



Case studies



Caroline Lake

In the fast lane

There must be nowhere harder for a woman to make her mark than in the car business - but Caroline Lake has done just that.

The 36 year-old trampolinist, from Wymondham, runs her own garage and also teaches car maintenance classes.

"We do everything here from repairs, MOTS and work on classic cars through to paint spraying," she said. "I also run female-only car maintenance classes. These have been very successful."

Caroline, who also teaches 12 trampoline and gym classes a week, and still finds time to compete herself, first entered the car business nine years ago.

She went to work for a company that imported cars - and before long, she was in her overalls and covered in oil.

"I wanted to know more about what I was selling so went to work in a garage as an unpaid apprentice," she explained. "The more I did it, the more I enjoyed it."

Caroline took her MOT tester's exams and decided to take the plunge. Last June she opened Caroline's Cars, in Ashwellthorpe. "Most people are fine about the fact that I'm a

woman," she said. "My main market is women but many of my customers are men too. Word is spreading and the garage is doing well. "I hold the car maintenance classes in the evening - we took under the bonnet and discuss how to change the oil and water, check the tyre pressure and tread depth etc and how to change a wheel.

"I am planning to hold some mixed classes in the future too where men and women can come along together."

Caroline remains very hands-on in her business. She spends a lot of time in the paint shop and is still as passionate as she was when she started out.

"I would like to expand the business," she said. "As well as running more classes, my long-term plan is to have more than one site. "Some women have bad experiences of going to male-run garages, I can offer them something different - and although it was hard at the beginning, men as well as women now realise that we do a very good job."

***For more information call (01508) 488441 or 07767 605931.**