

# Bathing Water Improvement Plan

## Worthing Beach House

### Investigating the causes

When creating a bathing water improvement plan, we undertake a series of investigations to understand the possible causes of reduced water quality in the area.

This detailed analysis enables us to make the best use of our resources, using data and science to ensure we're prioritising the most effective opportunities that will have the biggest impact.

### Our findings

Below are the potential root causes we investigated, and our findings on them. However, we will continue to investigate these issues and analyse results to inform our approach. Any changes in the below will be communicated to community groups and incorporated into future versions of this plan.

1. Current rainfall and water quality analysis indicates that pollution sources may be linked with **rainfall**.
2. We know there are strong concerns around storm overflow impact to water quality. A comparison of water quality samples and storm overflow data shows that **storm overflow releases** are not the main driver in this location; In 2024 a total of seven less-than-satisfactory water quality samples were collected, and only two were within three days of a storm overflow release, so it is clear other factors are contributing. We're focussing on the issues causing the biggest impact, however storm overflow impact is continuously monitored to identify any changes.
3. Comparison of water quality samples and **tidal level** shows that bacteria concentrations are higher when tidal levels are higher. This suggests that faulty sewers may be causing **wastewater leaks into the surface water system**. We're investigating further to confirm this and fixing instances as they are discovered.
4. **Low groundwater levels** don't cause pollution directly; however, levels tend to be low following warm weather and lack of rain, circumstances that would encourage increased traffic on the beach ([point 5](#)) and cause less rainwater to dilute things like illegal connections or surface water contamination ([point 2](#)).
5. Investigations have uncovered that some local households and food establishments have inadvertently **connected their wastewater to the surface water sewer** (an 'illegal connection'), which goes straight onto the beach and causes pollution. When found, we work with households and businesses to rectify these.
6. There is some positive correlation between elevated samples and **high temperatures**. Investigation is planned to determine if the elevated samples are caused by factors relating to the sea being warm, or simply that there is more beach use in warmer weather ([point 5](#)).
7. **Increased use of the beach** appears to have an impact on water quality. We're investigating if this is caused by **humans, dogs on the beach, seabird pollution**, or a combination of the three. The results will inform how we proceed in this area.

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**Worthing Beach House: V1**

To find out more about the Worthing Beach House bathing water including detailed water quality samples and sampling schedule, [visit the Environment Agency's Swimfo page](#)

For near-real time updates on storm overflow releases and their impact to bathing water quality, [visit Rivers and Seas Watch](#), Southern Water's storm overflow monitoring service.

## Improvement plan

Below is our detailed improvement plan, collaboratively created by Southern Water, Worthing Borough Council, and the Environment Agency.

### Key

<b>RAG status – if the item is on track</b>	<b>On track</b>	<b>Late (recoverable)</b>	<b>Late (not recoverable)</b>
<b>WBC</b>	<b>Worthing Borough Council</b>		
<b>SWS</b>	<b>Southern Water</b>		
<b>EA</b>	<b>Environment Agency</b>		

### Plans

Action #	Owner	Action	Description	Status	Yr 1 Target Completion Date	Yr 2 Target Completion Date	Yr 3 Target Completion Date	RAG status	Comments
<b>Southern Water actions</b>									
1	SWS	Illegal connection investigations	An Illegal Connections Team action plan has been developed and being actioned. Includes observations in the area, manhole cover lift & looks survey and cage installations (to capture any debris in surface water sewers). Efforts are reviewed annually	In progress	Jun-26	N/A	N/A		Initial investigations completed by Illegal Connections team. Investigations have identified several businesses premises misusing the surface water system (often accidentally) to remove wastewater. Illegally connected kitchen found and resolved. Catchments covered include, Steyne Gardens, New Parade, Ophir Road, Heatherstone Rd, Thalassa.

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Action #	Owner	Action	Description	Status	Yr 1 Target Completion Date	Yr 2 Target Completion Date	Yr 3 Target Completion Date	RAG status	Comments
1.1	SWS		Explore wider catchment. Engage with property owners, businesses and council to ensure illegal connections, sewer misuse issues are no longer impacting the environment and plan next year's critical areas of focus		N/A	Apr-27	N/A		
1.2	SWS		Deliver investigations in agreed areas of focus, work with homeowners, businesses and local authority to resolve issues identified		N/A	N/A	Apr-28		
2	SWS	CCTV investigations	Potentially defective sewers have been identified using existing CCTV reports. CCTV survey completed at these locations to identify current issues	In Progress	Jul-26				Re-checking of Existing CCTV is being undertaken by Lanes Group. Repairs will follow where required
2.1	SWS	Sewer rehab Programme	Build a plan to carry out repairs quickly with a zero-tolerance approach on issues found and optimal repair undertaken	In Progress	Jul-26				Repairs completed: Brighton Road (8 repairs) The Steyne (1 repair) Repairs outstanding: Richmon Rd (2 repairs) awaiting permit approval
3	SWS	Revisit CCTV investigations	Widen the area for CCTV investigations and repair programme based on findings	In Progress		Mar-27			
4	SWS	Adler & Allan Sampling programme	A sample plan has been developed to collect samples for year-round testing	Resource plan in development	Rolling programme	Rolling programme	Rolling programme		A quote is in development to ringfence a team to solely focus on high-risk bathing waters
5	SWS	Review system to look for issues with unconfirmed resolution	There are a number (6) reported actions which may have not been resolved. These should be investigated and resolved if necessary.	In Progress	Jul-26	Apr-27	Apr-28		Desktop study & scope needed by the illegal Connections Team
6	SWS	Asset investigations	Wastewater pumping stations which could benefit from additional surveys have been identified and issues escalated to ensure resolved quickly.	Complete	Apr-26	Apr-27	Apr-28		Pre-season checks completed each year ahead of the bathing water season
7	SWS	Rising main health check	A plan for checking rising mains has been developed.	In Progress	Jul-26	Apr-27	Apr-28		Work order to be raised to check air valves on the rising main to assess operational status
<b>Worthing Borough Council actions</b>									
8	WBC/SWS	Pier surveys	Pier Drainage Survey	Rolling programme	Complete	Mar-27	Mar-28		Completed December 2025 with no issues reported. Booked in again for December 2026
9	WBC/SWS	Funding of Belly Bins	Larger bins to be placed along coastline	In Progress	Jul-26				Funding approved for 11 bins and locations identified

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10	WBC/SWS	Funding of bin sensors	Funding in 2027 for bin sensors across Goring, Worthing Beach House and Worthing	In Progress		Apr-27			Sensors to be installed on the 11 bins provided
11	WBC/SWS	Pollution Risk Forecast (PRF) Signage	Funding of solar powered PRF signs across Worthing, Worthing Beach House and Goring bathing waters	In Progress	Jul-26				Funding approved
<b>Environment Agency actions</b>									
12	EA	Statutory sample collection	Collection of statutory bathing water samples during the bathing water season (May to September)	Rolling programme	Sep-26	Sep-27	Sep-28		<a href="#">View sample data on the Swimfo page</a>
13	EA	Investigational sample collection	Collection of investigational samples in the surrounding area	Rolling programme	Oct-26				
14	EA	Sample data analysis	Analysis of EA samples to identify any trends and provide focus for future work	Rolling programme		Mar-27			
15	EA	MST	Conduct animal and/or source tracing on selected samples	Rolling programme		Mar-27			
16	EA	Pollution Risk Forecast (PRF) service	PRF service makes daily pollution risk forecasts when bathing water quality is likely to be reduced based on rainfall and other factors. This is provided at Worthing and Worthing Beach House during the bathing water season (May to September)	Rolling programme	Jul-26	Sep-27	Sep-28		<a href="#">View PRF notifications on the Swimfo page</a>
<b>Collaborative actions</b>									
17	WBC / SWS / EA	Yellow Fish Campaign	Develop a campaign in partnership with Worthing Borough Council and the Environment Agency to raise awareness around the purpose of a highway gullies and the impact misuse can have on local seas and rivers	Complete	Completed				Completed covering Bathing Water Area. Exploring opportunities for a more permanent labelling. 15 Drains marked with stickers and five signs installed
18	WBC / SWS	Stakeholder planning and engagement	Southern Water are committed to supporting the Nature Vision Workshop. Session booked with key stakeholders, West Sussex Council, National trust, Environment Agency to align on Bathing Waters in Worthing	In Progress	Rolling programme	Rolling programme	Rolling programme		Nature Vision workshop took place on Wednesday 28th January
19	SWS / WBC	Community steering group	Community groups are to be set up with the purpose of sharing details of investigations being carried out locally, share updates gather local knowledge to support efforts	In Progress	Rolling programme	Rolling programme	Rolling programme		The first community drop in took place on Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> May at Worthing Town Hall
20	WBC / SWS / EA	Hello Lamppost	Deliver engagement in the local area focusing on all things that have the potential to impact water quality	Complete	Completed				Delivered in March 2026. Next steps are to assess analytics