

Short Term Let owners in North Berwick face parking permit bills of £750 a year

Short term holiday flat owners in North Berwick could have to pay up to £750 a year for guest to park outside their properties under new parking permit plans.

The local authority is introducing a new £30 a week permit for holiday properties in North Berwick's new controlled parking zones.

The new permits, which will be restricted to 25 a year, are expected to generate a large income for the council, with the majority of the town's estimated 445 short term lets operating within the controlled parking zone.

It comes as the local authority is also considering the introduction of a Visitors Levy, similar to one recently approved by neighbour Edinburgh City Council, which could see guest pay an additional nightly fee for staying in the county.

The permits are part of East Lothian Council's new parking charges scheme for the seaside town which includes controlled residential zones and town centre charges.

But while residents living in the zones will be able to buy a permit for £40 a year, short term let operators will be charged far more and restricted to only being able to use them for half the year.

Additionally the council is planning to introduce a £4 a day permit for visitors and local trades people who may need to park in the streets.

The permits are part of new plans approved by councillors at a meeting in December which include the introduction of Controlled Parking Zones, permits for residents, time restrictions and charges for parking on some streets and car parks.

North Berwick has the highest number of short term holiday lets and Airbnbs across East Lothian.

An independent report for North Berwick Environment and Heritage Trust last summer said the number of lets had increased by 30% in a year with an estimated 445 active listings.

A council spokesperson said the plans for permits were still in progress with details on how to apply online set to be issued "in due course".

Full details of the changes can be found on the council website.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter