

Bathing Water Profile for Seamill

West Kilbride, 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 Seamill bathing water is situated next to the small town of West Kilbride. The designated area is round 800 metres in length. The sandy beach is popular with both locals and summer visitors.

During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 20–200 metres.



Site details	Local authority	North Ayrshire Council
	Year of designation	2008
	Water sampling location	NS 19802 47319

Catchment description

The catchment draining into the Seamill bathing water extends to just over 10.5 km². It is a hilly catchment, with elevations ranging from 10–20 metres along the coast and rising to around 330 metres in the north-east of the catchment.

The area is predominantly rural (86%) with grassland being the major land use. Approximately 13% of the bathing water catchment is urban. The main population centre is the small town of West Kilbride which is adjacent to the bathing water. The population density outside of West Kilbride is generally low and includes Seamill, a village which extends to the south of the bathing beach. There is a large hotel development in Seamill which contributes to bathing beach usage.

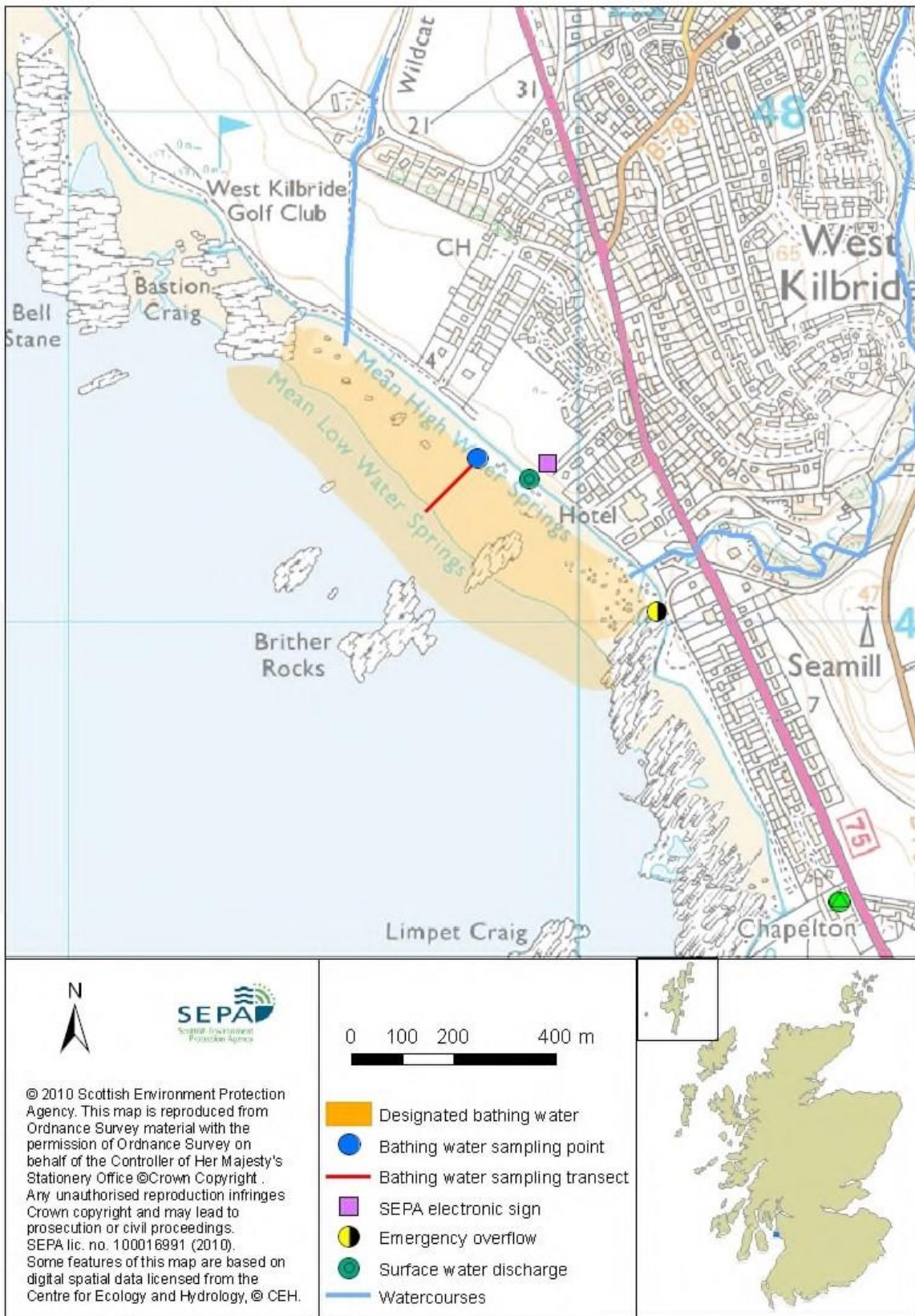
Risks to water quality

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, combined sewage overflows and treated sewage effluent.

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: Seamil 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**

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 rural tributaries in proximity to Seamill which could impact on the bathing beach during and following heavy rain.

Farm visits started in the North Ayrshire Coastal priority catchment in 2013 and are ongoing. These visits look to identify diffuse pollution sources and pathways. Mitigation measures have been 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 catchment. SEPA will continue to work with the farmers 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.

There are no continuous discharges from the public sewerage system to the designated bathing water or to the immediate environment. Under normal circumstances, all sewage from the town is pumped to Stevenston sewage treatment works. There are three combined sewer overflows that discharge storm sewage to the Kilbride Burn during and after rainfall. Several surface water outfalls also discharge urban run-off to the burn. There is also a combined sewer overflow which discharges into the Wildcat Burn. The combined sewer and emergency outfalls associated with West Kilbride sewage pumping station discharge to the Firth of Clyde via a long sea outfall.

Sewage from private septic tanks situated beyond the town discharge into the Kilbride Burn. Septic tanks on Portencross Road discharge into the Wildcat Burn.

Improving pollution from diffuse urban sources

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

Urban run-off from West Kilbride is washed into the Kilbride Burn.

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. However, at any time of the year and particularly after storms, a considerable amount of seaweed can become stranded on the beach. Under the right conditions accumulated seaweed can rot producing grey/black fluid. The rotting seaweed can also generate offensive odours. This is an entirely natural process.

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 North Ayrshire Council for this bathing water.

Contact details and information sources

<p>SEPA Ayr office 31 Miller Road Ayr Ayrshire KA7 2AX 01292 294000 www.sepa.org.uk</p>	<p>North Ayrshire Council Cunninghame House Irvine KA12 8EE 0845 603 0590 contactus@north-ayrshire.gov.uk www.north-ayrshire.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>		

Version number:	Date:	Next review due:
1.1	April 2013	
1.2	April 2014	
1.3	April 2015	
1.4	April 2020	
1.5	May 2023	