



ESSENTIAL FLEET MANAGER *Magazine*

ISSUE 3 2024

*In this issue:*

# Vehicle Management

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# Essential Fleet Manager - Issue 3 (2024)

The publication for fleet professionals that operate the vehicle fleets that support the UK's Essential Services Fleet Sector.

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

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.

Regards, **Debbie Cheadle** - Editor



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# Operators, YOU have responsibilities too!



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

## **A message to Directors, sole traders and business partners: don't leave it to the Transport Managers(TMs)! You have a job to do, too!**

TMs and their teams have a pivotal role in managing vehicles and drivers safely. Many will be brilliant, many average and some fall short. However, what is expected of a director, owner or partner of a transport business? How should they manage and oversee transport management? What practical steps and actions should they carry out? Do they need training? What is their legal liability?

Whilst what is set out below is universal, this article centres on vehicles subject to operator licensing and the expectations of the regulator, the Traffic Commissioner.

Standard licences must have a nominated Transport Manager, of course. A Restricted licence has no such requirement but there will have to be a Responsible Person (RP) who has custody of this function. In either type of licence, a TM/RP may or may not also be a director or owner or partner. In many businesses they will be separate.

It is easy for there to be a mindset that the Transport Managers are in overall charge of compliance – after all, they are specifically qualified with a Transport Manager CPC qualification. But, what mechanisms are in place for the proper oversight and management of them and their teams? What is happening in this upper part of the management pyramid? The answer is that often all too often there is a void, or the oversight is insufficient.

This area comes regularly to the fore in DVSA investigations and at Traffic Commissioner hearings.

### **Senior Traffic Commissioner Guidance**

So, what is required of operators – what is expected of the controlling minds of the business? The Senior Traffic Commissioner Statutory Guidance and Statutory Document gives a clear steer as to the expectations:

*'The responsibility for ascertaining what is required and for complying with those requirements lies with the operator. .... the Senior Traffic Commissioner has described three simple steps: check compliance with the governing legislation, train*

*drivers regarding that legislation and monitor compliance, retrain and discipline drivers where shortcomings are identified.'*

Ensuring compliance can be delegated - but responsibility cannot be delegated. In other words, the Transport Manager can be tasked (and on a Standard licence has the statutory role, alone or with others for continuous and effective transport management) but the directors etc. cannot offload their own obligations.

Of huge importance it that failure to have oversight on the part of an operator is a good repute or fitness issue. In some situations, operators may have actual knowledge of breaches but fail to take any or enough action, or they have no knowledge of non-compliance, for whatever reason, which also raises the issue of whether they are of good repute.

In reality, a significant proportion of cases investigated by DVSA that unearth poor transport management (and lead to Traffic Commissioner intervention) are not the result of deliberate actions – invariably, they stem from knowledge and training issues, an absence of

proper procedures and an absence of business owner and senior management oversight of Transport Managers.

### The Senior Traffic Commissioner guidance set out further principles:

- Directors have collective responsibility for the company which they manage, and it is therefore their responsibility to set the standards which employees are expected to meet and ensure that those standards are met;
- A person who controls an entity which operates good vehicles or public service vehicles must have sufficient knowledge to exercise proper oversight; and
- Traffic Commissioners are .... entitled to assume that directors are all equally responsible for the management of the company and therefore equally culpable for any non-compliance.

This last point does not mean that all directors have to all be equally involved in transport oversight. It is perfectly permissible for specific directors, such that *"one or more director(s) is more responsible for maintenance and road safety than others."*

### Meetings

There is an expectation that the *"management pyramid"* will involve senior management interacting with transport management as part of the process of oversight. In some businesses there may be a disconnect between senior management and transport teams. Whilst a lot of good day-to-day management may well take place in the form of general 'management by walking about', and this gives senior management a lot of vital information, there should be a formal meeting process at regular intervals e.g. fortnightly or monthly meetings, with a set agenda and minuted/documentated.

Further, such meetings should have meaningful content. Whilst transport meetings may properly need to cover things such as fuel usage, accidents and such like, there must be on the agenda

specific items dealing with the elements of operator licensing. These might include things such as:

- Adherence to inspection intervals (%);
- Inspection sheet data and brake testing
- Annual test history; OCRS performance
- Prohibitions or other notable incidents;
- Driver defect reporting and audit results; and
- Drivers' hours compliance etc./ missing mileage
- Driver issues/disciplinary follow-up
- Maintenance provider performance
- Driver training
- Driver licence checks

It is often the case at Public Inquiry hearings that Traffic Commissioners will make reference to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be identified by operators for inclusion in such meetings, so that senior management is able to home in on really important data to show there is compliance.

Proper minutes of such meetings are an excellent way of positively demonstrating that there is focus by directors, partners etc. on the scrutiny of transport management. By carrying out this correctly they are checking the transport team and also exhibiting the responsible behaviour that Traffic Commissioners expect from those holding an operator's licence.

### Training

It is entirely commonplace for operators to never have undergone any kind of operator licence training. Such courses known as OLAT (Operators Licence Awareness Training) needs to be attended by one or more directors, partners or sole traders (and other senior management).

In a recent Public Inquiry attended by the writer, a Traffic Commissioner made plain that it was a minimum expectation that at least one director of a limited

company should attend OLAT training.

So, this area is not regarded as some kind of optional extra. It has become an expectation as, how else will the operator have their requisite knowledge at senior level, to understand operator's licence requirements?

### Criminal law

The need for directors, partners and owners to be properly engaged in transport management is not simply confined to operator licensing, but to other possible action in the form of criminal proceedings for acts caused by drivers and vehicles (and indeed those that do not involve transport).

Where senior management leave transport teams unsupervised, the business is exposed to the risk of prosecution, and this may involve the prosecution of individuals.

Of course, a major benefit of limited company status is that if a prosecution is brought by, say, DVSA, HSE, Environment Agency etc. it is the legal person that is the limited company that is taken to Court, in the first instance. However, in many cases, directors are also prosecuted for their individual failures – often for "permitting" offences. They may not have deliberately set out to offend but negligence has allowed a state of affairs to arise where offences have been allowed to happen.

Partners and sole traders (who therefore do not operate within a limited company) do not enjoy any first line protection from prosecution. They are prosecuted as individuals. Again, they expose themselves to risk, if they do not have proper oversight.

As Traffic Commissioners repeatedly say at Public Inquiries, transport systems cannot be left to run themselves. There has to be top-level oversight and proactivity from above. ●

### Ashtons Legal advice and representation

Should you require assistance in the areas of investigations conducted by DVSA (in-person or desk-based assessments) or Operator Licensing (including Traffic Commissioner hearings) then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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# Changes in Employment Law

## Changes to employment law that take effect from 6 April 2024

These changes come from several pieces of legislation passed in the last two years, mostly Private Members' Bills which have passed with Government support and related secondary legislation.

All these changes apply to England, Scotland and Wales, but not Northern Ireland where employment law is devolved.

### Rise in National Minimum Wage (NMW)

The Government has announced the rates of the National Living Wage (NLW) and National Minimum Wage (NMW) which will come into force from April 2024.

The NMW rates which will apply from 1 April 2024 are as follows:

#### National Minimum Wage new Rates

Age	NMW Rate	Increase
(21 and over)	£11.44	£1.02
18-20 Year Old Rate	£8.60	£1.11
16-17 Year Old Rate	£6.40	£1.12
Apprentice Rate	£6.40	£1.12

### Changes to flexible working

Employees can now make two rather than one request a year for flexible working, and the deadline for employers to respond to requests has been reduced from three to two months.

Employers will also have to explain the reasons for denying any request, and employees no longer have to explain the impact of their request. However, the list of reasons employers can use to deny requests is remaining the same, including factors such as cost to the business or impact on quality, performance or ability to meet customer demand.

*These changes were made through the Employment Rights (Flexible Working) Act 2023.*

Through a separate piece of secondary legislation, employees will also be able to make such requests from their first day of employment, without having to wait the 26-week qualifying period.

### Carer's leave

Employees are now entitled to take one week of unpaid leave a year if they have caring responsibilities.



This applies to any employees who are caring for a spouse, civil partner, child, parent or other dependant who needs care because of a disability, old age or any illness or injury likely to require at least three months of care. The leave entitlement is available from the first day of employment with no qualifying period.

*This entitlement was created by the Carer's Leave Act 2023 and the associated Carer's Leave Regulations 2024.*

### Increased protection against redundancy for pregnant employees

Employees taking certain types of parental leave now have protection from redundancy for at least 18 months. This protection means that if their role is made redundant their employer must give them first refusal of any other vacancies; however, they can still be made redundant if no appropriate vacancy is available. Previously, employees only had this protection during their period of maternity, adoption or shared parental leave.

Protection now begins on the day the employer is first notified of the employee's pregnancy and ends 18 months after the date of the child's birth. These protections also now extend to 18 months after the date of adoption for parents taking adoption leave or 18 months after the child's birth in cases where a parent is taking at least six weeks of shared parental leave.

*These changes were made by the Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act 2023, and the Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave and Shared Parental Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2024.*

### More flexibility for paternity leave

Employees taking statutory paternity leave (and pay, if they are eligible) can now split their two weeks' entitlement into two separate one-week blocks, rather than having to take them both together. They can also take their two weeks at any time within the first year after their child's birth, rather than within only the first eight weeks after birth as previously required.

Employees now have to give employers 28 days' notice for each week of leave, down from 15-weeks' notice previously, before taking leave. However, they still need to give notice of their upcoming entitlement 15 weeks before the expected date of birth.

*These changes were made by the Paternity Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2024.*

### Changes coming later in 2024

Other changes are expected to come into force later in 2024:

- A new code of practice on dismissal and re-engagement ('fire and rehire'). For more information on this issue see the Library briefing on Fire and rehire practices. The Government expects the code will come into force by summer 2024.
- A new law creating a right to request more predictable working patterns for eligible workers. This is expected to come into force from around September 2024.
- A new law requiring employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their employees. This will come into force from October 2024.●





## Crown Commercial Service launches latest, simplified iteration of vehicle telematics agreement

**The next iteration of Crown Commercial Service's (CCS) agreement for vehicle telematics, helping buyers make their fleet operations more efficient and optimise their driver management, is now live.**

Vehicle telematics hardware and software solutions are used to collect data about the vehicle it is fitted to and how it is driven. The data produced ranges from location tracking and fuel consumption to speed and movement and how a vehicle is being driven (driver behaviour).

The full range of telematics products and services under the new Vehicle Telematics Solutions [RM6315] agreement are available to buyers across the public sector. They will allow a wide range of fleets to better analyse the use of their vehicles and make informed, evidence-based decisions in the management of their fleet. It is an important component of the total fleet solutions offered by CCS.

The key benefit of telematics solutions to buyers is the use of real time vehicle data to support the management of risk and efficient fleet management. These benefits can result from using the vehicle data

to identify, implement and manage initiatives designed to improve driver behaviour and compliance with fleet policy. For example, by using tracking solutions like driver ID and automated driver benchmarking, buyers can improve the on-road behaviour of their drivers, reducing the risk of accidents, injuries and property damage.

The new agreement replaces CCS's Vehicle Telematics Hardware and Software Solutions [RM6143] agreement, which expired on 23 April 2024. It is similar in terms of scope and scale to its predecessor but with the introduction of a new single-lot structure that offers all available products and services in one place. This allows buyers to more easily identify the solution that suits them and provides a simpler procurement journey.

Sustainability remains a key focus, with vehicle analysis tools helping buyers to achieve their carbon reduction goals by improving fuel efficiency and informing their approach to the transition to zero-emission vehicles.

**The new agreement officially went live on 24 April 2024 and will run for 2 years, until its expiry on 4 March 2026.**

*"We're delighted to launch our newest vehicle telematics agreement, offering a simple and efficient route to market that gives public sector buyers access to sustainable, safety-conscious solutions that enable value through fleet optimisation.*

*"CCS estimates that more than half of public sector fleets have either introduced or are thinking about the benefits of telematics. Recent steps in the ongoing digital transformation of the public sector have seen more of us turn to connected vehicles and telematics as a key enabler to boost productivity, control costs, manage risk and reduce our environmental footprint.*

*"As public sector organisations look to work smarter and secure social value and community benefits through their contracts, it's not hard to see why telematics is such a valuable tool when it comes to effectively managing driver risk. Using the tools and data available through telematics solutions can enable fleet managers to proactively tackle the causes of accidents and ensure risks are not taken on the road.*

*"It is another example of the additional value CCS offers its buyers in connecting them with the solutions they need."*

**Tammy Carter, Head of Fleet at Crown Commercial Service**

### High inclusion for SME suppliers

The marketplace for vehicle telematics includes many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and this agreement represents our commitment to supporting SMEs. 90% of the suppliers awarded places on the agreement are SMEs.

### Innovations and benefits

- a simple 1 lot structure, encompassing a wide range of vehicle telematics solutions in a single, consolidated framework
- a simple order form has been introduced to support the customer journey by giving easier access to the full range of products available under the agreement
- specific solutions are now available for:
  - specialist and heavy vehicles including those utilised for waste management, winter maintenance or other Streetscene operations
  - buyers undertaking covert operations and blue light related fleet and incident management

To find out more about Vehicle Telematics Solutions visit: [www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/agreements/RM6315](http://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/agreements/RM6315)

# “Quartix isn’t just a fleet tool”

How **telematics helps** manage a **nationwide fleet**

Telecommunications giant Circtet has over 700 vehicles tracked with Quartix. National Fleet Manager Lawrence McPherson, has the daily task of supervising drivers in multiple depots across the UK. Lawrence’s long-term goal is to develop his drivers’ skills and, in the process, reduce the costs and carbon emissions associated with bad driving.

His long-term goal is to develop his drivers’ skills and, in the process, reduce the costs and carbon emissions associated with bad driving.



A Circtet Van and Driver

## A deep dive into driver performance

Lawrence started by saying, “The biggest challenge is making sure we know where all vehicles are and that they have been driven as safely as possible and that our risk is as low as we can manage. As a fleet manager, it’s helped us, excuse the pun, drive down any kind of poor scoring or poor driving habits through being able to see the driver’s score.”

The Quartix vehicle tracking system assigns drivers a daily driving score to each of Circtet’s drivers, based on their speed, acceleration and braking indexes. These scores are colour-coded and make it easy for Lawrence to see who is driving well and who needs coaching.

He added, “We manage 600 drivers. We look at all the scores for the last month, looking to find the drivers in red, the poor scorers. We’ll have conversations with them and the good drivers will be

rewarded. It’s actually helping the drivers too, in understanding how they can improve their driving and for us better drivers means lower insurance premiums.”

Read more about how Quartix’s driver scores are calculated.

Visit: <https://www.quartix.com/en-gb/driver-scores-guide>

CLICK HERE



Vehicle	Driving time	Distance (miles)	Speed score	Acceleration index	Braking index	Driving style score
Q431 SW - Renault Trafic	05:40	226.1	76.0	47%	100%	45.0
Q470 SW - Fiat Ducato	14:55	411.0	77.0	58.0	59.0	60.0
S461 QTX - Audi	0:01	0:01.0	14.7	16.9	22.9	49.0
M51 QTX - Volvo	02:00	1:02.0	58.9	22.5	19.0	61.0
Q461 SW - BMW 520D	19:00	322.7	42.9	14.4	8.4	64.4
Q470 SW - Mercedes Sprinter	19:25	2:25.0	54.4	1.9	11.0	64.0
Q471 SW - Renault Midlum	04:30	90.1	68.0	0.1	0.0	69.0

Screenshot showing a driver’s scores

## Focusing on speed

Although speed is a big part of driver performance, the Quartix system allows Lawrence to narrow in on this one specific element that contributes the most to vehicle wear and tear and potential accidents. With Quartix’s Safe Speed Database integrated into all driving style reports, Lawrence knows if his drivers are operating within legal speed limits, but also if they are driving safely.

Evaluating driving behaviour by just using the legal speed limit sometimes isn’t enough. Often, the safe speed for a road

may be well below the legal limit. This is particularly true on rural roads where data shows a high rate of fatal accidents despite very few drivers exceeding the legal limit on such roads.

Quartix provides a better picture using the average speed drivers use on a particular road versus the ‘legal’ speed. With this information, Lawrence can coach his drivers on safer driving, potentially saving lives.

“The drivers understand that, although the speed limit for the road might be 60 miles an hour,

if there’s a sharp right-hand corner, they shouldn’t be doing 60 miles an hour. So, it’s all about education,” says Lawrence.

Read more about the Safe Speed Database.

Visit: <https://www.quartix.com/en-gb/vehicle-tracking/safespeed>

CLICK HERE





Screenshot showing a driver's daily speed report and score

### Looking at the bigger picture

Lawrence went on to say, "Quartix isn't just a fleet tool; the system has options that can help our whole company. We use it to check parking claims and mileage when reviewing our fuel spend. Our operations teams use it for many different reasons."

Quartix makes it easy for Circet to analyse their accumulated vehicle tracking data by generating simple to use reports that help make sense of mileage and fuel costs, while reducing administrative tasks. Not only does this make them more efficient and productive, it has the added benefit of improving their customer service.

He added, "Quartix is key to improving driver safety, but we also like knowing if a driver hasn't reported for their next job. We can

use the system to make sure that if a customer is expecting us at a certain time, we'll be there at that time. If we're not, we can investigate and find out why."

### Reducing their carbon footprint

Not to be overlooked is Quartix's ability to help Lawrence and Circet reduce their impact on the environment, something that is becoming an increasing concern to all businesses, no matter the size of their fleet. With Quartix, it's easy to see where emissions can be reduced, either through curbing excessive idling or eliminating unnecessary driving altogether.

"We have reports we look at to monitor our CO2 output—we can share that with our customers and let them know that we are a company with the welfare of the environment on our minds.

"There are so many positives we can see with Quartix telematics. Without a doubt, businesses benefit from everything they get from the Quartix system. The rewards far outweigh the investment," concluded Lawrence.

**Hear more from Lawrence about working with Quartix and his career as a Fleet Manager on The Fleet Insider podcast.**

**Listen here:**  
<https://thefleetinsider.buzzsprout.com/2179658/13498343-we-doubled-our-fleet-to-600-in-just-a-few-years-lawrence-mcpherson-circet-uk>

**CLICK HERE**



### About Quartix:

Quartix has delivered real-time vehicle tracking and telematics solutions to mobile fleets across the UK, France, the USA and Europe for over 23 years. Businesses choose Quartix because of the cost-efficient solutions that are easy-to-use from installation through reporting. Over 35,000 companies use Quartix solutions to gain actionable insight into vehicle movements, engine usage, driver behaviour, and fuel consumption. ●

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For more information about Quartix, visit: [www.quartix.com/en-gb/](http://www.quartix.com/en-gb/) or call 01686 806663.



## Workshops gear up for the future of emergency vehicles

**Emergency Service vehicles operate as a lifeline to communities across the UK. However, the workshops tasked with repairing and maintaining these fleets are all facing familiar hurdles encountered by their private sector counterparts – a severe shortage of skilled technicians, the integration of new technologies, and notably the rise of electric and hydrogen vehicles.**

Recent statistics reveal a notable shift towards sustainability across the UK's emergency services. Police forces now

boast a collective fleet of 430 electric vehicles operational nationwide, supported by 808 charging stations. In a pioneering move back in 2022, the London Fire Brigade led the charge by introducing the first electric fire engine, marking a significant step towards greener emergency response vehicles. Meanwhile, the introduction of electric ambulances signals another progressive initiative underway in the UK. The first electric ambulance to respond to emergency 999 calls in London went out

on its maiden voyage on New Year's Eve 2024, joining the ranks of the London Ambulance Services' fleet of 160 zero-emission capable vehicles.

The deployment of these fleets highlights a commitment to eco-friendly solutions despite the unique challenges posed by these heavy, specialised vehicles.

For the network of workshops, strategically placed to ensure rapid response times and optimal functionality of the UK's 48,000 police vehicles, 9,500 fire service vehicles, and 8,500 ambulance

vehicles, the transition towards EVs represents a significant shift.

While offering environmental benefits and potential cost savings, they require a distinct skill set for maintenance and repair, and the significance of this change must be recognised.

Alongside an emphasis on upskilling vehicle technicians working within emergency service workshops to help maintain growing fleets of energy-efficient and digitally enabled emergency vehicles, there is a critical need to equip workshop managers with the requisite skill set to navigate the evolving automotive landscape effectively.

For instance, the unique components and maintenance requirements of electric vehicles demand a workforce equipped with advanced skills in electrical engineering, battery technology, and software diagnostics. Bridging this skills gap is crucial to ensure a smooth transition to an electric future, particularly within the emergency services.

Managers must not only equip

themselves with the technical know-how of EVs but also possess the proficiency to effectively steer their teams through this seismic transition.

The Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) predicts a potential shortfall of 4,500 EV qualified TechSafe® technicians by 2029, escalating to 16,000 by 2032. While this reflects the entire aftermarket, emergency services are acutely feeling this skills gap as electric vehicles are increasingly incorporated into fleets.

Alongside training, there is also a requirement for Continuous Professional Development, to ensure qualified technicians remain compliant and up-to-date with the latest advancements in EV and ADAS technology.

The demand for workshop managers to integrate new technologies and maintain a skilled workforce capable of meeting the demands of a rapidly evolving industry is undoubtedly intensifying. To meet this need, Autotech Training, a leading provider of automotive training solutions, including IMI-accredited Levels 1-4 Electric/Hybrid Vehicle training

has spearheaded a Management Development Programme. The two-day course is designed to prepare emergency service workshop managers for the future, as the transition towards EVs, hydrogen vehicles and other advanced digital technologies continues.

*"The next generation of emergency vehicles, which support zero-emission goals, is coming through and it is important that workshop managers are prepared.*

*Our Management Development Programme empowers workshop managers and equips them with the right tools and knowledge to oversee this pivotal transition and uphold the highest standards of operational excellence."*

**Alistair McCrindle, Operations Director for Autotech Training. ●**



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## The force is strong

Nottinghamshire Police adds **100 new Škoda cars** to its emergency fleet

**Nottinghamshire Police has expanded its emergency vehicle fleet with a delivery of 100 new Škodas. The new additions will be used across a range of functions, from neighbourhood and roads policing units to driver training.**

The delivery builds on Notts Police's existing fleet of emergency vehicles – which already includes Škodas – converted for use across a number of functions, some of which were converted under Škoda's all-inclusive turnkey conversion service.

A total of 92 Octavia Estates and eight Superb Estates have been delivered. The Octavias – 1.5 TSI and 2.0 TDI SE Tech models – will be used in response and neighbourhood policing roles, fitted with emergency warning equipment, full livery kit and light bar on the roof. They will also be used by driver training teams along with the Superb Estates – all in Sportline Plus 2.0 TSI 280 DSG 4x4 spec –

which will be used in dog units and road policing roles.

Dog units come with bespoke kennel conversions, developed by Pressfab EVO Limited – one of Škoda's approved converters – in conjunction with Nottinghamshire Police to meet their specific requirements, with specialist air conditioning and blue light fitment. Road policing cars get a full blue light fit, ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) and matrix board.

Škoda cars can be specified by emergency fleets for Ambulance, Police and Fire and Rescue teams across the UK via Škoda's bespoke emergency service converters. This includes integration of the emergency services' communications platform within the infotainment touchscreen and 360-degree lighting. Individual conversion requirements can also be catered for with Škoda's approved specialist converters.

*"Nottinghamshire Police has opted to add more Škodas to the fleet due to their performance within the blue light market and reliability on our current fleet. We have found the manufacturer and its models to be reliable, operationally responsive and dependable for our ongoing commitment to safety and the officers who are driving these vehicles under demanding conditions."*

**Rachael Whinham, Fleet Manager at Nottinghamshire Police. ●**



**FOR  
EV**  
FOR  
FLEETS

Looking to **electrify** your **fleet**?  
Make your move to EV easy.



Lindsay Wallace, Executive Director,  
Sales & Innovations Europe, FOR EV.

**Experts in our field, our team at FOR EV makes fleet electrification simple, rewarding and risk-free.**

Our new 'FOR Fleet' service focuses on all your EV needs, providing a simple end-to-end solution to help achieve your net zero ambitions.

With no upfront costs and no hidden fees, we assess, define, deliver, and operate your electrification needs, so that you can focus 100% on your business while knowing the future of your fleet is in good hands.

To make your EV transition as smooth and stress-free as possible, we promise:

**To keep it simple.**

Our expert team deals with everything from planning and installation to operation and maintenance, so you don't have to. We're not fans of making things more complex than they should be, which is why our hassle-free service is

managed in one single contract, meaning you can access everything you need in one place.

**To save you money.**

Our unique funding model is designed to deliver long-term savings, so you'll never have to worry about hidden fees or upfront costs. Instead, we'll pre-agree a cost per kW and charge you quarterly based on your anticipated electricity usage, making your journey as rewarding as possible. And with technology updates included in your contract, outdated assets will never be a problem.

**To help achieve your net zero ambitions.**

Our state-of-the-art software supports your ESG reporting needs, and we'll only ever use 100% accredited renewable energy, helping your operation become more environmentally sustainable.

**A best-in-class experience.**

Customer service remains at the heart of everything we do. Our industry-leading technology is scalable and adaptable, offering a future-proofed solution. And we're on-hand 24/7, all year round, to provide peace of mind and offer our support whenever you need it. Our fleet customers can also enjoy open access to our growing public charging network across Scotland.

**To meet your unique business needs.**

We value long-term relationships and understand every customer is different. No matter how big or small your fleet is, our flexible approach allows us to work closely with you to fully understand your business needs and provide the best possible EV charging solution.

We're currently delivering a landmark project that will support a large national organisation's fleet transition to electric, based on their current and future vehicle needs. We installed their new charging hub in just 9 weeks, and will be operating and maintaining their infrastructure for years to come. The hub offers a blend of AC and DC charging, using industry-leading technology, and its weatherproof body and special coating allows it to cope with anything the changeable UK climate can throw at it.

The project also included a full route analysis to provide the optimum mix of charge points, and a programme of EV education and training for the organisation's staff. This will lead to a smoother transition and increased awareness while addressing any concerns staff may have, such as range anxiety.

We work with fleets of all types and sizes. Whatever the nature of your project, we always aim to deliver maximum impact while limiting any disruption to your business operation. ●

**Ready to take the next step in your EV fleet transition?**

Contact us now for a no-obligation chat to find out more about our 'FOR Fleet' service!

Visit: [www.forev.co.uk/for-fleet/](http://www.forev.co.uk/for-fleet/) or email our team at [info@forev.co.uk](mailto:info@forev.co.uk)

# Orica UK has added four new Volvo FMX 460 6x4 rigids to its fleet

**Mining services business Orica UK has continued a long-standing partnership with Volvo Trucks by adding four new Volvo FMX 460 6x4 rigids to its fleet. The new trucks are equipped with MEMU mixing tank bodies that are used to make explosives for the mining and quarry industries.**

The business has been using the Volvo chassis for its specialist trucks for more than 20 years, largely due to the reliability of the engines, plus the comfort of the cab and the continued support from Volvo Trucks dealer network.

Ian Gregory, Specialist-Operations Support at Orica UK, says: "We first switched to Volvo in 2001 and have stuck with them since then. Today, all 15 trucks that we run in our UK operation are Volvos.

"In fact, our first Volvo chassis is still in service and just passed its MOT earlier this month at 23 years of age! We have never had a major issue which, considering we have the engine

constantly running to power the PTO when we're on-site, is pretty impressive."

The latest ultra-durable Volvo FMX trucks have been supplied by Paul McNicholas, Customer Solutions Manager at Thomas Hardie Commercials, who has played an instrumental role in the project.

"Paul and the team at Thomas Hardie have given us great service from start to finish, they did everything in their power to get us the trucks as quickly as possible," adds Gregory. "Two of the FMX chassis were sent direct to France for body builds, and two were refurbished in the UK. We're very pleased with the final product."

Each finished truck comes with full ADR certification and is powered by a Euro-6 compliant Step E diesel engine, producing 460 hp and a peak torque of 2,300 Nm. This is driven via a 12-speed automated I-Shift gearbox, which constantly evaluates information regarding speed, weight, road grade and torque demand to apply precision to every shift.

Orica UK has also opted for Volvo's X-High chassis to unlock additional ground clearance, crucial for its off-road operations in quarries across the UK and Western Isles.

"We used to specify a manual transmission, as so much of the work is off-road but the guys are all very complimentary about the I-Shift gearboxes on the newer models," says Gregory. "Making sure our drivers have a



truck they are comfortable with and enjoy driving is very important to us."

The sleeper cabs on the new FMX trucks come with improved storage possibilities, including a large compartment underneath the raised bed and upper rear storage with LED panels in the compartment dividers. The interior also features a dynamic 12-inch high-resolution instrument display with a user-friendly interface, plus a nine-inch side display providing infotainment and navigation. The specification is completed with an upgraded nine-tonne front axle and Alcoa Dura-Bright alloys.

Each new truck is expected to clock in the region of 80,000km per year.

Orica UK is part of Orica Group, one of the world's leading mining and infrastructure solutions providers. Dealing with the production and supply of explosives, blasting systems, mining chemicals and geotechnical monitoring as well as cutting-edge digital solutions. ●

## New fleet of waste vehicles ready to roll out in Portsmouth

**A fleet of 21 new vehicles will soon be collecting household waste and recycling in Portsmouth as part of the city council's decision to bring these services in-house.**

The people's collection rounds and services will remain the same. However, a new online portal will be introduced which will allow people to easily find their collection days for household, food, garden waste, and recycling in one calendar and make a missed collection report in one click.

When the current contract with collectors Biffa ends, the council staff will take over

the delivery of recycling, food waste, garden waste, and household waste. Around 90 staff will transfer to council employment and operate the new fleet of vehicles. These vehicles have in-cab devices that record collections and flag any collection issues in real-time.

Cllr Dave Ashmore, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, visited the Dennis Eagle factory in Warwick to see the first of the new collection vehicles coming off the production line.

17 of the new vehicles will have electric bin lifts, which typically reduce fuel consumption by around 8%. This is a significant reduction in environmental impact. The new vehicles will continue to use hydrotreated vegetable oil fuel, which produces low carbon emissions in line with the council's target of achieving 'net zero' operations by 2030.

*"By bringing these services in-house and investing in 21 new vehicles, we are ensuring Portsmouth residents receive excellent waste and recycling services. The current fleet is over 12 years old and coming to the end of its working life. So, we have committed £4.7m to replace all the vehicles to minimize potential breakdowns and disruption. There won't be any changes to collection rounds, so residents shouldn't notice any difference, aside from the new vehicles and staff wearing city council uniforms."*

**Cllr Dave Ashmore, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services. ●**





# TTC awarded an industry-first 10-year contract with South West police

Trusted relationship secures tenure to deliver in-person and online driver rehabilitation courses to keep road users and pedestrians safe



Picture for illustration purposes only

**The UK's leader in delivering driver rehabilitation courses, TTC, has been awarded an industry-first 10-year contract by multiple police forces across the South West, including Devon & Cornwall, Avon & Somerset and Wiltshire.**

As a single provider to South West forces, TTC will provide inclusive access to a suite of courses for business and leisure drivers from the region, either in person or online. However, crucially, the company will also collaborate directly with each police force to support their specific road safety initiatives, including Devon & Cornwall's Vizion Zero ambition.

*"Our relationship with South West police forces began in 2011 and we are immensely proud to remain their trusted training partner today and for the next 10 years. Whilst the quality of the courses we deliver form the foundations of this relationship, our ability to provide equality of choice to support the diversity of their community is crucial. A comprehensive choice of classroom venues helps to accommodate those living in rural locations, with flexible course timings and online learning ensuring accessibility for all."*

**Sharon Haynes, Police Director at TTC.**



*"We pride ourselves on delivering a consistently high-quality service which directly makes a positive impact to improving road safety across the UK, and this contract win is a testament to that commitment. This is a huge boost for our business, recognising the dedication and professionalism of our trainers, our operational staff, and our management team. We all look forward to working collaboratively with each force to support their road safety and community engagement needs for the future."*

**Jim Kirkwood, Deputy Chair at TTC.**

TTC is the UK's largest provider of UK Road Offender Education (UKROEd) accredited courses. Nationwide it has over 600 trainers who have been recruited at a local level to ensure they have community knowledge. TTC courses offered to South West motorists through the contract include 'Speed Awareness', 'Motorway Awareness', 'Safe and Considerate Driving', 'What's Driving Us' and 'Rider Risk Awareness' – a course designed specifically for motorcyclists.

TTC's focus on bringing social value to all its police force partners is unmatched. In addition to trainers being recruited locally, helping to boost the area's employment rate, it utilises community-based venues, where possible, to generate revenue to reinvest back into the region. Members of TTC's trainer community are also active volunteers supporting community and environmental projects.●

To find out more visit: [www.thettcgroup.com](http://www.thettcgroup.com)

# St Helens Borough Council charges towards net zero with electric fleet upgrade



Councillors and council officials with some of the new electric fleet (Image: St Helens Council)

## A suite of new electric vehicles has joined St Helens Borough Council's growing green fleet, from small vans to recycling collection vehicles.

The fleet's additions are six Ford E Transit electric panel vans, one utility vehicle, 23 Toyota Proace light commercial electric vehicles and two kerbside sort electric recycling vehicles, which are among the first of their kind purchased in England.

The growing green fleet of 34 electric vehicles and one truly pioneering hydrogen fuel cell electric refuse collection vehicle - custom made by German manufacturer Faun Zoeller and the first in operation in the UK are helping St Helens Borough Council towards achieving its target of net zero carbon

by 2040.

Procurement of the vehicles is part of ongoing plan to replace ageing council vehicles with electric and low-emission alternatives, saving money and cutting carbon emissions by 100s of tonnes every year.

To facilitate the charging of the new electric vehicles St Helens Borough Council has installed 25 EV charging points in its Hardshaw Brook Depot as the first phase of its EV charging infrastructure.

The move supports the council's ambitious Climate Action Plan adopted last year, which set out an initial list of 134 activities that will help the borough to achieve its net zero carbon targets.

Alongside the reduced emissions, the modernisation of the fleet is helping to increase service resilience and efficiency, with less downtime for repairs and reduced maintenance costs, which had begun to spiral with many vehicles long past their industry standard lifespans.

And it's providing opportunities for staff to learn and develop new skills that will serve them well as the switch to sustainable transport continues.

*"This replacement programme is supporting our services to undertake wider modernisation and provide flexibility for the future. It will also ensure that our workforce has access to modern and fit for purpose vehicles and equipment, increasing service efficiency and cutting maintenance costs dramatically. "And by adopting more electric and hydrogen vehicles we continue our transition to a low carbon fleet in a managed way, taking further significant steps towards our ambitious target of net zero emissions by 2040."*

**Councillor Andy Bowden, St Helens Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Environmental Services. ●**

## Vinyl makeover for Sandwell's new waste and recycling fleet

### Cannock-based refuse vehicle specialists Creative Vehicle Wrapping Ltd (CVW) has given Sandwell Borough Council's brand-new waste and recycling collections fleet a vinyl wrap makeover.

The 22 vehicles, a combination of twin-pack and standard 26t RCVs, will replace existing vehicles as part of Serco's ground-breaking 25-year contract to provide household food and garden waste

collections, recycling, and street cleansing services in the borough.

Tony Marston, Senior Contract Manager said, "With our new fleet I was keen to move away from the traditional method of advertising service information. My objective was to find a way of promoting key messages in an impactful and fresh approach to drive behavioural change and vehicle wraps fitted the brief perfectly."

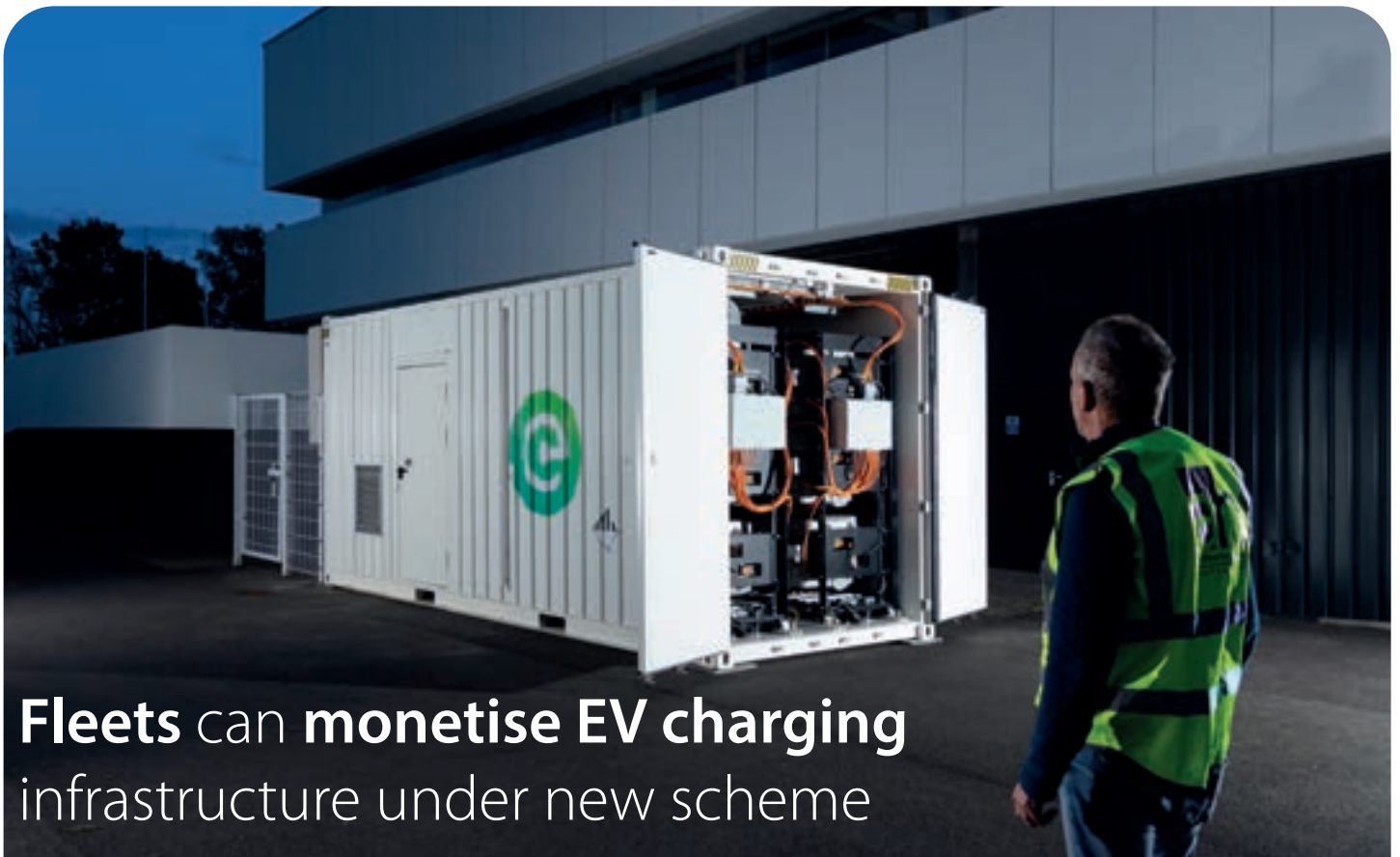
The entire fleet was wrapped at CVW's extensive premises. Each vehicle features one of three eye-catching designs with messages to encourage residents to recycle, highlighting the provision of green waste and small electricals collections.

Jonathan Thomas, Director, CVW: "Our

team worked closely with Serco to ensure that their design concepts could be applied perfectly onto the vehicles. We also delivered each vehicle back to the council depot. We are thrilled that Serco and Sandwell Council are pleased with the vehicles and we hope they help to boost recycling rates in the Borough." ●



To find out more visit: [www.creativevehiclewrapping.co.uk](http://www.creativevehiclewrapping.co.uk)



## Fleets can monetise EV charging infrastructure under new scheme

### EV charging infrastructure can become a revenue source for commercial fleet operators and truck dealerships thanks to a new incentive programme.

The Association of Fleet Professionals (AFP) is currently exploring ways that its members such as DPD and Royal Mail can share the EV charging infrastructure at their depots. Reciprocal arrangements where operators can use each other's charge points can help improve productivity, extend EV range, and reduce costs.

However, van and truck operators can also easily monetise their chargers, according to energy storage experts, Connected Energy.

The new Demand Flexibility Service (DFS) from the National Grid incentivises businesses to reduce their demand on the grid during peak periods. This means that companies can get paid for using less energy. The aim is to help the electricity network to flatten out spikes and significantly reduces the risk of blackouts. EV chargers add significant load to the grid – and this will grow as more high-capacity chargers are deployed to service

trucks and buses, or to rapid charge cars and vans. However, by pairing these chargers with a battery energy storage system (BESS), fleets can still charge their EVs while also reducing the amount of grid energy they consume during peak periods.

*"This could be a real game-changer for fleets,"* said Nigel Dent, head of sales at leading BESS provider Connected Energy. *"The modelling we've already seen for truck depots and HGV service centres indicates that companies could earn up to £15,000 a year by using a BESS to participate in DFS and other schemes."* DFS runs each winter from November to March, with National Grid designating at least 12 periods of time known as 'events', when it will ask participants to stop drawing energy from the network. These will occur at times when demand is exceptionally high, usually between 4pm – 7pm.

Each event could last up to four hours, but a business doesn't have to participate for the full duration and the minimum length is 30 minutes per event. They get paid for the length of time they take part and the amount by which their energy consumption is reduced. National Grid

has quoted this as £3,000 per megawatt-hour (MWH).

*"Commercial fleet operators and truck dealerships are going to have to install high-capacity charging stations to support the transition to electric vans and HGVs,"* added Nigel. *"By pairing them with a BESS and taking part in these flexibility initiatives, they can transform this from a necessary expense into a return on investment."*

Connected Energy designs and produces E-STOR, which uses batteries from end-of-life EVs and gives them a second life in energy storage. These 300kW systems are used across Europe to support EV charging, generate revenue, and optimise on-site renewables.

*"A fleet depot or truck dealership is an ideal participant in reducing load as they're more likely to be charging at set times, often overnight,"* said Nigel. *"Trucks need high-capacity chargers, typically 150kW or 350kW. By using a BESS you offset your energy use without actually having to turn off the charger. You can continue to charge the vehicle for that hour without drawing from the grid, meaning you can claim under DFS without impacting your operations."* ●

Connected Energy has recently released a new whitepaper on the benefits of battery energy storage on EV high powered charging sites. To download it, visit: <https://landing.connected-energy.co.uk/break-power-barriers-with-battery-energy-storage>





Pictured: The new Romaquip fleet at North Devon Council with Matthew Patanden (UK Sales Manager, Romaquip), Jeffrey Bennett (Southern Operations Manager, SFS), Councillor Ian Roome (Leader of North Devon Council), Steve Howlett (Fleet Contract Manager, North Devon Council), Mark Kentell (Head of Environmental Enhancement, North Devon Council)

## North Devon welcomes new recycling

### A convoy of 16 brand new kerbside recycling vehicles has arrived in North Devon ready to carry out weekly collections across the district.

The vehicles, all manufactured by Romaquip, have been supplied by the council's vehicle and workshop partner, Specialist Fleet Services Ltd (SFS). In September 2021, North Devon Council joined forces with Somerset West and Taunton Council in a procurement exercise and awarded a 7-year contract to SFS for the provision and management of over 200 vehicles.

Romaquip Kerb-Sort vehicles are designed ergonomically to maximise the range and volume of materials that can be collected directly from people's homes. There are seven fully enclosed compartments, to eliminate the risk of litter and to enable every category of material to be stored separately.

When safe to do so the vehicle can even be loaded from both sides simultaneously and to optimise load space plastics, cans and cardboard can be automatically compacted.

Bob Sweetland, Managing Director, SFS said: *"We are pleased to be able to provide North Devon Council with this fleet of vehicles, which will help to maximise the amount of recycling that is collected, in an efficient and safe way."*

Matt Patanden, UK Sales Manager, Romaquip: *"Romaquip is extremely pleased and grateful for the opportunity to supply the new fleet into North Devon District Council (NDDC) through SFS. Both NDDC & SFS are long standing customers of ours and we appreciate the continued support we receive from both parties. These vehicles, from our 2024 range, will help to future proof collections as they are configured to address the ever-changing recycling habits*

*of residents."*

SFS celebrated its 30-year anniversary in 2023 and has an extensive track record in delivering fleet and workshop management solutions to local authorities across the UK. The company runs a nationwide network of workshops and operates its own specialist vehicle hire division, CTS Hire, for the provision of short to medium term municipal vehicles.

*"The arrival of our new fleet marks a significant step in our commitment to sustainability. These vehicles enhance our recycling efforts, ensuring a more efficient and eco-friendly collection process for the benefit of our community and the environment."*

**Councillor Ian Roome, Leader of North Devon Council. ●**

For more information visit: [www.sfs.co.uk](http://www.sfs.co.uk)



## Brigade Electronics' award-winning Backeye®360 receives an AI upgrade

**Brigade Electronics has added artificial intelligence technology to its award-winning Backeye®360 vehicle safety solution.**

The 360-degree four camera system, which has been a best-selling product for the business since it launched in 2013, has been enhanced using state-of-the-art AI that can identify humans in vehicle blind spots.

The intelligent camera system is designed to assist with manoeuvrability in challenging situations by providing drivers with a complete 360-degree view of their vehicle in a single image. The system combines images from four cameras placed around the vehicle and provides a real-time view on a monitor inside the cab. The result is a 'bird's-eye view' of the vehicle and surrounding area.

- **Advanced AI Technology:** employs sophisticated algorithms to identify humans in real-time, alerting drivers to potential risk.
- **High Definition Imaging:** offers a 1080p HD 360° image, providing

comprehensive view of the surrounding area in a single image.

- **Multiple Viewing Options:** includes a 3D view which provides a higher quality and definition of the scene and allows the driver to see the relevant image when performing manoeuvres, such as reversing.
- **Easy Calibration:** features an automatic calibration process, streamlining installation and set-up.
- **Broad Compatibility:** designed to integrate seamlessly with Brigade's range of HD monitors and digital video recorders, making it adaptable to a diverse range of vehicles and applications.

The Backeye®360 AI has been met with enthusiasm from industry professionals, drawing considerable interest during the customer trials in the UK and Europe. Brigade's forward-thinking approach to safety continues to establish industry standards, with the Backeye®360 AI marking a significant innovation in the UK and European markets.

*"By enhancing our Backeye®360 with AI technology, we can provide even more reassurance to operators that they are being supported with the very safest solutions on the market. Our innovative systems actively prevent incidents while providing support in critical situations. Brigade's AI 360 can be effortlessly incorporated into a vehicle's existing infrastructure for a seamless upgrade and is compatible with our full range of AI-powered devices."*

**Peter Squire, Managing Director at Brigade Electronics in the UK. ●**

To find out more visit: <https://brigade-electronics.com>



## South Derbyshire District Council trials hydrogen refuse vehicles

**Following a bid for funding, South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC) was awarded a grant via the UK's agency for innovation, Innovate UK, and Local Enterprise Partnership D2N2 to conduct a six month trial on two hydrogen dual fuel refuse vehicles, and the supporting temporary refuelling infrastructure. The vehicles, converted to run on hydrogen dual fuel, can significantly cut harmful emissions and contribute to carbon neutral fleet operation.**

The objectives of the project were clear: SDDC has committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Three key areas identified as fundamental to achieving this are renewable energy, transport and buildings.

When considering options for carbon reduction with transport, one challenge became apparent. Although vans and standard vehicles could transition to electric, the very rural, elongated operational area or South Derbyshire means that electric Refuse Collection Vehicles are currently not practical for

the Council to operate on its fleet, and are potentially far too costly to become replacement vehicles.

The Council liaised with Toyota Manufacturing UK Ltd, at their vehicle manufacturing plant located at Burnaston in Derbyshire, to discuss their own journey using hydrogen technology to fuel vehicles, and engaged with ULEMCo who are experts in Hydrogen Solutions for Transport. ULEMCo is a leading developer of technology that enables commercial vehicles to convert current diesel combustion engines to run on hydrogen-diesel dual fuel.

Through engagement with ULEMCo, the Council recognised The Procurement Partnership Limited (TPPL) as an organisation capable of supporting a unique technical procurement process for not only the conversion of vehicles to hydrogen hybrid technology but also the infrastructure to support them.

*"Our inclusion on the TPPL framework has been really important to our success in supplying hydrogen transport solutions for the public sector",* said Amanda Lyne,

Managing Director of ULEMCo. *"TPPL helps SMEs meet procurement processes and to get highly innovative approaches and technology into real-world use.*

*"In this case, the two refuse trucks are already in use and are therefore saving many hundreds of tonnes of GHG emissions. As a trial, this points the way to helping councils like South Derbyshire to deliver on their net-zero targets."*

Following a comprehensive process, Fuel Cell Systems was identified as the preferred hydrogen refuelling supplier to support the trial. The plan is to monitor the performance of the vehicles during the trial period both technically and operationally, including assessment of driver use, public perception, and procurement challenges. A 'playbook' can be written for other district councils when considering this solution to help them decarbonise.

The grant supported the Council with the cost of the ULEMCo hydrogen dual fuel conversion works to two new Dennis Eagle refuse vehicles, procured prior to the trial. The grant also supports the

additional cost of hydrogen compared with diesel. The trial will run for five months and commenced at the beginning of December 2023. The Council has already realised a 40% reduction in tailpipe emissions and diesel displacement compared with conventionally fuelled versions operating on fleet.

Whilst deployment of the infrastructure and vehicles provided various challenges due to the new technology involved, the need for handholding and specific operator training was critical and scoped into the procurement specification, supported by TPPL.

Matt Holford, Head of Environmental Services at SDDC, commented: *"The Council couldn't have done it without TPPL's expertise and support in this industry. The support received was fantastic throughout a complex and lengthy process."*

The temporary mobile refuelling solution has been provided via Fuel Cell Systems limited and BOC, both of which are appointed to the TPPL and Highland Council hydrogen infrastructure and supply procurement solution.

Tom Chicken, CTO of Fuel Cell Systems commented *"Vehicle trials such as the one at SDDC, are key to demonstrating hydrogen as a practical solution for commercial vehicle fleets. Our hydrogen refuelling products are modular, scalable and affordable, enabling councils across the UK to conduct trials before making a significant investment. The support of TPPL has been invaluable to facilitate this"*

D2N2 is one of 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships working across England to support business growth and level up productivity. Its ambition is to improve the productivity of the Derbyshire economy and the standard of living of residents in the area.

*"We were delighted to be approached by South Derbyshire District Council to support them with this innovative project. Our procurement solutions and services have been developed to support local authorities with decarbonisation initiatives. We hope the output from this trial will help other district councils make an informed evaluation on the viability of hydrogen as a fuel source for their own refuse fleets."*

**James Brennan, Managing Director of TPPL. ●**

For more information visit: [www.tppl.co.uk](http://www.tppl.co.uk)

## New rescue vans carry innovation and efficiency for fire service



**Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue have seven new Technical Rescue Vehicles (TRVs) – vans that carry specialised equipment for incidents such as water rescue and animal rescue.**

The service relies on a whole host of vehicles and equipment which all play vital roles in operations. The previous rescue units had reached the end of their serviceable life, and have been replaced with bigger and better vehicles that are also more efficient.

Designed with input from firefighters and incident data, the new vehicles can even carry heavy rescue equipment used to shore up buildings to prevent building collapses.

Cllr Lindsey Cawrey, executive councillor for Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, said: *"When new equipment and vehicles are needed, we're constantly looking for what best meets the needs of our fire crews and the communities they serve."*

*"Investing in these TRVs means that a wider selection of equipment can be transported to incidents, and without the need for trailers, making them more efficient. They can also be used more flexibly for a much wider range of incidents, offering greater resilience."*

Chief Fire Officer for Lincolnshire, Mark Baxter, said:

*"These vehicles are more efficient on every level and have been much*

*improved to include lots of new features. They weigh in at 5.5t and allow for a wider collection of tools and equipment. Three of them carry equipment that can be used to provide a shelter with support and welfare functions at incidents, such as generators and IT equipment.*

*"They can also carry larger inflatable boats on board for rescue from water and animal rescue. Previously, they needed to be towed behind the TRVs."*

*Other items that can be carried in the TRVs include Rescue Sleds (an additional option to rescue from water when boats are unsuitable), compressed air cylinders and spares, shoring props, timber for bracing and jacks for lifting heavy vehicles including HGVs."*

Mark added:

*"The vehicles have been ergonomically designed to make things easier for our crews with special shelving to help with getting to equipment, enhanced and additional lighting together with 360 cameras, an intelligent charging system, and a platform lift to assist with the handling of heavy equipment too."*

The new TRVs will be stationed strategically around the county to provide maximum coverage and optimum response. They attend specialised activities such as RTCs involving heavy vehicles, incidents involving large animals or water-related incidents where there is a danger to life and also enhance and support general operations. ●



## Pocket Box introduces **asset management** to fleet software solution

**Pocket Box has enhanced its fleet software solution to meet growing demand for an all-in-one system to manage vehicles, drivers and associated equipment.**

The new asset module within Pocket Box Fleet will provide added functionality to help customers maintain, monitor and protect a wide range of powered, unpowered and portable equipment within their operations.

*"Ever since the launch of Pocket Box Fleet, our customers have been asking for a simple way to manage other equipment alongside their fleet operation,"* explains Jim Finnegan, CEO of Pocket Box Ltd. *"Our latest software development will make it possible to bring everything together into a single system, so they have complete visibility and control over their physical resources."*

The asset module is highly flexible, so it can be tailored to manage any type of equipment, with comprehensive maintenance, compliance and inventory management features. This can include powered equipment such as plant, forklift trucks and materials handling products, as well as unpowered assets including trailers, containers, skips and tools.

Using the Pocket Box Fleet app, drivers will now be able to undertake a tool audit at the same time as daily vehicle and equipment safety checks to pinpoint the last known location and condition of smaller items that have been allocated to them. This will enable fleets to keep track of portable assets to ensure mobile teams have the tools needed to complete their jobs, while minimising the impact of lost and stolen equipment.

*"Our aim to deliver a digitised solution to eliminate labour-intensive operational*

*processes that are causing an unnecessary headache to SME businesses. By bringing together the management of vehicles, equipment and drivers, our customers can save both time and money, while achieving the highest levels of health and safety compliance. The asset module will also enable us to introduce new security features moving forward that will help companies combat the issue of equipment theft,"* adds Finnegan.

Pocket Box is a cloud-and app-based software company that has developed a comprehensive eco-system for the consumer motoring, automotive, fleet, road transport and construction sectors. The feature-rich eco-system is designed for ease-of-use and to support multiple integrations with third-party technology partners, enabling Pocket Box to deliver advanced vehicle, driver and equipment management solutions. ●

For more information visit: <https://pocketbox.co.uk/>



# Pinpointers enhances fleet and video telematics offering with link-up with Queclink Wireless Solutions

**Pinpointers, a leading provider of vehicle tracking and video telematics solutions, has expanded its hardware partnership with Queclink Wireless Solutions.**

The latest agreement will cover the provision of the recently launched CV200 smart dashcam, enhancing the company's fleet proposition with a highly flexible, all-in-one camera and tracking device.

*"Our priority is always user experience, so we needed a robust and consistent dashcam that works out of the box first time,"* explains Jon Pope, Sales Director at Pinpointers. *"We have undertaken extensive testing within the video telematics marketplace over a number of years and found the CV200 AI dashcam unmatched in terms of reliability, functionality and affordability."*

The CV200 is 4G device that delivers fleet and video telematics functionality in a single unit, combining AI features with the ability to add a choice of secondary cameras and integrate with the vehicle's CAN bus system. During the testing phase, Pinpointers identified a number of unique features including equal priority for tracking and video data; video retrieval when the ignition is turned off; and



instant device start-up.

*"We have a longstanding relationship with Queclink Wireless Solutions, based on their ability to deliver quality products backed by unrivalled support. Their global presence also means they can provide certified solutions for different international markets. As a result, the CV200 will be a core component of our expansion into the United States and the Philippines this year,"* adds

Pope. Vernon Bonser, UK Sales Director at Queclink Wireless Solutions commented: *"We are working with a growing number of telematics service providers to support their fleet and video technology needs. As hardware partner of choice, we provide 4G vehicle telematics, asset tracking and dash cameras, which are underpinned by first-class technical and operational support."* ●

## Fleets are being urged by the Association of Fleet Professionals (AFP) to check that cars and vans are delivered with the correct registration plates

**The industry body has seen an apparent rise in the number of vehicles being mistakenly supplied with plates showing the wrong registration, or even with different plates on the front and rear.**

Paul Hollick, chair at the industry body

said: *"We're hearing from our members of an increasing incidence of this problem. It's quite an easy thing for fleets to miss on delivery and there are reports of cars and vans driving around on the wrong plates for months or even years."*

*"In some cases, the error only comes to light when fleets find that the vehicle has been stopped by the police. Operators need to start identifying the problem earlier on by making their own checks on delivery."*

He said that the error was being made by manufacturers or dealers when the vehicle was being prepared for delivery.

*"Really, this is something that should be picked up during the pre-delivery inspection but, from what we are hearing, this is happening less and less often. If a problem subsequently arises and there is a financial implication, there is then the question of who is to blame? Certainly, in those circumstances, dealers don't seem too keen*

*to take responsibility."*

Paul said that the issue was likely to be tackled in a revised version of the AFP's Dealer Standard, designed to ensure that fleet cars and vans are delivered in excellent condition to the end user, who is then shown the fundamentals of how to operate the vehicle and treated courteously.

*"The original Dealer Standard has been pretty successful since it was launched in 2022, having been adopted by several major dealer groups, and we are looking to re-examine the document in the light of newer developments such as the registration plates issue."*

*"Certainly, there is a perception within the AFP that dealer relationships with fleets have probably worsened in recent times and could be improved. The Dealer Standard could play a useful role in changing this situation."* ●



## 5 ways to upskill as a HGV fleet manager

**Working as a transport manager is a busy job, and it can sometimes be hard to see ways to advance and upskill your career whilst managing a fleet. Keeping refreshed and learning new skills via courses can be a great way to both stay up to date and upskill as a fleet manager – and in fact, it's all doable whilst maintaining work full time. But you might want help in working out which courses to do, and how long they will take. Training specialists Driver Hire break it down to help you take the next step in your management career.**

### 1. Do regular refresher courses

Legislation is always changing in the transport industry, and to be a competent and respected transport manager with up-to-date knowledge, it's important to take refresher courses. The Traffic Commissioners recommend a refresher every couple of years, to ensure your skills stay sharp. It's a great way to maintain a good OCRS and stay compliant with your operator licence, as well as learning new legislation to help you be a better and more assured transport manager.

A Transport Manager Refresher course takes two days, and as a bonus, counts 14 hours towards your Driver CPC training.

### 2. Sign up for an Operator licence Awareness Training (OLAT) course

When working as a transport fleet manager, the responsibility falls to you to keep up to date with all legal compliance related to the fleet. One of the best ways to ensure that you have all the current knowledge is to do an OLAT course. This type of course isn't essential, but is recommended to be completed every few years to help managers have a full understanding of relevant legislation. It's also useful for anyone else involved in your transport operation, ensuring that everyone has a common point of view, helping to avoid penalties for the operation and the people working in it. OLAT is a great way to invest in your career and protect your operator licence.

This course takes one day, and counts 7 hours towards your Driver CPC training.

### 3. Check out Health and Safety courses

Another way to upskill and expand your knowledge as a fleet manager is to get health and safety qualifications. The IOSH Managing Safely course for example is a great way to enhance your reputation in the supply chain, and improve the safety of all staff in the organisation you manage. It helps managers assess and control risks, understand responsibilities and hazards and investigate incidents. It also helps managers measure performance against health and safety targets.

This course is three days and is delivered online. If you've already completed this course, looking at a refresher for managing safely would be a good option to further upskill.

### 4. Sign up for Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) training

Gaining FORS training is another excellent way to push yourself as a fleet manager and maintain a level of excellence in your fleet's operations. FORS accreditation shows your supply chain and your customers your commitment to exemplary levels of practice in efficiency, environmental protection, and safety. There are multiple FORS courses available, with most taking a day to complete, or less, making them easy to schedule throughout the year.

### 5. Stay up to date with industry news

Aside from courses, reading and keeping up-to-date with industry news is vital for transport managers who want to get ahead. With an ever-changing industry and technological advances making major advances to how fleets are managed efficiently and safely, staying one step ahead of the curve by reading the news regularly can ensure you are amongst the first to upskill in areas which will make a big difference to your career and the success of your fleet. ●

For more information visit: [www.driverhiretraining.co.uk/get-your-licence/courses/hgv-licence/](http://www.driverhiretraining.co.uk/get-your-licence/courses/hgv-licence/)



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## Minimising Vehicle Off Road (VOR) time

**All fleet operators face the inevitable prospect of Vehicle-Off-Road (VOR) time. The larger and more diverse the fleet, the more complex the issue. Across the Essential Services sector, unplanned downtime may have a serious impact on service delivery and vital repairs to the infrastructure.**

Planned downtime for regular vehicle maintenance or servicing can be managed, but what are the causes of

the unplanned events and how can they be minimised?

### **Road Traffic Incidents**

No Fleet or Transport Manager can plan for collisions involving their fleet vehicles, but steps can be taken to reduce the chances and risk of a damaging incident.

Assuming that a vehicle is well maintained, the solution lies with driver training and education. Drivers who are taught techniques in safe and efficient driving styles will subject vehicles to less

wear and tear, obvious issues being the extra wear on brakes and tyres resulting from aggressive driving. They will also be less inclined to take risks that can lead to serious collisions.

Not only is there a wide variety of highly professional driver training organisations but once this has taken place, reward systems can be put in place, using data from telematics systems for example. As well as highlighting problem drivers, safe drivers can also be identified through

the use of data and a ‘*culture of driving excellence*’ can be created. This will have a positive effect on vehicle downtime and across several other important issues. The same reward system will also act as a catalyst to improving driving behaviour where there is an issue.

Drivers also need to conduct daily pre-use checks on vehicles. This is a vital safety requirement and will identify any concerns with the vehicle that may lead to an incident on the road or unplanned maintenance. Apps are available that not only provide real-time reporting during pre-use checks but also prove that the check is being carried out.

### Vehicle Wear & Tear

Any good Fleet Manager will have systems in place for maintenance scheduling and will also have a reasonable expectation as to what constitutes fair wear and tear. Of course, this is vital in ensuring that unexpected end-of-life costs are avoided, but it will also help identify if the demands on the vehicle have changed. For example, during a regular check, cosmetic damage may be noticed. This may not seem serious at the time but might indicate that extra demands are being placed on the vehicle and if not addressed, this can develop into serious damage, leading to the vehicle being off the road. It is therefore essential to identify the cause of all types of damage and establish if they are likely to become part of a pattern.

It is important to have processes in place to cover those unforeseen incidents that are extremely difficult to plan for, such as discovering tyre damage that are not part of expected wear and tear. The best tyre suppliers that may be engaged directly or be a partner to your fleet management provider, will have systems to mitigate the disruption and attend as quickly as possible.

Another example is key loss or failure. In these situations, an otherwise sound vehicle will be off the road for as long as it takes to replace the key. If these situations are treated as and when they arise, fleet managers may have to resort to costly and time-consuming

solutions with a main dealer. There are mobile services that will attend to the affected vehicle at its location and by use of technology, create duplicate keys in the shortest possible time, very much minimising the impact of any key loss or failure.

### New Vehicle Specification

Fleet Managers could be forgiven for thinking that ordering replacement vehicles, at the right cost from a good supplier and all in plenty of time to take over from those being de-fleeted, is a job well done! However, whilst that is all very important, it is also critical to review the role of each asset. Contract requirements change and it is not always sufficient to order the same vehicle, with the same specification or payload.

A more demanding application can lead to extra strain on the vehicle, consequent damage with the inevitable downtime or even issues surrounding overloading. Even if the vehicle application is principally the same, there may be an innovative piece of onboard equipment that may help reduce wear and tear and consequently reduce the risk of unforeseen downtime. It is also important to replace vehicles at the right time. If they have been outright purchased, their value will be written down over a period of time. However, if a vehicle develops issues that often take it off the road, it may be worth considering an early replacement. Although there may be an extra cost associated with the early capital outlay, it may well avoid far greater costs that result from frequent vehicle downtime.

### Prevention

Rigorous Service Maintenance and Repair (SMR) processes are essential. Although planned maintenance or servicing will inevitably take a vehicle off the road, they can be carried out at times of low demand on the vehicle, such as evenings or weekends. Mobile servicing units can also greatly assist with reducing downtime. Major LCV OEMs, through their dealer chains, are now expanding the availability of mobile servicing which is a great addition to other services. When this is not an option, choosing a garage

network with multiple sites near your operational areas will also be of great benefit.

### Action

When a Fleet or Transport Manager employs any form of technology within their fleet the most important thing is to act on the information or data provided. Effective communication with drivers and maintenance teams will lead to the action being taken that will prevent unplanned downtime and promote a safe and efficient fleet culture.

### Work collaboratively

Fleet managers should establish a collaborative relationship with their suppliers if they haven't already done so. This will enable them to quickly consider and implement new services as needed, with maximum support.

It is also crucial to stay informed about the latest developments from suppliers who are not currently being utilised to be aware of as many helpful services as possible.

### Future Opportunities

Many fleet operators are well on the way to embracing the opportunities presented by electric vehicles (EVs). Where it is cost-effective and practical to replace an ICE van with an EV there are not only the huge environmental benefits, but also the prospect of very much simplified maintenance schedules and much lower risk of vehicles developing faults. This results from the relatively low number of moving parts and an EV is, in engineering terms, far less complex than ICE counterparts.

Although issues with EVs are less frequent than those with ICEs, the skill base within the vehicle maintenance and repair sector of EVs must increase in line with the sharp increase in EV adoption, so that it doesn't impact servicing requirements.

The move towards fleet electrification also throws up issues with vehicles being ‘ready to work’ in other words, fully charged. Charging can be complex and managing it is becoming to be an increasingly intensive task within fleet management. ●

# Vehicle Security protecting your assets

**As a fleet operator in the Essential Services sector, your vehicles are highly specified and fitted with expensive onboard equipment and tools, making them an attractive target for thieves. It is therefore crucial to ensure the security of your valuable assets.**

Excessive vehicle damage as the result of an attempted theft or break-in will also result in costly repairs and extended VOR time.

While many thefts still occur in the traditional smash-and-grab manner, the increasing use of advanced technology in vans has necessitated a corresponding evolution in the methods employed by criminals. These individuals are highly knowledgeable and capable of circumventing many of the latest security measures.

## Branding a deterrent or attraction?

If your vehicles are fully branded with graphics or sign writing across a large area of your vehicles, this may deter a potential thief. The cost of removing or spraying over your branding will mean extra costs for the perpetrator trying to move on, the stolen vehicle.

Branding is also important as it makes your vehicles more visible to the police, and makes them harder to hide away or sell without questions being asked.

Your branding on the other hand could be an open invitation to a potential thief, as it may indicate the sort of equipment that could be inside for the taking.

Either way, it is advisable to enhance your vehicle security from the manufacturer's standard fit to make sure you are protecting your valuable assets in the best way possible.

## Secure the contents

In most cases, if a van is used for servicing and repairs, the assumption will be that there are valuable tools inside, so it is best to add an extra layer of security for tool storage. Removal of all expensive tools overnight isn't always practical so the use of secure storage boxes inside the vans makes it harder for thieves to remove them.

## Mark your valuable items

You might not be able to stop thieves from raiding your equipment but you can ensure they are harder to sell on undetected by marking them in some way. This will also help the police to recover items for you. Marking tools and equipment by engraving, painting or stamping them is one way, they are also products that use unique forensic technology to provide robust traceability that is almost impossible to remove.

## Invest in or specify upgraded locks for your vehicles

Locks can add an extra layer of security to your vehicles while also acting as a visual deterrent to potential thieves. It's important to choose the right lock that balances convenience with safety.

Certain parts of your vehicle, such as catalytic converters, are especially vulnerable to theft. To reduce the risk, consider adding appropriate locking devices.

Below is basic guide to the type of locks available together with their main benefits and usage.

- **Slam locks** are ideal for vehicles that need to be accessed quickly and frequently. These locks automatically engage as soon as the door is closed, so drivers don't have to constantly lock and unlock the vehicle.
- **Deadlocks** are recommended for vehicles that are parked outside overnight or in an insecure area for extended periods. Even if thieves manage to bypass the standard lock, they will still need to overcome the deadlock, which provides an additional layer of security.
- **Hook locks** are an alternative to deadlocks and offer extra protection against forced entry. The locking mechanism of a hook lock uses a 'hook' that latches onto the keep, making it more difficult for thieves to force open the van doors.
- **Anti-drill guards and door handle protectors** can be used to provide additional protection for vulnerable lock barrels or handles. These can

help prevent forced entry and act as another barrier for would-be thieves.

- **Steering wheel locks** are easy to install and store. They act as a visual deterrent and make the act of stealing a vehicle more difficult.

## Protect your 'keyless' keys - gone in 30 seconds

The easiest way to steal a van is still obviously with the key, so it is vital drivers are reminded to be aware of where their van key is at all times. As vehicle connectivity advances so does the use of more hands-off technology such as keyless entry.

Keyless vehicle theft usually takes place at night. It happens when the signal from a vehicle's key is captured by somebody using a special relay device - usually standing outside the house or premises where the vehicle key is being kept. The captured signal is relayed to another device in the hands of a criminal standing next to the vehicle. It can mean a vehicle can be stolen in under 30 seconds.

Because keyless entry allows a driver to open and start the vehicle with a fob in their pocket, it is easy for a relay device to do the same.

If your drivers have to press a button on the key fob to open their vehicles you are not at risk of being hacked in this way.

Electronic devices can be used to jam the electronic signal from your key fob to lock your vehicle. It is advisable to ask your drivers to manually check that their vehicle is locked before walking away.

## Door Peeling

Due to the requirement for modern vehicles to become more and more efficient, this can mean thinner metal is used in their manufacturer which makes them easier to break into.

Many vans have sensors installed in the front, but not in the side, back doors, or roofs. Consequently, thieves can easily remove these parts of the vehicle without being detected, referred to as door peeling. To make matters worse, thieves don't even require any

specialised tools to execute this kind of theft.

### Trackers

Although trackers cannot prevent break-ins, they can help ensure that your stolen vehicle can be traced. It is important to notify the police as soon as the vehicle is stolen so that they can act on the information from the device. However, it's essential to note that experienced thieves may be able to jam or remove these devices, so not 100% reliable.

### Park in a well-lit area

With many vehicles in the Essential Services sector being taken home at night by operatives, this does present a problem in terms of security especially if the vehicle is going to be left on a road that might not be close to the operative's home. This is when added security including alarms that alert the driver to any potential problem is required.

If drivers haven't got a driveway it's best to advise them to choose a sensible location, preferably in a well-lit area with CCTV and nearby occupied buildings. It is also a good idea to park against a wall to make it harder to access doors etc.

On a very basic level, drivers should be advised not to leave valuables on display inside the vehicle, especially in the cab, that an opportunist thief will be tempted to steal.

### Keep a record of tools and equipment

If a van is targeted by thieves, it can be a very stressful event. It is important that your drivers keep a list of all the equipment and tools kept in their vehicles for better traceability. This list should also include photographs. By doing this, drivers can keep track of their stock and identify thefts quickly. Additionally, it can help in case you need to make an insurance claim.

### In summary

It is crucial to prioritise the security of your fleet vehicles, just as much as the safety of your drivers and operatives on the road. Taking the necessary steps to protect your assets can also demonstrate to insurers that you are serious about protecting your investment. This, in turn, could help reduce your premiums, so it is worth consulting with your fleet insurance provider to ensure you have the right security measures in place.●





## Using technology to help tackle the challenge of Health & Safety compliance

**Organisations have a responsibility to ensure their fleets are kept road legal and safe, while staff are fit and eligible to drive, but for many this represents a huge challenge. This is particularly true for small and medium sized operations within the essential fleet sector that may not have the systems and processes in place to ensure legal compliance.**

*"One of the biggest pain points currently for essential fleets is their vulnerability due to non-compliance or misunderstanding of ever tightening road safety legislation,"* claims Jim Finnegan, CEO of fleet software specialist Pocket Box. *"Less than 5% of the businesses we speak to are fully aware of their legal responsibilities, making it impossible for most to know if vehicles and drivers are compliant."*

### Understanding Health & Safety responsibilities

The human cost of work-related driving is considerable and well-documented, but despite high-profile safety awareness campaigns, associated deaths are still on the increase according to government data. There are believed to be 40,000 injuries linked to someone driving for work each year, so there is much more to be done by fleets to protect their drivers and other road users. If an organisation is found not to be meeting the required Health & Safety standards, they could receive fines representing at least 20% of turnover and even result in a custodial sentence for those in charge.

Nigel Lawrence, Director of Applied Driving, a global provider of driver safety and performance management solutions, explains: *"The primary legislation that fleets need to be aware of is the Health & Safety at Work act 1974, which outlines their legal responsibilities and duty of care obligations to drivers and other road users. It also covers the need for drivers to follow established safety procedures and for senior management to put these processes in place in the first place."*

The Health & Safety at Work act states that that employers must do what is practicable to minimise the risk to employees and others, in this case their drivers and other road users. Employers have a duty of care to maintain appropriate safety standards and breaches represent a corporate event that can result in significant fines as well as negative publicity orders that seriously damage reputation.

In addition, the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) considers a motor vehicle to be a piece of work equipment, and this is regardless of whether the vehicle is company provided or an employees' own used for work. As a result, the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) also apply and require employers to ensure vehicles are suitable, inspected and maintained, while employees receive appropriate information and training.

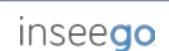
Nigel Lawrence adds: *"Fleets need to consider their moral and financial responsibilities alongside their*



**Jim Finnegan**  
CEO  
Pocket Box



**Nigel Lawrence**  
Director  
Applied Driving



**Steve Thomas**  
Managing Director  
Inseego UK





Inseego Vehicle Check List

legal obligations. Ensuring everyone gets home safely must be the starting point for any organisation, regardless of the threat of legal action or monetary losses."

### Creating a safe place for vehicle and driver data

Fleet software can play a crucial role in keeping drivers and vehicles safe and legal, while ensuring organisations are operating efficiently and responsibly. All vehicle and driver documentation can be stored electronically, all in one place, so any policy renewals or driver related requirements are managed correctly, with automated alerts, so no deadlines are missed.

Despite the proven benefits, there are many essential fleets still using spreadsheets, whiteboards, and paper-based files to manage their vehicles and drivers, resulting in labour-intensive processes and record-keeping. Moreover, it becomes virtually impossible to ensure that legal obligations are checked, managed and logged, with any non-compliance quickly rectified. This becomes a huge issue in the event of an HSE inspection or following a serious road incident.

The well-known adage "you don't know, what you don't know" is particularly relevant when it comes to legal compliance suggests Finnegan: "We have had new customers who have discovered that over 25% of their vehicles were not road legal during the initial roll-out of our software. By simply pulling in data direct into the system from DVLA on MOT and tax, for example, fleets are quickly discovering significant discrepancies."

Even grey fleet, where vehicles owned and driven by an employee for business purposes, require a host of checks to prove that it is road worthy and can be legally driver for work with appropriate MOT, road tax and insurance. Nigel Lawrence points out: "Travelling for work

is any journey the employee would not have undertaken if they were not employed by their employer, other than commuting, however infrequently. Motor insurance defines commuting to and from a single place of work, while for those designated as home-based any journey to the office becomes a work journey, so its important to understand where business insurance is needed."

The fleet management function is often a secondary role or spread across multiple stakeholders in different departments, which represent another potential challenge. Despite the fleet operation typically being the second largest business cost for many organisations, a lack of visibility, resourcing and attention will increase the risk of non-compliance. "Having a robust fleet policy and defined processes must be the focal central point for any driver safety strategy. This will help to create shared responsibility and contribute to a strong driving safety culture," explains Applied Driving's Nigel Lawrence.

### Keeping track of compliance

In the past small and medium sized fleets may have pushed back against excessive complexity when it comes to technology adoption, often deeming it to be an unnecessary burden on tight budgets and resources. Larger fleets have been more likely to be using sophisticated systems – combining both real-time and historical data – but even these can become overly complicated

inspection. They were quickly able to share requested information and show they had up-to-date driver and vehicle records and documentation all in one place, with a complete audit trail."

Steve Thomas, Managing Director of Inseego UK, suggests that fully integrated fleet management systems are no longer the preserve of the larger fleet. "Any fleet can now bring together multiple systems to create a comprehensive picture of health and safety compliance, as well as proactively identify where issues and the most risk exist. For example, by integrating fleet software with telematics, organisations can access live data – such as mileage, utilisation, driving styles and engine status – to further automate and simplify vehicle and driver management processes."

App-based technology is providing a simple way of ensuring the road worthiness of both company and grey fleet vehicles. Having a paperless system to electronically complete daily walkaround checks, report vehicle related issues and take photographs of damages and defects makes removes the hassle for drivers and achieve high levels of compliance. This can be combined with other driver-related data capture or engagement to make the most of the tool.

Jim Finnegan says: "Our Pocket Box app also includes a declaration form, so employees can confirm they are fit to drive and have not consumed unsafe levels of

alcohol the previous day," while Steve Thomas explains that "any app needs to possess highly customisable reporting because a fleet may be operating multiple vehicle types that all have different requirements. In addition to bespoke vehicle checks, an app could also support private/



Pocket Box Fleet System

and cumbersome.

Organisations of all sizes are increasingly recognising the need for simple and easy-to-use digitised solutions, explains Pocket Box's Jim Finnegan, to gain visibility of critical information and monitor ongoing levels of compliance. "Recently, our software proved to be an invaluable tool for one of our customers during an HSE

business mileage, driver scoring and targeted training."

Fleet software can play a crucial role in managing health and safety compliance. By putting fleet manager, senior directors, and the organisation itself back in the driving seat, it provides added control and complete peace of mind. ●

# Tyre maintenance best practice

## Regular checks are crucial for all vehicles on the road, including tyre condition and inflation.

Driving with under-inflated tyres, even if it is only 10% below the recommended level, can increase braking distance, make a vehicle more challenging to steer, increase fuel consumption, and shorten the lifespan of tyres due to excessive wear. As an operator, this means early and more frequent replacements of tyres within your fleet.

Legally, your vehicle's tyres should have a tread depth of at least 1.6mm. If your drivers are stopped and found with illegal tyres, it can lead to significant fines and penalties.

Given that tyres are one of the most important parts of a vehicle, tyre maintenance should be a top priority. Ensuring the wear and tear on your vehicle's tyres is regularly checked, not only protects your drivers but also other road users.

## Keep the pressure under control

Tyre pressure can have a significant impact on your vehicle's handling and braking. If tyres are under or overinflated, it can also increase fuel consumption and make them more susceptible to wear and tear. It's important to make sure that your drivers check their vehicle's tyre pressure at least once a month, or if that isn't possible, ensure that it's done at the depot where your vehicles are stored, including all spare tyres by your vehicle maintenance team.

It's also worth bearing in mind that the pressure number marked on the tyres is the absolute maximum the tyre can take and should not be used as an indicator for daily use.

## Be aware of tyre damage and unusual wear and tear

With many vehicles in any given fleet being used by different drivers on a daily basis, a vehicle pre-use check should be encouraged if not made compulsory. This should include a physical check of the vehicle's tyres, looking out for any signs of unusual wear or damage, including cuts and bulges. Any reported defects should be investigated further, and if

necessary, the defective tyre should be replaced before the vehicle is in use again.

## Ensure you have enough tread

Tyre treads have a direct impact not only on the performance of your vehicles but also its overall safety, especially in poor weather conditions. Light Commercial Vehicles (LCVs) are subject to the same tyre law as cars, so they must have a minimum of 1.6mm of tread across the central three quarters of the tyre around its entire circumference. If any of your vehicles have a tread that is at or below the minimum depth, those tyres will need to be replaced straight away.

Vans and car-derived vans usually require specific tyres, which are designed to cope with the payload of the vehicle. Car tyres are often not suitable for vans. If in doubt, speak to a local tyre retailer for specific advice on the most appropriate tyre for your needs and load requirements.

Remember, if you allow a driver to go out in a vehicle with tyres below this limit, it is not only illegal but also extremely dangerous. Having the correct depth is essential to ensuring good control and maximising safety, so don't chance it, check it.

## Avoid overloading your vehicles

Overloading a vehicle beyond its maximum permitted weight limit is an illegal offence, and the legal consequences for both drivers and operators can be serious and far-reaching. A vehicle carrying a lot of weight can compromise the handling and cause excessive wear on the tyres due to excessive heat. This could cause a tyre explosion and put your drivers at greater risk of being involved in a road collision.

## Keep your wheels aligned

Incorrectly aligned wheels can result in uneven tyre wear, which can weaken them and make them more prone to damage. It can also reduce the driver's control of the vehicle and increase fuel consumption.

## Watch where you park

Many of your vehicles will be used to visit customers in residential areas where pulling up to park on a busy

street means sometimes mounting the kerb is unavoidable. Mounting the kerb can cause the tyre's sidewall to become pinched between the kerb and the wheel, causing them to weaken and potentially resulting in a tyre blow-out.

Ideally, you should encourage your drivers to avoid mounting the kerb altogether. It is also illegal in some areas. The Highway Code rule 242 states: *"You MUST NOT leave your vehicle or trailer in a dangerous position or where it causes any unnecessary obstruction of the road."*

## Maintain good driving habits

It is important to encourage your drivers to practice good driving habits and to respect the vehicle they are driving. Excessive braking or acceleration or constantly stopping and starting in traffic can have a detrimental effect on your tyres and cause them to wear more quickly.

With this in mind, encourage drivers to drive as smoothly and consistently as possible. It is more or less impossible to avoid uneven road surfaces and hazards such as potholes, but by taking extra care, drivers can help to prevent wheels from being knocked out of alignment unnecessarily.

## Electric Vehicles

Electric vehicles (EVs) are heavier than regular combustion engine vehicles due to the weight of the technology required to power them. This means that EV tyres have to support a significant extra load. As a result, specialist tyres are necessary, which come with an improved rubber compound, sidewall strength, as well as a tread and groove design that offers greater resilience.

Due to their structure that is designed to absorb strain, electric vehicle tyres wear down at a slower rate than conventional tyres, despite their higher cost. Therefore, if you have incorporated EVs into your fleet, it is important to ensure that you work with a tyre partner who has a ready supply for fleet or that you have a stock at your depots. This will help prevent vehicles from being off the road while awaiting replacements. ●

# TYRE SAFETY

## the case for action



**1 in 5**  
**Drivers**



have **NEVER**  
 checked  
 their tyres



**4,596**  
 total casualties from  
 tyre-related incidents  
 in the last five years

**2,200,000+**  
**MOT FAILURES**  
 due to tyre defects  
 every year\*\*



**£416m**

Estimated cost to the economy for the  
 last 5 years from tyre-related incidents\*

**15,000+**

tyre-related convictions in  
 the past 3 years\*\*\*



**10**  
**million**  
**= 1 in 4**

**10 MILLION ILLEGAL TYRES**

on Britain's roads every year – potentially one in every four cars & vans\*\*\*\*

\* DfT Reported road casualties Great Britain: over past 5 years. \*\* DVSA. \*\*\* Ministry of Justice  
 \*\*\*\* TyreSafe survey in partnership with Highways England 2016

### ACT NOW

Check your vehicle's tyres at least once  
 a month and before long journeys



**AIR PRESSURE:** are all tyres at the vehicle  
 manufacturer's recommended pressure?



**CONDITION:** are all tyres free of lumps, bumps,  
 cracks, cuts or embedded objects?



**TREAD DEPTH:** are all tyres above the legal limit of  
 1.6mm? Use the 20p test to check

**SAFE TYRES SAVE LIVES**

tyresafe.org



**TyreSafe**

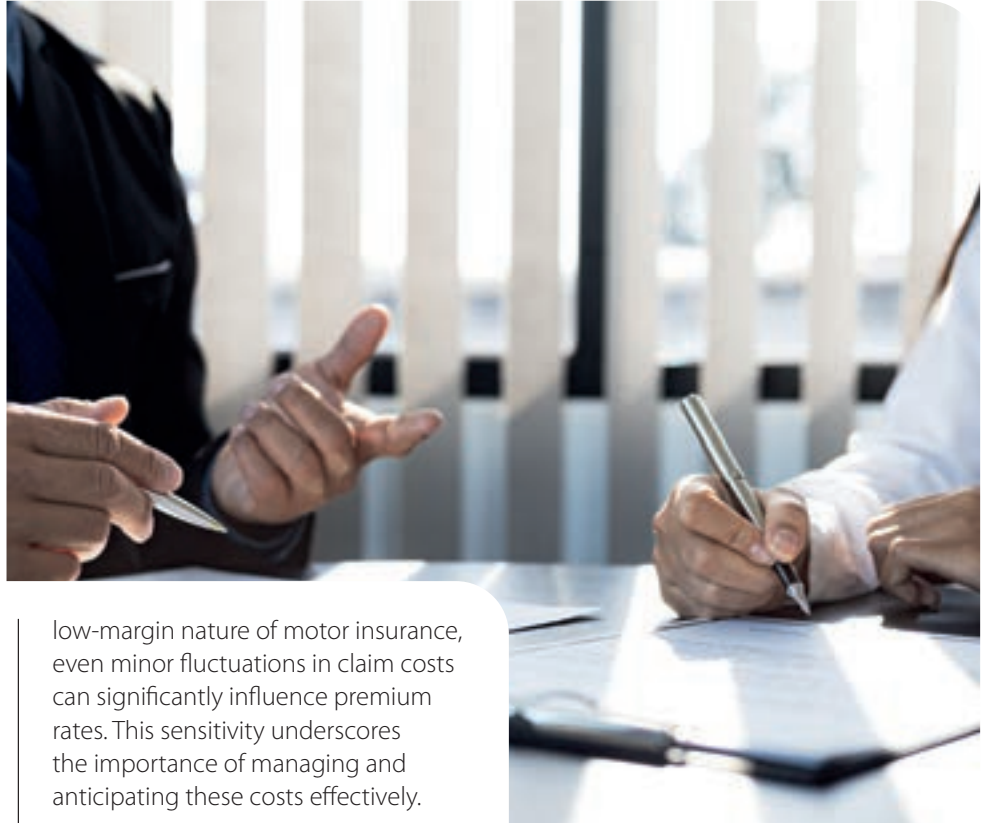
## Supplier Insight: Flock

with Antton Pena, Founder and Chief Strategy Officer.

# Navigating the Surge in Fleet Insurance Costs

The insurance industry, pivotal in underpinning economic stability, faces formidable challenges that have triggered significant cost escalations over the past year. Understanding these shifts is crucial for fleet managers, insurance providers, and stakeholders navigating this evolving landscape.

Essential Fleet Manager spoke to Antton Pena, Founder and Chief Strategy Officer Flock to explain further.



### Why have insurance costs increased significantly over the last year?

Primarily, the rise in insurance costs can be attributed to an increase in claims costs, compounded by several factors:

- **General Inflation:**  
The post-pandemic economic recovery has been marred by inflation, affecting various sectors, including the insurance industry.
- **Post-Brexit Trading Conditions:**  
Brexit has introduced complexities in trade and logistics, impacting replacement part costs and availability.
- **Global Supply Chain Disruptions:**  
The pandemic-induced lockdowns, particularly in China, have disrupted supply chains, delaying the availability of crucial vehicle parts.
- **Skilled Worker Shortages:**  
A notable shortage of skilled healthcare and repair workers has led to increased costs in injury care and vehicle repairs.

### How do claims costs affect insurance premiums?

Insurance premiums are closely tied to claims costs. Insurers rely on premium payments to cover claims. Given the

low-margin nature of motor insurance, even minor fluctuations in claim costs can significantly influence premium rates. This sensitivity underscores the importance of managing and anticipating these costs effectively.

### Strategies for Fleet Managers to Control Insurance Costs

Fleet managers play a critical role in mitigating insurance expenses through proactive measures:

- **Driver Safety Training:**  
Educating drivers to adopt safer driving practices can drastically reduce accident rates.
- **Managing Driver Performance:**  
Monitoring driver behaviour and taking corrective actions, including training or necessary disciplinary measures, ensures only the best practices are followed.
- **Prompt Incident Reporting:**  
Encouraging immediate claim reporting can significantly reduce costs, as delays often complicate and increase claim expenses.
- **Detailed Incident Documentation:**  
Gathering comprehensive details about incidents aids insurers in efficient claim processing, potentially lowering costs.

### The Role of Technology in Reducing Claims Costs

- Technological advancements are pivotal in enhancing fleet safety and operational efficiency:
- **Safety and ADAS Technologies:**  
Equip vehicles with advanced driver-assistance systems to prevent accidents.
- **Telematics and Data Analytics:**  
Utilise data to monitor driver behaviour and vehicle performance, identifying risk factors early.
- **Accident Detection Technologies:**  
Implement systems that alert fleet managers and insurers immediately after an incident, even if the driver has not formally reported it.
- **Digital Documentation Tools:**  
Use onboard cameras and mobile apps to comprehensively document incidents, aiding in swift and accurate claim processing.



## How are fleet insurers adopting technology?

While most insurance companies face challenges in efficiently integrating new technologies in a customer-centric manner, a select few are beginning to harness these advancements to help fleets manage their costs effectively. Flock, a company I founded, aims to lead the insurance industry in such technological adoption.

Flock offers a new type of insurance solution, with the following key features:

- Connection Proposition:**  
 We utilise data from telematics and other sensors to enhance vehicle safety, helping fleet managers maintain secure operations. Flock is compatible with 35 telematics brands and offers a free telematics solution if the fleet requires it.
- Digital Insurance Portal:**  
 Our portal empowers fleet managers by simplifying vehicle management. With just a few clicks—three, to be precise—managers can add or remove vehicles and generate claims reports instantaneously.
- Safety Review Meetings:**  
 In collaboration with Flock's Safety Coaches, fleet managers receive continuous support to devise and implement effective safety strategies, thereby reducing risks and insurance costs.
- Safety Incentives:**  
 Fleets demonstrating safe practices can receive up to 10% of their premiums back as rebates. Additionally, reporting claims within 24 hours can reduce the insurance excess by 75%.

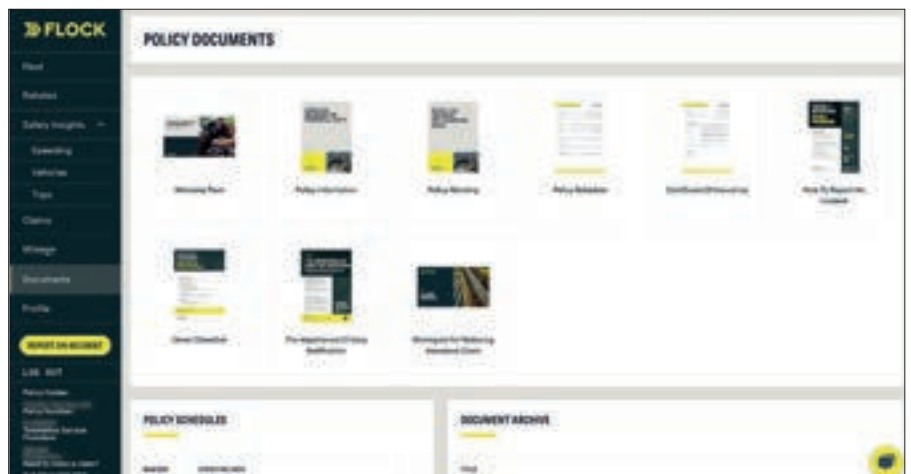
Flock's proactive approach does more than just cover risks—it actively partners with fleet managers to minimise them, enhancing safety while managing costs effectively. As we continue to embrace technological innovations and leverage data-driven insights, Flock remains at the forefront of transforming fleet insurance to meet the dynamic needs of modern fleets and insurers.●

Example screenshots from the Flock system.

**Flock Fleet Screen:** "Fleet managers are able to add and remove vehicles from their policy in simply three clicks, automating all related admin"



**Flock Documents Screen:** "All insurance documents are provided instantly and in digital format for easy access"



**Flock Claim Screen:** "The status of all claims is updated in real-time, reducing the need to chase for updates. Loss ratios are fully transparent"



For more information on how Flock can optimise your fleet operations and reduce insurance costs, visit [flockcover.com/fleet-insurance](https://flockcover.com/fleet-insurance)



## Citroën - New Van range

Citroën has announced that its new van range, including Berlingo Van, Dispatch and Relay. The new range comes on the back of an extremely successful 2023 for the brand in the UK. From My Ami Cargo to ë-Relay, Citroën is showcasing the widest modern range on the market, tailor-made to meet the needs of every professional, and totally committed to the energy transition featuring 100% electric versions right across the range.

### Berlingo Van and ë-Berlingo Van

The new Berlingo Van is now available in two lengths (M - 4.40m and XL - 4.75m) and with two or three seats for all versions. It has a total capacity of up to 4.40m<sup>3</sup> and a payload of 1 tonne (780kg for the electric version). Berlingo also comes in an extended cab version. The van is available in two trim specifications, Enterprise and Driver.

Berlingo Vans are equipped with advanced entertainment and safety technologies such as adaptive cruise control with stop and go, lane assist, driver tiredness warning, road sign reading, automatic emergency braking with pedestrian and cyclist detection, and adjustable speed limiter.

Citroën offers a wide range of efficient powertrains for the new Berlingo Van to meet the requirements of all professionals. The internal combustion engines include the PureTech 110

petrol and the BlueHDi 100 diesel with a six-speed manual gearbox, and the BlueHDi 130 diesel paired exclusively



with the EAT8 eight-speed automatic transmission. The new ë-Berlingo Van retains its 100% electric powertrain, which delivers 136PS (100kW) and a maximum torque of 260Nm, combined with a new 52kWh\* battery.

Thanks to the improvements made to its efficiency, ë-Berlingo Van's zero-emission range is now a benchmark in the

segment. It can now cover up to 205 miles (WLTP Mixed cycle), which is a 20% increase over the previous model. The vehicle's new regenerative braking system can be activated using steering wheel-mounted paddles, which helps to optimise the distance it can cover based on three different regeneration levels. Enterprise versions of the Berlingo Van feature four-way passenger seats, My Citroën Play smartphone station with DAB, cruise control with speed limiter, rear parking distance sensors, and high beam assist. In addition

to the Enterprise specification, Driver versions feature Citroën Drive Plus with a 10" HD central screen, Mirror Screen, steering wheel controls, Navigation, and Dynamic Surround View to help drivers see their blind spots.

## Relay and ë-Relay

New Relay takes driving aids, connectivity and comfort to a new level. Its range of diesel and electric engines have been extensively overhauled, offering even greater efficiency and lower running costs.

The front end of the Relay has been redesigned, improving its aerodynamic characteristics. The black lower section has been reinforced to further enhance the vehicle's impact protection. The new LED headlamps are also 30% more efficient than their halogen predecessors. The rear lights have also been given a new design.

New Relay is designed to be the most robust in the lineup, with a payload capacity of up to 2 tonnes (1,385kg for the ë-Relay).

Available with two different wheelbases (3.45m and 4.04m), the panel vans come in three lengths (L2, L3 and L4) with five distinct body styles, offering capacities ranging from 10 to 17 m<sup>3</sup>. Additionally, the new Relay is available in L2 or L3 single and double cab chassis, serving as a foundation for specialised conversions. The passenger compartment has improved ergonomics and comes with

a new digital instrument cluster, large central screen, and upgraded steering wheel, gearbox controls, and door trim.

The new Relay is more versatile than ever before, featuring engines that combine performance and efficiency. The new 2.2 diesel engine is available in two power outputs, 140PS and 180PS, combined with a new six-speed manual gearbox. For



engine has been replaced with a new electric unit that develops 270PS (200kW), with torque significantly increased from 260 to 410Nm. Additionally, the 37kWh and 70kWh batteries have been replaced by a single 110kWh model, providing a WLTP range of up to 261 miles.

The performance and range of the new ë-Relay can be optimised depending on driving conditions via three driving modes and paddles located just behind the steering wheel that activate four levels of regenerative deceleration, enhancing driving comfort and range. The ë-Relay comes standard with an 11kW onboard charger, and a full charge from an 11kW AC charger will take 12 hours. When using a 150kW DC rapid charging point, it takes only 55 minutes to charge the battery to 80%.

The new ë-Relay now features My Citroën Play Plus, which includes a 10-inch color touchscreen with Citroën Connect DAB radio, Apple CarPlay® and AndroidAuto® with TomTom 3D connected navigation. The interior is further improved with a wireless phone charger, automatic climate control, and upgraded fabric upholstery.

the first time, an eight-speed automatic transmission is available as an option with the BlueHDi 140 and 180.

To meet the needs of fleet operators who are keen to adopt sustainable mobility while reducing their day-to-day costs, the ë-Relay now has an all-new 100% electric powertrain. The previous 122PS (90kW)

## Dispatch and ë-Dispatch

The Dispatch comes with a redesigned front-end, featuring an optimised bumper for improved aerodynamics, new LED headlights, and a completely new radiator grille that incorporates the brand's new signature. The sides of the vehicle have also been updated with new wheel colours and a new Titanium Grey body colour.

The new dashboard has a new design, with increased storage compartments for added practicality. The steering wheel has been updated with integrated controls for driving aids, telephone, and multimedia. Electric Power Steering is now standard, making the Dispatch even more manoeuvrable. The Dispatch is available with a diesel or 100% electric powertrain. The Dispatch comes in two lengths, M (4.98m) and L (5.33 m), and several body styles, including a panel van, and a five or six-seater extended cab. It has a volume of up to 6.6m<sup>3</sup> and a payload of 1,446kg for

Dispatch and 1,000kg for ë-Dispatch.

The BlueHDi diesel engines are fuel-efficient, with the BlueHDi 145 available



with a choice of a six-speed manual or EAT8 eight-speed automatic transmission. The ë-Dispatch uses the 136PS (100kW) electric motor and has a range of up to 217 miles (WLTP Mixed cycle) with its

75kWh\* battery. The battery can be fully charged in 11 hours and 20 minutes using a 7.4kW AC charger, 7 hours and 30 minutes using an 11kW AC charger, and 45 minutes using a 100kW DC rapid charger.

Dispatch and ë-Dispatch are available in two trim levels, Enterprise and Driver. Enterprise versions feature a new premium Mistral Black dashboard, a full 10-inch LED instrument cluster, and an ergonomic six-way driver's seat with Lumbar and Armrest. The updated My Citroën Play Plus infotainment system includes a 10-inch HD central touchscreen, Mirror Screen technology with AppleCarPlay® and Android Auto, steering wheel controls, and a range of new safety technology and driver assistance systems. Driver variants add Dynamic Surround View, Reversing Camera with Top Rear Vision, blind spot assistant, and Front Park Assist as well as design cues such as body colour exterior and 17-inch wheel trims and front fog lights. ●

To find out more about the Citroën range visit: <https://business.citroen.co.uk>



## Volkswagen Crafter new digital instruments as standard

### The Volkswagen Crafter is a modern and versatile commercial vehicle suitable for a range of fleet operations.

It comes in different forms such as panel van, dropside, chassis, camper van, or as a platform for second stage manufacturers. The latest update of the Crafter includes software and hardware upgrades, along with a completely redesigned cockpit. It is equipped with the latest generation of infotainment systems, a multifunction steering wheel, electronic parking brake, and several other assist systems.

The previous Crafter model had a traditional handbrake lever located next to the driver's seat. However, the new generation of Crafter comes with an electronically operated parking brake, with its switch positioned between the instruments and the infotainment system.

This design change has freed up space next to the driver's seat and improved access to the rear. The new Crafter model features USB-C interfaces instead of USB-A sockets and also includes an inductive charging option for smartphones.

Vehicles with a gross weight of more than 3.5 tonnes now come with new standard features such as a blind spot information system that alerts drivers to pedestrians, cyclists, or scooter riders in their blind spot. Other features include a moving-off information system and an oncoming vehicle braking when turning function. If you have a vehicle with a gross weight of up to 3.5 tonnes, you can still order these systems as an optional feature.

Standard features also include Front Assist, Lane Assist, Dynamic Road Sign Display, speed limiter, and acoustic Park

Distance Control for the rear area.

The Crafter is available in a wide range of body types, including closed panel vans, single and double cabs as dropside and chassis, box bodies, and tippers. It is also available in different weight classes (up to 5,500 kg gross vehicle weight), two wheelbases (3.64 and 4.49 metres), and various overall lengths (6.0 to 7.4 metres). Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles offers the Crafter with four roof heights (2.4 to just under 3.0 metres). The new Crafter is also available with front-wheel, rear-wheel, and all-wheel drive.

In addition to the familiar six-speed manual gearbox and eight-speed automatic gearbox for the front-wheel and all-wheel drive models, a new eight-speed automatic gearbox will be used for the variants with rear-wheel drive. ●



For more information about the Volkswagen range visit: [www.volkswagen-vans.co.uk](http://www.volkswagen-vans.co.uk)



# Work Better, Live Better: The Next Generation Nissan Interstar

The next-generation Nissan Interstar is engineered to be the most advanced addition to Nissan's Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) portfolio. Designed with increased size and versatility, it is also Nissan's first large van available with a 100% electric powertrain, without compromising on performance. The all-new Nissan Interstar is perfect for businesses of all sizes, prioritising efficiency, maximum capability and customer well-being.

## Conversions

It comes to market with a wide range of factory-built conversions, including Tipper, Dropside and Box Van – ensuring a large van that is as diverse as its customers.

## Range / Charging

The all-new Interstar-e, Nissan's first fully electric large van, provides a more sustainable ride with an 87kWh battery providing a top range of over 286 miles.

Nissan's D/C Charging offers rapid capabilities, recharging up to 157 miles in just 30 minutes, and A/C Charging capabilities cater for depot charging from 10-100% in under 4 hours. The Interstar-e complies with all urban policies on pollution and air quality, giving users reassurance as they operate across eco-conscious cities.

This next-generation Interstar is equipped with class-leading aerodynamics, with a 20% Drag (SCx) Reduction, helping customers save either fuel or electricity and maximize their driving range and business efficiency.

## Payload / Towing Capacity

The diesel and EV versions are also equipped with a max towing capacity of 2500kg, allowing for a greater range of products, goods or equipment that can be towed by the model. The revamped interior is designed with the driver and passengers front of mind, with durable

seat covers, a heated windshield and seats, and improved maneuverability. It also boasts a 40mm wider side door alongside a 100mm longer load area. The Interstar has a payload of up to 1.6 tonnes for the electric version and almost two tonnes for ICE options.

## Safety

As with all Nissan vehicles, safety is a top priority. The new generation Interstar models come equipped with a wide range of safety features, including Forward Emergency Braking, Drowsiness Warning, and a Tyre Pressure Monitoring System. The Trailer Sway Assist is also included, providing added security while towing goods.

## Warranty

The next generation Interstar comes with Nissan's standard warranty of five years or 100,000 miles, or eight years or 100,000 miles for Interstar-e battery, ensuring peace of mind for every journey. ●



For more information about the Nissan range visit: [www.nissan.co.uk](http://www.nissan.co.uk)

# Effective and sustainable – why the Nissan Townstar EV is the perfect choice

**Commercial vehicle customers looking to future-proof their business operations and transition to zero-emission motoring have been turning in ever-increasing numbers to the new Nissan Townstar EV.**

The multi-award-winning Townstar EV is proving to be the ideal vehicle for companies and organisations of all shapes and sizes in both the public and private sectors.

A truly efficient mobility solution, it can help customers adapt to changing emissions regulations.

The Townstar EV builds on the success of the e-NV200, Nissan's previous all-electric compact van and a former UK best-seller, which was designed with business owners' requirements in mind.

## Charging

It features an efficient, aerodynamic design and a powertrain optimised with intelligent energy management and battery thermal cooling. Delivering 122PS and 245Nm of torque, the Townstar EV's 45kWh battery offers both AC charging (11 kW or 22 kW) or DC CCS quick-charging, the latter of which enables users to charge the battery from 15% to 80% in as little as 37 minutes. Battery thermal cooling combined with the 22kW AC and 80kW DC CCS charging is standard from Acenta grade onward.

## Load Capacity

The Townstar EV offers between 3.3 to 4.3 cubic metres of cargo-carrying capacity – enough to carry two Euro pallets starting from the short wheelbase version and offers an impressive towing capacity of up to 1,500kg.

## Safety

An array of available active and passive safety technologies for those on the move include Blind Spot Warning, Hands-Free Parking, Active Cruise Control, Intelligent Emergency Braking, Side Wind Assist and Trailer Sway Assist.

## Styling

The Townstar EV features fresh, distinctive styling that is reminiscent of Nissan's other electrified models. The bespoke aerodynamic front shield features an intricate Kumiko pattern, which heralds Nissan's Japanese DNA and gives the



vehicle a premium feel.

## On the Inside

Inside, the Townstar EV puts customer satisfaction and ergonomics at the forefront. Boasting more than 20 technology features, including an on-board connectivity service, and available with a 10-inch digital instrument panel, the Townstar EV represents the most advanced van in Nissan's current LCV line-up.

Townstar EV also introduced Nissan's ProPILOT Assist advanced driving assistance system.

ProPILOT Assist gives drivers a hand with the little things – like helping them keep centred in their lane, and maintaining a preset distance from the vehicle ahead.

A hands-on driver assist system, it combines Nissan's Intelligent Cruise Control and Steering Assist technologies and



includes a stop and hold function that can bring the vehicle to a full stop, hold it in place and bring it back up to speed when traffic starts moving again.

This technology, along with Nissan's Intelligent Around View Monitor (AVM), provides drivers with extra help and reassurance.

In addition, and for improved cabin comfort, automatic climate control and a heated steering wheel are available. Meanwhile, a heat pump improves both efficiency and comfort in colder temperatures by distributing heat from the battery into the cabin.

All these fantastic features and characteristics have led to Townstar EV and its petrol-powered sibling accumulating a considerable haul of awards and accolades.

#### Warranty

Every Nissan LCV boasts an industry-leading five-year or 100,000-mile warranty, demonstrating Nissan's continued commitment to quality. The Townstar EV expands on this offering with an 8-year warranty on the battery state of health up to 70%. ●



## 'Townstar is a super vehicle and we get plenty of positive feedback'

**The all-electric Nissan Townstar has proved hugely popular with fleet managers and decision makers since launch.**

For example, York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust recently took delivery of nine of the environmentally-friendly LCVs, with another five expected to arrive shortly.

The vehicles are being used by the trust's security and estates teams, as well as carrying out important tasks such as transporting blood samples and delivering furniture and other bulky items to hospitals and surgeries in and around North Yorkshire.

The Trust is clearly a fan of electric Nissan vans – the Townstars are successors to a number of e-NV200s, the vehicle's predecessor.



Philip Bland, Transport Manager at York Teaching Hospital Facilities Management, said range was the most important factor for the Trust when considering which electric vehicles to go for.

Townstar's impressive combined range of up to 183 miles meant it was a clear favourite, with its handy side-loading door another key factor.

*"Townstar ticks every box for us, in the same way that e-NV200 did,"* said Philip. *"Aside from purely practical considerations, it's a super vehicle and we get plenty of positive feedback from our drivers – they say it's just like driving a car."*

*"The vans are put to all sorts of uses – our skilled tradespeople such as joiners, plumbers and painters use them, as well as*

*our CCTV teams and other colleagues. They need to be able to adapt to all kinds of uses – and they are excellent at doing that. We're delighted with them."*

Available with either a petrol or electric powertrain, the vehicle has been designed to future-proof business operations and accelerate the transition towards electrification.

York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provides a comprehensive range of hospital and specialist healthcare services for approximately 800,000 people living in and around York, North Yorkshire and Ryedale – an area covering 3,400 square miles. With eight hospital sites, the Trust has a workforce of around 10,000 staff. ●

For more information about the Nissan range visit: [www.nissan.co.uk](http://www.nissan.co.uk)



## Vauxhall announces specification for new LCV line-up



**Vauxhall has released the features of its new range of light commercial vehicles (LCV). The latest versions of the compact Combo, mid-size Vivaro and large Movano vans come with a revamped exterior design and cockpit. Meanwhile, the fully electric models continue to offer an excellent driving range while also having significant price reductions.**

### Trim levels

Vauxhall's van lineup offers a simple choice of trims to make things easy for customers. The New Combo and New Vivaro have two specification levels - Prime and Pro. Prime is the basic level that comes equipped with all the necessary features and equipment that a modern van should have at a competitive price. On the other hand, Pro takes things up a notch, adding extra features for more comfort and practicality. The New Movano is even simpler, with Electric and diesel versions available in well-equipped Prime trim.

Both diesel and electric versions of the New Combo are available in two lengths, with a choice of two or three front seats. The New Combo and Combo Electric are also offered as five-seat Crew Vans.

### New Combo Electric

#### Range / Charging

The New Combo Electric is produced at Ellesmere Port, the UK's first EV-only volume manufacturing plant. It can travel up to 205 miles on a single charge of its new 50kWh battery (WLTP combined cycle), which is 30 miles more than its predecessor. The New Combo Electric has

an electric motor that produces 136PS and 270Nm of torque, and comes with a 7.4kW on-board charger as standard (an 11kW charger is optional). The battery can be recharged from 0-80% in 30 minutes at a 100kW public charging station.

### **Payload and Towing Capacity**

Like its predecessor, the New Combo Electric provides up to 4.4 cubic metres of storage space (the same as its combustion engine siblings), while the 780kg payload and the 750kg towing capacity are both best-in-class.

### New Combo

#### Model Options / Trim Levels

The New Combo is powered by an efficient 1.5-litre turbo diesel engine that produces 100PS and is paired with a six-speed manual gearbox. A 130PS variant is also available which can be specified with either a six-speed manual or eight-speed automatic transmission.

The entry-level Prime specification comes with a smartphone station as standard, featuring DAB radio, Bluetooth® and a smartphone interface with Apple CarPlay™ and Android Auto™, as well as Vauxhall Connect. Prime models are also equipped with a comprehensive suite of safety systems, including advanced emergency braking, driver attention alert, intelligent speed assistance and lane keep assist. For added convenience, drivers benefit from rear parking sensors, automatic lighting control with high beam assist and cruise control.

Pro trim adds Vauxhall's Multimedia Pro Navi infotainment system, which includes a 10-inch touchscreen with satellite

navigation and natural voice recognition. The instrument cluster is also upgraded to a 10-inch digital display, while visibility is improved thanks to the Dynamic Surround View system. This comprises two cameras, one located above the rear doors and another under the passenger-side exterior mirror. The images – of the rear while driving and (when activated by the indicator stalk) of the side blind-spot – are displayed in the new high-definition digital rear-view mirror.

The Combo Pro also features adaptive, glare-free Intelli-Lux Matrix LED® headlights, which become the first model in its segment to have this technology. Its matrix headlamps, comprised of 14 LED elements, automatically cut out oncoming road users from their beam, ensuring drivers have a clear view ahead without dazzling others.

The model also adds full-diameter 16-inch wheel trims, body-colour bumpers and door handles and black power-folding door mirrors. The FlexCargo Pack provides greater practicality with a load-through bulkhead, dual front passengers' fixed bench seat, fold-flat centre seat backrest with table and two-way foldable outer seat.

### New Vivaro and Vivaro Electric

The New Vivaro and Vivaro Electric are also available in Prime and Pro trim levels. Both versions are available in two lengths (4.98m and 5.33m) and come as a Panel Van, Crew Van/Doublecab, or a platform-chassis for a variety of body types. Depending on the version, the New Vivaro offers up to 6.6m<sup>3</sup> of cargo volume and 1.4 tonnes of payload. ●

For more information about the Vauxhall range visit: [www.vauxhall.co.uk](http://www.vauxhall.co.uk)

## Bumper March for new vans as fleet demand surpasses 50,000 units

### REGISTRATIONS OF VANS plus HCVs 3.5T-6T by MONTH

	Mar-24	Mar-23	% change
Pickups	5,767	5,762	0.1%
4x4s	1,632	1,264	29.1%
Vans <= 2.0t	986	681	44.8%
Vans > 2.0 - 2.5t	8,939	9,276	-3.6%
Vans > 2.5 - 3.5t	35,592	30,651	16.1%
All Vans to 3.5t	<b>52,916</b>	<b>47,634</b>	<b>11.1%</b>
Rigids > 3.5 - 6.0t	946	648	46.0%

### REGISTRATIONS OF VANS plus HCVs 3.5T-6T by YEAR-TO-DATE

	YTD-24	YTD-23	% change
Pickups	10,664	9,854	8.1%
4x4s	2,663	1,858	43.3%
Vans <= 2.0t	1,613	1,466	10.0%
Vans > 2.0 - 2.5t	17,141	15,770	8.7%
Vans > 2.5 - 3.5t	62,731	58,314	7.6%
All Vans to 3.5t	<b>94,812</b>	<b>87,272</b>	<b>8.6%</b>
Rigids > 3.5 - 6.0t	1,990	1,245	59.8%

More than 50,000 new light commercial vehicles (LCVs) joined UK roads in a bumper March for fleet renewal as more businesses upgraded to the very latest models than in any other month during the past three years. 52,916 new vans, 4x4s and pickups were registered, up 11.1% as Britons increasingly depend on vans for everything from online shopping to local trades. As a result, the van sector in 2024 delivered its best first quarter for three years, with volumes now just -7.7% below Q1 2019.

Registrations were driven by popular demand for the largest models – those weighing more than 2.5 tonnes to 3.5 tonnes – up 16.1% to represent more than two thirds (67.3%) of the market. The biggest percentage increase in uptake was of the smallest vans, up 44.8% to 986 units, while demand for medium-sized vans fell slightly by -3.6% to 8,939 units. Pickup volumes increased to 5,767, up 0.1% compared with a particularly strong month last year, while demand for the latest 4x4s rose by 29.1% to 1,632 units.

More fleets went green last month than in any other new numberplate month to date, with new battery electric vans (BEVs) continuing to rise, up 14.7% to 2,906 units. It means the very greenest vans represented 5.5% of the whole LCV market, but up only slightly from 5.3% in March last

year. With manufacturers now mandated to achieve increasingly ambitious proportions of zero emission sales, urgent action is needed to improve the confidence of operators – from large fleets to small businesses and the self-employed – to switch to the growing range of BEV models on offer.

Maintaining existing purchase incentives is essential, but urgent action is also needed to address the concerns of some businesses. This includes tackling charging anxiety by ramping up van-suitable public infrastructure across the UK, from motorways to residential streets, so that operators have full confidence to charge wherever and whenever they need. At the same time, with the cost of VAT on public charging four times higher than private or home charging, this disparity presents another obstacle for businesses planning to transition to a net zero fleet, which is essential if the UK's world-leading net zero market is to be met. ●

*"A strong new plate month with the greatest number of zero emission vans joining UK roads is a bellwether of the sector's progress, cutting emissions while keeping British businesses on the move. Industry is ready to deliver further, but with green uptake still below mandated levels, swift action is needed to give new van buyers the confidence to go electric. Rapid delivery of van-suitable public charging points and removing the hurdle of taxation on their use are key to greener fleets and a greener future."*

**Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive**



# Evolving EV salary schemes: What might the future bring?

By Matthew Walters, Head of Consultancy Services and Customer Value, ALD Automotive | LeasePlan (UK)

**With the House of Lords committee calling on the Government to tackle EV misinformation and insufficient charging infrastructure, it'd be easy to understand why there might be a lack of uptake of electric vehicles. However, the committee noted that there's one existing Government policy having a positive impact on the transition to EVs – salary sacrifice schemes.**

Data from BVRLA has shown that salary sacrifice grew by over two-thirds (68%) year-on-year in the third quarter of 2023, showing the scheme's popularity. But with the Chancellor failing to provide updates on EV incentives, such as the future of electric car Benefit-in-Kind (BiK) rates in his Spring Budget, many will be questioning the future of salary sacrifice schemes and whether they can carry on an upward trajectory.

## Setting the scene for salary sacrifice schemes

Salary sacrifice schemes have been an important driver of the UK's electric vehicle market since the tax incentives were renewed four years ago. There are many advantages to opting into a salary sacrifice scheme. These schemes enable employees to lease a low-CO2 plug-in hybrid or EV car through their employer, fund it with their pre-tax income, and then pay tax and National Insurance on the remainder which typically reduces their tax bill.

It can't be emphasised enough how important salary sacrifice schemes are for helping drivers transition to EVs. With such strong incentives for company car drivers, salary sacrifice is the most cost-effective and easiest way to get a new EV - helping drivers to make a more sustainable choice and swap to the latest tech after just a few years.

Reports also suggest that employees are more likely to stay with the company that offers them access to the electric car scheme and data from YouGov shows that 74% of employees would like their companies to offer the scheme.

Alongside these employee retention benefits, salary sacrifice schemes provide people with the chance to upgrade their cars and cost-effectively enjoy a new electric vehicle while switching to a more sustainable vehicle option.

## What will the future of salary sacrifice look like?

While the current rate of BiK tax for electric and plug-in hybrid models is currently at 2%, this is set to change post-March 2025 with it steadily increasing up until 2028. But in four years, which is typically the next replacement cycle for fleets, it's unknown what will happen to BiK rates causing uncertainty for those considering making the switch to EVs.

With the Government failing to provide any updates about salary sacrifice in its Spring Budget, we've outlined several suggestions that are needed to ensure the future of salary sacrifice:

### Company car tax bands

Publishing company car tax bands beyond April 2028 is increasingly important. Businesses are still enduring extended delivery times for new vehicles and longer lifespans are increasingly common. Some fleets will already have cars on order that will still be on the road after the current tax bands expire.

For salary sacrifice to remain a cost-effective and attractive option, we predict that BiK rates will need to remain low for EVs to give people the confidence to go electric and help increase the uptake ahead of the ZEV mandate.

### Second-hand schemes

While salary sacrifice schemes are a great opportunity to drive a brand-new car at the most affordable price, a scheme for second-hand electric vehicles can make EVs more accessible to the mass market.

This would give people access to nearly new, fully maintained electric cars while still getting all the benefits of transitioning to an EV. With petrol and diesel cars set to be banned from 2035, there needs to be a strong second-hand

market for electric cars to be affordable and accessible to drivers. Through second-hand salary sacrifice schemes, companies can ensure more EV stock is available to drivers while still being at a cost-friendly price point.

ALD Automotive | LeasePlan UK recognises this and is in the initial stages of developing our proposition around Multi Cycle Asset Management (MCAM), taking this important step towards the transition to a more sustainable future.

### Advancements in EV technology

As battery technology continues to evolve, more affordable vehicle models have entered the EV market and are becoming a viable option for drivers. While previously dominated by high-income workers enjoying tax advantages, salary sacrifice schemes could become more accessible as EVs begin to be more affordable for drivers.

### Changing charging infrastructure

Developing suitable charging infrastructure is key to keeping the momentum up for the uptake of EVs. While the Chancellor failed to address this in his Spring Budget, reducing VAT on public charging, from 20% to 5%, aligning it with plugging in at home, would have been useful. Especially for drivers without off-street parking and fleets who rely on mid-shift top-ups.

Convenient charging will be the most important development that needs to happen long-term and there will likely be an acceleration in the rollout of charge point facilities to provide EV drivers with easier and more reliable public charging.

As salary sacrifice continues to surge in popularity, it will continue to remain a favourable benefit to help encourage people to transition to zero-emission transport. However, with an election date looming, employers need assurance and certainty from the Government to help ensure the future of salary sacrifice schemes and continue a positive trajectory in the uptake of electric cars. ●

For more information visit: [www.leaseplan.com/en-gb/](http://www.leaseplan.com/en-gb/) or [www.aldautomotive.co.uk](http://www.aldautomotive.co.uk)

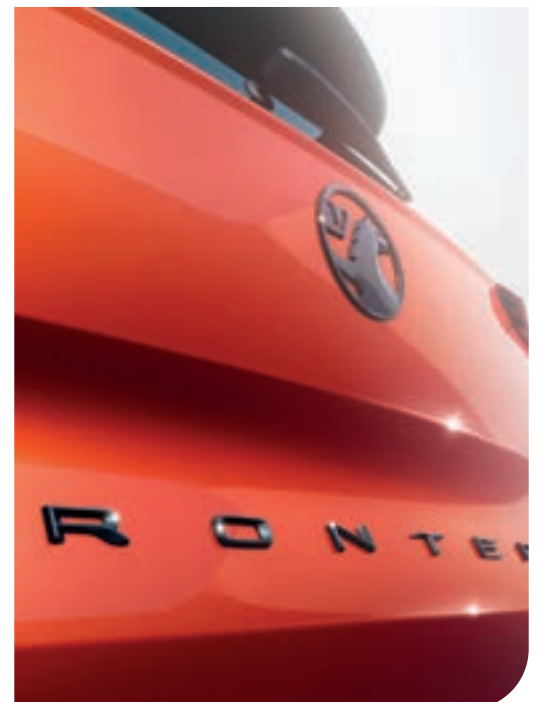
# Vauxhall's new Frontera: Battery-electric version or efficient 48-volt hybrid powertrains



Vauxhall has released the first images of their new Frontera, a spacious C-SUV. Like all new models, the new Frontera not only impresses with its bold and pure design, but also with its responsible performance.

## Model Choices

Customers can choose between a fully electric variant or highly efficient engines with 48-volt hybrid technology, in line with Vauxhall's commitment to electrifying its entire range by the end of 2024.





## Exterior Styling

The Frontera's front silhouette is upright and combines a functional and roomy cabin with a bold, modern and expressive look. The black Vizor, which houses the Eco LED headlamps with automatic high beam and the central Vauxhall griffin logo, gives the front of the Frontera a unique identity. It is supported by a trapezoidal cooling opening in the lower third, which emphasizes the car's solid and robust stance.

The well-known Vauxhall wing lighting signature is present in the Frontera's modern interpretation. Three lighting blocks are separated by body-coloured insets. The side view reveals a distinctive C-pillar, which visually splits the spacious cabin. Elsewhere, the pronounced wheel arches give the Frontera a solid and modern look while planting the car firmly on the road.

## On the inside

The new Frontera boasts a modern interior design, which marries clever functionality with a visually appealing

look. The instrument panel and doors feature wide, horizontal decors that further enhance the cabin's spaciousness. Additionally, the fully digital Pure Panel cockpit, complete with two 10-inch displays and a Multimedia infotainment system, is a sleek centerpiece that is complemented by a bold and elegant new steering wheel. Vauxhall has put maximum comfort with minimum distraction at the forefront of the Frontera's design, providing a clean, streamlined user experience to avoid any digital stress.

Vauxhall's commitment to providing seating innovations that cater to a broad range of customers is evident once again in the Frontera. The front seats come equipped with a patented Intelli-Seat feature, which includes a slot that relieves pressure on the tailbone, providing exceptional comfort even on long journeys. The seats are richly crafted and sculpted, with eye-catching contrast stitching, and the fabrics are available in fully sustainable, recycled material.

The Frontera is packed with clever

solutions that enhance the driving experience. It features a wireless charger and two USB ports in the front, as well as two additional USB ports in the second row, making it easier to charge mobile devices. Even larger devices like tablets can be safely stored in the centre console, thanks to a flexible strap that holds them in place. The cabin also offers ample open storage areas with rubber lining to prevent rattling and sliding. Second-row passengers can take advantage of the integrated smartphone pockets in the backrests of the front seats.

## Load Space

The Frontera offers a spacious and efficient loading capacity, with over 460 litres of luggage space in the boot with the back seats up, and up to 1,600 litres with the seats folded down. The 60:40 split of the rear bench adds further versatility, while a second load floor is standard. Customers who require more luggage space or want to take full advantage of the roof load of more than 200kg can choose the optional functional roof rails. ●



For more information about the Vauxhall range visit: [www.vauxhall.co.uk](http://www.vauxhall.co.uk)

# Nissan Qashqai : Available with e-POWER, a unique and innovative powertrain

**The Nissan Qashqai has received a comprehensive aesthetic refresh, including bold changes to the exterior styling and comprehensive updates to the infotainment and connected services on board.**

## Exterior Styling

The Qashqai's front grille now features dozens of high-gloss, three-dimensional comma-shaped elements painted in high-gloss black paint that seem to float between the lip of the bonnet and the number plate holder.

The new headlights provide a sharper look and now come with an adaptive high-beam module, complemented by a smaller unit for wider beam distribution. The daytime running lights consist of five small lenses, which are the same shape as the "commas" of the main grille.

The bumper has been redesigned and now features harmonised colour - either gloss black on higher-grade versions or body-coloured on the new N-Design grade.

The mid-grade Qashqai now comes with a new 18" diamond-cut alloy wheel as standard. For higher grades, there are new 19" and 20" diamond-cut alloy wheel designs.

Five of the Qashqai's colours - Pearl White, Deep Ocean, Fuji Red, Magnetic Blue, and Ceramic Grey - are all available in two-tone, with a black roof for a more distinctive look.

## On the Inside

For the upper grades of the Nissan Qashqai (N-Design and Tekna+), there are some new additions to the interior. Alcantara® has been applied to the dashboard, door inserts, door armrests, and centre storage console lid. Additionally, updated seat trims have been introduced across the upper three grades of the Qashqai.

To enhance the experience of life on board, ambient lighting has been added to the N-Connecta, N-Design grades, and above. Advanced red/green/blue LEDs are discreetly located to allow the driver or passenger to personalize the interior lighting according to their mood.

When reverse is selected, the view of four external cameras is combined to

give a birds-eye view of the vehicle to allow parking manoeuvres with maximum confidence.

The upgraded AVM system now features a 3D function allowing the driver to see the car not only from above but also select one of eight different external camera viewpoints to visualise the car from the front, rear, sides or corners to potentially identify any unseen exterior hazards. It works in tandem with Nissan's Moving Object Detection system, which sounds an alert when it perceives a moving object in the proximity of the Qashqai.

Some design changes have been made to the visuals that are displayed on the TFT driver information screen behind the steering wheel. The design of the dials on display changes to red in Sport mode, to green in Eco mode or pale grey in Standard mode - in both "normal" or "enhanced" view mode.

There is now a "minimal" mode which reduces the potential distraction for drivers by displaying only the selected gear, drive mode and speed. For e-POWER equipped Qashqais, the energy flow display is now available in "normal" view mode.

## Safety

The suite of driver assistance systems has been significantly upgraded to provide improved vigilance and intervention, for maximum peace of mind.

Firstly, the Autonomous Emergency Braking functions have been recalibrated to sharpen its risk detection and to react more quickly in case of possible collision.

The Emergency Lane Keep System is now automatically activated on starting the Qashqai. It triggers the operation of both Lane Departure Warning and Lane Departure Prevention systems at speeds above 60km/h. The Intelligent Speed Assistance system which helps the driver to adapt the vehicle system to the prevailing speed limit by using both a camera to read speed limit road signs as well as GPS data has been upgraded. A flashing icon already catches the driver's attention when they are above the speed limit, and it will now sound an alarm if they don't reduce their speed.

The updated Qashqai is available with Google Maps and, once signed in with

a personal Google Account drivers can access their favourite locations and points of interest. This reduces the dependence on a mobile phone and cellular phone network. Over-the-air updates ensure the map information is always current.

## Connected Services

For peace of mind, the Nissan Connected Services update will surveil the Qashqai on the driver's behalf. It can remind customers if they have forgotten to lock the car or close the windows if they remain open one minute after the engine has stopped. Customers can close the windows and lock the car from the smartphone app. It will also warn them if the car has been tampered with or towed.

## e-POWER

In keeping with the pioneering spirit that gave birth to the original Qashqai and which invented the crossover segment, e-POWER is the unique electrified powertrain that has proved so popular with customers since its launch in 2022.

The petrol engine generates the electricity which is used to drive the wheels. This is far a simpler solution than the myriad traditional hybrids on sale today.

The result of that simplicity is a drive experience which combines responsiveness and refinement with efficiency - with no compromise on driving pleasure.

The key to e-POWER's unique and innovative powertrain is that there is no gearbox. The wheels are only ever driven directly by the electric motor.

A pure electric motor direct drive to the wheels means instant, high torque and linear response. It represents an EV-drive sensation without the need to think of charging - a sort of stepping-stone for customers who aren't yet ready to make the switch to 100% EV.

The sole role of the advanced turbocharged 3-cylinder engine - with variable compression ratio technology - is to generate electricity, which is sent via the inverter to either the 140kW electric motor or the 1.8kwh battery (or both, according to the driving scenario). The engine works quietly in the background to provide the necessary charge to the battery and motor. It's



been programmed to provide electricity about vehicle speed to avoid the disconcerting disconnect between background sound and vehicle progress.

Like a pure electric vehicle, the e-POWER system can harness momentum during braking or coasting to send electricity back to the battery. Drivers can also select the B mode on the gear selector for higher levels of brake regeneration. Nissan's e-Pedal Step function allows drivers to drive using just the accelerator – where significant braking is achieved upon release of the gas pedal. After a few minutes, driving with e-Pedal Step activated becomes second nature, particularly in an urban environment. (The brake may still be required in some unforeseen circumstances. And e-Pedal Step will only brake the vehicle until it is at "creep" speed, like a traditional automatic gearbox. For a full stop, the brake will be needed). ●



For more information about the Nissan range visit: [www.nissan.co.uk](http://www.nissan.co.uk)



## New Ford Puma - Cool, Calm and Connected Compact Crossover

**Ford has unveiled the upgraded new Puma, a compact crossover designed for easy city driving, with enough space for five people and their belongings. The new Puma has an entirely new interior equipped with large digital displays, advanced connectivity, and driving technologies.**

### Model options / Trim levels

Customers can choose from Titanium, ST-Line, and ST-Line X models, each with Puma's iconic coupe-inspired exterior style and unique front bumper, grille, and alloy wheel designs.

The new Puma models are powered by Ford's 1.0-litre EcoBoost Hybrid engine that uses 48-volt mild hybrid electric power to help save fuel or boost performance up to 155 PS. Ford Performance has also developed the new Puma ST Powershift, with a special sports chassis, styling and specification, and up to 170 PS peak power delivered as standard through a quick-shifting seven-

speed automatic gearbox that's also available for other Puma variants.

The company has also announced the fully electric Puma Gen-E, which will be launched later this year, providing zero-tailpipe emission driving.

### On the Inside

The sports car-style cockpit offers a calming environment with angled screens mounted high for the driver's convenience. The new Puma is equipped with two large screens, a 12.8-inch digital instrument cluster and a high-definition 12.0-inch centre touchscreen which displays maps, infotainment, and functions like climate and seat heating. The SYNC 4 connectivity and infotainment system has twice the computing power of the previous version and adapts to make it easy to access the features drivers use most. The car also features wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto 7 and voice recognition that understands everyday language.

Drivers can use Alexa Built-in 2 without a smartphone connected, asking for their calendar, their commute status, or to play their driving playlist.

Intelligent Adaptive Cruise Control with Stop & Go and Lane Centring makes driving more natural, accelerating and braking smoothly. The Predictive Speed Assist adjusts cruising speed for curves in the road, roundabouts, and when entering or leaving highways. The 360-degree surround-view camera system provides a bird's eye view in the city, helping drivers avoid scrapes when parking.

### Boot Capacity

The Puma has the practicality of a big car, with an 80-litre MegaBox in the boot floor that can hold a small supermarket shopping trolley. Two sets of golf clubs can stand upright in the boot, and there is more than 450 litres of space for luggage, shopping, or a dog cage even with five people onboard. ●

For more information about the Ford range visit: [www.ford.co.uk](http://www.ford.co.uk)

# Careless driving habits

## common practice among motorists



### Venson survey reveals drivers are frequently risking collisions, fines and driving bans while behind the wheel

**Lack of focus when behind the wheel can prove catastrophic, yet drivers continue to be distracted, make mistakes and put themselves and other road users at risk. A new survey from Venson Automotive Solutions found that drivers admit to making a wide range of careless habits daily, including hogging the middle lane, running red lights and speeding.**

#### Key findings:

- 71% go against the Highway Code to use their headlights to signal to other drivers
- 54% confessed to regular sudden braking
- 48% admit to speeding
- 46% hog the middle lane on motorways
- 44% drive too slowly
- 37% admit to being distracted by their satnav or mobile phone occasionally

#### Potential penalties for careless driving

- Driving deemed to be 'Careless and inconsiderate' can draw unlimited fines and 3-9 points
- Using a hand-held mobile phone risks £1,000-£2,500 fine and 6 points
- Speeding fines can reach £1,000 on most roads or £2,500 on motorways

as well as 3-6 points

- Traffic light offences could result in a fine of up to £1,000 and 3 points

Any of these careless habits could result in the driver being disqualified

*"Drivers who are unfamiliar with the details of the Highway Code may be surprised to learn that they risk a £1,000 fine for flashing their headlights to signal to another vehicle for any reason other than to highlight their presence,"* comments Simon Staton, Client Management Director for Venson Automotive Solutions.

*"With an estimated 14 million grey fleet drivers and nearly 2 million true fleet drivers on the UK's roads, businesses operating fleets should be particularly concerned by our survey findings. The risks businesses are exposed to by careless driving of employees are significant. Working together with Fleet managers, senior management teams within organisations must help enforce a robust policy and processes to ensure drivers not only keep their Highway Code knowledge fresh and up to date, brushing up on existing rules and understanding any changes but also that persistent offenders are highlighted and bad behaviours managed accordingly."*

*"Having drivers fully aware of the Duty of Care to themselves, their employer, other road users and pedestrians, should help them to understand how to reduce the risk*

*of incurring significant financial penalties, avoiding significant harm to others and limiting the risk of losing their licence. All of these will impact business efficiencies and could even end up with a custodial sentence for a company director should a serious incident occur."*

Hogging the middle lane or tailgating are common high-risk problems on UK motorways, so much so that National Highways has launched a campaign – Keep a safe distance - specifically targeting these issues[iii]. Close to half of the Venson survey respondents admitted to hogging the middle lane, and 12% confessed to tailgating. Worryingly, a survey commissioned by National Highways found that these behaviours can seriously affect other drivers: lane hogging was among the behaviours most likely to cause frustration for motorists, while tailgating was among the most likely to make drivers feel anxious, stressed or unsafe.

Simon Staton concludes: *"Careless driving not only risks directly causing a collision, but it can increase stress for other drivers and therefore cause them to be distracted and more likely to cause a collision themselves. Increasing driver focus and reducing bad habits through driver training and awareness campaigns will help improve safety and reduce risk for all road users."* ●

For more information visit: [www.venson.com](http://www.venson.com)

# All-New Swift Hybrid - Suzuki's Fourth Generation Compact Supermini



**With the launch of the fourth generation Swift, Suzuki is offering a compact supermini that features excellent visibility, a spacious cabin, ample luggage space and this is packed with technology.**

## Model Options / Trim Levels

The Swift is available with two trim levels the Mild-Hybrid Motion and Mild-Hybrid Ultra.

Standard equipment for Motion grade is comprehensive and includes 16-inch alloy wheels, LED headlamps, navigation, rearview camera, rear parking sensors, Adaptive Cruise Control, wireless smartphone link display audio, keyless entry & start, Driver Monitoring System, Dual Sensor Brake Support (upgraded), Lane Departure Warning and Weaving Alert, Rear Cross Traffic Alert, Blind Spot Monitor and enhanced Traffic Sign Recognition.

Ultra grade adds 16-inch polished alloy wheels, automatic air conditioning, rear passenger heater outlet and electric folding door mirrors incorporating side turn indicators.

Fitted as standard equipment for the new Swift, the 12V Mild Hybrid system is a compact and lightweight unit that incorporates an Integrated Starter Generator (known as ISG) which acts as both a generator and starter motor, the ISG is belt-driven and assists the engine during vehicle take off and acceleration and also generates electricity through regenerative braking.

For the Swift Motion with manual transmission, the Hybrid system helps reach a CO2 emissions figure of just 99g/km (WLTP regulation) plus achieve a fuel consumption figure of 64.2 mpg (WLTP) on the combined cycle.

## Exterior Styling

Swift is available in eight metallic colours with a further four dual-tone colours available optionally incorporating either a Black Pearl or Grey metallic roof depending on the chosen body colour.

The muscular appearance of the new Swift is further established by blacked-out pillars creating the appearance of a floating roof that adds a sense of lightness, while a high-tech look comes in

the form of a piano-black front grille and L-shaped signature lamps that conform to the cars flowing body lines. The LED headlamps have been revised to an inner lens + light rod type that give them a wider appearance when illuminated.

At the rear, the car has a new and distinctive sculpted tailgate with a wide rear bumper design and an integrated rear hatch spoiler and boot side spoilers helping to give new Swift a look of balanced stability.

New design 16-inch alloy wheels offer an ideal balance of aerodynamics, weight and strength.

## On the inside

A new high-quality dual-tone design is featured with centre controls angled towards the driver and a prominent nine-inch infotainment display fitted as standard equipment. The full-colour 9-inch High Definition display includes the audio control, standard equipment navigation system, rearview camera image and connectivity for both Apple CarPlay and Android devices via USB and Wi-Fi.

The standard heated front seats are of new design with reshaped cushioning between the shoulder and side bolsters creating a more sculpted look.

The Swift comes with a Driver Monitoring System (DMS), a camera built into the instrument panel monitors the driver's eyes and a near-infrared LED illuminates the driver's face to enable monitoring in low light. If the system detects that the driver is drowsy, falling asleep, or looking away from the road, it sounds a warning alarm and displays an alert message on the information display.

The system detects driver drowsiness by monitoring the degree of eyelid closing and yawn frequencies. If this is detected at speeds of approximately 43mph or more, the monitoring system will advise the driver to take a break by sounding an alarm and displaying an alert message on the information display.

The audio system for both Motion and Ultra grades has a full-colour 9-inch High Definition display that includes the audio control, standard equipment navigation system, rearview camera image and connectivity for both Apple CarPlay and Android devices via USB and Wi-Fi.

#### **Service Activated Warranty – Up to Seven Years Cover**

Low cost of ownership is ensured with the inclusion of Service Activated Warranty. This is offered free of charge once the car reaches the end of its manufacturer warranty period and is then booked in for its next scheduled service within the Suzuki Dealer network. This warranty stays in place until the next qualifying service and is then simply renewed again up to a maximum vehicle age of 7 years / 100,000 miles - whichever comes first.

Major components are covered, and should a customer decide to sell their car between services and within the seven-year qualifying period, the warranty can simply be transferred to the next owner – again free of charge.●



For more information about the Suzuki range visit: <https://cars.suzuki.co.uk/>

# Honda: New CR-V

**The Honda CR-V's sixth generation boasts a more confident and bold appearance and exceptional levels of practicality, safety, connectivity, and comfort.**

## Models / Powertrains

The popular C-segment SUV is available in either a full hybrid (e:HEV) powertrain or a plug-in hybrid (e:PHEV) option. The full hybrid (e:HEV) comes with AWD, while the plug-in hybrid (e:PHEV) is available as 2WD. Both options have a 2.0-litre four-cylinder direct-injection Atkinson-cycle petrol engine.

The e:HEV powertrain has been updated and revised for the new CR-V, with a downsized battery and a more efficient motor. The all-new e:PHEV, with a larger battery pack, offers up to 81km (50 miles)

of all-electric range.

The boost in power compared to the previous CR-V means a more assured acceleration feel and improved responsiveness with the e:HEV system, which also offers increased efficiency and reduced emissions, with combined CO2 as low as 151g/KM and 6.7l/100km (42.2mpg).

The plug-in e:PHEV features a larger 17.7kWh battery and a lightweight, high-output on-board electric charger. This increased electrical assistance means the engine speed can stay lower than before, improving noise levels, refinement, and fuel efficiency at various speeds. It also allows for an EV-only range of 81km (50 miles).

Efficiency and consumption figures for the plug-in hybrid system are just 18g/km and 0.8l/100km (353.1mpg) with a fully charged battery. When the battery is depleted, these figures will only increase

marginally, and the vehicle becomes a traditional hybrid.

## On the Inside

The CR-V offers a spacious interior with best-in-class legroom for rear-seat passengers. The larger proportions create more boot space and increase stability at higher speeds. Customers can choose from six exterior colours, including new rich Diamond Dust Pearl, Canyon River Blue Metallic, and Gold Titan Metallic colours.

Safety is a priority, and the all-new CR-V has been engineered to achieve industry-leading safety performance. It is the first European vehicle to feature Honda's most advanced suite of Advanced Driver Assistance Technologies (ADAS) - Honda SENSING 360. Advanced driver-assist and advanced accident-avoidance functions alleviate the burden of driving, and when coupled with a stronger body, the CR-V offers excellent safety features. ●



For more information about the Honda range visit: [www.honda.co.uk/cars](http://www.honda.co.uk/cars)



# Latest **Volkswagen Golf** opens new chapter in remarkable **50-year** success story



**The latest version of the Volkswagen Golf is now available, marking 50 years since the original model first launched.**

## Model options / Trim levels

The Golf Hatch comes in three trims - Life, Match and Style - while the Estate has the Life and Style trims. Engine and transmission options include the 1.5 TSI 115 PS manual, the mild-hybrid 1.5 eTSI 115 PS with automatic direct-shift gearbox (DSG), the 1.5 TSI 150 PS manual, and the 1.5 eTSI 150 PS with DSG. The first Golf R-Line models are set to launch soon, complete with sporty styling and additional features such as LED headlights, leather-wrapped and heated multi-function sports steering wheel, 12.9-inch infotainment display, rear-view camera, adaptive cruise control, and Lane Assist. Engine and transmission options for the R-Line models include the 1.5 TSI 150 PS manual and the 1.5 eTSI 150 PS with DSG.

Sales for additional Golf models, including eHybrid, GTI, and GTE versions, are set to begin in the middle of this year.

## Exterior Styling

The Golf's exterior has undergone a revamp, with newly-designed LED headlights - including the optional high-performance IQ.LIGHT matrix headlights - and a horizontal LED strip in the radiator grille, along with an illuminated Volkswagen logo. The rear of the car also features optional three-dimensional and redesigned IQ.LIGHT clusters, complete with welcome and goodbye effects that can be customized in the vehicle settings.

## On the inside

The car's interior has also been updated, with a newly developed and intuitive infotainment system (MIB4) featuring a free-standing 32.8 cm (12.9 inches) touchscreen, fast processor, and user-friendly, illuminated touch sliders for temperature and volume. Other new features include an enhanced multi-function steering wheel with physical buttons and the IDA voice assistant, which is ChatGPT-enabled and can be used to control functions such as air conditioning, telephone, and navigation, as well as accessing online information

such as weather forecasts and general knowledge,

The Digital Cockpit Pro (26 cm/10.2 inches) can be tailored to display either classic round instruments or progressive tiles with space in-between that can be assigned freely to display navigation route guidance or assist systems. Model-specific information profiles for the Golf R-Line, GTI and GTE will also be available.

The Golf's new assist systems, including the enhanced Park Assist Plus and Park Assist Pro, make maneuvering both the Hatch and Estate versions easier than ever. For the first time in the Golf, the Park Assist Pro allows driving in and out of parking spaces using a smartphone, while the 360-degree Area View is another new and useful feature.

## Charging / Range

Finally, the new plug-in hybrid drives with DC quick charging offer additional power and an electric range of approximately 100 km, while the highly-efficient 48 V mild hybrid versions will be of particular interest for drivers who do not have a charging wall box at home. ●

For more information about the Renault range visit: [www.volkswagen.co.uk](http://www.volkswagen.co.uk)

# Kia reveals striking new Sorento

**Kia has announced the specifications for the new Sorento, its popular seven-seat SUV in the UK. The updated model features a refreshed exterior and interior design and an expanded specification line-up.**

## Model Options / Trim levels

The updated Sorento will be available in three grades: '2', '3', and '4', with a choice of a 2.2-litre diesel, 1.6-litre turbocharged-petrol hybrid (HEV), or a 1.6-litre turbocharged-petrol plug-in hybrid (PHEV). The HEV and PHEV models come with a 6-speed automatic transmission (6AT), while diesel models receive an 8-speed dual-clutch transmission.

Regardless of trim level, the new Sorento offers an unrivalled level of equipment.

Standard equipment across the new Sorento line-up includes automatic headlight control, electrically folding, adjustable and heated door mirrors with LED indicators, roof rails and rear spoiler, rain-sensing front wiper, dual automatic and rear air conditioning. In addition, heated front seats and a heated artificial leather steering wheel, start/stop button with smart entry system, 2nd row sliding and auto-folding seat, 6x USB-C charge ports, a 12.3-inch touchscreen navigation, wireless Apple CarPlay™ and Android Auto™, free 7-year Kia Connect services, Bluetooth® connection with voice recognition, Ecall emergency service, over-the-air software updates.

The Sorento '2' is the entry-level model and is available with diesel, HEV, or PHEV power, '2' models come with a host of highlights, including 17-inch alloy wheels (19-inch on PHEV), tinted glass, all-round electric windows with driver auto up/down function, cloth and artificial leather upholstery, auto-dimming rearview mirror, manual front seat height adjuster, manual tilt/telescopic steering wheel adjustment, 4-inch driver display screen, and a 6-speaker audio system.

## Exterior Styling

The new Sorento takes design inspiration from the brand's all-new flagship SUV, the Kia EV9, with new vertical headlights and 'star map' daytime running lights, redesigned alloy wheels, and a new



bonnet design. The car features a redesigned gloss black radiator grille, black side sill, and wheel arch mouldings, giving it a bold, rugged appearance.

In the UK, a Mineral Blue exterior paint finish is offered as standard, with the option of five additional premium colours: White Pearl, Midnight Black, Interstellar Grey, Cityscape Green (previously only offered on the Niro), and a new addition, Volcanic Sand.

## On the Inside

Inside, the Sorento has been aligned with Kia's newer SUV models and remains one of the best-equipped models in its segment, with premium features such as fingerprint recognition, dual curved 12.3-inch displays, ambient lighting, and

a customisable head-up display. It also features artificial leather and recycled PET cloth throughout the cabin and upholstery, reflecting Kia's sustainability mission.

The new Sorento also continues its predecessor's legacy as one of the safest cars in its segment, with a range of passive and active safety and security systems as standard including, intelligent speed limit assist (ISLA) and manual speed limiter, drive mode select, electronic stability control (ESC), dynamic brake control (DBC), trailer stability assist (TSA), multi-collision braking system (MCB), paddle shifters, lane keep and lane follow assist (LKA/LFA), reversing camera system, front and rear parking sensors. ●

For more information about the Kia range visit: <https://www.kia.com/uk>



## New Jeep® Renegade 2024

**The Jeep Renegade is known for its distinctive style, compact size and off-road capabilities and is marking its 10-year anniversary with the launch of the new model.**

The new state-of-the-art infotainment system improves the driving experience in several ways. It is five times faster than the previous version, has a larger display area, and offers exceptional connectivity. The system supports over-the-air updates and 4G connectivity, ensuring drivers are always connected to the digital world.

Safety features include Forward Collision Warning and Connected Services.

The new 2024 Renegade is available in three trim levels, Altitude, Summit and Overland, all providing a satisfying and client-centric driving experience. The Altitude trim level has stunning full LED

headlamps and taillamps, LED front fog lights, and stylish 17-inch alloy wheels. It also has automatic air conditioning and a Digital Rearview Camera for easy parking. The Summit trim level has new 18-inch alloy wheels, leather heated seats, and a heated steering wheel. It also has a windscreen wiper de-icer and carpeted floor mats for added luxury. The Overland trim level is perfect for off-road adventures with its 17-inch alloy wheels and mud and snow (M+S) tyres. It also features off-road bumpers and enhanced capability.

The new Jeep Renegade 2024 offers a choice of two hybrid powertrains: the e-Hybrid and the 4xe plug-in hybrid. The e-Hybrid powertrain seamlessly manages the propulsion system by automatically switching between full electric, hybrid,

and internal combustion engines based on factors such as the 48V battery state of charge, real-time driving conditions and other monitored parameters. The 4xe plug-in hybrid utilises both electric and endothermic engines. The electric propulsion system generates increased torque, allowing for precise adjustments and enhancing four-wheel-drive capability on various terrains, making it suitable for challenging off-road adventures.

The new Renegade will introduce an optimised new calibration of the engine and battery, both on e-Hybrid and 4xe PHEV that, combined with the introduction of the new A+ class 18-inch' tyres, will improve fuel consumption and CO2 emissions up to 5% (pre-homologation figures).●

For more information visit: <https://www.jeep.co.uk>

# New Renault Captur, the B-segment car for living

**The Renault Captur is very versatile, compact on the outside, spacious on the inside and features a range of ingenious high-tech equipment.**

## Model Range / Trim Levels

The new Captur has three trims, Evolution, Techno, and Esprit Alpine.

The Evolution trim features 17-inch alloy wheels and a matt black finish on the lower body and beltline with long, black front and rear skid plates. The higher Techno trim features all-new 18-inch alloy wheels and a High Gloss Black finish on the lower body and beltline. The new Esprit Alpine trim is immediately identifiable with its Ice Black logos, High Gloss Black window surrounds, 19-inch wheels of specific design, aerodynamic splitter, and front and rear skid plates with Slate Grey matt finish.

The new Captur is offered with two engine choices, including the 145 bhp E-Tech full hybrid option. For enhanced driving pleasure and a more dynamic ride, the running gear has been revised and the power steering recalibrated.

With its modern, efficient powertrains, the new Captur is equally at home in the city, on the motorway, or on country roads. The 145 bhp E-Tech full hybrid engine meets the highest standards in fuel efficiency and CO2 emissions. It combines a 4-cylinder engine with a smart automatic dog clutch gearbox delivering 60.1mpg. It is as quiet as an electric car in the city without the charging constraints. The other option is the 1.0 TCE with 90 – 90 bhp, 160 Nm of torque and a turbo 3-cylinder engine paired with a 6-speed manual gearbox.

## Exterior Styling

The new front end takes on a more elegant, technological look, with the one-piece logo built into the multi-faceted grille and a higher, more horizontal bonnet. The new front lights feature full LED technology as standard on all levels of trim. The headlights come to life in a new welcome sequence when the doors are unlocked remotely.

Six body colours are available: Arctic White, Oyster Grey, Diamond Black, Ceramic Grey, Iron Blue, and Flame Red. The two-tone colour scheme, which is

optional on techno and standard on esprit Alpine, is popular with customers who can select Diamond Black for the roof and door mirrors.

New Captur can be personalised with a wide range of equipment available to order, including underbody lighting, sidesteps, towbars, bicycle racks, and illuminated door sills.

grained cover material fabric on the seats and door panels and a blue-grey insert on the dashboard. The cabin also makes many nods to the Alpine brand, a symbol of sporting elegance, with the national flag in the side piping, seatbelts with blue top-stitching, aluminium-plated sports pedals, branded door sills, and a special steering wheel.



## On the Inside

The cabin comes with new upholstery and dashboard screens. Depending on the version, the OpenR Link multimedia system with Google built-in provides the very best in on-board technology with Android Automotive 12, which is a world first in this B segment. The entirely new electronic architecture takes safety to new levels, with a range of latest-generation driving aids.

The interior ambience is immediately modern and welcoming with its all-new upholstery. The grey and heather grey seat fabric on the evolution trim gains yellow top-stitching on techno, with a Renault diamond pattern on the interior side supports of the front seats. The new esprit Alpine trim features multi-textured

Renault aims to completely phase out animal-derived materials by 2025. In New Captur, all the upholstery includes recycled fabrics selected for their low carbon footprint, without compromising on perceived quality, feel, or comfort. The esprit Alpine trim includes over 26% recycled and recyclable fabrics in its upholstery, through the use of bio-sourced materials such as grained cover material and hemp.

For digital in-car entertainment, front passengers have access to two USB-C sockets and a 12V socket, with another in the boot. On techno and esprit Alpine, two further USB-C sockets are available behind the central armrest for rear passengers, while a wireless phone charger in the centre console is standard



across the range.

Passenger knee room at the rear is still among the best on the market, at 221 mm, thanks to a rear bench seat designed to slide back as much as 16 cm, which is an ingenious feature that has become a hallmark of Captur. This allows users to create more space for cargo or passengers as required. The cabin includes a total of 24.7 litres of storage space, including a 7-litre glovebox and, depending on the version, map pockets on the backs of the front seats.

#### **Boot Capacity**

In terms of boot capacity, the new Captur ranks among the best on the market, with a maximum volume of 536 litres (VDA) when the rear bench seat is pushed fully forward (a gain of 114 litres VDA). The boot is modular, with a rear bench seat sliding over 16 cm and a removable floor creating a flat space. With the rear seats folded (2/3-1/3 split), the load length is 1.57m. ●

For more information about the Renault range visit: [www.renault.co.uk](http://www.renault.co.uk)

# Hyundai announces specifications for New Tucson

**Hyundai Motor UK has released the specifications for the new Tucson. The latest model now boasts a more dynamic and refined appearance, which embodies the company's vision for future mobility.**

## Exterior Styling

The new Tucson retains the essence of the previous model's design language while showcasing a more powerful aesthetic. The front fascia features a redesigned radiator grille with thin, angular lines, complemented by hidden daytime running lights (DRLs). The front bumper and skid plates have also been updated, extending seamlessly from side to side, creating a dynamic and wider stance. The skid plates at the rear have been integrated into the bumper moulding and enlarged horizontally, giving the impression of a wider wheelbase.

## On the Inside

The interior of the new Tucson prioritises spaciousness and practicality. The redesigned dashboard features a new horizontal crash pad design that creates a sense of openness, while physical heating and ventilation controls and a redesigned centre console with buttons for frequently used functions are also featured. The automatic and hybrid powertrains come with a wireless charging pad housed in the centre armrest.

Standard on all new Tucson models, the award-winning connected car Navigation Cockpit (ccNC) is the latest version of Hyundai's ccNC. It offers a range of content including natural language voice recognition and real-time navigation. The ccNC can also be updated continuously to the latest specifications via Over-the-Air (OTA) wireless software updates. The ccNC also supports wireless Apple CarPlay® and Android Auto® and is home to the display for the reverse view camera.

## Model range / Trim Levels

The new Tucson range offers customers



a variety of powertrain options based around the 1.6-litre petrol SmartStream efficient turbocharged engine.

The options available include the conventional engine in a 6-speed manual with 2WD, electrified 48-volt Mild Hybrid with a 7-speed dual-clutch transmission with 2WD or 4WD, Hybrid 6-speed automatic transmission in 2WD or 4WD or Plug-in Hybrid 6-speed automatic transmission in 2WD or 4WD.

Four trim levels are available, Advance, Premium, N Line and Ultimate.

The new Tucson range starts with the Advance 1.6T 6-speed manual. The Advance trim includes 17" alloy wheels, body-coloured door handles and mirrors, LED headlights and taillights, privacy glass, front and rear parking sensors, and keyless entry. Interior features include premium cloth trim with a leather steering wheel, height adjustment for driver and front passenger seats, customisable interior lighting, and front and rear USB-C charging points.

The Premium 1.6T 6-speed manual builds on the Advanced trim level with the addition of 18" alloy wheels, metal TUCSON branded scuff plates, premium combination cloth and leather seat trim, with electrically adjustable and heated front seats, rear heated seats, heated steering wheel, smart electric tailgate, and rear window sun blinds. The Premium trim introduces the KRELL audio system with 8 speakers and subwoofer and a wireless charging pad for compatible devices, along with the addition of the Junction Turning function to the Forward Collision Avoidance Assist safety system already standard on the Advance trim. DCT and Hybrid models also feature

smart adaptive cruise control with a stop/go function and Highway Drive Assist.

The N Line trim level adds several external styling changes to enhance the model's sporting aesthetic, with bespoke 19" N Line wheels, body-coloured wheel arches and N Line design package with changes to both front and rear bumper design.

Interior changes include N Line interior design package with red accents and stitching and details, such as the red ring around the engine start/stop button and N Line seats in textile faux suede trim in Obsidian Black.

In addition to the N Line, customers can also choose the N Line S, which adds electrically adjustable, heated and ventilated front seats, rear heated seats, heated steering wheel, matrix LED headlamps, panoramic sunroof with tilt and slide function, the KRELL premium audio system, surround view monitor, blind spot view monitor, parking distance warning with front, side and rear detection zones, and parking collision avoidance assist on DCT and Hybrid powertrains. The N Line S trim level shares the powertrain options with the N Line model.

The Ultimate trim level, adds 19" alloy wheels and matrix LED headlamps. Interior equipment is also enhanced, with the addition of driver's seat position memory function, ventilated front seats and the option of Black, Moss Grey or Cypress Green leather seat trim. Safety additions include the surround view monitor, blind spot view monitor, parking distance warning with front, side and rear detection zones, and parking collision avoidance assist on DCT and Hybrid powertrains. ●

For more information about the Hyundai range visit: <https://www.hyundai.com/uk>

# Nissan Juke: say hello to yellow again

**Nissan has updated its popular Juke urban crossover with a mid-lifecycle refresh. The changes include a striking new yellow exterior colour option, a significantly revised interior with new materials and upgraded fit and finish, and enhanced in-car technology.**

## Model Options / Trim levels

The Juke is equipped with two powertrain options. The electrified option is the Juke Hybrid – now available from Acenta Premium spec (previously N-Connecta upwards). Consisting of a Nissan internal combustion engine specifically developed for working in a hybrid powertrain application. On the electric side, the main electric motor produces 36kW (49hp) and 205Nm of torque, which is supported by a 15kW high voltage starter/generator, which runs via an inverter and 1.2kWh liquid-cooled battery. The net result is a powertrain providing 25% more power (143ps vs 114ps) than the current petrol engine option, with a fuel consumption reduction of up to 37% in the urban cycle, and up to 20% over the combined cycle (DCT Tekna+ vs Hybrid Tekna+).

Under the bonnet of the non-electrified

engine option for Juke is an efficient 1.0-litre three-cylinder DIG-T turbocharged petrol engine. It produces 114PS and 180Nm of torque (200Nm with over-torque function). Available with an engaging 6-speed manual or sporty 7-speed dual-clutch (DCT) paddle-shift transmission, and a driving mode selector (Eco, Standard, Sport).

The mid-life upgrade also introduces a new grade called N-Sport, which emphasises the Juke's dynamic qualities both on exterior and interior details. When specified in the N-Sport trim, the yellow contrasts with the black roof, wheels, door mirrors, wheel arch inserts, grille and A- and B-pillars, giving the car an added splash of swagger and attitude.

Andrew Humberstone, managing director of Nissan GB, stated that the Juke's continual improvements, including a new hybrid powertrain, have ensured its popularity with UK customers in a fiercely competitive sector. The latest updates retain the Juke's distinctive style while enhancing connectivity, quality, interior design, and safety to ensure it stays ahead of the competition.

## On the Inside

Inside the car, the first change that existing customers will notice is the increased size of the central infotainment screen, which is now 12.3 inches from corner to corner and inclined towards the driver by 8° for easy access. The combimeter, which houses the dials showing the Juke's speed and other key information, is now a 12.3-inch digital TFT screen on N-Connecta and upwards. The hi-resolution screen (1920 x 720 pixels) allows the driver to configure the display to show the combination of information according to their preferences. The upgraded infotainment system also comes with a more intuitive home screen, improved voice recognition, and "natural language understanding" capability.

The new N-Sport grade features a matching yellow highlight across the top of the instrument panel, down to the air vents, and on the seats. The seats have yellow recycled Alcantara® inserts to match the new exterior paint. The base and seat upright are quilted in a distinctive pattern, while "Juke" is embossed at shoulder height on the seat upright. Yellow stitching completes the bold effect. ●



For more information about the Renault range visit: [www.nissan.co.uk](http://www.nissan.co.uk)



## Peugeot reveals new E-5008 seven seat electric SUV

**Peugeot has unveiled its latest electric SUV, the E-5008, which offers seating for up to seven passengers, three powertrain options, and a range of up to 410 miles.**

This model meets the requirements of customers looking for a spacious SUV with a striking design, comfortable interior, and efficient electric performance. The new E-5008 is covered under the Peugeot Allure Care program for up to 8 years/100,000 miles, offering the longest coverage of any European brand and complete peace of mind.

The E-5008 boasts an attractive design combining the dynamism of an SUV with the refinement of a top-segment model.

Peugeot is dedicated to becoming an electric-only brand and is expanding its range to cater to all customers' needs. The company plans to introduce an electric version of every model in its range from 2025. The E-5008 is the only model in its category to offer 100% electric mobility for seven passengers with a choice of powertrains.

Built on the Stellantis STLA-M platform, the E-5008 showcases its flexibility by

being the first model to benefit from an extended configuration. With a wheelbase of 2.90m and a total length of 4.79m, the E-5008 is spacious and comfortable.

The E-5008 features a range of up to 410 miles, charging capabilities of up to 160kW, a rapid DC charging time of 20% to 80% in 30 minutes, and connected services including a trip planner, smart charging, vehicle to-load, "over-the-air" updates, and built-in Chat GPT.

The E-5008 will be available for orders in Autumn 2024, with a choice of two trim levels, ALLURE and GT, and three simplified option packs. The full 5008 will include the choice of three electric and two hybrid powertrains.

The new E-5008 is distinguished by its strong SUV character, combined with an aerodynamic silhouette and a refined



interior with exceptional space and onboard comfort. The front of the car features the new Peugeot light signature and an innovative front grille design that blends into the body colour. The E-5008 is available in six colours.

Inside, the spectacular 21-inch Peugeot Panoramic i-Cockpit® display puts passengers in an environment that is as high-tech as it is user-friendly and is featured as standard across the range. The display shows all the driving information, speed, power meter, driving aids, and energy flow. ●





## Peugeot announces new Hybrid powertrains for its 308 and 408 models

**Peugeot has announced new powertrain options for its 308 and 408 models. These models will now come with the new Hybrid 136 powertrain, which incorporates a 1.2-litre petrol engine, a 21kW electric motor, and a 0.9kWh 48V Lithium-ion battery. This powertrain is coupled with a new six-speed dual-clutch automatic gearbox, providing drivers with improved efficiency and extra torque at low revs.**

The new hybrid powertrain is capable of operating in zero-emission all-electric mode for more than 50% of the time during low-speed urban cruising, resulting in a fuel economy improvement of up to 15%. The reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is up to 22g/km for the 408 and 19g/km for the 308 when compared to the existing PureTech 130 EAT8 engine. Additionally, the hybrid powertrain has a reduced rate of Vehicle Excise Duty and a lower rate of Benefit-in-Kind Tax for company car drivers.

One of the significant advantages of the new hybrid system is that the 48V Lithium-ion battery recharges itself while driving without the need to be plugged in. When the battery energy level allows, the system enables the vehicle to be propelled using the electric motor alone. The 0.9kWh 48V battery is quite compact and is neatly installed under the front passenger seat. With the battery positioned up front, the 408 and 308 models retain all their interior space, and there is no compromise on boot volume.

The new powertrain options give drivers a wider choice of powertrain, while also offering more dynamism for an enhanced driving experience. The electric powertrain allows drivers to begin their journeys, make challenging manoeuvres, and travel at low speeds in urban traffic using only the electric mode. When more progress is needed, the electric motor provides extra torque to the low-rev petrol engine, while the battery position offers optimal weight distribution.

The HYBRID 136 e-DSC6 powertrain will be available for the ACTIVE, ALLURE, and GT trim levels on the 308 model. On the 408 model, this powertrain will be available on the ALLURE and GT trim levels. ●

For more information visit: [www.peugeot.co.uk](http://www.peugeot.co.uk)

## Fiat reveals the new 600 Hybrid

**The Fiat 600 Hybrid offers two different trim levels: the entry-level 600 Hybrid and the premium 600 Hybrid La Prima, both of which come with a range of paint options.**

This much-anticipated release is designed to meet the demands of modern drivers, prioritising sustainability and performance.

Built on the advanced CMP2 platform, the Fiat 600 Hybrid incorporates cutting-edge technology derived from the acclaimed 600e series. The groundbreaking powertrain features a robust 100 horsepower 48V Hybrid application and a seamless 6-speed automatic gearbox, ensuring a dynamic driving experience while also prioritising environmental responsibility.

Thanks to the innovative integration of an electric motor within the gearbox, the 600 Hybrid boasts full electric capabilities, allowing for effortless detachment of the engine from the transmission.

Standard features include 17-inch Diamond-Cut alloy wheels, Fiat Black & Ivory bi-colour fabric seats, and heated front seats (600 Hybrid). ●



For more information visit: [www.fiat.co.uk](http://www.fiat.co.uk)

# Skoda has released the final specifications for the second-generation **Kodiaq SUV**

**The new Kodiaq builds upon the strengths of the original model and now has more interior space, a bigger boot capacity and bold new interior design. The innovative Smart Dials, LED Matrix headlights, and Turn and Remote Park Assist are among the new technologies and creature comforts that the Kodiaq has to offer.**

## Model Choice / Trim Levels

Customers can choose between five and seven-seater models and two trim grades, SE and SE L. The SportLine variant will join the line-up later in the year.

Five drivetrain options are available, including a plug-in hybrid option that offers an all-electric driving range of more than 62 miles and rapid DC charging at speeds of up to 50kW. The PHEV drivetrain will be available with five-seater variants of both trim grades - the order date is yet to be confirmed.

The all-new Kodiaq will be supplied exclusively with an automatic transmission and a shift-by-wire gear selector that moves to the steering column, freeing up space in the central console area. The car has been designed to offer a natural, intuitive user

experience, with three configurable Smart Dials that allow occupants to control ventilation, volume, driving modes, and other comfort functions.

The Kodiaq SE model comes with 18-inch Mazeno alloy wheels, LED front and rear lights, heated front seats, and KESSY - a keyless start/stop system. It also features a 13-inch satellite navigation touchscreen display, a 10.25-inch Virtual Cockpit, and tri-zone climate control. The SE model has a range of safety systems as standard, including Front Assist with braking reaction to vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists, Blind Spot Detection with door exit warning and Front Cross Traffic Assist. SE models can have five or seven-seat layouts, with the latter adding a variable boot floor to the standard specification.

SE L models build on the SE specification and add 19-inch Rapeto alloy wheels, LED Matrix headlights with AFS (adaptive front light system), AWL (all-weather lighting system), and all-weather light with cornering function. SE L models also feature ecoSuite black design selection with perforated black artificial leather and real leather, an electrically adjustable driver's seat with memory function, an electrically operated boot, and a keyless

entry and start/stop system.

## Exterior Styling

The all-new Kodiaq has been redesigned from the ground up, introducing elements of Skoda's new Modern Solid design language, a revised Skoda logo, and a wide air intake below the grille, framed by two air curtains and a hexagonal grille. The grille can be specified with a striking LED strip made up of 14 lighting elements between the headlamps. The new model has a lower drag coefficient than its predecessor, thanks to the sloped roofline, aerodynamic rear bumper, spoiler, and alloy wheels.

## On the Inside

The car has been designed to offer a natural, intuitive user experience, with three configurable Smart Dials that allow occupants to control ventilation, volume, driving modes, and other comfort functions.

Space and practicality have been improved, with passenger space and boot volume both increased. Five-seater models have a boot capacity of 910 litres with the rear seats upright and 2,105 litres with the rear seats folded down. ●



For more information about the Skoda range visit: [www.skoda.co.uk](http://www.skoda.co.uk)

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