



Ten Tents – December 2025



Welcome to the final edition of Ten Tents for 2025. I am delighted to be able to start with something different. Adrian Mingay, one of our Sussex members, has volunteered to write what we plan will be a series of short articles about his restoration project. These might later form the basis of an article for Revcounter but for now, they are for your exclusive enjoyment and (hopefully) education. Over to Adrian:

BT7 L 6364

‘At the time it seemed like a good idea’

I guess that there are plenty of Healey owners that can relate to that statement.

This is a short introduction to what is, hopefully, a series of articles in the following issues of 10/10ths that will follow the ups and downs of ‘recommissioning’ (read that as ‘rebuilding’) a BT7.

This adventure started way back in 2016; a colleague tracked me down to enquire if I would be interested in buying a ‘Big Healey’. Having never owned one but having driven a couple, my ears, uncontrollably, picked up and my facial expressions obviously gave the game away.

My “I might be” was incorrectly interpreted as “sale completed”.

The dialogue that followed “she was built in December 1959, exported to California and registered there in January 1960. A relative has purchased her and re-imported her from California back to the UK, all the paperwork is correct, all she now needs is recommissioning.”

“Why are they looking to sell her?”

“Purchased too many and don’t have the skills or time”.

So, having not even seen her either in the flesh or a picture of her, I blind purchased her for £18,000. Two weeks later she arrived at my Man Cave, having to be pushed off the trailer as a ‘non-runner’.



It doesn't look too bad from this angle



...or this angle, just don't zoom in!

You can't see from this that the steering wheel is fractured by the spokes



On opening the hood - sorry, you're back home we call it a bonnet (need for re-education identified) the carbs were piped up to a temporary fuel supply from a US gallon plastic oil container wedged into the wing area and gravity feed. Photo with temporary fuel supply removed!

First impression, left the factory Colorado Red, returned Primrose Yellow with a respray that, at best, left a lot to the imagination.

So, my quick turnaround, retirement toy suddenly became an interesting project!

Back to the drawing board, (that shows my age!) need to get the mechanics resolved and restore the bodywork.

Conclusion, bite the bullet, total bare metal rebuild. That just opens another can of worms. Restore as close as possible to original, or rebuild sympathetically incorporating modern technology to improve reliability and performance? The initial concept of a retirement toy was for summer touring with the odd gentle historic trial / rally.

Keep LHD or convert to RHD? Lefthand foot well is over two inches wider than the righthand.

Conclusion, more foot space and better resale prospects keeping her a left hooker. Consideration to our offspring being 20 and 14 at the time, so European touring as a couple is not that far off! Supported by my brother having an apartment in Italy and itching to have her based at his on Lake Maggiore.

So, the way forward is decided, keep her a left hooker and rebuild as a fast road car / mild rally car.

A little more background information, I have never strictly been involved with the motor trade. Never rebuilt a AH3000. As an apprentice engineer, I could not live on apprentice salary so I did blue print motor cycle engines and in the 70's built a couple of replica Slippery Sam's. (IoM TT fame)



The work is still very much 'in progress' and hoping to be back on the road early next Summer. Going forward, the plan is to break the project down into the different disciplines with a more technical report appearing in future editions of 10/10ths as and when there is space to fill.

Photo: currently here, going back to Colorado Red.

Who has done what?

London to Brighton Veteran Car Run 02/11/25: I trailed this in the last issue with a promise of veteran vehicles and even penny farthings, plus 2pm lunch at the Victory Inn, Staplefield, for which I know Jeff Snell had a good turnout. Here are a few photos.





Caroline, Jeff, Anne, Piers and Carolyn enjoy the spectacle

National AGM Leamington Spa 07/12/25: Just over 30 attended and we were treated to a finger buffet lunch and the opportunity to catch-up with the Centre Directors and Club Officers afterwards. Rob Hudson (formerly the South West Director) took over from John Keener as our Chairman, with our Dave Colwell remaining as Vice-Chairman and National Safeguarding Officer. Tony Curran has taken over the post of National Membership Secretary. We wish all the Officers and Directors on the NEC Committee well in their roles.

At a national level, we ended the year in the black – a small operating loss was covered by the bank interest we earned. Subs have not changed since 2015 and would cost £68 now if they had been raised by inflation – well done to our Directors and Officers for controlling costs.

Membership has declined a little to 1,730 from (I believe) 1,780, despite 182 new joiners. We are (mainly) distributed over the UK, USA, Europe and Australia and our average age continues to increase.

You will probably have noticed the Events Calendar in Revcounter is now colour coded to our areas, and online the Action Planner includes pictures to help identify the events.

The National website has a new technical article index.

If you are interested in reading the full minutes, you can apply to the National Secretary, who will provide a copy once they have been agreed. The reports will appear in Revcounter and then be posted online.

In AOB, I asked if the Club has a central Tool Pool. This was because I recently found it necessary to invest in a set of Difficult Access sockets (deep sockets with a cut-away section) to allow me to access the wired water temperature probe on my engine. It appears some Centre's and the Jensen Healey Register do have a Tool Pool, but not the NEC nor Southern Counties. Is this something the Southern Counties Committee should consider as a Centre resource? Let me know your thoughts.

East Sussex Noggin Centre Christmas Supper 10/12/25: Nick Varlow reports "We had a great Laying Up/Christmas Supper at The Blackboys Inn on the 10th December. Nineteen club members came together for a catch up and to celebrate a good year's Healey. There was a very generous collection for all the Blackboys staff, who have looked after us every month for the last 12 months. A convivial evening was enjoyed by all, grateful for a marvellous 2025 and looking forward to 2026!"



Events

- **Dinner at the RAC Club, Pall Mall, London 13/02/26:** Michelle McDonough has kindly arranged for a special dinner at this prestigious venue. Call it our late-Christmas dinner. The event is sold-out and Michelle is operating a reserve list. Mg.mcdonough41@googlemail.com
- **The Daffodil 14-17/04/26:** whilst an advert has appeared in Revcounter, this popular 25 car / 50-person event in Norfolk has filled by 'word of mouth'. There is a wait-list and if you are interested to have your name added to that list for 2026, or register interest for 2027, please let me know jonathan@woodrow.eu.com
- **Goodwood Member's Meeting 18-19/04/26:** you need to know a member of the Goodwood Road Racing Club to get tickets to this 'petrol-head's heaven'. NB: not an official Southern Counties event but you will see our members there.
- **Drive-It Day 26/04/26:** the Committee is working on details which we hope to share in the next edition of Ten Tents. Expect a quiz that will send you out in your cars to



answer clues, likely in the Newdigate area. Don't forget there is a Drive-It Day trophy to compete for.

- **Further ahead:** see our website

Housekeeping

- A reminder to make sure your details are up-to-date on the National database: [The Austin Healey Club Ltd - Members Area](#). In particular, PLEASE CHECK you have correctly recorded your 'Age Group' and full postal Address INCLUDING COUNTY as well as Postcode. Look on the National site under Member's Area – My Membership. Please also make sure you have provided information about your car to the relevant Register Secretary in The Cars – Marque Registers.
- We would like to encourage you out to our Noggins and Events and in your Healey if possible. We are therefore building on the Noggin Attendance Award run this summer. From January through to August 2026, there will be a points system:

Attend your local Noggin – 3 points

Visit a different Noggin – 5 points

Attend one of the Club Events in our Calendar – 7 points

Attend any of these in a Healey and get 1 **bonus** point

Make sure the Noggin Organiser records your attendance / visit, and please tell your Noggin Organiser about any Club Events you attend. They will keep a record and ensure they are collated so we may announce the results for each Noggin Centre at our AGM in September. Good luck!

- Would you be interested in any non-car events, such as the dinner at the RAC Club in February? Please let me have your suggestions.
- Don't forget Southern Counties provides [HealeyHelp](#), a service to assist members who would like further guidance on how to tackle a Healey issue. HealeyHelp advice is by email and liaised by a non-technical club member free of charge. See Healey Tech tab on the Southern Counties website. 
- We continue to develop our new-look website and hope to have new features for you early in the New Year. These will include a Member's Area where we will hold Minutes of both our AGM's and past Committee Meetings. Once development is complete, you will be able to apply to the Webmaster (Nick Varlow) for access to the Member's Area.

Rear View Mirror

December 2015: this issue led with a look-back at 2015. The last flight of the Vulcan V2 bomber XH558, the Shoreham Airshow crash and the passing of Ann Wisdom (Pat Moss's co-

driver in international rallying). Ten years on and we are lamenting the passing of Joy Healey (wife of John Healey), Mary and Linda (Peter Healey's mother and sister) and Caroline Curran (our National Membership Secretary). We are getting older...

There was also a report from Dave Colwell about a trip to Ypres in Belgium with 'words of wisdom' worthy of repeating. In essence, the importance of making sure you have travel AND breakdown insurance when you go abroad. One of the cars had an engine issue that stranded the occupants on the hard shoulder of a motorway. That in itself would have been an expensive recovery without insurance. Let alone the recovery to the UK for final repairs. The Austin Healey Club Insurance provided by Peter James Insurance includes UK and European Breakdown cover. Other quality insurance packages should do the same thing. Just make sure to check you have the right cover before setting off on your adventures and that you actually have the documents in the car with you in case you need to make the call! The article also mentioned the EU requirement to carry a warning triangle (some countries require two I believe) and have high-vis jackets (in the cockpit) for ALL of the occupants.

There is a requirements list that goes beyond the scope of this article so please do check before you travel. I will however highlight that in Spain there is an imminent mandatory requirement to carry a V-16 beacon. This is an amber flashing light that can be placed on the roof of your vehicle without the need to exit the vehicle. Drivers of open-top vehicles will no doubt need to use your imagination... These beacons replace warning triangles in Spain as the legal requirement effective 1st January 2026. Units approved by Spain's Directorate-General for Traffic (DGT) include geolocation technology that sends the vehicle's exact location to the DGT's 3.0 traffic management system in real-time, allowing emergency services and road-side assistance to respond more efficiently. The idea is to reduce delays and improve accident prevention measures. You can see other countries will follow suit before long. Expect units to cost £50-£150+.



Photo acknowledgement: The European Commission

Well, it's the time of year when cars get laid-up. In the case of our Healey (ASJ), after 6,000 miles of use since we collected her in April from re-spay, it is time for some TLC. I have both the water temperature / oil pressure gauge and speedometer with Speedy Cables (in Abercraf, near Swansea, Wales) for overhaul. Once these are back, I hope to run the car again, subject salt, as I know she prefers (near) constant attention.

I would like to publicly thank all of our Committee: Steve Barber, Geri Barnden, Mark Bethel, Graeme Hogg, Michelle McDonough, Clive Timothy, Nick Varlow and Carolyn Woodrow – and also Ed Friend, Rob Law and John Williams, who were on the Committee until the AGM in

September - and yourselves! Without your Committee giving of their time to organise and you the Membership turning out to the Noggins and Events we put on, nothing would happen...

I hope you have enjoyed this the final edition of the Ten Tents Newsletter for 2025 and in particular Adrian Mingay's article ("thank you" Adrian). If you have any material you would like to contribute to a future edition, I would be really pleased to hear from you.

In conclusion, I would like to wish you all a Happy Christmas and the opportunity for many safe and reliable Healey miles in 2026.

Jonathan Woodrow

Chairman – Southern Counties

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