

The campaign to reduce UK levels of carbon continues, but now, more than ever, the potential for savings to be made in the commercial vehicle community are getting people excited.

Much of this excitement and anticipation is not wrongly placed, if the impressive showing of 'green' vehicles at LCV 2011 was anything to go by. The event, which took place at Rockingham Race Circuit and is now into its fourth year, saw a record number of commercial vehicles appear alongside their passenger car cousins.

For the transport engineers, fleet managers and owner-operators amongst the LCV 2011 delegates, it was a chance to see how they could make a positive difference to their business through advanced engineering. Equipping their fleet with transport that emits fewer pollutants, and is more economical than the current line-up, is now firmly in the realms of reality, rather than simply a fantasy.

And that message was rammed home, thanks to the opportunity for visitors to experience a range of alternative-powered commercial vehicles – many from behind the drivers' seat. Those present included a battery electric version of the Transit Connect, a hydrogen-powered Mercedes-Benz Vito van and a 17-seat electric minibus from Smith Electric.

And there was tangible proof that serious gains can also be made with the heavy vehicles. With a range of vans and trucks in the commercial sector, Iveco has been making lots of noise about its green credentials, the tub-thumping normally being done by Martin Flach, the company's product director.

To this end, using LCV 2011 for its UK launch of the Eurocargo Hybrid was a smart move by the Italian manufacturer – causing quite a stir among visitors. It will probably leave a lasting impression with many other manufacturers, too, that hybrid and larger commercial vehicles can indeed go hand in hand.

The transport future's bright. The transport future's green...



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Transport Engineer's regular 'IRTE to IRTE' members' column: focusing on the issues, challenges and concerns that matter to transport engineers and fleet managers