REF.	ACTIONS	PARTNERS (lead partners in bold)
12.1	**Investigate potential causes of failure to meet Bathing Waters Directive Guideline Standards. Publish a bathing water profile to identify and assess causes of pollution that might affect bathing waters and impair bathers' health.**	**SEPA** / SW / ACC / SGRPID / VisitScotland
12.2	**Take action to reduce the risk of pollution identified in 12.1.**	**SEPA** / SW / ACC / SG / SGRPID / NFUS / Land managers / Landowners
12.3	**Take action to prevent bathers' exposure to pollution.**	**ACC / SEPA**
12.4	**Establish an Aberdeen beach management group to specifically focus on bathing water quality in terms of Bathing Water Directive compliance and ensure management actions are consulted upon and publicised.**	**ACC /** SEPA **/** SW / ACC / AHB / VisitScotland / EGCP

Acronyms are listed in the centre of this Action Card



aberdeen beach

12 WATER QUALITY

OBJECTIVE 12. Ensure good bathing water quality at Aberdeen beach.

BACKGROUND

Aberdeen has an extensive sandy beach bounded by the Rivers Dee and Don and is well used for water sports and bathing. The most popular stretch of the beach fronting the main leisure complex area was designated a Bathing Water in 1987 under EC Directive 76/160/EEC on the quality of bathing water; this Directive provides quality standards that the beach must meet. The principal standards relate to indicators of micro-organisms harmful to human health. There are two sets of standards: *Mandatory* standards have to be achieved but *Guideline* standards are more stringent. Aberdeen beach has always met at least the *Mandatory* standards and achieved *Guideline* standards in 2006 for the first time since 1999. In March 2006 the revised Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC) entered into force and will be enacted in the UK by Regulations by March 2008. Key features are tighter microbiological standards to be met by 2015 and increased provision of public information.

ISSUES

- Bacteria occur in discharges of sewage to coastal waters such as from Aberdeen's Long Sea Outfall.
- Bacteria can also arise in the Rivers Don and Dee due to point-source discharges of sewage or to rainfall run off from urban or agricultural land that has been used by livestock. As the rivers flow into the sea, so their bacterial load may affect the bathing water.
- The new Directive on the management of bathing water quality came into force during 2006, setting more stringent standards for the management of bathing waters to ensure protection of the health of bathers.

EXISTING / RECENT INITIATIVES

- The main Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) serving Aberdeen is located at Nigg and has been upgraded from a plant that provided basic screening to remove sewage solids to one that provides settlement and biological treatment to improve effluent quality.
- The second largest WWTP serving the city is located at Persley and provides full treatment and disinfection to remove bacteria before discharge to the River Don.
- Nitrate Vulnerable Zone Action Programme: part of the Dee and Don catchments is designated as a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. Farmers with land within the zone are required to develop Farm Action Plans to reduce the polluting impact of their activities. The plans are specifically aimed at controlling nutrients but they may lead to a reduction in bacteria levels as well.
- Other initiatives contributing to the reduction of bacterial levels include the 4 Point Plan and the Farm Soils Plan.
- Electronic signs have been erected at the sea front to provide the public with the predicted bathing water quality status on any given day during the bathing season (1st June to mid-September). The sign predicts poor, good or excellent water quality and the predictive modelling work helps us to understand why dips in quality happen so that we can take improvement action.



Aberdeen beach and harbour (AberdeenHarbour Board)

WHO IS INVOLVED?

Aberdeen City Council

Dee District Salmon Fishery Board East Grampian Coastal Partnership

Landowners

The Macaulay Institute

National Farmers' Union Scotland

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Scottish Agricultural College

Scottish Natural Heritage

Scottish Government Rural Payments & Inspections Directorate

Scottish Government

Scottish Water

VisitScotland

Further copies can be downloaded at www.theriverdee.org. For further information contact the Dee Catchment Officer c/o The Macaulay Institute, Craigiebuckler, Aberdeen AB15 8QH Telephone: 01224 498200 email: info@theriverdee.org

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- Aberdeen Beach Management Group, comprising Aberdeen City Council (ACC), East Grampian Coastal Partnership (EGCP), and others with a remit including the beach area, collectively contributes to the management of the beach resort area and help to determine what actions are necessary to achieve Directive standards.
- Aberdeen Bathing Water improvement plan.
- The Blue Flag campaign (administered in Scotland by Keep Scotland Beautiful on behalf of the Foundation for Environmental Education).

ACTIONS REQUIRED

- Early actions are likely to include bacteriological surveys to identify pollution sources to the Rivers Dee and Don and sewerage modelling to determine the extent of urban pollution.
- Use the information collected to identify remediation measures.

LEGISLATION

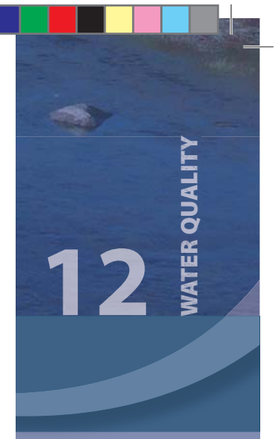
See Action Pack Annex for information sources

- EC Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC)
- Bathing Waters (Classification) (Scotland) direction 1999
- Bathing Waters (Classification) (Scotland) Regulations 1991
- EC Bathing Water Directive (76/160/EEC)
- Water Framework Directive
- Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003
- Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2005
- EC Nitrates Directive (91/67/EEC)
- Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil (Scotland) Regulations 2003
- WWT Directive
- WWT Regulations
- Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD)

GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

See Action Pack Annex for information sources

- Prevention of Environmental Pollution From Agricultural Activity (PEPFAA Code) 2005
- PEPFAA DOs and DONTs Guide
- SEPA Best Management Practices
- www.sepa.org.uk/data/bathingwaters/bw2005/result.asp?id=233616
- www.blueflag.org.uk



RELATED ACTION CARDS

1. Diffuse agricultural pollution

13. Aberdeen harbour