



Vacant Home Tax – Guidance Note

Vacant Homes Tax (VHT) is a government measure aimed at encouraging the use of residential properties and addressing housing shortages. It applies to residential dwellings that are occupied for fewer than 30 days in a 12-month chargeable period. The tax is charged as a multiple of the property's Local Property Tax (LPT) and has increased over time. For the first chargeable period (1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023), the rate was three times the basic LPT. This increased to five times the basic LPT for the period 1 November 2023 to 31 October 2024, and from 1 November 2024 onwards the rate is seven times the basic LPT for the property. To avoid liability, parishes should ensure that any residential property is used as a dwelling for a minimum of 30 days in the year. Practical options include short-term occupation such as local students to stay, providing temporary accommodation, or entering into a caretaker agreement. Leaving a property vacant is not good practice, as unoccupied buildings are more likely to deteriorate, may attract vandalism or damage, and can also raise insurance concerns, with some insurers restricting or invalidating cover where a property is left empty for extended periods.