

Twin test

Two caravans with the same layout have been given very different treatments. Which will have the greater showroom appeal?

BAILEY

Pegasus 514



Berths.....	4
Overall length.....	7.18m
Width.....	2.28m
Overall height.....	2.63m
MiRO ⁺	1250kg
MTPLM ⁺	1466kg
User payload.....	216kg

Price
£16,140

STERLING

Eccles Moonstone



Berths.....	4
Overall length.....	7.18m
Width.....	2.29m
Overall height.....	2.61m
MiRO ⁺	1368kg
MTPLM ⁺	1580kg
User payload.....	212kg

Price
£15,832

⁺Terms explained in 'Caravan Basics' (glossary, page 120)

SIDE-DINETTE FOUR-berth tourers have been a staple of the UK caravan market for years. It's not hard to see why. For small families, they give you superb lounge, kitchen and washroom areas with the flexibility of four berths. For couples, you get all that, but the side-dinette makes a perfect space for morning coffee

or evening crosswords, even if the other person wants to stay in bed. Compared to many modern four-berths, they are pretty compact and the weights are sensible, too.

This is the first time we've put a caravan using Bailey's Alu-Tech construction method up against a traditionally built tourer and we're fascinated to see the results. As is

often the way with Bailey products, the Pegasus 514 is loaded to the gunwales with kit but this range has divided opinion with its clean lines and minimalist treatment.

The natural rival to the Pegasus in our mind is the Sterling Eccles Moonstone. Sterling caravans are

characterised by contemporary looks and tremendous showroom appeal. With prices that are within a few hundred pounds of each other, this is exactly the sort of conundrum potential buyers will face and we can't wait to see the outcome.

Please turn for full reviews, our verdict & specifications >>

BAILEY Pegasus 514



Walls are a sandwich construction lined with GRP on the inside, giving a clean but austere look

The 514 has long sofas and the seat support with knee rolls is excellent, making a very comfortable lounge

The free-standing table has drop down sides and is nice to use but it is heavy. Centre chest is a £280 option

“The pull-out seats work well, providing the most comfortable tourer seats we’ve ever seen”



Kitchen has good worktop space, four-burner hob and large sink



Racking makes most of cupboard space for food and cutlery storage



Good

Superb list of standard equipment and the body construction is cutting edge. The body warranty is unrivalled in the market and for such a well-equipped tourer, the weight is eye-catchingly low, too.



Bad

Some fit and finish issues, no centre chest as standard, stark interior and understated exterior. Washroom design doesn't use the available space very well and gas locker is difficult to access.



Upright seating is fine for short periods but table leg can drop out. The side bunks are made up in the usual way but the steel ladder is poor





BAILEY Pegasus 514

Pitch and set-up

This is a well-equipped caravan. The Al-Ko hitch-head stabiliser, ATC stability control system and Secure wheel lock are all included as standard, while an inboard water tank, framed aluminium windows and insulated pipe runs help retain heat in cold conditions, making this a great year-round tourer. The 514 also has an alarm and Tracker system.

The construction method used to build it minimises opportunities for water ingress. The roof and front panel are made of a single sandwich panel and the sidewalls are a single sheet of aluminium. Where possible, external fixtures are bonded into place to minimise holes in the bodywork that can allow in damp. The body panels are bonded into the aluminium frame.

The side-accessed wet lockers are good but gas bottles are tricky to access owing to the low opening height of the lid and limited access from either side of the A-frame.

Lounge

The centre chest is an optional extra but, uniquely, it can be moved to the side of the dinette in long-lounge models like the 514. The standard wrap-around seating makes a comfy lounge and seat support is excellent. The wide front shelf goes some way to making up for the lack of a centre chest, but it's easy to snag a teacup on the backrest when passing it across.

The pull-out seat bases work well, providing the most comfortable tourer seats we've seen. Lighting is adequate, but hardly generous. The side dinette seating is bolt upright and fine for short periods but the table is awkward to move and care must be taken to avoid the leg's dropping out. The main dining table is large but heavy and awkward to handle.

Kitchen

The kitchen has some thoughtful touches. The large sink is excellent and the drop-in chopping board and bowl are a usable size. Work space is good and so is the storage, although the large locker over the kitchen is

compromised by the racks for mugs and plates. Keen cooks will love the Thetford hob with front-facing controls and its mix of small and large burners.

Beds

Making up the front bed is made simple by the pull-out bases and, with no standard centre chest, the bed is huge. The side bunks are made up in the normal way, but the painted steel ladder is poor and the hooked top will eventually damage the edge it hangs over.

Washroom

No shortage of space in here, but there are a few things that are not well thought out. The shower is large but the shower curtain looks a pretty crude affair next to the cutting-edge cubicle. The electric-flush Thetford C250 toilet is always a welcome sight and while legroom is fine, space across the shoulders is quite tight at around 56cm.

The wardrobe is huge, though, and shelves in the nearside corner are great and have a locker door to access them from the front. There is so much wasted space, though. The full-height hanging space is unlikely to get used and the area under those shelves will be tricky to get to once there are things hanging. The storage under the vanity unit is useful but for a top-end tourer, the basin area feels sparse. Lighting is a bit limited, but an opaque window and rooflight allow in natural light by day.

Storage

Exterior storage is pretty good, courtesy of the wet lockers on either side of the gas locker but you won't squeeze in a Wastemaster. Inside, the underseat areas are easy to access. The whole seat base and front face lift on gas struts. However, standing above the lifting lockers, your vision is obscured by the front face as it lifts. The roof lockers have shelves to make the space usable, and the space under the side dinette lockers is clear and easily accessed.



Front locker lid does not lift very high, making it difficult to manoeuvre gas bottles in and out



Seat bases slide out, making it possible to put your feet up and providing a very comfy lounge



With the slide-out seats forming the base, making up the bed is easy. Without the optional centre chest the bed is huge



The cutting-edge shower cubicle is spoilt by the curtain. Wardrobe has full-length hanging space and shelves

OUR
BEST
BIT

9 10

7 10

5 10

6 10

8 10

8 10

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STERLING Eccles Moonstone



Worktop space is good but is made better still by having a removable plastic drainer

Mains lighting is supplemented by LED spotlights in each corner of the front lounge



The table is light and easy to handle but the standard centre chest is sufficient for light meals

“The upholstery is busy but with the dark counter tops and light woodwork the effect is very stylish”



Storage options in the kitchen are good with cupboards and shelving



Pull-out wire shelves make the most of narrow cupboard space



Good

Bags of showroom appeal. Looks great inside and out, balancing contemporary looks with traditional appeal. Evidence of thoughtful design throughout, particularly in the kitchen and washroom.



Bad

The equipment is not exactly generous for the price and it's too heavy for a single-axle tourer. It really needs an executive class estate or small 4x4 to tow it, which is silly for a mid-range four berth.



Side dinette converts into bunks at night. Aluminium ladder and plastic brackets feel substantial and guard wraps around to keep pillows in place

STERLING

Eccles Moonstone

Pitch and set-up

The Sterling is a great-looking van from every angle and everything about setting up is very straightforward. The 12V control panel is on the left as you enter the van and most other controls are grouped at the end of the kitchen area. Having the power switches for the mains water and space heating under the front offside seat is a bit of a bind, but otherwise, everything falls to hand. Exterior specification includes a gas barbecue point and mains socket inside the wet locker. A spare wheel and carrier are standard but most other chassis extras, such as Al-Ko Secure, ATC and a wheel-changing kit are costly optional extras. Combined with a disappointing MTPLM figure of 1580kg, there is room for improvement.

6/10

Lounge

The lounge is comfortable and benefits from two TV points, access to five mains sockets and a CD/radio and bottle clips are housed in the large cupboard above the kitchen worktop.

8/10

Headroom through most of the Swift is excellent, although it drops to around 1.85m in the lounge under the rooflight. The lighting is mostly LED. Flush-mounted twin spots directly over the centre chest help make up for the directional nature of the LED spotlamps in each corner of the lounge. All these LEDs are great news for battery life, although there are mains lights in the corners of the lounge.

The upholstery is busy but with the dark counter tops and light woodwork the effect is very stylish. The standard centre chest is big enough for a light lunch, but when the table is needed, it is light and easy to handle.

Kitchen

The kitchen has been thoughtfully designed. The 107-litre digital control fridge is a good size, while the dedicated cutlery drawer, large pedestal unit on the offside and under-counter cupboard provide ample storage. The mains-powered electric hotplate is a Swift Group standard fit, meaning there are three gas

7/10

burners, oven and grill and a swish-looking Sanyo digital control microwave. This is installed in a roof-level unit.

The limited lighting is the main downside of an otherwise good set up but at nearly £16,000, the lack of an extractor fan seems stingy.

Beds

Pull-out slats make up the front double bed, which is comfortable and flat. The LED spotlamps make good reading lights, whichever way around you sleep. The side bunk also uses slats, which are stored under the bunk by day. They are a little fiddly, but otherwise the side bunks set up easily. The chunky aluminium ladder and plastic mounting brackets feel substantial and the clip-in guards around the top bunk wrap around the end to stop the pillows falling off at night. The privacy curtain is stowed in a locker mounted at the back of the dinette by day. It's a neat solution.

8/10

Washroom

Initially, the washroom looks claustrophobic but once inside, you realise every square centimetre has been thoughtfully used. It works well. The wardrobe is divided up with two drawers below, shelves inside but still with enough hanging space for most. The shower cubicle is large and there is a dedicated light inside. Storage is excellent, too, with a wall cupboard behind the Thetford C-250, a shelf along the back wall and two shelves in the vanity unit locker. The carpet is split and can be removed easily.

9/10

Storage

The front seat lockers provide the bulk of the storage, accessed through either the drop-down fronts or the self-supporting locker lids. The side-dinette storage areas have lift-up lids but there are no supports. It's a shame that there aren't shelves in more of the overhead lockers and that makes the space less usable, but generally, there is little to complain about.

8/10

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Gas support strut lifts lid high on spacious front locker for easy access to two gas bottles



Power switches for mains water and heating are located under the front offside seat. It's not ideal



The front lounge makes up into a flat, comfortable double bed in the usual way with pull-out wooden slats



Thoughtful washroom design gives excellent storage, enough room around the toilet and a large shower cubicle

OUR
BEST
BIT

This is as difficult a comparative test as we've ever done, because we're not just comparing two caravans. We're comparing a pair of products that take fundamentally different approaches to luring the same customer base.

Bailey blinds you with science. It makes a convincing case for buying

a caravan claiming to be warmer, stronger and cleverer than anything else on the market. In a straight comparison with the Sterling Eccles Moonstone, it's a clear win for the Bailey Pegasus. Although the Sterling enjoys a £300 price advantage over the 514, the difference in specification between the two caravans easily

swallows that and more. The retail value of the Al-Ko Secure receiver, ATC, Tracker and the Avtex television is conservatively around £1000 and makes Pegasus look exceptional value. Factor in its 114kg weight advantage and peerless body warranty, and we have an open and shut case. Even the insurance is cheaper.

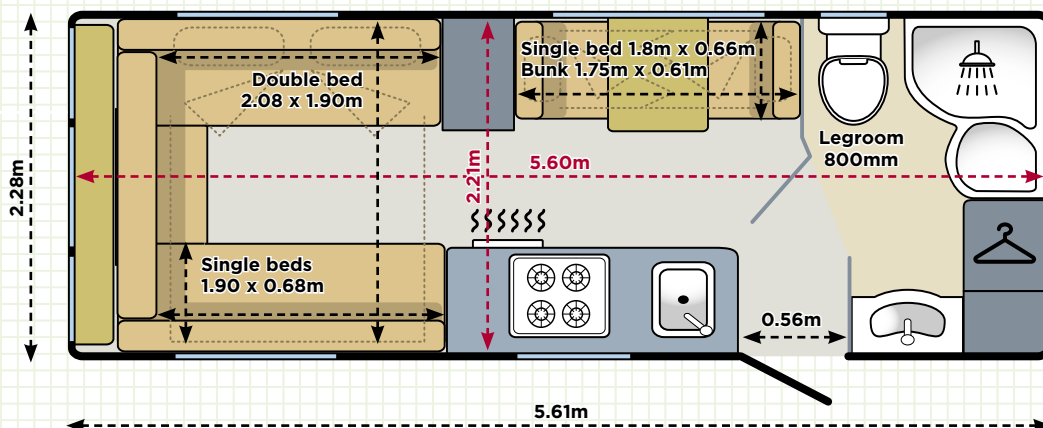
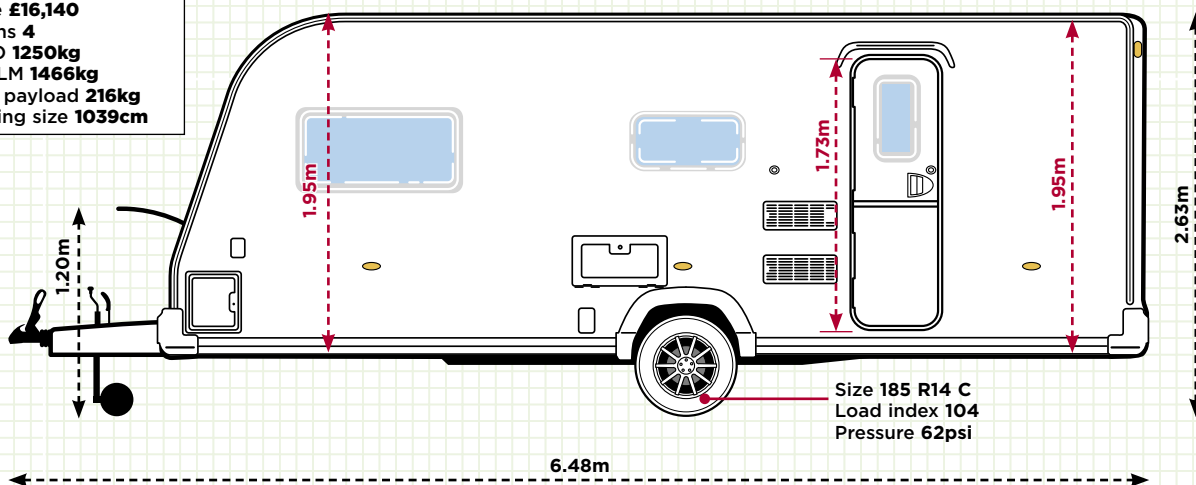
It really isn't that simple though. Years of experience in the traditional caravan building process give Sterling a huge advantage inside. Its designers have spent their time making sure the little things work. The washroom space is used beautifully, the overall appearance inside the caravan is warm and welcoming,

BAILEY Pegasus 514

Bailey of Bristol, South Liberty Lane, Bristol BS3 2SS
Tel 0117 305 2939 Web www.bailey-caravans.co.uk. Dealers 80



VITAL STATS
Price **£16,140**
Berths **4**
MiRO **1250kg**
MTPLM **1466kg**
User payload **216kg**
Awning size **1039cm**



STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Construction 'Alu-tech' aluminium skin with GRP internal walls. Aluminium framework. Single-piece roof and front panel, Al-Ko galvanised chassis

External Equipment Al-Ko 3004 stabiliser. Button-free handbrake. Shock absorbers. Al-Ko ATC. Spare wheel and carrier. Status 530 directional aerial. Internal, removable water tank. Twin wet lockers. Mains socket. Gas point

Heating Truma dual-fuel, blown-air space heater.

Truma dual-fuel water heater.

Lounge Pleated blinds and flyscreens to all windows. Privacy glass windows. Removable carpets, Heki rooflights. Radio/CD/MP3 player. Speakers. Avtex TV/DVD player.

Kitchen Dometic 110-litre Series 8 fridge with removable freezer compartment. Separate oven and grill. Four-burner gas hob. 800W microwave.

Washroom Thetford C-250 swivel-bowl toilet with electric flush. 18-litre wheeled waste tank.

Lined, double-width shower cubicle.

Security CRIS identity number on windows and chassis. Al-Ko Secure wheel locks. Concealed security data chip. Alarm. Tracker

Warranty Three years parts, six years water ingress, plus four-year warranty extension - 10 years in total.

OPTIONS

Upholstery (£255). Centre chest (£280).



Stellar specification, cracking value and clever, but lacks crucial showroom appeal

giving the Sterling bags of showroom appeal that is simply absent from its rival. Put bluntly, the Sterling makes you feel good when you are inside it. The Pegasus looks and feels far more austere than the sticker price suggests. We know the Pegasus is clever, but we found we were forcing ourselves to like it.

We love everything Pegasus stands for and applaud Bailey for dragging caravan manufacturing into the 21st century. But buying a caravan is not like buying a toaster or a washing machine. It's not enough that it is clever or practical. You have to love it. And that's precisely why, despite everything, we'd take the Sterling.

We say



Alyson Warnock says

The Pegasus is clever and I love the day beds in the lounge. But for this price I would want the finish and feel of the Eccles Moonstone.



Nigel says

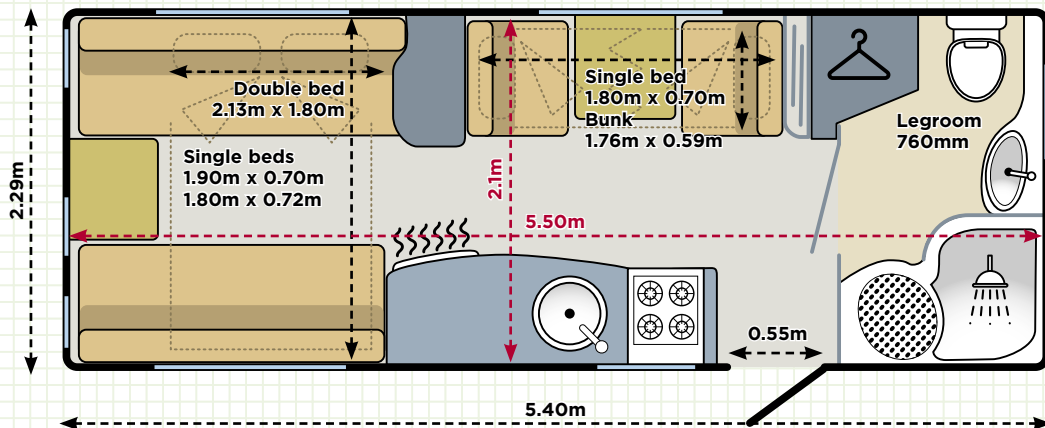
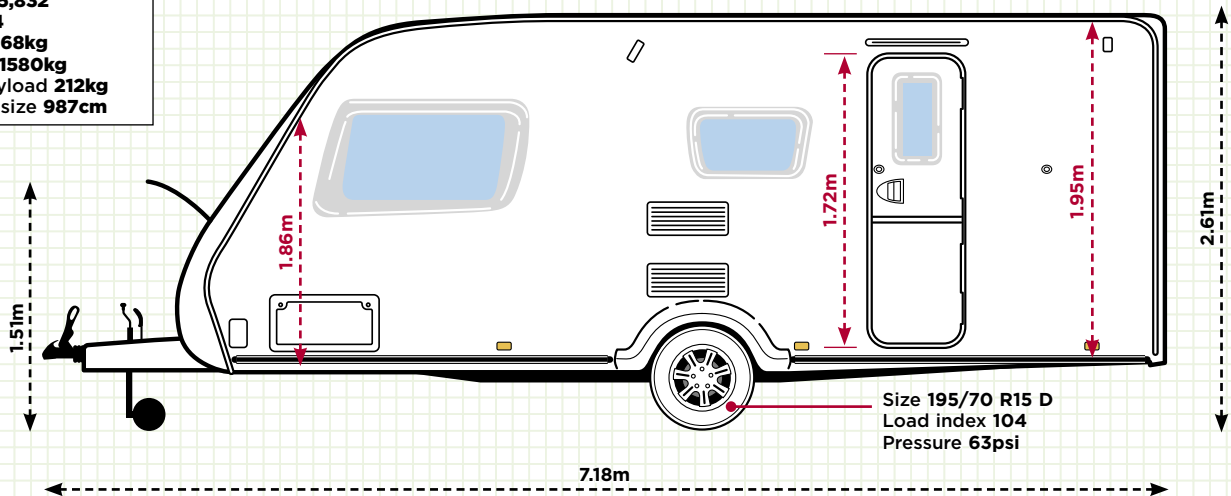
Both caravans will doubtless delight potential owners but the minimalist appearance of the Pegasus will turn off a lot of the more traditional buyers.

STERLING Eccles Moonstone

Swift Group, Dunswell Road, Cottingham, East Yorkshire HU16 4JX
Tel 01482 847 332 Web www.swiftleisure.co.uk Dealers 64

CARAVANGUARD
INSURANCE
QUOTE
£249*

**VITAL
STATS**
Price **£15,832**
Berths **4**
MIRO **1368kg**
MTPLM **1580kg**
User payload **212kg**
Awning size **987cm**



STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Construction Single-piece aluminium sidewalls, sandwich construction. Full-height GRP front panel. Full-height ABS rear panel. Al-Ko chassis

External Equipment Al-Ko stabiliser. Button-free handbrake. Shock absorbers. Al-Ko Spare wheel and carrier. Status 530 directional aerial. Wet locker. Mains socket. Gas point.

Heating Truma dual-fuel, blown-air space heater. Truma dual-fuel water heater.

Lounge Centre drawer chest. Pleated blinds and flyscreens to all windows. Removable three-section carpets. Heki rooflights. Radio/CD/MP3 player, speakers. LED lighting.

Kitchen Thetford 107-litre fridge. Separate oven and grill. Three-gas burners and single electric hotplate hob. 800W microwave. On-board water tank.

Washroom Thetford C-250 swivel-bowl toilet with electric flush. 18-litre wheeled waste tank,

Lined shower cubicle.

Security CRIS identity number etched to all windows and chassis. Al-Ko Secure receiver. Concealed security data chip. Alarm

Warranty

3 years parts, 6 years water ingress

OPTIONS

Al-Ko ATC. (£434). HAL Locate GPS tracking system (£639). AL-KO Secure wheel lock (£199).



Loses out in a few key areas but feels the more upmarket and desirable caravan