

Help keep the area around Bewl Water peaceful and tranquil for visitors and the wildlife

Help protect the water sport clubs at Bewl Water



Emily Craig MBE, who trained at Bewl Water, with her Olympic rowing gold medal

A developer is trying to overturn the decision of Wealden District Council and ignore the wishes of the local community

Background

The managers at Bewl Water have launched planning application after planning application to convert Bewl Water, the internationally important wildlife centre and recreational area for local people, into a centre for overnight accommodation. You will not be surprised to learn that those that control the company making the planning application manage a loss-making hotel. It is believed the visitor numbers at Bewl Water have, over the years, fallen from 200,000 to 100,000 a year.

The latest planning application is to convert the water sports clubhouse at Bewl Water into eleven holiday lets. The sailing club's facilities would be so reduced they would not be able to manage regattas or junior training because there isn't sufficient room or space for safeguarding. Also, the social facilities of a club are important for attracting and keeping members.

The Friends of Bewl Water conducted an extensive campaign against the planning application. It involved many documents being distributed to the councillors; an expert ecologists report, a solicitor's assessment and details about the loss of facilities at Bewl Water. Emily Craig MBE, the Olympic gold medallist supported us. There were 150 objectors to the scheme and no supporters. The councillors at Wealden rejected the scheme 9-0.

The applicant has now lodged an appeal with the Planning Inspectorate.

The Friends of Bewl Water objections

The Friends of Bewl Water and the Parish Councils of Ticehurst and Wadhurst object to the urbanisation of site. The objections include:

- The proposed housing units will be at the water's edge. The housing will not help local people at all.
- Bewl Water is a site of international importance, because of the protection it gives to endangered birds, particularly those on the Red List (the most at risk), which roost there. The planners are obliged 'to seek to further the purpose of **conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape**'. (Previously known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.) This application does neither.

- **Noise pollution** is an issue for the wildlife, the visitors and the nearby residents. The proposed holiday lets have balconies and outside hot tubs. Taking into account the lack of supervision at the campsite, the users will be able to make as much noise as they like without any supervision.
- **Removing the club house removes an important social facility** for the members of the water sport clubs. It also means the sailing club cannot run regattas because there is no longer the ability to have safeguarding facilities in place.
- **Dark skies** are very important to the birds and other wildlife. Bewl Water is an important dark skies area and the loss is significant to light sensitive birds and other wildlife.
- There is **no tourist need** for new holiday lets as there are so many similar and underused sites nearby, which are more suitable for tourists.
- There are Health and Safety concerns with holiday makers partying next to what is claimed will be a poorly lit area on the water's edge.

To learn more about the application

To learn more visit <https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/Planning/Display/WD/2025/1539/MAJ> and press the Documents tab. Alternatively, visit our website.

Register your objection now

To object or comment on the appeal (Closing date 29 April 2026)

1. Visit <https://appeal-planning-decision.service.gov.uk/comment-planning-appeal/enter-appeal-reference>
2. Type 6006398 in **Enter the appeal reference number** box.
3. Press **Submit Search** and then press **Make Representation**. You can either write in the box or attach a document.

Please list the reasons why you object because that will give your objection more weight.

The planning Inspector does not accept e-mails from the public, however you can send a letter by post to the Planning Inspectorate. You must quote APP/U1430/W/25/6006398.

If you live nearby, or visit Bewl Water, please say so.

Please inform others

Please pass on this information and help others to hear about the appeal. Please encourage them to object. The total number of people objecting matters.

The Friends of Bewl Water

The Friends of Bewl Water wants to protect Bewl Water. Bewl Water should be for recreation during the day and a tranquil setting for the wildlife at night. The group also wants more housing for local people in the right place that meets their needs. This should be decided in the Neighbourhood Plans.

The group needs more members and volunteers. To learn about the group visit www.friendsofbewl.co.uk

Claire Moore

Chair

The Friends of Bewl Water

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