

Monster Mover

Ian Lamming takes a monster truck out of its comfort zone

IT'S the call every motoring correspondent dreads.

"We need to take mother shopping – to York – what's the test car?"

Quasi-mother-in-law (we are not married) is resplendent and spritely in her 81st year. The test car is an Arctic Trucks. A what? I hear you cry.

Well, it starts life as an excellent Isuzu D-Max pick-up then it is handed over to specialists Arctic Trucks for a bit of tickling.

When it comes back it sports monster truck balloon tyres, jacked up suspension and, for the full space-hopper experience, it is orange.

It is enormous. It is truly awesome. I deliberately parked next to a Land Rover Discovery; they don't come much bigger than a Disco. Oh look, they do. The orange apparition simply dwarfs the Landy making it the king/queen of the road.

Reach up for the door handle, cock a leg up to the running boards, grab the interior handle and climb aboard, literally, easy, even for an octogenarian.

It is amazing how quickly everyone adapts to the behemoth size of the Arctic Trucks and it is surprisingly easy to drive because the view you

get from the cab is so unobstructed and clear. Bolt on wheelarches to cover the bigger tyres make it wide, so it fills the road width-wise, for height and length; it is vast.

Already tight car park spaces have to be filled with care and only a brave man would risk a high-rise or underground car park. We opt for York's park and ride so there is plenty of space and no rip off city centre prices to worry about.

What you have to remember is how far you are off the ground. I didn't and fell out of the cab on to my bum. Swinging the door open as normal, followed by my legs, I drop to the ground forgetting there isn't any for several feet. So you need to climb out like you climbed in; well done granny.

The gargantuan tyres do a couple of things. They make the ride bouncy trouncy fun and they alter the gearing. Forget trying to pull sixth gear until you are at least doing motorway speeds. Even then you'll find just 1,500rpm on the clocks when doing 70mph, which is great for a relaxed ride and good for fuel, which approaches 40mpg.

Off road, they should ensure go-anywhere ability and there will be greater wading depth because of the increased ground clearance.

D-Max is an accomplished mud-plugger with torquey 2.5 litre twin turbo diesel and a low range gearbox. Arctic Trucks is only ever going to improve on that.

Taking such a beast in to the city was a fascinating exercise and the fact it took care of the shops shows the truth depth of the vehicle. See, shopping doesn't have to be all bad.

Fact File

- Model: Isuzu D-Max Arctic Trucks
- Engine: 2.5 litre diesel
- Drivetrain: six-speed manual
- Power: 163PS
- Top speed: 112mph
- 0-62mph: -
- Max braked trailer towing weight: 3500KG
- Miles per gallon 38.7 (combined):
- CO2 (g/km): 192

