

TECHNICAL SMARTS

Do you feel your caravan controls aren't as smart as you'd like? **Ian Hewlett** has been testing a system that might be just what you're looking for, even if you already have a caravan

Many of us use our smart phones to control aspects of our lives today, from turning the heating on before you get home to booking a camping pitch. Wouldn't it be great if you could buy a gadget that allows you to manage your caravan's systems in the same way, one that gave you access to some of the latest smart technology and with the ability to add additional aids when you are ready - even for an older caravan?

Well, that's pretty much what the E-Trailer system allows the user to do. Its smartphone app includes some functions that aren't even available in the most modern luxury caravans and motorhomes.



E-Connect - the heart of the system

The system can be purchased as various combinations of modules or individually, though you have to start with the E-Connect base station. It's also completely portable if you decide to change your caravan or motorhome.

The E-Connect unit is the heart of the system and it communicates with the free smartphone app via Bluetooth. You need to position the unit high up in your vehicle to get the best signal and it must have a 12V DC electrical supply from the vehicle's battery.

Once you've fitted the E-Connect you simply download the app and register. This process needs an internet connection so it may not be possible to do the setup if your unit is stored at a remote location without reception.

Once the app is connected you're ready to add modules by scanning the QR codes supplied and following the instructions.



E-Level keeps you on an even keel

E-Level is the system's levelling aid. To set it up you will need to level your caravan or motorhome as normal. This may mean allowing it to lean slightly towards the sink and shower-tray drains if these don't normally drain well. The E-Level is then calibrated to this position and from then on it will display this as your preferred level.

The big advantage of this is you can see when your caravan or motorhome is level when you're sitting in the driving seat. This makes manoeuvring to get level from side-to-side much easier as you don't need to keep getting in and out of the vehicle to check.

Check out our video review of the E-Trailer system at its UK launch at the NEC in 2018 at bit.ly/ETrailer or in the magazine app.



Check your tyres with E-Pressure

Tyre pressure monitoring is commonplace in cars and motorhomes nowadays but it's not generally available for trailers. It's still important to have the correct pressures in the tyres, though, and the E-Pressure is designed to monitor this. The two sensors in the pack fit on the tyre valves and allow you to monitor and set warnings for pressure and temperature, allowing you to see a potential problem before it becomes dangerous.



E-Volt - all-important battery voltage care

The E-Volt module provides an easy and accurate way to monitor your caravan or motorhome's leisure battery without leaving your seat, again just scan the QR code and this function is added.

If I find this very useful especially when on the move, as I can see if the battery is charging or the fridge is drawing 12V power. It's also handy if you spend time camping without an electric hook-up at a Certificated Site, Temporary Holiday Site or a Club meet.



Avoid costly damage with E-Switch

The two sensors provided with the E-Switch are a little more fiddly to install than some of the other modules, but they provide a useful aid to confirm whether your doors, windows or rooflights are shut during towing. It's particularly handy for roof lights as an open one is easy to miss when you're doing a final check around your unit before you set off.



E-Temperature - the simple and easy way to check temperature

The sensor for the E-Temperature module is portable so you can place it anywhere within your caravan or motorhome to monitor temperature and humidity. It's also useful to check the fridge temperature, especially if you are concerned whether the fridge is working correctly or you have medicine that needs to be chilled. You can also keep an eye on the levels of humidity to prevent dampness while in storage.



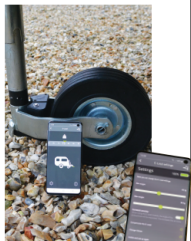
ONLINE NOW

The E-Connect Base station is priced from about £140, with bundled packs available or individually-priced modules. RoadPro is offering a 25 per cent discount to Club members. Go to mycc.co.uk/discounts for details.



E-Gaslevel - it does exactly that

Once the E-Gaslevel is attached to the bottom of a metal LPG cylinder it lets you know how much gas is left in the tank - a useful feature to help you avoid running out at an inconvenient moment.



E-Load - quick and easy way to check noseweight

The E-Load is a jockey wheel assembly with a noseweight gauge built in. It allows you to set the required load on the tow hitch for your combination to ensure things are well balanced and within limits for the road.

The setup requires a couple of measurements so it can give an accurate weight (within 2kg) at the hitch. It can also be used with pneumatic tyres.



TECHNICAL MANAGER IAN SAYS...

I have been using the E-Trailer system for a while and I'm impressed with it. Once I have connected through the app it tells me all sorts of useful information, as long as I'm close enough to get the Bluetooth signal from the E-Connect. This is very useful for storage, while camping and on the move.

I elected to run a feed from the main 12V DC supply unit, which is live all the time so my passenger can monitor items such as the battery, tyres and fridge temperature easily while on the move. I have also installed a switch and fuse protection so it can be isolated when not needed.

Finally, all the modules are configurable within the app so you can set your preferred settings and warning levels. As this is a wireless system the sensors have batteries, but all are replaceable. Some of the modules would suit campervans and trailer tent users as well.



E-Waterlevel - helps you monitor stored water

E-Waterlevel is a handy tool to monitor the water levels in your tanks, avoiding the need to run between the tap and display panel on your motorhome. It can also be used on a caravan water barrel, so you don't get caught out by the water running short just when you need it. **OK**