

The Outj^oyment Report



The
**Camping and
Caravanning
Club**
The Friendly Club

 **LIVERPOOL
JOHN MOORES
UNIVERSITY**

**Sheffield
Hallam
University**
Knowledge Applied

A study into the well-being and mental health benefits of camping in the great outdoors



IMPACT REPORT

Camping - a force for good



AT THE CAMPING and Caravanning Club, we've always believed camping has a positive effect on those who do it, but could this be supported by evidence?

In 2011 we published the Real Richness report, a ground-breaking study in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU).

A team led by Dr Kaye Richards reviewed research into the psychological and social benefits of camping – in all its different forms – and we went on to conduct a survey of campers and non campers. We were delighted to have our beliefs confirmed. Campers were shown to be happier than non campers and there were measurably positive effects of camping on family life and social interactions.

A decade later we're back with The Outjoymnt Report, looking again at the health, well-being and sense of community of those who camp – whether in tents, trailer tents, folding campers, caravans, campervans or motorhomes. Has anything changed in the last, somewhat turbulent, decade? Read on to find out more.

We're pleased to say Kaye is back on the team, this time with support from Dr Adele Doran and others at LJMU and Sheffield Hallam University – both centres of excellence in psychology and well-being, and outdoor activity, recreation and tourism research.

I'm delighted to present these results, which again suggest camping is a way to support our health and well-being, especially in challenging times. Campers are loving life and thrive on being outdoors, immersing themselves in nature. Ultimately, we think campers live a life full of 'outjoymnt'.

Camping is hugely important for domestic tourism and can help with the nation's recovery in so many ways.

We hope this research provides the evidence needed for decision-making bodies to include camping among the ways to improve the lives of more people in the years ahead. And The Camping and Caravanning Club will be championing this – as it has since our foundation in 1901.

Sabina

Sabina Voysey
Director General
The Camping and Caravanning Club

Cover photo: Our Outjoymnt artwork was created at Alton, The Star Camping and Caravanning Club Site by the team at Sand in Your Eye and photographed by Matt Smith

Did you know

ARE HAPPY

97% of campers say happiness is their top motivator for going camping while **48%** of campers reported feeling happy almost every day, compared with **35%** of non campers

ENJOY BETTER WELL-BEING

93% of campers value camping for the benefits it gives to their health and well-being, which is an increase on the **85%** of our last report

ARE LESS STRESSED THAN NON CAMPERS

88% of campers are motivated to go camping to take time out of everyday life and have higher levels of psychological well-being than non campers

campers...

ARE FLOURISHING

44% are flourishing (have optimal mental health) compared with **31%** of non campers. This increases for those who camp more often

ARE MORE CONNECTED WITH NATURE

93% go camping to enjoy being in nature – the second highest motivator after happiness

WANT CAMPING ON THE CURRICULUM

94% believe children should learn outdoors while **93%** think children should camp as part of their formal education – a big rise from the **59%** of our 2011 survey

ARE LESS ANXIOUS

91% go camping because it makes them feel relaxed. Campers are **23%** less anxious than non campers

ARE ACTIVE OUTDOORS

98% of campers take part in outdoor activities. **91%** go walking, **39%** cycle and **26%** enjoy bird-watching

WANT SOCIAL (GREEN) PRESCRIPTIONS

83% of respondents felt positive about health professionals prescribing spending time in nature as an effective remedy for poor mental health, which rose from **58%** in our previous study



What did we learn?

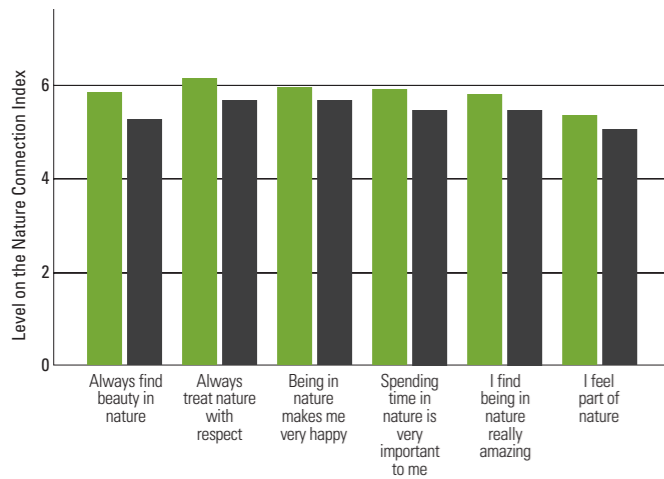
Here are just a few of the things we discovered as a result of our research

Graph Key ■ Campers ■ Non campers ■ Camping 6+ times a year ■ Camping < 6 times a year



HOW CAMPERS AND NON CAMPERS RATED THEIR CONNECTION WITH NATURE

Campers spend more time in nature and are more connected to nature than non campers. Those who camp less than others are still highly connected to nature.



HOW CAMPERS AND NON CAMPERS RATED THEIR WELL-BEING

Using the Office for National Statistics Personal Well-being scale, the Mental Health Continuum (as shown below), the Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-being, and the Perceived Stress Scale, campers rated their well-being higher than non campers. For example, campers are more likely to be flourishing. Flourishing is a term used in psychology to describe positive mental health encompassing emotional, social and psychological well-being.



BARRIERS TO CAMPING (AS GIVEN BY NON CAMPERS)

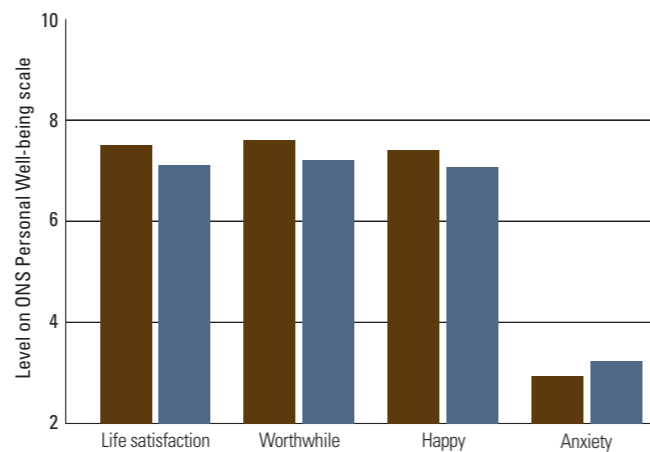
We asked non campers what stopped them going camping and were interested to note the unreliability of the weather was not the top reason. 'Don't like camping' or 'just not interested' came well down the list, being cited by less than 10% of respondents. Here are the top seven responses.

Barrier	Frequency
I prefer to do other leisure activities or use other forms of holiday accommodation	32%
Poor weather	26%
Too busy at home, perhaps with family commitments	20%
Staying at home to stop Covid-19 spreading	19%
Poor physical health or illness	18%
My physical ability	17%
Lack of general home comforts such as showers and heating	17%



HOW MORE FREQUENT CAMPERS RATED THEIR WELL-BEING

According to this research, the more you camp, the more likely you are to be flourishing, enjoying better well-being and have lower levels of anxiety and stress (using the scales listed above). Campers are also more satisfied with life, are happier and have more positive relations with others compared to non campers.



THE REASONS CAMPERS PITCH UP

Motivations to camp are varied and illustrate how camping can promote well-being in many ways (such as positive relations with others, happiness, improved physical health, and reduced stress and anxiety), supporting campers' mental health and overall well-being. Here's a selection.

I go camping...	Percentage who agree or strongly agree
as it makes me happy	97%
to enjoy being in nature	93%
to visit the local area and sightsee	92%
because I enjoy an outdoor lifestyle	92%
to make me feel more relaxed	91%
to take time out from everyday life	88%
to create lasting memories of shared experiences	80%
to spend quality time with family	79%
to be physically active in the outdoors (such as walking, cycling, climbing or surfing)	79%
as it's affordable	79%
to have an adventure	76%



Why do we go camping?

Camping – whether it's in the smallest tent or largest motorhome – fuels a sense of adventure and campers love pastimes that keep them active and offer an outdoors lifestyle. It also creates a feeling of escapism.

The added benefit is that it leads to better mental health through positive emotions like joy, happiness, excitement, love, pride and inspiration.

This may technically be known as flourishing, but ultimately camping gives you a deep sense of happiness so it's not surprising people want to camp regularly.

A PATHWAY TO A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER LIFE

Camping is a route to a lifestyle full of physical activity, often in the natural environment.

This study shows a life lived outdoors and with activity is a better life for us, for our community and our planet. Doing physical activities in different types of natural environment gets the best of both worlds, fostering greater well-being and providing mental health benefits, all through the simple activity of camping.

SURVIVING THE COVID YEARS

All the signs pointed to an expansion of camping during 2020 and 2021, when other forms of holiday were often out of reach because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Staying in your own accommodation on a campsite that allowed social distancing by default attracted many newcomers to the pastime. Especially since these are holidays in the open air.

Our survey showed campers place a high value on camping for their health and well-being, 93% feeling positive about it. This did not change during the pandemic, though 51% admitted Covid-19 had negatively affected the amount of time they spent camping. However, 25% of those we surveyed spent more time on the campsite during the time of the Covid-19 restrictions, when campsites were allowed to open.

HOW HAVE THINGS CHANGED SINCE 2011?

Our understanding of psychology has developed significantly since the last report and this study draws on a range of validated measures of well-being that were not widely used or did not exist 11 years ago. That means direct comparisons could not be made with the Real Richness report of 2011.

However, the findings of The Outjoymment Report corroborate those of the last study – campers have better well-being than non campers – and the latest measures have allowed us to examine well-being in more detail. Campers are more satisfied with their lives, happier and less stressed than non campers. They are also more social, enjoy more positive relationships with others, have a stronger sense of belonging to a community and are generally more likely to feel people are good.



Our credentials

With a heritage that stretches back to 1823, **Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU)** is now one of the largest and well-established universities in the UK, and its research institutes, centres and groups carry out important and inspirational work, committed to the University strategy to find solutions to the problems of the 21st century.

The School of Psychology at LJMU conducts world-leading research in all areas of applied psychology and neuroscience. Research is co-ordinated by the Research Centre for Brain and Behaviour, which has expertise in neuroscience, forensic psychology, health and well-being and cognition, education and language. More broadly across the university, this research fulfils research priorities of the university's Institute for Health Research (IHR), and its commitment to interdisciplinarity and is driven by strategic developments in line with national and international health policy. The IHR provides strategic leadership, inspiration and facilitation of a range of activities to support the internal and external research community and their combined research priorities, which also includes green spaces and mental well-being strategic priorities as part of this work.



Dr Kaye Richards BEd, MSc MSc PhD, FRSA
Senior Lecturer in Psychology

As a Chartered Psychologist and Outdoor Learning professional, my specialist areas include outdoor and adventure therapies, the psychology of outdoor adventure and nature-based experiences, outdoor education and outdoor leadership, counselling and psychotherapy, and mental health and well-being.



Dr Caroline E Brett MA, MSc, MSc, DPsych
Senior Lecturer in Health Psychology

I'm a registered health psychologist with expertise in research methods and evaluation and interests in the factors and interventions that improve well-being in people of all ages.

Here's what others say



JULIA BRADBURY,
President of The Camping and

Caravanning Club, broadcaster and outdoor enthusiast: "Camping is an opportunity to break away from our hectic lives and apply ourselves in a different way in an alternative environment. Family and friendship dynamics change on a camping holiday and we all get the opportunity to take on new roles and operate outside the confines of day-to-day life. I love the

feeling of sleeping near a woodland or beautiful landscape knowing that I can pull on my boots and be out there in minutes on a camping holiday... hearing and sensing the elements. Physical activity outdoors makes me happy and eases my anxieties."



ANDY TORBET, TV presenter, adventurer and stuntman:

"The science of 'why' may only be in its infancy but anyone who camps or spends time in the

Sheffield Hallam University is one of the largest in the UK, with about 33,000 students from across the world.

The Outdoor Recreation Research Group is the first cross-disciplinary research group in the country looking at the growing sector of outdoor recreation from all perspectives. Bringing together economists, social scientists, ecologists, engineers and behavioural change and tourism experts, it is the home of expertise in the way we play outdoors – and the important economy behind it. It works with local authorities, national bodies, recreation and tourism providers, sport companies and others with an interest in outdoor recreation to provide evidence, expertise and consultancy.



Dr Adele Doran BA, MSc, PGCE PCET, PhD
Principal Lecturer in Tourism Management

My research focuses on outdoor recreation and adventure tourism including participant experiences, motivations, constraints and well-being; equality, diversity and inclusivity; adventure media and marketing; and employment and entrepreneurship.



Harriet L Wingfield BA
Doctoral PhD student/Research Assistant

I am a doctoral student undertaking a PhD investigating the relationship between cycling tourism and well-being.



Dr Peter Schofield BSc, MA, PhD, MCILT
Professor in Tourism and Services Management

My research and consultancy interests include consumer decision making and behaviour, services marketing and travel motivations and constraints. I have expertise in quantitative data analysis and statistics.

The Camping and Caravanning Club is the world's oldest organisation dedicated to all forms of camping, from those who enjoy expeditions on foot and pitch up in tiny backpacking tents to tourers in American-style RV motorhomes – and everything in between. As a not-for-profit membership organisation, the Club has been encouraging people to enjoy the outdoors while staying in their own accommodation for more than 120 years. Today, it has more than 770,000 members.

outdoors knows you just feel better in nature. And the fact that regular camping breeds greater practical skills, self-sufficiency and independence make us more resilient to the obstacles and stresses of modern life."



MAX McMURDO,
Designer, author and TV presenter:

"Converting an old ambulance into a campervan was originally a project to keep me sane during lockdown, but now I can't imagine life without it. Most weekends we

pack a few things and escape somewhere – it's so liberating!"



GEMMA HUNT,
Children's TV presenter:

"Camping awakens the child in me. Wearing wellies or running around barefoot, toasting marshmallows, and brushing your teeth outdoors – things we forget to do as adults. It gives me an opportunity to breathe in more fresh air and listen to the sounds of nature and wildlife around me, that I otherwise miss indoors."

How we generated the report

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Our experts started by identifying academic research relating to camping or caravanning and published since 2010 in English, reviewing 1,166 articles and chapters from books.

This explored

- The beginnings of camping as a leisure activity
- How different types of camping emerged and moved from a specialist activity to more common practice
- Why people are motivated to camp
- What discourages people from camping
- An exploration of the potential benefits of camping such as connecting with nature and connecting with other people
- Using camping to improve health and education

2. THE SURVEY

Who took part?

15,127 adults completed an online questionnaire in February 2022 giving 10,992 useable responses from campers and non campers.

How did we survey them?

We used an online questionnaire to ask about camping in its different forms – whether the respondents did it and if so, with whom, how often, where and for how long. We enquired whether they explored natural spaces or took part in other similar activities. This was accompanied by a section on demographics that included asking about their age, employment status and where they lived. We also asked them their views on related subjects such as education in the context of camping trips for school children.

How did we analyse the results?

The survey responses were analysed using a set of internationally-recognised measures to help us highlight areas where campers and non campers might differ.

3. MEASURING WELL-BEING

Office for National Statistics Measurement of Personal Well-being

Using the UK's Annual Population Survey, the ONS has been collecting data from four questions relating to feelings of satisfaction with life since 2011. This covers whether you feel your activities are worthwhile and if you're happy or anxious. We used these same questions so we could compare the results from campers with those from the wider UK population.

The Mental Health Continuum – Short Form

A tool to help establish whether someone is flourishing, moderately mentally healthy or languishing in terms of their emotional, social and psychological well-being over the previous month.

The Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being

Questions that dig more deeply into six aspects of well-being and happiness, namely autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance.

Nature Connection Index

A set of questions used by Natural England to explore a person's relationship with nature and sense of place.

Perceived Stress Scale

This is a way to measure the extent to which people see their lives as being unpredictable, uncontrollable or overloaded – or the opposite – over the course of a month. This allows us to test whether campers might be avoiding the negative effects of excessive stress.



Making enjoyment of the outdoors a reality

OUR PLEDGE: TO GET THE NATION CAMPING

Camping connects people – to the outdoors, to nature and to each other.

The results of The Outjoymment Report show how beneficial camping can be, with the potential to improve well-being, mental health, a sense of community and more.

We know camping in all its different forms offers life-enhancing and accessible experiences, and provides a unique gateway to the great outdoors.

We're seeing a greater diversity of people enjoying the pastime. This is great news but it's vital to attract more people from all backgrounds.

The Camping and Caravanning Club's overarching vision is for a society in which camping and

memorable outdoor experiences can play a full part in building a happier, healthier nation. To do this, we are seeking to work in partnership with those who share our passion and ambitions.

Our goal is to raise the profile of camping and the countryside, to make enjoyment of the outdoors a reality for as many people as possible and to secure a sustainable future, making sure our world-class outdoor experiences are here for the generations of tomorrow.

With your support, we're really looking forward to helping others flourish through camping and the great outdoors.

Find out more about Outjoymment and see the report in full at

www.theoutjoymmentreport.co.uk

