



Would Murray's professional kit betray Phil's DIY tracking efforts?

## Time for laser precision

### 1962 Jaguar E-type FHC

Owned by Phil Bell ([phil.bell@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto:phil.bell@bauermedia.co.uk))

Time owned 9 years

Miles this month 135

Costs this month £0

Previously Had the rusty heater box blasted and recoated, fitting it just in time for a run to Bicester Sunday Super Scramble

Last year I refitted my steering rack with polyurethane mounts in place of standard rubber parts that were allowing an alarming amount of movement, and while I was at it I added a pair of new track rod ends. Despite greasing the old ones at the factory mileage intervals the excess egress from the dust seals was starting to look rusty brown and the joints no longer felt smooth.

I'd taken a great deal of care measuring the length of exposed track rod thread so that I'd end up with close to the same toe-in, but without being certain that it was spot-on I feared premature wear to my Dunlops, and they're not cheap. To do the job properly you need alignment equipment. Normally I relish an excuse to buy more tools, unless they're expensive

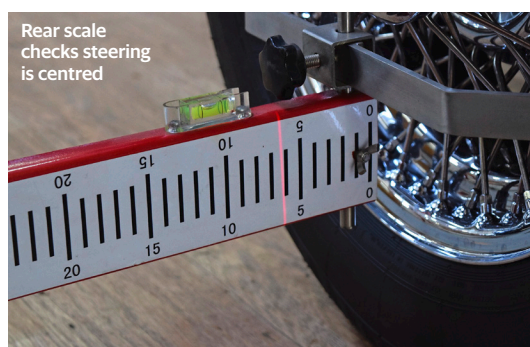
and unlikely to see much action. Handily, E-type specialist E-conic, better known as Moss Jaguar, had recently relocated to nearby Letchworth and I was looking for an excuse to have a nose around. While Angus Moss showed me the charming Victorian building with its sawtooth roof and a dozen or so E-types in for work, technician Murray Simpson wheeled out a rack of modern laser alignment kit to check out my car.

As well as the toe-in, he would give a verdict on all of the adjustable front and rear alignment parameters that can effect handling and tyre wear. Resetting everything is a fiddly process where adjustment in one dimension upsets another, so I awaited the results with some trepidation. As it turns out, only the easiest needed changing. The front track should toe in by between 1.6 and 3.2mm and mine was 3.8, so Murray wound the track rods out slightly to give a mid-range 2.5mm. My earlier DIY attempt had been a near miss.

The front castor and camber were both within tolerances, as was the rear camber, which I'd had to reset with shims after the



Laser tool allows four-wheel alignment



Rear scale checks steering is centred

last differential rebuild and wheelbearing replacement. A normal person would be pleased that there was so little wrong, but I was disappointed. I'd hoped that everything would have been way out, and the healing hands of the doctor would transform my E-type into a Lotus Elise-like tool of precision. Or at least a bit less grand tourer on turn in and a bit more sports car.

A step change in feel would require stiffer torsion bars, coil springs and anti-roll bars, but I'm not convinced that I want to go that far. Perhaps it's better to enjoy the E-type for what it is and borrow my wife's Boxster whenever I feel the need for something sharper.