

# FLEXINEWS

ALL THAT GOES ON IN THE WORLD OF REFLEX VEHICLE HIRE



## Ford Custom PHEV

Plugging in to fleet fuel efficiency with Ford on a 400-mile client test run

## Renault Twizy Tester

Trialling new electric vehicles for the fleet, including the Renault Twizy

## Mind Time To Change

Mental Health Pledge signing as Reflex commits to changing the way we think and act at work





On 4th August, Reflex Vehicle Hire signed their **Mind Time To Change Pledge**.

We held a meeting with the Mental Health committee members at Reflex, chaired by Charlie Atkins, Reflex's **Mental Health Ambassador**.

The Mental Health Champions spoke about what the pledge would entail and what this meant for all staff at Reflex.

Along with this, the members are undergoing intense mental health training to deal with speaking to staff about the sensitive subject.

Some of the ideas involve bringing all of our departments together through team building activities so that we can eliminate any alienation between departments and bring everyone together as one big Reflex family. We are all here to help each other and look out for one another and this pledge should spread that message through the business.

Signing the pledge represents the action that Reflex plan to take and what we will do. We hope to raise awareness and help people speak up about the issues that they may have tackled.



Earlier this year, **The BDO Leicestershire Growth Report** announced the **Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies** in the region.

Across the 50 companies, a whopping £2.1bn was generated as combined revenues with an average growth of 23%.

Real estate and construction has experienced strong sector growth averaging 40%, attributable to just four companies within the top 50.

Retail and wholesale was followed closely by companies in the

manufacturing and industrial markets sectors which made up more than a quarter of the top 50 and achieved an average sector growth rate of 22%.

According to LLEP, Leicestershire proves to be a bustling hub for the retail and wholesale sector boasting 18 businesses in the top 50 and tracking an average sector growth rate of 22%.

Reflex Vehicle Hire are proud to be featured within the list at number 9, with a growth rate of 32%.



**F I N A L I S T 2 0 2 0**

Reflex Vehicle Hire has been shortlisted for **The Virgin Atlantic Customer Experience & Loyalty Award** in recognition of our customer service levels.

The award is part of the prestigious **2020 Lloyds Bank National Business Awards** and attracted entries from businesses throughout the country in every industry sector.

The achievement recognises the consistent focus on customer service throughout the Reflex Vehicle Hire business during some of the most challenging times the industry has faced.

We believe that if companies are

to truly prioritise customer service, they must consistently deliver support to their customers through good times and bad.

The Coronavirus crisis has been a test of how businesses respond to customers in need, and we have maintained our strategic focus on putting our customers first and doing all we can to help.

Our team members understand our customers and their needs, and that has had an impact on everything, from the way telephone conversations are handled through to how innovative technology is developed.





Here at Reflex, we like to trial different makes and models that are new to the industry before welcoming them to our fleet.

The **Renault Twizy**, which is a two-seat microcar, came to visit us on site for a few days whilst we put its electric ability to the test.

We were impressed, with zero CO2 emissions and an official range of 62 miles, it's the perfect companion for shuttling in cities.

Our fleet team will thoroughly put vehicles to the test before making

any purchasing decisions to ensure we get it right.

Getting the right vehicles to join our fleet is vital, as we always want to offer the latest and most innovative technology to our customers.

Our fleet vehicles are not limited and we will always encourage customers to place orders for their perfect vehicle that fits their exact needs.

You can enquire with our expert fleet team to get a real taster of what is available and see what will suit your business requirements the most.



Reflex Vehicle Hire makes the perfect partner for **RSS Infrastructure**, as both companies are committed to high service levels and industry leading safety standards.

Our hire fleet is also a valued flexible resource for the business, which can expand and contract as market conditions dictate.

For example, as disruption from the Coronavirus crisis took hold, RSS Infrastructure was able to reduce its fleet size before quickly adding vehicles as demand returned.

This flexibility is enabled by Reflex Vehicle Hire's award-winning customer service team, who earned praise from Johnathon McDonough, Fleet Co-ordinator at RSS Infrastructure.

He said: **"They are a supplier like no other. 99% of the time they will supply exactly what you need. Their customer service is outstanding. The team go above and beyond all the time. In the current climate, it can be hard to get vehicles, but Reflex Vehicle Hire have been able to sort out exactly what we need or find an equivalent to get the job completed."**

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While services are flexible, the commitment to safety continues unchanged, so RSS benefits from 'Safety-as-Standard' risk management services.

Vans are provided with telematics and dashcam technology as part of the *Drive with Reflex* modular risk management service.

The system helps to protect the business, vehicles, and drivers. It provides information that can power driver education courses, while camera footage and telematics data can defend drivers from inaccurate third-party claims.

McDonough said: **"On several occasions, because of the systems in the vehicle, we have been able to show that an incident is not the driver's fault. Drivers recognise that this is about road safety, particularly the younger ones who are tech savvy and understand the benefits. The system has also helped to decrease incidences of speeding, as I get a regular report that helps with driver management."**

Head over to our website where you can read more **customer case studies** and find out how we have helped their business.





Reflex Vehicle Hire has one of the youngest fleets in the industry and we rolled out our latest **replacement models** as the new 70-plate registration number was launched.

We constantly invest in new vehicles to ensure our customers get access to the most modern vehicles and the latest technology, meaning we are first on the road when new registration plates are introduced.

Despite the disruption of the Coronavirus pandemic, we have continued to renewing and update our fleet with replacement vehicles.

At Reflex Vehicle Hire, we are using our buying power to support the

UK's dealer network on the road to recovery.

We purchase thousands of new vehicles each year worth millions of pounds and we are working with a wide network of vehicle dealers to support their businesses.

Among the vehicles joining our fleet recently are five replacement **Ford Transit Couriers**, which offer a 1,620mm load floor length, with plenty of room for cargo, toolboxes or equipment, along with sidewall-mounted tie-downs that keep the load door free from obstructions.

Browse our **full vehicle range** on the website.





Each year, Reflex Vehicle Hire attend the prestigious **Fleet & Mobility Live** event put together by Fleet News and Commercial Fleet. The exhibition is the UK's leading event for the fleet industry that invites individuals working in the sector to come along and learn all about what is happening in the market.

However, this year the event will be moving virtual following a recent announcement in Fleet News surrounding the uncertainty of Coronavirus.

The event itself offers a vast array of virtual exhibition stands with suppliers sharing ground-breaking and innovative new technology for visitors to make use of, as well as

the option for visitors to take away any information they deem interesting.

The fleet sector plays an essential role in keeping UK businesses moving, even during unprecedented times to provide basic necessities.

The virtual exhibition will take place on 17th - 19th November, giving exhibitors and attendees time to prepare for the changes to arise.

Although the event has moved virtually, Reflex are still able to communicate fresh ideas on how to better manage your fleet and drivers, finding the best solutions to suit your business.



Our new personalised Reflex Vehicle Hire 3 tier metal racking system by **Hubb Systems Ltd** and **Complete Vehicle Accessories** in one of our utility vehicles.

We undertake bespoke requests often for our client base and can offer personalised and branded features for your company just like this.

If your company has certain specifications for vehicles to fulfil vital contracts, we will look to accommodate any requirements that we can.

Our services do not stop at flexible vehicle hire with safety as standard. You can design your plain white van anyway you need it.

From chapter 8, livery and beacons, to towbars, racking and deb units. There is not much we cannot supply.

Our partnerships with vehicle accessory companies mean that your choice of ancillary items is endless.

Request your perfect vehicle, exactly the way you need it. Take a look on our website for details.





Since the start of the pandemic, Reflex have supported local charity, We Care UK with the donation of a vehicle to complete deliveries of food parcels to the community.

The organisation pledged to deliver meals to the elderly and vulnerable families who may have fallen on hard times during the pandemic such as having financial difficulties.

We Care UK have now expanded to delivering face coverings as well as meals. The donated vehicle has seen the delivery of over 8,000 food parcels and 7,000 masks to date.

The team have made such an amazing impact on the community considering the unprecedented circumstances and Reflex are only too happy to help with the tremendous efforts that they have made.



Jason Bains, a We Care UK founder, says: **"Coronavirus has left people very isolated, particularly the elderly and vulnerable. Having a van has made a real difference to the number of parcels we can carry. We can be delivering up to 60 miles away from our warehouse, so it's important to minimise trips to reduce fuel use. We would not have been able to meet the demand we have faced without the support of Reflex and we are immensely grateful for their help."**





Reflex Vehicle Hire has been a vital component in Clancy's supply chain for over a decade – providing vehicles to support the specialist contractor's work in energy and water utilities.

Working across the UK through a direct delivery model, Clancy operates 2,400 vehicles, including 400 cars and 1,200 vans, along with more than 11,000 pieces of equipment ranging from 30 tonne excavators down to drills.

In this fast-moving industry, businesses require equipment that can be depended on to do the job, including vans that are ready to work.

Reflex supplies around 400 vans that offer a flexible buffer for changing levels of demand within

the Clancy fleet as customer requirements develop.

Quality and flexibility of vehicles and service has seen Reflex Vehicle Hire become a trusted partner, according to David Janes, Head of Clancy Plant.

**“Over a decade of working together, Reflex Vehicle Hire has developed a detailed understanding of our requirements,”** says Janes. **“We know that it just needs one call and it is done. They understand the business and we have a relationship built on trust.”**

This support for the business extends to meeting the bespoke needs of Clancy's fleet, with vehicles enhanced with thousands of pounds worth of additional equipment for their specific working environment,

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including generators and compressors.

**“As a specialist business we have specific requirements,”** Janes adds. **“Reflex Vehicle Hire has met our needs and more as each side’s understanding of the other has grown.”**

As the Coronavirus crisis emerged this year, Reflex Vehicle Hire was able to ensure Clancy’s key workers could continue their essential roles in the water and power sectors. We provided vehicles and staff support throughout the most difficult weeks of the pandemic.

Janes explains: **“We have been very busy throughout lockdown. People always need water and power and we have had to work, so Reflex has**

**worked with us. Reflex ensured we had the capacity to cope with demand and we have not had an issue. They understand our business and they knew what support we needed.”**

As a trusted provider that has proven its long-term commitment to supporting Clancy’s success, Reflex Vehicle Hire recently secured a contract to supply an additional 515 vehicles in a five-year deal.

The long-term agreement reflects the level of trust between the two companies as partners, with vehicle hire playing an important role within Clancy’s fleet – providing an alternative to full ownership while reducing reliance on short-term subcontracting.



SEAT has become a growing force in fleet, with a growing list of award wins and business buyers.

The Leon is its best-selling model, with a substantial proportion sold to fleet operators who value its competitive running costs, efficiency, and a wide model range.

However, the competition is fierce for the lower-medium sector crown, with the Leon facing a challenge from almost every other brand, including the Volkswagen Golf, Ford Focus and Vauxhall Astra as well as offerings from Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Audi.

As part of the Reflex Vehicle Hire road test programme, we put the

**2020 model year Leon 5-door FR 1.5 TSI EVO 130 PS 6-speed manual** to the test and it fights hard for a coveted place as best in class.

Our drivers who tested the previous model praised the interior upgrades and design updates in the new car, with features that help it stand out from the crowd, including rear lights that stretch across the full width of the boot.

On the road, the sporting character of the SEAT brand shines through, with the 1.5-litre engine delivering 130hp at 5,000rpm, offering swift progress through the six-speed gearbox to 62mph in 9.4 seconds.



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Despite its sporting pretensions, on the road the SEAT helps drivers to prioritise safety and economy with a range of useful dashboard prompts.

The driver coaching messages were welcomed by the road test team, although they seem to be quite frequent, with warnings such as 'take your foot off the accelerator when you're coming up to a roundabout', which might lead to some drivers digging around the menu options for the mute setting.

However, the benefit of all this coaching is enhanced fuel economy, with the TSI engine offering 49mpg on a mix of urban roads and

motorways during nearly 100 miles of testing, close to its official overall economy figure of 56.5mpg.

Aaron Cawrey, Vehicle Purchasing Manager at Reflex Vehicle Hire, said: **"Overall it was a very smooth drive and the petrol-engined model we tested would definitely have a role to play in fleet. It is a great competitor in its segment and stacks up well against rivals.**

**"I am looking forward to driving the mild-hybrid version of the Leon that we will be testing soon and seeing how it compares."**



Under government plans, diesel has just over a decade left before the law will mandate a move to electric vehicles. The ambitions of MPs are still at the proposal stage, but there is a clear message that fleet operators need to consider new ways of powering cars and vans.

In response, manufacturers are introducing a growing range of alternative fuel vehicles, including the new Ford Transit Custom PHEV (plug-in hybrid electric vehicle).

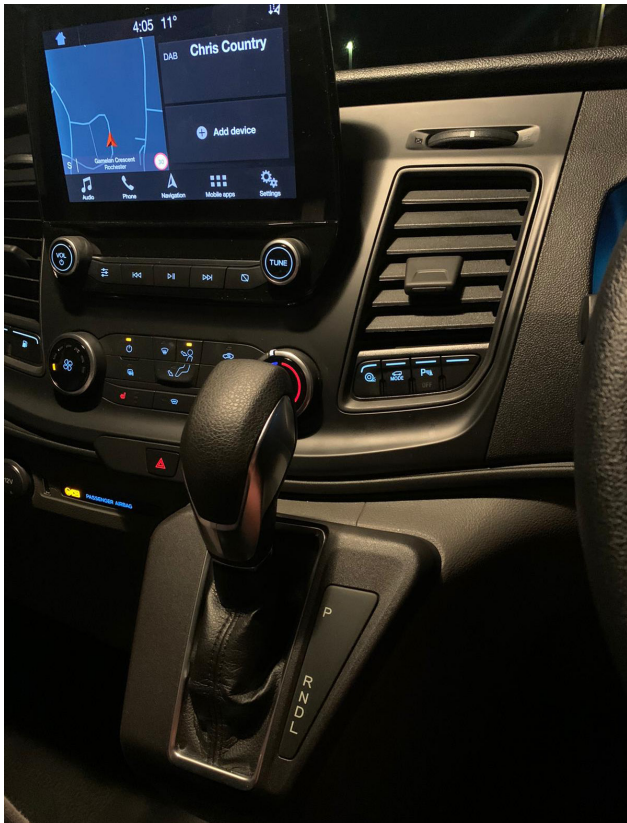
Ford was the first volume manufacturer to offer PHEV technology in this segment of the van market, which acts as a stepping stone to pure electric technology for fleets.

We put Ford's new contender for the green fleet crown through its paces in a 400-mile test drive with **Morson International**, one of the largest engineering recruitment companies in the world.

The Transit Custom PHEV uses an advanced hybrid system that targets a zero-emission range of around 30 miles, backed by Ford's award-winning EcoBoost 1.0-litre petrol engine as a range extender to provide a total range of 310 miles.

The 13.6kWh battery pack is a compact liquid-cooled lithium-ion design located under the load floor, preserving the full cargo volume offered by the standard Transit Custom van.





Tim Wood, Morson International Regional Fleet Manager, praised the new Custom PHEV overall, including the ease of switching between battery modes.

He said: **"I really liked it; it was great to drive and the battery usage modes were easy to switch between. I did a lot of motorway driving, which affected the fuel economy compared to its intended use around town, but it allowed me to cover around 400 miles."**

If used for dedicated local journeys, a Ford Transit Custom PHEV could feasibly use no fuel at all. With broader use, some published test returned around 40mpg, but official fuel economy figures claim 91mpg, so it depends heavily on application.

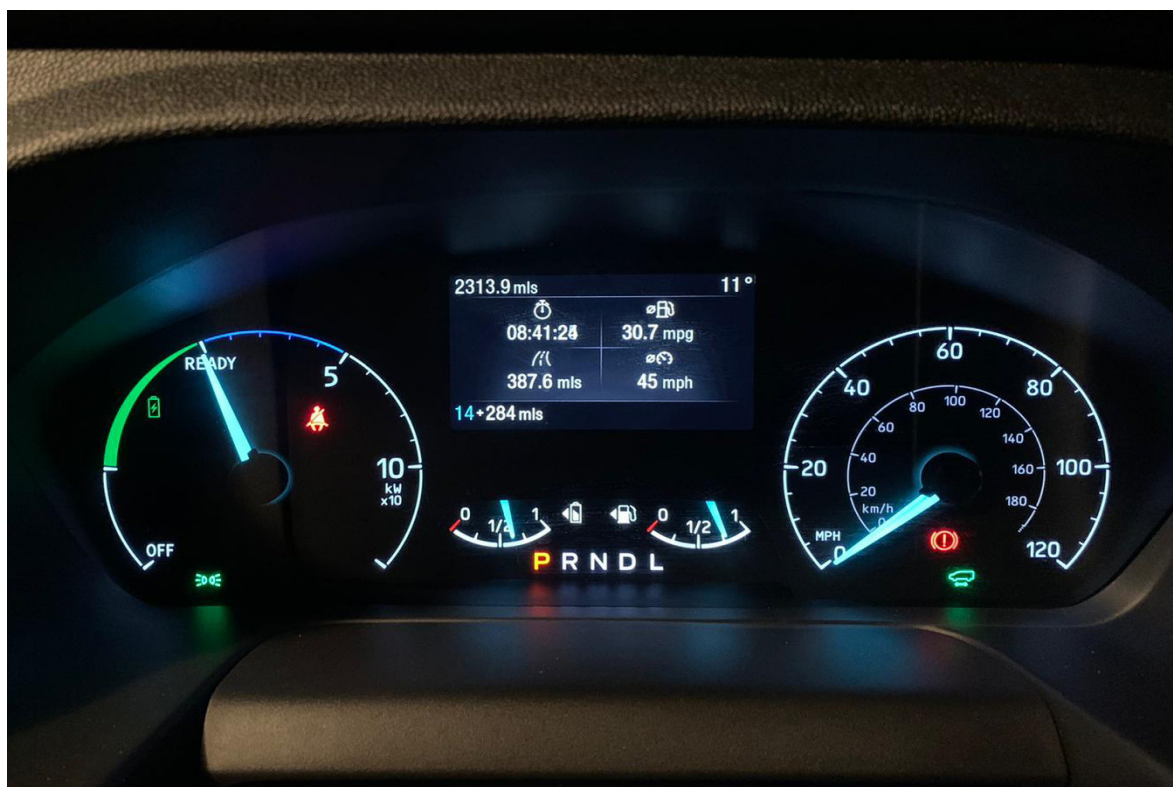
The Transit Custom PHEV is driven by electric power, but switching modes allows the energy to be delivered in different ways.

It can run purely on its batteries, or another mode prevents battery power being reduced so it can be used later, in which case the petrol engine generates the power needed during driving. You can also choose for the engine to power the electric motor and charge the battery at the same time.

Wood said: **"It is an automatic, so it was very relaxing to drive, especially as it is mostly silent, even at motorway speeds, although acceleration at higher speeds can be a bit slow."**



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It features regenerative braking, so energy normally wasted during slowing down is used to recharge the batteries. This can be engaged as soon as drivers take their foot off the accelerator, effectively offering one-pedal driving.

Wood said: **“The one-pedal driving was impressive, although it took a little getting used to.”**

On the inside, there is little difference from a standard Transit Custom, except for the dials in the instrument cluster. There are two fuel gauges; the left-hand gauge indicates how much charge is left in the battery and the right hand one shows the petrol level. Other gauges show energy usage or whether energy is being recovered.

When used in urban areas, the Transit Custom PHEV provides additional benefits, such as silent running.

Recharging was simple when plugging in overnight. The batteries can be fully charged in around 4 hours using a domestic plug or 3 hours using a 7Kw charger, but many fleets are likely to add emission-free miles in short ‘pit stops’ during the day, rather than waiting to completely fill the battery.

Other than the engine, the Ford Transit Custom PHEV offers all the advantages of a standard van, with wide opening doors leading to a spacious loading bay that can take 6m<sup>3</sup> of cargo totalling around 1,130kg.

## Service

Billy Kelly

**Maintenance Controller**

