

DRIVE



This month's motoring correspondent **TIM BARNES-CLAY** test drives top-quality, efficient German engineering, putting the

Armchair on the A14

Fast facts

- Max speed: 142 mph
- 0-62 mph: 8.7 secs
- Combined mpg: 56.5
- Engine: 2143 cc 4 cylinder 16 valve twin turbo diesel
- Max power (bhp): 168 at 3000 rpm
- Max torque (lb/ft): 295 at 1400-2800 rpm
- Max towing weight (braked) 1900 kg
- CO2: 133 g/km
- Price: £30,995 on the road

I commute 130 miles to my office quite regularly. It's not a pleasant journey driving eastbound along one of the UK's most congested A roads.

Yes, that's right; I'm talking about the A14. It's a dual carriageway where heavy goods vehicles heading to the ports of Felixstowe and Harwich take about ten

minutes to overtake each other – and, when that's not happening, I'm normally stuck in gridlocked traffic on the A14/A1 intersection. Not that I'm complaining.

Well, certainly not when driving the Mercedes-Benz E220!

You see, the German motor is not really a car, it's better than that – it feels more like a great big mobile armchair. It's so comfortable and it has all the accoutrements that you need for a relaxed business-style commute on British roads.

Cushion of air

On the move, the E220 soaks up potholes and glides along almost as if it was on a cushion of air. The rich sound system helps melt away any tension – it's so resonant that you really do feel like you are in your own living room.

Back on planet earth, the sat-nav is easy to operate and the hands-free Bluetooth system is convenient. And, when the traffic does grind to a halt, the cushioned headrests just take the stress out of things when you need to lay your head back and accept you're not



Pictured: A glide of a ride – enjoying a relaxed commute in the Mercedes-Benz E220.

Mercedes-Benz E220 CDI BlueEFFICIENCY Saloon Executive SE through its paces, along a notoriously unpleasant A road.

the A14

going anywhere for a while.

The Mercedes-Benz E220 CDI BlueEFFICIENCY is a large motor, so it sometimes feels a little heavy and unwieldy on twisty country lanes, but it feels safe – and it should do. You see, for more than 50 years, the saloons in the E-Class range have been acknowledged as trendsetters in the safety field.

The current car continues this tradition with the very latest assistance and protection system. The technologies involved make the E-Class an 'intelligent partner' which can see, feel, react reflexively in

critical situations and, if necessary, act independently to prevent accidents or mitigate their consequences.

With this concept, the E220 not only protects you, but also contributes decisively to the greater safety of other road users.

Long-distance comfort and state-of-the-art safety aside, the Mercedes' combined fuel economy of 56.5 mpg means you can enjoy prestige motoring without incurring high fuel costs. And, with the E-Class emitting just 133 g/km CO₂, you can rest assured your choice of car is also environmentally-friendly.

Pros 'n' cons

- Comfortable ✓
- Long distance cruising ✓
- Safe ✓
- Equipment ✓
- Cumbersome on country lanes X



Tim Barnes-Clay



Above: Inside, the 'armchair' controls are an intelligent partner for the driver of the Mercedes-Benz E220.

Below: A little heavy on twisty country lanes – but very safe.

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POSH Meetings Peterborough United, London Road, Peterborough, PE2 8AL | Tel: 01733 341050 e-mail: meetings@theposh.com