

## 2021 explanatory notes

### Non-domestic rates

Non-Domestic Rates, or business rates, collected by local authorities are the way that those who occupy non-domestic property contribute towards the cost of local services. Under the business rates retention arrangements introduced from 1 April 2013, authorities keep a proportion of the business rates paid locally. The money, together with revenue from council taxpayers, locally generated income and grants from central government, is used to pay for the services provided by local authorities in your area. Further information about the business rates system is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), and at the website of your local council which is normally shown on your rate bill.

### Business Rates instalments

Payment of business rate bills is automatically set on a 10-monthly cycle. However, the Government has put in place regulations that allow ratepayers to require their local authority to enable payments to be made through 12 monthly instalments. If you wish to take up this offer, you should contact your local authority as soon as possible.

### National non-domestic rating multiplier

The local authority works out the business rates bill for a property by multiplying the rateable value of the property by the appropriate non-domestic multiplier. There are two multipliers: the national non-domestic rating multiplier and the small business non-domestic rating multiplier. The Government sets the multipliers for each financial year, except in the City of London where special arrangements apply.

Ratepayers who occupy a property with a rateable value which does not exceed £50,999 (and who are not entitled to certain other mandatory relief[s] or are liable for unoccupied property rates) will have their bills calculated using the lower small business non-domestic rating multiplier, rather than the national non-domestic rating multiplier.

The multiplier for a financial year is based on the previous year's multiplier adjusted to reflect the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation figure for the September prior to the billing year. The current multipliers are shown on the front of your bill.

### Rateable Value

Apart from properties that are exempt from business rates, each non-domestic property has a rateable value which is set by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), an agency of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. The [VOA compile and maintain a full list of all rateable values](#). The rateable value of your property is shown on the front of your bill. This broadly represents the yearly rent the property could have been let for on the open market on a particular date specified in legislation. For the current rating list, this date was set as 1st April 2015.

The Valuation Office Agency may alter the valuation if circumstances change. The ratepayer (and certain others who have an interest in the property) can also check and challenge the valuation shown in the list if they believe it is wrong.

Further information about the grounds on which challenges may be made and the process for doing so can be found on the [VOA website](#).

## **Revaluations**

All non-domestic property rateable values are reassessed at revaluations. The most recent revaluation took effect from 1 April 2017. Revaluations ensure that business rates bills are up-to-date, more accurately reflect current rental values and relative changes in rents. Frequent revaluations ensure the system continues to be responsive to changing economic conditions.

## **Business Rate reliefs**

Depending on individual circumstances, a ratepayer may be eligible for a rate relief (i.e. a reduction in your business rates bill). There are a range of available reliefs. Some of the permanent reliefs are set out below but temporary reliefs are often introduced by the Government at Budgets. You should contact your local authority for details on the latest availability of business rates reliefs and advice on whether you may qualify. Further detail on reliefs is also provided at [www.gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates](http://www.gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates) or at the website of your local council which is normally shown on your rate bill.

### **Small business rates relief**

If a ratepayer's sole or main property has a rateable value which does not exceed an amount set out in regulations, the ratepayer may receive a percentage reduction in their rates bill for this property of up to a maximum of 100%. The level of reduction will depend on the rateable value of the property – for example eligible properties below a specified lower threshold will receive 100% relief, and you may receive partial tapered relief up to a specified upper threshold. The relevant thresholds for relief are set out in regulations and can be obtained from your local authority or [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK).

Generally, this percentage reduction (relief) is only available to ratepayers who occupy either—

- (a) one property, or
- (b) one main property and other additional properties providing those additional properties each have a rateable value which does not exceed the limit set in regulations.

The aggregate rateable value of all the properties mentioned in (b), must also not exceed an amount set in regulations. For those businesses that take on an additional property which would normally have meant the loss of small business rate relief, they will be allowed to keep that relief for a fixed additional period. Full details on the relevant limits in relation to second properties and the current period for which a ratepayer may continue to

receive relief after taking on an additional property can be obtained from your local authority or [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Certain changes in circumstances will need to be notified to the local authority by the ratepayer who is in receipt of relief (other changes will be picked up by the local authority). The changes which should be notified are—

- (a) the property falls vacant,
- (b) the ratepayer taking up occupation of an additional property, and
- (c) an increase in the rateable value of a property occupied by the ratepayer in an area other than the area of the local authority which granted the relief.

### **Charity and Community Amateur Sports Club relief**

Charities and registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs are entitled to 80% relief where the property is occupied by the charity or the club and is wholly or mainly used for the charitable purposes of the charity (or of that and other charities), or for the purposes of the club (or of that and other clubs).

The local authority has discretion to give further relief on the remaining bill. Full details can be obtained from the local authority.

### **Unoccupied property rate relief**

Business rates are generally payable in respect of unoccupied non-domestic property. However, they are generally not payable for the first three months that a property is empty. This is extended to six months in the case of certain other properties (for example industrial premises or listed buildings). Full details on exemptions can be obtained from your local authority or from [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

### **Expanded retail discount and nursery relief**

In the Budget on 3 March 2021 The Chancellor announced that properties in receipt of either expanded retail discount or nursery relief would get continue to receive 100% relief for up to 3 months until 30 June 2021.

The Chancellor also announced at the Budget, a further 66% discount from 1 July 2021 for the remainder of the 2021-22 Financial Year for eligible Businesses. Please note, this too is a temporary relief as the Government is only providing funding for qualifying ratepayers up to 31 March 2022, so if all other qualifying criteria are maintained, the discount will not continue beyond this date.

Prior to the 100% relief ending on 30 June 2021, you should receive a further revised Business Rates bill for the remainder of the 2021-22 financial year. This will include the 66% discount should you be eligible, and, in that case, instalments will be adjusted from 1 July. Please note, the 66% discount applicable from 1 July 2021, is subject to a 'cash cap'.

### **Expanded retail discount cash cap and refusing relief**

Ratepayers in receipt of expanded retail discount may only receive up to the following cash caps in 2021-22, ignoring any relief for the period before 1 July

2021: If you have several properties you should confirm that you intend to claim for the Crawley premises.

- £2 million for ratepayers which were mandated by the Government to close their business on 5 January 2021 due to the pandemic
- £105,000 for all other qualifying retail discount ratepayers

See the full [retail discount guidance on GOV.UK](#). We may ask you to complete an online form to confirm you do not exceed the cash cap.

If you do not wish to accept the expanded retail discount (100% and then 66%), you can opt out by [emailing the rates team](#).

If you would exceed the cash cap by accepting the 66% discount from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021, and therefore are not entitled to this discount, please inform us as soon as you can by [emailing the rates team](#).

### **Nursery relief cash cap and refusing relief**

The 66% discount applicable from 1 July is subject to a 'cash cap'. This means a person/organisation may only receive up to £105,000 of Nursery Discount in 2021-22, across all of their hereditaments, ignoring any relief for the period before 1 July 2021.

See the full [nurseries discount guidance on GOV.UK](#).

If you do not wish to accept the nursery retail discount, you can opt out by [emailing the rates team](#).

If you have multiple premises across England, you may need to choose which properties to receive the 66% discount from and if you conclude that you will exceed the cash cap by accepting the 66% discount from 1 July 2021, and not entitled to this discount for the Crawley premises, please inform us as soon as possible by [emailing the rates team](#).

### **Transitional rate relief**

At a revaluation, some ratepayers will see reductions or no change in their bill whereas some ratepayers will see increases.

Transitional relief schemes are introduced at each revaluation to help those facing increases. This relief has been funded by limiting the reduction in bills for those who have benefitted from the revaluation. Transitional relief is applied automatically to bills. Further information about transitional arrangements and other reliefs may be obtained from the local authority or on [GOV.UK](#).

### **Local discounts**

Local authorities have a general power to grant discretionary local discounts and to give hardship relief in specific circumstances. Full details can be obtained from the local authority.

## **State aid**

The award of discretionary reliefs is considered likely to amount to state aid. However, it will be state aid compliant where it is provided in accordance with the De Minimis Regulations EC 1407/2013. The De Minimis Regulations allow an undertaking to receive up to EUR 200,000 'de minimis' aid over a rolling three-year period. If you are receiving, or have received, any 'de minimis' aid granted during the current or two previous financial years (from any source), you should inform the local authority immediately with details of the aid received.

## **Rating advisers**

Ratepayers do not have to be represented in discussions about their rateable value or their rates bill. However, ratepayers who do wish to be represented should be aware that members of the [Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors](#) (RICS) and the [Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation](#) (IRRV) are qualified and are regulated by rules of professional conduct designed to protect the public from misconduct. Before you employ a rating adviser or company you should check that they have the necessary knowledge and expertise, as well as appropriate indemnity insurance. Take great care and, if necessary, seek further advice before entering into any contract.

## **Information supplied with demand notices**

Information relating to the relevant and previous financial years in regard to the [gross expenditure of the council is available on our website](#). A hard copy is available on request by calling 01293 438000 or by writing to us:

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Town Hall  
The Boulevard  
Crawley  
RH10 1UZ