

# Owner of holiday flat says it keeps his kids in touch with grandparents

An Australian family who run a holiday flat in Musselburgh say losing it will mean their children can no longer visit their grandparents.

Peter Oliver applied for a change of use for his flat in the town's Bush Street, after operating it as a short term let for seven years.

East Lothian Council's planners refused to grant permission saying the use of the flat, which has a communal staircase was 'incompatible' with residential living.

And after losing an appeal to the council's Local Review Body, the owner has appealed to Scottish Ministers to overturn the decision.

In the appeal, Mr Oliver says, no neighbours have complained about the holiday flat, which he says benefits everyone in the building as he pays for the cleaning of the stairwell.

He adds that as well as allowing other people to let the flat it is a home for his family when they visit his parents in the summer so they can spend time with his children.

He said: "Most of all, our family use the property. We stayed for a month last year and are planning a longer stay next summer.

"We live in Australia and this property is a vital link to allow our children to spend time with their grandparents who can't travel and otherwise would not know them.

"As they get older we intend to spend more and more time visiting each summer. We can not have this property on the residential market as, if our parents ever become sick, we need a place to come back to be near them.

"Having this property available for other guests to use outside of those times makes it possible for us to do this. It also gives couples in similar positions a great place to stay while they are doing the same."

The appeal has been given to a Scottish Government Reporter for investigation.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter