


Bathing water profile:

Seamill

<p>Bathing water: Seamill</p>	
<p>EC bathing water ID number: UKS7616083</p>	
<p>Location of bathing water: UK/Scotland/LA (Map1)</p>	
<p>Year of designation: 2008</p>	
<p>Bathing water description</p> <p>Seamill bathing water is situated next to the small town of West Kilbride. The designated area is round 800 metres in length (Map 1). The sandy beach is popular with both locals and summer visitors. It was designated as a bathing water in 2008. However, due to its general recreational use, we have monitored the water quality at this beach since 1998.</p> <p>During high and low tides the approximate distance to the water's edge can vary from 20–200 metres. For local tide information see: http://easytide.ukho.gov.uk/EasyTide/</p> <p>Our monitoring point for taking water quality samples is located towards the centre of the designated area (NS 19802 47319) as shown on Map 1.</p>	
<p>Monitoring water quality</p> <p>Please visit our website¹ for details of the current EU water quality classification and recent results for this bathing water.</p> <p>During the bathing season (1 June to 15 September), designated bathing waters are monitored by SEPA for faecal indicators (bacteria) and classified according to the levels of these indicators in the water. The European standards used to classify bathing waters arise from recommendations made by the World Health Organisation and are linked to human health. More information on bathing water monitoring, health and classification can be found on our website².</p>	

¹ <http://apps.sepa.org.uk/bathingwaters/SamplingResults.aspx>

² <http://apps.sepa.org.uk/bathingwaters/Index.aspx>

Risks to water quality

In general, most natural waters will be affected to some extent during and following rainfall as pollutant loads may be increased due to run-off from agricultural or urban land in the catchment. In addition, at some locations waste water discharges from combined sewer overflows, which then drain into the bathing water and can reduce water quality.

Faecal pollutants can come from human sewage, farming activities and livestock (e.g. cattle, sheep), industrial processes, surface water urban drainage, domestic animals (e.g. dogs) and wildlife (e.g. birds) and can enter bathing waters via:

- direct discharges into the marine environment at, or in the vicinity of, the beach;
- the freshwater network draining into a bathing water, which can be prone to elevated bacterial levels as a result of diffuse pollution and/or point source inputs upstream.

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. These events are expected to last 1–2 days depending on the duration of the rainfall and may result in elevated bacteria levels compared to dry conditions.

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.

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 overproduction 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 the summer months. This is a naturally occurring phenomenon. Although there are a few stinging species common to the UK, most are harmless. The Marine Conservation Society advises to 'look but don't touch'.

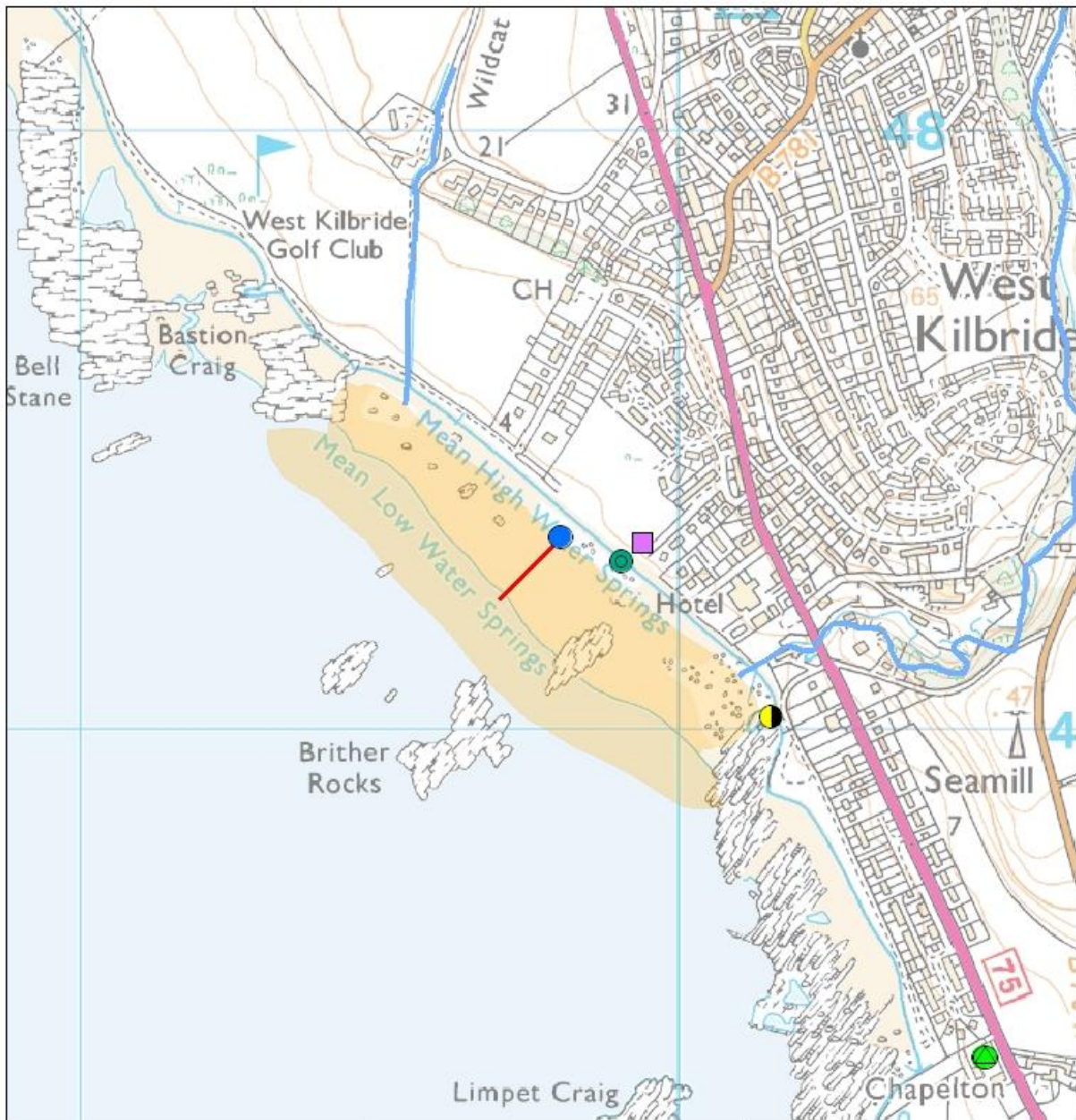
Daily water quality forecasts

Seamill bathing water is part of our daily water quality prediction and signage network.








Throughout the bathing season we display daily water quality predictions on the electronic message sign (Map 1). These water quality predictions are also available on [our website](http://apps.sepa.org.uk/bathingwaters/Predictions.aspx)³ or via the Beachline phone number (08452 30 30 98).

³ <http://apps.sepa.org.uk/bathingwaters/Predictions.aspx>

Map 1: Seamill Bathing Water

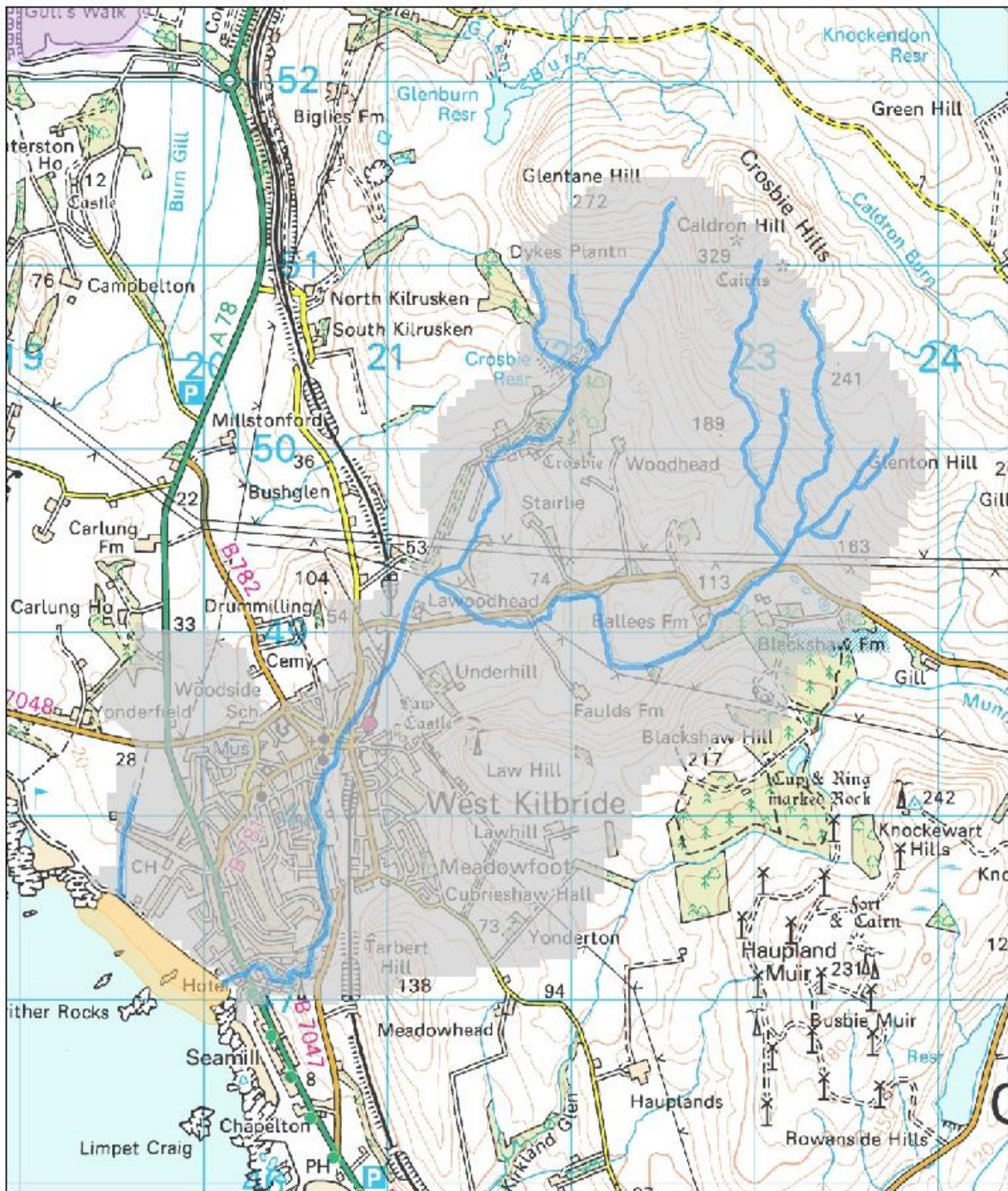


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


-  Designated bathing water
-  Bathing water sampling point
-  Bathing water sampling transect
-  SEPA electronic sign
-  Emergency overflow
-  Surface water discharge
-  Watercourses



Map 2: Catchment draining into Seamill bathing water



Legend

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



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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 but 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. The area also includes West Kilbride Golf Club (to the north of the bathing beach).

Average summer rainfall for the region is 392mm compared to 331mm across Scotland as a whole.

The main rivers within the bathing water catchment are the Kilbride Burn and the Wildcat Burn.

Seamill bathing water sits within a designated Shellfish Water. There are no other protected areas in the vicinity of the bathing water catchment.

Measures to improve bathing water quality

High quality bathing waters are important so that people can enjoy Scotland's environment safely. They are also important for Scotland's tourism industry.

Recent years have seen considerable improvements in Scotland's bathing water quality, not least due to substantial investment in the sewerage system. SEPA and our partners are fully committed to continuing to improve bathing water quality.

Improving diffuse pollution from agricultural sources

Diffuse pollution from agricultural sources is normally the result of cumulative inputs of pollutants from several different sources on farms within the catchments draining to the bathing water. Consequently, tackling diffuse agricultural pollution requires concerted action across catchments. We will ensure this by working with farmers to raise awareness about the requirement to prevent and reduce pollution, and to help them identify appropriate actions for doing so.

To help co-ordinate our work to encourage and ensure action, SEPA participate in the [Diffuse Pollution Management Advisory Group](#)⁴ (DPMAG), which is a partnership of relevant authorities, land manager representatives and voluntary organisations.

The Scottish Government has also brought together nine public bodies to form [Scotland's Environmental and Rural Services](#)⁵ (SEARS). This partnership will contribute to implementing plans for tackling diffuse pollution by providing co-ordinated education and advice to rural land managers.

Additional targeted efforts will be made to improve management of diffuse pollution within catchments identified as 'priority' catchments. These are catchments where the scale of the pollution reduction needed will require planned and targeted actions to be identified and discussed with farmers concerned. Assistance will be given in these areas to identify pollution hotspots, and one-to-one advice will be provided on following the agricultural codes of good practice, which in themselves lead to compliance with these regulations. Action in priority catchments will be phased.

Seamill bathing water catchment is within the North Ayrshire coastal priority catchment. There are approximately 46 farms within the priority catchment. Diffuse pollution improvement work was carried out in the area before the 2014 bathing water season.

Improving pollution from sewage and other discharges

Most waste water collection and treatment services in Scotland are provided by Scottish Water. It has invested substantially in waste water collection and treatment provision over recent years to protect public health and the environment. Public investments in the sewerage network and in treatment works will continue to be co-ordinated through the national investment and planning process for Scottish Water, known as 'Quality and Standards'.

⁴ <http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/who-is-involved-with-rbmp/dpmag/>

⁵ www.sears.scotland.gov.uk

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 for treatment and disposal. There are three combined sewage overflows that discharge storm sewage to the Kilbride Burn during and after rainfall and several surface water outfalls which also discharge urban run-off to the Kilbride Burn. There is also a combined sewage overflow which discharges into the Wildcat Burn. West Kilbride sewage pumping station is situated at the southern end of the town. There combined and emergency sewage overflows associated with this pumping station discharge to the Firth of Clyde via a long sea outfall.

Scottish Water has recently undertaken a study at Seamill bathing water to identify whether asset improvements are required to meet the requirements of the new Bathing Waters Directive. This concluded that rehabilitation of Summerlea Road CSO and an investigation and removal of flooding manholes on the Kilbride Burn will reduce the risk of bathing water failures.

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

Improving pollution from diffuse urban sources

Urban diffuse source pollution comes from rainwater falling onto urban areas (roads, pavements, yards and roofs) becoming contaminated with pollutants on those areas, washing into surface water drains and discharging from those drains to the water environment.

Tackling this type of pollution requires substantial changes in the way urban areas are drained, and efforts to reduce the quantity of pollutants deposited on urban surfaces. Since the mid 1990s, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) have increasingly been used to drain new developments. They are designed to avoid pollution of the water environment and include permeable surfaces that allow infiltration of rainwater into the ground, slowing the rate at which it drains to the water environment and trapping and breaking down pollutants. Artificial ponds or wetlands provide a final stage of treatment. Local authorities, Scottish Water and SEPA are working together to co-ordinate efforts to tackle pollution from diffuse urban sources, incorporating SUDS into local plans and encouraging partner organisations to retrofit SUDS where possible.

Urban run-off from the town discharges into the Kilbride Burn.

Responding to pollution incidents

Although rare, pollution incidents affecting bathing water quality can happen. Pollution incidents tend to be unpredictable, for example a slurry spill or sewage network failure, and can result in elevated levels of faecal indicators.

To report a possible pollution incident please use our 24 hour pollution hotline (0800 807060). In response we 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.

Whenever our routine sampling of bathing waters identifies elevated levels of faecal indicators there is an immediate response to check all relevant potential sources and major discharges in the immediate catchment, as well as our hydrometric information to determine whether the levels may be due to high river flows. Follow-up microbiology sampling is also undertaken of the bathing water and local water courses.

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](#)⁶.

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

⁶ <http://apps.sepa.org.uk/bathingwaters/Predictions.aspx>

Contact details and sources of additional information

SEPA Ayr office

31 Miller Road
Ayr
Ayrshire
KA7 2AX
01292 294000
www.sepa.org.uk

North Ayrshire Council

Cunninghame House
Irvine
KA12 8EE
0845 603 0590
contactus@north-ayrshire.gov.uk.
www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk.

Pollution Hotline

0800 80 70 60
24 hours per day, seven days per week

Keep Scotland Beautiful

01786 471333
beach@ksbscotland.org.uk
www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org

Scottish Government

Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ
0131 244 0396
egcat@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/15561/bathingwaters

Further information about the condition of our water environment and the actions needed to deliver improvement can be found in:

- the Scotland river basin management plan
<http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/>
- the Clyde area management plan <http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/who-is-involved-with-rbmp/area-advisory-groups/clyde/>

Good Beach Guide: www.goodbeachguide.co.uk

Blue Flag and Seaside Awards: www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/coastal

Version Control

Version number:	Date:	Next review due:
1.1	April 2013	
1.2	April 2014	
1.3	April 2015	