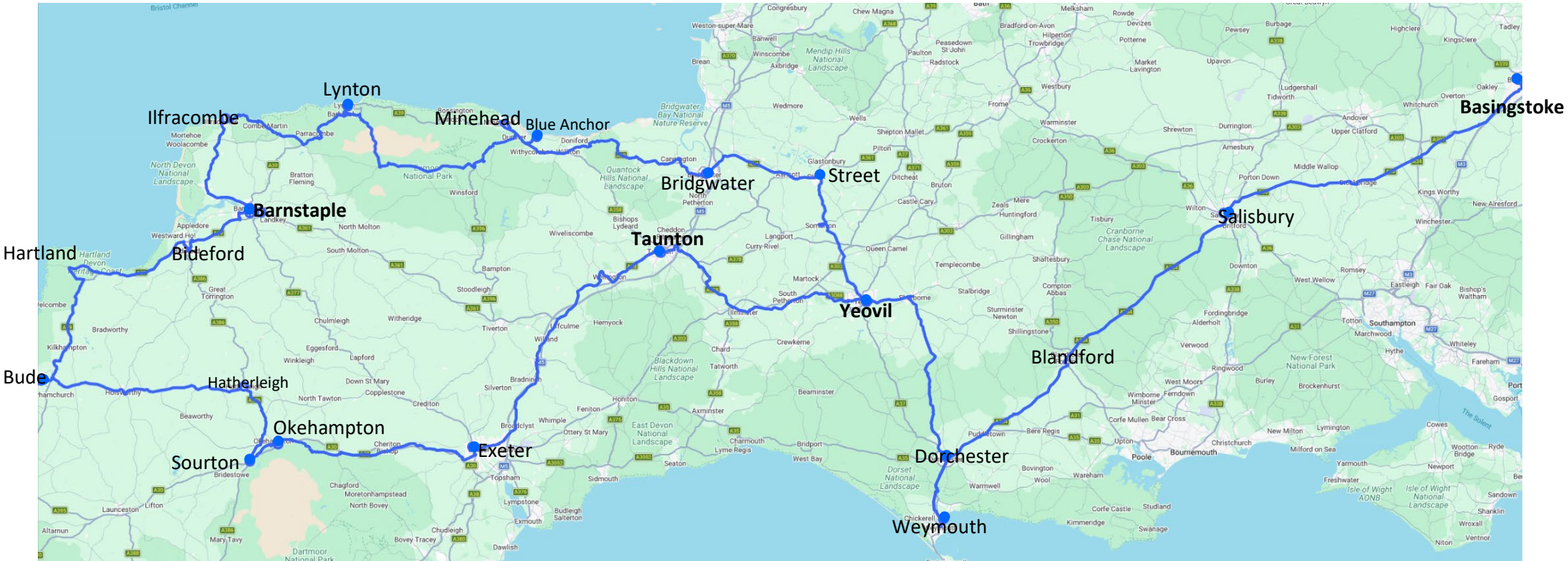


ROYAL BLUE RUN 2026, 19-21 June

Day 1 – 19 June – Basingstoke (Milestones), Salisbury, Blandford, Dorchester, Weymouth (Coach park), Dorchester, Sherborne, Yeovil, Taunton

Day 2 – 20 June – Taunton (Castle Green), Exeter, Okehampton, Sourton (Services), Bude, Hartland, Bideford, Barnstaple

Day 3 – 21 June – Barnstaple, Ilfracombe, Lynton, Minehead, Blue Anchor (WSR), Bridgwater, Street, Yeovil



Google MyMaps QR Code

Background

Our Royal Blue Runs were established in 2002 so that owners and their passengers can relive the pleasures of long distance luxury coach travel for which their carefully preserved vehicles were originally intended. The aim is to follow original Royal Blue routes as closely as possible and to travel at a leisurely pace redolent of the times. The runs also create a wonderful spectacle for innocent bystanders and dedicated photographers alike, thanks to the hard work and resources the owners have devoted to restoring and maintaining their fine coaches.

A lot of work goes into planning the runs from selecting routes from the extensive Royal Blue network and researching the original drivers' instructions and passenger timetables, preparing maps and outline routing, driving the routes to develop detailed instructions allowing for modern day features and constraints, organising refreshment stops, obtaining parking permissions, to identifying potential accommodation for a dozen or more coaches and their passengers. Despite all the preparations, final timings are hard to judge whether due to roadworks or things that might pique the interest of crews along the way. The coaches do not travel in close convoy so as not to inconvenience other road users. Drivers may also deviate from the suggested route (intentionally or unintentionally!).

For those watching the run, it is important to note that the timings are indicative and many factors may affect the out-turn on the day. In addition the coaches / drivers are free to do some or all of the run each day and some have been known to insert their own route variations, so we cannot guarantee a steady stream of all the listed coaches at the nominated time. The organisers have driven the full route several times and endeavour to keep up with the latest news on roadworks and local events.

2026 route and context

An illustrative overview of the 2026 route is given on the cover page. Further details of the principal routing and probable stopping points with outline timings are tabulated at the end of this introduction.

Day 1 (Friday 19 June) The **Royal Blue** non-stop direct service from London to Weymouth was introduced in 1967 taking the 'new' A30 route, which followed the old Roman road for much of the way from **Basingstoke** to **Salisbury**, via **Stockbridge**, and then another old Roman road to **Blandford** and **Dorchester**, before reaching **Weymouth**. This forms the first part of Day 1 – we have not gone by this route from Basingstoke to Salisbury, nor travelled from Salisbury to Dorchester, in previous Royal Blue runs. From Weymouth, the route is that of the **Associated Motorways** service to Bristol as far as **Yeovil**, and then (one of several) routes followed by **Royal Blue** coaches from there to **Taunton**.

Day 2 (Saturday 20 June) Day 2 follows the Associated Motorways route to **Exeter** along the A38, and then by way of the old A30 to **Okehampton**, before taking the late 1960s' route to **Bude**, not previously featured in a Royal Blue run. The route from there is back into Devon at **Hartland** and then to **Barnstaple** following the north Devon coast route passing Clovelly and through **Bideford** (*where Southern National's depot became the main works for Western and Southern National during WW2 when Plymouth Laira had to be evacuated*) to **Barnstaple**.

Day 3 (Sunday 21 June) Day 3 heads through north Devon from **Barnstaple** to **Ilfracombe**, then runs for a while alongside the alignment of the narrow gauge Lynton & Barnstaple Railway (part now restored) before running into **Lynton** and into Somerset via Simonsbath to **Minehead**. There will be a stop at Blue Anchor (*West Somerset Railway*) and the route then heads to **Bridgwater**, before the final section to **Yeovil**. Royal Blue runs have not been eastwards from Ilfracombe through Lynton, Blue Anchor or Somerton before, although some sections of the road may be familiar from other routes.

2026 Participating Coaches

The following coaches are anticipated to be taking part for some or all of the run (as of 13/6/26).

Fleet no	Reg No	Chassis/Type	Year	Operator	Notes (if part of the run only)
279	EMW284	Bristol L6B / Beadle	1947	Wilts & Dorset	Day 1 from Salisbury, Days 2 & 3
	EFN568	Dennis Falcon	1950	East Kent	
1250	LTA729	Bristol LL6B / Duple	1951	Royal Blue	
1286	MOD973	Bristol LS6G / ECW	1952	Royal Blue	
1291	MOD978	Bristol LS6G / ECW	1952	Royal Blue	
2200	OTT43	Bristol LS6G / ECW	1953	Royal Blue	
2267	56GUO	Bristol MW6G / ECW	1961	Royal Blue	
2270	253KTA	Bristol MW6G / ECW	1962	Royal Blue (Western National)	
	100VRL	AEC Reliance / Harrington Grenadier	1964	Hawkey's Tours	Day 2 - Sourton to Bude, only
2138	BHU92C	Bristol MW6G / ECW	1965	Bristol Omnibus Co Greyhound	Day 1 from Salisbury, Days 2 & 3
1423	EDV505D	Bristol MW6G / ECW	1966	Royal Blue (Western National)	
1433	HDV638V	Bristol MW6G / ECW	1967	Royal Blue (Western National)	
2375	LDV847F	Bristol RELH6G / ECW	1968	Royal Blue (Southern National)	Day 1 Blandford to Weymouth May be substituted. by VDV753
1460	OTA632G	Bristol RELH / ECW	1969	Royal Blue (Southern National)	
2380	OTA640G	Bristol RELH6G / ECW	1969	Royal Blue (Southern National)	
1482	RDV433H	Bristol RELH6G / ECW	1970	Royal Blue (Western National)	Days 2 (from Exeter) & 3
3547	FDV803V	Leyland Leopard / Platon Supreme	1980	Royal Blue (Western National)	

Route Details

Coaches/crews participating in the run are at liberty to take alternative routes, set off early and/or add in breaks as they wish. The outline follows original routing as closely as practicably possible and *approximate* coach timings are given below. Some of the terrain is challenging in this year's run so travel times will be affected by conditions.

Approximate timings – not a guaranteed timetable – and may be influenced by conditions en route

Day 1, 19 June – BASINGSTOKE (Milestones) - TAUNTON

Time	Location and routing
0930-1000	Milestones Museum, Basingstoke (RG22 6PG)
1000	Basingstoke A340 Ringway West A30 via Sutton Scotney A30 via Stockbridge
	Salisbury A36 signs for Southampton to College Rbt A354 to Blandford , through town A354 via Puddletown A35 to Dorchester , through town A354 to Upwey B3159 into Weymouth
1315-1400	Weymouth, Coach Park (DT4 7SX)
1315	Weymouth Town Centre circuit B3159 via Broadwey A354 to Dorchester B3147, then A37 (briefly) to A352 for Sherborne Sherborne circuit A30 to Yeovil Through Yeovil, west to Montacute A303 briefly A354 via Seavington St Mary, Ilminster and Hatch Beauchamp to Taunton
1700	Taunton Tower Street and departure to hotels.

Day 2, 20 June – TAUNTON TO BARNSTAPLE

Time	Location and routing
0930-1000	Taunton - Castle Green
1000	Taunton A38 to Wellington B3187 into Wellington A38 to Waterloo Cross rbt B3181 through Cullompton and Broadclyst B3212 into Exeter
1115	Exeter Via St David's Stn (for Dartmoor Line travellers) B3212 to St Thomas Via Pathfinder Village, Tedburn StMary to Whiddon Down B3260 to Okehampton Okehampton through town and up to Station B3260, A30 briefly to Sourton Cross
1245-1315	Sourton Services (EX20 4LY) A386 to Hatherliegh A3072 via Holsworthy to Bude
1445-1515	Bude, Crescent Coach park (EX22 8LE) A39 to Baxworthy B3248 to Hartland A39 towards Bideford A386 into Bideford
1630/1700	Bideford / Barnstaple B3233 out of Bideford onto A39 for Barnstaple A3125 into Barnstaple

Day 3, 21 June – BARNSTAPLE TO YEOIL

Time	Location and routing
0900-915	Barnstaple, Seven Brethren coach park (EX31 2AS) A3125 over Long bridge to The Strand
915	Barnstaple, The Strand (EX31 1EU) A361 via Braunton to Ilfracombe Through Ilfracombe to Quay A399 to Combe Martin and Blackmoor Gate A39 to Barbrook B3224 into Lynton
1045	Lynton, Bottom Meadow Car Park (EX35 6JD) Continue on Church Hill to Barbrook A39 to Hillsford Bridge B3223 to Simonsbath B3244 via Exford to Wheddon Cross A396 through Dunster A39 into Minehead – circuit A39 to Carhampton B3191 into Blue Anchor (for WSR)
1230-1315	Blue Anchor Return through Carhampton A39 via Williton , through Nether Stowey and Cannington A39 into Bridgwater
1430	Bridgwater (Bus and Coach Station) A39 to Street , through town B3151 to Somerton and into town B3151 to Ilchester A37 to Yeovil
1600	Yeovil Bus Station (BA20 1LH)