



A weekend with the Jaecoo 7 SHS

We sent *Suffolk magazine* subscriber Richard Bannister to review this new SUV, courtesy of John Grose

Firstly, a big thank you to *Suffolk magazine* and John Grose for letting me loose around East Suffolk in the new Jaecoo 7 SHS (Super Hybrid System).

This plug-in hybrid SUV combines an electric motor with a petrol engine – the best of both worlds. With most of us driving fewer than 50 miles a day, its 56-mile electric range is enough for daily use while the petrol engine takes over on longer journeys, eliminating the dreaded ‘range anxiety’. For me, as a surveyor constantly zipping around Suffolk, it felt like an ideal balance.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

My adventure started at John Grose in Ipswich, where I was given a tour of its impressive features and a quick training session on the touchscreen system. It was intuitive once I got the hang of it.

Styling-wise, the Jaecoo 7 feels contemporary without being futuristic. Its squared-off body, bold grille, slimline LED headlights and floating roof give it a smart,

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Range Rover-like presence.

Inside, the surprise was just how premium it felt for the price point. Plush finishes, a panoramic sunroof (standard) and a crystal-clear reversing camera gave the interior a ‘high-end SUV’ vibe. Backseat passengers benefit from plenty of light and space, and at 6ft 4in I still had ample headroom and legroom in both the front and back, so this would be ideal for a road trip around Suffolk (especially with the drinks holder in the middle of the back seat and an air cooled central storage compartment).

The boot is slightly smaller than some rivals due to the battery under the floor, but still practical and easy to access without stooping.

BEHIND THE WHEEL

The driving position is excellent: a commanding ride height, good visibility, and seats with multiple adjustments and memory functions. I often get back pain on



long drives, but the Jaecoo’s comfort meant no aches all weekend.

Keyless entry felt strange at first. The car unlocks as you walk towards it, wakes up when you press the brake, locks itself when you walk away, and even warned me when I left my phone on the wireless charging tray – clever and reassuring.

On the road, the single-gear electric motor gave continuous smooth acceleration and very responsive steering for a car of this size. It was nippy off the mark at road junctions but not snappy or aggressive.

Light steering made it easy to handle, and its suspension coped well with Suffolk’s potholes. I didn’t dare venture off-road – I hardly thought John Grose wanted the car returned coated in mud – but out in the countryside, the SUV’s firmer set-up handled winding roads with surprising composure, while the raised seating provided a confident view of the road.

I also appreciated the head-up display, projecting speed onto the windscreen – no need to glance down when approaching village speed limits.

PERFORMANCE AND PRACTICALITY

It’s advertised as doing 0-60 in 8.5 seconds, which is quick for a family SUV, so I thought I’d give it a go. Push too hard from a junction and the front wheels can spin, but this isn’t designed as a sports car – it’s about comfort and practicality.

At night, the displays dim easily to avoid glare and the headlights are bright yet well-angled to avoid dazzling oncoming traffic.

As for fuel use, after 50 miles the battery ran low and the petrol engine cut in

seamlessly, almost unnoticeable. I was able to regenerate the battery on the A12 and still had enough charge left for quiet, emission-free town driving.

TECH AND SAFETY

The Jaecoo 7 is packed with modern safety kit: lane assist, speed warnings, collision alerts – all working to keep you safe. I found some of the beeps and nudges over-enthusiastic, but the beauty is that you can switch them off individually and back on when needed.

VERDICT

I was genuinely reluctant to hand the Jaecoo 7 back to John Grose. Stylish, comfortable and practical, it impressed me at every turn. It’s a family-friendly SUV with the technology and premium feel of a much more expensive car, but without the premium price tag. Add in its generous warranty and it’s strong value in a competitive market.

I’m due to change my current car, a petrol Tiguan, and I have already started the process of looking at buying or leasing a Jaecoo7 SHS. That’s how impressed I was with it – so thank you, *Suffolk magazine* and John Grose!

Overall, I’d rate it 4.5 out of 5. If you’re not wedded to brand names, this SUV deserves serious consideration. ● **Would you like to write a reader review? Subscribe to *Suffolk magazine* and keep an eye on your email inbox for your chance to enter our next competition. You can get 12 issues for £35.99, saving 45 per cent on the cover price. Visit suffolkmag.co.uk/sub and use promo code RR25**