



Household charges for the supply of water and wastewater services

Household Charges Scheme 2026-27

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Thames Water Utilities Limited (TWUL)
Published date: 29 May 2026
Effective date: 1 April 2026
Version 2.0

Revision history

Date	Version	Changes
29 January 2026	1.0	Publication
29 May 2026	2.0	Added FAQ to clause 3.6 and corrected description of Block 2 on Table 8 (Smart Saver tariff, Volumetric charges)

1 Introduction

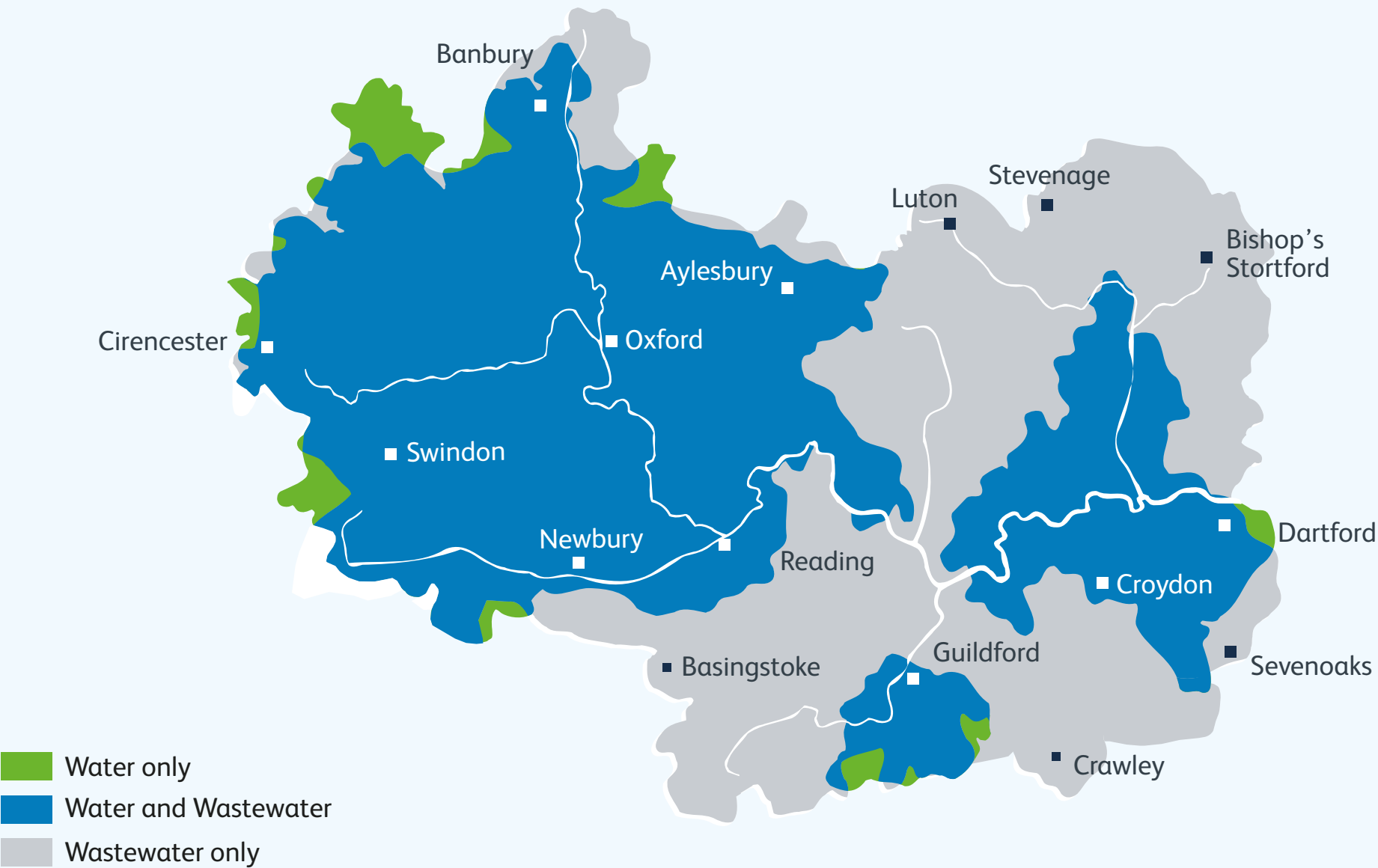
This document sets out the charges for the water and wastewater services we provide to your household property.

- 1.1 This is Thames Water’s Household Charges Scheme for the charging year 2026-27, made under Sections 142 and 143 of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended), which gives us the power to fix charges and to demand and recover charges for services we provide. You do not have a contract or agreement with us for the services we provide.
- 1.2 This Charges Scheme sets out our charges from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 for water and wastewater services provided to household properties and for other services provided in the course of carrying out our statutory functions. It explains how the charges are calculated, how we apply them and how and when you need to pay us. The charges themselves are listed as tariffs in the Charges Schedule in section 12.
- 1.3 There may be charges which are not set out in this Charges Scheme, that we may apply if we provide you with water and/or wastewater services or facilities to comply with a statutory order, direction, undertaking, determination, or similar obligation.
- 1.4 Where the water supply to your property is provided by another water company and we provide just the wastewater services, then only the parts in this Charges Scheme relating to wastewater services will apply to you. The charges for your water supply will be set out in your water company’s Charges Scheme. If your water company transfers you on to a different water supply tariff, then the tariff for your wastewater will also be transferred to the equivalent tariff. If we provide just the water services to your property, then only the parts in this Charges Scheme relating to water services will apply to you. If we provide water and wastewater services to your property, then the whole of this Charges Scheme will apply to you.



2 The Thames Water region

- 2.1 We serve 16 million customers across London and the Thames Valley. We are planning ahead to make sure we have enough water in the future, as the South East of England is one of the driest regions in the UK. Our supplies are being stretched further as the number of people living in our area increases, and the choices we make today will shape the water supply we provide in the future.
- 2.2 We provide both water and wastewater services to households in the blue area of the map below, including areas such as Oxford, Reading, Guildford and much of London.
- 2.3 If your property is in the grey area of the map – including Bishop’s Stortford, Basingstoke and Crawley – you receive wastewater services from us and water services from a separate water company. They bill you for both services, including billing for your wastewater services on our behalf.
- 2.4 If your property is in the green area of the map, you receive water services from us and wastewater services from a separate water company. We will bill you for both services, including billing you for your wastewater services on the other company’s behalf. The exceptions are those areas on Southern Water’s border, where you will receive two bills: one from Southern Water for the water services and another from us for the wastewater services, or vice versa.
- 2.5 If you are moving home and want to check if the property is in our supply area, you can visit thameswater.co.uk/movinghome to carry out a postcode search. If you want to check which charges apply, contact us using the details on the next page.





3 How to contact us

- 3.1 If you have a specific enquiry, please visit thameswater.co.uk/contactus for advice. You can also contact us via Facebook and X (Twitter), or by calling us on the following numbers:
- Operational enquiries: 0800 316 9800
 - Billing enquiries: 0800 980 8800
 - Extra care services: 0800 009 3652
- 3.2 If your hearing or speech is impaired, you can contact us using Relay UK – see relayuk.bt.com
- 3.3 If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, you can find more information about our complaints procedure at thameswater.co.uk/complaints, or call us and request a copy.
- 3.4 CCW is an independent body that acts as the voice for water consumers. For free independent advice visit ccwater.org.uk, call 0300 034 2222 or write to CCW – the voice for water consumers, 23 Stephenson Street, Birmingham B2 4BH.
- 3.5 Our regulator Ofwat can deal with certain issues – for more information see ofwat.gov.uk
- 3.6 Below we have added a section on [Frequently Asked Questions](#) to make it easier for you to find answers to the most common questions about your water bill.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to pay water service charges if my premises are empty?

If your property is empty and unfurnished, you do not need to pay water and wastewater service charges. We may carry out checks at certain times to make sure the property is empty and unfurnished. Please let us know if the situation changes and the property becomes occupied.

If your property is furnished, water and wastewater service charges are payable in full and you must have an account. A property is only classed as unfurnished where there is nothing in the property except for white goods such as washing machines, fridges and freezers.

If your property is being renovated and the cost is under £250,000 (regardless of whether you are living at the property or not), water and wastewater charges are payable in full and you must have an account.

If your property is being renovated and the cost is over £250,000, contact us on 0800 009 3921 for further information.

Would having a water meter installed save me money?

If you don't have a water meter, applying for one is quick and easy. Once you apply for a meter, we'll arrange a survey to check whether a meter can be fitted at your home.

For many customers, having a meter can work out cheaper because you only pay for the water you use.

If you already have a meter, using water more efficiently - or fixing things like a leaking toilet - can help reduce your bill. Check out our [water-saving tips](#) for more ways you can make serious savings.

Please note that if you are in an area where we are rolling out (or have already rolled out) our Compulsory Metering Programme, you will not be able to go back to your unmeasured charges.

Can Thames Water force me to have a meter fitted?

Yes – our region is classified as being in an area of serious water-stress. The Water Industry Act 1991 enables water companies to meter properties in areas of serious water stress.

We are currently rolling out a Compulsory Metering Programme across our region, installing Smart Meters where possible; this is known as the Progressive Metering Programme.

I don't want a meter, but I live alone. Can I be moved to the Single Occupier charge?

No – the Single Occupier Charge is part of our Assessed Household Charge Tariff and can only be applied where we have tried to install and it is not possible to fit a meter. thameswater.co.uk/ahc

I have moved into a house with a water meter. Can I receive my bills with unmeasured charges instead?

No – where a meter has been installed at a property you cannot ask to be charged on an unmeasured charge instead.

Can I change my rateable value?

No – Rateable Values were set by the valuation office at the Inland Revenue. With the introduction of the Community Charge (Poll Tax), since replaced by Council Tax, Rateable Values are no longer reviewed. Since 1990, all new properties have to be billed based on a meter and no new Rateable Values are issued.

What do I need to do if I have altered my premises?

Any new or converted property since 1 April 1990 must be charged on a water meter.

If you have converted a property you must apply for new supplies to be laid so that each property can be billed separately – contact us on 0800 009 3921.

If your property is being renovated/altered (not converted) and the cost is under £250,000 (regardless of whether you are living at the property or not), water and wastewater charges are payable in full and you must have an account.

If your property is being renovated/altered and the cost is over £250,000, contact us on 0800 009 3921 for further information.

Will I be charged if I have a leak?

If you arrange repair within four weeks, you may be eligible to claim the cost of the lost water. Terms and conditions apply – for more information visit our website thameswater.co.uk/leaksathome

If you're on a water meter, we'll compare how much water you've used in the past against the amount recorded while you had the leak.

If there are not enough past meter reads available to do this, we'll base the leak allowance amount on the typical water use for a similar household.

What are surface water and highway drainage charges?

These charges cover the cost of removing rainwater that falls on your premises (surface water) and removing rain from roads and public footpaths (highway drainage). If your premises are not connected to the public sewer for removing rainwater, and you can provide evidence, you do not need to pay the surface water part of these charges. All customers with a connection to our wastewater network need to pay highway drainage charges.

I have a meter but my last few bills have been estimated.

Do I have to pay them?

Yes – Where we have not been able to obtain a Meter Reading we will issue an estimated bill. We will calculate your charges based on estimated usage using historical meter readings at your property. If this data is not available, or does not cover a long enough period, we will use any other relevant information as a method to calculate your estimated usage.

If we have sent you an estimated bill and you then provide your own meter reading, we will recalculate your charges and send you a revised bill –

thameswater.co.uk/meter

I live in a rented property so why have you sent me a bill in my name?

Liability for the payment of water and wastewater service charges is with the occupier(s) of the property. Unless your Landlord sends us written confirmation that they take responsibility for the payment of the charges, bills will be issued in the name of the person residing at the property.

4 Liability for paying charges

This section sets out who is liable for paying us for water and/or wastewater services, and under what circumstances.

4.1 Who is liable for paying charges?

- 4.1.1 The occupier of a property will be liable for paying the charges.
- 4.1.2 Where a property is rented and a tenant occupies the property, the tenant will be liable for paying the charges, regardless of any terms and conditions to the contrary contained in a tenancy agreement made between the tenant and their landlord.
- 4.1.3 Where two or more people are occupying a property, then each occupier will be jointly and severally liable for paying the charges – i.e., we can recover all the charges for the property from all or any one of the occupiers.
- 4.1.4 Where a property is divided into bed-sitting rooms with communal facilities, and the owner occupies the property, the owner of the property is liable for paying the charges.
- 4.1.5 Where a property is used (whether formally or informally) as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), the person who is responsible for the property and collects rent from the occupiers, such as an HMO Manager, owner or landlord, may be liable for the charges.
- 4.1.6 Where we have existing arrangements in place for local authority and housing association landlords to collect the charges from their tenants on our behalf, our services are provided to the tenants as the occupiers of a property and the tenant is responsible for paying their landlord the charges.
- 4.1.7 Where we have entered into a billing agreement with a third party such as a landlord or management company, the third party will be liable for paying the charges for services provided to a property.

4.1.8 Where a billing agreement has not been made but a third party is authorised to collect charges from the occupier and pay the bill on the occupier’s behalf, our services are provided to the occupier of the property and liability for the charges will remain with the occupier.

4.2 Liability for paying the charges when the occupier moves out

- 4.2.1 If you pay metered charges, you must give us at least two working days’ notice before you move out – meaning the date on which you will no longer be the occupier of the property, otherwise we may continue to hold you liable for paying the charges until the earliest of the following:
 - 28 days after you give us notice;
 - the date of the next scheduled meter reading; or
 - the date when any other person tells us they are the new occupier.
- 4.2.2 If you pay unmetered charges and move out after paying your charges for the billing period, we will refund or credit your account for the charges covering the period when you have left the property. We will do this by calculating the charge per day on a pro rata basis.

4.3 Back-billing of charges

- 4.3.1 If we identify that we have not billed you for all or part of your water and/or wastewater charges, we may back-bill you for those charges. In most cases, this may be up to a maximum of six years from the date we became aware that we had not billed you, in line with the Limitation Act 1980. Longer periods may apply depending on the circumstances. In doing so, we will apply the tariffs (including all fixed and variable charges) set out in the Charges Schemes for the relevant year/s.
- 4.3.2 If you have asked us to fit a water meter at your property, or we have given you notice that we will fit one compulsorily, and we then

discover that you have not been billed for all or part of the water/ wastewater charges for any billing period before the meter was installed, then if we are unable to back-bill charges on an unmetered basis, we may back-bill charges based on an estimate of the volume of water supplied.

4.4 Disconnection of water supply

- 4.4.1 Where you give us written notice that from a specified date you no longer require a water supply to the property you occupy, you will not be liable for the water charges after that date.

4.5 Insolvency

- 4.5.1 If you enter into any type of formal insolvency procedure, such as bankruptcy, individual voluntary arrangement or debt relief order, we will calculate any charges you owe on a daily basis up to the day that the relevant insolvency procedure takes effect (‘the insolvency date’). These charges will be managed in line with the relevant insolvency procedure.
- 4.5.2 Charges that apply after the insolvency date will not be included in the insolvency procedure. This means that you, as the occupier of the property, will be responsible for paying the charges that apply from the next day after the insolvency date.

4.6 Water for firefighting purposes

- 4.6.1 We will not charge for water used for the purpose of firefighting, testing firefighting equipment or training persons for firefighting, in accordance with Section 147(1) of the Water Industry Act 1991.
- 4.6.2 We will not charge for the discharge of water into the sewer network, which has been used for firefighting purposes.

5 Unmetered charges

This section explains how we calculate the charges for each water supply and/or for wastewater services provided if your property does not have a water meter for charging purposes.

If we just provide your property with wastewater services, we will calculate your wastewater charges on an equivalent basis to the unmetered water charges applied by your water company.

- a) We will base unmetered charges on one of the following, which will be indicated on your bill:
 - rateable value charge
 - notional value charge
 - assessed household charge
- b) We will then add a fixed charge, as described in 5.4 on the next page, and make any deductions if you have successfully applied for either a surface water drainage rebate or a wastewater abatement (explained in the [‘Further adjustments to your bill’](#) section).
- c) Finally, we will apply any further adjustments we have agreed to make if you have spoken to us about having difficulty paying.

5.1 The rateable value charge

- 5.1.1 We will calculate your charges based on your property’s rateable value.
- 5.1.2 Rateable values were created by the Government, based on their assessment of how much properties could be let for. They considered

factors like the size and condition of a house and the availability of local services.

- 5.1.3 We multiply the rateable value of your property by the rate per pound for water and wastewater. This is the amount, in pence, we charge for each pound of your property’s rateable value. There is one rate per pound for water and another for wastewater returned to our sewers. We divide this total by 365 to work out your charge per day and then multiply it by the number of days in your billing period.
- 5.1.4 The rates vary depending on the charging area your property is located in. The rates for each charging area are set out in the Charges Schedule. An area is determined by us and the charges that apply to each area reflect both the difference in the average use of water and/or wastewater services for various properties and the broad variations in rateable value for similar properties across our supply region. We set the water and wastewater rates to make sure that customers living in similar properties pay approximately the same amount for their water and wastewater services.

- 5.1.5 The Government froze rateable values in 1990, so we use values from the rating valuation list as at 31 March 1990.

5.2 The notional value charge

- 5.2.1 Where we cannot apply the rateable value charge to your property for any of the reasons below, we will decide a notional value for your property. This will apply where the property:
 - a) had no rateable value at 31 March 1990;
 - b) has been created since 31 March 1990, by dividing one or more properties, merging two or more properties, or has been developed so that the property floor space is at least 50 per

cent more than it was previously; or

- c) has a rateable value of less than £50, which is not representative of other similar properties in the rating valuation list.
- 5.2.2 We will decide a notional rateable value by referring to the rateable values of similar properties within the same charging area, as included in the rating valuation list on 31 March 1990.
- 5.2.3 Once we have set a notional rateable value for your property, we will apply the rateable value charges as set out in 5.1.3 and 5.1.4 above.

5.3 The assessed household charge

- 5.3.1 If we supply your water and have been unable to install a meter at your property because it is not reasonably practicable to fit one or it would involve unreasonable expense, we will let you know in writing that we will apply the assessed household charge and when this will take effect. We will not apply the assessed household charge if the circumstances set out in 5.3.2 below apply.
- 5.3.2 If we supply your water and you have asked us to install a meter but we have been unable to fit one, we will not require you to pay the assessed household charge if this results in you paying more than on our rateable or notional value tariff. In this case, we will continue to charge you the rateable or notional value tariff but will charge any new occupiers moving into the property on the basis of the assessed household charge.
- 5.3.3 If we supply your water and have been unable to install a meter at your property as part of our compulsory metering programme, we will require you to pay the assessed household charge even if it is more than you were paying under the rateable value tariff.

5.3.4 Whether we provide just your water services, water and wastewater services, or just your wastewater services, our assessed household charge is based on an assessed consumption charge. We calculate this by multiplying the average water consumption of properties with the same number of bedrooms as yours, by the relevant rate per cubic metre. If you have told us the number of bedrooms in your property, we will base the assessed household charge on that information, unless you are a single occupier, in which case we apply a single occupier charge. If you have not told us the number of bedrooms or that you are a single occupier, we will apply the tariff for a three-bedroom property.

5.3.5 If you later tell us the number of bedrooms, or that you are a single occupier, we will amend the charge from the date we receive the information but will not backdate this.

5.3.6 A single occupier means one person only. A single parent with children at the same address will not be classed as a single occupier. The single occupier charge applies provided we have received satisfactory confirmation that there is only one occupier.

5.4 The fixed charge

5.4.1 Once we have calculated the relevant unmetered charge, we then add a fixed charge.

5.4.2 The fixed charge is made up of the following:

- A retail fixed charge which covers the cost of producing bills, processing payments, managing debt and answering queries;
- A wholesale water fixed charge which covers the cost of maintaining our water network; and
- A wholesale wastewater fixed charge which covers the cost of providing highway and surface water drainage services.

5.4.3 If either the rateable value or notional value charges apply, then the fixed charge will only apply if your property has a rateable/notional value of at least £50.

5.5 Common supplies

5.5.1 Where your property is one of a number of properties which share a common supply pipe, you will be responsible for paying the same water and/or wastewater charges as if you were supplied by a separate pipe.

5.6 Supplies to domestic garages, car spaces or store areas

5.6.1 If we provide water services or water and wastewater services to your garage, car space or store area through a separate supply, we will apply a single annual charge for each service, as shown in the Charges Schedule. If your garage, car space or store area is outside of the boundary of your property and does not have a separate water supply, then we will apply a wastewater charge. This charge will be a single annual charge if your garage, car space or store area is within our water supply area, or a rateable value annual charge in line with section 5.1 above if your garage, car space or store area is within the water supply area of another water company.



5.7 Using other water supplies

5.7.1 Where the property you occupy has no water supply, but you have the right to use the unmetered supply from another property, then you will be responsible for paying the unmetered charge for the property you occupy.

5.7.2 If you occupy more than one building where the buildings are not separated by a highway and not all the buildings have a water supply, then the buildings without a supply will be deemed to have the benefit of the water supplied to those that do. You will be responsible for paying unmetered charges based on the combined rateable value of all the buildings. We may exercise our discretion not to apply this method of calculation in specific circumstances.

5.8 Renovation/building works

5.8.1 If we supply your water and you are having building or renovation work done to your property and you are still occupying the property while the work is being carried out, you should let us know, as you may be using more water than normal.

5.8.2 You may be charged for the water used for the purposes of building or renovation works, in addition to the unmetered water/wastewater charges you are responsible for paying.

5.8.3 Where unmetered charges apply to your property, we will calculate these additional charges on the basis of the total contract value of the work. If the total value of your building/renovation work is up to £250,000 then we will not apply an additional charge, but your normal unmetered charges will apply. If the total value of your building/renovation work is over £250,000 then we will apply a separate charge of 0.17 % of the contract value.

6 Metered charges

This section explains how we calculate the charges for each water supply and/or for wastewater services provided if your property has a water meter for charging purposes.

If we just provide your property with wastewater services, we will calculate your wastewater charges using the consumption recorded by the water meter provided by your water company.

- a) Metered charges are the fairest way to pay because your bill is based on the amount of water you use and/or the wastewater services for your property. We will apply metered charges for a property if:
- there is already a meter used for charging purposes
 - you have asked us to install a meter
 - we compulsorily install a meter
 - there has been a change of occupation
 - there has never previously been a water supply connection
 - there is a large pond or swimming pool
 - there is a large bath
 - there is an automatic garden watering system
 - the principal use of the property is not as your home (such as residential homes for the elderly and similar properties)
- b) We will base metered charges on a volumetric charge, calculated as described in 6.1 below. We will then add a fixed charge, as described in 6.2 below, and make any deductions if you have successfully applied for either a surface water drainage rebate or a wastewater abatement (explained in the [‘Further adjustments to your bill’](#) section).

- c) Finally, we will apply any further adjustments we have agreed to make if you have spoken to us about having difficulty paying.

6.1 The volumetric charge

- 6.1.1 We calculate the volumetric charge by multiplying the volume of water you have used, or which we estimate you have used, by the rate per cubic metre (i.e., per 1,000 litres).
- 6.1.2 There is one rate for water and another rate for wastewater returned to our sewers. These rates are set out in table 2 of the Charges Schedule.
- 6.1.3 We bill the same volume for wastewater returned to our sewers as for water supplied. This is because our wastewater charges already assume that up to 10 per cent of water used is not returned to our sewers. Please see section 9.6 for further details on wastewater abatements.

6.2 The fixed charge

- 6.2.1 The fixed charge is split into the retail fixed charge, which covers the cost of producing bills, processing payments, managing debt and answering queries, and the wholesale fixed charge which covers the cost of providing highway and surface water drainage services.
- 6.2.2 The retail fixed charge is applied once per property but the wholesale fixed charge is applied once per pipe/meter supplying the property. Therefore, a property with two pipes/meters will be charged one retail fixed charge but two wholesale fixed charges.
- 6.2.3 There is a fixed charge for single properties with their own meter, and another for multiple properties with a bulk meter. If your property has a bulk meter, the fixed charge will depend on the size of the meter and will also include an additional fixed retail services charge, as shown in the Charges Schedule.

6.3 Liability for leakage

- 6.3.1 When we talk about charging you for the volume of water you use, we mean all the water recorded by the meter, including any water wasted as a result of leakage from your supply pipe.
- 6.3.2 Our leakage Code of Practice sets out our procedure on leakage including information about our leakage allowance. For more details on our leakage Code of Practice see thameswater.co.uk/leaks.

6.4 Reading the meter

- 6.4.1 We rely on meter readings as an accurate recording of how much water we should be charging you for.
- 6.4.2 The water meter will be either:
- a standard model, which is read by visiting the site of the meter or via a hand-held device from a nearby vehicle; or
 - a smart model, which can be read remotely if there is a signal transmission mast installed in your area.
- 6.4.3 If you pay us by instalments as part of a payment plan, we will use the meter readings to help recalculate your next plan once you reach the end of your current one.
- 6.4.4 If we supply your water, unless you have a smart meter fitted, we will read the meter at least once a year and as near as practicable to the same date each year.

6.5 Estimating your charges

- 6.5.1 If it has not been possible to read your meter for any reason, we will calculate your charges based on estimated usage using historical meter readings at your property. If this data is not available, or does not cover a long enough period, we will use any other relevant information as a method to calculate your estimated usage.
- 6.5.2 If we have sent you an estimated bill and you then provide your own meter reading, we will recalculate your charges and send you a new bill based on your meter reading.

6.6 Access to the meter

- 6.6.1 Where we provide you with a water supply, the water meter belongs to us and we are responsible for carrying out any metering works such as fitting, proving, reading, maintaining, repairing, replacing, disconnecting and removing the meter, and inspecting, examining or testing the meter, including carrying out surveys or tests required for any metering works. We will cover the cost for these metering works except where a meter is fitted for a new connection, or where we have incurred a cost because you have obstructed or covered the meter.
- 6.6.2 If the meter is within the boundary of your property, such as your driveway or garden, it is important that you do not cover or obstruct the meter in any way and that you allow us reasonable access to the meter so we can take a meter reading or carry out any necessary metering works.
- 6.6.3 If you deny us access to fit, read, maintain or replace the meter or carry out any necessary metering works at your property, we may transfer you to our no access charge until you provide us access.
- 6.6.4 If you receive your water supply from another water company and are transferred on to their ‘no access’ charge because you have denied them access in the way described in 6.6.3, we will transfer you on to our no access charge for wastewater charges.

- 6.6.5 The no access charge is a fixed annual charge as shown in the Charges Schedule, which may be more than what you would normally pay.
- 6.6.6 You must not remove, interfere with or damage the meter, as this is a criminal offence under Section 175 of the Water Industry Act 1991. If you are convicted of this offence, you could be ordered by the Magistrates Court to pay a fine.

6.7 Smart Saver

This section provides an explanation of how charges for water supply and wastewater services are calculated if your property is equipped with a smart water meter and you are participating in our Smart Saver Tariff trial, which uses a rising block model.

Structure of the Rising Block Model

- 6.7.1 The Smart Saver Tariff uses a rising block model. In this context, a ‘block’ refers to a specific volume range of water measured in cubic metres. Your total annual water consumption is divided into these defined blocks, with each block corresponding to a set number of cubic metres. Each subsequent block is charged at a higher unit rate than the previous one. This approach encourages water efficiency by applying increasing rates to higher usage levels.
- 6.7.2 We are planning to launch a two-year trial of the Smart Saver Tariff, using this rising block structure, during the 2026-27 charging year. The aim is to assess the potential benefits of a charging system that incentivises reduced water consumption.

Eligibility and Participation

- 6.7.3 If you have been selected to participate in the Smart Saver Tariff trial, you will be on the tariff for the entire duration of the trial. Participation is by invitation only: it is not possible to opt in if you have not been selected beforehand, and you cannot opt out if you have been chosen to take part.
- 6.7.4 If you are part of the Smart Saver Tariff trial, a smart water meter will already be installed at your property. Prior to the trial, you will have been charged according to our standard metered tariff.

Calculation of Charges

- 6.7.5 Metered charges under the Smart Saver Tariff using the rising block model will be based on a volumetric charge and a fixed charge as described below. Where applicable, deductions will be made if you have successfully applied for a surface water drainage rebate or a wastewater abatement.

The volumetric charge

- 6.7.6 Your volumetric charge is calculated by multiplying your water usage for each block by the corresponding rate per cubic metre for each block. The charges calculated for each block are then added together to give your total volumetric charge. The rising block model has three blocks:
- The first 50 cubic metres per year is charged at a lower rate,
 - The next 200 cubic metres (51–250) per year is charged at a slightly higher rate,
 - Any usage above 250 cubic metres per year is charged at a significantly higher rate.

6.7.7 Monthly bills are based on smart meter readings, with annual block limits divided by 12 for monthly thresholds. The actual volume of water that you have used each month will be compared to the monthly thresholds for each block to calculate your bill for that month.

6.7.8 Separate rates apply for water and wastewater, as listed in table 8 of the Charges Schedule. We bill the same volume for wastewater returned to our sewers as for water supplied. This is because our wastewater charges assume that up to 10% of the supplied water is not returned to our sewers; see section 9.6 for further details on wastewater abatements.

The fixed charge

6.7.9 Fixed charges on your bill follow those specified in section 6.2 for the standard metered tariff.



7 Moving to metered charges

If your property is within our water supply region, you can move to paying metered charges either by asking us to install a water meter or as a result of us fitting a meter compulsorily. This section explains the processes involved and how we deal with any changes once the meter has been fitted.

7.1 Requesting a water meter

- 7.1.1 You can apply for a meter at thameswater.co.uk/meter or by calling us to ask us to install one. If you are renting your property and have a tenancy for six months or more, you can apply for a meter and do not need your landlord's permission.
- 7.1.2 We will install the meter free of charge, within 50 calendar days from the date of your request, and will apply metered charges from the date we fit it. If we fail to install the meter within this timeframe and it is our fault, we will charge you only the metered fixed charges from day 51 until the date we install the meter, after which both volumetric charges and metered fixed charges will apply.
- 7.1.3 If you have caused a delay which prevented us from installing the meter within 50 calendar days – for example, by not attending pre-arranged appointments or by asking for the meter to be fitted at a later date – we will continue to charge you on your existing tariff until we have either fitted the meter or find we are unable to install one.

- 7.1.4 We are not obliged to fit a meter if it is not reasonably practicable or it would involve unreasonable expense – for example, if:
- we need to install more than one meter
 - fitting the meter would create problems in accessing, reading, inspecting and maintaining it
 - substantial alterations to the pipework would be needed
- 7.1.5 Where the circumstances described in 7.1.4 above apply, we may fit a meter where it can be agreed that works can be carried out to enable a meter to be fitted, and where you agree to pay towards the cost of fitting the meter. If we fail to install the meter within the agreed timeframe and it is our fault, we will charge you only the metered fixed charges from the day we should have installed the meter, until the date we do install the meter, after which both volumetric charges and metered fixed charges will apply.
- 7.1.6 If we are unable to fit a meter for the reasons set out in 7.1.4 and there is no agreement under 7.1.5, we may move you to the assessed household charge as described in 5.3 above.
- 7.1.7 If you disagree with us whether it is reasonably practicable to install the meter, or whether it would involve unreasonable expense, and you are unhappy with our response, you (or we) can contact Ofwat.



7.2 Reverting to unmetered charges

- 7.2.1 Subject to section 7.2.2, you can ask us to revert you back to unmetered charges within 12 months of us applying metered charges, or within one calendar month of receiving your second metered bill (whichever is the later). Where you ask us to revert to unmetered charges, this will take effect from the date you make the request. If we do not have an actual reading taken on this date, we will estimate what it would have been. In this case:
- The meter must remain in place, as we will use it as the basis for charging subsequent occupiers
 - Your property must be mainly used as a home
 - You can only revert to unmetered charges if you or a person living in the property who remains living there had originally requested us to fit a meter and neither you nor the other person had previously requested a meter for the property
 - If your property falls within an area where we will compulsorily install meters in the future, we still have the right to charge you metered charges at a later date.
- 7.2.2 You cannot revert to unmetered charges if:
- your meter was fitted compulsorily,
 - your property is in an area which is subject to compulsory metering,
 - you use the water supply for any of the following:
 - to water your garden using a sprinkler, hosepipe or any other device that is not hand-held
 - to fill a large pond or swimming pool with a capacity greater than 10,000 litres
 - to fill a bath with a capacity (measured to the centre line of overflow) greater than 230 litres

- for a shower unit of a type specified under paragraph 4(c) of the Table to Regulation 5 of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999
- for a unit which incorporates reverse osmosis

7.2.3 If you switch from unmetered to metered charges during a billing period for which you have already been billed using either rateable value or notional value charges, you will only be responsible for paying these up to the date we fit the meter. If you have paid all or part of these charges, we will either credit or refund any unmetered charges covering the period after which we installed the meter.

7.3 Compulsory metering

- 7.3.1 We have a metering programme to install smart meters to properties we supply water to which are in areas of serious water stress.
- 7.3.2 An area of serious water stress is determined by the Secretary of State under Regulation 4(1) of the Water Industry (Prescribed Conditions) Regulations 1999 (as amended) in accordance with Section 144B of the Water Industry Act 1991. Our water resources management plan, published under section 37B(8)(a) of the Water Industry Act 1991, sets out our compulsory metering programme, which the Secretary of State has approved.
- 7.3.3 If your property falls within a water supply area which will be compulsorily metered, we will write to you in advance to let you know when we will install the smart meter and when the meter will be activated. We will also explain to you about our 12-month comparison period and when we will move you from unmetered charges to metered charges.
- 7.3.4 Once we have fitted the meter, in order to help you adjust to metered charges, we will send you regular ‘comparison’ bills over the 12-month comparison period. These will show the difference between your unmetered charges and what you would be paying if charged on a metered basis.

7.3.5 We will switch you to metered charges from the date of your first meter reading taken after the 12-month comparison period, unless you have asked us to switch to metered charges before then, or if there has been a change of occupation of the property.

7.3.6 If you move into a property where we have installed a meter, metered charges will apply from the date you move in, whether or not the previous occupier has reached the end of the 12-month comparison period.

7.4 Meter location

- 7.4.1 We will tell you where we will install the meter, as we need to make sure it is reasonably accessible for reading, inspection, testing or maintenance. We will usually try to install the meter outside your property as near as reasonably practicable to the boundary of your property, or at the point where your supply pipe enters your property.
- 7.4.2 If we are unable to install the meter outside then we will try to install it inside your property, as near as reasonably practicable to where your supply pipe enters your property, or to the internal stop tap.
- 7.4.3 If you ask us to move the meter to an alternative location, we will do so at our discretion. You will be required to pay any costs this will incur. The cost will depend on the work needed to relocate the meter and we will add VAT. For more information, see thameswater.co.uk/meter.
- 7.4.4 When we install the meter, we will tell you if we find a leak on your supply pipe. If we can fix it without any further digging, we will do so, but if not, we will tell you how you can get it repaired. For more information, see our leakage Code of Practice at thameswater.co.uk/leaks.

7.5 Testing water meters

- 7.5.1 If you think your meter is not working correctly, you can ask us to test it. We will remove the meter and send it to an independent testing facility for testing in line with the Water (Meters) Regulations 1988. In the meantime, we will install a replacement meter, which will remain in place regardless of the test results.
- 7.5.2 If the results show the meter is working correctly – in other words, registering within the prescribed limits of error – we will charge you £70 (+VAT).
- 7.5.3 If the results show the meter is not working correctly – in other words, registering outside of the prescribed limits of error – we will adjust your metered charges:
- In the case of under-recording, we will adjust your charges back by a maximum of six months from the last meter reading.
 - In the case of over-recording, we will adjust your charges back to the last meter reading but one.
- 7.5.4 If we decide your meter should be sent for testing, we will not charge you, whatever the result.



8 Charges if you have difficulty paying

We know it can be worrying if you are struggling to pay or concerned that you might struggle in the future. There are a number of ways in which we may be able to help. We have explained two of these schemes below: WaterSure and WaterHelp.

To apply for either scheme or find out more about our other financial support schemes and flexible ways to pay your bills, see thameswater.co.uk/help/topay.

8.1 WaterSure

- 8.1.1 The WaterSure scheme caps your metered water and wastewater charges. Eligibility for WaterSure will be based on the qualifying criteria set out below.
- 8.1.2 Where you apply and qualify for both WaterSure and WaterHelp, we will charge you the lower of the two tariffs.

Qualifying criteria

- 8.1.3 To qualify, you or someone living in the property must receive one or more means-tested benefits/tax credits set out in 8.1.4 below and either:
 - the person receiving the means-tested benefits/tax credits is also receiving child benefit for three or more children under the age of 19 who are living at the property and who are in full-time education or approved training; or
 - someone living in the property has any of the medical conditions set out in 8.1.5 below that requires them to use extra water.
- 8.1.4 The qualifying means-tested benefits/tax credits are:

- Housing Benefit
- Income related Employment & Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Income based Job Seeker’s Allowance
- The Working Tax Credit
- The Child Tax Credit (except families in receipt of the family element only)
- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit

8.1.5 The qualifying medical conditions are:

- Abdominal stoma
- Desquamation (flaky skin loss)
- Weeping skin disease (eczema, psoriasis, varicose ulceration)
- Crohn’s disease
- Ulcerative colitis
- Incontinence
- Renal failure requiring home dialysis (except where a health authority contributes to the cost of water)
- Any other medical condition that has been diagnosed by a medical practitioner that requires the use of a significant additional amount of water

Capped metered bill

- 8.1.6 If you qualify for WaterSure your annual water charges will be capped at £372.00 and/or your annual wastewater charges will be capped at £286.00. If your meter readings show that you are using less water and that you should be paying less than this capped amount, we will apply metered charges, so you only pay for what you use plus the fixed charges.

Restrictions on use of water

- 8.1.7 In addition to the qualifying criteria above, the property must be your only or main home and you must not use water supplied to the property for automatically filling a swimming pool or large pond or watering a garden with a sprinkler or other automatic garden watering system.

How to apply

- 8.1.8 If you receive water only, or both water and wastewater services, from us, you can apply for WaterSure at thameswater.co.uk/watersure or call 0800 009 3652. If you qualify, your charges will be capped from the date of your application, and will expire 12 months later, unless this falls part way through a billing period, in which case it will expire at the end of the next billing period. Your application will be automatically renewed each year, but we may be in touch if we need to check that you still qualify. If you receive wastewater services from another service provider, we will let them know to apply the WaterSure cap to your wastewater charges.
- 8.1.9 If you receive wastewater services from us but another water company supplies your water, you will need to apply for WaterSure directly to that water company. If you qualify, we will apply the cap to your wastewater charges when your water company requests us to do so.

About the WaterSure scheme

- 8.1.10 The WaterSure scheme is a nationwide statutory social tariff as set out in the Water Industry (Charges) (Vulnerable Groups) (Consolidation) Regulations 2015 and in compliance with section 143A of the Water Industry Act 1991.

8.2 WaterHelp

- 8.2.1 The WaterHelp scheme reduces your metered or unmetered charges and applies to the services which we bill you for.
- 8.2.2 If we bill you for both water and wastewater services and you spend greater than 5 % of your net household income on water and wastewater charges, WaterHelp reduces these charges by between 25 % and 99 %. The level of discount will depend on your bill to income ratio.
- 8.2.3 If we bill you for either water or wastewater services and you spend greater than 2.5 % of your net household income on water or wastewater charges, WaterHelp reduces this charge by between 25 % and 99 %. The level of discount will depend on your bill to income ratio.
- 8.2.4 Eligibility for WaterHelp will be based on the qualifying criteria set out below.

Qualifying criteria:

- 8.2.5 We will assess eligibility based on the net household income during the six months preceding the date of application. Evidence of income relating to a shorter period (of at least two months) may be accepted if you are unable to provide evidence of income for the whole six months.
- 8.2.6 In order to work out your net household income, we take the total income from all sources (including any pensions and benefits) of everyone living permanently at the property. We then deduct income tax, National Insurance, Council Tax, disability benefits and housing costs to give the net household income.
- By ‘disability benefits’ we mean Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payments, and the disability element of any other benefits.

- By ‘Council Tax’, we mean the amount you are required to pay, after any discounts are applied.
- By ‘housing costs’, we mean rent and mortgage payments (except lump sum capital repayments).

8.2.7 Once we have worked out your net household income, we then apply a method used by the Office of the European Union to adjust the net household income proportionately, according to the number of people living at the property. This includes non-dependent residents, such as working adult children or lodgers. We also factor in the number of household members aged under 18.

How to apply for WaterHelp

- 8.2.8 You can apply for WaterHelp at thameswater.co.uk/waterhelp or call 0800 009 3652. If you qualify, your charges will be reduced from the date your application is received. Your application will be automatically renewed each year, but we may be in touch if we need to check that you still qualify.
- 8.2.9 If you are billed by another company for your water supply, you may be eligible for their financial support schemes for the water supply services they provide to you. Your water company will have support schemes set out in their own Charges Scheme.
- 8.2.10 If you receive your wastewater services from us but receive one bill from your water company for both water and wastewater charges, your eligibility for WaterHelp will be based on the low income criteria. Your water company’s Charges Scheme will set out the eligibility criteria and application details for the low income WaterHelp scheme.

About the WaterHelp scheme

8.2.11 Our WaterHelp scheme has been developed in compliance with Section 44 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (social tariffs) and with regard to the Defra document ‘Company Social Tariffs: Guidance to water and sewerage undertakers and the Water Services Regulation Authority under Section 44 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010’ June 2012.

Existing WaterHelp customers

8.2.12 We have changed the eligibility criteria for WaterHelp. If you are currently in receipt of the WaterHelp scheme under the previous low income criteria, you will continue to be charged 50 per cent of your water and/or wastewater charges until at least 31 March 2027, provided the low income criteria are met. This means you need to have a gross household income of less than £24,479 or less than £26,936 if your property is within a London Borough. ‘Gross household income’ means the total income from all sources of everyone living at the property. ‘Gross’ means before any deductions for tax, national insurance, DWP or council deductions, or any other non-disability related benefits including Housing Benefit and Child Benefits. You do not have to include any money you receive in respect of disability. This includes Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payments and the disability element of any other benefits.

9 Further adjustments to your bill

This section explains a number of reductions to our charges that you might qualify for depending on circumstances at your property.

9.1 Charging adjustments for empty properties

- 9.1.1 We define an empty property as one that is unoccupied and unfurnished, except for white goods such as washing machines, fridges and freezers.
- 9.1.2 If we have been told your property is empty and you can show it is unoccupied and unfurnished, we will not charge you for unmetered supplies or fixed charges for metered supplies.
- 9.1.3 If you need to tell us about an empty property, please call us – see the ‘Contact information’ section. If we reduce your charges, this will take effect from the date you tell us the property is empty.
- 9.1.4 If we become aware that water is being used at the property (including water lost due to leakage), all relevant charges will be payable.

9.2 Temporary absence from your property

- 9.2.1 If you are temporarily absent from your property for an extended period of time – for example, because you are living abroad or are in prison – we will apply the same process as in 9.1.2. Again, the property will need to be unfurnished.

9.3 Compassionate allowance

- 9.3.1 We will refund charges for unmetered supplies, or fixed charges for metered supplies, if you are the sole occupier of a furnished property and are in medical care, such as a hospital, nursing home or care home, for three months or more.
- 9.3.2 In these circumstances, if you pay unmetered charges, we will credit your account with any charges paid during your period of absence. If you pay metered charges, we will credit your account with any fixed charges paid during your period of absence.
- 9.3.3 If it is confirmed that you will not be returning home, we will close the account from the date you left the property.

9.4 Leakage allowance

- 9.4.1 You are liable for all water passing through the meter, including water lost due to leakage from the supply pipe.
- 9.4.2 If there is a leak on your supply pipe downstream of your water meter, your bill will be higher as a result. If you repair the leak within four weeks of it coming to our attention, we will credit your account with a leakage allowance, subject to the exceptions set out in 9.4.5.
- 9.4.3 We will calculate this allowance by estimating the volume of water lost via the leak and working out how much water is likely to have been used at your property based on your past usage.
- 9.4.4 If there is no record of past usage, we will base our estimate on typical water usage for similar properties. We will further adjust your charges if your subsequent usage is significantly different from what we have estimated.

- 9.4.5 We are not required to apply a leakage allowance if:
 - the leak is on internal pipework and we have previously applied a leakage allowance to an internal leak at your property;
 - the leak was caused by your negligence, or that of anyone acting on your behalf;
 - we have had to use our powers under Section 75 of the Water Industry Act 1991 to repair it; or
 - you knew about the leak, or ought to have, and failed to repair it within four weeks.
- 9.4.6 We need to be satisfied that there is reasonable evidence for establishing the start and end dates of the leak. You must submit a claim for a leakage allowance in writing within three months of repairing the leak – you can find the claim form at thameswater.co.uk/leakallowance.
- 9.4.7 If we have granted you a leakage allowance on internal pipework, we will not do so again if a subsequent internal leak occurs at your property on the same pipe. This limit does not apply to leaks on an external pipe.
- 9.4.8 We will pay the leakage allowance for the period from the date the leak began until the date it is repaired, for a period no longer than two years. For more details on our leakage Code of Practice, see thameswater.co.uk/leaks.

9.5 Surface water drainage rebates

- 9.5.1 Where you can prove to our satisfaction that no surface water from your property drains to a public sewer, we will reduce your wastewater charges by the amount shown in the Charges Schedule.
- 9.5.2 We will backdate this rebate to a maximum of six years – the current financial year plus a further five – where you can provide evidence that no surface water from your property has drained to our sewers over this period.
- 9.5.3 We will not apply this rebate where some, but not all, surface water from your property has been diverted away from our sewers. It would be prohibitively expensive to fund the cost of fairly and accurately calculating rebates based on the proportion of surface water that does not enter a public sewer.
- 9.5.4 We will seek to verify all information you provide. We will not reduce your charges where our maps show there is a surface water sewer nearby.
- 9.5.5 If you successfully apply for a rebate and our records show there is only a foul or private sewer in your road, we will write to your neighbours in the same postcode inviting them to apply.
- 9.5.6 If your property is part of a block of flats or maisonettes and you successfully apply for a rebate, we will automatically apply the rebate to all the properties within the block of flats or maisonettes and their rebate will apply from the date you made the application.
- 9.5.7 Claims must be in writing and can be made using our form at thameswater.co.uk/swd.

9.6 Wastewater abatements

- 9.6.1 Our wastewater charges already assume that up to 10 per cent of water used does not return to a public sewer.
- 9.6.2 If you can prove that more than 10 per cent of the water you use is not returned to a public sewer, you will qualify for a wastewater abatement. We will apply this abatement by reducing your wastewater bill by this additional percentage.
- 9.6.3 If there is a leak on your supply and you successfully apply for a leakage allowance, we will not process an application or pay an abatement during the period of this allowance. This is because the allowance covers the increased wastewater charges as well as the water lost during the period the leak was running.
- 9.6.4 You must apply in writing and can complete a form at thameswater.co.uk/abatement You must also provide meter readings covering the previous 12-month period. We will not consider your application if there has been a leak on your supply during this 12-month period.
- 9.6.5 If you qualify for a wastewater abatement, we will apply it from the date when we received your completed application form. We will not backdate it beyond this point.
- 9.6.6 If you receive only wastewater services from us and are billed on our behalf by another water company, we will notify them if you qualify and ask them to apply the abatement.
- 9.6.7 We may review whether you still qualify for an abatement at any time and adjust your account to reflect any change in circumstances.

9.7 Wastewater charges where there is only a surface water discharge

- 9.7.1 If your property discharges only surface water to a public sewer, your wastewater bill will be limited to just the fixed charge as set out in the Charges Schedule, unless you only pay us drainage charges for a garage, car space or store area. This will apply so long as the property has a rateable value of at least £50. You will need to call us to tell us this.

9.8 Charge reductions during a Temporary Use Ban

- 9.8.1 A Temporary Use Ban (TUB), more commonly known as a hosepipe ban, may need to be implemented for a period of time in our water supply area following prolonged periods of dry weather. A TUB restricts the ways in which our customers can use their water supply in order to protect our water resources from more severe drought restrictions being required.
- 9.8.2 We do not reduce customer charges as a result of introducing a TUB. This position is compliant with Section 76(6) of the Water Industry Act 1991 and in accordance with the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
- 9.8.3 Metered customers pay for the water that they use, so as a hosepipe won't have been used during the period of restrictions, no charges will have been applied for a use that has been restricted. As such, no charge reductions would be applicable to metered customers.
- 9.8.4 For unmetered customers, we do not have any charges that relate specifically and/or exclusively to the use of hosepipes, so there are no charges made in respect of prohibited uses that would reasonably need to be reduced.

10 How and when to pay us

10.1 Methods of payment

- 10.1.1 There are a number of ways you can pay your bill. Some service providers may charge you a handling fee for using their payment method, and some do not. We have set these out below.
- 10.1.2 The following payment methods do not incur a handling fee:
- Direct Debit is a quick and easy way to pay your bill regularly: to set this up, visit thameswater.co.uk/directdebit or call us on 0800 980 8800.
 - Thames Water payment card for use at PayPoint and Payzone outlets: to set this up, visit thameswater.co.uk/paymentplan or call us on 0800 980 8800. We recommend you ask for a receipt. The maximum single transaction is £350.
 - Debit/credit card: visit thameswater.co.uk/cardpayment or call us on 0800 980 8800. There are no handling fees for this option, but your bank may charge you interest if you use a credit card.
 - Online banking: quote your Thames Water account number as a reference and send to Thames Water account 00286125, sort code 57-27-53.
 - Cheque: payable to: Thames Water Utilities Ltd. Send it to: Thames Water, PO Box 234, Swindon, SN38 3TW. Write your Thames Water account number on the back. Please do not post-date your cheque.
 - Water Direct: If you are in receipt of means-tested benefits and want your water/wastewater bill deducted from your benefit payments, visit thameswater.co.uk/waterdirect.

- 10.1.3 The following payment methods may incur a handling fee, so please check with the service provider first:
- Giro slip: fill in the giro slip on the back of your bill and take it to a bank or Post Office that accepts them.
 - Pay by cash: You can take your bill to the Post Office and make a cash payment. Please make sure you get a receipt.
- 10.1.4 When paying in full – without a payment plan – you can pay by debit/credit card, online banking, giro slip or cheque.
- 10.1.5 If you are unable to pay your bill in full, you can split the amount into more manageable instalments at no extra cost. You can do this by setting up a payment plan with us, and paying by Direct Debit, debit/credit card, Thames Water payment card, online banking, cheque or Water Direct (if eligible).

10.2 Frequency of payment for unmetered charges

- 10.2.1 Unmetered charges apply for each day that you occupy the property. The payment is due in advance on 1 April and we will bill you before this date for the charges that apply for the following 12 months.
- 10.2.2 If you have moved into the property after 1 April, charges will be payable on a day we advise. Payment of your bill can be made in full or split across the year in a payment plan.
- 10.2.3 Direct Debit payment plans are available:
- Monthly
 - Ten times a year
 - Eight times a year
 - Half-yearly
 - Once a year, when you receive your bill

- 10.2.4 If you are not paying by Direct Debit, payment plans are available:

- Weekly
- Fortnightly
- Monthly
- Ten times a year
- Eight times a year
- Half-yearly
- Once a year, when you receive your bill

10.3 Frequency of billing and payment for metered charges

- 10.3.1 We will attempt to read your meter twice within the charging year, and we will bill you approximately every six months. If we have actual meter readings, we will calculate your bill using these. If not, we will calculate your bill using an estimated reading.
- 10.3.2 If you are deemed to be a large user or have a smart meter, we may bill you monthly.
- 10.3.3 Your billing period may fall within two charging years, meaning that part of your bill will apply the charges set in our 2025-26 Charges Scheme and the balance of your bill will apply the charges set in this Charges Scheme for 2026-27. We may calculate the part of your bill relating to our 2025-26 charging year on estimated usage using historic meter readings at your property.
- 10.3.4 Payment is due on receipt of the bill, unless you have agreed a payment plan with us.

10.3.5 Direct Debit payment plans are available:

- Monthly
- Every six months, when you receive your bill

10.3.6 If you are not paying by Direct Debit, payment plans are available:

- Weekly
- Fortnightly
- Monthly
- Every six months, when you receive your bill

For more details on ways to pay and how to set up a payment plan, see thameswater.co.uk/pay.

10.4 Payment by instalments

- 10.4.1 If there is any underpayment or overpayment where you are paying by instalments, we will carry this forward and use it to calculate the instalments for your next payment plan. Where requested, we will refund any overpayment.
- 10.4.2 We calculate monthly instalments on the basis of predicted usage and adjust these on a twice yearly basis once we have taken meter readings.
- 10.4.3 If you are paying by instalments and have not paid on the due date, or not paid the required amount, you will become liable for paying any remaining charges. For more details see thameswater.co.uk/debt.

10.5 Debt recovery procedure

- 10.5.1 If you are having difficulty paying your bill, please contact us straight away so that we can help you get back on track.
- 10.5.2 Our debt recovery procedure is set out in the guide ‘How we can help if you’re struggling to pay’, available at thameswater.co.uk/debt.



11 Interpretation

In this Charges Scheme the following terms have the meanings as set out below:

Term	Meaning
assessed household charge	means a fixed annual charge, split into bands, which relates either to a single occupier or to the number of bedrooms in a property.
billing period	means a period of time determined by Thames Water in respect of which Thames Water may submit a bill for any charges made under this Charges Scheme.
bulk meter	means a water meter which serves more than one property which are in separate occupation.
charging area	means an area determined by Thames Water to reflect in its charges the differences in the average use of water and/or wastewater services for various properties and which reflect the broad variations in ratable value for similar properties throughout the Thames Water supply region.
Charges Scheme	means this charges scheme made under section 143 of the Water Industry Act 1991.
Charges Schedule	means the schedule of charges fixed by Thames Water for the financial year 2026-27, which forms part of this Charges Scheme.
charging year	means a calendar year running from 1 April in a given year to 31 March in the following year.
cubic metre or m3	means a unit of volume equivalent to 1,000 litres.
domestic garage, car space or store area	means any garage, car space or store area used wholly or partly as a domestic garage, car space or store area or intended for such use.
domestic purposes	means a supply of water which is used for drinking, washing, cooking, central heating and sanitary purposes and as set out in section 218 of the Water Industry Act 1991.
house	means any building or part of a building which is occupied or is likely to be occupied as a dwelling-house, whether a private dwelling-house or not, as set out in section 219(1) of the Water Industry Act 1991. This includes a flat or maisonette.
household premises	means premises in which, or in any part of which, a person has his home and whose principal use of the premises is as a home as set out in section 17C of the Water Industry Act 1991. Household premises are referred to in this Charges Scheme as “properties” and “property” (except where the context otherwise requires) and includes household premises within Thames Water’s supply region where Thames Water provides water and/or wastewater services, and household premises outside of Thames Water’s supply region where Thames Water provides water only or wastewater only services.
Instrument of Appointment	means the written instrument dated August 1989 (as varied from time to time) appointing Thames Water Utilities Limited as the water and sewerage (wastewater) undertaker for the areas described and subject to the conditions set out in the instrument, under section 6 of the Water Industry Act 1991.
large bath	means a bath with a capacity, measured to the centre line of overflow, of more than 230 litres.
large pond	means any kind of pond or pool (other than a leisure pool or swimming pool), inflatable or otherwise, with a capacity of more than 10,000 litres which uses an automatic replenishing system.
leisure pool	means any kind of pool (other than a swimming pool or large pond), inflatable or otherwise, with a capacity of more than 1,000 litres and which is up to 1 metre in depth.
meter	means any apparatus used for measuring or showing the volume of water to household premises and includes a meter installed by Thames Water or another water undertaker or in accordance with a specification approved by Thames Water or another water undertaker for the purposes of measuring the volume of water supplied to household premises, including any water lost due to leakage.
metered charges	means charges for services that are based wholly or partly on measured quantities of volume and include a fixed charge.
no access charge	means a charge that is applied where Thames Water has been denied access to the property for the purposes of fitting, maintaining, replacing or reading a water meter.

Term	Meaning
normal working hours	means the hours of 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday excluding Bank Holidays.
notional rateable value	means the value determined by us in respect of any premises in place of any value included in a rating valuation list.
occupier	means, where relevant, you/your (as defined) or any position determined by common law which we may apply in the circumstances.
Ofwat	means The Water Services Regulation Authority.
property	means household premises.
rateable value charge	means a charge fixed wholly or partly by reference to a rating valuation list or otherwise determined, whether directly or indirectly, by reference to any value or other amount specified at any time in such a list or which purports to be so fixed or determined.
rating valuation list	means a list which is or has at any time been maintained, for the purposes of rating, under section 41 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, section 67 of the General Rate Act 1967 or any other enactment.
sprinkler	means a rigid or flexible pipe or similar apparatus and accessories (including for the avoidance of doubt trickle irrigation systems) drawing water directly or indirectly from the water mains whether by permanent or temporary connection and which is used attended or unattended for dispersing water from more than one outlet in such pipe or apparatus or in more than one direction whilst being operated externally to any property supplied.
supply pipe	means any part of a service pipe which does not belong to Thames Water.
swimming pool	means any kind of pool (other than a leisure pool or large pond), inflatable or otherwise, with a capacity of 10,000 litres or more which uses an automatic replenishing system.
unmetered charges	means charges for services that are not based wholly on measured quantities of volume, and include a fixed charge.
wastewater services	means the provision of a drainage connection, whether direct or indirect, from household premises to the Thames Water sewerage network. Where appropriate, references to “wastewater” include the terms ‘sewage’ ‘foul water’ ‘surface water’ ‘highway drainage’ ‘sewer’ and ‘drains’ to the extent these terms are defined by section 219 of the Water Industry Act 1991.
water services	means the provision of a water connection, whether direct or indirect, from the Thames Water network to household premises.
we/us/our	means Thames Water Utilities Limited and may be referred to as “Thames Water”.
you/your	means the person liable to pay charges for water and/or wastewater services provided to household premises, or any other person we provide or might provide any services to in the course of carrying out our functions, or where relevant the ‘consumer’ or ‘customer’ each as defined in the Water Industry Act 1991.

- 11.1 Except where the context otherwise requires, words in the singular include the plural and words in the plural include the singular.
- 11.2 If not defined above, words and expressions used in this charges scheme shall have the meanings given in the Water Industry Act 1991. References to any legislation shall include its or their amendment or replacement.
- 11.3 This charges scheme should be read and construed in conjunction with the Water Industry Act 1991 (including any regulations made under it) and our Instrument of Appointment. In the event of any conflict or inconsistency with this charges scheme, the provisions of the Act or as the case may be our Instrument of Appointment will prevail.
- 11.4 The charges under this charges scheme are levied in accordance with the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991 and the Instrument of Appointment and any taxes (including VAT) imposed by law on the making of such charges shall be recoverable in addition to such charges.
- 11.5 We may (subject to certain restrictions in the Act) fix charges for the services we provide by reference to such matters and may adopt such methods and principles for the calculation and imposition of charges as appear to us appropriate.
- 11.6 Our charges must not show undue preference to, and must not unduly discriminate against, any class of customers or potential customers.
- 11.7 Our charges scheme must comply with charging rules made by Ofwat under sections 143(6A) and 143B of the Act.
- 11.8 We have consulted with CCW about this charges scheme.



Household Charges Schedule 2026-27

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Metered water and wastewater charges

Table 1 Metered fixed charges per year based on pipe size

Pipe size (mm)	Pipe size (inches)	Water	Wastewater Full	Abated*
Single households	N/A	£66.87	£128.13	£80.43
Bulk metered households				
12/15	0.5	£0.00	£75.16	£27.46
20/22	0.75	£0.00	£169.12	£61.79
25/28	1.00	£0.00	£300.64	£109.84
30/32/35	1.25	£0.00	£469.76	£171.63
40/42	1.50	£0.00	£676.44	£247.14
50/54	2.00	£0.00	£1,202.56	£439.36
65	2.50	£0.00	£1,879.00	£686.50
75/80	3.00	£0.00	£2,705.76	£988.56
100	4.00	£0.00	£4,810.24	£1,757.44
125	5.00	£0.00	£7,516.00	£2,746.00
150	6.00	£0.00	£10,823.04	£3,954.24
200	8.00	£0.00	£19,240.96	£7,029.76
250	10.00	£0.00	£30,064.00	£10,984.00
300	12.00	£0.00	£43,292.16	£15,816.96

* Where a single household property does not discharge surface water to our sewers, they can claim a rebate of £47.70. Where there are a number of households in a block and the charges for the block are paid by reference to a bulk meter by a managing agent or landlord, the fixed charge and any surface water drainage rebate that may apply will be based on pipe size and calculated by reference to the figures under ‘Bulk metered households’ above.

In addition to the fixed charge based on pipe size, a fixed retail services charge of £66.87 for water and £52.97 for wastewater will also be applied to the block of bulk metered households.

Table 2 Volumetric charges (All rates in p/m³)

Households	
Consumption	Volume charge
Water supply service	273.46 pence
Wastewater service	147.21 pence

Table 3 Fixed charge per year for surface water drainage only

	Wastewater
	Surface water drainage only
All households	£75.16

Unmetered water and wastewater charges

The water and wastewater services bill is calculated by applying a ‘rate per pound’ to the rateable value (RV) of your property. There is a different rate for water and wastewater services, each expressed as pence per pound (of RV) and disclosed in Table 5. In addition, a yearly ‘fixed charge’ is applied; disclosed in Table 4.

Table 4 Fixed charges - unmetered per year

	Water	Wastewater	
		Full	Abated*
All households	£81.76	£126.69	£78.99

* Where a household customer does not discharge surface water to our sewers, they can claim a rebate of £47.70.

Table 5 Unmetered charges pence per pound of rateable value

Charge area	Local authority area		Water (pence)	Wastewater (pence)
1	Kensington & Chelsea London, City of Westminster		135.07	63.07
2	Barking & Dagenham Brent Camden Hackney Hammersmith & Fulham	Islington Newham Redbridge Tower Hamlets Waltham Forest	161.76	90.56
	Havering		N/A	
3	Bexley Bromley Croydon Dartford Epsom & Ewell Gravesham Greenwich Kingston Lambeth	Lewisham Merton Richmond Sevenoaks Southwark Sutton Tandridge Wandsworth	180.18	98.26
	Tonbridge & Malling		N/A	
4	Barnet Broxbourne East Hertfordshire Enfield	Epping Forest Haringey Welwyn Hatfield	176.54	96.92
	Brentwood Harlow Luton	North Hertfordshire Stevenage Uttlesford	N/A	

Charge area	Local authority area		Water (pence)	Wastewater (pence)
5	Chiltern Dacorum Ealing Hounslow	Slough South Buckinghamshire Spelthorne Wycombe	179.71	100.45
	Harrow Hertsmere Hillingdon St. Albans	South Bedfordshire Three Rivers Watford	N/A	
6	Basingstoke & Deane Chichester Elmbridge Guildford Hart Horsham Kennet	Mole Valley Newbury Reading Reigate & Banstead Waverley Windsor & Maidenhead Wokingham	207.79	118.74
	Bracknell Crawley East Hampshire Mid Sussex Runnymede	Rushmoor Surrey Heath Winchester Woking	N/A	
7	Aylesbury Vale Cherwell Cotswold North Wiltshire Oxford	South Oxfordshire Swindon Vale of White Horse West Oxfordshire	247.58	138.10
	Daventry South Northamptonshire	Stratford Tewkesbury	N/A	

Table 6 Fixed charge per year for surface water drainage only

	Wastewater
	Surface water drainage only
All households	£75.16

Assessed household charge

Where the assessed household charge is payable, it will be calculated on the basis set out below.

Table 7 Assessed household charges

Band	Bedrooms	Water	Wastewater
1	0/1 bedroom	£282.05	£151.84
2	2 bedrooms	£304.20	£163.76
3	3 bedrooms	£345.77	£186.14
4	4 bedrooms	£378.86	£203.95
5	5 or more bedrooms	£422.89	£227.65
6	Single occupier*	£233.92	£125.93

In addition, the customer pays a fixed charge of £65.76 for Water and £126.69 for Wastewater (£78.99 for abated Wastewater).

* N.B. Single occupier – i.e., one person only. A single parent with children at the same address will not be classed as a single occupier. The single occupier charge applies provided Thames Water has received satisfactory confirmation that there is only one occupier.

Smart Saver tariff

Our Smart Saver tariff trial is based on a rising block model and is designed to encourage water efficiency by applying increasing rates to higher usage levels.

Table 8 Volumetric charges (All rates in p/m³)

Block	Volume range for block	Water	Wastewater
1	0 – 50m3 per annum	161.83 pence	87.12 pence
2	51 – 250m3 per annum	323.65 pence	174.23 pence
3	Above 250m3 per annum	686.31 pence	369.46 pence

Fixed charges on the Smart Saver tariff are applied using the charges set out in Table 1.

No access charge

Thames Water reserves the right to transfer household customers to the no access charge where the customer has denied Thames Water access for the purpose of fitting, replacing, maintaining or reading a meter.

Table 9 Fixed charge per year for no access tariff

	Water	Wastewater	
		Full	Abated*
All households	£725.91	£482.91	£435.21

Other unmetered charges

Where an unmetered supply only serves a domestic garage, car space or store area at a household premise, a fixed annual charge for each unit will apply. Where there is no water supply, but surface water drains to our sewer, only the wastewater fixed charge is payable.

Table 10 Domestic garages, car spaces and store area – unmetered fixed charge per year

Domestic garages, car spaces and stores	Annual Charge
Water fixed charge per garage, car space or store	£20.58 per garage
Wastewater fixed charge per garage, car space or store	£12.02 per garage

WaterSure tariff

The capped metered tariff that applies to customers who qualify for the WaterSure scheme will have the following caps applied to their annual metered charges.

Table 11 WaterSure tariff annual price caps

	WaterSure tariff annual price cap	
	Water	Wastewater
WaterSure customers	£372	£286

Sundry charges

Other sundry charges not covered in the sections above are detailed below. Charges are presented excluding VAT.

Table 12 Building supplies (zero rate VAT applies)

Building supplies	Charge
New supplies	Metered
Alterations to existing properties with contract sum over £250,000 (where no new supplies needed)	0.17 % of contract value

Table 13 Meter testing and relocation (standard rate VAT applies)

	Charge
Meter testing	£70
Meter relocation	Price on application

