

High water marks for Wales as annual bathing water statistics released

All 104 designated bathing waters in Wales met the European classifications for bathing water quality this year, with none being classified as 'poor'. 78 bathing waters achieved the highest classification of 'excellent', 21 were classified as 'good' and five as 'sufficient'. Six bathing water classifications have gone up and six have gone down, following the 2018 season.

Bathing waters are sampled regularly during the official bathing season, between 15 May to 30 September, and classified as either excellent, good, sufficient or poor. The classifications go on display at the start of the following year's bathing season.

Cemaes, in Anglesey, has now achieved sufficient bathing water quality, following two years of poor classification. Natural Resources Wales has undertaken considerable work in the area to ensure compliance with the standards.

Wales has more Blue Flag beaches per mile than anywhere else in Britain and Visit Wales is investing in infrastructure to help beaches attain Blue Flag status. Visit Wales is also supporting projects with organisations like Keep Wales Tidy and Surfers Against Sewage to promote responsible, sustainable tourism and the need to protect coastal assets and abundant wildlife.

The Environment Minister, Hannah Blythyn, said:

"2018 is Wales' Year of the Sea, so I'm pleased to see all bathing waters in Wales meeting the water quality standards, with most areas again achieving an 'excellent' rating. This is an achievement worth celebrating.

"While some bathing waters have improved, it's disappointing to see some classifications fall. Natural Resources Wales will be working with Dŵr Cymru, local authorities and other stakeholders to identify and address any problems with water quality locally.

"Wales has a beautiful coastline and I want to see our bathing waters continue to meet the highest standards we've become accustomed to."

Natalie Hall, Water Manager for Natural Resources Wales, said:

"Protecting the environment is our main purpose which is why we work day in and day out to help make Wales as clean and as safe as possible for people and wildlife.

“We’re especially pleased with the quality improvement in places like Cemaes Bay and Wisemans Bridge that have been real focus areas for us over the years.

“Our hard work will continue, in partnership with others, so that bathing water standards are maintained and continue to improve where necessary.”