

Discretionary Business Rates Relief for Charities and Non-Profit Organisations

Introduction

The following details the eligibility criteria against which the Local Authority will consider applications from non-profit making organisations. We will consider the individual merits in each case.

- a) Eligibility criteria**
- b) Factors to be taken into account**
- c) Parts of the process**
- d) Type of organisation and discretionary rate relief**

a) Eligibility criteria

- The applicant must be a charity or exempt from registration as a charity, a non-profit making organisation or registered community amateur sports club (CASC).
- All or part of the property must be occupied for the purpose of one or more institutions or other organisations which are not established or conducted for profit and whose main objects are charitable or otherwise philanthropic or religious or concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature or the fine arts; or
- The property must be wholly or mainly used for the purposes of recreation, and all or part of it is occupied for the purposes of a club, society or other organisation not established or conducted for profit.

b) Factors to be taken into account

The London Borough of Brent is keen to ensure that any relief awarded is justified and directed to those organisations making a valuable contribution to the well-being of local residents. The following factors will therefore be considered:

1. The organisation should provide facilities that indirectly relieve the authority of the need to do so, or enhance or supplement those that it does provide
2. The organisation should provide training or education for its members, with schemes for particular groups to develop skills
3. It should have facilities provided by self-help or grant aid. Use of self-help and / or grant aid is an indicator that the club is more deserving of relief
4. The organisation should be able to demonstrate a major local contribution.
5. The organisation should have a clear policy on equal opportunity.
6. There should be policies on freedom of access and membership.
7. It should be clear as to which members of the community benefit from the work of the organisation.
8. Membership should be open to all sections of the community and the majority of members should be Brent residents
9. If there is a licensed bar as part of the premises, this must not be the

principle activity undertaken and should be a minor function in relation to the services provided by the organisation.

10. The organisation must be properly run and be able to produce a copy of their constitution and fully audited accounts.
11. The organisation must not have any unauthorised indebtedness to the London Borough of Brent. Rates are due and payable until a claim for discretionary rate relief is heard.

c) Parts of the process

No right of appeal

Once the application has been processed, the ratepayer will be notified in writing of the decision. As this is a discretionary power there is no formal appeal process against the Council's decision. However, we will re-consider our decision in the light of any additional points made. If the application is successful and the organisation is awarded discretionary rate relief, it will be applied to the account and an amended bill will be issued.

Notification of change of circumstances

Rate payers are required to notify any change of circumstances which may have an impact on the award of discretionary rate relief.

Duration of award

All awards will be reviewed periodically by the Council on a timescale to be approved from time to time. Prior to any review period applications will be sent inviting recipients to re-apply, this will ensure the conditions on which relief was previously awarded still apply to their organisation. This will help ensure that the Council's rate records remain accurate.

Withdrawal of relief

One years' notice has to be given by the Council for the withdrawal of relief

Unlawful activities

Should an applicant in receipt of discretionary rate relief be found guilty of unlawful activities for whatever reason, entitlement will be forfeited from the date of conviction.

d) Type of organisation and discretionary rate relief

The types of organisations and the percentage relief that can be awarded are shown below:

No.	Type of charitable/non-profit making organisation	Discretionary relief limited to
1	Local charities meeting required conditions (80% mandatory relief will apply)	20% (100% of remaining liability)
2	Local Non-profit-making organisations (not entitled to mandatory relief)	25%
3	Premises occupied by a Community Amateur Sports Club registered with HM Revenue & Customs. (80% mandatory relief will apply)	20% (100% of remaining liability)
4	Non-Local charities (80% mandatory relief will apply)	25% (of remaining liability)
5	Voluntary Aided Schools (80% mandatory relief will apply)	20% (100% of remaining liability)
6	Foundation Schools (80% mandatory relief will apply)	20% (100% of remaining liability)
7	All empty properties	Nil
8	Offices and Shops occupied by national charities	Nil
9	An organisation which is considered by officers to be improperly run, for what ever reason, including unauthorised indebtedness.	Nil
10	The organisation or facility does not primarily benefit residents of Brent.	Nil
11	Registered Social Landlords (as defined and registered by the Housing Corporation). This includes Abbeyfield, Almshouse, Co-operative, Co-ownership, Hostel, Letting / Hostel, or YMCA.	Nil
12	Organisations in receipt of 80% mandatory relief where local exceptional circumstances are deemed to apply.	Up to 20% (100% of remaining liability)