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Citation: Wilson, Sharon and Obrador Pons, Pau (2022) Dwelling in campervans: homemaking and mobile neighbouring on the move. *Mobilities*, 17 (1). pp. 102-118. ISSN 1745-0101

Published by: Taylor & Francis

URL: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2021.1967095>
<<https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2021.1967095>>

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Dwelling in campervans: Homemaking and mobile neighbouring on the move

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Abstract

This article is concerned with tourist dwelling and mobile neighbouring in Volkswagen campervans. It takes notions of dwelling and neighbouring to the spaces that tourists inhabit away from home, extending philosophical debates on dwelling-in-mobilities to the actual temporary dwellings of tourists. A dwelling perspective focuses the attention on the binding acts of homemaking and neighbouring on the move, rather than on the bounded spaces of home, transforming home from a noun into a verb. For dwelling to be relevant to tourism mobilities, however, a more lineal and processual approach to habitation is necessary, which emphasises how dwelling emerges during travel, alongside others. This article reports on empirical findings from ethnographic and autoethnographic research on Volkswagen Campervan, filling a gap in knowledge concerning mobile homes in lifestyle mobilities. The article unpacks the domestic rituals, homely feelings and family memories that are contained within these vehicles. We also explore the social relations that are formed and performed on the move, as being is always being-with others. The case of campervans shows that home is a journey as well as a place, a question of becoming as well as emplacement.

Keywords: dwelling, mobile neighbouring, homemaking, campervans, tourism mobilities, ethnography

Introduction

This paper is concerned with tourist dwelling and mobile neighbouring in campervans. Home is a constant presence in tourism and yet, home is notoriously absent from tourism theory and research. Home is either ‘tourism theory’s mysterious “Other”’ (Larsen 2008, 22) or a commercial enterprise. As Light and Brown (2020) explain, there is little scrutiny of tourist practices of habitation and neighbouring away from home, which are increasingly prominent within the context of lifestyle mobilities. The invisibility of home in tourism research is the result of the way tourism has traditionally been conceptualised as the opposite of dwelling, ‘as an escape from home’ (Larsen 2008, 21). Campervans are great spaces to examine how home and tourism, travelling and dwelling, come together, with their ‘ability to create a home away from home while remaining mobile’ (Hardy, Gretzel, and Hanson 2013, 49). Twenty per cent of tourism accommodation in the EU and almost half of the British second homes are campervans and mobile homes (Hall and Müller 2018). However, their inherent mobility makes them notoriously hard to define and regulate as a version of home. Research on campervans have barely touched on ideas of home and domesticity, emphasising notions of freedom and adventure instead. Existing work presents caravanning in individualistic terms (Kearns, Collins, and Bates 2017; White and White 2004) as a form of travelling that enacts ‘dominant ideologies of freedom as exoticised, masculinised and individualised’ (Mikkelsen and Cohen 2015, 664). Research on campervans has mainly paid attention to people travelling for months on end, with a special focus on the consumption of nature (Garst, Williams, and Roggenbuck 2010; Jacobsen 2004) the formation of neo-tribal subcultures (Hardy, Gretzel, and Hanson 2013; Hardy and Robards 2015), and senior travellers and snowbirds (Wu 2017; Onyx and Leonard 2005; Viallon, 2012; White and White 2004). Previous work has ignored that most campervan travel takes place closer to home (Jeuring and Haartsen 2017). There is a revived interest in lifestyle travellers making home on the move (Cohen et al. 2015; Rickly 2016; Carnicelli-Fhilo 2010), the more domestic contexts of caravan tourism (Mikkelsen and Cohen 2015; Blichfeldt and Mikkelsen 2013) and the multi-sensual and embodied nature of this tourist experience (Wilson and Hannam 2017). These exciting contributions have changed the terms of the academic debate but have yet to venture into the interiors of campervans. Mobilities research has examined dimensions of home that are brought into the times and spaces of motor vehicles (Laurier 2004; Merriman 2004; Sheller 2004; Urry 2006), which highlights

how people inhabits cars, and places through cars. But this body of work has barely touched on homes on wheels. Only the work of Redshaw (2017) and Hall and Müller (2018) examine vehicles that allow dwelling.

This article draws on notions of dwelling and neighbouring to examine campervan homes. There is a growing interest in the mundane in tourism (Edensor 2007), and the unravelling of the host-guest distinctions (Lynch 2017), which are evident in lifestyle mobilities (Cohen et al 2015, Rickly 2016). However, mobile practices of habitation have not received much attention in tourism research and have frequently been referred as placeless. Dwelling is a relevant conceptual framework for tourism mobilities that recognises tourism as a situated, contingent and skilful process of engagement with the environment. A dwelling perspective refocuses the attention on the binding acts of homemaking, the actions of assembling home, rather than on the bounded spaces of home, transforming home into a verb. The concept of dwelling entered tourist research as part of the ‘practice turn’, as way to highlight that ‘tourism is a practical and embodied way through which we are involved in the world’ (Obrador 2003, 47), a matter of *doing* rather than *being*. Discussions on dwelling, however, have developed mainly at a philosophical level, with an existentialist emphasis on solitude and sedentarism, and, as Veijola and Palin (2016) denounced, have not been used to examine tourist dwellings and the practice of neighbouring.

This article takes the debates on dwelling and neighbouring to the mobile temporary spaces that tourists inhabit away from home, extending the conceptual background of Obrador (2003, 2012) on dwelling and the familiar to the actual mobile dwellings. This article seeks to demonstrate the extent home and travel are intertwined by examining both the acts of dwelling and neighbouring that takes place on the move and the feelings of belonging that are contained within campervans. Dwelling, however, is a problematic notion that evokes an organic and solitary relation between people and places that do not correspond with the fluid world of tourism. For dwelling to be relevant to tourism research, it is necessary to challenge its sedentarism and solipsism, mobilising and socialising this concept. Drawing on the work of Ingold (2011) on wayfaring and Veijola and Falin (2016) on mobile neighbouring, this article develops a more lineal and processual approach to habitation, which emphasises that dwelling emerges during travel alongside others. Home is a knot and a network as well as a place.

Methodology

This article is part of a larger study on the materialities of VW campervan travel and the social and multi-sensorial production of tourism mobilities. Previous publications have looked at the embodied experiences of VW campervan travellers while in motion, including relations of slowness (Wilson and Hannam 2017) and sonic experiences (Wilson, Chambers, and Johnson 2019). This paper leaves the road to examine the van as a dwelling space, focussing its attention on what happens in the campsite alongside others, filling a gap in knowledge concerning homes on wheels. The initial study was guided by constructivist methodologies and concomitant qualitative methods. It experimented with a diverse range of qualitative methods to develop what Kincheloe (2001) describes as a bricolage of data. Established qualitative methods were used alongside artistic practices such as photography, drawing and filmmaking, developing a more sensuous ethnography (Paterson 2009). This bricolage of sensuous ethnographic data affords a visceral understanding of VW campervan from within rather than from a detached observing position. It also moves the research away from purely textual versions of qualitative research to see the field as sensually constructed, where the body is not just a position but an active agent of making knowledge (Crang 2003). Indeed, sensuous ethnographic approaches helps us to develop a better understanding of how “people constitute both their self-identities and place through their multisensory embodied experience.” (Pink 2007, 247). Sharon, the first author, engaged in sensuous ethnographic practices by using her own campervan, constantly crossing the line between ethnography and auto-ethnography. Sensuous ethnographic approaches place the researcher in a blurred position in-between the field and the academia, subjecting the researcher to the same scrutiny normally reserved for research participants.

This paper revisits ethnographic and auto-ethnographic findings that were not included in previous articles. It reports on findings from ethnographic research on temporary campsites at Volkswagen campervan festivals. Fieldwork was conducted at six Volkswagen festivals in the North East of England and Scotland, which Sharon visited twice for three days each time, between 2010 and 2013. Particular attention was accorded to the Flat 4 Dubs owners club based in County Durham. By becoming a member, Sharon was able to access 600 owners online, 53 of which were interviewed within the context of a festival. Participants were predominantly from a white and working-class background, which is typical of caravan cultures (Hall and Müller 2018). Seventy per cent of participants were male and 65% 39

years old or under, in line with the communities' demographics. Children were not interviewed for ethical reasons, but participants often mentioned them in recollections of their experiences. This paper also reports on auto-ethnographical findings that Sharon recollected in her field diary, including her feelings, thoughts and experiences of her own campervan. Autoethnography is used here not so much as an exercise of self-reflexivity but as a way to develop a more visceral account of 'our tribe' (Crang 2003, 498). All the data were transcribed and textually analysed using Nvivo software. Both authors immersed themselves in the data through a constant iterative process, which revealed the importance of dwelling and neighbouring. The two main themes that emerged from the data analysis form the basis of the two empirical sections on homeliness and mobile neighbouring. Before we revisit the empirical data, however, we would like to engage with the concept of dwelling.

Dwelling

This section takes as its starting point Obrador's (2003) conceptualisation of dwelling, which re-joins tourism with the opposing concepts of home, familiarity and the everyday. His explorations on dwelling were inspired by Ingold (2011, 2000), who turned to Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty to re-think spatiality neither as a given priority nor as an outcome of human design. In contrast to constructionist perspectives in which worlds are thought to be designed in webs of meaning, prior to their material realisation, a dwelling perspective asserts that worlds are made on the ground, because 'something [...] must be wrong somewhere, if the only way to understand our own creative involvement in the world is by taking ourselves out of it' (Ingold 2000, 173). To be-in does not primarily refer to the spatial location of human activities but to the practical involvement of humans with things. Dwelling, for Ingold, designates 'the event of space' (Harrison 2007, 627), 'the very acts of assembling' (McFarlane 2011, 384), the 'make do with spatiality' (Stock 2019, 50). The notion of dwelling entered tourist studies as part of the 'practice turn'. It emphasises how 'tourists are not only in place, but also involved with the place' (Obrador 2003, 51), with their own practices and intentionality (Varley et al. 2019). Dwelling is a useful concept to de-exoticise tourism (Larsen 2008) that shows the extent tourism is carried out unreflectively through routine conventions and embodied practices, what Edensor (2007) calls touristscapes, everyday, familiar spaces of unreflexive habits. However, for Stock (2019) such an emphasis on the mundane needs to be examined more critically, inasmuch as in late modernity, 'holidays are posited as means of allowing a time-space for deroutinised activities' (2019,

49). The focus on the mundane has also been criticised by Steiner and Reisinger (2006) for misunderstanding Heidegger's existentialist approach. For Heidegger, human dwelling is much more than the mindless coping with life, it is an ontological vision of togetherness, belonging and wholeness. Existentialist approaches highlight the potential of tourism as a vehicle for achieving, and disrupting, the fulfilment of the self (Chen et al. 2020). This paper develops a performative understanding of tourist dwelling that sees caravans as sedimentations of (mundane) mobile practices in what Ingold (2000) calls *taskscape*.

Dwelling is a byword for home. And yet, as Veijola and Falin (2016) explain, discussions on dwelling have so far not touched on the actual dwellings where tourists live, which have been apprehended mainly in terms of hosting and guesting. Hospitality implies that the spaces welcoming tourists are not real homes and that the host maintains the privilege of dwelling (Lynch 2017). Critical work on hospitality (Lynch et al., 2011) has brought about a revived interest in the concept home and the practice of hosting in tourism with emergent perspectives on lifestyle mobilities (Cohen et al. 2015) showing the unravelling of host-guest distinctions. However there has been little scrutiny of practices of habitation in tourist accommodation (Light and Brown 2020). This article re-joins home and dwelling within the context of tourism, by focusing on practices of habitation and neighbouring that take place on the move. Dwelling not only help us to understand the world of the summer resident (Löfgren 1999) but also the familiar spaces of mass tourism (Obrador 2012) or the practices of sleeping (Veijola and Valtonen 2011). The relation between dwelling and home is similar to that between a verb and a noun, according to McFarlane (2011). Dwelling names the process of assembling a home, whereas home designates the actual material site where one lives. But home is more than a house. Home is an imminent space of unreflexible habitual ordinary practice, a '*taskscape*' (Ingold's 2000) that functions as a second skin, 'which allows the subject to be touched and touch the world' (Ahmed 1999, 341). It foregrounds mundane modes of dwelling (Edensor 2007) as well as workable utopias (Löfgren 1999). However, home is also a transcendental space that designates a set of feelings and values anchoring identities. It is 'an affective space, shaped by emotions and feelings of belonging' (Blunt and Dowling 2006, 22), that concerns ideas of gender, community and nationhood. To articulate home and dwelling, we need, according to Jacob and Smith (2008) to think of the material and the imagined home, transcendence and immanence, as part of the same process of dwelling. The challenge, according to Jacob and Smith (2008) is to focus on 'the action of dwelling', that is, on the dispersed logics, practices, meanings, and experiences that perform

'home' as an 'assemblage of dwelling' (McFarlane 2011). A dwelling perspective on campervans, therefore, requires a special attention to the homemaking practices that take place on the move. Home does not just exist but is made and remade through practices of habitation. Homemaking consists of 'the activities of endowing things with living meaning, arranging them in space in order to facilitate the life of activities of this to whom they belong' (Young 2005, 133-4). Tourists, particularly lifestyle travellers, still make home on the move, sometimes more intensively than at home, and caravanning is a great example.

In western thought, dwelling is defined by stasis and proximity. Heidegger's philosophical work on dwelling evokes an immobile place to rest (Meier and Frank 2016) where there is an organic relation between people and place, like in his romanticised rural communities of the Black Forest (Urry 2000, 132). Heidegger did not travel and rejected its efficacy 'as a means of experiencing a greater awareness of one's own place in the world' (Shepherd 2015, 60). The same is true with the notion of home, which has been traditionally constructed as a purified space of belonging, 'as a place with boundaries that are fixed, such that homes become pure, safe and comfortable' (Ahmed 1999, 339). The sedentarism of dwelling is reinforced by normative forms of ethnography, which 'has privileged relations of dwelling over relations of travel' (Clifford 1997, 22), and hospitality, which assumes that 'the home is secure against what is foreign, strange and unfamiliar' (Germann Molz and Gibson 2007, 12). A dichotomy is established between the authenticity of sedentary places of dwelling and the transient non-places of modernity, which, according to Augé (1995) are designed not to stick. This is a gendered dichotomy where women are confined at home 'for the sake of nourishing male projects' (Young 2005, 116), while men are 'out in the open'. Instead of rejecting the notion of home, Young proposes to de-gender the dichotomy and reverse the prevalence of transcendent building work over immanent practices of dwelling and preservation, extending the values of home to everyone.

We must challenge the separation of dwelling and mobility and extend the privilege of dwelling to temporary relationships to place, integrating 'the presence/absence patterns and the mobility component in the analysis' (Stock 2019, 59). We concur with Urry in that 'people can indeed be said to dwell in various mobilities' (2000, 157); and also, with Light and Brown (2020) in that home and travel 'co-exist in dynamic and complex ways' (2020, 8). As Urry summarises, there are 'a variety of ways of dwelling, but that once we move beyond that of land, almost all involve complex relationships between belongingness and travelling'

(2000, 157). We must also challenge a dystopian view of transient non-places, liberating them from ideas of loss and unhomeliness (Merriman 2004). Varley et al.'s (2019) concept of intentionality is highly useful here. Unhomeliness is not an innate quality of transient spaces but reflects the intentionality which individuals experience them with. Thus, we recall Massey's progressive sense of place (1991) to recognise the multiple ways tourists bend these environments, making places, however fleetingly, as they go. A conceptualisation of dwelling as proximity 'does not do justice to forms of inhabiting where mobility is key' (Stock 2019, 57), like the case of campervans. It overlooks many contemporary forms of dwelling on the move such as transient rock climbers (Rickly 2016) and other lifestyle travellers (Cohen et al 2015; Carnicelli-Filho 2010), multi-local life-worlds (Hilti 2016) and temporary dwellings of displaced communities (Brun 2016) but also older mobile forms of dwelling like Roma communities (Martins-Holmberg and Persson 2016). Rejecting Heideggerian ideas of dwelling in tourism research, as Shepherd (2015) do, is misguided (Light and Brown 2020). Instead, we must put a de-gendered notion of home into motion, 'opening it up to the intersecting flows and circulations' (Germann Molz and Gibson 2007, 13) articulating places. Because performing 'home' on the road is a characteristic feature of contemporary cosmopolitan mobilities. We live in a post-sedentary world (Stock 2019), which is not emplaced in the way Heidegger imagined. The mobilisation of dwelling is reflected across various fields, from architecture, with the increasing use of temporary and pop-up elements (Meier and Frank 2016), to the mobilities turn in sociology (Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2006) and the ethics of mobilised hospitality (Lynch et al., 2011).

Campervans provide a unique context to examine the intersection of travelling and dwelling. It is a niche form of tourism where dwelling is not defined by stasis and proximity but involves travel, something that could be termed as dwelling/travelling (Clifford 1997, 24), 'dwelling-in-transit' (Crang and Zhang 2012, 898), 'dwelling-mobility' (Light and Brown 2020), 'mobile dwelling' (Veijola and Falin 2016) or 'Home-on-the-move' (German Molz 2008). Mechanised vehicles, which are 'frequently referred to as being 'placeless'' (Merriman 2004, 146), have traditionally neither been associated with acts of dwelling nor with slower more authentic temporalities (Vannini 2012). However, as the case of caravans demonstrates, 'people dwell in, and socially interact through, movement within their cars' (Urry 2006, 19). We concur with Merriman on the need to pay attention to 'the hybrid subjectivities, senses of place, dwelling, home and sociality' (2004, 146) that emerge through the folding and placing of cars, bodies, roads and surrounding landscapes. Cars are domestic

spaces in contemporary societies that function as extensions of the house, where we perform homely activities on a daily basis (Laurier 2004). A car is, for many, a more intimate space than the houses we share; a private room where you can be alone. The car's sense of domesticity has increased over time with ergonomic and digital developments that cushion occupants from the outside world (Sheller 2004; Wilson, Chambers, and Johnson 2019). Campervans are not as intimate and private as commuters' vehicles; however, they embody the double meaning of dwelling as both a verb and a noun better than other vehicles. Campervans are not just homemaking devices, where dwelling is assembled, they are also mobile accommodation sites where people eat and sleep away from home. Campervans 'enable tourists to take "home" with them on holiday' (Light and Brown 2020, 7) as travelers can enjoy the enchantment of the unfamiliar from the comfort and stability of home. As Redshaw explains, campervans are 'a moving dwelling from which to explore and to return to for refuge and rest' that 'facilitate the maintenance of a sense of home while on the move' (2017, 93). For many underprivileged members of society, they are even a permanent home. By foregrounding the affective, social and material dimension of campervan travel, Wilson (Wilson, Chambers, and Johnson 2019; Wilson and Hannam 2017) has placed these vehicles in the sphere of the mundane, in sharp contrast with existing literature, which sees them as an adventurous proposition. As with the case illustrating this article, most caravanning involves travel only a short distance away from home (Jeuring and Haartsen 2017), in close companionship with familiar members, in an example of a mundane form of travel (Blichfeldt and Mikkelsen 2013; Mikkelsen and Cohen 2015). By examining dwelling in campervans, this article takes Wilson's focus on the embodied and the mundane home, to its natural conclusion.

The case of campervans, in which home is not contained within a particular location but is redistributed rhyzomatically across space, raise fundamental questions concerning what actually means to dwell and how this process can be mobilised. Dwelling captures well our skilful engagement with places but even when we mobilise it, dwelling continues to be emplaced. Ingold comes to this conclusion after observing that in Heidegger's work the world opens to humans in circumscribed ways inverting the affordances of dwelling, 'turning the way through of the trail into the containment of the place-in-space' (Ingold 2011, 148). Breaking with this logic of inversion, Ingold now defines dwelling as a movement of becoming rather than an act of emplacement. 'To be, I would now say, is not to be in place but to be along paths. The path and not the place is the primary condition of being or rather of

becoming' (Ingold 2011, 12). He proposes the notion of wayfaring to describe the embodied experience of this perambulatory movement, because 'it is as wayfarers, that human beings inhabit the earth' (Ingold 2011, 148). The notion of wayfaring introduces a sense of temporality to the process of inhabitation, which is redefined as lines of movement, 'a development along a way of life' (Ingold 2011, 150). Wayfaring recognises that 'humans are rhythm-makers as much as place-makers' (Vannini 2012, 256). A relational idea of place is at the heart of Ingold's notion of wayfaring, as 'places are like knots' (Ingold 2011, 149), a meshwork of interwoven lines, which are delineated by movement 'not the outer limits to movement' (Ingold 2011, 149). Ingold's new approach has important implications on how we think of home, which he describes as 'a place where the lines of its residents are tight knotted together' (2011, 149). Homes are place-binding rather than place-bound, always on the move, just like campervans. Homes in cars are not just mobile homes that go from place to place but also homes that emerge along the way, knots of interwoven lines. Ultimately what Ingold is suggesting is to reverse the relation between home and away, home and tourism, and not just think of the homely nature of cars, but as well of the car-like nature of homes, which should be conceived temporarily as a network and a journey.

Notions of dwelling have also been criticised for omitting the social nature of being. 'Most readings of Heidegger' - Veijola and Falin conclude – 'emphasise dwelling as a personal, human or cultural experience' (2016, 389), ignoring neighbours and significant others. Drawing on the philosophical writings of Nancy (2000), Veijola and Falin explain that 'the ontology of being is that of being-with' (2016, 384), that dwelling is essentially social as we always dwell-with-others, that a home requires neighbours. Existing research on campervans, with its emphasis on freedom and adventure, reproduces this narrative, ignoring the socialites of the campsite. The omission of the neighbour in tourist research is congruent with the way tourism has been traditionally conceptualised in the social sciences, which leaves no room for thinking of sociality and relations of domesticity. Classical conceptualisations of tourism celebrate solitude, detachment, estrangement and alienation (Kaplan 1996). The tourist is a masculine and solitary figure that departs from the consistency of everyday life to embrace the wider world, replacing the security of home with something more fugitive and ephemeral. In response to this omission, Veijola and Falin propose the notion of mobile neighbouring, which highlights 'responsible and creative forms of encounters between tourists in material settings' (2016, 382). If we mobilise dwelling, we also need to mobilise neighbouring. We often think of mobilities in terms of disconnection

from social networks. However, as Bissell, explains ‘mobility itself generates multiple forms of proximity’ (2013, 363), some of which take the form of post-modern neo-tribes (Maffesoli 1996) as with the case of rock climbing mobilities (Rickly 2016). These proximities cannot be dismissed as just ephemeral postmodern relations, they are also forms of ‘mobile neighbouring as an ontological-ethical dimension and a social-material condition of being-in-plural-with-others’ (Maffesoli 2016, 390). This is evident in the case of second homeowners, where a dense network of social and ethical obligations is created with people that temporarily reside nearby. Mobile neighbouring brings attention to the ethical dimension of lifestyle mobilities and how we establish ‘temporary mutualities’ and meaningful connections ‘to moments and milieus’ (Veijola and Falin 2016, 393). A dwelling perspective on campervans, therefore, requires an awareness of the different relations of neighbouring that travelling affords, that is, to the social and ontological starting points of being-with others.

Home on the move

Campervans mobilise dwelling as both a noun and a verb. Campervans are simultaneously ‘mobile forms of accommodation’ (Caldicott, Scherrer and Jenkins 2014, 419) for temporary dwellers and a distinctive set of performances assembling home on the road; temporary dwellings where travellers sleep, eat, cook and relax away from home and homemaking devices with the ‘ability to create a home away from home while remaining mobile’ (Hardy, Gretzel, and Hanson 2013, 49). This section examines the homemaking dimension of campervan travel, by unpacking the rituals, feelings and memories of domesticity that are contained within these vehicles. Campervan travel shows both the extent to which tourists make home on the road but also how dwelling is a form of travelling; a process of becoming as well as emplacement (Ingold 2011). WV campervans, and most lifestyle mobilities, are associated with masculine ideas of freedom and adventure. And yet, what appeals to most campervan travellers is the possibility of taking home on the road. Many participants in this research described campervans as a form of travelling without leaving home. Angie, for example, explains how a key benefit of travelling with a campervan is ‘to know that I have everything with me, the clothes and stuff; it makes me feel like I am bringing my home, me and my house; all that I need is moving with me’. Gilly concluded that there is no real break from home as everyday routines continue as normal in the van. ‘When I am a passenger, driving I just carry with my day often working on my laptop when I am supposed to be on holiday’ she explains, concluding that ‘I suppose the van lets you do

that'. The homeliness of campervans is reinforced by the familiarity of the journeys people take. As with the case of Jeuring and Haartsen (2017), most respondents did not engage in long trips. Excursions rarely took participants more than a 100-mile radius from their residences, often recurrently stopping in the same campsites. This article concurs with Mikkelsen and Cohen (2015) and Blichfeldt and Mikkelsen (2013) on the mundanity of campervan travel and also with Rickly (2016) on the importance of community in lifestyle mobilities. Campervan travel challenges the established opposition between home and tourism, as travellers are not escaping home but travelling with their homes, simultaneously dwelling and travelling. Campervan travel also challenges a fixed version of home (Ahmed 1999) as home is reconstituted on hazardous highways and unfamiliar campsites.

Mundane practices of preservation like sleeping, cooking or eating are the main constitutive acts of dwelling, with homes functioning, paraphrasing Ahmed (1999), as a 'second skin' enveloping these ordinary habitual practices. Mobile homes are taskscapes using Ingold's (2000) terminology, housing 'the materials of accommodation, the business of dwelling' (Jacobs and Smith 2008, 518). Most respondents described their campervans as living spaces accommodating homely routines. This research recollected a wealth of homely moments in the van, like families playing scrabble together, couples having a cup of tea and mums improvising meals. It was not uncommon for campervan enthusiasts to eat, read and socialise inside the van even when it was parked at home in the drive. This was the case of Dennis who often used his VW Campervan as a living room during the summer months. Dennis' wife buys campervan magazines, which he reads in the van. 'I won't sit in the house and read them; I go to the van'. For some, the mundane benefits of dwelling, including rest and relaxation, are more accessible in the van than at home. This was the case of John, who occasionally travels with the van on his own for the pleasure of sleeping away. 'You go to bed earlier but then get up before 6 to see the world you don't normally see'. He concludes that 'it's much easier to get to sleep in a camper if you're mortal (drunk)'. The practice of sleeping here is not dead time but it is re-inscribed in accordance to the values and meanings of rest and recovery (Veijola and Valtonen 2011). However, doing home on the move can also be uncomfortable. In her auto-ethnographic account, Sharon explains that she did not enjoy sleeping in the van. 'I absolutely hated sleeping in the back of the van. I used to find it really uncomfortable, and claustrophobic'. She found going to the toilet in the middle of the night particularly unpleasant. Cooking was also challenging. 'I never really did any particularly elaborate meals, when I was in the van. We used to sort of keep things to a

minimum, sort of boiling a kettle and cooking tinned food and things like that'. A lot of work was necessary 'to replicate what was taken for granted at home'. She describes campervan travel as double domesticity, 'because you you're having to sort of do twice as much domestic work for the sake of a holiday'. Her comments reflect the extent to which the North-East WV campervan scene is a male and heterosexual-dominated subculture where men are behind the steering wheel, engaging in more physical activities, whilst women take on secondary supporting roles, navigating routes and coordinating family activities. Homes are highly gendered spaces where 'men are the builders and women the nurturers' (Young 2005, 122). Men's freedom often means depriving women of the possibility of having a break from homely routines.

Home is 'an affective space shaped by emotions and feelings of belonging' (Blunt and Dowling 2006, 22), it is 'perhaps the most emotive of geographical concepts' (Duncan and Lambert 2003, 395). VW campervans attract strong feelings of love and belonging, which are equivalent to, if not stronger than, the emotional attachments we develop for our homes. Strong feelings of belonging are also common in lifestyle mobilities. Many of the participants in this research displayed great affection for their vans, inhabiting their vehicles emotionally as well as practically. In the following quote Michael compares his affection for his van to his feelings for his apartment. 'When I got it, I did fall in love with it, very much like I fell in love with my pad'. It was not uncommon to sentimentalise vehicles in a similar way as we do with pets. 'She makes me smile' Liz conceived. Many even named their vans, *Maud*, *Binky* or *Paris Hilton* were a few examples. The strong personality of the Volkswagen brand was an important factor contributing to this sentimentalisation. In the following quote, Derek describes the strong desire he felt for the Volkswagen brand on the day he collected his first campervan. 'If I could understand why, we had an instant liking to it I would bottle it. It was strange, there's just something about them'. Older vans tend to attract stronger emotional connections. Winnebago owners, particularly, highlighted how classic models inspired deep connections in ways other recreational vehicles did not. In her auto-ethnographical account, Sharon explains that part of her attachment to the van was related to its age. 'It has a history, it has been loved before, and now it's our turn to love it and take care of it'. The values attributed to classic VW campervans are similar to the values attributed to old houses that stand the test of time; as something old enough to have a genealogy that owners feel the need to preserve. In all these cases, the van is presented temporally as well as geographically, as a material object facilitating people's wayfaring, their movements of becoming.

We dwell among objects, which provide meaning to our lives. The preservation of the material structure that accommodates us and its subsequent transformation into homes are essential to the act of dwelling, according to Young (2005). Dwelling involves homemaking, ‘endowing things with living meaning (...) in order to facilitate the life activities of those to whom they belong’ (Young 2005, 133). Most participants did plenty of preservation work on their vans to make them more homely. VW campervan owners added stylish cushion covers, novelty air fresheners, dashboard paraphernalia, curtains, stickers, just like they would do back home. Sharon was a van owner actively engaging in homemaking practices, preserving and improving her van. In this auto-ethnographical account, she explains the deep affection she felt for her first van and how she occupied it and personalised it.

When I bought Maud she had an old fashioned interior which made me think of her as an old lady. Because of her style we wanted to add more things to it such as books, old board games, my daughter’s toys and retro décor to make her feel more authentic. It even had rusty bits, stains on its seats and quirky things like one window that wiper would stop working in heavy rain. It was like going back in time riding in her, making us nostalgic as though she had meaning and a real belonging to us

Sharon’s preservation work did not just make the van more homely, it also made it more human, naming it *Maud*. She was not unique in anthropomorphising the van. As we can see in figure 1, Hillary decorated her van with the female fictional character of Betty Boop, thus, transforming her vehicle into a non-human being. Most of the examples of preservation that this research collected focused on the mechanics of the van with the aim of producing immaculate engines and conserving the original aspect of the vehicle. It was not uncommon for VW campervan owners to re-paint and re-upholster their vehicles, tinker with engines and modernise the interiors to fit their preferences or purchase new features. These mechanical interventions transformed vehicles into crafts that owners had made their own. Through their active fabrication the owners connected with the van on personal and often emotional level. The sense of pride is evidence in figure 2, in which Johnny sits proudly in front of the engine he transformed. The figure displays animal ownership and the hedonistic practice of drinking alcohol as one might relax in front of the fireplace at home.

Homemaking is also a question of memory and storytelling, of ‘endowing things with living memory’ (Young 2005, 133). As Ahmed explains, ‘memory is a collective act which produces its object (the “we”)’ (1999, 343), facilitating people’s life journeys of becoming,

something we can also see with VW campervan travellers. The close relation between memory and homemaking is discussed in Tolia-Kelly's (2004) work, which examines the importance of visual culture as a way to reconstruct migrant's sense of home. VW campervans function in a similar way to the landscape painting that Tolia-Kelly examines as a materiality that allows embodied connections with past homes and landscapes. This research has collected many nostalgic memories involving the campervan. In the following quote, Ken reveals the close association of his van with his deceased relatives.

The bus I have now has been in my family since 1973 owned and cared for by my grandfather who has long passed away. My mother used to drive it when she was a young lass, they used it on my family holidays, and it was my grandfather's daily runner for thereabout 40 years. He was known all over South Shields for his bus.

Most of the memories this research collected are directly concerned with family life, sometimes involving deceased relatives like in this quote. They are mostly memories of domestic leisure and mundane everyday life. Derek mentioned how seeing his teenage sons socialising in the van evoked happy memories of them as youngsters. Darren described having fond memories of driving up to Marsden Rock, a landmark in North East England, and stopping to make a cup of tea in the back of his van. As with family photography, the stories this research collected celebrate a nuclear and inward-looking family enjoying their holidays together, indeed 'a mythologized version of the family' which no longer exists (Chambers 2003, 103). Campervan travel is for many a period of heightened family life that is saturated with ideas of love, togetherness and domesticity, just like the world of the summer resident (Löfgren 1999). Indeed, we need to make space for the family (Obrador 2012) also in campervan travel. For many campervan owners, their van is an important material object of the family. 'This bus to me and my family is worth more than gold' concludes Darren. For Ken it is a family treasure that is to be handed over to the next generation.

The first one I bought will be handed down to my daughter shortly after it takes me to the crematorium. Selling one would be like losing a family member. She has taken us on many adventures, my daughters have grown up with her and hopefully she will take my grandchildren to the seaside and festivals etc.

The van is here very important for the family, and by proxy becomes a member of the family. ‘It is part of the family, even though she is “just a van”’ _ concludes Darren. The familiness of the van is visualised in figure 3 featuring Marty and his two children next to *Binky*, their van, which is presented as a significant other alongside the family dog. A sense of familiness can extend beyond close relatives. Thus, for example, personalising her van with a Betty Boop character enabled Hillary to be accepted as part of the ‘Volkswagen family’. In the next section we will explore the Volkswagen family and how dwelling is always dwelling with others.

Mobile neighbouring

Dwelling has been mainly discussed as a solipsistic act; however, homes always have neighbours as being is always being-with, alongside others. Addressing tourist dwelling requires an awareness of the relations of neighbouring that campervans afford - a perspective that Veijola and Falin (2016) describe as ‘mobile neighbouring’. The question of neighbouring brings attention to the ethical dimension of tourism and how we establish ‘temporary mutualities’ and meaningful connections ‘to moments and milieus’ (Veijola and Falin 2016, 393). This section explores relations of proximity that are established in the temporary campsites of VW campervan festivals. According to VWshows.com there are over 100 VW festivals in the UK, which mainly take place in rural locations. Most festivals are organised by VW owners’ clubs and attract regular members, an arrangement that stimulates relations of neighbouring (Hall and Müller, 2018), which are similar to the campsites that Rickly (2016) analyse, isolating and yet mooring the ephemeral community. The thick sociality and quotidian rituals of these temporary neighbourhoods mirror the world of the summer resident (Löfgren 1999), with campers developing similar attachments (Hall and Müller, 2018). Sharon visited six festivals in the North-East of England with a distinctive working-class ethos, which is typical of caravan cultures (Leivestad 2018). There is a common structure to these festivals. They include various forms of entertainment including live music, *show and shine* competitions, children’s art activities, mobile discos and pop-up bars. They also include bric-a-brac stalls selling spare van parts, souvenirs and vintage clothes, and fast-food outlets. The most important aspect of these festivals, however, is the reencountering with familiar people and places and the experimenting with a simpler summer life outdoors, that is, ‘the expectations of particular forms of collective sociality’, which are interlinked with ‘historical ideas of democracy and class’ (Leivestad 2018, 304). These

festivals make mobile neighbouring tangible, ‘opening a time and space of being-nearby’ (Veijola and Falin 2016, 394). They offer friendly meeting spaces for like-minded people with a shared interest in the Volkswagen brand, in a paradigmatic example of post-modern neo-tribes (Hardy, Gretzel, and Hanson 2013). These temporary social formations draw on the emotional attachment to the community values and free spirit of the Volkswagen brand. And yet, they are framed by a rigid structure, which is typical of planned events. The free spirit of the brand is set against a backdrop of rules and regulations concerning noise, temperance, dog handling, good neighbouring and health and safety. It is a paradoxical social space that combines freedom and regulation, fluidity and rigidity.

VW campervan festivals invoke an ethics of mobile neighbouring, opening a friendly space and time for collective sociality with like-minded people. And yet, the temporary neighbourhoods that are erected in these festivals emulate the rigid separations of suburban life; with suburbs being where most attendees actually come from. Campervans are correlated into plots, which are designed to be three metres apart from their neighbours, with each plot fenced off as in figure 4 to maintain privacy. Echoing suburban living, campervans gather alongside each other without necessarily sharing much of their life with their neighbours. There are constant tensions between the private and public logics of these temporary campsites, which are manifested, for example, in the cordoning-off of the van to avoid attention from strangers. These tensions are evident in figure 5 which features Angela relaxing in a cordoned outdoor space. She enjoyed relaxing outdoors but disliked uninvited guests entering her personal space as she did not appreciate feeling like ‘part of human zoo’. At festivals, people make home in the public eye, simulating living rooms in the open, and yet many attendees are very protective of their semiprivate spaces. The suburban logic of these mobile neighbourhoods with their rigid separations, however, was regularly transgressed with campers visiting each other and offering unsolicited mechanical advice. Campervans were often arranged in exclusive enclaves, simulating suburban cul-de-sacs. These semi-private enclaves were mainly created by club members, travelling together. At the centre of these enclaves there was common sitting areas where the residents spent most of their time relaxing, drinking and engaging in general chit chat with others. The themes of conversation tended to revolve around what was happening at the time, with their children, their pets and other owners. Teenagers were observed playing with their phones, children were around with water pistols or generally engaging in tomfoolery. There was banter about the behaviour of other owners and how they treated their vans. This was infused with

personal observations about dogs fighting, the quality of bands playing and the prices of engine parts. WV festival campsites arguably resemble a modern neighbourhood with their suburbs, fences and cul-de-sacs.

The social formations of VW festivals are paradigmatic of postmodern neo-tribes of consumption. Mobile neighbouring is depending here on the loyalty to a branded object, with its consumer values enabling temporary mutualities and meaningful relations. We agree with Hardy, Gretzel, and Hanson (2013) on the potential of Maffesoli's (1996) neo-tribal work for the analysis of VW campervan communities. VW festivals nurture temporary groupings some of which are formalised into permanent clubs with strong ties but many are not. What unites campervan travellers is not an ideological project but a symbolic and emotional bond to a brand and the lifestyle it affords. The whole point of attending a VW festival is to be with 'people that like the same things as me' that is, a branded recreational vehicle that resonates with a specific lifestyle. Most participants in this research expressed their symbolic commitment to the Volkswagen brand. This was the case of Alan, who emphasised the feeling of pride, contentment and self-respect that comes from showing his vehicle to his peers.

The feeling of pride and happiness when a family asks if they can take a picture of their kids inside your bus. Also, a feeling of contentment when you park next to a load of fellow dubbers at meetings and rallies and then the feeling of relief when you see a bus that's worse than yours.

Van owners like Alan enjoyed the possibility of cultivating relations of proximity with people sharing the same lifestyle and love for a brand. With the rise in popularity of VW campervans, however, a diverse range of people are attending these festivals. This has impacted negatively in the community spirit of these fluid formations as not everyone is 'someone like me', with the same appreciation for the van. Club members, specially, expressed their dissatisfaction with casual attendees as they did not really understand the ethos of the brand. This quote from Liz and Gary reflects such discomforts.

we went to Druridge Bay festival – Gary was furious, the place was too over packed, and we just wanted to chill. Vanfest is like that, they have commercialised that and people are deciding not to go. That's not what the thing's about.

Club members, ‘those in the know’, saw themselves to be more dedicated to the cause than those with no previous alliance to the brand. However, these differences were hard to define beyond vague notions of housekeeping, family values and friendliness. The festival community is increasingly fragmented into smaller tribes, according to their degree of affiliation to the brand, as established club members organise themselves into distinct neighbourhoods.

VW festivals are, therefore, a world of social distinctions as well as shared feelings. Like in any other neighbourhood, they are spaces of social competition and dissent that are marked by subtle differences, which often echo class distinctions. In VW festivals, the most basic distinction is between campervan owners and renters. Renters are not regarded as full members of the Volkswagen community as there is not commitment without ownership. The most important distinction this research observed, however, was between classic and newer models. Old vehicles were seen as more socially credible due to their design, history and the commitment of their owner. Negative judgements were made on those who had opted for the more convenient options. Classic models are widely regarded to be a form of cultural capital. Thus, for example Tony admitted that he enjoyed ‘seeing the new motorhomes full of plastic people - that makes me smile, smug, I guess’. The same standpoint was echoed by Dave. In the following quote he discerns owners according to the age of their vehicles

I wouldn’t wave at new VW vans. It is hard to imagine how people who own them fit into the ethos of the retro VW. The new ones have all the modern conveniences including remote control flip-top roofs and their interiors are something like the neat and tidy looking mobile home interiors, kind of a luxury travel lodge aesthetic crammed into a tight space. This seems very removed from the vans parked around the Durham Dubbers communal area.

Social distinctions were also drawn in relation to engine sizes. In the following quote Peter contraposes two types of vehicles: air and water cooled.

There is a big difference between people who drive air-cooled and those who drive water-cooled vans. The people are very different. The water-cooled are more extreme with their cars, more extreme with their attitudes and their alcohol intake. The air-cooled scene is a bit more laid back, the air-cooled scene is a bit less in your face, more about tunings and how it looks. How loud it is, how fast it goes, sound system,

20k on a sound system. If you had a full on water-cooled and a full on air-cooled there would be a clash in the middle because the people are totally different.

Distinctions in taste and status are implicit in all these quotes. Owning a classic VW campervan represents ‘good taste’ and therefore enriches your social status within the community. It gives a *cache* that tourists owning a standard motor home do not have. VW communities are not the inclusive utopia that the brand promises but a mobile neighbourhood divided by taste and status, indeed an expression of western individualism.

Conclusion

This article has explored tourist dwelling and mobile neighbouring in VW campervans. We have taken philosophical notions of dwelling to the mobile spaces that tourists inhabit away from home – extending debates on dwelling-in-mobilities to the actual temporary dwellings of tourists. A dwelling perspective focuses the attention on the binding acts of homemaking and neighbouring on the move rather than on the bounded spaces of home, transforming home from a noun into a verb. The sedentarism and solipsism associated with dwelling is, however, highly problematic. For dwelling to be relevant to tourism research, a more lineal and processual approach to habitation is necessary, which emphasises how dwelling emerges on the move and alongside others. This article has reported on empirical findings from ethnographic and auto-ethnographic research on Volkswagen campervan, filling a gap in knowledge concerning tourist homes on wheels. We have first examined the homemaking dimension of campervan travel, by unpacking the domestic rituals, homely feelings and family memories that are contained within these vehicles. We have also explored the social formations of dwelling-on-the-move, as being is always being-with, alongside others. There are many commonalities with other lifestyle mobilities, where mobile home situations are also common. Campervans also destabilise the notions of home and away, demonstrating the significance of dwelling and neighbouring in tourism. However, there is a stronger emphasis on the mundane in campervans, which often emulate suburban living. This article’s caravans are not an example of cosmopolitanism that is at home in the world, but a workable utopia of domesticity and familiarity, defined by distinctions and communalities. The significance of dwelling in tourism is growing, with campervan sales at an all-time high, following the covid-19 crisis, as people seek to travel without leaving the safety of home. Therefore, we need to complicate the relations between home and tourism. Tourism has been traditionally defined as the opposite of dwelling, as an escape from the

mundanity of home. However, the privilege of dwelling cannot be contained within the sedentary spaces of home as tourist travel with their homes, where dwelling and travelling comes together. The case of campervans is not only relevant to tourism mobilities, but also to cultural geographies of home. It shows that home is a multi-scalar and performative phenomenon that is both temporal and spatial. Home is a journey as well as a place, a question of becoming and emplacement. Dwelling is a form of travelling and home a crisscrossing of paths that are assembled and disassembled in the campsite and on the road. Dwelling is a highly relevant conceptual framework that affords a more geographical perspective of tourism mobilities that highlights our skilful, embodied and social engagement with places.

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