

Public Participation: Identification of Bathing Waters

Local authorities must identify official bathing areas in their area every year so that they can be monitored for safety, water quality and their level of use. To help with this process, Kilkenny County Council are asking people who swim at beaches, lakes and rivers to tell them if they think they should maintain existing designated bathing waters designations or give a new official bathing area designation to areas that are commonly used for swimming, but not identified at the moment.

Under European and Irish law, Irish local authorities must identify bathing waters each year so that these areas can be monitored to ensure they meet stringent microbiological water quality standards. In some cases, the official bathing areas are also the areas where local authorities focus their resources providing lifeguards during the summer season. These laws also require that the local authority prepares detailed descriptions or profiles for each of the identified bathing water sites that describe not just the bathing area but also areas in the surface waters catchment area that could be a source of pollution. The profiles include an assessment the risk of pollution and what action would be taken if pollution occurs.

If you are a regular swimmer and want to help your Council decide which bathing areas should be classified as such, it might be helpful to consider the following:

- How your swimming area has been used up to now;
- How many people use the site;
- What facilities exist at the site and how accessible it is;
- Any safety issues.

If you wish to propose your favourite beach/river etc as a new bathing water site or comment on an existing site please contact Environment Section, Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny.

Closing date for submissions to Kilkenny County Council is 22 June 2020. For further information please contact Environment Section, Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny, 056 7794470 or environment@kilkennycoco.ie.

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