

HEADING HOME

Ratskeller



Cathedral



This week

The worst week of our travels, it went from bad to worse.

We left Salzburg and headed towards the Hymer manufacturer at Bad Waldsee. After a nightmare time with Hymer we ended up going to another small workshop to sort out the repairs. Once the motorhome was fixed we set off to slowly Bumble home via the Alps but...we arrived in Austria, reversed in to an air pump then the electrics failed and then the water pump packed in and then 101 other bits and bobs failed plus my itching got worse so we packed up and headed home...

Friday 8th August: Salzburg to Breitbrum Am Chiemisee

We packed up Homer and said good bye to our new found friends, the Italians and set off from the campsite. It is a shame we have to move as I do love staying put for a while and meeting new people. It all adds to the experience but I guess we need to move quickly if we are to make it to the manufacturers before they close for the summer holidays.

A pleasant drive through countryside with lots of rolling fields and tree line lanes. A quick nip to the bank followed by a diesel fill and we were off again.

Peanut is on top form today with stomach churning farts...I sure as hell hope he goes to the loo later otherwise tonight is gonna be a testing time.

We arrived in the little town of Seebrook in Germany and decided to take a walk around and stretch our legs. Only a small stroll but well needed.

Saturday 9th August: Breitbrum Am Chiemisee to Munich



After a quick Lidl shop and fill up on LPG we set off towards Munich. Arriving in Munich on a Saturday was quite good timing. We managed to drive right in to the centre, find our bearings and then drive back towards the ring road and park up on a main street. Weekends are much quieter than weekdays and the parking is free. We cycled in to the city centre, had a look at a few things and then had words. We were tired and once again, all sorts of little things going wrong in the motorhome were driving us



mad. Nothing major but it feels like one thing after another. Needless to say, we didn't quite appreciate the highlights of Munich.



Sunday 10th August: Munich to Bad Waldsee

With all the bits and bobs of issues driving us bonkers, we set off first thing to get to Bad Waldsee as soon as possible. The whole journey was full of squeaks, rattles and rolls just the sort of journey you need when you are not speaking. Inside we both know it is because we are fed up of all the issues but still, it is damn hard going when you are stuck in a tiny space. We love each other like crazy but right now, we hate this damn motorhome for all its minor faults and it is putting



a strain on us. We are starting to question if motorhome life is for us. We love travelling but hate the fact that everyday something goes wrong. We appreciate things break but this is taking the biscuit!

We arrived in Bad Waldsee and parked up on Hymer car park...tomorrow morning can't come soon enough.

Monday 11th August: Munich to Bad Waldsee

Up at the crack of dawn and ready to dart in to the Hymer Service Centre. First through the doors we explained we needed a new shower tray as the current one had broken and flooded the garage. We then showed them our second problem of water ingress through the garage door causing the main floor space to rot and waste away. Plus we had 101 other issues albeit minor in comparison to the above. The service guy was really nice and he examined all the issues. However, he was too busy to provide an estimate and timescale for repair. He asked us to return this afternoon.



We waited around and got chatting to another couple Pauline and Norman. We shared stories and had a good old whinge about Hymer which was quite good in some respects to let off steam but not sure it helped with our 'feeling battered' mood.

Mid afternoon, we popped back in to the Service centre and they estimate was not ready. To be honest, they looked like they did not care. We felt more of a hinderance than anytime and our custom was not

welcome. Eventually, the engineer gave us a rough verbal estimate of \$5,000 and a timescale of end of October. We nearly dropped through the floor. I did not know whether to laugh or cry and given all the issues I just felt like going home. If this is the level of service with the manufacturer then I really do not want this motorhome. It has tested us all the way through this journey and now the manufacturer is testing us too. The service girl could see the disappointment on our face and she handed us an address of someone who maybe able to do the repairs sooner. We packed up with our tail between our legs and headed to the address of HK.

HK are a small workshop just a few kilometres down the road from Hymer. They are two chaps who trained with Hymer and then set up on their own. After hunting around the industrial estate we finally found their workshop. The two guys did not speak much English but we managed to explain the issues. I think they could see the despair on our face and said they would repair for a fraction of the Hymer quote. In addition, they could commence immediately and we could sleep in the motorhome overnight. These two chaps don't realise how much this means for us.

We had a cycle ride in to the town of Bad Waldsee. It seemed quite nice but our mind was on Homer and getting him fixed.

That night, we slept inside Homer but in the garage of HK as Homer had no garage door and a gapping hole in his floor. He looked mighty sick. On a positive, HK had let us stay in the motorhome which made it much easier because having Peanut could make it hard to find accommodation.

Tuesday 12th August: Bad Waldsee

Up early again so the guys could start work on Homer at 7am. Poor Peanut wondered what was going on, he has not seen early morning for quite a while.

We cycled back in to the town and had a good toot around. It really is very nice with a large lake, nudist swimming pool, busy market town and plenty coffee shops. We walked and walked and then sat in the middle of the town watching the world go by. It was quite a cold day but we managed to find a sun spot, which helped us slowly defrost. Peanut didn't come from under his blanket it was so cold.

By 4pm the motorhome was ready and after examining all the repairs we paid up and headed off. It felt good to have a motorhome back in one piece with no repairs. As it was late in the day we decided to stop in Bad Waldsee and move on tomorrow.

Wednesday 13th August: Bad Waldsee

After a Lidl shop and some new wiper blades we headed over to the Hymer centre to pick up some spare parts and see if they could at least sort out the malfunctioning grill. We really don't want to give them any business but we have little choice if we want the spares.

We pulled up and guess who we bumped in to ... Pauline and Norman from the other day. They had not moved. We spent the afternoon chatting away to them and sorting out our spares. Craig also bumped in to a chap called Alan who owns a sports bar a few miles down the road. Alan invited us over for the night, so we kindly accepted and headed over.



We parked up at the Sports Bar alongside Pauline and Norman and we all piled in the bar. Alan greeted us with a round of drinks and a warm welcome. Then out came the menu's and we opted for a german sausage...not that we had much else to chose from. Pauline and Norman were ever so funny. They were in their 80's and been travelling for 20+ years. Their stories were fab but as an old couple they had good old banter and digs at each other that we all found highly

entertaining. If nothing else they could hardly hear each other and so often misunderstood what the other was asking. Then to top it off, Pauline fell fast asleep at the table without any warning. She woke up and carried on chatting like she'd never nodded off. It was one of the funniest nights we'd had in a long time and well needed. The only downside, we got shafted with a bill



twice the price of Norman & Pauline's even though we didn't have half as much as them. Hey ho but the laugh was worth it.

That night, we slept like logs on the sports bar car park.

*Thursday 14th
August: Bad Waldsee
to Brigenz*



Another up bright and early to head back to Hymer. The Dometic engineer is coming to Hymer today and they have arranged for him to have a look at our grill.

Well we waited and waited and he never turned up. Hymer said they didn't know where he'd got to. We waited from 7am until 2pm and then lost the will to wait any longer. In the meantime, Pauline, Norman and Alan turned up to give us some morale support. A lovely thought but what they didn't know is all the electrics had just blown and we weren't in the right frame of mind for chatting. What a blinking nightmare this motorhome is turning out to be. Then next minute we spotted a load of water on the floor and our hearts just sunk. With no Dometic guy and Hymer not giving us any support we decided to head off.



Pauline & Norman weren't getting anywhere with Hymer too, so we escorted them to HK and after a quick introduction we said cheerio and set off. We headed towards Brigenz with the hope we could just put our feet up and chill for the weekend. We feel we've had our belly full of the motorhome and could do with a bit of a break. What we didn't realise is it was the last bank holiday for the year and everyone was heading in the same direction. We hit a traffic jam that lasted for several

hours. In the end we pulled in to a garage and next minute...bash! A stupid old lady walked straight behind the motorhome as Craig was reversing. He slammed on the brakes and swerved to avoid her but then clipped a air pump / cleaning station. No damage to the equipment but we ended up with a bust light and a dent to the bumper. Jeez this is turning in to a nightmare.

We decided to just find a temporary parking spot and see if we could fix the light and when we did...the bloody water pump failed and we ended up with water everywhere. A nearby resident came out and informed us we could not park in the bay and would call the police if we did not move. We apologised and explained we had no intention of stopping, we just had a few technical problems that we were trying to fix. In all fairness, she thought we were dumping grey water all

over the road when she realised we had a problem and it was fresh water, she was a little more understanding.

It took Craig over an hour to fix the pump by which time it was getting dark and his temper was at breaking point. The lady who complained came out several times to see if we were alright. She became very supportive and helping once she realised we weren't squatting on her door step. By the end Craig snapped and said enough, we are going home. We climbed in the front and set off.

We stopped somewhere on route for a few hours kip.

Friday 15th August: Brigendz to Merzig

Not sure where we actually ended up last night but Brigendz was the last recorded place. After a cool breakfast we hit the road again.

We drove and drove and drove. Craig was very quiet and inside his was boiling. He was completely and utterly fed up with fixing the damn motorhome. I felt the same but more scared for his sanity. If he carries on he will end up in a straight jacket. My itching was also getting worse, so at least if we go home we can get everything fixed.

Another day of driving but this time via the vets. We needed to get Peanut his worming tablet administered by a vet and a stamp to prove he was all OK to travel back to UK. Fortunately we managed to find one by was of looking at POI on the GPS.

As we travelled all day, it allowed us to reflect on the last few months.

Saturday 16th August: Merzig to Calais

Another day of driving and we finally arrive in Calais. I went over to the ticket office and arranged a ferry for tomorrow morning. It was a busy time of year and the ferry assistants were fed up of serving customers. Must be something in the air because everyone was arguing and falling out. Sad to see but it made me feel better...it is not just us!

With €125 tickets I walked back to the motorhome feeling a sense of relief.

We drove a couple of miles to the aire located right on the beach and parked up. On route we spotted a lot of migrants talking shelter in make shift tents. A lot of them jumping over bard wire fencing, trying to cross the port terminal and hitch a ride. The French police were everywhere trying to keep a control on the situation but with so many migrants it was clearly a challenge.

It was very busy at the aire but we managed to squeeze in. We met a variety of people and had a good chat with a few of them before we snuggled down and prepared for our journey home.

We felt sad to be going home but we knew we could not carry on with the number of motorhome issues. This journey's had the best high's you could ask for but it has also had the worst lows you could imagine. It is nothing like we imagined. We are glad we did the journey but right now we are not sure if travelling in a motorhome is for us. We feel completely battered and utterly disappointed. We feel like we have failed.

Sunday 17th August: Calais to Home

We caught the 7.45 ferry and arrived in Dover 1.5 hours later...and later that day we arrived home. Chill and Relax

The weeks that followed...

Well folks, since we touched base in England its been a bit of a roller coaster ride. Homer got real sick and nothing for it, he got the sack. For the 1st couple of weeks we gave ourselves a real hard time, questioning and challenging each other on pro's and cons of travelling and asking ourselves...is this really for us, is it worth it and can we do it? We'd planned on travelling and living the dream for so long that arriving home was a really blow and we really didn't know what to make of it.

Despite everything we've achieved and all our adventures we really felt like we failed and let ourselves down. Discussing life in a motorhome when you are sat in the comfort of your own home, sounds so simple and exciting! Why wasn't it that simple for us? Where did we go wrong? We then started to reflect on Homer and how the motorhome had really tested our patience and pushed our frustration buttons to the limit. When we sat down and looked at all the issues, to our surprise we discovered Homer broke down or had problems nearly every other day. Now motorhomes do need constant TLC but every other day became too much. I am not sure how long we would have lasted if we hadn't got Craig DIY skills. Some major and some minor but it all ended up at the same point where we just didn't trust the motorhome. We also learned a lot about ourselves and each other despite being together for nearly 30 years!

Cheerio Homer x x x



Homer the Hymer

After much debate we picked ourselves up, dusted ourselves down and toured England to find the right motorhome for us. We weren't going to give up that easy and recon we'd just picked an unlucky motorhome. Yeah we needed to change a few things but with experience on outside that could easily be done. Eventually, we found a 2013 Hymer B590 with 700 miles on the clock. It ticks all the right boxes and is now being prep'd for part II. We need to fit solar, sort out the electrics etc and prepare the motorhome for how we want it, which will probably take another couple of weeks. Once ready we'll take it for a trial run - around the UK? Then back home to do the final fixes before hitting the road again. In terms of a name for the motorhome, well we are still debating. Craig wants a simple name "**Van**". But not on my nelly, is it being called van. Anyway, Van lead on to possibility of "**Vin**" short for Vinny our diving "**Bud**", who was a bit of a diesel head. The new motorhome is a 6 cylinder 3L diesel and sounds pretty sexy as far as diesels go, so he would love the sound. So "**Vin Diesel**" could be its Sunday name but don't book the Christening just yet!

Pictures eeeerrrr, well, we have a slight problem. We left our camera at the dealers, dozy sods, so we can't take any photo's just yet. Here are a few dealer pic's until we get our camera back. BTW seats are light grey and not cream :)



The best thing about being home is you get to see all our family and friends, which is just amazing. There is nothing like a big hug to put things in to perspective. As always, just great to see Barrie & Michel, giggle a minute. Next week is a "me and mum week", so loads of hugs everyday as we go shopping and tea room tasting (towards the end of the week I am sure we'll want to kill each other haha). Dad's been helpful as always running us here and there. I got to see my great nephew Lucas for the 1st time and he is just adorable. Oliver my other great nephew is now 9 months old and turning in to a right cheeky but loveable character. The best hug and the one I longed to give was to my sister Mandy, didn't think I would but I missed her so much...my earth angel xxx

The 3 of us have also had an MOT - doctors, dentist, eyes, vets and all sorted apart from my itchy skin. I've seen a consultant dermatologist and he is doing biopsy plus a few more tests in a

couple of weeks. Once the results are back and we know the source of the problem we can start to plan for take off!

Its hard to fix a date until we have the biopsy results but we're aiming for take off early December. Where to...we have no idea but we are getting our mojo back and looking forward to part II.

Joanne, Craig & Peanut