

hatch

You will need an emptying hatch for each chamber.

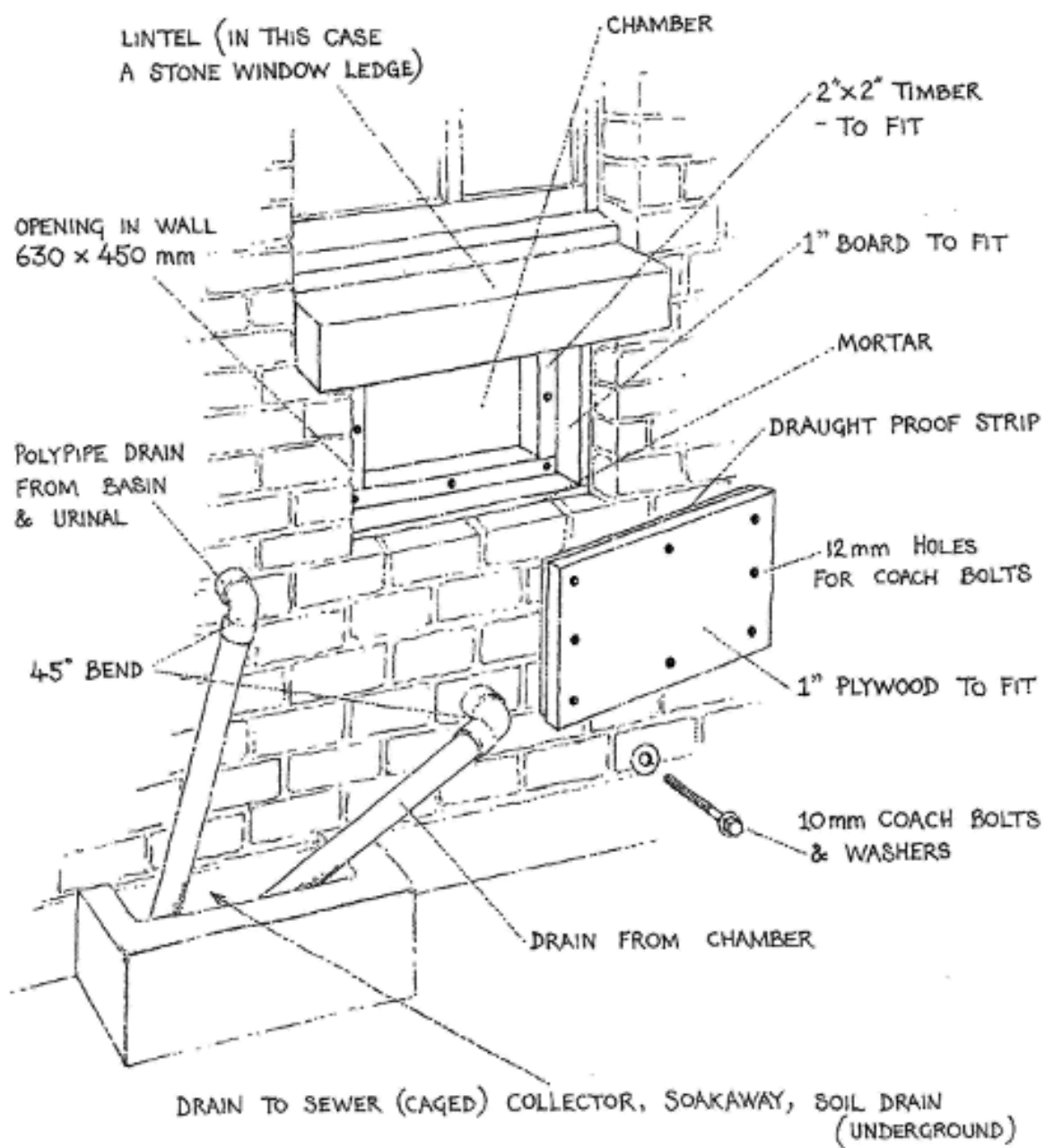
If the wall you're putting the hatch through is brick, then you'll need to mark it, then put a few holes around the perimeter with an SDS drill with masonry bit, then knock out the rest with a lump hammer and bolster. The hatch doesn't have to be enormous – just enough to get a long-handled shovel in to empty it.

you will have to insert a pre-stressed concrete lintel above the hole for the hatch, otherwise the bricks above may collapse when they are no longer supported from below.

Then cut some timber to provide a frame for the hatch. This will involve timber the same width as the thickness of the wall, and then narrower but thicker pieces inside to fix the hatch to. Mortar any gaps between the frame and the wall, then coat with bituminous paint on the inside surfaces only (see Chambers).



A hole has been knocked through the external wall for the hatch; coach-screws fix the hatch to the frame. The hatch can be removed, and the chamber emptied into a wheelbarrow with a long-handled shovel. The inside of the hatch is painted with bituminous paint to stop it rotting.



Plan for the construction of the hatch for one of the chambers.

Then measure and cut some timber for the removable hatch itself. Drill holes around the outside for 8 coach screws (screws with a hexagon head for a spanner), then mark the frame and pre-drill to take the coach screws. Paint the inside surface of the hatch with bituminous paint, allow to dry, then put a line of draughtproof strip around the outside to seal it. Paint the frame and hatch (with eco-paints, naturally), allow to dry, then fix the hatch to the frame with the coach screws.

Some books say that you need a grille / zinc gauze on the hatch, or an air brick somewhere on the chamber (leading to the outside). But, we've found that there are several problems with this:

- Icy draughts from the toilet in winter – not very comfortable.
- It cools the pile down, and slows decomposition.
- It allows light in and means that you can see what's going on in the chamber – not a very good idea.
- A grille maybe, and an air brick definitely, will allow flies into the chamber; no-one wants to see flies escaping when they open the toilet lid.