

NEWS FLASH

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY...

Grand Scénic ups appeal

"One of our favourite models has been revamped," says *Auto Express* as it slaps an immediate four-star rating on the new Renault Scénic.

"Facelifted for 2012, the seven-seater Scénic now gets a sleeker front grille, LED running lights underneath and smarter gloss black and chrome detailing," writes Paul Bond.

"A revised line-up means there's only one trim level, but Dynamique TomTom comes well equipped, with sat-nav, air-con, Bluetooth and cruise control.

"We drove the range-topping 1.6-litre diesel version, which combines 130hp and 320Nm of torque with low emissions of just 114g/km. Unlike most eco-minded models, the Scénic feels really punchy and very refined, with a comfortable ride.

"As with most MPVs, the Scénic is extremely flexible,



with a third row of seats that slide, fold and can even be taken out completely for a maximum 1,863-litre load space."

And "even in this high spec it's cheaper than both" the Ford S-MAX or Vauxhall Zafira.

"It all adds up to a convincing package that holds more appeal than ever." ★★★★★

**Auto
EXPRESS**

7 March

Stunning electric baby revealed

Auto Express described the Renault Zoe as "stunning" after getting a sneak peak ahead of the Geneva motor show.

Renault had to decide whether to make the car 'look' like an EV, but owners will be getting "a beautiful car that happens to be electric", writes Ian Jolly.

The car has been packaged like a "tall supermini" to make sure the nose meets crash regulations. But there's also a lot of kit under the bonnet, including a radiator to cool the electric motors and separate air-con systems for the passengers and battery. Renault's Director of Design for Central Europe, Geoff



Gardiner, said: "The low weight makes it like a go-kart to drive. It's fun."

Interior designer Catherine Joly added: "We wanted to express purity inside, reflecting the zero emissions, and give a quality feel."

**Auto
EXPRESS**

7 March

Mégane on top form

The *Sun's* Ken Gibson, gets behind the wheel of the new Mégane, and is very impressed.

The Mégane is a "very good-looking car" which boasts a range of "excellent" new engines, all "perfect" for family buyers, says Gibson.

The new Mégane has been tweaked, becoming more "streamlined", with interior upgrades also on offer. "The Mégane also comes well equipped, but the big gains are in the range of new super-efficient petrol and diesel engines."

The 1.2-litre petrol is "excellent", an example of how

"downsizing doesn't mean going downmarket". With performance comparable to a 1.6, while remaining "quieter and more refined", the engine tops it off by being more economical.

The new diesel engines have similar benefits. The 1.5-litre delivers "lowest in its market" emissions of 90g/km and the 1.6-litre "makes sense as a retail buy or company car".

The "great" engines and a range of model options make the new Mégane "well worth a test drive".

**THE
SUN**

23 March

Zoe's got the looks

The Renault Zoe is "the best-looking affordable electric car yet", according to the *Sun*. In his Geneva show round up, Phil Lanning says: "It's priced at £13,650 – after the £5,000 Government plug-in grant is taken off the cost. And a 130-mile range and top speed of 84mph means it is also realistic for daily use for most motorists."

Ken Gibson adds: "This is the best case yet for electric city cars because the Zoe is attractive and more realistically priced from £13,650 – after the £5,000 government plug-in grant is taken off the cost."

Sun

9 March

High standards

The Renault Fluence featured in the *London Evening Standard's* round up of lowest emission cars.

"This five-seater saloon, launched this month, looks fairly conventional despite its all-electric 95hp propulsion system which gives it a range of up to 125 miles. The system is driven by a substantial battery pack hidden behind the rear seats. Charged from dedicated charging points, or the mains, it's nice to look at, nice to drive –

Evening Standard

6 March

Little wonder

"Renault, which is offering the new Twingo and Clio Expression for £179 a month, is also offering its new 4+ package worth about £900 on all its new cars," reports the *Daily Express*. "As the name suggests, it covers your warranty, servicing, roadside cover and a special finance package for four years.

"With its cheeky styling, good equipment level and new range of colours, the Twingo **DAILY EXPRESS** looks a real winner."

26 February

DRIVE THE CHANGE



Zoe is 'most affordable and most practical' EV

"Pure electric cars don't get more practical or affordable than the new Renault Zoe supermini, unveiled in production trim at the Geneva show," reports *Autocar*. Indeed, it is the lowest priced EV "on the market" and offers the "best-quoted range in its class" at 130 miles, says Chris Rosamond.

The car "holds true" to its concept origins with a "svelte" appearance that eschews the temptation "to create something avant-garde in homage to technology".

He continues: "With a 2.58 wheelbase and 4.08m length the Zoe has a 'wheel at each corner' stance'. Deep body sides, which hide the battery pack, account for its 1.73m height. The car's construction is conventional steel monocoque with the battery sandwiched under a 20cm-high platform running aft from the front seats. Under the bonnet there's an 87hp electric motor that drives the front wheels directly. Top speed is limited to 84mph.



"Inside, there are three trim levels – the entry-level and a pair of themed luxury versions called Techno and Zen. The Zen spec includes an air toxicity sensor, 'relaxing' air ioniser and scent diffusers developed in a tie-up with L'Oréal.

"The Zoe gets an ECU that determines the required split between brake retardation and energy generation, taking into account the declarative effect of a coasting motor. The tech package, combined with the heat-pump air-con and low rolling-resistance tyres, is **AUTOCAR** called Range Optimizer." 7 March

Insight into Zoe design

An insightful Q&A with Geoff Gardiner, Renault's Director of Design for Central Europe, revealed some of the thinking behind the Renault Zoe's design.

Was there an argument for making the Zoe design more radical to highlight its electric powertrain?

We asked ourselves that at the beginning and decided that people just wanted a beautiful car first, and one that's electric afterwards. We found that if you try and design a sense of electricity into a car, you end up with something cold that probably looks like a Robochef.

What were the technical challenges that affected its design? The Zoe needs its motor cooled below 60deg C [as opposed to 90deg C for an internal combustion engine], so it still needs cooling intakes that are much the same size as a traditional radiator grille. There's no sunroof, and the glasshouse is minimised to reduce sun

load. There's also a real working rear diffuser.

So this wasn't a chance to really push boundaries from a design perspective? There are people who'd love something different or radical, but we wouldn't sell many and going electric doesn't necessarily add that much design flexibility. Open the bonnet and you won't see empty space – the volume of the powertrain is very similar to that of a Clio.

So how might a more radical approach have differed?

You'd need to put the motors in the wheels to really be able to break away with design. The battery cells could then be spread out around the car but you'd have weight distribution and practicality issues. As it is, the floor steps up 20cm under the front seats and towards the back, so weight is low and the batteries can be swapped quickly. **AUTOCAR** 7 March

Grand Scénic test drive

"Under the skin of the revised Grand Scénic is an efficiency improvement that makes it the cleanest seven-seater around," reports *Business Car*.

"The engine line-up includes 110hp 1.6 and 115hp 1.2 petrol engines and 110hp 1.5 and 130hp 1.6 diesels, the latter being the new 114g/km unit.

"But it's with the 110hp 1.5 diesel's efficiency where Renault has made serious inroads, with CO₂ down from 128g/km to 105g/km thanks to the introduction of stop/start. That compares with 129g/km for the equivalent Ford Grand C-max and 135g/km for Citroen's C4 Grand Picasso. Economy is cited as 68.9mpg.



"That huge efficiency gain gives the Grand Scénic a cost per mile of 49.8p, which compares well against its rivals. Those figures come despite the Renault being £170 cheaper than the Ford." **BusinessCar** magazine | website | email | events 16 March

Kangoo Van Z.E. collects third award

"Renault's Kangoo Van Z.E. has been named Eco Van of the Year by *VansA2Z.com*, marking the electric van's third award win this year," reports *The Green Car Website*.

"The 100 per cent electric commercial vehicle bagged *What Van?*'s Van of the Year and International Van of the Year award late January and, yet again, the Kangoo Z.E. stared down even more fierce competition including Ford's Azure Transit Connect." Andy Heiron, Renault's Head of Electric Vehicle Programme UK collected the award.

"There has been a real buzz around the Kangoo Van Z.E. ever since its launch at the end of last year and this is further proof that it is the market leader in the UK," he said. "I am sure this latest recognition at the *VansA2Z.com* Awards will generate even more interest in Kangoo Z.E. and help to highlight the significant benefits of electric motoring."

Neil McIntee, Editor of *VansA2Z*, added: "The Kangoo Z.E. is absolutely superb, the most complete electric vehicle and very driveable – it works beautifully.

"I have driven it many times in many countries, including the Brighton to London Future Car Challenge, and found it works completely effortlessly. It was the worthy winner in the Ecovan category."

The Green Car Website adds:

"The Renault Kangoo Van Z.E. range is eligible for the Plug-in Van Grant which knocks the line-up's starting price down to



£13,592 excluding VAT. 16 March