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Editorial comment and the latest from the *Mercedes Enthusiast* team



I wanted to do something extra special for the 190 as it approached its 40th birthday



It brings me great pleasure to introduce issue 237 of *Mercedes Enthusiast*, within which we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the 201-series 190.

Having owned one of these wonderfully compact saloons myself – and written about it for this esteemed magazine – the Baby Benz is very close to my heart. It was for this reason I wanted to do something extra special for the model as it approached its 40th birthday. A few productive conversations with Mercedes-Benz Classic later and we had the beginnings of our story. We just had to avoid the chaos at airports as holiday season kicked off. Much to my relief, the seven-car photoshoot in Germany went without a hitch. Dive into our 190 tribute on page 20.

Had the 190 – or rather, several of the most significant – not demanded a prime spot on this month's front cover, I would have given the space to RennTech's S76R (shown left). Based on a 600SEL, this long-wheelbase saloon is surely among the most desirable 140-series cars ever created. It was no easy feat for Ian Kuah to cram in all the technical details and meet my typically stingy word count, nonetheless he's done a brilliant job of capturing what makes this M120 V12-powered saloon so incredible. In the S76R, RennTech has made the most powerful, naturally aspirated 140 S-Class ever to roam the planet...



Kyle Molyneux
Executive Editor

Who's been doing what in this month's *Mercedes Enthusiast*...



Ian Kuah

"Ask me to name a traditional, 'over-engineered' Mercedes and I would have no hesitation in handing the accolade to the 140-series S-Class. With

the 600-badged V12 widely acknowledged as the ultimate luxury saloon of its era, the S76R that RennTech recently completed for an enthusiast in Florida is a powerful answer to any open questions on what might have been when it ceased production 24 years ago. Better late than never, I suppose!"



Steve Hall

For this issue, we sent Steve Hall to the TeamAMGUK Showdown meeting at Mercedes-Benz World in Surrey, where over 200 cars from Affalterbach were

in attendance. "Well, that's one way to get a good tan!" Steve laughs. "It was one of the hottest Sundays of the year, and I had the pleasure of witnessing what might be the biggest gathering of AMGs in the UK so far. Not just a static meet, cars ventured on track too." Check out the full event report, which starts on page 54.

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The latest Mercedes launches, news and motorsport

News

AMG One

Production of Affalterbach's new hypercar gets underway in the UK, with first customer deliveries imminent

Just 275 examples of the AMG One will be made – and all of them will be assembled in Coventry in the UK. Production of the new hypercar started in August and the first lucky customers should receive their cars during the second half of 2022.

The Formula 1-based hybrid powertrain comprising a 1.6-litre V6 turbo engine and four electric motors is being built by Mercedes-AMG High Performance Powertrains in Brixworth, which is also responsible for developing and producing the Power Units for the Mercedes-AMG Petronas F1 racing cars. The production of the complete vehicle will be carried out in Coventry. For this

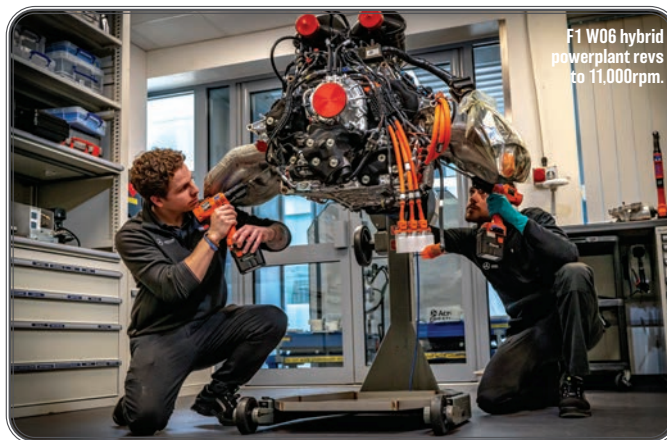
purpose, AMG worked with manufacturing partner Multimatic to set up a dedicated small series production facility.

As you'd expect, the production

process is seriously hands-on, comprising 16 assembly and testing stations. Aspects such as the carbon fibre monocoque with bonded-in roof and detachable

body parts are pre-assembled and tested for fit before being combined for real; in some areas, the carbon is only 1.2mm thick, making the process particularly difficult. Before the 1,046bhp V6 turbo engine, high-voltage battery and four electric motors are installed in the car, they are hot tested on test benches at Brixworth.

Over 50 specialists will work on each Mercedes-AMG One, and every car will undergo final evaluation at a nearby proving ground in the hands of a factory test driver. Once approved, each car is transported to AMG's HQ in Affalterbach before being handed over to its new owner. All examples have already been sold, despite the price tag of around £2.4m.



F1 W06 hybrid powerplant revs to 11,000rpm.



Carbon fibre body parts are pre-assembled to make sure all is well.

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△ MADE IN THE USA

Production of the electric EQS SUV is now underway at Mercedes' Alabama factory in the USA. The car's battery is made in nearby Bibbs County in a new plant that opened in March 2022. UK prices will start at under £130,000.



△ HOLY GRAIL CULLIVING

A 1,620-mile, aluminium-bodied 300SL Cullwing - one of just 29 made - sold for \$5.01m (£4.27m) in an RM Sotheby's auction at Pebble Beach in late August. The car had been restored by Kienle Automobiltechnik.



△ STARS UNDER COVER

A facelifted AMG GLA35 and CLA (both due next year) have been spotted testing. The CLE - a replacement for two-door C- and E-Classes - has also been spied, this time in hybrid form ahead of its full reveal later in 2023.

▽ END OF THE ROAD?

A report by German newspaper *Handelsblatt* has suggested that in 2025 Mercedes will cease production of the A-Class and B-Class, as the company reduces its entry level range from seven models to four.



△ One of just 13 Hammers built by AMG in the USA.

△ Six-litre M117 V8 produces 385bhp/417lb ft.



EQE SUV interior

Mercedes has revealed the interior of the new EQE SUV, a brand new all-electric model set for its global debut on October 16. Sitting above the EQC SUV and below the EQS SUV (read our first ride impressions from page 70), the EQE SUV boasts

an optional MBUX Hyperscreen dashboard display (pictured), and a 'hyperanalogue' design theme blending "high-tech precision mechanics" and digital elements.

A nice feature is the free-standing front section of the centre

console, while five co-ordinated colour combinations emphasise the interior's sense of space. Elsewhere, laser-cut hybrid trim (wood with fine metal pigments) with a 3D relief-look finish further ramps up the cabin's premium status.

55 years of AMG



The Mercedes-AMG F1 team celebrated 55 years of AMG at the Belgian Grand Prix in late August. The W13 racing cars of Lewis Hamilton and George Russell carried a special AMG logo featuring a 55th anniversary signet and a large vintage starting number on the sidepods, reminiscent of the 1971 Spa 24H class winner, the 300SEL 6.8 AMG. The F1 Safety Car also had the anniversary signet. During the race weekend, the Mercedes-AMG One hypercar, 300SEL 6.8 AMG and brand new GT3 Edition 55, a collector's edition celebrating AMG's 55th anniversary, also took to the track with Lewis, George and team principal Toto Wolff at the wheel.

Hammer makes six figures

Mercedes-Benz auction specialist The MB Market, based in the USA, recently sold a 1988 AMG 6.0 Hammer Coupe for \$761,800 (around £650,000). Believed to be one of only 13 Hammers ever built by AMG North America, the car began life as a standard 300CE Coupe with grey leather interior before being overhauled by AMG in Westmont, Illinois.

Finished in blue-black metallic, modifications include a full AMG bodykit, 17-inch AMG wheels, AMG springs and dampers, and an AMG exhaust system. Under the bonnet is a six-litre, 32-valve M117 V8 making 385bhp/417lb ft torque, linked to a four-speed automatic gearbox from the W126 S-Class. The mileage stood at a mere 19,000.



For August's Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, Mercedes-Benz rolled out several of its most recognised classics, including its road legal C111 research car with 3.5-litre V8 engine making 197bhp, linked to a ZF five-speed manual 'box with dog leg first gear. During the C111's visit to the US, it ventured south to Los Angeles and apparently found a deserted beach...

IMAGE: MERCEDES-BENZ GROUP AG





Recalling trailblazing Mercedes-Benz cars of yesteryear

“It was proof that Stuttgart had not forgotten how to make reliable and durable motorcars”



W212 E-Class

The fourth E-Class emerged during an encouraging time at Mercedes, when the company rediscovered its mojo in the modern era

WORDS DAVID SUTHERLAND IMAGES MERCEDES-BENZ GROUP AG, TERRY OBORNE & DAVID SUTHERLAND

We didn't know it at the time, but when Mercedes-Benz launched the fourth-generation 212-series E-Class in 2009, it released a model that almost single-handedly restored a car making reputation in so much trouble its very market position looked threatened.

The seeds of this problem had been sewn in 1995 when Stuttgart replaced the much loved and solidly built 124-series with the 210-series family, a car that looked fresh and innovative as it glittered on motor show stands, but which was poorly built and would soon

be rusting at a fast pace.

By the time the 210 gave way to the 211-series E-Class in 2002, the corrosion issue had been grappled with if not completely overcome, only to be replaced by a new nightmare – malfunctioning electronic black boxes, whose reliability is reckoned not to have been sufficiently tested. In previous times it would have been possible for engineers to quietly develop out the bugs, but by now the ambitious US automotive research firm JD Power had set up in Europe to specialise in customer satisfaction indexes – and a top prestige brand letting down customers was survey gold.

Mercedes' performances in the JD Power Customer Satisfaction Survey, which studied two- to three-year old cars, had been mediocre during the early 2000 but matters came to a head in 2005 when the 211 E-Class crashed to 95th place out of 124, beaten by a welter of Citroëns, Renaults and Daewoos. This couldn't be smoothed over by a few press releases, and incoming Mercedes boss, Dr Eckhard Cordes instigated a massive, 1.3 million car recall which would see the E-Class and others get new software and other electrical upgrades.

If any one model defines Mercedes-Benz it must be the

E-Class saloon, the consummate middleweight four-door whose customers around the world range from company directors to taxi drivers. So it could be no coincidence that the next E-Class delivered was beautifully designed, brilliant to drive – but most importantly, totally bombproof.

Diesel power

The quality issues of its two predecessors had obscured the fact that Mercedes had been honing the dynamics of the E-Class, and the W212 chassis was the equal of the benchmark 5-Series in this respect. But arguably the best all-round models, and no doubt the most popular, were the E200/220/250 CDI using the robust (subject to proper maintenance, of course) OM651 four-pot turbodiesel producing between 134 and 201bhp, and 265 and 369lb ft of torque.

The 212-series claimed back a respectable place in consumer rankings, but my own endorsement



◀ 6.2-litre, naturally aspirated V8 with 518bhp in first E63.

of the car he'd bought just a few weeks earlier. Adam planned to run it for 120,000 miles and then check the Mercedes website to see what late model E-Class would make a suitable replacement, but his E220 CDI would have almost certainly have gone to another cabbie along the food chain.

But if the base diesel was all most owners would need or desire, the W212 was built with other great engines. For those prepared to settle for 40 rather than 50mpg economy and pay more road tax and insurance, the E350 CDI was and is a magnificent diesel drive. Using the three-litre OM642 turbodiesel V6, it provided performance and refinement in the E350 petrol league, but with much superior torque and economy.



△ Diesel-electric E300 Bluetec Hybrid built from 2012-on.

◀ Taxi driver Adam and his facelifted E-Class saloon.

▷ There is plenty of room for adult passengers here...

▽ Cabin with an understated and robust look and feel.



AMG models

The W212 also played host to AMG power in its most exciting and uncompromised form when the 6.2-litre, naturally aspirated V8 – Affalterbach's first built-from-scratch engine, and an engineering showcase – was dropped in to form the E63 AMG. It was essentially a high-revving racing design, and its 518bhp produced at a screaming 6,800rpm (the 465lb ft occurred high up too, at 5,200rpm) made the flagship E-Class one of the most exciting cars of its time, even if Mercedes could hardly have made its appearance lower key. However, after two years that particular celebration of raw horsepower ended, and the E63 AMG received the 5.5-litre, turbocharged M157 V8 with even more power and torque, but which although more civilised was lower revving and less fun.

Replaced every seven years, E-Class saloons tend to be quickly forgotten as the new, evolutionary model takes the limelight, and so it was when the W212 bowed out in 2016. But the back story amounts to more than one more chapter in the life of Mercedes' most enduring model line – it was, in the nick of time, convincing proof that Stuttgart had not forgotten how to make reliable and durable motorcars.



of this E-Class was based not on market research, but a 15-mile journey from home to Heathrow airport in summer 2015 in the back of a one-year old E220 CDI taxi owned and driven by Adam, from Poland. Seated in the rear cabin offering excellent seat comfort and plenty of head and legroom, I asked why he chose the Mercedes as his main working investment. "It's the best car for the job," he simply said



AMG's E63 would switch from NA to turbo power during the 212 generation.

Insight from a Mercedes-Benz tuning industry veteran

Modded Mercs



This issue, tuning car expert Ian Kuah discusses the controversial subject of modifying older Benzes, and gives his view on how best to make classic and modern classic Mercs stand out from the crowd

Originality. This is a very big word in the classic car community, and over the years I have had more or less the same conversation on this topic with different groups of friends loyal to the BMW, Ferrari, Mercedes-Benz and Porsche marques. It is commonly accepted that cars attain classic status when they reach 25 years of age. And those living in the UK gain the advantages of free road tax and no legal requirement for an annual MOT once their car reaches 40.

Condition, originality and service history have the potential to enhance a classic car's value. However, it must be stressed that, as with fine watches, condition is king, and all the paperwork in the world will not enhance the value of an old rust bucket. That said, papers can easily get lost over the years, especially if a car has changed hands several times. However, the one very legitimate reason for a dossier of invoices and receipts paperwork to not accompany a car is if it was owned via a company. While service invoices disappear into the accounts department, never to be seen again, the good thing is that company-owned vehicles tend to be serviced religiously, with cost no object.

The reason that supporting bills and a stamped service book are looked upon as complimentary is simple. While fake, stamped-up service books are quite easy to make up by a bent motor trader, it is much

harder to manufacture a car's 'history' with fake service invoices and MOTs. However, in the final analysis condition is everything, and if you just want a usable classic car and are not going to join the concours d'elegance circuit, then paperwork gaps in the history of a 25-year plus car is of far less consequence than a five-year old one.

Using aftermarket parts on a classic car is a bone of contention

mind would fiddle with a 300SL Gullwing, but an R107 or R129 SL is fair game as thousands were made. My take on this is that if you must personalise a classic Mercedes, then the appropriate way is to do it in period using the factory option or aftermarket alloy wheel designs and other accessories that were available when the car was new.

For instance, if you have a mint W124 or R129 SL and find the car's stance too weedy on the stock 16-inch alloys, fitting a set of the 18-inch AMG, Brabus or Lorinser wheels that were available during that era, along with a set of Koni or Bilstein dampers is absolutely fine. Not only will this fill the arches and give the car

a more purposeful stance, these upgrades will also enhance handling, braking and grip. However, fitting modern 20-inch alloys and slamming the ride height is a no-no in my book.

The same goes for body styling and sports exhausts, as the full AMG or Brabus period treatment was the finest statement of individuality for the wealthy who bought these cars new. Brabus' signature, angled twin exhaust outlet design was distinctive and something very special back in the 90s.

Finding new-old stock of these parts is becoming increasingly difficult as time goes by, but it is a big world and it is likely that

small quantities of these parts are still out there. That said, for some enthusiasts the journey that involves searching ebay, marque forums and enthusiast websites is actually half the fun! 📌



△ Early R129 SL with upgrades from Brabus.

◁ AMG split-rims work well on the W124.

◁◁ Brabus signature exhausts.

As purists prefer a time-warped car that looks exactly as it left the factory, using aftermarket parts on a classic car is a bone of contention that really sets them off. No one in their right

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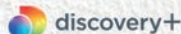
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The expert on all things Mercedes gives us his latest views...

Material gains



As David Sutherland roasts himself on the seat of his GLC during a heatwave, he wonders if Mercedes' old upholstery lines would have been more suitable for the conditions

Temperatures around Europe soared to record levels in July, here in the UK breaking the 40C barrier for the first time. This brought back memories of the summer 1976 heatwave and my student holiday job in an Edinburgh pub, where there was an unlimited supply of cooling drinks which the brewery didn't seem to mind staff partaking of.

But the unprecedented heat also made me nostalgic for something else – long lost velour car seat upholstery. Our GLC has Mercedes' Artico trim, so-called 'man made' leather (surely a contradiction) and in the heat we experienced was simply too hot to sit on. Even if the car was parked in the shade, the surface temperature was unbearably fierce.

If our much appreciated, mid-sized SUV had been trimmed in velour, I would have felt some heat but not an excessive amount, but every time I drove the GLC I had to drape a towel over the seat. Luckily, I had held onto a large bath towel embroidered with A-Class lettering, a memento from the press launch of the W169 A-Class in 2004, which fits the seat perfectly.

Velour seating grew in popularity in the early 1970s, as a step up from the austerity and unpleasant feel of vinyl trim. Ironically, many new car buyers intent on preserving the interior of their new car left the protective seat covers intended only for delivery purposes in place and sat on plastic anyway.

In that era, leather seating was the preserve of luxury cars with, for example, most Jaguar, Bentley and Rolls-Royce cabins using it. Top Mercedes models had leather as an option – but it wasn't commonly taken up. Back then, many

owners did not consider leather practical, due to how hot it became in summer and its coldness in winter, while those who drove their cars spiritedly would appreciate how cloth held you in place better than slippery leather. Look at 1970s 116-series S-Classes and you'll see most have velour, even the flagship 450SEL 6.9.

And the colours that Mercedes used in that decade were unforgettable: the brown/oranges in particular were wonderful, and the material, although hard wearing, was luxurious to the touch with its faux velvet crushed texture, and arguably more welcoming than leather. In the 1980s, blues and purples were more likely

expensive by Mercedes-Benz standards at £150. The taxi spec 124s had it, and it was even available on the 126-series S-Class, as that model too was used by the taxi/private hire trade.

Now we seem to have come full circle, with most mainstream Mercedes models fitted out with the modern day version of MB-Tex –

Artico. I searched the web in an attempt to find out if it had any special properties that might set it apart from vinyl, but all I came across was a newspaper story from 2019 reporting how an E-Class owner had successfully taken

Mercedes-Benz to court for suggesting that all the seat was leather when in fact portions of it were synthetic.

There is no doubt that high quality leather trim sets off the interior of an upmarket car perfectly. But a soft furnishing can work well too. I recall driving a 126-series 560SEC with light tan velour and thinking it unusual – and likely to detract from the luxury coupe's resale value – but pleasant to sit on. The first owner must have been brave to go against convention and tick the no-cost option velour box on the order form, or perhaps it was more them not wanting to sit on a dead animal.



Brave to have ordered this 560SEC with tan velour seat upholstery.



△ This 116-series S-Class has vibrant velour trim.



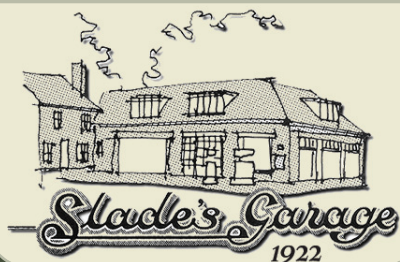
△ G-Wagen's fabric trim with extrovert pattern.

Mercedes velour colours, and are now so evocative of that decade. You rarely saw a 124-series E-Class with hide unless it was something like the 300E, which was hardly surprising given leather cost £1,600 extra.

Going the other way, into the 1990s Mercedes was still offering its classic MB-Tex, a vinyl possibly tough enough to survive Armageddon. This too was a chargeable item, the standard trim on all models being cloth, though not

Iwould like to see cloth and velour make a comeback on Mercedes cars, especially at the lower end of the price scale. Leather, along with its Artico imitator, is a 'feel-good' item, along with oversized wheels and aggressive bodywork, that the marketing people foisted on us, and I'd happily pay less for the car and not have it. And if the climatologists are correct and we're in for more severe hot spells, then the coolness of cloth will be doubly welcome.

The colours that Mercedes used in that decade were unforgettable



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280SL Auto Convertible W113 Pagoda 1970, 99,000 miles, ALL MOTS and Service History, solid Mid blue DB 350 with Ivory, just had a full restoration at great expense with new floors, Massive folder with all manuals, Data Cards, service books etc., New Blue Soft Top. **£POA**



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280SE 2.8 Automatic W108 1974, 86,000 miles, 4 owners, BEHR (MB) Aircon, EWindows, Sunroof Mid Blue DE350 with Ivory MBtex, Amazing condition, Every Extra, virtually not welded. **£POA**



250 CE Auto Coupe W123 1973, W114 80,000 Miles, Less than 3 owners. In white with blue interior. E/Sunroof. NEVER WELDED original floors, stunning rust free example. FSH, with all manuals, data cards. MOTS Service book, recent Gearbox overhaul, Valve clearances FREE MOT and FREE. Drives superb. **£POA**



250CE Auto Coupe W114 1970, 81,000 miles, 2 owners, in white with brown, ESunroof, NEVER WELDED, original floors, Recent recommissioning, sub mounts, clearances, Cold start etc. **£POA**



280CE Auto Coupe W123 1978, 65,000 miles, 4 owners, Service History with old MOTs, service book data cards, In Blue with Caramel cloth, E/windows, Rust Free, Original floors, FREE ROAD TAX. **£POA**



500SEC Coupe W126 1989, 80,000 miles, Service History, 3 owners, Metallic Blue, Stunning Grey leather. **£POA**

500SEC Coupe W126 1989, 83,000 miles, 3 Owners, Smoke Silver, Leather, Ac, Immaculate. **£POA**



1986D 420SEC Coupe, 76,000 miles, FSH, in metallic green with beige Leather. **£13,995**



CL420 Coupe W140 1998, 78,000 miles, Service History, all manuals and service Books, 6 owners, absolutely stunning car. **£POA**



CL500 Coupe W140 1998, 67,000 miles, Service History, 3 owners. **£POA**



S420 Saloon W140 1996 Facelift model, 43,000 miles, 2 owners, Absolutely Immaculate, like new. **£POA**



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TALKING POINT



This month's Talking Point...

What's the one job that you really need to get done on your Mercedes-Benz?

"Suspension bushes on my 280CE - I drive 200km per year and every time I think, 'I must get that done this year'." **Paul-Kirsten Edge**

"A solution for the very poor headlights on my S213!" **Tim Johnston**

"Changing all suspension bushes and shocks on my 209 CLK to make the drive exactly like when it left the factory." **Yusuf Joosub**

"Gearbox oil cooler seals on my R-Class. I keep putting it off because the leak is next to nothing." **Gareth Caffyn**

Take part in **Talking Point** every month on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. See the bottom of page 3 for our respective websites!

Merc Spotter



Perhaps it was the yellow paintwork. Or maybe the colour-coded hub caps. But we were particularly taken by this W123 250 model sent in by Andy Boyle. This 1977-manufactured chunk of German excellence was spotted at Mathewsons Auctions in Yorkshire. Despite its presentable condition, records held by the DVLA suggest it's been off the road for a while. Worth saving from the scrapheap? We think so!

Seen an interesting Mercedes or caught one in an unusual situation? Send a picture to info@mercedesenthusiast.co.uk (subject 'Merc Spotter') or by post to Mercedes Enthusiast, 17 Wickham Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 5JS.



Cheshire Classic Benz

The Finest Examples of Mercedes-Benz Cars from the 1960s to the 1990s

280SE 3.5 Coupe LHD 1970

Silver Grey metallic, blue leather, column change auto, manual windows, electric sunroof, an original, cherished and well maintained car, sold new to France, featured in Classic Merc Issue 25 . **£94,950**



E220 Cabriolet 1996N

Tourmaline Green metallic, black soft top, Mushroom leather, walnut wood, leather steering wheel and gearknob, 4 speed auto, airbags, heated seats, original alloy wheels, FSH, 95,000m **£13,950**

230CE Coupe 1992J

Almandine Red metallic, Mushroom leather, Walnut wood, 4 speed auto, 4x electric windows, elec sunroof, central locking, front & rear armrests, original alloy wheels, FSH, 96,000m **£9,950**



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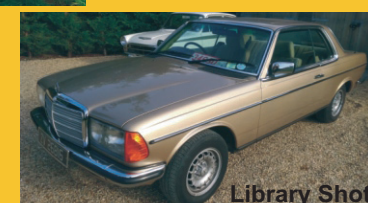
280SL Roadster LHD 1975P

Topaz Brown, brown soft top, Mushroom MB Tex interior, manual gearbox, manual windows, rear seats, orig Becker Monza, orig alloys, all tools and manuals, FSH, two owners from one family, 71,000m . . . **£29,950**
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Left Hand Drive

230CE Coupe 1983Y

Champagne metallic, Date cloth, Zebrano wood, 4 speed auto, 4x elec windows, electric sunroof, central locking, f & r armrests, luggage nets, original alloy wheels, **one owner from new**, FSH, 65,000m . . **£22,950**



Library Shot



300SL Roadster 1987F

Diamond Blue metallic, matching hardtop, blue soft top, blue sport check interior, 4 speed auto, ABS, electric windows, rear seats, original 15 hole alloy wheels, FSH, 121,000m **£28,950**

Choice of 2

300CE Coupe 1988F

Pajett Red met, Palomino leather, aircon, cruise, electric tilt/slide sunroof, illuminated vanity mirrors, heated seats, electrically adjustable seats and original 15 hole alloy wheels, FSH, only 27,000m . . **£19,950**



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Social Club

Mercedes-Benz related highlights from the world of social media



Gokhan Bigg Gee



@b7d_bm_

I would like to thank each and every person who has loved my Pagoda and messaged me with amazing pictures, and also to the boys at @htg_tuning for working round the clock to get it show ready. This 1967 280SL automatic runs on Air Lift 3P air suspension and custom, three-piece, 18-inch Mercedes Centero wheels. The car is fully restored and sports a freshly rebuilt straight-six.



HK-Engineering



@hkengineering

This spectacular 300SL Roadster was delivered to the first owner in the colour DB662 *Uranium Yellow* or *Uranium Yellow*. He loved this Roadster so much that his garage had to be in a matching yellow. He took the car to many places in Europe like Paris or San Remo. In the 70s, the car was painted white, but the owner wasn't happy about his decision and did not drive the car much after that. Last year, a friend and long-time customer of ours bought the car. All over the car were some spots where the original yellow colour was showing. The decision was made to carefully remove the white paint. To everyone's surprise, we were able to preserve the majority of the original colour. Now the Roadster is back in its original state. Image: HK-Engineering



Zeke Epps



@zekeepps

Putting the 'class' in classic. Happy Independence Day!



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Dougie McColm

 @dougimccolm

It's been four years since we took the W108 low-rider off the road for full restoration and now it's finally back.




The SLShop

 @TheSLShop

The ultimate survivor. We just had to share this SL60 currently available on SLSHOP MarketPlace. One of only 49 RHD examples, this SL60 is now available following 18 years of ownership by its current owner. This well-cared for example is extremely rare, particularly given its low mileage of only 48,000. The asking price for this 1998 roadster was £49,950.



The MB Market

 @thembmarket

This 1994 Mercedes-Benz E500 Limited was originally ordered via the Leipzig (Germany) branch of Mercedes-Benz in September 1994. This European-market example reportedly resided in Germany prior to its importation into the United States in November 2021. Finished in Sapphire Black (009) over special two-tone Gray and Black (288) leather, this E500 Limited shows 16,000km.



RoadNClub

 @roadnclub

Make green great again. Mercedes-Benz 280SL Pagoda with five-speed ZF transmission, built in 1969.



Lorinser North America

 @lorinserna

Mercedes-Benz C-Class with Lorinser styling and Lorinser RSK6 wheels! Offered in sizes 19-, 20- and 21-inch, this three-piece wheel design starts at €5,045 (£4,300) per set. Head over to the Lorinser.com website for more details.



Awesome Classic & Custom

 @awesomeautotrim

We had a visit from an unmissable Mercedes-Benz 280SLC owner today. We created a leather interior plan of action, which was built around preservation. Deep cleaning, nourishing and protection of the leather will keep the original interior looking awesome for years to come.

40
YEARS OF
W201



*“Handsome and
deceptively simple, the
190 had a visual kinship
with the W126 S-Class”*

New Benz on the block

Presented in December 1982, the W201 Mercedes-Benz 190 saloon packaged everything the world had come to expect from three-pointed stars in daringly compact form. Over the next 16 pages, we look back on 40 years of this highly successful series, recalling its global debut and UK launch, as well as seven of the most memorable iterations – some of which didn’t make the production line...

WORDS **MARTIN BUCKLEY** IMAGES **MERCEDES-BENZ GROUP AG**



If not quite revolutionary, the 1982 W201 190 saloons were as much of a risk as ultra conservative Mercedes-Benz was willing to take 40 years ago. Almost all new, this long-awaited 'baby Benz' was tasked with taking the fight not only to the irritatingly popular BMW 3-Series (also revamped in 1982), but also lesser versions of bigger cars from the likes of Audi, Ford and Opel in the hope that buyers would be willing to trade size for the prestige value of sitting behind the three-pointed star.

Today, the 190 would be a 'C-Class', but in 1982 Mercedes called this new three-box, four-door saloon its 'third range'. These were the smallest vehicles the firm had built since the 1950s, although Daimler-Benz AG preferred to call them 'compact'; in fact, the 190 was about the size of the new Ford Sierra, but a whole foot shorter, 10 inches narrower and a whopping 280kg lighter than the two-litre version of Mercedes' own W123 saloon.

Of course, 'compact' did not equal 'cheap' in Mercedes-speak.

In 104bhp carburettor form, the 190 was only a few hundred pounds less expensive than the ageing 200 saloon. There was some well-founded anxiety that the new car would steal sales off the older, bigger one. The W123's status as the taxi of choice in Germany was safe at least, as the new model offered much less space in the rear and in the boot.

For the car to gain acceptance, it was important to get the shape just right. It was carefully proportioned so as not to look like a smaller version of a bigger car. Handsome and deceptively simple, the 190 had a visual kinship with the W126 S-Class and (to a lesser extent) the W123 but really ushered in a new, elegantly sharp-edged design language that would be reprised two years later in the W124 range.

That car was designed to be built on most of the same tooling as the 190 which, in 1983, had the most automated build process yet seen on a DBAG production line. The cars were produced in Sindelfingen at first and then the former Mercedes light commercial vehicle factory at Bremen.

Apart from its squat grille there was no chrome on the 190. Features like flush wheel covers and the high tail 'wedge' profile were a nod to the early 80s enthusiasm for all things aerodynamic. At 0.33Cd, Bruno Sacco's shape truly was slippery – a creditable achievement on such a relatively short vehicle – but not slavishly: aero addenda was not allowed if there was any cost in practicality, hence the lack of Audi 100-style flush glass (Mercedes said it made the car more vulnerable to theft yet made little difference to the drag factor), and the retention of rain gutters. In fact, the 190's profile was somewhat influenced by aspects of the C111

< 190 lines at Bremen (shown) and Sindelfingen.

▽ The 190's design was decided by 1979.



△ Two manuals and an autobox were offered.

△△ Multi-link rear made the 190 a sweet handler.

△△△ Much thought was given to aero.

< Gerhard Prinz (left) was Daimler Chairman at the time; right is chief engineer Werner Breitschwerdt.

<< W201 190 between the W123 (left) and W126.

turbodiesel record breaker/research car of the late 1970s.

Efforts were focused on making the computer-assisted structure lighter with higher strength steels, alloys and plastics. The 190 was more resistant to rust but just as crash safe as the bigger cars, with the ability to survive the benchmark 35mph offset concrete barrier test. Four-wheel disc brakes were standard, of course, but you had to pay extra for ABS and airbags at first.

Work on the new car started in the mid 70s and the shape was 'frozen' in 1979 – after board room approval – with no plans for any two-door or estate versions. Although front-wheel drive 190 prototypes had been built, Mercedes still considered rear-wheel drive optimal for this size of car. Diesels and all manner of sportier and more luxurious versions of the W201 190 would appear throughout the 1980s and into the 90s but, at its Paris show launch, there was a simple choice between 104bhp carburettor and 118bhp fuel-injected versions.

However, the 190 and 190E shared a single-overhead-camshaft, in-line four-cylinder

that was a lighter version of the M102 engine found in the least powerful, petrol-engined W123 models. A four-speed manual was standard with lightweight five-speed and a new four-speed automatic as options. All models ran a 3.23:1 rear axle at first, which allowed the Bosch-injected car, with its fuel saving overrun cut-off, to reach around 120mph, with 0-62mph completed in 10.5 seconds.

All versions would cruise at the tonne – turning at 4,500rpm – but with the ability to return very competitive mpg figures in the 40s if driven carefully. But it would be fair to say that pundits were underwhelmed, overall, by the straight-line performance of the new car, yet wowed by the excellence of its chassis.

With anti-dive/anti-squat geometry and anti-roll bars at both ends, the 190 was always going to handle well, especially with the power steering which was quicker lock-to-lock than a non-PAS set-up.

The wishbone and coil spring front suspension had its springs mounted inboard of its dampers to spread the loads. However, the headline feature was a new, five-link independent rear end comprising double unequal length split wishbones with a control arm for camber and toe-in. Rubber mounts, carefully tuned for compliance, allowed the 190's chassis engineers to tune in a big car ride (better than an S-Class, some said) with very high cornering power and a neutral, agile character that set new standards for the class.

Daimler-Benz agonised over the wisdom of building these smaller models. The company gave Mercedes a presence in the volume sector of the market where it looked as if it would need to gamble its hard-won reputation for quality and engineering excellence on a product that, by its very nature, had to be built to a price rather than a standard if it was going to turn a profit.

That the W201 190 managed to balance these conflicting criteria so well is evidenced by an 11-year, 1,879,629-unit production run that handsomely repaid Daimler's £600 million investment in its design and development.

40
YEARS OF
W201



Cover
story

Significant Seven

Mercedes-Benz gathers among the most important W201s in existence for a photoshoot like no other – exclusively for *Mercedes Enthusiast*

WORDS **KYLE MOLYNEUX** IMAGES **CRAIG PUSEY & MERCEDES-BENZ GROUP AG**





W108 280SE - £30,000 no VAT. This amazing Mercedes Benz is the W108 chassis, S280 SE Automatic model, freshly imported from South Africa into the UK with all duties and tax paid. Rust free and right-hand drive. This 1968 car is now classed as Historic, so is Tax and MOT Exempt. She drives so well, and is in amazing condition inside and out, a real time warp car straight from the 60s. She was subject to a major mechanical overhaul which is evidenced in the A4 folder that comes with it. This car benefits from Power Steering and Automatic transmission, so driving the car is as simple as a modern car, and she keeps up well with modern traffic.



W126 500SE - £19,990 no VAT. This fantastic old Mercedes Benz is the W126 chassis, 500 SE Automatic model, finished in Metallic Silver with Full Grey Leather interior. This car is a fresh import from South Africa and is now UK registered with all taxes paid. The car is in rust-free condition and is in excellent order inside and out. She drives so well, and has lost nothing of the Mercedes Limo feel, even as a standard wheelbase. She boasts Power Steering, Sunroof, Leather, Electric Windows, Becker Radio and so much more. If you are after one of these, I would say this is certainly amongst the best available.



560SEL - £24,990 no VAT. This Mercedes Benz is the W126 chassis, 560SEL model, finished in lovely metallic Blue with full Beige Leather interior. This car is freshly imported from South Africa and is in virtually rust-free condition and right-hand drive. At 30 years old, I have to say that she is in remarkably good condition and drives very well with the 5.5 litre V8 Petrol engine at the heart of her. This Limousine has acres of room in the rear and is so comfortable to drive and ride in.



W115 - £21,000 + VAT. This beautiful Mercedes Benz is the W115 2.2 220 model, finished in solid Cream White with Full Red Leather or MB Tex interior. This is a 1970 car, just imported into the UK and now registered and legal. She is Historic class, so MOT and Tax exempt. The car is in stunning condition inside and out and drives well, she will happily keep up with modern traffic. There are no electrical gizmos to go wrong, even the windows are manual, and she really does give great pleasure to drive.



W123 280CE - £50,000 + VAT. This stunning 1982 280CE is a fresh Import from South Africa and is in simply outstanding condition inside and out. The car drives without fault and still looks and feels of such high quality. This car was a 1 Owner car in SA, and is in totally original, rust-free condition. The car has been kept in amazing condition and looked after by the owner. The paint is original, the Velour interior is lovely, and she drives without fault. You may have seen this car at our Goodwood Festival of Speed display earlier this season. If you are looking for a genuine, unrestored, and original car, you will not find one like this again. What a fantastic find! These are pre-prep pictures but should wet your whistle. Call for more info.



W123 - £25,000 + VAT. This Mercedes Benz W123 is the 230 E Automatic model, freshly imported from South Africa in a rust free and right-hand drive condition. This car has factory fitted Air Conditioning. This car has lots of originality, but we have had it painted to refresh her appearance, and the interior, engine bay and wheels are literally as per from 1985. The car has been so well looked after it is amazing. W123 World, Mark Cosovic have recommissioned the car and said it is one of the best they have ever seen.



190E Compact Car

“Open the tailgate and you’ll notice plenty of room for an engine”



The W201 190 of 1982 to 1993 is no stranger to the pages of *Mercedes Enthusiast*, but its 40th birthday called for something truly unique. Following discussions with the Mercedes-Benz Classic department, we were presented with a list of cars available to photograph in Germany. It was at that point we asked, ‘Can we shoot all of them... together?’

Two months later and we’re stood outside the Classic Center in Fellbach, seven 190s twinkling in the sunshine, each with a story to tell. It’s an occasion we’ll never forget. But why this group? What makes them so special? Read on to find out...

Compact car

What do the bootlid and tail lights from a 123-series Estate have in common with the chrome-trimmed door handles of a Mk1 Volkswagen Golf? They all feature on the experimental 190E Compact Car of 1981...

This may be difficult to believe, but this big-snouted, short-rumped bundle of confusion is one of the most significant cars in the W201’s history, even though it never made mass production. Not only can this ultra-short-wheelbase Benz claim a high level of input from legendary Mercedes engineer Erich Waxenberger in its construction, this weird-looking car set in motion Mercedes’ relationship with Cosworth.

It is well known that the W201 190 was originally intended for competitive rallying before Audi showed up with its Quattro and Merc shifted its focus to track racing instead. And many assume the 190 would have competed in rallying largely as we know it now. However, this hatchbacked, multi-link rear suspension’d prototype shows what Mercedes was really thinking – something more in the shape of an MG Metro or Peugeot 205 than a traditional, three-box saloon. Rumours that the company was developing a new city car helped conceal the truth about this test mule...

Open the Compact’s white tailgate and you’ll notice a distinct lack of rear seats, and plenty of room for a motor. Was Mercedes considering making its new rally star mid-engined? There’s certainly the potential here. And when it came to the



△ A rally version of the Compact would have had a four-pot turbo from Cosworth, possibly located behind the driver.

powerplant, the rumour is that Mercedes-Benz wanted Cosworth to develop a turbocharged four-cylinder for its mini 190. Remember, this was several years before the 16-valve models arrived with their Cossie-developed cylinder-heads. Measuring just over 2m long, this 190 would have been quite the handful...

Avantgarde edition

The W201 190 appealed to younger buyers by design, and this encouraged Mercedes to explore hitherto untapped retail techniques that could boost sales volume, particularly towards the end of the model’s life. The 190E Avantgarde cars (one of which is shown overleaf) signalled a new approach from Stuttgart and went on sale in March 1992, the additional equipment adding code 954 to the build sheet. Three versions were available until mid 1993 – the metallic red 190E 1.8 Avantgarde Rosso, the metallic blue 190E 2.3 Avantgarde Azzurro, and the metallic green 190E 2.5D Avantgarde Verde. ▷



Senna's 190E 2.3-16



Senna's 190E

Ayrton Senna and the 190E 2.3-16 are forever connected thanks to the Brazilian's famous race win in Mercedes' then-new performance saloon at the grand reopening of the Nürburgring in 1984. The timing was perfect – Senna had just broken into Formula 1 and had something to prove, while Mercedes-Benz was keen to show off the handling ability of its high-revving, 182bhp saloon

▷ The Avantgarde Rosso boasted 15-hole alloy wheels and fabric 'Arkade' interior upholstery inspired by New York graffiti. There was also a steering wheel and gearshifter wrapped in nappa leather, a Becker Europe 2000 radio/cassette player, powered windows and sunroof, and anti-lock brakes.

The Avantgarde Azzurro (pictured below) was the performance offering, equipped with a 134bhp, 2.3-litre four-cylinder engine, plus 23mm lowered Sportline suspension that was 20 per cent stiffer, light alloy wheels, carbon fibre effect cabin trim, and leather sports seats each with their own individually coloured headrests matched to the finish on the bottom of the steering wheel's rim. This model was also equipped with a Becker Grand Prix 2000 head unit, electric windows and sunroof, seat heating, a driver's airbag and ABS.

The Avantgarde Verde was a more relaxed affair – not that you had a choice with a 93bhp, 2.5-litre non-turbo diesel tucked away in the nose. Riding on 15-hole alloys, this model's cabin was treated to special green and black dotted fabric, teamed with similarly green bird's eye maple trim on the centre console. There was also a black leather steering wheel, Becker Europe 2000 radio/cassette player, and powered windows and sunroof, not forgetting all-important anti-lock brakes.

△ Where the great Brazilian racer once sat: louder than your usual 2.3-16...

with four-valve Cosworth cylinder-head; the 16-valver had already proven its pure speed with a series of endurance record runs at the Nardò Ring in Italy before its global debut at Frankfurt in September 1983.

The 2.3-16 was an altogether more serious proposition than 190s further down the hierarchy, featuring a racy, wind-cheating bodykit that raised more than a few eyebrows, as well as more grunt under the bonnet, plus 15-inch alloys with 205/55 tyres, quicker steering, bigger brakes and stiffened suspension – hydro-pneumatic level control standard on the multi-link rear and optional on the front axle to improve agility and stability further still.

For the 1984 Race of Champions event, Senna's 190 – along with everyone else's in the 20-car field – was equipped with Recaro bucket seats, a full Rubi Motorsport roll cage, an even smaller diameter steering wheel and wider wheels from the 126-series S-Class. The exhaust's centre box had also been removed to aid engine breathing and add a naughtier note, and the gearbox's final drive ratio was shortened slightly to improve acceleration.

On a slippery Nürburgring circuit, car number 11 of Senna romped away from the likes of Alain Prost, Niki Lauda, Alan

▽ Limited edition of 1992: bright leather interior of Azzurro model complete with Sportline extras.

190E 2.3 Avantgarde Azzurro





190E 2.5-16 Evolution

Jones, Keke Rosberg, Stirling Moss and Jack Brabham, taking the chequered flag by 1.3 seconds. It was the moment the motorsport world stood up and took real notice of the 24-year old. It was also the moment the world at large witnessed what the 16-valve 'Cossie' was capable of. An impressive 19,487 were made in total, the higher powered 2.5-16 arriving with the W201's (mild) facelift in 1988.

Born racer

By the time the Evolution debuted at the Geneva motor show in March 1989, Mercedes had already raced the 2.3-16 in Germany's premier touring car series with some success, although the driver's championship title continued to elude the manufacturer.

The upgraded 2.5-16 model of 190E (launched in 1988) seemed ideal for racing, but its engine was not. Long story short, Mercedes had to create a new version of its four-cylinder M102 motor to meet FIA motorsport regulations, and then install it in at least 500 road-going cars before hitting the race track.

The result was the 190E 2.5-16 Evolution, 502 of which were built between February 1989 and May 1989 – all finished in blue-black metallic paint. The 192bhp/173lb ft torque Evo engine featured a bore and stroke of 97.3x82.8mm (versus 95.5x87.2mm for the stock motor), which allowed a higher redline more suited to racing applications, and opened up further tuning potential. The Evolution also had larger brakes (300 and 278mm front/rear discs versus 284/258mm), uprated suspension, 16-inch alloy wheels and various bodywork

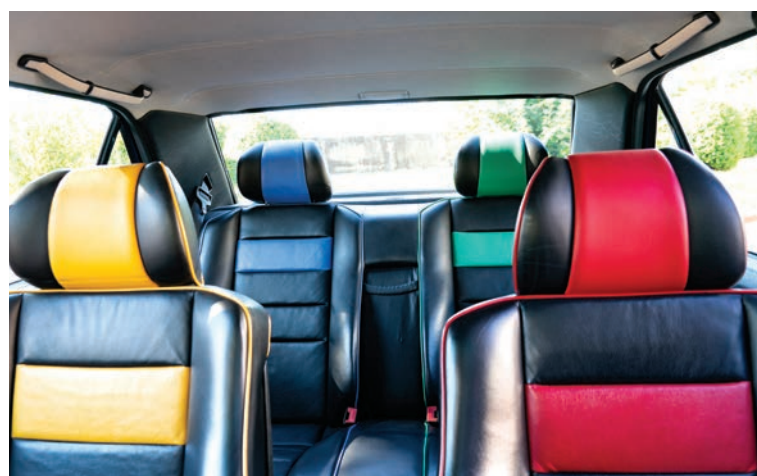


△ Evo's optional AMG Power Pack unlocked 222bhp from the rebored and stroked M102.

upgrades including extended wheelarches, a rear spoiler and larger rear wing. Sold only with a five-speed manual gearbox (with dog leg first like its brethren), the Evolution was no quicker on paper than the standard 2.5-16, taking 7.7 seconds to hit 62mph and maxing out at 143mph, but this model paved the way for the more extreme, 232bhp/181lb ft Evolution II that would eventually give Mercedes-Benz the domestic touring car crown it so craved. For those Evolution buyers miffed at the prospect of paying an extra DM18,000 (approximately £6,000) over a regular 2.5-16 and receiving no more power for the privilege, there was the optional AMG Power Pack comprising sharper camshafts, larger valves, two metal cats instead of one ceramic cat, and an exhaust system with two AMG chrome tailpipes. All of which produced 222bhp at 7,200rpm, as well as 177lb ft torque at 5,500rpm. ▶

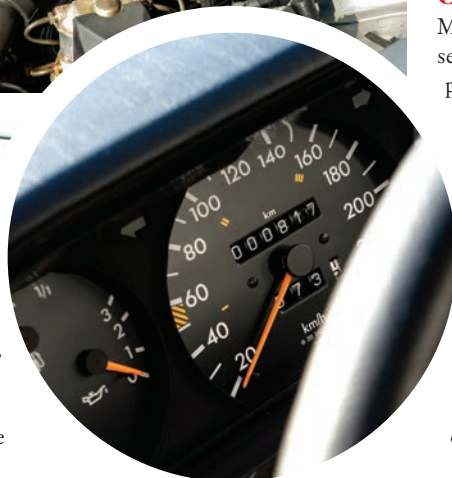


“The Evolution paved the way for the Evo II that would give Mercedes the crown it craved”





190E 2.6



△ This low-mile 2.6 was the last 190 to roll off the line at Bremen.

▷ Straight-six

With Mercedes-Benz keen to promote the 190's 'big car' capabilities, the installation of its 2.6-litre M103 six-cylinder in 1986 was something of a master stroke. In the so-called 190E 2.6, Stuttgart finally had a rival to BMW's six-pot 3-Series, which had been available for at least three years by then, and this range upgrade also reaffirmed just how capable the baby Benz was as a mile muncher. The additional smoothness and in-gear torque of this longitudinally-mounted powerplant elevated the W201's driving experience to new heights.

Sporting 158bhp and 162lb ft torque (with a catalytic converter), the 2.6 was pleasingly fast-footed, accelerating from 0 to 62mph in 9.2 seconds with its four-speed automatic (the five-speed manual version was marginally quicker) and it could touch 129mph flat out. Despite the additional two cylinders, the 2.6 wasn't overly punishing at the fuel pumps either and, where the four-cylinders became a touch thrashy at the top of their rev bands, the six-cylinder really got into its stride, delivering a quiet yet satisfying howl as the revs piled on.

Of course, you paid for the privilege of owning a 2.6, the asking price some 20 per cent (£3,500 to £4,000) higher than that of a two-litre, 116bhp 190E, although as well as the extra performance and car park kudos 2.6 owners were treated to anti-lock brakes, a headlamp wash/wipe system, a leather covered steering wheel and gearshift knob, plus a larger, 70-litre fuel tank – all as standard.

Many obviously considered the extra outlay worth it, as between April 1986 and August 1993, Mercedes-Benz built 104,907 of its 190E 2.6. The car pictured is considered W201 royalty, not because it's covered a mere 817km (508 miles) – this Brilliant Silver 2.6, with its humble, aerodynamically honed hub caps and Zebrano wood trim, was the very last W201 to roll off the Bremen production line.

Convertible

Mercedes-Benz never put a droptop version of the 190 into series production, but it did consider the idea, building two prototypes to test chassis reinforcement concepts, as well as roof operation and packaging – ideas that would eventually find their way onto the 124-series Cabriolet with great success.

Finished in beautiful Pearl Blue metallic, chassis number 2 (pictured) is topped off with a dark blue fabric roof, and boasts high quality seat leather with a ruched effect. Called the 190E 2.6 Cabriolet, this prototype demonstrates the W201's sheer depth of quality. With its leather-wrapped helm, Zebrano wood and air conditioning, it so easily morphs from three-box saloon into handsome sunset cruiser, but sadly we can only dream of what might have been with this three-pointed star.

To make space for that thickly layered, folding roof, complete with glass rear window, Mercedes engineers moved the rear seats forwards slightly, and increased the bootlid's depth to ensure sufficient space for the roof once it was stowed below deck.

This prototype goes without the powered roof operation seen on the 124 convertible, but we'd guess at this price range owners wouldn't have minded operating it manually. Indeed, today it would only add to the car's charm and be one less complication to worry about. Of course, losing the B-pillars and rigid roof would cause issues without bracing. In this regard, engineers

190E 2.6 Cabriolet



Electric 190



“Capable of around 100 miles on a single charge, several of these electric 190s were made”

added reinforcing members to the side sills, diagonal bars to the underbody and a concealed strut brace behind rear occupants.

Given the six-cylinder's creamy and torquy nature, it should come as no surprise Mercedes elected to test this 158bhp motor in its 190 cabrio concepts. It would have been the perfect match.

Elektro

Long before Mercedes' EQ brand arrived, the company was conducting serious research into electric vehicles as far back as the 1960s. As ever, battery technology was the limiting factor, but the manufacturer had made some headway by May 1990 when it debuted a W201 190 with electric drive at the Hanover Fair.

Each rear wheel was powered by a 16kW (22bhp) DC electric motor integrated into the rear sub frame, and these drew power from a sodium-nickel chloride battery. Hooked up to the mains, this battery could be recharged from flat in around 13 hours, although even back then Mercedes' engineers could see this was too long and had identified the importance of a yet-to-be-developed adapter for faster charging. The Benz boffins also envisaged the importance of plug-in hybrid cars for those drivers who racked up higher

△ Mercedes tested several battery-powered 190 saloons during the 1990s.

▽ Cabrio test car with fabric roof; premium quality leather and 2.6L straight-six power.

miles outside the confines of towns and cities.

The 190's battery could pull energy from the braking system to recharge itself, which was pretty clever stuff back then. Capable of around 100 miles on a single charge, several of these electric 190 prototypes were made, and each weighed around 200kg more than a standard saloon.

In 1992, Mercedes-Benz and other car makers trialed zero-emissions transport on the island of Rügen, located in the Baltic Sea, as part of a DM60m project backed by the German government, which aimed to establish the real-world practicalities of such technology. Mercedes sent 10 test cars to Rügen with a range of electric drive configurations.

Lift the bonnet of the test car pictured and you'll find boxes of electronics, including a drive control unit and 'measuring electronics' for tests, plus the charger. In the boot is other test equipment and the chunky-looking battery, which extends to the rear seat space in front. The cabin's specially adapted

instrument cluster, meanwhile, features a battery voltage gauge and digital charge level indicator.

It is amazing how this technology has progressed since this 190 arrived in Hanover. 📌

► An enormous thank you to Mercedes-Benz Classic for its assistance with this special feature



40
YEARS OF
W201



◁ Moss kicks off his piece to camera with some suitably speedy cornering.

▽ Stirling recalls events of the 1955 Mille Miglia in front of the Tazio Nuvolari memorial in Mantua, Italy.



Every inch a Mercedes-Benz



Shortly after the model's global debut, W201 190 saloons made their way to the UK in right-hand drive form and were backed by a clever marketing video involving none other than Stirling Moss and Joanna Lumley, as a former product manager at Mercedes-Benz recalls...

▷△ Stirling Moss retraced the route of his famous Mille Miglia win.

▷ Actress Joanna Lumley provided an alternative view in a town setting.



WORDS **RICHARD MASON**
IMAGES **MERCEDES-BENZ UK & OWNERS**

Rarely has a car split opinion as much as the W201 Mercedes-Benz did during its development, but its introduction was a necessity. The 1973 Arab oil embargo and the USA's response to it – the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards, a law which passed in 1975 and aimed to double the efficiency of passenger cars within a decade – forced Mercedes and other automotive manufacturers to create more fuel-efficient cars to avoid hefty penalties.

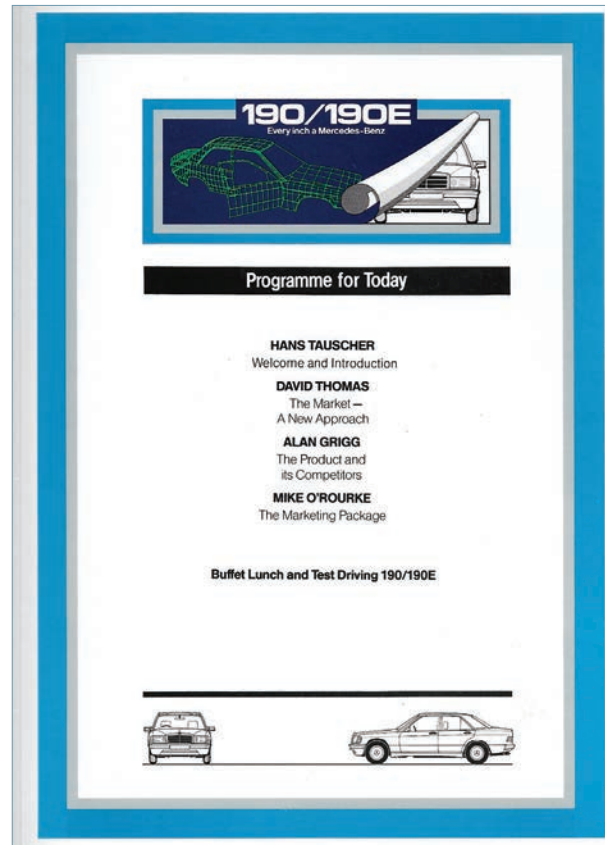
In the 1980s, Jonathan Ashman was car product manager at Mercedes-Benz UK and the 190's UK launch was his responsibility. "The W201 launched in December 1982 but we had to wait nine months for the right-hand drive car's arrival," Jonathan begins. "In the meantime, on April 20 in 1983, a red, two-litre, LHD manual example arrived at our Brentford HQ, so every department could evaluate it.

"I remember that a draft press pack in English came with the car and the multi-link rear suspension translation was 'arms waving about in the air'. This symbolised the marketing problem facing us. We had to avoid language that undermined not only the car, but the entire Mercedes-Benz brand.

"Spending £600m to address a fuel crisis that had largely gone away created a dilemma for Daimler – either it abandons the project and loses £600m, or it carries on and risks its reputation. Stuttgart chose the latter but we were terrified the W201 might destroy the market for bigger Mercedes. If customers who bought these knew there was a smaller car, the bigger ones could lose their prestige. People traditionally bought our cars because of their engineering excellence. Image was so important and customers were willing to pay a premium for that. Hence avoiding the word 'small' at all cost. The W201's marketing material had to be like no other before.

"The launch concept was partly aimed at reassuring customers the 190 was every bit a Mercedes, only compact. That was the vital message," Jonathan continues. "I decided to commission a video for the five-day press and dealer launch. Three production companies were asked to pitch. Some of the pitches showed the 190 outside Harrods or at events like Wimbledon. To me these all looked a bit too obvious.

"Stumped for fresh ideas, I consulted Brian Robbins who was doing a BBC TV programme called *Wheelbase*. He suggested taking cars to Sienna, which is associated with the Mille Miglia, and inviting Stirling Moss, who won the race in 1955 driving a Mercedes no less, to drive the 190 over sections of the Mille Miglia route and reminisce. This wasn't about portraying a sporting image, rather Moss would be showing that the Mercedes 190 is perfect for touring around Tuscany or wherever.



◀ An excerpt from the UK launch pack.

"The launch concept was partly aimed at reassuring customers the 190 was every bit a Mercedes, only compact"



◀◀ Danny Lucas of Danz Benz and his 1985 190.

◀ An 80s Zender bodykit for Barry Henderson's 190E.

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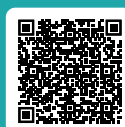
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▷ “To highlight the 190’s urban driving virtues, we thought actress Joanna Lumley would be ideal. Joanna could be filmed driving an automatic 190 through Sienna talking about the architecture, as well as the 190’s suitability for town driving. Brian’s ideas took us beyond the normal commercial promo, giving a documentary feel with the Mercedes as its focus. Brian had the added advantage of previous work with Mercedes in Germany. So he really was the best fit,” Jonathan affirms.

Plans take shape

“I decided the UK launch would take place at Effingham Park in Surrey. We agreed a launch date of September 2, hosting 200 people a day, although only 50 on the two press days. We had 25 cars available with registrations in some sort of sequence, amongst them A190 FLO and A201 FLO. There were three

models to choose from – carburettor, fuel injection and diesel. We basically repeated the launch for five days, with all the chairmen and managing directors of the dealerships on one day, then sales people over another two days, plus two days for the media. They all got to see the video, hear the speeches and drive the cars.

“The video was integral to the launch but was only shot the month before,” Jonathan recalls with a grimace. “I flew to Stuttgart on August 1, collecting the first right-hand drive 190E – the red one – and driving it to Sienna. It was already pre-registered on British plates. Two more 190s came down, driven by a cameraman and a sound recordist. Stirling and Joanna flew out and we all stayed in a beautiful country location until shooting finished on August 11. I then drove the red 190E back to London.

“Although we prepared Moss for the shoot by writing him a script, he did everything off the cuff – he was an absolute natural and we never did a retake. We just left him to describe the car as he found it. He really enjoyed the whole experience. Joanna was the other way round – she preferred a script. The whole Mercedes approach to this video was doing it to a high standard, not lavish, but the money would be there.

“**The 190’s UK public launch was on September 13. There were no specific adverts though, only general adverts for the Mercedes-Benz brand as a whole.** The strategy was to rely

entirely on favourable editorial and impressive road tests from the Effingham event. I didn’t even employ a photographer for the Effingham launch – I left it all to the media,” Jonathan reveals.

“Of course, dealers had the video. They all had VHS machines in their showrooms and visiting customers could

▷ The W201 190’s innovative rear suspension set-up.

“Although we prepared Moss for the shoot by writing him a script, he did everything off the cuff”

△ Moss liked the 190’s handling and braking system.

▷ A 190 FLO was later used on the UK launch event.

▽ Lumley loved the simplicity of the 190’s cabin, and didn’t hang about out of town.



watch the video whilst waiting to collect their car from a service.”

Jonathan recently saw the video for the first time in 30 years. He laughs as Joanna describes the 190 as “handling like a kitten, it skips along.” Jonathan recalls they had to get special permission to use the centre of Sienna, site of the world famous horse race – the Palio di Sienna. “In the video, we were really pushing the innovations – low fuel consumption with lively performance, and a shape and profile that were the last

▷ word in aerodynamics,” Jonathan explains. “We stressed that the long wheelbase improves handling while making it easy to get into and out of the car. We were emphasising that although a compact car, the 190 still had the advantages of big Mercedes.

“I’ve since tried tracing the cars featured in the video. Joanna’s car, with numberplate A217 FLO, is still around according to the DVLA, but the red one that Moss drove – A190 FLO – has disappeared. Pity,” Jonathan laments.

Moss’ narration starts off with a word he’s supposed to avoid. “When I get in the car, I feel it’s smaller than other Mercedes, but then I’ve always looked upon Mercedes as large cars. I think it handles in a small fashion – it’s

manoeuvrable and it’s easy to throw around,” Moss continues. “The new rear suspension is stunning, quite honestly. On these hairpins, the car is extremely manoeuvrable – the steering is light, it’s positive.” Moss has high praise for the ABS brakes too, describing them as “revolutionary”.

Watching the video again jogs Jonathan’s memory. “At one point, whilst out doing the tracking shots, we parked to have lunch in a cafe near the famous Raticosa pass. An old man in the cafe recognised Moss. He beckoned Stirling over saying, ‘Muss! Muss!’ – he couldn’t speak any English, but luckily Moss knew a little Italian. Anyway, they went outside and the guy pointed to the wall opposite the cafe. On it, someone had written, 28 years earlier, Moss’ average time for this stage of the race. Within minutes, word had spread and quite a crowd had gathered around Moss – some 30 or 40 people. It was quite amazing.”

With the W201’s launch complete, Jonathan’s team then had to concentrate on getting enough cars to satisfy demand. “Dealers always had a launch car, but then the cars came through in batches – typically 20 in the first month and 50

“The W201 190 got Mercedes-Benz into the volume market at a critical moment”

▽ We’re sure Moss loved driving the old Mille Miglia track.



in the second, then building up month by month. But the 190 came through in bigger numbers, faster than normal – a lot faster.

“We were under pressure from Stuttgart to take higher numbers of diesels. In Germany the market was diesel, diesel and more diesel. In the UK it was a different story, hence we only had two at the press launch – a manual and an auto. We knew the big seller would be the 190E. It was the one to have, especially as it was a

relatively expensive car in its sector. It may sound arrogant, but we never thought about competitors. We found that our customers had already made up their minds – they wanted a Mercedes. They were buying the three-pointed star, and with good reason as Mercedes always had strong second hand values.

“The 190 was an excellent car with no significant warranty claims,” Jonathan concludes. “With hindsight, it would have been quite an issue for Mercedes-Benz if the company hadn’t made the 190. The car got Mercedes into the volume market at a critical moment and took off much better than anyone expected. It sold nearly 1.9 million units in its 11-year production run.” By 1993, foundations for the future had been laid and Mercedes-Benz hasn’t looked back since... ▀

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WHEN
THEY
WERE
NEW

▷ Tracy Andrews
and her modified
190E from 1990.

▷▷ This W201 is
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Well over two years in development, the RennTech S76R is the most powerful naturally aspirated 140-series S-Class in existence. *Mercedes Enthusiast* spoke exclusively to its creators...

WORDS IAN KUAH IMAGES RENNTECH

There are many stories about the gestation of the Bruno Sacco-designed W140 S-Class, the most well-known being how its 18-month development delay and cost over-runs triggered the resignation of engineering chief Wolfgang Peter.

A lesser known fact is that this significant delay allowed the engineers to complete development of the all-new M120 V12 and adapt the 140-series's engine bay to accommodate it, while specific suspension and brake components were also upgraded to handle the extra power and weight. Final development prototypes were completed in June 1990, with pilot production models built between June 1990 to January 1991 in time for the media launch.

The biggest and most bombastic German luxury saloon of the 1990s, the long-wheelbase 600SEL/S600 L, was acknowledged as the supreme autobahn stormer. For some, however, the V12's 402bhp and 428lb ft of torque was not enough, and soon AMG, Brabus and RennTech were busy exploring the outer limits of

this incredible engine's tuning envelope. In the end Brabus won the contest, the 574bhp and 568lb ft of torque of its 7.3 S motor propelling the W210-based E V12 into the *Guinness Book of Records* as the 'World's Fastest Production Saloon' in October 1996.

Fast forward a quarter of a century to 2022, and Florida-based RennTech recently handed this 600SEL-based S76R back to its owner. "He's a local client who first came to us with his W221 S65 AMG about six years ago," explained RennTech boss Hartmut Feyhl. "He likes big sedans and has an eclectic car collection that includes classic Italian, British and American cars and a few Porsches. He does not follow any so-called trend, and simply enjoys driving.

"However, he did not have a W140 in his collection and was looking for a good base car for a retromod project," Hartmut recalled. "I offered to find a good donor car but he insisted on searching for himself. He came up with a nice example, but it was an early 1992 model, which set off a cascade of issues that took a lot of time and money to resolve." ▸



“
The engine is the heart of
any car, and here RennTech
has really done itself proud

”

▷ 'S76R 1 of 1' plate on console; dash took work...

▽ Unique cabin upholstery for this special Benz.

▽▽ The one-off S76R was created out of this early 1992 600SEL.



“The wiring harness had to incorporate many new control and convenience features”

▷ The main problem was the Bosch LH-Jetronic that fuels the V12 in the first series 600SE/L. Compared to the Motronic ME1.0 used on the MY1995-on version, it lacks the adjustability to control a tuned, larger displacement conversion. This 1992 car also has the four-speed rather than the five-speed automatic that came later.

“While the car had low mileage and excellent bodywork and paint, it came with a brown leather interior without the full leather dashboard option,” Hartmut explained. “The owner wanted a full black leather interior and we thought we could just swap out all the ‘wrong’ bits. But the actual changes required came as a big surprise.”

Mercedes-Benz created more components than you would think just for their trim options. For instance, the moulding for the optional leather covered dashtop is reinforced to cope with the twisting forces imposed by leather shrinkage over time, while the double stitch feature on the full leather dashtop requires grooves in the moulding. You can’t just buy these dash tops off the shelf from a Mercedes dealer 25 years later, so RennTech had to modify the basic vinyl covered dashtop of the donor car.

The company ended up buying a cheaper, higher mileage donor car for the Bosch Motronic ME 1.0 along with some other parts, and the model year upgrade alone added nearly six months and additional costs to the project.

More than just a cosmetic facelift, the MY1995 facelift S-Class was also a significant engineering upgrade. The wiring harness had to incorporate many new control and convenience features that added additional ECUs and unique connectors to the CAN bus system. There was also a different engine bay wiring loom as the whole Bosch fuelling system has wiring for the throttle body, air mass sensor and so on.

All this took place leading up to the Covid-19 pandemic, during which everything shut down and one staff member retired. Factor in pandemic-related supply chain issues and an extra year was added to the 18 months originally allocated to the project.

Seven point six litres

The engine is the heart of any car, and here RennTech has really done itself proud. “In the days when AMG and Brabus were making 7.3 litre conversions, we had a slightly longer stroke that achieved a real 7.4-litre displacement with 7,414cc from a 91.0mm and 95.0mm bore and stroke,” said Hartmut. “The first few M120 conversions we did were 7.1s with crankshaft mods alone. Our mainstream 7.4-litre conversion used US-made steel billet cranks and KS [Kolbenschmidt] pistons linked by forged titanium con rods.”

Hartmut was mindful of future rebuilds and commissioned a few sets of 92mm over-sized pistons for stock just in case a block was

damaged and needed to be over-bored. However, by the time the M120 went out of production in 1998 RT had never experienced a problem with this bulletproof engine and started using its over-sized piston stock for even larger displacement conversions.

These 92mm-diameter pistons took swept displacement to 7,578cc, and the first such motor was installed in a California-based R129 SL that Hartmut remembers fondly. This was a very late production SL600 to which Mercedes had fitted the improved smaller ABS unit and cleaned up other parts of the engine bay. The extra room allowed RennTech to use a larger airbox, which liberated extra power. Sadly, the owner took the car to a local detail where one of the staff had a Ferris Bueller moment and crashed it.

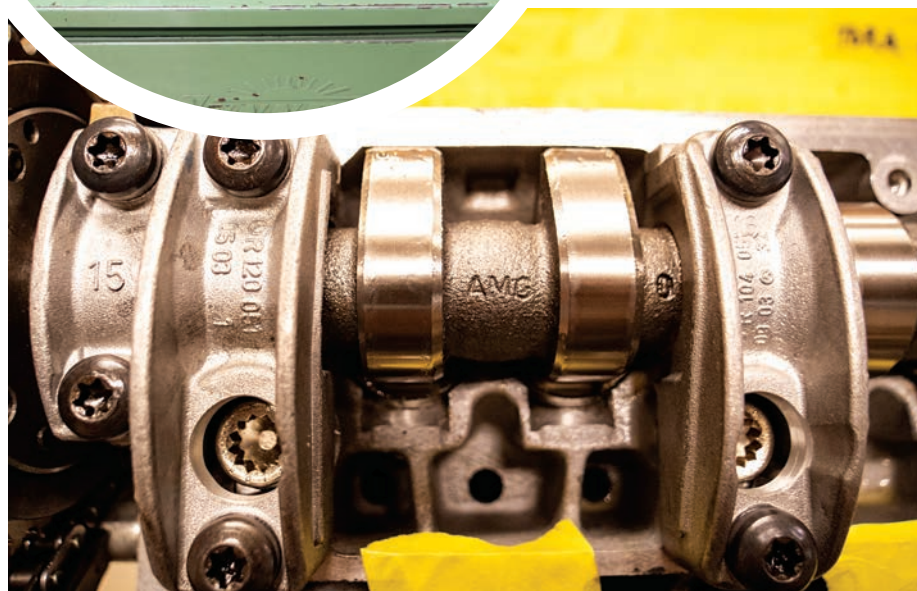
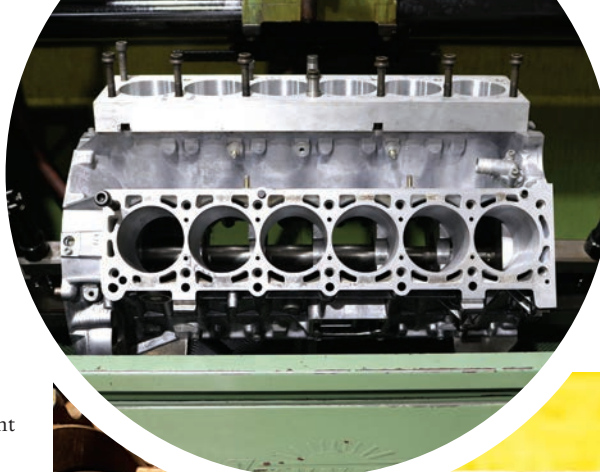
“We had one set of 92mm pistons left for a 7.6 and, as the owner of the S-Class wanted 600hp, this was the best way to achieve it,” said Hartmut. “Compression ratio is slightly higher at 10.3:1...”

“I was looking for more aggressive cams, and one of my German sources offered me some special development intake cams that AMG had made for the Pagani Zonda,” he continued. “Together with our larger air boxes and equal length headers this showed over 600hp on the first dyno pull, and 615hp after some fine adjustments to the camshaft timing.

“The Bosch Motronic ME 1.0 has its limits because it is a first-generation Motronic with a single-core processor per cylinder bank. You can adjust the ignition, fuelling and intake cam phasing, but as these are one-time programmable chips, we got through a lot of them,” Hartmut explained. “The car runs great but the idle speed could be just a bit higher. Right now, it is set at

◁ Honing the M120 V12’s block bore for 7.6 litres.

▽ AMG cams originally made for the Zonda.



the factory 750rpm, but with the overlap of the hotter cams we could do with another 150rpm on top to smoothen it out.”

Attention to detail

The stock intake and exhaust on the M120 are incredibly restrictive and really strangle output. Hartmut explained that the M120 intake boxes and filters are disproportionately small, and that the engine really wakes up if you have space for bigger air boxes and larger diameter intake pipes. ▷



△ A stock, 89mm M120 V12 piston weighs in at 1,310g (1.3kg)...



△ ... while RennTech’s titanium 92mm piston and rod is 952g.

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One of my German sources offered me some special development intake cams that AMG had made for the Pagani Zonda

◁ Carbon trim works very well in the 140-series.

◁ Naturally aspirated V12 makes 615bhp.



powerful naturally aspirated 140-series S-Class ever created.

To handle the massively increased output, the 722.6 five-speed automatic gearbox was beefed up using the tried-and-tested method of modifying the clutch packs to accept one or two more discs each. An OS Giken limited-slip differential was fitted for improved traction and handling, while the driveshafts reinforced with high performance tripod CV joints from Metalore in California are a standard RennTech upgrade following a couple of axle failures with 7.4s back in the day.

To help maintain optimum suspension geometry under acceleration, cornering and braking, uprated springs were matched to the stock dampers along with stiffer control arm bushes to take the slack out of the car's chassis responses. The rubber mounts of the front and rear subframes were fitted with travel limiters to counter torque induced movement, and during the development phase the front subframe was modified to lower the motor slightly in the engine bay.

"At that stage, we thought we might need to make headroom for a single throttle intake system, but in end we achieved over 600hp using just our larger airboxes and intake pipework," Hartmut explained.

Brakes have come a long way in the



▷ "The stock intake boxes are just 350mm long and 120mm wide, which is ridiculously small for the stock six-litre V12, and the noise insulation foam inside each makes the space for the filter unit inside even smaller," he explained. "On top of that, the intake trumpets are just 80mm high and 30mm wide, and make a 90-degree turn to reach the throttle body."

Additional gains

RennTech did some engine bay space rationalisation so it could fit larger air boxes. This included relocating some air conditioning components and the suspension oil reservoir, and making a smaller coolant expansion tank. It was well worth the effort as the company's bespoke larger air boxes and re-designed intake pipework liberated 30bhp!

Meanwhile the equal length headers add another 20bhp or so, while the big bore sports exhaust with 200-cell metal catalytic converters and custom-made resonators and rear silencers helps too. "The exhaust sounds really good as it



is, but we are still working on achieving an even deeper note under full throttle," said Hartmut.

The final dyno numbers are 615bhp at 5,500rpm, underpinned by a whopping 703lb ft (952Nm) of torque between 4,250 and 4,500rpm, making this by far the most



“The final dyno numbers are 615bhp underpinned by a whopping 703 ft lb of torque”

▷ intervening years, and RennTech grafted on a set of 402mm and 360mm AMG carbon-ceramic brake discs with six-pot front calipers and four-pot calipers at the rear. Designed to stop the charge of the heavier W222 AMG S-Class, these brakes were fitted to the 140's stub axles using one-off RennTech adaptor hats.

One of the most impressive features of the S76R's driving dynamics, these huge brakes sit snugly behind the 9.0Jx19 and 10.5Jx19 RennTech Classic Series three-piece forged wheels specifically made for the S76R and wrapped in 255/45ZR19 and 285/35ZR19 Michelins. Together with the 25mm lower ride height conferred by the sports springs, these big wheels and tyres give the car its purposeful stance.

Dressed appropriately

A couple of items not initially planned for the car came along purely by chance. One of these was the AMG bodykit found online by one of the RennTech engineers working on the car. A 140-series enthusiast who owns two C140 coupes, a W140 saloon, and an R129 SL himself, he also found the individually reclining rear seats for the car on ebay.

The subtle front splitter and bootlid spoiler help to reduce lift at speed. Like the side panels with air extractors behind the wheels, they were

▷ Three-piece Classic Series rims size 19-inch.

▽ Carbon ceramic brakes from the W222 S-Class AMG.



3D-printed in-house from ABS plastic. The only real upgrade in the plush fully retrimmed cabin is the audio system with modern speakers behind the factory grilles and the period-look

head unit with up-to-date features like a USB input and Bluetooth.

While its sheer size and in-your-face presence was viewed negatively in the recession ridden early 1990s, it did not take many years after it was replaced by the 220-series for the 140 S-Class to be acknowledged as a high-water mark in Mercedes-Benz engineering prowess.

Using a combination of period and modern design and engineering, the RennTech S76R is the ultimate expression of the 140-series S-Class. The car was delivered to its owner in early July 2022 and he is reportedly over the moon with it. We would like to think that he will enjoy its power and uniqueness for many years to come.



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Where stars shine

We take a walk around the fabulous showroom, restoration and storage facilities of Hilton & Moss, and find out more about the company's involvement in the electrification of the SL Pagoda

WORDS **DAVID SUTHERLAND** IMAGES **CRAIG PUSEY AND HILTON & MOSS**



“Hilton & Moss is one aspect of the Hilton Group, rooted in the mid 1980s”

◁ 75,000sq ft facility is a treat for all car fans.

△ Mercs rub shoulders with Jags and Astons.

▽ W111 Cabriolet receives the Hilton & Moss treatment.

It would be easy to assume that Hilton & Moss is simply one of a number of car dealers in the UK specialising in premium priced classics, with a particular penchant for Mercedes-Benz models. For years, *Mercedes Enthusiast* readers will have seen the Hertfordshire-based company's advertisements offering star-badged dreams, and those looking a little further might have spotted its celebrity cars at classic events, for example at the London Concours event in June where the 190SL it restored for model David Gandy was on display along with another 190SL once owned by Beatles drummer Ringo Starr.

But to think this would be to underestimate the scope and ambition of the company. Hilton & Moss is in fact but one aspect of the Hilton Group, rooted in the mid 1980s and which has recently expanded operations to include a new, purpose-built, 75,000sq ft facility on three floors that accommodates not only the existing repair/restoration and sales operations but also a serviced classic/collector car storage unit. Hilton & Moss has also recently partnered with car technology start-up Everrati Automotive to build electric W113 SL Pagodas, more about which later.

The Hilton & Moss sales model is not to pile high and sell cheap: you'll generally find a small but extremely select choice of Mercedes (along with others from Lotus to Lamborghini), the cheapest at the time of writing a R107 300SL in Nautical Blue and with 85,500 miles at £39,950. A pair of 190SLs (a model that has been a Hilton & Moss speciality over the years) were £156,995 and £170,000, while a 300SL was labelled 'price on application'. It's the level of stock you would expect to see at international auction, and it's offered from a super smart showroom with enough darkened glass to pass for a car manufacturer's franchised site. As you can see from the photos, this place really is very smart, although its effective public opening was a good old fashioned Saturday morning Cars & Coffee in late June, which attracted 300 car enthusiasts.

Exclusive acquisitions

Behind the two-storey showroom that fronts the new building, constructed on land adjacent to the existing premises which have been repurposed as a paint and car preparation centre, is the 30-bay workshop, also on two floors, that Hilton & Moss founder, managing director and owner Peter Hilton describes as “the largest manufacturer-approved repair facility in the UK.” With ▷



▷ This 190SL's cabin is coming together nicely.

▷ All kinds of old Mercs are worked on here...

▽ Signal Red 300SL Gullwing in the showroom.



▷ respect to its body repair work on modern cars, the Hilton Coachworks Approved Accident Repair Centre has been endorsed by a number of car brands, including Mercedes-Benz, for many years.

The skill set of the restoration facility – whose work is 80 per cent Mercedes-Benz – allows classic car builds to be undertaken entirely in-house, with no farming out of specialist jobs. Concours standard paintwork has long been a Hilton & Moss speciality, whether that be the traditional two-pack and cellulose process or modern water-based paints, and Peter takes a particular interest, overseeing jobs. The team responsible for bodywork and metal fabrication presently boast over 100 years of experience between them.

The building's third story houses the newly established Hilton Car Storage business, where classics and supercars can be stored and receive full care and maintenance. On arrival, every vehicle is processed through a nine-step check-in. They're inspected and documented in meticulous detail, and this report is given to the owner.

Cars could hardly be more mollicoddled: this high-security facility at the top



of the building is maintained at a 55 per cent relative humidity, and is continuously monitored by internal and external CCTV. A full delivery and collection service is offered, and a Triumph TR5 that Peter and a friend rescued and restored nearly 40 years ago is kept here...

Relocation, relocation, relocation

Getting the business to its present stage has taken nearly four decades, and Peter is more than happy to reminisce about the mid 1980s when he left college armed with just an HND in engineering and a specific, and strong, interest in body repairs and paintwork. Deciding he wanted to work for himself rather than as a motor trade employee, Peter drove from his home to North Wales, hoping to persuade his grandparents to lend him the money to build a garage in the garden of his parents' home in Ugley Green, a small village to the north-east of Bishop's Stortford in Hertfordshire.

This pushy, precocious plan worked. "Initially, work came from friends, family, people from the local pub and living in the village – plus I also started to get known for repairing and restoring MGs and TRs," Peter tells us. "From there, things naturally progressed to accident repairs, which I really enjoyed because it was quite fast-paced, and you got a real sense of achievement from turning a damaged car into something that looked perfect again."

By 1991, he'd relocated the business to a brand new unit in Elsenham, just a mile away, with its own spray booth and paint mixing system. But within three years, as expansion continued, Hilton Coachworks moved again to a 10,000sq ft site before moving to its present site in Raynham Road, Bishop's Stortford, where it initially operated from a 20,000sq ft building complete with two paint ovens. "It was from here that the business really began to take off," Peter says.

Peter entered the Mercedes world in the same year *Mercedes Enthusiast* magazine was founded, 2001, to cater for the upswing in interest in classic Benzes, this at a time when a very marked difference had emerged between Stuttgart's traditional cars and those it now built. Intent on diversifying, he launched Hilton & Moss as the sister operation to Hilton Coachworks, and which was dedicated to classic car service and restoration. At the same time, Castle Sports Cars was formed, which specialised in Lotus.

Since then, the Hilton brand has extended to 80 employees and joint ventures including Hilton Leasing, Rental and Windscreens, and two years ago Hilton Group acquired Bespoke Performance which sells and services TVRs. But there is still something of a family feel about the company: his father Fred helped with the accounting for more than 20 years after retiring from Barclays Bank, wife Sarah is a director and daughter Kate worked in the marketing team before heading off to university. Peter's father-in-law, Ron, even helped with the metal fabrication of the new building.

New partnership

As standing still is clearly not part of the company ethos, Hilton & Moss is about to embark on a new, high technology venture that is very much of the moment – electrification. It was announced in May 2022 that Oxfordshire-based Evertati Automotive, formed in 2019 and describing its expertise as "the redefining and futureproofing of automotive icons", will build battery-powered Pagodas utilising Hilton & Moss as its restoration partner; a demonstration car can



△ W113 SL body shell fresh out the painting booth.



◁ Hidden rot must be found and resolved.

“The restoration facility allows classic car builds to be undertaken entirely in-house”

▷ A 116 S-Class on Penta rims and 190SL in the shop.

▽◁ Storage and maintenance are also offered.

▽◁◁ Splendid looking M121 four-cylinder.





Nut-and-bolt resto of this 190SL was a highlight of our visit.

▷ presently be inspected in Hilton & Moss' showroom. There are harsh realities to be addressed in the electrification of premium classic cars. They are enormously expensive to build – well over £100,000 is a reasonable estimate – and are not guaranteed to recoup costs when sold. Plus electric technology, especially batteries, is so fast-moving that today's state-of-the-art vehicle can soon be left outdated. A good job then, that Evverati's technology can be upgraded, and the entire conversion is reversible to preserve the car's original value and provenance.

Hilton & Moss doesn't want to talk about the number it might sell, or if any other classic Mercedes conversions might happen. What we do know is that Hilton & Moss will only supply built-up cars, and that the price, which will vary according to individual customer requirements, is going to be £300,000 or more. Hilton & Moss will not offer conversions on individual cars – owners requiring that can deal directly with Evverati.

The company's showpiece electric conversions include Porsche 911s and a Ford GT40, and the W113 SL is intended to substitute for the highest and final spec Pagoda, the 1968 to 1972 280SL. Evverati plays no part in the restoration, commencing its work once Hilton & Moss delivers the refurbished, engine-less car to Bicester.

Classics reimaged

The 280SL that Sindelfingen built had a 2.8-litre straight-six engine producing 168bhp and 177lb ft torque. The Evverati version is claimed to give the equivalent of 300bhp and 221lb ft (300Nm) torque, with 0-60mph acceleration of seven seconds (around two seconds faster than the factory car) and a range of over 200 miles. The power pack comprises a 81.6kWh battery with advanced battery management and temperature control, OEM-grade three-phase AC motor and custom-made single-speed gearbox. Regenerative braking is included. The only signs that this is anything other than an immaculate Pagoda are the plug-in point near to the original fuel filler, and carefully integrated instruments on the fascia.

A high proportion of Hilton & Moss's energy goes into older cars, the company having ridden the crest of the long sustained classic car wave over the last two decades. The electric classic car venture is merely the latest that Peter Hilton looks likely to successfully exploit. He may be looking to the past, but he is also very much focused on the future.



“The Evverati SL is claimed to give the equivalent of 300bhp and 221lb ft torque”



△ It may look standard, but this SL is electric.

► Thank you to **Hilton & Moss** for its assistance with this feature Tel +44 (0) 1279 813907
Web www.hiltonandmoss.com

► Evverati will help build the zero-emission SL.

HILTON & MOSS



HILTON & MOSS AND EVERRATI PARTNER TO EXPERTLY RESTORE AND ELECTRIFY ICONIC MERCEDES-BENZ MODELS

Everrati Automotive Limited (Everrati) and Hilton & Moss together announce a new strategic partnership, combining their respective expertise in EV conversion and classic car restoration to produce the Mercedes-Benz W113 SL 'Pagoda' model redefined by Everrati.

The Hilton & Moss team – based at a 125,000 sq/ft site in Bishop's Stortford – has worked with Mercedes-Benz models for more than 40 years, entrusted with the restoration of priceless 300 SL Gullwings, alongside its other work with icons from Jaguar, Aston Martin and more.

The Mercedes-Benz W113 SL 'Pagoda' model becomes the latest model to benefit from technology from the best Tier 1 automotive suppliers and the company's sector-leading IP.

Focussing on immersive and engaging driver experiences, Everrati works meticulously to respectfully preserve the original character and 'feel' of its redefined icons.

Everrati's Mercedes-Benz W113 SL 'Pagoda' remains true to this ethos, offering levels of performance comparable to the original model.

Boasting over 100 years of combined experience, the specialist team at Hilton & Moss enhance the electrified driving experience with a loving restoration of each vehicle from the ground-up.

Stripped down to a bare chassis, repaired and sealed for decades of future use, then meticulously built up again using original, refreshed parts where possible, the end result is a car that's more perfectly finished than even the day it originally left the factory.

Hilton & Moss restorations have won awards at some of the UK's finest concours d'elegance events, including Salon Privé and the Warren Concours.

It was meant to be

Introduced to Mercedes-Benz and the first-generation SLK at a young age, it was only natural for William Duke to purchase his own roadster two decades later

WORDS NEIL BRISCOE IMAGES JOSHUA LATCHFORD



“The R170 still looks striking today — a mixture of neat detailing and clean sides”



< William Duke's father also owned an SLK Roadster.

You might be forgiven for forgetting that, until just recently, Mercedes-Benz still made a compact and relatively affordable sports car. The SLC (internally designated R172) departed production in 2020. Perhaps there ought to have been more of a fanfare, but then the world was rather preoccupied with certain other things to be worrying about the demise of a Mercedes with a folding hardtop. By the time it left us, the SLC had pretty well been overshadowed by SUVs and electric cars, among other vehicles. It deserved a better send-off, to be honest.

Of course, wind back the clock and it was all so different. Back in 1996, the SLK took the world by storm. Back then, long before Mercedes switched the last letter to reflect the car's C-Class DNA, SLK stood for *Sportlich* (sporty), *Leicht* (light) and *Kurz* (short/compact). To be fair, that 'K' could also have stood for Kompressor, because the SLK launched with a pair of supercharged petrol engines – 2.0-litre and 2.3-litre – developing nearly 190bhp. That doesn't sound like much now, but this was 1996 and the original SLK weighed in at around 1,300kg, so it wasn't going to be hanging about.

You could have had a naturally aspirated 2.0-litre too, and eventually there were V6 and AMG V6 options, but none of the mechanical bits (largely donated from the W202 C-Class and 208-series CLK) were of much interest once you'd seen it. Michael Mauer's design, previewed by a 1994 concept car, still looks striking today – a mixture of neat detailing and clean sides, with a pert rear end that looks way too small to contain the folding metal roof.

Ah yes, the vario-roof – the SLK's calling card, turning it from secure and safe coupe to open roadster in a few seconds. Twenty-five seconds to be exact, and it made for street theatre, with the whole rear end of the car pivoting backwards to allow the roof to furl or unfurl. Folding hardtops would be 10-a-penny within a few years, but when the SLK was launched, this was serious novelty.

Little wonder that celebrities rushed to buy one. Posh Spice was an early customer, as too were Kylie and Dannii Minogue (apparently they shared theirs, which must have made for some interesting sisterly arguments of a Friday evening). Even the great Bill Murray had an SLK, proving that its appeal spread wide across both characters and generations.

Age is no barrier

Speaking of which, meet William Duke. He's a man of impeccable taste. Not only does he own an original SLK, in the most desirable colour, but he's also an avid reader of *Mercedes Enthusiast*. "My love of cars and Mercedes came from my dad and my grandad," begins the 22-year old. "When my grandad left his original job, he became a wedding chauffeur and so there

▷ 230 four-cyl the range topper until the V6 arrived.

▽ First-gen SLK on the prowl in the City of London.



were always Mercedes around. My dad grew up in the back of these cars, being dropped off to school and so on, and it rubbed off on me, too."

So, why an SLK? Well, it turns out that there's SLK history in the family. "My dad had an SLK just before I was born. He bought it in 1998, just after they came out. There was a waiting list at the time, so he had to go for a bright yellow one because I guess fewer people wanted that colour. And then he found out that my mum was pregnant with me. So obviously they had to get rid of the car and get something more sensible, although they did keep the SLK long enough for there to be a couple of photos of me sitting in it as a baby."

Clearly, such early exposure to SLKs triggered something in Will. "We live in Brentwood, and a new classic car dealer opened up nearby, so obviously we had to go and check that out. To my surprise, they actually had one – an SLK – just sitting there in the corner. Really low mileage – 38,000 – and with just two previous owners. It seemed like an omen or something because I'm standing there with my mum and she's loving it, going on about ▷

R170 SLK values

The SLK is ludicrously cheap for a convertible Mercedes-Benz. You can pick up a car that's failed its MOT for under £1,000 if you're feeling brave and have access to your own inspection pit and toolkit. You don't have to spend much to get a far nicer one, either – around £1,700 to £2,000 will get you a decent car with some history. In fact, if you spend just a little more, around £2,500 to £3,000, you'll get some of the best around, even a late 3.2-litre V6-engined model. It's only the supercharged AMG V6 versions that hit five-figure sums, and even then that would have to be a very low-mile car, with lots of service history.

Rust is the enemy – an early SLK can almost literally rust anywhere – but it's generally cosmetic rather than structural. If the roof isn't working, it's likely down to a microswitch issue, which isn't necessarily expensive, but it can be fiddly to fix. Both four-cylinder and V6 engines are exceptionally tough as long as you give them a regular service, and keep an eye out for minor electrical and electronic issues.

▷ it being the same year and the same style as their old one. Aside from the colour – this one is Brilliant Silver. The price was only a couple of grand, so we kind of had to have it.”

For a car with a list price of £34,000 in 1998, getting one now with that kind of mileage seems like a staggering bargain, but Will isn't treating the car with kid gloves. He's using it, which sounds like a far better driving experience for a 22-year old than driving the all-too-predictable, clapped-out Fiesta or Corsa.

“I don't daily drive it — I have a Mini for everyday stuff. But I do drive it quite a bit, and it always gets looks. I've even had people coming up to me for a chat about it. That never happens with the Mini. I think being younger and driving a car like the SLK makes it a bit more unusual. People don't expect me to have a car like that.”

“ The price was only a couple of grand, so we kind of had to have it ”

Happily, the SLK has given Will no trouble despite his dad advising caution when it came to Mercs from the early 2000s. “This one comes in just under that line. I think I've kind of got away with it and have had no engine or gearbox trouble. There's an aftermarket immobiliser – well, it is a car from the 1990s – and that caused some ruckus. When we went to pick up the car, it wouldn't start and the roof wasn't working. The poor dealer was panicking, saying, ‘I swear it was all working fine this

▷△ M-B built 113,520 of the early SLK230 K.

▷ Red and black tones ramp up the sporty vibes.



morning’, but we traced it to the immobiliser.”

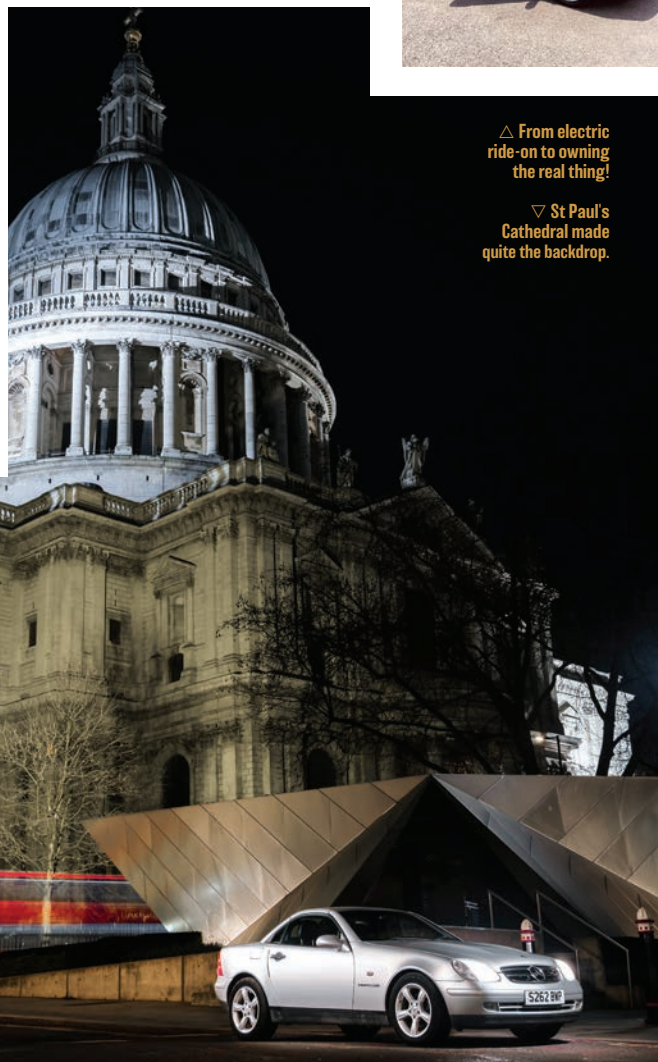
Just as important as working out the immobiliser is working out exactly what kind of car the SLK is. Thankfully, Will seems to have cottoned on pretty quickly. “It’s not a sports car,” he says. “That is a fact. It’s definitely not a sports car. It looks like one, and it feels sporty when you sit behind the wheel, but it’s the most relaxing, refined and quiet car I’ve driven.”

It really does seem like Will was fated to drive and own an SLK. Not only was there that lost and lamented yellow one, but he actually drove one when he was just a child. Sort of. “When I was younger, my grandad got me one of those electric toy cars for kids. And, yes, it really was a silver SLK. There are pictures of me driving it in the park. It’s one of those things where you see those photos and then you see this car, and it all kind of makes sense. Twenty years later, I’ve got the full-sized version.”



△ From electric ride-on to owning the real thing!

▽ St Paul's Cathedral made quite the backdrop.



Just the facts

Mercedes-Benz SLK230 Kompressor (R170)

ENGINE **M111 1,998cc 4-cyl supercharged** POWER **190bhp@5,300rpm** TORQUE **206lb ft@2,500-4,800rpm**

TRANSMISSION **5-speed auto, RWD** WEIGHT **1,325kg** 0-62MPH **7.3sec** TOP SPEED **141mph**

FUEL CONSUMPTION **29.7mpg** YEARS PRODUCED **1996-2004**

All figures from Mercedes-Benz for a pre-facelift 1998 car as pictured; fuel consumption according to NEDC combined

Hot property

If you love AMGs, then TeamAMGUK's recent meeting at Mercedes-Benz World in Surrey was an unmissable event - we report on the day's action

WORDS & IMAGES **STEVE HALL**



▷ Several cars sported special body wrapping.

▽ A great show for picking up modding tips.

“The group continued growing rapidly by harnessing the power of social media”



The guys at TeamAMGUK must have friends in high places. On one of the best weather Sundays so far – already a hugely busy day for Mercedes-Benz World – they somehow managed to arrange afternoon access to the track, including skidpan, for 50 of their members, in the process creating one of the most impressive displays of AMG cars you’re likely to see anywhere in the world. If seven AMG GT Rs isn’t impressive enough, how does four AMG GT Black Series grab you? That’s knocking on the door of a cool £2m worth of metal, and probably the only time four of these cars have come together outside the factory.

From their quiet – almost inadvertent – start back in 2017, TeamAMGUK has amassed over 45,000 followers and growing, which is really quite impressive when you consider founder Naz had no designs on building this group in the first place. But as he says himself, destiny has a way of taking control all by itself. It all started when his C63 Coupe was regularly spotted cruising the cooler parts of London whilst commuting, car spotters doing what they do and before he knew it his car was, shall we say, ‘internet famous’.

Naz didn’t even have an Instagram account at this point, but with encouragement took the plunge – at which point he was hooked and started populating his channel (@c63_naz) with various videos and pictures of car meets he attended in his C63. In short order, his page was regularly receiving 200,000 video views and 15,000 image likes – a fair proportion of these coming from fellow AMG owners.

So, what do you do when you have one of the most popular AMG accounts on social media? You arrange an AMG meet! This was the seed for what has now become one of the top AMG groups globally. With that first meet proving a great success – and noticing something of a dearth of AMG clubs and groups – it prompted Naz to launch TeamAMGUK in February 2017.

The group continued growing rapidly by harnessing the power of social media, posting on a daily basis and encouraging members to share their own cars through the group. Despite the efforts of lockdown the group has flourished, with trips ▷



◁ There were more than a few surprise guests.

▷ Just the 720bhp for AMG’s GT Black Series.



▷ to Germany (including visits to Affalterbach) and many UK trackdays and meets to their name. From innocuous beginnings, great things can happen.

Naturally, *Mercedes Enthusiast* was thrilled to be invited to what could prove TeamAMGUK's biggest and best UK meet so far. With a huge M-B World car park devoted entirely to the club, there was space for dozens and dozens of cars. Which was handy, because at its peak there were 215 AMG models, mostly carefully arranged (you'll understand, this can be quite challenging with so many comings and goings) so that individual models were generally grouped together. There was even an imposters section for members who (how dare they!) had moved onto other marques. But the pair of Ferraris flanking an Aston Martin weren't enough to dilute what was an absolute treat for anyone with enthusiasm for all things AMG.

The sheer volume and variety of AMG GTs in attendance

was stunning, with probably every iteration of the model represented – but nonetheless dominated by the aforementioned quartet of Black Series versions.

In fact, AMG GTs were by far the most common Black Series model to attend the event, the C63 and – my car of the show – white CLK63 making for quite the display. As a representative of *Mercedes Enthusiast*, Naz brutally railroaded me into standing in front of the crowd and announcing the magazine's car of the show; and I thought this job was just taking pictures and writing words! In reality, it was an easy decision and I was happy to choose such a rare and stunning car.

I've loved the CLK63 Black Series ever since I was fortunate enough to drive one on a trip to Norway for the mag several years ago, and whilst it would have been easy to choose one of the other Black Series cars

or perhaps a more classic model, as soon as I laid eyes on this example I knew it was our chosen one. It's a shame Mercedes-Benz couldn't have rolled out its highly prized white SLS Black Series (once of these pages!) to make for the full set of AMG's best work, but I guess it leaves something to aim for next year...

From all walks of life

The rest of the blazing hot car park (I finished the day with a fine tan...) was generally filled with every AMG you could think of, from a sprinkling of fine modern classics like the C43, C55 and 190 nestled together with a lovely R107 SL, to the plethora of modern AMGs, many sporting a variety of modifications.

Some of them were certainly eye-catching! How about a metallic pink-wrapped GL63 S? Or if that's a bit too much for you, maybe a white C43 Coupe on lovely Ispiri flow form wheels – and presumably on air ride – sitting absolutely on the deck. Too subtle for you? Well, wraps certainly seem to be as popular as ever with various lurid shades from peppermint green to a green/purple flip metallic on display. This seems to be more common to the newer cars, the modern classics and W204 C63s preferring to stick with the hue they left Affalterbach with. ▷

“The sheer volume and variety of AMG GTs in attendance was stunning”



△ Le Mans Red SLS AMG chased by an AMG GT R.

▷ The 205-series C63 cars were well represented.

▽ Some show goers were allowed on track.



▽ Awesome GT R with some neat yellow detailing.

▷ A hand built AMG V8 was never too far away...

▷▷ The latest AMG A45 was well suited to the track.





▷ This CLK Black Series was our car of the show.



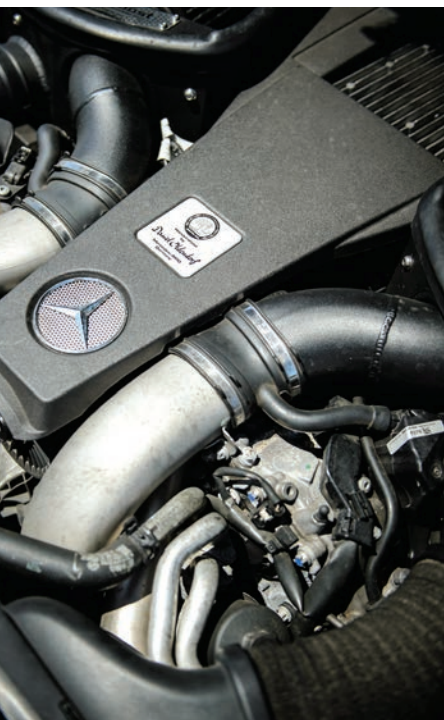
▽ Modified GL next to Naz's AMG GT63 S Coupe.



△ Aggressive diffuser for this W204 C63 AMG.

▽ Scissor doors on this R230 SL caught attention.

▷ Mercedes-Benz World in Surrey hosted the event.



“By the end of the awards ceremony, it was clear everybody had enjoyed a fabulous day’s entertainment”



◁ Satin wrapped C43 (@shark_c43) with over 420bhp.

▽ TeamAMGUK was selling its own merchandise.

▽▽ No less than four GT Black Series showed up.

▽▽▽ Older AMGs were certainly not forgotten in Surrey.

▷ Some would say this is indicative of the older cars appealing to the purist, but I see it another way: the new model lines continue to attract new, enthusiastic owners to the brand, which can only be a good thing. The older models will be around for a long time yet, but with models like the A45 (which was heavily represented at Mercedes-Benz World) bringing more new owners into the fold, it’s safe to say AMG is in good shape.

Arguably, apart from one thing which has been an AMG staple for a very long time and is destined to depart: that V8 noise, and boy did the folks at this meet want to remind us of it. Between the various cars arriving and leaving (a bit of full throttle on departure was de rigueur), as well as those giving static demonstrations in the car park the air was pretty much constantly filled with V8 thunder. Some were so loud it was hard to conceive how it’s tolerable, but the sheer aggressive whip-crack thunder of the classic AMG V8 is a thing to behold, especially when uncorked like this. We’re going to miss it.

The day started at 10am, in the usual format of a meet – but ramped up to 11 to borrow a *Spinal Tap* reference. TeamAMGUK had a stand offering lots of club merchandise, some of which was given away as part of the awards ceremony at 2pm. Naturally, one of the highlights for viewers and participants alike was the hour-long parade of selected AMGs held on a combination of the main track, but also taking in the outer part of the skidpan circle (which passes right in front of the M-B World building), so the plentiful audience could see and hear the cars up close. Sent off in batches of 10, the cars certainly didn’t hold back with the lead instructor car clearly not there to create a slow procession, but to keep things moving at a quick but safe pace.

By the end of the awards ceremony, it was clear everybody had enjoyed a fabulous day’s entertainment, indulging themselves in the opportunity that joining the TeamAMGUK family had given them. That we were blessed with baking sunshine and blue skies was the icing (well, the exact opposite – but you know what I mean) on the cake. Quite how the guys will better this next time round is hard to imagine, but with the stunning selection of cars that had travelled from all over the UK and Europe to participate, it’s clear that the enthusiasm for all things AMG remains unabated. If anyone can better this, I’d put my money on Naz to do it.



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Desert dreams

This perfect replica of Jacky Ickx's 1983 Dakar G-Wagen not only looks the part, its rally-mad owner actually used it to compete in this year's Classic event. Here's how he got on...

WORDS **ROBB PRITCHARD**
IMAGES **COURTESY OF JÖRG SAND**



HA'IL
START 2/01



◀ On the start line and ready to fulfil an ambition.

▷ Sand (left) and Klausung take a well-earned break.

▽ The route for the 2022 Dakar Classic event.



RIYADH
REST DAY 8/01



SAUDI ARABIA

“The Dakar is a few orders of magnitude harder than any other rally”

JEDDAH
FINISH 14/01



On a cold December day in Paris in 1985, a young Jörg Sand stood with his father watching in awe as the Paris-Dakar cars slithered around the prologue course – cars like the Porsche 959 and Mercedes-Benz SLC (with Jochen Mass at the wheel), as well as beasts from the truck class. From that moment Jörg was smitten, and his dream was to conquer the deserts of West Africa and get to the Senegalese capital. He already had the perfect surname, but the dream would have to wait 37 years.

For two decades, Jörg had to make do with being press, following the ever-evolving event with his camera through the Ténéré and Sahara deserts, then the Altiplano and Andes of South America where the rally took place for a few years, before relocating to Saudi Arabia where it has remained since. But when the organisers created the Dakar Classic for cars made before 1999, Jörg decided it was finally time to take the start at the wheel himself – especially as he already had the perfect car.

In the June 2016 issue of *Mercedes Enthusiast*, we featured his official replica of Jacky Ickx's 1983-winning 280GE. Built to such a high standard and virtually indistinguishable from the original, Mercedes-Benz has used it at



△ Additional controls for transmission and four-wheel drive.



△ M110 straight-six with AMG head makes a strong 220bhp.

shows and for demonstrations. Jörg even achieved a stage win on the El Chott Rallye in Tunisia before sadly retiring.

Most people know how tough the Dakar is on man and machine, but the first obstacle competitors face is the expense. The entry fee alone is an eye-watering £42,000, although that includes return shipping from the south of France to Saudi Arabia and all the fuel. Jörg, as we've already mentioned, is a real Dakar fan and owns a couple of ex-Paris-Dakar service trucks from the 1980s. In an attempt to offset some of the cost, he rented one out to carry spares and supplies for a few other teams, along with a mechanic. The fee for each mechanic runs into the tens of thousands of pounds, so Jörg would be sharing the helping hands with three other teams.

Date with destiny

As well as the staggering financial outlay, the Dakar is also a few orders of magnitude harder than any other rally and simply getting the car ready for the gruelling 4,500 miles across the Arabian Peninsula ended up costing £8,400 in parts and labour. A slight oil leak necessitated a complete strip down of the front axle, but the biggest upgrade to the car in recent years was the fitting of a long-elusive AMG cylinder-head of the same type that was fitted to the original G-Wagen in 1983.



▷ Stripped out cabin primed for competition.

▽ The Dakar Classic covers 4,500 miles.



The hard-working mechanics can be shared between teams.

Jörg had been searching for one for seven years before he found a rotten W126 S-Class with the required parts. The reconditioning work was done by a company called Red Head that specialises in restoring the cylinder-heads of classic engines. With bigger pistons power is now up to a healthy 220bhp and with a gearbox from a Mercedes Transporter, with a long fifth gear, top speed is just shy of 100mph, which for the sand and rocks in the desert is just fine – especially as speed isn't the main requirement of the Dakar Classic due to it being a regularity event in which consistency is key.

With it being more of a navigation exercise than one of speed, the most important aspect in the team is an experienced co-driver. Jörg's friend Bastian Klausing had never done anything remotely similar to this before. Not only did he have to follow the detailed tulip diagrams measuring the distance between each turn or hazard, he also had to calculate the correct speed for different sections. Arriving at the time controls early or late would incur penalties.

One goal

"From the start, we knew it would be impossible as on the prologue we were way too fast and got lots of penalties. Later, we found out that the top 15 or so crews had a special trip computer that can be programmed at the start of the stage and works out the average speed you need, which is a massive advantage. They cost around £1,700, but I never knew they existed," Jörg admits.

Upon this realisation, the team's plan was then simply to make the end of the two-week-long rally, which with 7,000 intense kilometres through every type of desert terrain would be no easy feat. Fortunately, the only pressure for a good result came from only one person. Legendary driver Jacky Ickx was a guest of the event for the first week and is familiar with Jörg's G-Wagen, as it has been to many events in the last 10 years, including Jacky's 75th birthday a few days before it was put on the boat. He checked on Jörg most evenings and told him that he had a responsibility to win!

As well as following the directions in the road book on the normal special stages, there were separate and rather tough navigation tests too. In theory, this involved getting to some random GPS points scattered around the desert in the shortest possible distance, with penalties awarded for anything over the minimum. In practice, it was like watching a load of panicked chickens with dozens of cars going around in circles trying to get their bearings.

It was in one of these confused sections that Jörg's rally almost came to an end when another competitor tried to do a U-turn in front of him. The impact was enough to break the other car's wheel, but G-Wagens are built tougher than Mitsubishi's and Jörg's 280GE suffered nothing more than a slightly bent bumper – for the time being; the hit was hard enough to dislodge some crud in the fuel tank, which would become an issue later. ▷

"Jörg's rally almost came to an end when another competitor tried to do a U-turn in front of him"



▷ The two weeks were an amazing experience, but it was no holiday. A typical day would involve waking at 4 or 5am to grab some breakfast, seeing the sunrise on a liaison section of 300 or 400 miles, a full day out on the special stages, seeing the sunset behind the wheel, getting dinner and then working on the car, which in a frigid 3C wasn't all that much fun. After a few hours of sleep, they'd have to do it all again. Times 13.

Harsh reality

There was a rest day halfway through the rally, but by the second week everyone was extremely tired and the growing fatigue wasn't helped when the G-Wagen developed a problem. Jörg suspected that one of the fuel filters in the tank was blocked because after half a day of driving the revs wouldn't go above 4,000rpm.

At the bivouac work area, the mechanic was always too busy working on the other cars which, not being Mercedes, needed more maintenance, and as Jörg was always too tired to change it himself, all he could do was bang the outside of the fuel tank with a hammer hoping to dislodge as much as he could.

The only other mechanical mishap came after an impact with a bush where the shock absorber propelled itself out into the desert. Jörg assumes that the impact with the Mitsubishi had broken the mount. Following an unprompted hunt around the desert to find it, they carried on. Just. Co-driver Bastian fell ill and with a temperature of 39C the medics contemplated taking him to hospital, which would have meant instant retirement. But he soldiered on and it looked like they were going to make it... until with a couple of stages to go the diff lock light started flickering.



The reward for finishing the Dakar Classic and coming sixth in class.

“When we did the rally in Tunisia, a carrier bearing in the rear diff failed, so I was worried that the same thing was happening again,” Jörg remembers. They made it through the last special stage, but still had another 200 miles to the end and be classified as finishers. Listening to the grinding noises coming from the rear made for a stressful drive with the real prospect of retiring looming on the very last few miles on tarmac. But with all 4,500 miles covered they made it. Exhausted but proud, Jörg and

co-driver Bastian finished 6th in class out of 29 starters, which was not bad at all!

On the edge

“I never thought it would be such a hard event for classic cars. I suppose the Dakar Classic can't be compared to the difficulties of the real Dakar, but we did just 750 miles less over two weeks, so it was still a really crazy event,” Jörg concludes. “It is by far the hardest thing I have ever done!”

The dream may be realised, but the story isn't over yet. Next year is the 40th anniversary of Ickx's win and the plan is for Jörg's daughter Vannina to drive the G-Wagen. Claude Brasseur was Ickx's co-driver for that famous victory and his son is getting ready to sit in the co-driver's seat. Mercedes-Benz has also offered its support, so expect to see more of Jörg's G-Wagen in the future. 🏁



△ Legend Jacky Ickx won the Dakar rally in a 280GE in 1983.

“It is by far the hardest thing I have ever done!”



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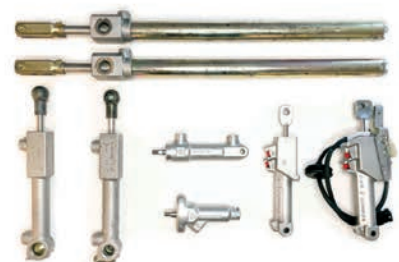
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WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD

One of the most original W100 600s we've ever seen recently found a new home in Poland. We catch up with the car's proud owner as he nears the end of his restoration mission

WORDS & IMAGES **ROBB PRITCHARD**

The mighty 600, an absolute behemoth of a vehicle, was in its time the most luxurious and expensive car in the world. Nothing else like it graced the road and against Mercedes' flagship limousine not even Rolls-Royce or Bentley could compete in terms of technical sophistication. With such levels of prestige, it was the favourite ride of both the world's top diplomats and also its worst despots.

Usually, a large car collection is built up over years, one cherished addition at a time. Rafał Sobczak, from the small central Polish town of Leszno, has always loved great cars and a Porsche GT3 and BMW M4 are among his daily drivers but, as his daughter Monika explains, what he always wanted was a Porsche 356. His search for a perfect and well-priced example coincided with panic and confusion at the outbreak of the Covid pandemic. No one knew for sure what was going to happen to the volatile financial markets and, with the possibility of another 2008 stock market crash, Rafał decided it would be safer to invest his money in metal. Lots of metal.

Two years after his first classic car purchase, he is now the proud owner of a grand total of 33 cars, several which are Mercedes, including a 300 Adenauer, an immaculate 560SEL with just 60,000km on the clock, four Pagodas and a 190SL. However, his favourite by far is his 1970 W100 600.

Purchased for a highly agreeable price, as soon as Rafał had the *Grosser* in his workshop, he saw what a special and incredibly well-built car it is, which goes some way to explaining why it's the first car in his suddenly massive collection restored to near-perfect condition.

This particular W100 enjoyed a long life carrying the German ambassador for Switzerland, no doubt blasting Zurich's road users out of the way with its still-attached and ear-splitting siren. No official record of its 20 years of diplomatic life exists, however; its recorded history begins in 1992 when the embassy sold it off for something a bit more modern with a mere 28,700km (17,800 miles) on the clock.

Between 1992 and 1997, the 600 was owned by a Swiss collector who probably never drove it and for the next 15 years it was on display in a Swiss Mercedes-Benz showroom. In 2012, it was bought by a Polish collector who also never drove it, and this is who Rafał bought it from. Although Rafał buys cars as



Serial car collector Rafał with daughter Monika and the 1970 W100 600.



investments, he likes to enjoy cars as their manufacturers intended – on the road.

The first thing to do was give the Grosser a much-needed service (one of the oil filters had the date '1991' on it!). A full belts, oil and filter service was done on the big M100 6.3 V8 but that was all they had to do. Fortunately, the complicated and incredibly expensive hydraulic system, which operates the suspension, windows, seats, closing doors, bootlid and sunroof, seemed to be in good condition, which was a relief. A braking system fault was caused by perished piston cap rubbers, although finding replacements was tricky.

Patience required

Due to the 600's sheer weight, it has model-specific dual calipers on the front wheels with a pneumatic pressure intensifier to boost braking pressure. Out of production for over 40 years and with less than 3,000 models made, Mercedes doesn't allocate any shelf space in its classic parts department for this item. Brembo, the maker of the brakes, couldn't supply the parts either, so Rafał had to wait more than six months for Mercedes to produce a new set.

Following years chauffeuring diplomats, the leather interior was a little grubby in certain places. It had obviously been well ▸

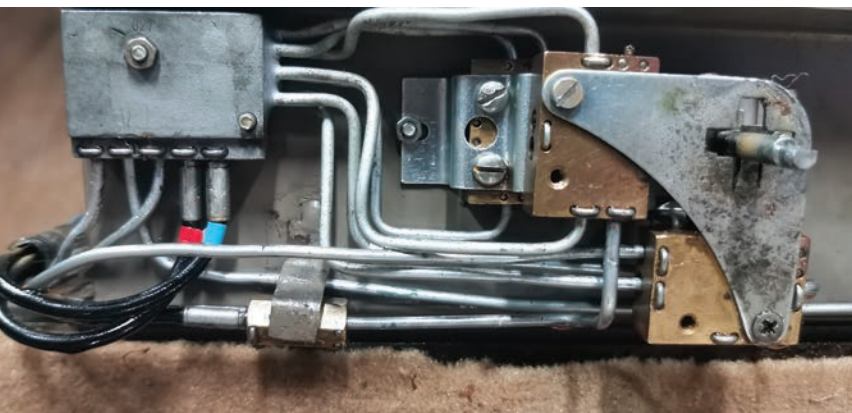
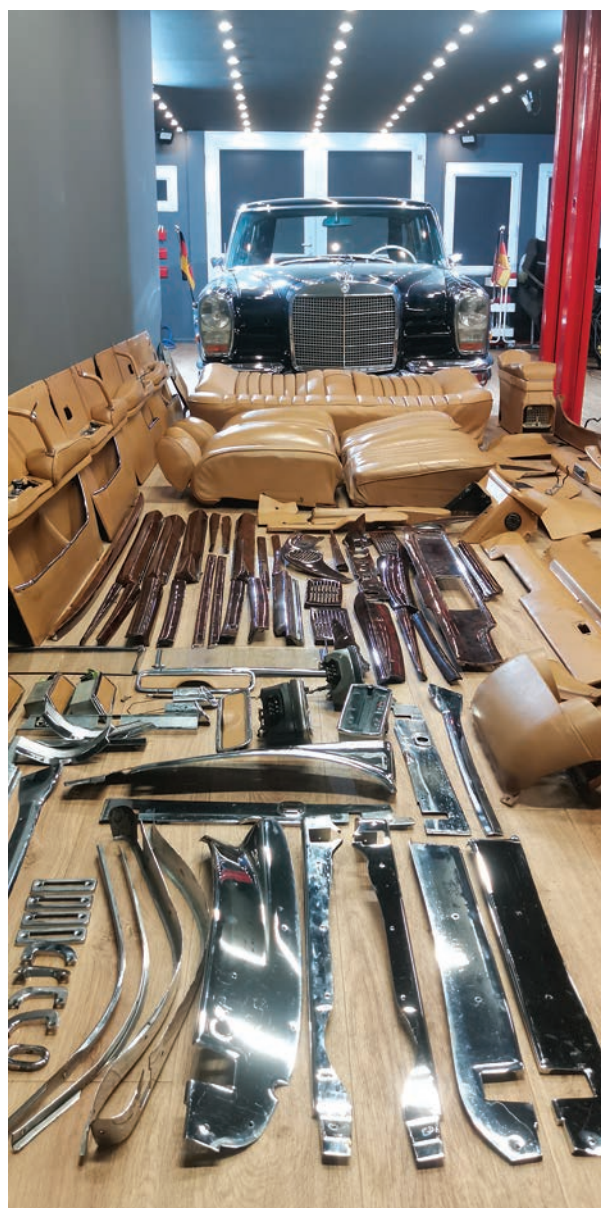
△ Leather trim redyed in original Mercedes shade.

△▷ 6.332cc V8 given a much-needed service.

“Rafał decided it would be safer to invest his money in metal – lots of metal” ▸

▽ Hydraulic seat adjustment system restored.

▷ Car Bone in Lodz took apart the interior.





▷ looked after and maintained as there was no signs of wear, never mind damage, but because Rafał wanted the car to be as good as new, he sent it to Car Bone in Łódź. There, every single item that could be unbolted or unscrewed was removed, cleaned and tested. The team found a few small leaks in the hydraulic seat adjusting mechanisms, though. The system operates at an incredible 2,176psi (150bar), so any less than perfect connections could turn into a serious issue.

There is no company in Poland specialising in such work, so the mechanisms were sent to Germany for refurbishment. "The parts have to be accurate to fractions of millimetres. It's like a mini engine," Monika explains.

Finishing touches

Before everything was reinstalled, Rafał felt the leather was a little lighter than it should be, and so after finding the correct Mercedes tone he had everything dyed a little darker to match the factory shade. From being displayed in the Mercedes-Benz showroom for so long, the paintwork had

△ After 500 hours of work, the 600 is ready to roll.

▷ Stunning combo of wood, chrome and leather.



“Due to the 600’s sheer weight, it has model-specific dual calipers on the front wheels”

a fair few little scratches and chips where people had knocked into it. Once all this was rectified, the 600 had consumed around 500 hours of effort. The one single imperfection that remains is a mark in the paint on the bootlid where a radio aerial was bolted through. This would have been done by the embassy so that in the times before mobile phones they could communicate via CB radio. It would cost some original paint to fix this, so Rafał will be leaving it as it is.

The final job is fitting new gaskets for the air suspension, as the originals are over 50 years old. After that, Rafał will be taking his family out for sedate summer afternoon drives around the local Polish countryside – and in some style! 🏠

Just the facts

Mercedes-Benz 600 (W100)

ENGINE **M100 6,332cc V8** POWER **247bhp@4,000rpm** TORQUE **369lb ft@2,800rpm** TRANSMISSION **4-speed auto, RWD**

WEIGHT **2,475kg** 0-62MPH **9.7sec** TOP SPEED **127mph** FUEL CONSUMPTION **15.9mpg** YEARS PRODUCED **1964-1981**

All figures from Mercedes-Benz; fuel consumption determined at 3/4 of top speed (110km/h, 68mph) plus 10 per cent



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Culture shock

Mercedes-Benz is in a state of transition, moving from old-world internal combustion to battery-electric vehicles. We join key engineers testing forthcoming electric vehicles, including the new EQS SUV, and discover this switch to battery power has provided fresh motivation for staff, who are fully embracing the company's new direction

WORDS **KYLE FORTUNE** IMAGES **MERCEDES-BENZ GROUP AG**



“We have no boundaries, basically. What we didn’t have, though, was a baseline. We had to re-learn the car – packaging, crash behaviour and more. The design process was the most exciting thing in my whole career, because you really could, together with Gorden Wagener [Chief Design Officer Mercedes-Benz] and his team, have freedom,” explains Christoph Starzynski, Vice President Electric Vehicle Architecture & Head of Mercedes-EQ.

I’m sitting alongside Starzynski in a Mercedes-Benz EQE, doing some final testing in Arjeplog, Sweden. It’s the first time Starzynski’s been here in two years, due to the global Covid pandemic, and he admits he came directly from the airport to Mercedes-Benz’s testing area and jumped straight in a car. “I’ve missed this,” admits Starzynski, saying he really enjoys the winter testing element of his work. All Mercedes-Benz cars go through the company’s usual testing of at least two winters and two summers, and – at the time of our visit – the EQE was just coming to the end of that process.

There’s a real buzz among all the Mercedes-Benz engineers on this test programme. We’re riding alongside as the battery electric EQE and EQS SUV are being tested, along with the next GLC (revealed in June), with its internal combustion, mild-hybrid drivetrains. It’s not just the fact that the engineers are

actually able to be here, but the feeling that this is the culmination of many years of new thinking, creativity and innovation, that’s been instrumental in not just changing the direction for future mobility, but transformative in how the company itself works.

Starzynski explains that with the EQ models. “We changed the way of working, we wanted to do things a bit differently and we wanted agile teams, less hierarchy.

We’re going to have so many new innovations, we have stakeholders within agile teams and we did sprint reviews like you’d do in a software industry. We even had an arena as a workspace, a huge space with no fixed desks and benches, and we did reviews there [from 2017 to Covid]. Even the board came in there. The transition to EVs has changed how we work as a company. It was fantastic seeing the interaction, and the creativity.”

That sentiment is echoed by Holger Enzmann, Head of Overall Vehicle Development EQS SUV, who says he’s never enjoyed his work more than he does now. “It’s immensely satisfying. Back in 2015, at the beginning, we were a small group and a lot of people didn’t think [going electric] was the right way, but now that view has changed.” ▸

The team working on EV-specific architecture comprised just 50 people, but now the entire company is involved



▷ The team working on EV-specific architecture that underpins the EQS, EQE and EQS SUV comprised just 50 people, but now the entire company is involved. That shift has been seismic. “Back in 2017, nobody would have known that the board and CEO would say now that we’re going entirely electric,” explains Starzynski. The company stated in July 2021 that all newly launched architectures from 2025 will be electric only, though there’s a bit of a proviso in that statement – “where market conditions allow”.

To facilitate that shift, Mercedes-Benz is undertaking a comprehensive plan to accelerate research and development, with investment in battery electric vehicles between 2022 and 2030 amounting to over €40 billion. The EQE and EQS SUV here then are just the beginning of the story, with more models to come.

Unlike some EV rivals, Mercedes’ position as a legacy manufacturer means this brave new world is approached in a traditionally methodical manner. “We undertake two testing seasons in summer and two in winter. We also use cold chambers to drop to -25C,” explains Enzmann. “The testing procedures are the same whether it’s BEV [battery electric vehicle] or ICE [internal combustion engine].”

“ESP [Electronic Stability Program] and safety systems are tested here, there’s high effort testing for the HVAC [Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning] systems here, and the fine snow – it’s all difficult conditions. We need the BEVs to work in Sweden as well as Los Angeles.”



△ Holger Enzmann (left), development chief for EQS SUV.

several weeks to as much as an entire year for an endurance run.

Bench testing is undoubtedly crucial, but nothing beats real-world tests. While some of the previous winter tests had to be undertaken at Mercedes-Benz’s Immendingen facility in Germany due to Covid, with travel now possible the more usual testing schedule is being undertaken in Arjeplog, Sweden. The EQS SUV will have also been tested in Austria, Finland, France, Spain, Italy, Dubai, South Africa, USA, Mexico, China and Japan. A team of Enzmann’s colleagues are undertaking dune driving in Arizona while we’re out testing in Sweden.

On the charge

The EQS SUV uses the same 12-module 107kWh battery as the EQS saloon, although Enzmann admits using a smaller battery is feasible. “With a vehicle this size, customers will expect the range and this means using a bigger battery.”

We’re in an EQS580 prototype, with 536bhp (400kW) and 633lb ft of torque output, and a potential range of between 315 and 381 miles (WLTP); some prototypes are hitting 410 miles on a charge.

There are two motors, one per axle, with the front motor able to recuperate as much as 70 per cent of braking energy. In addition to the extensive real-world testing, Mercedes-Benz has six dedicated eDrive test benches, which run almost constantly, with programmes running from



△ In the UK, the newly designed GLC SUV should start at around £45,000.



△ Kyle Fortune sampled the new-generation GLC before its market reveal.

“We are amazed at the capabilities of the vehicle. With fine tuning, we can manage the torque on each wheel 160 times per second, 10,000 times per minute, and that controlling of each wheel helps us in the sand and snow,” Enzmann explains. “It wasn’t designed to go off-road, but we found it could, very well, so we have off-road specific screens and functionality. Our off-road testing colleagues were so impressed with the quietness – you don’t hear the car, you hear the birds. Normally when off-road, you hear the effort, but not here.”

That lack of masking sounds from internal combustion has meant additional work for the NVH team, with both vehicles featuring things like foam-filled body cavities, foam within the tyres and things like double glazed glass to maintain serenity, Starzynski saying that working from the basis as a luxury manufacturer was advantageous here. But regardless, BEVs present unique challenges in relation to NVH. “Every part of the car has the ability to make its own frequency,” Starzynski laughs.

Not that you’d know it here, even riding on hard-packed, far-from-flat snow and ice. The serenity in both the EQE and EQS SUV is palpable. Both cars also have ample range for our full day of activities, covering all aspects of the stability, traction and braking systems.

Enzmann and Starzynski are visibly excited by the potential of electric drive systems. Of course, maximising range is top of the wish list, but there is so much other untapped potential, including in vehicle dynamics, just waiting to be exploited. Witnessing first-hand the enthusiasm of engineers as Mercedes-Benz enters the brave new world of electrification would be enough to allay the fears of even the greatest EV doubter. ■



△ The all-electric EQE saloon kicks off at £73,450 OTR in the UK - range tops 385 miles!



△ Christoph Starzynski (right), Vice President for EV architecture and head of EQ.



There are two motors, one per axle, with the front motor able to recuperate as much as 70 per cent of braking energy

Grand tourers

Combining exquisite styling with immense performance and seating for four, Mercedes-Benz GTs make incredible second hand buys – our market expert picks his favourite CL and S-Class Coupe models

WORDS GUY BAKER IMAGES LLOYD PREMIUM CARS, ROY HUMPHREY PRESTIGE CARS & HEARTYS OF PETERBOROUGH



2014 CL500 V8 at Roy Humphrey Prestige Cars yours for under £28,000.



Glamorous coupes are a cornerstone of Mercedes' heritage, and demand remains high for certain models –

especially highly specced contemporary cars and collectable two-door classics. But demand for Merc coupes that don't quite fit into either of these camps is less intense, and many lose value pretty quickly, making for great bargains.

If you hunt out examples with lower than average mileages too, then their residuals and reliability are likely to be better than that of leggier rivals, and if you're prepared to put in the time then you could unearth some real gems. Among the best value stars right now are found at the top of Mercedes' range, including pre-2017 S-Class Coupes and CLs. And white seems to have been a very popular colour choice with first buyers, as you can see here.

This 2016 designo Diamond White metallic S500 Coupe AMG Line Premium, for example, spotted at Lloyd Premium Cars (www.lloydpremiumcars.com) in Lancashire was palatially equipped and had covered just 28,857 miles, but with good negotiation we're sure it could have been yours for a grand or two under the official £42,990 asking price.

Upholstered in black leather, it came with the Premium Package as well as Mercedes Benz Media System with Comand satellite navigation system, Burmester premium speakers, Bluetooth and DAB, a panoramic glass sunroof, electric memory comfort heated and cooled front and rear seats, cruise control, reversing camera, 20-inch AMG alloys, the Air Balance Package and a full service history record!



△ Lloyd Premium Cars had this sub 30K-mile S500 up at £42,990.



△ Another white wonder – Heartys' CL500 listed at £25,975.

Impressive though that S-Class was, you can find even better value by going back one generation – to the 216-series CL. And there are quite a few late-plate 2013 and 2014 cars around at seriously low prices. Like this Diamond White, 2014/14-plate CL500 V8

BlueEfficiency for sale at Roy Humphrey Prestige Cars (www.royhumphreyprestigecars.co.uk) in Suffolk.

Stickered at £27,895 – which is close to the market average – this car had covered just 25,000 miles! And the spec was as good as it gets too, with black leather upholstery, 20-inch AMG twin-spoke alloy wheels, Parktronic with rear view camera, the Driver Assistance Package Plus, the Front Seat Entertainment Package and the AMG Sports Package just some of the list of goodies included. When you consider that the first owner paid over £90,000 for a car like this, you realise just how good value they are right now.

Under £30,000

If your budget won't quite stretch to this example, then with just a few more miles on the clock this similar-vintage, Diamond White CL500 BlueEfficiency could be yours for a tad under the £25,975 asking price. Another 14-plate, it had covered just 39,077 miles, and at the time of writing was sitting pretty on the forecourt at Heartys of Peterborough (www.heartysofpeterborough.co.uk).

Once again, the spec will leave you wanting for absolutely nothing, but make sure that your CL500 comes with complete service history. This car, for example, had its first five services at a Mercedes-Benz main dealer, and the rest at a well-known Mercedes specialist.

► Looking for a modern Mercedes with four-wheel drive and off-road potential? Then check out our top three £15,000 Mercedes SUVs on page 76

Forecourt find

500SEC
(C126)

If you prefer your Mercedes-Benz coupe to be a bona fide modern classic, then the 126-series 500SEC surely has to be high on your list of candidates. And if you can find a better-looking example than this 1988 Signal Red coupe at Old Colonel Cars in Hertfordshire then you've done well.

For sale at £19,995, this V8-powered SEC had covered 121,000 miles and came with excellent service history that included a recent timing chain replacement and gearbox service. Perfect for weekend cruising, this example was guaranteed to glean admiring glances wherever it went, and with a contrasting cream leather interior and BBS-style, split-rim alloys it packed a comprehensive specification including electric seats, an electric sunroof and cruise control.

Dealer information Old Colonel Cars
Tel 07407 477843
Web www.oldcolonelcars.co.uk



△ 121,000 miles from new and a full service history record.

▷ This is a 1988 car with walnut trim and a four-speed automatic.

▽ BBS-style alloy wheels; Signal Red rarely seen on the SEC.

Mercedes
market

Knowing the Mercedes-Benz marketplace means you can make the best buying decisions. This requires up-to-date information, however, which is why we generate fresh data every issue, to give you the best chance of bagging a great deal. A car's colour, spec, fuel type, mileage and drivetrain all affect its residual value...

The top 6 best-selling
used Mercedes

(In order of used examples advertised for sale; percentage of total used Mercedes market)

- 1 **C-Class** (23.6%)
- 2 **A-Class** (18.1%)
- 3 **E-Class** (14.9%)
- 4 **GLC-Class** (6.2%)
- 5 **GLA-Class** (5.7%)
- 6 **GLE-/M-Class** (5.6%)

What's in a colour?

The colour of your Mercedes could affect its future desirability and its residual value. So, what are the top five colours on the used Mercedes market?

- 1 **Black** (28.2%)
- 2 **Silver** (20.7%)
- 3 **Grey** (16.9%)
- 4 **White** (16.0%)
- 5 **Blue** (10.3%)

Miles ahead

Low-mileage Mercedes often possess better residuals, whilst high-mileage cars can offer better value

Less than 50,000 miles
59.4%

Between 50,000 and 80,000 miles 21.9%
More than 80,000 miles 18.7%

Fuel watch

How are used Mercedes powered?

Diesel 56.6%
Petrol 39.4%
Hybrid 3.30%
Full electric 0.70%

Drivetrain

Four-wheel drive Mercedes usually offer greater traction, but often poorer fuel economy. Rear-wheel drive Mercedes can be more fun to drive, but trickier on the limit

Four-wheel drive 24.4%
Front-wheel drive 27.2%
Rear-wheel drive 48.4%



Auction spotlight

A round-up of recent prices paid for average-condition Mercedes in auctions across the UK

● CLK220 CDI Coupe Avantgarde

2.1-litre, diesel, auto, 2007/57-plate, 105,000 miles, £3,100

● SL500

5.0-litre, petrol, auto, 2003/53-plate, 91,000 miles, £5,700

● ML320 CDI Sport

3.0-litre, diesel, auto, 2007/57-plate, 90,000 miles, £6,575

● B200d AMG Line Premium Plus

2.1-litre, diesel, auto, 2015/65-plate, 57,000 miles, £11,825

● A200d Sport Premium

2.1-litre, diesel, auto, 2016/66-plate, 48k miles, £13,000

● SLK200 AMG Sport

2.0-litre, petrol, auto, 2016/16-plate, 43,000 miles, £14,100

● CLA180 Coupe AMG Line

1.6-litre, petrol, auto, 2017/67-plate, 17,000 miles, £20,600

● SLC180 AMG Line

1.6-litre, petrol, auto, 2018/68, 20,000 miles, £21,050

● C200 Coupe AMG Line Premium

1.5-litre, petrol-electric, auto, 2018/68-plate, 49,000 miles, £22,300

● C200 Coupe AMG Line Premium

2.0-litre, petrol, auto, 2018/18-plate, 34,000 miles, £24,600

● AMG C63 Coupe Premium

4.0-litre, petrol, auto, 2016/66-plate, 72,000 miles, £31,100

● CLS350d Coupe 4Matic AMG Line

Premium Plus 3.0-litre, diesel, auto, 2018/18-plate, 36,000 miles, £32,500

● S450 L AMG Line

3.0-litre, petrol, auto, 2019/68, 45,000 miles, £35,400

● V220d AMG Line

2.1-litre, diesel, auto, 2019/19-plate, 36,000 miles, £47,300

● AMG G63 AMG

5.5-litre, petrol, auto, 2018/18-plate, 56,000 miles, £81,800

And remember...

Always arrive early at car auctions, if in person then pick up the sale catalogue and examine the vehicles in the line-up before the bidding starts. In addition to the hammer price, you'll have to pay a small buyer's fee. You'll need to provide a deposit of at least £500 (in cash or by Maestro or Visa Delta debit card) but the balance of the purchase price and the buyer's fee can be paid by banker's draft, cash, cheque, telegraphic transfers, credit or debit card.

Find your nearest auction house check out www.british-car-auctions.co.uk or www.nama-uk.com

TOP THREE

£15,000 SUVs

The popularity of SUVs as family transport has blossomed in recent years. Fortunately, Mercedes-Benz has produced many great models, so those seeking a high-riding family mover with a Stuttgart star on the grille have plenty of choice – and that includes prospective buyers with a £15,000 budget. If you stick to older turbodiesel models, then you will

get even more metal for your money, but bear in mind that road tax and other running costs on larger ML and GL models are high. Our top three Mercs this issue include a compact SUV with A-Class running gear, a flagship V6-powered seven-seater, and how could we not include an SUV with AMG's stonking, 6.2-litre naturally aspirated V8?



GLA220 CDI (X156)

Our first contender boasts low running costs, with an annual road tax bill of just £135 and 55.4mpg combined economy. The X156-generation GLA220 CDI Sport claims all the looks, in a small but perfectly formed package and boasts spritely 134mph performance plus plenty of legroom for rear seat passengers. And four-wheel drive ensures you have plenty of traction even in wet conditions. Your GLA220 CDI should have a full service history, no more than two previous owners and come with a good spec and a year's MOT.



GL350 CDI (X164)

At the opposite end of the size spectrum, Mercedes' full-size X164 GL350 CDI is a pretty rare beast, and expensive to tax – but great value for money and claims commanding road presence. A stonking 457lb ft of torque ensures that you always have plenty of pulling power – however heavily laden the car may be – and with a 140mph top speed and a 7.9-second 0-62mph time the performance is strong, despite the GL's substantial size. A 15 grand budget bags a 2011 car with around 70,000 miles.



ML63 AMG (W164)

Between the previous two in terms of size, but way ahead of both in terms of performance, the 507bhp ML63 AMG is a beast of an SUV – claiming epic performance and an equally-epic spec. Our budget buys a cherished 2007 example with 90,000 miles and a full service history. The 0-62mph dash takes just 4.8 seconds and the acceleration in every gear is potent, with excellent grip courtesy of 4Matic four-wheel drive. Just make sure you budget for fuel (expect less than 20mpg combined) and the car's £630 annual road tax bill!

Latest products and accessories

Forge intake filter and adaptor

If you're looking to extract more power from your A45, CLA45 or GLA45 AMG's engine then increasing inlet air flow is an essential component. And that air needs to be kept as cold as possible – so Forge's new UK-manufactured intake filter and adaptor makes an ideal choice. It enables you to get the most out of the stock intake system on the A45, CLA45 and GLA45.

The powder coated, large-bore metal intake adaptor supplied with this kit replaces the restrictive stock intake adaptor. Coupled with the Forge filter (which increases flow by up to 30% over the stock filter and improves filtration), they offer a performance increase of up to 20bhp. Priced at £233.59, you can find full details at www.forgemotorsport.co.uk.



Autoglym Air-Con Sanitiser

Car cleaning expert Autoglym has released Air-Con Sanitiser, a deadly new weapon against microorganisms lurking in the inaccessible areas of your vehicle's air conditioning system. Moisture can collect within the depths of your car's system and provide a welcoming environment for microorganisms. Since it is not possible to physically clean such hard-to-reach areas, Autoglym Air-Con Sanitiser is an aerosol product that is designed to fill every nook of the air conditioning system with a highly effective sanitising spray.

Priced at £17.99, it promises to kill 99.9% of harmful microorganisms, including enveloped viruses such as coronavirus, influenza, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and swine flu (H1N1), leaving nothing but a clean and fresh citrus scent in the process.



Miofive 4K Dash Cam

Miofive's latest AI-enabled, 5G Wi-Fi, 4K UHD dash cam features built-in 64GB eMMC storage capacity, a 4K Sony IMX 415 sensor, 2.2-inch IPS display, Stop & Go Artificial Intelligence, built-in GPS and a G-sensor. It also boasts 24-hour parking monitoring and is available on Amazon UK now for £149.99

Signature Tune **AMG A45**

So you've bought a first-generation A45, but what can you do to improve the hatchback?



The first-gen A45 was launched in 2013 and facelifted in 2015.

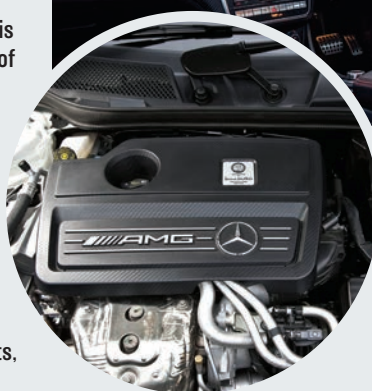
When Mercedes-AMG launched its 355bhp A45 pocket rocket in 2013, the image of the humble A-Class changed forever. And with its turbocharged four-cylinder engine and four-wheel drive, it appealed to a whole host of buyers new to the Mercedes brand, brought up on a diet of high-performance Subaru, Mitsubishi and Toyotas. Unlike the majority of previous Mercedes owners, they had their eyes on the car's tuning potential too, and the W176 A45 AMG certainly has plenty of that, despite an impressive factory spec.

This included cars from the 2015 facelift, which brought a tweak to 376bhp, plus revised gear ratios, styling enhancements, more options and exciting new driving modes - AMG Dynamic Plus and Race.

Our top tuning tips

Despite the performance on tap, the A45's reliability appears excellent, but buyers should steer clear of garishly modified examples and start with an unmodified and cherished example if possible, packing a full M-B and specialist service history record. This way, you'll be sure of the provenance of all the tuning.

A few early cars had issues with their turbos or the dual-clutch transmission, but these should have been resolved under warranty, and the electrics can be expensive to fix - so employ a



diagnostic to scan the car's ECU for any faults. Prices for W176 A45s start at just over £18,000.

Engine

Adding a sports exhaust, better induction and remapping can unleash a lot more power from your A45. A simple K&N high flow air filter is £81, whilst a turbo downpipe is around £650, and a Forge induction kit is £233.59. A typical ECU remap - which is around £750 including VAT - can add 70bhp and 65lb ft. CKS Performance and Collins Performance both have plenty of experience with this process. A stage 2 package with a hybrid turbo is at least £3,500 but could deliver 460bhp.

Transmission

Most A45 AMG owners leave the gearbox alone. After all, it's pretty impressive as standard, and can take more torque. But if you are keen to make the most of your A45's transmission then a gearbox ECU remap (RennTech is a popular provider, as is MSL Performance) can produce slightly faster gearshifts and also adjust the torque limiter to release slightly more pulling power when the map believes it's safe to do so.

Suspension

New polyurethane bushes can make a dramatic improvement to the way your A45 AMG rides and handles - OE bushes start to wear out in just a few years. Powerflex is the most popular choice, and you can also upgrade the OE anti-roll bar links, plus fit an aluminium strut brace. Plenty of suitable aftermarket shock absorbers and coil springs are available - H&R and Eibach are popular, as are Bilstein dampers.

And coil-over kits (like the £600 Bilstein B12 Pro Kit) are a wise choice for trackday enthusiasts.

Brakes

If you increase your A45 AMG's performance then some kind of brake upgrade is essential. There are plenty of aftermarket options out there for the A45 - from upgraded pads right up to pricier big brake kits from the likes of Forge, Brembo and EBC. Make sure any uprated pads work effectively with the OE discs - and if you go for uprated discs and pads then we recommend you get them fitted together wherever possible. RennTech's performance brake kit is around £900 and includes braided brake hoses and DOT5.1 fluid.

Wheels and bodywork

A45 owners tend to be less conservative than the majority of Mercedes owners, and there are numerous alloy wheel options recommended by different tuning houses. Use an app to check out your intended rims before making a decision - and keep the unsprung mass to a minimum. Body wise, small rear boot spoilers and colour-coded components are popular, as are bodykits from the likes of Lorinser, RevoZport and Mad Motors. But you don't have to make big changes, with retrofit facelifted LED headlights available for pre-2015 cars.

Interior

Many A45 AMG owners keep their car's cabin pretty standard, and this will maximise resale value. But some have fitted aftermarket steering wheels and pedals, as well as sports seats, carbon fibre trim and bespoke gearknobs. You can install apps from the Google Play Store, play DVDs and connect to any Wi-Fi network with an Android DVD GPS Navigation Comand upgrade. With the appropriate adapter you could also gain access to the ECU's diagnostic fault codes, which could save you money when some maintenance issues arise.

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NEXT ISSUE



TOP TREBLE

Classic trio combine for the perfect three-car garage



PLUS

LIFE WITH THE GT R

What it's really like owning the 577bhp AMG coupe



**124-series by tuner Boschert ♦ 190E with M120 V12 engine!
AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!**

Mercedes
ENTHUSIAST

December/January 2023 issue
ON SALE November 18th

“You barely need to venture above 2,000rpm to make like a whippet”



Burn with **desire**

Mercedes' first turbodiesel-powered roadster did not disappoint, offering high levels of torque and excellent economy, plus exciting handling - and now you can pick up an SLK250 CDI for around £10,000

WORDS **DAVID SUTHERLAND** IMAGES **TERRY OBORNE**

You're a fly on the wall at a top secret planning meeting deep within

Mercedes-Benz, and one of the big bananas on the board rises to tell everyone they're proposing to build a diesel sports car. If that was now, it'd be hard to imagine a reaction other than laughter and disbelief all round. But that's exactly what Mercedes planned and did back in the early 2010s.

Of course, that was pre-Dieselgate, a perhaps now hard-to-visualise time when diesel was the technology of the future: better fuel consumption and less

CO2 emissions than equivalent petrol motors, and with torquey power delivery that suited the driving conditions experienced most of the time. Rudolf Diesel's sparkless internal combustion configuration had plenty of potential left, Mercedes-Benz and others thought.

"Diesel drive and roadster excitement do not go together - or so a common misconception would have it," conceded Mercedes at the international launch of its R172-series SLK250 CDI in summer 2011. The car maker's hope was that the 2.1-litre OM651 engine borrowed from the

C-Class and others producing a healthy 201bhp and a thumping 369lb ft - 10 per cent more power and twice the torque of the existing SLK200 - would make the case for the oil burning roadster that would not be emerging from BMW or Porsche.

The SLK that filled up at the black pump was produced until the end of the R172 life cycle in 2016 (after which it carried on for a while in rebadged, SLC form), and did sell in substantial numbers, now accounting for a third of R172s for sale. But as a used buy, available from as low as £9,000, does it offer any advantage over

the petrol models in this present anti-diesel climate?

Design and engineering

Some months before the SLK250 CDI was launched, Mercedes had unveiled the R172 SLK family, the third-generation of the diminutive roadster that in original 1996 R170 form had been inspired by Mazda's MX-5, and which has created a lucrative new niche for the German car maker. That somewhat dainty design had given way to the harder-edged R171 in 2004, which in turn was replaced by the R172. It now more than ever looked like a scaled-down SL, and with some

Spotted
for salePRIVATE SELLER
SLK250 CDI2013/13 plate, Fire Opal red. Grey
cloth, 89,500 miles, four owners,
£9,500, Edinburgh

Just the facts

Mercedes-Benz SLK250 CDI (R172)

ENGINE OM651 2,143cc 4-cyl biturbo

POWER 201bhp@3,800rpm

TORQUE 369lb ft@1,600-1,800rpm

TRANSMISSION 7-speed auto, RWD

WEIGHT 1,590kg

0-62MPH 6.7sec

TOP SPEED 151mph

FUEL CONSUMPTION 56.5mpg

CO2 EMISSIONS 132g/km

YEARS PRODUCED 2012-2016

All figures from Mercedes-Benz; fuel
consumption according to NEDC combined

Perhaps not the best first impression, but we went on to say, "Maximum torque arrives at just 1,600rpm, which means you barely need to venture above 2,000rpm to make like a whippet," and that the "SLK250 petrol is dealt a Sugar Ray Leonard-like, left hook by its torque-tastic diesel stablemate."

Fuel consumption was impressive, too. "On flowing A-roads, 45mpg is well within reach and during pure motorway driving we topped 55mpg without trying." But noting "the very un-sports car like engine note and the typical-of-a-diesel, low redline [are] the biggest barriers to driving enjoyment."

What you'll pay

Production of the SLK250 CDI ran for five years, and prices now range from about £8,500 (or less if it's a rebuilt insurance 'write-off') for the first, 2012 cars to £17,000 for low mileage examples from 2016. For a higher price than this, you would be able to buy the equivalent SLC250d model. Not surprisingly for a two-seat sports car, SLKs can readily be found with low mileage, perhaps second or third cars in the household and used for fun only.

Capping the budget at £10,000 still allows a good choice, although at this price 70,000 miles or higher should be expected. It's likely that a non-AMG Sport would fetch less, but they are in the minority and the AMG Sport is a more attractive package.

We didn't expect official Mercedes dealers to still carry SLKs given the diesel powertrain and the youngest example is six years old. But when we checked, there was a choice, if not a large one, cars priced at between £13,000 and £17,000. ▶

CLS AMG cues. What of course didn't change was the cosy, close-fit cabin and the extraordinary, folding metal vario-roof that changed this car from a secure coupe to a fully open sports star in seconds.

The SLK250 CDI offered the same power as the turbocharged, 1.8-litre SLK250 petrol, and 100bhp less than the 3.5-litre SLK350 V6. But, unsurprisingly, on torque it was way ahead of both, even the SLK350's 272lb ft trailing it by 25 per cent. Under the bonnet was four-cylinder diesel technology at its peak at the time: fourth-generation common-rail injection and two-stage turbocharging, which also made the oil burner the runaway economy star of the range, its 56.5mpg on the combined test 13mpg clear of the next most miserly version, the SLK200 in automatic form.

There was only one transmission for the SLK250 CDI, the seven-speed 7G-Tronic Plus automatic. If the mile-stretching

economy alone didn't see customer resistance to a diesel-engined roadster melting away, the pricing would have been the clincher – the CDI was £13,470 cheaper than the 250 in comparable autobox form.

The SLK250 CDI was offered as the BlueEfficiency and also BlueEfficiency AMG Sport, and judging by what's for sale, a large proportion of the cars were the latter. Compared to the base car's 17-inch alloy wheels and cloth seat trim, the £4,000 Affalterbach marketing saw 18-inch rims, AMG body styling, 10mm lowered suspension, drilled front brake discs, steering wheel gearshift paddles, leather seating and AMG trim detailing. On top of this there was a long list of desirable optional extras, such as the Dynamic Handling Package (Direct Steer, Torque Vectoring Brake), Airguide wind deflector, Airscarf and two further choices on the vario-roof, the glass Panoramic version or the same with Magic Sky Control switchable transparency.

Sensibly, other than the CDI badging, Mercedes kept the diesel looking exactly the same as the petrol models, right down to the same twin-tailpipe exhaust system. It went on sale in the UK in 2012 and underwent a late, mild facelift in autumn 2014 along with the rest of the range, but there was no change to engine spec.

Driving the SLK250 CDI

By the time the R172 was launched in June 2011, the SLK had been honed into a near faultless little roadster. However, the question was whether it successfully recast itself as a turbodiesel car, and back in 2012 *Mercedes Enthusiast* put the then brand new SLK250 CDI under the microscope to see if it had done so.

"Turn the key and instead of a buzzy, petrol start-up, the OM651 diesel motor grunts itself awake then steadies with a smooth feeling yet rugged sounding idle," we wrote. "This is an alien development in an otherwise familiar train of events."

SLK250 CDI Inside and out



Specialist overview

Steve Dickens of Autoclass Garage in Milton Keynes

"The OM651 diesel engine was used in a lot of Mercedes-Benz cars at the time, and is generally reliable, although it does suffer some issues. The R172 has a galvanised body, so I have not seen any issues with corrosion, but check all panel gaps are OK - if it doesn't look right, it could have been in an accident. Also check that all the electrical functions work."

www.autoclassgarage.co.uk

Powertrain

- The OM651 is normally reliable, but sometimes suffers coolant leaks from the water pump and fuel filter housings. Various sensors, especially on the exhaust and diesel particulate filter (DPF) system can fail, causing the engine management light in the instrument panel to illuminate.
- Early engines suffered with fuel injector issues, which caused breakdowns. However, it's very likely that the affected cars were recalled under the factory warranty and the problem dealt with.
- All UK SLK250 CDIs have an automatic transmission - Mercedes' 722.9 gearbox. This is usually very reliable, although it can be affected by a faulty speed sensor, necessitating replacement of this or even the gearbox ECU. The problem was mostly seen on early cars.
- The state of the gearbox oil is crucial for gearbox longevity. Make sure it has had its oil service at five years or 77,500 miles.



2.1-litre diesel has two turbos; integrated dash screen; paddleshifters.



Suspension, steering and braking system

- The suspension is largely trouble-free, but front suspension arm ball joints can wear, causing a knocking noise. The same symptoms can indicate worn anti-roll bar links, and in both cases trouble is more likely at higher mileage.
- The steering is rack and pinion, unlike the vague-feeling recirculating ball system on the original R170 SLK, and should be responsive. Pulling to one side suggests a tracking problem, but specialists rarely report steering problems.
- Brakes should be inspected to ensure that there is life left in the discs, a 'lip' on the outside a sign that they are, or will be soon, in need of replacement. On the road test check that the car brakes without the judder that can be due to warped discs. Pulling to one side under braking can be due to a sticking caliper.



Wet and windy outside? That's no problem for the SLK's folding metal roof.

**Spotted
for sale**
USED CAR DEALER
SLK250 CDI AMG Sport
2013/62 plate, Diamond White,
black leather, 42,000 miles,
£12,490, Hampshire

The SLK has lovely rear haunches; this car is in top AMG Sport spec.



“All UK SLK250 CDIs have an automatic transmission”

Bodywork and wheels

- Check carefully for accident damage, overspray on body panels the most obvious sign. It pays to see if it has ever been an insurance write-off - advertisements on the Auto Trader site, for example, will state whether the car is a legally rebuilt insurance write-off, either a Category C or D write-off. These cars will have been repaired adequately, but their history tends to

adversely affect their market value.

- Corrosion should not yet have developed, even on the first cars, thanks in part to the galvanised body.

- Look closely at the wheels, a variety of 17- and 18-inch diameter designs. They may be a diamond-cut finish, particularly the AMG style, and these are prone to varnish peeling off and the alloy corroding.



The cabin has a chunky look and feel; Airscarf neck heating an option.

Interior and electrics

- The key check here is that the roof operates correctly. The R172, regardless of engine variant, suffers from water entry via the metal roof, this caused by poor seam sealing of the top panel. This is expensive and time-consuming to repair, as the roof top needs to be removed and cavity wax injected, and then refitted with new seals. Look for signs of water entry, especially on the front corners of the roof where it meets the A-pillars. Staining on the inside in this area is a tell-tale sign.

- Check all the electrical equipment works, especially if the car has the Airscarf system, as the motors for this neck warming feature can fail; heated seats can also stop heating. Sound system head units can crash or continually restart themselves, which could require simply a software update - or a new head or Comand unit.



SLK250 CDI Inside and out

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SLK250 CDI AMG Sport
2014/64 plate, Obsidian Black, red
leather, 31,543 miles, £15,995,
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Verdict

The SLK250 CDI is a typical modern Mercedes-Benz – stylish, convenient and beautifully engineered, and durable well into six figures, if it has been properly maintained. So your petrol/diesel decision should be based on none of the above – but possibly on what your ears tell you!

Whereas the SLK350's V6 zings pleasurably, and the four-pot petrol turbo units rev smoothly, the Stuttgart turbodiesel didn't throw off its turgid warble for the SLK installation, and this and the low, diesel-style rev limit would spoil the enjoyment for some. But if the soundtrack's irrelevant for you, the CDI-powered SLK is highly recommended – everything you already loved about the R172, but as miserly as a supermini.

Typical basic servicing costs

(A/B services including VAT)

MODEL	OIL SERVICE	MAJOR SERVICE
SLK250 CDI	£175	£305

Quotes from Autoclass Garage

Non routine servicing costs

- ★ Transmission fluid change – 5 years/77,500 miles **£285**
- ★ Replace automatic gearbox speed sensor (including gearbox service) **£895**
- ★ Replace leaking water pump (exchange unit) **£336**
- ★ Renew both front suspension arm ball joints **£174**
- ★ Replace front brake discs and pads **£350**
- ★ Four premium brand tyres (size 235/40R18 front, 255/35R18 rear) **£560**

What you'll pay

£8,000–£10,000 Early 2012 cars, with 100,000 miles plus, probably non-AMG Sport trim

£10,000–£12,000 AMG Sport cars from 2013, typically 75,000 to 100,000 miles, good condition

£12,000–£15,000 2013/2014 cars, some with under 50,000 miles. M-B dealer cars start at £13,000

£15,000–£17,000 At this price only consider late, 2015/2016 cars with sub-30,000 miles and Euro 6 ULEZ compliance



Economy and emissions

Until Dieseltgate erupted, it was likely that people chose diesel cars as much for their torquey power delivery as for their superior fuel economy, or indeed took them because they were the models car makers promoted and incentivised most. But what actually is the financial advantage of a diesel?

It's impossible to state the case precisely, because maintenance requirements differ between petrol and diesel, particularly at higher mileage. But on fuel alone, and based on the combined test minus 10 per

cent for a reality check, 10,000 miles in an SLK250 will at present UK prices cost around £2,200, the diesel bill some £450 less. A saving but not a major one.

Another aspect to consider is that while every petrol R172 is compliant with London's Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ), only the late, 2015/2016 EU6 SLK250 CDIs are compatible. Although ULEZ presently only affects drivers in London, it is increasingly impacting used car values.

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Roads scholar

A house move was just the beginning for Reed Hitchcock, who has been very busy of late, in the process making adjustments to the family fleet

WORDS & IMAGES REED HITCHCOCK

FACTSHEET

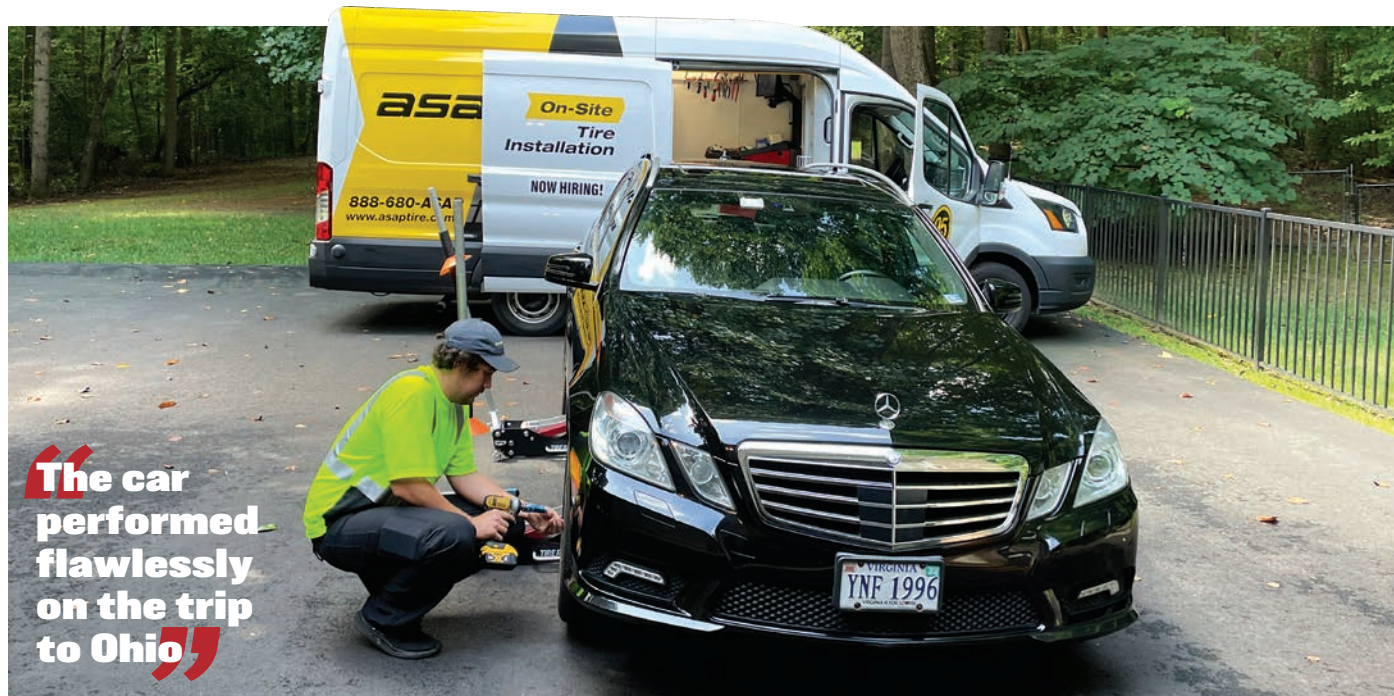
CARS 1986 560SL Roadster/1972 280SEL 4.5 Saloon/2002 ML320 SUV/2011 E350 Estate

OWNER Reed Hitchcock

LOCATION Virginia, USA

PURCHASED November 2021/April 2020/June 2018/May 2015

UPDATES SINCE LAST REPORT ML320 has moved on, new tyres for the E-Estate and the 560SL is lined up for a rally



The car performed flawlessly on the trip to Ohio

△ Reed decided on a new set of Vredestein Hypertrac tyres for the E.

It's been a busy summer season at the Hitchcock Garage. There have been fleet adjustments, service woes, a wholesale relocation, and now that the dust has settled we've even got some fun in the pipeline.

First off, in March the ML320 decided to go and live with a close family friend. We hadn't been using it much, as #2 daughter commandeered my BMW X5 (*Ack! The horror!*) after I came home one day with a proper, full-sized American pick-up truck. Like you do.

In any case, after a rocky start thanks to an exhausted battery, it's now living in central Pennsylvania and at last report was still delivering the goods on a daily basis. I was sad to see that one go, as it had really served us well despite all the naysayers on the W163s in general. I've said it before and I'll say it again: get a

well-maintained, post-2002 W163 and you'll have a great and highly capable vehicle – even if the heated seats get flaky, or the finish comes off the D-pillar trim.

Then in April we made a sudden decision to move house. We had the opportunity to sell high and buy low, which also meant a new garage for me! It's still just two spaces, and I still have to beg my mother to use her spare garage for winter, but we painted the space and had a polyurethane coating applied to the concrete. With significantly more storage than our old house, I'm able to keep just cars and car-related stuff in the garage now. Incidentally, with five acres of land there just may be a separate workshop and garage in my future – but that's a ways off, I'm afraid.

New boots

The S212 E350 4Matic Estate retains its position as the car my wife won't let me sell, no matter what it costs us to keep. Actually, it's been pretty solid since the last major cash infusion. In fact, the most recent unscheduled work on it was almost discretionary. Last time it was in for a major service, the technician pointed out how the tyres – Continental DWSs – were excessively loud. I'd noticed it too, but my wife hadn't complained. Then we decided to drive

the car to deliver our daughter to university in Ohio some 450 miles away, and leading up to that I had a major service completed. Driving to the mechanic, the tyre noise was truly annoying, so upon returning from dropping off the car I ordered a set of highly rated Vredestein Hypertracs. So far, we are both extremely pleased – they are quiet, smooth, and seem much grippier in the wet. The car performed flawlessly on the trip to Ohio, during which it crossed 105,000 miles, and reminded me how good a happy 212 can be.

With the move, the 560SL has spent more time than I'd have liked in the garage, but recently it's started seeing much more of the light of day – morning coffee runs and so on. Excitingly, I was contacted about participating in an invitation-only road rally in September that will take us from the New York City metro area to the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York – about a 200-mile run on top of the 300 miles to get to the start from home. I've already got a buddy roped-in for co-piloting duties, and have bought all the spares I could reasonably expect to need, including plugs, wires, belts, cap, rotor, relays and voltage regulator. The weather should be near-perfect. 🏁

▽ Coffee runs for the 560SL, and an invitation to a road rally event.



Fighting fit

As autumn draws near, the 190E's owner embarks on another round of tinkering to prepare the modern classic for cooler months

WORDS & IMAGES WILLIAM TERRINGTON

FACTSHEET

CARS 1989 190E/2011 E250 Coupe

OWNER William Terrington

LOCATION Surrey, UK

PURCHASED March 2014/March 2017

UPDATES SINCE LAST REPORT W201's interior spruced up and new brake pads fitted with note of partly seized caliper; Castrol engine oil also added

The 190E popped back to the specialist for new front brake pads



Recently I've been getting the 190E holiday ready. By the time this issue hits the shelves, it'll have been on a week's camping in the New Forest. Fortunately, a few years back I discovered a car-friendly campsite – just drive around on a nicely maintained site and pick a spot to set up base.

To make sure the classic saloon looks presentable, there will of course be the usual polishing and detailing, however this time I'll be trying another new product on the interior – Chemical Guys' HydroThread. Offering ceramic protection for interior fabric and carpets, reducing UV rays and repelling dirt and water, it looks promising. And for a great holiday soundtrack, a head cleaner is on order for the original cassette player!

The 190E needed to pop back to the specialist though, as a set of new front brake pads were required. On replacement, it turned out that I'll need to replace or refurbish the calipers next time they're due a pad change because the front left was a little seized, but was thankfully remedied this time.

That aside, the 190E has been running perfectly. Regular use driving to and from my other work – a gentle commute along Surrey B-roads – has seen the car become better to drive. Its new Pirellis have worn in nicely and have noticeably improved fuel economy. A new top up of oil has also been tried – Castrol GTX Ultraclean 10W/40 with MB 229.1 approval. As a result, the engine has been running very smoothly.

Parts sourcing

The subject of further ways to future-proof the 190 has arisen – not surprising given it's a regularly used classic. Building up a stash of spare parts is a good way of doing this. One example was the prompt purchase of a spare radiator. Thanks to a chance browse online, I discovered that Mercedes only offers radiators for W201s with air con, which mine doesn't have. Browsing the website Autodoc revealed just two left from Mahle with the correct connections for cooling the automatic gearbox.

Due renewal at some stage is my

△ The 190E served as holiday transport to the New Forest area.

car's rear window seal. It's not an urgent issue but genuine seals are available from Mercedes, so it's best to purchase one whilst they're around. Another impromptu purchase was that of a new grille emblem, as the original is looking rather tired. Once again, this item is no longer produced by Mercedes-Benz, but a small supply of new ones can be found online. However, its fitting can wait until the concours!

On the E-Class front, the E250 Coupe continues to take the back seat. However, I'm pleased to report that the service has improved performance: it revs more freely and even averaged 45mpg on the motorway! Impressive for a petrol engine. The rubber bushings for the front anti-roll bar are perishing, so that's a small job to do soon. Thankfully they come with a split, so removing the whole roll bar isn't necessary.

Up soon though is giving the underside a seriously good clean, and applying the CG's Bare Bones underside detailer – the same treatment the 190 received. It turns out it's rather effective as tyre dressing...

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W202 C200 AMG 2000, 128,000 miles, one owner, grey leather seats and interior all in excellent condition, bodywork very good, full servicing records held, MOT until March 2023, all in good running order, viewing available at any time, £4,000. Tel: 07974 381315. Abergavenny [JKW2]



W123 300D 1984, 55,000 miles, automatic, immaculate interior, ex South Africa via Portugal, outstanding paintwork thanks to repair work around rear window, the engine is perfect commensurate with mileage, £16,500. Tel: 07415 129117. Surrey [JKW3]



Unimog U1000 Turbo 1983, ag spec, three-way tipper, CAT2 linkage, rear PTO, air brakes, pickup hitch, engine rebuilt, new turbo, rams rebuilt, brakes overhauled, cab tips, £15,000 ONO. Tel: 07545 265075. Andover [JKW4]



SLK230 K 1999, 108,300 miles, recent oil and filter service, new MOT until July 2023, four excellent Continental tyres, designo blue/black interior with heated leather seats, original M-B audio 10 radio/CD can be provided if required, £3,300. Tel: 07730 437219. Horsham [JKW5]



R107 300SL 1987, 39,000 miles, absolutely original concours sold by the SL Shop, Nautic Blue/cream MB-Tex, original service book, extensive history, spare unused, £75,000. Tel: 07818 420620. Goodwood [JKW6]

E320 2002, AMG spec, FSH, 177,000 miles, white leather interior walnut dashboard, alloys, AMG extras, sale due to lack of use, 11 months MOT, private plate not included, suit Mercedes devotee, £2,350 ONO. Tel: 07523 195247. Porthcawl [DE]



W116 280SE 1976, totally original, two owners from new, RHD with full leather interior, assembled and owned in South Africa, no rust, £10,990. Tel: 07808 528752. Northampton [JKW7]



E200 Kompressor 2004, 51,465 miles, my sister and I have owned this car from new, reluctant sale, FSH, gearbox service, good condition, registration not with car, £5,000 ONO. Tel: 07973 399578. Manchester [JKW8]



W203 C320 30,000 miles, avantgarde, 3.2 V6, auto, ex Jersey car, leather trim like new, four new tyres and alloys just refreshed, parking sensors, air con with sunroof, all books, warning triangle, immaculate, future classic, EPOA. Tel: 07966 139882. Saddleworth [JKW9]

E320 CDI Auto, black, beige leather, light interior, electric heated seats, full electrics, sunroof etc., FSH, always garaged, two keys, registration LS56 KUV, as new, 79,000 miles, no offers, £9,995. Tel: 0208 505 4678. Woodford Green [CD]



SL500 1996, 60,000 miles, FSH, dry stored, excellent original paint, no corrosion, major service 2,000 miles ago at M-B, new front suspension, gearbox, diff and power steering services done, new front and rear brakes, original 16-inch wheels and AMGs included, hardtop relined, £19,250 ONO. Tel: 07977 553391. Birmingham [JKW10]



SL500 2003, 33,000 miles, one owner and garaged from new, Graphite Napa leather interior with walnut steering wheel and internal trim, fully automatic roof, heated seats, £14,950. Tel: 01772 782362. Preston [JKW11]



SLK230 Kompressor 2001, 86,000 miles, one careful owner since new, automatic Tiptronic transmission, 2 keys, comprehensive service history, cruise control, black leather interior, air con, excellent tyres, remote central locking, alarm and immobiliser, £2,300. Tel: 07720 401691. Oxhill [JKW12]

600SEL V12, 1992, 408bhp, silver, blue leather, excellent condition, 87,000 miles, extensive history, very rare, only 63 left in UK, enthusiast, collectors or investment car. £16,000, Tel: 07815 530652. Buntingford [CD]

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W123 230CE 1985, 134,000 miles, MOT, drives well, lots of history, good tyres, stainless steel exhaust, needs work, £3,900 ONO. Tel: 07836 769915. Surrey **[JKW14]**



W114 MB Crayford LWB estate Totally one-off, ex-motor show, fully rebuilt to as new in 2010, then into private collection, never worked for hire/weddings, called 'The Dachshund', three rows of seats for eight people, £POA. Tel: 07733 111736. Oxford **[JKW15]**



C240 Elegance 34,000 miles, 2.6-litre V6 auto, very low mileage, owned by a Mercedes enthusiast for 16 years, garaged and SORN for last 12 years, recent MOT and service, FSH, usual Elegance refinements including full leather, parking sensors, memory seats, £POA. Tel: 07463 993934. Buckinghamshire **[EFW15]**



E320 1995, 121,000 miles, saloon, Sportline chassis, with original owners pack, MOT, good condition, wonderful car, £POA. Tel: 07733 218261. Romsey **[EFW4]**



E240 Avantgarde 2002, 118,000 miles, two owners, silver, recent MOT, new shock absorbers, serviced regularly, smooth runner, glass tinted roof and sunroof, personalised numberplate, £2,950 ONO. Tel: 07970 128889. Maidenhead **[EFW2]**



CLK Cabriolet 2008, 140,000 miles, three-litre V6, in stunning condition, electric heated leather, full Mercedes history, looks like new, garaged and well cared for, drives smooth and quiet, upgraded Bluetooth and Apple CarPlay, new MOT and service, £3,995. Tel: 07456 163794. Kent **[EFW5]**



R171 SLK200 Kompressor 2008, 66,997 miles, long MOT, metallic dark blue with ivory leather interior, last service less than 12 months ago, part service history (last nine years), car based in mid Wales, viewing recommended, £4,900 ONO. Tel: 01686 651284. Welshpool **[EFW7]**



500SEL 1986, 62,352 miles, very good condition, runs and drives, not being used, rust on underside of bonnet, light rust to bottom of doors, small hole in rear windscreen frame, £5,000. Tel: 07979 611071. Reading **[EFW6]**



W115 320.4, 33,000 miles, absolutely original concours award winning car recently approved by SL Shop, grey blue/blue Tex, manual, Blaupunkt radio, original service book, extensive history, spare unused, £24,500. Tel: 07818 420620. 651284. Welshpool **[EFW7]**



E300 TD Estate 1999, 234,000 miles, automatic, one owner from new, silver/grey leather, seven seats, ESR, towbar, used daily, now need garage space, £1,100 ONO. Tel: 07836 232969. Worcester **[EFW9]**



CLK230 Kompressor Avantgarde 2002, Tiptronic, silver, only two owners in 20 years, FSH, Merc specialist last 10 years, MOT March 2023, no advisories, AMG alloys, two-tone leather, potential classic, sensible price, £1,490. Tel: 07710 198665. Halifax **[EFW16]**



CLK320 Avantgarde 114,000 miles, convertible, five-speed auto, FSH, MOT until April 2023, drives beautifully, roof works perfectly, great condition inside and out, £2,200. Tel: 07563 670417. Southampton **[EFW10]**



A180 £26,500. Tel: 07927 809373. UK **[EFW11]**



221-series S300 2011, 40,000 miles, limousine saloon, petrol V6, auto, Tanzanite Blue metallic/brown leather, B and gearbox service at 36,000 miles, imported from Singapore last year, excellent condition, full spec on request, £9,850 ONO. Tel: 07950 825710. Tyne and Wear **[EFW14]**



C180 SE 2003, 56,000 miles, classic auto, two owners, service history, drives well, nice clean example with electric windows, cruise, alloys, electric mirror, air con, long MOT, bargain for low mile car, £2,495. Tel: 07961 808069. Wimbledon **[EFW18]**

C240 1998/V reg in original condition regularly serviced, 80,000 miles from new with MOTs and all bills, in fair condition, new tyres, alloys, starts first time every time, sensible offers accepted. Tel: 07504 729127. Croydon **[DE]**



E220 1995, 96,000 miles, auto, convertible, two owners, all original booklets and stamped service book (8 stamps), low mileage and been cared for, drives very well and great condition too, heated beige seats, centre walnut storage box, latest Bluetooth stereo, airbags, electric mirror and remote central locking alarm, great value for a future classic with low miles, £9,995. Tel: 07961 808069. Wimbledon [EFW17]



S124 300TE 1990, 95,000 miles, three owners, Astral Silver with blue leather and walnut trim, extensive mechanical and bodywork restoration since 2017, massive history file, stunning condition inside and out, fitted with period three-spoke Brabus monoblock 17-inch alloys, £10,495. Tel: 07970 275792. Chichester [EFW19]



E280 CDI Estate 2006, seven-seater, diesel, automatic, Cubanite Silver, grey leather, 108,000 miles, excellent condition, lots of service history, long MOT, £3,250. Tel: 01483 282830. Surrey [DEW26]

C240 1998/V reg in original condition regularly serviced, 80,000 miles from new with MOTs and all bills, in fair condition, new tyres, alloys, starts first time every time, sensible offers accepted. Tel: 07504 729127. Croydon [DE]



C270 CDI Elegance SE Saloon, automatic/Tiptronic, showroom condition, Brilliant Silver, unmarked Pacific Blue interior, one driver from new, 52 Reg, 34,900 miles, no short runs of less than 30 miles, garaged from new, fitted with a heated/dehumidifier, usual MB refinements: electric seats, cruise, heated mirrors etc., serviced and MOT'd exclusively by Mercedes main dealer from new, full records, original handbook/documents, full set of keys, exceptionally well cared for, £5,250. Email: Bazhylda1.11@outlook.com. Buckinghamshire [CM36W6]



280SL 1983, 138,000 miles, Forest Green bodywork, parchment interior, MOT May 2023, hard and soft tops, history, super bodywork, recovered seats, beautiful chrome, steering overhauled, new brakes/calipers as needed, beautiful looking car and drives great, ready to be used, enjoyed and loved, £19,995. Tel: 07932 666491. West Midlands [EFW25]



W140 S280 1998, five-speed automatic, fantastic condition, in Brilliant Silver with black leather interior and walnut trim, FSH 3x M-B main dealer, 2x M-B specialists, 2x other, three owners, kept off road in heated garage over winter, £14,950. Tel: 07887 777147. Lincoln [EFW27]



123-series 230CE 1985, 134,000 miles, MOT, drives well, lots of history, good tyres, stainless steel exhaust, needs work, £3,900 ONO. Tel: 07836 769915. Surrey [EFW26]



220 CDI Elegance 2003, 34,000 miles, MOT June 2023, FSH, in very good condition, £3,750 ONO. Tel: 07707 509448. Aberdeen [EFW28]



SL500 1998, 44,600 miles, black, grey leather, light wood, electric heated memory seats, xenon lights, panoramic hardtop, SH, MOT Nov 2022, £34,500. Tel: 01692 630441. Norfolk [EFW21]



A180 Sport 2016, automatic, 66 plate, half leather interior, three new tyres, just had new brakes and discs, been fully serviced, 51,000 on the clock, recorded in 2018 as Cat S, runs and drives really well, airbag light keeps coming on but have no time to take it in. POA. Tel: 07806 771571. Tamworth [CDW4]



E280 Avantgarde 2007, 85,000 miles, genuine D5 Brabus conversion, selling due to no garage now, every extra you would expect, recent MOT and all new tyres 295 on rear 20-inch barbs refurbed alloys, well looked after mostly in storage and summer outings, any trial welcome or text for more pictures, £POA. Tel: 07949 620118. Grimsby [EFW22]



350SL 1980, 95,000 miles, automatic, owned for the last 28 years, Thistle Green, new soft top and original hardtop, well maintained both mechanically and bodywork, stainless steel exhaust, drives beautifully, £19,500. Tel: 01977 515575. Leeds [EFW24]



E-Class Cabriolet Sportline 1993, I have owned the car for 10 years, in storage for past three, FSH with plenty of bills, £POA. Tel: 07565 006735. Cambridge [DEW6]



230E 1990, 21,338 miles, fully undersealed, new condition, original tires, toolkit, first aid kit, concours apart from stereo, one UK owner, three previous in Jersey, Champagne metallic, unmarked wood and cloth, lifetime garaged, service, MOT on sale, stamped history, £14,995. Tel: 07824 476564. Thornton-Cleveleys [DEW1]



E55 AMG 2004, 28,500 miles from new, paperwork to prove, FSH, dry-stored from new, owned by wealthy Japanese businessman, driven only 250 miles in six months, factory carbon fibre spoiler and rear splitter, £POA. Tel: 07825 374132. Falmouth [DEW3]



AMG S63 2013, last of 221-series, outstanding, 40,000 miles, special Java tan interior, fully serviced, long MOT, £42,500. Tel: 01483 282830. Surrey [DEW25]



220E 1994, reg M988 AGO, convertible, silver with black soft top, heated front seats, air conditioning £8,500 ONO. Tel: 01268 725128. Basildon [DEW12]



CLK 320 CDI AMG Sport 2006, only 114,000 miles, grand tourer, serviced above and beyond by specialists, very good condition for year, only selling due to being able to cycle to work now, good home sought, park sensors, leather, auto, rare dual Tiptronic, privacy glass, memory seat, 6x CD changer, MoT Mar 2023, wheels refurbed, just had service, great economy, great torque and power, £4,299. Tel: 07792 887729 Stockport [DEW36]



190E modern classic and one of the last over-engineered Mercedes, 70,301 miles, manual transmission, 1.8L, very original, minor paint chips, very good history and paperwork, £7000. Tel: 07976 968723. Albury [DEW11]



320CE 1993, black, available with FSH (Automer in recent years) in SE10 (London) available, drove 10,000 miles on European ventures in year before lockdown (including down to Greece and back), but it has been serviced annually since, I bought K59MMM in May 2012 from CCB, £POA. Tel: 07711 761232. Greenwich [DEW10]



C36 AMG 1996, 170,000 miles, great condition, head gasket and wiring loom replaced, Koni adjustable suspension, new discs, lots done, have owned the car for 12 years, has a couple of items which need sorting mainly fan and air con, reluctant sale but space needed, £8,250. Tel: 07976 923091. Cardiff [DEW20]



SL500 R129 1992, rare LHD, 83,000 miles, one UK owner registered, fully loaded including electric windows, mirrors, seats, steering column, heated seats, cruise, black leather, Lorinser alloys, hard top roof, excellent throughout, £16,950. Tel: 07703 176137 Sunderland [DEW38]



E280 Elegance, 57 plate, 7Gtronic automatic, Airmatic suspension, Parktronic, split rear folding seats, hands free, Indium Grey metallic, interior seats Palma Grey cloth, burr walnut wood, very low mileage 14,000, serviced at same main dealer since new, pristine condition, £8,495. Tel: 07751 560818 Hertfordshire [DEW30]



260E 1991, straight-six 2.6, legendary Mercedes engineering, MOT until November, bodywork needs attention, arches mainly, roadworthy UK example, recent service including both fuel pumps, needs a good home, £3,500 offers considered. Tel: 07521 227883. Nottingham [DEW21]



230CE, low owners, 64,000 miles, reg'd Dec '89, spec includes leather, sunroof, a/c, sale due to lack of use, recent maintenance includes head gasket, full service, gearbox service, discs/pads, 4 tyres, radiator, gearbox pipes, fuel filter and more, excellent, £POA. Tel: 07809 200005 Caterham [DEW31]



E270 CDI Estate 2005, 7-seater, green, 205,000 miles, passed last 3 MOTs, had 3 injector back brake pipes replaced, last owner of 4 years has original invoices of regular repairs and servicing, good solid reliable Merc, £2,500. Tel: 07592 176617 Bolton [DEW32]



500 SL 1991, appreciating classic with 106,000 miles, in excellent condition, had major overhaul 2 years ago by Mercedes specialist, drives excellently with many new parts, new MOT etc, rust free example ready to use every day, £12,000 ONO. Tel: 07710 552677 Weston-Super-Mare [DEW33]



280SL 1995, convertible (R129) automatic with hard top/soft top, finished in silver with grey leather interior, grey over mats, roll over safety bar, wind deflector, cd/stereo, air con, electric windows, alloy wheels, good tyres, service history, 69,500 miles, MOT to Nov '22, boot spoiler, rear parking sensors, new spare tyre, tool kit, new hard top roof lining, in very good condition, part exchange possible, £11,995. Tel: 07831 511781 West Sussex [DEW34]



S55 AMG 2001, 87,000 miles, showroom condition, MBSh, 3 previous owners, rare Titanite Red with Saffron Nappa leather, fully loaded with every extra including rare Distronic adaptive cruise control, unbelievable history file, no expense spared, I believe to be the best example in the UK, £11,995 ONO. Tel: 07572 056231 West Yorkshire [DEW35]

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CLK V6 320 CDI 2005, silver, 149,000 miles, one owner from new, full Mercedes service history (last service 01/22), MOT until 08/22, Distronic, Keyless Go, sun roof, leather heated seats, Command Sat Nav etc. personalised number plate (J55CLK) included in price although will sell either separately, £3,499. Tel: 07885 156001 Essex [DEW39]



E320 CDI Elegance 2001, 94,943 miles, 3.2-litre diesel, five-speed automatic Tiptronic, two previous owners, MOT expired October 2018, not driven since, silver, black leather interior, £2,000. Tel: 07778 405300. St Neots [CDW5]



CLK320 Avantgarde Auto, full service history with loads of paperwork, just had service with my local Mercedes specialist, good condition inside and out, drives absolutely beautifully, roof works perfectly and hood in good condition, just been weatherproofed, old school Mercedes which I purchased on the advice of my local Mercedes specialist, the 3.2 with the five-speed auto is a fantastic combination of reliability and simplicity. Becoming rare now, Mercedes enthusiast owned, get ready for the summer with this fantastic car, no time wasters please, POA. Tel: 07563 670417. Southampton [CDW10]



C55 AMG 2005, saloon, 56,632 miles, only 105 of these beautiful beasts registered on the road (DVLA Q2 2021), probably one of the best of them. Recent MOT and service by Mercedes-Benz Brooklands, FMBSH, immaculate inside and outside – 5.5 litres of pure AMG muscle, normally aspirated engine, gone up in value every year I've owned it. Insured by Adrian Flux Classic Car Insurers with agreed value of £15,000. Comes with four brand new tyres, tracker, uprated Tarox discs, pads and braided hoses, new M-B battery, 18-inch alloy wheels, climate control, electric windows (front/rear), ESP and ABS, in-car entertainment (radio/CD autochanger), metallic paint, electric front seats with memory and heating seats, leather upholstery, £14,000. Tel: 07415 936750. West Molesey [CDW6]



W126 300SE 1988, immaculate, white with blue velour interior, 174,000 miles with a great history portfolio, recent mechanic overhaul including major service, brakes, seals and all works as required, long MOT, no expense spared, low owners and HPI clear, drives like a dream, only £5,450. Tel: 07870 963662. Leicester [CDW3]



SL320 1994, 83,000 miles, excellent engine and automatic transmission, clean grey leather interior, good soft top and hardtop, nice alloy wheels and good tyres, wind deflector, new battery, recent new brake discs fitted, new spark plugs, oil change, drives very nice, POA. Tel: 07895 954531. Hertfordshire [CDW24]



C43 AMG Bought the car in 2001 at three years old with about 15,000 miles on the clock, current mileage approximately 121,000, maintained by J Haynes who will support any enquiries, please call for more details, £6,000 OVNO. Tel: 07762 776244. Worthing [CDW9]



W111 220SEb Coupe 1961, LHD, manual floor change, steel sliding sunroof, arrived in the UK from the States as a very solid rust free example, owned by me from 2017 having since undergone a comprehensive restoration including total bodywork and repaint (DB906 grey Blue metallic), retrimmed in leather (1088 Bright Red), new veneer, headlining in correct cloth, mechanical overhaul with many new genuine and refurbished parts, displayed at M-B World Brooklands for many months and now stored in a Carcoon, stunning and never used since completion, £48,950. Tel: 07976 254804. Hampshire [CDW18]

INTERNATIONAL MERCEDES



560SL 1989, 96,500 miles, PS, PB, electric windows and door locks, 2 USB ports, new soft top, hardtop, very good condition, all new carpeting, \$30,000. Tel: +1 1714 299 9264. California [EFW1]



300SE 1965, automatic, RHD, in two-tone maroon and white top with a beautiful beige interior and wooden dashboard to compliment the ride, car starts and runs, air suspension in running condition, minimal rust, car can be shipped to the UK, £85,000 ONO. Tel: +65 8118 4948. Singapore [EFW3]



230SL 1964, 144,000 miles, dark Bordeaux (573), Crema Tex, all necessary restoration work during my 12 years ownership noting Build Card, £74,000. Tel: (00) 353 872 401 819. Dublin [EFW12]



W202 C36 AMG 1996, 310,000 km, green black/black interior, in excellent condition, completely original and unmolested, LHD, fully stamped MB service book plus loads of history from day one, this rust free car looks and performs as a C36 should, on UK plates kept at my home in the Algarve, EPOA. Tel: +351 289 489 662. Portugal [EFW13]



190C 1964, four-door saloon, 1,897cc four-cyl engine, 79bhp/113lb ft torque, four-speed manual gearbox, 0-62mph in 15.9 seconds, EPOA. Tel: 00201222300041. Egypt [DEW4]



170V 1937, one of first Mercedes sold new in Portugal, LHD, original 1700cc gasoline engine, MOT until 2030, historic interest certificate, runs and drives like new, needs nothing, very rare in this condition with this originality, a true jewel, EPOA. Tel: 00351916269080. Portugal [DEW29]



280 SL Pagoda 1968, white, leather cognac, automatic transmission, completely maintained service booklet, invoices and service booklet are available, the condition grade is 2, EPOA. Tel: +49 7152 90163-0. Germany [DEW28]

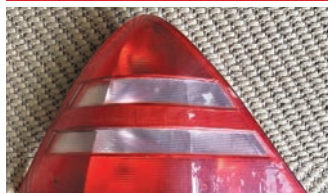


W201 190E 2.3-16 1983, unique, unit number 10 built, driven by two grand prix drivers – John Watson (in the Race of Champions, won by Ayrton Senna) and Manfred Winkelhock (the first owner after Mercedes Germany). This is one of 20 RoC cars and only four are known to still exist (Lauda, Senna, Schurti and Watson), POA. Tel: +34699 249085. Barcelona [CDW22]

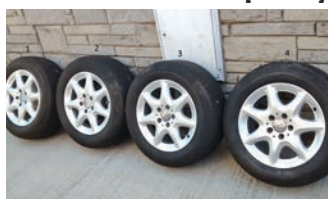


280SL 1983, only 101,093 miles, Mercedes maintenance book, many photos and documents on demand, beautiful car, right-hand drive, POA. Tel: 06071 42044. Lyon, France [BCW12]

PARTS, MISC & ACCESSORIES



SLK230 rear left side light panel and centre console lid Fits 1996 to 2000 models, £60 for light panel, £20 for lid – £70 for both plus postage from Ireland. Tel: (089) 400 1255. Dublin [EFW20]



Original W220 S-Class wheels 16-inch Carmenta alloys front and rear, wheels/rims in good condition, tyres not suitable for road use, all four wheels for £200. Tel: 01254 824277. Lancashire [EFW23]



E-Class facelift grille Centre for E-Class facelift model 2013 to 2016, star logo not included £100. Tel: 02866 341988. Enniskillen [EFW13]



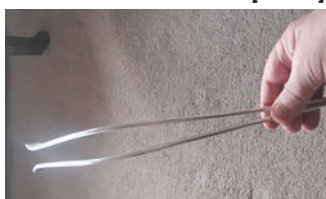
W212 E-Class facelift engine undertray Sump protector, facelift E-Class models 2013 to 2016, £130. Tel: 02866 341988. Enniskillen [EFW14]



107 SL & C107 SLC front wing rubber/chrome moulding Original Mercedes part, not cheaper aftermarket copies that do not look right, in good condition £50 ONO. Tel: 07818 222574. Milngavie [DEW8]



W212 E-Class SE parts 2013 – 2014, facelift model, two headlights, original Mercedes OEM, will fit from March 2013 and 2014 models, includes control units fitted, £1,290. Tel: 02866 341988. Enniskillen [EFW11]



107 SL & C107 SLC chrome eyebrows For above headlights, original Mercedes part, not cheaper aftermarket copies which do not look right, in good condition £75 ONO. Tel: 07818 222574. Milngavie [DEW9]



Four Mercedes Bundt wheels 4x14-inch, in perfect chrome, 14x6.5J, unused, stored since 2007, the invoice shows wheels were purchased in 2007 from a Mercedes specialist for \$796, this equates to \$1,100 in 2022 (£840), the wheels are sold as a set and not separately, £420. Tel: 07703 986781. London TW1 [DEW14]



AMG hardback book Dealer supplied, dated 2004, 14 models, great photos, specs, unmarked pages, as new, £12.50. Tel: 07399 359072. Canterbury [DEW2]

NO. PLATES

CHZ 8057

CHZ 8057 On retention, £1,495. Tel: 07836 259766. Birmingham [FG]

J55 CLK

J55 CLK Personal plate, dateless and a great numberplate for CLK enthusiasts, particularly the CLK 55 AMG, available on retention, £1,750 ONO. Tel: 07885 156001. Essex [EF]

300JB

300JB Personal plate, purchased from DVLA auction on retention, offers over £10,000 invited. Tel: 0208 707 4781. Feltham [DE]

2HWH

2HWH Personal plate, dateless, lowest digit available, on retention, all serious offers invited, £20,000. Tel: 07583 613521. Tamworth [DEW27]

BCL45S

BCL45S Personal plate, great numberplate for enthusiasts available and owners of the Mercedes-Benz 'B' Class, on a certificate, £25,000. Email: jb52543@gmail.com. Ilford [DE]

WANTED

Wanted Mercedes-Benz electrician, might suit semi-retired enthusiast, to work in West Midlands area, hours to suit. Tel: 07836 259766. Birmingham [FG]

W120 180 1953-1958, diesel, saloon, RHD or LHD, in pristine condition or a restoration project, will travel, £20,000 available. Tel: 0151 639 0149. Wirral [FG]

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SLK32 AMG 2002, 94,000 miles, full service history, V6, superb condition, new wings, respray, wheel refurb, new set of Rainsport tyres, new battery, recent new discs/pads, secondary cat delete, sold with full MOT, Alpine hi-fi, iPod connection, call for more info and pictures, £10,000. Tel: 07539 955573, Wivral [JKW48]



E320 Coupe 1994, blue/black over silver/grey, beige leather interior, sunroof, long MOT, very good condition, no rust, excellent engine and gearbox, lovely to drive, with many recent new parts to include, engine wiring looms, tyres, exhaust, suspension, £3,250 ONO. Tel: 07851 250111, Southport [JKW45]



230SL 2000, red with cream interior, excellent condition, fully loaded, 45,000 miles, full service history, £13,750. Tel: 07808 366076, East Sussex [JKW24]



123-series 230TE 1985, seven seater, automatic, Thistle Green metallic. This is a one off, collectors car with many extras and in superb condition, current recorded mileage is 7,519, top specification, heavily loaded sunroof, air conditioning, all electric windows, sun disc glass, graduated tinted front wind, electric mirrors, self levelling suspension, recommissioned at the beginning of the year, pristine condition, £23,800. Email: gemininternational@btworld.com Hampshire [JKW40]



E240 Elegance 2000, 6,000 miles from new, full Mercedes-Benz service history, one previous owner, superb all round, no rust, garaged from new, too much to list here so please call for a detailed history, £7,250. Tel: 07850 012794, North Yorks [JKW47]



190D 1987, manual, five-cylinder 2.5, diesel, MOT has 11 months condition, blue cloth interior, sunroof, radio/cassette player, car has been owned and garaged for the last four years, £2,500. Tel: 07791 561435, Glasgow [JKW44]



230E 1984, two lady owners from new, cherished and meticulously maintained, 112,000 miles from birth, genuine, cylinder head off with new valves in January 2016, brand new set of tyres, will be sold with 12 months MOT, nearest offer, £15,000. Tel: 01225 425096, Bath [JKW43]



R129 280SL 1994, Brilliant Silver metallic, black leather trim, 58,322 genuine miles, MOT until July 2018, completely original, exceptional condition throughout, eight-hole alloy wheels, original hardtop, lock barrel blanking grommet fitted, Blaspunkt Casablanca stereo, wind breaker, tool roll, original document pack, service history, two keys, old MOT's, receipts for work completed new...



CLK430 Cabriolet 2001, good condition, well looked after, example of this model, dark blue metallic, gold tyres, blue roof replaced two years ago, grey leather interior all good, she drives really well, 113,000 miles, serviced regularly and runs well, MOT until October 2017, new battery in June 2017, xenon conversion, Bose base boost system for music...



124 E200 Estate 1994, great low mileage wagon, all MOTs, three owners, lovely condition inside and out, steel slide/tilt roof, mats and mud flaps, no issues, MOT until January 2018, serviced and brakes done, roll packs renewed, a really nice, honest car...



C500 2002, factory original, LHD, imported from Germany in 2002, 47,000 miles from new, finished in rare, Tekkita Grey metallic, full black nappa leather interior, complete service history, original fully stamped service book, every MOT certificate since 2005, air conditioning, Command sat nav, electric sunroof, a truly outstanding example, unmoistened and...

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C180

With a mere 20,000 miles on the clock, this top condition 1995 C-Class was certainly one for the memory bank

WORDS & IMAGES ERIC RICHARDSON

The life cycle of mainstream cars can be broken down into distinct stages, beginning of course with the first flush of youth when a model is launched, normally with support from a global marketing campaign. Once a new generation version arrives, however, our model slips quietly into the background while still delivering the kind of service it did when factory fresh.

But as time goes on and its market value decreases further, the likelihood of botched maintenance and repair work under the direction of new owners increases. Eventually, the number of well-cared-for examples dwindles and, unless a particular car is extraordinary enough to assume 'classic' status, most become old bangers with a one-way ticket to the scrapyard.

Despite their premium status, Mercedes are not immune from this fate. The W201 190 range has now achieved recognition as a 'modern classic', but not before some difficult banger years that killed off many of these compact four-doors. But what about the model that replaced it in 1993, the W202 C-Class? Spend a few minutes browsing the classifieds and – if you ignore the 10 grand C36 and C43 AMG – you'll discover a large proportion of these C-Classes are valued at £1,000 or less. In fact, we saw a 220,000-mile C180 advertised for just £300.

Although clearly established as a modern banger, some admirers of the W202, including Yorkshireman Neil Connelly, believe the time has come to preserve the best of them. Which goes some way to explaining why he owns a 1995 C180 Elegance with just over 20,000 miles on the clock. "I'm confident that the W202s will become collectable in time," Neil declares. "Good ones are getting harder to come by, which means prices will eventually go up."

After five minutes looking over Neil's immaculate C180, I conclude that his must surely be among the most likely to assume collectable status. The Onyx Grey paint is totally



“The Onyx Grey paint is totally blemish free and even the wheel trims sparkle.”

▽ Owner Neil Connelly considers the W202 C-Class a Mercedes worth preserving.

▽ The interior of this Elegance-spec C180 was in fantastic overall condition.

blemish free and even the wheel trims sparkle. Open the driver's door and you find yourself staring at an interior that looks barely used. Suddenly I feel guilty for asking Neil to meet me in a gravel car park...

While the C180 may not be held in the same regard as say, the C43

AMG, for the car's original owner it held special significance in his life. He always kept the car garaged, never took it out in rain, and all servicing was carried out by an official Mercedes-Benz dealership. In choosing middling Elegance specification, he granted the car additional equipment over Esprit spec (Classic was base spec, Sport top), plus lower side cladding colour coded to the upper body paint. The hub caps have a chrome ring in their centre, and the light clusters feature clear glass sections instead of orange, giving the car a modern appearance.

On Yorkshire's empty roads, the C-Class proves its good health. The four-cylinder M111 engine, which pushes out 120bhp and 125lb ft of torque, requires extra encouragement when the swooping roads steepen, but with such competent handling and a comfortable ride, establishing why this car is cherished is easy.

For those seeking highly affordable, stylish, comfortable and economical transport, the C180 Elegance, with its 15-inch wheels and cushioning suspension, is hard to beat, especially one in such fantastic condition as this example.



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