



## **ASSC: Measuring the Unintended Consequences of Short-Term Let Licensing to Self-Catering in Scotland – SEPTEMBER 2021**

### **Introduction**

- The Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers (ASSC) is the leading source of knowledge on short-term letting and traditional self-catering in Scotland. The traditional self-catering sector alone is extremely important to the Scottish economy. A recently launched impact report by Frontline (Sept 2021) found that the self-catering sector contributed:
  - 17,794 properties
  - 2.4 million visitor nights
  - £867.1m total visitor spend
  - 23,979 jobs
  - £672m to the Scottish economy
- The ASSC has been working pro-actively and constructively with the Scottish Government on the introduction of regulations to the short-term let sector since 2017 and is pleased to provide more data to inform the ongoing process.
- On 24th September the ASSC conducted a Survey entitled "*Measuring the Unintended Consequences of Short-Term Let Licensing to Self-Catering in Scotland*" to gain further insights and additional data to further inform the Scottish Governments Short-Term Let (STL) Legislation Proposals.

### **Survey Overview**

- The ASSC ran an online survey consisting of 22 questions. This was publicised via ASSC newsletters, as well as on the ASSC's social media pages.
- **In just 72 hours, the ASSC gathered 668 responses** from self-catering operators across Scotland.
- Responses received were from both ASSC members (366) and non-ASSC members (302), from 31 local authority areas.
- It is hoped that the survey results will inform greater discussion regarding the Scottish Government's short-term let legislation proposals.
- It is also hoped that the responses received provide an insight into the **unintended consequences this legislation is impacting on self-catering businesses across Scotland**, which form the backbone of Scotland's vital tourism offer.
- The full list of questions and survey results are set out below.

### **Summary**

**If the Scottish Government introduced licensing as drafted, 92% of the industry consider the licensing scheme burdensome whilst 88% consider it onerous. Over half (55%) would consider removing their property from holiday letting.**

- 71% said that the purpose of the property is specifically for a tourism accommodation business, with 82% on non-domestic rates.
- 12% said it was part of their primary residence, 30% said they would leave the property empty while only 20% would sell it.
- 72% said that if they were to sell their property, it would not be available for affordable housing.
- A staggering **92% have concerns about the unknown cost of a licence** application in addition to existing H&S compliance.
- When asked about the mental implications of the proposed licensing scheme to self-catering operators their family or business colleagues, **82% said the proposed scheme was causing them concern or distress.**
- **89% of operators said they feel uncomfortable or distressed about the uncertainty of having to apply for a licence every 3 years.**



### Q1 Where is your business based?

The vast majority of respondents are based in rural areas, with just 15% operating in cities across Scotland.

Local Authority	Number of Respondents
Aberdeen City	5
Aberdeenshire	27
Angus	7
Argyll & Bute	81
Clackmannanshire	0
Dumfries & Galloway	34
Dundee City	1
East Ayrshire	1
East Dunbartonshire	1
East Lothian	5
East Renfrewshire	1
Edinburgh City	68
Eilean Siar	25
Falkirk	2
Fife	31
Glasgow City	9

Local Authority	Number of Respondents
Highland Skye & Lochalsh	82
Highland - other	150
Inverclyde	2
Midlothian	2
Moray	16
North Ayrshire	20
North Lanarkshire	2
Orkney	6
Perth & Kinross	37
Renfrewshire	2
Scottish Borders	27
Shetland	16
South Ayrshire	8
South Lanarkshire	8
Stirling	18
West Dunbartonshire	1
West Lothian	6

### Q2 How would you describe the location of your property?

Whilst 70% of respondents rely entirely on self-catering as income, others illustrate a diverse range of multiple income streams that make up their entire income, a common feature of many small businesses today. Interestingly, there was no mention of crofting or fishing as additional income streams.

Urban	104	15.57%	} Combined = 79.94%
Suburban	27	4.04%	
<b>Semi-Rural</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>16.92%</b>	
<b>Rural</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>44.31%</b>	
<b>On an Island</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>18.71%</b>	
Pan Scotland	3	0.45%	

### Q 3 Are you registered on the Non-Domestic Rates Roll or Council Tax?

Yes	<b>550</b>	<b>82.34%</b>
No	118	17.66%



**Q 4 Is the prime purpose of the property/ies specifically for tourism (tick any that apply)?**

The Purpose is specifically for a tourism accommodation business	<b>473</b>	<b>70.91%</b>
A second home that I also use for tourism accommodation	79	11.84%
I inherited the property & I have diversified for use for tourism accommodation to keep it in the family	44	6.60%
It is part of a diversified business (ie farm / other activity)	63	9.45%
The property was renovated from empty/derelict/previously unused property	<b>107</b>	<b>16.04%</b>
The property was built specifically for the purpose of letting out for tourist accommodation	88	13.19%
The self-catering element is attached to my primary residence	<b>100</b>	<b>14.99%</b>

COMMENTS:

- *3 of the cottages were built 10 years ago with help of Rural Development Grant because of deprived area*
- ***The nucleus of the business was started with a grant from the then EEC to enable crofters to diversify into tourist accommodation. This was fully supported by the government at the time and it is ironic that the Scottish Government seems now to be discouraging letting for the tourist.***
- *By providing top quality, self-catering accommodation, accessible for wheelchair users, adjoined to my main residence, I will be able to generate a living for me and my family, work from home and sustain rural self-employment whilst reducing carbon footprint, add to the overnight inventory in rural West Stirlingshire, promote other local businesses and generate secondary visitor spend in the local area. This is not a 'second home' property run by an anonymous website, I take pride in providing a professional, authentic visitor/accommodation experience and the potential cost brought on by additional regulations will disproportionately affect my business.*
- *Until a year ago there was a 6 week occupancy restriction on the 42 properties on the development to ensure use as tourist accommodation. This has been removed without our support. Now our business is exposed to planning control regulations*
- *As one of the oldest properties in the Highlands with additions over the last 400 years the house needed a very significant investment to insulate and upgrade to current Scottish Government standards, which could only be achieved by letting it for short term holiday accommodation which would give max. spend locally or selling it as a second home where the spend locally would be minimal. It has therefore been upgraded to achieve VisitScotland 5\* as there is a lack of that standard of accommodation in the Aviemore area and the return should pay back the investment and interest over 10 years.*
- *After inheriting the property in the late 1980's, we kept it in the family to ensure our children have the option of a future home on the island. Housing for young people has been a crucial issue for, at least, the last 30-40years! Buying a home or business property here was an issue for us too. We had to go abroad to work for 13 years, to earn the money to buy a business/home on the island in the early 1980's! Its not a new problem., its always been unaffordable for young adults to buy or build on the island. Opportunities are scarce, wages are low. 2. It may now be required to provide for our retirement as the financial sector collapse had made pensions unattractive and insecure, and government pensions are widely acknowledge as inadequate.*
- *The building is just a few feet from my primary residence, and would have fallen down completely if we hadn't renovated it nearly 30 years ago for self catering. It dates back to the 1700s and was originally an agricultural building with limited accommodation for WW2 German prisoners of war working on the farm here!*
- *The reason I decided to do this is that I am a self-employed single mum supporting 2 children myself, and when I lost work in 2018, and after much uncertainty in my self employment over 14 years, I*



decided to invest money into buying and running one small holiday cottage that would become my main regular income, supplemented by other smaller more seasonal work. It is a lifeline for me.

**Q 5 Do you have concerns about the proposed short-term let licensing scheme? (tick any that apply) If so, please give any details.**

<b>Uncertainty over licence not being granted</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>85.67%</b>
<b>Licence potentially being revoked or refused on a 3 yearly basis</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>84.31%</b>
<b>Booking problem: if you have to enter into a term of agreement with your guests that they can only stay if a licence is granted</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>82.2%</b>
Commercial investment: your financial provider may reconsider your terms, if your licence may be refused or revoked	141	21.27%
Personal investment: if your licence may be refused or revoked you will reconsider investment in terms of capital / fixtures & fittings	353	53.24%
Neighbour objection: current proposals require any neighbour within 20m, or your nearest neighbour, to be informed and given the opportunity to object	290	43.74%
<b>Cost: the unknown cost of a licence application in addition to existing H&amp;S compliance</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>91.68%</b>
<b>Appeal: lack of ability to appeal a refusal / revocation decision</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>78.43%</b>
Overprovision policy: local authorities may consider there to be 'too many STLs' and a shortage of housing, so refuse an application on those grounds	459	69.23%
<b>Inspection costs: Councils may also require inspections and there is a suggestion premises could be charged for these inspections.</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>86.58%</b>
I have no concerns	13	1.96%

**COMMENTS:**

- ***The whole question of an extra licence for our property has caused so much uncertainty that it already has an impact on our business. We are working on shortened lead times. At the moment we only accept bookings up till Easter 2022 because the licensing question and the general political noise is so off-putting that we do not want to commit to any investment in 2022 at this stage.***
- *We would struggle with conservation work funding as funders look for at least 10 years stability before considering applications. This would put an end to important projects on the island currently funded by Flora and Fauna International.*
- *My concern is that I was intending to paint the property throughout including outside windows which may require scaffolding(estimated cost of £5000 in 2019). This essential maintenance has already been delayed 2 years due to loss of earnings due to Covid and i cannot afford to go ahead this year with it with this unknown licensing charge hanging over me. Therefore the uncertainty and potential charges are preventing essential maintenance.*
- ***Our business is in a tenement building. Interestingly our business had been there longer than any resident in the building and a high proportion of the properties are let out on a six month basis with students being one category. In the 6 years we have been in business we have never had one complaint form our neighbours. Indeed we have provided accommodation for many of our neighbours who were visiting them. We also have employed neighbours to meet and greet when we have been busy. Our neighbours also benefit from us providing free stair cleaning and we pay for any minor repairs and repainting the front door when required at our cost.***
- *The suggestions are outrageous and will severely damage the local economy which is largely dependent on tourism. Most of our bookings are returning guests who value the efforts and investment we have put into the business since 2008.*
- *I also develop property; I have provided land for 10 affordable home completions in the last 2 years; I could have provided 50 if the planning authority and Scottish Government would/ could coordinate properly. Housing professionals, supported by exasperated home seekers, are using this proposal as a PR cover up for their poor performance over the last 20 years. There is nothing wrong with affordable*



housing policy; four of the affordable homes completed this year had no government subsidy and everyone is happy; except that it took ten years to get through the bureaucracy. Also hearsay is that many affordable homes that are completed are allocated to people who do not belong to the area.

**Q6 How could any concerns be mitigated**

COMMENTS:

- *Scrap the whole stupid and greedy idea, stop penalising a genuine small business that produces taxes and large spends from tourism in to the much needed economy.*
- *By listening to the experts in the field and ensuring that any legislation is sensible and not one size fits all approach.*
- ***Robust research into identifying the issues, how many short-term lets the Scottish Government anticipates will return to the long-term housing market following the implementation of its plans WHY and HOW?, looking at what has worked and has not in other areas both UK and Internationally and why, researching outcomes and consequences for the local and Scottish economy.***
- *Scrap this nonsense and start again. Be clear what the purpose of any additional regulation actually is. Gather clear and incontrovertible evidence to quantify what the problem actually is that our government is trying to solve. Do NOT kick an industry already on its knees post pandemic. Above all, listen to those in the industry who actually understand how it works, and the consequences.*
- *We support a licence scheme that protects businesses & visitors. not one that is anti-business with the sole intention of forcing houses back onto the long term rental market. our properties have had much investment and would not be suitable for long term lets ( we couldn't meet the repayments ) several are also connected to or form part of our farming business and they make a necessary contribution , especially in difficult years. There are many varied business models for STL and these need to be considered in the legislation.*

**Q7 Do you consider the proposed licensing scheme to be?**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Onerous	566 87.62%	16 2.48%	64 9.91%
Burdensome	590 91.76%	12 1.87%	41 6.38%
Proportionate	19 3.10%	530 86.60%	63 10.29%
Fair	14 2.28%	541 88.25%	58 9.46%
Targeted	191 31.16%	325 53.02%	97 15.82%

**Q8 The ASSC has suggested a compromise, with an exemption for 'Registered Accommodation'. Would you support this? (<https://www.assc.co.uk/stl-licensing-proposed-exemption-for-registered-accommodation/>)**

Yes	509	76.20%
No	24	3.59%
Not sure	135	20.21%



**Q9 If the Scottish Government introduced licensing as drafted, would you consider removing your property from holiday letting?**

Yes	364	54.49%
No	90	13.47%
Not sure	214	32.04%

**Q10 If yes, what would you do with the property?**

Leave it empty / use for family and friends (it becoming a second home)	177	30.57%
Sell it	114	19.69%
Let it out long-term	63	10.88%
I'm unable to let out long-term	22	3.80%
Have to sell, due to return on investment being too low to continue with financial lending commitments	37	6.39%
Can't sell it as it is part of a primary residence	70	12.09%
Can't sell it due to planning conditions	12	2.07%

COMMENTS:

- *Close and get a job elsewhere. But so would my 6 employees.*
- ***My letting properties form part of my farm, which is also my home. Long term letting makes no sense, the properties are high quality but not suitable as full time homes. I could not sell either, as this would mean splitting my title. The holiday cottages will therefore remain empty, and the visitor spend will be lost to the island.***
- *I will not long term let it - leaving it empty causes deterioration of the property. Unfair dilemma, the house is not an extra its part of our family's plan for a future home here.*
- *I'm still thinking about this, as it affects my whole family's future (including my retired parents, as it's their income, as well). If we had to sell or let long-term, neither of my two properties fall under the category of "affordable housing".*
- *planning permission was for holiday let only.*
- *Probably just leave it empty or demolish. It is fairly old purpose-built holiday accommodation requiring a lot of upkeep which I am willing to do if it is being used, but which would be pointless if the property is unused. I don't want to risk paying rates on empty property, so would consider demolishing it and living on my widow's pension.*
- *Cottage is literally a 'summer house' and not suitable for year-long tenancy, it's old and unable to be insulated. it's a historic village property and may end up being demolished as a result of this.*

**Q11 If you were to sell it, would it become available for affordable housing? If not, why not?**

Yes	19	2.96%
No	462	72.07%
n/a	160	24.96%

COMMENTS:

- *It is part of my home*
- *It would go for far above affordable housing rates as a recent sale has done, so would not create any benefit to the local economy but would end up taking away local jobs for servicing the self-catering accommodation.*



- ***I have 2 holiday cottages and I doubt would be considered as starter or affordable housing. They have each taken significant investment to achieve and maintain their present standards.***
- *Built as a holiday let/home and has a condition attached so you cannot stay for longer than 6 weeks*
- *It is within the boundary of a listed property and is itself listed. It cannot be separated from our main residence which is large. If we were to sell, we would be selling the whole lot.*
- *Not suitable for long-term accommodation- they are designed as holiday accommodation*
- *Ours are luxury properties costing hundreds of thousands to construct and completely inappropriate for affordable housing.*
- *because it would sell on the open market*
- *It is a high spec converted Steading. We have invested a lot of money and would want to recoup this outlay.*
- ***It is written in the planning permission that was granted that these buildings can only be used for holiday let accommodation and for no other purpose***
- *The properties are modest farm cottages adjacent to my farmhouse. They are not suitable to use as long term homes, nor would I wish long term tenants on my farm.*
- *It would not be in the price bracket normally considered for 'affordable' housing*
- *Why would anyone let out a house for affordable housing when the governments keeps layering more and more regulatory costs onto the private sector*
- *It would cost more than a local byer could afford. it would likely go to another wealthy retiree. A non working age resident put further pressure on the islands beleaguered workforce.*

**Q12 How do you feel about having to apply for a licence every 3 years? Does this bring uncertainty and if so why?**

Comfortable	18	2.69%
Neutral	54	8.08%
<b>Uncomfortable</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>50.75%</b>
<b>Distressed</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>38.47%</b>

**Q13 How do you feel about the future of your business - if the proposed licensing scheme is established?**

<b>Very Pessimistic</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>37.43%</b>
<b>Pessimistic</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>44.91%</b>
Neutral	92	13.77%
Optimistic	21	3.14%
Very Optimistic	5	0.75%

**Q14 How would you feel about your business - if 'registered accommodation' was EXEMPT from the proposed licensing legislation (as proposed by the ASSC)?**

Very Pessimistic	19	2.84%
Pessimistic	24	3.59%
Neutral	117	17.51%
<b>Optimistic</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>50.60%</b>
<b>Very Optimistic</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>25.45%</b>



**Q15 What are the mental implications of the proposed licensing scheme to you, your family or business colleagues?**

I am not worried at all	18	2.69%
<b>The proposed scheme is causing me concern</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>47.16%</b>
<b>The proposed scheme is causing me distress</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>35.33%</b>
I am feeling confused	64	9.58%

COMMENTS:

- ***The utter shambles that is the proposed licensing scheme has caused severe mental health issues for me, as well as great concern for my family; these issues have had massive knock-on effects on my physical health (which have been exacerbated by the stress I'm under at the thought of losing my family-run business).***
- *Having a hospitality business, post-covid, is difficult enough!*
- *This is my only source of income, at 58 yrs old what would I do ? Who would employ me? My husband is close to retrial age. This is so stressful fir us as a family*
- *The constant pushing back on voting etc whilst deadline for getting a license remains the same is just adding to stress*
- *This is very distressing as we are unable to make long term plans or long term bookings. We might just jump before we are pushed so to speak. It is the cause of many sleepless nights and constant discussion. It is ironic that our guests are always a source of great pleasure to work with yet our own government is the source of such distress and anxiety. Most of all we feel targeted, scapegoated and unfairly treated. It is really a shameful disgrace the way the government and ECC are behaving.*
- ***Never should "EVERYONE be punished for the crime of ONE." Deal with the problem and leave the rest of us law-abiding people alone.***
- *Worried about the complexity of this - it needs to be focused and simplified. but we'll find a way through no matter what.*
- *I will not be able to provide for my family. I am 56 years of age and truthfully that will be me finished in contributing to the Scottish Economy. We will move to England.*

**Q16 How do you feel that the Scottish Government has dealt with the short-term let licensing consultation process**

Excellent	1	0.15%
Good	4	0.60%
Adequate	17	2.54%
<b>Poor</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>24.85%</b>
<b>Dreadful</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>71.86%</b>

**Q17 If you could highlight one significant point about the proposed licensing scheme to the Scottish Government what would that be?**

COMMENTS:

- ***It's a Burach. A mashup of licensing, planning, and lurid tabloid headlines. It won't work. Even one of the original proponents, Andy Wightman could not support it when it came before the Committee. He could recognise a car crash when he saw it. Scrap it, and allow the self-catering sector to recover from the terrible year we have just had. Don't kick us when we are already on our knees.***
- *Another example of huge disconnect between city and rural areas and the economic implications of reducing a vital income stream.*



- As usual the few abusers are causing a well run and self governing business unnecessary regulation and licencing.
- These proposals have already created a great deal of uncertainty in the immediate post pandemic recovery period.
- Pay attention to the ASSC, it's members and associates who understand the industry and to recognise that these are people who rely on their business for their main income.
- existing legislation should be enforced for unsocial behaviour which is causing the main problem
- Sledgehammer to crack a nut. Disproportionate to small number of localised problems.
- Uncertainty over costs and level of inspection requirements casts doubt on long term viability of the business
- **It will not lead to an increase in affordable housing for local communities. Health & Safety can be adequately addressed without the proposed licence.**
- It is unnecessary, over the top, interfering and causes another layer of useless bureaucracy. In our area, none of the problems that triggered this proposed action apply.
- We have enough red tape and check and balances in place. Leave us alone - we don't need more bureaucracy
- The government have no understanding about the effect on the economy of rural communities. Many of these properties will become second homes and lie vacant for most of the year so contributing very little or nothing to the local economy where as the spend from short term let customers is the back bone of the economy many rural communities.
- Licensing would cause impossible uncertainty for advance bookings
- There is no baseline to determine why an STL would be granted or not. Seems to be on whim of Council. It will not in any way create additional affordable housing, that is a myth.
- Edinburgh apartments need different treatment from rural cottages.
- It would be an expensive red tape scheme, pushed through by persons who don't understand the industry. Quite frankly an insult. We take pride in our properties & locations
- It has the potential to decimate the tourism industry in our local area, as there will be insufficient accommodation for the demand. There will only be an increase in 2nd homes lying empty for the majority of the year

#### Q18 How long is it likely to take your business to fully recover from Covid-19?

Within the next year	78	11.68%
1-2 years	216	32.24%
3-5 years	185	27.69%
6 years or more	22	3.29%
My business is operating normally	80	11.98%
I'm unsure	73	10.93%
Other:		

- I should have grown my business in this time but I'm at least 2 years behind and growth is uncertain due to the new licensing laws likely to come in.
- Demand has recovered; our costs have increased; the work we put into this has also increased.
- We lost many guests who are not returning as concerned that Scotland does not want 'English' visitors and will create a border with the rest of the U.K. and Wales
- I believe that the tourist industry has changed for the worst for Glasgow and Edinburgh. I strongly believe that the Local Governments and councils do not grasp this fact.
- although my bookings have been up the last six months because people could not travel overseas I believe next year they will be lower as people take advantage of relaxing of travel restrictions



- *Behind on our mortgage payments, also have a bounce back loan to pay and haven't done our improvements plans which are required each year to keep our tourist board star rating*

**Q19 Do you consider the Scottish Government to be supportive of small businesses?**

Yes	70	10.48%
<b>No</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>59.13%</b>
Not sure	134	20.06%

**COMMENTS:**

- *Scottish Government Minister for Tourism should be in charge of their brief and have the industry-wide expertise to know how the accommodation sector works in Scotland. It would have been prudent to engage with the sector before suggesting new policy.*
- *It has been to date, but the proposals feel like a turn in the opposite direction*
- *It feels like it doesn't have much knowledge of businesses like ours in remote locations.*
- *Not for the self-catering market*
- *The actions and proposed actions are demonstrably harmful to large numbers of small businesses, yet they carry on regardless. People can see that plainly, govt has been given facts and information and actions indicate blatant disregard. No one could make a case for this govt being supportive of small businesses, there is NO evidence*
- *I am unable to comment on other small businesses, but I don't feel well supported by the Scottish Government with the current STL legislation proposals.*
- *Certainly not self-catering businesses - I think they are supporting the big hotel groups by destroying self-catering*

**Q20 Have you written to your MSP representatives regarding STL Licensing?**

Yes	373	55.84%
No	295	44.16%

**Q21 If the answer is yes, did you receive a satisfactory response?**

Yes	101	15.12%
<b>No</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>84.88%</b>

**Q22 And finally in a short paragraph, tell us how this is going to affect you and your business?**

**COMMENTS:**

- ***We have been going for 50 years. This will put us out of businesses because the margins are very tight and the proposed costs and inability to take forward bookings will devastate us.***
- *Distress, distress, and distress*
- *Professional accommodation providers do not need more bureaucracy; we need less to allow us to concentrate on recovering and growing our business to support the tourism opportunities of our beautiful country; surely one of our most important industries.*
- *Badly. The scheme is badly thought out and will be very harmful not only to my business but to many small accommodation providers across the whole of Shetland. The entire scheme should be scrapped.*



- *The uncertainty and expense will be financially and mentally crippling if the gov proposals go ahead as originally planned*
- ***At present whilst I'm my mum's full-time carer (she is disabled and has Parkinson's and dementia) it's my primary source of income - without it I'm scuppered as the allowance for being a carer is negligible and certainly not enough to live on.***
- *Any business needs to plan over the short, mid and long term. The proposed processes do not allow business to do this (planning renewal every 3 years) therefore making any investment questionable and potentially making self-catering carry too much risk and therefore not viable as a business model.*
- ***It may make our life, and certainly that of our young adult children, not economically viable on the island, as it will weaken our business income here. There is nothing to replace that loss of income. Without self-catering the other jobs in tourism will go, and therefore with it low paid jobs and the need for social housing . It will cause rural depopulation. Oh the irony!***
- *I don't think I will continue with holiday lets*
- *If the introduction of this legislation goes ahead I am most likely to sell off the business and use the capital to support my pension. That will ultimately reduce the taxation raised and visitors spend. Loose-loose scenario.*
- *If the licensing goes ahead it is likely I will go out of business.*
- *It may now cause my business to fail having a terrible impact on local businesses and individuals that we currently employ as well as having a huge impact on my family financially.*
- *We have invested the past 13 years building this business and this proposed legislation appears clumsy and disproportionately hard on good, small businesses that are not part of a wider housing issue.*
- *The uncertainty of all of this is going to cause me distress on a personal level and on a commercial level with GNL which employs 5 people. We could lose a lot of properties which would in turn mean having to make staff redundancies. This in itself causes me a great deal of stress never mind the money the business will lose.*
- *The uncertainty is a big concern, no problem with there being a requirement to meet minimum standards but we need some assurances we won't find our businesses under threat of closure every 3 years*
- *I think it will raise the cost of running the business, potentially significantly, and add significant uncertainty and bureaucracy. I believe the regulations are driven by a small but vocal minority with an axe to grind against Airbnb businesses and are intended to be used as a mechanism to reduce the number of properties in areas such as Edinburgh City. I believe the stated objective to improve safety is disingenuous, that the regulations are overly complex and burdensome, and that the wider implications and impact on the businesses and tourism of the legislation have not been given sufficient attention. I have zero confidence that the regulations will be applied fairly and consistently, and I believe many low-grade properties will continue to operate outwith the regulations, further increasing the price differential between professionally operated ones and those looking to make the maximum profit without meeting basic safety standards, particularly non-permanent structures.*
- ***I love the tourism sector. I take huge pride in doing all that I can to ensure guests experience a warm welcome and enjoy a relaxing holiday in comfortable surroundings... somewhere to call home while they explore the area and contribute greatly to the local economy, whether it be cafes, restaurants, boat tours, historic attractions, weavers, distilleries, artists. I love being part of this sector and helping to promote local businesses. Without this business I don't know what I will do. I will obviously lose my income (as will my housekeeper and manager, and the local laundry will lose a client). I want to continue offering quality accommodation and to continue welcoming my many returning guests as well as getting to know new guests...but I am not sure if my mental health can stand the uncertainty of this bizarre licensing scheme...how can we take bookings and tell guests we might not be able to honour them if our licences are not renewed? I am feeling nauseous and anxious as I write this...so I guess that describes how this is going to affect me...***