

## Whitstable National Coastwatch – Volunteer Eyes along The Coast

Whitstable has its own National Coastwatch Station, manned by uniformed volunteers, on Tankerton Slopes.

The blue and yellow “beach hut” opens up, currently, every Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, throughout the year, displaying signs, observation windows, sprouting flags and aerials, turning into an integral part of the search and rescue organisation for the seas off the beaches of Whitstable.

**National Coastwatch Institution ( NCI )** is a registered charity, formed in 1994, to provide a visual watch on the seas around Britain. There are currently around 50 watchstations, the two locally being Herne Bay and Whitstable. All are run by volunteers from local communities. For more information on all our national activities see [www.nci.org.uk](http://www.nci.org.uk)

National Coastwatch works with HM Coastguard and RNLI. Volunteers have to be trained to a standard to interact with other arms of the search and rescue operation.

There are about 30 trained watchkeepers in the Whitstable Station, which allows opening on 4 days a week through the year. We will usually have half a dozen trainees as well. More volunteers are needed to train towards the assessment of qualified watchkeeper, so that, ultimately NCI can provide a local service on more days of the week for extended hours.

Volunteers can be from any background. If you are willing to learn and committed to helping with maintaining safety at sea, the training will equip you with all you need.

Visitors are always welcome at the Watchstation. If you’re strolling along the promenade on one of our operational days, why not pop in and see what we do. And, don’t forget our colleagues at Herne Bay NCI station – they’ll be happy to see you too.

**Free talks to local groups** are available – short and informal to full slide show presentation.

For more information, contact **Whitstable Station Manager, Steve Ware** on **01227 265195**



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