



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Applications for the designation of 4 sites as bathing waters

March 2023



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Contents

Background.....	1
Proposals for bathing water designation	2
Sykes Lane Bathing Beach, Rutland Water, Rutland	2
Location and facilities	2
Usage numbers and methodology	3
Local consultation	4
Whitwell Creek, Rutland Water, Rutland	5
Location and facilities	5
Usage numbers and methodology	6
Local consultation	7
Firestone Bay, Plymouth, Devon	8
Location and facilities	8
Usage numbers and methodology	9
Local consultation	10
River Deben, Waldringfield, Suffolk.....	11
Location and facilities	11
Usage numbers and methodology	12
Local consultation	13
Responding to this consultation	14
Annex - List of consultees.....	14

Background

Popular beaches and inland waters that attract a large number of bathers are designated as bathing waters under the Bathing Water Regulations 2013 (S.I.2013/1675) ('the Regulations'). During the bathing season, which in England runs from 15 May to 30 September, the Environment Agency ('the EA') monitors water quality for intestinal enterococci and *E. coli* (among other substances). Bathing waters are classified annually as 'excellent', 'good', 'sufficient' or 'poor', based on the EA assessment of the level of bacteria in the water over the preceding four years. If the site is designated, the EA will develop a bathing water profile and put plans in place to monitor and protect the bathing water, with the aim of achieving at least a 'sufficient' classification.

Bathing water monitoring measures the level of bacteria and other substances set out in the Regulations but does not imply that the area is safer than any other water body. The objective of the Regulations is to drive improvement to water quality at sites where people swim, by putting in place duties on the EA, local authorities and sewerage undertakers to investigate pollution incidents at bathing water sites so that remedial measures can be put in place.

The Regulations define a bathing water as a surface water where '*... the Secretary of State expects a large number of people to bathe, having regard in particular to past trends and any infrastructure or facilities provided, or other measures taken, to promote bathing at those waters*' (reg. 3(1)). Designation also takes into account any facilities that are provided to promote and support bathing (for example lifeguarding, first aid facilities, public toilets, shops and cafes) because the presence of such facilities demonstrates that the site is an established bathing area and is promoted and managed for bathing.

Under the Bathing Water Regulations 2013, the local authority must display public information about water quality and pollution sources at designated bathing waters during the bathing season (15 May to 30 September). The information displayed is provided to the authority by the Environment Agency.

Defra provides guidance for those applying for bathing water status and requires that the application provides information on the facilities provided, the number of bathers and description of local consultation: [Bathing waters: apply for designation or de-designation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Proposals for bathing water designation

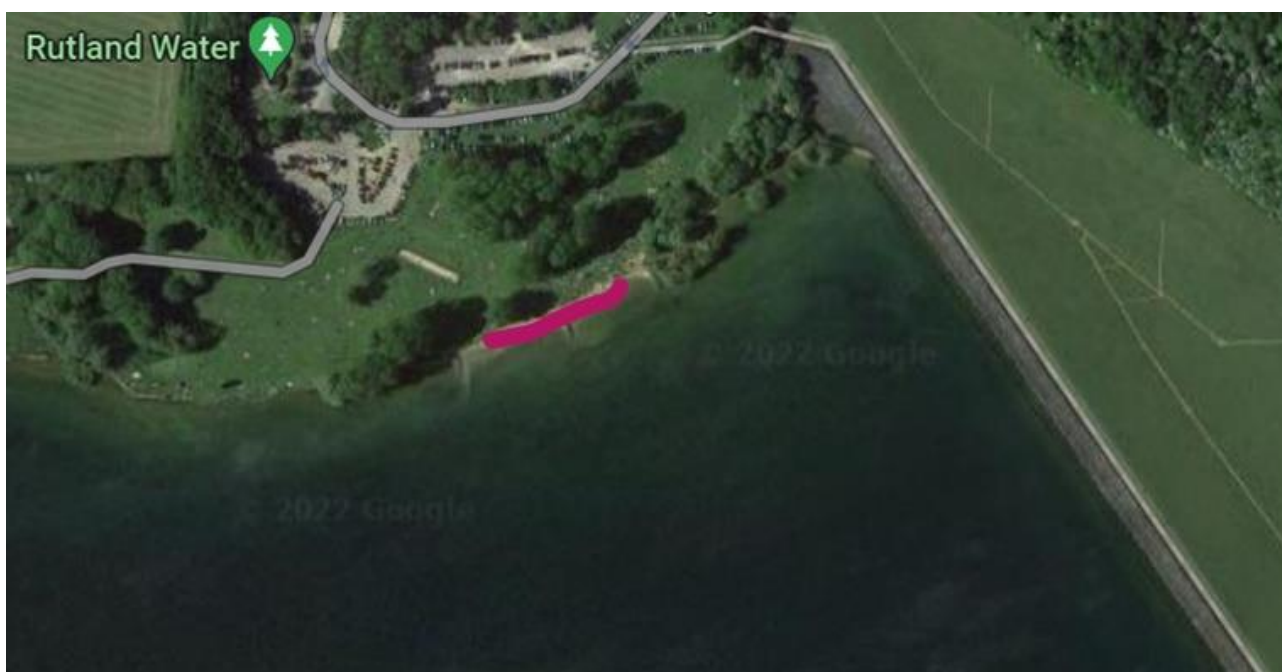
Sykes Lane Bathing Beach, Rutland Water, Rutland

Anglian Water has applied for Sykes Lane Bathing Beach, Rutland Water to be designated as a bathing water. This consultation sets out our summary of the application and seeks your views on the proposal to designate this site as a bathing water.

Location and facilities

Sykes Lane Bathing Beach, highlighted in Image A, is located on Rutland Water. The land is owned and managed by Anglian Water.

Image A



If the site is designated as a bathing water, the Environment Agency will determine a sampling point on the basis of where the greatest number of bathers go into the water. The annual classification would reflect bathing water quality at this point.

The facilities that are available near to the site include:

- public toilets
- large car park
- on road parking
- first aid service
- cafe
- lifeguards
- visitor centre and mini golf
- BBQ stands

Usage numbers and methodology

Defra's guidance on applying for a new bathing water designation asks for a numerical survey of beach usage covering a minimum of 20 days during the bathing season. The survey must include 10 weekend or bank holiday days and half of the survey days must be during school holiday periods. The guidance asks for the numbers of adults bathing and children bathing or paddling to be shown separately, as children are more likely than adults to become immersed and ingest water and for that reason are counted as a bather.

The applicant has provided a survey of usage taken over 20 days between 25th June and 30th August 2022.

The breakdown of numbers reported over 20 counts was:

- 17,170 bathers (adults swimming and children swimming or paddling)

This gives an average per count (rounded to the nearest whole number) of:

- 859 bathers

The total number of bathers for each count is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Date of count	Bathers
25/06/22	108
09/07/22	1876
10/07/22	2015
11/07/22	567
12/07/22	432
14/07/22	654
15/07/22	544
16/07/22	1098
17/07/22	1654
19/07/22	512
23/07/22	291
06/08/22	345
07/08/22	361
12/08/22	416
13/08/22	1153
14/08/22	1657
15/08/22	765
16/08/22	568
17/08/22	1675
30/08/22	479
Totals	17,170
Daily Average	859

Bathers comprise adults swimming and children both swimming and paddling.

Local consultation

Anglian Water held a local consultation to gather views on the water quality at Rutland Water and the proposal to apply for a bathing water designation. The consultation was carried out in person during the 2022 bathing season. It targeted users of the site, who would be directly affected by the proposal. There were 167 respondents.

72% responded that water quality is important to them when using water for recreation.

16% of respondents did not feel that water quality is important to them when using water for recreation, with the rest being neutral on the issue.

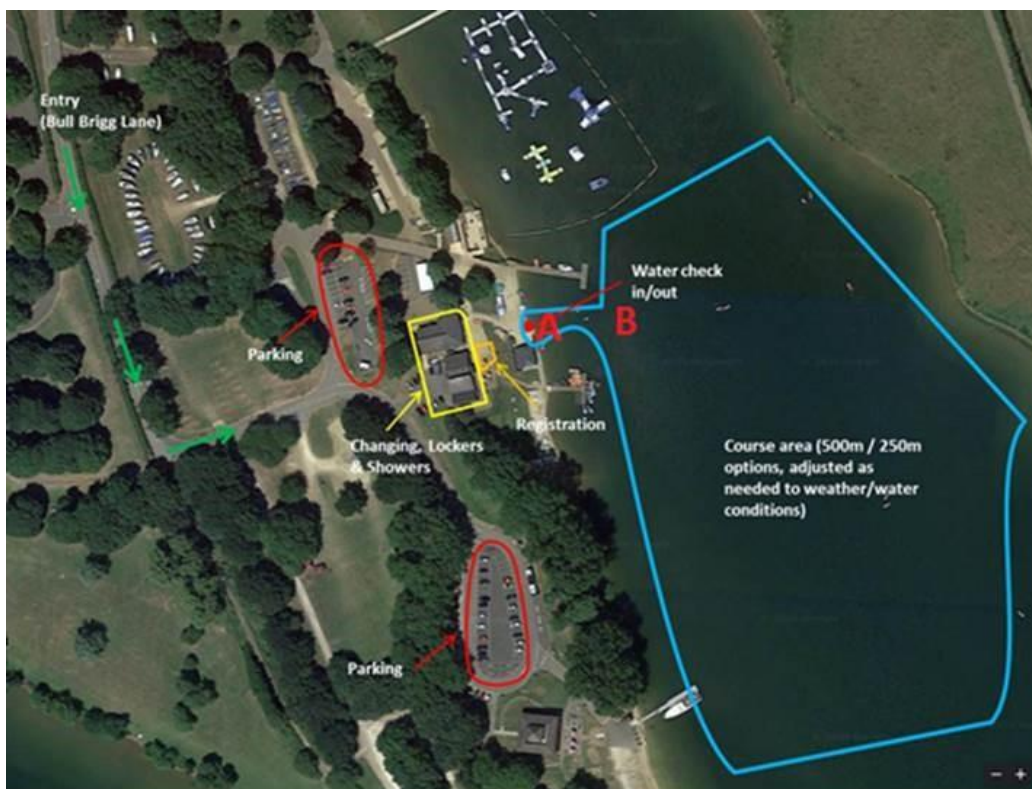
Whitwell Creek, Rutland Water, Rutland

Anglian Water has applied for Whitwell Creek, Rutland Water to be designated as a bathing water. This consultation sets out our summary of the application and seeks your views on the proposal to designate this site as a bathing water.

Location and facilities

Whitwell Creek, highlighted in Image B, is located on Rutland Water. The land is owned and managed by Anglian Water.

Image B



If the site is designated as a bathing water, the Environment Agency will determine a sampling point on the basis of where the greatest number of bathers go into the water. The annual classification would reflect bathing water quality at this point.

The facilities that are available near to the site include:

- public toilets
- large car park
- first aid service
- cafe
- lifeguards
- BBQ stands

Usage numbers and methodology

Defra's guidance on applying for a new bathing water designation asks for a numerical survey of beach usage covering a minimum of 20 days during the bathing season. The survey must include 10 weekend or bank holiday days and half of the survey days must be during school holiday periods. The guidance asks for the numbers of adults bathing and children bathing or paddling to be shown separately, as children are more likely than adults to become immersed and ingest water and for that reason are counted as a bather.

The applicant has provided a survey of usage taken over 20 days between 15th May and 11th September 2022.

The breakdown of numbers reported over 20 counts were:

- 2,129 bathers (adults swimming and children swimming or paddling)

This gives an average per count (rounded to the nearest whole number) of:

- 106 bathers

The total number of bathers for each count is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Date of count	Bathers
15/05/2022	104
22/05/2022	131
29/05/2022	102
31/05/2022	15
05/06/2022	108
12/06/2022	134
19/06/2022	154
03/07/2022	100
10/07/2022	157
17/07/2022	176
24/07/2022	151
28/07/2022	13
31/07/2022	138
14/08/2022	177
16/08/2022	10
21/08/2022	148
25/08/2022	9
28/08/2022	127
04/09/2022	93
11/09/2022	82
Totals	2,129
Daily Average	106

Bathers comprise adults swimming and children both swimming and paddling.

Local consultation

Anglian Water held a local consultation to gather views on the water quality at Rutland Water and the proposal to apply for a bathing water designation. The consultation was carried out in person during the 2022 bathing season. It targeted users of the site, who would be directly affected by the proposal. There were 167 respondents.

72% responded that water quality is important to them when using water for recreation.

16% of respondents did not feel that water quality is important to them when using water for recreation, with the rest being neutral on the issue.

Firestone Bay, Plymouth, Devon

Plymouth City Council has applied for Firestone Bay, Plymouth to be designated as a bathing water. This consultation sets out our summary of the application and seeks your views on the proposal to designate this site as a bathing water.

Location and facilities

Firestone Bay, Plymouth, highlighted in Image C, is located on the south coast. The land is owned and managed by Plymouth City Council.

Image C



If the site is designated as a bathing water, the Environment Agency will determine a sampling point on the basis of where the greatest number of bathers go into the water. The annual classification would reflect bathing water quality at this point.

The facilities that are available near to the site include:

- public toilets
- car park
- on road parking
- first aid service
- cafes
- shops
- changing facilities
- disabled access
- life buoys

- water bottle refill station
- accessible greenspace with seating

Usage numbers and methodology

Defra's guidance on applying for a new bathing water designation asks for a numerical survey of beach usage covering a minimum of 20 days during the bathing season. The survey must include 10 weekend or bank holiday days and half of the survey days must be during school holiday periods. The guidance asks for the numbers of adults bathing and children bathing or paddling to be shown separately, as children are more likely than adults to become immersed and ingest water and for that reason are counted as a bather.

The applicant has provided a survey of usage taken over 20 days between 2nd June and 21st August 2022.

The breakdown of numbers reported over 20 counts were:

- 2,175 bathers (adults swimming and children swimming or paddling)

This gives an average per count (rounded to the nearest whole number) of:

- 109 bathers

The total number of bathers for each count is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Date of count	Bathers
02/6/2022	58
03/06/22	108
05/06/22	62
11/06/22	62
12/06/22	120
17/06/22	149
18/06/22	112
21/06/22	125
22/06/22	135
25/06/22	73
08/8/22	137
09/8/22	126
10/8/22	172
11/8/22	88
14/8/22	160
15/8/22	101
18/8/22	122
19/8/22	113
20/08/22	60
21/8/22	92
Totals	2,175
Daily Average	109

Bathers comprise adults swimming and children both swimming and paddling.

Local consultation

Plymouth City Council held a local consultation to gather views on the proposal to apply for designation as a bathing water. The consultation was carried out via post and email. Between 22nd August and 2nd September 2022. It targeted individuals and groups who would be directly affected by the proposal, including residents, and businesses local to Firestone Bay. There were 94 responses.

87 respondents were in favour of Firestone Bay becoming a designated bathing water with 5 opposing the proposal. 2 residents undecided.

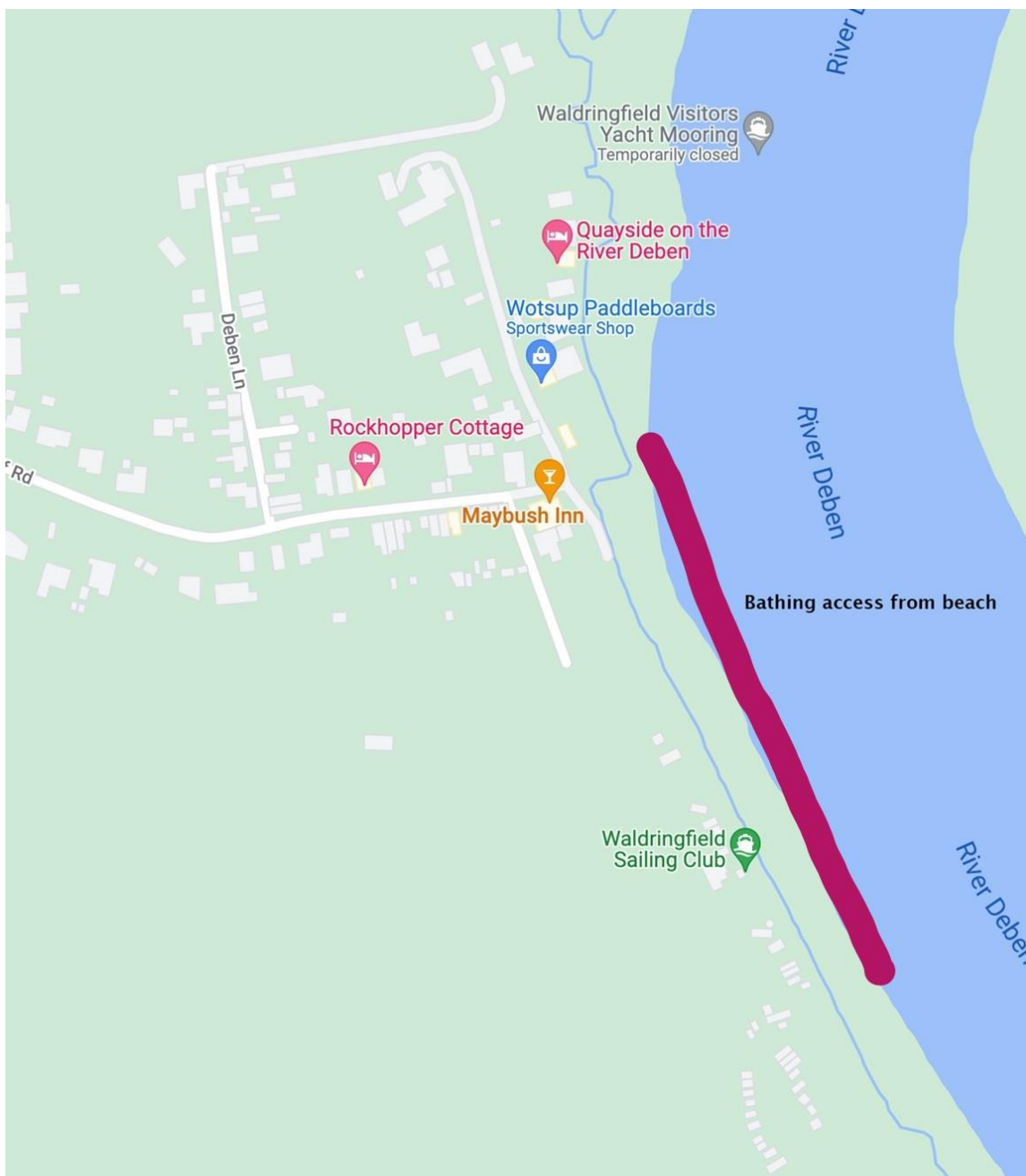
River Deben, Waldringfield, Suffolk

Save the Deben Campaign Group has applied for an area of the River Deben at Waldringfield to be designated as a bathing water. This consultation sets out our summary of the application and seeks your views on the proposal to designate this site as a bathing water.

Location and facilities

The River Deben at Waldringfield, highlighted in Image D, is located inland in Suffolk. The land is owned and managed by Suffolk County Council.

Image D



If the site is designated as a bathing water, the Environment Agency will determine a sampling point on the basis of where the greatest number of bathers go into the water. The annual classification would reflect bathing water quality at this point.

The facilities that are available near to the site include:

- public toilets
- car park
- on road parking
- public house
- shops
- disabled access
- defibrillator

Usage numbers and methodology

Defra's guidance on applying for a new bathing water designation asks for a numerical survey of beach usage covering a minimum of 20 days during the bathing season. The survey must include 10 weekend or bank holiday days and half of the survey days must be during school holiday periods. The guidance asks for the numbers of adults bathing and children bathing or paddling to be shown separately, as children are more likely than adults to become immersed and ingest water and for that reason are counted as a bather.

The applicant has provided a survey of usage taken over 20 days between 16th July and 3rd September 2022.

The breakdown of numbers reported over 20 counts were:

- 3,203 bathers (adults swimming and children swimming or paddling)

This gives an average per count (rounded to the nearest whole number) of:

- 160 bathers

The total number of bathers for each count is shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Date of count	Bathers
16/07/22	116
17/07/22	145
30/07/22	155
31/07/22	173
01/08/22	152
02/08/22	146
03/08/22	154
09/08/22	123
10/08/22	126
12/08/22	145
13/08/22	274
14/08/22	262
16/08/22	123
17/08/22	151
24/08/22	115
26/08/22	153
27/08/22	195
28/08/22	215
29/08/22	108
03/09/22	172
Totals	3,203
Daily Average	160

Bathers comprise adults swimming and children both swimming and paddling.

Local consultation

Save the Deben Campaign Group held a local consultation to gather views on the proposal to apply for designation as a bathing water. The consultation was carried out during the 2022 bathing season. It targeted individuals and groups who would be directly affected by the proposal, including residents, and businesses local to Waldringfield. There were 1,158 responses.

All respondents were in favour of the River Deben at Waldringfield becoming a designated bathing water with no one opposing the proposal.

Responding to this consultation

We would welcome your views on the proposal to designate any of these sites as bathing waters.

In your response please state:

- Which site(s) you are providing your view on
- Do you agree or disagree with the proposal(s)
- Your reasons or evidence to support your view

Please respond by 24 March 2023 via Citizen Space, by email to bathingwater@defra.gov.uk or by post to:

Bathing Water Team
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
2 Marsham Street
Seacole Building
London
SW1P 4DF

Annex - List of consultees

British Destinations and UK Beach Management Forum
British Long Distance Swimming Association
Consumer Council for Water
Country Land and Business Association
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Marine Conservation Society
National Farmers Union
Outdoor Swimming Society
River and Lake Swimming Association
Surfers Against Sewage
Visit England
Water UK
Anglian Water
South West Water