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# Leisure 2000

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Fiat Fanfare

Renault Romance

VW Villa and Vision

Ford Future

Road tests on Villa, Vision, Future, Romance & Fanfare  
PLUS – Bill Brooks guide to motor caravanning in Europe  
PLUS – John Hunt on motor caravan design

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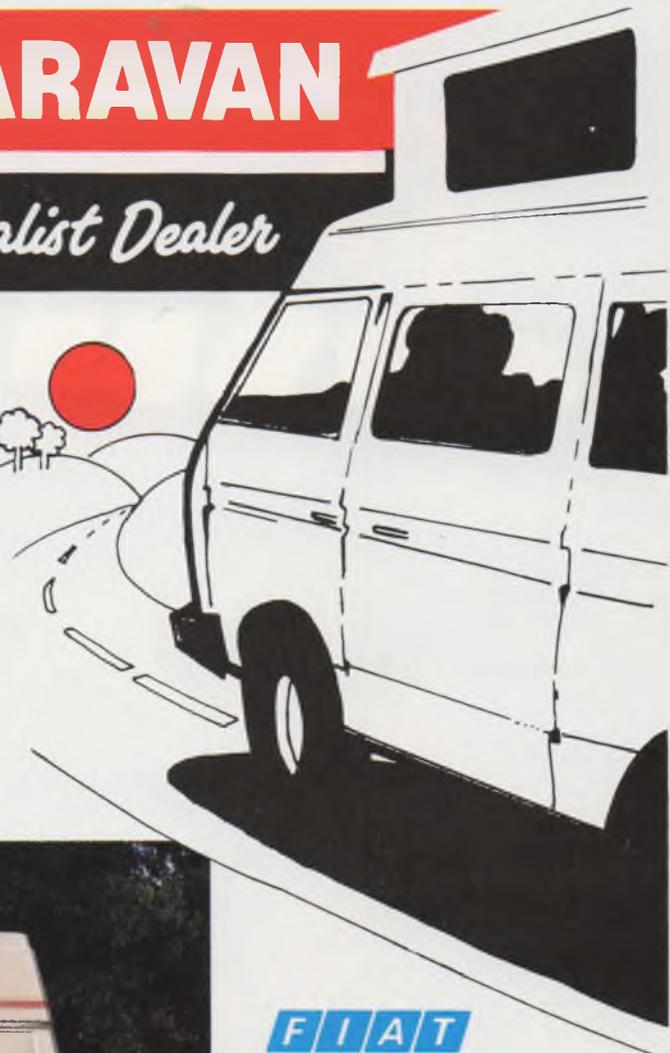


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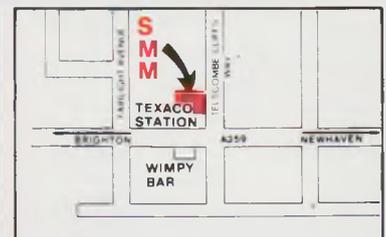


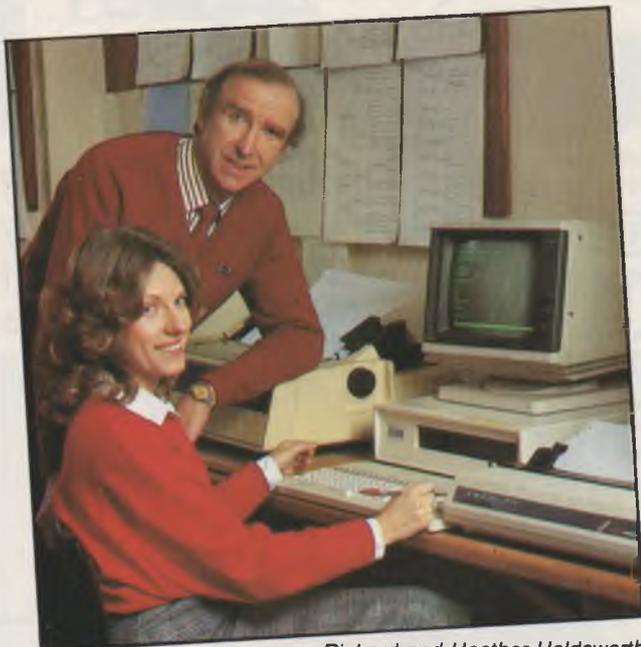
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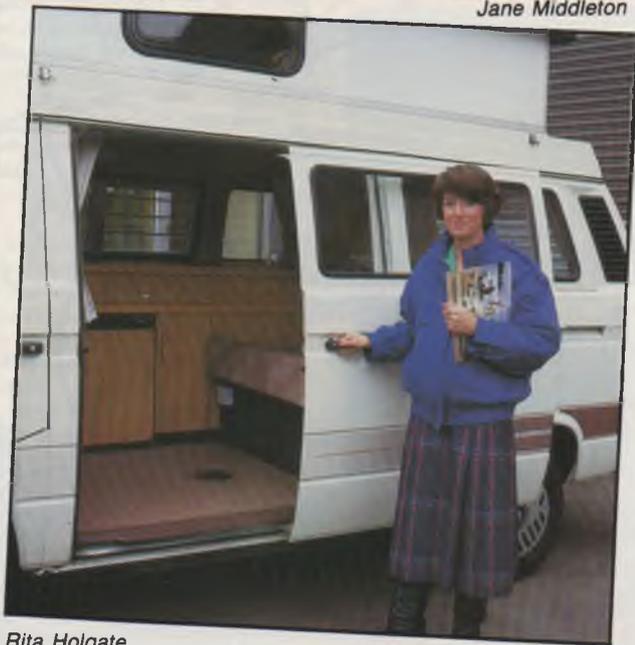




Richard and Heather Holdsworth



Jane Middleton



Rita Holgate

# Motor caravanning with Holdsworth

Welcome to LEISURE 2000 the magazine that highlights the wonderful world of motor caravans and — in particular — the motor caravans produced by my company, Richard Holdsworth Conversions Limited.

LEISURE 2000 has valuable information on the four major chassis used for the modern motor caravan. It has information on the leading conversions and it has an easy-to-follow guide to where you can see these motor caravans.

There is an article on quality and innovative design by John Hunt, the most respected and authoritative motor caravan observer, while Bill Brooks, one time Fleet Street motoring correspondent, writes with some useful tips on motor caravanning in Europe.

There are also totally independent road tests of five of our most popular motor caravans, and these provide a really first class assessment of the motor caravans in question.

Finally, it has all been brought together by Peter Warwick and the production team at the leading motor caravan monthly — Motor Caravan Magazine.

I hope you will share with me the excitement, pleasure and cost effectiveness of the wonderful world of motor caravans as seen through the eyes of LEISURE 2000.

**RICHARD HOLDSWORTH**

*Photos: Top: computers have played an important part in the efficient running of the Holdsworth factory. Richard and Heather Holdsworth keep an eye on the machine that keeps an eye on the costs.*

*Centre: At the end of the phone for Renault and Fiat enquiries is Jane Middleton.*

*Below: Rita Hoigate will bring you up to date with the latest in Richard Holdsworth Volkswagen and Ford motor caravans.*

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Romance Raising Roof



Romance HTL Super



Volkswagen High Top

# MOTOR CARAVAN CENTRE IN THE COUNTRY

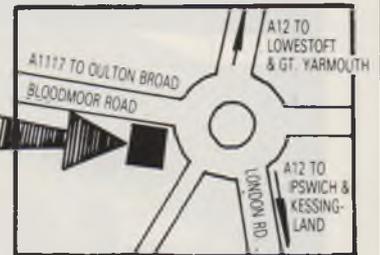
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# Lasting qualities

**Richard Holdsworth Conversions have been in business for 20 years. Peter Warwick has known them for most of that time and looks at why they have succeeded where many others have failed.**



The latest Holdsworth motor caravan, based on the Ford Transit.

Twenty years ago an agricultural journalist returned to England from Australia with a lovely wife but little else. He noticed that there was a lively trade in motor caravans with Australians who bought them to tour Europe, then an almost compulsory part of a young Aussie's education. And demand for good vehicles exceeded supply.

Then, as now, Richard Holdsworth had a keen eye for what people wanted and while his wife, Heather, worked in publishing to pay the rent, he was in a tiny lock-up garage in Clapham converting secondhand Volkswagen vans into motor caravans. Only a handful were made that first year but two moves to larger premises in Ashford, Middlesex, were made in as many years.

My first test of a Holdsworth conversion was in 1968. It was a non-elevating roof VW and it was noted in the test that 'Although one of the lowest-priced conversions on the market, there is no impression of cheapness. The design was well thought out, materials used are of good quality and standards of workmanship high'. The heat-resistant melamine worksurfaces,

the use of veneered plywood for the furniture and the attractive and hardwearing Finnish weave upholstery were all commended. 'Richard Holdsworth Conversions would seem to have a bright future', says the report.

In a Camping magazine review of motor caravans in April 1969 Richard Holdsworth Conversions were described as 'One of the most up and coming makers', a fair prediction as time has proved. It is interesting to note that of the



Today, as at the beginning, the VW is a cornerstone of the business.

23 makes described in the review, only one other than Holdsworth is still in business under the same name and ownership.

Why did Richard Holdsworth succeed where so many others didn't? In my view it all stems from those basic principles evident in that first conversion I tested. The direct line is still there. The well-made plywood furniture, the quality of soft furnishings, the sensible design and the value for money. Richard has never compromised on the quality of materials and workmanship to save a few pounds.

Knowing him as I do I suspect that this is because he takes criticism hard and doesn't dare to cut corners!

While often innovative, he has also sometimes seemed to lag behind in certain areas, but invariably for good reasons. He has a dislike of external water fillers, which so often result in disaster at the petrol station. Almost against his better judgement, he is now



Useful touch — this VW has a removable seat to increase load capacity.

bowing to demand and starting to fit them.

Similarly, he was by no means the first to design a solid panel elevating roof, but when he did it set new standards and promptly won the best elevating roof conversion award at the Caravan Show. Behind the scenes Richard Holdsworth Conversions were quick to grasp the immense value of computers in running the business efficiently and have developed a highly effective system.

Now twenty years after starting in that Clapham lock-up garage, he is still expanding and has taken over more space alongside the factory near Reading where the motor caravans are now made. The 'bright future' predicted all those years ago is now part of the present.

**"He has never compromised on quality..."**



anything apart from my precious sheets of plywood! Perhaps more important, however, is the ability to accommodate a wheelchair and occupant in a comfortable travelling position with excellent all-round view. The Renault conversions, with their low floor level, are particularly suitable in this respect. A simple ramp is sufficient to get chair and occupant into the vehicle. Most motor caravan dealers can arrange supply – and the waiving of tax that goes with it.

### Versatile Volkswagens

It is probably in the development of the Volkswagen interior over many years that Richard Holdsworth has demonstrated his unique abilities – skilled craftsmanship and innovative design. My own real acquaintance began with ownership of an old Volks that had been built by its previous owner from a Holdsworth kit. (Kits are available for some designs, allowing DIY owners to build their own motor caravans bearing the Holdsworth name tag – an important point when it comes to selling.)

Although lacking the good looks of more recent conversions, my old Volks was an honest package, with all furniture units constructed of plywood with hardwood edgings – not a sign of chipboard anywhere. It is a policy that continues today.

# Holdsworth quality

by John Hunt

A gratifying aspect about writing for Richard Holdsworth is being allowed to criticise, even encouraged to do so. 'Say what you like, John. You and I have both been wrong on occasions,' he declared.

Perhaps my judgement was the most recent. I voted for the new Fiat Fanfare HTS layout – the cheaper model with access through both rear and side doors. Yet the model that is bringing in the quantity orders is the HTL, with kitchen across the rear, blocking off the exit.

Certainly, the luxurious HTL boasts more of the equipment I'd appreciate, such as water heater, a good toilet compartment and the larger Electrolux refrigerator. The HTS, although the same overall

dimensions, has merely a 'make do' place to use the Porta-Potti, with no provision for a shower. But it does preserve the rear access that is essential for me, allowing transport of baulks of timber and sheets of plywood.

My motor caravan must double as a workhorse. It seems that many customers place the 'caravan' aspect higher than that of the 'van'. Richard Holdsworth caters for both. It's the same with his Renault conversions. You can have a spacious rear kitchen or U-shape, or a simpler one flanking but not obstructing the gangway to the back doors. At present, the Ford Future offers no alternative but we learn that another and simpler model is under development. So who knows?

Mind you, during a short trial of the first Ford Future to come off the assembly line, I nearly changed my mind. It was such a delightful, car-size and car-like motor caravan that I was prepared to forgo the ability to carry 8ft x 4ft sheets of plywood. Lengths of timber could still be loaded via the rear doors, as could the family's provisions for a lengthy holiday. My wife particularly appreciated the cupboards with rear access – no need to climb in and out with baskets of groceries.

Most Holdsworth motor caravans can quickly be converted into load carriers by the simple removal of a seat inside the side-opening door. This allows bulky items of, say, furniture to be transported on occasion – in fact, almost



Mitred beech edging on the Fiat Fanfare HTS.

Holdsworth VWs have come a long way since then, with attractive interiors which are also hard wearing, thanks to the all-round use of quality materials. (Examine the carpets and soft furnishings as well as the woodwork – you won't be disappointed).

Richard Holdsworth, master of innovation (I expect at least one surprise from him each year) is the first to admit that he has not always 'got it right'. My old Volks, for instance, had a 'low level bed' which did not extend over the rear engine deck. It was convenient not to have to shift the clobber that inevitably accumulated there at bedtime – but the bed occupied the whole floor area, leaving nowhere to stand. Many years later, the firm's VW hightop (then called

Hi-Flyer) was the first to put a toilet compartment into this popular vehicle. It was located behind the driver's seat, took up a lot of space and never sold successfully.

Later, the new-shape VW allowed the cab seats to be used as part of the living accommodation and another Holdsworth 'first' – the room divider, came into existence. It is a concertina type folding door that separates the front (seating/sleeping) area from the rear (kitchen/toilet). Available also on Renault and Ford, this spacing saving design is arguably preferable to trying to squeeze a separate toilet room into a compact high-top vehicle.

Holdsworth, in the Villa, also produces an entirely conventional Volkswagen layout but his other innovation on this popular marque, the Variety, with U-shaped kitchen at the rear, has not been as successful as hoped. This is strange, for it is an attractive interior, providing generous storage space. The subsequent Vision (with room divider) is proving to be the winner.

When comparing the Holdsworth high-top exteriors with other Volkswagens sporting more visually appealing roofs, it is as well to remember that the official VW fitted cap allows full standing room over the whole floor area. Others have interior height restricted by roof bows which the vehicle makers advise should not be removed. And Holdsworth's use of Renault's high roof van allows those excellent tall rear doors to be retained.

## A new roof – by demand

Whilst the concertina-walled rising roof used by the firm is just about the simplest of all to operate and covers a larger area (so giving more interior standing room than most), some customers wanted a 'solid' riser. Holdsworth took his time and eventually brought out an extremely functional and easy to operate elevating top with excellent insulation and control over ventilation.

Another popular feature on many conversions is the firm high-level double bed which replaces the once-universal stretcher bunks. To my knowledge, the first ever was seen on a Sherpa from you-know-who.

On a recent visit to the factory, I thought I'd caught Richard Holdsworth out. Most other makers put insulation material between vehicle sides and interior panels. Some Reading models have; on others it is lacking. 'Why?' According to Renault engineers, the materials used for insulation can trap condensation, leading eventually to rusting from the inside. The final decision is the custom-



Seen now on several Holdsworth models – the comfortable L-shaped settee and folding door that makes a private back room.



Loading the Ford Future. Notice easy access to rear of cupboards and gas bottle stowage.

**“No automated production line here ... just skilled craftsmanship.”**  
**John Hunt**

er's. If wanted, it will be built.

So, the story continues. A few of the bright ideas that flow from the Reading factory may be doomed to obscurity but many more will be found in successful products. Other makers have been known to flatter Richard Holdsworth's analytical approach – look around!

Of one thing we can be certain. Holdsworth products will continue to bear the stamp of individuality coupled with the skilled crafting of high quality materials.

You won't find Richard Holdsworth motor caravans in every showroom or on every forecourt, but you can be sure the extra miles spent in seeking out a good Richard Holdsworth dealer will be worth every bit of the effort.



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**Leisure 2000**

**RICHARD HOLDSWORTH**

# Designed by people built by people



*Cars may now be built by machines with the help of people, but with motor caravans it's the other way round. Skill, experience and craftsmanship are what it takes, and what the team at Richard Holdsworth Conversions have in plenty. The people who design and build the motor caravans gather in formal pose outside the factory (left) while Richard Holdsworth manages to be in two places at once and is seen above in 'the office'*

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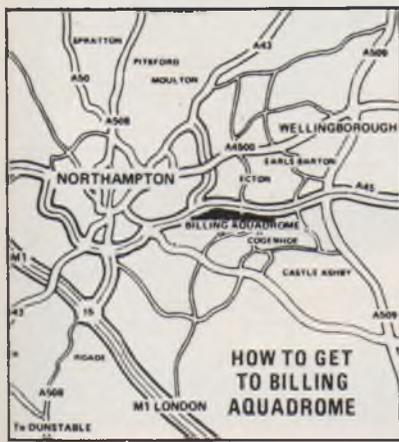
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# Renault Traffic

## The Vehicle

It was in the early 1980's that Renault introduced a quite revolutionary range of front wheel drive commercial vans, and although other manufacturers have responded with new models and changes to their older designs, the original advantages displayed by the Traffic are still very much there today.

The Renault Traffic is light and easy to drive, has compact dimensions and can be exceptional in its fuel consumption. Earlier models were thought by some to be underpowered with smaller engines and four-speed gearboxes, but the recent introduction of 1.7 and 2.0-litre petrol engines coupled to five-speed gearboxes have made them as nippy as any on the road.

The use of front wheel drive – along with other advantages in the running gear – gave the Traffic the lowest floor height of any commercial on the road at the time, and it still applies today.

Richard Holdsworth, always ready to use his own motor caravanning experience, quickly opted for Renault's own high-top on the Renault. Amongst other advantages, this gives full height rear doors, (no more cracked heads when climbing in the van!) and full standing height right into the cab of the vehicle.

Fuel consumption? As always, fuel consumption depends on the individual user, what load the vehicle is carrying and, of course, on the type of terrain that the vehicle is being driven over. However, experience shows that the Renault usually stretches a gallon of fuel to its maximum, and users often report consumption figures into the thirties. More than one careful owner of a Richard Holdsworth Renault diesel has

*Enormous space in the Romance Elevating Roof*



reported up to 40mpg – but that can be regarded as exceptional.

## The Conversion

The Richard Holdsworth range for the Renault Traffic is as wide as you could wish with elevating roof, plus high top models based upon both short and long wheelbase vans. All carry the name 'Romance' immediately letting you know you are looking at a French vehicle!!

The Romance elevating roof came first and immediately set the pattern for Renault's motor caravan range by winning the coveted Brands Hatch Motor Caravan of the Year award on its first outing.

The features that gave it the edge back in 1982 are still very much there today, with a full-length elevating roof (much more space to move around in), a refrigerator fitted above waist level (more storage space below) and a superb kitchen that surrounds the cook on all sides.

Richard Holdsworth lets you move up into the world of Renault high-top motor caravans with two models that are as different as chalk to cheese, but which are equally successful in their own ways. They are the HT2 and the HTL Super and they are both based upon the long wheelbase vehicle, which provides an extra 18 inches of interior space over its short wheelbase cousin.

And what an advantage this 18 inches gives, too. Yet with the spare wheel removed from the rear door and tucked neatly in its own cupboard, the overall length

is a compact 15ft 9in.

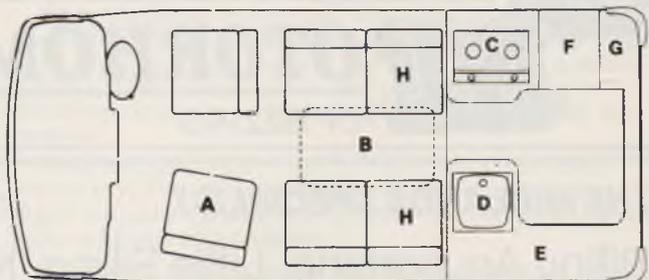
A full road test on the HT2 follows and you will see just what a practical and attractive motor caravan it is. Suffice to say, if you are looking for a spacious motor caravan, with a great variety of seating/dining/sleeping arrangements plus a room divider that creates an enormous toilet/changing room, then the HT2 must be high on your shopping list.

The HTL Super is at the top of the tree. The layout is typical Richard Holdsworth – unorthodox yet highly successful with the shower moved from the rear corner to make it by far the biggest of any Renault motor caravan. But it's the kitchen area that catches the eye – it spreads around the rear of the van and is superb in the extreme. An oven/cooker, eye-level grill, large refrigerator with freezer compartment, mains hook-up, split charger and dual batteries are just part of the specification.

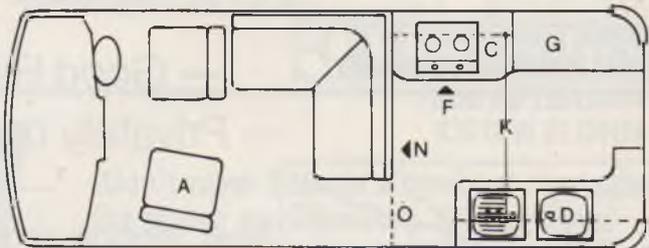
*One of the best kitchens in any motorcaravan – HTL Super*

### Key

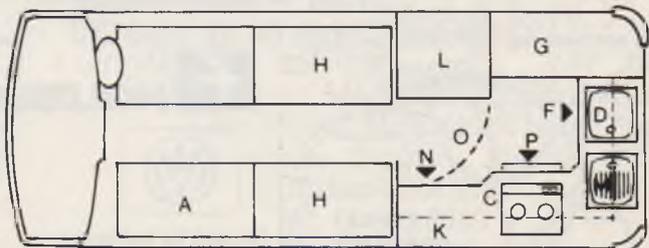
A Swivel Cab Seat; B Table; C Cooker; D Sink; E Storage; F Fridge; G Wardrobe; H Flexi-Seat; K Roof Cabinets; L Shower; M Drainer; N Toilet; O Folding Door; P Oven.



**Romance**



**Romance HT2**



**Romance HTL Super**



# HOLDSWORTH ROMANCE HT2



# TEST EXTRA

## Renault Trafic-based two-berth with an L-shaped dinette and spacious kitchen

Holdsworth's Romance HT2 features a similar L-shaped dinette/lounge layout to the company's VW Transporter-based Vision tested last month. Another similarity is that Holdsworth use the base vehicle manufacturer's own high-top model, in the Romance's case a long-wheelbase Renault Trafic T1000, powered by a 1721cc petrol engine which drives the front wheels through a five-speed manual gearbox. The extra space available inside this much larger vehicle (compared to the Transporter) is used to create a nearside/offside split kitchen area aft of the lounge, and to provide more storage.

Apart from being a generally larger vehicle than the Transporter, the Trafic also benefits from having a front engine/front-wheel drive configuration that is not only more space-efficient, but creates a lower floor level for the converter and a more convenient step-in height for the user. Access to the living quarters through the nearside hinged door or rear twin doors is a step up of just 18in. Occupants can also move between the cab and living quarters with no difficulty.

An air of interior spaciousness is further underlined by large cab windows, which are supplemented by additional front and side windows fitted at the Holdsworth factory. The latter comprise front and side windows in the high-top roof –



Short front and rear overhangs provide stability on the road and on site

fixed as standard but available as sliding units at extra cost – and sliding windows each side. Deep windows in the full-height rear doors provide good rear vision, assisted by cab door mirrors.

### Interior

Internal walls are trimmed with a soft pink cord material up to window height, the window surrounds being trimmed with ivory leather cloth. The high-top roof lining and sides are faced in beige cord material. Keying well with these neutral colours is a modern, warm, diagonal-stripe upholstery, zipped for easy removal, beige curtains

and a mushroom carpet in the cab and lounge areas. Practical and attractive tile-effect vinyl covers the floor in the kitchen.

Well-made furniture units have a light, simulated wood-grain finish, complemented by solid hardwood edgings and door pulls. Further evidence of Holdsworth's attention to detail is seen in the use of brass-finish piano-style hinges for all cupboard and locker doors.

Dinette seats can be arranged as an L-shaped lounge or as two forward-facing single seats. The cab passenger seat swivels as standard. At mealtimes, a 30 x 19in centre-leg table provides room for up to four people to

eat in comfort. When not required, the table stores flat against the vehicle's side wall and the leg clips neatly inside the wardrobe.

Once the sun has gone down, HT2 occupants need not rely on carrots to enable them to see in the dark; eight-Watt fluorescent lights are sensibly fitted above the side and rear doors, over the hob and sink unit. A single 10W corner reading lamp is fitted in the lounge, where there is also a central switch plate which enables all interior lights to be operated from one point – handy if someone has left the kitchen light on after going to bed.

As its title suggests, the HT2 is a two-berth as standard, although sturdy side supports are fitted to take the optional solid-based roof bed should four berths be required. Downstairs, the standard bed arrangement is two singles derived from the dinette seats mated to the fully-reclined cab seats. Extra infill supports and cushions to make a double bed are on the options list.

The kitchen sink unit features an L-shaped sink unit on the nearside, the 'leg' of the L extending across one half of the rear door. Worktops are faced with an attractive wine-coloured, grained laminate and have an inset sink and separate drainer in 'harvest gold' vitreous enamel. Backing the sink unit is a smart wallboard with a red/white squared pattern. Below the sink is a spacious, shelved cupboard, one side of which is taken up by an 11.5-gal fresh water tank. Water is fed to the tap at the sink by a 12v pump operated by a footswitch. Conveniently sited above the sink unit are



Plenty of storage space for clothes etc in and around the wardrobe



Dinette seats combine with cab seats to make two single beds



2 litre now available

# Spacecraft...

One of the features that an experienced motor caravanner seeks is space – and the Renault HT2 from Richard Holdsworth has more space than most thanks to its clever 'L' shaped dinette.

Not only does this unique layout allow room to stretch out during the day but it also brings a host of benefits when the sun goes down.

When you want a good night's sleep, for example, the lounge quickly turns into either a pair of single beds or a two-thirds width double at no extra cost.

On the move, the 'L' part of the lounge folds away and you have either a bench seat or two face-forwards singles – again at no extra cost.

Another trick that the HT2 has up its sleeve is its simple room divider which quickly creates an enormous toilet/changing room.

The HT2 is built on the long wheelbase van and because it

uses Renault's own high top, standing room extends right into the vehicle cab. Rear doors are full height too and with the spare wheel mounted inside exterior length is scarcely more than short wheelbase vans.

The HT2 has its own kitchen 'alcove' with extractor fan and light. All units are the latest vitreous enamel – the large fridge has its own freezer compartment and is three-way operation. There is a central lighting control panel, mains hook-up and full electrical safety protection.

HT2 – the extra space is just one of its advantages.



Richard Holdsworth Conversions Limited, Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire. Our sales office is open weekdays from 9am to 5pm – Sats until 1pm Closed lunchtime from 1pm to 2pm

## THE 1987 RENAULT HT2

# TEST EXTRA

lockers and a lipped shelf.

Directly opposite on the offside is a two-burner hob and grill, backed by matching red/white wallboard. Below the hob is an Electrolux 2cu.ft fridge with electronic ignition and operating on 12v, 240v or gas. Additional high-level storage is provided by two roof lockers.

## Storage space

Aft of the cooker recess is a two-door wardrobe. The narrower door opens on to three lipped shelves; the wider door gives access to hanging space from a front-to-back rail, which is supplemented by a stubby 'half-rail' set lower down and suitable for carrying light garments. Below the wardrobe are two more cupboard doors, behind which is more shelved storage space. Wheelarch intrusion at floor level restricts space in the base of this cupboard to some extent, although

there is ample room in this ventilated compartment for the HT2's complement of two 6lb Camping Gaz cylinders.

To assist with the dispersal of cooking smells, a wind-up roof-light with integral insect mesh is fitted in the kitchen area. This part of the HT2's floor space can be partitioned from the lounge area by a concealed, lightweight concertina door. Thus owners can create a separate washroom/toilet compartment of far more spacious dimensions than would normally be expected in a panel van conversion. With this in mind, provision is made to house a portable toilet beneath the sliding lounge seat.

The Renault's spare wheel is neatly housed behind the sink unit's L-shaped extension, access to which is available from the back of the vehicle, where even more storage space takes the form of open shelving.



Dinette reading lamp and main switch panel for all interior lights

Holdsworth's Romance HT2, at £12,021, provides a good, basic specification to which owners can add at a later date. To this end the converters offer a comprehensive list of optional

extras which, added to the base vehicle options of a 2068cc diesel or a 2000cc petrol engine, means that potential customers are not limited for choice. □

## HOLDSWORTH ROMANCE HT2

**PRICES.** All prices in this test apply to the time of original publication and may have altered. Please check current prices with Richard Holdsworth Conversions or your Holdsworth Dealer.

### Converter

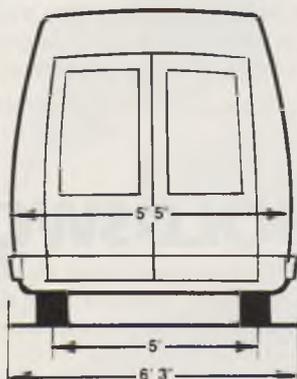
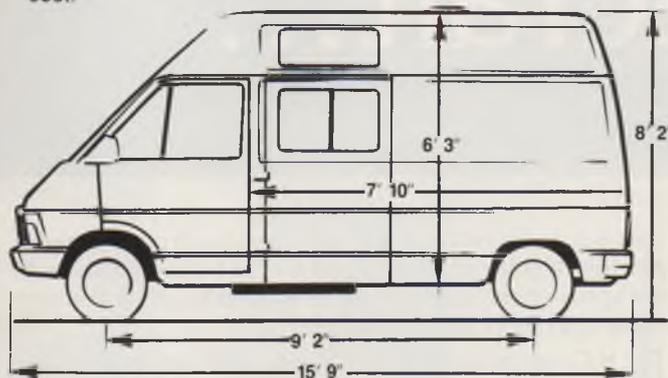
Richard Holdsworth Conversions Ltd, Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire  
☎ 0734 692900

### BODY

**Type:** high-top.

**Construction:** Renault Trafic T1000 long-wheelbase high-top panel van with additional windows fitted by converter.

**Insulation:** internal walls and roof lined with cord carpet material; air space between outer walls and ply lining, and between floor layers. Glass fibre insulation available at extra cost.



**Doors:** two cab doors, nearside hinged door, rear twin hinged doors.

### INTERIOR

**Toilet room:** no, but kitchen area can be partitioned to provide separate washroom.

**Gas system:** on-board capacity for two 6lb Camping Gaz cylinders.

**Electrical system:** all 12v from vehicle battery.

**Lighting:** four 8W fluorescent lights, one 10W bulb light. Cab and interior courtesy lights.

**Standard equipment includes:** reclining cab seats, passenger seat swivels; 2cu.ft fridge with electronic ignition and 12v/240v/gas operation; two-burner hob/grill; separate enamelled sink and drainer; L-shaped lounge or separate forward-facing seats; sliding partition.

**Factory fitted options:** pressurised hot water system, £416.59; solid roof bed, £114.71; blown-air central heating, £356.21; flyscreens for two lower windows, £42.26; flyscreens for high-top windows, £36.23; opening high-top windows, £48.30; cab headrests (available only as original equipment), £78.49; double bed, £48.30.

### BASE VEHICLE

**Model:** Renault Trafic T1000 long-wheelbase high-top panel van.

**Engine:** 1721cc, 4 cyl in-line. Max power 69.5bhp at 5000rpm, max torque 92.6lb.ft at 2750rpm. Compression ratio 9.25:1.

**Transmission:** five-speed manual, front-wheel drive.

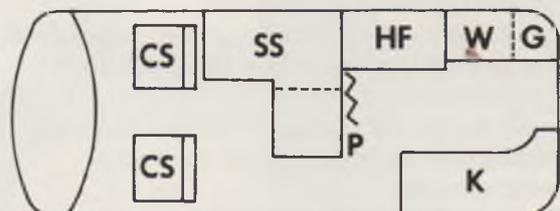
**Suspension:** front independent with MacPherson-type struts, telescopic shock absorbers, needle-bearing top pivots bonded to rubber semi-spheres; bottom wishbones. Rear tubular axle with welded stub axle carrier; single leaf springs.

**Steering:** rack and pinion.

**Tyres:** 175 R 14 C-PR6.

**Factory fitted options:** 2068cc diesel engine, £941.85. 1995cc petrol engine, £476.96.

**Supplier:** Renault UK Ltd, Western Avenue, London W3 0RZ.  
☎ 01-992 3481.



**KEY:** CS cab seat, SS settee/two single beds, HF hob with fridge below, W wardrobe, G gas storage, K kitchen, P partition.

# Volkswagen

## The Vehicle

For many years now, Volkswagens have been the best-selling motor caravan in the whole of Britain. The combination of appeal to the driver, low depreciation year-in, year-out, variety of engine options and gearbox types and undisputed quality usually ensures that four out of every ten motor caravan buyers choose Volkswagen.

Volkswagen have spent an enormous amount of time and money on the safety aspects of their vehicles, and the VW Transporter – even with the engine in the rear and with apparently little in front of the driver – comes out of crash tests vastly better than virtually all forward-control vans with the engine between the driver and front passenger.

The main reason is the fact that the vehicle is built around an immensely strong 'cage' of steel struts and members, with those beneath the driver's cab designed specially to collapse progressively in the event of a front-end impact.

Even if some observers think that the VW is close to perfection, Volkswagen engineers keep on making improvements and adding options to give it an even wider appeal. There are two petrol-engine power outputs, 78bhp and the new 2.1-litre fuel-injected engine developing to no less than 112bhp. There is an economical diesel and a turbo diesel, while the latest option is a sophisticated four-wheel drive version that can even show a Land-Rover the way across certain types of impossible terrain.

Fuel consumption? With the 78bhp petrol engine you should achieve between 25 to 30mpg – perhaps more on a long run. Interestingly, a five speed gearbox doesn't help much with the VW as the ratios for top gears in both boxes are the same. But for those who may not have driven the Transporter for some time, it is well worth a re-test just to see why so many people choose this well-engineered German vehicle as a base for their motor caravans.

## The Conversion

Most converters build a conversion that can be regarded as the standard layout for the VW and which puts the main double bed over the engine deck, with the main caravan facilities in a long unit down the side of the van.

It works perfectly well but you must watch the smaller details if the conversion isn't to be some-

thing of a compromise. Take the rear bed, for example. Richard Holdsworth uses a marvellous German rock-and-roll bed mechanism where others make up flaps and hinges that cost in terms of time and convenience when on the camp site.

The discerning motor caravaner will also note that some converters push the rear seat right back against the engine deck – or fit the water tank beneath this seat – and it means an enormous inroad into your vital storage space. On the other hand, the Villa 3, has a seat that is well forward of the engine deck and it means more storage and a longer main bed, too. It also incorporates a compartment for a slide-out portable toilet.

And one last benefit – rear passengers are, automatically, closer to the people in the cab, so it's much more sociable in a Villa 3 than some others.

If the Villa 3 roughly follows the traditional

of Volkswagen motor caravan, the Vision high-top certainly doesn't, and the result is one of the most exciting and complete motor caravans on the road today.

The VW Vision is a real enthusiast's motor caravan and, probably, the best combination of features and specifications ever offered on the VW.

The driving cab, unlike other VW layouts where it is used solely for driving, combines with an 'L'-shaped seat in the centre of the van to form a spacious lounge for relaxing or dining. For travelling, this 'L'-shaped seat has other tricks up its sleeve, because it can form a bench or two single face-forward seats. Part of the seat will even slide out of the vehicle to leave space for carrying goods or a wheelchair.

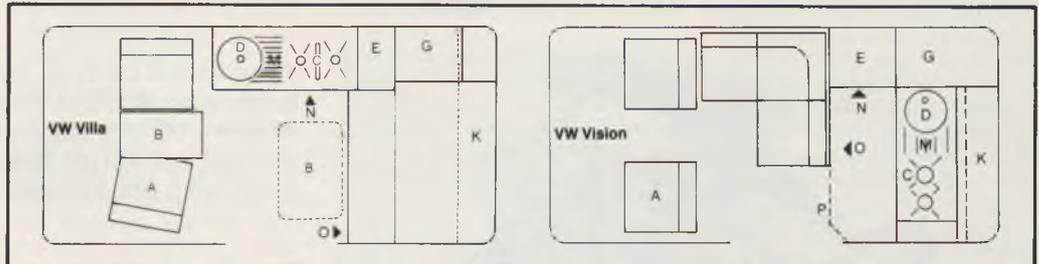
At night, the same rear seat combines again with the cab seats to form either a two-thirds width double bed, a full width double or a pair of single beds. And you can't find that elsewhere in a

Volkswagen motor caravan.

Not content with this sort of versatility, the Vision goes one further by providing a separate changing room/toilet at the rear. It's formed by a simple fold-out room divider that slides out when the toilet compartment is required, and slides away when not. And the toilet? It's housed in its own compartment and, therefore, it doesn't intrude on the caravan during the daytime.

Last but not least, the Vision has a superb kitchen spread across the rear of the vehicle, which combines with really exceptional storage to mark this motor caravan as a real enthusiast's vehicle.

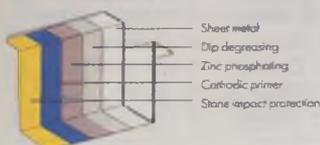
KEY	
A Swivel Cab Seat	G Wardrobe
B Table	H Flexi-Seat
C Cooker	K Roof Cabinets
D Sink	M Drainer
E Storage	N Large Fridge
	O Toilet
	P Folding Door



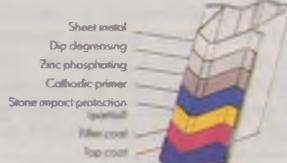
# Some hints from Volkswagen on how to build the most popular motor caravan...



Paint structure – underbody

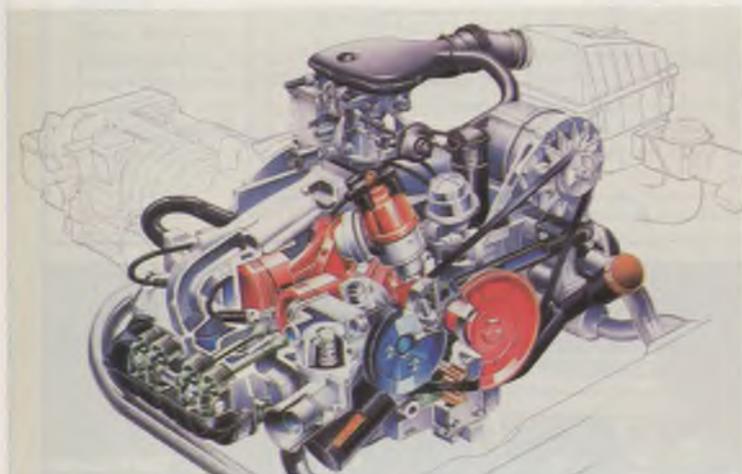


Paint structure – body



A motor caravan base vehicle has to be something rather special if it is to be the number one best seller.

Driver appeal is just one reason; also our low depreciation year in, year out. Don't forget our 10 point anti-corrosion treatment applied at all stages of manufacture, added to a standard of finish which seems to win more friends every time the Caravan Show comes around.



If you want to catch up, try building a van with independent suspension all round. And the engine behind the rear wheels – not only will your customers find it's smoother on the road, but you get better traction off the beaten track (a tricky camp site, for example).

Then there's the option of no less than four engines, 78bhp petrol and the new fuel injected 112bhp model. There's the economic diesel and a powerful turbo diesel. There are four and five speed manual gearboxes and an automatic too and if your motor caravanning is in some of the wilder parts of the world, you'll appreciate the amazing syncro four wheel drive system.



All this helps to keep the driver in control and clear of accidents, but isn't it nice to know just how sturdily every Volkswagen is built. There's a special energy absorbing floor structure beneath the cab to keep you safe in the unlucky event of a front end collision. The occupants are surrounded by a safety cell made up of vertical struts, longitudinal members and rollover bars. Even the doors contain special structural sections for ultimate protection.

These are just some of the reasons why Volkswagen motor caravans take some beating. And the Richard Holdsworth Villa 3 elevating roof and the Villa 3 and Vision high tops are three of the best.



V.A.G (UNITED KINGDOM) LTD., COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DIVISION  
FRANKLAND ROAD, BLAGROVE, SWINDON SN5 8YU OR TELEPHONE (0793) 40231

# HIGH-RISE VILLA

**Holdsworth's Transporter-based Villa was first introduced when Volkswagen launched the water-cooled version of their popular base vehicle. We spent some time with one of the very latest Villa Mk3 variants**

As its name suggests, Richard Holdsworth's Villa 3 is the third generation of Villa motor caravan conversions based on Volkswagen's Transporter. A full range of base vehicle options is available: 60 or 78bhp 1.9-litre water-cooled engine, 1.6-litre diesel or diesel-turbo power units, plus a choice of four or five-speed manual or automatic transmissions.

Conversion options are 'non-roof' van, solid-side elevating roof or fixed high-roof. All versions offer two-berth accommodation as standard, although the elevating-roof and high-top models can be additionally fitted with a solid-base roof bed (£72.45 and £114.71 respectively).

Taking the 60bhp 1.9-litre engine and four-speed manual transmission, Villa 3 prices start at £10,049 for the non-roof van, £11,347 for the elevating roof conversion, and £11,355 for the high-top model. The Villa 3 supplied to us for test had the elevating roof and was built on a 78bhp 1.9-litre Transporter with four-speed manual gearbox - price £11,611.

The Holdsworth elevating roof is a well-designed piece of equipment which is also very carefully mated to the base vehicle. On the road it blends in naturally with the Transporter's profile, while a well at the front creates a useful roof rack. Raising the roof requires little or no effort, since this operation is assisted by gas-filled struts fitted front and rear. Simply release four over-centre catches (fitted to the outside), step inside and push upwards on a centre pad. As the roof cap rises, the side and end walls open up automatically. If extra ventilation is needed in the roof space, the end sections can be left unsecured; alternatively, the forward end wall is held shut by a bolt, while a simple rod-operated 'pusher' is used to engage the rear wall in its fully closed position.

### Very simple

Reversing the procedure is just as simple: disengage the end walls and pull down using two vinyl straps which, when not required, are held against the roof cap by Velcro tabs. It's

all very simple, and the roof's insulated sides and ends cut down heat loss. Fixed windows in the sidewalls are double-glazed acrylic and come with fitted curtains. Headroom in the Villa's living quarters is a generous 6ft 9in when the roof is raised.

The general interior layout of this latest Villa remains essentially unchanged, basically because Holdsworth designers saw little point in altering what is recognised as the most successful floorplan for an elevating roof conversion. The galley extends down the offside, where it terminates in a storage chest. Installed across the vehicle just behind the sliding door is a two-seat settee. Behind this, and separated from the kitchen unit by a bulkhead, is a wardrobe.

Without doubt, the most obvious change can be seen in the 1986 Villa's decor and upholstery: furniture units are finished in a lighter woodgrain, while seats (including those in the cab) are upholstered in a very attractive coral Dralon which takes on a warm golden

colour under the van's fluorescent light. Seat cushions (4 1/2in thick) are very comfortable, and remain so when used as a double bed.

The bed makes up easily as a result of an easy-action hinge mechanism built into the settee base which causes the settee backrest to drop flat, creating a 6ft 3 1/2in-long mattress. Bed width is 4ft 1in at the back, narrowing to 3ft 7in where the kitchen unit intrudes. A nice touch is the provision of individually adjustable aircraft-style spotlights over the rear of the bed. Plain beige unlined curtains run smoothly on metal track and are very generously cut. Where required they are held against the windows by plastic-coated wire.

### High quality

Completing the decor, internal sidewalls and window surrounds are lined with 'needlecord' carpet material - a soft mushroom colour up to just below the window line and pale beige above. A good quality twist-pile carpet in biscuit covers the floor.

Decor and the choice of furnishing fabrics are, of course, very personal matters. But that apart, we were left with the over-riding impression of a well-balanced decor and that only material of a very high quality had been selected. This impression was further supported by the solid feel to the furniture units, which are finished with an attractive wine leather-look laminate to worktops, hand-varnished solid beech edges

*continued on p20*



The Villa's dinette table is really only big enough for two people; an extra table that fits between the cab seats is optional



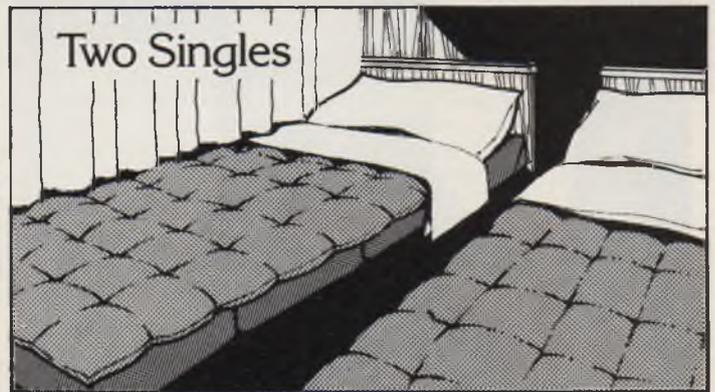
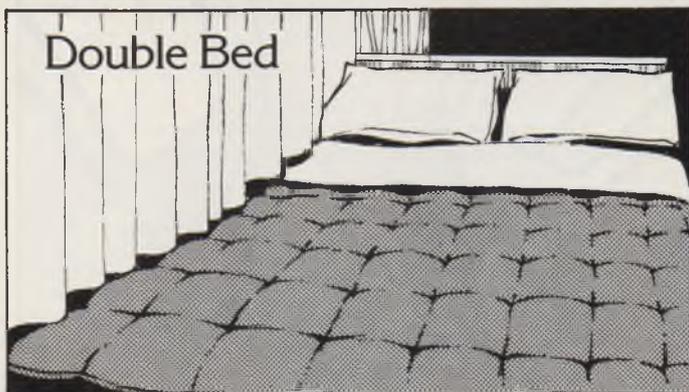
A smart, enamelled sink and hob in ivory sits beneath laminated worktops: the base unit provides a variety of storage

# STAR TEST





## Double Vision...



Take a quick look at the Volkswagen Vision and you see a superb motor caravan with a giant sized double bed – take a second look and you see the same vehicle with two single beds.

But not only is the Vision unique amongst Volkswagen motor caravans in the choice of single or double beds, but it is also unique in lots of other nice ways too.

Take day-time relaxing, for example. The Vision has a spacious 'L' shaped lounge that really lets you relax in comfort. For day-time travelling, the lounge makes either two face-forwards single seats or a face-forwards bench seat. And one seat even slides right out of the vehicle to leave masses of free floor space to carry goods (wheelchair, perhaps?).

At night a simple divider partitions off part of the vehicle to provide a separate toilet room – the toilet slides out from an under-seat locker and slides back in again when not needed. (In day-time, the divider can be used to create a separate changing room without having to draw all the curtains).

At the rear is a kitchen area that could put many other motor caravans in the shade. It's separate to the lounge area for a start, and has the latest enamel two-burner and grill cooker, sink and drainer, large Electrolux refrigerator with freezer compartment, its own lighting control panel and two-way extractor fan.

There's a mains hook-up split charger and secondary battery, under-floor water tank and no less than five opening windows. And it's built to the now legendary Richard Holdsworth standard.

The Volkswagen Vision from Richard Holdsworth – even a quick look tells you it's something really special.

 **Richard  
HOLDSWORTH**

Richard Holdsworth Conversions Ltd., Headley Road East, Woodley Reading, Berks. Our sales office is open weekdays from 9am to 5pm – Sats until 1pm. Closed lunchtime from 1pm to 2pm.

## THE 1987 VW VISION

[www.vwT25camper.info](http://www.vwT25camper.info) - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T25 / T3 / Vanagon Campervans

# STAR TEST



A deep larder chest aft of the kitchen unit contains a lined cutlery tray and sliding tray: sprung struts support the lid



The wardrobe is conventional for Transporter-based motorvans; lockers over the bed provide additional storage for folded clothes



Two 6lb Camping Gaz cylinders can be accommodated on the convenient slide-out tray which is vented to the exterior



Lowering Holdworth's solid-sided elevating roof is easy using the two straps provided: the straps locate on Velcro tabs

continued from p17

and handles. It's worth mentioning here that all furniture is based on ply panelling, not chipboard, and marine ply is used in the kitchen area to prevent delamination.

Access to the kitchen's one-piece enamelled sink drainer and two-burner hob grill is by raising separate worktop sections, each of which is supported against the sidewall by hinged stainless steel splashguards. The large, circular sink has a domestic-size waste outlet but only a small drainer. Water is piped to the sink's

swivelling spout from a 12-gallon tank, now fitted beneath the floor as opposed to its inboard location on earlier Villas. Supply is via a Lab-Craft 12v pump actuated by a foot-switch. A warning light fitted on the wardrobe's forward wall indicates low fresh water level. Waste water drains away to an outlet point on the offside.

## Light interior

Large windows in the cab and the main body of the van let in plenty of light. Standard on the Villa 3 are louvred kitchen windows, to allow ventilation as well as light. Flyscreens are

available as an optional extra.

The Villa's interior may be well lit during the day; however, we felt its single 8W fluorescent did not provide sufficient light for reading or playing cards etc at the dinette table at night. The fitting's location on the sidewall above the sink unit produced, in our opinion, a further problem: the wood edging on the worktops caused two thirds of the unit's depth to be in shadow. We felt that one more fitting located over the vehicle's sliding door would brighten up the interior considerably (additional fluorescents are available as factory-fitted options at

around £10 each).

Storage in the kitchen base unit centres around a 2cu.ft Electrolux fridge which is fitted with automatic electronic ignition and operates on gas, 12v or 240v mains. Shelves cupboards are provided on each side of the fridge, the one on the left containing a slide-out tray which can carry two 6lb Camping Gaz cylinders. The tray and the vehicle floor are vented to allow any leaking gas to escape. The fridge's 12v operation can be controlled by a switch set in the lower part of the dashboard. Mains operation is catered for by a BS 4343 240v inlet which is

# STAR TEST



An unusual and very useful feature are these aircraft-style lights which are fitted above the double bed



If additional ventilation is required, the roof's end walls can be opened; this device also locks the rear wall in place

also wired to a 13amp switched socket via an earth leakage circuit breaker and a Warner electrical control unit. Space for an auxiliary battery is provided in a lidded compartment behind the cab passenger seat.

Extra storage for odds and ends is available beneath the sink, while the chest next to the wardrobe makes an ideal larder. Thoughtful and practical fittings in the chest are a deep, sliding tray and a lined cutlery tray. Its lid is held open by sprung struts, leaving both hands free to find the desired item.

Clothes and bedding storage is certainly adequate for two occupants, and would probably stretch to a family with two young children. The wardrobe is of a size we have become accustomed to in Transporter conversions: about 1ft deep by 2ft wide and with a 6in front-to-back hanging rail set 3ft above the base. The window that extends into the wardrobe area is frosted against prying eyes. Additional clothes storage is provided in a deep locker with two access doors in the roof area above the engine deck. Cubby holes extending aft of the wardrobe are accessible only when the tailgate is raised.

If only two people are using the Villa, the temptation may be

to store bedding (at least while on site) in the roof space over the engine deck. There is some storage available in the settee seat base, although part of this is taken up by a compartment designed to take a Porta Potti 235. Bedding could also be stored on the engine deck, behind the settee.

## On the road

In overall respects the Transporter was a predictable pleasure to drive. Steering, brakes and clutch were light and precise, while the gear-change made for relaxed driving. All-round visibility is excellent and the vehicle is no problem to park or place on the road. The only disadvantages of driving what is, in fact, a light commercial vehicle are the absence of a dipping rear-view mirror, intermittent windscreen wipers and, perhaps the greatest nuisance in winter, the lack of a heated rear window.

Such problems, however, fade into the background when set against the many positive features of the Transporter as a motor caravan base vehicle. We could find very little to fault on the Villa 3. The conversion work on the model we tested was well executed and had a look of durability about it that would stand the test of time. □

## HOLDSWORTH VW VILLA 3

**PRICES.** All prices in this test apply to the time of original publication and may have altered. Please check current prices with Richard Holdsworth Conversions or your Holdsworth Dealer.

### Converter

Richard Holdsworth Conversions Ltd, Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire

☎ 0734 692900

### BODY

**Type:** elevating roof.

**Berths:** two adults.

**Construction:** Volkswagen Transporter with Richard Holdsworth fitted windows. Plywood inner skin on some walls, covered with carpet-type material. Exterior-grade plywood inner floor. Richard Holdsworth rising roof with GRP top and plinth plus steel polystyrene plywood sides.

**Insulation:** carpet-type material; air space between outer walls and plywood lining; air space between floor layers. Glass fibre mat insulation in walls and roof top available at extra cost.

**Doors:** two cab doors, nearside sliding door and rear tailgate.

### INTERIOR

**Toilet room:** no.

**Gas system:** inboard capacity for two 6lb Camping Gaz cylinders.

**Electrical system:** mains electric 16amp inlet socket wired to earth leakage circuit breaker with test switch and Warner control unit; one 13amp switched socket outlet.

**Lighting:** one 8W strip light over kitchen unit, two aircraft-style lights over bed.

**Standard equipment includes:** enamelled one-piece sink/drainer and two-burner hob/grill; louvre windows over kitchen unit; Electrolux 212E electronic fridge; underfloor 12gal fresh water tank; 12v Lab-Craft water pump with footswitch control; 12v low water level warning lamp; wardrobe; swivelling passenger's seat; storage for Porta Potti 235.

**Factory-fitted options:** Zig charge/control unit and auxiliary battery £96.60; swivelling cab driver's seat and occasional table £126.79; solid roof bed £72.45; flyscreens for louvre windows £30.18; Hot Box blown air heating £356.21.

### BASE VEHICLE

**Model:** VW Transporter delivery van.

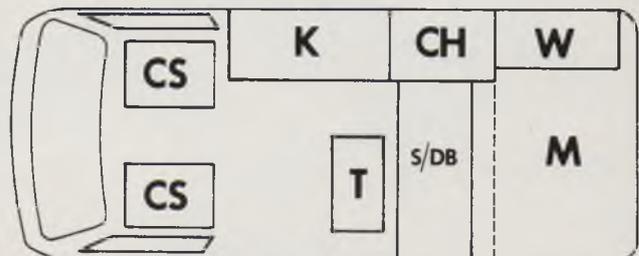
**Engine (as tested):** 1913cc, 4cyl horizontally opposed. Max bhp 78 at 4600rpm, max torque 104lb.ft at 2600rpm.

**Transmission:** four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive.

**Suspension:** front independent double wishbones, progressive coil springs with telescopic shock absorbers, anti-roll bar; rear independent trailing arms, miniblock springs with telescopic shock absorbers.

**Tyres:** 185SR 14C

**Supplier:** VAG (UK) Ltd, Yeomans Drive, Blakelands, Milton Keynes MK14 5AN. ☎ 0908 679121.



**key:** CS cab seat, K kitchen, CH storage chest, W wardrobe, M section of double bed mattress, S/DB settee/double bed, T table.

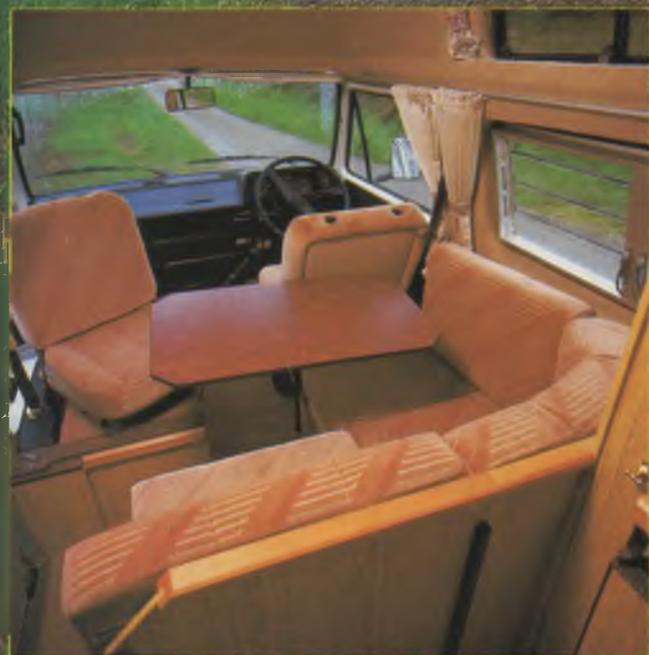
### IMPROVEMENTS

Since our road test a number of significant improvements have been made to the Villa 3.

The Volkswagen now has a trip mileometer and clock as part of the instrumentation and a new, fuel-injected 112bhp engine is available as an optional extra. The Villa 3 conversion includes additional interior lighting, a split charger and exterior fresh water filler as standard.

**STAR TEST**

# HOLDSWORTH VW VISION



# STAR TEST

## Not just a refreshing change of layout for the VW Transporter, but a motor caravan that offers comfort and convenience in a compact package

It's a common idea that Volkswagen's Transporter offers limited options for motor caravanners in terms of layout. Even high-top models are restricted to the vehicle's physical length and width, and in particular by the hump created by the rear engine deck. Traditionally, Transporter-based conversions feature an offside longitudinal galley/storage area, while passenger accommodation comprises the famous 'rock-'n'-roll' bench seat that converts to a double bed. This layout has been, still is, and no doubt will continue to be a very practical solution.

Clearly not content with this situation, Richard Holdsworth Conversions have proved that it's not only possible to create a different layout within the Transporter's confines, but that such a conversion would be a popular one with motor caravanners. Appropriately, in our opinion, its name is Vision.

Aft of the twin cab seats, Holdsworth designers have contrived to install an L-shaped lounge, the transverse leg of which is mounted on captive rails, enabling the seat to slide over to the nearside to provide a separate, single seat. The remainder of the L-shaped seating can also be converted to a single, forward-facing seat by folding back a hinged ply extension and rearranging the cushions/backrests accordingly.

Vision is a two-berth as standard, although solid bases for location over the cab are available to provide a double bed in the high-top roof area.

Access from the cab to the living quarters is straightforward, the aisle created between the rear seats lining up exactly with the space between the cab seats. If the rear seats are in the L-shaped configuration, there is room to pass between the seat and the sliding door.

### Kitchen unit

Behind the rear seats, the Vision's transverse kitchen unit is built on to the forward part of the engine deck, thus actually making use of the Transporter's notorious 'hump'. Extending down the offside behind the passenger seating is a floor-to-ceiling storage/facility unit that houses a 2cu.ft Electrolux electronic ignition fridge, a high-level cupboard containing inset mouldings for cutlery and crockery and, at head level, the

vehicle's electrical services. These centre round a Zig CF8 electronic control panel with mains/charging facilities (240v mains electrics are standard on the Vision), battery condition monitor and fuses. Mains wiring is protected by a separate ELCB, which has main switches neatly inset into the furniture next to the Zig. Above the ELCB controls is a rocker switch for a two-speed extractor fan, plus a low-water warning lamp connected to the van's 10gal fresh water tank.

The wardrobe is located in the usual Transporter position at the offside rear. It's a reasonably spacious compartment for the size of vehicle and offers the extra facility of three lipped shelves as well as hanging space from a front-to-back rail set 33in above the base. Additional lockers for folded clothes are located above the wardrobe and across the back of the vehicle, above the kitchen unit. Open storage is available on a wide, carpeted shelf behind the kitchen unit. Below this shelf, and accessible through the tailgate, is a very useful 'boot' area in which



Rear seats divide to make a central aisle to kitchen unit

items can be stored securely out of sight.

Two worktops, hinged separately on a single piano-style hinge, give access to the Vision's attractive, ivory-finished combined sink/drain and two-burner hob/grill. The tops are supported on hinged, stainless steel flaps and are finished in a smart, wine-

coloured, leather-look plastic laminate, with white laminate on the undersides.

A sign of the quality that Holdsworth build in to their motor caravans are the solid wood edgings on worktops and as finials in appropriate areas of furniture construction. Also noticeable are the wooden pulls fitted to cupboard and locker doors.



Rear tailgate gives access to concealed storage and gas compartment

# STAR TEST



Rear dinette seats combine with cab seats to create two single beds

Combined with the use of piano-style brass hinges throughout and an attractive woodgrain-effect ply for furniture, these details give Vision more than a touch of class.

Back to practicalities: below the sink a drop flap open on to storage, while twin cupboards in the base unit offer plenty of space for food and utensils. Cupboard interiors are finished in easy-clean white board – so much more sensible than bare wood.

In addition to the tasteful combination of woodgrain and the worktop laminate, the

Vision's interior decor contrives to achieve a modern look while at the same time being restful. Seats are upholstered in a horizontal/diagonal stripe velour in a colour that varies from a soft mushroom to something approaching pink/brown, depending on how the light strikes it. Individual cushions are vinyl backed and zipped for easy removal and cleaning. From the cab to the kitchen unit the floor is covered in a practical short-pile carpet that tones in well with the decor.

Also well matched is the cord carpet material used to cover

internal walls up to just below window height, where a similar material in beige takes over and continues up side walls and over the roof lining. Pleated curtains are plain beige, with ties that have a pink/wine floral motif.

## Spacious interior

The atmosphere of spaciousness created inside the Vision by using VW's high-top Transporter is further emphasised by Holdsworth's provision of large windows in the living quarters. Fixed windows are fitted in the sliding door and

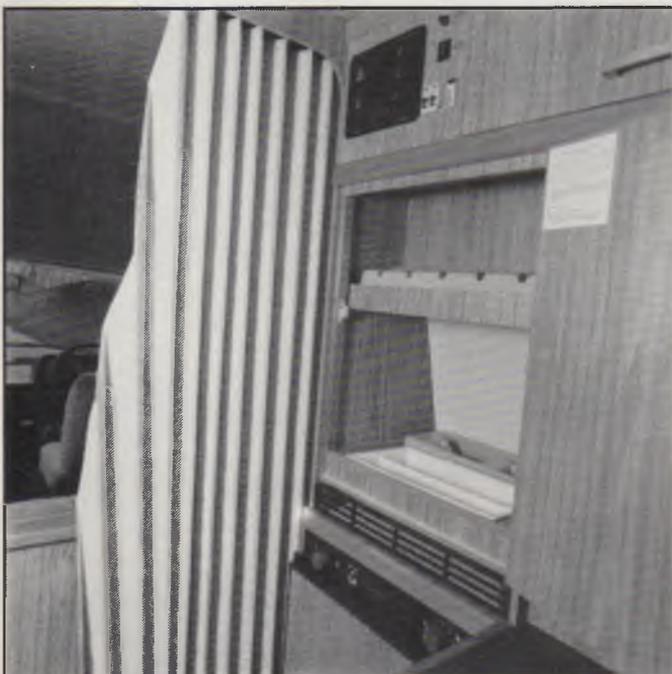
the panel behind it; on the offside behind the driver's seat a wide louvre window will provide plenty of ventilation, supplemented by sliding windows in the high-top roof.

Nor have Holdsworth neglected electric lighting in the Vision: eight-watt fluorescent lights are fitted to the rear bulkhead, above a face mirror in the roof-side over the kitchen unit, and above the nearside seat. A single corner reading lamp is also provided over the lounge area. Nice touch is an inset switch plate with four individual rocker switches that operate all four of the van's interior lights.

## Separate areas

A significant feature of the Vision's layout is the way that the lounge seating effectively divides the van's floorspace behind the cab into two distinct areas – lounge and kitchen. Not content with such innovation, Holdsworth designers have taken the concept to its logical conclusion by ingeniously accommodating a lightweight concertina door in the offside storage/facility unit, where it is neatly stored behind a long, narrow door so that it does not flap around when on the move. The door can be extended across the vehicle, partitioning the kitchen area, which can then double as a washroom/toilet compartment. The locker beneath the island seat is designed to take a portable toilet, offered as an optional extra.

At mealtimes, a pivoting tubular support fitted behind the driver's seat takes the van's 30 x 19in table (an occasional table for use between the cab seats is also on the options list).



Lightweight concertina door divides kitchen from dinette



Hinged extension to seat base can be used for extra storage

# STAR TEST

The L-shaped seats will accommodate three in comfort and the cab passenger seat can be swivelled to face the rear if needed.

Choice is also offered in sleeping arrangements: hinged extensions in rear seats can be opened out to make up two single beds in combination with the cab seats. Alternatively, a large double bed can be created by fitting a separate support board between the cab seats, and the table between the rear seats.

Vision's already capacious storage is further augmented by under-seat lockers, it being possible to extend the offside one by opening out its hinged base.

Priced at £12,750 (1.9-litre 60bhp petrol engine and four-speed manual gearbox), the Vision has a lot to offer the motor caravanner: an extremely convenient and easily manoeuvrable base vehicle with full

*Concealed seat base accommodation for a portable toilet*

standing headroom from front to back; a comfortable and well-appointed interior; standard features that include an under-floor fresh water tank, electric pumped water supply, fully-protected mains electrics input with 13amp switched socket; lots of practical storage space; and versatile accommodation.

## Extras

Volkswagen options available for the Vision are the 78bhp and new 112bhp fuel-injected engine, 1.6-litre diesel and diesel-turbo engines, and the four-wheel drive syncro. Transmission options are a five-speed manual and four-speed automatic, the latter combined with the 1.9-litre petrol engine. Factory-fitted options are listed, with prices, in our data panel. □



## HOLDSWORTH VW VISION

**PRICES.** All prices in this test apply to the time of original publication and may have altered. Please check current prices with Richard Holdsworth Conversions or your Holdsworth Dealer.

### Converter

Richard Holdsworth Conversions Ltd, Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire

☎ 0734 692900

### BODY

**Type:** high-top.

**Construction:** Volkswagen High-top Transporter with additional windows fitted by converter.

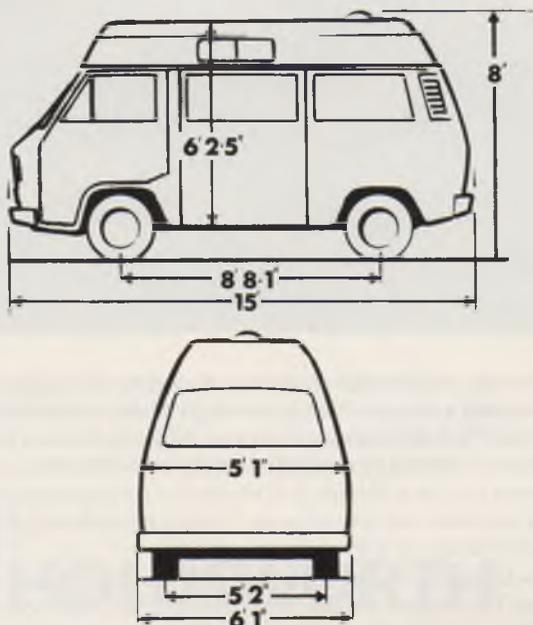
**Insulation:** all internal walls and ceiling lined with cord carpet material; air space between outer walls and ply lining and between floor layers. Glass fibre insulation available at extra cost.

**Doors:** Two cab doors, nearside sliding door and rear tailgate.

### INTERIOR

**Toilet room:** no, but provision for portable toilet in seat base.

**Gas system:** on-board capacity for two 6lb Camping Gaz cylinders.



**Electrical system:** 16 amp input wired through earth leakage circuit breaker to Zig CF8 control/charge unit and to auxiliary 12v battery. One mains socket.

**Lighting:** three 8W fluorescent lights, one 10W tungsten-filament reading lamp; all four individually switched or controlled from lounge switch panel. Cab courtesy light.

**Standard equipment includes:** swivelling cab passenger seat, 2cu.ft fridge with electronic ignition, louvre window, under-floor fresh water tank and level gauge, vitreous enamel sink/cooker, sliding partition to divide lounge from kitchen/washroom area.

**Factory-fitted options:** swivelling driver's seat and occasional table £126.79; solid roof bed £114.71; flyscreens (for louvre window) £30.18, (for high-top windows) £42.26; matching cab headrests £78.49; high-roof storage shelf £54.33; blown-air central heating £356.21.

### BASE VEHICLE

**Model:** Volkswagen Transporter high-top delivery van.

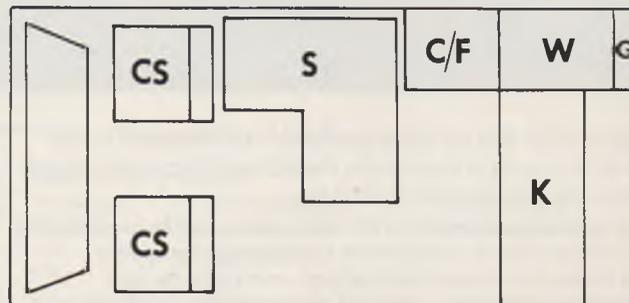
**Engine:** 1913cc, 4cyl horizontally opposed, water cooled. Max power 60bhp at 3700rpm, max torque 102lb.ft at 2200rpm.

**Transmission:** four-speed manual, rear-wheel drive.

**Suspension:** front independent coil springs with upper and lower wishbones, anti-roll bar, telescopic shock absorbers; rear independent trailing arm, coil springs, telescopic shock absorbers.

**Factory-fitted options:** 78bhp engine/four-speed gearbox £280.14; 78bhp engine/five-speed gearbox £525.26; 78bhp engine/four-speed automatic transmission £978.08; 1.6-litre diesel with four-speed (five-speed) gearbox £783.67 (£1028.79); 1.6-litre diesel-turbo engine/four-speed gearbox £1328.25; 112bhp fuel-injected engine/five-speed gearbox £1089.17; 78bhp syncro £4324.05.

**Supplier:** VAG (UK) Ltd, Yeomans Drive, Blakelands, Milton Keynes MK14 4AN. ☎ 0908 679121.



**Key:** CS cab seat, S seating (converts to two singles or a double bed), C/F cupboard/fridge below, W wardrobe, G gas storage, K kitchen unit

# Look no

Richard Holdsworth has t



Fiat Fanfare

Renault Romance

No matter whether you are a first time buyer or a dedicated motor caravanner with years of experience, the Richard Holdsworth range is the first and last stop on every buyer's list.

With a range that stretches from the basic, no nonsense model to the super luxurious, there is certain to be something for you. And amongst those who give us their support – we name no less authorities than Volkswagen, Renault, Ford and Fiat – and you can't get better than that.

One thing's certain – because Richard Holdsworth have a reputation for always being one step ahead with technically advanced layouts, you can be sure that there is something among the ten models to really excite you and your pocket.

There are models with showers and models without. And even where there isn't a shower, there is almost invariably a toilet compartment formed by a space saving foldaway divider, just one of the many practical features pioneered by Richard Holdsworth.

Others include inflatable seat squabs for comfortable driving day in, day out, slide out caravan seats for extra load carrying space (business use or a wheelchair perhaps?)

One last thing – we never spend your money on fittings you don't want. Four berths are only fitted for those who have four to sleep; oven cookers for those who want a five course meal and hot water for those who want the extra convenience.

HOLDSWORTH QUALITY

# further!

## the model for you . . .



VW Villa and Vision

Ford Future

One thing you do get for standard and that's Richard Holdsworth quality.. Solid plywood with full length brass piano hinges. Quality dralon furnishings and – above all – a standard of finish that makes a Richard Holdsworth motor caravan an investment for years to come.



Richard Holdsworth Conversions Limited, Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire. Tel: (0734) 692900. Open weekdays from 9am to 5pm – Sats until 1pm. Closed lunchtime from 1pm to 2pm.

Stamp brings details of the Richard Holdsworth 1987 range.

Please tick your selection:

- |            |   |  |
|------------|---|--|
| Volkswagen | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed (low) roof | <input type="checkbox"/> I will be buying in |
| Renault    | <input type="checkbox"/> Elevating roof   | the coming year <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Ford       | <input type="checkbox"/> High top         |  |
| Fiat       | <input type="checkbox"/>                  |  |

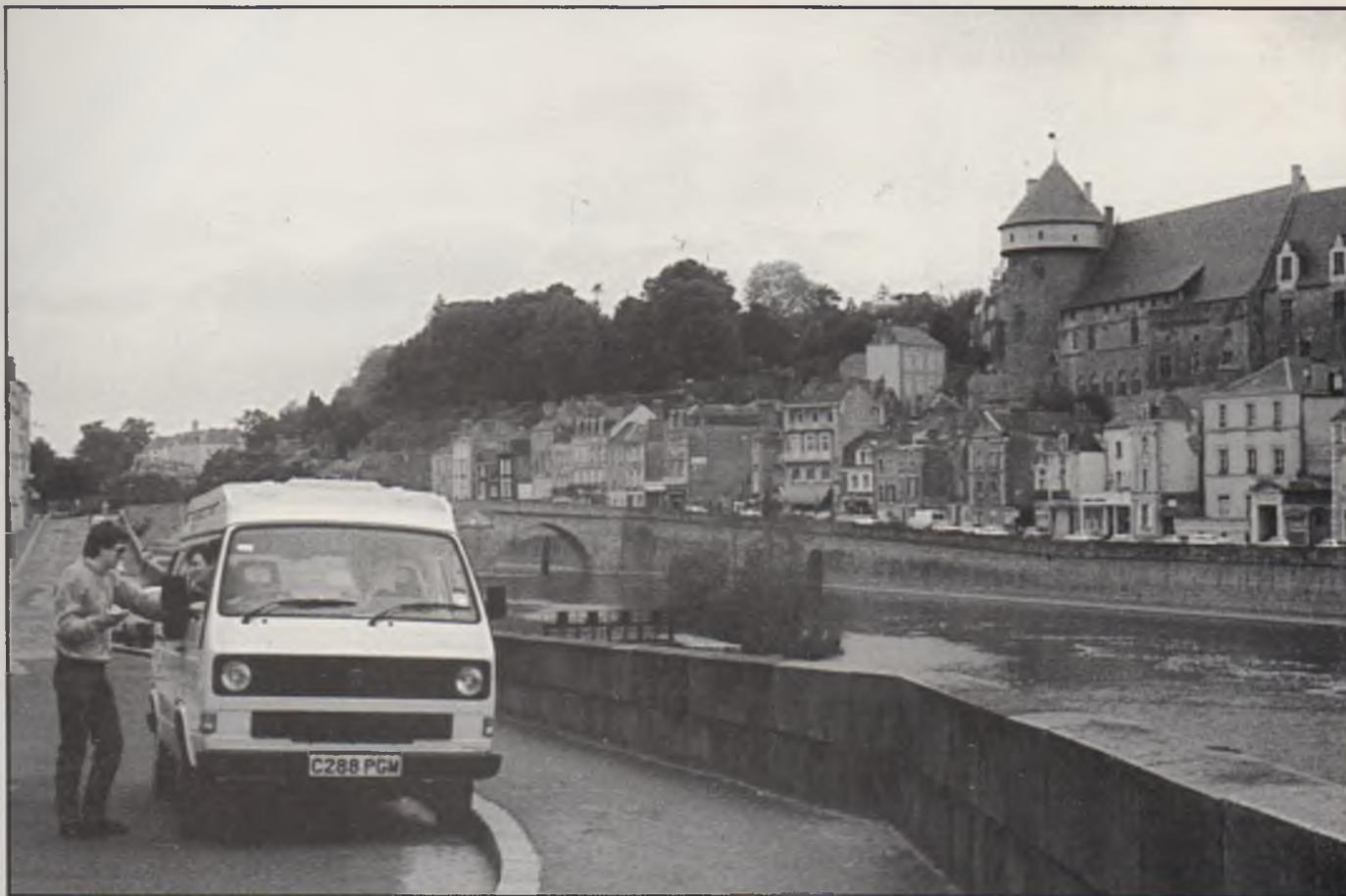
Name .....

Address .....

Telephone number .....

Link

[www.vwT25camper.info](http://www.vwT25camper.info) - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T25 / T3 / Vanagon Campervans



Villa in the heart of town – by the river at Laval, France

# New Worlds

The exciting world of our European neighbours is only a short ferry-hop away across the Channel and the most enjoyable and economical way of exploring it is by motor caravan – the most adaptable and versatile vehicle ever invented. I write from experience. For many years I worked as a national newspaper motoring correspondent and in that capacity was able to test drive new and expensive cars in spectacularly beautiful terrain. Business combined with a great deal of pleasure!

It costs the earth to holiday abroad by car doing a Grand Tour from one posh hotel to another, yet even if I had the income which makes that kind of trip possible (and I haven't) I would opt for motor caravanning, which offers a freedom of choice unmatched by the best of hotels. I recall one impossibly hot August when we were driving through the south of France on our way to the Spanish border, the roads choked with cars loaded to the scuppers with holidaymakers and their luggage.

**Bill Brooks looks at the new worlds that open up with a little help from a Richard Holdsworth motor caravan.**

Hold-ups were frequent, so we made the best of it and pulled in for a stop whenever we fancied. Up went the elevating roof of our Volkswagen (a vintage Holdsworth conversion and still going strong) to refresh us with an in-rush of air as we sipped our cool drinks. No car we saw could match that one!

This ability to pull in for a rest and turn our motor caravan into a snack bar is a delight and serves us well at the Channel ports which have honed transit procedures to a fine art. Even so there is always an hour when you wait in line to board and what better time to put the kettle on for tea?

We crossed from Dover to Calais recently by Townsend Thoresen late one dark cold and windy night just before Christmas. On our way to Leiden in the Netherlands we decided to cross by the midnight ferry and rest in

Calais before visiting the hypermarket near Dunkirk and tackling the long drive to our destination. We stopped in the big car park near the ferry operators' well equipped reception block which houses toilets, showers and a snack bar and restaurant. In a matter of minutes we were drinking a hot cuppa and then bedded down comfortably for the rest of the night before setting out for the hypermarket in the morning, fresh baked French bread and aromatic coffee our incentive. What civilised people these French are when it comes to essentials!

Our run to Leiden and back was in a VW motor caravan, the blessedly quiet 1.9 litre water-cooled engine, the 78bhp version, functioning beautifully with power in hand on the motorways although we were heavily laden. Over 718 miles there and back we averaged 24mpg, which is pretty economic-

at motoring. Once again we marvelled at the contrast between 'over there' and here in Britain in what is provided for travellers.

In Britain it is possible to drive for hours without passing a decent lay-by and one with toilets and space to walk about is a rarity. Not so in Europe. On the roads through France, Belgium and Holland there are plenty of stopping places, from service stations with parking space well back from the pumps to rest area/lay-byes with toilets and sometimes picnic tables and children's play areas. Even in motor caravans with their own amenities, the provision of roadside halts is welcome.

We found the same pleasing frequency of well-planned travellers' rest areas on the long drive from Boulogne to Jugenheim, which is south of Darmstadt in the German Federal Republic. We travelled in Autumn, again in a VW, a Holdsworth Villa – a nicely engineered and comfortable vehicle. Crossing from Folkestone to Boulogne early morning we were astonished at

how many people had booked on the same ferry and we were correspondingly grateful to Sealink for their provision of 'motorists only' lounges, a recent innovation.

It was pleasant to be able to relax without overcrowding, especially as we had a long 400-mile drive ahead, one with mixed fortunes in weather! Torrential rain, high winds and fog were all encountered but endured with fortitude! It is not a journey I would have cared to have made in the best of cars. As it was the height from the ground in the motor caravan gave me a better view than most motorists and that coupled with the VW's wonderful all-round visibility eased the difficulty of driving on the right in such conditions.

Coming back we holed up some miles from Calais, put up the roof, enjoyed a delicious hot meal and slept snugly for the night. Our stopping place was a service station car and lorry park and our companions heavy freight lorries whose drivers were resting for the night before the early morning run into Calais. We came back to Calais and crossed to Dover by Sealink on that occasion, rejoicing as always at the heart-warming sight of the famous white cliffs.

I must mention economy tariffs which all the ferry companies go in for with the aim of encouraging people to cross earlier or later in the year than the high season or at times that are less popular. Because, with a motor caravan, you have your mini-hotel literally on your back and can stop and rest up just when you like, you are in the happy position of being able to take advantage of economy tariffs and it is a factor to take into account when you plan your journey.

*Among the yachts in fashionable St Malo*



*All good things must come to an end – boarding at St Malo*

You can holiday on a shoestring by motor caravan, eating when and how you please and supplementing stores with local market produce. It is surprising how little a trip need cost, especially if you plan carefully and take a number of basic essentials in the way of foodstuffs. Or you may prefer to mix eating out with eating in, breakfasting 'at home' and lunching or dining at restaurants.

The choice is always yours according to preference and budget. I know of no other holiday option which offers the same number of options.

Good camp sites are thick on the ground on the Continent and France, in particular, boasts a plethora of excellent municipal ones. In addition there are super sites, not only the beautifully-equipped ones which dot the

coast but also inland, sometimes in the grounds of a chateau.

Some years ago we stayed at one such site in Brittany which was so delightful, with its own swimming pool, lake and woods, that we were tempted to stay put quite a few days. We were in easy reach of a lovely and interesting coast and once again our motor caravan came up trumps transforming itself into a changing room when we swam in the sea.

Holidaying in Europe can be cheaper or dearer according to mileage! Go to Brittany and it is a fairly short distance with a modest bill for fuel. More distant Portugal or Southern Spain is a different proposition, although such long journeys provide so much of interest *en route* that they are worth it for that alone.

Every journey can be an adventure with a motor caravan donning a new guise to suit your fancy. We have explored busy Lisbon and many an ancient French city to dine and taste the local cuisine, carefree in the happy knowledge that we can go back to a campsite or decide to move on.

Our vehicle has everything aboard and doubles as a taxi and a holiday home. Indulging an impulse we once turned off the Bordeaux to Biarritz road, a move impelled by exhaustion. We discovered a little village, Ahetze, with a quiet peaceful camping site and, nearby, a restaurant where we ate sumptuously at no great cost. It is enshrined in family folk lore as the best and happiest meal ever!

Such delights can and should be yours motor caravanning abroad, and if you are an old hand you will be familiar with them. If you haven't tried it, waste no time because Europe is your oyster and for you the best is yet to come!



# Fiat Ducato

## The Vehicle

When the Fiat Ducato was introduced in the mid-1980s, it set a new dimension in commercial vehicles with its combination of space and performance. In particular, it appealed to motor caravanners because of its light and easy steering, fast acceleration and – above all – its high touring speeds.

This new vehicle was the result of collaboration between three of Europe's leading motor manufacturers – Fiat, Peugeot/Talbot and Citroen. The collaboration meant that the enormous costs of developing a new vehicle could be spread three ways and a better vehicle built.

The vehicle is, in fact, made in Fiat's ultra modern factory in Turin with virtually every item of the three makes being identical – except, of course, the vehicle badges. When a diesel engine is specified, these differ between the makes with the Ducato using a new four-cylinder Fiat unit of 2.5 litres and developing 75bhp. The petrol engines are either 1.8 or 2.0 litres, with power outputs of 69bhp and 78bhp respectively. A four-speed gearbox is standard on the smaller petrol engine and five-speed standard on the 2 litre and diesel.

As with all vehicles, fuel consumption depends upon the individual user, but the range expected by the average motor caravanner should be from 25mpg to 30mpg.

Although Richard Holdsworth motor caravan conversions are based upon the Fiat Ducato, they can also be specified upon the Talbot Express or Citroen versions of the vehicle.

The Fiat has a particularly good six year anti-perforation warranty and Fiat Assurance, which is a roadside rescue and recovery service.

## The Conversion

Wherever possible, Richard Holdsworth offers a choice between two totally different layouts on the one base vehicle – and this is the case with the Fiat Fanfare.

At the top end of the market is the superb HTL with just about every possible convenience built in as standard – but not only does the HTL have just about everything to offer, but everything is bigger and better than before.

In a nutshell, it's all down to layout. Using his experience as motor caravanner, Richard Hold-



Spacious and practical – Fiat HTS

worth looked long and hard at the Ducato base van and immediately decided that with a simple and easy-to-use side door, there was every reason for spreading the units right around the rear doorway – thus making them bigger and better while still leaving more room elsewhere.

Take a look at the shower, for example. Instead of being the usual cramped affair, squeezed into the corner of the van, it spreads halfway across the rear and really is spacious by anyone's standards.

This sort of layout also puts the large Electrolux refrigerator just inside the back doors making it easier to service and repair, while leaving more room for storage elsewhere.

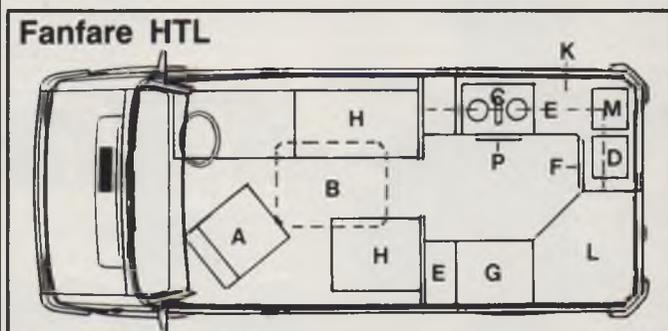
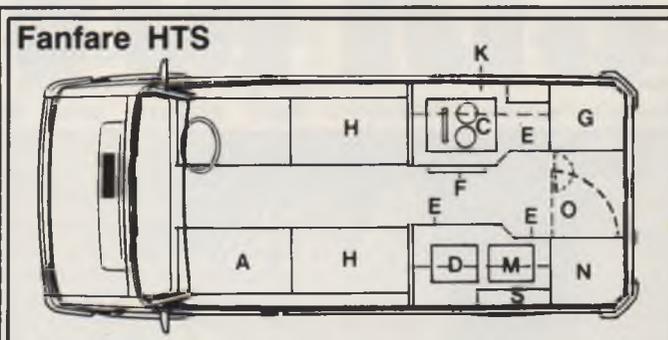
The beds are large and comfortable with two singles as standard and a giant double available as an optional extra. Roof beds are also available if required.

The HTL has a sophisticated electrical control panel with mains hook-up, split charger and dual batteries. An under-floor water tank is standard along with an oven, cooker hood and extractor fan.

On a less expensive scale, but not less exciting in its concept, is the new HTS – a motor caravan that appeals most especially to

the first time buyer. There is an enormous amount of storage space, and although a shower compartment is not available, a

neat and clever fold-out double door closes the rear of the vehicle making a large and practical toilet/ changing room.



**KEY**

- |                   |                 |                    |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| A Swivel Cab Seat | F Fridge        | M Drainer          |
| B Table           | G Wardrobe      | N Toilet           |
| C Cooker          | H Seat          | O Folding Door     |
| D Sink            | K Roof Cabinets | P Oven             |
| E Storage         | L Shower/Toilet | S Cocktail Cabinet |

# HOLDSWORTH FANFARE HTL



# STAR TEST

Three models make up Richard Holdsworth's Fanfare range: high-top HTS and HTL, and elevating-roof RR. All are available on either Fiat Ducato or Talbot Express base vehicles, although only the HTL comes as standard with a two-litre petrol engine and five-speed gearbox, both of which are optional extras on the other two Fanfares.

The Fanfare HTL supplied to us for test direct from the Holdsworth factory was a pre-production prototype based on the Ducato. Nowadays, when high-top conversions from a variety of companies tend to take on a similar appearance, the Fanfare stands out as a result of its unique roof spoiler – an attractive feature which the Holdsworth design team will no doubt tell us helps with fuel economy and general stability.

With only 29 miles on the clock of the Fanfare on collection, any efforts at estimating an accurate fuel consumption would have been misleading, so we decided against it. From past experience with this base vehicle mated to a high-top conversion, we think that owners could reckon with a consumption rate of between 22mpg and 27mpg, depending on how the vehicle was driven.

Our stint behind the wheel did, however, reveal just how easy the Ducato is to handle and how well it holds the road when cornering, with very little body roll being apparent. Rack and pinion steering is light and precise, if a little vague in the straight ahead position, and the Ducato's tight turning circle makes easy work of parking, three-point turns and general town driving. It's becoming a cliché to say 'it handled just like

## Fiat's popular Ducato base vehicle in a high-top combination that carries the hallmark of Holdsworth design flair and practicality

a big car', but that's the way it was.

Naturally, there isn't the turn of speed that one gets from a car, but the Fanfare was no slouch in traffic. The brakes worked well, too, even if the foot pedal still suffers from a spongy feel. Somewhat unusual nowadays is having the handbrake on the right, but drivers will soon get used to it. Our only complaint about the Ducato's driving characteristics is that the foot pedals seem to be directly beneath the driver's

feet, which is fine for the clutch and brake, but holding the right foot on the accelerator in one position for long periods became tiring on the calf muscles.

With so few miles under its belt, we weren't surprised to find our test van's gearshift tended to be notchy. However, after a bit of practice, gearshift and clutch combined well to give smooth progress, and especially easy restarts from the progressive clutch.

Out on the open motorway,

the Fanfare felt particularly taut and responded obediently to the minor adjustments required when changing lanes. It was surprisingly little affected by blustery side winds and never so much as twitched when being overtaken by heavy vehicles or coaches. Not that we were overtaken by many – the Ducato's willing engine pushing the Fanfare along comfortably at 70mph. Noise levels inside the cab at that speed were just about acceptable, permitting normal conversation.

Controls and instruments are straightforward and easy to get along with, although we didn't like the 20, 40, 60 etc graduation of the speedometer, which lacked numbered markers for our more common speed limits of 30, 50, 70mph. The speedo does have a trip recorder, however, which will help the figure-conscious motor caravanner. There's also plenty of storage in the cab area, comprising a lidded glove compartment in the dashboard facing the passenger, a central 'bin' for maps etc, and a small cubby hole to the right of the steering wheel. In the cab roof Holdsworth have provided small open compartments above the windscreen and on each side.

Cab seats are upholstered to match the dinette seating, while the floor covering – a practical twist-pile carpet in beige fleck – extends back into the dinette as far as the kitchen area, where octagonal tile-effect vinyl takes over. Direct access to the dinette and kitchen areas is available from the cab, or through a wide nearside sliding door. The L-shaped kitchen precludes access through the Ducato's rear doors, one of which is, in any event, fixed.



Above: comfortable cab offers good all-round vision. Below: rear seats can be arranged as two doubles (left) or used conventionally as single seats (right); cab passenger seat also swivels



# STAR TEST



Fanfare HTL is a two-berth as standard, although support ledges are built in to take an optional double bed in the roof space. Individual forward-facing seats behind the cab seats allow four people to travel in comfort, rear passengers having the benefit of opening windows to increase ventilation if required, or simply to enjoy the passing view. With a total of three opening windows in the caravan body, plus fixed windows in the high-top roof and a roof-light over the kitchen area, the interior is light and airy, and should remain so even if inclement weather means that all the doors have to remain shut.

First impressions of Fanfare's interior were how well the decor was matched, as well as being modern and practical. Individually zipped seat cushions are covered in an attractive mauve diamond pattern velour with plain edge panels and wine coloured piping. This blends well with the colour-keyed, ribbed carpet material used to line internal walls up to window height. A similar material in mushroom extends from above the windows and across the ceiling, broken by a fillet of mauve that again keys in with the upholstery. Pleated curtains are unlined, plain beige material suspended on metal track. Those on the Fanfare we tested were generously cut for width and drop, and provided a good measure of privacy.

Furniture units are well made in ply throughout and faced with a medium oak simulated veneer. Hardwood edge mouldings and nicely rounded, matching wood handles on doors, cupboards and lockers add a touch of distinction. Kitchen worktops are covered in a

*Above: single beds (left) are standard, although a "downstairs" double is available. L-shaped kitchen unit (right) is well equipped and designed. Below: Fiat's base vehicle performed well*



leather-look, wine plastic laminate, again keyed into the overall decor.

Standard sleeping accommodation is in two single beds, each 6ft 2in x 1ft 11in maximum, and derived by combining the dinette seats with their respective cab seats. Extra support panels and cushions to make up a double bed are optional at £51.32. In daytime use the dinette seats can be extended and used as two inward-facing benches. Fitted centrally between the seats is a plinth for a single-leg table which stores neatly behind the nearside dinette seat. At 30 x 19in, the table is adequate for two people at mealtimes, but

would be unable to cope with place settings for four. The cab passenger seat pivots to face the rear, providing yet another alternative at meal- or snack-times.

Fanfare's L-shaped kitchen takes up a position down the offside and combines useful work surface with a good level of equipment and storage. Two-burner hob has a self-supporting hinged glass top and is combined in one unit with a grill and oven. Fixed worktops are provided on each side of the hob. In the rear corner and extending across the back are a separate drainer and sink, each finished in mushroom vitreous enamel to

match the hob.

Daylight and ventilation are excellent, and supplemented by two eight-Watt fluorescent lights, each well positioned to illuminate the hob and sink/drainage areas, respectively. Heat and smells from cooking are countered by a hood and extractor fan fitted over the hob, as well as the roof-light mentioned earlier. Gas storage is in an open compartment which is accessible through the opening rear door. The compartment has a floor vent and will accommodate two 6lb Camping Gaz cylinders.

Fresh water is pumped from a 11½gal underfloor tank to a mixer tap at the sink, hot water being supplied by courtesy of a Hot Springs/Optimus storage water heater housed in a kitchen cupboard. Controls are conveniently sited in the base unit fascia, next to a 13-amp 240v switched socket.

Mains wiring is a standard feature of the Fanfare HTL, the external input being located in the nearside rear corner. The wiring is brought up inside the wardrobe, above which it is connected into a safety RCCB and Zig CF8 mains/charger unit. Also standard is an auxiliary battery, which is housed together with the vehicle's spare wheel under the bonnet. Switches for the extractor fans fitted over the hob and in the shower compartment, and for a Zig fresh water level gauge, are located close to the Zig unit. A quartz clock is fitted to the wardrobe's forward wall.

Ample storage is provided in the kitchen base unit by cupboards and the van's Electrolux 2cu.ft electronic ignition fridge. Three kitchen roof lockers with handy lipped shelves under-



# More and more people are converting to the Fiat Ducato

Insist on the Fiat Ducato for your motorcaravan. After all, by popular demand, it's the base on which more and more motorcaravans are being built.

But why is the Fiat Ducato so attractive to motorcaravan owners and converters alike?

Recently voted "Best Motorcaravan" at the Caravan, Camping & Holiday Show, the Fiat Ducato offers outstanding pulling power, economy, performance and consistent comfort.

You'll find the Ducato inexpensive to run, maintain and service and it's fully backed with Fiat's unique 6-year anti-perforation warranty, plus Fiat's own international support and the recovery service.\*

Top-names use the award-winning Fiat Ducato as the base for their motorcaravan and motorhome conversions. Now you too should insist on the Ducato as the ideal base for your ideal Motor-Home.

**FIAT**

RH87

Fiat Information Service, P.O. Box 39,  
Windsor, Berks SL4 3BS Tel: 0753 856307  
Please send details of  
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## **FIAT DUCATO MOTORCARAVANS**

LEADING FIAT DUCATO CONVERTERS NOW INCLUDE: RICHARD HOLDWORTH LTD (AS PICTURED ABOVE); ELLDIS, C. R. V. INTERNATIONAL, AUTOHOMES, AUTO-SLEEPERS, NOMADIC WHEELS, SWIFT.

\*Fiat Assurance, 24 hour rescue and recovery service applies to UK mainland & Northern Ireland only.

# STAR TEST

neath complete the larder facilities.

In the opposite corner to the kitchen is the Fanfare's toilet/shower compartment, which will be the object of considerable improvement on production models. Shower tray and tiny corner handbasin will be moulded in 'whisper grey' GRP, matched to a diagonal pattern vinyl wall covering and contrasting deep red sealant beading.

The compartment is not large and a considerable chunk of the floor area is taken up with the vehicle's boxed-in rear wheelarch. However, it should be spacious enough for its purpose and will take a portable toilet. Fittings include a plastic shower hose and head connected to a mixer control unit above the handbasin, full-length nylon shower curtain and a large mirror on the rear



*Pull-out seat extension supports*

wall, with an 8W fluorescent light above. There is no window in the compartment, ventilation being provided by an extractor unit fitted in the ceiling.

Immediately forward of the washroom on the nearside is the Fanfare's spacious wardrobe, which provides mainly



*Rear access to gas storage and fridge*

hanging space from a front-to-back rail set 4ft above a shelf in the base of the compartment. Shoes can be stored beneath the shelf, although the vehicle's wheelarch again intrudes. More space for towels, etc, and possibly bedding, is available in the dinette seat bases, although their inset ply lids may make storing and retrieving pillows and sleeping bags something of a chore.

At £12,763 Holdsworth's Ducato-based Fanfare HTL represents excellent value for money for the motor caravanning couple who are looking for that little bit extra in terms of on-board facilities and comforts. From the outside it looks smart and modern, while the interior is a compliment to Holdsworth's attention to detail and flair for creating an attractive yet practical living environment. □

## HOLDSWORTH FIAT FANFARE HTL

**PRICES.** All prices in this test apply to the time of original publication and may have altered. Please check current prices with Richard Holdsworth Conversions or your Holdsworth Dealer.

### Converter

Richard Holdsworth Conversions Ltd, Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire.

☎ 0734 692900



### BODY

**Type:** high top.

**Construction:** Fiat Ducato swb panel van with additional side windows and GRP moulded roof fitted by converter.

**Berths:** two, optional four.

**Insulation:** all internal walls and ceiling lined with cord carpet material; air space between outer walls and ply lining, and between floor layers. Glass fibre insulation optional extra.

**Roof-lights:** one.

**Doors:** two cab doors, nearside sliding door, single rear door.

### INTERIOR

**Toilet room:** yes, with handbasin and shower; extractor fan in ceiling.

**Gas system:** exterior vented locker accommodates two 6lb Camping Gaz cylinders.

**Electrical system:** 240v input wired through residual current circuit breaker to Zig CF8 240v/12v distribution/charger unit, and to 13-amp mains socket; auxiliary battery under vehicle bonnet.

**Lighting:** four 8W fluorescent lights, plus cab courtesy light.

**Standard equipment includes:** two-burner hob combined with grill and oven; extractor fan and hood; separate vitreous enamelled sink and drainer; storage water heater supplying mixer taps at kitchen and in washroom; 2cu.ft Electrolux fridge with electronic ignition for gas operation, also operating on 12v/240v; underfloor 11½gal fresh water tank with Zig electronic level gauge.

**Factory fitted options:** high-top double bed, £138.86; blown air central heating, £356.21; flyscreens, £54.33; cab headrests, £78.4 (pair); sidewall insulation, £36.23; extras to make dinette double bed, £51.32.

### BASE VEHICLE

**Model:** Fiat Ducato swb panel van.

**Engine:** 1971cc ohc 4cyl petrol. Max power 78bhp at 5000rpm. max torque 112lb.ft at 2500rpm. Compression ratio 8.0:1.

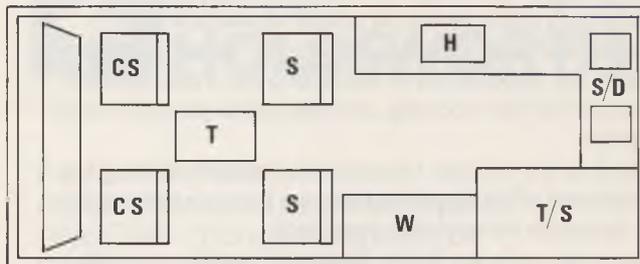
**Transmission:** five-speed manual, front-wheel drive.

**Steering:** rack and pinion.

**Suspension:** front independent MacPherson struts, coil springs; rear leaf springs.

**Brakes:** front discs, rear drums; dual-circuit, servo-assisted.

**Importer:** Fiat Auto (UK) Ltd, Bakers Court, Bakers Road, Uxbridge UB8 1RG. ☎ 0895 51212.



**Key:** CS cab seat, S single seat (combines with CS to make single bed), H hob unit with grill and oven, S/D sink and drainer, T/S toilet/shower compartment, W wardrobe, T table

# Escape capsule...

HOLDSWORTH  
QUALITY



There's no better way to escape the pressures of today's living than in a motor caravan, and the Fiat Fanfare high tops from Richard Holdsworth let you escape in real style.

Take the Fanfare HTL, for example. It's the sophisticated and beautiful motor caravan seen in the pictures above.

The HTL has everything – but more importantly it has everything bigger and better than almost anything that has gone before. And the reason is simply down to layout.

With a wide and easy-to-use side door Richard Holdsworth have taken the opportunity of spreading the main caravan units across the rear doorway, and this alone gives so much more space.

Take a look at the shower, for example. Instead of being the usual cramped affair, squeezed into the corner of the van, it really is spacious by anyone's standards.

The layout also puts the larger Electrolux refrigerator with freezer compartment just inside the back doors, leaving more space for storage and worktop area elsewhere. Then

there are the beds and with the unique HTL layout, these can be longer and more comfortable too. Two singles are standard with a giant sized double extra. Two 'solid' roof beds are available for the third and fourth members of the family.

There's a mains hook-up for modern camp sites, but the feature that allows you to get off the beaten track for days on end, is the sophisticated electrical control system and its dual batteries.

Write today for details of the Fanfare HTL and its less expensive stablemate – the HTS.

 **Richard  
HOLDSWORTH**

Richard Holdsworth Conversions Ltd., Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, Berks. Our sales office is open weekdays from 9am to 5pm – Sats until 1pm. Closed lunchtime from 1pm to 2pm.

## THE NEW FIAT FANFARE

[www.vwT25camper.info](http://www.vwT25camper.info) - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T25 / T3 / Vanagon Campervans

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*We will be happy to hear from you!*



# Ford Transit

## The Vehicle

The long awaited new model Ford Transit hasn't disappointed – it looks good, drives beautifully and Richard Holdsworth's conversion has brought together a range of features that would not shame many much bigger motor caravans.

In short, the new Transit has put Ford very much back into contention in the wonderful world of motor caravans.

Not that the new Transit is revolutionary in any way – but it's more a case of gradually perfecting an already tried and tested formula.

The new Transit, for example, doesn't have front-wheel drive and, as a result, the floor level isn't quite as low as some other vehicles. But the new Transit drives really well. The cab is wide and comfortable, and the dashboard could have come from any one of Ford's top saloon cars. The suspension, too, is like a rather expensive car, and the overall 'feel' is about as far from a commercial vehicle as you can get.

The 2-litre Transit engine has been further refined and, coupled to a five-speed gearbox and with a sculptured front end that slips easily through the air, the fuel consumption should certainly be better than the vehicle it replaces.

Overall, the new Transit is a worthy addition to the line-up of outstanding motor caravan base vehicles, and it will probably find its greatest appeal with motorists who seek an uncomplicated reliable and well engineered motor caravan.

## The Conversion

Typically, it was Richard Holdsworth who came up with the most advanced motor caravan conversion for the new Ford Transit – and what a winner it is.

Named the Future HT, it uses lots of clever Richard Holdsworth ideas, some pioneered in previous models and some that were entirely new. The end result is outstanding, with all the motor caravan pundits singing its praises.

The Future HT utilises Holdsworth's unique 'L'-shaped dinette arrangement which works really well within the wide body and spacious cab of the new Transit. For daytime or evening relaxing, leave the rear seats as the 'L'-shaped lounge and then swivel either one or both cab seats and you have a lounge room that just cannot be beaten for space and comfort.



Comfort supreme – New Ford Future HT

At night, of course, the seats rearrange to provide any one of three bed options – two singles, a two-thirds width double or a full width double.

And then to the rear of the vehicle where the superiority is just as great over ordinary layouts with units built just along the sides of the van.

As with some other Richard Holdsworth models, the whole of the rear can be closed off with a simple room divider to make a giant sized toilet/changing room. (The toilet is stored in its own compartment and slides out when required and hidden away when not).

But the real success comes from building the kitchen units around the rear doorway and this, alone, means almost 50 per cent more storage and worktop area compared with ordinary layouts. Then there's the added advantage

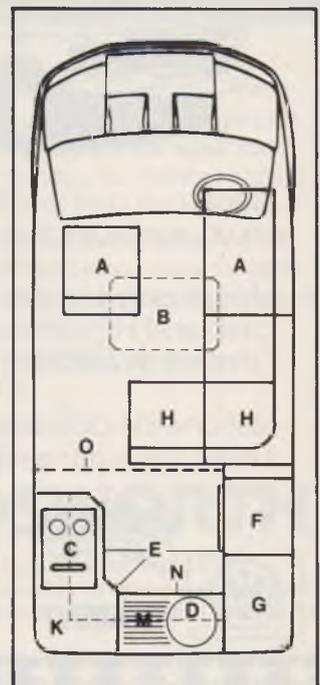
of being able to service the motor caravan through the rear doors. Food cupboards can be loaded, gas cylinders changed and the toilet removed, all from outside the van.

The loss of the rear doors for access should be very little disadvantage. The side door – always the most popular on camp sites – is light and easy to use and with the built-in side step is a real winner on the new Ford.

Richard Holdsworth also has plans for a more basic layout for the new Transit and, possibly, an elevating roof model, so it's worth keeping an eye on developments from the Reading-based company.

### KEY

- |            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| A Swivel   | G Wardrobe     |
| B Cab Seat | H Seat         |
| C Table    | K Roof         |
| D Cooker   | Cabinets       |
| E Sink     | M Drainer      |
| F Storage  | N Toilet       |
| G Fridge   | O Folding Door |





## THE FORD TRANSIT. THE HOME THAT THINKS IT'S A CAR.

Since its launch in February 1986, you will have seen countless new Ford Transits weaving their way through high streets, nipping in and out of tight parking spaces, and gobbling up miles on the motorways.

Yet the Ford Transit is equally at home as a motor caravan, as it is a business van.

In both instances, in terms of performance and maintenance, you might be forgiven for thinking you were driving a car.

Twenty years of superior knowledge, advanced technology and Ford's unique expertise have succeeded in producing a Transit that has broken new ground in economy, comfort, ruggedness and reliability.

Let's begin, however, with the Transit's stylish good looks. Its sleek aerodynamic form reduces wind drag and noise, while increasing fuel economy.

Thirty per cent more glass on the doors and windscreen allows unrivalled vistas of the surrounding countryside, road and kerbside.

The new, low-effort sliding side doors can swallow any amount of equipment, luggage and souvenirs.

Under the bonnet (not under your legs) sits a 2.0 litre petrol engine, acknowledged as among the most reliable

and cost-efficient on the road. Which, coupled with Ford's own versatile and economical gearboxes, ensures that while you're clocking up mileage, you're not guzzling fuel.

So much for your encounters with petrol stations. What about your encounters with the countryside?

Even on the most hazardous hairpin bends, independent front suspension makes handling simple.

The Transit's high tensile steel underbody can withstand almost any amount of punishment from Mother Nature.

Should the worst come to the worst, the large energy-absorbing crumple zone will protect you and yours from front impact.

What's more, thanks to the Transit's rear wheel drive and accessible engine, reliable running and easy servicing couldn't be better.

The three largest and best known caravan converters in Britain are currently producing motor homes for the Transit.

And we are rather of the opinion that Richard Holdsworth have excelled themselves.

But then, that's hardly surprising. With a vehicle as outstanding as the Ford Transit to work on, they probably had very little alternative.



**FORD TRANSIT.**

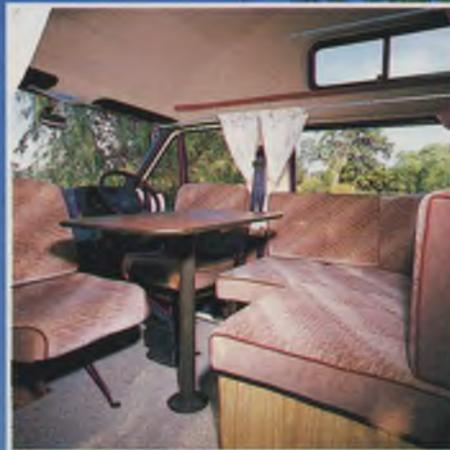
[www.vwT25camper.info](http://www.vwT25camper.info) - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T25 / T3 / Vanagon Campervans

# HOLDSWORTH FORD FUTURE

*Based on Ford's new Transit, the high-top Future looks good from any angle – but it takes more than good looks to make a successful motor caravan*

*L-shaped dinette seating can be rearranged to provide two forward-facing single seats*

*Kitchen is located across the back and offers ample storage space in cupboards and lockers*





## NEW FROM RICHARD HOLDSWORTH. THE TRANSIT THAT THINKS IT'S A COUNTRY COTTAGE.

The Ford Transit is the best example of ruggedness, reliability and comfort in the medium commercial vehicle market.

Richard Holdsworth is one of the largest caravan converters in Britain. And his company has just designed a motor caravan exclusively for the Transit that is equally rugged, equally reliable and equally comfortable.

It's called the Transit Future. Like the designers of the Transit, Richard Holdsworth believes in stretching the boundaries of economy as far as they can go. With this in mind, the Future has been fitted to a standard that almost belies its price.

The Future is built to last. Holdsworth's 50 strong team of designers and craftsmen use only the finest materials.

Crafted from Finnish marine ply, the interior woodwork will look beautiful for years to come.



Chic Italian dralon covers the seats, which create a sumptuous 'L' shaped lounge during the day, and at night, either two single beds or a small double. A full size double bed is optional.

Berber style carpet provides a luxurious, easy to clean flooring.

And the ingeniously designed 'U' shaped kitchen provides an exceptional amount of storage and working space.

It all adds up to a motor caravan that is just as stylish as it is practical.

Qualities which we at Ford certainly hold dear to our hearts. If you would like to see the Future for yourself, why not pay Richard Holdsworth a visit.

Or you can write for details to: Richard Holdsworth Conversions Ltd., Heady Road East, Woodley, Nr Reading, Berkshire RG5 4NE.



**FORD TRANSIT.**

# STAR TEST



New Transit's cab is well laid out and provides excellent vision

The first conversions on the new Transit base vehicle have been anxiously awaited ever since Ford launched the stylish replacement for their long-running work horse. This Earls Court Show saw the launch of at least three different approaches to solving the same problem: that of mating a high-top to the very raked, aerodynamic profile of the new Transit, without completely ruining the vehicle's aesthetic appeal, and at the same time providing adequate interior accommodation.

While it was still in the prototype form, we managed to obtain the Holdsworth Future for a short period and put it through the road test treatment.

At the same time it was possible to see something of the conversion work as the first of the production vehicles started on its journey through the factory.

## Raked front

The Future has a high-top GRP roof designed to complement the Transit's very raked front end. So well have Holdsworth continued the line of the basic Ford that it is difficult to tell where the change takes place. The whole of the Ford roof is removed before a strengthening box section is fixed in place right round the perimeter of the aperture. Welded steel box-section supports are then placed over the



Lightweight PVC concertina door makes a handy partition

aperture before the GRP roof is fitted and trimmed. The roof has a thin layer of foam insulation, but insulation in the walls is an optional extra.

The steep rake of the roof at the front means that maximum headroom is not achieved until well back in the living area, but this is in no way a problem. Over the dinette area maximum headroom of 6ft 2½in is reached and this is continued to the rear of the vehicle. The roof and interior walls are trimmed with a carpet lining in two shades of coffee, blending well with the medium oak veneer of the furniture and the pale claret, diamond pattern velour upholstery.

All upholstery covers are

zipped and removable for cleaning. Cab seats are trimmed to match the rear seats. Holdsworth discard the original Transit seats and fit units which lay flat to complete the beds and also reverse to provide additional lounge or dining seating. To provide forward facing seats on the road, the rear seats can be separated or slid together to form a bench seat that could hold three people. In neither case are rear seat belts or mountings supplied. The nearside rear seat, complete with its fully-enclosed locker box base, can be removed entirely through the side loading door to provide space for a wheelchair or to enable bulky loads to be carried.



Storage space is just one of the Future's many good points



Rear access to gas locker and portable toilet

HOLDSWORTH  
QUALITY



# Look to the Future...

The new Ford Future from Richard Holdsworth is the most exciting motor caravan to arrive in the market place for many a year.

Just look why. The new Transit is superb in its looks and the way it performs. The cab is car like and comfortable and the ride is better than many so-called luxury limousines on the road today.

**Richard Holdsworth builds a conversion to match the new Transit.** The aerodynamic high top complements the new Transit every inch of the way and its streamlined and graceful lines slip effortlessly through the air.

The interior layout is not from yesterday either. The Ford Future has the latest 'L' shaped dinette to give you space to really relax and enjoy your moments of leisure.

At night, there's two separate single beds or a two-thirds width double (a giant sized double is available at a small extra cost).

**Richard Holdsworth stretches the units across the rear to make so much more of your motor caravan.** The new Future layout – with the units across the rear – provides much more storage and worktop area. And you can load the vehicle, change the gas cylinders and service the toilet all from outside the vehicle.

There's a simple room divider to create a separate toilet compartment, full electrical equipment with mains hook-up, split charger and dual batteries – all at no extra cost.

The Ford Future – tomorrow's motor caravan here today!

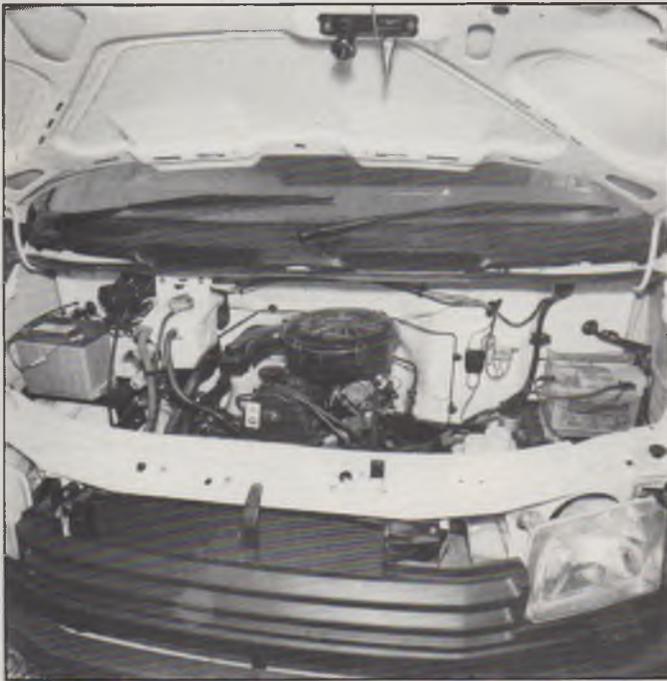


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## THE NEW FORD FUTURE

[www.vwT25camper.info](http://www.vwT25camper.info) - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T25 / T3 / Vanagon Campervans

# STAR TEST



Plenty of room to work under bonnet; second battery is standard

The layout of the Future is very similar to Holdsworth's Volkswagen Vision model. Cab seats are backed by a second row of seating which can form the L-shaped dinette. Kitchen and wardrobe are at the rear. It may seem odd that a layout designed for a rear-engined vehicle should be repeated in the Transit but, in the Future, Holdsworth completely ignore the rear doors except as will be seen later. Because of this, perhaps, they could consider using the tailgate version of the Transit, which would give the benefit of an undivided rear window.

A single table measuring 2ft 6in x 1ft 7in has a single tubular metal leg and is no more, no less stable than any other table of this type. By opening out an extension flap on the offside seat base and pushing the sliding nearside seat to the centre of the van, an L-shaped dinette can be formed. Additional seating at table can be arranged by reversing the front passenger seat or the driver's seat, or both. On the whole the arrangement provides quite a comfortable location for three or four people to dine and, with the table removed a practical party area for half a dozen.

## Making the beds

The Future is designed as a two-berth and two single beds, each 6ft 4in x 2ft wide (where it matters) can be arranged by folding the cab seats flat in order to mate up with the extended rear seats. To create a double bed 6ft 4in long x about 5ft 6in wide, the table is laid on runners between the rear seat bases, and a loose platform with folding wooden legs is

placed between the cab seats over the handbrake lever. Extra loose cushions as necessary are supplied to complete the bed. We were unable to try the double bed arrangement as the final form of the extension had not been decided when we tested the van, but we see no reason why this simple method should not be perfectly adequate.

Holdsworth have given some thought to a four-berth version of the Future, possibly by providing a platform bed at original roof level over the forward section of the interior. A bed with ample width and up to 5ft 8in long could be accommodated with adequate headroom, suitable for two children.

All the fixed furniture is arranged in a U formation at the rear of the vehicle. On the nearside is the Spinflo glass-topped, two ring and grill hotplate, the grill part concealed behind a veneered drop flap. The glass



Dinette seats 'extend' to make up two 6ft 4in long single beds

top is retained in the upright position by a spring in the hinge mechanism and requires no safety catch to hold it secure. At right angles to the hotplate and across the rear doors is the large circular sink and drainer unit with a hinged, melamine laminate lid, which acts also as a splashback against the door windows. In the corner between sink and hotplate is a good-size work surface.

Both units have a full range of cupboards below them and those at the rear have one of the most practical arrangements we have seen on a motor caravan. The doors at the front are complemented by other doors at the rear, reachable through the opened rear doors of the Transit. Not only does this make loading, unloading and intermediate restocking of the kitchen supplies easier, it permits a Porta Potti – one of the cupboards is tailored to fit it – to be removed from the outside so

that it never has to be manoeuvred through the caravan interior. In the offside corner is stowage for two gas bottles, accessible only from the outside.

Above the gas bottle stowage is a generously proportioned wardrobe measuring 1ft 7in x 1ft 5in with 3ft 7in of hanging height. The side wall of the vehicle inside the wardrobe is lined with carpet – as are both wheelarches – to prevent the formation of condensation. Three small, lipped shelves inside the wardrobe are useful for the stowage of underclothes and socks.

Completing the U-shaped area of furniture is an Electrolux 212 fridge above a small fall-front locker round the wheelarch and topped by a large, shelved cupboard with plastic racks for the stowage of crockery. The fridge is the electronic ignition model and operates from gas and mains electricity



Early stages in the Future's production



Corner reading lamp and main lights switch

# STAR TEST

on site. On the road it can also be powered by 12v and the system incorporates an automatic relay which prevents the fridge from draining the battery when the alternator is not charging.

At high-top roof level there are roomy lockers right round the rear compartment, plus a very useful roof-level shelf on the nearside and across the rear. All the units are well made, neatly finished and feature hardwood edgings. Handles on all doors and locker lids are neat wooden items that add a touch of distinction.

A slim, full height locker alongside the fridge houses a PVC concertina partition which can be drawn across the centre of the living area, enclosing everything to the rear of the side door. The floor space enclosed forms a sizeable bathroom, toilet and dressing room, made totally private by pulling just

two curtains.

Water is piped to the sink unit via a folding spout from an 11-gallon tank mounted under the floor. The foot switch for the electric pump is located by the sink cupboard, conveniently close to the user's left foot. The filler cap for the tank is placed inside the body of the vehicle behind the drivers seat, where it is easy to reach with a hose or carrier but safe from the attention of vandals.

## Zig unit

The electrical services feature both mains and 12v with a Zig CF8 unit controlling charging of the auxiliary battery from either the mains or the vehicle alternator. Fused outlets and an LED battery condition indicator are provided. The mains electrical system incorporates a residual current circuit breaker plus two miniature circuit breakers and a

13-amp outlet socket located below the wardrobe.

Lighting inside is good, comprising three eight-Watt fluorescent fittings located over the sink, hotplate and side loading door, and one reading lamp with a pink shade above the dinette. All the lights have individual switches, but they are also wired through a switch panel just below the reading lamp. This can be reached from the dinette and is also convenient for controlling the lights once the occupants are in bed.

During the day there is plenty of window area to admit light; ventilation should be ample even on wet days when the doors have to be closed. As well as the opening cab windows, both the high-roof side windows slide open, as does the side window to the rear of the hotplate. In addition there is a multi-directional roof-light in the centre of the rear area which

encourages through ventilation plus the extraction of cooking heat and smells.

Our experience convinced us that the layout designed for the VW seems to work even better in the slightly larger Transit. There is ample sitting, eating and free floor space, plus a really generous amount of storage and a moderate level of specification which is accurately reflected in the price.

The test model had barely 200 miles recorded when we drove it and the engine was particularly tight. We were therefore unable to sample the full road performance of this latest Holdsworth, but there is enough published praise for the new Transit for us to be entirely happy about the combination. Add to this the very pleasing styling treatment of the high-top conversion and we have every reason to think that there is great hope for the Future. □

## HOLDSWORTH FORD FUTURE

**PRICES.** All prices in this test apply to the time of original publication and may have altered. Please check current prices with Richard Holdsworth Conversions or your Holdsworth Dealer.

Converter

Richard Holdsworth Conversions Ltd, Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire. ☎ 0734 692900

### BODY

**Type:** high-top.

**Construction:** Ford Transit swb with additional windows fitted by converter; GRP moulded roof with box section steel supports.

**Insulation:** all internal walls and ceiling lined with cord carpet material; air space between outer walls and ply lining, and

between floor layers. Glass fibre insulation available at extra cost.

**Doors:** Two cab doors, nearside sliding door. No entry through rear doors.

### INTERIOR

**Toilet room:** no, but provision for portable toilet in locker.

**Gas system:** on-board capacity for two 6lb Camping Gaz cylinders.

**Electrical system:** 16 amp input wired through residual current circuit breaker to Zig CF8 control/charger unit and to auxiliary 12v battery. One mains socket.

**Lighting:** three 8-Watt fluorescent lights, one 10-Watt tungsten filament reading lamp; all four individually switched or controlled from lounge switch panel. Cab courtesy light.

**Standard equipment includes:** swivelling cab seats, 2cu.ft fridge with electronic ignition, underfloor fresh water tank, vitreous enamel sink and cooker, sliding concertina partition.

### BASE VEHICLE

**Model:** Ford Transit swb panel van.

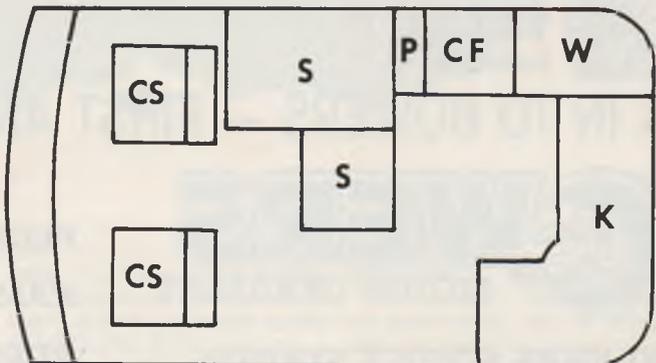
**Engine:** 1993cc 4cyl ohc. Max bhp 76 at 4500rpm. Max torque 106 lb.ft at 2800rpm. Compression ratio 8.1:1.

**Transmission:** five speed manual, rear wheel drive.

**Suspension:** front independent MacPherson struts, coil springs; rear live axle, leaf springs, telescopic shock absorbers.

**Steering:** rack and pinion.

**Suppliers:** Ford Motor Company Ltd, Eagle Way, Warley, Brentwood, Essex CM13 3BW. ☎ 0277 253000.



**KEY:** CS cab seat, S seating (converts to two singles or a double bed), P partition cupboard, C/F cupboard/fridge below, W wardrobe, K kitchen.

# LOOKING FOR A HOLDSWORTH



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# There's a Richard Holdsworth specialist dealer near you!



**Richard Holdsworth motor** caravans aren't sold through every major caravan centre.

For a start, there are not enough Richard Holdsworth motor caravans to go round and when demand outstrips supply, it's good business sense to concentrate on the

very best dealers in the country – dealers who know most about the different Richard Holdsworth models, who can give you the very earliest delivery and who can give the best back-up service.

There should be a Richard Holdsworth agent in your

area. The map above shows the location of just twelve of them. And the next few pages of LEISURE 2000 tells you a lot more about these dealers.

For further information, contact your local dealer or – in the event of difficulty – contact the Richard Holdsworth sales

office direct.

(Remember, models may be temporarily out of stock and it is always a sound idea to contact your local dealer to check that the model you wish to see is available for inspection when you intend to call in).

# Dealers



## BLACKMORE VALE MOTOR CARAVANS

**Blackmore Vale Filling Station, Shaftesbury, Dorset.**  
Tel: 0747 51497

Newcomers to motor caravanning often need to spend time researching the market and deciding over a suitable model in quiet unhurried leisure, and Blackmore Vale couldn't be a better place to do this.

In addition to offering the best motor caravans from the top motor caravan builders, Blackmore Vale also has a sales department that specialises in towing caravans at their splendid five-acre site, two miles past Shaftesbury on the A30 to Yeovil.

Head of Blackmore Vale Motor Caravans is Dawn Hopkins and she has young and enthusiastic sales and service staff. Dawn agrees that a motor caravan is a cross between a car and a house, and as such, requires a lot of careful thought. 'For this reason', says Dawn, 'we don't offer motor caravans from manufacturers that we feel only have showroom appeal rather than the practicality needed on the camp site.' Dawn should know because she helps her father run a delightful five acre caravan and camping site along with the motor caravans, on an adjacent site.

At Blackmore Vale you will usually find between 30-40 new and used motor caravans and you also certainly find a warm and friendly welcome and helpful advice that is often worth more in the long run. There is also a large workshop where maintenance and alterations can be carried out to the customers' own requirements.

You will also find the majority of Richard Holdsworth models on display, along with those from other leading manufacturers, and with Dawn and Robert on hand to help, your visit could be the stepping stone for the best in motor caravanning.

There's a Richard Holdsworth specialist dealer near you – the numbers will help you find them on the maps.



## BOWERS MOTOR CARAVANS

**Green Lawns Garage, Luton Road, Harpenden, Herts.**  
Tel: 05827 3094

**Bowers Motor Caravans are not** only one of the largest motor caravan dealers in the UK, they also have an extensive range of services specifically for the motor caravan buyer. Their skilled staff can modify and refurbish any make of vehicle in the modern workshop.

Bowers are conveniently situated some 30 miles north of London, just 5 minutes from Junction 10 of the M1. They attract customers from throughout the country to their pleasant site and accessory shop, and also have the facilities to handle duty free and export vehicles.

From their inception in 1976, Bowers handled conversions built by Richard Holdsworth, first with conversions of used vans followed by taking the Richard Holdsworth agency in Volkswagen and Renault-based vehicles, and now with the new Ford Future.

Bowers also hold the agency for Peugeot/Talbot cars at their Harpenden High Street premises and, because of their tie-up with Peugeot/Talbot, offer the Talbot Express versions of the Richard Holdsworth Fanfare range of motor caravans.

The Harpenden site is one of the most attractive in the whole country. Motor caravans are spread throughout the two-acre site and trees are dotted around the area to provide a relaxing atmosphere in which to inspect the very wide range carried by this most impressive of dealers.

On the site is also a first class accessory shop, and there should be no problem taking a break during your visit as there are meals served in the public house opposite the site and there is also

a pleasant cafe next door.

Bowers also boast one of the best equipped motor caravan workshops in the country and are highly recommended by Richard Holdsworth for the repair of their motor caravans and the fitting of heaters and other equipment. Bowers have also taken on the work of altering motor caravans to their owner's specification and adapting conversions for disabled users.

Any potential customer – whether they already own a motor caravan or have not discovered the freedom that motor caravans can bring – cannot fail to be impressed by the professionalism of the Bowers operation.



## DON AMOTT MOTOR CARAVANS

**Hilton (on A5132) Nr. Derby, Derbyshire.**  
Tel: 0283 732193

**There is a wealth of experience** spanning two generations behind the Don Amott operation. The company was formed by Don Amott senior in the early 1960s from a relatively modest beginning and now it is one of the largest caravan, holiday hire and motor caravan centres anywhere in the country.

Altogether, up to 80 motor and touring caravans can be inspected in a huge under-cover showroom which is both carpeted and heated throughout. The most recent addition is a vast caravan and camping display for a wealth of accessories.

Despite growing enormously in size over the years, the aims that Don's father held most dear are still maintained – particularly the personal service for each and every customer. 'Our aim is to provide a warm and friendly welcome and to provide impartial

advice no matter what the customer may seek', says Don junior, 'and it really should add up to a sound purchase followed by many happy years of motor caravanning.'

The Hilton site also has a specifically prepared rally paddock and visitors are invited to bring their existing caravans or motor caravans for an overnight stay.

Customers of Don Amott have other advantages too, and one that may be high on their priority list is the fact that they are as close to the centre of the country as you can get. The M1 motorway is only a matter of a few miles away and the M6 not much further.

Don Amott holds the agencies for a number of leading motor caravan converters, so that there is always a good range of motor caravans on display including coachbuilt models. But the Richard Holdsworth range of high-tops and elevating roof models helps provide a wide range of vans in the most popular section of the market – and that's the one that attracts most buyers. There are usually plenty of secondhand vehicles as well, making a visit to the Don Amott Hilton site a sound move.



## KEN JACKSON CAR SALES LTD

**(Inc. Cleveland Motorhomes), Teesside Airport, Near Darlington, Co. Durham.**  
Tel: 0325 332626

**Ken Jackson's super new 1½-acre site at Teesside Airport** is probably the most modern and exciting motor caravan centre in the north-east of England – if not the whole of the country.

The new centre – incorporating showrooms, a vast display area, accessory shop and extensive workshops – is the place that motor caravanners head for right throughout the North of England.

And to greet Ken's many customers and visitors there is a free coffee shop and an overnight parking area for those who don't wish to return home the same day.

In fact, many people find that they can travel a fair distance for a short stay in the area discovering some of the most beautiful country in the UK while combining this with the all-important task of selecting their next motor caravan from the vast display.

The new motor caravan centre is the sole agent for Richard Holdsworth motor caravans in the area, and there is usually a selection of new Richard Holdsworth models on display, although (as always) it is worth checking by 'phone beforehand to make sure any particular model is in stock at the time. Many models sell so quickly that they can be on their way to their new owners before spending time inside the show-rooms.

Ken Jackson himself has been in the motor caravan trade for over 22 years, and such is the enthusiasm that the rest of the Jackson family has joined in. Ken's attractive wife Marlene, and the two sons, Craig and Neil work alongside the Sales Manager, Barry Shutt.

5

## MARINA MOTORHOMES

**Billing Aquadrome, Little Billing, Northants.**  
Tel: 0604 401255

**There's nothing like first-hand experience of using motor caravans to really help the first-time buyer and Alistaire Whitmore of Marina Motorhomes probably has as much experience as any.**

Before setting up the new dealership, Alistaire was the manager of a motor caravan centre in Wilby, Northamptonshire, and that gave him a valuable insight into looking after all aspects of customer service and attention.

But before that, he spent over two years on the road for a motor caravan converter living permanently in the company's products, and it was this experience that really taught him what works and what doesn't.

'That's where the Richard Holdsworth product comes in,' says Alistaire, 'there are practical features everywhere and you can tell that Richard and his family are practising motor caravanners themselves.'

Marina Motorhomes' sales centre is within Billing Aquadrome, the largest pleasure park in the United Kingdom, and from March to the end of October, you will find a host of things to do - sailing, boating and fishing plus all the fun that goes with a large funfair. Billing is certainly the place to

entertain the children while you make the big decision on which motor caravan to buy!

Alistaire tends to specialise on Volkswagens, and endeavours to have a Villa 3 and Vision on display all the time, but you will also find the outstanding Holdsworth Renaults amongst the other new motor caravans on show. There is also a range of secondhand vans for those looking for something slightly less ambitious.

Billing Aquadrome is almost a self-contained village with sales centres for caravans and boats plus caravan accessories, and Alistaire claims to be open seven days a week right throughout the year.

6

## MIDLAND MOTORHOMES

**Unit 2, Logan Square, Northern Court, Vernon Road, Basford, Notts NG6 0BJ**  
Tel: 0602 760494

**PLEASE NOTE**  
**Moving to larger premises nearby. Please phone Enquiry line 0949 38643 before your visit.**

**Midland Motorhomes may be a relatively new name in the motor caravan world, but the team behind the name certainly lacks nothing in motor caravan experience.**

A father and son team, David and Stephen Ackroyd have, between them, no less than sixteen years in the motor caravan trade, and have built up no fewer than three major motor caravan centres for previous companies. It says a lot for a management team that can establish a highly successful sales centre, build up customer relations and then hand it over when it is running smoothly. Now the decision to 'go it alone' is resulting in one of the most enthusiastic centres in the country.

David Ackroyd has been selling Richard Holdsworth motor caravans ever since he first sold motor caravans. 'The range has always appealed to the customer looking for something extra special,' says David, 'and the latest models are really exceptional.'

David and Steve are very keen on the new range of Fiat Fanfares, but they have also had a great deal of success with the Holdsworth Renaults. They will also be endeavouring to keep a number of Ford Futures on display, but they agree that the Volkswagen and Villa and Vision will probably remain the mainstay of their sales.

7

## PERTSHIRE CARAVAN CO (MOTORS) LTD

**Dundee Road, Errol, Perthshire.**  
Tel: 08217 212

**Perthshire Caravans is the oldest established caravan sales depot in the whole of Scotland and is also the sole agent for Richard Holdsworth North of the Border.**

It was way back in March 1936 that Peter and Chris McCormack secured the small corner of an open field to establish their caravan sales and service centre and it is on this same site - halfway between Perth and Dundee on the A85 - that the large and impressive sales site stands today.

But it is not only a massive sales site that attracts so many customers to the company. There is also a service and repair facility that is second-to-none, including a workshop with skilled staff that can literally re-build an entire motor caravan. The accessory shop is also on the grand scale, and there is a good chance that almost any accessory or spare part can be found on the well stocked shelves.

Perthshire is now managed by Peter McCormack's two sons, Peter junior and Ian, and their Sales Manager Dave Millar, who - with the rest of the 30 staff - provide a first-class service for a wide range of new and second-hand motor caravans.

8

## SIMPSONS GARAGE (LOWESTOFT) LTD

**Cooke Road, South Lowestoft Ind. Est., Lowestoft.**  
Tel: 0502 2583

**One of the country's biggest and best known Volkswagen dealers - Simpsons of Lowestoft - is also where you will find one of the best ranges of Volkswagen motor caravans. They were established by one Mr Simpson as far back as 1919, and it is thought to be one of the first garages to exist in the town.**

1975 was a very important year for Simpson, as although they were already Volkswagen dealers they obtained their Audi franchise and, very importantly, they moved

to their new impressive glass-fronted building standing in a two acre site on the Pakefield roundabout on the A12.

This is yet another family company, and whether you are welcomed by Simon Woodgreaves, the Managing Director, or Terry Buxton, the Sales Manager, or any of their sales staff, you are certain to receive a warm welcome and given the opportunity to browse round their many makes of motor caravans without being subjected to sales pressure.

Simpsons relationship with Richard Holdsworth goes back to 1968 and, as they specialise in Volkswagen motor caravans, you can be sure that every effort is made to keep on display the Villa 3 elevating roof model, plus the Villa and Vision high tops. As motor caravanners' needs are many and varied it is nice to know that their individual needs can be met by Simpsons staff, who are continually attending training courses to ensure that the high reputation for integrity and quality is maintained.

9

## SOLENT MOTOR CARAVANS

**Warsash Road, Warsash, Southampton, Hampshire.**  
Tel: 04895 81353

**Warsash a small Hampshire village right beside the beautiful river Hamble is the home of Solent Motorcaravans, the area's representatives of the Richard Holdsworth range of motor caravans.**

The area is particularly attractive, and is well known for its boating interest and was, in fact, where much of the television series *Howards Way* was filmed. A visit to Solent can be more than just a day out seeking your next motor caravan!

Solent are well established motor caravan dealers, having held the Richard Holdsworth franchises ever since the company started in business. Other ranges are also stocked so that the motor caravans from the smallest to the largest can usually be viewed.

There is a fully-equipped specialist workshop for alterations, repairs and general motor caravan maintenance - but you need to book early so that the last minute rush is avoided.

Solent have one of the largest heated indoor showrooms in the country, and even in the winter motor caravans can be viewed in complete comfort. Finance can be arranged if required and cars caravans and motor caravans

taken in part exchange. On certain occasions, boats can also be taken as part payment for your new motor caravan!

Warsash is within five minutes drive of the M27 motorway which, in turn, now connects to the M3, thus bringing the Solent area well within easy reach of many more motor caravanners. A trip to Solent's large showroom display could be a profitable day out.

10

## STEWART MOULAND

Rear of Texaco Service Station,  
South Coast Road,  
Peacehaven, Sussex.  
Tel: 07914 87229

Situated on the South Coast just five miles from Brighton is Stewart Mouland Motorcaravans, an energetic and enthusiastic young company that established itself when the giant company of Davis & Stone left the motor caravan scene back in 1984.

Top salesman at Davis & Stone, Gordon Stewart, joined forces with Steve Mouland, who had looked after the company's service centre, to form the new company - Stewart Mouland.

'I knew so much about motor caravans', said Gordon, 'that it seemed a pity to leave the industry.' Gordon, who was at one time the top Ford car salesman in England, brings a flair to the industry and has a reputation for finding just the right motor caravan for the right customer.

Although Gordon Stewart and Steven Mouland only started their own company in 1984 from small premises at Peacehaven, they have already taken over the complete garage site to further enable them to improve the service they give to the many old and new customers on their books.

'Motor caravanners are a particularly nice group of people', said Steve, 'and it is satisfying to recommend to them a vehicle that will suit their needs exactly and give them satisfaction for years to come.'

Stewart Mouland started selling the Richard Holdsworth range from the moment they opened their doors and always endeavour to have as many Holdsworth models in stock at all times.

They would be the first people to admit that this is a difficult task because of the speed at which the Richard Holdsworth models sell, but a visit to Stewart Mouland is always worthwhile if you need sound service on all the Richard Holdsworth range.

11

## G. WELLS & SONS LTD

Station Road, Strood,  
Rochester, Kent.  
Tel: 0634 721021

G. Wells & Sons Ltd based at Rochester-upon-Medway in Kent, is very much a family firm which, having been established in 1962, is now approaching its Silver Jubilee - this must be one of our oldest established dealers!

G. Wells are a main Vauxhall/Opel/Bedford Dealer, and they take a very active interest in motor caravans which they find is becoming an increasingly important part of their business. They hold a combination of appointments unique in the UK, as in addition to their main franchise, they are a

Volkswagen Specialist Motor Caravan Dealer, they are members of the Motor Agents Association and they are also founder members of the Master Dealers' Association.

Their association with Richard Holdsworth is a long and happy one, and they always have a large selection of Holdsworth conversions on show and available for inspection. Their sales staff are always available to answer any questions and happy to help prospective motor caravanners make a wise choice in choosing which conversion would suit their needs the best.

Wells have an unrivalled reputation for fair dealing and after sales service. They are open seven days a week: 9.00-6.00 Monday to Saturday and 10.00-4.00 on Sundays. Recent motorway openings have made Wells even more accessible than hitherto, as their extensive premises are within easy reach of M2, M20, M25 and only 15 minutes from the

Dartford Tunnel.

Rochester-upon-Medway is a City of immense historical and architectural interest, and there are some pleasant overnight sites nearby in the charming countryside, so prospective purchasers can combine some siteseeing in one of the loveliest parts of the country with the all important task of purchasing their Holdsworth motor caravan.

Holdsworth and Wells are a fine combination - put them on your shopping list now!

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## WEST COUNTRY MOTORHOMES

Turnpike Road, Lower Weare,  
Axbridge, Somerset.  
Tel: 0934 732503

West Country Motorhomes are one of the largest - if not the largest - motor caravan sales centres in the West of England and the full range of Richard Holdsworth models can usually be seen on display.

As with so many motor caravan centres, West Country is a family run firm with Phil Pike heading the dedicated team which includes his sons Steve and Paul.

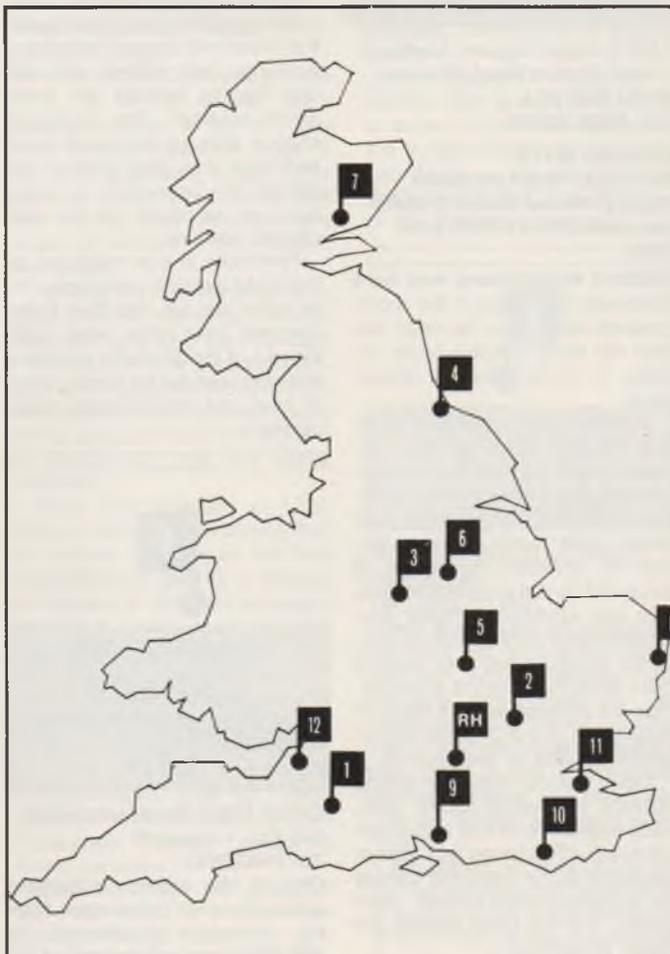
Such is the enthusiasm of the West Country outfit that one can find one of the vital cogs in the efficient sales office team - Janet Sandford - only joining on a part-time basis but now often working more hours than many so-called full time employees at other companies.

The West Country site is a really outstanding one that anyone would be proud of. Situated on the busy A38, the site has a display area for over 80 vans while clustered around the perimeter are workshops, painting facilities and showrooms for a variety of accessories.

Sales Manager, Steve Pike is, naturally, proud of the whole operation. Starting only seven years ago, the family came to selling motor caravans after handling cars and towed caravans.

'We like to try and stock the widest possible range of motor caravans', said Steve recently, 'and also a good, representative display of secondhand models to suit most types of customer.'

West Country also attend many shows in and around their areas - even the well known agricultural shows - and this often introduces newcomers to motor caravanning, as can be seen by the ever increasing numbers on the roads and in camp sites today.



Don't forget there's also the Richard Holdsworth factory at Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire. Tel 0734 692900. We can't sell to you direct, but can point you towards a dealer who can. We are always very busy but you are welcome to look round and normally there is at least one of each model to be seen.

You can also obtain details of diy kits that can be provided, and find out more about the conversion service for good quality secondhand vans. The factory is open from 9am to 5pm weekdays (closed 1-2pm) and from 9am to 1pm Saturdays. Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays.

# Blackmore Vale Motorcaravans



2 miles from Shaftesbury on the main A30 to Yeovil



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