



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

Nigel Huddleston MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of
State for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and
Civil Society
4th Floor
100 Parliament Street
London SW1A 2BQ

E: enquiries@dcms.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dcms

Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

29 June 2022

MC2022/08787/DC

Dear Meg

I am writing to draw your attention to today's publication, by the government, of a call for evidence on short-term and holiday letting in England. The call for evidence will gather views and information on a range of issues related to short term lets, in order to improve the government's understanding of the benefits and challenges of the increase in short-term and holiday letting in England in recent years. This evidence will help us determine whether there are options the government should pursue through a consultation. The commitment to consult on a registration scheme was first made in the Tourism Recovery Plan, published in June 2021.

England has long had a high-quality tourist accommodation offer, but the introduction of online booking platforms such as Airbnb and Booking.com has led to significant developments in the range and volume of accommodation on the market. In particular, there are now far more short-term and holiday letting options available to consumers, including in what might otherwise be residential accommodation.

Whilst the sharing economy has brought many benefits to the tourism sector and wider economy, as well as creating an additional income stream for homeowners, the government also recognises that the rise in short-term and holiday letting has also prompted concerns. These include the impact on the housing market and local communities, particularly in tourism hotspots, and a sense that new entrants in the market are not being held to the same health and safety standards as traditional operators of guest accommodation such as hotels and bed and breakfasts. Although there is likely to be regional variation in how these issues manifest in England, I know that amongst some members (from all parties across the House) there is a significant strength of feeling on these issues.

Many other countries and cities have introduced measures in recent years to respond to some of these concerns. Whilst there is no common model, most measures tend to involve either a compulsory registration or licensing scheme as well as new powers given to local authorities to control short-term letting activity in their area. The call for evidence will allow us to gather the evidence necessary to develop proportionate, evidence-based policy options that work for England. We are also keen to consider alternatives to registration and licensing schemes



including non-regulatory alternatives. I am cognisant of commitments in the Levelling Up White Paper to explore proposals for introducing a National Landlord Register in England, and my Department will work closely with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities to ensure the government is joined up in identifying the right solutions for each sector and avoid duplication.

I am happy to discuss this work with you and your committee if desired and I have also written to Julian Knight MP, the Chair of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Commons Select Committee and Clive Betts MP, Chair of the Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities Commons Committee to highlight the publication of this call for evidence.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Huddleston', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nigel Huddleston MP
Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society