

ESSENTIAL
FLEETManager
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Fleet in Focus
Platform Housing Group



Essential Fleet Manager - Issue 4 (2022)

Welcome to issue 4 (2022) of Essential Fleet Manager Magazine, published for fleet professionals who work for organisations that operate within the Essential Services Sector.

The Essential Fleet Sector includes: Local Authorities, Major Housing Associations, Central Government Departments & Agencies, NHS Trusts, Police & Fire Authorities, Specialist NHS Authorities, Educational Establishments, Power Generation, Gas Supply, Telecommunications, Water Authorities, Road Rail, Infrastructure Management, and Construction.

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If you would like to feature your fleet operations in a future issue of Essential Fleet Manager - get in touch, we would love to work with you on highlighting your achievements.

Regards, Debbie Cheadle - Editor

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Scottish SMEs join new £80m electric vehicle charging point contract

Eighteen Scottish businesses have secured a place on a national electric vehicle charging point contract, that will help Scotland's councils work towards having ultra-low emission vehicle fleets.

The Scotland Excel electric vehicle charging infrastructure framework is expected to be worth £20m a year. It will run for an initial two-year term with the opportunity for two 12 months extension periods.

Scotland Excel is the national centre of procurement expertise for the local government sector. It is a leading shared service, funded by all 32 Scottish councils.

This will be Scotland Excel's first ever electric vehicle charging infrastructure framework to support phasing out new

petrol and diesel cars from the public sector fleet, as the country aims to achieve net zero emissions by 2045.

The framework will enable councils and other public bodies to source the supply, installation and maintenance of electric vehicle charging points, from companies who have been through the tender process and are ready to do business.

A total of 33 suppliers – all UK based – have joined the first-generation framework. They each now have the opportunity to secure a share of the business, which is expected to be worth £80m over four years.

Julie Welsh, Chief Executive of Scotland Excel, said: "I welcome the launch of this new contract that will give councils and other public organisations the support they need to efficiently source the range

of products and services needed for the supply, installation and maintenance of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

"With sustainability at its core, this framework will underpin the Scottish Government's drive for net zero by 2045. It will support councils in their efforts to reduce emissions from council fleets by phasing out new petrol and diesel cars in the coming years.

"It will also bring significant opportunities for the businesses that have secured a place on the framework, which includes 18 Scottish suppliers – 12 of which are Scottish SMEs."

In terms of social benefits, all 33 suppliers are committed to returning community benefits through the framework, while 28 pay the Real Living Wage.



Matt Neale, Group Fleet Manager, Platform Housing Group.

Fleet in Focus: Platform Housing Group

Platform Housing Group is one of the largest providers of social housing in the Midlands. With 45,000 homes and 120,000 customers spread between the Derbyshire Dales in the North, The Cotswolds in the South, Herefordshire in the West and all the way through to the Lincolnshire coast in the East, maintaining properties and services is a complex operation.

The backbone of this operation is the van fleet and Essential Fleet Manager has been speaking to Matt Neale, Group Fleet Manager, who by embracing innovative thinking, new technology and ideas is driving fleet management standards forward to the future. Matt is also the recipient of the 'Financial Superstar' award at the Great British Fleet Awards, with the judging panel commenting:

"Since Matthew joined the company in September 2021, he's made a tangible and positive difference to the fleet team and the larger fleet sector in the UK. His work at Platform has included revamping the fleet strategy and policy, making operational and structural changes and introducing new solutions – helping to optimise fleet running and enhance functions."

All of which has been branded by Paul Hollick, Chairman of the Association of Fleet Professionals, as "nothing short of phenomenal – and making Platform very much an example of best practice going forwards too."

Q: On joining Platform Housing Group, what did you see as the most pressing challenges and were there any obvious opportunities for improvement?

Upon joining Platform, I listed all the areas that immediately stood out for improvement and categorised them in order of priority.

The first challenge to overcome was managing 400+ vehicles on a spreadsheet. I engaged with FleetCheck and they soon became our Fleet Management System partner. This allowed me to manage multiple streams of crucial data in one platform, which is priceless when running a small team.

We then went on to partner with FMG Accident Management to support in our Accident Management provision. This was the first step in the right direction to collating our accident information, to provide us a one touch solution to our drivers, whilst also providing us with robust reporting solutions and access to more insightful information to support in us identifying trends and areas for immediate improvement. FMG also actively manages the downtime of these vehicles, which for a small team has been a valuable area of support for a business who relies on maximising vehicle availability at all times.

Q: What was the consultation process that lay behind the formulation of your fleet strategy?

The Fleet Strategy was born out of our Corporate Strategy 2021 – 2026. Our fleet is highly visible within the communities that we work in, and our leaders fully support the importance of ensuring that we provide a robust vehicle provision to support in the delivery of customer service excellence to our customers.

Our high-level overview of our strategy is to provide a group wide World-Class Fleet service to Platform Housing Group, leveraging our scale and size to generate commercial benefit, the highest levels of service, Risk Management and Driver compliance.

Q: What are the main objectives of that strategy?

This Fleet Strategy shares how, through pro-active Fleet Management, we will deliver our strategic goals and provide assurance on risk and our contracted exposure.

The Fleet Team will ensure that Platform realises the benefits and economies of scale for an organisation of our size and influence.

The outcomes will be:

1. An improved Customer Experience (for our drivers and tenants).

2. Efficiency savings linked to Vehicle utilisation and availability.
3. The provision of a fully compliant fleet offering, ensuring the right vehicle is available at the right time.
4. The delivery of a compliant business-wide Driver Behaviour Program.
5. A compliant 'Grey Fleet'.
6. A managed approach to Risk and Insurance.
7. The achievement of value for money through modelling and understanding the Whole Life Cost.
8. Involvement of our drivers and the incorporation of our drivers' views.
9. Engagement internally, with the sector, external stakeholders, and partners.
10. Roll out of electric vehicle fleet.

Q: What are the day to day challenges that affect vehicle operation and how can they impact the delivery of services?

Many factors affect our daily operation, such as staffing and materials, so as a Fleet team we fully appreciate that Vehicle reliability plays a key role in our business running efficiently.

We maximise the productivity of our operatives, and to do that we need to ensure we have the most reliable vehicles supporting our delivery of service.



We want to work with suppliers and organisations who share our social purpose to build innovation and secure quality delivery.

We will continue to develop trusted and mutually beneficial commercial relationships with suppliers, and will look to achieve whole life value from what we buy, and we will not base our decisions on cost alone.

Q: How large a part will E-LCVs play in lowering emissions and ultimately, decarbonising your fleet?

The transition from Diesel LCV's to E-LCV's will play a major part of our business over the coming years. Our corporate strategy is to be fully electric by 2026. I have forecasted to have transitioned 25% of the fleet to E-LCV by end of 2023, and then 25% per year after. We are currently in the middle of ensuring we have all the correct infrastructure to support our journey to a greener future.

Q: What is the current fleet breakdown and how will this change in the short, medium and long-term? How much of this change will be driven by an increase in services offered by Platform Housing Group?

We currently have 470+ vehicles, with 95% of those being light commercial vehicles.

As we build and take on more properties, our van fleet will grow with this to support the demands of the business. In September we had approx. 400 vehicles, and already we are up to 470. I project this to be 500 by the end of 2022.

Q: How important is technology in meeting all your goals and which types of solutions do you see having the greatest potential?

Technology is going to play a vital part in us being able to achieve our goals as an effective vehicle fleet. We will continue to invest in the newest, most innovative technologies which will allow us to not only drive a more efficient fleet, but also a safer one.

We are currently looking in to our telematics providers, to support in the overall improvement of our driver behaviours, whilst also supporting in the carbon reduction. We are also researching various camera solutions.

Q: Away from the van fleet, you have recently implemented an employee Salary Sacrifice scheme for cars. How will this scheme assist in reducing whole fleet emissions and how does it improve employee well-being and retention?

Our Green Salary Sacrifice Employee Car Ownership Scheme is a great addition

to the many benefits we already offer our employees. This scheme will allow employees to have a vehicle, that they may not in other circumstances be able to afford.

They will be able to benefit from tax savings and do their part in making our planet a greener place to live. It also allows us to support our groups wider ESG commitments

Q: How are you approaching driver training, well-being, and risk management?

We take the well-being of our drivers very seriously, and as such we are currently undertaking a complete overhaul of our driver behaviour and risk management offering on our commercial vehicles. This has board level sponsorship, and we will engage all areas of the business such as Fleet, Health and Safety, Human Resources, Finance, Service Managers and our front-line operatives to make sure we get it right.

We are a modern housing association, and as such we are fully embracing new ways to make our fleet safer, and are currently in communications with telematics, driver behaviour and road risk partners, with a view to becoming a pioneer in our sector, and truly leading by example.

...Cont'd on page 06

...Cont'd from page 05

Q: The charitable status of Platform Housing Group demands that you are as financially efficient as possible when not only running but also expanding your fleet. How do you get the most out of your financial resources?

Whilst we are a “not for profit” organisation we have a clear obligation to our customers that we ensure that the ‘Platform Pound’ is spent effectively, efficiently and with a conscience. We base our decisions on whole life costs and seek out sustainable practices that support our longer-term goals around Economic and Social Growth. We best achieve this by building strong relationships with our suppliers whilst looking internally to ensure that we reduce waste and duplication in our internal processes.

Q: As an active member of The Association of Fleet Professionals, how important is the sharing of ideas and expertise, when it comes to driving up standards in fleet management?

It is imperative that we, as an industry share best practice to create a better industry for ourselves. We should continue to develop our technologies, improve on our communication (whether that be verbally, written, or digital) and invite new experts into our field to support in our growth.

Being a member of the AFP allows me to openly engage with like-minded professionals about how to develop not only personally, but also professionally to make Platforms fleet a market leader in the housing sector.

I was also invited by the AFP to become a committee member on two committees which are ‘Committee of Light Commercial Vehicles’ and ‘Committee for Training, Education & Leadership’ which allows me to not only develop professionally, but also support in others progression. I am also currently undertaking the AFP Fleet Vehicle Management Strategic course, which is externally accredited by the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI).



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*The fuel consumption, electric consumption, CO₂ emissions and range figures mentioned comply with the WLTP test procedure, on the basis of which new vehicles are type approved from 1 September 2018. This WLTP procedure replaces the European drive cycle (NEDC), which was the test procedure used previously. Due to more realistic test conditions, the fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions measured under the WLTP are, in many cases, higher compared to those measured under the NEDC. The fuel consumption, electric consumption, CO₂ emissions and range figures may vary depending on actual conditions of use and on different factors such as: vehicle load, charging frequency, driving style, speed, accessories fitted (post registration), specific equipment, options, class of tyres, outside temperature and thermal comfort on board the vehicle. The charging time depends in particular on the power of the charger on board the vehicle, the charging cable and the type and power of the charging station used. Please contact your Vauxhall Retailer for further information. Correct at time of publication.

Electrifying fleets – preparing for the inevitable



Colin Gleghorn, MD of Autotech Training

Fleet operators are key to driving electric vehicle adoption if the Government's target of all new car sales being zero emission by 2040 is to be met.

The electrification of large vehicle fleets will create a significant early impact on reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and these fleet operators are largely expected to set the standard for the electric revolution.

However, there is still resistance amongst some fleet operators to make the switch and here, Colin Gleghorn, Managing Director of Autotech Training discusses the challenges fleet operators face and how mass electric vehicle adoption can be effectively implemented by everyone within a business.

Why are some fleet operators still hesitant about adopting electric vehicles?

Many maintain that petrol and diesel vehicles provide more range and are cheaper to run, and the charging infrastructure is still not where it needs to be. This is, by and large, down to a lack of understanding about electric vehicles and by not delivering even essential training could render fleet electrification a 'tick the box' exercise for many fleet organisations.

Is it just technicians servicing electric vehicles who need EV training?

Absolutely not. Everyone within a business who comes into contact with an electric vehicle should receive some level of training. The high voltage nature of electric vehicles introduces new hazards; therefore, EV awareness training should be planned for all members of staff to enable them to safely work alongside these vehicles. In accordance with the Electricity at Work regulations, enforced by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) all employers have a responsibility to ensure that employees are adequately trained – otherwise they may find themselves liable.

What training is available?

There are four levels of training available through the IMI, starting at Level 1 which offers awareness training. Level 2 is designed to give learners the knowledge and skills required to work safely on electric/hybrid vehicles whilst carrying out routine maintenance and repairs, while Level 3 delves into more diagnostic work. At Level 4, delegates who have completed all the previous stages can learn how to work on live high voltage electrical components and systems safely.

How do I know what level of training to book for my employees?

A good EV training specialist will seek to understand the needs of the fleet company and offer guidance on which level of training employees should receive. Essentially, any employee, who will not be carrying out repair work on the vehicle should take the IMI Level 1 Electric/Hybrid vehicle training course. While providing an overview of the technology and the essential functions of the vehicle, this course will also help alleviate any anxieties people may have about EV's. For instance, many have concerns about the range and Level 1 will teach the delegate about the regenerative braking to help top up the battery and how roadside recovery will change (you can't tow an electric vehicle!)



Autotech Training's headquarters' features a dedicated EV Training Suite complete with an electric car for hands on learning



What sort of repair work will fleet workshop employees expect to undertake?

In the short term, with many electric vehicles still under manufacturer warranty, workshops may not see a large volume of work, but having the skill set to carry out even the most basic

of repairs, including the maintenance of brakes, tyres and wipers, will be essential. Consequently, most fleet workshop technicians should receive IMI Level 2 or Level 3 Electric/Hybrid vehicle training. This will enable them to safely isolate the high voltage system from the rest of the vehicle, carry out any maintenance safely, and correctly re-instating it. These courses will also cover off the right tool which are needed to carry out EV repair work - such as insulated rubber gloves and plastic tools.

Will the training need to be adapted to suit the specific vehicle?

There are certain OEM components on a vehicle which will be factored into the training, but a good training provider will quantify the business needs from the outset and tailor the delivery of the training to suit.

Autotech Training offers IMI Level 1 – Level 4 IMI electric/hybrid vehicle courses either from its dedicated EV training suite within its Milton Keynes headquarters, or on the premises of any garage or organisation. Level 2 and 3 Heavy Vehicle EV Systems Repair and Replacement courses can also be delivered on the site of any company and all training can be delivered flexibly, including over weekends and around shifts, to meet the needs of the company.

For further information visit www.autotechtraining.co.uk



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The road to tomorrow starts today

Venson have published a white paper looking at the future of 'alternative fuels' in commercial transportation. Some of the information has briefly been summarised below, the full version can be downloaded by clicking the link at the end of this article.

It's no secret that conventional fossil fuels are nearing their expiration date. For the past few decades, supply, sustainability, and pollution have been among the hottest topics for industry, politics and just about everything in between. Conversely it is also important to stress the importance of the transport sector and how vital it is to every sector of industry and society.

The UK is still tightly gripped by a shortage of HGV drivers, which is having ripple effects across all links in the national supply chain.

As we move towards the Government's ban on new petrol/diesel car and van registrations deadline of 2030, with personal and business transport so heavily reliant on conventional fossil fuels like diesel, where do we go from here?

In August 2021, the UK government announced ambitious new plans to "kick start a world-leading hydrogen economy", in-turn creating over 9,000 jobs and attracting investments to the tune of £4 billion by 2030. Within this, Downing Street plans to support industry in drastically slashing their emissions with £105 million in funding to affect a 'green industrial revolution'.

Despite the 2030 ban on, ICE (Internal Combustion Engine) powered vehicles they will still have their place in society for many years to come. For those operators looking for greener alternatives now, we look at what's available.

The last two years have seen manufacturers like Stellantis and Ford concentrating on bringing to market new electrified versions of their most popular cars and Light Commercial Vehicles (LCVs), with increasing range and choice.

We're also seeing exciting players entering the electrified vehicle market from start-ups that have received heavy investment such as Arrival and Volta Trucks, two examples that are beginning to make real waves with bespoke products taking home-grown British engineering to mass-market.

The UK's charging infrastructure is a big deal too, with new networks and facilities appearing by the day, though that too can still present its own issues with outages, and vehicle compatibility.

What are the 'alternative fuels'?

Broadly speaking, while 'alternative fuels' used to mean any form of power which was derived from sources other than petroleum, increasingly and for the purposes of the white paper, the term 'alternative fuels' has come to mean anything which is not fossil fuel derived.

However when it comes to the pillars of the UK's alternative fuel economy, the main 'clean' options are electricity, biofuels, compressed natural gas, nuclear energy, and hydrogen.

What does this mean for the CV sector?

The future looks both bright and green, although the road to this carbon-neutral state of play is not without its challenges.

In short, the gap between the current state of 'alternative fuel' infrastructure available for the commercial vehicle sector, and where it would need to be to be net-zero by 2050 is wide – and will not be easy to bridge.

Pros and Cons

In theory there are some major advantages to Electric Vehicles (EVs) when compared to traditional ICE vehicles, and their relative lack of componentry is one of them.

Maintaining an EV requires little beyond consumables such as tyres and brakes, meaning that theoretically, vehicle down-time for mechanical works is minimised for operators, allowing for commercial units to remain in profitable use for as long as possible.

Financially, when this reduction in maintenance is factored in alongside the relatively cheap cost of electricity when compared to diesel or petrol, the use of EV technology in a commercial setting should come with a reduced cost of ownership when compared to ICE alternatives.

However, there are several key areas surrounding the introduction of commercial EVs which need consideration by operators before any wide scale introduction of such vehicles.

The initial purchase cost of ECVs is higher than that of ICE vehicles, partly due to economies of scale, but mainly due to the high cost of the raw materials needed for the battery packs.

A major consideration for any potential commercial operator of an ECV is that of range. For LVCs this problem can be particularly acute, with the majority of electric vans on the market having a range of 150 miles or less.

While there are now more than 42,000 charge points across the UK in over 15,000 locations, it has to be noted that charging electric vehicles takes much longer than traditional fueling so this would need to be factored into operational schedules.



The full version of the white paper - can be downloaded by visiting:

https://www.venson.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/VENS7994_Alternative-Fuel_AW1-DIGITAL.pdf

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Contract hire - The ideal route to electric refuse collection fleets?

Local Authority vehicle and workshop partner Specialist Fleet Services Ltd (SFS) recently announced that it is to become the first company to provide a fleet of Dennis Eagle electric refuse collection vehicles (eRCV) on contract hire. The three new eCollect 26t refuse trucks are to be delivered to Exeter City Council in June this year as the next phase of the fleet modernisation programme SFS is contracted to provide.

Bob Sweetland, Managing Director, SFS said: "We are proud to be the first contract hire company to install a fleet of eCollect refuse vehicles in the UK. This is an important step in the decarbonisation of Exeter's fleet, and we are confident that the new vehicles will be well received by crews and residents."

Cllr David Harvey, Exeter City Council's former Lead Councillor for City Management, said: "The introduction of three brand new electric refuse collection vehicles into our fleet is fantastic news for Exeter and its residents. The vehicles are clean and quiet and are a vital step on our journey towards a carbon neutral City. When it is complete the new solar array at Water Lane will supply power to the vehicles further reducing the carbon impact. Over 20% of the City Council's vehicles are now electrically powered and this is the vital next step on delivering a 100% carbon neutral fleet."

SFS has undoubtedly set a precedent with Exeter's fleet and the project is a fantastic example of what can be achieved when the public and private sector works hand in hand to deliver fleet solutions, but is this model repeatable?

Until recently most councils have only considered accessing eRCV technology through outright purchase. However, with unit prices in the region of £400,000-£450,000 (compared with £180,000 for a diesel powered equivalent) and restricted capital budgets, the cost difference has made them unattainable to many and this has undoubtedly slowed implementation. Contract Hire provides a different way to approach this challenge.

Furthermore, as Bob explains: "With the

technology in its relative infancy we have as of yet, no data on used eRCV sale values and are refining our modelling of the optimal operational life of the vehicles. It would be fair to say that the industry also remains uncertain regarding the longevity and end of life solutions for key components such as motors and batteries for this application.

"Under the Outright Purchase approach, Local Authorities need to develop their own views on the risks each of these complex factors presents whilst continuing to deliver front line statutory services. As a specialist vehicle provider with almost 30 years' experience of Local Authority fleets across the UK, we however, have specialist teams who have used their breadth of knowledge, experience, and problem-solving ability to develop fundable solutions.

"The contract hire option enables councils to implement the technology without these risks. We take all the responsibility for maintaining the vehicles and disposing of them or replacing them when they reach end of life. The customer has budget certainty and can develop simpler business cases focused on highlighting the decarbonisation benefits of eRCV adoption.

"Whilst confidence in eRCVs is developing and Contract Hire provides an effective acquisition solution, the principal challenge to universal implementation remains supporting infrastructure. On this point, Bob added: "We are investing a significant amount of time and resources into making sure our customers are fully prepared and supported for the transition to electric. Our team are already assisting customers with this process; helping them to establish the correct charging infrastructure, planning and implementing staff training, reconfiguring workshops, investing in new equipment, and putting new operational procedures in place.

"Inevitably more and more clients will follow Exeter's example and in 2-3 years' time there will be even more choice in terms of vehicle technology and charging options. Our role is to ensure that our team continue to monitor these developments closely and present to the market innovative Contract Hire solutions which facilitate the transition to a net Carbon Zero operating model."



Pictured: An eCollect demonstration refuse and recycling from residents. The park will comprise 3,700 sq





use vehicle on trial with Exeter crews. Exeter's new electric bin lorries, which are quieter and produce zero local emissions, will be used to collect fleet will eventually be powered by the Water Lane Solar Park, which is currently being built by the council and is scheduled for completion this solar panels to create 1.2MW of clean green energy.



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MFS EV tyre guide to help Fleet Managers 'supercharge EV tyre knowledge'



Martin Towers, Sales Director,
Micheldever Fleet Solutions (MFS)

Micheldever Fleet Solutions (MFS) is giving Fleet Managers in the utilities and the wider public sector the opportunity to 'supercharge their EV tyre knowledge' with a new EV tyre guide to help them develop their expertise.

MFS - the fleet tyre division of Micheldever Tyre Services, one of the UK's leading tyre wholesalers – says the different tyre requirements for EV vehicles demand a more in-depth tyre knowledge than for conventional vehicles. As a result, MFS has released its 'Supercharging Your Fleet' tyre guide, available as a free download from <https://micheldeverfleet.co.uk/>, to help Fleet Managers "get up to speed" on the key differences.

The EV tyre guide provides a market overview, guidance on the challenges posed by EV vehicles and advice and tips on fitting EV tyres to a company's fleet.

It includes expert guidance on the best tyres to fit to different types of EV vehicles, safety advice, wear rates and

tyre replacement cycles.

Martin Towers, MFS Sales Director, said: "The EV market is surging right now, and it will continue that way throughout the year and beyond.

"For those organisations and businesses looking to make the transition to a zero-emission fleet, they need to not only ensure they secure the right vehicles but have the right tyres fitted on them. There is a lot for Fleet Managers to consider and fitting the wrong type of tyre can result in a loss of range, extra noise, accelerated wear and compromise the safety of the vehicle.

"It's therefore really important that Fleet Managers supercharge their EV tyre knowledge and get up to speed on the key differences between EV tyres and those fitted to conventional vehicles.

"We have produced the new MFS EV tyre guide to help Fleet Managers fill in any gaps in their EV tyre knowledge and to support them in developing their position as EV tyre experts within their business."

While 2021 saw the biggest annual increase in EV vehicle registrations, the numbers of EV vehicles coming into fleets are not yet into high numbers, particularly within the utilities sector.

Given though the acceleration in the range of EV models available, those numbers are set to increase, although concerns around range and proven off road capabilities mean that internal combustion engine vehicles (ICE) will remain in use for some time yet.

Martin Towers adds: "We are still really at the embryonic stage of EVs coming onto fleets in high volumes and we know that things such as vehicle conversions that have historically been a well-oiled machine will be more complicated.

"Many of these vehicles will short term have to accept that the ranges won't be the same, but that is no different to the current ICE vehicles. The difference being

that the vehicles already have a reduced range in comparison to ICE vehicles and it is easy for vehicles to carry spare diesel if needed.

"I think short-term many fleets will continue to employ ICE vehicles for these specialist uses. However, at the same time with businesses and organisations keen to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and zero carbon credentials, change will happen. As the numbers of EVs begin to accelerate into fleets, then fleet managers will need to be across the different types of tyre fitments, replacement cycles and other issues associated with EV tyres.

"MFS though is there to help fleet managers respond to these challenges and facilitate a smooth transition of EV vehicles into their fleets."

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Why choosing the right tyres for your electric vehicle is so important

Operators who now have Electric Vehicles (EVs) on their fleet need to pay close attention when finding replacement tyres.

The original tyres fitted are usually designed for use on EVs and can be significantly different to the 'normal' tyres fleet operators are familiar with. Fitting the wrong type of tyre could result in loss of range, extra noise, accelerated wear and the risk of failing while being driven, which could result in a serious incident.

Fleet operators should therefore plan maintenance cycles for tyre wear on their EV fleet, this will help to avoid additional and costly down-time and ensure the appropriate tyres are being sourced.

There are a wide range of factors which are important to choosing the right tyre, which the vehicle manufacturer has already taken into account when fitting the originals at the factory. The vehicle's weight is just one as it influences. The amount of air pressure required to keep a tyre in its optimal shape along with the stiffness of its sidewall and even its centre section. EVs are well-known for being heavier than their petrol or

diesel equivalents, so operators must be aware of their tyre's load rating when a replacement are being procured, as well as maintaining the recommended tyre pressure at all times.

Another consideration is the impact tyre choice can have on an EV's range, due to its 'rolling resistance'. A tyre should have the least rolling resistance as possible, however, as always, a balance needs to be struck as grip is essential for safety when it comes to braking. Minimising rolling resistance while providing adequate grip seems like a contradictory requirement but this is a key performance characteristic for EVs to ensure maximum range.

The tyre also needs to be robust as EVs produce maximum power from standing. This places high demands on the rubber compound, which needs to be of the right mixture of components and have the appropriate tread pattern to provide a lifespan comparable with petrol or diesel vehicles.

The amount of noise the tyre produces as it travels over a road surface is yet another example of the possible

adaptations which could make tyres for EVs different to those of a petrol or diesel vehicle. As EV motors produce very little noise, the quiet cabin environment is one of the big attractions of these cars, which could easily be ruined by the wrong choice of tyre.

Stuart Jackson, TyreSafe, Chair, said: "Tyres are an extremely sophisticated pieces of technology, which we all too commonly taken for granted. However, fleet operators must be aware of how different they are and when it's time to replace the original tyres, they need to ensure they are buying the right specification. Choosing a like-for-like tyre will allow owners to enjoy the full benefit of the electric vehicle revolution and reduce the risks of an incident."

For more details visit: www.tyresafe.org



With inflated fuel prices at the pumps don't neglect your tyre pressure

Prices at some fuel stations have now hit eye-watering new highs – and that trend is expected to continue to rise amidst global uncertainty around oil supply and costs.

TyreSafe is encouraging operators to perform regular tyre checks that could provide significant financial savings as fuel prices continue to escalate.

Underinflated tyres require a bigger force to make them turn, leading vehicles to consume more fuel. Tyres inflated to a pressure just 6psi below the recommended inflation could produce a 3% increase in fuel consumption.

Drivers of electric vehicles will be similarly affected by experiencing reduced range.

There are further potential issues of driving with low tyre pressures. Underinflation causes a 10% reduction in tyre life, meaning drivers will need to replace their tyres more frequently, adding further unnecessary and avoidable expense. In addition, tyres with insufficient air are more likely to suffer from a sudden rapid deflation and premature wear on the outer edges of

the tyre.

Most importantly, correct tyre pressure is crucial for optimum braking and cornering performance. Tyres that are 20% underinflated are considered dangerous to use, while 40% below the recommended inflation are very dangerous, putting drivers and other road users at significant risk. With an estimated 57% of car tyres in the UK at least 4psi below the recommended pressures, the problem is widespread and affecting a large proportion of drivers.

To prevent these unnecessary costs and risks now and in the future, operators and drivers should check their tyres once a month, every month and before long journeys. Drivers should perform these when the tyre is cold and check every tyre using an accurate pressure gauge, regardless of whether their vehicle is fitted with a Tyre Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS). Drivers can find the correct pressures for their tyres inside the fuel filler cap or in one of the front door sills.

Stuart Jackson, TyreSafe Chair, said:

"We're all feeling the pinch during these challenging times, and need to find ways to reduce unnecessary outgoings. Many businesses neglect to carry out regular tyre checks, leaving them vulnerable to wasted fuel expenses and hefty premature tyre replacement costs. Perhaps most importantly, is the even greater price operators could face by driving on underinflated tyres, which pose a risk to life. Simply put, checking tyres can save money and lives."

TyreSafe provides an online pressure-checker tool, which enables drivers to look up the correct pressures for their vehicle. The charity also supplies a wealth of guidance and resources to support drivers in performing regular tyre safety checks.

For more details visit: www.tyresafe.org





New MFS fleet service moving forward following strong first 12 months

Micheldever Fleet Solutions (MFS) is “aiming to keep driving forward’ in key markets such as the utilities and wider public sector as the new fleet brand gets set to mark a year operating as a business.

Launched in 2021, by Micheldever Tyre Services (MTS) one of the UK’s leading tyre wholesalers, Micheldever Fleet Solutions (MFS) pulls together the previous separate elements that formed the Fleet Tyre Network (FTN), to create a new, fully fledged, one stop shop solution for fleet businesses.

The MFS fleet service now has an extended nationwide presence across the UK, with a particular focus on the utilities sector, whilst having increasing volume working with the Contract Hire and Leasing market.

MFS provides an unmatched combination of fleet solutions and product expertise to deliver against the vehicle performance, commercial and the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) needs of the most demanding vehicle fleets.

For those fleet operators that MFS work with, they have opportunity to utilise a wealth of industry knowledge and product expertise. The MFS team works with customers such as the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) to create bespoke custom-built solutions, including tyres, MOT and maintenance. There is also 24/7/365 support available and UK national network coverage, which includes their own Protyre retail sites and Micheldever individual partnered retailers.

Through MTS’s supplier agreements, MFS is able to supply the tyres to suit the fleet policy, while at the same time having access to well established brands such as General Tire, Falken and BF Goodrich. This enables MFS to offer a comprehensive range of tyres suited to all types of off-road terrain.

MFS works with clients to assess vehicle requirements and provide the best



unbiased tyre solution for their needs. As well as identifying the right tyre to suit the right vehicle, MFS can also find a solution for disposing of the original equipment tyres that are now surplus due to the vehicle conversion process.

MTS partners with their customers to ensure tyres taken off vehicles are successfully redeployed, both removing the hassle for the customer and allowing the tyres to be put to an alternative use that is beneficial to all involved.

Martin Towers, MFS Sales Director, said: *“Following on from our launch almost twelve months ago, the Micheldever name has now been well accepted across our target sectors. The customers we work with can see a real benefit of working with us as a retailer, fleet operator and wholesaler.*

“We are able to provide customers with a wider knowledge and unbiased advice regarding tyres and tyre provision, access to established brands and the support and network coverage.

“This one stop shop solution for fleet services makes MFS fairly unique in the sector and therefore very attractive to businesses looking for that joined up service, particularly to those fleets that have specific or non-standard requirements.

“Overall, we have increased penetration into our already established fleet contracts and took on some new customers who fit into the model of requiring cross stream provision of fitting,

delivery and brands. It’s been a strong first 12 months for MFS and the aim for the next year is to keep moving forward in our key markets.”

MFS rode to the rescue of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) by getting to grips with a pattern problem specific to pick-up trucks.

MFS’s expert team found that many of the OEM tyres on pick-up trucks were not best suited for multiple terrain use. This is due to the majority of pick-up trucks being supplied on road orientated tyres as original equipment, often to comply with current WLTP legislation requirements.

This was the issue for the Coastguard and MFS brought their knowledge and expertise to the fore to provide a robust and achievable solution to be rolled out across the MCA’s pick-up truck fleet.

The tyres were expertly chosen to handle the conditions of service which these MCA vehicles encounter. The General Grabber AT3 were the tyres of choice for the Mitsubishi L200 pick up range, coupled with the Falken Euroall AS210 all-season tyres, which have also been added to the MCA’s Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross vehicles in their fleet.

For honest, unbiased advice on a range of tyre solutions for fleets businesses, please contact: Martin Towers at martin.towers@micheldever.co.uk or 01962 774700.



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New fleet helps Lichfield and Tamworth improve quality of recycling collections

Recycling is changing across Lichfield District and Tamworth Borough. To improve the quality of recycled materials collected from homes, a new fleet of refuse vehicles has arrived to collect paper and card separately from other dry mixed recyclables such as glass, tins, and plastic.

A fleet of five new 26t Twin Pack refuse vehicles, designed to collect separate waste and recycling streams at the same time, has been delivered to Lichfield and Tamworth Joint Waste Service by Specialist Fleet Services Ltd (SFS). Following a competitive tendering process in 2016, SFS was chosen as the service's vehicle provider in a six-year contract hire agreement, with an option to extend for an additional six years.

Bob Sweetland, Managing Director, SFS said: "We have enjoyed working with the Joint

Waste Service over the past 5 years and we have developed an excellent working relationship. The transition from the councils' previous operators was very smooth and we are delighted with the resulting improvements in vehicle technology and availability. These vehicles will help to ensure the new collections are efficient as well as facilitate the Service's commitment to improving recycling rates."

As part of the contract SFS has already provided 22 replacement vehicles to replenish the Service's refuse, recycling, and street cleansing fleet. The contract also includes the maintenance of the vehicles at Lichfield District Council's workshop facilities.

The new recycling service is currently being rolled out and recycling will continue to be collected every fortnight. New waterproof blue bags to store paper and card are being

delivered to residents.

Councillor Ashley Yeates, cabinet member for climate change and recycling, said: "It is vital that we do everything we can to improve recycling rates across Lichfield and Tamworth and we are confident this measure will make a significant difference."

SFS was established nearly 30 years ago and has a successful track record in delivering fleet and workshop management solutions to local authorities across the UK. The company runs a network of workshops across the UK as well as operating its own specialist vehicle hire division, CTS Hire.



For more information about Specialist Fleet Services tel: 01604 234601; email info@sfs.co.uk; visit www.sfs.co.uk

Launch of new Off-Road Firefighting Vehicle

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MAWWFRS) has procured its first All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV), to assist in firefighting and operations in rural areas, which will be stationed at Brecon Fire Station in Powys.

The Polaris Ranger is an all-wheel-drive vehicle fitted with an ultra-high-pressure pump and a 300-litre water tank. The primary use of the vehicle will be to support safe systems of work when fighting wildfires, but it can also be utilised at a wide range of incidents where access is required over rough or hilly terrain.

This is the first vehicle of its type in MAWWFRS and the crew from Brecon have undertaken a range of training courses including off-road driving, winching and pump operation in preparation for its use.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Roger Thomas commented *"Providing this vehicle for crews will assist enhance our ability to manage incidents at traditionally inaccessible areas and will support a safe system of work at a range of incidents. The location of the appliance has been chosen based on risk profiling and I am pleased to see this new appliance going to Brecon, in our Northern Division. Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service is committed to investing in appliances and equipment that further increases the safety of our firefighters at incidents."*



The ATV will be deployed to incidents on a trailer towed by one of the Fire Service's new Ford Ranger vehicles, one of six that have been brought into service within MAWWFRS Northern Division which encompasses the counties of Powys and Ceredigion.

The new appliance will also be utilised by the MAWWFRS Community Safety Teams to assist in delivering safety messages within rural communities.

Northern Division Commander, Group Manager Craig Thomas added *"We are very pleased to receive this new ATV into Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and our crews have trained hard to gain the new skills required to realise its full potential. The new Ford Rangers will also improve our ability to tackle wildfires and other incidents within rural areas."*

Asset Alliance Group's support takes hire company to new

Plant and equipment specialists Enable Hire and Enable Welfare have doubled the size of their combined fleet with funding support from the Asset Finance team at Asset Alliance Group.

The sister businesses, both based in Lingfield, Surrey, have acquired more than 40 new assets on hire purchase, including lighting equipment, vehicles and welfare cabins, allowing them to serve a much larger customer base across the construction, railway, film and events sectors.

Enable Hire has invested in four new Ford Ranger pick-up trucks, four Generac VT-Hybrid lighting towers and three Trime T-Zero X-SOLAR lighting towers.

Enable Welfare has acquired 15 new Mercedes-Benz welfare vans, eight static welfare cabins, six 16ft towable welfare units as well as four AJC 16ft towable welfare units powered by solar and hydrogen, supporting the team's commitment to reduce its carbon footprint.

Over the past two years both businesses have grown significantly, especially as demand for welfare support increased.

General Manager at Enable Hire, Peter Milnes, says: *"Our sector boomed over the pandemic as the requirements for welfare such as site accommodation, toilets and hand-washing facilities became*



more important.

"We supported several organisations with welfare vans including the NHS, where they were used for vaccination bases and to extend A&E facilities.

"As a result, our business has grown quickly, and we are excited to be investing further and extending our offer with a lot of new and top-of-the-range equipment."

He adds: *"We knew of Asset Alliance Group's excellent reputation for commercial vehicles, so they were our first choice for support and we're delighted with our new partnership.*

"The team have gone above and beyond for every request. They are efficient and very easy to work with and we will 100 per cent look to them for finance again in the future."

Sales Director of Asset Alliance Finance Division, Darren Fitzpatrick, says: *"It's wonderful to see hard-working teams like Enable Hire and Enable Welfare doing so well and we're really pleased to have been able to support them with flexible and competitive finance in support of their expansion."*

Established in 2016, Enable Hire and Enable Welfare are part of a wider group of Infrastructure companies under the umbrella of Enable Investment Holdings.



Alphabet launches new LCV conversion partner network

Alphabet (GB), leasing and mobility specialist, has enhanced its LCV offering by launching a new network of approved UK conversion partners. The newly contracted suppliers will work alongside Alphabet's existing team of dedicated commercial vehicle experts to ensure every detail from racking to livery is taken care of for Alphabet customers.

The exclusive nationwide supplier network comprises nine approved LCV conversion specialists covering seven core categories; internal van provision, construction body and dry freight, minibus and wheelchair accessible vehicles, refrigerated vehicles, livery and media.

"Alphabet experienced strong demand for LCVs in 2021 and with no signs of things slowing in 2022, we want to ensure that even the most complex fleet requirements are expertly implemented with little to no downtime for our customers. Successful mobility depends on a great supplier network and each of our partners have been chosen for their specialist experience, enabling our customers to continue to

receive quality vehicles and service, while benefitting from access to a wide range of fully-managed bespoke solutions at competitive prices," said Simon Simmons, LCV National Corporate Sales Manager, Alphabet (GB).

While Alphabet's commercial vehicle team is always on hand to support, Alphabet customers can also take advantage of a range of self-serve options with Alphabet's online ordering portal. The portal brings the available LCV fleet and conversion options to life in an intuitive digital format, allowing customers to select a vehicle type and explore 360-degree visuals of the options, before submitting their order through the portal.

Once the order has been confirmed, the conversion process is carefully managed with the help of Alphabet's online Build Management System. The live system provides full visibility of each vehicle's progress throughout the build process and end-to-end co-ordination of the order specification across the network to ensure all parties are working together seamlessly. The system engages

the conversion partners to complete the conversion within the scheduled timeframe, as well as managing the collection of existing vehicles, so that the new fleet can be mobilised with minimal disruption.

"LCV specification, preparation and mobilisation can be a complicated process and we want to simplify this as much as we can for our customers. The dedicated specialists in our new partner network complement our in-house LCV experts perfectly and allow us to continue to have the very best teams in place to support our customers. We've already had the opportunity to deliver some exciting projects with our new network and now that it's fully live, we're looking forward to rolling-out more industry leading solutions as we continue to help our customers mobilise their fleets, as quickly and easily as possible," said Simmons.

Alphabet's conversion partner network consists of: Bevan Group, Bri-Stor Systems, CoolKit, GowringsVersa Mobility, Mediafleet, Modul-System, Stanford Coachworks, System Edström, and TGS Group.

September 21-22, NEC, Birmingham

<https://www.emergencyuk.com/>

See vehicle innovation and technology at The Emergency Services Show

The Emergency Services Show returns to the NEC, Birmingham on 21 and 22 September 2022, showcasing how technology and innovation are transforming emergency response for all blue light services and first responders. Vehicle and vehicle equipment suppliers are prominent among more than 450 organisations exhibiting at the UK's largest emergency services event.

The show is the perfect place to research the latest innovations, products and services for anyone responsible for specifying and procuring vehicles and fleet equipment for the emergency services and allied organisations. On show will be the latest in electric, hybrid and decarbonised vehicles for emergency

service applications, as well as smart and connected vehicles that serve as communications hubs and mobile incident command units.

The Emerging Technologies and Vehicle Innovation Theatre will also showcase how the emergency services can manage and leverage communications, data and technology more efficiently and effectively.

Leading vehicle suppliers at the show include Ford Motor Company, Venari, Mercedes Benz Trucks, Saab, Volvo Trucks and Yamaha Motor Europe as well as a wide range of chassis manufacturers and specialist vehicle converters including Cartwright Vehicle Conversions and Wilker UK Ltd. Isuzu will be displaying their new

pick-up, the All-New Isuzu D-Max.

Emergency One, Rosenbauer, Terberg and Volvo Trucks are among manufacturers bringing their latest fire appliances to the show. Angloco will demonstrate its ladder and other fire fighting vehicles in the Outside Area. Emergency One will be showing its new E1 EV0 fire appliance for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The zero-emission electric vehicle has the same capability and equipment as a diesel model and is the first to feature an innovative all-electric rear drive axle installation. It has a range of approximately 220 miles with an 80% charge, while the optional onboard smart charger provides resilience at protracted incidents.



Among the many ambulance suppliers exhibiting this year are Ford, Venari, Blue Light Services, MAN Truck and Bus, VCS, WAS UK and Wilker UK. Alfa Dropbox will showcase its ground-level loading ambulances.

Emergency and rescue vehicles of virtually every other type, including search and rescue appliances, fleet cars, motorbikes, boats and UAVs or drones will

all be on display.

The show also features providers of all types of in and on-vehicle ancillary equipment and systems including lightbars; vehicle livery; battery management; driver training and more. Standby RSG will display their lighting, hazard warning systems products and solutions and VUE will be showcasing its fleet risk management solutions - CCTV

and telematics hardware and easy-to-use software systems.

The Extrication and Trauma Challenges return as interactive experience for participants. Hosted by West Midlands Fire Service, the challenges showcase the latest technology and equipment in action, live streamed to large screens within the exhibition hall.



Entry to the Emergency Services Show and parking at the NEC are both free. The NEC is linked to Birmingham International Station and Birmingham Airport and is directly accessible from the UK motorway network.

Registration for the event is at www.emergencyuk.com



East Midlands Ambulance chooses the Kia Niro

The East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EMAS) has replaced every one of its non-emergency patient transport service (NEPTS) cars in Derbyshire with the fully electric Kia e-Niro. The move will reduce the trust's emissions by 96 tonnes of carbon dioxide, equivalent (tCO₂e) per year.

EMAS began its search for a suitable electric vehicle for its Derbyshire NEPTS service almost three years ago. The trust tested a variety of different vehicles before making a final decision to implement the Kia e-Niro. EMAS has now taken delivery of 16 of Kia's best-selling EV for patients in Derbyshire who need non-emergency medical or clinical support to get to and from their healthcare appointments.

Andy Watson, Fleet Assistant General Manager for EMAS, said: "We're really pleased to have been able to introduce these fully electric, zero-emissions vehicles to our fleet. With these vehicles now fully operational, we are immediately putting them into service as we respond to the needs of our patients."

Running on pure electric power, EMAS staff will be able to recharge the vehicles at numerous public charging points across the region. All the electric NEPTS vehicles are fitted with satellite navigation as standard, which can also alert the driver to the nearest available charging station when required.

Steve Farnsworth, Assistant Director of Operational Support at EMAS, said: "We are constantly evaluating the electric vehicle offering that is available, which is changing and improving with new products being launched year on year. These vehicles have an excellent range and the manufacturer is very much established in this field of technology."

"The car is capable of up to 282 miles when fully charged and our NEPTS vehicles complete 90 miles per day on average, meaning one charge should last a day without the need to charge again."

Jenny Revill, Clinical Lead for NEPTS in Derbyshire at EMAS, was one of the first people to take the electric Kia e-Niro out for a spin before they were deployed to stations across the division: "The cars are smooth to drive, have a quiet ride and respond well



to different traffic conditions. They are very comfortable for staff, which is important for 12-hour shifts, and the patients that have used them have given positive feedback – especially on getting in and out of the vehicle for those with mobility challenges.

“This is because the electric vehicles are slightly larger than our previous cars and this helps patients getting up from the seated position as there is plenty of legroom in the rear. The added feature of heated seats for the winter will be really helpful.”

This latest rollout of electric vehicles at EMAS is part of the organisation’s ongoing commitment to becoming a net zero trust by 2040.

Stacie Scullion, Sustainability, Energy and Compliance Manager at EMAS, said: “Our operational fleet accounts for 65 per cent of the emissions we control directly.

“Changing 16 diesel cars in Derbyshire to electric vehicles will reduce our fleet emissions by 96 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) per year and will have the greatest benefit to reducing our



overall climate impact.

“The climate emergency is also a health emergency and these zero emission cars are welcomed at EMAS as we recognise their importance in reducing the negative health impacts caused by air pollution.”

The all-new Niro EV is powered by a long-range 64.8 kWh lithium-ion polymer battery pack and a 201 bhp (150 kW) electric motor. Torque is rated at 255 Nm, and the car is capable of accelerating from 0-to-62 mph in just 7.8 seconds. The car’s electric driving range is rated at 285 miles on the WLTP combined cycle.



Award-winning, fourth-generation FABIA joins the KODIAQ and ENYAQ iV in the latest line-up of the brand's emergency service vehicles

The much-loved ŠKODA FABIA has been a part of police fleets since the first generation arrived over two decades ago, and now the award-winning fourth generation is the latest to join the ranks. With a combination of bold design, enhanced connectivity, plus class-leading safety and interior space, it's the ideal beat car for police forces across the UK, whether on city streets or country lanes.

The new FABIA – launched in the UK in March – builds on the legacy of its predecessors with a dynamic new design and a raft of advanced comfort and safety technologies. Despite its increase in size it remains a compact and easy-to-drive car, making it an ideal solution for police forces nationwide. The FABIA's incredible ability and value are far from its only traits to appeal to emergency services customers, however.

A choice of four EVO petrol engines is available with power outputs of 80 PS to 150 PS, propelling the FABIA to 62 mph in as little as eight seconds and on to a top speed of 139mph for the range-topping Monte Carlo spec with the 1.5-litre 150 PS engine. This performance is balanced with excellent fuel consumption and improved emissions, making the FABIA efficient and economical.

The new FABIA also features the latest connectivity features and cutting-edge technology, including ŠKODA's 10.25-inch Virtual Cockpit technology, which makes its debut in the model and, alongside a 9.2-inch touchscreen, means that civilian and police drivers alike have easy access to all the information they need.

For blue light services, this includes 360-degree lighting and

a full integration of the emergency services' communication platform within the existing infotainment setup, ensuring all functionality, such as the lighting and siren, can be controlled through one accessible central platform.

Further back, the FABIA's boot now provides 380-litres of space – the largest in its segment and expandable up to 1,190 litres with the rear seats down – allowing room for everything police officers require to perform their vital work once they arrive on scene.

The new FABIA also boasts the title of the safest car in its class, having received the full five-star rating from crash test experts EURO NCAP. In addition to its enhanced physical construction, which has resulted in an extremely high level of torsional stiffness and improved handling technology also plays a key role. All variants across the range's four trim levels – SE Comfort, SE L, Colour Edition and Monte Carlo – come equipped as standard with LED headlights, Front Assist, and Lane Assist.

With up to nine airbags available, as well as a raft of driver assist technology including Manoeuvre Assist and Predictive Pedestrian and Cyclist Protection, the FABIA offers performance, protection and practicality to police officers in the line of duty.

Bespoke conversions for emergency services fleets can be provided through ŠKODA's 'one-stop shop' service. Alongside hassle-free finance solutions, ŠKODA is able to provide fully converted vehicles to suit specific requirements, giving emergency services fleet managers the peace of mind that the conversion, breakdown recovery, servicing, maintenance and repairs are built into one convenient package.



How believe housing's new fleet will benefit staff and customers

Believe housing has a new fleet of vehicles which is on the road to saving it thousands of pounds to reinvest in homes and services for its customers.

The County Durham based housing association, which manages more than 18,000 affordable homes, recently appointed Alphabet to supply its fleet of 165 light commercial vehicles (LCVs) including two company cars.

The move from a flexi-lease arrangement to a sole contract hire supplier, which is currently underway, will save believe housing money and ensure a safe and comfortable working environment for frontline staff.

It also fits with an environmental pledge made by the housing association last year to take significant steps to reduce its carbon footprint, by reducing fuel consumption.

Some of the vans in the fleet have been downsized and in the first year of the contract 10 per cent will be electric vehicles (EVs) - Vauxhall Vivaro-e commercial vehicles and Nissan Leaf cars – which can be increased in future years.

To support the operation of EVs, extra charging points are being installed at believe housing's offices in Seaham and Bishop Auckland and at the homes of trade operatives so they can charge their vehicles overnight.

Rachel Cox, Director of Property Repairs, said: "Most of our staff get to work in one of our lovely offices or from home, but for trade operatives the van is their office.

"Making sure the vehicles were fit for purpose and were a safe and comfortable working environment was at the forefront of our minds.

"That meant consulting members of each trade, so the racking suited the materials and tools they use, to having air conditioning and DAB radio in the vehicles.

"The move to a sole provider and new funding model will reduce operational costs by about 30 per cent over the next five years, and as a not-for-profit all the money we save will go back into providing affordable housing in the region and a wide range of support services for customers."

The housing association worked with fleet consultancy

service, EVP Solutions, to review its fleet provision when the previous arrangement was coming to an end.

Since taking its repairs services in-house in 2019, believe housing's direct workforce has grown and the fleet requirements of frontline staff including property repairs had changed.

EVP Solutions provided expert support with the review, funding route, specification and procurement of new vehicles, along with up-to-date information on market trends and relationships with suppliers and manufacturers.

Alphabet is also providing maintenance, accident management, driver risk management and rental services so believe housing can keep its teams on the road and delivering services to customers.

Alphabet's conversion partners Modul-System provided the bespoke racking and Media Fleet worked with believe housing's designers on the striking livery, which includes a reflective element to provide night-time visibility.

The new vehicles are equipped with telematics provided by Quartix, along with dashcams and a performance dashboard, to help believe housing understand the status of its vehicles and driver performances.

Dermot Kehoe, Corporate Sales Manager at Alphabet (GB), said: "It's great to be working with believe housing in this key period of growth for their business.

"With a substantial fleet based on a flexi-lease model, we were keen to get the process of moving to contract hire vehicles underway as soon as possible, so they could start benefitting from significant cost reductions.

"And by advising them to order the LCVs prior to full specifications being agreed, we were also able to help them avoid three price increases on the main models they selected, creating further cost savings for the business.

"We're delighted to have part of the new fleet already in operation for believe housing and are looking forward to identifying more efficiencies, as we continue to build our partnership and help them drive the business forward."



Highlights from The Commercial Vehicle Show

As the UK's largest and best-attended road transport exhibition, The Commercial Vehicle Show is a must for anyone involved in the industry. This year's event took place from the 24th -26th May at the NEC in Birmingham and attracted over 200 exhibitors.

Exhibitors included manufacturers of trucks, vans, tankers, trailers and tyres, insurers, telematics specialists, training providers, and fuel and lubricant suppliers from across the service support sector, who showcased the very latest products, services and technology solutions.

New at the show was Ineos Grenadier, BP Fleet Solutions, Digihaul and NanoSun, who featured alongside returning brands such as Ford, Harris Maxus, Isuzu, LEVC, Carrier Transcold and Toyota, BPW, Brigade and Kuda, showcasing the breadth of innovative products available

to UK operators.

From Toyota, the new Hilux GR Sport made its UK debut, as well as the production-ready Corolla Commercial, a new car-derived van developed in Britain and built at Toyota's Burnaston plant.

David Crouch, of Toyota GB, said: "We have attended the Commercial Vehicle Show since 2016, ever since we announced we were 'Back in Business' with commercial vehicles. Each year we use the show to highlight a new element of our commercial vehicle strategy.

"The CV Show provides a platform for us to engage with both new and existing customers about current and future products as we look to increase our position in the UK commercial vehicle market."

One of the newcomers, Ineos, showcased its new Grenadier, with product experts on-hand to provide technical and practical information for visitors.

Gary Pearson, Head of UK Sales & Marketing at Ineos Automotive, said: "The show fell at the perfect time for the firm to showcase the Grenadier and hear from potential customers as the order books open this month.

"It is also useful for us to build new and valuable relationships with perspective business partners, which is important for us as a relatively new manufacturer."

Locks4Vans had two electric vehicles on its stand this year, both of which were kitted out with a wide range of its locking and shielding products.

"The company has always considered the show as the highlight of the CV calendar and, as such, has consistently exhibited since 2006.

"The show provides us with the valuable opportunity to showcase our products to new customers whilst reconnecting with existing customers."



Toyota Corolla Commercial, a new car-derived van developed in Britain and built at Toyota's Burnaston plant.



Electric vehicle on Locks4Vans stand, kitted out with a wide range of its locking and shielding products.

"What makes the show special though is having the unexpected conversations that lead to exciting new opportunities." said Terry Raynor, Commercial Director at Locks4Vans.

Two live theatres, the Workshop Theatre and Road Ahead Theatre, offered presentations on industry trends and panel discussions.

Mike Hawes, Chief Executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), delivered a presentation and Q&A session titled *'Meeting the zero-emission van uptake challenge'*, giving insight into some of the most important challenges facing the industry today.

Other speakers included representatives from BP, the Road Haulage Association, Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency, Bosch UK and Varta Batteries, covering topics from EV charging infrastructure, battery management and the use of

hydrogen to vehicle compliance and driver facilities.

One of the key challenges facing the sector relates to zero-emission vehicles, with SMMT forecasting that about 6.4% of all new van registrations in 2022 will be battery electric vans, a rise of 2.8 percentage points compared with last year.

In response, manufacturers are bringing yet more electric van models to market, reflected by those present at the show, broadening the choice of options for businesses looking to decarbonise their transport.

Amongst the electric exhibitors was Maxus, with a fully electric stand of 12 zero emission vehicles, including an eDeliver 9 panel van, dropside and minibus, eDeliver 3 sports model panel van, tipper, and its specialist conversion van.

"The CV Show is a great opportunity to get

key names in the industry together under one roof. It's a showcase event for Maxus and the flagship event on our annual calendar," said Mark Barrett, General Manager at Harris Maxus.

Meanwhile, Ford promoted its Ford Pro brand, including its electric van back-up service that supports customer charging, fleet maintenance, telematics and intelligence.

The first vehicle benefitting from Ford Pro is the new E-Transit, which has 196 miles of range, carrying up to 15 pallets with a forecast 40% reduction in running costs.

Dan Alcock, of Ford Pro, said: *"the CV Show hosts so many UK business owners, employees and vehicle users all under one roof so it's really important to Ford."*

In summary the Commercial Vehicle Show 2022 was once again a key annual event for the road transport industry.

Want to be part of Clayton Power's Expert User Programme?

Clean onboard power experts Clayton Power are recruiting an exclusive group of fleet managers and vehicle converters to be part of an expert user panel.

Participants will:

- Trial LPS II units for free for a year.
- Opportunity to trial the new Clayton Power Connect Modules – to allow them to track, analyse and report usage.
- Give regular feedback and input to help Clayton Power develop their product roadmap

The all-in-one LPS II provides onboard power for everything from laptops and kettles through to angle grinders and welders. It can also be recharged from

solar, the vehicle's alternator and from mains-hook up.

The LPS II is a compact unit that takes up less space than traditional onboard power kits... and they're lighter too. And they can be easily installed and re-installed from one vehicle to another – which means they can keep on going, even at the end of a vehicle's life or rental period.

All of this is making the units a firm favourite with fleets, wherever they are on their EV journey.

Clayton Power's UK commercial lead, Karl Jones says: "The LPS II is an innovative, all-in-one unit that generates zero emissions. It's lighter, so reduces a vehicle's payload, especially when you take into account

that by using it, companies don't have to carry heavy generators and fuel around with them.

"The LPS II gives fleet managers the ability to incorporate cleaner energy alternatives, even if they're not ready to update to electric vehicles. And of course, if they already have EVs, by cleaning up onboard power, fleets can be even more sustainable.

"The Expert User Programme will help us to get user insight into what our fleet customers want and need – so that we can keep innovating for the benefit of the industry and the environment."

Clayton Power recently launched this trial at the CV Show, but if you would like to be part of the programme contact Karl Jones directly on 029 2240 9396.

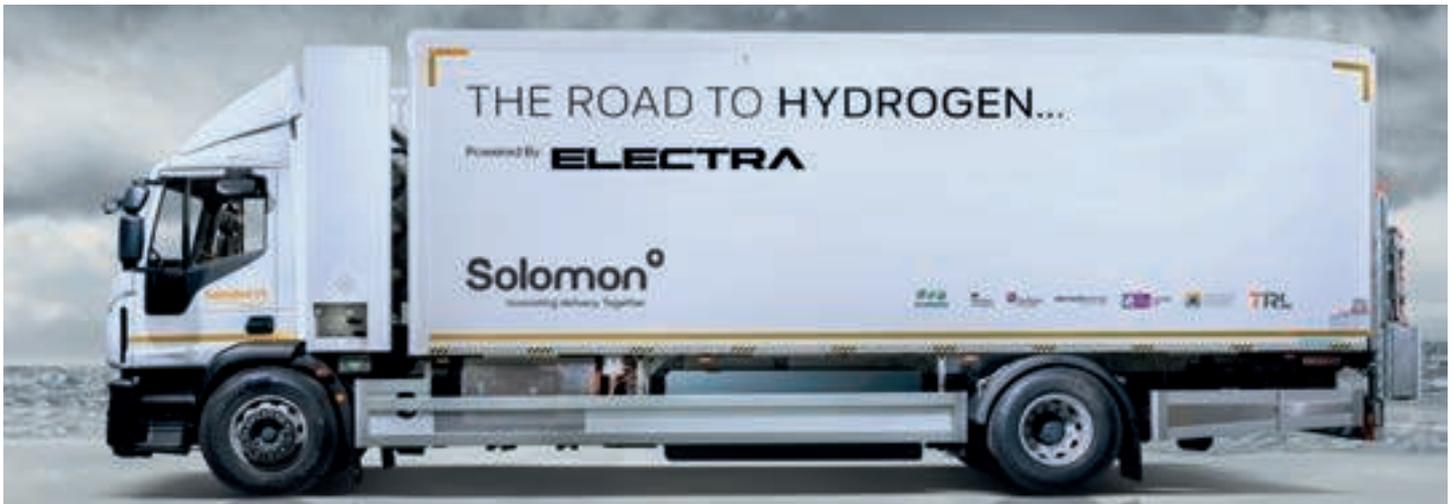


Featured at The CV Show: an openreach Vehicle equipped with the all-in-one LPSII to provide onboard power.

claytonpower.com

ukinfo@claytonpower.com

+44 (0)2920 240 9396



Electra shows the first zero-emission refrigerated hydrogen HGV at the CV Show in a UK first

Electra Commercial Vehicles showcased the first zero-emission refrigerated fuel cell electric vehicle (FCEV) in the UK at the CV Show this year.

The 19-tonne hydrogen-powered truck is the first of its kind to go into operation and will significantly help operators move towards zero-emissions logistics. Electra is also the only manufacturer in the UK which builds both electric and fuel cell battery electric vehicles.

The Electra eCargo FCEV will be on trial with Sainsbury's as part of the Road to Hydrogen – a UK Government-funded project focused on helping the UK solve challenges around zero-emission road freight, linked to the Teesside Multi-Modal Transport Hydrogen Hub.

Ben Smith, MD of Electra Commercial Vehicles, commented: 'We were very excited for people to view the first fully hydrogen-powered temperature-controlled FCEV in the UK. It is an example of genuine innovation that will help operators transition to authentic zero-emission transport.'

'We have created this 19-tonne truck with four type three cylinders providing it with a capacity of 20 kg of hydrogen @350 bar. Fitted with a Proton Motors HY45 fuel cell, the vehicle will have an operating timescale of 9-10 hours, after which it can come back to base needing a quick refill of hydrogen so that it can be double shifted.'

Electra has the unique capacity to offer its customers with a full turnkey solution for

hydrogen supply through its partnership with Element 2, the UK's leading hydrogen refuelling business.

By working with Element 2, Electra can deliver clean, green hydrogen with on-site refuelling trailers, so operators can run their fuel cell vehicles from anywhere in the UK – without the need to invest in extensive and expensive infrastructure.

'The partnership is removing barriers to entry and helping our clients transition to zero-emission Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles. We are the first in the UK to deliver a complete and holistic hydrogen transport solution for trucks,' highlighted Ben.

Visitors to the CV Show saw that Electra has deliberately designed the vehicle with an over-specified battery pack of 225kWh. After the trials have been completed, this will be reduced to 80kWh. For the Tees Valley project, where it will be collecting data, Electra required contingency in its ability to return to base.

The truck has been built on a standard Iveco Eurocargo glider chassis equipped with a Solomon insulated flexible split-compartment refrigeration body with a tuck-under-tail lift. The Carrier Iceland Split Refrigeration System is also powered by hydrogen with an EV Powerbox inverter.

Ben comments: 'The integration and installation of the fuel cell and hydrogen storage system provides supreme flexibility to the base electric vehicle platform. We expect this will extend the geographic capability of the vehicle from an urban

environment to one that can comfortably achieve regional distribution.'

The Electra eCargo FCEV can operate for 8-10 hours on the hydrogen storage system's reserve. However, it can significantly extend the distance that the vehicle can accommodate and return to base with a charge of 100%. It opens the opportunity to double shift the HGV with a short break to refuel.

'The tried-and-tested FCEV combinations we previously built have demonstrated that an 8-hour operational multi-drop urban shift is easily achievable. Transitioning to hydrogen is not nearly as complicated as it might seem,' Ben went on to say.

Electra now designs this platform for various applications such as tractor units, RCVs, sweepers, spreaders and many more.

Electra is a UK-based OEM of battery electric and fuel cell battery electric vehicles, ranging from 7-tonnes GVW upwards. Electra collaborates with major global truck manufacturers to source glider chassis units to build into their products.

Electra works with strategic partners such as NRG Fleet Services for fleet management, leasing, and maintenance services.

In addition, Electra partners with infrastructure companies like Element 2 to ensure a connected and structured solution is delivered to clients.

For more information, please, visit electracommercialvehicles.com

Isuzu UK showcased the brand's dedicated Fleet Conversion Centre at the Commercial Vehicle Show



At this year's Commercial Vehicle Show, Isuzu UK showcased the brand's Fleet Conversion Centre which provides a bespoke vehicle production service to suit the needs of any client. The dedicated centre, based in Sheerness, works in conjunction with the brand's fleet sales, homologation and technical teams to ensure Isuzu UK are in a unique position to offer their fleet customers a specialised build to order service, whilst retaining the manufacturer warranty and ensuring the capability of the vehicle is not compromised in any way.

The vehicles on display, which were built to current customers' requirements, included an Isuzu D-Max Utility Double Cab for Network Rail featuring a Truckman canopy with roof vent and internal lighting, additional exterior lighting, all-terrain tyres, VB Tech air suspension system, Axtec axle weight load indicator system and an interior mirror reverse

camera kit. The load area is finished with a bespoke racking storage system, COSHH storage locker, handwash and DEB hand cream PPE unit and a water boiler.

Other vehicles on the Isuzu UK stand included an Isuzu D-Max Utility Extended Cab from National Resources Wales which features a Truckman canopy with internal lighting, high-power exterior lighting, and a double slide-out drawer system, with sliding cargo tray, racking storage units and a slide-out vice assembly. Other items include all-terrain tyres, an in-cab rear seat storage system with PPE hooks and a fire extinguisher, a first aid kit and a warning triangle.

Another example of just how diverse customer requirements can be is the Isuzu D-Max Utility Double Cab from Mitie Landscapes. This unique vehicle includes an N&J Agrican canopy, under-rail load liner and bespoke internal ladder rack with swivel lighting. This vehicle is also fitted with the VB Tech air

suspension system and a bespoke snow plough bracket mounted at the front of the vehicle and bespoke brackets for attaching portable ramps on the rear tailgate.

Neil Scott, National Fleet Sales Manager, Isuzu UK said: "At The CV Show this year we wanted to demonstrate the versatility and professional approach of our dedicated Fleet Conversion Centre, which enables us to provide a one-stop-shop for Isuzu fleet customers. We had a number of our vehicles on display which demonstrated the adaptability and flexibility of not only the Isuzu D-Max pick-up but also the service that we can provide to meet the varying demands of our current and future customers. We believe this one-stop-shop approach means that we can help to minimise not only the overall cost of a vehicle and conversion but also any potential future vehicle downtime when it comes to repairing or replacement of any components."



The Isuzu UK display also featured an Isuzu D-Max Utility Single Cab from Cumberland Platforms Limited (CPL), the UK access platform specialists. The CPL conversion is type-approved with a 3.5t suspension upgrade and 7t GTW. The platform has a working height of 13.1m and a working outreach of 6.2m, which means the platform knuckle remains within the vehicle's working envelope at all times and removes the possibility of it being hit by oncoming vehicles when working at height on the highways.



Isuzu D-Max Utility Double Cab for Network Rail featuring a Truckman canopy with roof vent and internal lighting, additional exterior lighting, all-terrain tyres, VB Tech air suspension system, Axtex axle weight load indicator system and an interior mirror reverse camera kit.



Isuzu D-Max Utility Double Cab from Mitie Landscapes.

New “Make it Visible” mental health campaign

Ford has teamed up with the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity to “Make it Visible” – a new high-visibility campaign using higher-viz safety vests to grab attention and point people in the direction of help when needed.

The UK’s commercial vehicle leader is stepping in to help combat the issue, with as many as two construction workers lost to suicide every day, according to the Office for National Statistics.

Despite extensive physical safety measures taken to protect on-site workers, construction workers in the UK and Ireland are taking their own lives, unaware of the help and support available.

Working with the Lighthouse Club, and construction contractors Balfour Beatty, Ford seeks to actively promote wellbeing awareness amongst its van customers. With Ford accounting for almost one in three new commercial vehicles sold throughout 2021 – and higher into the construction industry - putting mental safety on an equal footing with physical safety on building sites is an important step for this group of customers. By helping to make the support more visible, more workers will be able to seek assistance from available resources.

“This campaign is hugely important to Ford and highlights the importance of mental wellbeing alongside physical wellbeing on the construction site,” said Mandy Dean, director, commercial vehicles, Ford of Britain and Ireland. *“As the UK’s best-selling commercial vehicle brand, it is likely the majority of construction workers are also Ford customers and operators, so we feel we have a duty*

to support them, through this partnership with the Lighthouse Club, raising awareness and getting support to those in need of it.”

The “Make it Visible” campaign follows on from Ford’s “Elephant in the Transit” launch from 2018, building awareness of male suicide and promoting the front seats of a vehicle as a safe space to talk.

This latest initiative sets out to provide counsellors a means to get to construction sites, with onsite posters matching the vest’s colours. These posters will direct workers to a safe place to talk off-site, so more can seek help easily.

Bill Hill, CEO of the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity, said: *“We are absolutely delighted to be partnering with Ford to deliver the “Make it Visible” campaign.*

“These highly distinguishable vans will be visiting sites across the country to deliver visible support to the boots on the ground workforce. The vehicles are manned by the Lighthouse Club’s on-site team who are all Mental Health First Aiders with relatable experiences in the construction industry. I am convinced that this initiative will have a positive impact on workforce wellbeing and ultimately save lives.”

The “Make it Visible” campaign kicked off at this year’s Commercial Vehicle Show in Birmingham, supported by a fully liveried Transit Custom in matching high-visibility tones. In attendance on the Ford stand for launch day was construction contractors, Balfour Beatty, a key supporter of the initiative, who were involved in piloting the scheme on one of their sites in London.



"For too long, the construction and infrastructure industry has treated mental health as the poor cousin of physical health. We must change this incredibly outdated perception – and at Balfour Beatty, we are continuing to lead the charge.

"The "Make it Visible" campaign helps to build on the work we have done with the charity Mates in Mind, by specifically helping us to reach those, including our valued supply chain partners, who may not be aware of the resources available to them whilst also providing a dedicated, safe space to talk."

Heather Bryant, Health, Safety, Environment and Sustainability Director at Balfour Beatty



ARI Fleet UK rebrands as Holman

ARI Fleet UK is now known as Holman following a global rebrand and reorganisation offering leasing and fleet management customers enhanced levels of support.

The move will see the entire global organisation, including retail dealerships, vehicle up-fitters and fleet management, come together as Holman.

This marks the first time in nearly 100 years of operation that all companies will operate under a singular name and the banner of 'Driving What's Right' to form a global organisation employing around 6,500 people and managing in excess of two million vehicles under funding and fleet management.

The news comes as ARI Fleet UK has just been named as Leasing Company of the Year (up to 20,000 vehicles) at a leading industry Awards ceremony.

As part of the change, Holman's award-winning global team will work even closer together to deliver customers additional insight around supply chain, best practice, finance and electric vehicles, supported by local expertise to help implement fleet solutions for their customers.

Nick Caller, UK Managing Director of Holman, said: "We're beginning the next

important and exciting chapter in the Holman history. The automotive sector is going to experience more changes in the next 20 years than it has in the past century, with the advent of increased electrification, innovative funding methods and technological leaps in areas such as autonomous driving and safety.

"We are committed to being at the heart of these changes, which is why we have decided that we need to work as a global partner for our customers, sharing best practices and insights from our teams across the world.

"Our customers' fleets are evolving, and so are we. With local experts working on an operational level and a global view offering strategic insight, we will be 'Driving What's Right' on a daily basis to ensure we continue to offer an award-winning service.

"It's important to our customers that they know we remain focused on their needs – while we are a global company, we will never take our eyes off the needs of our UK customers, with our team of experts covering all areas of fleet management, from financing specialist vehicles for utility fleets to lobbying legislators on behalf of our clients.

"Although this move is a huge shift for the business and our customers will reap

the benefits, he assured customers they would notice no interruption in their day-to-day interactions."

He added: "Nothing will change in terms of the way we work together – contacts will remain the same, services will remain the same and our first-class delivery will remain the same.

"The same team that was responsible for winning the Leasing Company of the Year award from Fleet News is still in place."

The Holman business is a family run global organisation specialising in multiple automotive sectors.

It runs more than 40 dealerships, parts distribution and vehicle uplift businesses as well as insurance. These are in addition to the 5 ARI Fleet divisions running across the world. Holman began trading as a single Ford dealership in New Jersey, USA, in 1924.

Chris Conroy, president and chief operating officer of Holman, added: "The automotive world continues to experience unprecedented change, which means we face new challenges, but also new opportunities; and while we at Holman are very familiar with the wide range of competencies we possess, and services we offer, many of our customers and partners are not."

The Bri-Stor Group becomes The HEX Group in 2022

Staffordshire engineering and manufacturing business, Bri-Stor Group, which includes multi-award-winning businesses Bri-Stor Systems, Alpha Manufacturing, Atlas Coating, Hex Graphics and HEX Living has announced that the Group will be known as The HEX Group.

With the company launching its Alpha Manufacturing Chemical Technologies business in 2021 coupled with the recent launch of HEX Living – a new division

designing and manufacturing leisure and garden products – 2022 is the time to present a new Group brand that better reflects the businesses' total market offer.

Martin Smith, The HEX Group CEO, has led the development of the new brand and he comments: "The Bri-Stor Group has stood for world-class engineering and manufacturing for almost 40 years, and I am proud of our achievements as a Group. From its inception, our family values have underpinned the success of our business, resulting in long-term trusted partnerships and today, we continue to form strong alliances in new and exciting markets.

"This is more than a name change. It's our opportunity to present to the market a new and reinvigorated strategy that better reflects the breadth and diversity of our total Group offer. For those familiar with the Bri-Stor Group, the hexagon shape has

always formed part of our brand story, so it seemed fitting that we bring it to the fore and not lose sight of how it all began. These are incredibly exciting times for the business and as we continue to grow and extend our market presence, we create more jobs and further contribute to the wider economic prosperity of the region."

The five trading divisions of The HEX Group remain central to the commercial output of the business, yet new for 2022, the business is formally launching HEX Careers – the sixth component of the Group. With a highly respected Apprenticeship and Higher Apprenticeship programme in its 12th year, the Group is now focused on a wider people-development strategy which includes several new initiatives including The HEX Group Accelerate Programme.



ISS rebrands as Fleetclear

Leading fleet solutions provider Innovative Safety Systems Ltd (ISS) is bringing together its technology and software services under one new company brand – Fleetclear.

Established over a decade ago with the goal of making commercial vehicles safer, the company has evolved into a complete fleet solution provider encompassing all aspects of vehicle and driver safety and compliance, including bespoke technology solutions. The new name, Fleetclear, communicates the company's full scale of expertise in keeping fleets safe, effective, and legal.

Gavin Thoday, CEO, Fleetclear: *"Safety is still at the core of our purpose and our principles remain the same – innovation, integration, and collaboration. We will continue to develop innovative technology-based solutions, to address the challenges faced by fleet operators, in close collaboration with our trusted industry partners and customers.*

"However, we are a data driven technology

company focused on integrating systems to enhance and future proof fleets. We provide a complete end to end solution for vehicle and driver safety, efficiency, and compliance. The Fleetclear brand better reflects the full extent of our services."

A market leading vehicle safety and technology provider, Fleetclear designs, manufactures and installs its solutions to over 60% of local authorities in the UK and has a reputation for premium quality products and exemplary aftersales support.

The Fleetclear web-based software application integrates the company's vehicle technology, fleet management and tracking equipment together seamlessly to create a simplified and user-friendly way to manage assets and drivers. For fleet operators the result is a clear picture of the performance of every vehicle and every driver, throughout every moment of operation, with integrated video.

The Fleetclear app is a powerful tool

for Fleet Managers enabling them to re-construct any event in seconds with accompanying telematics and journey data. There are advanced compliance modules and integrated operational efficiency elements to ensure optimal performance across every area, as well as regular software updates and the ongoing development of new features.

Gavin adds: *"Ultimately, we provide everything you need for operational fleet management and safety in one place. By delivering accurate and usable data, we equip our customers with the information they need to maximise the output of their division, drive up safety standards and stay compliant."*

"Fleetclear marks an exciting new era for us, and we are delighted that so many of our customers are already benefiting from this fully-integrated fleet solution."

Fleetclear is located at the same address: Unit 19, Kempton Road, Keytec 7 Business Park, Pershore, WR10 2TA; with the same telephone number Tel: 01386 630 155.



Mer helps to drive the future of electric vehicles in Eastleigh

The installation of Mer's 100% renewable-powered chargers will improve access to sustainable and faster charging points for EV drivers in Hampshire.

Eastleigh Borough Council has set out its aim to be carbon neutral by 2025. Installing publicly available charging points to encourage EV adoption is a key component of its Air Quality Action Plan and Climate Change and Environmental Emergency Action Plan. Furthermore, in March, the government announced new targets to increase EV chargers to 300,000 by 2030. Mer's support will be instrumental in enabling the council to meet its own climate goals, as well as helping communities and businesses across the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality.

Anthony Hinde, Managing Director at Mer UK – Public Charging says, "72% of

local councils are yet to release a strategy for supporting the switch to electric mobility. And many local councils feel unprepared and unsupported for the UK's transition to electric. Mer is already well-established in Europe, and we are working with local authorities to deliver simple, sustainable, and accessible EV charging solutions across the UK.

"Working with a Borough Council like Eastleigh that is prioritising the planet by tackling climate change and driving EV adoption for residents is an encouraging step forward to meeting 2030 targets."

The installation of fast, rapid and ultra-rapid chargers complements the slower on-street chargers already installed in Eastleigh.

Councillor Rupert Kyrle, Eastleigh's Cabinet Member for the Environment, said, "We know that access to charging points and speed of charging are major

barriers to more people going electric. The installation of these eight new electric vehicle charging points in four of our car parks will make a big difference to addressing these barriers. We're excited to be working with Mer to improve access to cleaner, greener forms of transportation in the Borough."

This phase will see the installation of eight chargers including one ultra-rapid 150kW charger, three rapid 50kW chargers and four dual fast 22kW chargers at four destinations: Romsey Road Car Park, Places Leisure, Channon Retail Park and Chestnut Avenue Retail Park. There are plans for more sites to be included in future phases.

To find out more about how Mer is supporting local authorities and public sector bodies with sustainable EV solutions, visit <https://uk.mer.eco/ev-local-authorities/>



Cygnnet Healthcare praises Fleet Evolution for niche fleet service provision



Katharine Draper -
Group Fleet Manager

Award-winning healthcare specialist Cygnnet Healthcare has praised EV salary sacrifice and fleet management specialist, Fleet Evolution, for providing an array of niche fleet services to its specialist fleet of 285 vehicles.

Cygnnet Healthcare, which works with individuals with mental health needs, autism and learning disabilities across the UK, operates a multi-class fleet of outright purchased vehicles meeting several different healthcare needs, many of which have been specially adapted and converted.

These range from specially converted minibuses to multi-marque SUVs serving some 180 different locations across the country.

The award-winning business, recent winners of the Fleet Management Superstar category at this year's Great British Fleet Awards, went out to tender to a variety of different fleet management services and selected Fleet Evolution for several important

sectors of work from a final shortlist of three suppliers.

Fleet Evolution, based in Tamworth, Staffs, now provides a number of niche services including short-term hire vehicles, vehicle UK movements, condition reporting, repurposing and reconditioning and disposals.

Cygnnet has presided over a number of fleet improvements and has invested heavily to upgrade its fleet, switching from leased and rental vehicles to outright purchased and Cygnnet-specified vehicles, with investment in on-board technology helping to streamline operational processes.

These changes have led to a reduction in carbon emissions of 90 tonnes a year, a 40% reduction in accidents, a 6% increase in fuel consumption and a 15% reduction in the company insurance premium.

Group Fleet Manager, Katharine Draper, who runs a three-strong fleet department, said "Fleet Evolution provides

a number of key fleet services that are very bespoke to our needs.

"They have been able to provide services that have been highly customised to meet our requirements, rather than adopting a policy of one size fits all.

"Customer service is first rate, nothing is too much trouble for them and they have become a highly valued fleet management partner. They make the running of our services' demanding fleet requirements far more achievable" Katherine continued.

Fleet Evolution founder and managing director, Andrew Leech, said: "Cygnnet requires a variety of specialist fleet services to meet its primary business needs.

"Because we are not constrained by a set matrix of fleet services, like some of the larger fleet management providers, we can think outside the box, and were able to come up with an assortment of services to very exactly meet their requirements.

"We look forward to a long and mutually rewarding business relationship with them."

Daily Rental companies turning down fleet business for retail, reports AFP

Some daily rental companies are beginning to turn down fleet business in favour of higher margin consumer bookings, the Association of Fleet Professional (AFP) is reporting.

James Pestell, AFP Director, said that businesses were finding no vehicles were available using corporate rental online portals but then discovering that if they visited a rental outlet in person, they could hire a car or van at a retail rate using a credit card.

"We're not saying all rental companies have adopted this as a policy and we are not saying that, even within the same companies, it is happening uniformly across the country – but it does certainly seem to be happening, according to feedback from our members.

"To some extent, suppliers doing this is understandable. Most of them are operating reduced fleets in a time of high demand, so it makes commercial sense for them to be employing their assets in markets where bigger margins are available.

"On the other hand, fleets are regular and reliable customers for daily rental and often have longstanding relationships with their preferred rental suppliers. Their needs should arguably be given due consideration. Certainly, we suspect that many of our members would rather be given the opportunity to have conversations about rates than simply be shown zero availability when there are vehicles available for rent."

James said that rental shortages were currently a regular topic of conversation among AFP members, with widespread

discussions about the difficulties that were being faced.

"It's a situation that is showing few signs of improvement and may even get worse before it improves. Rental companies – like everyone else – simply can't access new vehicle supply in the quantities they need.

"However, it does create difficulties for fleet operators in all the usual instances when rental vehicles are needed – to cover vehicles that are off the road for repair, for new employees, for temporary contracts and more.

"Some fleets are keeping hold of vehicles that they would normally have defleeted to use as pool vehicles as an alternative but this is far from a perfect solution, with the vehicles often in the wrong locations for the current need."

Humn and LEVL partner to offer competitive data-driven insurance for electric fleets



Mark Musson, CEO of Humn Mark Musson, CEO of Humn

Humn the real-time data-driven insurance provider for fleets, have announced its partnership with LEVL, the Authorised Reseller for the world's leading provider of fleet management and vehicle telematics, Geotab. The partnership will enable Humn to have access to data from electric vehicles (EVs), in real-time, to offer an integrated and seamless solution.

Via the partnership, Humn will gather data on driver behaviour and miles driven recorded using the Geotab telematics device in EVs, to then quote fleets based on how safe their drivers and vehicles are. Each quote will be tailored to the data from each vehicle rather than a generic price, offering cheaper insurance to the EV market, which is traditionally higher due to the lack of claims data available.

Mark Musson, CEO of Humn says of the partnership; 'Here at Humn we are

constantly looking to the future of vehicles on our roads, and our partnership with LEVL is no exception. The number of EVs in fleets is only set to increase, and the insights that Geotab and Humn can provide together ensure that fleet owners have access to the most cost-efficient insurance policies available. This is made possible by our technology, operating in real-time and providing an increased level of data which, to date, has been limited in this field.'

Commenting on today's news Andrew Pearce, Director and Co-Founder at LEVL said: 'It is great to be working with an innovative company like HUMN, our customers can benefit when adopting the HUMN insurance platform, many of our connected fleets use Geotab to improve safety and driver behaviour and therefore can lower their risk and premiums with HUMN a WIN WIN for all'

Humn's data-driven insurance management systems analyse thousands

of risk data points such as environmental factors, vehicle control and driver fatigue to produce a 360-degree risk picture offering personalised premiums for every journey. The AI-driven solution saves time on fleet management and quickly identifies which drivers to reward, and which need support.

LEVL is the UK's leading value-added Reseller of Geotab products and services. Geotab's telematics technology is currently utilised by more than 40,000 customers around the world and is found in over 2.4 million vehicles globally. Processing more than 40 billion data points per day, Geotab customers benefit from data-rich insights that enable them to increase the productivity, safety and efficiency of their fleets.

For more information on Humn, please visit: [Humn.ai](https://www.humn.ai)

Second generation of MirrorCam: Mercedes-Benz Trucks is evolving some important details of the mirror camera system



Mercedes-Benz Trucks presented a truck with cameras instead of exterior outside mirrors back in 2014 with its study entitled “Mercedes-Benz Future Truck 2025”.

In 2018, it was the first in the industry to introduce series production of MirrorCam – the first mirror camera system for trucks. A series-produced truck equipped with MirrorCam no longer had traditional main and wide-angle mirrors. Instead, it had a system consisting of two cameras attached to both sides of the roof frame as well as two portrait-format monitors attached to the A-pillars in the cab, together with the corresponding controls in the driver’s cab. A conscious decision was made to use two equally sized, 15-inch monitors on the driver’s and front passenger’s sides. This is because the larger the image of a moving object, the easier it is to judge its speed. For the driver to identify the image information relevant to the situation as quickly as possible, a complex, multi-quadrant view was also replaced by a single image.

Mercedes-Benz Trucks has now updated MirrorCam for the first time. With the second generation, available for the Actros and Arocs as well as eActros series since April 2022, Mercedes-Benz Trucks has evolved important details of the system, winning several Innovation Awards. Prof. Uwe Baake, Head of Product Development at Mercedes-Benz Trucks, explains: *“The intensive discussions with our customers and their experiences from day-to-day operations formed the foundations for us to make further adjustments to individual technical parameters, thereby generating even greater added value, especially in terms of display and safety.”*

In addition to improved aerodynamics and correspondingly lower fuel consumption and energy requirements,

MirrorCam has brought about increased road safety, given that where the glass mirrors previously concealed large areas (‘blind spots’) to the sides of the A-pillar, MirrorCam does not obstruct the field of vision. This is particularly beneficial at junctions, when manoeuvring, and in tight bends. Furthermore, the electronic system uses functions such as semi-trailer tracking or special views for challenging manoeuvring tasks to make everyday operations easier for professional drivers.

Less is more: Shorter camera arms are beneficial

The exterior of the second MirrorCam generation stands out because the camera arms on both sides have been shortened by ten centimetres. This applies to both the narrower and wider cab and, among other advantages, allows drivers to reverse in a straight line more easily than with the first MirrorCam generation. This comes as a result of MirrorCam’s perspective now being even more akin to that of conventional glass mirrors. Shorter dimensions bring about another benefit because with the 2.5 metre-wide cab, the camera arm now protrudes no further than the kerb mirror which is within the driver’s sight. Collisions with objects at the edge of the road are now virtually impossible. As chassis widths are identical, this also applies to the 2.3 metre-wide cab variant.

Further optimised image parameters on MirrorCam

As part of the revision of the camera-based system, Mercedes-Benz Trucks has also evolved further features. For example, the revised MirrorCam arms now incorporate an enhanced housing design which further reduces the risk of debris obscuring the camera lens and causing undesirable visual effects. In

addition, engineers at Mercedes-Benz Trucks have further optimised the tone mapping – tone mapping is a process in which an image is adapted so that a large range of tones are displayed correctly on a medium – reflected primarily as an improved contrast display. The camera system’s evolution in colour and brightness adaptation, which is already very bright in itself, means that the displays show the area relevant to the driving situation even more accurately when the vehicle is reversing into a dark or poorly lit facility, for example.

Committed to safety and driver convenience

These revisions result in an even higher added value for MirrorCam overall. Thanks to its supporting effect, the enhanced system can help to manage situations such as overtaking, manoeuvring, driving in poor visibility and darkness, cornering and passing narrow spaces even more safely and without causing stress. The existing advantages are still available, such as wide-angle mode when reversing, distance lines on the display for better assessing the distance from objects behind the vehicle being driven, camera image panning when cornering, and monitoring of the vehicle’s surroundings during rest periods.

The interaction between MirrorCam and the cornering assistant from Mercedes-Benz Trucks has already proved helpful, especially in complex traffic situations and at confusing junctions. If, contrary to expectations, there is a risk that a truck driver fails to spot a cyclist or pedestrian when turning left, Sideguard Assist can – within its system limits – warn the driver as part of a multi-stage process, using the MirrorCam display to provide visual warnings.

MJ Hughes bridges the visibility gap with Mirro Cam-equipped Mercedes-Benz Arocs



South Yorkshire-based structural steel specialist MJ Hughes has added a truck with MirrorCam to its all-Mercedes-Benz fleet – the 8x2 Arocs will spend much of its time in London, where the manufacturer’s acclaimed alternative to conventional mirrors is officially recognised for its contribution to safety by Transport for London’s Direct Vision Standard scheme.

Supplied by Northside Truck & Van, the vehicle has a ClassicSpace L-cab sleeper for which Auto Electrics Group, of Bradford, fitted a full complement of cameras that provide 360° visibility.

The Arocs is smartly finished in MJ Hughes’ recently updated silver and grey livery, with Alcoa Dura-Bright alloy wheels and roof-mounted light bar. Its ‘cheese wedge’ beavertail plant body is the work of Sterling, of Stokesley, North Yorkshire.

As a 3245 variant the truck is powered

by a 12.8-litre in-line six-cylinder engine that produces 330 kW (450 hp). Thanks to the single drive axle it is significantly more fuel-efficient than an 8x4 32-tonner. The fact that the rear axle can be lifted when the vehicle is running light also allows the operator to save on tyre wear; even when deployed the axle’s turning function reduces scrub as well as enhancing manoeuvrability.

MJ Hughes has been serving the general construction and rail sectors from its headquarters in Maltby, near Rotherham, since it was established in 2002. The company offers a comprehensive assembly and installation service covering bridges and overhead line electrification works, that includes lift plans and Risk Assessment Method Statements (RAMS).

MJ Hughes commissioned its first Mercedes-Benz truck in 2012. The Axor eight-wheeler was also the first new truck

to be purchased by the company.

Although still reliable and cost-effective to run, its Euro V engine meant the Axor no longer met the required emissions standard for operation in London, so it was sold last year to make way for the new Arocs.

Plant & Transport Manager Chris Hall reported: “Our Mercedes-Benz trucks have always lived up to their premium brand reputation. They don’t let us down, they’re easy to work on, and the drivers like them.

“They look really good too. Image is important and a clean, smart looking truck reflects well on our business in the eyes of every one from the DVSA to the Public.”

He continued: “Our vehicles can spend as much time on rough sites as they do on the road, so the extra ground clearance you get with the Arocs is a big advantage. It offers a good body and payload allowance, and as a purpose-designed construction chassis is ideally suited to our work.”

Potent Mercedes-Benz Arocs tipper rises to the occasion for DA Commercials



Devon's DA Commercials is already saving time and hopes also to cut its fuel bill after specifying its latest Mercedes-Benz multi-wheeler with a powerful 390 kW (530 hp) engine.

Supplied by dedicated Mercedes-Benz Trucks Dealer City West Commercials, the Arocs 3253 tipper makes the steep ascent to the top of Telegraph Hill at Haldon, near Exeter, five times a day.

DA Commercials is based in the village of Beer and provides haulage services to the construction sector. Its eight trucks deliver concrete, Tarmac, aggregates and sand throughout the South West.

Acquired with competitive funding support from Mercedes-Benz Finance, the latest addition to the fleet is working out of Stoneycombe Quarry, near Newton Abbott, and serves sites in and around Exeter. Each load represents a round trip of approximately 40 miles.

Owner-driver Dan Ayling established DA Commercials in 2013 and purchased his first construction-specification 8x4

Arocs from City West Commercials Truck Sales Executive Richard Smith the following year.

The new truck is his fourth and the most potent yet, having been specified with the highest of the five outputs available from Mercedes-Benz Trucks' 12.8-litre OM 471 in-line six-cylinder engine.

It has a ClassicSpace M-cab and an insulated aluminium tipping body by Aliweld, of Ryton, Newcastle upon Tyne. High-tech driver aids include MirrorCam, the ground-breaking camera-based replacement for conventional mirrors, and Multimedia Cockpit, interactive, the optionally upgraded version of the manufacturer's radical twin-screen dashboard – this boasts a larger, 12in instrument panel and comes with extra functionality, including satellite navigation.

Fitted with a roof-mounted Ecco light bar and Alcoa Dura-Bright alloy wheels, the high-riding truck wears the colours of leading customer Aggregate

Industries. So, too, does the Arocs 3243 truck mixer with 10.7-litre, 315 kW (428 hp) 'straight six' and body by McPhee, Glasgow, that DA Commercials purchased last September.

Dan Ayling explained: *"The mixer makes up to six deliveries a day and the journeys are shorter – sometimes it won't do more than 20 miles in a day but it spends a lot of time ticking over on sites.*

"Whereas the tipper has to get over the top of Telegraph Hill five times a day. We've found that using bigger engines for this work is both quicker and more fuel-efficient, because the truck is not having to work as hard."

Mr Ayling previously favoured a Swedish truck brand but now believes that Mercedes-Benz offers the best combination of product technology and service. He is a big fan of MirrorCam: *"Rear visibility is certainly better – reversing into tight spots is very easy now,"* he said.

"More importantly, though, by doing away the mirrors and replacing them with roof-



No looking back: DA Commercials drivers James Habayeb, left, and Marc Major were initially sceptical about MirrorCam, but quickly won over by Mercedes-Benz Trucks' camera-based replacement for conventional mirrors

mounted cameras Mercedes-Benz has also effectively eliminated a massive, forward-facing blind spot. I've been driving for more than 20 years and can tell you that's a huge safety benefit, particularly on the approaches to roundabouts."

The new tipper is driven by Marc Major while the latest truck mixer – which is also equipped with MirrorCam – is assigned to James Habayeb. "Both were sceptical about MirrorCam but very quickly changed their minds once they'd tried it," reported Mr Ayling. "They're getting on really well with the new dashboard too, as it's so easy to use."

DA Commercials also runs a 2019 Arocs mixer but sold its original Mercedes-Benz in December. "There was nothing wrong with the truck; it just made sense to downsize the fleet a little," recalled Mr Ayling. "Pricewise, I did very well. The 2014 Arocs went for nearly three times the figure achieved for a 2014 French-built tipper I sold at the same time.

"Our Mercedes-Benz trucks have lived up to their reputation for reliability, while on the evidence of that first sale they will also do so when it comes to residual values."

As with its previous Arocs, the new tipper

is the subject of a six-year Mercedes-Benz Complete Service Contract, and maintained at the nine-bay workshop on the Greendale Business Park at Woodbury Salterton, Exeter, that City West Commercials opened in 2018.

My Ayling added: "The Dealer's aftersales service is good while I couldn't wish for a better sales contact than Rich Smith. He's at the top of his game, always upbeat and a really nice guy to do business with. In fact, my relationship with Rich, and the trust I place in him, also helps to explain why Mercedes-Benz is now getting repeat custom from me."





Ford: E-Transit Custom

Ford has taken another major step in its electrification transformation and has revealed the all-new, all-electric, E-Transit Custom.

Following hot on the heels of the all-electric E-Transit that began production in March this year – and the first of four further all-electric commercial vehicles Ford Pro will introduce by 2024 – the E-Transit Custom is designed to set a new benchmark in Europe's one-tonne van segment and help businesses across the region to effortlessly make the change to electrified vehicles. The E-Transit Custom will be supported by Ford Pro software, charging, service and financing solutions via one comprehensive platform to help increase uptime and reduce operating costs. Its no-compromise all-electric architecture helps to deliver a targeted driving range of up to 236 miles, 3 DC fast-charging, and full towing capability – not to mention dynamic new styling. In addition, the new van will help take productivity to new levels using sophisticated connectivity to enable always-on relationships.

"This is a watershed moment for commercial vehicle operators in Europe, and another hugely significant realisation of our Ford Pro ambitions," said Hans Schep, general manager, Ford Pro, Europe. *"Europe's best-selling van just went all-electric and – supported by*

our unique Ford Pro one-stop-shop of productivity-boosting services – the operating benefits this will bring to business across Europe cannot be overstated."

Among features developed using in-depth insights from van users to ensure E-Transit Custom provides an unmatched customer experience, ProPower Onboard technology will provide exportable power for tools, lights and devices while on site.

With an expressive and sculptural design, E-Transit Custom is a working vehicle that companies of all sizes will be proud to have as a trusted partner for their business. Featuring rebalanced proportions, a confident stance and full LED lighting, the new model will set a distinctive new design benchmark in the one-tonne segment.

Earlier this year Ford announced that by 2024, four further new all-electric vehicles will join the E-Transit two-tonne van as part of the iconic Transit family, including the Transit Custom and Transit Courier vans, as well as Tourneo Custom and Tourneo Courier people movers.

The all-electric E-Transit Custom will enter production in the second half of 2023.



New Vauxhall Grandland introduces several new technologies to the segment



The New Vauxhall Grandland has new technologies, lower pricing, and a range of efficient petrol, diesel and plug-in hybrid powertrains. It is available in SE, SRi, Elite and Ultimate trim levels.

It is the latest model to feature Vauxhall's new and bold design language with its distinctive Vizor front end.

Vauxhall's flagship SUV also introduces several new technologies and assistance systems that until now, have been reserved for premium segments of the market, including Adaptive IntelliLux LED® Pixel HeadLights. The 168 LED elements – 84 per headlamp, as seen on the new Insignia – result in a seamless and intelligent adaptation of the light beam according to the driving conditions and surroundings, without dazzling oncoming traffic. The LED elements of each slim headlamp unit line up in a three-row matrix system where the functions flow seamlessly into the next level.

New Grandland models are also available with Night Vision technology, a first for Vauxhall, with the system capable of detecting pedestrians and animals in darkness at a distance of up to 100m and alerting the driver. Vauxhall has also

ensured the New Grandland features the latest in semi-adaptive driving, and is available with Highway Integration Assist which keeps the New Grandland in the middle of its lane and maintains the distance to the vehicle in front, it also allows for "stop & go" progress in traffic.

The exterior of the New Grandland now features the distinctive Vizor trim detail on the front of the car, and the new Griffin logo proudly located in the centre, flanked by slim LED lighting units and muscular bumpers for a purposeful profile.

On the Inside, you will find features such as the new Pure Panel cockpit with two widescreen displays for the latest digital experience. Pure Panel is made up of the latest digital technologies and displays the most important information straight to the driver. Ahead of the driver is a display up to 12 inches in size, offering up essential information to the driver with minimal distraction, while the central 10-inch display controls all infotainment via a touchscreen. All models come standard with Apple CarPlay™ and Android Auto™ for full smartphone connectivity.

Leading the powertrain line-up is the Plug-in Hybrid offering up to 192mpg and

an electric driving range of up to 34 miles (WLTP), making it the perfect companion for most commutes while still delivering impressive and enjoyable performance from its 1.6-litre petrol engine and electric motor, which deliver a combined 225PS.

With emissions of just 31g/km CO₂ under WLTP testing, the New Grandland is eligible for just 11% Benefit-in-Kind rate, making it ideal for fleet and business users. PHEV variants of the New Grandland are available in sporty SRi or Elite trims.

The New Grandland is also available with a choice of efficient petrol and diesel units. A 1.2-litre Turbo petrol (130PS) and 1.5-litre Turbo D diesel (130PS). Petrol models are available with either six speed manual or eight-speed automatic transmission; diesel models get an eight speed automatic transmission.

SE variants feature 17-inch alloy wheels as standard, and come with a seven-inch Pure Panel colour touchscreen and driver display of the same size. All models come with a generous level of standard specification including DAB, Bluetooth, cruise control, electric parking brake, electric folding mirrors, front and rear parking sensors and automatic lighting



and wipers.

Sportier SRi variants upgrade the wheels to 18-inch gloss black alloys, and come with a 12-inch Pure Panel driver display with 10-inch central touchscreen. Also included is 180-degree rear-view camera, high gloss black colour-coded roof, roof rails, wheel arch cladding, skid plates, bumper inserts, and badges, as well as dark tinted windows to enhance the sporty look.

Elite variants introduce 19-inch Bi-

Colour alloy wheels and additional technology including LED Matrix automatic front lighting, wireless phone charging, advanced park assist, side blind spot alert, keyless entry and start and a power tailgate, while inside occupants benefit from advanced Ergo Active front seats.

Range-topping Ultimate variants add Alcantara® upholstery and 360 degree camera with high-gloss black exterior letter detailing.





The new BMW 3 Series: refreshed and enhanced

The new BMW 3 Series has a refreshed exterior, an extensively modernised cabin and the latest advances in digitalisation and equipment.

All variants of the new BMW 3 Series now come as standard with an eight-speed Steptronic Sport transmission with gearshift paddles on the steering wheel and a newly designed selector lever. A restructured optional equipment line-up also makes it easier for customers to individualise their car according to

their preferences.

There is a choice of four petrol engines, including one plug-in hybrid variant, and two diesel engines, both with mild-hybrid technology. At the top of each model line-up sits a pair of BMW Performance models meaning the new BMW 3 Series can be ordered with outputs from 184hp to 374hp. BMW xDrive intelligent all-wheel drive comes as standard on the range-topping models, and is an option on selected variants.

The revised front apron adds to the sporty appearance and the standard full-LED headlights are now much slimmer, with clear contours and daytime driving lights arranged in an inverted L shape. Adaptive LED Headlights are available as an option, and come with a range of functions including the cornering light and non-dazzling matrix high beam as well as dynamic headlight range control and variable light distribution.

The standard specification for all BMW 3 Series models now includes 17-inch



light-alloy wheels. The M Sport model includes 18-inch light-alloy wheels as standard, while the BMW Performance models feature a 19-inch light-alloy design. The range of exterior colours has been expanded and the selection of around 150 additional BMW Individual special paint finishes is class leading.

The interior of the new BMW 3 Series has been treated to a comprehensive update, embodied by the large BMW Curved Display. A 12.3-inch information display behind the steering wheel and a 14.9-inch control display merge into a single fully digital unit.

The control panel on the centre console of the new BMW 3 Series has additional touch-controlled surfaces, with the Start/Stop button, iDrive Controller, Driving Experience Control buttons, parking brake and other vehicle functions.

Other new additions to standard specification for the new BMW 3 Series include an automatically dimming rear-view mirror and Park Distance Control

(PDC) with sensors at the front and rear. Plus, all models now also come with the BMW Live Cockpit Plus including BMW Maps navigation system.

Mild hybrid technology gives the four-cylinder BMW 320d and six-cylinder BMW M340d exceptionally responsive power delivery and optimised efficiency. A 48V starter-generator acts like an electric drive unit to assist the engine, while also offering an electric boost effect that can instantly deliver an extra 11hp when accelerating off the line. The mild hybrid system collects power through Brake Energy Regeneration and stores it in an additional battery. This is used not only to provide the engine with its electric power boost, but also to supply power to the vehicle's 12V electrical system.

Gearshift paddles are included with the now standard eight-speed Steptronic Sport transmission, which stands out with its sharp shift dynamics, Launch Control function, and ultra-quick bursts of mid-range power via its

Sprint function.

When it comes to breadth of functionality and availability, the automated driving and parking systems are among the best on the market. Camera images and the data gathered by ultrasonic and radar sensors are used to monitor the area around the car, warn the driver of possible dangers, minimise the risk of an accident, and carry out automated parking manoeuvres..

The My BMW App acts as a universal digital interface, enabling remote vehicle locating, locking and unlocking the doors, monitoring the car's immediate vicinity (Remote 3D View), and sending destination addresses to the vehicle's navigation system. Plug-in hybrid BMW 3 Series owners can also charge the battery of their cars remotely via the My BMW App, allowing the user to set their desired charging window and the charge level they wish to achieve. The charging process can be started or interrupted at any time.



EASY REFERENCE GUIDE

CAR TYRES

CAR TYRES ARE ESSENTIAL FOR KEEPING YOU AND YOUR PASSENGERS SAFE ON THE ROAD. **THE DRIVER** IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TYRE CONDITION.

CHECK YOUR TYRES AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH



AIR PRESSURE

Check your tyres are at the manufacturer's recommended pressure. This may be in the door shut, fuel filler cap or owner's manual



CONDITION

Remove any stones or objects from the tyre's tread. If you spot lumps, bumps or cuts, get your tyres checked by a professional.

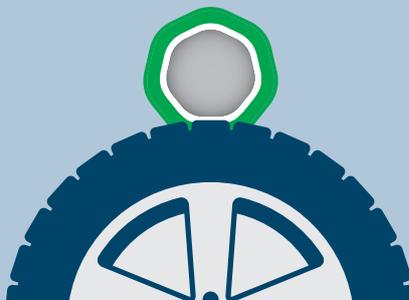


TREAD

The UK legal minimum tread depth is 1.6mm across the central three quarters of the tread. Check you're safe with the 20p test below.

Simply place a **20p coin** into the main tread grooves of your tyres.

Check at least three locations around each tyre.



If the outer rim of the coin is **obscured**

Your tread depth is above the legal limit.

Stay safe by checking your tyres at least once a month.



If the outer rim of the coin is **VISIBLE**

Your tyres may be illegal and unsafe.

Get them checked immediately by a tyre professional.