

Improve the ride of your 20hp back to original specification.

We all think that our 20hp cars ride well – even if you haven't given the road springs a proper service for some time. Simply oiling the nipples on the gaiters is just not sufficient. The following method will improve the quality of the ride to something you'd expect from a modern Rolls-Royce and is easily performed in an ordinary garage even without a pit.

In the first instance, remove the gaiter and then the cotter pins and nuts on the 4 x U-clips that hold the spring together. These clips will pop off (and probably benefit from a good cleaning!). Then place a jack under the CHASSIS near to each wheel and slowly lift the corner. Once the wheel is well clear of the ground, place a support under the chassis in case the jack should slip/fail and lower the chassis onto the support.

You will now see that by lifting the weight off the axle, the body will have been raised and the axle will have dropped, opening the leaves. If you have access to an air-hose, pressure-hose the gaps between the springs. If not available, use a strong cloth ripped into strips and slide between the leaves and pull to each side. You will find a load of 'gunge' will come out – most of it probably solid grease. (Remember there's only one place on your car for grease, and that's WP Grease in the water pump gland!).

Once you are satisfied that you have removed as much gunge as possible, I would suggest a good spray of a silicone lubrication in an aerosol and this will coat the surfaces well and blow out any small bits left behind.

Now OIL between each leaf preferably with an 80/90 gear oil (as it hangs around a lot longer than engine oil). Give it a good dose so that it drips out.

Once completed, jack the pressure off the support you have put under the chassis, remove the support then SLOWLY let the jack down. This will put pressure on the wheel, lifting the axel and closing the leaves. You can now replace the U-clips, the nuts and of course the cotter pins. Check the tightness of the nuts after taking the car for a drive. If you have gaiters, refit. If not, get new ones made by www.wefco-gaiters.com. Great company and lovely people! These will protect the springs for years. Putting nipples on them has a limited value as the procedure above should be carried out every 10 years.

Do this to all four springs and then go for a drive.

I told you it would be better!

Andrew Sington.