

18<sup>th</sup> June 2008

Dept. of Finance & Personnel,  
Rating Policy Division,  
Room D12 Rathgael House,  
Balloo Road,  
BANGOR  
BT19 7NA

Dear Sir/ Madam,

**RATING CONSULTATION**

Following the publicity given to the revisions applied to the rating system and the on-going consultations that are taking place, I wish to object to the outlandish burden being placed on householders.

During our working lives I and my wife worked hard to provide for our retirement. I find it abhorrent that having cared for both the young and the old here in our home, we as pensioners are now being asked to pay exorbitant increases for services which we are using less and less, including water, forcing the need to consider an untimely move out of our family home. Any rating system based on the value of homes is unfair, particularly under today's political environment where the "polluter pays." It is therefore only right that where at all possible the charge levied on homes is based on the usage of those services provided and that annual increases bear some relationship to inflation.

In my opinion current rating systems are grossly unfair. This has been recognised in both England and Wales, where the value of homes on which rates are levied has been capped at £400,000. Even in an unfair system I cannot see why those living in Northern Ireland should be more punitively taxed than those in other parts of the U.K.

I therefore support the proposal that the Cap level here in Northern Ireland should be set at a maximum of £400,000.

Yours sincerely,

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