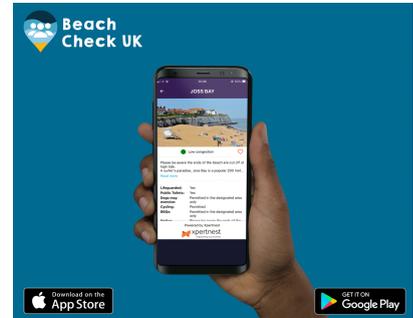




School's out for summer! Time to hit the UK's best beaches for families

Use the new Beach Check UK app in advance to check for crowds



L-R: Camber Sands; Paddle boarding at Worthing Beach; Beach Check UK app.

27 July, 2021

Beach Check UK is an innovative app which allows visitors to check the status of a beach before they arrive – meaning that they can avoid congested beaches and instead discover nearby beaches that are quieter and less crowded.

Ideal for families planning a day out during the school summer holidays, the free-to-use app is downloadable from [Google Play](#) and the [Apple App store](#) (with no in-app purchases necessary). It is simple to use, allowing you to **check individual beaches** and to see a map showing red (crowded), amber (less congested) and green (uncongested) beaches, as well as to **see at a glance the ability for social distancing to be maintained, the number of car park spaces and which facilities are nearby.**

Discover some of the best beaches for family days out, and staycations, with Beach Check UK's guide:

[Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate beaches – great for little explorers](#)

Families visiting these beaches this summer can hire a [Coastal Explorer Pack](#) for just £5, plus proof of ID, for at least half a day of fun and exploration. Whilst the packs contain information specific to each of the main beaches and bays, most of the activities can be done anywhere along this coastline. Make a sundial, learn the names of different clouds, play hopscotch and use the explorer equipment to identify marine life in rockpools – the packs are great fun for children of all ages. Use the Beach Check UK app to avoid the busiest beaches.

Where to stay: Walpole Bay Hotel, Margate - <https://www.walpolebayhotel.co.uk/>.

[Minehead, Somerset – perfect for day-trippers](#)

Known for a combination of charm and space, Minehead's beaches make an ideal family day trip destination. A mile-long beach curves around to a historic harbour framed by hills, with lovely views across to Wales and Weston-super-Mare. There are WCs, plenty of cafés and restaurants, deck chairs and windbreakers for hire, and for families there's an amusement arcade, great rock pooling and a promenade to stroll along.

Where to stay: Visit www.mineheadbay.co.uk for latest accommodation availability.

[Westward Ho!, Devon – ideal for surfers and swimmers](#)

With two miles of golden sandy beach backed by a unique pebble ridge, Westward Ho! has plenty of space for families to play beach Olympics this summer. One of North Devon's most popular surfing and swimming spots, the life-guarded beach has WCs, plenty of parking in the town, it is dog-friendly in permitted areas, and BBQs are allowed after 6pm. The vibrant seaside town itself enables easy access to the beach and has lots to entertain kids, including Northam Country Park nature reserve with its newly-renovated visitor centre, Pebble Ridge Adventure Golf and Go Karts, and the Big Sheep family farm attraction with rides.

Where to stay: Check out accommodation on <https://www.visitdevon.co.uk/>.

[Camber Sands, East Sussex – ideal for wildlife watchers](#)

A vast and unspoiled golden sand beach, the two miles of Camber Sands are home to the only sand dune system in East Sussex, a natural habitat for many animals and plants – and an ideal spot for budding young bird and wildlife-watchers. The life-guarded beach has WCs and several cafés, and an easy 20-minute cycling route connects Camber Sands with Rye via the stunning Rye Harbour Nature Reserve, which has a new visitor

centre.

For more information please visit:

<https://www.rother.gov.uk/leisure-and-events/beaches-and-coastline/camber-sands/>

West Wittering, West Sussex – for wide, clean and safe sandy beaches

Set in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, West Wittering is a large and sandy beach at the entrance to Chichester Harbour. It has a Blue Flag Award for cleanliness and safety and is patrolled by lifeguards in the summer. Car parking spaces must be pre-booked, meaning that numbers are closely monitored and regulated. If parking is sold out, please do not travel to the area by car, as there is no alternative parking nearby.

Where to stay: There are several camping sites and holiday camps in the surrounding area - please see www.visitchichester.org for more information.

Worthing, West Sussex – for the quintessential English seaside experience

The sloping sandy and shingle beach at Worthing is ideal for kids, with lovely rock pools at low tide, zoned areas for water and paddle sports, and an iconic pier and Splash Point. Great for adults too - don't miss the beachfront cafés selling freshly-caught seafood and the local arts and crafts studios on East Beach. There's always something going on in the lively seaside town of Worthing, and it's also home to one of the oldest independent cinemas in the country, The Dome, right on the seafront.

Where to stay: Visit www.ExperienceWestSussex.com

Hayling Island, Hampshire – for watersports galore

A long-standing Blue Flag award winner, Hayling Island is blessed with fine beaches and a beautiful, natural coastline that is a haven for a wide range of plants and wildlife. With ample parking and WC facilities along the length of the shore, the island is a well-established and well-loved seaside destination. The spiritual home of windsurfing - first developed on Hayling Island in 1958 – and now a renowned location for many watersports, the island is the ideal place to enjoy the water, relish food and drink out and to relax.

Where to stay: Visit <https://hayling-accommodation.co.uk/>

Sandbanks, Poole – for Blue Flag bathing

Winner of a Blue Flag award for over 30 years, the soft golden sands, breath-taking views and beautiful life-guarded bathing waters of Sandbanks beach make it an excellent choice for families. The soft sand is ideal for building sandcastles, and there are lots of watersports on offer and equipment hire available, including volleyball nets, slackline and table tennis. The leisurely promenade offers cafés, shops, plenty of parking (including a park and ride option), and there are WC facilities along the beach too.

Where to stay: Visit <https://www.pooletourism.com/accommodation>

The Beach Check UK app is currently available at the following coastal locations: Hayling Island, Hampshire; Camber Sands and Bexhill Beach, East Sussex; Thanet (Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate); Westward Ho!, Devon; West Wittering, West Sussex; Worthing, Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole (BCP); and Minehead, Somerset.

The National Coastal Tourism Academy is supporting BCP Council in the roll out of their app and is encouraging resorts nationwide to adopt it.

For more information, visit <https://www.englishcoast.com/en/blog/beach-check-uk-app>

Press:

For further information on Beach Check UK, or high-res images, please contact Lizzie Cooper or Jackie Franklin at [Travel PR](mailto:l.cooper@travelpr.co.uk) on l.cooper@travelpr.co.uk (07772 136 027) / j.franklin@travelpr.co.uk (07779 336 158).

Notes to editors:

1. Launched in July 2020, the Beach Check UK app is the brainchild of BCP Council, designed using sophisticated technology to help manage over-crowding among its busy beaches.
2. Each location in which the app is operated will provide information specific to the data available. In some locations the new version will use camera feeds to determine the traffic light system across beaches and will include updates on car park availability. It is simple to use, free to download from Google Play and the Apple App Store and it allows users to check individual beaches or to see a map showing red (crowded), amber (less congested) and green (uncongested) beaches.
3. App data is supplied by a mix of sources. At the start of the day, a prediction is set for each zone, based on previous data, factoring in the date and weather, to show how busy the forecast for each zone is. From mid-morning, beach management staff (seafront rangers) will update each section on a regular basis to reflect any changes in congestion observed. This is supplemented by CCTV and some footfall counters. Plans are underway to embed the app on coastal destination tourism webpages.
4. The app has been funded by the government's Local Digital Collaboration Unit at MHCLG (the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government), which includes funding the launch and maintenance of the app in its first year at no cost to local authorities. The total funding secured for this development is £160,000.
5. The beaches can be searched for individually as well as seen on a wider map. Where data is not available, this will be indicated on the app; ditto if any location is temporarily closed. Options allow the consumer to change the colour codes of the beaches if required. Those who have already downloaded the app will find it updates automatically to the national version.
6. Visit www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/summerreadiness for more information.