

## Celebrating 100 Years Of The British Holiday Camp!

Imagine choosing between a guest house with a set of strict rules – and a landlady ready to enforce them, or a holiday camp with tents and daily chores to complete. Doesn't sound like much of a choice, yet these were the accommodation options for those holidaying in Great Britain's seaside resorts in the 1900s.

Given these were the only options, the 'freedom' offered by the holiday camp was instantly appealing and holidaymakers were welcomed at the UK's first holiday camp in 1906 at Caistor-on-Sea, Norfolk. By today's standards the camp was incredibly basic and certainly had no luxury accommodation on offer! Yet it paved the way for a holiday genre that has been thriving for more than 100 years.

Holiday camps continued to make steady progression and 1924 saw the arrival of a holiday camp in Hopton-on-Sea which boasted brick chalets, running water and electric lights – some of the ultimate facilities. However, global events were to have a serious impact on holidays with two World Wars, and the take over of holiday camps to be used as military bases in the Second World War.

Holiday camps really came into their own with a glorious golden era during the 1950s and 60s after the end of WWII. People hadn't been on holiday for many years and many children had never seen the sea. Life had been incredibly hard and the public were in need of fun and entertainment. The holiday camp could provide all this and more. With swimming pools on site, entertainment in the evenings, competitions including 'Glamorous Granny' and 'Knobbly Knees' plus plentiful food the camps offered all the right ingredients for an fun and affordable family holiday.

While the offer of cheap sea and sun holidays drew many people to destinations such as Spain in the 1970s, UK holiday resorts such as Great Yarmouth have seen a resurgence of visitors in recent years. As the cost of living continues to soar and with the need to consider 'greener' ways to travel, a Great British seaside holiday – with glorious beaches, strolls along the pier and ice cream – is an attractive proposition.

And where better to stay than a holiday village? A far cry from their 20th Century counterparts, Great Yarmouth is home to some of the UK's best including some with 5-star ratings. With the promise of modern accommodation, a huge range of indoor and outside entertainment for children and adults and onsite eateries, it's the ideal choice for families.

Great Yarmouth has invested more than £25 million in redeveloping the seafront, creating a stunning new promenade area for visitors to stroll along, and a beautifully lit pedestrianised walkway linking the seafront to the town centre. The town's rich maritime heritage is evident all around, with a heritage quarter rich in history to explore. The many holiday parks and villages along this part of the coastline expect a bumper year in 2008.

## About the Author

Lindsay Chapman is author of this article. Holiday camps continued to make steady progression and 1924 saw the arrival of a holiday camp in Hopton-on-Sea which boasted brick chalets, running water and electric. For more information visit – <http://www.great-yarmouth.co.uk/xxl/lang/en/area/accommodation/index.html>

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