

Bathing Water Profile for Elie (Harbour) and Earlsferry

Elie, Scotland

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

Description Elie (Harbour) and Earlsferry bathing water is located next to the town of Elie on the north coast of the Firth of Forth. It is a long, sandy beach (1.3 km in length) which slopes gently towards the water.

The area is popular with water sports enthusiasts. During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 0–340 metres.

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For local tide information see:

<http://easytide.ukho.gov.uk/EasyTide/index.aspx>



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Site details	Local authority	Fife Council
	Year of designation	1999
	Water sampling location	NT 48900 99800

Catchment description

The catchment draining into Elie (Harbour) and Earlsferry bathing water extends to 2.3 km². The area is predominantly rural (94%) with arable agriculture the major land use. Approximately 6% of the bathing water catchment is urban. The main population centre within the catchment is the town of Elie.

There are no major rivers within the bathing water catchment.

There are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within or near to the bathing water or catchment. Firth of Forth is designated as a SSSI due to the internationally important bird population. Kilconquhar Loch is designated as a SSSI due to its importance for birds and habitat. These bird populations have the potential to influence water quality at the bathing water.

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 potential sources of short-term faecal indicator pollution at this bathing water can originate from human or animal sources.

Map 1: Elie (Harbour) and Earlsferry bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into Elie (Harbour) and Earlsferry 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.

Improvement works have been carried out to South Street and Earlsferry sewage pumping stations. Remedial works at Cadger’s Wynd pumping station have also been carried out.

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 Fife Council for this bathing water.

Contact details and information sources

<p>SEPA Glenrothes office Pentland Court The Saltire Centre Glenrothes KY6 2DA 01592 776910 www.sepa.org.uk</p>	<p>Fife Council Fife House North Street Glenrothes Fife KY7 5LT 08451 55 00 00 fife.council@fife.gov.uk www.fife.gov.uk</p>	<p>Keep Scotland Beautiful 01786 471333 beach@ksbscotland.org.uk www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org</p>
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Scottish Government

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1.0	Nov 2010	
1.1	March 2014	
1.2	June 2015	
1.3	April 2020	
1.4	May 2023	