



RESORT BEACH CRITERIA 2011



A '**resort beach**' is one which is actively managed and promoted by the owners (local authority or private) as a tourist resort, actively encouraging 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 award section of the beach would be expected to be no less than 500 metres long.

Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB), following consultation with a National Beach Jury, will only award the Resort Seaside Award to beaches that comply with all relevant national and local legislation, achieve the mandatory water quality standard* (Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC) and which fulfil all other land-based criteria.

In order to protect the integrity of the Seaside Award and the beach managing authority it is crucial that the flag be taken down, permanently or temporarily, if there is any infringement of the criteria and at the end of the award season. Information should be posted to explain the absence of the flag and KSB should be notified immediately.

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 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 came into existence in March 2008. However, all monitoring must be carried out strictly within the Directives 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. Algal and other vegetation materials should be left on the beach unless it becomes a hazard to the public.

Algal vegetation generally refers to seaweed. Whilst seaweed is 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. Seaweed should be composted or reused. It must not be put to landfill unless contaminated with hazardous waste.

4. There must be no visible oil pollution of the beach or water.

CLEANSING

5. There must be adequate cleansing of the beach and surrounding area.

Accumulations of litter and dog waste are not acceptable on the beach or in the areas surrounding a beach (that is for example, the car park, grass areas, and paths).

Local Authorities are responsible for keeping beaches and surrounding areas 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. 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 (1st 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 where the booklet 'Litter & Scottish beaches - A guide for the public and practitioners' can also be downloaded.

With regards to dog waste on beaches the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003 specifies that the person in charge of a dog must be responsible at all times for removing faeces from any public open space. In relation to beaches, dog owners, walking on the beach are now responsible for picking up after their dogs and disposing of the waste in an appropriate way (dog bin, general waste bin, or take it home).. Local Authorities now have an active part to play in enforcing this in open spaces – including on beaches. Both the police and authorised LA officers can issue Fixed Penalty Notices of £40 without the need for corroborative evidence.

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. (See Criteria 3)

It is recommended that the cleaning regime for each beach be examined carefully and a litter plan produced and submitted with the award application. 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.

Dumping, or flytipping, is illegal and must not be allowed. 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 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.

6. Appropriate litter bins should be in place. There should be an adequate number and they must be properly secured, regularly maintained and emptied.

Litter bins should be covered and of a suitable character, size and appearance. It is recommended that bins should be located at 25 metres minimum interval, although numbers may vary according to the bin capacity and the number of beach users. 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*

It is recommended that there be some mechanism put in place where members of the public can report overflowing or damaged bins to the beach manager for action to be taken.

7. Bins suitable for dog waste must be provided.

Specific dog waste bins, or general waste bins which clearly accept dog waste, must be provided.

Appropriate arrangements must be made for emptying them and disposing of the waste.

8. Recycling should be promoted where possible

Facilities allowing beach users to separate their waste should be investigated and where possible installed in easily accessible locations close to general waste bins.

The receptacles should be properly designed and managed for the type of waste received. They should be regularly emptied.

Recycling on the go guidance is currently being developed and should be consulted before new facilities are installed. It is recommended that an audit of the most likely recyclables to be collected at your beach be carried out before deciding what facilities to install.

Any recycling facilities at the beach should accommodate the collection and separation of as many different, but relevant, types of waste as possible. (It is suggested that at least plastic bottles and cans are accepted).

MANAGEMENT

9. There must be local emergency plans to cope with pollution incidents.

Where there is a written Emergency Action Plan (EAP) it should be submitted with the application.

There should be prompt public warning if the beach has been, or is expected to become, grossly polluted or unsafe. The EAP should provide details of how the public will be informed of such an incident, both on information boards at the beach, and where appropriate, through the media.

Details of how an oil spill would be dealt with, on land and at sea by the award beach, should also be considered in an EAP.

10. Easy and safe access to the beach must be provided for all.

Paths and 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 two metres a handrail on each side and a landing area is recommended. Ramps for wheelchairs should have a minimum clear width of a metre. 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

Where promenade edges are higher than two metres above the beach, particularly where the substrate below is of rocks, pebbles or concrete, 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.

11. Unauthorised driving must be prohibited.

Where there are no physical barriers preventing access to the beach, and where vehicles are known to be an issue, causing damage to dunes and eroding pathways, measures, such as barriers, must be put in place to prevent unauthorised vehicles accessing. .

Information should be provided about why vehicles are kept off the beach.

12. Conflicting and incompatible needs of different users must be managed.

On beaches commonly used by multi user groups, which are believed to conflict with each other, consideration must be given to how these are managed. A risk assessment may for example highlight where swimmers, surfers, windsurfers, motorised craft all share the same space, or where users mix on a nature conservation area.

Consideration should be given to how motorised craft e.g. personal water craft users, water skiers, power craft users and paddle or sail craft are managed

Zoning, either physical or by time, should be enforced by clear signage at information points, entry points to access channels, explicit reference in literature and physical barriers such as buoyed lanes.

13. 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 as specified in the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003.*

Where there is an enforced bye-law banning dogs from the award area this can be upheld. It is recommended that an area be provided for the public to exercise dogs and this should be clearly marked, along with information encouraging people to pick up after their pets.

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

14. A clearly marked and protected source of drinking water must 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 or a clearly marked mains water supply tap.

15. A public telephone or emergency phone, within easy access (5 minutes walk), of the beach must be available.

The location of the telephone should be clearly signed, marked on the map, and accessible to the public at all times when the award flag is flying.

16. Adequate toilet facilities, cleaned and maintained, including facilities for less able bodied people must be available. Suitable facilities for disposal of sanitary waste should be provided.

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

They must be cleaned to an acceptable standard, stocked with toilet paper, soap and either hand towels or a drier.

Ideally toilet facilities should be available between 10.00 and 17.00 daily. If the opening times of facilities differ from the criteria guidelines information should be given to the public and KSB should be informed upon application as the flag may not be able to be flown during these periods.

Access to facilities for disabled people may be restricted by the use of a RADAR key. If toilets are manned, the attendant is expected to hold such a key.

Suitable facilities, whether sanitary bins or general waste bins, should be provided for the disposal of feminine hygiene items. Information about the appropriate disposal of sanitary waste should be provided in the toilets too. Posters and leaflets are available from Scottish Water at www.scottishwater.co.uk or their call centre on 0845 601 8855.

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

- 17. 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.

- 18. Adequate access and parking facilities, with marked spaces for disabled users must be provided.**

The car park surface must be in good order, preferably a suitable finish.

Reserved spaces for disabled users must be clearly marked and be close to easy access to the resort facilities.

There should be safe access for all to the beach from the car park with controlled traffic flow on any intervening roads where possible.

It is also recommended that sustainable transport is provided to the beach area and actively promoted with the provision of cycle racks and bus/train timetables.

SAFETY

- 19. A risk assessment should be carried out and appropriate control measure put in place - either lifeguards and/or adequate public rescue 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.

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

Carrying out a risk assessment may help with writing a Normal Operating Procedure (NOP) and Emergency Action Plan (EAP) which together form a Beach Safety Operating Procedure. It will also help identify the need for lifeguard staff and the type and location of appropriate public rescue equipment for your beach. A guide to coastal public rescue equipment published by the RNLI gives excellent guidelines on appropriate equipment for different beaches.

The following websites could be consulted for support information:

*www.rnli.co.uk / www.rospa.org.uk / www.rlss.org.uk /
www.nationalbeachsafety.org.uk/*

- 20. If lifeguard staff are provided they must be competent and the times and area patrolled should be clearly defined and marked.**

Beach lifeguard staff must be competent to carry out their duties and hold appropriate vocational and training qualifications from a recognised training and assessment centre.

Bathing areas patrolled by lifeguards should be designated. 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. Please see the RNLI publication 'A guide to beach safety; flags, signs and symbols' for further information.

Ideally lifeguard staff should be available between 10.00 and 17.00 daily. Where this differs KSB should be informed as the flag may not be able to be flown during these periods.

Where a risk assessment has demonstrated that no lifeguard staff provision is required the public should be informed about other safety provisions, including public rescue equipment, supervision, area covered and out-of-season arrangements.

21. Clearly sign-posted first aid facilities must be available

It is recommended that first aid is available to beach users between 10.00 and 17.00 on the seafront. If facilities are available at other times these should clearly be stated and agreed with KSB.

First aid provision can be provided by lifeguard staff, could be located in a local leisure pool, a hotel, a local authority building, as long as it is clearly sign posted. First aiders should hold appropriate qualifications

It may also be that volunteer first aiders patrol the beach during high season at weekends. If this is the case, alternative, out-of season arrangements should also be displayed.

*Further information on first aid regulations can be found at:
<http://news.hse.gov.uk/category/first-aid-at-work/>*

22. Beach supervision throughout the summer season should be provided.

Beach supervision could be provided by beach lifeguard staff, beach patrol staff, first aid officers, beach officers or a combination. Where the lifeguard takes on the supervisory role the over-seeing of the beach should not detract from the specific responsibilities of a lifeguard.

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*
- Emergency provision including public rescue equipment, telephones*
- Beach Safety Operating Procedures including an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and Normal Operating Procedure (NOP)*
- First aid & vehicular access points*
- Seaside Award criteria*

A beach officer/supervisor should also be visible, mobile and able to summon appropriate aid, monitor pollution, dog control and provide information to 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 Beach Safety Operating Procedures including emergency action plan and normal operating procedure*
- *Emergency whistle*
- *Black/white board & pen to display up-to-date information about sea temperatures and information about local environmental initiatives.*
- *Seaside Award information and environmental leaflets*
- *Quick reference emergency contact numbers*
- *Telephone / radio*

23. A record should be kept of all emergency incidents and KSB notified of any significant incidents.

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

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

24. There must be evidence that the interests of protected sites and rare or protected species have been addressed in liaison with recognised conservation organisations.

Some sites may prove environmentally delicate and require particular management techniques. In which case evidence must be provided to show that recognised conservation organisations (SNH / local rangers) have been approached for advice.

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.

25. Appropriate codes of conduct for beach use should be easily available to the public.

Codes of conduct for beach use, water use and safety should be made available on information boards. Such codes may be council specific or refer to national guidance, such as the Outdoor Access Code.

Keep Scotland Beautiful can provide examples of codes of conduct displayed at beaches across the country on request.

26. 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*

27. 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 / emergency 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 main 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

KSB can provide award map guidance.

28. The responsible authority should be able to demonstrate that it educates beach users about the coastal environment.

Information boards, interpretation panels and or leaflets about the coastal environment can all be used to educate beach visitors about the natural environment and the part they play in protecting it – taking litter home, picking up after their dogs, respecting the wildlife etc.

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 activity ideas which people can get involved with.

Further information and application forms are available from:
Keep Scotland Beautiful, Wallace House,
17-21 Maxwell Place, Stirling, FK8 1JU.
www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/coastal
beach@ksbscotland.org.uk