



FROM LEFT: the first hull of the Arkosen 85, its construction phase; A render of the main deck; an open-plan area; a rendering of the interior of the yacht; the construction of the interior view of the forward part of the main deck.

## The Arkosen Way

As Jasper Smith visits the shipyard, he says the new vessels are "balancing yacht luxury with adventurous capabilities"

At the Düsseldorf Boat Show in January 2019, Jasper Smith introduced to the industry an adventure explorer yacht concept, the Arkosen 85, which is the first of the shipyard's vision to nearing completion with the second hull in the series. I went to visit the team at the vessels currently in production from Chief Operating Officer, what it is that makes it different.

Stopping off the ferry in East Cowes, entering to a cacophony of grinding and welding. Specialist metalworking is the core of this yard's heritage and sitting to the right of the shed was the aluminium hull of the first Arkosen 85, sparks flying as the welders forged on with their work. It is an exciting time here in Cowes. The first yacht for any new company is its symbol to the industry of what it is all about and it didn't take long to realise that this bold explorer is going to find its own niche. To our left, the upper superstructure, which comprises the wheelhouse and upper saloon, was being assembled, to be welded into place in only a few weeks.

Ewan Hind and Executive Director City Hicks were leading the tour, evidently

Arkosen Chief Operating Officer, Ewan Hind



enthusiastic about the progress of the two projects. During the introduction we were shown the new renders of the interior for the first unit penned by Design Unlimited. This yacht is owned in split partnership between a group of enthusiastic yachtsmen, a programme which is referred to by the team as an Adventure Syndicate.

This approach to ownership is one of the core pillars of the Arkosen philosophy, designed for families who are looking for an alternative to the traditional routes to yachting, recognising that aspects of ownership can be more taxing than enjoyable. Arkosen is offering the chance to own it's explorer yachts with the team handling the after-sales elements of operation, from crew management, to maintenance planning and expedition support. It is certainly a unique offering and Smith's support of it couldn't be more clearly demonstrated. In fact, in the week that this piece was written the UK government also revealed it's support of the shipyard, announcing it as one of the 158 companies that have converted their loans to equity through its Future Fund, aimed at supporting innovative UK-based companies.

While the ethos and philosophy of the shipyard may be unique, it is also its yachts which are worthy of note. At 27.3-metres, this first unit is set to offer long-range autonomy with a hybrid propulsion package (future owners have the choice between hybrid or traditional propulsion methods). Featuring exterior design from Humphreys Yacht Design, the all aluminium yacht accommodates as many as 10 guests between four ensuite staterooms on the lower deck. These are comprised of two twins, one VIP and a full beam owner's stateroom and office, with direct access to the engine room through the adjoining office.

Everything about this yacht is different. There is no main deck master suite at the bow. Here, that space is set aside for all of the guests, with a dedicated seating area to best enjoy the views from this coveted location. The vessel has been designed to allow the owner and guests autonomous voyaging, though there are cabins for two crew members. Should the owner wish to sail unaccompanied, the yacht has been tailored to that end. For Hind, these vessels "balance yacht luxury with

adventurous capabilities. They are capable, world voyaging yachts with a trans-oceanic range and that is at the core of the Arkosen philosophy."

While the interior layout is unique, the exterior design screams explorer. The large aft deck is an open space with room for a tender up to 5.5-metres, while a smaller crew tender and a host of toys are stowed in the lazarette/workshop to aft. There is a sturdy crane to port with a 1.2-tonne capacity as well as a pair of outriggers which can hold the tenders and toys and clear the aft deck for socialising and lounging.

Taking the steps down to the boarding platform, the lazarette door folds down transforming into an impressive swim platform, larger than what would be expected for a 27.3-metre vessel. Surprising is something that can be said for the yacht as a whole. Head height throughout the 125 GT yacht is at least 2-metres and with Ewan leading our tour, a man of well over 6-foot himself, it was clear that despite her size she is a comfortable boat no matter your height.

Recognising that technology may change in the years to come, Arkosen has ensured that the vessels can be easily maintained and upgraded by fitting panels above the engines that can be easily removed. This will allow the yacht's systems to be upgraded over time, without the need for drastic changes to the hull, and this sense of sustainability is imbued across everything the team here is working on.

An example of this is how the team has selected alternative sources for construction materials used aboard the yacht, with 70% of the hull made from recycled Njordal aluminium from Hyndal foundries in Norway. In fact, Arkosen is partly funded by one of Smith's ventures, a venture fund called Vaia Capital, that puts funding into research and development of sustainable solutions. This first Arkosen 85 will, in part, be dedicated to research and conservation through the Sea Time Pledge run through Arkosen's philanthropic arm. Many of the materials used onboard by Design Unlimited have been specially selected for their high proportion of recycled or sustainable components, such as soft furnishings include natural materials and some made from recycled plastic bottles.

Looking to the future, the shipyard are now in the assembly stage of the second unit and designs have been released for different models in the Arkosen fleet, including the Arkosen G and Arkosen 75. Ewan notes that they have been receiving a very high number of serious enquiries, now more than 400 from potential customers who are drawn to the adventurous mentality of the vessel. It will not be long before we see the Arkosen 85 afloat, with this first unit due to be launched in Summer 2022 and it doesn't seem to be a yacht that changes the mindset of what luxury yachting can