

PRIVATE AND COMMERCIAL

GREAT NEW FORD TRANSIT COMMERCIAL · EXC



ABOVE LEFT

Just one of the many versions in which the real Ford Transit Van is available

ABOVE RIGHT

The VW 1600 TL as it appears in real life

OPPOSITE PAGE TOP

These examples of the new Dinky Volkswagen not only illustrate the numerous action features fitted to the model, but also show the fine detail present. Note, particularly, the wheels.

OPPOSITE PAGE BOTTOM

A model to delight commercial vehicle fans is new Dinky Toy No. 407 Ford Transit Van

'WE aim to please,' said a spokesman for Meccano Limited recently when talking about the new Dinky Toys models of the Volkswagen 1600 TL Fastback and Ford Transit Van, hot off the production lines when this article was written. I'm not sure I like his turn of phrase, but I fully understand the point he was trying to make. Broadly speaking, most die-cast model collectors can be split into two main groups—those who prefer private cars and those who go in for commercial vehicles. These latest Dinkys cater for both groups. Mind you, I suspect that Meccano also had an eye to good business. As I have mentioned on several occasions in the past, more than half the production of the company is exported, with a good proportion of the exports going to the Continent, and I'll bet that the fact that the original of one of the models happens to be a Continental car is deliberate rather than coincidental. 'Fair enough,' I say. After all, it's only right that Continental collectors, who buy such a lot of models, should be borne in mind when new models are on the stocks.

Anyway, irrespective of its nationality, the Dinky Volkswagen 1600 TL is well worth buying

for its own sake. Numbered 163, it's an action-packed model in the best Dinky Toy tradition. Features present not only include the now almost standard opening bonnet, detailed engine, opening boot, suspension, windows and interior fittings, but also opening 'upholstered' doors, tipping seat-backs, plated bumpers and baseplate, jewelled headlamps and Continental-style number plates. Perhaps the most interesting feature of all, however, from the connoisseur's point of view, is the wheels. These are entirely new and are very well detailed representations of the wheels fitted to the real-life car. The doors, too, are worthy of special note. You may have noticed on other models fitted with opening doors that only the lower half of each door is present, the window surrounds having been omitted. Not so in the case of the Volkswagen. The whole door is included and the complete unit, of course, opens. Strangely enough, the only other Dinky sporting this feature is No. 129 Volkswagen 1300 Sedan—the famous 'Beetle'. It seems to be a family trait!

It's worth remembering, incidentally, that, like most other Volkswagens, the 1600 has a rear-mounted 'engine', with a luggage compartment

under the bonnet. Fine body detail is well up to standard, including door handles, guttering and engine air-intakes above the rear wheels, while rear-view mirror and windscreen wiper representations appear on the windscreen moulding. Along each side of the model, running its entire length, is a raised line representing what, on the actual car, is a chrome strip. The engine, by the way, is mounted beneath the floor of the boot. Under normal circumstances, of course, this would prevent it from being seen, so the boot has been given a transparent floor—problem overcome! Finish is in a striking red gloss with off-white interior.

In my opinion the real VW 1600 TL Fastback is an extremely attractive car, although I must admit that the lack of a radiator grille takes a bit of getting used to. The long, sloping fastback gives the vehicle a sleek powerful appearance which is well deserved. Admittedly, its maximum speed is only 84 m.p.h., but its performance up to this

safer handling. Another point which, although not connected with safety, I found interesting is the fact that all four wings are bolted in position instead of being welded. This allows damaged wings to be removed and new wings fitted easily and quickly. Even the door hinges are screwed on, making the replacement of a damaged door extremely easy. In short, the whole car can be summed up by the manufacturers' words, 'modern, practical and sensible'.

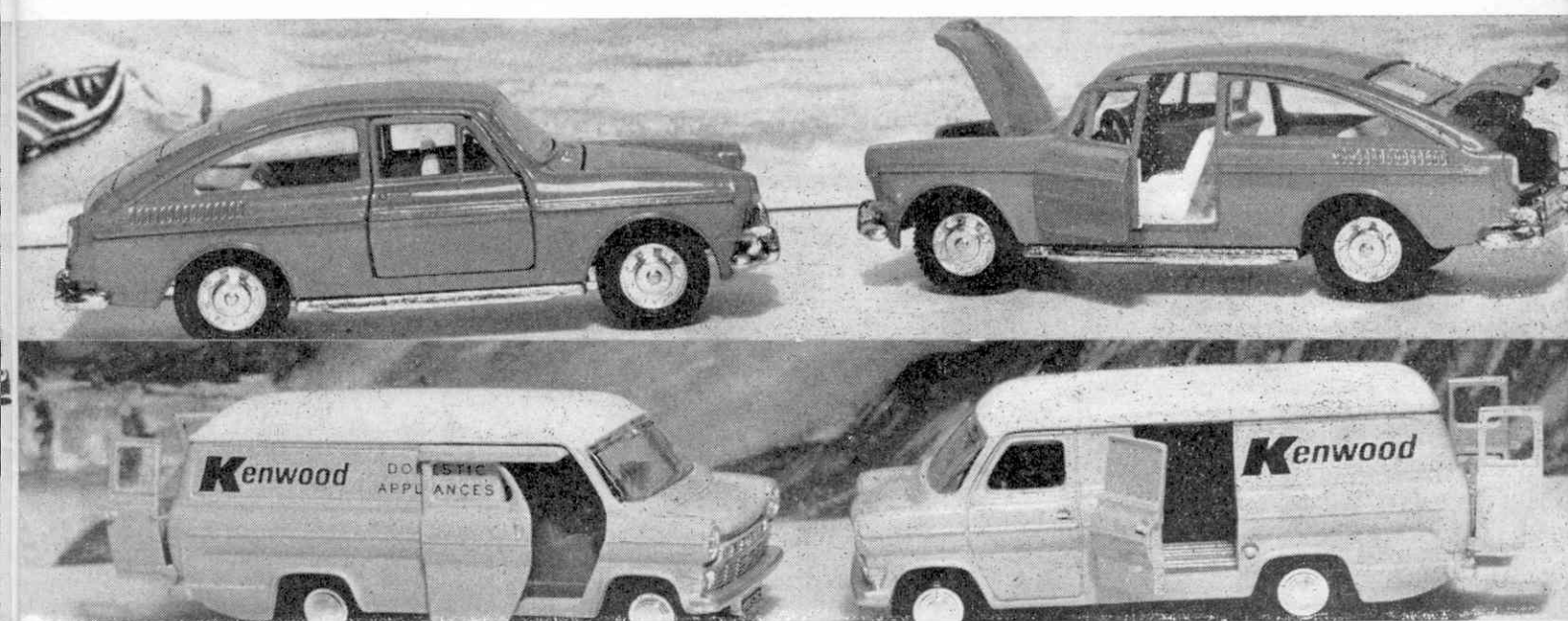
Ford Transit Van

Commercial vehicle followers will be delighted with the other new Dinky Toy to make its appearance, No. 407 Ford Transit Van. This really is a fantastic model—not only because it's an exact reproduction of a brand new and ultra-modern vehicle, but also because it's got opening doors all round the place! Both rear doors, a wide loading door in the near-side of the van body, driver's door—they all open! Never

In real life, the Ford Transit was first introduced to Britain and the world in October 1965. Since then it has become a world best seller. The Ford Motor Company believe that its fantastic success is due largely to the opportunities it gives operators to 'tailor' vehicles exactly to the job they have to do. As Fords put it, 'the Transit provides over 500 basic specification variants—on two wheelbase lengths and six payload categories from 12 to 35 cwt. The list of options, alternatives and variants is so long that every shopkeeper, contractor, ambulance driver, builder, baker or candlestick or holidaymaker can find his own special requirements in the Ford Transit'.

It should be stressed that a lot of the '500 basic specification variants' are very minor things such as colour schemes, radiator blind, interior rear-view mirror, etc., but a lot of the variants are quite outstanding, the six different payload categories, for example, or the two wheelbase lengths. The short wheelbase versions can be 12,

EXCITING NEW VOLKSWAGEN 1600 TL FASTBACK!



speed is excellent. It also has a very good climbing ability, being capable of negotiating a 1 in 2.2 hill in the lowest of its four forward gears. Power is supplied by a 4-cylinder engine of 1,584 c.c. capacity that develops a power output of 65 b.h.p. at 4,600 r.p.m. Twin carburettors are fitted as standard.

As already mentioned, the engine is mounted beneath the boot—not in it—which leaves the boot free for luggage. This, coupled with the luggage compartment under the bonnet, adds up to an enormous amount of luggage space.

Described as a 'Five-seater Sedan', the vehicle as a whole incorporates many useful safety features, including disc brakes on the front wheels, safety glass all round and little indicator repeaters at the sides, which flash in conjunction with the respective main indicators. Side repeaters of this type are rare on British cars and I can never understand why. They're very useful safety features, enabling anybody at the side of the vehicle, out of sight of the front/rear indicators, to see which way the car is turning.

The luggage compartments, themselves, also increase safety, as they allow better weight distribution when the car is loaded, resulting in

before has a Dinky Toy Commercial Vehicle been able to boast four opening, die-cast doors, but as if this wasn't enough, all the doors open correctly, those at the rear and near-side hinging outwards while the driver's door actually slides backwards and forwards!

Attention to detail hasn't stopped with the doors, however. Also included are windows, seats, steering wheel, van floor, new-type wheel centres, jewelled headlamps, and even suspension, a feature not often fitted to Dinky commercials. Working on the theory that the bigger the model, the easier it is to fit opening doors, you may think that the Transit Van has been made over-size so as to accommodate everything. This is not the case. It is produced to the now standard scale (wherever possible) of 1 : 42, therefore, it is in exact proportion to most other Dinky Toys in the range. All the same, it's a good substantial model being 4½ in. long by 1½ in. wide with an overall height of 2 in. Finished in a very attractive colour scheme of light blue with red interior and white roof, it carries 'Kenwood' transfers on the sides. Kenwood, of course, are the well-known manufacturers of domestic appliances such as food mixers, etc.

17 or 22 cwt. payload carriers in a choice of five different bodies, while the long wheelbase models sport 25, 30 or 35 cwt. ratings, also in a choice of five bodies. In addition, there are 9, 12 and 15-seater buses, plus chassis-cab, chassis-windscreen and Kombi versions. The chassis-cab and chassis-windscreen models are intended to take special bodies, whereas the Kombi is a combination of van body with dual passenger seat and bus windows, providing 'a first-rate basis for conversion to motorised caravan, personnel carrier or ambulance at little extra cost'.

All standard short wheelbase versions are powered either by a compact V-4 petrol engine of 1,663 c.c. capacity that develops 73 b.h.p. at 4,750 r.p.m., or by a 4-cylinder in-line diesel engine of 1,621 c.c. capacity, developing 42.3 b.h.p. at 3,600 r.p.m. The standard long wheelbase models are powered by a 1,996 c.c. V-8 unit that develops a gross power output of 85.5 b.h.p. at 4,750 r.p.m. Transmission on all models is to the rear wheels via a 4-speed fully synchromesh gearbox.

Footnote: The Dinky Ford Transit Van is based on the standard long wheelbase van. Given free with each model is a 7½ in. by 2½ in. car window transfer, illustrating the new road signs.