



GUIDANCE NOTE FOR LAND OWNERS

CONDITIONS APPLYING TO WATER MAINS & ACCESSORIES (‘relevant pipes’) IN PRIVATE LAND

Background

This guidance note has been produced to assist Landowners’ understanding of what activities may and should not be undertaken within **‘the Sterilised Area’*** required to protect a water main and the access rights to and along the line of the pipe* (* Section 3 (52) of the Code). This note is supplemental to Bristol Water’s **Code of Practice: Pipelaying and Other Works (the “Code”)**.

The following is an extract from the relevant section of the Code:

Section 3 Clause 52 (Information) of the Code

“To avoid damage to the pipe and to allow us access we will give you information on any activities which should not be carried out without our express permission in that area. This will include planting certain types of trees or erecting buildings but will not prevent normal agricultural operations”.

The pipe that has been placed in your land is vested in Bristol Water (the “Company”) and has been laid in accordance with the Water Industry Act 1991 (the “Act”) (and/or in accordance with a Deed of Grant of Easement). Under the Act, the Company benefits from the right of access onto Land to inspect, maintain, repair, replace, alter, and renew a relevant pipe. Listed below are details of uses and works that you can and cannot do within the Sterilised Area.

1. Sterilised Area

The Sterilised Area is generally measured from the centre line of the pipe or from the outside of the pipe. (The table below confirms the total sterilised width).

Pipe Size (Diameter)	Up to 169mm	170mm to 299mm	300mm to 449mm	450mm to 649mm	650mm+
	< 6"	6" to 12"	12" to 18"	18" to 26"	>26"
Sterilised Area	5 metres	6 metres	8 metres	10 metres	12 metres

2. Plan

The approximate route for a relevant pipe is recorded on our GIS mapping data. You may find enclosed with the accompanying letter a copy of a plan recording the pipe route. This is for information purposes only. Please contact us if you need a Plan.

3. Activities that may be undertaken within the Sterilised Area:

- Normal agricultural operations/use, garden use or for open space.
- Erect fences over the line of pipe that are easily removable **provided** the fence posts are not installed directly over or into the line of the pipe.
- Lay sewers, drains, pipes, cables, or wires **provided** you first consult us.
- Construct a street, road/access track across the Sterilised Area **provided** you first consult us.
- Plant a hedgerow either for screening or to indicate a field boundary. Please only plant blackthorn/quick thorn, Elder, Hazel or Privet hardwood species across the pipe.



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4. Activities that should not be undertaken within the Sterilised Area:

- Erection / construction of foundations, walls, buildings, or other structures whether temporary or permanent.
- Use the land for any purpose that may cause damage to the pipe.
- Remove any soil that supports the pipe.
- Alter, lower, or increase the ground level along the pipe.
- Make access to the pipe difficult or expensive to the Company.
- Piling operations.
- Tree planting.
- Temporary storage of materials or other items (including farmyard manure (contamination hazard)) that may obstruct access to or pose a hazard to the water main, an accessory and/or water supplies.

The above list is a guide only and not exhaustive. If you are unsure, please contact us.

5. Trees and Shrubs

- Note: Roots can cause damage to pipes.
- Ash, Beech, Elm, Horse Chestnut, Lime, Oak, Sycamore, Fruit trees and most Conifers may only be planted as individual specimens, or a single row, in an area at least 6 (six) metres clear of a pipe. Woodland planting may be carried out at a distance greater than 10 (ten) metres from a pipe. Poplar and Willow may not be planted within 10 (ten) metres of a pipe.

6. Notice timescales

In the future event that the Company requires entry onto your Land to inspect, maintain, repair, replace or alter its pipe and/or accessories, it may do so by providing the Notice (either in writing or in certain occasions with verbal contact):

- Immediate Entry (Emergency): If we need access due to a burst/leak we will use reasonable measures to contact you before taking entry unless we are responding to an emergency incident when customers have or at risk of no water.
- 7-day notice: To inspect/survey a pipe and/or accessory.
- 21 days’ notice: To lay a new water pipe or install a new connection subject to a requisition.
- 42 days’ notice: To alter and/or replace an existing water pipe and/or accessory.
- 3 months’ notice: To construct and lay a new water pipe including accessories.

7. Contact Us:

If you are considering any works within the Sterilised Area and/or need to apply for a pipe diversion** (**Section 185 of the Act), please contact us at:

- Development Services, Bristol Water, Bridgwater Road, Bristol BS13 7AT
- Telephone: 0845 702 3797
- Email: development.services@bristolwater.co.uk
- Website: www.bristolwater.co.uk