

**Guidance notes and procedure**

These guidance notes will assist you in completing a new sewer adoption application. You should read the notes in conjunction with the Water Industry Act 1991. The relevant section is Section 102 - adoption of existing sewers.

**What is a public sewer?**

Most sewers that are shared by more than one property or lateral drains (pipe outside the property boundary but only serving one unit) are public, and will be owned and maintained by Wessex Water. There are some exceptions. The only sewers that remain private are those that:

- Only serve a single property within that property boundary
- Are maintained privately as part of a documented property management scheme
- Do not connect directly to the public system, for example some surface water systems that flow directly to a culvert, watercourse or soakaway.

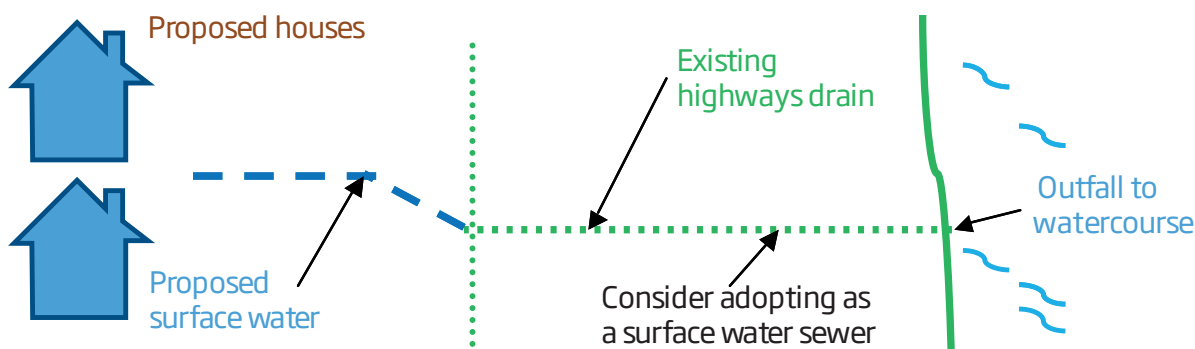
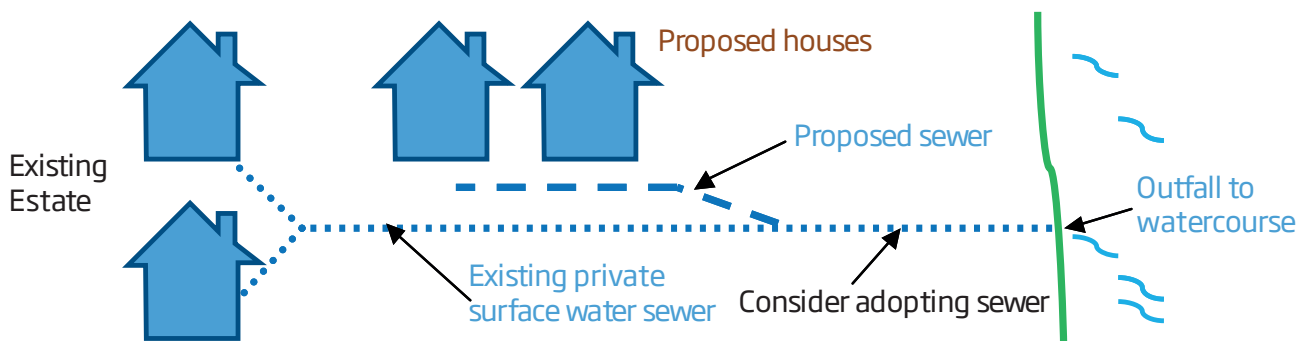
**Can I connect to a private sewer?**

You do not have a right to connect to a private sewer; it needs to be by negotiation with the owner of that system.

**Can Wessex Water adopt a private system?**

Yes we can consider adopting a privately owned system so that it becomes part of the public network. The Act requires that we 'have regard to all the circumstances of the case' and 'consider the method of construction and state of repair of the sewer or works.' When we adopt a sewer, we are then responsible for future maintenance, improvements and agreeing any connections to it.

For instance, it may be beneficial for a developer to ask us to consider adopting an existing private sewer or highways drain so they can apply for a connection.



## What do I need to do?

### Step 1 Submit your application

Please complete the application form. Send it, along with relevant information, to the local Developer Services office. Contact details are at the end of these notes.

### Step 2 Application acknowledgement

We will acknowledge if the application is complete or incomplete. We will ask for further information if necessary.

### Step 3 Application complete and fixed fee payment

We will confirm when your application is complete, i.e. is there sufficient information for us to review.

### Step 4 Survey and inspection

You need to provide details to locate the sewer and prove it is in an adoptable condition. You should arrange high pressure jetting to pre-cleanse the sewer, followed by a camera survey.

We will give you contact details for our local site inspector. We will carry out a manhole inspection, and witness air testing (where appropriate). You will need to provide labour to lift the manhole covers and arrange for access or any traffic management.

### Step 5 Review

We will review the information and will advise if any repairs are necessary.

### Step 6 Adoption

When we confirm that the sewer/asset is an acceptable standard, we will serve a formal notice on the current owners and interested parties. If no objection is raised within a two month appeal period, we will vest the sewers. The sewer is then added to our records and maintained in the future as public.

## What information do I need to provide?

- Location plan
- Third party land ownership details (if known)
- Any relevant information relating to third parties
- Layout plan showing sewer and manhole locations
- Pumping station details (if applicable)
- Cover and invert levels, pipe material details and gradients
- CCTV survey report and DVD
- Confirmation of discharge consent with the riparian owner if a surface water sewer outfalls to a watercourse
- Any other relevant information

## What details are reviewed?

We will review the CCTV survey and manhole inspection report, along with other relevant information listed below:

- The pipe diameter must be 100mm minimum.
- Building proximity to the sewer. Is it built over? Is there adequate clearance for access?
- Route should be in the highway, or publically accessible.
- Is the sewer be needed for future development?
- What else is connected?
- There must be at least two properties connected
- Pitch fibre pipes are not acceptable
- Is the sewer in good condition?
- Who currently owns the system and are all owners in agreement with the adoption request?
- Do you know the discharge consent?
- Is the request simply to pass a known or ongoing problem to Wessex Water?
- Are the downstream sewers already public?

Pumping stations can be expensive to bring up to an acceptable condition. They need an extensive review, including assessment for telemetry installation and septicity checks. We can provide more information when you apply.

### How much will it cost?

Please refer to our Developer services charging arrangements.  
You will be responsible for the cost of any remedial work identified.

### Who will carry out the site inspection?

You will need to arrange testing and inspection with our site inspector. We will give you their contact details.

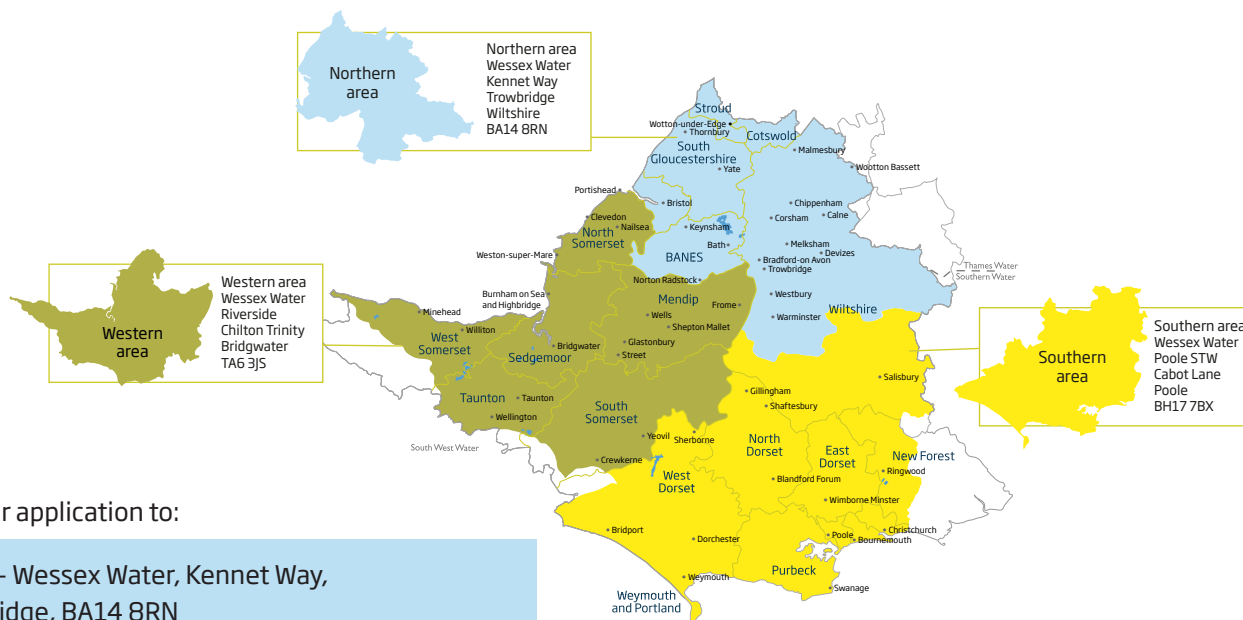
### What happens if the sewer is in poor condition?

If the system is not in an adoptable state, Wessex Water will identify remedial repairs required to bring it up to an appropriate condition. You will be responsible for carrying out the works at your cost, followed by a further inspection and survey to confirm completion.

If remedial repairs cannot be agreed, the adoption is formally rejected and we will provide reasons.

### What can I do if I disagree with the decision?

If you are not satisfied with our decision then you should first discuss it with the local Developer Services team. If we cannot agree a solution, then you may use the formal Wessex Water complaint system or contact OFWAT for a ruling.



Send your application to:

**North** - Wessex Water, Kennet Way,  
Trowbridge, BA14 8RN  
Tel 01225 522 682  
Email [development.north@wessexwater.co.uk](mailto:development.north@wessexwater.co.uk)

**South** - Wessex Water, Poole, STW, Cabot Lane,  
Poole, BH17 7BX  
Tel: 01202 643 461  
Email [development.south@wessexwater.co.uk](mailto:development.south@wessexwater.co.uk)

**West** - Wessex Water, Riverside, Chilton Trinity,  
Bridgwater, TA6 3JS  
Tel 01823 225 225  
Email [development.west@wessexwater.co.uk](mailto:development.west@wessexwater.co.uk)