Thames Water Utilities Limited (TWUL)

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Version 1.0

Household charges schedule

For the supply of water and wastewater services



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Metered water and wastewater charges	
2.1 Metered water and wastewater charges	4
2.2 Volumetric charges	6
3. Unmetered water and wastewater charges	7
3.1 Unmetered water and wastewater charges	7
3.2 Fixed charges	11
3.3 Assessed household charge	11
3.4 Other unmeasured charges	12
4. Affordability help schemes	13
4.1 WaterSure	13
4.2 WaterSure Plus	17

1. Introduction

This booklet forms part of the Charges Schemes made by Thames Water Utilities Limited under the powers conferred by Section 143 of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended). It contains the household primary charges for 2019-20.

The wholesale elements of the household primary charges covered in this booklet have been set at a lower level than that allowed under the PR14 price control limits set by Ofwat.

Following Ofwat's leakage investigation which concluded in August 2018, we have committed under section 19 of the Water Industry Act 1991 to provide a rebate to our water service customers in 2019-20. This equates to a reduction of around 3% applied to the wholesale water charges used to calculate 2019-20 bills. This booklet therefore contains the tariffs we have set prior to the rebate being applied as well as the prices that will be used to calculate customer bills with the rebate included.

In addition, the wholesale wastewater charges covered in this booklet have been set at a lower level than that allowed under the PR14 price control limits set by Ofwat. This is to mitigate against significant price increases in our wastewater charges and to smooth the impact of rising prices over multiple years.

This Charges Scheme has been prepared in accordance with the Charges Scheme Rules for 2019-20.

2. Metered water and wastewater charges

2.1 Metered water and wastewater charges

Water charges are payable for all supply points which receive a water supply either directly or indirectly.

Wastewater charges are payable for all properties which are connected directly or indirectly to a public foul or surface water sewer or which have the benefit of these services and will include elements of foul water, surface water and highway drainage. If your property only has surface water drainage, rate-based wastewater charges are not payable. In this instance a fixed fee of £48.09 a year for household customers will be levied.

Where a single household property is not connected to our sewer for the purpose of discharging surface water, then a reduction of £26.40 can be claimed on the wastewater fixed charge.

For bulk metered household properties in a block that do not discharge surface water to our sewers, an abatement can be claimed based on pipe size. The charge payable is shown in Table 2.1.

We will also consider reducing the wastewater charge where it can be proven that less than 90% of the water supplied is returned to the public wastewater system.

Thames Water reserves the right to transfer household customers to the no access charge (£359.28 water pre-rebate, £347.35 water post-rebate, £281.88 wastewater), where the customer has denied Thames Water access for the purpose of fitting, replacing, maintaining or reading a meter.

Table 2.1 Metered fixed charges per year based on pipe size

		Water		Wastewater	
Pipe size (mm)	Pipe size (inches)	Tariff (Pre-rebate)	Charge (Post-rebate)	Full	Abated*
Single households	N/A	£21.86	£21.40	£72.88	£46.48
Bulk metered ho	useholds				
12/15	0.5	£0.00	£0.00	£48.09	£21.69
20/22	0.75	£0.00	£0.00	£119.79	£52.03
25/28	1.00	£0.00	£0.00	£214.18	£93.17
30/32/35	1.25	£0.00	£0.00	£333.99	£145.21
40/42	1.50	£0.00	£0.00	£480.40	£208.12
50/54	2.00	£0.00	£0.00	£853.09	£370.28
65	2.50	£0.00	£0.00	£1,334.70	£579.62
75/80	3.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,920.39	£833.75
100	4.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3,414.82	£1,482.33
125	5.00	£0.00	£0.00	£5,335.22	£2,316.09
150	6.00	£0.00	20.00	£7,682.74	£3,334.95
200	8.00	£0.00	20.00	£13,658.09	£5,929.36
250	10.00	£0.00	£0.00	£21,339.63	£9,264.32
300	12.00	£0.00	£0.00	£30,729.77	£13,341.04

^{*} Where a single household property does not discharge surface water to our sewers, they can claim an abatement of £26.40. Where there are a number of households in a block and the charges for the block are paid by reference to a bulk meter, the fixed charge based on pipe size will be calculated by reference to the figures under "Bulk metered households" above. In addition to the charge based on pipe size, a fixed retail services charge of £21.86 for water pre-rebate, £21.40 for water post-rebate and £24.79 for wastewater will also be applied to the block of bulk metered households.

2.2 Volumetric charges

Table 2.2 Volumetric charges (All rates in p/m³)

Households		
Consumption		Volume charge (p/m³)
Water Supply	Tariff (Pre-rebate)	140.01 pence
water Suppry	Charge (Post-rebate)	135.25 pence
Wastewater Supply		86.72 pence

3. Unmetered water and wastewater charges

3.1 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 3.1. In addition, a yearly 'fixed charge' is applied; disclosed in Table 3.2.

Water charges are payable for all premises which receive a water supply either directly or indirectly.

Wastewater charges are payable for all properties which are connected directly or indirectly to a public foul or surface water sewer or which have the benefit of these services and will include elements of foul water, surface water and highway drainage. If your property only has surface water drainage, rate-based wastewater charges are not payable. In this instance a fixed fee of £48.09 a year for household customers will be levied.

Where a household customer is not connected to our sewer for the purpose of discharging surface water, then a reduction of £26.40 can be claimed on the wastewater fixed charge.

Table 3.1 Unmetered charges pence per pound of rateable value

		Household			
Charge	Local Authority areas	Wa pe	Wastewater		
area		Tariff (Pre-rebate)	Charge (Post-rebate)	pence	
1	Barnet Broxbourne East Hertfordshire Enfield Epping Forest Haringey Welwyn Hatfield	85.97	83.05	59.73	
	Brentwood Harlow Luton North Hertfordshire Stevenage Uttlesford	N/A	N/A		
2	Chiltern Dacorum Ealing Hounslow Slough South Buckinghamshire Spelthorne Wycombe	87.50	84.53	61.91	
_	Harrow Hertsmere Hillingdon St. Albans South Bedfordshire Three Rivers Watford	N/A	N/A		
3	Kensington & Chelsea London, City of Westminster	65.77	63.54	38.87	

		Household			
Charge	Local Authority areas	Wa pei	Wastewater		
area		Tariff (Pre-rebate)	Charge (Post-rebate)	pence	
4	Barking & Dagenham Brent Camden Hackney Hammersmith & Fulham Islington Newham Redbridge Tower Hamlets Waltham Forest	78.76	76.09	55.83	
	Havering	N/A	N/A		
5	Basingstoke & Deane Chichester Elmbridge Guildford Hart Horsham Kennet Mole Valley Newbury Reading Reigate & Banstead Waverley Windsor & Maidenhead Wokingham	101.18	97.75	73.19	
	Bracknell Crawley East Hampshire Mid Sussex Runnymede Rushmoor Surrey Heath Winchester Woking	N/A	N/A		

			Household	
Charge Local Authority areas		Wa per	Wastewater	
area	Local Authority areas	Tariff (Pre-rebate)	Charge (Post-rebate)	pence
6	Bexley Bromley Croydon Dartford Epsom & Ewell Gravesham Greenwich Kingston Lambeth Lewisham Merton Richmond Sevenoaks Southwark Sutton Tandridge Wandsworth	87.74	84.76	60.55
	Tonbridge & Maling	N/A	N/A	
7	Aylesbury Vale Cherwell Cotswold North Wiltshire Oxford South Oxfordshire Swindon Vale of White Horse West Oxfordshire	120.55	116.45	85.12
	Daventry South Northamptonshire Stratford Tewkesbury	N/A	N/A	

3.2 Fixed charges

Table 3.2 Fixed charges - unmetered per year

	Water		Wastewater	
	Tariff (Pre-rebate)	Charge (Post-rebate)	Full	Abated*
All households	£35.29	£34.26	£57.35	£30.95

^{*} Where a household customer does not discharge surface water to our sewers, they can claim an abatement of £26.40.

3.3 Assessed household charge

For household customers, where you have asked us to fit a meter but it is not practical or too expensive, you can opt to pay the assessed household charge which is linked to the size of your property. Where we have surveyed your property and cannot fit a meter under our progressive metering programme the assessed household charge will become payable immediately if lower than your current bill. If it will increase your existing bill it will become payable no less than a year after we have written to you to let you know a meter will not be installed.

Table 3.3 Assessed household charges

		Wa		
Band Bedrooms		Tariff (Pre-rebate)	Charge (Post-rebate)	Wastewater
1	0/1 bedroom	£130.39	£125.95	£80.76
2	2 bedrooms	£142.11	£137.28	£88.02
3	3 bedrooms	£163.96	£158.38	£101.55
4	4 bedrooms	£181.35	£175.18	£112.33
5	5 or more bedrooms	£204.55	£197.60	£126.70
6	Single Occupier*	£102.11	£98.64	£63.24

In addition, the customer pays a fixed charge of £35.29 for Water pre-rebate, £34.26 for Water post-rebate and £57.35 for Wastewater (£30.95 for abated Wastewater) as detailed in Table 3.2 above.

* 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.

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3.4 Other unmeasured 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 3.4 Domestic garages, car spaces and stores – unmetered fixed charge per year

Domestic garages, car spaces and stores	Annual Charge	
Water fixed charge per garage, car space or	Tariff (Pre-rebate)	£10.42 per garage
store	Charge (Post-rebate)	£10.07 per garage
Wastewater fixed charge per garage, car space or store		£7.41 per garage

4. Affordability help schemes

Introduction

As well at the statutory WaterSure scheme for high water users (see section 4.1), Thames Water also operate a social tariff aimed at households that may need financial help.

WaterSure Plus (see section 4.2) is for low income customers and, until 1 April 2019, customers in receipt of certain benefits and allowances.

4.1 WaterSure

Background

The Water Industry Act 1991, Section 143A, empowers the Secretary of State to specify "special provision...to be made for the purposes of assisting individuals who are or would be liable to pay any charges and who fall within any class of individuals appearing to the Secretary of State to require special provision". The Regulations issued under that Section identify two such groups of individuals, together described as "Vulnerable Customers".

The "WaterSure tariff" reflects those Regulations and a summary of the current position is set out below. If the regulations change, then the principles of the WaterSure tariff will automatically change to reflect any changes in legislation.

Qualifying households for WaterSure

The Government's intention is to avoid a particular hardship for households with a metered water supply and whose metered bills may be high because of the need to use large quantities of water for essential purposes.

To qualify for the WaterSure tariff any member of the same household must either have a large family or have a medical condition with a specified benefit listed below.

Specified benefits

A member of the same household must be receiving one of the following benefits, as subject to prevailing legislation;

- Housing benefit
- Income related Employment & Support Allowance, or 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

Please note – no other benefits will qualify a household for the WaterSure tariff.

Thames Water Household Charges Schedule Version 1.0 Copyright Thames Water Utilities Ltd 2019 In addition to a specified benefit one of these two conditions must be met:

1. Large families with specified benefits

A member of the household must be receiving one of the specified benefits and be in receipt of Child Benefit for three or more children under the age of 19, who live at the property.

2. Medical condition with specified benefits

A member of the household must be receiving one of the specified benefits and an individual within that household must have been diagnosed as suffering from one of the following medical conditions that causes them to use significant additional volumes of water.

- 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 uses a significant additional amount of water

WaterSure scheme benefits for qualifying customers

Customers who are accepted for the WaterSure scheme will have their annual metered bill capped at £398. This charge is made up of £210 for water and £188 for wastewater services. If during the course of the year a customer's water service charges fall below £398, the customer will not receive the reduction in charges and will pay their bill according to the actual use as registered on their meter, plus the fixed charge.

Exclusion where water is used for non-household purposes

Households that normally would qualify for WaterSure scheme benefits, will not do so where water is used for non-household purposes, for example automatically filling up swimming pools or large garden ponds, or garden watering with a sprinkler.

Administration of the scheme

Customers receive information about the scheme at least once a year. If a customer thinks they qualify further information and application forms can be found at thameswater.co.uk/watersure. Alternatively, customers can call us on 0800 980 8800 for further information.

Applications

In order to confirm eligibility, customers may be requested to provide supporting evidence for their applications. Thames Water will advise the requirements as part of the application and these may include:

- Where benefits are paid into a customer's bank account, a copy of the latest bank statement clearly showing the benefits and payments received.
- A copy of the current notice of their entitlement to a qualifying benefit or tax credit.
- For large household related applications, a copy of the latest notice of entitlement to Child Benefit for the qualifying children who live at the same address as the property in respect of which charges are payable.
- For medical related applications specifically named in the specified list, the condition must be confirmed on the application and medical evidence must be produced.
 Where the medical condition is not named, the medical condition must be identified along with evidence provided by a registered medical practitioner.

After receipt of a completed application the customer will be contacted confirming:

- Whether or not the customer is eligible to the WaterSure benefit
- If further information or evidence is required to enable a decision to be made
- If we are requesting validation from a third party (such as the applicant's medical practitioner, JobCentre Plus or the Department for Work and Pensions).

Implementation

The benefit will apply from the start of the billing period during which the application is received. This will normally be the date of the last meter reading, up to six months previously.

Customers billed by another water company on Thames Water's behalf

Customers who receive bills from another company on Thames Water's behalf will receive similar information and advice from that company.

If customers qualify for the benefit with the billing company they will also benefit from Thames Water assistance for that element of the bill.

Customers who only receive a wastewater service from Thames Water

Where bills for wastewater services are issued by Thames Water and based on meter readings supplied by a water only company, we will apply the benefit on receipt of the appropriate notification from the water only company.

Customers who receive only wastewater services will also be able to apply directly to Thames Water.

Ongoing eligibility

Each year we will contact customers benefitting from the scheme to check their ongoing eligibility. The timescale may be extended for customers with permanent or long term circumstances. If customers have not responded and confirmed their ongoing eligibility within one calendar month, they may lose their entitlement to the benefit.

Disputes

Any dispute about whether or not a customer qualifies for the benefit will be subject to Thames Water standard complaints procedure, set out in its Customer Code of Practice. Thames Water must be given the opportunity to respond before contacting the Consumer Council for Water.

How the tariff works

Bills for qualifying customers will be calculated as a "daily metered charge" based on the meter reading or estimate, which is compared with the "daily average charge" based on the capped tariff of £398. The lower of the two is automatically applied as the basis of the actual bill.

We aim to read all WaterSure customers' meters every 6 months. However, any estimated readings are treated in the same way an actual reading with any adjustments necessary automatically made after the next actual reading.

Auditing

Regular auditing takes place according to our standard quality procedures, which are regularly reviewed to ensure continuous improvement. If any applications are found not to comply with the relevant rules and guidelines, they will be addressed individually.

The details provided on each form are manually checked against our records to ensure they correspond. Any discrepancy or indication that the documentation provided by the customer has been tampered with will be investigated. Such investigations may involve correspondence with or visits to the customer, verification from JobCentre Plus offices or the customer's medical practitioner, whichever is appropriate.

We reserve the right to randomly select existing successful applications for auditing; this may include reference to the applicants' medical practitioners or JobCentre Plus offices, as appropriate.

We may also use certain secure external data sources to help us confirm whether a customer is eligible for WaterSure.

4.2 WaterSure Plus

Background

WaterSure Plus is just one of the ways we can help make things easier, by reducing qualifying customers' bills. It is available for all our household customers who meet certain criteria, whether you have a water meter or not and regardless of who sends you the bill.

Where a household customer applies and qualifies for WaterSure Plus they will be charged 50% of the standard charges payable by those who don't qualify. This 50% discount applies for the charges period 2019/2020 and may go up or down future years. This applies to charges for water supply and wastewater services to households when they pay on a metered or unmetered basis. The tariffs to which WaterSure Plus applies are described in detail in the Water Supply and Wastewater Charges Schemes. In summary, these include fixed charges, rate based charges, volume related charges and surface water charges. For full details please refer to our Charges Schemes.

Please note that where a customer applies and qualifies under the eligibility criteria for both WaterSure and WaterSure Plus they will be charged the lower of the two tariffs.

Details of the criteria that must be met to qualify for WaterSure Plus and how to apply can be found on our website at thameswater.co.uk/watersureplus.

Qualifying households

Applications from 1 April 2019

To qualify for WaterSure Plus applicants need to have a gross household income of less than £16,105. The qualifying amount is increased to £19,201 where the supply address is within a London borough.

Deductions from the figure may be made for any disability payments received for members of the household. These include Disability Living Allowances, Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowances, and also any element of other benefits and allowances that is specifically in respect of disabilities.

Gross household income is defined as all income from all sources for all members of the household received in the 12 months to the date of application. Gross means before any deductions for tax, national insurance, DWP or council deductions, or anything else.

The thresholds of £16,105 and £19,201 will be reviewed each year and adjusted as appropriate (see sub-clause 15(1) of the Charges schemes 2019-20 for further definition).

Existing WaterSure Plus customers who qualified prior to 1 April 2019

This section applies in instances where the consumer does not meet the criteria set out above for applications from 1 April 2019 but was eligible to pay the WaterSure Plus tariff on the basis of the previous eligibility criteria and continues to satisfy the eligibility criteria (below) on an uninterrupted basis.

To continue qualification for the pre 1 April 2019 version of WaterSure Plus, a household must be able to demonstrate that both of the following criteria apply:

- 1. the household water bill is 3% or more of the yearly net household income; and
- 2. one or more of the conditions set out below are met.

To meet the second criteria above, either gross household income is less than £16,105 and

- someone in my household is aged over 62; or
- someone in my household is registered disabled; or
- someone living with me has parental responsibility for a child aged up to 5.

or someone in the household receives one or more of these benefits:

- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit
- Child Tax
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
- Income based Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

WaterSure Plus benefits

Where a customer qualifies for WaterSure Plus they will be charged 50% of the standard charges payable by those who don't qualify. This applies to both water supply and wastewater services to households whether or not they are on metered payments.

Further details of the tariffs to which WaterSure Plus applies are described in detail in the (Water Supply and Wastewater) Charges Schemes document. In summary these include fixed charges, rate based charges, volume related charges and surface water charges.

Please note that where a customer has applied and qualifies for both WaterSure and WaterSure Plus, we will review their circumstances and look to apply whichever scheme is expected to provide the most benefit for their circumstances.

Administration of the scheme

Customers already on the scheme will receive information about the scheme once a year. Further information can be found on our website.

Alternatively, customers can call us on 0800 980 8800 for further information.

Applications

In order to confirm eligibility, customers may be requested to provide supporting evidence for their applications. Thames Water will advise the requirements as part of the application and these may include:

- Where benefits are paid into a customer's bank account, a copy of the latest bank statement clearly showing the benefits and payments received
- A copy of the current notice of their entitlement to a qualifying benefit or tax credit

Thames Water may also make checks using data from commercial sources and other providers including the Department for Work and Pensions.

After receipt of a completed application the customer will be contacted confirming:

- whether or not the customer is eligible to the WaterSure Plus benefit
- if further information or evidence is required to enable a decision to be made
- if we are requesting validation from a third party.

Thames Water will aim to respond to customers within 10 working days of their receipt of the application. The application process itself does not form part of the Customer Guarantee Scheme relating to response times.

Implementation

WaterSure Plus benefits will apply from the later of the date of the application or the date of the start of direct billing from Thames Water.

Customers billed by another water company on Thames Water's behalf

Customers who receive bills from another company on Thames Water's behalf will receive similar information and advice from that company.

If customers qualify for the benefit with the billing company they will also benefit from Thames Water assistance for that element of the bill.

Customers who only receive a wastewater service from Thames Water

Where bills for wastewater services are issued by Thames Water and based on meter readings supplied by a water only company, we will apply the benefit once we receive the appropriate notification from the water only company.

Customers who receive only wastewater services are also able to apply directly to Thames Water.

Ongoing eligibility

Each year we will contact customers benefitting from the scheme to check their ongoing eligibility. The timescale may be extended for customers with permanent or long term circumstances.

If customers have not responded and confirmed their ongoing eligibility within one calendar month, they may lose their entitlement to the benefit and revert to the standard tariff.

Where possible we will confirm eligibility using available data sources but in some circumstances we will require customers to supply evidence of their entitlement. This evidence may include:

- where benefits are paid into a customer's bank account, a copy of the latest bank statement clearly showing the benefits and payments received; and
- a copy of the current notice of their entitlement to a qualifying benefit or tax credit.

Customers should also contact Thames Water at any point when their financial circumstances have improved and they no longer meet the criteria.

Disputes

Any dispute about whether or not a customer qualifies for the WaterSure Plus scheme will be subject to Thames Water standard complaints procedure, set out in its Customer Code of Practice.

Thames Water must be given the opportunity to respond before contacting the Consumer Council for Water.

Auditing

Regular validation of records takes place according to our standard quality procedures, which are regularly reviewed to ensure continuous improvement. If any applications are found not to comply with the relevant rules and guidelines, they will be addressed individually.

The details provided by customers are checked against our records and potentially those of approved third party partners to ensure they correspond. Any discrepancy or indication that the documentation provided by the customer has been tampered with will be investigated. Such investigations may involve correspondence with or visits to the customer, verification from benefit offices or the customer's medical practitioner, whichever is appropriate.

We reserve the right to randomly select existing successful applications for further checks which may include verification from third parties such as benefit offices and the applicants' medical practitioners.

We may also use secure external data sources to help us confirm whether a customer is eligible for WaterSure Plus.

Contact us



thameswater.co.uk



Your bill and account

For queries relating to your bill, change of address, meter readings and other billing enquiries, you can speak to our team on 0800 980 8800.

Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm

Saturday 8am to 6pm

Textphone service if you are deaf or hard of hearing: 0800 316 6899.

Telephone self service

We have a wide range of self-service options available 24 hours a day, including:

- · pay your bill with a debit or credit card
- set up a Direct Debit or payment plan
- check your balance.

Water and wastewater services

For water and wastewater enquiries, emergencies and other non-billing enquiries, you can call our team 24 hours a day on 0800 316 9800.

Textphone service if you are deaf or hard of hearing: 0800 316 9898

To contact us from abroad: +44 1793 486555



Thames Water, PO Box 286, Swindon SN38 2RA



This leaflet can be supplied in large print, braille, or audio format upon request.