

Foreword

Hooked on Land Rovers since he was a boy, David Bowyer knows his Defenders – he runs an off-road centre and a specialist winch company

The first time I drove a Land Rover was in 1960 on my father's building site during the school holidays. It was what was eventually to be known as a Series I. It had a square transmission tunnel with big gear lever washers on the top, so it was a very early, or even pre-production, model.

I soon learnt how to use all the gears to their best advantage to help pull out stuck dumpers and lorries. The little Land Rover was as good as a mountain goat and pulled like a train.

Four years later, when I'd passed my test, I took over my father's Series II 88 and used it daily after fitting a truck cab and handpainting it Valspa blue.

In the mid-Seventies, married and with a growing family, I bought a new seven-seater Series II Station Wagon, and this was a truly versatile vehicle, used for transporting the children and for towing a horsebox or caravan.

Years further on, after I had founded 4x4 Overlander magazine, I helped in

the official launch of the Land Rover 110 by organising a massive gathering of Land Rovers (200 of them!) and enthusiasts at Eastnor Castle in early 1983. A couple of years later the 90 launch followed.

Within two years I'd bought a 90 Turbo D followed by a 90 V8. Both proved to be tremendous in so many ways, both on- and off-road, towing and carrying out recoveries.

I bought our first 200Tdi Defender 90 in the early Nineties, and I'm still using it today. It's another incredibly versatile Land Rover. OK, so I've changed the rear axle to a disc-braked one, and fitted Detroit True Tracs front and rear. And, like any other Land Rover that's done 150,000 miles, I just change whatever wears out.

After 27 years from new, it still does everything I ask of it, with great aplomb. In fact I've just enjoyed another two days' greenlaning in Wales, using the blue 90, G10 BOW, seen in many of our adverts.



David Bowyer, MD of Goodwinch Ltd, of Crediton, Devon. He founded Britain's first 4x4 mag in 1982, and has been involved in Land Rover club activities for decades

I have spent the last two-and-a-half years rebuilding and refurbishing my white Defender 90, G12 LRO, which is on the cover of this publication – and that's my tribute to Land Rover, who created the world's most versatile vehicle nearly 70 years ago.

The Defender is part of and is enjoyed by a phenomenal number of families around the world, and is used by so many institutions, utilities and businesses. It's been an amazing success and I'm sure it will be around for many, many years to come. Let's all hope the New Defender follows in its tracks. Enjoy the read!

David Bowyer



Rebuilt over a period of two-and-a-half years, this magnificent beast is David Bowyer's own Defender 90