# The Sportsman in Seasalter receives disappointing two-star food hygiene rating



A notable culinary establishment, The Sportsman in Seasalter, Kent, has recently received a two-star food hygiene rating from Canterbury City Council following a thorough inspection conducted in February. This rating comes as a significant disappointment to the gastropub, which has enjoyed considerable acclaim over the years, including a Michelin star obtained in 2008 and being named the UK's best pub in 2015.

During the inspection, health officials reported various cleanliness concerns regarding the kitchen environment. Specifically, the inspector noted "dirt and mould on the ceiling in the walk-in refrigerator" and drew attention to pickled cucumber being stored in a "heavily stained jug." The inspection also revealed mould present inside a door of an under-counter refrigerator, raising further hygiene alarms.

The inspector provided a comprehensive account of several structural and maintenance issues within the almost 400-year-old building. The inspection identified worn or missing linoleum flooring, damaged skirting boards, and rusting rubber coating and shelving in the fridges. Concerns were also raised regarding inadequate lighting in areas of food preparation and storage, alleging that it was insufficient to properly carry out essential cleaning and pest monitoring.

One notable finding during the inspection was the unprofessional practices observed among the staff; the inspector mentioned spotting "a member of staff eating in the kitchen," and also highlighted that "cloths over two chefs' shoulders" did not meet hygiene standards, with one chef wearing several leather bracelets. The inspector urged The Sportsman to reassess its personal hygiene policies, indicating that further preventive measures should be taken to uphold food safety standards.

Despite identifying two dirty chopping boards, the report acknowledged that The Sportsman maintained a 'satisfactory food safety management system.' However, it was noted that staff had not fully adhered to the identified critical measures necessary for maintaining hygiene. For instance, the daily diary was not completed for each day of February, and there was a noted lack of an allergen review.

In light of the findings, Shepherd Neame, the site owner, stated that staff had "taken immediate action" to correct the deficiencies that were observed during the inspection. The brewery has reportedly applied for a reinspection, with new evaluations expected to occur in the ensuing weeks. A spokesperson from the council noted that they have been monitoring the venue closely and expressed satisfaction with the progress made by The Sportsman in addressing the inspector's concerns.

The Sportsman, known for sourcing its seafood from the Thames estuary and meat from local farms, has also made a name for itself by growing some of its own produce in a small kitchen garden and polytunnel. The gastropub attracts a range of culinary enthusiasts, including well-known public figures such as Gary Lineker, Paul Hollywood, and Amanda Holden.

Despite the recent downgrade, The Sportsman offers a diverse menu priced at £85 for a five-course tasting option or £55 for a three-course midweek selection, featuring dishes such as pickled herrings with white cabbage salad and poached rock oysters complemented by pickled cucumber and avruga caviar. It is important to note that dogs are not permitted on the premises.

As the gastropub embarks on addressing its hygiene rating, both patrons and local food enthusiasts await the results of the upcoming reinspection.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/whitstable/news/michelin-star-restaurant-hit-with-poor-hygiene-rating-after-322622/> - Corroborates The Sportsman receiving a poor hygiene rating due to cleanliness and structural issues. It also covers the immediate actions taken by the establishment to address these problems.
* <https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Restaurant_Review-g3671028-d720594-Reviews-The_Sportsman-Seasalter_Whitstable_Kent_England.html> - Provides reviews on The Sportsman, highlighting both positive and negative experiences of visitors, which can add context to the establishment's reputation and recent challenges.
* <https://ratings.food.gov.uk> - Explains how food hygiene ratings work in the UK, which can help understand the context of The Sportsman's recent downgrade in hygiene score.
* <https://www.guidedining.com/The-Sportsman-restaurant1368.html> - Unfortunately, there is no direct link available from the search results. This placeholder indicates the need for a URL that discusses The Sportsman's Michelin star history and its culinary reputation.
* <https://www.shepherdneame.co.uk/> - As the site owner of The Sportsman, Shepherd Neame's involvement in addressing hygiene concerns and supporting the gastropub is relevant. However, direct information on The Sportsman's current situation is not found here.