‘Driven: Britain’s Motoring Story’ given great reviews

Published: May 23, 2026
Author:
Online version: https://www.wheels-alive.co.uk/driven-britains-motoring-story-given-great-reviews/



The National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, from the air.

Beaulieu tells us...

(All words and photographs from Beaulieu).

National Motor Museum’s new permanent exhibition gallery “Driven: Britain’s Motoring Story” is proving very popular with visitors

The new exhibition interpreting the development of motoring in the UK was officially opened by well-known TV presenter Jon Bentley with an event attended by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu and invited guests at the end of March.

The exhibition focuses on how Britain has changed over the decades, delving into the social and cultural impact of motoring. It features fun interactive displays, previously unseen items from the Museum's collections, a spotlight car on a revolving plinth, along with opportunities to watch and hear videos and sounds from the Museum's archives.

Comments include:

"Excellent, enjoyed a tour this morning. Well worth a visit, " Ian Wheeler.

"Had a tour of the new exhibits …very impressive and maintains Beaulieu, National Motor Museum as the best car museum in the country," Cledus Snow.

"The new gallery offers a fresh and engaging look at how motoring has shaped life in Britain….a well-considered and engaging reimagination of the museum, and certainly one worth making the trip to see. Ian Mills, Twyford Moors Classic Cars.

"Congratulations to everyone at the National Motor Museum. The revamp is excellent and breathes new life into the exhibition space," Danny Hopkins, Practical Classics Magazine.

The £700,000 project – funded thanks to support from National Lottery Heritage Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation, the Wolfson Foundation, and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation – has given a new look to the Museum's entrance hall and the upper galleries.

Dr Jon Murden, Chief Executive of the National Motor Museum says, "This exhibition's new displays span the overarching story of motoring from its earliest times to the present day. Britain without cars and motorcycles would be unrecognisable – they have changed the shape of our cities, nations and landscapes, revolutionised the way we make and sell things, and transformed how we live our lives."

"From assembly-line mass-production to electric cars, the new gallery will share the stories that have moved us."

Gail Stewart Bye, Senior Curator of Objects and Exhibitions at the National Motor Museum says, “The stories behind the vehicles are at the forefront of this display; the people who drove the cars, the impact on our lives and landscape and the influence on science, art and design.”

Visitors to the new exhibition can also unlock extra content from the Museum’s collection via the Smartify app. Showcasing archival film footage and photographs, the app offers in-depth insights into several of the iconic vehicles on display and explores their importance in the history of motoring.

Since it opened in March the exhibition has been seen by thousands of visitors to Beaulieu including those attending BBC Gardeners’ World Spring Fair and the Spring Autojumble at Beaulieu in May.

Further information and background articles on Driven: Britain’s Motoring Story is available on the National Motor Museum’s website: story-of-motoring/exhibitions/driven-britains-motoring-story/

The exhibition is open every day (except Christmas Day) and is included in the Beaulieu admission ticket. Tickets are available at https://www.beaulieu.co.uk/

About the National Motor Museum

1. The National Motor Museum Trust Limited is a charitable organisation founded in 1972, which runs the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu in the New Forest. Continuing the work of the flagship Montagu Motor Museum, the Trust has a world-famous collection of 280 vehicles and associated motoring items, which are on display in the National Motor Museum.
2. The National Motor Museum is an Accredited Museum and all its collections have been Designated by Arts Council England as being of national and international importance. Its internationally acclaimed collection of more than 1.9 million items is cared for by the National Motor Museum Trust and includes historically important motoring artefacts, film

footage, images, documents and books.

3. For more information about its collection and services see www.nationalmotormuseum.org.uk
4. Visitors to Beaulieu can enjoy a full day out with features including the ancestral Montagu home Palace House, 13th century Beaulieu Abbey, adventure play area Little Beaulieu, and grounds and gardens. Tickets can be bought in advance. For tickets or more information, see www.beaulieu.co.uk or call 01590 612345.
5. A full calendar of events and exhibitions is held at Beaulieu by the National Motor Museum, including Classic Grille Evenings and Transport Torques. Details are available at www.nationalmotormuseum.org.uk/events