

MY ELECTRIC CAR

Nearly 2 years ago I bought an electric (not hybrid) car and I'm still being asked the same questions, so I thought I would share a few - and dispel the myths.

"How many times have you run out of power? You can't do long journeys can you?"

'Never' and 'Yes'. My son visits from Sheffield (he has the same car but newer) and makes one 40 minute stop half way to re-charge. We both have Renault Zoe's, the small-car end of the market but all come with the latest sat-nav which lets you know when you set off that you have enough power for the trip and directs you to the nearest charge point if ever you need it. A display keeps you constantly updated with how many miles you have left, but don't forget going downhill charges up the battery again. My range changes a bit from Summer to Winter but has never been below 150 miles, and that's plenty. Exeter is only 23 miles away and I bet, like me, 99% of your journeys are local. I've never had a problem and new charge points are popping up all over the place now; perhaps we need one in Winkleigh... By the way, government grants are available for home charge points and mine was free.

"Aren't they dangerous because there's no engine noise?"

Yes, they're very quiet, although below 30mph mine has a noise which automatically comes on. I'm very aware in car parks that pedestrians may not realise I'm there and I'm extra careful, but so far no mishaps. I think we often forget how many people are hard of hearing or wear earphones and don't hear petrol cars. In country lanes horses always hear me before their riders but the motor for the heating is fairly noisy and I sometimes turn that on full for a second so that I don't creep up unawares.

"Big Tesla's are fine but aren't the small cars underpowered and flimsy?"

Absolutely not. The battery is under the floor and it's big and heavy. The car therefore has a good, solid feel and won't be blown all over the road when you go over the moors in force 10 gales. It's very easy to drive (no gears), and has no trouble accelerating up a steep hill with 4 people on board. Remember though, like all cars, how you drive makes a big difference to fuel consumption. My passengers often comment on the comfort and are usually very impressed.

We all know the importance of reducing fossil fuel consumption so I would urge you to consider making a change. I certainly wouldn't go back. The best things; no exhaust pipe so no pollution, no petrol station bills and no going out of my way to fill up, no car tax, instant power to overtake when I need it.

Marian Minton 23rd October 2019

