



Boat Building Academy
Lyme Regis

FRIENDS OF THE BOAT BUILDING ACADEMY

Newsletter - Spring 2025



*Hello and welcome to the Spring edition of the BBA newsletter!
Please read on to find out what's been happening in the past few months.
I Hope to see many of you for our launch day on Thursday 26th June.
Best Wishes,
Will Reed
Director and co-chair of trustees*

Limited spaces on our courses starting in September

- Limited spaces remain for our 40-week boat building and 12-week furniture making courses, both starting September 2025. It's the perfect chance to learn hands-on skills, launch a new career, or fulfil a lifelong ambition.



- The **September 2024 boat building class** are in the final stretch, working hard on finishing their boats—an 18' carvel diesel launch, a restored 12' Firefly dinghy, and two traditional clinker dinghies (14' and 12'). Join us on launch day, 26th June at 0830 to celebrate their hard work and cheer them on!



- The **February 2025 boat building class** has been refining their skills in painting, marine systems, planking, and sailmaking. After the June launch, they'll move into the main workshop to begin building their own boats—an exciting process you'll be able to witness firsthand as a student on our September 2025 boat building course.

- In April, the **January 12-week furniture making class** completed their final project pieces, which were displayed alongside the cabinets, tables, and tote boxes they crafted earlier in the course. It was fantastic to see so many people appreciating the unique and beautifully made furniture our students created.

- The **May 12-week furniture making class** has been busy practicing joinery, dovetails, and steam bending, and they've now started making their tote boxes. Using these skills, they'll go on to build their cabinets and tables before crafting their self-designed final pieces. Everyone is invited to view their work at the furniture exhibition on the 1st of August.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Boat Launch
0830 26 June 2025

Thames Traditional
18-20 July 2025

Furniture Exhibition
1530-1800 1 August 2025

Whitstable harbour & boat show
9 August 2025

UPCOMING COURSES

40 week Boat Building
1 September 2025 - 26 June 2026
16 February - 4 December 2026

12 week Furniture Making
22 September - 12 Dec 2025
5 January - 27 April 2026
11 May - 31 July 2026

**2025 SHORT COURSE PROGRAMME
AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE**

WWW.BOATBUILDINGACADEMY.COM

FOLLOW OUR SOCIALS



If you are interested in any of our courses and want to know more or visit the academy and have a tour, please contact us by phone, email or via the website.

www.boatbuildingacademy.com



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Matthew Law

We are all at the BBA deeply saddened by the passing of Matthew in April following complications from heart surgery.

Matthew's wisdom, kindness, humour, and leadership touched everyone he met. He taught nearly 300 boat building students and inspired countless more through short courses, leaving a lasting impact on the BBA and all who knew him.

His presence, laughter, and generosity made the BBA a brighter place. We'll miss him dearly and remember him always.



Case Studies



BBA graduate Luke Browne is a standout example of where the 40-week course can lead. After joining the BBA instead of university, Luke built a canoe, found his passion, and launched a global boatbuilding career—from Spirit Yachts in the UK to superyacht refits in Vancouver.

His journey has included roles in the Caribbean, Gloucester, and Southampton, building a wealth of hands-on experience. The skills he gained at the BBA laid the foundation, and now, working in Canada, he's even hired five fellow BBA graduates.

Luke plans to return to the UK to start his own boatbuilding business in Plymouth—hoping to employ more BBA alumni. His advice to anyone considering the course: "Go for it. It was one of the best things I've ever done."

Recent and upcoming Summer events

- It was great to see so many faces at our open day on the 3rd of May and let you all see inside the academy.
- In May, Will & Sara Stirling from Stirling and Son gave a thrilling talk 'Wood and Ice' about their boatyards and sailing the Northwest passage. Be sure to come along for Dermot Doynne's (Whitney Sawmill manager) talk in October.
- Our September 2024 students boat launch is on 26th June at 08:30.
- The Boat Building Academy will be at the Thames Traditional Boat Show on 18-20 July with our students taking part in the sail by!
- Join us at the Whitstable Harbour and Boat Show on 9th August, where we'll be showcasing outstanding student made work.

www.boatbuildingacademy.com