



Dealing with problems in private drains

Information and choices for customers

Visit our website at
➤ [southernwater.co.uk/
problems-in-private-drains](https://southernwater.co.uk/problems-in-private-drains)

 Southern
Water

Key steps to dealing with a blockage in your drain

1. Contact us to find out if the problem is in a public or private drain

2. If Southern Water is not sure where the blockage is we will come along to investigate


3. We will offer to try and clear the blockage, if we can do so quickly - within 30 minutes

First response ...

- When we receive a call about a problem, we will try our best to establish if it is in a public or private pipe by asking you some specific questions.
- If, together, we still can't find the root cause of the problem, we will visit your property to investigate.
- If the blockage is found to be on the private drain, we offer to try and clear it if we can do so quickly - within 30 mins of arriving.
- We will ask you to sign a consent form to allow us to work on your private drain before we start any work.
- If this is the first time we have been called to your property, we will not charge you. If, however, this is a repeat visit and the blockage is found in the same place we may have to charge you. We'll explain all the options before we make the visit.

More work required ...

- If the problem is more complex and will take longer to resolve, you have the right to choose a contractor to carry out the work.
- We recommend obtaining several quotations before work starts.
- You will find a selection of drainage companies by checking local business directories, referring to websites or checking with trade associations.
- Links to some of the best-known online business directories are available at: southernwater.co.uk/problems-in-private-drains - please click on Local drainage contractors.
- We will do what we can to help, but we cannot advise about the detailed extent of the work, nor provide any recommendation or endorsement for services to fix it.
- You may have home insurance that covers you for work to your drains. If you do please talk to your insurance company and also mention it to the drainage



4. We will ask you to sign a consent form to allow us to work on your drain



6. If we can not clear the blockage you will need to engage a private contractor



5. We will try and clear the blockage

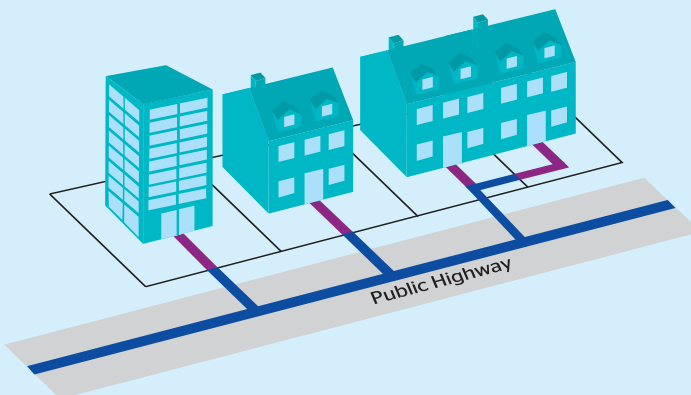
contractor you are talking to, as they are often able to carry out work for you and make the claim on your behalf.

Private Contractors Work

● If a private contractor attends and highlights there is an issue on a shared section of the sewer, do not pay for the contractor to undertake work, please contact Southern Water and we will carry out the necessary work

● Private contractors are not authorised to work on public sewers, under no circumstances should a contractor carry out work on the sections shown in blue in the diagram. Southern Water will always attend to issues on the shared section and carry out the necessary work to maintain the sewer network.

Who owns what?



Private drains are owned by the property owner and maintenance remains their responsibility

Public sewer and lateral drains are the responsibility of Southern Water

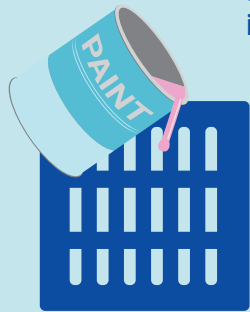
Property boundary

Protect your home

Kitchen



- Pour excess fat into a container and dispose of it in the bin – not down the sink
- More than 55% of all sewer flooding is caused by the build up of fat, oil and grease in pipes.



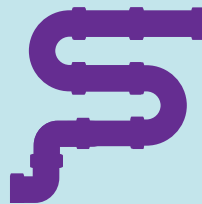
Drains

Motor oil, paint and other waste must never be poured into drains as many flow into rivers and coastal waters.

Bathroom



- Only flush the **three Ps** – pee, poo and paper
- Items such as wipes, sanitary products, nappies and cotton pads or buds should go in the bin as they can cause blockages.



Check your connections

Appliances such as washing machines – and even toilets – can be connected to the wrong pipes, meaning untreated water drains directly into rivers and coastal waters. Visit connectright.org.uk for advice on checking your connections.

For further information contact:

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