
CULLERCOATS:

WORKING IN
PARTNERSHIP
TO IMPROVE
BATHING WATERS



BACKGROUND

Since 2017, Northumbrian Water, North Tyneside Council and the Environment Agency (EA) have been working in partnership to find out and address the cause of a drop in water quality at Cullercoats Bay.

The classifications by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) have seen this bathing water rated 'Poor' since 2018, having dropped from 'Good' to 'Sufficient' in 2017.



North Tyneside Council

WHAT WORK HAS BEEN DONE?

Northumbrian Water took the voluntary decision with the EA to carry out a parallel investigation as part of the Water Industry National Environment Programme. The work explored a wide range of possible causes and confirmed that Northumbrian Water's network and assets are not the main cause of the reduction in water quality. It is believed that the main cause of this is contaminated groundwater.

The work carried out to date has included:

- Checks on all Northumbrian Water's assets in the area, taking the opportunity to improve and futureproof the network where possible, such as coating pipework with lining to prevent future leaks.
- Investigations and analysis of likely sources and pathways of pollution, including DNA analysis, biodegradable tracing dye and water sampling.
- Customer properties checked for misconnections and pipework repaired where needed.
- Northumbrian Water has also checked council drainage and other assets, such as gullies, and carried out remedial work where public and private drainage and connections have been found to be faulty.

THE WORK CONTINUES

The conclusions drawn from the work to date do not mean that efforts to improve the water quality of Cullercoats Bay have stopped.

- A disused council drainage culvert, the John Street Culvert, was capped off in 2011, having been found to be a pollution source. It is a possibility that flows of groundwater still passing through this culvert may make their way to the sea.
- Northumbrian Water is preparing a c.£150,000 plan to divert that groundwater into its own combined sewer network, to see if this breaks the connection with the bathing water and makes an improvement. It is hoped that this work can be completed this year.
- A sampling programme of five main sampling locations, including two groundwater sampling points has been developed to continuously monitor water quality.

HOW YOU COULD HELP

You can help us by checking to see if your pipes are connected correctly. If your wastewater pipe is connected to a surface water drain, this will affect the local bathing water quality.

Visit the Connect Right website [here](#) to see how you can fix any connection issues.

For more information and latest updates about this work, please visit our community portal [here](#).

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April 2022
