

Coast to Coast!



Bennington owner Zoe Woods and her 11.3h pony Jimmy take a coast to coast journey with her Bennington Buccaneer...

"In January 2009 I started to plan our summer holiday and soon came up with the idea of driving Jimmy "Coast to Coast" just south of the Scottish border. Sharing this idea with friends was met with much interest, followed by "you're mad", "great idea", "marvellous" or "little Jimmy is too small". Oh well....

Contacting the Cambridge Group of the British Driving Society, whose members had undertaken a similar trip, was the start of my planning. Upon receiving a copy of their route, I took a trip north to do some research and to find places for Jimmy and I to camp overnight. Research completed, I returned home to get Jimmy fit for our journey - 100 miles over 5 days. 4 months of planning and training followed...



Zoe & Jimmy

On May 9th we left for Rockcliffe on the Solway Firth just above Carlisle - our base camp. We were greeted the following morning by a wonderful bright and sunny morning - with a cool head wind that stayed with us for the whole journey. Our journey had began well! First stop was Bailey to pick up keys to allow us head into the forests of Kielder. Jimmy was in good spirits although on occasion I am sure he tried to take us off course and back to the trailer!

Picking up the keys allowed us to start our journey through the forests of Kielder - we thought.... Sadly, the keys didn't work in all the padlocks and we also found some tracks were closed for logging. As such, our 20 mile journey became 30 miles and we arrived exhausted at the Kielder campsite. Jimmy was very glad of a rest that night!

The following morning met us with a ground frost but soon the sun shone through and warmed us both up. We headed along the north side of Kielder Water and soon found that the track had been recently regraded and was rather unkind to small pony feet. However, Jimmy carried on without complaint but like me was pleased to reach Kielder Dam for lunch. After



Kielder Water

lunch we headed on to Redesmouth where we stayed with Mike & Sally Bell, who were invaluable in helping to find accommodation along our route.

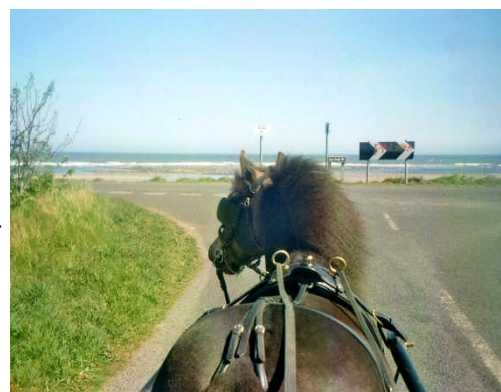
The following morning saw us trekking the 3 miles up Buteland Fell to the highest point of the trip before a gentle descent towards Wingates Moor Farm where we stayed for the evening.

Our final day was a pleasant trip through the lanes to finish at Hadstone Country Park, just south of Amble. Whilst the sight of the North Sea signified the end of our trip, Jimmy didn't like the breakers hitting the shore and so we soon headed back to the caravan site.

Leaving Jimmy for a well deserved rest, I left early the following morning to catch the train back to Rockcliffe to pick up the trailer. When I returned later in the day, Jimmy was so pleased to see me (or was it the trailer!) that he did a lap of honour in his field!

All in all, a wonderful journey and proof of how fantastic small ponies can be."

Zoe Woods



Jimmy arriving at Hadstone Country Park