

Major repair work

The intention is that a reduced Council Tax can be paid where a property cannot be lived in because it has fallen into severe disrepair.

It is not intended to cover situations where a property has outdated features, fittings and fixtures. Replacement, refurbishment or modernisation of e.g. kitchen, bathrooms, toilets; installation of replacement windows; central heating, rewiring, re-plastering, etc would not lead to a reduction because these are not major repairs. Neither will 'minor' repairs lead to a reduction. Quite often refurbishment works are carried out whilst a property is still lived in.

Many vacant properties have work done prior to the occupier moving in. This is more desirable or cosmetic rather than essential major repair work.

It is important for landlords or those intending to let property to note that although you may think of 'uninhabitable' as meaning 'unfit to let', the condition of the property may be acceptable to an owner occupier.

Because of the difficulties, it is essential the Council's Inspector can see the repairs that are needed before they are started or at least before they are completed. Substantial supporting evidence such as a qualified surveyors report may also be required.

The council can consider the cost and extent of the works required to make the property habitable, the time those works would take and any other obvious features of the works.

Structural alterations

These would include major underpinning, total replacement of floors, including new joists, damp proof membrane, total replacement of ceilings or roof including new joists/timbers, total re-plastering (back to brickwork) of the entire walls of the majority of the property.