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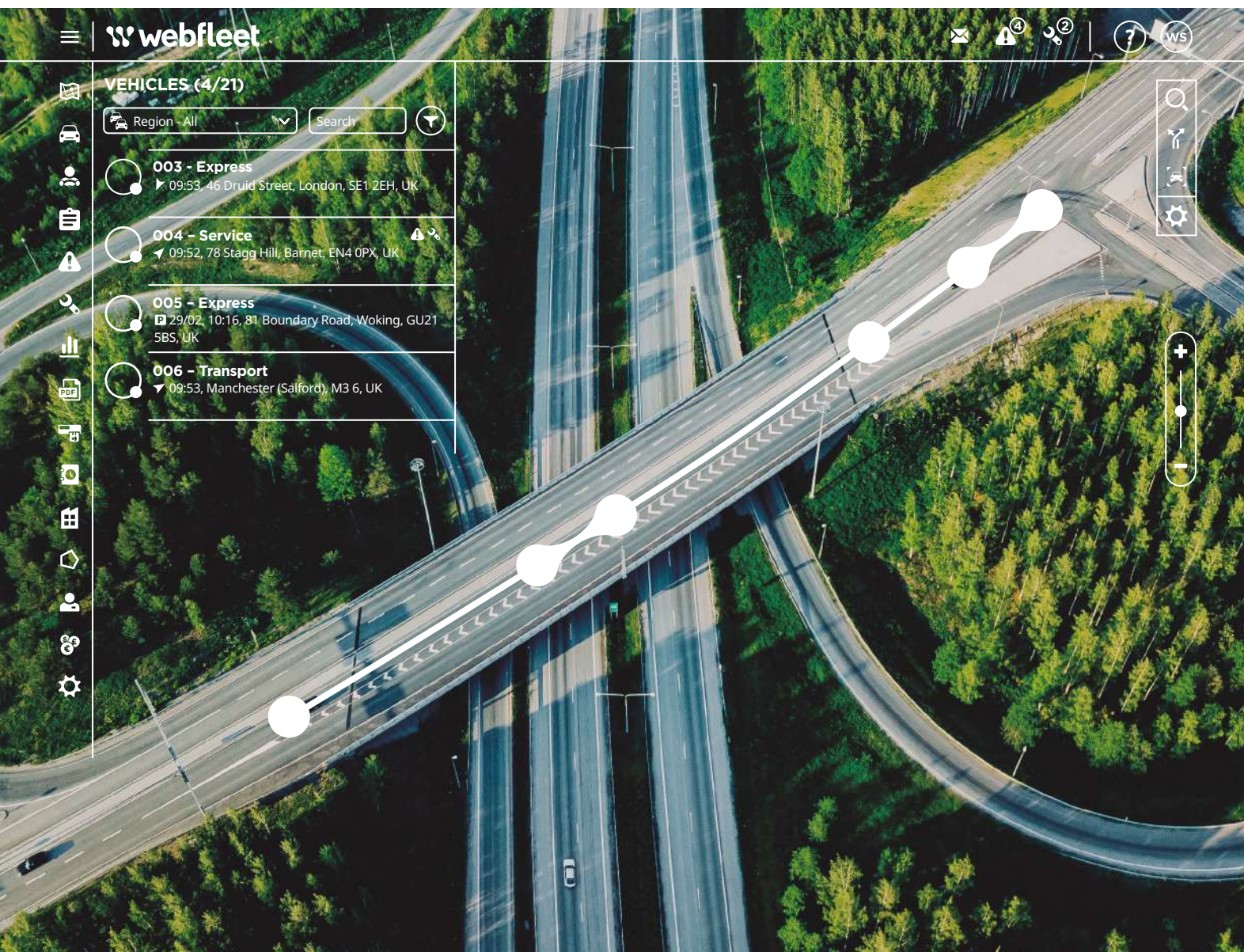
Liz Hollands enters the Hall of Fame

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Green and cost-effective



Budget packed with measures to incentivise electric vehicle uptake

Chancellor has good news for fleets in a Budget overshadowed by coronavirus outbreak

By Gareth Roberts

New company car tax rates, announced in the Budget, will cost the Government £100 million in lost revenue over the next two years. Policymakers believe the hit to Treasury coffers is a price worth paying to help the fleet industry spearhead the uptake in electric vehicles (EVs) and put the UK firmly on the 'Road to Zero'.

The publication of a new zero benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax rate for EVs, funding for a network of fast charge points and extending the plug-in grant (see page 9) were part of package of measures aimed at incentivising ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs), delivered in a Budget dominated by the coronavirus crisis.

The Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, warned MPs in the House of Commons that there would be a "significant but temporary disruption" to the UK economy, but insisted "we will get through this together".


The Bank of England announced an emergency cut in interest rates from 0.75% to 0.25% on the morning of the Budget (Wednesday, March 11) in a bid to support the economy during the virus outbreak. Rates have subsequently been cut to an unprecedented 0.1%.

Sunak has also announced a series of financial measures to help businesses and employees get through the crisis, running into hundreds of billions of pounds.

Ashley Barnett, head of fleet consultancy at Lex Autolease, told *Fleet News* it was "too early" to ascertain any potential impact on the company car market from coronavirus.

"Will we end up having to push back deliveries, will the return of vehicles be pushed back? Possibly," he said.

What is clear, according to Paul Hollick, chairman of fleet training body the ICFM, is the virus will have "ramifications for our industry for years to come".



BUDGET
HM TREASURY

FUEL DUTY
Frozen for a further year

PLUG-IN GRANT
Funding extended until 2023 but grant level under review (see page 9)

VEHICLE EXCISE DUTY (VED)
VED removed for zero-emission cars with a list price exceeding £40,000

CAPITAL ALLOWANCES
100% first year allowances for low CO2 emission cars and zero-emission goods vehicles extended by four years

EV INFRASTRUCTURE
£500m over the next five years to rollout fast-charging network

BIK CLARITY WELCOMED

The certainty that new company car tax rates has given fleets has been welcomed, together with their publication for the next five years.

Caroline Sandall, national chair of fleet representative body ACFO, said: "Company car demand has been hit in recent years by year-on-year increases in BIK tax and long-term rate uncertainty.

"However, the fact that rates are now known for the next five financial years – a full vehicle replacement cycle – gives planning confidence to both fleet decision-makers and company car drivers."

Barnett believes that the Treasury realised Government would not achieve its Road to Zero aims by "beating-up" 900,000-plus company car drivers with tax hikes.

"The issue that we have is 32 million cars and how do we get them cleaner and greener, and the company car market has a huge role to play," he said.

With Government consulting on plans to end the sale of new petrol, diesel and plug-in hybrid vehicles by 2035 or earlier, as part of its Road to Zero strategy, Sandall also believes now is the right time for fleets to embrace EVs.

She said: "It is imperative that fleet decision-makers and company car drivers focus on moving towards operating and driving 100% electric vehicles."

DELAYED BY BREXIT

The fleet industry has been waiting for the new BIK rates to be officially adopted since July 2019, when Treasury published how it intended to change them to counter the impact of the new emissions testing regime – the Worldwide harmonised Light vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP).

The new company car tax rates were expected to be rubber-stamped in the Autumn Budget, ahead of coming into force from April. However, continuing deadlock over Brexit put the new BIK rates and the required legislation on hold, after the Government decided to go to the polls.

The fleet and leasing industry was therefore relieved that the Budget confirmed the new rates and they will now be adopted into law.

Claire Evans, head of fleet consultancy at Zenith, said: "The fleet industry will take real confidence from the confirmation of BIK tax rates and the further announcement they will be frozen at 2022/23 levels for an additional two years.

"It gives the industry the certainty it needs and provides a commitment to low rates for drivers of EVs."

For cars first registered from April 6, 2020, most company car tax rates will be reduced by two percentage points, with a new zero percentage rate for pure electric vehicles.

The percentages will then be

increased by one percentage point for each of the tax years 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023.

In the tax year 2022 to 2023, the increase will bring the percentages back to their published rates in existing legislation. (Full tables at fleetnews.co.uk/bik).

The measure includes changes to the appropriate percentage figures for all cars classified as being zero-emission vehicles under both the NEDC and WLTP test procedures.

The appropriate percentage will be reduced to 0% for the tax year 2020 to 2021 and will be increased by one percentage point for the tax years 2021 to 2022 (to 1%) and 2022 to 2023 (to 2%).

In the tax year 2022 to 2023, the increase will bring the appropriate percentage back to their published rates in existing legislation which will be sustained throughout the tax years 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025.

For cars registered between 1 October 1999 and 5 April 2020 inclusive, the measure clarifies that the CO2 emissions figures for company car tax and related charges will continue to be based under the NEDC test.

Leasing companies have already reported seeing an increase in EV adoption rates. Zenith has seen orders of EVs leap more than 300% in salary sacrifice fleets and 250% in its company car fleets over the past six months, as drivers and fleet managers transition to electric cars.

ELECTRIC VAN FLEETS

Zero emission light commercial vehicles (LCVs) were also given a much-needed boost in the Budget.

From April 2021, the Government will apply a zero rate of tax to zero emission vans within van benefit charge, saving businesses an estimated £433 per van in tax in 2021-22.

Russ Boulton, ALD LCV consultant, said: "This is a sensible and much needed approach from the Government to further encourage the adoption of EVs as it lowers total cost of ownership and coincides with manufacturers releasing a greater amount of electric van models.

"The approach will also directly impact the electric van driver, further enhancing the proposition to change to an electric van where possible."

Meanwhile, new research from Centrica Business Solutions has highlighted the potential scale of future EV adoption. It found investment in EVs will increase by almost 50% over the next two years, exceeding £12 billion (fleetnews.co.uk, March 10).

EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENT RATES OF BIK PRE- AND POST-APRIL 6

Pre-April 6	P11D	CO ₂ (NEDC2)	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Audi A4 35 TDI	£34,975	98	£1,889	£1,889	£1,889	£1,889	£1,889	£1,889
Toyota Prius	£25,115	75	£954	£1,005	£1,005	£1,005	£1,005	£1,005
Kia E-Niro	£37,940	0	£1,214	£0	£76	£152	£152	£152
Post April 6		CO ₂ (WLTP)	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Audi A4 35 TDI	£34,975	135	NA	£2,378	£2,448	£2,518	£2,518	£2,518
Toyota Prius	£25,115	94	NA	£1,054	£1,105	£1,155	£1,155	£1,155
Kia E-Niro	£37,940	0	NA	£0	£76	£152	£152	£152



It surveyed businesses about their EV investment intentions and found many are planning to significantly ramp-up spending on the electrification of their fleet.

The data revealed that in the past two years, businesses have spent an estimated £8.2bn on EV adoption. However, it shows over the next two years, this level of investment is set to increase by almost half (46%) – to £12bn – as firms accelerate the introduction of electric cars and vans into day-to-day operations.

UK firms plan to spend an average of 4.5% of annual turnover on EV adoption over the next two years according to the data, with more than a quarter (27%) of respondents expecting at least a fifth of the vehicles within their fleet to be electric by 2022.

TAX BENEFITS

The appeal of an electric company car is now considerable, according to Michael Woodward, UK automotive lead at Deloitte.

He told *Fleet News* an employee could experience savings of around 95% by choosing an EV as their next company car, over a comparable diesel vehicle.

He said the BIK rate announcement put businesses in a “unique position to enable and accelerate the move to electric vehicles”.

Woodward added: “The success of this scheme in replacing higher emission petrol and diesel vehicles on our roads could be a big step towards achieving net-zero targets.”

However, he acknowledged there is still a lot of work to be done to maximise the scheme’s impact.

He explained: “In order to take advantage of the new tax scheme, businesses will need to resurrect company car schemes or think beyond their standard approach to company cars.

“Similarly, manufacturers will be under pressure to manage supply and we will need to see an improvement in the UK’s charging infrastructure.”

BIK COMPARISONS

Analysis of the new company car tax rates by *Fleet News* shows the obvious appeal of running an EV as a company car.

The annual BIK cost to a company car driver for a Kia E-Niro registered before April 6 was £1,214 in 2019/20, but this falls to zero in 2020/21, £76 the following year and then £152 for the next three tax years up to and including 2024/25.

The amount of company car tax paid year-on-year for the E-Niro, registered after April 6, will be exactly the same as that prior to that registered prior to April 6.

However, new company car rates do show large differences in the amount of BIK tax paid for some cars registered before and after April 6 (see examples on page 5), which were first highlighted by *Fleet News*, last year (fleetnews.co.uk, July 31, 2019).

Company car drivers choosing an Audi A4 TDI 35, for example, will be paying £2,378 in BIK in 2020/21, if registered after April 6 – almost £500 more for the same car registered before that date.

The gap continues to widen over the next four years, with the Audi driver paying £750 more in 2024/25 despite the new tax table aiming to soften the blow of higher WLTP CO2 values.

Furthermore, the lack of an RDE2-compliant engine in the Audi A4 pushes its rates even higher, because it attracts the 4% diesel differential.

■ For more on changes to the plug-in car grant, see page 9.



IT'S IMPERATIVE FLEET DECISION-MAKERS FOCUS ON MOVING TOWARDS OPERATING AND DRIVING 100% ELECTRIC VEHICLES

CAROLINE SANDALL, ACFO

Positive policy announcements, but some missed opportunities too



EDWIN KEMP, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR MOBILITY 2030 AT KPMG UK

As expected, headline measures in the 2020 Budget were designed to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, in what was a broadly positive Budget for fleets and the electric vehicle (EV) market, there were a number of items of note.

The Chancellor confirmed that company car tax rates disclosed last year will proceed. Specifically, benefit-in-kind rates on zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) will be set at 0% for tax year 2020/21, rising to 1% in 2021/22 and 2% in 2022/23.

Furthermore, this 2% rate will now be frozen until 2024/25. These measures will boost EV demand in the popular benefit, and five-year certainty should support investment decisions and company car market recovery.

There were fears the plug-in car grant (PICG) would be curtailed. However, the confirmation of its extension to 2022/23 reduces the total cost of ownership and further incentivises EV uptake. ZEV exemption from the ‘expensive car supplement’ through to 2025 was another welcome boost.

The £500m announced for investment in rapid charging hubs should help to address a key impediment for fleets of switching to EV – the lack of supporting infrastructure – by reducing vehicle downtime and allaying concerns about running out of charge.

Lastly, a portion of the £900m committed to high-potential technologies will go into UK supply-chains for the production of EVs at scale, supporting future availability of supply and UK manufacturing more broadly, at a challenging time.

However, there were some inconsistencies and questions raised by the Budget. There is little clarity as to how the £500m funding for rapid charging hubs will be spent.

Meanwhile, there were no new announcements around home and workplace charging support. These locations will represent the majority of charging activity, so further investment in these areas would have been welcomed.

Perhaps most surprisingly, PICG funding for battery electric vehicles (BEVs) will drop to £3,000 (from £3,500, see page 9). This will be particularly impactful in the short-term for those with lower purchasing power, while it also conflicts with the overall positive direction of travel.

There are two areas I believe were missed opportunities. The first being the transition to greener mobility, which doesn’t just concern automotive and transport value chains, because architecting the future state requires a collaborative, ecosystem approach. This includes energy and, disappointingly, there were no major announcements, for example, on green energy infrastructure or grid-level storage, both of which will be crucial to support EV uptake and deliver its benefits. This needs greater focus in future.

Secondly, to stimulate cross-sector mobility investment, catalyse the market and place the UK at the heart of the global EV transition, it would have been beneficial had the Government announced a fund similar to that of the Green Investment Bank for green energy a few years back.

In summary, there were positive announcements for fleets, but to truly drive the transition to a de-carbonisation, further work must done to bring the whole ecosystem together.



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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 CO2 emissions: 54 – 49g/km. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO2 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 CO2 figures (known as WLTP). The CO2 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 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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PEUGEOT RECOMMENDS TOTAL Official Fuel Consumption in MPG (l/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km) for the PEUGEOT 3008 SUV range are: Combined 35.2 (8.0) – 235 (1.2) and CO₂ 132 – 36 g/km. For the all-new PEUGEOT 508 range are: Combined 37.4 (7.6) – 235 (1.2) and CO₂ 128 – 38 g/km. For the all-new PEUGEOT 508 SW range are: Combined 37.4 (7.6) – 235 (1.2) and CO₂ 128 – 39 g/km.

The fuel consumption or electric range you achieve, and CO₂ produced, in real world conditions will depend upon a number of factors: including the accessories fitted (post registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test (WLTP^{*}) for fuel consumption, CO₂ and electric range figures. However, the CO₂ figures shown are NEDC equivalent, calculated using EC correlation tool which converts WLTP figures to NEDCeq^{**} figures and will be used to calculate tax for first registration. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; you should only compare fuel consumption, CO₂ 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.

NEWS: PLUG-IN GRANTS

Plug-in grants cut to be nullified by extra discounting from carmakers

As Chancellor's Budget trims £500 from the grant, other offers may help bridge the gap

By Gareth Roberts

Carmakers have moved to soften the blow of a £500 cut in the plug-in car grant announced in the Budget.

Peugeot has said it will effectively 'top-up' the grant by offering a £500 discount on its electric models, such as the all-new e-2008 SUV.

Renault, DS Automobiles and MG have also pledged to do the same until the end of this month.

David Peel, managing director of Peugeot UK, said: "The plug-in car grant has been hugely successful in helping hundreds of thousands to make the switch to electric."

"By making up the £500 shortfall in funding, we're aiming to ensure electric vehicle (EV) registrations continue to rise, and that the vehicles will remain accessible to as many as possible."

The Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, announced in the Budget that funding for the plug-in car grant had been secured for another three-years, but at the same time it would be cut by £500, from £3,500 to £3,000, and exclude electric cars costing £50,000 or more.



“WE’RE
AIMING TO
ENSURE
ELECTRIC
VEHICLES
WILL REMAIN
ACCESSIBLE
TO AS MANY
AS POSSIBLE

DAVID PEEL, PEUGEOT UK



Peugeot will discount models such as the all-new Peugeot e-2008 to counterbalance the impact of the Government's £500 grant cut

The Government has earmarked an additional £403 million for the scheme, while a further £129.5m would be provided to fund the plug-in grants for electric vans, taxis and motorcycles up to 2022-23.

Plug-in grants for electric vans (up to £8,000), large vans and trucks (up to £20,000), taxis (up to £7,500) and motorcycles (up to £1,500), will remain at the same level.

Fleets were given little warning of the cut, with the new plug-in rate published hours before the changes came into effect for car orders placed on the portal after 11:59pm on March 11.

The Government argues that it will allow more drivers to benefit from making the switch for longer – it effectively gives provision for another 134,000 cars – and says it will continue to keep the rate of the grant under review.

Experts predict the grant will continue to reduce over the next three years, with cuts in the grant triggered as the pot of funding falls.

Helen Cope, Lex Autolease, fleet consultant told *Fleet News* the introduction of a £50,000 threshold was to focus the grant on the mass market. She also asked whether manufacturers, with vehicles over the qualifying limit, would be tempted to cut prices so customers could still access the grant.

"It's difficult for the manufacturers as they would be in danger of setting a precedent," explained Cope.

"The £50,000 cap also comes with

£3,000

plug-in car grant after £500
reduction in the Budget

£8,000

plug-in van grant

its complications, because it's not the P11D value (of the car), it's not the list price, it's a different calculation.

"It factors in manufacturer's discount and it doesn't include vehicle options, so for those just over that £50,000 limit, manufacturers could be asked for additional discount."

"This could be a bit unfair for customers, because you might get somebody who gets slightly more discount than the next, which would make them eligible for the grant when others aren't."

However, Lex Autolease believes that, with the grant reducing now, and over time, manufacturers won't be discounting electric cars which currently sit in the £60,000-£65,000 bracket to below £50,000.

ACFO national chair Caroline Sandall is concerned that any erosion of the benefits will impact uptake.

"The Budget Statement made great play on the Government 'getting things done' and it being a 'Budget that delivers in challenging times'," she said.

"Well this cut to the plug-in car grant makes a swathe of electric vehicles more expensive and thus dilutes the benefits."

The plug-in car grant scheme was introduced in 2011 to support the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs). It was originally set at £5,000 for all eligible ultra-low emission cars but has been slowly reduced over the years.

In 2018, the grant was changed to focus on zero-emission cars. It was cut by £1,000 and fleets were told it would no longer apply to hybrid cars with a range of less than 70 zero emission miles.

Government figures show it has supported the purchase of more than 200,000 ULEVs of which more than 100,000 are zero emission.

That equates to more than £800m to support the early market for ULEVs, which now represent almost 6% of the new car market. Of this, more than £450m was spent on pure EVs, which now represent almost 3% of the new car market.

Quest links insurers and fleets to cut premiums

Software platform could lead to new insurance models and improve telematics investment returns

By Stephen Briers

A new software platform claims to “bridge the gap between fleets and insurers”, helping businesses to negotiate lower premiums and fully realise the return on investment in telematics systems.

Quest Automotive Fleet, launched this month by insurtech company Concirrus, is a data aggregator and analytics platform that creates the opportunity for behaviour and journey-based insurance pricing, rather than asset and postcode-driven premiums.

It is, claims Concirrus joint founder and managing director Craig Hollingworth, “a bridge across the chasm between fleets and insurers who are in different dimensions”.

Hollingworth, who set up the company with former Trimble CEO Andrew Yeoman, explained: “I have been disappointed in this market that fleet managers have invested huge sums in telematics, cameras, driver training and fatigue management because they want to reduce their insurance premiums.

“It’s snake oil – they aren’t getting a great deal because the insurance company can’t use the data on these devices.

“They can’t integrate data from hundreds of telematics systems, and

they can’t underwrite based on historical data.”

The software has been in development for several years, with various elements undergoing live testing with insurance partner Haven Group. This has enabled Concirrus to establish compelling stats which have been cross-referenced with broker partner Marsh to prove the cost benefit for fleets.

The launch phase centres on two key components: Automated First Notification of Loss (FNOL) and Active Risk Management.

With instant alerts sent to both claims handler and fleet operator, Automated FNOL has been proven to save an insurance company or self-insured fleet £3,000 per claim as it enables the business to take immediate control of the incident, including any third parties. It is also reducing the loss ratio (the frequency with which losses are incurred) by an average of 5%. Both will result in lower premiums.

Meanwhile, active risk management is resulting in a 10% reduction in collisions. The platform takes data from telematics and camera systems via API feeds, regardless of the provider, for real-time updates and alerts. It enables a fleet to send intervention messages to the driver during breaks or at the end of the day



to remind them about driving safely and not speeding.

The system also incorporates other environmental situations, such as locational risks and weather conditions, and fuses them with historical data, including risk by road type and Stats 19 incident data, to build an exposure ratio.

Quest is a subscription-based model on a per month, per vehicle basis. Pricing depends on the individual insurer/fleet, size of fleet and which modules they invest in.

“This is an independent platform that is accessible to insurers – that’s why we are different,” says Hollingworth. “It’s a statistical approach with data that is immensely valuable to the fleet and insurance company, saving money for both.

“The killer is when you take all that data and overlay it with the insurer’s own policy and claims data – that’s the magic machine.”

He believes insurers will look to develop new types of policy based on journey risk profiling, usage packages and pence per mile charging.

In addition, the level of control and insight offered by the system makes it easier for leasing companies to bundle insurance with the leasing rate.

“We can adjust the risk in real time and if a driver goes outside the parameters, then we can adjust the premiums. And why are policies annual?” Hollingworth asks. “They can be monthly or even daily, and done on an app. This could also be useful for car share companies.”

He believes there are further opportunities to be explored: “This is a fantasy view, but what about auctions? Fleet could share their (risk) data and insurance companies could bid for the contract – it puts procurement in the hands of the fleet manager.”

(operating costs) 20%, catastrophe losses (major losses) 5% and profit is 5%. “Do you want to barter with the 5% profit or the 70% attritional losses?” he asked. “The process to reducing claims costs is prompt FNOL, fast claims processing and real-time data to reduce the risk of collisions.”

He believes the next few years will see instant FNOL technology replacing phone notification. This will enable instant FNOL handling and also immediate contact with the policyholder to check on their welfare at a vulnerable time. “That will take it to the next level,” added Russell.

WHERE INSURANCE SAVINGS CAN BE MADE

Fleets will struggle to negotiate lower insurance premiums without taking robust action to manage risk or minimise the cost of claims.

The breakdown of premiums reveals where the opportunity is,

according to Mike Russell, managing director – head of non-speciality claims UK & Ireland, at insurance broker Marsh.

Attritional losses (claims costs) account for 70%, expenses

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Model shown Grandland X SRI Nav 16 (300hp) Turbo/Electric AWD. The Grandland X Hybrid and Hybrid4 are plug-in hybrid vehicles requiring mains electricity for charging. *Fuel consumption and CO₂ emission data given are obtained using a combination of battery power and fuel. Fuel consumption figures are determined according to the WLTP test cycle. CO₂ 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 CO₂ 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 CO₂ with other vehicles tested using the same technical procedures. For more information contact your local Vauxhall Retailer. Forecasted *10% 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. Please call 0330 587 8221 for full details. †3 Day Test Drive terms and conditions apply and vehicles are subject to availability. Information correct at time of going to press March 2020.

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*Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures for the Volvo XC40 T5 Twin Engine, in MPG (l/100km): WLTP Combined 117.5 (2.4) – 141.1 (2.0). NEDC CO₂ 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, CO₂ 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 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.

*£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

NEWS: MERGER

Major fleet bodies merge to give a stronger voice in Westminster

ACFO and ICFM branding to remain while new combined group builds familiarity in 'AFP'

By Gareth Roberts

Fleets will be given a stronger voice when lobbying Government, thanks to the merger of two of the industry's most familiar names.

Fleet representative group ACFO and fleet training body ICFM announced they were merging operations to create the Association of Fleet Professionals (AFP), earlier this month (fleetnews.co.uk, March 18).

The new combined organisation aims to give fleet decision-makers 'increased voice through combined strength', but also cater for those with fleet responsibility working in HR, finance, procurement and the fast-emerging mobility function.

ACFO national chair Caroline Sandall said: "We have really good working relationships with a lot of Government bodies, but this allows us to amplify that voice."

She explained: "There are a huge number of challenges across the industry and we still have concerns that Government doesn't necessarily understand every aspect of fleet operations; things that work and things that don't work, and where we need more help."

Sandall suggests the announcement in the Budget of £500 million for charge point infrastructure is the kind of area where they need to influence delivery when so many electric vehicles (EVs) are company cars.

"Those in government need to hear our voice and we need to make sure we're capturing people's opinions and concerns," she said.

Where to focus the new group's lobbying activity will be decided over the coming weeks as new specialist industry committees will be formed around key topics determined by members.

ICFM chairman Paul Hollick says they want to see a similar approach to the success ACFO achieved with the introduction of the electric company car reimbursement rate by HMRC.

He says this type of lobbying is "fundamental to our industry moving forward".

He told *Fleet News*: "It's really



“WE CAN DELIVER FAR MORE BENEFIT IF WE’RE WORKING TOGETHER”

CAROLINE SANDALL, ACFO

important for the industry and fleet operators that there is a centralised body that's sustainable, that can devote time to training and education, while also lobbying for the fleet operator community."

Sandall added: "We always thought it was the right thing to do and we would reach that stage where it became the only next best course of action to keep our organisations strong."

"We can do far more if we're one. We can deliver far more benefit if we're working together."

Both organisations will continue to

operate under their current branding, while they build familiarity with the new Association of Fleet Professionals (AFP) brand.

However, Sandall explained that, while exact timescales are fluid because of coronavirus, everything would be branded AFP within months, not years.

New members to ACFO and all membership renewals will now be granted under AFP membership. However, ICFM members will have the choice to maintain their ICFM membership during training.

Hollick said the ACFO branding

was also likely to disappear before that of the ICFM as trainees needed to complete courses under the ICFM banner, because of how the courses are accredited. ICFM will eventually become the AFP Fleet Academy.

Membership of the new joint group is expected to exceed 1,000. The AFP board will comprise of Sandall and Hollick, current ACFO deputy chairman Stewart Lightbody and Peter Eldridge, current sales and marketing director of ICFM.

Both ACFO and ICFM will also maintain their individual boards, with each focusing on their own areas of expertise.

ACFO, founded 48 years ago, will continue to represent the interests of fleet operators in the UK promoting their views to Government and its agencies, local authorities, motor manufacturers and industry suppliers.

Meanwhile, ICFM, founded more than 25 years ago, will continue to provide fleet education and training programmes to managers, administrators, fleet service providers and those whose job responsibilities include fleet.

There are currently no plans to elect a single chairman of the newly formed AFP body, with Hollick and Sandall instead sharing responsibility. But further down the line that could change.

The new joint group is backed by a new website – www.theafp.co.uk – featuring white papers on key issues and informative blogs, an online members' forum, and thought leadership and guidance on major taxation and legislative changes.

There will also be additional online training and educational 'master-class' content on a wide range of business-critical issues.

Fleet operator membership of the Association of Fleet Professionals will cost £299 per annum.

Corporate membership is at three levels: Platinum costs £2,000 per annum and provides eight employee memberships; gold costs £1,000 per annum and provides four employee memberships; and silver costs £500 per annum and provides two employee memberships.

THE BIG PICTURE

These are unprecedented times for our generation. So, how is the Coronavirus affecting your business?

At *Fleet News*, we're as prepared as we can be and we're working to keep as close as possible to 'business as usual' in these extraordinary times, safeguarding our business and our service to you, while keeping our people safe.

The team is now working from home but continues to produce news and insight for print and website.

We've had to cancel some events: this week's Fleet200 and the Smart Transport conference among them, and others may be looking for a new home in the calendar. We're also exploring virtual alternatives among our contingency plans.

It's times like these when we all pull together. Informed journalism will prevail and the strength of our partnerships with readers and commercial clients will get us through this.

Communication has been interesting. Like many, we've gone from the office hubbub to the relative tranquility and solitude of home.

We're on week one of Microsoft Teams, which is proving a revelation in terms of forum-style discussion, document uploading and team video meetings. We've put protocols in place around weekly catch-ups for the editorial team.

The frequency may rise as we move into weeks (months?) of home working – we must protect the mental health and well-being of our people if they feel isolated. Cue virtual tea breaks via video!

COVID-19 could be the push towards home working that so many have advocated in recent years, with obvious environmental and safety benefits from removing cars from the road.

Note the massive improvement in air quality in China during its lockdown – lessons for all of us.

We're considering all options to maintain our service for you. You will continue to receive print copies of *Fleet News* but for those working from home and unable to collect their office copy, we will be sending out our digital version. You can also access it at: www.fleetnews.co.uk/digital-issue/

You can stay up-to-date via our website and sign up to our daily or weekly newsletters.

We will also be running more webinars to give you insight into key the issues affecting your fleet.

All of us at *Fleet News* are grateful for the support from our readers and commercial partners during these difficult times and we remain committed to keeping you informed with our usual supply of unrivalled content across all channels. Stay safe.



Stephen Briers

Stephen Briers,
editor-in-chief,
Fleet News

EDITOR'S PICK

BUDGET 2020: BIK TAX

Chancellor's measures will boost company car market



Tony Fonseca wrote:

Having read 'Budget 2020: New company car tax rates announced' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 11), this was a really good Budget for the fleet industry and, despite the country's current woes, will be a welcome shot in the arm for the company car market for years to come.

The fuel duty freeze and £500 million investment in charge point

infrastructure was really welcome, but it was the clarity around benefit-in-kind tax which will have the biggest impact.

I think it will make some think twice about taking cash and go a massive way to helping drive EV uptake more widely and in the used market.

The confirmation of the new rates makes driving a pure electric company car a no-brainer, if you have the choice and it's fit for purpose.

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

Sage & Onion added:

It was great news on the two-year extension to the BIK rates. Also, great that the Chancellor saw sense in

removing the 'luxury car' VED tax after year one for electric cars costing more than £40,000. It's a pity he didn't extend this to PHEVs below 50g/km.

CORONAVIRUS

BVRLA support critical to rental industry

Rental wrote:

Having read 'Coronavirus: rental will be vital in delivering mobility services, says BVRLA' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 18), everyone in rental is seeing retail and inbound tourism bookings wiped out, without the ability to predict what the long-term future holds.

It's absolutely critical that BVRLA supports the rental sector (particularly the independent companies) throughout this period.

It would be without doubt one of the worst things possible if we were to lose any more independent companies because of this virus. Once they have gone, we won't get them back.

HAVE YOUR SAY

LINKEDIN [UK fleet managers group](https://www.linkedin.com/company/fleetnews/)
TWITTER twitter.com/_FleetNews

EMAIL fleetnews@bauermedia.co.uk
COMMENT ONLINE fleetnews.co.uk

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Working in collaboration key to Road to Zero



Paul Gauntlett wrote:

Having read 'UK fleets to invest £12 billion in electric vehicles (EVs)' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 10), we, along with other leasing companies, are seeing a spike in interest from clients that had previously outright purchased vehicles.

The higher initial capital outlay of the most efficient EV vehicles is definitely a factor, but not the only one.

A lease company will have considerable experience of operating EVs and be able to advise on topics such as home charging, reimbursement rates, mapping of ICE (internal combustion engine) vehicles to the EV equivalent.

It's great to see the energy providers working with large fleets to discuss on-site EV infrastructure. Partnership is clearly the key in driving the road to zero.

AIR QUALITY

Commercial vehicle research would be helpful

Bremsen Technik Group wrote:

Having read 'Tyre pollution 1,000 times worse than tailpipe emissions' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 6), this is an interesting piece of research into an area which often gets overlooked.

From a commercial vehicle perspective, it would be good to see the difference in pollution for tyre wear versus exhaust emissions – potentially a far greater divide between the two?

There are systems in place that aim to slow down the rate at which a tyre will wear down (Automatic Tyre Inflation Systems i.e. PSI ATIS), which has additional benefits as well.

EU legislation will be coming into effect whereby trailers/commercial vehicles will have to install some form of TPMS or ATIS system – but from what we understand this isn't necessarily from an environmental standpoint. Thanks for the article.



PLUG-IN GRANT

EV incentives seem counterintuitive

Daniel wrote:

Having read 'Budget 2020: Plug-in grant for electric vehicles cut' (fleetnews.co.uk, March 12) they have cut the VED expensive car supplement on electric vehicles over £40,000 to 'incentivise the uptake of ZEVs', then



proceed to cut the grant on electric vehicles over £50,000. Seems a bit counterintuitive.

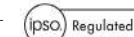
Jason added:

The biggest winners are the existing owners of Tesla Model 3s who don't have to pay £325 per year in VED any more and just saw the value of their cars go up since a new one just went up in price by £3,500.

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Burning question:

What do you miss most during the coronavirus crisis?

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Dropping the kids off at swimming training and enjoying the subsequent peace

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Sensible behaviour

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Two things actually – the footie, indeed all sport, and being able to go to the pub without feeling like a social pariah

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8 mobility predictions for 2020

The mobility landscape is moving fast but many solutions are still years away from becoming reality. What will happen this year in the sector? Experts from the KPMG consultancy gave their predictions at the Move 2020 mobility conference at London ExCel. *Andrew Ryan* reports

1 MICROMOBILITY GOES BIG

Micromobility is already making inroads into urban transport systems with shared pedal- and electric-bike schemes leading the way.

Latest figures from shared transport group CoMoUK show there were more than 650,000 users across 26 bike schemes in the UK in 2018: increases of 43% (users) and 63% (schemes) compared with 2016.

Transport experts expect the introduction of electric scooters – e-scooters – to boost the uptake of micromobility further, but these face a crucial obstacle: it is, currently, illegal to ride e-scooters in public spaces in the UK.

Sarah Owen-Vandersluis, head of Mobility 2030 for KPMG, says: "Our prediction for 2020 is that the UK market will take off for micromobility and that regulatory issues will be resolved.

"We think we might also see the Prime Minister ride an e-scooter on the streets of the UK this year."

E-scooters fall within the Department for Transport's definition of a motor vehicle, and subsequently are subject to the same MOT, tax,

licensing, construction and use requirements as other vehicles. As the design of e-scooters makes these rules almost impossible to comply with, they are illegal by default.

However, as part of its Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy programme, the Government will seek to review regulation and governance of emerging transport modes, including e-scooters. This could mean their use will be legalised across the UK.

2 EXPLOSION IN EV CHOICE

Restricted battery electric vehicle (BEV) supply is often cited by organisations as one of the biggest obstacles to large-scale uptake, but this theory will be put to the test in 2020, says KPMG.

Figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders showed that 37,850 BEVs were registered in the UK last year, a 144% increase over 2018.

The growth in BEV sales has accelerated this year, with 4,054 registered in the first two months compared with 1,334 in the same period last year – a 204% increase.

Waiting lists for some popular BEVs also reached almost a year, further signalling that demand far outstrips supply.

However, Graham Armitage, co-founder of Mobility 2030 for KPMG, says an increase in both the variety of models available and supply this year will help test whether the passenger EV market becomes constrained by demand rather than supply.

He adds: "There are 20 new EV models coming in 2020, but the big difference is that some of those new models are being manufactured at real scale. For example, Volkswagen's ID 3 model is being built at a large factory dedicated to the production of EVs.

"It will be easier to buy an EV at different price points over the course of the coming year and we will really get to find out how much consumer demand there is for this technology."

3 AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE TRIALS TO CONTINUE

This year's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas demonstrated a shift in the expectations surrounding fully autonomous vehicles.



In previous years, car manufacturers were almost clambering over

themselves to showcase their latest self-driving concepts, but while the technology was still prominent at the show, it was not as dominant as in previous years.

"Attitudes to autonomous vehicles have shifted in the past year," Mike Vousden, automotive analyst at data and analytics company GlobalData, said at the event.

"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."

Despite this, KPMG expects a number of high-profile robo taxi trials on public roads to be carried out this year, but says the real effort will be focused on developing autonomous vehicle use cases on commercial sites.

"We are going to see a significant increase in trials on private sites such as airports, ports, commercial parks and campuses," says Owen-Vandersluis.

"This will be the prelude to significant growth in future years of trialing on public roads."

4 ORGANISATIONS TO COMMIT TO ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EVs)

A number of large organisations have already committed to electrifying either their whole fleet or significant parts of it and KPMG expects more to join them this year.

Many have signed up to commitments such as the Climate Group's EV100, which sees them pledge to go fully electric by 2030.

"We also think we will see some organisations potentially committing to a more rapid time period," says Armitage.

Mitie is one of the signatories to the EV100 commitment. It has also pledged to switch 20% of its small van and car fleet to electric by the end of this year, and is on track to meet this target after taking delivery of its 250th plug-in vehicle in January.

"As this important milestone shows, our electric vehicle commitment is picking up pace as we rapidly rollout EVs all over Britain, putting 75 new EVs on the roads every month," says Simon King, director of sustainability at Mitie.

Other members include AstraZeneca, BT Group, Centrica, Foxtons, Heathrow Airport and RBS.

5 WIRED CHARGING TO DOMINATE

KPMG predicts that trials of inductive (wireless) charging for EVs will continue this year but, despite its advantages over cable charging, these will ultimately conclude that it doesn't – for now – charge quickly enough.

While wireless technology such as Qualcomm's Halo system can charge vehicles at up to 20kW, the latest cable-based chargers are capable of 150kW or more.

However, wireless charging does have potential benefits, such as increased convenience as no plugs or cables need to be used: charging takes place by simply parking over a pad.

One trial taking place is a £3.4 million Government-funded project in Nottingham. This six-month scheme sees 10 Nissan and LEVC electric hackney carriages retrofitted with wireless equipment, and a series of wireless charging pads installed at taxi ranks.

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TOMORROW'S FLEET: MOBILITY

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➤ These will provide frequent bursts of charge when the vehicles are stationary in the queue. As the queue moves forward, the taxi aligns itself on the next pad and charging recommences.

6 HGV FUEL DEBATE TO RUMBLE ON

The debate over decarbonising long-range freight and heavy goods vehicles will continue through 2020, says KPMG.

"Nobody will deal with the HGV elephant in the room," says Armitage. "There is real scepticism – rightfully so, we think – whether batteries will ever really work in 44-tonne HGVs.

"So the question is what is the alternative fuel of choice going to be for that market?

"Will natural gas be the end point? Will it just be a transition? It's still combustion and there are arguments about how green it really is and how quickly will we be able to roll out the infrastructure behind it."

Armitage says hydrogen is often cited as a potential clean fuel for HGVs, although other than Nikola in America, "arguably no one is really aggressively advancing the development of those vehicles".

7 TAKING CONTROL OF MOBILITY DATA

Governments around the world will increasingly take control of the data agenda in transport to drive future interoperability and public benefit, says KPMG.

"Data is going to be an increasingly big topic," says Owen-Vandersluis. "There's massive disjuncture at the moment between data in terms of the lifeblood of the new mobility models on one hand, and the need to share and collaborate around data for security, safety and traffic management.

"We think this is the year that governments worldwide will take a step forward for data and start to shape and control that landscape a little bit more."

Finland is a good example of what this may look like, he says. The Finnish Transport Infrastructure Agency supports transport and mobility in Finland by making its collected traffic data openly available to all citizens and different societal actors.

This includes data on public transport services and road weather conditions.

8 INCREASED COLLABORATION

KPMG expects increasing collaboration and potentially another big merger among the major carmakers this year.

"It's natural that businesses look to partner, to collaborate," says Armitage.

"We can see this through the alliance between Ford and Volkswagen, the BMW and Daimler mobility alliance and the merger between



Groupe PSA and FCA, for example.

"There are loads of occurrences where businesses would not previously have collaborated and it's really hard to over-emphasise how ground-breaking some of the deals of collaboration we've seen over the past year are.

"It is extraordinary that a 100-year-old manufacturer like Ford is investing in a start-up like Rivian, which has only been around for a couple of years, to get access to its EV platform.

"It is also extraordinary that a business like Hyundai and Kia which has a developed commercial vehicle business and has invested a lot in hydrogen and electric, is investing in a start-up in the UK – Arrival – to build electric vans."

The South Korean carmaker has invested €100m (£88m) in the partnership and through it plans to introduce small- and medium-sized electric vans and other products for logistics and on-demand ride-hailing and shuttle service companies.

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TOMORROW'S FLEET: GUEST OPINION

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FUTURE OF FUNDING FOR CAM UK

Consistent and continued funding needed to maintain or improve our position, says *Daniel Ruiz*

2 020. The beginning of a new decade, carrying with it a whole host of possibilities. The next 10 years are certain to see a number of doors to incredible innovation unlocked in the now burgeoning connected and automated mobility (CAM) industry as countries around the globe continue to gear up in the race towards getting connected and self-driving vehicles safely on public roads.

But where does the UK fit into this giant CAM puzzle? According to a KPMG report, the UK is currently ranked second in the G7 for self-driving vehicle readiness. We also became the first country to change primary legislation to enable CAM.

What is clear is that we are at a critical time in the development of self-driving technologies and mobility services. And, as we begin to see these technologies become more commonplace, it's easy to see the UK as an early leader in this space. We have a strong automotive heritage, a breadth of technical knowledge, excellent research bodies across the private and academic spheres and a history of innovation.

For example, next year we can expect to see the first commercial trials of self-driving vehicles in the UK. Bristol currently has driverless pods that can operate with a safety driver on-board.

The UK is also home to CAM Testbed UK, a global centre of excellence comprising six testing sites, all within a three-hour drive of one another, working towards innovation and the development and testing of connected and self-driving vehicle technologies.

And yet, these are but stepping stones on the way to a potential £13 billion boost to the UK economy by 2030. We have to make sure that Government and industry are collaborating to ensure the UK is in a position to grow its own self-driving technology,



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Daniel Ruiz joined Zenzic (formerly Meridian Mobility UK) as CEO in January 2018, having led a 500-strong team at Dynniq UK. He now leads the UK's connected and autonomous vehicle (CAV) programme.

INVESTMENT IN CAM CREATES A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A NEW SECTOR – ONE WHERE THE UK IS ALREADY IN A LEADING POSITION

Since Zenzic's inception, both Government and industry leaders have together committed £200 million for connected and self-driving testing and development in the UK. Our most recent example of this can be seen in the £1.2m in funding awarded, in conjunction with the Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CCAV) to seven projects across the UK to support the development of connected and self-driving vehicle cyber security testing capabilities. The outputs from these studies will form the basis of a compelling case for delivering future cyber security testing capability.

With a commitment to funding self-driving technology development over the next decade, there is a real opportunity for the UK to foster a whole new industry which could provide up to 420,000 new jobs, with 20,000 in the automotive sector alone.

On the other hand, if funding is not secured, there is a risk that the UK would not only lose the opportunity to become a technology exporter, but that we would need to buy in the technology from abroad. A double financial loss.

Aside from that, Government investment would unlock a plethora of opportunities which the current market cannot do by itself. It will help form much needed links between Government and industry bodies; it will help define the necessary safety requirements; and it will also send a powerful message to global investors that the UK is serious about delivering a sustainable integrated transport system.

The UK's CAM industry is thriving today, and we want to make sure it is able to thrive tomorrow.

With new jobs and a massive boost to the UK economy at stake, decisive and positive action must be taken now, to ensure the next decade of growth is safeguarded.

as well as export it. We have already seen Latent Logic, a successful British start-up, chosen as the first acquisition by Waymo, the self-driving vehicle arm of Google. This is proof that the UK is developing technology that is world-beating. However, to deliver this technology, we must see a consistent level of continued funding to build the new ecosystem.

Investment in CAM, paired with investment from industry as part of a wider programme, creates a rare opportunity to create a new sector – one where the UK is already in a leading position.



A pioneering vehicle-to-grid (V2G) project which could become an “exemplar” of how organisations can cut costs and carbon emissions across their whole operation is now live.

Islington Council has joined with Moixa, a smart battery charging software developer, and Honda, which has provided the charging technology, for the 12-month project, which sees five V2G charge points installed behind Islington Town Hall.

Moixa's Gridshare platform will manage the flow of electricity between five Nissan e-NV200 battery electric vehicles (BEVs) – used for a variety of roles including internal mail vans and a passenger shuttle – and the town hall.

They will be charged overnight when the electricity created by low carbon sources such as wind is at its greatest and cheapest.

The software will then allow the energy stored in the vehicle batteries to be transferred to the building at times of peak demand – when high carbon fossil fuel power stations typically provide a greater share of electricity generation – cutting the authority's energy costs and carbon emissions.

Knowing when the vehicles will be used and how long for, the software will then ensure they have enough power to carry out their daily duties.

If the trial proves successful then Islington Council, which has committed to converting its 500-strong fleet to fully electric as part of its ambition to become zero carbon by 2030, aspires to rolling out V2G to its main depot.

This would mean the 230 vehicles based there, including refuse trucks, buses and other HGVs, could be used as “phenomenal power storage” which would allow the borough to supply electricity to the local area as well as its own buildings, says Mark Smith, corporate fleet and transport manager at Islington Council.

“We won't really have paid for this storage as we'll have paid for the vehicles anyway which have the batteries, so on top of the £600,000 to £800,000 saving on fuel each year of going from diesel vehicles to fully electric we estimate, we could actually do a little bit of energy trading and reduce our fuel costs even further,” he adds.

“The potential is amazing. Arsenal's football stadium is one-quarter of a mile away from the town hall and if you look at the local area when there is a football match on, you have this amazing demand for energy.

“Every takeaway and business is open, everything is turned on, so if we manage to scale V2G at the main depot then – particularly for the ↗

WE COULD
ACTUALLY DO A
LITTLE BIT OF ENERGY
TRADING AND REDUCE
OUR FUEL COSTS
EVEN FURTHER ↗

MARK SMITH, ISLINGTON COUNCIL

Islington V2G project could be ‘exemplar’ for all fleets

Year-long scheme aims to demonstrate how combining vehicle batteries with buildings can cut costs and carbon. *Andrew Ryan* reports



Rowena Champion (right), executive member for environment and transport at Islington Council is pictured with (from left) Jorgen Pluym, project leader of energy management, Honda Motor Europe; Chris Wright, chief technology officer, Moixa; and Alistair Martin, chief strategy officer and founder of Flexitricity

SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Rachel Lane, fleet consultant at Zenith



The significant tax benefits of electric, as well as the opportunity to drive cleaner, lower-emitting vehicles is leading to increasing demand from both salary sacrifice and company car drivers.

Employers are looking to make electric available on their company car policies through assessing these vehicles on a whole life cost (WLC) basis whereby tax and fuel savings are built into the calculation.

Employers should be flexible with the amount drivers can contribute to ensure a range of electric vehicles (EVs) are available at all grades. For example, if the WLC of a Tesla Model 3 Long Range is £600 and a company's WLC entitlement is £500 then, without a driver contribution, the vehicle would not be available.

However, if the driver could pay £100 contribution towards the Tesla, they would pay zero benefit-in-kind (BIK) tax and be in a better total cost position, compared with the average BIK cost of £300 (40% tax payer) for petrol and diesel cars within their entitlement. The driver saves £200 a month and can switch to cleaner technology at no extra cost to the employer.

At Zenith, we are seeing increasing numbers of cash takers opt back into car schemes to adopt electric technology and benefit from tax savings.

Following the July 2019 announcement on zero BIK for electric and through employers adapting their policies, company car and salary sacrifice EV orders have significantly increased.

In February, 33% of all orders at Zenith were for EVs.

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Evening matches when the school buses are back in as well as some of the trucks – that could become a great opportunity to supply electricity to the local grid.”

While this vision may be some time away from becoming a reality, the Islington V2G trial provides an example of how the future is going to look, says Chris Wright, chief technology officer at Moixa, which is also partnering with energy technology company Flexitricity as part of the trial.

“The base load of the town hall is about 50kW and we can actually provide that from the five EVs.

“At peak, the average UK home uses about 800 watts, so you can see that we can put a significant amount of power into the grid.

“Moixa has a vision that through adding intelligence to batteries, the world can live on renewables alone, and this is both through static battery storage and vehicles with batteries.

“This project will deliver a demonstration of how electric vehicles can work with buildings through the next generation of charger technology.”

ANSWER TO GRID PROBLEMS

Wright says V2G may also provide the solution to the grid problems which could be caused by a wholesale transition of transport to EVs.

“There is the potential for this to really stress the grid – which is already extremely stressed in London – but if we control and manage the electricity going into and out of vehicles, then actually it can be a benefit,” he adds.

“The partners in this project share a determination to show how this can really deliver value not only for Islington Council as an exemplar for councils – and indeed fleet owners – everywhere, but there is a huge scale of opportunity as this goes forward.

“We can think of EVs as batteries with wheels. Cars are parked more than 90% of the time and for that time they can be part of the grid infrastructure, they can be part of the solution, not the problem.

“There are many tens of thousands of vehicles across councils and fleets everywhere, and we see Islington Council as a microcosm of the transitions to EVs.

V2G TO ‘HELP FLEETS WITH TRANSITION TO EVs’

More than half (53%) of fleet managers feel vehicle-to-grid technology could help them with the transition to electric vehicles, research by E-Flex has found.

The V2G consortium, led by Cisco and involving partners from across technology, academia, energy and the public sector, is one of eight co-innovation projects to receive funding from Innovate UK.

Its work involves testing the real-world viability of V2G technology, the surrounding commercial models and how it may be used. E-Flex is already working with a number of organisations including Fruit 4 London, Gnewt Cargo and Plymouth City Council to trial its V2G technology within their fleets.

The consortium’s research of 500 UK fleet managers – with an average fleet size of 73



“They are leading in this space, transitioning their fleet, understanding what the challenges are, and as millions of EVs are sold over the next decade, we will see that that can either be a huge problem for the electricity grid, or it can be the solution.

“It can be the mechanism that enables that transition from fossil fuels to renewables, and we are determined to show that through managing those vehicles, managing the energy that’s pushed into and pulled out of them, that will be a huge enabler of that transition to EVs.”

ISLINGTON COUNCIL FLEET TO BE FULLY ELECTRIC BEFORE 2030

As part of its commitment to become zero carbon by 2030, Islington Council – which has also declared a ‘climate emergency’ – aims to transition its 500-strong fleet to fully electric before then. Its fleet consists of more than 40 refuse trucks, 40 other HGVs and around 60 buses, with the remainder being cars and vans.

At the moment, around 5% of the authority’s fleet is electric but many more EVs are on order, says Mark Smith, corporate fleet and transport manager at the council.

“We’ve got more e-NV200s on order and some other cars and vans, so we are going to more than double the number of EVs we have by the end of the year,” he adds.

“We are expecting our first electric refuse truck in October, and are looking at the electric 7.5-tonne market at the moment as there are now a couple of viable vehicles in that sector.”

Smith says the council is also considering retrofitting some of its existing diesel refuse trucks with electric powertrains in the future.

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Charging challenges

Charging increasing numbers of electric vehicles is an issue still faced by many fleet operators. *Andrew Ryan* reports

More and more van operators are using schemes such as the Clean Van Commitment to pledge to electrify their fleets.

The commitment is overseen by Global Action Plan and, so far, 49 organisations have made the public pledge to transition their 72,000 vans in cities to zero tailpipe emissions by 2028.

At the Move conference in Excel London, three of these – Milk & More, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Commercial Group – discussed some of the issues they face.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU HAVE WITH CHARGING YOUR ELECTRIC VEHICLES?

Andrew McKenzie, head of CSR at Commercial Group: At the moment our drivers take their diesel vans home at the end of their delivery runs and drive them to the depot the following morning. We are looking at rolling out more EVs and the challenge of this is how they can charge: they might not have off-street parking, they might not own their property and may not be able to get permission from their landlord to install a home charger. Even if they do have off-road parking, is their space big enough for a full-size commercial vehicle? These are the challenges we are facing so

we are trying to find solutions that accelerate charging at depots, but that, in turn, stresses out the available power to those sites as well.

Marc Ling, fleet manager at Milk & More: Our employees don't take their electric vans home overnight and when they're being charged at some of our sites this puts us close to our electrical capacity. We've been able to balance the load on the chargers by marrying vehicles that do longer routes with ones that do shorter routes.

David Collins, senior project manager at Defra: We've got many and varied sites around the

country and some are very obscure operational locations in the middle of nowhere. We are finding that, at the majority of our sites, we are getting towards the top of our electrical capacity so we will probably put as many chargepoints in as we can without upgrading the grid connection. We find that if you use the existing on-site wiring, then it costs around £7,500 to put a chargepoint in but if you need to bring in a new grid connection, you are easily talking five figures dependent on how close the sub-station is. It could even be £50,000. We are having to think a bit more laterally about that now, how we can use battery storage, how we can use solar charging etc.

HOW HAVE YOU HELPED YOUR DRIVERS ADAPT TO EVs?

Marc Ling: We took the approach that we are not going out to teach them to drive, we will show them how to drive differently. One of my team members goes out and trains every driver. This includes vehicle familiarisation, how to charge them, how to get the best range from the vehicle and things like that. I get around to a lot of our depots and ask the drivers how they're getting on with the EVs and they say 'please don't give me the diesel back, I love the electric van'. It's a culture thing. If you can get the guys and the drivers on side, they will work with you and make it work.

David Collins: We have been working with Energy Saving Trust (EST) to provide eco training to all drivers and teams. We also have a customer-facing team which has been working with manufacturers to ensure that its members are able to answer drivers' queries, and solve the niggles first-time without having to go further up the chain to prevent issues blowing up out of all proportion.

“IF YOU NEED TO BRING IN A NEW GRID CONNECTION YOU ARE EASILY TALKING FIVE FIGURES DEPENDENT ON HOW CLOSE THE SUB-STATION IS”

DAVID COLLINS, DEFRA



The models that helped MG to a 44.5% increase in registrations in 2019

Right place at the right time

With demand for BEVs outstripping supply, MG Motor UK looks well placed to capitalise with up to 10,000 units promised this year. *Andrew Ryan* reports

In comedy, timing is said to be everything. It's also vitally important for carmakers in the fleet sector. Mitsubishi is a prime example of this. Its original Outlander PHEV plug-in hybrid was a huge success among company car drivers after its launch coincided with exceptionally favourable benefit-in-kind (BIK) rates. Now MG Motor UK hopes the unsatisfied demand for battery electric vehicles (BEVs) will provide it with a similar springboard: SAIC Motor, its parent company, has committed to supplying up to 10,000 BEVs this year. Lead times are also short. "Some vehicles are available within a couple of weeks and, from a factory order perspective, you are probably talking 12 weeks maximum," says Geraint Isaac, who was appointed as the brand's national fleet sales manager last September. Immediately prior to joining MG, he was national residual value (RV) and remarketing manager at Hyundai Motors UK, and he sees parallels between the companies.

"When I joined Hyundai in January 2009, we'd had the first year of scrappage and that really put it on the map because it was one of the few manufacturers to have stock on the ground," he says. "It ballooned its market and that established Hyundai – and Kia – in the UK and they've grown from there. "If we can capitalise on the current market trends with our electric vehicle (EV) products, that gets us on the map and we can develop further. "Because of the product we have and because of the types of product we've got coming, we aim to grasp the opportunity over the next three-to-four years and put ourselves firmly on the map as a serious contender in the UK motor industry."

EXPANDING EV RANGE
MG's current BEV offering is the ZS EV, a small SUV with a range of 163 miles. In the first two months of this year, it accounted for 28% of the brand's 2,729 registrations. This will be joined by a fully-electric C-segment estate later this year – the first vehicle of its type

on the market which will allow MG to offer "something that nobody else has", says Isaac – and a plug-in hybrid version of its HS mid-sized SUV. When the ZS EV was launched, it was offered with a £3,500 discount for the first 1,000 retail customers, in addition to the Government's £3,500 plug-in car grant. MG later extended the offer for the next 1,000 retail customers. "We've obviously put fleet terms in place with our end-users and fleet customers, so interest has been very high and, in fairness, the fleet offering is as good as the retail offering, if not slightly better in some cases," says Isaac. Fleet interest in MG EVs has been matched by that of leasing companies. "A number of major leasing companies have approached us and want to deal with us," he adds. "We've given support terms to all the major leasing companies and certainly the top five or six are on board with us. We are keen to grow with them and we see them as a major partner in our growth. "We've also launched a new white label programme for our dealer network so our dealers

IF WE CAN CAPITALISE ON THE MARKET TRENDS WITH OUR EV PRODUCTS, THAT GETS US ON THE MAP AND WE CAN DEVELOP FURTHER

GERAINT ISAAC, MG MOTOR UK

can go online and quote contract hire on all our products. That gives the dealers confidence that if they get an SME or a sole trader partnership that wants to contract hire, they have the tools to be able to do that and fulfil their needs." As well as SMEs, MG sees public sector organisations as key in the fleet market, which will overall account for between 40% and 50% of the brand's registrations.

Last year, it registered a total of 13,075 cars in the UK – a 44.5% increase on the previous year – with 6,288 going into either fleet captive, fleet Motability, fleet other, leasing/contract hire or rental. Under MG's Momentum & Growth mid-term plan, it aims to hit 30,000 sales by the end of the year, with fleet accounting for between 40% to 50% of this target, says Isaac.

Last year, it had an overall market share of 0.5% and wants to increase this to 1%. So far this year, it is at 1.2%. "This is about our long-term ambitions because unless you are at 1% and above, you are not going to be taken as a serious contender and we want to be taken as a serious contender," adds Isaac. "In time, we will be a 1% market player in fleet as well as retail, but that will come over a strategic growth period. "We are not putting any timescales on that. We will grow organically and see where that gets us. "We feel we have the product line-up that lends itself to the fleet arena and while we have big ambitions for volume growth for this year, we also have to be mindful of the channels we explore to get that growth." A deal with rental company Europcar put 800 vehicles into its fleet in 2018 and 1,400 in 2019, but these were through a buy-back scheme to help MG protect RVs. This allows MG to control the distribution of these vehicles into the dealer network and make sure the prices the manufacturer gets for those vehicles are the right ones, says Isaac, whose role also sees him responsible for vehicle remarketing, RVs and co-ordinating the brand's dealer fleet programmes. "I'm working closely with the main industry RV setters and data providers, giving them advance knowledge of new product so they can see the direction the business is going," he adds. "That gives them confidence when setting RVs. The ultimate aim is to get consistently good quality RVs at launch and maintain those throughout the life of the vehicle. "If you view the channels we are looking to do our fleet business in – contract hire, Motability and rental with buyback – they are good for RV. "It's not short-cycle business. We don't intend having vehicles on car supermarket forecourts within three months. That's not what we are about."

EXPANDING DEALER NETWORK
The manufacturer's expanding dealer network will have a key role to play in MG's fleet growth. In 2018, the brand had 80 UK dealers, by the end of 2019 it had 100, and it aims to grow that to 120 this year. "We want to drive about 80% to 90% of the business we will do in fleet through the dealers because then we can provide a tailored service," says Isaac. "For us, it's not just about the quality of the car, it's the quality of the delivery of the vehicle, the quality of the service we provide to end-users and also the aftersales support." MG is also looking to develop a fleet charter to give customers guaranteed levels of service, while it will also launch a pilot business centre programme with six-to-10 dealers this year. Isaac says the commitment to product, its dealer network and fleet initiatives shows MG is serious about its plans. "We are ambitious but we are also realistic. We know there is a challenge ahead of us, but we are going to thrive on that challenge," he adds. "We want to be recognised as a brand that is innovative, is constantly evolving and is consistently up-to-date with market trends."

NATIONAL FLEET SALES MANAGER: Geraint Isaac
TIME IN ROLE: Six months
ANNUAL SALES (2019): 13,075
ANNUAL FLEET SALES (2019): 6,288
MODEL RANGE: MG3, ZS, HS



Beverly Wise has more than 20 years' experience of working in the fleet industry

COMPANY: Webfleet Solutions
SALES AND MARKETING DIRECTOR, UK AND IRELAND: Beverly Wise
GLOBAL CUSTOMER BASE: 50,000
PARENT COMPANY: Bridgestone EMEA

Webfleet sets its sights on expansion in company cars

Webfleet Solutions believes telematics can help improve driver wellbeing.
Gareth Roberts reports

Webfleet Solutions is eyeing growth in the company car market, driven by a desire to improve the health and wellbeing of all drivers.

Currently, more than half (55%) of its business comes from heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and 35% from the light commercial vehicle (LCV) sector.

Just 10% of its UK customer base is derived from the company car market, but Beverly Wise, sales and marketing director for Webfleet Solutions in the UK and Ireland, believes the time is right for growth.

Driver wellbeing is moving up the fleet agenda and Wise wants the business to play its part.

She explains: "A key focus for us this year is around how we can improve the welfare and health of your employees, because there's an awful lot said about mental health and wellbeing

in the workplace, but that's defined by a building. All of the people we supply solutions to also have a workplace, it's just a mobile workplace and the stress that comes with driving can be significant."

Wise says stress can be detrimental to driving style, but by using telematics data to identify those underperforming drivers, you can then work with them to improve their wellbeing.

The technology, she says, is now widely accepted among truck and van drivers, who recognise its value to business and their personal health. But, she argues, business car drivers are "equally valuable" and 'spy-in-the-cab' fears should not outweigh the advantages that telematics can offer.

Wise believes how company car drivers interact with the technology can be crucial to overcoming some of those fears. For example, Webfleet Solutions gives drivers access to their data via an

app, which Wise says offers transparency and gives employees a sense of control.

Furthermore, it can allow drivers to switch the app between business and private use, ensuring only business miles are tracked.

"It isn't about trying to catch people out," explains Wise. "This is about enhancing their daily lives, getting them home safely at night and reducing their stress."

WEBFLEET PLATFORM

Webfleet Solutions delivers products through its Webfleet platform, which allows fleets to tailor a telematics package according to their needs thanks to its modular approach.

Connectivity is provided through plug-and-play hardware options via the vehicle's on-board diagnostic (OBD) port, or there are fixed box

options that offer greater functionality. Both offer data accessible through the company's apps.

However, the range of functionality offered to a fleet is always guided by what they want to achieve, says Wise.

"I don't want to sell somebody a box that goes into their vehicle," she explains. "We try to understand the prospect's pain points and what are their business objectives."

Products available through the Webfleet platform include fleet management, fleet optimisation, asset tracking, driver behaviour monitoring and mileage, fuel and CO₂ reporting.

It also operates an open application programming interface (API), which allows third-party partners to develop further products to benefit customers.

"If you're an owner-operator or have a fleet of 30,000 vehicles, we believe we have a solution that

“THIS IS ABOUT ENHANCING THEIR DAILY LIVES, GETTING THEM HOME SAFELY AT NIGHT AND REDUCING THEIR STRESS”

BEVERLY WISE, WEBFLEET SOLUTIONS

will suit your requirements," says Wise.

Furthermore, fleets can try out the technology for free for up to three months in 10 vehicles, allowing the decision-makers to assess the potential return on investment.

NEW OWNERS AND NAME

Webfleet Solutions has more than 50,000 customers operating across the globe, with Wise responsible for the business's UK and Ireland division.

She was appointed sales and marketing director in 2016, with more than 20 years' experience in the fleet industry.

She joined from Lex Autolease, where she was corporate sales director, having also previously held management roles with LeasePlan UK, BCA and incident management specialist FMG.

The past year, however, has seen significant change for her current employer, with a new name for the business and new owners.

Bridgestone announced the acquisition of TomTom Telematics for €910 million (£800m) in January 2019. The company name was changed to Webfleet Solutions last October.

Wise says the tyre manufacturer's acquisition is "exciting" for the business, because of its move towards 'mobility maintenance as a service'.

"They saw the benefits of working with us, especially as we are able to provide a lot of data," she says.

The data access will enhance Bridgestone's virtual tyre development and testing as well as connected tyre innovation. It also allows it to cross-sell tyres and solutions to Webfleet Solutions' customer base.

It has already launched a range of digital solutions and applications such as Tirematics, Mobox, FleetPulse and Bridgestone Connect, having built capabilities in data collection from sensors, data platforms and analytics.

It believes it has the "perfect assets" to "accelerate" the Webfleet Solutions business. CEO and president of Bridgestone EMEA, Paolo Ferrari, explains: "When we acquired Webfleet Solutions, we created a fleet solutions powerhouse."

"Together we have every capability to lead in what is an incredibly exciting, fast growing and innovative area of mobility."

"We have the ambition, the infrastructure and resources, the data and insights, and we have the people and their unrivalled knowledge."

"As the new worlds of connected and autonomous mobility rapidly become a reality, together

Bridgestone and Webfleet Solutions will ensure customers can enjoy every benefit of this new era."

Bridgestone made its first appearance at the annual Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas in January. The Webfleet Solutions platform took centre stage on the company's stand.

Wise says: "The transition from TomTom Telematics to Webfleet Solutions paves the way to a more connected, more holistic future in fleet and mobility management services."

INCREASED CONNECTIVITY

But as vehicle connectivity increases, and more manufacturers offer factory-fitted telematics options, is this seen as a threat to the business?

Wise says multiple reports from different manufacturers, with operators running mixed fleets, would just lead to increased admin costs.

Furthermore, she says the packages available can be restricted, in terms of the data they provide and the algorithms they are based on.

"Are you comparing like-for-like? Possibly not," she argues. "We still feel there is a benefit to having a single solution across your fleet to provide a single view of what your fleet is doing."

Wise does acknowledge, however, that there will come a time when vehicle manufacturers open-up their data to third-party providers.

This data exchange, between a manufacturer and Webfleet Solutions, is already being delivered through its OEM Connect programme with PSA Group.

"If you run a PSA fleet, we can literally flick a switch and that data from that vehicle will appear on our platform," says Wise.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

As a standalone business, Webfleet Solutions has an in-house development team, which has delivered a range of new products in the past year, including a new mileage logbook app, as well as routing and scheduling and asset tracking solutions.

However, it will now also benefit from being part of Bridgestone, with access to its IT infrastructure and research and development.

The platform is continually improved and updated, says Wise, with the company taking a collaborative approach with users, allowing them to feedback to the development team.

"We are absolutely about delivering a solution that aids and enhances your business and your business objectives," says Wise. "My mantra is to make customers look good in front of their peers."

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A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

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AWARDS 2020

Your 47-page souvenir guide to winners, finalists and those highly commended at the 2020 awards

FleetNews

AWARDS
2020

THE AWARDS

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- 79 Innovation in Mobility Technology Award

CHAIRMAN



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

WELCOME



We were delighted to see so many of guests at the Fleet News Awards in obviously very trying circumstances. Although around 400 people were unable to join us due to corporate restrictions on travel

implemented because of the Coronavirus, we still welcomed more than 750 to the awards evening to celebrate and honour the best people, companies and vehicles in fleet.

A special thanks to my events team, especially Sandra Evitt, for their calm and professional attitude during all the last-minute reshuffling of tables and tickets.

Thanks also to our sponsors for their support and my judging panel for the many hours spent in the process of helping us select the winners.

A special mention to Martin Ward, who is our longest serving judge – he's been part of the manufacturer panel for the past 21 years!

The integrity of the awards is paramount to us. We take the process seriously because it really means something to win a Fleet News Award.

Stephen Briers, editor-in-chief, Fleet News



The role of **Brian Cooper**, senior manager at Ernst & Young (EY), left, at the Fleet News Awards is to provide an independent view of the process

adhered to by the judging panels as they consider the sometimes lengthy list of entrants for each category in the manufacturer and supplier awards.

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

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

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

THE JUDGES



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



Caroline Sandall
National chair, ACFO
Fleet categories



Paul Hollick
Chairman, ICFM
Fleet categories



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



Liz Hollands
Facilities manager, FTA
Supplier categories



David Oliver
Procurement manager,
Red Bull
Supplier categories



Peter Weston
Fleet manager,
Arcus
Supplier categories



Jo Coffey
Fleet manager,
Anglia Water
Supplier categories



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



Stewart Lightbody
Fleet director,
M Group Services
Supplier categories



Martin Ward
Manufacturer relationship
manager, Cap HPI
Manufacturer categories



Matt de Prez
Senior staff writer,
Fleet News
Manufacturer categories



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



Mark Jowsey
Director, manufacturer
liaison, KeeResources
Manufacturer categories



Debbie Floyde
Fleet manager,
Bauer Media
Manufacturer categories



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



Shaun Sadlier
Head of consulting,
Arval
Manufacturer categories



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

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BEST COMPACT PREMIUM CAR OF THE YEAR BMW 1 SERIES

Carmaker's comments

BMW is delighted to win 'Best Compact Premium Car' for the new BMW 1 Series, a model that delivers increased comfort, aesthetic appeal and class-leading technology. Drivers benefit from enhanced specification, additional space due to the introduction of a front-wheel drive architecture and a lower BIK with RDE2-compliant models. It also comes with an enhanced digital eco-system that seamlessly merges driver's daily life into their driving experience. Optional technology such as head-up display, gesture control, and intelligent personal assistant ensure that drivers have the optimum experience while out on the road.



Fleet News says:
"Whether on the motorway or pootling around town, the 1 Series is proving to be a fine motor. Sitting behind the digital instruments, with a head-up display and the chunky leather-wrapped steering wheel, you'd be forgiven for thinking you were in an executive saloon."

Fleet News, January 2020

FleetNews



AWARDS 2020

WINNER



RANGE COSTS

P11D £24,205-£35,845
 CO₂ (WLTP) 119g/km-182g/km
 Annual BIK tax 25-37%
 Running costs (ppm) 32.42-49.68

FLEET PICK SPEC

116d Sport
 P11D price £26,265
 Running cost (4yr/80k) 33.78ppm
 CO₂ (WLTP) 120-127g/km
 Mpg combined (l/100km) 57.4-61.4 (49-4.6)
 Annual BIK tax 25-27%

FLEET NEWS AWARDS

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Liz Hollands (centre), of the Freight Transport Association, collected the Hall of Fame trophy from Stuart Thomas, director of business services, Fleet & SME Services, at sponsors the AA as awards host presenter Steph McGovern looks on



HALL OF FAME

Inductee: Liz Hollands

Liz Hollands had a hasty introduction to fleet management.

She was given two lever arch files and a spreadsheet and told to get on with it.

That was back in 1993 when she was working as an office manager at property services provider DTZ.

As someone who raced motorbikes in the mid-90s, Hollands's credentials as a petrol-head made her the ideal internal candidate, according to the business.

Fleet meant inheriting 350 cars from the merger of two companies, one side bought outright, the other funded on contract hire.

It was a baptism of fire, but one she handled with her customary calmness and pragmatism.

Her salvation, in terms of building fleet knowledge and skills, came in the form of trade association ACFO, with Fleet News playing a supporting role.

She became an ACFO director from 2006 to 2010 and has also been a pivotal part of the Fleet News Awards judging panel for

more than a decade.

From DTZ, Hollands went to run the FTA's fleet, which, in common with many fleet decision-makers, also involved taking responsibility for facilities.

During her 21 years in fleet, she has seen the role become much more strategic because much of the day-to-day operations can be outsourced.

However, she believes outsourcing can be taken too far and remains a firm advocate for the fleet manager. Without one, companies can easily lose sight of

the extreme costs involved in running a fleet.

Away from work, Hollands holds a pilot's licence which she put to good use following a phone-in with Chris Evans' former *Drivetime Show* on Radio 2.

He invited her to Duxford for a flight in a P51D Mustang, a World War II fighter plane capable of more than 400mph.

She took the controls for some of the flight which included several 360-degree rolls.

Afterwards, she quipped: "Work now seems very mundane."

PREVIOUS WINNERS

2019 Ian Hill & Graham Telfer
 2018 Mike Street, Phil Clifford & Maurice Elford

2017 David Hosking & Colin Marriott
 2016 John Pryor, Andrew Mann & Peter Roper-Hall
 2015 Larry Bannon & Hugh Wallace

2014 Val South & Peter Cakebread
 2013 Nigel Trotman & David Graham
 2012 Kevin Griffin, Vince Kinner & Julie Jenner

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FLEET NEWS AWARDS

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Data driven insights

Stewart Taylor (centre), fleet manager, Police Scotland, collected the award from Chris Woods, head of enterprise sales at sponsors Trakm8



FLEET MANAGER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Stewart Taylor, Police Scotland**

Almost six years after the creation of Police Scotland, which saw the merger of all eight regional police forces, fleet manager Stewart Taylor started work on a 2030 fleet strategy with an objective to deliver an efficient and effective operation for now and the future.

The goal was to "make it a better fleet for everybody".

Taylor's strategy split into two main components: first, to listen to and improve the experience of Police Scotland officers and end users with fleet in the short-term; second, to futureproof the fleet, ensuring flexibility to the changing busi-

ness landscape over the medium to long term.

The short-term strategy resulted in a change to replacement cycles, reducing the age of marked response vehicles but increasing the age for unmarked vehicles. This reshuffle enabled Police Scotland to focus its available resource on the essential marked vehicles, running a modern, efficient fleet, as well as reducing overall maintenance and repair costs.

The longer-term strategy was intended to react to climate and environment priorities, by transitioning the fleet to ultra-low emission vehicles.

Taylor showed clear leadership throughout the creation of the new

strategy, which required engagement, buy-in and collaboration from a variety of stakeholders, including the Scottish Government, 22,000 employees and internal departments such as IT and estates.

Crucial was a change in the funding model to focus on total cost of ownership, no mean feat in a public body that manages resource by capital expenditure. The new approach had to be signed off by the Scottish Government and

opened the door to electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles.

Police Scotland has 100 such vehicles now with another 150 scheduled to come on fleet during the course of 2020.

It is further tackling emissions by piloting drones for operational policing, such as search and rescue. Designed and built in-house, they reduce the need for helicopters, saving money and emissions, but they can also get to more inaccessible places.

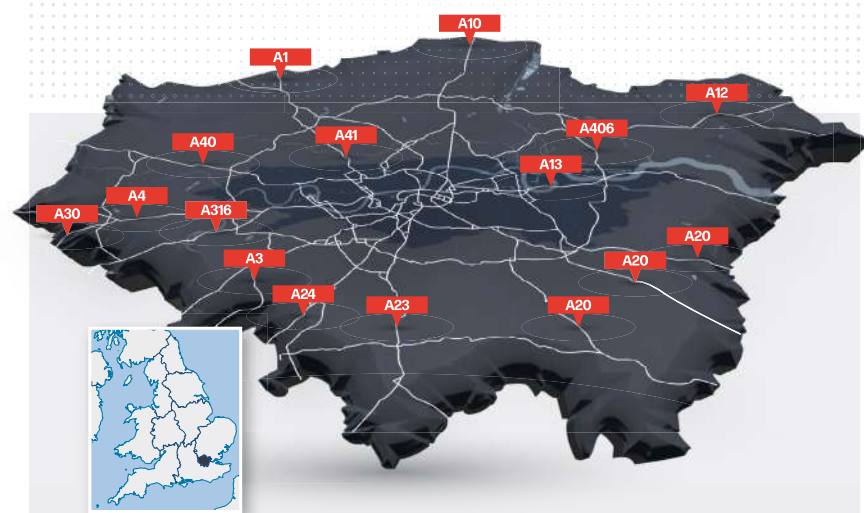
JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Working in partnership with the Scottish Government, local councils and utility companies, Stewart Taylor has delivered an exceptional fleet strategy that is bold, challenging and impressive. He overcame traditional cap-ex budgetary challenges to achieve stakeholder buy-in to a fleet solution that benefits the whole country.

FINALISTS

- 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



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FLEET NEWS AWARDS

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Nigel Morris (centre), electric vehicle integration manager, Active Building Centre – Swansea University, was handed the trophy by Christopher Macgowan OBE, chairman of the judging panel on behalf of VisionTrack

FLEET CHAMPION AWARD

Winner: Nigel Morris

Many businesses are still wary of electric vehicles (EVs), due to uncertainty about range, charging and how they might fit into their choice lists.

They should seek out 2020 Fleet Champion Nigel Morris – he'll be delighted to provide the answers, drawing on his own experiences in introducing and running an electric fleet for the Active Building Centre at Swansea University.

Morris has been championing EVs with infectious energy within his organisation and to other fleets – anyone who'll listen – for almost a decade.

His was one of the first Go Ultra Low accredited companies in Wales and one of the first accredited universities in the UK.

He has chaired the Swansea region ULEV (ultra-low electric vehicles) Taskforce for the past five years, helping a range of public sector bodies to share knowledge and experiences to resolve issues.

Morris also collaborates with the city council on hosting the annual Clean Air Roadshow to promote awareness and uptake of ULEVs to the public.

His own fleet consists of 15 electric cars and 12 electric vans on three-year leases. He does, to his personal chagrin, still run 10 diesel

vans, primarily tippers, Lutons and minibuses where there have been few powertrain alternatives, but is watching developments closely with a view to switching as soon as viable options come to market.

Better understanding and management of his electric cars has seen annual mileages rise from less than 5,000 miles to as much as 20,000, as they replace hire cars and grey fleet.

Meanwhile, the buildings play their own part by generating sufficient electricity to make the fleet grid-neutral over the year, while also providing energy to neighbouring buildings during the evening peak. This helps to

further decarbonise the fleet.

But Morris's leadership goes beyond electric vehicles. He has introduced public transport schemes to lure people out of cars and reduce journeys. He has worked with the sustainability team to introduce better lit footpaths for popular walking routes. And he promotes cycle-to-work with showers, changing rooms and safe storage areas – including a pool of electric bikes to replace grey fleet.

For those remaining wedded to their cars, Morris operates car share and lift share schemes, with incentivised parking permits to encourage ULEV adoption by staff.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Nigel is a real environmental champion with great energy who has engaged other fleets and businesses with his infectious enthusiasm and excellent ideas to share best practice in new mobility solutions and uptake of electric vehicles.



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FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR: BMW



Winner's comments

BMW Group knows delivering great products and services is of paramount importance to fleet. Our range of products includes recently launched key fleet models, along with a wider range of plug-in hybrids with low CO₂ (under WLTP). To further support our customers, a significant number of structural changes have been made, so we are better prepared to offer the very best of advice and products in an ever-changing world. Rob East, general manager, corporate sales, said: "We are delighted to accept these awards, particularly Manufacturer of the Year and New Company Car of the Year, which are reader voted."



Judges comments:

Market-leading products, as shown by its sweeping the board in the model categories, strong engagement with the fleet sector, and a real understanding of the needs of leasing companies, fleet end users and company car drivers saw BMW take back-to-back wins in the fleet manufacturer of the year category. It continues to sit right at the top of fleet choice lists.



Rob East (centre), general manager corporate sales, BMW Group UK, collected the award from Christopher Macgowan OBE, chairman of the judges on behalf of KeeResources

FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **BMW Group UK**



BMW has retained its Fleet Manufacturer of the Year title, taking its trophy haul to four at this year's Fleet News Awards.

Last year, Rob East, the brand's corporate sales manager, picked up the award having been in the role for just three months. A year on, East's influence has clearly paid off, with *Fleet News* readers naming the brand their favourite once again.

One of his priorities was to simplify the company's approach to the market, giving customers an easier journey.

BMW (as well as its Mini sister brand) has been among the first to share revised WLTP emissions figures ahead of the April deadline, allowing fleets and company car drivers to plan ahead for the new tax regime.

The company also made a conscious effort to help fleet customers understand WLTP, what the new figures meant and how they would be affected.

Among the brand's many products launched in the past 12 months was the all-new 1 Series and 3 Series.

Both models have shot straight to the top of their respective classes, bringing all the ingredients that

make a good fleet car to the table.

Electrification is also a priority, with the new Mini Electric joining the BMW i3 in the brand's line-up. BMW is also expanding its plug-in hybrid line-up, with the X1 and X2 gaining new ultra-low emission powertrains to join the X3, 3 Series, 5 Series, 7 Series and X5.

Many of the brand's models already achieve RDE2 compliance,

proving their environmental credentials and helping to minimise BIK tax for drivers.

This year, BMW plans to achieve approval for even more of its key models.

It is also introducing mild-hybrid diesel engines on the 3 Series, with lower CO₂ emissions, having successfully rolled them out on the 5 Series.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Market-leading products, as shown by its sweeping the board in the model categories, strong engagement with the fleet sector, and a real understanding of the needs of leasing companies, fleet end users and company car drivers saw BMW take back-to-back wins in the fleet manufacturer of the year category. It continues to sit right at the top of the fleet choice list.

FINALISTS

- BMW Group UK
- Ford Motor Company
- Toyota
- Vauxhall Motors
- Volkswagen
- Volvo Car UK



NEW COMPANY CAR OF THE YEAR BMW 3 SERIES

Carmaker's comments

Winning both 'Best Premium Car' and 'New Company Car of the Year' is testament to the position of BMW 3 Series at the top of its class and adds to the many accolades it has received since it was launched. An outstanding model for fleets, with a range of plug-in hybrid options, the car offers class-leading in-car connectivity and infotainment, much of which comes as standard. Real-time traffic information and assistance innovations save time during the working day. Safety is paramount, with Active Guard Plus providing speed limit information and lane departure warnings. The 3 Series embodies all the values that BMW stands for and has firmly established itself as the Ultimate Driving Machine.



Fleet News says:
"The 3 Series remains a benchmark in this class. Better-looking than its predecessor with sharp creases, aggressive-contoured front and low-slung bonnet, it features more interior space and higher levels of equipment, with precise, progressive handling and a hairpin-loving chassis."

Fleet News, November 2019

FleetNews



AWARDS 2020

WINNER



RANGE COSTS

P11D £30,690-£48,920
 CO₂ (WLTP) 32-189g/km
 Annual BIK tax 27%-37%
 Running costs (ppm) 41.87 - 67.32

FLEET PICK SPEC

330e M Sport
 P11D price £40,645
 Running costs (4yr/80k) 48.62
 CO₂ (WLTP) 32-37g/km
 Mpg combined (l/100km) 176.6-201.8 (72-6.9)
 Annual BIK tax 10%

FleetNews



Rob East, general manager corporate sales, BMW Group UK, collected the trophy from Le Etta Pearce, chief executive officer of award sponsors Dealer Auction



NEW COMPANY CAR OF THE YEAR

Winner: **BMW 3 Series**

READER VOTED
 ★★★★★

Launched in March 2019, the seventh generation of this premium saloon was a clear winner in the minds of *Fleet News*' readers when asked to choose their favourite new company car of 2019 in an email vote.

Its mix of badge appeal, efficient engines and sporty styling proved the winning combination and saw the 3 Series at the top of the fleet sales league as well as being BMW's best-selling model.

Key to fleets was the improvement in efficiency, through greater engine efficiency and choice – six petrol and diesel

engines with a plug-in hybrid arriving in July.

Of particular interest to fleets, this can travel up to 37 miles on just electric power – a 50% increase on its predecessor – with average fuel at 138mpg and 39g/km CO₂ emissions.

Attracting a modest 16% benefit-in-kind (BIK) charge, the annual tax bill for the top-selling M Sport (for a 20% taxpayer) is currently £1,250. This will fall to just £950 a year from April 2020.

The top selling model, the 330d, sees CO₂ emissions from 110g/km to 122g/km and combined fuel economy of 67.3mpg to 60.1mpg, an improvement over the previous

generation's correlated-NEDC figure.

For drivers, more interior space and new digital instrument cluster will add to the overall appeal, together with standard equipment such as adaptive LED headlights, heated front seats, BMW Live Cockpit Plus (including navigation, teleservices and map updates), heated front seats and parking assistance.

It may come as no surprise that

the 3 Series won since in November, exclusive research by *Fleet News* for the FN50 revealed that BMW retained its number one position for the fifth year as the most reliable manufacturer among the UK's top 50 leasing companies.

Despite only a few months on the market, FN50 data revealed the 3 Series was the second most reliable car on fleets, helping BMW retain the crown.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Readers have reacted positively to the most modern car in the segment which was replaced last year with a version that offers the latest safety technology, efficient engines (including plug-in hybrid) and connected services, while still delivering BMW's promise of an outstanding driving experience.

FINALISTS

■ BMW 1 Series
 ■ BMW 3 Series
 ■ Land Rover Discovery Sport

■ Mercedes-Benz CLA
 ■ Range Rover Evoque
 ■ Škoda Superb
 ■ Tesla Model 3

■ Toyota CH-R
 ■ Toyota Corolla
 ■ VW Golf



Oliver Waring (second from left), managing director, and Lisa Spong, sales director, Reflex Vehicle Hire collected the award from Christopher Macgowan OBE, chairman of the judging panel

FLEET SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Reflex Vehicle Hire**

An unrelenting focus on improving customer safety has seen Reflex Vehicle Hire overhaul its risk management offering.

Following conversations with clients, the company developed 'Drive with Reflex' to provide 'vehicle hire with safety as standard'.

This offers a range of standard and optional services such as: vans limited to 70mph, vehicle tracking and dashcams with automated incident reporting, telematics monitoring and data analysis service with live driver intervention, a driver

safety app including daily walk-around checks, and driver profiling services.

Reflex, which was the first van rental business to receive Van Excellence operator accreditation from the Freight Transport Association, also now provides a range of Ready to Work-compliant vehicles configured to meet the different standards set down by contractors or local authorities.

This, for example, allows customers to request pre-configured vehicles for specific roles which are also FORS-compliant.

Reflex has also rolled out a minimum specification programme for rental cars. Where

available, this includes reversing sensors or cameras, blind spot warning, lane departure warning, adaptive cruise control and autonomous emergency braking.

While it says this can have an impact on vehicle acquisition costs, it feels it is "an essential aspect of being a responsible fleet supplier to ensure drivers are as safe in our vehicles as they would be in vehicles provided by their own company".

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Safety is built into every aspect of Reflex's business products and services, which was a clear differentiator in this category. Reflex was a frontrunner in several other awards categories, proving just how strong it is as an outstanding all-round fleet supplier.

Alongside its focus on safety, Reflex has continued to invest in customer service, targeting five areas for continuous improvement: speed, accuracy, accessibility, empowerment and partnership.

Its work has been rewarded through growth. Over the past year, the company, which enjoyed a 100% retention rate for core customers in 2019, has seen its fleet size grow by 20% to more than 5,600 vehicles.

FINALISTS

■ ARI
■ Fleet Service GB
■ FleetCheck

■ FMG
■ Hitachi Capital
■ Vehicle Solutions

■ Reflex Vehicle Hire
■ The AA
■ TMC

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ ARI
■ Fleet Service GB

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FLEET NEWS AWARDS

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Intelligent Vehicle Solutions



Steve Winter (centre), head of fleet, British Gas, collected the award from Christopher Macgowan OBE, chairman of the judging panel on behalf of Zenith

FLEET OF THE YEAR 1,001-PLUS VEHICLES

Winner: British Gas

British Gas has introduced a range of initiatives targeting vehicle downtime, driver welfare and the environmental performance of the fleet.

As Britain's third largest fleet with 11,400 vehicles, the majority of which are job-need vans, keeping vehicles on the road is a priority. In the past year, it has ensured its surplus vehicles are strategically placed around the country with its repair network centres to act as an internal hire fleet. This means that in the event of a vehicle incident or breakdown, a like-for-like vehicle can be

quickly supplied to keep the engineer mobile.

Servicing vans during an engineer's rest day by using a 'pick up and drop off' service is also saving thousands of hours in downtime.

Fitting Michelin Cross Climate tyres has reduced the reliance on 4x4 hire vehicles at times of inclement weather while telematics enhancements mean British Gas's maintenance department can pick up on vehicle fault codes before expensive damage is caused.

Safety technology is included in the total cost of ownership of new vans and British Gas is working with Loughborough Design School to ensure its racking is not only fit

for purpose, but ensures users stay fit and healthy.

A welfare van is used at engineer team meetings to give engineers an insight into their personal health and is also used at British Gas's safe driver of the year event.

Compliance with clean air zones and London's ultra-low emission zone is high on the agenda but

head of fleet Steve Winter says British Gas wants to exceed the minimum standard and to be "pioneers of electric and zero emission technology". As a result, it is taking part in Optimise Prime – Europe's biggest commercial vehicle trial and has signed up to EV100 which means 100% of its fleet will be zero emission by 2030.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

British Gas has a well-balanced fleet team with complementary core skills that gives it the ability to link into the business in the right way and deliver a strategy that meets its needs. With a commendable commitment to electric vehicles, a strong and coherent strategy enables the business to take a holistic view while focusing on the detail to ensure every element of the operation is tightly managed. Drivers' welfare is always a priority with a dedicated health van providing regular check-ups.

FINALISTS

■ British Gas
■ Police Scotland
■ Royal Mail

■ Schneider Electric
■ Siemens
■ Vodafone

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Police Scotland

Safety as standard

"Safety is built into every aspect of Reflex's business products and services. Reflex was a frontrunner in several other awards categories, proving just how strong it is as an outstanding all-round fleet supplier."
Judge's comments

One of the many unique aspects to Reflex Vehicle Hire is that the business was built around the customer from its inception.

Reflex do business with customer service at its heart. We are more than just a supplier; we are a partner that works alongside our clients.

This message permeates from the boardroom throughout the business to every role and every level, so everybody is working with the same vision.

This has been fundamental to the way the business has developed. We have carefully developed customer relationships and emphasised long-term partnership.

We met with clients and discussed their needs, then responded quickly with service developments that helped them.

We have led the industry in our development of Drive with Reflex safety as standard package. The modular safety solution for hire vehicles includes speed limiters, vehicle tracking, dashcam and intervention with drivers if required.

The inspiration for our innovative developments is seeing the challenges our clients face.

When implemented and managed, technology makes a key difference and here we stand out for our consistent delivery of a clear vision to improve client safety.

Our right first time focus ensures that when customers make a request, they can trust our expert team to deliver what they wanted, where and when it is needed.

We invest in continuous staff improvement that ensures they constantly put the customer first and cross-check progress with their requirements.

This requires teamwork, from the boardroom to the sales team and delivery drivers, to ensure clear messaging and a business-wide commitment to meeting customer needs.



FLEET NEWS AWARDS

Sponsored by **Reflex**
Vehicle Hire



Steve Openshaw, group fleet and transport manager, Eric Wright Group, picked up the award from Lisa Spong, sales director of sponsors Reflex Vehicle Hire.

FLEET OF THE YEAR UP TO 1,000 VEHICLES

Winner: Eric Wright Group

Steve Openshaw, group fleet and transport manager at Eric Wright Group, likes to lead by example. He has been driving zero-emission capable vehicles for the past seven years, firstly a Vauxhall Ampera and then an electric BMW i3.

"I am showing drivers what these cars can do," he says. "You get some people saying you can't go anywhere with them, you can't do anything, so I am showing day-to-day that you can live with them."

To facilitate the

uptake of electric vehicles (EVs) the business has installed five charge points at its head office in Preston with plans to increase this to 25 this year and an additional 30 throughout the property portfolio. Drivers have also undergone environmental driver training with Energy Saving Trust.

Any alternative fuel vehicle can sit on the company car list provided it fits the wholelife cost model. Last year, 20% (34) of the 170 cars which the business leases were hybrid, plug-in hybrid or pure EV with a further 15 battery-electric vehicles on order.

A number of group businesses

have also been trialling electric commercial vehicles to identify whether a switch to electric is possible.

Other environmental initiatives include encouraging staff to car share journeys, where possible, or use alternative transport such as trains. The group participates in a cycle to work scheme with bike shelters, lockers and changing facilities available.

To improve the safety of the fleet, telematics and dashcams have been introduced to all commercial vehicles. Linking this to a mileage capture system and fuel cards has enabled the fleet team to gather more accurate data.

A reward scheme for improvement in driver behaviour scores, along with driver debriefs and e-training modules are also being introduced.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

With holistic thinking, Eric Wright has introduced a range of outstanding initiatives to run an efficient and effective fleet. It has excellent stakeholder and supplier engagement, robust grey fleet controls and an eye on the future with a clear long-term strategic plan.

FINALISTS

- ABM
- Auto Windscreens
- CLC Contractors
- Close Brothers
- Eric Wright Group
- Princebuild

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Auto Windscreens
- Close Brothers

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FLEET NEWS AWARDS

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Vehicle Hire



Shaun Atton, fleet manager, Auto Windscreens (centre) collected the trophy from Neil McCrossan, sales and marketing director of Northgate Vehicle Hire, the award sponsors



MOST IMPROVED FLEET OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Auto Windscreens**

Auto Windscreens has made wholesale changes to its fleet operation which have resulted in improved compliance and safety standards; reduced maintenance, leasing, fuel, incident and insurance costs; and better driver engagement.

The changes have been introduced by group fleet manager Shaun Atton who assumed the position in 2017, having transferred from a regional service manager role. Atton has been with the business for 16 years, starting out as a glass repair and replacement techni-

cian before progressing to operational roles. He believes his background has given him an insight into the drivers' needs and helped to get buy-in to changes.

Initially, he focused on reviewing processes and systems, learning what makes a best practice fleet operator; and listening to colleagues' and external experts' views on fleet management. He then developed a comprehensive fleet strategy.

Risk management changes have included training the Auto Windscreens technical training team in advanced driving techniques so they can assess technicians' on-road practices and coach them to be safer drivers, integrating telematics

with the existing 3G cameras and bringing accident management in-house. These changes have resulted in a significant reduction in insurance costs.

Other fleet management changes have included replacing spreadsheets with a bespoke fleet management system, changing fuel card provider; switching from pool cars to daily rental, changing leasing providers and

moving from using independent garages for MOTs and tyres to a national supplier with fixed rates.

Electric vehicle charging points have been installed within the Auto Windscreens network and Atton is now evaluating pure electric vehicles, following the introduction of hybrids. The business is already carbon-neutral thanks to a carbon offsetting scheme.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

An exceptional use of data from a variety of sources have driven an effective fleet strategy from a thoroughly modern fleet manager. Auto Windscreens is always looking for innovation and fleet manager Shaun Atton has excellent relationships within the business and with key supplier partners. The judges praised the role of the fleet within the company's charity work.

FINALISTS

- ABM
- Altrad Services

- Auto Windscreens
- Close Brothers

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Altrad Services



FLEET DEALER OF THE YEAR: JOHNSONS FLEET SERVICES

FleetNews



AWARDS
2020

WINNER

Winner's comments

As a team driven by passion, commitment and integrity, there is no greater confirmation that we are doing a great job for our customers than receiving this award! Every member of the team is absolutely delighted.

We operate a customer-centric business that recognises the need to constantly evolve and develop in order to adapt to the ever-changing environment and our customers' needs. This is all done while injecting an element of fun and laughter into our day, making us more like a close-knit family than work colleagues.

We were happy to celebrate receiving this fabulous award together!



Customer testimonial:

"Having a network of preferred partners that are managed closely means exceptional customer service and standards are a pre-requisite for ALD Automotive. The whole team at Johnsons provides this and more. A partnership that shows professionalism, respect, trust and expertise proves invaluable for us and our customers."

Andy Fowler, Procurement Supply Manager, ALD Automotive

JOHNSONS
FLEET SERVICES

FLEET NEWS AWARDS

Nigel Morris (centre), electric vehicle integration manager, Active Building Centre – Swansea University, collected the award from Henry Williams, head of fleet at sponsors Skoda UK



ENVIRONMENTAL FLEET

Winner: **Active Building Centre – Swansea University**

Active Building Centre – Swansea University's commitment to an environmentally-friendly fleet stretches far beyond just using electric vehicles (EVs).

Its EV journey began in 2012 with the installation of a single charge point: today 70% of its fleet is electric, with 26 EVs from six manufacturers and 20 charging points.

These vehicles are integrated into the organisation's Active Buildings which generate energy through solar panels to help decarbonise heat and transport.

These buildings generate enough energy to be grid-neutral over a

year, provide energy to neighbouring buildings during the evening peak and provide the centre's EVs with 24,000 miles of energy annually.

Mirroring the advance in EV technology in recent years, Active Building Centre's use of the vehicles has also developed significantly. In 2018, the annual mileage of its typical EV was 3,500 to 5,000; in 2019 it was 15,000 to 20,000.

The adoption of longer-range EVs has enabled Active Building Centre – Swansea University to reduce its use of hire cars, instead using its own EVs which has lowered fleet emissions. When it does use rental, it specifies low emission vehicles.

The organisation has also intro-

duced a number of other initiatives to reduce the environmental impact of moving people around.

It has introduced emission-based, incentivised parking permits to encourage adoption of low-emission vehicles by staff.

It operates car share and lift share schemes, while it actively discourages grey fleet use by offering staff the use of electric pool cars.

Electric bikes are also available for employee use, while Active Building Centre – Swansea University has collaborated with local transport companies to introduce award-winning public transport schemes to encourage people out of their cars.

The Active Building Centre was also the main driver behind a successful bid for a Santander cycle hire scheme in the city.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Active Building Centre – Swansea University takes an all-encompassing approach to electric vehicle procurement while integrating alternative forms of transport to reduce car journeys. It is a real champion within the local community helping other businesses to improve their own environmental standing, with ample examples of best practice.

FINALISTS

- Active Building Centre – Swansea University
- Defra Group Fleet Services

- Nottingham City Council
- Royal Mail
- University of Birmingham

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Nottingham City Council



Henry Williams (centre), head of fleet at award sponsors Škoda UK, presented the trophy to Altrad Services' UK fleet & transport manager Matthew Hammond

SAFE FLEET AWARD

Winner: **Altrad Services**

The use of telematics data and greater driver accountability have helped drive down incident rates at Altrad Services and secure it this year's Safe Fleet of the Year Award.

The industrial services and equipment supplier, which operates 1,200-plus cars and vans, bases its approach on intervention. It used telematics data and accident statistics to identify at-risk drivers, while introducing greater driver accountability and acting on driver feedback.

Its focus on safety starts from day one, with all new drivers joining the firm assessed over a

three-month period using telematics data from their vehicle.

Drivers of large vans undergo a half-day assessment before being allowed on the road. This involves vehicle familiarisation training, load security and safe loading training, both face-to-face and via e-learning modules.

The driver will then be shadowed for the rest of the day to assess their driving and customer interaction.

The assessment of all drivers is continuous, with telematics data building a profile of each driver and identifying areas of weakness to allow targeted training.

Driver training at Altrad Services consists of three key elements: e-learning, one-to-one driver

training and classroom-based courses.

Drivers who are deemed to be high risk are given priority, with areas of concern discussed initially between driver and fleet or line manager.

They will be presented with the telematics data showing the areas of concern, including how their driving might impact other road users or potentially result in an incident. They will then take a targeted e-learning course.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Safety is part of Altrad's DNA – it's number one priority. The company takes a holistic approach to safety and risk across the business which has resulted in a class-leading incident rate but it is never satisfied. It has a variety of innovative programmes designed to reduce the rate even further. A winning philosophy.

Drivers who do not show any improvements have to take a further half-day, in-house classroom-based course, which is followed up with further e-learning modules.

There is also annual training for all other drivers, which can be either a one-to-one session or online.

Altrad Services coaches its drivers to understand how their values, beliefs and personality impact the way they control a vehicle.

FINALISTS

- Altrad Services
- FM Conway

- Iron Mountain
- Princebuild
- Speedy Asset Services

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Iron Mountain



Nigel Morris (centre), electric vehicle integration manager, Active Building Centre – Swansea University, collected the award from Paul Hollick, awards judge and chair of ICFM

BEST TRAVEL AND MOBILITY INITIATIVE

Winner: **Active Building Centre – Swansea University**

Active Building Centre – Swansea University has introduced a range of initiatives to help improve air quality and reduce congestion in its locality.

Key to cutting emissions is the electrification of its fleet. From installing a single charge point in 2012, 70% of the organisation's fleet is now electric, with 26 electric vehicles (EVs) from six manufacturers and 20 charging points.

It operates an EV booking system to match the right vehicle to the journey and is using telematics to improve driver behaviour and help drivers select routes with efficiency in mind. While the organi-

sation does hire low-emission vehicles when required, it is increasingly able to use longer-range EVs for longer journeys: in 2018, the annual mileage of a typical EV was 3,500 to 5,000. This is now 15,000 to 20,000 and the Active Building Centre expects this to rise further.

While the increased use of EVs is reducing the fleet's environmental impact, the organisation is also working to reduce traffic congestion.

As well as having a pool car fleet of EVs, Active Building Centre – Swansea University actively discourages the use of grey fleet as far as possible by having electric bikes for staff use.

In collaboration with transport

companies, the organisation's travel planner and transport planner have also introduced award-winning public transport schemes to encourage people out of cars.

Its work extends to active travel options. Active Building Centre – Swansea University has introduced better-lit footpaths on popular walking routes, while the organisation was also the main

driver behind a successful competitive bid for a Santander cycle hire scheme across the city.

The organisation offers employees a cycle-to-work salary sacrifice scheme to allow them to buy a bicycle at a reduced rate.

Shower/changing/safe storage schemes are available for commuting cyclists.

It also operates car share and lift share schemes.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Active Building Centre – Swansea University has a holistic approach to multi-modal transport and travel with a clear plan to offer viable alternatives to grey fleet and commuters. The judges praised its public transport initiatives, investment in better-lit footpaths and facilities for cyclists, as well as its successful car share and lift share schemes. Success is measured via its travel planner which publishes annual stats to show the journeys saved.

FINALISTS

- Active Building Centre – Swansea University
- Bath & North East Somerset Council

- Highland Council
- Red Bull
- Siemens





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Graeme Jenkins (centre), head of fleet, Suzuki GB, collected the award from Marchel Koops – chief commercial officer of sponsors Athlon International



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MOST IMPROVED FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Suzuki GB**

2019 was a transformative year for Suzuki GB. Two years in the making, in July the brand launched the Suzuki Business Partner (SBP) programme in the UK. It sees dealers manage sales from contract hire and leasing companies while giving them the power to generate incremental sales from local SMEs. The programme incorporates 32 dedicated fleet dealer groups (with around 60 dealerships), fleet specialists at each site, dedicated demonstrator vehicles, new approaches to marketing, demos, admin and resources, a new aftersales charter (including reduced

labour and oil rates) and a bonus programme incentivising Suzuki business partners to exceed service level agreements.

As part of the scaling of the programme, Suzuki has hired a used car and remarketing manager, dedicated to working with the leasing industry and management of end-of-contract vehicles to ensure residual values (RVs) achieved are fair across the product line-up for all parties.

Finally, the role of cost of ownership and remarketing manager has been created to work closely with industry guides and aftersales and production departments on all models to improve RVs.

SBP is supported by a fleet demo app with vehicle ordering, a national

used car programme and e-auction platform, designed to protect RVs with vehicles sourced from the Suzuki GB network.

"It's a programme all about empowering our dealers around the country to manage incoming sales from contract hire and leasing companies, while also enabling them to generate sales from local business fleet needs," says Suzuki.

The results of the SBP have been impressive, despite the challenging

UK market place and economic uncertainty.

True fleet registrations through external leasing providers (excluding Suzuki Contract Hire and rental business) has grown 45%; Suzuki Contract Hire registrations have increased 132%.

Nine contract hire and leasing companies have requested Suzuki deals and its fleet market share (excluding Motability and rental) increased from 1.04% to 1.25%.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Suzuki has put in place a new fleet business programme over the past two years as part of a complete rethink in the corporate market. While it has never had a huge foothold in fleet, the restructure, which includes fleet specialists across its dealer network, shows serious intent, and has already resulted in impressive growth in the leasing sector last year. Suzuki is now ready and able to service the fleet market.

FINALISTS

- Hyundai UK
- Mercedes-Benz
- Suzuki GB
- Toyota GB

Stuart Ferma (centre), general manager, fleet, Toyota & Lexus, picked up the award from Marchel Koops – chief commercial officer of sponsors Athlon International



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GREEN FLEET MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Toyota GB**

Toyota has a dream of a 'sustainable mobility society', "one that allows us all to move freely in comfort and safety in an environmentally friendly sustainable manner". The Fleet News Awards judges say it is proving it can turn this dream into a reality.

Why? The Toyota and Lexus UK ranges include 20 different self-charging hybrid in nearly every market segment as well as a plug-in hybrid, the Prius, and the hydrogen fuel cell Mirai. Its self-charging hybrids now represent more than 50% of alternative fuelled vehicle sales in the UK market. For

Lexus, 98% of UK vehicles sold are self-charging hybrids. There are eight Toyota and two Lexus models emitting less than 100g/km CO2 and taking into account grade variations, this means 70 different models.

From 2020, Toyota will add a plug-in hybrid Rav4 and from 2021, the fully electric Lexus UX300e. A new Mirai is coming this year, with plans to build 30,000 a year by the early 2020s.

The Rav4, C-HR and Corolla will be hybrid only ranges. Toyota's single van offering, the Proace will be available in full electric power-train from 2021 in the UK.

Altogether the company plans to introduce 10 battery electric vehi-

cles to the global market in the 2020s.

For fleets specifically, the Toyota and Lexus Fleet localisation programme, delivering contract hire orders through a customer's local dealership, rather than distances requiring delay and onward delivery, is growing in popularity and environmental impact. Volumes last year were expected to exceed 10,000 units,

with contract hire orders growing 50% year-on-year. Toyota calculates it has reduced CO2 emissions by an average 32g/km per vehicle in the programme which began more than four years ago.

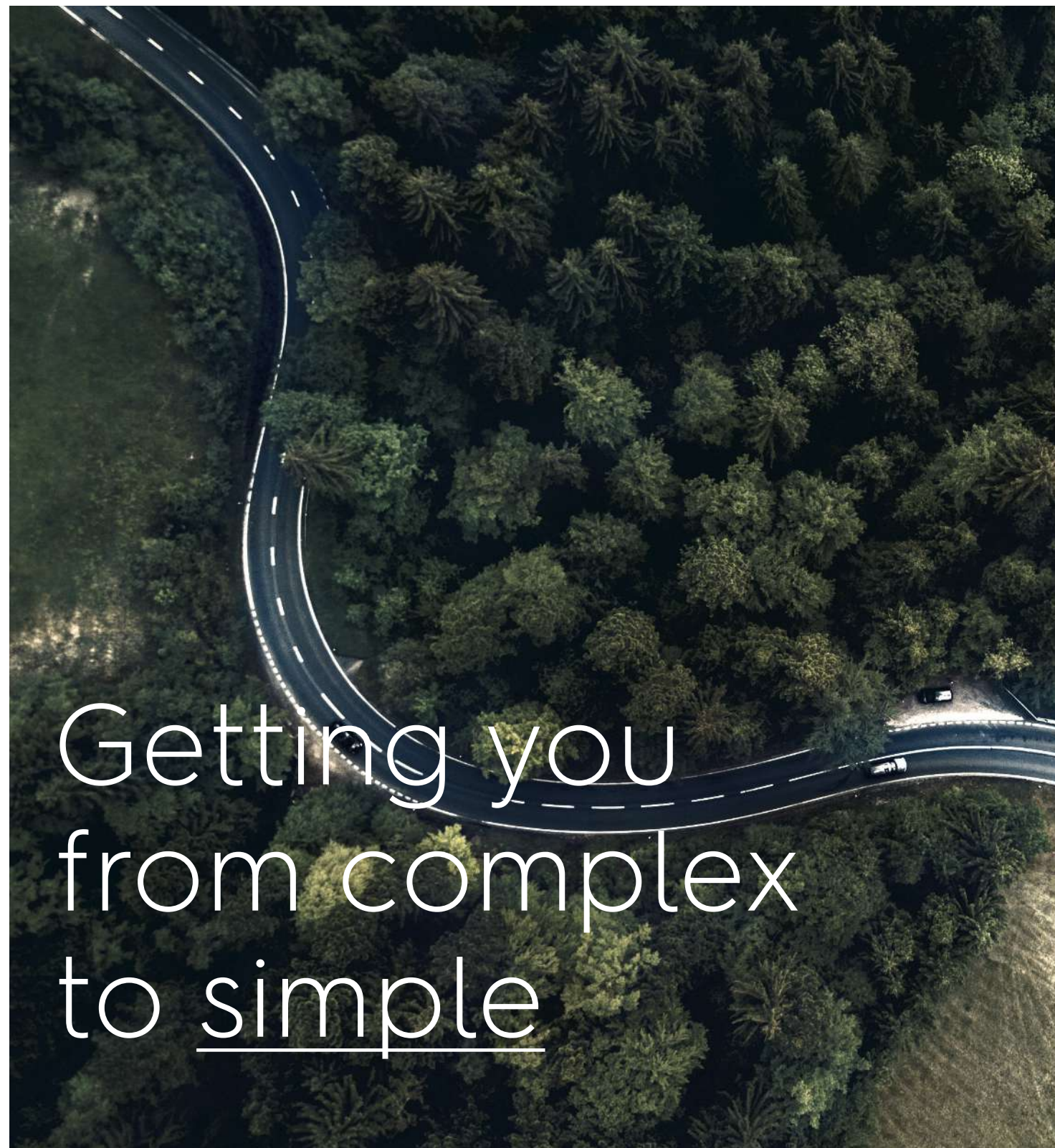
Finally, initiatives such as the Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050, that seeks to reduce the company's global environmental footprint, show the company takes green initiatives seriously.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Toyota's holistic approach to the environment sets it apart from other manufacturers. Yes, it's committed to hybrid, electric and hydrogen technology, but it is Toyota's other activities, including zero landfill, utilisation of renewable energy, fleet localisation plan and pledge to recycle waste water at its production plants, that make it a truly green company, not simply a manufacturer of green cars.

FINALISTS

- BMW Group UK
- Mercedes-Benz
- Toyota GB



Getting you
from complex
to simple

Athlon make fleet and mobility management simple. Always driven by a single-minded desire to uncomplicate the fleet process and help businesses get from A to B in the best way possible. Efficient mobility management, cost control, e-mobility, changing regulations, sustainability, employee motivation, van leasing, rental - all become easy with Athlon's solutions.

To find out more, go to int.athlon.com



John Hargreaves (centre), general manager – fleet and remarketing, Kia Motors UK, picked up the award from Marchel Koops, chief commercial officer of sponsors Athlon International

BEST ZERO EMISSION CAR

Winner: **Kia e-Niro**

There has been a boom in the number of electric cars on the market this year, but the Kia e-Niro is still a stand-out product thanks to its long range and affordable price.

Availability of the popular model is due to increase this year – a factor that previously affected its chances of winning – meaning waiting lists should shrink and fleet customers will be able to get their hands on one in 2020 should they wish.

With a range of 282 miles (WLTP) from its 64kWh battery, the e-Niro should help to stem

range anxiety among drivers, while its output of 204PS delivers impressive performance when required.

The car comes well equipped, with leather upholstery, LED headlights and keyless entry as standard.

Recent updates to the model have seen the introduction of a new infotainment system with a larger 10.25-inch touchscreen and UVO connected services, including mobile app integration, live traffic and weather reports.

Drivers also benefit from a suite of assistance systems, including adaptive cruise control, lane-keep assist and blind spot monitoring.

The e-Niro's SUV-inspired body shape and low ride height enhance practicality and efficiency. Passenger and luggage space is generous, while the interior layout is both functional and robust.

It provides a comfortable and refined ride, with minimal interior noise thanks to the electric powertrain.

The car is easy to drive, sharing its layout and controls with the hybrid and plug-in hybrid versions,

meaning drivers should find it easy to adapt.

The regenerative braking system can be adjusted via steering wheel-mounted paddles to suit the current driving conditions, allowing the car to recapture otherwise wasted energy and replenish the battery.

A seven-year warranty provides both peace of mind in-contract and ensures the car returns a strong residual value at the point of disposal.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Excellent range, spacious and practical, the e-Niro is competitively priced with an impressive seven-year warranty making it the perfect EV choice. You might have to wait to get one, but it will be well worth it, said the judges.

FINALISTS

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

BEST SMALL CAR

Winner: **Peugeot 208**



Martin Ward (centre), manufacturer relationship manager, Cap HPI, collected the award on behalf of Peugeot from Marchel Koops, chief commercial officer of award sponsor Athlon International

Peugeot is proving itself a leader in the small-car segment with the new 208. It's the first to be offered with petrol, diesel and fully electric powertrains, all with class-leading refinement and driveability.

Sharp looks and bold colours help the new model to stand out, while its futuristic i-cockpit provides an interior that no rival can match.

All trim levels come well equipped and the latest driver assistance and convenience systems are available, including Peugeot Drive Assist for

semi-autonomous driving.

Petrol models are fun-to-drive, with good performance and efficiency. For higher-mileage users, the BlueHDI diesel can achieve more than 70mpg.

Electric versions are almost indistinguishable from other 208s, yet they pack a 50kWh battery giving a range of more than 200 miles and a rapid-charging time of 0-80% in 30 minutes.

Competitive running costs and strong residual values ensure the new model holds favour with fleet managers, while the car's capabilities and style boost its desirability among drivers.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Vauxhall Corsa

FINALISTS

■ Audi A1

■ Ford Fiesta

■ Peugeot 208

■ Renault Clio

■ Vauxhall Corsa

■ Volkswagen Polo

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The new 208 is a complete transformation from the old car with significant improvements in looks and the quality of the interior fit and finish. It is packed with clever technology and has low running costs and CO2 emissions.

BEST LOWER MEDIUM CAR

Winner: **Ford Focus**



Neil Wilson (centre), fleet director, Ford of Britain and Ireland, collected the award from Marchel Koops, chief commercial officer of award sponsor Athlon International

The Ford Focus has picked up the Best Lower Medium Car award for the second year running, as rival vehicles failed to take its crown.

Sleek styling complements the car's agile handling and its spacious interior provides a refined and quiet ride – suited to all driving styles.

The 1.5-litre Ecoblue diesel engine offers low CO2 emissions of 118g/km (WLTP), with the promise of more than 60mpg.

Petrol models are also efficient, with the 1.0-litre Ecoboost providing

the lowest wholelife costs in the range.

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

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

There is also a crossover version, named Active, for those that want a more rugged look and the versatility of raised suspension.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Toyota Corolla

FINALISTS

■ Ford Focus

■ Hyundai Ioniq

■ Mazda3

■ Toyota Corolla

■ Vauxhall Astra

JUDGES' COMMENTS

With an impressive range of models, including the Active, and a strong engine line-up, the Focus offers something for every driver. It's a well-engineered premium product with class-leading performance. Priced correctly for maximum fleet appeal, it is the best all-rounder in the segment.



BEST COMPACT PREMIUM CAR

Winner: **BMW 1 Series**

BMW took a risk in developing its latest 1 Series without the brand's trademark rear-wheel drive layout, but it paid off.

The new model uses front-wheel drive for the first time, allowing for more interior space and a larger boot.

Despite the switch, the 1 Series still offers a class-leading driving experience with sharp steering, a balanced ride and well-weighted controls.

A striking new look ensures the car stands out, with enlarged kidney grilles and distinct LED lighting.

The engine range includes RDE2-compliant diesels, minimising benefit-in-kind tax for drivers, and efficient three-cylinder petrols.

Performance is impressive, no matter which version you choose.

Inside, the 1 Series shares the same interior layout and quality as the 3 Series.

It features a fully-connected infotainment system, digital instrument cluster and voice-activated digital assistant.

Refinement and build quality take this latest model to the next-level, earning it the trophy in this category.



Brian Cox (centre), national corporate sales manager, BMW Group UK, picked up the trophy from Marchel Koops, chief commercial officer of award sponsor Athlon International

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The greatly improved interior comes from a much higher class, making 'a good car even better. Distinctive styling, strong driver appeal and with front-wheel drive transmission that makes it more accessible and loses nothing over rear-wheel drive; this is an excellent choice for business fleets.

FINALISTS

■ Audi A3

■ BMW 1 Series

■ Mercedes-Benz

A-Class

■ Mini Clubman

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Mercedes-Benz A-Class



BEST UPPER MEDIUM CAR

Winner: **Škoda Superb**

Skoda's Superb remains unbeaten in the Best Upper Medium Car category for the fifth consecutive year.

A round of updates were applied to the model as part of a mid-life facelift in 2019, including the introduction of a plug-in hybrid variant, helping to secure its success in this year's awards.

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

It has a gigantic boot and generous cabin space, which could place it in the segment above. The build quality and fit and finish are equally as impressive.

Facelifted models introduce a new connected infotainment system and digital instruments. There is also a revised 2.0 TDI engine, which has been re-engineered for lower emissions and better fuel consumption.

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



Henry Williams, head of fleet, Škoda UK, picked up the award from Marchel Koops, chief commercial officer of award sponsor Athlon International

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Superb cannot be knocked off its perch as the best car in this segment. Refreshed last year with more technology and improved infotainment, the Superb makes it five wins in a row thanks to its low running costs, ample space, good looks and economical engines, which now include a hybrid version.

FINALISTS

■ Ford Mondeo

■ Peugeot 508

■ Škoda Superb

■ Toyota Camry

■ Vauxhall Insignia

■ Volkswagen Passat

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Peugeot 508

BEST COMPACT SUV



Winner: **Peugeot 2008**



Martin Ward (centre), manufacturer relationship manager, Cap HPI, collected the award on Peugeot's behalf from Marchel Koops, chief commercial officer of sponsors Athlon International

The Peugeot 2008 enters the highly competitive Compact SUV segment at the top of its class, bringing all the positive attributes of the 208.

It's spacious and practical, yet retains a compact footprint making it ideal for city use.

Powertrain options include lively turbocharged petrol units and a frugal diesel. There is also a fully electric version with a 206-mile range.

Running costs are impressively low, with both driver and business benefiting from the car's efficient engines and

strong residual values.

The 2008's premium interior is packed with technology, including digital instruments and a touchscreen infotainment system with smartphone connectivity. The latest driver aids are also available.

High levels of refinement ensure the car is competent on the motorway, yet it still feels agile and fun to drive on country lanes.

Generous interior space and a boot that out-sizes its direct rivals helped to secure the 2008's victory at this year's Fleet News Awards.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Ford Puma

FINALISTS

■ Ford Puma
■ Hyundai Kona
■ Peugeot 2008

■ Renault Captur
■ Škoda Kamiq
■ Toyota C-HR

JUDGES' COMMENTS

Offering a size that will meet the needs of most drivers, the new 2008 has fresh, modern and distinctive styling with a high-quality interior that elevates the brand to even higher levels. The electric version further transforms the model range. Peugeot has taken a good car and made it excellent.

BEST MID-SIZE SUV



Winner: **Toyota Rav4**

The new hybrid-only Toyota Rav4 impressed judges at this year's Fleet News Awards for its balance of running costs, practicality and efficiency.

Based on an all-new platform, the Rav4 features the latest hybrid powertrain from Toyota. It utilises a 2.5-litre petrol engine, which delivers strong performance along with CO₂ emissions from just 126g/km (WLTP).

Performance is strong, thanks to an output of 221PS, while fuel efficiency is equally impressive with up to 50mpg.

An all-wheel drive version is also offered for those requiring improved traction.

The best-selling Design trim comes with sat-nav, LED headlights and front and rear parking sensors.

Toyota's suite of safety and driver assistance systems also comes as standard on all trim levels.

Compared with its predecessor, the new Rav4 has greater driver appeal thanks to improved comfort and refinement levels, plus the new hybrid powertrain is more responsive, making the car better to drive.



Stuart Ferma, general manager, fleet, Toyota & Lexus collected the award from Marchel Koops, chief commercial officer of sponsors Athlon International

JUDGES' COMMENTS

The Rav4 is an impressive SUV that is only available as a petrol hybrid. It looks great, is extremely practical and offer highly economical real-world driving. Attractive BIKs aligned with Toyota's famed reliability make it the perfect fleet choice.

FINALISTS

■ BMW X1
■ Ford Kuga
■ Peugeot 3008

■ Toyota Rav4
■ Seat Ateca
■ Škoda Karoq
■ Volvo XC40

HIGHLY COMMENDED

■ Peugeot 3008

BEST PREMIUM CAR



Winner: **BMW 3 Series**



Adam Harley (centre), national leasing manager, BMW Group UK, was handed the award by Marchel Koops, chief commercial officer of sponsors Athlon International

A clear winner in the premium car category, the all-new BMW 3 Series continues to hold the torch of its forefathers as a segment leader.

It blends refinement, efficiency and drivability into a package no rivals can beat.

Recent updates include the introduction of mild-hybrid diesel engines, with RDE2 compliance and lower CO₂ emissions, ensuring drivers pay the lowest possible BIK.

The new 330e plug-in hybrid, now

available as a saloon or estate, has a longer electric range than before of up to 40 miles and promises significant fuel and running cost savings.

Connected services enable drivers to locate the car using an app, unlock it and drive away using their smartphone as a key and stream music directly from the infotainment system.

Performance and handling remain a key attribute of the new 3 Series, combining a comfortable and smooth ride with nimble handling when required.

FINALISTS

■ Audi A4
■ BMW 3 Series
■ Jaguar XE

■ Lexus IS
■ Mercedes-Benz C-Class
■ Volvo S/V60

JUDGES' COMMENTS

Best-in-class driving is a given, but BMW has greatly enhanced the interior quality and added a host of outstanding technology to make the 3 Series the standout car in this category. It's the newest product in the premium sector and it shows; BMW has stolen a march on its competitors, particularly with the plug-in 330e which is a compelling proposition for fleets and their drivers.

BEST EXECUTIVE CAR



Winner: **BMW 5 Series**

Unbeaten for the third consecutive year, the BMW 5 Series retains its crown as the fleet industry's favourite executive car.

A comfortable and spacious interior makes the 5 Series ideal for long journeys, with plenty of power coming from its range of powertrains.

It delivers a driving experience like no other car in the segment, but equally impresses when it comes to running costs – as one of the most

affordable cars in the category.

CO₂ emissions are among the lowest among its key rivals, achieved via the introduction of new mild-hybrid engines, which means favourable benefit-in-kind tax for drivers and low running costs for fleets.

The 530e offers the lowest BIK in the line-up thanks to its low CO₂ emissions (WLTP) of 32g/km and electric range of up to 36 miles.

Drivers love it, fleet managers love it, the 5 Series ticks all the boxes in this segment.



Lee Connolly (centre), national specialist sales manager, BMW Group UK, collected the award from Marchel Koops, chief commercial officer of sponsors Athlon International

JUDGES' COMMENTS

Already the best car in the segment, the new mild hybrid option and RDE2 diesel simply strengthen the 5 Series' hold on this award. The outstanding choice for fleets and drivers.

FINALISTS

■ Audi A6
■ BMW 5 Series
■ Jaguar XF

■ Lexus ES
■ Mercedes-Benz E-Class
■ Volvo S/V90

FINALIST: CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD



From top to bottom our knowledgeable team is here to help

As a nominee for the Customer Services Award, Activa Contracts is recognised by both industry professionals and their customers as supplying a consistently high level of service. They pride themselves on really getting to know their customers' operations, ensuring that a tailor-made solution and true partnership is achieved. Activa works with clients and drivers throughout the lifetime of the vehicle to alleviate any administration burden, instilling confidence that a single phone call into them means they can talk directly to someone who can assist and resolve any concerns.

Activa's knowledgeable staff are on hand to assist fleet managers and drivers alike with any question or query. Their flat management structure means that if for any reason a client requires escalation, Activa's customers have direct access to Senior Managers and Directors.

As part of the Arnold Clark Group, Activa have been involved in funding and managing fleets for more than 50 years and their wealth of automotive knowledge and experience is one of the many things that differentiates them in a crowded marketplace.

Activa's proactive and enthusiastic team are here to help you and your drivers, and they relish each



new opportunity to get to know your fleet and help you achieve the ideal car policy.

With an ever-changing landscape within the automotive world it is imperative that your fleet supplier is proactive, agile and can implement change swiftly and accurately, all of these we know Activa Contracts delivers.

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AWARDS
2020

FINALIST



Judges' comments

Activa impressed with its absolute focus on providing outstanding customer service – going above and beyond is the norm. It takes a personal approach with a single point of contact for each fleet. The judges praised its "heart-warming" submission, and said its innovative approach to problem-solving would appeal to customers.

FLEET NEWS AWARDS

Sponsored by **Copart**
Global experts in
vehicle remarketing



Marcus Bray (centre), head of sales, Fleet Service GB, collected the award from Mark Godfrey, strategy, insight & digital development director at sponsors Copart UK

CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

Winner: **Fleet Service GB**

Collaboration, a desire to listen and an in-depth understanding of customer needs are just three of the factors which elevate Fleet Service GB's customer service.

The fleet management provider's aim is always to manage and reduce fleet operating costs, but it says to do this it – and its employees – must completely understand its clients, their businesses and requirements.

It does this through a combination of personal relationships, a detailed knowledge of the fleet industry and technology.

Fleet Service GB is

supported by an advisory group of experienced industry individuals, as well as by customer fleet decision-makers.

It also has a 'New Dawn Group' made up of fleet managers which meets with the Fleet Service GB support team, notably the IT department, to challenge what the future looks like, identify potential solutions and then determine how best to develop and implement.

Another factor key to its customer service success was the decision taken when the business was formed in 2016 that it would be a co-ownership company. This means members of the senior management team are all shareholders and all staff have the

opportunity to shares to give them a stake in the organisation.

As a result of this 'individual ownership', employees take responsibility and have a commitment to deliver what customers require.

Fleet Service GB does not use traditional matrices to monitor customer satisfaction. Instead, it has in-depth relationships at both senior management and employee levels.

It believes that without those relationships and the ability to analyse

and exchange ideas, a business has no knowledge as to whether it is successful and delivering on the aims and objectives of clients.

Fleet Service GB provides 24/7 service support via a single phone number. Every call is answered within 20 seconds with a human response – there is no automated answering technology.

This level of service has resulted in 100% customer retention, with the company claiming to having never 'lost' a customer.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Fleet Service GB takes the time to understand how your fleet works and what it needs – everything the company does reflects that. It works in an open and transparent way to build a partner relationship, not simply a client relationship.

FINALISTS

- Activa Contracts
- Arval UK

- Fleet Service GB
- Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions

- Ogilvie Fleet
- Reflex Vehicle Hire
- The AA

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Ogilvie Fleet



LEASING COMPANY OF THE YEAR: OGILVIE FLEET

FleetNews

AWARDS 2020
WINNER

Winner's comments

Ogilvie Fleet is the UK's leading independent leasing company, managing more than 17,000 vehicles across the UK. The pace of change currently being witnessed in our industry is unprecedented and we have spent the year ensuring that we are at the forefront of our industry, embracing change and then imparting our new knowledge to clients. We have been relentless in our approach, despite the challenges surrounding our industry.



Customer testimonial:

"Thanks to Ogilvie Fleet which provides a first class service, and to the customer service team for their professional and friendly service. We would unhesitatingly recommend Ogilvie to all fleet operators as the benchmark in the industry."

David Hardman – Aarhus Fire Protection Limited

ogilvie
FLEET

FleetNews
AWARDS 2020



Jim Hannah (centre), operations director, Ogilvie Group, picked up the award from Martin Evans, managing director of sponsors Jaama

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

Winner: **Ogilvie Fleet**

Ogilvie Fleet has scooped the Leasing Company of the Year Award (up to 20,000 vehicles) for second year running.

Operating a risk fleet of 16,500-plus vehicles, over the past year the leasing company has enhanced the services available via its driver's app.

Rebranded as 'Happy Drivers App', it is accessible to all company car and van drivers, and fleet managers.

It provides a raft of in-life vehicle information that aims to reduce the administration burden for fleet decision-makers, including nearest fuel

station and electric vehicle (EV) charging point, and a vehicle wear and tear checklist.

In the past year, it has added further functionality with drivers now able to enter their vehicle registration to find out critical information such as P11D value, emissions data and service information.

Additionally, for drivers awaiting a vehicle delivery, the order number can be entered to receive updates on delivery information.

There has also been further functionality added to its 'Appraisal' app to help make the end of contract process more streamlined and the rollout of Ogilvie Fleet's fleet management reporting software.

The award-winning leasing company is also preparing fleets for the transition to electric, forming a green fleet taskforce in the past year. It meets regularly to discuss changes and Ogilvie ensures all staff are informed about the future of 'green' fleets.

To help fleets transition, updates have been made to the website, including the introduction of dedicated sections on EVs and plug-in

vehicles, information on why fleets need to consider electric and charging information.

This information has also been published in its first EV brochure, distributed to clients and prospects at events throughout the year and via a direct mail-out.

It has all helped Ogilvie Fleet achieve another successful year, with a near 100% client retention rate.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Ogilvie Fleet is very responsive to client feedback and developments in the fleet industry, such as business mobility as a service. Excellent use of a variety of apps makes the fleet manager and drivers' lives easier. Judges praised its Investors in People gold accreditation and Best Companies to Work For, and highlighted the green fleet taskforce which ensures customers are kept up to speed on EVs.

FINALISTS

- ARI
- Daimler Fleet Management

- Grosvenor Leasing
- Ogilvie Fleet
- TCH Leasing

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Grosvenor Leasing

Martin Evans, MD, Jaama (centre), collected the award on Hitachi's behalf from Chris Stott, managing director of sponsors SalesMaster



LEASING COMPANY OF THE YEAR – 20,000+ VEHICLES

Winner: **Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions**

Breadth and depth of product and service is the Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions mantra and it's taken the company to an 18% rise in customers and a 33% increase in fleet size year-on-year.

Cars, vans, trucks and specialist plant equipment combine with blended finance to give fleet decision-makers access to a comprehensive range of funding and fleet management solutions for all needs.

Hitachi introduced 'Rant & Rave' in late 2018 to capture customer feedback in a real-time online tool.

The open and trans-

parent feedback has, says the company, helped to "transform" the way it understands and engages with customers.

"Our goal is to bring the customer to all areas of the business, driving a customer-centric culture and customer-focused decision-making," it says.

CustomerFirst was launched in January 2019 with four key components: Brilliant Basics to establish solid foundations; Learning & Development to create experts; Rant & Rave customer feedback; and, Simply Thank You to support service recovery and complaint handling.

Improvements have been made

across the business, including faster call handling and fewer abandoned calls, a 20% reduction in complaints thanks to one-to-one coaching on the 'language of service' and faster order processing.

Hitachi is pushing ahead with electric vehicles (EVs), practicing what it preaches by revamping its own company car policy with a higher

allowance to encourage uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles.

It is also the funding partner for Optimise Prime, the UK's largest trial of EVs, and is developing new funding solutions, such as wrapping all the costs of EV leasing, including charging, into the monthly rate, and evaluating gross pay trade-ups for employees.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions has built on its 2019 success with another big year of growth. The company's involvement in Optimise Prime shows its EV leadership, while its new Rant & Rave customer feedback tool shows its commitment to improving service levels. Excellent use of telematics data to drive customer savings, a leader on blended funding solutions and UK-wide fleet engineer trouble-shooters further strengthen Hitachi's fantastic all-round service.

FINALISTS

- Alphabet (GB)
- Arval UK
- Free2Move Lease

- Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions
- LeasePlan UK
- Zenith

Jo Vickers, head of fleet and accident management (second from left), and Adrian Bewley, assistant vice-president, Enterprise Holdings, collected the award from Christopher Macgowan OBE, chairman of the judging panel (right)



BEST RENTAL COMPANY OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Enterprise**

Over the past 12 months Enterprise has combined new technology, tools and services to enable businesses and their employees to make the right mobility choice.

It has rolled out its free journey assessment and booking platform, Enterprise Travel Direct (ETD), to 43,000 UK employees, following a successful pilot. The tool allows customers to compare the actual cost of daily rental, hourly car club and grey fleet based on a specific planned journey, and shows the rental cost and the location of the

nearest available vehicle in real time. Employees can then choose the best option dependent on the company's travel policy, which is programmed into the system.

If grey fleet is the best option, the system manages risk by requiring drivers to confirm their vehicles are fit for purpose.

Enterprise has also progressed its car club offering. Car club bays are now available within 500 metres of 181 UK train stations and it is working to create city centre mobility hubs – locations with car club bays, cycle parking and train stations and/or bus stops all next to each other.

It has partnered with Liftshare to

offer a 'shared asset model' whereby a low-emission car club vehicle is driven to work and during the day it is available for use either by employees for company travel (removing the need for them to use their own vehicle) or by members of the public.

To further increase utilisation it is available on a pay-as-you-go tariff at weekends and evenings.

Vehicles which would have spent the majority of each day parked-up are replaced by fewer, more intensively used alternatives, delivering greater value.

The partnership utilises Liftshare's Trip Authentication and Smart Parking technologies to ensure the people parking in allocated sharing bays are genuine sharers.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Enterprise has a comprehensive rental and mobility service with plenty of innovation. An excellent all-round performer, with true 24/7 service support for fleets, the company is piloting next-generation mobility as a service technology to enable fleets to consider the best multi-modal travel solutions across bike, train, car club and rental. An impressive, sector-leading service provider.

FINALISTS

- Enterprise
- Europcar Mobility Group

- Northgate Vehicle Hire
- Reflex Vehicle Hire
- Thrifty Car & Van Rental

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Reflex Vehicle Hire

Fleet and Performance Highlights 2019







Sebastiano Fedrigo, Managing Director, Leasys UK, presented Fleet Dealer of the Year Award to Johnsons Fleet Services

Leasys has become one of the fastest growing UK leasing companies, moving from 24th to 17th place in the FN50 listing since being launched in the UK in 2017.






We provide a range of personal and business Contract Hire and related services for FCA brands and now expanding our product offering with selected manufacturers such as JLR, BMW, Volvo and Mitsubishi.

With the expansion of our product range and our retailer and broker network, we look forward to celebrating further success.

Fleet Highlights

-  **15%** increase in funding
-  **15,683** vehicles on the road at the end of 2019
-  **45%** Increase in order intake
-  **31%** increased growth for fully-maintained contracts

Performance Highlights

-  FN50 ranking from 34th to **17th position** since launch
Source: Fleet News November 2019
-  Most sold cars:
Fiat 500, Jeep Compass, Range Rover Evoque
-  Most sold LCVs:
Fiat Fullback, Fiat Ducato, Fiat Doblo
-  Fastest growing 2019 brand:
Jeep
-  New products & Services:
Mobility Subscription, Leasys App, Leasys Miles

FLEET NEWS AWARDS

Sponsored by 

Louise Baker, head of fleet operations, Johnsons Fleet Services, was handed the award by Sebastiano Fedrigo, managing director of sponsors Leasys



FLEET DEALER OF THE YEAR

Winner: **Johnsons Fleet Services**

Ensuring its staff understand the needs of fleet customers helped Johnsons Fleet Services to secure the Fleet Dealer of the Year award. Members of the 35-strong team in Tamworth have an average length of service of seven years, with expertise in all sectors. The head of fleet is continually evolving the operation to adapt to changing customer needs, while the national leasing manager develops and improves its service to contract hire companies. The major account sales team works with customers, leasing companies and manufacturers to produce choice lists, write effective fleet policies and organise 'ride and drive' events, while a local sales team focuses on SME operators. Meanwhile, a team of account managers looks after all end-users, leasing and fleet management companies, and a preparation centre manager ensures timely vehicle deliveries. Demo, delivery and dedicated fleet accounting teams also guarantee the necessary back-office support. Furthermore, every member of the team, regardless of position, must join a delivery driver during a handover every three months. Johnsons Fleet Services says this ensures they all understand that "special moment" a customer enjoys when receiving their vehicle. It also briefs all staff following leasing company reviews and manufacturer meetings to share important news which may impact fleet customers. Importantly, it summarises any changes to legislation affecting fleets in layman's terms to avoid the confusion so often seen in the marketplace. It insists that when a fleet customer enters a showroom, they should not be treated any differently to a retail customer, specifically in terms of advice, time spent, static and on-road demonstrations, and vehicle specific queries. Johnsons Fleet Services also offers retail staff a generous referral programme for any fleet customers that enter any one of its 43 dealerships. It's an approach that has proved successful, helping it to grow its existing fleet business and win new prospects over the past year.

JUDGES' COMMENTS: Johnsons displays an excellent understanding of the emotional investment that a driver has in their vehicle with an impressive handover process which includes emailing a selfie of the car the day before collection. It instils the same level of excitement as a retail customer. The dealer shows leadership on electric vehicles with all staff taking one out for a drive so they can properly explain them to customers. Staff are salaried not bonused to encourage outstanding service while fleet champions in service departments take care of your every need with a business class service that extends to offering a private office to work from. Simply outstanding.

FINALISTS
■ Johnsons Fleet Services
■ Swansway Group
■ TrustFord



INNOVATION IN MOBILITY TECHNOLOGY: FLEETONDEMAND

Winner's comments

Mobilleo is the first Business Mobility as a Service platform dedicated to powering the transition into MaaS and new mobility initiatives. Employees can manage their mobility preferences using the mobile app, including ground transportation in combination with public transportation for all business and private travel.

Fleet and mobility managers have access to middle office functions to create mobility profiles, mobility budgets and easily view and export detailed management reporting and real-time expenditure. These reports provide an insight into the Total Cost of Mobility throughout the business.



Customer testimonial:

"We use Mobilleo to book flights, accommodation and ground transportation. It's extremely quick and easy to navigate, combining all our business travel bookings into one single platform. I can set budgets, pull reports for the end of the month and get separate invoicing for different offices, saving time and money"

Hayley Raeper, office manager, DAC Group



Matt Heald (centre), operations director, Fleetondemand picked up the award from Christopher Macgowan OBE, chairman of the judging panel

INNOVATION IN MOBILITY TECHNOLOGY AWARD

Winner: Fleetondemand

Fleetondemand is fast establishing itself as one of the UK's most advanced mobility technology providers.

Its Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) platform, Mobilleo, is changing the way companies think about business travel and helped it win this year's Innovation in Mobility Technology Award.

The platform, designed with business travellers in mind, connects thousands of business users to flights, trains, taxis, car hire, car leasing, car clubs, bikes and hotels.

It was one of the

first technology companies to consolidate all modes of business transportation into a single solution.

Built from the ground-up, Mobilleo's 'Drive for Mobility' platform has been designed by a management and engineering team with extensive experience in the fleet and mobility sector.

Its smart mobility technology assesses any business journey and presents the user with all forms of available transport.

A 'Smartsearch' functionality allows users to choose from a range of multi-modal journeys based on individual preferences, which could be dictated by fastest route, most comfortable journey or

the journey with the lowest CO₂ emissions.

Users can also include the cost of driving their own vehicle for part of the journey compared with other modes of transport.

It is also continually updating and enhancing the platform, which can be downloaded as an app, with an annual development budget of £1 million.

At its core, Mobilleo is a customer-

centric platform for businesses, with the potential to dramatically change how employees travel.

Fleetondemand is planning to launch the platform in Europe this year, as it aims to be at the heart of the drive for connected mobility on a global scale.

It's a move that looks set to establish Fleetondemand firmly on the MaaS landscape for years to come.

JUDGES' COMMENTS:

Fleetondemand is an all-encompassing mobility solution that takes an agnostic approach to the form of travel. It enables businesses and their employees to select the best way to get from A to B by connecting times and services for air, train, taxi, car hire, leasing, car club, bikes and even hotels through one easy-to-use app.

FINALISTS

- Allstar Business Solutions
- CameraMatics
- Enterprise

- Fleetondemand
- The AA
- Vanvas

HIGHLY COMMENDED

- Allstar Business Solutions
- Enterprise

Provision of vehicles is so complex, isn't it?

JCT600 Vehicle Leasing Solutions (VLS) has launched Origo, a revolutionary online platform that cuts through all the noise and complexity of vehicle provision to employees, irrespective of the individual job role or journey profile.

VLS, a JCT600 group-owned leasing company, has invested approximately £400,000 over the past 18 months to develop the new Origo system, that provides a side-by-side comparison of funding types such as salary sacrifice, business contract hire (BCH), personal contract hire (PCH), structured cash alternatives, and employee car ownership schemes (ECOS) among others in order to reduce the complexity for drivers and fleet managers alike.

Origo, started development in August 2018, three months after managing director Ben Creswick joined VLS.

He was getting reacquainted with the fleet industry and it quickly became clear that the level of change and complexity businesses had to deal with was overwhelming.

Creswick said: "WLTP, EVs, OPRA, CAZ, CAFE, MAAS, so many acronyms! There was a significant level of customer confusion. My first thought was that surely we could create a way to give our customers and their drivers all the answers in one place. That's really where the online Origo platform stemmed from.

"We then had conversations with customers across the UK and they were all saying the same things: "What vehicles should we run as company cars? What is OPRA/WLTP/RDE etc and how do we future-proof our fleet? Has the company

“WLTP, EVs, OPRA, CAZ, CAFE, MAAS, SO MANY ACRONYMS

BEN CRESWICK, VLS

car become too expensive? Drivers are asking to take cash and we're not sure what to do."

This really consolidated what we already knew. VLS had to develop something to help customers truly understand the actual cost position of all the differing options and to do this in a simplified form.

"It was a significant project to pull together all the complexities surrounding employee vehicle provisions into a single system suitable to both companies and drivers. VLS customers get free use of the new system and now it is live, we are pleased to see it set a new benchmark for our industry in the delivery of online systems to UK businesses."

VLS will work with customers to configure Origo, identifying the most effective vehicle funding solutions available to each member of the employee population.

Christopher Caddick, head of business development, said: "One size has never fit all and rather than looking at provision of vehicles to employees as a whole,

including policies and the systems which deliver them, we must look at and cater for the individual employee or, at the very least, much smaller subsets of employees."

Once vehicle choice and funding options are determined, the system allows drivers to visualise how different vehicles and funding options compare with each other, taking into consideration individual differences such as personal or business mileage, tax rates and vehicle preferences. The ability to adjust the metrics further tailors the comparison to the individual, providing a 'real world' overview of the driver's options.

While the technology running the calculations is complex, including legal and Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) compliance, the front-end system is designed to present the information back in a simple, easy-to-use way that is expected of any consumer developed product.

The company has made some key hires to help support Origo with the expansion of its account management team, as well as appointing Rebecca Eggington as head of customer improvements and Nicholas Keefe as head of strategic projects, who is the Origo project manager.

Eggington said: "You only get one chance to successfully launch a new scheme, so the implementation is paramount."

A new Origo customer will take around three months in the implementation process, as VLS consults with them to determine the exact scheme structure, ensuring all business practices have been considered. This results in a tailored policy and extensive driver communications to launch the scheme.

Origo develops individual employee profiles that utilise employment and journey data coupled with automatic third party updates meaning that if any changes are made to legislation or if something develops in the market to do with Government grants or emissions, these are instantly reflected on the platform.

Origo opens up the option of structured personal contract hire that delivers the highest value to the company and its drivers, helping to tackle the risk around corporate social responsibility concerns and duty of care that comes with providing 'cash' to the employee.

Creswick said: "I think some drivers and companies believe that providing the cash and walking away is the end of the conversation, but it's not as simple as that. Dependent upon the scheme structure there can still be a responsibility to evidence a duty of care by the company. By offering a more structured PCH alternative



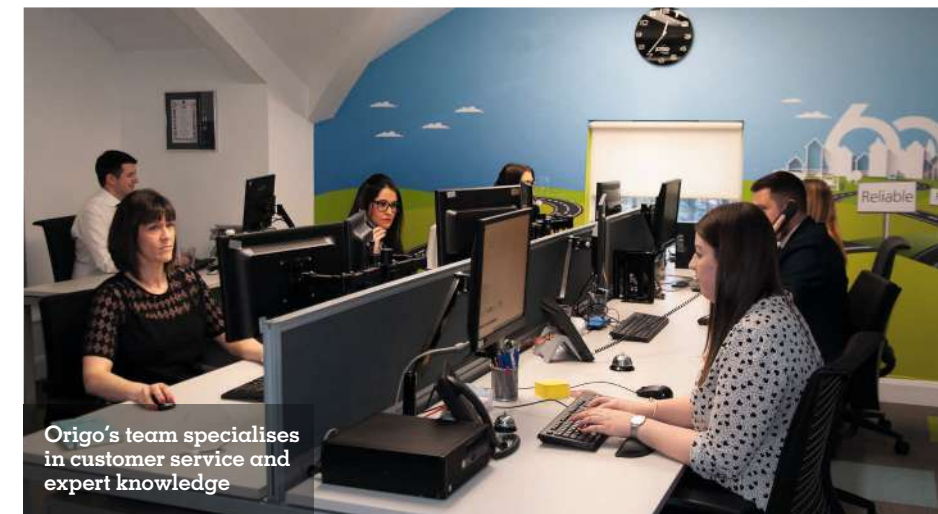
VLS's head office in Yorkshire, where Origo has been developed

you can give driver-enhanced vehicle options, while providing the company the right level of control, knowing the vehicles are all maintained, insured and suitable for business use."

Eggington added: "It is important to be able to show drivers the breakdown of costs in a really clear way, having the information in front of them can help them make the most informed decision, particularly from an affordability perspective should they choose a personal lease. That is why we also have built-in sliders such as mpg, which can be adjusted by the driver to see what difference it makes to the true monthly net cost.

"Origo has been designed using the latest technology on a truly modular basis. So, Origo will incorporate more funding options and mobility services as they become available."

Lindsay Francis, customer services director, said the feedback from companies on Origo has been overwhelmingly positive as businesses can now use one solution, rather than having to go to different providers for different funding options or different systems from one provider for different solutions. It means a company can find solutions through Origo whether it has high mileage drivers, perk drivers, job-need drivers or an all-employee vehicle benefit scheme. It has already helped win new contracts this year with customers switching to Origo



Origo's team specialises in customer service and expert knowledge

after the new tax year in April.

Keefe added that "the Origo platform is initially being rolled out to companies with more than 50 vehicles. The lower limit is due to the fact that offering multiple funding options tends to make more sense for businesses of that scale, although once Origo is up and running for existing customers, it will be possible to cater for almost any company profile".

Creswick said: "We pride ourselves on that personal touch and we have always said we don't want to be the biggest, just

the best. For any company interested, all it needs to do is pick up the phone, we would love to speak with companies that feel they're not getting the level of service they expect and are looking for a solution that can cut through all the confusion in the market.

"VLS and the Origo solution are ready to help deliver all vehicle provision solutions from a traditional company car to an all-employee salary sacrifice platform alongside the personal touch and customer service we are already so well known for."



The team provides feedback on the latest improvements

For more details email: origo@jct600.co.uk
call: 0113 3911791 or visit: www.jct600vls.co.uk

JCT600 | **origo**
VEHICLE LEASING
SOLUTIONS

'I'VE GOT AN ISSUE WITH MY FLEET – HOW CAN RENTAL HELP ME?'

Grey fleet, delays in new vehicle deliveries and changing vehicle needs are common problems faced by fleet decision-makers. Here, *Ben Rooth* looks at how rental can help solve these problems – and more

SCENARIO 1
We have a number of employees based at the same site who currently use their own cars for occasional, short business trips. However, we want to reduce the use of grey fleet vehicles for these journeys to improve duty of care, costs and CO₂ emissions.

Operating a car pool or car club are good solutions for organisations facing this type of scenario.

Both ensure there are safe, efficient vehicles available for staff to use when and where they are needed, instead of staff having to use their own vehicles.

"Car clubs are an increasingly effective way for customers to replace the grey fleet for short trips, combining a dedicated pool of vehicles located on-site with block-booked access to on-street cars during work hours, as well as access to an on-street car club network," says Adrian Bewley, assistant vice-president of business mobility at Enterprise.

Employees can book the vehicles at any time using a variety of different booking channels such as a website portal or an app.

Cars are normally accessed either by entering a code on a windscreen keypad or by using a radio-frequency identification (RFID) card, with keys frequently being kept inside the vehicle.

The Highland Council has been able to

reduce its annual business mileage by more than 825,000 by introducing an Enterprise Car Club.

Under the initiative, 60 car club vehicles are located across 21 council offices and can be booked by the hour or day online or via an app by employees who would have previously used a private car and claimed mileage reimbursement.

The majority of the vehicles are plug-in hybrids, although five battery electric vehicles are also on the fleet.

The local authority estimates that it has cut its carbon footprint from staff travel by approximately 377 tonnes of CO₂ in 12 months by transferring grey fleet mileage on to dedicated hybrid and electric Enterprise Car Club vehicles, a reduction of 19%.

During the first 12 months of the car club, The Highland Council saved £400,000, a 15% reduction in overall business travel costs.

Pool cars also offer organisations a way to cut both grey fleet use and CO₂ emissions, according to Martin Wilson, managing director of Thrifty Car & Van Rental UK.

"In addition, we'd also suggest a standard daily rental account where the newest, greenest vehicles can be delivered to your premises, or to the driver's home address, and used instead of grey fleet could also work well as part of this scenario," he says.

SCENARIO 2
We have a regular need to vary the size of our fleet at short notice and on a short-term basis – anywhere between one and 14 days – to cover changing demand, for example, when employees need to travel to courses or are based in other offices for short spells.

In this scenario, the traditional daily rental model makes the most sense, says Peter Crabtree, corporate sales director at Europcar Mobility Group UK.

"But rather than just allow staff to book vehicles as they need them, it makes more economic sense to agree an ongoing contract with a supplier so that cost benefits can be delivered over a year," he adds.

"We aim to work with our corporate clients to understand their likely vehicle needs over a year and then shape a package that will ensure they have access to vehicles when they need them, at the best price."

Adrian Bewley, of Enterprise, says daily rental combined with hourly car club use can prove to be the most effective way to resolve this scenario. ☺



CAR CLUBS ARE AN INCREASINGLY EFFECTIVE WAY FOR CUSTOMERS TO REPLACE THE GREY FLEET FOR SHORT TRIPS

ADRIAN BEWLEY, ENTERPRISE



SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Peter Crabtree, corporate sales director, Europcar Mobility Group UK



Changes to Benefit-in-Kind tax, the impact of WLTP on tax bands, continued economic uncertainty ... these are all subjects taxing the minds of the best in fleet management.

Research commissioned by Europcar Mobility Group UK last year revealed, unsurprisingly, mobility remains fundamental for many UK businesses, with 25% of firms saying they need some form of transport for a significant majority (75%) of their workforce to get their job done.

But, in the context of economic certainty and with many firms wanting to avoid the financial and administrative burden of fleet management, what is the solution?

Clearly flexibility is at the heart of any option considered by today's fleet managers. And flexible rental solutions are playing an integral role in that respect. This flexibility could cover picking up a car club vehicle on the street for a quick journey to and from the office for a meeting; or daily rental for one-day trips; through to longer term solutions that keep staff mobile without having to make big financial commitments for three-four years.

Rental provides a simple solution, with instant availability when vehicles are needed rather than time-consuming acquisition and year-round management of the asset. And the use of a hire vehicle also means there's an easier way to manage and monitor employees' travel activity and costs compared with using their own vehicles.

The key is to find a partner that also has a flexible approach – not just in the rental solutions offered, but in the vehicle types available and the network that can support employee mobility.

Email: john.fraser@europcar.com
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web: www.europcar.co.uk/business/advantagelongtermhire





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TODAY'S FLEET: RENTAL SCENARIOS

Sponsored by



FLEXIBLE RENTAL ENSURES YOU ARE NOT TIED INTO A LONG-TERM CONTRACT BEFORE BEING ABSOLUTELY SURE THAN THE EMPLOYEE WILL BE STAYING WITH THE BUSINESS

MARTIN WILSON, THRIFTY

“Many fleets combine hourly car club use and daily rental to meet variable short-term demand for different journey lengths,” he adds.

“It’s often important to have access to both, and technology can help to make this happen.

“Our Enterprise Travel Direct booking platform enables fleets to access both services and is also a compliance and demand management tool.

“It enables employees to book the vehicle in the increments of time of their choice, or even use the grey fleet when that is the best solution.

“It ensures that every journey offers the best fit with the employee’s requirements while complying fully with their employer’s travel policy.”

SCENARIO 3

We have a number of new employees due to start who are eligible for company cars. In the past we

would reallocate unused vehicles to them until they had passed their probation period, but we don’t have any cars which are available or suitable. We don’t want to contract hire more vehicles until we know these employees will pass their probation.

Flexible rental is a fleet operator’s friend in this scenario, says Peter Crabtree, of Europcar, as it allows organisations to take on a vehicle ‘commitment-free’ without tying up capital in three- or four-year finance agreements.

“Europcar Advantage, for example, provides a commitment-free solution for the three months-plus which matches the typical probation period of most staff.

“All vehicles in the Advantage fleet are brand new, so there’s no concern that a new member of staff, who a business has probably spent

money employing and training, is going to feel less valued.

“That has got to be good for long-term loyalty and retention.”

Thrifty’s Martin Wilson adds that flexible rental “ensures you are not tied into a long-term contract before being absolutely sure that the employee will be staying with the business”.

Adrian Bewley, of Enterprise, says: “Car clubs can also provide a pool of on-demand vehicles that may be an effective stopgap for employees during a period of probation.”

These are approaches taken by Bupa, where new starters in roles eligible for company cars are offered a pool car where available or issued a hire car before successful completion of their probationary period.

Once the employee passes their probation, they are required to order a car from the relevant list and return the hire car allocated to them.

SCENARIO 4

We have a number of leasing contracts about to end, but the long waiting list/availability of replacement cars means there will be a gap between their end date and when the new vehicles will be delivered. We are not sure how exactly how long the gap will be, but do not want to extend our leasing contracts any further.

This has become an increasingly common situation as restricted vehicle supply, caused by the introduction of the WLTP efficiency testing regime or limited availability of electric vehicles, has become an issue for many fleets.

Rental companies say flexible rental offers the best solution to this scenario.

For example, Martin Wilson, of Thrifty, says its Flexi Fleet product requires one month’s minimum hire after which the rental can be terminated at any time.

“This gives complete flexibility allowing you to have a pool of vehicles for as long as you need until the new lease vehicles arrive,” he says.

SCENARIO 5

Our business model sees us winning contracts of varying lengths, which means we need to take vehicles on for many months at a time, but also means we will not have any need for them after the contract ends. During this period, the types of vehicle we need will also change.

Rental companies agree that a long-term flexible rental solution is the best option in this scenario.

“Flexibility is key when companies have projects of varying lengths, particularly the ability to return vehicles at short notice without having to pay additional costs,” says Adrian Bewley, of Enterprise.

“A long-term flexible rental service allows fleets to take the vehicles they need for as long as they need them – and to replace vehicles mid-contract if necessary.”

Products such as Europcar Advantage are available for both cars and vans.

Fleets are also increasingly switching on to the benefits of flexible rental. Last year’s Fleet 200 research found 24% of respondents use flexible rental, up from 13% the previous year.

One organisation which is a user of flexible rental is Morgan Sindall, which funds 95% of its 450 vans through the method.



“WE HAVE TRIED TO HELP OUR BUSINESS CUSTOMERS FIND ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO KEEP EMPLOYEES ON THE ROAD WITHOUT HAVING TO MAKE A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO LEASING OR OUTRIGHT ACQUISITION”

PETER CRABTREE, EUROPCAR

Our business is contract-led and as well as contracts being varied in their length – they may be 18 months, they may be five years – the requirements of that contract may change as well,” says Paul Taylor, fleet manager at Morgan Sindall.

“You might say at the start of the contract you need 50 vans, but that number will vary as that contract develops.

“It’s not just about numbers, it’s about types of vehicle as well. At the start you may need 30 car-derived vans, some 3.5-tonne and some tippers, but by the end your requirements might be completely different.

“With flexible rental I can pick and mix as the contract develops and not have vehicles parked up that I don’t need as I can send them back at no cost. Flexible rental is the only funding method which allows me to do that really.”

SCENARIO 6

With the current economic uncertainty, we don’t want to be tied into long-term leasing contracts as we want the ability to defleet vehicles as and when we need to. We haven’t got the capital for outright purchase, or the desire to go down that route.

Many organisations are seeking long-term rental options due to the current economic uncertainty.

“Many companies prefer not to outright purchase or have leasing vehicles sitting on their balance sheet,” says Martin Wilson, of Thrifty.

“Long-term rental gives you the flexibility to upscale or downsize as the size of your workforce, or change in contracts, demands.

“Rental removes the burden of having a depreciating asset on the books and yet still provides the ultimate in flexibility by shifting the emphasis away from ‘ownership’ to ‘usership’ instead.”

Long-term rental is regarded by many to be a flexible alternative to leasing and ensures employees have access to a fully-maintained vehicle for longer periods – frequently more than 28 days.

Peter Crabtree, of Europcar, says one of the major requirements his company requests from its fleet and corporate customers last year was to enable them to manage their mobility needs without tying up cash in long-term deals – and expects this to continue in 2020 as well.

“We have tried to help our business customers

find alternative ways to keep employees on the road without having to make a long-term commitment to leasing or outright acquisition,” he adds.

It supplies more than 40 Mercedes-Benz Sprinter vans under its long-term van rental proposition basis to Fruidel, which supplies fruit baskets to more than 3,000 offices across the UK.

Stephen Bohen, founder and CEO of Fruidel, said: “As a growing business, long-term rental was the perfect transport solution for us.

“We needed a flexible option that didn’t involve tying up capital on outright vehicle acquisition.

“Leasing was more flexible than acquisition but it didn’t give us any of the maintenance benefits that we get from Europcar.

“The clarity this gives us means that we’re in a great position to make informed financial decisions to plan for the future growth of the business.”

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Advanced driver assistance systems included as standard on the new SEAT Leon

The newly launched fourth-generation SEAT Leon comes loaded with Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) that were previously out of reach for the majority of fleet customers.

It means fleets will gain access to features that will improve safety and reduce vehicle downtime no matter what trim level they choose.

The entry level Leon SE comes loaded as standard with the latest technology including Front Assist, featuring forward collision warning with braking reaction to vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, as well as a tiredness recognition system, lane-keeping system and cruise control with speed limiter.

The most popular fleet trim, SE Dynamic, adds Park Assist, which includes front and rear parking sensors, alongside the ability to automatically steer the car into a parking bay, including parallel parking spaces.

Amy Carter-Shaw, Leon product manager, said: “ADAS can help fleets with their duty of care by reducing the number of incidents out on the road.

“Most importantly, this helps to keep drivers safe, but also has the added bonus of reducing bumps and scrapes from collisions.

“This means fleets can increase utilisation of vehicles and keep downtime to a minimum, as well as helping to avoid end-of-contract repair charges.”

Some insurers will also pass on premium discounts for models where features like front assist are included as standard. Research from Euro NCAP shows that vehicles fitted with front assist can reduce incidents by as much as 38%.

SEAT UK’s Easy Move system,

“Fleets should feel safe in the knowledge that these trims have been specified with technology to keep drivers safe and to reduce operating costs”

which simplifies the purchasing process by allowing customers to simply pick an engine, trim level and colour, means that all ADAS features are baked in as part of the trim level, rather than additional options.

This means the technology is taken into account when residual values (RVs) are set. Following a recent test day with price guide setters the new SEAT Leon FR was given a 42% RV by Cap HPI, the strongest ever Leon result.

Aaron Cardoso, SEAT UK Fleet Business Development Manager, said this performance is giving leasing companies confidence in the product and the result is improved total cost of ownership (TCO) and reduced contract hire rates for lessees.

Cardoso said: “Fleets should feel safe in the knowledge that these trims have been specified with the technology they need to keep drivers safe and to reduce operating costs.

“Including this level of equipment is a massive departure from the previous generation model and these technology features are the kind that used

to be exclusive to premium brand models.”

The new SEAT Leon is a key part of SEAT UK’s fleet growth strategy and the team wanted to bring that democratisation of driver assistance systems to a much wider fleet driver audience.

The Live Showcase feature on the SEAT UK website means any fleet manager or driver can get a personal demonstration through a live video from a trained product expert from the brand’s Milton Keynes demonstration showroom.

Cardoso said: “Even before new Leon is physically available in Live Showcase, we have had really positive feedback from customers about how useful the Live Showcase team has been in helping customers with information about the new technology it will include.

“They’re poised and ready to answer any questions customers might have on what is the safest and most technologically advanced SEAT so far.”

Visit www.seat.co.uk/business to find out more



KIA SOUL EV

Raft of equipment as standard is good for the Soul

By Tim Rose

T

here's a raft of equipment on the new Soul EV that Kia is including as standard to help justify its £34,240 P11D price tag after the £3,000 plug-in car grant (PICG) has been taken into account.

In a competitive field against the new Peugeot e-208 and Vauxhall Corsa-E, which start at less than £26,000 (post PICG), Kia has decided its chunky B-segment zero-emissions crossover should meet the demands of customers who want longer range – 280 miles officially on a full charge – and high specification. This is much better than the previous Soul EV, which ceased sales in 2018.

Every exterior panel is new but it remains instantly recognisable to fans of the old model. Kia claims the new-generation 64kW/h battery packs powering this car have 25% greater cell energy density and are up to 30% more efficient than most rival electric cars. Soul EV's 150kW electric motors deliver 39% more torque than the old model. Power is up by 84% to 105PS.

FLEET PICK KIA SOUL FIRST EDITION	
SPECIFICATIONS	
P11D Price	£37,240
Monthly BIK (20%)	0%
Class 1A NIC	£0
Annual VED	£0
RV (4yr/80k)	£9,350/25.1%
Fuel cost	3.6ppm
AFR	4ppm
Running cost (4yr/80k)	41.1ppm
CO ₂	0g/km
Range	280 miles



The 10-inch touchscreen controls the premium stereo

Thanks to a having a DC charger as standard, long-distance commuters could charge Soul EV on a service area's 100kW fast-charger to 80% in less than an hour – adding around 200 miles.

Regenerative braking is selectable on Soul EV in four levels (from none to three), because Kia is conscious some drivers new to EVs want to brake as they've always done, whereas experienced EV drivers may be used to 'single-pedal' driving as the car slows automatically once the accelerator is released.

Standard Drive Mode Select lets drivers adapt the car to their preferred style or the road conditions, by choosing between Normal, Eco, Eco+ and Sport modes. Should drivers wish to sacrifice range, this car can sprint in 7.6 seconds from standstill to 60mph.

Soul EV is extremely comfortable, and thanks to its boxy shape and width there's no risk of front occupants rubbing shoulders. It is refined and quiet at low speeds too, thanks to the electric powertrain. At higher speeds, tyre noise is a little intrusive. That can be drowned out quite easily by

its 10-speaker Harman/Kardon premium stereo, which is controlled through a 10-inch touchscreen infotainment system.

Drivers will notice the black leather upholstery and head-up display which projects navigation and speed information in front of them. They'll also appreciate the powerful LED lights all around, heated front seats and steering wheel, adaptive cruise control, raft of safety systems and wireless phone charger at the base of the dashboard.

Drivers of Soul EV will get noticed. This quirky car is not for wallflowers, and Kia has enhance its extrovert styling by offering it in three two-tone colour combinations, mixing bright bodywork with contrasting shades for the roof and door mirror caps. The UK cars also feature an SUV Pack as standard, which brings prominent wheel arch and sill cladding and a skid plate on the front bumper.

Kia has added the Soul EV alongside the e-Niro, the first battery electric vehicle in its current line-up, and expects one in three of its UK sales in 2020 to be 'electrified' models (pure electric, plug-in hybrid or self-charging hybrid).



MERCEDES EQC

Refined newcomer has benefit of zero BIK, but better network of high-speed chargers is needed

By Matt de Prez

S

pearheading a new range of EQ-badged electric cars from Mercedes-Benz is the new EQC.

It's loosely based on the existing GLC – if you hadn't guessed from the way it looks – but packs an all-electric drivetrain, giving company car drivers an alternative to the Audi e-tron and Jaguar i-Pace.

Priced from £65,685, the EQC is cheaper than its premium rivals while offering similar levels of practicality and performance.

Nestled in the floor is an 85kWh battery, which gives a claimed range of up to 259 miles.

Two motors, one in each axle, deliver 408PS to all four wheels with the typical seamless power delivery you'd expect from an electric car.

It's fast, hitting the 0-62mph benchmark in around five seconds and delivering a weighty shove of mid-range acceleration when required.

More impressive is the refinement. While all electric cars are quiet, the EQC does a fine job of

FLEET PICK EQC AMG LINE PREMIUM	
SPECIFICATIONS	
P11D Price	£72,305
Monthly BIK (20%)	0%/£0
Class 1A NIC	£0
Annual VED	£0 then £320
RV (4yr/80k)	£32,825
Fuel cost	5.8ppm
AFR	4ppm
Running cost (4yr/80k)	62.6ppm
CO ₂	0g/km
Range	259 miles



The interior feels premium with top-notch materials throughout

insulating occupants from wind, road and motor noise.

The cabin shares many of its components with other Mercedes-Benz models, with the exception of some new air vents. Drivers are presented with two 10.25-inch digital displays using the latest MBUX infotainment system. There is a suite of connected services, augmented reality sat-nav and a variety of ways to connect and interact with the car via smartphone.

Passenger space is generous, both front and rear, while the interior feels resoundingly premium, thanks to having top-notch materials throughout.

Driveability is largely unaffected by the car's monumental 2.5-tonne weight. The suspension errs on the side of comfort rather than agility, which is no bad thing, and the EQC remains composed when driven more enthusiastically.

The power reserves are the most notable attribute. While muted in the Range Max and Eco drive modes, the Sport gives immediate response.

Clever technology enables the EQC to monitor the road ahead using sat-nav data and the

on-board camera and adapt its powertrain strategy to suit. The car can slow itself using battery regeneration, or the driver can manually select from five levels of ferocity using the steering wheel-mounted paddles.

During our testing we were able to achieve between 180 and 210 miles from a single charge, with an average consumption of 2.5mi/kWh. We've achieved similar results in the Audi e-Tron, with the lighter i-Pace managing slightly better.

Charging the battery from 10%-80% takes around 40 minutes if you use a 110kW DC charger, but considerably longer from a regular AC charger (eight hours according to Mercedes).

Here lies the problem. Our AMG Line test model cost more than £70,000, yet on a cold day with normal driving would manage about 180 miles.

The allure of zero BIK is likely to make eligible drivers sit up and take notice of the EQC and its rivals, but with the UK's limited network of high-speed chargers, they need to think carefully about the prospect of its day-to-day usability or adjusting their own driving patterns before committing.



By Andrew Ryan
It's time to say hello to the newest addition to the *Fleet News* long-term test fleet, and it's a very handsome one at that.
Audi's A4 is perennially popular with company car drivers and, after only a handful of miles in the 35 TDI Technik model, there is no reason to think this will not continue.
With a P11D price of £34,975 in standard trim, it offers WLTP combined fuel economy of 54.3mpg and CO₂ emissions of 135g/km.
Standard equipment includes LED headlights, Audi parking system with rear view camera, MMI Navigation Plus with MMI Touch and Audi Virtual Cockpit, heated front seats and digital radio.

On top of this, we've added Navarra Blue metallic paint (£995), a larger, 24-litre AdBlue tank (£60), black leather interior (£995) which also includes black carpets and grey headlining, and the comfort and sound pack (£1,395).
While the latest addition could appear slightly extravagant, the pack does add a lot of equipment for the outlay and further enhances the A4's already premium feel.
First impressions of the A4 are overwhelmingly positive. It looks and feels classy while, riding on standard 17-inch alloy wheels, it's really smooth and comfortable to drive.
Will it live up to its early promise over a longer period? We've got six months to find out.



By Trevor Gehlcken
German-made products are revered for their superb quality – and it's one good reason why Volkswagen has taken its place firmly in the number two slot in the van sales charts.
As a lover of all things German (note my surname), it was with some glee that I received a call from the Volkswagen press office offering the loan of a Caddy for three months, followed by a similar stint in a larger Crafter.
The Caddy is soon to be replaced with a new version – and a right corker it looks, promising that “no screw has been left untouched”. In the meantime, the Volkswagen fleet team is confident that the present contender can still, even nearing

the end of its life, stand up to anything from the opposition. And I reckon they are right.
Our test model is the Startline variety – the entry model so the one most fleet managers will choose – with a sensible 103PS diesel powerplant under the bonnet. To my joy, I found it mated to a DSG gearbox which offers seamless changes without messing around with clutches and gear levers.
More and more vans are being offered with auto boxes nowadays and about time too.
I'm looking forward to my time with the Caddy immensely and will be offering up some comments on its ride, handling and fleet suitability in the coming issues of *Fleet News*.



LEXUS UX 250H

By Andrew Baxter
Having seen some images of the UX before it arrived, I had, for some reason, decided that the 'urban explorer' was not dissimilar in size to the Volvo XC40 I had previously been road testing. Of course, assumption is a foolish endeavour and so when I first set eyes on our new Lexus my first thought was, “oh... that's quite small”.
The UX is, of course, not NX-sized. It's the first Lexus to be built on the manufacturer's new GA-C global architecture platform, with which Lexus is claiming to have created “a new genre of SUV, an 'urban explorer' that offers a new take on what luxury means for today's motorists”.
For the uninitiated (like me), it is 4.495m long, 2.08m wide (including mirrors) and stands 1.56m or 1.55m height dependent on whether it is sporting 17-inch or lower-profile 18-inch wheels, respectively.
Its compact dimensions mean the UX is a joy to navigate through towns and cities. In fact, according to Lexus it has the best-in-class turning circle.
By tilting the wheels inward during tight manoeuvres, the UX features a 17.1-foot turning radius, plus its suspension was “specially tuned to enhance agility and ride quality over well-worn streets”.
Our Takumi model also comes fitted with a 360-degree camera, Blind Spot Monitor and Rear Cross Traffic Alert with braking function, all of which combine to further enhance the ease of driving and sense of safety when threading through urban environments.
Of course, a fleet car is likely to spend much of its time on the open road, so it remains to be seen how the UX acquits itself on the motorway, but it's certainly won me over early on; despite being that bit smaller than I'd imagined.



VOLVO XC60 D4 MOMENTUM

By Stephen Briers
We've suffered more software glitches since our last review, although this time they sorted themselves out without the involvement of our local dealer.
It began as I started the car to commute to work. The radio emitted an unpleasant kurch-kurch-kurch noise rather than the usual strains of Absolute radio (on brand with our parent Bauer, naturally) which, thankfully, went quieter when the sound was turned down.
However, the noise substituted every other sound on the car. Touch the touchscreen – kurch-kurch-kurch! Switch the indicators on – kurch-kurch-kurch! Reverse the car – kurch-kurch-kurch! A quick switch off and on of the ignition made no difference, resulting in a frustrating 17-mile journey.
In the office, a colleague reported that a rival fleet magazine had suffered a similar issue with its XC60 which resolved itself and, low and behold, at the end of the day, the gremlin had disappeared. Thankfully, it's not returned since.
A less technical annoyance has continued, though – the cargo cover, which is very temperamental. It has three 'settings': closed, open and halfway – a raised position which partially blocks the rear windscreen but enables more luggage to be accommodated underneath.
Recently, the cover has been jumping from closed to halfway when shutting doors or driving over bumps. It's not a deal-breaker but is tiresome when driving.
Despite these niggles, we'll be sad to see our XC60 leave the fleet in a few weeks' time. For a big car, it returns a solid and consistent 40mpg, including on commute which is when average consumption on my test vehicles tends to drop markedly. It's comfortable, drives well, looks good and is well equipped.



By Sarah Tooze
One of the Scala's selling points is its practicality – a trait that has become particularly important to me now that I often travel with my nine-month-old baby.
The Scala's boot is an ample size to cope with all the paraphernalia that comes with having a baby. It's class-leading at 467 litres with the seats up and 1,410l with them folded. By comparison, the Volkswagen Golf offers 380l and 1,270l respectively, while the Ford Focus has 341l and 1,320l and the Vauxhall Astra has 370l and 1,210l.
It even outdoes my previous long-term test

car, the Nissan Qashqai, for seats up capacity by 37 litres, although the Qashqai's boot stretches from 430l to 1,585l when the seats are folded.
The Scala can be specified with an adjustable false boot floor for £160 and there is the choice of a family package (door edge protection, double-sided boot floor and leatherette protection to the back of front seats) for £200 or simply the double-sided boot floor for £75.
Being a ŠKODA, there are typical 'Simply Clever' features as standard, which are handy for a busy mum, such as an umbrella compartment (including umbrella) and an ice scraper in the fuel filler flap with a tyre tread depth gauge.



By Gareth Roberts
Mazda's aim with the new Skyactiv-X engine that powers the Mazda3 is to deliver diesel efficiency, with the performance and refinement of petrol.
Three months into our Mazda3's long-term test, it's clear the boffins in the Japanese manufacturer's engine development team have achieved their aim.
The claimed combined 52.3mpg has not been insurmountable – our test car has delivered similar figures in the same driving conditions, but currently is in the low 40s being driven predominantly in an urban environment.
Featuring Mazda's Spark Controlled Compression Ignition (SPCCI) technology, the

Skyactiv-X is the first production petrol engine to exploit the benefits of compression ignition.
The 2.0-litre four-cylinder 180PS Skyactiv-X engine features the highest compression ratio for a production petrol engine in the world, while its lean burn capabilities improve fuel economy and deliver low emissions.
Additionally, Mazda's Skyactiv-X engine is matched to the Mazda M Hybrid 24V mild-hybrid system that recycles recovered kinetic energy.
A belt-driven integrated starter generator (ISG) converts the energy in the 600kJ lithium-ion battery, while the DC-DC converter supplies it to the car's electrical equipment, further improving efficiency.



THINKING CAP

By Martin Ward, Cap HPI manufacturer relationships manager

This month I've been...

...setting people straight about hybrids

To many, a hybrid is a hybrid. But, in reality, there are mild hybrids, which just help a bit when setting off; self-charging hybrids, that charge themselves up when coasting or braking; and plug-in hybrids that can be charged using a cable from an electric plug. I try to educate my friends but is it time for the industry to do more to distinguish which is which, and what each does? Of course, if Boris gets his way, and all new petrol and diesel cars, including hybrids, are not available to buy from 2035, the manufacturers and the industry will have an even bigger headache. As we know, facelifts and all-new models are years in the planning. It could be that a new model is due in 10 years' time, but because of the 2035 cut-off, the carmakers will have to decide if they continue to produce that vehicle many years ahead, especially for UK specification.

...up to picturesque Thornton-Le-Dale to Mathewsons Classic Car Auction

The north Yorkshire auction features on the TV Series *Bangers and Cash*. A lot of the cars on sale were ones that many of us will have either driven or owned in the past; some evoke fond memories and some horror stories. It did make me think about residual values, and how we all worry about them now. Looking at the prices the 'oldies' achieved, it makes you wonder if fleets should keep their vehicles for 40-50 years, then they would actually make money. Doubt though if company car drivers would be very happy driving a classic car every day.

...to London for the Fleet News Awards

These went ahead as planned. There were not as many guests as in previous years but it was still better attended than I had expected, given the situation and understandable nervousness of people. I did think twice about going, but took the opportunity, and enjoyed the evening. I even collected two awards – the first time in my 21 years as a Fleet News Awards judge. Unfortunately, the awards were not mine, but I received them on behalf of a manufacturer who didn't have anyone there to collect them, but it was an honour.

cap hpi

IGNITION: OUR FLEET



CITROËN C5 AIRCROSS
130 BLUEHDI FLAIR PLUS

By Luke Neal

You will probably remember the 'adventure just got civilised' TV advertising campaign in which Nigel Owens MBE (international rugby referee) tames a wild bear, gives it a haircut, teaches it to play the double bass and dresses it in a dinner suit to promote the civilised manners of the C5 Aircross.

The C5 is part of Citroën's Advanced Comfort programme and includes two exclusive innovations, the first being suspension with Progressive Hydraulic Cushions which filters and absorbs surface unevenness. It is designed to give passengers a smooth driving experience by using two hydraulic stops – one for rebound and one for compression which gradually slow down the

suspension movement to avoid sudden jolts at the end of travel. The other innovation is Advanced Comfort seats which include a layer of 15mm-thick foam to make the seats softer and more durable. The front seats are also filled with high-density foam to help avoid poor posture after long periods and its three individual, sliding, incline-adjustable and folding rear seats make the C5 the most modular and spacious SUV in its segment, says Citroën.

It certainly is comfortable to drive, even on long journeys. My only slight niggle is that the suspension and softer seats together with the automatic gear box and start/stop can make the car feel a little boat-like in slow moving traffic.



BMW 118i
M SPORT

By Matt de Prez

Having taken the Best Compact Premium car title from its keenest rival, the Mercedes-Benz A-Class, at the 2020 Fleet News Awards, we thought it best to get the two together and see how they compare head-to-head.

If we based the judging on looks alone then the A-Class would win hands down. It's sleek, sophisticated and wears its three-pointed-star with pride.

The BMW, meanwhile, is a bit bulbous. It has ridiculous oversized radiator grilles and lacks the dignified posture of its key rival.

Delve more than skin-deep, however, and the BMW starts to come into its own.

While the Mercedes has a modern and crisp dashboard, it just doesn't feel as robust as the 1 Series. The BMW's infotainment system is also easier to use thanks to a rotary controller, while



the Mercedes features a fiddly touchpad like you'll find on a laptop.

On the road, the BMW ekes ahead again. Despite switching from rear- to front-wheel drive, the 1 Series is more engaging with precise steering and a firmer ride.

Unlike the 1 Series, the A-Class is now available as a plug-in hybrid and we'll be adding one to our fleet in the coming months, so it remains to be seen whether Mercedes-Benz can claw back its crown.

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Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Combo Cargo Van CO₂ emissions 106 – 123g/km.[#]

Model shown 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

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) – 70.6 (4.0).

option). [#]Fuel consumption data and CO₂ emission data are determined using the WLTP test cycle, and the relevant values are translated back to allow the the format of tyres.

By Gareth Roberts

The commercial fleet industry is warning that a new points-based immigration system could bring the supply chain to a grinding halt.

Faced with a 60,000 shortfall in drivers under the current rules, and EU workers accounting for 13% of all people working in the logistics sector, both the Freight Transport Association (FTA) and the Road Haulage Association (RHA) have urged the Government to think again.

After the policy announcement last month (February), Sally Gilson, head of skills policy at the FTA, told *Commercial Fleet* she was "appalled" that the Home Secretary, Priti Patel, had categorised professional drivers as "low-skilled", effectively ruling out the industry's ability to recruit foreign workers.

Gilson explained that the sector is already facing a severe labour shortage, with 64% of transport and storage businesses now struggling to fill vacancies.

"The logistics sector is the lifeblood of the nation's economy, ensuring shops, hospitals, restaurants and schools etc. all receive the goods they need to operate," she said.

This has increased in importance

due to the coronavirus, with the like of Morrisons looking to create 3,500 new jobs and expand its home delivery operation.

FTA is urging the Government to give special dispensation to EU logistics workers and the RHA is calling for the same.

Richard Burnett, chief executive of the trade body, said: "Many UK operators are totally reliant on European drivers.

"Putting a stop to the immigrant workforce will have a massive impact on the supply chain, and the next-day deliveries we have all come to expect will be a thing of the past."

Burnett highlights how 95% of all goods in the UK have made the journey to their ultimate destination on the back of a truck. "It cannot be allowed to grind to a halt as a result of Government short-sightedness," he said.

NEW RULES

The new system, which takes effect from January 1, 2021, will award points for specific skills, professions, salaries or qualifications/attributes and visas will be awarded to those who gain sufficient points.

The Government says it has listened to the "clear message" from the 2016 referendum and the

64%

of transport businesses struggle to fill vacancies before new system comes in

70%

of existing EU workforce estimated to not meet the skilled worker standard

2019 general election and will "end the reliance on cheap, low-skilled labour coming into the country".

It will treat EU and non-EU citizens equally. Skilled workers will need to meet a number of relevant criteria, including specific skills and the ability to speak English, to be able to work in the UK.

All applicants will be required to have a job offer and, in line with the recommendations of the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), the minimum salary threshold will be set at £25,600.

Patel said: "We're ending free movement, taking back control of

our borders and delivering on the people's priorities by introducing a new UK points-based immigration system, which will bring overall migration numbers down."

The new rules say there will be no specific route for low-skilled workers. It is estimated 70% of the existing EU workforce would not meet the requirements of the skilled worker route.

It has, however, announced that a pilot scheme for seasonal workers in agriculture will be quadrupled to 10,000 places.

The Government says UK businesses, including commercial fleets, will need to "adapt and adjust" to the end of free movement.

It urges employers to "move away" from a "reliance on immigration" as an "alternative to investment in staff retention, productivity, and wider investment in technology".

Brexit has already had an impact on the current driver shortage. According to the FTA's Logistics Skills Report 2019, declining EU net migration has contributed to a 43% rise in job vacancies in the transport and storage industry over the past couple of years.

An ageing driver population and significant training costs have also exacerbated the problem. The average age of an HGV driver is 55, less than 1% are aged under 25 and the cost of training is approximately £5,000.

Gilson said: "It is obvious how detrimental this policy will be on the very businesses charged with keeping the UK trading.

"If the Government insists on withdrawing access to EU workers, it will have to adapt and adjust its allowances for training; the burden should not solely lie on UK businesses."

TRAINING LEVY

The industry argues that changes to the apprenticeship levy could help deliver a boost in driver numbers (commercialfleet.org, October 16, 2019).

Employers, with an annual salary bill of more than £3 million must pay the levy, which in the current tax year is set at 0.5% of their total pay.

However, the training tax has been criticised for failing to deliver, including for the commercial fleet industry.

A recent report from the Public Accounts Committee, which highlighted the scheme's failings, blamed the Government's focus on higher-level apprenticeships. It wants the scheme overhauled so more benefit.

Burnett said: "Since its inception in 2017, hauliers have invested £320m into the apprenticeship levy, yet only £20m has been withdrawn. It's just not working. It's a tax on our industry."

Commercial fleet operators are only claiming back a small proportion of the money they contribute under the levy, because the apprenticeships are not suited to their training needs.

"It's a triple whammy," continued



“NEXT-DAY DELIVERIES WE HAVE ALL COME TO EXPECT, WILL BE A THING OF THE PAST”

RICHARD BURNETT, RHA

Burnett. "We're not getting the money to train new drivers, the driver shortage isn't recognised and now we're being told that operators can't employ immigrants to fill staff rotas."

He explained that profit margins are so low, between 1-2%, that employers simply cannot afford to train new drivers. "They need to employ those that are already qualified, but with a 60,000 shortfall this is impossible," he said.

There has been a recent injection of Government cash to help tackle the driver shortage (commercialfleet.org, October 16, 2019).

It announced a grant of £1m to

support Road to Logistics – a not-for-profit scheme, founded by the RHA in association with telematics company Microlise.

The Road to Logistics programme aims to support those who may find it difficult to get permanent jobs, such as services veterans, ex-offenders and the long-term unemployed, by putting them on a path to a career in transport.

The investment, from the Department for Transport (DfT), is enabling logistics companies to run essential skills training for these groups, including within the prison system.

At the time, transport secretary Grant Shapps said that, considering the role the transport sector plays in transporting more than 1.4 billion tonnes of goods across the country every year, Government needed to ensure it was "fit for the future".

Following a successful trial with HM Prison Sudbury and other jails across the UK, Road to Logistics aims to train up to 300 drivers in its first year.

The scheme will link potential drivers with employers, mentor them and put them through the necessary training, including taking their HGV driving test.

Gilson concluded: "The sector is already suffering from a severe labour shortage and the loss of these [EU] workers could cause business to come grinding to a halt. The UK economy simply cannot operate without the logistics workforce."

Points-based immigration system could be hammer blow for goods distribution

But Government says commercial fleets will need to 'adapt and adjust'

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COMMERCIAL FLEET: COMPLIANCE

FTA ADVICE

By Ray Marshall, senior transport advisor, FTA

Q We've always MOT'd the crash cushions in our fleet with no issue, however, we've just taken a new one for test and the test station say they're exempt and can't test it. As it's never been an issue before, can you advise if the law has changed and we're OK to use it untested?

A With the introduction of whole vehicle type approval, DVSA now has a more accurate record with regard to the specifications of crash cushion vehicles, commonly known as impact protection vehicles (IPVs). They were previously registered under dropside trucks.

When registered after whole

vehicle type approval as an IPV, if the overall length is not within C&U prescribed limits then VTG plates will not be issued by DVSA.

Without VTG plates the vehicle cannot be plated and tested and will have to be operated under a VSO (Vehicle Special Order).

The fitment of a crash cushion causes the vehicle to exceed overall length which is identified at the final type approval stage.

Although exempt, testing and plating the vehicle must still be maintained in a roadworthy condition at all times and comply with any operator licence requirements with regard to safety inspections.

Q Each night we drive one of our vehicles based in the north down to the Midlands, where we meet a vehicle from another company within the group which operates independently, this company is based in the south, each vehicle is carrying a load. The drivers swap vehicles and return to their respective depots. The following day we use the other company's vehicle and they use ours. Both vehicles are sign-written including company address. Our operating centre comes under the north-west of England and the other company comes under London and south-east. Could you please give me a

definitive answer as to whether or not this is legal?

A Our interpretation is that this is not legal due to the appearance that this is fronting. This is because the vehicle looks to be operated by the company mentioned on the livery, when the reality is that it is operated by a separate entity.

To resolve this situation, the company based in the north would need to apply for an Operator's Licence in the south-east traffic area, based at the site of the sister company in south, and the company based in the south would need to apply for an operator's licence in the north-west, operating out of the northern based operating centre.



In West Yorkshire? Your operation may be eligible for free electric vehicle trial



Leeds City Council and Highways England have launched an electric vehicle trial scheme in Leeds. This comes ahead of the city's clean air zone (CAZ), due for implementation later this year, and offers businesses and organisations the opportunity to drive an electric van free of charge for two months.

To trial either a Renault Kangoo or Nissan E-NV200, organisations must be based in West Yorkshire and currently operate at least one petrol or diesel vehicle.

Businesses that register their interest will then have their current vehicle usage reviewed to see whether an electric vehicle could be beneficial.

To register your interest, please see the Leeds City Council website. Further information provided by the council is included below.

How the Scheme works

Once you've registered your interest, we'll get in touch to speak about the needs of your organisation. If we think switching to electric vehicles could help your business, we'll test how you're currently using your vehicles.

Testing your vehicle use

We will install a black box in one of your vehicles for one month. This will test things like the length of journeys you take and your daily mileage.

We will use this information to create a report to see whether an electric vehicle would work for you.

If we don't think your organisation is suitable for our scheme, we will still give you advice on your organisation's current transport use, helping you understand the case for switching to electric or hybrid vehicles.

If we think that electric vehicles could save you money and help the environment, we'll loan you one or more electric cars or vans. You can keep these vehicles for up to two months and we will test how the electric vehicle compares to your current transport.

Making a business case for switching to electric vehicles

Once the trial is over, we'll produce a free report that will show you how much money and emissions your organisation could save by switching to electric vehicles.

Vehicles on offer

If you qualify for the scheme, we'll offer you one-on-one advice on which vehicle would be best for you to trial.

TRUCK CARTEL UPDATE

On July 19, 2016, five of the big truck manufacturers were fined €2.93bn (£2.67bn) by the European Commission for engaging in a price-fixing cartel. The price-fixing took place over a 14-year period (between 1997 and 2011). The cartel related to medium (six-16 tons) and heavy (16 tons+) trucks.

Anyone who bought or leased medium and heavy trucks during this period is entitled to bring a claim for losses suffered. These losses are likely to be in the region of 10-25% of the truck purchase price.

A case management hearing took place in the specialist court in London dealing with the truck cartel cases. A number of key issues were considered at this hearing. Of particular relevance, the following areas were discussed:

- **Pass-on** (i.e. how far the claimants have reduced their losses by 'passing on' the costs of the cartel to their customers/other businesses). The court confirmed consideration of this would rely on the court's decision in the Mastercard case (on which judgement is awaited).
- **Quantification of claims** (i.e., what methodology the experts will use to determine the amount of losses suffered by the claimants). This will involve using claimants' data before, during and after the cartel period and economist experts performing carefully designed analysis on this data.
- **The decision as to what parts of the European Commission's original decision** (the finding that the defendant truck manufacturers had price-fixed) are binding in the current proceedings. This decision is expected in the next few weeks, but could also be subject to appeal.
- **How foreign law applies to these claims.** A decision is awaited from the Supreme Court in Germany (which is expected towards the end of 2020).
- **Liability of non-addressees of the commission decision** (which may include subsidiaries of the defendant manufacturers). A decision is awaited from the Mercedes case in the Barcelona Court (although this may be fact-specific and there was no timeframe given for this decision).

RETREADS ARE GREEN – BUT THEY'RE ALSO COST-EFFECTIVE

They may have significant environmental credentials but retreads represent value too, *writes John Lewis*

While some fleets may relish the environmental kudos offered by opting for retread truck tyres can bring them, most are probably more interested in the financial savings such a move can achieve. So says Arthur Gregg, managing director of Continental-owned retreader Bandvulc, which produces 200,000 retreads annually at its factory in Ivybridge, Devon.

"Very often it's a cost-based decision," he says. "Switch to retreads and you get 95% of the mileage you'd get out of a new tyre for 70% of the price.

"This means that if you don't use retreads, and your competitors do, then you are at a cost disadvantage."

Terry Salter, retread business development manager for Northern Europe at Bridgestone, provided similar percentages. He says: "I would say a retread will cost you two-thirds of the price of an equivalent new tyre but you will get 90% of the mileage."

Meanwhile, Michelin's UK managing director, Chris Smith adds: "A retread's price can be as low as 55% to 65% of the new price."

David Howe, head of commercial at Goodyear, details some of the savings that can be achieved.

"Generally speaking, a fleet can increase the mileage of a single truck tyre by approximately 25% using regrooving and retreading," Howe says. "At the same time costs can be reduced by approximately 10% when compared with the cost of buying two new truck tyres."

Buying a new truck tyre will typically cost around £335 and it will cover around 112,000 miles if it is not regrooved or retreaded. A replacement tyre will cost the same and travel the same distance assuming it is treated in the same way.

"The two tyres will cost approximately £670 in total and cover 224,000 miles between them," Howe says.

Contrast this with a tyre that is bought as part of a tyre management programme, which includes regrooving and retreading.

"The tyre will cost approximately £368, but this includes a comprehensive service package to optimise tyre life," Howe says.

"Regrooving will increase the tyre's mileage to about 135,000 miles. The cost of retreading is about £217, including regrooving when necessary. This will give a further life of 135,000 miles.

"The total cost comes to roughly £586, providing an overall mileage of 270,000 miles," he concludes. In other words, you get close to 50,000 miles more life for £84 less.

This is not to say the environmental advantages of opting for retreads should be ignored Howe stresses, a view Gregg shares.

"They're especially important to some of the bigger fleets in particular," Gregg says. "They're aware of their carbon footprint and want to show both their shareholders and their customers that they are taking care of the environment."

200,000 retreads are produced annually at the Bandvulc plant

SPONSOR'S COMMENT

By Chris Smith, Managing Director
Michelin Tyre plc



With the ever-growing economic and environmental pressure on fleets to be more fuel-efficient, some operators are still missing a key opportunity to drive better value from their tyres.

Nearly all premium or mid-range tyres are designed to have multiple lives – meaning fleets can reuse the assets they already have, before they need to go and buy new.

Take a Michelin truck tyre – it's manufactured with an additional layer of base rubber to enable it to be regrooved. And once the regrooved tyre has worn, the casing can be retreaded.

We've got service partners such as Tructyre ATS managing customers' tyres through as many as five or six different lives, to ensure they extract the maximum performance from every Michelin casing. We'd like to see more fleets benefiting from this.

Our managed solutions team look after tyres for some of the UK's biggest fleets on a pence per kilometre basis, so we see the results for ourselves – regrooving and retreading really do reduce costs and increase efficiency.

Tyres are regrooved when their rolling resistance is lowest, and reductions in fuel consumption lead to reductions in CO2 emissions. Also, 70kg of raw materials are saved for every four tyres regrooved – the equivalent of a brand new tyre.

There isn't a single haulage operation I can think of where we wouldn't recommend fitting retreads – we've got customers operating fuel tankers, car transporters and even fire appliances which travel above normal HGV speeds, all getting great performance from Michelin Remix tyres.

Of course, it needs to be a quality retread, and that's where our Michelin Remix fitments come in. Manufactured at our plant in Stoke-on-Trent, they offer the long-lasting performance levels you'd expect from any Michelin tyre. What's not to love about that?



© Tony McHugh, UK sales and marketing director, and bus, at Giti Tire, says: "You've got to be seen to be green."

More and more fleets expect their tyre suppliers to offer retreads as well as new tyres as part of the product mix, McHugh says.

"Our Genesis retreads have been well received and we have them available in 295/80 R22.5 and 315/70 R22.5 sizes among others," he continues. "They can offer a 30% saving over new tyres."

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Singapore-based Giti Tire has been active in the UK for the past 10 years and has offered retreads for the past six years. "We only retread our own casings," says McHugh.

Giti's tyres are made in Indonesia. The fact they are of a high enough standard to be capable of being retreaded shows not all tyres sourced from the Far East are of mediocre quality, McHugh observes. "It wipes that argument out," he says.

Gregg adds: "Choose retreads and you are re-using 80% of the material used in the original truck tyre."

"We're talking about savings of 68 litres of oil, 44kg of rubber and 20kg of steel. We're also talking about 60 kilos of CO₂."

Even if less material is recycled, the environmental benefits can be substantial.

"If you re-use 50kg of material per retread then that means five tonnes of material saved for every 100 retreaded tyres and more than six tonnes of CO₂ not released into the atmosphere," says Hankook European marketing and strategy director for truck and bus tyres, Guy Heywood.

Gregg says: "Remember, too, that if a tyre casing is not re-used, then it has to be disposed of. That too has environmental implications."

Opt for a quality retread, and while it may deliver slightly less mileage, it will share all the positive characteristics of the equivalent new tyre.

"It uses the same rubber compound and tread

**50KG OF MATERIAL
PER RETREAD MEANS
FIVE TONNES OF
MATERIAL SAVED
FOR EVERY 100
RETREADED TYRES**

GUY HEYWOOD, HANKOOK

pattern and will of course use the same casing," Gregg says.

Salter contends: "The wet grip and rolling resistance offered by a premium retread will be similar to what is offered by a premium new tyre."

The failure rate in service is no worse than that of new tyres, he adds.

As with new tyres, retreads are likely to last longer if pressures are maintained at the correct level and if the reason for any uneven wear in the tread pattern is promptly investigated. It could mean there is a wheel alignment problem.

Retreads are typically used on most of the axles of a truck, including the drive axle, and on trailers. Many retreaders are somewhat reluctant to supply retreads for use on steer axles, often citing safety grounds; a somewhat contradictory attitude given the extent to which they continually stress how safe retreads are.

"But we are happy to see retreads used on a second steer axle, where fitted, and on steer axles fitted to trucks on low-speed work such as refuse collection vehicles," Gregg says. If retreads are going to be used on bin wagons then Bandvulc can build them with extra sidewall protection, to help guard against the effects of continued kerbing.

"We don't view fitting retreads to steer axles as a particular problem," says Salter. "In our view they should be treated in the same way as new tyres. They are just as reliable as new after all."

Fitting new tyres rather than retreads does, however, have the advantage of ensuring retreaders benefit from a steady stream of tyres that have not as yet been retreaded.

"There is no reason why a retread shouldn't be used on a steer axle, but if you fit new then you will always be receiving casings because steer tyres tend to wear out quickly," he says.

THE HEATING PROCESS

Last year, the Department for Transport launched a consultation which addressed the use of retreads on steer axles, among other topics, and could lead to a ban.

Around 66% of the retreads sold in the UK are made using the hot-cure process, estimates Gregg, while the remainder are built using pre-cure technology.

Pre-cures have pre-formed treads applied to their casings before being placed in a large oven called an autoclave and cooked at 115 degrees celsius for just over four hours.

Hot-cure tyres go into a giant heated press and have their new tread moulded on to fresh rubber. The sidewall is largely replaced too, with fresh rubber applied.

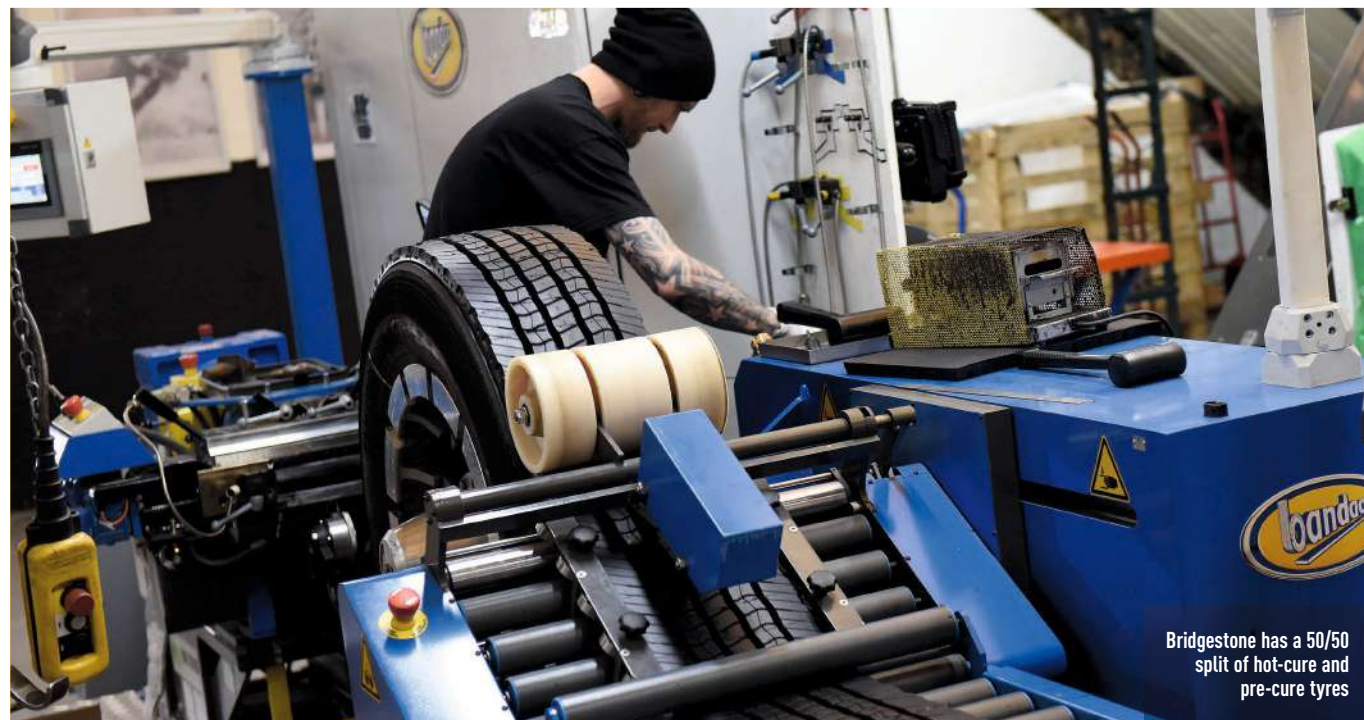
The process involves heating the tyre for up to 95 minutes at 155 degrees celsius.

"They look better cosmetically than pre-cures," says Gregg.

Salter adds: "With pre-cures, however, you get a harder-wearing rubber, which means you get better mileage."

Not everyone agrees. "Pre-cures are 10% cheaper to make but hot-cures should last longer, although the difference in life expectancy isn't significant," states Smith.

Heywood says: "The hot-cure process is



Bridgestone has a 50/50 split of hot-cure and pre-cure tyres



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Generally more expensive than the pre-cure approach, which means the finished product is often sold at a 10% to 20% premium. However the hot-cure process is believed to deliver a more-robust and higher-mileage product."

Pre-cure plants are often locally-based. That can make it easier for operators who are adamant that they want their own tyres retreaded and will not accept a retread of matching quality based on a casing from another source to get them back.

It also means that casings do not have to be transported over long distances.

Pre-cure retreaders can also offer a wider range of products for a smaller capital outlay than their hot-cure counterparts, says Salter. "They can cure 15 to 20 different tyres at a time in the same autoclave," he points out.

INTENSE SCRUTINY

Acquired by multinational tyre group Zenises in 2018, Lincolnshire-based Vaculug is typical among major retreaders in giving incoming tyres intense scrutiny before it considers retreading them. It produces 125,000 retreads a year, including those it makes on behalf of Hankook and Giti.

"We begin by putting them through a visual examination which involves looking for lumps and bumps and deformation, and for any discolouration in the butyl lining," says sales director Dave Alsop. "It can change colour if the tyre has been run under-inflated. We also look for any damage to the bead area and for any exposed wires."

Some tyres will be rejected because they have incurred damage so severe that the casing cannot be re-used. Vaculug uses bead-to-bead shearography – it employs light or soundwaves to provide information about the quality of different materials in non-destructive testing – to examine the interior of the casing to see if there are any faults.

Once the tyre has been buffed, it is inspected again. Alsop says a high-voltage current is passed through the butyl lining to see if the tyre has been penetrated by any objects, and where the penetration has occurred.

Strengthening patches are applied as necessary, and the casing is then placed in a press to have its tread moulded on. The newly-formed retread is then taken out of the press, inflated to 150PSI in seven seconds and given a final shearography test.

If it passes, it is given a serial number. This can be used to check what was done to the tyre during the retreading process, and who carried it out.

“WE CAN HANG ON TO CASINGS SO OPERATORS CAN CARRY OUT AN AUDIT IF THEY WISH”

ARTHUR GREGG, BANDVULC

Goodyear is among those at the forefront of retreading



CHECK THE REJECTS

Retreadable casings have a value, and if they have been sourced from a fleet and are rejected, then the fleet concerned will want to know why.

Bandvulc can provide a full report which may prompt the fleet concerned to take a closer look at its own policies and procedures. Internal damage leading to rejection may have been the result of a failure to ensure that pressures are correctly maintained for example.

"We can hang on to rejected casings so that operators can carry out an audit if they wish to see if they are happy with our findings," Gregg says.

Bridgestone's Bulldog plant in Bourne, Lincolnshire, produces 60,000 to 70,000 hot-cure and pre-cure tyres annually in a 50/50 split. Bridgestone also owns global pre-cure specialist Bandag, which has seven franchisees in the UK.

"Bandag franchisees will retread a fleet's own casings," Salter says. "But if the tyre is retreaded at Bourne the customer will be supplied with a tyre of equivalent size and quality to the one that was sent in."

For the Lincolnshire factory to offer an own-casings retreading service to fleets that could be based at the other end of the country could end up being a logistical nightmare, he contends.

Michelin operates a large retread plant in Stoke-on-Trent, and adopts the same approach.

Retread operations owned by the major tyre

manufacturers typically produce two or three different brands of retread to cater for different customer requirements and budgets.

Bandvulc's line-up, for example, includes ContiRe hot-cure retreads which are based on Continental casings. It also supplies Bandvulc-branded retreads which are based on casings from other manufacturers of premium tyres.

"The difference in price between the two is less than 5%," says Gregg.

Tariffs imposed on cheap new truck tyres shipped from China should, on the face of it, help to protect the UK retread industry. Slater says: "What many of the manufacturers concerned have done however is switch production to other Far Eastern countries such as Thailand and Vietnam."

McHugh says: "They're slightly more expensive than the tyres that came in previously, which means they are still cheap."

Salter adds: "Retreaders are also competing with the third- or fourth-line brands of new tyre supplied by European manufacturers. Such tyres are cheaper than premium products of the manufacturers, but typically do not feature the same levels of performance or technology."

But going for the cheapest tyre can be a false economy if it turns out not to be retreadable. All you will get is one life before it has to be scrapped, which could be disappointingly short.

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THE LAST WORD

EAMONN TIERNEY

MANAGING DIRECTOR, WEX EUROPE SERVICES

Tierney is convinced that the secret to success as an MD is to build the right team. Maybe he takes inspiration from the football club he supports – multi-trophy winners Liverpool

The advice I would give to my 18-year-old self is: find something you enjoy doing and do that for a living.

The song I would have on my driving playlist is *Cannonball* by The Breeders. The drop at 1' 24" is pretty, pretty good.

My first memory associated with a car was going on holiday in my parents' car – six children, no seatbelts and my dad smoking a pipe.

My favourite movie quote is "you can't really dust for vomit". One for the purists out there. For those not in the know it's from *Spinal Tap*.

If money was no object: multiple bicycle purchases and a move to Mallorca.

My pet hate is: when you're walking on the street and the person in front of you just stops? That.

My hobbies and interests are: European and World Champions, Liverpool Football Club and cycling.

A book I would recommend others read is *Espedair Street* by Iain Banks who is sadly no longer with us. It's the story of a fictional Scottish rock musician, his rise to superstardom and then his quest to find peace and happiness thereafter. It's told in flashback and is funny, melancholic and uplifting. I've loved all of Iain Banks's books but this is my fave. I worked in Edinburgh for a couple of years and always hoped I'd bump into him when I went over into Fife, where he lived. Never happened though.

If I were made transport minister for the day, I'd start by making sure I had more than one day in office! Then I'd implement a one-word strategy – integration. It feels that we're so far from having an integrated transport policy. I'd also want integration to be applied across government departments – Transport, Exchequer, Environment and Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) particularly should be in lock-step. There's a lot to sort out and we're not going to get near if we don't work together.

Why fleet: Wex Europe Services is a young, dynamic business (with two supportive parent companies) and we're about to embark on the next exciting stage of our journey. It's an industry that is at a real inflection point and for which the next couple of years are likely to be the most interesting and challenging ever experienced. How could I turn it down?

How I got here: I'm a marketer by profession and the majority of my career has been in banking and financial services. I joined a bank straight after university and spent the next 20 years with large, multi-national FS businesses before I became a director (and then MD) in one of the UK's big credit reference agencies. After we sold the business last year, I took the opportunity to look for a new challenge which is when the chance to join Wex Europe Services arose.

Latest products, developments and achievements: Wex Europe Services recently celebrated its fifth birthday and the growth of the business in partnership with Esso I'd count as our big achievement; with the development of bespoke propositions being key this year.

My company in three words: Customers, partners, people. Get these right and the rest follows.

Career influence: I've had the opportunity to work with inspirational leaders in amazing businesses, but my biggest influence is my wife Katie, who has been with me at every step and always seems to make the right call.

What makes a good MD?: Without a doubt it's someone who builds the right team - the right people doing the right jobs. Then it's about working with that team to clearly define the purpose of the business (and I mean real purpose) and create a strong strategy that delivers on the purpose.

Advice to fleet newcomers: Well, I'm a fleet newcomer so if there's any advice going, I'll gladly take it.

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