

FUEL EFFICIENCY PUT TO THE TEST

Taxi drivers may have seen The Capital Arrive 'N' Drive, held recently starting from Horseguards Parade. The event, which was sponsored by TfL, had a comprehensive display of the latest innovations to help reduce emissions and improve air quality in the capital. The highlight of the event was the Capital Fuel Challenge, which assigned a freight task to each vehicle entered in order to measure its fuel efficiency.

Each vehicle had to navigate its way around the congestion charge zone, stopping at four predetermined checkpoints to pick up a parcel. Former F1 World Champion Damon Hill started pole position in an all electric Tesla sports car, which is capable of impressive performance and emits no CO2 into the atmosphere. Damon said: "I was delighted to be involved with the GreenFleet Capital Fuel Challenge, which is a great way to showcase alternative fuels and greener driving methods."

The eco grand prix was set off at 9.30am by Deputy Mayor of London Richard Barnes. Visitors to the event were able to watch the fleet's progress on a huge screen thanks to innovative route tracking technology from Trakm8, a leading supplier of mobile asset management and vehicle tracking.



The Eco Driver Challenge category, sponsored by greener vehicle rental company Green Motion, featured four teams including the Institute of Advanced Motorists, Hillingdon Council and Fifth Gear presenter Jonny Smith, who stated: "The data gleaned from the challenge should help to encourage London's fleets to consider their options and switch to greener ways of working."

The vehicles are currently being scrutinised by Millbrook Laboratories, along with data provided by Trakm8's software. When completed, the winners will be announced and the most efficient fleets make it through to the GreenFleet® Awards finals at Twickenham on 25 September, where they will take part in the 'G-Factor'. Each organisation will present the reasons why they should win the prestigious TfL Capital Fleet of the Year Awards to an expert panel. The panel will then score each presentation, and the audience will get a chance to vote for which entry they think should win.

One of the entries in the Fuel Challenge was an "EcoVito". This Mercedes Vito Traveliner runs on biomethane. This is a Renewable Natural Gas from organic materials and wastes. As using renewable energy reduces the use of fossil fuels, Organic Power's technology converts organic materials into renewable energy by combining aerobic and anaerobic digestion in a series of minimum energy shaped tanks supported in lagoons of water which can be heated by solar power, to replace conventional cylindrical tanks. Over one



third of the world's energy requirement is for transport, and biomethane is quietly establishing itself as the world's cleanest fuel. A fleet of "EcoVito" vehicles are already in service as taxis in Kuala Lumpur.

The vehicles on static displays at the Horse Guards Parade event showed that they are suited to city driving and emit low levels of CO2. These included Aixam Mega's electric Mega City, and a range of low-emission vehicles from Toyota, including the Prius Hybrid. Another welcome return to the Capital Arrive 'N' Drive event came from Modec. Other exhibitors included specialist Greater London Hire, a private hire company who use hybrid vehicles.



Two static display vehicles from Citroen were the New C5 1.6HDi VTR+ and the Grand C4 Picasso 1.6HDi EGS Exclusive. A C3 1.4i Stop & Start was entered in the Fuel Challenge

ENGLISH HERITAGE BLUE PLAQUE FOR ACTOR ALASTAIR SIM

Acclaimed stage and film actor, Alastair Sim (1900-1976) has been commemorated with an English Heritage blue plaque at 8 Frognal Gardens, London, NW3, where he lived for over 20 years (from 1953 until 1975). It was at this address that Sim experienced his greatest fame and both his daughter Merlith McKendrick and his protégé George Cole have attested to the actor's happiness whilst living there. The plaque was unveiled by Merlith herself.

In his obituary in The Times, Sim was described as 'an uncommon comedian because what he did, however extravagant, appeared with him to be perfectly natural; he could invest a character with an air of wiliness combined with oracular dignity that could have served for the Shakespearian Ulysses.' He also had the inherent ability to attract the sympathy of the audience even when playing a villain, such as in The Green Man (1956). His tremendous popularity was evident in 1948 when he was elected rector of Edinburgh University by a majority much larger than that achieved by any of the political and military figures who had preceded him. When he retired as rector he was made an honorary LLD of Edinburgh University in 1951, and was appointed CBE in 1953. He was offered a knighthood but declined it on the grounds that he did not wish to be called Sir Alastair.