



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

Non-Domestic Rates Team  
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**25 October 2017**

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**Chief Finance Officers of English Billing Authorities**

**FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE BUSINESS RATES SECTION**

Dear Chief Finance Officer

**Business Rates Information Letter (6/2017): Rural Rate Relief and Spring Budget**

This is the sixth business rates information letter to be issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government this year. Previous letters are available on the internet at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/business-rates-information-letters>

or for archived letters:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/http://www.communities.gov.uk/localgovernment/localgovernmentfinance/businessrates/busratesinformationletters/>.

- **Rural Rate Relief**
- **Spring 2017 Budget - Business Rates Relief Schemes**

## **Rural Rate Relief**

1. The 2016 Autumn Statement confirmed the doubling of rural rate relief available to eligible businesses from 50% to 100%. The 20<sup>th</sup> December 2016 BRIL (3/2016) subsequently set out the Government's intention to amend the relevant primary legislation to require local authorities to grant 100% mandatory rural rate relief.

2. Following the decision not to reintroduce the Local Government Finance Bill, for 2018/19 we expect local authorities to continue to use their local discount powers to grant 100% rural rate relief to eligible ratepayers, as they have done so for 2017/18. Local authorities will be compensated in full for their loss of income as a result of this change. This compensation will be paid by section 31 grant and calculated on the basis of the returns that councils make under the rates retention scheme.

## **Spring 2017 Budget - Business Rates Relief Schemes**

3. On 13 October, the Government published on the gov.uk website a list of local authorities which had begun rebilling on each of the three relief schemes announced at the Spring Budget, at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-rates-relief-schemes-2017-rebilling-progress>

4. We will be updating this list regularly. We would be grateful for billing authorities to notify us once rebilling has begun on any of their remaining schemes at: [DCLG-SBschemes@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:DCLG-SBschemes@communities.gsi.gov.uk).