



CRUISING MATTERS

The latest news and views from the Cruising Association.

The CA was founded in 1908 specifically to meet the needs of cruising sailors and provides services, information, help and advice to thousands of members worldwide. For more information visit www.theca.org.uk.

New CA environmental best practice guide

The CA has published a short guide on good environmental practice, which you can read on the CA website.

It is a compilation of advice pulled together by our Regulations and Technical Services group (RATS) and edited by other volunteers, and it reflects the long-standing objective in the Cruising Association's Articles of Association: "To promote the preservation and protection of harbours, navigational facilities, estuaries, coasts and their environs".

Over the past half-century, there have been significant developments in reducing the environmental impact of cruising. Many boats are fitted with holding tanks, engines are more efficient with lower emissions and we are more conscious of how our actions affect both our immediate surroundings and the wider oceans. The CA's approach is to communicate and encourage best practice and keep members informed of national and international legislation and initiatives. theca.org.uk/about/organisation/environmental_guidance



Image: Gordon Knight

FAQ: There are other apps offering information on ports, harbours and anchorages, so what is unique about CAptain's Mate?

Reports posted to CAptain's Mate are all by members who have actually visited the location. Every moderated report is posted in a member's own name, no pseudonyms, and every report is a trusted source of information from a fellow member. Note also that the same Cruising Reports appear on the member-only pages of our website.



CA Online Spring Promo Week - 22 - 28 March 2021

Taking place over 22 - 28 March, Spring Promo Week coincides with the fitting out season!

Alongside the use of Live Chat and Zoom one-to-one to engage with anyone who wants a chat about cruising matters, the CA is running a new-member 25 per cent discount promotion, discounts on CA Shop orders, a variety of discount deals through the relationships the CA has with a wide range of suppliers, plus a series of specialist webinars open to members and non-members.



CA Videos and Podcasts

Members of the CA have generously given their time to produce and give presentations on specialist cruising subjects for us to share more widely.

We have included, amongst other interesting nuggets, a must-watch Brexit webinar, an interview with Mike Golding, a documentary about our Patron Sir Robin Knox-Johnston and a funny five-minute interview between CA President Julian Dussek

and Sir Robin, plus an excerpt from Technology Afloat: Navigation, Internet connectivity, boat systems integration and remote access.

Some are bite-sized excerpts of full-length recordings and, when you join the CA, you can revisit the pages and enjoy the full video and audio experience. www.theca.org.uk/public/videos_podcasts



Where do plastic boats go to die?

Disposal of old fibreglass boats has become a prominent topic in the marine press in the past few years.

Since practical use of GRP composites started in the late 1940/50s, this rugged material has been the primary material used in construction of everything from dinghies to superyachts and includes the boats most of us use. But what do we do with them at the end of their lives?

Old wooden boats were often left to rot in marsh areas, and even these can take years to degrade, but fibreglass will last hundreds of years, breaking down to produce masses of microplastics of which we have only recently become aware, as well as potentially harmful glass fibres.

There are thousands of old boats throughout the UK and indeed the world. The EU suggests that one to two per cent of over six million boats shorter than 24m reach the end of their life each year. That is more than 6,000 boats per year, yet only about 2,000 per year are being recycled.

THE UK POSITION

When a boat is dismantled, the metal parts, engines and electronics have well established recycling and disposal routes devised by the auto and waste industries and by legislation, but what happens to the often tonnes of glass fibre hull? They go to landfill.

Car scrapyards are permitted and regularly inspected by the Environment Agency/SEPA/Natural Resources Wales, but there is no organised system for boat scrappage in the UK.

Boats can reach the end of their lives through age and decrepitude or simply due to mooring/storage fees, but others are insurance write-

offs. We spoke to several insurance companies who all appear to shrug their shoulders over the problem and leave it to the owner to arrange disposal and just pay the bill. They generally go to landfill.

There appears to be only one specialised boat dismantling/scrapyard operation in the country. Boatbreakers (www.boatbreakers.com), based at Portsmouth, has thought through the required processes. It charges to receive a scrap boat, whether delivered under its own steam, towed or by road transport.

The company strips re-sellable items and then carries out proper dismantling with materials being recycled/recovered where possible. It even sells some of the parts it recovers to the public via its website. However, the composite hull remains waste. It is ground down and then landfilled.

Boatbreakers has been trying to get scrapyards in other parts of the country to engage to provide a network, but to date with no success. It is probable that normal scrapyards may well take in occasional larger boats to dismantle, but with no proper permits or experience, the process is a rather grey area.

Many other items are also made from fibreglass and one significant one, with large volumes, is wind generator blades from wind farms. These are already becoming a major waste stream, and there is significant pressure on the power industry to recycle these composite materials. Hopefully the marine industry can tag along on their developments.

An excerpt from a feature article by Nigel Robinson published in December's Cruising magazine.

A Seamaster 20 scrapped in Suffolk.
Image: Boatbreakers.com

