



REVIEW

BAILEY Olympus 530-4

This medium-priced range was left behind when Bailey launched its stunning, low cost Orions last year. A makeover was inevitable

It must be hard to be a Bailey Olympus – like being the second-to-smallest of four children; you're not the smartest in the family; neither are you the smallest. People fall for the sophisticated togetherness of Unicorn and Pegasus, and find Orion cute and quirky. But who are you exactly, beyond being lighter and cheaper than the big boys and more conservative, less out there than your little brother?

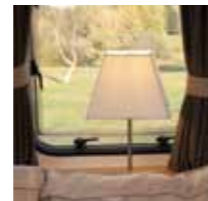
Olympus has tended to be a pragmatic choice rather than one from the heart, and Bailey has given it a much needed update in an attempt to address this. The colours inside are all changed and there is a new layout.

The 530-4 transfers across from the old-style Olympus range, with the new look, and few changes to its essential layout.

Shower 6/10

The shower room goes right across the back of the caravan but is smaller than you might expect. Go through the door, which is a proper domestic-style one with the kind of doorhandle you might find in a new

house. Turn to the right and you'll see a shower cubicle fully lined with plastic and with folding doors to keep the water in. According to our tape measure the shower enclosure is 75cm wide; the size of many you'll find in houses. But the folding doors will impinge on that space when you're standing inside. The shower itself has a single-action tap – tilt for on, twist for temperature, and is the kind that keeps water running continuously rather than in short bursts. So far so good, but the gap between the big white sink and the wall opposite is only just wide enough to allow you to open the door of the vanity unit under that sink. The loo has a slightly awkward angle to it, and you might easily bruise your thighs against the corner of the vanity unit. There's a long mirror, but unfortunately the only place for it is about 30cm to the left of anywhere you might stand to get a full-length view. There's a decent amount of storage space in this small room – three open shelves and two shelves in the vanity unit, plus a corner shelf high above the loo, ideal for storing towels; this shelf is tucked away in the corner in such



Sleeping for tall folk

Both beds are taller than a standard double. The fixed bed is 2cm up, at 193cm. The bed you make from front sofas utilises the full caravan width so is 198cm; 6ft 6in.

Top lockers

The Olympus range has a different style of locker door in the kitchen. This tester's not crazy about the curved corners - it looks like someone went round with a router. The standard doors are lovelier.

Bedroom partition

A pleated room divider pulls across between the bedroom and kitchen, separating the caravan into two rooms. This handy hatchway allows you to pass through a cup of tea or breakfast in bed.

Entertainment zone

The cubby hole above the Truma heater is ideal for dvd players, and standing your TV here makes sense. We're just a little concerned about the prospect of putting microwaved food near the TV.

Under the bed

The storage space here is huge, helped by the height of the bed. There's an outside hatch and Bailey has created a plastic-lined section for wet boots and so on.

THE REAL COST

£16,240

Bailey's normal delivery charge of £545 is added to the price. Our test caravan has the option of the front central chest of drawers, which costs an extra £286

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Front cupboards

These are exceptionally deep and spacious, thanks to the new profile. The window sill is also deep, making it a useful area to put books, magazines, mugs and wine glasses.

Convertible sofa

You know you're in a mid-cost Bailey range when you see that the bed slats are the old-fashioned clackety variety; Unicorn models have hinged sofa bases that pull out.

The short lounge

Sadly, these sofas are not full length; so would only make single beds for children. This tester loves full length sofas for lounging; in this model the u-shaped configuration helps.

Time to eat

The U-shaped seating makes this a practical area for entertaining; you might sit five people here. We would like the sofa end stop to be lower, making it possible to sit over the edge.

About the sink...

Bailey kitchens have distinctive, large, rectangular sinks made of stainless steel. The idea is that you might move the plastic bowl so that you have space at the end in which to run water.

I could imagine the hatchway working very well for Sunday papers and breakfast in bed

a way that we don't think even the tallest person is at risk of bumping their head. There are two towel hooks, plus two dressing gown hooks on the wall.

Sleeping 7/10

The double bed is a 135cm (53in) wide, 193cm (69in) long one. At 5ft 5in tall there was no way I could get my head or toes to touch either end. The mattress is firm, and there's a comfortable head rest. If you're the one sleeping on the wall side you get a shelf for a mug, and there's a hatchway through to the living area and sideboard at your feet. I could imagine this working very well for Sunday papers and breakfast in bed, though there's nowhere obvious for the other sleeper to put their mug.

The bedroom is bright and airy, with a large window to one side, but, as a space, it's marred by a large wardrobe facing the bottom of the bed; when you open the wardrobe doors, space is very tight. This always tends to be an issue with caravans which have double beds of this kind – the only really successful answer we've seen to it is in some of this year's Elddis models, which have taken the wardrobe out of the bedroom and replaced it with a dressing table.

At the front you can make up two singles or a double bed. As singles they are 1.58m and 1.6m long, so you're going to need to make up the front as a double bed if adults are sleeping here. The bed makes up via slats that pull out from under the front of the U-shaped sofa in the traditional manner, making a bed 1.95m long by 1.58m wide – a true king's size.

Storage 14/20

There's a lot of space for kit, considering this is a modest-sized lightweight layout. Olympus, like all Bailey's ranges, are blunter-nosed than typical caravans of the last two decades, and this gives a lot of depth in the overhead lockers at the front. Even though they're large, there's plenty of headroom to the

front of these caravans so you don't tend to find you're bumping your head on them (something we found was an issue with 2011 Sprites).

We would have liked to see shelving in these cupboards, to help us make the most of the cavernous space. There are shelves in some of the other overhead lockers, but there's none in the largest locker above the bed.

The massive space under the bed is easy to get to and has an exterior door, with a plastic tray giving you a kind of wet-locker for boots and picnic chairs that have been out in the rain.

There are some shortcomings. Another shelf in the tallest kitchen cupboard would be very welcome (see kitchens, below), and it would be so easy to make the sideboard that houses the Truma blown air heater more functional. At the top there's a small, useful locker above a microwave, then under the natural TV position there's a little hole for DVD players and games systems – we've seen rivals do a better job of media cabinets – the cubby hole seems a little stingy and in our test caravan the media shelf and TV shelf above it, share a single powerpoint. We'd also like to see a hole at the back of the TV shelf, for connecting wires.

On the plus side, Bailey's Alu-tech caravans were among the first to have a rigid, well-constructed door to the front gas locker; this is narrower than usual, leaving space for two other small lockers, one to either side of the front of the caravan. Use them for chocks, for toilet chemicals, walking boots; anything you like.

Then there is that wardrobe. While it does restrict the corridor, it also gives you masses of space for clothes, boots and possibly dirty laundry. There are eight huge shelving sections here, as well as a hanging rail.

Dining 8/10

This is a little caravan with one position for dining, but it's fit for purpose in the sense that this four

WHAT WE LIKE

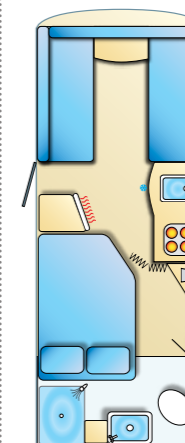
- ▶ The sumptuous carpet
- ▶ Many separate kitchen cupboards
- ▶ Attractive wood finish

WHAT WE DON'T LIKE

- ▶ Upholstery design
- ▶ Lack of shelving in some of the bigger lockers
- ▶ Lighting is a little dim

TECHNICAL STUFF

LENGTH
BODY 5.68M
OVERALL 7.25M
WIDTH
2.19M
HEADROOM
1.96M
WEIGHT
MIRO 1272KG
MTPLM 1443KG



Bailey's microwaves tend to look like removable items stood on a shelf



With the kitchen in full use, the sink and hob covers give you much needed space



You even get a pocket for magazines, plus two hooks for keys



We love the Belfast-style shower room sinks in this year's Bailey Olympus range

Bailey ▶ Olympus 530-4

TOW MATCH

Caravan weight
MTPLM: 1443kg

To tow this caravan at 85% you need a car kerbweight of: 1698kg

Never tow a caravan heavier than your car's kerbweight. We recommend towing a caravan no more than 85% of the kerbweight



AUDI A3
1378KG

At 100% → 1443KG



FORD FOCUS
1501KG



MONDEO ESTATE
1654KG

At 85% → 1698KG



FREELANDER 2
1785KG



HONDA CRV
1890KG



KIA SORENTO
2008KG



LAND ROVER
2230KG

berth is most likely to be chosen by people who mostly holiday as a couple. As such the front lounge, with its U-shaped sofa arrangement, offers plenty of space for you to be sociable – five people might comfortably sit around the table. The lighting at the front is on the subtle side, which would work well if you're looking to eat a meal in subdued lighting.

Our one niggle is that the dining table store is quite a narrow space, and its access door butts against the side of the fridge, so we can imagine people getting frustrated and perhaps scuffing their fingers as they get the table out or put it away.

Lounging 7/10

There's a lot we like about the lounge of this Olympus. The U-shaped seating works very well with the deep windowsills of these Alu-tech caravans – we don't find we miss having a front chest of drawers because books and drinks can sit on this sill.

The cushions along the front of the caravan are a little too loosely placed for our liking – we can see them falling about and not looking terribly tidy, but there's a lot of space for relaxing with friends.

You will want a table lamp if you choose one of these caravans; there are four little spotlights for reading, but with the combined force of three or four glow worms, who just happen to be close to each other.

We like the simplicity of the fabric used for the curtains, though the tie backs are the annoying type that stay up only by Velcro and friction, and are destined to disappear behind the furniture.

You must make up your own mind about the upholstery. I'm saying no more than that!

Kitchen 15/20

The 430-4 passes our cornflake packet test, and our Ribena bottle test. Both fit beautifully into a tall cupboard under the sink. They pass it a bit too well, in fact, and I'd love to see another shelf to make better use of the space.

Work surfaces are a beautiful high gloss, and there's a very respectable amount of free surface between the four-burner hob and the large, rectangular sink. Olympus caravans have a



The bedroom's bright, with a large window and rooflight overhead



The kitchen is equipped, with a 107-litre fridge, a domestic-style oven and four-burner hob



The large shower room at the back contains a separate, fully-lined shower cubicle



The corridor to the shower room is on the narrow side because there's a large wardrobe

similar run of overhead lockers to more expensive Baileys, and these are the only overhead cupboards in this caravan to have positive locking to keep your stuff secure when you're on the road. Half of the lockers are well-equipped with plate racks and other fittings, while in the other half the space is available for food. The shelf height only allows you to store things a little taller than tin-can height here, but we think dividing the storage into small compartments like this will help enormously when it comes to keeping the caravan tidy.

The microwave is opposite, above the TV. The fridge is a modest 107 litre Thetford, with push-button ignition, but that fits with the needs of a couple on holiday in this caravan.

Towing 7/10

It's relatively small, it's a single axle, so easy to manoeuvre on a campsite, and it's light enough to tow with a large family estate car. Just make sure you're not tempted to load heavy items under the bed, aft of the axle, which could ruin the excellent balance of this caravan – a characteristic noted by our associate editor Val when she took it out on its test tow. **SP**

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BUY THIS IF...

You like a fresh, modern looking caravan and will mainly be holidaying as a couple

ALSO CONSIDER...

Lunar Quasar 544 at £16,295. The Eiddis Xplore 504, £13,599 has less spec but a better bedroom layout.

OPTIONS TO GO FOR...

AL-KO Secure portable wheel lock, £194, bespoke bedding £203.

GRAND VERDICT: 84/100

Love the new wood; a well specified buy with all you need

We scored this caravan for its suitability for a couple