



## NEW HOUSE, NEW BOAT

*Gilbert Park trades in his much-loved Nimbus for a boat he can park next to his house*

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hen I moved into a new house in 2020, I was pleased to have drying moorings on two sides. I bought my Nimbus back from France in the same year. While I sorted out the house, I kept my Nimbus, *Let's Go*, in a nearby dry stack. I also got a small boat to use around Chichester harbour.

But in the summer of 2022, while I was storm-bound in St Peter Port in Guernsey, en route to Brittany, I had a lightbulb moment. The mooring on the side of the house had two posts 3m from the wall. A boat like a Rhéa could easily dry out between the posts and the wall.

As we went around Brittany, I looked at several Rhéas in the marinas and even contacted Rhéa to see if they had one I could see. Sadly, they didn't, so it was back to Blighty empty-handed. But after the holiday, I thought about it some more. I posted on the Nimbus owners' forum and contacted Offshore Powerboats to see if there was a Nimbus that could dry out safely, but there wasn't. I looked at various other boats such as a Greenline, Aquador and Seaward but none worked for me. Then the insurance and drystack renewal arrived in the same week and the idea of a change became even more compelling. Is there one boat that will dry out, while fulfilling the needs for my wife, Máire, and me?

One day, I went out in my little boat and moored up on the Town Quay in the centre of

Lymington. I walked to Lymington Marina and after visiting the chandler, I walked back to the town along the coast route. As I did so, I noticed there was a Mitchell 28 Classique for sale, and when the broker showed me around, I decided that this was exactly what I needed. Sadly, an offer had already been made and accepted, but when the broker called me three days later to say that the sale had fallen through, I left him in no doubt about my interest.

I hadn't told Máire anything about this yet so I needed to seek her opinion. On a Saturday morning, we went from Emsworth to Lymington to enjoy the town's fabulous Saturday market. On the way, I told her about the boat and, to my surprise, she agreed that it could really work. It was longer than the Seaward 25, our first motorboat, but it still had the comfort (including a proper indoor shower) that we had seen in our larger boats. The deal was done and the broker agreed to sell our Nimbus 365.

### NIMBUS V MITCHELL

So what were the arguments for and against each boat? The time and cost for maintenance were big factors. Having a boat next to our previous house had been a lifesaver during lockdown, as I was able to get loads of fun little jobs done on it while the Nimbus was locked up and inaccessible. And while going out on the boat needed careful planning to get the tides right, that in itself became quite enjoyable, particularly when Máire bought me a tide

**NIMBUS:** *Let's Go* was beautiful but costly to berth and run



**MITCHELL:** The new boat can dry out next to Gilbert's house



clock for Christmas. Then there's the saving on mooring fees. It cost me nearly £8,000 per year in drystack fees for the Nimbus, compared to £19 to rent the patch of mud near my house from Chichester Harbour Conservancy. A major service for the Nimbus's Volvo (435hp) is cheaper (just) than the Mitchell's Yanmars (125hp each), purely because the Nimbus is a single-engine



boat and the Mitchell has twins. But depreciation is a more significant factor. As a beautifully built and quite highly sought after Nordic boat, the Nimbus experiences less dramatic depreciation than most, but after four years, it still lost around £90,000 on the new price.

The other big difference is size. The Nimbus had much more space than the Mitchell with a second cabin and separate shower room rather than a wetroom. The cabins were also slightly larger. But then we asked ourselves whether the additional space was worth the extra money. We are both getting older and, given that we're now unlikely to be away for months at a time, we thought it probably wasn't. The grandchildren disagreed of course, as they loved the mid cabin on the Nimbus (or "the den" as they called it). But when they came down and had a tour of the boat they made some positive comments about how we might adapt the boat. Certainly, the inside of the Nimbus was much more lavishly fitted out but, on the plus side, we love the sensible rather than trendy fit-out on the Mitchell. It means I can finally stop worrying about all the beautiful woodwork and cushions sustaining damage! And the absence of teak on the Mitchell is wonderful. It means I can hose down or even pressure wash my decks to my heart's content.

**NIMBUS:** The old boat was much more lavish



**MITCHELL:** The practical interior means Gilbert doesn't have to fret about his grandchildren damaging the woodwork



It's everyone's dream to have their boat sitting next to the house



The temporary cockpit canopy will be replaced by a permanent one



## THE JOBS LIST

The Mitchell needed its electronics upgrading so I fitted a new radar, AIS and chart plotter. A cockpit tent is also needed and I have already installed the metalwork and made a temporary cover, which Máire is going to use as a template for a full cover in the future. The Mitchell also has to come out of the water to have its stern glands serviced.

Larger projects for the future include changing the green upholstery and investigating the Lightning range of Humphrey stabilisers to see if they will make a difference. I am also thinking of fitting a textured Finsulate film rather than an antifouling paint. But as things stand, with my finances under control and my boat sitting directly next to my house, my wife and I are very content that we've made the right choice.

The sensible interior is perfect for family fun

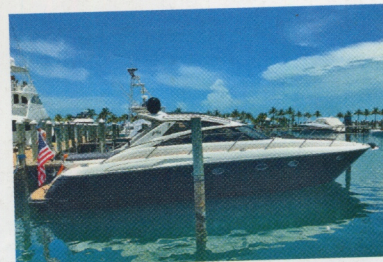
## OUR BOATS SOON TO BE FEATURED...



**AXOPAR 28 XC**  
*Fika, Porthmadog*  
Andrew Wilson-Bett recounts a life on the road and explains what to look for in the perfect trailer boat.



**MAREX 310 SC**  
*Offshore, Christchurch*  
Richard Hall visits the Marex factory for a catch up with the crew and a look at a potential upgrade.



**PRINCESS V48**  
*Privilege, Lake Erie*  
Elliott Maurice heads north for a summer of cruising on the epic waterways of the Great Lakes.