

BUYING GUIDE

STANDARD 8, 10 & PENNANT

(1953-1961)

Looking for Fifties fun at bargain prices? Then the Eight, Ten and Pennant trio offer a lot of tax-exempt charm that'll be welcomed into just about any classic vehicle gathering

WORDS Alan Anderson PHOTOGRAPHY Magic Car Pics



What's in a name? For the Standard Motor Company it proved to be its downfall. When the manufacturer acquired the bankrupt Triumph company just after the Second World War to create Standard Triumph it implied a certain quality. However, by the time Leyland bought the ailing outfit in 1961 the term 'standard' was reduced to infer basic so was dropped entirely in just two short years. The Standard Eight was launched five years after the innovative Morris Minor but despite undercutting its rival by a handsome £80 (almost £2000 in today's money!) this sober suited saloon never found as much favour and nor did the improved 'Ten' introduced a year later. For Phil Homer, vice chairman of the Standard Motor Club (SMC), it's a mystery. 'They were equally as good, and perhaps better than contemporaries such as the Minor, the [cable braked] Austin A35 and A40 and Ford's [sidevalve] 100E', he laments and now less than 500 survive with perhaps only 100 roadworthy. True, early cars were extremely basic, with the first Eights even lacking a boot lid, but they were as strong and resilient as Minors, so much so that a Ten won the tough RAC Rally outright back in 1955. The Pennant was a short lived restyled upmarket flagship and no rival offered options such as semi-automatic transmission or overdrive before the threesome were replaced by the mechanically similar Triumph Herald. As left field classics these Standard bearers have much to offer not least, servicing simplicity, scope for uprating by way of Herald hardware, rarity (when did you last see one?), good club support and best of all strong value for money. Isn't it time you set the standard, too?

Arguably not as pretty as a Minor, but equally strong.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

PRICEWATCH

CONCOURS	£7500+
GOOD	£3500-5000
USABLE	£1500-£3500
PROJECT	£500-£1500

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	948cc/4-cyl/OHV
POWER	33bhp@4500rpm
TORQUE	46lb ft@2500rpm
MAXIMUM SPEED	66mph
0-60MPH	34sec
FUEL CONSUMPTION	35-40mpg
TRANSMISSION	RWD, 4-sp'd man

CLUBS AND EXPERTS

Standard Motor Club. standardmotorclub.org.uk
Rimmer Bros., Lincolnshire. 01522 568000, rimmerbros.co.uk
Canley Classics, Warwicks. 01676 541360, canleyclassics.com

THE MARKETPLACE

There isn't a marketplace as such for these Standards, but when they do come up, either at auction or dealer, better than average examples are snapped up quickly. Recent auction sales around £5000 appear to be the norm, such as an extremely tidy, previously restored '58 Ten that sold for £4725 at a 2024 H&H (Buxton) sale. Scruffy but complete rolling projects advertised privately at just over £1000 can be found and, with a claimed 400 holed up in lock ups, the club is good source for finding potential purchases via its monthly magazine. Pennants, Companion estates, vans and pick-ups are naturally worth the most but it's very much a case of what you can get and it's worth paying a bit more for a structurally sound example – originality being a further bonus.



Early cars very spartan, but easy to restore and update, plus the Standard Motor Club holds a fair stash of trim.



Like the front valance, all wings are bolt on making repairs easier. Rare estates and commercial also made.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Firstly what's your Standard? Apart from a smattering of Companion estates and commercials all are four-door saloons and, while there's not enough surviving to be choosy, salient points are that early Eights are very basic with just sliding windows and semaphore trafficators, unlike the far preferable Deluxe. Later came Super 8s and Super 10s boasting better chrome with hub caps, improved trim, heaters and courtesy lights.

For 1957 came Phase II spec; essentially Super plus added decoration. Also that year, all gained higher compression heads in versions known as Gold Stars together with different furniture. For the first time Eights receive a boot lid and Pennant was also launched. As the club remarks: 'Not many have the original specification or wear the trim they did when they came out of Canley. Likewise, overdrives,

heaters and carpets may have been retrofitted. Unless you are an absolute purist, concern yourself with the actual condition of the bodywork rather than conforming to the factory specifications.'

The state of the body is naturally the deal maker or breaker and, while not anything like as widespread as the Minor, new and used panel supply is reasonably good care of the SMC (8and10spares@gmail.com). What you do need to weigh up however is how much you intend to spend on a restoration as you're never going to recoup your outlay.

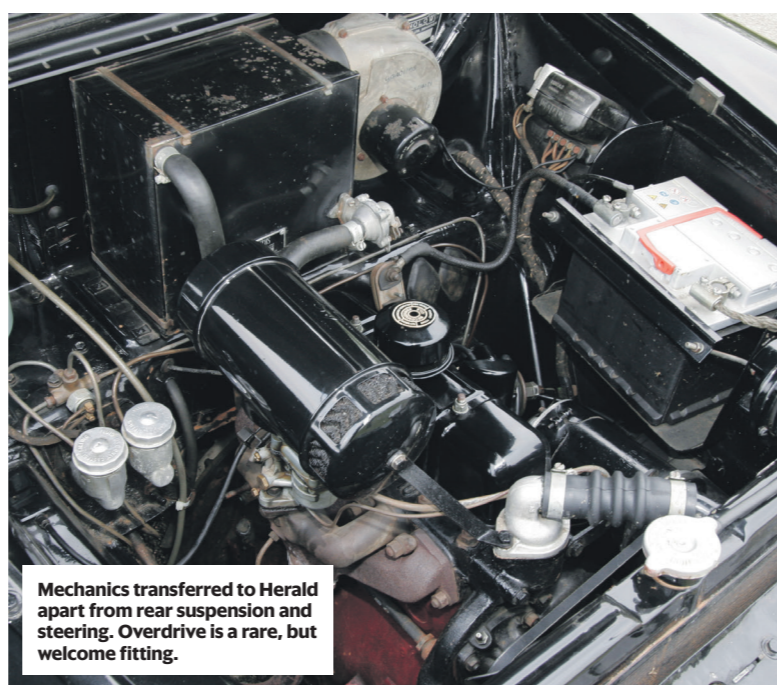
As with any '50s classic, look for rot everywhere and, in particular: sills (both inner and outer), starting from the rear; bottom and trailing edge of front wings; front edge of bonnet and boot lid; windscreen corners and headlights plus leaky seams between rear wings and body tub. And vitally,

thoroughly scrutinise the entire floorpan, including the boot. Inspect the B-posts and all inner panels, too.

The good news is that the wings are bolt on, making repairs both easier and simpler, including to the inner wings. But SMC advises when buying, make the bodyshell condition the sole priority as the only parts readily available are the inner and outer sills and repair panels for the bottoms of the front wings.

Trim and brightwork lacks stamina, so is bound to be wilting. Replacements are stocked as are screen rubbers, but side window seals for early sliding window Eights are now unobtainable. It's a similar story for the interior. A variety of materials styles and colours were offered, so it's pot luck what you can find from the club's stash.

Mechanically it's a happier story, as the oily bits serve the Herald. The engine is long lasting with no unusual traits other than hot running and developing tappet noise, which may



Mechanics transferred to Herald apart from rear suspension and steering. Overdrive is a rare, but welcome fitting.

be the cam followers. The club advises that the oil filter is best replaced with a modern design using an adaptor kit.

SMC adds it's common to replace the 803cc Eight with a 948cc unit from the Ten or indeed a later 1147cc '1200' Herald engine as they drop straight in and perk up performance. The rear axles and gearbox are sturdy enough, too. Chief wear points include noisy bearings, poor synchromesh and jumping out of gear. The overdrive unit should engage and disengage smoothly and the majority of issues centre round poor electrics. It's worth having and fitting to make cruising easier. The clutch-less Standrive semi auto may have already been ditched, like its contemporaries used by MG and Rootes at the time. But while the system had its issues and parts (and knowhow) are now scarce, the SMC blames lack of initial familiarity and the unavailability of the official workshop manual and can send a pdf of the booklet to interested club members.

The club also stocks replacement rubbers for the suspension and front subframe which makes a world of difference to the handling and stability. It also stocks an easy fit front anti-roll bar kit (£186) and uprated GAZ dampers costing £138. If the rear leaf springs require replacing bear in mind there are three different types.

One difference between the Standard and the Herald is that the former has some 18 greasing points, whereas the Triumph components did away with them. Worn trunnions are the main achilles heel. If the worm and peg steering is worn and can't be adjusted out, the only solution is a reconditioned Burman Douglas replacement from the club costing £432, although you can buy components separately. The hydraulic drum brake system is simple to service and uprate as the club offers finned brake drums (£308), front disc conversion kit (£718) plus optional servo assistance, although you can find good used Spitfire hardware cheaper.



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