

Response to Bathing Water Review in Wales for 2014

Consultation Response Form

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We have asked a specific question. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

Please enter here:

Maintaining good water quality in Llyn Padarn is essential to protect the health and well-being of the local residents and visitors who swim and paddle on the lake. The local economy is heavily dependent on these visitors and therefore, any deterioration in water quality would have a significant economic impact on the area. We believe that achieving Bathing Waters designation for Llyn Padarn would be an important driver to monitoring and maintaining water quality in the lake.

Information on the identification and designation process for Bathing Waters in Wales, available on the Welsh Government web page, states that detailed information and evidence of bathers is required in support of applications. The use and importance of Llyn Padarn is far greater than that suggested by the evidence provided for designation by Gwynedd Council. In addition to the evidence submitted by Gwynedd Council we would like to draw attention to the following points:

- Following the installation of the pontoon in 2013 and the associated fencing and landscaping work undertaken by the Padarn Country Park team, which coincided with a prolonged period of fine weather, there was a significant increase in the number of people bathing in the lake.
- The lake is an important economic resource for the area with a number of activity tourism businesses using the lake for water based activities throughout the year. From May to September they use the lake for water-based activities on a daily basis, frequently with more than one group per day. A number of locally based businesses rely heavily on the use of the lake, with other businesses based further afield busing clients to Llanberis to use the lake on a

regular basis. 10-15 businesses purchase a permit to use the lake on an annual basis, with an additional number using it regularly without a permit.

- The lake is used as a venue for the swim leg of two annual sporting events; Slateman Triathlon and Brutal Extreme Triathlons.

Slateman Triathlon: takes place in May and includes a 1000m swim in Llyn Padarn. In 2013 there were 1000 entrants. In 2014 1200 entrants will swim in the main event, with another 500 entrants competing in the Slateman Sprint which includes a 400m open water swim in Llyn Padarn.

The Brutal Extreme Triathlon takes place in September and includes an open water swim in Llyn Padarn. In 2013 there were 200 entrants. In addition to the Triathlon, in August 2014 Brutal Events are planning an open water swim (5k and 10K) in Llyn Padarn with approximately 200 entrants. In Jan/Feb 2015 they are planning a Cold Swim with 100-150 entrants.

The economic value of these events to the region is significant, with both events bringing in competitors, friends and family from outside the area. Accommodation and catering businesses benefit greatly from increased out-of-season bookings as a result. If events were to be cancelled due to water quality problems this income would be lost for that year, with the possibility that events might not return for the following year.

- Llyn Padarn is a well known venue for the growing sport of open water swimming. It is featured on www.wildswim.com, www.wildswimming.co.uk, and www.river-swimming.co.uk.
- Howe Bridge Marlins Long distance Swimming Club hold an annual competition (1000m, 1 mile, 2 mile and 4 mile distance races for juniors and seniors) on the lake in July each year.
- Llyn Padarn is a popular venue for canoeing and kayaking and is featured on www.canoewales.com and www.paddlepoints.net.
- In June each year local business, Surf-Lines, organises the Palm Big Paddle. This free event offers try-it canoe sessions, kayaking and stand-up-paddle-boards, guided nature and history tours of the lake, paddling workshops with Team Palm, and a 'Cardboard Canoe Race'. In 2013 approximately 200 people took part.
- Bangor University Boat Club (BUBC) train on Llyn Padarn twice a week during term time.