

Try Driving with Bennington Carriages

Bennington Carriages is a family owned business founded in 1962 by Michael Mart, originally specialising in the production of horse-boxes and trailers. The arrival of two Shetland ponies marked the starting point for today's Bennington Carriages.



Dusty and Fusty were bought for Michael's children, but the ponies showed little interest in being ridden. Using his engineering expertise, Michael developed a carriage allowing the ponies to be safely driven. It wasn't long before they started taking part in the then new competitive sport of driving trials. During these competitions, Michael observed that the traditional carriages being used were unstable and unsuitable for competitive driving. With this in mind, Michael started designing the Bennington range of carriages.

During the 1970's the Bennington Carriage became synonymous with innovative design, exceptional quality and outstanding customer service.

The patron of the sport HRH The Duke of Edinburgh awarded Bennington the Royal Warrant in 1979, and the company proudly retains it today. Many features on today's carriages are the result of Bennington's commitment to pioneering design. Examples include the back step allowing the groom to stand behind the driver, the aluminium wheel that is lighter and stronger than wood and Bennington's renowned delayed steering.

Over the last 50 years, Bennington has manufactured carriages for the British Monarchy, The Sultan of Brunei, The Disney Corporation as well as to driving enthusiasts worldwide. Sue and Wendy, daughters of Michael,

have now taken up the business reins and make sure Bennington remains true to its roots, remaining family owned and employing 15 highly skilled craftspeople who design, manufacture and support these fine carriages. Team Bennington compete in the carriage driving advanced single pony classes and have represented Great Britain, delighted to be members of the bronze medal winning team at the World Pony Championships in Holland 2015. Training other drivers is a significant element of the business. Sue has trained to be a UKCC Level 3 coach in driving and the Driving Academy offers carriage driving experiences for all levels and disciplines - from novice to advanced, from pleasure to competition. So whether you are a beginner wanting to try something new or a competitive driver wanting to improve your placings, the Bennington Driving Academy has it covered.

Bennington has received questions regarding the sport of Carriage Driving, often containing "is it difficult?", "what equipment do I need?", "how much does it cost?" or simply, "where do I begin?". With this in mind Bennington Carriages host Try Driving days which comprise practical, hands on tuition held at Bennington Carriages Driving Academy. During each session, attendees will be given an overview of carriage driving, including pony, harness and carriage. Once completed, attendees will then take the reins and drive a Bennington Fun Bug carriage whilst receiving one to one tuition.



The emphasis is on fun and safety, demonstrating how accessible the sport is. Suitable for all ages and abilities, Try Driving is the ideal introduction to the sport and makes a unique gift.

The Academy has a range of facilities including: 100m x 40m dressage arena, obstacle course and water splash, cones course and grass fitness track. There's ample hard standing parking, refreshment facilities, toilets and wash down facilities for both carriages and horses. There are even day boxes for hire so your horse can enjoy a little comfort while visiting the Academy.

Individual sessions are currently available, and Try Driving Weekends are scheduled for:

*30th April
21st May
20th August
24th September*



Bennington Carriages is situated off the A1 between Grantham and Newark, NG23 5GA. For more information about the carriages, the Academy and course dates, visit www.benningtoncarriages.co.uk or telephone 01400 281 280