



Curing a leaking heater matrix

Barry West sought help with a heater matrix leak on his Japanese spec RV8 in a V8BB post saying "on a recent local trip on switching the engine off (the heater was on) a small amount of steam drifted up through the windscreen vent on drivers side. There is no leak around the heater control valve that I can see and no coolant loss visible. The next thing I was going to do was attempt to remove and check heater matrix for flow. Does anyone have any advice/tips?"

Barry West said "I have searched this forum and scanned all the RV8NOTES and there doesn't seem to be much information on this subject. Before I attempt to start dismantling I looked at the microfiche and it looks like there may be one or two fixings securing the heater box in situ depending on the VIN number with two fixings after VIN 0971". He later posted an update saying "have now taken the heater motor out after discovering a small amount of antifreeze in the driver's footwell coming from the bottom of the steering column as it goes through the bulkhead. There is half an inch of coolant in the bottom of the heater box (see photo alongside) so it is definitely a leak from the matrix or pipework in the bulkhead".

Paul Atkinson later reported "I also experienced a leaking heater matrix on my RV8. This was manifested by coolant loss

which on one or two occasions resulted in small pools on floor at both sides of car and



also by failure to demist and, even worse, more mist being created! This latter happened in a torrential storm last October whilst returning to the UK through Switzerland and left a slightly oily residue on the inside of the windscreen. I had long worried about the slight coolant loss which had seemed untraceable.

Replacement of the matrix is easy involving moving the washer bottle, carbon canister and immobiliser unit to the side (without complete detachment from the car) then undoing the hoses and the two screws which hold the matrix into the heater box. The heater box etc. remains in situ, but I took the opportunity to clear the debris from the deteriorated foam seal with a powerful vacuum cleaner. Everything goes back in reverse order. It is worth knowing that the matrix is from the last versions of the Rover Mini and Metro and is thus reasonably easy to obtain. A word of caution; the first replacement I bought for under £20 was a poor fit as the plastic securing flange on the inlet/outlet end through which the two screws mentioned above pass was a couple of millimetres shy all round and thus did not seal properly. I then bought an all metal matrix for £45 from Motorads Online of Redditch and this fitted perfectly.