

# YOUR NON DOMESTIC RATES NA REATAICHEAN NEO-DHACHAIGHEIL AGAD

1 April 2010 - 31 March 2011



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We hold a register of people who are visually impaired. To have your name added to this register or to request this booklet and further information/ application forms regarding Non Domestic Rates in an alternative format e.g. **Large print**, braille, computer disk, audio tape or suitable language please contact the Non Domestic Rates Team.

## Change Of Circumstances Atharrachaidhean Suidheachaidh

### Change of ownership, tenancy or occupancy? Have you vacated or moved into a property? **PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU TELL US**

Changes should be notified immediately in writing to the:  
**Non Domestic Rates Team**  
Exchequer Section, PO Box 5650, Inverness, IV3 5YX

or by emailing:

nondomesticrates@highland.gov.uk

Please **DO NOT** send personal or sensitive information to this email address

or

Tel: 01463 702984

or email us to request a change of circumstances form.

Alternatively you can access this form on the Council's website:  
[www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) under "N" for Non Domestic Rates

## About This Booklet Mun Leabhran Seo

This booklet has been prepared by The Highland Council to help answer your questions about your new rates bill for 2010/11.

## Does The Council Set My Non Domestic Rates? Am Bi A' Chomhairle A' Suidheachadh Nan Reataichean Neo- dhachaigheil Agam?

No. Since 1990, non domestic rates, or business rates, have been controlled by the Government. Rates due are calculated by two factors. One is the **rateable value** and the other is the '**multiplier**' also known as the 'rate poundage'.

**The Highland Council's** role is to bill and collect the rates, administer rate relief and pay the collected rates over to the Scottish Government. For 2009/2010, we expect to pay £86.2 million to the central pool. We get around £87.7 million back to help run local services.

# About Non Domestic Rates

## Mu dheidhinn Reataichean Neo-dhachaigheil

### Non Domestic Rates Reataichean Neo-dhachaigheil

Non domestic rates, also known as business rates, are collected by local authorities and are a form of local taxation which requires those who occupy non domestic properties to contribute towards the cost of local services. The rates are pooled by the Scottish Government and redistributed to local authorities according to the number of people living in that area. These monies, together with revenue from council tax payers, revenue support grants provided by Government and certain other sums, are used to pay for the services provided by The Highland Council.

### Rateable Value Luachadh Reataichean

The Scottish Assessors give non domestic property in Scotland a rateable value, which is a legally-defined valuation of a property, broadly based on an analysis of annual rental values.

The Assessor compares a range of property information and studies the rental market in depth to ensure that rateable valuations are accurate, consistent and reflect the individual characteristics of each property. Further information on the principles of valuation and practice notes which will help explain how the rateable value for your property (ies) have been set, can be accessed via the Assessors' website at:

**[www.saa.gov.uk](http://www.saa.gov.uk)**

The Assessor will by now have written to notify you of the new rateable value, or the search facility at **[www.saa.gov.uk](http://www.saa.gov.uk)** provides details of rateable values for non domestic properties in Scotland. The rateable value is also shown on your non domestic rates bill. The list of rateable values for the Highland Council area is also available at Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX.

## Revaluation 2010 Ath-luachadh 2010

Every five years non domestic properties are assessed and given new rateable values. The current revaluation came into effect on 1 April 2010 which means non domestic properties had their rateable values reassessed based on a valuation date of 1 April 2008. Revaluation is about a fair distribution of the burden of taxation.

The key purpose of revaluation is to update rateable values of non domestic properties to reflect more up to date rental levels. This provides for a closer, fairer link between property values and the amount of rates paid by individual ratepayers. There will be no change for some properties whereas the majority of non domestic properties will have a new rateable value from 1 April 2010.

The revaluation is necessary because the relative value of non domestic property changes. However, the Scottish Government will not raise any more income in 2010/11 due to revaluation.

## What If I Disagree With My Rateable Value? Dè Mura h-Eil Mi Ag Aontachadh Leis An Luachadh Reataichean Agam?

You can appeal to the Assessor if:

- You believe that your rateable value is wrong;
- The Assessor changes your rateable value;
- There is a material change in circumstances which you believe affects the value of the property, for example a change in the property's physical state or use; a physical change in locality; or a change in the use of the neighbouring property.

For new properties and changed values, the appellant must adhere to the time limits as detailed on the valuation notice. **The ratepayer must continue to pay the rates as billed by The Highland Council while an appeal is being considered.** Rates overpaid following any successful appeal are credited to another account or refunded. Interest may also be payable in certain circumstances. These calculations and refunds are undertaken by the Highland Council's Non Domestic Rates Team.

Before employing an adviser to assist with an appeal, the appellant should be satisfied that the adviser has the necessary knowledge and expertise,

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as well as appropriate indemnity insurance. Members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS – [www.rics.org.uk](http://www.rics.org.uk)) and the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation (IRRV – [www.irrv.org.uk](http://www.irrv.org.uk)) are regulated by rules of professional conduct designed to protect the public from misconduct.

**Remember, no matter how persuasive the individual may be, no one can guarantee reductions in rateable value.**

### **CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE ASSESSOR IN HIGHLAND**

The Assessor operates independently from the Council and can be contacted as follows:

#### **Inverness Area**

Moray House, 16 – 18 Bank Street, Inverness, IV1 1QY  
Tel: (01463) 703340 Fax: (01463) 703301

#### **Ross & Cromarty, Sutherland Areas**

Robertson House, Green Hill Street, Dingwall, IV15 9QR  
Tel: (01349) 863260 Fax: (01349) 865942

#### **Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey, Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh Areas**

Moray House, 16 - 18 Bank Street, Inverness, IV1 1QY  
Tel: (01463) 703320 Fax: (01463) 703301

#### **Caithness Area**

3A Bridge Street, Wick, KW1 4AG  
Tel: (01955) 602251 Fax: (01955) 603982

### **Transitional Arrangements** **Rèiteachaidhean Eadar-amail**

Transitional Relief works by taking money from ratepayers who received savings from the revaluation process to subsidise those who saw a rise. The Scottish Government considers this is unfair and wants to pass on full savings to ratepayers. As a result, there is no Transitional Relief Scheme from April 2010.

## How Is My Bill Calculated?

### Ciamar A Tha Mo Chunntas Air Obrachadh A-mach?

You pay rates based on a proportion of your rateable value; this percentage is set annually by Scottish Ministers and is called the poundage. The Scottish Government has committed that the poundage in Scotland will not rise above the equivalent English rate for the lifetime of this Government.

The poundage rate for Scotland in 2010/11 is 40.7 pence. Larger properties in 2010/11 (rateable value in excess of £35,000) will pay a poundage supplement of 0.7 pence, which contributes towards the cost of the Small Business Bonus Scheme.

To calculate the rates bill for each property, the Highland Council multiplies the rateable value for your property by the "poundage" which is sometimes referred to as the "multiplier". For example, a property with a rateable value of £28,000, which is not due relief, will be liable for a rates bill of £11,396 for financial year 2010/11.

## Recovery Procedure

### Modh Ath-bhuannachaidh

Payment of non domestic rates should be made as per the instalments detailed on your rates bill. If you fail to keep the instalments for the current financial year, recovery action will be taken. If you receive a Final Notice you will no longer be able to pay by instalments and full settlement of your bill will be required within 14 days. After the 14 day period, any balance remaining on your account will progress to Summary Warrant with the addition of a 10% statutory penalty for late payment.

## Rating Relief Section

### Faochadh Reataichean

The Highland Council administers relief from non domestic rates. For further advice and information, please contact:

**The Non Domestic Rates Team**

**Exchequer Section, PO Box 5650, Inverness, IV3 5YX**

**Tel: (01463) 702984 Fax: (01463) 702468**

**e-mail: nondomesticrates@highland.gov.uk**

*Please **do not** send personal or sensitive information to this email address.*

Application forms are available on the Council's website:

**www.highland.gov.uk** under "N" for **Non Domestic Rates**

The following list provides examples of the types of available relief and is not exhaustive.

## Renewable Energy Relief Faochadh Lùth So-ùrachaidh

A new targeted relief from 1 April 2010 for renewable energy producers where the qualifying criteria are met - offering discounts of up to 100% - will support these producers' central role in the climate change agenda and promote expansion of the sector. This relief will operate under State Aid de minimis rules.

<b>Cumulative RV</b>	<b>Percentage relief (%)</b>
£145,000 or less	100
More than £145,000 but not exceeding £430,000	50
More than £430,000 but not exceeding £860,000	25
More than £860,000 but not exceeding £4,000,000	10
More than £4,000,000	2.5

## Rural Rate Relief Faochadh Reataichean Dùthchail

Certain types of properties in a rural settlement with a population below 3,000 may be entitled to relief. Thresholds of rural rate relief have increased for 2010/11 to continue support to rural communities. New thresholds for financial year 2010/11 are:

	<b>Thresholds 2009/10</b>	<b>New Scottish Thresholds 2010/11</b>
Shop, general store or post office	£7,000	£8,500
Petrol filling station or sole, singly owned pub	£10,500	£12,750

To qualify, these properties must also be occupied and an eligible ratepayer is entitled to relief at 50% of the full charge. The Highland Council has discretion to give further relief on the remaining bill.

The Highland Council can also give relief on certain other unoccupied property in a rural settlement where the rateable value is less than £17,000.

## Small Business Bonus Scheme Sgeama Bònas Ghnothachasan Beaga

From 1 April 2010 the thresholds of the Scheme have increased. The Scheme will provide relief to ratepayers with properties in Scotland with a combined rateable value of £18,000 or less. In addition, this Scheme has been expanded and, where the cumulative rateable value of a ratepayer's properties falls between £18,000 and £25,000, the Scheme will offer 25% relief to individual properties with a rateable value less than £18,000.

The Scheme provides the following relief from 1 April 2010:

<b>Combined rateable value of all non domestic properties in Scotland</b>	<b>2010/11</b>
Up to £10,000	100%
£10,0001 to £12,000	50%
£12,001 to £18,000	25%
Upper limit for cumulative rateable value £25,000*	25%

\* This will allow a ratepayer with 2 or more properties with a cumulative rateable value of under £25,000 to qualify for relief at 25% on individual properties with a rateable value less than £18,000.

## Empty Property Relief Faochadh Thogalaichean Falamh

For 2010/11, 100% mandatory rates relief can be granted to properties which are empty for the first 3 months with 50% discount available thereafter. However, for some properties such as industrial and listed buildings and properties with rateable values of less than **£1,700** there are no rates to pay even after the first 3 months.

## Partly Occupied Property Relief Faochadh Thogalaichean Air Am Pàirt Chleachdadh

A ratepayer is liable for the full non domestic rate whether a property is wholly or only partly occupied. However, where a property was fully occupied but due to a downturn in trade becomes partly occupied for a short period of time, the Highland Council has discretion to award relief in respect of the unoccupied part.

## **Hardship Relief** **Faochadh Cruadail**

The Highland Council has discretion to give relief in special circumstances.

## **Charity And Registered Community Amateur Sports Club Relief** **Faochadh Carthannais is Chlubaichean Clàraichte Spòrs** **Coimhearsnachd**

Where your organisation is a registered charity, listed on the register maintained by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), or has a tax exemption certificate and the property occupied by your organisation is used "wholly or mainly for charitable purposes", you may be entitled to 80% mandatory rates relief. The Highland Council will determine whether a property is being used "wholly or mainly for charitable purposes" and has discretionary powers to top this relief up to 100%. The same levels of mandatory and discretionary relief are available to registered community amateur sports clubs. Eligible licensed sports clubs can qualify for 80% mandatory relief.

## **Non-Profit Making Organisations Relief** **Faochadh Bhuidhnean Gun Phrothaid**

The Highland Council has discretion to give relief to premises occupied by non-profit making organisations and clubs for activities related to education, social welfare, science, literature or the fine arts and community halls.

## Ways To Pay Your Non Domestic Rates

### Dòighean Gus Do Reataichean Neo-dhachaigheil A Phàigheadh

Rates bills are payable in ten interest-free monthly instalments from May to February, with a choice of payment dates of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> of the month, or by two instalments in August and November or by a single payment by 30<sup>th</sup> September.



Why not pay by Direct Debit. **You** will receive a bill showing the amounts which we will collect from your account safe in the knowledge that a set amount will be collected every month. **You** give us your details only once, and every year we will do the rest. Paying by Direct Debit means that you will not have the burden of writing and posting payments or queuing to make payments and you will not be in danger of falling into arrears.

**If you choose to pay by Direct Debit, you will be helping us to maintain the quality and range of services we provide.**

If you would like to pay by this method, please complete the mandate which is enclosed with your bill and return it without delay to the **Non Domestic Rates Team, The Highland Council, PO Box 5650, Inverness, IV3 5YX.**

Mandates are available on the Council's website: **[www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)** under "N" Non Domestic Rates.

If you were paying your Non Domestic Rates by Direct Debit in 2009/2010 sit back and relax, safe in the knowledge that the same instalment arrangement will apply for 2010/2011 without further action on your part.

Once your Non Domestic Rates for 2010/2011 are paid in full please do not cancel your Direct Debit instruction with your bank as the Council will not debit your account with further instalments until 2011/2012. We will issue your 2011/2012 bill at least 14 days prior to deducting your first instalment for that year.

You may also pay your Non Domestic Rates by using one of the following methods:

- via the internet at **[www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)**;
- by Tele-Banking;
- in person or by post at any Service Point;
- by Debit or Credit Card Tel: **0845 602 4232** or **+44 (0) 1463 702484** if calling from overseas. Credit card payments are subject to a 2% surcharge;
- by Standing Order;
- by Bank Credit Transfer; or
- directly into the Council's Rates account by BACS or HOBBS.

# The Non Domestic Rates Team

**Non Domestic Rates Team,  
Exchequer Section  
PO Box 5650, Inverness, IV3 5YX  
Tel: (01463) 702984  
Fax: (01463) 702468  
E-mail: [nondomesticrates@highland.gov.uk](mailto:nondomesticrates@highland.gov.uk)**

## **Alternative Formats Fòrmatan Eile**

To request this information in an alternative format e.g. large print, braille, computer disk, audio tape, or suitable language, please contact:

**Non Domestic Rates Team  
Tel: 01463 702984 Fax: 01463 702468  
Email: [nondomesticrates@highland.gov.uk](mailto:nondomesticrates@highland.gov.uk)**