

ALL-NEW RENAULT MEGANE 110hp dCi

By Jim Mc Cauley



Renault continues its design renaissance with the launch of the fourth generation Megane, a model line well established over its 20 year span in Northern Ireland's Top Ten best sellers. Following on from their range rejuvenation in models such as the Twingo, Captur and Kadjar, the new Megane continues the exciting design theme.

The teasing lines are dominated by a larger Renault badge at the front within a grille that stretches out to the slim-line headlight units

and enveloping LED daytime running lights. And the larger badge holds secrets as does the smaller emblem on the rear hatch – hiding elements of the car's high-tech packaging.

While many manufacturers opt for slow evolutions of their top selling models, Renault has once again taken the braver step of advancing the model range in both its design and supporting technologies.

Initially there is a choice of four engines – two petrol and two diesel and the subject of this test is the lower output 110hp dCi option. Delivering power to the front wheels through the standard 6-speed manual transmission, this diesel engine has the lowest CO2 emissions of any model in the range, just 96gms/km, and has an official combined fuel consumption of 76.4 mpg.

On road, and the car is very refined with smooth and quiet engine response as well as excellent insulation from road and wind noise. Progress is well paced through the precision changes of the manual gearbox with the benchmark acceleration time from rest to 60mph achieved in under 11 seconds. A well cushioned but nevertheless supportive ride adds to the quality feel of the car, and there is no doubting the engineering advancements of the latest model.





For the occupants there is a welcoming interior, particularly so for the driver with the main instruments, including the central digital speed readout clearly displayed in a neatly crested binnacle. The 'Dynamique S Nav' specification of the test car featured an 8.7 inch vertical central screen for the infotainment system. This screen also allows the driver to configure vehicle options, and is very easy to both navigate and configure. Standard on this trim level is Renault's 'Multi-Sense' technology which allows drivers to personalise the driving experience. Among the items that can be changed are engine throttle response, engine sound, steering weight and interior lighting colours. Also standard on all models, except the range opening 'Expression +' is Renault's 'Visio' system which comprises lane departure warning, traffic sign recognition and automatic high / low headlight beam.

In terms of safety provision, all models have a 5-star EuroNCAP safety rating and come with Electronic Stability Program supported by a comprehensive package of handling technologies, hill start assist, automatic door locking on moving off, front and rear parking sensors with rear view camera and front, side and curtain airbags. The cars also get automatic lights and wipers, dual zone climate control and

quality sound system with Bluetooth connectivity. Additional technology packages include the 'Safe Distance Warning' package at £400 and 'Parking Pack Premium' at £500 which includes hands free parking, 360 degree parking sensors and blind spot warning.

Overall, Renault has taken their top selling Megane range to a higher level in terms of styling, engine refinement and new technologies. Basis of the new Megane is a multi-functional CMF platform jointly developed by the Renault Nissan Alliance which is a common building block in several model ranges. Along with this comes a new level of quality in both design and manufacture that takes the car to a market leading position. While the range opens at £16,600, the 110hp diesel model tested in mid range specification is listed at £20,400.

With regards to running costs this model is in Group 21E for insurance, and with a low Co2 emissions of just 96gms/km is in Band A for zero annual road tax, while for company car users it has a BIK of 19%.

The Renault owner also has the benefit of a better warranty than the industry norm. The company's '4+' warranty and assistance package provides cover for four years or 100,000 miles with roadside recovery and European cover part of the assistance package. For additional peace of mind, new owners can avail of a 3 or 4-year service plan with prices starting at just £299. s



(Driven July 2016)