

Venson's exceptional support puts Thirteen on the fleet best practice journey

Exceptional support from Venson from initial discussions through contract implementation and subsequently has given Thirteen confidence that it made the right appointment decision and the targeted financial savings will be obtained as a result.

Ms Johnson said: "The partnership with Venson is proving to be very successful. Thirteen has a great level of support and Venson's marketplace knowledge and expertise has been critical in shaping our new fleet strategy."

Working closely with Ms Johnson and Thirteen's implementation officer, Barbara Pacitto, Venson's mantra is "our customers are at the heart of everything we do".

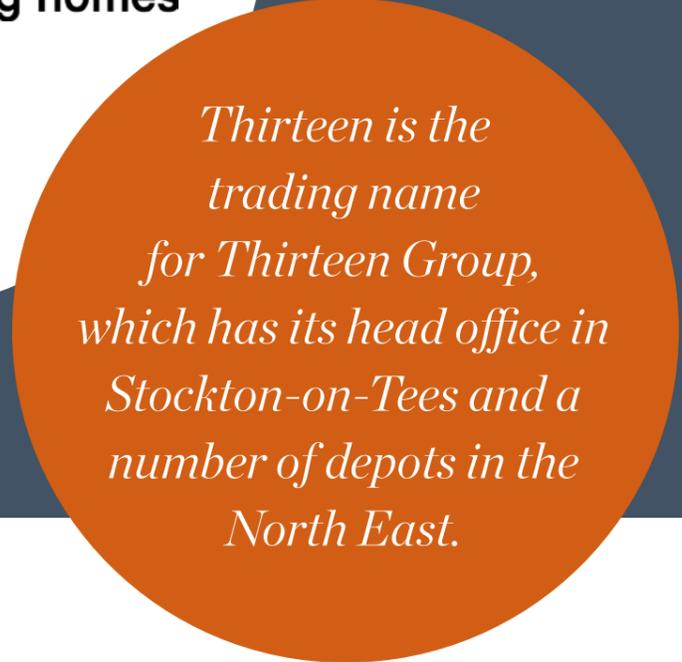
Ms Johnson said: "Venson has lived up to both expectation and its promises. 2018 will be a year of stability following much change across the fleet."

"Thirteen wants to make sure it is making the savings identified, that good fleet data is being obtained and key performance indicators are closely monitored to further improve the business operationally."

Weekly teleconferences between Thirteen and its account manager and project delivery manager at Venson are supplemented by face-to-face meetings if required.

Ms Johnson concluded: "Thirteen's fleet has been transformed as a result of the partnership with Venson. Previously a mix of vehicles and funding routes with an element of in-house management and outsourced management, the company now has complete consistency."

"From a management perspective we have confidence that the fleet is operating in accordance with best practice, while the vehicles also promote the image of Thirteen as a smart, forward-thinking and efficient business."



Thirteen is an expanding landlord and developer, providing homes for rent and sale, managing around 34,000 properties from North Tyneside to York, with the majority in the Tees Valley.



## Thirteen partners with Venson to deliver 'one-stop' fleet solution

*Thirteen signed a five-year contract with Venson Automotive Solutions through to 2021 after undertaking a three-month root and branch review of its then 420-strong vehicle fleet.*

Following business expansion and acquisitions, Thirteen found itself operating a wide cross-section of makes and models of vehicles – almost exclusively light commercial vehicles – on a mix of replacement cycles, acquired via different funding channels including contract hire, outright purchase and short-term hire, utilising both internal and external maintenance management and displaying various liveries.

Joanne Johnson, Thirteen's operational improvement manager with fleet responsibility, said: **"We decided it was the right time to undertake a detailed review of the entire vehicle operation that included: the size of the fleet, how vehicles were procured, the makes/models operated, whether to fully outsource and vehicle specification."**

The company engaged a fleet consultant to conduct the review and assess the market and it was decided to go out to tender via the Procure Plus framework, which was created out of a need for fairer, more predictable pricing for both landlords and their supply chains.

Venson is one of the approved suppliers on the fleet management framework and the company won the tender for a number of reasons, but notably including its: thoroughness in terms of ability to deliver a comprehensive range of services; ability to ensure Thirteen's maximum compliance with a raft of legislation, particularly work-related road safety; and competitive pricing.

Additionally, a review of vehicle manufacturers resulted in Thirteen deciding to switch to an all-Renault fleet based on total cost of ownership and price competitiveness from operating a mix of Citroen, Ford and Renault models.

Ms Johnson said: **"The value of Renault vans taking into account all cost aspects and the fact that the Thirteen fleet is low mileage and therefore significant service, maintenance and repair bills are not anticipated was the optimum solution when compared with other providers."**

Thirteen prefers to replace vehicles in a single tranche if possible – rather than across the course of a replacement cycle – hence the contract with Venson and the fleet operating cycle are both five years.

Ms Johnson said: **"That policy helps with vehicle livery consistency and company image and reputation."**



## Thirteen slims down fleet and reaps huge financial savings

Thirteen has slashed its fleet acquisition and operating costs by 30% – amounting to around £200,000 a year – as a result of the comprehensive review and its ongoing work with Venson.

Venson's detailed review of the fleet based on Thirteen's business needs identified an opportunity to cut the number of vehicles operated.

Venson identified that significant fleet savings could be made, chiefly by reducing the number of vans operated that were only driven to and from sites with employees having no requirement for a van during the day. That has resulted in the fleet reducing in size by almost 100 vehicles and employees using their own vehicle to drive to and from locations.

Today, the Thirteen fleet numbers 322 light commercial diesel vehicles from across the Renault model range – Kangoo, Trafic and Master - including panel vans and flatbeds. Approximately 85% of the fleet are Trafics and, additionally, the company operates a single Renault Clio assigned to its security team.

Critically, Venson also identified that Thirteen could slim down the size of vans operated. Ms Johnson explained: **"The majority of the fleet were large vans, but Venson identified that much of the available internal space was not being utilised."**

**"As a result, the majority of the vans are now mid-size Trafics which have replaced panel vans and, where possible, car-derived Kangoo vans are also being used. Not only are the vans fit-for-purpose, but the smaller vans are more cost effective to operate, fuel bills have been cut and so has Thirteen's carbon footprint due to lower emission levels."**

Vans are operated on a five-year/10,000 miles per annum replacement cycle and are typically allocated to operatives on a 'one man, one van' arrangement. Skilled tradesmen include: electricians, joiners, painters, plasters, plumbers and roofers as well as general labourers.

Ms Johnson said: **"Venson held meetings with Thirteen and our operatives so they could compile a specification for each vehicle according to the trade. Compiling a template on a per van/per trade basis and taking account of business need, operating requirements and our compliance obligations gives Thirteen the confidence to know that the fleet is operating in accordance with best practice."**

Additionally, Venson organised 'demonstration days' so that Thirteen and its employees could review the market choice relating to both van racking and telematics suppliers. That led to Thirteen opting to work with Tevo and Ctrack respectively.

All new vehicles are delivered to Venson's own 'vehicle conversion' facility in Yorkshire where they are fitted out to Thirteen's exact requirements prior to delivery.

What's more, Venson worked closely with Thirteen's communications team on new vehicle livery design.

Ms Johnson said: **"Venson has proved it has the knowledge and experience to work in partnership with Thirteen. The work it has done across the fleet means that the business has been able to cut vehicle acquisition and fleet costs by 30%."**

**"That equates to a saving of approximately £200,000 a year and, additionally, Thirteen is receiving a significantly enhanced service from our chosen provider compared with leasing suppliers the business has worked with previously."**

## Venson delivers comprehensive portfolio of services to Thirteen

In addition to providing all vehicles on five-year/10,000-mile per annum contract hire agreements and van conversions, Venson provides a comprehensive range of in-life services to Thirteen.

They include: Fleet management, maintenance management, accident and risk management including driver licence validation, short-term hire if required and Venson has taken charge of the remarketing of previously outright purchased vehicles.

Furthermore, in addition to working with a single van racking supplier and telematics partner – both sourced via Venson – Thirteen has consolidated its fuel purchasing by issuing a BP fuel card to operatives, again a Venson recommendation following the expiring of a previous fuel card arrangement.

Additionally, the raft of data available through the Ctrack telematics system is enabling Thirteen to both monitor and assess the driving performance of its operatives.

If required, toolbox talks and one-to-one meetings are used to encourage improvements in driving performance – solutions arranged via Venson's risk management partner, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) may also be utilised – while Thirteen is also looking at introducing a rewards initiative.

Ms Johnson said: **"We congratulate drivers on good driving, but we are currently considering whether to introduce a reward initiative as part of a wider review of pay and employee benefits."**