



# UPDATE

**2013 ELDDIS LAUNCH**

Strong, light, dry, bonded – and with a new range plus some new models, the Eddis story for 2013 is an energetic one

REPORT

Mark Sutcliffe

**e**lddis has made a step change in the way it builds caravans and rolled it out across its entire range for 2013. There's also a whole new range of tourers and some innovative new layouts.

At first glance at the 2013 collection, little has changed across the 2013 line-up of 28 touring caravans. There's a new mid-market range called Affinity, which slots in between an updated Avanté range and the top-end Crusader models.

But there are big changes which are entirely hidden from view...

Beneath the surface, Eddis caravans have undergone a construction revolution which will have pretty profound implications for caravan design both now and in the future.

The very fundamentals of the Eddis production process have been revolutionised to create a stiffer, stronger and lighter bodyshell which Eddis claims is utterly impervious to water ingress.

The Consett-based caravan manufacturer has named this new process SoLiD, which stands for Strong – Light – Dry. The highlight for 2013, in terms of



AFFINITY 574



AFFINITY 530



AFFINITY 550



AFFINITY 574

## NEW AFFINITY

models, is the arrival of the new Affinity range – a well-specced range of upper mid-market caravans.

The line-up comprises four popular layouts: the 540, 530, 550 and 574 – all of which will function as family-friendly four-berths. The 540 is the classic fixed bed, end shower room configuration; the 550 has a large fixed island bed at the rear; the 530, a novel new three-berth with optional bunk, has a huge shower room at the back and the 574 has fixed twin beds.



AFFINITY 574

### Televisions standard

All models have a high level of standard kit which includes a television and DVD player with built-in Freeview, BPW's IDC trailer stability system, external barbecue point and Alde central heating.

### Under 1500kg

Thanks in part to the new construction system, the Affinity models weigh in at under 1500kg MTPLM, so they will be compatible with a fairly modest car. Each model costs £18,999 plus delivery charges of £495.



AFFINITY 550



AFFINITY 574



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**XPLORE 505**



**XPLORE 530**

**New Xplores**

The budget Xplore range gets two new layouts, the 505 and the 530. Both are multiberth layouts with the Xplore's traditional attributes of lightness and affordability.

The whole Xplore range benefits from new windows, positive locks on the top cabinets, a door flyscreen as standard and a new Whale 8-litre water heater with faster heat-up.

**Avanté developments**

The Avanté range gets a significant make-over for 2013, adopting the much more modern bodyshell and front panel previously reserved for Eddis's more upmarket models. It's a huge improvement externally and things have moved further upmarket inside, too with contemporary new interiors and good standard spec – including the space-saving new 13-litre Whale water heater and an Avtex TV as standard. The eight-model line-up includes the staple 462 two-berth end shower room and a raft of roomy multiberths – including the new 576 6-berth end shower room and the 636 twin-axle. Prices start at £15,149 for the 462, rising to £18,649 for the 636.



**XPLORE 530**



**AVANTÉ 636**



**TEMPEST EB**



**TEMPEST EB**

**New Crusader**

There's a new model in the Crusader range – the Tempest EB, a six-berth, twin-axle with 6-feet long front beds for those who are happy to sleep separately rather than having the inconvenience of making up a double bed.

The whole range now benefits from GRP sides, energy-efficient LED lighting and a new, higher power 3kw setting for the Alde central heating, enabling it to warm the caravan more quickly. Prices for the Crusader range are from £20,999 to £23,999



**AVANTÉ 636**



**TEMPEST EB**



**AVANTÉ 576**



**TEMPEST EB**



**TEMPEST EB**

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### New Buccaneer

In the luxurious Buccaneer range, the existing four-model line-up is joined by the new Fluyt – a single-axle, end shower room model with twin single beds. Like its stablemates, this newcomer wants for nothing in terms of spec, featuring such refinements as the ability to activate the Alde heating remotely via text message, a motorised rooflight with rain sensor and automatic closing, and a Dometic ceramic lined loo. The Fluyt costs £24,999.



### THE SoLiD STORY

Caravan construction techniques have changed little over the last 60 years, but as manufacturers come under increasing pressure to produce lighter tourers, technology is starting to change.

Bailey was the first to switch to a new approach – introducing its patented Alu-Tech system which uses extruded rails and simple bolts to create a lighter, stiffer, wood-free bodyshell.

### Bonding process

Eddis has taken a different tack – retaining wood as a key component in the side walls, but dispensing with bolts and screws and relying instead upon a state-of-the-art bonding process to join the sides to the roof and front and rear panels – and even the chassis to the floor.

This reduces the number of exterior screws and bolts used to secure the caravan by 90 per cent, yet also results in a stiffer and stronger bodyshell in which the loads are distributed much more evenly across the caravan.

It was developed in collaboration with Henkel, a large German company which specialises in adhesives which bond wings to aircraft and whose products and expertise are used extensively throughout the automotive industry by manufacturers including Aston Martin, McLaren and Lotus.

### Impermeable joints

The new bonding system also makes the joints and seams impermeable to water – thanks in part to the dramatic reduction in the number of holes required to be drilled in order to manufacture the bodyshell.

The same bonding process is also used to mount the bodyshell onto the chassis; the end result is similar to the monocoque approach to construction employed in the motorsport industry.

### 10-year guarantee

Extensive testing at the Millbrook proving ground and on the continent subjected the prototypes to the equivalent of 27,000 miles of usage while fully loaded. They were also subjected to intensive water ingress tests and freeze-thaw action. Following this, all the prototypes were dismantled to check for any signs of wear, weakness or leaks, before being rebuilt from the ground up to check their reparability. No damage was found inside or out.

Consequently, Eddis backs every model with a 10-year water ingress guarantee. In the event of a failure, the bodywork is straightforward to repair and requires no additional investment by dealers in high tech servicing equipment.

Eddis managing director Rob Quine said: "In adopting SoLiD, we are bringing really advanced manufacturing technology into the caravan sector. This new approach will allow us to experiment with even more exciting designs in the future.

"These joints will not let in water but the technology is flexible enough to allow us to introduce more adventurous designs and we are absolutely convinced that this takes us in the right direction in the future."