

## Frequently Asked Questions



**What do you mean by 'empty home'?**

A property which is not lived in as anyone's main home.

### Questions about furnished empty homes-

<b>What do you class as a 'second home'?</b>	A furnished property which is no one's main home. For example, this could be a property left unoccupied whilst it is awaiting tenants, or a property which is used as a holiday home during the summer months, or a property that has been inherited.
<b>How do you decide which property is my 'main home'?</b>	We take into consideration all the factors involved, where you have the majority of your possessions, where you are registered for services such as doctors, dentists, bank, voting, who lives with you, your legal interest in a property. There is a great deal of case law surrounding the subject and each case is considered individually.
<b>What do you mean by 'job related'?</b>	You have to live elsewhere in Great Britain (GB) because it's in the terms of your employment contract that you must live in accommodation provided by your employer to enable you to carry out your job. The discount available is 50% of the charge. Please note; there are particular rules that apply to military personnel.
<b>I'm required to live outside of Great Britain because of my job, can I get a discount?</b>	No, if you are living outside of GB no discounts are available. However, if you are employed by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) you may find it useful to know that the MoD runs a scheme, as part of the military covenant, called 'The Council Tax Relief Scheme' that supports military personnel serving overseas who are liable to pay council tax for a property that they own in GB. If you believe you qualify you should seek further advice through the MoD.

### Questions about unfurnished empty homes-

<b>What do you class as 'unfurnished'?</b>	A property which is substantially empty of furniture to the point that a person could not reasonably be able to live in it, i.e no beds, white goods, seating etc.
<b>What is a 'vacant property'?</b>	A property which is both unoccupied and substantially unfurnished
<b>I live in MoD accommodation, are there any discounts available?</b>	No, however, if you leave your property vacant in excess of 2 years you will not be charged the additional premium.
<b>My empty home is in a poor condition, I would say it is uninhabitable, what can I do?</b>	If your empty home is in a very poor condition, you may be able to ask the Valuation Office to remove it from the Valuation List. In order for the Valuation Officer to consider this, the property must be razed to the ground or well beyond reasonable repair, i.e. the roof has been removed, external walls have been knocked down. This option depends largely upon the extent of your project. The decision to remove a property from the list rests with the Valuation Office and not the Council. If the Valuation Office decides to remove your property from the list, we will be unable to charge Council Tax until it is brought back onto the Valuation List. You can contact the Valuation Office at <a href="mailto:cteast@voa.gsi.gov.uk">cteast@voa.gsi.gov.uk</a>

Please note- This document is intended as a guide only as detailed criteria apply.