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## RAC's top patrol aims high with the 2019 WLTP Challenge

**Not content with being awarded the title of *Patrol Ambassador of the Year 2019*, Manchester-based RAC patrol Ben Aldous now has another challenge in his sights – to prove just how efficiently a fully-laden Ford Transit Custom patrol van can be driven on a typical weekday.**

Ben will be competing in the [Fleet World WLTP Challenge](#), which takes place on Thursday 10 October and will see dozens of drivers completing a round trip of some 250 miles between Bristol and the RAC's operational centre in Walsall, with the aim of demonstrating just how economically modern

vehicles can be driven in the UK.

The successor to the popular MPG Marathon that ran for more than 15 years, this year's event represents an even bigger challenge as participants aim to beat the 'real world' fuel economy figures quoted by manufacturers following the switch to the [Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure \(WLTP\)](#), which applied to all new vehicles sold from September 2019.

For the RAC's Ben Aldous, hitting or even beating the advertised economy figures for his van is only part of the story: there is also personal pride at stake as he attempts to emulate four previous top RAC patrols who have all recorded impressive overall miles-to-the-gallon figures – peaking at 47mpg in 2015.

**Ben said:**

“A large part of my day is spent driving to fix members' vehicles so I'm constantly keeping an eye on the fuel gauge so I can plan a stop to top up with diesel at the best time.

“That won't be the case on Thursday, when I'll be aiming to maximise my Transit's MPG on the challenge, despite it being fully loaded with all my 500 parts and tools. And, while I'd love to beat the official quoted economy figures, pulling off a better overall MPG than my fellow patrols have done in previous years is probably just as important to me!

“Since I signed up for the event, I've been monitoring my driving to see how to get more economy out of the Transit's engine. This has quickly shown me that even seemingly small changes like not braking late and accelerating smoothly have a huge impact on the van's overall MPG. So I'm very much looking forward to what's possible on the day, and hopefully the experience will give me some tips that I can bring to the driving I do for the RAC every day.”

**RAC business roadside managing director Phil Ryan said:**

“This is the fifth year we've been involved in this event, which is one-of-a-kind in the UK, and it is always an eye-opener in terms of what our patrols can squeeze out of their patrol vans' engines in terms of sheer miles on one

tank.

“We spend millions of pounds on fuel every year to keep our fleet of patrol vans and recovery vehicles on the road, so it’s vital we stay close to what manufacturers are doing to improve the efficiency of their vehicles. At the same time, we recognise that the work we do does have an impact on the environment which is why we are constantly refreshing our fleet and looking at how new technologies, hybrid and battery electric included, can increasingly play an important role in the vehicles that make up our fleet. It’s also why our patrols’ ability to fix four-out-of-five vehicles at the roadside is so important, as more cars fixed in situ means fewer miles spent towing.

“And of course, by reducing our emissions and boosting the fuel efficiency of our vehicles we’re also saving our business money. Clearly, our patrols, who between themselves cover hundreds of thousands of miles every year, have a big responsibility here, so it will be exciting to see just what Ben can pull off at this year’s WLTP Challenge.”

### **RAC patrols’ MPG Marathon / WLTP Challenge performance**

<b>Year</b>	<b>RAC patrol</b>	<b>Driving (fully-laden)</b>	<b>Overall MPG</b>
2019	Ben Aldous	Ford Transit Custom 340 130ps	tbc
2018	Mark Souster	VW Transporter T6 T32 Startline Bluetec Technology	37.03
2017	Chris Burgess	VW Transporter T32 ST-LN TDI Bluetec Technology	46.90
2016	Charlie Harding	Ford Transit Custom 330 125ps	39.84
2015	Ben Wilson	Mercedes-Benz Vito LWB 116CDi Bluetec 7G Auto	47.57

*The RAC, working with the Energy Savings Trust, has developed a detailed guide*

to saving fuel – see [www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/how-to/fuel-saving-tips](http://www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/how-to/fuel-saving-tips).

For more information about the 2019 WLTP Challenge, visit [wltpchallenge.com](http://wltpchallenge.com).

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## **Notes to Editors**

### **About the RAC**

The RAC provides complete peace of mind to 11m UK private and business drivers, whatever their motoring needs. Its services include:

[Breakdown assistance](#). Its highly-skilled, 1,600-strong branded patrol workforce attends more than two million breakdowns every year, fixing on average four out of five vehicles at the roadside. The RAC's patrol fleet is one of the most advanced in the world, and was the first to roll out both an [All-Wheels-Up recovery system](#), allowing the vast majority of vehicles to be recovered from a single patrol van, and [EV Boost](#) mobile electric vehicle charging units

[Insurance](#). The RAC is a top-five [car insurance](#) broker having surpassed the 500,000 policies-in-force milestone in 2018. It also offers '[black box](#)' [telematics policies](#), as well as home and travel insurance

**Other motoring services.** The RAC leads in the development of new solutions for business, fleets, electric vehicles and future car technology. Its additional products and services include a [personal loans offering](#), a [used car buying website](#), [vehicle inspections and checks](#), [legal services](#) or up-to-the-minute [traffic and travel information](#). It also has a network of [Approved Dealers](#) and [Approved Garages](#)

The RAC also works to support the interests of its members and UK drivers on the most important motoring issues which it identifies via the annual [RAC Report on Motoring](#) and the [RAC Opinion Panel](#). The Report on Motoring is the longest running analysis of driver opinion in the UK having been published every year since 1989.

**For more information about the RAC, visit the [RAC website](#).**

## Contacts



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