

LOCAL DISCRETIONARY RETAIL, HOSPITALITY & LEISURE RELIEF SCHEME

LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

This scheme forms part of the Council's wider Local Discretionary Rate Relief Policy. It sets out the principles upon which the Council will administer retail discount for occupied retail properties with a rateable value of less than £51,000.

This document sets out the broad framework of principles to be used in decision -making for this new scheme in line with Government guidance, covering 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

The value of discount awarded will be 75% to be applied after mandatory reliefs and other discretionary reliefs funded by S31 grants have been applied.

Any retail discount granted under this scheme will be reviewed each year subject to a change in circumstances that falls outside the principles of the scheme (ie. property becomes empty, change of use) in which case relief will be apportioned to the qualification dates.

Scheme Principles:

To qualify for Retail Relief a property must be:

1. Occupied
2. Have a Rateable value of less than £51,000 (this is shown on your Business Rate bill)
3. Properties that are wholly or mainly being used:
 - i. as shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas or live music venues,
 - ii. for assembly and leisure; or
 - iii. as hotels, guest & boarding premises or self-catering accommodation

Properties considered to be retail for the purposes of this relief:

i. Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public:

- Shops (such as: florists, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, stationers, off licences, chemists, newsagents, hardware stores, supermarkets, etc)
- Charity shops
- Opticians
- Post offices
- Furnishing shops/ display rooms (such as: carpet shops, double glazing, garage doors)
- Car/caravan show rooms
- Second-hand car lots
- Markets
- Petrol stations

- Garden centres
- Art galleries (where art is for sale/hire)

ii. Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:

- Hair and beauty services (such as: hairdressers, nail bars, beauty salons, tanning shops, etc)
- Shoe repairs/key cutting
- Travel agents
- Ticket offices e.g. for theatre
- Dry cleaners
- Launderettes
- PC/TV/domestic appliance repair
- Funeral directors
- Photo processing
- Tool hire
- Car hire

iii. Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of food and/or drink to visiting members of the public:

- Restaurants
- Takeaways
- Sandwich shops
- Coffee shops
- Pubs
- Bars

iv. Hereditaments which are being used as cinemas

v. Hereditaments that are being used as live music venues:

Properties considered to be assembly and leisure for the purposes of this relief:

i. Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of sport, leisure and facilities to visiting members of the public (including for the viewing of such activities).

- Sports grounds and clubs
- Museums and art galleries
- Nightclubs
- Sport and leisure facilities

- Stately homes and historic houses
- Theatres
- Tourist attractions
- Gyms
- Wellness centres, spas, massage parlours
- Casinos, gambling clubs and bingo halls

ii. Hereditaments that are being used for the assembly of visiting members of the public.

- Public halls
- Clubhouses, clubs and institutions

Properties considered to be accommodation for the purposes of this relief:

i. Hereditaments where the non-domestic part is being used for the provision of living accommodation as a business:

- Hotels, Guest and Boarding Houses
- Holiday homes
- Caravan parks and sites

To qualify for the relief the hereditament should be wholly or mainly being used for the above qualifying purposes. In a similar way to other reliefs (such as charity relief), this is a test on use rather than occupation. Therefore, hereditaments which are occupied but not wholly or mainly used for the qualifying purpose will not qualify for the relief.

The list below sets out the types of uses that the government does **not** consider to be an eligible use for the purpose of this discount.

i. Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public

- Financial services (e.g. banks, building societies, cash points, bureaux de change, short-term loan providers, betting shops)
- Medical services (e.g. vets, dentists, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors)
- Professional services (e.g. solicitors, accountants, insurance agents/ financial advisers, employment agencies, estate agents, letting agents)
- Post office sorting offices

ii. Hereditaments that are not reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public