

March 2023

# autoh!

the North East's own motor magazine : issue 20



## AUDI'S ELECTRIC REVOLUTION

p5



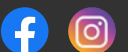
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# welcome to **autoOh!**

This is the 20th edition of AutoOh! the North East's own motoring magazine. All of our magazines are delivered to carefully chosen households across NE, SR and DH postcodes and to over 150 businesses. We are the region's leading magazine for anyone who's interested in cars. As usual, there's a full round-up of latest news and products from your local franchise car dealers.

Our headline article is about Audi and the way they're pushing the boundaries of electric motoring with their e-tron range. Performance and economy...a perfect blend.

Not to be outdone though, BMW are pushing ahead with their range of electric models. There's everything from

city cars to long distance SUVs.

We do like delving into some research here at AutoOh! especially when it comes to getting out and about. We name the UK's top ten routes for fabulous views and great driving.

There's another guest joining us to talk about their 'life in cars.' This time it's Match of the Day commentator, Guy Mowbray. Who remembers Guy, Gilly and Gates?

We'll be trying the new Nissan Juke Hybrid and explaining how important the automotive industry is to the UK economy.

Tyres are a key feature of any car...

they're the only thing between you and the road. But do you know about load factors and speed ratings? We'll tell you.

We check out the latest Bentley Bentayga, Mercedes AMG SL, and Volvo C40 Recharge, and round-up the latest awards won by some very special cars.

And we're all kids at heart so we celebrate 70 years of Matchbox toy cars.

Oh, and if you'd like to keep in touch with us, you can go onto our website [www.autoh.co.uk](http://www.autoh.co.uk) You'll find latest news, video reviews, previous editions and access to hundreds of quality used cars from all the major manufacturers.

**Graham Courtney, Editor.**



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# MINI MARVELLOUS



The BMW owned MINI has been a massive success story. Its popularity has picked-up where the original Mini left off.

Speak to the owner of any MINI (or Mini) and you'll invariably be bored rigid by how much they love their car. The way it drives and the way it looks are usually high on the praiseworthy list.

And MINI is keeping up with 21st Century trends with the introduction of electrification.

You can have a fully electric MINI (you even get a charger included as standard) or how about a halfway house if you're not sure whether 100 per cent electric motoring is for you just yet.

If that's the case, then take a very serious look at the MINI Countryman Plug-in Hybrid. You not only get all of the MINI Countryman attributes....roomy, handsome design, wonderful to drive, stunning build quality and plenty of standard kit...but, if you use the battery powered hybrid system to its full extent, you'll achieve a staggering 150mpg or so.

How do you manage to hit that sort of mpg?

Simple. Plug your MINI Countryman PHEV into a charger....top-up the battery...and then travel for around 30 miles on electric power only. Bearing in mind that most commutes in the UK are

under 30 miles, you should be able to do a Monday-Friday work shuttle using zero petrol. School and shopping trips were never so cheap.

But unlike a fully electric car where you need to keep an eye on how much juice you have left in the battery, the big advantage of the MINI Countryman Plug-in Hybrid is that you have a three cylinder 1.5 litre petrol engine under the bonnet.

In fact, when you add together the power from the engine and the power from the battery driven electric motor, you have a very healthy 217bhp which equates to 0-60mph in 6.8 seconds. As with all battery powered or battery assisted cars, the MINI Countryman Plug-in Hybrid is quick off the mark because the electric motor develops 100 per cent of its power instantly.

You get the best of both worlds.

On a day-to-day commute or a daily school / shopping trip, you can complete the whole journey on battery power alone. You'll ride along in near silence. If you need to go further like on a summer holiday or weekend trip to the Lake District, no problem because the 1.5 petrol engine joins the party. Clever technology also means that when you



slow down approaching a roundabout or traffic lights or apply the brakes, the engine will charge the battery. Nifty huh?

Three trims are available...Classic, Exclusive and Untamed. No matter which you choose, you'll get an automatic transmission and all-wheel drive which MINI calls ALL4.

As with every MINI, there's a terrific range of options which really does allow you to customise your car. Careful though 'cos it's very easy (but very tempting) to ramp-up your purchase price.

All trims come with a Premium Pack which includes DAB radio, heated front seats, rear parking sensors, satellite navigation system and smartphone integration.

Prices start at £36,600.

Oh...and grin-a-minute fun while driving your MINI also comes as standard, along with the opportunity for terrific economy. What's not to love?



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Duration (months)	49
Number of payments	48
Customer deposit	£1,999.00
Manufacturer deposit contribution	£1,000.00
Total deposit	£2,999.00
Total amount of credit	£19,273.02
Option to purchase fee	£10.00
Total charge for credit (incl. interest & fees)	£6,392.73
Optional final payment	£11,803.75
Total amount payable	£28,684.75
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Interest rate (fixed)	10.4%
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# PLUG AND PLAY at AUDI

The company which has been at the forefront of the successful electrification of cars, is Audi. Their e-tron range has been hugely successful.

Of course, for some people going fully electric either isn't something they fancy at the moment, or perhaps they're still a victim of range anxiety.

Let's address the last one first because the latest fully electric e-tron cars from Audi can now achieve the sort of distances where, to be honest, you should stop and take a break in any case.

Take the Audi Q4 e-tron for example. Audi estimate the car is capable of up to 321 miles before the battery dies. You'll be given plenty of warning beforehand... so...pop into a service area or find a rapid charger near your home or workplace, plug in the Audi Q4 e-tron, go for a coffee, come back 29 minutes later and you'll find that the battery has been charged up to 80 per cent.

Oh and you'll enjoy a 0-60mph time of 8.5 seconds thanks to a 203bhp surge of power.

Bearing in mind the average UK daily

commute is under 30 miles, you could charge the Audi Q4 e-tron ready for Monday morning and have sufficient battery power to be fine until Friday night. Plug-in the car at the end of the week and you'll fine for a return trip with the family to the Lake District.

If you need more space, look for the Audi Q8 e-tron. Fancy some sleek coupé performance? Head for the e-tron GT. Go for the 590bhp RS version and you'll be able to achieve a shattering 0-60mph time of just 3.3 seconds thanks to being able to boost the power output briefly to 637bhp. Range is around 300 miles.

These figures make buying an electrically powered Audi e-tron a seriously realistic proposition.

Still not convinced? No problem, because Audi has the ideal solution.

Plug-in hybrids have a chargeable battery which gives you the opportunity to travel for up to 40 miles on battery power alone....but there's then the

reassurance of having an engine under the bonnet to complete your journey.

Something like the Audi A6 Avant 50 TFSI e would be ideal if you need a car which will carry a vast load over vast distances. The plug-in hybrid technology means you can quickly charge the battery and have sufficient battery power for up to 41 miles. If you need to travel further than that, not to worry because the 2.0 litre petrol engine will seamlessly join the party. Add the power of the engine to the power of the battery driven electric motor and you'll have 295bhp which is good for 0-60mph in 6.3 seconds. Make full use of the hybrid system and you can crack 200mpg. Wow.

Of course, if you prefer to stick with traditional combustion power, you'll still find a great choice of diesel and petrol engines at Audi....but you really should consider electric power. It's the future.

For more information  
**Click Here**





# CONTINENTAL EXPRESS IS ON TRACK

**Mercedes AMG SL 55 4MATIC...the legend is updated.**

The Mercedes SL is one of those cars that people aspire to. It manages to fill the happy area between performance roadster and long-legged cruiser.

It also has something which more recent SLs have dispensed with...a canvas roof. It takes just 15 seconds to open and close. You can operate the mechanism at speeds up to 45mph.

Oh and if you're wondering from where the SL name is derived, it's for Sport-Leicht...Sport Light. Mind you, Leicht is something which you could never say about the latest Mercedes SL because it tips the scales at close to two tonnes.

There's plenty of grunt under the bonnet to shift it because this Mercedes SL is the 55 model which sits between the entry level 381bhp 2.0 litre SL43 and top of the range SL 63. Power for both

the 55 and 63 models comes from a 4.0 litre twin turbo V8 which develops a very healthy 470bhp in the SL 55 which converts to a 0-60mph time of 3.9 seconds and a top speed of 183mph. The SL 63 577bhp version is 0.3 seconds quicker to 60mph and 12mph faster. Stick with the SL 55. Both return almost exactly the same 21.5mpg. The SL 43 as you'd expect is more frugal manging into the 30s mpg...just. .

Permanent all-wheel drive comes as standard with the 55 and 63 models (hence the 4MATIC bit to the name), which has never appeared on previous Mercedes SL models, plus a small amount of rear wheel steer, all of which comes in handy when you decide to unleash the horses. Everything goes via a slick-shifting 9-speed auto 'box. The specially tuned exhaust gives you a cracking soundtrack. You really do need to drop the hood as frequently as possible.

The latest SL is no longer a Dallas wives show piece...this SL is aimed at those who like to drive as well as be seen.

The front view and profile of the SL are very distinctive, but the rear gave a few admirers the impression that it was a



Porsche sitting on my drive. You can either take that as praise or an insult. The pop-up wing gives a hint of the performance potential.

The interior is a work of art. No matter which trim level you go for, the Mercedes SL comes fully loaded. Oh and it's a 2+2, although the rear seats are for children or the local Hobbit. Just chuck some jackets back there. The boot is tight, but you'll squeeze in a couple of overnight bags quite easily.

After a few Mercedes SLs which didn't hit the mark and which had gone a bit soft and flabby (like a lot of the owners no doubt), this latest version is back to legendary status.



# BMW HAS AN EYE FOR AN *i*

When it comes to going electric, there's no holding back BMW. Hardly a month goes by without another battery powered model being added to their range.

Of course, 100 per cent battery powered motoring isn't for everyone. If you regularly do a seriously high mileage or live in a remote area where access to high powered chargers may be limited, you may prefer to wait.

If that's the case...not a problem because BMW still offer their traditional range of conventionally powered petrol and diesel cars, or how about a halfway house by going for a PHEV which would allow you to have a short burst of economical battery powered motoring for something like 30 miles.

However, don't forget, when the clock strikes midnight on January 1st 2030, you will no longer (in the vast amount of cases) be able to buy a petrol or diesel powered car. Some hybrids get a stay of execution until 2035.

Quick BMW history lesson.

The BMW i3 arrived in the UK in 2013. It was the first BMW with an electric motor and it is still one of the best electric city cars on sale in the UK. Nothing looks like it, inside or out, and you can manage up to 190 miles on a full charge. For many people that ideal for a week's driving.

In 2022, the iX1 arrived. It was BMW's



first fully electric BMW compact SUV and is the electrical entry model in the BMW X Series. Range is up to 270 miles which is the sort of figure that makes electric car ownership a serious possibility. Anyone travelling that sort of distance should have a break at some point, so why not charge the car while you're doing it?

Since then the BMW i range has blossomed.

The BMW i4 are the all-electric Gran Coupé BMW i4 eDrive40 which can deliver a class-leading 365 miles range... and BMW i4 M50 which is BMW's first electrically powered M car. The dynamic, slanted headlamps contribute to the four-door's expressive character, as do the rear wheel arches and rear side windows which rise toward the



tail. Delivering up to 537 bhp from an electric drive means you can achieve a 0-60mph sprint in 3.9 seconds. The latest technology allows you to give the battery a 71 mile top-up in just 10 minutes.

If you prefer an electric Sport Activity Vehicle (SAV) head for the BMW iX3 or, at the other end of the scale, if want to waft along in the pinnacle of luxurious electric motoring, the new BMW i7 Series will be perfect. It combines elegance with outstanding driving characteristics and multi-sensory entertainment.

And lastly, one of our favourite cars... the all-electric BMW iX which has the ideal blend of outstanding performance, decent range and a super hi-tech and incredibly smart interior. It's also one of the most distinctive cars on our roads.

Not sure which electric BMW to go for? Try one. It could be time for you to make the switch.



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# LOOKING FOR A PREMIUM MARQUE?

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This hasn't been an easy time for the car industry. Covid caused all sorts of problems as showrooms were forced to close, and then there was a shortage of microchips which affected the supply of new vehicles.

But, there was...and still is...high demand for quality used cars, especially those at the premium end of the market.

Which is why Lookers, one of the UK's largest car dealers, has opened a very special dealership here in the North East.

Lookers Premium.

"At Lookers we represent 32 manufacturers and have over 150 dealership sites, which means we have thousands of cars being bought and sold by the company over the course of 12 months," said Lookers Premium Brand manager, Rikki Ledger. "Many of these will be from volume manufacturers, but a decent percentage come from premium brands such as BMW, Jaguar, Audi and Mercedes as well as top-end marques like Bentley, Porsche, Land Rover, McLaren, Ferrari and Rolls Royce. Consequently, we decided to bring all of these prestige luxury, sport and, in some cases, rare cars together under one roof....Lookers Premium....based at our new dealership in Jesmond, Newcastle."

Needless to say that buyers of premium cars expect premium service...and that's exactly what you'll get at Lookers Premium. If you call into the dealership on Portland Road you'll be met by one of

the team who will give you as much or as little help as you need.

If you go online you can check out the entire range of what Lookers Premium has to offer. If you see something you fancy, you can either click for further details or, if the car is exactly what you're looking for, you can reserve or buy the car there and then.

"We offer a concierge service," adds Rikki. "Every car has a full video walk-through. Customers can view the video and make a decision purely from what they see. If they love the car, we'll take it to them... anywhere in the UK...there's no need to travel to Newcastle. We can even help with organising finance.

Every car we sell has been meticulously prepared. It has undergone a thorough 115 point check to ensure that everything is in order. We don't do anything 'off the peg'...each customer will receive bespoke service.

We can help owners of prestige cars sell their vehicle. A lot of owners would rather avoid the hassle of selling privately and dealing with potential visitors to their property....so....we'll do it all for them. We also operate a facility whereby customers who purchase

their car from Lookers Premium can eventually bring it back to us and we'll buy it back from them."

In other words, Lookers Premium has some very special cars on offer which you are unlikely to find at other dealers... and that includes manufacturer main dealers. Such is the buying power of Lookers that they can be ahead of the game.

And if they don't happen to have in stock exactly what you're looking for, they'll find it for you. Just give them your exact model specification wishes and they'll put wheels in motion. It's all part of the Lookers Premium bespoke service.

If you are in the market for a premium brand car, go onto their website...www.lookers.co.uk/premium...or call into their dealership on Portland Road in Newcastle. You can also call them on 0191 287 8321.

Oh, and if you already have a premium or prestige car, why not get the expert technicians at Lookers Premium to look after it for you? Your car will be in good hands.

Lookers Premium....premium brands... premium service.



# MAZDA'S FLAGSHIP DOCKS IN THE UK

The arrival of the CX-60 is important for Mazda because it goes straight in at the top of their range.

What is it?

The CX-60 is a large, premium SUV which is available as a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV). You can charge a battery which powers an electric motor and travel for close to 40 miles without using a drop of fuel.

Under the bonnet there's a 2.5 litre petrol engine. You get all-wheel drive as standard via an 8-speed auto 'box. Add power from the engine to power from the electric motor, you end up with a punchy 323bhp which is good for 0-60 in just under 6.0 seconds. Top speed is 124mph.

If you use the hybrid technology to its full extent, Mazda predict 188mpg. You're not going to get that because most folk will at some point need the engine to burst into life. We'd guess at mid-40s mpg. But, if you do a short-ish commute every day and can avoid using too much power, you'll boost that figure.



When it comes to charging the battery, if you use a wallbox, a full charge takes 2.20hrs. If you use a 3-pin socket, you're looking at around 7 hours. Plug it in when you get home and you'll be ready for the morning.

If you are a company driver, the Mazda CX-60 PHEV makes sense because emissions are a low 33g/km.

If you're going to do a lot of miles and regularly travel with a decent



load, you should consider the 3.3 litre diesel model. Mazda reckon you'll get 56.5mpg.

No matter which one you go for, the Mazda CX-60 is fully loaded, really comfortable, looks good, nice to drive and is decent value for money.

Elsewhere in the Mazda range, there's something for everyone. Here are two of our favourites.

If you live in a town but also need to dash along the motorway, the Mazda2 will be ideal. It's great fun to drive and seriously economical...you won't be far away from 60mpg. Go for the hybrid model and you'll be nudging 70mpg.

Need something a bit bigger? Go for the Mazda3 family hatchback. It's hard to beat. It has a seriously premium interior... looks good and feels good...and it's great to drive. If you like a car which is both comfortable and has a sporty feel, then you'll love the Mazda3. The most powerful version of the 2.0 litre petrol engine delivers 183bhp which gives you a 0-60 time of 8.1 seconds but go easily and you'll hit mid 50s mpg. If you fancy one with a bit more 'attitude', then try the CX-30.

Mazda is a brand that people often forget. They don't know what they're missing.





For more information

[Click Here](#)

# STRETCH OUT IN BENTLEY'S LATEST BENTAYGA



When looking at the list of super-desirable, big SUVs, the Bentley Bentayga is one of the biggest, fastest and most expensive.

And now, just in case you needed some extra space, it's got even bigger courtesy of a longer wheelbase....Bentley call it the Bentayga EWB.....extended wheelbase.

The big difference is in the rear. Granted, the 'standard' Bentayga is hardly snug, but bearing in mind a lot of Bentaygas are sold to customers who prefer to be driven rather than drive, you can see why Bentley has taken this decision. It also fills the gap left by the now discontinued Mulsanne.

One of the most popular seating arrangements in the rear will be two, enormous, 'captains' chairs. You can also get a traditional 3-seat bench arrangement, or 3 seats but the outer pair are much larger.

It's quieter too. Bentley has put a lot of time and effort into reducing any noise and vibration.

This is an important car for Bentley. The

Bentayga counts for around half of all Bentley sales and the EWB model is their new flagship.

As a company, Bentley is flying. Sales in 2022 set a new record and, for the first time in the company's history, they sold more than 15,000 cars in a single year.

Under the bonnet you'll find Bentley's trusted 543bhp 4.0 litre V8 petrol engine. It sounds fantastic and the 0-60 performance of 4.5 seconds and top speed of 180mph are stunning figures bearing in mind this car tips the scales at close to 2.5 tonnes. Power goes to all four wheels via an 8-speed auto 'box.

Obviously, the EWB version is longer than the original Bentayga (by 180mm), but it seems to have made the ride even better. The air suspension does a brilliant job and provides a cossetting ride.

Something else we like is the new four-wheel steering system. The rear wheels

turn slightly in the same direction as the front. This not only improves the turning circle but it also makes the car feel nimble at higher speeds. Yes, this is a big car, but it's never intimidating to drive.

We shan't list the standard equipment.... let's just say there's everything you're likely to ever need, including power assisted rear doors.

Needless to say that the interior is a work of art and the standard of workmanship is peerless.

Finally, and this is purely a personal observation, but we reckon this stretched Bentayga looks better than the 'standard' model....the additional 180mm gives the car's profile a better balance.

Given the choice, it's the one we'd go for.

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Official fuel consumption and CO<sup>2</sup> figures for the MY23 Volvo Cars range\*, in MPG (l/100km): WLTP Combined 29.4(9.6) – 403.0(0.7). WLTP CO<sup>2</sup> emissions 218 – 0g/km. WLTP electric energy consumption 2.5 – 4.1 miles/kWh. Equivalent all electric range 25.6 – 274.0 miles. \*Preliminary data. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption, CO<sub>2</sub> and equivalent electric range figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. Figures shown include battery and fuel powertrains where applicable. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. All offers subject to terms and conditions and are as part of a Stoneacre finance plan. Finance provided subject to status, written details available on request. Models shown are for illustration purposes only. Ask for details. Cars may be in group stock. Stoneacre operate as an Independent finance Introducer from a panel of lenders. Stoneacre do not charge a fee for introduction to a finance provider however we may or may not receive a commission. Offers correct at time of going to press, but may be subject to change. Subject to Your status, if after signing the Purchase Order You sign a Finance Agreement with a Finance Company in relation to the Vehicle, the terms of the Finance Agreement will replace this Supplier Agreement. The standard terms of the Finance Agreement will be stated on the Finance Agreement form that You will be asked to sign. Decidibloom Ltd t/a Stoneacre, Omega Boulevard, Capitol Park, Thorne, DN8 5TX, is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Our FCA number is 308726. You can verify this by visiting the FCA website or by contacting the FCA on 0854 606 9966. Car images are for illustration purposes only and may not be the exact model featured in the figures. The BCH offer is correct as of February 2023.

# VOLVO CARS ARE ON A CHARGE

When you look at the Volvo range, one thing is perfectly clear.

Electric power is a key ingredient. It doesn't matter whether it's mild, micro or full hybrid, or pure 100 per cent electric.

Volvo was the first major manufacturer to commit to hybrid or full electric for all of its models. Every model launched from 2019 onwards has featured an electric motor whether to assist the conventional engine or to power the car entirely...and by 2030, the Volvo range will be fully electric. Quite a commitment.

All of which means that if you are considering going part or full electric, then Volvo should be your first port of call because they already have an extensive range and they have vast experience when it comes to battery power.

Let's take a look at two of our favourites.

The XC40 has been a massive hit in the UK and is available as a mild hybrid with a self-charging battery helping a 1.5 litre petrol engine or as a rechargeable hybrid (PHEV) called the XC40 Recharge where the petrol engine is once again helped by a battery but in this case you can charge the battery and run for up to 30 miles on battery power alone. Alternatively you can have an XC40 Recharge which is 100 per cent electric.

The one you can see here is the incredibly powerful twin motor version of the all-electric XC40 Recharge. With power of 402bhp, it's no surprise that this XC40 is incredibly quick...0-60 comes up in just 4.9 seconds. However,



drive carefully and Volvo predict a range of 311 miles. You can achieve an 80% charge within 27 minutes using a rapid charging. A typical home charge will take around 7 hours from flat to full. These are hugely impressive figures.

Some things don't change though. This is a Volvo XC40 like all of the others in terms of excellent build quality,

versatility and class-leading levels of safety equipment. The interior is a work of art, and if you haven't sat in a Volvo for a while, you really need to because you'll immediately spot an uplift in the standard of materials used. This is a premium product.

Fancy an all-electric XC40 with some coupé style?...then go for the Volvo C40 Recharge. You can go for a single motor 235bhp version which sends power to the front wheels (0-60mph in around 7 seconds) or a twin motor version which is all-wheel drive because there's a motor on each axle. Performance, range and charging times are almost identical to the all-electric XC40.

Here's a neat touch with the C40 Recharge. There's no starter button. As soon as you flop into the driver's seat, a sensor in the cushion turns on the car.

SUVs, saloons, estates and a crossover coupé...a variety of hybrid power or full electric...and a variety of buying options. There's something for everyone at Volvo.



For more information  
**Click Here**

# In conversation with Guy Mowbray

BBC TV's lead football commentator tells us what he remembers about his cars.

Guy Mowbray is someone you'll see and hear on a regular basis. He's done World Cup finals, FA Cup finals, various internationals and thousands of Premier League, EFL and cup games for both Match of the Day, BBC 5 Live and several other broadcast organisations.

But he cut his broadcasting 'teeth' here in the North East. After a short spell working for BBC York (he was born and bred in York and still lives there), Guy then joined Sun City FM in Sunderland before moving on to Metro Radio in Newcastle.

A lot of you will remember him from what became an iconic programme.... Guy, Gilly and Gates on Metro. It was hugely popular and was one of the first

radio shows to bring a football legend... in this case Eric Gates...into a studio to talk about not only his former club, Sunderland, but about football and sport in general.

While Guy was at Metro he began commentating on Sunderland games with Eric alongside him. He caught the attention of a lot of people, including the judges at the prestigious Sony and EMAP Radio Awards. Guy was a regular winner...no wonder he's now one of the top names in sport broadcasting.

So, let's find out what he can remember about the various cars which have passed through his life.



#### What was one of the first cars you can remember?

My parents had a Ford Cortina in a kind of duck egg blue, followed by a Chrysler Avenger that was red with a black roof. The main memory of those cars was the annual summer holiday trip to Filey. There was always a lingering smell of stale fag smoke - I thought all cars just smelt like that!

#### What was the first car you bought?

It was an Opel Kadett that was officially bronze but looked brown. I was 21 and it cost me £500. I can still remember the reg - KEH 754 V

#### And after that?

At Metro Radio I had a couple of Ford Escorts. One dark navy and the next a shiny metallic light blue - and it had a spoiler on it. I really liked them at the time but looking back they were pretty uninspiring.

Whenever I used work cars it didn't go well. The only time I borrowed one of the Metro pool cars I got into a bump whilst back in York visiting family. The person in front didn't set off at a roundabout when they should have done! Thankfully I've been over 20 years without any scrapes now.





**Any unfortunate incidents?**

I wrote off the Nissan Primera that Sun City 103.4FM (remember that mouthful of a name?!) provided me with. It slipped and then flipped on a bend after a short sharp shower on the way home from a Sunderland v Wolves game. I finished upside down in a field, but crawled out through the back window with only a few scratches. Very lucky.

**Most unreliable car**

A Volvo 440 that was not fit for purpose. It actually caused me to miss my scheduled first day as Metro FM Sports Editor! I'd been in the Yorkshire Dales on the Sunday with my then girlfriend and now wife and we broke down (again) and couldn't get home. I'm sure she still thinks it happened on purpose so I could get a night away in a hotel with her!

**Least favourite car?**

Probably my wife's car now. A bright yellow Jeep Renegade! Our daughter refuses to go in it.

**Tidy car or mobile skip?**

My car has to be smart. I can't abide stuff left lying around inside.

**Steady Eddy or Foot-down Fred?**

I consider myself a quick but safe driver. Don't we all? I've currently got a clean licence but have been to more than a couple of Speed Awareness courses. I like a nice burst every now and again when it's quiet.

**Favourite cars you've owned.**

I would favour the ones that have been a little bit different. For example, the two BMW's I've owned were particularly dull. I loved my Chrysler Crossfire (pre-family!) and then the Jeep Grand Cherokee. I got rid of the latter a) for practicality - it was too big to park at football grounds, and b) because the whole 'diesel is evil' thing made me panic. I've regretted it ever since. It was a lovely big beast that saved my bad back.

**And lastly, your dream car.**

In the past it would have been some sort of supercar, but those days are gone. I'd just love a nice big, powerful SUV. Range Rover, Land Rover, the Lamborghini Urus that Premier League players drive. Or a Jeep - maybe my old one back.

**Thanks Guy. Safe driving**



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\*Offer based on All-New Jogger Extreme SE MY23. On The Road (OTR) price includes delivery to the dealer premises, VED, first registration fee at £55. Prices and offers shown are available on specified new vehicles when ordered between 9th February - 3rd April and registered by 31st December 2023.

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# NEW LOOK DACIA... SAME GREAT VALUE



Dacia is flying. 2022 saw them double their UK sales compared to 2021.

And they've updated their cars with new badging and new headlights design as well as introducing some very tempting new models.

And don't think that the only reason to consider Dacia is because of their competitive price. They're well equipped and surprisingly good to drive.

Two of the latest new models to arrive are also arguably two of the company's most important.

The Dacia Duster...starting price £15,795... continues the familiar trend of sensible, roomy motoring at the sort of price that other manufacturers can only dream about.

And the new Dacia Jogger Hybrid shows that the firm can produce some hi-tech cars with the potential for terrific economy. Prices for the 7-seater Jogger Hybrid start at £22,595.

There's also a new-look to the Sandero and Stepway.

The Jogger Hybrid is seriously impressive. We went on the car's launch towards the end of last year and were seriously impressed. It's a proper



7-seater and, in the case of the Hybrid model in Expression trim, it's well-equipped too.

Under the bonnet there's a 138bhp 1.6 litre petrol engine mated to an automatic gearbox. You'll manage mid 50s mpg and 0-60mph in 10 seconds. Rear camera, powered windows, parking sensors all-round, LED headlights, powered mirrors, air con and cruise control come as standard.

It's comfy, good to drive and looks really smart. No wonder the Dacia Jogger is the reigning Family Car of the Year with Auto Express magazine.

The Dacia Duster has been a massive success for the company, and the latest

version will easily find new converts to the brand.

You still get a decent choice of engines, including a bi-fuel model which lets you choose between petrol and LPG. If you prefer to head to the diesel pump, there's a single 1.5 litre engine developing 113bhp, but this is the engine where you can have all-wheel drive which will be handy for anyone living out in the sticks or who often drives across soggy ground. If you intend to tow, go for this one

In terms of petrol, you can go for a 1.0 litre engine developing 89bhp or a 1.35 litre unit which develops either 128 or 148bhp. The most powerful engine is available with automatic transmission.

If you want economy approaching 60mpg head for the diesel engine.

If you want performance in the region of 10 seconds for the 0-60mph dash, go for the more powerful petrol engines.

There are four levels of trim. We'd go for the 2nd level...Expression...which gives you rear camera, rear parking sensors, 8-inch screen for smartphone integration, air con, powered tinted windows, front fog lights and cruise control. Not much else you need really.

One thing's for certain, Dacia sales will continue to increase in 2023.



For more information  
[Click Here](#)

# TYRES.

## ARGUABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT FEATURE OF ANY CAR.

Okay, a lot of folk may point to brakes, safety kit, regular servicing etc, but there is only one thing between you and the road... Tyres.

If they're worn, under inflated, over inflated, damaged or the wrong sort of tyres for your particular car, then you've got a problem that's waiting to happen.

Throw in the sort of icy, wet or snowy conditions we get at this time of year here in the North East and you have a recipe for things going seriously wrong if you have any sort of defect with one or more of your tyres.

It may have escaped your attention and somehow didn't make it into your diary, but there is actually a Tyre Safety Month...it's in October...and most of the tyre manufacturers, tyre fitters, breakdown organisations and car companies, get involved to support it.

Yes it can be viewed as a bit of a sales push, but the fact that it takes place in October isn't a coincidence...it's a prelude to winter weather.

One of the most respected breakdown recovery firms is GEM Motoring Assist. Their Chief Executive Neil Worth said: "Around 14 per cent of calls to our breakdown line involve some sort of tyre issue, making tyres the second largest reason our members need roadside assistance. The vast majority of tyre problems could be avoided through making regular checks and ensuring that tyres are correctly inflated, with plenty of tread and no bulges or cuts.

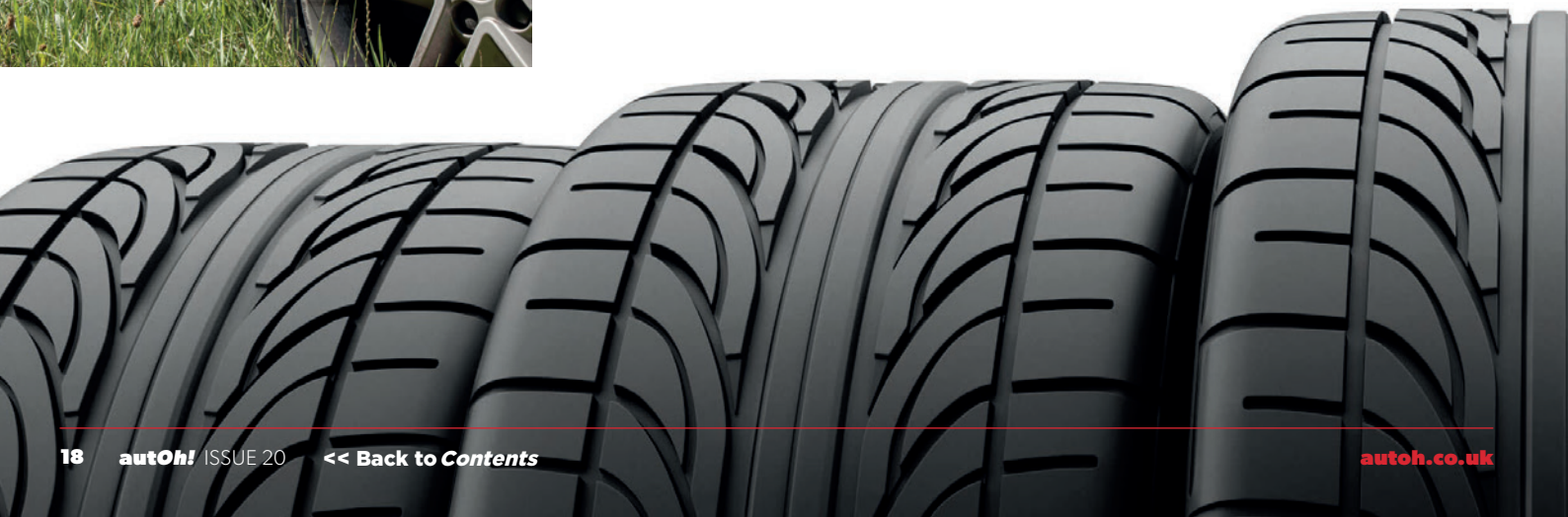
"A car's tyres must have a minimum tread depth of 1.6mm across the central three-quarters of the tyre, all the way around. Each bald or defective tyre



carries a fine of up to £2,500 and three penalty points."

So, a dodgy tyre is not only putting your lives and those of other road users at risk, you could also end up with a whacking fine and the possibility of losing your licence.

And if your tyres aren't legal, it could affect your insurance in the event of a claim.



## Here are some tips.

- Make regular checks of air pressure, condition and tread on your tyres. This is because under-inflated tyres reduce your vehicle's ability to grip the road, and will also compromise handling.
- Slow down in wet weather. Grip on wet surfaces reduces as a tyre gets older, or as water depth increases, so the safest course of action is to reduce speed.
- Don't cut corners when it comes to replacing tyres. Part-worn tyres, for example, are often imported from other European countries where the minimum tread depth is greater. So, a part-worn tyre will typically offer less tread depth when you fit it, and will need replacing much sooner than a new tyre.
- A car's tyres must have a minimum tread depth of 1.6mm. The outer band of a 20p coin measures exactly 1.6mm, so place the coin between the grooves of your tyre and if the outer band is visible then your tyres need changing.



The next pair of numbers...16...are the diameter of the tyre in terms of the rim it will fit onto. In this case it'll go onto a 16 inch wheel rim.

The final pair of numbers...91...relate to the weight the tyre is designed to carry when inflated to the correct level. There is a scale which these numbers correspond to. In the case of 91, it means the tyre is capable of carrying 615kg.

Finally, there is a letter...H. This is the tyre's speed rating. The letters usually range between Q and W. These letters relate to the maximum speed that the tyre should be used for. Q is for speeds up to 99mph...W is for speeds up to 168mph. The only letter that doesn't follow in the alphabetical sequence is probably the one which relates to the most popular speed rating...H. This is for cars that can travel up to 130mph and will cover the vast majority of cars on sale in the UK.

door frame or inside the fuel filler cap. If you're struggling, you can go online and find out all of the details either via the tyre manufacturer or car manufacturer. Most of the tyre suppliers and fitting companies also have a handy gadget where you simply put in the make and age of your car and it will tell you the recommended pressures.

You also need to be aware that all tyres have a speed and load rating.

On the tyre wall you will see a series of letters and numbers...for example

**195/55 R16 91H.**

The first numbers relate to the actual size of the tyre.

In this case the tyre is 195mm wide.

The second numbers, 55, relate to the height of the tyre.

The letter R denotes that this is a radial tyre. You will see this on nearly all new tyres. There is a tyre type called crossply, but you very rarely see them on cars.

In other words, you need to ensure that you have the right tyre for your car.

All responsible tyre fitters will know exactly what sort of tyre is suitable for your car.

If your car is reasonably new and still have the original tyres, we'd recommend you go like-for-like when the time comes to change.

Don't take risks when it comes to tyres. It may be the last thing you end up doing!



As we start to think about planning summer holidays and driving with a full load on board, you need to change your tyre pressure according to the load which the car is carrying. Driving with air pressures below the recommended settings makes them more vulnerable to a catastrophic failure or 'blowout', even with just the driver on board. When extra luggage and passengers are added, the likelihood of an incident increases if the pressures are not adjusted.

All cars have at least two recommended settings: one for when the car has a light load; the other for when it is carrying multiple passengers and their baggage. The correct tyre pressure settings can always be found in the owner's handbook. You sometimes find them also somewhere on the interior

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**HYUNDAI**

Fuel Consumption figures for the Hyundai Tucson 1.6 TGD SE Connect 5dr 2WD: 42mpg, 150 bhp, 151 CO2 g/km. Fuel Consumption figures for the Hyundai Bayon 1.0 TGD 48V MHEV SE Connect 5dr: 53 Mpg, 100 Bhp, 120 CO2 g/km. Fuel Consumption figures for the Hyundai i20 1.0T GDI 48V MHD 120 N Line 5dr: 53 mpg, 119 CO2 g/km, 120 bhp. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO2 figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load.

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# HYUNDAI TUCSON ... THE PERFECT FAMILY HOLDALL



If you're looking for a car which will happily cope with the school run, holiday outings, commuting, shopping and taking all of your garden rubbish to the tip, then the Hyundai Tucson will fit the bill.

Okay, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but we reckon the Hyundai Tucson is a seriously smart machine.

Oh and don't forget to start using the new pronunciation. Hyundai arrived in the UK in 2005 and ever since then we've all called it High-un-dye. How wrong we were. We should have been calling the car manufacturer Hyun-day... as in Sunday. Mind you, if you've been to the USA at any time over the last 20 years you'll have noticed that they've always been using that pronunciation.

In terms of engine choices, the Tucson features a terrific 1.6 litre petrol engine,



but you can choose from auto or manual gearboxes, front or all-wheel drive, and there's a choice of hybrids, including a PHEV, or a conventional set-up which is the entry level model.

If you decide to stick with entry level 1.6T, power output peaks at 148bhp. You shouldn't have any trouble hitting the recommended 42mpg.

However, we like the hybrid models... and especially the PHEV plug-in version. Yes you'll have to pay more, but you end up with a wonderful car. Power climbs to 261bhp. You slice almost 2 seconds off the 0-60mph time (8.6 seconds). All-wheel drive is standard and your fuel consumption improves dramatically for the simple reason that if you have fully charged the battery, the Tucson PHEV can travel for up to 38 miles on electric power only.

The Tucson is extremely roomy. We've had four adults in one of the models and there's loads of room to stretch out. Family transportation doesn't get any better. The boot area is huge too. If you enjoy going on camping holidays or need to carry a fair amount of luggage, the Tucson will easily cope. Summer holidays will no longer require days of preparation.... just take everything.

And if you haven't been in a Hyundai lately, you are in for a major surprise. The interior quality is now up to premium standards...and if you go for something like Premium trim you'll get satellite navigation, air conditioning, parking sensors front and rear, heated front seats and heated steering wheel, Apple and Android connectivity, and a cracking Krell audio system.

Out on the road the Hyundai Tucson is smooth, relaxed and comfortable. It soaks up ridges and potholes and remains extremely composed at all times. It's fun to drive and simple to punt around towns or along country lanes.

If you need a car that'll become part of the family, you can't go wrong with the Hyundai Tucson.



For more information  
[Click Here](#)



# DS IS PUTTING ON THE STYLE

DS does things differently. It's about style, grace and even a touch of glamour. Since the French brand was relaunched in the UK in 2015, it is steadily finding new friends on this side of the Channel.

And these latest models will continue to add to the flow of buyers into DS showrooms.

The DS 7 is one of the most handsome, large, SUV's around. This latest version looks better than ever.

You can choose from a 129bhp 1.5 litre diesel engine and a 1.6 litre petrol engine, although the petrol engine is now a plug-in hybrid (PHEV) and is available in three levels of output. At the top end, when you add the power from the engine to those of the two electric motors, you get a very healthy 350bhp which gives a 0-60mph time of 5.6 seconds. There's also a 222bhp and a 292bhp choice. The more powerful petrol engines get all-wheel drive as standard.

The most popular model will use the 222bhp petrol engine. Its 0-60 time of

8.9 seconds is quick enough for most drivers. The electric-only range of around 40 miles will allow some commuters the chance to do a round trip without using any fuel. If you travel further or need additional power, the engine seamlessly bursts into life and joins the party. If you can make full use of the plug-in hybrid system, DS reckon on 250mpg. Of course, in the real world, you won't reach that figure, but you should manage somewhere in the high 50s mpg without too much trouble.

Out on the road, the DS 7 is incredibly quiet. As you'd expect, comfort is the name of the game so there's a cushy ride and comfy seats. It's also extremely well-equipped. This will be a terrific long-distance cruiser.

Elsewhere with DS, there's the DS 3...a compact SUV...and the DS 9 four door



saloon. In the middle of the range you'll find this, the latest DS 4 which, like the DS 7, stands out from the crowd.

It's a family-sized SUV which fits the bill either for commuting, holiday outings, daily school run, shopping, trips to the tip etc. You can choose from 1.5 litre diesel, 1.2 litre petrol and 1.6 litre petrol plug-in hybrid power.

We like the 1.2 petrol unit which delivers 131bhp which should be good for around 50 mpg. The 8-speed automatic gearbox is really smooth and makes for simple progress. 0-60mph takes a shade over 10 seconds. It's one of those cars which will happily paddle around town and then stretch its legs on a long motorway haul. If you need more oomph or regularly travel with a hefty load, you'd probably prefer the other petrol engines.

The interior is a work of art...it's extremely smart with top quality materials and a great standard of build. You also get a terrific level of kit as standard so be careful if you're comparing like for like with any of the competition.

This is one of the best cars that DS has ever built.

Fancy something different...want to put on the style? Check out DS.





# LATEST JUKE IS BOXING CLEVER

Did you know that over five million Qashqai and Juke models have been built at the Nissan plant in Sunderland? Most are exported.

The two latest models...Qashqai e-POWER and Juke Hybrid have recently gone into production. We'll look closely at the Juke shortly.

Sunderland's Nissan plant is a classic example of how important car manufacturing is to the UK. Both cars are designed and manufactured in this country, creating over 7000 jobs in various locations as well as around 30,000 in the wider UK supply chain. 5,000 or so work in in dealerships.

If you add all of the manufacturers together, you end up with an annual turnover of around £67billion and close to a million people working directly or indirectly for the automotive industry.

And of course something like this latest Nissan Juke is vitally important to us here in the North East.

The Juke Hybrid is a clever bit of kit. There's a battery powered motor which can either drive the car on its own, or help the 1.6 litre petrol engine with some extra oomph. Added together you have 145bhp available.

When you set off from standstill, it's the electric motor which gets you underway...silently. You can reach 34mph before the petrol engine joins the party. All of this gives you a 0-60 mph time of around 10 seconds. It's quick enough.

There's an e-Pedal mode. This increases the amount of regenerative braking when you lift off the throttle and pumps more power into the battery as you slow down...hence self-charging. Get used to it and you can use the accelerator pedal to drive around town without touching the brakes until you need to completely stop.



This improves economy. Nissan reckon the hybrid version will give you up to 21% lower fuel consumption and 25% more power when compared to the conventional petrol only model. They reckon you'll manage 57.8mpg. Couple that with low-ish CO2 figures means that the Nissan Juke Hybrid would be a handy company car.

The Juke has always been a neat handler and this latest version is no exception. The car spent a weekend touring around the Lake District and the first thing that strikes you is how compliant the suspension is. Comfy seats too.

The cabin is roomy...looks good with a premium feel to the materials used. Every Juke Hybrid comes well equipped with sat nav, climate control, rear view camera, DAB radio, voice recognition, front and rear parking sensors and intelligent cruise control. If you're comparing like-for-like with other models, make sure you factor-in this high level of standard kit.

The Juke is a Crossover SUV which means it has all of the versatility and convenience of an SUV but with a dash of style.

Prices for the Nissan Juke Hybrid range start at £27,525.





For more information  
[Click Here](#)

# PEUGEOT'S FIRST CLASS FAMILY EXPRESS

Car manufacturers always have a tricky problem....juggling interior space with exterior dimensions.

The temptation is to suggest that if you want more interior space, go for an SUV...but a lot of folk aren't keen on the idea. So what about an estate? Nope...not their cup of tea.

Peugeot have a solution.

It's called the Peugeot 408.

As with all of the recently launched Peugeots, it looks extremely smart and, something which is increasingly rare these days, it is also distinctive and stands out.

Something which hasn't changed with the 408 however is the typical Peugeot DNA...it's comfortable, good to drive



and well-equipped.

If you haven't been in a Peugeot lately, you need to go on a refresher course because the interiors are ultra-smart with a definite premium look and feel. The fascia is hi-tech but works really well....it's simple and intuitive to use.

There's a decent range of engine options, including the one you see here... the Peugeot 408 Hybrid. It's a PHEV (plug-in hybrid electric vehicle) which means it has a 1.6 litre petrol engine and a battery powered motor. The headline figures are impressive; if you use the hybrid technology to its full extent, you can travel for up to 40 miles on battery alone and, if you drive carefully, achieve a staggering 269mpg. Okay, you're highly unlikely to get that, but in the real world it means you should easily reach top 50s mpg in day-to-day motoring. Emissions in the 222bhp model are low (from 25g/km) which means the hybrid Peugeot 408 will be great for company drivers.

You can also get a slightly cheaper hybrid which develops 178bhp. In terms of performance, there's hardly anything in it and the 1778bhp version will still do



the 0-60mph dash in a shade over 8.0 seconds.

If you are thinking about switching to a fully electric family car but aren't quite sure (there's an electric 408 in the pipeline) whether it'll suit your lifestyle, this Peugeot 408 Hybrid could be an ideal choice.

Decisions, decisions.





# POWER PLAY FROM CITROËN

As we're sure you're aware, January 2030 is the date when you will no longer be able to buy a new car powered solely by a petrol or diesel engine.

Citroën knows that electric power isn't for everyone at the moment which is why they offer buyers a terrific selection of conventional AND electric powered cars.

Here are two of our favourites.

When it comes to 5 door hatchbacks which will be equally happy on the school run as it will be going on family holidays, the Citroën C3 really does fit the bill.

Oh and talking of bills, the C3 is not only terrific value for money, it will also be kind on your pocket in terms of running costs.

You can choose from 1.2 litre petrol or 1.6 litre diesel engines. The petrol motor is available with either 82bhp or 109bhp. If you intend doing a high mileage or travel with a decent load, go diesel and you'll manage up to 65mpg. The petrol engines offer a bit more in terms of refinement and you'll still manage in the region of 50mpg.

In terms of trim, we like the C-Series Edition. You'll get a DAB radio, LED headlights, reversing camera, colour touchscreen, air con and smart alloy wheels.

And yes, it's extremely comfortable. It'll become a family friend.

But what about if you want to go electric?

Citroën's range of electric cars is steadily increasing. You can get everything from the funky AMI town car to the vast 9-seat ë-SpaceTourer.

In the middle of their range you'll find the ë-C4 which has built a reputation as an outstanding family car. As with the C3, you can also get the C4 powered by petrol or diesel, but you now have the choice of two electric versions. The ë-C4 is a swoopy coupé while the latest one to arrive is the one you see here, the ë-C4 X which is a saloon, although it looks like a fastback.



They all share the same wheelbase, but the ë-C4 X has a longer body which means you get more interior passenger space and the luggage area almost doubles in size.

In terms of power, the ë-C4 and this ë-C4 X are identical. The electric motor develops 134bhp and powers the front wheels. 0-60 takes 9.3 seconds, although the car feels much quicker because it is sharp away from standstill. Remember, unlike a conventional engine, electric motors develop 100 per cent of their power instantly and there are no gears.

As with all electric cars, the key figures are range and charging time. Citroën estimate a range of 210 miles on a fully charged battery. An 80 per cent charge with a rapid charger only takes around half an hour. If you have a wallbox, plug it in when you get home and you'll be ready for the morning.

There are 3 levels of trim but every ë-C4 X comes well equipped.

And, just like with the C3, the ë-C4 X has Citroën's trademark outstanding level of comfort. It's roomy, good to drive and stands out from the crowd.

This could be the car that makes you finally go electric.



# TOP 10 BEST DRIVING ROUTES IN THE UK REVEALED

Have you ever got up on the morning...flung the curtains open...checked the weather and decided to go for a ride out just for the pure enjoyment of it?

Well if you do, here we go with some handy tips because Fiat have revealed what their research considers to be the top 10 driving routes in the UK where you'll see the best scenery.

This follows on from the research we revealed in the last edition of AutOh! which studied the best beaches in England, and the winner was here in the North East...the Roker-Seaburn beach. If you want to find out more, go onto the AutOh! website...[www.autoh.co.uk](http://www.autoh.co.uk) and head for issue no.19.

Anyway, back to the top 10 Driving Routes in the UK where you can expect to enjoy some truly stunning scenery.

## Here's the list...

1. **The North Coast 500 route starting from Inverness in Northern Scotland**
2. **Kendal to Keswick in the Lake District**
3. **Cheddar Gorge through the Mendip Hills**
4. **St Ives to St Just in Cornwall**
5. **Snake Pass in Peak District National Park**
6. **Best of the Moors (A169 and A170) in Yorkshire**
7. **The Cotswolds - Cheltenham to Stratford**
8. **A82 road which goes towards the mystical Loch Ness**
9. **A39 coastal route linking Minehead to Barnstaple (Cornwall and Devon)**
10. **The Black Mountain Pass A4069 in the Brecon Beacons, Wales**



So, as you can see, sitting proudly at number one is the incredible North Coast 500 which takes in the sights of Northern Scotland.

A study of 2,000 motorists saw the 516 miles of epic coastal scenery, sandy beaches and rugged mountains, which starts and ends at Inverness Castle, come out on top.

The route offers a bit of everything. It even has its own website [www.northcoast500.com](http://www.northcoast500.com) which promises... "Stunning coastal scenery, white sandy beaches, rugged mountains, remote fishing villages, hidden gems, and a wealth of unforgettable experiences; the North Coast 500 is one of the world's most beautiful road trips."

Next up will be a favourite for a lot of you reading AutOh! magazine. It's in the Lake District and follows the route from Kendal to Keswick along the A591. The direct route takes in around 30 miles of Lakeland Fells and the banks of Lake Windermere. We'd also explore the option of dipping off the main route, head for Bowness, take the lake crossing and climb up through Far and Near Sawrey (you'll pass the home of Beatrix Potter), go through Hawkshead (cracking pub called the Queens Head is just off the village square), aim for Ambleside and rejoin the road to Keswick.

North Somerset's Cheddar Gorge through the Mendip Hills was third and Cornwall's route from St Ives to St Just came in at fourth. The coastal A39 linking Minehead to Barnstaple, the A82 leading to mystical Loch Ness, and The Black Mountain Pass in the Brecon Beacons were also among the top 10



beautiful roads to drive in the country.

It also emerged 78 per cent of drivers prefer to take the scenic route when travelling to a destination - to make the most of the view.

Research was commissioned by Fiat to launch the guide Scenic Drives Near Me: The Best Drives In The UK

The interactive map, which takes into consideration those that drive electric cars, details great roads, interesting waypoints, electric charge points and features a pre-loaded route that can be downloaded to a mobile phone.

The study also found 72 per cent believe the UK has some of the most scenic roads in the world. Further findings revealed 54 per cent prefer taking a picturesque journey even if it takes them longer to get to their location.

Of those, 44 per cent said driving on longer roads helps them de-stress while 41 per cent enjoy going somewhere they haven't been to before. And 38 per cent said it gives them more freedom in the open road - with 57 per cent finding driving in general relaxing.

It also emerged the ocean, rolling hills and mountain cliffs were among the types of beautiful scenery drivers want to see while driving. Scotland was named the best region to drive in the UK, followed by London and the South-West of England.

Nearly two in 10 motorists prefer to drive a convertible, with 29 per cent

envious whenever they drive one with the rooftop down.

Any downsides? Poor road conditions often prevent drivers from taking a scenic route while 29 per cent were put off by poor traffic. Other reasons for avoiding a longer journey include having to talk to passengers, worrying about the fuel tank and driving on unfamiliar roads.

Over half, 56 per cent, of drivers who have driven through a scenic route said they get jealous of other passengers who can concentrate on the beautiful views. While seven in 10 have pulled over the side of the road to admire the scenic views.

So, there you go. What this shows is that we are very fortunate in the UK because it's usually only a short drive to leave a town or city and, before you know it, be in the middle of nowhere. Enjoy.





For more information  
**Click Here**



# MG IS TOP OF THE CHARTS

Since the MG marque was relaunched in the UK, it has gone from strength to strength.

**Want some proof?** In January, the MG HS was the biggest-selling car in the UK. And that's official. The large SUV model, which is available in petrol or PHEV (plug-in hybrid) specification, topped the 2023 UK sales charts. If you compare like for like, MG saw overall sales more than double when compared with January 2022. Total UK vehicle sales were 7,433 cars. The announcement marks a great start to the year for MG following record breaking sales results in 2022 where the company was recognised as the fastest growing mainstream vehicle brand for a second consecutive year.

The MG HS in hybrid form is one of those cars which gives you the ideal halfway house between conventional petrol motoring and full electric. You still have the back-up of a 1.5-litre 162bhp turbocharged petrol engine, but you have the option of battery powered, electric vehicle (EV) driving for up to 32 miles.

For a lot of folk, that will be enough for a daily commute. Add the engine and electric motors together and you end up



with a very handy 258bhp. 6-9 seconds for the 0-60mph dash is good.

All MG HS models are equipped with MG's advanced driver assistance package called MG Pilot. It gives you Active Emergency Braking, Lane Assist, Traffic Jam Assist and Adaptive Cruise Control. And it comes fully loaded with kit too.

If you want terrific value-for-money in a sizeable SUV, this is a great place to start.

MG is also a company that is pushing ahead rapidly with offering 100 per cent electrically powered cars.....and they're good.

So good in fact that the MG4 EV has been named 'Best Small Electric Car' at the 2023 What Car? magazine's Car of the Year awards. Praise indeed. The What Car? judging panel said: "Given the rising cost of living and the fact that electric cars tend to be quite expensive to buy, the MG4 EV - with its very keen pricing - feels like the right car at the right time. And crucially, corners haven't been cut to achieve that pricing. In addition to undercutting rivals by thousands, the MG4 offers fast charging, plenty of space and lots of standard equipment. What's more it's good to drive and comes with the reassurance of a seven-year warranty."

And that wasn't the only electric MG to collect a gong. The MG5 EV received high praise and was named as the Best Electric Car' in the estate car category, while the ZS EV was recognised as 'Best for Value' of the electric SUV shortlist.

The experts love MGs....and so do we.

And judging by those sales figures, you do too.

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# NEW ASTRA IS THE BEST YET.

This is the 8th generation of the Vauxhall Astra. It looks really smart...quite distinctive actually. The front styling is particularly fresh. It looks like a motorbike helmet visor.

Two versions are available: hatchback and sports tourer (that's estate to you and me).

The engines are a pair of turbocharged 1.2 litre 3-cylinder petrol engines developing 108bhp or 128bhp...the 108 comes with a 6-speed manual gearbox only...the 128 gets a choice of an 8-speed auto 'box. There's a single 1.5 litre diesel which also develops 128bhp and comes with an 8-speed auto only.

The more powerful 1.2 litre petrol hits 60 in 9.7 seconds. The diesel is a tad slower at 10.6 seconds but it'll give you over 60mpg.

At the top of the engine range there's a single 1.6 litre plug-in hybrid which develops 178bhp so you get 0-60 in a shade over 7 seconds and a top speed of 140mph. If you just use battery power and go steadily, you can travel for 43 miles before the engine bursts into life.

That's more than likely sufficient mileage for most people's daily commute. An 8-speed auto comes as standard.

There are 3 trim levels...Design, GS Line and Ultimate. GS Line will be the most popular. All trims get a pair of 10-inch touchscreens, air con, LED headlights, front and rear parking sensors, smart cruise control, and a DAB radio. GS adds heated sports seats, heated steering wheel, 360 degree parking camera, and a black roof.

Looks good, drives well, plenty of kit and a price that looks very tempting. It can't fail.

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Fuel figures for the All-new Astra range. (WLTP) - CO<sub>2</sub> mass emission - Combined (g/km) 114-124. Fuel Consumption - Combined (mpg) 52-67. Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load.

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# TOYING ABOUT WITH THESE MINI MARVELS

A lot of you reading this magazine will have memories of playing with toy cars. We're not talking about plastic toys... these were made from die-cast metal.

Some of you may collect them...you might even have some cherished ones which are proudly on display.

The vast majority will have been wrecked as you played some games which invariably required hurling toys into each other. As well as cars, you could also get die-cast trucks, ships and aeroplanes. No matter how hard you threw the planes,...probably from

a bedroom window...they always nosedived into the ground. At bath time, the ships sank.

As for the cars, some were bog basic, but others had opening doors and boot, the wheels would steer and if you flicked open the bonnet, there was a detailed engine. Don't press down too hard though...the wheels would buckle.

Corgi and Dinky were two of the major toy car manufacturers....but another is Matchbox, and Matchbox is coming up to its 70th anniversary. Mattel, who now own the firm, is celebrating the brand and seven decades of die-cast adventures by introducing a line of special limited-edition vehicles, paying tribute to Matchbox's heritage.

Talking of heritage, if you have a Matchbox 1955, yellow, quarry tipper truck, in its box and in good condition, you could flog it for around £15,000.

Weirdly, the box is often worth more than the toy inside it for the simple reason that a lot of kids would open the box and then throw it away...or pretend it was a garage which invariably saw the whole thing eventually disintegrate.

The Matchbox heritage toys are planned to be available shortly at various outlets including Tesco, Sainsbury's, B&M Bargain and Morrisons, Prices start at £2.30 for a single die-cast vehicle.

And don't forget to keep the box...and don't play Destruction Derby with them either.



# HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU



Peugeot 308 is a stunner.

Okay, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but we reckon this is one of the best-looking cars out there. Hats off to whoever penned the Peugeot 308.

It certainly isn't your typical, bland, family hatchback.

The first big plus point, after the exterior has caught your eye, is the interior because over the last few years Peugeot has really upped its game. There's a premium look and feel to the build quality and standard of materials used throughout the cabin. It's very smart... and that includes the entry level models too.

There's something for everyone in the 308 range. You can choose from conventional petrol and diesel engines or go fully electric.

And then there's the one you see here. It's a PHEV...plug-in hybrid electric vehicle which means you not only have a 1.6 litre petrol engine under the bonnet,

you also have a rechargeable battery and an electric motor which will allow you to travel for up to around 40 miles without using any fuel.

There are two power outputs available for the hybrid 308...177bhp or 222bhp. To be honest, the smaller one is absolutely fine, giving you a 0-60mph time of 7.6 seconds, although it feels quicker because the electric motor helps you get away from standstill quite briskly. And of course, if you are a company driver, then the low CO2 levels from the hybrid 308 won't hurt your pocket.

In terms of fuel economy, Peugeot reckon their 308 PHEV...which they call the Hybrid 180 e-EAT...can achieve over 200mpg. Granted, you'll need to use the battery powered electric motor to its full extent, however in terms of real world motoring if you need to cover higher distances or regularly travel with a decent load on board, you're still likely to manage in the 50s.

Out on the road, you can choose from Sport, Hybrid and Electric driving modes. Sport adds a bit more weight to the steering and the 8-speed auto gearbox hangs on for a tad longer. Electric encourages the car to travel using battery power only, although if you need some extra oomph, floor the throttle and the petrol engine bursts into life.

There's loads of standard kit in the hybrid models, even in entry level Allure trim, meaning you get sat nav, reversing camera, smart alloys, front and rear parking sensors, DAB radio and powered windows all-round. There's also a comprehensive safety list.

Good to drive, well-equipped, economical, comfy, premium interior and super-stylish exterior.

Peugeot 308 Hybrid. What's not to love?

## PEUGEOT 308

### 1.2 PureTech Active Premium 5dr EAT8



PEUGEOT



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Based on 6,000 miles per annum\*

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Fuel figures for the Peugeot 308 1.2 PureTech Active Premium 5dr EAT8. (WLTP) - CO<sub>2</sub> mass emission - Combined (g/km) 128, Fuel Consumption - Combined (mpg) 51.9 - 43.3 (5.4 - 6.5). Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load.

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and using a motorhome to attend these activities is a great way to travel.

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WHATCAR?

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## Honda's Civic and Jazz ARE HYBRID WINNERS.

There's a steady trend developing at Honda. Electric cars are starting to appear in their range... the Honda e is not only cute to look at but it's great to drive and could be the car which makes you finally go electric. More 100 per cent battery powered Hondas are in the pipeline.

The other trend at Honda is for hybrid power. This is the ideal choice for those owners and drivers who're perhaps not quite ready to go electric, but would like to have the choice of some battery powered electric power whilst still having the back-up of a conventional engine.

The Jazz, CR-V, HR-V and Civic are all available with hybrid power.

The Jazz and Civic are so highly rated that they've both picked up gongs at the recent What Car? Magazine annual awards.

The Honda Jazz was named as Best Small Car and the Honda Civic collected the Best Family Car award.

Power in all versions of the Honda Jazz are the same...they use a hybrid combination of a 1.5 litre petrol engine which works in tandem with two electric motors. Add the power from the engine and electric motors together and you'll end up with 109bhp which, bearing in mind this is a car which is designed to spend a lot of its life in city traffic, will be fine. 0-60 is just over 9 seconds which

shows that the Jazz can also hold its own on motorways. Go easily and Honda reckon you can manage around 62 mpg which means if you brim the tank you can get up to 536 miles.

Steve Huntingford, Editor at What Car? said, "The Jazz's mini-MPV shape gives it one of the most spacious interiors of any small car, while incredibly flexible rear seating only adds to its practicality. The driving position is another strength, thanks to an elevated seat and slim windscreen pillars. And the car's hybrid tech combines impressive real-world fuel economy with peppy performance."

Praise indeed.

You'll also find hybrid technology in the award winning Honda Civic. The 11th generation Civic which Honda launched last year is a family favourite so it's no surprise that it won praise from What Car? Steve Huntingford added: "The Civic has the measure of all its family car rivals, not least due to its low running costs, effortless performance and smart interior. That interior is one of

the most spacious in the class, too, and features some of the most user-friendly controls. And the Civic is great to drive, because its steering is precise, and the suspension manages to blend tight body control with a settled ride."

Both Civic hybrids come with a 2.0 litre 181bhp petrol engine which give the car a 0-60 sprint of 7.9 seconds...a top speed of 111mph...and the potential for 56.5mpg. These are impressive figures.

And don't forget every Honda comes with a 3-year warranty.

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Ford owners across a large swathe of Northumberland were faced with a problem when their local service centre closed last year.

However, we have good news. Bristol Street Motors Ford in Morpeth has all of service records and will be able to pick up where the Alnwick site left off...it'll be seamless.

You'll probably recognise some familiar faces who'll be working on your car or van.

And you'll find they're open now, ready to look after your Ford...or of course any other vehicle...for all of you who live in and around Alnwick.

Need any help? The best idea is to call the Service Manager, Ian Stewart, and he'll sort out everything for you.

"It's never an easy time when you lose your local garage, but I'm delighted to confirm that here at Bristol Street Ford in Morpeth, we can take care of everything", said Ian. "We'll have all of your records so it means we can easily see the history of your car and pick up where you left off. We can look after your car and, if it's still under warranty, ensure that all work is completed to the manufacturer guidelines to keep your warranty fully valid."

Car owners in Northumberland can heave a sigh of relief.



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WHAT CAR?

CAR OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2023

OVERALL WINNER  
VOLKSWAGEN  
ID. BUZZ

# VOLKSWAGEN ARE WINNERS – AND THAT’S OFFICIAL

The What Car? magazine’s Car of the Year awards have been announced and the winner is...

## The Volkswagen ID. Buzz.

Steve Huntingford, Editor of What Car? said...“There’s so much affection for the retro design of the ID. Buzz that Volkswagen could easily have penny-pinned on the engineering and still sold as many as it could make. But instead, it has clearly thrown everything at the car, with this resulting in something that combines the practicality of an MPV with the comfort and refinement of a

premium SUV and the low running costs of an electric vehicle.

“In short, it moves the game on more than any other model launched in the past 12 months, so it had to be the What Car? Car of the Year.”

The ID. Buzz is a 5-seat car but, thanks to the shape, the boot is enormous. In other words, it’s a retro take on the SUV. Nothing looks like the ID. Buzz,

**The Volkswagen T-Roc was named Small SUV of the Year and the Volkswagen Golf R was commended as ‘Best Hot Hatch for everyday usability.’**

Steve Huntingford said: “Ever since it was launched, the Volkswagen T-Roc has been one of the best small SUVs on sale, thanks to its cossetting ride, superb refinement and generous passenger and boot space. However, updates made in



2022 moved it to the very top of the class, with the revised trim levels offering even better value.”

The biggest change was inside the T-Roc. There is a marked move upmarket in terms of quality of trim and fitments. This is a seriously premium product.

As for the Volkswagen Golf R, it’s no real surprise that it won praise for its versatility because... of course...it’s still a Golf, albeit a very quick one. It’s a living legend.

Volkswagen...the home of winners. And that’s official.



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WHATCAR?

CAR OF  
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Octavia remains the family car to beat for practicality."

The Karoq was named Best Family SUV for Value. "This temptingly priced family SUV offers a spacious interior with clever rear seating and is a pleasure to drive, thanks to its comfortable ride and great visibility."

And the Superb was also named Best Executive Car for Value. "These vehicles aren't only for the benefit of business users; they can offer private buyers terrific value, too, and none more so than the comfortable and hugely spacious Superb."

'Value' is the name of the ŠKODA game... and there are currently some terrific finance offers available plus the chance for of two services for just £199.

ŠKODA...serial winners.

## ŠKODA 'BEST OF' TROPHY CABINET CONTINUES TO SWELL

At some point, ŠKODA needs to get the builders in because their trophy cabinet is in danger of collapse.

The latest awards have come from What Car? magazine.

For a staggering 8th year in a row the ŠKODA Superb Estate, has driven off with the award for Best Estate Car. No car in the history of the awards has managed such an achievement.

Whoever was collecting awards on behalf of ŠKODA got plenty of exercise because the company also won gongs for the Karoq, Scala, Octavia and a second one for the Superb. Here's the list of winners, plus comments from What Car? Editor, Steve Huntingford.

On the SKODA Superb Estate win... "It offers loads of space, both for passengers and luggage. But it's also a very comfortable and relaxing car, comes with a great range of engines and is really big on value."

The Scala was named Best Family Car for Value for the second year in a row.

"It stands out for its highly competitive pricing, yet ticks boxes that plenty of more expensive family cars fail to. It combines a supple ride with composed handling, while inside you get loads of rear space, a big boot and a good infotainment system."

The Octavia retained its title of Best Family Car for Practicality. "As a hatchback that dwarfs most cars for interior and boot space, the Skoda



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**WHATCAR?**

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READERS' CHOICE  
**KIA EV9**



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# KIA - THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

We're into awards season for the car manufacturers and once again Kia has been collecting its usual array of gongs.

However, it's always nice when the general public give any car a massive thumbs-up.

What Car? magazine is seen as the Oscars of the car awards. The Kia EV 6 was named Car of the Year last year.

This year, the Kia Sportage has romped away with the title of Best Family SUV. The even better news for Sportage buyers is that Kia is offering the car with some seriously attractive finance offers plus getting the first two services included as part of the buying package. Servicing any car isn't cheap so remember to factor that saving into any comparisons you may be doing.

You can even tailor the Kia Sportage to your lifestyle because it's now available to fit in with driving on sand, snow and

mud. So, if you are into surfing, winter sports or a bit of off-roading, there's a Kia Sportage for you.

And it looks seriously smarty too.

Back to awards...and although it's always nice to receive a pat on the back from motoring experts, it's arguably even more gratifying when the buying public vote with their feet and support one of your products.

And that is exactly what's happened to the Kia EV 9. It won the What Car? award for Reader's Choice.

The EV 9 was launched a year ago as a concept vehicle but, believe us, this car will be arriving on our shores later this year. It's an all-wheel drive 7-seat electric car...and it's already been spotted out



and about undergoing testing. In other words, if you are in the market for an electric car which is plainly going to be seriously spacious, we'd hang on for a few months. Watch this space.

Kia is a company on the move. Gone are the days when a 7-year warranty was the only reasons to consider them. They're now a serious player and, as the regular collection of awards goes to show, they have some top vehicles on offer.

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