



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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TITLE Consultation on Bathing Water Regulation reforms

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BY Huw Irranca-Davies MS, Deputy First Minister & Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Today I am pleased to announce that the Welsh and UK Governments are continuing their collaborative efforts on water sector reform with the launch of a joint [consultation](#) on proposed changes to the Bathing Water Regulations 2013. These regulations, which apply to both England and Wales, play a fundamental role in safeguarding the quality of our bathing waters and ensuring the public is well-informed about water quality at these vital sites.

Wales is home to some of the best beaches and water quality in Europe, and outdoor swimming is increasingly popular. It is crucial that our bathing water programme evolves not only to reflect this growing enthusiasm but also to address the wider challenges posed by climate change.

This consultation is an important step within our broader programme to improve water governance in Wales. It provides an opportunity to address immediate regulatory needs, while also gathering valuable feedback that will inform future phases of reform. By working collaboratively with the UK Government and stakeholders across the water sector, we can ensure that the necessary changes are made to protect our natural resources, improve water quality, and deliver long-term benefits for the people and environment of Wales.

This consultation builds on the progress we have made through recent joint initiatives between the Welsh and UK Governments, such as the Water Special Measures Bill and the Water Regulatory Review Commission. The Bill seeks to strengthen regulatory oversight to ensure water companies meet their obligations, while the Commission is working to modernise the regulatory framework for water in the UK. Together, these efforts aim to create a water sector that is resilient, environmentally sustainable, and equipped to meet the challenges of a growing population and the ongoing climate crisis.

While the legal framework for the Bathing Water Regulations is shared across both nations, the operation and management of the bathing water programme in Wales is fully devolved. My priority remains ensuring that any regulatory changes are in the best interest of Wales and deliver positive outcomes for our communities, environment, and economy. We will await the outcome of the consultation before deciding how to proceed in a way which best reflects our objectives in Wales.

Our commitment to protecting and enhancing water quality remains a top priority, and we are determined to ensure that popular bathing sites in Wales are properly identified, and their water quality effectively monitored.