



## Melissa and Simon with Amelie (15) and Louis (12)

“Now for the Portland dwellers! To break tradition, there has actually been some work done on the Portland residence. Finally windows are in - and in light of the fact it's important not to rush these things, a new Waszp foiling dinghy was purchased with the bathroom funds - which had provided much greater entertainment especially during the summer months! Who knows, next year there could be more progress - I'd not get too excited however!

After last year's lockdown Christmas (with postponed skiing trip) time was spent cycling around the island, having a Boxing Day sailing series - Louis claims to be the winner - set the tone for the year.



**Melissa's** year started with her school, (she's the head) Atlantic Academy, achieving their first long awaited Ofsted visit, an exciting, and very stressful event, with the amazing result of a Good. This set the tone of a hardworking and busy year which sees the school continue to grow. Alongside work life, Melissa has spent some much deserved time on the water, sailing the Waszp (when the children give her time) and learning to wind foil. Frustratingly this appears to be a much easier challenge when you are 20 years younger - it's been fun, but hard work.

**Simon's** business continues to run from strength to strength - but more excitingly than this, the old Yellow trimaran (now blue) might actually be close to launching. As a labour of much restorative love, there are plans for many voyages in the new year, she will be a much cherished vessel - and apparently also has an amazing IRC rating so no doubt will soon be raced! Simon's been competing in the foiling Moth and was this year crowned as National Champion. None of these events however beat racing **Aina**, the Brightlingsea One Design for Pyefleet Week this year! (see right)

**Amelie** - now 15 and in Year 11 is looking at next steps post GCSEs. With college applications in, there appears to be a hard Google search trend on 'easier A-Levels to pass' we shall see what



August brings. Sailing is clearly her passion and a direction she is hoping to take. 2022 has seen her compete in the 29er Europeans in Denmark, the 29er Worlds in Spain and most weekends either travelling to sailing venues or competing on home waters as an active member of the 29er Youth Squad. Alongside the 29er sailing, she spends time racing the Waszp, learning to wing foil - much easier than Mum and occasionally sailing the FX

with Dad and friends. It's fair to say she's living her best life!

Also along that 'Best life' trend, **Louis** has had a smashing year. He continues to flourish at school and is working hard (possibly harder than his sister in year 11!). Louis continues to sail the Feva with crewmate Nicola and has this year competed in the World Championships in Portland. He's an active member of the Regional Sailing squad and has a great selection of mates he sees and races against every weekend. This year Louis was selected as part of the Sail GP Inspire program in Plymouth which saw him competing against the epic Sail GP boats - it was an Amazing Experience! Alongside the Feva, Louis has also competed in his newly acquired Tera, is actively involved in the Windsurfing life in Weymouth and has recently also learnt to foil in the Waszp.



It's definitely been a busy year with everyone working hard or afloat - feels like we've all got the balance pretty spot on!" (Grandad writes: it rather does doesn't it!)

### **Letty, Josie and Elodie.**

"Life in Brightlingsea continues to fly by. Letty is filling her time with multiple beach schools ([beachschool.org](http://beachschool.org)) for school kids, pre schoolers and also now for "old folk", alongside her national work with Time and Tide Bells, (follow the link <https://timeandtidebell.org/> it's fascinating stuff) and also throwing fresh ideas into some rather exciting schools elsewhere in the world - including on the banks of the Amazon in Colombia for indigenous kids; just like Brightlingsea beach school (but with anacondas, piranhas, etc)



Josie and Elodie have a firm gang of lovely fellow sailing friends who they play with all spring summer and autumn in and on the water. Josie completed in the Oppie Summer Championship and did well in the regatta fleet, despite the course being laid so far out into the North

Sea that BREXIT looked likely to be a problem! School is still leaping ahead (and they are enjoying being taught by their mum on outdoor days). Josie remains a Harry Potter obsessed water baby, whilst Elodie maintains she will be a dancer like her (something removed) cousin. We enjoyed a visit to Harry Potter World in Elstree of course! It is an amazing attraction.

Shell Cottage, the "new" house, is moving forwards: air source heat pump, underfloor heating, solar panels, massive insulation and all. Rather excitingly, it now looks like an actual house so in the next few newsletters (we have learned not to over promise given the Heppell renovation history!), nanny and grandad may find a return to freedom once the hurricane of two pesky small people (and their mum) move next door! (Grandad comments: but we love their mischief and company). If you frequent Instagram then search for [bungalow\\_renovation\\_2019](https://www.instagram.com/bungalow_renovation_2019) ).



Letty is also rather proud that she managed to sea swim three times a week, all through the year, - no wetsuit, just energetic movement and still swimming this week as you read these words; she can confirm that it takes a touch of madness but is worth it for the far less achy back!

**Disney holiday** back at Easter was amazing with **Nanny, Grandad, Louis, Elodie, Josie** and **Letty**. The girls got to meet an array of princesses and characters, but were most excited by... well... all of it. They loved the details - and the amazing drinks!



Louis was absorbed by Star Wars - droid making and so much more. Big memories include Josie screaming on the Avatar ride that "this is the best day of my life!" And Elodie shrieking with joy on the Dwarfs' Mine Train. Grandad and Louis disappearing underground in Harry Potter land. It was unremitting joy and fun! The Florida beach animals and shark spotting was pretty epic, too as we calmed down at the beach for the trip home (and Grandad left for Colombia)!



### Carole and Stephen

...still live at The Anchorage which is quite near to being finished - they moved here in 1987. Letty's two little girls (now 6 and 9) are growing up, and indeed have grown up delightfully here over the last 6 years, so there is now a steady stream of their friends and shipmates passing through most weeks. So many highlights as the piano playing, dancing, MarioKarting and general fun fill the shoreside days whilst Optimist racing, Mirror racing



and general pirating fill the on-the-water hours.

Stephen's work is crazy busy, he's on the board of an NHS Trust too these days as well as

the Spanish work. He had a few health issues - a new hip when he fell off a ladder into a skip, for example). Carole continues to keep the whole home running somehow and does bits of work too \_ in all another blissful fun exhausting year. Hope to see more of you all as we maybe come out of COVID?



Meantime, keep safe everyone. Happy Christmas and a jolly New Year too.



# HAPPY CHRISTMAS 2022

**Christmas Newsletter 2022 from all of us in Brightlingsea, Portland and Brighton,  
to all of you, everywhere, with a very happy and festive season's greeting.  
The Anchorage, George Avenue, Brightlingsea, Essex. CO7 0NE [www.heppell.net/christmas](http://www.heppell.net/christmas)  
page 5 of 5**