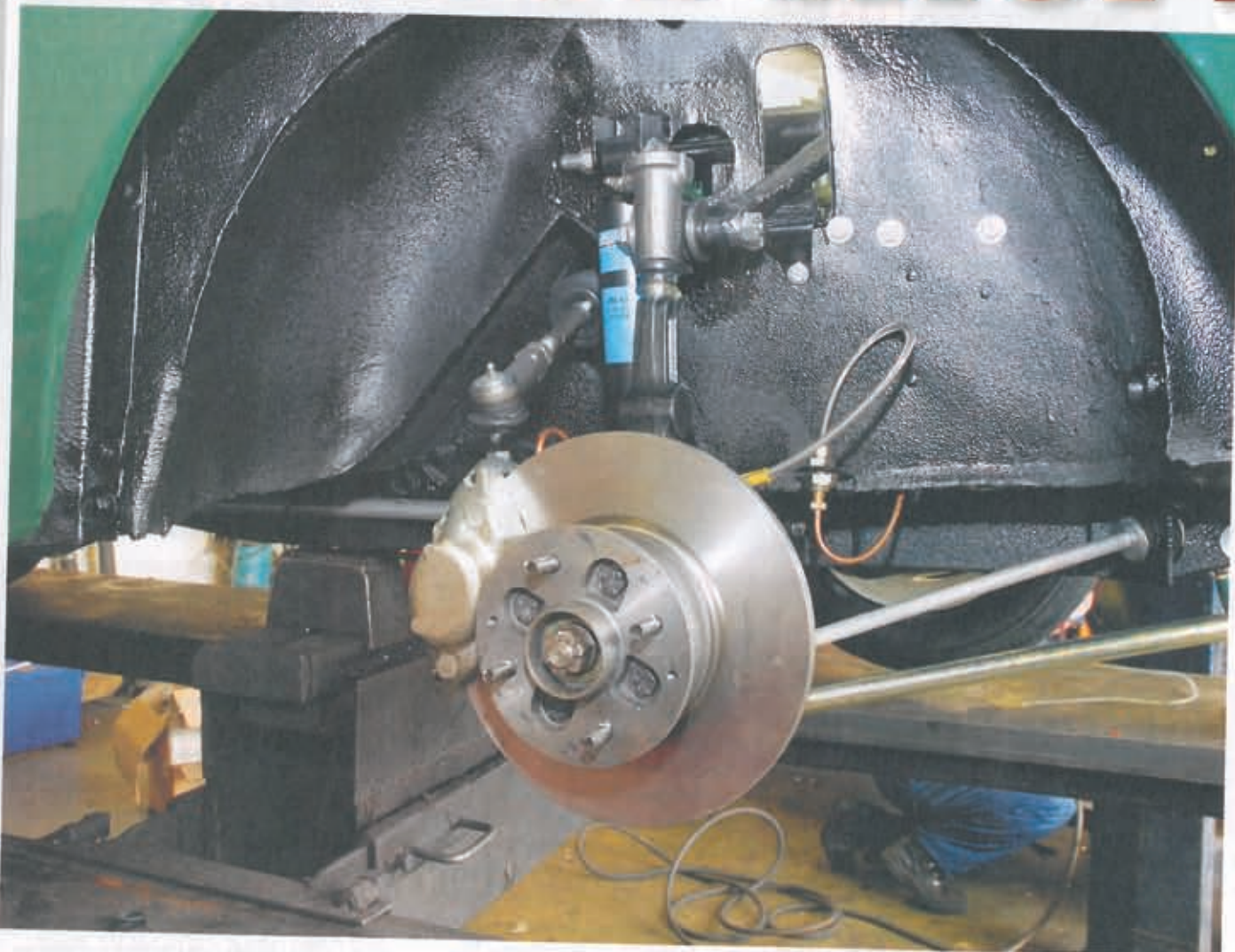


SERVICE SHOP:



Making your Minor stop: we run through braking upgrades for the evergreen Morris.

Words and pics: Paul Wager

In this job you find yourself driving a variety of different cars – both classic and modern – on a daily basis and it's often the difference in braking capability which is so noticeable on the '60s and '70s drum-braked cars.

Disc brakes are now pretty much universal, with even humdrum family hatchbacks often sporting them on the rear too, but as recently as the late '70s it wasn't unusual to find a car with all four wheels braked by drums.

A well set-up drum brake with good quality friction material isn't necessarily a bad thing and in the majority of cases the drums on classics were well up to the speed and type of driving for which they were designed. Fast forward to today though and the traffic generally moves faster – and crucially, stops faster too. It's not always possible to maintain the braking gap you'd like to have and

especially in city traffic, the physical effort required to stop adequately with non-servo drum brakes can become a pain.

All of which explains why disc brake conversions are one of the most popular upgrades to many popular classics and the Morris Minor is a case in point. When Issigonis designed the original sidevalve MM in 1948, its drum brakes were well up to the job of halting its 30 bhp on the sparsely populated postwar roads but BL's lack of development meant the Minor kept those drums right up to its demise in 1971.

A standard Minor stops well enough on its standard drums when driven conservatively, but the pedal does have a rather wooden feel and without any power assistance it does need a hefty shove to stop hard. Drivers unused to the cars will often find the brakes unnerving after a modern car, which coupled with the popularity

of go-faster mods on Minors means the brake upgrades are popular.

To find out what's involved in making your Minor stop like a modern, we visited Charles Ware's Morris Minor Centre in Bristol, where they offer a range of upgrades from remote top-up reservoirs to servo assistance and full disc conversions.

COSTS

Remote reservoir	£132 fitted
Servo kit	£474 fitted
Disc brake conversion	£780 fitted

Thanks to Charles Ware's Morris Minor Centre for letting us take up time in their busy workshop and explain the details of Minor brake upgrades. More details from www.morrisminor.org.uk or 0117 3003754.

BRAKING POINT



This is what you'll get if you order the full disc brake conversion: a pair of discs, a pair of brake callipers, the mounting brackets, backplates, the replacement hubs and a remote top-up reservoir. Plus of course all the crucial fitting brackets, bolts and brake pipes, ready cut and flared.



The remote reservoir can be fitted entirely separately from the rest of the brake upgrades and is worth doing as the standard Minor master cylinder lives in the chassis leg under the carpet. It's all too easy for the fluid level to get overlooked...



When converting from drums to discs, it's recommended that you install a remote fluid reservoir. The reason is that in a drum brake set-up, the wear in the shoes is taken up by the manual adjustment you need to do in order to keep the brakes working properly. Disc brakes on the other hand don't have this adjustment so as the pads wear the calliper piston has to move further out and there's a danger of running too low on fluid with only the standard master cylinder.



... whereas with the remote reservoir the fluid level can be checked from under the bonnet at a glance – a legal requirement in Germany where this Traveller was destined. Fitting is simple: the plastic reservoir is mounted under the bonnet and the feed pipe runs down inside the car...