

Community spirit saves vulnerable vessel

A local community came to the rescue of a neighbouring lighthouse keeper last night, after the lantern in the lighthouse smashed and left approaching boats in a perilous predicament.

The keeper of Briar's Rock Lighthouse, Mr Harold Thomas, 56, was working in the lantern room at the top of the tower, when he accidentally dropped the glass dome, smashing the glass of the lantern irreparably. Mr Thomas was attempting to make emergency repairs to the light, something he had undertaken a number of times during his 20-year tenancy, when he tripped and fell backwards holding the glass.

The lighthouse is an indispensable piece of architecture and has been guiding vessels to safety for over 100 years. It stands proudly on Briar's Rock above a particularly hazardous strip

of coastline with rock formations known as Poseidon's Footsteps. Inhabitants of Briar's Rock village, with a population of around 250, immediately responded to Thomas's aid. A villager, who attended the scene, told us, "I realised there was a serious problem when my house fell into complete darkness. Immediately, I grabbed my lantern and headed out to help." Villagers, alongside Mr Thomas, scrambled up Briar's Rock to aid an incoming ship that passed within an inch of its life. If it were not for their quick thinking, disaster would have struck.

Members of the local community are now assisting Mr Thomas with the repairs to Briar's Rock Lighthouse and are planning to fit a remotely-operated lantern to the clifftop as a temporary measure.