



**middle level
commissioners**

Proudly managing water levels in the Fens since 1862

Middle Level Commissioners and Administered / Associated Boards Surface Water Drainage Contribution - FAQs

1. What is a Surface Water Drainage Contribution (SWDC)?

A SWDC is a one-off charge relating to the surface water discharge from a development, requested by the Board. The Middle Level is a 2-tier system in which water may be pumped several times, and the charge will help fund the running and improvement costs of the drainage network. These works may include maintenance, the operation of structures and pumping stations and improvements of the system and structures. The Middle Level Commissioners and Internal Drainage Boards are not for profit but are obliged to recover their costs.

2. Why is a SWDC required?

Increasing an impermeable area to any site will generally increase the volume and rate of surface water discharge. Even limiting the discharge to greenfield rates will normally increase the volume of water reaching the Board's system. Increasing the volume of water in a Board's system may require the Board to increase the length of time it operates their pumping station, increase the capacity and capability of pumping stations and/or create additional storage to ensure the increase in water can be managed.

3. Isn't the Board already funded to manage the discharge from my development?

No, core funding via drainage rates and levies are not designed to cover the additional burdens placed on the Board from new development discharging into the Board's system. Government grant for flood infrastructure improvements is also not available for new development and there is a government policy of requiring partnership funding.

4. Does the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) include funding for drainage?

No, The CIL is a charge levied by some Local Planning Authorities to help deliver infrastructure needed to support development in their area. The levy funds a wide range of infrastructure as defined by Section 216(2) of the Planning Act (2008), but this does not include drainage or water level management infrastructure and currently IDB's do not receive any of this funding.

5. How is the SWDC calculated?

Please see the fees document on our website. You will be advised of the SWDC once your consent application has been considered.

6. What if I do not want to pay the SWDC?

If a developer does not wish to pay the contribution, all surface water from the development will need to be kept on site, with no outfall into the Board's system, either directly or indirectly.

7. How do I pay the SWDC?

You will forward the discharge consent application form with the application fee and any required information. Once the application has been duly made it will be considered by the Board. When the Board is content to issue consent, you will be sent a 'notification to grant consent' letter which includes the SWDC and/or treated effluent contribution fee. This must be signed and returned with the contribution fee within 28 days. The consent document will then be forwarded to you/your agent.

Apr 2025