

Guidance on using

HROA FACEBOOK GROUPS

At the time of writing – autumn 2014 – we have over 90 members of the Facebook group, 'HROA Cruising', and it is proving to be an extremely popular and simple way of keeping in touch while away sailing. However, some members have experienced difficulty viewing pictures and other large files while using a weak Wi-Fi connection. Similarly, if connected via a cellular network, large downloads can become quite expensive.

We have therefore created a new group, 'HROA Chat', which may be used for sharing your photos and videos, commenting on the weather and generally sharing your thoughts with other members.

These two Facebook groups have very different purposes, and below is some guidance on how to get the best out of them.

Please note that neither group is a substitute for the forums on the HROA website. These are available to all members while the Facebook groups are only accessible by members who have specifically asked to join them.

Also, don't ignore our magazine The Blue Line! Many HROA members do not use Facebook, so all contributions for wider publication should still be sent to the magazine Editor as usual.

HROA CRUISING

This group has two objectives:

- a) to enable you to alert other HROA members about port closures, marina alterations and other useful navigational news which could affect their cruising plans;
- b) to advertise your whereabouts and intentions while cruising in order to encourage and arrange informal meetings between members.

Restrictions

For the reasons stated above, this group should not be used for sharing pictures of sunsets, playful dolphins or huge waves. Indeed, photographs should be restricted to those which are of purely navigational interest – a new marina entrance, perhaps.

You are asked, therefore, to keep your posts – and replies - short and relevant. Unless you have a question or are responding to an opportunity to meet other HROA members, there is probably no need to reply at all.

HROA CHAT

This group is for the general exchange of views, sharing photos, videos etc. It is more akin to a typical Facebook page where (almost) anything goes. But only those members who have joined the group will be able to read and comment on your posts.

Confidentiality

Some members who monitor these groups may not wish their current location to be known by others. So please do not identify other members or their boat names in your posts unless you see that they have already posted their position or you have their express permission to do so.

Joining the groups

If you already have a Facebook account, search for 'HROA Cruising' and/or 'HROA Chat' and ask to become a member of the group. The group Administrators (currently Andy Du Port (*Kudu*) for HROA Cruising and Tim Bishop (*Minke II*) for HROA Chat) will check the sites regularly for requests to join and, having verified your membership of the HROA, will sign you up.

You do not need to re-apply to join HROA Cruising if you are already signed up to that group.

If you don't have a Facebook account, create one by following the instructions on the homepage (<http://www.facebook.com>). This is a very simple and quick process; all you need is an email address.

If you have any questions, email Andy at kaladup@tiscali.co.uk or Tim at comms@hroa.co.uk.

Security

You may, understandably, be concerned about the confidentiality of joining groups such as these; no-one wants to broadcast the fact that they are away from home or receive undesirable messages. Both are 'closed' groups which means that only members of the groups can read the posts within them, and only members of the HROA will be allowed to join them. As stated above, your presence in any particular harbour or area will not be promulgated by other members without your implicit permission.