

# Westport

## Pilot 6 Open

The new Pilot 6 has been designed specifically to suit customer feedback – **Simon Everett** takes it for a cruise and shares his verdict.



The Pilot 6 manoeuvres very well and can clip along at a fair rate – 31 knots on the test!

The Westport range of fishing boats has been designed to provide safe and affordable family boating. The existing range of cuddy boats has been very well received, and the models have gained a reputation for their dryness and stability with higher-than-average build quality. You only have to look at the fittings, and where they are placed, to see that these boats are designed and built by people who know boating.

The new, open version of the Pilot 6 has come about due to customer feedback, demonstrating that this is a company that listens to its customers. But creating

a new model of boat isn't a cheap exercise. The design and development costs, along with subsequent tooling to produce the moulds, require significant investment so the finished product has to be right, or the whole exercise simply becomes a drain on the company.

### Simple Changes For The Better

The Pilot 6 Open has been carefully thought about and designed by utilising years of experience, consultation with anglers, boat-testing journalists and existing customers. Many of the major components are the same as on the cuddy version, saving on the

investment required and ensuring continuity between the two models. The hull and liner are the same, or at least very similar – only the top deck has changed to accommodate the console. The result is a very sensible boat that has excellent internal freeboard with plenty of room to move about.

### Dry Decks

As with other Pilot models, the open version has a deck that's completely self-draining through large scuppers in each quarter. The deck sits just above the waterline so, unless she is really heavily loaded, it remains dry and rainwater simply flows overboard. This is a great

feature that sees an end to flat batteries – an all-too-common situation on boats that drain into the bilge and are then pumped out by the auto-bilge pump. The self-draining feature also makes cleaning down easy; you simply sluice the washing water straight out through the scuppers.

### Great Designs

Without the cuddy I thought that the open boat would be more exposed than it turned out to be. The console and screen really do a good job of providing protection, as does the high bow and the generous high internal freeboard of 90 centimetres all round.

Other than the installation of the console, the layout of the cuddy and open versions is almost identical. The locker location is the same, with storage in two forward lockers in the bow seating, with space for an icebox on the centreline forward under a forward-lifting step, to allow close access to the foredeck while stood on the main deck. The drained chain locker is right in the forepeak with good deck furniture surrounding it, and a side-opening hatch to provide room for anchor handling. The foredeck is adorned with a main twin post open base cleat, in line with the stem head, for tying off the anchor and on each

### PERFORMANCE

Powered by a Honda BF75, with two adults aboard and 40 litres of fuel. Speed measured on a Garmin GPSMAP76CSx.

RPM	Speed (knots)
1,000	2.7
2,000	5.6
3,000	11.5
3,200 planing	14.4
4,000	20.9
4,200	23.0
5,000	28.8
5,600	31.1

### SPECIFICATIONS

Length (hull): 5.20m  
 Beam: 2.20m  
 Boat weight (excluding engine): 590kg  
 CE category: C  
 Passengers: 5 (75kg each)  
 Outboard motor: max 90hp longshaft  
 Designer: Charles Broughton

### PERFORMANCE

With full fuel tank, single crew and kit.

Engine Size (horse power)	Top Speed (knots)
90	30-34
70	28-30
60	26-30
50	23-25

side twin post horn cleats for mooring duties. All cleats are through bolted from the underside with hidden fasteners and large backing plates.

### Fine Details

Sat in the bow, the bulwarks provide great back support at just the right height for leaning against. There's a raised wave-deflecting ridge around the bow, which extends aft of the console, flaring out as it runs aft – this is to stop any free water coming over the bow. It's unlikely that she would put her head down into a wave, but water lying on the bow or any slop is directed over the side, and not into the cockpit.



She offers a great fishing platform with ample deck space.



There's plenty of stowage at the bow.

The entire forward end is surrounded by a tapered pulpit rail, which follows the curve of the sheer for a pleasing line. The anchor locker cover has a finger notch moulded in it, which gives an indication of the level of detail that has gone into the design of the boat. The non-slip moulded areas are moulded with sharp diamond grooves that provide excellent grip, and all the seat lockers are fitted with lockable latches for security of your gear.

### Console

The console is a bit lean, but that leaves plenty of room for the walkway each side. It's wide enough, but doesn't completely shroud the seats. Even so, there's good protection, even at 30 knots, from the wind blast.

The blue-tinted screen works to deflect air up and over the crew, but I did suggest that flared wings to the screen might do the job

of a wider console without reducing the side deck width. This is something that the company will no doubt experiment with, because it's simply a matter of playing with the screen shape.

The stainless handrail surrounding the console is ideal, gives plenty of hand-holds when moving around and the forward-end locker, which houses the fire extinguisher, still has plenty of volume for storing other kit.

The console is both bolted and glued in place, creating a watertight seal around the base, so anything stowed here will remain dry.

The helm station is very plain and simple. The moulded dash houses the single, multifunction engine gauge, but there's room for additional clocks and a bracket-mounted chartplotter tucked behind the protection of the screen, which is sealed at the bottom. The practical nature of the design shows



**PRICE**

**Pilot 6 Standard Boat**

With a Honda BF50 LRTU, top-mounted control with basic rigging kit and single 25-litre portable fuel tank and trailer with hitchlock and hub wash – £19,154 including VAT at 20 per cent

**Pilot 6 Standard Boat**


With a Honda BF75 LRTU, top-mounted control with basic rigging kit and single 25-litre portable fuel tank and trailer with hitchlock and hub wash – £21,844 including VAT at 20 per cent

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 The view from many other boats will simply be the Pilot 6's stern as she races off over the horizon!

through with the moulded rain channel around the stowage-shelf area behind the screen, and there are no nooks or crannies where water can sit and go green. The flat area can be used as a chart table or as a shelf on which to place binoculars, cameras or sunglasses.

**Be Seated**

The pedestal seats adjust for reach and are spaced so they can both swivel around to face aft. Placing them closer together would put them behind the console, but then the swivelling ability would be lost. I found their spacing fine and the flexibility of being able to sit and face aft is a useful feature, especially when the boat is used for picnic outings where the swivelling seats create a five-seater aft cockpit at rest.

**Going Aft**

The aft seating is on a stern bench that runs full beam, with the centre section designed to create additional stowage volume by following the curve of the engine well. With two 25-litre tanks in here, there's room to spare.

The starboard locker houses the boxed battery and isolator switch, and again

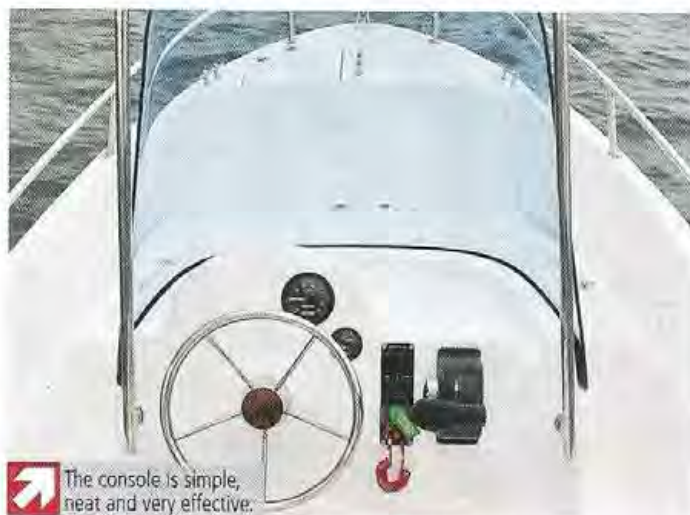
there's more room for small items of gear. The seats are quite deep and there is no back rest to speak of. A padded section added to the pushpit would address this but, of course, would also add to the cost.


Forward of the pushpit rail are teak gunnel cappings, for use as boarding and disembarking steps – a nice touch that's both practical and decorative.

**On Test**

The Pilots are surprising boats when you get them on the water. They don't look as though they should be very fast, but the Open 6 with a 75hp Honda went to more than 31 knots – on an engine with only three hours on the clock! I was privileged to get out while she was still undergoing sea trials and, I have to say, she came through with flying colours.

The traditional-looking boat has a mild vee hull, and she gets on the plane very easily. This is seen as a more important aspect than the ability to charge through rough seas at breakneck speeds. Load carrying and comfortable rides don't go with high-speed and rough-water handling – most people



 The console is simple, neat and very effective.

back off when it's lumpy, and would rather have the more economic-to-run aspect of the flatter hull design.

The result is a boat that can scamper for home – but, at all-day every-day cruising speeds, she uses less fuel and is right in the economy band of the Honda outboards.

The handling of the Open 6 has been refined by offsetting the engine just ever so slightly, making the turn radius equal both sides and she will carve neat 'S' turns at speed without heeling excessively.

**Great Investment!**

The Pilot 6 Open has been designed to provide

incredibly safe, secure and practical boating for anglers or family pleasure time without breaking the bank.

The pleasing lines are timeless, and the space on deck makes moving about very easy. If you need shelter there's the cuddy version, but if you prefer more room, the open boat is ideal and her build quality means you are investing in a boat that will last a very long time indeed.

Being compact, she's easy to house at home in a garage or on the drive, requires little power to run and can be towed, launched and recovered with a small family car. No wonder they are gaining in popularity! 