

Lagondaforum: Advice needed

Re: Advice needed

Written by Dick Jones at May 21, 2018 10:04 am

Hi Hugo, sounds like it has gone to a good home. John used to attend our local VSCC meets but left when it clashed with his council meetings.

I must say the auction write up is a bit unfair with ref to the dropping of the steering column. John called me over last year to discuss the 2 litre as corrosion had set in; the car hasn't been on the road for some years now and these castings have a habit of corroding from inside out. He was looking at getting the radiator rebuilt as it lost water last time we were out in the cars together.

Colin is correct in that it is a known car and came from a well known stable up north.

Happy motoring...

Re: Advice needed

Written by Hugo at May 23, 2018 10:51 am

Thank you - I didn't believe this story about the steering column either! Apart from anything else, I found it surprisingly tricky to get that big clamp bolt (which I found in the door pocket!) back through the bracket and through the column. Nobody is going to do that on a routine basis.

Clearly the reason it was off was that the previous owner had started to remove the steering box to gain access to the 1/4" bolts for the side plate, almost all of which were broken.

Seeing as the clutch needed doing also, I just hoiked the engine out which made the whole operation much easier.

Since then, like Ancient Mariner, I have been utterly becalmed. Foiled by the computer. Not the computer on the car, or course (thank God!), but the one that runs the Lagonda Club Spares dept. I had ordered various parts over the last few weeks, all of which arrived swiftly, but the big one - the one including the clutch - went AWOL. It had sent me an e-mail saying "Thank you - your order has been placed", but it turns out it was bluffing. When I got that message I just thought Yippee that's that, oblivious to the fact that I had neglected to enter my card details, as I discovered when I went back to the site to investigate.

Anyway, I remedied that, and double-checked that it said "Your order has been paid" .

Then I got an e-mail saying "Your order has been shipped". Yippee I said. But it turns out the computer was bluffing again! I just spoke to a very apologetic human in Suffolk - apparently I had really upset the computer and it was now not talking to anybody. Not about my order anyway.

But now the human has given the computer a good talking to, and, fingers crossed, I should be back on the road in a few days.

The radiator, incidentally, has a big gob of araldite or similar in the middle of the core, but it's not leaking noticeably so that's how it's going to stay till the winter. I got a quote for reconditioning the radiator, but it was over £4,000, which strikes me as a lot.

I have read various accounts of people's struggles replacing the clutch in situ, and I can see why. What I don't understand is why people don't take the engine out to do the job - makes it a doddle. The good news is that my clutch centre plate is perfect. I wouldn't change the original design for a Borg & Beck. Clearly the original design won't stand for a lot of abuse, but the answer, surely, is not to abuse it?

Re: Advice needed

Written by Mark at May 23, 2018 12:47 pm

Hi Hugo,

The 2 Litre clutch is surprisingly robust as long as it is well maintained and not abused. However, there is one golden rule which I was told many years ago by the late great Phil Ridout..."the 2 Litre clutch is either in or out, never slip the clutch" That is because the steel drive plate will quickly heat up and distort and then it will destroy the friction surfaces. I am not a fan of the modern clutch conversion, it is after all a vintage car we drive not a modern one!

As regards radiator rebuilds I used the following company a few years back, they have done many 2 Litre rads

<http://cparadiators.co.uk/contact-us>

Hope this helps

Mark

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Re: Advice needed

Written by Hugo at May 25, 2018 12:44 am

Thank you - I will try those people for the radiator. I've sent out requests to two companies for quotes & am waiting to hear back.

That advice is good for all clutches I think! I am a coach operator, and the vehicles I run have a 10 litre Cummins diesel at the back. They are renowned for eating clutches - in fact the last one I bought had needed a new clutch every six months till I bought it. I got fifteen years and 300,000 miles out of that clutch, and then it wasn't worn out - the only reason I had to replace it was that the spigot bearing (a ball race) had run dry and was starting to drag. The linings would have been good for half a million I reckon.

I must say I was surprised to find the centre plate in my Lagonda in such good condition, although the linings were worn, but all nice & even.

PS Google never found these radiator people, so thanks!

Re: Advice needed

Written by Hugo at May 25, 2018 2:00 pm

Well, that was interesting. I e-mailed CPA radiators late last night, and by 0730 this morning there was an estimate (£2,000 - 2,200) in my inbox. That was about half what I had previously been quoted.

Spoke to the people up there and they sound very good - they are very familiar with these cars and do all of Bishop Gray's radiators for them apparently.

The plan is for me to run the car for the summer, then take the radiator up to them in Grantham, kick my heels for a few hours while they extricate the core from the shell, then I can sort the shell out while they make a new core, then do the same in reverse.

So thanks for the tip - I wouldn't have found them otherwise.

Re: Advice needed

Written by Colin M34 at May 26, 2018 9:29 pm

Hi Hugo

Sounds like great progress. Just make sure you have a proper honeycomb core not the one made out of strips. See the YouTube video linked to my Facebook post.

Also check you have a thermostat. This is essential for the engine to run cool.

Cheers Colin

Re: Advice needed

Written by Hugo at May 27, 2018 9:36 pm

Thanks - where would I look for a thermostat?! I haven't come across one yet! It has an electric fan fitted, so I suspect all was not well with the cooling (aside from all the aluminium bits reverting to their powdered state!).

Engine, clutch etc all back together & hopefully going back in the car tomorrow. Then we'll see what's what! I just noticed, just before I put the head back on, that the front bore has a couple of lumps out of it, & gouges running down the bore from them. They are fore & aft, so probably gudgeon pin related, and historic (I hope!). I'm surprised I hadn't noticed them before, but the bores are all good otherwise. Bit of a gap on no.3 rings, as it leaves a 1/16" to 1/8" streak of oil down the bore when you turn the engine over. I ran the engine for a few minutes prior to dismantling, & there were no nasty noises, just timing chain rattle (not surprising, as the chains were very slack) and valve clatter. I'm going to ignore the gouges for now & see what happens. Ever the optimist 😊

Re: Advice needed

Written by Hugo at May 27, 2018 9:37 pm

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Thanks - where would I look for a thermostat?! I haven't come cross one yet! It has an electric fan fitted, so I suspect all was not well with the cooling (aside from all the aluminium bits reverting to their powdered state!).

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Re: Advice needed

Written by Dick Jones at May 28, 2018 6:39 am

So you are right about why John dropped the steering column and you would understand why he had to do so if you had tried to get into his workshop - to say it was jam packed would be an understatement. Even the garden was starting to fill up with modern cars.

John had the privilege of attending our local pub meets with Phil (Mark mentions above) who believed one should just maintain one's 2L and not restore it unless circumstances took over. I was behind John travelling back after the funeral and that is when the clutch started slipping (probably reason for worn linings you mention). It was on a steep T junction in the village of Porton near Salisbury; we had to pull into the bus stop afterwards to let the clutch cool down before continuing. Lesson repeat - do not try and slip the clutch like a modern car, on or off please!

Glad to hear some of your comments regarding clutch etc, John would appreciate that.

Timing chain can be easily adjusted by removing the reverse P timing cover.

The price you were quoted for your radiator is not far off what I paid for one when Jess Dille first started out so fair play to CPA. The problem we have in is the hex tubes that make up the honeycomb are no longer produced in the UK, they have to be imported from Germany (or used to). There is a Serck machine nesting in a garden in Reading but the lady wont sell it (her other half used to work for Serck). Most early cars run without thermostats hence you see the rad half blanked off with card in the winter.

Re: Advice needed

Written by Colin M34 at May 28, 2018 9:12 am

Hi Hugo,

Just to explain thermostats a little more. The 2 Litre radiator consists of two parts. The centre core does the cooling and the sides work as a by-pass. So the thermostat is a change-over valve. When cold the water runs down the sides and when hot, down the core - or rather that's the idea. As Dick says, many cars work without a thermostat because the coolant quite happily goes down both.

However if the core is blocked - perhaps with limescale - the radiator gets hot but the core is not doing much cooling, in which case the car will run warm. Perhaps that is why someone fitted an electric fan, which is not really needed.

The 2 Litre radiator generally works so well that I also blank off my lower half. I have a heater and the women folk like warm legs when I run with the top down.

Cheers M34