

Club President **JULIA BRADBURY** shares her hopes for 2017 along with a taste of her new walking series for ITV

First lady



AS THIS IS our January issue (though many of you will be reading this in December) may I wish you all a very happy new year! I hope you've had a wonderful festive break, huddled around the Christmas tree sharing good cheer.

Moving from one year to the next is always an opportunity to look back over the last 12 months and forward to the next.

What a tumultuous year 2016 has been. We've got a lot to thank politics for in a way. Brexit has certainly had an impact on the popularity of the 'staycation' and holidaying at home.

The immediate impact has been the sharp increase in the cost of European holidays, since the Euro and the Pound are now much closer in value.

This is good news for the UK-based holiday providers, just like the Club, who will undoubtedly see more people staying put in 2017.

As for the politics in the USA and Donald Trump's successful Presidential campaign, we will have to wait and see. Maybe we'll have an influx of Americans with their RVs coming to our shores!

I'm really looking forward to 2017 for lots of reasons.

I'm excited to be able to introduce my new walking series, Britain's Best Walks with Julia Bradbury, which is due to be shown on ITV in early January.

In the show I'm taking in the most beautiful landscapes of the UK. I've travelled from the Isle of Man to Scotland, visited Cheshire and Yorkshire, and had some fun encounters with lovely people along the way.

During filming we were very lucky with the weather – in Dorset the skies were blue and the sun was so hot I could

have filmed the entire episode in my bikini. We had suitably tough conditions in Yorkshire where we battled wind and rain, but that's the beauty of walking in the UK – you have to be prepared for it, and it keeps the experience real for us all.

It's great to be back on the box again and I hope you enjoy the new show – as a little treat just for our Club members you can find out a bit more about it in the February issue.

Meanwhile the Club has a number of great reasons to be cheerful in 2017 as well. Later this month we'll be revealing the results of our tent, caravan and motorhome Owner Satisfaction Survey.

By celebrating the best tents, caravans and motorhomes on the market, and highlighting areas for improvement, the Club can use its authority to help improve the overall quality and reliability of those on sale today. The results of each survey will help campers make better informed choices when researching their next unit, and before parting with their hard-earned cash.

I'll be presenting the results in Manchester on 19 January, a few hours after meeting more of our fabulous Club members at the Manchester Caravan and Motorhome Show, and hopefully encouraging a few new folk to join us too.

We also have National Camping and Caravanning Week to look forward to in late May and we'll have some exciting plans to reveal about that soon.

Plus, of course, we'll all be enjoying 'A Day at the Races' at the 2017 National Feast of Lanterns in Sussex in August. Time to dig out the posh hat again!

Since a bit of belt-tightening might be needed this early in the year it's also good to see the magazine covering money-saving tips for campers (see page 28).

My favourite tip, as you'll see from the feature, is spreading the cost of a new camping unit or equipment by sharing the costs with someone – a sort of tent timeshare!

If you only camp a few times a year, could another member of your family or family friends make use of your tent, caravan or motorhome when you're not? (Martin Lewis, the Moneysaving Expert, will be on the blower to me soon).

Another feature you'll read in this issue is about caravans and motorhomes in film.

There have been loads of great movies made over the years where camping plays a big part but for me, being a Carry On girl, it's Carry on Camping that gets my vote. Who doesn't love a bit of Sid James (with his famous cackle) and our beloved Babs Windsor, eh? What a reason to smile, and to enjoy camping no matter what 2017 may throw at us.

Look forward to the year ahead everyone, and don't forget – Carry On Camping! 

