

The best off-road vehicle for the best shooting on Exmoor

NEVILLE GILL joins a party from Roxtons to discover if the new Shogun really is the best yet

The new Mitsubishi Shogun

Reassuringly familiar yet notably different, the brand new fourth generation Mitsubishi Shogun is the most powerful, luxurious Shogun we have ever built with everything you need in a 4x4 for an outdoor life



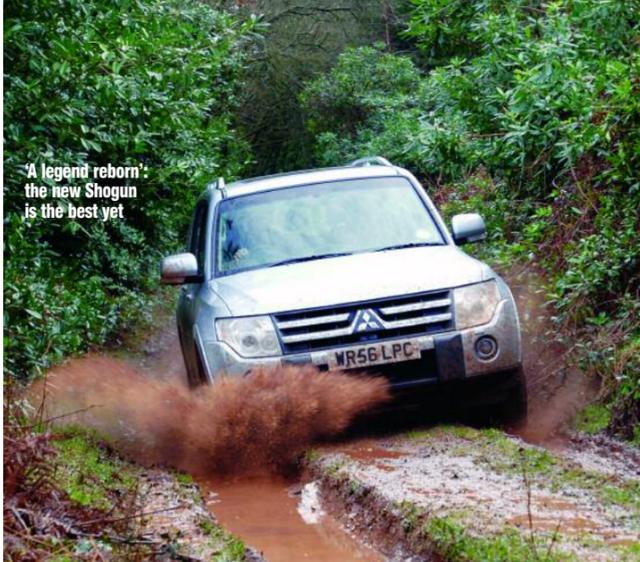
The new Shogun: a top performer on and off road

- Mitsubishi Active Stability and Traction Control
- Super select 4WD
- Electric windows
- Electric door mirrors
- Front, side and curtain airbags
- ABS with EBD

- ISO-fix child seat mountings
- Alloy wheels
- The Mitsubishi Shogun is available as a 3-door five seater or 5-door seven seater, with prices that start from £22,549 on the road.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT www.mitsubishi-cars.co.uk or call 0845 330 2002

The 'on the road' price includes delivery to the dealer's premises, number plates and VAT at 17.5%, with government road fund licence for 12 months and DVLA vehicle first registration fee of £38. The right is reserved to change prices and specification without prior notice.



'A legend reborn': the new Shogun is the best yet

PICTURES: GUN HOMELIS

The Mitsubishi Shogun is considered by many to be one of the best 4x4s around. And the latest model, billed as 'a legend reborn', bears testament to this claim.

Roxtons, the sporting agency based in Hungerford, have been running a fleet of five Mitsubishi Shoguns for the last few seasons and I was invited to join them for two days shooting to see how the new Mitsubishi Shogun performed.

I met Simon Russell-Marsh, a professional shooting instructor and shooting consultant for Roxtons, on Exmoor in the middle of January. The weather reports predicted very high winds but little did I know that we were about to have one of the worst storms for 17 years.

Travelling down to the West Country in the new Mitsubishi Shogun, it was noticeable how quiet the new vehicle is compared to the last model. On the motorway it was very hard to tell whether we were in a diesel or petrol vehicle. The 3.2 litre diesel engine is deceptively quiet and will easily return over 30mpg on a good run.

An all-new strengthened monocoque

body has certainly improved rigidity and stability, providing a smoother ride even as we headed into strengthening crosswinds. There are a host of other refinements including high visibility xenon headlights, cruise control and music control switches mounted on the steering wheel.



Luck of the draw: the first day's shoot was cancelled due to extreme weather

As the wind strengthened during the night it was clear that our day at Chargot – one of the UK's premier shooting estates – might not happen. As the sky lightened the wind and driving rain only became stronger but we met at 9 o'clock regardless.

The shoot extends to 4,000 acres, including an amazing 400 acres of cover crops. It is run by David Powell who lives in the middle of the estate. He explained to me that the shoot relies heavily on cover crops.

"We're going to wait until 11am to see if the wind drops," David told the gathered guns. "If it hasn't I'm afraid that we will have to cancel the day, gentlemen. It is not just that the birds won't fly in this wind. I don't want any of my beaters or pickers-up injured by falling trees. Safety is paramount – as we all know!"

Sadly shortly after 11am the

Simon Russell-Marsh is a consultant for Roxtons



The steep-sided wooded valleys on Exmoor make for top quality birds



The storm had brought down several trees on shoot tracks



The new Mitsubishi Shogun tackles rough terrain with confidence

day was cancelled and the guns filled in their insurance forms. Roxtons insist that guns take out insurance on all shoot days for just this reason – you can't fight the weather.

Once the guns and beaters had departed, Simon Russell-Marsh jumped into the new Mitsubishi Shogun to check out the storm damage. We quickly saw that David Powell's decision to cancel the day was a wise one. Uprooted trees had fallen across the tracks in several places, and Simon set to clearing them with his chainsaw.

"I'm very impressed with the new Mitsubishi Shogun's performance offroad," Simon commented as he worked. "It has an excellent turning circle, and the traction control system

is fantastic. I'm sure I could take this vehicle anywhere," he added with a grin.

The new Mitsubishi Shogun uses the Mitsubishi Active Stability Traction Control

'It really is a superb vehicle for anyone who is seriously involved in the countryside'

System (MASTC), the same as on the award-winning Mitsubishi L200 pick-up. The electronic control is so sophisticated it will drive up a steep bank with your foot off the throttle.

Once Simon and David were happy that all the roads were clear of fallen trees we departed and were able to shelter at last from the biting wind.

The next morning we met up with a new team of guns. The

wind and rain had dropped and our team would be able to shoot. Simon Russell-Marsh briefed the guns about safety and the day ahead before they drew numbers for the day.

The first two drives were in the type of steep, wooded valley that Exmoor is renowned for, producing some magnificent testing shots over the treetops. As we were shooting through, we stopped at mid-morning for a welcome break of coffee and soup. Michael Archer, one of the guns, remarked: "They really have thought of everything on the new Mitsubishi Shogun. It is ideal off-road as well as an

excellent vehicle on-road. The attention to detail is impressive – there is even a reversing camera that displays a video image on the same screen as the sat nav. It really is a superb vehicle for anyone who is seriously involved in the countryside".

At the end of the day I caught up with John Duncan, Roxtons' director of shooting, and asked him about their choice of vehicles.

"We've used five Mitsubishi Shoguns and an L200 for the last four seasons," he told me. "The new Mitsubishi Shogun is so robust and well built I would recommend it to anyone – after all, we should know as we use them continuously six days a week throughout the shooting season!" ●