

What is site area?



What is site area?

Part of your water and wastewater bill covers the costs of removing the rainwater which falls on your building's roof and any hardstanding areas of your premises or site (surface water drainage), and public roads and pavements (highway drainage).

This water is carried through our network of sewer pipes to be cleaned at one of our treatment works across the North West before being safely returned to rivers and the sea.

If you have been categorised as a non-household customer and you have a water meter, your charges for surface water and highway drainage are based on the area of your premises. This fact sheet provides a simple overview of how we calculate these charges. There is more information on our website at [unitedutilities.com/Business-services/business-customers/site-area](https://www.unitedutilities.com/Business-services/business-customers/site-area).

Can I see my site area map online?

You may be able to see your site area map at [site-area.unitedutilities.com/SiteArea/Terms.aspx](https://www.unitedutilities.com/SiteArea/Terms.aspx). You will need your wastewater supply point identifier (SPID) and the postcode of the property. If you do not know your SPID, your retailer will be able to give it to you.

If you cannot check your map online, your retailer will be able to give you a copy.

Surface water drainage

This is the service we provide to remove and treat the rainwater that falls on your building's roof and any hardstanding areas of your premises or site and then drains directly or indirectly to the public sewer. We calculate the cost of this service by assessing the chargeable site area of your premises.



If the surface water from all or part of your site does not drain directly or indirectly to a public sewer, you may be able to reduce your surface water charges.

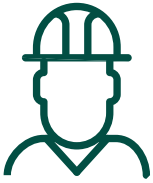
Highway drainage

All premises that are connected to the public sewer for surface water drainage, or which benefit from a sewerage service, must pay a highway drainage charge.



This covers our costs for removing and treating rainwater that falls on public roads and footpaths in the North West.

The charge you pay for this service is also based on the chargeable site area of your premises.



How we calculate your chargeable site area

The chargeable site area of your premises includes all land and buildings within your boundary, apart from any permanently grassed, planted or landscaped areas where no surface water or groundwater drains directly or indirectly to the public sewer (non-chargeable areas), as we don't charge for these.

If a building has other occupiers besides you, each occupier will be responsible for paying a portion of the charges for the roof area of that building. To make sure we only charge you your share of the cost, we take the total of the floor area for that building and use the calculator shown below to work out the percentage of the roof area you are responsible for. We use the same percentage to decide what percentage of any communal areas, inside or outside the building, you are responsible for. Adding these two figures together gives your chargeable area.

The example opposite is for premises with a single occupier

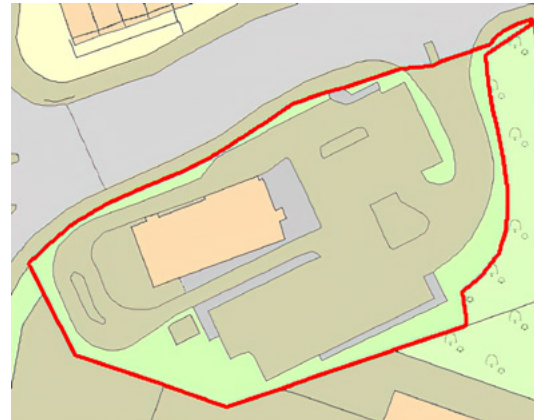
Building roof area + external area – non-chargeable areas = chargeable site area

Which site area charge band your premises are in, and how much you are charged each year, depends on your chargeable site area.

Your retailer will be able to tell you the banding ranges and charges.

If you are the only occupier on your site, you are responsible for the full chargeable site area of your site.

The diagram below shows an aerial view of a site. You can see the building roof area and the other areas within the site.



Building roof area		External areas		Non-chargeable areas		Chargeable area
500m ²	+	1500m ²	-	1000m ²	=	1000m ²

Below are some examples of sites and buildings with more than one occupier

If your business premises form part of a larger site or building which has several occupiers (for example, an office block, retail park, industrial park or mill), the chargeable site area of your premises may include a portion of any communal areas such as car parks, loading bays, access roads, reception areas, shared bathrooms and kitchens. If a site or building has more than one occupier, responsibility for the chargeable area is shared between all occupiers.

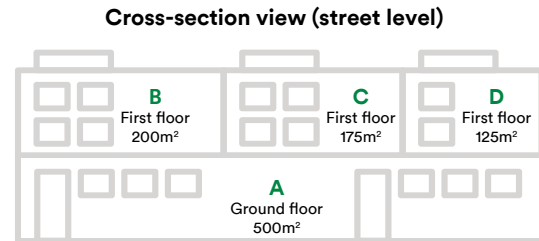
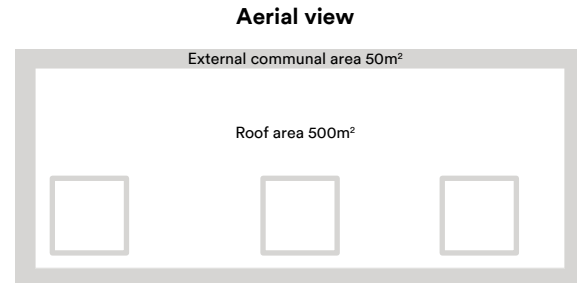
The bigger your share of the building's roof area, the bigger your proportion of the surface water and highway drainage charges for the site and any communal areas will be.

If there are any areas on the site that are only used by you, they will be added to your chargeable site area and not shared with the other occupiers. If there are areas that you do not have access to (for example, because of a gate or fence), these will not be included in your chargeable site area.

The example below is for a building with several occupiers

To understand how we calculate the chargeable area for a building with several occupiers, it may help to look at the aerial view of your premises as this will show the building's roof area and the external areas. As we have already mentioned, if a building has more than one occupier, the chargeable area of the site is divided between

all of the occupiers depending on how much of the building they occupy. To do this we need to calculate what proportion of the roof area they are responsible for. We will then charge them the same percentage of the charge for any communal areas.



In the example opposite, the aerial view shows a roof area of 500m². The building has two floors, giving a total floor area of 1000m² (2 x 500m²). Not all the occupiers occupy the same-size area, so they will not have the same chargeable site area. We use the formula below to calculate the chargeable site area for each occupier.

Share of building roof area + share of communal area = total chargeable site area



Customer	Floor area	Percentage of total floor area (customer's floor area ÷ total floor area)	Share of roof area (% floor area x total roof area)	Share of communal area (% floor area x total communal area)	Chargeable site area
A	500m ²	50%	250m ²	25m ²	275m ²
B	200m ²	20%	100m ²	10m ²	110m ²
C	175m ²	17.5%	88m ²	9m ²	96m ²
D	125m ²	12.5%	63m ²	6m ²	69m ²

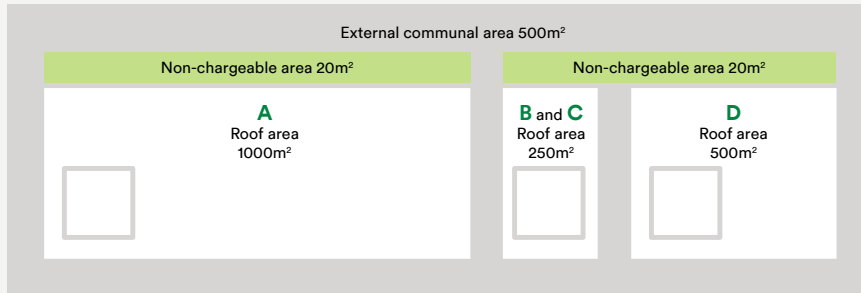
If we look at **customer B**, we can see that the space they occupy is 200m², which is 20% of the overall floor area of that building so they are responsible for 20% of the charges for the roof area and 20% of the charges for the communal areas.

The example below is for a site with several occupiers

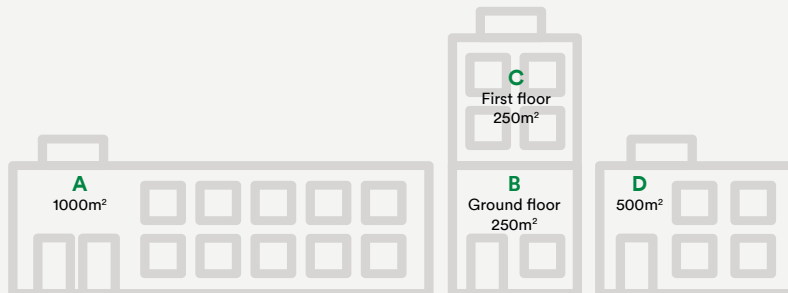
The example below is a site made up of three separate buildings with four different occupiers in total. The total floor area of the site is 2000m².

There is also a communal area, measuring 500m², outside the building. All four customers have access to this area, meaning that their share of the communal area will be included in their chargeable area. There is also 40m² of non-chargeable area which is **excluded from the calculation**.

Aerial view




Cross-section view (street level)



Each customer's chargeable area is broken down below.

Customer A

 **Customer A** occupies all of their building, so is responsible for 100% of their roof area (1000m²).


Their internal floor area is also 1000m², which is 50% of the total combined floor area of all the buildings on the site. This means

that 50% of the communal area (250m²) is included in their chargeable area.

This is how we calculate **customer A's** chargeable area.

Building roof area	+	Share of communal areas	=	Chargeable area
1000m ²		250m ²		1250m ²

Customer B and Customer C


 These customers both occupy one whole floor of the same building and are responsible for a proportionate share of the roof area for that building. The internal floor area of the building is 500m² in total and each customer's floor measures 250m², which is 50% of the total internal floor area. This means they each are responsible for 50% of the roof area (125m²).

Each customer's floor area is 250m², which is equivalent to 12.5% of the total combined floor area of all the buildings on the site, so 12.5% of the communal area (63m²) is included in each of their chargeable areas.

This is how we calculate **customer B's** or **customer C's** chargeable area.

Building roof area	+	Share of communal areas	=	Chargeable area
125m ²		63m ²		188m ²

Customer D

 **Customer D** occupies all of their building, so is responsible for 100% of their roof area (500m²).

Their internal floor area is also 500m² which is 25% of the total combined floor area of all the buildings on the site. This means that

25% of the communal area (125m²) is included in their chargeable area.

This is how we calculate **customer D's** chargeable area.

Building roof area	+	Share of communal areas	=	Chargeable area
500m ²		125m ²		625m ²

How do I reduce my surface water and highway drainage charges?



There are a number of ways to reduce your surface water and highway drainage charges, for example, by reducing your chargeable site area or, if you are eligible, with a lower tariff under one of our concessionary schemes.

Please remember that your charges will only be reduced if your new chargeable site area falls within a lower surface water or highway drainage charging band and will also depend on your contract with your retailer. Before making any changes, or to confirm what discounts you may be eligible for, we advise you to speak to your water retailer.

Replacing chargeable surface types on your site

You may be able to reduce your surface water and highway drainage charges by replacing chargeable surface types such as concrete, paving stones or tarmac, with one of the following non-chargeable categories, providing no surface water or groundwater drains either directly or indirectly to a public sewer from it:

- Permanently grassed
- Cultivated
- Landscaped

Diverting your surface water away from the public sewer

If more than 10% of your surface water does not drain to the public sewer (either directly or indirectly through a drain or watercourse), you may be eligible for a reduction in your surface water charges. The 10% of surface water that does not drain to the public sewer can come from a single area or several smaller areas within the boundary of your premises. If none of the surface water from your site enters the public sewer, you may not have to pay any surface water charges.

It is important to remember that any reduction will apply to your surface water charges only and not your highway drainage charges, so you may have different charging bands for the surface water and highway drainage charges.

If you believe that more than 10% of the surface water from your site does not drain to the public sewer you can contact your retailer to claim a reduction in your surface water charges.



Installing a sustainable drainage system

If more than 10% of your surface water drains to the public sewer through a qualifying sustainable drainage system (SuDS), you could be eligible for an 80% reduction in your surface water chargeable area for the areas that drain through this system. You will need to be able to show that the drainage system has been installed and is being maintained in line with specific minimum standards.

For more information on qualifying SuDS and the standards for installing and maintaining them, see our website unitedutilities.com/Business-services/business-customers/sustainable-drainage-systems

It is important to remember that any reduction will be in your surface water charges only and not your highway drainage charges, so you may have a different charging bands for the surface water and highway drainage charges.

If you believe that more than 10% of your site already drains to our sewer through a qualifying SuDS you can contact your retailer to claim a reduction in your surface water charges.

Concessionary schemes

We offer two concessionary schemes for certain community groups and schools.

Community groups

Our concessionary scheme for community groups means you could have your surface water and highway drainage wholesale charges capped at charging band 1, regardless of your chargeable site area.

Your premises may be eligible for our concessionary scheme if its main use is as one of the following.

- Place of worship
- Scout and guides hall
- Sea cadets unit
- Community amateur sports club
- Village hall or community centre
- Cemetery
- Local authority park

Schools

Our concessionary scheme for schools is open to any educational establishment which is used only (mainly) for providing education and tuition to students in Key Stages 1 to 5, or equivalent, and also has a playground attached.

If we accept you on to this scheme, your chargeable site area will remain the same, but your surface water and highway drainage wholesale charges will be reduced. Please ask your retailer for details.





Water for the North West