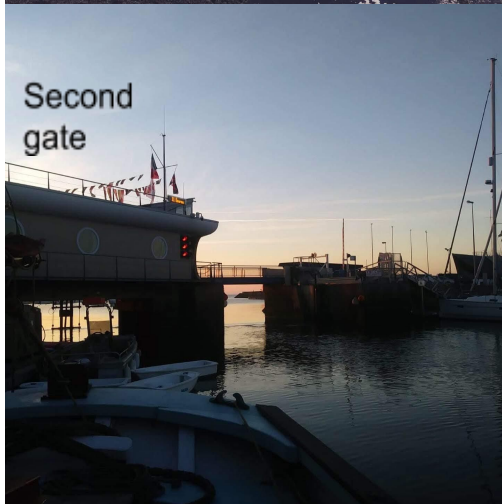


## June Blog

Back from a break and straight into Brixham heritage regatta and Binic cod festival cruise. Brixham was full to bursting with all sorts of heritage vessel from sloops to junks to trawlers and on the day it was a bit like dodgems trying not to hit other boats. Most of the time they'd get out of the way as it's a bit of a scare having 80 tons of unturnable boat bearing down on you at 6 knots - but there are always exceptions! And we did go 6 knots, steaming along in the Brixham trawler speed scale with a good wind, lots of sails up, the working rig (mizzen, main, staysail and jib) plus both topsails when going upwind.



Downwind we took down the staysail to replace it with the tow foresail (a much wider sail that is sheeted in aft of the forward shrouds) and also put up the mizzen staysail. We had guests onboard and by the end of the race we were pretty slick, like a well-oiled machine, tacking, gybing, taking down and putting up sails all came like second nature. Unfortunately we came last. The other Brixham trawlers didn't have guests onboard and were too competitive for their own good and I strongly suspect sabotage!

We headed off to Brittany the day after the race and pottered around Treguier, Lezardrieux and a beautiful little anchorage to the North of Sainte-Quay (the locals were lovely, I don't think they'd had tourists for a couple of decades) where we met up with Iris, another Brixham trawler (locals now fainted in shock) and made our way to Binic (locals crying and waving handkerchiefs). To get into Binic, you first have to have a look at the tides as at low water there is no water, none, for about half a mile, and at high water there is a bit of water but not enough, and at high water springs there is just about enough water. Then there's the first gate which is about 100m wide and then the second gate which is about 10m wide, tricky when Provident is 5.5m wide. On top of this, add about 50 heritage yachts and vessels

floating around, a French harbourmaster who speaks with an outrageous accent which is almost worse than just speaking French and about 1000 people lining the dock watching your every move. Sounds exciting! Thankfully everything went to plan, or at least to plan B or C (I swear on a boat like Provi you need at least plans A to Z in case the wind changes or she just decides she doesn't want to go that way for no reason).





The festival was full of little stalls and French fishermen, some of whom didn't talk at all, others talked too much. The crew were invited to a hall for a delicious dinner and entertainment with all the other heritage boat crews, the entertainment included lots of sea shanties and Breton dancing - holding hands in a circle and walking around slowly to music, hopefully in time (though I did get critiqued for my style, blame it on the free wine). We spent a few days in Binic enjoying the festival, the sun

and doing some minor repairs to the boat. I also went sailing on Iris, lug rigged, amazing how much higher she could angle to the wind and how much easier the rig is to handle. We had a great sail back to Brixham with an amazing sunset, one of the many perks of the job seeing the sun set every day.

After this cruise followed three sail training cruises: the first with 13-15 year olds from a school specialising in ADHD and autism; the second with 14-15 year olds, half from an environmental and land-based school and half from a comprehensive school with self-esteem issues; the third with a group of Care leavers, 18-20 year olds who had been struggling with life outside Care. There was a huge difference in ability and competence between the groups and by the end one group ran the entire boat by themselves whereas with another group it was enough to get a hold of the basics of making fast. Each cruise really had to be tailored to the group and what they could handle.

