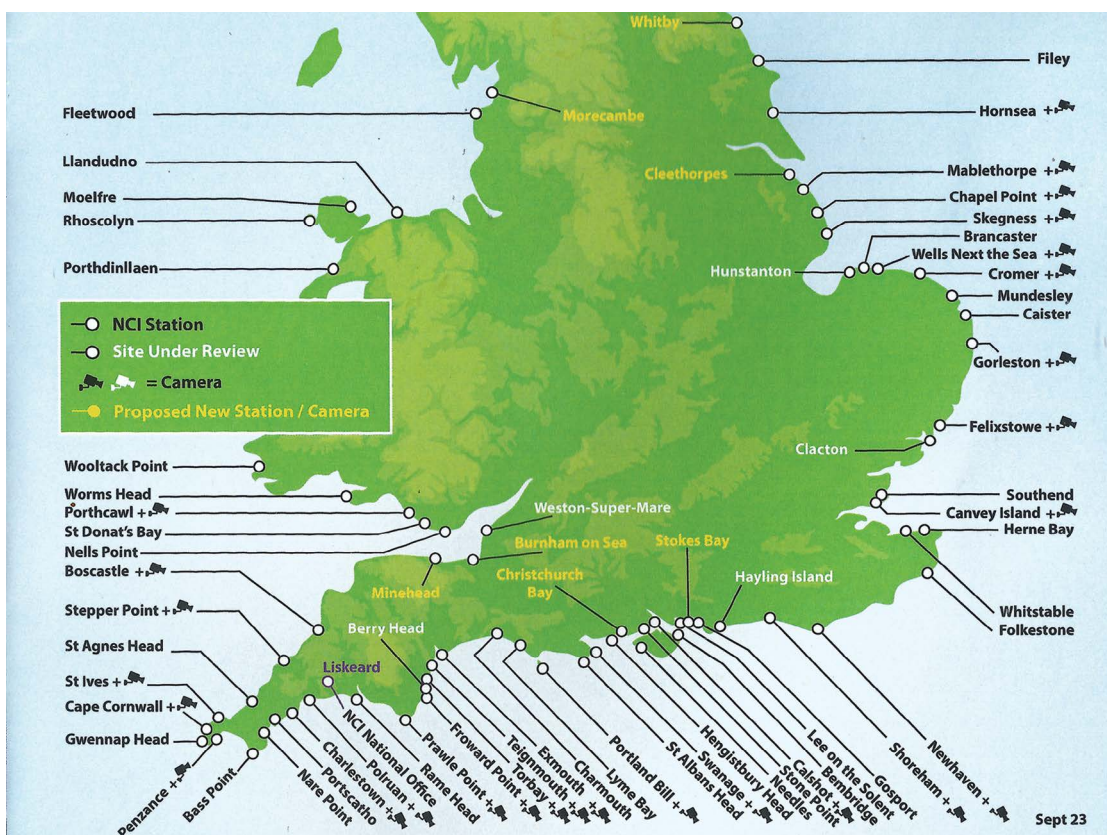


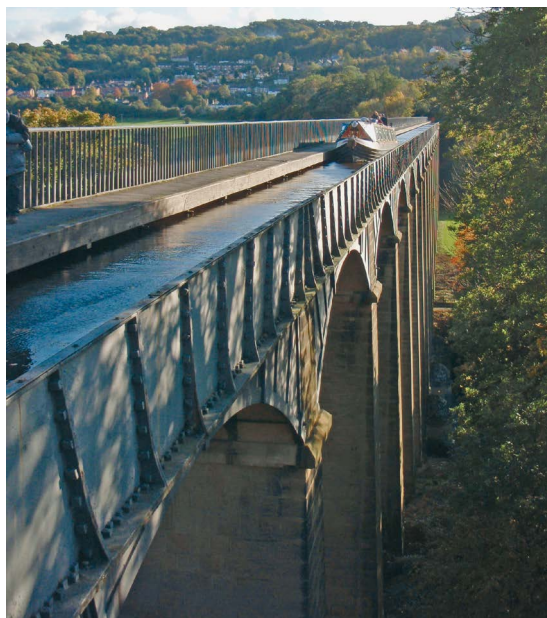
Undercurrents



The National Coastwatch Institution have updated their index of stations. Scarborough and Walney have gone. Whitby is proposed, as are Cleethorpes, Stokes Bay, Minehead, Burnham on Sea and Morecambe. Christchurch Bay could replace Steamer Point, Moelfre replaces Point Lynas, Llandudno replaces Great Orme and Barry Head is under review. Perhaps some of these are just name changes.

Pontcysyllte traffic control?

Trip boat operators are calling for traffic control as paddlers are beginning to clog up the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. Our experience is that trip boat operators are not too keen on narrowboats that do not give them priority, either. Perhaps it does not help that the CRT suggest this is a good place for novice paddlers (Nov 22, p38).



Water safety

An Adjournment Debate brought by Rob Butler (Con, Aylesbury) addressed drowning prevention in the aftermath of the death of 12 year old Sunnah Khan at Bournemouth. Her mother had said 'The water should be a safe space for people to enjoy, especially on a lifeguarded beach, and if it cannot be made safe then people should not be allowed to swim in it.' She also suggested that people should wear light coloured bathing costumes, easier to see below the water surface.

A petition had attracted 108,000 signatures in support of widening the scope of school swimming lessons to include knowledge of such features as rip tides and how to get out of them. Last year there were 226 water related fatalities in the UK. Low income and ethnic minority families were disproportionately represented, black children being three times as likely as British white to become victims.

There has been a call for more signs at beaches. In fact, this can have the opposite effect. Listing everything that could possibly go wrong could result in all signs being ignored. Making a feature of just unusual aspects of a location is more likely to be noted.

In fact, 90% of children who died in open water last year were inland, not at the coast.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education Claire Coutinho assured that the Government were working with relevant sector organizations to improve the situation, including knowledge of cold water shock, rip tides and frozen water. Last year 80% of primary school pupils were provided with swimming and/or water safety lessons.

Scottish power schemes

The 1.5GW Coire Glas pumped storage scheme will draw from Loch Lochy and so should not affect boat users. However, there are up to 14 more pumped storage schemes proposed and we need to pay attention to what is intended.

Pool back

The BoatLife Show at the NEC on Feb 15-18th will see the activity pool in use again, hosted by GJW Direct Insurance and managed by Rockley Watersports. The show encompasses a wide range of watersports.

Watersports survey

British Marine have published the results of their 2022 watersports survey, which says that 13,200,000 UK adults tried a boating activity that year. Overseas participation is recovering well, following the Covid travel restrictions, and sunny weather has assisted on the home front.

Swansea slipway

A slipway, to serve for launching canoes and powered craft, has been opened by the Swansea Canal Society. This gives access to over 3km back in water.

Biting insect blues

Researchers at Aberystwyth University have discovered that biting insects like the colour blue as this is typical of their victims' skin colour. The moral is that if you don't want to get bitten you should not wear blue. This could be bad news for bodies from the CRT to the Guides who have blue uniforms.