

Consultation on a registration scheme for short term holiday lets in England – Suggested answers in italics

Question 1: Which high-level approach to the registration scheme do you prefer?

- a) An opt-in scheme for local authorities, with the framework set nationally.
- b) An opt-in scheme for local authorities with the framework set nationally, and a review point to determine whether to expand the scheme to mandatory.
- c) A mandatory national scheme, administered by one of: the English Tourist Board (VisitEngland), local authorities, or another competent authority.

Please give the reasons for your answer

Please also provide any evidence relevant to the three high-level approaches set out in Question 1

It is considered that a mandatory national scheme administered by local authorities is the best approach as this provides certainty to operators, many of whom operate properties in more than one area. The registration scheme is also intended to provide a data source and adopting it only in parts of the country will mean that a huge part of the comparative data will not be collected.

Question 2: Who should be responsible for administering the registration scheme?

- a) Local authorities
- b) The English Tourist Board (VisitEngland)
- c) Another national body (please specify - this could be an existing body or a new one)

Please give the reasons for your answer.

Local authorities are an independent public body answerable to the electorate. As such, they should be responsible for administering the scheme as they are able to balance the interests of the communities in the round including the tourism businesses. Having the data to hand is also useful for local authorities when planning strategies for the area and will be necessary if deciding to implement the powers that maybe introduced in relation to planning controls..

Question 3: Should there be an analogue version of the registration scheme which would run in parallel with the digital one?

- a) Yes
- b) No X

If you answered 'yes', please suggest what form this could take.

No, a digital register should be sufficient and maintaining an analogue register in conjunction with a digital one will just increase costs.

Question 4: Should the platforms require a valid registration number in order to list a short-term let?

- a) Yes X
- b) No

Question 5: Should the registration number be displayed in any advertisement or listing of a short-term let?

- a) Yes X
- b) No

We would be interested in views on alternatives to either of the above mechanism

We consider that a registration number should be required by platforms and should be displayed as this provides confidence to the public and assists in ensuring that the system is self enforcing.

Question 6: What should the 'unit' of registration be?

- a) Owners
- b) Premises/dwellings or part of a dwelling
- c) Individual accommodation units within a premises/dwelling
- d) Other (please specify)

We consider that the "unit" should be (c) above. One of the intentions of the scheme is to provide the public with confidence that individual units that they may wish to let are registered. A scheme that allows individual owners who may own or manage many properties to register themselves rather than the properties will not provide that confidence to the public. Other registration and licensing schemes focus on the premises and this should be no different.

Question 7: How should the following types of accommodation be treated in respect of the registration scheme?

Accommodation type	Include	Exclude
Caravans on sites or any site which accepts motorhomes or campervans or any other vehicle providing accommodation	X	
Treehouses	X	
Mountain bothies	X	
Shepherd's huts	X	
Cars	X	
Motorhomes	X	
Glamping	X	
Yurts	X	

Accommodation type	Include	Exclude
Boats inc. houseboats, canal boats	X	
House swaps	X	
Other - please specify		

Please give reasons for your answers.

As mentioned above, one aim of a registration scheme is to ensure that accommodation is suitable. That principle should apply, no matter what the type of accommodation, in fact it probably should apply more to some non traditional accommodation where risks of fire etc may be greater. Having said that, the non traditional types of accommodation have no real impact on the supply of housing in local areas although can present anti social behaviour issues.

Question 8: Do you agree with this list of exemptions?

- a) Yes X
- b) No

Please explain your answer.

Question 9: Are there any other types of short-term accommodation that you think should be exempt from a requirement to register? If so, please specify.

Perhaps accommodation provided by an employer as part of employment

Question 10: How long should registration be valid for?

- a) One year

- b) Two years
- c) Three years
- d) Four years
- e) Five years
- f) The length of registration should depend on the length/validity of relevant documentation
- g) There should only be a one off registration, with providers able to remove themselves if they no longer provide the STL(s)

Please give the reasons for your answer.

Most registration schemes last for 1 – 3 years and so it is suggested that this should be the approach with this scheme.

Question 11: What information should be collected? (Please tick all that apply).

	To be collected at registration	To be collected annually	Should not be collected
a) Address of the premises/dwelling(s)	X		
b) Name of premises/dwelling owner	X		
c) Address and contact details of premises/dwelling owner	X		
d) Address and contact details of operator/manager, if different	X		

	To be collected at registration	To be collected annually	Should not be collected
e) Whether the premises/dwelling to be let is an dwelling or part of a dwelling, such as a room or outbuilding	X		
f) Self-certification of adherence to relevant regulations (see question 12)	X		
g) Proof (eg. a photograph or electronic upload) of adherence to regulations	X		
h) Detail about the accommodation unit(s) (eg. number of units, number of bedspaces, accessibility)	X		
i) If relevant, confirmation that in any rental, lease or other agreement that the responsible person is entitled to use the premises for short-term letting purposes			X
j) Number of nights per year the premises is available to let	X		

To be
collected at
registration

To be
collected
annually

Should not
be
collected

k) Number of night the premises was let out
for in the last year

X

m) Whether planning permission has been
granted or is not required

X

n) Other - please specify – ***Period of letting
eg summer let or spread throughout year***

Please give the reasons for your answer.

***The information above seems reasonable to be supplied upon
application provided there is also a requirement for the owner to notify
any changes as soon as they happen, especially if registration is for 3
years.***

Question 12: Which regulations should be satisfied in order for a property to
be registered? Please tick all that apply.

- a) Gas safety
- b) Boiler safety
- c) Fire safety
- d) Electrical safety
- e) Furniture safety
- f) Planning [where relevant, subject to DLUHC planning use class
consultation]
- g) Food safety
- h) Equality Act
- i) Other - please specify

Please give the reasons for your answers.

Agree with the above

Question 13: In the context of compliance and enforcement, what should be the starting point of the registration scheme? Please tick all that apply.

- a) An entirely self-certifying process with no element of ongoing physical inspection of documentation or of the short-term let.
- b) Light touch inspections of documentation uploaded as part of the registration process based on a % of all properties to be spot checked at random on an ongoing basis.
- c) Light touch physical inspections of short-term lets based on a % to be spot checked at random on an ongoing basis.
- d) Light touch physical inspections of short-term lets based on an intelligence or risk-based approach on an ongoing basis.

Please give the reasons for your answer.

We consider that there should be no set percentage for inspections of documentation or properties, this should be for the local authority to consider on a case by case basis.

Question 15: What penalties do you think would be appropriate? Please tick all that apply.

- Fines, which could vary according to the severity and duration of a violation.
- Revocation of registration, for a period of time or permanently.
- Notices requiring a short-term let owner/provider to rectify a violation could be issued in some circumstances before registration is revoked. If the owner/provider fails to take the necessary action within a specified timeframe, then the registration would be revoked.
- Other - please specify

Please give reasons for your answer. If relevant, please also provide views on the appropriate quantum or procedure e.g. for a fine, a timeframe for addressing a violation, or for another penalty referenced above.

In relation to an offence of failing to register, the penalty ought to be a fine, perhaps level 3. A failure to notify of a change in circumstances ought to carry a similar fine, or there should be the option to require information to be provided through notices.

Question 16: Should there be a flat fee per owner, or a sliding scale attendant with the number of units being let? (See also question 6 on unit of registration)

- a) Flat fee per owner

- b) Flat fee per property or part of a property
- c) Sliding scale based on number of units owned
- d) Sliding scale based on size of a unit (eg. number of bedrooms)
- e) Other (please specify)

A flat fee per property or part of a property would be the preferred choice

Question 17: Should there be an annual fee to be in the registration scheme, regardless of the frequency of renewal asked in question 10?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Please give reasons for your answer.

It would be appropriate for the fee to be paid upon registration, whatever that frequency. If a lengthy registration period is chosen, consideration ought to be given to a fee for making amendments and notifying of changes.

Question 18: Should the platforms and/or other areas of industry contribute to the set up and running costs of the scheme?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Please give reasons for your answer.

The fees proposed should be calculated to cover the costs of administering the scheme. Not all advertising is carried out through platforms and so it would seem simpler to impose the obligation to pay the fees on the owner of each unit.

Question 19: Do you think that any of the data captured should be shared at all beyond the competent authority administering the scheme, as determined in Question 2?

- a) Yes X
- b) No

If you answered 'No', please give reasons for your answer.

Question 20: If you answered 'Yes', which types of organisations should have access to the data collated by the registration scheme? Please tick all that apply.

Organisation	Should have access to aggregated/anonymised data	Should have access to detailed/individualised data
Local authorities / local planning authorities		X
Enforcement agencies		X
Organisations or individuals for commercial purposes	X	
Mortgage providers, landlords, freeholders, commonhold associations, resident management companies and neighbours		X
English Tourist Board	X	
Central government	X	

Organisation	Should have access to aggregated/anonymised data	Should have access to detailed/individualised data
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Academics	X	
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Other - please specify The public	X	
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Question 21: Should there be a de minimis below which a property can be let for without the requirement to register?

- a) yes (if so what should the minimum threshold be - please specify)
- b) no - all short-term let accommodation should be a requirement to register. X
- c) Don't know

What are the reasons for your answer?

A registration scheme needs to be simple to operate in order for it to achieve its objectives. The purpose is also to ensure that short term lets are being managed in a safe way. Registration should therefore be a requirement for all short term lets, whether it is for a full year or part of it.

Question 22: Are there any other issues that you think the government should be considering as part of its work to develop a short-term let registration scheme?