



Cruising

www.theca.org.uk

- Katy Stickland on the future of cruising
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Making progress

Robin Baron welcomes new ways to look at the future of cruising – together with the chance to show the value of what the CA already has



As I write this in late April our island is enjoying a good spell of warm, sunny weather, and the desire to get afloat as quickly as possible is stimulated. Long may this weather continue and give us a season to remember!

In March I and four members of Council visited the Trinity House depot at Harwich. This is one of two depots providing sea-going support to Aids to Navigation in England and Wales; the other is at Swansea. It is also the home of GRAD (the General Lighthouse Authorities' Research and Development Directorate).

We had a series of presentations covering the servicing of buoys and, mainly, the increasing use of technology in day-to-day operations and the work of GRAD. I was impressed by the professionalism of everyone we met. It seemed a very well-run organisation that knew its function and strategy, and had everyone aligned. Bearing in mind that the service is provided free of charge to most leisure sailors (only pleasure craft of 20 gross tons and above are liable to pay light dues) we should be very grateful to all three General Lighthouse Authorities that work so hard to keep us safe at sea.

On the day of the visit to Trinity House I also attended CA House to hear the Hanson Lecture presented by the editor of *Practical Boat Owner*, Katy Stickland, on The Future of Cruising. There was much food for thought, including some of the issues I raised in our December issue and some new points, including the increased popularity of multihulls and the desire to have experiences rather than ownership.



Council members visit Trinity House at Harwich

I am still slightly in shock at the news that Ian Wilson has stood down from the Cruising Information Development Group (CIDG). Ian and CIDG have been almost synonymous since 2017. In that time CIDG has achieved much including, notably, the development of Captain's Mate and improving the CA's use and distribution of cruising information. On behalf of the Association I give our heartfelt thanks to Ian for his excellent leadership of CIDG during this period.

No rest for Ian is in sight as he'll be the CA lead on the renewed Lobster Pots Campaign to make the proper marking of fishing gear legally enforceable. This revival is a collaborative effort with the RYA and RIN (Royal Institute of Navigation). We know from talking to members and others who cruise in home waters that the risk of entanglement is near the top of their list of safety concerns. The first meeting of the revived campaign takes place in May, to be attended by representatives from the RYA, RIN, *Practical Boat Owner* and *Yachting Monthly* as well as Ian, other CA volunteers and me. As always, your experiences matter. If you've encountered issues with unmarked gear, please share your insights with the CA team on lobsterpots@theca.org.uk. You can also report incidents using this RYA link: www.rya.org.uk/knowledge/safety/look-after-yourself/fishing-gear-incident-report-form. An update on the campaign will appear in the September issue of *Cruising*.

In the March issue I reported that Council had formed the Council Strategy Group (CSG) to think strategically about how the CA ensures it sets a course to remain relevant and effective in decades to come. This process went surprisingly smoothly. Work will now pause while we enjoy some cruising and resume in the autumn when we consider what initiatives to progress.

As you know, the Cruising Association relies heavily on its volunteers to provide the services our members value. It was a great pleasure to send a President's letter of thanks to Alan Kohler and to Machiel Lambooy – each for Captain's Mate editorial work, to Marie Ross – for her company secretarial services, and to Sam Steele – for continuing improvements to Captain's Mate including arranging a productive online meeting of Captain's Mate editors. We are fortunate to have such dedicated and talented volunteers.

It was also a pleasure to present, on behalf of CA volunteers, vouchers from a well-known chandlery to our long-serving web editor Ann MacKellar (née Rowe) on the occasion of her marriage to longstanding partner Andy. Last year Ann and Andy bought *Sea Apple*, an LM26 that they keep in Falmouth Marina, so I'm sure the vouchers will be put to good use.

Finally, now that the sailing season is upon us, I wish you all fair winds and following seas!





Emerging new tech includes silicone-based wraps and antifouling paints from MacGlide and Hempel, or (right) AI-powered thermal imaging from SEA.AI



Katy Stickland,
editor of Practical
Boat Owner
Photo: ©Richard
Langdon



Katy Stickland charts the future of cruising

Katy Stickland, the editor of *Practical Boat Owner*, delivered a compelling vision of cruising's evolution at the Cruising Association's annual Hanson Lecture.

Speaking to a live audience at CA House in London and via Zoom, Katy's wide-ranging address traced cruising's journey from its Victorian roots to today's era of rapid transformation. Modern lifestyle shifts, technological advancements, and environmental and regulatory changes are reshaping the cruising experience.

The changing face of cruising

Looking at today's cruiser, Katy noted that most are affluent over-55s, while younger generations prefer more affordable, easily accessible alternatives. The traditional model of solo boat ownership is set to decline, making way for shared ownership schemes and boat clubs.

Sailing clubs are adapting with flexible membership options, dinghy hire and youth programmes to attract more members. The industry is also shifting toward larger, more comfortable multihulls, despite higher costs, with marinas expanding to accommodate these vessels.

Technology & environment shifts

Katy looked at the promise and limitations of electric propulsion, breakthroughs in bio-based resins and

3D-printed components, the need for better HVO biofuel availability in the UK, along with advances in solar technology, including spray-on photovoltaic cells.

Emphasising the need to solve the end-of-life boat crisis, Katy cited EU statistics about fibreglass boat abandonment and discussed potential solutions like France's eco-tax model.

Recent advances like Starlink, which provide sailors with affordable, high-speed internet at sea, enabling calls, streaming and weather data were addressed. Katy anticipates that satellite/WiFi connectivity will become standard on boats of 45ft upwards, with more power outlets to support remote working.

Katy addressed regulatory shifts, including looming bans on traditional toxic antifoul paints as eco-alternatives emerge, like silicone coatings and fibre wraps. Stricter sewage regulations may mandate holding tanks and pump-out facilities to curb coastal pollution.

Noting the likely expansion of marine protected areas, which currently cover approximately 40% of UK waters, the Studland Bay model in the UK is seen as a test case. Eco-moorings and no-anchor zones will spread, she predicted, urging sailors to champion sustainability.

Safety and navigation

Looking at AI, Katy addressed the improved maritime safety via collision-avoidance systems and SAR mission planning. Innovations like SEA.AI's thermal cameras detect hazards, while digital charts are replacing paper charts, although standardisation by digital chart providers still needs to be addressed. But with more offshore wind farms, sailors must stay vigilant. Chart updates, strict passage planning and awareness of local regulations will be even more essential.

A changing world

Katy underscored climate change impacts, drawing on Jimmy Cornell's research, which notes that hurricane seasons are lengthening, the Azores High is becoming unpredictable and we're seeing more Category 4-5 storms.

Moving to the EU, the new Entry/Exit System will add more formalities. ETIAS authorisation will follow in late 2026. Cruisers can expect stricter 90/180-day rule enforcement and the potential loss of some French marina entry points.

Katy's message was clear: cruising is evolving fast, driven by sustainability, tech and regulation.

■ We hope to include a longer version of Katy's talk as an article in a future edition of *Cruising*.

NEWS FROM RATS

HVO:

Are we getting it right?

In December the CA, along with key partners, launched a campaign to make Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil more accessible and affordable for cruising boaters. But in recent weeks, questions have been raised about whether HVO is really the sustainable alternative that it appears to be. Here we answer some members' questions

Q. What is HVO?

The best term to describe HVO is a "renewable diesel". It is also known as a second-generation biofuel. HVO is produced from vegetable oil or waste feedstocks, but the finished fuel contains no vegetable oils, esters or oxygen.

A paraffinic mineral diesel fuel of high purity which is clear and odourless, HVO has a high cetane number which benefits cold starting and noise. The absence of aromatic compounds reduces particulate emissions.

HVO is less susceptible to water uptake and, as it contains no vegetable matter or oxygen, it is far less likely to suffer from diesel bug. Because it is highly paraffinic, it is therefore very stable and can be stored for long periods without deterioration.

HVO is a "drop-in" marine fuel, which is approved for use in any concentration up to 100% in diesel engines with no modifications by most manufacturers – a list is on the CA website.

Q. How is HVO checked and certified?

Under the UK's Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) scheme, administered by the Department for Transport (DfT), suppliers of relevant transport fuel in the UK must meet an annual obligation using tradeable Renewable Transport Fuel Certificates (RTFCs), awarded for the supply of sustainable renewable fuel.

All applications for RTFCs must be independently verified and must demonstrate compliance with the RTFO sustainability criteria. They must also prove minimum greenhouse gas reduction of 65% over the whole supply chain from "field to wheels", including factors such as changes in land use and transportation.

Q. Does UK-supplied HVO come from sustainable sources?

Over the last five years, all UK-supplied HVO has been produced from waste materials, according to the Government's RTFO data.

An accepted list of feedstock materials used for making

renewable fuels is

provided as guidance for the RTFO and SAF (Sustainable Aviation Fuel) Mandate.

Wastes and processing residues, such as used cooking oil (UCO), tallow, brown grease, palm oil mill effluent (POME), spent bleaching agent or tall oil, receive twice the number of RTFCs per litre compared with biofuel. This ensures there is little incentive to use crop-based materials.

Q. How can HVO suppliers demonstrate sustainability and compliance?

Under the RTFO, renewable fuel supply chains are required to meet criteria for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions savings, feedstock sustainability and supply chain traceability. Suppliers must ensure that HVO sold in the UK is manufactured from sustainable sources and does not result in environmental damage due to land use change, such as deforestation for palm oil.

UK Government-recognised accreditation schemes, which have a high uptake according to DfT annual reports, are available from a number of organisations. In Europe, ISCC (International Sustainability and Carbon Certification) and REDcert are the predominant schemes, with ISCC certifying 92% of all UK renewable fuel in 2023, according to DfT statistics.

RTFCs are only issued once sustainability and GHG reductions are verified.

Q. How does the UK RTFO discourage fraud in the HVO feedstock supply chain?

In the UK, the RTFO gives suppliers a strong incentive to avoid fraud. If the DfT finds that there is fraud or misuse, the RTFCs for those fuels will be rescinded. The RTFO administrator can apply civil penalties on the supplier, up to 10% of the turnover of their fuels covered by the RTFO.

The schemes described above (ISCC and REDcert) include protocols for testing of feedstock to detect fraudulent mixing of virgin materials with waste. These can be done on a random basis or specifically targeted where fraud is suspected. ➤





HVO on sale to cruising yachts in the Netherlands, alongside FAME-free diesel

According to recent press reports, the DfT is investigating the potential fraudulent use of virgin palm oil in the feedstock of HVO. It is said that these materials are mislabelled as POME, a waste product of palm oil processing.

The CA supports a thorough investigation of any potential fraud in the supply of biofuel feedstocks. Although controls exist on the use of palm oil, **the CA would also support a complete ban on all palm oil products in HVO production,** including waste from processing.

Q. How are greenhouse gas savings calculated?

Greenhouse gases (see table above) are reported as grams of CO₂ equivalent (gCO₂e). GHG contribution is calculated throughout the supply chain. For crops, this is from “field to wheels” and applies to all biofuels: ethanol for petrol, FAME for biodiesel and HVO. Factors include:

- Growing the crop, and changes in carbon storage in land
- Fertiliser use
- Fuel used in machinery for harvesting
- Transport to production
- Production costs of drying, crushing and processing to a finished fuel
- Transport throughout the supply chain to the end customer
- For waste materials, the supply chain starts at the producer of the waste
- For used cooking oil (UCO), this is the restaurant or food processing plant.

Nitrous oxide is particularly important because of its high global warming potential (GWP); it is produced mainly from nitrate fertilisers under anaerobic conditions. The final tailpipe emissions are compared to fossil diesel on a consistent energy basis. According to RTFO data, GHG savings for HVO from waste over the past five years range from 83% to 91%.

Q. If I buy HVO, how can I be sure it meets all the sustainability and GHG requirements?

In the UK, suppliers and distributors can participate in the Renewable Fuel Assurance Scheme (RFAS) operated by Zemo Partnership.

The RFAS verifies that renewable fuel supply chains meet criteria for GHG emissions savings, feedstock sustainability and supply chain traceability for each batch of HVO. Declarations or certificates which show traceability of fuel feedstocks and GHG emissions savings are issued to the distributor.

Main greenhouse gases (GHG)	Global warming potential (GWP)
Carbon dioxide (CO ₂)	1
Nitrous oxide (N ₂ O)	265
Methane (CH ₄)	28

UK-supplied fuel: DfT figures	2024*	2023	2022
Palm oil waste in HVO	2.4%	20%	25%

* provisional

Q. How much feedstock (source material) is available?

Waste feedstock is used for a number of fuels:

- First generation biofuel FAME (Fatty Acid Methyl Ester)
- UCOME (Used Cooking Oil Methyl Ester)
- Second generation biofuels HVO and SAF (Sustainable Aviation Fuel)

Forecasts for Europe show that HVO will overtake FAME in 2027 as the predominant biofuel, with SAF demand still small. Even through to 2035, HVO demand will still be double SAF demand, with FAME demand falling.

The supply-demand balance is available through Argus Media who provide data and forecasts in quarterly bulletins. Argus forecast that HVO capacity will double by 2028.

With regulatory uncertainties, there is still a risk that demand may outstrip supply, causing prices and availability to remain volatile.

Q. What is the future direction of renewable diesel?

SAF (Sustainable Aviation Fuel) is one processing step further than HVO and some producers are already able to switch production. In the UK, the SAF Mandate bans use of crop-based feedstock and waste biofeeds, and HEFA (Hydroprocessed Esters and Fatty Acids) are progressively reduced to 42% by 2040 – but this is not the case in other markets and feedstock supply is a global market.

The UK SAF Mandate requires a progressive reduction in HEFA bio-feedstock from 2027 through to 2040 specifically in order to make more HVO available to other “difficult to treat” transport modes.

Longer term, the SAF Mandate focuses on the development of alternative liquid fuels, commonly called Power to Liquids, using renewable electricity to produce hydrogen for conversion to liquid fuel. The RTFO currently includes mandatory targets for “development” fuels from non biological origins; these targets increase each year. An increase in use of alternative waste feedstocks in addition to UCO in HVO production offer further grounds for optimism about the supply-demand balance.

Q. How can I tell you my views?

We know that HVO is a compromise. Perhaps you believe that it’s not the right one. RATS welcomes informed debate: contact us at rats@theca.org.uk or post on the CA forums.

For more information on the HVO Campaign visit www.theca.org.uk/hvo-for-boats

Malcolm Denham, Jules Riegal & Trevor Page



The orca are still there

As predicted by the CA's **Orca Interaction Monthly Location Table**, the orca damage to yachts has become more frequent during April and May. Currently most are happening to the west of Gibraltar. The reports can be found on the **GT Orcas** app, or on social media sites such as Orca Attack Reports on Facebook. Unfortunately, so far this year, most of the skippers have not reported the details to the CA, so we only have access to a minimum of details.

We have just received confirmation that the postponed trial of the **Genuswave** Acoustic Startle Device, which it is hoped will be an effective deterrent, is planned for this summer. Once we have the details we will make them available on our website.

For this season the advice continues to be, Plan, Prepare and Stay Safe. All the details on how to do this are on our website at www.theca.org.uk/orcas.

Liferaft servicing

Last year, a member had his liferaft serviced and was told that the previous servicing company had not carried out the work required and it was highly unlikely the raft would have deployed correctly, if at all.

RATS will be reviewing liferaft servicing during the course of the year but in the meantime, RATS has this advice for members:

- Use companies accredited by the manufacturer of the liferaft.
- If practicable, ask to watch the liferaft being serviced or being inflated/unpacked prior to servicing.
- Ask the company to return any expired items removed from the raft.
- Be cautious about a low-priced service quote.
- Ensure you get a servicing certificate and file in your ship's papers.
- Ensure the liferaft has a 'serviced by' and expiry date label.
- In some countries, carrying expired safety equipment is illegal and considered worse than not having the equipment on board.

Bringing dairy and meat into GB

In April, the UK Government introduced changes to the foodstuffs, including certain meat and dairy products, that you can bring back into Great Britain. Note there are different rules for Northern Ireland. This is a temporary tightening of the rules as a result of animal disease outbreaks (including foot and mouth disease) in the EU. These restrictions also apply to pet foods.

If you plan to travel back to GB, familiarise yourself with the types of food that are restricted and ensure you do not have these on board, or if they are ship's stores, that they do not leave the vessel. Similar restrictions have applied to taking food into the EU from GB since the UK left the EU in 2021.

Read full details at www.gov.uk/bringing-food-into-great-britain/meat-dairy-fish-animal-products. If you need to dispose of food-related waste you should also read www.gov.uk/guidance/handling-and-disposing-of-international-catering-waste

Temporary Admission: a reminder

RATS hears that EU customs authorities are taking more interest in UK-flagged boats in EU waters. There's a reminder of the rules on Temporary Admission, how it works and when is it relevant, at www.theca.org.uk/news/rats/temporary-admission

Restoring seagrass in UK waters

Seagrasses are marine flowering plants that thrive in shallow waters across the globe, from tropical regions to the Arctic Circle. They form dense underwater meadows that are vital to both ecosystems and human communities. They support food security through fish production, enhance water quality by acting as natural filters, protect coastlines from erosion, storms, and flooding, and play a crucial role in carbon sequestration and storage.

Despite their importance, seagrass meadows are threatened. Recent estimates reveal persistent declines of 1%–2% per year. Unfortunately, seagrasses remain one of the least protected coastal ecosystems, facing threats from coastal development, nutrient runoff, and climate change. Anchoring or inappropriate moorings may also cause damage. A voluntary no-anchoring scheme in Studland Bay, Dorset, combined with an increasing number of eco-moorings, is aiming to address this for *Zostera* species in the UK; in warmer countries, schemes aim to protect a different species, *Posidonia*.

An alternative approach is being taken in the River Hamble, which for many years has had no seagrass at all following disease attacks in the 1930s. During April 2025, the marine conservation team of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust planted 2,000 seeds directly into the seabed.

The **CA's Environmental Guidance** at www.theca.org.uk/about/organisation/environmental_guidance suggests, among other points::

- *Avoid disturbance of the seabed by inconsiderate anchoring. Use fixed moorings if available and if they are suitable for the vessel.*
- *Marine Protection Areas are increasingly common around the UK, and more are planned. Other maritime states have equivalents or are planning them. Such areas may not always be marked on charts. We should make sure we are aware of and comply with them.*

Find out more at www.projectseagrass.org



Taking your pet with you on board

This article was finalised before the announcement on 19 May that a new deal between the EU and the UK includes re-introduction of pet passports. This should mean that for travel between the EU and the UK you can apply for a continuing passport, rather than an expensive one-off Animal Health Certificate. As Cruising went to press, we do not have timescales for the change. There may also be further changes to the Pet Travel Document for Northern Ireland. For the latest information, check www.gov.uk/taking-your-pet-abroad/pet-passport.

Taking your pet with you can increase your enjoyment of cruising. Pets are great company and make great walking companions when you get to your destinations, and there are no kennel fees or bookings to worry about. However, the rules and regulations for travelling with pets are very complex.

The good news is, if you're travelling with your pet **between Great Britain (Scotland, England and Wales), the Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands**, or you are **travelling from Northern Ireland to GB** there are no pet documents or health requirements for travel. You do not need to use an approved route (ferry or air route) and you can take your pet on your private boat with you. There is one exception in that from 4 June 2025, if you're taking your pet *from GB to Northern Ireland*, you will need a simple pet travel document issued, free of charge, by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). To



obtain this document, your pets must be microchipped, but there is no requirement for a rabies vaccination.

If you want to take your pet **from Great Britain (or from any third country) into the EU**, you must enter through a Traveller's Point of Entry (TPE). A TPE is different from a point of entry, which is for people and goods only. But the good news is that you can take your pet into the EU on your private boat via a TPE. There is an exception to this: if you are travelling to the Republic of Ireland (EU member), all TPEs are ferry terminals with no yacht facilities, therefore travelling with your pet is only legally possible on a commercial ferry.

In addition, you must have the required documentation. Check the UK Government website to find out whether you can apply for a pet passport issued in GB, or whether you need an Animal Health Certificate. For either, your pet must be microchipped and vaccinated against rabies, this vaccination must be at least 21 days prior to travel, your pet must be 12 weeks old in order to have their first rabies jab, and it must be signed by an official vet. Only registered, official vets can sign AHCs, which must be issued no more than 10 days before travelling to the EU and are valid for one trip only. This includes onward travel within the EU

		Travel TO					
Travel FROM		Great Britain	Channel Islands	Isle of Man	N Ireland	Republic of Ireland	EU
	Great Britain				1		
	Channel Islands						
	Isle of Man						
	N Ireland						
	Republic of Ireland			2			
	EU			3			
		Documentation required: Animal Health Certificate, <u>or</u> GB-issued Pet Passport (only valid for entry to GB), <u>or</u> EU-issued Pet Passport, if available. See text					
		Tapeworm treatment required for dogs					
		KEY					
		Via any route including your own vessel. No documents or health requirements					
	1	New, for travel from GB to Northern Ireland: Pet Travel Document					
		Only via a Travellers' Point of Entry, plus documents/health requirements					
	2	Enter via GB then to IoM					
		Only via an Approved Route, plus documents/health requirements					
	3	Enter via GB TPE & Approved Route then onwards to IoM					

Useful links

- www.theca.org.uk/rats/brexit_advice/pets
- www.gov.uk/taking-your-pet-abroad
- www.gov.uk/taking-your-pet-abroad/pet-passport
- www.gov.uk/apply-for-northern-ireland-pet-travel-document (usually verified within 5 working days)

Contact the **pet travel helpline** if you need more help: pettravel@apha.gov.uk or phone: 0370 241 1710 Monday to Friday, 0830 to 1700 (closed bank holidays)

or Northern Ireland and back into GB for four months after the date of issue. Up to five pets may be included in this AHC.

On arrival you must visit border control and clear the formalities, which is usually very straightforward, especially if you have been able to email border control and warn them in advance of your arrival.

The rules on travelling **from the EU to Great Britain** are:

- **Documentation:** you need either a pet passport (check, as above, whether this is available yet), an AHC, or (although they are not valid for entry to the EU) an older EU Pet Passport issued in GB. If you have overstayed in the EU for more than the four months covered by your AHC, you can apply for a GB Pet Health Certificate.
- You must ensure that a dog has received **tapeworm treatment** one to five days before arriving in the UK, and this needs to be administered by a vet and recorded on the AHC or pet passport.
- You must travel using an **approved ferry or air route**. Travel from the Republic of Ireland to GB is the only exception to this rule where there is no requirement to use an approved route. Most operators of ferries to and from France only allow pets in a vehicle. So instead of coming back to GB with you on your boat, your pet has to travel on a ferry, and most likely in a vehicle. Arranging the logistics of this may be difficult or impossible, depending on your circumstances, and may be a deciding factor on whether you travel with your pet to the EU in the first place.

GB is not the only country with tapeworm treatment as an entry requirement. If you are travelling with your dog directly to



Finland, Republic of Ireland, NI, Norway or Malta, it must have treatment against tapeworm. Your dog must receive treatment one to five days before arriving in any of these countries from a vet, who must enter full details on the AHC or pet passport following treatment.

The table on the previous page summarises the requirements for travel between the different countries.

What happens if you don't comply with all these rules? Your pet may be put into quarantine for up to four months, or you may be refused entry if you travel by sea. You are responsible for any associated costs and charges.

Summary

For all trips with your pet, you need to plan ahead. Check:

- All the requirements of all countries to be visited, including your return trip
- Your pet's documents
- Vaccinations
- Ports of entry
- Whether there is an authorised route that must be used.

Tania Nieveen



CREW: "I'm very fit and active and have a strong passion for sailing. I share a family Contest 44 CS which I have skippered for the last 5 summers. I'm at ease on a night watch, navigation, cooking at sea, pilotage and long passages. I've skippered around Great Britain in 2021, across the channel to Normandy, Northern and Southern Brittany and sailed around the Isles of Scilly. I'm looking to sail with other skippers to gain experience on different boats and maybe sail different places."

Crewing Service: listings & forum

The CA's Crewing Service puts skippers in touch with crew and crew in touch with skippers, with regular crew meetings at CA House and online over the winter period. You can also find crew or a skipper by posting your details on our listings (the quotes here give a taste of what's on offer), or post on the Crewing Service Forum. Find out more at www.theca.org.uk/crewing/welcome and if you have any queries please contact Malcolm Davidson at crewing@theca.org.uk



SKIPPER: "Now based in A Coruña, cruising Atlantic Spain and Portugal. Crew required from early July 2025. Starting from Sada, heading Plymouth via Brittany. Happy to take a younger crew of either gender willing to learn. Rear cabin bunk available for privacy. I will pay all boat expenses. Contributions to galley bill accepted!"

Brixham, traditionally a fishing harbour but now a lively resort



The English Riviera

Gordon Bentley has recently become the CA's Honorary Local Representative in Torbay. In our *HLRs & their coasts* series, he describes the charms of Brixham, Torquay and nearby waters

Torbay, on the south coast of Devon, is a fantastic spot to visit by boat. With its natural horseshoe bay, sheltered waters, and charming coastal towns (Torquay, Paignton, and Brixham), it's a sailor's delight. Want some tips on anchorages, marinas, or things to do ashore? Or are you planning a longer route that passes through Torbay?

Having recently volunteered to be the CA Honorary Local Representative (HLR) for Torbay you might like to make contact with me for practical advice and guidance if visiting. I'll do my best to meet your need, and if I can't help, I am pretty sure I can find someone who can!

Now retired, my wife and I started sailing

late in life, about 25 years ago, and currently own and keep my 32-foot yacht in Torquay Marina. As a management member for the Royal Torbay Yacht Club I have access to a wide range of technical expertise among our membership, and contact details for local specialist maritime service providers that I can recommend. Or why not join me in the yacht club bar on an early Friday evening for Happy Hour from 1800 to 1900? – all CA members are most welcome on production of their membership card.

Traditionally a fishing harbour, Brixham is buzzing from first thing in the early morning when the fish auctions are held, with Fish Market Guided Tours offered to the public. Or maybe to wake you up a free dip in the nearby Shoalstone Seawater Pool? Annual highlight is the Pirate Festival.

Torquay Harbour has 24/7 access and ashore is a great place to shop, explore and make the most of the vibrant nightlife. Being in the north-east corner of Torbay it is sheltered from the prevailing south-westerly winds, and with the MDL Torquay Marina having a new lengthy Visitors' A' Pontoon installed last year, berthing space is almost always available to visiting yachts and motor cruisers up to 30 metres. Fuel and lift-out facilities are available in the harbour area.

And if marina berthing fees sound scary there are an increasing number of free mooring buoys in Torbay designed to protect sea grass conservation. There



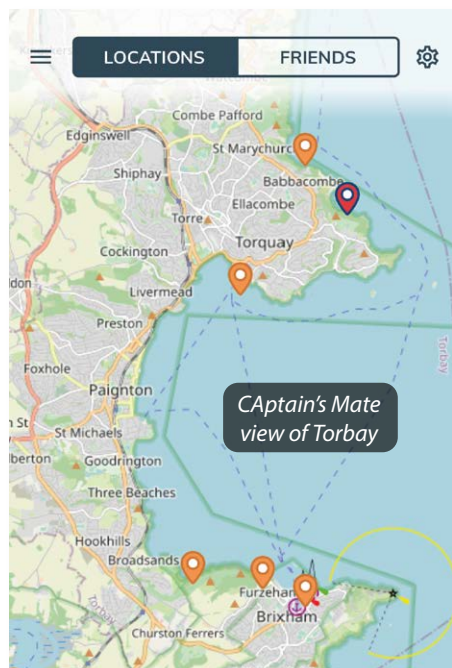
Quintet is a Beneteau Evasion 32 ketch



are three moorings in Fishcombe Cove and a further 10 planned this year for Broadsands Beach – a popular area for SUPs and Kayaking. This mooring location is excellent for watching the annual English Riviera Air Show each year in early June.

And the downside of Torbay? Well, firstly, if the wind direction is a strong easterly you will know it. Even if you are berthed in any of the marinas the swell can be unsettling. Secondly, the summer tourist season makes restaurants, bars and local venues congested. That's why I joined the local Yacht Club for a quieter contemplation of the Bay and weather over a gin and tonic at any time of the year!

You can find my contact details on the CA website or in the Captain's Mate app.



Freedom in Dieppe

In the April 2025 CA Newsletter, our *Where in the world* photo showed Dieppe. We encourage members to tell us their experiences of the locations; **Jacques Bouwens** sailed there during the Covid pandemic, and we liked his story so much that we are sharing it here



Photo of Dieppe marina by Machiel Lambooi

The picture in the Newsletter was taken in Dieppe. We had arrived there during a sailing trip which was part of a small flotilla that we joined in the summer of 2020. It was a unique experience, not only because we were sailing during the height of the Covid pandemic, but also because of how the flotilla operated. All briefings had to be held outside, often on the quay, with skippers and crews standing in carefully spaced circles, keeping the required 1.5-metre distance. It gave the whole experience an almost theatrical feel – a curious combination of freedom and constraint.

What made the trip special was that it



took us to places we hadn't sailed before, particularly the Breton coast, which was new territory for many of us. On the way out, we passed by Dieppe without stopping – the schedule didn't include it, and our attention was focused on destinations further west. But on the return journey, Dieppe was back on the itinerary, and it turned out to be one of the unexpected highlights of the trip.

The town welcomed us with its quiet charm and a historic atmosphere that felt almost untouched. Unlike other towns we'd visited – many of which still bore the scars of World War II – Dieppe had preserved much of its older character. The Église Saint-Jacques was one of the most striking discoveries. As someone named Jacques, I felt an immediate connection, and of course, I couldn't resist taking a photo of myself standing in front of it. The church is full of beautiful details: intricately carved façades, maritime motifs, and a sense of quiet dignity that suited the moment.

In many ports along the way, social distancing remained the norm. Dieppe was no exception. I still remember copying down the access codes for the pontoons on a little scrap of paper – and just to be sure, I took a photo of it, which I still have on my phone today. A small but vivid reminder of a very particular moment in time.

It was one of the only vacations we managed to take during the pandemic, and we were deeply aware of how lucky

we were to be able to travel, thanks to the boat. While so many friends were stuck at home, we could still move, explore, and breathe the sea air. That little sailing boat became the ultimate symbol of freedom. And yes, as soon as we stepped ashore, the masks came on – a small price to pay for the ability to roam.

We ended up staying two days in Dieppe, enjoying the sea breeze, the food, the quiet streets, and the sense of discovery. What was meant to be a quick stop became a memorable part of the journey.

Jacques started on a windsurf board, moved to a dinghy, then a Finngulf 33, and now sails *Eva Maria*, a Noordkaper, together with his wife Marie-Louise. Their trips range from England's south coast to Sweden's Stockholm archipelago.



Adriatic exploration

Heading for Croatia, **David Innes-Wilkin** was warned of expensive marinas... and was also told 'Give your CQR anchor to a museum'. With a new Spade anchor he and Sarah were able to relax and enjoy the islands of Dalmatia on board *Shearwater*

We returned to **Bari** in 2024, getting ready to explore Croatia. The plan for our cruise was to sail from Italy in order to take in the islands and bays while not paying too much for moorings. We'd heard that Croatia can be expensive. By cruising in the same region for the summer we enjoyed being relaxed in anchorages we came to trust between Split and the nature reserve of Lastovo – a delightful area we can now warmly recommend.

The pleasures of bike rides into the old quarter of Bari balanced the work-life nicely while we prepared *Shearwater*. There are fascinating medieval alleys, and an opera house to experience. We often enjoyed the local pasta, ear-shaped *Orecchiette*.

Near the yard we frequented the *Cimedit ristorante* and were welcomed like celebrities because of a newspaper travel tip which I'd published about them in March. It featured the special Bari dish of "Assassinator" spaghetti, as hot as rocket fuel... their hugs and double kisses on arrival each night showed us the friendly side of Italy.

Early one morning in July we set sail north for **Vieste**. We were mostly motoring. It was a full day's passage against increasing winds on the nose, and a moderate sea which broke over the deck. Like Bari, Vieste has lovely medieval streets in the old quarter. We anchored in the bay to the south and this was calm in spite of the fresh winds from the north. Our 35lb spade anchor dug in to the sandy bottom in about 3m depth securely for our first test here. When the

wind went round offshore from the west it still remained firm. "Give the CQR to a museum," we'd been told. And so we said goodbye to the CQR anchor by donating it to the yard. We had come to hate it, for if the yacht was turned in the wind it used to fall over on one side and let go!

We weighed anchor before sunrise and had a fine reaching sail of 62 miles in slight sea to the nearest island of Lastovo. The wind tends to blow up or down the Adriatic here, not across it. We were relieved to enjoy good sailing after the passage north against challenging seas. Even in benign weather, as we are just two on board, we sailed with one reef, and still averaged six knots. The wind in the Adriatic always seemed to increase late in the day, and with just two of us it's not easy to reef later. We anchored in the second bay at **Ubli**.

Paperwork to transit from Italy to Croatia stopped being required in early 2023, when Croatia joined Schengen (the agreement for Europeans to move between EU countries). But we hadn't realised... and spent an hour chasing the harbour police, only then to discover it. The friendly uniformed official turned up at about 5pm. "You don't need to sign in or out of Croatia from Italy," he said. We got the permit to stay in this lovely nature reserve. During our visit a polite team on a launch checked the permit, and we paid €5 every couple of days. They were chatty and knowledgeable about the birds.

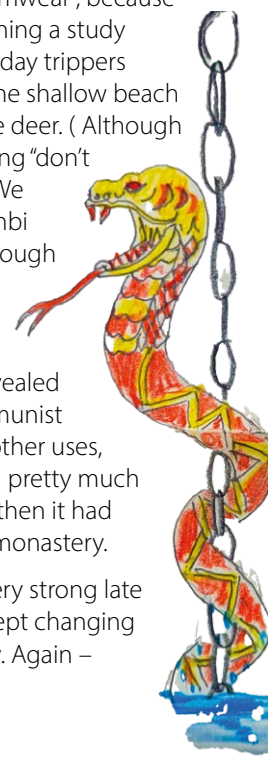
Lastovo nature reserve has rattlesnakes! We saw the tail of one crossing our path. We renamed this group on our chart as



"Rattlesnake Islands". More exciting and visible were the birds... it was busy with nesting shearwaters. Less pleasant was the invasion by lots of flies. We spent languid days anchored in a calm green bay, surrounded by forests and a trail to the nearest coffee bar. In the evening, raptors would circle nearby.

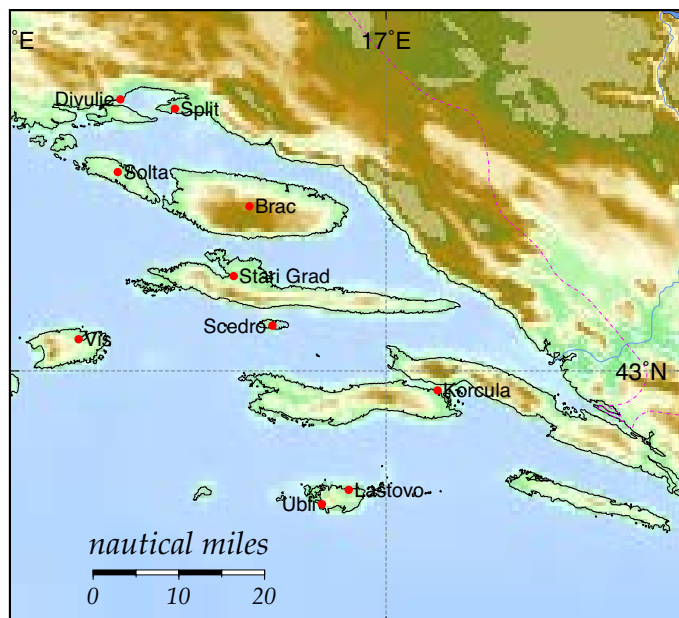
Sailing between these islands was usually on a good reach. To visit Korcula island, it was free to anchor safely in sand at 3m depth by the monastery on Otcic Badja which is nearby. The monastery quay had a sign saying "no swimwear", because the monks were running a study week. Nearby, many day trippers arrived to swim on the shallow beach and to feed the tame deer. (Although there was a sign saying "don't feed them carrots") We renamed this as "Bambi Island." We walked through fragrant pine forests, and Sarah ran all round it. Visiting the bare church itself revealed that under the communist era the church had other uses, and things had been pretty much stripped bare. Since then it had reverted to being a monastery.

The wind became very strong late on some days and kept changing direction completely. Again –





Lastovo Marine Park



we had no anchor failure. It gave us confidence on this cruise not to pay for expensive moorings, about which we had been warned.

We visited **Korčula** town by water taxi from the monastery. It had a medieval quarter which was fascinating and we went up the Campanile, a Venetian-style tower. Marco Polo's family was from here. At one of the promenade restaurants, Melaina, we enjoyed a Croatian treat called "the Dalmatian Plate". It featured tuna, crevettes, prawns, pate, marinated small slices of vegetables, jams and warm soft home made bread. We liked it so much we went there more than once on this cruise, and it was popular with Croatsians. (There were almost no British flags to be seen at the anchorage).

Another half-day of fine sailing westwards took us to **Vis**, where the town is even older, in a pre-medieval layout. The car-free main street was two donkeys wide. We got on the quay early as it filled up mid-afternoon. We liked Vis port and put up with the rough nights when swell came onto the quay; double lazylines at the bow helped us to feel safe. There are plenty of buoys, but we needed fresh water.

In the back streets local people would leave their living room door open and sit outside chatting in the evenings, for there were almost no courtyards. A "Venetian" tower turned out to be a private enterprise structure built for defence against the Ottomans in 1610...! It had no ground-level openings. Round the top were large machicolations, just like those on the sections of city wall round Korčula. (I looked them up to learn the spelling.) The overhang up there was where burning oil or quicklime could be

dropped on the attackers.

A good sail eastwards, again reaching, took us to **Otok Scedro**, finding a south-facing bay halfway along. It's open to some winds but it was calm when we visited. We named this place "Rat island". We did not want stern lines ashore, so we swung free. A stout Croatian next to us shouted "Rats, rats...!" Some boats were chancing that they could deter a rat stowaway by using funnels on their shore lines. Does this work? I doubt it.

Motoring north on a day with almost no wind took us to a bay on the south coast of **Solta** called Stracinska. The anchor seemed to catch on the rocky bottom after some practice. We learned to give it some time slowly down there, and on the first visit we anchored five times. Then the wind got up after sunset, but we were not dragging when others around us had to re-anchor. This was the most challenging type of anchorage, being very deep with a rocky bottom. Three yachts tried to anchor even more times than us, and after they kept failing to get a grip motored away, giving up. We let out 60m of cable in 12m depth, with three stern lines ashore, and when the wind got up in the middle of the night several other yachts had to re-anchor. We have named this bay "No anchors bay".

It became our favourite bay near Split – forests and cliffs all round it, with clear deep swimming. We made many visits to it, and Sarah later mastered getting a grip usually first time. It's surrounded by shaggy Aleppo pines which lean out of the high pale cliffs. Large shoals of fish wait under the yacht. Swifts call from high above. One night I heard an alarm... cheep cheep... but Sarah said it was a scops owl.

My new anchor hatch turned out to be needed here, because I had enlarged my access to get at the chain. Letting it all out so often had allowed it to decide to snag into horrid knots. This summer I've been able to reach in with both arms and sort it, unlike the crew on a beautiful sleek 50 foot Italian Solaris yacht which anchored next to us. They wrestled for an hour as the wind pushed them sideways because their chain jammed. The Italians were, as ever, cheerful, entertaining neighbours.

Things were going too well, and then the starter failed, just as we were about to anchor in another bay, and a very strong wind got up. Fully reefed, we zig-zagged between many bays along **Brač** looking for room to anchor with no engine. Then, miraculously, it started when



Another great meal at Melaina in Korčula

Getting to know the Adriatic Sea

With the great luxury of sailing the Adriatic for a few months each summer we'll be getting to know the Italian coast more, and returning in 2025 to the eastern part of Croatia to take in Dubrovnik. There are safe clean bays, good food and handy harbours when we needed them for water or for repairs. (All the water is drinkable – no bottles were needed). It is expensive, but we anchored most of the time in order to avoid the steep charges. Croatia only moved to the euro as currency in 2023, and several locals mentioned that this seemed to disguise price rises. We've got used to the wind pattern being up and down the Adriatic, often strengthening towards dusk. It occasionally seemed to round up and give us a headwind! Parrot says, for better winds, "Remember to make a libation to Poseidon"

we turned the key one last time.

We needed to stay in the **Split** marina while the solenoid wiring was replaced. But it was full, so after the mechanic had made a visit we were sent away for a few days until after the public holiday. Doing this we enjoyed some more anchorages doing flash-bang jump starts until we could get back for the mechanics. They took it to pieces but found nothing wrong. Then they renewed a lot of connections. Davios said, "your wiring is a disaster". He added a bypass relay to feed the starter directly from the battery.

Staying at Split we were collecting a son and a grandson anyway, so we did not mind combining the repair with the collection. Split marina is very expensive at over €100 a night. It's 25 miles from the airport and Owain got the wrong buses, but we coped with a few hours' delay by having a long lunch at the Fig, a courtyard restaurant in the heart of the Diocletian Palace. Next day, Jamie arrived just as the mechanic and electrician finally re-fixed the starter.

The palace of Diocletian is amazing because it's several storeys high but completely built into the old city. There's a legacy of temple and stone carving which show Roman details so fine that Robert Adam came here to copy them. Diocletian was the last persecutor of Christians, but later they got their own back by taking over his mausoleum. There's plenty more to see, Byzantine, Venetian and creative conservation styles!

An early morning sail to Vis ensured a



The Spade anchor

place on the quay which gets normally full later. We forgot you can only get water before 10am. But we did have enough. (We had added tanks to triple the storage that was built into the Moody) It was a fun week. Exploring more bays, making some zig zags after leaving Split town marina.

By the Venetian-style tower in Vis our lads hired scooters. They toured the island and brought back wine direct from a vineyard. We'd had this good Vis wine the previous evening in a ruined Venetian house, with great pizzas. I think there is more Italian food there than Croatian.

We dropped Owain and Jamie by anchoring at **Divulje**, a one-kilometre walk from Split airport. It's not named in the pilot book. The harbour is tiny, too shallow for us, and it has hidden concrete blocks. The anchorage to the south of it was calm and we had a fine evening after a great seafood feast at the beach-side restaurant, in spite of their power cut.

That week *Genial Bee*, our friend Andrew's boat, was hit by lightning. As other boats have reported, this can wipe out most of the electrical system. We were the only yacht anchored at Divulje, and being on our own, we felt vulnerable as clouds gathered, making us scared of testing our lightning braid onto the keel. If we ever do get hit, I'll write about it.

Stari Grad gave us a berthing problem. Getting a space is not always possible, but we wanted water. It's a very large inlet with long quays in front of stone alleys in a medieval warren. So we anchored the night before in a finger bay a couple of miles to the west in order to be there by the middle of the day.

Strong sidewinds and a pushy charter-skippered yacht trying to beat us made it very difficult to back astern in a straight line into the quay. Sarah's handling was spot on, but like all yachts without a bow thruster there is a moment of not moving



Diocletian's Palace, Split

any more when the sidewind takes over. Then the fenders did the work of being squeezed as we were pushed on to the next boat. This time, a first for many years, we kissed the concrete with our gelcoat. We luckily had two more visiting crew friends. John was on the bow heaving the harbour lazy line and Mary was on the spare fender and... there was still too much wind pinning us. Then we were rescued by the marina rib as it powered full astern to pull us off. Simultaneously the larger skippered yacht who was in Sarah's way at the beginning of this challenge again tried to back in through the situation and had to be whistled at with shouting to make them wait. *Shearwater's* motto, says Parrot, should be: "Shout early, whether or not we are in the right."



Shearwater is a Moody 346, sailed to Greece from Dartmouth through the French canals by David Innes-Wilkin and Sarah Ackroyd in 2014. David, 78, combines writing with longer cruises with Sarah, 68, who is a teamwork and leadership consultant. They take a toy parrot, who says 'There is never a cross word on the boat with this married couple, who have sailed together for over 30 years.'



Messing about ...in every kind of boat

Cathy Brown is enjoying being part of the new Motorboat section, but would like some yachties to appreciate that she has experience of sailing too



Photo: Machiel Lambooj

The CA's newest section is for motorboaters. Launched with appropriate fanfare at the Southampton Boat Show in September, it has already attracted more than 150 members.

When I first started sailing in the 1980s, there was a widespread assumption that yachtsmen and motorboaters were two separate tribes. There were "proper" yachties, who understood the wind and the tides and did things in quiet and traditional ways, and then there were "yahoos" in motor boats who dashed around at ridiculous speed creating unwelcome noise and wash. They tended not to get on very well with each other.

The first newsletter of the CA's motorboat section, published in January this year, revealed that two-thirds of the new section's members have come from a sailing background. Not so different after all, then.

Husband Richard and I (enthusiastic members of the new section) are among the ever-growing number discovering that once advancing age makes handling a yacht increasingly challenging, motorboating provides a seductive route to continuing to stay afloat and enjoy the pleasures of cruising in greater comfort and with less physical effort.

The mini heatwave at the end of April, the week after this year's vital updated chartlet of the entrance to the Ore had been published (thank you www.eastcoastpilot.com) gave us the opportunity to return to one of our favourite anchorages in the Little Gull at the north end of Havergate Island, the original RSPB bird reserve.

We stayed there for a couple of nights, enjoying a dinghy run ashore to Orford with its welcoming Jolly Sailor pub and legendary Pinneys smoked food shop, and even more so, some extended sunshine basking in *Attitude's* cockpit, watching a marsh harrier soar around us.

The fact that we had arrived under power rather than sail did nothing to detract from the experience – not least because there was so little wind that the yachts we encountered along the way were all motoring, too.

There was so little wind that the yachts we encountered along the way were all motoring, too

Sadly, there still seems to be a widespread misconception among many (possibly less experienced) yacht sailors that motorboaters do not understand anything about sailing.

We have learned to stay quiet when offered advice by people whose age reveals they cannot have a fraction of the "miles under the keel" experience that we do. And we have learned that most motorboaters we meet are, like us, converts to "the dark side."

Former CA president Stuart Bradley, who along with wife Marjorie and crewmate Laura Gill, swapped sail for power as a concession to advancing years, says in the April edition of the motorboat section newsletter that he hates that expression as it is not true.

It is a valid point. One of the greatest pleasures of motorboat cruising is sitting

in a light and airy cabin with huge windows – rather than huddling down below in the much darker interior of a yacht.

Motorboats also offer opportunities to explore waterways inaccessible to tall-masted and deep-keeled yachts. It is not all gain, of course, and I do still miss the thrills of sail-power and that moment when the engine is silenced and everything goes blissfully quiet.

But perhaps the creation of the motorboats section within the CA is ultimate recognition that motorboating and sailing are not so different after all. Motorboaters should resist the temptation to think of yachtsmen as "wafties" (wind assisted --- idiots) and yachtsmen should stop classifying motorboaters as clueless yahoos.

As (converts from sailing) John Andrews and Freda Heylett put it in the first motorboats section newsletter: "We should all resist thinking in terms of 'us' sailors and 'them' boaties."

As the CA has rightly recognised, we all share and appreciate the joys and benefits of time on the water and "messing about in boats".

Cathy, a former editor of *Cruising*, is enjoying cruising with her husband Richard on their motor boat, *Attitude*. In her four sailing predecessors they raced and cruised from Spain to Sweden and sailed around the UK and Ireland.





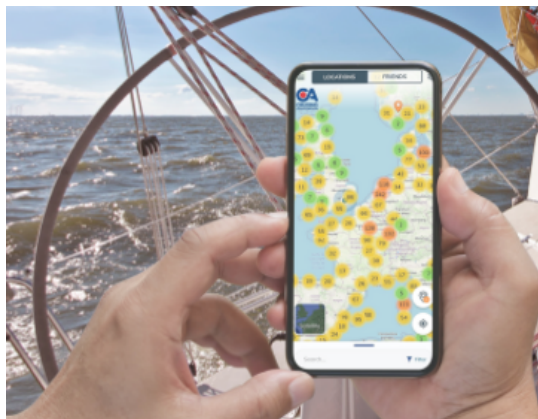
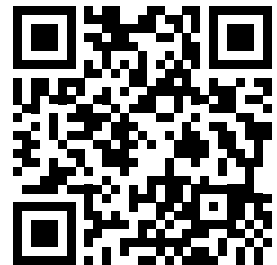
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