



## RESORT BEACH CRITERIA



A 'resort beach' is one, which actively encourages visitors. It would normally be adjacent to, or within easy and reasonable access of the urban community with developed facilities providing varied recreational opportunities. It would typically include all, or some, of the following: a café or restaurant, shop, toilets, public transport, supervision, first aid, public telephone.

Where the award refers to a section of a long beach, with no natural divisions, the beach would not, normally, be expected to be less than 500 metres long.

**Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB) following consultation with a National Beach Jury will award the RESORT SEASIDE AWARD to beaches that have bathing water of the mandatory standard\* (Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC) and which fulfil 30 land-based criteria.**

### WATER QUALITY

- 1. To be eligible for entry to the award scheme the bathing water associated with the beach must have attained at least the mandatory standard\* as outlined in the Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC. The results of the current season's water quality monitoring and the standards of, at least, the previous three years (where available) must be posted.**

*The bathing water at a resort beach does not necessarily have to be identified as one of Scotland's designated bathing waters under the existing Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC or under the Revised Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC) list which will come into existence in March 2008. However, all monitoring must be carried out strictly within the Directive methods of analysis of inspection by either SEPA or an authority approved by Keep Scotland Beautiful. The suitability of monitoring bodies other than SEPA should be checked with KSB.*

*A SEPA and Clean Coast Scotland water quality poster template for displaying appropriate water quality information should be used and is available from KSB.*

*The award beach should include a water quality sampling point, or be part of a designated bathing water area, as mapped by The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), which includes a designated sampling point.*

***\* Continued Seaside Award status may be considered at sites where Mandatory or Guideline water quality has previously been achieved, but where poor water quality events have led to a breach in annual compliance. This will only be possible where the number of poor water quality samples is low and the majority of these poor water quality samples have been predicted accurately and the public warned using electronic messaging systems controlled by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). The final decision will be assessed on a case by case basis by the National Beach Jury. If a bathing water does not achieve the Mandatory Standard for more than three years in a row the award is likely to be withdrawn.***

- 2. Waste water discharge points and riverine inputs within one mile of the beach/water must be highlighted to KSB and the public.**

*The presence of a discharge point does not necessarily eliminate the beach from consideration, but they should be marked on a map so that members of the public can make an informed decision on whether to enter the water or not.*

#### **BEACH AND INTERTIDAL AREA**

- 3. There should be no gross pollution by sewage related or other waste matter including discharges of industrial or urban waste.**

- 4. No algal or other vegetation materials accumulating or decaying.**

*Algal vegetation is generally accepted to refer to seaweed. Whilst small amounts of seaweed are encouraged as a vital part of the beach ecology it should not be allowed to accumulate on resort beaches and become a hazard to the public. Where seaweed is removed KSB encourages beach operators to investigate composting or reusing it rather than adding it to landfill.*

- 5. No oil pollution.**

#### **SAFETY**

- 6. A risk assessment should be carried out and appropriate control measure put in place - either lifeguards and/or adequate lifesaving equipment.**

*A risk assessment is a legal requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which sets out the responsibilities employers have towards themselves, employees and members of the public. The Act states that employers must ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that employees and members of the public are not put at risk. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999, also set out in detail what employers must do to manage health and safety. The Regulations require an employer to make a 'suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking'. So the duty to carry out risk assessments extends to visitors as well as to employees.*

*Carrying out a risk assessment may help with identifying the need for lifeguards on site and the type and location of appropriate public rescue equipment for your beach. A guide to coastal public rescue equipment has recently published by the RNLI and gives excellent guidelines on appropriate equipment for different beaches.*

*Appropriately qualified personnel should conduct any risk assessment and normal operating procedures should be written to address any identified risks.*

- 7. If lifeguards are provided the times and area patrolled should be clearly defined and marked.**

*Safety guidelines should conform to the recommendations in SOBB i.e. Lifeguards should hold appropriate qualifications from an appropriate and recognised training and assessment agent and tested by qualified, independent assessors.*

*At least 2 people within easy access of the foreshore need qualified lifeguard training and should be carrying out a surveillance plan from a fixed point. It is recommended that lifeguard uniforms conform to the officially recognised red/yellow standard.*

*Bathing areas patrolled by lifeguards should be explicit. The area should be defined both on the map at the information point and physically on the beach with markers or flags. It is recommended that the nationally recognised flag zoning system be used:*

- red = danger*
- red/yellow = lifeguard patrolled areas*
- black/white = surfing only*

*Where there are no lifeguards the public should be informed about other safety provisions, including rescue equipment, supervision, area covered and out-of-season arrangements.*

**8. Clearly sign-posted first aid facilities must be available between 10.00am and 6.00pm on the seafront. (If facilities are available at other times these should clearly be stated and agreed with KSB).**

*First aiders should hold appropriate qualifications and could be located in a local leisure pool, a hotel, a local authority building.*

*It may also be that volunteer first aiders could be invited to patrol the beach during high season at weekends. Alternative, out-of season arrangements should also be displayed.*

**9. Beach supervision throughout the summer season through attendant lifeguards, first aid officer, beach officer or a combination.**

*All beach personnel should be readily identifiable, preferably with a distinctive uniform, and conversant, through appropriate training, with the following:*

- Supervision duties and requirements*
- Potential local hazards and their location, access points, zones, public rescue equipment*
- Preventative strategies including details of flag systems, safety information provision, seasonal /daily variations in levels of provision*
- Emergency provision including public rescue equipment, telephones*
- Action plan in the case of an emergency*
- First aid & vehicular access points*
- Seaside Award criteria*

*Where the lifeguard takes on the supervisory role the over-seeing of the beach should not detract from the specific responsibilities of a lifeguard.*

*A beach officer/supervisor should also be visible, mobile and able to summon appropriate aid, monitor pollution, dog control and provide information for the public.*

*If the beach officer is based in a nearby building clear information on where he/she can be found must be available and the base should be clearly identifiable for members of the public.*

*An office should ideally contain the following equipment:*

- Incident record book and/or diary*
- Copy of the emergency accident plan*
- Copy of the normal operating procedure*
- Loud hailer*
- Black/white board & pen to display up-to-date information about sea temperatures and information about local environmental initiatives.*
- Seaside Award & Blue Flag information and leaflets*
- Emergency contact numbers*
- Telephone / radio*

- 10. A record should be kept of all emergency incidents and KSB notified of any significant incidents. These records should be available for inspection on request.**

*These records are already required under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The RLSS UK have produced an incident report form: we would recommend its use. Please contact RLSS for details - [www.rlss.org.uk](http://www.rlss.org.uk)*

## **MANAGEMENT**

- 11. The beach must be actively managed and promoted by the owners (local authority or private) as a tourist resort.**

*The official bathing season starts on 1 June and continues until 15 September. If the beach is managed for a different period this should be stated clearly. If the management of the beach or opening times of facilities differ radically from the criteria guidelines, (ie that supervision is provided between 10am and 6pm and that the toilets are only open during the month of July) information should be given to the public. The flag should not be flown and KSB should be informed.*

- 12. Local emergency plans to cope with pollution incidents.**

*Where there is a written emergency procedure it should be submitted with the application. The public should be informed of pollution or potential dangers by the posting of information at the information board and through the media.*

*In order to protect the integrity of the Seaside Award and beach managing authority it is crucial that the flag be removed if there is any infringement of the criteria e.g. sewage pollution. A sign should be erected to explain the absence of the flag and KSB should be notified immediately and given details of the incident.*

- 13. Easy and safe access to the beach for all including disabled people where this is possible.**

*Ramps should be provided where possible to allow wheelchair and pushchair access. The gradient of fixed ramps should be no more than 1 in 12. If the length exceeds 2metres a handrail on each side and a landing area is recommended. Ramps for wheelchairs should have a minimum clear width of 1metre. In many circumstances the installation of permanent wheelchair access ramps may be impossible. When this is the case it is recommended that removable portable wheelchair ramps are bought for at least one beach within a local authority area. Further guidance is available at: [www.snh.org.uk/publications/on-line/accessguide/steps\\_list.asp](http://www.snh.org.uk/publications/on-line/accessguide/steps_list.asp)*

*Where promenade edges are higher than two metres above the beach, particularly where the substance of the beach is of rocks, pebbles or metal, a barrier should be erected to prevent accidental falls. It is appreciated that this is a long-term and expensive exercise and in the first instance warning signs and/or yellow lines highlighting the edge should be introduced.*

#### **14. Prohibition of unauthorised driving and dumping**

*Where there are no physical barriers preventing access to the beach, and where vehicles are known to be an issue, there should be a bye-law prohibiting unauthorised driving, about which there should be information displayed.*

*Dumping, or flytipping, should not be allowed and in areas where there are problems with the practice there should be deterrents put in place. Information should also be made available to visitors about how they can report incidents which they may witness. Further information can be found at [www.dumbdumpers.org](http://www.dumbdumpers.org) and the stop line number which could be advertised is 08452 30 40 90. Leaflets and posters can be downloaded from this site for display too.*

#### **15. Manage the conflicting and incompatible needs of different users e.g. zoning for swimmers, surfers, windsurfers, motorised craft, nature conservation.**

*On beaches where there are regular conflicts between swimmers should be protected from all sea craft. Distinctions should be made between motorised craft e.g. personal water craft users, water skiers, power craft users and should be separated from paddle or sail craft.*

*Zoning planning should be enforced by clear signage at information points, entry points to access channels, explicit reference in literature and by buoyed lanes.*

#### **16. Dogs must be under ‘proper control’ in the award area throughout the summer season.**

*The definition of ‘proper control’ can be found in The Scottish Outdoor Access Code, which was compiled following the introduction of The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.*

*The two important points in the Code, with relevance to dogs and beaches are:*

- *Keep your dog on a short lead (a short lead is taken to be two metres) or under close control (under close control means that the dog is able to respond to your commands and is kept close at heel) in a number of other places; and*
- *Remove any faeces left by your dog in a public open space.*

*Where there is an enforced bye-law banning dogs from the Award this can be upheld. It is recommended that an area be provided for the public to exercise dogs and this should be clearly delineated.*

*All other animal access and activities must be controlled under all circumstances e.g. donkey/horse riding.*

**17. Dog refuse bins must be available along the seafront where all dogs should be kept under ‘proper control’ at all times.**

*‘Seafront’ refers to the immediate area adjoining the beach - any promenade, adjoining landward section of the beach or car park.*

*The bins are provided they must be clearly marked for the purpose and appropriate arrangements must be made to dispose of dog refuse.*

*If specific dog waste bins are not available then it should be clear whether people can use general waste bins.*

**18. A clearly marked and protected source of drinking water should be available.**

*The source of fresh drinking water can be within the toilet facilities block or on the seafront but must be protected from birds or animals. This can be in the form of a drinking fountain.*

**19. Public telephones within easy access (5 minutes walk) from any point of the award beach.**

*An emergency telephone alone is not sufficient. The location of the telephone should be clearly signed, marked on the map, and accessible to the public at all times. A telephone should also be accessible to wheelchair users.*

**20. Adequate toilet facilities, cleaned and maintained, including facilities for disabled people should be available.**

*The number of toilet facilities available must take into consideration the maximum number of visitors expected at the beach at any one time.*

*Access to facilities for disabled people may be restricted by the use of a RADAR key. The supervisor would be expected to hold such a key.*

*Access to toilet facilities must be safe with no hindrance or interference from vehicular traffic.*

- 21. All buildings and equipment must be maintained to a high standard and, where practicable, there must be safe confinement of all construction work which must not detract from the enjoyment of the beach user.**

*Any construction work or hazardous derelict structures should be enclosed to prevent ready access by the public, particularly small children.*

- 22. Adequate access and parking facilities with marked spaces and suitable access for disabled people. Where it is necessary to park on the beach it must be safe and clearly marked and defined. Sustainable transport should be promoted.**

*There should be safe access to the beach and resort facilities from the car park with controlled traffic flow on any intervening roads.*

*The car park surface must be in good order, preferably a metalled finish. Reserved spaces for disabled person's parking must be clearly marked and give easy access to the resort facilities.*

*Where it is absolutely necessary to park on the beach it must be safe, controlled, clearly marked and defined.*

*Is sustainable transport promoted in any way? Bus routes and train times etc should be promoted where possible and if beaches are close to cycle routes they should also be promoted.*

## **CLEANSING**

- 23. There must be adequate cleansing of the beach**

Local Authorities are responsible for keeping beaches under their management or ownership clean under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA). The EPA makes 'Duty' Bodies responsible for keeping beaches clear of litter and refuse. Full details of how they must comply with this cleansing duty are contained in the Code of Practice on Litter and Reuse, which accompanies Part IV (section 89) of the EPA.

Based on land use and time the Code of Practice sets out reasonable and acceptable standards of cleanliness which Duty Bodies should achieve at beaches under their management. What matters is maintaining the cleanliness of an area, rather than how often it is cleaned.

The section which covers beaches has been significantly updated in the past year. There are now four 'categories' of beach: amenity, recreational, special conservation areas & other, depending on the use of the beach. All award beaches fall under one of the following three categories: amenity beach, recreational beach or sensitive conservation area. A Seaside Award beach must meet the appropriate cleanliness standards set out in the Code of Practice. Therefore, if cleanliness standards drop below a 'Grade B' the duty body must return the beach to this standard within 48 hours at amenity beaches and within a week at recreation beaches, during the bathing season (1<sup>st</sup> June & 15 September). Beaches which are classified as Sensitive

Conservation Areas must be hand picked of litter within a month if the standard drops below a 'Grade B'. Different timescales are set for the winter months.

Further information, including images of the appropriate 'Grades' can be obtained from KSB, or found at [www.littercode.org.uk](http://www.littercode.org.uk) where the booklet 'Litter & Scottish beaches - A guide for the public and practitioners' can also be downloaded.

The existence of seaweed is a vital part of the beach ecology. The raking of sandy areas closest to dunes and the removal of seaweed should be treated sensitively as the removal of pioneer species, such as sea rocket and sea stock which grow in front of the dunes, prevents them establishing roots and stabilising the dune structures. KSB encourages beach operators to investigate composting or reusing seaweed removed from beaches.

It is recommended that the cleaning regime for each beach be examined carefully. It may be more effective, and indeed, economical to hand pick litter at some sites. A document outlining the benefits and problems of mechanical and hand picking cleansing techniques is available from KSB.

**24. Appropriate litter bins in adequate numbers, properly secured and regularly maintained, emptied at least daily should be in place.**

*Litter bins should be covered and of a suitable character and appearance. It is recommended that bins should be located at 25 metres minimum interval although numbers may vary according to the bin capacity, numbers of users and the effect of the tide on the area of the beach. When choosing and locating bins the following points should be considered:*

- Bin capacity
- Type & source of litter
- Volume of pedestrian traffic
- Servicing methods and intervals
- Local environment - potential strong winds, high tides, scavenging animals
- Accessibility

## **INFORMATION AND EDUCATION**

**25. There should be prompt public warning if the beach or part thereof has, or is expected to, become grossly polluted or unsafe.**

*This requirement includes the discharge of storm water or sewage contamination. Contingency plans must be devised to broadcast warnings to the public, both through the media and through the provision of signs on the beach and at Tourist Information Centres and civic offices. This criterion also links with number 12.*

**26. Evidence that the interests of protected sites and rare or protected species have been addressed with close liaison with recognised local conservation organisations.**

*Some sites may prove environmentally delicate and require particular management techniques in which case evidence must be provided to show that recognised local conservation organisations have been approached for advice and problems addressed.*

*It may be that the fragility of certain environments will preclude them from this sort of award on the grounds that greater visitor numbers would endanger wildlife or habitats.*

**27. Laws covering beach use and appropriate codes of conduct should be easily available to the public (including in Tourist Information Centres and civic offices).**

**28. An Information Point must be present. It must have:**

- *Telephone numbers for the nearest hospital, surgery or first aid point*
- *Telephone number for the nearest police*
- *Telephone number for the coastguard*
- *Information about local hazards where applicable*
- *Contact number & address for the local authority / beach guardian*
- *Contact details for Keep Scotland Beautiful*
- *Seaside Award Criteria*
- *Seaside Award Certificate (current)*
- *Bathing Water Quality Poster with updated information ideally conforming with the Clean Coast Scotland / SEPA format including the results of, at least, the previous three years' monitoring*

**29. A map must be present. It must show:**

- *The appropriate area of the beach (especially if award section is part of larger beach)*
- *Water quality sampling point*
- *Car / bike parks*
- *Disabled parking (where applicable)*
- *Nearest public telephone*
- *Information points*
- *Lifesaving equipment*
- *Position of lifeguards (where applicable)*
- *Location of first aid kit/facilities*
- *Larger litter bins & recycling facilities (where applicable)*
- *Public facilities - toilets, drinking water (where applicable)*
- *Disabled toilets (where applicable)*
- *Access points*
- *Disabled access points (where applicable)*
- *Nearby footpaths*
- *Potential hazards (cliffs, rip currents, access problems)*
- *Environmentally sensitive or protected areas.*

- Riverine or waste water discharges to bathing water/beach
- Recreational zones (where applicable)

*This information should be displayed at every reasonable access point to the beach. Award posters are provided to all award beaches. These can be adapted to include all the pertinent information for the beach. Certificates outlining the criteria will be issued to all successful applicants.*

*All signs should be clean, legible and weatherproof, have strong colour contrast to distinguish information from its background, be within visual range of eye level.*

*The RNLI provide guidance on sign production and safety information using international symbols. [www.rnli.co.uk](http://www.rnli.co.uk)*

**30. The responsible authority should be able to demonstrate that it encourages promotional / educational activities throughout the year relating to the coastal environment in the area.**

*It is recommended that attention be paid to recycling and the provision of recycling facilities at, or near, the main beach area. Linking to existing sites is also recommended and [www.sort-it.org.uk](http://www.sort-it.org.uk) may be of use identifying such sites.*

*KSB has produced a number of support information posters which can be provided and used on information boards. The poster topics range from general information about Scottish coastal wildlife, appropriate behaviour at an award beach, and ideas which people can get involved with.*

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Further information and application forms are available from:  
Keep Scotland Beautiful, Islay House, Livilands Lane, Stirling, FK8 2BG.

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