

# Bathing Water Profile for Lossiemouth (East)

Lossiemouth, Scotland

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

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

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## Description

Lossiemouth (East) bathing water is situated on the north coast of Moray to the east of the town of Lossiemouth, near Elgin. The sandy beach is approximately 2 km long and is prized for its unspoilt golden sands. It is popular in particular with surfers and walkers. The bathing water is located close to a caravan park.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 0–140m.



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## Site details

Local authority	Moray Council
Year of designation	2008
Water sampling location	NJ 24050 70500
EC bathing water ID	UKS7616076

## Catchment description

The catchment draining into the Lossiemouth (East) bathing water extends to 380 km<sup>2</sup>. The catchment varies in topography from high hills (maximum elevation 520 metres) in the south to low-lying plains (average elevation 5 metres) along the coast.

The area is predominantly rural (96%). Of the rural land, 33% is woodland, 21% arable agricultural and 28% grassland. There is mixed farming through the catchment. Approximately 2% of the bathing water catchment is urban. The main population centre is the city of Elgin which is 9 km inland to the south of the bathing water. The town of Lossiemouth is situated 500 metres to the west of the designated bathing water. Population density outside of the towns is generally low. The area also includes the site of RAF Lossiemouth.

There are several protected areas either fully or partially within the bathing water catchment including one Special Protection Area, 12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and one Ramsar site. The catchment also partially lies within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone.

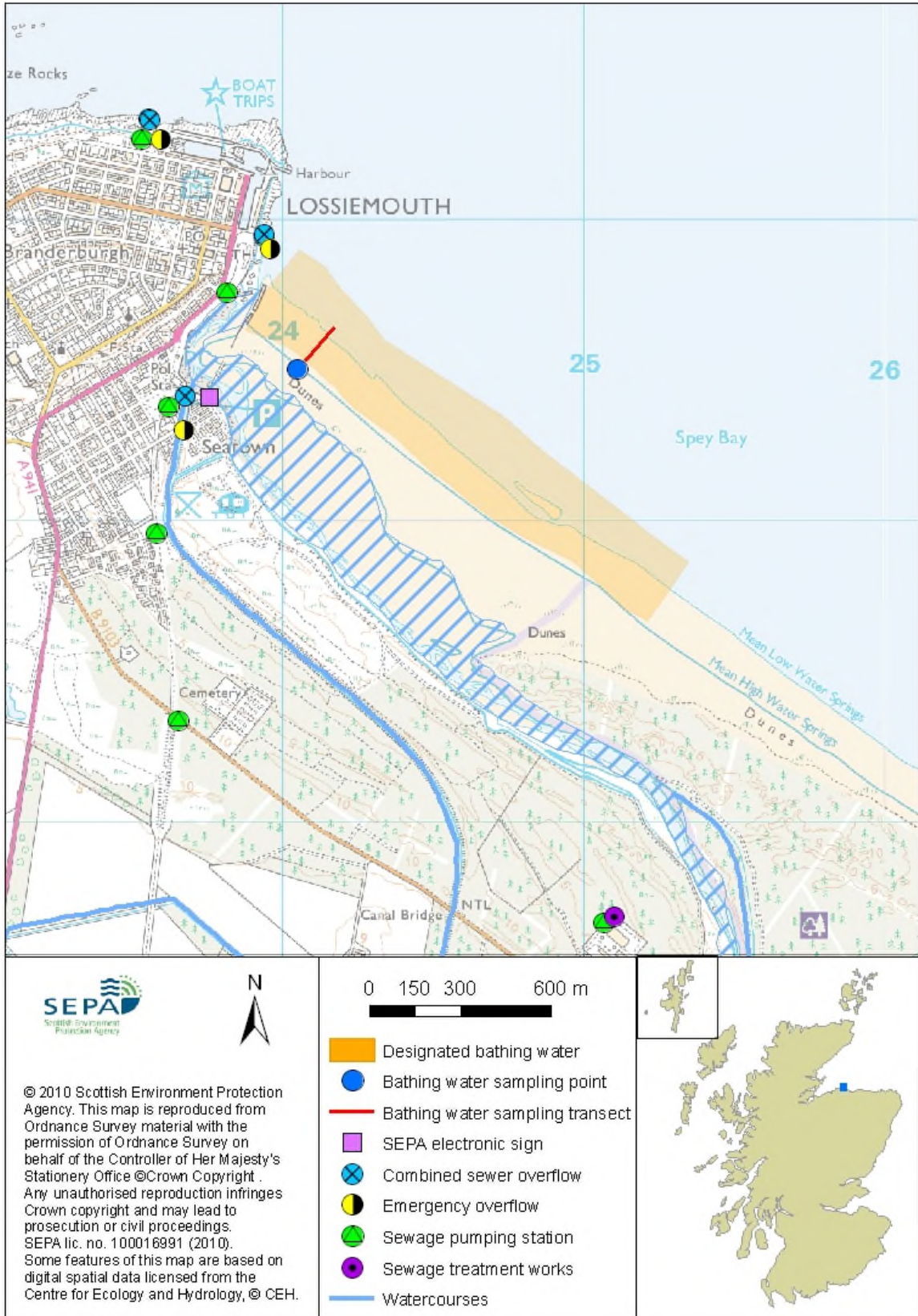
## Risks to water quality

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 originate from human and animal sources.

**Map 1: Lossiemouth (East) bathing water**



Map 2: Catchment draining into Lossiemouth (East) bathing water



**Legend**

- Designated bathing water
- Bathing water catchment
- Watercourses
- Protected areas & nature reserves



0 5 10 km



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## **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 (08452 30 30 98).

## **Improving bathing water quality**

### **Improving diffuse pollution from agricultural sources**

There are many farms in the catchment draining to the Lossiemouth (East) bathing water. Pollution from agricultural run-off is thought to occur mostly in the River Lossie. This is believed to be a primary source of pollution at the bathing water.

The catchment draining to Lossiemouth (East) bathing water is within the Moray Coastal catchment. Work to address diffuse pollution issues in this catchments is expected to be completed by 2027.

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

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

Oakenhead Wood sewage treatment works is situated to the east of Lossiemouth. It provides full biological treatment for sewage from Lossiemouth and Elgin, with the final effluent being discharged via a long sea outfall 1.4 km from the beach.

There are several combined sewer overflows and emergency overflows that discharge in the vicinity of the bathing water.

There are many private septic tanks which discharge to the River Lossie and to the Spynie Canal.

### **Improving pollution from diffuse urban sources**

Urban diffuse source pollution comes from contaminated rainwater discharging to rivers and streams.

The River Lossie is likely to be affected by surface water run-off as it flows through Elgin town.

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.

### **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 Moray Council for this bathing water.

## Contact details and information sources

<b>SEPA Elgin office</b> 28 Perimeter Road Pinefield Elgin IV30 6AF 01343 547663 <a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk">www.sepa.org.uk</a>	<b>Moray Council</b> Council Office High Street Elgin Moray IV30 1BX 01343 543451 <a href="mailto:hotline@moray.gov.uk">hotline@moray.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.moray.gov.uk">www.moray.gov.uk</a>	<b>Keep Scotland Beautiful</b> 01786 471333 <a href="mailto:beach@ksbscotland.org.uk">beach@ksbscotland.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org">www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org</a>
<b>Scottish Government</b> Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ 0131 244 0396 <a href="mailto:eqcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">eqcat@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>		

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1.1	April 2013	
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1.3	June 2015	
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