

going for gold

Auto-Sleepers celebrated their 50th year by introducing an exciting new model

IT doesn't take a genius to see that the Topaz inspired the design of Auto-Sleepers' newest van conversion, the Kemerton. There's the same lounge of side settee and single forward-facing seat, a split kitchen and a full-width across-the-aft-end washroom. But transferring the layout from Volkswagen T5 to Peugeot Boxer has turned this into something of a Tardis.

Not only does it feel huge inside, it's around £7300 cheaper than a Topaz. This is the most exciting new Auto-Sleeper in a while and it seems to have been timed perfectly to catch those buyers looking to downsize. On the outside it looks resplendent in (£360 extra) metallic paint and has alloy wheels (which, with cab air-con, front foglamps, cruise control, awning, microwave, TV and tracking system, make up the £2500 Premium Pack). Everything else comes as standard, even a gas tank, while the familiar flush-fitting, dark tinted, athermic side windows complete the look. And once you've twisted the cab chairs around, the interior feels enormous.

The last 800mm or so of floorspace are devoted entirely to the washroom and the whole area is closed off behind a proper door. Close that behind you and there's a deep mirror on the other side, but unlike the Topaz, the Kemerton's wardrobe is sited separately. On the offside is the wet area with shower and tip-up basin behind tambour doors, while on the nearside is a bench

cassette toilet with a small metal-lined storage box behind. This is a better washroom than you'll find in all but a couple of Auto-Sleepers' coachbuilts, and they've even fitted a reversing camera (because there's no through view). If there's a downside it's that you'll want to use these facilities instead of campsite showers and you'll soon fill the 46-litre waste water tank.

In the Kemerton's kitchen you'll discover a posh three-burner hob, combined oven and grill, sink with removable draining board, good-sized fridge and an extractor hood. It also has acres of worktop space, plus an additional flap at the end of the offside unit. Kitchen storage is good, while clothes storage is brilliant, thanks to drawers beneath the wardrobe. Bedding storage is a problem, though, because most of the settee base is full of technical equipment.

The blinds are the upmarket concertina type and the attention to trim around the windows is first-class. On the road conversion noise was not completely absent, but otherwise this vehicle impressed with its build-quality, especially for a prototype. And you can see that Kemerton is a much newer generation of Auto-Sleeper with its rich, dark wood and well-chosen fabrics.

There's no single bed option here but the transverse double is quick and easy to make. It's comfortable too, thanks to high-quality Reflex foam; the internal dimensions of a Peugeot van limit mattress length to 6ft.

FACT FILE

PRICE FROM £46,495
BERTHS 2
TRAVEL SEATS 3
DIMENSIONS 5.99m L, 2.26m W, 2.60m H
MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3500kg

BASE VEHICLE

PEUGEOT BOXER LWB
ENGINE 2.2HDi 130bhp

COOKING/HEATING

COOKING Smev three-burner hob with oven/grill
FRIDGE Thetford 96-litre SES three-way
HEATING Whale gas/mains blown-air
BOILER Whale gas/mains

RIVALS

AUTOCRUISE TEMPO
IH OREGON
MURVI MORELLO



Peugeot Boxer base carries a classic layout



WHICH motorhome says...

Auto-Sleepers doing what they do best, with a superb washroom, great kitchen all in a brilliantly spacious and practical van conversion.