

Ask your Club

The Club's technical team answers your burning questions

Please address your questions to: **Technical Information, The Caravan Club, East Grinstead House, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 1UA**
...and quote your membership number

Hose talking

Q Can I fill my motorhome water tank using a hosepipe if there's a hosepipe ban in place?

A This is a topical question, hosepipe bans having been introduced by several water companies from April 2012. Companies have provided a variety of



general advice on hosepipe use, some of which can sound alarming to motorhome or caravan owners (eg in terms of bans on 'recreational use').

However, when queried directly on this issue, no water company has indicated a concern with filling motorhome or caravan tanks for what might be called 'domestic

use' – for example drinking, washing and toilet flushing.

Please note that using a hosepipe to wash your vehicle would normally be prohibited during a ban. Exemptions to any ban often apply (perhaps for disabled people, for instance), but you need to check with the local water provider.

Games advice



Q I'm hoping to visit some of the Olympic events this summer. Do you have any advice specifically for caravanners?

A Yes we do! We have published a guide providing travel advice and related information for campers, caravanners and motorhome users on the Club website. You can find it on the page for the Barleylands temporary site in the 'News and Events' section (there is a clickable link labelled 'advice guide' in green within the body text), and on the 'Road Safety and Travel Advice' page in the 'Expert Advice' section under 'Using and Maintaining'.

How long is a caravan?

Q How do you define the length of a caravan? I need to know if I can legally tow one I am considering buying.

A The key figure is that which is usually described as 'external body length'. This does not include the drawbar or hitch, but does include the gas bottle locker, if the locker is integrated into the body.

Be careful when reading the caravan specification – some fall just the wrong side of the 7m length threshold. Any caravan longer than this can only be towed by a vehicle with a maximum gross weight exceeding 3,500kg, which excludes any conventional European-market car or 4x4 and indeed smaller versions of vehicles such as Transit vans.

Here are a couple of examples. A Hobby Prestige 650 UFM is 6.66m



long excluding the gas locker, but 7.26m including it. The gas locker is an integral part of the body, so the larger figure applies (meaning this model

exceeds the 7m threshold). Not including its gas locker, an Airstream International 684 (pictured) is over 6.8m, but in this case, the locker is a

separate unit and thus not included in the body length. So the Airstream is under the 7m threshold and can legally be towed by a (large) car.

OUTFIT MATCHING: THINKING OF CHANGING YOUR CAR OR CARAVAN? WANT TO CHECK YOUR EXISTING OUTFIT IS A GOOD COMBINATION? THE CLUB'S FREE OUTFIT MATCHING SERVICE IS THERE TO HELP YOU. SEE CARAVANCLUB.CO.UK/OUTFITMATCH