

## Toyota Avensis 2.0 D 4-D

By Jim Mc Cauley

Toyota's European flagship has been revised and updated for 2012. The British-built 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Avensis continues to offer legendary reliability with improved fuel economy and lower emissions. Design refinements to the front end and rear give the car a little more personality and assertiveness while the main changes are underneath.



In the case of the test vehicle, this is in the form of the 124 bhp 2.0 litre turbo-diesel which offers many advantages over its predecessor including increased refinement and sub 10 seconds 0-60 mph time.

Finished in second-up TR trim, this combination is the range's best seller and it is not surprising when you add up the sum of the parts. For the family user, the car offers excellent 5-seater accommodation with a 509 litre boot that should swallow most long-term holiday requirements. The cabin receives minor updates but the overall dark colours in the test car came across as austere with

the only bright elements – the chrome surrounds on the air vents – making a nuisance of themselves by reflecting in the door mirrors.

But, minor distractions aside, the 2.0 D 4-D engine offers improved refinement with better ride and sharper response on more demanding roads. While brakes provided confident response driving 2-up, a full complement of five occupants required a noticeable increase in foot pressure to achieve the desired stopping response.

Lights provided good coverage at night while both front and rear courtesy / reading lights are welcome fittings in a large cabin.

Keeping prices identical to the outgoing model, the TR grade features a full complement of safety features including seven airbags, active front head restraints, Vehicle Stability Control, and reversing camera. Other equipment is also comprehensive and includes climate control, electronic parking brake with auto release, Toyota 'Touch and Go' satellite navigation system, auto-dimming rear view mirror and Bluetooth connectivity with auxiliary media sockets.

On the economy front, I returned a figure of 46.6 mpg in mixed driving which I would have liked to have been

closer to the official figure of 62.8 mpg. However, company car drivers should





anticipate an improvement on this where there is more open road driving, and with a CO2 emissions of just 119 gms/km, the lowest Benefit in Kind rating of 13 per cent is a strong attraction. This also places the car in Band C for zero car tax in year one and £30 per year afterwards. The model tested is priced at £21,790 with metallic paint adding £450. All Toyota models now come with a 5-year / 100,000 mile warranty.