



The History of Sewers - SCRIPT

There's been a problem at the film company who are shooting a film about Southern Water wastewater. The editing software has cut out words from the voiceover script. The missing words are in the text box. Fill in the gaps.

By 1800, overcrowding in towns and cities had made the disease and smell problem overwhelming. Water borne diseases like cholera and typhoid killed thousands. In 1849 an outbreak of _____ in London resulted in the deaths of 2000 people a week. It was widely believed that disease was spread by the _____ not the germs and bacteria contained in the sewage and waste.

Some people used cesspits – deep holes under or near their house or waste just ran into the streets after it was thrown out of _____. 'Night soil' men would collect the waste in carts and take the contents to _____, to be ploughed into the soil as _____.

From the 1850s on, richer people started buying the new water closets, or WCs, for their homes. But this didn't help with the existing way that waste was disposed of - the contents of the new loos still went into a hole in the _____ or ended up untreated back in the _____.

It was only after the 'Great Stink' from the _____ in the hot summer of 1858 that parliament finally did something. They asked Joseph Bazalgette, Chief Engineer of the Metropolitan Board of Works, to come up with a solution.

Bazalgette's brilliant solution was to build a network of interconnecting pipes _____. You can see here his original designs. Notice the egg-shaped construction which creates turbulence as the wastewater passes through the narrowed section, which helps breakdown the solids. The new _____ took the wastewater directly to the Thames Estuary, far away from where most people lived.

Work began soon after on _____'s sewerage network, using Bazalgette's egg-shaped design. It ran under the centre of town and then out to _____. Similar projects to provide a network of sewers in other towns and cities also began.

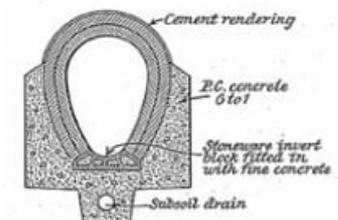


FIG. 5.—Section of Egg-shaped Sewer, showing use of Invert Block and Subsoil Drain.

Our Victorian sewer systems are still in use today. But now we treat the _____ making sure it is safe to be returned to the environment to become part of the water _____ again.

Smell...farms ... fertiliser ...cholera ... underground ... sewers... Brighton...
Thames... sea...sewage... windows...ground...cycle...rivers

