

Bathing Water Profile for Fraserburgh (Tigerhill)

Fraserburgh, Scotland

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

Description

Fraserburgh (Tigerhill) bathing water is located on the north coast of Aberdeenshire. It is an extensive sandy beach of approximately 2 km in length, backed by an impressive dune system.

The beach is a popular recreational, surfing and windsurfing area.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 0 to 130m. The beach slopes gently towards the water. For local tide information see <http://easytide.ukho.gov.uk/EasyTide/>



Site details

Local authority	Aberdeenshire Council
Year of designation	1987
Water sampling location	NK 00510 65640

Catchment description

The catchment draining into the Fraserburgh (Tigerhill) bathing water extends to 16 km². The catchment varies in topography from gentle hills in the west to the low-lying plains along the coast.

The main river within the bathing water catchment is the Kessock Burn which flows into the sea at the western end of the bay.

The catchment is predominantly rural (93%) with agriculture the major land use. The agricultural land is split between arable farming (60%) and grassland (26%). The area supports mixed farming. Approximately 6% of the bathing water catchment is urban. The main population centre is the town of Fraserburgh. Population density outside of the town is generally low and is centred within a number of small villages.

Risks to water quality

The principal risks and source of wet weather driven short term pollution at this bathing water arise from surface water urban drainage, 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 originate from human or animal sources.

Map 1: Fraserburgh (Tigerhill) bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into Fraserburgh (Tigerhill) 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 the Kessock Burn which could impact on the bathing beach following heavy rain. Farm visits in this area were undertaken as part of the Buchan Coastal priority catchment campaign during 2015. These visits looked to identify diffuse pollution sources and pathways. Mitigation measures were agreed with land managers to reduce the risk of bacterial pollution on water quality.

SEPA has observed significant changes in land management practice within the catchments. SEPA will continue to work with the farmers in these catchments to reduce the risk of pollution to the bathing water.

Improving pollution from sewage and other discharges

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

Sewage is pumped to Fraserburgh works where it undergoes treatment prior to being discharged. Fraserburgh sewage treatment works is not a potential threat to the bathing water quality at Fraserburgh (Philorth).

The sewage pumping station at the northern end of the bathing area poses a potential risk to water quality. Work has been carried out by Scottish Water to ensure that spills from this discharge are restricted. This facility is inspected prior to the start of every bathing season.

There are three surface water sewers discharging to the Kessock Burn. An intermittent problem exists with one of these discharges despite several investigations to identify the root of the problem. These surface water sewers have the potential to affect the bathing water quality. Proposals to identify and rectify misconnections on the sewerage system were put forward under Scottish Water's Quality and Standards programme.

There are a number of private septic tanks that discharge to the Kessock Burn which cumulatively have the potential to impact on the bathing water quality.

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. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) have been incorporated into local plans and partner organisations have been encouraged to retrofit SUDS where possible.

The Kessock Burn, which discharges directly into the Fraserburgh (Tigerhill) bathing water, is known to be affected by surface water run-off from the urban area through which it runs and potentially impacts on bathing water quality.

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 Aberdeenshire Council for this bathing water.

Contact details and information sources

<p>SEPA Fraserburgh office Shaw House Mid Street Fraserburgh AB43 9JN 01346 510502 www.sepa.org.uk</p>	<p>Aberdeenshire Council Woodhill House Westburn Road Aberdeen Aberdeenshire AB16 5GB 08456 081207 www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Keep Scotland Beautiful 01786 471333 beach@ksbscotland.org.uk www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org</p>
<p>Scottish Government 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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