

# Bathing Water Profile

## Cloughey

May 2018



Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**

[www.daera-ni.gov.uk](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)



## Map of Northern Ireland's Bathing Waters 2018



## Background to Bathing Water Profiles

This is one of a series of profiles which cover all 26 of Northern Ireland's identified bathing waters. These are the most popular of our bathing areas and have been 'identified' as part of a network of European bathing sites.

The purpose of the bathing water profile is to help the bather to make an informed choice before bathing. The profile gives information on the physical, geographical and hydrological characteristics of the bathing water while assessing the possible pollution risk at the site. Bathing water profiles are a European requirement, under the 2006 Bathing Water Directive ([www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/bathing-water-quality](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/bathing-water-quality)). It is our intention to review the profiles annually.

All of our bathing waters are monitored on 20 occasions during the bathing season. In Northern Ireland the season runs between 1st June and 15th September each year. Bathing waters are tested for bacteria which indicate faecal contamination. Results are published weekly to bathing water operators and to the NI Direct website ([www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/bathing-water-quality](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/bathing-water-quality)). Waters are then classified annually as Excellent, Good, Sufficient or Poor, as defined by the European Bathing Water Directive, 2006.

## Key Information

Bathing Water Name	Cloughey Bathing Water
Location	UK/Northern Ireland/County Down/North Down Coast
Year of identification	2018
Local council area	Ards and North Down Borough Council
Bathing Water Operator	Ards and North Down Borough Council
Description of bathing beach	Sand, approximately 1 kilometre in length.
Monitoring Point	Middle of bathing water, J64355721 (Map 2).

## A Description of Cloughey bathing water and the surrounding area

Cloughey bathing water is located on the Ards Peninsula on the east coast of County Down. The bathing water, which occupies the northern end of Cloughey Bay, is approximately 1km in length and is comprised mainly of sand. It is backed by dune systems and the village itself. The village of Cloughey is located along the length of Cloughey Bay, with residential clusters mostly adjacent to the Southern half of the bathing water. There are also a number of caravan parks in the area.

The catchment area for the bathing water is mainly improved grassland with arable farming.

There are two small rivers which flow into Cloughey Bay, approximately 1km to the south of the bathing area.

The bathing area is within the following designated sites: Strangford Lough ASSI, Strangford Lough Special Area for Conservation, Strangford Lough Special Protected Area, Strangford and Lecale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Strangford Lough RAMSAR site, all of which afford the area environmental protection.

## Bathing Water Quality History at Cloughey

Cloughey bathing water was nominated for identification during a review of identified Bathing Waters in 2017. Monitoring of water quality was carried out in 2017 and preliminary results from Cloughey indicated Excellent water quality.

Cloughey bathing water was officially identified in May 2018 and is now included on the list of 26 identified bathing waters that are monitored by DAERA Marine and Fisheries Division.

In 2015 the 1976 Bathing Water Directive was replaced by the European Bathing Water Directive 2006/7/EC. This revised directive introduced more stringent bathing water standards. Bathing Waters are classified as Excellent, Good, Sufficient or Poor. This classification is based on a statistical assessment of results from the last four years.

All of Northern Ireland's water quality objectives are set out in River Basin Management Plans ([www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/water/river-basin-management](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/water/river-basin-management)). Within the Programme of Measures in the River Basin Management Plans there are a number of measures which relate directly to the protection of bathing waters.

## Potential sources of pollution and measures to reduce the impact at the bathing water

The potential sources of pollution have been split into three main categories. These are waste water (sewage) treatment works discharges, waste water systems in urban areas and rural source pollution, including agriculture.

DAERA Marine and Fisheries Division work with NIEA and other Departments to identify and resolve sources of pollution..

## Are there Waste Water Treatment Works in the vicinity of Cloughey beach?

There is one Northern Ireland Water (NIW) operated waste water treatment works approximately 1.5km to the south of Cloughey bathing water. The waste water from the Cloughey area is pumped to this works for treatment. NIW is currently upgrading the waste water treatment works and UV treatment will be in place from the 2019 bathing season onwards.

## Are there other risks of pollution from waste water systems?

Cloughey 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 Cloughey village has the potential to effect water quality during and after periods of prolonged or heavy rainfall. There are a number of caravan parks in the area which also have the potential to effect water quality during periods of heavy rainfall. In the event of very heavy rainfall a collection system may not be able to deal with all the flow received. A portion of the contents of the collection system may overflow to a waterway under storm conditions. **This is why there is general advice not to bathe during or up to 2 days after such rain.**

The municipal collection and treatment of waste water has the potential to cause pollution because all combined collection systems must be designed to overflow in periods of extreme wet weather or following failure of the system. If systems are not designed in that way, then sewers may overflow into residential areas. Within Cloughey bathing area there are several wastewater pumping stations with associated emergency overflows as shown on Map 1.

In order to reduce the potential for pollution in the water environment from these systems NIEA requires that all current and proposed systems meet the

requirements of the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive ([www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publication/waste-water-treatment-works-discharges-and-ec-urban-waste-water-treatment-directive](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publication/waste-water-treatment-works-discharges-and-ec-urban-waste-water-treatment-directive)) and the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

During the expansion of any urban area, there is the potential for misconnections between the sewer system and surface drains, which may allow untreated wastewater to enter the water environment. When these become apparent, NIEA pursues them as pollution incidents.

A further measure in tackling urban pollution is through the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS), which NIEA encourages through its SUDS Strategy. Other measures include compliance with the Northern Ireland Water Order 1999 and implementation of Pollution Prevention Guidelines ([www.netregs.org.uk/library\\_of\\_topics/pollution\\_prevention\\_guides.aspx](http://www.netregs.org.uk/library_of_topics/pollution_prevention_guides.aspx)).

## Are there risks from agriculture and rural activities?

Agriculture is a major industry in Northern Ireland and 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 subjected to inputs from chemical fertilisers and organic wastes which can contribute to pollution problems in the surrounding area. 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.

The Nitrates Action Programme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 (previously the Nitrates Action Programme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010) and the Phosphorus (Use in Agriculture) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 were introduced to improve the use of nutrients on farms and as a result improve water quality throughout Northern Ireland. The effectiveness of these regulations is continually reviewed through monitoring, enforcement and education.

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

## Are there other potential sources of pollution?

Other sources of pollution exist in this bathing area, these include;

- Dogs
- Horses
- Litter
- Fly tipping

All issues have been addressed through local signage to ensure that these controllable causes of pollution do not affect the bacteria content of the water.

NIEA have compiled River Basin Management Plans, these take an integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. Each plan identifies existing pollution reduction programmes and additional measures which could be implemented to maintain or improve the water quality.

Cloughey is located in the North Eastern River Basin Management Plan - further details can be found at [www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/north-eastern-river-basin-management-plan-2015-2021](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/north-eastern-river-basin-management-plan-2015-2021).

## Water pollution Incidents

From 2014-2017 there were four confirmed incidents of water pollution within 3kms of the bathing water. Two of these incidents occurred during the bathing seasons.

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

If you see a water pollution incident, you should immediately contact NIEA through the Emergency Water Pollution Hotline, which is operated 24 hours.

**Phone: 0800 807060**

When a pollution incident is reported or pollution is found to be affecting the water quality of a bathing water, an immediate investigation is instigated. All possible sources of pollution are checked. In addition, a resample will be collected to monitor whether the beach is still polluted. Bathing waters may be closed (by local authority or controlling body) until the water quality has improved and levels of bacteria are within mandatory standards.

## Macro-Algae, Phytoplankton and Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae)

Cloughey bathing water is not at risk of a proliferation of marco-algae, phytoplankton or cyanobacteria (blue/green algae).

## Daily water quality forecasts

There is presently no facility to predict bathing water quality on a daily basis. However, the general advice remains: do not bathe during or for up to 2 days after heavy rainfall events.

## Contact details

For general information about bathing waters:

### DAERA

Marine and Fisheries Division  
17 Antrim Road  
Tonagh  
Lisburn, BT28 3AL

Email: [Marine.InfoRequest@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Marine.InfoRequest@daera-ni.gov.uk)  
Phone: 028 9262 3244

### Water Pollution 24hr Hotline

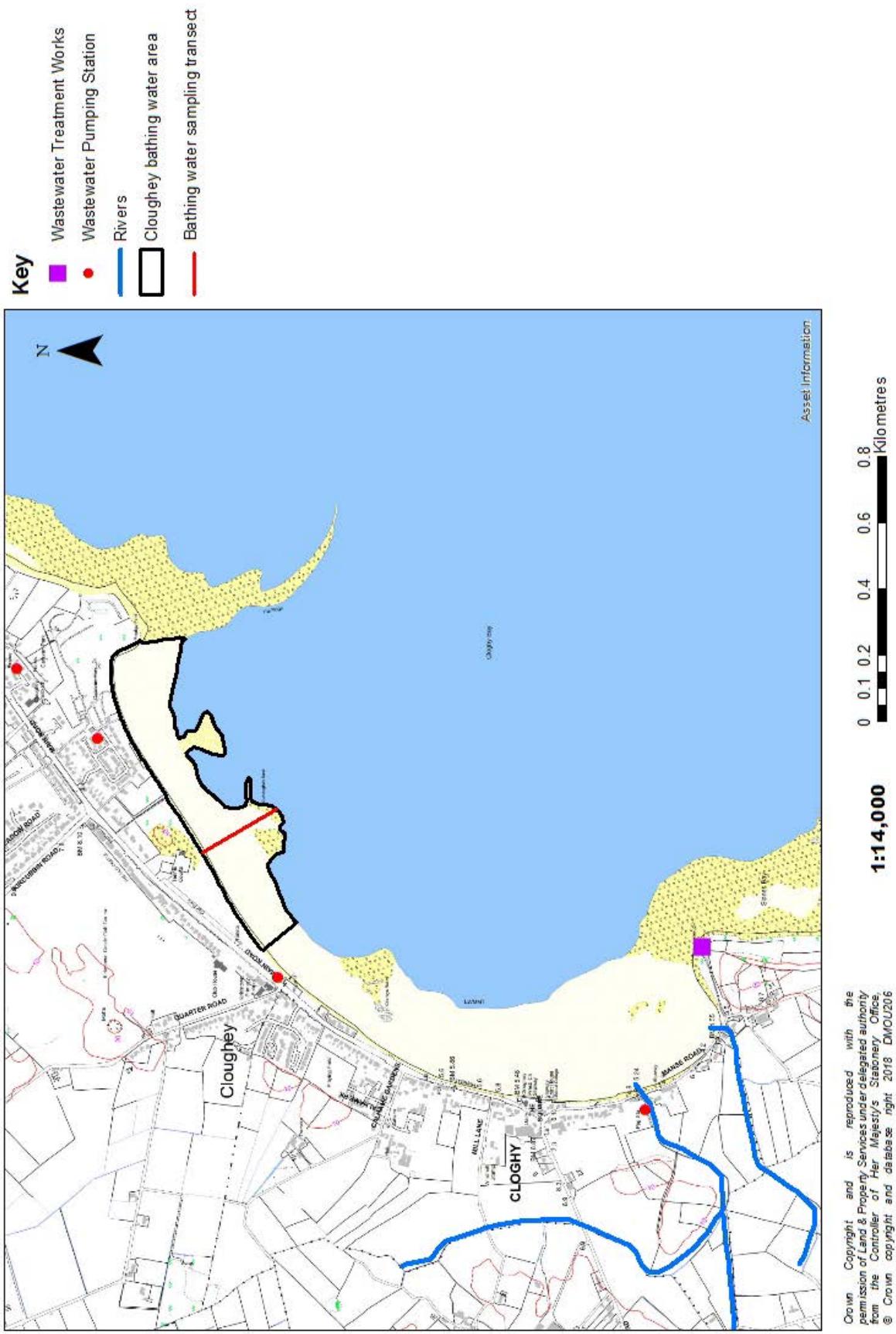
Phone: 0800 807060

### Local Authority

Ards and North Down Borough Council  
Town Hall  
The Castle  
Bangor  
BT20 4BT

Phone: 0300 013 3333

**Map 1**  
Cloughney Bathing Water -  
Potential Pollution Sources



**Map 2**  
Cloughey Bathing Water -  
EC Bathing Water Sample Location



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Rural Affairs  
Marine and Fisheries Division  
17 Antrim Road  
Tonagh  
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