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Titre : Bentley to stop making petrol cars by 2030 and go fully electric

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Bentley to stop making petrol cars by 2030 and go fully electric

5 Bentley, the luxury carmaker, will stop making fossil fuel cars by 2030 and aims to be completely carbon neutral at the same time, in one of the most ambitious plans of any UK car manufacturer in the transition towards electric vehicles. It will stop building cars with traditional internal combustion engines within six years, instead making hybrids and then its first battery electric cars in 2025. By 2030 it will sell only pure battery electric vehicles, with zero-carbon exhaust emissions.

The rapid transition will mean that a company famed for enormous petrol engines, with large carbon dioxide emissions, aims to become one of the UK automotive industry's leading champions of environmental sustainability.

10 Bentley's Crewe plant is the only major factory in the UK to commit to producing electric cars exclusively on such a tight timescale, apart from its competitor Jaguar at Jaguar's Castle Bromwich site. Workers on internal combustion technology will be redeployed.

15 Bentley's promise to be an "end-to-end carbon neutral organisation" without using carbon offsetting is bold, as electric car batteries take considerable amounts of energy to produce. A spokesman said the company and its biggest suppliers would have to work out how to hit the target.

The carmaker said its environmental targets would make it "financially resilient and recession proof", as it and other carmakers looked for ways to emerge from the coronavirus pandemic, which has damaged car sales.

20 Figures published on Thursday showed last month was the weakest October for new UK car sales in nine years. The number of cars registered fell 1.6% to 140,945, putting the industry on course for the weakest year since 1982, according to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. Electric car sales were one of the few bright spots, nearly tripling so far in 2020 to 76,000.

25 "Within a decade, Bentley will transform from a 100-year-old luxury car company to a new, sustainable, wholly ethical role model for luxury," A spokesman said.

Jasper Jolly, The Guardian.com, November 5, 2020

Tight timescale : délai serré

bold : audacieux