

## Ballygally – Bathing Water Profile

Ballygally beach, County Antrim, Northern Ireland



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*Bathing Water Profiles are designed to help the public make an informed choice before bathing, providing detailed information on the physical characteristics of each bathing water as well as assessing the pollution risk to each site. They are a requirement of The Quality of Bathing Water Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 and are reviewed in line with these regulations.*

Historical and Current bathing water compliance classifications for Ballygally can be found at – [Bathing Water Compliance](#)

**There is general advice not to bathe during or up to 48hrs after heavy or prolonged rainfall.**

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**Description** Located on the County Antrim coast, the bathing water is approximately 0.6km in length, comprised mostly of sand with rocky outcrops at both ends and backed by rock armour and a sea wall. Facilities close to the bathing water include two public car parks, picnic sites and public toilets. The residential area of Ballygally is behind the bathing water. There is one small river which flows out to the sea at the western end of the bathing water. Flowing through a surrounding rural environment and Ballygally village it may be influenced by both sources of pollution. The wider catchment area for Ballygally bathing water consists of improved grassland, forestry, and farming.

**Site Details** Local council area – Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Year of designation – 2006

Water sampling location – Lat 54.89941, Long -5.85933

### **Potential Pollution and measures to reduce impact on site:**

The potential sources of pollution have been split into three categories; wastewater (sewage) treatment works discharges, wastewater systems in urban areas and rural source pollution, including agriculture. DAERA Marine and Fisheries Division work with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and other departments to identify and resolve sources of pollution.

### **Wastewater (sewage) treatment works discharges.**

There are no wastewater treatment works within the vicinity of Ballygally bathing water. A major wastewater treatment facility is located in Larne, a sea port and industrial town which is 6.5kms south of Ballygally. This works serves the larger Larne area, including Ballygally, and discharges treated effluent approximately 7km from Ballygally bathing water. All wastewater received at the WWTW undergoes secondary treatment with UV disinfection throughout the year.

### **Wastewater systems in urban areas.**

The urbanisation of Ballygally is a potential source of pollution, especially during or after periods of prolonged/heavy rainfall.

In the event of prolonged/heavy rainfall the wastewater system may become overwhelmed leading to an overflow/discharge of wastewater. **This is why there is general advice not to bathe during or up to 48 hours after prolonged/heavy rainfall.**

The collection and treatment of wastewater has the potential to cause pollution as all combined collection systems are designed to overflow in periods of extreme wet weather or following failure of the system. This prevents overflows into residential properties. Within the Ballygally area there are a number of combined sewer overflows (CSO) and wastewater pumping stations with associated emergency overflows, highlighted on Map 1

There is also the potential for misconnections between the sewer system and surface drains, which may allow untreated wastewater to enter the water environment. Misconnections are not obvious, but when these become apparent NIEA pursues them as pollution incidents.

### **Rural source pollution – agriculture**

The surrounding catchment area of Ballygally bathing water is improved grassland, forestry, and farming, which could potentially have an effect on the bathing water quality due to the heavy agricultural influence. Areas within the catchment where agriculture is the dominant land use may be subject to inputs from chemical fertilisers and organic wastes. Prolonged periods of rainfall can cause surface runoff of these organic wastes, such as animal slurries, contributing to the bacteria content in the water environment.

### **Other potential sources of pollution.**

- Dogs
- Horses
- Litter
- Fly tipping

### **Management measures:**

The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017, take an integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. River Basin Management Plans (RPMP) are produced which detail all of Northern Ireland's water quality objectives and a programme of measures to achieve these objectives. Within these 'Programme of Measures' in each River Basin Management Plan are a number of measures which relate directly to the protection of bathing waters.

Ballygally bathing water is located in the North Eastern River Basin District. You can find more information about the North Eastern River Basin Management Plan below:

[Draft 3rd cycle River Basin Management Plan for Northern Ireland 2021-2027](#)

Within the River Basin Management Plan programme of measures there are several schemes to address sources of pollution:

- Nutrients Action Programme (NAP) 2019-2022
- Knowledge Advisory Service (KAS)
- Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS)
- Soil Nutrient Health Scheme (SNHS)

### **Macro-algae, phytoplankton, and cyanobacteria (blue-green algae)**

Ballygally bathing water is not at risk of proliferation of macro-algae, phytoplankton, or cyanobacteria (blue-green algae).

### **What should I do if I see a pollution incident?**

If you see a water pollution incident, you should immediately contact NIEA through the **24 hr** Emergency Water Pollution Hotline:

**Phone: 0800 807060**

When pollution is reported or found to be affecting the water quality of a bathing water, an immediate investigation is instigated. All possible sources of pollution are checked and the bathing water is monitored until the effects of the incident have passed. During this time, bathing waters may be temporarily closed (by local authority or controlling body) until the water quality has improved and levels of bacteria are within mandatory standards.

### **Contact details**

For general information about bathing waters:

**DAERA** Marine and Fisheries Division  
 17 Antrim Road, Tonagh, Lisburn, BT28 3AL  
 Email: [Marine.InfoRequests@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Marine.InfoRequests@daera-ni.gov.uk)  
 Website: [DAERA Bathing Water Quality](#)

**Local Authority** Mid and East Antrim Borough Council  
 Address: 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena, BT43 5EJ  
 Email: [enquiries@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@midandeastantrim.gov.uk)  
 Phone: 0300 124 5000  
 Website: [Mid and East Antrim Borough Council](#)

Map 1 Ballygally Bathing Water



### Legend

- Wastewater Pumping Station
- ▲ Combined Sewer Overflow
- Ballygalley bathing water area
- Bathing Water Sampling Transect
- Rivers

1:12,000

