

## Practitioners Fact Sheet No. 3

### Roles of Organisations In Bathing Waters

10 July 2012

This document is designed to be used for practitioners in Bathing Waters as a reference documents for responses to queries from the public or the media.

### Organisations with Statutory Responsibilities

Defra, Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly Government and Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland have responsibility for administering the EC Bathing Waters Directives throughout the UK and across the devolved administrations.

Defra – the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is the government department responsible for water in England. They instruct the Environment Agency on the implementation of bathing waters policy, hold enforcement powers for the public information parts of the Directive and represent the UK at EU level.

Environment Agency for England and Wales (EA), Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) are the environmental agencies responsible for implementation of the Bathing Water Directives, monitoring and reporting on water quality and ensuring action is taken to meet the appropriate standards for the directives throughout the UK. They also regulate discharges to the aquatic environment.

Bathing Water Operators and Bathing Water Controllers are responsible for the management of beach facilities and the publication of information to the public.

### Local Authorities

Local Authorities who are bathing water controllers are responsible for the provision of public information about bathing waters being displayed in an easily accessible place in the vicinity of the bathing water. This includes the provision of public information to prevent exposure to pollution during short-term incidents and advice against bathing where the bathing water does not meet the sufficient standard. Signage should also state where further information can be found.

Water Companies provide water and sewerage services. Their activities are regulated by the environment agencies.

### HPA

The Health Protection Agency is an independent UK organisation that was set up by the government in 2003 to protect the public from threats to their health from infectious diseases and environmental hazards. It does this by providing advice and information to the general public, to health professionals such as doctors and nurses, and to national and local government. From April 2013 the HPA will become part of Public Health England.

## Voluntary Organisations & Charities:

### Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI)

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution is the charity that saves lives at sea. It provides, on call, a 24-hour lifeboat search and rescue service up to 100 nautical miles out from the coast of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland and a lifeguard service on appropriate beaches. In 2012 the RNLI will employ 1000 lifeguards to patrol 183 beaches around the coast of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. To stay safe on the beach the RNLI would always encourage families to swim at a life-guarded beach and read and obey any safety signs.

### Keep Britain Tidy

Keep Britain Tidy is an environmental charity and the anti-litter campaign for England. They administer the Blue Flag and Quality Coast Awards in England, both of which are awarded to beaches with high standards of cleanliness and management. They also work to reduce marine litter by spearheading national litter campaigns, together with specific coastal projects such as BeachCare.

### Keep Wales Tidy

Keep Wales Tidy operate many coastal awards for Welsh beaches and marinas. [The Green Coast Award](#), [Seaside Award](#) and the [Blue Flag Award](#) are all given to beaches and marinas which comply with strict cleanliness and environmental guidelines. These awards promote Wales as a destination for coastal tourism in such a manner as to bring sustainable economic and environmental benefits to the people of Wales.

### Keep Scotland Beautiful

KSB administers blue flag awards for Scotland and runs the Seaside award scheme for Scotland.

### Tidy Northern Ireland

TIDY Northern Ireland runs three programmes for beaches around the scenic Northern Ireland coastline; The Blue Flag awards, the Seaside Awards and the Clean Coast Programme. The Clean Coast Programme consists of two parts, the Green Coast Award and Coast Care, which supports community volunteering. The Green Coast Award is aimed more towards rural beaches. All the awards aim to raise environmental quality standards, provide the public with relevant timely information and deliver a strong tourism focus.

### Marine Conservation Society

The Marine Conservation Society (MCS) is a UK charity dedicated to the protection of our seas, shores and wildlife. MCS campaigns for clean seas and beaches, sustainable fisheries, and protection of marine life. Through education, community involvement and collaboration, MCS raises awareness of the many threats that face our seas and promotes individual, industry and government action to protect the marine environment. MCS produces the annual Good Beach Guide ([www.goodbeachguide.co.uk](http://www.goodbeachguide.co.uk)), the Good Fish Guide relating to sustainable seafood, as well as promoting public participation in volunteer projects such as MCS Beachwatch Big Weekend and Basking Shark Watch. For further information go to [www.mcsuk.org](http://www.mcsuk.org).

## **Surfers Against Sewage**

SAS is an environmental charity protecting the UK's oceans, waves and beaches for all to enjoy safely and sustainably, via community action, campaigning, volunteering, conservation, education and scientific research.

SAS projects target environmental issues affecting beaches including marine litter, sewage pollution, climate change, toxic chemicals, shipping and coastal development.