



HIGH-END LAYOUT ON A BUDGET
Is there a catch to this island-bed dream?

Part of the

out&about LIVE

family

Caravan

TOURING ▶ CAMPSITES ▶ TESTS ▶ EVENTS ▶ TECHNICAL ▶ PUZZLES

FAMILY FUN ROAD TRIPS

MOTORHOME TO BASECAMP:

One family's road to adventure

INSURANCE INSIDER:

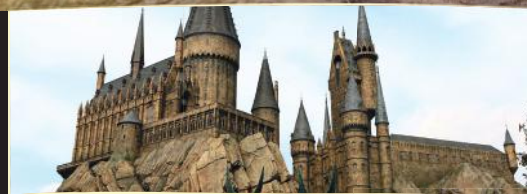
The secret discounts you're
already entitled to

**SIGNAL
SOLVED**

Never battle poor WiFi
(or bored kids)
ever again

RETRACE THE STEPS OF

BOND, POTTER & DRAGONS



**WHY COACHMAN'S
LASER IS BIG LUXURY,
SINGLE AXLE**



THE BEST-SELLING

VIP

2026 RANGE

Signature comfort and practicality.



Prices from £34,470.00*

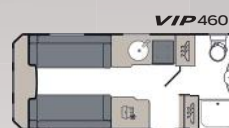


The VIP delivers the signature comfort and practicality that define Coachman, making it our best-selling range. Further enhanced for 2026, all five luxury layouts bring superior comfort to every journey.

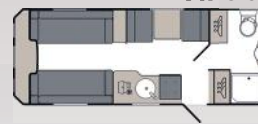


Specification highlights:

- Superior foam construction upholstery
- **NEW** domestic style flexible chrome and black kitchen tap
- **NEW** Soft furnishing with co-ordinating scatter cushions
- Lift-up kitchen worktop extension in 'Raja' finish
- Thetford dual fuel hob with cast iron pan rest, electronic ignition, glass lid and flame failure device
- LED reading spot lights with touch controls and night-light setting
- Colour co-ordinated sockets and switches with chrome surrounds
- **NEW** Top mounted vanity bowl with co-ordinating contemporary curved furniture doors in 'Pebble' design
- Contoured front chest of drawers with slide out extending table top mechanism
- Superior one-piece exterior door with high security locking system and easy action flyscreen
- Five single axle models, from 2-4 berths



VIP520



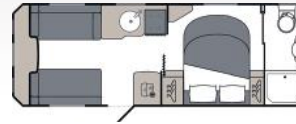
VIP545



VIP565



VIP575



Explore the full range at

www.coachman.co.uk

+44 7940 585401

Model shown VIP 575, prices from £37,220.00*

* Recommended retail price (incl. VAT). Price excludes a recommended dealer charge of £650 (incl. VAT). Prices exclude Northern Ireland. Prices effective from 29th January 2026.



COACHMAN

WELCOME

"If I had my way, I'd remove January from the calendar altogether and have an extra July instead."
Roald Dahl



MACAULAY NICHOL EDITOR



As we head into the peak touring months, there's one question that comes up time and time again... *can my car actually tow the caravan I want?* It's not always an easy one to answer. You might have your ideal layout in mind, but your towcar can quickly narrow those options. That's where Towmatch comes in. It's a simple, free tool on our website that shows you exactly which caravans your car can safely tow, taking away the guesswork and helping you move forward with confidence. If you're in the early stages of choosing your next caravan, it's a great place to start bit.ly/CVNTowmatch

July is also when the show season really hits its stride. The East Midlands Motorhome & Campervan Show at Newark continues to be one of the highlights, with a huge exhibition area, expert advice and plenty of entertainment across the weekend. Not long after, the Norfolk Motorhome & Campervan Show brings the Out & About Live Summer Party to life, including the new subscriber camping area, which is set to be a great addition this year. And looking ahead, Retro Festival in August offers something a little different, with live music, classic vehicles and a real festival atmosphere bit.ly/OAL-Shows

We would love to hear from you

Share your caravan adventures, your campsite reviews, your caravanning DIY tips and advice and even your gripes with fellow readers. Email us at: caravan@warnersgroup.co.uk Join the community facebook.com/Caravanmag/ instagram.com/caravan_mag/



BRAND NEW FOR 2026!

Bring your caravan and stay with us in The Out & About Live club camping area at The Norfolk Motorhome & Campervan Show.

ENJOY ALL OF THIS...

- Goody bag ● Arrival drinks ● Quiz ● Vanlife Eats cook along ● Bushcraft fire lighting display
- Early entry to the silent disco ● bFrank exercise class ● Extra entertainment and more!

Book now – outandaboutlive.info/summerparty

Not a subscriber and don't want to miss out on the fun? **See offer on page 25**

CONTENTS

July 2026

Travel & lifestyle

- 10** Tour the UK's most iconic filming locations in style
- 22** Ditching the motorhome for a Basecamp: how downsizing unlocked total Highland freedom
- 28** Reliving cherished childhood memories: blooming orchids, Blackpool's bright lights and a surprise appearance!
- 34** A getaway to Pembrokeshire with the grandkids
- 40** Set yourself up for a fun-filled getaway with a selection of 10 campsites for families
- 48** Pitchside views: quiet Lake District touring near Windermere
- 50** Meet the owners: Holme Valley Caravan Park
- 62** Puzzles

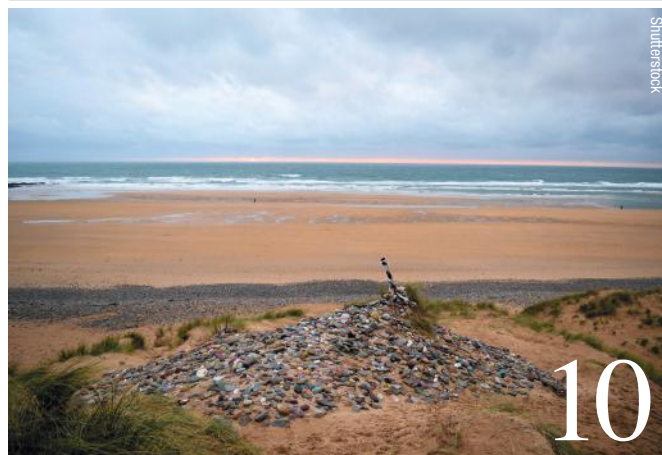
Scotland



Pembrokeshire



TV sites



CONTACT US

Warners Group Publications plc, The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH **E** caravan@warnersgroup.co.uk **W** outandaboutlive.co.uk

MANAGEMENT

MANAGING DIRECTOR Stephen Warner

MARKETING

HEAD OF MARKETING Ellis O'Connell

T 07786 337274

BRAND MANAGER

Lucie Cox **T** 01778 395016

EDITORIAL

HEAD OF CONTENT Daniel Attwood

E danielattwood@warnersgroup.co.uk

EDITOR Macaulay Nichol

MANAGING EDITOR James Buzzel

CONSULTING EDITOR Val Chapman

E caravan@warnersgroup.co.uk

ONLINE EDITOR Dean Ruane

DESIGN Nigel Fish

ADVERTISING

GROUP HEAD OF ADVERTISING

Fleur Chivers **T** 01778 392071

GROUP COMMERCIAL MANAGER

Zellah Stark **T** 01778 392093

MEDIA SALES EXECUTIVE

Danielle Walder **T** 01778 392452

PARKS ADVERTISING

GROUP COMMERCIAL MANAGER

Ashleigh Chadwick **T** 01778 392050

MEDIA SALES EXECUTIVE

Emma Hill **T** 01778 392057

AD PRODUCTION & DESIGN

Viv Lane **E** outdoorleisure@warnersgroup.co.uk

PRINTING

Stephens & George Limited

We are not responsible for the quality and/or performance of goods and/or services advertised. The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) exists to regulate the content of advertisements and can be contacted on 02074 922222.

Caravan is published 12 times a year.

S&G
STEPHENS & GEORGE
PRINT GROUP

DREAM, PLAN, GO!

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES START...

...with our brand new guide to the best of caravan life.

Get yours now and start living the dream!

Visit caravan.ma/perfect

out&about LIVE

How to choose the perfect layout

- Finace & insurance
- Towbars explained
- Caravan storage
- New versus used
- Essential kit

BUYING YOUR PERFECT CARAVAN

SAY HELLO TO CARAVAN LIFE

NEW! 2026 GUIDE TO CHOOSING THE RIGHT CARAVAN

£9.99

Coachman Laser 545 Xtra



Caravan WiFi



Sprite Major 4 SB



Tech, kit, tips & advice

- 6** Used bargains of the month
- 12** Swift Sprite Major 4 SB: a top-tier, family-favourite caravan
- 16** Coachman Laser 545 Xtra: the wide-body, single-axle tourer with L-shaped seating and Alde heating
- 20** Bailey Discovery D4-4: a lightweight, low-price tourer
- 52** Caravan WiFi guide: expert advice on routers, boosters, MiFis, fitted systems and getting started with Starlink
- 54** New gear: highlights from the 2026 Camping Gear Awards
- 56** Caravan insurance: advice on picking the right policy for you
- 60** Q&A: your questions answered



Pitchside views



Camping accessories



Bargains of the month

Looking for the best used caravan deals on the market? This month we resume our series to help you find the best caravan deals. These examples are just a glimpse of the outstanding value you'll find in our dedicated Out & About Live Caravans for Sale listings

Bailey Unicorn Barcelona S3

Our initial thoughts:

Bailey's third-generation Unicorns debut a striking new look featuring bright white GRP exteriors with curved rear corners and redesigned panels.

Showering

The Barcelona's washroom runs the full width of the caravan, as it has done since the model was launched in 2011. This new shower is now larger than the previous model. It's square, 68cm x 80cm, and has a shelf running across the rear wall. The shower door is a simple single-piece unit. There are four towel hooks, two alongside the shower and two more on the door.

There are two cabinets, one under the basin and a second on the offside wall.

Sleeping

The double bed has a deep (19cm), sprung mattress. There's double bed opportunity in the lounge, too; a slatted base can be rolled out from under the two drawers. Significantly, the settee single beds are slightly longer, at 1.78m, than those in previous models, the result of a redesign of the windowsill area.

Storage

The Barcelona's standout feature is its under-bed storage, featuring a slatted, metal-framed base supported by gas struts for easy access. Dual exterior hatches, one under the bed and another under the nearside settee, lead to plastic trays specifically designed for sliding in fresh and waste water tanks.

Dining

The awkward table storage from previous models has now been replaced, with a much more accessible recess behind the wardrobe. Held by a simple channel and clip, the table is now easy to extract.

This area also includes a mains socket and mirror, perfect for grooming. For smaller meals, the windowsill extension creates a 52cm-deep surface, providing a practical dining space for two.

Lounging

You'd hardly notice that the settees are slightly longer than those in the previous model; they are certainly long enough for three to sit along each side. You will notice, though, that the armrests are large and sculpted. The front two armrests hide a superbly designed feature; plastic-lined storage compartments that are completely hidden from view.

The soft-close lockers feature gloss finishes and metal accents. Their cream and brown woodwork perfectly matches the surrounding panels, which house integrated spotlights.



The interestingly designed lounge and kitchen



Image Highbridge

Similar lighting is built into the moulding for the front window and rooflight.

Kitchen

The Barcelona's kitchen is totally different to that of its predecessor. The surface is all on one level, rather than having a raised section for the sink, which is now in the centre of the kitchen rather than on the front end of it. A hinged extension creates extra space when you need it; that won't be very often, because the dresser on the nearside gives you a surface that's 1.03m long and 60cm deep.

Our verdict

Most buyers will likely find the latest Unicorn Barcelona the best one yet. These are the reasons: It has a 40-litre water tank. Its lounge is longer than its predecessor. Its shower is bigger. It has more space in the centre of the caravan because the fridge is now on the offside and there is a large dresser on the nearside, creating more kitchen space. And it has a cabinet for shoes beside the door.

- YEAR 2017
- PRICE £17,995
- BERTHS 4
- CLASS TWIN AXLE
- Deal found at Highbridge Caravan Centre Ltd

You can find similar deals at bit.ly/CVNSALE



Scan to find your perfect new or used caravan from hundreds nationwide and start your caravanning adventure today

Coachman Laser 650

Our initial thoughts:

The Coachman Laser 650/4 breaks the mould with a layout that trades the standard transverse island bed for something far more sophisticated. By placing the head of the bed against the rear wall, the design shifts the vibe from “typical caravan” to “boutique hotel suite.”

This “inline” innovation moves away from sideways beds, instead anchoring both the head and foot against walls. Slide the doors closed and you have surely the cosiest bedroom in any tourer, completely closed off from the rest of the caravan. Open either door and you are in the spacious en suite area, with the shower on the nearside and the toilet opposite.

A door on the forward end of the en suite room leads into the rest of the caravan. It's an awesome arrangement.

Showering

The showering and washing area spans the full width of the caravan and is one metre deep. That's about the size of the average end washroom and is bigger than many.

The shower is semi-circular, measuring 70cm by 76cm deep. Two towel hooks and a loop are on the wall directly alongside the shower, above the Alde-heated towel rail. Full marks for towel provision, then. The washbasin is in the centre, mounted on the wall that divides the bedroom from the washing area. Floor space is good and so is illumination, with 18 bright LEDs set within frosted sections of the mirror, plus four ceiling lights.

A top-opening linen cabinet, 49cm deep, sits against the forward wall. It's lined with a cotton bag, secured by press-studs so that it can be removed. The idea is to stow items waiting to be washed here but we think if the caravan were ours we'd use it for storing towels or clothing ready to be worn, rather than ready to be washed.

Sleeping

At 1.81m long and backed against a wall, the bed may be too short for some taller users. Dual wardrobes flank the bed, offering convenient shelving and deep cabinets for extra storage.

The Alde heating system provides consistent, comfortable warmth through meshed vents in the wooden casements. These vents are neatly positioned along the walls directly beneath both windows.

Concealed LED strips glow above the windows, complemented by two spotlights over the bed and a pair of tiny lights built

into the base. We felt, though, that the overall illumination level was a little too low and perhaps even somewhat dim as daylight faded.



The fixed bed is assembled to maximise comfort

Storage

We started our storage analysis in the bedroom, under the bed. It rises easily. There's no frame to get in the way of lifting things in and out. And there's a surprise under the bed: an AL-Ko safe, mounted to the floor; it's part of the standard equipment.

Upper lounge storage consists of six lockers. There's a full-length door to the space under the nearside settee. You get into the corresponding offside space by raising the settee base; that's because the base of the lounge double bed forms part of the settee base structure.

Dining

The extending centre-front table top gives you a surface measuring a generous 82cm by 63cm. When you need the four-seater table, getting it out of its dedicated cabinet alongside the door is an easy task.

Lounging

This is a four-seater lounge, with armrests at both ends. The fabric scheme is beautifully designed, with settee back edging matching the top sections of the armrests. There's good shelf space below the wide sunroof. And good illumination, from lights above the top lockers, a ceiling light, two concealed corner lights and four spotlights.



A roomy layout, built to maximise living space



Image Highbridge

Kitchen

The kitchen has three drawers and two cabinets. The forward cabinet is 42cm wide and has two shelf spaces. The second cabinet, although 60cm wide, effectively only has one shelf because the wheelarch intrudes into the space. But that doesn't matter, because the overall storage capability of the kitchen, with two large top lockers, is generous.

Opposite the kitchen, Thetford's slimline 140-litre fridge is a fair trade-off for the magnificent primary bedroom. An extractor fan is also perfectly positioned right above the hob.

Towing

It goes without saying that a caravan in this spec bracket will have the ATC stability control system. With four chunks of rubber to keep you glued to the road one might say its presence is not as important as on a single-axle caravan. But it's nice to know the automatic electronic control device is there anyway, especially if you encounter gusty winds.

Our verdict

Coachman Lasers are created for discerning buyers. The latest Laser performs an additional function. Its bedroom design sits on a fence between a cosy hotel room and a caravan. And that could just be the key to drawing a new sector of people into caravanning; people, perhaps, who had never before considered caravanning; people whose hitherto holiday mode is about renting plush studio apartments, with, yes, a bedroom and en suite and a separate kitchen-lounge-diner, just like the Laser 650.

- YEAR 2019
- PRICE £23,995
- BERTHS 4
- CLASS TWIN AXLE
- Deal found at Highbridge Caravan Centre Ltd

You can find similar deals at bit.ly/CVNSALE >>

Buccaneer Schooner 2013



Our initial thoughts:

Buccaneer claims to be the most luxurious and opulent touring caravan in the UK, a bold statement we're inclined to agree with. Its extensive list of standard features is genuinely impressive, ranging from a ceramic toilet to a remote-controlled, rain-sensing rooflight. High-tech additions like mobile-operated Alde heating and an intelligent water pump control set it apart from the competition. The build quality is equally high-end, using SoLiD bonding technology and a GRP underskin to ensure total water resistance. Thoughtful touches abound, including floor-level night lights and an automatic wardrobe light for added convenience. Safety is also a priority, featuring anti-snaking drive control and a Thatcham-approved tracker as standard. Ultimately, the Buccaneer lives up to its lavish reputation by offering more features than any other caravan on the market. This commitment to innovation is best seen in action with the Buccaneer Schooner, which closes its own rooflight when it rains; its technology is amazing, and so is its level of equipment and luxury



Showering

Time to investigate the showering department for humans, though. We've been so awestruck by taking in the level of equipment that, until now, we'd taken in the Schooner's fixedbed, rear shower room layout without noticing it. The walls of the shower are tile-effect, in mid-grey. No other caravan shower looks like this. And there's a feature in the shower that's much more important than looks. A rail for four towels pulls out from high up on the shower wall;

you retract it when it's not in use. So simple and so brilliantly practical. In addition, there's a towel bar above the Alde heating outlet, on the rear wall, and a twin-hook on the wall alongside the shower. That's more towel provision than any other caravan we've yet seen.

Sleeping

Buccaneers have memory foam mattresses with Coolmax technology which is designed to keep you at an even temperature. It's deep, at 18cm, and feels exceptionally firm when you sit and lie on it. This bed is also exceptionally large, at 1.8m wide and 2.08 long, with one of the smallest corridor cut-off areas in any caravan; you only lose 20cm of width at the foot of the bed.

At the front, two single beds can be made; they're 70cm wide and 1.8m long. That puts the Schooner firmly into the bracket of fixed-bed caravans that are well up to family capability.

Storage

The Alde unit is under the offside settee but you won't notice the space it occupies; there's a vast amount of storage space in this long lounge. The water tank is under the bed but, again, there's so much space here that you won't notice that it takes up a little of it. Six top lockers around the lounge and three more over the bed and a cabinet under the dresser alongside the bed take care of all small foldable items. And the wardrobe? That's a star! It has a light which comes on when you open the doors, and three rails which give you, in total, more than 120cm of hanging space.

Dining

The dining table hides away in its own cabinet on the forward end of the kitchen. When just two are dining, you'd probably leave the table stowed away, because the pull-out section of the chest of drawers gives you an area measuring 81cm by 65 ; that's plenty of space for two place settings.

Lounging

We sit down in the lounge and analyse its ambience, within the frame of those words "luxury" and "opulence". Curtains hang on chrome poles. They're subtly green with a light-reflective sheen, and exquisitely made, with panels across the top of a different green fabric. There's a pattern going on here but that's the only pattern you'll see in the Schooner. If you imagined Buccaneers to be traditional in looks, think again, for the look is very modern; the predominant

colour in the seating is white, teamed, on the backrests, with pale brown for the seat cushions which precisely match the (very close pile, very high quality) carpet.

It's gorgeous in its simplicity and, more importantly, it will always appeal to most refined tastes.



Kitchen

The kitchen is 1.75m long. Its dual-fuel hob and sink with recessed (proper!) drainer is finished in gloss enamel. Four lights create excellent illumination where you need it. And a strip of LED lights is concealed under the front edge of the work surface top, running the whole length of the kitchen. Lavish? Luxury? Ostentatious? No, just awesomely nice.

Towing

The stability enhancement provided by twin axles makes for relaxed open-road towing and greater predictability when precision corner positioning and reversing is required. The Schooner was a joy to tow – and it has the safety asset of iDC anti-snaking control.

Our verdict

The Buccaneer Schooner is the ultimate luxury choice for couples or families of four who value high-tech features, like rain-sensing rooflights and smartphone-controlled heating, alongside the finest craftsmanship. It isn't just about the extensive equipment; it's the quality of the fabrics and the refined finish that make every corner of the Schooner look and feel superb.

- YEAR 2013
- PRICE £14,999
- BERTHS 4
- CLASS TWIN AXLE
- Deal found at Pearman Briggs Leisure Ltd

You can find similar deals at bit.ly/CVNSALE

125 years of...

Not knowing where
you are, but knowing
this is exactly where
you should be.

Welcome to the incredible outdoors.



Whether it's your first night under canvas or your hundredth, our campsites are open to everyone. Swap the ceiling for the stars and rediscover the effortless joy of the incredible outdoors. After all, the best stories aren't told indoors.

Your journey starts here. Book your escape today.





Swap the sofa for the slow lane and follow Britain's biggest screen stars – the places. This cinematic caravan tour pairs iconic TV and film locations with nearby campsites, so you can stay the night and roll on to the next scene

From *House of the Dragon*'s eerie castles to the wizarding world and James Bond's Highland hideouts, this tour pairs unforgettable filming locations with top-tier Premier Parks

campsites – meaning you can follow in your favourite characters' footsteps and still be back in time for tea in the awning.

HOLYWELL BAY, CORNWALL

Sweeping sands and deep dunes set the scene for *House of the Dragon* – filmed at Holywell Bay. Cornwall's coastline needs no introduction, but this stretch is a cinematic standout.



Images: Shutterstock



Porth Beach Holiday Park

PORTH BEACH HOLIDAY PARK

Just minutes from the sands of Holywell Bay and ideally located near Newquay, this family campsite is as close to beachside bliss as it gets. With serviced pitches and award-winning amenities, it's a prime base to explore the coast and film sets alike.



Images: Shutterstock

DINORWIG QUARRY, GWYNEDD

North Wales' slate-quarrying past sets the dramatic tone for one of the show's most haunted castles – Harrenhal.



Bryn Gloch

BRYN GLOCH CARAVAN & CAMPING PARK

Located at the foot of Snowdon with riverside views and excellent facilities, this campsite is a walker's dream. Follow film history by day and unwind with Welsh mountain views by night.

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

The cloisters of Gloucester Cathedral are instantly recognisable as the corridors of Hogwarts.

Images: Shutterstock



As seen in: *Harry Potter*

The cloisters of Gloucester Cathedral



Timeless views across the Gloucester vales

COUNTRY VIEW HOLIDAY PARK

A scenic drive from the cathedral, this Somerset gem is great for families. With a heated pool and coastal proximity, it's a magical base in its own right.

Country View Holiday Park makes a great stay in Somerset

Country View



PREMIER PARK 2026
The first UK campsites, independently assessed

WHERE TO STAY

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK, SCOTLAND

Loch Laggan and the rugged Highlands gave Bond's final chase sequence the dramatic finish it deserved.

Cairngorms National Park in autumn

Images: Shutterstock



As seen in: *James Bond – No Time to Die*

BLAIR CASTLE CARAVAN PARK

Set within the grounds of Blair Castle, this campsite blends historic scenery with Highland landscapes. Segway tours, bike hire and a legendary castle next door? Bond himself would approve.

WHERE TO STAY

Within the grounds of Blair Castle, the campsite enjoys stunning castle and mountain views

PREMIER PARK 2026
The first UK campsites, independently assessed

Blair Castle Caravan Park



Blenheim Palace in autumn

Images: Shutterstock

BLenheim PALACE, OXFORDSHIRE

This stately home hosted Ethan Hunt during a high-stakes charity auction.

As seen in: *Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation*

WHERE TO STAY

LINCOLN FARM PARK

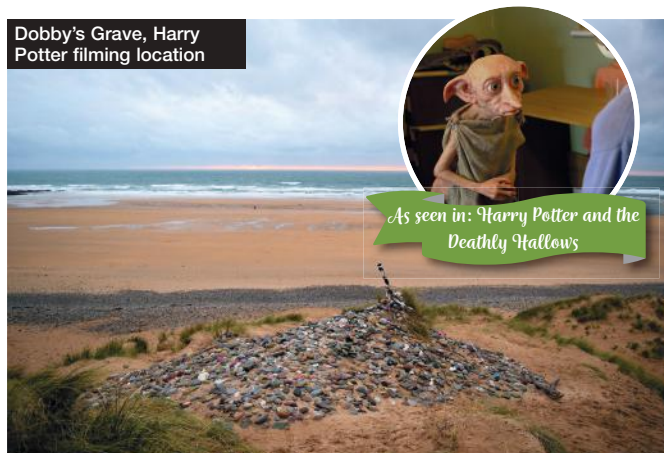
With spa-style indoor pools, full-service pitches and close access to the Cotswolds, Lincoln Farm Park balances action with relaxation.

Lincoln Farm Park offers a premium touring experience in the heart of Oxfordshire

PREMIER PARK 2026
The first UK campsites, independently assessed

Lincoln Farm Park

Dobby's Grave, Harry Potter filming location



As seen in: *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

Images: Shutterstock

FRESHWATER WEST, PEMBROKESHIRE

The windswept beach of Freshwater West served as the touching backdrop for Dobby's final scene.

An adults-only touring site, perfect for a longer drive with great views

WHERE TO STAY

PREMIER PARK 2026
The first UK campsites, independently assessed



South Wales Touring Park

SOUTH WALES TOURING PARK – LLWYNIFAN FARM

Adults-only, peaceful and scenic, this Carmarthenshire campsite offers countryside views and access to the coast – perfect for Harry Potter fans on a getaway.

Sprite

Major 4 SB

The lightest and cheapest transverse island bed, rear shower room tourer on the market

Words: Val Chapman ■ Photography: Richard Chapman

In the field of lightweight, affordable caravans, Sprites have always been front runners. The marque has built its reputation on those two factors, plus practicality and pleasing ambience – and there is no better example, in today's line-up, than the Sprite Major 4 SB.

This standard-width model has a full-width rear shower room and a transversely aligned bed; a layout that has luxury appeal. Its MTPLM is a mere 1,383kg.

The SB was introduced in 2015 in response to the rising popularity of the transverse island bed layout. Sprite had to get in on the act – and, 11 years on, it's as popular as ever, standing its ground among competition from all the major manufacturers.

In Swift's portfolio, there are two others of this layout. These are the Challenger 580 (£30,095 and 1,510kg MTPLM) and the Conqueror 580, albeit

with Alde heating (£37,695 and 1,675kg MTPLM).

Bailey offers three models with this layout. There's the Phoenix Black 644 (£25,649 and 1,437kg MTPLM), the Pegasus Black Brindisi (£29,799 and 1,546kg MTPLM; this one is wider, at 2.43m), plus the Alde-heated Unicorn Deluxe Vigo (£33,399 and 1,600kg MTPLM). Coachman's Acadia 575 has a similar layout. Like the Vigo, it has Alde heating. Its price tag is £32,190 and its MTPLM is 1,537kg.

There's also the Elddis Whirlwind 554 (£26,750 and 1,470kg MTPLM) – if you can find one, bearing in mind that they are no longer being produced for 2026.

So, the Sprite Major 4 SB is the lightest and cheapest standard-width, transverse island bed caravan around. Worth a very close look, then...

We came to Leisure Sales, in



Thanks to...

Leisure Sales,
Sandbach, Cheshire

Cheshire, to explore this icon of light weight and affordability.

This is what you get. Sprites have a bright, fresh, simple-styling appeal. On the face of it, no frills. Just functionality. But there is more than meets the eye about Sprite components. There's the comfort and durability of sprung seat bases; a new feature for 2026. The mattress deserves a mention, too; it's made of reflex foam and incorporates memory fibre that is designed to increase airflow. There's a door flyscreen, and curtains on all windows. Recognising today's fashion for



ABOVE

Plain, smart, yet also homely

RIGHT

Spotlights above the mirror and a large light in the shower cubicle



fewer curtains in caravans, it has to be said that they still bring a depth of cosiness to a lounge and this one is a great example.

Sprite has kept the price low but buyers can upgrade with a package of equipment.

You can get a microwave, a set of carpets, a hitch-head stabiliser and a television aerial – but you have to pay extra for these items. Together, they're called the Lux Pack and it adds £995 to the price.

Other options include an Al-Ko Secure wheel lock (the receiver is fitted as standard), a solar panel

mounted on the roof and an alarm system (with tilt sensor and key fob operation).

The kitchen provides all you need – except, perhaps, a microwave – although, if you don't go for the Lux Pack, you could buy a microwave to use in an awning. There's a 98-litre fridge, a combined oven/grill and a three-burner hob. And surface space – while not generous – is enough for reasonably easy food prep. Storage space deserves praise. There are two top cabinets, 46cm and 75cm wide, and a 26cm-wide cabinet between the fridge and





the cooker that contains a small cutlery drawer and a shelf, plus a cabinet measuring 46cm wide and 50cm deep under the oven. The advantage of having a combined oven/grill rather than a deeper cooker with a grill above the oven is that there is space for a large cabinet here.

Opposite the kitchen is a handy extra surface, 58cm by 32cm. This is a storage cabinet providing

two open shelves, 58cm by 14cm, and also incorporates the housing for the free-standing table.

The lounge, of course, can be transformed into a second double bed, by pulling out webbing-linked slats from under the drawer at the front. The resulting bed measures 2.02m by 1.17m.

It's the proper bedroom that gets the accolades, though, for its cosy ambience, enhanced by its

ABOVE
Surface space isn't generous but is sufficient for reasonably easy meal prep

BELOW LEFT TO RIGHT
No other caravan has a tall, stylish cabinet like this! A practical kitchen and an inviting bedroom

tall bedhead upholstered in the sort of tactile, quality fabric you'd expect in a caravan many rungs higher on the luxury ladder. If your exploration of the Sprite Major 4 SB is your first foray into fixed bed caravan selection, you may not be familiar with the mechanism, found on most island beds, that enables you to shorten its length during the day to create more floor space for you to walk





TESTED | SPRITE MAJOR 4 SB



around the foot of the bed to the shower room.

The forward wardrobe is 67cm wide and the aft one is 40cm. Both have cabinets beneath, and a little ledge perfectly sized for coffee mugs. The two over-bed lockers are 20cm deep and 66cm wide.

The corner dressing table provides a triangular cabinet and an array of shelving, plus a double

coat (or dressing gown) hook. So, storage space in the bedroom is first rate and that's before you have factored in the huge space under the bed, which has an exterior hatch.

Perhaps you'd expect to find at least one area of this caravan that appears a little basic, respecting the Sprite Major 4 SB's budget status – but, as our review progressed all of the way to the

shower room at the rear, we still hadn't found anything that could be described as basic.

On the contrary; there is a spotlight beaming down within the top shelf units, and two spotlights above the mirror, all giving a good level of illumination and simple styling. White cabinet doors, plus shelving, look pleasingly plain and stark. All in all, an excellent preening environment.

ABOVE LEFT TO RIGHT

A dressing table and coat hook, plus plenty of shelving

BELOW

White, cream and grey – neutral shades that combine beautifully



verdict

The luxury of an island bed layout with a low price and a low weight – surely the backbone of everyone's idea of a perfect choice for their first caravan. The Major 4 SB answers those needs perfectly. Plus, while adhering to the Sprite no-frills ethos, if ever there's a tourer that sings out the message that caravanning is great – and affordable – it's this one.

fact file



- Berths 4
- Length
 - Body 5.83m
 - Overall 7.54m
- Width 2.23m
- Heating system
 - Truma Combi
- Weight
 - MIRO 1,227kg
 - MTPLM 1,383kg

Coachman ■ W coachman.co.uk ■ £40,690

Coachman

Laser 545 Xtra

The only single-axle tourer with Alde heating, maximum width and L-shaped seating

Words: Val Chapman ■ Photography: Richard Chapman

The market is awash with single-axle caravans that have secluded rear bedrooms and central showering arrangements in all price ranges. Offerings include Sprite's Major 4 EB, Swift's Challenger 560; Bailey's Pegasus Black Portofino and Unicorn Deluxe Cabrera; the Adria Adora Tiber – and three from Coachman.

If you are looking for a caravan of this layout that has Alde heating, that reduces your choice to four, and all of them have comparable MTPLM figures. There's Bailey's Unicorn Deluxe Cabrera, at 1,600kg, Coachman's Acadia 545, at 1,550kg, the VIP 545 at 1,678kg – and this one, the Laser 545 Xtra,

at 1,770kg. Lots in the running, you might say. But of these only one is maximum width. That's the Laser 545 Xtra. And this is the only one that has L-shaped seating. Which makes it a very special caravan.

We went to Preston Caravans & Motorhomes to find out more.

It's worth saying that, until the arrival of the super-sophisticated Lusso range, Laser was Coachman's flagship range; the line-up on which this company made its name as a manufacturer specialising in high spec and luxury. It first appeared in 1999, but it wasn't until 2021 that Laser branched out into single-axle territory, a year after the first eight-

Thanks to...

Preston Caravans
& Motorhomes

MAIN IMAGE

High seat backs and lots of cushions

BELOW

The T-shaped surface provides lots of space



foot-wide Lasers reinforced this range's position at the top of its game. Now, Laser's seven layouts – all maximum width – provide buyers with a wide choice at the top end of spec, price and comfort. The 545 isn't the only Laser to have an L-shaped lounge; there are three – but the other two ride on twin axles. So, if single axle is your choice, this is the Laser for you.

We'll start our exploration in the area of the 545 that makes it unique among its rivals: the lounge. The word sumptuous might be a tad overused in furniture parlance, but it truly best describes this

TESTED | COACHMAN LASER 545 XTRA



curved creation of comfort that makes the 'welcome' statement as you step inside. The backrests are higher than those found in most caravans. The armrests are large and, without taking up too much seat space, provide good supportive comfort. The six cushions play a big part in the amount of cosiness, of course – in three different fabrics, all with plush, tactile appeal and guaranteed to give you snuggle comfort. And grey button and piping detail adds to the sophisticated look.

It's not just the L-shape of the

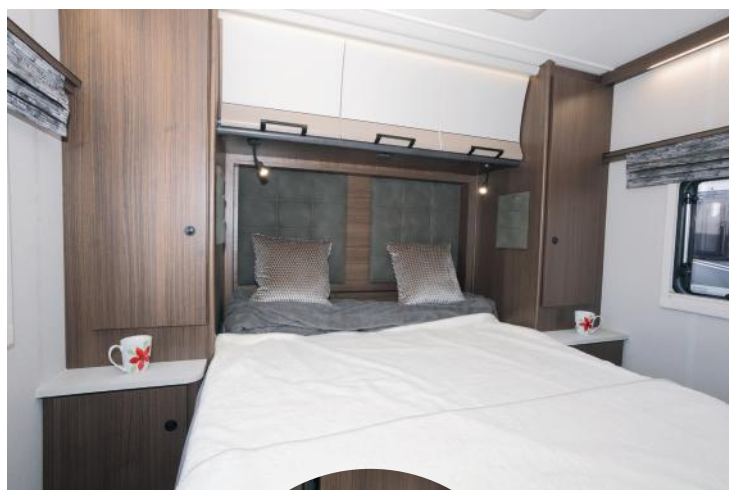
seating that sets the 545 apart. It's the presence of a window in the wall that is the dedicated media area; many L-shaped lounge caravans have a blank wall behind the place where you'd place your television. So, the 545 has wide-open, lots-of-daylight appeal on its list of attributes.

There's a double-doored cabinet, with a shelf, to take care of media paraphernalia and a desk-style hole through which to feed power and aerial cables to sockets



>>

TESTED | COACHMAN LASER 545 XTRA



within the cabinet, so all stays neat and tidy. And the 1.45m-long shelf is plenty big enough for other stuff alongside your television.

Reverse-curve top locker doors add not just style but an increased feeling of space at head height. And this lounge has a hidden storage surprise. Set into the windowsill is a 74cm-wide cabinet. Your only clue is a finger hole via which to raise it. Inside, there are two compartments, 17cm deep. What's it designed for? A hideaway for books perhaps, in the interest of tidiness. Whatever you use it for, it's neat – and practical.

When the time comes to turn your lounge into a dining room, you'll appreciate the proximity of the table, stowed in its own cabinet on the aft side of the door. And the shelf above this cabinet is the

perfect place for keys, phones and wallets as you step inside.

Next up on our scrutiny list is the kitchen. Instantly, it lives up to expectations as ideal for buyers

who regard cooking as a priority element of holidays. The L-shaped surface provides oodles of space – it's 76cm wide and, at its deepest point, it measures 87cm. The 59cm by 39cm extension gives you even more space when you need it.

In typical Laser high-spec style, there's an extractor fan set into the lockers directly above the hob, and lighting is concealed between each of the three drawers in the kitchen.

The fridge/freezer is opposite the kitchen. It's the Thetford 137-litre capacity model. There's a locker beneath it and, in the kitchen itself, three drawers, 38cm wide, plus a cabinet containing two drawers,



fact file

- Berths 4
- Length
Body 5.8m
Overall 7.43m
- Width 2.44m
- Weight
MIRO 1,615kg
MTPLM 1,770kg

ABOVE (CLOCKWISE)

A caravan of two rooms! The shower room has the luxury of a towel warmer; Reverse-curve locker doors, tall bedheads and bedside pockets for phones

22cm wide and 66cm long, that pull out on runners. The top locker alongside the microwave is a generous 73cm wide. That surely amounts to ample storage space in total.

The entrance to the bedroom is a feature that this caravan shares with its VIP sibling and also the twin-axle Laser 845 Xtra. That's a sliding door on each side of the washbasin, which sits in the centre of the washroom. Do you need two doors to get into the bedroom? Most certainly not. But it's a nice flexibility – and, with both doors open, there's a charming open-plan en suite vibe about the showering and bedroom area.

This is a bedroom that cocoons you in luxury, thanks to its high, padded and buttoned bedheads, its triple pockets for phones on each side of the bed and a television wall at the foot of the bed.

INSET

A ledge that's useful for keys and phones as you step inside

verdict

A lovely separate bedroom, a kitchen with a surface area large enough for the most adventurous of caravan cooking and storage space to match – and a wide lounge that feels as homely as it is sophisticated. It all adds up to a caravan that looks and feels luxurious and good value for its price tag.

FREE NIGHT ON US

Become a member today!

Join the Caravan and Motorhome Club and get a **FREE*** night to use at one of our 150 UK Club campsites.

Plus, membership gives you access to a whole host of Club campsite offers: enjoy up to £40 off your Summer holiday and 10% off Autumn getaways! For all-inclusive value, try our Tour for Less for £25 per night all season offer, or explore the South West for Less with £4 off per night on selected stays.

Scan me



Find out more at camc.com/freenightjoin



Get away, your way.



*Free night voucher is valid for one FREE night for use at all UK Club campsites for bookings made between 1 April 2026 and 10 December 2026 for arrivals between 1 October 2026 and 23 December 2026. For full offer terms and conditions see website camc.com/freenightjoin

UK Club campsite offer terms and conditions apply, see camc.com/specialoffers for full detail. Copyright © 2026 Caravan and Motorhome Club. All rights reserved. Information correct at time of print

Bailey

Discovery D4-4

An outstanding shape, a bright blue interior accent colour, an awesome amount of shelving, generous storage provision, a light weight – and a low price

Words: Val Chapman ■ Photography: Richard Chapman

Certain caravans are designed to be distinctive and different in looks and character. The Bailey Discovery range is one of these. And the most distinctive part is actually the rear. That's because of its curved shape. If you find yourself following one on the road, you know, instantly, that it looks like no other caravan.

Comments have reached us that the rear bodyline makes them look like horseboxes – with which we don't agree, but the positive message is clear: they don't look akin to any other caravan.

The design of the front sets Discoverys apart, too – because they have just one window. Not the panoramic style of window once commonly found in caravans in budget territory. But a vertical window, arching high into the roofline, sharing the hallmark

window style with all other Baileys.

So, dramatically different in appearance, light in weight and pretty light on price, too; Discoverys have a lot going for them.

And that's even before you step inside.

There are three models in the range. The D4-2 is the baby; a two-berth, just 3.76m in body length and with an MTPLM of only 998kg. The four-berths are the D4-4 L – the family Discovery – with an offside dining area that converts to bunks, and the D4-4. This one, while a four-berth, has strong couple appeal. That's because it's the only Discovery with the luxury of a fixed bed.

If you remember the Bailey Orion series, which ran until 2013, you will recall that the 430-4 had a similar layout to the D4-4; the



ABOVE (TOP TO BOTTOM)

A combined oven/grill and a large cabinet beneath;
A compact layout that works well

OPPOSITE PAGE (CLOCKWISE)

A spacious shower room with lots of shelving; A single, central high-arching window; The bold blue for backrest tops and seat edging makes a big contribution to the character of the Discovery;
A large cutlery drawer pulls out from the top of this cabinet

Pegasus Verona, produced until 2018, also shared this layout. So did the Bailey Pursuit 430-4 and the Pegasus Modena, made until 2017. What that little trip down Bailey memory lane demonstrates is that the D4-4 has a proven layout, now presented in a totally different style.

Designed to appeal to the adventure market, the D4-4 is tailor-made for couples who want the luxury of a bed that's ready made, a full-width rear shower room and a kitchen that's amply sized for preparing easy, on-the-go meals – all wrapped up in the curvy shape that is surely Bailey's most mould-breaking caravan to date.

Another thing that sets Discoverys apart is that the drawbar is longer than that on most caravans – to allow for a cycle rack suitable for two bikes.

Interior styling mirrors the distinctive exterior. Upper cabinets are pale fawn and handleless. Lower cabinets are dark matt grey. Natural wood softens the look, for the windowsill, upper cabinet framework and the kitchen surface. The use of blue for backrest tops



Thanks to...

Campbells Caravans
& Motorhomes,
Lostock Hall,
Lancashire



and seat edging, panels in each of the front corners, plus the top of the bedhead, injects a bright, lively aspect.

Cooking equipment in this Truma-heated caravan is a three-burner hob and a combined oven/grill. Discoverys don't have microwaves. The fridge is the Dometic 92-litre capacity model.

With the hob top down there is 1.03m of surface length and, opposite, there's more surface, measuring 37cm by 47cm.

Storage space in the kitchen is generous for a compact caravan. The top cabinet is just over a metre long and contains two shelves in one sector. Under the combined oven/grill is a large cabinet – 48cm by 47cm. A cutlery drawer is under the surface opposite the kitchen.

Storage elsewhere is generous, too. Above the lounge are two



68cm-wide lockers. There are two above the bed, one is 78cm long and the other is 1.05m.

The wardrobe is positioned in the front offside of the bedroom, slightly wedge-shaped, and with a rail that is 84cm long. There are two large shelves under the hanging space plus a small shelf (30cm by 23cm) on the right-hand side. Three more shelves sit in an alcove above the foot of the bed and two more, much larger, are in the rear corner. And, if you are looking for even more shelf space, you can find it on the offside of the bedroom to the rear of the wardrobe, above the place where the table is stored. All this, plus of course, the space under the bed.

The more we explore the D4-4 the more we are impressed by its spacious feel – and that's especially true of the shower room, spanning the width of the caravan behind the bedroom. It's 1.2m at its deepest point, so the amount of floor space is amazing. So is shelf space. There are three large shelves in the offside corner and three more smaller shelves beneath in an almost hidden position, ideal for rolled-up towels and toilet rolls. Then, of course, there's the large shelf on which the washbasin sits. That's 1.3m long and almost dressing table-style. In addition to all of that there is a cabinet on the



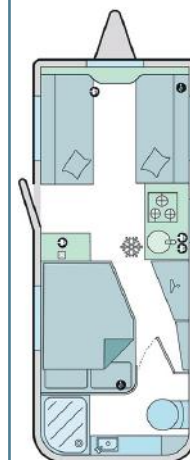
rear wall, 33cm wide, containing three shelves.

Talking of shelves, two of this caravan's multiplicity of shelves have an aesthetic function as well as a practical one. These are in the two front corners of the lounge, curving to follow the body lines, and containing recessed lighting, so forming a décor feature. And there's yet more. Above the door is a shelf that's perfect for keys. And, aft of the door, is a recess with two coat hooks and a shelf beneath. By this time during our review day we'd lost count of the number of shelves. Then we noticed two more, almost hidden, under the windowsill. And below, centre front, is yet another, on the top of the housing from which you pull out the slatted central portion of the double bed that you can make in the lounge.

verdict

Technically, the Discovery sits at the bottom of Bailey's price and spec echelon. But, thanks to its distinctive design and character in terms of exterior looks and interior ambience, the Discovery sits on its own, not conforming to the conventional market stereotypes of price, spec and whether or not that equals luxury. The D4-4 carves out its own path in the market. We love it.

fact file



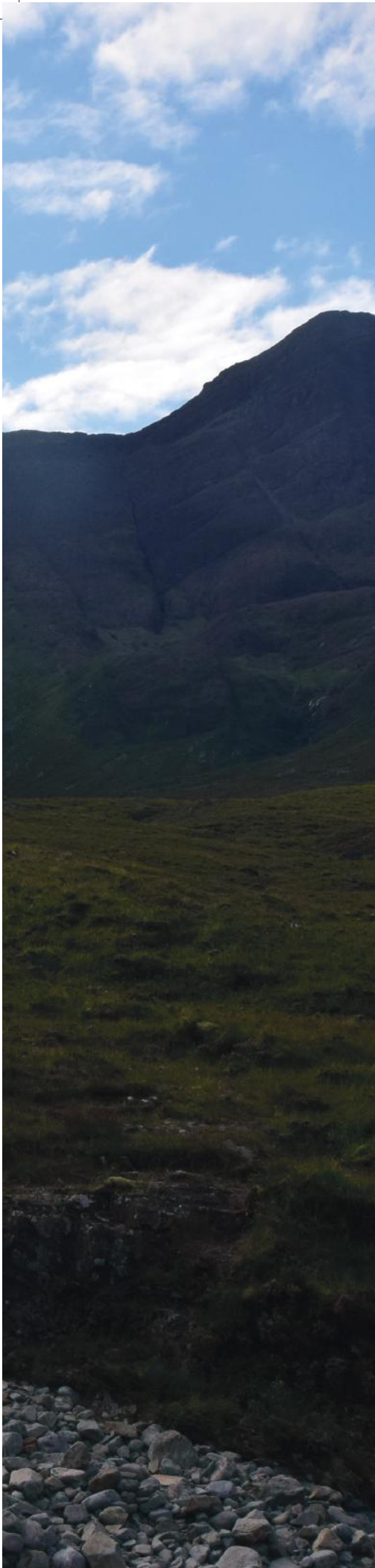
- Berths 4
- Length Body 5.31m Overall 7.14m
- Width 2.22m
- Weight MIRO 1,102kg MTPLM 1,248kg

A full-page background photograph of a Scottish Highland landscape. In the foreground, a river flows over dark, wet rocks, with a small waterfall visible in the middle ground. The river is surrounded by lush green vegetation. In the background, dark, jagged mountain peaks rise against a bright blue sky filled with white, fluffy clouds. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

High spirits in the Highlands

From the silent summit of Ben Nevis to the serene banks of Loch Linnhe, Helen and Martin Matthews share how switching to a Swift Basecamp 4 unlocked a new level of freedom for their Scottish summer adventures

Words & photos by Helen and Martin Matthews



The blue sky was criss-crossed with white trails as the early morning sun shone with increased warmth. Almost out of nowhere, the piper started playing. The whole summit of Ben Nevis seemed to fall silent as he performed from the top of the trig point. Our children (aged five and seven) held chocolate bars in their hands but watched in awe. A kind person had shared the chocolate with them after being “inspired” to get up the mountain after following them bound up in the misty, early morning light that covered the mountainside as we ascended. The growing crowd at the summit stood in silence as the pipes let out soulful sounds that seemed to flow down into the glen below.

We were on top of Ben Nevis, in part, because we had a caravan nestled beyond the peaks at a campsite waiting for our return. Our caravan has allowed us to (or encouraged us to at least) access new places we hadn’t seen before and perhaps would not have seen without it.

We had toured Scotland for a few summers prior to the one just gone by. First, we were in a VW campervan and then later a motorhome. A year or so ago, we made the decision to purchase a caravan. Sometimes, it’s great to sit back at a campsite or just explore the immediate surroundings. Having said that, sometimes you want to go further afield to see something different. Having a motorhome can

sometimes be restrictive due to the length and manoeuvrability of many of them; simply, they don’t fit in car parks, and they can’t go down some of the roads that tow vehicles can. In addition, we were getting fed up of constantly packing everything away and setting up child safety seats to go out for the day. As a result, we thought a caravan might be the answer. We researched different types – as the seasoned caravanner knows, there’s lots to choose from. As first-time caravanners we wanted a small caravan but with enough space for our young family. The Swift Basecamp 4 caught our growing attention.

Moffat

There is that wonderful feeling of freedom that washes over you when you start up the engine of your tow vehicle at the beginning of a trip. The elation often flows through you. You’ve got your home on wheels behind you, and it will go with you (pretty much) wherever you want to go. As we pulled away from our home on the English/Welsh border, we were looking forward to another trip to Scotland.

Our first stop this summer was the historic town of Moffat near to the Scottish/English border. Whether you’re travelling south from Scotland or north from England, it’s certainly worth a stop for a few nights. Moffat itself is a stone’s throw from the A74(M), which means it’s easily accessible regardless of what you’re towing. >>

MAIN PICTURE

Skye is a car drive from Morvich campsite, but it’s worth the time with lots to see, such as the famous Fairy Pools

ABOVE

The Kelpies



As our tow vehicle pulled our caravan up the motorway, the traditional and well-rehearsed cries of “Scotland” from the children rang out from the back seat as we crossed the border.

When deciding to switch from a motorhome to a caravan there was an understandable air of apprehension; towing, would it be as ‘easy’ and enjoyable? Would caravanning suit us?

For us, the Basecamp 4 is a nifty little ‘van that feels at home on motorways, or smaller roads.

Despite its diminutive size, it is still a four-berth caravan, with a slightly quirky rear door. On entering the ‘van, there is a small dining area on the left which can be converted into bunk beds. We leave our ‘van set up as bunk beds permanently, as it’s easier with small children. On the right-hand side is a small toilet and shower room. Next, there is the kitchen, including an oven, a hob and an ample-sized fridge for a small ‘van. Finally, there is a seating area which converts into a double bed at night. It is a compact caravan, but (to us at least) it is like a Tardis (much bigger on the inside than it looks on the outside) and we find it fits our needs.

The towing has been much

easier than expected and our confidence is increasing – certainly when going forwards. One of the challenges was the shift in doing something that previously seemed straightforward, like reversing and adapting to new ways of driving. There is so much satisfaction from reversing the caravan onto a camping pitch without the assistance of a motor mover. Also, importantly, the skills are essential if that friendly motor mover fails. Luckily, the Basecamp 4’s size and weight means that it can be pushed into place if needed... and it has been needed once.

ABOVE

A view through the pines, atop the hills. Walkable from Moffat

INSET

Cloudy view of the earlier stages of a path heading up Ben Nevis. The early morning mists still hang in Glen Nevis, as we ascend the mountain

BELOW

View from the side of Ben Nevis across Glen Nevis. The early morning mist still clings to the glen floor

Onich

On waving goodbye to Moffat, we moved on to Onich, near Fort William. As the mountains surrounding Glen Coe sailed by the window and the caravan glided along in the rear view mirror, it was easy to reflect on towing. We tow our caravan with a VW Transporter Kombi 150hp. We initially had a VW Tiguan, petrol, and, although it would tow the caravan (we of course checked this before towing), the marked difference has been noted with the VW Transporter. As people who once owned a VW campervan, the Kombi works well as a tow vehicle because it gives the ‘best of both worlds’ in that you have the size and space for a full day out, whilst also being a powerful tow vehicle. The Tiguan had taken us across some mountainous terrain



Turn every road into your own story...

...inspiration for every chapter of your caravan life

- Make “Where next?” your favourite question
- Stay connected to the caravan life you love
- Feel more confident wherever the road leads
- Make more of every trip

Begin with your first issue for only £1. Then just £5.25 a month, cancel anytime.



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

bit.ly/carasum26

Call 01778 392017 quoting: **CARA/SUM26**

Offer is open to UK residents for a limited time.

shutterstock.com



previously, but there was always that nagging doubt of “Will we actually get up this hill?”, alongside the fear felt when stopping at temporary traffic lights on hills. The Transporter, however, is a beast. It’s easy to forget sometimes that the caravan is following you.

The Basecamp 4’s rear door means that awnings must go on the back of the ‘van. We have two awnings. A Vango awning that came with the ‘van and a smaller one that we purchased ourselves. A downside of the rear door means that some pitches can be too small as the awning that

ABOVE

A piper plays on top of the trig point of Ben Nevis. The various groups of people at the top all seemed to stop to watch him play...

BELOW

A little hiker steps onto the Affric Kintail Way. Easily accessible from the campsite, the views here rarely disappoint and roll on, seemingly forever

comes with the ‘van puts the length similar to larger caravans. Still, this is a minor problem in the great scheme of things and is not as troubling as the age-old question of “What on earth do you do with a wet awning?”

Sitting on the banks of Loch Linnhe, Onich itself is a great place to drive out from, heading back to Glen Coe and surrounding areas, or heading to places like the Glenfinnan Viaduct or the historic Fort William. This was our base for our adventure up Ben Nevis. If you want a break from driving, then Glen Righ Forest is not far away, with paths and waterfalls to enjoy.

As the sun set after our epic Ben Nevis climb we looked over the loch from our pitch with that comforting feeling of escape, freedom and serenity... until the midges descended.

Morvich

Next, we headed up the scenic A87 heading for Morvich. Morvich rests near to Loch Duich. It’s a great place to visit Skye from or simply stay in the surrounds and take in the Affric Kintail Way or, for the more adventurous, head off to the Falls of Glomach, which is one of the highest and most isolated waterfalls in the UK. The landscapes here are the sort that stay with you after you’ve left. You can find yourself returning to them time and again.

On arrival, things were quiet. So, this gave time for practising to park the ‘van on the pitch. Helen does all the driving and whenever she encounters a quiet site, she will attempt to reverse the ‘van onto the pitch. As with any developing skill, confidence is key and without practising that won’t grow. Equally, there’s the opportunity to provide hilarity for the seasoned caravanner, as they watch us trying to work out hand signals to assist with parking.

One of the nicest things we’ve noticed, since owning ‘vans, is the sense of community and coming together when like-minded people meet. The help and advice





received regarding modern leisure vehicles, being out on the road and finding wonderful places to stay has been immeasurable.

Kinlochewe

The journey further north led us to Kinlochewe. A village well and truly in Highland Scotland, sitting in the view of the majestic Beinn Eighe. From the village you can access various trails and walks that, seemingly, go on and on.

As noted already, one advantage of owning a caravan is having a vehicle to then explore in. We have

been able to access areas we couldn't get to with a larger vehicle. It has also been beneficial to not have to pack and unpack like we did with the motorhome and put child seats into place. There were walks we wanted to do which were too far from the campsite, now we have the option of going there with the tow vehicle. It is nice to set up 'home' and then return to it at the end of the day. It suits us at this stage of our lives.

Cairngorms

The weather was due to change,

ABOVE (CLOCKWISE)

A view from the A832, as we descended into Kinlochewe. Loch Maree waits in the distance; A native, wild (but friendly) creature found on Kinlochewe campsite; The steam train in Aviemore. A scenic train ride through railway history and majestic countryside



with high winds, so it was time to set off. The seasoned caravanner will read this knowing full well the importance of weather watching. It's a point we considered carefully. Even so, with winds even mildly raised, we noticed a difference when towing. Also trying to set up is a challenge when the wind keeps blowing various items out of reach. Before starting the journey, we always discuss the route to ensure there are no 'bad' roads on the way, whilst checking the weather. Our time in the Cairngorms was a change from the mostly sunny weather we had experienced elsewhere, as the rains began to fall. Our stay was at Grantown-on-Spey, which allows access to local walks along old railway track beds, or into woodland. Equally, short drives out can take you to Aviemore (where we enjoyed a steam train ride) and to other locations within the Cairngorms National Park.

The rain managed not to dampen our spirits for our stay and, as we waved goodbye, and began the drive back south we felt the inevitable sadness of the end of another holiday. This year saw us have two solid weeks away. Well over 1,000 miles travelled and multiple bags of Jelly Babies for 'car games' with the children: "Right, before you have a sweet you need to spot a tractor, a helicopter or a kangaroo" (sometimes the sweet levels drop very low). Thousands of steps walked. Precious unforgettable memories stored.

Caravanning, it turns out, is for us after all.

WHERE TO STAY

MOFFAT CAMPING AND CARAVANNING CLUB SITE

Hammerlands, Moffat, Dumfries & Galloway DG10 9QL

T 01683 220436

W campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk

BUNREE CARAVAN AND MOTORHOME CLUB SITE

Onich, Fort William PH33 6SE

T 01855 821283

W caravanclub.co.uk

MORVICH CARAVAN AND MOTORHOME CLUB SITE

Inverinate, Kyle IV40 8HQ

T 01599 511354

W caravanclub.co.uk

KINLOCHEWE CARAVAN AND MOTORHOME CLUB SITE

Kinlochewe, Achnasheen IV22 2PA

T 01445 760239

W caravanclub.co.uk

GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY CARAVAN PARK

Seafeld Ave, Grantown-on-Spey PH26 3JQ

T 01479 872474

W caravanscotland.com

Snap decisions and family roots



Camerambling through childhood memories, finding orchids in bloom,
Blackpool's lights glowing, and even a surprise appearance from Dad!

Words & photos by David Chapman

I was born and dragged up in Blackpool. Before spreading my wings at a tender age, when certain aspects of my personality and many of my interests were already well established, my passion for wildlife came independently of my family but my interest in photography was definitely nurtured by my dad.

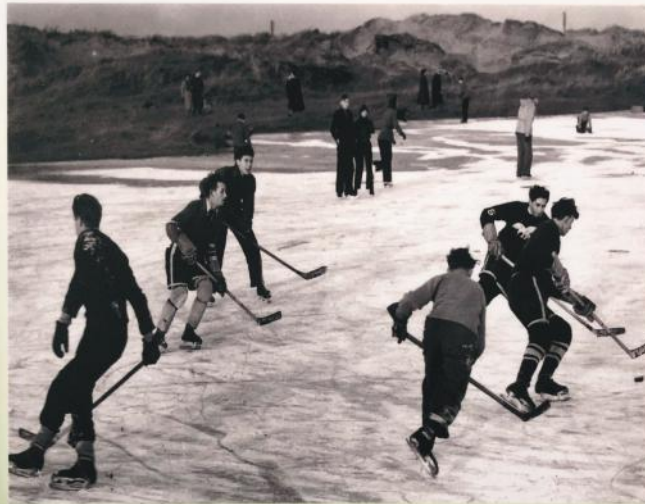
I now live in Cornwall, with Sarah. My mum and sister haven't travelled as far, moving only to the posh end of the Fylde, in St Annes. Our latest visit to the area was intended to be simply a family visit so I wasn't thinking of doing a lot of photography (though I can sense the wry smile on Sarah's face at this point) until my mum took us to nearby Fairhaven Lake.

Two things happened. My mum told me there was an area next to the children's playground that had been fenced off to protect orchids. Well, as I said to Sarah, it would be rude not to show an interest so we went to have a look and found the biggest, most beautiful bee orchids I have ever seen and, apart from the close proximity of the children's playground, it was a great place to photograph them, so it would be churlish not to return with my camera.

Then we went into the RSPB visitor centre. Apart from buying a coffee, we stopped to look at the heritage display, including historical photos of the Fylde. What should we find but a photograph of my dad, taken in 1952. The photo shows him playing ice hockey (he was a founder member of Blackpool's ice hockey team) on a frozen pool amongst the dunes between Blackpool and St Annes.

Finding that photo not only reminded me about the local nature reserve on the dunes (more on that later) but it also started a chain of photographic events. The first link in the chain was to dig out bags and suitcases full of photos from my mum's attic.

My dad was a keen photographer and some of his black and white images were very good, particularly when put in the historical context that was now inevitable. Looking through his photos got my own creative juices flowing, and, to be honest, I was looking for an excuse to get out with my camera. Being outdoors with my camera is what keeps me sane. So, my best intentions for a photography-free family holiday soon became a camerambling.



1952 Ice hockey played on the frozen sand dunes.

STAY AT

Nearby, the Blackpool South Caravan and Motorhome Club Campsite offers touring pitches starting at £13.30
[W caravanclub.co.uk](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk)

MAIN PICTURE
 The shallow pools on the beach offer great reflections in the evening light

LEFT
 Here is the photo from the visitor centre at Fairhaven which shows my dad playing ice hockey on the frozen dunes in 1952 >>

TOP TIPS

- If you need a good photo of an urban landscape and the weather is dull, try shooting at dusk when the streetlights are on. You might be surprised by how good it looks!
- Don't expect to take a lot of good photos in one session, take your time. One good photo is better than lots of mediocre ones.

Our visit didn't coincide with the famous Blackpool Illuminations, but there are plenty of lights on Blackpool Promenade throughout the year. With this in mind, I set off for an evening on my bike complete with camera and tripod. There's an off-road cycleway from St Annes to Blackpool and the lovely new promenade seamlessly accommodates both eager cyclists and walkers

There's nowhere quite like Blackpool for assaulting the senses. The smell of hotdogs blends imperfectly with cigarette smoke, candyfloss and the vinegar which readily evaporates from fish and chips. Exciting, enticing electronic sounds emanate from the amusement arcades, trams rattle past, and my attention was taken by the loudspeaker 'five and seven, Heinz varieties, 57'.

I once worked in a bingo hall and never forget the bingo caller's

phrases. Scattered along the prom are a weird and wonderful selection of sculptures; horses trot along the road pulling their vintage landaus; people of all shapes and sizes mill around; piers jut out into the sea, or across the beach when the tide's out, and the Blackpool Tower stands tall, proud and serenely over it all.

The tower is the obvious photographic focal point on the seafront, but where to photograph it from is the question. With the sun setting offshore, the best place in the evening is on the beach and, at low tide, the historic piers can provide an intriguing frame and pools of water reflect it quite beautifully.

On this particular evening, the nearest pool was just beyond North Pier, so I set up my tripod and took a few test shots; the photo looked pleasing but I knew it would be better after sunset when the lights came on.

Any town or cityscape looks good at dusk, the sky becomes deep blue and the warm streetlights are at the opposite side of the colour spectrum, giving maximum impact. Reflections in pools or wet pavements work well because they give double the bang

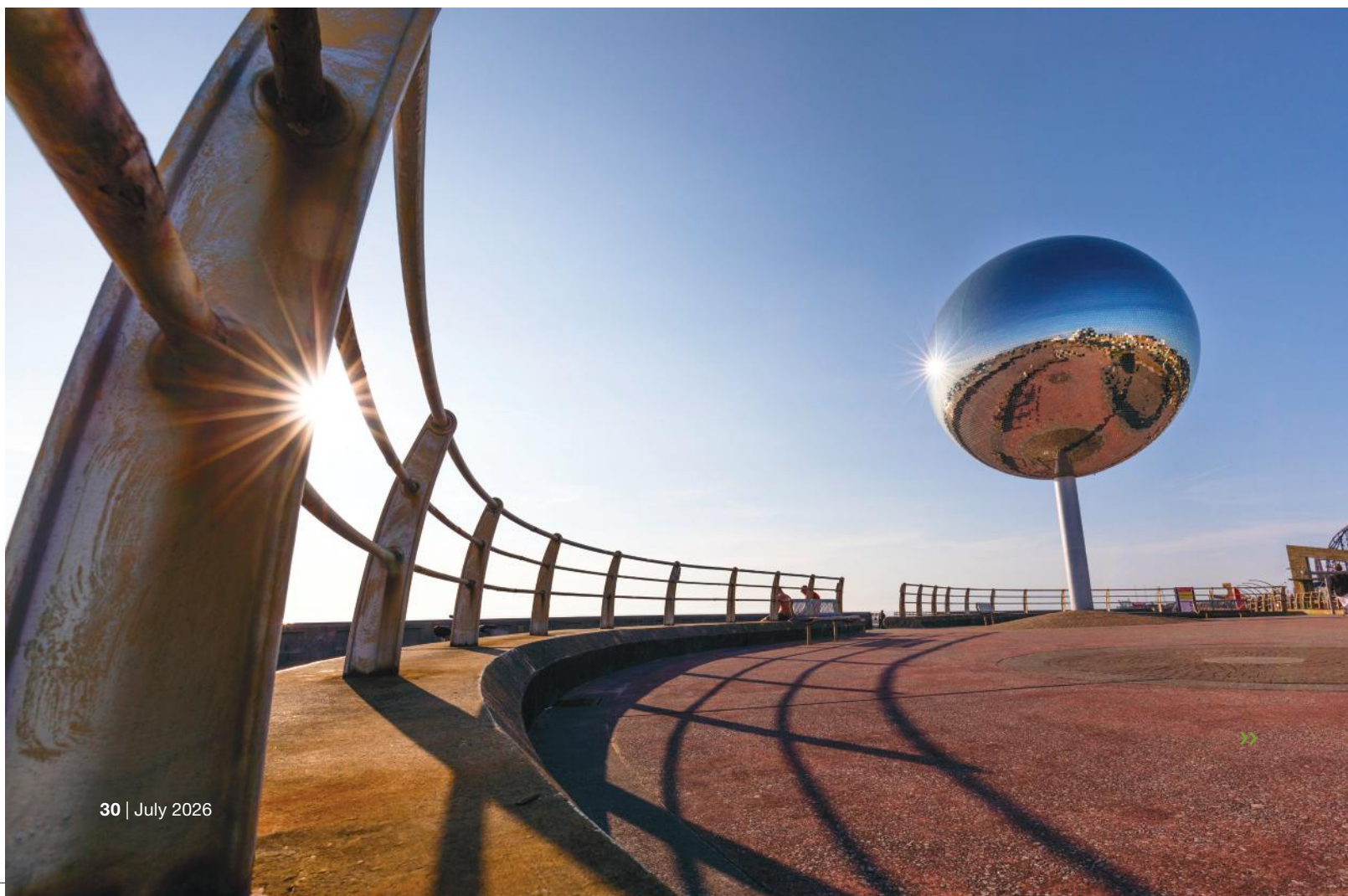
RIGHT (TOP TO BOTTOM)

For this photo of a bee orchid I used a 100mm macro lens but crucially also used a gold reflector;

For this early marsh-orchid photo I got down very low to include the sky as the backdrop

BELOW

The Mirror Ball on Blackpool Promenade





JOIN TODAY!

FREE CARAVAN NEWSLETTER

It's time to hit the road...

but not before you sign up for our **FREE ENEWSLETTER!**

Get our unmissable guides, tips & tricks, news, reviews and more straight to your inbox!

www.outandaboutlive.co.uk

SCAN ME!




Trust us to insure your freedom

The BEST Caravan Insurance

Insurance choice awards
Best caravan cover provider
Winner 2025

Smart money people



Get a quote today

01422 396 758

caravanguard.co.uk/caravan

Caravan Guard Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

NEW CATALOGUE



SEALS+DIRECT

Rubber seals and trims for caravans & motorhomes

FREE, fully illustrated catalogue

Please visit our website or call **01425 617722**

Seals+Direct Ltd,
Unit 6, Milton Business Centre
Wick Drive, New Milton,
Hampshire BH25 6RH
Email: sales@sealsplusdirect.co.uk

MARINE INDUSTRIAL CARAVAN AUTOMOTIVE

www.sealsdirect.co.uk

BRAND NEW FOR 2026!

BRING YOUR CARAVAN AND STAY WITH US IN THE OUT & ABOUT LIVE CLUB CAMPING AREA AT THE NORFOLK MOTORHOME & CAMPERVAN SHOW.

Join us in our brand-new dedicated club area for magazine subscribers only with exclusive benefits including a premium pitch close to all the amenities for up to four nights, plus:

- Goody bag plus arrival drinks and quiz
- Vanlife Eats cook along
- Bushcraft fire lighting display
- Early entry to the silent disco
- bFrank exercise class just for those booked into the club area
- Saturday night evening entertainment with Stephen Tanner before the main entertainment

You'll also be able to enjoy all the great activities we have planned for the show including access to the exhibition area and evening entertainment.



BOOK YOUR PITCH

You need to be a current subscriber to camp in this area. Pitches are limited and will sell out quickly so reserve your pitch now by heading to outandaboutlive.info/summerparty and selecting "Book your pitch". Choose "Club Camping Areas" then, at the checkout, select "Out & About Live" and enter your subscriber number.

Not a subscriber and don't want to miss out? See our subscription offer on page 25 or head to

www.mymagazinesub.co.uk/caravan





for your buck, so, having found my optimum spot, I stood and waited.

Thirty minutes after sunset I still hadn't solved any of the important problems going through my mind but I reckoned I had got the shot I wanted, and this gave me a few minutes to get up to the prom and takes some more photos of the tower before it became too dark.

My next favourite viewpoint was a marriage of the Wedding Chapel in the foreground and the tower in the background – I hope you see what I did there, this is what you pay your magazine subscription for! My tripod was essential at this time of the evening because my shutter speed was now five seconds and increasing.

For this and my next viewpoint, with a colourful amusement arcade in the foreground, I took photos as a tram came into view. The trams are also lit up and their movement registers as a vibrant diagonal streak into the image which can look quite dynamic.

The fortnight turned out to be a bit of an orchid-fest, with the Fairhaven bee orchids acting as a catalyst. It's lucky that the bee orchids were there at all. An observant member of the public noticed them when they were no more than a rosette of leaves, and after discussions with the relevant parties a fence was established to protect them from mowing and trampling, and there they were in all their glory through the second half of June.

Photographing bee orchids can be tricky. Their lower lobe, which resembles a bee, is very dark and this is in stark contrast to the pale pink outer 'petals'. I use a gold reflector, simply a piece of shiny Christmas tablecloth, to reflect some sunlight onto the lower lobe and this helps bring out its rich wine-red colour.

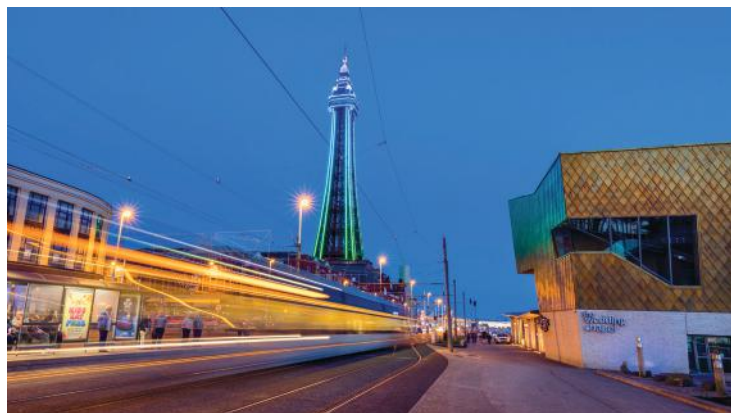
Their bulbous shape makes depth of field an issue. If you get close to a flower with a macro lens you might notice that when the

pink petals are sharp the lower lip isn't; for this reason, it is necessary to use a small aperture to get a big depth of field.

Spurred on after seeing the bee orchids, and intrigued by the photo of my dad, I decided to check out the dunes between St Annes and Blackpool. The best area I found for orchids was about 50 yards south of the New Thursby Nursing Care Home. The damp patch here, though not wet enough to form a skating lake, had no less than eight species of orchid: common spotted; southern marsh; pyramidal; early marsh; bee; marsh helleborine; dune helleborine and green-flowered helleborine. Now that takes some beating. I was particularly enthused by the dune helleborine, a new flower for me and one which is very rare.

My main problem was weather. The weather in St Annes is odd. When I phone my mum from Cornwall, where I have to admit it often lashes down, my mum never admits to there being any rain in St Annes but will then go on to complain about flooding on the roads and boast that her water butt is always full! When challenged, she explains that it must only rain at night.

Well, let me tell you, Mum, that's a fib! (I hope she's not reading this.) In late June last year, after a remarkable spell of good weather, it began to rain frequently. The rain did occasionally stop but the wind didn't and that caused me some problems. It's very difficult to



ABOVE
The land yachts make for a colourful photo, especially when the sun shines

LEFT
With a five-second exposure the tram has blurred nicely



photograph a tall flower spike when, in the words of Bob Dylan, “the orchid is blowin’ in the wind”.

Luckily, one of my jobs was to clear out my mum’s garage and I found some useful pieces of stiff wire. These, together with some bread bag tags, would hold the stems of the orchids still long enough for me to photograph the flowers. To the dunes I would return whenever it was dry in the evening light, armed with wires, reflector, camera and tripod.

I use two lenses for orchid photography, a macro lens for close-ups and a telephoto for full-length flower shots. With the telephoto lens I get down very low so the vegetation beyond the orchid is quite distant and therefore out of focus in the image.

It’s useful to have some foreground vegetation between camera and subject; this is rendered as a soft blur and will help mask any supporting wires lower down the stem. So, the answer, my friend, to blowin’ in the wind is a couple of stiff pieces of wire!

For my last photographic activity, the strong wind was a definite advantage. A morning trip to the dunes coincided with a low tide; in fact, the sea was so far away I couldn’t see it, ideal for a regular sporting activity on this beach: land yachting.

When I arrived, the course had been laid out with flags and warning signs to members of the public not to stray onto the track. The land yachts were all anchored down whilst the participants gathered for their final briefing before the off.

The moment arrived and all the yachts were lined up, approximately anyway, ready to begin the race. The chap with the flag stood dangerously in front of all the yachts. After a few moments of suspense, he raised the flag and began a loud countdown; “Are you ready? Three, two, one, go!”

After the slowest start I have ever seen, the yachts eventually got up some speed and were cruising back and forth before all



heading off onto the course proper. ‘Cruising’ is a generous term for it, ambiguous enough to suggest movement without necessarily implying any great speed.

The excitement grew when the three-wheeled yachts tipped onto two wheels, overtook each other and splashed through the pools on the beach. It must have been a bumpy ride over the ripples and I felt sorry for the sailors who got stuck in the mud and needed to get out and give it a push.

It struck me as a good subject to practise action photography because the yachts are quite colourful, the speeds moderate and the future paths of the yachts fairly predictable.

Even when the sun wasn’t shining it was bright enough to achieve shutter speeds of 1/1000 of a second, or faster, and this will freeze the action. Fast shutter speeds make the yachts look stationary so I tried experimenting with a skill called ‘panning’. To pan a photograph, we set a deliberately slow shutter speed; I was using about 1/50 of a second.

There is a little skill involved in a successful panning photo. You must follow the subject in camera, keeping it in the same position within the frame, and take a burst of photos without stopping.

If done well, the photo will show the subject sharp but will blur the background in streaks. Panning tends to work best when the background is already full of detail, because the streaks are more obvious, so a beach scene is not ideal.



ABOVE (LEFT TO RIGHT)

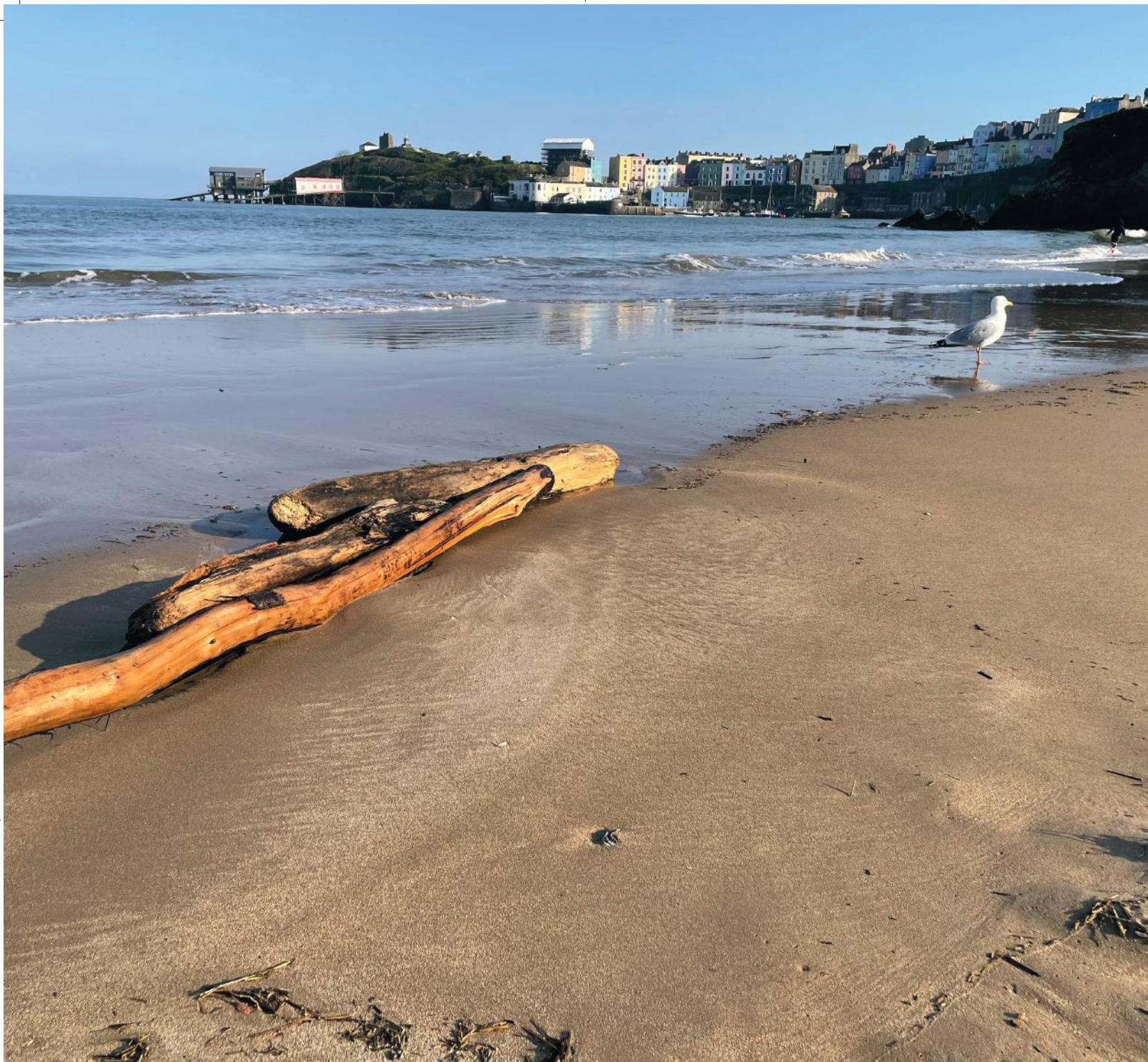
The dunes between St Annes and Blackpool hold at least eight species of orchid; David Chapman

INSET

In the wind I used stiff metal wires and bread bag tags to stabilise the dune helleborine

LEFT

Fairhaven Lake with its iconic model Spitfire



Doing it for the (grand) kids...

Taking the grandchildren and their parents away for a week in Pembrokeshire proved pure play for Nick Harding and Lin Oakley

Words Nick Harding ■ Photography Lin Oakley



“**T**here he is. There he is.” Two-year-old Sully simply couldn’t contain his excitement at spotting the Easter Bunny. That’s the real Easter Bunny, of course. The one we told him and his sister – four-year-old Amelie – that we might just encounter.

Rascal (his real name) was indeed out and about, visiting the attractions at Milford Waterfront. We’d just ordered lunch at burger specialist, Stack’D (note for next time: neither grandchild particularly likes burgers, nor – even more surprisingly – chips) at Milford Haven’s Waterfront marina complex, when Rascal was seen going into the shop next door... He emerged just a couple of minutes later to come and... gasp... join us. We duly did introductions and took pictures.

I don’t think I’ll ever tire of visits to Pembrokeshire. It’s a part of Wales that suits touring particularly well. The main routes are straightforward and while some of the smaller coastal lanes are better explored by car, distances between beaches, attractions and towns are generally short once you are pitched up.

If you’re after beaches, castles, no motorways, countryside that rolls up to the occasional mountain, plus pleasant surprises like photo opportunities with Easter Bunnies, it’s right up there.

This was a pre-Easter week with my partner, Lin, plus Amelie and Sully, two of our grandchildren – with their parents, Rob and Meg, set to join us two days later. We’d had the prospect of what the weather might do in the backs of

our minds. But we struck sunshine gold with the weather and some of the attractions we visited.

That quieter pre-holiday timing made a real difference. Once we were set up on site, getting out and about by car was simple and many of the area’s best-known attractions were within easy reach.

i

- Pembrokeshire makes a strong choice for a touring holiday, with plenty of attractions within easy reach of well-placed campsites. Main routes into the area are straightforward, while some of the narrower coastal roads are better tackled once you have left the caravan on site
- Travelling outside peak holiday weeks can also make a very noticeable difference to traffic, parking and availability

OPPOSITE
The view from Tenby North Beach

ABOVE (LEFT TO RIGHT)
Enjoying the views at Milford Haven waterfront; Fun and games at Milford Waterfront

BELOW
Playing on the swings



And so much was within easy driving distance of our chosen campsite, Mill House Caravan Park at the enticingly named Pleasant Valley in the tiny village of Stepaside. It also works especially well as a base, letting you leave the ‘van on site and explore this part of Pembrokeshire without having to tackle every smaller coastal road the hard way.

There’s more than a touch of exclusivity here and it was certainly a return to a long-term favourite campsite for me, this being something like my seventh visit here.

It’s also a very manageable run >>



with a 'van, with good main routes for most of the journey before the quieter roads into Pembrokeshire. That's just one of the joys of touring with your own set-up, of course. You're not tied to motorway services and the like on longer journeys, which makes it easier to plan your own stops along the way. Instead, we stopped, made sandwiches, shared cold drinks, etc, before carrying on our journey to Stepside.

I have to say, though, Milford Waterfront was new to me. It hosts plenty of events throughout the year, but we were lucky to catch up with the first one of the season – the Easter Market. A small gathering of indoor stalls, we bought chilli sauce from Pleasantly Pickled, handmade soaps from Major Nuts and a handmade pottery vase from Cariad Crafts, while the kids took advantage of a free-to-all selection of pencils and pens, sunglasses, colouring-in pages, puzzles and even a

postcard from the organiser.

There was also time to visit the charming Milford Haven Museum and catch the story of how it developed from a Bronze Age settlement to a high point as a key port to the whaling and fishing industries and now, looking ahead to the rest of the twenty-first century and a role in supporting the world's energy demands.

Parking was easy with free spots at Milford Waterfront and more right by the venue. After such an active day, it was no surprise that Amelie and Sully were out cold for the half-hour drive back to the site.

But that was just our first day. Appropriately, if not deliberately, day two saw us leaving the 'van on site and taking to two wheels (two of us on scooters) for the mile journey out to the nearest beach, Wiseman's Bridge. It's a lovely

stroll through woodland on a particularly flat, wide walkway that the kids tackled with ease. It may be a lesser-known short stretch of coast between Amroth and Coppet Hall, then Saundersfoot, but there's enough sand and rocks at Wiseman's Bridge to occupy two beach-happy children. There's also a pub (not used by us this time) and – I remembered – a campsite that also has the only shop in the locality. I was able to break off from the rockpool investigations to get to the shop and buy two lots of buckets and spades – the former concealing a tub of ice cream for each child, which meant I scooped (pun intended) Grandparent of the Day. To be fair, Lin – or Ninnie, as Amelie and Sully prefer to call her – nearly always wins it otherwise.

Our day on the beach was far from complete, as another big surprise was on its way: Meg and Rob seeming to appear from nowhere to join us couldn't have been more dramatic if they'd emerged from the sea itself!

Now, according to Cadw – that's the Welsh Government's historic environment service – Wales has some 427 castles. Pembrokeshire was our chosen one. Even though it's getting on for 950 years old, much of it is still intact. We decided against the (free) guided tour, relying instead on scanning the QR codes that brought up audio tales from individual characters dotted throughout as we wandered from Chancery to Dungeon Tower to Great Keep to Wogan Cavern, home to the earliest humans in Britain. There's a large open area in the middle of the outer ward –

ABOVE
The beachside
at Saundersfoot

RIGHT
Pembroke Castle



THANK YOU TO OUR 2026
HEADLINE SPONSOR



AUTOGUARD
WARRANTIES



THE EAST MIDLANDS

MOTORHOME &
CAMPERVAN SHOW
NEWARK

12-14 JUNE 2026

TWO WAYS TO VISIT

CAMPING PITCHES

Pitches include evening entertainment and unlimited access to the exhibition area. Join us in your motorhome, campervan, caravan or tent. Prices start from **£94.50 per pitch**.

DAY TICKETS

Day Tickets cost **£10 per person** in advance. Under 18s go free and do not need to book a ticket.

INFORM



ADVICE CENTRE

Enjoy free talks from our knowledgeable guest speakers covering a wide range of topics to guide you on your adventures.

MANOEUVRING COURSES

Brush up on your manoeuvring skills. Free 20-minute courses in conjunction with Out&AboutLive.



ENTERTAIN



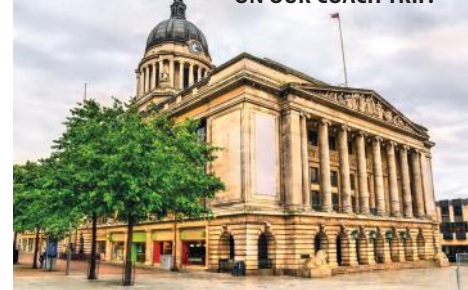
Evening entertainment is available for people camping on-site for the weekend.

All entertainment is included in your pitch price except for the Saturday night headline show in the main area, which is ticketed.

Acts include:

The Decades | Bringing on back the 80's featuring Glen Leon | Glam 45 | Retroelectra | The Kommitments | Earth Wind for Hire | Simon Paul | The Sundaes | Sing Baby Sing

**VISIT HISTORIC NOTTINGHAM
ON OUR COACH TRIP.**



INSPIRE

400+ NEW AND USED VEHICLES FOR SALE TO INSPIRE YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE

Check out the latest vehicles and a great range of second-hand to suit every budget. You'll also find hundreds of accessories. Whatever is on your shopping list, you're sure to find it at the show! It's a great way to compare different layouts and see what suits the way you like to live on the road.



out&about LIVE
**WARNERS
SHOWS**

WWW.WARNERS-SHOWS.CO.UK



where a map of Wales on the floor showcases its castles and there are grassed areas where we were able to enjoy an impromptu picnic.

Also, we – or rather, Amelie – counted 97 steps down from the Great Keep, where officially there are 100. You can probably imagine the consternation.

Pembroke Castle's best bits? "Where we listened to the people (via the QR codes)," (Amelie). "The dragons on the floor. The one that was asleep," (Sully). The children's hot chocolates (with marshmallows) went down particularly well, too. As did the pastries for the adults purchased from one of the castle's eateries.

It was an even closer journey from Mill House site to our next attraction. Folly Farm is just seven minutes' drive away and even setting aside a day here really

ABOVE
One of the corner fortified towers

INSET
Pembroke Castle makes a great family-fun-day

ROUNDAL
The kids having a great time on the slides



doesn't do it justice. There were plenty of farm animals to meet – in ascending order of size: mice, rats, goats, sheep, pigs, horses. Then there's the zoo, with lions, monkeys, meerkats, the only giraffes in Wales, etc. Big news was one of the rhinos was pregnant... but not due to give birth until November.

Plus, there are all kinds of rides – starting with a tractor around the farm – as well as an old-style funfair area (undercover), with everything from traditional fairground rides to slot machines.

Sully liked seeing the spider in the toilet (really) and the big pig with its piglets (less than a month old) in the Jolly Barn, the tractor train ride, and an owl. Amelie highlighted the giraffes and the play areas.

Be warned, though. An extensive gift shop devoted mainly to toys and animals is particularly well designed for ensuring doting grandparents are happy to pay for presents for loved ones. Seriously, there's a particularly good deal to

look out for if you are on holiday over here. Whatever you paid for your first day, if you come back again within seven days there's no extra charge. Plus, a recent development since I last visited, there's now a full-scale, all-facilities Folly Farm campsite.

From animals great to small... our next trip out was across the county to Dr Beynon's Bug Farm, near St Davids and well worth the one-hour drive from the site. We all learnt so much about bugs and their place in our world, the essential roles they play, etc. Did you know cockroaches can live up to two weeks without a head? And there are getting on for half a million different species of beetle?

Dr Sarah Beynon is the multi-award-winning founder of the Bug Farm, part of a 100-acre working farm that's now also a major research centre and nature reserve. Among many achievements, she was a major force behind St Davids being named Wales's very first bee-friendly city.



- Start your research from home
- W visitpembrokeshire.com

- Marina with more

W milfordwaterfront.co.uk

- Dreams and reality

W pembrokecastle.co.uk

- Meet the stick insects, where bug life begins

W thebugfarm.co.uk

- Brush up on your pottery

W thecreativegallery.co.uk

- Say aaargh, eat out at sea

W facebook.com/p/The-Pirate-Cafe-61573649361617



No end of facts were thrown at us as we took part in a Meet the Bugs session – getting to hold (or rather, gently stroke) various cockroaches, stick insects, etc – before heading out to the Bug Barn, Bug Museum, Tropical Bug Zoo, Art Gallery, Wildlife Watching Hide and more, the latest of which is the opening of a Nature Recovery Centre and Farming History Exhibition.

Dr Sarah's husband, Andy Holcroft, is a chef and he has a key role at the Bug Farm, too. Grub Kitchen is the name of the restaurant here and the menu that day included their own VEXo insect and plant bolognaise, bug

burgers, cricket cookies and more. Don't worry, there are lots of interesting alternatives if you're feeling a bit squeamish.

Want to put something in your back pocket for a rainy day? How about the chance to paint pottery at The Creative Gallery on Haverfordwest's High Street. Go downstairs for the studio where you can choose from various items of pottery then add your own paintwork designs – Amelie picked a dolphin, Sully a dinosaur, mum Meg concentrated her efforts on a coffee mug, Lin ditto with a small vase. The plate with hands on was a team effort from the grandchildren. Coffee and hot chocolate drinks helped get the creative juices flowing. Also, the arts and crafts shop back up at street level had plenty of great, hand-crafted gift ideas.

After painting, our items were left with owner, Donna, and her team at The Creative Gallery, who then fired them and sent them on to us some ten days later. A brilliant memento of our holidays and what great gifts to give those who, unfortunately, had to stay behind at home.

It goes without saying we also hit a few other beaches. Sandy Saundersfoot, Tenby's North (there's also a busier South), and Newgale. And that made for a timely reminder. Parking charges excepted, Pembrokeshire's many

and varied beaches are free. I wouldn't expect you to visit all the above attractions in one go... that would cost a small fortune. But each has its, er, attractions – most of them suited to days when the weather may not be so kind.

Also, what we spent in terms of entertainment was offset by cooking our very own meals – pasta and tomato sauce, a barbecue, and more, when back on site in the evenings (with thanks, also, to the Co-op supermarket at nearby Kilgetty).

But the biggest excitement of the week also involved no actual cost. Tuesday morning saw a duck and nine ducklings walk right past us while we were having breakfast. Excitement enough for Amelie and Sully. But, although the ducks successfully negotiated crossing the road to get to the river, one got left behind – and came right up to us to tell us of his plight. He took a bit of catching, but eventually we had him and were able to return him to his family... only to find a second duckling who'd become detached from the same family. We had the hang of it now, making a quicker return to the fold.

But, there was more. That evening, on returning from Folly Farm, we discovered a third, lone duckling, stuck in a small drainage area at the back of the campsite reception. This time it was campsite owner Simon Wood's turn to be a superhero – pushing a ladder into the mud before clambering down in his (leaky) waders to collect the duckling before wife, Mandy, returned it to its home pond, successfully completing Rescue Number Three. Much to the delight, not just of Amelie and Sully, but all of us.

ABOVE

The coast of Tenby North Beach

LEFT

Running in the soft sand along the beach

STAY AT

MILL HOUSE CARAVAN PARK

Pleasant Valley, Stepaside, Near Saundersfoot, Pembrokeshire SA67 8LN

T 01834 812069

W millhousecaravan.co.uk

OPEN 20 March – 31 October

FOLLY FARM HOLIDAY PARK

Begelly, Kilgetty, Pembrokeshire SA68 0XA

T 01834 812731

W folly-farm.co.uk

OPEN 4 January – 21 December

Both of these sites work well as a base for exploring the wider area, whether you want beach days, family attractions or easy drives out to some of Pembrokeshire's best-known spots.



Set yourself up for a fun-filled getaway with a selection of top campsites for families

MONKTON WYLD HOLIDAY PARK, DORSET

Scotts Lane, Charmouth, Dorset DT6 6DB

T 01297 631131 W monktonwyld.co.uk OPEN 6 February – 2 November

Monkton Wyld is an excellent choice for families, offering an extensive outdoor playground, a nature trail, a games room and plenty of space to enjoy outdoors. Just three miles from the Jurassic Coast, it combines a child-friendly setting with a calm, relaxing atmosphere for adults. The campsite is arranged across several paddocks, with generously sized pitches that back onto hedges or flower borders, giving guests a greater sense of privacy.

Visitors can choose between grass or hardstanding pitches, all with electric hook-ups. On-site amenities include toilets and showers, family washrooms, a launderette, a shop and dedicated areas for dog walking, along with a dog wash. Food trucks stop by on selected evenings, making it easy to grab dinner without leaving the site.

From Monkton Wyld, there are scenic walking routes leading to Lyme Regis and Charmouth. These nearby spots are perfect for children to explore the beaches and search for fossils.



SUPER SITES | FAMILY CAMPSITES

BEACHSIDE HOLIDAY PARK, ST IVES

Steeds Lane, Kingsnorth, Ashford, Kent TN26 1NQ

T 01233 620859 W broadhembury.co.uk OPEN All year



Set along the stunning coast of Cornwall, amid the dunes of St Ives Bay, Beachside Holiday Park offers direct access to a wide sandy beach, making it easy to spend your days by the sea. Whether you prefer early morning walks along the three-mile shoreline or relaxed afternoons listening to the waves, the beach is always just moments away.

The campsite provides a range of spacious grass pitches, many with electric hook-ups and some are full service. Open layouts and coastal views create a comfortable base for a traditional seaside stay.

Facilities on site include modern toilet and shower blocks, a launderette and dishwashing areas, along with a small shop for everyday essentials. For leisure time there is an outdoor pool, surf school, children's play area and a café, restaurant and bar. Nearby, the South West Coast Path offers scenic walking routes directly from the site, perfect for exploring the rugged shoreline and hidden coves.



ABERERCH SANDS HOLIDAY CENTRE, GWYNEDD

Abererch, Pwllheli, Gwynedd LL53 6PJ

T 01758 612327 W abererch-sands.co.uk OPEN 1 March – 30 October



Perfect for families who enjoy the beach and watersports, Abererch Sands Holiday Centre sits right by the sea, protected by a large sand dune. Its private sandy beach stretches for four miles, offering plenty of space and easy access just a few steps from the site. On the opposite side, a nearby train line and station make it simple to reach Pwllheli, where you'll find shops, pubs, restaurants, a marina and a slipway for boat trips.

The campsite has touring pitches, all with electric hook-up and water-fill point on firm grass. There is a toilet and shower block, launderette, dishwashing facilities, a play area and an indoor swimming pool.

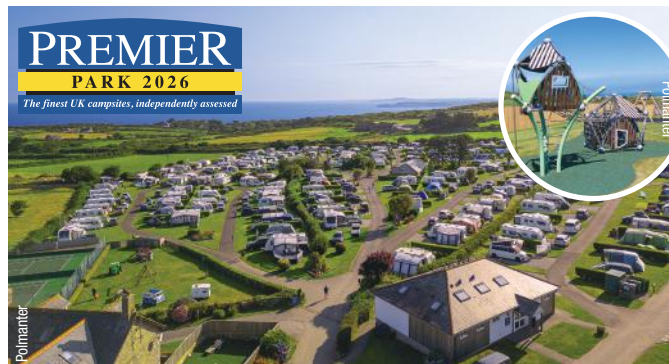
For a fun day out, you are only a short drive from Snowdonia National Park, too, where you could head to Llechwedd Slate Caverns and have some adrenaline-filled fun on the zip wires or the underground trampolines! >>

SUPER SITES | FAMILY CAMPSITES

POLMANTER TOURING PARK, CORNWALL

Halsetown, St Ives, Cornwall TR26 3LX

T 01736 795640 W polmanter.com OPEN 1 April – 30 October



Set in the Cornish countryside, this award-winning touring site strikes a great balance between on-site fun and easy access to the nearby fishing town of St Ives, which you can even reach on foot.

For younger guests, there are two playgrounds, indoor soft play and a games room, while everyone can enjoy the heated outdoor pool, tennis courts, putting green and playing field. Practicalities are taken care of with an on-site shop, bar and restaurant and four-legged family members have a dedicated exercise field and shower. During the summer season there's often entertainment and kids' activities held in the bar and restaurant.

There is a choice of pitches, including grass or hardstanding with electric hook-up and multi-serviced hardstanding pitches. Toilets and showers, accessible suites and family bathrooms complete the site's facilities. You can enjoy cross-country walks direct from site and there is also a regular shuttle bus from Polmanter into St Ives.

New for 2026 are fully furnished and kitted out safari tents – perfect if multiple generations want to holiday together but not everyone has a caravan!

STANWIX PARK HOLIDAY CENTRE, CUMBRIA

Greenrow, Sillioth, Cumbria CA7 4HH

T 01697 332666 W stanwix.com OPEN All year

This is the family holiday park that has it all, whether you want a day at the coast or to explore the Lake District. Stanwix Park is next to a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and less than a mile from the seaside town of Sillioth. The path to the beach is just over the road from the site and a golf course can be found here, too.

The trouble is you might find it hard to leave the campsite, since there's a 29-metre indoor pool, an outdoor pool, ten-pin bowling, a play park, crazy golf, tennis, cycle hire, amusement arcade, a sports bar and family entertainment at the Sunset Inn. If you're in need of some refreshment after all that activity then head to the site shop or café and maybe relax in the sauna and steam room.

Stanwix offers fully serviced pitches on hardstanding, with toilets, showers, bathroom cubicles and a launderette all nearby.



GOLDEN SQUARE CARAVAN PARK, NORTH YORKSHIRE

Oswaldkirk, Nr Helmsley, York, North Yorkshire YO62 5YQ

T 01439 788269 W goldensquarecaravanpark.com OPEN 1 March – 31 October

Located in a scenic spot just southeast of the North York Moors National Park, this campsite offers pitches overlooking a mix of farmland, woodland and open moor. Surrounded by excellent countryside for walking, it's also conveniently positioned about three miles from the market town of Helmsley.

There are plenty of family-friendly attractions close by, including the historic Helmsley Castle and Pickering Castle, with Pickering roughly a 30-minute drive away. The site is also within 40 minutes of Rawcliffe Bar Park and Ride, providing easy access into the city of York, where there's no shortage of things to see and do.

Golden Square's campsite is arranged across three levels, offering grass pitches with electric hook-ups, some private screened options and premium fully serviced pitches. Facilities include two heated shower blocks with family bathrooms, covered washing-up areas, a microwave, launderette, licensed shop, dog exercise field and woodland trails. For activities, visitors can hire bikes and younger guests can enjoy two outdoor play areas, an indoor play space, crazy golf and a football field.



CORNWALL



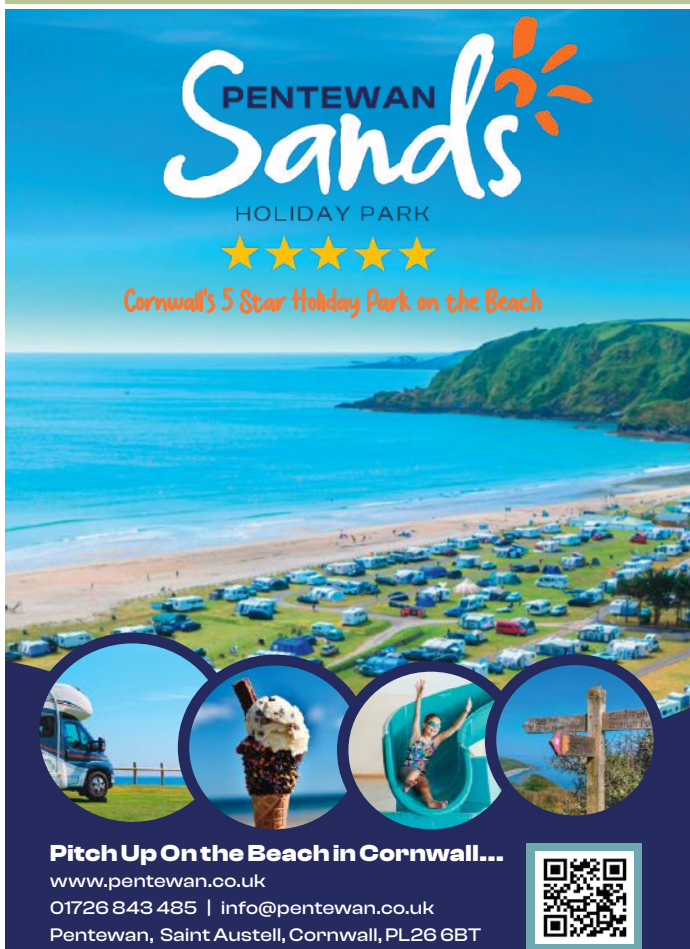
Heligan
CARAVAN & CAMPING
★★★★★

Located next to the South West Coast Path and The Lost Gardens of Heligan, enjoy discounted entry when you stay with us

Discover Your Cornish Escape
heligancampsite.co.uk
info@heligancampsite.com | 01726 842 714
Heligan Caravan and Camping Park | Pengrugla | Cornwall | PL26 6EL



CORNWALL



PENTEWAN
Sands
HOLIDAY PARK
★★★★★
Cornwall's 5 Star Holiday Park on the Beach

Pitch Up On the Beach in Cornwall...
www.pentewan.co.uk
01726 843 485 | info@pentewan.co.uk
Pentewan, Saint Austell, Cornwall, PL26 6BT



BERKSHIRE

Hurley Riverside Park

Hurley, Berkshire, SL6 5NE • 01628 824493 • info@hurleyriversidepark.co.uk



Award-winning pet-friendly park in the picturesque village of Hurley alongside the River Thames. We are ideal for families, paddleboarding, boat owners and walkers and are the perfect location for campervans, caravans and motorhomes.



 www.hurleyriversidepark.co.uk 

CORNWALL



CHACEWATER PARK
Adults only
Touring site in Cornwall

Open from 1st April - 30th September 2026
Special Weekly Rates
Serviced Pitches £165.00 per week booked
Standard Pitches £150.00 per week booked
Metered Electricity - £2.00 per day free
Wifi Available
Separate Six Acre Dog Walking Area
www.chacewaterpark.co.uk
Tel 01209 820762

DEVON



Rest and relax in the heart of North Devon whilst escaping from the demands of everyday life and making memories to last a life time.

Smytham
Holiday Park

Call us on 01805 622110
or visit smytham.co.uk

Download our app!


SUPER SITES | FAMILY CAMPSITES

LADY'S MILE HOLIDAY PARK, DEVON

Eastbourne Road, Exeter Road, Dawlish, Devon EX7 0LX

T 01626 863411 W ladysmile.co.uk OPEN All year

For families wanting a seaside break with a touch of nature, Lady's Mile is ideally situated. It's under a mile from the sandy shores of Dawlish Warren Beach and close to the 500-acre Dawlish Warren National Nature Reserve. The beach stretches for about a mile and a half, lined with dunes and nearby you'll find shops, amusements, go-karts and adventure golf.

On site, swimming is a major highlight, with both indoor and outdoor pools, flumes, a plunge pool and an indoor inflatable aqua course for younger guests. There's also plenty more to

keep everyone entertained, including a bowling alley, outdoor play park, bike pump track and arcade. Food options range from the on-site shop to the restaurant, bar and fish and chip takeaway, with evening entertainment for the whole family.

Pitches include grass and hardstanding options with electric hook-up, some offering water and drainage. Facilities include toilets, showers and a launderette and dogs are welcome, with a wash area and dedicated walking field available.



Lady's Mile



Lady's Mile



Pixabay

APPULDURCOMBE GARDENS HOLIDAY PARK, ISLE OF WIGHT

Appuldurcombe Road, Wroxall, Nr Ventnor, Isle of Wight PO38 3EP

T 01983 852597 W appuldurcombegardens.co.uk OPEN 20 March – 3 November

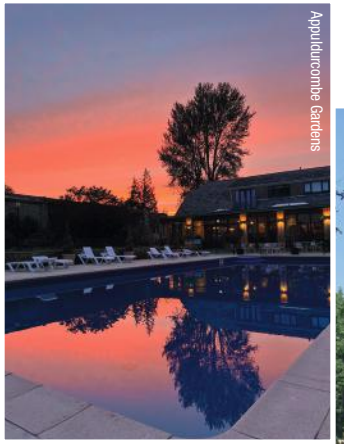
This award-winning five-star holiday park sits within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, offering a tranquil setting for visitors. The touring area is nestled in sheltered grassland, with a quiet meadow beside a stream featuring hardstanding pitches and water points. Fully serviced pitches are also available. Amenities include toilet and shower blocks, an accessible shower room and a launderette. Guests can relax by the outdoor heated pool, with its nearby bar and lounge, while other facilities include a café, children's play area and a four-hole crazy golf course.

Thanks to the compact size of the Isle of Wight, all the main attractions are within easy reach. Just a few miles away is the lively Victorian seaside town of Ventnor, known for its sandy beaches.

Sandown and Shanklin are both around a 10-minute drive. The island is perfect for walking, cycling, fossil hunting and water sports. It also offers attractions such as zoos, a model village, a theme park and the well-known Alum Bay, where a chairlift links the clifftop to the beach below, famous for its colourful sand cliffs.



Appuldurcombe Gardens



Appuldurcombe Gardens



Appuldurcombe Gardens

DEVON



Whitehill Country Park

Countryside holidays by the sea
Paignton, South Devon

Visit and book online whitehill-park.co.uk Call us 01803 782338

DORSET



www.bagwellfarm.co.uk
01305 782575

Bagwell Farm TOURING PARK

Chickerell, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 4EA

Discover the Landscape - Treasure the Memories
Camping in Every Season

Independently owned - Well-stocked shop open daily - Bus stop half a mile

ISLE OF WIGHT



Heathfield Farm Camping Park

The perfect place to relax and explore
Heathfield Camping is a family run Isle of Wight campsite located in the rural West Wight on the outskirts of Freshwater village, an ideal choice for your holiday on the Isle of Wight.

- Level marked pitches
- Dogs welcome
- Wheelchair accessible shower and toilet room
- Camping, touring and motorhomes
- Close to beach and shops
- Bus stop outside the park

Peaceful West Wight location
Easy access to coastal and downland walks
Explore stunning scenery and local attractions

Heathfield Road, Freshwater, Isle of Wight PO40 9SH
01983 407822 www.heathfieldcamping.co.uk

WHERE ISLAND ADVENTURES BEGIN - EXPLORE THE BEAUTY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT

KENT



THE FINCHES CARAVAN AND CAMPING SITE

SALES :: HIRE :: STORAGE :: PARK

CHARTWAY STREET, KINGSWOOD, MAIDSTONE, ME17 3NU
01622 844388 / 01622 842096

All amenities in an ideal Kent location - just 2 miles from J8 of the M20. Hard-standing for all caravans as well as electricity to all pitches, showers, toilets, washing up room, laundry room, games room and wheelchair friendly wet room.

E: thefinchescaravanandcampingsite@yahoo.com
Web: www.kingswood-caravans.co.uk

DORSET



WAREHAM FOREST TOURIST PARK

Wareham Forest Tourist Park
North Trigon, Wareham, Dorset BH20 7NZ

www.warehamforest.co.uk
01929 551393

OPEN ALL YEAR

Premier Park 2026
The Best of British
Dorset Tourism Awards 2023/24
South West England Tourism Excellence Awards 2023/2024
AA Caravan & Camping 2025/26

Special Offers Available

KENT



HOP FARM CAMPSITE

CAMPSITE AND TOURING PARK IN KENT

CALL US 01622 870838
WWW.THEHOPFARM.CO.UK/STAY

Have a super stay-cation at The Hop Farm

The Hop farm is a superb award winning touring and campsite set in over 500 acres of beautiful open fields and woodland. Riverside camping also for kayakers and paddleboarders! It is one of the best Kent campsites and has a spectacular Oast village, the largest Oast house collection in the world - it's the ultimate backdrop and a fantastic base for exploring Kent's Garden of England.

You can enjoy the best in camping in a glorious setting with all the creature comforts you need. We have modern showers, toilets and washing facilities, a camping shop and on-site popular pub/restaurant. Ideal for families and great local amenities nearby.

PEACE & TRANQUILLITY IN ACRES OF PRIVATE, BEAUTIFUL KENT COUNTRYSIDE

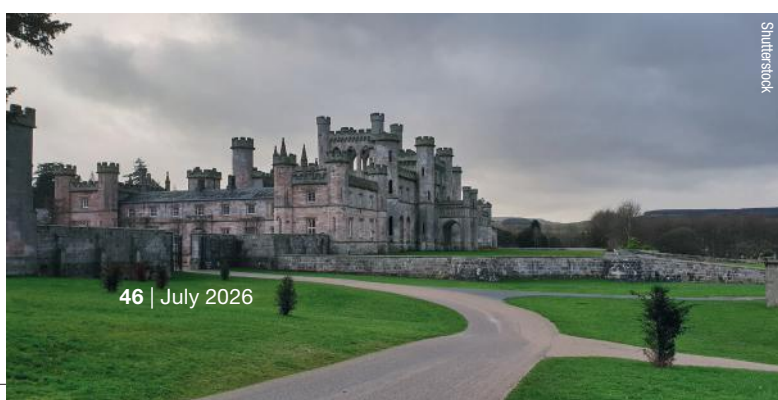
SUPER SITES | FAMILY CAMPSITES



LOWTHER HOLIDAY PARK, CUMBRIA
Eamont Bridge, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 2JB
T 01768 807995 W pure-leisure.co.uk
OPEN 1 March – 30 November

Set within the historic Lowther Estate, Lowther Holiday Park is tucked among woodland by the river, around a 10-minute drive from Penrith and just outside the Lake District National Park. On site, there's a playground, amusements and a restaurant and bar known as The Cow Shed, featuring a family room, play area, extensive beer garden and more.

The park offers a mix of grass and gravel pitches with electric hook-up, along with facilities including toilets, showers, a launderette and a shop. Dogs are welcome and there are plenty of nearby walking and cycling routes to explore. The estate is also home to Lowther Castle, where you'll find impressive ruins, exhibitions, an adventure playground, plus a café and shop. For a family outing, Ullswater is just a 15-minute drive away, offering scenic steamer boat trips on the lake, or you can enjoy kayaking and canoeing as a family.



POMEROY CARAVAN & CAMPING PARK, DERBYSHIRE
Street House Farm, Pomeroy, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 9QG
T 01298 83259 W pomeroyfarmpark.co.uk/
OPEN 1 April – 31 October

This small, family-run farm site sits on the edge of the Peak District National Park and even produces its own dairy ice cream. The farm is home to a variety of animals, including pygmy goats, sheep, miniature donkeys, alpacas, tortoises and giant rabbits, with hands-on experiences like goat walking or pig bathing available to book.

There's direct access to the High Peak Trail, perfect for traffic-free walking and cycling. The spa town of Buxton is just a 10-minute drive away, offering attractions such as the Pavilion Gardens. Nearby highlights also include Buxton Country Park with woodland walks and home to a Go Ape course and the underground Poole's Cavern.

The Pomeroy site offers mainly grass pitches with full services (a few hardstanding options are available), plus toilets, showers, a family bathroom, laundry room, shop, a ball games field and a secure dog exercise area. Fire pits are available to hire and a local pub is just a mile away.



SOMERSET



Bath Chew Valley Caravan Park

Exclusively for adults • Open all year • Pets welcome
 Ideal for exploring Bath, Chew Valley Lake Country Park, Bristol, Cheddar, the Mendips & Somerset attractions. Fully serviced & hardstanding pitches. Solo bathroom suites. Local shop and pub-restaurant in the village. Hire car available.







Free 3 night stay for the first person to book on 01275 332 127 & quote Caravan July 26 *t&c's apply



Book online: bathchewvalley.co.uk

SUFFOLK

MOON & SIXPENCE
NEAR WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK



A.A 5 pennant, gold award, premier park

Secluded, serviced, tourer and motorhome sites with some hardstandings. Good choice of caravan holiday homes for sale; owner occupiers only. Superb, tranquil, landscaped 85 acres parkland & 100 acres of woodland.

9 hole compact golf course, 3 hard tennis courts, volleyball, basketball. Sandy beach, woods. Dog walks, cycle trails. Attractive lounge, bar, restaurant and shop. Located unspoilt Coastal Suffolk. Close to Woodbridge & River Deben.

www.moonandsixpence.co.uk

Moon & Sixpence, Waldringfield, Woodbridge, IP12 4PP

Tel: 01473 736650

e-mail: info@moonandsixpence.co.uk

out&about ^{LIVE} Outdoor adventures start here

FIND YOUR PERFECT CAMPSITE with

CAMPSITE FINDER



Featuring hundreds of sites including:

- Listings for all Premier Parks
- Search by country and location
- Find the perfect pitch for your adventure
- Adult only, dog-friendly & open all year sites

campsite-finder.co.uk

SCAN ME 

Mendips Holiday Park, Cornwall





pitchside VIEWS

Real sites. Real views. Real experiences



This Lake District campsite blends proper facilities, quiet corners and a choice of accommodation, all within easy reach of Windermere



Are you looking for that rare balance in the Lake District, somewhere that feels rural, yet doesn't leave you wrestling with tight lanes, limited facilities or overcrowded pitches?

During our April visit, Park Cliffe proved to be a spacious base from which to explore the area. Pitches aren't squeezed in, and the natural contours of the site create a series of terraces and pockets that make it feel far more intimately relaxed than its size suggests.

For first-timers, it's an easy introduction to touring the Lake District. Access is relatively straightforward, the welcome is warm and everything is clearly laid out. But, for experienced tourers, it's the small details that stand out: thoughtful landscaping, well-positioned hardstanding pitches and just enough separation between areas to create a sense of privacy.

The setting works, too. You're high enough to admire the fells once Moor How has been conquered, yet sheltered enough to feel comfortable whatever the weather decides to do. On a clear evening, it's the kind of place where you sit outside longer than planned, watching the light change over the hills.



Facilities are Park Cliffe's strong suit. There's a well-stocked shop, a bar, a takeaway for those evenings when cooking feels like effort and enough on-site activity to keep things ticking over without turning it into a holiday park. For families, there's plenty going on. For couples, it's easy to find a quieter corner and treat it as a base. This flexibility is what makes the site work so well, as it adapts to how you want to use it.

Step beyond the campsite and the Lake District opens up quickly. Windermere itself is nearby, with lakeside walks, boat trips and the steady rhythm of one of the UK's best-known tourist hubs. Equally, head a little further and you can escape the crowds, picking up quieter trails and less obvious viewpoints, especially those on the western side of the lake.

Park Cliffe offers alternative accommodation for those without a

caravan, so, should family members wish to join you, they can choose from tent camping, pods and statics. With the right pitch, a bit of good weather and a loose plan, it becomes the perfect place from which to explore the Lakes, even during peak periods. New for 2026, Park Cliffe has joined the Caravan and Motorhome Club network as an affiliated site.



Where to stay

- **Park Cliffe Camping & Caravan Estate**

W parkcliffe.co.uk




Places to visit

- **Windermere & Bowness (10 minutes by car)**

Boat trips, walks, cafés and shops. Busy during peak periods, but a must for first-time visitors

- **Lakeland Motor Museum (10 minutes by car)**

A great car and motorcycle museum with fair pricing and a café next door. Both are recommended.

- **Lakes Aquarium (10 minutes by car)**

A wide variety of marine life with an underwater tunnel. Again, highly recommended.

- **Stoked Watersports (10 minutes by car)**

Kayak, paddleboard and rowboat hire on Lake Windermere. See the lake from a different perspective?

- **Grizedale Forest (25 minutes by car)**

Walking and cycling routes, sculpture trails and plenty of space to get away from it all.



Holme Valley

Holme Valley Caravan Park



Holme Valley Caravan Park sits just outside the historic market town of Holmfirth, surrounded by the nearby countryside of West Yorkshire and within easy reach of the Peak District.

Over the past 40 years, the park has grown from a former derelict mill site into a well-established destination, now offering a blend of touring pitches and glamping accommodation. Facilities have evolved with it, too, including modern amenities blocks, a reception and shop, alongside additions like a takeaway food cabin, all designed to make longer stays feel that bit more comfortable.

Despite the changes, the focus has stayed firmly on creating a welcoming, well-kept site that feels personal rather than overdeveloped. Its location is a big part of the appeal, with Holmfirth just a mile away for shops, cafés and restaurants, while walking

routes, reservoirs and open countryside are right on the doorstep.

We spoke to the owners, Naomi and Ben Humphreys, about the park's 40-year journey and what continues to bring guests back year after year.

How did Holme Valley Caravan Park first begin?

Before moving back to the UK, Naomi's parents, Hazel and Phil, used to hire out touring caravans on the Mosel River in Germany, where they lived for 10 years. It persuaded them to give up their daytime jobs and open their own caravan park in Holmfirth, West Yorkshire. The local council was on the lookout for someone to open a caravan park in 'Last of the Summer Wine' country, as the area was becoming well-

known and inundated with tourists keen to see the location of the sitcom.

What were those early days like when you first opened to guests?

Difficult! Developing the land from a derelict mill site led to so much mud that Hazel and Phil feared it would be the last place anyone would want to bring a caravan or tent! Fortunately, generous grants from the local council and West Yorkshire, as well as winning the *SHE* magazine award for new businesses, helped to keep us afloat.

Looking back over the last 40 eventful years, how has the park changed and developed?

Gradually, over the years, more and more land was bought and added to the park, including farmers' fields and woodland. In 2014, just in time for the hundreds of guests arriving to watch the Tour de France passing by the park, a new two-storey park building was completed. This houses a new reception and shop at the entrance to the park and, below, new toilets and showers as well as family bathrooms. More recently, in 2018, Ben and Naomi introduced



glamping accommodation, starting with four cabins; this has now increased to a range of nine accommodation units, including pods and a geodesic dome. The Camping Stove, a takeaway food cabin, opened in 2023.



What have been some of the biggest milestones for the park over the years?

- The longest-running British TV comedy programme, *Last of the Summer Wine*, filmed several scenes at the campsite in the early 90s. This was great promotion in the park's early years and made us popular with LOTSW fans
- Getting our first David Bellamy Award for Conservation. We received a Silver award in 1995, the second year of the scheme; since then, we have achieved a Gold award every year
- In 2014, the UK leg of the Tour de France cycle race passed the entrance of the park. Minutes after the announcement, bookings flooded in, leading us to fill a field never used before for camping! We arranged a big screen and a pop-up bar – the weekend was a great success!
- We received the David Bellamy Special Distinction Award in 2015 for the green credentials of our newly built amenities block
- Radio Leeds broadcast live from the park in 2023 during "Rima's Roadtrip," their tour of Yorkshire
- Being selected as a location for a Swift motorhome advert and, very recently, scenes for an upcoming Channel 4 drama
- Being crowned Out & About Live Campsite of the Year 2026!

What do you think has stayed the same since the beginning?

Its strong green ethos. From the very beginning, Phil and Hazel were passionate about conserving wildlife while developing the site. A private borehole ensures that the park always has a reliable supply of crystal fresh water. Native trees and hedgerows continue to be planted, and both amenities blocks are run sustainably using biomass boilers and solar thermal panels.

What do you enjoy most about running a caravan park after all these years?

Working in a beautiful green location with an excellent team and meeting new customers every day. We love to see families returning every year and watching children grow up and return with their own families.

What have been some of the biggest challenges along the way?

Covid introduced new dynamics; however, it also opened us up to new ideas and developments.

Do you have any other memorable stories or moments from guests over the years?

When Naomi's former A-level French student from her teaching days walked into reception to check in and said, "Mrs Humphreys! What are you doing here?!" He became a regular guest, bringing his own children on holidays. We have also had several couples get engaged while staying at the park.

What do you think keeps people coming back to Holme Valley year after year?

The warm welcome, friendly staff and beautiful setting.

How has the touring and caravanning industry changed since you first started?

Expectations are higher, which has led to us upgrading the amenities. Caravans are larger; therefore, our pitch sizes have increased. More guests like to camp with an electric hook-up, so we have significantly increased the number of premium hook-ups available.

What makes the location of Holme Valley special for visitors?

We are not miles from anywhere, so guests from nearby towns and cities such as Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester can reach us quickly. The market town of Holmfirth, just one mile down the road, is a gem with plenty of independent shops, cafés, and restaurants. We are surrounded by many fantastic walking trails and reservoirs, and we are located on the edge of the Peak District.

What does a typical day look like for you now compared to when you first started?

We started with a team of two (Hazel and Phil), and now the team numbers 25! We see significantly more arrivals

every day, and it can often take two dedicated members of staff just to field the phone calls.

As you celebrate these 40 years, what does this milestone mean to you personally?

A great deal of pride for a well-regarded family business. The hard work and personal sacrifices that Hazel and Phil endured in the early years have certainly paid off and have been a fantastic springboard for Naomi and Ben to take the business forward.

Looking ahead, what are your plans or hopes for the future of the park?

The park still has plenty of potential! We plan to further our green credentials and build a solar array. We would like to expand our range of accommodation and introduce caravan storage. We are also planning to expand the range of activities for children with woodland walking trails and activity backpacks, and perhaps a Cresta Run and outdoor cinema. We're always looking to run our business in an ethically sound and more sustainable way while being supportive of the environment.

Finally, what do you enjoy doing when you get a rare moment away from the park?

We love the outdoors: walking, biking, skiing, and especially holidays. We have a campervan, so we can't help enjoying a busman's holiday and checking out what other campsites are doing!



info

HOLME VALLEY CAMPING AND CARAVAN PARK

Holmfirth, West Yorkshire HD9 7TD

T 01484 665819

E enquiries@holmevalleycamping.com

W holmevalleycamping.com



Falcon Technology

Getting online from your pitch is easier than ever. Your guide to caravan WiFi takes you through routers, boosters, hotspots, MiFis, fitted systems – and also Starlink

One of the best parts of a caravan holiday is escaping the pressures of everyday life – trading Microsoft Teams and Outlook for coastlines and countryside lanes. But even surrounded by the great outdoors, many of us still want (or in some cases need) a good digital slice of connectivity.

So, whether you're streaming your favourite television show, checking in with work, or keeping the family entertained, having access to WiFi in your caravan is more useful than ever. From campsite signals to satellite-powered solutions, here is your complete guide to getting online while on tour.

CAMPSITE WIFI, CONVENIENT BUT VARIABLE

Many caravan parks offer free or low-cost WiFi, but performance can vary wildly depending on the location and time of day. Rural sites often struggle with

limited infrastructure and because of this, shared bandwidth can quickly become overwhelmed when everyone logs on – particularly in the evenings when families return from a day out.

If your needs are simply checking emails or briefly browsing the web, campsite WiFi may be

enough. But for anything more intensive, it's worth considering your own setup.

MIIFI DEVICES

Small and battery-powered, a MiFi device uses a SIM card to access mobile data and can support multiple devices at once. Think of this as a personal dedicated portable mobile hotspot, one which is ideal for caravanners wanting flexibility, offering fair speeds and often unlimited data plans.



Shutterstock



Falcon Technology

Falcon Tech's "no-holes" 4G solution is a plug-and-play window-mounted booster that provides reliable mobile internet for up to 10 devices

Keep an eye out for newer models with long battery life and dual-band connections for faster speeds.

CARAVAN ROUTERS

Some routers designed for caravans work in two ways: they either boost a weak WiFi signal or use a SIM card to connect via 4G or 5G networks.

Routers which have SIM slots can switch automatically between campsite WiFi and mobile data – giving you an always-on internet experience. Some can even come with external aerials (either directional or omnidirectional) for improved signal reception.

This is a good choice for people who are regularly on the move and need consistent connectivity.

WIFI BOOSTERS

If your site offers WiFi but your pitch struggles to pick it up, a booster could significantly help with this. These units amplify existing signals, improving coverage and speed inside your caravan.

As they are already connected to and use the existing WiFi network, you won't pay extra data charges, but having said that, they rely on a base signal being available – they can't create connectivity from scratch. I've used these devices frequently in the past, and while they only make a small difference, sometimes they provide just enough of a boost to cut buffering time from 20 minutes, down to 10. They are not a guaranteed or long-term solution, but considering their price, they definitely offer some value.



USING YOUR MOBILE AS A HOTSPOT

A simple and quick solution is tethering your smartphone. Just enable the hotspot feature and connect your devices.

This is indeed very easy to do and most, if not all, modern androids and iPhones support this feature. I must provide one significant warning, however: ensure you check your monthly data allowance!

I have made this (rather rookie) mistake too many times. When I hotspot my data, my partner and I watch a film, or catch up on whatever Netflix show we are watching and then the next day I receive a text from my network provider informing me that I have used all of my mobile data.

After all, streaming or video calls can



burn through data quickly, leading to hefty charges if you exceed your plan. If you are not unlimited, then this is perfect for occasional browsing, but keep an eye on the data usage.

FITTED CARAVAN WIFI SYSTEMS

For those wanting a permanent solution, purpose-built WiFi systems for caravans offer high-speed access and can even double as TV aerials.

These are often mounted on the caravan roof with internal routers installed inside. A 12V power supply is typically required and permanent professional installation is needed to maintain warranties.

The investment can be significant (with prices nearing £1,000 for premium models), but it's a reliable option for serious internet users.

STARLINK

If you're venturing far, completely beyond the grid, Starlink – a satellite internet service from SpaceX – is now an option for caravanners.

It essentially uses a portable satellite dish and router to beam internet directly from space and in-turn delivering home-like speeds almost anywhere with a clear view of the sky. And by anywhere, Starlink means business. In some cases and under specific Starlink packages, this can be used in motion and not just standstill. There are even stories of users using Starlink in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, with further plans to connect internet through to the Sahara Desert. This new technology has certainly opened many new routes for internet

connectivity and in this case, many new roads, campsites and patches across the UK/Europe you may have always wanted to explore.

One downside however: the hardware isn't cheap and you'll pay a monthly subscription, but for frequent explorers it's a game-changer and has the ability to connect you wherever you maybe.

BUDGET OPTIONS

If your usage is light, you may not need to spend big.

Basic dongles start from around £30 and can provide occasional access, while MiFi devices with pay-as-you-go data plans offer flexible alternatives without the need for contracts.



Final thoughts

Choosing the right WiFi setup for your caravan comes down to how much you want to be connected.

Casual users may get by with campsite WiFi or phone tethering, while regular streamers or remote workers may need a more reliable and permanent solution. With so many options now available – including satellite – getting online from your pitch is easier than ever. Just remember to balance convenience, cost and coverage to find the right fit for your travels.

Award-winning camping kit for caravan trips

Best Camping Furniture

Vango Atlas

A comfortable chair always earns its place on a caravan pitch, especially once the awning is up and the kettle is on. The Vango Atlas is camping furniture that properly delivers on the promise of relaxation, offering an oversized, generously padded seat that you'll happily sink into after a long day outdoors.



RRP
£80

Built around a robust steel frame, the Atlas doesn't just prioritise comfort – it backs it up with serious strength, supporting up to 180kg.

The DuoWeave fabric strikes an excellent balance, too: tough enough to handle years of campsite use, yet remarkably soft enough to make you forget you're sitting outside.

Thoughtful touches elevate it further, from the padded armrests that make getting in and out effortless, to the wide, stabilising feet that prevent sinking into softer ground (a small detail that makes a big difference on British campsites).

What really sets the Atlas apart is how it blends that lounge-like feel with practical portability.

The detachable headrest frame reduces pack size, and it all stows neatly into a carry bag with compression straps for easy transport. Add in a handy side storage pocket, and you've got a chair that feels genuinely well designed.



[w vango.co.uk/atlas-chair](http://w.vango.co.uk/atlas-chair)

Highly Commended Camping Furniture

Trail Slimfold Kitchen Stand

The Trail Slimfold Kitchen Stand is the sort of accessory that makes sense for caravanners who like to cook outside, use the awning as an extra room, or simply keep the pitch better organised.

It gives you proper workspace for meal prep, serving and storing cooking kit, without taking over the whole set-up.

Its quick-fold design, generous workspace and clever storage options make meal prep effortless, while the lightweight frame and compact pack size ensure it's as portable as it is useful.

[w trail.co.uk](http://w.trail.co.uk)



RRP
£139.99

Best Rucksack / Bag

Kelty Redwing 50

A good rucksack is not just for wild camping. On a caravan holiday, it can be the bag you reach for every time you leave the pitch, whether that is for a coastal walk, a trip into town, a day at an outdoor event or a longer route from site.

It is a well-established backpack that has been refined over time, rather than changed for the sake of it.

The updated model introduces an advanced perimeter frame for improved load stability, alongside the FIT-Pro adjustment system that allows a quick, dialled-in torso fit on the move.

Comfort is further boosted by the new AMP-Flow ventilated back panel, helping reduce heat build-up on longer days on the trail.

Practicality is a standout, too: wing side pockets now feature slots for trekking poles or fishing rods, while the clever hybrid U-zip opening lets you switch between top-loading simplicity and full panel access.

At £140, it delivers serious versatility without pushing into premium expedition pricing, and that balance of durability, comfort and smart design is exactly what makes it our winner for 2026.

[w twistdistribution.com](http://w.twistdistribution.com)

Compact outdoor cooking

Campingaz Twister Connect PZ

A small gas stove can be a useful extra on a caravan trip, especially if you like cooking outside, making coffee away from the pitch, or keeping things simple on a day out.

The Campingaz Twister Connect PZ keeps that idea compact and practical. Weighing just 220g, it is light enough to pack without much thought, but the 2,900W burner gives it the sort of performance you still want when you are actually cooking.

The big talking point is Campingaz's Easy Clic Connect technology. It is designed to make attaching the stove to the gas cartridge easier and more secure, with a built-in safety feature that stops gas from flowing if the cartridge is not correctly connected.

There is also piezo ignition, so you do not need to rely on matches or a lighter.

W campingaz.co.uk



Collapsible coolboxes

Coleman Snap 'N Go Coolers

Coolboxes are incredibly useful on caravan holidays, but storing them can be a pain. That is where Coleman's Snap 'N Go range has an especially obvious appeal.

These are Coleman's first collapsible coolers, designed to fold down to a third of their full size in seconds. That makes them much easier to store in the caravan, towcar, awning or garage space when they are not being used.

When opened up, they work like a proper hard-sided cooler, with three sizes available depending on how much food and drink you need to keep chilled. The largest 55QT model offers 52 litres of capacity and keeps ice frozen for up to 64 hours, while the smaller options are better suited to weekends, picnics, beach days or extra overflow storage on site.

The appeal is simple. You get the cooling space when you need it, without having to find room for a bulky coolbox for the rest of the trip.

W gooutdoors.co.uk



Camping chair review

Trail Rock Folding Rocking Camping Chair

For caravanners, a good chair can make all the difference once the awning is up or the pitch is set for the evening. This Trail model is more of a stay-on-pitch chair than something to carry far, but that makes sense if comfort is the priority.

Balancing something that feels both heavy-duty and genuinely comfortable, while still looking elegant, isn't easy, but this chair manages it. Brought to you by Trail, the Rock Folding Rocking Camping Chair does exactly what it says on the tin, rocking and folding to make a reliable option for travel, whether you're lounging by the campfire or easing into the day with a hot drink.



Reviewed by
Henry Hurt

PRICE: £59.49 | **WEIGHT:** 7.3kg | **HEIGHT:** 102cm by 87cm by 65cm by 23cm



At 48cm, it sits fairly low, which is a bit of a double-edged sword. While that lower profile adds to the comfort, it can make getting in and out a little tricky, though personal preference (and mobility) will play a part.

Despite its more refined look, the double-layer ripstop polyester is both water-and-abrasion-resistant, so it's built to last. That said, it weighs in at 7.3kg, so this isn't a chair you'll want to carry far. It's very much designed to stay put alongside your caravan rather than be hauled around on foot.

W trail.co.uk



Caravan insurance

Looking after your investment is key

The insurance marketplace is vast and, as consumers, we are well-versed in insuring everything from the pets we adore to the houses we live in. However, does this peace of mind extend to your caravan insurance policy? We'll examine touring caravan insurance policies in more detail, including the types of cover available, whether all caravan insurance policies are the same, and the sizeable discounts you may automatically be entitled to.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Much like our insurance policies for homes, cars, pets and other items, caravan insurance covers your touring caravan against certain insurable risks. These risks include theft and accidental damage, with some policies encompassing your caravanning essentials, such as awnings, motor movers, air-conditioning units, barbecues, etc. Insurers can also tailor cover to suit caravans permanently sited on a seasonal pitch.

DO I NEED CARAVAN INSURANCE?

Legally, no, you do not need to have insurance for your caravan but it would be a mistake not to have it. So, it's worth

covering a few points in greater detail to explain why.

If your car insurance policy covers you while towing (most policies do, but you should always check), damage caused to a third party is likely covered. This is the legal

minimum required while on the move.

However, your car insurance policy will not cover any damage to your caravan, even if you have comprehensive cover.

Caravans can be quite an investment, so it's important to get dedicated insurance.



Caravan insurance protects the caravan and its extras against theft and accidental damage

This is not a one-size-fits-all solution; there are numerous factors that underwriters take into account when determining the cost of your policy. This means that no two quotes will be identical, each caravan and its owner have unique circumstances. As a rough guide, it can cost a few hundred pounds per year to insure a caravan that has a motor mover and an air-conditioning unit.

WHAT'S COVERED?

Even experienced caravanners can encounter low-hanging branches, rocks obscured in roadside undergrowth, or posts on a campsite pitch. Thankfully, caravan insurance covers accidental damage. It can also cover you in the event of a road accident. Again, we need to reference towing experience here; experienced caravanners know they have to lessen speed on downhill gradients and allow room when cornering to avoid clipping a tight kerb, but accidents do happen.

Even though experienced caravanners know the hazards of towing in high winds, there are occasions when that is unavoidable. For example, you may be unable to delay your return to work to wait for high winds to subside. Plus, high winds may develop when you are on a journey. You keep the speed down, of course, but gusts can happen, and accidents can result.

Storm damage is another covered risk. Severe hailstorms can harm the roof of your caravan, fencing panels can break free in high winds and collide with your caravan, and should an awning collapse or partially collapse, its poles can wreak havoc with caravan side panels.

Caravan insurance, however, isn't all about towing and touring. If your caravan is sited in one place on a seasonal pitch, site owners will likely want to see a copy of your insurance policy, as most have a rule that all caravans on the campsite must be insured.

Theft is a worrying thought for any new caravan owner, as it can result in the loss of valued possessions.

While it's unsettling to think that your prized items could be stolen, having insurance can offer peace of mind. This package supports policyholders financially by covering costs related to damage or replacement, making them feel more secure about their investments.

New caravanning kit (awnings, barbecues, outdoor furniture, motor movers, TVs, AC units, etc) can also be expensive, although a dedicated policy can include these items if specified.

TYPES OF CARAVAN INSURANCE

Two common types of cover are new-for-old and market value.

New-for-old cover means that your caravan is insured for its full replacement



Caravan insurance is crucial for peace of mind and protecting your investment

cost with a new caravan. Insurance companies typically offer this cover for caravans up to a specified age, usually 15 years old.

Market value cover means the caravan is insured for its current retail price. Because caravans tend to hold their value better than cars, etc, checking your caravan's value at renewal time is essential.

CARAVAN INSURANCE DISCOUNTS

Nobody likes spending money unnecessarily. Thankfully, serious discounts can be had on policy costs, many of which may already qualify. The list to the right comes from a leading caravan insurer. Discounts may vary among different brokers and insurance companies, but it shows the potential for savings.

- Up to 25% no claims discount
- 15% discount for an approved tracking device
- Up to 15% secure storage discount: secure compound surrounded by security fencing
- 10% discount for axle wheel locks
- 10% CaSSOA silver/gold storage
- 5% discount for an electronic anti-snaking device (AI-Ko ATC, etc)
- Up to 5% security marking discount (5% VIN Chip Plus, or 2.5% other security marking)
- 5% tyre safety discount: tyron bands, TMPS, or tyre sealant
- 5% discount for a caravan reversing aid: reversing cameras or reversing sensors, not your partner, or child!

Quotes depend not just on the value of the >>

ADVICE | INSURANCE



caravan but also on where it is stored when not in use. Caravan storage facilities that have the maximum CaSSOA (Caravan Storage Site Owners' Association) security rating, for example, will likely attract a discount on your premium regardless of the insurer. As with house and car insurance, the area you live in (if you store your caravan at home) has a bearing on the cost.

The cost of a policy is also influenced by the security devices you have. Wheel clamps and hitch locks are mandatory for most policies, and this combination may be the minimum security required. It's worth noting that security products have to be approved to attract a discount. Your insurer will have a list of such products, so it's worth getting in touch before opting for a particular make and model of security product. Al-Ko's ATC is a handy addition. ATC stands for automatic trailer control and it is designed to detect a snaking motion when towing before automatically applying caravan brakes. It aims to straighten the caravan before the snaking motion becomes serious.

WHAT IS AN INSURANCE EXCESS?

Simply put, an insurance excess is the amount you must pay in the event of a claim. This can vary, with typical amounts being £100, £250, or £500. Choosing a higher excess amount may lower your premium.

EUROPEAN CARAVAN TRAVEL

It is commonplace for caravan insurance policies to include European travel cover, but ensure this cover is in place before visiting the Continent and beyond. Standard policies often include 180 days of European cover per year, which can typically be extended to 240 days. Check the small print

on your policy before travelling abroad, as it will likely ask you to adhere to European travel rules on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) for the policy to remain in force.

ARE ALL POLICIES THE SAME?

In short, no. Check the small print before accepting a quotation to ensure it meets your needs. Some insurers may not offer cover for a specific item of equipment, or the insurable risks may not be as comprehensive as another policy. Before signing on the dotted line, make a cup of tea and read through the small print, including the policy section that details what's covered and what's not. Taking a few moments to check these areas can save you hundreds, if not thousands, of pounds. The cheapest isn't always the best.

FAQS

Does car insurance cover a caravan while it's being towed?

Most comprehensive car policies cover the caravan while it is being towed but always check with your car's insurance company. This can cover you for third-party risks, such as if your caravan collides with another vehicle while being towed. Any damage to the caravan will only be covered by a caravan insurance policy, not your car policy.

What happens if the only person who tows the caravan becomes ill or injured during a trip?

It is common for only one person in a family or couple to tow the caravan, and insurance companies recognise this; a mere sprained ankle can render a driver unable to drive. Some policies will arrange to bring your caravan home if this occurs during your holiday.

Does the age of my caravan matter?

Some companies insure caravans up to 25 years old, while others may cover a 30-year-old caravan. This can vary between insurers, so contact multiple

companies if you're struggling to insure a vintage caravan.

Can I include personal possessions on a caravan insurance policy?

Yes, although it may be worth checking your house insurance policy to avoid duplicate cover. Things to look at include policy exclusions, such as specified items, and the excess amount for each policy type.

Will my caravan insurance policy cover friends or family who wish to borrow our caravan?

Certain policies can extend cover to friends or family who are borrowing your caravan. However, ensure cover is in place before they embark on a holiday.

Which companies offer specialist caravan insurance?

Among the best-known, and in no particular order, are Lifesure, Caravan Guard, Ripe, Shield Total Insurance, Caravanwise, Grove & Dean, Adrian Flux, Safeguard, Everywhen, Coast and the two major Clubs.



shield
TOTAL INSURANCE

Part of **HOWDEN**

SPECIALIST CARAVAN INSURANCE FROM THE EXPERTS



The Caravan Insurance policy we offer includes:

- New For Old, Agreed Value and Market Value cover available.
- EU repatriation cover included if European cover selected.
- Wide range of discounts for security and storage.
- Replacement cover for up to 5 years from new – available on all New For Old policies.
- EU cover for up to 180 days in any calendar year.
- Loss or accidental damage to awnings and equipment (excluding wear and tear).

Get A Quote Online ↓

shieldtotalinsurance.co.uk
or call us on **0330 174 4653**



Shield Total Insurance Services is a trading style of A-Plan Holdings authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority
Registered Office: 2 Des Roches Square, Witney OX28 4LE • Registered in England • Registration Number 750484. This can be checked
on the FCA's register by checking the FCA website at www.fca.org.uk/register.

QUESTIONS

& answers

Our technical expert,
Lee Davey, answers your questions

Tips for towing

Q I'm hoping to buy a caravan this year, but I'm unsure whether my current car will be able to tow the caravan I want. Is there anything I can do to check what's suitable and build my confidence before my first proper trip?

A That's completely normal, and something many caravanners worry about at first. A good place to start is by checking what your car can safely tow using a tool such as Towmatch, which can help narrow down suitable caravan options before you buy W bit.ly/CVNTowmatch. I'd also recommend booking a towing course with one of the major UK Clubs, such as the Caravan and Motorhome Club or the Camping and Caravanning Club. These courses are great for building confidence and usually cover practical skills such as manoeuvring, hitching, loading and towing.



Gas bottle trouble

Q We can't get our gas bottle off. It just won't budge, and I wondered if you had any tips?

A Your gas bottle likely has a left-hand thread, so they undo clockwise, not anticlockwise. You likely know this already, but it's worth mentioning as it catches out many people. If it still won't budge, use a long spanner that has a snug fit. Be careful, as stuck fittings in a gas locker can be a recipe for skinned knuckles. If that fails, it may be worth speaking to your local caravan dealer to see if they can loosen it.

Towbar tips

Q I've just had a detachable towbar fitted. One person said I should remove the paint from the ball, while someone else said I needn't bother. What should I do?

A Both people are correct, but it depends on which caravan hitch type you have. Most caravans are fitted with a stabiliser hitch, and for this hitch type, the paint should be removed before towing. The stabiliser hitch relies on clean, bare metal contact to work properly, and paint can hinder this and contaminate the pads. More often, 400-grit wet-and-dry sandpaper will work – it should be cleaned afterwards with brake cleaner or similar. If, however, you don't have a stabiliser hitch, simply grease the painted towball before hitching up. Stabiliser hitches are easily identified by two handles – one for attaching the caravan to the towball and the other for engaging the pads.

Register your caravan

Q We're about to buy our first touring caravan. What do we need to get it CRiS registered?

A From 1992, all new caravans built by NCC member manufacturers were CRiS registered, so there's a very good chance your caravan is already CRiS registered and transferring the registration is as simple as filling in a form and paying the required fee. My 1967 caravan wasn't CRiS-registered, but registering it with CRiS was relatively straightforward, and this process can be followed for an unregistered caravan. However, if a caravan doesn't have CRiS documentation, think carefully about why this may be, as this is commonplace with stolen caravans. More details can be found at W cris.co.uk



Email your tech questions and pictures to caravan@warnersgroup.co.uk or, if you prefer to post, write to Questions & Answers, *Caravan Magazine*, The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincs PE10 9PH



Our expert team is happy to answer your questions, whether they relate to touring or towing, DIY or disasters! Whatever it is that's been causing you bother, we are on hand to help!

Keeping cool

Q Thinking ahead to our trip to France, how do you keep your caravan cool at night during very hot weather?

A Heat management is all about airflow and timing

- Vent late, not early: keep blinds and windows shut during the day to block excessive heat
- Open everything up at night: rooflights and windows create a chimney effect
- Use flyscreens so you can ventilate without insects.
- A fan can make a big difference in still air, especially if you place a bowl of ice in front of it
- Think about pitch position. Shade from trees or even the caravan's orientation can noticeably reduce heat build-up

Failing that, an air-conditioning unit is a great investment for frequent/lengthy trips to warmer destinations.



Electricity abroad

Q We're planning a trip to France, but a lot of sites say they're 6A. How does that work?

A In France, campsite electrics are often lower-rated than in the UK. A 6A supply gives you roughly 1,300W, which isn't a lot by UK standards, but it's adequate with careful use. In practical terms, it means you can run one high-draw appliance at a time, such as a low-wattage kettle (a domestic kettle can be 3,000W) or a heater, but not all together. If using the caravan's heater, ensure it's set to 1kW, or use the gas setting. It's also worth purchasing a European hook-up lead adaptor, as connections can vary.



Find Lee Davey here: [X TinTent](#) [tin.tent](#) [TinTent](#)

Facebook caravanmag X caravanmagazine Web outandaboutlive.co.uk/caravans



PROTECT YOUR GREAT ESCAPE YOUR ADVENTURES. COVERED.

Insurance for your caravans, pets, bicycles and more with our wide range of policies.

UP TO
45%*
DISCOUNT
ON TOURING CARAVAN
INSURANCE



theinsuranceemporium.co.uk/CM99 03300 244 039



*The maximum available discount is 45% - this is a combination of a range of discounts. Please see our website for more details.

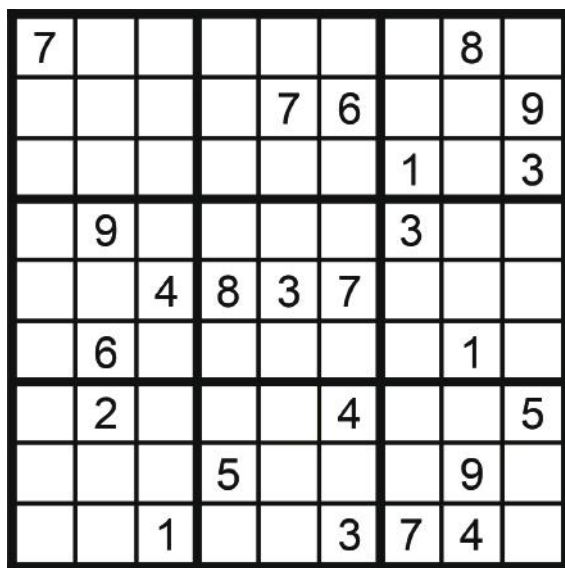
Lifestyle Policy Limited is an appointed representative of The Equine and Livestock Insurance Company Limited. The Insurance Emporium is a trading name of The Equine and Livestock Insurance Company Limited (registered in England and Wales no: 294940) which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority no: 202748.

brainteasers

puzzles to exercise your mind when at home or in the caravan

sudoku

If you are looking for a challenging puzzle, sudoku is great fun and will certainly get the cogs turning!

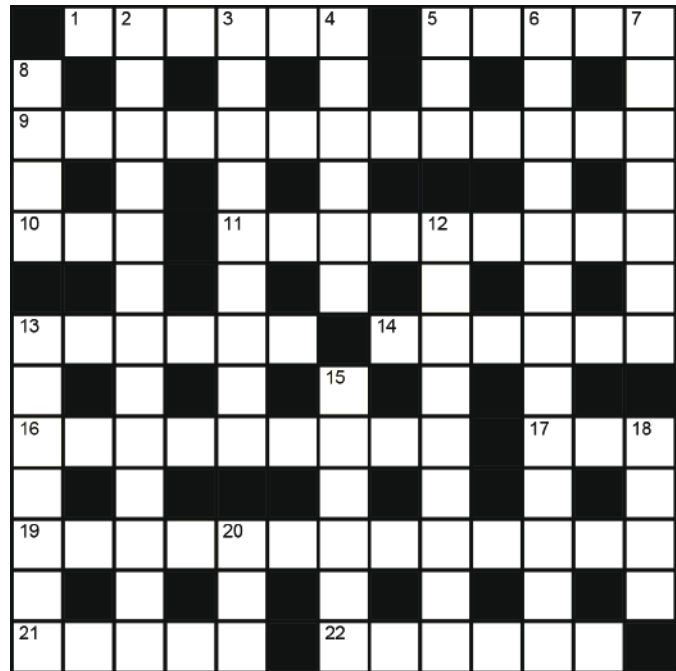


just for fun

Find the 22 countries of the world



crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Train departure warning: All ____ (6)
- 5 Land on the Red Sea (5)
- 9 A collection of countries over the Channel (8,5)
- 10 Country with star spangled banner (3)
- 11 Spiny lobster (9)
- 13 Bathed in rays (6)
- 14 Overwhelm with noise (6)
- 16 Music with banjos and mandolins (9)
- 17 Away (3)
- 19 A number of people drawn together sharing a common activity or opinion (8,5)
- 21 The magic number in the De La Soul song (5)
- 22 Ringed planet (6)

DOWN

- 2 Yellow sticker enthusiast (7,6)
- 3 Shocking (9)
- 4 Pulls the plug on (6)
- 5 "____ rang?" (3)
- 6 Chief assistants to a bride (5,2,6)
- 7 A yellowish cotton cloth (7)
- 8 Andean land (4)
- 12 Lapse (9)
- 13 Get by (7)
- 15 Creme de ____ (liqueur) (6)
- 18 Spinners (4)
- 20 Caviar (3)
- 17 Allow to proceed without restraint (3,3)
- 18 Eighth letter of the Greek alphabet (5)
- 21 Pouting grimace (4)

your scribbles



ANSWERS ACROSS: 1 aboard 5 Yemen 9 European Union 10 USA 11 langouste 13 sunlit 14 deafen 16 bluegrass 17 out 19 interest group 21 three 22 Saturn DOWN: 2 bargain hunter 3 appalling 4 drains 5 you 6 maids of honour 7 nankeen 8 Peru 12 oversight 13 subside 15 cassia 18 tops 20 roe

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES START HERE



out&about **LIVE**

- **Towmatch** – tow with confidence
- **Reviews** – to rely on, adventures to trust
- **Caravans for sale** – jumpstart your 'van buying journey
- **Travel guides** – inspiration for every journey



- **Campsite Finder** – discover campsites in epic destinations
- **Forum** – your community for life on the road
- **Warners Shows** – experience the UK's premier motorhome shows and festivals

DISCOVER MORE
visit outandaboutlive.info/caravan



BOOK YOUR SUMMER BREAK

Cae Du Caravan & Camping Park, Wales

PREMIER
PARKS 2026

The finest UK campsites, independently assessed

PLAN YOUR
NEXT GETAWAY WITH
PREMIER PARKS!
Get your FREE 2026
digital brochure now -
www.bit.ly/PP-2026

THE FINEST UK CAMPSITES, INDEPENDENTLY ASSESSED



Adults-only campsites



Family campsites



Dog-friendly campsites



Coastal campsites



Open-all-year campsites



Campsites for fishing

premier-parks.co.uk