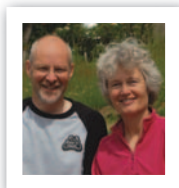


AUTOCRUISE TEMPO



FETISH FANS

Indulge your 'PVC' fantasies with two British-built, front-lounge high tops

Words & pictures by Andrew and Rona Bromley



Figures indicate ever more motorhome buyers are tempted by the array of 'PVC products' on the market. Demand for PVCs (that's Panel Van Conversions, just in case you thought otherwise!) is climbing again, with ingenious new layouts and designs revealed at many motorhome shows. Are PVC enthusiasts merely panel van fetishists, or are there more sound reasons for their

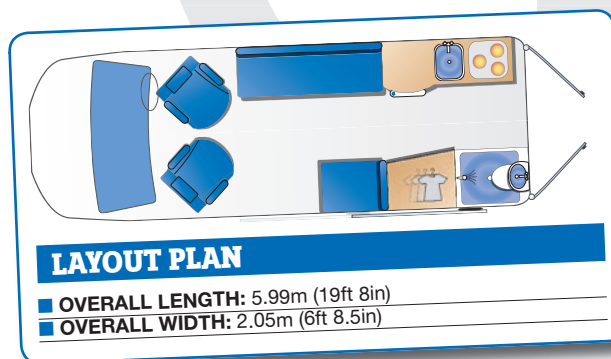
passion? After all, these 'vans aren't cheap, and often more expensive than their coachbuilt counterparts. But they're slimmer and easier to drive and to park - perhaps that's the key?

This month, we test two British designs, both from long-standing companies. Autocruise, though taken over by Swift, retains its distinctive design DNA, with an excellent coachbuilt selection, plus a range of six, musically-named, Sevel-based panel van conversions. We tested the Tempo, a long wheelbase high top, featuring the traditional, ever-popular layout of front lounge with kitchen and washroom on either side to the rear. Prices start at just over the psychological £40,000 point.

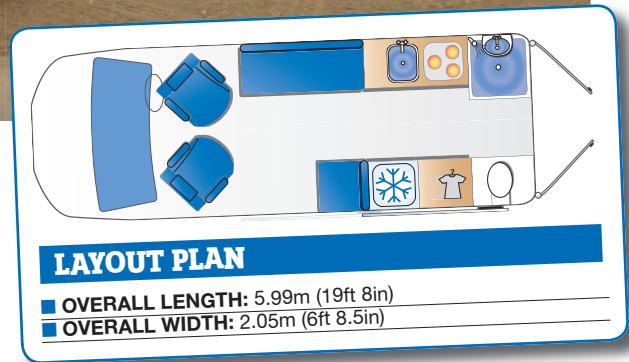
Auto-Sleepers offers, in addition to a bewildering array of coachbuilts, a wide range of Volkswagen and Peugeot-based panel van conversions. Here, competing with the Tempo, is the company's new Kemerton. Named after

a Cotswold village, the Kemerton is priced higher, starting at over £45,000. Another Sevel-based high top with forward lounge, this 'van features a split kitchen with washroom across the rear. The Kemerton's layout is similar to (but larger than) the Volkswagen T5-based Topaz, a long-time stalwart of Auto-Sleepers' panel van range.

Using the same base vehicle, you'd expect these rivals to look similar; the shape is identical, but styling is quite different. The Tempo appears more traditional, with acrylic



AUTO-SLEEPER KEMERTON



double-glazed side windows, plus one in the offside rear door - the expanse of 'road-coloured' silver/grey metal offset by large, matt black decal panels and red highlights. The Kemerton is based on the Peugeot Boxer window van, so features dark-tinted single-glazed, glass-panel windows the length of the sides, and at the rear. There are small, opening flush-mounted insets in the lounge windows. The exterior looks sharp, modern and upmarket with its Azzura metallic blue finish preferable to the Autocruise's silver. Both have colour-coded front bumpers.

Entering through the side sliding doors, the Tempo has the usual electrically-operated Omnistep, whereas the Kemerton boasts a Project 2000 step, which seemed more sturdy and retracts automatically when the ignition is activated. The lounge areas have similar layouts, with offside settees, nearside travel seats and swivelling cab seats. In both, the higher cab

area floor is extended, affording foot-room for cab seat occupants without obstructing access into the main living area. The Tempo's cab extension has a hidden floor box, while the Kemerton has a heater vent and blue LEDs.

The Kemerton's upholstery, in pale blue/beige design (Judy Sky), has ribbed fabric surrounds for lounge windows and cream plastic mouldings on kitchen walls. There's mid-brown woodwork, cream padded ceiling and removable coffee-coloured carpets over a sandy tile-effect vinyl floor. The Kemerton's main kitchen unit is on the offside - the fridge opposite, behind the travel seat. Next comes the wardrobe and across the rear (behind a wooden door), the washroom. With no means of holding that door open, the driver lacks through vision to the rear. However, a reversing camera is fitted.

The Tempo's (Secura) woodwork is paler than the Kemerton's and, on the test 'van, was suffering some scuffed edges. High-level lockers, enlivened by glossy darker panels, have silver strips containing positive catches. Diago upholstery is a mixture of oatmeal and beige/coffee faux-suede, with oatmeal fabric wall-covering in lounge and on rear doors. Removable carpets, in pale tweedy beige, cover a mottled vinyl floor.

The offside-located kitchen stretches right to the rear door under an expanse of cream-patterned worktop, with cream plastic wall moulding. The washroom is opposite, aft of

the TV cupboard/wardrobe. Tempo drivers would have some rear through vision through the rear door acrylic window, but an interior mirror wasn't present.

MOTIVE POWER

As mentioned, both 'vans are Peugeot Boxer-based - though (optional) automatic Autocruises bear Fiat insignia and have 157bhp motors. This is because only Fiat offers the Comfort-Matic auto gearbox, and then only with the range-topping 157 horsepower engine. Our test vehicles had 120bhp engines with manual six-speed gearboxes. Both run on 15-inch wheels and have maximum weights of 3,500kg (allowing reasonable payloads). Both also have standard, full-sized spare wheels fitted. However, the more expensive Kemerton has higher specification, with front fog lights, Al-Ko's Air Top (supplementary air suspension assisting the rear leaf springs) and traction control/ESP

- 1 Tempo has cruise, cab air con and twin airbags, but no mirror or reversing camera
- 2 The Kemerton cab trumps its rival with a reversing camera and dash trim

On Test Autocruise Tempo v Auto-Sleeper Kemerton

AUTOCRUISE TEMPO



3



4



5

3 View aft through the comfortable lounge. The settee has a shaped backrest

4 Kitchen, washroom and wardrobe form an aisle in the rear

5 Tempo's lounge is the brighter, thanks to lightly tinted windows. Inset: The large table - with offset mount - is very convenient for lounge occupants, but no use for cab seat users

as standard. Alloy wheels are optional.

Both cockpits are well equipped, with cab air-con (optional on the Kemerton), electric windows and mirrors, twin airbags, cruise control and wheel-mounted audio controls. Plastic 'wood' trim on the Kemerton's dash is the main distinguishing feature. Suffice to say, drivers will have everything they could reasonably need in cabs with plenty of storage and a good driving position. This is aided by comfortable, height-adjustable seats. The Tempo's four armrests outdo Kemerton's two.

ON THE ROAD

Regular readers will know we love driving Sevel-based (Fiat Ducato/Peugeot Boxer/Citröen Relay) 'vans' - all their engines are peppy and spirited, handling sharp and tidy and road-holding secure. However, the rear suspension can seem a trifle harsh. Maybe that's why Auto-Sleepers fits Air Top to the Kemerton. We found its ride smooth, even over a mile of suburban speed humps - taken at a suitably low speed. However, we'd no complaints about the Tempo's ride composure either, and would need longer tests (over more varied road surfaces and preferably more heavily laden) to properly evaluate the Kemerton's air suspension.

The Kemerton travelled relatively quietly, whereas the Tempo suffered from cupboard door rattle. The Kemerton also scored by providing the aforementioned reversing camera, activated with the ignition and usable as a rear-view driving mirror. In conjunction with the big door mirrors, rear visibility was superb. The Tempo relies on (optional) reversing sensors to warn of unseen dangers.

LOUNGE AND DINE

Little to choose between these two here - their traditional lounge designs giving no surprises and working well. On warm summer evenings, imagine sprawling on the settee in either, glass in hand, sliding door wide open, listening to birdsong and enjoying the warm breeze. Bliss! Needless to say, it wasn't quite like that on the test.

Actually, if in the Kemerton, I'd need that door wide open, as those elegant dark windows are gloomy from inside. Fine for Sevel's designers under southern Europe's glaring sun, but possibly inappropriate for the pastel light of Britain. Thankfully, a Heki rooflight helps ameliorate the situation.

AUTOCRUISE TEMPO

WE LIKED

- Base vehicle performance
- Lighter lounge area
- Reasonable price
- Extended cab step - good foot-room for cab seats
- Choice of fresh water filling systems
- Spare wheel

WE WOULD HAVE LIKED

- More cheerful external colour and decals
- Plastic-lined shower
- Bigger beds
- Dual-fuel space heater

WE DISLIKED

- Lack of integral draining board
- Paucity of reading lights
- Table and leg stowage



Head-to-head test

AUTO-SLEEPER KEMERTON

WE LIKED

- Base vehicle performance
- Beautiful modern exterior and colour
- Interior finish
- Thetford bench toilet with own water supply
- Good shower cubicle
- Well-equipped kitchen
- Spare wheel
- Extended cab floor; good foot-room for cab seats

WE WOULD HAVE LIKED

- Bigger bed, preferably longitudinal

WE DISLIKED

- Lack of integral drainer
- Pump-in fresh water fill system
- Position of washbasin, in shower rather than above toilet
- Dark tinted glass windows

An overhead LED-powered dome gives satisfactory night-time illumination, but the swivelling reading lights proved inadequate.

The Tempo, with only lightly tinted windows, has the brighter interior. The offside lounge window is top-hinged, the door window slides and there's a rooflight above. Lounge lighting is a tad lacking, with a flush ceiling-mounted LED disc and only two swivelling LED reading lights above the settee. The travel seat has nothing.

The cab seats on both 'vans are usable when swivelled, but only turn part way, blocked by the settees. But those extended steps allow ample foot-room for both occupants. Neither has extra cab reading lights. The settees in both are comfortable and the rear travel seats have raked backs, three-point belts and metal frames - the Kemerton's seeming the sturdier.

Both 'vans have two tables. The Kemerton has a free-stander that lives above the cab, plus a smaller table, with pole-leg (stowed in the wardrobe), slotting into a floor socket and perfect for cab seat occupants. The Tempo has just one table-pole socket (in the lower lounge floor), but two table tops - the larger stowing in the wardrobe, the smaller above the cab. Lacking an in-cab socket, either table is too low for cab seat occupants to use. And the pole restraining straps in the wardrobe proved ridiculously fiddly.

Very similar in layout, equipment and décor, the Tempo's brighter interior is balanced by the Kemerton's better table set-up, so a draw.

COOK'S QUARTERS

The Tempo's chef has a long kitchen unit housing the 80-litre fridge, cutlery drawer, two big cupboards (one, largely occupied by the water heater, another limited by the water drain tap), Thetford Triplex cooker (three burners and oven/grill) and large cupboard. With three overhead lockers (un-shelved, but one with crockery racking) and end-of-unit rubbish bin, there's useful storage space aplenty. The small, glass-lidded sink looked rather lost in the vast cream work-surface. Yes, you've guessed, there's no integral stainless steel drainer! Drainers can double as heat-proof work-surfaces, but not vice versa. Narrow LED striplights illuminate sink and cooker, along with two ceiling light fittings, and a sliding window.

The Kemerton's kitchen is divided by the

AUTO-SLEEPER KEMERTON



6 The small table is perfect for cab seat occupants to use

7 A luxurious and comfortable lounge. TV is standard

8 Large dining table is a versatile freestander Inset: Tinted windows proved very dark for average UK conditions

On Test Autocruise Tempo v Auto-Sleeper Kemerton



HEAD-TO-HEAD DATA

AUTOCRUISE TEMPO

PRICE

- From: £40,773 OTR
- As Tested: £41,968 OTR

BASICS

- Berths: 2
- Three-point belted seats: 3 (incl driver)
- Warranty: Base vehicle and conversion 3 years
- Badged as NCC EN1646 compliant: Yes
- Construction: All steel bodied, high roof panel van
- Length: 5.99m (19ft 8in)
- Width: 2.05m (6ft 8.5in)
- Height: 2.55m (8ft 4.5in) incl TV aerial
- Wheelbase: 4.03m (13ft 3in)
- Rear overhang: 1.00m (3ft 3.5in)
- Gross vehicle weight: 3,500kg
- Payload: 610kg (after allowance for driver @ 75kg, 90 per cent fuel, fresh water, gas)

THE VEHICLE

- Chassis: Peugeot Boxer long wheelbase van
- Engine: 2.2-litre turbo-diesel producing 120bhp
- Transmission: Six-speed manual gearbox, front-wheel drive
- Brakes: Discs all round with ABS
- Suspension: Front: independent on coil springs. Rear: leaf-springs on rigid axle
- Features: ABS, ASR, driver and passenger airbags, remote central locking, immobiliser, electrically-adjustable heated door mirrors, electric windows, trip computer, radio/CD player with steering wheel-mounted controls, spare wheel

INSIDE

- Layout: Swivelling cab seats ahead of lounge, sofa and kitchen on offside, travel seat wardrobe and washroom on nearside. Caravan entrance - side sliding door - on UK nearside
- Insulation: 25mm Thinsulate
- Interior height: 1.89m (6ft 2.5in) max

KITCHEN

- Sink: Stainless steel unit with glass lid and mixer tap, no drainer
- Cooker: Thetford Triplex stove with glass

- lid, three-burner hob, oven/grill all with electronic ignition
- Fridge: Three-way with freezer compartment. Capacity 81 litres gross

WASHROOM

- Toilet: Thetford C200 swivel-bowl cassette, flushing water from main tank
- Basin: Plastic drop-down bowl with mixer tap
- Shower: Integral, with single-drain wet-room floor, mixer, riser rail, shower head, nylon curtain

BEDS

- Transverse lounge double
- Length: 1.87m (6ft 1.5in)
- Width: 1.65m (5ft 5in) max
- Alternative longitudinal singles
- Lengths: Nearside: 1.83m (6ft 0in). Offside: 1.85m (6ft 1in)
- Widths: Nearside: 635mm (2ft 1in). Offside: 760mm (2ft 6in)

EQUIPMENT

- Fresh water tank: Underslung, insulated, 66 litres (14.5 gallons)
- Waste water tank: Underslung, 50 litres (11 gallons)
- Water heater: Truma Ultrastore boiler, gas-mains operation
- Space heater: Truma E2400 with blown-air, gas-only operation
- Leisure battery: 75 amp hr
- Gas: Capacity 2 x 7kg cylinders
- Lighting: All LED. Ceiling-mounted disc lights in lounge, kitchen, rear aisle, washroom, 2 reading lights above settee, strip lights above sink and cooker
- Sockets: 230V: 4 (1 in settee base, 2 in kitchen, 1 in TV cupboard). 12V: 1 (in TV cupboard)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

- Fitted to test vehicle: Comfort Pack - cab air-conditioning, cruise control, alarm, reversing sensors (£1,195)
- Other options available: Upgrade to 157bhp engine/Comfort-Matic auto gearbox - only on Fiat and with Comfort Pack - (£3,855), awning (£663), alloy wheels (£607)

aisle. The main (offside) unit has a smaller surface than the Tempo's, but has a slide-out extension. There'd still be room for an integrated sink/drain (as featured by Auto-Sleepers' own Symbol), but regrettably, a sink with glass lid and plastic insert drainer is fitted instead.

Alongside the sink is a Smev cooker (three burners and oven/grill), and a large cupboard below that. Overhead, at a reasonable height (1.53m), there's a Daewoo microwave, locker with crockery racking (a melamine set is supplied) and a cooker hood - necessary, as the window doesn't open. There's more storage, with cutlery drawer, a big shelved cupboard below, plus a door below the sink, inside which, is fitted a Brabantia kitchen-roll holder. Here also are two shelves and a useful shallow vertical space.

Opposite, under a large work-surface, the 96-litre fridge (with SES auto power selection) has a capacious, un-shelved locker overhead. Two towel rods live between fridge and travel seat back.

Overall, both kitchens are practical and efficient apart, that is, from the missing drainers. The Kemerton scores higher by virtue of its enhanced specification fridge, microwave and cooker hood. However, one must always remember its higher price.

BATHING SPACE

The across-the-rear washroom is the Kemerton's USP. Through the door, a nearside-located bench-type toilet (with plenty of foot and elbow room) faces a separate shower cubicle - roughly two feet square with rounded edges equipped with two translucent tambour doors. Within the shower (against the offside wall), a tip-up basin has a large mirror above, with two inset rows of 'amusing,' blinding blue lights. A domed LED light restricts headroom, and there's an extractor fan, two shower drain holes and a mat. By 'PVC' standards, this is an excellent shower. Another mirror (on the inside of the washroom door), robe hook, toilet-roll holder and towel rail are also fitted. Concertina blinds cover both rear windows and another behind the toilet, though they are hardly necessary with the window's tinting; talk about, 'through a glass, darkly!'

Thetford's 402 toilet, with its dedicated flush-water tank is, we think, the best currently



AUTO-SLEEPER KEMERTON

available: easy to clean and here, the cassette is easily extracted (for emptying) via the rear doors. Behind is a metal-lined box; a somewhat OTT locker for holding spare toilet-rolls? No, I'm told it's a wet locker!

But it is not the perfect washroom. Though having some excellent aspects, we can't understand why the washbasin is within the shower cubicle; why not above the toilet where it's much more convenient for hand washing? Also, the washroom walls are fabric-covered and the shower side-walls are wall-board. We'd prefer easily cleaned moulded plastic throughout, as on the ceiling and mirror wall (which is black, marble-effect).

The Tempo's washroom, in contrast to the novel Auto-Sleepers' closet, is a very traditional affair, containing Thetford's 200 swivel-bowl toilet (flushing water from main fresh tank) and tip-up basin, with mirror-doored vanity unit above. Opposite the door is the shower head on a riser-bar, with chromed baskets for toiletries. Towel ring and toilet-roll holder are provided. The shower tray has just one drain hole, plus a mat, while a shower curtain protects the dappled wallboard, but stows uncomfortably close to the toilet. There's no window, but a lamp and rooflight compensate. A retractable clothes line thoughtfully allows the hanging of lightweight articles. Outside the door is a large mirror and robe hook. There's nothing fancy here, and though we'd prefer smooth plastic walls and a loo with its own water supply, the Tempo's washroom is compact and workmanlike.

BED TIME

Both 'vans suffer the usual limitation of Sevel PVCs: the cab seats are set on a platform higher than the settee and rear travel seat, so cannot

9 Kitchen has acres of work-top, but no fixed drainer

10 Washroom has all necessities, but we'd prefer smooth plastic walls

11 A well-thought out kitchen, drainer is removable

12 Separate shower washroom is the Kemerton's USP

13 A pity the tip-up basin isn't above the toilet

HEAD-TO-HEAD DATA

AUTO-SLEEPER KEMERTON

PRICE

- From: £45,195 OTR
- As Tested: £46,805 OTR

BASICS

- Berths: 2
- Three-point belted seats: 3 (incl driver)
- Warranty: Base vehicle 3 years, conversion 2 years
- Badged as NCC EN1646 compliant: Yes
- Construction: All steel bodied, high roof window van
- Length: 5.99m (19ft 8in)
- Width: 2.05m (6ft 8.5in)
- Height: 2.60m (8ft 6.5in) incl TV aerial
- Wheelbase: 4.03m (13ft 3in)
- Rear overhang: 1.00m (3ft 3in)
- Gross vehicle weight: 3,500kg
- Payload: 507kg (after allowance for weight of driver, 100 per cent fuel, 90 per cent water and gas)

THE VEHICLE

- Chassis: Peugeot Boxer long wheelbase window van
- Engine: 2.2-litre turbo-diesel producing 120bhp
- Transmission: Six-speed manual gearbox, front-wheel drive
- Brakes: Discs all round with ABS
- Suspension: Front: Independent on coil springs. Rear: leaf-springs on rigid axle with Al-Ko Air Top suspension
- Features: ABS, ASR, ESP Traction control, cruise control, driver and passenger airbags, remote central locking, immobiliser, electrically-adjustable door mirrors, electric windows, trip computer, radio/CD player with steering wheel-mounted controls, faux-wood dash trim, spare wheel

INSIDE

- Layout: Swivelling cab seats ahead of lounge, nearside travel seat, offside main kitchen unit, nearside fridge, wardrobe, across-the-rear washroom. Caravan entrance - side sliding door - on UK nearside
- Insulation: 25mm Eco-fibre (manufactured from recycled plastic drinks bottles)
- Interior height: 1.89m (6ft 2.5in) max

KITCHEN

- Sink: Stainless steel unit with glass lid, chromed mixer tap, wire cutlery drainer, removable plastic drainer, inset chopping board
- Cooker: Smev stove with glass lid, three-burner hob, oven/grill, all with electronic ignition. Daewoo microwave
- Fridge: Thetford three-way with auto energy selection (SES). Capacity 96 litres

WASHROOM

- Toilet: Thetford bench-type, cassette on wheels, built-in flush-water tank
- Basin: Plastic drop-down bowl, mixer tap
- Shower: Separate compartment, twin tambour doors, two-drain tray, mirror with integral lights, mixer, riser rail, shower head

BED

- Transverse lounge double
- Length: 1.88m (6ft 2in)
- Width: 1.46m (4ft 9.5in)

EQUIPMENT

- Fresh water tank: Underslung, 69 litres (15.2 gallons)
- Waste water tank: Underslung, 46 litres (10.2 gallons)
- Water heater: Whale boiler, gas-mains operation
- Space heater: Whale with blown-air, gas-mains operation
- Leisure battery: 100 amp hr
- Gas: Underslung 20-litre tank (approx 10kg capacity)
- Lighting: Ceiling-mounted LED dome lights in lounge, kitchen, shower. Oval dome lights in kitchen and above toilet. Adjustable LED reading lights in lounge. Blue LED lights in shower and on cab step. LED awning light
- Sockets: 230V: 4 (1 in settee base, 3 in kitchen). 12V: 2 (in TV cupboard and cupboard above fridge)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

- Fitted to test vehicle: Alloy wheels and cab air-con (£1,250), metallic paint (£360)
- Other options available: Awning (£729), tank heater (£150), half-leather upholstery (£600), 157bhp engine upgrade (£POA)

On Test Autocruise Tempo v Auto-Sleeper Kemerton

AUTOCRUISE TEMPO



AUTOCRUISE TEMPO LOANED FOR EVALUATION BY:

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combine with them to augment bed length.

Making Kemerton's only bed is simple: press a lever on the side of the rear travel seat and the base slides forward smoothly. Pull the settee base to the 'van's centre, drop the backrest flat, and you've a gap, filled by four small infill cushions (remember to first remove them from their dedicated locker in the settee base). The resultant bed is 1.88m (6ft 2in) long by 1.46m (4ft 9.5in) wide. Lacking knee-rolls, it's flat and reasonably comfortable. However, as always with PVC transverse beds, joins across the bed are inescapable, so some may desire a mattress topper. For privacy, Kemerton has full cab curtains - an old-fashioned system, but it works.

Tempo's bed making ritual is similar: slide forward the travel seat, pull out the settee base and drop in the backrest - being shaped, this must be removed and reversed, placing the raised edge against the wall. The bed is marginally shorter than Kemerton's (1.87m - 6ft 2in), but against that, it's a wide at 1.65m (5ft 5in). Autocruise also supplies two cushions to help create single, longitudinal beds - the offside being but 1.85m (6ft 1in) long, the other slightly shorter. A Remis windscreen blind provides privacy, but it's somewhat remiss (sorry) of Autocruise to omit cab door blinds - removable quilted screens are supplied instead and their daytime storage is a bugbear.

Neither 'van would suit me, because of my 'unreasonable' height. Every prospective owner above medium height should test the beds carefully before purchase.

STORE ROOM

Both 'vans have adequate payloads (507kg for the Kemerton, 610kg for the Tempo), so where to stow it all? Both manufacturers use the slim overcab shelf for table stowage; we'd prefer this to be elsewhere and lower down, so you could squeeze some bedding in up top. Each has storage space under the rear travel seat - in the Kemerton it's accessed only from above. A cupboard door on the front of the seat's base drops to reveal a four-bottle wine rack.

Above the Kemerton's sliding door, there's a high-lipped shelf and, on the door, a fabric-covered cubby. Above the settee are two small open shelves, then two generous lockers (one shelved) with positive catches.

You'd expect reasonable under-settee storage, but not so: in addition to the four bed infill cushions, the heater, leisure battery and power unit/charger also crowd this space. And the heavy settee base is only supported by one side-mounted metal strut.

The Kemerton's wardrobe has a one metre hanging drop, plus three shelves. The television cupboard is in the forward side and above the over-fridge work surface. Below the wardrobe are three commodious clothing drawers, but still nowhere obvious for bulky bedding. The washroom has a shelved overhead locker above the toilet and two small open cubbies above the rear doors. There's little space in the shower area for toiletries.

The Tempo has very similar storage solutions, though the travel seat base has a side flap in

14 Alternative singles are short-ish, and while one is quite wide, t'other is just for a slimline motorhome

15 Transverse double bed is slightly shorter, but wider than its rival's

16 Good under-settee storage, but gas struts need to be stronger to hold up the base

17 Neat, flush TV locker - buy your own set



Head-to-head test

addition to top access. The under-settee area is only slightly obstructed by the Truma heater and the charger - there's much more room in here than in the Kemerton. Two gas struts proved unequal to the task of holding the settee base up, but there's a large drop-down flap too. Two small shelves, high-level lockers (three rather than two, but unshelved) and an open cubby above the sliding door, mirror the Auto-Sleeper's layout. The wardrobe has a longer hanging drop than the Kemerton's, plus three cubbies for socks and knicks in the forward wall, but it lacks the useful drawers below. The television cupboard is, again, set in the wardrobe's forward wall, and behind a silver tambour door. Additionally, the lounge has a couple of fabric pockets and two fabric-lined cubbies in the sliding door. Inside the nearside rear door is another fabric-lined cubby and, facing you on the rear of the washroom, a full-length door concealing three slim shelves and access to the rear of washbasin, and the toilet cassette.

The Tempo wins this round with better settee base storage and similar facilities elsewhere.

LIFE SUPPORT

The Kemerton has underslung water tanks of 69 litres (fresh) and 46 litres (waste). This compares with 66 litres and 50 litres for the Tempo. However, Autocruise insulates the fresh water tank. In each case, capacity is adequate, rather than generous. The Kemerton's fresh water tank is filled by Whale's pump system, enabling you to stay connected to a water tap or to an Aquaroll. Auto-Sleepers uses this system on several new designs, saying it's very popular. We preferred the normal - pour-in - filler offered by the Autocruise. The Tempo also offers the best of both worlds - fitting a 12V socket adjacent, thus allowing easy top-ups from a water porter, using a submersible pump. The Tempo heats 10 litres of water using Truma's gas/mains boiler, but disappointingly, the Truma blown-air space heater is gas-only powered. The Kemerton has the new Whale gas/mains space heater and (13-litre) gas/mains water boiler.

The Kemerton has a 20-litre underslung LPG tank, allowing much cheaper and easier re-filling, whereas the Tempo stores two 7kg cylinders in a dedicated locker. The Kemerton has a 100 amp hr leisure battery, compared to the Tempo's 75 amp hr unit.

Auto-Sleepers supplies a 16-inch Avtex TV/DVD player and aerial as standard, while Autocruise provides just mounting and aerial.

The Kemerton's complement of five mains sockets (two above the kitchen work-surface, one above the fridge work-surface and two in the settee base) outnumbers Tempo's four (one in the settee, two over the kitchen unit and one in the TV cupboard).

Overall, the Kemerton has more up-market features than the Tempo, but that's not to say the Tempo is inadequately equipped. And remember that price differential.

CONCLUSION

These two practical British 'PVCs' both drive beautifully and have sufficient, sensibly set-out equipment, plus plenty of payload. Both should give many years of enjoyable holidays. Auto-Sleepers' Kemerton has a higher specification to warrant its greater price, and a novel washroom. The Autocruise Tempo offers a traditional, proven layout. You pay your money and you take your choice. But check you fit the beds before buying. ■



18 Transverse double is the only bed, so check that it's long enough for you

19 Not much room in here. The settee base is held up by just one metal stay

20 Whale's new space and water heaters feature

AUTO-SLEEPER KEMERTON LOANED FOR EVALUATION BY:

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