



Standard above, de-cat below – saving a tidy 1.6kg in the process



TRIUMPH SCRAMBLER 1200XE 6393 MILES

Cats out of the bag!

Time to de-cat in search of more grunt and improves tunes

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The look of a bike is one thing, but the sound of a bike, well now you're talking. For me, my ultimate is a big thumping single. To my ears, it's unbeatable. The big twin Scrambler 1200XE ought to be more fruity, but is lacking a good soundtrack to go with its stunning looks. And even with £700 of Arrow's great looking twin headed stainless-steel silencer, there was very little to write home about.

After a bit of research on the internet I found Italian company Free Spirits (www.freespiritsparts.com), who produce a handcrafted H-pipe (de-cat) for £308 excluding tax, this replaces the standard Triumph header pipes thus doing away the built-in catalytic converter, allowing the 1200 twin to breathe properly.

There are no shortcuts to fitting the header pipes, it's an exhaust system off job on the right-hand

side of the bike, leaving only the left-hand header pipe in place. This only takes about half an hour, then I was ready to start putting the new H-pipe on in place of the original. It's worth fitting a new copper gasket which goes between the header and the cylinder head.

Before I started fitting everything back on, I took the opportunity to pop both headers on the kitchen scales to see what the weight was. I was surprised at the substantial difference, the standard weighed in at 2.936kg as opposed to the Free Spirits H-pipe which weighed in at a rather slender 1.395kg, just under half the weight. That's impressive.

The real beauty of this new pipe is that not only does it save mass, but it's carefully designed as a direct replacement, so all the original Triumph heat shields and shrouds fit straight back on, preserving the original look of the bike.

Everything back in place – it's the moment of truth. Time to hit the start button. The low-down bark resonating from the twin-headed Arrow silencer had got just that bit deeper, with a bit of a crackle as I

rolled the throttle off. The sound had changed, not too much, but enough to be tangibly better. The next question was performance, had anything changed there?

It's always pulled like a steam train, but now it feels like it comes in earlier (at around 3000 revs), where it begins to pull hard, then whips up to the 7000rpm limiter effortlessly. Sixth gear roll-ons feel more flexible too. I'm impressed!



**Triumph
Scrambler 1200 XE**

£12,900
On-the-road price

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