

Drainage and sewage maintenance advice

South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City

The drainage systems in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City include a range of different features, from watercourses to sewers, both public and private. This guide explains the roles and responsibilities of the wide range of bodies responsible for maintaining different elements of the drainage systems within the area, helping residents and stakeholders know who to contact for specific drainage issues.

Private property

Your council's Health and Environmental Services can insist that the property owner maintains the drainage within their landowner curtilage. This could include anything from underground drains and sewers to surface water features like ditches and streams and soakaways.

If you live in South Cambridgeshire

Please contact South Cambridgeshire Council
Tel: 01954 713 000
8am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday.

If you live in Cambridge City

Contact Cambridge City Council
Tel: 01223 457 000
9am to 5.15pm, Monday to Friday.

Council property / land

Your council's Housing Services will fix any serious drainage problem including open watercourse maintenance on land or at properties they own. This could include anything from underground drains and sewers to surface water features like ditches and streams and soakaways.

If you live in South Cambridgeshire

Please contact South Cambridgeshire Council
Tel: 01954 713 000
8am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday.

If you live in Cambridge City

Please contact Cambridge City Council
Tel: 01223 457 000
9am to 5.15pm, Monday to Friday.

Public mains sewerage system



Inspection covers like this are often found on the highway.

Anglian Water is responsible for the upkeep and any problems with foul and surface water drains

and sewage. This includes issues with toilets not being able to be flushed during significant rainfall events. Any issues should be reported directly to them.

**You can call 03457 145 145
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

Highway drainage (roads & footways)



These highway drainage features are often referred to as 'gullies'.

Cambridgeshire County Council Highways team is responsible for maintaining road

drainage systems to reduce the risk of standing water on roads and footways. If a surface water drain (gully) is blocked, please report this to:

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults



Land drainage - Ditches

Open watercourses are often referred to as ditches, drains, dykes etc.

Land drainage is usually the responsibility of the nearest landowner. In some rare cases it may be that the watercourse maintenance has been passed onto South Cambridgeshire District Council or Cambridge City Council as a landowner or as an 'awarded watercourse responsibility'.

Where a watercourse is alongside a road, between fields or alongside a property it is usually the nearest landowner's responsibility to maintain them (these are called ordinary watercourses). The landowner is referred to as a 'riparian' owner. Additional information can be sought from Cambridgeshire County Council flood and water team on riparian responsibilities.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water/watercourse-management

If you live in South Cambridgeshire

Awarded watercourses are a network of important drainage ditches throughout the district for which South Cambridgeshire District Council are responsible for the maintaining. If you are not sure if a ditch is an awarded watercourse, please contact Health and Environmental Services and ask for the Drainage Manager: streets@scambs.gov.uk

If you live in Cambridge City

Awarded watercourses are a network of important drainage ditches throughout the city for which Cambridge City Council are responsible for the maintaining. If you are not sure if a ditch is an awarded watercourse, please contact Customer Services
Tel: 01223 457 000 and request the Sustainable Drainage Engineer
or email: SUDS@cambridge.gov.uk

Works or changes to or near to a watercourse

You must seek permission from Cambridgeshire County Council flood and water team for any works or changes to or near a watercourse, the required permission is called an 'ordinary watercourse consent'.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water/watercourse-management/ordinary-watercourse-consent

If your plans involve connecting to one of the council's awarded watercourses a bye-law consent may also be required.

If you live in South Cambridgeshire

Please email South Cambridgeshire Council: streets@scambs.gov.uk

If you live in Cambridge City

Contact Cambridge City Council
Tel: 01223 457 000
9am to 5.15pm, Monday to Friday.

Flooding to property or land

If you experience flooding to your property or to your land, this should be reported to Cambridgeshire County Council's Flood and Water team for them to investigate. Depending on whether the flood incident meets certain criteria for investigation, the Flood and Water team may produce a report on the incident and speak with you directly regarding their findings.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water/report-a-flood

Pollution in a watercourse

Pollution in a watercourse or to land should be reported the Environment Agency:

www.gov.uk/report-an-environmental-incident

**You can also call them on 0800 80 70 60
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

Sandbags

If you live in South Cambridgeshire

South Cambridgeshire Council does not provide a sandbag service to residents. Generally, it is the responsibility of residents to protect their own properties from flooding. However, they do have a limited supply of sandbags that can be delivered to domestic properties that are at imminent risk of flooding only, and not as a preventative measure days or hours in advance of potential flooding (maximum of 5 per household to ensure fairness of provision). By this, we don't mean if there's a weather warning in place for your area for a given day; we mean if the water is rising by a front door.

This is aimed at our most vulnerable residents and only intended for people who have no friends, family or neighbours who can assist them fast enough or in advance. If a resident has had previous flooding, or flooding is forecast, they need to have done all they can to obtain sandbags themselves.

Inside normal office hours

Please contact South Cambridgeshire Council
Email: streets@scambs.gov.uk
Tel: 01954 713 000
8am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday.

Outside of normal office hours

If it is outside of normal office hours and an emergency (inline with the above policy) then please contact South Cambridgeshire District Council's out of hours number for Environmental Health Emergencies Tel: 01253 501 055

If you live in Cambridge City

Cambridge City Council does not provide a sandbag service to residents. Generally, it is the responsibility of residents to protect their own properties from flooding. Whilst we do have a limited supply of sandbags that can be deployed in serious flood events, supply is usually coordinated through the flood incident response role where the Environment Agency or other emergency services are requesting assistance.

Main Rivers

Main rivers and some smaller tributaries are the responsibility of the Environment Agency. In South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City this will typically be watercourses such as the Granta / River Cam, River Great Ouse, Beck Brook, Washpit Brook, Bourn, Oakington and Bin Brook.

All Environment Agency responsibilities can be viewed on their Statutory Main River Map:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency

You can also call them on:
0800 80 70 60
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Other important drainage bodies

Internal Drainage Boards (known as IDB's) are very important drainage authorities. These are particularly found in the north of the South Cambridgeshire District. IDB's carry out important drainage functions including maintenance and pumping functions. You can see if you are in an IDB area on this website:

www.ada.org.uk/idb-map/



www.greatercambridgeplanning.org