



### Give Carriage Driving a try!

Come along to one of our 'Try Driving' days at Bennington Carriage Driving Academy, Try Driving days are suitable for all. We also provide training for all levels of driver at our purpose built facility nr Newark, Nottinghamshire.

### Try Driving Dates 2011

July - Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd  
August - Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th  
September - Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th

*Manufacturers of Bennington Carriages,  
stockist of Zilco harness and driving accessories.*

For more information about 'Try Driving' or Bennington Carriages  
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[www.benningtoncarriages.co.uk](http://www.benningtoncarriages.co.uk)

## The added ingredient that makes 'try driving' such fun



Even before starting 'Try Driving' events, the team at Bennington Carriages always went the extra mile for their customers and that policy has earned them the gratitude of Caroline Crawley from Waltham on the Wolds.

"I can't sing their praises enough," says Caroline. "Where else would a complete beginner be able to rub shoulders with people at the top end of their sport and even help load a carriage on to a trailer?"

Like many people who take up carriage driving, Caroline used to ride when she was younger but, not being the most confident of riders, she was put off after having a bad fall. However, she has found the answer to having fun with horses now she has her own driving pony and having lessons with Sue Mart and Amanda Saville at the 'Try Driving' Bennington Academy.

"I have always loved horses and my sister and aunt had ponies. I started

riding when I was eight years old and got my first pony when I was 15; she is buried on my parents' smallholding and I never thought I would love another horse as much as her. Although I've had other horses I was never competitive; I was definitely an official 'happy hacker!'" Caroline explains.

About 10 years ago Caroline ended up in the A&E department of her local hospital after a nasty fall and she vowed never to ride again. "I did get back in the saddle at a riding school and I was offered lots of different horses to have on loan but I just wasn't confident enough."

Caroline's introduction to carriage driving had actually happened some years earlier. "I was given a driving lesson as a present; I enjoyed it very much but as I was still riding at the time I didn't take it any further."

However, a discussion with her mother led Caroline back down the

driving route. "I hadn't ridden for quite a few years and really missed having a relationship with horses. My mother and sister owned a saddlery in Oakham so knew lots of people. One of them was Julie Allen, a scurry driver, and my mother suggested I ask if I could help with her ponies."

Caroline spent many a happy hour with Julie's ponies and, after Julie let her have a go driving them, she was totally addicted to the idea. As a result, Caroline bought Rupert, a six year-old Welsh section A pony who, although 'green', had been broken to harness. "When I got him he only had a headcollar and rope. Sue [Mart] has been such a help with everything. She

and Amanda gave me the support and confidence I needed. When I had to go over to Bennington's one day and had no family to help load my carriage on the trailer, Amanda gave me a hand. The carriage driving community is lovely!"

Caroline now thoroughly enjoys having Rupert and taking him for 'Try Driving' lessons. "The facilities are fantastic; if you don't have your own pony you can always drive one of Amanda's."

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