

## **Rough Running**

by David Stevens

For several weeks my beloved R1150 RT (15,000 miles; 2003) had been difficult to start easily, but with perseverance it did start... but, using the choke I could get it to run, although a bit on the "lumpy" side. Enough was enough, I finally decided to visit my friendly BMW specialist, Worthing based Eric Anderson, for his diagnosis.

Several thoughts emerged, unbalanced carbs, spark plug issues, wiring faults – the list was far from definitive. We started by replacing all 4 spark plugs. Being an RT with its full fairing, this required removing both mirrors and side fairings, together with the associated 32 screw fixings. Did the designer ever think about this fairly basic task from the point of view of a service engineer? Clearly, No! Before removing the main spark plug, the stick coil required extraction. Wow! It was much shorter than expected – probably because it was broken in half! I was amazed that this cylinder fired at all.



David's issue revealed - broken coils



On the basis that this coil had clearly exceeded its sell-by date, I decided that both coils should be replaced - "belt and braces". Maybe it was an age-related issue as the bike is nearly 16 years old. Each coil was £97 from BMW. It's only money after all.

Following installation, the bike started and ran as intended.

Subsequently visiting YouTube, I found many examples of this issue, some even having caught fire in operation! This component is found in many BMW models, I guess I was unlucky or lucky not have encountered total failure in the middle of Europe.