

P6 Rover Owners Club

If you are able to take these readings and they are correct, then there can't be much wrong with the low-voltage side of the ignition system. Whilst you are at it though, replace the contact-breaker set and the condenser, especially if you have just bought the car with an unknown service history. Finally, notice how the ignition coil current flows through the tachometer. This device measures the current pulse rate and displays it as engine RPM. Any faults or bad connections here and you have no ignition! The HT side of the ignition system I will leave for a future article.

“A Turn of the Screw”

Peter Garnier discovers that low oil pressure doesn't always mean an expensive engine rebuild...

A few months ago my P6 V8 suffered a worrying drop in oil pressure – very worrying because it seldom, if ever, clambered anywhere near 30psi. The very depressing conclusion was that a major engine overhaul was in the offing. So, in high hopes, I renewed – thanks to S & G Walker – all renewable parts in the oil pump. Sadly, it made only a very small improvement, so I decided to carry on using the car until the onset of warning noises from under the bonnet.

There were none of those, until there developed the onimous “tick, tick...” at around half engine speed. “Worn camshafts, followers and rocker shafts are likely...” promised the third paragraph of “Words to the Wise”, relating to V8 engines, in the Pink Pages. So we listened with a “stethoscope” carefully from end to end of both valve corners, eventually locating the sound to the front end of the near-side cover, which we removed more in hope, I have to say, because we both suspected the worst, with a major order to S & G and the car off the road for days.

Everything looked fine, with the sludge-free film of clear oil, resulting from regular oil/filter changes at 3000 mile intervals since

1970. Then, all of a sudden, my help mate said “Hey – LOOK at this!” and pointed to the bolt securing the foremost bearing on the rocker shaft. It was well and truly unscrewed – and finger tight. So we tightened it down, greatly relieved that the up-and-down hammering hadn't wrecked the thread in the aluminium head, and replaced the valve cover.

The result is that the ‘tick’ has completely vanished – and the oil pressure has not only been fully restored, but slightly improved.

I dread to think what it might have cost if we hadn't spotted that simple solution.

Replacing P6 Door Skins

Step by step guidance from Adrian Elliott...

Before starting any job like this think safe!

The P6 doors tend to suffer from rust in the bottom (oo er! Ed) and at the end of the day the only option is to take the angle grinder to them, but first things first.

1. Door Removal: To remove first open the door and prize the retaining washer from the door stop bar, to do this gently ease a medium sized screwdriver under the washer and twist gently, be ready to catch it with our free hand as it pops off. Once removed you can now lift the stop bar from its retaining post and the door will pivot open to its full extent.

Do not touch the top hinge! Go to the lower hinge and back off the lock nut half a turn, then undo the centre bolt. As the bottom hinge is effectively upside down, you are now retracting the hinge pin out of the hinge body, whilst the weight of the door is supported by the top hinge. Once the bottom pin is clear of the lower hinge body you will feel the door become loose, it is now just a question of lifting the door off of the top hinge, as the top hinge is fitted the opposite way up. Because you have not touched the top hinge pin (which stays on the car) there should be no need to adjust the door on refitting.

2. Remove the Door Handle and Window Winder: (These are located by spring clip).

Use a pair of pin nose or snipe nose pliers, once the clips are removed the handles just slide off the shaft. (Note, if you decide it would be easier to just swap the doors for good replacements later modes had different furniture and shafts).

The next step is to remove the door panel, these are only hardboard covered so unless you have the correct tool be gentle working your way round the outer edge removing the clips.

Slide out the wood capping and put it somewhere safe, then remove the cross head screws retaining the plastic insert.

At the base of each window frame is a couple of locating screws, slip the window winder back on its shaft and wind down the window, slip it back off, no spray liberally around the frame locating screws from inside the frame with a penetrating fluid, and go and have a cup of tea.

The fluid should have worked its magic by now and the screws should release. Remove the screws and lift out the frame. Replace the winder back on its shaft, wind the window back up and you should now be able to free off the glass and lift out.

3. There are many manufacturers of replacement panels – but I have found the panels supplied by Ray Weekley are a very good fit.

Align the panel over the door, and mark off the top edge, the replacement panel will have a joggled section, and once fitted will lip up under the existing panel. Measure the joggled section (approx. 1 inch) and draw another line below the top line you have drawn, this will be your cut line. (If in doubt measure twice cut once!), if you are using an angle grinder cut on the waste (bottom) side of the line, if you have a nibbler you should be able to cut right on the line. At this stage do not cut right up to the outside edge, stop half an inch from each side. The door skin is fixed to the frame but crimping it over, the next part of the procedure needs to be carried out with a bit of care. You are about to grind off the folded over door skin. I always start at the bottom edge, be very careful, wear gloves and goggles, this edge is often rusty so bits can fly off, also make sure your feet and legs care clear of the cutting area.

You can now proceed to grind the bottom edge, gently work your way along you should see the metal 'part' as you get through, but you are only grinding the thickness of the skin,

once the bottom is done work your way up the sides until you come up level with your cut line, now gently cut through the last half inch, the bottom half skin can now be lifted off, remember sharp edges possibly hot! Now stand the door up and there should be a band of metal still attached at the cut line around the 'back' edge of the frame, carefully cut this off. Lay up the panel to see how it fits. Remove the panel and you can now do any repair work required to the bottom edge, or at least clean it out and paint with smoothrite. Now go and have another cuppa!

4. Preparation: Clean the paint off the areas to be welded together, and if you have it paint with weld through primer, this helps prevent rust at a later date.

5. Reassembly: Lay up the repair panel, and make sure the fit is right, from here on it starts getting critical! Remove the panel and drill a series of holes across the panel (these will be to weld through), lay up the panel and mark through these holes, and drill small holes, lay up the panel and fit self tapping screws through the top layer into the new panel, check it all seems to fit right.

Caution... panels distort when heated.

I always remove the centre self tapper first and weld through this hole, I then go to the two outside screws, and remove each in turn and weld through, always checking the panel is still sitting correctly. It is now just a question of slowly working as far from each previous weld to stop heat build-up and distortion. The folding of the edge is easy on the front doors, but with the back doors having a curve they are a bit more time consuming. I always start from the bottom edge, it is best to use a hide mallet, a small hammer is just as effective, but be gentle with it. Work the bottom edge then down the sides, if you find the metal is 'bunching on the corners' don't be afraid to gently slot it with a hacksaw to allow the metal to fond over on itself.

Now the panel is on you can either 'seam' across the middle joint, but I usually grind down the welds, put a skim of filler on the inside along the top edge of the new panel, and across the welds, it is now just a question of painting the panel and then after about a week for the paint to harden reassembling the door and refitting.

Hope you novices out there might feel confident enough to have a go at this, good luck and remember, take your time, get it right.