

Sustainable fuels

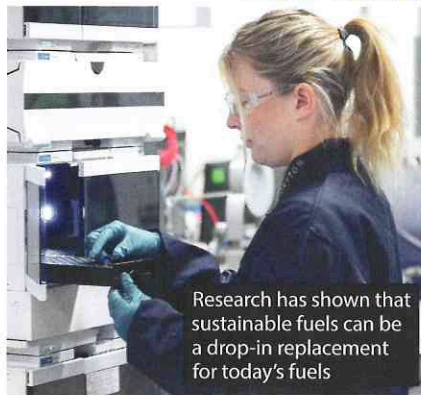
The Government's own figures show that switching existing vehicles to sustainable fuels could slash carbon emissions by more than 80 percent. Richard Gotch asks if this remarkable claim is realistic.

With the single-minded drive towards electric vehicles, it's easy to forget that we already have 36 million Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) cars on UK roads, with new examples added daily until 2035. The good news is that there is a solution that could slash their carbon emissions by more than 80 percent.

"The SMMT's figures predict that by 2030, only around 20 percent of vehicles on UK roads will be fully electric," states Andrew Willson, CEO of UK-based clean fuels developer Coryton. "There are many variables that could change these numbers, but it's clear there will still be tens of millions of combustion engine cars, even beyond 2035."



The historic vehicle sector contributes around £2.9 billion every year to tax revenues and supports around 110,000 jobs.



Research has shown that sustainable fuels can be a drop-in replacement for today's fuels



Coryton CEO Andrew Willson

Another point often raised is Food vs Fuels, but this is

"The fastest way to slash automotive CO2 is to change the fuel in the existing fleet"

Garry Wilson, HCVA

Swapping to sustainable fuels can help reduce ICE emissions to net-zero. It sounds like a perfect solution, but is it a realistic cause for Government to support?

The first question is infrastructure. To deliver the EV charging network by 2050 will require an investment of £330 Bn, according to analysis by E&T magazine. A big advantage of sustainable fuels is that they are 'drop in': they can be delivered in existing tankers, dispensed from existing pumps and used in existing vehicles, without any changes.

based on an outdated understanding. As Willson explains, it's simply a question of responsible sourcing of feedstocks. "There are examples of crops being diverted to make fuels, but that's a first generation approach," he says. "At Coryton, we use 100% bio waste, a resource in plentiful supply."

The other point of contention is what comes out of the tailpipe. To set the scene, manufacturing EV batteries creates a substantial CO2 spike. In most usage cases, the benefit is quickly positive, but it's wrong to think of EVs as emissions-free even if the electricity feeding them is fairly clean. Coryton's Willson believes that to clean-up our planet, we have to focus on reducing whole-life emissions, not just what comes out of the vehicle. "Sustainable fuels recycle CO2 that already exists in our atmosphere: a cycle of carbon capture, release and re-capture - unlike fossil fuels which release additional CO2," he states. "Thinking to 2035 and those millions of combustion vehicles, they need to be supporting the government's net-zero target too, or we're just scratching the surface."



HCVA CEO Garry Wilson

Protecting the future of classic motoring

The tax raised from the classic vehicle sector is currently around £2.9 billion per year, according to the Historic & Classic Vehicle Alliance (HCVA). Although emissions from the sector are tiny, the Alliance's CEO, Garry Wilson, is a strong believer in sustainable fuels. "The ability

to become net-zero is very attractive, and of course that means we are also protecting over 110,000 UK jobs," he points out. "We are already talking to Government about sustainable fuels research and encourage all conversations on the topic."

