

**This was always intended to be Carys and Matt's story of their first son's birth at home, but with life taking over the way it does when you have a baby, they have now also given birth to their 2<sup>nd</sup> son, again at home. So this story is two for the price of one!**

## **Home birth of first baby, Robert 02/01/2015**

I had gone out for dinner and board games with friends on New Year's Eve and had a lovely evening. We also do a charity shop secret Santa, which is always entertaining. We buy silly and nice things and get to give to charity at Xmas, so everyone wins.

On getting home we went to bed about 2am and the minute my head hit the pillow I started getting some contraction type pains. I thought they would just fizzle out so tried to sleep between them. I still hadn't had a show or any other sign it might be soon. After a while I decided to time them and they were about 8 mins apart. I still expected them to go so carried on dozing. About 7am I woke up properly and told Matt what was happening and asked him not to go play golf with his dad. Even though I wasn't sure if they would carry on I didn't really want to be alone if this was it. At this point they weren't painful and I could carry on as normal.

We got up, had some breakfast and watched some TV. At about 11am I had a shower and the contractions ramped up to every 2-4 mins and stayed like this until the end. I had done a Natal Hypnotherapy hypnobirthing course with Zana and pregnancy yoga so used the breathing to get through them as they were quite painful. Between contractions I carried on as normal. At this point we called the midwife as I had planned a homebirth. The midwife came out at about 1pm and stayed for a couple of hours taking my blood pressure, etc (slight worry as it was a bit high but I have a very quiet pulse and she just couldn't hear that it was ok). Given how regular and painful the contractions were I thought it would be any minute now (how wrong I was) and I asked for an internal examination to see how close I was - only 3cm! Before this I didn't want any internals but glad I did ask as it helped me pace myself.

The midwife left and I had another shower and tried to nap (lying down was not comfy with the contractions) while Matt filled the birth pool. I got in around 5pm-ish and called the midwife back at 6pm (now 5-6cm). She changed over at 8pm and I asked the new midwife to bring in the gas and air (birth plan said leave in car and I'll ask when I want it). I used it for the next few hours until I was about 9cm when the second midwife was called, although in many ways the calm deep breathing I had practiced was better. I asked my husband, Matt, to read some of the Natal Hypnotherapy scripts Zana had provided at various times during labour as it helped me focus on my breathing, being calm, relaxed and letting my body do what it needed to. The scripts didn't need to be customised as I found they were right for me as they were and just listening to Matt's calm voice and his gentle touch really helped. At this point my waters hadn't gone but they were bulging and the midwife said to give a push and see if they will pop, which they did.

Soon after I got really strong pushing feelings (before this they were mild and I could ignore them). I started pushing and 50 mins later out came Robert at 1.47 am, almost 24 hours after the first contraction. I delivered the placenta naturally after delayed clamping.

I felt completely in control the whole time and stayed relaxed, which I think the Natal Hypnotherapy really helped with. I hadn't realised how much as a first time mum

attempting a homebirth I had expected to go into hospital until I had the session with Zana. The course not only helped with pain control, which is why I went, but it gave me the confidence that I could give birth at home and that my body knew what it needed to do. I would give birth at home again in a heartbeat and I'll be booking in again to see Zana when that time comes!

**And true to their word, just over a year later, pregnant with their 2<sup>nd</sup> baby, Carys and Matt spent a couple of hours with Zana for a bit of a refresher/recap. They talked through their previous experiences of birth and breastfeeding, working out what they would like to change, what they'd like to repeat and reminding Matt of the things that he did that were so helpful last time and that Carys would like him to do again. They left with a list of things to do to prepare between then and their baby's birth.**

**This is their next birth story...**



Andrew's birth was a lot quicker. Both Matt and the midwife almost missed it! My contractions started at about 3am and were strong and fast from the start but I stayed in bed and dozed. At 6am Matt and Robert woke and went for breakfast. As soon as nursery opened we called to see if they could take Robert for the day. I spent this part of the morning pacing up and down upstairs. Matt got Robert ready and I asked him to call the midwife before he left as I was starting to struggle, especially with a toddler hanging onto my legs! Little did I know he had told the midwife not to hurry... In the end Matt arrived back with 15 minutes to spare and the midwife arrived shortly after Matt. I had been waiting for Matt to come home and just breathing through each contraction. I didn't realise how far I'd got. Andrew was born a couple of pushes later on the bathroom floor at about 8.20am on 10<sup>th</sup> May. No time to fill the pool this time!

So now I have another beautiful baby boy called Andrew and he's wonderful!