

Drainage and Flooding FAQs

When it rains it takes a while for the water to flow down the drain, it must be blocked.

The metal grids you see alongside the road allow water to be collected. This water is then taken away in pipes to local rivers or into large 'soakaways' where it will gradually seep away into the surrounding ground.

During or following periods of heavy or prolonged rainfall the water takes longer to seep away; this does not necessarily mean the drain is blocked; it could be due to the sheer volume of rainfall and the current saturation levels of the surrounding ground.

Who is responsible for the road drains and when are the drains cleared?

Essex County Council (ECC) Highways only deals with surface water drainage on the roads and pavements it is responsible for on the publicly maintainable highway. All highway drains are cleansed at least once every year but where ECC have known flooding issues we do try to cleanse them more often.

Whilst ECC are cleaning the drains they also capture data which will enable ECC to clean them in a more efficient manner in the future. This will take into account the drain's location; if it is an area that is prone to flooding and how much debris was removed.

I live near a river which often floods the surrounding area, who is responsible for this?

Essex County Council Highways only deals with surface water drainage on the roads and pavements it is responsible for on the publicly maintainable highway. The flooding of rivers, streams and coastal areas is the responsibility of the [Environment Agency](#).

There is a ditch outside my house, who is responsible for clearing this?

Private land owners are responsible for the drainage from their land and have a duty to ensure drainage and roadside ditches adjacent to land are kept clear to ensure roads and pavements do not become flooded. This is called Riparian Landownership. More details on riparian responsibilities can be found on the gov.uk website at the following [link](#).

How can I report a blocked drain?

If the drain is on highway land you can report this directly to Essex County Council on their website via their [report a problem](#) page.

Further information on flooding

ECC's Flood and Water Management Team have produced an informative video which explains the cause and effect of local flooding in an interesting and factual way. To view the video [click here](#).