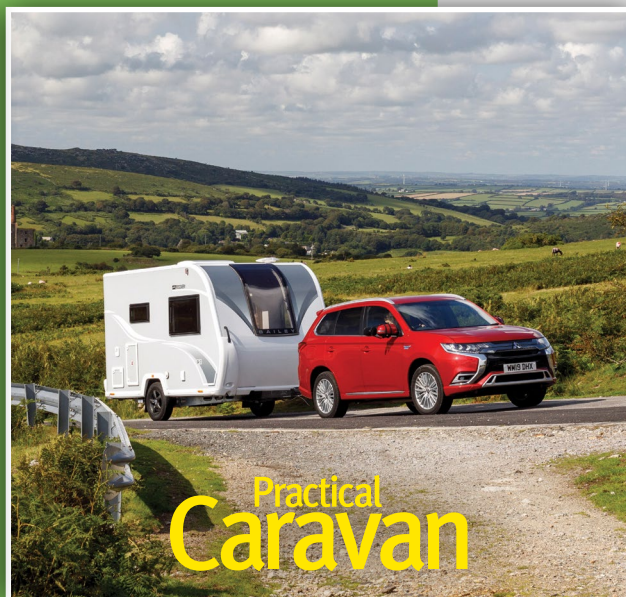


PRACTICAL CARAVAN AND
PRACTICAL MOTORHOME GUIDE TO

EASY AUTUMN TOURING

Make your season less stressful with our
handy guide to the UK's top driving routes!



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Welcome!

We've all been there - towing a caravan or driving a motorhome along a busy major road, only to get stuck in a traffic jam, or get close to running out of fuel. It's a stressful situation - which is where the *Practical Caravan and Practical Motorhome Guide to Easy Autumn Touring* comes in!

Over the next 22 pages you'll find details of stopping places, services, fuel stations, food outlets, traffic hotspots and much more besides - there's even the history of major routes, to keep you entertained on your journey.

Whether you plan your stops in advance, or simply want to take a break when you feel like it, this is the guide you need. With our help, this autumn touring season will be your best ever!

Practical Caravan **Practical Motorhome**

Contents

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A2 20

Safe and Secure 22

Sponsored by



Services

- **Where** West Knoyle. Single site, westbound, located between Amesbury and Ilchester
- **Operated by** EG Group Services
- **Parking** There's room on the public road in a layby on the B3089 next to the services. It's possible to pass through the services to reach the layby
- **Catering** Starbucks
- **Forecourt** Esso, Spar, Greggs, Subway, Starbucks on the Go, AdBlue
- **Charging** BP Chargemaster electric-vehicle charging point

Earmarked by David Cameron in 2014 as one of the roads that would benefit from a £15 billion 'roads revolution' of improvements

- **Where** SP4 7AS. Eastbound at Amesbury, also accessible from A345, close to Stonehenge
- **Operated by** EG Group Services
- **Parking** Some for caravans/motorhomes, alongside grass verges
- **Catering** Burger King, Greggs, Subway, Starbucks on the Go, Sainsbury's on the Go
- **Forecourt** Shell, Select, Deli by Shell, Costa Express, AdBlue
- **Charging** None

Services

- **Where** SP4 75Q. Large single site, westbound at the junction for Amesbury East, Bulford and Boscombe Downs
- **Operated by** Essentially a retail park; filling station run by Co-operative Group
- **Parking** There is parking for HGVs near the Co-op forecourt
- **Catering** Costa Drive Thru, Harvester, KFC Drive Thru, McDonald's Drive Thru, Pizza Hut, Solstice Bar and Grill, Toby Carvery
- **Forecourt** Co-op fuel and food, Costa Express, AdBlue, car wash, jet wash
- **Charging** BP Chargemaster electric vehicle charging point

4 | Guide to Easy Autumn Touring

For those living in the south-east, the east-west aligned A303 is often the preferred towing route to the south-west. It is certainly the shortest and avoids motorways. The 92-mile trunk road starts in the east, just west of Basingstoke in Hampshire, where it joins the M3 (J8) and heads west as far as Upottery in Devon. Here it joins the A30 in Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In this article we're focusing on the busier eastern part.

It may not have the convenience of the multifunctional motorway service stations, but it does have parking laybys, where you can pull over for a picnic in or beside the van and use your own facilities, and it does have fuel stations – 12 in fact – where you can usually stock up on fuel for yourself as well as your vehicle.

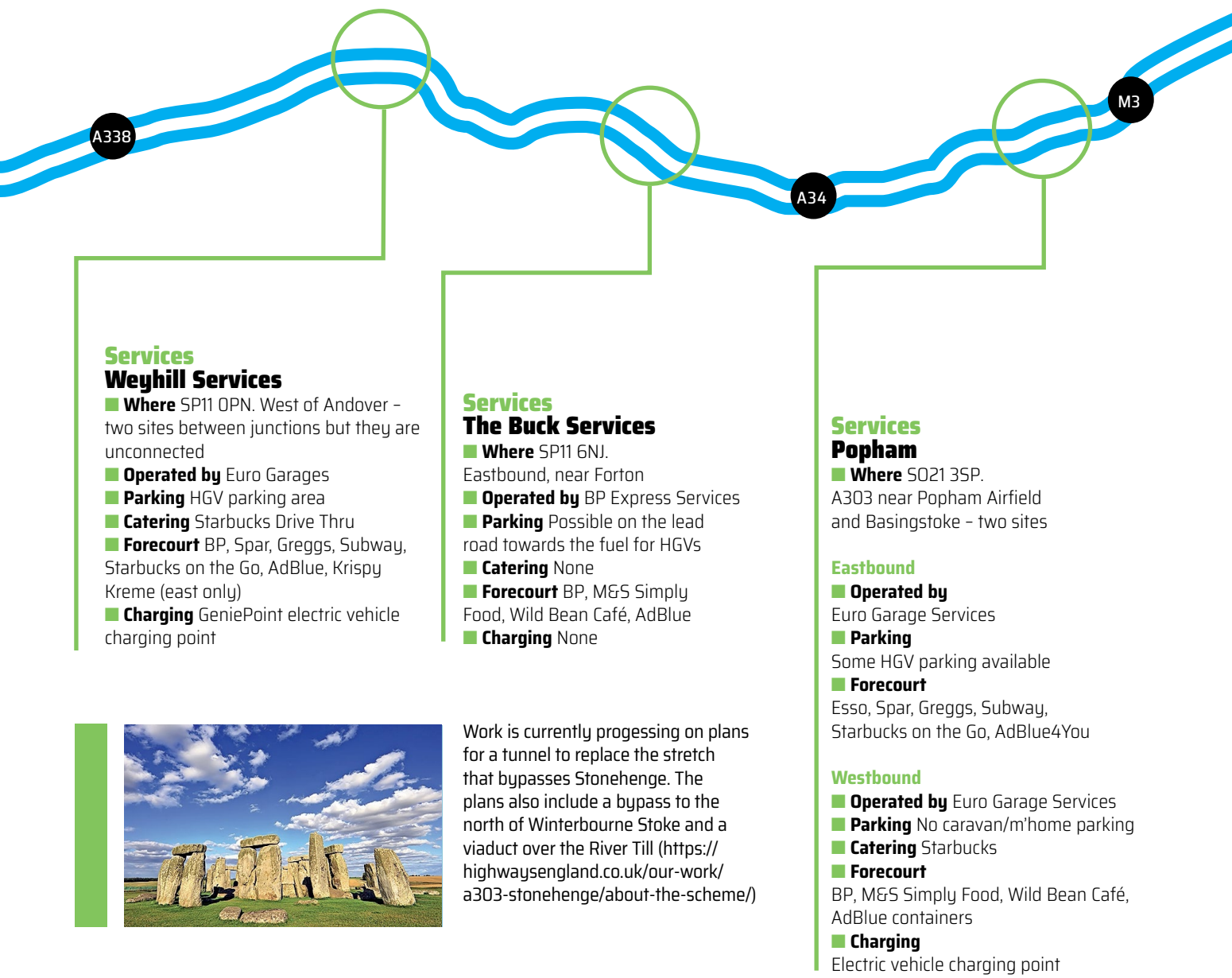
It also has a retail park with cafés and shops at Solstice Park. And at the moment it offers spectacular views of one of Britain's most iconic visitor attractions, Stonehenge, where the single-carriage Amesbury to Berwick Down section bisects the World Heritage Site.

Along its course, it covers the 5000-year-old Harrow Way from Basingstoke, past Salisbury Plain and Stonehenge.

More recently, in the 19th century, it was a coaching route known as the New Direct Road, connecting London and Exeter. The route fell into disrepair during the rise of the railways, but returned to popularity in the 1930s, when it provided a bypass to the A30, which was unable to cope with the increasing volumes of traffic. The A303's straighter route and fewer towns made it the more popular road to the south-west, and it became a trunk road in the late 1950s.

Despite the bottlenecks where dual carriageways suddenly narrow down into singles, this remains a popular route with those who like to make the journey part of the holiday.

The countryside you pass through is beautiful. Look out for the open-air piggery just past Stonehenge, on the opposite side of the road and before you get to Long Barrow!



Services
Weyhill Services

- **Where** SP11 OPN. West of Andover – two sites between junctions but they are unconnected
- **Operated by** Euro Garages
- **Parking** HGV parking area
- **Catering** Starbucks Drive Thru
- **Forecourt** BP, Spar, Greggs, Subway, Starbucks on the Go, AdBlue, Krispy Kreme (east only)
- **Charging** GeniePoint electric vehicle charging point

Services
The Buck Services

- **Where** SP11 6NJ. Eastbound, near Forton
- **Operated by** BP Express Services
- **Parking** Possible on the lead road towards the fuel for HGVs
- **Catering** None
- **Forecourt** BP, M&S Simply Food, Wild Bean Café, AdBlue
- **Charging** None

Services
Popham

- **Where** SO21 3SP. A303 near Popham Airfield and Basingstoke – two sites

Eastbound

- **Operated by** Euro Garage Services
- **Parking** Some HGV parking available
- **Forecourt** Esso, Spar, Greggs, Subway, Starbucks on the Go, AdBlue4You

Westbound

- **Operated by** Euro Garage Services
- **Parking** No caravan/m'home parking
- **Catering** Starbucks
- **Forecourt** BP, M&S Simply Food, Wild Bean Café, AdBlue containers
- **Charging** Electric vehicle charging point



Work is currently progressing on plans for a tunnel to replace the stretch that bypasses Stonehenge. The plans also include a bypass to the north of Winterbourne Stoke and a viaduct over the River Till (<https://highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/a303-stonehenge/about-the-scheme/>)

The A303 is the shortest route from London and the south-east to the south-west, but despite being a major trunk road, it still has **35 miles of single carriageway**, which are prone to traffic bottlenecks

ROADSENSE

A9

We look at major UK driving routes and reveal everything you need to know



Scotland's longest road runs from Thurso in the north, via Perth and Stirling, to Falkirk in the south

Fuel Stop

1 East Brora

■ **Where** KW9 6NJ
Past the Durnoch Firth. Fuel is available at East Brora on both sides of the road (northbound has more space for caravans/motorhomes)

Services

Skiach

■ **Where** IV16 9XJ. Single site located at a junction, between Inverness and Thurso. Operated by Gleaner Services
■ **Parking** Car park.
■ **Catering** Skiach Services restaurant
■ **Amenities** Children's play area, meeting room, picnic area, showers
■ **Forecourt** Gleaner, Shop, Costa Express, AdBlue Pump, Autogas LPG, Jet Wash ■ **Charging** Electric vehicle charging point

The A9 starts at junction 5 of the M9, but because the M9 motorway continues to form the primary route as far as Stirling, the A9 is non-primary here. The new Falkirk bypass has adopted the A9 number around the north side of the town, to meet the original line of the A9 at the junction for the Falkirk Wheel

The A9 is also known as
The Spine of Scotland

Average speed cameras (ASC) were introduced in 2016 to try to make the road safer. The HGV speed limit was raised from 40 to 50mph to maintain traffic flow. A study showed that speeding reduced from one in three to one in 20 vehicles.

Fuel Stop

2 Asda supermarket and fuel

■ **Where** IV19 1NZ
Past Inverness and before you cross the Durnoch Firth, just off the A9. Lots of parking bays

At 273 miles long, the A9 is Scotland's longest road, and runs from just west of Stirling, in the centre of the country, to Scrabster Harbour, Thurso, in the far north – the gateway to the Orkneys.

En route, it passes Bridge of Allan, Perth, Pitlochry, through the west side of the Cairngorms National Park, past Inverness and then along the east coast, following the NC500 route.

Although this is the fifth-longest A-road in the UK, it has surprisingly few services – just four – part of a deliberate strategy to encourage people to use the facilities in towns bypassed by the road, a bit like the villages étapes in France.

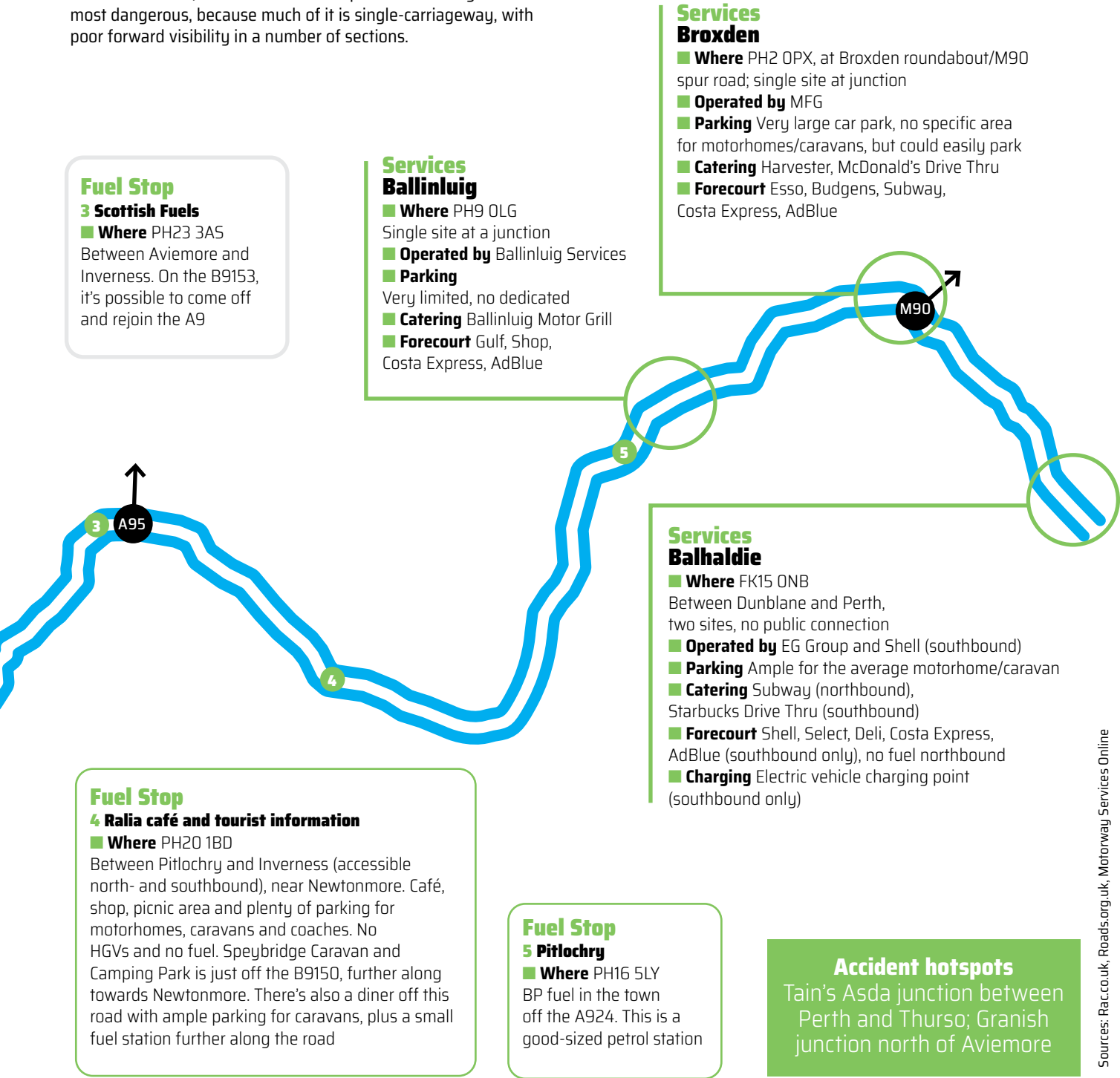
Consequently, it might be useful to be aware of where these fuel stops – for people as well as vehicles – are located before you set off.

The road's route through the Cairngorms makes this a joy for the unhurried tourist, but it also has the reputation of being Scotland's most dangerous, because much of it is single-carriageway, with poor forward visibility in a number of sections.

The 29-mile section from Dunblane to Perth is all dual-carriageway. The 117-mile stretch from Perth to Inverness is mainly single-carriageway, with nine short dual-carriageway sections that, together, add up to around 30% of the total distance.

From Inverness to Thurso, the single-carriageway north of the Tore Roundabout is dogged by tight bends and poor forward visibility. Latheron to Scrabster Harbour has better forward visibility. It's this section that follows the north-east coastline NC500 route, from Inverness as far as the village of Latheron.

The Scottish Government proposes to dual-carriageway the whole route from Perth to Inverness. This work began in 2015 and is expected to end in 2025, at a cost of about £3bn.



MAYDAY UK Breakdown Cover gets you ready by uncovering some weather motoring myths

Whether it's hot or cold, extremes in temperature pose problems for drivers. And when the weather's doing something we're not used to, we need to know how to react. With MAYDAY, we're busting six popular weather motoring myths to get you back on the UK roads.

Myth 1: it's illegal to drive in flip flops

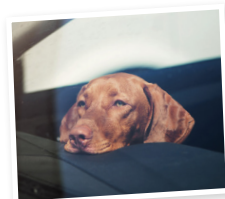
It's completely legal to drive in flip flops, sandals and even in bare feet. You just have to be able to operate the controls safely. If you get in your vehicle with wet feet that could slip off the pedals and put other road users at risk, that is against the law.

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) also advises: "We would not recommend driving barefoot because you don't have the same braking force with bare feet as you do with shoes on." And if your inappropriate footwear is found to be directly responsible for a crash, your insurer may not cover you.



Myth 2: it's illegal to leave pets in vehicles

The act itself isn't against the law, however, with reasonably mild temperatures, a vehicle left in direct sunlight can heat up quickly, and cause pets to suffer. If something happens to your pet, as a consequence of it being shut in the vehicle, you can be prosecuted under the 2006 Animal Welfare Act. If convicted, you could end up in prison for up to six months and be slapped with a chunky fine.



Myth 3: it's illegal to smash a car window to rescue a pet

You can legally break into a vehicle to save a pet in distress but you must take certain steps first. The 'Ask the Police' website (www.askthe.police.uk) says you should first ring the police on 101 or 999. If they can't get there and you want to act, tell the police what you intend to do first. Then take photos or a video of the suffering animal and get names and contact details for witnesses.

(The Criminal Damage Act 1971 says you have a lawful excuse to commit damage if: "At the time of the act or acts alleged to constitute the offence you believed that the person or persons whom you believe to be entitled to consent to the destruction of or damage to the property in question . . . would so consent to it if s/he . . . had known of the destruction or damage and its circumstances.")





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Myth 4: when it's hot you get more fuel by filling up at night



The thinking behind this is that when it's cooler, fuel is denser. When it heats up, it increases in volume, not density. Therefore, buy cooler fuel and you'll get more for your money.

That does make perfect sense but when people say fill up when the air's cooler, in the early morning or at night, they're not taking into account where fuel is stored. And that is in massive tanks buried underground where it's cool. So it really doesn't matter when you fill up.

Myth 5: tyres wear more in hot weather



This depends on the tyre and how hot the weather is. Tyres are made up of a mix of chemicals called a compound.

The compound of the regular tyres fitted to most vehicles are designed to operate across a wide temperature window.

Equally, the tread patterns provide a compromise between dissipating water, managing heat, noise, and wear.

You would imagine that very hot weather would increase friction between tyre and road and therefore tyre wear. While this may be true, tyre experts say it can be offset by the increase in air pressure inside the tyre. This slightly reduces the amount of tread in contact with the road.

Myth 6: turning on the heater doesn't cool the engine



If you notice your vehicle's temperature gauge climbing, there's a quick and very temporary solution. Turn the air-con off (this is powered by the engine) and put the heating on (of course it makes sense to open a few windows too). Hot water from the engine will flow through the heater's core. This will act like another radiator with heat being drawn away from the engine. It is just a 'get you home or to a garage' fix. It's not normal for an engine to overheat, no matter how hot the weather is, so seek professional attention. And a reminder – don't top-up your radiator while the engine is still hot.

To get your **MAYDAY UK Breakdown Cover**,
call us on **0345 366 6579** or visit **camc.com/MAYDAY**

WE S N E S R O A D

A40

London and Fishguard are the start and finish of this route across England and Wales



The original 1920 route was from the City of London to Fishguard. It officially starts where St Martin's Le Grand meets Cheapside and includes Holborn Viaduct, High Holborn, Oxford Street and the Westway, following the old Roman road to Oxford. As caravans/motorhomes are unlikely to use this section, we'll begin where the A40 leaves the M40 at Oxford and heads into Wales.

As a major route to the port of Fishguard, the A40 is useful for those going to Ireland by ferry. It is a mix of single- and dual-carriageway, passing through the Cotswolds and the Wye Valley before skirting the edge of the Brecon Beacons and continuing on to Carmarthen.

From the M40, the A40 is a busy dual-carriageway, picking up traffic to Oxford and beyond, forming the northern section of the Oxford ring road. Between Oxford and Cheltenham, it passes through the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), mainly as single-carriageway.

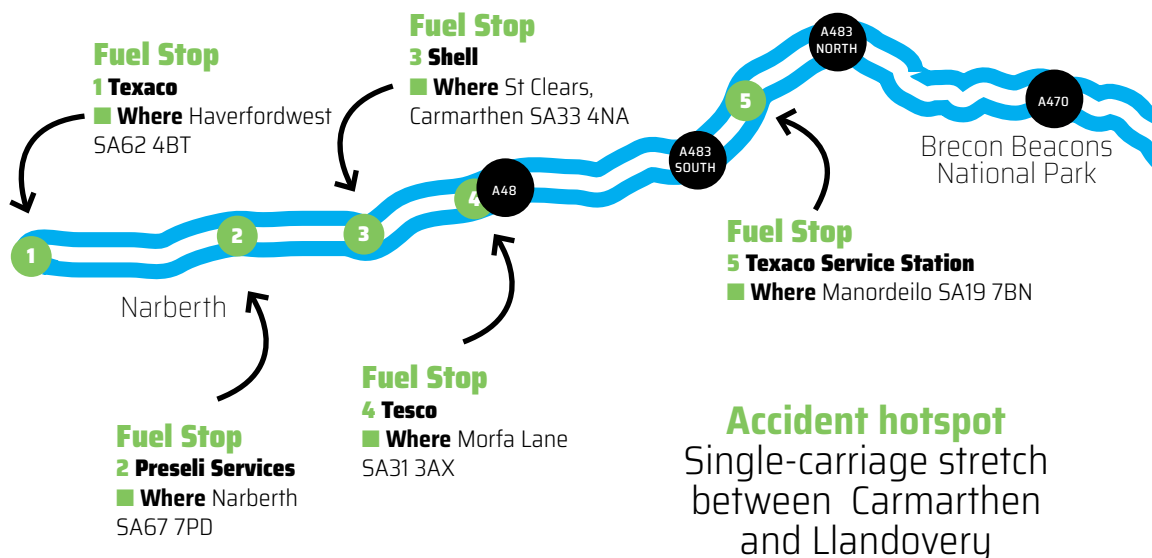
After Cheltenham, it crosses with the M5 before becoming the Gloucester bypass. For the remainder of Gloucestershire, and a part of Herefordshire, the road is single-carriageway until Ross-on-Wye, where it connects with the M50.

From here to Monmouth, it passes through the Wye Valley AONB, crossing the Welsh border and running parallel to the River Wye. Near Raglan, the A40 is dual-carriageway as far as Abergavenny.

Here it narrows, following the north side of the Usk Valley through the eastern part of the Brecon Beacons National Park.

Bypassing Brecon as dual-carriageway, it narrows again to single-carriageway to follow the northern edge of the Beacons. From Llandovery, it runs along the Tywi Valley to Carmarthen, where it becomes the eastern bypass until Pensarn. From Carmarthen it is the primary route west until it meets the A477. From here, it is two- or three-lane single-carriageway to Haverfordwest and Fishguard.

Sources: Motorway Services online, Sabre, RACe



The A40 covers
263 miles & is the
UK's **7th longest** road

Facts and figures

- Links London to Fishguard
- Known as the London to Fishguard trunk road
- Passes through seven London boroughs
- Meets the M40 at Denham, Buckinghamshire
- Also connects with the M4, M5, A34, A449 and A479
- Covers 263 miles and is the UK's seventh-longest road



The stretch of the A40 just outside Oxford, early on a winter morning

Busy junctions

- **Golden Valley Interchange**
Gloucestershire, where the A40 meets J11 of the M5
- **Headington roundabout**
just outside Oxford
- **Wye Bridge Monmouthshire**,
where the A40 meets the A449
taking traffic to Newport
- **Over roundabout**
Gloucestershire

Services Oxford

- **Where** OX33 1LJ
Single site at J8a of M40 and A40
- **Operated by** Welcome Break
- **Parking** Good dedicated parking for caravans/motorhomes. First two hours free, after which £30
- **Catering** Burger King, Harry Ramsden's, KFC, PizzaExpress, Starbucks, Subway, Tossed, Costa Express, Krispy Kreme, Yorkshire Tea
- **Facilities** Fone Bitz, Little Waitrose, WHSmith
- **Forecourt** BP, Shop, Upper Crust, The Pasty Shop, Krispy Kreme, Millie's Cookies, Starbucks on the Go, AdBlue
- **Charging** Electric vehicle charging point

Services Ross Spur

- **Where** HR9 7QJ
On A449, access from M50 and A40
- **Operated by** Euro Garages
- **Parking** Some for HGVs
- **Catering** Starbucks Drive Thru
- **Forecourt** Esso, Spar, Greggs, Subway, Starbucks on the Go, AdBlue
- **Charging** None

Services Ducklington

- **Where** OX28 4TT
- **Operated by** Shell
- **Parking** None
- **Catering** Countrywide
- **Forecourt** Shell, LPG, Select, Budgens, Deli by Shell, Costa Express, AdBlue
- **Charging** None

Services Symonds Yat

- **Where** HR9 6DP
Between Ross-on-Wye and Monmouth

Westbound

- **Operated by** MFG
- **Parking** Plenty of space for HGVs
- **Catering** Subway, Costa Express, West Cornwall Pasty Co
- **Forecourt** Gulf, Spar, Costa Express, Food to Go Café, AdBlue
- **Charging** None

Eastbound

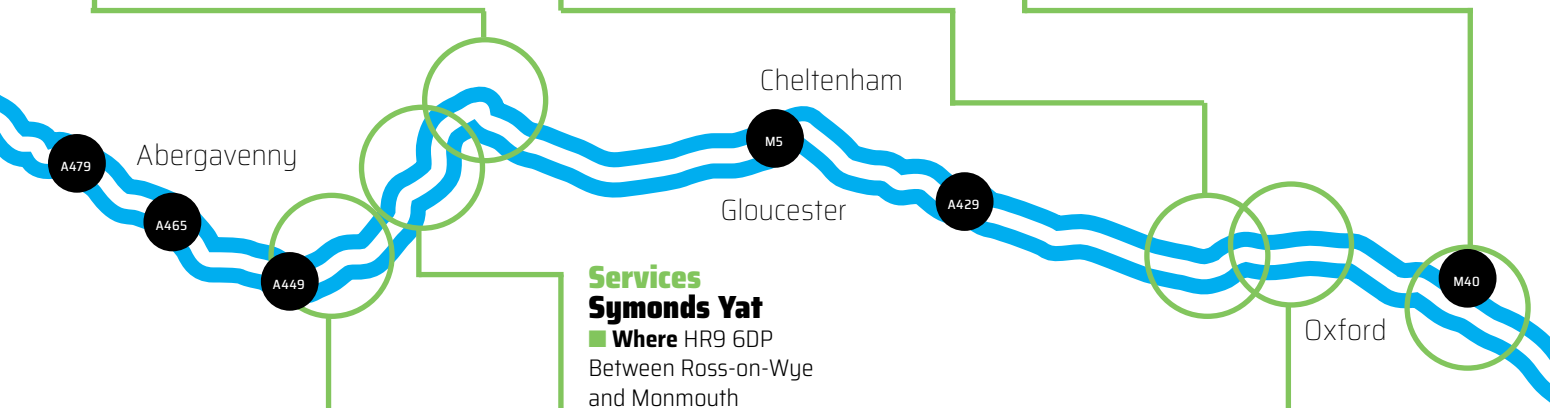
- **Parking** Plenty of space for HGVs
- **Catering** Subway, Costa Express, West Cornwall Pasty Co
- **Forecourt** Shell, AdBlue, Londis
- **Charging** None

Services Monmouth

- **Where** Between Newport and Monmouth
- **Operated by** Euro Garages
- **Parking** Good space for HGVs east- and westbound
- **Catering** Burger King Drive Thru, Greggs, Starbucks, Subway
- **Forecourt** Esso AdBlue, Spar
- **Charging** None

Services Eynsham

- **Where** OX29 4EN
Between Oxford and Cheltenham
- **Operated by** MFG
- **Parking** None
- **Catering** Costa Express, Rollover
- **Forecourt** (westbound only) BP, Hursts, Costa Express, AdBlue; (eastbound only) Esso, Tesco Express, Costa Express
- **Charging** Electric vehicle charging point (westbound only)



A82

Experience beautiful Scottish views with a trip along the north-south A82 road



The A82 connects Glasgow to Inverness via Fort William, and provides a vital link for the West Highlands and the Western Isles to Glasgow and Scotland's Central Belt.

At 175 miles, it is Scotland's second-longest road, and is one of the UK's most scenic routes, passing lochs, moors and mountains. It is a stunner and, for tourists, very rewarding.

You pass through Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park alongside the loch, following the Luss Road on the west shore.

You will also cross Rannoch Moor, pass through Glencoe, cross the Ballachulish Bridge, then pass Fort William and Ben Nevis, Loch Ness and Urquhart Castle.

Some of the time you will be sandwiched between loch and mountain or crossing moorland, and most of the time, you will be on single-carriageway – the view will always be fantastic, though.

There are few service stations here, but at Tyndrum, near Crianlarich, is the Real Food Transport Café, with a large car park, and Pine Trees Leisure Park (www.pinetreescaravanpark.co.uk), offering fully serviced pitches with gorgeous views.

There's a car park at Bridge of Orchy, and viewpoints at Glencoe and Three Sisters. Signs for Glencoe Visitor Centre will also get you to the Glencoe Camping and Caravanning Club Site.



Fun facts

- The A82 featured in Bond film Skyfall (2012), when 007 and M escape to his ancestral home in the Highlands
- Glencoe has also been a location in Harry Potter films, Highlander (1986), Braveheart (1995) and Rob Roy (1995). More recently, it was in Outlaw King (2018) and Mary Queen of Scots (2018)
- Luss was the setting for Scottish Television's popular daytime soap opera Take the High Road (1980-2003)

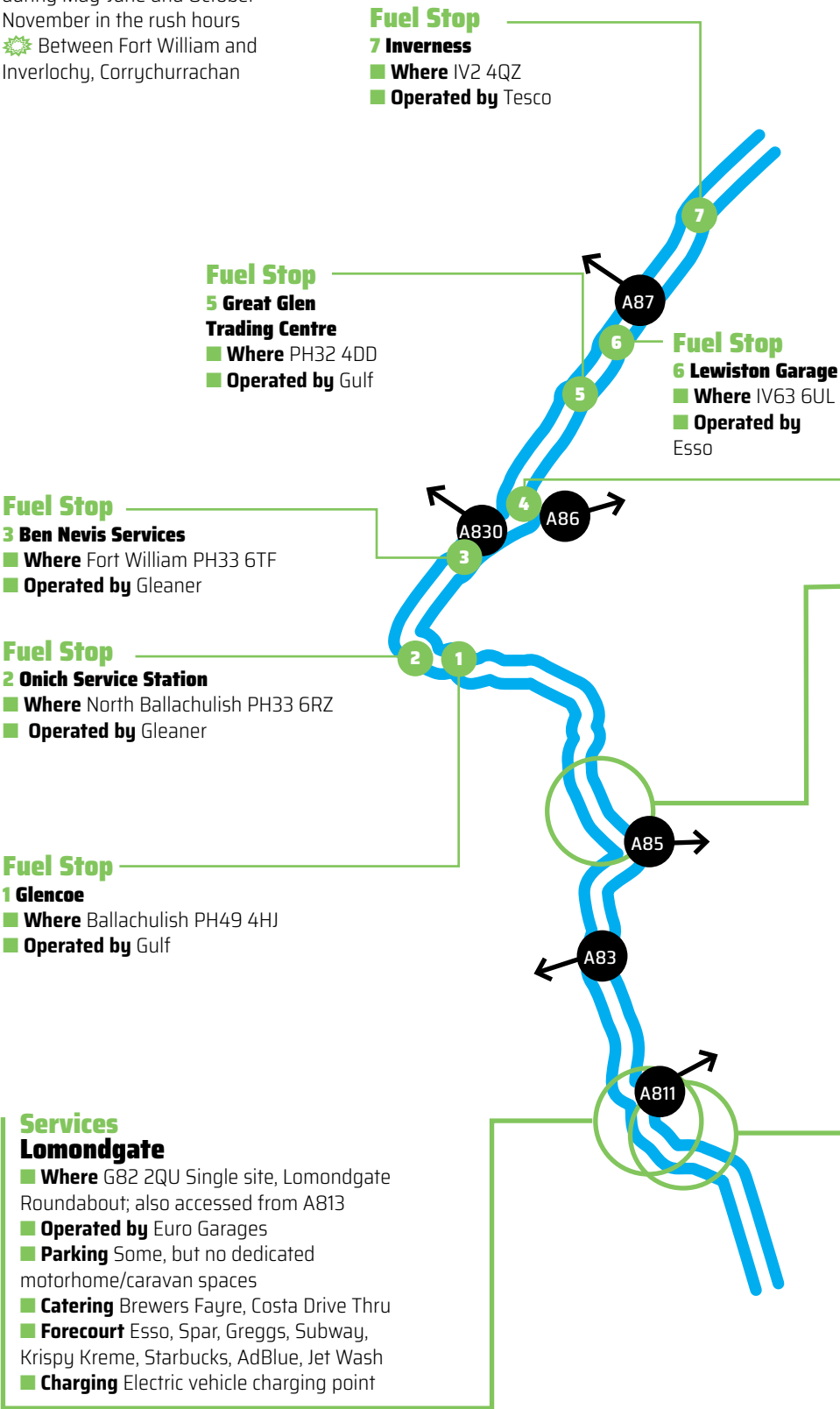
HISTORY

Some of the road began life as a military route, built in the latter half of the 18th century after the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, to give troops access to the Highlands. Many of these military road were revised at the beginning of the 19th century by Thomas Telford. The route was again revised in the 1930s, to accommodate the growing popularity of the motor car, and became one of the first trunk roads in 1936.

Sources: Wikipedia, Transport Scotland, Roads.org.uk Motorway Services Online, sabre-roads.org

Accident Hotspots

- Between Renton and Alexandria and between Dalnottar and Dumbarton, look out for deer, particularly during May-June and October-November in the rush hours
- Between Fort William and Inverlochy, Corrychurrachan



Services

Green Welly Stop

- Where Tyndrum FK20 8RY Single site on street
- Parking Dedicated spaces at back of parking lot
- Catering Snack Stop and Restaurant
- Forecourt Gulf, groceries, ATM, shop selling outdoor wear, accessories, homewares, food and gifts, plus a launderette and showers
- Charging Electric vehicle charging point

Fuel Stop

- 4 Glengarry
- Where PH35 4HL
- Operated by Gleaner

Services Milton

- Where G82 2TZ (northbound) G82 2TN (southbound) Two sites between Glasgow and Dumbarton
- Operated by MFG (northbound), BP Express (southbound)
- Parking Car parks, but no dedicated motorhome/caravan spaces
- Catering Starbucks, Masala Twist (northbound); Stonefield Carvery (southbound)
- Forecourt Esso, Hursts, Costa Express, AdBlue (northbound); BP, M&S Simply Food, Wild Bean Café, AdBlue, Jet Wash (southbound)

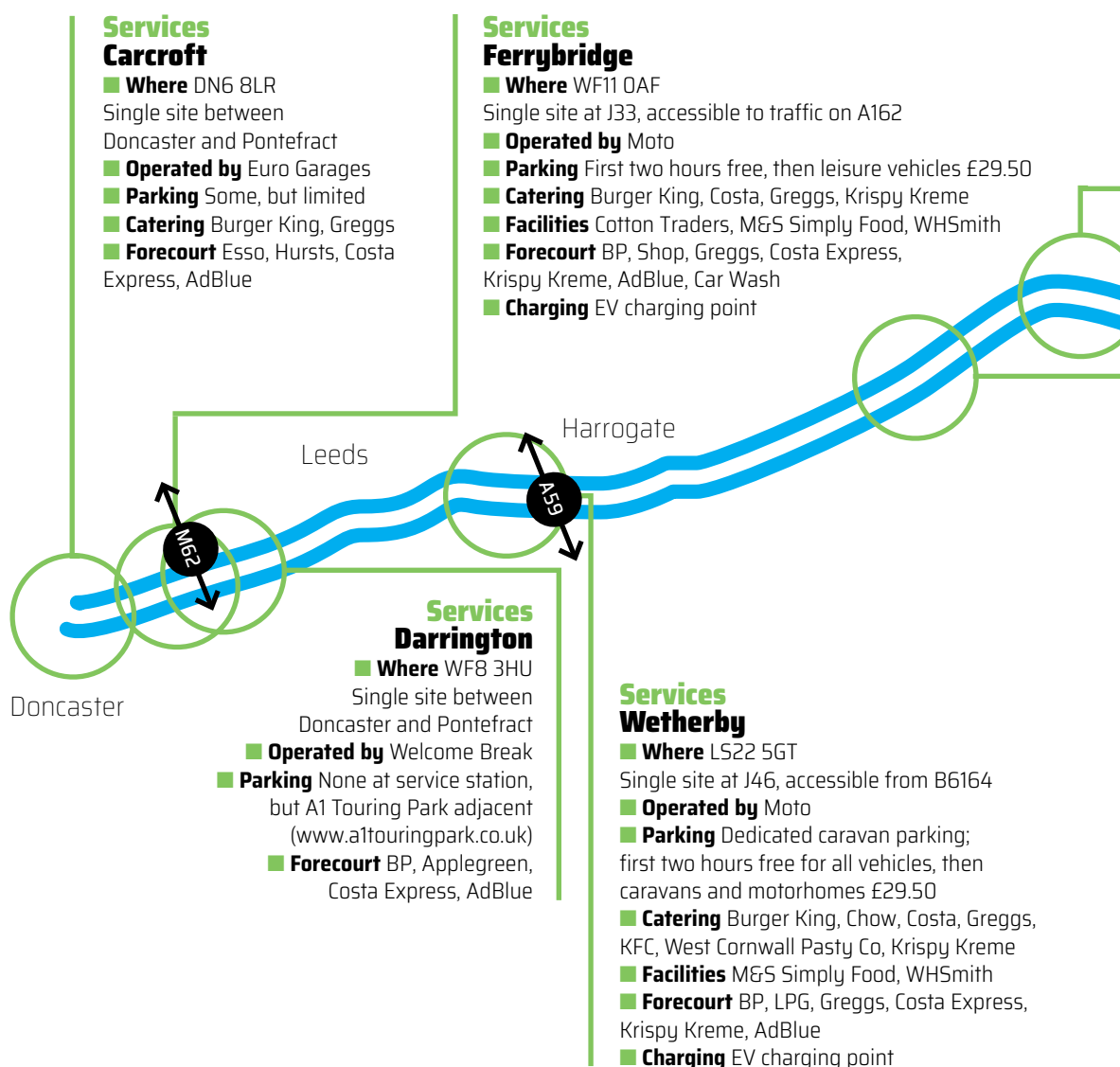
A1 (North)

This major route cuts through many counties and towns – here's what you need to know



At 410 miles, the A1 is the UK's longest numbered road, giving access to eastern England – Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire – the East Riding of Yorkshire and North Yorkshire, the towns of Peterborough, Doncaster, Leeds, York, Darlington and Durham, then past the Angel of the North to Newcastle upon Tyne. As it starts to follow the Northumberland coastline, the route is pleasantly scenic, reaching Alnwick, Bamburgh, Seahouses and Berwick-upon-Tweed.

The A1 passes through 17 counties and has 36 services, although we only list those with room for caravans and motorhomes. We begin this stretch in South Yorkshire, at Carcroft services. Incidentally, Wetherby services claims to be the greenest service area in Britain.



Services

Scotch Corner

■ **Where** DL10 6PQ

Single site at J53, Scotch Corner Interchange, accessible to traffic on A66 and A6108

■ **Operated by** Moto

■ **Parking** None for caravans

■ **Catering** Burger King, Costa, Greggs, KFC, West Cornwall Pasty Co, Costa Express, Krispy Kreme

■ **Facilities** M&S Simply Food, WHSmith

■ **Forecourt** Esso, Spar, Subway, Starbucks on the Go, AdBlue

■ **Charging** EV charging point

Services

Durham

■ **Where** DH6 5NP

Single site at J61, accessible to traffic on A177, A688, B6291

■ **Operated by** Road Chef

■ **Parking** Caravans and HGVs; first two hours free for all vehicles, then cars pay £12 and caravans £24

■ **Catering** Costa, McDonald's Drive Thru, Costa Express, Krispy Kreme

■ **Facilities** WHSmith

■ **Forecourt** Shell, Select, Deli, Costa Express, AdBlue

■ **Charging** EV charging point

Services

Willowtree

■ **Where** NE66 2HA

Two sites around Alnwick junction

■ **Operated by** Co-operative Group

■ **Catering** McDonald's Drive Thru, The Hog's Head Inn

■ **Forecourt** BP, Spar, Costa, West Cornwall Pasty Co

■ **Forecourt** Co-op Petrol, Co-op Food, Costa Express, AdBlue, LPG, Car Wash, Jet Wash

Services

Leeming Bar

■ **Where** DL8 1DT

Single site at J51, accessible to traffic on the A684

■ **Operated by** Moto

■ **Parking** Dedicated parking for caravans; first two hours free for all vehicles, then caravans £17.50

■ **Catering** Costa, McDonald's Drive Thru

■ **Forecourt** BP, Shop, Costa Express, AdBlue

Services

Washington

■ **Where** DH3 2SJ

Two sites between J64 and J65 connected by a bridge

■ **Operated by** Moto

■ **Parking** For HGVs and caravans; first two hours free for all vehicles, then caravans £24.50

■ **Catering** Burger King, Costa, Greggs, Krispy Kreme

■ **Forecourt** BP, Shop, Costa Express, Krispy Kreme, AdBlue

■ **Charging** EV charging point

Services

Adderstone

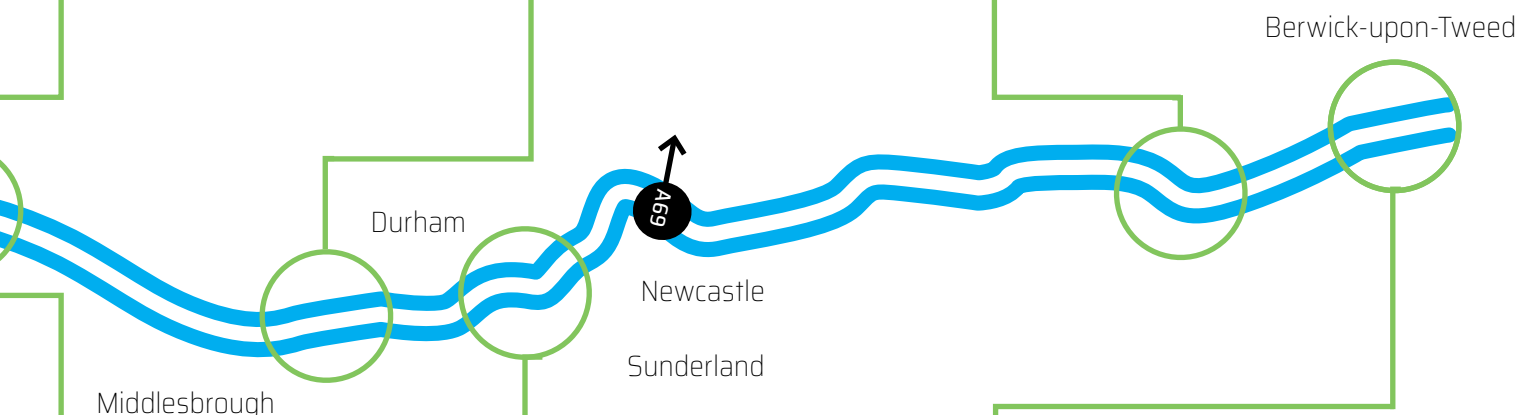
■ **Where** NE70 7JU

Single site between Alnwick and Berwick-upon-Tweed

■ **Parking** Plenty of room for caravans; 30 overnight HGV spaces at £12 per night

■ **Catering** Café One, The Lodge Bar & Grill

■ **Forecourt** Harvest Energy, KeyStore More, Coffee Machine, Air1 AdBlue, Jet Wash



Get road trip ready

MAYDAY UK Breakdown

Six things to do before you hit the road

1 Wake up those tired tyres

One in five breakdowns on the motorway are due to tyre problems, according to Highways England. We don't want you sitting on the side of the road when you could be sitting on a camp chair, so check your tyres before you set off.

Tyre pressure

Check the recommended tyre pressure in your vehicle's manual, and make sure your tyres are at the right level.

Different pressure might be recommended in hot weather, or if you've got a lot of luggage or people in the vehicle – so keep an eye out to make sure you've balanced it out.

Tyre treads

Checking your tyre treads is as important as checking their pressure. Thankfully, it's nice and easy.

Place a 20p coin into the main tread grooves of your tyre. If you can't see the outer band of the coin when it's inserted, then your tread is above the legal limit. If the outer band is visible, then it's time to get that tyre changed.

2 Test your battery

Battery trouble is the most common cause of breakdowns. We've seen a huge increase in battery problems over the past year or so, partly due to so many vehicles not being used as regularly as usual. Thankfully, the power to stop this from happening is in your hands.

Check your vehicle battery (or take it to a local garage if you'd rather someone check it for you) and give it a charge if it's low.



3 Your vehicle needs fluids as well

Coolant

Look for the maximum and minimum markers on your coolant reservoir, and make sure that the level of fluid sits between these two.

Oil

When the engine is cold, pull the dipstick out, wipe it on a cloth, then push it all the way back in. The oil should reach somewhere in between the two optimum level marks. It's best to wipe it and check it a few times to be sure.

Brake fluid

The brake fluid reservoir is normally white plastic with a black lid and a yellow brake symbol on it. When you're parked on a flat surface, check to see if the fluid level is between the minimum and maximum markers. If any of these fluid levels are too low, it's time to top it up.

4 It's always cool to check your air-con

If your air-con system is blowing out warm or room-temperature air, it's probably time to get it re-gassed.

You could do this yourself with the right

with down Cover

We've got our top 6 tips to help you get ready for your blissful escape, or idyllic camping adventure



'Before any road trip, it's important to be prepared for an emergency, whether it's medical or mechanical'

safety equipment, but we recommend taking it to a professional at a local garage, who will help get it working again properly.

5 Remember, safety first

Before any road trip, it's important to be prepared for an emergency, whether medical or mechanical.

Medical

Whether there's a minor accident, or those new trainers of yours have rubbed in all the wrong places, a first aid kit can help get the problem sorted.

Visibility equipment

If you break down, having high-vis equipment with you will help keep you safe from other drivers (and can help your

technician find you). A reflective hazard triangle, some hi-vis vests, an LED flameless flare and a torch are all worth having with you.

6 Have your handbook to hand

Ah, the vehicle handbook. We get it, we throw it in the glovebox, we forget about it. Well, while it's not the most entertaining thing you'll ever read, it's worth having to hand when you go on a long drive.

Sometimes, minor issues can be sorted with a bit of basic troubleshooting using your manual. It's also a must for when you're sorting out your tyres.

Finally, and most importantly, have fun! Enjoy your road trip and remember, if you need us, MAYDAY UK Breakdown Cover is here 24/7.



Call 0345 366 6579 or
visit camc.com/MAYDAY

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**CARAVAN AND
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A470

The A470 cuts from south to north Wales – here’s our guide to what you need to know



The A470, linking the south and north coasts of Wales, was mainly created by renumbering existing trunk roads. It passes through two national parks – Brecon Beacons and Snowdonia – and ends by the sea at Llandudno.

The road starts on a large roundabout in Cardiff Bay. Its route through Cardiff takes in the National Museum and City Hall, Cardiff Castle and the University of Wales. It then passes under the M4 by the fairytale folly of Castell Coch.

Moor and mountain

Along the Taff Valley towards Pontypridd and Merthyr Tydfil, the road continues north towards Abercynon and Mountain Ash, taking in the Merthyr Bypass.

High in the Brecon Beacons, it passes three reservoirs and some parking, if you want to stop at Storey Arms, the start of the footpath to Pen y Fan, the highest point in South Wales.

Away from Brecon, it heads north-east into the Wye Valley, then follows the Wye north-west to the market towns of Builth Wells, and Rhayader in the Elan Valley, an area famed for its dams and reservoirs.

At Llangurig it turns towards Llanidloes, on the River Severn. At Newtown, it heads north-west to Machynlleth, home to the caves and mines of King Arthur’s Labyrinth.

Six miles short of Machynlleth, it turns right and enters the Snowdonia National Park at Mallwyd, skirting Dyfi Forest and curving west to Dolgellau and Cadair Idris.

To get to Dolgellau, the road makes a steep ascent through the 3.5km Bwlch yr Oerddrws pass. The descent is more gradual and meets the A487 at Cross Foxes. Bypassing Dolgellau, it runs north with the A487 via Coed y Brenin Forest Park to Trawsfynydd, then to Ffestiniog and Blaenau Ffestiniog.

The A470 crosses the River Conwy to the south-east of Betws-y-coed. Passing to the east, it heads past Zip World Fforest, then down the Conwy Valley towards Llanrwst and on to the ‘Queen of Welsh Resorts’, the seaside town of Llandudno.

Services

Eso Garage Dolgellau

■ **Where** LL40 2AB

■ **Parking** Yes

■ **Facilities** Shop, Starbucks just before fuel station with plenty of parking

■ **Open** 7am-8pm

Services

Texaco Caersws

■ **Where** SY17 5EF

■ **Facilities** Mini-supermarket

■ **Parking** None

■ **Open** 7am-10pm (closed on Mondays)

FAST FACTS

■ The A470 or Cardiff to Glan Conwy Trunk Road is 186 miles (299km) long

■ It begins on a roundabout at Cardiff Bay and ends on Llandudno’s seafront

Services

Eso EG Wye Garage

■ **Where** LD3 0UR, near junction with A479

■ **Operated by** Euro Garages

■ **Facilities** Spar shop

■ **Parking** Area behind shop

Services

Sainsbury’s

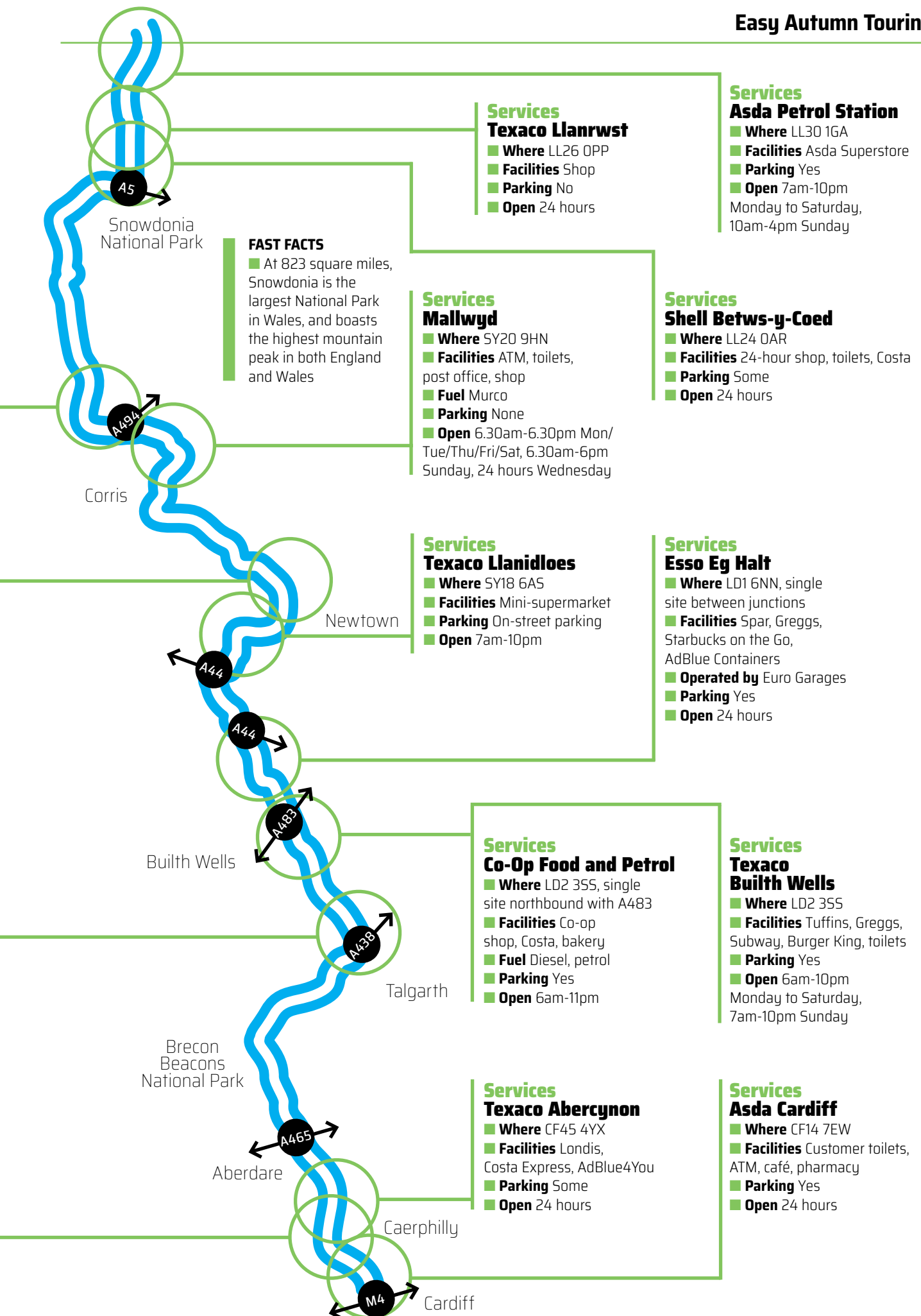
■ **Where** CF37 4DA

■ **Facilities** Toilets, baby change, ATMs, jet wash

■ **Fuel** Petrol, diesel

■ **Parking** 455 spaces

■ **Open** 7am-10pm Monday to Saturday, 10am-4pm Sunday



ROADSENSE

A2

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**Explore the best of the beautiful
Northern Irish coast along the stunning A2**

From south to north, the A2 starts at Newry, a vibrant city that was once a major port and is now a thriving retail centre. To the east are the Mourne Mountains; to the south-west, Ring of Gullion Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

From there, the A2 runs alongside the Newry River, then the east bank of Carlingford Lough – the west bank is in the Republic of Ireland – as far as Lisnacree, crossing to Kilkeel and turning north to hug the Co Down coastline, sandwiched between the sea and the Mourne Mountains, to the seaside town of Newcastle.

The town sits at the foot of Slieve Donard, Northern Ireland's highest mountain. Out in the harbour are seals and smugglers' caves and along its shore, the UK's only seaweed bath-house.

The road passes Murlough Nature Reserve, managed by the National Trust, on the Mourne Coastal Route to Belfast. There are a couple of car parks along this stretch.

At Clough, the A2 turns east, then south to Tyrella Beach, backed by 25 hectares of mature sand dunes. This is a conservation area with a large car park. At Killough, it circumnavigates the sheltered harbour then continues on to Ardglass

before heading north-east towards Strangford. Strangford Lough is a large sea lough, almost enclosed by the Ards Peninsula.

At its narrowest point at Strangford, the road meets the ferry to cross to Portaferry. Here, you could follow a narrow road around the loughside, but the A2 leaves Portaferry, heading north-east to Cloughey, from where it hugs the eastern shore of the Ards Peninsula, passing through Bangor then into Belfast, becoming Shore Road.

Causeway Coast

Once clear of Belfast and following the Belfast Lough through Carrickfergus, the road becomes the Causeway Coastal Route, following the western edge of Larne Lough to Larne.

From here, the route is sandwiched between sea and mountain as far as Cushendall, at which point it meanders inland a little, crossing the Glendun River, as far as Ballycastle.

From Larne to Ballycastle, the road passes through the glorious Antrim Coast & Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

After Ballycastle, the A2 follows the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to

Portrush, passing the Giant's Causeway. After Portrush, it enters Co Londonderry.

At Portstewart it runs south to Coleraine, crosses the River Bann, then heads north again to follow the coast beyond Castlerock. It passes the Umbra Nature Reserve and then turns inland. At Limavady, the road heads westwards.

At City of Derry airport, it becomes a dual carriageway to the outskirts of Derry. The road enters the city to cross the River Foyle at Waterside, then heads north-east to the border.



On the road along the
spectacular Causeway Coast
in Northern Ireland

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Sources: Roads.org.uk, Motorway Services online, Sabre-Roads.org, RAC

ASK THE EXPERTS

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Simple safety checks
MAYDAY UK Breakdown cover here with advice for caravan and trailer owners! Before you use the A2, give your tyres a once over. Check their pressure, keep your treads above 1.6mm, and remove any stones, oil or fuel you see. Not using your caravan or trailer for a while? Keep your tyres in good condition by storing your outfit in a cool, dry place, away from sunlight, and consider breakdown cover at home, in case you need assistance when you bring them back out again. Talking of cover: check out MAYDAY UK Breakdown cover, exclusively for Caravan and Motorhome Club members.

FUEL STATIONS

- 1 Texaco**
Newry BT34 3LD

2 BP
Newcastle BT33 OLN

3 Maxol Service Station
Newtownards BT22 1QU

4 BP
Bangor BT19 7HA

5 Tesco
Bangor BT19 7HB
In Bloomfield Shopping Centre & Retail Park, where there might be further parking

6 Sainsbury's
Bangor BT19 7HJ

7 AS4
Bangor BT19 1AA

8 Maxol Service Station Marino
Holywood BT18 OLR

9 BP
Holywood BT18 ONE

10 Kinnegar
Holywood BT18 9ES

11 Tesco
Belfast BT4 2PW

12 Emo Oil Embankment Service Station
Belfast BT15 9PW
Also has EV charging

13 Maxol Service Station
Whitehouse Auto 24 BT37 9SZ
Retail park by station

14 Emo Oil Trackside Service Station
Newtownabbey BT37 9RY

15 Maxol Service Station Hazelbank Auto 24
Carrickfergus BT37 0AA

16 BP
Carrickfergus BT38 8BS
Potential parking here, plus a retail park

17 Cable
Carrickfergus BT38 9SP

18 Glenarm Road Filling Station
Larne BT40 1DZ

19 Glencloy Filling Station
Ballymena BT44 0HP
Parking possible

20 Two Trees Service Station
Cushendall BT44 ONB
Limited parking possible

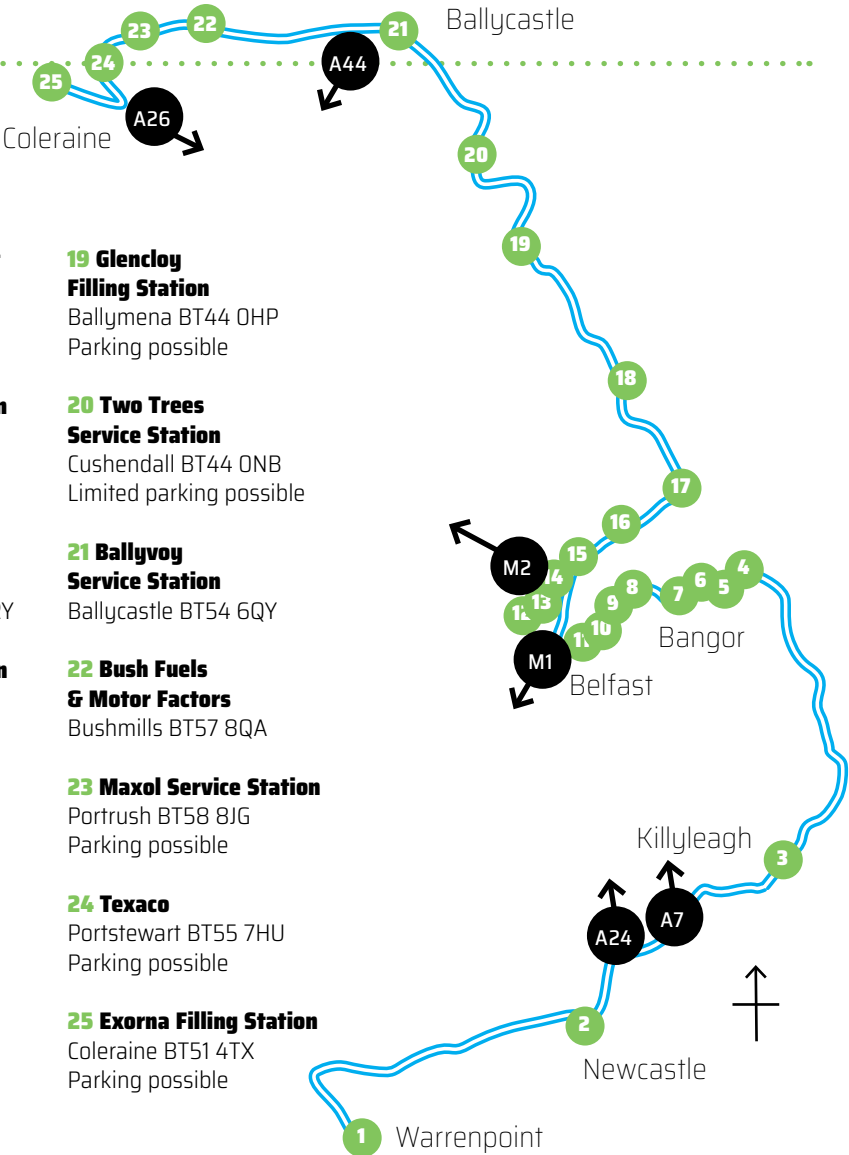
21 Ballyvoy Service Station
Ballycastle BT54 6QY

22 Bush Fuels & Motor Factors
Bushmills BT57 8QA

23 Maxol Service Station
Portrush BT58 8JG
Parking possible

24 Texaco
Portstewart BT55 7HU
Parking possible

25 Exorna Filling Station
Coleraine BT51 4TX
Parking possible



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Safe & secure

It's crucial to keep your caravan or motorhome secure. Here are some easy ways to do just that

People quickly become very attached to their motorhome or caravan; they're almost part of the family. And like any family member, you'll want to protect your motorhome or caravan and keep it safe.

Fortunately, there are some simple steps that you can take to keep your home-from-home secure.

Storage

Most touring units spend far more time in storage than they do out on the road. So when choosing where to store your motorhome or caravan, security should be a top priority.

A friendly local farmer might rent out the corner of a disused barn, but if the closest thing to security is a geriatric sheepdog, you'd be better off choosing specialist storage. Features to look for include CCTV, 24-hour on-site security, robust perimeter fencing, security lighting and controlled access.

Start your search for secure storage at CaSSOA (the Caravan Storage Site Owners' Association). Any of the 400+ sites listed on the CaSSOA website (www.cassoa.co.uk) must achieve a minimum level of security, which is independently assessed every five years (unless security concerns prompt an earlier visit).

There are three levels of security available: Bronze, Silver and Gold. You can expect to pay in the region of £350 to store a single-axle unit for a year, although costs will vary from site to site.

You'll also find that twin-axle caravans and larger motorhomes will cost more to store in these facilities than smaller vehicles.

Undercover storage – which helps to protect your motorhome or caravan from the elements as well as thieves – will also cost more.

However, you shouldn't rule out a particular storage facility just because it isn't part of CaSSOA.



At home

Of course, one of the most appealing things about caravanning and motorcaravanning is the ability to pack up and head off on tour whenever the mood takes you. But that's not so easy if your motorhome is in a storage site 20 miles away.

If you have space, keeping your motorhome or caravan at home is a convenient solution. But unless you take certain precautions, it can also be all too convenient for thieves.

Invest in good security. Hitchlocks on caravans, for example, are not very effective until the hitch is on something, so a security post with a ball on the end could be really effective, as you lock the caravan to this, then install a wheel clamp and augment with steady-leg locks, too.

Posts are great with motorhomes as well, and there's a good choice of wheel clamps and steering wheel locks available.

When choosing a security device such as a wheel

1 Motorhome and caravan thefts are on the rise

2 CaSSOA is a good place to start your research on sites



lock, look for one that has been certified Sold Secure Silver or Gold, preferably Gold. A handful of products achieve the even higher Diamond standard.

Some examples of wheel locks and clamps that have performed well in independent testing include Al-Ko's Secure Caravan Wheel Lock (www.alko-tech.com) and Milenco's Compact C Wheelclamp (www.milenco.com).

Touch wood, locks and clamps should be enough to prevent any theft. But as another tier of security, consider a tracker such as those available from Bulldog Secure (www.bulldogsecure.com), so that there's a chance you'll get your motorhome back if it is stolen.

Trackers are assessed by the insurance industry body, Thatcham. Categories S7 and S5 cover these devices.

Insurance providers are likely to insist on a minimum level of security, such as an axle- or wheel clamp. The more valuable the caravan or motorhome, the more particular insurers are likely to be, so check the policy wording carefully.

3



**KEEP OUT
TRESPASSERS WILL
BE PROSECUTED**

On tour

Owners need to be vigilant on holiday, as well as at home. It's not just your caravan or motorhome that might be at risk, but the possessions inside.

Be sure that you don't have any big-ticket items on show. There are aftermarket safes available that you could secure inside a locker.

Window locks are also worth considering to make it harder for a thief to gain access to the inside of the tourer or motorhome. Lock M Out (www.lock-m-out.co.uk) produces 11 security devices for different types of window catch.

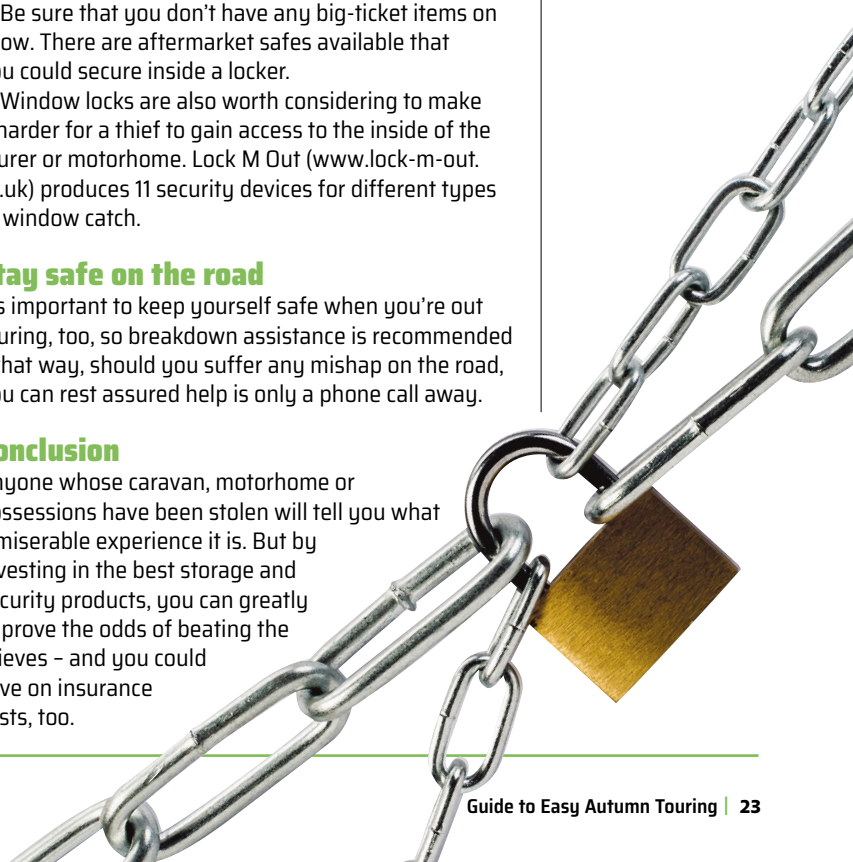
Stay safe on the road

It's important to keep yourself safe when you're out touring, too, so breakdown assistance is recommended – that way, should you suffer any mishap on the road, you can rest assured help is only a phone call away.

Conclusion

Anyone whose caravan, motorhome or possessions have been stolen will tell you what a miserable experience it is. But by investing in the best storage and security products, you can greatly improve the odds of beating the thieves – and you could save on insurance costs, too.

3 Fit devices such as wheel locks and you could get a discount on insurance cover





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