

## Cloughey – Bathing Water Profile

Cloughey beach, County Down, 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 Cloughey 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 east coast of County Down this bathing water occupies the northern end of Cloughey Bay, is approximately 1km in length and comprised mostly of sand. The bathing water is backed by a sand dunes system and the village of Cloughey. There are also a number of caravan parks within the vicinity of the bathing water. There are two small rivers which flow into Cloughey Bay, entering the sea 1km south of the bathing water.

Cloughey bathing water is within the following designated sites: Strangford Lough Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI), Strangford Lough Area for Conservation (SAC), Strangford Lough Special Protected Area (SPA), Strangford and Lecale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Strangford Lough RAMSAR site, all of which afford the area environmental protection.

**Site Details** Local council area – Ards and North Down Borough Council

Year of designation – 2018

Water sampling location – Lat 54.43689, Long -5.46763

### **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 is a wastewater treatment works approximately 1.5km to the south of Cloughey bathing water. The wastewater from the Cloughey area is pumped to this works for treatment, including UV disinfection as the final process.

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

Urbanisation associated with the nearby residential area of Cloughey village and the caravan parks in the vicinity have the potential to affect the water quality during and after periods of prolonged or 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 Cloughey area there are several wastewater pumping stations and 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 land cover within the catchment area of Cloughey bathing water is predominately improved grassland with arable farming. 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.

Septic tanks also have the potential to cause localised pollution, but there is no evidence to suggest that this is impacting Cloughey bathing water.

### **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.

Cloughey 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)**

Cloughey 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** Ards and North Down Borough Council  
Address: City Hall, The Castle, Bangor, BT20 4BT  
Email: [enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)  
Phone: 0300 013 3333  
Website: [Ards and North Down Borough Council](#)

Map 1 Cloughy Bathing Water



### Legend

- Wastewater Pumping Station
- Wastewater Treatment Works
- ▲ Combined Sewer Overflow
- Rivers
- Cloughy Bathing Water
- Bathing Water Sampling Transect

1:25,000

