

## Bathing Water Profile for Findhorn

Findhorn, Scotland

Current water classification <https://www2.sepa.org.uk/BathingWaters/Classifications.aspx>

### Description

Findhorn bathing water is located within the Moray Firth next to the village of Findhorn. The designated bathing water is a 1.5 km stretch that sits at the western end of the sweeping Burghead Bay. The beach is backed by dunes, a caravan site and the Findhorn Bay Nature Reserve.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 0–370 metres. The sandy beach slopes gently towards the water. For local tide information see: <http://easytide.ukho.gov.uk/EasyTide/>

The beach is prized for its unspoilt golden sands and is popular in particular with wildlife and water sports enthusiasts.



### Site details

Local authority	Moray Council
Year of designation	2008
Water sampling location	NJ 03560 64940

### Catchment description

The catchment draining into the Findhorn bathing water extends to only 300 m<sup>2</sup>. It has low-lying topography. The area is predominantly sand dunes (52%) and vegetated shingle. Approximately 7% of the bathing water catchment is urban. The main population centre is the village of Findhorn situated within 1 km of the bathing water. Outside of the immediate catchment, the area supports mixed farming, with more livestock than arable in the lower River Findhorn catchment. Other nearby population centres include the towns of Forres and Kinloss as well as RAF Kinloss.

There are no major rivers within the bathing water catchment. However, immediately adjacent to the catchment area, the River Findhorn, Bolmack Burn, Muckle Burn, Mosset Burn and Kinloss Burn flow into Findhorn Bay.

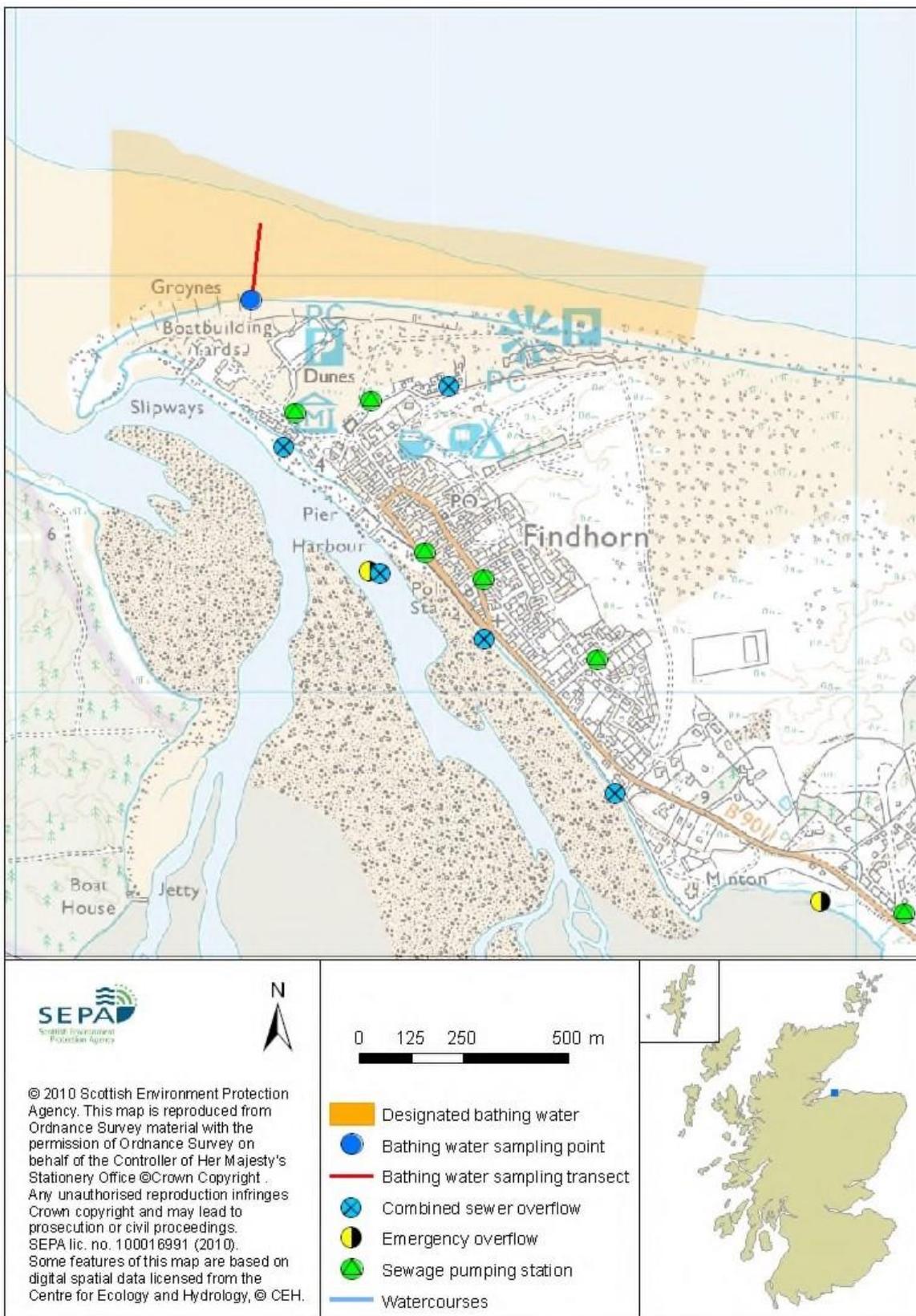
### Risks to water quality

The principal risks and source of wet weather driven short term pollution at this bathing water arise from agricultural run-off and combined sewer overflows.

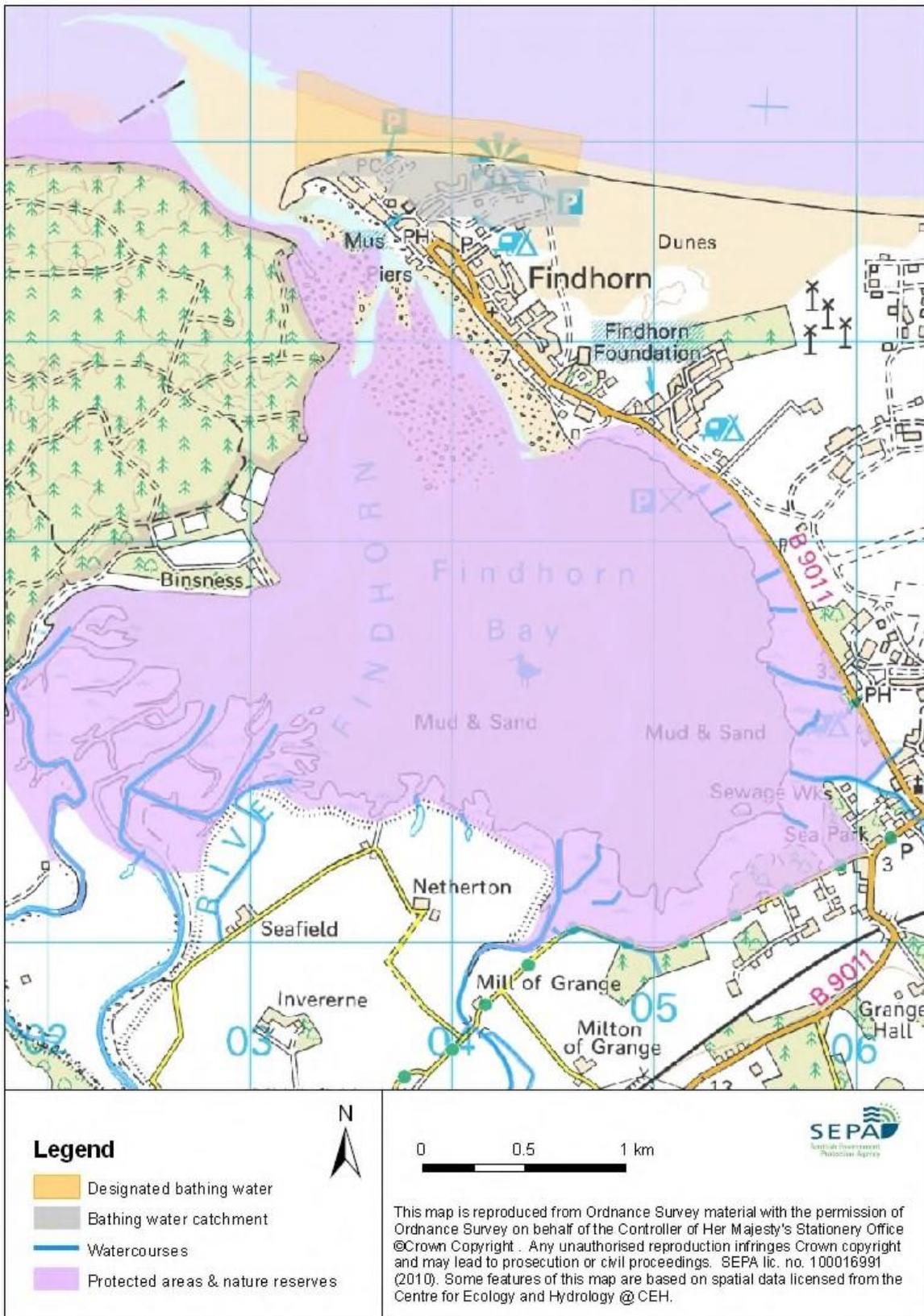
There is a risk that water pollution may occur after heavy rainfall. **Bathing is not advised during or 1-2 days after heavy rainfall. This is due to the risk to bathers' health from water pollution.**

Our regulatory and scientific assessment indicates that potential sources of short-term faecal indicator pollution at this bathing water can originate from human or animal sources.

Map 1: Findhorn bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into Findhorn bathing water



## **Improving bathing water quality**

### **Improving diffuse pollution from agricultural sources**

Diffuse pollution from agricultural sources is the result of rain driven events causing cumulative inputs of pollutants to rivers and streams.

There is potential for agricultural diffuse pollution to impact Findhorn bathing water given that the areas supports both livestock and arable farming.

Work to address diffuse pollution issues in this catchment is expected to be completed by 2027.

### **Improving pollution from sewage and other discharges**

Scottish Water provides most waste water collection and treatment services in Scotland.

Sewage from Kinloss is pumped to Forres sewage treatment works before discharging.

There are several private septic tanks discharges into Findhorn Bay as well as into the local burns and rivers.

### **Improving pollution from diffuse urban sources**

Urban diffuse source pollution comes from contaminated rainwater discharging to rivers and streams.

The rivers and burns that flow through urban areas are thought to be impacted by surface water run-off. They then flow into Findhorn Bay and out to the sea.

### **Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae)**

Marine waters are not at risk of cyanobacteria overproduction.

### **Algae**

Current information suggests that this bathing water is not at risk of excessive growth of macroalgae (seaweed) or phytoplankton.

### **Jellyfish**

There is a possibility of increased numbers of jellyfish in the water during summer months. This is a naturally occurring phenomenon. Most species common to the UK are harmless. The Marine Conservation Society advises to 'look but don't touch'.

### **Responding to pollution incidents**

Please use our 24 hour hotline (0800 80 70 60) to report pollution. SEPA will investigate the incident and contact other relevant organisations. That may include Scottish Ministers, Scottish Water, the local authority and the relevant health board. Where necessary, measures will be put in place to resolve the problem.

If beach users or bathers are considered to be at risk, the local authority will warn the public by erecting signs at the bathing water. Information will also be available on our website.

SEPA will investigate whenever our sampling identifies pollution.

Beach users are encouraged to use the bins provided or to take litter home. Beach cleaning and litter clean-up is maintained by Moray Council for this bathing water.

**Contact details and information sources**

<p><b>SEPA Elgin office</b></p> <p>Elgin Office 28 Perimeter Road Pinefield Elgin IV30 6AF 01343 547663 <a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk">www.sepa.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Moray Council</b></p> <p>Council Office High Street Elgin Moray IV30 1BX 01343 543451 <a href="mailto:hotline@moray.gov.uk">hotline@moray.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.moray.gov.uk/">www.moray.gov.uk/</a></p>	<p><b>Keep Scotland Beautiful</b></p> <p>01786 471333 <a href="mailto:beach@ksbscotland.org.uk">beach@ksbscotland.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org">www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org</a></p>
<p><b>Scottish Government</b></p> <p>Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ 0131 244 0396 <a href="mailto:eqcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">eqcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/15561/bathingwaters">www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/15561/bathingwaters</a></p>		
<b>Version number:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Next review due:</b>
1.0	September 2010	
1.1	May 2014	
1.2	June 2015	
1.3	April 2020	
1.4	May 2023	