



**National
Coastwatch
Institution
Froward Point**

**Annual Report and
Business Plan
2012**



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1. Introduction

The National Coastwatch Institution (NCI) is a voluntary organisation set up in 1994 to restore a visual watch along UK shores after many small Coastguard stations closed due to Government cutbacks. NCI is a registered charity managed by a board of Trustees with a Constitution agreed by the Charities Commission. Each station has its own committee charged with upholding the agreed principles, procedures, and policies of the Charity.

The Froward Point Committee wishes to acknowledge the contribution of all those watchkeepers who have assisted in activities throughout the year and to thank those who, for various reasons, could no longer continue to volunteer. To those in particular we say 'thank you' for your service and wish you well for the future.

*The Committee also expresses its thanks to Bob Tozer, Station Manager from 2009 to November 2011, for his energy, enthusiasm and vision in leading Froward Point to its present strength and commitment as part of the search and rescue system. We also acknowledge his contributions to this report and business plan before his resignation following differences of opinion within the Committee over the consideration of plans for the future.

The coming year offers several major challenges not only for Froward Point but also NCI nationally. It is important that all those concerned with NCI are aware of the issues and we hope that this plan has gone some way to answering those challenges.

Finally, in this introduction, we offer many thanks to all our volunteers, both watchkeepers and non-watchkeepers for the time and effort, in so many ways apart from watchkeeping, that they put into maintaining Froward Point and its facilities and to contributing to our success as a coastwatch station.

NCI Froward Point Committee

**Grateful thanks to Bob Tozer for his contributions to this report and his earlier drafts of sections 1 to 3*

2. Vision

It was reported last year that we needed to be aware of the political and economic situation we now have to work in. That situation still pertains and we cannot relax in our emphasis to demonstrate how effective we are as an organisation both locally and nationally.

Our national chairman has responded to the Department of Trade/MCA's second consultation on the proposed cuts to the coastguard service in England & Wales. In it, Alan Richards emphasised once again the needs for NCI stations and personnel to be assigned, by MCA, an enhanced role and to have a dedicated VHF channel. Consequently, we need to continue to improve and enhance our role at local level. It was proposed by Bob Tozer that we might do so in three specific ways at Froward Point. Subject to further consideration and approval by the Committee, the proposals are:

1. The introduction of electronic charts
2. Improving the visibility from the Froward Point lookout
3. Installation of a Remote Camera to maintain observation of Newfoundland Cove

Electronic Charts: During the last year Paul Hayes and Bob Tozer have been investigating the possible use of a two-screen system with software which, when linked with GPS, gives the user a real-time picture of the area around Start Bay and the River Dart. This would enable us to input tide information and the range and bearing of an incident or other sighting in order to get an instant latitude and longitude read-out with tidal drift data. The second screen will show the Ordnance Survey map of our area. The system also incorporates AIS.

Improving Visibility from the lookout: There have been negotiations over recent months with the National Trust over the possibility of changes to the interior layout of the lookout with the intention getting watchkeepers closer to the front windows so that we have a much better view of the area below Froward Point and inside the Mewstone cardinal buoys. Costed proposals have not yet been considered by the Committee or discussed by watchkeepers formally, but possible options will be looked into during coming months.

There has also been discussion about the possibility of improving visibility into Newfoundland Cove which is at present obscured during the summer months – our busiest time – by some of the trees to the west of the lookout. It has been suggested, however, that the installation of a remote-controlled camera on the property owned by Mr and Mrs Stuart Sadd at the coastguard cottages at Little Dartmouth to look into Newfoundland Cove might be a solution. The camera would allow observation of the cove and could be remotely controlled from the lookout in zoom, tilt and pan. The existing microwave link would be used to transmit the “picture” back to the lookout. However, this would be a costly solution and requires full consideration of the details by the Committee.

Other Issues

- 1.** We have this year purchased a new binocular and sight, the Cyclops. Most who use it have found it to be a good investment though some still feel that the best result can only be obtained using the single lens telescope. Therefore, any plans for improving the visibility at the lookout might include re-instating the second single lens telescope and place the Cyclops in a central position on a moving carriage-way similar to the Pelorus.
- 2.** As part of the proposed alterations and introduction of electronics the laptop would be moved into the lookout. This would allow use of the digital weather station facilities, such as cloud base, and would also mean that we could access other links on our web page should the need arise. We would also use the laptop to view the picture of Newfoundland Cove being beamed back on the microwave link.
- 3.** The committee stressed the need for exercises with the Dart Lifeboat and other services and it is with much regret that we have not been able to achieve this goal. Early in the year the RNLI nationally informed Dart Lifeboat that they we were not allowed to use their private frequency on which we had already carried several short conning exercises. Dart Lifeboat was unable to get that decision changed and so we have no means of exercising with them on an ad hoc basis. Having our own VHF private channel would allow such exercises to be carried out.
- 4.** The committee has always been concerned with fundraising. We have had a very successful year. This is the result of much very hard work by the committee and many of our volunteers who have given a great deal of time in doing so. Although we have a healthy bank balance, much of the excess might be needed for our future projects.
- 5.** We have circulated a paper from the centre regarding proposed changes to the way funds are held centrally. This is an important and necessary change if NCI is to make the move from being essentially a local organisation to a national one. Watchkeepers everywhere hold strong views which must be respected. Nonetheless, change is afoot and NCI must not falter if it is to be recognised as a national body; for if not it will never be a fully integrated part of the search and rescue system in the UK.
- 6.** We have successfully fitted another bank of photo voltaic cells on the roof. Our reliance on the generator has dropped, bringing with it a corresponding drop in the consumption of diesel fuel.
- 7.** We have recruited 15 new watchkeepers during the past twelve months but have lost 14, two of whom are now non-watchkeeping auxiliary members. Our next entry, in the spring of 2012, already has four potential recruits.

Goals for the next twelve months

- 1.** To pursue the possible implementation of improvement objectives outlined above.
- 2.** To carry out at least two exercises with RNLI Dart Lifeboat.
- 3.** To ensure that we are successful in our annual DFS assessment.
- 4.** To recruit sufficient new recruits to establish a minimum of 70 watchkeepers.
- 5.** To take up any invitations to give NCI promotional presentations.

3. Security

Due to the remoteness of the station, security of the access gates and buildings is of paramount importance. We are still, unfortunately, experiencing problems. The three locks on the main lookout steel door are not always found to be double locked and the inner stable door has been found to be not shut at all. Extreme care **MUST** be taken to ensure proper locking procedures are adhered to.

4. Funding (Linda Lister)

The watch station costs in the region of £8000 to run on an annual basis: our income figure is an unknown. Funding comes from activities organised by the Friends of Froward Point, donations from the general public and local businesses, and monies collected in the charity collection boxes. It is encouraging that the income from the boxes at the watch station has again exceeded £2000 this year. A big thank you to all the Watchkeepers.

We were fortunate to have the sponsorship of Sainsburys in 2010/2011. In addition to the fund raising activities of the staff at the store, it also allowed the Friends of Froward to organise fund raising events at the store. These events raised the fantastic sum of £3810.35. Other events organised by the Friends totalled £1687.81. This year we also received sponsorship from Noss Marina to cover the costs of printing calendars. We hope to raise in excess of £1000 by selling the calendars at the watch station, fund raising events and in local business premises.

There is a donation button on our website which has generated additional income. Handing out our leaflet to visitors and highlighting the website to them will hopefully encourage more. All donors are thanked; a Gift Aid declaration is included for signature and return where applicable. We are looking to promote the NCI Shorewatch membership to visitors to the station. This will help to increase awareness of the NCI to the public. The station will receive £5 of the membership fee on an annual basis, and it could be more if the Shorewatch member donates more.

We shall, during the coming year, be encouraging walkers and others to consider making a provision in their will for a legacy or gift to NCI. A5 hand outs will be available and watchkeepers should hand them out along with copies of our newsletter and any other promotional literature which will be available from time to time. We need, as part of the whole of NCI, to endeavour to raise funds from all possible sources.

Financial results for previous years

Year	2011	2010
	(£)	(£)
Total Income	13,395	9,718
Total Expenditure	8,828	7,090
Net Position	4,567	2,628
Bank Balance	12,635	8,068

Budget for 2012

Expenditure

Telephone	800	(760)
Refreshments (Tea & Coffee at FP)	400	(360)
Rent	150	(130)
Postage/printing/stationery	500	(700)
Repairs/maintenance	1500	(1500)
Fuel/generator	750	(2250)
Capitation	1000	(1600)
Insurance	200	(300)
Fund raising	500	(880)
Training	300	(250)
NCI Shop (epaulettes, name badges, etc) 100		(60)
Publicity/Website	75	
Station Admin/Travel costs	200	
Capital Expenditure *		(£3500)
Station Refurbishment	2500	
National Trust restoration costs	500	
Camera Link to Newfoundland Cove	2500	
Equipment	500	
Total Expenditure	12475	

Income

Froward Boxes	2400
Friends – Other Activities	1800
Other Donations	2400
Gift Aid Tax Reclaimed	100
Sainsburys	2000
Total Income	8700

Shortfall 3775

*Capital Expenditure

Figures quoted to allow the committee to consider various projects that have been suggested to improve the watch station and the visibility at the lookout.

5. Training and Watchkeeping (Michael Powell)

1. The station is fortunate in having a well established core of watchkeepers, diverse in talent and dedicated to providing a full watch rota. Nonetheless, with constantly changing needs and development an ongoing training regime for both new and existing members is necessary. This includes the provision of a bi-annual entry per year and introductory 'classroom-based' training is provided for new entrants. These sessions are held in the spring and autumn of each year. New members will continue to be coached by our Training Officers.
2. The Committee is committed to achieving 100% of all day watches (ie 0900 to 1700 in summer and 1000 to 1600 from October to March) and 100% of evening watches (ie 1700 to 2000 during June to end of August).
3. We aim to complete two major exercises with HMCG Brixham, Dartmouth Lifeboat and/or Brixham Lifeboat, and to retain the Station's Declared Facility Status through the annual assessment process.
4. We will continue with our agreed training programme as outlined above, including provision for all new watchkeepers to attend formal group sessions.
5. We will ensure that our training programme is consistent with the NCI Training Manual, subject to appropriate adjustments reflecting arrangements at Froward Point.
6. It is our aim that all current and future watchkeepers should possess the skills, knowledge and experience expected of competent watchkeepers.
7. We will continue to develop all documentation for training purposes, both for new and existing watchkeepers. Amongst new materials will be new instructions for setting up the radar to achieve optimum presentation on the screen.
8. The current head count (6th December 2011)

(1) Qualified Watchkeepers	
a. Training Qualified & VHF Cert	52
b. Training Qualified only	5
	<u>57</u>
(2) Under Training as Watchkeepers	6
(3) Auxiliaries - non-watchkeepers	5
Total head count	<u>68</u>
9. While the development and maintenance of our Watchkeepers' proficiency in VHF communication is currently hindered by the MCA directive that Channel 0 cannot be used to log on and off and to alert HMCG Brixham to incidents within the area visible from Froward Point, we will provide appropriate training and practice using our existing PMR446 hand held devices. Two of our watchkeepers are now qualified as VHF (Channel 0) course leaders.
10. Every effort will be made to encourage better relationships both with our adjoining stations, the RNLI and HMCG Brixham. To this end we aim to hold two joint exercises each year and may participate in other joint training sessions.
11. The Committee encourages our watchkeepers to engage in self monitored training revision, dedicating an hour or so, for example, on chart work, and familiarisation with station equipment and procedures as necessary.
12. While we should be proud of our voluntary efforts this should not detract from striving to achieve the highest possible standards of professionalism. Our station is only as good as the individuals within it.

Goals for the next twelve months

1. To successfully complete the DFS Inspection in February 2012.
2. To carry out at least two exercises with Brixham CG and RNLi Torbay/Dartmouth.
3. To have sufficient trained watchkeepers to achieve 100% coverage of all watches during 2012.
4. To qualify all watchkeepers as VHF Channel 0 operators.
5. By the end of 2012 to have at least 70 qualified watchkeepers.
6. To implement a new training programme for tuning the radar.
7. To ensure all watchkeepers are competent in using the radar.

6. Maintenance (Austin Guy)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped and assisted me during my first full year as Facilities Manager. It is encouraging to note that individuals readily respond when asked to help, besides those who help on their own initiative without being asked. I am particularly grateful to Rosemary and John Ellerby for keeping the lookout stocked with supplies of tea, milk, and sugar, and to Barrie Eggleton for looking after our toilet.

1. Power Supply

Early in 2011 we installed an additional bank of solar panels, which are now feeding one of the two banks of batteries that power the equipment in the lookout. We have two banks of four batteries each. During the summer the solar panels seemed to be doing a really good job in keeping the batteries topped up. However, we recently discovered that this was far from the truth and as a consequence we have experienced major problems. This was due, we believe, to the poor quality of the existing charger which was being used to charge both banks of batteries. This charger has now, with the help and much time given by Geoff and Marcus Ogborne, Phil White and Michael Furminger, been replaced by a much more powerful one.

We have also replaced all four batteries in bank number two at no cost to the Station as they were still under guarantee. This bank is used exclusively to power our weather station and the web-cam, which were failing on a daily basis and could only be corrected by running the generator. A situation that had to be urgently corrected. I am pleased to report that the actions taken have so far been successful. Our electronic expert, Phil White, has produced a set of instructions regarding battery maintenance. Copies are posted in the lookout for all to read.

We had a small problem with the diesel generator, which, thanks to John Boyne, has now been put right.

As we move into the next year, we will be adding more electrical and electronic items to the facilities that we already have, so consequently, a secure and reliable power supply, that we hopefully now have, is very essential.

As for the future, it is hoped that we will be able to carry out limited alterations to the interior of the lookout in order to improve visibility and, of course, redecoration will be carried out once this work is completed.

Work was commenced in November to smarten up the kitchen area and will be followed by similar work to the visitors' centre and generator room in the near future.

2. Access Track

As all watch-keepers are aware, it is the responsibility of NCI to maintain the gates and track to be kept in a reasonable condition. Repairs are always ongoing and carried out as and when required. However, I would like to point out that there is plenty of width to the track, so if you notice a pot-hole forming, it would be easy enough to drive around

round it to avoid risking damage to your car's suspension and, perhaps reduce the number of occasions when maintenance is carried out.

Goals for the next twelve months

1. To monitor the efficiency of both banks of batteries by keeping a record of their status on a weekly basis (there will be a separate section in the maintenance log for this) and report the results to the Station Manager in a weekly report.
2. To complete the renovation work in the kitchen by the end of March 2012.
3. To continue to monitor security and report to the Station Manager any breaches found should they occur.
4. To monitor the access track for pot-holes and have them repaired as required.

7. Public Relations and Business Fundraising (Paul Hayes)

As last year, our aim is to identify and target individual businesses with which we share a common interest. On establishing such an interest we should endeavour to go into partnerships with such companies with the aim of building long term agreements to our mutual benefit.

It is also our aim to continue to increase our public profile. The number of visitors to the lookout who are unaware of our existence (let alone our function) is still too high and it is important to stress the 'local' nature of Froward Point.

Walkers always seem to appreciate our presence when visiting and we need to explore ways in which we can increase donations at this point.

Although our benefit to walkers is, in many ways, secondary to boat owners, it is a fact that individual voluntary donations come mainly from the walking public – whereas our benefit to boat owners could be life saving. We need to explore ways in which we can raise money directly from these boat owners – perhaps by displaying and manning exhibitions at marinas at busy weekends, or creating hard hitting posters for display. Therefore, good relations with all marinas and related bodies are essential.

8. The Friends of Froward Point (Paul West)

The Friends of Froward Point consists, at present, of a nucleus of six volunteer ladies, assisted by member watch-keepers, who have over the past six years raised in the order of £4,000 per annum. They work towards a programme of events each year that are generally well supported by local communities, watch-keepers and their families.

The successful formula of past years has continued, and will continue, with stalls, selling "bric-a-brac", some home-made produce and offering various fund-raising and popular games, at various fêtes and functions such as The Galmpton Gooseberry Pie Fair, the Kingswear Regatta Day Fair, the Stoke Fleming Fair, The Dartmouth Food Festival, and The Royal Dart Yacht Club Charity Christmas Fair. In addition to these activities, following our very beneficial association with Sainsburys, we intend to apply for some "Bag-Packing" days throughout the year.

For Christmas this year we are at present, and will continue to sell, our specially designed Christmas cards along with our in-house designed calendars for 2012, especially at the RDYC Christmas Fair.

Following the very successful concert, given for our benefit the year before last, by the Brixham Orpheus Male Voice Choir in Torquay, plans are under way for a second concert, to be held this time in Kingswear, probably on Saturday 14th April 2012. We look forward to this being well supported.

9. Dates for Meetings 2012

Committee (Wednesdays)	Watchkeepers (Thursdays)
22nd February	1st March
2nd May	10th May
11th July	19th July
19th September	27th September
21st November	6th December (AGM)

Committee meetings will start at 1430 and Watchkeepers meetings at 1900.

10. Contact details for Committee Members

Chairman	Paul West	01803 527578
Station Manager	[Vacant]	
Training Manager	Michael Powell	01803 867595
Facilities Manager	Austin Guy	01803 883108
Treasurer	Linda Lister	01803 391058
Watchkeepers Rep.	Peter Keil	01803 833944
Public Relations	Paul Hayes	01803 845533
Friends of FP	Paul West	01803 527578
Hon. Secretary	Paul Hayes	01803 845533
Minute Secretary	Lynda Keil	01803 833944

Please note that apologies for absence at meetings should be passed to Paul Hayes (email: paul.hayes@btconnect.com) and not to other committee members.

Froward Point 07976 505649