

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

**­­­­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**­­­­**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE**  | **Extension of High Street and Retail Rates Relief for 2020-21** |
| **DATE**  | **07 January 2020** |
| **BY**  | **Rebecca Evans AM, Minister for Finance and Trefnydd** |

On 10 December 2018, the Welsh Government launched the enhanced High Street and Retail Rates Relief scheme for 2019-20. The scheme has provided targeted support to help high street and retail properties with their non-domestic rates bills.

I am today extending the scheme for a further year, providing support to all retailers in Wales with a rateable value of up to £50,000.

We will make an £24.2m of support available in 2020-21 through the high street and retail rates relief scheme to support Welsh businesses. This is in addition to the more than £230m we provide through our other reliefs to help businesses pay their rates bills.

The high street and retail rates relief scheme will provide support to over 15,000 small and medium-sized businesses in 2020-21. It will be fully funded by the Welsh Government and will provide support of up to £2,500 towards the rates bills for retail properties with a rateable value of up to £50,000.

It will reduce rates bills to zero for retail properties with a rateable value up to £9,100 and reduce bills by £2,500 for properties with a higher rateable value.

As well as supporting retailers on the high street, the scheme will continue to support retailers in other locations. Ratepayers benefitting from the relief include those with occupied retail premises such as shops, restaurants, cafes, pubs and wine bars.

A further £2.4m will be allocated to local authorities to provide additional discretionary rates relief for local businesses and other ratepayers to respond to specific local issues. This funding will be provided through the local government settlement, taking the total being provided to local authorities for discretionary relief to £4.8m for 2020-21.

This extension to the high street rates relief scheme and the additional funding for discretionary rates relief, together with our permanent small business rates relief scheme, which has been in place since April 2018 and other bespoke reliefs, combine to offer timely and targeted support for ratepayers across Wales.

This scheme will continue to be administered by local authorities on an application basis and operates in addition to the wide range of other support provided by the Welsh Government.

Technical note

The eligibility criteria for qualifying businesses for the enhanced high street and retail rates relief scheme are as follows:

1. Hereditaments that are being used wholly or mainly for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public.
2. Hereditaments that are being used wholly or mainly for the provision of the retail services to visiting members of the public
3. Hereditaments that are being used wholly or mainly for the sale of food and/or drink to visiting members of the public.

The relief will exclude:

1. Hereditaments with a valuation of more than £50,000.
2. Hereditaments not reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public.
3. Hereditaments that are not occupied.
4. Hereditaments that are in receipt of mandatory charitable rates relief.