



FRESH DISCOVERY

Bailey has resurrected an old range for 2020. Rob McCabe examines the new-look four-berth



To be frank, the first incarnation of the Bailey Discovery wasn't particularly exciting. It was a perfectly normal – but really rather anonymous – entry-level caravan that enjoyed a run in the Bailey line-up through the 1990s and most of the subsequent decade.

Well, it's back, and you certainly wouldn't call it anonymous now. The new Discovery (which comes in two-, three- and four-berth guises) stands out from the crowd with a sharp, attractive bodysell resplendent in a striking two-tone slate grey and white finish.

Bailey is targeting a younger, more active crowd with this newcomer. Here, we investigate the D4-4 fixed-bed four-berther to see whether it will appeal to the young at heart too.

BUILDQUALITY

Bailey's Alu-Tech construction method has been around for so long that some 60,000 vehicles have been put together this way – and the new

Discovery models now join their massed ranks. The almost total lack of exterior fasteners means a lengthy anti-water-ingress warranty if you keep to the servicing schedule; and here we have a finely screwed-together caravan that looks and feels bank-vault sturdy, inside and out. Opening the lockers reveals a pleasing absence of unsightly runs of cable or piping; everything is neatly concealed behind trunking. The only thing that needed attention on our test example was the fold-out front table, which didn't snick into place as securely as it ought to.

TOWING

This is one of the Discovery range's main selling points. The smallest of the trio, the two-berth D4-2, doesn't even reach 1,000kg fully laden, and the legal limit for this one is just over 1,200kg, so you can choose from a massive pool of suitable towcars.

A built-in stabiliser is standard but there's no option to fit the much-admired Al-Ko ATC system. However, that continental-style extended A-frame is a boon to stability, as is the weight distribution; all the heavy stuff (including the gas locker) has been set up over or around the axle. Incidentally, an A-frame-mounted storage box is an expensive-sounding £599 option, or you can fit a Thule two-cycle bike rack there instead (£349).

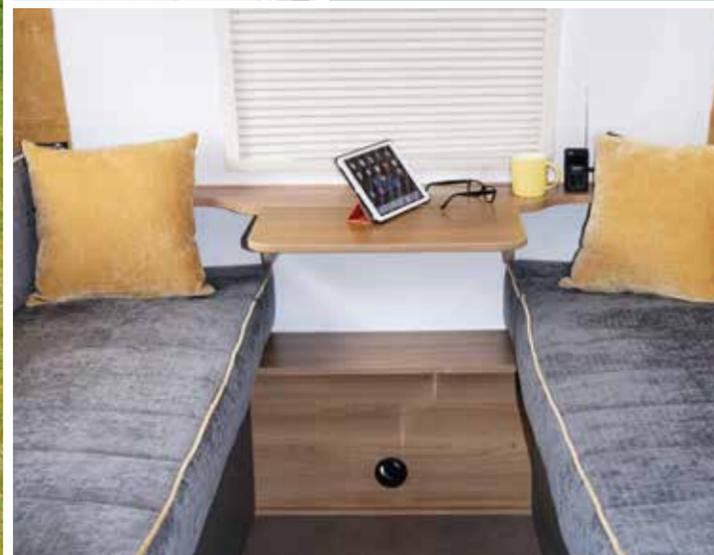
DAYTIME

Fixed-bed caravans often have front lounges that feel a bit pinched. That's not the case here. The parallel sofas allow full-length, feet-up reclining and they can seat four with room to spare. The upholstery doesn't feel especially supportive, though; the front edge of the squab dipped quite



Opposite: the optional wraparound awning should be a big draw (inset – distinctive graphics)

This page from top: kitchen is fairly basic; front bed is sizeable; lounge in day mode



TECHNICAL RATINGS 👤👤👤👤

90% BUILD QUALITY	90% TOWING	86% DAYTIME	75% NIGHT-TIME
81% KITCHEN	85% WASHROOM	90% LIGHTING	85% VERDICT

Beds

Front double: 6ft 2in x 4ft 6in (or two singles: 5ft 5in x 2ft 1in)

Rear fixed double: 6ft 1in x 4ft 4in

MRO

1,059kg (20.85cwt)

MTPLM

1,206kg (23.74cwt)

User payload

147kg (2.89cwt)

Price as tested

18,064 OTR

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Heating

Truma Combi

Fridge/freezer

Dometic fridge-freezer

Toilet

Thetford

Overall length

23ft 5in (7.14m)

Overall width

7ft 4in (2.23m)

Overall height

8ft 6in (2.61m)

Figures from manufacturer's literature.

*Based on standard new-for-old cover, cover limit of £19,000 (caravan and equipment), £500 contents cover and £100 voluntary excess. Includes security discounts of 15% for Al-Ko ATC, 15% for Al-Ko Diamond Standard wheel lock(s) and 10% for alarm with tilt sensor. Includes 4+ years no claims discount (not protected). Legal protection is an optional extra charged at £9.75 for the year. Subject to underwriting – a copy of the cover wording, including benefits, limitations and exclusions that apply, is available on request. Caravan and Motorhome Club is a trading name of The Caravan Club Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for general insurance and credit activities.

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noticeably under my weight. You don't get any carpeting as standard with the Discovery range – it's a cost option.

The huge front window is an attractive focal point that lets in a lot of light, and it's good to see that it opens fairly wide. With the exception of the tiny one in the kitchen, all the windows and the Midi Heki sunroof are served by pleated blinds, which add an upmarket look when in use. The window-less stable door is protected by a full-height flyscreen.

There are plenty of thoughtful, practical touches, including USB sockets built into the bedroom and lounge reading lights. Exterior hatches give access to the space under the double bed and the nearside seat locker, and the spare wheel is easily accessible under the offside seat locker. Storage elsewhere is bountiful, including a big wardrobe and lots of open shelving; and there's the ever-useful (but often absent) key shelf above the door. That will always elicit

a "hurrah" from me. The Truma Combi system provides hot water and heating on both gas and electric. But a walk around the outside of the Discovery gives a clue as to the main talking point: an awning rail that runs right around the rear of the caravan to accommodate an exclusive wraparound Prima air awning. This eye-catching, optional extra costs £1,199, and it's no surprise to learn that Bailey expects most buyers to specify this at the time of ordering.

NIGHT-TIME

With two double beds more than 6ft in length (and generously wide, too), the D4-4 guarantees a decent night's sleep for four, even if the mattress on the fixed bed is a big step up in quality from the

upholstery sections that rearrange to make up the one in the front. If you do occasionally like to have guests staying over, the lack of even a curtain to separate the bedroom from the rest of the caravan may be a bit of an issue. Similarly, the washroom is right at the back – not ideal if those sleeping upfront wish to pay a middle-of-the-night visit. These factors combine to mean many buyers will only use this Discovery as a two-berth. The bedroom itself is thoroughly pleasant. I found the bed to be splendidly comfortable and supportive. I'm also a big fan of the slate-coloured wall behind it – it contrasts attractively with the white locker doors/washroom door/sidewalls, and adds an air of panache. Two wall-mounted shelves give a home to overnight paraphernalia but they don't have lips around the edging, so I'm not sure I would trust them with a glass of water.

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Above: fairly roomy washroom can double as a dressing area



Left: Discovery's rear aspect is certainly different from other caravans



Right: fixed bed is very comfortable but there is no way of shutting yourself off from the rest of the caravan



Relax and enjoy the great outdoors knowing you're covered

And I have to reiterate... while I was in here, I couldn't shake off the feeling that someone forgot to fit the dividing wall and door.

KITCHEN

This is another sharply dressed area, although its equipment roster is on the minimalist side: a fridge, a three-burner hob (no electric hotplate), a combined oven/grill, no microwave and no lid over the sink. That said, if a fully-kitted kitchen is high on your wishlist you probably won't be looking around a Discovery anyway.

The modest worktop is expanded by a little lift-up extension, although I imagine most cooks will be more grateful for the roomy dresser top on the opposite wall – it's the same height as the kitchen unit.

WASHROOM

The nature of the exterior styling means no window in here; the sole entry point for daylight is the tiny skylight above the shower, so it does feel a little bit gloomy without the lights on. There's

nothing flashy about the decor – pure and simple is the order of the day, and I have to say it's really none the worse for it.

Given the open-plan layout of the rest of the caravan, this facility will also have a role as a dressing room, and it's spacious enough to carry out that task comfortably. The shower cubicle is a good size too, although it lacks anywhere to plonk shampoo, gels, etc. Other storage provision is very good, thanks to a decent-sized cupboard and lots of shelving.

LIGHTING

As is so often the case with caravans at the bottom of the pecking order, there are only two reading lights in the lounge. But pecking order or not, this caravan still costs more than 18 grand – which should really be enough to buy you illumination for all four lounge corners.

That aside, lighting is excellent throughout. The mood lights that run along the tops of the overhead lockers look attractive and are also bright enough to make a difference. The kitchen is exceptionally

well served by a couple of flush-fitting lamps, and a tug on the pull-cord in the washroom brings on two bright lights, including one that serves the mirror very effectively; no dedicated light for the shower, though. A pair of reading lights, downlighters above the wardrobe door and a swathe of mood lighting takes care of the bedroom very nicely.

VERDICT

Bailey deserves a lot of credit for the exterior design of a caravan that stands out from the crowd – and that optional wraparound awning is sure to win a lot of fans. The interior is a breath of fresh air too, although the one-room nature of the layout won't appeal to everyone.

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