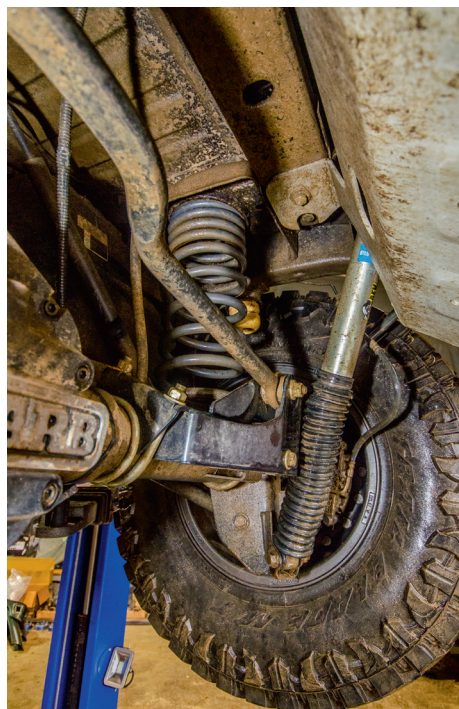




On pretty much anything that's not a Rubicon, you'd be looking at the pictures above while we went on about the trick diffs and heavy-duty halfshafts inside the axles. No need to here, though. This is a truck that came out of the factory on Dana 44 axles with Jeep's own Tru-Lock diffs – you'd need to be fitting a truly enormous set of tyres before you had to start thinking about strengthening them further

Right: Oh all right then, here's an axle mod. The diff pans have been replaced by heavy-duty ones from ARB. Happy now?



Left: AEV is becoming an increasingly big player in the UK Jeep aftermarket, which is hardly a surprise as it's an absolutely enormous one in the US. The company's +2.5" DualSport XT system is based around lifted springs and custom-tuned Bilstein shocks, but there's a lot more to it than that – in addition, you get a new rear panhard rod axle mount, steering damper relocation brackets and the bits you need for repositioning the brake lines and bump stops. That'll be why cheap kits are cheap and this one is right, then

Years turned to decades, and Land Rovers turned into more Land Rovers. Andrew takes up the story: 'I have owned a succession of Series vehicles, Defenders and Discoverys, including a 2009 G4 model, and a few Range Rovers – including a CSK model about 15 years ago, which I have regretted selling ever since, especially now I watch the stratospheric prices they appear to command! In total, I've owned well over a dozen Land Rovers.'

But this is a man with an open mind. And when the family business welcomed a Ford Ranger into the fold, guess what he did? He went green laning, of course. 'It was taken on a couple of weekends to Wales and Salisbury Plain,' he says. 'Where its abilities surprised everyone.' But you knew that bit.

So here we have a man who's spent most of his life driving Land Rovers but clearly doesn't have any problem getting behind the wheel of anything else. Well, so long as it's a 4x4, of course. Perfect conditions for a conversion.

And here's how it happened. 'Last January, I was on a green lane weekend with Russell Dykes of Yorkshire 4x4 Treks. He had just acquired a new Wrangler, and also on the trip was another Wrangler, owned then by Bob Seaborn.

'I had never really seen Jeeps in action, and had previously always supposed them to be a bit showy and not really up to serious off-roading. How wrong I was! On a snowy frozen weekend in January in the Yorkshire Moors and Dales, these Jeeps really proved themselves to be incredibly useful tools!

'On the long drive home in my Defender, with the heater battling to keep up a survivable temperature, the radio battling to be heard and my left leg and right elbow suffering the usual Defender pains, I decided that it was maybe time to try a Wrangler. They were clearly excellent off-road, and I suspected their on-road characteristics could be no worse than my current vehicle! So it was worth a shot...'

Andrew's first move was to join the Jeep Owners Club. Happily, you don't need to be a Jeep owner to do that, but it wasn't long before he became one. 'I was pointed in the direction of Horsham Jeep by the club president, Stewart Harding. Horsham had a Rubicon Unlimited in black on its way to them in the near future. I placed the order and put the Defender up for