



# Ahoy!

National Coastwatch Institution  
www.nci.org.uk

**The bi-monthly newsletter for Friends of  
Hengistbury Head Lookout and its Watchkeepers**

Issue 30 November 2024

## ***From the Editor:***

As we rapidly approach Christmas we send our good wishes to you for the festive season. We will be operating from the lookout every day except Christmas day itself. But it is time to remember those of you who contribute to our on going funding with your generosity. To our 'Friends' we say a big 'thank you' and we shall be sending a reminder to those whose annual contribution are due for renewal. Also we recognise the contribution given through those of who play the Coastal lottery from which we receive a share of your ticket money. Your on going support is a valuable part of our ability to continue operating our cover.

AS you know we are an entirely voluntary organisation and without your support we would not be able to operate.

Ken Male

## ***In this issue:***

- **In Focus** - a regular feature about one of our volunteers and any personnel highlights
- **Training update** – new recruits and developments
- **Thank you** - to Friends & supporters
- **Been there done that** - a summary of recent 'Incidents' and Station activities
- **Looking Ahead** – dates for your diary
- **Stay in touch** – essential contact details



# *In Focus*

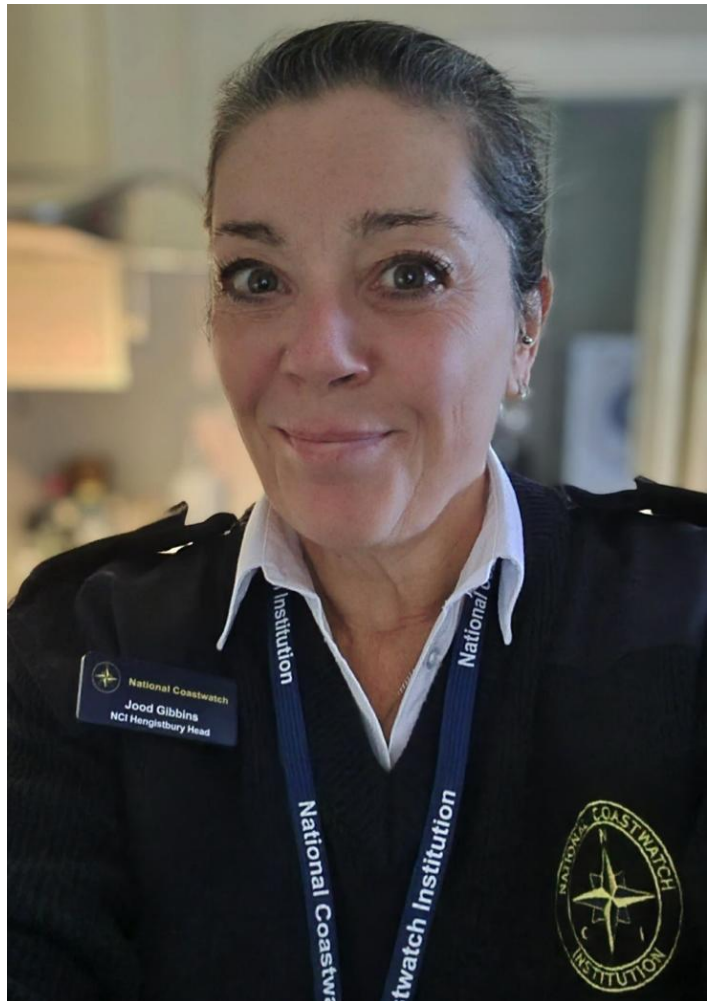
**Name Jood Gibbins**

**Role within the Station**

Watchkeeper

**When and why did you join NCI Hengistbury Head ?**

August 2023. I'd been on the waiting list since January. I partially retired from my NHS job in the middle of 2020 and following the pandemic was looking to learn something completely new as a voluntary role. Something that would tax my brain cells and would last me until I decide to stop paid work altogether. I found that Hengistbury Head was somewhere I really missed during the pandemic and lockdowns and that's why I decided to apply, so I have great reasons to be there on a regular basis.



**What are the best and worst aspects of being part of NCI Hengistbury Head?**

The best is always, That View. Nothing beats it for me. I love being able to see across the bay in the ever-changing conditions.

Feeling like I'm part of a much wider network that is there to be helpful and support the SaR teams. We are always watching, always prepared and always ready to assist. And we have loads of biscuits! 😊

The worst, I'm not sure. There isn't much I don't like. Maybe, having to drive out there in the middle of winter when it's rainy and cold and you know there will be hardly any visibility?

### **Are you a sailor?**

No, not for one single second.

### **Tell us a little about your career.**

I trained as a Mental Health Nurse in Bristol in the 80s and came to Dorset as soon as I qualified. I worked in acute psychiatry at St Anns, then spent some time in rehab psychiatry before going to work in addictions, where I stayed for 26 years in total. That included a nine-year stint in Hampshire, a three-year stint at a prison and doing the nurse prescribing course (officially one of the hardest things I've ever had to learn). And then in 2015 I came back to Dorset Healthcare with a career change into older people's mental health. I now work part-time managing the memory assessment services across Dorset. It is the most rewarding and lovely job ever!

You must have had some real career highs and lows! I don't think this is a question is it? Working in a prison was the worst and lowest point of my career. It genuinely sapped my will to live.

### **Hobbies**

I'm a runner, I lift weights, cycle and am going to be running the London Marathon for the first time in April 2025. I make origami cranes and like apocalyptic or sci-fi films and scandi-noir crime series! And of course I'm a Watchkeeper now! I'm part of Poole and Parkstone Productions, though I rarely tread the boards any more, more likely to do Front of House than front of stage!

## **Cat? Dog? Stick Insect?**

Cats. I'd have hundreds but am stuck with one blue-eyed elderly Tonkinese who hates other cats! I do love all the dogs we get to meet at Hengistbury Head though, it's a plus point for me if they run in and say hello (as long as they don't steal our snacks!)

## **Favourite tippie**

Tea. Strong. Yorkshire.

## **Favourite Book/Film**

The Hobbit/Lord of the Rings. When I first saw the first LoTR film I just started crying and then cried on and off all through it. It felt like someone had lifted my imagined thoughts from reading the books as a child and brought them to life.

Also, at Christmas, It's A Wonderful Life, the most incredible film, always watch it in black and white. And cry, of course! Hot Dog!

## **And finally, where's your feel-good, favourite place?**

Anywhere I'm running! My favourite place is wherever I go then but if it has a sea view or is in the New Forest then I'm happy 😊

## ***Training Update***

Every year we undergo a review by our colleagues at the National level to ensure that we are operating to the high standards required to be recognised by our colleagues, His Majesty's Coastguards.

I am pleased to report that this inspection took place earlier in November and we continue to bear the 'Designated Facility Status' certification for our professionalism in delivering our service.

Not only did we achieve this but there were no recommendations for improvement. Well done the team!!!!

## *Thank you....*

### **New cameras**

We have received a promise of the provision of a new Pan Tilt and Zoom camera for the lookout. This is from Sirius Insight who produce the cameras. It will have the capability to be accessed by HMCG at their HQ providing even better service.

Sirius Insight have agreed to donate the equipment to us.... Thank you very much!!

This means that it may free up funds for us to provide a remote camera as an alternative to the potential station at Avon Beach. This would be positioned to enable us to cover areas currently obscured by the Hengistbury cliffs. More on this later.

In conjunction with this we are looking to upgrade the optics with a new and better range telescope. It is important that we have the most capable of equipment and the fund we raise through our public supporters enables us to do that.

## *Been there, done that.....*

### **Station AGM 27th November**

This was a chance for us all to catch up on the activities of the last year and share plans for the future. Out of the 60 NCI stations around the coast HHNCI was the third busiest for the number of incidents dealt with.

The already mentioned DFS was hailed as a great success too.

Although we will not be changing the operating hours we are looking to change the shift pattern to better reflect the daylight hours next autumn. As the daylight shortens we intend to change from a 4-4-3 hour pattern to 4-3-4 ... sounds more like a football strategy!

Presentations were also made to Steve Marks, Richard Soloman and Nick Townsend to mark their 5 year service achievement. The photos show them receiving their award from NCI trustee Chris Aps

Steve Marks shown here.





Richard receiving his presentation

And finally..... for the five year service award..Nick Townsend



Anna Mills shown receiving her new epaulettes on re-designating her status from Watchkeeper to 'Watchkeeper Assistant'. This is a relatively new role for us to enable those who are cannot provide the same level of commitment but do not want to leave the organisation completely.

## Incidents since last 'Ahoi'

An "Incident" in NCI terms is a situation concerning the safety of life or property, during which an NCI Station has observed, or had any involvement of supporting the Coastguard (CG) or other Search and Rescue (SAR) resource. Needless to say the number reduces at this time of year as fewer venture onto, or near, the water. Most recent Incidents appear at the top of this list.

CRT = Coastguard Rescue Team; MoP = Member of Public CG = Coastguard; ILB = Inshore Lifeboat; LB = Lifeboat; NFA = no further action; cas evac = casualty evacuation; FAWGI = False Alarm with Good Intent

Date of Incident	Incident Summary	Lifeboat involved
08/11/24	NCI observed a MOP standing close to cliff edge. Appeared agitated when approached. HMCG informed, and tasked assets to location. Casualty was found by Police at visitor centre and taken into care.	No
02/11/24	NCI observed a motor launch aground on sand bank. 1 person in water trying to walk it into deeper water. HMCG informed, monitoring requested. Casualties deployed anchor, and 2adults carried 2children , to the shore. Second vessel then ran aground, 2 POB, no lifejackets. CG informed. NFA while lookout remained open.	No
17/10/24	HMCG phoned NCI re. report from MOP of motor boat aground. NCI informed CG they had visual. NCI then reported to CG vessel was afloat but running erratically, with damage. ILB tasked and towed , casualty back to harbour	Yes
13/10/24	NCI observed a MOP sitting on cliff edge. W/K went to chat, but no response, person looked upset. HMCG informed, CRT and ambulance tasked. Police also arrived, and engaged with casualty. , Casualty left with Police, CRT stood down.	No
09/10/24	Pan Pan from yacht caught in lobster pot line. NCI informed HMCG they had visual. Seastart were called, asked NCI to inform CG. Diver went down and cut vessel free, Pan Pan cancelled.	No
30/09/24	NCI observed debris , possibly a boat hull, 0.8 mile from	Yes

	lookout. HMCG informed, ILB tasked, and NCI gave position. LB confirmed it was a section of a boat hull, and a hazard to navigation., LB towed debris to beach and secured it to rocks.	
29/09/24	Pan Pan issued from ocean rowing boat, 3 POB, struggling in conditions. Tow requested. NCI eventually located vessel, which issued a second Pan Pan, and gave location to CG. ILB tasked, and casualty, by then was only 40 mtrs from shore in heavy surf. NCI updated ILB, and casualty was then washed onto beach, ILB unable to get close. 1 POB had leg injury. CRT tasked. ILB stood down, and ambulance, then attended. CG kept updated of developments.	Yes

## Looking Ahead

### Christchurch living Advent Calendar

Our CLAC date is the 16th December at Ye old George Inn, Christchurch from 17.30. Please come along and support us. We are also looking for items for our raffle prizes should you have anything suitable lurking in your cupboards.

**Support one of our regular supporters and have an enjoyable evening at the same time.**

A  
FOREST  
CHRISTMAS



‘Burley Bookends’

presents an evening of words, music and song, including a special performance by the musicians, actors and singers of The Milford West Gallery Quire.

**December 17th, 7.30pm Burley Village Hall,  
Pound Lane, Burley, Hampshire, BH24 4EB**

**Mulled wine, mince pies and raffle.**

All profits to be donated to National Coastwatch Institution, Hengistbury Head and Burley Good Neighbours. Please bring cash to support our raffle and for donations for mulled wine and mince pies.

**Tickets £5 in advance only**

**Telephone: 01425 402180**

**Email: [ginnydalgarno@gmail.com](mailto:ginnydalgarno@gmail.com)**



## ***Stay in touch***

Please let us know if any of your personal contact details change. Address all correspondence to our Friends Administrator Ken Male – [ken.male@nci.org.uk](mailto:ken.male@nci.org.uk). who will also be happy to provide details of how to become a Friend should you know of anyone interested.

You can keep up to date with our activities via various social media:

- Facebook Hengistbury Head NCI
- Twitter @NCIHengistburyH
- Instagram @hengistburyheadnci

And, of course, by keeping up to date from our website.....

<https://hhnci.org.uk> NCI Hengistbury Head is one of 60 NCI Stations around the UK keeping "Eyes along the coast". Current Station opening hours 8.00am-7.00pm