

From: [Starmer, Phillipa](#)
To: [Chris Bourne](#)
Cc: [Parsons, Matt](#)
Subject: Whitby Cliff Lift
Date: 24 January 2026 20:14:32
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
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[OFFICIAL]

Hi Chris,

As you know, we visited the Cliff Lift on Wednesday.

The focus of the visit was to look at whether there was further evidence of water ingress since we visited in August following the wetter months over winter. Overall, conditions appeared similar to those in August. However, it was noted that there was one isolated source of inflow at the top section of the shaft. The cause of this is unclear and we recommend that it should be further investigated. The previous recommendations from the earlier visit remain unchanged.

I would like to reiterate that this is a high-level view based on our short visits, rather than an in-depth analysis, and that that our views and recommendations should be subject to a detailed professional review.

Regards,

Phillipa Starmer

Manager Woodsmith
Crop Nutrients



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Hi Chris,



The opinion is only based on what we could see during the short visit – there were signs where water had entered the liner at some point, evidenced from the small salt formations, but these were not active during the visit and were minor in nature but I didn't notice many of these. It would certainly be advisable to conduct a review at the wetter time of year to understand any influence from the ground water, but purely based on our short visual this didn't appear to show signs of having been a major issue, the tubbing gaskets were intact (alongside the stair case), I only mentioned reviewing the old grout plugs as some looked rather deteriorated and could allow ground water ingress (not seen during the visit) if the groundwater levels rise. But yes, present groundwater could be a potential source of water ingress, but wasn't seen at the time or looked to have been a major issue from past years.

Hopefully this is of some help.

Regards,

Phillipa Starmer, [REDACTED]

From: Chris Bourne <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 11:16 AM
To: Starmer, Phillipa [REDACTED]; John Woodhead <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Parsons, Matt <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: Whitby Cliff Lift

Hi Philippa,

Many thanks for the helpful advice and the time of your team to assist with this. Please could I ask a follow up question specifically in relation to the absence of water ingress in the shaft.

Is it possible this is due to the time of year and current weather conditions ?

We have just had the hottest summer on record, groundwater levels are extremely low, and there is a hosepipe ban in effect.

Based on your experience is it likely that if a return visit was to be made in say January/February that the water ingress situation in the shaft might be different if we have a wet winter and groundwater levels return to normal ?

Thanks

Chris Bourne

Head of Harbours and Coastal Infrastructure

North Yorkshire Council

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From: Starmer, Phillipa <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 02 September 2025 09:42
To: John Woodhead <[REDACTED]>; Chris Bourne <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Parsons, Matt <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Whitby Cliff Lift

[OFFICIAL]

Dear John, Chris

Apologies for the delay in getting back to you. It was good to meet you too John and please thank Tony for supporting the visit.

Please see below for our high-level view of the current condition of the shaft (with specific regard to any water ingress issues), ventilation, and mechanical, electrical and structural matters, together with feedback about the consultant scope of works.

I would like to stress that this is a high-level view based on our visit, rather than an in- depth analysis. Our views and recommendations should be subject to a detailed professional review.

Shaft

It would appear that the shaft is relatively dry, with no significant water ingress. Based on this we would suggest that backwall grouting is not required at this time and instead we recommend that that the original grout port plugs are inspected and replaced as required.

Ventilation

Our view is that the main source of water in the shaft is due to moisture accumulation (condensation), related to a lack of adequate ventilation.

We suggest that reinstating passive ventilation at the earliest opportunity would to be likely to sufficiently resolve the issue. This could include opening the original ventilation in the headframe structure and replacing the tunnel entry doors to include integrated ventilation openings.

Mechanical, electrical, structural

It is recommended that a thorough review of the systems, including a compliance check against all relevant legal and regulatory standards, is undertaken.

The main items noted on our visit was the poor state of the lift guide rails, counterweight, and the bolting in the emergency staircase. In addition, it is clear that works are required to improve the condition of the external headframe building, and that the temporary inspection openings in the tunnel should be closed or made permanent inspection hatches. To ensure electrical equipment is maintained a review of the IP (ingress protection) rating should be included. In the Woodsmith shafts we have applied di-electric grease to help maintain our electrical connections and protect from corrosion/moisture ingress.

Feedback on consultant scope of works

In addition to the items on the proposed scope of works we would suggest:

- Full legal compliance check of electrical / mechanical systems
- Review of all flat surfaces in the shaft and removal of any/all potential dropped object.

I hope this is helpful and happy to have a call to discuss further.

Regards,

Phillipa Starmer

Manager Woodsmith

Crop Nutrients



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