



Model father: David Beckham shared pictures of himself building the Lego princess castle, right, and the finished product, left. Beckham says he has 'no power whatsoever' with daughter Harper, below



Build it like Beckham... David spends six days on daughter's castle

By Anita Singh
ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

DAVID BECKHAM has enhanced his reputation as a model father by spending six days building a Lego princess castle for his daughter.

The father-of-four worked secretly on the 4,080-piece construction as a surprise for six-year-old Harper, and posted the results on social media.

He first shared a picture on Instagram six days ago, sitting astride a sun lounger surrounded by plastic bricks and studying a hefty instruction manual.

"Page 1 of the Disney castle. 4,000 pieces, 490 pages of instructions. I look confused but I'm so excited," he wrote.

Sharing a picture of the finished model with his 39 million Instagram followers, he said proudly: "I am done..."



Someone's gonna have a nice surprise in the morning."

Some observers wondered why Harper, who celebrated her sixth birthday in July with a tea party at Buckingham Palace, could not have built the castle herself. But the £300 kit is so complex that it is aimed at over-16s.

Beckham has previously spoken about his enthusiasm for Lego. "The last big thing I made was Tower Bridge. It was amazing," he said. "I think Lego sometimes helps to calm me down."

Speaking about Harper, his youngest child, he said in one interview: "I have no power with that little girl - no power whatsoever."

"I love all my children, of course, equally, but I'm definitely stricter with the boys, which gets me in trouble with my wife."

Caravan sales take off as visitors sleep on the drive

With families squeezing into smaller homes, some relatives are bringing the spare room with them

By Katie Morley
CONSUMER AFFAIRS EDITOR

THEY may conjure up images of rainy British summers, tedious Scrabble games and cramped bathrooms, but sales of caravans and motor homes

have boomed over the past 12 months, figures show.

Although Britain's "staycation" trend is a factor behind the increase, it has emerged that another, even less glamorous, phenomenon is behind the rise: the housing crisis.

With house prices close to an all-time high, families are squeezing into ever smaller homes, and the number able to comfortably host visiting relatives has dwindled.

According to the National Caravan Council (NCC), which represents the

caravan industry, motor homes are proving a convenient solution to Britain's spare-room shortage.

Production of touring caravans was up 13.7 per cent in the first six months of 2017, compared with the same period last year.

At the same time, motor home registrations rose by 11.3 per cent and nearly 12 million caravan and camper-van trips were made.

According to the NCC, a major driver behind the rise in domestic trips was

large car. Caravans are not allowed. Generally it is better to stay in a caravan park or in a pub car park which allows caravans and camper vans. This is because you can easily connect to gas and dispose of waste."

Dan Wilson Craw, a housing campaigner, said: "Young people with relatives in different parts of the country will find camper vans are certainly one way to accommodate people."

"First-time buyers and renters alike are living in smaller and smaller prop-

erty. If you are parked on the road this is fine as long as you are in a camper van."

end of the income spectrum - it's middle-class people too. It's often most important for people to live near their workplace, and having a spare room is often low down the list of priorities."

There are around 550,000 touring caravans in the UK and about 205,000 motor homes, the data shows.

Separate Visit England figures show Brits are increasingly using caravans, motor homes and camping as accommodation for trips around the UK with a total of 1.94 million trips taken

in 2016, up from 1.7 million in 2015.

Caravan and motor home sales are also up, with the NCC reporting a 13.7 per cent increase in touring caravan production in the first six months of 2017.

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time high, families are squeezing into ever smaller homes, and the number able to comfortably host visiting relatives has dwindled.

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rules. If you park on a drive, that's fine, as long as there is no covenant in place which forbids it.

According to the NCC, a major driver behind the rise in domestic trips was more people visiting relatives in cara-

tives in different parts of the country will find camper vans are certainly one way to accommodate people.

"First-time buyers and renters alike are living in smaller and smaller properties. It's not just people at the lower

Separate Visit England figures show Brits are increasingly using caravans, motor homes and camping as accommodation for trips around the UK with a total of 11.94 million taken last year, an annual increase of 2.5 per cent.

Hi-tech artwork turns the air blue by mishearing Hull accent

By Harry Yorke

RUDE words have appeared on a giant art project in Hull because the computer system is reportedly unable to understand Yorkshire accents.

The "Speakers Corner" project, announced after Hull was made City of Culture 2017, includes a giant screen fitted on to the Humber estuary's tidal barrier, which allows people to translate speech into messages projected across the city.

In order to prevent foul language making its way on to the screen, the public arts project, named "Look Up", was programmed with an algorithm to detect any dubious wording.

But in recent days, locals have reported seeing a number of messages which have clearly bypassed the safeguards, including a number of sexual references such as "send nudes" and

"ejaculation". Commenting on the mishap, the project's artist, Michael Pinsky, said: "This is a kind of extended speakers' corner. Rather than just a small audience, people can have what they say read by half of Hull."

"This is cutting-edge stuff which has never been done before. I have always been interested in voice recognition

'This is cutting-edge stuff. In time, the technology will learn the Hull accent and get better and better'

technology but it is only now I have been able to make it into a piece of artwork. In time, the technology will learn the Hull accent and get better and better." Andrew Knight, the curator of the project, added: "There is

voice recognition software which translates the spoken word into text. As time goes on the software will learn and get better.

"There is a long list of offensive words the software recognises and if spoken it will just come up blank.

"If people do say anything offensive it will only scroll through once and won't be seen again so it isn't like graffiti which can remain for a while. But we trust the people of Hull to use this as intended."

In order to place a message on the screen, members of the public have to speak into a microphone which is attached to a steel lectern on the quayside of Humber Dock.

The data is then sent to a processing unit which transcribes the words into scrolling text which is projected across the tidal barrier. The project will remain open until New Year's Eve.

From Land's End to John O'Groats in world's fastest shed

THE world's fastest shed is about to set off on a 870-mile journey from Land's End to John O'Groats.

Kevin Nicks, 52, will attempt to break his own speed record of 99.766mph in his self-built contraption at Elvington Airfield, near York, as part of the trip. The shed is built on top of a 1999 Volkswagen Passat - a project that took six months to complete and cost £5,000.

Mr Nicks will be accompanied by Sophie, his 14-year-old daughter. The pair hope to raise £10,000 for Katharine House Hospice in Oxfordshire.

He told *Oxford Mail*: "We're all only here once and it's about what we do when we're here. A lot of people will get to the end and think 'isn't that a dull life I lived'."

"Some people do ask me why I want to drive around in a shed. And I say because I don't want to drive around in a boring car like everyone else."

Mr Nicks and his daughter will set off from the hospice in Banbury tomorrow and they expect the trip to take about a week.

He first broke the record for the world's fastest shed in 2015, when he reached 70.8mph during an event at the airfield. He broke the 99mph barrier earlier this year and hopes to travel at 100mph during his next attempt.



Kevin Nicks is aiming to break his own speed record ... and raise a shedload of money

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