Action at each bathing water

This part of appendix 2 lists each at risk water, shows what the compliance record for the water is 2005 to 2012 and describes what the problems is and outlines the actions we are undertaking to resolve issues at the bathing water. The actions aim to improve water quality, however, in some cases other actions such as investigations or de-designations are more appropriate.

Quality Bar

The coloured bar shows rBWD official results. The numbers indicate the percentage risk of failing sufficient. A low number indicates the bathing water is likely to stay in sufficient class and a high number is indicates it will be more likely to remain poor. The colours are the classes achieved in each year.

Blue = excellent, green = good, orange = sufficient, red = poor

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
					23	28	53

32 - Walpole Bay, Margate (12630)

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
10	7			10	14	89	67

Expected 2015 result: poor

Actions completed

Intensive monitoring of the bacterial loads within Walpole Bay and 1km either side of the bathing water has been carried out, between April and October 2012, after a review of the existing bacteriological data proved inconclusive. The results of the latest monitoring indicated the bathing water is predominately impacted by local sources, however firm conclusions could not be drawn from the study due to exceptional weather in 2012.

Reports from the council beach operator indicate Walpole Bay bathing water is not a popular beach resort in comparison to other beaches in the area. Planned measures to improve the bathing water quality are likely to be expensive, and may be disproportionate compared to the revenue generated by the bathing water. Walpole Bay was put forward for our national disproportionate cost project to

determine the value of the bathing water, and assess the level of interest in improving the bathing water. On the ground surveys and disproportionate cost assessments were carried out which concluded that expenses are disproportionate. As a result de-designation is being discussed with Thanet District Council. At present it is unclear if Thanet District Council wishes to proceed with the de-designation. All the information will be presented to the local authority to allow them to make an informed decision.

Outcome to date

Compliance has decreased since 2011 from sufficient to poor.

Future action

The bathing water has experienced a number of mandatory exceedances; we suspect they are due in part to excessive seaweed at the bathing water beach. We conducted a national research project to investigate the relationship between seaweed and faecal pollution. This has confirmed that seaweed can sometimes act as a reservoir for bacteria and affect compliance. Other sources of contamination also need to be assessed.

We are working in partnership with local authority technical and operational personnel to ensure open communications regarding the bathing water. During meetings we will notify the local authority of progress in our investigations and research and provide opportunities to consider solutions and actions that will result in improvements in bathing water quality.

We will continue to conduct intensive sampling within Walpole Bay and 500 metres either side throughout the 2013 season to determine pollution sources.

De-designation will be considered.

Expected outcome in 2015 and beyond

Compliance only expected after 2015 when planned measures are in place