

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2022

# NEWS

The magazine of the Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club



# ASOC

NATIONAL RALLY & AGM  
THURSDAY 28 APRIL - MONDAY 2 MAY 2022

AT NEWARK SHOWGROUND

Standing before their probation officer, Emperor Ming the Merciless on Mongo, Martin and Ozzie were severely reprimanded for gadding about the universe enjoying themselves, drumming up interest in the National Rally and AGM, against the wishes of Emperor Ming, as this went against all that was laid down in their good behaviour bond.

Before Ming could pass sentence on them to be sent to the salt mines on Kepler 186F, the duo were saved by Chewbacca and Robby the Robot, who spirited them away to safety out of Ming's evil clutches.

Returning to Earth via Altair and Alpha Centauri, Martin and Ozzie wondered if they had done enough to persuade members to book for the National Rally and AGM. Marvin, the paranoid android, thought not, but Tinkerbell sprinkled fairy dust over the pair saying all will be well.

Please members do not let Tinkerbell down.

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## MEMBER INFORMATION

From time to time the club may send you emails regarding any information we think you might find useful. This is only available to those members subscribed to the member area of the website. We will never disclose your email address to any third party or mailing lists.

## PUBLICATION DETAILS

The opinions, beliefs, viewpoints or advertisements expressed by contributors to ASOC News do not necessarily reflect those of the Club or Editor.

Contributions from members are published in good faith, that they will be interesting and useful. All care is taken to ensure accuracy but no modification or suggestion has been tested by the Club or the Editor.

No warranties are expressed or implied nor indemnities given. You try them at your own risk.

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## SUPPLIER DISCOUNTS

The list is available on the website

We have many companies who offer members a discount on the goods and services they supply.

To claim your discount, you must present your ASOC membership card at the time of order or arrival. You will not qualify for the discount by presenting your membership card after work has commenced.

## RALLY INFORMATION

**Points to remember:** Marshals should let the rally coordinator know when their rallies are fully booked.

Always carry your ASOC membership card when attending rallies.

Inform the marshal if you plan to bring a car, tent or trailer to a rally.

All rallies start at 12 noon unless otherwise stated in the rally information.

**Running a rally:** If you would like to run a rally, contact the rally coordinator for "Guide for Rally Marshals". When a date and venue is chosen you will receive the "Rules for Rally Marshals" and asked to sign a marshal's declaration which should be returned to the rally coordinator. Assistance and advice is available from the rally coordinator or a committee member.

If you would like to assist a rally marshal to see what is involved in running a rally, or interested in the details of possible rally sites we have, contact the rally coordinator.

**Important:** All potential rally dates and venues must be checked with the rally coordinator, who will check that the club will be able to comply with regulatory and insurance requirements.

# THIS MONTH

We need a Marshal to run the  
National Motorhome & Campervan Show  
21-24 April 2022 (see page 10)

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# EDITOR'S VIEW

The views expressed by the editor may not be the views of the committee or ASOC

Welcome to the February/March issue of News.

Well, this is issue 401 of the newsletter/magazine. We have seen many changes since issue number one. All the newsletter/magazine issues are available as PDF to download in the member area.

The Club shop has a few small price increases due to postage and manufacturing of the items, but still offer good value.

We are still looking for new rally marshals to host rallies. We have included in this issue, a guide for rally marshals, it is not as difficult as you may think. If you need more information, our Rally Coordinator is happy to give all the details and chat it through with you.

Talking about memories, It came up about how owning a dog has changed. Now we have special food, fancy dog coats, extendable leads and harness and not much training. I know it has been a while since we had a dog, then it was just a slip chain or leather collar, short lead and simple food. The dog always had a favourite snack, sausage ends, a daily pint of tea with a splash of milk and five dog biscuits, A huge marrow bone from the butcher, which was regularly buried and dug up again to be sucked and bitten. I don't remember why we did it, but for the "no" command the dog was trained to understand it in German and English.

Now back to rallies, These are not regimented, you can just do your own thing if you wish, many marshals organise a welcome event to say what is going on in the area and arrange meals if you want them. It also gives you chance to meet other members. The National Rally has a lot going on with an open forum and entertainment. There are plenty of pitches with electricity, so we can accommodate everyone. The Committee will be around if you want to chat to them. We usually wear a badge so you can pick us out.

Some members have decided not to access the member area, and I wonder why this is? It is very easy to subscribe by going to the website, login button, and use 'opt' in to the member area.

Finally, a new year, so lets have some articles please for the next issue.

# Chairman's chat



With Carol, our Treasurer, finalising the 2021 Club accounts for independent auditing, it was good to see that 70% of Membership renewal payments for the year were via Electronic BACS. As a gentle reminder if you have not paid your membership subscription for 2022 there is still time, it's still great value at £20, Jean, our membership secretary is ready and waiting.

During these long winter nights following the festive season, I took the opportunity to analyse the Rally record returns for last year. (Sad I know!). However, it was great to see 246 members and 130 vehicles took part in at least one or more rallies. For at least 12 members it was their first time at a Club rally, 4 members managed to enjoy 6 rallies. Can this be beaten in 2022?. Hopefully, Carol, & I will get to a few more rallies in 2022.

It's good to see many members booking to join us at the National Rally at Newark Showground at the end of April/ May Bank Holiday, it's a great event with the National team having many things lined up for the weekend. The Auto Sleepers Factory Team will be with us again along with, hopefully, a few technical suppliers. Carol & I attended our first National Rally in 2019, with the intention of meeting Auto-Sleepers technical staff and having our vehicle weighed.

It's been great that we have had a couple of members offer their services on the committee, but we are still looking for a new technical member to take over from Dennis Downie when he stands down in May '22, I appreciate he may be a hard act to follow, but really it is making the post your own, whilst liaising with the factory technical team on behalf of our members.

With several Local Authorities being given greater powers over traffic offences and now with Manchester being the latest authority to implement a Low Emission Zone, we need to be ever more vigilant of our routes through cities and their charging zones as we visit certain camp sites. Also, we all should be mindful of the changes in the Highway Code which puts many of us in a different category to car drivers when it comes to the priority hierarchy.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the National at the end of April.

Don't forget this Newsletter is going Bi-monthly as of this month, so your next Newsletter is at the beginning of April.

Take care and enjoy your motorhome.

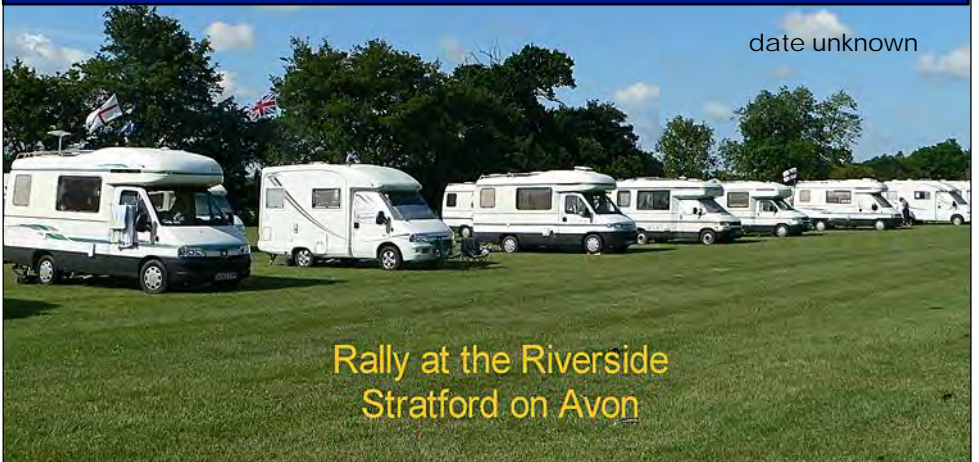
Steve

Are your travel tales hidden away?  
Now's the time for them to surface and  
send to ASOC News



## FROM THE ARCHIVE

date unknown



Rally at the Riverside  
Stratford on Avon



Driving in a clean air zone <https://www.gov.uk/clean-air-zones>

Bath

Birmingham

Bradford (charging starts in 2022)

Greater Manchester (charging starts on 30 May 2022)

Portsmouth

There's a different service if you want to drive in London's low or ultra low emission zones. <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/check-your-vehicle/>

Downloaded the AUTOGAS App <https://www.autogas.app> which gives you a map of LPG available sites. Found it very useful but I do telephone ahead to check. Belt and Braces I know but it does give you confidence.

Lionel Allery

## WE HAVE BEEN PERSUADED

I had several enquiries from members who were hoping that the Holiday Resort Unity in Brean and the Sedgemoor Carnival rally in Burnham on Sea would resume this year if the Covid restrictions are lifted.

The site of Holiday Resort Unity had been mailing me for Touring pitch bookings so following discussions we decided we would run it again and would follow on from the Shepton Mallet show. We have booked thirty places for September 2022.

As for the Sedgemoor Carnivals, these have been in existence since the days of Guy Fawkes whose failed attempt prompted the original Bridgwater and Highbridge carnival celebration. The early processions often involved whole families and included decorated carts, hence the term which is still used today. Even though many are now tractor drawn low loader trailers and huge generators, they are still called carts.

Those of you who have seen the carnivals will appreciate the magnitude of the events and the amount of work that goes into the building of these carts and the walking entrants. The carnival clubs and other entrants are self funded, so fund raising and building is a year round task. Funding for the events, including the massive public liability insurance, relies heavily on sponsorship which has been understandably short coming since Covid hit us.

As a result of the Covid disruption, the Sedgemoor carnivals were suspended for 2020 and 2021 and may even be for 2022 unless the clubs can resume fundraising and building activities again in time. Unfortunately, even if the Carnival goes ahead, the Haven site will not.

We have had a total of twenty one ASOC Sedgemoor carnival rallies with November 2000 being the first one that we held on the Burnham on Sea Haven site.

2019 was our twentieth to be held there but, unfortunately, as Haven are now turning the touring pitches over to static caravans it is also our last. These things happen.

There are numerous other sites in the area for anyone wishing to see the carnivals which take in seven towns, starting as always with Bridgwater on the first Saturday to fall in November and Burnham on Sea the following Monday. Sadly none of these sites will be as convenient as the Haven site which was so close and easy walking distance to the town but they are still very good sites. Holiday Resort Unity is always available, also Northam Farm and the Home Farm Caravan site. Check them out online.

In the past, I know campers have bussed in from Unity and Northam Farm sites into Burnham or even to Bridgwater itself to see the respective carnivals. Home Farm is on the main Road into Burnham (no busses) and about a fifteen minute walk.

Back on the subject of club rallies, the current list looks a little sparse. Organising and running rallies is not so difficult as some people think and how much time and effort you put in is very much up to each individual.

Rallies can be basic where members are free to organise their own activities or, if you do enjoy organising then you will find any activities, walks or quizzes etc. are appreciated.

Why not give it a try. Maybe we will see some new rally marshals and some new venues post Covid.

Brian Ellis 2360

## NATIONAL RALLY 2022



Liz Irvin and Chris Brown are again holding the successful bottle and can tombola at the National Rally in the Sir Stuart Goodwin Pavilion.

All proceeds go to the Club Charity.

They would be very grateful if club members could start collecting bottles and cans to donate to the Tombola.

The more we have, the greater the contribution to the charity.

2022

# Never been to an ASOC National? Well 2022 is a good year to try it

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28 APRIL  
- 2 MAY

## SO, WHAT HAPPENS AT THE NATIONAL RALLY?

You will have been reading over the last few months in the NEWS the daring exploits of Martin and Ozzie around the galaxy promoting the National Rally and AGM.

There will be members who do not know what happens at the National Rally and AGM. So, while waiting for the application forms to roll in I will run through the programme of events. Which may change due to circumstance beyond the control of Martin and myself. In with this issue of the News there is an application form just in case the one in the January issue has been mislaid. Where you will be able to see the costs and the meals.

The rally runs from Thursday 28th April to Monday 2nd May when we have to vacate the site by 12 noon. You can book from one to four nights. All the pitched will have electric hook-up which is included in the fee. Disable pitched are available (to blue badge holders) as close to the facilities as we can arrange but this has to be per- booked on the application form. On site there is fresh water and Elsan disposal, toilets and showers. Gas bottles may be available. A Newsagent will attend on Friday, Saturday and Sunday to bring pre-ordered Newspapers. See application form.

A Welcome Pack will be available from the Cedric Ford Pavilion after you have been shown to your pitch. This contains all the information about the rally. Martin, Ozzie and the team wish everyone a good time.

Though meals are available (pre-booked) everyone is most welcome to come into the Cedric Ford Pavilion just for a drink and to watch the entertainment. The tables used for those having a meal will have numbers on them to avoid any confusion.

On Saturday and Sunday afternoon, SMC, the Auto-Sleepers dealer in Newark, will run a shuttle mini bus service to their showroom, tea and cake will be provided while you look around.

Thursday 28th April the rally opens at 12 noon, not before then. Directions of how to enter the Newark showground will be sent with your confirmation letter. On arrival you will be shown to your pitch. For the rest of the afternoon relaxation or chat with your neighbour.

At 6pm the bar is open at the Cedric Ford Pavilion and then at 6.30pm the pre-booked meals are served. See application form.

After everyone have finished their meal it's time for a good old natter

with old and new friends and perhaps have some laughs playing games.

Friday 29th April, The Stuart Goodwin Pavilion will be open at 10am where there will be jigsaws, books, tombola, and regalia stalls. Our Technical team will be on hand with information. There will be a display of the entries for the Photographic Competition. Tea and coffee will be available for which there is no formal charge, but a donation to the charity will be appreciated.

At 2pm in the Cedric Ford Pavilion there will be a question-and-answer session with Auto-Sleeper staff and others.

Like Thursday night, the bar will be open at 6pm and the pre-booked meals served. See application form.

After the meals have finished we have, for your entertainment, Fiona Harrison who sings songs from the 1940s to the 1970s, music to sing along and dance to!

The bar will close at 10.45pm and the Pavilion at 11pm.

Saturday 30th April, this is when we hold our AGM in the Cedric Ford Pavilion, registration is from 10am and then the AGM is from 10.30am. After the AGM has finished there is a short break, followed by the Open Forum where any member can ask the committee questions regarding the running of the Club.

At this point I must stress that if you just want to attend on Saturday for the AGM and Open Forum, please do so, it is your right.

The Stuart Goodwin Pavilion will be closed in the morning but open from 2pm to 4pm. There may be a craft workshop being held.

The bar will be open in the Cedric Ford Pavilion from 6pm and then at 6.30 there will be the Annual Dinner, see application form. Smart casual is the dress code.

From 8pm there will be dancing to the Soundation with a break at 9.15pm for the raffle, then again at about 9.45pm its back dancing with the Soundation. The bar will close at 10.45 and the pavilion at 11pm.

Sunday 1st May In the Cedric Ford Pavilion at 10.45am there will be a get together for tea and coffee and for another natter. At 12 noon the pavilion will have to vacated for half an hour while the staff set out the tables for the carvery, see application form.

The bar will be open from 6.30pm with a quiz from about 7.30pm.

The bar will close at 10.15pm the pavilion 10.30pm.

All to soon its Monday 2nd May, time to say our good byes and leave the rally.

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28 APRIL  
- 2 MAY

## WHITMEAD FOREST PARK RALLY 14 - 18 March 2022 (4 nights)

Parkend, Near Lydney, Gloucestershire GL15 4LA

Rally marshals: John and Jackie Moss, Janet and Paul Nash

Site fees £48 + £5 rally fee

Please send rally slips and cheque for £53 payable to:

J Moss, 34 Cocksparrow Street, Warwick, CV 34 4ED

Telephone: 01926 497309 Mobile: 07508 200336

Please send SAE or a CLEAR email address for confirmation

We shall be sited on the terraces area known as the Meadows which has hard standing with hookups. We hope all facilities will be available subject to site and Government ruling at the time

Directions: Drive into Lydney town centre from Gloucester, turn right at the Swan pub before the level crossing signposted Parkend, follow the road to Parkend station and turn left At the Fountian Pub, at the top of the road turn left site is in on the left approx 100 yards.

DO NOT ARRIVE BEFORE 2.00pm (14.00 hours)

## National Motorhome & Campervan Show 21-24 April

East of England Showground, Peterborough

We need a volunteer to marshal at this event,  
please contact the Rally Coordinator

WE NEED A MARSHAL

## NATIONAL RALLY & AGM 28 April - 2 May

Newark Showground

Rally application form included with this issue of News, or fillable PDF in the member area of the website to download. Payment is available by bank transfer or cheque.

Running a rally: If you would like to run a rally, assistance and advice is available from the Rally Coordinator or committee member. A "Guide for Rally Marshals" is available from the website. When a date and venue is chosen you will receive "Rules for Rally Marshals" and asked to sign a marshal's declaration which should be returned to the rally coordinator. It is important that all potential rally dates and venues are checked with the rally coordinator, who will confirm the club will be able to comply with regulatory and insurance requirements.

If you would like to assist a rally marshal to see what is involved in running a rally, or interested in the details of possible rally sites we have, contact the Rally Coordinator.

## RALLY DATES 2022

14 -18 March

Whitemead Forest Park, nr. Lyndney, Forest of Dean

21 - 24 April

National Motorhome & Campervan Show, East of England  
Showground, Peterborough

28 April - 2 May

National Rally & AGM

19 - 24 June

Wigginton FC, York

2 - 7 July

Stafford Boat Club, Staffordshire

7 - 12 July

Leon's Field, St. Ives, Cambridgeshire

18 - 24 July

Bath, B&NES

6 - 11 August

Redcar Rugby Club, Redcar & Cleveland

11 - 16 August

Eskdale School, Whitby

18 - 21 August

Great Western Show, Malvern, Worcestershire

22 - 26 August

Symondians Cricket Club, Winchester

8 - 11 September

South West Motorhome, Show, Shepton Mallet

11 - 18 September

Unity Resort Brean Somerset

22 - 25 September

Season's Finale Motorhome & Campervan Show, Lincoln  
Showground

28 September - 3 October

ACCEO Rally, Tamworth



## INVITATION TO ASOC MEMBERS

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You will need to quote your membership number  
Book via the AAOCC website [www.AAOCC.org.uk](http://www.AAOCC.org.uk)  
(booking will be active after January 1st 2022)

Friday 25th March to Sunday 27th March  
Langer Landings, Harby Road, Langar, Nottingham  
Nottinghamshire, NG13 9HQ  
Site fee: £16 including hook up  
Rally fee: £4:00

Friday 29th April to Monday 2nd May  
McKies Caravan Park, Inholme Farm, Beeford,  
Driffield, East Yorkshire, YO25 8BG  
Site Fee: £ TBC  
Hook Up: TBC  
Rally Fee: £4:00

Friday 26th May to Monday 30th May  
The Pastures, Highfield Farm,  
Heage Lane, Etwall, Derbyshire, DE65 6LS  
Site Fee: £ 7.00  
Rally Fee: £4:00

Thursday 7th June to Thursday 14th June  
Cobbs Meadow, Bekesbourne Hill  
Bekesbourne, Nr Canterbury, Kent, CT4 5DY  
Site Fee: £ 20.00 including Hook Up  
Rally Fee: £4:00

Tuesday 13th September to Tuesday 20th September  
Warcombe Farm Camping Park, Station Road, Mortehoe  
Near Ilfracombe, North Devon, EX34 7ES  
Site Fee: £15.50 p/n Inc EHU  
Rally Fee: £4:00

Friday 23th September to Sunday 25th September  
Ripon Race Course, Boroughbridge Road, Ripon, HG4 1UG  
Site Fee: £23.00 for weekend (includes race entry and all race amenities)  
Rally Fee: £4.00

# FROM THE ARCHIVE

Malvern National Rally 1999





# AUTO-SLEEPER OWNERS' CLUB

A Company Limited by Guarantee

Registered Office:

Orchard Works, Willersey, Worcestershire WR12 7QF

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## Guide for Rally Marshals

Before booking a Rally, please contact the Rally Coordinator for approval of date and venue.

### A Marshal

The administration and supervision of a rally is carried out by a marshal. It is usual in ASOC for a marshal to be a couple together in one van, however occasionally the marshal is actually two single people each in their own van. It is ASOC's policy that a marshal should be entitled to a free pitch on the rally; in this context the Club recommendation is:

- One Marshal for up to twenty vans,
- Two Marshals for up to forty vans and,
- Three Marshals as an absolute maximum.

### A Rally

A rally is a meeting of club members to camp and socialise. Rallies can be held in the UK and Europe, they are the initiative of individual club members who voluntarily and at their own expense identify a suitable site, make all of the arrangements and are on site to conduct the rally.

Camping in Motorhomes in the UK is regulated by the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. For land to be used as a caravan site it must have a caravan licence and planning permission for the use; many such sites exist and we refer to them as 'Commercial Sites'.

The first schedule to the 1960 Act contains paragraphs that detail cases where a caravan site licence and planning permission is not required. ASOC is able to conduct rallies under the terms of two of these paragraphs on what we call Green Field sites:

**Paragraph 6 Exemption:** ASOC have been granted a paragraph 6 exemption certificate. The time spent on site is strictly limited to 120 hours (5 days), this includes any setting up time required by Marshals. The rally has to be supervised by a member of ASOC and only permanent members of ASOC can attend.

**Paragraph 4 Exemption:** ASOC is a member of the Association of Caravan and Camping Exempted Organisations (ACCEO). ACCEO hold a para 4 exemption certificate that can be used (on application) by member clubs. ASOC have to have a marshal who is a personal member of ACCEO to supervise activity on site, ACCEO have to enter into a legal contract with the land owner and also consult local councils before using the site - and not use it if the council objects. ASOC can spend no more than 28 days at a time at these sites.

If the site is within a National Park, permission would need to be granted by the National Park Authority. This procedure can take at least a year and would be dealt with by the Rally Coordinator. A local authority can remove exemption from a site and/or an organisation if they receive a complaint or objection.

## Rally Venue

The minimum requirement for a rally site is a fresh water supply and elsan emptying point.

- i. Commercial Sites the conditions laid down by the site warden should be observed. Some commercial sites have a separate area used for rallies, which would be classed as a 'Green Field' site.
- ii. 'Green Field' Site rallies will be held under the terms of an Exemption Certificate (paragraph 6 exemption). If setting up for a 5 day rally cannot be achieved within the 120 hour time frame, a Marshal may seek, as a private individual, permission from the land owner to camp for up to two days, using their own insurance cover. ASOC does not use Green Field sites for rallies outside the UK.

## Pitching of motorhomes

On a Commercial Site, units should be sited in accordance with the pitches agreed with the site warden.

On a 'Green Field' site spacing is important. The minimum distance allowed between Motorhomes in all directions is 6m (20ft) to enable access for emergency vehicles and safe evacuation if necessary. For this reason, vehicles should ideally be facing the same way and in neat lines.

When marking out the site, remember to allow space for each Motorhome. 3m (10ft) for width and up to 8m (26ft) for length. If space is tight, the length calculation can be reduced, if shorter vans are booked on the rally.

Please reserve pitches near to facilities for disabled members and electric hook ups where requested.

## Things to Consider

Whether a booking fee or deposit is required. If so, please check procedure with the Rally Coordinator

The site fee and electric hook up charges per night

The availability of free pitches for Marshal/s

The condition of the land – soft ground should be avoided at all costs

Location and flow of Fresh Water Point – if slow, congestion may arise

Chemical Toilet Emptying facility – if water is not available, suitable water containers need to be provided to rinse cassettes. Under no circumstances are cassette toilets to be rinsed out using Drinking Water taps

The availability of toilets on site

The disposal of rubbish – if there is no rubbish disposal point, provide bags for members to take rubbish home

The whereabouts of dog exercise area

Whether the site has a room suitable for 'communal use' - if you wish to use a Club urn, please reserve with the Rally Coordinator

## Information for Ralliers

Site address, including post code – also required in the event of an emergency for the relevant services.

Address and phone number of the nearest:

Doctor

Hospital/A&E Dept

Dentist

Vet

These details should be displayed prominently or given to all ralliers in 'welcome envelope'

Location of Shops

Pubs/Restaurants

Bus Stop

Railway Station

Local attractions

## Rally Costing

To comply with Club policy, ensure the rally at least breaks even. Receipts are required for all items costing over £20 and for other items wherever possible.

## Site Fee

The charge made by the site, per night, multiplied by the number of nights of the rally. In some cases this may also include electrics, otherwise show the cost of electrics separately.

Some sites do not charge Rally Marshals for a pitch during a rally. If a charge is made, the cost should be added to the site fee paid by ralliers. Calculate this by dividing the cost of Marshal/s pitches by the anticipated number of participants and add to the site fee.

## Rally Fee

The rally fee is designed to cover the cost of extras provided during the rally such as light refreshments, bin bags, envelopes etc. as well as small admin expenses incurred in arranging the rally plus rally plaques at £1.00 each (min order 25). Rally plaques are ordered through the Rally Coordinator once the Rally has been confirmed and paid for by the club treasurer.

Travel expenses are not paid by the Club. Purchases of equipment or large expenditure is subject to prior approval by the Rally Coordinator.

## Raffle

A raffle may be organised, but is not a requirement. To comply with the Gambling Act, raffle tickets may only be sold to Club members during the rally. Proceeds are to be sent to the Club, although the cost of raffle ticket books and the purchase of prizes can be reimbursed from the proceeds.

## Rally Refreshments & Meals

It is customary to hold a 'get-together' on the first evening of a rally with light refreshments to introduce first time ralliers and announce any planned arrangements. A similar event can be held on the last evening/morning.

A meal may be arranged on site or at a local Pub/Restaurant. On site it is important all food is prepared and/or handled by adults. The use of barbeques is permissible with site owner's permission and providing they are sited at least 6m from any van if used in a group barbeque. Individuals use a barbeque at their own risk.

Organised meals and/or entertainment are optional extras to be paid for by the ralliers in addition to the site and rally fees.

## Publication of Rally

Details of rallies are usually announced in the Club Magazine two months beforehand and bookings cannot be taken until this notice appears. Prepare a rally 'advertisement' in a similar format to others in the magazine, identifying the location, dates, Marshal's details, price and directions, plus any other information thought to be beneficial. Send to the Rally Co-ordinator as soon as possible. If the Marshal is prepared to accept payment for the rally by bank transfer as well as by cheque, he can say so in the advert and ask members to contact him for bank account details.

Once the rally has been confirmed, the Rally Coordinator will send 'Rules for Rally Marshals' and an agreement letter to be signed by the Marshal, along with other relevant documentation.

Please remember rallies should be as much enjoyment for the Marshal/s as for participants.

The Rally Coordinator or any member of the Committee will be happy to answer any queries or concerns and attendees on rallies are always more than willing to assist in any way.



The Rally Coordination has a list of suitable venues to hold rallies if you dont want to find a venue yourself for the first time.

He is happy to give you any help you may require.

Why not assist a Rally Marshal to see what is involved.

## Mercedes Sprinter Safety recall

A safety recall has been issued by Mercedes for a potential issue with the rear brake calipers on the current model of Sprinters. Please contact your Mercedes dealer to have this issue resolved.

The problem appears to be the possibility of brake fluid leaking from the rear calipers and getting onto the brake disc and pads. I have had mine changed early in January by my local Mercedes Commercial dealer.

There is a useful safety leaflet here for which I have not been given permission to reproduce for either the magazine or to put on the website. However, I suggest following this link and taking a look at it...

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/302391/safety-recall-leaflet.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/302391/safety-recall-leaflet.pdf).

If you view this on the club website technical page, the links take you direct.

## Storing motorhomes with EC700 systems

I posed a number of questions to Sargent Electrical support team relating to storage of our motorhomes fitted with the Sargent EC700 control system.

Here are my questions and their advice...

1. When stored with no hook-up, should the main display panel and the main controller be left switched on or not?
2. How is power to the tracker derived / controlled? From the vehicle battery or the leisure battery?
3. What is the EC700 system load when switched on and when in standby?
4. What is the tracker load (in mA/uA)?
5. Is solar charging dependant on the EC700 system being turned on?
6. Can the leisure battery be disconnected during vehicle storage without compromising security (tracker) performance? (Many members store off-site without power).
7. Are there any parasitic loads, as built when new, if the EC700 system is turned off?
8. I understand that Auto-Sleepers fit a Sterling split charging system during build. Does this contribute to any parasitic load that may need to be accounted for in low power storage of the motorhome?

Here is their advice:

- 1) *When in long-term 'over-winter' storage we suggest shutting the system down. This leaves solar maintaining the vehicle battery and only the tracker drawing from the leisure battery. The leisure battery voltage can be checked on AS monitor (on the map pin or on the history screen) and the customer can also*

- setup email/SMS alerts to be notified if the leisure battery gets low. For shorter term or summertime storage the system can be left powered up (with the control panel power turned off), which does have the added benefit of remote temperature, humidity, water level and vehicle battery monitoring.
- 2) The tracker is powered from the leisure battery, but also has an internal backup battery that powers the unit should the leisure battery be disconnected. The tracker also monitors the leisure supply and alerts the monitoring station (if there is a valid tracking subscription) and the customer if email/SMS alerts have been turned on.
  - 3) With the PSU switched on and in standby (12V power on and control panel power turned off) the system uses around 200mA. This quiescent load is taken from whichever source (charger, leisure battery, vehicle battery) has the highest voltage.
  - 4) This is extremely difficult to quantify, but is very low. It all depends on local variations in mobile network signal, GPS satellite availability and what the tracker is doing at the time, and a conservative average would be around 2 to 10mA on the 12V side. In practice, average lead-acid batteries and lead-acid derivatives (AGM, gel etc.) will often naturally discharge at a rate faster than that caused by the load applied to them by the tracker.
  - 5) With the PSU switched off (system shutdown) all of the solar charge is directed to the vehicle battery (unlike your EC500, which directs it to the leisure battery) and at the same time the Mains charger is directed to the leisure battery. The PSU / system must be turned on for the smart charge system to be enabled (choosing the target battery automatically) or for the leisure battery to be manually selected for solar charging.
  - 6) No. The leisure battery must be left fitted for the reason highlighted in point 2.
  - 7) No. The EC700 does not cause any drain on either battery when the system is shutdown. The tracker is the only thing drawing from the leisure battery at this time.
  - 8) This is only fitted to Mercedes based vehicles, due to problems caused by the smart alternator operation. The Sterling unit is switched into use when the engine is running, and then disconnected again when the engine is stopped, and therefore does not place any load on the system during storage.
- Adam Tanton, Technical Support, Sargent Electrical Ltd.

You will see from this advice that you should not leave your leisure battery disconnected when stored. If the tracker battery discharges and you have told your insurer that there is a tracker fitted, or if they have a reasonable expectation that you have a tracker fitted because of the model specification, they will expect you to keep it properly maintained. Any theft claim may be "loss adjusted" or even denied if you have allowed the tracker to become inoperable by way of (as they may define) neglect.

In the past, I have advised members who cannot connect their vans to mains power (EHU) while in storage, to keep a spare leisure battery at home, fully

charged, and when and if the AS Monitor alerts to a low battery, to take the fully charged battery to the stored motorhome, swap it out and return home to charge the depleted battery. I know this may be impractical in some instances. Personally, I still hold the view that during lay-up periods, taking the van out just to allow the batteries to charge while driving is not the best approach.

### Mains Power Surge Protection

So, for more on this, I have built a “Plug & Play” solution to help protect your motorhome from power surges when on site Electric Hook-Up (EHU) is being used. You may recall in the last two editions of News, reports of many hundreds of pounds of damage occurring to the electrical equipment in motorhomes when a fault on the site power system creates surges. These surge protectors automatically disconnect the mains supply when a surge is detected and attempt to reconnect after a short period.

I have produced Ideas Sheet 253, which by now should be on the website for you to view and download. There is enough information there to allow anyone with a modicum of electrical skills to replicate. Alternatively, a friend or relative who is an electrician or similar could assemble one of these. The surge protector connects in-line with your EHU cable, so needs no modifications to your motorhome – particularly useful for owners of vans under warranty as no changes to the van systems are necessary.

I especially recommend this unit to people who have habitation air conditioning. These units do not tolerate interruptions in the mains supply while they are in cooling mode. The surge protector will trip on a potentially damaging surge and not reconnect the mains until the sensitive equipment like AC units have had time to settle.

Dennis Downie  
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This year's subject Anything you like

entries close 30 March 2022

submit up to four photographs. All members per motorhome can enter

Size 6 x 4 inches or 7 x 5 inches unmounted



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