

Case: 201102297, Scottish Water
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: sewer flooding - external
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

There was significant flooding in Mr C's area in July 2011. Mr C considered that, on a particular day that month, the cause of the flooding was a blockage in a Scottish Water sewer. He complained that Scottish Water had not maintained their sewer system adequately. He considered that Scottish Water should be required to proactively monitor the system by inspecting their entire network of pipe work to ensure blockages did not occur. He considered that that a failure to do so led to the flooding of his local sewer on that day in July 2011, because it was blocked.

We explained to Mr C that Scottish Water do not have any obligation to monitor their sewer network in the way he suggested. Therefore, we did not uphold the complaint. Nevertheless, we did consider what had caused the flooding in July. Our investigation revealed that there had been severe thunderstorms locally on the day in question, with torrential rain which caused extensive flooding in many parts of the area.

Scottish Water said that, following the flood, they had used CCTV cameras to check for any blockage but had only found the normal debris which is naturally and unavoidably present in many sewers. Although this debris was not causing a blockage, Scottish Water did clear the debris. All the evidence, therefore, pointed to the cause of the flooding as being the rain, rather than any blockage or anything that proactive monitoring could have prevented.