



Cruising

www.theca.org.uk

CRUISING DECEMBER 2024

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- Who needs an engine?
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Welcome to the CA's 34th President

Robin Baron has just taken on the role of President of the CA. As a long-standing member of the Association he looks at how it has evolved – and how it will continue to change



As I write this, I have just been elected as the 34th President of the Cruising Association. This is a great honour, and I feel truly privileged to have this opportunity to lead the UK's leading organisation for cruising sailors.

I have been a member of the CA for more years than I care to remember. When I joined, the CA occupied one large, impressive room in Ivory House in St Katharine Docks. Pretty much everything was done by volunteers: Saturday morning envelope-stuffing sessions for mailings to members (very jolly), self-made toasted sandwiches by a set of toasters (machines not people), volunteer bar staff (fumbling for drinks and change). Without volunteers there would have been no Cruising Association, and it had been like that since 1908.

Since I joined there has been steady incremental change with certain milestones: the move to our own clubhouse (CA House) in 1994, the CA's first web presence in 1998, remote meetings by Zoom since 2019 and the relaunch of Captain's Mate in 2021. While those milestones are significant, the main cultural change has been the professionalisation of the CA, both in the work of Lucy Gray, our Chief Operating Officer, and her team, and in the way volunteer-led parts of the CA present themselves. This is as it should be, if the CA is to continue to punch above its weight in the increasingly connected and competitive society in which we live.

In September this year I attended the Southampton Boat Show and spent time on the CA stand. It was the first day of the Show and so was well attended. But, as the day went on, many stands lacked visitors; not so on the CA stand where a steady stream of visitors, some members, some prospective members, made the stand a centre of attention. Overall the number of visitors was down and the number of new members recruited to the CA was less than expected. Exhibiting is by no means cheap, Lucy and her team

put in a tremendous amount of effort in preparing for the show and they and our volunteers work hard over the 10 days of the show itself. Our Marketing Communications committee (Marcom) and Council will be looking critically at whether we are getting the best bang for our buck out of the show.

Volunteers still play a vital role in the CA's activities. As many of you will know, my recent experience within the CA has been with the Regulatory & Technical Services group (RATS). I have just stood down after five years as Chair of RATS in what turned out to be very interesting times, dealing particularly with Covid-19 and Brexit-related issues.


When I joined the CA, volunteers did everything from stuffing envelopes to making toasted sandwiches

In November RATS held its Annual Strategy Meeting (ASM), during which we take stock and plan how and what RATS will tackle over the next 12 months. One of our topics was *Sustainability and Cruising*. Our aim is to give those members who are concerned about our planet, that is most of us, guidance on how best to mitigate the impact of their cruising. Increasingly RATS aims to include sustainability issues in the work we do and publish. There were 14 of us round the table and our discussions were conducted in an atmosphere of inquiry, attention and good humour. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my RATS colleagues for their support over the past five years. I never cease to be amazed at the dedication shown by the talented and knowledgeable members of RATS.

The CA depends on its volunteers. The various roles are diverse and so there is usually something to suit everyone. Volunteering is rewarding in itself. At

this time we are looking for people with skills and experience in marketing and in web development. If you are interested in discussing how you may help please contact me: president@theca.org.uk to arrange an initial chat.

I would like to thank Derek Lumb, our retiring President, Ivan Andrews, retiring Vice President, and Peta Stuart-Hunt, Simon Hampton-Matthews and Martin Sutcliffe, retiring members of Council, for the work and time that they have given to the CA during the past three years. Platitudes about well-earned retirements would be out of place here: Derek will continue as joint Section Secretary of the Celtic Section and as a member of the Cruising Information Development Group (CIDG); Ivan will continue as a member of CIDG and will continue to work closely with Adrian Lester (our Chief Technical Officer) to see through the upgrade of our website; Simon succeeds me as Chair of RATS; and Martin continues as Chair of Marketing Communications (Marcom). Nevertheless I am pleased to be able to express on behalf of the CA our gratitude to them all for their service on Council.

Finally, I wish you all a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year. 



Robin at the Southampton Boat Show with round-the-world sailor Jeanne Socrates and the CA's Chief Operating Officer, Lucy Grey



Members of RATS and Reservists at CA House

Members of RATS meet to agree strategy

RATS (the CA's Regulation & Technical Services group) held their annual strategy meeting in early November. This was an opportunity to meet face-to-face (most other meetings in the year are held over Zoom) and also to welcome new RATS in person.

On the first day we were joined by Nick Nottingham, Chair of Council, who set the wider CA position as a backdrop to our deliberations. Martin Sutcliffe, Chair of the Marketing Communications committee discussed membership data. The recent survey about members' cruising habits was of huge interest to a Parliamentary group discussing recreational boats' path to carbon zero propulsion. RAT Trevor Page made us think about how we approach sustainable cruising – not just fuel use but anchoring, waste discharge and shore-side infrastructure to support new technologies.

Our new RATS members spoke of their first impressions of joining the team

which has given us some ideas for improvement.

The following day we reviewed the exercise we conducted the previous year to identify actions we could take and looked at how we could improve our internal record keeping – boring but vital stuff! We identified potential new projects that will be taken to feasibility stage including:

- Is eco-anchoring viable?
- Selecting and fitting solar panels
- Dealing with black and grey water
- The growing use of AI in navigation equipment
- Dealing with sudden adverse weather

Finally, *Cruising* editor Camilla Herrmann and RAT Sarah Banks discussed ways to present "Technical Basics" topics to the CA's members.

Simon Hampton-Matthews
RATS Chair

Mike Golding joins Cape Horn Hall of Fame

CA honorary member Mike Golding has joined the select group of 40 sailors who make up the Cape Horn Hall of Fame. Mike tuned in to nomination event, in Les Sables d'Olonne during October, via video link from the Cocos Islands; he and his family are sailing from New Zealand to Europe. He said, "It is a fantastic honour to be nominated and inducted into the Cape Horn Hall of Fame. There is no finer award than one created by your peers."

Mike has rounded Cape Horn six times, three westward and three eastward. He says his abiding memory is... "the smell of land, the smell of heather, and the smell of peat, all combined by the churning ocean. It is just the most amazing place."

Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, the CA's Patron, is also in the Hall of Fame along with Jeanne Socrates, Dame Ellen MacArthur and many others.



CREW: "I have a 33' sloop which I regularly sail solo on Lake Ontario, spending approximately 50 nights out of harbour for the last two seasons. I have ocean experience including the Caribbean. I am particularly interested in sailing Scottish waters but would be delighted to sail anywhere in the UK, Baltic or Mediterranean. You

can see sketches of my travels on Instagram"



Crewing Service: making contact now

The CA's Crewing Service puts skippers in touch with crew and crew in touch with skippers, with regular crew meetings at CA House on the first Thursday of each month until April. At the New Year event **on 9 January**, celebrate with a complimentary glass of fizz! There's a Sunday meeting on **9 March**, plus Zoom meetings. 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: "I favour a relaxed style of cruising, moored or anchored for the night where possible. Each cruise lasts from 8-12 days including travel. Departure and arrival ports are as close to airports or train stations as possible. My aim is to cover around 25-30nm each day, although some night sailing may be needed. During 2025 I plan to sail in the Adriatic visiting the numerous ports and islands between Corfu and Split."

EES: what we know so far

The Europe-wide Entry and Exit System could make it easier to get in and out of Schengen... or it could be a nightmare. What's certain is that the date has changed *again*. **Mike Eastman and Judy Evans** report

Over recent months there has been much new publicity about the Europe-wide Entry and Exit System (EES). The EU Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, announced in a detailed speech in mid-August a definite start date (10 November 2024) and gave more details about how the system is planned to work. But, as with so many massive IT rollouts, this was followed in early October by rumblings of a "soft start" and indications of problems, closely followed by the news that the system would **not** be started in November – and giving no new date. So, at the time of writing (mid-October) there is no clear information about the intended start date.

But it is still very much the intention that this will be no more than (yet another) delay rather than a total abandonment. EES is still a key project for the EU, to be put in place to increase security around irregular migration.

The scheme is an electronic passport monitoring system designed to track visitors to the EU under the Schengen 90/180 day rule, and to eliminate the need for human passport checks and passport stamps. It will record everyone entering and leaving the Schengen area for less than 90 days who hold a foreign (non-EU) passport, and will identify anyone who has overstayed their permitted time within the area.

While much planning and preparation for the start of the EES has been done, inevitably some points of detail will only become clear when the system is actually operational and practical experience is able to provide precedents and solutions to particular problems. [See below – *What we don't yet know about EES*].

Who will it apply to?

It will apply to all those travelling for a short stay (less than 90 days) from what the EU call a "third country", who are not an EU citizen or a citizen of the Schengen area. A short stay is defined as visits, holidays or business trips that have a total

duration of up to 90 days and are taken within a 180-day period.

Who will it *not* apply to?

EES will not apply to EU nationals (this includes Irish passport holders, despite Ireland not being a signatory to the Schengen agreement and not operating the EES) and their close family members. It will also not apply to UK and other non-EU passport holders who have EU residency.

What will happen?

No action will be required from travellers before they start their trip, as registration in most cases will be done at the external border of any of the 29 European countries which use the EES system (the 27 Schengen countries, plus Bulgaria and Romania). However, those departing from the UK via either the Port of Dover or Eurostar/Eurotunnel will have the necessary checks done when going through passport control in the UK, due to the dual border (British and French) at these locations.

On initial entry by an individual to the European area, EES will:

- take details of biometric and personal data – full name, date of birth, etc as shown in travel document(s), date and place of each entry and exit, facial image and fingerprints and whether the individual has been refused entry at any time
- create and store these as a 'biometric template'
- at each subsequent entry of that person, recheck all their personal details against the retained information to confirm that the individual is the same person as originally registered, and to keep count of the time that individual has spent in the area, to ensure they do not overstay the time allowed to them (eg: 90 days out of 180 days).

This will be done every time travellers

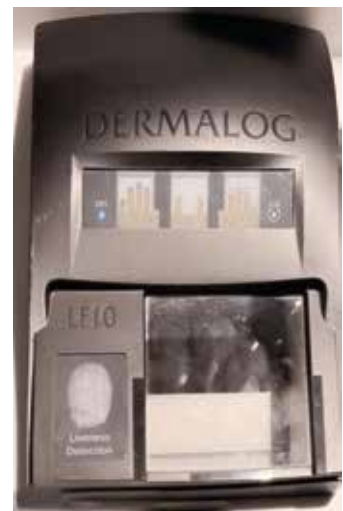
cross **external** borders (either entering or leaving the Schengen/EU area) and will replace manual stamping of passports.

Delays at border crossing points should be expected initially, as details are taken from each traveller. Borders with large numbers of people crossing (such as the main cross-channel ports between UK and the Continent) will be particularly affected. However, the expectation is these delays should reduce with time.

ETIAS

Beyond the Entry and Exit System, the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) is planned to come into operation in mid-2025. This will be a necessary requirement to enter Europe and, although it is a separate scheme, will work alongside EES. It will be for travellers who do not need a visa (citizens of those third countries which have Schengen visa-waivers, including the UK) to enter 30 European countries (the 27 countries in the Schengen Area plus Bulgaria, Cyprus, and Romania) for a short stay (less than 90 days). If you are either an EU citizen or citizen of a Schengen state, ETIAS does not apply to you (but you may need an ETA to enter the UK – see panel on page 22).

With ETIAS, visa-exempt travellers will need to apply for and obtain a travel authorisation, which will be linked to their passport, before starting their trip. This will cost €7 for most travellers (although without charge for applicants under 18 or above 70 years of age and for family members of EU citizens or of non-EU nationals who have the right to move freely throughout the European Union, other than entering the state of which the EU citizen is a national). The authorisation will be valid for three years (or until the travel document



used in the application expires – whichever comes first). ETIAS is not a visa, and its introduction does not modify the visa-exempt status of travellers; nor does it alter the need for the EES.

What we don't yet know about EES

At the time of writing, we do not have a clear understanding on a variety of points. This is either due to conflicting reports of interpretations around the EU borders or to no specific information being available yet. These include:

- How holders of VLS-T and VLS-TS visas allowing extended stays in France are to be treated – will this be as non-EU nationals or as holders of residence permits?
- Does the same apply to holders of the SVRP permit for Sweden?
- Does this apply to holders of other visas – eg: for digital nomads, short-stay residence visas, 'golden' visas for investors in a specified country or countries, etc?
- Some third countries have bilateral travel agreements with an EU/Schengen state, allowing them to extend their 90 days within the country – for example, Canada with the Netherlands. (A full list is at [op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c067e92d-](https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c067e92d-5a8b-11e9-9151-01aa75ed71a1)

More information

The CA is particularly concerned as to how EES will affect cruising sailors and we already have a considerable amount of information which we are using to keep our resources for members as up-to-date as possible. If you think EES will affect you, please spend some time viewing the RATS pages on **Cruising in the EU** (particularly the first of the links below) as well as the Section pages for more country-specific information about where you are planning to go, and the links below:

- Post-Brexit Advice: Departure and Arrival in UK and EU | CA (www.theca.org.uk/rats/brexit_advice/departure_arrival)
- Entry-Exit System – European Commission (travel-europe.europa.eu/ees_en)
- EU freedom of movement and residence | EUR-Lex (eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/eu-freedom-of-movement-and-residence.html)
- Border Guards Handbook (home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/schengen-borders-and-visa/border-crossing_en)



[5a8b-11e9-9151-01aa75ed71a1](https://www.theca.org.uk/rats/brexit_advice/departure_arrival)).

How will visitors from these countries be treated?

- Freedom of movement (FOM) rules establish the right of EU citizens and their close family members to travel to or reside in a Member State other than that of which they are a national for longer than 90 days (EU Directive 2004/38/EC). EU citizens and their close family members travelling to the member state of their nationality however do not normally benefit from the FOM legislation and are instead covered by national immigration rules. RATS have some reports of persons attempting to exercise these rights

being unable to do so even before the introduction of EES. How will EES deal with EU nationals exercising these rights?

- The same FOM regulations also include extensive exemptions from the collection and retention of personal and biometric data for those individuals who are embraced by the definition of close family members – how will this be applied?
- How EES will work for cruising sailors entering the EU/Schengen via ports of entry? There have been suggestions of mobile scanners and/or online apps as a means of capturing the required data, but the situation remains unclear.

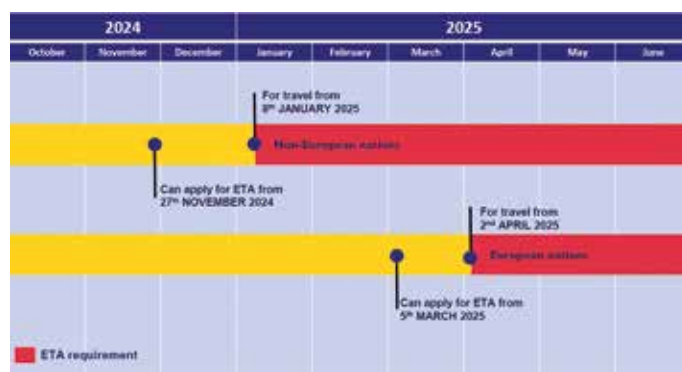
Non-UK citizens: dates to apply for an ETA

If you are a non-UK citizen who doesn't have a visa or other permission to stay in the UK, the British Government is introducing a new permit system, the UK Electronic Authorisation System or ETA.

It's a phased introduction:

- Some **Middle Eastern** countries already need an ETA.
- From 27 November 2024, nationals of countries **outside Europe**, including Australia, New Zealand and the United States, will be able to apply for an ETA and can travel to the UK with an ETA from **8 January 2025**.
- From 5 March 2025, nations of countries **in Europe** will be able to apply for an ETA and can travel to the UK with an ETA from **2 April 2025**.

The ETA costs £10, lasts for two years or until your passport expires if that's earlier, and you can apply online or via an app. It can take up to three days to come through and can be used as many times as you wish. It is different from an ETIAS, which non-EU citizens will need to enter Europe, but the principles are similar.



Initially someone without an ETA will *not* be refused access to the UK. The enforcement date has not yet been announced.

The CA understands that the airline, ferry operator or **skipper of a pleasure craft** is responsible for ensuring that non-UK nationals have an ETA before they board, if needed. For skippers, this will be checked when completing an sPCR. You should also check passports in person when your crew board.

Find out more at www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-an-electronic-travel-authorisation-eta and get details of when to apply at www.gov.uk/guidance/check-when-you-can-get-an-electronic-travel-authorisation-eta.





Orca - Historical interaction location data around the Iberian Peninsula
www.theca.org.uk/orcas

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Orca sightings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Orca attacks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Orca sightings per 100 miles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Orca attacks per 100 miles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Orca project update

Interactions between orca and yachts have continued throughout this season. The key differences have been that the interactions started slightly later this year, and there was a reduction through the busiest period from June to August. However, by September the monthly number returned to the same level as last year, resulting in 119 to the end of October as opposed to 163 in 2023. We do not know whether this reduction was because skippers are being more cautious or whether the orca are changing their behaviour.

There have been many fewer interactions off the west coast of Portugal. Disappointingly this has made it impossible to run the Portuguese government-led trials of the Genuswave acoustic startle device. They are looking at the possibility of running a trial next year in Spanish waters..

Orca interaction location data table

After five seasons there has been some consistency in the location and time of interactions, so a database has been built by the CA Orca Project Team and published as a table, which should prove useful to anyone planning to sail through the affected waters.

It analyses orca interactions from 2020 to the present, covering the Atlantic coasts of France, Portugal, Spain, and the Strait of Gibraltar. Based on monthly data from Grupo Trabajo Orca Atlantica (GTOA), it provides the interaction locations by year and month. Because they are not made aware of absolutely every interaction, the GTOA information cannot be regarded as 100% accurate, but it is very comprehensive and provides a useful guide as to the likely risk of an interaction.

The table highlights in green where there have been no interactions in that section of coast by year and month. It can be accessed from www.theca.org.uk/orcas/reports.

While the data offers helpful insights, it is still crucial to use up-to-date GTOA monthly maps and the CA's recommended protocols when planning passages in affected areas.

Interaction Comments Library

The CA orca project team has also updated the skippers' **Interaction Comments Library** at www.theca.org.uk/orcas/interaction-deterrent-library. Over 40 new entries have been added, including a new section for *Stopping the boat*. This has been introduced to try to help skippers prepare what to do if they are unfortunate enough to have an interaction. There are two very different options:

- **Stop the yacht**, as the scientists have stated that calms the orca as it is less stimulating for them and will lead to them getting bored and as a result to cause less damage, or...
- **Leave the area as fast as possible**, as scientists also believe that the main pod will be feeding and the orcas involved in hitting the rudder will not want to leave the others.

There appear to be interactions when both have worked and when both have not. The Orca Team is trying to make available

as much information as possible to help skippers decide which option will suit their particular circumstances. A powerfully engineed yacht close to shallow water will have a potential that one with a much smaller engine some way offshore may not. Likewise, heaving to in calm conditions is very different from trying it with a large following sea.

Sailors preparing for a passage within and through the affected areas can read skippers' comments collated into different deterrent measure sections: Reversing; Noise; Sand; Continued sailing/motoring; Stopping the boat; Other measures.

Be Safe, Be Prepared

This season, only two CA members reported an interaction with orca, and fortunately neither yacht sustained damage. To help, the CA continues to encourage crews to stay safe by being prepared for the risk of an encounter with orca, in the way they prepare for the risk of stormy weather, by collecting and sharing information on precautions and protocols to help crews minimise the risk of encounters and provide guidance on actions to take if one occurs. Although most yachts avoid orca interactions, understanding the risks and knowing how to minimise the likelihood of an interaction is crucial: To avoid known danger zones, the CA recommends that skippers:

- Review the Interaction Table referred to above before planning to voyage through the affected waters.
- Research the information on the CA's dedicated orca portal at www.theca.org.uk/orcas for resources including the CA *Checklist, Risk Reduction and Deterrent Measures*, and prepare to be able to follow the recommended Safety Protocol at www.theca.org.uk/orcas.
- Stay updated with the GTOA traffic light risk map at www.orcaiberica.org/en/recomendaciones, the GTOA's interaction and sightings app GTOrcas, and the Orcinus app for current sightings. In addition, some social media sites such as Orca Attack Reports on Facebook have reports of current sightings.

Submit a report

It is disappointing that the number of reports being made on the CA website has fallen this season, as it is the only permanent repository of comprehensive information on what occurred and is valued by scientists and the press as well as by sailors, so please submit your reports on interactions or on uneventful passages through areas of interactions to assist the CA in developing its resources for all at www.theca.org.uk/orcas.

John Burbeck





Electric outboards: now lighter & cheaper

Ian Thomson of Nestaway Boats looks at the newest class of electric outboards to come on to the market. Is it time to make the change?

A new class of superlight, integral battery, electric outboard has emerged, aimed primarily at the yacht tender market. If all you want to do is get to the pub and back, or take the dog ashore - at harbour legal speeds - they might be just what you need.

These new “superlights” fit below the 1kW electric outboards that many members will already be familiar with, such as the Torqeedo 1103 and ePropulsion Spirit. The superlights have less power and less battery capacity, but are much lighter and more compact, and because their batteries are fixed internally there are no cables to connect. They are also cheaper to buy

The benefits of light weight

Superlights are easier to store, handle, and install on/remove from your tender... quicker in some cases than attaching a pair of oars.

The lightest petrol four-stroke outboards on the market are the Suzuki 2.5hp and the Honda 2.3hp, both claiming around 13.5kg “dry weight”. But dry weight does not include oil or petrol, so as used they’re more like 15kg, a two-handed pass for most people.

The heaviest of the superlight electric outboards discussed here is 6.5kg, which most adults can pass up and down in one hand. So the whole operation is both easier and much less precarious; you can use your spare hand to steady yourself. There’s nothing to leak out of an electric outboard either, so you can pass it around upside down if you like.

Other benefits?

Superlight electric outboards also still have much the same benefits as any other electric outboard. So compared to petrol outboards they’re:

- So **quiet** that the water splashing on the hull often drowns out the motor noise. You won’t wake your neighbours on early morning dog relief expeditions, and can communicate

What is a superlight outboard?

Superlight electric outboards are those which weigh less than 7.5kg, or about half the weight of a typical small petrol outboard. Some in this category are even lighter.

with your dinghy passengers at normal speech levels.

- **Easier to start** (push button, go), with no starter cord to pull, and can’t be “flooded” etc. This enables less able/experienced crew to operate the dinghy independently.
- **Easier to store**, because they’re physically smaller and there’s nothing to leak out or smell.
- **Easier to carry**, because they’re lighter.
- There’s **no carburettor** to gum up – the reason we hear most often when people are making the switch. Just about the worst thing you can do to a small petrol motor is to store it in a damp environment and use it infrequently. E10 petrol has made the situation worse, as it appears that the good stuff evaporates in a few days, leaving behind a brown sticky mess that clogs up carburettor jets and fuel lines and filters.

Range: how far do you really need to go?

Lighter weight means less battery capacity. And nearly everyone gets range anxiety. But battery density (energy stored per unit of weight and volume) is improving, and for many tender users the next size up of electric outboard, the 1kW motors, now has more battery capacity than they actually need. There are many variables, but as a working rule of thumb you can say that one hundred watt hours (Wh is the lowest common denominator of battery capacity) will push a 2.5m dinghy with two people in it about one nautical mile, at a speed of 3.5 to 4 knots. Much less if you go faster, much more if you go slower (speed and power are exponentially related).

The superlight with the smallest battery has about 250Wh. So if we go with that rule of thumb, even that model should give you about 2.5 nautical miles range. Which is quite a long way in a small dinghy, particularly if your main use is short trips ashore.

How fast do you really need to go?

Make no mistake, if your tender use “requires” planing speeds – from your Caribbean anchorage out to the reef to go diving for example - a superlight electric outboard is not going to do it. But most yacht tender use is in speed-restricted harbours, or anchorages that you shouldn’t plane through if you don’t want to upset the neighbours.

If you’re not planing, hull or displacement speed for most

Disclaimer: Unless specified otherwise, products & services have not been tested by nor are they endorsed by the CA

	ePropulsion eLite	ThrustMe Kicker	Temo450
Price (UK inc VAT)	£995	£1,099	£1,499
Max Power	750W	500W	450W
Battery Capacity	378Wh	259Wh	290Wh
Run time at 250W	1hr 30m	1hr 2m	1hr 10m
Weight	6.5kg*	4.7kg	4.9kg
Bag included	Yes	Yes	No
Mains charger	4hrs	4hrs	3.5hrs
12V charger	option	option	option

small dinghies is somewhere around 4 to 4.5 knots, and 500W of power (typical output for the superlights) will get you very near that. Even 250W will get most dinghies to about 3 knots, because the huge torque from electric motors is very effective at displacement speeds.

If you do need to plane sometimes, the motor that can achieve that is going to be significantly larger and heavier than a superlight electric. Increasingly we find our "liveaboard" type customers opt for a two outboard solution (a small electric and larger petrol), and most of them find they opt for the easier-to-use electric far more often than they initially thought.

Battery charging and storage

All the motors we're talking about here come with a mains charger, and offer some form of 12V charging as an option. The largest battery in this class will need about 30Ah (at 12V) to recharge from flat, which is well within the capability of most yacht systems.

You should always read the manual, of course, but we believe that all can be left at least three months and still hold their charge. What you shouldn't do is leave them permanently on a "float charge" (lithium batteries don't like that).

You may also have read about lithium battery fires (see RATS, page 24), but these are usually the result of very fast charging, or use of the wrong charger. All of the superlight batteries have very conservative (by modern lithium standards) charging speeds, and not using the wrong charger is just common sense.

What are the contenders?

As of July 2024, there are three electric outboards that weigh less than 7.5kg including their battery:

- **ePropulsion eLite**, RRP £995. This has a 500W motor (up to 750W in short bursts) with a 378Wh capacity battery. Weight 6.5kg plus 1kg (quick release mounting) clamp bracket. Straightforward in terms of design, tiller-operated twist throttle, but all very neatly done.
- **TEMO 450**, RRP £1499. 450W motor with a 290Wh battery, weight 4.9kg. A slightly different approach from this French manufacturer, somewhat akin to a "longtail", mounts on a rowlock-style bracket and trigger-style throttle. Beautifully made.
- **ThrustMe Kicker**, RRP £1099. 500W motor, 250Wh battery, weight 4.5kg. Lightest on the market through extensive use of plastic and a smaller, faster-spinning propeller. Removable remote control throttle.

Choosing between them largely comes down to your priorities. The eLite has the most battery capacity/range, and is the most (conventional) outboard-like in terms of operation, but is also



heaviest (although still not exactly heavy!). The Temo has a bit of a learning curve to it (because the propeller is 3ft behind the boat) and is up towards the next class in terms of price, but once mastered is also very convenient if you do a lot of work in shallow water (instant height adjustment). The ThrustMe wins the weight competition, but has the least battery capacity/range as standard (there is now a range extender battery option).



UK contacts

Nestaway Boats www.nestawayboats.com

ePropulsion www.epropulsion.uk

TEMO www.marineproductsdirect.com

ThrustMe www.thrustme.uk

Who needs an engine?



Blue Mermaid anchored off Second Beach at Brightlingsea and below, on her home mooring

Andy Beharrell spent a few days on an engineless barge, and is inspired to sail more and motor less on his own boat



Towards the end of the 2023 season, I went sailing on a beautiful boat with a topsail, but unusually, no iron topsail. The boat was a Thames Barge called the *Blue Mermaid*, and I spent five days on board cruising around the east coast.

For me this was a steep learning curve. As someone who has been known to have their finger hovering over-enthusiastically over the engine starter button when the wind dips below 10 knots or so, I came away from the trip with a heightened admiration for the skills of those sailors who have no fall-back plan in the form of an engine, but also with a sense of guilt about how much diesel I have been known to burn in a season, often in the name of cruising deadlines. The trip was a great chance to reflect on my own practice and how I could perhaps change it in the future to make my sailing less pressured and hopefully more enjoyable.

The original *Blue Mermaid* was one of the last barges built, one of seven barges commissioned for F W Horlock of Mistley.

She was built in 1930, but sadly sunk when she hit an enemy mine in 1942. The new *Blue Mermaid* is a faithful replica based on the surviving drawings of the original design. She was built between 2016 and 2019 and welcomed her first guests on board in May 2019.

She is run by the SeaChange Sailing Trust, who work with all sorts of groups, many of them groups of youths and vulnerable adults from London, Essex and Suffolk. Our group was from the Woolverstone Project – a specialist charity offering sailing for the disabled – and was composed of people with autism, Parkinson's disease and cerebral palsy, along with three of us as volunteers supporting the group.

Whatever their situation, no-one was just a passenger. The human chain to lift all the supplies for the week on board was just the start of our work. As soon as everything was stowed and we had been briefed and kitted out with lifejackets, we were set to work. The first job was

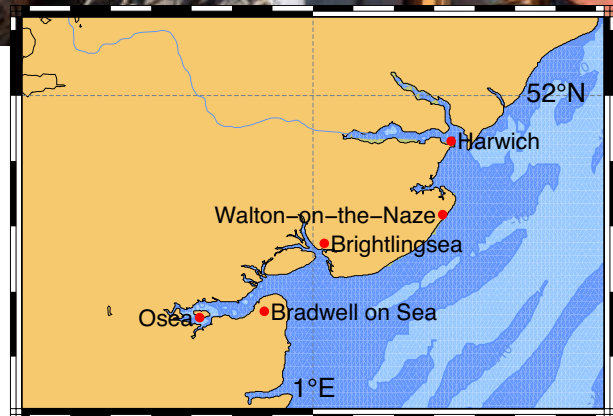
raising the anchor; no button pressing or remote-control anchor winches here. Hoisting the anchor on the *Blue Mermaid* gave me a sense of how the sailors manning a capstan must have felt. In my mind I was singing shanties to maintain the rhythm, but to maintain the sanity of all on board, I felt it best that I didn't do this out loud!

After what felt like an eternity of winding, I was ready for a cup of tea, but no, we were not allowed a break... the next job was to man the brails to get some way on as the anchor broke out. We were leaving from the popular anchorage of Pyefleet Creek, off Brightlingsea. Without an engine, everything has to be carefully choreographed to ensure no expensive insurance claims from all the boats nearby. With the main, mizzen and staysail pulling we started to make some progress down the Colne; to maintain the pace, the skipper quickly called for the topsail and jib as well. Finally, once everything was set and we were sailing smoothly, the kettle could go on and

Raising the anchor, with a reserve team ready to step in



Everyone in the group had a go at helming



Woolverstone Project

The Woolverstone Project provides sailing opportunities and tuition for those with disabilities with sailing throughout the year at Alton Water, and during the summer months at Woolverstone on the River Orwell. It has 22 specially adapted dinghies on Alton Water. At Woolverstone it has a Wheelyboat, which can take wheelchairs directly on board through a boarding ramp and can even be driven by wheelchair users. Also at Woolverstone the project has a Sonar – an ex-Paralympic keelboat.

we could reflect on the manoeuvre we had just done. What was clear from this start and indeed throughout the week was the thought and preparation from the skipper. Nothing was rushed and he issued instructions calmly and clearly. He knew exactly what he wanted done and when, and communicated that effectively. If the manoeuvre had been accompanied by music, then it would have been something calm and soothing like a gentle waltz, whereas with most of the manoeuvres on my boat, something akin to the Benny Hill theme would be more appropriate.... and that is even with an engine!

When you have no engine, the wind and tide take on a much greater significance. We all know that we should use the tide effectively, but sometimes cruising deadlines and other pressures result in us forgetting that, and the iron topsail

is employed to compensate for our carelessness. We had no such option on the *Blue Mermaid*, so our departure was carefully timed to push us up the coast on the ebb and arrive at the entrance to the Walton Backwaters just as the tide turned to help us into Hamford Water.

In the event, we were a little early, but what followed was a masterclass on short-tacking an 87-foot barge through a narrow channel to an anchorage. The skipper was casting the lead to check the depth as we crossed the channel. Maintaining a smooth, gentle rhythm he languidly threw the lead ahead, retrieved it, checking the depth as he went and then cast it again. As the depth shelved he kept a finger on the leeboard hawser, and as he felt the leeboard touch, gave the order to tack. When sailing dinghies I have often used the centreboard as a depth sounder, but never on a large

steel barge! Around 25-30 tacks later, the anchor went down and, after a quick trip to see the seals in Oakley Creek in the barge boat, we retired to the hold for what we felt was a well-earned supper.

The rest of the week followed a similar theme. A short sail in very little wind the next day saw us anchored off Harwich with a trip ashore to see the historic parts of Old Harwich being followed by supper in the Alma Inn. On the third day, the weather looked good to head back down the coast, so we took the very last of the ebb out of Harwich and picked up the flood down and back into the River Colne, anchoring off what the locals know as "second beach", for a swim.

I had, slightly rashly, asked the skipper about sculling, and the next thing I knew, I was being given a lesson in the barge boat. I was taught how to do this many years ago by my father

Swinging the lead on the way into the Walton Backwaters



Packing up the topsail after a day's sailing





The Woolverstone Project group learn to row the barge boat



The view from the top of the ratlines

and so confidently set myself up and started what I thought was sculling. The skipper tried to suppress his laughter and then accused me of being all “Kentish”. I felt sure that this was not a polite commentary on my sculling technique. He took over and showed me the proper “Essex” way of doing it. With a few minutes of practice, I was successfully going nowhere, but given that this was into around a knot of tide, I was quite pleased. Eventually I made just enough headway to get us back alongside. Watching the skipper and his mate doing it made me realise what a useful skill it is, but I still wonder how I am going to practice further with an Avon Redcrest!

After our second night in Pyefleet, the next day we tacked out of the Colne. We were now working as a well-oiled machine... up to a point, as my joints were still creaking. We had a lovely sail out to the Wallet Spitway and then back past St. Peter’s Chapel at Bradwell – probably the oldest intact church in the UK. It was built by Bishop Cedd in 654 and much of the stone was from the Roman Fort of Othona nearby.

The next landmark brought us sharply back up to date – Bradwell nuclear power station, or at least the remains of it encased in concrete for the next 80 or so years. After that came a reminder of the pirate radio days: the *Ross Revenge*, which was for many years, the home of Radio Caroline. She is now maintained by a trust and though Radio Caroline transmits mainly from on shore now, they do still



Going under Tower Bridge in 2024

use the boat for special weekend events. Finally, we rounded up and anchored off Osea Island.

Osea has a fascinating history. The island, which is accessible by causeway around low water, was originally settled by the Romans and they built the causeway, a salt works and even grew arable crops on the island. After them the ownership of the island passed through the hands of many powerful families, eventually being bought by the Charrington family of brewing fame. Given this family heritage, it was perhaps surprising that Frederick Charrington set it up as a temperance resort. It is said that, having witnessed drunken and violent behaviour outside a Charrington-owned public house, he decided to make amends by setting up a temperance society. However, locals would apparently provide supplies of alcohol for the people on the island, attaching them to a buoy locally nicknamed The Doctor. The more recent history of the island has featured celebrities and celebrations: local singer Olly Murs got married there and many other A-listers have visited.

Our last day gave us another masterclass – this time in picking up a buoy under sail. As ever, everything happened slowly and with a degree of professionalism that many sailing instructors (myself included) would aspire to. The most difficult part of the whole manoeuvre was getting the mooring warp back on board, as the boat hook was around three metres long and difficult to manhandle elegantly, but we were soon secured to our buoy and cleaning up and packing up began.

It is always sad to end a cruise, but this one had given me a great deal to reflect on. Being utterly reliant on the wind and tide was a salutary lesson in planning ahead. Having no recourse to the engine means looking at a range of options before any manoeuvre and always looking for a possible exit strategy – something that having an

Wind, Tide & Oar

Engineless sailing has seen something of a resurgence of interest on the east coast and in August 2023 an “engineless sailing jolly” set the participants various fun races and engineless sailing seamanship tasks. The Woolverstone Project provided a support boat so that the whole event could be captured on 16mm film. The footage became part of an Arts Council funded film called *Wind, Tide and Oar*, which premiered at Greenwich in spring 2024 and has toured the east coast using *Blue Mermaid* as a mobile cinema. Find out about future screenings at www.windtideandoar.com/land-tour.

engine instantly available can make us complacent about.

I came away from the trip feeling guilty and so determined to spend some time next season practising things like picking up a mooring under sail, weighing anchor under sail and something we perhaps all should do – man overboard practice. Certainly I plan to put myself under less pressure to be somewhere according to a deadline and be more flexible in light airs. Unfortunately last year Santa forgot to bring me the Code Zero sail I wanted, but perhaps this year...

Andy Beharrell was brought up on England’s east coast and has sailed for nearly 50 years on boats from dinghies to ocean racers. He bought his Starlight 39, *Charmary*, in 2010 and sailed her round Britain before heading to the Baltic. He is a trustee of the Woolverstone Project. His blog is at www.charmary.co.uk.



CA London lectures Spring 2025

Visitor moorings
at Mala Rava,
Rava island, Zadar
archipelago



From wooden boats and Medway Muddies to cruising in Croatia, and from charting the west coast of Scotland to charting the world, there's so much to learn. Put the dates in your diary now

All events are open to any member, subject only to restrictions on numbers for those attending at CA House. Please note: lectures can be watched live online but we do not generally make recordings available after the event, for a number of reasons relating to time and copyright issues. Members of CA London section will receive weekly reminders, with the booking links. If you are not on the section mailing list, please check the events listings on the CA website.



Wednesday 5 February A journey round Navionics charts, Emma Maule

Emma Maule from Navimaps, the UK distributor for Navionics, will talk about these popular nav aids from chart cards

onboard in your plotter to the Navionics Boating app on mobile and tablet, covering such things as advanced features, overlays, viewing options and how to keep your charts up to date. Emma will welcome your participation and questions. If you use the Boating app on your mobile, be sure to open it up on the evening.

Wednesday 12 February In Praise of Wooden Boats, Paul Eedle

Nine years ago, Paul Eedle became obsessed with owning a historic wooden boat even though he could hardly sail. He found his 1907 Looe lugger Guiding Star so rewarding despite the challenges that he asked a shipwright friend in Cornwall to design and build him a new wooden boat. Hopeful, a 30' gaff ketch, was launched this summer. Paul tells the story of two boats which transported him to a new world.

Wednesday 19 February The Medway Muddies, Adam Taylor

For almost a century, gangs of men called Muddies sailed Thames barges to

the remote salt marshes of the Medway estuary, to dig tons of mud to satisfy the relentless demands of the cement industry. They worked hard, drank hard, got into fights, and changed the tidal flow of a river, forever. An entertaining journey through an almost forgotten piece of unique history.

Wednesday 26 February Cruising through Croatia, Charles and Elizabeth Thorp

Charles and Elizabeth brought their twin-keel Westerly Ocean 33 *Aura* across France to the Med in 2012 and after exploring Med Spain, France and Italy they arrived in Croatia for the first time in 2015. Other cruisers said they should go to Greece, and in 2017 they did, and also to Istanbul and south-west Turkey. Then in 2023, notwithstanding Croatia's reputation for crowds and cost, they came back. They will share the story of their 2024 cruise from Dubrovnik to Istria and back, how they avoided the crowds (most of the time) and kept some grip on cost, and their experience of practicalities like formalities and sources of weather



Looe lugger Guiding Star



The Medway Muddies



Entering Loch Teacuis



Geraldus Mercator's map of the North Pole 1595

forecasts, and they will try to show some of the spectacular beauty of this wonderful cruising ground.

Wednesday 5 March
Secrets of the West Coast of Scotland, Bob Bradfield

Bob will talk about some of the stand-out places to visit and some of the much less well-known. He will also suggest ways of making the very best of the time available to you, including exploiting the weather, whatever it serves up, and everything else the West Coast has to offer. He will illustrate his talk with photos but also with his charts and with anecdotes from his 15 years of surveying in West Coast waters.

Bob has devoted much of the last 15 years to producing 750 charts of channels and anchorages that run, typically, on an iPad or Android tablet and show you exactly where you are at all times to within just a couple of metres. They are now used by most yachtsmen on the West Coast and also as the basis for the plans in the pilot books.

Bob has an engineering degree but spent his working life in finance in the City of London. On retiring at 50 he sailed to the Arctic, Antarctic, transatlantic and round the top of Australia as well as all round northern Europe and many other places. He stumbled into his surveying

and chart-making project and it has since become an addiction for which he has won many awards, including an MBE.

Wednesday 12 March
Slightly pear-shaped: Surveying and Mapping the World, Jeremy Batch

"Earth is pear-shaped" became headline news in March 1958 when the Vanguard satellite's orbit deviated from expectations, irreparably confusing a generation of schoolchildren and their geography teachers.

That the Earth is round had been known for centuries; that it might also be (very) slightly oval was also long-suspected, although we disagreed with the French as to which way the oval went. How did we work it out?

Who was Mercator, how (on Earth) did he make his projection, and why is it not always used?

How did the Swallows and Amazons make their map of the Walton Backwaters with nothing but a compass and a few sticks; how did the Romans give their aqueducts a slope of 1 in 3,000; and how did the Egyptians align their pyramids?

Plus: why, if points had been given for effort, the Prime Meridian really should have run through Paris; how a globe, bought for £150 at a Welsh antiques fair during Covid, then sold at auction for

a quarter of a million; and how Gladys West's model of the Earth allows your GPS to work.

Wednesday 19 March
An Evening with RATS

We hand over to our Regulatory & Technical Services team to update us on their current projects. The agenda will probably include orca interactions, electrics, use of HVO and other alternatives to diesel, electronic navigation and the EES and ETIAS schemes from the European Union.

Wednesday 26 March
Hanson Lecture: The Future of Cruising, Katy Stickland

What will cruising look like in the next decade or so? *Practical Boat Owner* editor, Katy Stickland, has spoken to experts and looked at trends to find out how pathways into sailing and boating have changed, looking at models of boat ownership and how this will impact the type of cruising people will be doing, as well as what boats and gear might look like by 2050. The talk will be followed by the award of the CA's log competition prizes. Tickets at £20 include supper and must be paid in advance.

Bookings

Events start promptly at 7pm unless otherwise stated. To book to attend any lecture at CA House, and to indicate whether you'll be ordering food, go to **News & Events > Events > BOOK VENUE** on the CA website. Please pay in advance on the website, or by contactless on the door. Individual lecture tickets Members £4, Non-Members £7.

Webinar links will be published before each event. Any problems with the booking system, call or email Darren on 020 7537 2828/events@theca.org.uk. There is no charge for viewing online.



Katy Stickland with 2023 winner Bjorn Riis-Johannessen



The two apps widely used by Dutch marinas: Blue Water, left, and i-Marina, right

Sippi, which can be used to pay for parking in Portland... or mooring in Studland.

Appealing or appalling?

Apps and QR codes are becoming an essential part of boating – which means that you need internet access too. **Cathy Brown** appreciates the ease but misses the contact with real people

Our early summer cruise in the Netherlands made us realise that technophobia is no longer an option. A smartphone to read QR codes has become an essential piece of boat equipment.

There are two apps, Blue Water and i-Marina, and almost every harbour we visited asked you to use one or other of them to pay your dues. In a gigantic marina where the harbour office is an interminable walk away, it is very convenient just to scan the code displayed at the berth.

Provided you have used the app before, it will instantly fill in all the details of you and your boat and offer you options of how to pay – credit card, Apple pay or whatever. Double click and you're sorted. An email pings in instantly, with receipt, wifi and gate codes and everything else you need to know. It seems almost too good to be true. But I missed going into the office and exchanging pleasantries with a human being. Always, there is useful local info to pick up.

At Lauwersoog we paid as directed by QR code, but then had to go to the

office anyway for directions to the shop – which we would never have found otherwise.

The Texel marina laundry ran by QR code. When I pointed my phone at the washing machine the electronic display instantly switched from Dutch to English. The six-euro charge was taken by Apple pay and the machine sprang into life. So much easier than finding the right change, or getting a token, I marvelled.

We paid by QR code, but then had to go to the harbour office anyway for directions to the shop

Then the tumble drier took my money but I could not persuade it to start. I had to wait for the harbour master to come back on duty. His smartphone could see that I had paid, and he gave me a (cash) refund and then a free go as an apology for the inconvenience. Human intervention 1, QR code 0.

On the Grevelingenmeer we discovered that what were free harbours last time we were there (admittedly some years ago) now require a licence, which can, theoretically, be purchased by QR code direct from those delightful islands in the middle of nowhere.

Even though we were going to have to buy a month's licence (the minimum) for just two nights (all we had time for) we didn't mind. It still worked out at only 12 euros a night for a substantial pontoon with shore access and rubbish collection.

But even though it was i-Marina, which by now I had used successfully on several occasions, this time I absolutely could not make it work. So the next day we had to call into the marina at Bruinisse – going out of our way to pay. It was good to have a chat with a human anyway.

Internet access is now a vital part of cruising for everything from weather forecasts onwards. I found Captain's Mate invaluable. But sadly, although harbour wifi is nearly always promised, in our experience it rarely worked well. So my iPhone was over-used as a personal hotspot and ran out of data allowance, putting QR codes beyond reach.

Belatedly, I realised the solution was to buy a local data sim card for my iPad. Only it wasn't a card at all – merely a QR code with a couple of verification numbers. Installation was simplicity itself. I was back under the spell of those weird little black and white squares.

Love them or hate them, it seems we are going to see more and more of QR codes. If only they all worked as well as the best. And as long as there is still someone to talk to when they don't.



It looks like a SIM card, but it's just another QR code

Cathy, a former editor of *Cruising*, is exploring new options 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.

