

STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE MOTORCARAVAN TOURISM IN THE UK

2021



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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



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Report Title: Motorcaravans & Potential Economic Benefits

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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 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 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 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. 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, 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

¹⁴ ONS International Passenger Survey 2017

¹⁵ VisitBritain: Accessibility - Non-Participation. 2018

¹⁶ Office for National Statistics: Travel Trends 2018

hardstanding areas and can be provided with certification and monitoring by one of the motorcaravan 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 environementally 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, ie 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 motorcaravans’ needs - ie 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
- 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 overnighting 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-parking/car-parking-strategy>

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

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

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.

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 Bunrana; 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

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

²⁴ www.pro.campingcarpark.com/

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

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.

9. GROWTH OF MOTOR-CARAVAN 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 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, nighttime 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 kind 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’ eg 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 car parks. The scheme is being monitored with a view to introducing a £5 per night charge in 2021. Some car parks, such as Clattershaws, 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

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

³⁰ www.forestryandland.scot.gov/staythenight

passing tourists are unlikely to avail of the scheme as it requires an annual membership.

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

³¹ www.britstops.com

³² www.aferry.co.uk/ferryports.htm

³³ www.dfds.com

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

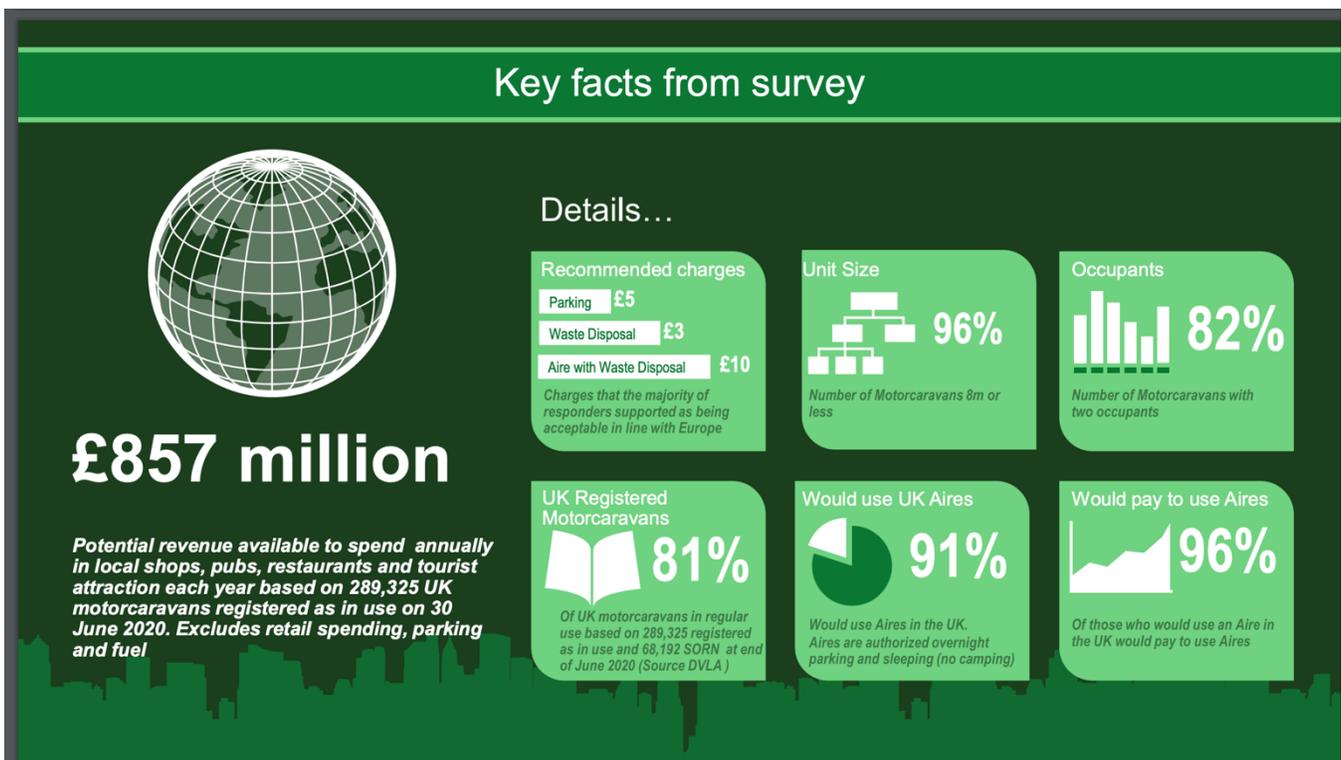
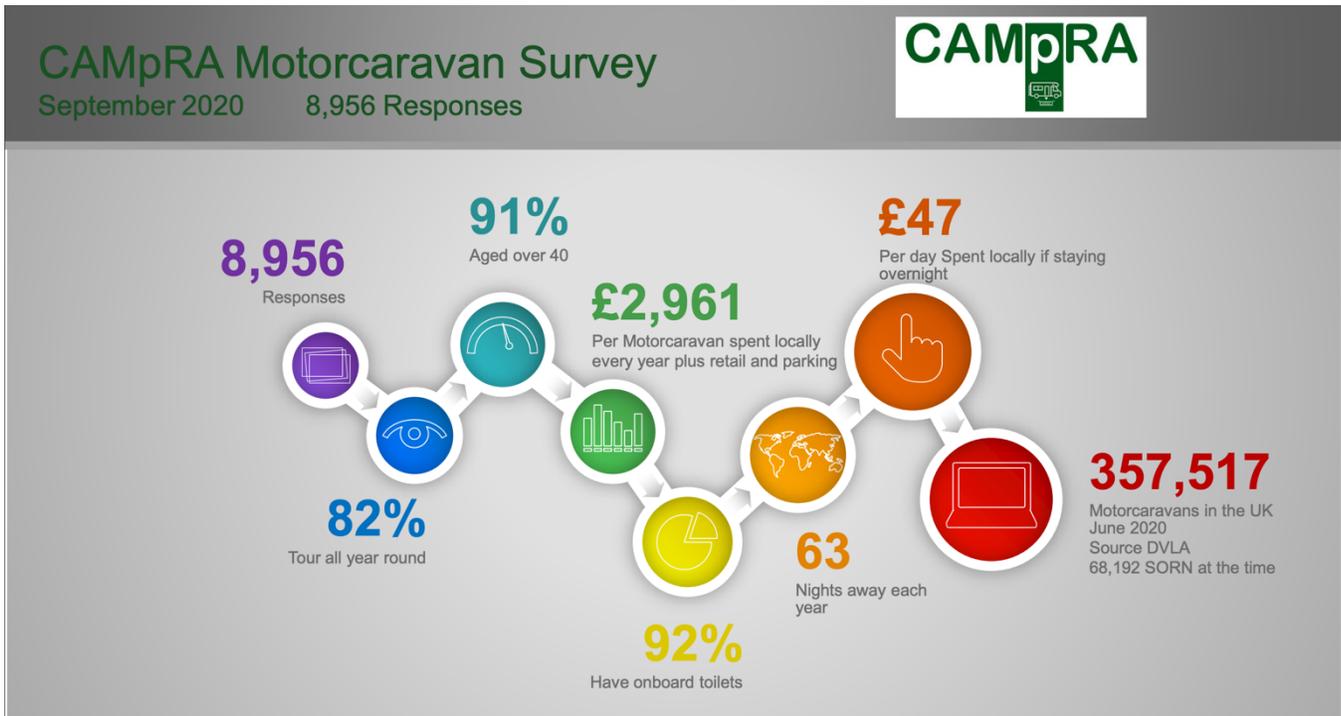


Stopover – A stopover which is not on a formal campsite. While this could be a car park in a town, it normally refers to a wild and remote location.

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

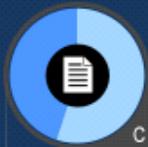
- Purchase food and supplies locally whilst away



62%

Self contained

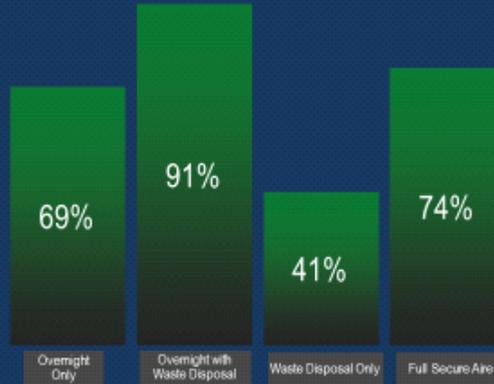
- Owners who can last 3 days or more between Waste Disposal Points



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 moments 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 6mvan conversion we realised the freedom to tour was for us.



Tracey Barkwill

Leadership Team Member

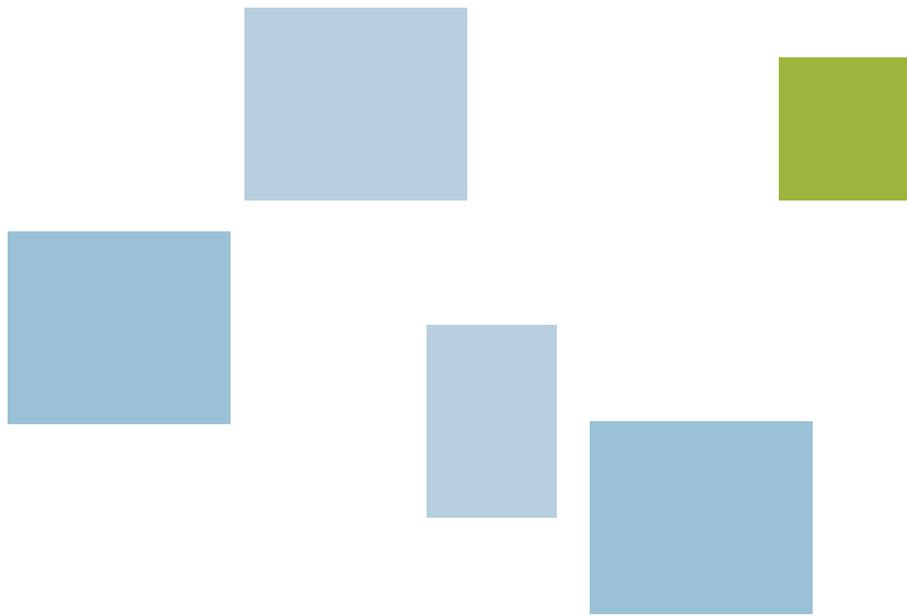
After a lifetime of camping and caravanning, we bought a motorhome to enable us to stop close to small towns and villages and go at our own pace. An industrial injury meant we needed to be off the beaten track (away from crowds) but close enough to shops etc. Having had a fantastic trip through France 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