

The Scottish BEACH AWARD GUIDE

2008



61 Award Winning Beaches



For further information and to vote for your favourite award winning beach, please visit www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/coastal



Keep Scotland Beautiful is an operating name of Environmental Campaigns (Scotland), Scottish Charity Number SC030332.

Flags have been flying at beaches around Scotland for the past 16 years highlighting award-winning locations.

And with over 60 Scottish award beaches to choose from this guide should help you pick your ideal destination. So whether you are looking for the perfect backdrop for a bit of soul searching, a beach with excellent bathing water quality for swimming, or somewhere close to other attractions for a family day out then our handy map will help you select one of the best beaches in Scotland for your needs.



The number of award beaches continues to rise reflecting the increasing importance of beaches to Scottish communities and their economies, as well as a desire to encourage visitors to experience and share these special places.

Because of the very different character of Scottish beaches Keep Scotland Beautiful runs two beach award programmes - the internationally recognised Blue Flag and the prestigious Scottish Seaside Award.

You can maximise your enjoyment, and that of all other visitors, by following these two simple codes.

The beach code

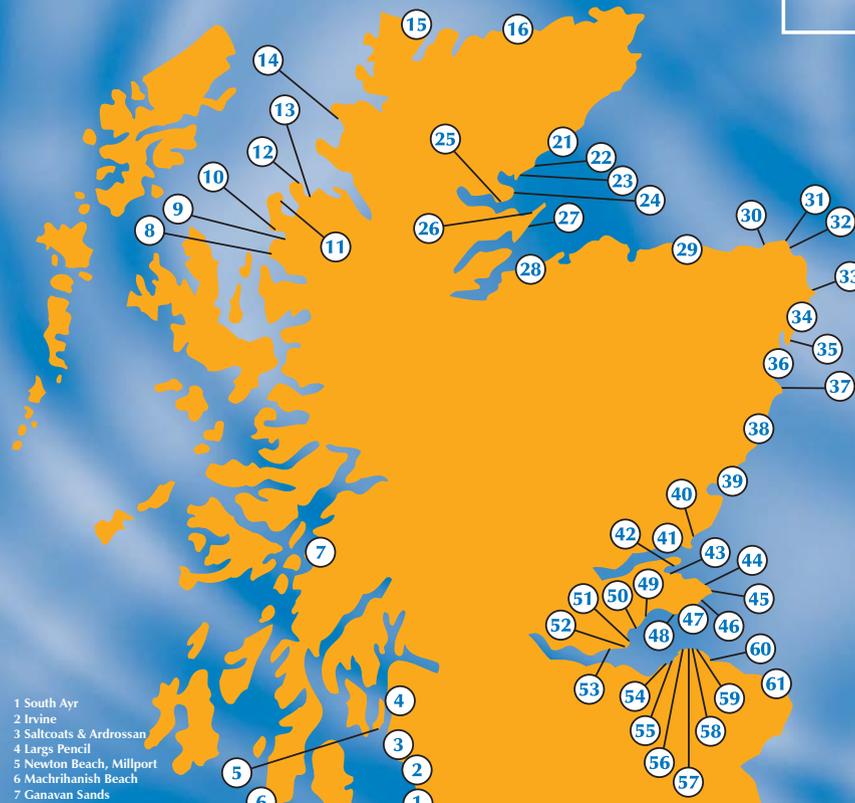
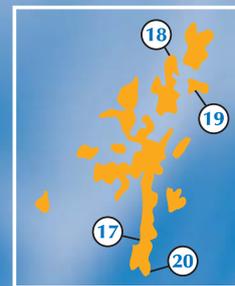
- Take your rubbish home with you or use facilities provided - recycle where possible.
- Where dogs are allowed on the beach please keep them under control, always clean up after them and use the bins provided.
- Check the notice boards for local information about facilities, water quality and safety procedures at the beach.
- Use public transport, walk or cycle to the beach when possible.

The water code

- Beware of the dangers - rip tides, offshore winds, breakwaters, pipes and rocks.
- Never swim alone, or after eating food or drinking alcohol.
- In case of emergency dial 999 and ask for the coastguard.
- Be constantly aware of the tides and waves when you are in or by the sea.

MAP

Please see overleaf for a description of all the beaches numbered below, including directions and award information or visit www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/coastal



- 1 South Ayr
- 2 Irvine
- 3 Saltcoats & Ardrossan
- 4 Largs Pencil
- 5 Newton Beach, Millport
- 6 Machrihanish Beach
- 7 Gairloch
- 8 Red Point North
- 9 Cairloch
- 10 Big Sand
- 11 Firemore
- 12 Mellon Udrigle
- 13 Gruinard Bay
- 14 Achmelvich Bay
- 15 Durness, Sango Bay
- 16 Strathly Bay
- 17 St Ninian's Isle
- 18 Sands of Breckon
- 19 Tresta, Fellar
- 20 West Voe
- 21 Brora Beach
- 22 Golspie North Beach
- 23 Golspie South Beach
- 24 Imbo Beach
- 25 Dornoch Beach
- 26 Portmahomack
- 27 Shandwick Bay
- 28 Nairn Central
- 29 Inverboyndie
- 30 Rosehearty
- 31 Fraserburgh Esplanade (Tigerhill)

- 32 Fraserburgh Waters of Philorth
- 33 Peterhead Lido
- 34 Cruden Bay
- 35 Collieston
- 36 Balmedie Beach
- 37 Aberdeen Beach
- 38 Stonehaven
- 39 Montrose Seafroat
- 40 Carnoustie
- 41 Broughty Ferry
- 42 St Andrews West Sands
- 43 St Andrews East Sands
- 44 Kingsbarns
- 45 Craik Rooms Bay
- 46 Billowness, Anstruther
- 47 Elie Ruby Bay
- 48 Elie Harbour Beach
- 49 Leven East
- 50 Kirkcaldy Seafield
- 51 Kirghorn/Pettycur Bay

- 52 Burntisland
- 53 Aberdour Silver Sands
- 54 Longniddry No 1
- 55 Longniddry Ferry Ness/ Gosford Bay
- 56 Gullane Bents
- 57 Yellowraig
- 58 North Berwick West
- 59 North Berwick Milsey Bay
- 60 Belhaven Bay, Dunbar
- 61 Coldingham

Key to symbols used overleaf

- Seaside Awards** - Generally rural in nature the Seaside Award beach may only have basic facilities but all provide information, are cleaned and cared for and must meet a minimum of 15 criteria. Dogs may be allowed on the beach.
- Blue Flag** - With excellent water quality and facilities, environmental education activities and clean sands these beaches will typically provide toilets, first aid, disabled access, facilities, information and maps. They are all supervised and often have lifeguards present during the peak season.
- Family friendly** - These beaches include toilets, parking, easy access and information about the water quality, facilities and activities which take place in the area. Often there are cafes, shops and children's play areas close by.
- Recreation friendly** - Many of these beaches are located on or near coastal walking and cycle routes. Access to the beach can be steep or require a short walk, although car parking is usually provided.
- Good for wildlife** - These beaches are renowned for wildlife watching. Rock pool creatures - crabs, starfish and anemones - and many seashore birds can easily be spotted. On a good day you may even see a seal, porpoise or dolphin.

For further information please visit www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/coastal

1 South Ayr - South Ayrshire

This sandy beach backed by an esplanade has visitor facilities including a putting green, well equipped play area and refurbished Pavilion with indoor soft play. If arriving by car from the A77 trunk road head for Ayr town centre and follow signs. The beach is signposted from the railway and bus station. The promenade is part of Strathans national cycle route 7.

2 Irvine - North Ayrshire

A long straight stretch of golden sand, located beside Irvine Bay Park, is filled with a mix of sand dunes with parks and golf courses to the landward side. The Magnum Leisure Centre is adjacent to the award beach. The beach can be accessed from the A78. It is located half a mile from the train station. A regular bus service is available from Ayr, Kilmarnock and Greenock.

3 Saltcoats & Ardrossan - North Ayrshire

A traditional sandy beach between the towns of Ardrossan and Saltcoats. The water is shallow for several hundred metres from the shore making it an ideal paddling destination. The views of the Clyde and Arran are breathtaking. Situated beside the B714. Access by rail and regular bus routes from Greenock/Ayr/Kilmarnock and Glasgow pass the beach.

4 Largs Pencil - North Ayrshire

A naturally sandy bay with some shingle 1km south of Largs town centre. Popular with walkers and picnickers, it has stunning views of the Clyde, Millport and Bute. Off the A78, between Largs Marina and the town centre, it is next to the Largs/Glasgow railway line. The path behind it is part of the Strathans network.

5 Newton Beach, Millport - North Ayrshire

The small sandy beach is on the seafront with many nearby facilities. The award section is part of the sheltered Millport Bay and has stunning views of the Clyde Estuary and Little Cumbrae. It was voted the public's favourite award beach in 2007. By the promenade at Millport, on the Isle of Cumbrae, the beach is beside the town centre, close to the harbour and famous crocodile rock.

6 Machrihanish Beach - Argyll & Bute

The award section is at the south end of the three mile long beach alongside dunes and Machrihanish Golf Course. Never crowded, it is ideal for walking, surfing or watching the sunset. Take the B943 from Campbelltown to Machrihanish. Access is through a gate and across a fairway opposite the Golf Clubhouse.

7 Ganavan Sands - Argyll & Bute

A picturesque sandy beach with easy access, ample parking and great views out to Mull, Lismore and Morven. The beach lies adjacent to a superb coastal walk. Approaching Oban from the South on the A816 at the 1st roundabout (Argyll Square) take the 3rd exit at the 2nd roundabout take the 1st exit and continue along the shore road for about a mile.

8 Redpoint North - Highland

Access to this spectacular beach can be a challenge, especially with small children or walking difficulties, but the views to the Isle of Skye are worth it. From Gairloch take the A832 south for two miles then turn right onto the B8056. Follow this road for nine miles.

9 Gairloch - Highland

Wooden boardwalks through well-established sand dunes lead you to a stunning beach. The long expanse of sand provides an ideal space for walking, playing, relaxing and recuperating. The beach is situated to the north west of the village of Gairloch on the A832. Car parking is provided beside the golf course.

10 Big Sand - Highland

Sheltered from the onshore wind by Longa Island, the beach is a wonderful location to sit and take in the magnificent view of the mountains of Skye and Torridon. Access through extensive sand dunes is not always easy. From Gairloch take the B8021 for 3 miles. Entry is via the Sands Holiday Centre on the left.

11 Firemore - Highland

This fine unspoilt sandy beach is opposite Isle Ewe and is a firm favourite with locals. It provides a peaceful escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. From Poolewe take the B8057 for 5 miles. The beach is on the right past the helmet of Firemore.

12 Mellon Udrigle - Highland

Broad sands that stretch into the inviting azure coloured sea make this beach a popular location for dinghy sailors and fishermen. There is a campsite close by and free parking by the beach. From Laide take the turning north and follow the road to Mellon Udrigle.

13 Gruinard Bay - Highland

This unspoilt sheltered sandy beach surrounded by magnificent scenery is a must for locals and tourists. Steep steps lead down from the road side to the beach, but it is an ideal stop on a long car journey. On the A832 from Gairloch to Braemore Junction, this beach is situated approximately 5 miles from Laide on the left hand side. The car park is situated opposite the beach.

14 Achmelvich Bay - Highland

This is a beautiful, natural, west coast bay with a large expanse of silver sands. It offers a quiet sheltered retreat. This is a good beach for canoeing, sailing, wildlife watching and walking. It was voted the public's favourite award beach in 2006. Located at Lochinver.

15 Durness Sango Bay - Highland

A beautifully formed cove which offers panoramic views of the North Minch. It enjoys golden sands together with rocky outcrops which offer shelter. Sango Sands is accessed by very steep steps but once on the beach it delivers amongst the best nature can offer. Situated on A838. Follow road to beach, located in village centre beside Tourist Information Centre and car park.

16 Strathay Bay - Highland

Expansive bay in the heart of Mackay country. Naturally formed with sand dunes it has outstanding views of the Pentland Firth. Popular location with surfers, however access is not easy and care should be taken. Strathay Bay is on a minor road sign posted to Strathay East, off the A836 Thurso to Bethyhill Road, three miles west of Melvich.

17 St Ninian's Isle - Shetland

A picturesque beach linking the South Mainland with the Isle of St Ninians where there is a famous archaeological site. There are facilities in nearby Bigton, and an RSPB site at Scousburgh. On the A970 from Lerwick to Sumburgh turn on to the B9122 towards Bigton. Follow this single track road for 1 1/2 miles, take the second turning on the right to Bigton. After 500 yards turn left then immediately right.

18 Sands of Breckon, Yell - Shetland

A white sandy beach in the north of Yell with the largest area of shell sand dune and dune grassland in Shetland. Traces of Viking and pre-Viking settlements can be found nearby. Access can be steep. From Lerwick take the A970 to the North Isles Ferry Terminal at Toft. From the ferry, follow the A968 through the island of Yell, turn right onto the B9083 to Cullivoe and follow signs to Breckon.

19 Tresta, Fetlar - Shetland

This pretty beach, with easy access, is in a calm shallow cove on the island of Fetlar. Cross by ferry to the island of Yell, follow the A968 through Yell to the Gutcher Ferry Terminal and travel to Fetlar. Follow the B9088 and take the third turning on the right to Tresta, then the first right to the beach.

20 West Voe - Shetland

Located on the southern tip of Shetland by the ancient settlements of Jarlshof and Old Scatness Broch, this long white sand beach has easy access. Picnic tables are available. The nearest village is Virkie. From Lerwick take the A970 south to Sumburgh. The car park is to the right of the main road, just past the turning for Scatness and opposite Sumburgh Airport.

21 Brora Beach - Highland

This small, sheltered beach is next to the links golf course. Brora has golden sands and a sloping sea front. It is ideal for walking and picnics. Take the road towards golf course for approx. 1/2 mile. There is free parking in golf club car park. Rail link to Brora station. Bus via City Link & Stagecoach.

22 Golspie North Beach - Highland

A typical, gradually curved long east coast beach, with a mixture of sand and shingle. Panoramic views across the Moray Firth make it an excellent destination for long beach walks. Situated off the A9 one hour north of Inverness, follow signs for beach car park. Rail link to Golspie Station. Bus via City link and Stagecoach.

23 Golspie South Beach - Highland

The southern beach of Golspie again offers a lovely expanse of golden sand with a natural breakwater and calm seas. This beach has doortstep access to local amenities and services. Situated directly off the A9 one hour from Inverness.

24 Embo Beach - Highland

A belt of dunes offer some shelter from the prevailing wind, making this beach the perfect destination for walkers, families and any beach lover. Embo is off the A9 via Dornoch. Follow the signs for Embo (three miles).

25 Dornoch Beach - Highland

To the front of an established dune system is a beautiful expanse of golden sand. Close to the historic town of Dornoch with its championship golf course. The beach is also recognised for its nesting birds, flora and fauna. Dornoch is off the A9. Head into town, turn right at town square, and follow signs to beach. A bus service is provided by City Link and Stagecoach.

26 Portmahomack - Highland

Situated by a picturesque village the golden sands of this beach are close to a quaint harbour which often bustles with a variety of water sports. Extensive coastal walks and unique historical sites can be found nearby. From A9 turn right onto the B9165, half a mile after Nigg roundabout. After Hill of Fearn turn left to remain on the B9165 until you meet the village. There is a bus service from Tain.

27 Shandwick Bay - Highland

The extensive sandy beach has dunes behind it and extensive coastal paths pass by. There is easy access from the area to many local historical sites. From A9 turn right onto B9165, half a mile after Nigg roundabout. Follow the right turn until you reach Balintore. Turn right through the village and then left after the harbour, down Sand Dune Walk. Buses from Inverness & Tain.

28 Nairn Central - Highland

A tourist beach with a distinctly rural feel this sandy, accessible beach is fringed by dunes with a hinterland of open grassy links. The coastline is home to a resident school of dolphins. The surrounding area hosts a paddling pool, cafe, beach supervisor and playground. The beach is approximately half a mile from the train station and a quarter of a mile from the nearest bus station.

29 Inverboyndie - Aberdeenshire

This popular beach attracts walkers, swimmers, surfers and windsurfers. It has a sandy foreshore with sloping rocky access. Inverboyndie Beach is situated at the 4 star Aberdeenshire Council caravan site where facilities can be found. From the historic town of Banff, drive north on the A98 for 3 miles. At this point the caravan park is signposted to the right.

30 Rosehearty - Aberdeenshire

A small but well used beach which is increasingly popular with wildlife enthusiasts following recent sightings of basking sharks and whales off the coast. The beach nestles between the harbour to the west and a rocky outcrop to the east. The area is now being used for scuba diving too. Rosehearty lies four miles north of Fraserburgh on the B9031, which is signposted for the village and harbour.

31 Fraserburgh Esplanade (Tigerhill) - Aberdeenshire

A sandy beach next to the town this is a popular location for many activities and family outings. The beach closest to the town is known as the Fraserburgh Tigerhill while the other part of the bay, which also has an award, is known as Fraserburgh Philorth. The Esplanade can be reached via the A90 turning off to the east on Harbour Road. Access is from the car park and the beach is adjacent to the caravan park.

32 Waters of Philorth - Aberdeenshire

An extensive, pristine sandy beach next to the Waters of Philorth, Local Nature Reserve. Philorth is a popular recreational, walking, surfing, and windsurfing area. Two miles south east of Fraserburgh on the B9033 to St Colms. Can also be reached on foot from the Esplanade close to the town centre.

33 Peterhead Lido - Aberdeenshire

An unusual beach forming the shoreline of a boating marina in the town's outer harbour. There are open views across the marina so always plenty to watch. The Lido is accessed from the car park, signposted from the A982. There is a steep hill down to the beach. Limited alternative parking is available by the marina.

34 Cruden Bay - Aberdeenshire

A sweeping expanse of golden sands and dunes popular with day trippers, water sports enthusiasts and for sea fishing. From Aberdeen, take the A90 to Peterhead for 11 miles then take the A957 signposted Newburgh. At Cruden Bay turn right to the car park. From there walk towards the harbour. Cross the burn by the White Lady's bridge.

35 Collieston - Aberdeenshire

A thriving village with an excellent natural harbour which used to host a busy fishing fleet and is now filled with golden sand creating an idyllic sheltered beach. When entering the village of Collieston take the first left past the church and park in the car park. There is a path which heads around the headland towards the harbour and the beach.

36 Balmedie Beach - Aberdeenshire

Balmedie is a flat, sandy beach backed by dunes. An ideal walking location, there is ample car parking, toilets and an active ranger centre. From Aberdeen, take the A90 north for eight miles and turn right at the second turning for Balmedie. Take the second road on the left and follow for one mile past the mushroom farm on the left.

37 Aberdeen Beach - Aberdeen

The award section of this beach is to the south and sheltered by the harbour. Behind the beach are cafes, restaurants and amusements. The esplanade is popular with walkers, cyclists, runners and inline skaters. The beach is to the east of the City and signposted from the A90. There are regular buses from the City Centre, and the esplanade is part of the North Sea Coastal Trail.

38 Stonehaven - Aberdeenshire

A popular coastal resort, well used by water sports enthusiasts, Stonehaven Bay is 1.1km long. The southern end of the bay is sandy and it is used more by bathers. Access the beach from the southern end of the town at the historic harbour area or from the northern end via Beach Road which is adjacent to the sports centre and Art Deco open air swimming pool.

39 Montrose Seafront - Angus

This extensive golden beach is easily accessed by steps and a boardwalk. Next to the beach is a purpose built play area and paddling pool for children of all ages. The area also includes a family run cafe and amusement centre, and the Trail Pavilion. Located off Trail Drive the Seafront Splash is well signposted from the Montrose A92 Arbroath and Aberdeen approaches. The Strathans National Route 1 also passes by Montrose.

40 Carnoustie - Angus

A beautiful bay with golden sand by the world famous Carnoustie Golf Course. Feels remote, yet is only a few minutes walk from the train station and the town. The beach is easily accessed by steps and ramps. The adjacent leisure centre offers excellent sport facilities along with outdoor tennis courts, children's play area, paddling pool and free car parking. The Strathans National Route 1 also passes by Carnoustie.

41 Broughty Ferry - Dundee

Nestled beneath a historic castle is a sandy beach backed by a promenade. There is a nature conservation site nearby where a host of wildlife can be seen. A safe area is marked out for swimming and lifeguards are present at this beach. From Dundee follow the A930 to Broughty Ferry. At the Queen Street / St Vincent Street junction turn right and follow the signs to the beach. The Strathans National Route 1 also passes by.

42 St Andrews West Sands - Fife

Two miles of uninterrupted sand backed with dunes and the world-renowned championship golf course. There is plenty of car parking, lots of information available and zoning of the beach to keep recreational users and families apart. Lifeguards are present at this beach. The beach is accessed from A91 Cupar - St Andrews road. It is 15 minutes walk from the bus station.

43 St Andrews East Sands - Fife

On the south side of the old harbour close to the East Sands Leisure Centre with a promenade link to the Fife Coastal path. Lots of water sports, including surfing and sailing, take place at this beach. Lifeguards are present during the high summer. From the centre of St Andrews take the Crail Road south. Opposite the St Andrews Memorial Hospital, a road to the left takes you down to the harbour and the beach.

44 Kingsbarns - Fife

Located on the east of Kingsbarns the beach stretches for about two miles and is bordered by rolling sand dunes. A very popular beach with walkers the Fife Coastal Footpath passes above it. The beach is off the A917 Crail - St. Andrews and a 10 minutes walk from village. There is ample car parking.

45 Crail Rooze Bay - Fife

A naturally peaceful cove of sand with rock pools and a small paddling pool at one end providing a haven for wildlife. A sloping grass area and children's playground provide the backdrop to the beach. Crail is on the Fife coastal driving route. Access to beach is off Rooze Bay Crescent or is a 10 minute walk from the town centre.

46 Billowness, Anstruther - Fife

Set in the heart of East Neuk of Fife, Billowness sits on the Fife Coastal Path so is an ideal location for starting or ending coastal walks. The beach is sandy and fronted by rock pools offering hours of entertainment for children. The beach is signposted from the A917 coastal route when approaching by car. There are no rail links.

47 Elie Ruby Bay - Fife

An alternative to the resort beach in Elie, this beautiful sheltered beach with rock pools is a great place to watch birds and wildlife while relaxing. Walks starting at Ruby Bay link into the Fife Coastal Path. The beach can be accessed by car via Wadeslea Road and by foot from the centre of Elie. Ruby Bay is within walking distance of Elie Harbour beach.

48 Elie Harbour Beach - Fife

This beach lies north of the harbour and close to many facilities. There is a water sports centre where equipment can be hired and adventure trips on inflatable's can be enjoyed. Lifeguards are present at this beach. By car and bus on the A917 coastal route, East Neuk of Fife.

49 Leven East - Fife

Leven East beach is situated in an area of industrial heritage. It is backed by a promenade, green open space, a caravan park and golf course. The beach is close to the town centre and has views across the Firth of Forth. The beach is accessed from A915 Fife coastal road, taking the B955 and turning left along The Promenade. There is a new bus terminal close to the beach.

50 Kirkcaldy Seafield - Fife

Located to the South of Kirkcaldy over looking the Firth of Forth this sandy beach with rock pools is a real walk on the 'wild side'. You can watch seals basking in the sun from the Fife Coastal path just ten minutes walk south of the beach and listen to the seabirds. There is a regular bus route (No. 7 from Kirkcaldy bus station, stance 13). Kirkcaldy also has a train station which is a 2 minute walk from the bus station.

51 Kinghorn, Pettycur Bay - Fife

This pleasant, small sandy beach is located on the west side of Kinghorn. It is a haven of peace and tranquility with beautiful scenery. Access to Kinghorn is via the A921 by car/bus and 5 minutes walk from the train station.

52 Burntisland - Fife

The sandy beach is enhanced by a modern leisure centre, seaside park, crazy golf course, bouncy castles, picnic tables and an annual summer fairground. Lifeguards are present at this beach. Access to Burntisland is via the A921 by car/bus. The beach is 10 minutes walk from the train station.

53 Aberdour Silver Sands - Fife

One of the most popular and attractive beaches on the Fife coast, it offers the freshness and variety of the seaside as well as the peace and tranquility of the countryside. The Fife coastal path passes by. Lifeguards are present. The beach is just off the A921 road from Inverkeithing to Burntisland and is 10 minutes walk from train station.

54 Longniddry No 1 - East Lothian

A wild and undisturbed beach Longniddry No. 1 has a mix of both sand and rocks to guddle about in providing an ideal location for family day trips. There is a dog exercise area and the beach provides good walking and horse riding while windsurfers and canoeists can often be seen. Access off the main East Lothian coastal train route. Signposted clearly.

55 Longniddry Ferry Ness/Gosford Bay - East Lothian

This long sandy and rocky beach is close to nature reserves so there are a lot of birds to be seen feeding when the tide is out. The beach is often visited by canoeists and windsurfers. There is a dog exercise area. Access is off the main East Lothian coastal train route. The beach is well signposted.

56 Gullane Bents - East Lothian

A glorious sandy beach which is particularly popular with families it is ideal for sunbathing, walking, kite flying, picnics, windsurfing and canoeing. The sea buckthorn and the extensive back dune system provide a haven for small birds. There are regular bus services to Gullane and the beach is signposted from the town.

57 Yellowcraig - East Lothian

With a nature trail, barbecue site, excellent natural themed play area, network of footpaths through the sheltered woodlands and extensive grassland behind the beach there is something for everyone here - even a special 'dog walk'. The beach is within walking distance from Dirleton and there is a regular bus service from North Berwick. The beach is signposted from Main Street.

58 North Berwick West Beach - East Lothian

A long stretch of sand with views to the island of Craigleith and the Bass Rock. It is a great family beach with a putting green behind it. The West Beach in North Berwick is the closest to the train station and a direct train service runs from Edinburgh. There is also a regular bus service.

59 North Berwick Milsey Bay - East Lothian

A popular family beach that has a boat pond built into the rocks which holds the water when the tide is out, providing a place for children to play. Milsey Bay is the most easterly beach of the two in North Berwick. There are signposts throughout the town, a train service from Edinburgh and a regular bus service.

60 Belhaven Bay, Dunbar - East Lothian

Located within the John Muir Country Park the beach is fringed by low, sheltering sand dunes, rich salt marsh and colourful grasslands. Ideal for walking, picnics and surfing. The nearest village, which is within walking distance, is West Barns. The beach is signposted from the roundabout on the A1 from Dunbar Park. There is a regular bus service.

61 Coldingham - Scottish Borders

A sheltered beach with sand framed by a rocky shore. Situated in the St Abbs and Eyemouth Voluntary Marine Reserve there is plenty of wildlife to be seen. Beach guards are present. A regular bus from Berwick upon Tweed visits the village which is a short walk from the beach. There is a small car park.