



26th October 2020

Dear Minister,

Postponement of the Scottish Government's Short-Term Let Regulatory Process

As you are aware, the Covid-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc across Scotland's tourism industry, as well as the general economy, resulting in an extremely perilous set of circumstances for business. It is within that context that we are surprised that the Scottish Government has proceeded with such haste in respect of its short-term let consultation.

Scottish tourism has changed irrevocably since the short-term let regulation proposals were first unveiled to the Scottish Parliament back in January 2020; yet the Scottish Government's overall approach does not take cognisance of this changed reality. We have witnessed a truncated consultation process – contradicting the Scottish Government's own best practice guidance, including the lack of a partial Business Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) – at a time when many businesses are predominantly concerned with ensuring their continued survival.

While minds have been focused elsewhere, the Scottish Government remain firmly set on a timetable which dictates that the secondary legislation must be laid by December 2020 in order that the regulations come into force by Spring 2021. We do not believe that a full explanation has been provided as to the rationale behind this, especially as numerous Covid-19 restrictions have been placed upon affected businesses and uncertainty endures as to when these might be lifted.

If enacted, these regulations will introduce significant changes that will impact a crucial component part of our tourist industry. Short-term letting is a diverse sector, comprising traditional professional self-caterers offering self-contained holiday cottages to those merely sharing a room in their own home to guests via online marketing platforms. The growth of short-term lets is not just an urban phenomenon in cities like Edinburgh but one that reaches into rural and remote areas, providing an economic boost to local communities. Moreover, this industry should not be viewed in isolation from the wider economy: for example, visitors in such properties generate economic footfall for hospitality businesses and visitor attractions. That again underlines the necessity of getting the detail right on these regulations.

Given the considerable local and economic impact, it is only fair that any regulation must be properly considered and scrutinised by policymakers. It is therefore our recommendation that the Scottish Government should immediately pause their work on the regulations – as per

other pieces of legislation such as the Transient Visitor Levy – so that the industry has time to recover from the devastating consequences of Covid-19. Such an approach would also enable a far greater discussion of the possible consequences of the regulation and ensure that we arrive at a proportionate and balanced solution that can benefit both business and communities. We remain committed to working with you to ensure a positive outcome for Scottish tourism.

Yours sincerely,

Airbnb: Marie Lorimer, Public Policy UK & Ireland
Argyll & Isles Tourism Cooperative: Iain Jurgensen, Chairperson
Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers: Fiona Campbell, Chief Executive
Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions: Gordon Morrison, Chief Executive
Association of Serviced Accommodation Providers: James Foice, Chief Executive
British Holiday & Home Parks Association: Jeanette Wilson
Cairngorms Business Partnership: Mark Tate, Chief Executive
Confederation of British Industry: Mari Tunby, Head of Policy
European Holiday Home Association: Carlos Villaro Lassen, Secretary General
Federation of Small Businesses: Andrew McRae, Scotland policy chair
Gilson Gray LLP: Joanna Millar, Legal Director
Holiday Home Association: Martin Sach, Chief Executive
Institute of Directors Scotland: Malcolm Cannon, National Director
Oban & Lorn Tourism Alliance: Linda Battison, Director
Outer Hebrides Tourism: Rob McKinnon, Chief Executive
Professional Association of Self-Catering: Alistair Handyside, Executive Chairman
Quality in Tourism: Deborah Heather, Director
Sail Scotland: Alan Rankin, Chief Executive
Scotland Food and Drink: James Withers, Chief Executive
Scottish AgriTourism: Caroline Millar, Lead
Scottish Council for Development and Industry: Sara Thiam, Chief Executive
Scottish Chambers of Commerce: Liz Cameron, Chief Executive
Scottish Hospitality Group: Stephen Montgomery, Spokesperson
Scottish Land & Estates: Sarah-Jane Laing, Chief Executive
Scottish Retail Consortium: David Lonsdale, Director
Scottish Tourism Alliance: Marc Crothall, Chief Executive
Sharing Economy UK: Jenna Cane, Manager
Shetland Tourism Association: Emma Miller, Chairperson
Short-Term Accommodation Association: Merilee Karr, Chairperson
SkyeConnect: Alistair Danter, Project Manager
South of Scotland Destination Alliance: David Ibbotson, Chair
UKHospitality: Willie Macleod, Executive Director, Scotland
VisitAberdeenshire: Chris Foy, Chief Executive
VisitArran: Sheila Gilmore, Executive Director
Visit Inverness Loch Ness: Michael Goldie, Chief Executive
Visit Moray Speyside: Laurie Piper, Chief Executive
Where Stags Roar: Rod Frazer
WildScotland: Victoria Brooks

Contact: Fiona Campbell | ASSC | fiona@assc.co.uk | 07958 771106

Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers

Mansefield House, Arrochar, Argyll & Bute

07958 771106 www.assc.co.uk fiona@assc.co.uk



European Holiday Home Association

