# Heacham beach receives second consecutive Brown Flag for poor water quality



The travel website Holiday Park Guru has introduced the Brown Flag Awards in 2024, conceptualised as a parody of the widely recognised Blue Flag Awards, which celebrate high environmental and safety standards at beaches. The awards are issued to beaches in England that the Environment Agency has classified as having “poor” water quality. This year, the awards were publicised on May 1, revealing that Heacham, located near Hunstanton in Norfolk, has received this distinction for the second consecutive year.

The Environment Agency has consistently advised against swimming in Heacham due to known issues with water pollution, making its selection for the Brown Flag somewhat expected. Robbie Lane, a representative from Holiday Park Guru, expressed disappointment that the number of poorly rated beaches surged from 13 to 19 this year. Lane stated, “For Norfolk, the bad news is that it’s picked up a Brown Flag Award for the second year in a row.”

Despite the negative implications of the Brown Flag, Lane provided a silver lining, noting that approximately two-thirds of beaches in Norfolk are rated as "excellent" for water quality during the summer months. Furthermore, three beaches in the region have improved their water quality ratings over the prior year.

The awards come with the option for beaches to receive a physical brown flag to display, though it appears most have opted not to claim this emblem. Lane encouraged beachgoers to conduct thorough research before visiting, implying that knowledgeable choices could lead to a more enjoyable experience. “Do your research this summer and you’ll be saying 'wish you were here' rather than 'wish I’d worn a hazmat suit,'” he advised.

This initiative appears to be a method of drawing attention to water quality issues while simultaneously providing a comedic take on the traditional awards process. As the summer approaches, both local residents and visitors may pay closer attention to water quality warnings as they plan their coastal activities.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.lynnnews.co.uk/news/top-of-the-plops-beach-reputation-sinks-to-new-low-with-9364365/> - This article discusses Heacham Beach's reputation decline due to pollution, leading to its 'Brown Flag Award' for poor water quality.
2. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/24298063.heacham-beach-norfolk-wins-brown-flag-award/> - This piece reports on Heacham Beach receiving a 'Brown Flag Award' for being one of the dirtiest beaches in England, highlighting the Environment Agency's classification of its water as 'poor'.
3. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/23522832.heacham-new-no-swim-warning-beach-pollution/> - This article details the Environment Agency's advisory against swimming at Heacham Beach due to pollution concerns, citing multiple sources of faecal pollution.
4. <https://www.jameswild.org.uk/news/james-wild-mp-welcomes-improved-bathing-water-quality-heacham> - This report highlights improvements in Heacham's bathing water quality, noting that the water would be classified as 'Good' based on recent data, despite the ongoing 'Poor' classification over a four-year period.
5. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/24310671.beaches-norfolk-cleanest-swimming/> - This article contrasts Heacham Beach's 'Poor' water quality with other Norfolk beaches rated as 'Excellent' or 'Good' for swimming, emphasizing the regional disparities in water cleanliness.
6. <https://www.lynnnews.co.uk/news/latest-data-is-revealed-on-water-quality-at-our-beaches-9394608/> - This piece reports on the latest data revealing improvements in Heacham Beach's water quality, noting that E. coli meets 'Excellent' standards and intestinal enterococci meets 'Good' standards, though the beach remains classified as 'Poor' over a four-year period.
7. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25130776.heacham-beach-norfolk-wins-brown-flag-award-dirtiness/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data