

Inquiry into Short Term Accommodation

Economics and Industry Standing Committee
Legislative Assembly
Ms Jessica Jane Shaw MLA

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the inquiry into short term accommodation.

We are the owners/operators of Windrose B&B since 2001. It is a Bed & Breakfast with four different uniquely decorated rooms and guests enjoy a scrumptious breakfast and a personal connection with the host including full tourism information.

As you are well aware, as a lodging house registered with the Shire of Denmark, we are subject to inspections for health, safety and other regulations. We also pay higher Shire rates due to the fact that guests use our street and property.

With the arrival of AirBnB, the playing field in the holiday accommodation sector has changed significantly. Starting of as a platform for people wanting to rent out a room in their house to a traveller it has now become a website on which home owners rent out their whole residential property.

Not only are there lots more properties to choose from but they also can afford to be cheaper due to the lack of regulations for these properties. It seems not right that home owners can make a profit from renting out their residential dwellings when others have to pay commercial rates for the use of their properties by guests. There is definitely a need of policies that will regulate the offer of short term accommodation. There should also be acknowledgment of the benefits of hosted accommodation in contrast to unhosted accommodation, as the host can make sure that guests fit into neighbourhoods and can improve the experience for the guests by providing local information and support.

The second change we noticed is the customer expectation. Since the arrival of AirBnB people are confused what a Bed & Breakfast actually means – people arrive here with the expectation to find a house with kitchen for their use. It used to go without saying that a B&B is just that: a bed and a breakfast, now we have to make it abundantly clear that we do not offer self contained accommodation.

While we are not able to quantify the impact that AirBnB providers have on our business (although customer numbers have dropped for diverse reasons), we feel it is important to campaign for a fairer playing field for all accommodation providers, and support and market those that follow the rules for regulations and accreditation.

Thank you
Anna and Matt Ramrath

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