



Social

Happy New Year to one and all. The next social meeting at Wivenhoe Sailing Club will be on Monday 2nd February 2026 at 20:00. We hope to see you there.

The best laid plans to meet up in January were scuppered by the weather. Snow fell overnight and was expected to clear during the day, as it usually does. After some discussion, it was decided at short notice to cancel the meeting in the interests of safety and a cancellation email was sent to all members. The temperature continued to fall, and it proved to be one of the coldest nights of the year to date. Please accept our apologies if you did not see the email in time and arrived at the club to find it closed. In the unlikely event that a meeting has to be cancelled, we will endeavour to email all members before 17:00 at the latest.

Cruise in Company

The forthcoming season's programme is in development and will be published soon. If you would like to suggest a destination, why not come along to the social and discuss it.

Shed news

At the coldest time of the year the water to the sheds is normally turned off. This is to protect the pipework inside the sheds. If you need to use the water, please make sure it is turned off again, and the system drained down.

It is not a good idea to leave mains equipment plugged in unattended. Even something as simple as a battery charger. I forgot to unplug mine a few years back. On my return the top of the battery was not

connected to the bottom. Dealing with the sulphuric acid clean-up is not for the faint hearted.

Vacancy

After many years of doing a splendid job of looking after ACBO finances and keeping us afloat as well as lots of other volunteer work Steve Watts has told us that he will not stand for re-election to the committee in October this year. Therefore, we are looking for someone to step into that role and ideally to work alongside Steve up until October to ensure a smooth transition. All financial transactions are managed online; the main responsibilities are approving and recording income and expenditure, presenting simple accounts to the committee meetings and AGM and working with our accountant to prepare returns to the FCA. Anyone who feels they could help the Cooperative in this way to please contact Keith (chair) for an informal discussion by email below.

Moorings

They are still there and I'm finding excuses to ignore them! My new year's resolution is to check them before I put the boat back.

Other News

One of the winter jobs has involved chasing down an irritating leak. The suspected cause has been found; corrective wood butchery is in progress. However, there is a damp area which I have to dry out. As the boat is under a cover over the Winter, I always leave the hatches open. The constant flow of air is the best way to prevent the formation of condensation and black mould. However, this damp area required a little more aggressive treatment. I decided to try a dehumidifier. Research revealed there are two main



types of powered unit. The compressor type, which works like a fridge, extracting the moisture on cold plates is only suitable for temperatures above 10°C. The alternative is the desiccator type which absorbs the moisture into a medium first and the medium is refreshed by warming. This is the only type which can be used on a cold boat. It works like those tubs of silica gel which you refresh in the oven but in an automatic unit. Suffice to say the wood is now dry, and I switch on the unit whenever I am there to remove any additional condensation caused by kettles etc whilst I am working. It also seems to remove the winter chill enhanced by a damp atmosphere.



This prolonged cold spell will quickly find out if you have winterised your engine and freshwater system, including the heads. Boats remaining afloat will have an advantage in that the water around them will provide some protection from the elements. It is useful to keep the engine turned over to prevent corrosion. Don't forget the engine and prop anodes. My routine when laying up ashore is to drain the exhaust water lock before mixing up a bucket of antifreeze solution. I then run the engine with the water inlet pipe in the bucket. This ensures that the seawater side is flushed with antifreeze. I flush the heads with antifreeze solution as well. Water tanks are drained and if possible, wiped out with a sterilising solution.

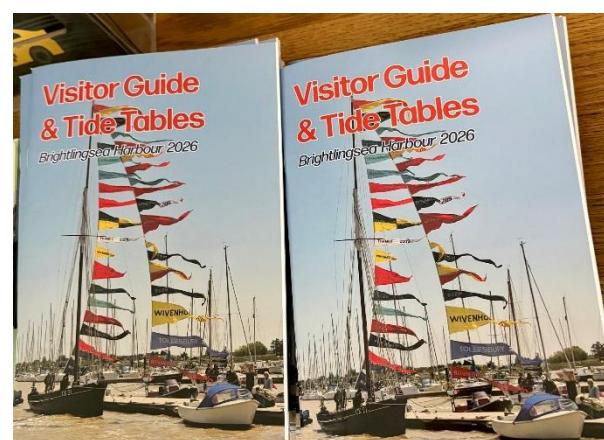
For outboards draining all fuel and having a dry carburettor over the winter has always been best practice. Petrol loses its volatile elements rapidly and should not be expected to last over the winter. As petrol evaporates it also leaves a gummy residue which blocks the jets.

The jury is out on diesel fuel tanks. Traditionally diesel tanks were filled to the brim to prevent condensation. With the introduction of biofuels, the fuel is more likely to degrade over the winter. I try to drain the tanks instead. This means I can check them before launching and add fresh fuel in the spring. I always add a fuel treatment such as marine 16 at every fill. Diesel bug can sit at the bottom of the tank until you need the engine most. Removing the bug once there involves a lot of cleaning, boat yoga and filter replacements. Don't ask me how I know.

End of March and early April will have Spring tides around lunchtime (as usual) Looking like 2½ months until launch day. Seems further away than saying 12 weeks! I see lots of sanding in my immediate future. Varnish and antifoul has been bought.

Last season I tried relying on simply scrubbing during the Summer. I applied two coats of Hempel classic before launch as usual. I needed two sessions on the posts with a pressure washer, the fouling was very heavy this year. The first was straightforward. The second scrub, only a month later was much harder as the barnacles were harder to remove. I ended up having to use a scraper. Back to the normal routine of two coats in the Spring and an extra coat in July.

Brightlingsea Visitor Guide & Tide Tables are now available from the harbour office.



Contacts

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