

Bathing Water Profile for Maidens

Maidens, Scotland

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

Description

Maidens bathing water is an enclosed bay situated between Maidens harbour (to the south) and the rocky outcrop of Barwhin Point to the north. The area is very popular with holiday makers, particularly during the summer months, due to its proximity to caravan parks.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 30–170 metres.



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Site details

Local authority	South Ayrshire Council
Year of designation	2008
Water sampling location	NS 21700 08501

Catchment description

The catchment draining into the Maidens bathing water extends to approximately 5.5 km². The area varies in topography from a maximum elevation of 125 metres in the east to the low-lying plains (approximate elevation 5 metres) along the coast.

The catchment is predominantly rural (81%) with grassland the major land use. In general, the area supports beef and sheep farming. Approximately 17% of the bathing water catchment is urban with the main population area being Maidens village.

There are no major rivers within the bathing water catchment. The catchment is drained by two burns, the Hogston Burn to the north and an unnamed burn to the south.

To the north, the bathing water extends as far as the Maidens to Doonfoot Site of Special Scientific Interest.

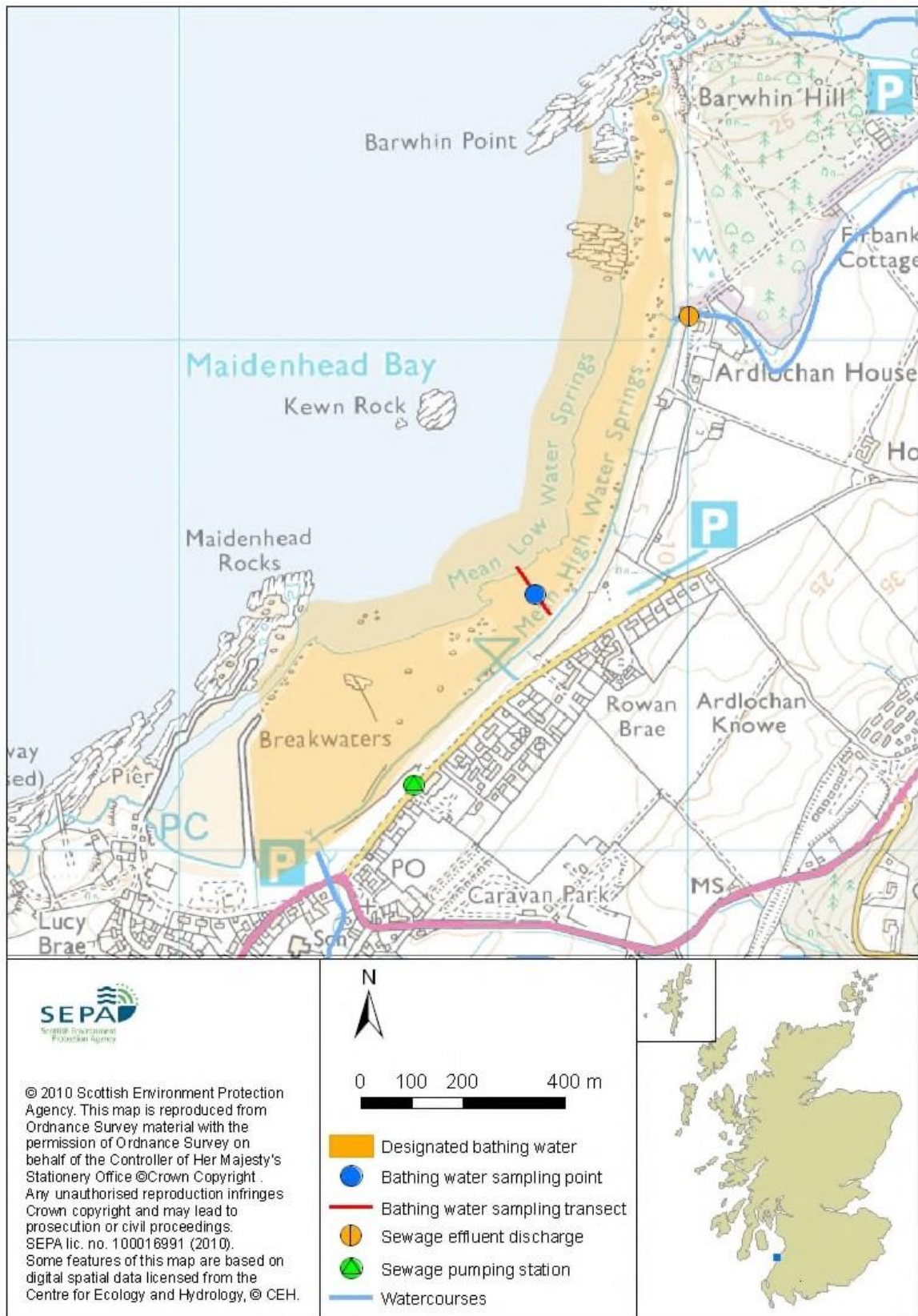
Risks to water quality

The principal risks and source of wet weather driven short term pollution at this bathing water arise from urban drainage, agricultural run-off and storm sewage discharges from the sewerage system.

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: Maidens bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into Maidens 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 occur in Hogstown and other small burns in the area. These are a risk to Maidens bathing water quality, particularly during and after periods of wet weather.

Farm visits to identify diffuse pollution sources in the South Ayrshire Coastal catchment began in 2015. The priority catchment program is now complete. All agricultural compliance work has been completed in this bathing water catchment and all farms are in a compliant state. SEPA will continue to engage with farmers and the NFUS to remind them of good practice when applying slurries and manures and grazing livestock.

Improving pollution from sewage and other discharges

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

Sewage from Maidens village is pumped to Girvan sewage treatment works. Discharges of sewage can occur as a result of heavy rainfall or as a result of failure of the sewage pumping station.

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. However, at any time of the year and particularly after storms, a considerable amount of seaweed can become stranded on the beach. Under the right conditions accumulated seaweed can rot producing grey/black fluid. The rotting seaweed can also generate offensive odours. This is an entirely natural process.

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 South Ayrshire Council for this bathing water.

Contact details and information sources

<p>SEPA Ayr office</p> <p>31 Miller Road Ayr Ayrshire KA7 2AX 01292 294000 www.sepa.org.uk</p>	<p>South Ayrshire Council</p> <p>Burns House Burns Statue Square Ayr KA7 1UT 01292 618222 environmental.health@south-ayrshire.gov.uk www.south-ayrshire.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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