

Dear Sir or Madam,

In response to the invitation to submit responses to the Review of the Domestic Rating System, we would like to submit the following proposals:

Modifications to existing system:

- Deduct the rates charge directly from salary on a monthly basis, before income tax is paid (i.e. from gross salary, in the same way National Insurance contributions are deducted).
- Introduce discount for single dwelling owner occupiers, with corresponding higher charge for multiple property owners and vacant houses.
- Lower the capital value at which rates are capped to £250 000.
- Remove costly items from local authority funding and transfer their costs to the actual users of that service, to reduce the overall financial take required. E.g. refuse collection, leisure centres etc
- Factor in the differing levels of service provided in rural compared to urban areas and modify costs accordingly – rural residents have less access to many services (e.g. street lighting , road cleaning) yet at present contribute to the cost of these services. Perhaps have a rural dwellers discount?

Long Term:

- Move to a system based on ability to pay, not value of your house – i.e. local income tax.