

AM

ACCEO MATTERS

Issue 101 May 20

ACCEO NATIONAL RALLY & AGM
30th September to 05th October 2020
Hosted by All Year Round Caravan Club
at Ludlow Racecourse



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Stay Home, Stay Safe, Protect the NHS
and Key Workers



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Annual General Meeting
Minutes

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AM

ACCEO MATTERS



Serving the interests of Independent caravan clubs since 1985

First President & Founder Chairman the late Bob Smylie MBE

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Well, who would have thought that following the dreadful floods earlier this year and shortly after the Caravan, Camping and Motorhome Show, we would have been living in a very strange way. As difficult as it has been, I do hope that none of you have been tempted to take your units anywhere, breaking the lock down rules. I am lucky enough to have my caravan on my drive at home. Most days I go into it; the fridge and freezer have acted as extra storage for all the fresh food I have had to buy because I can't go out to the restaurants.

With all fingers crossed, I do hope that the ACCEO National Rally and AGM due to be held in October will go ahead and be very successful. Included in this issue is a loose booking form that can be completed either on the hard copy or electronic download off the ACCEO website. There are a few months before the deadline, please think about attending. Remember you can come on your own and represent your club, you will not be left out. It would be lovely if your club could come en masse.

The rally will be held at a new venue, Ludlow Racecourse, running from Wednesday 30th September until Monday 5th October 2020. The Host Club is the All Year Round Caravan Club.

As many of you will know, I have been the Editor of AM for a number of years. ACCEO is looking for a replacement as I wish to give up this committee role and continue with my role as Exhibitions Officer.

If you are interested in taking up the Editor's position, please contact me, I will be happy to discuss the process and what is expected.

Don't forget if you visit any of the rally sites that advertise in AM, to mention that you saw their advert in AM. Also, if you visit any rally site that would be interested in advertising in AM, please ask them to contact me on: ameditor@acceo.org

If anybody has any subject they think might be of interest to other Association Members and would like it included in AM, please contact me on: ameditor@acceo.org

Elaine Nicholls
Editor

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Next copy date:- 1st September 2020

Chairman's Chat

The first thing I must say is a great big thank you to Elaine and Tony for again working so hard on ACCEO's behalf setting up the ACCEO stand and running the ACCEO Lounge at the February Motorhome and Caravan Show. Those many members I spoke to gratefully appreciated that there was space where they could come, sit and talk to friends in a quieter environment, a break from the show.

At our last ACCEO Executive Committee Meeting we discussed the various posts that the current committee do, what they would like to do in the future and those roles that we may need to cover when members eventually deem it's time to retire. It became apparent that eventually, we will need to fill the following posts, Finance Officer, ACCEO Matters Editor and Membership Secretary.

Also at the current time we are two committee members short. We would like to have these places filled, sooner rather than later, so that members joining the committee can join without the worry of having a major role to do from the start. Join and see how we work, then if you fancy one of the roles that needs to be filled, shadow the committee member doing the job until you think that it is the role for you, it is probably the best way to learn.

If you fancy assisting ACCEO, let one of the ACCEO Committee members know - we don't bite.

Peter Brown, Gaynor Hart and I, along with the Motorhome and Caravan Club, attended a meeting hosted by the Caravan and Camping Club at their headquarters in Coventry. Although a shortened meeting, the poor weather and amount of rain caused transport delays for some those attending the meeting. It was a productive meeting and lots of our concerns were put to rest.

Now we come to the current climate and Coronavirus!

As an organisation, we, like you the member clubs, take our lead from our Government sources, mainly Natural England. If we do pass on their recommendations, you can be assured it would be passed on word for word.

As I write this it looks like we could be in this for the long haul. I hope we can all keep well and follow all the recommendations to avoid the virus, and I hope we can meet up at Ludlow in October knowing this has passed us by.

Robin Wilkinson

Insurance Officer

I would like to say thank you to all our member clubs that have taken advantage of the club public liability insurance.

It was wonderful to see so many clubs renew on time and hopefully you will all agree that Saffron Insurance did an excellent job in getting the renewals terms and documents to you in good time.

I receive a lot of emails from clubs at the end of the year when insurances are due and I thank you all for your patience in waiting for my reply as sometimes it does take a few days with work and family commitments as well.

If you are one of the few clubs that do not take advantage of the club liability insurance and arrange insurance elsewhere, please contact myself or Saffron Insurance as we would be happy to have a chat to see if we can help.

Should your club not have public liability insurance, please give this some serious thought as without insurance you are putting not only your club but also the club officers and members in danger and financial risk should the worst happen.

Ian Derbyshire

ACCEO Rallies for 2020

Unfortunately, there are only four ACCEO Paragraph 6 Rallies this year, the Tiddlers and Crouchers Club had to cancel their August Bank Holiday Rally, so this leaves just the following.

Early Bank Holiday	05 th – 08 th May	Inholme Lodge, Beeford (YO25 8BG) - cancelled due to Covid 19
Matlock Lights	16 th – 18 th May	Miners Arms, Matlock (DE4 2DR) cancelled due to Covid 19
Spring Bank Holiday	22 nd – 25 th May	Thoresby Hall (NG22 9EP) - may be cancelled due to Covid 19, you will have to liaise with the Host Club or check the ACCEO website
New Year Rally	29 th Dec – 1 st Jan 2021	Robin Hood Activity Centre (NG21 0NF) This will depend on Covid 19. There will be an update in the next issue of AM.

If you would like to run one of your rallies under the ACCEO Paragraph 6 exemption certificate, please get in touch for more details. It's another way to possibly get more members on your rallies and you may even attract new members.

Robin Wilkinson & Pat Moyses



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Extended Rallies, National Parks Rallies ACCEO Para 6 Rallies

New National Parks and Extended Rallies Officer – Pat Moyses

Moving forward Pat Moyses has agreed to take over from me as your National Parks and Extended Rallies Officer, processing all your Extended Rally applications with the site owners and local councils, and liaising with each of the National Parks representative as your applications come in. I wish Pat all the best in her new role within the ACCEO Executive Committee.

National Parks

At the time of writing this we have only received 2 applications for a National Parks Rallies for 2021. Please be aware that all applications to host rallies in the National Parks for 2021 have to be submitted to the National Parks Officer by the 24th April 2020. Forms are available online and need be sent via email to nationalparks@acceo.org posted to the address on the form.

Forms are available online and need to be sent via email to nationalparks@acceo.org or posted. Obviously due to Covid19 this deadlines has now passed. I feel this year will have to be written off. Get your applications in for 2022. Forms are available online and need be sent via email to nationalparks@acceo.org posted to the address on the form.

The National Parks representatives do go round their sites in the National Parks ensuring that all rallies have been sanctioned and take issue if they find unapproved rallies taking place or booked without permission.

Extended Rallies

So far this year we have had seven applications for extended rallies, two have been approved and the rest well on the way to being approved.

Please remember that when applying for extended rallies you must ensure that you allow a minimum of 14 weeks prior to the rally taking place so we can get the appropriate paperwork in place and approval granted with minimum fuss.

Robin Wilkinson & Pat Moyses

Just a brief note to let you know that the Camping and Caravanning Club has decided to continue with the normal dates and deadlines for the Events Control Scheme in the National Parks for 2021. As the scheme can operated without physical contact, we feel that it is appropriate to go ahead and prepare for next year when hopefully things will be in better shape.

This means that the deadline of submitting events to our National Parks Sites Officers is 1st May 2020 and the NPSOs have a deadline of submitting events to the National Parks by 1st June 2020.

This notice was emailed out to clubs on 19th April 2020 by Peter Brown ACCEO Secretary.

Pat Moyses

ASSOCIATION OF CARAVAN AND CAMPING EXEMPTED ORGANISATIONS

Minutes of the 36th Annual General Meeting
held at the Ukrainian Youth Centre, Derbyshire
on Saturday 5th October 2019

The Meeting opened at 2:00pm

1. Opening Remarks by the Association Chairman

The Association Chairman, Robin Wilkinson, said it was a pleasure to see everyone on the rally field and thanked them all for attending this Annual General Meeting.

He asked all present to observe a Minutes Silence for Members who were no longer with us.

2. Vice-President's Welcome

The Vice-President, Tony Smith, said it was an honour to welcome everyone to this AGM and was glad they had managed to make it through the inclement weather. He introduced the Members of the ACCEO Executive Committee in turn.

3. Convening the Meeting

The Chairman then asked the Association Secretary to convene the meeting.

The Association Secretary, Peter Brown, read the Convening Notice for the 36th ACCEO AGM, explained the procedures for Delegates to speak and to vote, and then declared the meeting open.

4. Appointment of Tellers

The Meeting agreed to the appointment of 2 non-voting tellers:

Christine Brown (Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club)
Matthew Hart (AAOCC)

5. Those Present and Apologies for Absence

Member Clubs present on the Rally and at the AGM were recorded as:

AAOCC
Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club
Bailey Owners Club
Bessacarr Owners Club
Bridge Club (2014)
Compass Club
Concraft Camping Club

Eccles Caravan Owners Club
Elddis Owners Club
Hymer Club International
Pilote Owners Association
Royale Caravan Owners' Club
Safari Caravan Club
Seaboard Camping & Caravan Club
Swift Owners Club
Tiddlers & Crouchers
Touring Caravan Club
Wessex Winter Caravanners
Zodiacs

and:

Alternative Retro & Classic Caravan Society

were represented at the AGM.

Apologies for Absence had been received from:

Abbey Caravan Club
All Seasons Caravan Club (The Doves)
Association of Land Rover Clubs
Avondale Caravan Club
Castaway Caravan and Camping Club
Coachman Owners' Club
Freedom Caravan Club
Friends of Leukaemia (Research) Caravan Club
Historic Caravan Club
Phoenix Camping Club
REME Assn Caravan & Camping Club
Spread Eagle Caravan Club

6. Minutes of the 35th ACCEO AGM held at the Ukrainian Youth Centre, Derbyshire on 6th October 2018

The minutes of the 35th ACCEO AGM having been circulated in the prescribed manner were put to the Meeting for approval as a true record of the proceedings. This was:

Proposed by Paul McArdle (Elddis Owners Club)
Seconded by Mick Whitehouse (AAOCC)

All voted in favour. They were duly signed by the Chairman.

7. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

There were none.

8. Officers' Reports *(written reports had been circulated previously)*

(a) Chairman. Robin Wilkinson wished to add to his written report his thanks to the two Vice-Presidents for their advice and support during the year, and to the Safari Caravan Club for inviting him along to share in their 60th Anniversary celebrations.

He advised that all Officers' Reports had been circulated in advance, but some Officers may wish to add to, or update, these. All would be happy to take any questions on them.

(b) Association Secretary. Peter Brown had nothing to add to his report. There were no questions.

(c) Finance Officer. David Thompson had no further points to add to his report.

Paul McArdle (Elddis Owners Club) asked which year the £1776 insurance commission shown in the 2018 Income column on the accounts ending 30th June 2019 was for. David Thompson said it was late payment of the 2018 commission by the company.

The Chairman asked for a proposer and a seconder that the accounts be adopted:

Proposed by Stephen Mason (Bridge Club 2014)
Seconded by Mick Whitehouse (AAOCC)

When put to the vote all were in favour.

(d) Insurance Officer. Ian Derbyshire said the overdue commission payment for this year had now been received and would be shown on next year's accounts.

Iain Mellis (Alternative Retro & Classic Caravan Society) asked if there had been any claims on the insurance during the year and, if so, what they had been.

Ian Derbyshire advised that there had been 2 claims passed through:

- A gazebo had blown into another Member's caravan.
- Someone had scalded their hand on a tea urn.

Both claims had been resolved satisfactorily with the insurance company.

(e) Publications Officer. Elaine Nicholls had no further points to add to her Publications Officer and Exhibition Team report.

(f) National Parks & Extended Rallies Officer. Robin Wilkinson updated his report to say that all applications to rally in National Parks had now been approved and the Clubs had been informed.

Paul McArdle (Elddis Owners Club) had been told by someone at the Peak District National Park that he didn't need permission to rally there, but national guidance says you do. He asked who was right.

Robin Wilkinson said he would talk to Natural England to resolve the matter and let Paul McArdle know the outcome.

(g) National Rally Co-ordinator. Chris Lowery had nothing further to add to his report.

(h) Membership Officer. Gaynor Hart had nothing to add to her report.

She said she would be available before and after Flag in the morning for Personal Membership renewals and at the same time would be happy to sign up any new Personal Members.

9. Election of Executive Committee Members

The Chairman advised that there were 10 vacancies on the Executive Committee at this AGM, the vacancies having been notified to Member Clubs in the prescribed manner. The 7 nominations received by the due date were for David Thompson, Humph Jones, Gaynor Hart, Ian Derbyshire, Elaine Nicholls, Robin Wilkinson, and Pat Moyses; accordingly, all 7 are duly elected to the Committee.

He further advised that the Committee would be meeting later that afternoon to decide which officers will fill which post and that will be announced immediately prior to the Prize Draw at Flag on Sunday.

10. Presidential Appointments

The Chairman was pleased to be able to tell the AGM that John Rowe and Tony Smith had agreed to continue as Vice-Presidents of the Association for the coming year.

11. Appointment of Holding Trustees

The Chairman explained that the Association needs to have Holding Trustees in order to satisfy the appropriate Government Department requirements under Paragraph 4 of the First Schedule of The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, whereby the Association must have the legal status to be able to take an interest in land, usually by leases. The lease agreement may be oral if for less than 3 years duration. The Holding Trustees must satisfy themselves that any land so leased and/or occupied by a Member Organisation is properly supervised at all times. The Holding Trustees are also responsible for ensuring that any payments due for the lease of this land are properly made to the person entitled to receive them. The Executive Committee has appointed the holders of the following posts as its Holding Trustees for the coming year:

Chairman

Finance Officer

Extended Rallies Officer

Association Secretary

Vice-Chairman

12. Motions Received for the Consideration of the AGM

No Motions had been received for consideration at this Meeting.

13. Any Other Business

There was none.

14. Date, Time and Venue of Next AGM

The Chairman said that the 37th Annual General Meeting of the Association would be held at Ludlow Racecourse on Saturday 3rd October 2020 at 2:00pm.

Closing Business

The Chairman thanked the Bridge Club 2014 for acting as Host Club for this National Rally and making such an excellent job of it. The Members present concurred, with long applause.

He notified the Meeting that there would be a short non-denominational Church Service at 9:30am on Sunday in the small conference room opposite the main entrance to this hall, where all would be welcome.

He thanked all present for attending the AGM and stated that the Open Forum would commence after a 15 minute break.

The Chairman then declared the AGM closed at 2:25pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

(Chairman)

Please note that these Minutes are subject to ratification at the next AGM

Rallies: Sharing a Site and not able to use CLs/CSs

I wrote this piece for a member club but am sure many others will find it useful, it is written specifically for Caravans/ Motorhomes (and not for Tents/Trailer Tents) in England but circumstances are very similar for Tents/Trailer Tents and in Wales/Scotland.

The right granted to holder of Exemption Certificates to use land as a caravan site is given in Part 5 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 and as specified in paragraphs 4, 5 & 6 of Schedule 1 to the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (The Act). These documents are readily available to view on searching the Internet, however for ease of reference:

Extracts from:

FIRST SCHEDULE CASES WHERE A CARAVAN SITE LICENCE IS NOT REQUIRED

Sites occupied and supervised by exempted organisations

4. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 13 of this Schedule, a site licence shall not be required for the use as a caravan site of land which is occupied by an organisation which holds for the time being a certificate of exemption granted under paragraph 12 of this Schedule (hereinafter referred to as an exempted organisation) if the use is for purposes of recreation and is under the supervision of the organisation.

Sites approved by exempted organisations

5. — (1) Subject to the provisions of paragraph 13 of this Schedule, a site licence shall not be required for the use as a caravan site of land as respects which there is in force a certificate issued under this paragraph by an exempted organisation if not more than five caravans are at the time stationed for the purposes of human habitation on the land to which the certificate relates.

(2) For the purposes of this paragraph an exempted organisation may issue as respects any land a certificate stating that the land has been approved by the exempted organisation for use by its members for the purposes of recreation.

(3) The certificate shall be issued to the occupier of the land to which it relates, and the organisation shall send particulars to the Minister of all certificates issued by the organisation under this paragraph.

(4) A certificate issued by an exempted organisation under this paragraph shall specify the date on which it is to come into force and the period for which it is to continue in force, being a period not exceeding one year.

Meetings organised by exempted organisations

6. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 13 of this Schedule, a site licence shall not be required for the use of land as a caravan site if the use is under the supervision of an exempted organisation and is in pursuance of arrangements made by that organisation for a meeting for its members lasting not more than five days.

A plot of land can be used as a caravan site under the conditions of either paragraph 4, 5 or 6 of Schedule 1 of the Act.

The following is published by Natural England in their Requirements and Guidelines to Camping and Touring Caravan Exemption Certificates (copy attached):

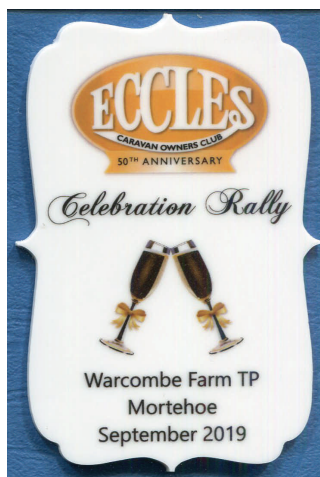
Q19. Can two or more organisations rally simultaneously on the same site?

Meetings organised by two separate organisations for the benefit of their own members are allowed simultaneously on the same site, with permission of the landowner. However, each rally must be clearly delineated from the other and each must be under the control of a nominated supervisor.

Q22. Can paragraph 5 sites be used for rallies organised under paragraph 4 or 6?

No. Paragraph 5 member only sites are restricted for the use of no more than 5 caravans or motorhomes at any one time. Events being operated under Paragraph 4 or 6 must be on clearly separate land with a permanent border in between.

Peter Brown
Association Secretary



September 2019, members of the Eccles Caravan Owners Club recently celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the club in 1969.

A celebration rally was held at Warcombe Farm Touring Park at Morteohoe, North Devon and we were graced with wall to wall sunshine for almost all of the week. We held a number of get-togethers on site, including a special cake enjoyed with a few bottles of bubbly and each member was presented with a commemorative cushion.

We held group barbecues on three occasions, tea and cakes one afternoon and all in all had a wonderful time together enjoying the outdoors.

On Thursday we held our AGM outdoors which passed off very quickly so that we could retire to a local hostelry for a celebration dinner.

A fish 'n chip supper was planned for the last day but unfortunately the weather turned against us, so we were forced to eat in our vans.



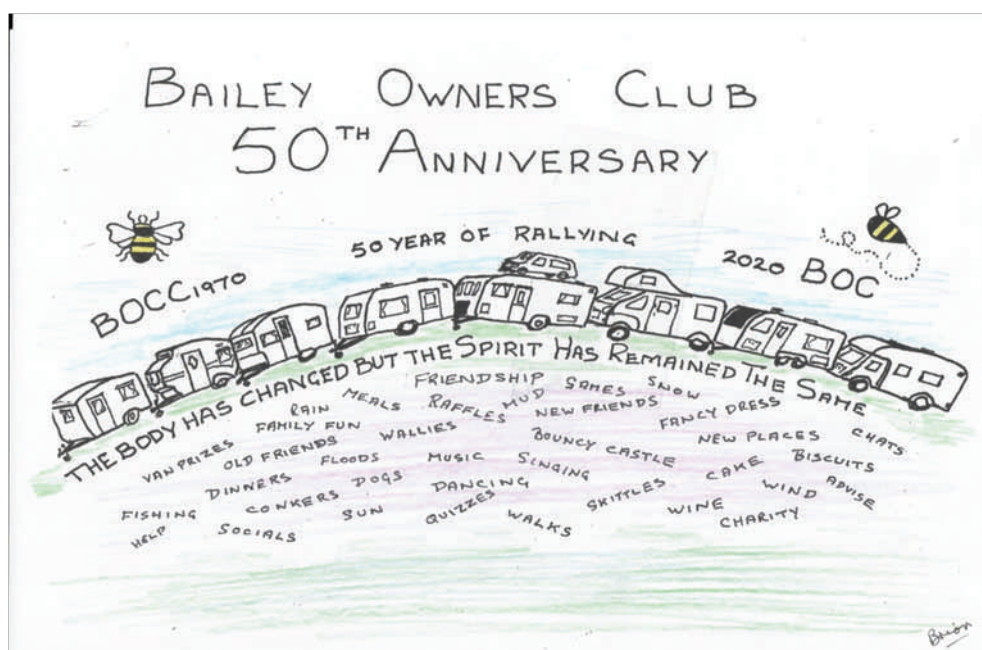
The Eccles Caravan Owners Club is thought to be the oldest surviving single brand owners club where the brand is still in production and where all members have Eccles Caravans and we look forward to many more years to come.

The cushion was a commemorative gift given to every member unit

The couple cutting the cake are Ken and Chris Wells. Ken has been the Chairman of the club for many years.

Mike Toms
Secretary
Eccles Caravan Owners Club





In April 2020, The Bailey Owners Club celebrate 50 years as a club, run by volunteer members, for members, with links and support from Bailey of Bristol.

The Club was founded by our late President John Stayte. Throughout 1969, John made enquiries of fellow Bailey owners and he decided that there was enough interest to arrange the first rally for Easter 1970, which took place at a small hotel at Longhope in the Forest of Dean. There were some 20 owners booked for the rally. John took along an exhibition unit which had a kitchen and bar and a large awning to use as a base in the grounds of the hotel.

The first meeting of the club took place on Sunday the 1st April in the hotel, where the first committee was formed. Mr. FG Bailey the founder of Bailey Caravans was asked to become the first Club President and the Bailey Owners Caravan Club and the links to Bailey Caravans was borne.

The club continued as a Caravan Club until Bailey Caravans began to produce and sell Motorhomes in 2011. The growth in Motorhome sales eventually led for a call to change the club name from the "Bailey Owners Caravan Club" to "Bailey Owners Club", a club intended for all Bailey leisure vehicle owners.

The "Bailey Owners Club" continues today with a membership of some 500 members. All this from small beginnings and the vision of one man, 50 years ago, John Stayte.

John Birchall
Bailey Owners Club

Off Grid

It was back in 2012/13 or even a bit earlier that the miracle happened. Up to then, and like countless thousands of others, I had slept soundly, believing the EHU was the only way of going into the great outdoors with a caravan - how ridiculous that sounds now!

It was around this time that I was finally woken from my slumbers regarding the way I was caravanning. Technology, and an interest in it, had started to make me realise that there was another way, a better way. I had started to realise, that with the modern technologies that were appearing, it was bringing new and exciting possibilities to the art of caravanning and beginning to make inroads into the use of the electric hook up. I asked myself one question - "Can I find a way, with these new technologies, of enjoying my caravanning without the ubiquitous orange lead and enjoy it as much without an EHU as I had with, and at the same time slash my costs?"

In other words can I make my caravan as comfortable Off Grid as it had been On Grid ? I have believed for a long time that caravans will never reach their full potential unless they can be. It was a bit of a tall order, as I really wanted to be able to use everything in the caravan that the manufacturer had put in it - you've paid for it so you want to use it, right? - that included the microwave oven - and how was I to do that? However, I was prepared to go as far as I possibly could to achieve my goals - it was definitely worth a journey into the various technologies that had appeared over the previous few years and, I was pleased to see that they seemed to be particularly tailor- made for the caravanner!

LED lighting was one. This had improved since the first ones were introduced from something that simply glowed as an indicator on a printed circuit board to something that now offered a real alternative to the old tungsten lamps I was using at the time - saving about 90% on electrical consumption. So my lights were all changed to LEDs shortly after my first solar panel was fitted to the roof of my caravan. Again, solar panels had been improved and increased in efficiency from the early ones. Technology had marched on and had started to give a real alternative to the rather anti-social generator! Now we could have an almost miraculous panel that sat on the roof or, if a 'suitcase', anywhere I decided to put it. As long as it had light striking it, it would generate amps for the battery. Not only that, it did it with the minimum of fuss. No noise, no fuel needed, no servicing - this one invention was indeed, without doubt, a gift to the hundreds of thousands of caravanners who enjoyed this hobby. If only people realised what we had here. With a quiet 'generator' on the roof, peace would once again break out on off grid sites and the 'flat battery' at rallies would disappear! The solar panel to me is the most important of all of the new techs. Without a charge, it doesn't matter what battery you have, if you can't charge it, it's useless.

Now, we have to talk about batteries. The lead acid battery that had been the mainstay of power storage for the past 100+ years, still dominated the battery market. There were other types but the cost and the scarcity of them made them a bit of a novelty so I would stick to lead acid, imperfect as they were, but a proven solution as far as they went. Yes, new versions of them had been introduced like the AGM and the Gel but they were still of the lead acid type - still not able to do what I wanted.

Although I had been turning over in my mind various solutions to what I wanted to achieve in my caravanning up to two years before I actually took the first practical steps to energy independence, it was in 2013 that I actually took it by having a second 110ah battery fitted and a 135w panel fitted to the roof of my caravan. I remember John at Panelworks at Bawtree, South Yorkshire looking at me and saying, "Are you sure about this? This is a serious bit of kit!" And of course it was then, with the manufacturers being at least 5 years behind in the design of power systems and solutions (which they still are by the way). When they were fitting 40w panels I was fitting 135w. Now they are fitting 100w I have 300w!

However, needless to say I told him I was sure and it was fitted expertly. Immediately the benefits became apparent. No longer was I running backwards and forwards to the storage site with a newly charged battery every few weeks. The batteries were 100% charged all the time. Now I look back, it's interesting to note that in just 5 or 6 years what was a 'serious bit of kit' is now almost standard, and I have moved ahead again! The price of solar has of course tumbled since then. For a 135w panel I was £585 lower in my bank account. For the same panel now, I'd be looking at about £100. Solar has become so cheap now, but beware, not all panels are the same!

In 2014, after visiting the Arley Hall National of the CMHC or CC as it was then, I had a 2000w pure sine wave inverter fitted. I was set to prove that what I had wanted was possible and for 15 months it seemed that I had been right. Unfortunately, I was about to be brought back to earth with a big bump. I was noticing that the batteries were not able to supply the power I needed to the microwave or the toaster as they once had. Why was my toast taking so long?? Why? Further research showed me the drawbacks of lead acid batteries. Even if you bought the best batteries on the market, they were unable to give the amperages I was demanding from them without being seriously damaged. The plates had started to warp and deform and the batteries were failing badly. Also, you couldn't charge them very fast either - and if you did, that would probably cause more damage than heavy discharge! I had to admit to myself that what I had wanted wasn't going to be a reality unless I was prepared to replace expensive batteries every 18 months to 2 years! That was not going to happen and I was looking at converting the microwave back into a bread bin!

We limped on like this for a couple of years, but even during that time a 'new' battery had appeared in the market place! Technology was about to play another ace. At a Show at the NEC in 2017, I was able to make my first close encounter with a lithium leisure battery. I was able to handle it and was amazed by the lack of weight. Apparently this thing gave almost the same amount of power as 2 x 110ah lead acid batteries, being able to give 95% of its power! There were no fumes, no acid, no lead, it was maintenance free. But wasn't this the type of battery that burst into flames? My goodness - and the price!! Are you joking?

It was over the next year or so that I had an opportunity to look into lithium further. I didn't do it straight away as I had almost convinced myself that it was a non-starter due to the safety issues that were all over the Internet at that time, and the price was eye watering. However, I wanted to know more about this technology and my Google account was tailored to bring me any new developments in this field to my phone. It was now early spring 2018 and after the Show in February I had discovered the LiFePo4 Battery or the Lithium Phosphate Battery that was totally safe in normal use. It wasn't as dense in power as the ion battery but it was far more stable. The price was still an issue of course but I kept looking at this relatively new technology that had been developed in the 1970/80s but had really only just made it to the commercial stage and now I was staring it in the face. Was this what I had been looking for?

It was after the Show that I really set about looking at lithium again. I needed to know more as I had heard all sorts of rumours about lithium batteries, including thermal runaway which caused fires. Some of the reports might be true, perhaps all of them, but I needed to be informed. As it happened, I rang Roadpro at Daventry and started my enquiries! From what I was told, these lithium phosphate batteries were not only perfectly safe, they were, with additional electronic wizardry, perfectly usable in a caravan. This was a revelation as I had searched YouTube and found many videos about them being installed in motorhomes or canal boats but nothing about a caravan. Could this really be done? Roadpro became aware through my endless questions that I was not totally happy with what I was hearing, scepticism being the better part of valour, as it were, and if I was going to take the leap of faith into the world of lithium, and shell out 10 times the cost of a 'normal' leisure battery, I had to have solid and well researched knowledge of the product I was contemplating buying.

As it happened, two representatives from NDS, the Italian company that were the manufacturers of the battery I was looking at, were visiting Roadpro, and, thanks to Andy Harris, the MD, I was invited down to their offices to ask as many searching questions as I could! I spent some time before I went to Roadpro, formulating and writing my questions down. By the time the 'interview' came I was prepared but were they? I spent 2-3 hours at Roadpro that morning and had a detailed discussion with the NDS reps, one of whom was the chief technical engineer at NDS. I asked about everything from high charge and discharge rates, charging in sub-zero temperatures, battery management systems or BMS as they are known, weight, charging parameters and a host of other questions. They answered them all and the doubts I had were put to bed with confidence and assurance.

It was obvious to me now, that what I was looking at was a product as far removed from lead acid as it was possible to be. I had made up my mind. I was about to put my money where my mouth was. I was about to buy a battery that was the top side of £1,000 but if I had this right it would do what I had always wanted and I would never have to do it again, as these things lasted anything up to 25 years and I really couldn't see me still towing at 90 years of age! The other thing was that the EHU would be a thing of the past. Not only would I be towing a quarter of the weight compared to the two batteries I had been towing around, but this battery would allow me the full range of the installed equipment - exactly what I had wanted when I started on the Off Grid adventure!

The battery and all the attendant electronics like the Battery to Battery charger and the Votronic MPPT Controller, both with lithium cycles, were fitted on a beautiful Spring morning on the 10th May 2018. 70 kilos of useless lead acid was removed and a LiFePo4 battery weighing 14.4 kilos was installed! I paid the bill, swallowed hard and looked forward to the promises of my new toy.

The next break which was coming up would prove to me whether I had been correct to rely on my research. We left for Wales some days later and I have to say that I was 'gentle' with the system, only using it now and again to do toast and I don't think, on that first trip out, I used the microwave. You see, I was still suffering from 'lead acid poisoning,' I knew I had to leave the past behind but I was finding it difficult. 25 years of lead acid takes its toll you know! Could this battery really do what they had told me it could? Over the next few months I had more off grid holidays. I slowly got used to the battery display which showed me all I needed to know about the health of my new lithium battery. I started to use the battery more and more for toast in the morning, and now and again the microwave went on to heat a curry or whatever. Oh, my goodness - I could now pop water, milk, sugar and coffee in a mug and stick it in the microwave and have a hot coffee in no time! No more taking a flask to storage, or a Safefill cylinder when I wanted to work on the caravan, and when I did and needed to clean up, I could whip our powerful 240v vacuum out and clean up properly!!

2019 came and soon it was the February Show. I had been to every Show since 2010, but, since 2015, I had attended for 2 days at each Show as I wanted to be sure I didn't miss anything on the technology stands. One day just wasn't enough! However, at this show, due to the fact that the Bailey Valencia had been in for water ingress, and she was 8 years old (Bailey picked up the bill as I had a 10 year water ingress warranty) I had an eye on a new van - a Coachman if I could get the right price. I negotiated with Broad Lane Leisure the purchase of my new Coachman. I remember sitting with their representative Neil and him proudly announcing that the show offer was a 100 watt panel and an Elite Tow Cover. I had to smile. The latter was very welcome but the former wasn't. I explained to him what the van was going to be: an Off Grid Caravan with its own power plant, therefore I needed to be able to charge the battery with a substantially bigger array than 100w. I told him that whilst 100w may be OK for those who choose EHU, it was not going to be OK for me. I already had 135w! Having had a word with Coachman, he came back to me and offered me 320w - 2x160 panels. WOW! But in the end I settled for 2x 150w panels, one to be fitted at the factory and the second fitted by Broad Lane. And that's what happened.

I now have 300w on the roof! It's amazing what you can get if you push a bit, but to be fair, I didn't have to push all that hard. I think Coachman were interested in what I was doing and I almost believe they wanted to help. Anyway, on 8th May 2019, I picked up my new van from Broad Lane, Alcester and 3 days later we were in Wales with all the new kit fitted, as it had been removed from the Bailey some weeks earlier and fitted in the new van the day before we left. Again, I had Roadpro to thank for making it happen.

So, does it work you are asking? We went for 6 weeks and used the toaster every day, sometimes twice. We used the microwave to heat drinks and meals etc. The battery was reduced on a toast cycle by 4%, running the microwave for a few minutes was the same. While we charged phones, tablets and toothbrushes we noticed that there was so much power being produced up top that the monitor never dropped off 100% ! But even with the more greedy appliances, with 300w on the roof the battery was soon put back to 100%. At one point, I noticed 19.1 amps being fed to the battery. I knew that if I had tried to do that with a wet lead acid, it would have caused damage!

It was also fascinating to watch the electronics 'talking' to each other as the charge was cut down slowly by the solar mppt controller as the battery management system asked for less charge to fill up the last few amps. The technology is truly brilliant and that is where the cost is. As I have said and have proved to myself, had I treated lead acids like that over that period in a similar fashion, I would have had two damaged batteries - no doubt about it!

So, with a battery that holds so much power and can give high amperage to power the things we want but not to a point where it affects the cycle life, I see that this new technology is an absolute must for anyone like me who is absolutely passionate about Off Grid caravanning.

However, there is one thing I need to cover- and that's the cost of this battery. The battery cost me about £1,100. Now, if I had wanted to do the same, but with lead acids, I would have had to replace them every 2 years due to the damage from heavy draw. At £140-£150 each x 2 - work that out over 25 years! So, believe it or not, lithium not only gives me everything I want without damage, but works out far cheaper over the long run. You have to see the big picture, not just the price tag! Oh, and if I ever do get down on the amps, which I never have, I can always stick the car on and charge it up really fast. Lithium can take high charge as well as give a high charge and with no damage! If you stuck 100amps into a lead acid battery to charge it, you wouldn't have a battery left. With a lithium, you can stick 100amps into a 100ah lithium and charge it up in an hour and it'll take it!

I love my 'EHU in a box!' That orange cable is now a bad memory, as indeed Calor cylinders are after discovering Safefill cylinders, and it's all down to the amazing technology that the best in the world have given us over the last fifteen years. Twenty years ago the wheel was turning away from the beautiful quiet off grid CLs and CSs as every man and his dog chased the EHU, but I see evidence every day that that is slowing or even reversing as more and more begin to look at lithium, and the attendant electronics and realise that they are no longer held by a cable and that these sites are once again available to them. Going back to caravanning 'as it should be' is no longer seen as low brow or 'roughing it', as was recently levelled at me! With toasters, microwave ovens, coffee machines and the rest being able to be used off a battery, I would love to have the opportunity to watch the face of a forbear as they discover what we can do these days in our wobble boxes!

My desire now is to share and hopefully show others what can be done Off Grid and the money that can be saved, so I, together with an Off Grid CL owner have now started a Facebook group called CAMOGG - Caravan And Motorhome Off Grid Group. Everything to do with Off Grid equipment, ideas, tips, tricks and good off grid company - you would be most welcome to share your experiences with us.

There is life after the EHU believe me. Enjoy!

Merve Gaskin

The ACCEO National Rally would be perfect for off grid enthusiasts, why not give it a try this year at Ludlow Racecourse. Details in this issue.

Motorhome and Caravan Internet Connectivity

In recent years, many of us have used campsite wifi to access the internet from our motorhomes or caravans. It worked but coverage was poor, speeds low (so restricted usage) and often expensive so use was limited to a little web browsing and basic email.

The rollout of the 4G mobile data network and the reducing costs of mobile data plans made the use of that means of internet connectivity simpler, faster and more economical in the UK, and then in June 2017 came free roaming in the EU so we could gain the benefit there as well. We were in Europe in June 2017 and I managed to use up my (then limited) data package before we returned home.

I increased my data package at the beginning of 2018 and during our trips in the UK and Europe that year I found that adequate 4G was becoming available in most places and campsite wifi was rarely needed or wanted – even if free.

Chris and I do not watch a lot of TV in the van but there are things we would prefer not to miss and have generally used a mix of terrestrial and satellite TV to achieve this. The downside of that when abroad is the hour time difference moving 9pm to 10pm, so I bought a lead to connect my phone to the HDMI input on the TV. This proved a great success, although not used a lot we could use the various TV ‘Players’ and Amazon to watch what we wanted when we wanted. Setting it up was a bit of a faff though and the video connection on the phone was also the charging connection so a bit of pre-planning was required. However the data usage when streaming was much less than I expected.

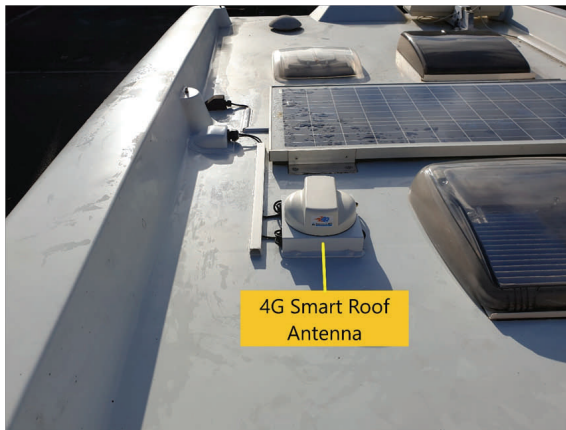
On the Auto-Sleeper stand during the October 2019 NEC Show they were displaying a product being retailed by Motorhome wifi (www.motorhomewifi.com) that will be installed in all 2020 AS models. It is the 4G Smart Compact that consists of an Antenna (roof mounted), Router (needing 4G mobile sim card) and router docking station including power supply and antenna connections. The Auto-Sleeper staff on the stand who had developed this installation (and who I’ve known for several years) were extremely enthusiastic about the performance of the system.

Motorhome wifi also had a stand at the show and after a few visits to them and receiving satisfactory answers to my many questions I decided to plead my case to Chris. The essence being that (at quite a significant initial and annual cost) we could use the internet as we do at home in that all the ‘cloud based’ synchronisations would occur, updates would happen, and TV on demand was available if wanted. We agreed to buy the kit and add a data-only sim to our mobile account and ‘go for it’.

I found that there was nowhere on the van roof where the antenna could be located above a locker so had to add a ‘stand-off’ bracket that Motorhome wifi could supply as an option. I designed the installation and installed the docking station, router and connected power (during the Wells rally), acquired a sim, the set up was easy and everything worked.



I was nervous about drilling the roof as there was no leeway for more than a couple of mm error so used a local Stoke firm, Towtal, to do that and to fix the stand-off bracket to the roof – I pre-assembled the antenna and its down leads.



I had an unused Amazon Kindle Fire TV Stick so after a little struggle to get the software updated (eventually found to be caused by a faulty remote control), I attached it to the van TV.



All this was done just in time for a planned trip for a week at Clitheroe followed by the Club's Southport rally. Don't forget this is not a cheap facility; it was great to find that all gadgets – laptops, kindles, ipads, etc had super connectivity all the time and synched with each other as though we were at home. We watched (streamed) far more TV than we would have at home because on some days the weather was terrible. I quickly determined that there was no visual benefit in streaming HD TV or high-quality video to our (excellent) Avtex TV so turned quality down. We were very happy with the quality and on average used 700MB of data for each hour viewing –we could have been using 6GB an hour using HD TV quality with no visual benefit.

Choosing your service provider for the sim card needs care. Many seem attractive but cap the data allowance at a lower level when you are roaming abroad. I've added my sim card to my contract but subjectively (and subject to my previous comment) it is probably a lot cheaper to use a pre-loaded card. We'll use what we have for a year and then decide whether to change – with life in general I'm moving more and more to: I just want it to work when I want it, rather than expending minimal cost.

When we were in Europe this year I found we could stream the BBC iPlayer through the Vodafone 4G (roaming) network, but not on local wifi, and am hoping we can confirm that this all works next year. I have loaded– all of the UK TV Service streaming apps onto the firestick.

Peter Brown

Caravan, Camping & Motorhome Show 18th—23rd February 2020



I know this probably seems like a life time ago. The Show was a little different this year, as you will have noticed we had a new location in Hall 3.



Personally, I felt that the new room in Hall 3 suited our needs better. We were fairly easy to find and in my view the location was better for our members.



I also attended every day, as I took annual leave from my paid job, even though I did have to return home on Monday to have my tooth sorted out due to an abscess forming under it.



Thank you to all the volunteers that assisted in the ACCEO Hospitality Lounge, we wouldn't be able to run it without you. Also to all the visitors that came into the Lounge for a sit down and hopefully a welcome break. There'd be no point us being there if you didn't visit, and it was lovely to chat to you all.



Elaine Nicholls
Exhibitions Team

We are happy to reveal that a massive 89,377 visitors attended this year's show at the NEC, with a huge range of visitors exploring everything from tipis and tents to caravans and luxury lodges.

Despite a stormy half term week, exhibitors reported strong business during the six days of the show, which offered the UK's largest display of caravans, campervans, motorhomes, caravan holiday homes & lodges, tents, awnings and accessories, all at one venue.

As well as five halls full of exhibitors, the show saw a packed programme of celebrity guests including **Shane Richie** opening the show alongside industry favourite **Matt Allwright**, and recent Strictly Come Dancing star **Kelvin Fletcher** joining **Rowland Rivron** on the Freedom To Go Theatre.

Families flocked to the feature activities including crazy golf, a climbing wall, face painting on a number of exhibitor stands and the brand new Electric In Motion area where cycle brands Roodog, Ride & Glide and Ribble gave young and older visitors a taste of electric powered bicycle power, as well as scooters and skateboards.

The ever-popular Top Dog Arena returned with amazing agility demonstrations by four-legged stars.

Commenting on the show, **Jenny Summers, NCC Events Marketing Director** said: *"We were delighted with the visitor numbers and the quality of the show experience, created by our exhibitors in 2020. This spring event is designed to bring new people into our industry and give a taste of the outdoor lifestyle from all parts of the industry. We had both Channel 5 and BBC Radio 4 at the show, as well as brilliant support from the local media despite the weather in the region creating issues for many."*

NCC Events







ACCEO NATIONAL RALLY AND AGM 2020



30TH SEPTEMBER 2020 TO 05TH OCTOBER 2020

HOSTED BY ALL YEAR ROUND CARAVAN
CLUB

AT LUDLOW RACECOURSE

Wednesday

Arrival Date, chance to meet up with friends new and old.

Thursday

Social Evening in the main hall with a quiz and some background music

Friday



LIVE ENTERTAINMENT from female vocalist **EMILY ABBISS**

Saturday

AGM in the afternoon

EVENING LIVE ENTERTAINMENT from the brilliant

“THE SOUNDATIONS BAND”



Sunday

Coffee Morning with announcements and prize draws.

Evening get together in room

EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

National Rally: Ludlow Racecourse September—October

The ACCEO National moves to a new venue in 2020, Ludlow Racecourse. Ludlow is a historic market town in beautiful Shropshire and has a lot of interesting places to visit to keep you entertained while you're at the National.

Its Castle and historic churches are worth a visit, along with the Acton Scott Victorian Farm just up the road, at Cleehill, which can be seen from the racecourse. For those who wish to venture out in a more vigorous manner Wenlock Edge and the Long Mynd are just a few miles up the road.



Ludlow's market is held 3 times a week Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday to supplement the local shopping experience and is renowned for its fine food.

The Racecourse is situated two miles north of Ludlow approximately 800m from the A49 at the north end around 300m at the south. The Clive Arms and Ludlow Farm Shop as well as a bus stop are on the north junction and another bus stop on the south junction,. For the 435 bus into town the service is hourly and a timetable will be available at the racecourse if you wish

Chris Lowery



THE ZODIACS
An Independent
Rallying Club
For Motor Caravans
And Caravans

Motor Caravan/Caravan Rallier?
TRY "THE ZODIACS" Tel: - Tony on
07890 537554 or see www.thezodiacs.org

Rally Sites Classified

Herefordshire

4 acre well maintained rally field at Oakleigh, St Owens Cross. 4 miles from Ross on Wye with views towards the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean. Facilities include a drinking water tap and an elsan disposal point with separate tap for washing out. Batteries can be charged and electric can be provided for rally marshals.



Large and small rallies catered for. There is a dog walk in the adjacent orchard and a fishing lake half a mile way.

We live adjacent to the rally field, so if there is anything you need we are usually on hand to help. In addition to being ACCEO personal members, we are Caravan Club members and keen ralliers.

If you would like to know more, please phone Lynda or Geoff on 01989 730466.

North Wales



Four Winds Rally Fields PRESTATYN

- Well maintained 15 Acres of flat Idyllic quite country space
- Panoramic views of the Sea and Dyserth mountains.
- Ease of Access
- Close to all amenities
- Electric hook ups, Fresh water and Disposable
- Fishing on site
- Miles of cycle paths close by
- Also Separate CL 1Acre site also available
- Separate Ladies and Gents Toilet Block
- £6.00 per unit per night
- £3.00 Electric hook up per night

Large or Small Rallies catered for
Contact Sandy or Allan for Availability and Prices
01745 857644 or email : a.clews@btinternet.com

Suffolk

Dan's Meadow Camping & Caravan Site

Come and enjoy the peace and tranquility in the heart of Suffolk. With over four acres of well kept meadow land, just off the A12 at Martlesham, near Woodbridge in Suffolk.

Large or small rallies catered for. Easy access to site.
Certified site with five electric hook-ups Jan - Dec
New toilet and shower block with disabled and baby changing facilities.

Rally facilities include

Running water - Toilets
Chemical waste disposal
Hall on site for hire
Safe site for children

Dan's Meadow

In association with Kesgrave Aggregates,
Bealings Road, Martlesham, Suffolk, IP12 4RW
Tel: 01394 386751 Fax: 01394 386752
Email: enquiries@dansmeadow.com

Why not come and visit us soon. You are assured of a warm welcome at this family-run site. Check out our web site

www.dansmeadow.com

Rally Sites Classified Page

Warwickshire

HAMPTON HOUSE FARM, COMBROOK, KINETON



Hampton House Farm,
Combroom Rd,
Kineton
Warwickshire
CV35 0JH
01926 641829

Large, quiet Rally Field, situated on a working arable farm, with panoramic views from Edgehill to The Cotswolds.
We accept small & large Rallies. Can accommodate up to 200 vans.
Water, waste, a total of 16 hook ups.
Barn available for hire for April, May & June for larger rallies.
Free Marshall pitches with hookup available. Ask for details.
Direct access to footpaths & bridleways. Only 20 minutes from Stratford upon Avon, Warwick, Leamington Spa, Banbury & The Cotswolds. email: hamptonhousefarm@gmail.com
website: www.hamptonhousefarm.com



greenhillpark

touring caravan rally site

A 3.5 acre, gently sloping rally site.
With a capacity for 40 units.
Toilets and function room.
Tree lined, secluded and picturesque.
Ideally situated between Stratford-Upon-Avon
and Henley-In-Arden.

Contact Roger 07720055007 or Andy 07845049446

Email - info@greenhillpark.com

Web - www.greenhillpark.com



Salters Lane, Bearley, Stratford-Upon-Avon. B95 6DN

Worcestershire



TOP BARN FARM Holt Heath, Worcester

Next to the River Severn in beautiful rural Worcestershire, Top Barn Farm is the ideal rally site! Plenty to see and do in the local area. Lots of space with great facilities on site:

- NEW 10 Amp Electric Hook Ups
- Toilet & Showers
- Farm Shop
- Meeting Room for Hire
- Fishing
- Farm Park



Local attractions include:

- Worcester Cathedral
- Witley Court
- West Midlands Safari Park
- Severn Valley Railway

Nearby: The Cotswolds, Malvern Spa, Cheltenham Spa, Ludlow. M5 easily accessible.

Contact: Nicky Harper on 07739746660 or
richharper22@hotmail.com
www.topbarn.co.uk



Porth Beach

tourist park

Only 100m from the beach!

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Cornwall, TR7 3NH

Call: 01637 876531
or book online at
www.porthbeach.co.uk

The ideal location for groups and rallies. Check out our website and call Chris or Kate for flexible dates and special rates.



Club **WiFi**



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Hendra

HOLIDAY PARK

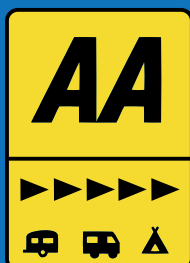
camping ★ touring ★ pods ★ holiday homes

WiFi
AVAILABLE



Quite simply a five star rally site

- ★ Superb rally facilities. ★ Experienced and popular rally venue. ★ Amazing deals and extras.
- ★ Activity programme available. ★ Organisers free 'Check & Explore' visit. ★ Electric available.
- ★ Available anytime Easter to end October. ★ Call Matt or Scott on 01637 875778.



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