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# KEEP THE LAND TO STARBOARD

## David and Debbie

Managers Debbie and David are a real inspiration to many; they have the perfect work-life balance, they're building a strong Forever business that works for them, and they are no strangers to pursuing what brings them joy in life...

Debbie and David worked hard to get to where they are today and now these two incredible sixty-something-year-olds are living their dream and sailing the seas. Forever's Editor Kate Hodge caught up with Debbie to find out more about their Forever business and the nautical adventure it helped to bring to life.

### KH: How did your Forever journey begin?

**DP:** I first became involved in Forever in 2008 when a friend told me she had started her own business alongside her teaching career. At the time I was working part time in accounts, a job I had fallen into after a long career break bringing up my children, and the opportunity to be my own boss appealed to me. I loved the products, and I'd been struggling to get back to full fitness after two knee operations, but after discovering the Forever Aloe Vera Gel my interest in health and fitness soared.

### KH: How did your business progress?

**DP:** I built a large retail business and slowly started building my team, it took me a year and a half to get to Assistant Manager and sack my boss, and another three and a half years to get to Manager.

David and I have been keen sailors for over fifty years, mainly in dinghies, and at the end of 2009 we achieved our first major goal and bought our yacht 'Lacerta'. At this stage my focus on my Forever business dropped a little, but it was David wanting to take early retirement in May 2013 that spurred me on to reach Manager. A year later another major goal was reached and we upped sticks and moved from the Midlands to Torquay so that we could be closer to our boat. This move enabled us to achieve more goals and in 2015 we sailed around Britain – this took us six and a half months but we even managed to fit in a five-week sailing trip in the Caribbean on a friend's boat before we started! We could not have achieved any of this without the freedom and flexibility that being a Forever Business Owner gives us.

### KH: How did sailing around the UK for over six months impact your business?

**DP:** I wanted to ensure I maintained a level of business while we were away so the boat became my office as well as our home and means of transport. There were many challenges including where to get my own monthly order delivered to as we use so many of the products ourselves. Not many Forever orders are delivered by Harbour Master's launch! Phone and internet signals varied considerably; sometimes we had better signal when at sea, but I was then faced with the challenge of talking to customers while keeping wedged as the boat heeled and rolled in the waves. Nevertheless I was able to maintain my level of business and I even picked up some new customers en route. In fact, I had the pleasure of meeting a team member for the first time when we arrived in North Shields.

### KH: Did you use Forever products during your trip?

Absolutely! We continued to use our usual everyday personal care items (*Forever Freedom*, various supplements, *Forever Bright Toothgel*, *Aloe Ever-Shield Deodorant*, *Aloe Sunscreen*, *Aloe Lotion*, *Aloe Nourishing Serum*, *Aloe Deep Moisturizing Cream*, *Aloe Propolis Creme*, *Aloe Heat Lotion*, *Aloe MSM Gel*, *Aloe Vera Gelly*, *Aloe Lips* and *Forever Sun Lips*) but the *Forever Hand Sanitizer* was also very useful as our water supplies were limited. We also found *Forever Lite Ultra*, the *Fast Break Energy Bars* and the *Forever Pro X2* bars really useful as they could be consumed underway when the weather conditions made it impossible to cook.

### KH: What was your favourite aspect of the trip?

**DP:** There were many highlights on our trip: the wildlife, the scenery, fantastic sunrises and sunsets, making new friends and meeting old friends, some of whom we hadn't seen for forty years! The sense of achievement felt when we arrived into a new port after a hard and exhilarating sail was a special feeling, but being able to watch the sun go down in a quiet anchorage after a wet and windy sail is one of our best memories. We spent a lot of time in the Western Isles and intend to go back there, and The Orkneys were another place we would like to revisit, hopefully in better weather!

In September 2015 we arrived back in Torquay, greeted by a welcome party of our son, friends and a bottle of champagne. It took a while to sink in that the trip was over, though running water, flushing toilets and hot showers on demand were a welcome reminder of coming home!

### KH: What advice would you give an FBO who faces obstacles in their business?

**DP:** There have been times on our Forever journey when life and circumstances have been challenging (e.g. illness and family bereavements), but we've had to learn to just keep touching the business in some small way every day. Keep smiling and be grateful for what you do have, and never give up – Forever is always there for you.



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**Steve Pickles**

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