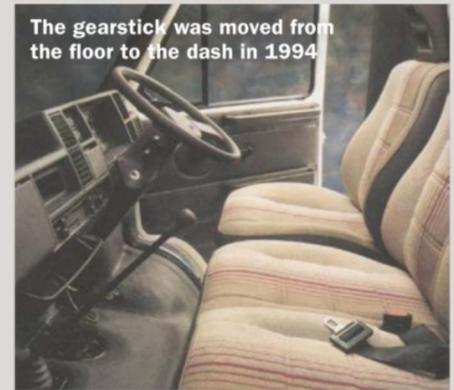


The Ducato has been a favourite among motorhome converters for decades



The gearstick was moved from the floor to the dash in 1994



A 1999 Ducato-based Bessacar

PETROL ENGINES POST-1993

I have not mentioned petrol-engined vehicles made since 1993 because, although they were always available, they are so rare that we have no experience of them. I would expect their refinement and reliability to have been in line with other petrol-engined vehicles of the same era.

victims of early corrosion.

Some starting problems were actually caused by corrosion in the lower front cross-member spreading to a very important electrical connector that was situated underneath it.

Engines that had no turbo were prone to frequent glowplug failures, more so the 2.8D than 2.5D or 1.9D and many engines suffered running issues from cold with wax stats on the fuel pump not functioning correctly.

The 2.5-litre and 2.8-litre turbo-diesel vehicles would sometimes have a flashing glowplug light lit for much longer than it was supposed to be; even with a warm engine. This was due to an electrical fault with the cold start injector in the inlet manifold. Not the end of the world, but annoying.

Vehicles that had immobilisers would sometimes refuse to start and the immobiliser would flash. This would happen a few times before failing to start completely. The solution is to fit a new immobiliser pack (expensive) or have it removed by an auto-electrician and make other arrangements. It is far easier to heed any warnings and get the latter done!

The front doors were not particularly well fitted and this poor fitment would cause excessive wind

noise or even daylight to enter at the front upper edge of the door. This can be adjusted using shims from Fiat and a little bending if required. New door seals will not remedy the situation.

The engines, with the exception of the 1.9D, were strong and injector problems were unheard of. The 1.9D was weak, although the later 1,905cc Peugeot engine was an improvement. All of the 1.9TDs were highly stressed and did not last long.

The 2.5D was not a refined engine but was solid and reliable, while its 2.5TD counterpart was both powerful and frugal. Don't be alarmed if you see lots of black smoke on start up; just get moving as soon as you can and it clears up quickly.

The later 2.8D was an improvement in terms of strength and refinement over the 2.5D but was no more powerful. The arrival of the 2.8idTD was a revelation. It was a milestone in refinement and durability. There are no issues with this engine that I recall.

Towards the end of the production of this series the first JTDs arrived. The 2.0JTD appeared in the price list but in the UK it never made it to the road. I have never seen one in the metal and had a couple on order for a year that never arrived! You may find European examples, though.

The 2.8JTD was widely regarded as

the best light commercial engine of its time and there are vehicles from 2001 with this engine. Apart from a propensity to become porous and start to leak oil from the crankcase with age, there are not really any issues to report on this engine.

There have been a number of minor electrical niggles but none so common as to be worthy of note; perhaps headlamp adjusters. The air-operated ones were not good (before 1999) and parts for these are difficult to obtain. The later electric ones are much better.

2002 TO 2006

Apart from a new front grille and headlamps that have to be removed to change a bulb, and a new interior, there was little difference between the 2001 and 2002 vehicles. The heavier vehicles now had rear disc brakes instead of drums and a new engine was introduced.

The range now included a Peugeot-sourced 2.0JTD along with Fiat's 2.3 and 2.8JTDs. Although the injection system was very similar to the previous JTDs, a fault involving poor starting from cold did develop on a lot of 2.8JTD vehicles. The engine would become progressively more reluctant to start and then would not start at ►