

Rossendale
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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The Fleet Interview

with James Gunning, Workshop & Transport Services Manager

Rossendale Borough Council

Essential Fleet Manager - Issue1 (2023)

Welcome to issue 1(2023) of Essential Fleet Manager Magazine, published for fleet professionals who work for organisations that operate within the Essential Services Sector.

The magazine is available as a 'free' digital edition or can be delivered in 'printed format' for a paid subscription.

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.

For more information please email production@essentialfleetgroup.co.uk

Regards, Debbie Cheadle - Editor



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Funding for seven local highways authorities to develop and use new technologies to reduce emissions, improve regional connectivity and move to net-zero local roads.

Future roads could be built using asphalt made from grass cuttings and 'carbon capturing' cement, supported by £30 million government funding awarded to seven innovative, net zero projects.

Seven projects spread across the UK, from Lanarkshire to Devon, have been awarded funding today through the Live Labs 2: Decarbonising Local Roads competition. The programme supports projects led by local highways authorities focused on tackling the long-term decarbonisation of highways infrastructure, such as streetlights, and transforming

local authorities' approach to decarbonising roads.

The winning projects include cutting carbon emissions from our streetlights to producing asphalt made from green waste like grass cuttings. Other projects plan to drive changes to the design, construction and maintenance of typical UK highway construction, as well as plans to develop a first-of-its-kind system approach to creating a net carbon negative model for green infrastructure delivery.

Roads Minister Richard Holden said:
"The UK is a world leader in technology

and innovation and we must use that strength to drive decarbonisation and the next generation of high tech jobs that go alongside it.

"We are supporting this vital agenda to help level-up through £30 million funding for ground-breaking projects and boosting regional connections to support growth.

"The government is determined to create good, well paid jobs – via innovation and investment across the UK – as we accelerate the road to net zero."

The seven successful local highways authorities and their partners will be provided funding, subject to due



diligence, to develop, test, pilot and roll out new technologies to facilitate decarbonisation, including in supply chain emissions. The seven successful bids are:

- **Highways CO2llaboration Centre for materials decarbonisation, Transport for West Midlands:** supporting upskilling and developing a team in the West Midlands to decarbonise highways via two initiatives, including a 'Highways CO2llaboration Centre', and demonstrator sites showcasing and monitoring innovative decarbonised highway materials
- **UK Centre of Excellence for Material Decarbonisation in Local Roads, North Lanarkshire Council:** creating a centre that will develop a materials testing programme identifying and deploying the latest tech for road construction, in addition to testing and deploying

recycled materials from other industries to build roads

- **A net carbon-negative model for green infrastructure management, South Gloucestershire Council and West Sussex County Council:** aims to develop a first-of-its-kind approach to creating a net carbon negative model for building and delivering green infrastructure, for example recycling biomass from green waste
- **A382 Carbon Negative Project, Devon County Council:** aims to drive changes to the design, construction and maintenance in typical aspects of highway construction to reduce carbon emissions, and to build a new link road including walking and cycling options
- **Ecosystem of Things, Liverpool City Council:** aims to introduce an 'Ecosystem of Things', exploring a scalable and transferrable approach to understanding various systems (including design, public spaces, materials/process technology, recycling infrastructure and the legal, contractual and procurement processes) at city level to embed and adopt decarbonisation initiatives
- **Decarbonising street lighting, East Riding of Yorkshire Council:** plans to work on increasing efficiency for low carbon lighting to make sure they can still be clearly seen by drivers and to create a framework for an alternative manual for highway lighting, signing and road marking
- **Net Zero Corridors, Wessex Partnership:** will pioneer net zero roads that are built without creating more carbon emissions overall in Somerset, Cornwall, and Hampshire in 9 'net zero corridors' linking rural and urban areas

Live Labs 2 is designed to ensure innovations are shared across the whole of the UK and bidders were encouraged to create partnerships across the public and private sector, and academia. As such, the winning projects will be working together across four interconnected themes, including:

- **A green carbon laboratory:** examining the role that non-operational highways 'green' assets can play in providing a source of materials and fuels to decarbonise highway operations, for example,

using biomass from green waste to create alternative fuels and asphalt additives

- **A future lighting testbed:** researching the future of lighting for local roads to determine what is needed in the future and how they can be further decarbonised
- **A UK centre of excellence for materials:** providing a centralised hub for research and innovation that would help test construction materials and their use
- **Corridor and place-based decarbonisation:** working to create decarbonisation across specific, wider regions and corridors covering both urban and rural areas

Live Labs 2 is funded by the Department of Transport (DfT) and organised by The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (ADEPT), which represents 'directors of place' who are responsible for providing day-to-day services, such as local highways, as well as strategic long-term delivery.

This programme follows the previous and successful Live Labs 1, a £22.9 million innovation programme that focused on adoption of digital technology across the local roads sector in England.

"Tackling the carbon impact of our highways' infrastructure is critical to our path to net zero but hard to address, so I am pleased that bidding was so competitive. Live Labs 2 has a huge ambition – to fundamentally change how we embed decarbonisation into our decision-making and to share our learning with the wider sector to enable behaviour change. Each project will bring local authority led innovation and a collaborative approach to create a long-lasting transformation of business as usual. I am looking forward to the opportunity to learn from our successful bidders and taking that into my own organisation."

Mark Kemp, President of ADEPT



World's biggest commercial EV trial accelerates move to all-electric fleets

The trials for Optimise Prime, the world's biggest trial of commercial electric vehicles (EVs) have come to an end, and demonstrated how barriers, such as cost and energy demand, can be overcome through digitisation and new product offerings. The outcomes of this landmark study follow a year-long trial, and could help unlock the mass rollout of EV fleets across UK and beyond.

The fast roll out of electric vehicle fleets is vital for the UK to meet its net zero goals. The sixth carbon budget requires that all new cars and vans are low-carbon and largely electric by the early 2030s [1]. The Climate Change Committee also advises that companies lead the transition to electric vehicles in the UK by switching their vehicle fleets to EVs in the 2020s.

The Optimise Prime trials began in July 2021 and have been led by Hitachi Europe and electricity distributor UK Power Networks. The trial saw over 8,000 electric vehicles from Centrica, Uber and a large UK depot-based parcel carrier take to the roads across

the UK, supported by distribution networks including Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks, and partners Hitachi Vantara and Novuna Vehicle Solutions. The trials included depot, home, and on-the-road charging.

The project delivered an end-to-end overview of what the switch to EVs means for the cables and substations that deliver electricity to the community, for the businesses that need to invest in new infrastructure, and for the fleet owners that need to power their vehicles. Advice was also provided to fleet operators to ensure they were getting the most out of the project.

Key interim findings of the trial found that:

EV models can cover the typical range requirements for all three types of fleets, making electrification feasible and achievable. To enable the private hire EV transition, a London Borough such as Tower Hamlets alone will need around 3,200 more chargers by 2025.

In the longer term, the trials highlight how EV fleets can generate revenue and support network operators by offering 'turn-down' services where fleets can be charged only when needed, and stop charging during peak times on the electricity network.

Digitalisation can allow for charging to be forecast by fleet and

network operators to help manage demand at peak times on the network

"With road vehicles being the biggest producer of the UK's transport emissions, it is clear that individuals and businesses need to make the move to more sustainable transport." said John Whybrow, Optimise Prime Business Lead at Hitachi Europe Ltd.

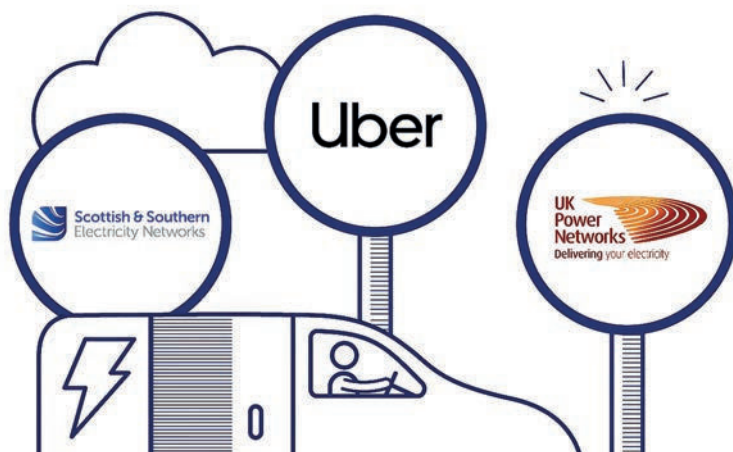
"Our work alongside key partners in this trial has shown that the ambitious EV rollout is possible, and with the use of data, we can overcome the challenges being faced by businesses such as costs and charging availability. Making the transition to EVs easier and cheaper is key in accelerating the road to net zero, not just in the UK but globally."

Ian Cameron, Director of Customer Service and Innovation at UK Power Networks said: *"Electrifying your vehicle fleet is a big step to take, but we are making it cheaper, quicker and easier than you ever thought possible; our project has proved that. We set out to come up with practical solutions to cut the cost of fleets going electric and that's exactly what we have done – along with a mass of insights and learnings to help fleet managers. Just one example is how using smart charging can go a long way to lowering your up-front costs. And perhaps the best feedback we've had is from a fleet manager in the trial who said they had no idea of all the clever things happening in the background because it happened seamlessly without impacting on operations."*

Careful planning is essential for fleet managers as they

consider transitioning to EVs. Hitachi has put together a comprehensive guide based on the experiences of Optimise Prime which considers business needs, site constraints (both physical and electrical) and the management of changes to business processes.

This, plus the final results and datasets on commercial EV charging and use will be shared openly on the UK Power Networks' open data platform in the coming months to help the wider industry be better prepared for making the switch.



To find out more about Hitachi's Zero Carbon offerings for Fleet Optimisation visit: <https://zerocarbon.hitachi.com/>



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Five steps to greener transport

Transport is the largest emitting sector of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the UK. Transport covers everything from street lighting and traffic management to electric vehicles, logistics and sustainable travel.

Practical steps to net zero transport

As we transition to greener methods and reduce the need for travel overall, it has become clear that adapting our transport strategy can significantly impact us, moving us closer to achieving carbon net zero.

A deep dive into the interlinking elements of your transport emissions can help you assess what aspects of your transport strategy can be altered to reduce the impacts of climate change.

1 Focus on operational fleet management

The alternatively fuelled vehicle market has grown extensively in recent years. As a result, you now have more vehicle choices, from standard-built cars used in pooled fleets to converted vans used for complex, operational work.

As part of your fleet management, you should regularly review your fleet size, vehicle type, fuel usage and whether you could use telematics to help monitor driving styles. Our agreements are designed to empower you to invest resources today so

you have an efficient, cost-effective, and low-emission fleet in the future.

2 Take a blended approach

Think about transport and travel solutions as a blended approach. Many organisations have to plan transport options for moving their goods and people, which can be challenging. Others, such as local and combined authorities, need to meet the needs of local citizens and people travelling into the region for work or leisure, which is where smart, green transport gets tricky.

The optimum solution allows you to see all the options for travel and transport in one place. Whether booking platforms for rail, bus or taxis, access to a pooled fleet, ability to hire in a car, or use a local car share scheme, having visibility of all these options is a great place to start moving transport to greener solutions.

3 Make commuting and incidental miles less harmful

Simple solutions can help you make a bigger impact on incidental miles travelled for business and commuting or for journeys carried out in employee-owned vehicles, also known as grey fleet. You can maximise journeys and encourage electric vehicle use in a number of ways.



Crown Commercial Service



Options include:

- placing car share vehicles near travel hubs and meeting spaces
- making newer and less harmful vehicles readily available to more staff and at an appealing cost
- offering green car salary sacrifice schemes to employees as a benefit

A green salary sacrifice scheme gives employees access to newer, cleaner, safer vehicles, making commutes and incidental miles less harmful. Hiring newer vehicles also allows employees to choose a hybrid or fully electric vehicle.

4 Create a scalable charging infrastructure to meet multiple user needs

Assess how your charging infrastructure can meet the needs of fleet users, employees, and the general public in various ways, including:

- dedicated networks for operational commercial vehicles
- in-car park offerings for staff

- hybrid models where charging facilities are made available to the general public at cost

In addition, some contract styles require minimal outlay from public sector organisations and instead look to the provider to generate revenues to cover initial installations and ongoing maintenance.

5 Put innovative technology and data to work

Deploying innovative technology to do some work for you when transport is live can help reduce carbon emissions. Across the UK, traffic management is helping tackle many sources of air pollution. SMART technologies can be used to incentivise and regulate driver behaviour and create Clean Air Zones to improve the air we breathe and how we navigate our cities.

Using roadside furniture, such as number plate recognition, vehicle charging infrastructure, sustainable street lighting, and traffic monitoring CCTV systems, can further extend your green impact, helping to establish and maintain clean air zones.

Find out more

Crown Commercial Service (CCS) looks at the whole vehicle lifecycle alongside your organisation's wider strategies. Our agreements are designed to enable access to all ultra-low and zero-emission vehicles.

Download our updated *Cityscape* interactive guide to learn how small changes to the public sector's transport and travel strategy can help us reach carbon net zero.

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[crowncommercial.gov.uk/cityscape](https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/cityscape)

Autotech Training goes the extra mile for the Shetland Island's Council

The Autotech Training car on arrival at the Shetland Islands



The training was delivered to technicians within the Council's Lerwick workshop over four days

As with all local authorities across the UK, the Shetland Island's Council is working towards electrifying its fleet of over 320 vehicles. One of the key requirements was to ensure that its vehicles technicians held the relevant skill set to repair and maintain these vehicles safely.

However, lying approximately 100 miles north east of Scotland, finding the right training provider was challenging. Considerations included the expense of sending its eight vehicle technicians over to the mainland for training or finding a provider who could travel the distance to deliver EV training courses directly to its vehicle technicians.

Without training, the electric vehicles would have to be sent to Aberdeen for routine maintenance and repair work – which can be a 24 hour round trip.

The Autotech Training difference

Struggling to find a solution, the council contacted Autotech Training. Based in Milton Keynes, the company is an IMI approved training provider and offers a range of courses including ADAS, MOT Manager and MOT Tester. Autotech Training also delivers IMI Levels 1-4 electric/hybrid vehicle training and, most recently IMI Levels 1-3 Heavy Vehicle electric/hybrid courses.

Courses can be undertaken at Autotech Training's headquarters, which features a dedicated EV Training Suite, or rolled out to any business or garage across the UK.

Due to the company's flexibility, including its ability to send experienced trainers out on the road, the number of electric vehicle courses booked with Autotech Training has rapidly increased. This year alone over 60% of these courses have been delivered on a customer's premises.

"Above all, we understand the challenges our customers face," comments Colin Gleghorn, Managing Director of Autotech Training. *"From the downtime and cost to the business as a result of sending essential staff out for even just one day's training, to the overall investment in travel and accommodation expenses."*

As one of the only training providers able to meet the Shetland Islands Council's EV training needs, Dave Walker, Business Development Director for Autotech Training, made the 1,600 mile round trip from Milton Keynes to The Shetland Islands last month in an Autotech Training branded hybrid vehicle.

Delivering both IMI Levels 2 and 3 electric and hybrid vehicle training over

four days within the council's dedicated Lerwick workshop, Dave equipped the eight vehicle technicians with the skills needed to help the council continue its electric vehicle transition.

"We have been delighted with the entire process. The electric vehicles we currently have include both cars and vans for the support we offer our care centres. Autotech Training have not only gone above and beyond to deliver electric vehicle training to our technicians, but they also tailored the approach and demonstrated the learning on our own range of electric vehicles offering them hands on experience."

"As a result, our technicians now have the skill set to safely maintain our fleet as the number of electric vehicles within it increases - I cannot recommend Autotech Training enough."

Raymond Murchison, acting Team Leader of Fleet for Shetland Islands Council



Longcliffe celebrates Silver fleet Award

Pictured: Longcliffe's Logistics Manager James Hopkinson (right) celebrates the FORS silver accreditation with driver Liam Fletcher

Demonstrating first-class commitment to the highest standards in safety, environment and operational efficiency across its road operation, Derbyshire based Longcliffe Quarries is celebrating the company achieving and maintaining its Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) Silver accreditation.

FORS is a voluntary accreditation scheme for fleet operators. Originally brought in by Transport for London to improve safety for cyclists, it 'aims to drive up standards within fleet operations and demonstrate which operators are achieving exemplary levels of best practice in safety, efficiency and environmental protection*.

Longcliffe Logistics Manager James Hopkinson said: "We are delighted to win our FORS Silver accreditation for a third

year. It is recognition for the whole logistics team from drivers through to maintenance mechanics and demonstrates our continued commitment to improving safety and environmental performance."

To win and maintain FORS Silver, Longcliffe had to prove it is maintaining its progressive approach in six key areas including vehicle performance (emissions and air quality); road risk and cycle safety; professional development; and vehicle safety equipment.

Drivers are heavily involved in the work to achieve the FORS certification. For instance, to demonstrate the most positive approach to road risk and cycle safety, all 46 drivers had to take part in a full-day's training which included spending half a day out on the road on bikes.

Driver and driver trainer Chris Dakin said: "This training was really successful, particularly for the driver's that don't cycle. It gave us all better perspective."

To achieve FORS Silver, Longcliffe also had to demonstrate the highest standards of visibility equipment in its lorries. This includes a four-way camera system and an alarm which sounds when a vehicle is about to take a left turn.

Longcliffe Group Managing Director Paul Boustead adds: "This award is testament to the hard work of our fleet and logistics teams. It not only highlights our performance and safety commitments, but it also ensures we meet the standards expected by many of our customers."

*<https://www.fors-online.org.uk/cms/>



The weather outside is Frightful, but my EV is so Delightful

Venson provides Electric Vehicle owners with practical advice on keeping vehicles moving this Winter

Newly registered plug-in vehicles now represent more than one in four new cars on the UK roads, which means there are a lot of first-time EV owners getting to grips with battery based motoring this winter.

During the colder months, Drivers must prepare themselves for more severe weather conditions. Venson Automotive Solutions is reminding new EV owners that some popular models are reported to reduce in battery range by as much as 52% at -5 degrees and urges them to plan ahead.

Alison Bell, Operations Director at Venson Automotive Solutions comments, *"Although weather forecasts do usually predict severe weather conditions, many drivers still get caught out by the harsh driving conditions. And EV drivers face a different set of challenges to keep their vehicles road ready. In particular, the batteries that power EVs are very temperature sensitive, so bad weather can significantly reduce a car's range and increase the length of time needed to recharge the battery. These are things owners must consider when preparing for a journey. Always aim to keep the vehicle's battery between 20 percent and 80 percent charged and use the eco-mode whilst driving to reduce your rate of battery draining acceleration."*

There are other key measures that EV drivers can take to minimise

battery drain when a big freeze sets in. This includes using the vehicle's preheating function, also known as preconditioning, that heat the vehicle's battery and cabin as required. Not only does this ensure the vehicle will be warm inside when the driver is ready to set-off, the program efficiently manages the heat once it hits a preferred temperature. This means that only the necessary amount of energy is used to warm the car and to regulate the temperature whilst on the road, again minimising battery drainage. Making sure the vehicle is plugged-in whilst preheating is vital though, so that the battery isn't being drained by the process.

As with traditional fuel vehicles, tyre inflation is also important to a keep check on when EV winter driving. Due to the temperature dropping during winter, tyres will begin to contract as the air pressure falls, negatively impacting battery drain. Regularly inflating tyres will avoid this and help to maximise road grip at all times.

Alison Bell continues, *"Whatever powertrain vehicle you are driving this winter, it is important to prepare your vehicle, so it functions efficiently in adverse driving conditions. Not only does it reduce wear and tear, but it also helps mitigate against the chances of having an accident due to driving a poorly maintained vehicle."*

Venson's top tips to ensure electric vehicles run at their best this winter

Use the vehicle's precondition function. This allows the driver to heat or cool the battery and cabin as needed, allowing the stored energy in the battery to be used as its main purpose, to power the vehicle. By making sure the car is plugged in while preconditioning means you are not draining the battery.

Be Battery Kind. Batteries like consistency, so, when possible, avoid running your battery super low. Aim to stay between 20 and 80 percent charged whenever you can to maximise battery efficiency and longevity.

Regenerative Braking. When the battery is very cold using the regenerative braking system will be less effective. Therefore, turn it off when driving in icy and/or snowy conditions and rely on the vehicle's friction brakes until the battery warms up.

Use the Eco Mode. Eco Mode generally reduces the amount of power supplied to the drive motor and features, like the cabin heater. Used in the winter, it can reduce the power to the motor, so the car accelerates more slowly – not a bad thing as it reduces the possibility of wheel spin.

Avoid freezing 'fuel cap'. In extreme cold weather leave the vehicle plugged in overnight to avoid a frozen fuel cap should you need to charge the vehicle in the morning. Also be prepared, refer to the manufacturer's guidance for how to release the fuel cap manually.

Properly inflated tyres. As the temperature drops, tyre pressure falls and under-inflated tyres create more road friction, which impacts on the vehicle's efficiency. Drivers need to check tyre pressure and general tyre health regularly as properly inflated and safe tyres are an easy way to help maximise winter range.

For more information visit: www.venson.com



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THE FLEET INTERVIEW

with James Gunning, Workshop & Transport Services Manager - Rossendale Borough Council



Situated in the extreme South-East of Lancashire, Rossendale sits across a large part of the Irwell Valley, with much of the population of around seventy-one thousand living in the towns of Haslingden, Rawtenstall, Bacup and Whitworth. Along with the urban population, there are a number of more remote communities and some challenging terrain, so managing the vehicle fleet that provides essential services throughout the borough is therefore a demanding role. These demands are being met by a team led by James Gunning, Workshop & Transport Services Manager and Essential Fleet Manager spoke with James about how this is being achieved, along with how he is applying an innovative fuel solution to help reduce emissions.

Q: Could you describe and break down your fleet assets prior to October 2021?

Before October 2021, the fleet at Rossendale Borough Council consisted of 51 fossil fuelled vehicles.

- 15 Refuse collection vehicles
- 9 Chassis cab pick ups
- 6 Panel vans
- 1 Luton Van

- 1 Caged Tipper
- 1 Hook lift skip wagon
- 2 Mini Diggers
- 3 Tractors
- 5 Ride on mowers
- 2 Compact sweepers
- 1 Truck mounted sweeper
- 1 JCB Waste master
- 1 Pool car
- 2 4x4 pick ups
- 1 Mayoral car

Since then, we have installed an EV charging station at our office and replaced the Mayor's car with a fully electric vehicle and we are also awaiting the delivery of a new fully electric Pool car.

We have also replaced a substantial proportion of our fleet with the latest euro 6 stage engine vehicles reducing the Council's carbon footprint even further.

Q: What are the main vehicle tasks throughout the borough?

Being a single tier council our main service provision within the Rossendale Valley is to remove the waste for private and commercial properties. We deal with fly tipping and keep the cobbled paths and streets clear of debris. In addition we provide a service for our Green Flag awarded parks and open spaces, ensuring play areas are safe and clean with neatly cut fields and football pitches, along with organizing and carrying out burials within our borough.

Q: Are there any particular challenges that need to be met derived from the area that your fleet serves?

We are in the heart of Lancashire and surrounded by hills and valleys. Our heritage of being a mill town is shown in narrow streets with obscure angles, sloping paths and quaint little snickets.

The topography of the land ranges from rows of terraced houses in small market towns to rural outposts. This in turn limits us to the use of certain size Refuse collection vehicles.

When we explored the range of electric Refuse collection vehicle options, we found that the manufacturer only built a rear steering version. This is a problem for us as we still have to use landfill to dispose of our non-recyclable waste and we know the site will not allow rear steering vehicles to enter.

Finding an alternative to the currently available electric options was therefore essential.

Q: Which options did you explore before you decided the direction of your decarbonisation plans?

Upon starting our journey towards decarbonisation we explored various routes which all presented different obstacles.

Electric RCV: Only one manufacturer was able to supply the size of vehicle we needed to navigate the streets of the valley, and at £450,000 per vehicle, the cost was quite high. Additionally, the vehicles were only available with rear steering in electric form, meaning the we could not enter the landfill facilities we use.

Electric Vans: The vans we explored were not able to tow the weight needed to transport our mowing and agricultural equipment. The payloads were also

insufficient for our needs.

Electric Sweepers: The technology did not seem suitable and the cost was around £400,000.

Hydrogen: At the time the technology was just being developed and didn't meet our requirements, as with electric, the costs were high.

Solar: This option was also investigated, it was found that this would give us a 5% saving on fuel by way of reducing the amount of electrical draw from the alternator.

HVO: This is an option that I had extensively researched for approx. 12 months. I started by approaching contacts in the industry to gain knowledge from both sides of the field. I worked closely with our local supplier and vehicle manufactures to ensure that HVO would be a viable and cost-effective alternative to reduce our carbon emissions.

Whilst technology improves, and electric vehicles become more affordable, the use of HVO is helping Rossendale

Borough Council to reduce its carbon footprint by 90%, therefore helping to meet the target of being carbon neutral for 2030. It also means we can continue to explore different alternatives to fossil fuel.

Q: What were the issues associated with first generation Biodiesel?

Back in the late 1990s and early 2000s Biodiesel was just making an appearance and claiming to be the super fuel of the future, my personal experience of this is that 'not all that glitters is gold'.

The fuel's chemical makeup contains fatty acids and oils which freeze in cold temperatures. For us, this would result in a reduction in the services we could provide, out-of-hours call outs, missed deadlines and overall disruption within the fleet.

The fuel also clogs up fuel systems and fuel filters resulting in extra costs and increased servicing of the vehicles.

...cont'd on page 16



Pictured: James Gunning, Workshop & Transport Services Manager - Rossendale Borough Council

...cont'd from page 15

Q: How did you trial the feasibility of HVO in practical terms and then justify the extra fuel costs?

The decision to move the whole fleet to HVO was taken after the costs had been calculated and offset against the cost of purchasing electric vehicles.

We calculated that an overspend of £160,000 would be needed to fuel the fleet with HVO for the coming year.

The information gathered was put in a report to the councillors and the directors. The report showed how, for the extra fuel cost, Rossendale Borough Council would be able to decarbonise its whole fleet, reducing carbon emissions by 90% overall. Crucially this extra cost equated to replacing just one diesel RCV with one electric RCV. It would therefore be a quick win for both cost and reducing emissions. This was received and implemented in the new budget year of 2022.

Q: In what stages did you introduce HVO to your vehicle fleet?

After exploring the options available and settling on the direction in which we were going, I contacted the local supplier who I had worked with closely, (Crown Oil in Bury), and organised a separate fuel tank to conduct the trial.

Phase one of the trial started with four frontline Dennis Eagle Refuse Collection Vehicles that were less than six months old. This first phase was scheduled to run for 12 weeks. However, after only eight weeks it was determined that things were going extremely well, having experienced no problems. Therefore, we started to implement phase two with a range of different vehicles, this next trial was set to last for four weeks.

Phase three saw the introduction to the remaining parts of our fleet.

As of March 2022, HVO has been fuelling our whole fleet.

Q: Now that HVO is fuelling your entire fleet, what are the practical benefits?

After monitoring many factors relating to our use of HVO over the last 12 months, I have gained valuable insights. I measured MPG, reliability, servicing costs as well as environmental impact. In summary, the data showed no extra serving costs and the reliability of the vehicles had not been affected. There had also been no impact on MPG figures, the usage of Ad Blue had

slightly but not measurable decreased. The cost per litre had increased creating an overspend, but this had been accounted for prior to beginning the trial.

The real positive outcome from the use of HVO fuel is the fact we had previously produced approx. 600 cubic tonnes of greenhouse gasses throughout the fleet and this is now approx. 60 cubic tonnes, moving us firmly towards our goal of achieving zero emissions.

Q: There are slightly varied claims about how much CO2 is saved by using HVO; what is your demonstrated experience?

In my research into the positive gains from using HVO, the scientific data provided by the organisations supplying HVO were key in my decision to move over. Field trials carried out show that HVO produces 33% fewer particles compared to fossil fuels and that Hydrocarbons are down by 30%, carbon monoxide is cut by 24% and Nitrogen oxide (NOx) is reduced by 9%. This is the data I have used to calculate my reduction in emissions using HVO.

Q: How important has it been to remain engaged with both fuel suppliers and with vehicle manufacturers during the process and as you move on?

It is extremely important to keep up to date with fuel suppliers. When we first started trialling HVO there were only a few major suppliers but as time has progressed, there is now a network of five or six suppliers who are able to compete. This enables us to get the best prices and means extra savings for the Council.

It is also important that we work hand-in-hand with the vehicle manufacturers to keep abreast of technology and advancements in alternative fuels.

With the increased use of HVO it is good to share experiences and future advancements in this ever-changing field. As we update the fleet, it is vital that each vehicle or piece of plant is HVO compatible, able to meet our needs, and allows us to continue the journey to decarbonisation.

Q: How is your experience benefitting other Local Authority fleets?

I have been approached by some of the local councils and councillors over the last 12 months asking for help in their own

journey to become carbon neutral. I have worked closely with the fleet managers and have been able to provide first hand experiences in the transition and share my preconceptions in the initial stages.

Whilst working together with our local councils, I have been able to form strong networks and extend partnerships. By sharing knowledge with like-minded people, for me, has the added bonus of being both exciting and uplifting. In this process I have helped other fleet engineers and councils to become cleaner and although it is not 100% carbon free, I have demonstrated it is a quick and affordable win.

Q: Does the relatively limited capacity to manufacture HVO mean that it will remain an option only for those fleets with on-site fuel storage facilities? What is the future for HVO alongside the rapid development of BEVs and Hydrogen Fuel Cell vehicles.?

HVO is getting increasingly popular in the UK so the demand is increasing. In terms of supply it is just as good as obtaining fossil fuels, although this certainly wasn't the case when we started using it 2021, as it was limited to two suppliers at best. We have been lucky to have one of the main suppliers of HVO in the UK on our doorstep. With the help of their expert team we have been able to make the transition with ease.

The main supplier of HVO is a company based in Finland called Neste and they ship across millions of litres per annum and while it is not available at the conventional pump, the need for onsite storage is the only option for now.

Technology is improving all the time and so are the advancements in Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) and Fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEVs) as more companies are getting involved with their development. Our main problem still lies with the disposal of waste at landfill, so the current technology is not a realistic option, for the reasons mentioned previously. This, combined with the cost of purchasing the vehicles is just not realistic. I feel there will be a need for HVO for a while yet and certainly until the cost of alternative fuelled vehicles decreases and the technology advances to meet the needs of our fleet.



HVO explained

Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) is a premium, high quality diesel fuel made from renewable, sustainable raw materials that reduces up to 90% of net CO2 and significantly reduces nitrogen oxide, particulate matter and carbon monoxide emissions.

HVO is part of the paraffinic family of fuels which are stable, renewable, sustainable and high quality, making it perfectly suited for a wide range of applications including vehicles, generators and industrial power systems.

HVO meets EN 15940 standards and Fuel Quality Directive 2009/30/EC Annex II and has a wide range of OEM approvals, so it can be used as a direct, drop-in alternative to mineral diesel without modifications to infrastructure or high initial investments, removing cost barriers and enabling a practical step towards decarbonisation.

All raw materials are checked and verified, and the fuel's credentials audited by the Department for Transport (DFT) to ensure both sustainability and product integrity are certified.

HVO meets bio content requirements with no FAME included and, to that point, avoids the instability and operability issues seen by many low blend diesel fuels and high blend biofuels.

We became the first UK fuel supplier to switch our entire fleet to HVO in June 2021. Since moving to this fully renewable fuel, we are reducing our carbon footprint by approx. 3000 tons CO2e every year.



Looking for a 100% renewable diesel alternative?

Improve your corporate social responsibility and reduce your environmental impact with Crown HVO



Up to 10-year storage lifespan



Cuts net GHG emissions by up to 90%



Meets EN 15940:2016 and ASTM D975 specifications



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Endorsed by a wide range of OEMs



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For further information visit:
www.crownoil.co.uk/faq/hvo-fuel-faq/

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Bincredible Hulk

Ed Sheerbin & bin lorry 'friends' hit the streets in Suffolk

Ed Sheerbin, Gary Bineker and Binnie the Pooh are just some of the new bin lorries making an impact in Suffolk thanks to residents' creative name suggestions and a vehicle wrapping company

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, and their waste provider Serco, ran a competition last year asking residents to submit names for a new fleet of Twenty Two environmentally friendly refuse vehicles.

The 'family' of vehicles have been wrapped in unique designs created by the councils' in-house designer and installed by refuse vehicle wrapping specialists Creative Vehicle Wrapping (CVW).

Each vehicle side carries a different image conveying important waste messages. These include:

- ways residents can help prevent littering and fly tipping
- tips on what can go in recycling bins
- raising awareness of the lorries' used cooking oil fuel (certified sustainable Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO)), which is helping to cut the fleet's carbon emissions by up to 90%, as well as reducing other pollutants

Additionally, all the lorries' designs include individual names above their doors – Ed Sheerbin, Gary Bineker and Binnie the Pooh among them – after the councils' ran a competition to submit names for their new fleet.

Launched to mark their £2m investment

and biggest upgrade to their 35-vehicle waste fleet in almost 10 years, the competition saw over 400 individual name suggestions submitted to the councils by local residents of all ages.

Twenty Two winning names were then chosen by the crews and councils' waste team, with winners invited to see the new lorries in action up close and meet crew members later this year.

Cllr Elisabeth Malvisi and Cllr Jessica Fleming, cabinet members for environment at Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council respectively, said:

"We were absolutely bowled over by the response to our competition from residents of all ages who've showcased their wordplay skills.

"We know that many in our communities anticipate the arrival of our bin crews. They carry out over 100,000 collections every week, and we hope that the new lorries' names and colourful designs will provide some light fun for everyone.

"Collecting your bin is one of our most visible jobs. And, as you'd expect, having a modern and reliable fleet is essential. The lorries are also playing a key role in reducing our carbon emissions after we became the first rural councils in the UK to use HVO fuel last year."

Oliver Faiers, corporate manager for

recycling, waste, and fleet at Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, said:

"Creative Vehicle Wrapping have been excellent. They understood exactly what we wanted to achieve and have gone above and beyond to help us make an impact while collecting people's bins.

"Our new bin lorries look amazing, and really have been brought to life with the high-quality wraps – all despite a tight turnaround, and the added complexity of varying designs for each vehicle."

Jonathan Thomas, Director at CVW, said:

"These vehicles are a perfect example of how refuse vehicles can be used to engage with people and communicate important messages. Research shows 80% of people take notice of vehicle wraps and, most importantly, remember what they saw. The vehicles will attract a lot of attention and help the councils promote key waste messages."

CVW is an accredited Avery Dennison approved installer, and the team are experts in commercial and specialist vehicle wrapping, providing a one-stop shop for design consultancy, installation, and aftercare. The company has its own fully equipped installation unit and has built a reputation for creating impactful 'wrap' campaigns on refuse vehicles and specialist commercial vehicles.

The winning names were:

1. Ed Sheerbin
2. Gary Bineker
3. Stranger Bins
4. Chitty Chitty Bin Bin
5. The Binbetweeners
6. Strictly Come Binning
7. Binderella
8. Trashosaurus
9. Mission Binpossible
10. The Binner Takes It All
11. Lord of the Bins
12. Beauty and the Bin
13. Waste warriors
14. Bin here, there, everywhere
15. Binnie the Pooh
16. Bincredible Hulk
17. The Adventures of Binbin
18. Binin' in the Rain
19. Bindiana Jones
20. To Binfinity and Beyond
21. Mary Popbins
22. Gone with the Bin



The Binbetweeners



Ed Sheerbin



For more information about CVW visit www.creativevehiclewrapping.co.uk

Supplier Insight: CheckedSafe

Vehicle compliance for all fleets

As a fleet or transport manager you have a requirement both legally and financially to ensure that you are operating a safe, efficient and compliant fleet. Although operating a pure LCV fleet does not require an operators licence, the same principles should be applied to your vans to ensure you are meeting your duty of care requirements. Ensuring your vehicles are compliant and importantly 'safe to drive' is essential.

Within the Public Sector, Housing and Utilities sector many van fleets are managed remotely, as drivers may not return to base overnight. Micro-managing these vehicles is almost impossible for a fleet or transport manager, so there is a heavy reliance on drivers to make sure their vehicles are properly checked before use each day.

A real innovator in the area of vehicle compliance software is the award winning CheckedSafe, founded in 2014 by Gary Hawthorne and business partner Darran Harris.

As a company they have developed products that provide assistance to fleet operators not only to help with operator licence compliance but that make the management of remote van fleets safer, more efficient and easier.

To find out more, Essential Fleet Manager spoke with Gary Hawthorne, Director and Co-Founder on how the CheckedSafe APP works and how, with ease, drivers can safely and comprehensively carry out pre-vehicle usage checks.

Gary, with his background in the transport industry, developed the product after identifying issues with other applications. With his business partner Darran a litigation solicitor, he focused heavily on developing a fit for purpose APP that not only helped with compliance but was also specifically designed for the effective management of work-related road safety.

Q: Above, we mentioned how the need for remote management of van fleets that do not return to base over night can be problematic, how can the CheckedSafe App assist with this?

CheckedSafe replaces the paper-based daily vehicle check by allowing drivers to complete a daily vehicle check via an App on their smart phone. The App is compatible with both Android and Apple devices and it improves the overall efficiency of the check process. Therefore, no matter where the vehicle or driver is located the APP gives the driver remote functionality.

Q: You mentioned the App works on most mobile devices, how about connectivity?

With vehicle checks being a vital part of any operation, ensuring

reliability is key for CheckedSafe, we use Amazon servers, with eight back ups via AWS.

The system has also been designed so that it will still function offline, not just in case of server problems, but because we know that sometimes drivers will not have internet access. Drivers can still do their checks, and the APP will synchronise as soon as internet access becomes available.

Q: Although all drivers should take the pre-use check very seriously, is the system open to abuse, could the driver for example just carry out a tick box exercise whilst using the APP without actually walking around the vehicle?

The system monitors the driver's behaviour and location to make sure that checks are being carried out, with minimum times for each check.

The APP also tracks the movement of the phone or tablet being used around the vehicle to ensure the driver doesn't just tick the boxes away from the vehicle - this minimises the chances of a false check being submitted.

This is one of the unique benefits of our system.

Q: How easy is the CheckedSafe APP to use, do drivers or operatives need to be 'tech savvy' to be able to use it?

The app is very user-friendly, with all checks separated into clear categories.

Pre-built templates within the APP can be tailored to meet individual requirements and we will always go to visit a company implementing our system to make sure we offer training and assistance where required.

Drivers can also take photos or make voice recordings to help submit information.

For operators large and small, compliance should never be a chore but is often seen as an administrative burden. A system such as CheckedSafe helps reduce that burden as it is extremely easy to use and streamlines the checking and follow up processes.

Q: How does the fleet or transport manager access the information provided by the driver via the APP?

Once a driver has submitted their check results, they are sent in real time via email and are viewable on the CheckedSafe Workforce Management (CWM) suite. The fleet or transport manager can then access the information and interpret the data - any issues with the vehicle that need attention can then be scheduled for maintenance if required.

Making this process digital ensures any defects are found and

the driver can get a quick determination from the office or depot as to whether the vehicle is safe to use on the road or not.

Q: How can the data sent from the APP be interpreted to help with vehicle fleet management?

Comprehensive reporting allows the fleet or transport manager to view details relating to checks and their outcomes, including historical checks.

The system provides full visibility as to the status of each vehicle, its servicing and maintenance requirements and provides an end-to-end compliance audit trail.

The data provided by the system should be interpreted and acted upon. Identifying minor defects early, can save the need for more serious and costly repairs at a later date.

All reports can be viewed online or downloaded for further analysis meaning our system simplifies and digitises fleet management.

Q: Another problem all drivers may face is ‘on-the-road’ incident that may involve damage to a vehicle, how does the CheckedSafe App assist with this?

Within the APP we include what we call a ‘bump card’ which gives prompts on what information to collect in the event of an accident. The back office can then see that data in seconds, as the driver can submit a report straight away.

The first hour is known as the ‘golden hour’ for insurers and CheckedSafe can help drivers record details while they’re still fresh. This sweet spot for information can dramatically reduce the cost of any 3rd party claim.

We did a study with a HGV operator in Manchester and found it had significantly reduced payouts on claims as a result.

We’re starting to see the insurance companies take note now and we are partners with the likes of QBE and RSA to name but two.

Q: How does the CheckedSafe system help with legal compliance?

The CheckedSafe system offers organisations a complete solution, enabling them to manage and protect their workforce and comply with legal compliance requirements, whilst reducing cost and liability. CheckedSafe can provide organisations with a fully integrated solution - so you can be completely paperless. By using our system properly you will have a legally defensible product.

Q: We have covered how CheckedSafe assists van fleets and many of those features will be applied when managing compliance in larger fleets subject to requirements under the O licence. How does the CheckedSafe system help with gaining DVSA Earned Recognition status or any other valuable accreditations?

The DVSA recognise operators who show high standards of compliance. Our system is fully DVSA-compliant, allowing your drivers to prove their vehicle’s compliance at the touch of a button.

Operators can use our system to compile and submit vehicle compliance reports directly to the DVSA with ease, and by submitting regular reports, vehicles will be less likely to be pulled over for roadside inspections.

CheckedSafe features include:

- Unlimited daily checks with all of the various controls that we have. We can also update the checks to give you Covid-19 checks for such things as sanitising vehicles etc.
- Bespoke templates for any piece of kit including plant equipment.
- Full maintenance solution. This allows scheduling your PMI’s. Brake Roller Tests, LOLER check etc. The system provides the ability to either do the check digitally or if you prefer use manual PMI sheets and upload them to our system and we will digitise them so you can be totally paperless.
- Unlimited document storage either for vehicles/assets or users.
- Unlimited users.
- Full message service (back office to App users- useful for things like briefings and toolbox talks etc). This has proved very popular during the lock-down period as it allows you to communicate with all of your staff.
- Documents-to-App service whereby the customer can push documents to the user via the App. Useful for certifications, dig-tickets, access documents. Covid-19 briefings etc
- Reminder service for things like servicing, maintenance, MOT’s Insurance etc. This will provide a weekly-to-do list to allow you to keep on top of the whole compliance provisions for the business.
- Trend reports to show things like :
 - Most common defect.
 - Drivers not reporting defects.
 - Drivers with repeat defects for the same issues.
 - Time taken from defect being reported to repair/rectification etc.
- Full cloud based solution so you can operate the system from anywhere as long as you have an internet connection.
- We are a full accredited and validated DVSA IT ER Systems Provider.
- We are endorsed by the Fork Lift Truck Association and Border Force Agency.
- All our software belongs to us and we do not need to licence parts of it from others.

Eight years ago, CheckedSafe was an idea, that today, has flourished into a fully successful business. Gary and Darran are passionate about what they do and provide a skill set that boasts professionalism and expertise.

*If you would like to find out any further information, please visit: www.checkedsafe.com
 T: 01282 908429 | info@checkedsafe.com*



Overloading: Understanding your van's limits

It is an offence to exceed a vehicle's maximum permissible weight limit by overloading. The impact of doing so not only carries penalties for you as the fleet or transport manager, but also for the driver responsible for the vehicle. Both yourself and the driver could be cautioned, incur penalty points or be prosecuted for an overloaded vehicle. In serious cases, a prosecution could be brought for Dangerous Driving under the Road Traffic Act 1988.

Overloading is not only seriously risky, it puts additional stress on the vehicle's tyres and suspension components, and this combined, creates a vehicle that is exponentially more dangerous than a

responsibly loaded vehicle.

If your organisation operates with a fleet solely consisting of Light Commercial Vehicles (LCVs) not above 3.5 tonnes, you will be exempt from certain legal requirements such as the need to install and use tachographs or to possess an operator's licence to carry goods as part of your business, but your van fleet is still subject to other important rules that must be complied with.

Your van fleet must be roadworthy, operate within permissible weights and speeds as well as be driven by properly licensed drivers, complying with drivers hours and working time rules at all times.

It is your responsibility as the fleet or

transport manager to enforce policies that prevent vehicle overloading and conduct regular risk assessments. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1999 states that, *'all companies have a duty of care to ensure the safety of their employees while at work.'*

Many fleet or transport managers are also unaware that if any of your vehicles are involved in a collision on the road and they are found to be overloaded, your insurance will be void. This means that by overloading, you could be operating a commercial vehicle without insurance – a legal requirement for all vehicles, this could also leave your organisation with very high repair costs.

It is vital that both yourself and your

drivers understand the weight limits of each vehicle operating within your fleet. The manufacturer's plate which will clearly state these limits including both laden and unladen can usually be found inside the engine bay, doors or windscreen. The plate also lists the VIN and other important vehicle information.

Ensuring drivers are legally permitted to drive the type of vehicle they are required to within your fleet, is vitally important. Weight limits of commercial vehicles will vary depending on the kind of vehicle and so will their licence requirements. In general terms, a driver with a standard UK Driving Licence can drive a van up to 3,500kg.

The key terms a fleet or transport manager as well as a driver needs to be aware of are explained below:

Unladen weight

The unladen weight of any vehicle is the weight of the vehicle when it's not carrying any passengers, goods or other items.

It includes the body and all parts normally used with the vehicle or trailer when it's used on a road.

It doesn't include the weight of:

- fuel
- batteries in an electric vehicle

Maximum authorised mass

Maximum authorised mass (MAM) means the weight of a vehicle or trailer including the maximum load that can be carried safely when it's being used on the road. This is also known as gross vehicle weight (GVW) or permissible maximum weight. The manufacturer's plate or sticker may also show a gross train weight (GTW), also sometimes called gross combination weight (GCW). This is the total weight of the tractor unit plus trailer plus load.

How loading weight and capacity differs in Electric Vans

In general terms the added weight of a battery isn't really an issue for smaller vans. But an unladen electric van will weight more than its petrol or diesel equivalent due to the weight of the batteries. This means that an electric van's maximum payload is also generally less.

Adding extra weight to any van either electric or diesel will negatively effect its fuel consumption and with an electric van this impacts the range, as you are

using more power to move the vehicle.

Further Legislation relating to overloading

Two regulations that also enforce the idea that drivers are responsible for the safety of their vehicles and loads as well as any danger they may pose to themselves and other drivers are:

- **The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986** require drivers to ensure that *'all parts and accessories and the weight distribution, packing and adjustment of their loads shall be such that no danger is likely to be caused to any person in or on the vehicle or trailer on the road.'*
- **The Road Traffic Act 1988** states that *'vehicle users must ensure that vehicles are not overloaded'*

In summary as a fleet or transport manager with any size van fleet, you must look at overloading as a serious issue and put checks in place to ensure it doesn't impact your organisation.

Staying compliant is key to making sure your drivers as well as the wider public, stay safe out on the road.

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Safe loading

By: Mark Cartwright, Head of Commercial Vehicle Incident Prevention at National Highways

Insecure loads are an immediate threat to the road-using public, the driver and the vehicle. Yet very often drivers are left to handle load safety without adequate equipment, instruction or oversight.

The dangers of insecure loads are substantial. Items literally fly off vehicles on the strategic road network. In 2022, there were over 62,000 items left on England arterial routes, including several sheds, mattresses, ratchet straps and loads of timber. As amusing as the idea of a sofa rolling down the motorway seems, it isn't nearly as funny if it's suddenly in the path of your vehicle.

The Strategic Road Network (SRN) also sees a large number of spillages from liquid loads, which are not only a hazard for oncoming traffic but can also be very damaging to public health, infrastructure and the environment.

Obstruction is one of the top three reasons for delays on the SRN. Whether solid or liquid these deposited loads cause great risk to other road users, disruption to the road network as lanes or carriageways are closed for clearance, and as such carry a hefty bill to the public purse, and in terms of lost productivity for UK services and industry.

Any items carried by or attached to a vehicle is effectively part of its load, whether that is a lunchbox in the cab or machinery. Ropes, chains, straps, tools and other ancillary equipment must all be tightly secured for transport, so that they don't cause a hazard to the public or compromise the driver's vision or well-being as the vehicle moves. Even a piece of rope becomes a lethal weapon if it whips out at 30mph.

Equally personal items or tools should not be unrestrained in the cab. In an emergency stop or collision, they can strike the driver or passengers, or go through the windscreen. Items rolling about the cab can prove a fatal distraction to a driver, whose attention must be on the road.

Fleet operators and drivers both have a responsibility under regulation 100 of the Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986 to make sure that loads are properly secured. The wording is deliberately general to cover the huge array of goods which may be transported by road, saying that no item should be able to fall or be blown off. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has extensive guidance on safe loading.

Fleets beware

The penalties for insecure loads can be high. Drivers can receive three penalty points, but if referred to court then the potential fine is unlimited. Police and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) traffic officers can also apply a prohibition to a vehicle which means that the driver has 60 minutes to make the load safe, or he will not be allowed to continue on his journey.

If a fleet vehicle with an unsafe load causes injury or death in a collision, the fleet operator is likely to be investigated and potentially held responsible as well as the driver.

Fleet drivers and managers should be aware that enforcement agencies and authorities – including the police, the DVSA, Traffic Commissioners, HSE and National Highways itself – consider improper load restraint a priority road offence in its own right. Insecure loads have such a great potential for causing and/or exacerbating road traffic collisions that enforcement activities frequently target load security.

National Highways' Operation Tramline HGV units are continuously on loan to police forces around the country and in the past four years, these vehicles have apprehended 1,000 drivers with insecure loads.

As compliance with safe loading regulations is a crucial fleet responsibility, any vehicle stopped with an insecure or unsafe load is also very likely to be checked for other potential offences.

What constitutes safe and secure loading?

- Freight loads must be correctly manifested: if the documentation doesn't say exactly what's inside, emergency services will not be able to make informed decisions in the event of a safety incident
- The vehicle must not be overloaded – this will seriously affect the way the vehicle handles and makes over-turning and jack-knifing much more likely
- Loads should be evenly spread over the axles: follow the manufacturer's guidance for specific axle weights. Too much weight concentrated at the front or rear of the vehicle will alter its centre of gravity and make it unstable.
- Loads must be properly secured and restrained from moving forwards, backwards or sideways. Whether it is a toolbox, or 15 tonnes of pallets, the principle is the same. It must be secured so that in the event of a sudden change in speed or direction, it doesn't move.
- Avoid overhanging loads, particularly for pipes, scaffolding or specialist equipment. There are specific rules covering this.
- Be aware of any specific instructions or regulations regarding potentially hazardous items, including if they are in a mixed load or limited quantity.
- All restraint systems such as sheets, ropes, straps, buckles, chains or curtains must be in good order and free from defects. These should form part of the drivers' daily checks.

Force of nature

The force of moving objects is many times greater than their force when stationary. This means that a restraint which is adequate for something standing still will not necessarily be adequate once the vehicle is moving. Objects in a vehicle naturally continue moving at the same speed unless restrained, even when the vehicle brakes. This includes human occupants and is one good reason why anyone in a vehicle should wear a seat belt.

It is a mistake to assume that the weight of an object will be sufficient to keep it in position.

What constitutes safe and secure loading varies according to the vehicle and the application. Some sectors have very specific guidance they must follow – such as the ADR or chemicals transport industry.

Every type of load will have its own appropriate and safe method of securing it, which is usually encoded in sectoral best practice guidance.

Know your vehicle

Safe loading isn't only important for road safety – although that should be a priority – but also to prevent damage to the vehicles and loads. Load liners will last longer if the items are stowed correctly. Any division between 'clean' and 'used' equipment, for example in the health and care industry, is often ensured with hygiene liners and movable bulkheads. These are easily damaged by loose loads.

Curtainsided vehicles also require specific care when loading and unloading. Although some curtains (commonly known as EN XL) have a higher restraint rating, (which must be matched

by the trailer body) internal restraints should always

be used – curtains alone cannot hold heavy loads. They should be loaded as though they were flatbeds.

All fleet drivers should be properly trained in the safe operation of load restraint systems. This is often overlooked as it may seem relatively simple compared to the operation of an HGV, or whichever professional role the driver is qualified for. However, the Association of Pallet Networks says that, in 2022, 26% of all safety incidents at its Hub sites were caused by the improper use of curtains, nets and straps. This is because load restraint systems necessarily work under tension. That tension needs to be released with the proper care, as buckles, straps and poles can be a serious hazard for the person operating them.

Get it right

New vehicles should be specified to be fit for purpose – and that means ensuring that they can safely and securely carry whatever will be necessary to their role.

Fleet managers should regularly review the type and weight of equipment typically carried by fleet vehicles and provide adequate bulkheads, racking, secure compartments or load restraint mechanisms.

Detailing the use and proper storage of commonly carried items helps drivers to quickly locate, and safely replace, equipment.

It is good practice to occasionally audit vehicles, with on-the-spot inspections, to ensure that drivers are not unnecessarily carrying items which they may use only occasionally. Not only can this cause a weight challenge for the vehicle's payload, but it also wastes fuel.

Sometimes operators fall foul of the law by trying to bypass the problems of load restraint. For instance, plant hire companies can carry exceeded quantities of fuel in bowsers, but these must be fully detachable from the vehicle. Some have chosen to weld them in place, effectively making it a tank vehicle, rather than use a correct load restraint system.

Checklist for fleet drivers

1. Do I need it? If you carry equipment, then take only what you need.
2. Is it safely stowed? Some equipment, like fire extinguishers, must be easily accessible. That doesn't mean they should be rolling underfoot. Stow it or strap it down.
3. Do I know the total weight of the load and does it correspond to the gross vehicle weight of my vehicle?
4. Do I know the axle weights permissible on the vehicle, and has it been loaded for maximum stability?
5. Have I ensured that sufficient internal load restraints have been used to ensure that if I open doors or curtains, nothing can fall out? If I brake hard, can anything fly forwards?
6. Do I have sufficient training in unloading and reloading, or in redistributing the load as necessary? Have I been trained in using all the straps, nets, curtains, or other internal load restraints?
7. Do I have all the necessary certifications for my vehicle and the load it carries?

For more information and useful advice visit <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/>



Question: What is the difference in legal maintenance standards required of a business pulling its own trailers compared to when it is drawing those belonging to third parties?

Answer: There is none.

By: Tim Ridyard, Partner Transport and Regulatory, Ashtons Legal.

This issue has been flagged in the most recent Traffic Commissioner Annual Report 2021/2022. It is a topic that is being given significant prominence - operators need to be aware of the standards expected, as well as policies to be put in place.

The report notes:

"In several high-profile cases this year it has been suggested that some trailer suppliers (including those based offshore) are avoiding responsibilities to ensure safe operation of trailers on GB roads. The lack of adequate arrangements regarding regular and frequent brake testing has been a prominent failing. The potential impact on British roads is significant and the traffic commissioners have felt the need to issue several warnings regarding this to companies involved in this type of third-party trailer operation."

As a matter of law, the user of the vehicle (the operator) and the driver are responsible for the condition of the goods vehicle on a public road – that includes any trailer drawn by it, whether it is being used temporarily by the operator or not. Any proceedings for related offences will be taken against the operator/driver, just as actions taken by DVSA e.g. prohibitions, will be recorded against the operator's licence, regardless of ownership or length of time a trailer is in possession. The Report highlights this:

"For the avoidance of doubt, operators providing traction-only services to third-party trailers are responsible in law for

the condition of that trailer when in use. Transport managers are also required by law to manage the transport operation continuously and effectively. The operator's licence requires "satisfactory facilities and arrangements for maintaining the vehicles used under the licence in a fit and serviceable condition". In that context, "vehicles" includes any trailer (including those from abroad) being drawn."

Whilst this refers to operators whose businesses might simply be that of providing traction, it applies to all operators using trailers that do not belong and which may, say, have been hired in for short-term or temporary use.

Traffic Commissioners will wish to see evidence of operators having in place formal policies and statements, confirming the respective positions of, and the relationship between, operators and trailers owners. If not already in place, this needs actioning. For an operator, such a statement and policy would contain the following:

- confirmation that the operator and driver understand that they have full legal responsibility for any trailer drawn by its vehicle
- a declaration that the operator is satisfied with the arrangements in place for trailers being kept fit and serviceable
- confirmation that drivers have received dedicated walk-around check training for trailers, to include MOT expiry checks, as

well as safety inspection check and brake testing within the date stated; and that if not MOT'd or outside those dates, the trailer will not be used

- ability under the arrangements to decline a trailer that has a safety defect
- confirmation that documentation setting out the above will be carried within the vehicle.

A trailer owner does not have its own operator's licence (unless it is operating goods vehicles in its own right) and hence is not under the jurisdiction of the regulator, i.e. the Traffic Commissioner. Nevertheless, the Traffic Commissioner believes that there should be a statement of its responsibilities, confirming by the following:

- assessment of the trailer inspection frequency and confirmation of the service interval
- confirmation arrangements are in place to maintain trailers in a fit and serviceable condition
- arrangements to display information on trailer headboard or by chassis Ministry plate: MOT expiry date, dates of last PMI, date of last roller brake test, defect report contact details
- confirmation of no commercial impact or consequence where an operator refuses to operate a trailer because there is a safety defect.

Ashtons Legal advice and representation

If you require any advice with regard to Goods and Passenger Operator Licencing, including advice concerning DVSA Investigations, correspondence with the Office of The Traffic Commissioner or Traffic Commissioner Preliminary Hearing/Public Inquiry work, then please get in touch.



Contact: Tim Ridyard, Partner Transport and Regulatory T: 01284 732111 E: Tim.Ridyard@ashtonslegal.co.uk



CTS Hire electric refuse vehicle at South Tyneside Council depot

South Tyneside first to hire electric bin lorry

South Tyneside Council has become the first local authority in the country to hire an electric refuse vehicle of this type, from CTS Hire, on a short-term arrangement.

The vehicle is a Renault Trucks E-Tech D Wide electric rear-steer chassis with the Dennis Eagle OL21 body and Terberg Xtra bin lift and is one of two identical vehicles to be supplied to CTS Hire by RH Commercial Vehicles (RHCV). The trucks are powered by 4x 66kW lithium batteries located in the wheelbase.

The council will be assessing how the vehicle performs in comparison with a conventional diesel vehicle whilst collecting waste from households and businesses across the Borough. This will include monitoring the running and maintenance costs, the impact of frequent start and stops and bin lifts on vehicle battery life and the impact of charging requirements on staff working patterns, as well as the 27t vehicle's suitability on the Borough's varied collection rounds, in different neighbourhoods, streets, and gradients.

Councillor Ernest Gibson, Lead Member for Housing and Transport, said: "Our diesel refuse collection vehicles perform a hugely demanding task.

"Every waste collection round is different and puts a different strain on vehicles and our crews, which is why it is important to give this specialist electric bin lorry a thorough test drive in real-life day to day operations"

"We're delighted to be the first local council to test this new electric refuse collection vehicle from CTS Hire and give our waste collection crews the chance to work with the latest technology."

"We're excited to see how well it works for us and will be monitoring how it performs, particularly over the winter period and in inclement weather."

"This will help us to understand the capabilities of electric refuse collection vehicles and make informed decisions about their viability for potential use in South Tyneside in the future."

The Council has a fleet of around 325 vehicles, 18 of which are electric. The fleet accounts for 11 per cent of the 17,000 tonnes of carbon emissions that the Council must cut to achieve its ambitious targets to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Councillor Gibson added: *"We have set an ambitious target for carbon emission reductions by 2030 across our council operations and introducing more electric*

vehicles to our fleet is one of the ways we are working to meet our objectives.

"These electric trucks are much quieter than their diesel counterparts and have zero CO2 emissions leading to reduced noise and air pollution, which makes them ideal for operating in busy urban areas. More sustainable alternatives are a huge step in the right direction for us to achieve our aims while continuing to deliver the front-line services on which our residents rely."

Bob Sweetland, Managing Director, CTS Hire: *"We are delighted to be able to give South Tyneside Council this unique opportunity to hire an electric refuse vehicle. We hope the trial will prove to be a success and lead to the adoption of more electric vehicles in the area to help the council achieve its carbon reduction target."*

CTS Hire is the municipal vehicle rental division of contract hire and fleet management company Specialist Fleet Services Ltd (SFS). CTS offers a wide range of high-quality, FORS, LEZ and DVS compliant vehicles, featuring the latest technological and safety enhancements, supported by a 24/7 national mobile engineer and workshop network. The fleet includes 3.5t-26t Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCV), specialist recycling vehicles, caged tippers, hook loaders and skip loaders, all available for short to long-term hire including contract hire options.

For more information about CTS Hire: Tel: 01453 511 050; email info@ctshire.co.uk; visit www.ctshire.co.uk.

Draintech Tankers pumps up its fleet by switching to Mercedes-Benz Arocs

So delighted was Hampshire-based Draintech Tankers with its first two Mercedes-Benz tankers that it returned to Marshall Truck & Van just three months later with a follow-up order for another couple.



two other manufacturers – the nearest agent for one is some 20 miles away, the second 10 miles further on.

In the face of soaring demand from customers, Director Robert Simpson resolved last year to take a fresh look at Draintech Tankers' vehicle sourcing and maintenance arrangements with a view to reducing the amount of time its trucks were spending off the road.

As Marshall Truck & Van's Andover branch is practically on the company's doorstep, the Mercedes-Benz Dealer was an obvious place to start. And having recently undergone a £1-million upgrade that included an extension to the workshop, its facility on the town's Walworth Industrial Estate made a positive first impression.

Likewise, the muscular Mercedes-Benz Arocs. "I could see immediately that it was a quality product and well suited to our work, while Marshall Truck & Van's proximity to us was also a big attraction," recalled Mr Simpson. "On this basis, I was very happy to order our first Mercedes-Benz vehicles."

Draintech Tankers specialises in emptying septic tanks, cesspits

and sewage treatment plants, for customers located across the Test Valley area of west Hampshire. It also provides a variety of associated services such as high-pressure jetting and drain unblocking, clearing grease traps and oil interceptors, repairing pumps, and installing drainage.

Acquired with funding support from Daimler Truck Financial Services, the two vehicles that entered service last autumn both have ClassicSpace M-cabs and are fitted with stainless steel vacuum tanks by VJ Engineering, of Rugby. Each is also equipped with a Juroop RV520 hydraulic drain pump, washdown jetting system, full opening rear door, and stainless steel storage trays and lockers.

One is an 8x4 Arocs 3248 with 12.8-litre in-line six-cylinder engine producing 350 kW (476 hp). This truck, which carries a 4,200-gallon tank, is in ENA configuration, with single front steer axle, double-drive bogie and rear steering axle.

The other, a 6x2 Arocs 2542 variant, is powered by a 310 kW (421 hp) version of the same 'straight-six' as its larger stablemate. This truck has a 3,200-gallon tank and is also equipped to pull a tri-axled drawbar trailer on which is mounted another tank with 3,000-gallon capacity.

"Since shortly after they arrived both have been on 24-hour hire to our local water supplier," explained Mr Simpson, "helping to deal with parts of the drainage network that have experienced very high flows with all the heavy rain we've seen in this region."

He continued: "These are still relatively early days but we're very confident that we've made a wise choice. The Arocs are performing strongly while the feedback from our drivers has been extremely positive, with the comfortable, well-equipped cabs coming in for particular praise.

"I spend most of my time in the office now but I started 'on the tools' so I know very well that having the best equipment can make working life a lot easier. The axle set-up on the eight-wheeler is especially useful in this regard, because of the enhanced manoeuvrability it offers. Coupled with double drive, it means the truck is very well suited to jobs on local farms where access can be tricky."

If the Arocs have impressed, so, too, has Marshall Truck & Van, which is inspecting and maintaining both under five-year Mercedes-Benz Complete Service Contracts – and now looking after Draintech's older vehicles too.

"The Dealer is very attentive and provides first class aftersales support," reported Mr Simpson. "What's more, while the difference in distance between our previous suppliers' premises and Marshall's is not huge, the time we're saving by not having to make the longer journeys for every inspection and service soon adds up. Last year was extremely busy and with our vehicles working flat out to meet demand it's already made a real difference.

"All of which explains why, having commissioned our first Arocs in September, we had no hesitation in returning to Marshall Truck & Van in December to order a pair of identical chassis."

The new trucks, which will also be funded by DTFS, bodied by VJ Engineering, and maintained under contract, are scheduled for delivery in the autumn. They will be additions to a fleet which, as well as Draintech Tankers' original Arocs, comprises five other trucks.

Switch to e-vehicles cuts East Herts Council's carbon footprint

East Herts District Council's vehicle fleet has gone green with the replacement of all its diesel vans with a fleet of e-vehicles. The switch to the Nissan Leaf e-cars will reduce the council's carbon footprint by nine tonnes of CO2 each year and cut leasing costs.

The fleet consists of five Nissan Leaf e-vehicles which will be used across East Herts by council officers involved in services such as fly tipping enforcement, parks inspections and leisure initiatives.

Councillor Graham McAndrew said: *'The move from diesel to electric vehicles is good news for the environment and part of our*

on-going drive to be a net zero carbon council by 2030. It is also an effective use of financial resources at a time when budgets are under significant pressure.'

The vehicles are manufactured in the UK in Sunderland, Tyne and Wear and will be leased for five years from Sinclair Financing and Leasing, having been procured through The Procurement Partnership's PCR compliant contract hire Framework Agreement.

Thomas Jenkins, head of business at Sinclair Finance & Leasing commented: *'We are delighted to have won the opportunity to assist East Herts District Council in meeting their carbon reduction*

targets. To be given the chance to illustrate our flexibility at short notice is an important feature of our normal services, and we are happy to be associated with both East Herts Council and The Procurement Partnership.'

James Brennan, Managing Director of The Procurement Partnership said: *'We are delighted to help East Herts District Council with their acquisition of zero emission vehicles which will assist them in their drive towards carbon neutrality. At a time when vehicle supply is in high demand, we used our vast network of suppliers to source the vehicles competitively within a short lead time.'*



Pictured (L-R): Councillor Graham McAndrew, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability and Jonathan Geall, Head of Housing and Health at East Herts Council



V2X

ev.energy announces collaborative project to unlock the potential of bi-directional EV charging

Electric vehicle (EV) software specialist ev.energy has announced V2X-Flex, a collaborative project which will define the future of the UK's smart flexible energy ecosystem.

With the Energy Systems Catapult (ESC) as project partner and the help of charger point and vehicle manufacturers, Indra, Wallbox, Volkswagen Group UK, Nissan, Siemens – the project will focus on upgrading smart charging technology to ensure solutions are interoperable and bi-directional. The goal is to connect network operators and EV drivers through software to offer increased convenience, resilience, self-reliance, and carbon savings on top of direct financial benefits.

While the UK is shifting towards renewable energy, there are inconsistencies that need to be addressed. The intermittency of sunshine and wind means that renewable energy sources generate their energy depending on the time of the day and weather. This poses a problem in delivering on-demand power 24/7.

V2X-Flex has the potential to help unlock £2.5 billion* in annual system flexibility value by 2050. This will be achieved through upgrading 26% of home and workplace EV charging from smart to bi-directional vehicle-to-grid (V2G), vehicle-to-home (V2H) or vehicle-to-business (V2B) charging. If over a quarter of the UK's private charging infrastructure is upgraded to smart bi-directional,

the net EV winter peak demand could be reduced by over 15GW – that is the equivalent energy needed to power 11.25 million homes.

The V2X-Flex project, part of the V2X Innovation Programme, is funded by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), delivered by Innovate UK. V2X is part of the up to £65m Flexibility Innovation Programme, funded from the £1 billion BEIS Net Zero Innovation Portfolio.

EV drivers who use V2X services will enjoy an enhanced charging experience that could save them up to £800 through reduced bills and rewards funded by ev.energy's grid-service programs.

William Goldsmith, Head of Grid & Data Services at ev.energy, says: *"The V2X-Flex project builds on ev.energy's world-leading smart charging platform, incorporating bi-directional charging technologies to unlock an exciting new range of EV charging products and services."*

"As a global EV charging platform, ev.energy works with charger manufacturers, vehicle OEMs, and energy utilities to connect electric vehicles with the smart grid. Collaboration and alignment are key to delivering successful innovation and we are thrilled to be delivering this project with such a great range of partners."

Danica Caiger-Smith, Consumer Research Lead at Energy Systems Catapult, said: *"Smart charging is already helping us to*

better align EV charging with intermittent renewable energy generation. Adding two-way charging – charge and discharge – establishes flexibility with our energy use.

"Most importantly, two-way charging could help consumers to use energy in ways that gives them what they need, when they need it in their homes, cars, and on the grid. This adds value to the EV charging proposition. The more we can establish value in services for consumers, the greater their uptake and the greater the opportunity for EV energy flexibility becomes."

Energy and Climate Minister Graham Stuart said, "We want to make smart charging an easier choice for drivers of electric vehicles, whether that is charging on the driveway, at the workplace, or parked on the street. To do that we need to build new network infrastructure at pace, using the latest available technologies.

"The plan sets out how we will work with Ofgem and industry to kickstart the market for smart charging, which we are backing up with £16m in innovation funding. This will let people take control of their energy usage, in the most convenient and low-cost way."

If you would like to discuss or contribute to the project, please get in touch via the ev.energy website to see how you can join the program.

**based on BEIS-Smart-Systems&Flexibility-Plan-2021, annual system cost saving from 15GW of additional flexibility*



Government charges ahead in car fleet transition to electric vehicles

The government is powering forward towards decarbonising its central car fleet, as it has been confirmed that it hit its target in switching over a quarter of all its cars (25.5%) to ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV).

Having a higher rate of ULEV vehicles in its fleet means the government is on track to meet its 2027 target for the entire fleet to be fully zero emission.

As set out in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' Greening government commitments in 2021 to 2025, the government was required to transition a minimum of a quarter of its car fleet to ultra-low emission vehicles by the end of 2022. As of the latest data from September, 25.5% of all central government cars were ultra-low emission vehicles, reaching the target 3 months ahead of schedule.

Technology and Decarbonisation Minister Jesse Norman said:

"As the UK moves towards a cleaner transport network, the government is doing its part, with over 25% of its central car fleet being battery-powered 3 months earlier than planned.

"It's critical that progress in decarbonising fleets is matched elsewhere. We will continue to forge ahead, to complete the switch by 2027 and help make the UK a world leader in decarbonisation."

With the electric vehicle (EV) sector showing year-on-year growth, today's announcement demonstrates the government's commitment to decarbonising its own vehicle fleet. The target is just a first milestone as government looks to decarbonise the entirety of its central car and van fleet to zero emission vehicles by 2027 – faster than the wider phase-out date, which sees the sales of new petrol and diesel cars banned by 2030.

Across the wider market, the UK continues to lead the way in transitioning

to battery-powered cars, as 1 in 5 cars sold in 2022 had a plug. According to the latest industry statistics from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, sales of EVs overtook those of diesel in 2022 for the first time.

With a burgeoning EV sector, the government has also made great strides in boosting the charging network. The £10 million Local electric vehicle infrastructure (LEVI) pilot, part of the wider LEVI fund, is expected to deliver 1,000 local chargepoints across England, with 9 local authorities receiving funding. Winning projects are supported by an additional £9 million in private funding. This will improve access to EV chargers, particularly for residents without off-street parking, supporting the nation's uptake of zero emission vehicles.

The government is committed to ending the sales of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030 as we work towards a carbon-free transport network.



Paying for EVs: A new way of doing things

www.fleetcor.com



Tom Rowlands, Managing Director,
Global EV Solutions at FLEETCOR

Paying for charging is one of the biggest challenges a fleet will have to manage, just as paying for fuel is one of the biggest challenges today. The entire system of supply is different from that which you're used to, as are the suppliers, meaning that your company will have to adapt to entirely new ways of paying.

There are a number of areas to consider and new processes to put in place when your company begins transitioning to an all-electric fleet, and for companies who haven't modernised their fuel payment operations yet it's a great opportunity to get ahead of the pack and start saving on everyday expenses.

Network costs

The costs for charging can vary a lot depending on the prices of rapid, ultra-rapid charging and charging at home or at your company's own office or depot. For the very fastest charging the costs can be as much as 70p per kWh, while the price of electricity from a wall socket is currently capped at 0.34p per kWh.

It's important to establish a balance of need versus cost. There's no point in topping off a 90% charged battery with an ultra-rapid public charger when it's twice as expensive than simply waiting to charge at home. Likewise, if a driver has plenty of time – a lunch break for instance – then they can use slower and less expensive charging solutions.

Charging also takes place in different places. With these varying conditions and a wide range of suppliers and costs, trying to understand the exact amount to reclaim can be difficult for drivers. While all business mileage can be reclaimed at 8p per mile by following HMRC's Advisory Electric Rate (AER), this is not always accurate, particularly when electricity prices are high, and especially when ultra-rapid charging is used. Drivers can be thousands of pounds

out of pocket when accounting for the difference between what they spend and what they can be compensated.

Delayed bills for home charging

An issue some fleet drivers encounter is 'bill shock' for home charging. For the first few months their electricity bills don't noticeably change as the supplier is not taking account at that point of the increased usage in its monthly bill. Then, when it takes a reading, it revises the monthly charge based on the new, increased usage, which means the driver is suddenly confronted with a much bigger bill they might not have been expecting.

The benefits of an EV solution

For charging on the public network, Electric charging cards make payments simple and easy. Similarly, for those fleets that need the ability for drivers to charge their vehicles at home for work purposes, home charging solutions provide accurate payment for the costs of driver's EV charging at home. Bill shock is mitigated as the solution provider pays the bill every month direct to the drivers' energy supplier, right from the start of the EV use, based on smart tariffs.

The benefit for fleets means that they're able to use one supplier to meet all charging needs, receive one consolidated invoice for all charging, as well as access running cost data and manage drivers and payments through a portal.

Collecting and utilising EV data

EVs can produce more data than their petrol and diesel counterparts. Because of the nature of how electricity is produced and delivered you can account for every unit of electricity, its cost per kWh and where it was drawn. It will be up to each fleet operator to choose what level of detail they want to access, not only for what is useful to their business, but also how much data is manageable, avoiding information overload.

Fuuse and partners win grant funding to develop efficient V2X solution for fleets

EV charge point management platform, Fuuse, along with innovators in energy and EV charger manufacturing have been granted almost £200K to develop an end-to-end V2X (vehicle-to-everything) DC microgrid solution for fleets. The project seeks to provide support for the National Grid as EV uptake continues to accelerate putting rising pressures on energy demand.

The project, already underway, explores the efficient distribution of energy between EV batteries and other site components such as buildings, other vehicles, or local generation sources such as solar panels and wind turbines.

Joining Fuuse are TPS (Turbo Power Systems), providing their Velox ultra rapid Electric Vehicle charging hardware which uniquely can both charge and discharge vehicle batteries to enable V2X; whilst fleet electrification specialists, Gridicity, join the consortium to provide smart intelligent

forecasting of energy demand and supply. Fuuse will collate these insights and determine where the energy in the EV batteries will be moved from and to. Powering the crucial testbed on which to prove the capabilities of the new solution, is PNDC (Power Network Distribution centre) based at the University of Strathclyde.

Dr Will Maden, COO of Fuuse explains more:

"As momentum for EV uptake accelerates and more pressure mounts on fleets to make the transition, we must focus our efforts on resilience, for not only organisation sites, but the wider Grid. We must enable fleets to transition as responsibly and efficiently as possible.

"This project is another step toward organisations becoming self-sufficient when it comes to their site energy infrastructure. Fleets who can harness and redistribute their EV battery energy where it is most needed will not only reap operational and financial rewards but become a key player to providing the support the UK will need in its

EV rollout goals."

Nigel Jakeman, Engineering & Business Development Director at TPS said:

"With the challenges presented by the electricity distribution network capacity to deploying widescale electric vehicle fleets, V2X will undoubtedly play a role in addressing this and unlocking the full potential of EVs.

"Deployed in our Velox chargers, V2X will provide resilient and flexible charging solutions for our customers enabling transfer of power not just to the vehicle but from the vehicle to supply local premises, the grid, battery storage and even other vehicles."

Alicia Blatiak, CEO and Founder of Gridicity said:

"Knowing when EV charging demand and other building demand is expected allows for intelligent microgrid-like capabilities on the sites of fleet customers for the day ahead. The V2X solution we are working on as a consortium will be of benefit to customer sites, making the most of energy tariffs, local energy generation and offering

grid services. We are pooling expertise to operationalise the potential of V2X technology."

Ryan Sims, Lead R&D Engineer from PNDC said:

"V2X technologies hold great potential to provide value to their owners and to the wider energy networks. The 'V2X Local Network Fleet Solution' solution represents an exciting development of V2X technology that unlocks the full storage potential of EV batteries and delivers benefits from DC-to-DC power exchange efficiencies with other local energy resources. The PNDC is delighted to be able to support this by project by testing the full integrated solution within our smart grid test lab."

The grant funding comes as part of the government's V2X innovation programme, part of a wider Flexible Innovation Programme to deliver a range of smart energy applications. This phase of the project aims to test the concept in a controlled environment. Future developments will include real world testing with forward thinking fleets.



VisionTrack sees growing demand for video telematics

VisionTrack, the leading AI video telematics specialist, achieved rapid growth during 2022, experiencing strong demand from commercial fleet operators both in the UK and internationally. The number of cameras connected to its award-winning IoT platform, Autonomise.ai, increased by 43 per cent, with the rapidly expanding US market now making up more than 10 per cent of the overall devices.

"Vehicle operators are increasingly targeting road safety, fleet risk and insurance improvements, so there are huge opportunities for us with our proven and industry-leading video telematics software," explains Simon Marsh, CEO of VisionTrack. "The functionality, scalability and capacity of Autonomise.ai is making it possible for us to develop sophisticated AI technologies. This is keeping us at the forefront of



the marketplace."

VisionTrack also increased its global workforce by over 40 per cent and doubled its operation in the US. Senior appointments were made to the company's management, professional services, and development teams, with particular focus on strengthening its computer vision and machine learning capabilities. As a result, VisionTrack was able to accelerate the development of innovative AI video telematics that automate management processes, data analysis and incident detection.

During 2022, VisionTrack continued to champion fleet safety, working with key partners – including Brake, Together for Safer Roads, and Driving for Better Business – to help reduce unnecessary road deaths and injuries. In particular,

the company was a co-headline sponsor of Road Safety Week 2022, supporting the efforts of road safety charity, Brake, and launched its own Fleet Risk Reduction campaign that is engaging with vehicle operators to improve work-related road safety.

"Our video-enabled devices are now recording on average 4.0 million driver miles every day, equating to travelling the entire UK road network 16 times over. Furthermore, 35 billion data points a month are collected, as well as 63 million hours of video that would take over 12.5 lifetimes for the average individual to watch. By leveraging this information, we are gaining a unique understanding of vehicle journeys, traffic levels and driver behaviour, which is enabling us to continually push the boundaries of what is possible and support data-driven problem solving," concludes Marsh.



Applied Driving partners with Institute of Highway Engineers to target fleet and driver safety

Applied Driving has teamed up with the Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE) to improve health and safety for those working on the road network. The global provider of driver safety and performance management solutions has become an IHE Professional Development Partner, continuing to share best practices and help raise standards across the highways sector.

"This is an exciting opportunity to make a difference within the highways industry by promoting road safety and engaging with those responsible for constructing and maintaining our roads, explains Dr Jim Golby, Chairman at Applied Driving. "Our aim is to work closely with IHE members and other Professional Development Partners to establish new ways of communicating guidance on fleet and driver risk."

The IHE is the UK's leading professional



organisation for specialist highway and traffic practitioners. It engages with government and industry to improve the highway environment, while providing assistance, leadership and professional development to over 3,500 members. The institute's partnership programme is designed to promote closer cooperation between IHE and partners, supporting the provision of industry standard training and promoting the Highway Engineering Academy (HEA).

Steve Spender, CEO of the institute of Highway Engineers commented: *"Applied Driving has been supporting us for some time, so it is fantastic to formalise our relationship and make them an important part of our Professional Development*

Partnership. The IHE is looking forward to involving them in several initiatives next year, and we have already invited their team to present at our branches across the UK on road-based employee safety."

"We are already successfully supporting many IHE members with driver safety and performance management solutions that have enhanced their safe driving culture. Our services are helping organisations to ensure legal compliance, reduce incident costs, manage fleet risks and provide the latest training solutions, so we are well-placed to support the IHE regarding their road safety priorities," concludes Golby.



Anglo Scottish Asset Finance helps Newcastle and Gateshead businesses achieve clean air compliance

Anglo Scottish Asset Finance Ltd has been appointed by Newcastle City, and Gateshead Council to deliver the financial assistance scheme to support businesses affected by the introduction of a clean air zone in Newcastle City Centre.

The financial assistance scheme has been launched to support Newcastle and Gateshead's Clean Air Zone (CAZ), which will charge some of the most polluting vehicles to drive in the city centre. From 30 January 2023, non-compliant taxis, buses, coaches, and HGVs will be charged to enter the zone, with charges for vans and light goods vehicles beginning in July 2023. The scheme only affects buses, coaches, taxis, vans, and heavy goods vehicles that do not meet national Clean Air Zone emissions standards and will not affect private cars.

The scheme has been created in response to a legal direction by the UK Government to the councils in Newcastle and Gateshead to take action to reduce illegal levels of traffic-related pollution. Financial support will be provided in the form of a grant to help reduce the cost to businesses to replace non-compliant vehicles and avoid paying a daily charge for driving in the city centre, it will also aid in the city's goals to meet the government targets in the shortest possible time.

The initiative is funded by the Government's Clean Air Fund, to help businesses to upgrade non-compliant vehicles, as well as to educate businesses and individuals on how to switch to more sustainable forms of transportation. You can find out if you're eligible by visiting Newcastle and Gateshead councils dedicated Breath-Clean Air website.

Established in 2007, Anglo Scottish is an independent finance broker, providing a range of financial services across the UK including asset finance, business loans, as well as personal vehicle solutions, and vehicle sourcing.

Anglo Scottish has previously worked with Bath & North East Somerset, and Bristol Council to develop the two city's pioneering financial assistance scheme and has helped over 400 businesses

to replace non-compliant vehicles and avoid daily charges to enter the respective city centres.

Businesses can benefit from Anglo Scottish's clean air zone services which include, grant application assistance towards the acquisition of new compliant vehicles, retrospective grant applications for vehicles already purchased, financing to spread the cost, and vehicle sales/part exchange facility to source and replace their existing vehicles.

"We're delighted to be working with Newcastle City and Gateshead councils to support businesses in becoming clean air compliant." Commented David Foster, MD at Anglo Scottish.

"As a North East based business, we already deal with many companies who regularly drive in and out of the city centre, and the Anglo Scottish team is in a fantastic position both in our expertise and geographical location to be able to support all affected businesses with our "one-stop-shop" solution of grant assistance, cost-

effective finance, and vehicle sourcing to reduce the pressures on businesses"

A spokesperson for Newcastle and Gateshead councils, said: *"Poor air quality has a serious impact on people's health and one of the ways in which we are seeking to address this is by introducing a Clean Air Zone.*

"This will help to reduce harmful emissions by encouraging individuals and businesses to upgrade and replace older, higher polluting vehicles – with financial assistance available to help towards the cost of doing so.

"We're pleased to be working with Anglo Scottish to deliver these funds to local businesses."

If the Newcastle and Gateshead Clean Air Zone will impact your business, you can find out more about the financial assistance and vehicle sourcing options available from Anglo Scottish.

<https://www.angloscottishfinance.co.uk/clean-air-zones/newcastle/>



Pictured: David Foster, MD at Anglo Scottish.



E.ON driver and road safety advocate scoops up safety award

Trakm8 has announced a winner in its search to find Britain's Road Safety Hero, rewarding drivers who have gone above and beyond to keep Britain's roads safe.

A long-time supporter of Brake, Trakm8 partnered with the road safety charity to search for Britain's Road Safety Hero to mark last year's Road Safety Week which took place in November.

This year's winner was announced as driver Sherry Cox, a smart meter technician from energy supply and solutions provider E.ON. Sherry was nominated by her manager Lance Goodenough for her efforts and commitment to promote road safety not just within her immediate team but across E.ON's wider workforce too. Sherry will receive a £250 Amazon voucher as the Road Safety Hero Award winner.

Lance, safety lead and line managers Kevin Massey and Richard Morris who have managed Sherry for 3 years said "we are all so incredibly proud of Sherry and delighted that her determination to practise and encourage safe driving has been recognised with this award".

"Sherry installs smart meters in our customers' homes and businesses across a busy inner-city patch, which requires real awareness and attentiveness when driving between jobs. She's also known for her vigilance in carrying out vehicle checks and upholding the maintenance schedule."

Sherry Cox said: "It's a real honour to be named a Road Safety Hero and receive this award. I've always considered part of my job to take personal responsibility for my driving as well for the condition of the vehicles I use. Road traffic incidents can have a terribly high cost, both in terms of their impact on the people involved and the business. If it's within my power to take any steps that

make an accident behind the wheel less likely, and helps keep others safe, of course I will, just as I hope any other responsible road user would. It's such an important message that I'll keep reminding my colleagues too."

Nick Guise, Group Marketing Manager, at Trakm8, said: "We have been inundated with entries for the Trakm8 Road Safety Hero award, as we were when we set up the Trakm8 Road Safety Hero Award last year. It's great to see that this is a topic that is getting the attention it deserves and that drivers are being recognised for their hard work."

"Sherry stood out as someone who really personifies this year's Road Safety Week message, 'Safe Roads for All'. She has clearly and consistently worked to keep others safe and promote the right attitudes and practices in other drivers. This type of attitude goes a long way to making a difference to the level of danger posed by roads in the UK. Sherry is a credit to E.ON, and the industry as a whole."



Electric Van availability provides opportunity for fleets, Says AFP

New electric van availability could be exceeding diesel, providing an opportunity for light commercial vehicle fleets to seriously consider adopting the new technology, says the Association of Fleet Professionals.

Paul Hollick, chair at the industry body, explained some members were reporting that electric vans were currently available with significantly shorter lead times than diesel equivalents.

“Electric van production is beginning to ramp up quite quickly and while the numbers remain relatively small in overall industry terms, this appears to be creating what are – in current terms – relatively short lead times that can be measured in months.

“As with electric cars, there is a strong possibility that manufacturers are channelling greater resources into electric van production in order to meet corporate emissions targets and this could additionally lead to comparatively strong availability over the next few years.

“What this means overall, we believe, is that now is a good moment for fleets who need vans and who have been deliberating over electrification to think seriously about placing orders. While there are widespread reservations about some aspects of going electric for light commercial vehicles, in many cases it makes more sense to have an electric van and begin managing those issues sooner than to wait longer for a diesel model.”

Paul added that the general AFP view was that although serious consideration needed to be given to the potential drawbacks of electric vans, most fleets could begin to use them relatively easily in at least some applications.

“We worry that widely discussed operational and technical barriers – while they certainly need to be part of any buying decision – are serving to disproportionately hamper electric van adoption across our industry when there remain many operators for whom

electrification is a real and viable solution.

“The fact is that in the absence of any other widely available zero emissions technology, electrification is the future for light commercial vehicles so, as a profession, we need to be working to resolve these problems and doing so operationally in the real world is probably the best way forward. Bearing in mind the current supply situation, now is a potentially a good moment for fleets to place orders.”

Paul added that much more government assistance was also needed to speed adoption and help to overcome objections.

“We’ve talked at length in recent months about the requirement for some kind of government support for fleets to acquire electric vans, acting as an equivalent to the way benefit-in-kind has been used to massively boost car electrification. It would really be a help to provide incentives that effectively outweigh any potential problems.”



New van registrations fall in 2022 as market looks towards net zero rebuild

UK new light commercial vehicle (LCV) registrations reached 282,139 units in 2022, a decline of -20.6% on the previous year of strong post-pandemic bounceback, according to the latest figures released today by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).

Despite strong order books throughout 2022, performance continued to be held back by persistent supply chain issues, which have restricted production globally, resulting in limited model availability. As a result, the market was -22.9% down on pre-pandemic 2019,¹ marking the fewest LCV registrations since 2013.²

Despite the significant economic and supply challenges faced by the sector, demand for battery electric vans (BEVs) grew, with deliveries up 31.2% to 16,744 units. There is an ever-increasing number of electric van models available for a broad range of use cases, however, uptake remains some way off the new car market,

where BEVs comprised 16.6% of new registrations. Four in 10 of all the BEVs ever registered in the UK were delivered last year,³ but action from all stakeholders is needed to ensure the UK can achieve its ambitious green goals.

Registrations of the most popular vans weighing greater than 2.5 to 3.5 tonnes fell by -14.4% in 2022, while vans weighing greater than 2.0 to 2.5 tonnes fell by -31.0%. Meanwhile, deliveries of pickups fell by -30.4% and 4x4s by -13.6%, with these two segments remaining a fraction of the market. While overall average new van CO₂ emissions rose by 3.9% to 195.7g/km, reflecting a market shift to larger vehicles which offer payload efficiencies, many segments of the van market saw their average CO₂ emissions fall.

The LCV market is set to deliver an additional £1.6 billion for the British economy this year, and a further £2.4 billion in 2024 as the latest market outlook forecasts around 330,000 new

van registrations in 2023.⁴ With the second largest van market of all European nations, the UK should be at the forefront of LCV decarbonisation, with BEV van deliveries expected to rise by 60.7% in 2023.

Public charging infrastructure, however, is already insufficient for the number of plug-in vehicles already on the road and is generally geared towards cars rather than vans. With the Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate due to come into force in 2024 – which includes cars and vans – and the end of sale of conventional petrol and diesel vans in 2030, a national van infrastructure plan is essential if environmental goals are to be met. This means delivering the necessary levels of LCV-suitable charging points across every region of the UK. At the same time, a fair fiscal plan and the continuation of incentives will be essential if van buyers are to be encouraged to switch to zero emission and the UK's ambitious targets for zero emission mobility are to be met.

"While demand for new vans remained robust throughout 2022, replicating last year's high levels of fleet renewal was always going to be a challenge with relentless supply chain disruptions and wider economic malaise. A return to growth is expected in 2023, but if this crucial sector is to deliver for the economy, society and the environment, action is needed from all stakeholders, particularly in the areas of charging infrastructure and fiscal frameworks, enabling more van buyers to make the switch."

Mike Hawes,
SMMT
Chief Executive

Mercedes-Benz Vans announces specification for the new Citan



Boasting a sharp new design and a stylish interior, the new Mercedes-Benz Citan panel van is now available to order by UK customers, with first deliveries of compact L1 models arriving in February. L2 variants as well as crew van and electric models will be available later in 2023.

Mercedes-Benz vehicles are renowned for their exacting safety credentials and premium specifications. The Citan is no exception, with standard specifications including Active Brake ASSIST with pedestrian recognition technology; ATTENTION ASSIST, which detects drowsiness in the driver and encourages them to take breaks when tired; and Hill-Start ASSIST to prevent rolling back. There's also a speed limiter, an emergency breakdown assistance call button, rear parking aid with a reversing camera and no fewer than six airbags. Blind Spot ASSIST, Active Lane Keeping ASSIST and Speed Limit ASSIST can all be specified as options.

As with all Mercedes-Benz vans, the new Citan comes with a three-year, unlimited mileage warranty and free, round-the-clock roadside assistance. Managed and operated by Mercedes-Benz franchised Dealers, this award-winning service is free for three years on all new vans and renewed every 12 months after this period, when serviced at an authorised Mercedes-Benz workshop, for up to 30 years. Known as MobiloVan, it covers accidents, breakdowns and a number of minor mishaps and driver errors - from running out of fuel or using the wrong fuel to flat tyres, lost keys and attempted theft or vandalism in the UK and across Europe. The Citan also includes anti-theft protection in the form of double locks and an integrated alarm system.

Mercedes me connectivity as standard means that real-time vehicle data can be accessed remotely via a smartphone app to help optimise uptime, safety and security. Features include over-the-air software updates, access to vehicle monitoring in the event of theft. Fuel levels, mileage and remote door-locking

"In the new Citan, van operators have a vehicle that exemplifies all the renowned Mercedes-Benz virtues of reliability, safety and cost-effective performance, backed by a national network of dedicated Dealers who provide the highest standards of customer care. It's much more than just a great small van, though. The services available through Mercedes me once again demonstrate that we're dedicated to supporting our customers by doing all we can to keep their businesses moving."

Mercedes-Benz Vans UK Sales Director Sarah Palfreyman

functionality can also be checked via the app. The potential benefits for operators were clear to judges who named the new Citan joint winner of the International Van of the Year title for 2022.

Multimedia functions, including a seven-inch touch screen and a multimedia system with 'Hey Mercedes' voice assistant and smartphone integration via Android Auto or Apple Carplay are standard features on all Citan trim lines.

Both L1 and L2 versions of the Citan will be powered by the same 1.5-litre diesel engine, which generates 95 hp and 260 Nm of torque, and delivers WLTP combined fuel economy of 54.3 mpg, helped by the ECO start/stop function. Drive is to the front wheels via a six-speed manual or optional seven-speed automatic transmission. Fully electric eCitan variants, with zero tailpipe emissions, will follow at a later date.

Two trim levels will be available, PROGRESSIVE and PREMIUM, both with comprehensive equipment offerings. All Citan cab interiors boast heat-insulating glass all round and multi-function steering wheels that adjust for both rake and height. Exterior design touches include 16-inch wheels (design wheels on the PROGRESSIVE and alloys on the PREMIUM) and heated, electrically adjustable side mirrors.

PREMIUM adds a range of cosmetic enhancements including body-coloured bumpers, chrome trim, gloss black dashboard finish, a Dynamic exterior package with metallic paint and unique alloy wheels and a Light package, which comprises LED high-performance headlights with High Beam Assist and front foglamps.

The Citan L1 has a load length of 1,806 mm and a payload capability of 667 kg in PROGRESSIVE form, with a 666 kg payload for PREMIUM vehicles. Both are rated to tow trailers up to a maximum gross train weight of 3,500 kg.

2022 marked the second year in a row that Vauxhall topped the e-LCV sales charts



Vauxhall was the UK's best-selling electric Light Commercial Vehicle (e-LCV) manufacturer in 2022, the second year in a row the brand has topped the sale charts, according to the latest sales and registration figures published today by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).

Last year, Vauxhall sold 5,038 e-LCVs, a rise of 73% from 2021. Vauxhall remains one of the few manufacturers in the country able to offer fleets and buyers a fully electric van across its entire model line-up. The Vauxhall e-LCV line-up consists of the Combo Electric, Vivaro

Electric, and Movano Electric.

The sales success was underpinned by the award-winning Vivaro Electric, which was the best-selling e-LCV in the UK for the second year running. Throughout 2022, Vauxhall sold 4,212 Vivaro Electric vehicles to both business and private customers.

James Taylor, Managing Director, Vauxhall, said: *"Electric van sales grew significantly in 2022, and will continue to grow next year, as more businesses and fleets look to cut their emissions and running costs. It's a testament to the breadth and quality of our all-electric LCV range that the highest share of businesses*

and private buyers opted for an electric Vauxhall van for the second year in a row."

The Vivaro Electric has a long list of awards under its belt, including 'Medium Van of the Year' at the What Van? Awards 2022 and 'Best Medium Electric Van' at the Driving Electric Awards 2022. The Vivaro Electric was also voted 'International Van of the Year 2021', alongside multiple other top honours.

Available with a 50kWh or a 75kWh battery, the Vivaro Electric achieves a WLTP range of up to 205 miles from a single charge and comes with a maximum payload of up to 1,226kg.



Refreshed Jazz e:HEV line-up gains new sport variant

Honda is increasing the appeal of its Jazz line-up with revisions across all grades and the addition of a new Advance Sport grade; offered with exclusive styling details inside and out.

The refreshed Jazz range also features a revised e:HEV hybrid powertrain that improves driveability, adds power and a towing capacity, without impacting CO₂ or fuel efficiency.

Elegance and Advance grades feature a new, more defined grille design as well as a darker headlight insert. More sculpted bumpers front and rear are complimented by textured lower sections.

The Jazz Crosstar also features several exterior revisions including a defined grille featuring a pronounced honeycomb design, revised bumpers which feature silver inserts designed to look like underbody protection, and new, matching side skirts. In addition there is a new finish for the alloy wheels, and the introduction of a new exterior colour: Fjord Mist blue.

Elegance and Advance grades come with revisions to the interior colour, material and finish choices, whilst the Crosstar's interior features new seat upholstery as well as revisions to the dash and door cards.

The new stand-out Advance Sport grade – available in a new exclusive paint finish, Urban Grey – incorporates a unique finish

to the front bumper design, a sporty lattice grille as well as gloss black wing mirrors and unique 16" alloy wheels to broaden the appeal of the Jazz e:HEV.

Inside, the Advance Sport benefits from grade-specific enhancements that increase the premium sporty feel of the latest Jazz e:HEV.

The refreshed Jazz e:HEV retains Honda's responsive and highly efficient advanced hybrid technology. The latest generation e:HEV powertrain comprises two electric motors, an economical petrol engine, automatic transmission and three intelligent driving modes to deliver high levels of real-world efficiency and refinement.

Revisions to all aspects of the e:HEV system have seen efficiency, driveability and output increased. The electric drive motor has seen a 10 kW (14 PS) increase, taking its total output to 90 kW (122 PS), and the generator motor has also seen an 8 kW increase in power, taking it to a peak of 78 kW (106 PS). The 1.5-litre port-injection petrol engine has gained 7 kW to now produce a maximum of 79 kW (107 PS). Torque remains at 131 Nm. Honda's fuel-efficient hybrid system produces CO₂ emission from 102g/km, with the Advance Sport grade from 105 g/KM.

Honda's automatic transmission in the Jazz e:HEV has also been revised to improve smoothness and driveability to deliver a more engaging driving experience. Crosstar, Elegance and Advance grades feature a new acceleration response concept to increase the sensory feeling of acceleration. Following customer feedback, the

requirement for towing ability has been added, making the Jazz e:HEV even more versatile. All models can tow a competitive 500kg, accommodating small trailers or bike carriers.

New Jazz retains class-leading levels of interior space that have proven to be the hallmark of previous generations. Key to maximising cabin room is the positioning of the fuel tank in the centre of the chassis beneath the front seats, which is unique in this class. This enables the Jazz to retain the exceptionally versatile rear Magic Seats that offer both "fold-flat" or "flip-up" seat flexibility, depending on cargo space required.

To complete the strong package of the new Jazz, Honda provides some of the most comprehensive advanced safety features and driver aids in its class.

Utilizing a wider angle, higher-definition camera enables improved awareness of vehicle surroundings, including recognition of verges without kerbs or roadside markings, whilst the active safety systems have been revised to reduce their intrusion on everyday driving.

The Traffic Jam Assist function, now upgraded to feature steering support from 0 km/h, reduces the burden on the driver when driving in traffic and heightens its already impressive crash protection.

These advanced driver assistance systems compliment the standard ten airbags, including front occupant knee and front centre airbags. The latest Jazz and Jazz Crosstar will carry the same active safety technologies and driver aids that were awarded the maximum five-star rating in 2020 Euro NCAP safety tests.

New Vauxhall Grandland GSe combines responsible performance with 300PS, e-AWD traction and SUV practicality



Vauxhall has revealed the New Grandland GSe – a performance electrified version of the established family crossover, to sit alongside the recently announced All-New Astra GSe and All-New Astra Sports Tourer GSe as part of Vauxhall's new GSe electrified performance sub-brand.

The New Grandland GSe combines a 1.6-litre turbocharged petrol engine with two electric motors – one on each axle – for a combined power output of up to 300PS (provisional WLTP combined fuel consumption 217.3mpg, CO2 emissions of 31-29 g/km). The plug-in hybrid powertrain makes the Grandland GSe a permanent electric all-wheel-drive vehicle with optimum traction and class-leading acceleration from a standstill. 0-62mph takes just 6.1 seconds, while top speed is 146mph (84mph in electric mode).

Featuring a plug-in hybrid powertrain,

the New Grandland GSe offers enhanced performance combined with ultra-low emissions. All-wheel drive traction, unique suspension and revised steering combine to deliver performance-oriented handling, while maintaining the versatility and style New Grandland is known for. Sitting in the C-SUV class, the New Grandland GSe will be one of the few performance SUVs outside of the premium segment.

Like the All-New Astra GSe and All-New Astra Sports Tourer GSe, the New Grandland GSe features a unique suspension set-up and steering calibration. With MacPherson struts at the front and a multi-link axle at the rear, the New Grandland GSe is fitted with firmer springs and dampers with KONI FSD (Frequency Selective Damping) technology, which enables different damping characteristics for the optimum balance between ride comfort and

handling. As a result, the New Grandland GSe offers more precise and consistent responses while retaining superior stability under braking, in corners and at higher speed.

The bold and pure exterior design of the Grandland with its 'Vizor' front end is further enhanced by signature GSe styling cues: 19-inch alloy wheels inspired by the award-winning Manta GSe concept; a unique rear diffuser; and a GSe emblem on the tailgate. As a further distinguishing feature, the Grandland GSe is optionally available with a black bonnet. Inside, the new Alcantara®-trimmed front sports seats have been certified by AGR*, providing additional comfort and support for sporty driving.

The New Grandland GSe Plug-in Hybrid will go on sale in the UK towards the start of 2023 with customer deliveries scheduled from Spring 2023.

Mokka Electric with new 54KWh battery

Vauxhall has introduced a new 54kWh battery on the Mokka Electric, with range increasing to 252 miles (WLTP) - an improvement of 20% over the outgoing 50kWh unit. Orders for the Mokka Electric with a 54kWh battery will open from March 2023 with first deliveries commencing from the Spring.

Replacing the current 50kWh unit, the new 54kWh battery is also more efficient, requiring just 15.2kWh of electricity to cover 62 miles (100km). It is coupled with a more powerful 156hp electric motor (an increase of 20hp), enabling the Mokka Electric to accelerate from 0-62mph in under 10 seconds. Top speed is electronically limited to 93mph.

Despite its increased range, the Mokka Electric's compact battery size and efficient packaging ensures no space is lost in the passenger or luggage compartment.



Supporting up to 100kW rapid charging, the Mokka Electric can be re-charged from 0-80% in just 30 minutes. It also features an 11kW on-board charger as standard, suitable for home charging via a wallbox.

The Mokka was the first Vauxhall to be available with a fully electric powertrain from launch. Featuring the brand's bold and pure design language, it was also the first model to introduce the Vizor front end and fully digitised Pure Panel cockpit.



Pre-orders open for the first-ever fully electric Jeep SUV

Pre-orders have opened for the European Car of the Year 2023 winner, Jeep Avenger 1st Edition, the brand's first-ever fully electric SUV. Ahead of the full range launch in June, the limited edition Avenger is a modern, fun and desirable SUV appealing to customers looking for a capable, compact, modern all-electric Jeep.

True to the Jeep DNA, the new Avenger offers impressive ground clearance, approach, breakover and departure angles for its segment.

It delivers a modern and technologically advanced interior with class leading space for cargo and contents.

Thanks to the high power (max power 156hp, 115kW) and torque (max

torque 260Nm) in addition to a specific e-powertrain calibration, the new Avenger offers uncompromised driving enjoyment on and off-road, providing a range up to 248 miles.

Jeep Avenger is fitted with a CCS 2 socket (Combined Charging System Type 2) supporting 100kW rapid charging, enabling 0% to 80% charge in just over half an hour, or five minutes charge to get the average daily usage of 28 miles.

It is available in a choice of three colours (Sun, Graphite and Volcano), all with black roof, privacy glass and 18" alloy wheels. The Avenger also comes with a three year vehicle warranty (or battery warranty of 100,000 miles in eight years).

The new Avenger is equipped with standard SelecTerrain and Hill Descent Control which, together with its outstanding approach and departure angles and the vehicle's ground clearance, bring impressive levels of capability to the segment.

The Selec-Terrain® system offers six modes: "Normal" for everyday driving; "Eco" to enhance range; "Sport" for more

driving fun; "Snow" for maximum traction on icy roads or trails; "Mud" to optimise mud performance and to enhance grip; and "Sand" to limit the risk of becoming stuck on sandy soil.

Avenger also brings next level safety and convenience features to a compact SUV. It includes a 10.25" HD touchscreen Infotainment system, DAB, voice recognition, Apple Carplay/Android Auto, 360° parking sensors and 180° rear camera, level two autonomous drive (ACC with lane centering and traffic jam assist), wireless smartphone charger and keyless entry & go.

It also comes with blind spot monitor, an auto dimming rear view mirror, hands free power liftgate, traffic sign recognition with intelligent speed assist and rain sensors.

Since its launch, the new Jeep Avenger marks the introduction of a portfolio of new battery electric vehicles (BEV) for the brand in Europe showing its strong commitment to a future of sustainable mobility, which is in line with the vision of "Zero emissions, 100% freedom".



Mercedes-Benz CLA and CLA Shooting Brake

With numerous innovations and upgraded standard equipment, Mercedes-Benz is strengthening the position of the CLA Coupé and CLA Shooting Brake in the compact segment.

Enhancements include a newly shaped front apron, revised radiator grille, modernised graphics in the LED High Performance headlamps as standard and the LED rear lights.

New paint colours hyper blue (exclusive to the CLA models) and spectral blue have been added as well as three additional wheel-rim designs in sizes up to 19 inches. As standard, the new CLA Coupé and CLA Shooting Brake models are fitted with 17-inch five-spoke alloy wheels in vanadium silver or a five-double-spoke design in high-gloss black with high-sheen finish.

The highlight of the interior is the free-standing double screen. It now includes a 7-inch and a 10.25-inch display and a steering upholstered in leather Nappa both as standard. The new trim elements in a dark carbon look, open-pore brown lime wood or brown MICROCUT microfibre (AMG Line only).

Comfort seats are also fitted as standard with a combination of ARTICO man-made leather and three-dimensionally embossed fabric in black, there is also plenty of choice of other options available.

The CLA Coupé and CLA Shooting Brake feature the latest generation of MBUX – with newly designed display styles: “Classic” provides all relevant driver information, “Sporty” impresses with the dynamic rev counter and

“Discreet” is limited to the most essential items. Together with the three modes (Navigation, Assistance, Service) and seven colour worlds, the instrument cluster and central display can be individualised according to the driver’s wishes and the situation. The central display offers all previous functions such as navigation, media, phone, vehicle, etc. and can be operated conveniently as a touchscreen.

The revised telematics system impresses with a new design and improved performance. A new feature is connectivity with smartphones via Apple CarPlay or Android Auto Wireless. For further connectivity, the CLA Coupé and CLA Shooting Brake have an additional USB-C port and increased USB charging capacity. All USB ports are now illuminated.

The new CLA models also improve in terms of safety assistance. With the upgraded Driver Assistance Package, for example, Lane Keeping Assist is controlled much more comfortably by the active steering control. The next generation of the Parking Package supports longitudinal parking and offers 360-degree visualisation for camera-assisted parking using 3D images.

The petrol engines are electrified throughout and include four-cylinder units with a 7- or 8-speed DCT automatic transmission as standard. As mild hybrids, the engines are equipped with an additional 48-volt on-board power supply that supports agility at start-up with 10 kW more power. The new belt-driven starter-generator noticeably improves customer comfort and experience. For example, it enables low-vibration and low-noise engine starting as well as coasting with the combustion engine switched off. During braking and acceleration, the starter-generator recuperates and thus supplies the 12-volt on-board network and the 48-volt

battery with electrical energy. This can support the combustion engine during acceleration. The new ECO Score 3.0 motivates drivers to adopt fuel-saving behaviour through a differentiated evaluation of the various driving phases.

The improved high-voltage battery offers a higher usable energy content, resulting in greater electric range. The power of the electric motor has increased by 5 kW and now reaches a powertrain output of 80 kW. For charging, three options are still available: in addition to the 3.7 kW standard, the battery can now also be charged with alternating current and up to 11 kW instead of the previous 7.4 kW. The new CLA models also continue to offer the option of charging the battery with direct current, and up to 22 kW. A DC charge from 10% to 80% takes around 25 minutes[2], providing a versatile charging experience suitable for everyday use.

Numerous updates make the CLA and CLA Shooting Brake from Mercedes-AMG even more desirable. The new exterior design is particularly striking on the CLA 35 4MATIC Coupé (WLTP preliminary values: fuel consumption combined 8.5-8.1 l/100 km; CO2 emissions combined 193-185 g/km)[4] and CLA 35 4MATIC Shooting Brake (WLTP preliminary values: fuel consumption combined 8.7-8.3 l/100 km; CO2 emissions combined 197-189 g/km). Both entry-level models have been given an AMG-specific radiator grille with vertical slats, a reshaped front apron and a round badge with the AMG emblem that reinforces the brand affiliation. The revised design of the inside of the headlights with LED or MULTIBEAM LED technology and the LED taillights also characterise the two top models CLA 45 S 4MATIC+ Coupé (WLTP preliminary values: fuel consumption combined 9.0-8.7 l/100 km; CO2 emissions combined 205-196 g/km) and CLA 45 S 4MATIC+ Shooting Brake (fuel consumption combined 9.2-8.8 l/100 km; CO2 emissions combined 209-201 g/km).

Alfa Romeo Tonale Plug-In Hybrid Q4



The Alfa Romeo Tonale Plug-In Hybrid Q4 completes the Tonale range—the model with which the brand made its entrance into the world of electrification. This new version sits at the top of the range and combines maximum efficiency and sportiness: more than 49 miles in full-electric in the urban cycle, 372 miles in the total cycle and emissions reduced to 26g/km.

Quality and attention-to-detail have been combined with dynamic characteristics, while its on-board technology and connectivity make it the most hi-tech Alfa Romeo ever.

The powertrain in the Plug-in Hybrid Q4 makes it the most efficient Tonale in the range, offering the best in terms of performance and battery life. The advanced hybrid system combines a 180hp, 1.3-litre turbocharged MultiAir, 4-cylinder engine coupled to a 6-speed automatic transmission to provide traction to the front axle, with an electric motor capable of supplying 90kW of max peak power and 250 Nm of torque to the rear axle.

The 306-volt, 15.5 kWh lithium-ion battery supplies an electric range of over 49 miles in the urban cycle and more than 372 miles of total range, making the Tonale Plug-in Hybrid one of the most efficient plug-in hybrid SUVs. The new hybrid powertrain reduces CO2 emissions to 29 g/km and improves fuel consumption to deliver 217.3 mpg in the WLTP cycle. With the aim of providing maximum efficiency, it takes less than 2.5 hours to fully charge the battery from a 7.4 kW charger.

Equipped with a Q4 all-wheel-drive system—the front wheels are powered by the internal combustion engine and the rear wheels are powered by the electric motor— helping to provide best-in-class agility, lightness and driving dynamics.

Its 280hp hybrid powertrain ensures it accelerates from zero to 62 mph in just 6.2 seconds and onto a top speed of 84 mph in full-electric mode and 128 mph in hybrid mode, with the e-AWD system providing instantaneous deployment of 100 per cent of available torque from the electric motor on the rear axle.

The advanced 4x4 hybrid system guarantees maximum stability both off-road and on. It does not physically connect the two propulsion systems, but rather coordinates them, making the



Tonale Plug-In even lighter and unmatched in its handling. It is possible to manage the Q4 traction and the electronic controls, coordinate the action of the engine and transmission and modify the sensitivity of the commands all on a single selector dial.

- **Dynamic mode** prioritises the vehicle's performance with a specific calibration of the throttle, management of the transmission and stability controls, which have been combined with a more direct steering response.
- **Natural mode** uses hybrid driving and all-wheel drive to optimise the efficiency of the internal combustion engine and electric motor, without compromising performance.

Advanced Efficiency obtains maximum energy efficiency in full-electric driving mode. When the driver removes their foot from the throttle the car will continue to drive in Sailing mode, while the new eCoasting Descent Control is activated when going downhill to maintain a constant speed of 31 mph (adjustable with a light touch of the throttle or brake).

The addition of EV features on the Tonale Plug-in Hybrid Q4 guarantee an even more efficient and relaxing driving experience. E-Save allows drivers to recharge or maintain the battery level when the internal combustion engine is on; the regenerative braking system allows drivers to recover energy during the phases of deceleration and braking, storing it in the battery pack, and by activating E-Coasting, energy recovery takes place even when slowing down without a foot on the



brake pedal. The EV Features can be controlled by the driver through the instrument panel.

Superior software and connectivity have been provided as standard to offer the brand's trademark driving pleasure, while guaranteeing a comfortable and connected experience. The integration with the Amazon Alexa voice assistant offers the convenience of interacting with the system without the driver having to remove their hands from the wheel.

The brand-new infotainment system comes as standard and offers functionality and services which are constantly updated via its customisable Android operating system and 4G connectivity with Over The Air (OTA) updates. The high-resolution 22.5-inch screens — 12.3-inch totally digital screen and 10.25-inch main touchscreen unit — features an intuitive and easy-to-use system. The dials in the Tonale Plug-in Hybrid Q4 includes features such as the *elettro-biscione*, in the lower part of the right dial, which changes colour based on the electric motor's status (off, on, on and charging) and provides all the information related to power and charging.

Four new functionalities make their debuts on the Tonale Plug-in Hybrid Q4 and further expand upon the Alfa Connect Services:

- **E-control:** allows the customer to control various functionalities based on the EV features—including charging and the climate control system— directly from the My Alfa Connect App
- **Dynamic Range Mapping:** allows drivers to travel with peace of mind, showing them the destinations they can reach based on the battery charge
- **Charging Station Finder:** allows the customer to see the nearest public charging stations both on the navigation system map and the My Alfa Connect app
- **My eCharge:** allows for the use of the My Alfa Connect app to directly access Free2Move eSolutions services to manage public and private charging. It will be possible to locate

the public charging stations, check the charging methods, make payments, visualise the charge history and manage charging from a home Wallbox – allowing drivers to decide how much electricity to use and even increase, decrease, suspend and reactivate the charge

The Tonale Plug-in Hybrid Q4 is the top-of-the-range model. It is available in Ti trim, with an elegant and distinctive character, and Veloce trim, with a more sporty feeling.

The Ti version is externally distinguished by a satin chrome V front bezel, 18-inch dark finish diamond cut alloy wheels with coloured Alfa Romeo centre wheel caps, a gloss-black body kit, with satin side and front inserts, privacy glass and black painted mirror caps. Inside, sporty black cloth upholstery, driver's seat with four-way lumbar adjustment, 60/40 split rear seats with ski pass and sport leather steering wheel with start button complete the Ti.

The Veloce builds on this with dark miron V front bezel, *veloce* badging and body kit, with matt side and front inserts, gloss black window surround, and 19-inch dark finish diamond cut alloy wheels with monochrome Alfa Romeo centre wheel caps and red painted Brembo brake calipers. Inside, the Veloce adds aluminium door sills and column mounted aluminium shift paddles to its distinctive black and red Alcantara upholstery. Under the skin, the Veloce also gains Alfa Dual Stage Valve suspension (DSV) for an even more compliant ride.

The Tonale Plug-In Hybrid Q4 will also be available as an exclusive SPECIALE launch version with enhanced contents and connectivity including gloss black body kit with titanium side and front inserts, a SPECIALE badge on the wing and a black Tonale badge, 20-inch alloy wheels, metal pedals and red Brembo brake calipers.

The Tonale range is available in a choice of six solid, metallic and tri-coat colours – Alfa White, Alfa Red, Alfa Black, Misano Blue, Montreal Green and Vesuvio Grey. A leather pack is available on all trims to enhance their standard interior offering.

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.



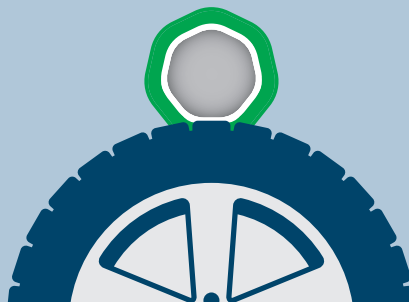
TREAD

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.

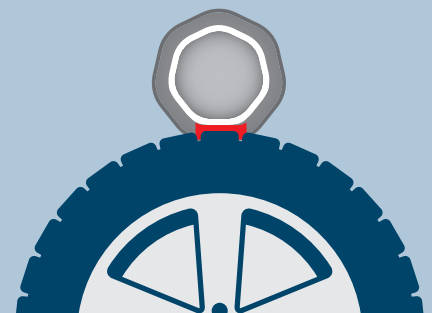
Check at least three locations around each tyre.



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.