

Eric the Viking – a restoration in many parts – August 2024

Spend since last report: £73. Total hours labour since last report: 16.1

The last issue was reserved for the Germany trip, so this is actually 4 months of very minor and rather eclectic updates.

I bought a diesel heater some years ago which in the short term was on the garage wall to take the edge off the winter cold. This was dismantled and built into the wasted space under the passenger seat. It took a little fiddling as the space is large enough for the heater but the entrance was too small. A section of bracing was removed and welded in a few inches away allowing the heater to pass into the hole. A hole was cut in the floor of that area for the exhaust pipe and air inlet and the 2mm thick steel plate provided with the heater was bolted into place. A 70mm hole was cut in the rear of the bulkhead to allow hot air into the cargo area as well. I have fashioned a very small fuel tank that also sits in the same area to run the heater at night. It is very discrete as well as functional.

The kitchen pod has been filled, sanded, epoxy primed and top coated on the inside and looks rather good. It cannot go in until the B post and C post are finished and top coated though, so it is sitting forlornly at the side of the garage. That left nothing needing white paint that was finished, so I sanded the dashboard, pedal and steering column sections before spraying them black and trial fitting them back in.

The wiring loom was removed some years ago and had been subjected to some “upgrades”. This included a lot of bullet connectors to join the front to the rear and plenty of extra wires serving unknown purposes. Every wire was removed from the fuse board, inspected, cleaned and the coil, ignition and main live cables from front to rear were replaced. The entire plastic shrouding from 1973 was hard, brittle and missing sections, so it was removed and discarded. The fuse board was filthy and slipped out of my hands, accidentally landing in the dishwasher whilst Lorna was out. Along with some of the plastic air vents. Once it was all clean and ready, the smaller cables like rear lights and indicators were rejoined, the whole loom rebuilt into the fuse board following the 1973 wiring diagram and the long snake hung from the fuse board.

Several rolls of fabric tape were used to give me a neat finish from the fuse board for about a metre. This was then passed through the hole in the floor in front of the passenger’s feet and onto the garage floor.

The brake lines were still not right, so to finish both brakes and wiring, Eric went onto his side again.

All brake joints were dismantled, checked and put back together or replaced. Malcolm’s advice was that making the end is all well and good but to finish it, you wind it down into the correct place.

With the van on his side, the rest of the wiring from front to rear was taped up and run as far as the engine bay. Then the reversing light switch on the gearbox received a pair of new cables in more fabric and that ran into the engine bay as well. Then finally, the brake light switch on

the new master cylinder also received a new pair of cables in fabric up to the fuse board. All told, that looked rather nice.

The rear windows had also seen better days and needed some attention – very frilly metal was removed, new sections added, and welds tidied up. The external covers on each side sit on clips nearly a metre long which had also perished and have been removed. New ones are a continuous U-shaped steel section, the old ones were more like fingers which makes them very fiddly to make. JK came to the rescue (with club discount) supplying the simple rectangle of steel folded over. There were no mounting holes either, so I drilled holes ready to weld them to the body.



Brake bleeding again. The plastic reservoir on top of the master cylinder was leaking, cylinder removed to the bench, issue traced to it not sitting correctly. Master cylinder refitted.

Brake bleeding again. The master cylinder was now leaking on the joint heading to the rear brakes. I'm not playing that game again – just that one end removed, and new flare added. Every time I remove a pipe leaking at one end, the other end leaks!

I would have done more, but since the last report, we have been to the AGM, Germany, the Cider farm, Cheddar, Herefordshire again, RAF Odiham and that is just club events. I'm going back to work for a rest!!