

Bristol 401

Registration number: LHO 401

Chassis number: 401/1202

Engine number: 85C2220

Mileage: 44,700

A fantastic opportunity for someone to own a Bristol 401 and there is a genuine reason for selling. This car just needs finishing.

The work on this car has been carried out over a number of years with the past two owners.

The car was delivered to TT Workshops Ltd in 1979 for the bodywork to be done, they stripped the car completely and the body stripped back to the aluminium, the same company refurbished the suspension and steering finally giving the finished body a basic undercoat for protection.

The car was with TT Workshops for 15 years; work was carried out as and when the owner could afford to pay the restoration company.

Current owner purchased the vehicle in 2019. The car was still stripped down but all the major components were with the car, which included the original engine, gearbox and drive train. The reason for buying this particular car in the stripped down condition (which is always the worst thing to do) was he identified from the logbook it was registered within 4 days of current owners birth so this deal had to happen.

First task was getting the car to a workshop to identify what was missing and to be truthful the car was in effect 85% complete which was better than we expected.

The engine and gearbox was removed and the rest of the car checked to make sure all the work had been done to the suspension, steering etc., by the previous restoration company, this all checked out to be very good. The chassis in particular is in excellent condition with no corrosion or any sign of damage and painted as original finish.

The car was stripped and taken as a rolling body to Superspray Limited and to their head painter José, who has an amazing reputation for detail. The car body was taken back to bare metal and the only flaws found by José were two small holes in the lips of the front two wheel arches and two small holes in the web of the front nose, which he filled with aluminium welding, a very delicate process. (Please note these holes were not filled with filler). (Pictures of the car body stripped and prepared for paint available, also note that the chassis number is stamped on every panel removed).

It was identified the car's original colour was a blue / green colour but was decided British Racing Green would be used as the body colour. José also identified that the engine bay should be a satin black finish along with inside the boot.

Whilst the body was away being painted the current owner stripped the engine and identified that although there was very little wear, the engine needed to be rebuilt to a better specification. The block and head were cleaned and placed in the hands of Rob Walker

Engines in New Yatt Oxfordshire, he checked the bores, skimmed the head and fitted hardened valve seats, he also ground the crank shaft and provided +10th replacement bearings mains and big ends. Rob also confirmed the con-rods were straight and well within tolerance.

From Roderick Macpherson a Bristol Engine specialist, a set of Cosworth pistons and rings were obtained (developed for better combustion in race engines and are a work of art) along with a fast road profiled camshaft.

So along with new uprated oil pump, uprated cylinder head gasket, new valves, new head studs, complete gasket set, new clutch and a refurbished water pump, the engine has been put back together. With the help of Bristol Car Owners Club, he obtained the correct paint colour for the engine block, pale green. Whilst the engine was being prepared, the gearbox was taken to another Bristol specialist, to have it checked over and an overdrive unit fitted. Mike has a wealth of knowledge regarding Bristol cars and was a great help in obtaining parts that were hard to find.

Another important job, was to arrange for all the chrome items to be re-chromed using Castle Chroming in Dudley, where they finished all the chrome to an excellent standard as usual.

Obtaining a new complete wiring loom from Autosparks we began the task of rewiring the car. The dashboard was a complete nightmare, due mainly to the complexity of the Bristol design primarily based on aircraft wiring. I am sure the Bristol Beaufighter was less complex. A number of upgrades with the wiring including: LED upgrades for side lights so we could include indicators and brighter rear / stop lights. The front indicators are now located within the front fog lights, using a bi-colour LED bulb gives the car modern indicators without adding extra light fittings.

Note the original semaphores are also fitted with LED Flashing lights. A Dynalight alternator, which looks like the original dynamo was also fitted, giving the advantage of the extra power from an alternator, please be aware that the voltage regulator is now a dummy regulator housing the main vehicle fuses. In using the alternator the car has now been converted to Negative earth.

The three carburettors have all been refurbished and are set with the original needle valves and settings. The original cast manifolds were not the best for gas flow, a decision was made to improve the performance and take advantage of the upgraded engine components, we needed a better manifold and exhaust system. Using an exhaust specialist in Alex at Man to Automotive in Basingstoke he made a complete system that has improved the gas flow tremendously.

We did identify that the braking system had not been refurbished, so new master and slave cylinders have been fitted where required along with new flexible brake pipes front and rear. We did consider upgrading to disc brakes but the cost and the modifications needed far outweighed the improvement so right or wrong the braking system is as original.

Items not complete.

1. Windscreen and chrome fitting
2. Passenger door glass and winder mechanism
3. Some interior finishing panels, including rear armrests- leather required is with the car.
4. Fitting of door cards, already trimmed.
5. Heating system to be connected to engine and cooling system.

6. One shot system requires a section of copper piping
7. Boot lock mechanism
8. Fuel filler cap cover and lock requires fitting
9. Handbrake cable

Now unfortunately this very rare Bristol 401 is being offered for sale for someone else to finish due to illness. A fantastic opportunity for someone to take on and a classic that will only go up in value.

The car also comes with a good folder of history and pictures of the body restoration carried out. We also have pictures of when the car arrived to us. Current V5 also available and has a very desirable plate

The car is located with us and can be viewed by appointment. More pictures and videos available. There is a genuine reason for selling.

Price: £52,995