

Number: **WG20978**



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Consultation Document

Bathing Water Review in Wales for 2014

Date of issue: **7 February 2014**

Action required: Responses by **21 March 2014**



Overview

The aim of this consultation exercise is to seek views about our proposals to designate two sites in Wales as bathing waters under the Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC).

This is in line with the requirements of the European Bathing Water Directive, which aims to protect human health by requiring Member States to identify popular bathing waters, monitor their water quality, keep bathers well informed about water quality and endeavour over time to achieve good water quality at all designated sites. In Wales the bathing season runs from mid May to the end of September.

One of the requirements under the revised Directive is for the Welsh Government to annually review the list of designated bathing waters in Wales.

How to respond

Please submit your comments by 21 March 2014, in any of the following ways:

Email:

Water@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

Post:

Water Branch (Bathing Water Consultation)
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

If you have any queries on this consultation, please email: Water@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternate language versions of this document are available on request.

Information on bathing water designation is available on the Welsh Government website. The link is below: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/epq/waterflooding/bathing-water-quality-and-beaches/idnewwaters/?lang=en>

Contact details

For further information:

Water Branch (Bathing Water Consultation)
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff CF10 3NQ

Email: Water@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

Telephone: 029 2082 5509

Data protection

How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

Summary

The revised Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC) requires Member States to annually identify all popular bathing areas and to monitor water quality at these bathing waters throughout the bathing season, which in Wales runs from mid May to the end of September.

The European Bathing Water Directive aims to:

- protect human health by requiring Member States to identify popular bathing waters
- monitor their water quality
- inform bathers about water quality
- over time to achieve good water quality at all designated sites.

Public Information provision – Local Authorities

There has been a requirement since the 2012 bathing season for public information signage to be available at all designated bathing waters during the bathing season. Every local authority that controls a bathing water, must ensure that the following information is available at the site:

- A general description of the bathing water
- Information on where to find more detailed information about the bathing water
- Information on abnormal situations and their expected duration

From 2016, local authorities that control a bathing water will also be required to display further information in the form of classification symbols.

Review of bathing waters for the 2014 bathing season

For the 2014 bathing water review we have received two requests for designation, one from Gwynedd Council and one from Denbighshire Council, for Llyn Padarn and Rhyl East.

Current Position

There are currently 100 designated bathing waters in Wales. All the current designated bathing waters are monitored by Natural Resources Wales, who carry out water sampling to assess compliance with water quality standards set by the Directive.

We are consulting on our proposals to designate two further bathing waters in Wales to provide an opportunity for members of the public and organisations to consider if they have any comments which they would like to provide on this proposed decision.

Information on the identification and designation process in Wales is available on the Welsh Government web page:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/epq/waterflooding/bathing-water-quality-and-beaches/idnewwaters/?lang=en>

Further information on bathing water quality and a copy of the Bathing Water Directive is available on the link below:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-bathing/>

Response to Comments

Following the consultation period, we will give full consideration to the responses received and issue a summary of responses.

Consultation Period

The consultation will run for a period of 6 weeks from 7 February to 21 March 2014.

Question

We would welcome your comments on whether the two sites (at Doc 1 and Doc 2) should be designated and added to the list of bathing waters under the Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC)?

1. Llyn Padarn - Llanberis, Gwynedd (Document 1)
2. Rhyl East - Promenade, Rhyl (Document 2)

Consultation Response Form

Your name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Email:

Telephone number:

Your address:

We have asked a specific question. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

Please enter here:

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here:

Doc 1

Application for designation of a bathing water under the Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC)

Llyn Padarn (inland Water)

Location: Llyn Padarn, Llanberis, Gwynedd

Reference: SH573609 (Llanberis)

Managing Authority: Gwynedd Council

Request from: Gwynedd Council

Background

Gwynedd Council have applied for Llyn Padarn to be designated as a bathing water under the Bathing Water Directive. The lake is primarily owned by Gwynedd Council, with the Seiont Gwyrfai and Llynfni Angling Association owning a section of the north western part of Llyn Padarn.

Llyn Padarn is located within the boundaries of Padarn Country Park on the North Western edge of the Snowdonia National Park.

The lake is approximately two and a half miles in length and half a mile wide and at its deepest point, almost 100ft.

Llyn Padarn is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Further information about the site

Access to the shores and waters of Llyn Padarn is possible from many points on the South Western side. The area identified as 'Y Glyn' provides access and egress to the waters from small lagoons that adjoin the main body of water. There is also access to the lake from the slipway at the amenity area situated close to Llanberis village.

Lifesaving rescue devices are located in strategic locations along the lake. Public safety and information signage is also located along the lake shore.

Gwynedd Council have reported that the area has seen increased water activities following a major investment in the form of landscaping, tree removal and new fencing. They have also reported that a major attraction for the summer of 2013 was the procurement of a jetty through the 'Splash' grant scheme which allows easy access to the waters of the lagoon. Splash is a Welsh Government grant funded scheme which aims to support projects that encourage people to enjoy the waters of Wales, including lakes. The scheme is administered by Natural Resources Wales.

The area also supports a broad range of water and other outdoor activities, including a local adventure club, based at the site which provide canoeing and kayaking activities by Canoe Wales accredited staff on a voluntary basis for the local community.

Evidence provided for designation as a bathing water

Bather numbers

Gwynedd Council provided a survey of bather and shore user numbers on 45 different days from 1 April to 27 September 2013. Two of the counts were taken on bank holidays and 10 counts were taken on weekends, including the school holiday period. Beach users were categorised as swimmers, swimmers and shore users, kayak and open boat users. They also provided information on other water related activities at the site. Photographs of usage was also provided.

The breakdown of usage is set out below:

Activity breakdown	Number
Swimmers and shore users	2,039 (of which a minimum of 1,239 were identified as swimmers only). The remaining 800 including swimmers and shore users.
Kayaking	959
Open Boats	216
Other	752

The survey data provided a good cross section of dates during the 2013 bathing season when significant numbers of bathers were present.

Facilities

The following facilities are available:

There are public toilets, picnic and seating areas, and car parking.

There is a regular 'Sherpa' bus service to the lake during the summer months.

There are lifesaving rescue devices located along the lake shore.

There are several access points to the water, which includes a recently installed jetty which has improved access to the waters and lagoons.

Within easy walking distance of the lake, the village of Llanberis has shops, cafes and other related services.

There are colour coded trails which circumnavigate the lake.

Wi Fi is available free of charge at the information point (car park).

The area also supports a broad range of water and other outdoor activities, including a local adventure club, based at the site which provide canoeing and kayaking activities.

Consultation

Gwynedd Council discussed their proposal to request designation of Llyn Padarn at the Padarn Forum which included Llanddeinolen Community Council and Llanberis Community Council and Local Elected Member (Cyngor Gwynedd).

Gwynedd Council have also liaised with Natural Resources Wales, who assisted in sampling the bathing waters during the 2012 and 2013 bathing season.

Gwynedd Council have made Seiont Gwyrfai and Llynfni Angling Association aware of the request for designation.

Doc 2

Application for designation of a bathing water under the Bathing Water Directive

Rhyl East

Location: Rhyl East, East Parade, Rhyl, Denbighshire

Reference: Easting/northing: 301065, 382038

Managing Authority: Denbighshire County Council

Request from: Denbighshire County Council

Background

Denbighshire Council have applied for Rhyl East beach to be designated as a bathing water under the Bathing Water Directive. The beach is already maintained by the Council.

Further information about the site

Rhyl East stretches from the coastguard station past the Rhyl Sun-Centre and is split into two zones, Bather and Craft. The area offers traditional seaside activities such as swimming, paddling and donkey rides.

There are future proposals to create a new entrance for the Pavilion Theatre, introduce beach huts, and establish a kite surfing school at the Rhyl East site.

Rhyl town has a harbour at the west end of the promenade which is currently going through a phased development. There have also been improvements to the public area at the western end of the promenade in recent years.

In 2013 a brand new pedestrian/cycle bridge (Pont-y-Ddraig) was opened in Rhyl creating a new traffic free link from Rhyl to Kinmel Bay. It is part of a development which will include a public square and quayside building to create a hub for the harbour and the surrounding dune and beach areas when the full project is completed.

Evidence provided for designation as a bathing water

Bather numbers

Denbighshire County Council provided a survey of bather and beach user numbers for 105 days from 23 May to 4 September 2013. The counts included weekends, bank holidays and school holiday periods.

The breakdown of usage is set out below:

Activity breakdown	Numbers
Bathers	1,485
Beach users	42,110

The bather numbers recorded for 2013 (1,485) represents an increase on bather numbers from 2012 (543) of 173%.

The survey provided a good cross section of dates during the 2013 bathing season when significant numbers of bathers were present.

Facilities

The following facilities are available:

There are public toilets and outdoor shower, car and coach parking.

Tourist Information Centre, public information, kiosks and restaurants are available near by.

There is a seasonal lifeguard service. Sand Friendly Wheelchairs and beach sports equipment is also available for hire.

There is good access to the beach and ramped access which complies with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements.

Consultation

There have been a number of meetings and discussions about beaches and bathing water with Denbighshire Member Area Group Councillors and Town Councillors in November/December 2012 and in April 2013. Denbighshire Council have reported that at these meetings all were supportive of the proposals to apply for designation of Rhyl East.