

catch on any small imperfection in the pipe. Ideally, bathroom and kitchen waste items should be **'bagged and binned'**.

Who is Responsible?

Remember, on a private sewer, owners / occupiers are responsible from the point of connection to the junction with the public sewer. Therefore everyone connected upstream of the blockage or problem has a joint responsibility to keep the sewer flowing freely.

Options Available

1. One of the persons affected can organise the clearance and payment.
2. The Council offers rodding for a charge, provided someone will agree to pay for the charge prior to the rodding.
3. Statutory Notices can be served on all those connected upstream of the problem. These notices allow the persons affected 48 hours to arrange for the clearance themselves. If the persons affected would prefer for the Council to arrange the clearance, ignore the Statutory Notices. After the 48 hour period has elapsed, the Council will employ a jetting service vehicle to clear the blockage and will arrange for the payment of the jetting company. The persons affected will then be invoiced an equal amount to cover the costs incurred, plus a charge for Council Officer time.

Environmental Health

For further information or a request for service please contact the Environmental Health Business Unit at :

Warwick District Council

PO Box 2176
Riverside House
Milverton Hill
Royal Leamington Spa
CV32 5QF.

Tel : (01926) 456734

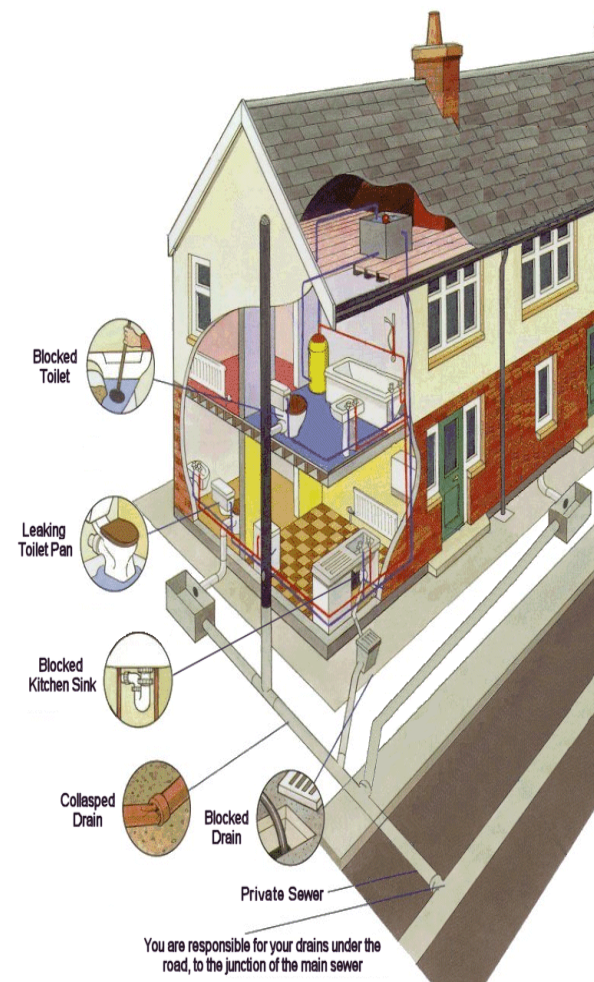
Fax : (01926) 456746

Website : www.warwickdc.gov.uk

Email : ehpollution@warwickdc.gov.uk

DRAINS & SEWERS

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS & RESPONSIBILITIES



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Environmental Health

Environment Protection
Division



WHAT IS A DRAIN? WHAT IS A SEWER?

Drains and sewers serve all properties and are never given a thought until something goes wrong. Only when there is a foul smell in the area, the toilet will not flush, or worse still, sewage is flowing over the garden, are they considered.

1. What is a Drain?

A drain is an underground pipe that drains a single property.

If the pipe runs from the property and joins a public sewer system directly, it remains a drain until it joins the public sewer.

If the pipe runs along and joins a neighbour's drain it is a drain up to that point.

A drain is always private and therefore the responsibility of the owners / occupiers of the property.

2. What is a Sewer?

A sewer is a pipe that serves more than one property.

As above, when the drain joins a neighbouring drain, it then becomes a sewer.

A sewer can be either private or public.

OWNERSHIP & RESPONSIBILITY

Who owns drains and sewers and who is responsible for them, is not widely understood.

Public Sewers

Public sewers are (usually) larger diameter sewers that often run in the highway or across fields picking up private sewers along the way. These are the responsibility of the relevant Water Company, namely Severn Trent Water Ltd. in this area.

Section 24 Sewers

These are a special category of sewer and are public sewers provided they meet certain conditions. There must be more than one property connected to the sewer, the properties must have been occupied prior to 1st October 1937, and must have been in separate ownership at that time.

Should you suspect that there is a problem with a Public Sewer then Severn Trent Water Ltd. should be contacted. Their emergency number is 0800 783 4444.

Private Sewers

All other sewers are private and are the responsibility of those persons connected.

The house furthest away from the public sewer, is responsible for its drain until the second house joins, then both properties become responsible for the next section and so on until the sewer joins the public sewer.

NOTE - the sewer will remain private until it joins the public system, even if the pipe runs under fields, roads or other people's land, and remains the responsibility of those connected.

PROBLEMS & ANSWERS

Environmental Health have officers who have wide ranging experience and knowledge of sewerage systems and the problems that can occur.

Smells

Sewage smells - these should not be in the home or even obviously present in the surrounding area. If there is a strong smell, this could indicate a fault on the system. In these cases contact Environmental Health for advice.

Blockages

From time to time sewers can block, but with care this can be made a rare occurrence. Large amounts of fat,

cooking oil, food waste such as rice can become a major nuisance especially in combination with debris such as nappy liners and sanitary towels which can