



Security of Caravans and Trailers

First steps in securing your caravan

- Immobilise your caravan, even if only stopping for a short time. A large number of caravans are stolen annually from service areas.
- Use hitch locks, heavy-duty chains, good quality padlocks with a short shackle, locking wheel nuts/wheel clamps. Consider securing each corner leg.
- Lock the gas compartment or padlock the cylinders to fixing clamps.
- Consider fitting a tracking device. - The likelihood of recovering your caravan in a short period of time is greatly increased.
- Fit an alarm and use it when the caravan is not in use, even for a short time.
- Close the windows and roof light and lock the door when the caravan is not in use, even for a short time.
- Consider window locks and a specialised deadlock to the door.
- Mark all property with your postcode or other unique number linked to a recognised data base, and take all valuable with you when leave, do not leave items on display.
- Take photographs of your caravan and internal fittings.
- Do not leave registration documents in the caravan.

When your caravan is not in use it can be even more vulnerable and should be properly secured. If using a caravan storage area look for one that has obtained a Caravan Storage Association award www.cassoa.co.uk . When leaving your caravan unattended close the curtains or pull the blinds down. This will deter prying eyes looking in.

Caravan security marking helps police to identify stolen caravans and can put off thieves. Since 1992 all National Caravan Council recognised manufacturers have stamped the 17-digit vehicle identification number (VIN) on the vehicle chassis and etched it into the windows.

If your windows are not marked consider doing so and mark the VIN on the inside of the caravan in several hidden places and consider having part of the number put on the roof. For further information visit: -

http://www.thencc.org.uk/Our_Schemes/cris_scheme.aspx.

Advice about purchasing

- Buying a new caravan? Ask about built in security features, since 1997 most will have security tags installed.
- Buying a used caravan? Consider checking the caravan details with the Caravan registration and Identification Scheme (CRIS) telephone 01722 411 430 or see <https://www.cris.co.uk/cris-check/>
- Try to verify the seller's identity, be cautious if the seller meets you away from home and be wary of temporary or handwritten number plates.
- Do not be tempted to hand over cash without confirmation of their identity. Does the registration on their vehicle match the one on the caravan?
- Record the details of the towing vehicle.
- Persons selling stolen caravans will come up with the saddest and most plausible story. They are not your friends; this is a business meeting. Do not get drawn into buying a stolen caravan.
- If you buy a stolen caravan not only will you lose the money you have paid; you will more than likely lose the caravan as well.

Use the Internet. There are various websites giving information on buying a caravan and security. Consult the main caravan clubs:

- The Caravan Club <https://www.caravanclub.co.uk/membership>
- The Camping and Caravan Club <http://www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/>. They offer very good advice.
- Read or check on-line caravan publications such as Practical Caravan <https://www.practicalcaravan-magazine.co.uk>, these magazines will give you practical advice and give you market values.

If in doubt – don't buy it.