

Kilclief – Bathing Water Profile

Kilclief beach, County Down, Northern Ireland

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 Kilclief can be found at – [Bathing Water Compliance](#)

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

Description Located on the Lecale peninsula, approximately 0.8km in length, this bathing water is comprised of both sand and rocky outcrops. Facilities near the area include a car park, picnic area and Kilclief castle. The small village of Kilclief is inland from the bathing area and several private houses and farms are dotted along the minor road adjacent to the southern end of the bathing area. The bathing area is within the following designated sites: Strangford Lough Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI), Strangford Lough Special area of Conservation (SAC), Strangford Lough Special Protected Area (SPA), Strangford Lough 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 – Newry Mourne and Down District Council

Year of designation – 2018

Water sampling location – Lat 54.33605, Long -5.54307

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.

The majority of sewage generated in this area is pumped to Strangford wastewater treatment works which is approximately 4km north of the bathing water.

Wastewater systems in urban areas.

Kilclief bathing water does not have a large urban area and therefore may not be affected by this source of diffuse pollution. However, the nearby residential area of Kilclief village has the potential to affect 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 Kilclief area there are a number of 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 catchment area of Kilclief bathing water is predominately improved grassland, along 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 Kilclief.

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.

Kilclief 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)

Kilclief 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
Website: [DAERA Bathing Water Quality](#)

Local Authority Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Address: Downpatrick Office, Downshire Civic Centre, Ardglass Road, BT30 6GQ
Newry Office, Monaghan Row, Newry, BT35 8DJ
Email: info@mnandd.org
Phone: 0330 137 4000
Website: [Home - Newry, Mourne and Down District Council](#)

Map 1 Kilclief Bathing Water



Legend

- Wastewater Pumping Station
- Kilclief Bathing Water
- Bathing Water Sampling Transect

1:10,000

0 0.070.15 0.3 0.45 0.6
Kilometres