

Picture: SONYA BROWN



RARIN' TO GO: Caroline Lake, owner of Carolines Cars, runs courses to help women look after their vehicles

Car course that gives women back the power

Hands-on' training will stop women being intimidated, says this female entrepreneur

A businesswoman has launched a car maintenance course with a difference - it is aimed purely at her own gender.

Caroline Lake, owner of Caroline's Cars on Ashwellthorpe Industrial Estate, decided to set up the course to help women become more confident about their ability to look after their vehicles.

Miss Lake, who opened her garage in June 2006 at the Ashwellthorpe site, held her first evening course just before Christmas, with five women.

"Even reliable new cars need windscreen wash topping up, oil checking and a punctured tyre replaced -- and the hard shoulder of the A47 in the pouring rain is no place to learn," said Miss Lake.

Wearing rubber gloves, Miss Lake spent the first class teaching participants how to undo their bonnet, check and top up their oil, water, and

By ED FOSS

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screen wash, how to check and pump up tyres and how to change a wheel. In addition to this the women were shown what should happen at a service or MoT and given a brief explanation of how the various components work.

Training was hands on allowing all the women to demonstrate their new skills and giving them parts to handle including brake pads, a piston and an oil filter.

"I firmly believe that offering informal, friendly education and advice to women can help to stop them being intimidated and ripped off," said Miss Lake.

"I get very angry at the numerous horror stories I hear and really hope that what I am doing will help."

One of the women attending the course, Lena Rutter from Wymondham, said: "The course offered clear, friendly instruction coupled with a willingness to answer numerous questions.

"I also found the brochure we were given very helpful as it mirrored what actually happened on the course and I think it's very valuable to keep in the car."

"I will definitely recommend the course to my friends."

The course finished with a glass of wine and each woman went home with a certificate of participation and a 12-page brochure covering everything they had learnt.

For information on courses or for advice on any aspect of the garage industry, contact Miss Lake on 01508 488441 or e-mail her at carolinescars@aol.com.