

Guidance Notes for Class D discount

Properties which are vacant and undergoing major repairs to render the property habitable or undergoing structural alterations may be entitled to a discount of 50% for a period up to a maximum of 6 months. To qualify for the reduction the property must meet **one** of the following criteria-

- The property is unoccupied and requires or is undergoing **major** repair work to render it **habitable**
- The property is unoccupied and is undergoing **structural** alteration

If the property remains unoccupied and the major repair works or structural alterations are completed within 6 months the discount will continue to apply up to the maximum 6 month period.

Major Repairs to render a property habitable

The repair works being undertaken at the property must be both major and required to render the property habitable. The property must therefore be considered uninhabitable before the work starts.

Major works do not include works such as re wiring, re plumbing, decorating and replacement kitchens/bathrooms. These works would be considered of refurbishment nature and would not qualify.

The uninhabitable aspect relates to the condition prior to work commencing rather than because of the work that is in progress. For example, where a property was occupied up to the date of purchase by the previous owner we would be unlikely to consider it uninhabitable as it was inhabited prior to your acquisition. If the property has become uninhabitable for some reason (eg: flooding, fire, subsidence) then we may be able to consider this further.

Structural alteration

Work considered as being undertaken to the structure of a dwelling may include extensions, loft conversions or removing existing walls etc.

It is important we are notified before work starts, or very soon after works begin, so as to assist in the overall verification process. If we receive a retrospective claim, we will only consider application on receipt of substantive documentary evidence, including receipts from tradesman and/or surveyors reports.

If you feel you qualify for the 50% discount, we will require completion of our Class D Application form, together with the documentary/ photographic evidence listed on the application form – please send the form (and supporting evidence) as an email attachment to counciltax@stalbans.gov.uk.

We will seek to inform you of our decision within 14 days of receipt of the completed application and accompanying evidence. In some cases, an inspection of the property will be required. If this should be the case, our inspector will contact you to arrange a convenient date and time.