

New motorhomers tale

Years and years of looking and thinking of buying a motorhome, shows visited and magazine subscription bought, we could never find just what we were looking for.

Then, in October 2016, a visit to Marquis at Ipswich and a good look round the new Benimar Tessoro led to us finally putting our money where our mouths were and putting down a deposit.

We decided on the 481 model. It ticked all the boxes. It fitted comfortably on our drive being less than six metres, had a huge bathroom with a

separate shower and came on a Ford base with an automatic option. The salesman was good and we added an awning and satellite TV to the deal.

Six months later and the automatic versions finally arrived, excitement levels were rising and we couldn't wait to pick up 'Tessa'. Yep, we'd even named it already!

Then a call came from the salesman; when the van was having its valet ready to go out, they'd found a problem with the paintwork. Disappointment is an understatement to say the least. We went to inspect it to see how bad the problem was and it became clear this was a problem that must have come

all the way through from the Ford factory.

Marquis was very good and, after speaking with the salesman and manager, we came to an agreement that we were all happy with. We would take delivery of the vehicle and have a total cab respray once it could be booked in.

A comprehensive handover followed and finally we were ready to take Tessa home. We felt like kings of the road driving her home and such celebrities once we parked her on the drive, with all the neighbours wanting to see inside and marvelling at the 'posh' drop-down bed.

On the first trip, a day out to Alton Water on the Suffolk/Essex border, disaster struck quickly. Another motorist caught Tessa's wing mirror. Alas, a new indicator lens would need to be fitted. Why couldn't this sort of problem at least wait a couple of months so it didn't seem so new?

Then, once parked up, we couldn't get any hot water. Yes – the cover was still on the boiler's vent. Perhaps I hadn't listened to the handover as much as I'd thought.

After that a lovely day followed and we decided we were ready for the first overnight stay.

We had already booked a couple of nights at Cliff House Holiday Park at Dunwich, which had been recommended by friends and was absolutely brilliant when I telephoned to reserve a pitch.

There were no dramas on this trip except for me getting told off for not waving at other motorhomers on the way!

We turned up and the campsite was immaculately kept. Reception and checking in was really easy and we were given time to set up before someone came along to make sure we were happy and had managed to get everything hooked up.

As I write this, I'm sitting in glorious sunshine; the prosecco and cider is chilling in the fridge. Travels-With Tessa now has her own Facebook page to keep our friends updated on what we're up to and the wife and I are more relaxed than we have been in years. I think we're going to enjoy this motorhoming lark.

Stuart & Wendy Driver, by email

