

Sustainability in yachting

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Sustainability Musings by Gemma, @SeastainableYachting

The world is a complex, interconnected place and it is in a constant flux of change. It is also changing at a terrifying rate. From global warming, deforestation, water security, pollution, waste, biodiversity loss, ocean acidification, soil erosion to dwindling resources – sorry, were you reading this for good news?

The last few years have felt like these issues have gone from being 'some day' to something that we are now seeing the impacts of every single day. They are so big and complex, I find myself thinking surely someone has got to fix it from the top? How can, I, little old me, be expected to change anything?

I imagine that is how you also feel? But amongst this pending doom is something we should all cling to – hope. Hope that we can turn it around.

It's true, we can turn it around. Times are changing, sure, maybe too slowly, but change is happening. Even in the process of typing this, there are new eco-friendly products in development, shipyards breaking through sustainable. Technical advances and even crew buying their last pack of plastic water bottles. Whilst I certainly don't have the answers to fix the whole industry, what I do have is lots of ideas that will make a difference to our industry.

There are changes you can make without political agendas and without big businesses having to dig deep to find their conscience. I have actionable changes, just for you...

Introducing Seastainable Yachting

The industry is built upon a passion for the ocean, a drive to constantly improve and a commitment to please and offer the best to our clients. So, why on earth would we not want to protect its future?

Sustainability needs to be on the top of every agenda. Enter [Seastainable Yachting](#). This purpose driven platform was founded by me back in 2019, for more information check out this [interview](#). I have started this monthly column as a way of opening up the sustainability conversation even more.

Make a change

Making sustainable changes onboard can be overwhelming. Wondering if it really does make a difference? It does. I want you to use those feelings to fuel some active hope. Sitting and waiting isn't the solution to any problem. Doing something feels better than doing nothing, every time. Seastainable is about **doing**. Changing some of the things we do, we buy, changing the way we, as crew, run Superyachts.

But changing habits is hard work. Ask anyone that has tried to loose a few pounds or tried to stick to a new fitness regime. But also ask them how they succeeded – in small acts everyday. Making small changes builds into bigger shifts in social behaviour. Look at how quickly we all ditched plastic straws or stopped travelling in lockdown.

Small acts multiplied by millions will transform the world (and, more importantly, our industry) So, read on for my top tips to make changes today.

Top tips for making changes

- ***Get motivated:***

Find your 'why?', why you actually want to make changes?

Why you want your boat to be run more sustainably – if my introduction wasn't scary enough, please contact me for more information on why you should be wanting to make changes!

- ***Quick & easy does it:***

No-one will continue with anything if it isn't easy to start with. Look at what can be changed easily without too much upheaval and start with that.

- ***Don't run before you can walk:***

Similar to picking easy tasks. Start with one – do not go out with the mindset to change everything. When you put your sustainability goggles on believe me you will see everything differently and want to change everything there and then but you have to start with a means to continue.

- ***One step at a time:***

Yes being a 'zero waste' yacht would be amazing but, completely overwhelming. Imagine where you are at now and where 'zero' would be – I know without even setting foot onboard your yacht that's too much. So break it down into manageable milestones.

- ***Progress not perfection:***

Quite simply, all progress is progress. Don't beat yourself up about making it perfect, yet.

- ***Be realistic:***

You work onboard a yacht with a unique set of circumstances, things change. Sustainability is such a huge topic, pick specific goals you want to happen onboard first.

- ***Write it down:***

Accountability goes a long, long way. Display your changes and goals visually in the crew mess for everyone to see. I have some simple but effective downloadable [infographics](#).

- ***Don't do it alone:***

You have a team onboard for a reason, this is a whole crew activity, involve everyone in your proposed changes. You also have Seastainable, I founded the platform to help others make changes, get in touch.

- ***Set deadlines:***

Don't procrastinate. Set timelines on when you want things to happen, e.g. by the time we leave the yard we will be doing X instead of Y.

- ***Accept mistakes:***

Forgetting your reusable shopping bags doesn't make you a failure – think about what went wrong and why and give yourself a better chance next time.

What does our new future look like?

Lastly, I want to end these columns looking out into the

future and the wider world, bringing these thoughts back into our industry.

Since the Covid pandemic this phrase of 'new normal' is being thrown around a lot. How should the world make its comeback? Should we go back to the way things were? Have we realised we can change certain things in our lives that really weren't working out too well anyway?

What does our industry need to do for our 'new normal'?

- We need to clean up; clean up our workplace, the oceans
- We need to expand better; using the framework of circular economy
- We need to create a better industry; a fairer, equal, more diverse one
- We need to collaborate more; no one can prosper alone to solve these issues
- We need to embrace positive change; and to implement these changes throughout the industry

Thank you for reading, for additional information and resources please drop me an email or check out the [website](#).