

Bathing Water Profile for Prestwick

Prestwick, 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

Prestwick bathing water is situated on the Ayrshire coast between Ayr and Troon. The beach runs parallel to the town of Prestwick and is adjacent to the Troon Golf Links. The 3 km long beach is mainly sandy with rocky outcrops and shingle at the southern end.

The beach is popular with windsurfers and with members of adjacent sailing club.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 25–300 metres. The beach is relatively flat but slopes gently towards the water.



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Site details

Local authority	South Ayrshire Council
Year of designation	1987
Water sampling location	NS 34466 26192
EC bathing water ID	UKS7616046

Catchment description

The catchment draining into the Prestwick bathing water extends to 55 km². The land around the bathing water and the urban areas is generally low (average elevation 10–20 metres) and rises up to low hills (max elevation 150 metres) to the east.

The area is predominantly rural (84%) with agriculture the major land use. The more upland areas support mixed sheep and beef cattle farming whilst the lowland areas are used for intensive dairy farming. Approximately 15% of the bathing water catchment is urban. The town of Prestwick is immediately adjacent to the bathing water. The area also includes some small scale commercial and industrial activity and Glasgow Prestwick International Airport.

Troon golf links and foreshore to the north of the bathing water has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest as it supports a significant sand dune and dune grassland ecosystem.

Risks to water quality

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

Map 1: Prestwick bathing water



Map 2: Catchment draining into Prestwick 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

Work began in the Ayrshire catchments in 2010 to identify pollution risk hotspots. Since then the work to raise awareness of diffuse pollution risks and implement measures to reduce these risks has been carried out in this catchment. Farm revisits took place in 2015 to check compliance with relevant regulations.

Improving pollution from sewage and other discharges

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

There are several surface water outfalls, combined sewer overflows and emergency sewage overflows which discharge to the Pow Burn. There are also combined and emergency sewage overflows at St Andrews Caravan Park and the Esplanade pumping stations that discharge to the Firth of Clyde. Under dry weather conditions and when the pumping stations are operating normally, there are no continuous discharges from the public sewerage system.

SEPA is monitoring the impact of septic tanks and private sewage treatment works on water quality.

Improving pollution from diffuse urban sources

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

Ladykirk Burn and Pow Burn are likely to be affected by surface water run-off from urban area. This is not thought to have a significant effect on bathing water quality.

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 South Ayrshire Council for this bathing water.

Contact details and information sources

SEPA Ayr office 31 Miller Road Ayr Ayrshire KA7 2AX 01292 294000 www.sepa.org.uk	South Ayrshire Council Burns House Burns Statue Square Ayr KA7 1UT 01292 618222 environmental.health@south-ayrshire.gov.uk www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk	Keep Scotland Beautiful 01786 471333 beach@ksbscotland.org.uk www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org
Scottish Government Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ 0131 244 0396 eqcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/15561/bathingwaters		

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1.1	April 2013	
1.2	April 2014	
1.4	March 2016	
1.5	April 2020	