

SHERINGHAM COASTWATCH

Sheringham Coastwatch is registered as a charity with HMRC.

Our over-riding aim is to help to ensure the safety of those on the sea and people who use the beaches and cliff walks in the Sheringham area.

OUR MAIN ROLES

- Keep a visual, radar and AIS watch on the coastal area visible from the Station and log all passing vessels. (Most commercial vessels are required to have AIS equipment which transmits information about the ship, its position, speed, and course as well as its destination.)
- Monitor the international distress channel on VHF chs.16 and 70.
- Report any incidents or emergencies to HM Coastguard and/or Police or Ambulance Service, as appropriate.
- Co-operate with HM Coastguard and other Search and Rescue organisations when requested.
- Monitor local weather conditions and when requested give local weather reports. (Not weather forecasts.)
- Assist the general public and relevant authorities where possible.

WHY WE WERE SET UP

In the 1960's HM Coastguard became a '999' service, enabling the public to raise the alarm as with the other emergency services; the last Coastguard station where a visual watch was kept closed in 1994.

There are now only two Coastguard stations on the East coast of England-Humber and Walton on the Naze.

These stations do not keep a visual watch; their main role is to co-ordinate rescues.

In 1994 two fishermen lost their lives directly below a recently-closed Coastguard lookout. Local volunteers decided to re-open the lookout and to keep a visual watch. And so the Coastwatch movement was born.

Since then the number of Coastwatch stations has grown and there are now over 50 around the coast.

Sheringham Coastwatch was formed in 1997 since when we have been keeping watch over the sea, beach and cliff paths visible from Old Coastguard Lookout on Skelding Hill, the highest point of Sheringham golf course.

We are part of the Sea Safety Group of Coastwatch stations which is a charity set up to promote safety at sea.

OUR WATCHKEEPERS

We operate from the Old Coastguard Lookout (the Watch tower) on Skelding Hill, the highest point of Sheringham golf course.

All watchkeepers are volunteers and have a variety of backgrounds. Some have considerable maritime experience but most have none.

The watchkeepers are responsible for raising all the funds to equip, maintain and run our station.

New members are always welcome and are fully trained by experienced watchkeepers before standing watches alone.

Most watchkeepers stand one regular watch each week. Some choose to work alternate weeks. Others decide not to have a regular watch but choose to provide cover for regular watchkeepers.

We work to guidelines agreed nationally with HM Coastguard who inspect us annually to ensure that effective training takes place and that we apply the relevant rules properly and follow procedures correctly.



HOW WE ARE RUN

Sheringham Coastwatch is totally self-financing. As well as collecting donations in a box at the Station we undertake a number of collections at local supermarkets. We also receive some donations directly from people who think our work is important and who want to support us.

As a charity, the Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the organisation is run effectively and efficiently. The Trustees include representatives elected by the membership as a whole.

Our Station Manager and his two deputies run the station on a day to day basis. The Trustees are elected at our AGM. As well as an AGM, there are 4 meetings a year at which members get together and may raise and discuss any issue that relates to Sheringham Coastwatch.

Twice a year we hold a dinner when members (and their partners) can meet colleagues in an “off duty” setting. These events are very informal.

SHERINGHAM COASTWATCH

Sheringham Golf Club. Sweetbriar Lane.
Sheringham. Norfolk. NR26 8HG
Telephone: 01263-821200

Why not join us? There can be few more wonderful places to spend a few hours each week. But as well as enjoying the views you will know that you are helping to ensure the safety of those on the sea, or using the beaches and cliff paths.

If you would like to join us, pick up an application form and information sheet from the Station at the Old Coastguard Lookout on Skelding Hill.

If you have any questions call in at the Station and talk to the watchkeeper on duty, phone 01263 821200 or email enquiries@sheringhamcoastwatch.org.uk

For more information visit our web site:
www.sheringhamcoastwatch.org.uk

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