

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

27th November 2025

COUNCILLOR SANDRA SQUIRE - CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & COASTAL

For the period to 25th November 2025

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

I must apologise for the lateness of this report. I held it back because the new bathing water classifications were due to be published today. We have been excitedly expecting a change but didn't want to speak too soon. So without further ado....



BATHING WATER CLASSIFICATIONS 2025



2025 Bathing Water Profile for Heacham

Norfolk, England

No pollution incidents reported.

The most recent classification is **Sufficient**, based on samples taken from 2022 through to 2025.



2025 Bathing Water Profile for Hunstanton Main Beach

Norfolk, England

No pollution incidents reported.

The most recent classification is **Good**, based on samples taken from 2022 through to 2025.



Hunstanton (Old Hunstanton)

A designated bathing water where water quality is monitored from May to September by the Environment Agency

Latest Annual Classification: 2025



Good
bathing water quality
★★★★ excellent
★★★★ good
★★★ sufficient
★ poor
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Heacham – Sufficient
Hunstanton Main – Good
Old Hunstanton – Good

I'm sure you will all be as pleased as I am that we will finally lose our brown flag award for Heacham! Due to the classification being based across a 4 year range for testing, the loss of the 2021 results has certainly helped.

We knew that the majority of this years tests results were in the Excellent range, except for a few that were discounted as they were linked with significant rainfall.

While we have a very unique geography, wildlife and tidal processes in the wash, which will limit the level of improvement we can see in the future, by working together with our partners, looking at the data and science, improvements have been made and water quality has improved.

This could not have been achieved without the excellent work of our partners, in particular the Environment Agency and Anglian Water. I would like to express my thanks to both organisations, but also to Cllr Parish and Cllr Dark who began the process of examining the issues to try to find solutions.

Work will still continue, this isn't a case of "job done" and we can all relax. We are still awaiting the permit from the EA to be able to place bins and dog bins along the beach at Heacham, we expect they will be installed ready for the start of the 2026 bathing season.

We will be holding a celebratory dip at Heacham in the near future, as promised in previous reports. Further details will be given to councillors and anyone who would like to join us, as soon as we have checked the tides and arranged a date. Please do consider joining us, this is a great result not just for the council and our partners, but also for residents and for local businesses that rely on tourism.

15 years of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

We are celebrating 15 years of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

Since the launch of the National Food Hygiene Rating scheme launch, we have noted the role that the scheme has played in helping businesses not only to recognise when they are meeting the right standards and why that matters but also understand the importance of addressing areas where they fall short.

The scheme has been a real driver of improvement. Initially, approximately 86% of businesses achieved a rating of 3, whereas today we consistently see over 98% reaching that level or higher, with businesses really wanting to get and keep that rating of 5.

The scheme has increased consumer awareness as to the important role that Local Authorities and their food safety officers have in promoting and protecting health, and has undoubtedly resulted in an increase of intelligence led complaints about food and food premises.

The proliferation of food delivery platforms and their role in setting sign up standards incorporating the need for food businesses to register demonstrates the power that such schemes can have.

If you would like to check the Food Hygiene Rating for any food premises, they can be found here: [Search for ratings | Food Hygiene Ratings](#)

Pilot Scheme with FSA

We are also piloting a scheme with the FSA called 'Active Business Check Tool'. The tool is designed to support LAs in managing the volume of registered food businesses by verifying whether Food Business Operators (FBOs) are still trading. It works by sending automated emails to FBOs at configurable intervals (for example, 3, 6, or 12 months after registration), asking them to confirm their trading status. Responses are captured via direct links and sent to us.

The benefits of the tool include:

- Reducing unnecessary inspection visits
- Minimising administrative burden
- Improving the accuracy of FBO data
- Supporting data retention and compliance

Sea Defences and Hunstanton Prom

The project task group has been created and work with the contractors is progressing in terms of detailed design work, updates will be given as when possible. Most recent repairs have all been completed as expected. Winter storms always pose challenges, our team monitor the prom regularly and reinspect after any significant storms, so further repairs may be needed, depending on the weather.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

With changes to portfolio responsibilities, it's been interesting adding elements to my portfolio and being briefed on them, many of which were linked previously anyway.

I will be visiting Hunstanton next week with officers to review any upgrades and improvements that need to be made before next season, especially to public facilities including toilets and waste bins, particularly on the prom and on the cliff top.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Various portfolio briefings
Meetings with LGA Coastal SIG officers
Cabinet Sifting
Cabinet Briefings
Cabinet
Joint Waste Contract Review Board Meeting
RFCC Pre-meet
Planning Committee
LGA Coastal SIG Water Quality Working Group
East Anglian Coastal Group Meeting
RFCC Meeting
Hunstanton Masterplan Briefings
NEWS Board meeting
LGA Coastal SIG Quarterly Meeting
Resort Visit