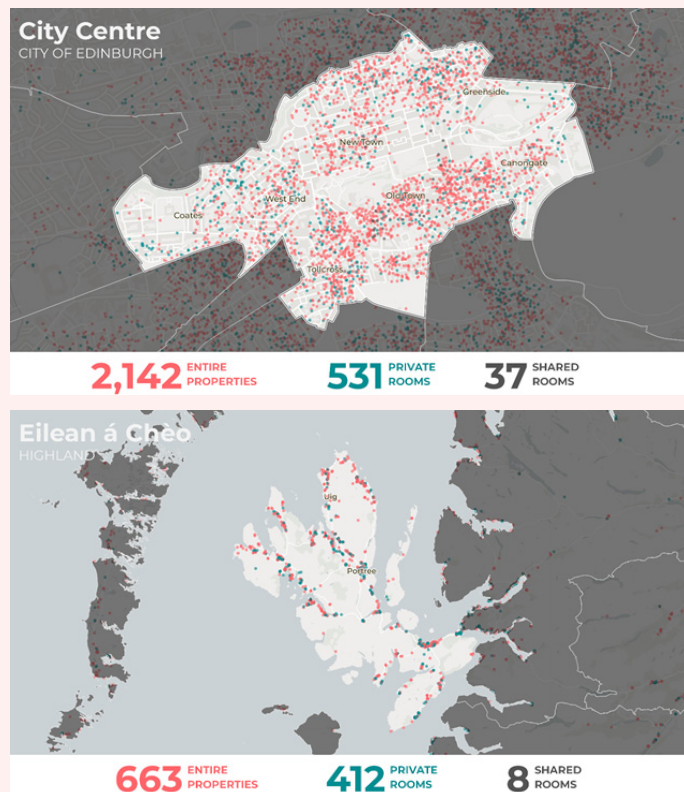


# SHORT-TERM LETS

We're giving more powers to councils to licence short-term lets.

SHORT-TERM LETS can evoke strong opinions. For many, short-term lets using Airbnb and similar platforms have enabled cheaper, more flexible accommodation, but others – particularly in tourist hotspots, like the centre of Edinburgh, and Skye – are concerned they make it harder to find homes to live in.

That's why – following a wide-ranging consultation – we announced in January 2020 that councils are to be given powers to implement a licensing scheme for short-term lets. The scheme will include a mandatory safety requirement that will cover every type of short-term let. It will also give councils the discretion to apply further conditions to address



▲ Short-term let concentration in Edinburgh and on Skye.

concerns of local residents. Councils will also be able to designate short-term let control areas to ensure that planning permission will always be required for the change of use of whole properties for short-term lets.

We will also review the tax treatment of short-term lets to ensure they make an appropriate contribution to the communities they operate in.

The regulations giving local authorities the powers to license short-term lets and introduce control areas will be in place by spring 2021.

**Read more:** [www.gov.scot/publications/short-term-lets](http://www.gov.scot/publications/short-term-lets)

## BACKGROUND TO THE NEW POWERS

THE EXPERT PANEL on the Collaborative Economy, set up by the Scottish Government in April 2017, reported that peer-to-peer accommodation expands the range, choice and flexibility of accommodation for tourists in Scotland and welcomed the positive contribution it can make to Scotland's economy.

But the panel also highlighted a number of issues and challenges in relation to peer-to-peer accommodation, and short-term lets more broadly. Our response to the panel's report committed us to several actions. These included establishing a Short-Term Lets Delivery Group to assess the impact of short-term lets; identify councils' existing powers, and explore whether further measures were required.

In our 2018-2019 Programme for Government we said we would ensure that councils have appropriate regulatory powers to balance the needs and concerns of their communities with wider economic and tourism interests. We then held a consultation to hear from people across the country what those powers should be. In that consultation there was wide-ranging support for some form of regulation, appropriate to local circumstances. We also published independent research on the impact of short-term lets on communities. This research highlighted positive impacts of short-term lets, including local economic benefits associated with tourism and increased household income for hosts. But it also confirmed the negative impacts on communities' quality of life, reduced availability of residential housing and increased strain on local public services.

