

GOOD MOTORING

The magazine for members of GEM Motoring Assist

Sunshine summer

Everything you need to make the most of your holidays and free time

Congratulations, Your Majesty!

We celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with a special eight-page automotive tribute

Also in this edition...

- **Competition**
Win a two-night break in York
- **Terry Cook's reflections**
How to be a better driver
- **Second-hand electrics**
Grab a bargain, avoid the traps

A black convertible car is parked in a field of yellow flowers. The car is the central focus, with its top down. The background is a bright, sunny day with a blue sky and green grass. The foreground is filled with out-of-focus yellow flowers.

Summer 2022

A warm welcome to the Summer edition of *Good Motoring!*



Welcome to a very special edition of Good Motoring as we join well-wishers from across the world to congratulate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth on her Platinum Jubilee. As the Prince of Wales said in a special message published earlier this year, “the Queen’s devotion to the welfare of all her people inspires still greater admiration with each passing year.”

The year brings an opportunity for everyone to celebrate the service of the Queen during her 70-year reign, and allows us as a motoring and road safety organisation with a proud 90-year heritage to share some appropriate words and pictures in our own tribute to her remarkable achievements. With this in mind, there is a special eight-page central section of this edition, where we learn about some of the cars owned and driven by the Queen - and get an insider’s perspective on what it’s like to ride as a motorcycle escort for Her Majesty.

Of course, we continue our own 90th birthday celebrations, so do check to see if you might have received a golden ticket with this magazine. Over the course of the year we are slipping a total of 90 tickets into the magazine, each one entitling the lucky recipient to a £10 voucher for use at Starbucks, Costa or Caffè Nero.

Have you noticed how much busier the roads have become in recent weeks? Perhaps we have all become used to the Covid restrictions that were in place for so long – and more of us are gaining confidence to get out and about. As you know, our priority is to provide the highest possible levels of service should you experience a breakdown and find yourself in need of assistance. But what we are also keen to do is share some simple tips – for you and for your car – that will hopefully ensure your journeys this summer will be trouble free. Our holiday planning feature includes advice on parking, journey planning, safer sharing and reducing stress. What’s not to like?!

The Spring edition certainly sparked a lot of correspondence, particularly relating to electric vehicles, driver health and Highway Code updates. Unfortunately there is not room for everyone’s comment, but rest assured we do read every letter and email – and we have allocated an extra page in this edition in order to include as many contributions as we can.

Make sure you get your entry in for our fabulous short-break competition. You and a companion could find yourselves heading to luxurious Middlethorpe Hall in York for two nights, with wonderful opportunities to explore the medieval city using your own complimentary two-day passes... and relaxing at the end of a busy day with a pair of spa treatments and a memorable dinner.

From all of us at GEM, may I thank you for your continued loyalty as a member.

Neil Worth, Chief Executive

GOOD MOTORING is the magazine for members of GEM Motoring Assist.

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Rethinking mobility



We're sending [Neil Barrett](#) to a number of destinations over the course of 2022 to see how cities are adapting to new mobility opportunities. For this edition he has been in and around Bristol

SINCE MY first visit in this series - to Oxford - there's an added urgency in the push towards embracing future mobility. Fuel prices are at an all-time high, with just a small cut in fuel duty trying to soften the blow.

So, here goes: from one university city to another. For this second visit in the series I drove to Bristol. Being in another place with a student population, I was interested to see how well modern mobility had been embraced by Bristolians, temporary and permanent, young and not so young. This was a two-day trip, with the first afternoon of day one spent exploring the area around my city centre hotel, on foot and on two wheels.

A number of e-scooter hire pilots have been extended across the country in recent months, both time-wise and geographically. It looks like these legal schemes are here to stay, although

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I was pleased to be welcomed by the familiar sight of the orange Voi e-scooters...

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the debate rages on when it comes to safety. A reminder: the sign-up process is more in-depth with these UK trials than in many other countries. Here, your account is linked to your driving licence, with an identity check to prove you haven't borrowed someone else's.

E-SCOOTER

I was pleased to be welcomed by the familiar sight of the orange Voi e-scooters, last used in Oxford. I had already downloaded and activated their app, so the process of getting started was quick and simple.

There were plenty of scooters parked in clusters around the city centre. This didn't seem to be because of a lack of interest; I saw lots in use at every turn, with individuals and groups of various ages riding confidently – almost always on the road. Bristol's scheme has a large coverage area.



This city was ahead of the curve on these schemes. It has had dockless bike hire for many years, with YoBike choosing the city as its UK launch location back in 2017. This was not a surprising choice given the cycling culture. However, the scheme suffered from many problems including persistent theft and vandalism, with wheels and entire bikes disappearing on a regular basis. Judging by the lack of website and inactive social media feeds, YoBike seems to have left the UK market completely.

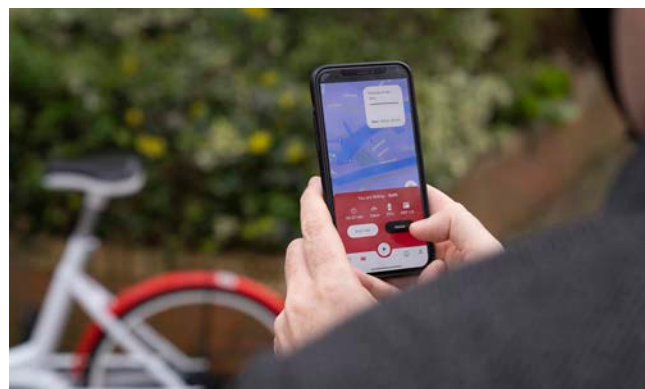
There are some smaller-scale manual bike hire schemes now in place, one of which includes Brompton folding bikes. YoBike’s ubiquity hasn’t yet been replicated, which could be a good or bad thing depending on your viewpoint.

THE BIG ISSUE

Never fear: the e-bike revolution is here – and this reboot is powered by an unlikely entrant into the market: The Big Issue. The well-known charity helping the homeless and unemployed is supporting people to get back into work, paying

them a living wage to help run the scheme. It’s a worthy initiative and the tech is being provided by Norwegian firm ShareBike.

The dedicated app offers two “ride plans”: a subscription at £19.95 per month (including the first 10 minutes of every ride) and a pay-as-you-go option with a 50p unlock fee and 20p per minute riding charge. Not being a local, I opted for the latter.



The bikes themselves look good, with white and red Big Issue colouring and a robust frame. I was impressed by the quality of the cycles; a nice touch is that they all have a name. My ride was on Albert, around the shopping quarter and parts of the main roads, including a central section of the A38. The ride was smooth, assisted almost straight away when the motor kicked in. After picking up some speed I was ready to change gear. But I realised shortly afterwards that these are fixed-gear bikes and there can be no changes.

CYCLE LANES

What of infrastructure? There were plenty of pick-up points and bike racks. That’s encouraging but it’s not as important as the safety features on the road. On my first day of riding, I couldn’t see any protected cycle lanes. Main roads relied on simple paintwork marking the cycle paths, and even these were intermittent.

BEYOND THE CITY

My second day gave me the opportunity to venture a little bit further afield, using the car. Bristol is planning to bring in a Clean Air Zone scheme later this year, in part due to pressure from the UK government. This pressure was also heaped on Manchester, however their zone is currently under review at a late stage; the signs are already up. Bristol, however, is not showing any signs of backtracking, so I’ll be scoring it based on its scheme going ahead on schedule. >>

Pics: Hamish Beeston



>> Our photographer Hamish was also my guide, helping me head for some more residential parts of Bristol. Our first stop of the morning was The Grove Pay and Display car park, near to Queen Square, on a sort of inner-city peninsula with bridges galore. The first job was to park and charge. The car park is sandwiched between the road and the canal. It is long, thin and in sections. In my hunt for a charging station I completed a couple of loops around the first section and some more around the second. There was no sign of the promised local authority-supported EV charger.

But then, tucked away at the side of one of the buildings, I spotted a two-space non-rapid charger. These are a “bring your own cable” affair, with a choice between app-based and smartcard activation. Although the local network is branded as Revive, it is also linked in with the GeniePoint network. This meant I could use the app and some of the top-up credit I had loaded onto the account on a previous trip. Parking charges apply here too, so it was off to the RingGo app to do that bit. All of that worked first time.

THE LOCKED BIKE

The first attempt to ride a Big Issue bike didn't go well. It just wouldn't unlock. The app told me it was ready to ride but the bike wasn't having it. Either the lock had jammed or the last user had parked in a no-go area.

Never mind – I wasn't deterred. Actually, it was quite fortuitous. During the pause where Hamish and I were thinking about where to find another nearby e-bike, we spotted some great examples of protected cycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

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No sign of the promised local authority-supported EV charger...
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Parts of the old bridge next to us were reserved exclusively for those on bikes and on foot; the bollards protecting the adjacent cycle route were of the hardened concrete type you would not want to mess with.

We found another bike on a nearby housing estate, which worked flawlessly. A quick battery-boosted waterside trip showed off the sights of the city as well as the quality of the ride.

Finally, we popped over to Clifton village. Although the quantity of e-scooters has dropped recently due to residents' concerns, there were plenty available. What better way to finish than a picturesque ride on über-modern tech with Bristol's historic bridge as the backdrop? ■



Neil's summary and score out of 100:



Br stoli s mak ng a clear statement of intent with plenty of bike and e-scooter options and plans to reduce the amount of polluting vehicles in the city centre. It would be good to see more protected infrastructure for vulnerable road users, as well as wider coverage for local authority supported app-based EV charging for those who need to get around on four wheels. Overall: a work in progress which seems to be accelerating in pace.

Online information to help plan journeys	8
EV charger convenience (location, number and reliability)	6
App-based ride hailing	8
App-based bike provision	3
App-based e-scooter provision	10
App-based e-bike provision	9
Cycle/scooter infrastructure (e.g. dedicated lanes)	6
Low/zero emission zone or clean air zone	7
Connected mobility (Park & Ride, transport hubs)	7
Walking routes / pedestrianisation	6
TOTAL SCORE:	70

Have a stress-free holiday journey



Check out our top tips for steering clear of trouble

Looks familiar...

Plan your route and journey so that you avoid spending hours in traffic. Of course, unexpected delays can always happen, but why not consider leaving at a different time of day when it could be quieter? Do you know areas where roadworks cause daily problems? Is there an alternative route or could you go cross country and enjoy some rural scenery? There are lots of route planning options as well as good old paper maps; try Google Maps and even Google Streetview. This is particularly helpful if you are not sure of your precise destination, as you can get a clear picture of any turnings, entrances or car parks. You can 'drive' the virtual journey in the comfort of your own home to familiarise yourself with your destination.



Hydration for concentration

Dehydration is about more than being thirsty. It's likely to have a negative effect on your ability to concentrate - particularly in hot weather. In tests conducted by Loughborough University back in 2015 it was found that people who were dehydrated and driving committed the same number of errors as those who had consumed two alcoholic drinks. So throughout the journey make sure you keep up your water intake. So don't wait until you're thirsty... schedule rehydration stops for yourself, your passengers and any pets who might be with you. Also, keep a decent supply of fresh water available in the car.

It pays to park smart

When travelling to unfamiliar destinations, do you know where the car parks will be and how much it will cost to use them? There are websites that can give you exact car park locations, as well as how many spaces are available and the hours of operation. Try searching for 'car parks in...' and a list should appear for that town or area. Have a couple of options written down as one may be full when you arrive. Book in advance if you're sure of your schedule. Keep a few coins in the car as some still do not take card payments. Before you leave your car, make a note of the location (of the car *and* the car park) so you won't waste time trying to find it later.



FLOWERY checks

Fuel: Do you have enough fuel? If you have an electric or plug-in hybrid car, is it fully charged?

Lights: Take a walk round the car to ensure they're all working. Check fog lights and reversing lights too. Get someone to help or use a reflection.

Oil: Use the car's dipstick to check oil level. Make sure you're on a flat, level surface, when the engine is cold. Some newer cars have an electronic gauge so you won't find a dipstick. If in doubt, consult the manual.

Water: Make sure you top up the windscreen washer fluid. Adding some screenwash is a good idea.

Electrics: Check all the controls and make sure there are no unexpected dashboard warning lights illuminated.

Rubber: Walk round and inspect the tyres for inflation, tread depth and damage. The minimum legal tread is 1.6mm but you should look for more than this to ensure good contact with the road. New tyres can have up to 10mm. The tread displaces water and gives good grip so the less tread you have, the more chance your car has of aquaplaning in wet weather and taking much longer to stop. Check the tyre pressures when cold with a reliable gauge, either at home or at a garage. The correct pressures can be found in the handbook, on the door frame or sometimes on the inside of the fuel cap and can vary depending on the load such as more passengers or heavy suitcases.

You: Are you well rested before a long journey? Do you feel safe to drive? Have you taken any medication that may affect safe driving or had a drink the night before? If you have any doubts, reschedule the journey or ask someone else to drive.



Car checker

A different 'COAST' to explore

Another neat little acronym to keep you and others safe.

Concentrate by minimising distractions and focusing on the driving task. This will ensure that you **O**bserve what is going on ahead and all around. By looking and scanning into the far distance, through to the close-up and back out again, you will see hazards more quickly, meaning you can **A**nticipate hazards earlier and avoid harsh, sudden and late reactions. Keep a good distance from the vehicle in front maintaining at least a 2 second gap in dry conditions and 4 seconds on a wet road. Give plenty of **S**pace when overtaking. The Highway Code says the minimum distance should be a gap of at least 1.5 metres when passing cyclists and 2 metres for horses and riders. By bringing in these simple elements into your driving you will give yourself **T**ime to think and plan. Nothing should then happen 'all of a sudden' and it will be a safer, smoother and much more eco-friendly road journey.



Space maker



Time saver

Get tech savvy to beat the jams

Update your satnav to ensure the information on new roads and speed limits is current. Your device may allow you to subscribe to traffic alerts, giving you alternative route options should something unexpected happen on the journey. While you're at it, sign up to free traffic alerts through text or email. The National Highways system will notify you of any road closures, either regionally or nationally, depending on the preferences you select.

SUMMER

ON THE ROAD



The cost of living crisis is hitting many drivers hard. The sky-high price of fuel is the most obvious way in which motorists are feeling the pinch.

No wonder so many buyers are switching to electric cars, with more EVs sold in March alone than in the whole of 2019. The trouble is, new electric cars may be cheap to run, but they're expensive to buy.

The answer could be to shop for a used EV. Al Suttie has advice for first-time electric car buyers on page 54. Is the time right to make the switch? We can help you decide.

David Motton

ROAD TESTS

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What is it?

Mazda has updated the CX-5 family SUV. It's the largest of Mazda's SUV range, at least until the new CX-60 arrives in showrooms this autumn.

Environmental credentials?

There's no all-electric or hybrid model,

but the petrol and diesel engines are competitive in terms of emissions and fuel economy.

Who should buy it?

If a conventional engine suits your driving, then the CX-5 is practical, well equipped and fun to drive.

Mazda CX-5

Driving and performance

The CX-5 has always been one of the sharpest-driving family SUVs, and the latest round of updates keep the car close to the top of the class.

Changes to the suspension have made the ride more comfortable, without compromising the Mazda's agility. It's still right up with the BMW X1 and Seat Ateca for driver appeal. There's less road noise than before, which makes the CX-5 a relaxing car to drive on long journeys.

Another change is the introduction of Mazda Intelligent Drive select (Mi-Drive) on petrol automatic models. This gives drivers the choice of Normal and Sport modes, as well as an Off-Road mode for certain specifications.

Buyers have a choice of two petrol and two diesel engines. The most affordable model in the range is the 165hp 2.0-litre petrol. However, it's short on mid-range muscle and needs to be revved hard to build speed quickly. The 194hp petrol engine makes the Mazda much faster, but it's only available on the top specification level with four-wheel drive, so it's

expensive to buy and run.

Although out of fashion with most buyers, we preferred driving the diesels. Take your pick from 150hp or 184hp engines. For most circumstances, the 150hp version is all you need. The difference in performance isn't as great as you might expect, as the less powerful diesel still had plenty of punch for confident overtaking.

It's only available with two-wheel drive, however, so if you live out in the sticks or want to tow a caravan or horsebox the 184hp version could be worth the extra.



Space/practicality

When a car drives this well, the driver's seat is where you want to be, and there's a wide range of adjustment to the seat and wheel to suit short and tall drivers. Lumbar support is standard on all versions - a big plus if you suffer from a bad back.

Mazda has resisted the trend to do away with physical buttons in favour of touch-sensitive pads, and the dashboard is all the better for it. It makes it very easy to adjust the air-con or turn on the rear demister without taking your eyes from the road for long.

Adults can get comfortable in the back, although there's not quite as much legroom as you would find in a Honda CR-V. Boot space is in line with expectations for a car of this size, with 522 litres (dropping to 510 litres for diesel models). You can fold the back seats down in three parts if more room is needed.

Safety

The pre-facelift CX-5 scored five stars out of five from the safety experts at Euro NCAP. We've no reason to think the latest version would perform differently. Autonomous emergency braking is standard on all models, as is a lane-keeping system that steers the car back to the centre of the lane if the car drifts out without indicating. Blind spot monitoring is also fitted to every version of the CX-5.

Equipment

Mazda is known for being generous with kit levels, even on entry-level models. The most basic SE-L cars have 17-inch alloy wheels, rain-sensing wipers, an auto-dimming rear-view mirror, Bluetooth connectivity, and a DAB radio with six speakers. Newground spec has extra equipment and lime green highlights, while Sport models have a power-operated tailgate, a reversing camera, part-leather seats and more. Top-spec GT Sport models have Napa leather seats and heated outer rear seats.

Costs

Prices start from £28,175 for the 165hp petrol in SE-L spec. Without a plug-in hybrid model, there's no headline-grabbing fuel economy figure to boast about. The 150hp 2WD diesel manual has a respectable combined figure of 50.4mpg. The most efficient petrol model achieves 41.5mpg in the official tests.

Infotainment and connectivity

The Mazda Connect infotainment system has a large 10.25-inch colour screen, mounted high on the dash where it's easy to see. A rotary controller, not dissimilar to BMW's iDrive, is mounted between the driver and front passenger seats. It makes it easy to scroll through the on-screen menus with minimal distraction. We found the system responsive and easy to use. Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are both standard features.

For/against

- ✓ Lots of fun to drive
- ✓ Generously equipped
- ✓ Diesels offer good economy and performance
- ✗ Rear space is limited
- ✗ Lacks a hybrid model
- ✗ Entry level petrol needs plenty of revs

The numbers...

Price:	£32,220
Performance:	0-62mph in 9.9 secs
Economy:	50.4 mpg
Insurance:	22E
Tax:	£220/£155

Figures for the 2.2 Skyactive-D 150PS 2WD Sport manual.

Best deals

A personal contract hire deal over four years and 8,000 miles per annum from RRG Contract Hire comes out at £324 per month. Up front deposit is £1,949 plus £238 in admin fees, with a total cost of £17,459.

What will it be worth?

After four years and 40,000 miles, reckon on a Mazda CX-5 retaining 52% of its original list price.



Review: David Motton

AT A GLANCE

Price range:	£28,175	£39,435
Seats	5	
Manual/ auto	Both	
Hybrid	No	
Pure electric	No	



WE SAY: The Mazda CX-5 remains one of the best family SUVs around.

BRANDS ON THE UP

KIA is the fastest growing car brand in Great Britain, new research has revealed. The study, carried out by CarInsurance.ae, used Department for Transport data for all licensed and registered cars of 26 manufacturers to analyse how many of each were on the road in 2010 compared with 2020.

Growth

The study showed that Kia has seen the most growth, with registered cars rising from 300,500 in 2010 to 869,500 in 2020 – an increase of 189%. Mini comes in second place with a 127% increase from 346,600 in 2010 to 786,800 in 2020.

In third place is Hyundai, another brand from South Korea. The firm had 852,400 registered cars in 2020, from just 382,200 in 2010, giving it an increase of 123%. Skoda is now in fourth, rising 102% from 383,600 cars in 2010 to 774,300 in 2020. Audi takes fifth with a 92% rise from 874,900 in 2010 to more than 1.6 million in 2020.



DRIVING HOLIDAYS... OOH LA LA!

Get ready, set and go on an unforgettable journey with Ultimate Driving Tours for an ultra-luxe driving experience in France this summer. Take in stunning scenery whilst travelling in the most luxurious way, by supercar.

The organisers claim each experience celebrates a passion for motoring and an appreciation for the finer things in life.

Whether you fancy a relaxed five-day self-guided driving holiday on the Cote d'Azur, or a guided small-group tour of Provence, there are offerings for all interests. The self-guided driving holiday through the French Riviera and Provence offers the opportunity to explore the diverse landscapes of the Cote d'Azur and Provence.

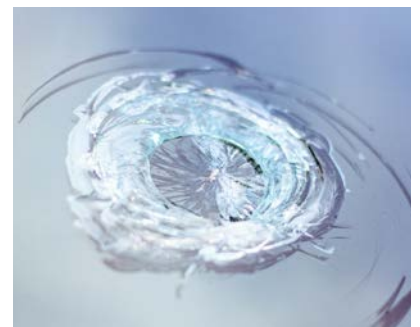
Self-Drive Holidays start from £4,990 per person for four nights, including hotel. Check out ultimatedrivingtours.com or call 0800 098 8175.

CHECK FOR CHIPS

A FREEDOM of information request submitted to the Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) by Autoglass has found that more than 40,000 vehicles failed their MOT test in 2021 due to a chipped, cracked or damaged windscreen. That's an eight per cent increase on 2020.

According to Autoglass research, one in four drivers is unaware that windscreen glass integrity is included in an MOT check. A car will fail an MOT if the windscreen is chipped or cracked, with the maximum damage size for a chip 10mm in the driver's line of vision, or 40mm elsewhere.

The research also found that loose debris on the road was the most common cause of a chipped or cracked windscreen, with 38% of drivers who experienced damage stating pebbles or road chippings were to blame.



AUTOMOTIVE UPDATE

GOING NOWHERE

ENGLAND'S WORST major road for delays is the A2270 in Eastbourne as revealed by new research from the Department for Transport. The A2270 racks up 196.5 seconds in average delays for every mile driven. You might also want to avoid the A335 in Southampton and parts of the A57, which clock up more than 90 seconds per vehicle per mile (SPVPM).

Apparently Londoners are most likely to be frustrated by delays of up to 342 SPVPM.

Only 12 roads of the more than 2,000 more minor A-roads monitored had less than 10 SPVPM waits.

CURRENT BEST AND WORST: WHO'S LEADING THE CHARGE?

A NEW study has revealed that Milton Keynes is the best area in the UK to own an electric car. The study, by CarGuide.co.uk, analysed the number of electric car charging points on ZapMap and ONS data to establish which area in the UK with a population of more than 100,000, has the highest number of charging points per 100,000 population. The data found that Milton Keynes is the area in the UK with the highest number of charging points per 100,000 people, at 137.3.

The area also boasts the highest number of rapid charging devices at 121. The second-best area in the UK to own an electric vehicle is Coventry



which has 127.8 charging points per 100,000 people. Brighton ranks third with 117.9. At the other end of the scale is Bolton, with only 8.3 charging points per 100,000 population.