

The guidance in this document is subject to ongoing review and updates.

Developers are responsible for ensuring they consult and apply the most current version available at the time of use. The advice below is intended to support the preparation of well-informed assessments and submissions. It does not constitute a definitive or exhaustive response and should not be relied upon in place of formal advice or determinations.

Please note that any formal advice or detailed guidance issued upon request is subject to resource availability and may not always be immediately accessible.

## 1 Is Wessex Water my supplier?

If you are unsure if you are in the Wessex Water area, [please use the Water UK finder tool](#).

You can get a copy of our network maps via our free online service.

## 2 What type of application do I need?

If you are unsure which application you need, please take a look at our list of services:

### I am a homeowner/single-property developer

- Single household applications will not require capacity assessments.
- I need a [water connection](#) to the public water main.
- I need a [sewer connection](#) to the public sewer network.
- I need guidance on [building over/near a public sewer](#).
- I need guidance on [building over/near a public water main](#).
- I want to apply for a [sewer requisition](#).
- I want to apply for a [sewer diversion](#).

### I am a larger developer

- I need a [new water main](#).
- I would like [self-lay](#) information.
- I want to offer [new or existing sewers for adoption](#).
- I want to [alter / divert a public sewer](#).
- I need a [diversion / disconnection of a public water main](#).
- I need to [permanently or temporarily disconnect an existing water supply](#).
- I need to [requisition a public sewer](#).
- I need [pre-planning/capacity assessment](#) (Single household applications will not require capacity assessments).

### I am a self-lay provider (SLP)

- I would like [self-lay](#) information.

### I am a New Appointments and Variations (NAV) company

- I need [NAV](#) information.

### I am developing a commercial property

- I need information for developing [commercial property](#).

### I am developing a block of flats

- I need information for developing a [block of flats](#).
- [Water Pressure](#) - On-site private storage and pump systems will be required for buildings more than two storeys high. No guarantee can be given on a specific pressure or on maintaining that pressure.

### Other relevant information

- What is your position on [nutrient neutrality](#) for new development?
- I need [something else](#) not covered by the above.

### 3 Who is responsible for my property's pipes?

#### Water

- [Information on water pipe responsibility.](#)

#### Sewerage

- [Information on public and private sewers.](#)

### 4 What are your levels of service?

[Water UK sets the minimum levels of service](#) that all water companies must meet when providing a range of essential services for new developments. These outline the deliverables for each service and the timeframes within which we are expected to complete the work.

### 5 What is a site location plan and a site layout plan?

For most Developer Services applications, you will need to provide a site location plan and, in some cases, a site layout plan, so we can determine the location of your site and what is already there. You should also check the [Planning Portal](#) for more guidance on the plans that should be submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authority. Doing so will allow you to align the plans required for Wessex Water and the Local Planning Authority at an early stage.

#### Site location plan

A site location plan shows where your property or site is in relation to the surrounding area. It should include a clearly defined red line boundary, street/road names, other nearby properties, a north arrow and the scale (typically 1:1250 or 1:2500 for larger sites).

#### Site layout plan

A site layout plan includes more detail about the layout of the site, including existing and proposed roads, buildings, ground levels and any existing water/sewerage network assets that you're aware of, which may affect your proposals.

Our requirements for site location plans and site layout plans depend on the type of application you're making. These requirements are laid out in the relevant application form.

### 6 What do I need to consider as part of my proposal?

Proposed developments should not interfere with Wessex Water assets. Use the [map of our assets](#) to see the position of existing assets in relation to your proposed development layout.

If your development is in the vicinity of our services, then standoff and protection measures around our services must be adhered to. [Please review the information](#) when preparing your proposal.

Standoff requirements are considered on a site-by-site basis please contact Planning Liaison on: [planning.liaison@wessexwater.co.uk](mailto:planning.liaison@wessexwater.co.uk)

### 7 What is an odour and fly zone, and when do I need an odour assessment?

New homes close to Wessex Water's operational sites could be vulnerable to odour and noise nuisance from our apparatus and operational activities. Wessex Water identifies Odour and Fly Buffer Zones around Water Recycling Centres (WRC). If the proposed development falls within the odour or fly consultation zone for a WRC, users of the development may be susceptible to nuisance from odour or flies. Therefore, an odour and fly assessment must be in place to ensure the amenity values of future residents. The developer should contact the Wessex Water planning liaison team to discuss our policy and procedures for odour and fly assessment. The applicant's odour consultant will be required to work with our odour scientist in preparing their odour model and report.

- For more information, please visit our [website](#).

## 8 What do I do about surface water discharge from my site?

Wessex Water [rain water policy](#) emphasises that discharging rainwater into foul or combined sewers is unacceptable, as it leads to pollution and reduced capacity for future developments. Our policy requires all new developments to manage rainwater sustainably at source or via local watercourses, aligning with government guidelines to protect the environment and existing infrastructure.

### National Surface Water Discharge Guidance

All developments are required to follow the Surface Water Discharge Hierarchy.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) mandates that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) must be incorporated into new developments to manage surface water runoff, mitigate flood risks, and provide additional benefits, including enhanced water quality and green spaces. Surface water must be disposed of via the SuDS Hierarchy, which is subject to Building Regulations and National Planning Policy Statement.

No surface water runoff, land drainage or groundwater will be accepted into a public sewer that carries sewage, either directly or indirectly.

In line with the drainage hierarchy outlined in [Approved Document H](#) of the Building Regulations, Planning Practice Guidance, and the necessity to address water scarcity, all surface water runoff should aim to be discharged as high up the following hierarchy as feasible:

- Rainwater reuse through harvesting or greywater recycling
- An adequate soakaway or other infiltration system
- Discharge to the above ground surface water body (eg, an ordinary watercourse) (Non technical standards for SuDS)
- Discharge to a watercourse (including culverted watercourse) (Building Regulations)
- Discharge to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or other drainage.

**Note:** To utilise a lesser priority final destination, appropriate evidence shall be provided that demonstrates all higher priority final destinations have been utilised to the maximum extent practicable. Higher cost alone shall not be a reason to utilise lower-priority final destinations.

### What is your policy on surface water discharge, and why has it changed?

In line with the updated Wessex Water Surface Water Management Policy, new developments may not connect surface water pipes into foul sewers or combined sewers.

Our starting position on the management of surface water through our infrastructure assets is that Wessex Water will not accept any new surface water connections to our foul or combined sewers network. Once in the combined or foul sewer network, surface water incurs unnecessary pumping and treatment costs that do not represent value to our existing customers.

This also gives rise to water quality problems that may be caused through sewer flooding and/or increased spills to the water environment as a consequence of more intense rainfall. It is estimated that the peak surface water flow from a single house plot is typically equivalent to the peak foul flow from 100 single house plots.

Surface water can be more sustainably treated above ground, often in conjunction with other existing surface waters, in a way that contributes to flood risk management, placemaking, and biodiversity.

### Can I drain land drainage into your network?

Wessex Water has no statutory obligation to drain land drainage and does not accept land drainage discharging into our public sewer network. Land drainage must be managed privately and directed to an appropriate alternative outfall.

## 9 Where can I find more information on SuDS?

Please ensure you have reviewed the guidance below on SuDS before contacting Wessex Water.

- [Tools for SuDS design | UK SuDS](#)
- [Susdrain - The community for sustainable drainage](#)
- [sudsguide.pdf](#)
- [Ciria guidance](#)

## 10 How do I deal with foul water from my development?

You must first contact your local water and sewerage company (if you are in the Wessex Water area, it will be us) to determine if connection to a public foul sewer is possible and reasonable. If connection to a public sewer is not possible or reasonable, you may install a private sewage treatment system (like a septic tank or treatment plant). For any non-public sewer discharge, you'll need to comply with the [Environment Agency's General Binding Rules](#) and may need a [discharge permit](#). Ensure you have [Building Regulations approval](#) and consult your local planning authority for any additional planning requirements.

Some useful information can be found below:

- [Sewer Connection Quick Guide](#)
- [Guidance Notes](#)
- [Pumping Station Septicity](#)
- [Confined Spaces](#)

## 11 What is your policy on the size-for-size connection for foul water discharge?

The point of connection to the public foul network is by application and agreement with Wessex Water. Wessex Water will accommodate domestic-type foul flows in the public foul sewer, with connections made on a size-for-size basis. The developer is liable to fund the cost of connecting to the nearest 'size-for-size' sewer, and Wessex Water will manage the sewer network to accommodate foul flows from granted development. We fund this through our infrastructure charging arrangements.

The size-for-size connection will be determined by the number of dwellings you are proposing. Please refer to the table below:

Foul sewers		
Pipe diameter (mm)	Discharge (litres/second)	Max no. of dwellings based on diameter
100	5.0**	10
150	10.7	231
225	24.0	518
300	42.6	921
375	66.6	1,439
450	96.0	2,073
525	130.5	2,820
600	170.7	3,687

The developer should contact the local development team by emailing [development.north@wessexwater.co.uk](mailto:development.north@wessexwater.co.uk), to agree on proposals for the Section 104 adoption or Section 106 connection and submit details for technical review before construction.

We will not accept foul connections from below ground level; foul flows from below ground level must be pumped to ground level before connection to the public foul sewer. Separated systems of drainage are required: Wessex Water will not accept surface water or land drainage flows to the public foul sewer and treatment works, either directly or indirectly.

You should check our [network mapping](#) to determine what services are available around your development proposals.

## 12 Why can't I discharge surface water into the foul sewer?

### What is surface water?

Surface water is the rainwater that runs off roofs, roads and paved areas into the public sewerage system.

### What is a combined sewer?

Historically, foul sewage generated from within properties (i.e., toilets, baths, sinks, etc.) has been mixed with surface water in a single pipe (combined sewer). Heavy rainfall results in increased runoff from roofs and surfaces, leading to more water [entering the sewer network](#), which can cause storm overflows to operate automatically. If this rainwater is captured before it enters the sewers, it could reduce the frequency of their operation. As such, it is recognised best practice to separate foul sewage from surface water.

Foul sewage is now drained and treated separately via foul sewers, pumping stations and wastewater treatment works. Surface water is now drained and treated separately via surface water sewers and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), ultimately returning it to the water environment.

It's important to note that it is unlawful to discharge foul water into a surface water drainage system where public sewers have been set up separately for foul water and surface water, as outlined in Section 109 of the Water Industry Act 1991.

### 13 How do I deal with trade effluent?

For trade effluent queries: please email: [trade.effluent@wessexwater.co.uk](mailto:trade.effluent@wessexwater.co.uk)

### 14 My development includes a swimming pool. Are there any requirements I need to be aware of?

Water in swimming pools contains chlorine, which helps keep swimmers safe from bacterial infection. Still, as chlorine is a bleach, it is very damaging to the flora and fauna in the wider environment. Swimming pools must not be drained to a river, lake, pond, surface water sewer or any other watercourse, including a ditch or highway drain.

#### Can I drain my swimming pool into your network?

Swimming pools can be drained to a foul sewer; it's the safest place for it. Wessex Water must be informed of any swimming pools being drained by emailing: [sewer.protection@wessexwater.co.uk](mailto:sewer.protection@wessexwater.co.uk) with the following information:

- The date you plan to start draining.
- A contact number, so the drainage can be stopped if problems occur in the sewers.
- A flow rate of 1 l/s is suitable for most sewers. If you require a higher rate, please request it first.

There may be conditions imposed, such as the time of day or in the event of wet weather at some sites to prevent flooding (overnight drainage is preferred). The pool should be left to stand for three to five days without chlorination to allow the dissolved chlorine to disperse before being discharged to a foul sewer.

#### How do I deal with back-wash water?

Back-wash water must always be drained or pumped to a foul sewer. Volumes are low, so they do not normally affect sewer capacity, provided the flow rate does not exceed 1 litre per second. However, you must take steps to limit the free chlorine concentration to a maximum of 2 mg/l so that you do not put sewerage staff at risk. You should also retain a plan of the drainage system to the foul sewer, as this will be required to be produced should there be a need to investigate any pollution events.

### 15 Do you do all the pipe laying and connection work?

No, it's important to know that when it comes to water and sewerage works.

Some work must be done by Wessex Water. This includes anything that could compromise the integrity of our existing networks and the public supply if done by anyone else.

Some work must be done by a [competent contractor](#). For example, you need to hire a competent contractor to lay a water supply pipe inside the boundary of your property. You must also hire a competent contractor to lay new sewers or replace existing ones, or to make new sewer connections, either on private or public land.

Some work can be done by either Wessex Water or a competent contractor. For example, you can hire an accredited self-lay provider (SLP) to install a new water main and water connections to serve a development, subject to our acceptance. You can also approach us directly to install the new main and connections.

Please be aware that no connections should be made to the public water or sewer networks without Wessex Water's approval. If the work you're planning crosses into third-party land, you'll also need to get the consent of the affected landowner before starting the works.

## 16 What is the Water Industry Act, and why is it important?

[The Water Industry Act 1991](#) is a UK legislation that outlines our duties to you regarding water supply and sewerage. Most of the services we provide as a water company are governed by the Act, including our Developer Services, and that's why we sometimes reference important sections of it.

Here's a list of sections of the Act that directly relate to Developer Services:

### Water

- [Section 41: water main requisition.](#)
- [Section 45: water connections to the public water main.](#)
- [Section 51A: adoption of new water mains under a self-lay agreement.](#)
- [Section 62: permanent disconnection of a water supply.](#)
- [Section 185: water main diversions.](#)

### Sewerage

- [Section 98: sewer requisition.](#)
- [Section 101A: first-time sewerage.](#)
- [Section 102: adoption of existing sewers.](#)
- [Section 104: adoption of new sewers.](#)
- [Section 106: sewer connections.](#)
- Section 115: highway drainage connections.
- Section 116: sewer closure.
- [Section 185: sewer diversions.](#)

## 17 Where can I find your Charges?

### [Our charges](#)

#### [New Connections Charges Calculator](#)

Where a new water connection and a new sewer connection are made by two separate companies, connections charges will be payable to both companies.

For all other enquiries please [contact us](#).