

# First time sewerage

Your questions answered

Wessex Water has started work on designing a sewerage system to be built in your area.

As a householder you will be given the option to connect to the new system.

This leaflet is designed to answer the most commonly asked questions you may have about the proposed sewerage system and the implications of connecting to it.

## The following terms are used in this leaflet:

- **infrastructure charge** – a standard charge payable by each householder on connection to the public sewerage system. This fee contributes towards the cost of upgrading our sewerage network to meet the increased demand created by new connections. The current infrastructure charge can be found on our website: [www.wessexwater.co.uk](http://www.wessexwater.co.uk)
- **connection charge** – the cost of the physical connection
- **requisition** – a formal legal request for Wessex Water to provide the service which enables us to serve legal notices to complete the work for you
- **lateral** – the drain serving your house. It runs from your property boundary to the public sewer
- **adoption** – where Wessex Water takes ownership and responsibility for the sewer.



**Wessex  
Water**  
a YTL company

# Your questions answered

## Why is Wessex Water building a first time sewerage scheme in my area?

We received a request for a first time sewerage scheme to be provided in your area. Following an appraisal, we have decided a new sewerage system is the most appropriate way to resolve the long standing problem of pollution and health hazards arising from the unsatisfactory disposal of sewage from private sewers and drains in the area.

## Who pays for the new sewerage system?

Wessex Water will pay for the new sewerage system. If you choose to connect to the new sewerage system, you will be responsible for the following:

- payment of a deposit equivalent to the standard infrastructure charge – this is a one off payment
- the cost of altering your drainage to connect your property to the new lateral drain left for you at your boundary by Wessex Water. This cost will depend on your particular drainage layout. We advise you to get several quotations from reputable drainage contractors before you arrange this work
- the cost of meeting building regulations for the works involved in revising your private drainage. An approval fee will need to be paid to the local authority or other building inspection agency. This fee is set by them
- annual sewerage charges to Wessex Water – these vary according to individual properties.

## Does Wessex Water offer any incentives to connect?

Yes. We will construct and pay for up to 10 metres of the lateral between the public sewer and the boundary of your property. We will be responsible for the future maintenance of this lateral.

However, we will only carry out this work if you requisition the lateral from Wessex Water and before we begin the scheme pay a deposit which is equivalent to

the standard infrastructure charge. This is non-refundable unless the scheme does not go ahead. If you make your connection within 12 months of the scheme's completion, you will not have to pay any further infrastructure charge.

## If I do not take advantage of this incentive can I connect later?

Yes. On application you can connect to the sewer at any time in the future. However, you will be responsible for paying for the new lateral and access chambers needed up to the point where it connects with the main sewer – this is often under the road. You will be responsible for any future maintenance of this lateral unless an adoption application is made. You will also have to pay an infrastructure charge and connection charge to Wessex Water. You can still requisition from Wessex Water any lateral needed in the highway from Wessex Water but the work required will be fully recharged to you.

## Why are some sewers built under roads?

We have a long term duty to maintain public sewers. Although designed to need minimum maintenance, sewers block occasionally. Access is easiest when sewers are laid in roads. However, there are occasions where a route through open fields, gardens, or other private land is preferable so that existing drainage can be easily connected.

## Will you build the lateral for me if the sewer is not sited in the road?

Yes. If we lay the public sewer in private land other than your own, we will still lay and pay for a lateral to your property boundary, provided you requisition Wessex Water and pay a deposit equivalent to the infrastructure charge. However, you may have to make a contribution towards the cost of this if it is more than 10 metres long.

## What happens if the new public sewer is laid through my property?

If the most suitable route for the new sewer is through your private property, we will discuss this with you and issue a statutory notice to lay the sewer and compensate you appropriately. Once the sewer is laid, we will reinstate your garden to its former condition or better. If you wish to connect your drain to the new sewer, we will provide and mark a connection point for you in return for a deposit equivalent to the infrastructure charge, as detailed overleaf.

## Can I get financial help to carry out drainage works on my land?

Not normally, although it may be possible to get a renovation grant from your local authority if your existing system has a public health notice served on it stating that the system is unfit. For further information on grants, contact the housing advice centre at your local council.

## When can I connect to the public sewer?

Once the scheme is complete, we will send you a letter informing you that you can connect your drains, subject to the building inspector's approval. You will be required to complete a form giving us details of when you connected. Periodically we will carry out checks on the number of connections made to the sewer.

## Why are some nearby properties not given the option to connect?

It may not be possible to connect some outlying properties without an expensive pumped system which could put at risk the viability of the whole project. However, these properties may connect at their own expense if they wish.

## Can Wessex Water make me connect?

No. We cannot make you connect, but your local authority's environmental health department can take legal action if your private drainage arrangements are causing a public health nuisance.

## What are the benefits of connecting?

The benefits of connecting to a mains sewerage system include:

- a potential increase in the value of your property
- it is often easier to sell a property connected to mains drainage
- you will no longer have to empty a septic tank or cesspit
- there is minimal maintenance involved
- there should be no more problems with smells
- environmental improvements such as a reduction in pollution incidents and health hazards associated with leaks from septic tanks or cess pits.

## How can I find out more?

If you require more information or have any questions about first time sewerage, please contact:

Development Engineers

Developer Services

Wessex Water

Claverton Down

Bath BA2 7WW

**Telephone:** 01225 526 000

**Website:** [www.wessexwater.co.uk/developerservices](http://www.wessexwater.co.uk/developerservices)

You can contact Wessex Water on the following numbers which are charged at local rates. All calls to these numbers are recorded to ensure that we always give you a quality service.

Call 0845 600 3 600 for:

- queries relating to your bill
- change of address
- meter readings.

Call 0845 600 4 600 for:

- emergencies
- other non billing enquiries
- literature.

