kW fast charger up to five miles, a 50kW rapid charger up to 33 miles and a 150kW ultra-fast forecourt charger up to 100 miles.

While the potential of ultra-fast charging produces headline-grabbing figures, it is not only the speed of the charge point which affects the time it takes to

charge a car: the power rating of a vehicle's on-board charger will also determine this.

"You could plug a car into a 150kW rapid charger, but if its on-board charger takes 43kW, it would still take the time that a 43kW charger would take," says Rob Anderson, programme manager at Cenex.

This will change as BEV technology develops and new vehicles are launched, but this capability will differ dependent on the manufacturer and model.

For example, of the newer EVs, the MG ZS EV has an on-board charger rated at 85kW, Mini Electric 50kW, Peugeot e208 100kW, Corsa-e 100kW, Tesla Model 3 100kW/200kW, Polestar 2 150kW, Mercedes-Benz EQC 110kW and Porsche Taycan 270kW.

Future battery technology developments are also expected to enable faster charging of BEVs, but having a vehicle with the fastest-charging capability isn't always necessary to successfully operate one – the duty cycle and journey profile of vehicles is more important.

"You can adapt the type of charging to your time of parking," says Peter van Praet, chief commercial office at EVBox.

"If you are at home for about eight to 10 hours, or if you are at work for eight to 10 hours, you don't



HAVING A SLOWER RATE OF CHARGE IS ACTUALLY OF BENEFIT TO THE MARKET

TOM CALLOW, BP CHARGEMASTER



## EV CHARGE TIMES BY MODEL

Battery electric vehicle	Range (WLTP)	CHARGEPOINT POWER					
		EMPTY TO FULL				20%-80%	
		Three-pin plug	3.7kw	7kw	22kw	50kw	150kw
Audi e-tron	250	42h	26h	14h	9h	70 min	30 min
BMW i3	193	19h	12h	6h	4h	40 min	40 min
BMW i3s	177	19h	12h	6h	4h	40 min	40 min
DS3 Crossback E-Tense	200	22h	14h	7h	5h	40 min	20 min
Hyundai Ioniq Electric	183	19h	12h	6h	6h	40 min	40 min
Hyundai Kona Electric 39kwh	180	19h	12h	6h	6h	40 min	40 min
Hyundai Kona Electric 64kwh	279	29h	18h	10h	10h	50 min	40 min
Jaguar i-Pace	292	39h	25h	13h	13h	70 min	40 min
Kia e-Niro 64kWh	283	29h	18h	10h	10h	50 min	40 min
Kia e-Soul 64kWh	281	29h	18h	10h	10h	50 min	40 min
Mercedes-Benz EQC	259	37h	23h	12h	12h	70 min	30 min
MG ZS EV	163	20h	12h	7h	7h	40 min	40 min
Mini Electric	145	14h	9h	5h	3h	30 min	30 min
Nissan Leaf	168	18h	11h	6h	6h	30 min	30 min
Nissan Leaf 3.Zero e+	239	27h	17h	10h	10h	50 min	30 min
Peugeot e-208	217	22h	14h	7h	5h	40 min	20 min
Polestar 2	311	34h	21h	11h	7h	60 min	20 min
Renault Zoe R110 ZE40	174	18h	11h	6h	2h	40 min	n/a
Renault Zoe R135 ZE50	242	37h	15h	8h	3h	50 min	50 min
Seat Mii Electric	162	16h	10h	6h	6h	40 min	40 min
Škoda Citigo e	162	16h	10h	6h	6h	40 min	40 min
Smart EQ Forfour	99	8h	5h	4h	1h	n/a	n/a
Smart EQ Fortwo	99	8h	5h	4h	1h	n/a	n/a
Tesla Model 3	254-329	24-33h	15-21h	8-11h	5-7h	40-60 min	20 min
Tesla Model X	230-315	33-44h	21-27h	11-15h	5-6h	60-80 min	30 min
Vauxhall Corsa-e	209	22h	14h	7h	5h	40 min	20 min
Volkswagen e-Up	83	8h	5h	5h	5h	20 min	20 min
Volkswagen e-Golf	143	16h	10h	5h	5h	40 min	40 min
Volkswagen ID.3	205	21h	13h	7h	7h	40 min	40 min
Volvo XC40 Recharge	250	34h	21h	11h	7h	60 min	20 min
Electric vans							
Nissan e-NV200	124	18h	11h	6h	6h	30 min	30 min
Peugeot Partner Electric	106	10h	6h	6h	6h	20 min	20 min
Renault Kangoo ZE	168	15h	9h	5h	5h	n/a	n/a
Renault Master ZE	124	17h	10h	6h	6h	n/a	n/a
Mercedes-Benz eVito	94	18h	12h	6h	6h	n/a	n/a
Mercedes-Benz eSprinter	93	18h	12h	6h	6h	45 min	45 min
Ford Transit Custom Plug-in Hybrid	35	4h	4h	3h	3h	n/a	n/a
Volkswagen e-Crafter	107	17h	10h	5h	5h	45 min	45 mins

Source: Pod Point. Based on Pod Point estimates, charging rates can differ based on the ambient temperature and variation in charging rate



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## ELECTRIC FLEET: CHARGE TIMES

Need to rapid charge – it's not a matter of speed, but it's a matter of how much time you've got."

Tom Callow, head of external affairs at BP Chargemaster, says his employer tends to put public charging into two categories.

The first is destination charging, where a driver is going to that location for a purpose other than to charge.

"You could be going to the cinema, to a shopping centre, to work or staying somewhere overnight, so a slower charger may be suitable at these sites," he says.

Recent examples of investment in 'destination charging' include Engenie's partnership with Marston's Inns and Taverns to initially install 400 50kW rapid chargers at selected sites, allowing up to three cars to charge at each site at any one time.

Another is Pod Point's partnership with Volkswagen and Tesco which has seen it roll out more than 450 charging bays at the supermarket's sites, with another 2,400 charging bays across 60 stores to become available by the end of this year.

Since the rollout started last July, the Tesco charge points have been used by more than 8,000 drivers, providing more than 200,000 electric miles.

Pod Point says that with the average weekly shop taking around 50 minutes, BEV drivers who charge while they shop will get around 23 miles of charge from its 7kW units.

However, this logic only works when a few cars require charging – the destination infrastructure falls far short of having capacity to charge tens, or even hundreds, of cars concurrently.

The second category BP Chargemaster puts public charging in is rapid or ultra-fast charging.

Pod Point has teamed up with Volkswagen and Tesco to install 450 charging bays at the supermarket group's stores with 2,400 more to come



"This predominantly fulfils two use cases," says Callow. "The obvious one is en route driving, so extending your range. You could be driving from London to Scotland and need to stop to charge – that's one example.

"But if you live in an urban area, for example, and don't have access to off-road parking with a charger, using rapid charging maybe once a week, once a fortnight, could be the right solution for a driver to enable them to own an EV very easily.

"They would drive to a forecourt to fill up with petrol or diesel once a week or once a fortnight,

so why would they not drive to a forecourt to fill up with electricity at the same frequency?"

He adds: "The fact that EV charging happens in different places is a benefit as is the fact it happens at different speeds, because if you have everyone rushing to charge at the fastest possible rate you could get power problems.

"But, of course, you don't need to charge at the fastest rate because we know that cars spend 90% of their time doing absolutely nothing, so having a slower rate of charge is actually of benefit to the market."

## THE CHANGING CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE

The ongoing advances in BEVs and their charging technology is reflected in the changing profile of the public charging infrastructure.

According to BP Chargemaster figures, in 2013 there were 4,000 public charging points, with 300 rapid chargers. In 2019 this grew to 28,000 and 2,600 respectively, and by 2023 the company expects there to be 60,000 public chargepoints with 6,000 rapid chargers.

"We are noticing a shift in the types of chargepoints that are being installed," says Rob Anderson, programme manager at Cenex.

"In the beginning it was mainly slow and fast chargepoints, but it is now drifting towards fast and rapid chargers because a lot of the chargepoints are being installed at service stations or destinations where the supplier knows you are going to be half-an-hour or 45 minutes and then out again."

Among the companies investing in this technology is BP Chargemaster, which plans to roll-out 400 ultra-fast chargers at BP sites across the UK by the end of 2021, while Engenie is planning to install more than 2,000 rapid charging points in accessible public

sites, including supermarkets and retail parks, by 2024. While Instavolt is adding 125kW chargers to its existing 50kW network across the UK.

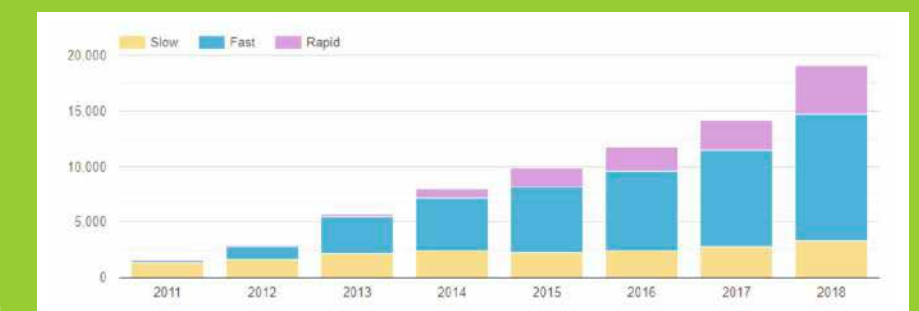
As well as the growing number of rapid and ultra-fast charge points, another development is set to transform the profile of the charging infrastructure in the UK: Gridserve last year unveiled plans to install a UK-wide network of 'electric forecourts' delivering ultra-fast EV charging to the public.

As part of a five-year plan valued at around £1 billion, more than 100 forecourts will be developed at strategic locations, with each

one featuring dedicated zones for both private and fleet vehicles such as taxis, buses and delivery vehicles.

Gridserve has partnered with EV charging infrastructure specialist ChargePoint for the projects, which will see chargers with speeds up to 500kW available for cars and light commercial vehicles.

They will also incorporate a range of facilities for drivers to access while vehicles are charged including coffee shops, convenience stores and airport-style lounges. In September, councillors in Braintree approved plans for the first of these.



Source: ZapMap



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\*Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures for the Volvo XC40 T5 Twin Engine, in MPG (l/100km): WLTP Combined 117.5 (2.4) – 141.1 (2.0). NEDC CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 43 – 41g/km. T5 Twin Engine WLTP electric energy consumption 3.7 – 4.0 miles/kWh. T5 Twin Engine WLTP all electric range 26.1 – 28.0 miles. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption, CO<sub>2</sub> and equivalent electric range figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures were obtained using a combination of battery power and fuel. The Volvo Twin Engine range are plug-in hybrid vehicles requiring mains electricity for charging. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures. The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown, however, are based on the outgoing test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration.

\*£4,520 saving per car each year based on average CAP Total Cost of Ownership saving of the Volvo XC40 R-Design plug-in hybrid compared to nearest equivalent UK premium diesel and petrol vehicles. 'Premium' based on SMMT definition. Savings versus particular models will vary. All data provided by CAP based on 36 months / 60,000 miles, correct as of 10/12/19. The information provided is for guidance only and should not be relied upon. Data is subject to change, so we therefore advise you to investigate the figures to ensure they are up to date. For further CAP comparison data visit [volvocars.co.uk/compare](http://volvocars.co.uk/compare)

**ELECTRIC FLEET:** GUEST OPINION

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## 2020 – TIME TO ACT ON TRANSPORT DECARBONISATION

UK can emerge as a global leader if it takes its chance now, says *Jason Torrance*

**F**or the transport agenda, much has changed over the past year. Looking further into 2020 and beyond, promises and commitments must be taken forwards with ambitious action to deliver the decarbonisation that is needed – and the economic prosperity that will follow.

While the General Election in 2019 returned a large majority for the Government, and a wide range of policy and political commitments followed, taking action forwards on the ground hasn't become any easier – most significantly, the commitment to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

By the end of 2020 we will know, from the actions taken by Government and the business sector, whether we are on track to tackle the climate emergency or whether we have failed.

Over the course of the past year, the mood of the nation shifted. On the streets, Extinction Rebellion and the school climate strikes have changed the nature of debate about climate change. In our homes, concern about climate change reached record levels with half now 'very concerned', according to polling by Ipsos Mori.

On our roads, clean air zones were agreed by councils across the country, meaning that charges will need to be paid by polluting vehicles. And in car showrooms, registrations of new cars, recorded in January, saw sales of diesel vehicles fall for the 34th month, by 36.0%, while battery electric vehicle (BEV) registrations continued to surge, up 203.9%.

In response to a lack of significant action to reduce road transport emissions, the Government has now announced it is bringing forward the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans to 2035, subject to consultation. But this is not fast enough, according to city leaders who, at Clean Air Summits convened by UK100 and the Mayor of London in 2019 (in association with *Fleet News*), urged Government to commit to a 2030 ban – with necessary support



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Partnership convener Jason Torrance has 25 years' experience in various disciplines. He has held roles as policy director at Sustrans and co-chair of the stakeholder advisory group at Highways England.

to enable the transition. According to the excellent Net Zero Policy Tracker, published by Green Alliance, banning petrol and diesel by 2030 saves around 40% more CO<sub>2</sub> than a 2035 ban. That's more than 10% of the gap the UK needs to fill to be on track to net zero.

Like many recent policy commitments, there's no actual regulation to deliver a ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars. Much is expected of the highly anticipated Transport Decarbonisation Plan, set for this year. New targets are cheap, but real progress is harder.

But financial markets are shifting. BlackRock, the world's largest asset-management firm, responsible for more than US\$7 trillion, recently announced that it would begin to reallocate its capital away from

fossil fuels, stating in its annual letter to investors that climate change has set us "on the edge of a fundamental reshaping of finance".

Likewise, the European Investment Bank announced that it would phase out its multibillion-euro funding of all coal, oil, and gas projects by 2021. Big change is under way.

We are, however – in the words of former UK Government COP26 president Claire O'Neill – "miles off track".

It is really no surprise that the transport sector is repeatedly singled out as an area that is not fulfilling its potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. After all, there is sluggish progress towards decarbonisation, resistance from motoring organisations to working in partnership towards ambitious climate action, and an ongoing road building programme.

At the end of the year, the UK will host what many commentators are predicting will be the largest-ever gathering of foreign leaders on UK soil, with some 200 leaders and 30,000 delegates expected for the COP26 Climate Summit for the most crucial of international gatherings.

In the Paris agreement, 2020 was nominated as the year the world had to narrow the gap between its noble aspirations to limit global warming to 1.5C and its country-by-country commitments, which currently add up to, at best, 3C of warming. Given we have only a decade to decisively turn things around, the summit and the journey towards it – and after it – will decide the future of generations to come.

Surely, this is the moment when business leaders, fleet operators and political leaders stand together and commit to big, bold, ambitious action on transport. To land future generations with a planet that is secured with ambition and commitment to make this year, 2020, the year when everything changes for good!

**“THERE'S NO  
REGULATION TO  
DELIVER A BAN ON  
NEW PETROL AND  
DIESEL CARS. NEW  
TARGETS ARE CHEAP,  
REAL PROGRESS IS  
HARDER”**





Nick Saunders says managing the RNLI fleet is all about balance. Some vehicles may not cover many miles, but they still form a vital part of the lifesaving service

# “Saving £800,000 on our fleet will help save lives”

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) will make a net saving of £800,000 this year thanks to new contracts, using wholelife costs and telematics. It's money which will benefit its life-saving work out at sea, says Nick Saunders. *Sarah Tooze* reports.

**S**ince the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) was founded in 1824 its lifeboat crews and life-guards have saved more than 142,700 lives.

In 2018 alone (the latest available statistics), it came to the aid of 41,619 people and saved 329 lives.

Critical to the charity's work is its fleet of 1,050 vehicles – made up of 650 cars, vans, 4x4s and HGVs, which are used for a range of job roles such as fundraisers and system technicians, and 400 specialist vehicles including agricultural tractors and bespoke equipment, used to launch and recover lifeboats, and quadbikes, which are used to patrol lifeguarded beaches.

Managing such a diverse fleet is made more challenging by the RNLI's geographical spread with 238 operational lifeboat stations around the UK and Ireland, 248 UK and Channel Island beaches patrolled, plus six regional bases (London, Poole and Saltash in England; Perth, Scotland; Dublin, Ireland; St Asaph, Wales), which act as a hub for each region, and 40 regional support centres, which handle day-to-day maintenance of some of the vehicles.

“Unlike a lot of fleets which may be based around certain urban areas, our locations literally couldn't be any further away,” says Nick Saunders, senior procurement category manager, warehouse and logistics at the RNLI.

“They are dotted right along the coast and in some cases – in Scotland – they are on outlying islands.”

Masternaut telematics, which is being fitted to 650 vehicles, provides data on vehicle location, how the vehicle is driven and helps Saunders to understand its utilisation.

However, it's not simply a case of identifying and then removing an under-utilised vehicle.

“We've got a lot of vehicles that, on the face of it, aren't highly utilised or are doing quite short journeys,” Saunders says. “So that might be a lifeguard vehicle that is operating

on a beach. It will have very low mileage but it is doing a very important job and it is necessary for that vehicle to be there to provide a safe and effective lifeguarding service.

“It's a difficult balance between looking at vehicles and trying to get their utilisation up versus vehicles that may be utilised every day, but do relatively low mileage.

“Our rescue service has to be available 24/7 so the biggest challenge is making sure we are able to back that up in the most cost-effective way, achieving an optimised fleet, while still having that safety net and the right contracts in place to deliver and support that service.”

The RNLI has put a number of new contracts in place over the past 18 months after Saunders, who joined the charity in 2017 having previously worked at Babcock managing major fleet contracts on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, was tasked with reviewing the charity's fleet spend.

A savings target of £1 million was set and the RNLI is on track to achieve a net saving of £800,000 (taking into account costs incurred such as the price of installing telematics). That money will help the RNLI with its goal of defeating drowning and saving more lives at sea, says Saunders.

The RNLI has moved away from buying vehicles, where possible, to leasing and now chooses vehicles on a total cost of ownership basis.

Previously, its cars were often selected based on who was offering the best discounts and it had 16 different car manufacturers on the fleet as a result.

The RNLI ran a tender to appoint one manufacturer for all vehicles under 3.5 tonnes. In addition to cost savings, it wanted a manufacturer to act as a corporate partner to help the RNLI achieve some of its strategic goals in terms of fundraising and safety messaging.

The fleet's total environmental footprint (CO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and particulate matter) was also taken into account.



“We knew how many of each vehicle type we were going to order so we calculated what our NOx footprint, carbon footprint and particulate matter footprint would be each year based on the vehicles that had been offered from each supplier and tried to select a provider which gave us the best overall footprint based on the solus badge,” Saunders says.

Ford was appointed and the fleet now includes the Fiesta, EcoSport, Focus, Kuga, Ranger, Transit, Transit Connect, Transit Custom and Transit Custom PHEV.

A CO<sub>2</sub> cap of 110g/km is in place for cars while vans are all below 165g/km. Saunders says that the RNLI is on track to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 20% by the end of the year.

Saunders has also reduced the replacement cycle for leased cars from four years/80,000 miles to three years/60,000 miles as it allows him to change the fleet more regularly and introduce ‘greener’ vehicles and “it didn’t really cost us any more from a wholelife cost point of view”.

The vehicles which the RNLI buys are kept longer, owing to their low mileage – seven years, on average, but some specialist lifeboat-related vehicles used for launch and recovery average 20 years. The RNLI has some vehicles which are more than 30 years old.

At the same time as the manufacturer tender, the RNLI ran a tender for vehicle leasing and appointed Alphabet, chiefly for its AlphaCity corporate car sharing service and the guidance it could provide on electric vehicles (EVs).

Leasing means the RNLI doesn’t have cash tied up in vehicles and gives the charity budgeting certainty with a fixed monthly maintenance

“IT’S A BIT EASIER FOR A BROKER TO SOURCE VEHICLES IN SOME OF THE STRANGE AND WONDERFUL PLACES WE WORK”

NICK SAUNDERS, RNLI

cost for most of the fleet. The RNLI still maintains the specialist vehicles and the Ford Rangers as they are modified and spend a lot of time going in and out of the water.

The RNLI has been able to outsource a lot of the day-to-day fleet administration, such as licence checks, to Alphabet.

“It is taking that kind of pain away from us and just reporting back,” Saunders says.

The RNLI will begin trialling an AlphaCity vehicle in the spring, and through its busiest period, summer, with a view to rolling vehicles out to its regional bases.

“We’ve got to work out where the profile is right to get the utilisation (of the AlphaCity vehicles),” Saunders says.

“We need to hit around two-thirds utilisation for it to be cost-effective compared with just renting a vehicle as and when we need it.”

The RNLI has 2,500 rentals (equating to 5,000 rental days) per year to cover everything from the summer peak (when employee

numbers swell from 1,000 to 1,600 due to more lifeguards being required) to staff travel from the headquarters out to different lifeboat stations and regional bases, and volunteers travelling to training at the main training site in Poole, Dorset.

In the latter case it is often cost-effective to hire a vehicle for a group of volunteers to travel down to Poole.

Volunteers make up 95% of RNLI’s people, including 23,000 volunteer community fundraisers, more than 5,500 volunteer operational crew, 3,500 volunteer shore crew, 178 volunteer lifeguards, plus thousands of other dedicated volunteers. It means some grey fleet use is inevitable, but Saunders says “we try to discourage it”.

Its policy is that any journey more than 100 miles must be done in a hire vehicle or RNLI lease or owned vehicle.

The RNLI ran a tender last year to appoint a new rental broker and selected Nexus Vehicle Rental.

Just more than half (52%) of rentals are one-way, “which is quite rare, so that’s why we selected a broker”, Saunders says.

“It’s a bit easier for a broker to source vehicles in some of the strange and wonderful places we work.”

Switching to Nexus allowed RNLI to restrict the options people could select on a hire vehicle and the types of vehicles.

“It was already controlled but we’ve really tightened it,” Saunders says.

“We’ve got really good compliance – 95% of our vehicles now are medium hatchbacks or medium estates so we’ve really driven the volume into the vehicles that are most cost-effective for us to supply.”

Saunders believes more of the vehicles the

RNLI owns could be switched to rental, dependent on their location.

“In the south west, the season for beach lifeguarding is long so it’s cost-effective for us to own or lease the vehicle and have availability all-year round,” he says. “In other areas, such as the north west or north east, the season might be shorter so we need to work out whether it’s more cost-effective to switch more vehicles there to rental. Telematics is really helping us to see how much those vehicles are needed and used.”

The RNLI opted for a telematics system which is plugged into the vehicle CANbus, giving data on vehicle location, fault codes, fuel consumption, speed, acceleration and braking. It is accompanied by an app, for recording business mileage, and a lightbar solution, which alerts the driver as performance thresholds are crossed with LED and audible warnings.

Driver behaviour reporting, along with licence check data, is sent on a quarterly basis to the RNLI’s health and safety team to review and identify drivers who are in the top and bottom percentage quartiles, and address any issues with those department’s line managers and the drivers themselves.

Saunders is targeting a 7% saving on fuel. There are other less tangible benefits from telematics too, such as reducing the amount of time drivers spend doing mileage claims and ensuring the RNLI is HMRC-compliant.

The fault code data allows the RNLI to do daily vehicle checks for the vehicles electronically and feed that information back centrally to reduce the amount of paperwork and admin.

Saunders believes the biggest benefit could be from identifying which petrol and

diesel vehicles could switch to electric. It is beta testing a tool which models the RNLI’s journeys against public charging infrastructure. It is also possible to stipulate that charging will only be done during the day or only overnight or at RNLI locations.

The data suggests that of the 500 vehicles currently fitted with telematics, more than 30% (150 vehicles) are suitable to switch to electric.

Currently, the RNLI has two Mitsubishi Outlander PHEVs, which are used by fundraising and operational support workers, and it has the Transit Custom PHEV on a one-year trial.

“We’ve been using it in a variety of different circumstances and scenarios to help us learn about where it might be suitable,” Saunders says. “One place it has been suitable is in Poole, acting as a support vehicle for our factory where we build all-weather lifeboats. So it does short journeys out to local suppliers and can be plugged-in in between.”

“It’s a fantastic message to say we’re benefiting air quality locally because the vehicle is running mostly on pure electric mode.”

With a number of vehicles due for replacement next year, Saunders believe the RNLI will be “rolling out electrification in a big way”. This year is about trialling vehicles and staff engagement.

“Having that telemetry data is going to allow us to electrify our fleet,” he says. “We will be able to say ‘if we had charging infrastructure here, here and here, all these vehicles could have done their journeys pure electric’.

“It’s not going to be a leap of faith.”

# SAUNDERS ON....

## ...Petrol versus diesel

Telematics data has helped the RNLI to work out when it is cost-effective for drivers to take a petrol rather than diesel vehicle.

“It depends on the vehicle make and model, but we’ve got quite a lot of vehicles which are regionally based and spend a lot of time just hopping along the coast, supporting a particular area, so they’re not necessarily doing as high as mileage as other fleets,” Nick Saunders says.

“Some of these vehicles might do 15,000-16,000 miles annually and we’re finding it’s cost-effective for them to be in petrol.

“The telematics data shows an average of 53mpg for the 1.0-litre petrol Ford Focus over the past six months so it’s cost-effective for our fleet on a total cost of ownership basis.”

## ...Getting driver buy-in

The RNLI, together with Ford and Alphabet, did a series of driver roadshows at its regional bases to brief drivers on the changes taking place on the fleet and why.

Masterminded by RNLI staff and Nexus ran a separate training session.

“From a telematics point of view we gave really clear messaging to say ‘this is what we will do with the data’ and, perhaps more importantly, ‘this is what we will not do with the data’,” Saunders says. “We just gave them some confirmation that this isn’t about tracking working practices or working patterns or where people are, it is more about taking data afterwards to try and do a lot of data modelling and getting the right data so we’re making the right decisions on the fleet to bring savings.”

**ORGANISATION:** RNLI  
**SENIOR PROCUREMENT CATEGORY:** MANAGER, WAREHOUSE AND LOGISTICS:  
 Nick Saunders  
**TIME IN ROLE:** Three years  
**FLEET SIZE:** 1,050 (200 cars, 150 4X4s, 280 LGVs and vans, 20 HGVs, 100 agricultural tractors, 150 quad bikes and 150 specialist bespoke vehicles)  
**FUNDING METHOD:** leasing and outright purchase  
**REPLACEMENT CYCLE:** three years/60,000 miles (cars and vans)







The VW factory where Transporters are produced

# ‘Working with you’ is mantra as VWCV steps up fleet sales efforts

Closer collaboration with the factory forms part of the win-and-keep-customers initiative. *Matt de Prez* reports

**C**hange is afoot at Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles (VWCV) as the brand ushers in a range of new models, its first electric vehicle (EV) and new ways of working as a result of its recently refreshed management team.

“Working with you” is the mantra that employees have adopted and, this year, the company seeks to speed up and smooth out its offering of bespoke fleet vehicles as part of that promise.

“We’ve been working a lot with the factory on customer orientation and customer solutions,” says Claire English, VWCV head of fleet.

“We’ve been looking at aftersales but from a sales perspective. Where we’ve got a customer with a specific requirement how can we speed up the process by getting into the heart of factory?”

“Working with you, that is our methodology. If we can work even closer with the factory to get the solutions for our customers, that can be very positive.”

A close relationship with the brand’s plants means VWCV UK staff have the flexibility to offer fleet customers a turn-key solution to their needs.

That can incorporate anything from bespoke paint colours and modifications to factory specifications to full fitouts and conversions.

The result is a quick turnaround and a factory-approved vehicle with one invoice and no leg work for a fleet operator to get their ideal vehicles.

To enhance the service, the brand is introducing a new digital solution to use during its sales presentations with customers. Using 3D modelling, it allows a vehicle to be built and customised virtually then demonstrated to the customer on a tablet; giving them a 360-degree view of what the finished product will look like.

English joined the CV division of Volkswagen in June, moving across from the passenger car side of the business. Her most recent role was national contract hire and leasing manager, where she is credited for playing a “key role” in the development of the brand’s fleet strategy.

Replacing David Hanna, who is now head of service and parts at VWCV, English is responsible for all fleet sales through the five area sales managers and key and central account managers,

rental and leasing managers and the local business development managers within the brand’s 72 Volkswagen Van Centres.

## MOVE TO ELECTRIC

EVs are high on the agenda for many fleet operators and VWCV is planning to launch its first model, based on Transporter, this year.

“Our customers are desperate to find out when they can have electric. It’s a hot topic that we are being asked about all the time,” says English.

Initially, the company will deploy some left-hand-drive demonstrator vehicles to do trials with customers. Production-ready right-hand-drive models are expected to be ready for delivery before the end of the year.

“Our team members are really excited about getting EVs. They’ve seen car, with the e-Golf, but now we have our own model to talk about,” explains English.

While customer demand is expected to be high, she believes many fleets are not ready for a mass take-up of EVs with most looking to “test the water” with a smaller number.

“Diesel vans still dominate. It will take time to shift,” says English. “If you take Golf, it is not a specific vehicle, it is a Golf that is electric. It’s the same with Transporter. From a driveability perspective it looks like it and feels like it, making the transition easier.”

The e-Transporter, first unveiled at the IAA Commercial Vehicles show in 2018 and then later showcased at the 2019 CV Show, is built by third-party tuning company ABT.

At its unveil, VWCV announced that the twin-battery (77.6kWh) version has a driving range of 250 miles NEDC, while a single-battery (38.8kWh) variant offers 134 miles. The electric motor drives the front wheels in e-Transporter and delivers 112PS and 220Nm of torque.

**HEAD OF FLEET:** Claire English  
**2019 SALES:** 47,998  
**KEY MODELS:** Caddy, Transporter and Crafter



This new VW Caddy is due to be released this year

When the vehicle makes full production, it will be based on the new T6.1 facelift Transporter rather than the old T6 platform on which the vehicles were previously shown.

An electric Caddy, built by ABT, was also pitched for release last year but was subsequently shelved as an all-new model is due for release this year.

## POSITIVE PERFORMANCE IN 2019

Sales grew by 2% at VWCV in 2019, slightly behind the overall commercial vehicle market (2.4%) but enough to make the UK the brand’s second biggest market. Registrations of 47,998 sees VWCV behind only market leader Ford in the overall sales rankings for the year.

Transporter was the best-selling model, by some margin, shifting almost 24,000 units.

Caddy sales declined by around 700 units to 10,902 in 2019. This was driven by a combination of the model being due for replacement and the company losing a contract with British Gas.

English remains upbeat about the model, despite it being at the end of its life. “Caddy is still really popular and we still get a lot of proposals. The feedback from all the customers is they really like the Caddy. It’s great to have that reputation to carry over to the new model,” she says.

Crafter, the brand’s biggest van, has seen a vast increase in sales since it was replaced two years ago. Almost 10,000 were handed over in 2019, in contrast with around 5,000 units in 2017.

## DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Expanding on its ‘working with you’ promise, VWCV is introducing a range of new digital and connected solutions to further enhance the customer experience it offers.

The new Transporter is the first vehicle in the brand’s range to come with We Connect Plus, a new connected service that provides a digital link

between the fleet operator, driver, vehicle and Volkswagen Van Centre. The brand’s existing telematics service, provided in partnership with the RAC, will continue to be supported although it hopes customers will switch to the new We Connect system when they replace their vehicles.

Using the technology, if the vehicle identifies a fault while being driven, it can notify the van centre and a technician can assess the best course of action – that could be to schedule a visit to the workshop or arrange a mobile repair.

It builds on the firm’s Breakdown Hotline, launched last year, where roadside assistance technicians can feed diagnostic information to the van centre so necessary repairs can be carried out as quickly as possible upon the vehicle’s arrival.

For bigger fleets, the service can be extended to report faults directly to a fleet operator – enabling them to take the best course of action.

The new connected service also enables other features, such as remote access to a vehicle.

English says it can help fleets do away with having multiple keys – an often costly exercise.

“It’s a big cost. If there is new technology that allows someone to get in without the keys. That is a practical application. The technology exists in the car-sharing industry with rental companies. We need to offer the service to make use of it in a practical way.”

It would enable a mobile technician to access and work on the vehicle without the driver being present. It could also be used by businesses to enable seamless loading or unloading or for access to vehicles by multiple drivers.

The initiatives contribute towards the brand’s strategy to boost its retention and aftersales business through improved customer satisfaction.



Claire English is looking to work even more closely with the manufacturing plants



# TRAINING DRIVES EV IMPROVEMENTS

Providing targeted training to electric vehicle drivers has safety and efficiency benefits. *Ben Rooth reports*

**P**roviding electric vehicle (EV) training for drivers, even if it is simply a thorough handover, outlining how to charge the vehicle and how to drive it rather than a formal training session, is an essential part of a fleet's electrification strategy.

There are a number of fairly small, but crucial, differences which mean that a driver who jumps straight into an EV from an internal combustion engine vehicle will not be getting the best out of it. These include greater instant acceleration, more deceleration when lifting off the accelerator and how they are refuelled. All have safety or efficiency ramifications.

Get it right and there are benefits for drivers who switch between vehicle types too, as Royal Mail found (see panel on page 45).

"Ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) are the

future but, like any vehicle, they need to be driven in a way that makes the most of their capabilities," says Mark Roberts, chief executive of in-cab driver training technology company Lightfoot.

"Driven aggressively, ULEV range falls significantly, and that has implications for the environment due to the energy required to generate the electricity in the first place.

"The more frequently the vehicle is charged, the larger the impact on the environment. So, while ULEVs may be cleaner on the surface of things, they are not without a footprint."

These factors mean that targeted driver training can have a significant effect on the safety or efficiency of a fleet.

For example, 67 drivers received training over a three-month period through the Energy Saving Trust's Ecodriving in EVs programme. Results

showed a reduction in energy consumed of 16% and a resulting increase in range of 20%.

"It is about planning way ahead to help avoid sudden braking and harsh acceleration that can have such a draining effect on the battery," adds Andy Wheeler, technical delivery director at TTC Group.

"There is also a real art to deceleration as it takes place a lot quicker than with conventional petrol models, helping to regenerate the battery – but you constantly need to be mindful that traffic following you might not expect such deceleration."

## WHAT DRIVER TRAINING IS AVAILABLE FOR ULEVS?

As well as eco driving courses, driver training providers have already developed a range of programmes despite EV uptake still being in its early stages.

These include vehicle familiarisation, how to charge EVs and carry out appropriate vehicle checks, as well as courses focusing on safe driving.

They are also available in different formats, such as e-learning, classroom-based sessions, one-on-one in-cab sessions or workshops.

"Businesses that wish to transition to electric or hybrid fleet vehicles, or to encourage more uptake among their grey fleet, would do well to consider providing employees with a relevant course, especially if they're encountering resistance to the change," says Gary Bates, marketing manager at IAM Roadsmart.

As well as equipping drivers with the skills to drive an EV efficiently and safely, training can also help overcome range anxiety: consistently cited as one of the major obstacles to widescale EV uptake.

"One of the biggest challenges facing users of

BEVs or PHEVs is range," says Roberts. "Quite apart from the hassle of having to plan a journey to ensure that you can find a reliable fast charge point, if you do need to stop mid-journey, charging times can add significantly to the overall journey time. Even a rapid 30-minute charge can set you back.

"To help diminish the frequency of charges there is a simple solution, but it requires a change in driver mindset.

"Smoother driving is the answer. The trouble is, without guidance to show the driver how to drive more smoothly, it's all too easy to be heavy on the pedal, draining range."

## WHEN SHOULD TRAINING TAKE PLACE?

Ideally, drivers will receive EV training before they are handed the keys to their vehicle so

## SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Nick Butler, fleet director, DriveTech



The start of a new decade and a suitable moment to reflect on road risk and headline statistics.

Recorded road deaths and serious injuries, as reported by the Department for

Transport, have remained reasonably static for the past 10 or so years – road deaths in the last official report for 2018 stated 1,784 killed.

Statistical trends on paper is one thing, but these are human lives and in a developed country with well-established highway codes and increasingly sophisticated vehicles this cannot still be acceptable; if this sad statistic was associated with another more singular transport tragedy – such as a rail crash or an aeroplane tragedy, there would be a huge amount of emotion, noise and uproar with demands for immediate change, but deaths on our roads just keep happening with an alarming consistency but with more passive comment; and perhaps most notably, provisional figures for 2019 (provisional stats published in November 2019 for year ending June 2019) indicate an increase, to 1,870 road deaths.

With the march towards driverless vehicles continuing, and an increasing assortment of gadgetry being added to the modern vehicle, most intended to improve road safety, are we in danger of de-skilling the human driver in the middle of it all? We have just published our latest whitepaper on ADAS (advanced driver assistance systems) asking whether they are all genuinely beneficial enhancements or sometimes actually more of a distraction.

Our most successful customers are those that take road safety seriously, recognising that the costs of collisions and poor driving are significant, not only to their business but to lives and wider society, and do something positive and progressive to reduce risk. Intelligent driver training programmes play a key role. Measurement is key.

Taking ownership for road safety is everyone's issue. Driving is still very much a skill for life.

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## CASE STUDY: ROYAL MAIL PRODUCES TAILORED TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR EV DRIVING



Royal Mail is operating Mercedes-Benz eVito vans as part of the Optimise Prime EV trial

Royal Mail launched an electric vehicle driver training module before introducing its first Peugeot Partner Electric van at the end of 2017.

The organisation, which runs the UK's largest fleet, is now part of Optimise Prime – the world's largest commercial vehicle EV trial – which will see it, together with Centrica and Uber, put 3,000 EVs on the road.

Royal Mail currently operates 295 Mercedes-Benz eVito and Peugeot Partner Electric vans, and has put more than 1,000 drivers through the EV training in the past two years.

"From the start, we viewed the introduction of EVs as a positive change to workplace equipment that has been welcomed by employees," says Mark Bromhall, road safety manager at Royal Mail.

"We recognise that there will be some key differences in the operation and driving styles between the EV vans and our more traditional fleet, therefore we have produced a tailored training programme that has already been rolled out to potential drivers.

"For example, few of our drivers have had experience of driving automatics before receiving the keys for the EVs.

"And then there are issues surrounding situations like driving through floodwater – all of which need to be clearly highlighted."

### WHAT'S INVOLVED

The course includes modules for:

- Charging procedures
- Vehicle controls
- Automatic gearbox
- Performance awareness
- Awareness of other road users
- Regenerative braking – how it works
- Floodwater – understanding the potential consequences of driving through fords and deep standing water.

An unexpected benefit of launching the EV driver training module has been a 31% improvement in fuel efficiency while driving an internal combustion engine van.

Bromhall says: "The course makes drivers think about the most fuel efficient way to drive – and that might be linked to harsh acceleration and breaking among other factors.

"The skills they learn will benefit them when they get behind the wheel of any vehicle for work or pleasure."



**FROM THE START, WE VIEWED THE INTRODUCTION OF EVs AS A POSITIVE CHANGE TO WORKPLACE EQUIPMENT THAT HAS BEEN WELCOMED BY EMPLOYEES**

**MARK BROMHALL, ROYAL MAIL**

they know how to get the most out of it before any bad habits set in.

This can also reduce risk by ensuring they are not distracted while driving by any new or unfamiliar technologies or controls.

It also enables them to make any necessary adjustments to their routine and working procedures prior to getting behind the wheel.

Bates adds: "If EV familiarisation training is not possible before delivery, then carrying out a familiarisation course at the point of delivery will still be of benefit.

"Employers have an important role to play. In our experience, individual drivers are often convinced that they do not need any additional training and may participate only if their employer makes it a requirement.

"Therefore, fleet managers and health and safety managers who understand the safety benefits of on-road training can have a real impact on road safety by encouraging the uptake of all forms of driver training."

### HOW SHOULD ULEV TRAINING BE INCORPORATED INTO A TRAINING STRATEGY?

There is a cost to using any external training provider and fleet decision-makers must factor this into budgets.

"However, the financial benefits of EVs are there for all to see and these should offset the expense of e-learning or practical workshops," says Wheeler.

"In addition, if all the drivers in your fleet are getting the most out of their vehicles, you have

happy motorists and fuel-efficient cars that are reducing the firm's carbon footprint.

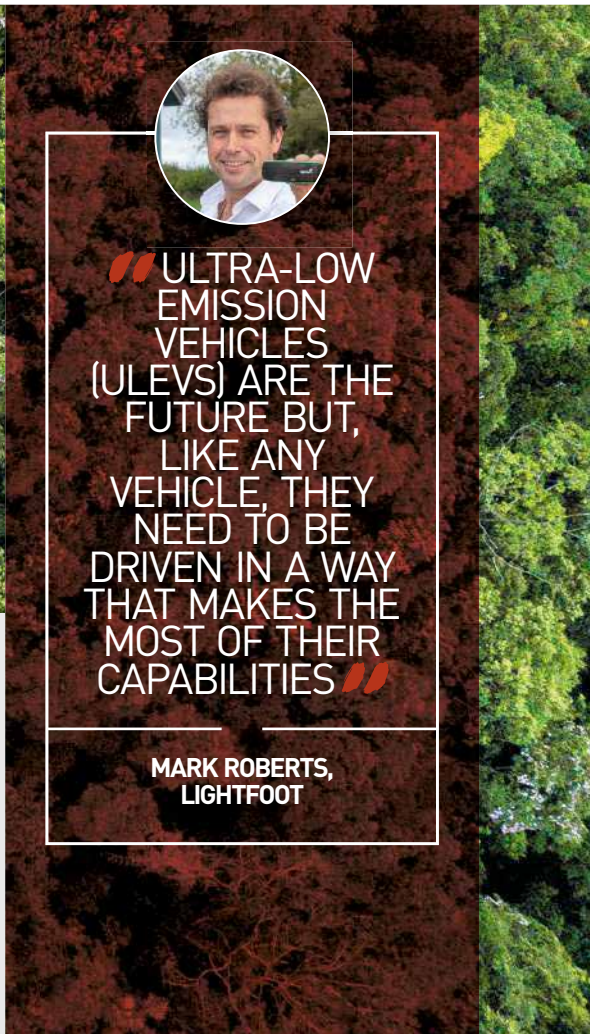
"Traditionally, we have found there has been some resistance from certain motorists when it comes to the new technology so clear communication on the social, environmental and financial benefits should be set out from the start."

ULEV training "dovetails" other forms of training, says Bates, and needs to be considered when implementing a training strategy.

"While EV training should not necessarily be considered as a replacement for other driver safety training, it is worth noting that eco-driving techniques are known to have benefits for safety, as they require drivers to use early observation and drive less aggressively," he adds.

"Our driving for work course, for example, ➔





TOP TIPS FOR EFFICIENT ELECTRIC VEHICLE DRIVING

1. CONSERVE MOMENTUM

Reading the road and observing other road users further ahead allows a driver to reduce unnecessary acceleration and braking, which has a major affect on energy consumption and maximises regenerative braking.

2. AVOID HARSH BRAKING

Regenerative braking is a key feature of ULEVs which converts some of their movement (kinetic) energy back into electricity to recharge their batteries.

When a driver lifts their foot from the accelerator pedal, the electric motor acts as a generator and creates reverse torque to the front wheels, slowing the car down.

Energy recapture available through regenerative braking is around 10% through normal driving and up to 30% on descents.

3. WATCH YOUR SPEED

High speeds increase energy consumption in EVs more than they increase fuel consumption in conventional vehicles.

Typically in a conventional vehicle, the most efficient speed is achieved at approximately 40-50mph, but the most efficient speed for EVs is lower than this.

4. KNOW YOUR VEHICLE'S ECO FEATURES

Many EVs come with a range of features that can ensure smarter and more efficient driving. Switching on the eco mode in an EV can reduce the draw of energy used by limiting the throttle and the power of some ancillary features such as air conditioning.

Some plug-in hybrid vehicles and range-extended EVs also have features that allow drivers to choose when they use battery charge or fuel, ensuring that drivers can opt to use the battery when it's most efficient – for example, city driving.

Source: Energy Saving Trust

incorporates an eco-driving session which teaches efficient driving techniques that are applicable to traditionally-powered vehicles, EVs and hybrids alike.

“A course of this kind, which is usually assigned to business drivers as part of a fleet risk management programme, can also be used to develop drivers’ skills as appropriate to their vehicle type.”

It is also important to monitor driver performance to provide training when necessary. This can be done through a good online fleet management system, or a risk management and licence checking portal, adds Bates.

These can be used to collate vehicle information that can be referred to when assigning relevant training courses according to vehicle type.

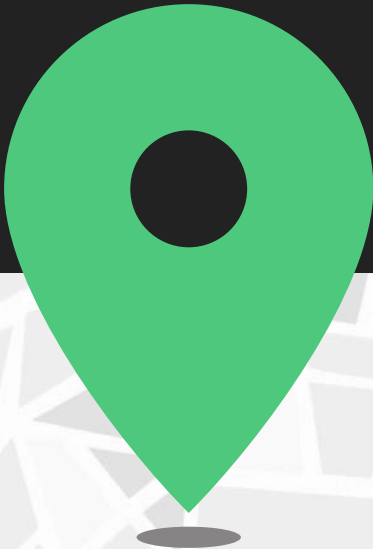
“Integral e-learning modules are an easy way to get drivers thinking about the importance of driver behaviour, and also to make sure their knowledge is up-to-date regarding things like clean air zone signage and safe charging procedures,” says Bates.

“Drivers can then be put forward for on-road training if their skills would benefit from further development.”

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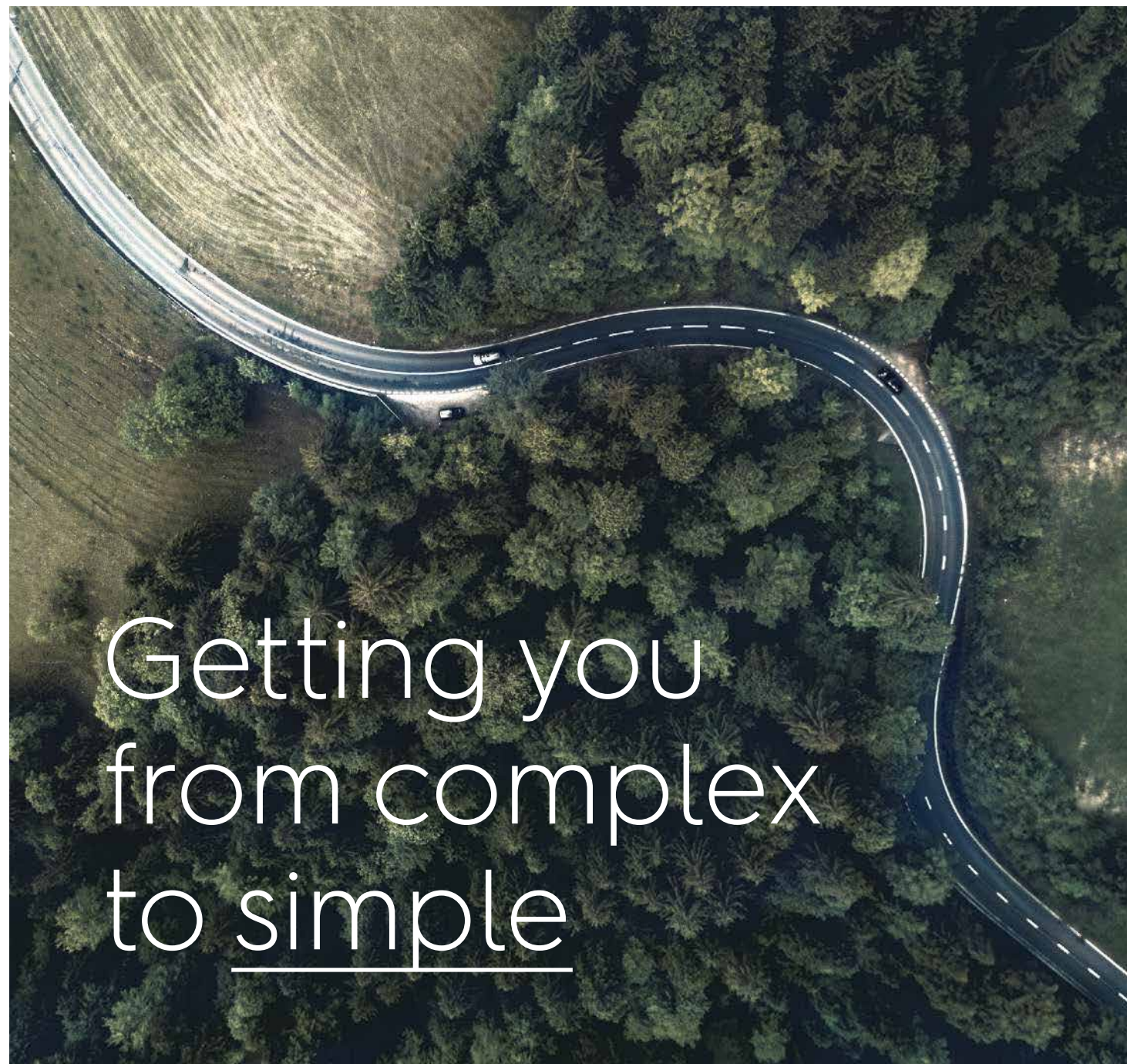
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Athlon is one of the leading providers of vehicle leasing and fleet management in Europe, with a presence in more than 20 countries. In 2020, they'll bring their highly flexible, forward-thinking approach to the UK.

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With ever increasing demands from employees for more flexible working practices, as well as the growing desire to significantly reduce the corporate carbon footprint. Athlon is working tirelessly every day to help shape the future of business travel.

With over 100 years heritage, Athlon has helped thousands of fleets.

#### Full service, total simplicity

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#### Small changes, big benefits

Through in-depth analytics, Athlon identify the small – but crucial – gains that can add up to improved efficiency and make a big difference to fleet performance. By really getting under the skin of a client's operation, Athlon create tailor-made solutions, offering the ideal level of assistance and support each time.

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The biggest change coming to the fleet landscape is the rise of electric. But as an expert in environmentally friendly transport, Athlon have been developing their expertise in electric vehicles since introducing them to the leasing market in 2008.

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Whatever the goals of your business, Athlon will help get you there.

To find out more,  
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# DEVELOPING AN ACQUISITION AND REMARKETING Strategy

ICFM director *Peter Eldridge* outlines key considerations that should form part of the presentation to the board

■ If you would like to find out more, take a look at the ICFM training and education programmes. More details are available on the website [www.icfm.com](http://www.icfm.com) or you can contact [administration@icfm.com](mailto:administration@icfm.com) for further information.

**T**his yer provides a new dawn regarding the most strategic way forward for businesses' fleet operations, with greater clarity on a number of issues.

An essential part of any strategy is to deal with the 'right here/right now' challenges and these, of course, include making sound decisions concerning your existing vehicle fleet.

An intrinsic part of the decision process is to revisit your vehicle acquisition and remarketing strategy as this will be key to the ongoing success.

**Step 1** is to define what vehicles will be selected as part of your vehicle acquisition policy and how that fits with regard to the detailed analysis recommended in previous articles. This involved carrying out a vehicle-by-vehicle/driver-by-driver analysis of journeys made and linking that to a 'blended solution' of vehicle types.

This 'blended' solution would promote a fleet profile of something like: diesel (Euro 6) for high-mileage motorway driving and where a large number of journeys are made in non-urban environments; petrol where a mix of motorway and urban driving is the norm; plug-in hybrids, pure electric and range-extended electric vehicles where driving is largely urban with hybrids forming a halfway house.

There are now around 75 alternatively fuelled vehicles on the market, including more than 40 plug-in models and the latest low-emission diesels remain the right choice for many drivers. New technologies, including the latest low emission diesels, are a vital ingredient for the UK and the fleet industry in particular, to meet their climate change targets.

Since the Government announced plans to

reduce benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax rates for zero-emission models to 0% in the 2020/21 tax year (pending ratification in the post-March Budget Finance Bill), the 'blended' initiative is somewhat hampered by fleet demand for electric vehicles (EVs) outstripping supply. This is largely due to a combination of retail focus on the part of the manufacturers and the subsequent limitations that this is delivering to fleet customers when attempting to manage zero-emission expectations.

These barriers should not be considered as the norm and the strategic fleet managers will continue in their quest to arrive at a position where they can feel confident that all of their vehicle powertrain choices can be achieved, with all of the benefits that this will deliver.

Once this is established, the checklist for vehicle acquisition becomes more straightforward and, among other requirements, includes the following:

- How do your requirements compare with the budget allowance and forecast?
- When are the vehicles required?

■ What is the composition of cars and commercial vehicles required?

■ What type of vehicles are needed to support the business best practice objectives?

■ Are the proposals in line with the business's environmental objectives?

■ Are there any specific duty of care/health and safety requirements?

■ What acquisition method will be employed?

■ Are the operational costs included – service, maintenance and repair (SMR), tyres, etc?

■ What lead times are involved?

■ What additional branding/commissioning elements need to be included?

When submitting recommendations to the board, there must be a clear statement regarding the quantifiable benefits included in the fleet policy proposal and, typically, these would include savings compared with current and previous periods; a comparison against established and planned environmental and other benchmarks and a detailed analysis of the pluses and minuses associated with all other options such as grey fleet.

## WHO IS PETER ELDRIDGE?



Peter Eldridge joined ICFM in 1993, making him one of its longest-serving members. The ICFM was founded in 1992 and remains the UK's only independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to furthering the education, recognising the achievements and advancing the profession of car and light commercial fleet management.

Eldridge joined the ICFM steering committee in 1996 and became a full council member in 1997. He was appointed a director in April 1999 and is regarded as one of the institute's strongest lead tutors. In 2011, he was inducted as an honorary fellow.

Courses include introductory programme, intermediate training, advanced diploma and distance learning. Please mention *Fleet News* if booking.

■ For information about ICFM leadership and management training, go to [www.icfm.com](http://www.icfm.com)

Once all has been correctly identified and sense-checked, it is good practice to enlist the help of the other fleet responsible stakeholders in the business, to ratify the proposals and provide comment and feedback.

**Step 2** is to ensure the remarketing strategy coincides with the business's vehicle acquisition objectives. The backdrop to achieving this is the UK's used car market, which, according to figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), experienced two quarters of growth in the second half of 2019 following a nine-quarter downward streak.

Overall, 7,935,105 transactions took place in the year, down 9,935 on 2018. Sales of diesel were down 0.6% to 3,297,953 and a 41.7% market share while petrol fell 0.3% to 4,494,611 transactions. Sales of Euro 6 models were up 32.5% as more of them reached the used market.

There was increased demand for zero emission battery electric vehicles (up by 21.8% to 14,112, although still only representing 0.2% of the market). Combined alternatively fuelled vehicles (hybrid, plug-in hybrid and battery electric), rose 23.4% with 135,516 changing hands and accounting for 1.7% of all sales.

Vehicle remarketing is arguably the most neglected aspect of fleet management, yet it is capable of having the greatest impact on the total cost of ownership for fleets that buy outright.

The principal considerations include determining what is being disposed of and the number and type of vehicles involved over the coming 12 months. Vehicle replacement dates will be defined by the policy and varied according to the anticipated lead times for the new vehicles.

As stated, demand for EVs has been outstripping

supply and this, of course, is affecting the retention period for the existing fleet.

Poor decisions to 'plug the gap' must be avoided. Simply retaining/informally extending contracts involving the current fleet is one such poor decision. All too often the vehicles retained or having their contracts extended represent the highest CO<sub>2</sub> levels, which not only detracts from improving any carbon footprint objectives, but also increases BIK exposure for the driver and SMR risk for the operating company.

Before embarking on what at first glance might appear to be an easy course of action, it is prudent for businesses to undertake a detailed risk analysis and consider their alternative short-term options – 'mini lease' etc.

Vehicle condition at the point of sale has a significant impact on the remarketing process and the primary objective for all fleet operators is, of course, to ensure that cars being returned for disposal are in a clean and undamaged condition that will lead to a good sale outcome or, in the case of a leased fleet, prevent charges. Vehicle condition is also important if you have negotiated a profit-share arrangement with your lease provider.

Key to achieving this is the user agreement in the fleet policy, which should set out clear and unambiguous guidance regarding what is and what is not acceptable.

In an ideal world, cars should be inspected in the presence of the user before acceptance, but, in any event, a robust time/date process should be in place, to include images of the vehicle condition.

Light commercial vehicles (LCVs), by their very nature, involve different considerations and have a broader definition of reasonable wear

and tear. Although the same basic principles exist for LCVs as well as for cars, allowances will need to be made with regard to the number of users and the nature of the business activities being undertaken.

Achieving good residual values and a positive remarketing experience need to take account of all of the elements mentioned and there are some dos and don'ts that should be considered.

Firstly, carry out an informed analysis of the vehicles being selected at the acquisition stage, poor decisions at the front end can have serious implications at the point of sale.

Always monitor the condition of vehicles being returned and be stringent with the recovery of any costs for which the user is liable. Part of this process is to ensure all documents/keys/original equipment are available with the vehicle and that a full service history is recorded.

Additionally, try to dispose of vehicles when planned but consider 'plate' and seasonal variances that might negatively affect sale proceeds.

Don't 'flood' the market with vehicles of similar types/colours at the same point of sale outlet and consider using specialist sales outlets for 4x4 and prestige vehicles.

Only transfer vehicles to pool/general use if the case for doing so is strong and a detailed benefits analysis has been undertaken.

Regularly monitor the remarketing results and vary disposal procedures to maximise the ongoing performance.

In summary, developing an acquisition and remarketing strategy requires that the fleet stakeholders concerned adopt a positive approach to the key considerations involved.



# WHY FLEXIBILITY IS KEY TO FUNDING AND MANAGING RENTAL FLEETS.



**Tim Bailey, UK Fleet Director at Northgate Vehicle Hire.**

Many businesses often find the task of taking on a new service or establishing a relationship with vendors quite challenging. For some, sourcing company vehicles is no exception. There are a wide range of options available, all with their own benefits and potential pitfalls. Northgate Vehicle Hire has discovered that despite the multiple vehicle hire solutions on the market, four out of every five UK businesses still own their company vans, whether it is the most suitable option or not.

A big part of fleet management involves minimising risk. There is of course much more involved, including improving fleet efficiency and productivity and ensuring each vehicle follows government regulations. For many business owners, the main barrier to vehicle hire is not necessarily resources and budgets. They may just be unaware of the processes and policies involved.

The last few years have been exciting for the vehicle hire industry, with significant changes being carried out to provide customers with more flexibility and streamline complex processes. Hiring vehicles is not as daunting as it was once perceived to be and by addressing three key areas - services, price and maintenance - businesses can adopt a rental fleet effectively.

## Finding flexible services

Companies need a much more tailored solution, rather than simply accessing the same set of vans that would otherwise be available through a

manufacturer. So aside from checking the duration and terms of the hire, businesses are advised to search for the right add-on services that will make fleet management easier and improve outcomes.

Racking and livery should almost go without saying, as vans that aren't fit for purpose or fail to represent a business's brand are not worth having. Technology, like telematics and a compatible fleet management software, offers fleet managers better visibility of where and how vans are used.

Industry and subsequent fleet requirements may not be easy to predict, especially if you are susceptible to seasonal demand. The most cost-effective solutions tend to combine a fixed number of vehicles with flexible 'on-demand' vehicles, so organisations can easily up and downscale fleets with ease.

As part of a flexible deal, switching the rented vehicles whenever deemed necessary has become a must-have. This way, businesses are assured that when a job comes up that requires specialist vehicles,

they will be in a position to take it on knowing that the fleet can be modified at short notice and with no or just a small extra cost.

## Staying cost effective

Given that 18% of business owners don't necessarily understand the pricing involved when renting a van, it is important to find a provider that is completely transparent with how much services cost. The pricing of different solutions and packages can of course range significantly, depending on the length of contract and any extras included.

It's surprising how many business managers tend only to consider the initial purchase as their main cost. The problem with this way of thinking is the complete oversight of the significant running and maintenance costs that any vehicle inevitably presents. From insurance and fuel, to tyre replacement and MOTs, costs really can rack up.

Consider day-to-day expenditure. Could running costs be reduced through fuel cards for drivers - all provided by the rental company? Are there any other offerings and extras that will help optimise fleet performance?

**“VAN OWNERS SPEND £1,200 A YEAR ON AVERAGE TO COVER DAMAGE REPAIRS.”**

Northgate found van owners spend £1,200 a year on average to cover damage repairs, along with a loss of £800 for each day a van is off the road or out of action. The beauty of vehicle hire is that with a comprehensive package, companies have a clear understanding of how much they'll need to pay. Providers should offer all servicing, maintenance and breakdown cover as standard, saving businesses any extra outgoings during the rental period.



Fleet managers who are particularly worried about potential hidden costs, will do well to discuss damage allowance. Minor scratches and dents up to 50mm in length which occur as part of natural daily usage are not billed, but damage allowances give greater peace of mind.

## Maintaining fleets

Without a fully maintained fleet, businesses cannot effectively service their customers. That is why we recommend all servicing requirements, such as MOTs, tyre changes and oil changes are included in a rental agreement and made the responsibility of the rental company. This not only keeps vehicles on the road, it also saves times and money.

If a rental van does break down and is temporarily out of action, the hire company should provide a replacement vehicle whilst the van is being repaired, so that an organisation does not suffer any business loss as a result of breakdowns. Northgate research has found that around half of van owners are currently at risk of incurring fines if their vehicles are out of service for a week, whereas those renting can avoid both this extra cost and upsetting customers.

Unsurprisingly, 43% of businesses are worried about damaging rental vehicles and having to pay for any repairs. Some providers have introduced packages that are designed to take these worries away. The Northgate VanHire+ package, for instance, includes an allowance for in-life damage, variable by hire period. This feature has the benefit of removing or limiting some of the un-planned end of life charges which push users towards ownership and can rightly, or wrongly, damage the reputation of the hire sector.

A final piece of advice I'd offer is that fleet managers should raise any concerns they have before signing a rental agreement. It may sound obvious but due diligence is vital to any successful business relationship. This will go a long way to ensuring things run smoothly once processes are up and running with a rental fleet, so there aren't any nasty surprises when vehicles are on the road.



**Tim Bailey is the UK Fleet Director at Northgate Vehicle Hire with more than 30 years' experience in the vehicle hire industry.**

**NORTHGATE**  
for all vankind



# PEUGEOT 2008

Good to drive with impressive technology and an electric option

**By Tom Goodlad**

**T**he Peugeot 2008 enters its second generation with a sharp new look that scales down the best bits of the 3008 and 508, much like the smaller 208 on which it is based.

There is a suite of new driver tech, an evolution of the maker's modern i-Cockpit and more space than before. It is also available in all-electric e-2008 form, underlining the company's strategy of offering all its models with a choice of petrol, diesel or electric power.

Key competition comes from the new Nissan Juke and Renault Captur, as well as the Volkswagen T-Cross. Despite being more compact than a Volkswagen T-Roc, the 2008 offers impressive interior space and the price to match pricier VW models.

While the old 2008 didn't exactly set the world alight, the larger 3008 and 508 have done very

“THE 2008 HAS AN AGILE CHASSIS THAT ALLOWS YOU TO HAVE A LITTLE FUN IF YOU WANT TO”

well at revitalising the brand's appeal and the manufacturer hopes buyers will find the new 2008 just as appealing.

Interior quality is high and the controls layout is impressive when compared with other cars in the segment. Using Peugeot's i-Cockpit concept, the 2008 has a smaller steering wheel than most cars, designed to sit above or beneath the instrument cluster, meaning drivers will have to adjust their

position to suit. It won't be to all tastes, but Peugeot believes the setup enhances the driving experience.

The 2008's petrol engine line-up consists of one 1.2-litre PureTech unit in various power outputs. The entry-level PureTech 100 returns around 50.4mpg. Move up the range to the PureTech 130 and you can expect 47.8 (manual) or 45.5mpg (automatic), while the most powerful PureTech 155 returns up to 45mpg.

Diesel models are better suited to higher mileage users with fuel economy of 62.7mpg for the BlueHDI 100. CO2 emissions are also lower at 96-102g/km, while the petrols range between 103 and 121g/km.

The e-2008 uses a 56kWh battery, giving a total range of up to 206 miles.

Most customers are expected to favour the PureTech 130. It provides ample performance from such a little engine, getting from 0-62mph in



The second-generation 2008 has a sharp new look



Interior quality is high and the controls layout is impressive

	FLEET PICK 1.2 PureTech 130 Allure	DIESEL 1.5 BlueHDI 100 Allure	ELECTRIC e-2008 Allure
SPECIFICATIONS			
P11D Price	£23,345	£23,745	£33,745
CO2 emissions (g/km)	103	96	0
Monthly BIK tax* (20%)	24%/£93	27%/£106	16%/£90
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	50.6	62.7	Range 206 miles
Fuel cost (ppm)	11.2	9.4	3.9
Annual VED	£150 then £145	£150 then £145	£0
Class 1A NIC	£773	£885	£745
Residual value (4yrs/80k)	£7,800/33%	£7,525/32%	£10,900/32%
AFR (ppm)	12	9	4
Running cost (4yrs/80k)	34.1ppm	33.6ppm	35.9ppm

\*Go to [www.fleetnews.co.uk](http://www.fleetnews.co.uk) for tax figures from April 2020-2022

## RIVALS



FORD PUMA  
1.0T 125 MHEV Titanium



ŠKODA KAMIQ  
1.0TSI 115 SE L



RENAULT CAPTUR  
1.0Tce 100 Iconic

SPECIFICATIONS			
P11D Price	£20,660	£21,755	£18,870
CO2 emissions (g/km)	96	116	116
Monthly BIK tax (20%)	23%/£79	27%/£98	27%/£85
Fuel efficiency (mpg)	61.4	49.6	47.1
Fuel cost (ppm)	9.3	12.1	12.1
Annual VED	£130 then £145	£170 then £145	£170 then £145
Class 1A NIC	£656	£811	£703
Residual value (4yrs/80k)	£7,425/36%	£7,550/35%	£6,850/36%
AFR (ppm)	12	12	12
Running cost (4yrs/80k)	29.8ppm	34.4ppm	30.4ppm

8.9 seconds. It pulls strongly but the manual gearbox can be quite jerky, as we've found in other PSA cars with this engine. The gearlever itself is a bit bulky and awkward, and the throw a bit long and indistinct.

The solution to this problem is to opt for the EAT8 automatic transmission. It can make the car feel a little eager to duck and dive when accelerating and braking, but the gear changes are fast and smooth and suit the engine well.

The more powerful 155PS unit is only available with the EAT8. There is only a 4g/km emissions penalty for the more potent unit, which is likely to appeal to user-choosers.

The 2008 is one of the more satisfying compact SUVs to drive, with an agile chassis that allows you to have a little fun if you want to. Most of the time it feels easy to drive and to manoeuvre. There isn't a large degree of bodyroll in corners and the seats are supportive, making it feel civilised.

The suspension can feel a little troubled by a series of bumps in the road that produces a slight skittish feel, but most of the time it's composed and well-rounded. It feels most like the Škoda Kamiq, blending comfort and control nicely without compromising too much in each area.

Those opting for the e-2008 should enjoy an equally rounded driving experience. A 300kg

weight penalty means the 136PS motor doesn't deliver as much of a shove as you might expect from an EV, but for moderate driving, the electric model is a great package.

The boot, which comes in at 434 litres, is larger than its immediate rivals – and should be sufficient for family duties without too much trouble. The e-2008 has the same boot volume, although it loses the storage space beneath the boot floor.

Four trim levels are available. Entry-level Active versions are fairly sparse in terms of equipment but you do get rear parking sensors and LED headlights.

The Allure features chrome and gloss black trim pieces, climate control, electric folding door mirrors and a new 3D digital instrument cluster.

GT Line versions are expected to have the best residuals, and therefore be most attractive to lease. They get heated seats, sat-nav, sportier styling and partial leather trim.

The range-topping GT comes with the 155PS petrol engine. It adds adaptive cruise control, blind spot monitor and a panoramic sunroof.

The e-2008 is available in all four trim levels. Prices start at £19,945 for the entry level PureTech 100 Active, rising to £31,350 for the PureTech 155 GT. The e-2008 is priced from £31,595 (P11D).



## THINKING CAP

By Martin Ward, Cap HPI manufacturer relationships manager

**This month I've been...**

**Judging the Fleet News Awards**

I have been involved in the Fleet News Awards judging more than 20 times and it doesn't get any easier. So many great cars, improving year-on-year, and picking a winner from so many good contestants is difficult. This year there was one category that had us all scratching our heads amid much debate – 'best electric vehicle'. For a start, the price range was from less than £30,000 to more than £90,000, a vast difference. But, after much deliberation and discussion a winner was chosen. All the winners will be announced in London on March 11.

**Driving the Bentley Bentayga**

Went to Crewe, the home of Bentley, for a factory tour and a drive in a Bentayga. This is Bentley's 101st birthday. It originated in London, but moved to Crewe in 1946 to a factory that had been used for producing Merlin engines between 1938-1946. Bentleys have been, and are still regarded as, big gas guzzlers. So the company is doing much to be carbon neutral. It is now offering plug-in hybrids – the Bentayga will cover up to 24 miles on pure electric and, by 2023, all Bentleys will be offered with hybrid technology. The factory has 22,000 solar panels that produce 60% of the factory's electric needs and for every tree it uses, it plants three. In 2019 it produced and sold 11,006 cars. We drove the £190,000 Bentayga around Cheshire and it was sophisticated, smooth, luxurious, quick, oozing quality, and ... expensive!

**Not convinced about 2035 deadline**

Everyone is talking about the PM's announcement banning sales of all new petrol, diesel and, very surprisingly, hybrids from 2035. I accept there has to be a commitment to cleaning up our air. I'm not convinced this is the best way to go about it. It is a start, but what about trucks and buses, will they still be polluting? If this means fewer cars on the roads the revenue lost by HMRC will be immense in fuel duty, so where will the shortfall come from?

Possibly higher taxation on numerous other things...

cap hpi



# PEUGEOT NEXT GENERATION PLUG-IN HYBRID UNBORING THE FUTURE



CO<sub>2</sub> FROM 36 G/KM<sup>\*</sup>  
UP TO 39 MILE RANGE IN FULL ELECTRIC MODE<sup>^</sup>  
UP TO 235 MPG<sup>^</sup>

MOTION & e-MOTION



PEUGEOT

**PEUGEOT RECOMMENDS TOTAL** Official Fuel Consumption in MPG (l/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km) for the PEUGEOT 3008 SUV range are: Combined 35.2 (8.0) – 235 (1.2) and CO<sub>2</sub> 132 – 36 g/km. For the all-new PEUGEOT 508 range are: Combined 37.4 (7.6) – 235 (1.2) and CO<sub>2</sub> 128 – 38 g/km. For the all-new PEUGEOT 508 SW range are: Combined 37.4 (7.6) – 235 (1.2) and CO<sub>2</sub> 128 – 39 g/km.

The fuel consumption or electric range you achieve, and CO<sub>2</sub> produced, in real world conditions will depend upon a number of factors: including the accessories fitted (post registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test (WLTP<sup>^</sup>) for fuel consumption, CO<sub>2</sub> and electric range figures. However, the CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown are NEDC equivalent, calculated using EC correlation tool which converts WLTP figures to NEDCeq<sup>\*\*</sup> figures and will be used to calculate tax for first registration. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; you should only compare fuel consumption, CO<sub>2</sub> and electric range with other vehicles tested using the same technical standard. The plug-in hybrid range requires mains electricity for charging. The figures displayed for this vehicle were obtained using a combination of battery power and fuel. \*WLTP – Worldwide harmonised Light vehicles Test Procedure. \*\*NEDCeq – New European Driving Cycle. ^Figures shown are for the 3008 SUV HYBRID 300 e-EAT8. Information correct at time of going to print.

IGNITION: FIRST DRIVE



## FORD PUMA

Puma's innovative boot grabs attention at media launch

By Andrew Ryan

**P**resentations at media launches for new cars often focus on the latest technologies, but the Ford Puma event provided a twist to the usual format: plenty of attention was instead paid to a low-tech feature – an extra storage compartment. The concept of its 'Megabox' is simple: instead of providing a spare wheel well beneath the boot floor, Ford has turned this space into a compartment featuring a waterproof lining and a drain plug to allow for easy cleaning with water.

Accessed by removing the load floor in the Puma, which sits between the Ecosport and Kuga in Ford's SUV line-up, this adds another 80 litres of space, giving its newest model up to 456 litres (in comparison, a Renault Captur offers 455 litres, a Seat Arona 400 litres).

Probably more importantly, though, it allows items as tall as 1.14 metres to be carried upright in the boot, adding an extra dimension of practicality.

**FLEET PICK**  
1.0 ECOBOOST 125PS  
HYBRID ST-LINE

SPECIFICATIONS	
P11D Price	£21,610
Monthly BIK (20%)	£83
Class 1A NIC	£686
Annual VED	£130 then £145
RV (4yr/80k)	£7,650/35%
Fuel cost	9.25ppm
AFR	12ppm
Running cost (4yr/80k)	30.72ppm
CO <sub>2</sub>	96g/km
Fuel efficiency	44mpg



The boot space is deep enough to take a golf bag standing up

The downside is that no spare wheel is provided or, indeed, optional. However, due to the cost and efficiency gains offered through the weight saving of not supplying a spare wheel, the majority of new cars instead provide a tyre inflation kit (in the Puma this is positioned under the front passenger's seat).

However, the Megabox is not the only notable debut in the Puma: the SUV also sees the introduction of Ford's mild hybrid powertrain.

In the Puma, this teams the 1.0-litre Ecoboost petrol engine with an 11.5kw motor and 48-volt battery, increasing fuel efficiency by around 9%, according to the manufacturer.

In 125PS trim, the engine offers CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 96g/km to 99g/km on the NEDC cycle (WLTP: 124g/km to 132g/km), with fuel economy of 40.6mpg to 43.6mpg. The mild hybrid powertrain is also available with 155PS and this has NEDC CO<sub>2</sub> of 99g/km to 101g/km (WLTP: 126g/km to 133g/km) and fuel efficiency of 39.9mpg to 42.7mpg.

Puma is also available with a 95PS 1.0-litre Ecoboost petrol engine, producing 95PS, NEDC CO<sub>2</sub> from 102g/km (WLTP: from 129g/km) and fuel economy of up to 50mpg.

A 120PS 1.5-litre Ecoblue diesel engine will be introduced later this year offering CO<sub>2</sub> from 117g/km and fuel efficiency up to 63mpg.

Trim levels reflect other Ford model ranges and include ST-Line, Titanium and ST-Line X Vignale, while the cabin quality will also be familiar to anyone who has sat in a Fiesta or Focus recently.

This means clear instrumentation, an eight-inch touchscreen, decent build quality, and the manufacturer's impressive Sync 3 infotainment system.

The benefits of sharing so much with its siblings also extends to the way it drives. It uses the same platform as the Fiesta – although the Puma is around 15cm longer – and, like the supermini, is really engaging on the road.

We drove the 125PS mild hybrid and the new engine impressed. The hybrid system has the ability to provide up to 50Nm of torque and the Puma uses this to provide plenty of low-down power.

Its steering is sharp and the ride composed which, together with its practicality and efficiency, makes the Puma an excellent all-rounder, right at the top of the small SUV class.



# VOLVO XC90

Updated model falls short of fuel economy claims

By Matt de Prez

**H**aving spawned an entire model range of high-tech new Volvos after its launch in 2015, the XC90 has received a mild update for 2020.

The visual revisions have been kept to a minimum, so there's little more than a new grille, colours and wheel choices.

It is still an attractive SUV and easily as modern-looking as any of its rivals.

Versions with air suspension (a £2,150 option) have a more gracious ride, complementing the



The XC90's appearance hasn't changed much, but there's a new grille, colours and wheel choices



comfortable seats and overall relaxing ambience of the interior.

The flagship T8 plug-in hybrid, which we're testing here, gains a larger battery for better efficiency.

Volvo says the new model is 15% more efficient, with a claimed fuel consumption of 122mpg.

In reality, that figure will be difficult to achieve by anyone that travels more than around 15 miles at a time. A full charge registers around 22 miles of range, but travel at higher speeds and it dips rapidly.

Once the 2.0-litre petrol engine fires up, fuel economy falls quickly. While it doesn't match the claimed numbers, our achievement of 30mpg over 400 miles – from a large seven-seat all-wheel-drive SUV – isn't too bad.

A combined power output of 400PS gives a mighty turn of speed when requested, but the power delivery is hampered by a sluggish transmission. It doesn't move with the heft of a big V6 diesel, but, considering the tax breaks available, drivers would be mad not to take a look.

# VOLVO XC60

XC60 proves an excellent long-distance cruiser

By Andrew Ryan

**V**olvo's drive for electrification has led it to introduce mild hybrid powertrains across its range to improve efficiency, with its XC60 SUV one of the early beneficiaries. The manufacturer says the technology improves real-world fuel economy and emissions by 15% compared with the outgoing all-wheel drive D4 and D5 diesel units (which we have on long-term test).

Designated by the letter 'B', the new powertrain combines a 2.0-litre diesel engine with a 48-volt



Mild-hybrid powertrain adds to the XC60's appeal



mild-hybrid system, a kinetic energy recovery system (KERS) and an integrated starter generator. Volvo says a new automatic gearbox further increases efficiency.

The mild-hybrid is available with two power outputs – 197PS in the B4 and 235PS in the B5 – and we drove the lower-powered version in R-Design Pro trim (P11D price: £47,300).

Offering WLTP fuel economy of 38.7mpg to 45.6mpg and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions between 162g/km and 191g/km, the powertrain offers plenty of power throughout the rev range.

Aided by its smooth-shifting gearbox and excellent ride despite sitting on the huge, standard 21-inch

alloy wheels, the XC60 proved an excellent long-distance cruiser, returning 38.8mpg over just more than 600 miles of mainly motorway driving (our long-term is averaging 40.1mpg in comparison).

Other than the powertrain, the B4 shares its attributes with the rest of the XC60 range. Visibility is excellent with the elevated driving position providing a commanding view of the road. It is also impressively manoeuvrable at low speeds.

As in all XC60s, the interior design and perceived build quality is top rank with plenty of space.

The addition of the mild-hybrid powertrain has added to the appeal of an already impressive car, although we're not won over by the efficiency figures.

# AUDI S4

Diesel is not dead if this model is anything to go by

By Matt de Prez

**O**ne of the biggest changes to be announced at the recent launch of the facelifted Audi A4 was the transition of its S4 performance model to a diesel powertrain.

Audi is switching all its S models to diesel, despite the declining interest in the fuel.

While it may seem like a backwards step, the strategy is actually quite clever and is part of Audi's message that diesel is not dead.

For fleets, the £47,000 S4 may tempt drivers away from taking the cash option and remaining



Sharp steering and brakes mean it's a pleasure to drive

in the company car scheme. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 160g/km mean it falls into the highest benefit-in-kind tax band, with 40% taxpayers facing bills of £580 per month – that's about the same as it costs to lease one.

But drivers are still at an advantage once they consider insurance and running costs. The 3.0-litre V6 diesel engine is fitted with 48v mild-hybrid technology, helping to keep fuel consumption and emissions to a minimum by enabling prolonged engine-off coasting.

Our test saw an average of 42mpg, impressive

considering the pace achieved from the 350PS powertrain.

The car is restrained on the motorway, making effortless progress. Acceleration is instantaneous, with a huge 700Nm torque surge. Even the engine note has been tuned to give a more petrol-like growl. All-wheel drive ensures the S4 always feels planted and pin-sharp steering and brakes mean it delivers great driver thrills.

For businesses where employee retention is an important element of its company car scheme, the S4 will satisfy drivers without exorbitant fuel costs.

# VW PASSAT TDI EVO

Plenty to like about this improved performer

By Matt de Prez

**I**t might not sound exciting, but a new diesel Passat is quite an important model for the fleet sector – with around 80% expected to go to company car drivers. Even more important is this model's new 2.0-litre TDI engine.

An extensive re-working of the emissions system means this new version emits up to 80% less NO<sub>x</sub> than its predecessor.

It has CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 101g/km (NEDC-correlated) in saloon guise and 104g/km in more



The R Line is fully equipped – though you pay for it

popular estate form. Adding a DSG automatic transmission increases the CO<sub>2</sub> output by 1g/km. VW says it meets the technical requirements of Euro 6d, but is not currently RDE2-compliant.

The car should achieve around 55mpg, according to the WLTP test. During our time with the DSG estate, it exceeded this figure on multiple trips.

One of the most noticeable changes with the new engine is its refinement. At idle, and when driving around town at lower revs, there is much less noise intrusion from the engine bay. The diesel motor only makes itself known at higher revs.

Performance is good: with 150PS on tap, the Passat has just the right amount of power to not

feel sluggish and there is plenty of torque to keep the car moving without much effort.

SE models come with most of the equipment fleet users will require, including adaptive cruise control, although sat-nav is only available on SE Nav grade and above.

Our test car was an SEL (priced from £29,115), which features leather upholstery and heated front seats. It felt a bit dated with no climate control or digital instruments although both are available as options.

R Line models (as pictured) are the most desirable with all the above kit, plus a sporty look, but bump the starting price up to £32,000.





**Simon Marsh**  
Managing Director

## SPONSOR PROFILE

Founded in 2016, the rise of connected vehicle camera and video telematics specialist VisionTrack has been rapid, launching its Internet of Things (IoT) software platform in 2017 and becoming the industry leader last year. The company's unique approach is helping tackle some of the most complex challenges faced by the fleet, transport and insurance sectors.

VisionTrack works with all types and sizes of fleets that operate in a wide range of industry sectors. With a successful and proven track record, the company is now the preferred video telematics partner for a growing number of fleet businesses with over 40,000 devices already connected to the Microsoft-Azure hosted, cloud-based IoT platform. As a result – in 2019 alone – the company recorded more than 528 million road miles and in excess of 37 million hours of footage. During the same period, 4.6 million videos were requested from the platform and over 194 million data points collected.

From its headquarters in Tunbridge Wells, VisionTrack has started to expand internationally to the US, Australia and mainland Europe. Computer vision and machine learning also have an expanding role to play, with huge benefits to come for fleets, so VisionTrack has an extensive team of big data, AI and cybernetics experts and scientists working on next-generation video telematics solutions.



# MAKING PREVENTION A REALITY WITH VIDEO TELEMATICS

Video telematics is widely seen as an effective way of saving time and money when a fleet vehicle is involved in a collision. However, VisionTrack understands that today's near miss, could be tomorrow's serious incident, so the company's approach is very much about prevention. Whether it is making fleet managers aware of potential risks by understanding how someone is driving out on the road or providing drivers with the tools to operate more safely, VisionTrack's video telematics technology is continually advancing to meet these needs.



Powered by Microsoft Azure

## Platform for success

Probably the biggest reason behind VisionTrack's expansion and growth is its award-winning IoT platform that underpins all connected camera solutions. The cloud-based, device-agnostic software has been developed to provide the highest levels of operational insight, business intelligence and enriched vehicle data. This means fleet customers are empowered to make strategic mobility decisions that help improve road safety and reduce associated costs.

***"Our platform is designed to be infinitely scalable and handle thousands of videos a second"***

explains Simon Marsh, Managing Director of VisionTrack. "By collecting, processing and analysing such high volumes of video and supporting data, it is possible to gain greater understanding than ever before."

While driver behaviour monitoring has been around for some time, VisionTrack goes further by using **computer vision, machine learning** and **AI** to make the most of the available data and enhance its offering to fleet operators. With sophisticated algorithms, as well as behaviour and video analytics, the IoT platform can work out the propensity to crash, detect an impact and even avoid false alerts.

*"A significant proportion of road collisions are preventable, so it is critical to understand where risk exists within a fleet operation and take appropriate steps to minimise the impact. Because we are producing and analysing so many videos each month, it is possible to obtain real knowledge that can really support this preventative action,"* says Marsh.

## ADAS Innovation

Meanwhile, advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) are also helping to tackle traffic incidents before they arise by



detecting and warning of driver risk. "We are able to set up a system that will alert a driver when they are about to have a collision, are distracted or become fatigued," reveals Marsh. "You never know when an event could happen, so it is about informing and engaging with them in real-time about how to improve what they can do."

VisionTrack's connected ADAS solution combines a forward-facing camera along with an in-vehicle fatigue and distraction monitor, driver feedback device and HD mobile digital video recorder (MDVR). The ADAS forward-facing camera identifies lane departure, forward collisions, tailgating and vulnerable pedestrians or cyclists, while the in-vehicle monitor can recognise if a driver is tired or distracted by actions such as mobile phone use, smoking and eating.

As a result, a driver can immediately be alerted to any potential dangers via visual and/or audible warnings. At the same time, an office-based fleet manager can monitor areas of concern both in real-time and historically, so they can quickly address road safety and driver welfare issues.

## Addressing fleet risk

There is proven value from making video telematics an important part of any corporate safety strategy and driver training programmes. With live and historical driver and vehicle data, supported by video evidence, it is possible to identify fleet risk and ensure staff become more responsible drivers. This means an organisation can target continuous improvement with a tailored safety initiative across a fleet.

Video telematics is a useful way of identifying and understanding driving incidents such as collisions, near misses and harsh driving events. VisionTrack's platform analyses the data and provides useful information to the company so it can identify recurring issues that need to be addressed. If someone is consistently

braking harshly at high speed, for example, then it is possible that they are tailgating the motorist in front. However, Marsh points out that, "it allows the fleet manager to highlight the drivers who are most at risk, so it is about identifying where the training budget can be best spent."

## Fast and efficient claims

The overall goal should always be reducing incidents and improving road safety, but if and when they do happen, the response needs to be as quick and simple as possible. For fleet operators, along with their insurance partners, it is about speeding up the process and connected vehicle cameras have a massive role to play here. "Using video for First Notification of Loss (FNOL) means decisions can be made almost instantly and we are seeing the cost of claims reducing by several thousands of pounds in many cases," says Marsh.

Video Telematics has been shown to play an important role in First Notification of Loss (FNOL) and Third-Party Intervention (TPI), which are vital to keeping claims costs to a minimum and increasing the average speed of resolution. If an insurance business is instantly alerted to a collision and provided with actual footage from the scene, it is possible to take complete control of the entire process from start to finish.

With this instant intervention, there is an opportunity to better manage third-party hire and repair costs, discouraging exaggerated injury claims and achieve greater savings potential. In fact, one insurer VisionTrack works with has seen a combined reduction in frequency and cost of **claims in excess of 40%**. That is now – which means there is a lot of potential for improvements in the future.

However, it is not simply about reducing claims costs. There are also all those intangible overheads that are difficult to quantify and need to be considered such as drivers being taken off the road; associated reporting and added admin; potential damage to reputation and brand; and ultimately vehicle downtime.

## Looking to the future

With advances in computer vision, AI and machine learning beginning to gather pace, there are huge benefits to come for fleets. In fact, Marsh believes there has never been a more exciting time for video telematics, because of the huge strides that are being made with technology innovation. "Our aim is to help significantly reduce the risk of incidents happening in the first place and I truly believe we are now reaching a point where prevention is becoming a reality," he concludes.





IGNITION: FIRST DRIVE

# HYUNDAI i10

Third-generation i10 is every bit as eye-catching as its predecessor was anonymous

By Tom Wiltshire

**F**or 2020's third-generation i10, Hyundai has upped the ante, making it stylish and customisable, as well as filling it with the kind of sophisticated technology you'd usually find on much larger cars.

You can't really miss the new i10. Hyundai has made sure that this new model is every bit as eye-catching as its predecessor was anonymous.

Despite its tiny size, the Hyundai i10 offers as much practicality as many a larger supermini. There's room for four six-foot tall adults to travel in comfort, without suffering the bent necks and sore knees that usually accompany a drive in a small car. A middle seatbelt means a fifth occupant can be squeezed in.

The boot, too, is a great size – at 252 litres it's not much smaller than that in the Ford Fiesta, a car from the size class above.

The i10 is available with a pair of petrol engines – a 1.0-litre, three-cylinder unit with 67PS and a 1.2-litre four-cylinder offering 84PS.

The entry-level 1.0-litre is fine at town speeds but

## FLEET PICK 1.0 SE

SPECIFICATIONS	
P11D Price	£13,290
Monthly BIK (20%)	24%/£53
Class 1A NIC	£440
Annual VED	£150 then £145
RV (4yr/80k)	£3,600/27%
Fuel cost	10.05ppm
AFR	12ppm
Running cost (4yr/80k)	25.18ppm
CO <sub>2</sub>	104g/km
Fuel efficiency	56.5mpg



it feels strained on the motorway, requiring a lot of throttle just to maintain a cruise. The 1.2-litre feels more relaxed, and is also better suited to overtaking.

Neither engine has a turbocharger, so they need to be worked hard in order to get the best out of them. A new turbocharged engine with 99PS is on the way and will act as the sporty halo model in the range.

Hyundai's predicted best-seller is the standard 1.0-litre manual. It's also the fleet pick with up to 56.5mpg and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 104g/km.

A five-speed automated manual, badged as AMT, is available but it's laughably bad, bucking and bumping around like a learner driver on their first lesson. It even makes the already quite slow i10 even slower – in fact, the 1.0-litre AMT is one of the slowest cars on sale.

Meanwhile, the more powerful 1.2-litre engine returns 55.4mpg, 108g/km.

Our time in a variety of models saw us averaging mpg in the mid-40s. This didn't change much from

the 1.0-litre to the 1.2-litre, suggesting that the extra power of the latter means it doesn't have to work so hard to move the i10 around.

Hyundai has filled the i10 with loads of kit, some of which you might not expect on an entry-level model such as this.

As a result, you'll find the likes of a wireless charging pad, connected navigation with real-time traffic updates and even a companion app that can remotely lock, locate and check the car's status.

SE grade starts from £12,290. There is also SE Connect (+£1,000) or Premium (+£2,000).

Safety equipment, including with lane-keeping aids and autonomous emergency braking, comes as standard. It's even possible to specify all-round parking sensors and a reversing camera.

Keen drivers are better opting for the Volkswagen Up. Those who need an automatic should go for a Kia Picanto and, naturally, any car will struggle to lure fashionistas from their Fiat 500s.

However, the Hyundai i10 is a thoroughly excellent little car that should appeal to everyone else.

# RE-WRITE THE RULES

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More than 1.3 million fleet vehicles are presently managed by the multi-award-winning Key2 asset management system, and that figure is rising rapidly as an ever-increasing number of businesses recognise the multitude of benefits available from operating the advanced technology.

The configurability of Key2, with the ability for adopters to individually personalise, enables leasing companies to negate the requirement to spend vast amounts of time and

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intervention in processes and take contract hire and leasing companies further along the road to their vision, which is shared by Jaama, of a paperless office while simultaneously improving their customers' experience.

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# THE ELECTRIC REVOLUTION: FIVE STEPS TO A FULLY CHARGED FLEET

**With the government bringing forward its ambition to 2035 for all new vehicles to be zero-emitting, now is the time to develop and implement your fleet transition strategy to help your business meet its sustainability targets.**

## 1. HAVE A BOLD AMBITION

All fleets are unique and at different stages in their transition to electric vehicles. So, on the path to achieve your bold ambition, it's important to break down larger goals in to smaller, more achievable targets that deliver for your fleet.

Start with the fundamentals;

- ▶ Offering an electric option in every car grade and a clear driver policy.
- ▶ Completing a trial of electric vans (if applicable).
- ▶ Ensuring there is a charging infrastructure at workplace locations.

After laying the foundations, set clear targets to help maintain focus and track progress and look at how you can adapt policy to increase uptake. Tracked metrics may include percentage of electric new vehicle orders or a total reduction in CO2 emissions.

## 2. ENGAGE AND EDUCATE EMPLOYEES

Moving to electric as a means of powering a vehicle can be daunting for your employees, therefore understanding potential barriers to adoption of an electric vehicle is crucial. Focus on designing policy and issuing clear communications that help to inform employee choice and remove these perceived barriers. Engagement and education is pivotal to a successful uptake.

## 3. LET THE NUMBERS SPEAK

One key aspect in the education piece is to help employees truly understand the benefits an electric vehicle can bring them, both in taxation savings and private fuel costs and their impact on the environment. This may be particularly relevant for those employees who have opted out of a company car scheme previously and are unaware of the potential savings for electric cars through low BiK and grants – reducing the cost of the car and charge point installation.

**Claire Evans,**  
Head of Consultancy at Zenith

For fleet operators of cars or commercial vehicles, using a Whole Life Cost (WLC) methodology for each asset type to compare vehicle costs with petrol and diesel can quickly tell you and your employees if a new vehicle release is a cost-effective option for your vehicle policy.

## 4. ELIMINATE RANGE ANXIETY

Each area of your fleet will need assessing to understand daily travel requirements and if an electric vehicle will meet these.

**90%** of current electric car models available have an electric range greater than 100 miles.

Small and mid-sized vans are seeing improvements in ranges.

## EMPOWERING CHANGE

From now on we're going to be doing more than just offering electric – we're going to be leading the charge towards it.

With Zenith, you get one leasing company to manage all your electric needs, end-to-end. Whether it's our flexible services and funding or our consultancy bright sparks and electric gurus, ready and waiting 24/7 to support your drivers – everything we do is part of our ambition to always do what's right for your business and fleet, now and in the future.



This, coupled with an improving public charging network, helps to combat range anxiety for drivers.

Successful policies with good uptake offer driver support and education about available vehicles and how to optimise use of home, work and public charging.

## 5. STAY UP-TO-DATE WITH MARKET CHANGES

It's now more important than ever to keep up-to-date with what's on the horizon. Not only should you review the new and upcoming releases of electric vehicles, but you should have a mechanism to get early insight into changes to taxation policy and grant provisions.

Making the switch now ensures that fleets and drivers can take advantage of the significant incentives in place today.

## LEADING THE WAY

At Zenith, we have been working with customers with bold ambitions to improve the sustainability metrics of their fleet and are seeing fantastic results.

Post the July announcements on low company car taxes, we have seen a staggering increase in electric orders of over 300% in our salary sacrifice fleets and over 250% in our company car fleets.

## SPOTLIGHT

**EV 100**

### Zenith makes industry-leading EV commitment.

We are proud to announce that we have joined a global initiative committed to accelerating the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) and making electric transport the new normal by 2030.

The EV100 initiative, by The Climate Group, brings together forward-looking companies to drive the electric transport transition, reduce air pollution and climate change.

Our plan? Switch our own fleet to 100% EV by 2025 – five years ahead of the target date required by EV100. Zenith's battery-electric fleet has already saved 1.32m kg of CO2 in 2019, making an annual estimated saving of 6.9m kg CO2 by 2021.

"We congratulate Zenith on joining EV100. This is a great example of a company making a substantial vehicle commitment and sending a powerful demand signal to the market. As a major leasing company committing to 100% electric vehicles on its own fleet by 2025 – five years faster than required under EV100 – they are leading by example and we need every leasing company to follow suit."

**Helen Clarkson**  
CEO at The Climate Group

"Joining EV100 is key to supporting and delivering on the ambitions of Zenith and the needs of our customers. We are taking a lead in the transition from fossil fuels to electric in the UK and helping corporate clients and consumers maximise their opportunities and support their transition to electric and alternative-fuelled vehicles.

We believe leasing companies have a pivotal role to play in delivering meaningful and successful EV strategies and policies. Working with partners, Zenith can deliver end-to-end solutions from the vehicle to home charging infrastructure, to corporate energy solutions."

**Tim Buchan**  
Chief Executive at Zenith

**100%** Zenith plans to switch our own fleet to 100% EV by 2025.

**1.32m** Zenith's battery-electric fleet saved 1.32m kg of CO2 in 2019.

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or go to **zenith.co.uk**







By Luke Neal

The C5 Aircross is one of my most liked long-term test cars in recent years. I took delivery of the Flair Plus just before the end of 2019 and it has already cemented itself as a firm favourite.

With its distinctive styling, big wheels and subtle side airbumps, the C5 is unmistakably Citroën. I'm pleased there is nothing else on the market today quite like it. But that could make it a 'love it or hate it' car for some when it comes to kerb appeal.

That said, I do have some niggly gripes. The first is the opening panoramic roof (included on Flair Plus models). It's a treat for rear seat passengers, but, it is set so far back that it fails to bring any

enjoyment to those in the front. In fact, it's possible to forget it is there at all.

The second is the infotainment system. It follows that of its Peugeot brothers (our recently departed 508 had a very similar system) which consists of icons on touch sensitive dash-mounted buttons, physical push buttons and touchscreen buttons. It's overly complicated and requires more eyeball time than should be necessary.

For example, to change the fan speed first you have to locate the icon referring to the control you want and press it, this takes you into the climate control menu, you then tap the screen for the settings you require. I'm all for a clean dashboard

but there are times when a simple dial will suffice.

The washer jets are mounted to the wipers (also the same as the Peugeot 508) and are very slow to react when activated.

The rear view camera, while okay during the day is hard to see at night due to the very poor picture quality on the screen.

My last small gripe is with the start/stop button. Rather than press and release to start, the button must be pressed and held, just for a second but just long enough for it to be an annoyance.

First world problems.

Small gripes aside, so far the Aircross impresses in looks, comfort and build quality.



By Matt de Prez

Achieving the BMW's claimed fuel economy of 42-46mpg is proving a challenge for me, cementing my belief that the seemingly massive shift away from diesel is perhaps premature.

The best economy figure I've seen from the car's on-board readout is 38.8mpg on a sedate cruise from Peterborough to Coventry and since we took delivery of the vehicle in November, it's averaged 35mpg over about 2,000 miles.

I spent a week doing nothing but short urban trips – something we're told diesels are bad at – but the 118i fared poorly returning just 25.8mpg.

A colleague managed to squeeze 44.7mpg out of one journey in the car, but achieving it required considerable focus on efficient driving. On motorway journeys even large diesels can perform better than that.

The current 1 Series range offers three diesel engines; a 116PS 116d, a 150PS 118d and a soon-to-be-released 190PS 120d. These vehicles promise much better efficiency of up to 60mpg and, crucially, lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Our car's modest 1.5-litre three-cylinder petrol engine has a WLTP CO<sub>2</sub> emissions figure of 151g/km, boosted, in part, by its lengthy option list.

Were it to be registered after April 1 – as many ordered from now are likely to be – it would be placed in the 33% benefit-in-kind tax band.

In contrast, the RDE-compliant 116d will find itself in the 27% bracket.

The 118d, which offers an identical 8.5-second 0-62mph acceleration time to our 118i, will slot into the 32% band – although BMW says it is working towards making all its models RDE2-compliant by Spring, in which case it would fall to 28%.

We'd say the 118d is the pick of the bunch. Drivers might face slightly higher tax bills but they'll save on personal mileage and the 2.0-litre powertrain has a healthy dose of torque and excellent refinement.



## MAZDA3 SALOON 2.0 180PS SPORT

By Gareth Roberts

The Mazda3 faces some stiff competition in the compact saloon segment.

Our 2.0-litre four-cylinder Skyactiv-X Sport test car has impressed with its diesel-style compression ignition and a welcome amount of torque at low revs.

Emissions of 96g/km (NEDC-correlated), which equate to 23% benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax, and an achievable claimed combined fuel economy of 52.3mpg have also added to its fleet appeal.

In fact, on paper, the Mazda3 saloon stacks up well against rivals, which include the Honda Civic, the Mercedes-Benz A-Class and Audi A3 saloons.

The Civic starts from 91g/km for 1.6 i-DTEC manual, putting it in a BIK bracket of 26%, thanks to the 4% diesel premium. But a slightly lower P11D price, means it only equates to some £70 more in 2019/20 compared with a similar spec Mazda3, for a 20% taxpayer.

It fares even better against the A-Class saloon, which has emissions of 105g/km, attracting a BIK rate of 29%. An A-Class company car driver would pay £1,562 this tax year, £450 more than the Mazda.

The A3 saloon is the most expensive, however, with a company car driver paying some £550 more this tax year thanks to emissions of 113g/km and 30% BIK.

For the employer, the Mazda3 also stacks up well with a first year VED rate of £130, a subsequent annual charge of £145, and Class 1A NICs of £764.

The first year VED rate for the A-Class is £20 more, while it's an extra £40 for the A3. Expect to also pay £300-400 more in National Insurance Contributions for either of these two Mazda3 rivals.

While the tax position of the Civic measures up well to the Mazda3, it appears both employee and employer will have to assess the badge appeal of the Mercedes and Audi saloons against the additional cost they would incur.

However, it is worth considering the impact of Mazda's 2.0-litre petrol engine on fuel reimbursement rates.

Using the Government advisory fuel rates (AFRs), it would currently equate to 14 pence per mile (ppm), compared with 9ppm for a 1.6 diesel.

If a driver covered 20,000 miles a year in the Mazda, that could equate to the employer having to pay an additional £1,000, or 50% more, reimbursing their mileage.



## VOLVO XC60 D4 MOMENTUM

By Stephen Briers

Our enjoyment of the Volvo XC60 has taken a slight knock due to some technical gremlins.

Two messages recently flashed on the multimedia screen, both requiring a trip to the local dealership, Marshall Volvo in Peterborough. The first stated: 'SRS Airbag. Urgent Service. Drive to Workshop.' The second: 'Auto Hold. Service Required.'

The latter meant that the auto-hold handbrake function had stopped working – a minor irritant. The first warning seemed more imperative, but both issues were quickly resolved by a simple software download. And, importantly, the

airbag would've still inflated correctly if required.

Kudos to Marshall for its outstanding customer service. I completed a service form on its website and within 10 minutes an advisor had called me to book the car in. The job took around two hours, including complementary valet.

This is the second long-term Volvo that's run into software issues: on our Volvo XC40, a message popped up saying 'wiper failure – service required' (September 2019 review).

Sometime between occurring and the car going to the dealership, the fault rectified itself, but the service department confirmed the glitch and remedied the problem.



## ŠKODA SCALA 1.0 TSI SE L

By Sarah Tooze

Our Scala recently caught the eye of a local business owner, owing to its Rallye Green. She stopped me to say she loved the colour. I'm not so sure. It plays to Škoda's racing heritage, but the Scala isn't sporty enough to pull it off.

From Škoda's point of view, if it gets businesses noticing the brand then all the better.

Head of fleet Henry Williams recently admitted the focus for Scala last year was retail, although fleet still took more than half (55.6%) of its 1,658 sales. Of that, 20% went to true fleet, according to the brand's own figures.

Since the start of the year, however, Williams says Škoda has been "ramping up Scala for the

fleet sector" with marketing targeted at corporate end user customers and conversations with core fleet customers about how to make the Scala more attractive to their business. It's paying off as in January fleet had a 70.4% share of the 440 sold, with 34% of that being true fleet. Williams expects the true fleet mix to be around 30-35% this year.

The 115PS 1.0-litre petrol engine we're testing is proving the most popular (66% of sales, versus 18% for the 150PS, 10% for the 95PS output and just 7% for the 1.6 TDI 115PS).

Fleets are opting for a mix of SE and SE-L, dependent on whether the driver wants a built-in sat-nav (standard on the SE-L, while the SE has Apple CarPlay and Android Auto).





By Andrew Baxter

Marketing spiel aside, the Lexus UX cuts a stylish dash in the car park and our top-of-the-range Takumi model looks good in its £850 optional Sonic Titanium metallic paint finish.

In the UK, the UX is offered exclusively with a fourth-generation 'self-charging' hybrid powertrain. Available in both front-wheel drive (FWD) and all-wheel drive 'E-Four' drivetrains, the UX 250h combines a 2.0-litre four-cylinder petrol engine with a 650v synchronous electric motor on FWD models, while the E-Four gains a 216v induction motor at the rear.

Combined total power is 184PS for both variants,

with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions ranging from 94g/km for FWD vehicles fitted with 17-inch wheels, to 97g/km for those with 18-inch wheels, up to 103g/km for E-Four models. BIK ranges from 22% to 24% respectively, while VED costs are £120 for FWD models and £140 E-Four derivatives.

WLTP combined mpg figures are 49.5-53.2 for both FWD variants while the all-wheel-drive models dip to 46.3-47.

The Lexus UX 250h range starts at £29,905. Three specification levels are available: UX, F Sport, and Takumi. The Takumi has an on-the-road price of £39,105, when the optional metallic paint is included.

All models come with an impressive array of active and passive safety features as standard, which includes: Lexus Safety System+ with pre-collision system and pedestrian detection, adaptive cruise control, lane-keep assist, lane-trace assist, road sign assist and automatic high, beam/adaptive headlight system, electronic brakeforce distribution with brake-assist system, secondary collision brake, vehicle stability control, curtain shield airbags and traction control.

I'm really looking forward to clocking up some miles to see just how "infused with dynamic attitude" the Lexus UX 250h really is.



By Trevor Gehlcken

Last issue I picked out a few things about our long-term Vauxhall Combo I really like.

This month I want to vent my spleen about a few things that I'm not so keen on – although I must stress in advance that, even taking these rather meagre moans into account, I still hold this van in the highest esteem.

The lane departure system, which gently pulls on the wheel for you if it thinks you are straying off line, is my biggest gripe, although, luckily, I have worked out how to turn it off. It's okay on main roads and motorways, but traversing some narrow country

lanes near my holiday home in Devon seems to completely baffle the system, so it pulls this way and that as and when it feels like it.

I also find fault with the massive screen plonked in the middle of the dash giving out all sorts of info such as entertainment, sat-nav and rear parking camera. It works well enough but it seems to dominate the whole cab and often I find my eyes straying to it accidentally when they should be looking at the road.

And while I'm at it, I don't like the silly little switch you flick up to apply the electronic handbrake. Give me a good old-fashioned yank handle any day.

My final moan is of a practical nature – and it is simply that this van, with its smart metallic paint job, doesn't have a single plastic bump strip on it.

Knowing van drivers as I do, the Combo is quite likely to come back to base with a few added adornments caused by posts, walls and other protuberances. And when it does, instead of simply replacing a bit of plastic, the van will have to have some major surgery done on it to bring it back to its former glory. And that will cost an awful lot of money.

Gripes apart, I love this van to bits and will be sad when it returns to its Luton home next month.



# Commercial Fleet



## In search of flexible options on finance

The pros and cons of signing up to long contract hire agreements

PLUS: ELECTRIC VAN TRIALS • MAN SEEKS INCREASED MARKET SHARE • IVECO STRALIS 570 TESTED



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**VAUXHALL**

Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km). New Combo Cargo 70.6 (4.0). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 106 – 123g/km.<sup>#</sup>

Model shown New Combo Cargo L1 Limited Edition Nav with offside sliding side-access door (optional at extra cost) and Night Blue metallic paint (no-cost comparability into NEDC. The values do not take into account in particular use and driving conditions, equipment or options and may vary depending on

Van range: Urban 44.8 (6.3) – 65.6 (4.3), Extra-urban 57.6 (4.9) – 74.3 (3.8), Combined 52.3 (5.4) –

option). <sup>#</sup>Fuel consumption data and CO<sub>2</sub> emission data are determined using the WLTP test cycle, and the relevant values are translated back to allow the the format of tyres.





Leeds councillor James Lewis (left) with Highways England's Christopher Plumb

# Highways England plans more EV free trials after Leeds experiment

Electric vehicles purchased for the scheme will join the council fleet once trial is finished

By Gareth Roberts

Highways England hopes to fund more free electric van trials for local businesses, after launching a scheme in West Yorkshire.

Working with Leeds City Council, the operator of England's strategic road network (SRN) has spent almost £2 million on the project, with a further £920,000 coming from the local council.

The Highways England cash has already helped to buy close to 50 electric vehicles (EVs) – 24 Nissan e-NV200s, 20 Renault Kangoo ZE Maxis and five Nissan Leafs – through the council's existing vehicle procurement framework.

It says the money will be used to fund further EVs, with the trial fleet expected to consist of approximately 70 EVs by the end of the year.

Once the two-year scheme comes to an end, the trial EVs will join the

council's fleet, with no requirement for it to pay the original funding back to Highways England.

Christopher Plumb, air quality lead at Highways England, said: "Although this first scheme will be limited to West Yorkshire, we're actively discussing with lots of local authorities whether we can do the same elsewhere."

In 2015, Highways England was given £100m by Government to improve air quality between 2015 and 2021, with a directive that £75m must be spent before March 2020.

Plumb told delegates at the Energy Saving Trust Fleet Heroes conference he would like to invest more of the cash with councils.

He said: "We think this is a great way to ensure people switch to ultra-low emission vehicles."

"Discussions are ongoing and we hope to give them money before the end of this financial year."

## ACCELERATE UPTAKE

Highways England published its air quality fund plan in 2018, outlining how it wanted to improve the quality of air on the SRN, by reducing concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>).

In addition, it said it wanted to help achieve wider air quality benefits, like local plans for clean air that include sections of the SRN, and supporting the transition to zero-emission fleets on the roads it manages.

However, a Freedom of Information (FOI) request last November, revealed that Highways England had spent only £12.8m of the £75m designated in the air quality fund.

Plumb said: "It's been no secret that it's been quite challenging finding the best way to invest that pot so it will improve air quality."

"But, one great way is to accelerate the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs)."

Highways England previously worked with Energy Saving Trust to identify what were the barriers to business uptake of ULEVs.

"One of the things we identified was people just wanted to try them," said Plumb.

The highways authority first funded a six-month 'try before you buy' pilot project, involving 17 electric vans and five fleets across England, which ended in April 2018.

South Yorkshire Police's facilities management and driver services teams received five Nissan e-NV200s as part of the scheme, which led to them electrifying further vehicles on the fleet. (See *Fleet News*, June 2019)

## HELPING FLEETS

This latest initiative with Leeds City Council fits Highways England's air quality fund objective of supporting local authorities as they deliver the Government's air quality plan,

including implementing, where required, clean air zones (CAZs).

Leeds was set to introduce a charging CAZ on January 1, but it has been delayed twice due to problems with a Government online vehicle-checking tool, which is crucial to the scheme.

The city council says it will confirm their 'go-live' date next month, with buses, HGVs, taxis and private hire vehicles that fail to meet the required emissions standards paying a daily fee to enter the zone.

Car and vans won't be charged to enter the CAZ, which covers all roads within the boundary of the A61 and A63 near Leeds city centre.

However, Euro6 or earlier diesel buses and coaches and HGVs will be charged £50 per day. Taxis and private hire vehicles, which are Euro5 diesel or earlier, or Euro3 petrol or earlier, will pay £12.50 per day.

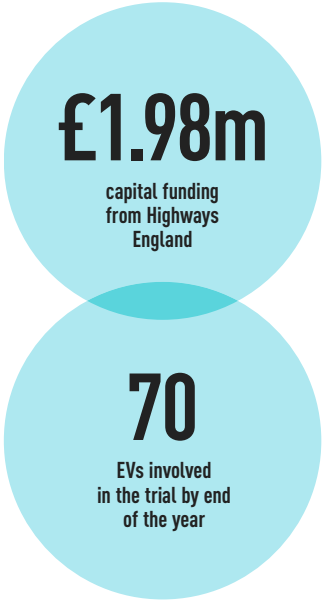
In preparation for the CAZ, local businesses have been awarded more than £3.7m by the council to help them upgrade their vehicles.

New licensing data reveals that taxi and private hire operators in the city have replaced around 1,000 diesel and petrol vehicles with lower emission hybrid, electric or LPG-powered vehicles since last January.

Additionally, it has helped dozens of operators of HGVs, buses and coaches upgrade or retrofit around 170 larger vehicles.

The council has also been able to draw on its experience of operating plug-in vehicles. Councillor James Lewis, executive member with responsibility for air quality at Leeds City Council, explained: "We've been working over a number of years to build up our own fleet of EVs and we want to share that expertise."

The council currently operates



more than a hundred EVs and the fleet is expected to number some 300 units by April.

That knowledge, and the fact Highways England was keen to drive down emissions to within legal limits along the A61 near Leeds, were key to the development of the new EV trial for local businesses.

## BUSINESS CASE

The free scheme is open to public, private and third-sector vehicle operators that currently operate at least one petrol or diesel vehicle and are based in West Yorkshire to trail an electric van. Private hire drivers are required to be licensed in Leeds.

Once an operator has registered interest in the scheme and is deemed suitable, it will have the journey profile of a petrol or diesel vehicle it operates assessed, using a telematics device, to understand whether an EV could work in theory before being loaned one under the trial.

The city council has partnered with EV specialists at Electric Blue to provide it with the telematics hardware and software to analyse data to establish the difference in ownership costs between an organisation's existing vehicle and the trial EV.

Electric Blue has experience of conducting this type of analysis to build the business case for electrification of different fleets.

If organisations are already operating telematics in their fleet, an additional device may not have to be fitted if data can be provided in a suitable format to conduct the analysis.

Operators offered a trial vehicle for two months will be required to insure the EV, with the council providing cover for a small number of vehicles employed by small organisations.

Cllr Lewis said: "We know that changing to electric vehicles would be a leap in the dark for some so this trial is to support businesses to understand the charging regime without having to make an upfront financial commitment."



“WE’RE ACTIVELY DISCUSSING WITH LOTS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES WHETHER WE CAN DO THE SAME (FREE TRAIL) ELSEWHERE”

CHRISTOPHER PLUMB, HIGHWAYS ENGLAND

## FREE ELECTRICITY

There were more than 290 public EV charge points in West Yorkshire as of October 2019, including 141 in Leeds, 48 in Bradford, 34 in Wakefield and 19 in Calderdale.

Leeds City Council is also working in partnership with Engie and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to install 88 new rapid charging bays across the county.

At least 30 of these new charge bays will be installed in Leeds by March 2020 and each of these

chargers will be free to use until October 2021 when the scheme ends. More than 250 businesses have already expressed their interest in the free EV trial and Cllr Lewis says if it proves really popular, and the funding is available, it may look at extending the scheme.

He concluded: "We'd encourage businesses and organisations from across the region to consider taking up a free trial. EVs could help them save on running costs while reducing levels of pollution in Leeds."



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# Ford

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SEARCH: NEW TRANSIT

COMMERCIAL FLEET: NEWS

## MAN seeks bigger market share, but not at any price, says UK MD

Manufacturer injects £20m into its own dealerships ahead of TGS and TGX launches

By Steve Banner

**M**AN is investing heavily in its dealer network with the launch of the new TGS and TGX imminent; but UK managing director, Thomas Hemmerich, has no plans to mount a grab for big-volume truck registrations at the expense of profitability.

At present MAN's truck market share hovers at around 9.2% to 9.3%.

He would like to achieve a 10% share, and go beyond it. However, he has no intention of forcing the issue by 'buying' sales through heavy discounting and lots of short-term buy-back deals; approaches that could eventually dent residual values.

Nor does he plan to use MAN Rental as a means of boosting registrations artificially.

"At one time the MAN Rental fleet totalled 3,000 units, but it's now down to 1,000," he said. "We've backed off from doing rental business ourselves and we're happy to support specialists such as Dawson-group instead."

"What I want is sustainable, healthy growth," he continued. "To achieve that, however, you need to have the right support network in place."



“WE WON'T SEE BATTERY-ELECTRIC AND FUEL CELL TRUCKS USED ON LONG-HAUL WORK BEFORE 2030”

THOMAS HEMMERICH,  
MAN



The eTGM all-electric 26-tonner has been on trial in Austria for the past 18 months

As a consequence MAN has invested £20 million in the 17 dealerships it owns. Its sites at Nuneaton in Warwickshire, Bellshill near Glasgow and Broxburn, not far from Edinburgh, have all been revamped, and a new £5m branch has been opened on a 3.3-acre site in Gateshead, Tyne and Wear.

A new branch will open in Stockton-on-Tees this year, too.

Including privately-owned dealerships as well as its own sites, MAN has 70 British locations. "We aim to increase that to 85 over the next four years," Hemmerich said.

Truck operators are notorious for having long memories.

So, are the severe reliability problems MAN experienced with early versions of the Euro V EGR D26 engine still an issue?

"They remain in the minds of some customers, but it's something we've now overcome," Hemmerich said.

Fleet successes in recent months include the 26 TGLs and TGMs, a mixture of 7.5- and 18-tonners with flatbed bodies, supplied to Blok 'N' Mesh. It manufactures, delivers and installs site hoardings, temporary fencing, barriers and traffic management systems.

Moving down the weight scale, MAN has supplied 92 TGEs to non-emergency ambulance provider

Falck for use on patient transfer work. TGE shares the same design as Volkswagen's Crafter.

While the 2020 truck market could potentially fall to 36,000 registrations, Hemmerich estimates it is more likely to reach around 40,000; a view pretty much shared by Daf managing director, Laurence Drake, who doubts it will venture beyond 41,000.

Diesel will dominate this year and for the foreseeable future – "for now a Euro VI diesel remains the safest bet," according to Hemmerich – but interest in battery electric trucks is rising. MAN has built a number of eTGM all-electric 26-tonne trucks and has had eTGM on trial with customers in Austria since September 2018.

"But, while everybody is talking about electric trucks, they become less enthusiastic when you start discussing hard figures," Hemmerich said. "We've had lots of inquiries from big companies but they're not necessarily willing to sign orders."

"I'm sure battery-electric and fuel cell trucks are the future, but we won't see them used on long-haul work before 2030," he added. With a range of 125 miles between recharges, the eTGM is designed for short-haul work.

MAN is, nevertheless, gradually

preparing its dealers for the arrival of electric vehicles.

Gateshead has four double-vehicle charging points and its workshop has extra-wide bays to make it easier to remove and replace battery packs.

That makes sense given that right-hand-drive versions of the battery-powered eTGE van will appear on this side of the Channel during 2020.

"It will be at the Commercial Vehicle Show in April and go on sale shortly afterwards," Hemmerich said. "It's already attracting huge interest from customers in places such as London and Manchester."

He believes this interest should soon translate into sales; the advent of London's ultra-low emission zone (ULEZ) means there is a good business case for running eTGE in the capital in particular.

Falck has been busy trialling a left-hand-drive eTGE in London.

Its zero-emission status is not its only advantage, according to Hemmerich. "The low noise levels of electric vehicles make them a great solution for early morning deliveries," he said; something dairies discovered many years ago, of course, when they first issued electric milk floats with lead acid batteries to milkmen.



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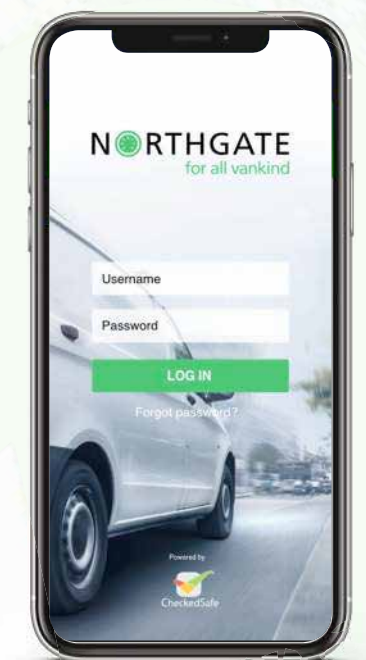


If Vanonomics sounds like it can help keep your business driving forward, get in touch. It really is that simple.

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At a time when little is certain and businesses need to be agile and flexible, it just isn't economically or operationally efficient to own company vehicles. As a result, we are seeing more businesses than ever turn to us to take care of their fleets.



At Northgate, our core objective is to help our customers keep their businesses on the road with a solution that is tailored to their needs. With a wide range of hire options and bespoke fleet management services, we take all worries away and ensure that our customers can remain efficient and successful. That's what we call Vanonomics.

We understand that times are changing and so are our customers' needs. That is why we are continually investing in our people, technology, systems and products to ensure that we can address all our customers' fleet concerns. In the last twelve months alone, we have made significant investments in our products and services to provide fleet managers with all the support they need in an increasingly challenging world of business. I'm extremely proud that we have been recognised for our efforts in this area by being voted Fleet News Reader Recommended Rental Company for the second year running.

To give you an overview of the biggest changes our team has introduced recently, let's start with our new hire option, **VanHire+**. It combines our award winning **12months+** plan, including a telematics package and optional fuel cards, with a unique damage allowance that gives fleet managers peace of mind.

We have also started offering our customers the opportunity to hire a wider choice of vehicles from outside our traditional offering, such as cars, 4x4s, minibuses, specialist vehicles and HGVs.

And as these vehicles can be available for short as well as long term hire, we are giving our customers the ability to react quickly if their vehicle needs change.

To help with ongoing fleet management, we've launched a new **Vehicle Inspection App** that removes the hassle of dealing with paperwork to inspect vehicles. Fleet managers can schedule inspections, so drivers carry out checks at the right times. The app allows drivers to complete checks in a matter of minutes and submit results, with photos, in real time.

We're working hard to ensure our customers can keep their drivers on the road and mitigate any negative impact of downtime. Our new **Telematics** solutions provide customers with visibility over vehicles and driver activity, and finally we've also come up with a new **Accident Management** service to take care of road incidents, vehicle theft and vandalism on our customers' behalf.

We are also working with many of our customers to make their LCV fleets more environmentally friendly. For example: they can benefit from the reduced operating costs of electric vans, whilst we use our buying power and expertise to manage the cost of ownership, which is something that currently deters many potential users.

We believe that commercial vehicles should enable businesses to do what they do best, rather than become a drain on financial resources and fleet managers' time. With Vanonomics, any business can get ahead.



**Neil McCrossan,**  
Sales & Marketing Director,  
Northgate



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PEUGEOT RECOMMENDS TOTAL Official Fuel Consumption in mpg (and l/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions obtained for the PEUGEOT Expert van range are: Combined 35.9 (7.9) – 44.2 (6.4) and CO<sub>2</sub> 148 – 130 g/km.

The fuel consumption you achieve, and CO<sub>2</sub> produced, in real world conditions will depend upon a number of factors: including the accessories fitted (post registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test (WLTP<sup>^</sup>) used to measure fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures. The fuel consumption figures shown in this advert are calculated under the WLTP test. The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown are NEDC equivalent (NEDCeq), calculated using EC correlation tool which converts WLTP figures to NEDC figures, however, these NEDCeq figures are based on the outgoing test cycle (NEDC<sup>^</sup>) and will be used to calculate tax for first registration. Figures shown are for comparison purposes. You should only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other vehicles tested using the same technical standard. <sup>^</sup>WLTP: Worldwide harmonised Light vehicles Test Procedure. <sup>^^</sup>NEDC: New European Driving Cycle. Model shown is PEUGEOT Expert Sport Edition Standard wheelbase panel van in Bianca White. \* Calls are free of charge from all consumer landlines and mobile phones. If you are calling from a business phone, you should check with your provider whether there will be a charge for calling an 0800 number.

## COMMERCIAL FLEET: COMPLIANCE

### FTA ADVICE

By Ray Marshall, senior transport advisor, FTA

**Q** Our drivers need to carry two 11kg propane gas bottles as part of their role when on roofing jobs. Would they require any ADR dangerous goods training?

**A** In this quantity and provided the carriage of these bottles is ancillary to the main activity, then

they fall outside the provision of ADR. However, if the bottles are constantly carried on the vehicle as part of the load then the driver would require 'awareness training' and a 2kg dry powder fire extinguisher would have to be carried in the vehicle's cab.

**Q** Although the bulk of our fleet is light goods vehicles (LGVs) and operates under EU drivers' hours rules, a small part comprises 3.5-tonne gross vehicle weight (GVW) vans for parcel deliveries. What drivers' hours rules should the drivers of these 3.5t vehicles be working under?

**A** The majority of goods vehicles that are exempt from EU hours rules will come under GB domestic rules. Your 3.5t vehicles would come under these rules, which are contained in the 1968 Transport Act. Drivers under GB domestic rules are limited to a maximum of 11 hours' duty in any working day. Where a driver does not drive for more than four hours on each day of the week, they will be



exempt from the daily duty limit for the whole week. Within the daily duty period, a driver is limited to a maximum of 10 hours' driving per working day. The definition of a working day under GB domestic rules is a 24-hour period, beginning with the start of duty time. This must always be considered when calculating a driver's daily duty and driving periods.

## Two new traffic commissioners appointed

It has been announced that Victoria Davies will be the new traffic commissioner for Wales and Gerallt Evans will be the new traffic commissioner for the North-West of England.

The senior traffic commissioner, Richard Turfitt, said of the appointments: "I am delighted Victoria and Gerallt have been appointed to the traffic commissioner team. They bring with them valuable experience of legal process and regulation, which will be used to great effect in serving the communities of their respective traffic areas. I genuinely look forward to working with them."

The two will be taking up their posts this month.

Traffic commissioners are responsible for the licensing and regulation of bus, coach and goods vehicle operators, and registration of local bus

services. Where appropriate, they can call operators to a public inquiry to examine concerns about vehicle and driver safety. They also deal with professional drivers at conduct hearings.

### VICTORIA DAVIES

Davies has more than 25 years' legal experience. Since 2010 she has worked as a senior lawyer managing the transport team for the Welsh Government. Before that, she spent eight years working for the Department for Transport as a senior advisory lawyer for various divisions, including for the Road Transport Advisory Division.

### GERALLT EVANS

Evans has extensive experience working in the



legal profession with more than 30 years of experience as a solicitor. For nearly all this time, he has worked as a prosecutor for the Crown Prosecution Service either in Wales or at its London HQ. He is currently deputy chief crown prosecutor with responsibility for all prosecutions in Magistrates' Courts in Wales.

## Health and safety at work: criminal and civil law



Both criminal and civil law apply to workplace health and safety. They are not the same. As an employer, you must protect your workers and others from getting hurt or ill through work.

### IF YOU DON'T:

- A regulator such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or local authority may take action against you under criminal law;
- The person affected may make a claim for compensation against you under civil law.

Neither HSE nor local authorities have responsibility for applying civil law or setting the rules for the conduct of civil cases.

### CRIMINAL LAW

Under health and safety law, as an employer you have a responsibility to protect workers and others from risk to their health and safety. Health and safety laws are mostly enforced by the HSE or the local authority. Responsibility for enforcement depends on the type of workplace.

GB health and safety law comprises acts of Parliament and statutory instruments (regulations). The main piece of legislation is the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA). Certain work activities have specific regulations, such as those for construction work or working with asbestos.

No one needs to have been harmed for an offence to be committed under HSWA – there only has to be a risk of harm.

The most important thing is what you actually do to manage and control risk in the workplace; paperwork alone does not prove you are complying with the law.

If you do not comply with a relevant regulation, you may be committing an offence and could:

- Get verbal or written advice.
- Get an improvement or prohibition notice.
- Be prosecuted.

### CIVIL LAW

If you meet your responsibilities under health and safety law, you will reduce the risk of being found negligent under civil law.

Under civil law, if someone has been injured or made ill through your negligence as an employer, they may be able to make a compensation claim against you. You can also be found liable if someone who works for you has been negligent and caused harm to another. If a claim is successful, a court may make a judgment against you and award 'damages' to compensate for the pain, losses and suffering caused. This is not a criminal conviction.

In most cases, employers must have employers' liability insurance. This will enable you to meet the cost of compensation for your employees' injuries or illness. It is a criminal offence not to have it.

Your insurer can give you guidance on managing and controlling risks. They may ask you to keep certain types of evidence to show you have taken steps to manage the risks your work creates.

Do not be tempted to overstate the measures you have or are planning to put in place to manage the risks, as this may put you at a disadvantage if you have to defend a claim.



# IN SEARCH OF FLEXIBLE OPTIONS ON FINANCE

Pros and cons of agreeing long contract hire agreements are examined by *John Lewis*

**T**ruck fleet operators distributing goods on behalf of third parties are increasingly seeking greater funding flexibility. Their own customers may be offering shorter contracts than they did in the past, with no guarantee of renewal, which makes commitment to a long-term finance deal more risky.

As a consequence, a fleet might be more inclined to sign up to a two-year deal than a four- or five-year one.

"If you enter into a five-year contract hire agreement, but the contract you have with your customer only covers a couple of years, then you have to work out what you are going to do with those vehicles once those two years are up," says David Potter, managing director of

Wolverhampton-based Asset Alliance Group.

The group operates across four sites and has 4,800 CVs out on contract hire to a wide variety of clients. It also runs a 400-plus rental fleet.

Simply sending vehicles back early is always an option, but can be financially painful. Not all manufacturers are prepared to include break clauses in the deals they offer.

The penalty levied is typically calculated as a percentage of the finance payments that would have been made had the agreement run its course, and could total thousands of pounds.

"If you sign up for three years, you're on the hook for three years," warns Peter Collins, MAN Financial Services director. MAN's line-up includes the Volkswagen Crafter-based TGE van as well as trucks.

The penalty can be mitigated dependent on the circumstances.

If a fleet, for example, is returning a dozen 3.5-tonne vans because its pattern of business has changed, but it needs the same number of 7.5-tonne trucks instead and is happy to remain loyal to the leasing company concerned, then any penalty imposed is likely to shrink substantially.

"What can make a real difference is if the contract hire company is able to place the returned vehicles with another operator who is, in effect, able to take over the agreement, and keep making the payments," says Neil Galloway, Renault Trucks Financial Services sales director. Renault Trucks markets the Master van alongside its truck range.

Even if their own customers are offering shorter contracts, many transport firms still favour longer contract hire deals – despite the risk of an expensive early termination – because the monthly instalments are lower, says Collins. "They want the cheapest rate they can get," he adds.

They also calculate that if they lose a contract, then they will probably be able to replace it. Inertia and the work involved in switching from one transport company to another mean that some contracts remain in place for many years.

Longer agreements also have the advantage of allowing operators to predict a big chunk of their costs with some certainty – assuming the agreement does not have to be curtailed suddenly – for some time ahead. Statutory inspections, MOT tests and tyres can all be covered by the regular payments, as well as service and repair.

Short-term agreements sound as though they might be expensive, but much depends on how the residual value (RV) of the vehicle is viewed, suggests Potter. "There is an appetite in the used market at present for younger second-hand assets specified to a good standard and buyers will pay a premium for them," he says.

Nailing down RVs over a longer period is, in fact, proving to be more of a challenge say

some industry insiders given rising hostility towards diesels. More and more local authorities may take a tougher line over their admittance to city centres in future, with Oxford already planning an outright ban.

So, if lessors conclude that secondhand diesel CVs will be worth significantly less in a few years' time than they are now, what implications will that have for operators' costs? RVs help determine the size of the monthly contract hire payments fleets have to make.

There are ways to keep payments down, but they are likely to involve more expense for fleets somewhere along the line.

"It may, for example, be possible for the customer to put down a higher initial deposit, or make a balloon payment at the end," says Dave Hickman, Scania Financial Services sales and marketing director.

The impact of tougher regulations on inner-city transport on diesel trucks should not be exaggerated though, given that many of them never go anywhere near city centres and residual values are fairly robust at present, adds Collins.

However, they could be affected if there is a significant downturn in the economy in three or four years' time; and Brexit contains many unknowns.

## ALTERNATIVE FUELS

So where does this leave the RVs of commercials powered by alternative fuels? Caution prevails, with some lessors wary of being too bullish about the second-hand value of anything propelled by compressed natural gas or liquefied natural gas because they view them as an interim step towards the more widespread adoption of battery-electric models, including hydrogen fuel cell.

They have reservations about battery-electrics too, which revolve around the question of how long the battery will last. If it is warranted for, say, four years, then offering a five-year deal could be problematic.

"We wouldn't want to be responsible for the battery in its final year," Potter comments.

Manufacturers are caught in a cleft stick. With operators as wary of gambling on the likely future value of electric trucks as the leasing companies are, they have to be prepared to underwrite the risk themselves if they are going to start selling them in volume.

The fact remains that a manufacturer has to stand by its products, says Collins. That is despite the fact that there are no hard and fast views on the residuals of vehicles powered by alternative fuels and no definitive matrix to act as a reference point.

One way of approaching this challenge as far as electric commercial vehicles are concerned, suggests Galloway, is to say that if a battery offering better performance and longer life appears, say, three years into a five-year agreement, then the existing battery will be removed, and the new one installed.

"Once that's done, we'll reschedule the instalments," he says.

Won't that mean the client ends up paying a lot more? Galloway doesn't think so because ☞

## SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By **Stuart Russell**  
commercial vehicle sales director,  
**Europcar Vans**



Who'd want to be a commercial vehicle fleet manager in 2020? There are so many unknowns. Of course, economic uncertainty comes top of the list – making many businesses want to swerve long-term financial commitments.

But a much more immediate unknown is the impact of WLTP and how that will affect tax rates for everything other than the lowest of low emission vehicles. How can a fleet manager make the right van choices for their business when they don't know what road tax they're going to be paying beyond 2021.

The reality is there isn't one simple answer to these challenges. But what can make life a bit easier is finding supply partners who apply a flexible approach to how they work with their customers.

Collaboration is vital – whether that's collaboration between different suppliers like leasing and rental companies to provide businesses with flexible commercial vehicle options or collaboration between customers and suppliers to have the clearest possible understanding of commercial challenges so they can work together to find the right solutions.

Identifying innovation that will deliver greater insight into CV usage – such as telematics and dashcams – is also an important facet that any business should look for from their vehicle supplier.

But the bottom line is today's fleet managers need to find partners who offer flexibility at all levels of the business relationship.

**Europcar**  
VANS & TRUCKS



Ryder has won a contract hire deal to supply 162 Dafs to Elis





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“TRANSPORT FIRMS  
STILL FAVOUR LONGER  
CONTRACT HIRE  
DEALS BECAUSE THE  
INSTALMENTS ARE  
LOWER”

PETER COLLINS, MAN  
FINANCIAL SERVICES

the vehicle's residuals should be enhanced. “Payments could come down, stay as they are, or perhaps increase slightly,” he suggests. “It’s a bit of a leap of faith though.”

Hydrogen fuel cells represent even more of a leap of faith although many believe they are the only viable solution for long-haul trucks.

To boost their appeal, US-based hydrogen fuel cell truck pioneer Nikola – now engaged in a joint venture with Iveco – is offering vehicles under a seven-year/700,000-mile leasing agreement in its home market.

The deal includes maintenance and fuel as well as the truck itself. It is possible that the fuel cell Nikola Tre – to be marketed through Iveco dealerships, and due to be in service with operators in 2023 – will be supplied on this side of the Atlantic under a similar arrangement.

#### ONEROUS RETURN CONDITIONS

Regardless of the method of propulsion selected, worries continue among truck fleets that they will be hit hard by onerous return conditions if they ink a contract hire deal. If they deal with Scania then their worries are groundless, insists Hickman.

“Our conditions are governed by our fair wear and tear guidelines and our vehicles are inspected by an independent third party assessor when they come back,” he says. It is the assessor rather than somebody from Scania who decides what is chargeable.

Steve Williams, sales manager at VFS Financial Services, the finance arm of Volvo Trucks, says: “We have a fair set of return conditions that are made clear to the customer from the start.”

Wear and tear in line with the truck’s age and the work it has been on is acceptable, but damage which should have been repaired – broken exterior mirrors and big dents in both the cab doors, for example – is not.

There are other penalties that can be levied.

“You may, of course, be penalised if you exceed the mileage agreed at the start of the agreement,” warns Galloway. A trend towards excess mileage

should be picked up long before the lease expires and the agreement re-written accordingly.

“You can also switch trucks around from high-mileage to low-mileage work and vice versa, to equalise the mileage,” says Paccar Financial UK managing director, Steve Barfoot.

Like their truck counterparts, some light commercial operators are having to switch to shorter-term funding arrangements in line with the policies pursued by their own customers. Others are able to enjoy the stability of longer-term agreements dependent on the nature of the business they are engaged in.

Last year, Scottish plant hire specialist AB2K obtained 31 Mercedes-Benz Citan vans on a four-year full-service contract hire agreement with Fraikin. Based at sites in Aberdeen, Glasgow and Inverness, they are covering up to 30,000 miles annually.

AB2K was acquired by Quattro Group in 2018. Fraikin won the business on the back of supplying more than 150 vans to Quattro in 2017.

Formerly known as AB2000, AB2K used to buy its vans outright.

“Moving to contract hire allows us to take advantage of fixed monthly pricing, and knowing exactly how much we’re paying each month makes planning fleet replacement intervals a whole lot simpler,” says Jon Sherred, Quattro Group area manager.

A key reason behind the company’s decision to sign up with Fraikin is FraikinView.

It allows the operator to monitor the maintenance of its vans through a web portal. Areas covered include defect reports, service records and the speed with which breakdowns are handled.

Web portals of this type are especially important for O-licence holders.

Switching to a full-service contract hire agreement does not mean fleets can off-load all responsibility for ensuring their trucks are properly maintained to a third party. They need to keep a close eye on what is being done to their vehicles; blaming a third party workshop if brake defects and other faults are discovered in a roadside check will not impress the traffic commissioner.

That is something recognised by Newport, South Wales-based meat wholesaler Deliserve.

Fraikin supplies it with refrigerated vehicles from 3.5 tonnes upwards, including 7.5- and 18-tonners, under contract hire, and manages servicing and repairs. Deliserve uses FraikinView to monitor all scheduled and unscheduled maintenance work.

Major contract hire companies have engineering teams that may be able to come up with packages that can save operators cash.

Ryder has recently supplied Kuehne + Nagel (K+N) with 78 Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 314CDI 3.5-tonners equipped with refrigerated bodies built by Solomon. They are being used on a distribution contract the logistics group has with Costa Coffee.

As part of the deal, K+N is trialling Trailar solar technology sourced from Ryder.

Thin solar matting is applied to the body’s roof and connected to a smart charge controller which works in conjunction with the vehicle’s battery



Deliserve uses FraikinView to monitor scheduled and unscheduled maintenance work



Rental rate for electric vans is likely to be double that of diesel, says Europcar



and alternator. The harvested energy contributes to powering the fridge's fans as well as running the vehicle's heating, air-conditioning, forward-facing cameras and other items of ancillary equipment.

Net result? Fuel consumption is down by around 7.8%, says Ryder.

Ryder has also won a contract hire deal to supply 162 Dafs grossing at from 7.5-to-18 tonnes to Elis. They are mainly used to collect and deliver laundry, and Ryder engineers worked with Elis and bodybuilder Bevan to design improved restraining straps and mountings to secure the laundry cages while they are being transported.

One option for fleets that do not want to be tied into a contract hire agreement is to choose a long-term rental deal that allows them to send vehicles back almost at a moment's notice. However, such deals have their drawbacks.

While hire fleets are usually willing to provide long-term rental clients with vehicles with basic equipment such as amber warning beacons, and to allow them to apply their own livery, vehicles that are completely unique to the customer's individual requirements can be far more problematic.

That is because it may be difficult for the rental fleet to hire them out again if they are sent back.

Demand for rental is increasing nevertheless, says Tim Bailey, fleet director at van hire giant Northgate, because businesses want increased flexibility.

#### ISN'T FLEXIBILITY EXPENSIVE?

"Commit to us for at least a year, and you will find the rental rate you pay is very comparable to the contract hire rate," Bailey replies. Send back the vans you have hired after just three months and you will simply have to find the difference between the standard three-month rate and the discounted 12-month rate you were paying.

Of the 50,000 light commercials Northgate has on its books, just 60 are electric. More are sure to be added, but operators will have to come to terms with paying more to hire them, says Bailey, because they are so expensive to acquire.



**CUSTOMERS WANT TO INCREASE AND DECREASE THE SIZE OF THEIR FLEETS AT THE DROP OF A HAT**

**STUART RUSSELL,  
EUROPCAR MOBILITY GROUP**

Europcar Mobility Group commercial vehicle sales director, Stuart Russell, takes the same view. "So far as we are concerned, the rental rate is likely to be twice that of the equivalent diesel van," he says.

The higher rate can, of course, be offset against the low cost of the electricity needed to power electric light commercials compared with the price of diesel.

"The demand for electric models isn't really there at present though," he adds.

Now with 8,000 light commercials up to 3.5 tonnes available to rent, Europcar saw its van hire business grow 40% last year, says Russell.

Partly this was driven by the uncertainty surrounding Brexit, but partly it was due to major changes taking place in the economy; the move towards online shopping and the widespread closure of traditional high street shops, for example.

"If things are uncertain, customers want the flexibility rental can offer," he comments. "They want to increase and decrease the size of their fleets at the drop of a hat."

He expects to see growth of around 23% this year.

Flexibility has its limits, however. If customers commit to a minimum three-month rental deal and send the vehicle back after just two months, then they will be charged for the entire rental period, says Russell.

"We're quite clear about this in advance and the package rate we quote reflects this policy," he says.

Moving up the weight scale, John Fletcher, Dawsongroup Truck and Trailer managing director, says truck hire remains quite buoyant.

"Rental trucks are increasingly becoming a core part of many fleets," he adds.

Once again, as in the van market, the need for flexibility is helping to underpin demand. "Business is facing a shifting landscape," he says.

Around 6,000 of the firm's vehicles are available for rent while the balance are out on contract hire.

"The boundaries between long-term rental and contract hire have become increasingly blurred though," Fletcher comments.

Some smaller transport fleets use hire purchase for some of their requirements. Interest in this option has been stimulated by the current availability of generous capital allowances.

Allowances of up to £1 million can be claimed against profits under a temporary arrangement introduced on January 1, 2019. It expires at the end of this year.

Modes of acquisition have altered little in their fundamentals over the decades. Could that change with the advent of new automotive technologies?

One option could be the introduction of pence-per-mile deals – something that has been suggested on a number of occasions over the years – perhaps based around a pool of vans and trucks that operators could draw on as and when needed.

"Pence-per-mile deals could work in the future as vehicles become more and more connected," says Barfoot. "But the asset would still have to be funded while it was standing idle."



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COMMERCIAL FLEET: FIRST DRIVE



## IVECO STRALIS 570

High-powered Stralis measures up well against competition

By Tim Campbell

**G**iven the current quest for zero or lower carbon-powered trucks, Iveco's high powered diesels are keeping a bit of a low profile. Indeed, the manufacturer seems to be spending a lot of time on its Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) products.

In the light of all this clean air pressure, one can't help wondering "is diesel a dead duck?".

To answer this, we thought it was time to put the Stralis 570PS through its paces.

Most experts agree there will not be one outright solution in the clean air debate, but a mixture of variables dependent on issues such as location, geography, range, payload and emissions zone types. Obviously that's not an exhaustive list.

The good news for the 570 is that, for the foreseeable future, it appears the latest generation Euro VI diesels will continue to have a role to play, especially in the long-haul trucking arena.

Therefore, Iveco still needs to continue to offer a competitive Euro VI diesel-powered tractor unit.

Iveco has an excellent global reputation for its diesel engine whether on or off highway, marine or industrial. In fact, it is so successful it has a separate company selling these products to global suppliers

under the Fiat Power Train umbrella (FPT).

The Cursor 13 Euro VI D engine is at the top of the tree when it comes to power for Iveco's tractor unit range. The 12.9-litre has a maximum power of 420 kW (570PS) @ 1,900rpm and maximum torque 2,500 Nm @ 1,000rpm.

The engine has a variable geometry turbocharger and electronic management ensures a better power/torque delivery, based on factors such as engine loading, better driveability and fuel consumption.

Behind the engine flywheel is a single dry plate 430mm (17-inch) diameter clutch which matches up to an automated Hi-Tronix gearbox featuring an electro-pneumatic clutch actuator where a travel sensor reports the clutch's actual position to the control unit.

Stralis has two wheelbases in a 6x2 configuration basically 3.8m and 4m measured from the Iveco front axle to the centre line between the rear bogie which has an ArvinMeritor single reduction rear axle.

The single leaf front suspension is rated at 7.5 tonnes and the rear bogie has a six bellows pneumatic suspension with a raising ranging to 100mm and can be lowered by 80mm i.e. 180 mm in total. The mid axle is rated at 7.5 tonnes and the drive axle 11.5 tonnes. The kerbweight is 8,040kgs (10kgs extra for longer wheelbase) and includes driver (75 kg), full fuel tank, AdBlue (if present), tool kit and spare wheel, when fitted.

Electronic braking and safety systems include standard features such as electronic stability programme, advanced emergency braking, adaptive cruise control, downhill cruise control and lane departure warning system.

The Stralis cab has been through a couple of revisions both inside and outside and, of course, for a long-haul truck a sleeper cab is standard. At the front, there's LED daytime running lights (DRL) and Xenon headlights. The windows are tinted and there are external storage lockers on both sides of the cab. Inside, the overall colour is a mixture of black and grey. The driver's seat is air suspended, heated



The cab, which has been through a couple of revisions, is due to be replaced later in the year

and ventilated system with an armrest and an integral head rest.

As you climb the four steps into the cab, you're welcomed by a very comfortable air suspended drivers seat and as it was a cold day, I quickly turned on the seat heating.

Turning the key, which is a little old fashioned nowadays, brought the engine and instrument cluster into life, with an impressive array of check lights (27 in total) and a LCD screen.

After the checks are complete, it's literally a case of pressing the large 'D' button for drive on the left of the instrument panel and releasing the small lever just underneath to the side.

Our route was mainly up and down the M6 and I was immediately struck by how quiet the cab was, a lot quieter than anticipated for a high horsepower engine. At a steady 90kph (56mph), the engine was working at around 1,150rpm well within the 1,000-1,500rpm green economy zone. Indeed, there wasn't too much wind noise, but I think that was a more due to the still day.

It's no big secret that later this year the Stralis is to be replaced by the next generation cab, the 'S-Way', but, despite this, the cab still stacks up well against some of the competition and the same can be said for the driveline.

### MODEL TESTED IVECO STRALIS XP 570

SPECIFICATIONS	
Model	AS440S57TX/P XP6x2C
GVW/GCW	26000kgs/44000kgs
Payload	35950kgs
Wheelbase	4000mm
Engine	Cursor 12.9 litre
Power bhp	570bhp (420kW)@1900rpm
Torque Nm	2500Nm @1000-1500rpm
Gearbox	Hi-Tronix 12 spd automated
Suspension	Parabolic Front & Air Rear



# THE LAST WORD

## TIM BAILEY

FLEET DIRECTOR UK & IRELAND, NORTHGATE VEHICLE HIRE

People who make assumptions are Tim Bailey's pet hate. He believes that company leaders need to ensure they have good people around them and be willing to listen

The advice I would give to my 18-year-old self is work hard....and have fun!

The song I would have on my driving playlist is *Enter Sandman* by Metallica.

My first memory associated with a car: the extending indicators on my dad's Morris Minor!

My favourite movie quote is "I'm Brian and so's my wife" – *Life of Brian*

If money was no object, I'd have an original 1957 Gibson Les Paul Custom guitar in the house and a Ferrari Testarossa, a Lamborghini Urus, a Harley Davidson Fat Boy and a Mercedes-Benz S63 AMG Coupe on the drive.



A book that I would recommend others read is *How To Drive* by Ben Collins (aka The Stig) – brilliant driver and lovely guy.

My hobbies and interests are golf, rugby, F1, family holidays.

My pet hate is assumptions.

If I were made transport minister for the day, I would sort out the mess that is city-based clean air zones (CAZs) and ensure they were all aligned and consistent.

### Why fleet?

Having moved from operational roles into fleet, I found the continuously evolving landscape to be fascinating. Even more so now, on the cusp of change to alternative fuels and autonomous driving. The dynamics of the fleet industry are intriguing from a number of perspectives – customers, OEMs, dealers, suppliers, competitors, market developments, interaction between all of these and the impact from, and on, the wider economy.

### How I got here

I joined Guy Salmon Car Rentals as a rental agent more than 30 years ago and worked my way up through the organisation (while it expanded, re-branded, changed ownership as Alamo, National and then Europcar) including five years living in Germany, before spending almost 10 very enjoyable years in credit hire at Auxillis, then back into rental at Northgate.

### Latest products, developments and achievements

Our range of new products, organisational changes and investments in people and technology are testament to our determination to remain at the forefront of the sector. We are investing heavily in our people, building strong teams that can continue to deliver for our customers. Our core offering, together with the new developments such as VanHire+, a vehicle inspection app and a fuel card (saving on average 5p per litre of fuel) can help clients succeed in many industries; ensuring our relevancy in a rapidly evolving market, and recognised recently when we were awarded the *Fleet News* Reader Recommended Rental Company and won the *What Van?* Rental Company of the Year Award 2020.

### My company in three words

Listening, transforming, delivering.

### Career influence

I have been very lucky to have worked for, and with, a number of brilliant people but probably the biggest influence was the much-missed, and much-loved, John Leigh.

### What makes a good MD?

Listening, having good people around them and the ability to communicate clearly to all.

### Advice to fleet newcomers

Don't be afraid to ask, never assume, pay attention to detail and always follow things through.

### If I wasn't in fleet

I'd be very bored.

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Next issue: Richard Lilwall, Teletrac Navman vice-president and MD, Europe

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