

Ruby's 1st Birthday! Happy Gotcha Day!

They say time flies, and this year certainly has!

We can hardly believe it, but this weekend - marks a whole year of us downsizing from motorhome and car to Ruby the Veedub Campervan as our sole vehicle. When we were faced with the decision of having to wave goodbye to many years of motorhoming, we weren't sure which direction to turn. We decided to give a small VW a whirl, swapping both our trusty Skoda and our beloved Bluebell the motorhome, but it was a snap decision and one we weren't 100% sure would

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suit our needs. We are 1 year on now, so what better time to stop and evaluate how downsizing has worked for us so far.



In short, I think we can fairly safely say that our downsizing project worked out pretty well! Despite Keith being 6 foot 4 and Ruby not having a pop up, we've coped well with the much smaller living space and have managed to avoid divorcing each other! In fact, we both enjoy the fact that managing the space once inside makes us feel closer and more together than ever, Keith often says he finds he does more when it comes to meal prep as he's my right hand man, fetching utensils from all the hidey-holes his side of the van. I like the fact that everything is

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much more of a team effort these days, rather than what it sometimes was in Bluebell – more of me doing and Keith chilling (once parked up that is!)

We've managed 12 trips away in Ruby – ranging from a night just down the road, to a full scale 2.5 week tour of Wales. We've taken her across the water to Holland and France and clocked up nearly 10,000 miles of both business and leisure miles. We've also used her instead of hotel rooms when attending parties and we've wild camping in the middle of winter with no heating! We knocked up some amazing meals on the 2 burner hob and had some barbecues with views literally out of this world.

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One main difference is that we've been using Ruby not only as a day to day vehicle, and obviously a campervan; but also we've been enjoying using her as a day van - cooking up lunches or serving tea and cake after a dog walk in a nearby village before heading home again. Next half term, I'm starting at a new School and Keith will be travelling with me, as we are both at the next school together. So whilst I'm teaching for an hour, Keith will be chilling in Ruby with a brew! So we feel like we really are utilising Ruby to her max potential.

We're finding our rhythm with the booking of sites with showers for a couple of nights, before maybe a night off grid then another site with showers. Keith is being very brave and

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has washed away (ahem*) his habit of being Mr 2 showers a day. He's found baby wipes are his friend and is nowadays happy to miss a shower for 2 days - 1 night! That is something that I never thought I'd write!

So a year on, despite Ruby having cost us a little more than we'd liked in various repairs, we are 100% sure that we've made the right decision. We are eagerly counting down the hours now until our next departure - which happily is this weekend; and have plenty of jaunts booked already for this year including our annual pilgrimage to Scotland and a really ambitious 3 week road trip to Southern Spain in August.

Our highlights of Ruby's first year in the O'-

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Gorman household are:

Utilising Ruby's sliding door – a real treat after years in a motorhome – give us a view and we'll knock up a meal and enjoy our very own rolling restaurant. Pic taken at **Brancaster Staithe** where we cooked up some fresh mussels from the fishmonger in Burnham Market.



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Ruby's first night of Wild Camping, up in
Scotland at the Black Mount viewpoint
on the road to Glencoe. We had our most
favourite BBQ at our most favourite view-

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point. Can't wait to get back up to Scotland
later this year.



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Taking Ruby to **Holland to see the Tulips**

Striding Edge and Helvellyn

Arisaig, Scotland



Until Next Time, which won't be long - YAY!

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