

# Household Charges Scheme 2019-20



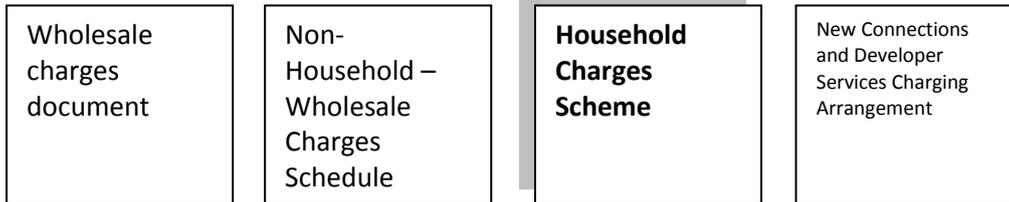
**Bournemouth**  
Water

## CHARGES 2019/20

This document contains details of Bournemouth Water's Charges Scheme for domestic customers for 2019/20. The Scheme is made under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended by the Water Industry Act 1999 and Water Act 2014).

The charges come into force on 1 April 2019.

This document is one of four charging documents as set out below:



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## DEFINITIONS

<b>Charging year</b>	1 April to 31 March of any year
<b>Charge</b>	A bill raised by way of the tariff structure
<b>The Company</b>	Bournemouth Water
<b>Consumer Council for Water (CCWater)</b>	Represents water and sewerage consumers in England and Wales.
<b>Domestic purposes</b>	Refers to water that is used for drinking, washing, cooking, central heating and sanitary purposes and any use outside the house which can be satisfied without the use of a hosepipe
<b>Households</b>	Premises used wholly for private residential use
<b>Houses in multiple occupation</b>	As defined by the Department for Communities and Local Government, and/or the relevant Local Authority
<b>Metered</b>	Also means measured and relates to properties, tariffs and water supplied
<b>Metered charges</b>	Charges for water based on the measurement by a water meter of water consumed, including the WaterSure tariff
<b>Non-domestic purposes</b>	Refers to any water used for purposes other than domestic purposes
<b>Non-households</b>	Any premises other than household premises
<b>Ofwat</b>	See WSRA
<b>The occupier</b>	Has the same meaning as in Section 144 of the Water Industry Act. In addition to the person or persons in actual occupation of premises, we may also view any persons or company with control of, or responsibility for premises, including vacant premises, as an occupier
<b>Premises</b>	Any building or part of a building which is occupied as a separate unit
<b>Rateable value</b>	The 'value' assigned a property by the local government Valuation Office which was effective on 31 March 1990
<b>Regulatory Year</b>	1 April to 31 March of any year
<b>Retail activities</b>	Customer facing services including billing and payment handling, customer enquiries and complaints, debt administration, developer services, connections and re-connections and customer side leaks
<b>Tariff</b>	The structure by which charges are raised
<b>Unmetered charges</b>	Charges for water raised on the basis of rateable value or any basis other than through the measurement by a water meter of water consumed
<b>WSRA</b>	Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat). The economic regulator of the water and sewerage industry in England and Wales
<b>Water Industry Act</b>	Water Industry Act as amended from time to time
<b>Wholesale activities</b>	The abstraction of raw water, transmission of raw water, water treatment, storage and distribution to end users plus ancillary services

## SECTION 1 - TABLE OF CHARGES FOR CUSTOMERS 2019/20

The following table contains the tariffs and charges for Domestic customers who receive a water service from Bournemouth Water. Further details of these charges can be found in Appendix II.

Description of Charge	Charge 2019/20 £ (excluding VAT)
<b>Unmetered Domestic Water Tariff</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Standing charge:</li> <li>2. Rateable value charge (per £ RV)</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: right;">26.30</p> <p style="text-align: right;">0.6881</p>
<b>Other unmetered water charges</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unmetered watering points</li> <li>2. Unmetered swimming pools</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: right;">74.84</p> <p style="text-align: right;">60.06</p>
<b>Assessed meter charges</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Standing charge:</li> <li>2. Assessed Charge per cubic metre (Estimated use in cubic metres)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One person (60)</li> <li>Two person (110)</li> <li>Three person (150)</li> <li>Four person (180)</li> <li>Five person (200)</li> <li>Each additional occupant (20)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: right;">26.30</p> <p style="text-align: right;">64.86</p> <p style="text-align: right;">118.91</p> <p style="text-align: right;">162.15</p> <p style="text-align: right;">194.58</p> <p style="text-align: right;">216.20</p> <p style="text-align: right;">21.62</p>
<b>Metered Domestic Water Tariff</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Standing charge:</li> <li>2. Consumption charge (per cubic metre)</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: right;">26.30</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1.0810</p>

## SECTION 2 – TABLE OF CHARGES – SUPPORT TARIFFS 2019/20

The following table contains the tariffs and charges for Domestic customers who are on either the WaterCare or WaterSure tariff. Further details of these charges can be found in Appendix II.

Description of Charge	Charge 2019/20 £ (excluding VAT)		
<b>Unmetered Domestic Water Tariff</b>			
1. WaterCare Tariff Assessed Charge Band 1 : 2 : 3	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
One Person Assessed Charge (est use 60m <sup>3</sup> )	45.58	68.37	77.49
Two Person Assessed Charge (est use 110m <sup>3</sup> )	72.61	108.91	123.43
Three person Assessed Charge (est use 150m <sup>3</sup> )	94.23	141.34	160.18
Four Person Assessed Charge (est use 180m <sup>3</sup> )	110.44	165.66	187.75
Five Person Assessed Charge (est use 200m <sup>3</sup> )	121.25	181.88	206.13
Each additional occupant (est use 20m <sup>3</sup> )	10.81	16.22	18.38
<b>Metered Domestic Water Tariff</b>			
1. WaterCare Tariff (Fixed charge)			
WaterCare Band 1			13.15
WaterCare Band 2			19.73
WaterCare Band 3			22.36
2. WaterCare Tariff Volume charge (per cubic metre)			
WaterCare Band 1			0.5405
WaterCare Band 2			0.8108
WaterCare Band 3			0.9189
3. WaterSure Tariff annual charge			143.99

## **SECTION 3 - MAIN TYPES OF CHARGES AND TARIFFS**

### **Unmetered water charges**

#### Premises with a rateable value

- 3.1 The owner or occupier of any premises receiving a supply of water other than through a meter will be charged:
- A standing charge, and
  - A rateable value based charge calculated by reference to the full rateable value of the property applicable at 31 March 1990.

#### Premises with no rateable value

- 3.2 Where premises are listed in the Valuation List before 31 March 1990, and it is inappropriate, in the Company's opinion to charge the rateable value listed in the valuation list or to meter the premises due to one or more of the following factors:
- An inappropriate rateable value configuration of a multiple-dwelling property
  - The complexity of plumbing arrangements
  - The division of existing premises into separate units
  - An extension in size to the premises
  - A change of use of the premises from non-household use to household use
  - The conversion of separate units into one unit

We may, at our discretion, apply an assessed charge calculated as follows:

- A standing charge, and
- A notional or assessed volume charge based on the number of full time equivalent occupants of the property multiplied by a notional volume per household customer supplied – (see Section 1), or
- A notional or assessed rateable value based on the original rateable value or the current size of the property or properties.

- 3.3 The charges for 2019/20 can be found in Section 1. Section 2 contains information on the Bournemouth Water ("the Company") Support Tariffs.

### **Metered water charges**

- 3.4 The owner or occupier of any premises receiving a metered supply of water is charged using one of the following metered tariffs:

- Standard metered tariff
- WaterSure metered tariff
- WaterCare metered tariff

- 3.5 The standard tariff comprises the following:

- a) A standing charge for each main charging meter, charged in arrears.
- b) A volume charge payable in arrears calculated on the consumption of water recorded by the meter

- 3.6 Details of the WaterSure tariff are in Section 6 and details of the WaterCare tariff are in Section 7.
- 3.7 Most customers will be charged on a half-yearly basis. Some may be charged monthly. The charge will be the same regardless of billing frequency.
- 3.8 Where a change in standing charge crosses the threshold of 1 April into the next charging year, and at that time the standing charge for the coming year has not yet been confirmed, we will estimate it. If, when the standing charge is confirmed, the estimate was incorrect, the customer's next bill will be adjusted accordingly.
- 3.9 Where a change in volumetric charge crosses the 1 April threshold into the next charging year, apportioned charges related to the number of days before and after 1 April will apply and will be at the old and new tariffs respectively.
- 3.10 Where for any reason the volume of water supplied for any period has not been measured, we may calculate a volume charge in respect of that period based on:
- An estimated volume, which may be adjusted if the actual meter reading is provided by the customer within one week of receiving an estimated bill, or
  - An assessed volume, where the meter is no longer recording, determined by the Company and based on past usage.
- 3.11 The full charges for 2019/20 can be found in Section 1. Section 2 contains information on the Company Support Tariffs.

### **Assessed charges**

- 3.12 Assessed Charges will be offered where a customer has applied for a meter but the cost of installing a meter would be unreasonable or it would not be practical to install a meter (see Section 8). The Assessed Charges are:
- Single Person Assessed Charge
  - Two person Assessed Charge
  - Three person Assessed Charge
  - Four person Assessed Charge
  - Five person Assessed Charge
  - An additional charge per occupant is payable for households with more than five occupants
- 3.13 Customers may continue to pay the due unmeasured charges for the property they are occupying rather than the Assessed Charge if they so wish.
- 3.14 In line with Local Authority policy, assessed-metered holiday homes will be given a 10% discount against the volumetric element of the bill. No discount will be given against standing charges which will be charged in full. Customers applying for the discount will be required to provide a copy of their Council Tax bill before the discount is applied.
- 3.15 In the event that an assessed charge is applied to a property within a sheltered housing complex for which shared laundry facilities are billed separately, we will reduce the assessed volume by a notional 15%. This discount must be applied for in writing and represents the estimated reduced water consumption by these customers on account of having communal laundry facilities provided. This policy became effective on 1 April 2011. Any existing assessed charge customers who feel they may qualify for this discount should apply to us in writing. The Company will not backdate any requests after 1 April 2019.

3.16 The full charges for 2019/20 can be found in Section 1. Section 2 contains information on the Company Support Tariffs.

### **Support tariffs – WaterCare and WaterSure**

3.17 The Company offers two tariffs – WaterCare and WaterSure - to help reduce the bills of customers genuinely struggling to pay. Both tariffs have different criteria to qualify. Further details can be found in Section 6 for WaterSure and Section 7 for WaterCare.

### **Miscellaneous Charges**

#### Disconnection Charges and Charges to Turn on Supply

3.18 Disconnection at a customer's request is free.

3.19 Should the occupier of a property later require us to turn on the supply the following charges will be payable on a per visit basis:

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| a) Within normal working hours           | £62.50    |
| b) Outside normal working hours          | £92.50    |
| c) Fee following change of ownership     |           |
| i. Within normal working hours           | no charge |
| ii. Outside normal working hours         | £92.50    |
| d) In an emergency (as determined by us) | no charge |

Normal working hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm, excluding Bank Holidays

#### Standpipe hire charges

3.20 Portable hydrant standpipes for use on specified hydrants are available for hire from the Company's nominated contractor. Hire will be subject to the nominated contractor's terms and hire rates.

3.21 Water used through a portable standpipe will be charged on a measured basis at the rate of £1.0810 per cubic metre. Charges will be billed by, and be payable to, the nominated contractor.

#### Hire of water bowzers

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| 3.22 Hire, including delivery and collection (per week or part week) | £181.50      |
| Where separate visits are required for refill                        | £90.50       |
| Tanker   | by quotation |

#### Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999

3.23 Initial inspections to assess compliance with the above Regulations are free. A site report and up to two follow-up re-inspection visits to assess resultant remedial works are also free. Subsequent visits may at our discretion be chargeable at £62.50 per visit until full compliance with regulations is achieved.

#### Other charges

- |                                 |        |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| 3.24 Additional work:           |        |
| a) Within normal working hours  | £56.00 |
| b) Outside normal working hours | £84.50 |

Normal working hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm (excluding Bank Holidays)

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| 3.25 Leakage detection advice – cost per hour (where chargeable) | £62.50 |
|--|--------|

3.26	Read a private bye-meter – per read	£29.50
3.27	Missed appointments (no charge for first missed appointment)	£29.50
3.28	Copy accounts – more than one per annum	£7.00
3.29	Special visit to previous occupier or to collect unpaid accounts following final notice	£68.00
3.30	SMS Data loggers	by quotation
3.31	Pressure recording using a data logger	£68.00
3.32	Pre-occupation - A supply connected during construction which is intended for the purposes of providing a service to a Household premises that is not yet occupied, and that is not a building water supply.	£1.0810 per cu.m

## **SECTION 4 - LIABILITY TO PAY CHARGES**

### **Water charges**

- 4.1 Water charges are payable for a property if a supply of water is available for use in connection with that property. It is not necessary for the property itself to be connected to the water supply.

### **Water charges are payable by the occupier of premises**

- 4.2 Where there is more than one occupier of a premises, the Company reserves the right to collect all charges for that property from any one of those occupiers.
- 4.3 Metered charges will be payable by the person(s) who have signed the measured charges notice or who have been identified as the occupier of the premises supplied. Where a supply is subject to a short-term tenancy, i.e. less than six months, we may, at our discretion, bill the owner or agent directly.
- 4.4 We will charge the owner or agent of any multiple properties or properties that: fall within the definition of a house in multiple occupation as defined by the Department for Communities and Local Government or Local Authorities; and are supplied through a single meter.
- 4.5 The Company reserves the right to require separation of supplies as provided in the Water Industry Act where multiple properties share a single metered supply and,  
a) There is no apparent single owner or agent and,  
b) No one will accept responsibility for the water charges.
- 4.6 Unmetered charges will be payable by the person(s) who have been identified as the occupier of the premises supplied. Where a supply is subject to a short-term tenancy, i.e. less than six months, we may, at our discretion, bill the owner or agent directly.
- 4.7 We will charge the owner or agent of any multiple properties or houses of multiple occupation which are charged using a single rateable value.

### **Bulk metered household supplies**

- 4.8 If a bulk meter supplies a number of dwellings, for example a block of flats, the person, company or management agent who pays the bill is the customer. The individual residents of the property are not defined in law as our customers.
- 4.9 Residents of properties who pay for water through a private by meter and who are not directly connected to our network are not defined in law as our customers.
- 4.10 Where a bill payer recharges the cost of water to individual residents within a property the price that can be charged is governed by the Water Industry Act, Section 150 – The Water Resale Order 2006. For further details see Ofwat's leaflet 'A guide to water resale'.

### **Liability for charges for unoccupied properties**

- 4.11 Where an unmetered property is unoccupied the full charge remains payable unless the supply is disconnected. Please note that our standard re-connection charge will apply when re-connection is requested. If a customer wishes to retain the supply but does not wish to pay the full unmetered charge, they may opt to serve a measured charges notice (see Section 8).
- 4.12 Where an unoccupied unmetered property shares a supply and therefore cannot be turned off or easily metered, we will require access to the property to ensure that it is unfurnished. The full charge will remain payable until such time as access is granted to survey the property. The full charge will also remain payable if the property is not totally unfurnished.

4.13 Where a metered property is unoccupied the full charge remains payable unless the supply is turned off. However, water volume charges will reflect the actual use recorded by the meter.

#### **Discretionary waiver**

4.14 Under certain limited circumstances, the Company may grant a discretionary waiver of the rateable value element of an unmetered charge. Examples include:

- a) If a customer's estate is subject to probate and the supply is required for nominal use, for example for central heating, or
- b) If a customer who lives alone is either hospitalised or enters a nursing home for the foreseeable future and the supply is required for nominal use, for example for central heating.

4.15 In these cases we will, on written application from the customer or their representative, waive rateable value charges for the remainder of the prevailing billing period (ending 31 March). Customers or their representatives must reapply in writing at the beginning of each charging year on 1 April. Applications will not be backdated any further than one month.

4.16 Where the customer is required to vacate the property as a result of an emergency or exceptional circumstances, the Company will decide whether the situation satisfies the criteria (and is therefore eligible for the waiver) and will also decide the terms of the agreement.

#### **Liability for charges on change of occupancy**

4.17 If a customer wishes the supply of water to be transferred to another customer, a minimum of two working days' notice in writing or by phone must be given to the Company.

4.18 Where a customer vacates a property without informing the Company, we will pass any closing account to a third party to trace the customer and collect the outstanding debt. We will pass all costs incurred to the customer.

4.19 If a new occupier fails to advise us of their move to the premises, we will backdate charges to the date of occupation once the identity of the occupier is established.

4.20 If the property becomes metered as a result of a change of occupier, metered charges based on the new meter will commence from the date of installation. Once the meter has been installed, we will raise a backdated charge covering the date of occupation to the date of installation. This charge will be calculated using the previous unmetered charge. The meter will be installed within 60 days of the change of occupier.

#### **Houses in multiple occupation**

4.21 The landlord of a property falling under the definition of a house in multiple occupation (HMO) as described by the Department for Communities and Local Government will be held liable for all water charges relating to that property.

## **SECTION 5 - HOW CHARGES ARE APPLIED**

- 5.1 The previous section explained legal liability to pay charges. This section sets out how the Company will apply the charges contained in this Charges Scheme.
- 5.2 Under the Water Industry Act 1999, the Company must charge occupiers of dwellings in accordance with this Charges Scheme. The Act removed the right of the Company to charge by agreement on dwellings but any agreements made prior to 1 April 2000 are not affected by the legislation.

### **The Metered Charges**

- 5.3 Where the occupier of a property at which a meter has been installed is liable to pay water charges the standard metered charges will apply unless there is an agreement between the Company and a customer to pay a different tariff; or the Company has confirmed to a customer that unmetered charges will apply; or a domestic customer who served a Measured Charges Notice on the Company within 24 months of so doing serves another notice that she or he wishes to revert to unmetered charges (see Section 8).
- 5.4 The standard metered charges will also apply where a customer moves into a property at which a meter has been installed previously even if the out-going occupier of the property was not paying metered charges.

### **The Unmetered Charges**

- 5.5 Where the occupier of a property is liable to pay water charges and a meter has not been installed at the property, the standard unmetered charges, or the relevant assessed metered charge, or any special unmetered tariff set out in this Scheme will apply.
- 5.6 The standard unmetered tariff will apply also where a domestic customer who has served a Measured Charges Notice on the Company has within 24 months of so doing served another notice that she or he wishes to revert to unmetered charges (see Section 8).
- 5.7 Where a property is wholly or partly its occupier's home, unmetered charges will continue to apply until such time as either:
- a) the occupier serves a Measured Charges Notice (see Section 8) on the Company requiring it to install a meter and bill her or him on the metered basis. Unmetered charges will continue to apply and be payable up to the date the meter is installed; or
  - b) the Company determines that water is being used, or is to be used, for one or more of the non-domestic purposes which would entitle the Company to require the water supply to be metered under Regulations made by the Secretary of State for the Environment (see Section 9). Again unmetered charges will continue to apply and be payable up to the date the meter is installed.
- 5.8 The Company will continue to use rateable values for household customers where a meter is not in place, unless a change of occupier has taken place and no charges have yet been demanded from the new occupier, in which case we may fit a meter if we believe that the new occupier would benefit from a meter (see Section 9).
- 5.9 Where the occupier of a property for which Assessed Metered Charges are being paid vacates the property, the new occupier will be charged unmetered charges. The new occupier will be entitled to serve a measured charges notice should they wish (see Section 8).

## **Water charges**

- 5.10 For both measured and unmeasured water charges, the fact that a property might receive its water through a shared private service pipe does not affect liability to pay the standard charges in full and no reduction will be made to the standard charges.
- 5.11 Where there is a change of use of water supplied by a part-common supply pipe to two or more premises in separate occupation, the charges for the supply to the premises on which the change of use has taken place will be metered charges, and the person chargeable for the supply must provide for the separation of the common supply and the installation of a meter on the separate supply to the premises.
- 5.12 In cases where the supply has not been separated, we will not split the existing bill unless, at our discretion, we feel there are reasonable grounds to do so. We will therefore collect all charges for the property in question from any one of the occupiers.

## **Assessed Charges for domestic customers**

- 5.13 Where a meter cannot be installed due to unreasonable costs or impracticality as described in Section 8 Assessed Meter Charges will be granted. A single person Assessed Meter Charge will be granted only where a customer provides evidence of entitlement to a single person discount for Council Tax purposes.

## **Water for fire fighting**

- 5.14 No charge is made for the availability of the supply of water, or water taken for fire fighting purposes, the testing and maintenance of fire hydrants and the testing of fire fighting equipment.

## SECTION 6 - THE WATERSURE TARIFF

### What is the WaterSure Tariff?

- 6.1 Based on our average charge for household customers, the WaterSure tariff is designed to assist metered household customers in receipt of certain state benefits who may have a high level of essential use either because of a medical condition or because they have a large family. Eligible customers are charged the lower of the actual metered charge and the WaterSure tariff.
- 6.2 For example, the annual charge for a property where water consumption is 250 cubic metres per annum and the customer is charged using the WaterSure tariff would be £143.99. Whereas if the customer were charged at the standard metered tariff the annual charge would be £296.55.
- 6.3 If a customer who satisfies the eligibility criteria applies for a meter in order to benefit from the tariff, but we are unable to fit one, the customer will be offered an assessed metered basis of charge, thus entitling them to the WaterSure tariff.

### Who qualifies for the WaterSure Tariff?

- 6.4 To qualify, a customer must be in receipt of one, or more, of the following income-related benefits:
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
  - Income Support
  - Working Tax Credit
  - Child Tax Credit (except families in receipt of the family element only)
  - Universal Credit
  - Housing Benefit
  - Pension Credit
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- 6.5 In addition, the customer must also meet either the medical conditions or social conditions set out below.

#### Medical conditions

- 6.6 The customer, their child, or another person residing with them in the premises (whether or not the same person as the qualifying person) suffers from one of the following medical conditions which requires them to use a significant additional amount of water:
- Desquamating conditions (flaky skin loss)
  - Weeping skin disease (eczema, psoriasis, varicose ulceration)
  - Incontinence
  - Abdominal stomas
  - Crohn's disease
  - Ulcerative colitis
  - Renal failure requiring home dialysis (except where the health authority makes a contribution to the cost of water used in the process of dialysis during the billing period)
- 6.7 There may also be other medical conditions which result in significant additional water usage. An application for assistance for a condition other than those listed above should be supported by a registered medical practitioner's certificate confirming that the customer (or their child or another person residing in the premises) has a condition that requires them to use a significant additional amount of water.

- 6.8 A registered medical practitioner's certificate should bear the signature of the registered medical practitioner and contain the following details:
- The name of the patient
  - The diagnosis of the condition the application relates to
  - The date
  - The name and address of the medical practitioner
- 6.9 If we do not receive a certificate we will refuse the application.

#### Social conditions – large families

- 6.10 The customer has three or more children under the age of 19 living with them permanently in the premises for whom they receive child benefit.

#### **Application information**

- 6.11 An application form can be obtained by calling Customer Services or downloaded from our website.
- 6.12 An application form must be completed and returned each year for the tariff to remain in place.
- 6.13 Proof of entitlement such as entitlement notices or benefit books must be provided before switching to WaterSure.
- 6.14 The company may contact a customer's registered medical practitioner before agreeing an application for a condition other than those listed in paragraph 6.6.
- 6.15 We may refuse an application if all qualification criteria are not met.
- 6.16 Customers with swimming pools and/or garden sprinkler or unattended garden watering systems are not entitled to the WaterSure tariff. Random checks are made to ensure the validity of data on application forms.
- 6.17 A random selection of customers on file is checked on a quarterly basis. These customers are looked at in greater detail and if it is felt appropriate to carry out further checks we will do so. This could take the form of contact with a registered medical practitioner, JobCentre Plus or a home visit by a Customer Counsellor.
- 6.18 The application form carries a warning that these checks will be made.
- 6.19 At the time of application we will also check for the following:
- Ambiguity of information e.g. for medical conditions or relating to residential address
  - Relevant dates are appropriate
  - Completeness of form
  - Inclusion in our Priority Services Register
  - Previous Correspondence, bill levels and payment history

#### **Qualifying time**

- 6.20 If the application is successful, the tariff is implemented from the beginning of the billing period in which the application is made.
- 6.21 Customers are only entitled to remain on the WaterSure tariff as long as the conditions are met.
- 6.22 A new application must be completed each year, the Company will ensure that customers are reminded of the need to do this.

6.23 Where the conditions fail to be met or where the customer advises us that their circumstances (and therefore their eligibility) have changed, we will switch the customer back to a standard tariff with effect from the next billing period (i.e. the next account for which a meter reading is required).

## SECTION 7 - THE WATERCARE TARIFF

### The WaterCare Tariff

7.1 The WaterCare Tariff is available for the following groups of **metered** customers:

Customers who are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits (or who have someone else resident in their household in receipt of the benefit(s)):

- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-based Job-seeker's Allowance
- Income-related employment and support allowance (or Income Support if still being paid)
- Pension Credit (Guaranteed element only)
- Universal Credit (Housing element)

7.2 In addition to the qualifying benefits listed above, the household income, after housing costs (AHC) have been deducted will be taken into account along with the household size and composition. The Tariff uses equivalised\* incomes to assess customers eligibility. See 7.4 below.

7.3 The WaterCare Tariff will not be available:

- a) where the premises for which water charges are payable is not the only or principal home of the consumer and any other qualifying person; or
- b) where premises are not used solely as a person's home, the other use is the principal use of the premises; or
- c) where water supplied to the premises is used to water a garden by means other than a hand-held hosepipe or for automatically replenishing a swimming pool or pond with a capacity greater than 10,000 litres.

### How much is the WaterCare Tariff?

7.4 The Tariff is made up of three bands offering a percentage reduction off the standard metered charges. Customers will be placed on to one of the WaterCare tariff bands appropriate to their household circumstances based on the qualifying criteria listed in 7.1 and 7.2.

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
Equivalised weekly household income level (AHC)*	<£170	<£235	<£295
Tariff reduction	50%	25%	15%

7.5 The WaterCare Tariff will be charged according to the services that the customer receives. Where a customer is eligible for the WaterCare Tariff but is unable to have a meter fitted – see section 8, they will be placed on the appropriate WaterCare assessed charge relevant to the occupancy level of the household, taking into account the qualifying criteria listed in 7.1, 7.2 and 7.4. The charges for 2019/20 can be found in Section 2 – support tariff charges.

7.6 Where a customer is only eligible for the WaterCare Tariff for part of the year, the amount payable will be worked out on a daily basis (see paragraphs 7.12 to 7.17 for details of the qualifying times for the Tariff).

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\* Equivalisation is a technique for adjusting actual money incomes according to the size and composition of a household.

## **Applying for the WaterCare Tariff**

- 7.7 A form to apply for the WaterCare Tariff can be obtained from our website [bournemouthwater.co.uk](http://bournemouthwater.co.uk) or through the Citizens Advice website: [citizensadviceplymouth.org.uk](http://citizensadviceplymouth.org.uk) or by telephoning our Customer Service Helpline.
- 7.8 The WaterCare Tariff application process will be administered by Citizens Advice who will carry out an income assessment along with using the required evidence of entitlement to ensure that qualifying customers are billed the right WaterCare Tariff appropriate to their circumstances and in line with the criteria listed in 7.1, 7.2 and 7.4.
- 7.9 A customer will not qualify for the WaterCare Tariff until the Company has received a completed form together with the required evidence of entitlement. Evidence will be:
- Photocopies of the latest entitlement notice for the qualifying benefit(s). The notice(s) must be dated less than 12 months before the date of the application for assistance.
  - Photocopies of the qualifying households latest bank statements covering a period of not less than three months. (This is required to carry out a household income assessment)
- 7.10 The application form will include a section you must complete authorising the Citizens Advice Bureau to contact Jobcentre Plus to verify the information on the form.
- 7.11 The Company will verify claims where it has any doubts as to whether the required criteria are met and, it will also carry out random audits of an appropriate percentage of applications annually by verifying applications with Jobcentre Plus to deter fraudulent applications.

## **Qualifying time**

- 7.12 Customers may apply for the WaterCare Tariff at any time in the charging year and provided they are eligible for the Tariff at the time of applying, the Tariff will be applied from the date of the last meter reading held by the Company.
- 7.13 A registration will last only for 12 months and will end at the date of the first scheduled meter reading taken by the Company after 12 months.
- 7.14 Customers will be required to renew their application for the WaterCare Tariff if they remain eligible for the Tariff after 12 months. The Company will automatically make contact with all customers registered on its records to pay the Tariff two months before their eligibility expires in order to establish continued eligibility.
- 7.15 If customers do not renew, or no longer qualify, their accounts will be transferred automatically to the standard measured tariff with effect from the date of the first scheduled meter reading taken by the Company after eligibility for the WaterCare Tariff has expired.
- 7.16 Where the Company is notified part way through the charging year that a customer no longer qualifies for the WaterCare Tariff, that customer's account will revert to the standard metered tariff with effect from the date of the next scheduled meter reading to be taken by the Company.
- 7.17 There is no limit to the number of years a customer may pay the WaterCare Tariff subject to the required criteria set out in this section being met annually.

## **SECTION 8 - HAVING A WATER METER INSTALLED**

- 8.1 A customer paying unmetered charges may choose to have a meter installed and pay metered charges, subject to paragraphs 8.14 to 8.18.
- 8.2 Only meters provided by the Company will be accepted for charging purposes and regardless of where they are installed, meters remain the property and responsibility of the Company.
- 8.3 Where a customer's property is connected to the main drainage, recorded water consumption will also be used to calculate their sewerage charge. Customers should contact their sewerage provider for details of how the sewerage charge will be calculated.
- 8.4 The customer will be charged on the metered tariff from the date on which the Company installs the meter, or in the case of a new water connection to our supply from the earlier of the date of occupation or the date the customer begins to receive a water supply.

### **Right to a free meter and how to apply**

- 8.5 For any premises in which a customer has a home, the Company is required to install a meter free of charge (as long as it is practical so to do and the cost of installation is not unreasonable) if a customer serves a Measured Charges Notice on the Company.
- 8.6 A Measured Charges Notice is a form provided by the Company. The form will be sent to customers on request along with a Your Option to Meter Leaflet which will allow customers to work out the effect of a meter on their charges. The form and leaflet can be downloaded from, or completed and submitted on, our website [bournemouthwater.co.uk](http://bournemouthwater.co.uk) or from our Customer Services Helpline.
- 8.7 The Company will only consider that it has received a "Measured Charges Notice" when it receives the signed and completed form it has provided for this purpose, whether by hard copy or online application.
- 8.8 Where a block of flats is supplied by a single unmetered supply pipe, the residents may ask the managing agents or residents' association to apply for a communal meter to be installed. Where there is more than one supply we will consider the installation of a second meter provided this does not entail disproportionate costs. Meters will be installed free of charge provided it is practical to do so and the costs are not unreasonable (see paragraph 8.15)
- 8.9 Where multiple dwellings such as blocks of flats and caravan sites are already supplied through a single bulk meter and hence, each individual dwelling is not connected directly to the Company's supply network, the right to a free meter does not apply. Residents who wish to have their own individual meter should contact the payer of the metered account.
- 8.10 Tenants, with the exception of those in a fixed tenancy of less than six months, do not require written permission from their landlord before they can apply for a meter but this should not preclude them from informing their landlord.

### **Timescale to install a meter**

- 8.11 The Company will install the meter within 60 days of receipt of the Measured Charges Notice.
- 8.12 If it does not, the Company will not apply the rateable value charge from the 61<sup>st</sup> day until the meter is fitted. Additionally the Company will credit the customer's account with £10.
- 8.13 Where the Company is not at fault for the failure to install a meter within the timescale set out in paragraph 8.11 no compensation will be paid.

## **Cases where the cost of installing a meter would be unreasonable or installation would be impractical**

- 8.14 Where the cost of installation is not reasonable or it is impractical to install a meter the Company cannot be required to install one.
- 8.15 Unreasonable expense includes:
- The costs of separation of a supply pipe if it is shared with other customers
  - The cost of installing more than one meter (where there is more than one supply, we will consider the installation of a second meter provided this does not entail disproportionate costs)
  - The cost of alterations to existing plumbing
- 8.16 In terms of practicality, the Company will usually consider it impractical to install a meter where:
- a) a single meter will not record all water used in a property; or
  - b) a meter will also record water used in another property.
- 8.17 Any dispute about a Company decision not to install a meter because of unreasonable cost or impracticality can be referred to the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat), Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham, B5 4UA by either party. Ofwat will make a binding decision.
- 8.18 Where the plumbing is complex and the costs of installing a meter are unreasonable, we will offer an assessed meter charge (see below). Alternatively, customers can still elect to have a meter provided they arrange at their own expense to make any plumbing or other alterations necessary to enable the free fitting of the meter. In the case of multi-occupied premises, the occupiers may form a management committee and thereby elect to have a single meter installed at the boundary box free of charge.

## **Meter location**

- 8.19 A meter must be installed in accordance with the Water (Meters) Regulations 1988 at a position where it records all use within the property for which it has been installed. It must also be accessible for meter reading.
- 8.20 The meter location is at our discretion and while we will try to agree the location with the customer, the final decision will rest with the Company. The meter will usually be installed in one of three locations:
- Outside the customer's property in a boundary box. This may be on the footpath outside the customer's property. This is the Company's preferred location
  - Outside the customer's home in soft ground. This will be as close to the boundary of the customer's property as possible, provided that the pipe runs under soft ground, for example, a flowerbed or lawn.
  - Inside the customer's home. This will be where the customer's water supply pipe enters their property, normally next to the stop tap, provided the pipe is easily accessible. Internal meters may be provided with an outread facility which is normally placed on the outside wall, to enable the meter to be read without entering the customer's home.
- 8.21 Internal installation will only be used where external installation is not appropriate. In particular, we will use our discretion in the case of vulnerable customers where external installation is possible but is not necessarily appropriate for the customer's personal circumstances.
- 8.22 Where the supply is to a block of flats and is shared, the meter will be fitted internally provided:

- The plumbing system in the flat is self contained with no shared communal storage tanks
- There is a suitable area outside the flat to install the meter where it can be read either directly or through an outread facility
- Permission has been given by the owners to install the outread facility or change the boundary box if it is located inside the boundary of the property
- No bulk supply arrangement exists (see paragraph 8.9)

8.23 Where the Company has used its right to decide a meter location but a customer requires the meter to be located in a different place, the customer may have the meter located in her or his preferred location provided that she or he pays any additional costs of installing the meter in the location requested rather than the location identified by the Company. The Company will consider waiving these costs where a customer with special needs requests a different meter location so it can be read more easily.

8.24 Requests to alter the position of a meter must be made in writing to Bournemouth Water, George Jessel House, Francis Avenue, Bournemouth BH11 8NX. The Company will provide a quote to the customer for the additional work requested and payment will be required in advance of installing the meter.

8.25 Disputes about meter location; requests for alternative positioning of a meter or out-reader; and the cost of an alternative position may also be referred to the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat).

#### **What will happen if a meter cannot be installed?**

8.26 If a meter cannot be installed for reasons of cost or practicality the Company will offer the occupier of the property the option of being charged on an assessed basis rather than by rateable value.

8.27 The Assessed Meter Charges will be:

- Single Person Assessed Charge
- Two person Assessed Charge
- Three person Assessed Charge
- Four person Assessed Charge
- Five person Assessed Charge
- Where a household comprises more than five persons an additional charge will be levied per occupant.

8.28 An Assessed Meter Charge will not be offered where pipework is boxed-in internally. Pipework must be made accessible in line with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999. If a customer does not wish their cupboards to be cut in to or does not wish to make pipework or stop taps accessible an assessed meter charge will not be offered if a meter cannot be installed.

8.29 Where we cannot install a meter and a customer has chosen to pay on the basis of an assessed metered charge, the Company reserves the right to periodically reassess the feasibility of fitting a meter at the property.

8.30 If it is established that a meter can be installed at reasonable cost, we will fit a meter unless the customer refuses.

8.31 Where a customer refuses to have a meter fitted following reassessment the Company will require the customer to revert to an unmetered basis of charge.

8.32 Any customer choosing to accept the meter will be entitled to revert to an unmetered charge as set out in paragraphs 8.33 – 8.35.

## Reverting to Rateable Value charges

8.33 Following the installation of a water meter because a customer has served a Measured Charges Notice on the Company, the customer who served the Notice (or if that customer has left the property, anybody else who was resident in the property at the time the Notice was served) can serve a further notice requesting that charges revert to the unmetered rateable value basis provided that:

- a) The notice requesting reversion is served on the Company within 24 months of the date on which the meter was installed (a reminder will be sent to customers before the 24 months have passed); and
- b) The person serving the notice has not previously requested that the property reverts to unmeasured charges after asking to be charged on a metered basis (that is for the same property a customer may ask to pay measured charges; ask to revert to unmeasured charges; and ask to pay measured charges again but after this second request to pay measured charges there is no right to revert to unmeasured charges again)

8.34 In accordance with The Water Industry (Prescribed Conditions) Regulations 1999 a customer will not have a right to revert to unmetered charges if her or his property contains one or more of the following water using appliances:

- a unit incorporating reverse osmosis (eg a water softening unit);
- a garden watering system which is not designed to be operated by hand (this includes garden sprinklers as well as any piped system **except** hand held hosepipes);
- a swimming pool or pond with a capacity greater than 10,000 litres which is replenished with water automatically; and
- a bath with a capacity greater than 230 litres (as measured to the centre line of overflow).

8.35 Should customers exercise their right to revert to unmetered charges after a meter has been installed, the meter will not be removed. If the property is sold or there is a change of tenant, the new occupier will be charged on a metered basis.

## **SECTION 9 - COMPULSORY METERING OF SUPPLIES TO HOUSEHOLD PROPERTIES**

9.1 The Company requires that a supply of water in any of the following scenarios must be provided only through a meter and be subject to the charges for metered supplies.

### **Pre-existing meter**

9.2 Where a meter is installed on a water supply to any premises, metered charges will apply. This will be subject to the customer's right of reversion as detailed in Section 8.

### **Discretionary use**

9.3 Where water is required for discretionary purposes, i.e. non-domestic purposes at a house including a water supply to a swimming pool (irrespective of size), or where a garden sprinkler, irrigation, seep hose system, or any automatic garden watering device is used. For practical purposes the whole supply will be metered. This also applies to ponds, lakes or other structures used to contain or store water.

9.4 For properties where a shower unit of a type specified under Paragraph 4 of the Table to Regulation 5 of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 is installed.

9.5 For premises that have a bath with a capacity in excess of 230 litres (a standard bath has a capacity of 80 litres).

9.6 Where water is used in any water softening unit incorporating reverse osmosis within a property.

9.7 There will be no right of reversion to unmeasured charges for the occupier of a property at which a meter was installed compulsorily under 9.3 - 9.6.

### **Change of occupier**

9.8 Where there has been a change of occupier at an unmetered household property and no charges have been raised to the new occupier, the Company may install a meter if we believe that the new occupier would pay less than they would on an unmetered basis. If, after 24 months, the customer has not benefitted from the meter we will convert the account to an unmetered basis.

### **Where we cannot install a meter**

9.9 Where, upon surveying for the purposes of installing a meter under the conditions of this Section, the Company determines that it is not practicable to install a meter, we may offer the customer the option of an assessed meter charge or to be charged by reference to the rateable value of the property.

9.10 Any offer of the above is wholly dependent on the nature of the water use and will be adopted solely at the Company's discretion

## **SECTION 10 - OTHER MATTERS FOR CUSTOMERS PAYING METERED CHARGES**

### **Access to the water meter**

- 10.1 The meter remains the property of Bournemouth Water and under Sections 162 and 172 of the Water Industry Act, the customer must allow us access to it whenever reasonably requested. It is a criminal offence to interfere with any meter or any other apparatus belonging to the Company.
- 10.2 The Company makes every effort to read all our meters during the Charging Year (beginning 1 April and ending 31 March).
- 10.3 Where access to the meter is not freely available this can result in a number of visits and attempts to contact the customer. If after three unsuccessful visits to gain access and three auditable written requests to the customer the meter remains unread, we will charge the customer £62.50 for our time.
- 10.4 Continued failure to allow the Company access may result in relocation of the meter to a more accessible position and passing the cost of doing so on to the customer.

### **Leakage from underground pipework**

- 10.5 Where a meter is installed externally it will record any leakage from the private underground service pipe between the meter and a property. If this happens a large bill may result. The customer is liable for the cost of all water recorded as passing through a meter and for repairing all leaks on their pipework (which may come before the meter) and within their property.
- 10.6 Full details of Bournemouth Water's policy on leakage, including allowances and assistance available, are set out in its Code of Practice on Leakage for Household Properties A copy of this document can be downloaded from our website [bournemouthwater.co.uk](http://bournemouthwater.co.uk) or obtained free of charge from our Customer Service Helpline.
- 10.7 Any leak allowance is given at the Company's discretion and is subject to the following conditions:
  - a) Only one leak allowance will be granted to the same customer at the same property in any five-year period
  - b) The leak must be repaired in line with our Code of Practice on Leakage for Household Customers. This may be when the customer discovers they have a leak or when the Company advises them that they have an unusually high meter reading.
  - c) The leakage is not as a result of negligence by either the customer or their agents.
- 10.8 Customers should note that if their account is in arrears due to non-payment of previous accounts not associated with the wasted water, we will offset any allowance we may choose to make against the outstanding arrears.
- 10.9 Notwithstanding the terms and conditions of a tenancy agreement, under Sections 10 and 11 of the Landlord and Tenants Act 1985, landlords are responsible for the upkeep of their properties. This includes the upkeep of internal and external water and sewerage pipes. Where possible under sections 73-75 of the Water Industry Act, we will hold the landlord of a property fully responsible for the repair of any internal or external leaks at their property and for payment of water wasted from leaks that are not covered by our leakage policies.
- 10.10 Where, in the case of a metered account, the customer continues to dispute the use recorded by the water meter after our representative has verified the meter reading and has checked and found no evidence of leakage, we will offer to data log the meter and analyse the findings. This will be charged at £68.00 which will be refunded if leakage is subsequently located.

## **Issuing of bills when it has not been possible to read a meter**

- 10.11 Should the Company not be able to read a meter when it is due to read it, an estimated bill will be issued. The estimate for the period for which the bill is issued will be based on past consumption at the property.
- 10.12 Customers receiving an estimated bill may read their meters and give us their meter reading either by calling us on 01202 590059 or via the online form at [bournemouthwater.co.uk](http://bournemouthwater.co.uk) under 'Water Meters'. A replacement bill based on the customer's reading will be issued.

## **Queries over the accuracy of a meter**

- 10.13 In accordance with the provisions of the Water (Meters) Regulations 1988, a customer who believes the meter supplying her or his property is faulty may require the Company to test the accuracy of a meter. However there will be a charge for this if the test shows that the meter is correctly recording use.
- 10.14 If a customer believes that their meter is recording incorrectly, we will remove it and arrange for it to be independently tested.
- 10.15 If the test confirms that the meter is inaccurate beyond the manufacturer's tolerances we will install a new meter free of charge.
- 10.16 Where the test shows that the meter is working within the manufacturer's standards a charge will be payable. That charge will not exceed £70.
- 10.17 Except where it is proved to have started registering incorrectly on a later date, a meter which is found to be registering inaccurately (beyond the manufacturer's standards) will be deemed to have been faulty since the penultimate time it was read by the Company. In such cases charges will be adjusted accordingly.
- 10.18 Any dispute about any matter arising from this section about meter testing may be referred to the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat), Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham, B5 4UA.

## **Reduction of meter size**

- 10.19 The Company will downsize a household meter that is larger than 20mm if the customer requests the reduction in writing. However, should the customer subsequently request to upsize the meter for any reason, we will charge for the work involved in doing so.
- 10.20 The Company may also downsize a meter at our discretion.

## SECTION 11 - PAYMENT OF WATER CHARGES

### Unmetered water charges

- 11.1 The annual charge for the water supplied to any premises other than through a meter is payable annually in advance on 1 April unless the customer has agreed with the Company for payment to be made:
- By two instalments on 1 April and 1 October, or
  - By ten instalments, via direct debit or PayPoint card.
- 11.2 If a customer pays by instalments, payments are due on the first, eighth, fifteenth or twenty-second day of the month commencing in April.
- 11.3 Payment by instalments will cease to be available if payment is not made on the due date, whereupon the outstanding full year's charges will become payable. In addition, if the first instalment is not paid by 31 May, any instalment facility will be withdrawn and the full year's charges will become due and payable.
- 11.4 For customers who have difficulty paying their bill, more frequent payment arrangements are available. We offer monthly, fortnightly and weekly instalments to suit their needs. Further information is available from Customer Service.
- 11.5 In the case of a new customer's first bill, payment is due immediately on receipt of the bill.

### Measured water charges

- 11.6 Measured charges are payable in arrears and unless a customer has agreed a different payment arrangement with the Company, they are payable immediately on receipt of the bill. Most customers paying a metered charge will be billed on a half-yearly basis. Some may be billed monthly. The charge will be the same regardless of billing frequency.
- 11.7 Charges may be paid, by prior arrangement with the Company, in 12 equal instalments payable on the first, eighth, fifteenth or twenty-second day of each month.
- 11.8 More frequent payments, such as weekly or fortnightly may be available. Contact Customer Service for further advice.

### Payment facilities

- 11.9 The payment methods, which are described on customers' bills, are as follows. All methods are available to customers using different payment frequencies. Cheques or postal orders should be made payable to Bournemouth Water.
- **At a bank** – customers should complete the payment slip and hand in the whole bill with payment. The bank will stamp the bill and give it back as proof of payment. If customers pay by cheque at their own branch or at any branch of Lloyds within our area of supply, the bank will not normally make a charge.
  - **By post** – The payment slip should be sent with the cheque or postal order unless a receipt is required. In this case, the whole bill should be sent and a receipt requested. All cheques are banked on receipt and any cost arising from irregularities or post dating is solely at the customer's expense.
  - **Direct debit** – customers can spread payment of their water bill over ten months from April to January in the case of unmetered customers and twelve months in the case of metered budget schemes (in the first year this may vary depending on when we can set up their instructions). Direct debits will be collected on either the first, eighth, fifteenth or twenty-second of the month at the customer's choice. Subject to demand, more dates

may be available so customers should enquire about availability by calling us or via the website. Direct debit instructions can be taken by phone or through our website.

- **Credit and debit card** – customers may make payment by credit or debit card by calling our 24 hour automated payment line on 0800 3895110.
- **PayPoint** – the Bournemouth Water payment card can be used to pay water bills by instalment at over 100 PayPoint outlets within our region and a further 20,000 throughout the UK. This service is free of charge.
- **BillPay** – this is a payment method offered in partnership with Santander Bank that allows customers to make a secure payment over the internet using their credit or debit card. The service is free to use and is available 24 hours a day throughout the year. Users must be a customer of a UK bank or building society, hold a debit or credit card and have an active email address. New users will be asked to complete a registration form online.
- **At a Post Office** – customers should fill in the payment slip and hand in the whole bill with their cash payment (cheques are not accepted). The bill will be stamped by the Post Office and returned to the customer as proof of payment. The Post Office makes a charge for this service.
- **Phone and internet banking** – payment should be credited to bank account number 02398451 sort code 30-00-00. Customers should ensure that they quote their customer account number. This consists of eleven digits and is clearly marked on the bill.
- **Standing order** – for customers unable to pay by direct debit we will, at our discretion, agree payment plans by standing order. The frequencies of any such plans will be tailored to the customer's circumstances.
- **Using Water Direct** – if a customer cannot pay their bill and is in receipt of certain benefits, JobCentre Plus may pay their bill directly out of their benefits to us. If the customer agrees to this method of payment, JobCentre Plus will take a fixed amount from their benefits to pay any amount they owe and to cover current charges. If customers wish to use this facility they should contact us or their JobCentre Plus office directly.

11.10 Where there is an outstanding sum due and a customer cancels a direct debit or standing order agreement without informing the Company, we may make an administration charge of up to £16.00.

### **Billing adjustments**

11.11 While the Company strives to ensure that all bills for charges are correct, in the case of error we reserve the right to make retrospective adjustments. This will always happen if the adjustment is in the customer's favour.

11.12 The Company will not make retrospective adjustments in our favour if there is clear evidence that undercharging has been due to a failure or error on our part.

### **Collection of outstanding household charges**

11.13 Where there is more than one occupier of either a metered or unmetered premises, the Company reserves the right to collect all charges for that property from any one of those occupiers irrespective of whether or not they are named on the account.

11.14 Where premises are unoccupied, the owner or other person responsible will be liable to pay water services charges in accordance with section 4.

- 11.15 The Company pursues a policy of enforcement for payment of the charges demanded. This is for the benefit of the majority of customers who pay promptly. Non-payment of charges will result in the pursuance of the outstanding charges through the courts.
- 11.16 Where a customer has not responded to our attempts to communicate with them prior to legal action, the costs associated with any visits and interviews to establish the customer's financial circumstances may, at the Company's discretion, be passed on to the customer. These visits and interviews are intended to reduce the likelihood of court action and amount to less than court costs.
- 11.17 If the actions in paragraph 11.16 fail to result in settlement of the debt or an agreed repayment plan, legal action against the customer will be taken. The Company reserves the right to pass all costs incurred in respect of legal action to the customer. In addition, the Statutory Interest at 8% (pursuant to Section 69 of the County Courts Act 1984) will be added to debts outstanding from the previous regulatory year and beyond. Customers should note that these costs are in addition to costs incurred under paragraph 11.16.
- 11.18 The Company reserves the right to pass collection of outstanding debts to a third party collection agency which will operate to our standards and codes of practice.
- 11.19 Anyone experiencing difficulties in meeting payments demanded should contact the Company without delay. Our 'Code of practice on recovery of domestic water debt' is available on request from Customer Service or via our website.
- 11.20 Where the Company believes genuine hardship exists, none of the above costs will be passed on to the customer. Additionally the Company will work to assist the customer concerned through for example, payment arrangements or referral to various free independent debt advice organizations.
- 11.21 In extreme cases we may be able to offer financial assistance to help towards payment of a customer's water bill. See 'Our Code of practice on recovery of domestic water debt' for details of the help available.
- 11.22 For tenanted properties, where
- A current tenant vacates
  - A change of tenant takes place, or
  - A new tenant occupies a previously empty property, AND
  - The landlord or agent fails to inform the Company within 14 calendar days of the tenancy change and we cannot subsequently recover the debt owed by any tenant, we may pursue the landlord or agent for payment
- 11.23 Action taken under paragraph 11.22 may result in debts for more than one tenant at the same property being pursued.
- 11.24 A national scheme designed to help landlords inform us of tenant changes has been introduced. The Landlord Tenant Address Portal for water billing in England and Wales or Landlord Tap as the portal is known, has been devised to allow landlords and managing agents to provide water companies with information about tenants of properties they own or manage in England and Wales. For more information see [www.landlordtap.co.uk](http://www.landlordtap.co.uk)
- 11.25 Landlords or agents of properties let to students must notify the Company so that separate billing arrangements can be made. Failure to do so may result in the landlord being held jointly and severally liable for any uncollectable water charges.

### **Costs incurred during debt recovery**

11.26 All costs, for example, solicitors' costs, court fees, enforcement and warrant costs, incurred by the Company in the collection of outstanding charges will be recharged directly to the Customer.

11.27 If legal action is being considered prior to issuing a claim, the Company will attempt to determine the circumstances of the debtor. This service is designed to be a less costly alternative to legal action. The Company will make an administrative charge of £36.00 plus VAT for this service which is waived if the customer is identified as being in genuine hardship.

11.28 Where we identify outstanding debts from a previous address or addresses, the Company reserves the right to transfer the debt to the customer's current address and require payment in full. The charge for tracing a previous occupier with outstanding debt is £50.50.

### **Discretionary billing arrangements**

11.29 We may agree alternative billing arrangements with owners of multiple premises. Any such agreement will be at the Company's discretion.

## **SECTION 12 – SEARCHES FEES AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REPORTING**

12.1 Searches are available from the suppliers of wastewater services.

### **Environmental Information Reporting**

12.2 The Environmental Information Regulations allow the information provider to make a reasonable charge for providing environmental information.

12.3 Where fees are required, a Fees Notice requesting payment will be issued and no further action will be taken until a fee is received. The time taken to pay the fees does not count as part of the 20 working day target for responding to requests, and it will be necessary to receive the due fee before providing the information requested.

12.4 We may charge for:

- a) Staff time for locating and retrieving information, except where the time spent is minimal
- b) Printing or photocopying costs
- c) Copying to different medias including photographic prints, scanning to CD-ROM, etc – details will be provided when responding to the particular request
- d) Postage or other delivery charges

12.5 We will not charge for:

- a) Information available on the Bournemouth Water website
- b) Copies of any publication (eg leaflets or reports) already made available by the Company
- c) Inspecting public registers or examining information at Bournemouth Water's head office.

12.6 Please note that these charges are correct at 1 April 2019 and will be reviewed to comply with any fees, or charges or regulations published.

12.7 Bournemouth Water reserves the right to waive charges where appropriate.

12.8 The Company charges a fee of £25.00 per hour per person for staff time.  
Charges for photocopying and postage are as specified below.

12.9 The Company may charge for providing other information:

Photocopying/printing	
Black & white A4	£0.085/sheet
Black & white A3	£0.17/sheet
Colour A4	£0.85/sheet
Colour A3	£1.70/sheet

12.10 Where more than 40 sheets are provided, time will also be charged at £12.50 per hour or part hour with a minimum charge of £12.50. Postage will be charged at cost.

12.11 Payment will be required in advance. In some cases where significant amounts of information are being requested, the Company will estimate the cost of provision and reserves the right to charge an additional amount should actual cost vary significantly from the estimate.

12.12 These charges are subject to VAT at the standard rate

## APPENDIX I - CUSTOMER INFORMATION

In addition to this Charges Scheme, which explains Bournemouth Water's charges in detail, Bournemouth Water produces a number of information leaflets and booklets for customers. These can be accessed on our website [bournemouthwater.co.uk](http://bournemouthwater.co.uk) or we will send copies free of charge if you call Customer Services.

The main customer literature is listed below in bold letters and, our website will have details of additional information documents, such as business plans, which are published from time to time.

Our Codes of practice set out information about all of our services and standards of service. Where we guarantee a specific level of service and undertake to make a payment to a customer if we fail to meet it, details are contained in our **Customer Charter Leaflet** which includes our Guaranteed Standards Scheme.

Our **Code of Practice on Leakage for Household Customers** sets out help available for customers who have had a leak on their private underground service pipe in respect of both repairing the pipe and allowances against a large bill.

If you are having problems paying, our **Code of Practice for recovering domestic water debt** explains what we will do to help you and also what we will do if you do not pay.

If you are not on a water meter and are having problems paying, switching to a water meter could reduce your bill. Our **Your Option to Meter Option** leaflet contains the information you need to help you decide whether to switch to a meter. If you are on a water meter and in receipt of certain means tested benefits, you may qualify for one of the Company's tariffs that are in place to support low income families or in the case of the WaterSure Tariff also support customers with certain medical conditions. Our **WaterSure Tariff** or our **WaterCare Tariff** application forms will give you the information you need to see if you qualify for help with your bill.

If your personal circumstances mean that we need to communicate with you in a particular way or provide extra help in emergencies, our **Priority Services** booklet, or audiotape, explains what we can do to help and how to register your needs with us.

Should you ever need to make a complaint, our **Code of practice – how we handle customer complaints** explains how we will deal with your complaint.

Making your home water efficient not only helps to minimise your bill if you are on a water meter but helps protect the region's water environment by stopping the unnecessary use of water. We have a range of **Water Efficiency Tips and Information** for household customers.

Where we need to lay pipes through someone's land, our obligations and your rights are set out in our **Code of Practice for the exercise of pipelaying powers on private land**.

For information on new connections, please see our **New Connections and Developer Services Charging Arrangements**

If you wish to check whether you will pay metered or unmetered charges for a property you are thinking of buying, please contact Customer Service.

## APPENDIX II – CHARGES BREAKDOWN

### TABLE OF CHARGES FOR 2019/20

The following table contains the charges set for recovering the billing and customer service costs for Domestic customers that receive a water service from Bournemouth Water.

Description of Charge	Billing and customer service charge 2019/20	Costs of delivery, treatment charge 2019/20	Total charge for 2019/20 £ (excluding VAT)
<b>Unmeasured Domestic Water Tariff</b>			
1. Standing charge:	26.30	-	26.30
2. Rateable value charge (per £ RV)	-	0.6881	0.6881
<b>Other unmeasured water charges</b>			
1. Unmetered watering points	23.34	51.50	74.84
2. Unmetered domestic swimming pools	23.34	36.72	60.06
<b>Assessed meter charges</b>			
1. Standing charge:	26.30	-	26.30
2. Assessed Charge per cubic meter (Estimated use in cubic meters)			
One person (60)	-	64.86	64.86
Two person (110)	-	118.91	118.91
Three person (150)	-	162.15	162.15
Four person (180)	-	194.58	194.58
Five person (200)	-	216.20	216.20
Each additional occupant (20)	-	21.62	21.62
<b>Measured Domestic Water Tariff</b>			
1. Standing charge:	26.30	-	26.30
2. Consumption charge (per cubic metre)	-	1.0810	1.0810

## TABLE OF CHARGES – SUPPORT TARIFFS 2019/20

The following table contains the charges set for recovering the billing and customer service costs for Domestic customers on either the WaterCare or Watersure tariff

Description of Charge	Billing and customer service charge 2019/20			Costs of delivery, treatment etc charge 2019/20			Charge 2019/20 £ (excluding VAT)		
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
<b>Unmeasured Domestic Water Tariff</b>									
1. WaterCare Tariff Assessed Charge Band									
One Person Assessed Charge (est use 60m <sup>3</sup> )	13.15	19.73	22.36	32.43	48.65	55.13	45.58	68.37	77.49
Two Person Assessed Charge (est use 110m <sup>3</sup> )	13.15	19.73	22.36	59.46	89.18	101.07	72.61	108.91	123.43
Three person Assessed Charge (est use 150m <sup>3</sup> )	13.15	19.73	22.36	81.08	121.61	137.83	94.23	141.34	160.18
Four Person Assessed Charge (est use 180m <sup>3</sup> )	13.15	19.73	22.36	97.29	145.94	165.39	110.44	165.66	187.75
Five Person Assessed Charge (est use 200m <sup>3</sup> )	13.15	19.73	22.36	108.10	162.15	183.77	121.25	181.88	206.13
Each additional occupant (est use 20m <sup>3</sup> )	-	-	-	10.81	16.22	18.38	10.81	16.22	18.38
<b>Measured Domestic Water Tariff</b>									
1. WaterCare Tariff (Fixed charge)									
WaterCare Band 1	13.15			-			13.15		
WaterCare Band 2	19.73			-			19.73		
WaterCare Band 3	22.36			-			22.36		
2. WaterCare Tariff Volume charge (per cubic metre)									
WaterCare Band 1	-			0.5405			0.5405		
WaterCare Band 2	-			0.8108			0.8108		
WaterCare Band 3	-			0.9189			0.9189		
3. WaterSure Tariff annual charge	25.95			118.04			143.99		

**Bournemouth Water**

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Fax 01202 597022

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