

24



empty homes

Our Ref: CMcF/KS

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31 July 2008

Department of Finance and Personnel  
Rating Policy Division  
Room D12  
Rathgael House  
Balloo Road  
BANGOR  
BT19 7NA

Dear Sir / Madam

**RE: CONSULTATION - RATING OF EMPTY HOMES**

Recent correspondence regarding the above refers.

The matter was discussed at a recent Council Meeting and the general principal of rating empty homes was welcomed. Members did note some concerns which they would like to see addressed in the policy:

- Concerns regarding the impact on the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) considering the volume of vacant NIHE properties;
- Concerns regarding the level of rates when no services or amenities were being utilised or required;
- Concerns for the rural community - implications for liveable wallsteads or derelict country buildings;
- Concerns regarding the rating of homes belonging to churches, e.g. Rectories.

We look forward to the introduction of the proposals as soon as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the consultation exercise.

Yours faithfully

**CATHERINE McFARLAND**  
Director of Corporate Services

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