

Club President JULIA BRADBURY looks forward to the new camping season, new experiences, new campers... and new arrivals!

First lady



Share the Outdoors

Now that it's April it's about time we all scraped the mud off our tent pegs, aired the awning and booked our next adventure.

The magazine's focus over the next few months is how we can share our love of camping, especially with people who haven't tried it before.

The way I see it, to get your non-camping friends involved you can do one of two things. Firstly, you might turn your camping experience into a big adventure, go somewhere remote with big skies and immerse yourself in the wilderness. My pick for this would be somewhere like Glencoe with all its ruggedness proudly on display, bursting with great stories of the clashes of the clans. This type of camping holiday is a great way to discover what makes a particular place tick and really gets you in touch with your senses, but make sure your companions are going to appreciate a camping experience at the more independent end of the scale – you don't want to scare them off!

Alternatively, you can do the complete opposite by making your getaway as comfortable and luxurious as possible. Show them how far camping has come in recent years.

It doesn't have to be bivouacing or stapling a tent to the side of a mountain, there are some incredibly comfortable and well-appointed campsites out there. Some Club Sites, such as Keswick, have had entirely new facilities blocks built in the closed season, making them really handy if your friends need their comfort factor.

And don't forget the Club now has Ready Camp – pre-pitched safari-style

tents that can be booked online by visiting www.readycamp.co.uk. They're great for busy people who still want to enjoy camping but who might not be complete experts and may feel daunted by the prospect of buying or packing up loads of kit and going for the first time.

There's just so much you can do to get out into the great outdoors – and encourage others to do the same.

So with that in mind, I'd urge all of you to support the Share the Outdoors campaign and make camping an enjoyable experience for someone you know.

A chorus of approval

As you read through this issue, you'll also see we've come up with a bit of a



A chaffinch singing in the dawn chorus

'bucket list' of fabulous adventures to have while camping. Including wildlife spotting and stargazing, there are 14 (and a half!) ideas that we think you should try at least once, starting

on page 34. I would add 'experience the dawn chorus' to the list. It requires a ridiculously early start to get up just before the birds but it's a great way to involve your children by making it fun and an adventure. Tell them you're getting up super early and take an app or ornithology book with you to make a bit of a game of it – see which of you can identify the most bird calls.

Unless I'm on first name terms with the birds I'm no good at telling a chaffinch from a chiffchaff. I definitely don't have a 'bird ear' but it's nonetheless something I'd urge everyone to try once... it's magical.

Another 'must do' is to pitch a tent on a cliff overlooking the sea so when you unzip the flysheet in the morning the first thing you see and hear is the waves washing up on the beach. Then you can go for a stroll along the empty coastline and soak up the solitude and the fresh morning air. Tough to beat.



Adding to the family

You may have heard that I'm expecting twins this month. In fact by the time you read this I may very well have welcomed my two new arrivals into the world.

I've been doing some serious nesting, and while I'll certainly have my hands full for a few months I'm pleased to say everything has been going well, and I'm really excited about meeting the two new additions to our camping and caravanning fraternity.

We'll keep you posted. I believe this is a first for a Club President!