Southern & Hills Local Government Association

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Latest News

SHLGA calls for a practical, fair short-stay accommodation scheme

The Southern and Hills Local Government Association (SHLGA) has called for a simple, state-run short-stay accommodation register that supports the visitor economy, enables fair treatment of commercial operators and responds to community concerns.

Our submission to the State Government's consultation recognises the important role short-stay accommodation plays across the Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island. It gives visitors more accommodation choices, supports local businesses and helps meet demand during peak periods and major events. It also provides accommodation for seasonal workers and others travelling for employment.

At the same time, councils are responding to concerns about rental housing availability, neighbourhood amenity and differences in the rates and regulatory costs faced by traditional accommodation businesses and commercial short-stay operators.

SHLGA's submission seeks a proportionate response that addresses these issues without imposing unnecessary red tape.

One state-run system

SHLGA supports the State Government hosting the register, processing registrations and renewals, collecting fees and enforcing registration requirements.

Distributing these tasks across councils would duplicate effort and risk inconsistent processes. A single administrator would give operators one set of requirements, including those managing properties in several council areas.

Registration fees should recover the reasonable and efficient costs of the scheme, without requiring subsidies from councils and their ratepayers.

Better information for fairer decisions

The register should cover all paid short-stay accommodation in residential properties, including whole homes, hosted rooms, granny flats and occasional holiday letting. It should include direct bookings as well as bookings through platforms.

Registration should not automatically mean a property is treated as a commercial business. Clear criteria are needed to distinguish occasional home sharing from commercial operations.

Reliable information would help councils apply their existing rating policies fairly. Commercial short-stay businesses should contribute equitably alongside other accommodation providers.

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SHLGA also recommends recording both nights available and nights booked, and whether accommodation is operated by an owner or tenant. This would improve understanding of the sector, including homes leased primarily for re-letting as short-stay accommodation.

Clear responsibilities and effective remedies

Owners, guests, property managers and booking platforms must take responsibility for preventing and responding to poor behaviour.

SHLGA's support for a Code of Conduct depends on it providing practical, timely remedies for serious or repeated misconduct. It should not create another lengthy and expensive enforcement process that councils are expected to fund.

The submission also calls for updated State guidance on planning requirements, public access to registration status with privacy protections, and at least 12 months for existing operators to meet new requirements.

Information from the register should be assessed alongside housing and tourism data before further controls are proposed. This would allow future decisions to reflect evidence and the different circumstances of communities across South Australia.

Read the full SHLGA Submission - Submissions | Southern and Hills LGA