

DEFRA has today announced a **six week** consultation (ends December 23rd 2024) on proposed changes to the Bathing Water Regulations 2013. Please take part by responding via the weblink below (and then follow the **consultation** and then the **respond online** link)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/bathing-water-reforms-to-consider-water-sports-and-water-quality>

It is good to be consulted, so please respond to the call!

The Lido at Knaresborough was designated a safe bathing water earlier this year and The Environment Agency (EA) have been taking weekly water samples during the 'swimming season' up to the end of September.

EA have yet to report their findings formally but published E.coli values for The Lido [Bathing water profile](#) indicate a POOR classification (as with **ALL** UK designated freshwater bathing sites currently) that will result in signs being erected by North Yorkshire Council at the Lido in due course with warnings against swimming. Other actions by EA and others **to actually improve the water quality** at the Lido (as opposed to warning us about avoiding swimming there) are not available at this point.

The DEFRA consultation is useful, if limited in scope, proposing:

- No automatic de-designation of bathing water status after 5 years of continuing POOR results, replacing this with a review about the economic feasibility of improvement, failure of which may lead to de- designation (is this a sneaky way of continuing to avoid doing anything?)
- Removing the limitation of monitoring to a fixed bathing season
- Including other water users such as kayakers in designating 'bathing' waters
- Monitoring at more than one point, if considered appropriate
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This feels a bit bureaucratic, rather than being outcome oriented.

To probably misquote the role played by Jack Nicholson in the film 'As Good as it Gets' (1997)

" I am drowning and you are describing water to me!"

You will have your own views, look at the material provided around the consultation, and **please give DEFRA your views.**

NAG concerns would include:

- the continued reference in the legislation to only water industry sources of pollution. Important, but leaving out other sources such as private septic tanks, agricultural practices and urban run off
- The continued restriction of monitoring to microbiological concentrations e.g. E. Coli, and the exclusion of other pollution types e.g. pharmaceuticals, forever chemicals, microplastics - all important to human health, as found in the recent Lido survey by NAG [Lido water quality](#)
- The failure to adopt innovative technology in much more intensive, even real time, monitoring to increase our understanding of pollution and human health
- the lack of commitment to fully fund further investigation, after designation, and action by EA and others.
- the lack of focus on action, rather than designation, on planned mitigation rather than administration of failure.

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