

## Bathing Water Profile for North Berwick (Milsey Bay)

North Berwick, Scotland

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

### Description

The North Berwick (Milsey Bay) bathing water is situated to the north east side of North Berwick in East Lothian. The sandy beach is approximately 1.1km long. The beach offers spectacular views of nearby Bass Rock. The area is popular with families and includes a small paddling area which retains water whilst the tide is out. The nearby Scottish Seabird Centre also attracts many visitors.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 0–170 metres.



©Copyright [RichardWebb](#) and licensed for [reuse](#) under this [Creative Commons Licence](#)

### Site details

Local authority	East Lothian Council
Year of designation	1987
Water sampling location	NT 56211 85327

### Catchment description

The catchment draining into the North Berwick (Milsey Bay) bathing water extends to 2.3 km<sup>2</sup>. Land use in the area is a mixture of rural and urban. The rural area is a mixture of arable agriculture and grassland. The town of North Berwick is the main population centre in the catchment.

The Mill Burn is the only river in the catchment which drains into the bathing water.

There are several protected areas within or in the vicinity of the bathing water and/or bathing water catchment, including two Special Protection Areas, two Sites of Special Scientific Interest and a Ramsar site.

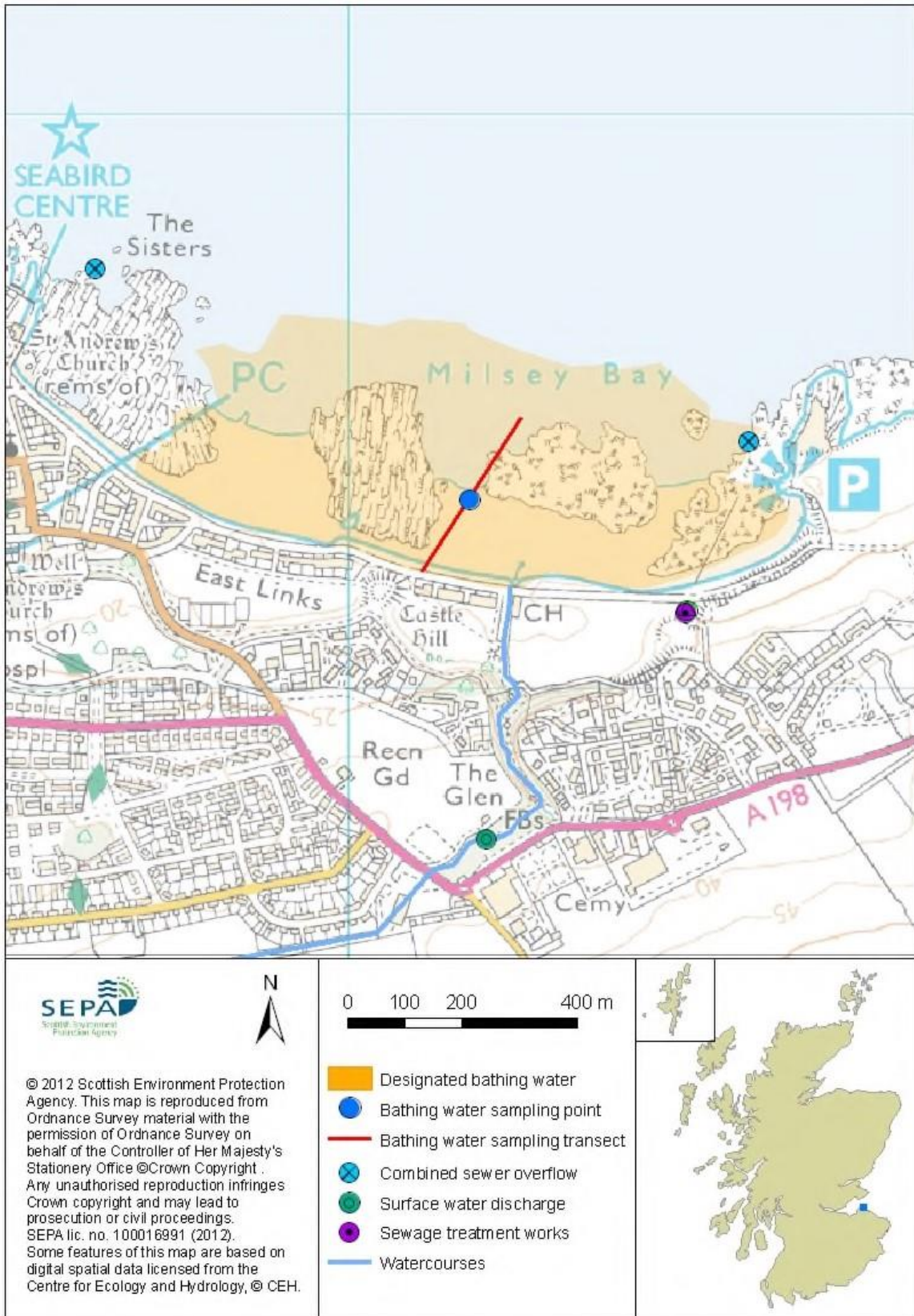
### Risks to water quality

The principal risks and source of wet weather driven short term pollution at this bathing water arise from combined sewer overflows.

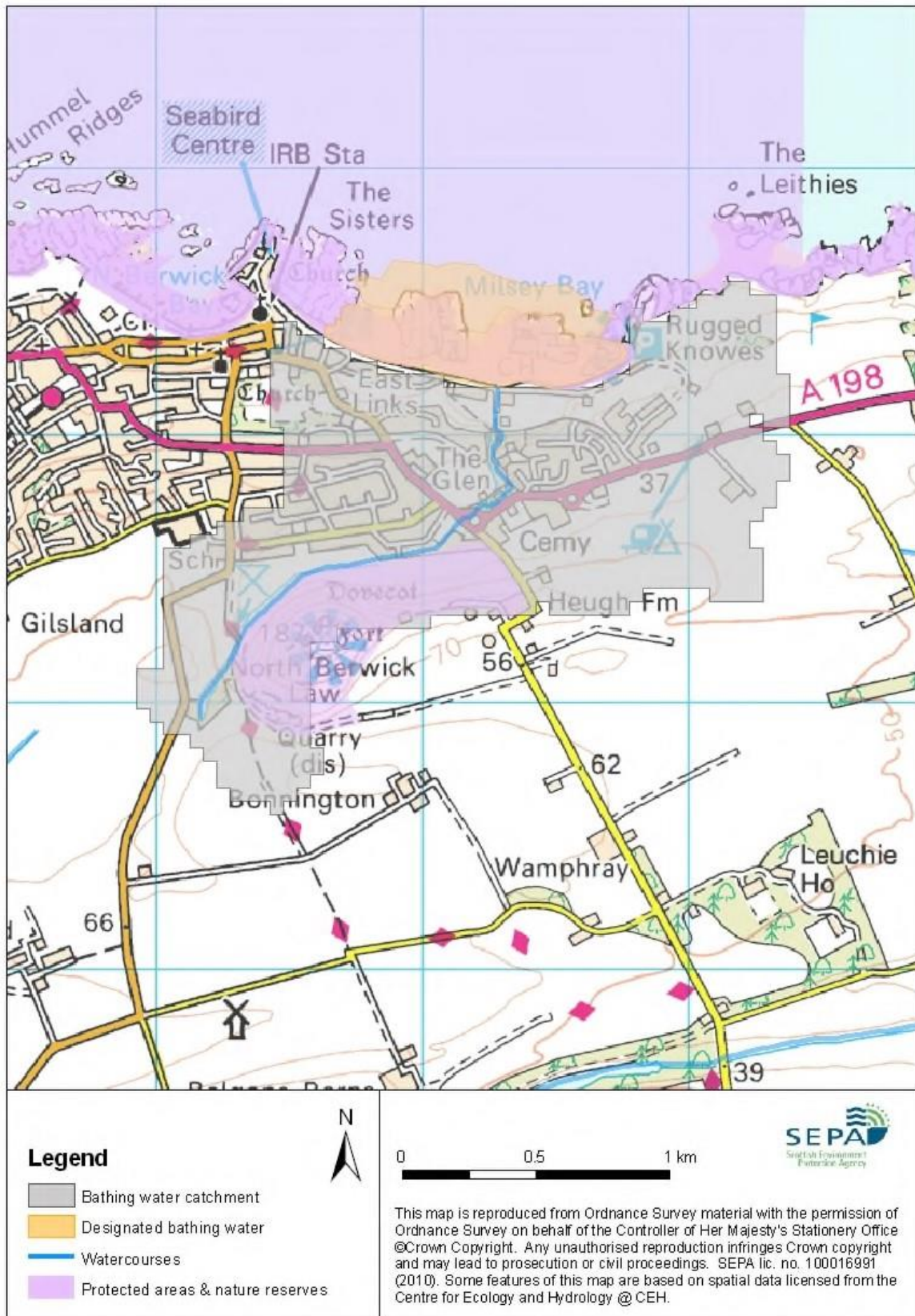
There is a risk that water pollution may occur after heavy rainfall. **Bathing is not advised during or 1-2 days after heavy rainfall. This is due to the risk to bathers' health from water pollution.**

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

Map 1: North Berwick (Milsey Bay) bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into North Berwick (Milsey Bay) bathing water



## **Improving bathing water quality**

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

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

Bathing water quality greatly improved after the commissioning of the North Berwick sewage treatment works and long sea outfall in 1995.

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

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

SEPA is currently investigating the possibility of diffuse urban pollution being a risk factor to bathing water quality at this site.

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 East Lothian Council for this bathing water.

## Contact details and information sources

<p><b>SEPA Edinburgh office</b> 231 Corstorphine Rd Edinburgh EH12 7AT 0131 449 7296 <a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk">www.sepa.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>East Lothian Council</b> John Muir House Haddington East Lothian EH41 3HA 01620 827827 <a href="mailto:customerservices@eastlothian.gov.uk">customerservices@eastlothian.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk">www.eastlothian.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: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></p>		
<b>Version number:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Next review due:</b>
1.1	May 2012	
1.2	April 2014	
1.3	June 2015	
1.4	April 2020	
1.5	May 2023	