

Wwise

'No man with a good car needs to be justified,' said the man in the hat in cult movie *Wise Blood*. And this blood red Ford Ranger is here to tell you that neither Paul Brown, nor any of the customers who throw in their lot with his company, are going to need any justifying at all

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A couple of issues ago, we featured Andy Smith's highly prepped Ford Ranger, which is in the process of being turned into a full-house expedition truck by PB Customs. The company is gaining a strong reputation among the sort of vehicle builders who like to manage a project rather than do the spanning themselves – and its own Ranger, which you see on these pages, is becoming an ever more impressive calling card for what the guys there can do.

The vehicle is a pre-facelift T6 Limited with the must-have five-cylinder 3.2 TDCi engine. With about 200bhp in standard form, this unit is one of the main reasons for

the Ranger's fast-growing popularity towards the upper end of the modding game; you can tune it for plenty more, too, though the truck's owner, PB Customs' main man Paul Brown, has left well alone.

That's not to say he hasn't already made an improvement under the bonnet, though. Not that it was the fun kind. Rangers of this one's generation with the 3.2-litre diesel have an issue whereby the oil pump can fail to prime after the sump has been drained, with predictably dire consequences. The fix is to replace the pump with a different unit, as used on later models – not the most pleasing thing to have to spend your money on, but a whole lot better than having to spend much more on a new engine. Doing

that would be enough to wipe out most vehicle builders' entire modifications budget. In fact, it would probably be enough to wipe out most vehicle builders' entire project budget, truck and all. Much better to spend it on cool kit from the likes of ARB and Old Man Emu.

That's the kind of stuff Paul fits to his customers' cars. He's a firm believer in the spend it once, spend it right approach to vehicle building, and would prefer to invest in a top-brand product than save a few quid in the short term then live with the fear of having to do it all again this time next year. That could be seen as a legacy of the places where he worked while learning his trade – he started out at Devon 4x4 and had a year at Nene Overland before setting out on his own, and neither of those are

companies you tend to associate with doing stuff on the cheap.

Paul spent his days building bespoke challenge trucks in his Devon years, and concentrated on special vehicle builds at Nene, so he definitely knows about this sort of thing. His own history as a 4x4 owner started, as they so often do, with a Suzuki SJ410, and at present he owns a Defender 110 which he's in the process of converting into a pop-top overlander.

These things take time, of course, especially when you've got customers' builds constantly muscling in on the queue. A nice problem to have, but one which



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