



THE LOOKOUT

News from NCI Worms Head Lookout Station · Autumn 2026 Newsletter · Registered Charity No. 1159975

Watch Your Step on the Rocks

Two helicopter rescues, a near-miss on a flooding causeway, and the start of our autumn hours.



A Coastguard helicopter lands on the causeway rocks. Photo: Watchkeeper Nigel Pullen.

Late summer kept the watch busy right to the end. On 25 August three people only just made it back before the causeway fully flooded, with wet feet to show for it. The crossing times are in our hut windows and on the big board at the top of the path down, which everyone walks past.

On 1 September the Coastguard asked us to help with an injured person on the causeway. Our watchkeepers spotted them and gave the Coastguard Rescue Team their exact location, and the Coastguard helicopter flew them to hospital. It was the second fall this summer that needed a helicopter.

Both falls happened on the rocky stretches, which are, after all, the seabed. Walking boots or sturdy shoes make a real difference. We see plenty of flip-flops, and even the odd pair of high heels, though we don't believe that caused either fall. Our thanks, as always, to HM Coastguard South and West Wales and to the Rhossili cliff rescue team.

“Recovering anybody who's been injured out on the island is almost impossible without using a helicopter.”

— From our Facebook page, 11 September

So please: come into the hut before you cross, take a photo of the times board, wear proper footwear, and head back at least 30 minutes before the causeway closes.

Also on Watch This Autumn

6 Oct — Autumn Hours. We're now on watch from 10am to 6pm, as we have no mains electricity in the hut. The 999 phone on the outside of our building is still out of order, so in an emergency always ring 999 and ask for the Coastguard.



Sheep waiting to cross over to their new home on the Worm. Photo: Rhossili Sunflowers.

Autumn — The Sheep Go Over

Local farmers keep up an old Gower tradition, grazing sheep out on the Worm through the winter. If you meet them, keep dogs on a lead and give them space.



Ernie and Tony, keeping an eye on Rhossili Bay.

29 Aug — Meet Ernie and Tony

Sarah loved Mariza's knitted seals so much she took two home and named them after the watchkeepers who showed her round. Thank you, Sarah!



A watchkeeper on the radio in the watch room.

A New Number for the Lookout

Our old landline is going as we move to Starlink. Call the lookout on 07392 327216 while we're on watch. In an emergency, always call 999.

Our New Website



The home page of our new website. Photo courtesy of Dan Santillo Photography. Our website is brand new, and our Causeway Tracker shows live when it's safe to cross to Worms Head and back. We'd love your feedback through the Contact Us page.

Seal Season



Grey seals hauled out on the rocks.

Autumn is pupping time for Gower's grey seals. Mothers feed their pups for just 18 to 21 days before the youngsters have to fend for themselves. Every time seals are disturbed on the rocks, they waste precious energy, so please enjoy them from a distance, keep dogs under close control, and never approach a seal or pup on the shore. Seen seals, dolphins or choughs? You can now send us your sightings on our website.

A Piece of History — The Helvetia



The Helvetia's ribs on Rhossili beach. Photo: David Morgan.

On the stormy evening of 31 October 1887, 139 years ago this autumn, the Norwegian barque Helvetia was just five miles from Swansea with around 500 tons of timber. A gale drove her onto the Helwick sandbank and then around Worms Head into Rhossili Bay, where her anchor gave way. All her crew reached the shore safely.

Her timber was auctioned off, and local stories say much of it went into buildings across Gower, including one man's kitchen floor. Her ribs still rise from the sand below Rhossili today.

How You Can Help

Follow the Watch

See what we've been called out to in our Lookout Log, and send us your wildlife sightings, at nciwormshead.org. Or follow NCI Worm's Head on Facebook.

Donate or Shop

One-off gifts at nciwormshead.org/donate, or pick up a calendar, beanie or fridge magnet at the lookout.

Kids' Corner — Here Be Dragons



One of the dragons said to watch over the Worm.

Our new website has a Kids' Corner for younger visitors. Find out why the Worm is really a sleeping dragon, uncover the secret Dragon Farm of Rhossili, learn super seal facts and go on a treasure hunt for the Samuel's anchor on the causeway.



Then call into the lookout and collect our safety stickers. Our 'Float like a starfish' sticker teaches children what to do if they fall into the water: don't panic or splash about, lie back, stretch your arms and legs out wide like a starfish, and float. Shout for help when you can.

Our 2027 Calendar and Cinch Bags



Our 2027 calendar is selling well, with photos of Worms Head and Rhossili Bay through the seasons, and it's £10 from the lookout. Our new drawstring cinch bags carry the NCI badge and have a zip pocket, in teal, red, green, black or yellow, for a £10 suggested donation. Both make lovely Christmas presents that help keep the watch going.