



Solihull
METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Brief Guide to Flooding

A brief guide to flooding

This leaflet provides an overview of the different types of flooding that may be experienced in the borough. This is not an exhaustive list and will not go into location-specific details. Queries of this nature should be directed to: drainage@solihull.gov.uk where one of our team will be happy to assist.

Fluvial flooding

This is any incident where a river, brook, stream, or other watercourse is unable to contain the amount of water flowing through it.

It is important to note the differences between a main river – e.g. the River Blythe – and ordinary watercourses, which can simply be a stream or ditch. Main rivers are usually under the jurisdiction of the Environment Agency.

Full details of the overall responsibility for each are contained within our Roles and Responsibilities leaflet.

Surface water

Surface water flooding usually occurs after periods of intense rainfall as a result of the water being unable to sink into the ground. When this happens, it sits on the surface, creating ponding or flows.

Flooding of this nature is difficult to predict, and the onsets can be very rapid. More often found in urban areas, this is the same mechanism that causes agricultural run off as described below.



Groundwater

Groundwater flooding is when the water table rises above the surface.

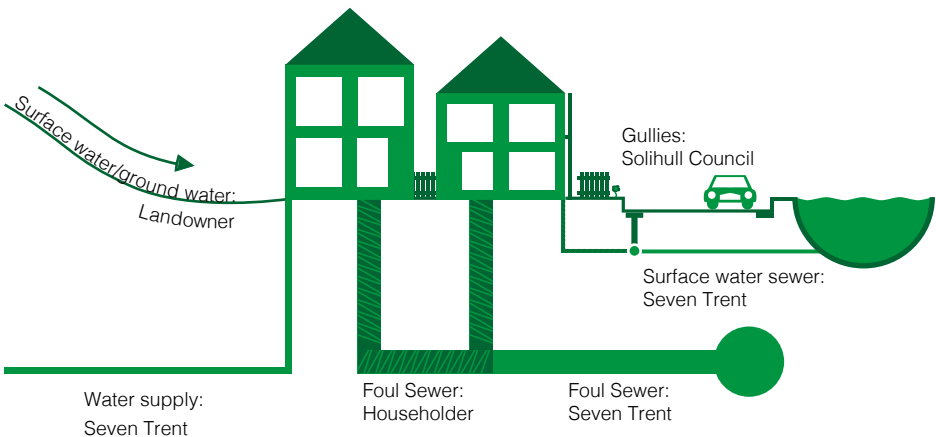
This normally happens after a prolonged period of rainfall and can take some time to subside. External areas such as gardens, within parts of the borough where land elevation is lower, can experience groundwater flooding.

Agricultural run-off

Surface water can sometimes run-off from surrounding land and into homes or businesses, causing issues for properties and highways.

This is a particular problem at the time of year after crops have been harvested and when soil becomes compacted and unable to absorb much water.

This is a normal and accepted process, however, if it seems the land is not being managed in a way that minimises run-off, or if a property is being flooded repeatedly, the first step should be to contact the landowner and see if this can be resolved. They may not be aware of the issue and an easy solution might be found.



Artificial sources

Both reservoirs and canals are man-made areas where water is collected and stored for use. If a reservoir floods (usually due to dam failure) then large areas are often affected.

In Solihull, there are few reservoirs but there are some close enough that could affect areas of the borough if they flooded. Although reservoir flooding often has a huge impact, it is extremely rare, and reservoirs are regulated under the Reservoirs Act 1975. This act is enforced by the Environment Agency.

Sewers

Sewer flooding happens when a network of pipes that convey waste water become blocked or simply overloaded due to an excessive amount of water.

This can often result in gullies backing up and flooding out onto the highway. Although this may appear to be an issue with the gully, it could be that the gully is functioning, and it is the sewer that needs cleaning.

If you would like to know more or have had an incident of flooding, please contact Solihull Council and one of our flood risk team will be happy to help

drainage@solihull.gov.uk

0121 704 8000