

September 2023

# autoh!

the North East's own motor magazine : issue 21



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Frugal.  
Safe.**

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# welcome to **autoOh!**

This is the 21st 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 200 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 the incredible Volvo EX30. It's the quickest car in the entire Volvo range but is also one of the most frugal and sensibly priced. And of course it'll be one of the safest cars on the road.

We love MINIs...they're a hoot to drive and there's pretty much something for everyone in their range. However, if you

like the Clubman, you'll need to move quickly because it's coming to the end of production and will make way for an electric model.

The parent company of MINI is BMW... and they've got a vitally important car coming up for them. It's the new BMW 5 Series. We give you the latest details.

If you want shattering performance, then read about the Mercedes AMG GT 63. It's fast and furious.

The summer holidays are coming to an end but we look at some latest research that shows more people are deciding to drive to the Continent rather than fly.

Sorry, we can't avoid it...winter is on the horizon...we take a look at some popular winter breaks using an electric car.

Oh, and talking about electric...every model in the Nissan range has some form of electrification. We run through what's on offer.

We also check out the latest DS7, Toyota GR86, Honda ZR-V (which has just gone on sale), and show that when it comes to Audi, size doesn't matter.

If you need 7-seats, why not consider the latest Dacia Jogger which comes with a hybrid powertrain. We take it for a spin.

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 and you can read previous editions.

**Graham Courtney, Editor.**



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# THEY'RE CHANGING GEAR AT HONDA

**Brand new ZR-V now on sale.**

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The ZR-V is one of a host of new models coming through at Honda...and it's perfectly timed because it bridges the gap between the HR-V and the CR-V, blending sporting looks, high levels of practicality and a premium interior.

It's arrived in Honda showrooms and, even though we tested the ZR-V recently, we already knew it would be good to drive.

How did we know that?

Simple...because the oily bits are based on the excellent Honda Civic.

Which means you get a 181 bhp 2.0 litre petrol engine mated to a full hybrid system with power going to the front wheels via a CVT gearbox. There's no need to charge the battery because the car charges itself as you go along with the engine mainly working as a generator. Clever huh?

0-60 takes a shade over 8 seconds. As for mpg, the beauty of a hybrid is that you can trundle around town for short-ish distances while using battery power only. Consequently, you don't use any petrol. You glide along in near silence. Official overall consumption is 49.6mpg

for general day-to-day motoring.

And because there's a lot of Honda Civic DNA running through the ZR-V, it means the car has a well-controlled ride which finds the happy compromise between firm enough on the quicker stuff but sufficiently supple to absorb lumps and bumps on our pothole-strewn town and side roads. You get four driving modes... Eco / Normal / Snow / Sport...we just left it in Normal.

There are three trim levels...Elegance, Sport and Advance. They all come with sat nav, air con, DAB radio, heated and folding mirrors, heated front seats, front and rear parking sensors, reversing camera, LED lights front and rear, adaptive cruise control and smart alloy wheels. Not much else you need really.

Prices start at £39,495.

The ZR-V joins a Honda line-up which is regularly updated and renewed.



Coming up later this year there will be a new CR-V which, for the first time in the UK, gets PHEV power.

The incredibly popular Honda Jazz has also been refreshed and now comes with an e:HEV full hybrid powertrain. Power comes from a 96bhp 1.5 litre petrol engine which gives you a 0-60 time of 8.6 seconds. Use the hybrid system to its full extent and you'll crack the 60mpg barrier.

It rates as one of the most comfortable small cars we've ever tried.

These are exciting times for Honda with the arrival of other new models like the fully electric e:Ny1 SUV. The Civic, Type R and HR-V go from strength to strength and the Honda e is one the best...and cutest...all-electric cars around.

Yep, they're changing gear at Honda.

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# STONEACRE JOINS THE 30 PER CENT CLUB



In 1899, a chap called Ernest Clement Skurray sold an Accles Turrell car from an old chapel building in Swindon.

That was the first time a contract to buy a car had been produced and is the first time a car was sold from what became a car dealership.

And it's safe to say that for most of the next century, nearly every other job in the motor industry will have been filled by a man. The car world was a male dominated world...men built the cars, men repaired the cars and men worked in the showrooms.

Thankfully, when you walk into a 21st Century dealership you will see that things have changed. The same applies in the car factories.

And the Stoneacre Motor Group has made a commitment to go even further.

The Group's Managing Director, Shaun Foweather has joined the Automotive 30% Club in order to bring more diversity and equality to the company and to the automotive industry as a whole.

So, what is the Automotive 30% Club?



It's a voluntary group of Managing Directors and CEOs from automotive manufacturing, retailing and supplier companies. The purpose of the group is to achieve a better gender balance within the automotive industry and to fill at least 30% of key leader's positions in the member organisations with women by 2030.

As a step towards offering more equal opportunities into the automotive industry, Shaun Foweather has joined in a bid to provide an inclusive workplace for women within Stoneacre Motor Group.

Recognising a generation where previous gender perceptions have become archaic, Shaun identified the duty to educate both Stoneacre's workplace and the industry on becoming more aware of offering equal opportunities.

Expressing new goals for the company, the MD and other members from Stoneacre have set up quarterly 'Women in the Motor Trade' meetings with key female members of the team. These meetings intend to discuss and implement plans to expand opportunities for women at Stoneacre to progress into more senior roles - improving the gender balance in the workplace.

And someone who is heavily involved in this for Stoneacre is Sunderland-based Karen Allen.

Karen is Corporate Sales Manager and spearheads Volvo's largest fleet department.

"I've been involved in the motor trade since 1988 and it's really heartwarming to see the changes that are being made," says Karen. "When I first started, it was a rarity to meet any other women but I saw it as a challenge and have loved my career. I run the Business Centre for



Stoneacre Volvo in Sunderland and really enjoy the level of success were currently having with fleet sales. The situation is changing when it comes to women in the motor trade and we're certainly seeing more women involved in fleet sales, but it would be nice to see more women across the entire range of roles which are available...and that of course is the aim of the Automotive 30% Club."

So...things are moving but there's still work to be done when it comes to attracting women of all ages into a wide variety of roles. It's great to see that Stoneacre has recognised that the situation needs to change and are doing something about it.



# BENTLEY - THE MOST SOUGHT-AFTER LUXURY CAR BRAND IN THE WORLD



Bentley can do no wrong at the moment. They continue to shatter production and profitability records.



Their five models...Continental GT, Continental GT Convertible, Flying Spur, Bentayga and Bentayga EWB...all sell like hot cakes. Bentayga leads the way and is the most popular model, the appeal of which was increased with the addition of a long-wheelbase model which, to our eyes anyway, has made the Bentayga even more handsome.

Bentley is also the master at creating special editions...some of which spread across the range while others are

standalone, coachbuilt models. All of them are incredibly desirable.

One of the most popular editions to the Bentley range has been the driver-focussed Speed models. They're available in all but the Bentayga EWB.

Speed models are really a nod to the heritage of Bentley's tremendous W12 engine which has been with us for 20 years. With 6.0 litres under your right foot and around 650bhp to play with, they are arguably the models to go for. You also get a selection of different colours and design options for both the interior and exterior. As for performance, in something like the Continental GT Speed Convertible, the W12 engine ensures 0-60 comes up in 3.6 seconds. Top speed is 208mph. We drove one last year at Silverstone. It sounds fantastic and the all-wheel drive and all-wheel steering makes for incredible roadholding.

However, for the ultimate Bentley, you

need to try to get your hands on one of the Mulliner models. We've already had the open top Bacalar but coming up shortly will be the Batur which Bentley refer to as their ultimate grand tourer. Development work is now complete and the first customer cars are being assembled. 18 will be made. Needless to say that they'll feature an exceptional level of bespoke craftsmanship. They'll take around four months to handcraft. The last one is due to be completed at the end of 2024.

Performance is stunning for this size of car. The W12 engine has been used but it now develops 730bhp. And look closely at the design features because the Batur is seen as the future shape of Bentley. The company says the Batur 'reflects the future of Bentley's design vision, offering a sleeker, more minimal and more focused interpretation of automotive luxury.'

The bottom line is that every Bentley is a pure joy to own and drive. Yes they sit at the pinnacle of automotive luxury but they're also totally usable...make for wonderful day to day motoring...and will continue to rate as the most sought-after luxury car brand in the world.



# CLUBMAN SAYS GOODBYE.

## THE MINI FUTURE IS ELECTRIC.



We've always thought the MINI Clubman with its funky barn-like rear doors, is one of the best-looking cars in the MINI range.

However, MINI has confirmed that the Clubman sales will cease in 2024 and the last model, appropriately called the Final Edition, has now rolled off the assembly line. Only 1969 have been built....1969 was the year when the original MINI Clubman appeared.

The car has a MINI Cooper S 176bhp engine and comes fully loaded. Prices start at £37,000 and, if you fancy one, you'll need to get a move on because only 100 examples will be coming to the UK.

Of course, there are other versions of the MINI Clubman available but your options will start to dwindle over the coming months. Prices for the range kick off at £27,440.

So, why make this change?

Simple. MINI is planning to be an electric-only range by 2030. Some models in the range will disappear while others get the EV treatment.

The 3-door MINI hatchback was first to be available as fully electric and it has

For more information  
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recently been joined by the Electric Convertible which looks really smart. Already in the pipeline is the all-electric Countryman and there's rumoured to be a smaller SUV called the Aceman which will, in effect, replace the departing Clubman.



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If you want a halfway house, the MINI Countryman with a PHEV powertrain is a great choice. If you go easily, you can travel for around 25 miles on battery power only. So, if you have a daily commute of, say, 20 miles, you can easily do the whole journey without the petrol engine bursting into life. Plug the car into a charger when you get home and it'll be ready for the morning.

Without doubt though, the 3-door MINI Electric is one of our favourite battery

powered cars. It not only looks terrific but it drives superbly with a 0-60 time of 7.3 seconds. And yes, it still has the MINI trademark skateboard handling characteristics. The range of up to 143 miles will be sufficient for most people doing a Monday-Friday work or school shuttle. With prices starting at £32,550

it represents decent value and, because it's a MINI, it'll hold onto its value like a limpet. It comes fully equipped to Cooper S standard which includes sat nav that can lead you to the nearest charging station. MINI currently has a deal which gives you the chance to have a home charger installed for free.

So, it's goodbye to the MINI Clubman as we know it....and hello to the future.

It's electric.

**MINI CLUBMAN FINAL EDITION.  
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# THE LEGEND FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

## New BMW 5 Series breaks cover

Very few cars can be seen as a standard bearer for a particular sector of the automotive market, but when it comes to executive saloon and estate cars, the BMW 5 Series is a world leader.

Consequently, when the time comes to replace it, BMW needs to be extremely careful. It's a case of evolution rather than revolution.

Which means, as you can see from the photos, the new BMW 5 Series...the 8th generation... is instantly recognisable. The styling changes aren't as radical as some of the other BMW models. The saloon goes on sale very shortly while the estate (Touring) arrives next year.

However, things are very different under the skin. The biggest change is that the 5 Series will be available as an all-electric i5. Petrol and plug-in hybrid versions continue. There's no diesel now because BMW wants to concentrate on high efficiency petrol and hybrid models.

The new 5 Series is a shade longer and wider, but the addition of an extra 20mm to the wheelbase should mean for extra legroom in the cabin.

The initial range of 5 Series saloons will be limited to a single petrol, engine... the 2.0 litre, four cylinder 520i. It comes with an 8-speed automatic gearbox as standard. Top speed is 142mph; 0-60 comes up in 7.5 seconds. BMW reckon



you'll get a shade over 48mpg which is pretty good going bearing in mind the size and weight of the car. Prices start at £51,000.

The electric and PHEV versions arrive next year.

As for what you get, the trims start off with M Sport. That means the standard kit includes LED front and rear lights, air con, sat nav, sports front seats, heated driver's seat, powered mirrors, rear camera and parking sensors. The interior also features BMW's excellent 12.3-inch screen behind the steering wheel and a 14.9-inch touchscreen infotainment system with Apple CarPlay and Android



Auto. It looks great and works well. To be honest, most folk will be perfectly happy with the entry level trim. You can also add the usual BMW Comfort and Tech packs.

If you want something to make your new 5 Series seem even more special, go for the M Sport Pro trim which gives you bigger alloys, rear spoiler and a natty illuminated front grille.

More powerful models are in the pipeline, but for the moment the new BMW 5 Series is in safe hands. It's moving with the times but also nods to its heritage.

The icon continues.



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# JOGGING ALONG NICELY.

This is the first car in the Dacia range to arrive in this country with electric assistance...it's the Dacia Jogger Hybrid.

Prices for the 7-seater Jogger Hybrid start at £22,995.

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 and two self-charging, battery driven electric motors. The Jogger Hybrid feels sharp off the line because it always starts in electric mode. You'll manage 0-60mph in 10 seconds. For those of you who only do a short-ish commute, school run etc, the fact that you can run for about 40 miles on electric power only, will be a major factor in choosing the Dacia Jogger Hybrid

version. Use the hybrid system to its full extent and you'll get very close to the official figure of 56.5mpg.

It's surprising that it's taken so long for Dacia to introduce some sort of electrification into their range because they're owned by Renault who've been using it for ages.

In terms of kit, the Expression trim (it's the introductory level on the hybrid model) gets you an 8-inch touchscreen with smartphone compatibility, rear camera, powered windows, keyless entry, parking sensors all-round, LED headlights, roof bars, DAB radio, powered mirrors, air con and cruise control as standard. We wouldn't bother



with the top of the range Extreme trim unless you really must have heated seats and additional styling.

As we mentioned earlier, this is a proper 7-seater. The third row will cope with a couple of adults (assuming you're not carrying a bunch of rugby players) rather than a pair of the local Hobbits. You can flop the 2nd row of seats forward and remove the 3rd row entirely if you want to use the Jogger as a glorified estate car. You'll end up with a vast 2,085 cubic litre of space. With 7 seats in place you still have a surprising amount of boot space. If you need extra capacity for 7 occupants, you can make use of the roof rails.

It's good to drive too and very quiet. It shrugs off rough and lumpy road surfaces yet manages to avoid too much in terms of body roll. It's not what you'd call fun, but it's fuss free and very comfortable.

Forget about the Dacia Jogger being competitively priced (which it is). It's a terrific 7-seater in its own right.

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





# MERCEDES AMG GT 63 S E PERFORMANCE Fast. Furious.

What you're looking at is the first performance hybrid from Mercedes-AMG. It's taken a while to finally come to fruition...it was muted by Mercedes back in 2017.



Let's do some number crunching.

Under the bonnet you'll find a 4.0 litre V8 bi-turbo petrol engine which, when added to the oomph delivered by a battery-powered electric motor on the rear axle, delivers a thumping 832bhp. All of this goes via a 9-speed automatic gearbox mated to a 4MATIC all-wheel drive system.

Floor the throttle and you hurtle to the horizon. 0-60 mph comes up in a truly stunning 2.9 seconds. Top speed is 196mph. For a car approaching 2.3 tonnes, these are impressive figures.

And yes, as this car is a plug-in hybrid, you can drive it using electric power only. However, don't get excited because Mercedes say that it can only manage



a rather pathetic 8 miles. But that's missing the point because the battery and electric motor are there to work in tandem with the engine and provide terrific off-the-line performance. If you make full use of the hybrid system and don't enjoy the engine note and performance, Mercedes reckon you can get around 35mpg. To be honest, you'll be lucky to get high 20's but we suspect you won't be too miffed when you're forking-out around £180,000.

There are seven driving modes which you select from a knob on the steering wheel...Comfort, Electric, Sport, Sport+, Race, Slippery and Individual (allows you to drift the car). To be honest, although it's fun to play with, most folk will leave everything in Comfort and let the air suspension do its work.



If you use this car purely for long-legged motorway jaunts, you are in for a wonderful experience because you glide along with only a distant rumble from the engine, but when you need to overtake and boot the accelerator, the car comes alive.

And if you don't want to disturb the neighbours and fancy saving the planet, switch to 'Electric' mode to arrive / depart home in silence.

The interior is a work of art with lashings of leather, chrome and natty lighting. The dashboard and steering wheel have a plethora of ways in which you can configure how the car operates. The 12.3-inch touchscreen and head-up display work well. The sat-nav is one of the best around and provides you with direction sign photos.

Formula One had a big say in the way this Mercedes AMG GT 63 S E Performance produces its power so when Max Verstappen notches-up his next F1 win, we should say thank you.





## Style meets versatility.

Discover the Audi A1. Now available from £299 per month at 10.7% APR Representative\*.

Solutions (Personal Contract Plan) representative example based on 8,000 miles per annum.

### Representative example

Audi list price	£20,597.97
Lookers Group price	£20,347.97
Savings on list price	£250.00
Monthly payments	£299.00
Duration (months)	49
Number of payments	48
Customer deposit	£299.00
Manufacturer deposit contribution	£500.00
Total deposit	£799.00
Total amount of credit	£19,548.97
Option to purchase fee	£10.00
Total charge for credit (incl. interest & fees)	£6,593.03
Optional final payment	£11,780.00
Total amount payable	£26,941.00
Representative APR	10.7%
Interest rate (fixed)	10.7%
Mileage restriction per annum	8,000
Excess mileage charge per mile	4.8p
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# WHEN SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Audi A1 and Audi Q2 show that size doesn't matter

It's very easy to assume that bigger, faster, longer, taller etc etc is better. But is that really the case?

Take the Audi range for example.

Yes, they have some fantastic machinery, all of which are hugely desirable, but for a lot of us it's worth concentrating on the models which appear at the start of the Audi range.

Take the Audi A1 and the Audi Q2 for example.

The 5-door A1 Sportback kicks off at the Audi range. Prices start at £22,710 which, bearing in mind this is a premium car which comes well equipped even in entry level trim, is decent value for money. There's also a really good choice of petrol engines. You can either aim for some serious economy, or you can go for something which is heading down the sporty route.

You can go for a 1.0 litre engine which is available in two states of tuning (95bhp or 110bhp) or a 1.5 litre (150bhp) engine.

No matter which one you go for you'll be getting around 50mpg. There's also a choice of manual or automatic gearboxes.

In terms of performance, the 1.5 litre 35 TFSI with an S tronic gearbox hits 60 mph in a shade over 9 seconds. However, go for the introductory engine...the 1.0 litre 25 TFSI with a 5-speed manual gearbox, and you'll still reach 60mph in 11 seconds yet return a predicted 50.4mpg.

As for trim, you can choose from Sport, S Line and Black Edition. All are well equipped, good to drive and will hang onto their value.

If you still fancy something with compact dimensions but would like the versatility of an SUV, then look at the Audi Q2.

You'll find the two larger engines from

the A1 also appear in this Q2. The car was recently given a refresh which made it a tad more sporty and aggressive...it looks great. As with the A1, trim comes in Sport, S Line and Black Edition levels. A 6-speed manual gearbox comes as standard but you can opt for the S tronic auto 'box.

The one thing you notice as soon as you climb on board is that you have a great view of the road thanks to the high driving position. It makes for simple positioning of the car in traffic. Parking is a doddle...parking sensors come as standard by the way. You also get satellite navigation, DAB radio, air con, cruise control, sports seats and a stack of safety kit.

Something else you'll notice in both the Q2 and A1 is that they're deceptively roomy. Looks can be deceiving.

Prices for the Audi Q2 start at £27,135.

So, the Audi A1 and Audi Q2...compact dimensions but big on personality, choice and value.

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V O L V O



**298** Pure electric range\*

**26.5** Minute ~80% charged\*\*

**15.7** kWh Energy consumption\*\*\*

**3.6** Second 0-62mph

STONEACRE VOLVO

## EX30. Big electric performance in a small package with a tiny price from £33,795.

The fully electric Volvo EX30 is designed to deliver a big car experience with a highseating position, refined interior design, smart interior storage, Google built-in\*and the safety technology you'd expect from a Volvo.

With clean lines, a dynamic appearance and confident expression, the smallest ever Volvo SUV makes a big impression on both high streets and highways.

We've crafted four nature-inspired interiors for the EX30. They blend beautifully colour-coordinated upholsteries and décor made from renewable and recycled materials.

Simpler and more customisable driver controls and displays help make driving less complicated and more intuitive.

**Get in touch to find out more and book a test ride to experience the EX30 for yourself.**

**Stoneacre**

[www.stoneacre.co.uk](http://www.stoneacre.co.uk)

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**01642 673251**

\*298 mile electric range is according to WLTP driving cycles and real-world range may vary. \*\*26.5 minute to 80% Fast charging under optimal charging conditions. Charging times are dependent on factors such as outdoor temperature, current battery temperature, charging equipment, battery condition and car condition. \*\*\* The figures are preliminary and derive from estimates and calculations performed by Volvo Cars for EX30 and these outcomes are not guaranteed. The driving range and energy consumption under real conditions vary depending on driving behaviour and other external factors. Vehicle certification pending.

Official fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures for the MY23 Volvo Cars range\*, in MPG (l/100km): WLTP Combined 29.4(9.6) – 403.0(0.7). WLTP CO<sub>2</sub> 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.

# FAST. FRUGAL. ECO-FRIENDLY. SAFE.

And the new Volvo EX30 is seriously well-priced too.

One of the big complaints is that electric cars are expensive. Well when this new Volvo EX30 arrives on our shores later this year, the starting price is expected to be in the region of £33,750 which is extremely competitive.

However, all of the other facts and figures are arguably even more impressive.

Depending on which powertrain you go for (there are 3) Volvo's smallest ever SUV comes with the potential for great range and absolutely stunning performance. Go for the top of the range 422bhp Twin Motor Performance all-wheel drive power option and you can hit 60mph in 3.4 seconds which makes it the quickest Volvo...ever. However, even the entry level EX30 develops a very healthy 268bhp which means you can reach 60mph in a shade over 5.0 seconds. That's the beauty of all-electric cars. You have 100 per cent power from the moment you hit the throttle. And it's effortless...no gears, no clutch.

In the middle there's another 268bhp power option but it comes with a bigger battery to allow more range. It'll probably turn out to be the most popular model in the range.

Ah...range. The big question mark for any electric car.

The entry level EX30 will manage 213 miles, but if you go for the same car but with the bigger battery and Volvo reckon you can reach 298 miles.

Rapid charging times for all of the EX30s are around 25 minutes from 10-80 per cent.

Volvo say that you should buy this car purely on your driving style and the sort of mileage you expect to cover. Your choice will be reflected in the price. Fair



enough. Their argument is that there's no need to buy a car which can cover a high mileage when actually you'll only be doing a round commute of 20 miles a day and that you rarely go on a long journey.

There are two equipment grades at launch - Plus and Ultra. An additional Core entry-level grade will be introduced later next year with prices rumoured to

kick off in the region of £32,000.

In terms of kit, Plus specification includes 12.3-inch touchscreen display, two-zone climate control, Harman Kardon premium sound system with dashboard soundbar (there are no speakers in the doors...the soundbar runs along the top of the fascia) front and rear parking sensors, rear camera, heated front seats and heated steering wheel.

Additional features on Ultra grade include 360-degree camera, fixed panoramic sunroof, dark-tinted rear windows, a self-parking system, 20-inch alloy wheels, and power-adjustable front seats.

And if you want to impress your friends tell them that a quarter of the aluminium used in your new Volvo EX30 has been recycled, as has 17 per cent of the steel and plastic.

We've yet to drive the EX30 but we went on the launch and saw the car in the flesh and sat in it. The car is extremely smart...looks great (think of a smoothed-off XC40)...and has a seriously premium feel to the interior.

Order books are open now. Form a queue.

For more information  
**Click Here**



# BORN TO BE WILD.



## CUPRA Born cuts loose.

Under the skin this is really a Volkswagen ID.3. However, CUPRA, which is the sporting arm of SEAT, has the knack of taking a 'standard' car and bringing it to life.

First of all, the CUPRA Born looks better than the ID.3 because it has a more aggressive appearance and fatter tyres. The ride height has been lowered slightly and the steering made sharper. We think it looks cool.

There are two power options, (a third lower powered version is in the pipeline apparently) both of which feed a single motor which drives the rear wheels. You can select either a 202bhp 58kWh battery or a 240bhp 77kWh battery which gives the CUPRA Born terrific performance and decent range. CUPRA reckon you'll get 340 miles before running out of juice with the bigger battery. If you can find one of the increasing number of rapid chargers, you'll hit an 80 per cent charge in around half an hour. You can also manage a 0-60mph time of around 6.6 seconds.

You can tell that the suspension has been lowered because the ride can feel a tad firm at slower speeds, but get moving on the quicker stuff and the pay-

off is that the CUPRA Born handles really well. It's not quite in hot hatch territory but it's not far off.

Trim names can often be a bit confusing with various manufacturers, but CUPRA has gone to the other extreme with the Born. You have three versions to choose from...V1, V2 and, erm, oh yes, V3. The cheapest Born kicks off at £36,475. Fancy the more powerful one?...add £5500.

Every Born comes with a handsome 12-inch touch screen and a 5.3-inch instrument cluster. The sat nav is responsive but the even though the temperature can be adjusted by external buttons, doing anything else is a bit fiddly, which is not ideal when you're on the move. There's also a rear view camera.

The seats are supportive but comfy and there's plenty of room for adults in the rear. There's a sense of quality about the interior trims too.



The difference between the two power outputs might appear to be significant at first glance, but in truth it doesn't make much difference in day to day motoring and even though the predicted range of the lower power model drops to 262 miles, that will still be ample for the majority of you reading this. I'd save your money and avoid the temptation of the more powerful Born.

This is the first all-electric CUPRA. It's a thoroughly enjoyable and competent car and certainly bodes well for future electric cars from the Spanish manufacturer.



# NEW GENERATION VAUXHALL CORSA Legend Updated

Future best seller now on sale.



So here it is. By the end of this year, the car you're looking at will more than likely have gone back to the top of the UK sales charts.

It's the brand new Vauxhall Corsa.

The Corsa finished 2022 as the UK's top-selling supermini and second best-selling car overall, and topped the overall sales charts in 2021. It's the best-selling car in its segment so far this year, while the Corsa Electric is the best-selling Small Electric Car.

These are impressive figures and this latest model will ensure that the records continue to tumble.

The new Corsa looks fantastic with the Vauxhall's trademark visor front design.



The interior has a premium feel and look to it, as do all the latest Vauxhalls.

In terms of powertrains, there will be a choice of petrol engines available in Design, GS and Ultimate trims. All

use a 1.2-litre unit which vary from a naturally-aspirated 74bhp engine paired with a five-speed manual gearbox; a turbocharged 99bhp engine with a six-speed manual or eight-speed automatic gearbox, or a 128bhp unit available as an eight-speed automatic. There will also be a 154bhp Electric Corsa which has a range of up to 246 miles as well as the current 136bhp powerplant. A hybrid option arrives very shortly.

Prices start at a highly competitive £19,625 and the order book is now open. Deliveries start imminently.

The latest Corsa will also be available with 0% finance. This applies to the entire Vauxhall range of cars including the electric models.

# 0% APR

Up to 2 years  
Minimum 30% deposit



## 100% No brainer

Available across the car range, including electric.



**Vauxhall Durham**  
Abbey Road, Pity Me,  
Durham, DH1 5DQ  
**0330 1080 192**

**Vauxhall Newcastle**  
2 City West Business Park, Scotswood Road,  
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, NE4 7DF  
**03300 960 851**

**Vauxhall Sunderland**  
Alexandra Avenue, Hylton Riverside,  
Sunderland, SR5 2TB  
**03300 960 853**  
[bristolstreet.co.uk/vauxhall](http://bristolstreet.co.uk/vauxhall)

0% APR Personal Contract Purchase.

Offer subject to availability, on selected models at participating Retailers only. Personal Contract Purchase. Ts&Cs apply. Applicants must be 18+. Finance by Stellantis Financial Services, RH1 1QA. 24 month term. At the end of the agreement there are three options: i) Part Exchange the vehicle where equity is available ii) Pay the optional final payment to own the vehicle. iii) Return the vehicle. Offer applies to private individuals and small businesses 1-49 units. Cannot be used in conjunction with loyalty bonuses or Vauxhall Partners. Orders from 18th July 2023 - 3rd October 2023.

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# THIS IS A SERIOUS WEIGHTLIFTER

The weather. I don't know about where you live, but summer 2023 has yet to materialise. We've had so much rain that I'm developing webbed feet.

Last week though, the planets were aligned. I was heading to the Lake District and my test car was the brand new SsangYong Musso Saracen +.

Oh and the + isn't a typing error...it means this particular Musso is a long wheelbase version.

Early models were a tad agricultural but SsangYong has moved with the times and their vehicles are now very much 21st Century. In fact, if you go for the Saracen model shown here, the interior is downright plush and puts a lot of much more expensive vehicles to shame.

Let's start with some basic figures.

Prices start at £24,765 ex VAT or £30,093 if you're not VAT registered. The fact that SsangYong quotes ex VAT shows that the Musso is aimed very much at owners who intend using their Musso as a workhorse. However, pick-ups are also very much a style statement these days and a lot of Mussos will find homes in leafy suburbs and experience nothing trickier than a school shuttle, supermarket run or holiday outing to the beach.

The Musso is a 'double-cab' which means you get four doors and five seats. Go for the 6-speed automatic version rather than the manual (the Saracen + has auto



as standard) and you'll be able to tow 3.5 tonnes and carry just over 1.1 tonnes in the load bed area at the same time. No other pick-up available in the UK can match those figures. The new 204 bhp 2.2 litre diesel turbo has incredible strength and flexibility. 0-60mph comes up in just over 11 seconds. Top speed is 114mph.

Four trim levels are available...EX, Rebel, Saracen and Saracen +. Go for top of the range Saracen + and you'll get satellite navigation, climate control, rear view camera, DAB radio, front and rear parking sensors, leather upholstery, heated and ventilated front seats, 18-inch alloys and a stack of safety kit.

Despite its size, the Musso is good to drive. The square front and rear dimensions make it easy to place on the road. The interior is roomy and comfortable. Kids love riding in a pick-up truck.

This excellent SsangYong pick-up has the knack of being able to deliver a pallet of bricks on the morning, haul a hefty trailer in the afternoon and then take you and your friends to a restaurant in the evening.

Surprising SsangYong? You bet.



# LOOKING GOOD TO TOP EUROPEAN SALES



For more information

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## Peugeot 208 and 2008 success story to continue

We think the Peugeot 208 is drop dead gorgeous...no surprise that it's been Europe's top selling car in 2021 and 2022. Latest figures are hinting that it'll be there at the end of this year too because there's a new 208 arriving in the UK very shortly. .

And it'll be joined by a new 2008 as well.

We're not surprised these Peugeots do so well because they not only look good, they're also great to drive, well equipped and great to sit in. The cockpit is well-equipped, ultra-modern and works really well.

Both cars have been given a thorough update inside, outside and under the bonnet. For the first time, they're available as petrol, hybrid or 100 per



cent electric. The electric E 208 can reach up to 248 miles on a single charge. You can boost the battery 20% to 80% in around 25 minutes using a rapid charger. A typical wallcharger will take about 4.5 hours. Plug in your 208 or 2008 when you get home and they'll be ready for the morning.

In terms of power choices, the new Peugeot 208 hybrid offers either 100bhp or 136bhp petrol engines combined with an electric motor.

If you prefer to stick with a traditional petrol engine set-up you can opt for PureTech 75 or PureTech 100 power plants.

The 2008 has a similar line-up although the PureTech 75 isn't available. A PureTech 130 joins the range. A 136bhp hybrid 2008 arrives next year but the electric E-2008 will be available from the start.

Both cars will be available to order very shortly. The 208 starts at £20,610 while the 2008 starts at £24,020.

They can't fail to be ultra-popular.

## New Peugeot 208

from only **£299** per month

100% electric or diesel, the Peugeot 208 city car asserts its youth right down to the smallest detail

- Bluetooth • Cruise Control • Diamond Alloy Wheels
- Two Toned • Apple Car Player Android Auto
- Rear Parking Sensors



### Representative PCP finance example: Peugeot 208 Allure Premium 1.2L PureTech

VEHICLE OTR PRICE	WINGROVE DEPOSIT CONT.	CUSTOMER DEPOSIT	TOTAL AMOUNT OF CREDIT	47 MONTHLY PAYMENTS	TERM OF AGREEMENT
£23,130	£1,577. <sup>63</sup>	£1,299	£20,253. <sup>37</sup>	£299. <sup>00</sup>	48 months
GUARANTEED FUTURE VALUE / OPTIONAL FINAL PAYMENT	TOTAL CREDIT CHARGE	TOTAL PAYABLE	MILEAGE ALLOWANCE	EXCESS MILEAGE COST	APR REPRESENTATIVE
£10,344. <sup>00</sup>	£7,020. <sup>26</sup>	£27,273.63	6,000	5.4p per mile	6.9%

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 MOTOR GROUP

www.wingrovetorgroup.co.uk

# New C-Series Special Editions



## C3 C-Series Edition

PureTech 83 S&S manual only

**£249** per month

- Bluetooth
- Cruise Control
- Diamond Cut Alloys
- Two Toned
- Apple car Player Android Auto
- Rear Parking Sensors



Representative PCP finance example: Citroen C3 C-Series Edition PureTech 83 S&S manual

VEHICLE OTR PRICE	DEPOSIT CONTRIBUTION	WINGROVE DISCOUNT	CUSTOMER DEPOSIT	47 MONTHLY PAYMENTS	TERM OF AGREEMENT
<b>£18,110<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>£500<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>£541.32<sup>91</sup></b>	<b>£499<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>£249<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>48 months</b>
GUARANTEED FUTURE VALUE / OPTIONAL FINAL PAYMENT	TOTAL PAYABLE	MILEAGE ALLOWANCE	EXCESS MILEAGE COST	APR REPRESENTATIVE	
<b>£8,784<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>£22,027<sup>32</sup></b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>5.4p per mile</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	

## C3 Aircross C-Series Edition

PureTech only

**£279** per month

- Bluetooth
- Cruise Control
- Gloss Black Alloys
- Two Toned
- Apple car Player Android Auto
- Rear Parking Sensors



For more information  
**Click Here**

Representative PCP finance example: Citroen C3 Aircross C-Series Edition Puretech

VEHICLE OTR PRICE	DEPOSIT CONTRIBUTION	WINGROVE DISCOUNT	CUSTOMER DEPOSIT	47 MONTHLY PAYMENTS	TERM OF AGREEMENT
<b>£20,890<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>£1,250<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>£572<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>£999<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>£279<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>48 months</b>
GUARANTEED FUTURE VALUE / OPTIONAL FINAL PAYMENT	TOTAL PAYABLE	MILEAGE ALLOWANCE	EXCESS MILEAGE COST	APR REPRESENTATIVE	
<b>£9,168<sup>00</sup></b>	<b>£25,102<sup>45</sup></b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>7.8p per mile</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	

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**WINGROVE**  
MOTOR GROUP

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# WINGROVE- ALMOST 100 YEARS OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

Wingrove Motors is one of the UK's longest-established family firms. They're also one of the country's leading suppliers of new Citroen, Peugeot and DS models.

However, they appreciate that not everyone wants a new car or van.

Wingrove has a great reputation for offering a terrific selection of previously owned vehicles at their sites in Wallsend and Newcastle....but they can now offer even more vehicles for customers to choose from.

They've joined the SPOTiCAR programme.

SPOTiCAR is the manufacturer approved used vehicle programme for the Stellantis Group which includes Peugeot, Citroën and DS.

SPOTiCAR used cars come with:

- HPI Insurance and Vehicle Mileage Check for piece of mind
- 2 Keys
- Minimum 12 months Manufacturers Backed Warranty - Free
- 12 months RAC Breakdown Assistance - Free
- No Admin Fees

Every vehicle is manufacturer-approved and thoroughly checked by manufacturer-trained technicians.



"We've been a family run business since 1925 and have always prided ourselves on giving customers the best possible service," said Chris Marshall. "Although we have hundreds of top quality used cars available at our sites, we know that some customers will quite rightly be very particular about the vehicle that they want. Consequently, if we don't have something which matches their requirements, we can use SPOTiCAR to find the car you are looking for."

So, there you go. If Wingrove don't have what you're looking for, it's not a problem because they can go elsewhere to find it for you. It also means that you can have confidence that the vehicle they find will match the standards that you would expect from Wingrove.

They do the leg-work for you. Simple.



## GLEN CELEBRATES 35 YEARS WITH WINGROVE

Anyone who calls into a Wingrove dealership will recognise a sea of familiar faces.

It's just the way it is at Wingrove. The Wingrove people who deal with customers face to face or those who are behind the scenes in workshops and offices, tend to stay.

Take Glen Musgrave for example. He's based in Newcastle and operates as a Local Business Manager with Citroen concentrating on commercial vehicle sales. He's just celebrated 35 years with Wingrove and has sold hundreds of cars and vans to a legion of customers.

*"I've gained over 35 years of experience in the motor industry, all of which helps me advise businesses on their vehicle strategy, provide advice on acquisitions, running costs and maintenance,"*

said Glen.

*"Business customers expect a business class service. I'm committed to providing them with a business class experience from sales to service."*

Congratulations Glen.



# LUXURY COMES AS STANDARD



## DS 7 is an SUV Premier League Player

The DS 7 continues to one of the most desirable, big SUVs around. It looks good inside and out, oozes with quality and is wonderful to drive.

It's also been given a refresh.

The range is now called DS 7, DS 7 E-Tense, DS 7 Performance Line and DS 7 Esprit de Voyage

The E-Tense PHEV (plug-in hybrid) is one of our favourites. Three power outputs are available but the one we like is the 360 which rates as the most powerful car that DS has ever produced. When you add together the 1.6 litre petrol engine and battery-driven electric motor, you get a very healthy 350bhp which equates to a 0-60 time of 5.6 seconds and a top speed of 146mph. All-wheel drive via an 8-speed auto



gearbox means you can use this DS 7 for travelling over soggy or rutted ground. It also makes the car feel very surefooted if you are pushing on. The ride has been lowered slightly and the dampers given a tweak. It doesn't ruin the ride though.

In terms of economy, because this DS 7 has a rechargeable battery, you can travel for up to 35 miles in EV (electric vehicle) mode using zero fuel. If you have a daily commute over that sort of distance, you can do it without the engine bursting into life.

Every DS 7 is lavishly equipped. The entry level trim for the 350 E-Tense is Performance Line+ which comes with sat nav, leather upholstery, 12.3 inch digital instrument cluster, reversing camera, powered and heated front seats. You get everything you need.

Good to drive, wonderfully kitted out interior and the potential for seriously good mpg. The latest DS 7 is better than ever. Prices for the DS 7 range start at £35,035.

## DS 7 Crossback E-Tense

Luxury motoring from **£499** per month

With three power units – a turbocharged petrol engine and two electric motors that combine to produce 300hp, DS 7 CROSSBACK ETENSE 4x4 300 becomes a new reference in terms of combining technology, refinement and performance.



DS AUTOMOBILES



For more information **Click Here**

Representative PCP finance example: DS 7 1.5 blue HDI Automatic Performance Line +

VEHICLE OTR PRICE	DEPOSIT CONTRIBUTION	WINGROVE DISCOUNT	CUSTOMER DEPOSIT	47 MONTHLY PAYMENTS	TERM OF AGREEMENT
£40,230. <sup>00</sup>	£2750. <sup>00</sup>	£622. <sup>91</sup>	£3,499. <sup>00</sup>	£499. <sup>00</sup>	48 months
GUARANTEED FUTURE VALUE / OPTIONAL FINAL PAYMENT	TOTAL PAYABLE	MILEAGE ALLOWANCE	EXCESS MILEAGE COST	APR REPRESENTATIVE	
£16,032. <sup>00</sup>	£46,856. <sup>91</sup>	6,000	10.8p per mile	6.9%	

All rentals are subject to VAT at the current rate. We are credit brokers and not lender. Finance is subject to status and finance company acceptance. We can introduce you to a limited number of lenders and their finance products. We will typically receive a commission from the lender, as either a fixed fee or a fixed percentage on the amount you borrow. The commission we earn does not change by the type of finance, or the lender we introduce you to. A guarantee may be required. The finance rate will vary dependent of customer personal circumstances for in dealership purchases. Written details on request. Images for illustration purposes only.

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# BRITAIN'S BEST WINTER BREAKS FOR ELECTRIC DRIVERS REVEALED



York found to offer the best combination of accessibility, public charging options and electric car-friendly accommodation.

**Vauxhall has been doing some research. They reckon they've found the best winter breaks for anyone in the UK who owns or uses an electric car... and it's great to see that one is on our doorstep...York.**

They used the highly regarded Condé Nast Traveller research to find the 10 best winter getaways in Britain, comparing how many locations could be reached from the country's 15 most populous cities using the 209-mile range of something like their Vauxhall Mokka Electric.

The research took into account the number of public charging points within a 10-mile radius in each city, how many of them were rapid chargers with speeds in excess of 50kW, as well as the number of accommodation options which offered charging for electric car drivers.

York is within reach from 11 of the most populous cities in the UK using the 209-mile range of the Mokka Electric,

so it's a piece of cake from the North East. They say that York has 47 different public charging points, with 11 of them featuring rapid charging. York also has the highest number of accommodation options which offer charging for electric vehicles, with 21 different choices within 10 miles of the city centre.

Tied in second place are Lode in Cambridgeshire and Bath in Somerset. The Winter Garden in Lode has been designed with plants that thrive in the winter months, with the village within 209 miles of 12 of the most populous cities in the country. Visitors there have access to 36 public charging stations.

Drivers heading to Bath to enjoy the Roman ruins and bath houses, or to visit the thermal spas on a cold day, will have access to 28 charging points within a 10-mile radius of the city centre, of which four come with speeds above 50kW. The city is also within 209 miles from

10 of Britain's most populous cities. Bath also has 16 accommodation options

offering charging for electric drivers within a 10-mile distance from the city centre.

The remaining top 5 locations based on Vauxhall's research are: Woodstock in The

Cotswolds, Newquay in Cornwall, and Beaulieu in New Forest.

Bear in mind however, that in winter weather the electric car range will decrease due to colder weather.

We'd like to chuck the Lake District into the mix. Okay, no big cities, not many chargers, not many people during the winter, decent prices...but if you do a bit of planning, it's another great place to visit from our region.

And we can't believe that Edinburgh isn't on the list. Ah well....damned lies and statistics.

Enjoy...and drive safely.

# DITCH THE PLANE - TAKE THE CAR





An interesting bit of research has come out showing this summer has seen more people deciding to travel abroad by car. They've dumped the idea of getting onto an aeroplane.



it the shortest journey on the list. If you fancy seeing the French capital, it takes just under 3 hours and 30 minutes to get to Paris.

Here at AutOh!, one of our guys regularly travels to the Dordogne in South West France where some friends have a holiday cottage. He managed to do Sunderland to the Dordogne in 15 hours. Granted, the journey could not have been better...no delays on the M1, the M25 was flowing sweetly, there were no delays through the 'Chunnel', and the Paris Périphérique (the ring road, but we thought we'd show off with a bit of French) and the A10 / A71 / A20 Autoroutes were surprisingly quiet.

Portugal offers the longest drive, taking 18 hours and 26 minutes to reach from the Channel Tunnel.

Something the research points out is that you need to keep an eye on the weather. Short spells of hot and thundery weather regularly happen on the Continent and, yes, it gets hot. Sometimes, as we've seen this year, it becomes absolutely scorching.

Bright sunshine and high temperatures pose a challenge when driving, and with schools on holiday and more people on the road, drivers also need to navigate busier traffic during the day. There's also more pollen about... beware hay fever sufferers.

Oh...and buy a decent pair of sunglasses. They're worth it and reduce glare.

And don't forget to take a break. Have fun.

Okay, if you're travelling to somewhere like Spain or Italy, it's going to take longer, but there's no hanging around at airports, your baggage won't go missing, you won't need to hire a car when you get to your destination, and you certainly aren't restricted by how much you can cram into your suitcase. Bikes, tents, surfboards, paddleboards, skis...no problem.

And it can also be much easier for anyone who has mobility problems.

Although the journey takes longer, it allows you to take your time, enjoy the views, and why not include some stops in towns and villages along the way. Make your holiday into a bit of an experience... do some exploring.

It takes just 35 minutes to travel through the Channel Tunnel, transporting drivers from South Kent to Northern France. From there you can drive to the location of your choice.

France, no surprise, tops the list, making it the most popular destination for drivers from the UK. It takes just six hours and 48 minutes for example to drive from Calais to Central France, making



# LEXUS HAS THE X FACTOR.

The motoring landscape is changing as we drift towards electrification, but some manufacturers are already ahead of the game.



Like Lexus for example.

They've been involved in battery power since 2005 when they launched their first hybrid. The hybrid technology was so good that it enabled sizeable cars like the RX to achieve excellent mpg figures. The other advantage of hybrid power is that if you need some extra oomph, the battery powered electric motors can join the party.

You end up with a double whammy.... good economy and good performance.

However, Lexus have now gone the whole hog and introduced plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) and also fully electric powered cars.

And here are two of the best.

The RX and NX...both available with plug-in hybrid technology.

The beauty of PHEV plug-in hybrids is that you can charge the Lexus RX 450h and NX450h at home or at work and enjoy your daily commute without using any petrol. The RX in full electric mode will cover 43 miles. Lexus reckon you can crack the 200mpg barrier if you use the hybrid technology to its full extent and rarely use the 2.5 litre petrol engine. Okay, that figure is highly unlikely in real-world motoring, but it still means the RX will return decent economy while still being able to cover the 0-60 dash in 6.5 seconds. You can charge the battery from empty to full in around 3 hours using a typical domestic wallbox.

The Lexus RX range kicks off at £62,125... but you can slice around £17k off that total if you go for the Lexus NX. To be honest, the main difference between the RX and the NX is the size. The

NX is the smaller stablemate but just everything else is the same....top quality build, comfortable, good levels of safety equipment, burst proof reliability...

in fact, it's so good that What Car? magazine named the Lexus NX450h PHEV as their Best Plug-In Hybrid and it was named mid-size Premium SUV of the Year in the Auto Express New Car Awards for a second year in succession.

The electric-only range of 45 miles will cope with most daily commutes, but of

course the big advantage of the PHEV Lexus NX and RX is that you never have to worry about range anxiety. If you run out of battery power, the 2.5 litre petrol engine will keep you moving. The combined power of the engine and the electric motor comes to 306bhp which gives you a brisk 0-60 time of 6.3 seconds. You can also travel at up to 83mph on battery power only.

Sat nav, DAB radio, reversing camera, heated steering wheel, LED headlights, leather upholstery, powered and heated front seats, powered hatch and a cracking audio system all come as standard.

They've got the X factor.





# THERE'S AN ELECTRIFYING FUTURE AT NISSAN

## Nissan give you some electric options

As you probably know, January 1st 2030 will mean you can no longer buy a car powered solely by petrol or diesel. Some hybrids get a stay of execution until 2035.

So, Nissan has anticipated this by launching new models and updating others to give you plenty of power options.

And the good news is that Lookers Nissan will always have a selection that you can take for a test drive and see which one suits your needs and driving style.

Every model in the Nissan range now features some sort of electrification...the Ariya and the Nissan LEAF are currently their 100% electric models, but more are in the pipeline.



The Nissan Ariya is a super-stylish, all-electric large SUV which is similar in size to the popular X-Trail...more about that one shortly. It's been getting rave reviews. Auto Express gave the Ariya their Car of the Year gong.

Quite right too. We tested one a few weeks ago and it marks a hint of the future for Nissan. It looks fabulous and there's a premium feel to the interior. Depending on which model you go for you can get up to 329 miles on a single charge. If you need a top-up, the Ariya will add a further 217 miles in about 30 minutes via a rapid charger. There's even an all-wheel drive model.

Prices start at £46,145 which is very competitive bearing in mind the size and high level of standard specification.

The X-Trail (from £32,890) we mentioned earlier is aimed at anyone who fancies a bit of an adventure. Two versions are available but both have the same 1.5 litre petrol engine under the bonnet.

The hybrid version has an electric motor which helps the engine, but you can also go for e-Power which is where an electric motor drives the wheels while the engine operates as a generator. We loved the e-Power X Trail because it drives much like an electric car...but you need never worry about battery range because the engine will keep the battery on song. You can even opt for the all-wheel drive model which has an additional electric motor driving the rear wheels.

Elsewhere in the Nissan range, the recently updated Qashqai and Juke now have hybrid power. It's also great to report that the Sunderland-built Qashqai was recently named Britain's most reliable car by the Which? consumer group. Praise indeed.

And finally, there's the car which really started the electric revolution in this country...the Nissan LEAF. With prices starting at £28,495 it is still one of the most attractive electric buys in the UK.

Nissan...it's electrifying.



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# THE RENAULTUTION IS UNDERWAY

## Flurry of new models cross the Channel

One of the main goals of Renault's strategic plan... they call it the Renaultution... is to introduce models which will steadily replace petrol and diesel driven versions of the same or similar cars in their range.

This is to prepare for 2030 when the UK Government...and a lot of others around Europe...force the sale of new normally aspirated cars to end.

Consequently, Renault is providing options...all electric or the halfway house of choosing a hybrid which will sort of prepare you for the full switch.

So, let's look at your potential choices.

One of the best...and latest...is the Renault Austral which, in effect, replaces the Kadjar. It is only available with hybrid power. There's a 1.2 litre petrol engine under the bonnet and a self-charging battery-driven electric motor which, when added together gives you an output of 198bhp. Renault reckon you'll crack 60mpg, but of course if you can use the hybrid system to its

full extent...you can trundle around town using only battery power. In fact, Renault reckon the Austral SUV is likely to spend around 80 per cent of its time in slow traffic.

Three versions are on offer...Techno, Techno Esprit Alpine and Iconic Esprit Alpine. Prices start at £34,695. There's a quality feel to the interior and you get plenty of kit as standard. The 12.3-inch digital dash, 12-inch touchscreen and head-up display are terrific.

If you fancy a smaller SUV, check out the Renault Arkana. Again, you get full hybrid power with a 1.6 litre petrol engine and battery-driven electric motor developing 143bhp which will also get you close to 60mpg and let you manage 0-60mph in a shade over 10 seconds.

Prices start at £28,395 which is seriously competitive.

One of our favourite cars in the entire Renault range is the all-electric Megane. It looks great and is terrific to drive. You can manage close to 300 miles on a full charge. The 215bhp electric motor which drives the front wheels, gives you good



performance. Make use of the power and your range will drop, but the 0-60 time of 7.5 seconds is very tempting!

It's well equipped and extremely comfortable, and rates as one of our favourite all-electric cars.

Elsewhere, the Renault range delivers. Captur, Clio and Zoe continue to be hugely popular...and if you like the look of the new Austral but would fancy an even larger SUV, then hang on because the all new Renault Rafale is in the pipeline.

The Renaultution is well and truly underway.





# THIS IS KONA BE GOOD

## It's already the Auto Express Car of the Year

Oh, and it was also named as best Small Company Car and best Small SUV.

Wow...not bad for a brand new model and comes hot on the heels of the Hyundai Ioniq 5 winning the top gong in 2021.



The judges praised the KONA for its design, spaciousness and electrified options. Steve Fowler, editor of Auto Express said..."We've been blown away by the KONA, which is now a much more mature and spacious package in a number of electrified flavours. It's a great looking car that will be easy to live with and cost-effective to own – a brilliant family SUV."

Praise indeed.

There are four trims available...Advance,



N Line, N Line S and Ultimate. It's interesting to note that a lot of cars are designed for a petrol / diesel engine and then adapted for an electric conversion. Hyundai engineered the new Kona in the opposite direction. It is designed from the outset to be all-electric but can also cope with 'normal' power under the bonnet.

Which means, depending on trim, you can choose from a mixture of 1.0 litre and 1.6 litre petrol engines. The 1.6 is also available as a hybrid. The all-electric Kona arrives shortly, promising a range of 223 miles.

The all-new, second generation Hyundai Kona is available now with prices starting from £25,725. We've driven it... and it's terrific.



For more information [Click Here](#)

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**HYUNDAI**

Fuel Consumption figures for the Hyundai Kona 1.6 GDi Hybrid Advance 5dr DCT Hybrid Hatchback: 60mpg combined, 106 CO2 g/km. 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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# HYDROGEN. IS IT THE FUTURE FOR CARS?

## As the race continues for all cars to be battery powered, is hydrogen an alternative?

We're sure that you're getting bored of hearing this, but January 1st 2030 signifies the death of conventional petrol and diesel new car sales. The UK Government...along with loads of other countries...is forcing us to buy electric. Some hybrids get a stay of execution until 2035.

All of which means that you may as well get used to planning ahead to make sure you have sufficient charge in the car's battery to reach your destination or reach a charging station. If you are travelling a long distance, you will have to build in additional time to complete your journey for the simple reason that you'll be stopping to recharge the battery.

But wouldn't it be handy if we could simply call into the equivalent of a petrol station, fill the tank, and resume our journey, just like the majority of folk still do in the world of cars.

There is a solution. It's called hydrogen. And the good news is that although

we've seen car manufacturers dabble with hydrogen power, there now seems to be a bit of impetus building in making this new technology suitable for the mass-market.

Toyota and Hyundai have previously been involved in building a tiny number of hydrogen cars, (the Toyota Mirai and Hyundai Nexa) but BMW is now flexing its muscles and dipping a toe into the idea of hydrogen power.

They've launched a fleet of around 100 BMW iX5 Hydrogen cars which will be employed for demonstration and trial purposes for various target groups.

The key thing to point out here is that hydrogen doesn't actually power the car like petrol or diesel. To keep things simple and without delving into chemistry, the best way to think of this is that hydrogen flows from a tank, mixes with oxygen taken from the outside air and hits a series of fuel cells which convert the gases into electricity. The electricity then either powers the car's electric motor directly or goes into a



battery. Power then transfers from the battery to the motor.

The only emissions will be water vapour from the 'exhaust' pipe.

BMW reckon it'll take only 3-4 minutes to fill the hydrogen tank. The iX5 Hydrogen model you see here has a range of 313 miles, can hit 60mph in 6 seconds and go on to 112mph. Power equates to around 400bhp.

So, the technology is being developed... we'll need to see more hydrogen filling stations (there are currently only 16 across the UK)...but it's encouraging to read that at least there is an alternative to electric power as we know it. Time will tell if the motoring world goes for it.

# WE'RE GOING TO NEED A BIGGER TROPHY CABINET

MG picks up awards like confetti.

For more information

**Click Here**



The last two years have been nothing short of incredible for MG. It's hard to keep track of the number of awards they've been receiving.



The latest is for the MG4 EV which was recently named UK Car of the Year. It was described by judges as 'a landmark moment for EVs', 'the perfect car for our times', and 'the car several other manufacturers will wish they had built'.

So, don't take our word for it when we say this is a brilliant car...some of the country's top motoring hacks reckon the all-electric MG4 hatchback is the best new car on sale in the UK today.

The UK Car of the Year title is the fifteenth major award achieved by the MG4 EV in the last six months. Incredible.

The model has also received recognition from Euro NCAP, achieving the maximum five-star safety.

Here are the all-important figures. The entry level MG4 EV will give you 218 miles on a full charge. The Long Range model reaches 281 miles while the Extended Range model ramps that up to 323 miles. If you want to frighten the life out of some vastly expensive performance cars, go for the MG4 XPower which hits 60mph in 3.8 seconds. Blimey.

Prices start at £26,995 which is seriously competitive.

Another model attracting a stack of praise is the MG HS SUV. It's recently been given a refresh...and the good news is that the latest model is the same price as the one it replaces kicking off at £23,495.

There are design upgrades to the front and rear, two new specification levels called SE and Trophy featuring new



bi-function LED headlights, twin exhaust outlets and really smart 18" diamond cut wheels. Every MG HS comes with air con, sat nav, rear parking camera with sensors, keyless entry and a leather trim to the steering wheel.

Power comes from 1.5-litre, turbocharged petrol engine with a manual gearbox although you can opt for an auto 'box.

Elsewhere in the range, if you are ultra-cost conscious, go for the MG3 (from £13,820)...if you fancy a compact electric SUV then you'll love the MG ZS EV (from 30,495)...or how about an all-electric estate with the MG5 EV (from £30,995).

One thing is certain, with the MG4 collecting a haul of awards so far this year, you can bet that the company will have some more in their trophy cabinet by the end of the year.

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# FORD RANGE CONTINUES TO EVOLVE

## Something for everyone at Ford

The beauty of being a company as large as Ford is that they can have one of the largest ranges of any manufacturer. It continues to evolve so it really is a case of keeping up with the changes.

One of the latest new vehicles to break cover is the new Ford Ranger which rates as Europe's best-selling pick-up. It's also finding a whole new market of buyers because the Ranger is so refined that it is now seen as an alternative 'lifestyle' vehicle. In other words, ditch the car and use a Ranger pick-up.

And don't forget, if you are VAT registered, the Ranger is doubly attractive because it's classed as a commercial vehicle. You can buy it ex-VAT. Another boost is that along with the normal 202bhp 2.0 litre diesel engine which you can get in the other Rangers, the Ranger Raptor is available with a stonking 288bhp 3.0 litre V6. It's an exhilarating vehicle to drive.

Of course, the Ranger is built to do a job. It can tow 3.5 tonnes and carry 1.2

tonnes. All-wheel drive means you can also travel on some tricky terrain.

It really is the sort of pick-up which can carry a bale of hay in the morning and go to the theatre in the evening. Prices for the Ford Ranger start at £28,275 (ex VAT).

The 3.0 litre Raptor is typical of Ford's sporting heritage. Another example is the Ford Puma ST.

The Puma ST takes a load of its oily bits from the Fiesta ST which rates as one of the best hot hatches around.

Some of you will remember that the Ford Puma used to be a funky coupé, but now it's a small SUV. We love it. It looks good, drives really well, is quick when you go for the ST, yet works perfectly as a family holdall.



Power in the ST comes from a 1.5 litre petrol engine which drives the front wheels via a 6-speed manual 'box'. The suspension has been beefed-up when compared to other Pumas, the steering is sharp and the anti-roll bars have been tweaked. Despite being quite a lofty car, it feels really well grounded. Fun too.

And with prices starting at £31,070 we think it's a bit of a bargain.

Lastly, did you know that last year, the best-selling vehicle in the UK was a van?

The Ford Transit Custom. Oh...and it was top seller in 2021 as well.

42,762 Ford Transit Custom vans were sold, which is more than double that of its closest competitor.

The beauty of the Transit is that you can get one which suits the role you need it for. You can choose the length, height and payload. You can choose from an extensive list of options to make it look and drive exactly how you want. Okay, its important job is to carry a load, but the Ford Transit is also good to drive around town or over long distances. It's super-reliable too.

It's not some sort of fluke that the Ford Transit Custom is so popular. It really is that good.

Just like the Ford Ranger and Ford Puma ST.





# SUZUKI S-CROSS IS A HYBRID SUCCESS

## NEW FULL HYBRID ADDS S-CROSS APPEAL

The Suzuki S-Cross is one of the most versatile SUVs around...and it's one that people often don't consider. Pity, because they don't know what they're missing.

It's extremely easy to live with, good to drive, reliable and you now get a choice of power outputs with the arrival of a new 1.5 litre full hybrid.

The entry level S-Cross comes with a 1.4 litre mild hybrid engine which drives the front wheels through a 6-speed manual gearbox. The battery-driven electric motor gives the engine some added oomph. 0-60 takes a shade over 9 seconds. Economy is an impressive 53.2mpg. There's even an option to go for ALL-GRIP all-wheel drive which gets an auto 'box. This only bumps-up



the price by around £4800...it's worth looking at if you live out in the sticks.

The 1.5 litre full hybrid gets an automatic gearbox and slightly improved fuel economy.

In terms of equipment, every Suzuki

S-Cross is well equipped. Suzuki keeps things nice and simple with just two levels of trim...Motion and Ultra...but even Motion gives you a reversing camera, front and rear parking sensors, air con, powered windows all-round, powered / folding mirrors, heated front seats, DAB radio, roof rails and a smart touchscreen with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay. Not much else you need really.

Prices for the Suzuki S-Cross start at £26,099...and if you're reading this before the end of September 2023 you get two years free servicing.

Go and have a test drive. You'll discover why Suzuki has one of the highest levels of customer retention. Once you've got one...you love them.

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# TOYOTA PLAYS THE NUMBERS GAME..... AND WINS.



The GR86 is a  
firecracker of a car.

The Toyota GR86 takes over from the GT86. The difference is the subtle alteration to the name. The GR initials are significant because this means the car has been sorted by Gazoo Racing. They're hugely successful in the World Rally Championship... they're the reigning champions.



It's also interesting that Toyota wants to maintain some serious fun factor in these GR cars, which explains why you'll find a manual gearbox. An auto is available but you'd be strongly recommended to stick with a stick.

Toyota has gone down the route of building of what could easily be called a simple, old-school, front engine - rear wheel drive sports car. There's even a manual handbrake which is great for locking the rear wheels on a snowy road and letting you do a handbrake turn into your driveway.

When compared to the Toyota GT86, the GR86 has seen more power teased from the engine which climbs from 2.0 litres to 2.4 litres and shaves a second off the 0-60 time which now sits at 6.3 seconds. It's much more relaxing to drive than its predecessor. Economy will be in the region of mid 30s mpg.

The sound the engine makes is one of the great characteristics of this car because it's a Subaru boxer engine. It's very distinctive.

The GR86 looks better than the GT86. The problem with the GT version was that the tyres looked skinny. Well,

thankfully, Toyota has fixed that and now provides 18-inch boots. They fill the wheel arches....it makes the car look more purposeful.

The driving thrill is spot on. The steering is perfectly weighted....the 6-speed gearbox has a lovely action (which is handy because you'll be using it a lot), you have a low-slung centre of gravity which makes the car feel rock-solid on the road.

The interior is a typical sports car 2+2 layout. The front seats are supportive and comfy while the rear seats are really only handy for chucking coats or some soft overnight bags.

In terms of kit, you get loads of safety gadgets plus the vital stuff like sat nav, climate control, reversing camera and parking sensors.

There's no doubting that the Toyota GR86 is one of the finest driving cars ever built. It's wonderful.

This could be the car which makes you want to get up on a Sunday morning and just go out for a drive for the Hell of it. The Toyota GR86 really is that good. It's a future classic.



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