

Unblocking a toilet

As we all know, accidents can happen and we can flush things down the loo which were never designed to be flushed down a toilet. Any sort of solid item sent down the toilet pan is likely to cause blockage to your drain and also to the public drain.

Items to avoid putting down the toilet include:

- Fats, oils or grease from cooking
- Leftover food
- Toilet bowl fresheners
- Excessive paper towels
- Disposable nappies / baby wipes
- Feminine hygiene products
- Solvents and paints

These items can become lodged in the private drainage systems (the part of the drainage system between your home and the public sewer) which is sometimes formed of narrow pipework and bends.

WC blockages are more than an inconvenience; they are also a health and safety issue because raw sewage that has been backing up in the drain can overflow into your home. In the event of this happening, the blockage must be attended to immediately with the affected areas fully sanitised to avoid the risk of infection.



What to do when a blockage occurs?

If you notice an overflow from your WC, if possible put on a pair of rubber gloves and eye protection to avoid contamination.

- Where possible, place down some old newspapers or towels that you don't mind throwing away, around the WC.
- If the pan is already about to overflow, then remove some of the water, again into a container you don't mind throwing away after use.
- Pour some boiling water slowly down the WC as this may sometimes dislodge fats and grease and then check to see if the water drains away.
- If the water does not drain then it is time to get the plunger out.

If the item is soft - push the plunger to the bottom of the WC pan and push up and down which should help in forcing the water through to dislodge the clogging item. Do this around 10/15 times and then flush the toilet to see if this has shifted the blockage. You may have to repeat this process a few times to bring the WC back to full working order.

If you have tried the above but are unable to unblock the toilet, then call the Hexagon repairs line. Please note that the time frame for attending blocked toilets is 5 days (for toilets that will not flush but where its possible to flush the toilet with a bucket of water) or 24 hours if the toilet is completely blocked.

