

Bathing Water Profile for St Andrews (West Sands)

St Andrews, Scotland

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

Today's water quality forecast <http://apps.sepa.org.uk/bathingwaters/Predictions.aspx>

Description

The St Andrews (West Sands) bathing water is situated to the north of the town of St. Andrews in Fife. The 1.8 km long sandy beach is backed by sand dunes which form the boundary with the St Andrews Links Jubilee golf course. The area is popular for walking, running and swimming.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 20–400 metres. The beach slopes gently towards the water.



Site details

Local authority	Fife Council
Year of designation	1987
Water sampling location	NO 50474 17681

Catchment description

The catchment draining into the St Andrews (West Sands) bathing water extends to 6 km². The area is predominantly rural (69%) with arable agriculture the major land use. Approximately 7% of the bathing water catchment is urban. The main population area being the northern outskirts of the town of St Andrews.

The small Swilken Burn drains to the sea immediately to the south of the bathing water. There are several protected areas either within or nearby the bathing water and its catchment, including a Special Area of Conservation, a Special Protection Area, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Ramsar site (Map 2).

The Strathmore and Fife area was designated as a surface water Nitrate Vulnerable Zone in 2002.

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.

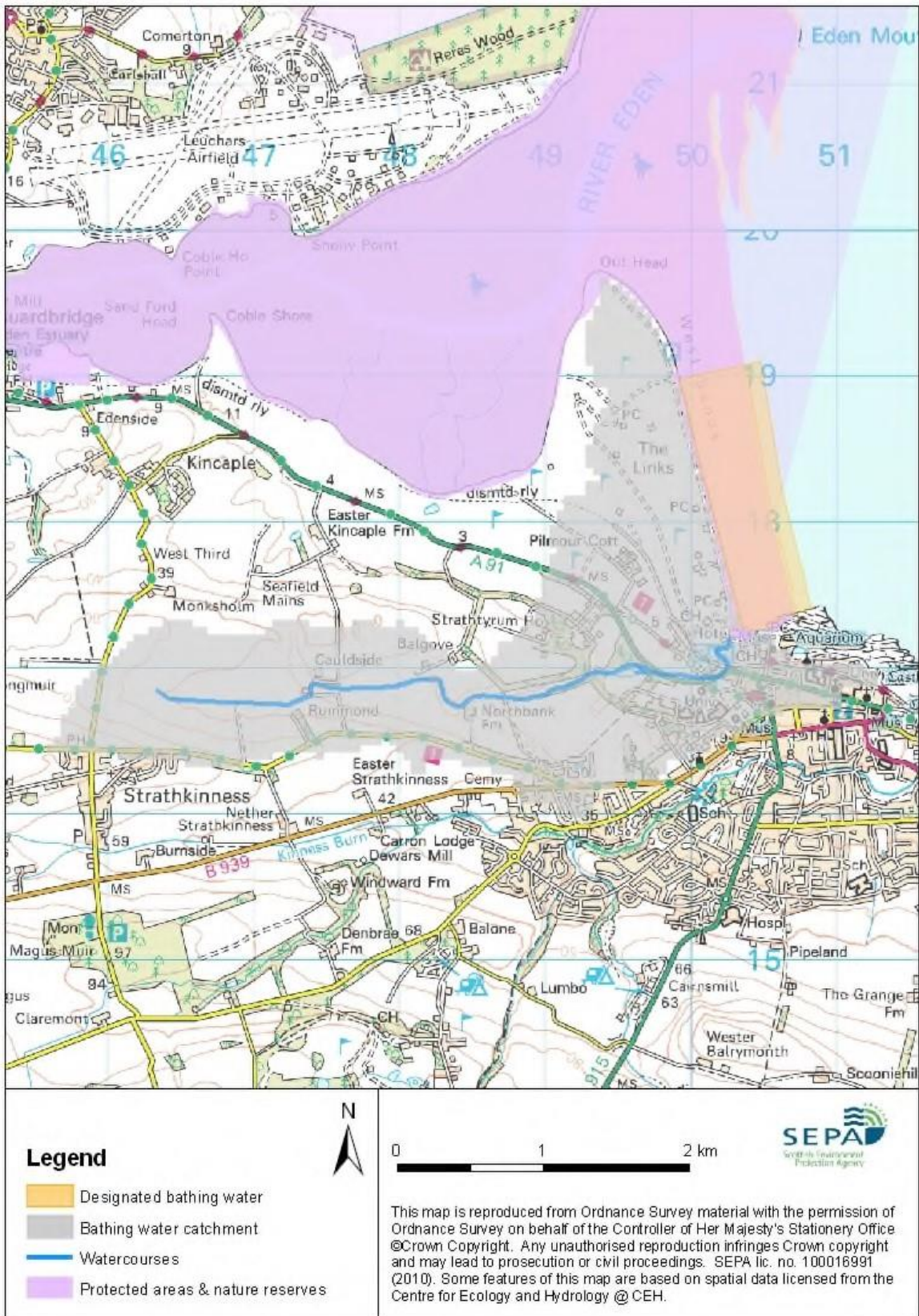
There is a risk that water pollution may occur after heavy rainfall. **Bathing is not advised during or 1-2 days after heavy rainfall. This is due to the risk to bathers' health from water pollution.**

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

Map 1: St Andrews (West Sands) bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into St Andrews (West Sands) bathing water



Daily water quality forecasts

Water quality is forecast on a daily basis during the bathing water season (1 June to 15 September). The forecasts indicate water quality is either acceptable or poor. Warnings against bathing are advised when poor water quality is forecast. This is because there is an increased risk to bathers' health from water pollution. Forecasts are communicated via electronic message signs at the beach, SEPA's website, mobile website and Beachline (03000 996699).

Improving bathing water quality

Improving pollution from sewage and other discharges

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

Sewage from St Andrews is pumped to Kinkell Ness treatment works. This works has tertiary treatment including disinfection. The treated effluent is discharged via a long sea outfall. Storm tanks have also been constructed in the Kinness Burn sewer catchment to minimise discharges from the combined sewer overflows.

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</p> <p>Pentland Court The Saltire Centre Glenrothes KY6 2DA 01592 776910 www.sepa.org.uk</p>	<p>Fife Council</p> <p>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</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>		
Version number:	Date:	Next review due:
1.0	Nov 2010	
1.1	March 2014	
1.2	June 2015	
1.3	May 2016	
1.4	April 2020	
1.5	May 2023	