

Poole Harbour Trip – Alice Semenenko



Ali and I decided to head down to Poole harbour to take advantage of the safety of the harbour, large sailing area and the good weather. We were like a well-oiled machine this time around, knowing more or less what to expect; the journey down and loading up Labrum of Love went all very smoothly.

We set sail on Friday afternoon and were desperate for a swim as we were so hot. We anchored off a small beach and had a lovely refreshing swim, followed by some lunch, in the most idyllic spot.



This trip was round 2 at an attempt to sleep aboard, this time with a tent. We had booked a campsite on Brownsea island as an insurance policy but we hadn't plotted our route on the chart prior to setting off and by the time it was too late, we realised we wouldn't actually be able to make it due to the tides! There was quite a lot of splash from the sea so this made using the paper chart incompatible - perhaps an indoor chart table would be nice. So that was it, we were sleeping aboard for the night. We cooked some Uncle Bens rice for supper and decided on a suitable location to anchor for the night. This was a bit tricky given how shallow Poole harbour is, especially on a spring tide. We settled on a place just out of the Wych channel, but it did mean a 5am alarm to depth check using the centre board. Maybe next time, the dinghy cruisers have got a depth sounder I can borrow?! We saw the most beautiful sunset and bedded down for the night. Everything went remarkably well and the Mirror was really rather comfortable, the only thing we were missing was an anchor light.

The next day we finally made it to Brownsea island and had a stroll around and a water refill. We then continued exploring the harbour and anchored at Goathorn point for the afternoon.



The second night, we sailed to Shipstall point and were hoping to use a mooring to stay the night. However this would have meant that we would be on the boat for 18 hours and I do love sailing but not that much. We decided to camp on the beach but this would mean that Labrum would be beached when the tide went out - I reluctantly agreed given the fragility of a wooden boat, I didn't want to add anymore jobs to the list.

Anyway, we had a nice evening ashore, and explored the RSPB Arne nature reserve while we watched the sun set. The next morning, wanting to be considerate wild campers we dragged ourselves out of bed early and waited for the tide to come in - a thoroughly enjoyable way to spend a Sunday morning. We made it back to the boat and were able to continue our lazy morning whilst we waited for the wind to fill in.

We had time for a further little exploration down to Rockley where I learnt to sail and felt proud at how far I had come. I remember getting very frustrated not understanding that I was sat head to wind!

All in all it was a very successful trip and a fabulous way to spend the weekend. Thanks to all those who helped us, the advice from the dinghy cruisers with a special mention to Phil for the anchor and fenders again. Matt for the chart and to Mum for lending us the car.