

# Bathing Water Profile for Sandyhills

Sandyhills, 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** Sandyhills bathing water is a small, shallow bay, about 1 km long. It is situated to the south of Dalbeattie in Dumfries & Galloway.

The arc of fine sand slopes gently towards the water. At high tide, the distance to the water's edge is approximately 50 metres. At low tide, there is a sandy area for approximately 200 metres.

Sandyhills also has an unusual tidal regime which can be dangerous for beach users. Mud flats are exposed at low tide, making the water's edge difficult to access in certain areas. Low tide also exposes areas of quicksand.

Please check the local tide information for further details:  
<http://easytide.ukho.gov.uk/EasyTide/>



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<b>Site details</b>	Local authority	Dumfries & Galloway Council
	Year of designation	1987
	Water sampling location	NX 89200 55100
	EC bathing water ID	UKS7616050

## Catchment description

A catchment area of 55 km<sup>2</sup> drains into Sandyhills bathing water. Boreland Hill lies to the north east of the bathing water catchment. The main rivers are the Barnhourie Burn (Fairgirth Lane) and Southwick Burn. The smaller Cairngill Burn also flows directly onto the beach.

Grassland is the major land use in the catchment. The upland areas support mixed sheep and beef farming while the lowlands are used for intensive dairy farming. Approximately 1% of the bathing water catchment is urban. The main population centre is Sandyhills village, situated next to the bathing water. Population density outside of Sandyhills is low.

Average summer rainfall for the region is 356 mm compared to 331 mm across Scotland as a whole.

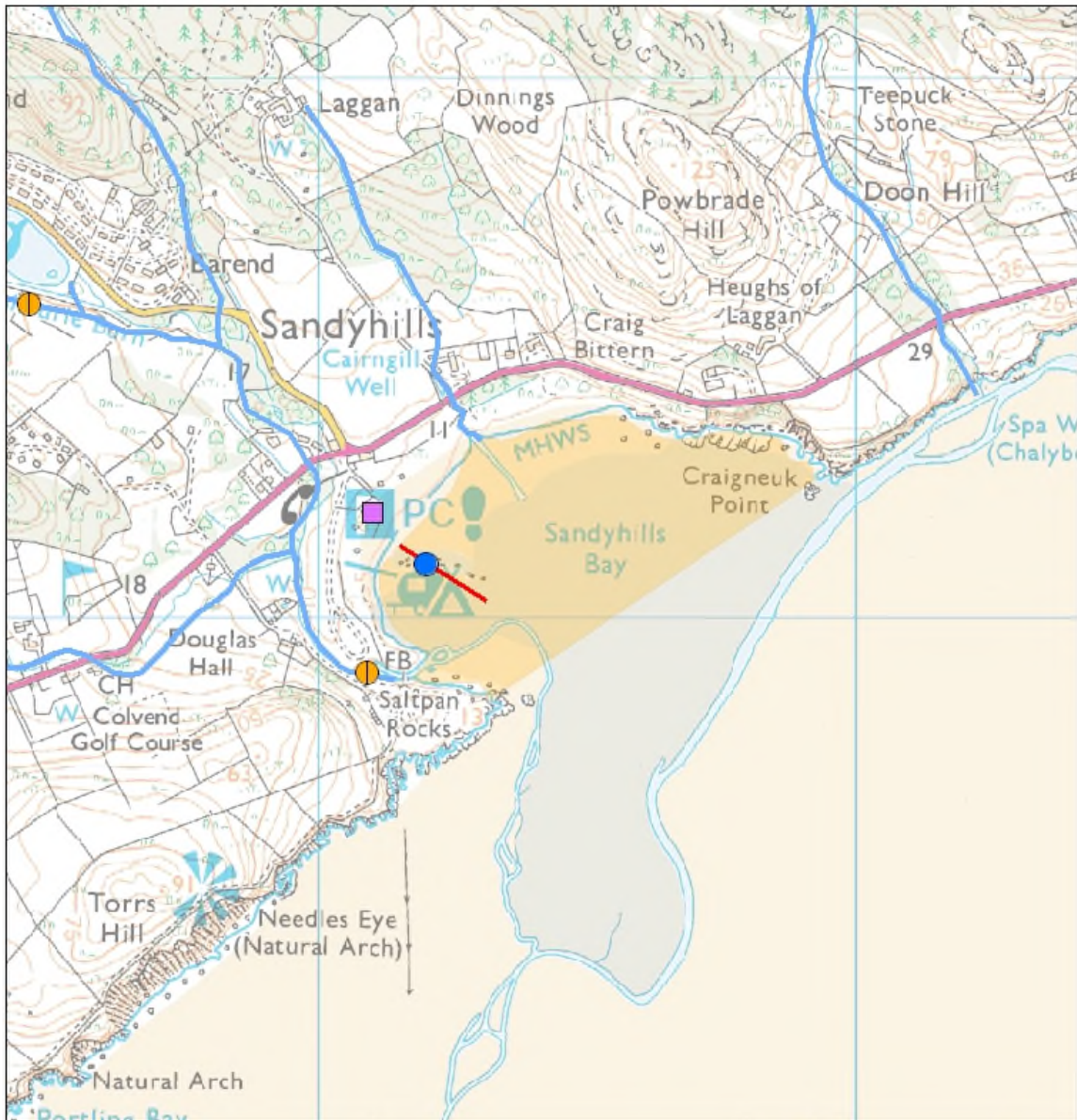
## Risks to water quality



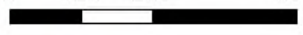







This bathing water is subject to short term pollution when heavy rainfall washes contaminants into the sea.

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

DNA tracing indicates that animal sources are contributing to faecal pollution of the bathing water.

**Map 1: Sandyhills bathing water**



 <p>© 2010 Scottish Environment Protection Agency. This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office ©Crown Copyright . Any unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. SEPA lic. no. 100016991 (2010). Some features of this map are based on digital spatial data licensed from the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, © CEH.</p>	<p>N</p>  <p>0 125 250 500 m</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Designated bathing water</li> <li> Bathing water sampling point</li> <li> Bathing water sampling transect</li> <li> SEPA electronic sign</li> <li> Sewage effluent discharge</li> <li> Watercourses</li> </ul>	
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Map 2: Catchment draining into Sandyhills bathing water





## **Daily water quality forecasts**

Water quality is forecast on a daily basis during the bathing 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 an electronic message sign 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 cumulative inputs of pollutants to rivers and streams.

Sandyhills is part of the Stewartry Coastal catchment. Pollution from diffuse agricultural run-off is thought to occur throughout the catchment. Farm inspections in the catchment began in during June and July 2014. These visits looked to identify diffuse pollution sources. Mitigation measures were agreed with land managers to address this. Work in this catchment was completed in 2017. Improved water quality as a result of this work is likely to be seen in several years.

A study of Sandyhills bay was carried out by the Centre for Research into Environment and Health (CREH) in 2014. It concluded that there is a connectivity of microbial pollutants between nearby rivers and the bathing water. In addition, it determined that sediments in Sandyhills bay act as a microbial pollutant store. Remobilisation of sediments along with microbial pollutants is thought to affect water quality. CREH also concluded that tidal movements affected concentrations of microbial pollutants in the bay.

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

Private sewage treatment systems from a caravan park and a chalet park are located within the bathing water catchment area. Both sites are on SEPA's monitoring programme to ensure compliance with licence conditions. Effluent from the caravan park is treated before being discharged into a soakaway system adjacent to the Barnhourie Burn. The chalet park effluent is treated before being discharged to the Barnhourie Burn.

Information on private sewage treatment systems in the catchment has been collated and is currently being assessed by SEPA staff.

### **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. Further sampling of the bathing water and related rivers and streams is undertaken.

Beach users are encouraged to use the bins provided or to take litter home. Beach cleaning and litter clean-up is maintained by Dumfries & Galloway Council for this bathing water.

## Contact details and information sources

<b>SEPA Dumfries office</b> Irongray Road Dumfries Dumfries and Galloway DG2 0JE 01387 720502 <a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk">www.sepa.org.uk</a>	<b>Dumfries and Galloway Council</b> Council Offices English Street Dumfries DG1 2DD 0303 333 3000 <a href="mailto:cis@dumgal.gov.uk">cis@dumgal.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.dumgal.gov.uk">www.dumgal.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.keepsotlandbeautiful.org">www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org</a>
<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>		

Version number:	Date:	Next review due:
1.2	April 2013	
1.3	March 2014	

1.4	April 2015	
1.5	May 2016	
1.6	May 2017	
1.7	June 2018	
1.8	March 2019	
1.9	April 2020	