

The Boat Files	Sailing Cruisers
<b>Kittiwake</b> Drascombe Lugger	5.72 metres overall length, very solid, very good on open waters. Takes a 4hp outboard. Can carry 5 crew.
<b>Little Dipper</b> Drascombe Coaster	6.3 overall length with a cabin. Gunter rig with jib and mizzen. Big steel centre plate and steel rudder which needs handling with care. Can carry five and sleep two.
<b>Lorax</b> Sailfish 18	Cabin trailer sailer. Can accommodate 4 good friends on days away cruises. Can take 4hp outboard.

To reflect the fact that it is possible to get into much more serious difficulty when coastal cruising and the potential for more significant damage to occur, both to our boats and to other people's, the sign off criteria for these craft is much more robust.

Unless a member joins the club with evidence of significant previous sailing experience, it really is necessary to undertake some formal training (i.e. away from the club) before sailing these without a competent skipper aboard. A dinghy sailing course (RYA level 2) should be adequate for the boat-handling element but you will also need some knowledge of collision regulations, navigation and chartwork, buoyage and tides.

We would also highly encourage anybody considering coastal cruising to undertake a VHF course and obtain a radio and a license to use it. This not only gives you a more reliable means of calling for help should you need it, it enables you to communicate with other boats in your party and to hear real-time information on shipping movements in what is one of the UK's busiest commercial ports. Courses can often be found at a significant discount if done last-minute or in the winter season and there are a number of training centres in the Southampton/Solent area.

Once you feel you have the sailing ability to consider venturing out on one of the coastal boats you will need to spend a day aboard with an club member authorised to sign off on these boats. This might be from the club or form part of an organised event elsewhere. You will be shown how to rig the boats and you will need to demonstrate that you can do this as well as helming the boats under motor and sail, including into and out of a berth. You will also have to demonstrate the ability to safely prepare, carry out checks and flush, lubricate and safely stow the relevant outboard engine.

If you wish to be signed off for these boats you need to give plenty of notice so that we can try to line up a date for you to go out with one of us. If you are keen to try out the cruising boats as a crew member without necessarily feeling ready to be signed off yet, please do make contact. We may be able to invite you to attend a rally or regatta with us. However please bear in mind that the members taking boats to these events will have put significant time into preparation and have often incurred expenses for rally fees, fuel and berthing. It would therefore be helpful if you can let us know with plenty of notice if you hope to attend

and any help with the preparation work you can offer would be much appreciated. Emailing a week or so before is too short notice as crews are usually organised several months in advance.

Coastal cruising is immensely enjoyable and we are truly privileged to have the facilities to spend whole weekends away for the cost of our club membership fee.

Finally, the coastal cruising boats require an immense amount of time and hard work to keep them in good condition and prepared for the summer's sailing. Over the winter we will be carrying out routine maintenance and upgrades that have been identified over the summer season. If you intend to use these boats, your assistance with these jobs would be very much appreciated.

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