

## Bathing Water Profile for Ettrick Bay

Isle of Bute, 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

Ettrick Bay bathing water is a wide, sandy bay of about 1.7 km in length. It is situated on the west coast of the Isle of Bute. The nearest town is Rothesay, which is about 4 km away on the east coast of the island.

The beach is primarily composed of coarse sand and is popular with locals and visitors. The beach offers spectacular views of nearby Arran.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 0–500 metres, although small strips of water are usually present on the beach when the tide is out. For local tide information see:

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



### Site details

Local authority	Argyll & Bute
Year of designation	1999
Water sampling location	NS 03724 66058

### Catchment description

The catchment draining into the bathing water extends to 22.5 km<sup>2</sup>. This hilly catchment surrounds the bathing water and a series of peaks can be seen from the beach. The highest of the peaks is Windy Hill in the north, which stands at 278 metres.

The area is predominantly rural (99%) with agriculture the major land use. The upland areas support mixed sheep and beef farming while the lowlands are used for intensive dairy farming. The areas of land next to the bathing water are used primarily for silage production and growing crops. The population in the catchment is very low as it does not include a town.

The main rivers within the bathing water catchment are the Glenmore Burn, Ettrick Burn, Drumachloy Burn and St Colmac Burn. Several small tributaries also enter the bathing water.

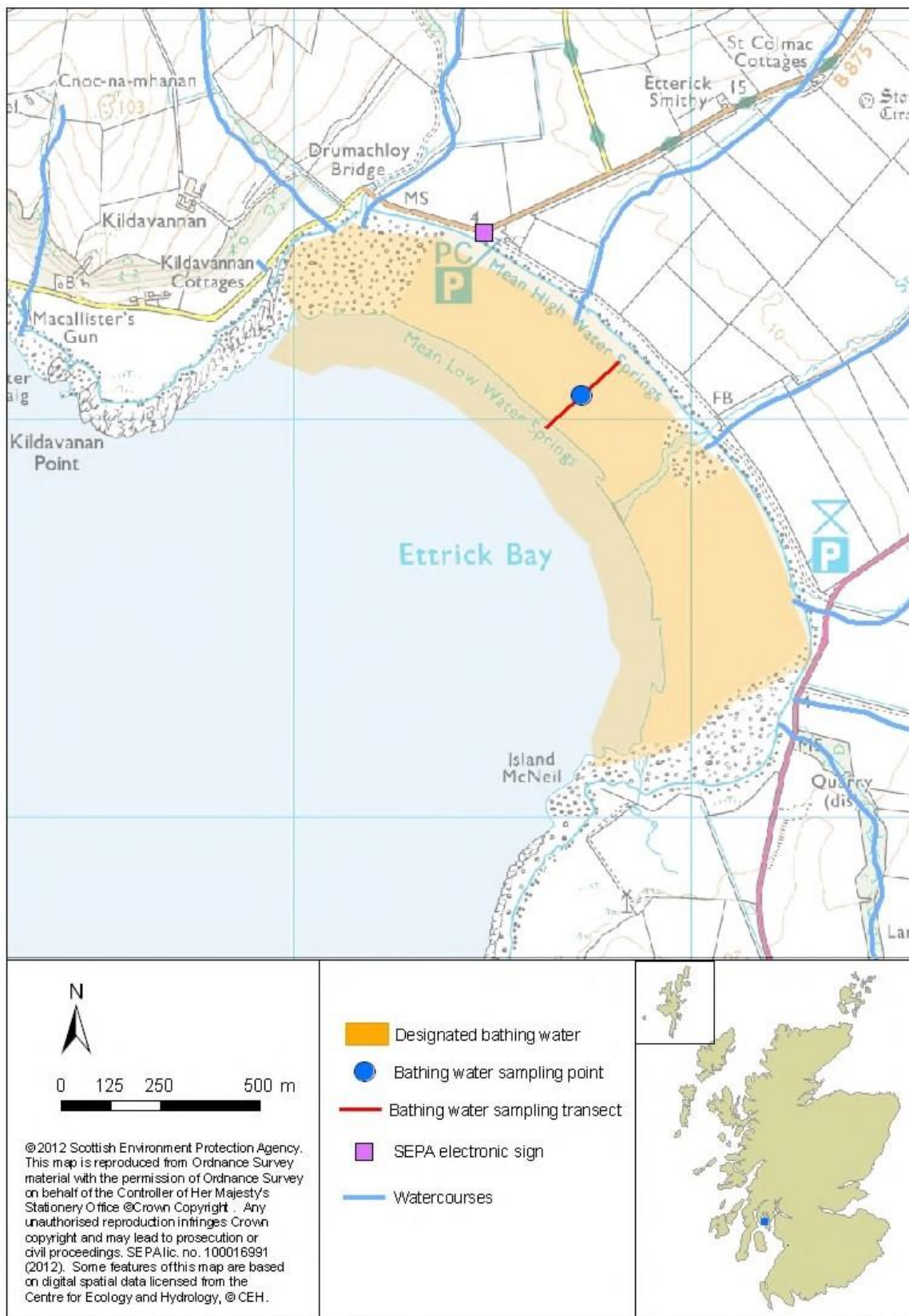
### Risks to water quality

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

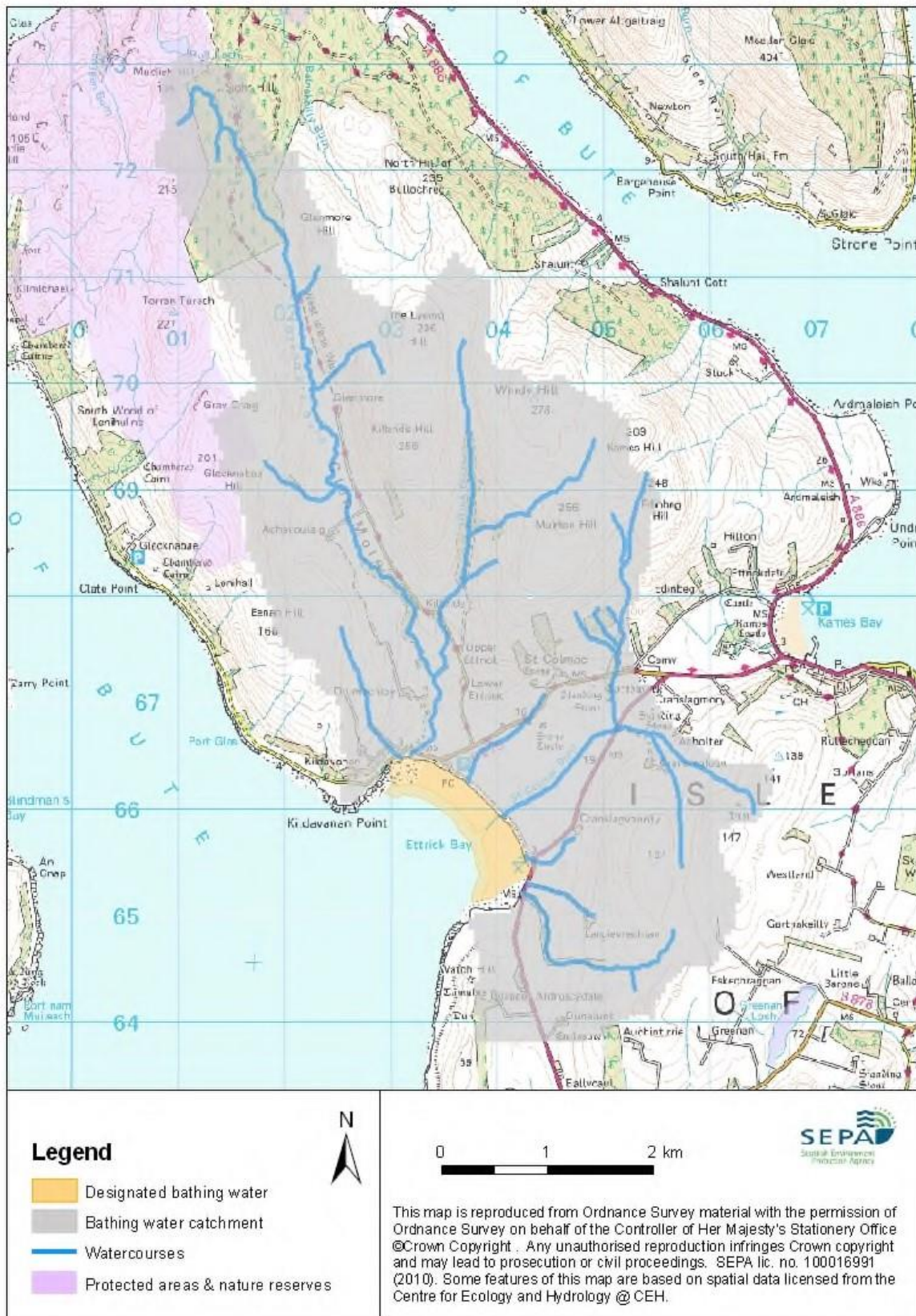
There is a risk that water pollution may occur after heavy rainfall. **Bathing is not advised during or 1-2 days after heavy rainfall. This is due to the risk to bathers' health from water pollution.**

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

Map 1: Ettrick Bay bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into Ettrick Bay 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 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 Ettrick Bay bathing water. SEPA have been working with farmers in this area since 2010 and will continue to work with these farmers to reduce the risk of pollution to the bathing water.

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

There are a small number of private septic tank discharges within the bathing water catchment which include the public conveniences adjacent to the beach. The sewage system at the nearby tea room discharges to soakaway.

#### **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 Argyll & Bute Council for this bathing water.

**Contact details and information sources**

<p><b>SEPA Lochgilphead office</b>                  Kilbrandon House                  Manse Brae                  Lochgilphead                  Argyll                  PA31 8QX 01546                  602876  <a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk">www.sepa.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Argyll and Bute Council</b>                  Kilmory                  Lochgilphead                  Argyll                  PA31 8RT                  01546 602127  <a href="mailto:enquiries@argyll-bute.gov.uk">enquiries@argyll-bute.gov.uk</a>  <a href="http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk">www.argyll-bute.gov.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Keep Scotland Beautiful</b>                  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>                  Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ                  0131 244 0396  <a href="mailto:egcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">egcat@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>
1.2	April 2013	
1.3	March 2014	
1.4	June 2015	
1.5	April 2020	
1.6	May 2023	