

It's Bathing Water Season – Picnic, Play, Stay all day (but please pick up and take away!)

With the temperatures starting to climb and the sun starting to shine, a trip to the beach is starting to feature in many of our weekend plans. The Isle of Wight boasts 14 designated bathing waters, all of which meet new stringent water quality standards and 6 of which are classified as excellent. This is great news for the Island, but there are three top tips we can all keep in mind to help keep bathing waters clean for all to enjoy.

1 – Pick up your litter and any leftover food. Litter and leftovers can attract large numbers of greedy birds, whose droppings can affect bathing water quality.

2 – Clear up after your dog. Dog mess left on the beach and surrounding roads and promenades is not only a nuisance on the land, but can be flushed into the bathing waters with rainfall, affecting bathing water quality.

3 – Check up on how your home has been plumbed. Wrongly connected pipes from homes can result in untreated sewage entering rivers and the sea. Visit <http://www.connectright.org.uk/> to see how you can check your home.

The Isle of Wight remains one of the UKs most popular tourism destinations, with the industry, estimated to be worth £1/2 billion per annum to the Isle of Wight economy. This is no surprise when we consider what the Island has to offer.

Whether people come to the Isle of Wight to enjoy the sailing, the beaches, the wildlife or the locally sourced shellfish, we all have a stake in the quality of its waters. Water quality has improved following decades of investment. Since 1995, Southern Water has upgraded waste water treatment at 5 sites on the Isle of Wight, reducing the impact of discharges from over 85,000 of their customers. For over a decade Natural England, the Environment Agency and others have advised land owners on how they can help reduce the runoff of pollutants following heavy rain.

This work continues, but each of us has a role to play in protecting water quality on the Island, both at home and by the water. By following the three top tips we can all help protect these jewels in the Island's crown.

Do you 'Love Where You Sail'? For more information about the project, recreational boating and water quality visit [The Green Blue](#).

