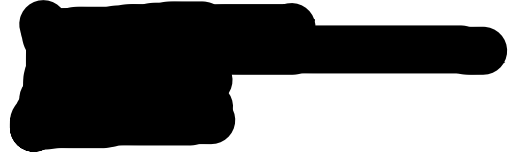




Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Emma Hardy MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

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London
SW1P 4DF



Sarah Olney MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

14 May 2026

Designation of Ham and Kingston, River Thames as a bathing water

Dear Sarah,

I wrote to you on 12 February concerning this department's plan to hold a national consultation on the proposal to designate the River Thames at Ham and Kingston as a bathing water under the Bathing Water Regulations 2013. This consultation concluded on 23 March and, having considered all the views expressed and other relevant factors, I am pleased to confirm that the designation has been approved. The site will be known as Ham and Kingston, River Thames.

Defra will publish a summary of the responses to the consultation and the government response on the [bathing waters GOV.UK page](#) before the start of the bathing water season. The site at Ham and Kingston, River Thames will be added to the list of designated bathing waters ahead of the start of the 2026 bathing season in May.

Designation means the site will be subject to regular testing by the Environment Agency throughout the official bathing season, which runs from 15 May to 30 September each year. This will give bathers a clearer picture of water quality at the site, helping them to make informed choices about when to enter the water.

The Regulations require public information about water quality and potential sources of pollution to be available at all bathing waters during the bathing season. Defra provides funding for local authorities for the installation of information signage at bathing waters, and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames will be responsible for maintaining signs at this site. The Environment Agency will also prepare a bathing water profile which will be available shortly on its [Swimfo website](#).

Both the relevant local authority and the applicant have been informed of the successful outcome of this application for bathing water designation.

Let me take this opportunity to personally thank you for supporting this application. Please pass on my thanks to all your constituents who took the time to respond to Defra's consultation and contributed to the positive outcome for this site.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Hardy', written in a cursive style.

EMMA HARDY MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs