

Bathing Water Profile for Dunbar (Belhaven)

Dunbar, Scotland

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

Description

Dunbar (Belhaven) bathing water is located to the west of the town of Dunbar. The designated area is approximately 1.3 km long and extends northwest from Belhaven Bay to about half way down the beach. Sand dunes border the beach.

The beach is popular throughout the year with wind and wave enthusiasts (particularly windsurfers), walkers and picnickers.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 0–630 metres. The sandy beach slopes gently towards the water. For local tide information see: <http://easytide.ukho.gov.uk/EasyTide/index.aspx>



Site details

Local authority	East Lothian Council
Year of designation	1987
Water sampling location	NT 65491 79125

Catchment description

The catchment draining into the Dunbar (Belhaven) bathing water extends to 396 km². The area is predominantly rural (98%) with arable agriculture the major land use. Approximately 1.5% of the bathing water catchment is urban. The main population centres within the catchment are Haddington, Gifford, Pencaitland and Ormiston, with many smaller villages in the catchment.

The main rivers in the bathing water catchment are the River Tyne, Biel Water and Whittingehame Water.

There are several protected areas either fully or partially within the bathing water catchment including 12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), two Special Protection Areas (SPA) and two Ramsar sites. See Scottish Natural Heritage's information service website for more information. Bird populations in Firth of Forth and the Fala Flow protected areas have the potential to impact on bathing water quality.

Risks to water quality

The principal risks and source of wet weather driven short term pollution at this bathing water arise from 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 there are no significant pollution inputs to this bathing water in normal conditions.

Map 1: Dunbar (Belhaven) bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into Dunbar (Belhaven) bathing water



Improving bathing water quality

Improving pollution from sewage and other discharges

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

Upgrades to the sewerage network in the Dunbar area include the construction of Beltonford treatment works. The works was built inland with a discharge to the Biel Water, using the existing long sea outfall as a storm overflow. Membrane technology ensures high quality effluent is achieved, further safeguarding the quality of this bathing water.

Improving pollution from diffuse urban sources

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

SEPA, local authorities and Scottish Water are working together to tackle urban diffuse pollution at this bathing water.

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 East Lothian Council for this bathing water.

Contact details and information sources

<p>SEPA office</p> <p>SEPA Edinburgh office 231 Corstorphine Rd Edinburgh EH12 7AT 0131 449 729 www.sepa.org.uk</p>	<p>East Lothian Council</p> <p>John Muir House Haddington East Lothian EH41 3HA 01620 827827 customerservices@eastlothian.gov.uk www.eastlothian.gov.uk</p>	<p>Keep Scotland Beautiful</p> <p>01786 471333 beach@ksbscotland.org.uk www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org</p>
<p>Scottish Government</p> <p>Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ 0131 244 0396 eqcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/15561/bathingwaters</p>		
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