



JULY 2023 Update

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Used Cars No Joke For Mr Bean!

Whilst Mr Bean is famous for ridiculous antics in his iconic Mini, Rowan Atkinson is quite a serious petrol-head who believes that the used car industry is still more important than Electric Vehicles (EVs)! Whilst EVs might have cleaner exhaust emissions on the road, Atkinson believes that the 'fast fashion' of EV ownership has serious negative implications for the environment, given their heavy manufacturing cost.

He points out that most new cars come onto the used market at just 3-years of age, which seems like "an outrageously profligate use of the world's natural resources when you consider what great condition a three-year-old car is in", easily seeing the next owner



through a decade of travel. With nearly **1.5 billion cars already on the road worldwide**, he wishes we would try harder to keep these vehicles which have already paid their 'environmental dues' on the road, whilst finding ways to mitigate their exhaust emissions (think catalytic converter tech). In 2013 Atkinson spent **£1m fixing his McLaren F1** rather than scrapping it!

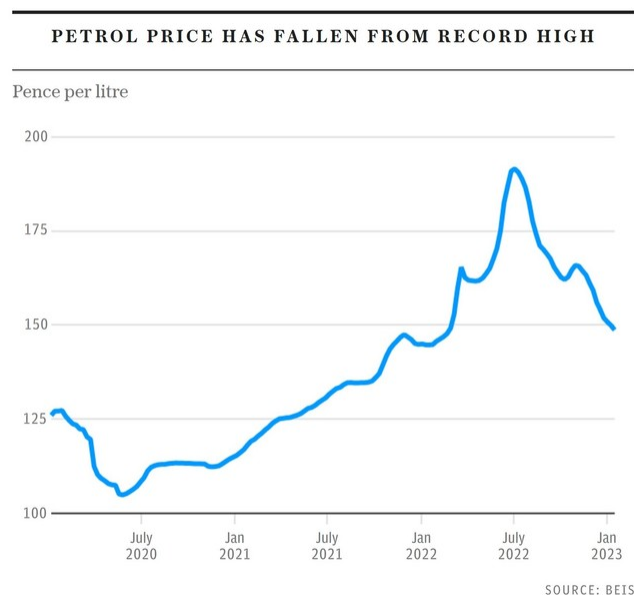
Atkinson concludes that "Electric propulsion will be of real, global environmental benefit one day, but that day has yet to dawn." He has serious concerns, as do we, about the lithium-ion batteries that are fitted to almost all models. These usually have a life-span of just one decade and consume huge amounts of resources during manufacture, including rare earth metals. As we've spoken about in recent editions of this newsletter, alternative technologies should be given more consideration, such as hydrogen and carbon-neutral fuels. We need to stop scrapping vehicles unnecessarily and really invest in a range of viable alternatives!

[EVs Now A Luxury That Most Can't Justify](#)

Electricity prices are still on the up, diesel & petrol prices are on the way down. The outcome? The RAC found that **the cost of charging an EV for a long-distance drive is now more expensive than filling up their petrol and diesel equivalents!** And so the market has seen a definite turn of interest away from EVs which are also expensive to buy (no longer subsidised!).

The boss of Vauxhall has warned that the middle classes can no longer afford to buy into the EV market, and that's a big problem. The extreme short-fall of new charging points doesn't help – Just one new public charger was built for every 53 electric cars sold in the UK last year.

According to the AA, **22% of drivers intend to buy a car this year** despite the cost-of-living crisis, but **80% of those won't be considering the switch to electric..!**



[No Grey Days For Fiat!](#)

In a bid to be more distinctive, Fiat wants its customers to choose more colourful vehicles and so has taken the bold decision to **cease production of grey vehicles!** It's a brave move – grey has been the most popular choice in this country for five years running, followed by



black and white. Fiat says 'Italy is known as the land of colours' (think - in the red..) and they want to be known as the 'brand of colours'.

Brits generally aren't known for their flamboyance (I'm wearing socks and sandals right now) so we'll see how it goes. Perhaps we will even start chatting on the train.. But grey isn't so bad. The definition of a grey person is "someone who looks boring and unattractive but is in fact well equipped for an emergency situation", sounds pretty cool. I'm informed that 50 shades of grey is not a book about a pallet of dull car colour choices either!

Fiat is also bringing their Topolino to the UK this year – a dinky electric quadricycle, it looks like a car but shouldn't require a driving licence to use on the road! It won't be for young racers though, boasting just 8bhp. Prices will start from around £8,000 and it could become a summer city favourite if the 'no door, roll back roof version' (see picture) is also offered to the UK market!



The Yellow Box Road

Last year the Government let councils outside of London and Cardiff apply for powers to enforce moving traffic offences. The outcome? 111 new yellow box enforcement proposals from 27 councils, **90% of which are problematic** and could lead to drivers being fined unfairly! In fact, a staggering **55% directly contravene the government's guidance..** on multiple counts.



The report put together by the RAC and Mr Wright (who planned London's yellow boxes) found that **'81% of the boxes proposed for enforcement are unnecessarily large and 36% have visibility issues'**. In many cases they found that 'enforcement may end up actually increasing congestion as a result of drivers hesitating before moving on for fear of being fined..

We're expecting that fine in the post soon then!

No Deal For Jaguar Land Rover!



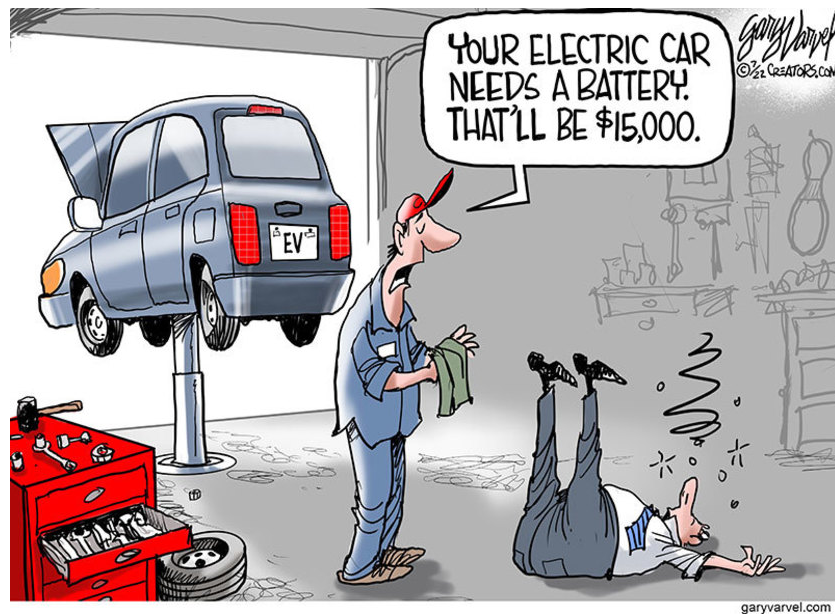
As part of the 'Reimagine' strategy that saw JLR drop the iconic 'Land Rover' name earlier this year, there will be **no haggling on new JLR car prices as of 2024**. That's true whether you buy direct online or go into a dealership to sit down with an actual human being!

Apparently, this is 'what the customer wants' and dealerships, who will now have to rely on customer service as a sole selling point, will remain 'viable businesses'. We

haven't found too many dealerships or JLR customers who agree with these sentiments .. many have accused manufacturers of making a 'margin grab'. Only time will tell if this move to take price "off the table" will protect the customer experience or if we'll see the emergence of an online only model for JLR (beware the tale of Cazoo!).

A True Spectre!

Last year some JLR customers were apparently forced to sign contracts preventing them selling their new Defenders within 6 months of purchase due to the inflated 'as good as new' prices that were hitting the market. But Rolls-Royce have just taken things a step further, bringing the Spectre's name to life by threatening no less than **a ban for life (!)** for customers who sell up for a profit. After spending almost half a million pounds to get their hands on the elusive model, we don't think a £50,000 profit is going to be a worthwhile risk for these high-end buyers, but still, we think it's a bit .. 'mean-spirited'!



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