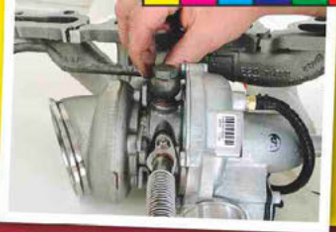


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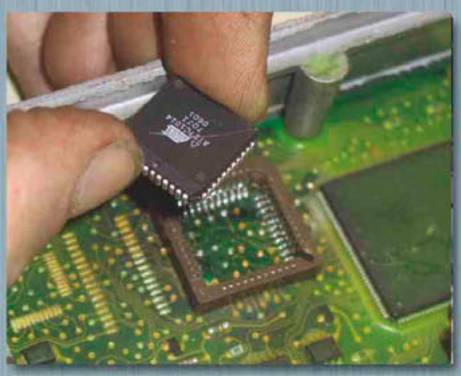
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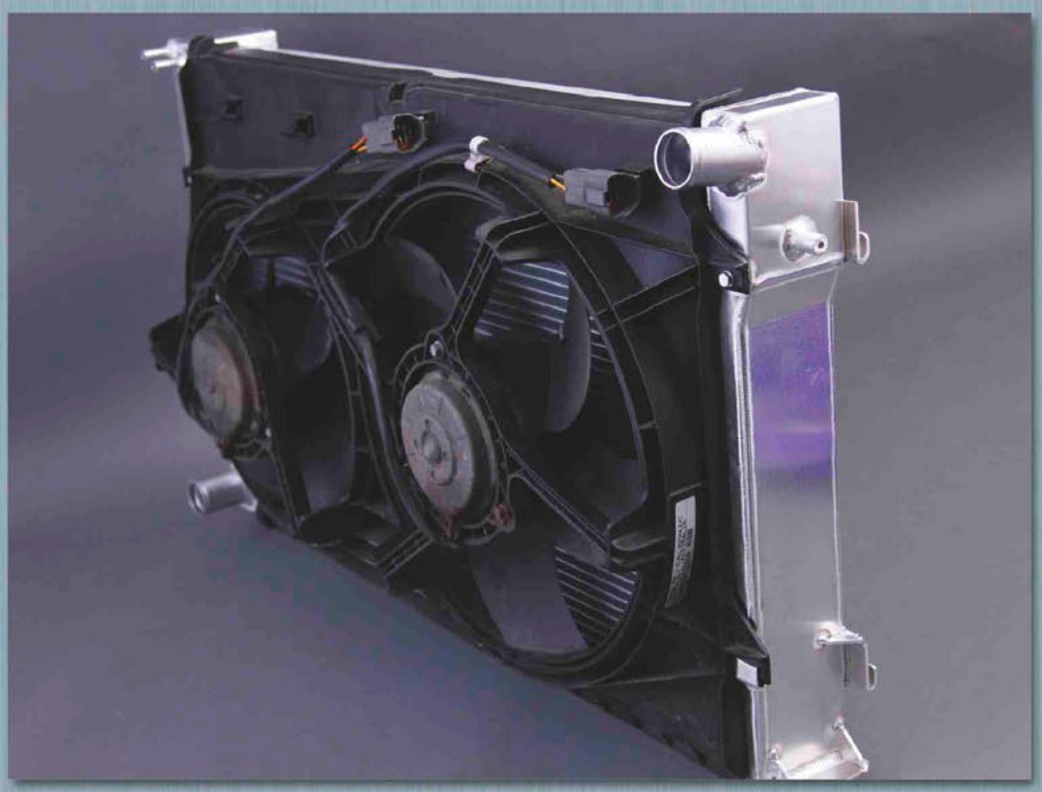
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TOTAL VAUXHALL
THE PERFORMANCE VAUXHALL MAGAZINE



Dare to differ

I'd like to take this chance to mount my soapbox and have a bit of a grumble. It's something I've mentionned before, but I reckon it's worth revisiting... Once upon a time people's only source of inspiration for car modifying was by buying magazines and attending shows. But with the advent of forums, and latterly social media – inspiration is literally a click away... or at least you'd think it was. But I'm increasingly seeing both on various forums, and on Facebook is people intent on constantly stifling creativity and originality. It seems that there are still those who believe there is a set path to modified perfection, and if you dare stray from that path you will be chastised, and ridiculed. I'd wager that many of the more outspoken ones are doing so out of both misplaced loyalty to the brand, and out of jealousy (because they're simply not capable of thinking creatively for themselves). The whole purpose of modifying your car is to make it into something that YOU want, that satisfies YOUR needs, YOUR taste and YOUR requirements. It is not, nor should it ever be, about placating some baying moron on Facebook who tells you that your wheels have ruined your car!

So at a time when magazines are in many ways anacronistic, there is something we do have over and above any digital channels – and that's that we celebrate those who dare to be differnet, those who push boundaries, and those who don't want a car like everyone elses!

Ultimately we can only feature what's out there – and there's no denying that there are some modifications that have arguably been 'done to death' but which still work well – but what we strive to do is bring you variety, individuality, and champion those who lead the scene rather than slavishly following it.

Right, I've said my piece, dismounted my soapbox, and I sincerely hope you enjoy your read!

Dan

IMPORTANT TOTAL VAUXHALL NEWS
SEE PAGE 16 FOR DETAILS

MEET THE TEAM

The people who bring you *Total Vauxhall*, and what we've been up to this month...



DAN WHITE
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Wondering how long before I get used to the new name!
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Planning a trip to a breakers for small spares for the Vectra
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Began preparing for a trip to Chernobyl - wish me luck!
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DOUGIE RANKINE
CONTRIBUTOR
Ending up with another Cavalier because I took pity on it. Taking expensive vitamin supplements.



DAVE REID
CONTRIBUTOR
The Turbo's on hold yet again... we're off to Rome in a £500 banger instead. One day Rodders...

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE: 10 APRIL 2015

TOTAL VAUXHALL
THE PERFORMANCE VAUXHALL MAGAZINE

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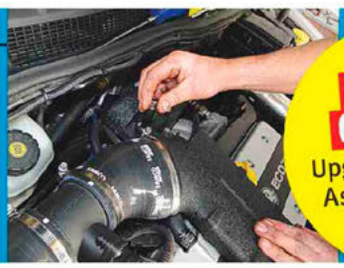
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VAUXHALL

ASCONA C

rescue mission

Saved from the jaws of the crusher, this is one awesome Ascona that's been transformed into something rather special... **WORDS & PHOTOS** Christopher Otto





FAST FACTS

★ C20LET conversion
★ KAW-Sport suspension, Koni dampers
★ 16in DZ DZ1 Exklusiv alloys
★ VW Classic Green respray
★ Koenig K5000 seats

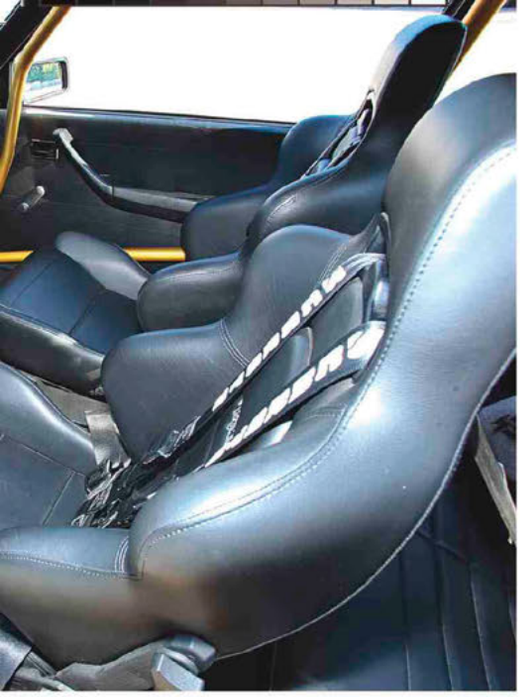
ASCONA C



With a few well chosen mods, the dated dash actually looks quite fresh











Tidy LET conversion delivers around 200bhp

This incredible Opel owes its existence to a completely different car! German Daniel Geffert is the lucky owner of this Ascona, and he was, by his own admission, heavily into his highly modified Vectra A (the Opel variant of the Cav Mk3 if you were wondering). In fact he was so into it that he didn't fancy the prospect of driving it around during the winter. So the hunt was on for a winter hack to tide him over until the sun reappeared in the sky. The hunt ended when Daniel chanced upon this particular Ascona sitting forlornly in a scrap yard. It was a Helios Blue example, but the name of the colour was about the only nice thing the car had to offer! Dented, rusted, and bruised, it stood in a corner, neglected and on the automotive equivalent of death row. Yet without even taking a test drive Daniel decided to rescue it from the jaws of the crusher and handed over 200 Euro. Amazingly, after some very minor fettling, the Ascona ran pretty much perfectly, and Daniel used it for several months without even considering any kind of modifications.

SWAP SHOP

Then, one fateful day, a mate offered him a C20LET from a Calibra he was breaking. Thinking how good it would be in his much-loved Vectra A, Daniel snapped it up and readied the Opel for some heart surgery. However, he got cold feet when he realised there wasn't a great deal to be gained by fitting it; there was nothing wrong with the original engine, and it wasn't exactly the most groundbreaking swap, having been done countless times before. However... it would slot perfectly into the Ascona, a car Daniel had become increasingly fond of. But before the potent powerplant was allowed to move into the engine bay, he decided the body needed a little TLC. But what started as a quick tidy-up soon mushroomed into something a



Who doesn't love a digi-dash?

"Then one fateful day a mate offered him a C20LET from a Calibra"

ASCONA C

TECH SPEC

ENGINE
C20LET conversion, Frontera intercooler, C20XE inlet cam, Irmscher manifold, stainless inlet piping, EDS Phase 2 software, Walbro fuel pump, Group A exhaust with 200 cell sports cat, wiring harness 'tucked' and bay smoothed, cam cover and various components chrome plated

POWER
(claimed) 204bhp

TRANSMISSION
F28 gearbox, Quaife diff, Calibra Turbo driveshafts

SUSPENSION
KAW-Sport suspension with Koni dampers, lowered (front/rear) 75/55mm, home made front strut brace

BRAKES
Kadett GSI master cylinder and servo, Calibra Turbo discs and calipers, uprated pads

WHEELS AND TYRES
DZ DZ 1 Exklusiv alloys, (front) 9x16in ET30 with 5mm spacers, (rear) 9x16in ET25 with 10mm spacers, 215/40x16 Hankook Ventus Evo12 tyres

INTERIOR
Koenig K5000 seats, black dash and interior retrimmed in black leather, Kadett GSi digi-dash, Schroth harnesses, Wiechers roll cage in gold with homemade cross bar, Raid steering wheel, LCD screen moulded into lower dash, VDO gauges, JVC headunit, 2xHifonics subs, Hifonics Brutus monoblock amp, Hifonics components under dash, Ground Zero 4-channel amp

EXTERIOR
1987 2-door Ascona C, homebuilt fiberglass front bumper, debadged grille, wheel arches flared 3cm, extended bonnet, washer jets removed, Fiat single wiper, side trims removed, delocked tailgate with electric release, underbody completely stripped, undersealed and painted beige, respray in VW Classic Green

THANKS
Girlfriend Sandra, 1st Opel Team Uelzen, Oliver Brand, Josef for the paintwork



16in DZ wheels replaced 15in BBS alloys as they didn't clear the brakes

We've got a lot of time for the 2-door shell!



lot more involved!

Within a matter of days Daniel and his mates had completely stripped the Ascona, and set about fixing the battered bodywork. Any panels that were beyond saving were replaced, and the underneath was stripped, then given a thorough coating of underseal, and then a lick of beige paint. The arches were flared in readiness for some larger wheels, the bonnet was subtly extended, and the side trim and washer jets were smoothed into oblivion. Then all that was needed was the paint. Daniel had always been fond of VW Classic Green, so has his friend Josef covered the 2-door's bodywork in the pearl paint.

BAY WATCH

With the bodywork complete it was time to fit the engine that had been the catalyst for the whole process, but not before Daniel stripped it down and fitted new pistons, bearings and seals. The inlet cam was swapped for a C20XE item, and the manifold replaced by an Irmscher component. In keeping with strict German emissions regulations a 200 cell sports cat was fitted to a Group A exhaust system, and the whole lot kicks out a little over 200bhp. Not massive power, but ample in such a lightweight shell – and more than enough to require the fitment of a Quaife to keep the 16in DZ





Daniel's one very proud owner

"Within a matter of days the car was stripped and they set about fixing the battered bodywork"

ASCONA C

The very first Mk2 Cavalier off the production line was a 2-door. Poor sales meant they soon dropped the model. The Ascona 2-door however, remained popular in Europe.

alloys pointing in the right direction under hard acceleration. The DZs replaced 15in BBS RS wheels after it was discovered they didn't fit over the Calibra Turbo brake upgrade.

Daniel's the first to admit that this is no motorway mile muncher, with a rather firm ride thanks to a 75/55mm drop over Koni dampers, but that doesn't mean he's not gone all out to make the interior comfy and inviting. The previously brown dash was painted/dyed black, and fitted with Kadett GSI clocks. Keeping the de-rigueur digi-dash company are a selection of German goodies including a Wiechers roll cage, a set of Koenig seats, and Schroth harnesses. A high end ICE install, complete with boot build means this car has the lot!

Considering how this car's journey began – abandoned and about to be recycled – it's an amazing achievement. But what of Daniel's much loved Vectra? Well, he still has it, but when it comes to show time, there's only one car he takes... and it's not the Vectra.





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WE'RE CHANGING!

TECHNICALLY THIS IS THE LAST ISSUE OF *TOTAL VAUXHALL*... EVER... BUT FEAR NOT, WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE!

As of next month *Total Vauxhall* will be called *Performance Vauxhall*! The name change has come about simply because it makes sense to align the magazine with the *Performance Vauxhall Show*, and it definitely doesn't mean we're going to radically alter the magazine's content, or change what we feature.

That's not the only change however, and although the next issue of *Performance Vauxhall* will be out in four weeks, after that we're going bi-monthly, so we'll be producing 6 issues a year – See the chart for the on sale dates for the remainder of 2015. As we'll have longer to put the magazine together it does mean that we'll be able to produce a bigger magazine, with more pages, more cars, more features and more of the content that we know you lot love! If you have any questions about the change feel free to email us at *totalvauxhall.ed@kelsey.co.uk* and in the meantime check out these FAQs.

FAQS

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Yes, certainly – full details on how to subscribe are on page 88

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The subscriptions team will be getting in touch with all subscribers to inform them of their new payment and delivery schedule.

Does this mean you're closing?
No not at all. It is most definitely business as usual!!

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Yes, simply go to www.pocketmags.com, or download the pocketmags app and search for *Performance Vauxhall*.

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There will be a nominal increase of just 5p per issue, but you'll be getting a bigger mag!

These are our new on sale dates for 2015:

Issue	On sale
174/May	10 April
175/Jun-July	5 June
176/Aug-Sept	31 July
177/Oct-Nov	25 September
178/Dec-Jan	20 November



NEWS > SHORTS

★VIVA FOREVER

Geneva will also see the launch of the all new Vauxhall Viva. Sitting slightly oddly between the Adam and the Corsa, the Viva is a 'true' 5 seater and will feature Vauxhall's 75bhp 1.0 three cylinder Ecotec.





Not everyone's liking the new look, but we love it, especially the bonnet vent!



ALL NEW CORSA VXR

It's nearly here, and it's set to be an absolute cracker!

If there's one thing that Vauxhall are good at, that's bringing out their flagship sporting versions soon after the launch of a new model – and the all new Corsa VXR is no exception, and will be officially released at the Geneva Motorshow in May! Vauxhall claim it benefits from significant revisions in technology, and it certainly looks the part (although, as with any new model, the change takes some people a while to get used to), and we love it.

So what are the all-important performance figures? Well it's certainly not shy, and is quicker than the outgoing model. 60mph appears in a claimed 6.8 seconds, and the speedo needle will keep moving until it reaches 143mph. Vauxhall are keen to highlight that with the new model comes increased engine flexibility, with a strong 245Nm torque being available from as low as 1900rpm right up to 5800rpm (compared to 2250-5500 for the current 'Ring and ClubSport models). What this means is that in gear acceleration is strong with 50-75mph in fifth gear being dispatched in 6.6 seconds.

The engine will continue to be a 1.6 turbocharged four cylinder, and the overboost feature provides a useful additional 35Nm torque for swift overtaking.

For the ride and handling Vauxhall have teamed up with Koni to produce what they call 'Frequency Selective Damping', which in short means that it works really well at high speed and also optimises ride quality at low speeds, so it's not bone-jarring around town. Interestingly the new VXR also offers switchable ESP and traction control – In 'Competition' mode the TC is inactive, and the ESP "relaxed", and for track use all driver aids can be turned off.



Bold lights dominate the rear end

There will be six exterior colour options including 'Flash Blue' (the new Arden?) and the interior will retain the always excellent Recaro seats and a host of VXR specific features.

We think it looks like an awesome car, can't wait to get our hands on one to give it a try!

★RETRO CARS TRACK EVENING

Our sister title *Retro Cars* are holding an evening of open pit track action at Brands Hatch on 10 June. It's for retro cars only (no moderns!) and for more info call 0843 453 3000 or check out the MSV website – *www.msvtrackdays.com*

★STICKY TYRES

Visitors to the Southbank Centre, beside the London Eye will be treated to this amusing art installation by Alex Chinneck entitled 'Pick yourself up and pull yourself together'. Chinneck said "With an effortlessly curling road I hoped to transcend the material nature of tarmac and stone, giving these typically inflexible materials an apparent fluidity." Yeah...okay...



CAR OF THE YEAR 2014



Thanks to everyone who took the time to vote for our COTY award – We had a superb response, and the voting was very close! In third place was Carl Evan's Astra Coupe, in second the Manta 400 Rep of Michael Appleyard – but in first place, the car that received the most votes was Scotty Harrison's Astra VXR! We've no doubt Scotty will be absolutely over the moon with the result, and we'd like to offer our congratulations!

2nd
MANTA 400 REP
MICHAEL APPLEYARD
ISSUE 164



1st

ASTRA VXR

SCOTTY HARRISON

ISSUE 157



3rd

ASTRA COUPE

CARL EVANS

ISSUE 165



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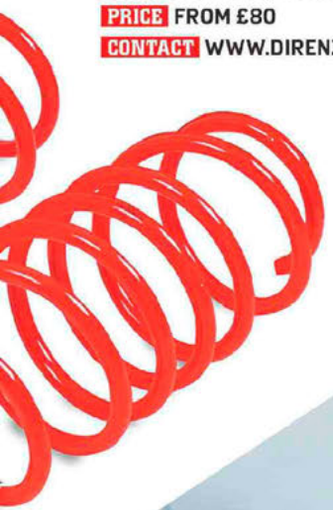
We're always on the lookout for new and exciting Vauxhall-based products and services – but we can only feature what we know about! So whether you're a big business, a sole trader, or just someone who offers a useful service from your garage, we'd love to hear about you! The only stipulations are that the product must be 'new' to the market, or that your services are relevant to the Vauxhall community.
Please contact *totalvauxhall.ed@kelsey.co.uk* for more information.

DIRENZA SPRING KITS

Looking for a simple spring kit for your car? Well Direnza have releases a new range of lowering springs. And with over 2240 applications, it's safe to say your car will be covered! The kits are TUV approved and come with a full 5-year warranty for added peace of mind. With prices starting at just £80 these are well worth checking out!

PRICE FROM £80

CONTACT WWW.DIRENZA.CO.UK





TARMAC SPORTZ RETRACTABLE SHOW PLATES

If you've ever thought that your number plate spoils the lines of your show car (and judging by the amount of cars with missing plates we see at shows, we reckon that's a lot of you) then you may be interested in this novel idea from Tarmac Sportz. It's a numberplate mounting bracket that simply slides away under the front bumper – either manually, or for a little extra, via an electronic remote control. A little head scratching may be required for some fitments, and the rectangular plate bracket may not suit all applications – but as the icing on a show car cake, it's a brilliant idea. And you obviously shouldn't use it on the road to avoid speed detection equipment, as that would be naughty!

PRICE MANUAL £53.00, ELECTRONIC £135.00

CONTACT WWW.TARMACSPORTZ.CO.UK



CORSA D PLUG COVERS

Looking for a bit of bling for your underbonnet area? Well if you have a Corsa D look no further – these hand made, hand polished plug covers from BadAss Performance are just what you need. They fit all petrol engines (including the VXR) and come with four different colour inserts, plus you get a choice of four different logos. At just £35 they certainly won't break the bank either

PRICE £35

CONTACT WWW.GETBADASS.COM



DOTZ ALLOYS

Prolific wheel manufacturer Dotz have launched yet another rim. This is the Kendo and it comes in four and five stud fitments, and in 7x16, 7x17 and 8x18in sizes. The thin spokes won't suit every car, but on the right Vauxhall they could really look the part. Check out the website for more info on these, and their other wheels.

CONTACT WWW.DOTZMAG.COM/EN


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NOV



FAST FACTS

- Rebuilt race-spec C20LET
- Quaife 34G straight cut 6-speed sequential 'box
- Wide track tarmac rally set up
- Alcon 4-pot calipers, Harry Hockley discs
- Rallycross wide-arched bodykit

It's not the first time this wide-arched Nova has appeared in Total Vauxhall... and somehow we doubt it will be the last... **WORDS** Dave Reid **PHOTOS** Ade Brannan

VA AGAIN

LET NOVA

Over the years we've featured literally countless cars, ranging from budget home brewed projects to money no object professional builds, we've seen Combat kits come and go, we've seen everything from 70's retro rally cars to brand new Euroboxes, we've seen twin engine'd Corsas, we've seen the first Z20LEH Mk4, we've seen Time Attack winners, we've seen Cleland's original BTCC Cavalier, we've seen DTM cars, rally cars and we've seen more vans than the M25 on a Monday morning, we've brought you the most iconic cars ever built, we found the original Nova Turbo. In short, over the years we've pretty much brought you the finest Vauxhalls the UK and Europe have to offer and with that, each and every one joined a rather exclusive club... *Total Vauxhall* feature car status. There's also another even more exclusive club, the one reserved for those serial car builders who have more than one feature in their portfolio. The most exclusive club of them all however is the domain of the tiny number of guys who have had more than one feature but with the same car. To gain access to that club, you need to pull something pretty epic out of the bag. Twice.



Often chased, seldom caught

BECAUSE NOVA

Our latest member of the club is 40 year old Paul Bell, director at Balgonie Motor Company and builder of this rather incredible Nova race car. Yes that's right, race car. Now, you can usually tell on what level of epic a car sits when you ask the owner to kindly send over a tech spec and it takes about a week to download. You quickly scan through it and when words like "race spec C20LET" and "sequential gearbox" and "MSA approved" pop up, it's pretty safe to assume that stuff just got serious. Now, I point blank refuse to try and cover every aspect of the car in words because well, you just can't unless you're happy to end up with a magazine as thick as the Yellow Pages at the end of it. Read the spec, check out the images and




Nortech manifold is just one of the high end mods



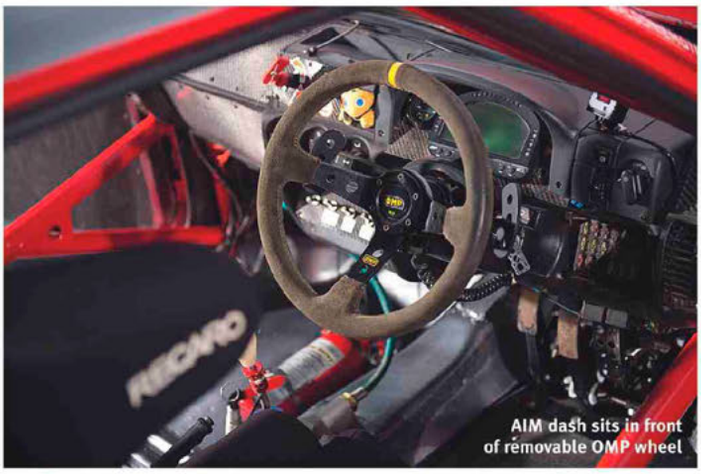


OWNER
PAUL BELL
AGE 40
OCCUPATION Company Director
FIRST CAR Metro
DAILY DRIVER Noble M12



XE made way for a LET, and now the LET is to make way for another XE!

LET NOVA



AIM dash sits in front of removable OMP wheel





Meanwhile I'll try and explain how the car has developed since that last time we saw it back in April 2008 when it was a very wide, very red, very track focussed and sporting a pretty incredible 258bhp C20XE which would put it round Knockhill Circuit in Fife in 57 seconds. Pretty insane when you consider that the BTCC lap record stands at 51.7 seconds. Even more insane when you consider the fact Paul used to jump in it after work, drive up, do a track night and then drive home again. So, having spent four years turning a very standard 1.2 ex-Motability Nova Expression into a wide tracked, Quaife dog boxed, fully caged, 258bhp track weapon and in the process, claimed his first *Total Vauxhall* feature, what happened next?

Well, despite creating his ultimate Nova... Paul then sold it! Off it went to Ireland and into the hands of James Hughes who then campaigned it in the Irish Time Attack series for the next year or so, and successfully too which just goes to show how good the car had been built. Meanwhile, Paul filled the Nova sized hole in his life with an Elise and latterly an Exige, neither of which gave the same excitement as the Nova. Paul then took it upon himself to build a Puma with a 500bhp Zetec turbo but even that didn't help quash the need to fill the gap left by the Nova. So, he bought it back and for the next



Who doesn't love a side-exit!

"Even the resident supercar drivers got sweaty palms when the little red Nova appeared in their mirrors"

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

Rebuilt race spec C20LET, 86.5mm forged Wossner pistons, Cat cams, forged rods, ARP 2000 rod bolts, new uprated oil and water pumps, lightened balanced and polished crank, race spec head with race ports, race 214N forged 1 piece stainless steel 1mm oversized valves, Duplex valve springs, competition oil seals, Cometic 1.9mm headgasket, baffled sump, custom alloy inlet chamber with V6 throttle body, Nortech exhaust manifold with small primaries for quick spool, rebuilt GT28/32 hybrid quick spool turbo, custom straight through exhaust with side exit, Omex 600 stand alone engine management with race loom running Ford coil pack and custom Magnecor ignition leads, 650cc injectors, 3-bar map sensor, iridium spark plugs, blue Samco hoses, thick core alloy radiator, alloy 13 row oil cooler with stainless braided hoses, custom front mount intercooler with rear facing ports

TRANSMISSION

Quaife 34G straight cut 6 speed sequential, 3.1 final drive, Quaife ATB limited slip diff, lightened balanced flywheel, Quaife selector cables, AP Racing paddle clutch, Flatshifter expert steering wheel mounted paddle shift system and electric actuator and auto blipper, Quaife driveshafts with modified Harry Hockley hub carriers to take full size Astra F20 hubs, Astra GTE wheel bearings

SUSPENSION

Super FWD wide track tarmac rally suspension kit, +100mm wider than standard with +50mm rose jointed track control arms, heavy duty rose jointed adjustable tie rods, Group A tie rod brackets, +50mm track rod ends, rally turret kit with eccentric solid top mounts, works style Uni Ball ball joints, +50mm rear stub axle spacers, Bilstein inverted tarmac rally shocks with coilover spring conversion all round, custom front strut brace, Quaife quick steering rack

BRAKES

Alcon 4 pot calipers, Harry Hockley 285mm grooved discs with Pagid blue race pads, rear disc conversion using Cavalier GSi rear hubs, grooved discs and calipers, new copper brake lines run inside car, Super Blue racing brake fluid, Goodridge steel braided brake hoses all round

WHEELS & TYRES

OZ Ultraleggera lightweight racing wheels with 195/50x15 Toyo R888s

INTERIOR

AIM PIsta digital dashboard and data logger with lap timer and pit wall beacon, AEM air fuel ratio meter, fully stripped interior including removal of all panels, sound deadening, and carpet, completely rewired, all unused wiring removed, spare wheel well removed and flushed, new copper brake lines and stainless fuel lines run inside, OMP removable steering wheel, MSA approved Custom Cages 6 point roll cage including door bars and 2 diagonals, Recaro Kevlar lightweight racing seat and TRS MSA approved 4 point harnesses, MSA approved pull cords for fire extinguisher and electric cut offs, carbon door cards front and rear, with carbon dash inserts, 6 gallon alloy fuel tank, Facet Red top low pressure lift pump, 1 litre swirl pot and Bosch high pressure motorsport fuel injection pump with braided hoses all housed inside a sealed alloy fireproof box

EXTERIOR

Stripped Nova 1.2 Expression non sunroof shell, inner wings and engine bay fully seam welded for strength including Pro-tec body and chassis plating kit, full rallycross wide arch fibreglass bodykit including front extensions, rear quarter panels, side skirts, front and rear bumpers widened, fibreglass bonnet with custom reverse scoop for heat removal, fibreglass tailgate with MSA rainlight, tinted motor sport polycarbonate windows with sliders

THANKS

Simon and the guys at Sitech for the original engine work and the mapping
Ricky Malone at Race Engines for the engine builds.
The guys at Balgonie Motor Company for all their help.
My other half, the family and everybody else who's helped and supported along the way.



few years it was hammered round Knockhill at every possible opportunity. A few changes were made, the brakes and suspension were tweaked and the car remained a force to be reckoned with and gained a fair degree of notoriety thanks to a few high profile kills. Even the resident supercar drivers got sweaty palms when the little red Nova suddenly appeared at speed in the rear view mirror over the crest on the main straight and then simply refused to go away. These kind of antics didn't go unnoticed at Knockhill and it wasn't long before it was suggested that Paul took things to the next level and started competing with the car. Handily the Scottish Motor Racing Club (SMRC) Sports & Saloons class would be perfect hunting ground for the Nova and so with that Paul got his racing license and set about making the necessary changes to meet the MSA regulations.



Full on race car spec fuel system



START YOUR ENGINES

Aside for the obvious additional safety requirements and changing the doors and wings back from the original lightweight items (and we don't mean rusty when we say lightweight) to the accepted steel items, the Nova was ready to race and in 2013 that's exactly what happened. Racing in the sub 2050cc class, in his first season Paul took the class win and managed a creditable 3rd place finish in a number of races. "3rd place?" we hear you cry, ahhh but bear in mind that this series is home to 500bhp Evos, M3s and a certain AG Motorsport Ford Focus. So yes, third place finishes were pretty bloody incredible. Not being a man to rest on his laurels, Paul felt there was more to come from the car and a few key areas where it lacked the pace of the bigger boys. Only one thing for it... power and lots of it. So, a fully forged C20LET short engine was

LET NOVA

Wide arches make for one tough looking Nova



Sourced and built up using the freshly rebuilt hybrid GT28/32 quick spool turbo liberated from the Puma, along with a Nortech inlet manifold and Omex management. Once built, in it went and after some mapping at Sitech Racing the results were in. 500bhp+ at 1.5bar. Everybody then stepped back amazed, before the wick was turned down a bit to aid reliability. 1 bar of boost still equates to nigh on 350bhp. That'll do donkey, that'll do. Now it's at this stage where Paul drops into the conversation that he likes beer and he likes the internet and as we all know, individually they are awesome, but together... bad things happen for your wallet. One such bad thing was the half Astra BTCC car he bought. Yes that's right, half. He also managed to buy a Quaife straight cut six speed sequential gearbox with flappy paddles. As you do.

UP THE CREEK

Unfortunately that's where the issues started, as nothing was a direct fit so weeks of painstaking modifying, fabrication and swearing followed to get the 'box in and working with the remote actuators for the paddle shift. This tested Paul's patience to the limit on several occasions and a series of niggles pushed him to the edge. The car successfully completed a couple of SMRC test days ahead of the racing season but despite having nigh on 100bhp more than the previous XE, the LET just didn't quite feel like it was on the pace. Granted it was fast, very fast, but while the XE could be driven at 100% lap after lap, the LET just couldn't match the reliability and drivability of the original engine. Somewhat disillusioned and with his attention starting to move away from the Nova and on to the SMRC Scottish Mini Cooper cup, the Nova was parked up at the garage while Paul got stuck in to his new racing interest. Late last year the forged LET and Quaife were removed and the rolling shell was sold to local lad Gordon Sherriffs (of Nova VXR fame) so rest assured it's not the last you'll see of it, and given it's destined to be reunited with its original XE, you Knockhill track day heroes best keep an eye on the mirror. As for Paul, does he regret the changes... "No, well not yet anyway" he laughs, "The car was at its peak in the 2013 season and I'd really taken it as far as I could in terms of race spec. Aside for some suspension tweaks and corner weighting, it was pretty much unstoppable. The turbo conversion never really worked as well as I'd envisaged." Perhaps not but we think it's safe to say that in terms of feature cars, this is up there with the best of them when it comes down to dedication and the quality of the work. Granted there's now another Nova sized hole to be filled but I suspect a couple of beers and the internet will have that sorted in no time.



Alcon brakes have their work cut out around Knockhill

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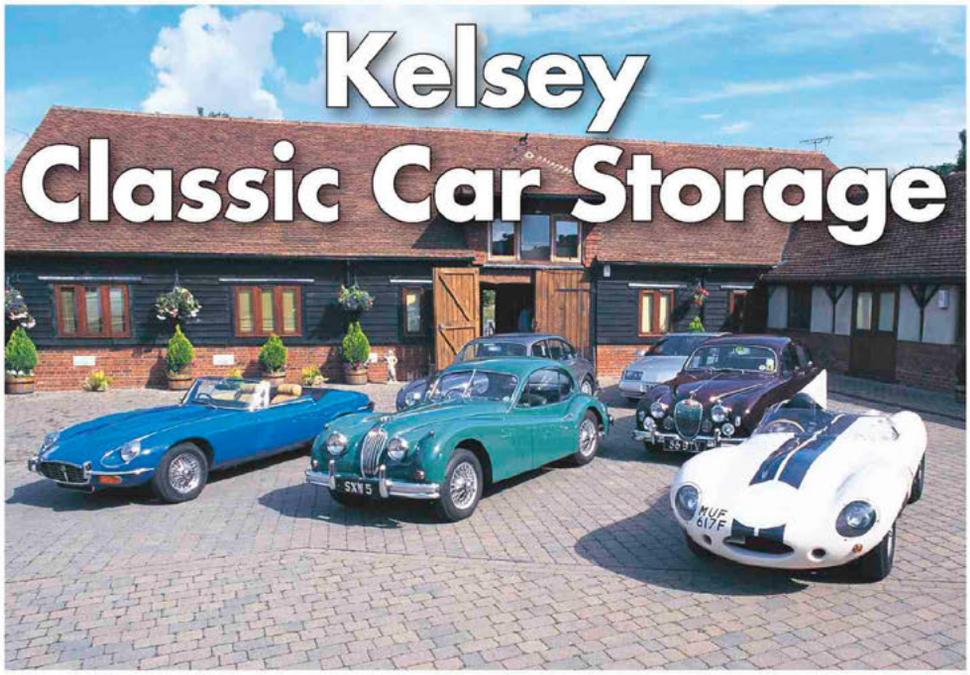
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Cheeky Kadett braved the elements!

OPEL IN THE

We wait until the warmer months for our shows, but not the Germans! Our man Chris Harden took a trip over to a chilly Oschersleben to check it out...

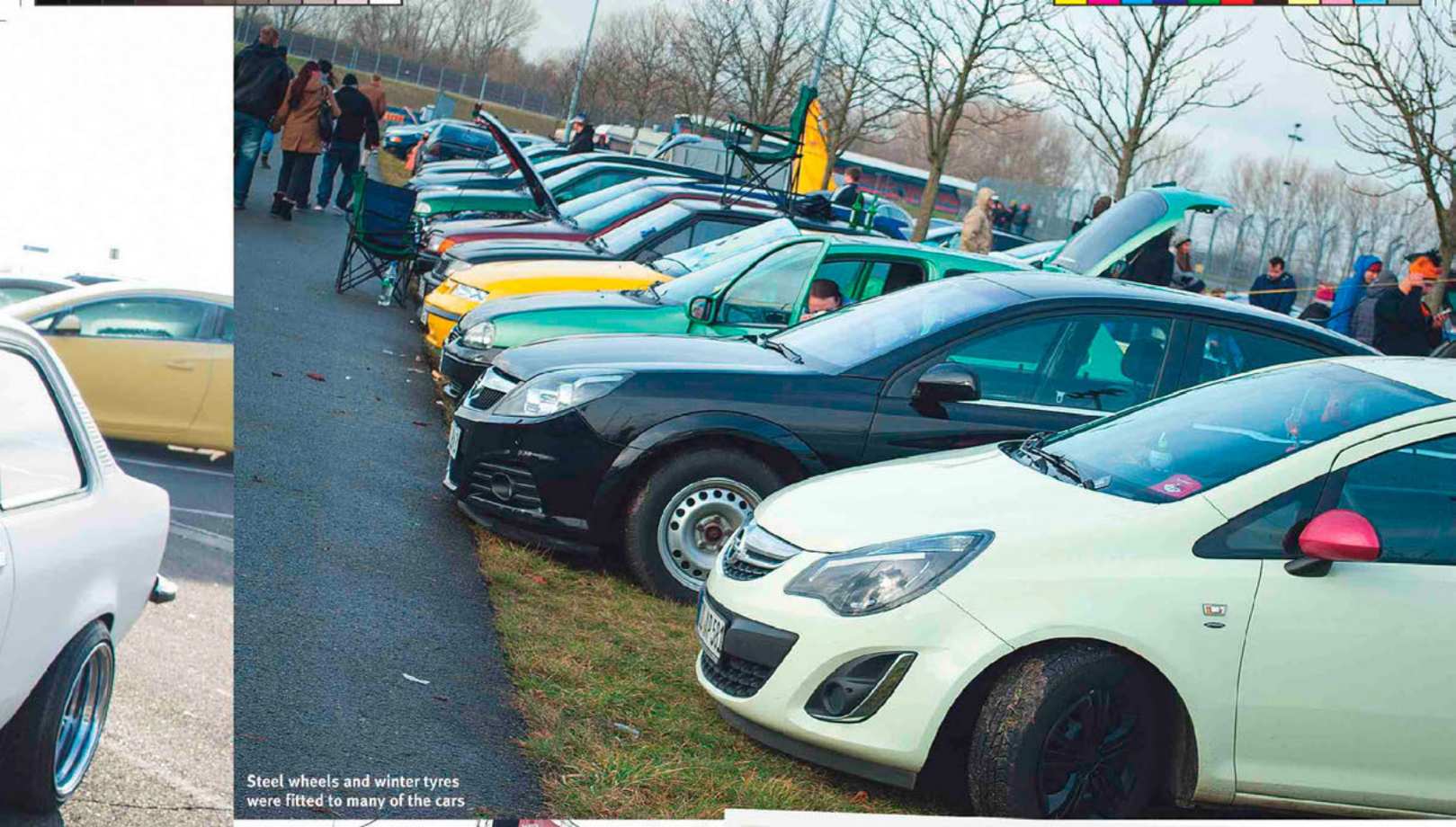
WORDS & PHOTOS Chris Harden

The show season has officially started! And the first show of the season is a new one to everyone – the 'Opel-Wintertreffen' (winter meeting) was held on a very cold weekend in January at the Etroplois Motorsport Arena at Oschersleben, bringing together hardcore Opel fans for the first Blitz meeting of the year.

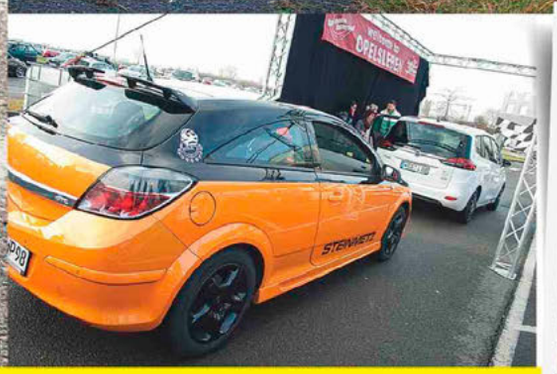
The winter meeting was the first one this year, with tickets being limited to only 1000, not surprisingly they sold out very quickly. This shows how dedicated the Opel fans are, as they love to meet up whatever the weather. Sadly there was no snow, the



Tough looking Calibra was well turned out



Steel wheels and winter tyres were fitted to many of the cars





SNOW

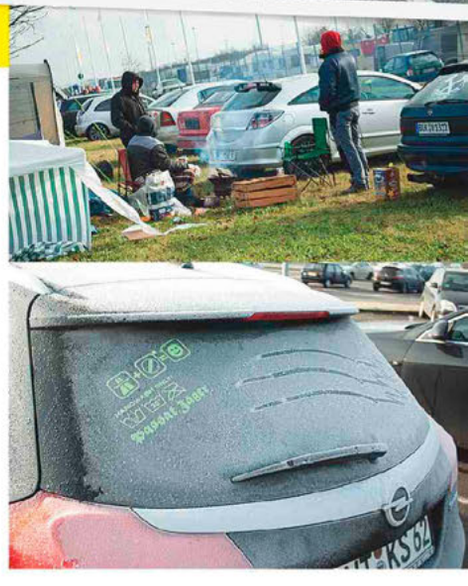
thermometer keeping itself around the freezing mark, but that didn't detract from the fun to be had. This will surely be a show that will grow each year in popularity, and attending means you can claim you're one of the Griffin loving crazy gang!

The main area of this show was based around a hotel (being mid-January), with daytime activities based both inside and outside. There was always something to see or do during the weekend, from looking around the Show & Shine entrants, the 'hot-drift' passenger laps from the NRW drift crew, the trade stands selling goodies, and food and drink stalls feeding the hungry crowds. With a mix of car club stands from near and far, the club camping areas was packed with all manner of GM branded goodness. There was also an international flavour as there were several people from outside Germany (Denmark & the UK).

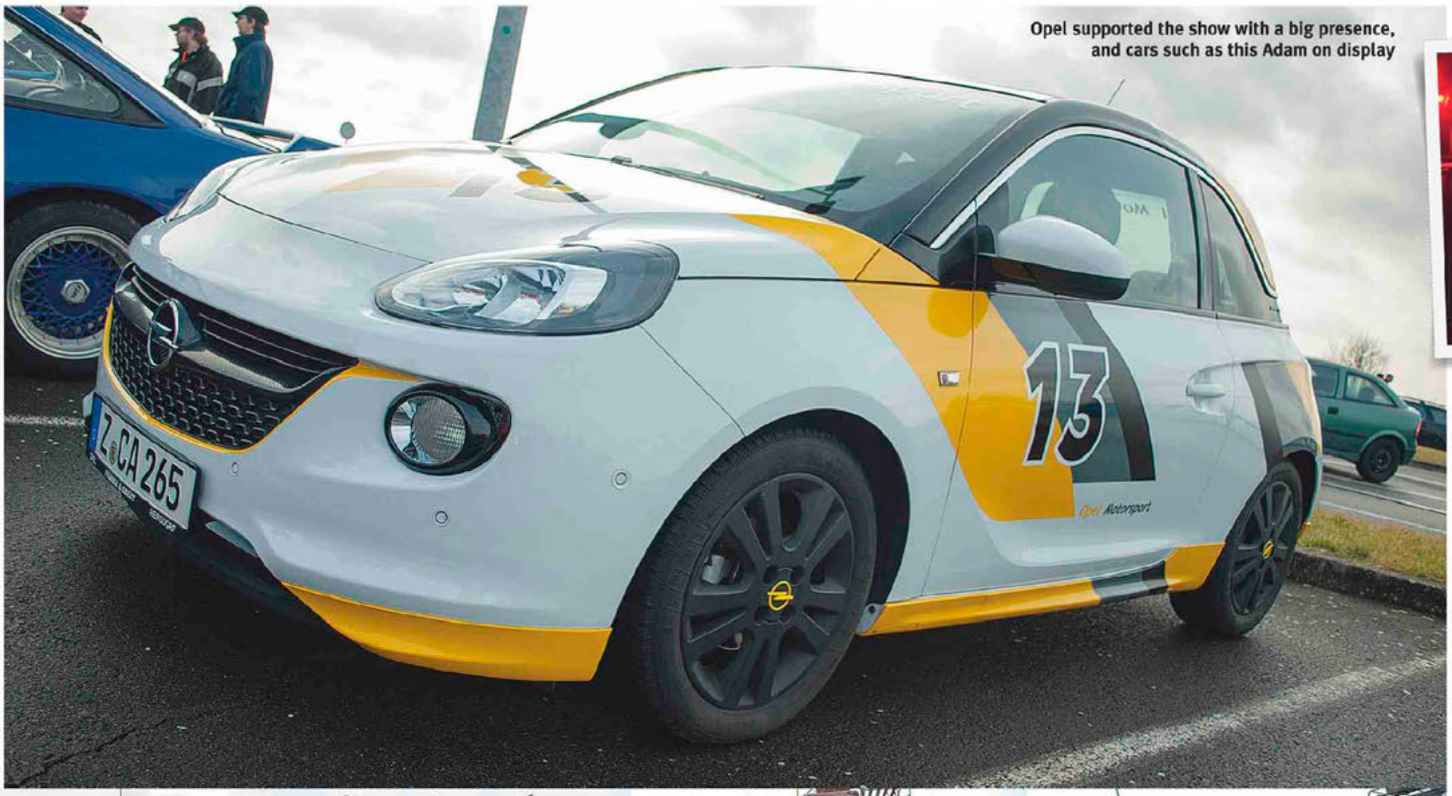
They also had a feature that could well benefit the UK shows with workshops dedicated to car detailing by the guys from Sonax, along with other demonstrations including one for vinyl wrapping. Trophies were on offer for the Top 25 cars in the Show & Shine, along with a couple of new categories – Winterschlampe (Winter slut!), and the Snow Shovel award for the best 'winter-ised' cars of the event, which explains why so many cars were on steelies. Winter tyres are mandatory in Germany during winter periods, so most of the people use the original wheels as their winter rims. If they're stopped by the police or even get stuck on the snow and ice with regular tyres on, then they get fined a bucket load of cash, and they aren't allowed to carry on until new winter tyres are fitted, or the weather improves!

The night-life was just as popular as the day's events, beginning with a screening of the legendary Opel movie *Manta Manta*, then on to the party tent until very late into the evening!

For those who get the show blues over the winter period, and need to get a bit of inspiration for the upcoming year, this show should now be on your list of ones to attend, then you can look forward to winter 2016.



OSCHERSLEBEN



Opel supported the show with a big presence, and cars such as this Adam on display











Matt Manta was pretty funky



They like sleepers in Germany too!











MANTA MANTA MOVIE

How to explain *Manta Manta*, think *The Fast & Furious* of 1991! But with Mantas! It's a story of cars, love, comedy, and some street racing with a bunch of friends who all drive Opel Mantas. The movie is only in the German language, but if you can get to watch it, do so! You'll definitely get what's going on in it.

The film does have a cult status in Germany and is still quite popular in the Opel world with Mattig & Kissling tuners having worked on the cars for the movie and there are several replicas still on the show scene even to this day!



UWE WOLF'S KADETT C COUPE

Uwe Wolf has created a masterpiece with his stunning 1976 Opel Kadett C Coupe. A 4 cylinder 2.2ltr with Mahle forged pistons, lots of cylinder head fettling, lightened flywheel and crankshaft to name a few mods, and a juicy set of DCOE 45s, along with lots of other serious engine work, which gives him a healthy 200bhp on tap. 8x15in BBS RS 001 alloys, combined with a KAW/Bilstein suspension set up gives a -90mm drop!

The car was subjected to an 18 month re-build with a team of three, and pretty much every nut and bolt has been removed and chromed and then re-fitted. The paint alone is 17 layers deep! There's a Clarion HX and Audio System HX Install throughout the car, and the overall attention to details is absolutely staggering up close. Winner of the "Perfect Opel" at Opel-Treffen Oschersleben 2012 and lots of other trophies around Europe since, it was also a winner here, as the best of show. The prize was an amazing Winter Driving Experience from Opel Germany in Austria worth £1000!

Thanks to Alexandra Werner & Jens We at the Etropolis Arena for all their help, and all the team at Opel-Treffen Oschersleben. We will see you in June for the big 20th Anniversary of the Opel-Treffen at Oschersleben.

www.opeltreffen-oschersleben.de





Army Spec Vectra







No prizes for guessing what this pair were used for on the day!

OSCHERSLEBEN



Wir sind sehr sehr betrunken



Ooh, that looks like a chilly night





GETTING THERE

Getting to the Opel-Wintertreffen may seem a bit mad to do, but it's just short hop on a plane! Honest!! There are lots of budget flights around, and we flew from Manchester to Berlin direct. Myself (Chris) from Rochdale, with Andrew Mitchell & Amanda Crawford from Stirling, decided that it would be a cool way to start off 2015 with a new show to go to. So, we did the usual thing of booking a cheap flight on the days we wanted and then we met up at Manchester airport ready to go for 3 days of Opel related fun. We'd pre-booked the hotel rooms at the Arena once we'd decided that we were going to make the trip over along with the entry tickets for the show. From there we rented a hire car and then drove the 100 miles to the show at Oschersleben.

We also tagged a day's sightseeing in Berlin in there as well! So we made the most of our short time in Germany and thoroughly enjoyed it. If this is something you'd like to do for the next year, or even come over in June to the 20th Anniversary of the summer show in 2015, then contact Chris Harden for any information you may want: *Chrismk1astra@hotmail.com*







Styling that looks dated over here is still very popular in Europe, as displayed by this Vectra (and no, it's not a Cavalier)



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TEAM DYNAMICS Le Mans 17", 18", 19"

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NEW

FOX FS804 14", 15", 16", 17", 18", 19"

ROTA Grid Drift 8x16", 8.5/9.5/10x18", 10.5x19"

3SDM 0.05 16", 17", 18"

Prices are per tyre

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Astra VXR 2.0 240PS	Turbo	£147.36
Cavalier GSi 2.0 C20XE	Coolant	£180.94
Cavalier/Calibra 16v Turbo	Turbo	£208.65
Corsa B 1.6 16v GSi	Coolant	£156.88
Corsa C 1.8 SRi Z18XE	Coolant	£85.58
Corsa 1.2 16v (Non Twinport)	Coolant	£175.33
Corsa VXR 1.6 Turbo	Coolant	£128.64
Corsa VXR 1.6 Turbo	Turbo	£184.36
VX220 Turbo (with or w/out DV take-off)	Turbo	£215.74

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Astra Mk4 2.0 16v GSi Turbo	£73.40	£150.98	£100.80	£214.97	£41.47	£108.52	£115.12
Astra Mk5 2.0 Turbo VXR	£83.48	£135.72	£86.40	£382.63	£55.48	£108.32	-
Calibra 2.0 16v Turbo	£55.10	£121.86	£115.20	£245.83	£34.70	£87.60	£76.75
Corsa B GSi 1.6 16v	£47.37	£147.04	£58.80	£194.40	£38.03	£88.90	£76.75
Insignia 2.0 Turbo	£79.06	-	-	-	£59.14	£158.60	-
Vectra B 2.5i V6 24v	£64.28	£121.86	£100.80	£245.83	£55.77	£111.70	£76.75



Suspension



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Astra Mk3	£165.00	£166.00	£158.74	-	£876.00	-
Astra Mk4	£165.00	£161.00	£140.38	£514.25	£833.00	£455.00
Astra Mk5	£165.00	£171.00	£151.18	£514.25	£920.00	£482.00
Astra Mk6	£165.00	£161.00	£145.79	-	-	£500.00
Calibra	£165.00	£166.00	£175.50	-	£876.00	-
Corsa	£135.00	£148.00	£139.86	£471.73	£526.00	£455.00
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VANITY FLAIR

The UK's love for the Astravan has never been in doubt, though very few end up as extreme as this VXR'd example.

WORDS Jarkle **PHOTOS** Chris Wallbank

The Vauxhall Astra van has a small but significant place in the hearts of the UK's motoring public. For decades they were the unsung heroes of the nation, hauling new deliveries the length and breadth of the land and only halting to fuel up with crisps, sweets, scratch cards and copies of the Sun. In the mid-'90s the Mk2 version of the Astravan became something of a legend, the king of the outside lane of the motorway and often the very last of the late brakers. This country's love of the Astravan has resulted in more than a few tuned and highly modified versions of all types, traditionally boasting either the trusty XE or C20LET, some seriously large wheels and a loading bay full of audio equipment.

Of course modified vans didn't die with the Mk2, and we still get plenty of Mk3, 4 and 5 vans submitted each year, often with seriously high-power turbocharged engines somehow squeezed between the front wings! Mk5s have never been



FAST FACTS

- Stage 3.5 Z20LEH with Regal cams
- AS Autocare FMIC
- Wavetrac LSD
- Alcon six-pot brakes
- Bilstein B8 dampers and DAP springs

ASTRA VAN



Powdercoated VXR 19s were a natural choice

"I knew I was in safe hands from the word go – I'd seen his last van!"



It's a fuel pressure regulator if you were wondering



TECH SPEC

ENGINE
Rebuilt Z20LEH DOHC 16v with Regal inlet and exhaust cams, EDS inlet manifold, EDS top hat, AS Autocare FMIC, 630cc injectors, Walbro fuel pump, adjustable FPR, hybrid K06 turbo, custom 3in exhaust system, 90mm Evoms air intake kit, AS Autocare silicone hoses, Stage 3.5 software, cruise control

POWER
(claimed) 350bhp

TRANSMISSION
M32 six-speed with Wavetrac differential and uprated driveshafts

SUSPENSION
Bilstein B8 dampers with DAP springs, polybushes, Whiteline rear ARB

BRAKES
Front: Alcon six-pots and drilled discs, aftermarket pads, braided lines
Rear: Factory setup, braided lines

WHEELS AND TYRES
Powdercoated 7.5 x 19in VXR wheels

INTERIOR
Full VXR interior, boost gauge in driver's side vent, carbon fibre panel

EXTERIOR
2008 Astra Sportive SE van in white, carbon dipped dash trims, grille, boot strip and mirror caps

THANKS
Andy and all the lads at AS Autocare for doing such a flawless job, Manor Vehicle Detailing for prepping the van for the shoot

Ever more popular and most owners continue to do what prospective van tuners have done for decades – look to the upper echelons of the model range for parts and inspiration, hence why it's not uncommon to see vans that started out as humble builder's tools dressed in all manner of VXR hardware. All of this means that making a VXR van stand out from the crowd is an increasingly tough prospect, though certainly one worth tackling. This particular example is owned by Martin Gregson and has been built by Andy Stockton Autocare, a small family tuning firm who've carved out one hell of a reputation for borderline bonkers vans. Long time readers will no doubt recognise that name, as Andy's own Chilli Orange Mk5 van graced the cover back in 2012, so it's fair to say he knows a thing or two about making them into Porsche beaters.

"I've always been a big fan of AS Autocare's work, so of course there wasn't anyone else in the frame when I decided to have some work done on the van. OK so I didn't exactly plan for the finished van to be this extreme, but I knew I was in safe hands from the word go – I'd seen his last van," chuckles Martin.

DIESEL DO NICELY

Martin's starting point was a 1.9CDTi SE, so a fairly plush van, and one that the first owner had ticked all the boxes

350bhp Z20LEH is a long way from its diesel beginnings

on the options list. His first trip to AS Autocare resulted in a diesel remap and netted him a whisker under 200bhp, so not bad for something designed primarily as a load lugger. Martin was impressed, and he only began considering taking things further after a few months worth of exterior upgrades left him feeling slightly uncomfortable about the van's performance relative to its looks.

"The last thing I wanted was for it to be a case of 'all bark and no bite,' and with the full VXR kit it was in danger of going that way. That's when I began seriously considering swapping the 1.9 for a Z20LEH," Martin recalls.

There was another reason for Martin ditching derv power –





Yup, the VXR theme carries on into the interior



Nsoot. See, Martin's a bit of a perfectionist when it comes to detailing his cars, and he simply couldn't live with the sooty deposits left all over the tailgate of the van by the 1.9 motor, so it was always living on borrowed time!

Money was saved and parts were ordered, meaning that come December last year the van was ready to be given over to AS Autocare and left in their capable, not to mention fast working, hands. The 2.0 in question came from a VXR that'd lost an argument with an item of street furniture in rather a big way, hence the need for a new turbo. Of course the LEH is a well known engine in tuning circles and there are a myriad of turbo options out there for those seeking to push power over the factory figure, hence Martin's eventual decision to plump for a hybrid K06, plus an EDS inlet and top hat, one of AS Autocare's own FMICs and a totally revised fuel system.

QUICK CHANGE

"I dropped it off with Andy on a Monday morning, then popped back on Wednesday to see how he was getting on. I couldn't believe it – the guys had pulled the diesel out and already had the VXR engine in and running!"

That LEH was swiftly mated to an M32 gearbox, albeit one that'd been carefully rebuilt and treated to a short-shift kit and a Wavetrac LSD, effectively eliminating the VXR's major weakness and ensuring it could comfortably handle all that extra shove.

AS Autocare are also more than capable of handling Vauxhall mapping, though the software in Martin's van is special even by their standards. It utilises the OE Canbus wiring (a notoriously tricky thing to work with when it comes to aftermarket engine conversions), yet all the engine's ECU and UEC control units have been painstakingly re-programmed to take into account and recognise the VXR engine. This means that what Andy and his team have effectively created is an Astra H VXR van, and when it's plugged into Vauxhall's Tech 2 system that's precisely what flashes up – there's no mention of its diesel origins at all.

"I couldn't believe the difference when I got the van back a few weeks later; I'd gone from just under 200bhp







"I couldn't believe the difference when I got the van back a few weeks later"

to 350bhp, plus Andy and the guys had totally overhauled the transmission and the suspension, so it now has a Whiteline ARB and Bilstein dampers," explains Martin.

The upshot of all this work is a van that handles and goes better than it really has any right to, and what started out as a practical, everyday vehicle has now been transformed into a very potent machine indeed. That overhauled suspension has been paired with suitably enlarged brakes, so Martin can now count on the stopping power of Alcon six-pots up front, plus aftermarket, high friction pads. Those are housed inside gloss black Astra VXR alloys, a tweak that only serves to highlight how far this van has come from its humble, commercial origins.

INTERIOR DESIGN

That commitment to the VXR sub-brand has been carried through to the van's interior, where you'll now find a complete roster of Astra VXR trims, fittings and, of course, front seats. Even a full ten years after the VXR was launched, its classy, well-designed interior looks great and there's not much that can be added to improve it, with the only obvious deviation from factory specification being the boost gauge set into the driver's side air vent, plus various carbon effect trimmings.

Martin's not yet had time to get to grips with the van – he's not had it back long, though it's fair to say he's more than happy with the fruits of AS Autocare's labours! The only downside of all this of course is that, for all its undoubted merits in its current guise, this van isn't exactly a practical workhorse anymore. OK so it still

VAUXHALL VANS

Vauxhall have been able to sell you a car-based van for decades, with the HA Viva van being one of the first to taste commercial success. In fact the Bedford HA soldiered on in production until 1983, a staggering 17 years after the HA Viva had been replaced! The HA gave way to a new generation of modern, front wheel drive Astra vans, with both the Mk1 and Mk2 going on to enjoy considerable, Bedford-badged success. The Mk2 variant attained something of a cult following; it was fast, light, reliable and, crucially, very car like, and plenty ended up with XEs and LETs in them as the '90s wore on. Sadly the Mk5 Astravan was the last Astra-based van Vauxhall produced, the company having since switched its focus to Corsa-based commercials and the Combo van.

ASTRA VAN

has a massive loading bay, but with so much time and money invested in it, Martin readily admits that it's no longer a daily driver and that it has effectively swapped pallet hauling duties for weekend blasts. Predictably there's yet more power to come, with Martin currently weighing up his options with the stated aim of breaking through the 400bhp barrier, probably with a Nortech manifold and Garrett turbo. Keep your eyes peeled for this deceptively potent van during the summer show season, and if you do encounter it out on the road then steal a glance while you can – we guarantee it won't stay in your rear view mirror for long!





OWNER
MARTIN GREGSON

AGE 35
OCCUPATION I work for a property maintenance firm
FIRST VAUXHALL A Jamaica Yellow Nova SR!
TOUGHEST PART OF THE BUILD Absolutely nothing, it's been a joy from start to finish
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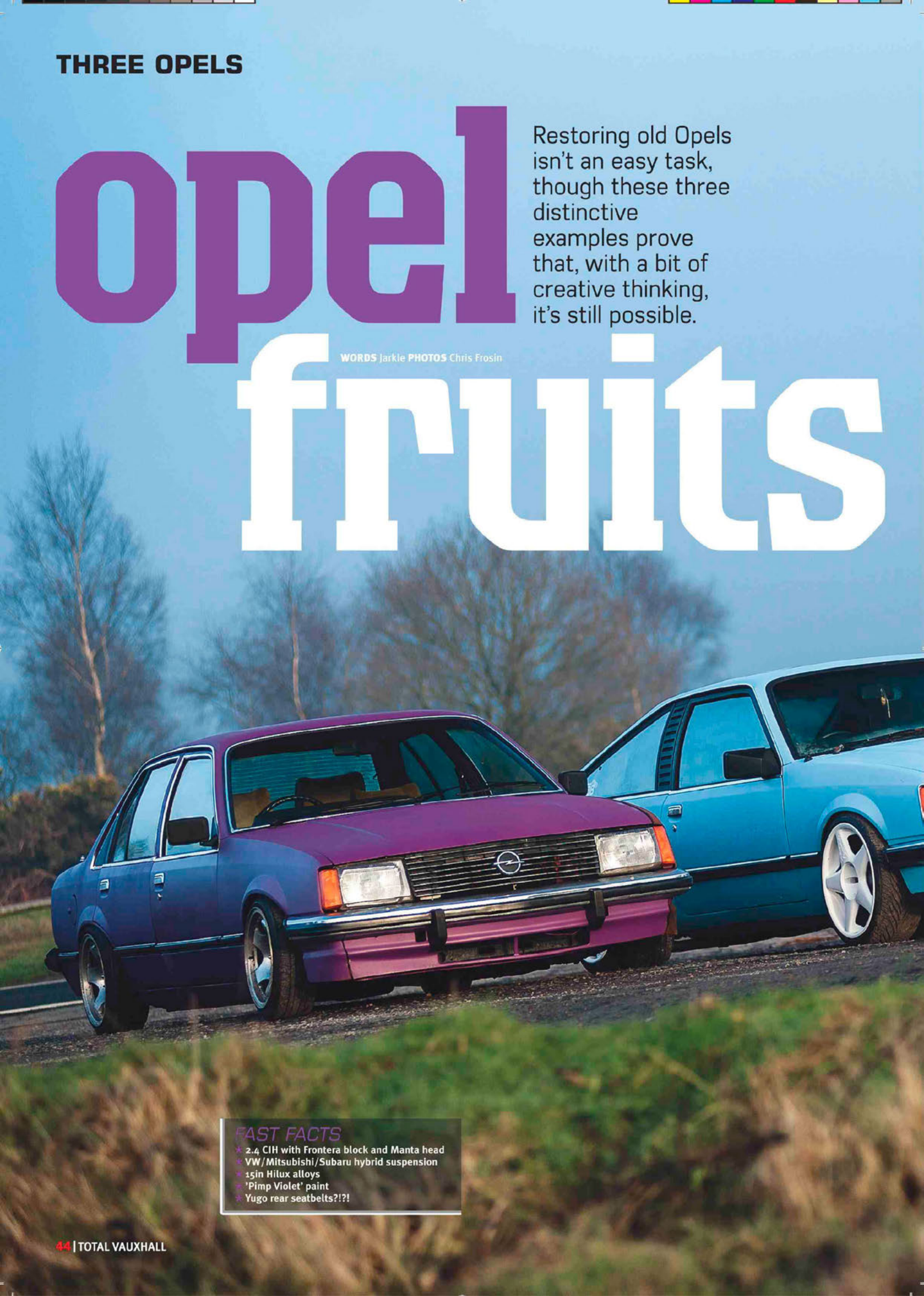


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opel fruits

Restoring old Opels isn't an easy task, though these three distinctive examples prove that, with a bit of creative thinking, it's still possible.

WORDS Jarkie PHOTOS Chris Frosin



FAST FACTS

- 2.4 CIH with Frontera block and Manta head
- VW/Mitsubishi/Subaru hybrid suspension
- 15in Hilux alloys
- 'Pimp Violet' paint
- Yugo rear seatbelts?!?!

We've nothing but respect for those who choose to tweak, tune, restore and otherwise mess around with old Opels and Vauxhalls. Of course we can see the appeal – cars like the Monza, Rekord and Senator are achingly cool and always have been – but there are certainly issues and difficulties associated with bringing an '80s GM product back from the brink. Near enough everything Opel and Vauxhall built back then needs very little encouragement to begin oxidising like there's no tomorrow, and, unlike the staggeringly well supported (and correspondingly expensive) old Ford scene, aftermarket parts supply is patchy at best. Cars like the Monza and the Rekord have always had loyal, cult followings, but it'd be fair to say they've never been embraced by the wider public compared with offerings from the FoMoCo like the Capri and the Granada.

The upside to all this is that those who are committed to playing around with Opels from this era tend to be an industrious and resourceful bunch, more than capable of making parts from all manner of other manufacturers work. These three cars are good examples of that, and getting and keeping them on the road has taken a lot of lateral thinking, all manner of parts from other marques, and an old bed frame (we'll get to that later)! They're owned by three friends with a lifelong passion for messing about with older cars of all shapes and sizes and their collective knowledge of retro GM metal is second to none, something that's come in handy several times along the way.

The orange Monza GSE is owned by Philip Warren, and it's a car that's been in his possession for a just over three years. Phil's owned several



FAST FACTS
- Rebuilt 2969cc 12V
- Manzel springs/Gaz dampers
- 18in Azev C alloys
- Custom 'Zoomie' exhaust'
- Baby Blue paint

FAST FACTS
- Rebuilt 2969cc 12V
- Custom height springs
- GSE Recaro seats
- 18in Venom-style alloys
- Orange graffiti paint

THREE OPELS

Monzas in the past, though this one was purchased on a whim;

"I'd been to the pub and then came home and went on eBay. I put a half-hearted bid on a Monza in Milton Keynes, went to bed and forgot all about it. I only remembered the car when I got an eBay alert saying I'd won it," chuckles Phil.

Now the stories of these three cars and their owners are very much entwined, so it shouldn't be that surprising that both Phil and Andy, the owner of the purple Rekord E1, trekked from the south coast to Milton Keynes to look at the car. What they found wasn't exactly inspiring, and it quickly became clear that a fair amount of work was going to have to be invested if the car was ever to see the road again. Still, a deal was struck and the pair set about rectifying the Monza's most pressing issue, corroded brake hoses. A variety of mole grips were pressed into service and though these ensured that the car could stop (sort of), it didn't change the fact that only three of the brakes were functioning in any shape or form!

ROAD TO HELL

"We started the drive home, me in front and Andy following behind. I remember stamping on the brakes for the first time and swerving across all three lanes. It's fair to say that Andy dropped back a bit after that," recalls Phil.

Phil set about tackling the extensive bodywork repairs almost immediately, with the list of areas needing attention eventually running to the sills, rear wishbones, chassis rails, rear arches and the rear spring cups. Pattern parts are very hard to come by and it isn't as if Monzas are exactly a common sight on our roads these days, so it goes without saying the majority of the panels on this car are original, they've just been painstakingly patched back together. Some areas required a bit of 'out of the box' thinking, and the rear spring cups now on the car actually started off life as part of Mark's (the owner of the blue Monza) bed!

"We'd kept it at our shared unit as it seemed to be made from good, strong steel and thought it'd come in handy at some point in the future. Turns out we were spot on!"

All three of these cars have been put together on minuscule budgets, so of course most jobs were tackled 'in house,' Phil, Mark and Andy chipping in and helping out with each other's projects along the way. They also have a suitably large unit (long ago christened TAB – The Auto Bahrn) packed full of old GM parts, spare metal and all manner of tools, and the trio's combined efforts saw the Monza take shape over the course of a year. The only area that couldn't effectively be sorted was the paintwork. Most of it looked like it'd seen better days, and that leads us neatly to the none too subtle shade of orange the Monza currently wears.

"I'd decided to just 'rattle can' it with graffiti paint but couldn't decide what colour to go for. In the end I just let my other half pick a colour, so I only found out what shade the Monza would be when it was delivered," laughs Phil.

Fifteen cans later and the Monza was coated in seriously vibrant orange – not a hue to please the purists perhaps, but then they probably wouldn't exactly be fans of the TSW Venom-style alloys and Audi TT rear dampers with custom height springs, so we think it's safe to discount their opinions entirely!

Monzas were originally marketed as big, comfy and effortlessly powerful coupes, and the latter was ably provided by six-pot versions of Opel's CIH engines, all of which produced very respectable

TECH SPEC

PHILIP WARREN, MONZA GSE (A2)

ENGINE
Rebuilt 2969cc 12v OHV straight six with 95x69.8 bore x stroke, 9.40:1CR, EFI

POWER
179bhp

TRANSMISSION
Stock four-speed automatic, propshaft and differential

SUSPENSION
Front: Factory dampers with custom height springs
Rear: Audi TT springs with factory dampers

BRAKES
Factory discs and calipers front and rear

WHEELS AND TYRES
8.5x18in Venom style black alloys, 215/40x18 tyres

INTERIOR
GSE Recaros and digi-dash, aircon and aftermarket cruise control

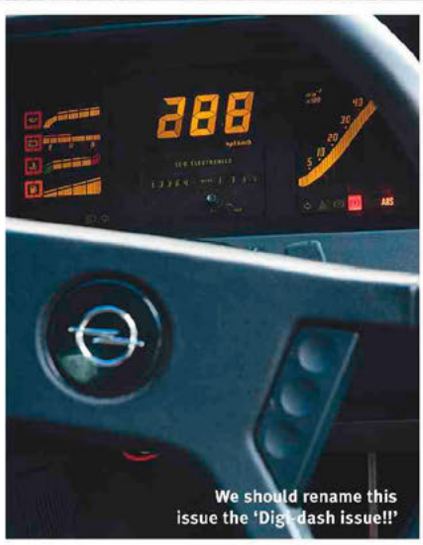
EXTERIOR
Monza A2 in bright orange graffiti paint, restored bodywork, de-bumpered rear





Phil's not exactly sure what these retro wheels are other than they're 'Venom-like'

"I'd been to the pub, came home, went on eBay and put a half-hearted bid on a Monza..."



We should rename this issue the 'Digi-dash issue!!'



THREE OPELS

figures for the time. Phil's car left Rüsselsheim with a 3.0 12v slotted between the front wings, a lump that's since been rebuilt and pressed right back into active service – if it ain't broke, why try and fix it?

The Monza enjoyed a long life with production running from 1978 right up to 1986, with substantial revisions to the range in that time. That explains why the other Monza, the baby blue one, looks so different to Phil's. This car is owned by Mark Wheeler, and getting it to its current state has actually involved two different cars in various states of disrepair.

"One had been fully restored and came with Gaz adjustable suspension, an aftermarket exhaust and a few other goodies. The downside was that it'd been crashed into a tree soon after the work was completed, so it was in a shocking state," recalls Mark.

The other Monza, this one in fact, had been stored in a none too weatherproof barn for a number of years and, predictably, the dreaded rot had well and truly set in, something not helped by the driver's side window having been left wide open! Mark ended up taking both cars off the owner's hands, the former having to be extracted from within the confines of a police impound yard, and then set about making one good example using parts from both. It proved to be a rather thankless task, with countless hours of welding, parts sourcing and, we're willing to bet, more than a few muttered expletives!

"One of the worst areas was the bottom of the driver's door; pattern panels don't really exist and replacements are really tricky to find. The ones I could source weren't really in much better shape, so it was a case of piecing together one good door from two others that'd seen better days," explains Mark.

More annoying still, some of the choice parts from the crashed car had properly lost their argument with the tree, so those Gaz front dampers were rendered useless. The aftermarket exhaust hadn't faired much better, hence Mark's eventual decision to craft a replacement from – you guessed it – parts of that same old bed frame! The monster of an exhaust that Mark eventually cooked up certainly isn't subtle – it's comically loud and exits halfway down the Monza's sill, but there's no doubt it suits the style of the car it's attached to.

Baby blue paintwork aside, those massive Azev C alloys are probably what really make this particular Monza stand out, especially as they're on the large side – 8.5x18in at the front, 10x18in at the rear. Azev wheels are closely associated with the mid to late '90s, and if you'd asked us whether or not we thought they'd have worked beforehand, we'd probably have replied in the negative. But a few late nights and some careful cosmetic surgery with a grinder have proved any doubters wrong!

EMERGENCY FLARE

"You end up with a fair amount of camber and toe in when you lower Monzas to this extent, so when I first bolted the wheel on, the trailing edge of the tyre was making contact with the rear of the arch. Luckily that's where it was most rotten so it needed a lot of work anyway, I just cut and flared it out to give the Azevs enough clearance."

It's probably worth noting at this point that parts from Andy's spares Opel Rekord found their way into the bodywork of Mark's Monza, and a portion of the saloon's right front arch eventually ended up being redeployed in the right rear of the blue coupe! Mind you, all the bodywork in the world was never going to

TECH SPEC

MARK WHEELER, MONZA S (A1)

ENGINE
Rebuilt 2969cc 12v OHV straight six with 95x69.8 bore x stroke, 9.40:1CR, EFI, custom 'zoomie' exhaust system

POWER
179bhp

TRANSMISSION
Getrag 265 five-speed gearbox, stock propshaft and LSD

SUSPENSION
Front: Aftermarket dampers and Mantzel lowering springs
Rear: Gaz shocks and Audi TT lowering springs

BRAKES
Factory discs and calipers front and rear

WHEELS AND TYRES
Front: 8.5x18in Azev Cs with 215/35x18 tyres
Rear: 10x18in Azev Cs with 225/45x18 tyres

INTERIOR
Blue velour interior, custom gearknob

EXTERIOR
Monza A1 in baby blue paint, rolled and flared arches







"You end up with a fair amount of camber and toe in when you lower Monzas to this extent"

It sits just right, but took a lot of work to get it that way



'Zoomie' pipes are a fun touch



Classically cool Azev alloys

TOTAL VAUXHALL





THREE OPELS

To disguise the fact that, much like the other two cars here, a gloss paint finish just wasn't going to work, and Mark wasted no time in hunting out 'rattle can' graffiti paint from the same source as Phil and Andy. The paint went on without a hitch, though Mark subsequently cursed his decision not to use a mask throughout the entire process ("I had a splitting headache for days afterwards – worrying stuff!"), and the finished coat looks suitably bonkers – about as far from subtle as it's possible to get, but a fitting colour on a car like this.

Mark's car has the same old school 3.0 straight six found in Phillip's, though here it's mated to a rare Getrag five speed manual gearbox. Move further down the car still and you'll find a clue to just how advanced and up market the Monza really was; a fully functioning, factory-fitted limited slip differential. Granted the 179bhp that 12v kicks out isn't a massive amount in a hefty car like this, but it's still more than enough to be entertaining, particularly as it's sent through a manual transmission.

PURPLE REIGN

Finally we get to Andy's Rekord E Berlina, a staggeringly rare car nowadays and, typically, the one that needed most work to get back on the road. Andy wasn't even on the lookout for a project when he stumbled upon this car, it was just very cheap, rare and reminded him of the Rekord his parents ran for a period in the late '80s. (that particular car met an untimely end, crushed by a falling tree and flying roof tiles in the Great Storm of '87.)

"We bought this one from South Wales and it was utterly knackered. Someone had made a half-arsed attempt to 'rat look' it a few years previously, so it'd been stripped down to bare metal and left like that! Luckily the guy I bought it off had given it a rough going over with some chassis black paint, but it was still rotten," explains Andy with a grimace.

Hardly the most auspicious of starts, particularly as finding Rekord spares in the UK makes hunting for Monza panels seem like a fairly easy task. It rapidly became clear that a donor car was needed if the project was ever going to be a viable prospect, and an extensive search eventually turned up a suitably sorry looking car for the trio to cannibalise for parts. Of course the donor was in an even worse shape than this one, but its saving grace was that it'd had a selection of repair panels welded in at some point in its life, so all was not lost. Andy got stuck in with the mammoth task of making one good Rekord from two hopelessly forlorn looking ones, and he estimates the total number of hours spent welding to be somewhere around the 100 mark – impressive, especially when you learn that it was all tackled in the evenings and at weekends. The colossal list of body repairs carried out on the car runs to the chassis rails, the rear arches, front wings, complete front panel, both screen frames, parts of the doors, sills and the rear panel, the latter having been recreated using steel from a scrapped night storage heater.

That lurid hue of purple is called, and we're not making this up, 'Pimp Violet,' and like the other cars here it's the result of a DIY spray session and more than a few cans of graffiti paint. Purple was chosen as it stood out like a sore thumb, but also because it worked with the Rekord's oh so early '80s mustard yellow velour interior, a trim that's since been christened 'crushed lion.'

"We honestly didn't set out to build three old Opels with lairy graffiti paint all over them, it just turned out like that as we were keen to keep costs low and do as much of the work ourselves," Andy laughs.

Want yet more examples of left field thinking? Well, as you'd expect, off the shelf lowering kits for cars like this simply don't exist, and even if they did it's supremely doubtful they'd go low enough for Andy's tastes. That means that the entire setup is custom built, with Avo VW Golf coilover damper bodies, Mitsubishi Legnum inserts and Impreza top mounts – "We had them kicking around at the time" – at the front, and a mix of lowering springs and AVO adjustable coilovers with rose jointed bottom mounts for the rear.



Awesome '80s crushed velour trim!

TECH SPEC

ANDY HINKS, REKORD E1 BERLINA

ENGINE
2.4 CIH with Vauxhall Frontera block and Opel Manta GTE 2.0 head, Frontera internals, Manta GTE fuel injectors on modified Frontera fuel rail, Manta wiring loom and ECU, four-branch exhaust manifold with custom exhaust system

TRANSMISSION
Getrag 240 five-speed gearbox, Carlton E2 propshaft and Rekord differential. Monza S pedal box

SUSPENSION
Front: VW Golf coilover bodies, Mitsubishi Legnum inserts, Subaru Impreza top mounts, 8mm hub adaptors to change PCD from 4x100 to 6x139
Rear: Avo coilovers modified to fit, rose-jointed bottom mounts, 8mm hub adaptors to change PCD from 4x100 to 6x139

BRAKES
Factory Rekord discs and drums

WHEELS AND TYRES
Front: 7x15in Toyota Hilux Surf alloys with ET0 and 6x139 PCD, 165/50x15 tyres
Rear: 7x15in Toyota Hilux Surf alloys with ET0 and 6x139 PCD, 165/55x15 tyres

INTERIOR
Stock 'Crushed Lion' velour interior, retro-fitted (but OE) central locking, electric windows and rear head rests, Yugo rear seatbelts (yes really!), custom crystal gearknob

EXTERIOR
Rekord E1 in 'Pimp Violet', restored bodywork, full chrome exterior trim, rusted passenger wing,

THANKS
Mark, Philip & Andy would like to thank everyone that makes TAB happen (which is basically each other, plus Dan VIP and Terri), and all the regulars of Retro Rides: South East Division. Mark thanks Craig Schofield for making sure both Monzas were fully 'Craig'd' and Andy would like to thank Rob Smith, Nick Bond and Robin 'sexyeyes' Ball for the cars, plus Dez Stringer, Steve Lacy, Mark Bognor & Steve Braeburn in particular..





The hubs themselves now boast 8mm adaptors that take the PCD from Opel's 4x100 to 6x139, enabling Andy to run those mammoth Toyota Hilux Surf wheels, now held in place by bolts instead of studs and nuts. It's worth noting that making this all work took a fair amount of head scratching, planning and a bit of trial and error, but it's a price Andy was more than willing to pay for being able to run such interesting wheels and to get the car sitting that much closer to the earth.

There's more, as unlike the Monzas, Andy's carried out a complete engine and gearbox swap on the Rekord. It arrived with a 2.0 and a gearbox carefully 'mounted' in the boot, so it seemed like as good an opportunity as any to swap for a manual transmission and something a little more potent.

"I put it back together first, just to see what it was like to drive in standard guise, but it wasn't great. The CIH had an awful Varijet carb and the autobox was pretty sluggish... that's when Phil reminded me he'd built a 2.4 CIH for his Manta a few years ago, so that's what's in there now," explains Andy.

MIX 'N' MATCH

That CIH is something of a hybrid, consisting of a Vauxhall Frontera block and the head from a Manta GTE. That same car also donated most of its fuel system so Andy could junk the carb setup, and it now runs a modified Frontera fuel rail with Manta injectors and a Manta wiring loom and ECU, plus a four-branch exhaust manifold and custom system. The auto transmission has been replaced with a Getrag 240





Adaptors were required to allow the Toyota Hiliux wheels to fit

"Andy had the mammoth task of making one good Rekord from two hopelessly forlorn ones"





five-speed and it's been impressively reliable, with no real issues to report from last year's show season.

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of these three old Opels is the sheer amount of creative thinking that's been put into them, all in an effort to keep costs as low as humanly possible. Andy reckons he's spent just over £1000 in total on his Rekord, and that's a figure that includes both this car and the donor. It's undoubtedly been money well spent, as seeing these three cars driving together is nothing short of jaw-dropping; let's face it, any Opel of this vintage would attract more than a few sideways glances, but put three of them together and paint them in colours like this and it's no exaggeration to say that town centres grind to a halt.



WORDS & PHOTOS hoskingindustries.com.au

THE SURVIVOR





FAST FACTS

- 5.7 V8 small block Chevy
- Powerglide transmission
- Custom Dragway 15in wheels
- Torana/Commodore brakes
- 8-point roll cage

It may look like an HB Viva, but this is an HB Torana, Holden's version of the Vauxhall, and this particular model is a piece of Australian drag racing history.

HB TORANA

Small block Chevy gets this thing down the quarter mile in under 10 seconds!

Some people pick brands to be loyal to. For most car-crazy Australians, that usually means picking Holden or Ford. Some kids are born into brand-loyal families, some fall into friendships with groups who drive particular makes and some form affinities all on their own – perhaps via their favourite form of motorsport or seeing a desirable car in a movie.

Then there are guys like Australian Dave Andrews. He didn't just form a lifelong brand loyalty to Holden. No, Dave took things one step further and fell in love with the mid-sized Torana (which is effectively a facelifted HB Viva). In fact, he's owned numerous examples of the model over the years, mainly early 1970s models like the LC, LJ and LH – most of which have also appeared in magazines and won countless trophies at car shows on the East Coast of Australia like the famous Summernats in the nation's capital, Canberra.

Dave's latest acquisition, this 1969 HB Torana has a lot of history in the Australian drag racing scene. Dave had fallen in love with this car back in the early 1990s when it terrorised local drag strips powered by a gassed-up small-block Chevy V8, running consistent low 10sec ETs. It's this history that attracted Dave to it when he saw it for sale around 18 months ago. "It was originally built in 1989 by Peter and Paul O'Shannessy," comments Dave. "Pat Whitwell bought it from them in the mid 1990s and raced it successfully in the Yokohama Street Shoot Out."

The car had basically disappeared after that and subsequently sat idle for years before it came up for sale. Being a big fan of the car from its heyday, Dave jumped at the opportunity, almost sight unseen. "We got it home, put fresh fuel and a battery in it and it turned over," he says. "It still needed some work, though. I went through and replaced the wheel bearings, fuel lines, brake lines and other stuff like that. I also got Dave at Cardiff Motor Trimming to repair all the original interior so I could keep the car as original as possible."

By original, Dave means



"We got it home, put fresh fuel and a battery in it and it turned over"

TECH SPEC

ENGINE
350Ci SBC block, 4-bolt mains, custom sump, solid cam, Yella Terra rockers, ported Dart heads, dual-plane manifold, 850cfm Holley carb, 2-stage direct-port nitrous system, MSD ignition, fuel cell, Barry Grant fuel pump, BG regulator, alloy engine plate, Custom manifold, twin 3in system, Magnaflow silencers

PERFORMANCE
9.62sec @ 144mph

TRANSMISSION
Powerglide, 3000rpm Dominator stall converter, Ford 9in, 4.11:1 final drive, full spool diff

SUSPENSION
Factory front layout with 90/10 shocks, half-chassis rear and ladder bar setup Koni coilovers

BRAKES
LJ Torana front discs and calipers, VK Commodore rear

WHEELS/TYRES
Custom Dragway 15in wheels (4in front, 10in rear)

INTERIOR
8-point roll cage, tan vinyl trim, Momo steering wheel, Autometer gauges, custom switch and fuse box, B&M shifter, fixed race buckets

EXERIOR
Exterior 1969 HB Holden Torana, Hornet bonnet scoop, stretched rear wheel arches, Mazda Mach green paint

THANKS
Dave would like to dedicate the story to the late Peter O'Shannessey, Peter's widow Josephine and their children





Massive Holley carb and 2 stage nitrous. Nice



HB TORANA

radically different from the HB's Vauxhall Viva origins. There's plenty of fabrication work lurking inside the car, including an 8-point roll cage and a rear ladder bar set up between the massive wheel tubs that permit the fitment of those huge 10x15in custom Dragway alloy wheels. Then there's the custom transmission tunnel to make room for the Powerglide that mates to the back of the small-block Chevrolet V8 up front.

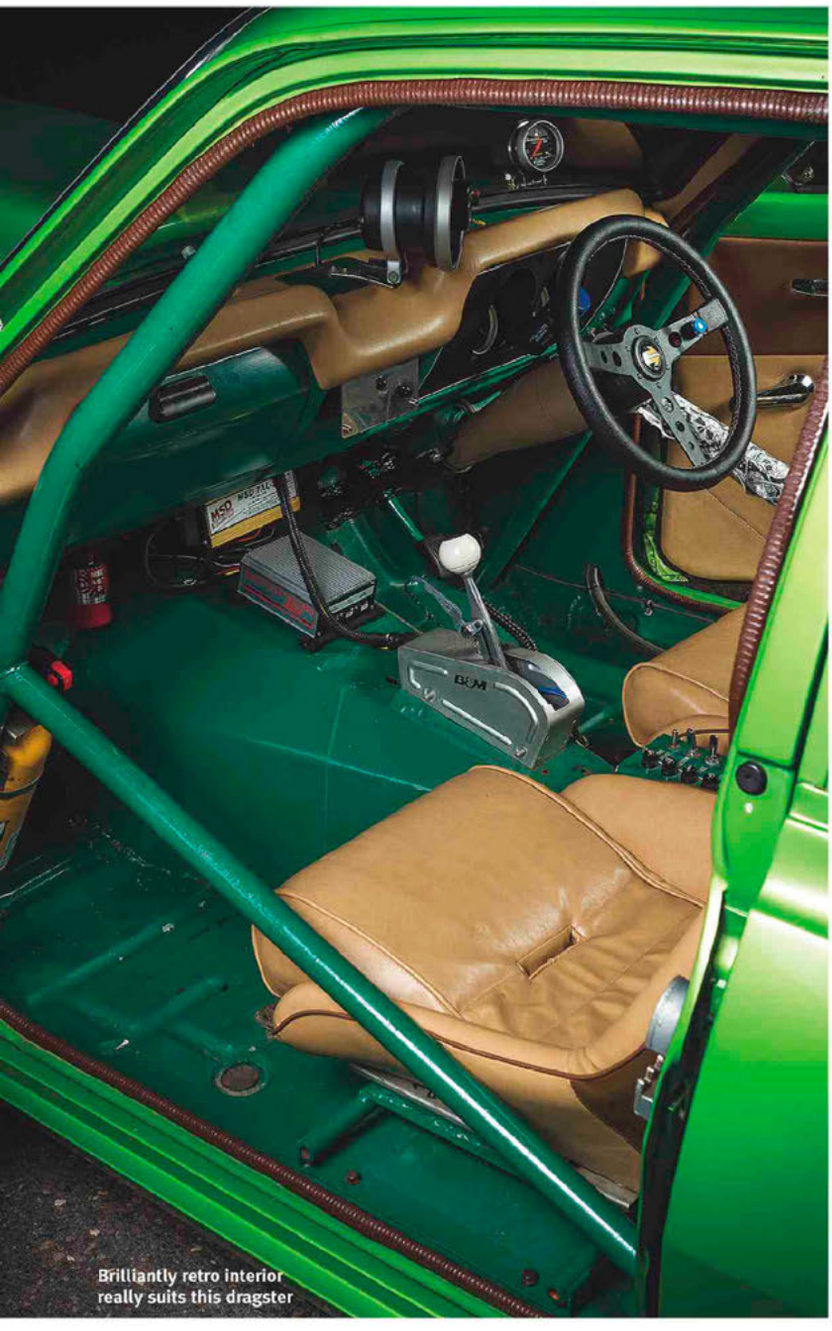
POWERSTATION

Dave says he feels more like the custodian of the car than its new owner and has no intention of deviating from its original aesthetic. Indeed, the car still wears its original late '80s paint, wheels and interior and Dave has even gone to the trouble of sourcing tyres that suit the era so things look right.

Since the photo shoot, Dave has sold the 350ci (5.7 litre) small block Chevy that came with the car (he doesn't believe this to be the engine the O'Shannessys built). A new small-block is being built by Pryce Engines now, measuring an astronomical 434ci (7.1 litres!) and wearing a pair of All Pro 23-degree high-port heads. A new 'box and tuning will come from Glen at G-Force.

"Sadly, Peter O'Shannessy was killed in a car accident and the family lost contact with the car after Whitwell bought it," Dave says. "When I bought it, I made contact with Peter's family. They still have photos of it during the original build-up and have been interested in seeing it today."

With another Torana sharing space in his two-car garage (an LH) and the walls covered in decades of old photos – proof of a life lived in the scene and a life lived well – die-hards don't come much more devout than Dave. There couldn't be a better place for the HB to live out the rest of its storied life.

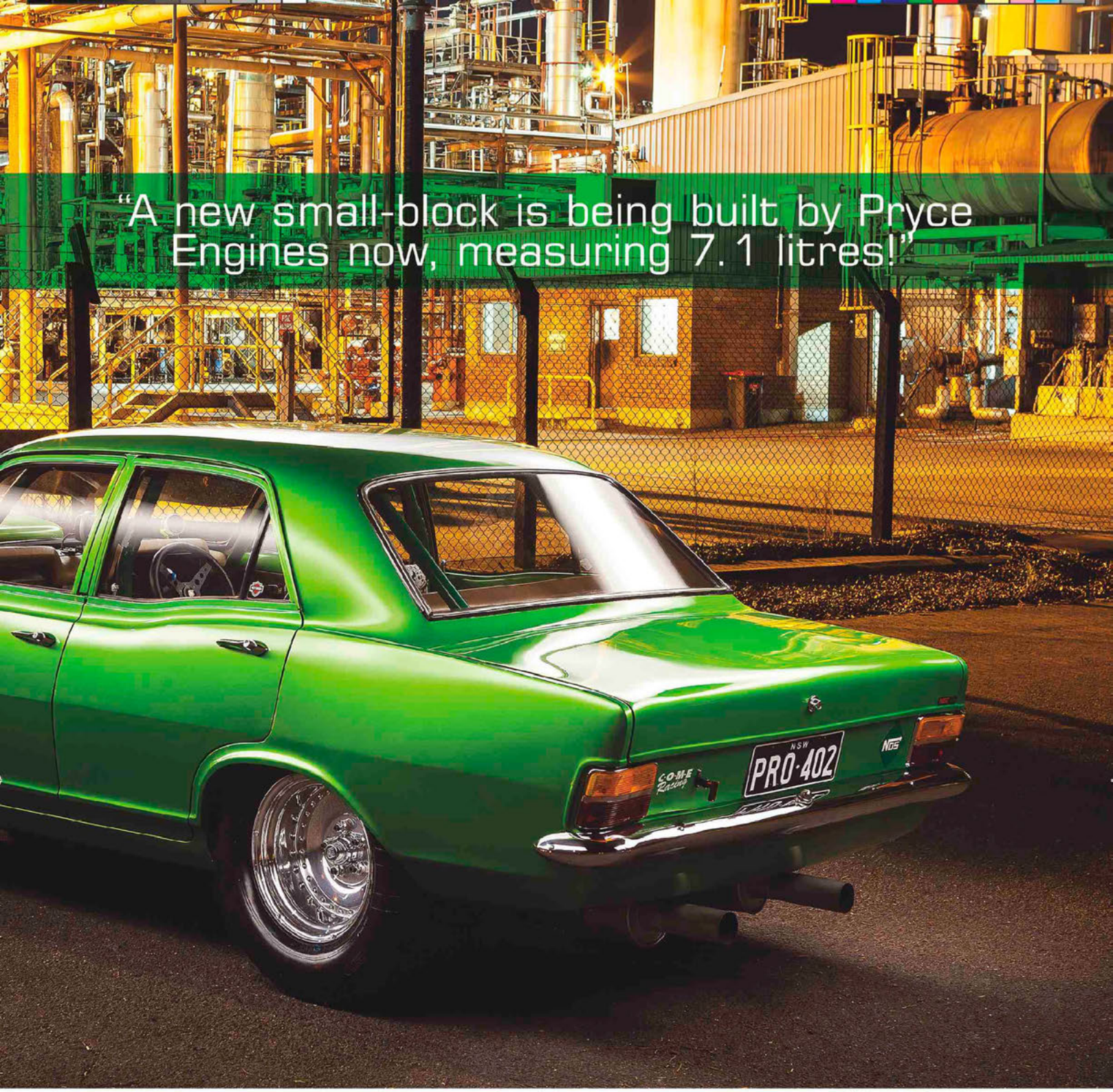


Brilliantly retro interior really suits this dragster





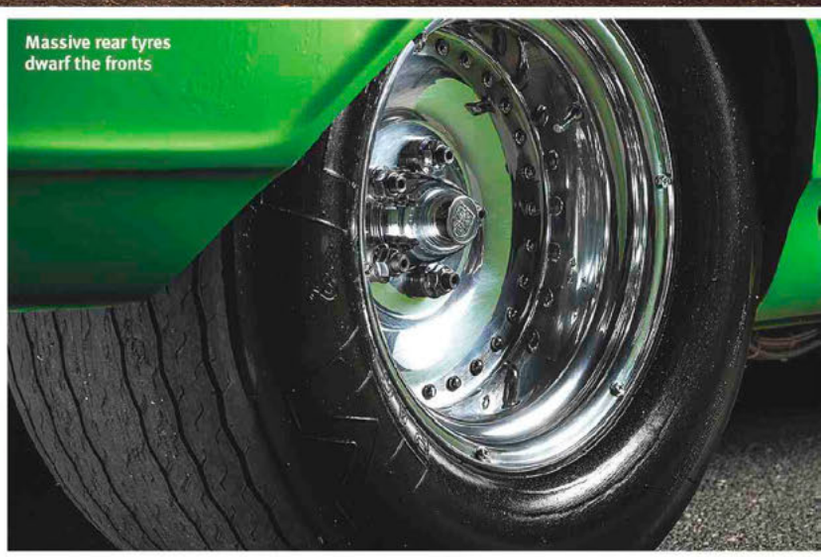
"A new small-block is being built by Pryce Engines now, measuring 7.1 litres!"







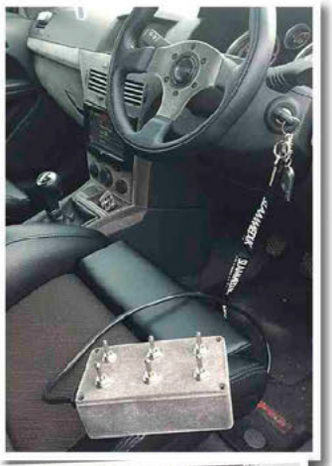
Neat fused switch panel sits between the seats


Massive rear tyres dwarf the fronts

HALL of FAME

Some top readers' cars to feast your eyes on!







MATT JONES

ASTRA SRi

Whether you love them or loathe them, there's no escaping the fact that airbags, and hydraulics have made a big impact on some areas of the Vauxhall scene – with the Mk5 Astra being one of the more popular conversions. This is Matt Jones' SRi which he's kitted out with a full 6-way Rayvern Hydraulics kit. In keeping with the smooth and low theme Matt has opted for the ever popular 0.06 3SDM alloys. Inside sits a pair of Corbeau buckets, a Momo steering wheel, and a flocked dash.



KEITH JACKSON

ASTRA COUPE

Newcastle lad Keith is a big fan of his ZLET Coupe in rare Fern Green, and he's lavished a lot of care and attention on it during his ownership. Modifications include 17in Turbo alloys powder coated in Anthracite, Astra VXR brakes and a full Eibach suspension set up. But that's not all, as the eagle eyed will spot the Focus RS bonnet vents, and R8 style headlights. The interior features the factory black heated leather complemented by a GSi steering wheel, boost gauge, and blue LED conversion for the interior lighting.

Want to appear in the Hall Of Fame? We want to see your car. Just email us your name, phone number, no more than four photos, car spec and tell us a bit about yourself – where you're from, what your job is etc to: **totalvauxhall.ed@kelsey.co.uk**



IAN O'KEEFE

VECTRA C ESTATE

Diesel tuning has come in in leaps and bounds of late – but there are still some tried and tested methods to gain more power – as Ian O'Keefe knows only too well. With a EGR delete, the DPF and cat removed, intercooler, and a corresponding map the big C now delivers a healthy 169bhp, and no doubt a whole load of torque. That power is delivered through a set of Opel badged 18in XP2 alloys which cover a set of larger 314mm discs with corresponding calipers. There are a whole host of other mods making Ian one proud owner!

MICHAEL MOORE

CAVALIER SRi

Many great Griffins have come and gone through Michael's hands over the years, and this is his fifth Cavalier (He even met his fiancee through the sale of one of his Cavs). This particular model came with a complete service history, and even though it's on 153K Michael comments that it drives, and looks, like a Cavalier with half the miles. The exterior has some discreet touches to bring it up to date, but it's the engine where most of the work was carried out – the Ecotec was recently rebuilt and rebored to 2.1litres, with a fast road cam. A load of new components and gaskets were fitted at the same time for peace of mind, and Michael reckons it's now around the 170bhp mark.







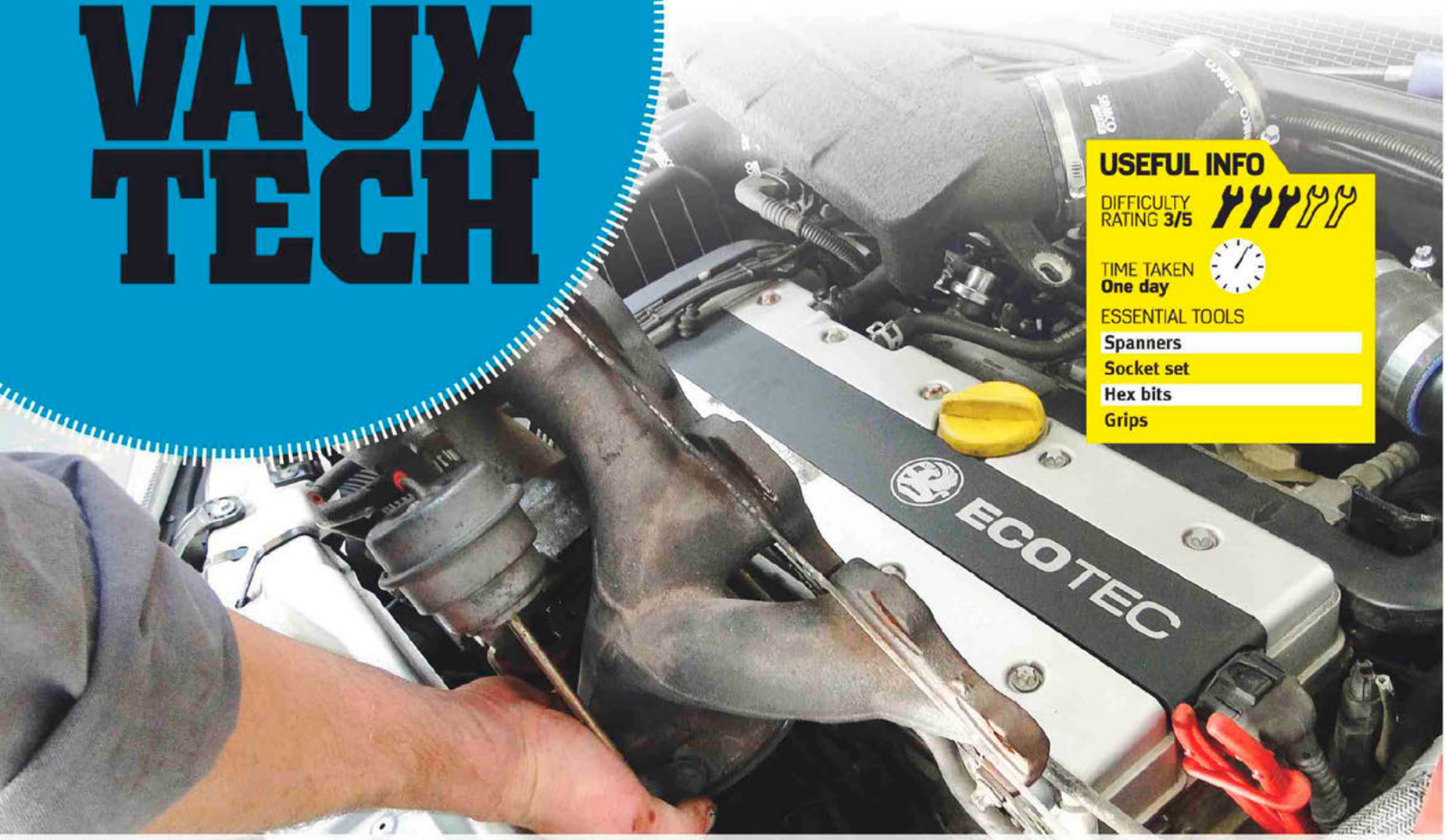
HIMESH SIYODA

ASTRA 888

The theft of a much loved VXR was the catalyst to buy this mint 888 according to serial Astra owner Himesh Siyoda. As with most 888s he intends to keep it pretty much as Vauxhall intended (bar some aftermarket engine hoses and grille) while he saves up for his dream car – a full on VXR8. In the mean time he's been using the Coupe to practice his budding photography hobby with some interesting results.



VAUX TECH



USEFUL INFO

DIFFICULTY RATING **3/5**

TIME TAKEN **One day**

ESSENTIAL TOOLS

- Spanners
- Socket set
- Hex bits
- Grips

VXR TURBO INTO MK4 ASTRA

Swapping the original turbo from a Mk4 Astra GSi for a VXR unit will give you more power and better reliability. Here's how to do it.

WORDS & PHOTOS Martyn Williams

The Mk4 Astra Turbo can benefit from some easy power gains and one of the simplest modifications is to fit the turbo from an Astra VXR. The turbo from the Astra VXR already has high performance credentials and improved durability. It's able to stand more heat than the standard ZLET turbo, which has a manifold that has been known to crack and Courtenay also recommend it as a better bet than aftermarket hybrid ZLET units. It's also worth noting that the turbo from the Astra VXR can also be used to upgrade other Vauxhall turbo engines including the Zafira (A and B models), the VX220 and VXR220 Turbo and it is also suitable as a direct replacement unit for the Z20LEL/Z20LER Mk5 Astra (170/200 PS models). The Z20LEH turbo also has the advantage of big manufacturer research and development which adds up to a better response and a corresponding improvement in driveability – ideal for anyone thinking of upgrading to Stage 3 and 4 along with relevant software remapping.

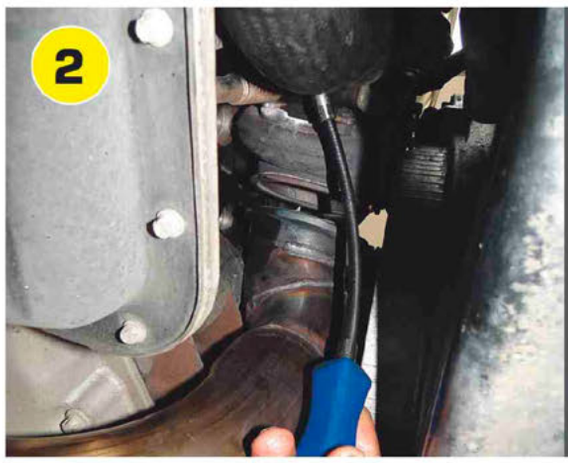
At £489.95 for the complete unit, the VXR turbo is relatively inexpensive – less than the original unit in fact. Another saving is that the expense of a remap is not required for standard cars. Additionally, Courtenay can reset the static pressure on the actuator to suit standard models that work at a lower pressure than the Astra VXR. Money can be saved by DIY-fitting shown here, but for non-DIY types, Courtenay charge £895 for the turbo and fitting which includes gaskets, oil, filter and a 12 month, 12,000 mile warranty (which you won't get if you fit it yourself). Early failures of turbos fitted by customers include bits falling unnoticed into the intakes.

The VXR turbo from Courtenay comes complete with the standard actuator which can be used on anything up to and including Stage 3 remapped cars (the Astra being converted here is a Stage 3 motor, complete with a 3 inch exhaust). An uprated actuator and bracket is available additionally from £147 for Stage 4 cars. Another upgrade offered by Courtenay is the fitment of an uprated turbo bearing assembly priced from £305. The turbo can be supplied with all the items normally required for the replacement process. These include the exhaust manifold gasket, sump bolt washer, breather tube gasket and turbo oil drain gasket (at £16.80), fully synthetic Valvoline 5w-40, GM Longlife oil filter and sump bolt washer at £52.50. There is also a replacement manifold stud and nut kit (10 of each) at £30 and the turbo-to-exhaust clamp priced at £42. Courtenay also offer a stainless steel washer plate for the exhaust manifold at £21.60.

Before removing the old turbo, it's worth thinking about getting at least a couple of exhaust manifold studs and a set of nuts. Studs breaking off, particularly at the number one cylinder end, is not uncommon. If it does happen, an experienced TIG welder should be able to build up metal on the end of the stud without harming the head. If there is a stubby bit left, the welder might be able to attach a nut to get a socket on to it. The only other complicated thing about fitting the VXR turbo is that the actuator setting is lower for non-VXR turbo cars which have not been remapped (see pictures showing adjustment of the actuator). If left at the standard VXR wastegate release pressure on a car with standard mapping, the extra pressure can set the ECU into over-boost protection mode. If this happens, the engine management warning light will come on and boost will be limited to five pounds at the most and the ECU will have to be reset. If a VXR turbo hasn't been recalibrated for lower boost, an emergency measure to hopefully prevent the ECU from tripping out is to slacken the inner and outer nuts on the actuator rod and move the outer nut so that the distance from the end of the rod to the outer face of the nut measures 5 mm. Nip up the inner nut to secure the rod, and hopefully it won't be too far out. It could be checked with a known-accurate boost gauge, but waiting for the turbo to cool down to make guesstimated adjustments is not ideal.



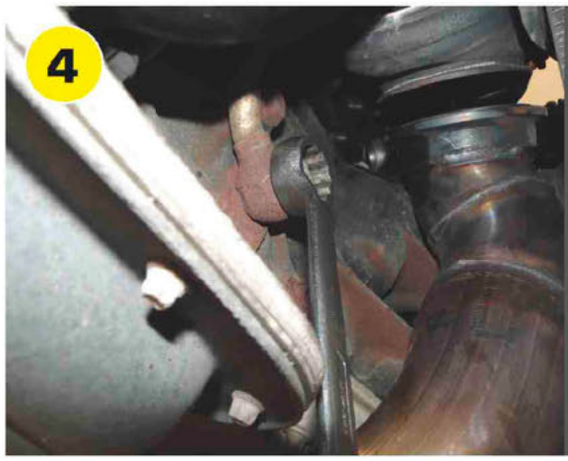
1 A new turbo deserves new oil and a filter. Courtenay recommend a GM Long Life filter and a fully synthetic SM-rated oil - check the side of the can, some synthetics have a lower SG rating. Whatever the oil brand, fully synthetic is best for turbocharged petrol engines.



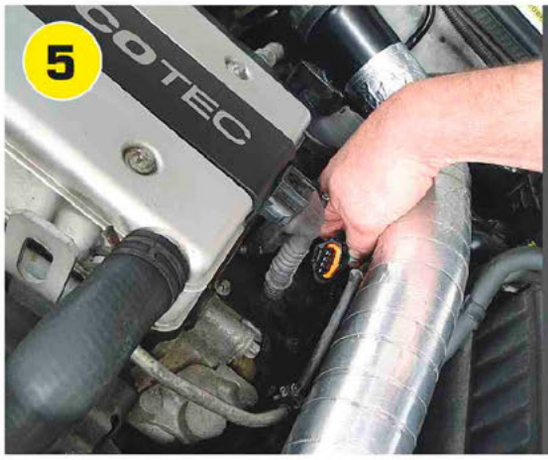
2 A springy screwdriver is handy for getting at the worm-drive clips on the boost hose but it can usually be done equally well with a ratchet handle and extension.



3 Avoid the slim chance of anything landing in the pipe while the work is going on by plugging the ends. Any small solid objects hitting the turbo blades could be disastrous.



4 The large bolt on the bottom of the block retains the oil return union from the turbo. This pipe will be fitted to the new turbo unit.



5 Disconnect the multi-pin plug to the lambda sensor on the exhaust downpipe and then pull out some slack to make sure it isn't stretched when the pipe drops down after the main turbo-to-exhaust clamp is removed.



6 The intake hoses across the engine need to be slackened off and the alloy transfer pipe removed.



7 If the existing turbo still has some life in it and is being used elsewhere, the same advice applies about plugging up the intake which is large enough to easily swallow a nut or bolt.



8 It's a good idea to attack small rubber hoses while there is still some warmth in the engine. Hoses such as the breather shown here, tend to be more flexible and easier to remove at this stage.



9

Other items that need disconnecting before the turbo can be removed include the plug to the boost control solenoid and the vacuum pipe to the recirculation valve.

COOLING THE TURBO – UP OR DOWN?

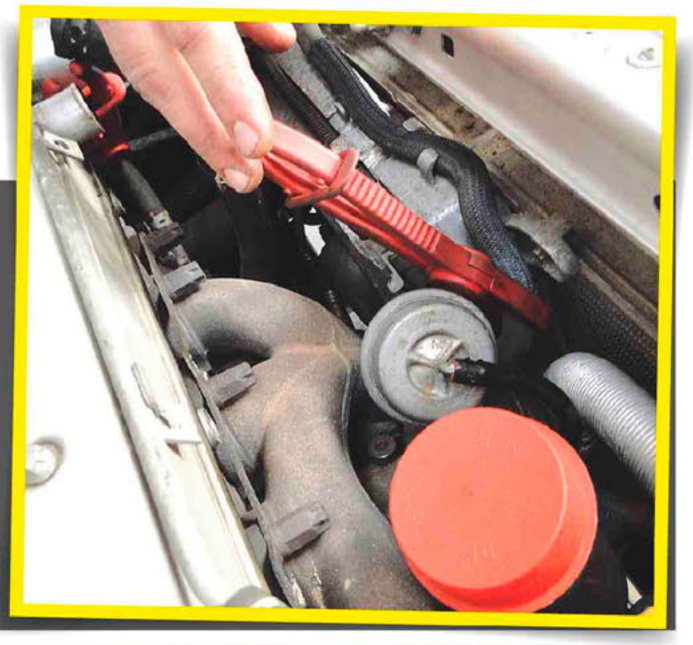
When the factory developed the Astra VXR with its improved turbo, they also changed the water flow direction to the unit so that it feeds from the cooler bottom end of the radiator, through the turbo water manifold and up to the top of the rad. All the previous models (apart from the VX220) feed from the top of the rad to the bottom.

Vauxhall offer an 'improved cooling service kit' which adapts the hoses to flow the VXR way, but this hasn't proved to be a big seller, probably because of the £155.00 price tag. Courtenay report a lack of interest in this conversion, and point out that Vauxhall often change things to cope with extreme 200 hour engine endurance testing, not typical road use.



10

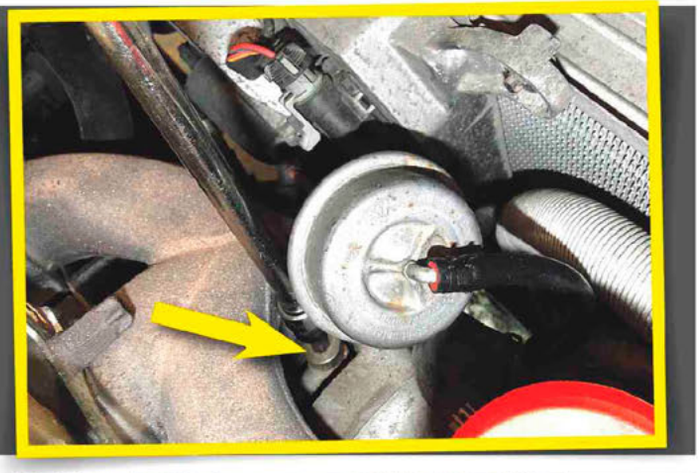
Clamping-off the coolant hoses to the turbo means one less job of draining the system. At Courtenay they use these neat hose clamps but it can be done with clamping grips used with a bit of old hose, (or similar) to protect the pipes from the metal jaws.





11

Removing the big banjo bolt and pulling the water hose free is not a problem but the oil union bolt can be a bit of a teaser and is sometimes difficult to free off. It's essential that the hex bit is a tight fit.





12

When removing the engine breather pipe from the bottom of the block, it needs to be done with care to avoid dropping a retaining bolt through the breather hole – it has happened! A temporary plug is a good idea and a new gasket is recommended. The gasket can be held in place with some sealant on the end of the pipe to stop it dropping off as it is lowered into place.

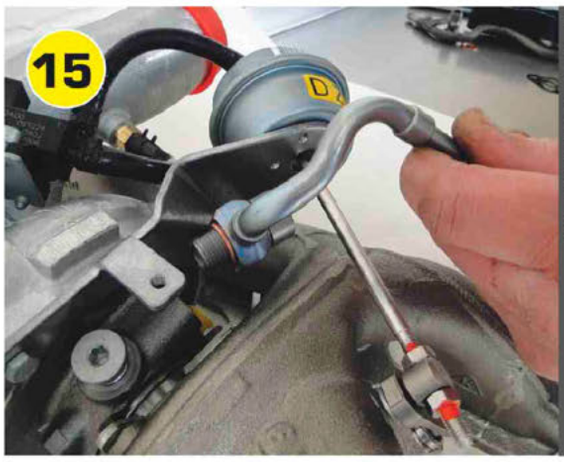


13

When removing the old turbo the top priority is to avoid bashing the radiator on the way out, otherwise it's just some careful wiggling about to pull the turbo assembly out.



14 An inspection light and a mirror are useful things to have in order to check the valve seals which can be prone to leaking at high-ish mileages. Any darkening of the ports and the back of the valves is a warning sign.



15 This is the new VXR turbo. The original VXR coolant pipe is not used on any non-VXR installation.



16 The existing oil return tube is fitted to the new unit. Again, a new gasket is worth fitting here.



17 The external dimensions of the manifold for the VXR turbo are the same so there are no complications to fitting the water pipe and its bracket. New copper washers help to ward off the possibility of leaks or the old washers can be heated till they glow red and then quench them in water. This softens them up to make a better seal.



18 The Astra VXR actuator setting is set to start releasing the waste gate at 10 psi whereas the setting on non-VXR turbo models is 7 to 8 psi. Here it is being done using a professional tool – Courtenay will preset the actuator according to your instructions when you buy a VXR turbo from them.



19 Adjusting the actuator rod is simple if a pressure pump and gauge is used. The outer nut is released to allow the inner to be adjusted to allow the waste gate arm to just start to move at the correct pressure. The outer nut can then be used to lock it in position.



20 The cylinder head port face tends to get a bit crusty and powdery where the gasket fits so it's worth cleaning it up with an ordinary kitchen scouring pad which is unlikely to dump any harmful residue in the ports before fitting the exhaust gasket.



Refitting the new unit is basically a reversal apart from fitting hoses to the turbo where needed. They include the oil drain pipe and the coolant return union on the back of the turbo.



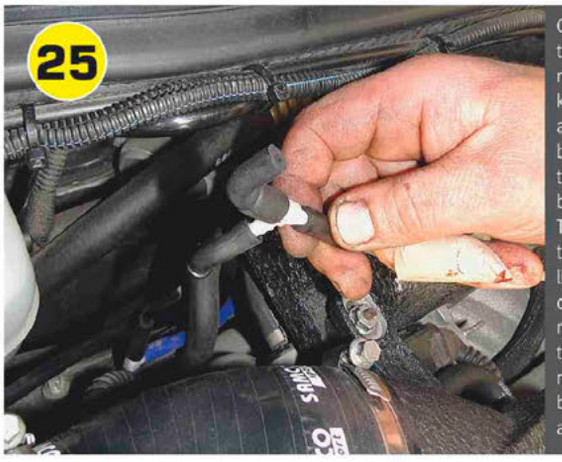
The manifold nuts have an internal socket apart from being able to spanner them on the outside which gives two opportunities to tighten them. Unless they are in really good condition it is best to buy a new set.



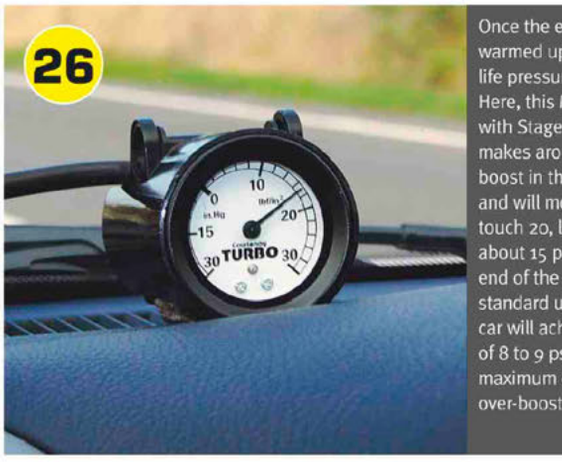
With everything in place, prior to running the car, the next stage is to disconnect the plug (shown here near the fuel regulator) which goes to the electronic crankshaft sensor. This will ensure that the engine can be cranked over on the starter without firing up.



After fitting the new oil filter and topping up with fresh oil, remove the oil feed banjo bolt and slowly pump in plenty of oil to pre-charge the turbo, making sure that it doesn't start dry. Once topped up with plugs and caps in place, the engine can be turned until the oil light goes out and then the crank sensor is ready to be plugged back in to fire it back into life.



Courtenay technicians normally fit a known-accurate boost gauge temporarily by using a T-piece into the pressure line so that it can be monitored on the road to make sure the boost settings are OK.



Once the engine is fully warmed up, some real-life pressures are noted. Here, this Mk4 Astra with Stage 3 mapping makes around 17 psi boost in the midrange and will momentarily touch 20, levelling off to about 15 psi at the top end of the rev range. A standard un-mapped car will achieve a peak of 8 to 9 psi and a maximum of 11-13 psi of over-boost.



CONTACTS

Courtenay Sport
01692 404313
www.courtenaysport.co.uk

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THE PERFORMANCE VAUXHALL MAGAZINE

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itch to scratch

When you get the craving for a Mk2 Astra GTE, there's only one thing that can satisfy you... as Daniel Fahimi discovered...

WORDS Jarkle **PHOTOS** Chris Frosin

Remarkably, there are 314 Astra GTEs registered with the DVLA at the time of writing. Granted that's a far cry from the early 2000s when they were part of the street furniture of the whole country (according to 'How Many Left' there were a whopping 11,361 alive in 2001), but it's still not at all bad for a car that's rapidly approaching its 30th birthday. It's also worth remembering that the GTE had to bare the brunt of the massive boom in joyriding that typified the mid to late '90s, and it isn't hard to see why they were such a target for those with loose morals and a penchant for exploring other people's property! The GTE was easy to find, simple to steal and seriously quick, though its slightly wayward handling undoubtedly played a part in so many examples ending their days buried into hedges and dry stone walls! They've gone on to be a cult classic of course, symbolic of a golden era of hot hatches with accessible performance, light weight and very little in the way of driver aids.

The GTE is also one of those cars that seems to suck people in and not let them go, and it's very rare that you'll meet an owner who's had just the one – many of them are well into double figures by now! David Fahimi certainly fits that description, having



FAST FACTS

- Totally restored bodywork with Power Red paintwork
- Rare Zender splitter in Honda nighthawk black pearl
- Full Champion interior
- Suspension lowered 40mm
- Speedline Alessio alloys in dark anthracite

ASTRA GTE



Black trim took some sourcing, but was well worth the effort

owned dozens of them over the years, and the cars have a special place in his heart to this day; "A friend took me out in one 'back in the day,' and it was probably the first car I'd been in at silly speeds. I remember getting out and thinking that I needed one of my own, and a few weeks later I'd bought a 2.0 8v example," recalls David.

That particular car met its maker in the same manner as countless others, David losing control on a wet road and skidding into the central reservation. It marked the start of his relationship with the cars though, and he's seldom been without a GTE ever since.

GOOD FROM AFAR

This car was actually an eBay purchase, and, like many cars bought and sold online, the pictures supplied definitely flattered it. David went to view it last August and expected to find a slightly tired, faded pink GTE, but was instead greeted by a car that had visible signs of rust and had certainly seen better days, amazingly, that still didn't put him off buying it!

"I needed to scratch my GTE itch and I'd managed to negotiate a very good price, especially as the car had tax and test at the time. I also work in a bodyshop, so it wasn't as if I couldn't tackle the rot myself," David explains.

David wasted no time in getting his purchase home, then set about pulling it apart to assess the extent of the rot and how much work was needed to restore the car to its former glory. We think we're on safe ground when we say that GTEs (and Mk2 Astras in general) don't need much encouragement to rot, with some of the worst trouble areas being the arches, inner wings and the bulkhead, the latter of which can split if not rectified swiftly. David's car hid all manner of horrors, with the rear arches looking especially sorry for themselves;

"They'd been replaced by the previous owner, but they hadn't finished the job very well so all the swage lines were lost and there were visible steps between the original metal and the new arches. The outer edges of the roof were covered in dents, the sills needed some work and the bulkhead had begun to split near the pedal box, so yeah, it wasn't exactly







OWNER
DANIEL FAHIMI

AGE 30
OCCUPATION Bodyshop estimator
FIRST VAUXHALL An 8v GTE
WORST PART OF THE BUILD Prepping the shell for paint!
BEST PART Just looking at it after it was finally back together and complete

VXR Power Red respray keeps it in the family, and looks awesome





A digi-dash in its original home for a change!

"I remember thinking I need one of my own, and a few weeks later I'd bought a 2.0 8v"

ASTRA GTE

20XE was in surprisingly good order when Daniel bought the Astra, and it still pulls like new

concours," laughs David.

Vauxhall aficionados are a stubborn and determined bunch though, and David wasted no time in getting stuck in, helped along the way by his friend and panel beater, Andy Rustle. There were setbacks along the way, like when David attempted to tease the loom out of the inner wing, only for it to come out attached to a clod of rotten silicone, but together the pair pressed on and made good progress. New Old Stock panels were sourced wherever possible, though David did have to resort to some ill-fitting pattern front wings, both of which took some 'convincing' to fit properly.

Eventually the pair had the bodywork back in a solid state and David could begin the laborious process of prepping the shell for paint.

"That wasn't much fun as it took such a long time. I remember thinking that it wouldn't be so bad if the end was just in sight, but there were hours of hard work to go before I could even being to think about that," says David with a grimace.

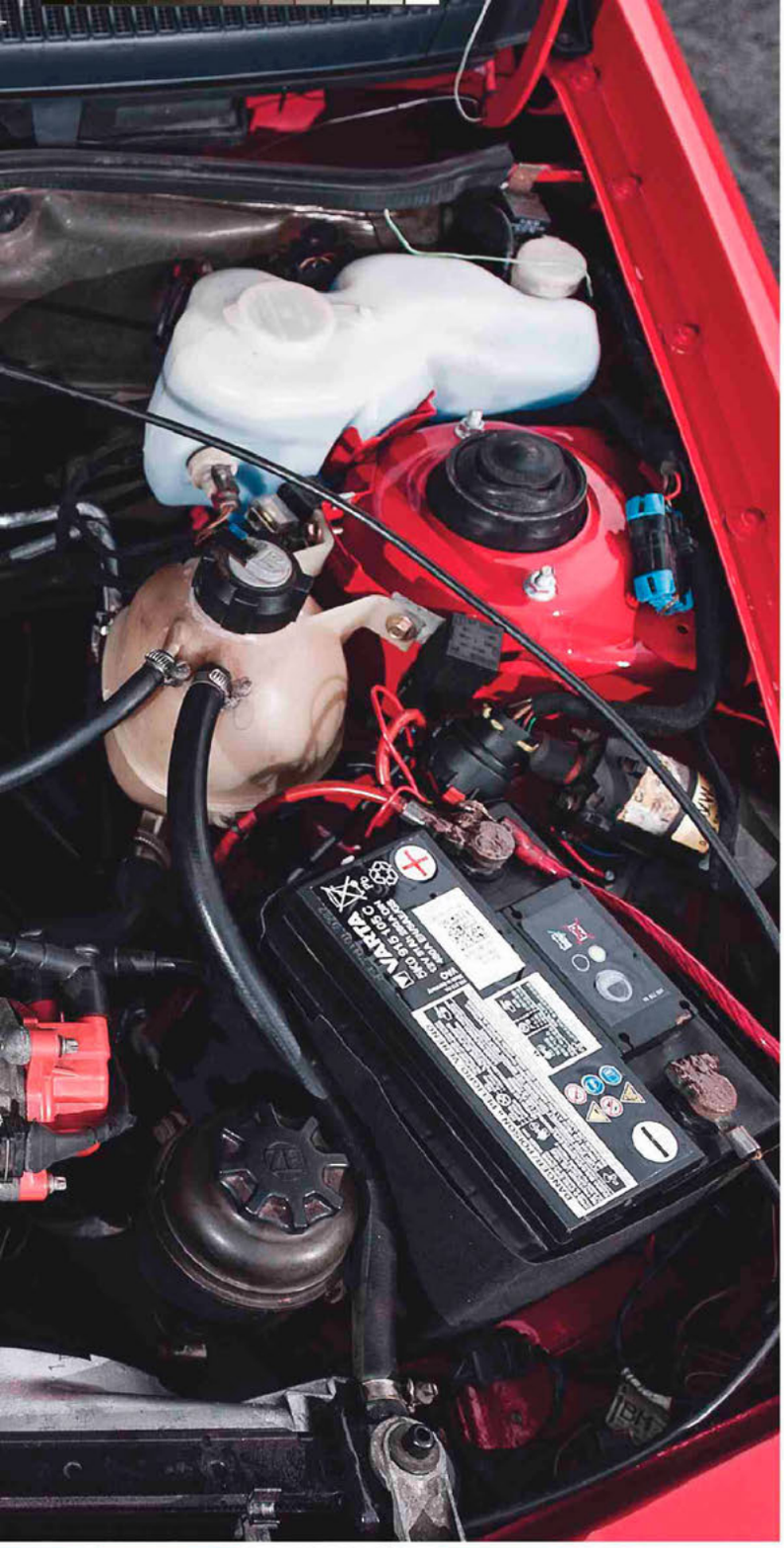
POWER PAINT

The car had arrived sporting a flat pink shade that had once been Flame Red, but David decided he wanted it to wear a deeper, less orangey colour, hence the decision to go for Power Red instead. The paint was applied by an ex-Rolls Royce employee, so perhaps it shouldn't be that surprising that the GTE now looks totally mint, every bit as good as when it left the line.

The interior hadn't weathered the years especially well either, and a peek inside revealed a mish-



Alessios, naturally









TECH SPEC

ENGINE
1998cc C20XE DOHC 16v, K&N induction kit, rocker cover painted in dark anthracite, plug cover panted red, chrome exhaust manifold heat shield, chrome injector loom cover

TRANSMISSION
F20 five speed, OE clutch and driveshafts

SUSPENSION
OE dampers with 40mm lowering springs, NOS bushes, painted lower arms

BRAKES
Rebuilt OE discs and calipers, aftermarket pads all round

WHEELS AND TYRES
7x16in Speedline Alessios in dark anthracite, 195/45x16 tyres

INTERIOR
Full Champion leather interior with correct trims and fixings, carpets cleaned and re-dyed, re-painted floors

EXTERIOR
Astra GTE 16v in VXR Power Red, fully restored bodywork with NOS and pattern panels, brand new headlights and fixing clips, Zender splitter in Honda Nighthawk black pearl, pressed steel plates, de-locked doors

THANKS
Simon, Andy Rustle, Carl Evans, Sav Maletta and everyone else at Spraytone LTD for doing such an amazing job with the paint, Deion Sellers for all the help, and Jennifer my misses for having so much patience with the car and the restoration

"The history revealed it'd been treated to a brand new engine in 1994"

ASTRA GTE

mash of Champion seats (albeit with collapsed bolsters) and silver coloured Laser trim – not exactly a combination that worked well together. The seats were quickly dispatched for a restoration and a re-trim, while David set to work hunting out everything he'd need to make a complete, black interior.

"The Mk2 owners club forum was brilliant for that as there's always a few GTEs being broken, and it's actually surprising how many examples are still out there. It was great when I finally got the whole interior back together and in one colour, though I reckon I'll get the rear bench re-trimmed soon..."

LUCKY BREAK

One area of the car that had stood the test of time was the engine. The 20XE has a fantastic reputation, but it's one that many feel is perhaps outdated, and finding a good, strong and low mileage example is certainly a challenge nowadays. David struck lucky with this car though, and removing the rocker cover revealed an engine that looked clean, and more importantly, sounded very healthy indeed. Delving into the car's extensive history revealed it'd been treated to a brand new engine in 1994, and after a compression check and a flush through it was ready to go again.

It's been a similar story with the brakes and suspension, both of which are largely stock. OK so the uprights now sport 40mm lowering springs, but other than that it's very much as Vauxhall intended – all David did was rebuild everything and give it a coat of paint, and before long the underside of his GTE looked every bit as flawless as the exterior.

This has been a seriously rapid build, with the entire restoration taking place between August 2014 and the start of January, which is impressive going in anyone's book, especially when you consider David's time on the car was strictly limited to evenings and weekends. There's more to come of course, with a brake upgrade and a re-trim for the rear bench the most pressing issues, but David's mainly looking forward to taking the GTE to as many shows as possible this year, so keep your eyes peeled at PVS!



When did you last see such a mint Mk2?

Q&A

All your tech questions answered by our experts

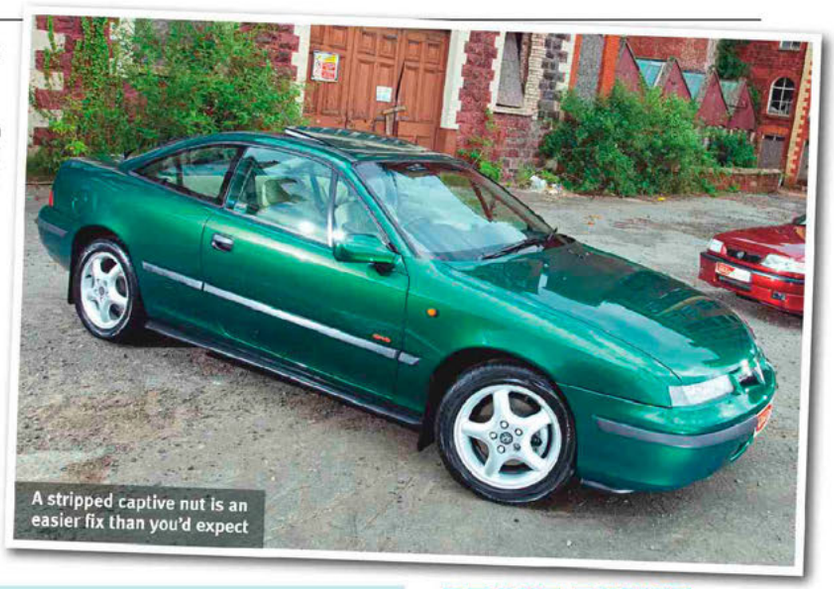
USEFUL CONTACTS

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Regal Autosport	www.regal-auto.co.uk
TX Autosport	www.txautosport.co.uk
Retropower	www.retropower.co.uk

STRIPPER

@ I'm changing the bottom arms on my Calibra and it was all going well until the last vertical bolt that goes up through the back of the arm into the floor and the thread has stripped. I got the bolt out with some effort and it's definitely ripped the threads out of what I assume is a captive nut inside the chassis somewhere? How the hell do I sort this mess and quickly as that's me stuck without a car now until it's sorted. Yours desperately,
Keith.

A Been there, done that. It's not actually as bad as you might first think. You're right, there is a captive nut on the inside of the floorpan, but it's in a void about an inch deep between the footwell and the floor pan with no access. But fear not! What we did was remove the arm then use a long thin metal spike that fits cleanly up through the bolt hole, hold it vertical and tap it through the floor pan right up into the footwell (pull the carpet back first!) once you have little hole, grab you hole saw and cut a 1in hole. You should now be able to see the top of the captive nut. You can either weld a new nut on top or simply use a longer bolt (think we used a Fiat Punto head bolt?) and then pop a lock nut on top. Weld the hole closed or pop a grommet in and that's you done. Dave's Cavalier has been like that for years with no ill effects.



A stripped captive nut is an easier fix than you'd expect

PISTON BROKE

@ Hi guys. More tales of woe. My 80k mile stage 2 Astra VXR has just let go. Believe it or not, I wasn't going hard but number four piston has failed and well, that's that really. So far I've stripped the head off it and it's not looking good. the piston has basically melted so I guess I'm looking at a bottom end rebuild at least? Any thoughts on sourcing parts or what I should upgrade while I'm at it? I'm on a bit of a budget so as much as I'd like to do a blank cheque build, I just can't afford it just now plus it's my daily driver so it's a double hit! Cheers,
Ian.

A Ah that's not good. May as well be brutally honest here and say it may have done cylinder bore damage too. You might be really lucky and get away with a hone but any significant scratches and you're looking at a new (replacement) block or a rebore with over sized pistons. There's enough of these about to source a complete second hand lump and simply drop it in and hope for the best or you could carry out a partial rebuild on said replacement engine; new head gasket, seals, relap the valves, belt kit and so on. These are probably your cheapest options and would get you back on the road pretty quickly too. On a side note, we'd also be asking what caused it to let go. Fuelling, too much boost or something mechanical? Rebuilding your engine will all depend on the damage to the block and the cylinder head. You'll really need to do a full inspection, and then decide from there. If you're lucky, you may get away with a hone, a replacement (second hand) piston and then rebuild the engine. You can still buy complete engines via Vauxhall for a tidy sum or you could go down the oversize route with steel rods etc. It really just depends on budget and the extent of the damage. Maybe have a word with the guys at Courtenay Sport given you're from that direction. They'll sell all you need and more. Best of luck with it.



When a piston gives up, it's time to upgrade!

BRAKE DANCE

@ Hi guys. I have a Corsa D SRi Turbo that has a few choice upgrades so it's about 240bhp just now and a bit of a sleeper. I put drilled discs on with Redstuff pads and thought they were awesome until my mate bought a VXR Nurburgring Edition... the brakes on it are immense. Any idea what sort of money would be involved in doing a conversion on mine and where I'd source the calipers and stuff? Cheers!
Artur.

A Yes, we'd agree... the Brembo set up on the 'Ring Edition is pretty fabulous especially on such a light car. Great news too, as those decent guys at Autovaux have everything you need at much reduced costs. You'll need a pair of calipers which currently retail at £197.34 each, a set of pads at £97.02 and a pair of discs at £170.64. Your total bill... £662.34, but it'll be worth it as not only is it a terrific set up but the calipers look fantastic too. Just remember and do the brake fluid and hell, why not speak to the guys at HEL and get some sexy braided lines whilst you're at it. In for a penny, in for a pound and all that.



Q&A

THE ONE WHO KNOCKS

@ Hi there. I have a 2003 Astra SRi Turbo that was lowered about 6 months ago on coilovers and it was fine for the first few hundred miles but recently it's started clunking when I go over speed bumps. I had it in and checked and the garage thinks it's the top mounts that are worn and moving about. Seems a bit excessive given the car has barely done any miles since the suspension was fitted? Any thoughts on why they've failed and how much to replace them again? Cheers,
Darryl.



When uprating suspension it's good practice to replace the top mounts where fitted

A You say 'again' but generally speaking coilover kits don't come with new top mounts (which are in effect just cups that sit up inside the strut turret) and so do you know if they were actually replaced at the time? If they were then yes, this isn't right and if they have failed, they should be covered by the manufacturers warranty. That said, first check what was in the kit and what was actually replaced. If they weren't replaced then it could just be one of those things, bearing in mind stiffer suspension puts more force on already worn components hence it's always best to replace everything that moves when doing suspension! Cost wise, expect to pay upwards of £40 for the mounts and bearings and perhaps an hour's labour to fit them. You'll need the camber reset too.

LIGHT UP

@ Guys... I need some help. I've just bought a Vectra C SRi CDTi estate with the full VXR styling kit and 19in alloys. Don't get me wrong, I'm delighted but sadly the previous owner was clearly 16 and hence it has stupid LED running lights, one of which works occasionally and when it doesn't, neither do my sidelights. That said the dash lights up like a Christmas tree in sympathy! It also has a ridiculous air induction kit/filter/lampshade under the bonnet and held on by tie wraps. I kid you not. None of this makes me happy so best way to get it back to standard and get my lights working as they should? Thanks.
Clive.

A Superb choice! We love these at TV... no really, we do! They are massive, go like stink (relatively speaking) and look great with the kit and wheels. Granted they have their niggles but it's all well documented with the 1.9CDTi and repairs are now getting much cheaper for the likes of DPF, injector and turbo related issues. Your issues seem minor but even minor issues are issues. The lights, deary me... as we keep saying, you can't just chop into Canbus looms as and when you please and rest assured somebody has done just that. The LEDs will be piggy backed onto the wiring for the lights, will be drawing too much current and the car body control module will be flaking out. Remove them, make sure the wiring is intact and pray it sorts it or it could be an expensive and involve repair. As for the induction kit, dead easy to pick up a second hand air box and a standard filter or even a foam replacement. All going well, this will all be sorted out and you'll have change from thirty quid. Job jobbed.

LEAKING LET

@ I'm having a nightmare! I have a C20LET in a Corsa B... fairly standard spec aside for the obligatory intercooler, exhaust and phase chips and it's been fine since I bought it but recently it's started using coolant. It would use about a litre a week then I noticed it dripping from behind the timing covers and also down sort of behind the alternator. My mate reckons it's the head gasket and also some three way pipe which looks like a nightmare to get to and replace. I'm totally scunnered with it as I get the feeling this is going to be dear. My mate reckons rip it out and do everything and then get it back in fresh. Any thoughts on that one?
Boab

A We'd be tempted to go with your mate on this one and take the engine out. Access is limited to the affected areas, more so in a Nova/Corsa conversion so assuming it has more than one issue, for the sake of couple of hours work we'd pull the lot out the top or better still, drop it down with the struts, gearbox, shafts as one unit. It'll be easier to replace said parts with full access, especially if you're faced with seized bolts or rounded jubilee clips. Granted, the work is possible with the engine in place but you'll need hands like a monkey and the patience of a saint. Take the engine out!

The other thing to consider... why is it suddenly using/losing coolant? It could be coincidental that X and Y part have started to leak but it could also hint at a head gasket issue which in turn could be pressurising the coolant system and causing weakened parts to then fail. on that note, we'd be very tempted to do a compression test and check for hydrocarbons in the header tank before you take the engine apart. To be honest, if it's not seen a spanner in years, we'd be looking at biting the bullet and getting it pulled apart and rebuilt or you'll be forever chasing niggle after niggle until you get sick of it and lose interest. Been there, done that! The good news is the LET is simple to work on and rebuild kits are cheap and readily available from the likes of LMF and Autovaux. It'll be worth it in the long run.



It's often easier to drop the engine when you've got a major job to tackle

LOCK UP!

Gents... HUGE problem. My Vectra SRi CDTi estate was in to have four tyres fitted the other day and the fourth a final lock nut has chewed up the locking wheel nut key. The garage tried to use a sort of copper headed chisel thing attached to a breaker bar and it was having none of it. They basically then gave up and said it'd need to be cut or drilled out and that might damage my wheel. So now I have three new tyres and one on the limit so kinda desperate to get this fixed. I need your expertise! Thanks,
Simon.


A knackered locking nut can really ruin your day

A Ahhh, nightmare. Locking wheel nuts are great but if they're over-tightened then it can go very wrong. First up, if the pattern on the bolt is fine you could order a replacement key. Tighten the other four bolts up mega tight and pray that's enough to release some tension on the locker. If the locker is damaged then it's time to get physical. There a few trains of thought on the best method. Some use a chisel/drift with a deformable head, this is battered onto the locker so the head forms to the pattern, grips it and winds it off. Or that's the theory. If that doesn't work, say cheerio to finesse. Forget drilling it off, it'll be hardened steel so you'll be there for months. Best option is to batter a socket over it or a reverse thread removal socket and then pray. If that doesn't work (which is common) then next option is to weld a fairly hefty nut on top (you need a decent Mig) and then wind it off. If that doesn't work (which is also common) then the final, last resort is to cut the wheel off. Do NOT use a metal cutting blade on alloy, its mega dangerous. Correct blade, mask, the works and go very slowly. Keep going till only the bolt remains. Sod's law it'll now come out by hand, if not... Stilsons, swearing and stud extractor then start searching the classifieds for a new wheel.

DEFECTIVE DIFF

Hello. I've got a MK5 Astra Sportive van which has been built to pretty much full VXR spec with the bumpers, seats and so on though it's still got the standard 1.9CDTi which has been remapped, has front mounted intercooler and a 3in exhaust. It goes well. Well, it did but recently it's developed a strange sort of rumbling under load. It started off will a wheel wobble so I had it all checked and couldn't see anything wrong. Latterly it's got worse, more so under power in third upwards and sounds like a grumbling which you can feel through the car. It goes away if I'm cruising or I lift off. Any ideas because my local garage seems stumped! Thanks.
Ash.

A It could be any number of things from a worn engine mount to a worn CV joint and pretty much anything in between but the M32 gearbox on the 1.9 (and others) has a bit of a bad reputation for being rather soft, especially when you ask it to cope with +100lb/ft and enthusiastic driving. The symptoms point in that direction and given it does it in third upwards, it would perhaps hint towards the diff starting to protest? If you have access you could pop it in the air and run it up and then listen to. Any grumbling and roughness would confirm our suspicions. Replacement boxes are hard to come by but there are numerous companies offering reconditioned units on an exchange basis or indeed you could replace the diff. Hello, is that Wavetrac? Ultimately this is all pure speculation so you're going to have to get it into a reputable garage and get them to pinpoint the issues. Having said that, if it's not the box, we'd be very surprised.



If your Astra has a noisy M32 it's a good time to uprate it!

Quick fixes

Q Guys, I've seen a few Vauxhalls around with sort of grey plastic covers on their wheel nuts. Any idea where I get these and what sort of cost? Thanks,
Stevie.

A You can get them from the dealer or from the bay of E... they come in various colours and sizes and yes, they do look so much better than rusty nuts. Expect to pay £10 to £20 a set.

Q I've just gone and cracked my Astra VXR's front bumper. Any contacts for getting a replacement without paying a fortune? Cheers.
Dan

A VXR bits are rocking horse poo, hence those that do come up are expensive. Chances of finding a bumper are slim. Can it not be plastic welded and then resprayed? Worth a shot.

Q Hi guys. Can you tell me if Astra Coupe Turbo wheels will fit on my Mk3 Astra with a five stud conversion? I've been told they will rub at the rear.
Peter

A They will as both are 5 x 110 and have an offset around the 38 to 49 mark. They'll go straight on but tyre size and suspension drop with be the deciding factor for it rubbing.

Q Gents, I've seen a few cars with darkened headlights and it looks really cool. Any ideas how this is done and what it would cost for my Zafira GSi? Thanks

A Certain performance models have smoked lights as standard but you can put a film over them, either a "Fly Eye" style, or a tinted film. It's a DIY job so only a few pounds, but be warned, despite what they say it WILL affect the light output, and may fail the MOT if they aren't bright enough.

Q Random one, but the timing belt cover on an X20XEV engine... I assume they're all the same? I need a new one but figured I should check first!
Derek

A You were right to check! Calibras/Cavaliers/Mk3 Astras are all the same but the Mk4 Astra/Vectra are different as they have an engine mount on the side that bolts through the cover.

ACE CAFE VXR MEET

PHOTOS Ashley Cashfield

It's become an annual pilgrimage for many VXR fans, and it's not hard to see why the Ace Cafe gathering has become so popular...

Five years ago Ross Melville helped organise the first VXROnline Ace Cafe meet – A collection of likeminded enthusiasts drawn together through their shared love the VXR brand, and it's a testament to that enthusiasm that the meet still goes ahead to this day.

With members from all national regions attending, it was set to be a biggie this year. Brian Young rallied round the troops and arranged a large convoy from Essex to the Ace Cafe, which, as Brian pointed out, is no mean feat, leading 25-30 cars and keeping them all together for a grand entrance isn't easy!

But on the day it all went to plan, there was a strong turnout and a great day was had by all – including the VXR Brand Manager Dougie McColm, who brought along the GenF VXR8 for the crowd to check out. If you fancy a slice of the action, planning for 2016 is already underway with a promise that it will be even bigger and even better, so get yourself over to *vxronline.co.uk* and sign up.



A grim day, but a great turnout



ACE CAFE MEET



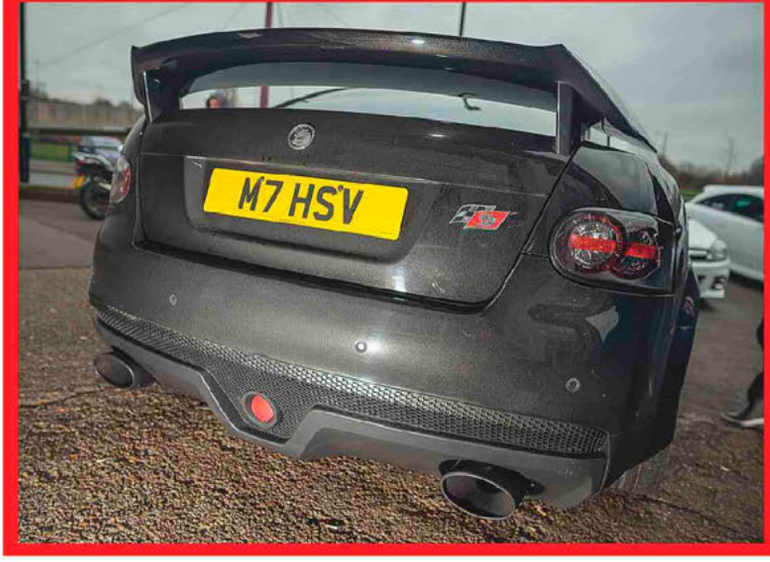
BRIAN YOUNG VXR8

Brian, one of the organisers of the day, brought along his impressive VXR8. Although he modestly claims it's "quite mildly tuned compared to some of the monster VXR8s out there" it's still a force to be reckoned with after being breathed on by Walkinshaw Performance. Since passing his test "many moons ago" Brian has only ever owned Vauxhalls, and he plans to keep this beast for a long time, having originally purchased it back in 2009. We can definitely see why!

Quick Spec

6.0 LS2, Walkinshaw Performance tuned, Walkinshaw Bi Modal Exhaust, BMC, LS7 clutch and flywheel, dipped engine cover and interior trim. HSV ID kit







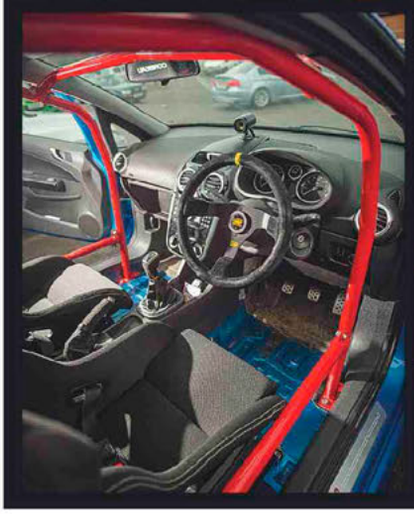
It may not be the best time of year to keep your car clean, but there were still some shiny cars on show











JACOB NEWMAN
CORSA VXR

A VXR meet wouldn't be a VXR meet without a bit of Arden Blue action – and this is Jacob Newman's Corsa complete with regulation Team Dynamics 1.2s. WG Motorsports have carried out all the work on this VXR, giving it a forged engine with 310bhp, with a planned upgrade to Piper cams and a Garrett turbo, which should see power up to the 330bhp mark. The interior has been stripped out and the rear seats replaced with an eye-catching roll cage and something tells us that Jacob's a long way from finishing tinkering with this little pocket rocket!

Quick Spec

WGM forged engine and Stage 4 Rabbid map, M32 Gripper LSD, Ksports 330mm brakes, Dbialas Intercooler, Evoms Cone Kit, 613cc Bosch Injectors, hybrid K04, full rollcage, OMP harness VMAXX coilovers, 1.2 Team Dynamics alloys, Corbeau seats





It wasn't just Astras and Corsas – this cracking VXR8 GTS made an appearance







ACE CAFE MEET









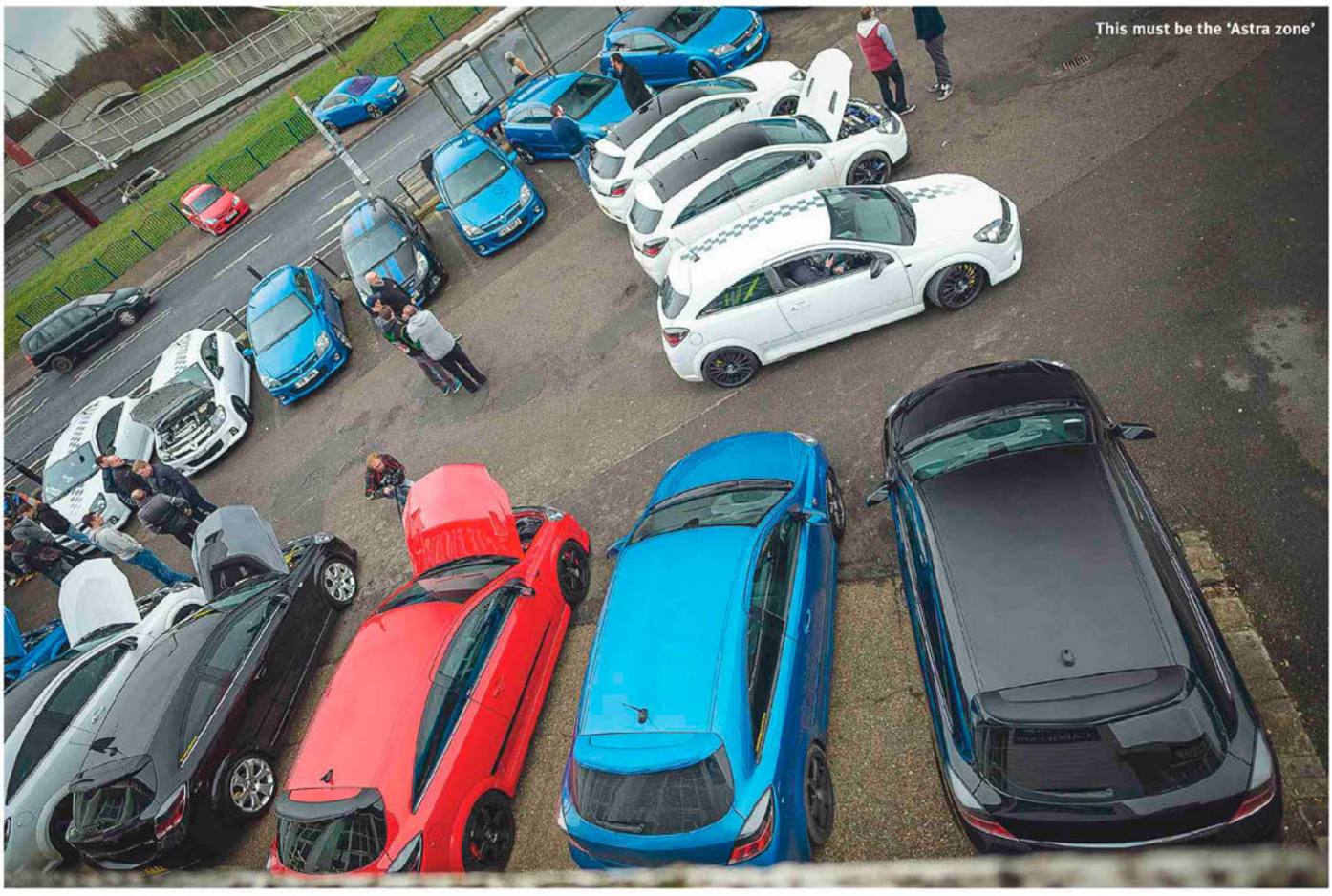


PHILIP BAILEY
ASTRA GTC VXR

This is Philip's first ever Vauxhall, and he came into Griffin ownership via the dark side, having driven his Ford Focus to the garage for a service, only to spot this white GTC in the showroom and become totally smitten. Since taking delivery of his Astra Philip has taken it to Stage 2 at 303bhp, with plans for a Stage 3 upgrade by the time you read this courtesy of Courtenay. Other mods include a full set of Polyflex bushes, DAP springs, and plenty of Forge goodies under the bonnet including a set of red hoses, and a recirc valve.

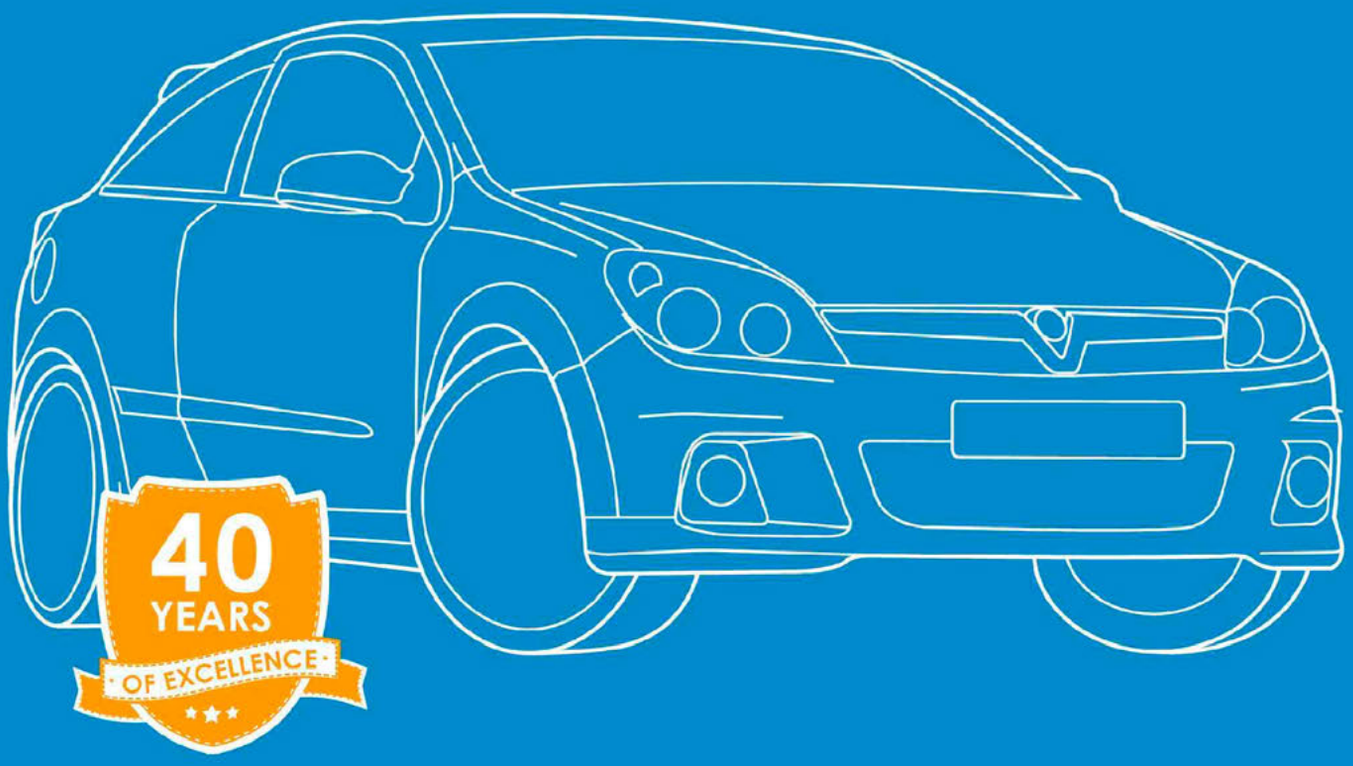
Quick Spec

RSS cold air feed, Polyflex bushes, DAP lowering springs, M-tech short shifter, Forge hoses, recirc valve and braided brake lines, Scorpion exhaust



This must be the 'Astra zone'

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STAFF CARS

What we've done with our cars this month

THE TV FLEET

DAN FURR **IRMSCHER MV6**



BOUGHT 2014
STATUS Dan's cracking on with some rubber and some cosmetic tweaks.

DOUGIE **CAVALIER 2000 SPORT**



BOUGHT 2007
STATUS Pressed into service with a set of impressively capable winter boots

JAMIE **CARLTON**



BOUGHT 2012
STATUS Like the prodigal son, the Carlton has returned!

DOUGIE **CAVALIER GSi 4x4 V6**

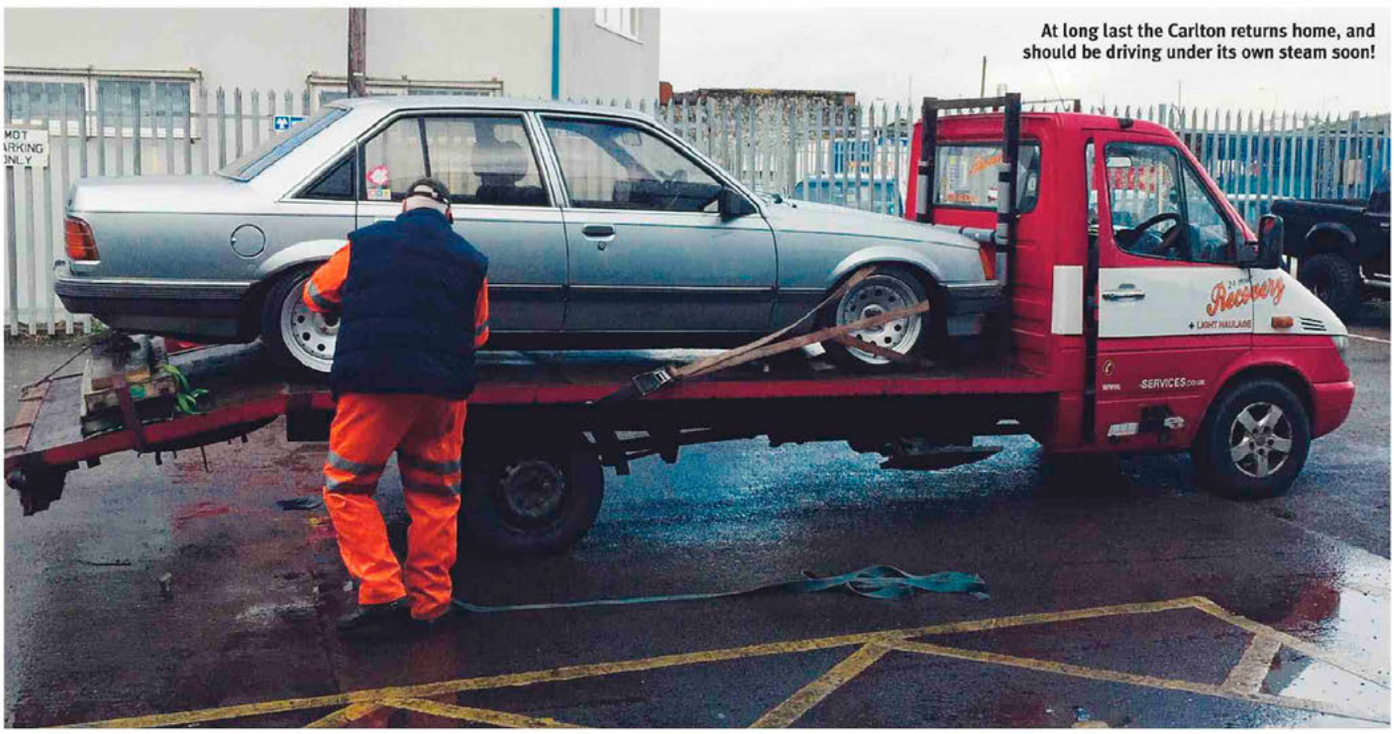


BOUGHT 2006
STATUS Still receiving plenty of TLC, and due for completion sometime soon



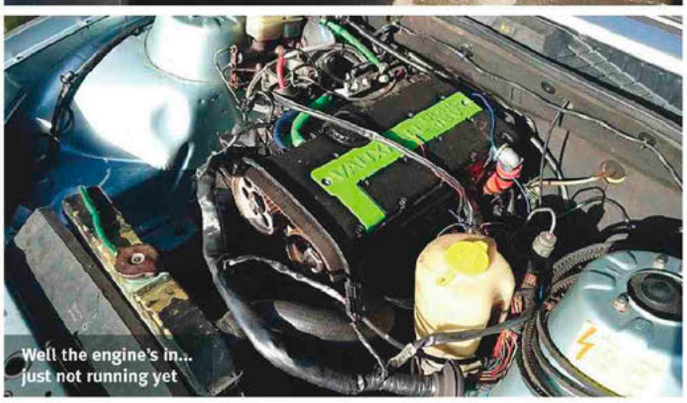
JAMIE **CARLTON**

OPERATION CARLTON RESURRECTION



At long last the Carlton returns home, and should be driving under its own steam soon!





Well the engine's in... just not running yet

Some of you might have been wondering what on earth happened to this old thing (not many, I'm sure most of you have better things to worry about), and if I'm honest it's been off the radar and tucked away in a workshop for the last six months. In that time an XE that formally saw active service in a Nova (haven't they all?) was fitted between the wings, a custom exhaust was made up, and the engine was mated the Getrag 240 'box. And that's where the progress abruptly stopped, with a mix of lack of funds, relying on unreliable people, and more pressing real life issues doing their damnedest to get in the way.

There was a point in late autumn when I nearly threw in the towel and sold it on, but the thought of giving up, not to mention the micky taking I'd have to endure at PVS, proved too much to bear.

I've not had much luck with XEs lately, and whenever one has got anywhere near one of my project cars it's only served to act as an anchor, effectively causing progress to grind to a halt!

Luckily things have changed, and as I write this the Carlton has just arrived back in Somerset (hence the lack of decent pics!) and it's waiting to be brought back to life. I've enlisted the help of my friend Steve Lacey, a man who knows a thing or two about making front wheel drive Vauxhall engines work in rear wheel drive applications, plus I've ploughed some money into the project in order to finally get the remaining parts needed to get it back on the road. The whole process has been complicated by the fact it ran out of MoT while in hibernation, and though it's in fairly good condition all in all, there are a few niggles that need fixing before it'll be allowed back on the road, namely a pair of shot dampers, some perished front bushes, and brakes that've seen better days. Still, it could be much, much worse, so I'm happy enough with how it stands. Watch this space, I'm aiming to have it on the road within a month or two.



DAN FURR **MV6**

SPOILER ALERT!

After much in the way of procrastination, I finally grabbed my power drill and attacked the MV6's already heavily modified boot lid in an attempt to fit the rare Irmscher wing that I'd managed to source. My intention was to position the freshly-painted part alongside the car's rear lip spoiler, although whether or not it would sit pretty remained to be seen (dealer fit options at the MV6's original point of sale allowed for one spoiler or the other, but never both!).

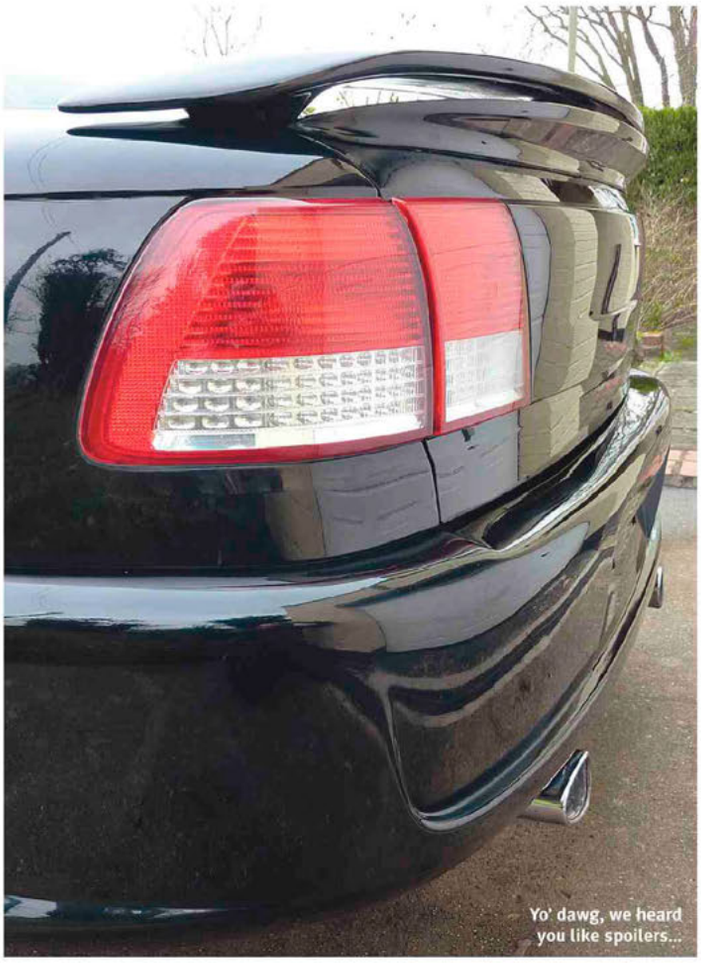
Fortunately, my caffeine-fuelled calculations were bang on the money, and I'm really pleased with how the rear end of the car looks now that the work is complete. That said, the nearside Cadillac Catera inner taillight lens was beyond filthy, and with no sure-fire way of removing dirt from the sealed unit, I was forced to import a replacement from the good ol' US of A. Yeehaw!

In other news, I removed the car's 18in staggered Ronal Irmscher Sport Star wheels in order to protect them while tinkering continues. This reminded me that 'wrapping each rim in new rubber' has been an item on my to-do list for a while, yet an online search proved that few tyre manufacturers produce a matching set of boots in the required 235/40 (front) and 265/35 (rear) profiles.

Thankfully, Japanese tyre giant, Falken, came to the rescue with its Azenis FK453 offering. Ideally suited to staggered applications, this fast-road rubber is claimed to be among the best tyre designs that the company has ever produced thanks to a silica-enriched compound and an asymmetrical tread pattern that has been influenced by the firm's experience in competitive motorsport. For the MV6, that equates to excellent performance in all weather conditions, high-speed stability and a quiet ride – attributes that are perfect for my planned European road trip.

Needless to say, I popped down to my local tyre fitters without hesitation! Before long, the chunky five-spokes were being clothed in fresh FK453s, and I can't wait to put them through their paces. In the meantime, however, I've opted to preserve them in a set of Richbrook wheel and tyre bags. Often seen at the nation's racing circuits, this convenient wheel storage and transportation solution features a handy labelling system, carrying handles, tightening pull-cords and useful wheel nut storage pouches. Each bag is a super-snug fit and ideal for taking care of my Sport Stars.

Lastly, I was recently chatting with *Total Vauxhall* feature car owner (and all-round good egg), Carl Evans, regarding the benefits of using Mk4 Astra GSi brake cooling ducts. By the end of our conversation, I'd ordered a pair in the hope of being able to modify each part so that they would bolt to the bottom of the MV6's wishbones without complaint. As you can imagine, a process of trial and error followed, but I'm confident that they're in the right place and that they will channel cool air to the car's front brake discs. Only time will tell!



Yo' dawg, we heard you like spoilers...



A tower of Falken's finest!





Mk4 GSi brake cooling ducts have been modified to fit on the the MV6's wishbones

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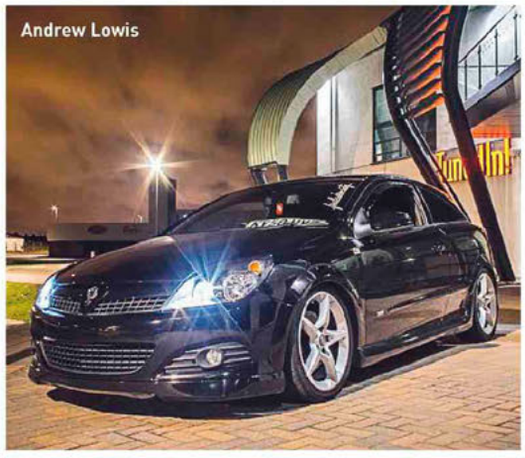


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ASTRA GSI 1.8



1993, £2,500 ono. Very rare car. Shiny white with 17" alloys with all good tyres, lowered suspension, thousands spent on performance, you could eat your dinner of the engine very shiny with mirrors, race exhaust all wy through, uprated brakes, very good well looked after seats and dash, Clifford alarm. Sold as seen. Yorkshire. 07808 276327 (HP)

ASTRA GTE



1983, 64,000 miles, £5,995. A rare retro hot hatch and if I'm not mistaken "The best in its day". New roof lining 2014. It has a factory fitted glass sun roof (not a cut out after market). The car has been painted 2013. I have spent a great amount of money and time on this car and regret writing this advert but I now have no dry storage for the car. Leicestershire. 07702 406942 (HP)

ASTRA GTE



1991, 23,000 miles, £3,795 ono. In stunning condition inside and out, very low mileage. Used for shows in dry weather. Use only between May and October, qualifies for classic car insurance which is £110 per year. Purchase of house forces reluctant sale. Nottinghamshire. phone 07967 240342 for more details (HP)

Calibra

CALIBRA



1997, 110,000 miles, £3,000 ono. 2.0L, 16V, vgc, new gearbox/clutch, 800 pound 17in alloys, good tyres, 12 month MoT, lovely looking car no rust, full history. Somerset. 7706 445692 or 01934 529011

Cavalier

CAVALIER

1993, 82,000 miles, £500. 2.0 GLS Auto. Metallic blue having usual marks on body as per year of car. The MoT has expired. This car runs and drives sweet and the auto box is fine. The body work is also in very good condition and the cloth interior defies it's years. 07804 669705. Staffordshire (HP)

CAVALIER



1987, £1,295. 1.6 automatic in outstanding condition inside and out. Been garaged its whole life and it really shows. Drives as well as it looks and comes with 12 months MoT. Full of service history. Merseyside. 07840 855896 (HP)

CAVALIER FACTORY CONVERTIBLE



1987, £1,395. 1800cc, 5 speed. Good hood. Back window. Tonneau cover. MoT July 2015. Original 15 inch Crosspokes. Only 48 left. No telesales please. Somerset. 07895 675851 (PB)

CAVALIER SPORTS HATCH



£Offers. Restoration project.Complete car 2 owners from new,stored in garage last 20yrs,engine runs well. 01616 534850 (JW)

Corsa

CORSA

2007, £POA. Tailgate spoiler with brake light- please call with offers. Bristol. 07502 032532 (JW)

CORSA



1998, 153,000 miles, £475. 1.7 diesel, very economical, very reliable engine. Many new parts over recent years including battery and glow plugs. Serviced august 2014. MoT to September 2015. Basic model, no electrics to go wrong! Body work in very good condition for age. Cash only, cheap but good runabout. Bedfordshire. 07914 768667 (HP)

CORSA SXI



2001, 75,000 miles, £995. 1.2 12v SXI. 3 door hatchback. 5 speed manual. Metallic silver with complementing cloth interior. MoT until end of April 2015. With some service history, including every MoT from new. Ideal first car. Economical with sporty looks. Superb looking example. Hpi clear. Buckinghamshire. 07749 062268 (HP)

Frontera

FRONTERA



1993, £450 ono. 2.4i LWB A series 4x4. Unfinished pickup truck conversion project. As you can see in pictures it still needs welding in rear. Also need 3 tyres. No MoT, but can be MoT before notifying DVLA of changes. Central locking. Power steering. Adjustable steering (up and down). Electric windows. Dorset. 07515 648207 (HP)

Signum

SIGNUM ELITE



2007, 63,000 miles, £3,875 ono. V6 2.8 turbo. Excellent condition and performance. 250 p.s. MoT. FSH. Tan leather. Sat Nav. Open to reasonable offers. Northamptonshire. 07590 020160 (PB)

SIGNUM V6 2.8 TURBO ELITE AUTO



2007, 63,750 miles, £2,895. 250 bhp model - 6.7 sec 0-60 155mph (limited) Full tan leather interior - loads of features including SatNav, heated seats, large luggage space, etc. Full Service History with only two owners - me and Vauxhall. Super car in excellent condition with current MoT. Milton Keynes. 07590 020160 (MJ)

Tigra

TIGRA

78,000 miles, £400 ono. Blue 1.4, V Reg, 10 months MoT, Lady owner, genuine reason for sale. Surrey. 020 8644 0152 (CG)

TIGRA 1.4 16V



1999, 109,000 miles, £745. 1.4 16v, LHD, spec includes: silver metallic with rare oxblood leather upholstery, power steering, central locking, electric tilt & slide sunroof, electric windows, colour coded body, tinted glass, alloy wheels, rear spoiler, fogs, air conditioning, heated rear screen, cd stereo system with am/fm radio, all usual refinements. MoT Jan '16. Buckinghamshire. 07933 670048 (HP)

Velox

VELOX E-SERIES



1954, 1,300 miles, £6,500. Brookland Museum - (BTM) Brooklands 2014 show winner First time for sale for many years, always garaged 1 of only 13 currently registered on the road in the uk. Silky smooth straight six, 2262cc, rebuilt engine. 3 speed column change gearbox just been fully rebuilt by specialist. Surrey. 07900 322325 (JW)

Ventora

VENTORA

1972, £3,500. Very good condition. Clean. Tax & MoT. Low Mileage. Gwent. 01495 772725 (JW)

Wyvern

BARGAINS VARIOUS VEHICLES

£Various. Austin A35, 1957, for spares or repair running restoration, £1800 ovno. Also Vauxhall Wyvern spares or repair running restoration, £3250 ovno. Both cars are taxed and MoT exempt and do not need a lot of restoration. Trailer away from Uxbridge. Middlesex. 01895 237820 (RB)

Zafira

ZAFIRA



2005 , 62,000 miles, £2,400. 1.6 life (new shape). Service history, all books and paperwork etc, both keys. All the old mots to back the mileage up. 12 months MoT. Great family car and good on fuel. Good condition unlike most mpv, cash on collection from Bolton. Lancashire. 07783 887413

ZAFIRA DESIGN



2005, £1,575 ono. 1.6 16v 7 seater, 2005. MoT'd till end of June 2015. No expense spared, service history with ££'s worth of reciepts etc. including all previous MoTs. Car has aircon, cd player, remote central locking alarm, abs, airbags, electric windows, power steering, etc. also 4 good tyres. 07837 237889. Leicestershire (HP)

VEHICLES WANTED

ALL VAUXHALL BRAVA TRUCKS AND ISUZU TRUCKS



Wanted. Any year clean or rusty we are very good buyers. (T). 07775 998628 (JW)

VAUXHALL CRESTA

Wanted. P.A. Anything considered or a Vauxhall Victor F-Type. Must be in excellent condition. Herefordshire. 07528 642560 (JP)

PARTS FOR SALE

INSIGNIA 5 DOOR HATCH



2011, £100. Car cover. Specialised. Tailor made outdoor car cover. Water proof. Useable on wet car. Fully fitted including door mirrors. Two tone blue/grey. Brand new and unused. Protective bag. Cost £249, original receipt available. Cheshire. 07831 237006 (PB)

VARIOUS VAUXHALL, OPEL PARTS

£POA. Incl Mk 1 Cavalier, Opel Monza. Phone for full list. Essex. 07525 973500

VAUXHALL

1970, £Various. 1800/2300 short motors, £150 each. Astra van 1.7D radiator with cooling fan. Hardly used, £100. Yorkshire. 01262 488672 (RB)

VAUXHALL BIG SIX PARTS

£150 Lot. 4 hub caps, pr, bonnet sides, hand brake lever, pawl, correct tail lamp, bumper emblems and int fittings. Staffordshire. 01782 624865 (JW)

VAUXHALL CAVALIER MK 1

£POA. Inc 2 o/s rear lamps, 1 x n/s rear lamp, various body mouldings, 1 front road spring. Phone for full list. Essex. 07535 979500

VAUXHALL CRESTA-VELOX PA

1960-1962, £POA. Chrome bonnet lip any condition trade or overseas welcome. 07976 909241 (CG)

VAUXHALL HC 1256 CC

£105 ono. 1 x engine and gearbox. 1 x rear bumper good cond £35. 1 x front windscreen £45. 1 x front grille £20. 01416 441533

VAUXHALL VIVA

1971, £250. Engine and gearbox, 1200cc. Staffs. 07816 888718

PARTS WANTED

SPARES FOR A VAUXHALL CRESTA PC

1965-72, Wanted. Derbyshire. 07956 018059 (JW)

VAUXHALL ASTRA 2LTR ESTATE

2000, Wanted. Parcel shelf, also wheel trims. Worcestershire. 07530 837264 (RB)

VAUXHALL CORSA

Wanted. 15in wheels, nothing special, to make it look better. West Midlands. 01543 378719

MISCELLANEOUS

1/43 SCALE MODELS



£23.50 each UK post free. Collection for sale, mint and boxed, Vauxhall Viva, Avenger Police, Cresta. Northants. 01280 701266

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£3,500 ono. 4 lower wheels narrow lower wheel 2 crushing and 2 swagging wheels, very universal, good condition. Also Eckold shrink and stretch machine, little use, £500 ono. South Yorkshire. 07768 458928

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£69,000. A brand new, quality DVLC registration number never issued on a vehicle. Not advertised by dealers. Private Sale. No VAT On DVLC Retention certificate, usual DVLA rules apply, on usage. Assignment fee paid. Applicable to any date Offers considered. We reserve the right to remove at any time. Newcastle Upon Tyne. 07551 607809 (CG)

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LOCKHEED P38 LIGHTNING

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MUM 580Y - CHERISHED REGISTRATION NUMBER



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PRIVATE REGISTRATION



£6,590 ono. SM14RTS. Beautiful. Reads perfectly the name SMARTS. Has been reduced from £9950. Staffordshire. 07583 613521 (RB)

RAC ASSOCIATE CIVIL SERVICE BADGE



1930, £75. King Crown. No. F30606. Civil Service on marble base. Essex. 07964 486932 (RB)

ROYAL NAVY BADGE



£75 post free. By J. R. Gaunt, Birmingham. Queens Crown. Size: 5in x 3in. No damage. Bar fixing. Surrey. 07968 659967 (PB)

TUY 583

£Offers. Private registration for sale. On retention and ready for transfer. Bristol. 01225 852852 (PB)

"V1XAN" PRIVATE PLATE



£15,000. On retention for immediate transfer. 07977 983002 (JW)

VAUXHALL BRAVA TRUCKS



2.5 diesel and Isuzu trucks any condition top prices paid we collect we need URGENT Dave (T). 07775 998628 (MC)

WRISTWATCHES



1970, Offers. 1 Vauxhall Tigra, in case. Good condition. 1 Sicura. Mechanical, digital, perfect working order. Suffolk. 07753 662286

MISCELLANEOUS WANTED

ANY DEVONSHIRE ROAD SIGN

Wanted. Wiltshire. 01666 837747

LITERATURE AND INFORMATION

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