

New short term lets legislation is welcome in Edinburgh

All short-term let properties will require a licence which can be granted by the local council.

This legislation approved by The Scottish Parliament is intended to ensure the properties are safe and the landlords are suitable.

Local authorities will have to establish a short-term lets licensing scheme by 1 October 2022, and existing hosts and operators will have until 1 April 2023 to apply for a licence.

The legislation was developed in response to concerns raised by residents and communities about the impact of short-term let properties on their local communities, including noise, antisocial behaviour and the impact on the supply of housing in some areas.

It is particularly welcome in Edinburgh where some areas of the city have been hollowed out for holiday flats which have caused permanent residents a great deal of nuisance in certain cases.

Council Leader, Cllr Adam McVey, said: "This is fantastic news for residents. After our call for this legislative change we worked with the Scottish Government as they consulted on this issue and how the details of a licensing scheme would work.

"I'm really pleased all short term lets will now need a licence making them much easier to control not only in terms

of overall impact on our housing supply but also help us deal with any anti-social behaviour and noise issues.

“It’ll mean whole properties being let out as short term lets will need to have ‘change of use’ planning permission before they can be granted a licence. This will help to stop homes being taken out of residential use or being let out when they are unsuitable or unsafe.

“In addition to this, councillors will consider a report next month on whether we should apply to the Scottish Government for Edinburgh to become a ‘short term let control area’. Enforcement of planning legislation is a costly and lengthy process. If approved, many properties being used as short term lets would automatically require to have planning permission in place”

Housing Secretary Shona Robison said: “This legislation is a significant milestone on our path to bringing in an effective system of regulating short-term lets.

“Our licensing scheme will allow local authorities and communities to take action to manage issues more effectively, without unduly curtailing the many benefits of short-term lets to hosts, visitors and the economy.

“We have already introduced legislation allowing councils to establish short-term let control areas and manage numbers of short-term lets. This is the next step to delivering a licensing scheme that will ensure short-term lets are safe and that allowing them to continue to make a positive impact on Scotland’s tourism industry and local economies while meeting the needs of local communities.

“This legislation covers the whole of Scotland, including island and rural communities, and offers flexibility to local authorities in how it is implemented based on local needs and concerns.

“We appreciate the input from tourism bodies, local government, community organisations, residents and others in reaching this point.”