

P-06-1483 Give neighbours their say when holiday let owners start applying for licences - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 21 April 2025

I felt that Rebecca Evans MS' letter dated 19 November 2024 did not adequately address the issues that I raised in my petition. I responded to that letter because I wanted to share my views on the "measures in place" for short-term holiday lets: measures which, I believe, support holiday let owners rather than local residents. Mark Drakeford MS has now responded to my letter: again, this letter defends the current "measures in place", and again I believe that the issues raised in my petition i.e. the effect that holiday lets are having on local residents are not being considered/addressed.

Obviously, my views differ greatly to those of the Cabinet Secretaries. I can only speak from the experience of living next door to busy holiday lets and how it has affected the enjoyment of my home. I did not buy a house next door to holiday lets, and I never would: I bought my mid-terraced home in a residential area. The measures that the Cabinet Secretaries refer to allowed the situation to arise whereby I now find myself living next door to businesses, and I have had no say whatsoever in the material change of use of the property next door to me. The holiday lets next door were operating prior to the implementation of Article 4, so unfortunately this measure has no effect on my personal situation.

I find it very difficult to understand why Welsh Government defends a system whereby holiday let owners pay no taxes whatsoever on their properties simply because of the number of days their properties are rented out to guests. Consider this example:

A detached house in Gwynedd is a holiday let business: it fails to meet the letting criteria, so the owner pays the council tax premium. The holiday let has no effect on neighbours.

A mid-terraced house in Gwynedd is a holiday let business: it meets the letting criteria, so the owner pays no taxes on the property. The house shares rights of access with neighbouring properties, and the holiday let guests disrupt the lives of the local residents on a regular basis.

Which of these properties is the "genuine holiday let business"? Mark Drakeford MS' letter suggests that the genuine business is the mid-terraced house in the example above because it's able to meet the letting criteria. However, the "genuine business" is the one which is causing problems for neighbouring properties. Why is this considered acceptable?

I'm also not convinced that holiday let guests make a substantial contribution to the local economy: the guests I see always arrive with boxes/bags of food and alcohol. I believe the guests' main contribution is to the holiday let owners. The downside of the tourist economy is paid by local residents in spiralling property prices and gig economy jobs: this is money being taken out of the local economy, not contributing towards it.

I would also like to point out that Mark Drakeford MS' letter states that the figure I quoted for the number listed for non-domestic rates reflects the position as it was prior to full implementation of the current letting criteria: this is incorrect. The figure I quoted in my letter (more than 10,000 short-term holiday lets in Wales not paying any taxes) was obtained from freedom of information requests sent to local authorities last year, in the period May to September 2024. My figure is, therefore, correct and up-to-date...unless there's been a

dramatic decline in the number of self-catering holiday lets failing to meet to letting criteria since last summer.

How will making the holiday lets next door safe for visitors affect me? For example, will it stop guests throwing lit cigarettes on my patio which has a rubber roof? Will it stop large numbers of people ruining the enjoyment of my home? Will it stop noise disturbance from guests?

Why is visitor safety the primary concern for short-term holiday let licences? Has there been a spate of incidents where visitors staying at self-catering holiday lets have been injured due to the absence of health and safety regulations? I'm sure that any work required to ensure compliance with safety regulations will be undertaken by the majority of holiday let owners because the short-term letting business is very lucrative: it will be in the holiday let owners' interest to spend some money to meet safety requirements because the financial returns are so rewarding. Where does that leave me as a neighbour, and others like me?

Shouldn't a licence be site specific e.g. limits on numbers of people using them if they happen to be located in a residential area? Why isn't a licence for short-term holiday lets addressing the wellbeing and needs of residents and communities in the first instance rather than the safety of visitors?

And yes, it does appear that the licensing scheme for holiday lets prioritises visitors over residents and communities: it appears to be doing this because it actually is doing this.

Before the flats next door to me became holiday lets I had a close friend who lived next door to a property that had been converted to a holiday let: they had been complaining for some years about the effect the holiday let was having on the enjoyment of their home and to their mental health. Although I was trying to be sympathetic, I thought that they might have been overstating the negative effect of living next to a holiday let: I had absolutely no idea how they felt or how living next door was affecting them until the same thing happened to me.

I find myself now pleading my cause to Members of the Senedd who have not experienced my situation because they do not know what it is like to live next door to a holiday let. It also appears that a vocal minority of wealthy people will continue having more of a say in Wales than the communities they are exploiting.

J Cullimore

P-06-1483 Give neighbours their say when holiday let owners start applying for licences - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 23 April 2025

Good afternoon.

I appreciate that the deadline was yesterday, but this is relevant to my petition: please see the attached reason given for refusing a recent planning application to change a domestic property to a short-term holiday let in Gwynedd. The application was refused because it "would likely cause general disruption and noise to a primary residential street adversely affecting the amenities and living conditions of the local occupants": this is the point I am trying to get across in my petition.

Thank you, Jacqueline Cullimore

rhif Cais / Application Number: C25/0127/35/LL

rheswm (rhesymau) am ddyfarniad y Cyngor i wrthod y datblygiad a nodwyd eisoes yw (ydyw):

the reason(s) for the Council's decision to refuse permission for the development specified is (are):

1 - Byddai caniatáu newid defnydd o eiddo preswyl sefydledig presennol (C3) i lety gwyliau tymor byr (C6) yn arwain at golled o stoc dai parhaol yn groes i ofynion maen prawf iii polisi TWR 2: Llety Gwyliau, Cynllun Datblygu Lleol ar y Cyd Gwynedd a Môn a Chanllaw Cynllunio Atodol: Cyfleusterau a Llety i Dwristiaid (2021). Allowing a change of use of an existing established residential property (C3) into a short-term holiday let (C6) would result in a loss of permanent housing stock contrary to the requirements of criterion iii of policy TWR 2: Holiday accommodation of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan.

2 - Byddai'r newid defnydd prif gartref (C3) i lety gwyliau tymor byr, sydd a natur gweithgarwch a symudiadau gwahanol i ddefnydd preswyl, yn debygol o achosi aflonyddwch cyffredinol a swm i stryd bennaf breswyl gan gael effaith andwyol ar fwynderau ac amodau byw y meddianwyr lleol, felly'n groes i ofynion maen prawf iv polisi TWR 2: Llety gwyliau a maen prawf 7 polisi PCYFF 2: Meini Prawf Datblygu o'r Cynllun Datblygu Lleol ar y Cyd Gwynedd a Môn. Changing the use of a main home (C3) to a short-term Holiday let (C6), which has a different nature of activity and movement to residential use, would likely cause general disruption and noise to a primary residential street adversely affecting the amenities and living conditions of the local occupants therefore, contrary to the requirements of criterion iv of policy TWR 2: Holiday Accommodation and criterion 7 of policy PCYFF 2: Development Criteria of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan.
