

Dear Mr Robinson,

As a single income household, I feel very strongly that the 25% single income discount should be applied in Northern Ireland as per the Council Tax throughout the rest of the UK.

Without it I can foresee not being able to continue to live in my home, as under the new Capital Value rates system the Northern Ireland 'market value' has more than outstripped my income. The next revaluation in 2010 will result in rates (and water) bills which would take my tax burden to well over the high earners' 40% mark and could force me to leave my home.

To be taxed in such an inequitable way is totally indefensible and I would hope that the new Northern Ireland Assembly would agree.

Implementing a system based on a percentage of income is the only truly fair way to raise Rates, since these are no longer being used purely to fund the 'traditional' services associated with Rates, but to fund additional Government loans etc.

Surely ability to pay and not speculator-driven market prices is the only fair basis for acceptable taxation.