



Ahoy!

National Coastwatch Institution
www.nci.org.uk

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

Issue 34 September 2025

From the Editor:

Hello again and welcome to the latest Edition of 'Ahoy', the newsletter for the 'Friends' supporting, and colleagues manning, the Lookout at Hengistbury Head. Our aim is to keep you updated with the work of our team volunteering to operate this busy station. Over the summer we had access difficulties but they have now been resolved with the acquisition of a golf buggy to transport crews to and from. This was a very kind donation from one of our supporters. It has meant that we have been able to maintain most of our volunteers, some of whom would have been unable to make the walk in the severe weather conditions we sometimes experience at Hengistbury.

In this issue:

- **In Focus** - a regular feature about one of our volunteers and any personnel highlights - this month one of our newest recruits.
- **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 Chris Greenwood

Role within the Station

Watchkeeper

When and why did you join NCI Hengistbury Head ?

I joined in April 2025.

Why? – Funnily enough it was my wife who volunteered me after speaking with Gill (our secretary) at the Kings Park Nursery. Gill suggested I might like it. One thing led to another and after retiring in April I was on board.



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

Best – doing something worthwhile for myself and the community at large in a role I didn't know existed until about 18months ago.

Working alongside new colleagues, finding out what they have done in the past and what they do now.

Worst – Having to remind some of the other watchkeepers where the kettle is when it is their turn to make a drink.

Are you a sailor?

Certainly not, but if you ask Bob he calls me Captain Chris. This is because when I first met him he asked if I had any nautical experience to which I replied 'only cross channel ferries'. He then asked me what I did and I said 'I just sit on them.'

He thought I was a captain or first officer or what ever, but actually I was a holiday maker!

Tell us a little about your career.

I started out working in social housing, did this for 27 years, made redundant, worked for the NHS then retired.

You must have had some real career highs and lows!

Career highs – working with great people

Career lows – too many to mention

Hobbies

I am a member of Christchurch Angling club and fish as often as I can. I also try and attend the gym as often as I can.

Also, though I am not particularly a motor sport fan but I have attended Le Mans 24hrs every year since 1996 and only missed 2 events. It is great to meet up with my two oldest pals and my brother. A couple of years ago I was lucky enough to travel down in my friend's Ferrari 488 Spyder



Cat? Dog? Stick Insect?

Cat – called Charlie

Favourite tippie

Any Belgium beer and Drambuie – not together of course.....

Favourite Book/Film

Book - Haigh Guide to Trout Fishing in England – I borrowed this from the local library when I was a teenager and couldn't believe that the rivers and landscapes, as depicted in the book, actually existed. I kept the book for so long that incurred a large fine and asked if I could buy it instead! When I eventually moved down here, I fished some of those rivers.

Film – Jaws. Just amazing, hardly saw the shark but the music and cinematography kept you, and still does funnily enough, on the edge of your seat.

What, for you, is the best bit of being part of NCI Hengistbury Head?

Being amongst like-minded people who all are dedicated to doing a good job

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

My holiday cottage in France – arrive there and relax.

France was always my holiday destination due to my tremendous fear of flying, however after having hypnotherapy 3 years ago all that fear has gone and since visiting the Greek Islands I can now also rate those as my happy place or places.

Also on the banks of the river Avon waiting for a bite watching all the wildlife – kingfishers, otters and birds of prey etc. and nodding off occasionally.

Training Update

Recent newly qualified Watchkeepers

Norm Husband, pictured here receiving his epaulettes, successfully completed his Final Assessment. Norm becomes the first attendee, in this issue, of the late May evening classroom session, to successfully join the ranks as a qualified Watchkeeper.

Congratulations, Norm, and welcome to great team.



Another three Trainees have completed their Final Assessments since the last 'Ahoy'.



Chris Greenwood, featured above, 'Met-the-Managers' at the Lookout in March. He then attended the late May classroom session, successfully completed his training on the 27th September, and is shown receiving his epaulettes on the Lookout balcony, in the sunshine.

Mick Bodington, who Met-the-Managers in May, and attended his classroom session in July, successfully completed his Assessment a couple of days later, on the 29th. Mick receives his epaulettes outside the Lookout, on another sunny day.



Congratulations to both Chris, and Mick. Welcome to great team.



The 8th Trainee to successfully complete the Final Assessment since August, is Nick Hadley, who completed his during the late shift on Tuesday the 7th October. Nick is pictured below, receiving his W/K epaulettes. Congratulations Nick, and welcome to a great Team. (Buggy driver instruction next 😊)

Thank you...

A Big Thank you

Our Veteran, Michael Thompson placed a number of collection pots to venues local to where he lives. I am delighted to record Michael's efforts have netted £131.73 for HH NCI. Very well done Michael - thank you.

A recent winner of the Bournemouth Coastal lottery (which financially supports us) kindly donated their winnings back to us.

And for long service.....

Congratulations and well done to Steve O'Riley on his 5 year service award.



Been there, done that.....

Incidents since last 'Ahoy'

An "Incident" in NCI terms is a situation involving contact to, or from any of the emergency services where we are asked, or expected, to take part. 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
18/10/2025	NCI observed a small motor vessel attempting to enter harbour, and ran aground, and was washed to shoreline and buffeted by waves. HMCG informed, and 4 POB were on sand, ILB and CRT were tasked, , CG requested monitoring. CRT attended, all POB were on beach, lookout closed and incident closed. All safe, and vessel still beached.	Yes

10/10/2025	HMCG called NCI re. report from MOP of vessel with no-one on board. 2 vessel seen, monitoring requested. NCI then updated CG that vessel had 1 POB who was fishing. No difficulty apparent. NFA.	No
08/10/2025	HMCG called NCI re. report from MOP of a RIB aground. NCI already had visual, 2 POB both wearing buoyancy aids, looking comfortable. Second boat nearby was in contact. Vessel was refloated 30 minutes , later and proceeded to harbour, CG updated. NFA.	No
10/09/2025	Yacht observed an orange life raft, HMCG informed NCI, Visual requested, CG asked any vessel in area to investigate. CG asked NCI for update, location given. NCI closed lookout, CG closed , incident, life raft not recovered.	No
06/09/2025	HMCG called NCI asking for visual on a surfer, reported missing. Search revealed nothing. ILB tasked, and Pan Pan issued. Nothing was found, assets stood down, Pan Pan cancelled. FAGWI	Yes
03/09/2025	Pan Pan issued re. large catamaran adrift. HMCG asked NCI for visual, - confirmed. NCI advised it was a trimaran, and was beached, ILB tasked to secure. Vessel remained ashore - no hazard, NFA.	Yes
02/09/2025	HMCG called NCI re. report from MOP of a RIB towing a Ringo (2 POB), and a Banana boat (3 POB) causing concern. Visual requested, - confirmed, and NCI agreed with concern. RIB turned and all 5 , persons ended up in the water. ILB tasked. NCI advised CG the Ringo and 3 casualties had made it to the shore, ILB accompanied RIB and 4 casualties to slipway. Safety advice was offered by LB crew.	Yes
26/08/2025	HMCG called NCI re. report of a surf board adrift. NCI searched, but could not see a person in the water. HELO, LGs, and ILB tasked, and after search no person was seen. It was assumed they had , returned to the beach.	Yes
17/08/2025	HMCG called NCI re. report from MOP of a paddle boarder possibly in trouble. NCI established visual, and told CG the casualty was paddling strongly. ILB and CRT tasked, casualty lost to view from NCI., No casualty found by LB or CRT. NFA.	No
16/08/2025	ILB called NCI after comms re. 2 persons on a paddle board, no life saving kit, at risk of being blown off shore. NCI searched area but nothing visible, CG informed. ILB tasked, recovered casualties , from inside harbour. All safe.	Yes
06/08/2025	NCI observed a kite surfer unable to remount board. NCI called HMCG and suggested ILB, which was on exercise, check on casualty. LB found casualty to be fine, NFA.	Yes

Looking Ahead

For your diary

19TH November. 1930 hrs = Station AGM. St Nicholas Church.
22nd Dec . Christchurch Living Advent Calendar.

NCI Christmas Dinner

We are in the process of booking this annual event. It will be held at the Cumberland Hotel in Bournemouth. The date is Wednesday 17th December. The dinner is open to all watchkeepers, family and 'friends' (we don't talk about watchkeeping honest!) and is a great evening. The price this year is £40 per person and includes a three-course meal followed by a quiz and raffle (also includes a tip). It would be lovely if you were able to join us and a good way to start off (if you haven't already) the festive season.



If you would like to come to the dinner, please reply direct to vince.tabor@nci.org.uk as a new email do not use reply button. Only positive replies please. The menu caters for all dietary requirements. Regards Vince.

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. 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