



NEW app helps staycationers find the south east coast's best beaches without the crowds

Beach Check UK works in real time to help maintain social distancing on the east coast this summer



L-R: Viking Bay, Broadstairs; Margate Main Sands, Stone Bay, Broadstairs

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Beach Check UK is an innovative new app which allows visitors to check the status of a beach before they arrive in order to avoid congested beaches and to encourage them to discover nearby alternatives that are quieter and less crowded. The app has just launched in Thanet on the UK's south east coast, as well as various destinations around the UK.

Thanet was one of the first local authorities to adopt the app, which will allow staycationers and day trippers to check the status of Margate Main Sands, Botany Bay, Joss Bay, Viking Bay (Broadstairs) and Ramsgate Main Sands.

Working on a traffic light system that uses sophisticated technology and on-the-ground authorised users who assign a colour code to beaches according to the number of visitors, whether social distancing can be maintained and number of car park spaces, the app aims to reduce overcrowding at popular coastal areas and encourage safe social distancing.

The app is free and simple to use, downloadable from [Google Play](#) and the [Apple App store](#) (with no in-app purchases), allowing users to check individual beaches or see a map showing red (crowded), amber (less congested) and green (uncongested) beaches.

Piloted by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council in summer 2020, the app was developed to help manage overcrowding of the area's beaches following easing of the first national lockdown. In its first phase, it had around 40,000 downloads. Following its successful first phase, the app was awarded further funding by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to roll it out nationally.

Cllr Reece Pugh, Cabinet Member for Economic Development at Thanet District Council, said:

"We're delighted to be one of the first local authorities to have joined this exciting new initiative. We're expecting lots of visitors this summer and we want to help everyone to enjoy our coastline and to do so safely.

"Through Beach Check UK, people will be able to see how busy our beaches are in real time. We'd urge anyone planning to spend time at the beach this summer to download the app and get the inside scoop on where they should head to. Residents and visitors can use that information to help them choose whether to go to those beaches or visit one of the others along the 19 miles of Thanet coastline."

There are plans to sign up more coastal locations, and users are encouraged to contact their local authority if they feel their area would benefit.

Explore the Thanet coast this summer with these ideas from Beach Check UK:

NEW accommodation & cultural openings: The launch of a Dickens-themed holiday cottage, [Fagin's Cottage](#), in Broadstairs, will allow families to step back in time with Victorian furniture, costumes, memorabilia, books, games and artwork. There's also the opening of a new [Crab Museum](#) in Margate's Old Town, with quirky interactive exhibits and a café and gift shop, and Antony Gormley's ANOTHER TIME sculpture will be staying in Margate for another 10 years.

NEW Pier-to-Pier Cycle Trail: Active Ramsgate has launched a new guide for cyclists to travel from Ramsgate Pier to Deal Pier, taking in some of the south east's best examples of architecture, history and nature along the way. The [Pier to Pier Cycle Trail](#) is 20 km one way, with the majority of the route on cycle-friendly paths with lots of rest and viewpoints along the way, so perfect for families. The downloadable guide features a map, pedal-by-pedal instructions, history of the area and eateries to stop at en route.

Doctor Forager walks and demos: On this two-hour foraging walk with [Doctor Forager](#), starting in Margate, you will learn how to forage sustainably and discover which wild coastal edibles are safe and tasty to eat. This will be followed by a cookery demonstration and lunch featuring your freshly-foraged treats, with dishes such as sea purslane pesto on pasta, and wild spinach with walnuts.

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](#) 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 app is the brainchild of BCP Council, designed using sophisticated technology to help manage over-crowding among its busy beaches.
2. Each location 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 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 we forecast each zone will be. 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's 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 or 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<<http://www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/summerreadiness>> for more information.