

Legal requirements for subletting your holiday caravan.

Your new holiday caravan is your pride and joy, and of course you will want to share it with others. But renting your caravan as family holiday accommodation can be a nightmare unless you make sure you are within the law, namely being insured to sub-let, and having all the required safety tests i.e. gas certificate and PAT tests (portable appliance test). [Get an insurance quote here.](#)

Assuming you are ready to sublet, this page will share with you;

- a. Subletting through holiday parks.
- b. Private subletting.
- c. Some horror stories.
- d. Benefits of subletting if applied correctly.

Subletting through holiday parks

We have been holiday caravan owners for many years, and in the early days we had to sub-let to help cover our overheads. We also learned the hard way how not to do it, but we were much luckier than some others. The bottom line, in our opinion, is that you should never allow your holiday park to sublet your caravan. The reasons are many, but probably the most important is because 'you have no say'. Some members of the public mistreat, or even remove items from your caravan because they think it belongs to the holiday park and they can afford it.

Some of the larger holiday parks make promises of a guaranteed rental period i.e. up to 40 weeks. This means you can cover all your annual costs and have a profit in your pocket. In reality this rarely ever happens, and to this day I have never met anyone who has told me that it has worked for them (although I am sure some must exist). Still the temptation to do it this way is great, because it seems like 'money for doing nothing'.

So where does all the money go? Firstly, many holiday parks will advertise short notice, or short break holidays at vastly reduced prices to help bring more money in for the parks clubs, bars and entertainment. Secondly, many of these bargain breaks attract the wrong sort of people who will be assigned to your caravan (see horror stories below). After the park has charged you for the laundry, cleaning and the park commission, not to mention your gas and electric bills, you may only get £20 to £50 for that holiday, and that's if you are fortunate enough not to have repairs bills too. At the end of the season MOST caravan owners end up owing the park money for the next years site fees and left with a caravan that has now seen better days.

Private sub-letting

Private letting allows you a much greater control such as overseeing who is renting your caravan and the income for that holiday let. For a nicely maintained caravan on a popular park you would expect to cover all your annual costs with just 6 weeks of sub-letting during the summer. For others it may take a little longer. This then leaves the rest of the year for yourself.

Finding the right place to advertise your 'caravan to let' is your first priority, and advertising on a high profile website is your best bet so that you receive enquiries all year round for one small fee. Getting your own website is good too, but takes time to be listed and found by the public. See here about advertising.

Screening all phone calls and asking 'certain questions' may help you choose families who will treat your caravan with the respect it deserves. In 4 years of letting (1996 to 2000), we never had a single bad incident, but we were very selective, and put off many undesirables with our higher prices balanced with higher specifications and service.

Some horror stories - genuine quotes

"It was like a cow field with muck everywhere including the walls, ceilings and bedding"

"They stole our toilet and sink from the bathroom"

"Someone had defecated under the bed"

"They played football in the lounge because it was raining outside"

"There were 14 people staying in our caravan"

"They took all our summer plant containers home with them"

"This is simply abuse of our trust. They have ruined our holiday caravan"

"Their cheque was returned and we did not know until after they'd left our caravan"

Benefits of sub-letting

You decide who stays in your caravan.

You can screen your holiday makers at the initial point of contact.

You decide the rate you charge.

You decide which and how many weeks to let until your costs are covered.

You can meet the holiday makers on site to give them the key (lots of advantages to this).

You know which weeks are available for the rest of the year for yourself.

One big benefit we found was:

You can place a sign 'TO LET' in your window and take enquiries direct from you caravan window. If you see people taking your telephone number, (and if you like the look of them) you can show them around and take a booking there and then, or build a strong rapport for later so they don't forget you.