

Motion by Councillors W Robertson and D Cuthbert

Loch Leven

This Council introduced planning guidance in relation to the Loch Leven Protection Area, and Ramsar site, covering phosphorus and foul drainage in the catchment area, as a consequence of new development, conversions or extensions.

However, this Guidance can only mitigate the impact of phosphorus generated by buildings and the waters flowing out of Loch Leven were a bright green colour (in November) due to a wider discharge issue leading to high concentrations of blue/green algae in the Loch.

This Council is very concerned about the deterioration in water quality in the loch, which is one of our most important sites and a very popular tourist attraction. Loch Leven is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a RAMSAR site (Wetland of International Importance), a Nature Reserve and a Special Protection Area (SPA).

The water in the loch is being enriched by phosphates entering the loch from agricultural run-off and treated effluent from the Milnathort and Kinross Waste Water Treatment Plants. This is leading to growing instances of algal blooms, some of which are toxic, making it unsafe for humans and animals alike.

However, there is a further problem. Because of the shared sewage systems (carrying both sewage and road water) in Milnathort and Kinross, in periods of heavy rain, Scottish Water are forced to divert untreated sewage directly into the loch. This is a further major factor in the degradation of the water quality.

We ask that the Leader of the Council writes to the Minister for the Environment asking for the following;

- That SEPA be instructed to introduce a weight limit on the amounts of phosphorous permitted to be deposited into Loch Leven. There is currently no limit set.
- That far tighter controls are introduced to stop Scottish Water depositing untreated sewage into Loch Leven and that all such overspill events are recorded and reported. Currently there appears to be no real records kept.

Loch Leven is one of most popular visitor attraction which is estimated to attract nearly 250,000 visits per year. It makes a big contribution to our local economy and we believe all efforts should be taken to protect it and reverse the current decline in water quality.