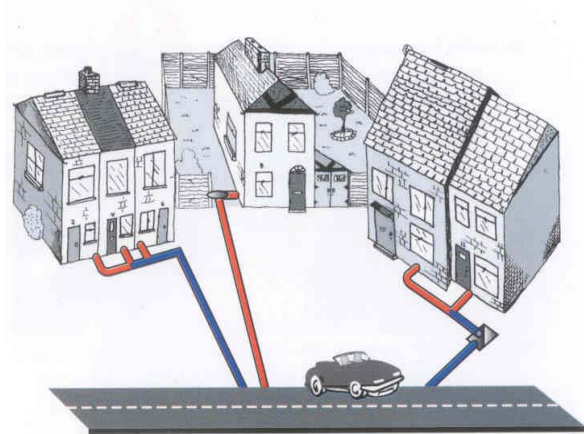


## BLOCKED DRAINS AND SEWERS:

The information on this page will help you decide who may be responsible for a blocked drain or sewer and what to do about it.

This picture is reproduced with the kind permission of Birmingham City Council. Sewage travels from your home in a series of pipes which are either called drains or sewers.



The lines in red are called **drains** and are pipes that take sewage from one building. The lines in blue are called **sewers** because they take sewage from a number of buildings in combination.

If a **drain** is blocked or defective then the owner or occupier of the building is responsible for the repair. In some cases landlords rather than tenants bear the responsibility for drainage from premises. Normally this is determined by the tenancy agreement. If you rent your home then you should discuss this with your landlord as soon as possible. If you are a Southampton City Council tenant then please report the problem to Repairline on 0800 5 19 19 19.

There are two types of sewer; **private sewers** and **public sewers**.

**Public sewers** are the responsibility of the Water Authority (Southern Water Services in the Southampton area.) These are normally the main sewers often found running under the road or to the rear of houses. If your house was built **before 1937** then the sewer will almost certainly be a **public sewer**. Report the problem to Southern Water Services on 0845 278 0845. For further information about Southern Water Services follow the external link on the previous page.

**Private sewers** are the responsibility of the owners or occupiers of all the premises drained by that sewer. If your house was built **after 1937** then the sewer will probably be a **private sewer**. (There are a few sewers that have been adopted by the Water Authority, you can check by calling Southern Water.)

Environmental Health can become involved in these situations and would normally serve notices on the relevant householders to ensure that the work is carried out. Normally the householders upstream of the defect would share responsibility to put things right if a problem occurs. The notices give a period of time for the repair to be carried out. At the end of this time period, if the householders have not already done so, the council will carry out works in

default of the notices. Reasonable costs are then recovered from the persons responsible in fair proportions.

If you have a problem to report and are in any doubt about whom you should be contacting to resolve it, please call the Public Health Team for advice on 023 8083 2531. We may investigate it ourselves or point you towards someone else who will.