



Certificated Sites and Certificated Locations Make a Positive Contribution to Tourism

Background

Certificated Sites and Certificated Locations (CS and CLs) are small, privately-owned caravan and motorhome sites that can allocate pitches for up to a maximum of 5 caravan or motorhomes (and up to ten tents for CSs) at a time. These sites are under the remit and form part of the offering of the Camping and Caravanning Club (CC) and the Caravan and Motorhome Club (CMC).

According to membership data provided by the UK Caravan and Camping Alliance (UKCCA), **in the summer of 2022 there were 3,378 CSs and CLs operating in the UK, accounting for 16,890 pitches.**

As part of the 'Pitching the Value' 2024 Economic Benefit Report: Holiday Parks and Campsites UK¹, a survey was undertaken with a sample of these sites. This was to better understand their contribution to the wider holiday park sector.

Over half (54%) of these sites were open all year round with 46% seasonal. The majority (58%) of operators have owned their site for more than 10 years.

Engagement with the local community

CSs and CLs engage with the local community in a number of ways:

- local events, promotion, sponsorship and signposting
- working with community groups and community councils
- providing leaflets and local information

"We support the air ambulance, local schools, Duke of Edinburgh, WW2 event hosts and car clubs."

¹ This report can be found at www.ukcca.org.uk



Support for the environment

These sites support the local environment by:

- recycling, including visitor guidance
- encouraging local wildlife
- providing compost toilets
- wildflower planting

"We have wildflowers, solar powered lights, native trees, recycling, and we encourage low energy modes of travel - bicycles and on foot."

Supporting visitors' health and wellbeing

CS and CL sites also encourage visitors' health and wellbeing, in the following ways:

- providing a place to pitch up in the countryside to spend time in the outdoors, which has known health and wellbeing benefits
- access to cycle paths and walks in the surrounding area
- promotion of local health and wellbeing facilities within the wider community

COVID-19 impact

CSs and CLs have felt the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic in the following ways:

- **varying visitor numbers** – with some sites experiencing an increase in bookings due to the 'staycation' trend, while others have seen a decline due to economic factors or increased competition from pop-up sites
- **changes in customer behaviour** – with an increase in first-time campers, increased demand for more spacious sites, and an increase in people using their own facilities

"Some new to caravanning have stayed, others have gone back to foreign package holidays. Greater visitor expectation for the perfect site."

frontline

curious · committed · smart · proactive

Consumer demographics

CSs and CLs have experienced changing customer demographics including:

- overall trend of campers getting older, or early retirees with new motorhomes
- some sites noticed more younger people or families booking a staycation
- some changes in behaviour, such as shorter breaks rather than extended holidays, and an increase in motorhomes and campervans rather than caravans

Cost of living

CSs and CLs have felt the impact from the increasing cost of living, including:

- rising costs of electricity, insurance and other overheads, with operators trying to balance absorbing costs whilst remaining profitable
- changes in customer behaviour, such as last-minute bookings and shorter stays

"Huge increase in cleaning costs, commercial waste and electricity costs simply running the campsite is getting more expensive and the net income isn't increasing with the cost of inflation."

Economic contribution

It is estimated that in 2022/23 visitors to CSs and CLs **spent a total of £115m in the UK economy, supporting 2,126 FTE jobs and contributing £68m of GVA.**

In addition to the above, CSs and CLs also contribute to the economy through the ongoing costs of maintaining and improving their sites. Individually, these sites spent, on average, £3,938 on improvements over the last three financial years. Factoring this up to the total number of CSs and CLs in the UK **this equates to a potential capital spend of £13.3m.**

Looking to the future, sites planned to spend, on average, a further £7,831 on maintenance and improvements over the next 3 years. Factoring this up to the total number of CSs and CLs in the UK this equates to **a potential future spend of £26.4m on both maintenance and improvements.**