

USE OF GARAGES

A frequently asked question is why don't people use their garages. There could be various answers including the inconvenience if the car is used frequently, the difficulty getting on and off the driveway if there is lots of parking in the street, the household may have decided that the garage is more useful for the freezer, bikes or other bits and pieces.

Another explanation is that garages are not very big, notably those included with houses in recent years, but cars have got bigger.

Here's an illustration:

Garages are often 5 metres by 3 metres. There has to be enough space to get the car in on the left hand side and to get out on the right hand side.

1933 Austin Seven (Dad's Car)

Length 3.023 metres. Width 1.588 metres. Height unknown. Weight 635 kg.

The Austin Seven was seen as the break through in family motoring before WW2.

Classic Mini (Mk1)

Length 3.05 metres. Width 1.41 metres. Height 1.35 metres. Weight 587kg (dry) or 634.5kg hydrolastic.

Some models of the classic mini were badged as Austin Sevens.

2011 Mini

Length 3.961 metres. Width 1.892 metres (over mirrors). Height 1.407 metres. Weight 1,075 kg (manual) or 1,150 (auto).

Remember these are supposed to be "small" cars! Note the 40 centimetre increase in width, the 90 cm increase in length (and the huge increase in weight).

If those are supposed to be comparable cars now consider the number of 4 x 4s on local roads. For example a Land Rover Discovery 4GS: Length 4.838 metres. Width 2.022 to 2.178 metres. Height 1.832 to 1.888 metres..

The increasing size of cars, width as well as length, will be adding to the pressure on street parking, to congestion caused by the effective narrowing of roads and to the blocking of sight lines.