



# A4' rce to be reckoned with

Ian Lamming tackles the North East terrain

## Fact File

Audi A4 Allroad  
Engine: 2.0 turbo diesel  
Power: 177PS  
0-62mph: 8.1 secs  
Top speed: 130mph  
Combined miles per gallon: 47.1  
Transmission: seven speed auto  
Insurance: 27  
CO2 g/km: 156

**I**F EVER a car was designed for the North of England it was this one.

Audi A4 Allroad slots into rural life like a grouse in the heather; it's as country as tweed and Hunter wellies; it will have villagers doffing their caps and the kids calling you pater.

Allroad starts life as an A4 Avant (that's an estate to the plebs). It then gets Quattro all wheel drive, a more macho grille, sticky on plastic bits to protect the bodywork and underside, 18in alloys and increased ride height making it a bit more off-roader.

Surprisingly, it's only 20mm lower than the Q5 and that's a proper SUV, but where the A4 scores is back on terra firma where it handles like a car not a 4x4.

This particular Allroad came with the 2.0 TDI from the Q5 which pumps out 177PS but still returns close to 50mpg, which is a great combination.

Once upon a time Audis came in silver and that was about it. This time you get a deep chocolate brown with lustrous finish, which simply adds even more class to the proceedings and couldn't look better on the gravel drive. Inside this is mirrored by good-enough-to-eat brown leather and when you already have one of the best interiors, in

terms of clocks, switches and specification, you have an interior to be proud of.

If it looks classy, then wait until you have a drive. The test route is supposed to challenge cars with its ever-changing topography and road conditions.

But Allroad laughs at the peaks and troughs of the Stang road staying composed when the longer travel suspension crests the rises and bottoms out in the dips. It scoffs at the hairpins, it glides over the terrible bumps and cambers as the road snakes towards Richmond.

The motor provides swathes of power without having to be revved and the S-tronic automatic box swaps seamlessly between ratios to keep it on song. It's a lovely ride particularly with the added benefit and thrill of all wheel drive.

A1 and A66M are dispensed with a waft allowing time to appreciate the top-notch Bang and Olufson hi-fi and Darlington is a doddle with easy proportions and parking radar all round allowing for simple maneuvering. Barnard Castle is in sight all too soon and so is the start/finish point of Dalton.

This car belongs in this neck of the woods. It looks the part and has the pedigree and dynamics to tackle our challenging road conditions. I wonder if I can keep it?