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MARINE SURVEYOR

REPORT OF A CONDITION SURVEY CARRIED OUT ON

Pecheur, 1971 Parkstone Bay Cruiser

17 July 2025, ashore in Bournemouth, Dorset UK

MARINE SURVEY ASSOCIATES
Yacht and Small Craft Surveyors

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A GENERAL NOTES

The following survey was carried out ashore in Bournemouth, Dorset, on 17 July 2025 for the owner Tom Rose, to ascertain the condition of his boat *Pecheur*. There is no liability to anyone other than the owner, and this survey is intended as a feasibility study into rebuilding *Pecheur* rather than a survey for someone intending to use the boat in its current state.

Scope

The survey was carried out to assess the structural and material condition of the vessel. Where equipment was tested this is detailed in the text, although in this instance, existing gear is minimal and will mostly be discarded as part of a rebuild.

Limitations

Parts of the vessel that were covered, unexposed or inaccessible due to fixed panels, mouldings, etc were not examined, and cannot be said to be free from defects other than where specified. The boat was seen ashore and on a trailer, so watertightness could not be verified.

No fittings or fastenings were removed for examination other than where specified. Note it is not possible to detect some latent and hidden defects without destructive testing which is not possible without the owner's consent.

Conditions

Conditions were sunny and dry, air temperature 28°c, humidity 30%. These conditions are good for moisture meter readings.

B SUMMARY OF CONDITION AND SUITABILITY FOR RESTORATION

Pecheur is a c1971 Parkstone Bay Cruiser 21 cruiser, one of the last (if not *the* last) example built in timber by FC Mitchell of Poole, who built quite a number of these in the post-war period, including a run of production in glass after making the switch from wood in the early 1970s. She's just under 21ft (6.4m), traditionally built in mahogany carvel planks on steamed oak ribs, with a diesel in a box in the cockpit, transom-hung rudder and small cabin. The hull is of the round bilge, displacement sort with small bilge keels (or 'bilge fins') each side of the centreline, near the turn of the bilge, to provide some directional stability and roll damping. The yard offered three main variations on this theme, moving progressively from 'bigger cockpit, smaller cabin' to its inverse. These were: the Sea Horse (one cabin window each side), the Sea Fisher (two windows each side) and the Sea Cruiser (three cabins each side). They also came with or without a raised doghouse, offering enhanced shelter (with) or better looks (without). *Pecheur* is a Sea Fisher without doghouse, probably the best compromise for today, when buying a classic is as much an aesthetic decision as anything else. For the size, she offers a good-sized cockpit to seat perhaps six for family days out, picnicking, fishing and so on, and the cabin has a proper heads compartment and space for a decent vee–berth, although any restoring owner will likely rethink the accommodation as part of the process.

The current owner bought *Pecheur* in January 2025 with the aim of restoration, after the boat sat for some time afloat, but uncared for, in Poole Harbour. Lack of covered space and an imminent new addition to the owner's family now force the sale. *Pecheur* needs a very serious rebuild before she can be refloated. Most of the frames and bilge doublers are either cracked or rotten, and nearly all the planking above the waterline needs replacing, along with the cabin trunk, interior and cockpit. To put it bluntly, everything above the waterline needs renewing, and possibly some of the structure below the waterline too. The good news is that the shape is still there, offering relatively easy rebuild, bit by bit, and a sound template for any future work. The engine, a two-cylinder, c20hp Bukh, needs a service and new alternator, but essentially runs well. Finally, the owner spent £3,000 on a twin-axle, braked trailer on which the boat sits. This is in good condition. The owner would like to recover the cost of the trailer and a small consideration for the engine. The boat itself, therefore, is essentially a free project, and while no one would suggest that *Pecheur* is of great historic importance or a ticket to joining the regattas of the world, she has good looks and unimpeachable functionality for exploring harbours and rivers very economically and in traditional style, albeit only at hull speed.

Given that the price of having a new version of this built would be prohibitive, the rebuild of *Pecheur* could be a viable project for someone with the time, ability and some covered space, or the willingness to have the boat rebuilt at a boatyard: these options for *Pecheur*'s future are discussed in the conclusion of this report.

C VESSEL DATA

Dimensions and specs from various sources, not measured on the day

DESIGN AND BUILD	FC Mitchell of Poole, Dorset
YEAR OF BUILD	c1971
LOA	21ft (6.4m)
BEAM	7ft 3in (2.2m)
DRAFT	c2ft 8in (0.8m)
DISPLACEMENT	None listed: probably 1.5 – 2 tonnes
ENGINE	Bukh two-cylinder diesel, raw-water cooled, c20hp
HULL NUMBER	N/A
REGISTRATION	N/A

D HULL

D1 Planking, rails and bilge keels

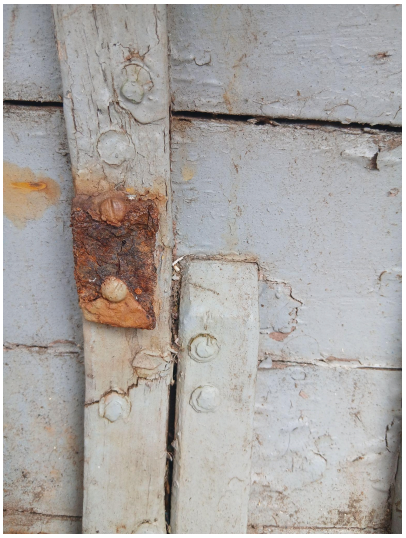
The hull of *Pecheur* is traditionally planked in a single layer of carvel, with 15 planks each side. These are in timber of the mahogany family and 19mm in thickness. The planks are fastened by rivets to the internal members. The planking is rotten above the waterline on both sides, particularly the port side, as evidenced by extensive hammer sounding and spike testing. There is also a square hole in the port side (pictured above) where it is thought the boat has suffered some damage in the past and been crudely re-patched, but given that all planking above the waterline will have to be replaced anyway, the point is moot.

The planking below the waterline is in considerably better shape, and at the very least would serve to hold the boat's shape while the planking above is replaced plank by plank. The true state of the planking below the water will only become fully apparent once work is underway, but it's likely much of it will be kept. The small bilge keels (for tracking and damping rather than taking the ground) showed some signs of decay, as did the half-length rails halfway up the freeboard on each side towards the stern. These should all be replaced.

D2 Centreline

The boat's internal skeleton is made up of an internal hog (150mm wide by 15mm deep, pictured left), atop a thin, shallow, full-length timber keel. There are small spots of softness in the hog, and it is likely that some new sections will need to be scarphed in; most of the hog, however, sounded well under hammer sounding. The stem was hammer sounded and showed no signs of decay, although the timber has become somewhat denatured after years of exposure to the elements without sufficient coating. At least partial stem replacement should be undertaken. The inner face of the stem (or 'apron') could be seen above the anchor locker and no sign of decay was found. The external keel showed no obvious sign of decay, but its underside was impossible to access, due to the boat's position low to the ground on its road trailer.

D3 Transverse stiffening (floors, ribs and bulkheads)



The boat is stiffened by steamed-oak ribs of 30mm width and 17mm depth on 165mm centres. Each of these is supported by a 40mm x 17mm doubler or 'sister rib' running from outboard of the hog to just above the turn of the bilge. Sister ribs or frames are usually retrofitted to return strength that was lost to a crack in the original member, but given the ubiquity of them in this boat, it's possible they are from the original build. Additionally, there are solid timber floors of 60mm width and 150mm depth running the length of the boat on 720mm centres. By and large, this is typical construction for a vessel this size. Nearly all ribs are either cracked or rotten, and a complete reframe will be needed. There is a full-width bulkhead near the transom, forming the forward end of the lazarette; the main bulkhead that forms the aft end of the cabin; and one further partial bulkhead near the bows. All are in 10mm plywood and should be replaced as a matter of course.

D4 **Beamshelf, stringer, beams and knees**

There are two principal longitudinal stiffening members: a beamshelf of 27mm width and 80mm depth running the perimeter of the hull just below deck level and a stringer of similar dimension running the perimeter of the boat near the turn of the bilge. Both these important members are soft, particularly towards the join with the transom, where exposed end grain has allowed the ingress of water. They will need replacing in their entirety, along with most of the rest of the vessel above the waterline. The transom's junction with the hog is reinforced by a transom knee of 70mm width (pictured) which hammer-sounded well, showing no apparent decay. The aft quarter knees in 50mm-wide timber were similarly sound, but these are perhaps moot points given that the scale of any rebuild will prompt their replacement. Photo below shows a section of the starboard stringer, as seen looking forward from the aft of the cabin.

D5 **Deck and supporting structures**

The deck, in plywood, along with its associated structures (deck beams and carlins) will need replacing in its entirety, along with much of the rest of the boat above the waterline, as a result of the rest of the rebuild.

E COCKPIT

The cockpit contains a small lazarette, two traditional upright mooring cleats in solid timber, and seating formed of 10mm-thick plywood on solid wood carcassing, all of which would be replaced as part of a rebuild. The flip-down helm seat in mahogany is in serviceable condition with a big split that needs some filling, but it's perhaps worth saving. Similarly, the boxing around the engine (see photo above) and the door to the cabin could perhaps be cleaned up and re-used, given that it's likely the same engine will be returning to the same position after rebuild.

F CABIN

This is formed of mahogany sides and front, with a plywood coachroof, the whole structure reinforced by solid wood quadrant pieces, carlins and deckbeams. There is a single lifting hatch. Condition here is variable, but the entire cabin trunk needs removal and dismantling to refinish, and at that stage, the most likely course of action will be to replicate most material before reinstating. The cabin trunk is of a size and shape that has held its appeal well, so this is potentially a relatively straightforward task, using the original as template. NB: the cabin sides run continuously into the cockpit coamings. There is a distinct line separating two different shades, but this is not evidence of a retrofit: it is simply uneven UV bleaching caused by prolonged periods under a cockpit cover. These two sizeable members (one each side) might be salvageable with a strip and refinish.

G RUDDER AND STEERING

The wooden rudder was off the boat at the time of inspection, but the owner claims it is in good condition. It is transom hung, and controlled by an oil-filled hydraulic ram controlled from the steering wheel. The steering linkage was tested and found to be working smoothly and is possibly worth saving for the restored vessel. The three-bladed propeller is fixed to the end of a stainless steel, half-inch (25mm) propeller shaft. The condition of prop and shaft are fair, but it's assumed replacement of both will be part of any restoration.

H ENGINE, BATTERY AND BILGE PUMPS

The engine (Bukh diesel, two-cylinder, raw-water cooled) sits on solid engine beds of 60mm-thick solid timber and drives a fixed, three-bladed propeller on a shaft that exits the boat through a shaft log running through the aft deadwood. It was run up to operating temperature, and seen working in forward and reverse. The alternator output was 11.6v, not enough to charge the two batteries (one crank battery and one leisure battery installed under the starboard cockpit seating). The engine runs cleanly, but the output of raw water through the wet exhaust seemed very low, implying the need for impeller replacement. The engine could do with a service and overhaul, including impeller, and a new alternator, but this is a sturdy, quality item that warrants

the expenditure and effort. Given that any restoration will entail removal of the engine, and given the very poor condition of the raw-water strainer and wet exhaust system, it will be necessary to fit a new exhaust system and raw water strainer as well as fuel and oil filters for the engine, and new, flexible rubber engine mounts. A manual Whale Gusher bilge pump and electric bilge pump on a float switch were both tested as working and should be retained or refitting after restoration. NB: in its current state, running of the engine should only be for short periods and under close supervision, as the severely corroded and perished exhaust hose poses a serious risk of carbon monoxide leakage.

I CONCLUSION

A decade or two ago, there would have been little interest in restoring a boat like *Pecheur*. Times have changed. Motorboats have been gaining in popularity steadily, and the bar for what is considered worthy of restoration has been steadily lowered, or at least reinterpreted in favour of small and local over glamorous and international. Unlike yesteryear, when boating was a mostly male activity and the onus was on performance, today's owners are increasingly looking for boats with lower carbon footprints to enjoy with their families for days out and perhaps the occasional overnight. This is a trend that has been reflected in boatbuilding worldwide. *Pecheur*, although in very degraded condition, is still true to her shape, and offers the potential for the sort of safe, stable pottering with family and friends that so many are looking for. Her likely cruising speed of just 5 or 6 knots will be, for many, more than offset by an understressed, simple diesel installation that will sip perhaps just a couple of litres of diesel per hour while offering plenty of outside space for picnicking or fishing, with a decent vee berth below for two to overnight in comfort, and the possibility of two more on the cockpit sole under an awning in warmer months. The simplicity of *Pecheur*'s drivetrain (engine and gearbox combined, driving a fixed prop on a shaft running through a shaftlog with everything easily accessible under the cockpit sole) is also of some appeal. Finally, there is the heritage and appearance. *Pecheur*, with her traditional form and the handsome sweep of the cabin trunk to cockpit coaming in solid timber, will never go out of fashion, and there are always owners who want a boat rooted in a time and place, a boat with a bit of local history.

The main question here is one of cost. *Pecheur* is available for the price of little more than the value of her trailer, but the true cost will be in her rebuild. There are essentially two approaches to this: the DIY method, which will be the more economical, but will take, as well as money, some skill, a covered workshop and suitable tools. The second option is to have her rebuilt at a boatyard. One boatyard quoted as little as £10,000 for the work, but costs on these projects often overrun, as more problems are revealed as the boat is dismantled; or, just as frequently, as the owner's ambition for the project grows. It would be safe to be ready to double, or even triple, that sum, but the end product would be a boat as good as a newly-built example. A newly built boat of similar style would cost in the region of £100,000 or more. .

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