

## Volkswagen Golf 1.6 TDI

By Jim Mc Cauley

If life begins at 40, then the Volkswagen Golf has a healthy future in front of it. Now in its 39th year, the latest model is larger all-round than its predecessor, but despite carrying extra equipment weighs in at around 100 kg lighter.

The signature silhouette of the original car has been successfully teased out through each evolution and the 7th generation model moves the car up-market with a longer, slimmer profile and improved interior quality.

Test choice was the smaller of the two diesel engines on offer, the 1.6 litre, 5-speed manual model which develops 105PS at 3000 rpm. This 4-cylinder turbo unit returns a 0-62 mph time of 10.7 seconds with the potential to top 119 mph.



On-road, and the car clearly adheres to its established accolade of being the ultimate driving machine. Power delivery is smooth and extremely refined while the gear-shift has watch-maker precision in its short movements between ratios. Ride is equally pleasant yet confidently supportive as every aspect of the car confirms the appeal of this flagship hatchback.

To ensure total satisfaction, the upper trim models including the test vehicle in SE specification feature Driver Profile Selection which permits drivers to match

car settings to their desired driving style with a choice of programmable Eco, Sport, Normal and Individual which alter throttle mapping and engine management settings.

On the economy front, this 1.6 litre TDI model has a quoted combined fuel consumption of 74.3 mpg while its low CO2 emissions of 99 gms/km leaves it free of annual road tax as well as enjoying the lowest Benefit in Kind rating of 10% for company car users.

Supporting the performance of the car is a range of electronically based safety features. These include Electronic Stability Program with Electronic Differential Lock and Automatic Post Collision Braking, standard on all models. The award-winning latter system brakes the car in the event of an accident to prevent a secondary collision.

In addition, the SE specification features a Driver Alert System which monitors the driver's control input and advises when fatigue is detected. Radar based systems provide automatic distance control from the vehicle in front and automatic low speed braking to lessen the severity of any impact at speeds below 18 mph.

An optional extra on the test car was Park Assist which detects a suitable parking space and automatically operates the steering to negotiate the gap.

Inside, and the cabin extends the premium ambition of the new model with quality materials, clear control layout and enticing dual colour schemes that brighten the interior. A standard 5-inch infotainment display extends to 8-inches on the top spec models with proximity sensors negating having to touch the screen.

Other interior equipment, standard across the three-trim range includes seven airbags, air conditioning, reach and rake steering adjustment, electronic parking brake with hill holder function and electric windows and mirrors.

While the range of the Mark VII Golf starts at £16,330, the 1.6 TDI 5-door model tested in SE trim is listed at £20,500. All models are covered by a 3-year / 60,000 mile warranty which can be extended to 5-years / 90,000 miles. A 3-year fixed price service plan is also available for £329.

