

Bathing Water Profile - Ballyloughane Beach (2015)

Bathing Water:	Ballyloughane Beach
Bathing Water Code:	IEWEBWT170_0700_0200
Local Authority:	Galway City Council
River Basin District:	Western
Monitoring Point:	132104E, 224573N

1. Profile Details:

Profile Id:	BWPR00307	Toilets Available:	Yes
Year Of Profile:	2015	Car Parking Available:	Yes
Year Of Identification	2011	Disabled Access:	Yes
Version Number:	1	First Aid Available:	Yes
		Sensitive Area:	No
		Dogs Allowed:	No
		Lifesaving Facilities:	Yes

Figure 1: Bathing Water



2. Bathing Water Details:

Map 1: Bathing Water Location & Extent



Bathing Water location and extent:

Ballyloughane Beach is located to the east of Galway City in the residential neighbourhood of Renmore. It is one of the most popular neighbourhood bathing areas in the city, particularly for residents of the Renmore area and east side of the city. The beach was not a designated bathing area under the old bathing water regulations. The average number of daily bathers during the bathing season is estimated at approximately 300 on weekdays and 500 on weekends.

The beach itself faces directly out to Galway Bay and boasts breathtaking views stretching for miles across the bay to County Clare, the Aran Islands, Hare Island and Mutton Island. It is accessed from the Ballyloughane Road off the R338 (Dublin Road). Free parking for about 55 cars is available along the promenade itself, and additional parking is available in a car park recently provided off the Ballyloughane Road. Recent improvement works at the beach have included the construction of an access ramp and steps to the beach, new footpath and cyclepath along the promenade, additional carparking facilities and picnic facilities.

Main features of the Bathing Water:

Type of Bathing Water

It has a safe, shallow, sandy beach of approximately 320m. It is suitable for swimming at incoming/outgoing and high tide only - low tide requires a walk of approximately 400m. Land use immediately adjacent to the beach is predominantly of urban fabric – residential and recreational & amenity – private domestic dwellings, public parks, and holiday accommodation in the form of caravan and camping parks. The beach is used all year round, due to its close proximity to the city centre and the adjacent residential area.

Flora/Fauna, Riparian Zone

Vegetation is sparse along the upper zone of the sandy shore. On the rocky outcrops, colonies of mussels, periwinkles, limpets and common barnacles can all be found. Small stands of seaweed can be present on both the strand and the rocky outcrops, but they rarely pose a nuisance to bathers.

Birds commonly found on or along the beach include Grey Herons, Curlews, Gannets, Herring Gulls, and Common Terns.

Water Depth

Variable - 1m approx at high tide

Tidal Range

The beach has a macro-tidal ranges (>4m) with medium and maximum depths of the bathing area varying in relation to the tide height and position.

Land Use

Land use immediately adjacent to the beach is predominantly of urban fabric – residential and recreational & amenity – private domestic dwellings, public parks, and holiday accommodation in the form of caravan and camping parks.

Sensitive Area

The entire area of Inner Galway Bay is covered by SAC and SPA designation.

Max. number of visitor during a day in high season: 500 approx

Approx number of visitor during the bathing season: 24,000 approx

Activities available at the Bathing Water:

The beach is used extensively all year round, due to its close proximity to the residential area of Renmore and the City centre. Swimming and bathing are popular activities particularly during the Summer months.

Seating and picnic facilities are available along the Ballyloughane promenade, and the promenade is used intensively by walkers and runners alike.

Dogs are prohibited on the beach from 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., during May, June, July, August and September, by beach by-laws.

Contributing catchment details:

Ballyloughane Beach is located in the townland of Inmore, approximately 2km from Galway City centre. It is located in the Corrib Estuary coastal water body (WE_170_0000), in the Western River Basin District. The contributing catchment is approximately 13 km² in area. The entire beach area lies within the Inner Galway Bay SPA, a Special Area of Conservation and houses a number of habitats of high conservation status, being listed in Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive Water Bodies

There are no streams/rivers discharging directly to the bathing water however there are a number of surface water outfalls which discharge surface water from the surrounding catchment.

The predominant soil group of the area is brown podzolics, on granite fill. Bedrock type is of the metagabbro & orthogneiss suite.

Monitoring point details:

The location of the bathing water monitoring point is at the centre of the beach.

Reason for selection of the monitoring point:

The location of the bathing water monitoring point at centre of the beach is the location where the majority of bathers use the bathing water.

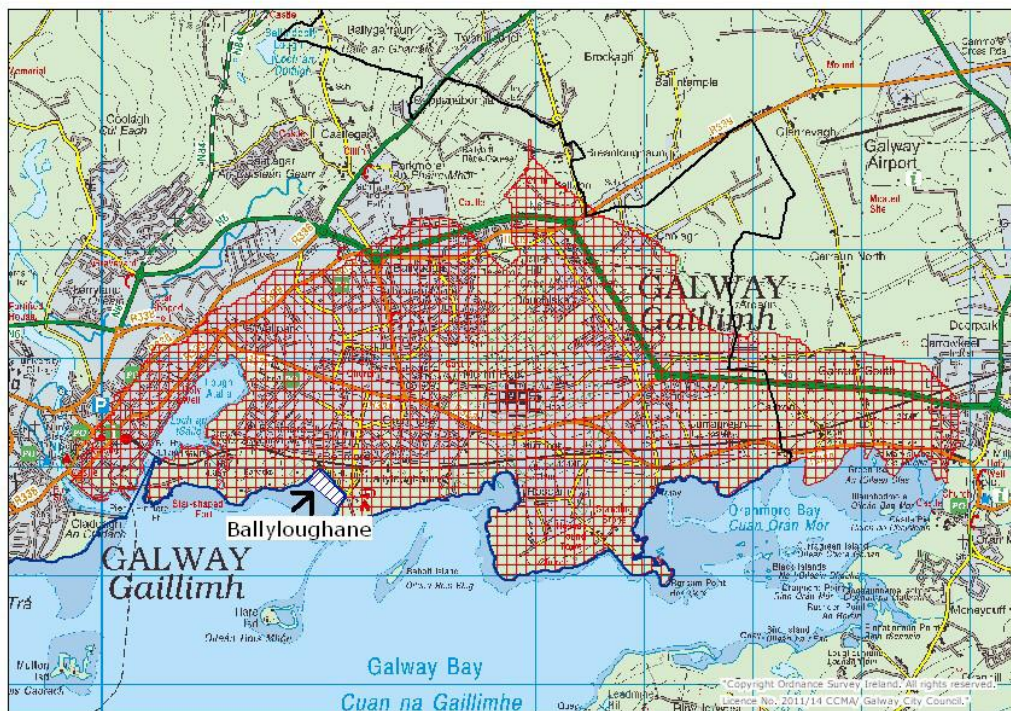
Water quality assessment:

For the 2015 bathing season, Ballyloughane Beach will be classified as 'Poor' following the four year water quality assessment (2011-2014). Water quality at the bathing water is impacted by heavy rainfall.

A management plan which sets out measures to improve water quality has been prepared, and this has been submitted to the EPA.

3. Identified Pressures:

Map 2: Bathing Water Catchment



3.1 Potential pressures in the catchment assessed as posing no risk:

No pressures identified

3.2 Potential pressures in the catchment assessed as posing risk:

Description:	Ballyloughane is a neighbourhood beach frequented by locals who do use the beach to walk their dogs. Use of the beach by dog walkers and subsequent dog fouling may pose a risk to bathing water quality and while bye-laws are in place prohibiting dogs on the beach during the bathing water season, these are not always adhered to. There is risk due to the use of the beach by dog walkers and subsequent dog fouling may pose a risk to bathing water quality.
Source:	Dogs on Beach
Type:	Domestic animals on beach
Short Term Pressure:	Yes
Nature:	Low Risk
Frequency:	<1 per season
Duration:	< 24 hours
Risk Assessment Methodology:	local knowledge
Risk Assessment Results:	Low, due to bye laws in place.
Details:	Risk is low, as dogs are restricted on beach during bathing season.
Management Measures:	<p>Bye-laws have been introduced which prohibits dogs from city beaches between 9am and 8pmduring the months of May – September inclusive.It is proposed to increase awareness of the risks to water quality as a result of dog fouling on a beach through public notices and information campaigns.</p> <p>Audio units were installed at the beach in 2014 for litter prevention and advising walkers to clean up after their dog, and it is proposed to continue the use of these units at the beach in 2015 with further messages regarding the prohibition of dogs on the beach during summer months.</p> <p>Increased presence of community wardens and dog warden to enforce the current bye-laws.</p>

Description:	The mutton island waste water treatment plan services the city of Galway and is located on Mutton Island, 1.2km from the beach. There is a potential risk of pollution, due to a failure of equipment or insufficient capacity at the plant, however this risk is deemed to be low.
Source:	Mutton Island Waste Water Treatment Plant
Type:	Waste Water Treatment plant
Short Term Pressure:	Yes
Nature:	High Risk
Frequency:	<1 per season
Duration:	< 24 hours
Risk Assessment Methodology:	EPA recommended methodology
Risk Assessment Results:	Discharge considered a long outfall. There is full treatment at the plant therefore the MMP is very low. 95th percentile for period 2011-2014 is >500, therefore WQI is D. MMPR is therefore high, using conservative assessment.
Details:	There is a potential risk of pollution, due to a failure of equipment, significant pressure on the plant or insufficient wwtp capacity.
Management Measures:	<p>A strong line of communication exists between the management at the treatment plant and the environment section/water services section of Galway City Council, so that in the event of a failure or discharge, a water sample is taken and bathers are notified of potential risk to water quality and advised not to use the bathing water by signage at the beach.</p> <p>Mutton Island WWTP DB Upgrade is currently ongoing and due for completion in Q4 2015.</p>

Description:	Risk during periods of high usage at public toilets where there could potentially be an overflow from the septic tank, resulting in a discharge to the beach. In addition, all domestic properties and the Liam Mellows GAA club situated in close proximity to the bathing water have on-site waste water treatment systems.
Source:	Public Toilets & On site waste water treatment systems
Type:	Septic Tank
Short Term Pressure:	Yes
Nature:	Moderate Risk
Frequency:	< 2 per season
Duration:	< 48 hours
Risk Assessment Methodology:	Local knowledge and history at the site
Risk Assessment Results:	The pressure risk is deemed medium during periods of heavy rainfall. Septic tank inspections carried out in 2014 by Galway City Council found all those inspected were compliant. Further inspections will be carried out in 2015.
Details:	Based on experience at the site, short term pollution does occur, however the duration does not generally exceed 48 hours.
Management Measures:	<p>Further septic tank inspections will be carried out in Ballyloughane vicinity in 2015 as part of the annual inspection programme. Regular inspection and maintenance of the public toilets will be carried out to ensure that the septic tank is emptied on a frequent basis. In the event of a discharge, bathers shall be notified of potential risk to water quality and advised not to use the bathing water by signage at the beach and by informing lifeguards on duty.</p> <p>Weather, and expected rainfall will be monitored and where it is forecast, advisory notices will be erected advising bathers that the beach may be the subject of short term pollution.</p> <p>A pumping station has been provided at Ballyloughane which would allow individual properties, including the public toilets to be connected to the main sewerage scheme, and on-site systems eradicated. If the septic tanks are found to be impacting water quality, the long term objective would be to secure funding to allow for this element of work to progress and connect all properties to the main drainage system. However these works are dependent on available funding and discussions are ongoing with Irish Water.</p>

Description:	<p>There are three outfalls that discharge in the vicinity of Ballyloughane Beach:</p> <p>Renmore Outfall Ballyloughane Outfall Murrough Outfall</p> <p>To coincide with the 2014 bathing season, Galway City Council engaged Capital Water Systems Ltd. to carry out flow and sampling monitoring of the three surface water outfalls in the vicinity of the Ballyloughane bathing water to establish whether or not these may be contributing to the issues with water quality. Results found that the Ballyloughane outfall and the Murrough outfall which discharge in the vicinity of the beach, both contained foul matter, which during rainfall events were significantly elevated, indicating that the CSOs on the outfall lines are being activated during periods of rainfall. Evidence of foul matter was also detected at the Renmore Outfall, however very low flows were noted throughout the survey period except during rainfall. Based on the data there would appear to be evidence to deduce that the outfalls are directly contributing to the pollution at the Ballyloughane bathing water, as a result of the activation of combined storm overflows and cross-connections in the sewer network upstream.</p>
Source:	Surface Water Outfalls and Storm Overflow
Type:	Sewer Networks
Short Term Pressure:	Yes
Nature:	High Risk
Frequency:	<2 per season
Duration:	< 48 hours
Risk Assessment Methodology:	Survey of outfalls and history at the site
Risk Assessment Results:	High
Details:	There is a high risk of short term pollution during periods of heavy rainfall, and monitoring of water quality over the past number of years has reflected this.
Management Measures:	<p>Works were carried out in September 2014 to raise the weir level at the Michael Collins Combined Storm Overflow (CSO), in order to limit the number of discharges from the foul sewer into the surface water network. Permanent upgrade works on the Michael Collins CSO were completed in November 2014.</p> <p>Monitoring of the Beach Avenue CSO is currently ongoing. It is proposed to carry out site investigation works during 2015 for the purposes of modelling/designing the upgrade works required at the Beach Avenue CSO. Further investigation is planned at the Renmore outfall and it is proposed to engage a CCTV contractor to monitor the pipe network at this location in Q1 2015.</p> <p>Review of operation, impact of all CSO's and discharges by way of modelling and on-site investigation with the intention of bringing it in to compliance with Guidelines, or elimination as required. Works will be dependent on IW funding availability.</p> <p>Galway City Council are procuring a contractor to reroute all the foul flows to the foul sewer and 75% of the surface water flows back to the surface water sewer in the Fionuisce, Fearann Ri and Caislean Thorlaigh housing estates. It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded in Q1 2015 and completed in Q3 2015. In addition to this GCC/IW intend to appoint a consultant to carry out a drainage survey of the Merlin Park Drainage Catchment Area and recommend remedial works in order to eliminate cross connections and defects in the system which are likely to be contributing to the water quality problems at Ballyloughane Beach.</p> <p>Weather forecasts and expected rainfall will be monitored throughout the bathing season. In the event of heavy rainfall, bathing water will be monitored and bathers shall be notified of potential risk to water quality where such exists.</p>

3.3 Other Risks:

Assessment of the potential for proliferation of cyanobacteria: N/A

Proposed management measures for cyanobacteria:	The beach will be monitored and the HSE consulted to determine the acceptability and any potential health risks, and where required, consideration will be given to the removal of excess macro-algae. The public will be informed through the posting of notices at the beaches.
Assessment of the potential for proliferation of macroalgae:	N/A
Proposed management measures for macroalgae:	There is no significant potential for proliferation of Macroalgae on this beach.
Assessment of the potential for proliferation of marine phytoplankton:	There is no significant potential for proliferation of Marine Phytoplankton on this beach
Proposed management measures for marine phytoplankton:	N/A
Additional Information:	<p>Contact Details:</p> <p>Galway City Council</p> <p>Sinead Johnstone, Executive Engineer Environment Section, City Hall, College Road, Galway.</p> <p>Phone: (091) 536595</p> <p>Fax: (091) 568146</p> <p>Email:sinead.johnstone@galwaycity.ie;environment@galwaycity.ie</p> <p>Name of contact person during holidays: Daithi Flood, Assistant Engineer or Eithne Murphy, Executive Engineer, Parks</p>

4 Bathing Water Status From Previous Sampling Years:

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Ballyloughane Beach	Sufficient	Sufficient	Poor	Poor

5 Contact Details:

Contact:	Galway City Council
Email:	environment@galwaycity.ie
Address:	Environment Department, City Hall, College Road, Galway
Phone:	091 536400