

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 January 2021 12:52
To: localplan
Subject: Local Development Plan submission: re. Scottish Borders Tour
Attachments: Scottish Borders Tour.pdf; Motorcaravan Strategy Nov 2020 copy.pdf

CAUTION: External Email

Dear Sirs

I attach for your consideration the text of a letter (below) and documents (attached) that I have sent to SBC Councillors concerning a Scottish Borders Tour circuit, and the establishment of a network of overnight parking places and motor caravan service points to be evaluated at various locations in the Borders. Also suggestions as to how local businesses and community assets may profit either from providing facilities themselves or from collateral spending by visitors in shops, pubs, restaurants etc.

The Motor Caravan Tourism Sector is a major and economically beneficial contributor to national, local and regional economies in many European countries, and elsewhere such as New Zealand, Australia, Canada and USA, yet is something to which UK Tourism Bodies and Local Authorities have remained totally blind. (please read the section on Tourism Strategy)

I believe it would be beneficial to the tourism economy of the Scottish Borders if a policy of encouraging this sector in a positive way with managed routes and appropriate paid facilities could be engrained in the Local Development Plan.

Regards
Ian Lones

Text of letter to SBC Councillors:

<< Scottish Borders Tour

I am writing to you in your role as representative for.....on South Borders Council.

I am retired Architect, 74. I grew up on the fringes of the Lake District, although now after a lifetime of designing hospitals in UK and abroad I have ended up retired in the Peak District National Park. So I am well aware of the challenges of managing tourism in National Parks and other rural areas. Through my grandmother, and my father being the 'revenue man' at Stornaway I have a long attachment to Scotland. I am a frequent traveller through the Borders, for ever seeking new routes as I head north to visit my son who is an Associate Professor at Heriot Watt.

I was very saddened at the behaviour of so many visitors in this summers 'Staycation Madness', more so as an owner of a motorcaravan I find myself and the majority of responsible motorcaravanners now tarred with the same brush as the unthinking minority mostly in tents, vans with mattresses and small camper vans with no sanitation. I am concerned that we are all now greeted with official hostility and would wish to clear the air by offering positive solutions.

In consequence I am now a member of the leadership group of CAMpRA (Campaign for Real Aires) a growing group now some 15,000 strong, actively campaigning for proper facilities such as have existed in the rest of Europe for many years, for the 357,000 motorhomes in the UK.

One great attraction that many European countries have developed are Themed and Scenic Touring Routes, very popular with motor caravanners, and which bring international visitors and substantial revenue to local businesses. Such routes often attract visitors to stay in places they would not have otherwise visited as destinations.

Following some exchanges with members of Scottish Borders Council it became apparent that, apart perhaps from the Borders Historic Route which whizzes through from Langholm to Edinburgh taking in only three towns, no comparable tourism equivalent is on offer to showcase the Borders rich variety of landscapes, its charming and interesting towns and villages, and its short but most attractive coastline.

In October I put together a proposal for a 'Cumbrian Coastal Tour'. This report suggested how this might help attract visitors in self-contained motorhomes and campervans away from the over-tourism of the Central Lakes, and bring revenue to Coastal Areas, in line with Cumbria's own strategy for tourism.

The responses I have received from Lake District National Park, Cumbria County council, Tourism Cumbria, and a number of Borough Councils have been favourable and appreciative. These are now engaged in planning for motor caravan tourism for 2021 and have shown a willingness to engage with us going forward.

Inspired by this I have put together a proposal for a Scottish Borders Tour, a copy of which I attach. It is seen as a coherent framework around which to establish a network of overnight stopping places and service facilities for motor caravans.

I would encourage you to look at the analysis of Tourism Strategy in the report. The total absence nationally, regionally or locally of any joined up strategy for motor caravan tourism lies at the root of many of our problems.

I have laboured long on this, I hope you will give it due consideration; and please read also the attached 'Strategy for Sustainable Motor Caravan Tourism in the UK' to which it relates, and which describes self-contained motor caravans, their use and requirements in more detail, and the economic benefits to local business of a managed motor caravan tourism strategy.

I would very much appreciate it if you could copy this letter and attachments to any of your colleagues or council officers who you think may also have an interest in this proposal.

Regards...>>

SCOTTISH BORDERS TOUR

2021



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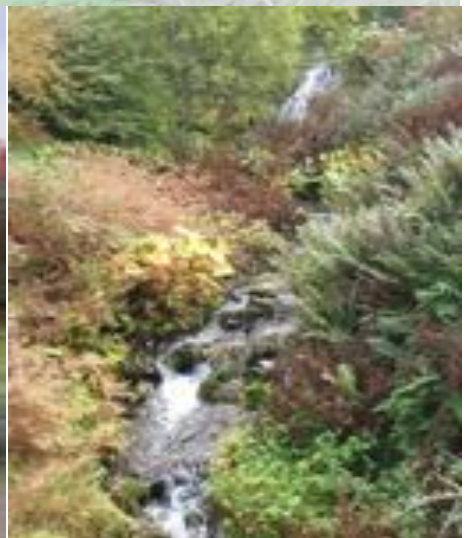
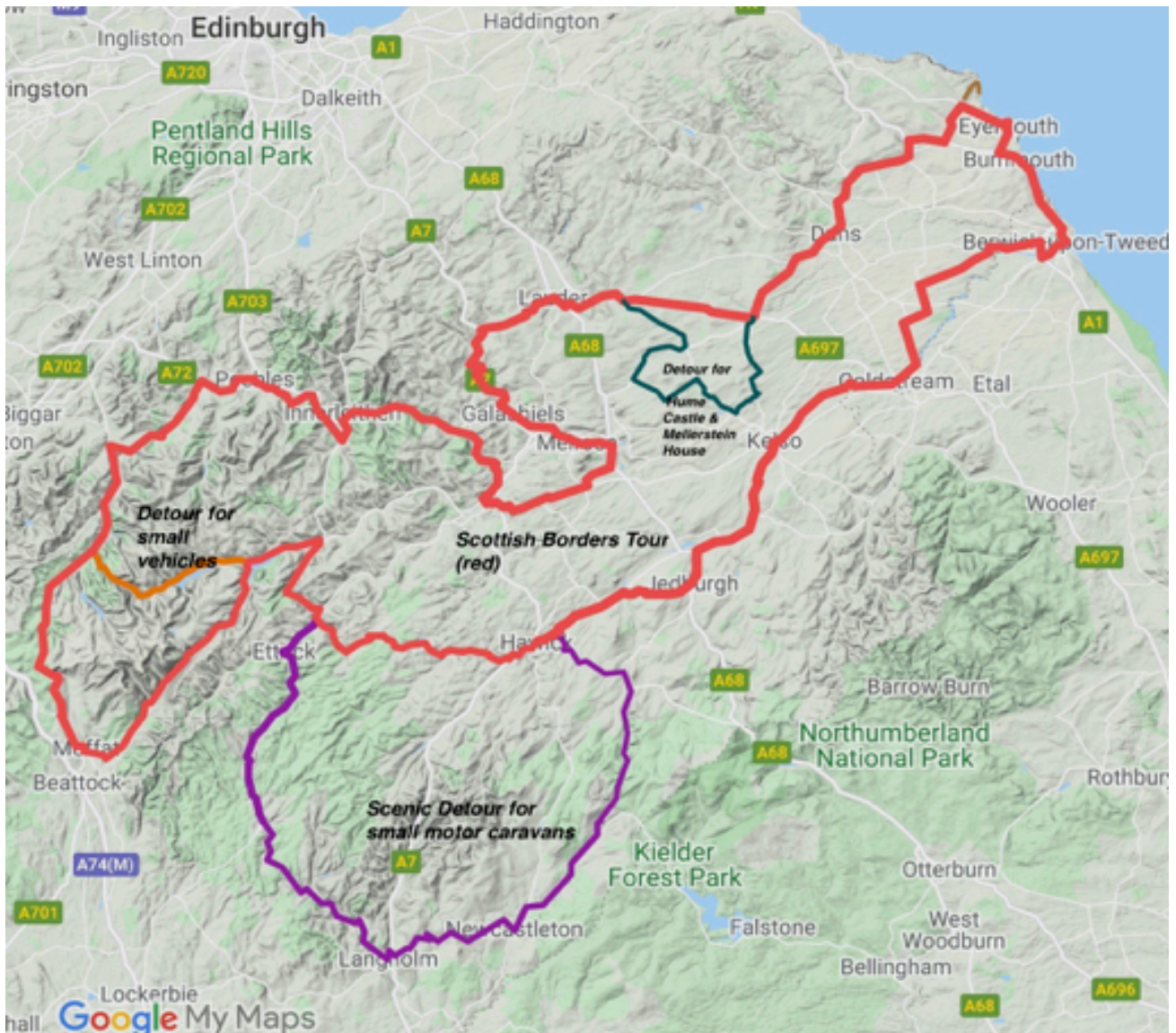
Appendix 1. Local Authorities with permitted motor caravan overnight parking

DATE: January 2021

REPORT TITLE: Scottish Borders Tour

REPORT BY: IAN LONES, CAMpRA LEADERSHIP TEAM

SCOTTISH BORDERS TOUR: MAP



Dawyck Botanical Gardens

INTRODUCTION

CAMpRA seek to address the problems caused by the absence of any co-ordinated strategy for motor caravan tourism in the UK or its regions, and lack of appropriate infrastructure. The economic benefits of motor caravan tourism are discussed in greater detail and scope in the companion report 'Strategy for Sustainable Motor Caravan Tourism in the UK'.

The number of motor caravan registrations doubled in the UK from 2012 to 2017 with new registrations increasing at around 14,000 – 15,000 per year. By mid 2020, there were 357,000 registered motor caravans in the UK. European countries have seen similar patterns with approaching 2 million motor caravans now in Europe.

Motor caravan visitors spend money on food and drink, attractions and shopping, and tend to spend more in local businesses when they do not have to waste money spending £20-40 per day in commercial campsites on acres of unwanted space, services and facilities that their self-contained vehicles simply do not need. Visitors in hired motor caravans tend to eat out even more frequently often returning vehicles with cooking facilities unused.

Motor caravanners in their centrally heated, solar powered autonomous vehicles are able to travel all year round, including winter when many campsites are closed or the ground unsuitable.

The Covid 19 pandemic has boosted sales and rentals of motor caravans and hugely inflated the number of British 'Staycationers'. For many older and more vulnerable people their motor caravan is the only safe and isolated form of transport and accommodation available to them. It is highly likely with the impending restrictions on European travel implicit in Brexit that many of those motor caravan owners who spend much of the year in Europe will in future be obliged to spend more time travelling in the UK. Also if the pound remains at a low value against the Euro more European owners will be tempted to travel in the UK, but very much on the proviso that UK provides facilities for motor caravans to the same extent as European countries.



Manderston House

There is now an opportunity, which needs to be grasped urgently, to transform what the short-sighted may perceive as a burdensome flood of motor caravans into the economically valuable tourism sector that it has become, not only in Europe, but in as far flung places as New Zealand, Australia, USA, and Canada. But this can only be achieved by pursuing welcoming policies that provide:

- Attractive routes to tour
- Welcoming and attractive places to visit with suitable parking
- Safe places to park and stay overnight at a reasonable price
- Basic service facilities for motor caravans to obtain water and dispose of waste and rubbish, which are only needed once every 3-6 days.

To establish a coherent framework around which to develop an infrastructure of facilities for overnight parking and service points for motor caravans we propose a framework of touring routes throughout the UK on similar lines to the very successful and economically beneficial themed and scenic routes established in some European Countries.

This report proposes a circular road around the Scottish Borders. A number of touring routes have been created around some regions of Scotland, including the well-known North Coast 500, Heart 200, Snowroad 90, and the North East 250. Apart perhaps from the Borders Historic Route which whizzes through from Langholm to Edinburgh taking in only three towns, no comparable tourism equivalent is on offer to showcase the Borders rich variety of landscapes, its charming and interesting towns and villages, and its short but most attractive coastline.

The communities along the proposed route have an opportunity to tap into the benefits of the motor caravan tourism market. But to do so requires imagination, mutual cooperation, and a joined up strategy. Although CAMpRA's focus is from the point of view of motor caravan tourism, the proposed route presents equal opportunities to attract visitors in cars to boost the local hospitality industry.

In actuality parts of the circuit are already well used by motor caravans; but not being appreciated as elements of a coherent tourism product, arrivals are treated by Local Authorities as random local incursions, something to be repelled.

These routes serve a number of purposes:

- As a focus for a managed network of facilities
- To disperse visitors away from tourist hotspots into less crowded areas.
- To open up tourism opportunities in less developed areas, and support local businesses
- To attract and enable visitors to enjoy the countryside, towns and villages
- To establish a product to promote to domestic and international markets



Kielder Forest Park

CURRENT ISSUES

Failure to develop the necessary infrastructure for motor caravan tourism in the UK has led to many towns, villages and coasts around the UK being overwhelmed by this year's 'Staycation' in the form of a deluge of motorhomes, campervans, and fly-campers in tents that could not be accommodated by the UK's out-dated campsite structure and 60 year old legislation, albeit problems had been accumulating, ignored or dismissed by the authorities and camping organisations for many years beforehand.

Deterrents:

- Unwelcoming or hostile to visiting motor caravans.
- Little sign of any motor caravan tourism strategy.
- Little evidence of co-operation between towns.
- Little provision for motor caravans except in campsites.
- Little daytime parking suitable for Motor caravans
- Campsites moving up-market with 'glamping' and huts in pursuit of profit, leaving less capacity for touring motor caravans.
- In winter most campsites closed or with unsuitable ground conditions
- Few motor caravan overnight locations, few facilities, no bins, no water or disposal points.
- Motor caravans making do in car parks overnight near villages and in laybys.
- Complaints of motor caravans obstructing views and residents and visitors car-parking.
- Proliferation of prohibition signs and barriers.
- Difficult to stay or park within walking distance of villages, or attractions.

Attractors

- Attractive countryside for walking and cycling
- Underdeveloped potential tourism owing to lack of infrastructure
- Pleasant green landscapes.
- Possibility to improve access and footfall at historic locations
- More space and opportunities to accommodate new motor caravan facilities
- Attractive by-ways.
- Access to regional footpaths and cycle ways
- Access for walking, cycling and cycle hire
- Access for Golf, Fishing, Sea-sports.
- Possibility of coordinating places to stay with public transport
- Possibility to permit overnight stay at a number of existing car-parks
- Attractive towns and villages on or near the route
- Existing pubs, clubs, and historic attractions that could gain from revenue from motor caravans by allowing overnight stay.

There is potential to attract, interest and cater for motor caravan tourists from home and abroad, but only with appropriate infrastructure. Information about places to stay with suitable facilities will rapidly disseminate through social media.



Ingleton



Preston Street car park Whitehaven



Lochore Country Park, Scotland

TOURISM STRATEGY

Nationally

How does public tourism strategy promote and manage Motor Caravan Tourism? Put simply, it doesn't.

Motor caravanners have for years been writing to MPs, Local Authorities and Tourism bodies asking for suitable facilities and places to stay.

They are ignored, lucky to get even an acknowledgement. MPs deflect the issue to LAs. Desperately underfunded LAs devolve tourism strategy to Regional or County Tourism Bodies and Local Area Economic Development Partnerships.

These latter bodies write wordy policies aspiring to promote new, innovative and alternative markets. But they are funded and managed by **existing** businesses and organisations, frequently including the two large Camping and Caravan Clubs, and Park Home and Holiday Park groups to whom new, innovative and alternative markets in their sector represent competition, which they have a vested interest in suppressing.

Authorities at national and local level have also failed to recognise that the 60-year-old concept and out-dated legislation controlling Caravan Sites and Campsites, whilst still relevant to tents and caravans is fundamentally unsuited to the totally different needs of the new market sector populated by self-contained motor caravans.

Thus it is small wonder that Motor Caravan Tourism Sector in the UK is decades behind most of Europe, New Zealand, Canada and the USA where this sector is flourishing, economically valuable, well promoted, well represented at all levels, and sustained by appropriate infrastructure. Those who populate the UK's Tourism Bodies, coming from the hospitality industry, seem blind to the existence of this sector.

The promotion by such Tourism Bodies of touring routes in the Highlands, thinking only of the hotel and hospitality industry with no matching investment in camping or motor caravan infrastructure, has led to misery for both residents and visitors.



The Borders Event Centre

The Chaotic 'Staycation' of 2020 and outbreaks of 'dirty camping' were not random unforeseeable events; their creation lay in the system described above. An inadequate infrastructure was confronted by a surge in numbers. Holidaymakers desperate to get away, turned up in droves in caravans, tents, motor caravans and campervans. The thousands of motor caravans that normally escape across the Channel from the UK's hostile environment in their thousands stayed home, as did thousands of others who bought cheap throw away festival tents and second hand campervans,

or vans with mattresses. This surge was but a pinnacle on top of a problem that had been steadily growing for years, as numbers grew but infrastructure did not.

How did Authorities react? Did they swiftly arrange temporary locations for tents in fields and green spaces? Did they make underused coach parks and parking at closed sports and other venues temporarily available? Did they mobilise Portaloos, and arrange access to water taps and drainage points? None of that, they fanned the flames by closing public toilets, putting up prohibition signs on parking places, and mobilising the police to issue penalties and drive visitors away.

With no positive action, and now Brexit restricting the amount of time UK motor caravanners can spend abroad, all the circumstances that created 2020's chaos remain in place awaiting the lifting of the lockdowns of early 2021.

Public policy cannot continue in such a vein, notwithstanding Covid, which will pass, there are still more than 357,000 motor caravans registered in the UK, rising rapidly and a further 2,000,000 in Europe, the owners of which with a welcoming environment could in the future become economically valuable visitors.



The Scottish Borders

What does current tourism strategy in the Borders have to say? There is an annually revised Scottish Borders Tourist Action Plan. It says nothing about motor caravan Tourism. But some of its aspirations are of relevance to the sector, to which the following comments can be made.

'Key attractions and gardens as strategic 'pull' factors': A motor caravan tourist route can be tailored to pass and give access to historic sites provided there is an opportunity to park and stay nearby.

'Borders Heritage Hub in Hawick': A good centre to disseminate information to visiting motor caravanners

'Mountain-biking assets and expand wider road and leisure cycling': many motor caravanners carry cycles but need parking and places to stay to access venues and starting points.

'High quality of infrastructure, support services and information to be available for walkers': of whom many arrive by motor caravan and need somewhere to stay near trail starting points.

'Expand the golf market – tackle new markets and innovative product packaging': Many motor caravanners are golfers, motor caravan golf tours and Aires at Golf Clubs would be innovative, a Golfing Tour" perhaps.

'Fishing / Country Sports Enhance and increase awareness of destinations current offering and integration with wider destination product offering': offering places to park with access to fishing waters would help, a Fishing Tour perhaps.

'Increase level of awareness of Surf product on East Coast': An Aire at Eyemouth, and improved arrangements at St. Abbs would give access for diving, sea fishing, boat trip and surf activities.

'Utilise current profile in equestrian market to support the area's drive from higher position and penetration of the activities market, see links with equestrian events and riding for the disabled': A good number of motor caravanners are elderly and some disabled, some with specially adapted motor caravans for themselves, spouses or children, a few overnight parking places at equestrian centres would help give them access to such activities.

'Investigate the tourism potential in relation to other sports including Rugby'...Although many motor caravanners are elderly and perhaps past their best rugby days there is an opportunity for rugby, cricket and other clubs to gain extra revenue by allowing paid-for overnight stay at night in their otherwise unused car parks, as indeed many do.

'The built and natural heritage of our towns and villages': this is what many come to see, but it will only be accessible to motor caravan visitors if overnight stay and parking are available within walking distance; in many towns new parking restrictions are driving them away.

'Maximise the opportunities....using events': Motor caravanners are enthusiastic event attendees, but only when accessible parking, even temporary, is available within walking distance.

'Ensure visitor dining offer capitalises on the excellent provenance of the Region's food and drink': motor caravanners eat out a lot provided they can park and stay within walking distance.

'Ensure a relevant range of types of accommodation is available across the Region to meet evolving market demand and expectations. Identify opportunities where better quality and new products can 'lead' and generate new demand': Motor caravan tourism is evolving, but ill accommodated, with expectations unmet and lacking in quality.

'Ensure all our tourism people / workforce and management have the relevant skills base to provide commercially successful, quality customer-focused services and products of international standing': it would appear none have knowledge or experience of motor caravan tourism.

'Understanding our Markets': not this market!

'Be fully aware and constantly updated of market trends and evolving expectations and needs of each sector of the market that offer opportunities to Scottish Borders', as above.

'Ensure that case studies and equality legislation is understood and implemented to allow for increase in accessible tourism opportunities': this does not at present extend to elderly, infirm or disabled motor caravanners.



Loch Clash Aire , Scotland



Gouthwaite Reservoir

Comparison with other countries

In Europe, New Zealand, Australia and elsewhere, motor caravan tourism is in itself an actively promoted major economic sector, supporting substantial manufacturing, sales and rental industries. Promotional information and Apps are available for information and guidance.

Scottish Borders has motor caravan sales, service, parts, rental and conversion businesses. Their economic success as everywhere in the UK is being strangled by lack of the crucial network of dedicated parking and service facilities where their clients can go; such as exist in those other countries.



Deutscher Alpenstrasse

Twin Towns

How do the towns in the Scottish Borders compare with those abroad with which they are twinned, is there something to be learnt?



Jedburgh: Malestroit, France.

Aire for 15 vans, 2 motorhome service locations, the local campsite also allows use of their service point by non-residents.



Peebles: Hendaye, France, 25 vans, services, €10



Innerleithen: Le Nouvion-en-Thiérache, France:

Aire, 5 van Aire at entrance to municipal campsite, 72 hour stay, Free, access to campsite services



Duns: Zagan, Poland:
Aire 2 vans at museum.



Kelso: Kelso USA, RV Park,
132 vans, all services



Moffat: Montreuil-sur-Ille

Aire de Camping Car, 6 places, free, free waste water and chemical toilet disposal, paid water and electricity.

THEMED TOURIST ROUTES

The establishment of themed tourist routes is nothing new; it is a well-established way at home and abroad of attracting visitors touring by car and motor caravan, many of whom are also walkers and cyclists.

Themed Tourist Routes in UK.

(As promoted by UK National Tourist Boards with additional RAC recommended routes in italics)

Scotland

- Angus Coastal Route
 - Argyll Coastal Route
 - Borders Historic Route
 - Clyde Sea Lochs Trail
 - Clyde Valley Tourist Route
 - Deeside Tourist Route
 - Fife Coastal Route
 - Forth Valley Tourist Route
 - Galloway Tourist Route
 - Highland Tourist Route
 - Moray Forth Tourist Route
 - North Coast 500
 - North East 250
 - North and West Highlands
- Route
- Perthshire Tourist Route
 - Snowroads Route
 - South West Coastal 300 Route
 -

Northern Ireland

- Causeway Coastal Route

Wales

- The Coastal Way
- (A proposal is under discussion for North Wales 360, with consideration of motorhome parking, overnight parking and service facilities)

RAC recommended:

- *Wild Wales*
- *The Dragons Spine*

England

- Bath and Cotswolds Secret Gardens

RAC recommended:

- *Cotswold Road Trip*
- *Norfolk Coast*
- *Atlantic Highway, South West England*
- *Land of the Lakes (not the coastal area)*
- *Best of the Moors*
- *Peaks and Passes*

Scotland in some areas has recently been increasingly active in establishing motor caravan parking. The Highland and Fyfe Councils especially are planning Aires and facilities for touring motor caravans. In most of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and some areas of Central Scotland and the Borders, with just a few enlightened exceptions (listed in Appendix 1), too many Local Authorities are still trying to find ways to ban motor caravans without making alternative provisions.

The problems of the NC 500 have already been touched upon. Motor caravanners had been warning of the growing need for infrastructure in Scotland for years but they were largely ignored. The initial knee jerk reaction of prohibitions and barriers proved generally futile simply intensifying the problem and moving the problem around; in consequence calmer heads in community and local councils are now setting about creating a proper infrastructure.

What a disappointing contrast this all makes with the situation in Europe.

European Tourist Routes

Many European countries have long established tourist routes, enthusiastically promoted by national and regional tourism organisations. Their popularity and resounding economic success have been boosted enormously by attracting great numbers of touring motor caravans. In parallel with developing the tourist routes a network of facilities (Aires, Wohnmobilstellplatz, Sostas) for parking, overnight stay and service has been established for motor caravans along these routes. Money pours into local economies, not just from direct revenue from the parking facilities, but also collateral spending in local shops, garages, attractions and hospitality venues, estimated to average 55€ per day per motor caravan.

It would be too much to list them for all countries, but as an illustration of the number and variety consider Germany and Norway (below).

Germany

- Fen Route
- Lower Saxony Asparagus Route
- Route of Megalithic Culture
- German Volcanoes Route
- German Fairytale Route
- Thuringian Forest Route
- German Half-timbered house Route
- Tauber Valley Wine Route
- German Wine Route
- Bertha Benz Memorial Route
- The Castle Road
- Bergstrasse Holiday Route
- Romantic Road
- German Limes Route
- Upper Swabian Baroque Route
- Romanesque Route
- German Avenues Route
- The Porcelain Route
- Saxon-Bohemian Silver Mines Route
- Saxon Wine Route
- German Alpine Route

Norway

- Hardanger
- Sognefjellet
- Hardangervidda
- Atlantershavegen (Coastal Route)
- Gaularfjell
- Aurlandsfjellet
- Havoysund
- Fonnabu
- Kristiansund-Alesund
- Ryfylke
- Valdresflye
- Varanger
- Lofoten
- Jaeren
- Andoya
- Gamle Srynefejjellsvegen
- Geiranger-Trollstigen
- Helgeland Coast (Coastal route)
- Rondane
- Senja

It is worth visiting these websites to see how Germany, Norway and France promote their touring routes:

<https://www.burgenstrasse.de/uk/Brochure...loads.html>

<https://www.visitnorway.com/plan-your-trip/travel-tips-a-z/norwegian-scenic-routes/>

https://www.savoie-mont-blanc.com/en/Version-EN/Discover/Worth-visiting/Natural-heritage/The-Route-des-Grandes-Alpes-a-legendary-journey-from-Lake-Geneva-to-the-Mediterranean-Sea?gclid=Cj0KCQiAIZH_BRCgARIsAAZHSBIZA3L3oeOXyRzZ1PN5EKGDAO-98_j6rfX8MkqLMoHv0-ansg6tO74aAnyHEALw_wcB



Romantische Strasse, Germany



Hardangervidda, Norway

WHO CAN PROVIDE AIRES AND SERVICE POINTS?

In Europe the main providers are:

- Local Authorities (most numerous).
- Community Councils and Trusts.
- Hotels, cafes and bars.
- Leisure Centre's, swimming pools and spas.
- Sports Clubs
- Farms, vineyards and garden centres.
- Visitor attractions and visitor centres.
- National parks and Forests
- Heritage centres, castles.
- Water utilities (at reservoirs)
- Campsites: separate short-stay Aire, and access to service points.

On the Scottish Borders Tour there is no reason why all or any cannot be providers. All can benefit from both the direct revenue from charges for motor caravan parking and use of services, and / or from indirect spending.

Appendix 1 provides a list of UK Local Authorities who already provide authorised motor caravan overnight parking either in existing car parks, designated spaces in car parks or Aires, some of which also include a motor caravan service point. Many pubs already welcome motor caravans and are advertised either through social media, or via the Britstops Scheme.

Numerous Scottish Community Trusts or Councils are already in the process of installing, or have already installed Aires and service points, funded variously by LAs, Scottish Government Grant schemes, or by Crowdfunding. Members of the motor caravan community recently gave generously to help fund new sanitary facilities at Arisaig in the Western Highlands, where a new Aire and motor caravan service facilities are now proposed.

Forestry and Land Scotland should be urged to reinstate in 2021 their successful Stay the Night scheme for motor caravans to stay overnight in many of their forestry car parks. National Trust is also looking at the potential on some of their sites.



Wauchope Forest, Borders



Derwent Reservoir

Planning Aires

An Aire, from the French 'Aire de Stationnement et Service de Camping-car' is in essence an authorised location for short-term overnight parking of self-contained motor caravans where camping behaviour, including placing anything outside (chairs, tables, barbeques, awnings etc.) is not permitted. Self-contained vehicles must have integral toilets, washing and cooking facilities, and on-board storage for wastewater (grey-water), toilet waste (black-water) and rubbish. All domestic activities, including cooking must be capable of being carried out inside. A motor caravan service point includes supply of water, disposal of grey and black wastewater and bins; they may be located at Aires or other suitable locations with road access where the necessary utilities are available. No booking is required or indeed desirable.

Motor caravan owners tend to tour, stay a day or two at a location without pre-booking, and then move on, for which Aires are designed. Campsites are badly suited for this purpose, often demanding pre-booking and minimum lengths of stay, and demanding a high price for superfluous space and facilities whether they are needed, used, or not.



Helmsley Yorkshire



Hawick, Borders, Scotland

It should be clearly noted that Aires do not compete with campsites they cater for a different market. Many motor caravanners will still use campsites, but out of choice, not from coercion resulting from absence of other options. Campsites are popular with families with young children and pets; and many motor caravanners will use them intermittently for the wider range of services they offer. Campsites can benefit from increasing motor caravan traffic if they provide short-stay Aire-type spaces, as do many of their continental counterparts, and allow paid use of their motor caravan service points by non-resident visitors; also from increased in tent and caravan visitors. It would be inappropriate for LAs to obstruct provision of Aires on the grounds of competition with campsites, as this would be counter to their guidance from the Competition and Markets Authority.

The distinction between Aires and campsites is elaborated in our report 'Strategy for Motor caravan Tourism in the UK'. Examples of Aires, practical details, and case studies are included in the report, and on CAMpRA's website campra.org.uk. The report gives further recommendations on suitable locations for Aires and Service Points; and on the website also can be found various resources about motor caravans and their use, and useful information about the setting up of Aires.



ESTABLISHING THE TOURIST ROUTE

To develop a branded tourist route and associated network of facilities from scratch is a collaborative undertaking requiring clear definition of:

- The lead
- Stakeholders
- Communication decision making strategy
- Consultation process
- Funding strategy
- Implementation
- Promotion.

This report can only sketch a mere outline of such matters, and indeed given the parties involved can rely on the competence of such organisations to establish the necessary procedures far better for themselves...once they have been inspired to do so.

The Lead

The Lead would be the stakeholder who has the widest remit for developing tourism in the Scottish Borders. Which would suggest an initial discussion between the primary stakeholders below to determine which organisation is best placed to take a lead and coordinating role.

Stakeholders

Those most likely to have an active role in planning, implementing and promoting such a proposal would include:

Primary stakeholders

- Scottish Borders Council
- South of Scotland Destination Alliance
- South of Scotland Enterprise

Significant stakeholders may also include

- Scottish National Trust
- Historic Scotland
- Forestry and Land Scotland

Contributory stakeholders would include:

- Community Councils, Trusts and Associations
- Water Utility Companies
- Other landowners and major estates

Other stakeholders with a consulting role could include:

- Relevant Police Authorities
- Representatives of motor caravan users CAMpRA
- The Campervan and Motorhome Professional Association CAMPA
- Visit Scotland

Beyond the primary stakeholders, the scheme would need active promotion to those other parties identified in a previous section as potential providers of Aires. To encourage their participation, and give advice regarding the direct and indirect benefits of providing Aires and service points, the formalities and practicalities of implementing them.

Communications strategy

Because there are a considerable number of potential stakeholders it would be important at an early stage to establish a formal communications and decision making framework, to assign roles and areas of responsibility, and to determine who receives which communications, and who must be involved in which consultations. We anticipate the primary stakeholders already involved in local tourism have avenues of communication in place without the need to labour the subject here.

Consultation

A formal consultation process will need to be developed to involve the various stakeholders. But given the nature of the primary stakeholders involved, as with communications, we feel we would be 'teaching grandmothers to suck eggs' if we tried to elaborate a strategy in this brief document. What is important however is to highlight those relevant participants who are too frequently left out of such discussions usually with sub-optimal consequences for all parties.

Consultation with motor caravan user groups such as CAMpRA (Campaign for Real Aires) and professional groups representing Motor caravan Hire Companies in Scotland CAMPA would be important to ensure that everybody buys into the scheme, and all requirements and behaviours are properly understood. In too many instances people, even from a tourism background, who have little or no knowledge of motor caravan travel patterns make uninformed or mis-judged decisions effecting motor caravan users with unforeseen or undesirable consequences.

The motor caravan hire industry is particularly important for tourists from New Zealand and Australia where motor caravan hire is a major part of their tourism industry, and increasingly Britons and Europeans who cannot justify the cost of buying a motor caravan themselves are hiring in greater numbers. However motor caravan hire companies in UK are expressing concern at the increasing limitation during the holiday periods on the availability of places for their clients to stay; more so recently as campsites become fully booked all summer and there is a continuing crack-down on informal off-grid overnight stay. It is also a concern that many hirers are new-comers with little or no prior knowledge of motorhome travel, and who are not adequately educated about the 'Leave no Trace' etiquette shared by regular motor caravanners, or about handling larger vehicles on small rural roads. Consultation is thus a two way process.

Importantly Local and County Authorities would need to support the scheme to smoothly overcome town planning and other obstacles, especially with regard to the provision of Aires and service installations by private landowners and businesses.

Local police authorities would need to be consulted on enforcement and traffic issues.

Funding and costs

We would anticipate the administrative costs of discussing, refining and developing the strategy could reasonably be absorbed within the normal business and operating budgets of the authorities and organisations involved.

However it is hoped that the involvement of South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) could open up avenues to funding for a better quality of product and infrastructure.

Some costs will be associated with provision of signage for the Scottish Borders Tour; the extent of these would have to be assessed by the County and Local Authorities responsible for road signage, and hopefully phased within annual budgets.

The infrastructure itself required to support a motor caravan touring network is generally very modest compared with other tourism modes. It is also spread amongst a wide number of stakeholders, and private concerns on whose land Aires are provided, and would be largely self-funding by those entities.

Permitting and charging motor caravans to stay overnight in existing public car-parks involves little more than altering signs and charging mechanisms, and possibly removing barriers. In the case of designating a specific motor caravan area some rearrangement of white lines may be needed, again a modest expense. In some cases TROs may need to be amended, thus an administrative cost.

By simply permitting motor caravans to stay overnight in their car-parks pubs, sports and other clubs, and community associations can easily generate revenue at negligible cost. Some Community Councils, such as Arisaig in Scotland have successfully raised money for facilities through Crowdfunding, to which the motor caravan community has donated generously. Via CAMpRAs association with the Motor caravanners Club who hold an Exemption Certificate assistance can be given to private landowners interested in setting up a certified Aire.

The cost of installing motor caravan service points can more substantial. It is crucial that a basic network of these are set up at the outset to avoid the untoward environmental consequences as suffered by the north coast of Scotland in the wake of establishing the NC 500 Route. Since motor caravans are mobile and are limited in Aires to 24-28 hours stay, motor caravan service points need not be provided in all Aires, or indeed may be located outside Aires (Norway and New Zealand have them at garages). The Scottish Borders Tour is about 210 miles in length, plus 72 miles for an optional scenic southern loop for smaller vehicles; so a starting network of about 6-7 service points for the main circuit, plus at least one more for the optional loop, should suffice. More could be added later in between as needs demand. It is reasonable to suppose that the larger Aires, and more suitably located for utilities and maintenance, would be in the larger towns or villages, or at strategic intervals such as at Hawick, Newcastleton, Ettrick, Peebles, Galashiels / Melrose / Lauder, Selkirk, Eyemouth, Coldstream / Kelso. An excellent and much appreciated motorhome overnight parking provision has been made at Hawick, but lacks a service point. In the event that existing campsites are persuaded to participate by providing all-year short-stay overnight parking with paid access to a service facility for non-residents (as many in Europe do), then the immediate pressure for new installations may be reduced.

An indication of the scale of revenue that Aires may generate is indicated in the table below for different occupancy rates, sizes of Aire and levels of services provided.

	Occupancy	Basic parking £	Parking + services £	Parking+ services +EHU £
Per night		5	10	15
4 months	95%	570	1140	1710
4 months	75%	450	900	1350
4 months	50%	300	600	900
Per space		1320	2640	3960
5 space Aire		6600	13200	19800
10 space Aire		13200	26400	39600
20 space Aire		26400	52800	79200

Promotion

Promotional material aimed at UK and international motor caravans and others needs to be readily available on the 'Visit Scotland', Local and County Council, Forestry and Land Scotland websites. The costs of such material may reasonably be included within annual budgets of these organisations. Information on the locations of any new Aires or service facilities would almost immediately be spread through the social networks used by motor caravan owners in UK and Europe at no cost.



AN OVERVIEW OF THE ROUTE

Our overview of the route starts at Hawick in respect of the great welcome this town has already extended to motor caravan visitors, and as a significant junction with the Historic Borders Route. However, being circular the starting point could be anywhere, easily accessed from any of the major north-south arteries. This overview serves only to suggest opportunities for possible locations and providers of Aires and overnight parking. It highlights existing car-parks with capacity and suitable locations to include overnight parking; also clubs, pubs, hotels, community facilities, businesses, attractions and other places that may benefit from and have space to accommodate motor caravans overnight.

It also includes such campsites as appear to have space, capacity or location to be able to assign an area for a basic short-term overnight stop.

None of these venues have been contacted, and whether they have an interest or not in participating is entirely unknown at this stage and would be subject to more detailed enquiry in due course.

As yet the locations are all just possibilities, opportunities and examples. Plenty of others would probably emerge when more detailed study gets under way, and more so if the project becomes a reality.

To get a basic network up and running the establishment of Aires and motor caravan service points in the larger towns or villages with access to service points would be a good start.

HAWICK TO LAUDER

Abbreviation. o/n = overnight stay

A7	A7	LINK TO BORDERS HISTORIC TOUR AND A7	
		HAWICK	<p>Attractions: <i>Wilton Lodge Park, cafe and Museum. Borders Distillery Heritage Hub, Textile Towerhouse, Factory Tours, Chisholme House</i></p> <p>Location: Existing large car park with o/n parking: add motor caravan services?</p>
		Optional detour for smaller vehicles by Ettrick, Langholme, Newcastleton, Bonchester Bridge rejoins.	
	11 miles		
A68	A68	JEDBURGH	<p>Attractions: <i>Mary Queen of Scots Visitor Centre, Abbey, Castle Jail + museum</i></p> <p>Nearby: <i>Monteviot House, Harestones, Game Fare Smokery</i></p> <p>Location: Cannongate and Jedburgh car parks: o/n stay?</p> <p>Golf Club: o/n spaces, Land adjacent Bowling Club?</p> <p>C&CC campsite: Aire spaces and / or service point?</p>
	12 miles		
		KELSO	<p>Attractions: <i>Floors Castle & Gardens, Roxburgh Castle, Abbey, Galleries, Memorials Farmers Market</i></p> <p>Location: Mayfield car park: 3-4 o/n spaces? Garden Centre car park: o/n spaces?</p> <p>Rugby Club, Swimming Club: o/n spaces</p> <p>Borders Event Centre: camping facilities: Aire + use of services?</p>
	10 miles		
		COLDSTREAM	<p>Attractions: <i>Hirsel Estate, Golf, Museum, Parks, Galleries</i></p> <p>Location: Hill View car park: o/n spaces + service point?</p>
	14 miles		
		PAXTON	<p>Attractions: <i>Paxton House</i></p> <p>Location: Paxton House: o/n spaces or commercial Aire?</p>
	5 miles		
A1	A1	BERWICK UPON TWEED	<p>Attractions: <i>Town walls, Lowry trail, Barracks, Ramparts, Beach, Lighthouse Berwick Bridge, Golf, Beach walks.</i></p> <p>Location: Sandsall Road, Quay Walls, Parade car parks: a few o/n spaces in each</p> <p>Golf Club, Berwick RFC: o/n spaces?</p> <p>C&MC campsite: Aire spaces and / paid access to services?</p>
	9 miles		
		EYEMOUTH	<p>Attractions: <i>Harbour, monuments, Gunsgreen House, Leisure Centre, Museum Boat trips, Golf, Hippodrome.</i></p> <p>Location: Eyemouth Harbour Trust: existing paid o/n with wcs: add service point?</p> <p>Eyemouth holiday Park: 17 spaces for touring motorhomes</p> <p>Car park at south of town above harbour: o/n spaces, or add Aire?</p> <p>Golf club: designate 2 o/n spaces for visiting players?</p>
	3 miles		
		COLDINGHAM & ST. ABBS	<p>Attractions: <i>Priory, beach, walking, memorials, St. Abbs Head & Visitor Centre</i></p> <p>Location: Coldingham Bay and Scoutscroft Leisure Parks: limited touring capacity.</p> <p>Starney Bay Caravan Site: consider paid access to service point?</p> <p>St. Abbs Harbour: a few existing o/n spaces for small motor caravans</p>
	13 miles		
		DUNS	<p>Attractions: <i>Motorsport Museum, Galleries, Golf, Duns Castle and Nature Reserve Manderston House and Gardens</i></p> <p>Location: Golf Club / Rugby Club: provide o/n spaces?</p> <p>Castle Estate: provide a new Aire?</p>
	7 miles		
		GREENLAW	<p>Attractions: <i>South of town: Hume Castle, Mellerstein House and Gardens. Pub.</i></p> <p>Location: None suitable.</p>
	12 miles		
A68	A68	LAUDER	<p>Attractions: <i>Thirlstane Castle, Pubs, Resauarants, Walking.</i></p> <p>Location: Castle Caravan Park: include Aire open all year in campsite expansion?</p> <p>Lauderdale Hotel: o/n spaces.</p>

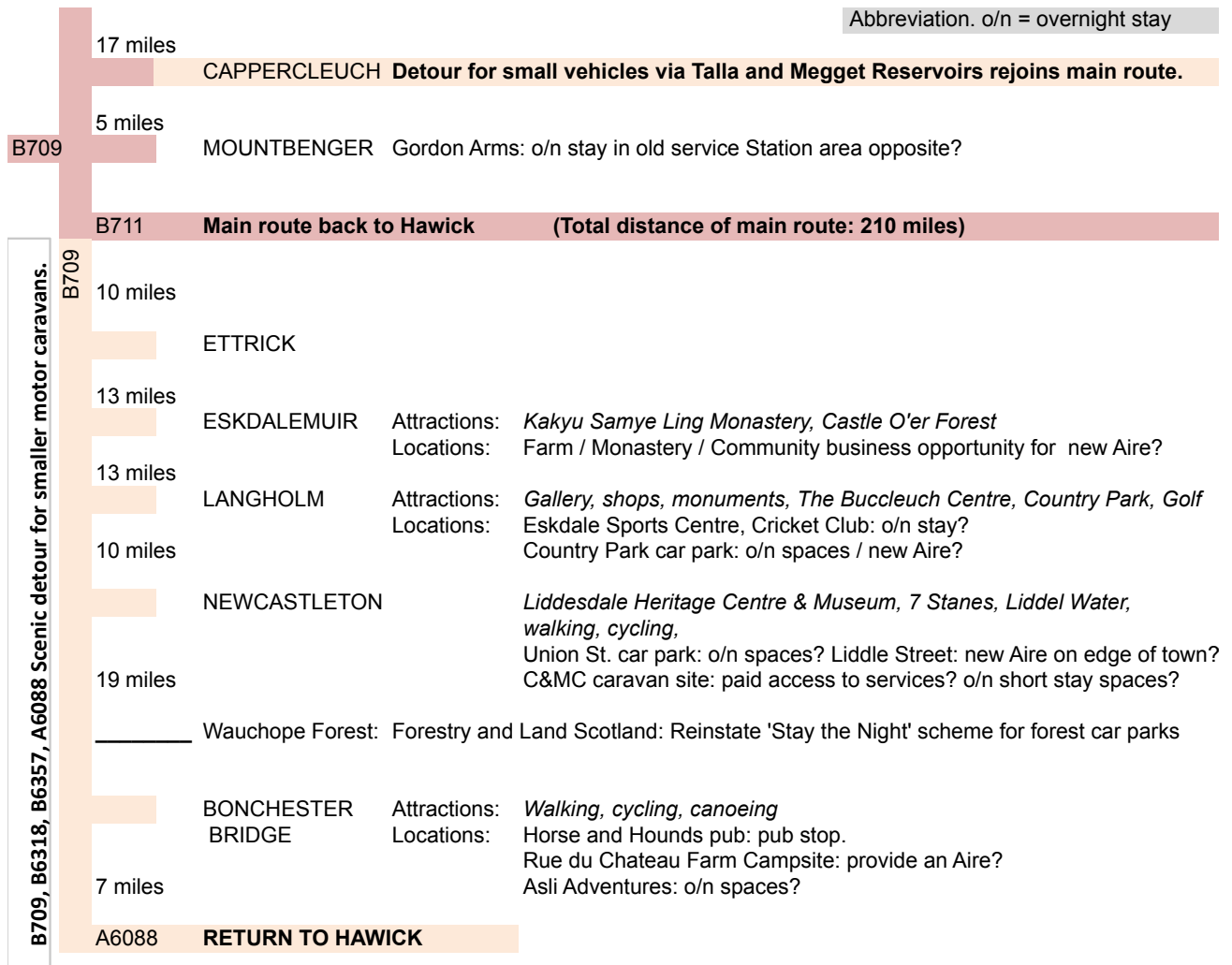
STOW TO MOFFAT

Abbreviation. o/n = overnight stay

5 miles			
	STOW	Attractions: <i>Church, War memorial</i> Location: No suitable locations	
7 miles			
A7	GALASHIELS & TWEEDBANK	Attractions: <i>Golf, museums, gardens, memorials, community woodland, walking Borders Railway, brewery tours. Abbotsford House</i> Location: Stirling Place, Stirling St., Hall St. car parks: designated o/n spaces? Heriot Watt car park: o/n spaces (outside term times)? Golf Club: a few o/n spaces for golfers.	
12 miles			
	MELROSE	Attractions: <i>Abbey, Pubs, restaurants, shops, museums, gardens</i> <i>Walking: Eildon Hills, St. Cuthberts Way</i> Location: C&MC club caravan site: o/n spaces, paid access to services? Abbey car park: o/n spaces? Cricket Club car park: o/n spaces Waverley Castle Hotel: o/n spaces or commercial Aire	
4 miles			
A68	NEWTOWN & ST. BOSWELLS	Attractions: <i>Dryburgh Abbey, Mertoun Gardens, Scots View, Wallace Statue</i> Location: Town car parks and Dryburgh Abbey car park: o/n spaces. Buccleuch Arms and Rugby Club: o/n spaces	
9 miles			
A7	SELKIRK	Attractions: <i>Bowhill House and Grounds, Lochcarron Visitor Centre, Haining Loch</i> <i>Heritage buildings, museums, parks, walking, golf</i> Location: RFC and Cricket Clubs car parks: o/n spaces? Town car park and Leisure centre car park: o/n spaces?	
15 miles			
	INNERLEITHEN	Attractions: Traquair House and Brewery, Printing Works, Alpacas, Museum. Forests, Walking, Riding, St. Ronans Well, 7 Stanes. Location: Hall St. and Victoria Park car parks: o/n spaces? Innerleithen Trails car park: o/n spaces? Tweedside Caravan Park: Aire, access to services?	
7 miles			
	PEEBLES	Attractions: <i>Glentress Forest, 7 Stanes, Distillery, Museum, Galleries,</i> <i>Walking, Railway Path, Fishing</i> Location: Tennis Club & Golf Clubs: o/n spaces for players Kingsmeadow, Niedpath and Leisure Centre car parks: o/n spaces Glentress MB Centre car park: o/n spaces for cyclists The Park Bar: pub stop	
6 miles			
	STOBO	Attractions: <i>Dawyck Botanic Gardens, Stobo Castle & Spa.</i> Location: o/n spaces in car parks at the above for visitors	
12 miles			
	TWEEDSMUIR	Detour for small motor caravans via Talla and Megget Reservoirs	
15 miles			
M74	MOFFAT	Attractions: Parks, fountain, nature walks, trails, fishing, cycling Location: Green Frog: existing o/n spaces & paid access to service point. C&CC Club campsite with paid access to service point: add Aire? Glebe car park and Woollen Mill car park: o/n spaces?	
	Grey Mares Tail	National Trust: Walk to waterfall. Car park: o/n spaces	
	St, Mary's Loch	Establish a basic rural Aire?	

CAPPERCLEUCH TO HAWICK

Abbreviation. o/n = overnight stay



Total distance of scenic detour: 72 miles

APPENDIX 1

Local Authorities with permitted motor caravan overnight parking

Local Authority	Location
ENGLAND	
Windsor and Maidenhead Borough Council	Alexandra Gardens car park, Windsor
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Little Roodee Car Park, Chester
Torrige District Council	Churchfield car park, Appledore
Torrige District Council	Riverbank long stay car park, Bideford
Torrige District Council	The Manor car park, Holsworthy
Torrige District Council	Sydney House car park, Torrington
Torrige District Council	The Main car park, Westward Ho!
East Devon District Council	Maer Road Long Stay Car Park, Exmouth
ditto	Queens Drive Echelon Long Stay Car Park
Portland Town Council	New Ground Car Park, New Ground, Portland
Thaxted Parish Council	Margaret Street Car Park
Winchester City Council	Worthy Lane Car and Coach Park
Canterbury City Council	New Dover Road Park & Ride car park
ditto	Neptune Car Park, Central Parade, Herne Bay
ditto	Reculver Country Park, Herne Bay
Blackpool City Council	Banks Street Car Park, Blackpool
ditto	Foxhall Village Car Park, Blackpool
ditto	Gynn Square Car Park, Blackpool
ditto	Lytham Road Car Park, Blackpool
ditto	Seasiders Car Park, Blackpool
ditto	South Car Park, Blackpool
Wyre Council	Central Car Park, Promenade Road, Fleetwood
Fylde District Council	Swimming Pool Car Park, South Promenade, Lytham St Annes
ditto	North Beach Car Park, Lytham St Annes
ditto	North Promenade car park, Lytham St Annes
Ryedale District Council	Cleveland Way Overflow Car Park, Helmsley
Craven District Council	Community Centre Car Park, Ingleton
ditto	Greenfoot Car Park, Settle
ditto	Coach Street Car Park, Skipton
Vale of White Horse District Council	Hales Meadow, Abingdon
West Suffolk Council	Ram Meadow Car Park Annexe, Bury St Edmunds
SCOTLAND	
Islay Community Council	Port Ellen Filling Station, Port Ellen
Hawick Community Council	Common Haugh Car Park, Hawick
Caerlaverock Community Association	Castle Corner, Caerlaverock
ditto	Glencaple Harbour, Glencaple
Fife Council	Lochore Meadows Country Park, Lochgelly
Arran Community Council	Blackwaterfoot
ditto	Whiting Bay
Perth and Kinross Council	Ferry Road Car Park, Pitlochry
WALES	
Ceredigion Council	New Promenade Car Park, Aberystwyth
ditto	Quay Street Car Park, Quay St, Cardigan
Powys Council	All Long Stay car parks

STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE MOTORCARAVAN TOURISM IN THE UK

2021



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Glossary of Terms

CAMpRA Survey, Sept 2020 Overview

Leadership Team

357,000

Number of UK Registered Motorhomes

£47

Average Daily Spend excluding fuel

£10

Happy to pay for park, sleep and CDP



Date: November 2020
Report Title: Motorcaravans & Potential Economic Benefits
Report by: Tracey Barkwill & Carolyn Mitchell

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report aims to highlight the tourism opportunity presented by an increase in motorcaravan ownership which has been growing steadily over the past number of years resulting in motorcaravans becoming increasingly prominent in our towns and villages and, in fact, has snowballed since the COVID-19 Pandemic and its consequent restriction hit our country. Left unmanaged, this increase could present problems, but positively promoting motorcaravan tourism could establish the UK as a premier



holiday destination for motorcaravan owners from across the UK and Europe. Motorcaravans have the ability to reach remote locations and attractions and therefore spread tourism revenue more evenly across the UK.

Brexit will undoubtedly have a major part to play in the British tourism industry, as British motorcaravan tourists will be prevented from spending extended periods abroad. This is likely to lead to a continued interest in UK motorcaravanning, and indeed – if proper facilities are put in place – it will also encourage foreign tourists to visit, thus bringing extra tourist income.

The investment needed to create a viable motorcaravan tourism product is modest and would be spread across a number of key stakeholders.

Ideally, strong leadership and coordination is required in order to own and drive a motorcaravan tourism strategy, however, there are many actions that can be taken at a local level to help to stimulate and manage demand.

2. INTRODUCTION

Recent years have seen an increase in the number of motorcaravan registrations which doubled from 2012 to 2017. The rate of new registrations is now around 14,000 – 15,000 per year. By June 2020, there were 357,000 registered motorcaravans in the UK, with 68,000 declared as SORN – possibly due to COVID19.¹ These increases are not unique to the UK and some core overseas markets such as Germany, France and the Netherlands have seen similar patterns.²

In 2017 there were over 1.5 million motorcaravans in use across Europe³.

In 2018 the UK attracted 38 million international visitors, who added £23 billion to the economy, making tourism one of the country's most important industries and the third largest service industry. Current forecasts predict the sector will deliver a 23% increase in inbound visitors by 2025.⁴ Domestic tourism is also set to increase by an estimated 3% per annum until 2025.⁵ In 2018, British residents took 119 million overnight trips in the UK, totalling 372 million nights away and spending £24 billion.⁶

It is commonly said that motorcaravan owners bring little economic benefit to the area as they fill up with food at supermarkets before visiting and spend little while here. While this may be true of some, there is strong anecdotal evidence that this is not the case with many others. 2019 figures show that a typical visitor to Highland will only spend 33% of their holiday spend on accommodation with the remaining 67% being on things like food and drink, attractions and shopping – all things that motorcaravan owners will also do even where they don't stay on commercial campsites. With hired motorcaravans one local hire company reports vehicles commonly being returned without the on-board cooker being used suggesting these visitors frequently eat out in cafes, pubs or restaurants.⁷

This document has been produced to help inform a tourism strategy to support motorcaravan tourism across the UK. It is our belief that the UK is well placed to become a first-class destination for motorcaravan owners from across the UK, Ireland and Europe.

1 DVLA, June 2020

2 Highlands Council Tourism Committee Oct 2020

3 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/795691/motor-caravans-in-europe-number-in-use-by-country/>

4 GB Tourism Survey 2018

5 Oxford Economics. 2018 to 2025

6 GB Tourism Survey 2018 (Overview)

7 Highland Tourism Committee Oct 2020

3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

While a lot of focus has (rightly) gone into increasing and improving the hotel stock in the UK and developing first class visitor attractions and bringing in top class events, we believe that the motorcaravan tourism sector of the market has gone largely unnoticed. We therefore believe that there is tremendous scope to develop the UK as a world leading destination for motorcaravan tourism.

The UK government's 'Tourism-sector-deal' (June 2019)⁸ highlights the need to:

- increase domestic tourism/ increase tourism from abroad
- increase opportunities for tourism outside of the peak 3 months
- become the most accessible tourism destination in Europe by 2025 (*by increasing numbers of disabled tourists from abroad by 33%*)
- diversify in order to sustain rural and coastal businesses and protect our landscape

- develop a better understanding of visitors' preferences for location, activities and products



- gather better data about the people choosing not to holiday in the UK.”
- make international travellers' trips to the UK easy, ... by providing a positive and welcoming experience of the UK.

4. THE COVID PANDEMIC AND HOW MOTORCARAVAN HOLIDAYS ARE PART OF THE POST-COVID ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The COVID-19 pandemic has driven sales and rentals of motorcaravans and hugely inflated the number of British, 'Staycationers'. It is a matter of urgency that we harness this opportunity before it is lost. This surge in motorcaravan tourism has caused huge numbers of potential tourists to question the lack of facilities provided, specifically, for motorcaravanners and the misunderstanding by public bodies and the

public in general about the needs of motorcaravan owners and the positive benefits that they can bring to an area. For many older and more vulnerable people, their motorhome is the only safe and isolated means of transport and accommodation available, especially those who now don't want to use public transport or hotel accommodation.



5. HOW CAN MOTORCARAVAN TOURISM CONTRIBUTE TO ACHIEVING THESE GOALS?

The provision of motorcaravan facilities could contribute to the solution.

5.1 Increasing revenue

“In 2018... 38 million international visitors... added £23 billion to the economy. Current forecasts predict a 23% increase in inbound visitors by 2025. Domestic tourism predicted to increase by an estimated 3% per annum until 2025. In 2018, British residents took 119 million overnight trips in the UK, totalling 372 million nights away and spending £24 billion”⁹

Response

5.1.1 A recent survey of motorcaravan owners in the UK¹⁰ shows the following:

- Where they are allowed to stay overnight, they spend money on meals, drinks and local attractions, together with retail spend, parking fees and fuel.
- The total possible available spend from UK motorcaravan owners is in excess of £800m
- There are 357,000¹¹ registered motorcaravans in the UK. This includes 68,000 registered motorcaravans which are currently SORNed, possibly as a result of Covid19.
- There are many times more than that in Europe who want to tour the UK. At the moment, they are often put off by the fact that many of the sites belong to the big clubs, who require an annual membership.
- The survey also shows that UK motorcaravan owners are willing to pay for overnight parking (no facilities), in addition to regular daytime charges. They are prepared to pay more where there is access to basic services such as fresh water and waste disposal. (98% of survey participants indicated that they would pay to use these services.)

5.1.2 Permitted Parking on an existing car park, would involve only minor changes to:

- existing Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)
- display boards and signage
- collection of fees
- possible re-marking of some parking bays

⁹ ONS:Travel Trends 2018) /(Visit Britain:GB TourismSurvey:overview.2018

¹⁰ CAMpRA Survey, Sept 2020

¹¹ DVLA, June 2020

5.1.3 Additional facilities could be easily and economically supplied where the facility already has the infrastructure to add a tap and black waste (toilet cassette) disposal point.

5.1.4 Bins or signs indicating recycling points.

5.2 Increase winter tourism

The ONS Statistics: Travel Trends 2018 report says tourism is *“hampered by overreliance on the July-September peak season. 38% of holidays by inbound visitors take place in these 3 months. The government will create up to 5 new Tourism Zones ...focusing on those areas looking to boost off-season visits.”*¹²

38% of inbound holiday visits are made in the 3 months between July and September



Response

82% of motorcaravan tourists travel all year round with many preferring the quieter winter months and midweek days. On average, they tour for 63 days per year and 63% choose midweek travel rather than weekend travel.¹³ It is imperative that this market is harnessed with a sense of urgency as the effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic has meant many of these customers have rediscovered the beauty of the UK. Without accessible facilities, there is a danger that they will return to Europe once the pandemic is over. It is therefore essential that we provide the infrastructure to encourage them to stay and spend in the UK.

¹² ONS Travel Trends 2018

¹³ CAMpRA Survey Sept 2020

5.3 Accessibility for disabled tourists

The report says the UK should aim to *"become the most accessible tourism destination in Europe by 2025, increasing the number of international visitors with disabilities by 33%make the UK the most accessible destination in Europe."*

*"1 in 5 people in the UK has an impairment and those with health conditions, and their travelling companions, are estimated to spend £12 billion on trips in England each year"*¹⁴

Through the Future of Mobility and Ageing Society Grand Challenges, the Government want to encourage those with health conditions, and their travelling companions. They are estimated to spend £12 billion on trips in England each year.

Although this is a significant spend, there are a number of opportunities to grow this figure further. Half a million British adults cited 'lack of accessibility provision' as the reason they did not take a domestic trip in the last 12 months.¹⁵

0.6 million inbound visitors in 2018 had a disability¹⁶

Response

90% of motorcaravan owners fall into the age group 40+. Although there is no known data for the proportion of motorcaravan owners with disabilities, the likelihood is that the figure would be relatively high and mirrored across Europe. For users with a physical disability, the motorcaravan increases their mobility by allowing them to park up closer to towns and villages. For others, with hidden disabilities they are the answer to many problems. For example, having a toilet and shower on board (so always at hand) can help and being able to stay inside one's own unit for touring allows a person with a mental health disability such as anxiety or PTSD to feel safe and secure (with a place to escape to when needed) whilst still being able to enjoy the coast or countryside.

5.4 Sustaining rural and coastal communities and their businesses by diversifying.

35% of Brits holiday at an English seaside destination in 2017 – totalling 16.7 million holidays. One-in-ten inbound visitors to the UK visit the coast or beaches (3.8 million)

"In rural areas diversification into tourism, by farmers, has helped keep their businesses sustainable and protected our landscape. In many coastal areas tourism is the lead employer and source of economic growth."

Covering nearly 25% of England, England's National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are pivotal to our tourism offer by helping to disperse tourism across the country and attract international visitors.

Response

This can be attained easily and economically as farmers and pubs/restaurants etc can use existing hardstanding areas and can be provided with certification and monitoring by one of the motorcaravan

¹⁴ ONS International Passenger Survey 2017

¹⁵ VisitBritain: Accessibility - Non-Participation. 2018

¹⁶ Office for National Statistics: Travel Trends 2018

organisations for up to 5 motorcaravans. They usually already have the required infrastructure to place a small standpipe for freshwater and install a cassette toilet disposal point. A number of farms, pubs, restaurants and similar businesses have already taken advantage of this.

Parish/Community councils, religious organisations and local community groups can benefit in the same way. If parking is not available, access to water and waste disposal would provide a revenue stream and support the our aims of promoting responsible and environmentally friendly disposal of waste.

Local Authority overnight motorcaravan parking areas can be very easily created and managed and can raise parking revenue from currently underused car parks during the night, on weekdays and during the winter period, with an inexpensive change to local TROs and simple changes to signage and charges.

A number of rural and coastal Local Authorities who are already taking advantage of this idea and have evidence of income from parking, reduction in anti-social behaviour (the presence of motorcaravans overnight has been shown to act as a deterrent) and increased income for small businesses in their areas.

The demographic of motorcaravan tourists is mainly retirees. They are environmentally aware and follow the “Leave no Trace” code of conduct. There are groups of motorcaravan owners who actively seek to clear other people’s litter away from areas they have parked up in, often leaving these areas cleaner than when they arrived. A considerable number of motorcaravanners carry litter picking equipment.¹⁷

Allowing overnight parking and sleeping in fully self-contained motorcaravans (with no camping behaviour allowed, i.e. no outside equipment like awnings, BBQ, tables, water containers, gas bottles) as in the rest of Europe, would make it much easier for communities and landowners to provide overnight stops. Motorcaravans need to be governed by different regulations from caravans.



5.5 Understanding why people are choosing not to holiday in the UK

The Tourism Sector Deal Policy Paper, June 2019,¹⁸ states that:

“Independent Tourism Data Hub.....will also enable the sector for the first time to gather better data about the people choosing not to holiday in the UK.”

“The ambition behind Tourism Zones is that they are focused on addressing local market failures initiatives such as enhancing tourism product, extending the tourism season”

“The government wants to make international travellers’ trips to the UK as easy as possible and ensure that they have a positive and welcoming experience of the UK.”

Response

The paper, through its attempts to gather a large enough sample to maximise reliability, has missed an opportunity to increase validity. It included a survey, but it was flawed in that it only asked those people who have recently taken UK breaks. In 2019, it might have been difficult to find many respondents in the motorcaravan category as many would have been in Europe and these are the potential customers the Tourist Board needs to reach. COVID-19 restrictions have created a monumental surge in the number of existing motorcaravan owners holidaying in the UK; the number of new motorcaravan owners; and the number of people hiring motorcaravans to use in the UK.

A substantial number of holidaymakers who generally choose not to tour the UK are motorcaravan owners, from both the UK and Europe. They are put off by:

- The lack of facilities: the majority of towns and villages throughout Europe have an “Aire” (known as Stellplatz in Germany and Sostas in Italy). These are overnight parking places for motorcaravans, many of which have Service Points for replenishing fresh water supplies and disposing of waste;
- Lack of understanding of motorcaravanners needs - i.e. they are categorised along with touring caravanners, yet their needs are very different;
- The cost of UK campsites which is much higher on average than in other European countries;
- The location of UK campsites – these are mostly some distance from town centres and other attractions, thus requiring the need for a car to tour around the area.



Modern self-contained motorcaravan with full onboard facilities. Designed to tour and be used away from a campsite for 3 to 4 days

Confusion over the law regarding sleeping in a self-contained vehicle is blocking progress in the UK. In the rest of Europe, it is classed as ‘parking’ but, in the UK, it is often referred to as ‘camping’. The antiquated Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960 is used as a reference. This Act was introduced many years before the modern motorcaravan was developed so makes no provision for the nomadic nature of motorcaravans or the fact that these self-contained vehicles can be parked for 3-4 days without requiring access to water/waste facilities. Motorcaravanners neither need nor want the full facilities of a campsite each night.

¹⁸ Tourism Sector Deal Policy Paper, June 2019

The Tourism Deal aims to pilot five 'Tourism Zones' and has outlined that 'winning strategies' are "likely to be those that address market failures and barriers to productivity", including:

- options for extending the tourism season outside of the summer months
- proposals for investing in the skills of the local workforce
- options for making the visitor economy more accessible
- investment opportunities to enhance and innovate the visitor experience, including options for 'small-scale' infrastructure developments



1960 motorcaravan used on campsites, and at festivals. No onboard facilities.

Response

Motorhome tourism can greatly assist all of these areas. For example, extending the tourism season outside the summer months is an ideal target for motorcaravans as is making the visitor economy more accessible and the development of small Aire facilities falls into the 'small-scale' infrastructure development category. The Government/tourist organisations should therefore attempt to integrate motorcaravan facilities into these five Tourism Zones as a pilot for their sustainability. The Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960 needs to be amended to include the classification of motorcaravans as a separate entity from caravans. Planning restrictions need to be eased to enable and encourage the setting up of Aires.

6. CURRENT SITUATION

A number of Councils now allow overnight parking for motorcaravans and provide dedicated spaces proportional to the size of the car park; some have developed full Aires. However, there is no consistent approach and, whilst some councils have developed motorcaravan strategies, few have identified motorcaravan tourism as a potential area for development.

Aires have been created in the UK including: Donaghadee (NI), Canterbury Park and Ride, Helmsley, Skipton, Hawick, Craven District Council, Lochore Country Park (Fife), Forestry Commission Scotland, Ardglass Harbour, to name but a few.

We know from surveying the members of a number of motorcaravan Facebook groups that these facilities are well used and that motorcaravan owners spend considerable amounts of money in the respective towns. A common comment made by those who use the Aire in Donaghadee is that they booked at least one if not two restaurants in the town if staying two nights. Clearly this is revenue that the town would not have if the Aire did not exist.

6.1 England

England has no cohesive or identifiable approach to motorcaravan tourism. Many Councils have, to date, failed to grasp the potential of motorcaravan visitors, but there are some signs that a growing number of Councils are starting to take notice.

Exmouth Town Council are in the process of providing dedicated motorcaravan facilities in order to manage the demand and in Canterbury, the local Council have provided motorcaravan facilities in the park and ride car park on the outskirts of the town. The bus service into town is popular with motorcaravanners and the parking facilities are positioned in a quiet corner of the site.

Craven District Council has dedicated motorcaravan parking in three of its car parks – Skipton, Settle and Ingleton. Skipton and Settle

have a maximum stay of three nights, but in Ingleton, up to seven nights are allowed. There are no facilities, and the cost to park is £5 per night, plus the usual day time charges. Motorcaravan parking is also available in Helmsley and the North Yorkshire Moors National Park are currently running trials, allowing motorcaravans to park overnight at Sutton Bank, Chop Gate and Thornton Le Dale.

Northumbrian Water currently permits overnight parking at three of its sites in the Kielder Forest - Tower Knowe and Kielder Castle Visitor Centres and Elf Kirk View Point. In addition, they permit overnight motorcaravan parking at other reservoirs such as Derwent and Fontburn.

In addition, United Utilities allow overnight parking at some of their reservoirs, including Thirlmere and Haweswater in the Lake District.

6.2 Scotland

Scotland without doubt, has the best infrastructure in the UK for motorcaravan tourism. While the number of visitors this year on the NC500, in the Highlands north of Inverness, has caused some problems, local communities along the route are recognising the need to address these problems and are installing motorcaravan service points.

Highland Council is asking landowners such as farmers with a spare field or someone with an extra-large garden to provide simple short stay aire type facilities, in order to bring economic benefit to local businesses.

Other areas under pressure have instigated bookable motorcaravan parking such as the Island of Tiree and the Trossachs Forest Park.

There are other routes being developed along the lines of the NC500. The North East 250 covers the area to the East of Inverness. Heart 200 covers the centre of the country and the South West Coastal 300 covers Dumfries and Galloway. All of these routes attract Motorcaravanners year-round.

Facilities such as at Caerlaverock and the Road to the Isles have been provided by local landowners and community groups, with encouragement from local and central Government. Fife Council have provided an excellent aire at Lochore Country Park near Lochgelly. Loch Lomond has also installed motorcaravan facilities.

The law in Scotland allows wild camping with a tent in wilderness areas on a leave no trace basis. However, this law does not apply to motorcaravans who are generally tolerated if they park in small numbers without causing obstructions.

6.3 Wales

The situation in Wales is mixed.

Powys see the benefits and allow overnight parking in many of its car parks for one night in seven. Carmarthenshire and Monmouthshire are exploring options with a lottery grant already allocated for a facility at Pendine. Ceredigion also trialled some overnighing in a few places over the summer.

However, the Welsh National Parks are negative in their attitude towards motorcaravans, with height barriers on car parks; fines for motorcaravans parking overnight; they simply direct motorcaravans to established camp sites. When contacted, Visit Wales pushed the issue away suggesting it was Welsh Local Government Association's responsibility. Natural Resources Wales are also run by the Welsh Government and have no funding capacity to take on additional projects.

6.4 Northern Ireland

The situation in Northern Ireland is similar to that in England, with many Local Authority car parks having height barriers. There are, however, aires in Donaghadee, Broughshane, Enniskillen, Portglenone and Portrush. Ards and North Down Council are currently undergoing a process of consultation, with a recommendation that motorhome parking and facilities be provided at eight further sites for between 3-5

motorcaravans, together with an extension of the facilities at Donaghadee.¹⁹ The consultation period finishes in December 2020. The laws governing the provision of campsites in Northern Ireland are *The Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 1963* and *The Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 2011*. As with the English Act, motorcaravans are not distinguished from caravans.

6.5 The UK as a whole

The pressure group, 'The Campaign For Real Aires' (www.campra.org.uk) was set up early in 2020 specifically to challenge the lack of progress on developing infrastructure for motorcaravans across the UK (14k+ members correct to Oct 2020).

The law in England & Wales regarding the overnight PARKING of motorcaravans is governed by Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960 (60 years out of date!!) Its rules were written to cover touring caravans as motorcaravans were very rare at that time. The needs of holidaymakers towing caravans are completely different to those of touring in motorcaravans and so the law needs to be changed to accommodate this.

Touring (and static) caravans are made from different materials to motorcaravans and comply with different standards.



¹⁹ <https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/resident/car->

7. PLANNING TO CREATE AN AIRE/MOTORCARAVAN PARK

Compared with basic certified campsites taking typically 2-3 acres (8100-12000 m²) or more, an Aire for five motorcaravans, including services, may only need 350-550 square meters of space (depending whether it is stand-alone or integrated into existing carpark circulation space), or even less than 300m² if longer vans can overhang a verge behind shorter bays. Consequently, Aires can occupy smaller sites, closer to urban areas and villages, can be accommodated in repurposed parking areas, and consume less agricultural land in rural areas. They can thereby be created more quickly and inexpensively as a means of increasing overall capacity.

There is currently no legislation which governs the setting up of an Aire in the UK. There are four main points of reference, but none of these is ideal as they make no distinction between tent/touring caravans who “camp” and motorcaravans, who “park”.

7.1 The DCLG Guide (Department for Communities & Local Government) – regarding Campsite Licences.

You don't need a licence to run a campsite if:

- the site is five or more acres and there are five or fewer tents there for 28 days or less per year;
- you're a member of an organisation like the Scouts and have an exemption certificate;²⁰
- your site is approved by an organisation with a **camping** exemption certificate

7.2 The Confederation of Fire Protection Associations in Europe (CFPAE) –which provides guidance on best practice for fire safety (which the UK signed up to) describe

a motorcaravan as 'A self-propelled vehicle used for overnight and dwelling purposes' and states:

"The free distance between each camping unit should be 3m preferably 4m".

"Where the guidelines and national requirements conflict, national requirements must apply."²¹

At present, no English/British guidance is available specifically for separation distances for motorhomes therefore it is an appropriate standard to be applied.

7.3 **The Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960** is often quoted as governing the setting up of campsites. However, amendments to the Model Standards for Touring Caravan Sites in 1983 clarify that the original Model Standards were not intended to apply to sites for touring caravans, but should be applied with due regard to the particular circumstances of each case, including the kind of holidays which the site is designed to offer.²²

7.4 **Local Authorities** have control over decisions regarding their own car parks and can amend TROs accordingly as, in fact, many have already done.

²⁰ www.gov.uk/guidance/camping-and-caravanning-site-exemption-certificates

²¹ (Fire safety report Westbeach Car Park- Adrian Brown MBA, FIFireE, ACIEA)

²² The Campsites & Control of Development Act 1960, Model Standards Circular 23/83 (Dept of Environment)

8. WIDER EU

The leading countries are probably France and Germany closely followed by Spain and Italy. However, all mainland EU countries have significant infrastructure to support motorcaravans and as a result motorcaravan tourism is significantly more developed on mainland Europe and is viewed as a year-round activity.

France is renowned for its welcoming approach to motorcaravans, there are thousands of Aires which are dedicated to motorcaravan use. In fact, nearly every village has one as they are viewed as a way to attract motorcaravans and therefore additional revenue into a town. Aires allow local councils to control motorcaravan parking. The council can better manage where motorcaravans can (and cannot) go, while the motorcaravan owners know that they will be accommodated in a suitable and legal parking area. The local residents know that the number of motorcaravans are being managed and that valuable revenue is being brought into the area supporting and sustaining the local economy.

French Aires are often free to use with a small charge for fresh water or Waste Disposal Point if such services are provided. Others have a small overnight charge.

A further French scheme is called France Passion. This is a scheme where farmers, wine growers, cider makers, cheese makers, artisans etc allow motorcaravan owners to stay overnight on their property free of charge. In exchange, the motorcaravan user may buy some local produce.

A relatively new idea in France (Camping-Car Parks²³) adds a number of new features to the basic Aire concept. Users are issued with a smart card which they load with money. All Camping-Car Park Aires have barriers which work in conjunction with the smart card. Several of the Camping-Car Park sites were former council run facilities that have been outsourced

to Camping-Car Park. As a result, this organisation has considerable experience at working with local government organisations to plan and develop motorcaravan specific facilities²⁴. In an interesting development Camping-Car Park have announced that they are hoping to extend their model into the UK and Ireland. A similar company is due to be launched in the UK in 2021.

Closer to home, the Republic of Ireland does not currently have a formal strategy for motorcaravan tourism. However, in 2014 Fáilte Ireland launched the Wild Atlantic Way²⁵ which includes 2,500km of coastline spanning the Inishowen Peninsula in Donegal to Kinsale in County Cork.

Since its introduction, it has become a major magnet for motorcaravan tourists and the motorcaravan social media sites are full of visitors seeking advice about places to visit and stay.

Several councils are becoming increasingly aware of the potential of motorcaravan tourism. For example, Waterford council are making provision for motorcaravans with plans for further facilities. Donegal Council have provided several motorcaravan stopover facilities. One of the best is the car park at the Tourist office in Buncrana; the facility is free to use, provides electric hook up (EHU) via a token and fresh water. Cork County Council have provided fully serviced Aires at Bantry and at Cobh, just outside Cork.

Waterways Ireland allow motorcaravans to stop over at their marinas and these are well used by the motorcaravan community. A good example of this is the marina at Portumna in the Republic of Ireland which has been shortlisted to win an excellence award. These facilities can be accessed via the purchase of a smart card from local shops. Cost is €6 for 10 units; a shower takes 2 units.

²³ www.campingcarpark.com/en/parking-areas/

²⁴ www.pro.campingcarpark.com/

²⁵ www.ireland.com/en-gb/articles/wild-atlantic-way/

9. GROWTH OF MOTORCARAVAN TOURISM & THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

Tourism contributes £106 billion to the British economy & GDP and supports 2.6 million jobs. By 2025 the UK tourism industry will be worth over £257 billion, around 10% of the UK GDP. The industry supports 3.8 million jobs and has a huge impact on the UK economy. Tourism is the fastest growing industry in Britain. It is expected to expand by 3.8% a year up until 2025, accounting for 10% of all jobs.²⁶

Our increased dependency on tourism as a means to build and sustain employment should encourage us to look at all types of tourism and to seek out and exploit opportunities. There were 40.9 million visits to the UK in 2019; those inbound visitors spent £24.8 Billion, up on inbound spending in 2018, setting a new record for inbound spending.²⁷

In 2019, British residents took 99.1m overnight trips in England, totalling 290m nights away from home and expenditure of £19.4bn, with an average trip length of three nights. The number of domestic trips to England was +2% higher than in 2018. 4.64m holiday trips were taken in England in 2019.

Target markets are:

- **Domestic**
As with any tourism product the domestic market is important but finite. However, the domestic market is vitally important as local motorcaravan owners can test the product, suggest routes and locations and communicate to a wider audience via connections on services such as social media. This has become especially noticeable since the COVID-19 pandemic has arisen.
- **European**
With twelve ferry ports having direct links to Europe, the UK is well placed to attract European visitors. Weak Sterling could well play a role but, most importantly, it is necessary to have a sound product and good marketing.



²⁶ UK Tourism Statistics 2020

²⁷ www.visitbritain.org/gb-tourism-survey-2019-overview

10. CARAVAN / TENT 'CAMPING' vs MOTORCARAVAN 'PARKING'

Many planners view tents, caravans and motorhomes as the same and are therefore of the opinion that campsites are the only solution. Much of this thinking undoubtedly stems from the outdated caravan act. However, the reality is much more nuanced and complicated. A traditional campsite, as a minimum will have a toilet and shower block. This in itself, is an expensive outlay which involves careful planning. Costs increase as other 'features' are possibly added – electric hook-up, a shop, a playpark for the kids, night-time entertainment. All of these features add cost and therefore increases the amount that has to be charged for the campsite owner to make a return on their investment.

However, many motorcaravanners do not want or need these kinds of facilities. As has already been mentioned in this report modern motorcaravans are 'self-contained' and can go several days before they need access to services such as fresh water and waste water disposal. While many motorcaravanners will use campsites, many others will seek out quiet or remote locations while others will look for locations in towns and villages close to pubs and restaurants. In reality, most motorcaravanners will use a combination of stopover types.

Many campsites prefer customers to book into their sites for a minimum of 7 days. This goes against the ethos of many motorcaravanners who tend to move on to a new location after 24 or 48 hours. The 7-day period is more suited to tents and caravan owners as the 'set up' process is more time consuming and it's therefore more hassle to move locations on a frequent basis. This is one of the key differences between motorcaravans and other types of 'camping'.

In addition, most campsites are seasonal and open between Easter and September. However, many motorcaravan owners want to use their vehicle all year round. This is supported by statistics from DVLA which shows that from 2012 to 2016, there has been a 32% increase in the number of motorcaravans licenced during the winter months.

As has been suggested in this report the solution is to bolster the campsite offering with a network of Aires. Such Aires would be dedicated to motorcaravans and comprise of either no services (other than legal parking) or at best basic services such as access to fresh water, and waste water disposal.



The following diagram gives a comparison between “camping” (tent/caravan) and “parking” (motorcaravan):

	CAMPING (TENT OR CARAVAN)	PARKING (MOTORCARAVANS/ CAMPERVANS)
Where	Campsites a few miles out of town	In towns & villages – preferably within walking distance of local shops, restaurants & services.
When	April- October High season/weekends	All year round Low season/midweek breaks (63%)
How	Use vehicle to get to site and then to travel around	Only vehicle – therefore walk/cycle
Length of stay	Long weekends/ 7-14 day holidays	24-48 hours
Facilities required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● toilets ● showers ● electric hook ups ● on site entertainment ● pitches big enough to ‘set up camp’ ● site shop ● play park ● dog walking area ● bar ● restaurant/café ● swimming pool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fresh water tap ● Waste disposal points ● Rubbish disposal point (not essential)
Interests	Setting up a ‘pitch’ and enjoying the facilities the site has to offer with occasional trips into the local area.	Dining out at local restaurants and cafes; exploring town centres and local attractions on foot or by cycle
Dining habits	Take food to cook, buy from campsite shop, occasional takeaways or visits to cafes or restaurants, BBQs	Take a small amount of basic food for trip then buy from local businesses or eat out at cafes/restaurants/pubs or buy takeaways to eat in motorcaravan.

NB: These descriptions are ‘typical’ e.g. some motorcaravanners do use campsites and some campers & caravanners will not require all of the facilities a campsite provides.²⁸

11. OPPORTUNITIES & ACTIONS

A motorcaravan tourism initiative is likely to be a very low-cost option. The initiative would, in the main, involve repurposing assets that already exist to create motorcaravan friendly facilities. The assets are owned by a wide variety of stakeholders so costs (as well as benefits) would be well distributed and not fall to any one organisation.

The following paragraphs set out some of the opportunities and actions that are required.



11.1 Review By-laws to permit overnight “parking”

Caravans and tents mainly use camp sites. They require time to set up, for example to pitch a tent or to unhitch a caravan. They put up awnings, set out chairs and tables – so it is clear that the owner is ‘camping’.

Motorcaravans are generally just looking for somewhere to park up and sleep overnight, for 24-48 hours, not somewhere to camp. There is no camping behaviour – ie no awnings, tables, chairs etc outside the motorcaravan.

Many motorcaravanners will fully exploit campsites when they are required, but prefer to look for alternative locations and venues close to town and village centres so that they can avail of services such as pubs, supermarkets and restaurants.

Despite their size, motorcaravans are highly mobile. They can therefore reach interesting nooks and crannies within our towns and countryside that mainstream tourists would rarely visit. Like most other visitors to the UK, motorcaravan tourists are likely to want to visit the premier sites. However, a key focus of a motorcaravan tourism initiative should be to help to develop other areas of the UK and therefore spread tourism revenue more equally around the country. If the infrastructure is available, there is no reason why motorcaravan tourists cannot be signposted to other lesser well-known towns and attractions – in fact this is likely to be a major attraction for motorcaravanners who, as their profile suggests, are keen to seek out freedom and something different. As a result, some pressure may be taken off our premier locations and tourist revenue distributed across a wider group of locations and attractions. It is therefore essential that Councils and the associated Government departments review bylaws to permit overnight ‘parking’ (including ‘sleeping’).

11.2 Approved Motorcaravan parking and stopover locations

The primary requirement for motorcaravan users is a range of safe and legal motorcaravan stopover locations. At present motorcaravan owners are excluded from too many sites due to height barriers and restrictive signage which combines to make motorcaravanners feel unwelcome. By using car parks which are empty overnight, motorcaravanners are happy to spend in the local businesses.

It is key to any successful motorcaravan tourism strategy that a wide range of stopover locations should be made available.

There will always be a need for formal campsites catering for the full range of camping visitors. The UK has some excellent sites in excellent locations and they all have a role to play in the development of motorcaravan tourism. The main issues relating to campsites is often that they are

mostly centred around caravans and therefore located in places that require a car to reach local attractions. In addition, many campsites are only open for the summer months, or only offer grass pitches, which does not suit the year-round travel potential of motorcaravan owners.

In addition to campsites, these locations should include:

11.2.1 Aire de Service

The name Aires comes from the French 'Aire de Service Camping Car', which is their term for motorcaravan stopovers. UK and Irish motorcaravanners normally refer to them as 'Aires'.

Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Italy and many other European countries also have their own equivalent of Aires.

An Aire de Service normally includes facilities for motorcaravans to access fresh water, empty grey and black waste and sometimes provide electric hook up (EHU).

A number of Aire de Service facilities have been introduced by Local Councils and these have been well received by the motorcaravan community. The Aire de Service facilities that have been introduced in the UK use European Style equipment to provide water and waste disposal. However, such facilities can be expensive to provide and can be difficult to maintain if they break down or are vandalised. We comment further on this in the next paragraphs.

11.2.2 Basic Car Park Facilities

Because many motorcaravans can go several days between needing to empty and refill waste and fresh tanks, not every Aire needs to provide access to services. Quite often a quiet corner of an existing car park is all that is needed. Many car parks close to town centres are rarely full, especially overnight. Many have spaces reserved for coaches. Simply amending these spaces to say 'Coaches & Motorcaravans' along with some signage and information about

maximum length of permissible stay would be all that is needed to create a basic Aire.

The web site all-the-aires.com²⁹ provides some good advice for Councils who are contemplating establishing Aires. They counsel against providing expensive European style service facilities and instead recommend the provision of simple facilities that can be easily installed, maintained and repaired, such as a drive over drain for grey waste, a removable manhole drain for black waste and a simple water tap for fresh water.



11.5 Forestry Campsites

11.5.1 Scotland

Forestry and Land Scotland have trialled a scheme in the summer of 2020.³⁰ This allowed self-contained vans to stay free for one night in listed forestry carparks. The scheme is being monitored with a view to introducing a £5 per night charge in 2021. Some car parks, such as Clatteringshaw, have facilities but most are basic parking only.

11.5.2 Northern Ireland

The Forest Service also offers a 'Touring in the Trees' scheme for caravans and motorcaravans. For an annual fee, subscribers to this scheme are given a key to a number of additional forestry sites which have very basic facilities which usually consists of a chemical disposal point and a fresh water tap. This type of scheme is ideal for motorcaravans, but passing tourists are unlikely to avail of the scheme as it requires an annual membership.

²⁹ www.vicarious-shop.com/blogs/vicarious-view/all-the-aires-guidebooks-by-vicarious-media

³⁰ www.forestryandland.scot.gov/staythenight

However, forestry sites have huge potential for helping to drive motorcaravan tourism and opening our countries' natural assets for visiting motorcaravanners and more effort should be made to develop and market these locations to motorcaravan visitors.

11.6 Pubs, Restaurants and Hotel car parks

This is an area which is ripe for considerable expansion. There are a significant number of pubs and restaurants in England that allow motorcaravans to park overnight in their car parks for a nominal fee of £5 or £10 which is normally waived if the motorcaravan owner has a few drinks or a meal in the bar. Considerably more could be done to encourage and advertise this type of stop over.

11.7 Farms

Earlier in the report we outlined the France Passion scheme where farmers and growers allow motorcaravans to stay over on their land free of charge. Produce is offered for sale, but there is no compulsion to buy. There is a similar scheme in the UK called Brit Stops³¹ and a number of the UK sites are already signed up to this service. However, many more could join which would greatly enhance to number available stop overs. The National Farmers Union (NFU) may well have a key role to play in promoting this approach to their members.

11.8 Fields

A farmer who owns a well-drained, flat field, preferably with a view, has an instant motorcaravan site. He/she does not even have to provide facilities such as waste and rubbish disposal – just make it clear that these services are not available. A good example of a facility with services Ardmore Seaview Motorcaravan Park in Co Waterford in the Republic of Ireland. This site started a few years ago and has become an extremely popular destination for motorcaravan tourists. The facilities are basic and consist of a drive over drain for grey waste, a drain for black waste and two water taps. A flat fee of €12 (£10) a night is charged. On the last weekend in July 2020 there were 168

motorcaravans on site and the following weekend there were over 100. Advertising of this site has spread mostly over social media. Many of the visitors spend valuable revenue in the local town's shops, bars and restaurants. The site at Ardmore has direct access to an attractive beach and is a few minutes' walk from the local town. Not every site would have this combination of local facilities, but it shows what can be achieved with the right location.

11.9 Passenger Ferry Ports:

There are 14 passenger ferry ports in England, 2 in Northern Ireland, 2 in Scotland, 3 Wales, 3 on the Isle of Wight therefore 24 points of entry for motorcaravans in the UK.³² It would be incredibly simple to create Aires next to or near to these ports and to consider the creation of 'routes' that they could take to tour the rest of the UK with maps of Aires and 'service points' incorporated.

For example, "the number of motorcaravans that DFDS carries on its Newcastle-Amsterdam route has been steadily increasing over the last 3-4 years (with the exception of this year due to coronavirus restrictions). In 2017 the company carried approximately 2,500. This increased to 3,300 last year.³³

11.10 National Trust

The National Trust already provides some camping facilities in the UK. However, it has considerable assets that could be made available to the motorcaravan community. National Trust locations should play a vital role in a UK Motorcaravan Tourism strategy.

The NT are currently looking into permitting motorcaravans to stay overnight in their carparks and are considering a trial scheme similar to the Aires system.

11.11 Supermarkets and other land owners

In Europe many supermarkets, particularly in rural areas, allow motorcaravans to park overnight in their carparks. In addition, several of

³¹ www.britstops.com

³² www.aferry.co.uk/ferryports.htm

³³ www.dfds.com

the big supermarket chains in France provide motorcaravan service facilities such as waste disposal and fresh water. The situation in the UK is very unclear. The addition of supermarket car parks to an overall motorcaravan offering would be most welcome.

Some supermarkets already allow overnight parking – Yourparkingspace.co.uk allows the motorcaravan tourist to enter a location and it will show supermarkets who allow overnight parking and the cost. This could be extended to a whole network of supermarkets if they were to liaise with the companies who manage their car parks.

There are a lot of other land owners throughout who have bits of land that could be used to provide motorcaravan stopover facilities and they should be encouraged to open them up for motorcaravan use.

11.12 Motorcaravan routes and tours

Motorcaravan owners tend to stay a day or two at a location and then move on. From the UK perspective, it is important to try to retain motorcaravanners within the UK area. To do this a wide range of 'branded' tours and itineraries should be developed.

Motorcaravan tours could embrace all manner of festivals and events such as vintage car rallies, air shows, village fetes, music and food festivals. The possibilities are endless.

Material aimed at motorcaravans needs to be readily available on the 'Discover Britain' and Local Council websites.



11.13 Combining Motorcaravan Stopovers with other activities

Many motorcaravanners carry bicycles with them as these are a practical option to reach attractions and town centres. There are tremendous opportunities to combine motorcaravan itineraries and stopovers with the evolving cycle routes that are being developed across the UK.

Another area that would be right for development is fishing and creating motorcaravan fishing routes throughout the UK could be a real winner with many motorcaravan tourists.

There are many other possibilities including food and drink, golf, Halloween, Christmas markets and of course Game of Thrones, Harry Potter and other film locations.

11.14 Communication Strategy

A clear communications strategy will need to be developed which should target all key stakeholders. The Communications Strategy should be jointly owned by Visit Britain and the Local Councils.

11.15 Reaching a new audience via Social Media

Social media is an important and cheap means to connect to a target motorcaravan audience. For example, there are many motorcaravan Facebook groups with many thousands of members. These groups, particularly local ones, can play a vital role in helping to develop, hone and communicate a motorcaravan tourism offering. However, poor facilities and bad experiences can travel across these groups just as quickly as good stories so it is essential that the right product and services are in place. A number of apps also exist which list campsites and stopovers. These apps could be further leveraged by providing accurate information about stopovers including times, costs available services and restrictions.

11.16 Four Countries Cooperation and Coordination

Clearly there are considerable opportunities for cross border cooperation and coordination in the development of a cohesive and seamless motorcaravan tourism proposition. Such cooperation could involve routes and itineraries. In addition, it is likely that most EU visitors will enter Britain via the ferry ports in the South and East of England. It is therefore essential that Visit Britain are on board with a UK Motorcaravan Tourism Strategy.

11.17 Engaging other Stakeholders

There is potentially a wide range of stakeholders that would have a role to play in making a Motorcaravan Tourism Strategy a success. Appendix 1 lists a few of the main players.



12. MANAGING ANY POTENTIAL ISSUES

While this report has focused so far on the positives of motorcaravan tourism there are also some potential drawbacks. These are in no way insurmountable and can be solved with clear communication and policies.

12.1 Parking

While there is tremendous potential for motorcaravans to exploit little used parking facilities, no doubt there will also be competition for more popular locations. Instead of banishing motorcaravans, provision should be made for some limited motorcaravan parking with clear signage as to where alternative parking is available.

In addition, there is no reason why sensible restrictions cannot be placed on motorcaravans who overnight in car parks that are busy during the day and used by local shoppers and commuters. In such cases motorcaravans could be restricted to parking between the hours of 6:00PM and 8:00AM. Alternatively, if the car park carries a charge then daytime charges could be implemented from 8:00AM. This option is implemented in Chester ('Little Roodee' car park) and in Skipton, Settle and Ingleton (to name but a few) where a number of motorcaravan bays are available for an overnight fee. However, normal daily parking rates apply from 9:00AM.

12.2 Overstaying the welcome

Signs stating the permitted length of stay should be clear and unambiguous. Motorcaravans would usually stay between 24-72 hours, depending on the locality and its attractions.

12.3 Waste and rubbish

Careless discharge of grey and black water

waste or the careless disposal of rubbish should not be tolerated and signage should make it clear that hefty fines would apply to anyone found contravening such rules. However, there needs to be many more facilities provided for disposal of waste, with clear directions to where the nearest disposal facilities are available.

12.4 Self-Contained Motorcaravans Only

Other restrictions could include insisting that the motorcaravan must be 'self-contained' and therefore have its own onboard water and waste system. Motorcaravans should also be prevented from putting out awnings, tables and chairs, BBQs etc.

12.5 Good Conduct Guide for Motorcaravan Tourists

It is only right that Councils and residents should expect motorcaravan tourists to behave in an appropriate manner and respect their surroundings. Owners of the motorcaravan tourism strategy should work with motorcaravan users to draw up a 'code of conduct' for motorcaravans visiting the UK towns, villages and attractions. The code should cover items such as:

- Safe waste disposal
- Leave no trace in respect of rubbish
- Careful and respectful parking
- Don't overcrowd a site
- Don't overstay your welcome
- Actively support the local economy
- Payment of all required charges

Existing groups such as 'Wild and Wombling Motorhoming' and 'Camping against Litter' already contribute quite significantly to the

cleaning up of litter/fly tipping etc as they organise regular group litter picks and encourage all motorcaravanners to carry litter picking equipment so that they can clean up litter discovered on arrival at an overnight venue.

Promoting such a code of conduct would help motorcaravan owners understand the issues of the local community. The code of conduct could be printed on routes and itineraries, form part of the signage, bumper stickers could be produced proclaiming that the motorcaravan owner will abide by the code and the many motorcaravan Facebook sites could be used to get the message out to the motorcaravan community.

12.6 Communication with Local Residents

The benefits of having motorcaravans within a town or village need to be clearly articulated to local residents. The main benefit is economic, but residents also need reassurance that motorcaravans will abide by the rules and action will be taken against offenders. Such communication would produce a 'win-win' situation for motorcaravan tourists and the local economy. Motorcaravans overnighing in a locality have been shown to reduce anti-social behaviour by their presence and can provide additional security by their presence.

13. OWNERSHIP OF A MOTORCARAVAN TOURISM STRATEGY

Ideally a Motorcaravan Tourism Strategy should be owned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and driven by Visit Britain and Local Councils. However, in the absence of an overall strategy, there is no reason why Local Councils cannot move forward with many of the opportunities and actions outlined above.

Appendix 1 - Glossary of Terms

A Class Motorcaravans - These tend to be large motorcaravans and have no separate cab. The body, including the driving compartment, is entirely coachbuilt. Most 'A' class motorcaravans are imported from Europe. Prices range from £50,000 to £100,000 plus.

Aires de Service – These are stopping places specifically designed for Motorcaravans or camping cars as the French call them. In most instances, they are run by the local town council, but there are also private Aires, auto route Aires, Aires within the proximity of campsites, Aires de Stationement (an Aire for parking, but no facilities). Aire de Service normally provide a range of services such as facilities to empty waste, dispose of rubbish and replenish fresh water. Some will also provide electricity. Services such as waste disposal are normally free, but modest charges are often levied for fresh water and electricity.



Black Waste – Refers to toilet waste which is normally contained in a toilet cassette and is drained into a suitable Chemical Disposal Point.

Blue water tank – This is an onboard water tank for fresh water which is used for showers, washing etc. Modern Motorcaravans hold anything from 40 litres to over 100 litres depending on the size of van.

Campervan – Campervans are epitomised by the classic Volkswagen campervans which have been popular for more than half a century. These continue to evolve and provide comfortable accommodation for two or more in a vehicle small enough to be used as the only family car. Prices for new campervans start at around £40,000. Many modern campervans are self-contained with toilet, shower, fridge, on-board water tanks and central heating.

Coachbuilt – Coachbuilt motorcaravans are based on a standard van chassis and with a fabricated motorcaravan body grafted on top. Prices start at around £40,000 and go to £80- 90,000. Modern motorcaravans are also well equipped and features such as additional batteries to power lights, solar panels to recharge batteries, central heating, toilets, showers, onboard water and waste tanks all afford modern motorcaravans a high degree of self-sufficiency and mobility.

EHU – Electric Hook Up. On many UK campsites this is a 16 AMP supply. However, many Aires in Europe provide a lower power ie 6 AMPS – this is provided to allow motorcaravans to charge internal battery systems and therefore encourages motorcaravan owners to conserve energy.

Fulltiming – Fulltiming refers to people who live full time in their motorcaravan. They have possibly sold their house, or rented it out and plan to travel extensively across Europe or even further afield.

Grey Waste – Waste water from a sink or a shower. This is normally stored in an onboard tank which would need to be emptied every 2-4 days. The tank usually has a tap which allows the waste to drain into a suitable 'drive over' drain. Grey waste tanks on modern motorcaravans range from anything from 40 litres to over 100 litres

Leisure Battery – The motorcaravan leisure battery powers lights, runs the water pump etc and is particularly important when the motorcaravan is 'off grid'. The leisure battery is normally recharged by the van's engine battery when it is running, or when the van is connected to an electricity supply on a campsite or via solar panels if they are available.

Off Grid – A motorcaravan operating without hooking up to electricity for onboard services such as heating and lighting

Self-Contained – In theory someone can buy a battered-up Ford Transit and throw a mattress in the back and call it a motorcaravan. However, a true

motorcaravan is a self-contained unit which would incorporate features such as on-board fresh and waste water tanks, toilet and shower, heating, fridge and cooker – in other words, those facilities necessary to function for a number of days without access to EHU, fresh water or waste water facilities.

Solar Panels – Solar panels are normally fitted to the roof of a motorcaravan and are used to recharge the leisure battery. Solar panels allow motorcaravans to remain 'off grid' for extended periods of time.

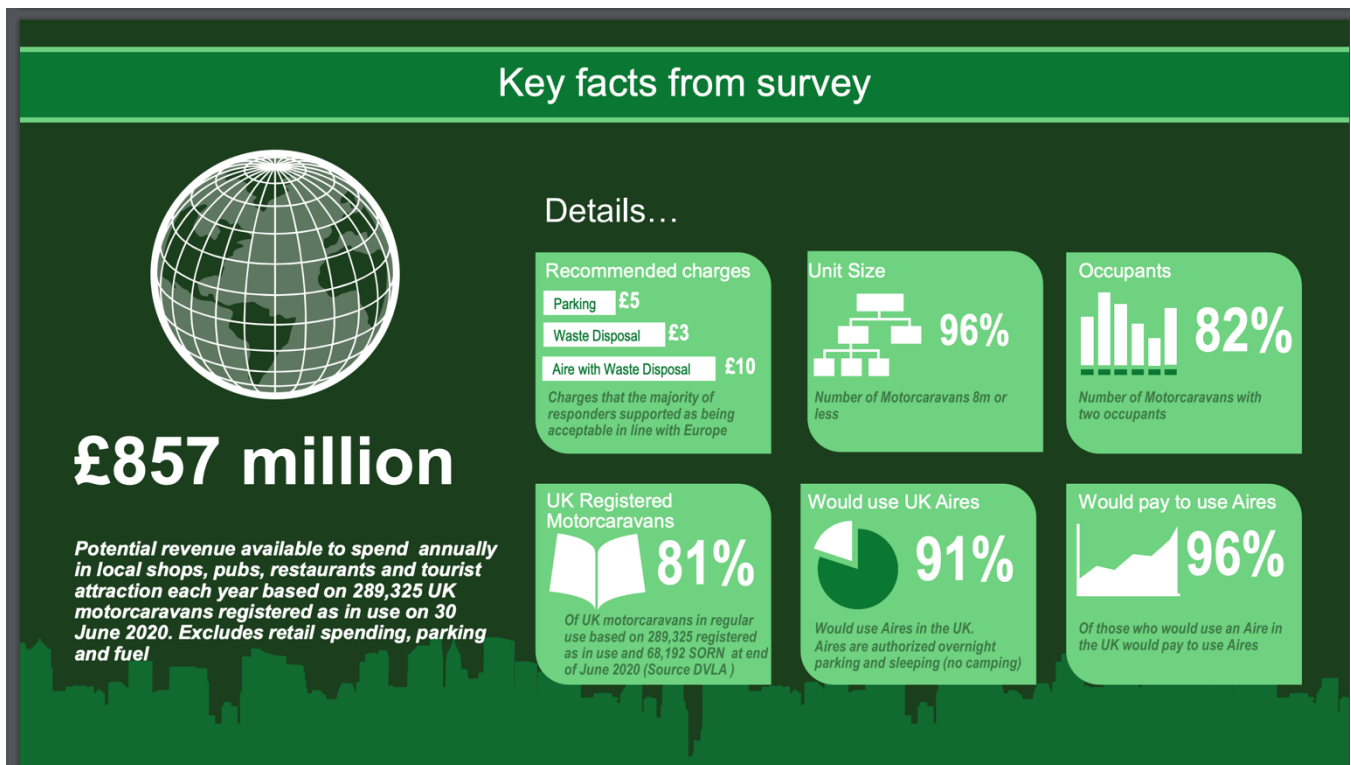
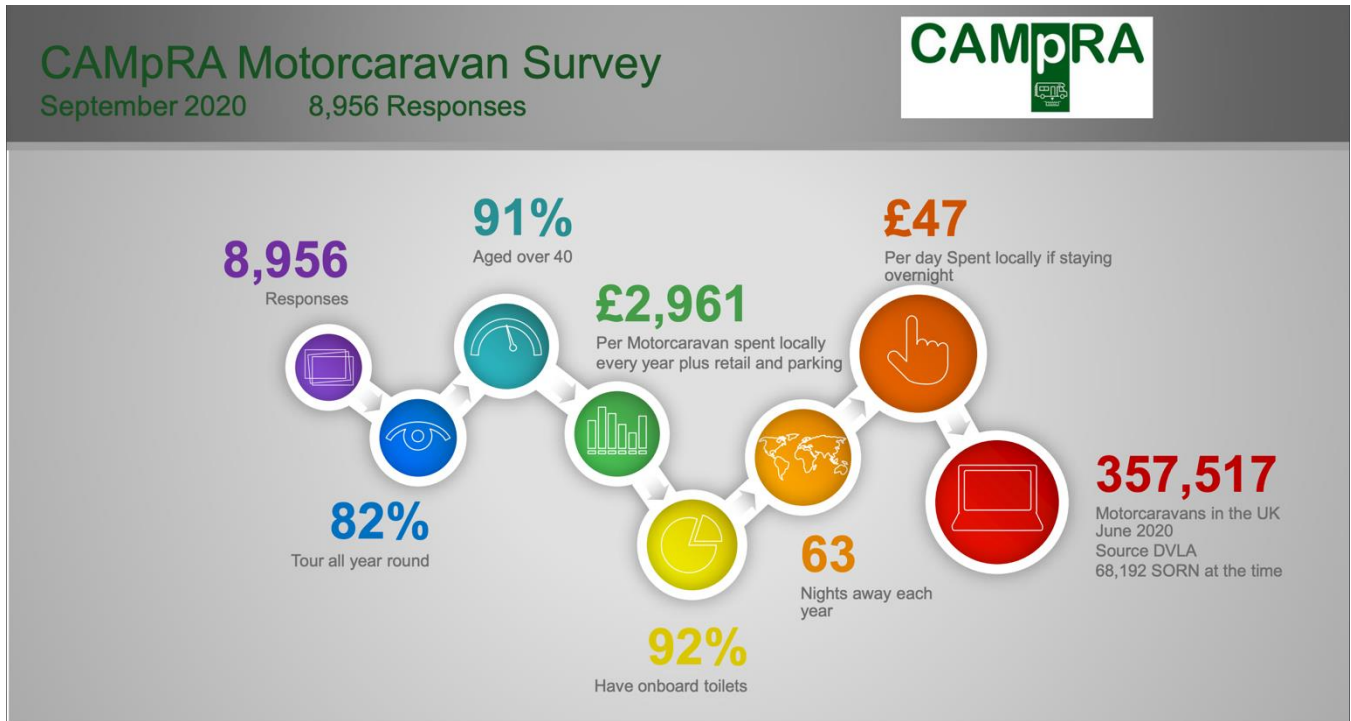


Stopover – A stopover which is not on a formal campsite. While this could be a car park in a town, it normally refers to a wild and remote location.

TRO – Traffic Regulation Order – specific orders relating to parking of vehicles, sleeping in vehicles etc.

Van Conversion – A van conversion takes a standard panel van and turns it into a campervan. Some companies specialise in this type of work, but there is a growing trend for DIY van conversions, which are often known as stealth vans.

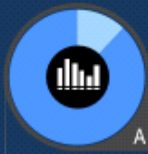
Appendix 2 – CAMpRA Motorcaravan Survey, Sept 2020



Use of UK Aires and Campsites

74%

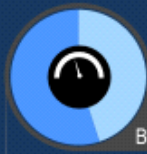
Percentage of owners who indicated that they would use Aires in addition to campsites when touring the UK.
Use of types of Aires shown below



97%

Spend Locally

- Purchase food and supplies locally whilst away



62%

Self contained

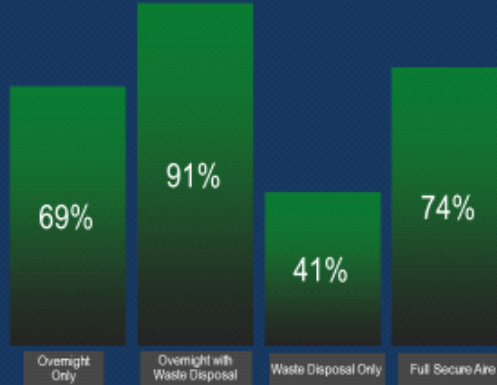
- Owners who can last 3 days or more between Waste Disposal Points



82%

Eat Out

- Owners who eat out twice or more per week when away



Aires UK

Check our gallery on campra.org.uk

LEADERSHIP TEAM



Donald Macdonald

Founder

After enjoying the freedom that comes with motorhoming in France, I wanted to be able to enjoy the same sort of holiday at home. But a lack of secure and recognised spaces to park overnight left me disappointed. Keen to holiday in the UK, I set up CAMpRA - and watched it grow and grow with thousands and thousands of fellow motorhomers who want to holiday in the UK.



Steve Haywood

Leadership Team member

I was a caravan owner for over 40 years and we moved to a motorcaravan 4 years ago as we wanted to tour in our retirement and to leave at a moment's notice, returning home when we wanted. After 40 years of pre booking sites months ahead, sitting on a campsite in the pouring rain as we had paid for the site only to return home to the sun. I was also involved in the formation of the Amateur Radio Caravan and Camping club which involved writing a constitution and administering the club exemption certificate. Having toured France and Spain on a 12-week 4500-mile trip to see if we could survive in a 6m van conversion we realised the freedom to tour was for us.



Tracey Barkwill

Leadership Team Member

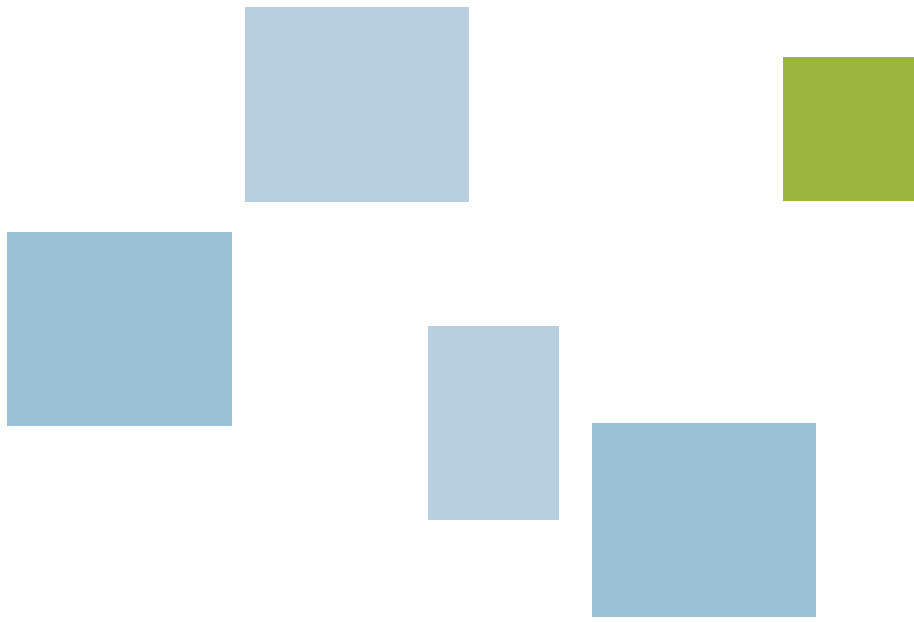
After a lifetime of camping and caravanning, we bought a motorhome to enable us to stop close to small towns and villages and go at our own pace. An industrial injury meant we needed to be off the beaten track (away from crowds) but close enough to shops etc. Having had a fantastic trip through France and Spain, using Aires, we were compelled to bring the idea to the UK. We believe, that with the advent of Brexit, there is a need to boost the British tourist economy and support small local businesses, and can't think of better a way to address both issues.



Carolyn Mitchell

Leadership Team Member

We had VW vans for many years but it wasn't until our son converted one of them to a campervan that we realised what an opportunity they presented for freedom! We had tents and caravans when the kids were young, but this was new to us. We bought our first campervan, and the rest – as they say – is history. We've spent many holidays in Europe, travelling as far as Slovenia and Croatia, and have loved being able to trundle along, visiting all sorts of towns and villages which we wouldn't have been able to if it hadn't been for the Aires system.



Campaign for Real Aires – CAMpRA
www.campra.org.uk