



EXPLANATORY NOTES

The information given below explains some of the terms which may be used on a non-domestic rate demand and in the supporting information. Further information about liability to non-domestic rates may be obtained from billing authorities.

Non-Domestic Rates

The non-domestic rates collected by billing authorities are paid into a central pool and redistributed to county and county borough councils and police authorities. Your council and police authority use their shares of redistributed rate income, together with income from their council tax payers, revenue support grant provided by the Welsh Ministers and certain other sums, to pay for the services they provide.

Rateable Value

The rateable value of non-domestic property is fixed in most cases by an independent valuation officer of the Valuation Office Agency. All non-domestic property is revalued every 5 years. From 1 April 2010 the rateable value of a property represents its annual open market rental value as at 1 April 2008. For composite properties which are partly domestic and partly non-domestic the rateable value relates to the non-domestic part only. The values of all property in respect of which rates are payable to your authority are shown in the local rating list, a copy of which may be inspected at the Valuation Office Agency, Crown Buildings, 11 Chepstow Road, Newport NP19 8WA and Torfaen County Borough Council, Civic Centre, Pontypool, Torfaen NP4 6YB.

More information is available from the local valuation office or the website www.voa.gov.uk.

Alteration of Rateable Value

The rateable value may alter if the valuation officer believes that the circumstances of the property have changed. The ratepayer (and certain others who have an interest in the property) may also in certain circumstances propose a change in value. If the ratepayer and the valuation officer do not agree the valuation within 3 months of the proposal being made, the matter will be referred as an appeal to a Valuation Tribunal. Further information about how to propose a change in a rateable value is available from valuation offices.

National Non-Domestic Rating Multiplier

This is the rate in the pound by which the rateable value is multiplied to give the annual rate bill for a property. The multiplier set annually by the Welsh Ministers is the same for the whole of Wales and except in a revaluation year cannot rise by more than the rate of the increase in the retail prices index.

Proposals and Appeals

Information about the circumstances in which a change in rateable value may be proposed and how such a proposal may be made is available from the local valuation office shown above. Further information about the appeal arrangements may be obtained from Torfaen County Borough Council or from the Valuation Office Agency whose website is www.voa.gov.uk.

Unoccupied Property Rating

Owners of unoccupied non-domestic properties may be liable to empty property rates which are charged at 100 per cent of the normal liability. Liability begins after the property has been empty for 3 months or, in the case of factories and warehouses, after the property has been empty for 6 months. Certain types of property are exempt from empty property rates.

Charitable and Discretionary Relief

Charities and community amateur sports clubs are entitled to 80% relief from rates on any non-domestic property where—

- (a) in the case of charities, the property is wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes, or
- (b) in the case of a club, the club is registered with HM Revenue & Customs.

Billing authorities have discretion to remit all or part of the remaining 20 per cent of the bill on such property and can also give relief in respect of property occupied by certain bodies not established or conducted for profit.

For more information regarding clubs you should contact HM Revenue & Custom, Charities, Sports Club Unit, St John's House, Bootle, Merseyside L69 9BB. (website is <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk>).

Small Business Rate Relief

The Non-Domestic Rating (Small Business Relief) (Wales) Order 2008 makes provision for rates relief for small businesses. Full details including the eligibility criteria, the exceptions and the procedural requirements are available from the billing authority.

The eligible properties and relevant rate relief are—

- (a) properties with a rateable value ("RV") of £2,400 or less – 50% relief;
- (b) properties with an RV between £2,401 and £7,800 – 25% relief;
- (c) post offices (and properties which include post offices) with an RV of not more than £9,000 – 100% relief;
- (d) post offices (and properties which include post offices) with an RV between £9,001 and £12,000 – 50% relief;
- (e) retail properties (ie where the trade or business carried on consists wholly or mainly of the sale of goods) with an RV between £7,801 and £11,000 – 25% relief;
- (f) properties used wholly for the purposes of child minding or provision of day care by a person registered under Part XA of the Children Act 1989 and with an RV between £2,001 and £12,000 – 50% relief;
- (g) properties used wholly for the purposes of a credit union which is registered under the Credit Unions Act 1979 and with an RV between £2,001 and £9,000 – 50% relief.