

# Proposed Plan 4 Change Home Share Accommodation

Mt Pleasant/Belleview Terrace Neighbourhood Support Group Presentation



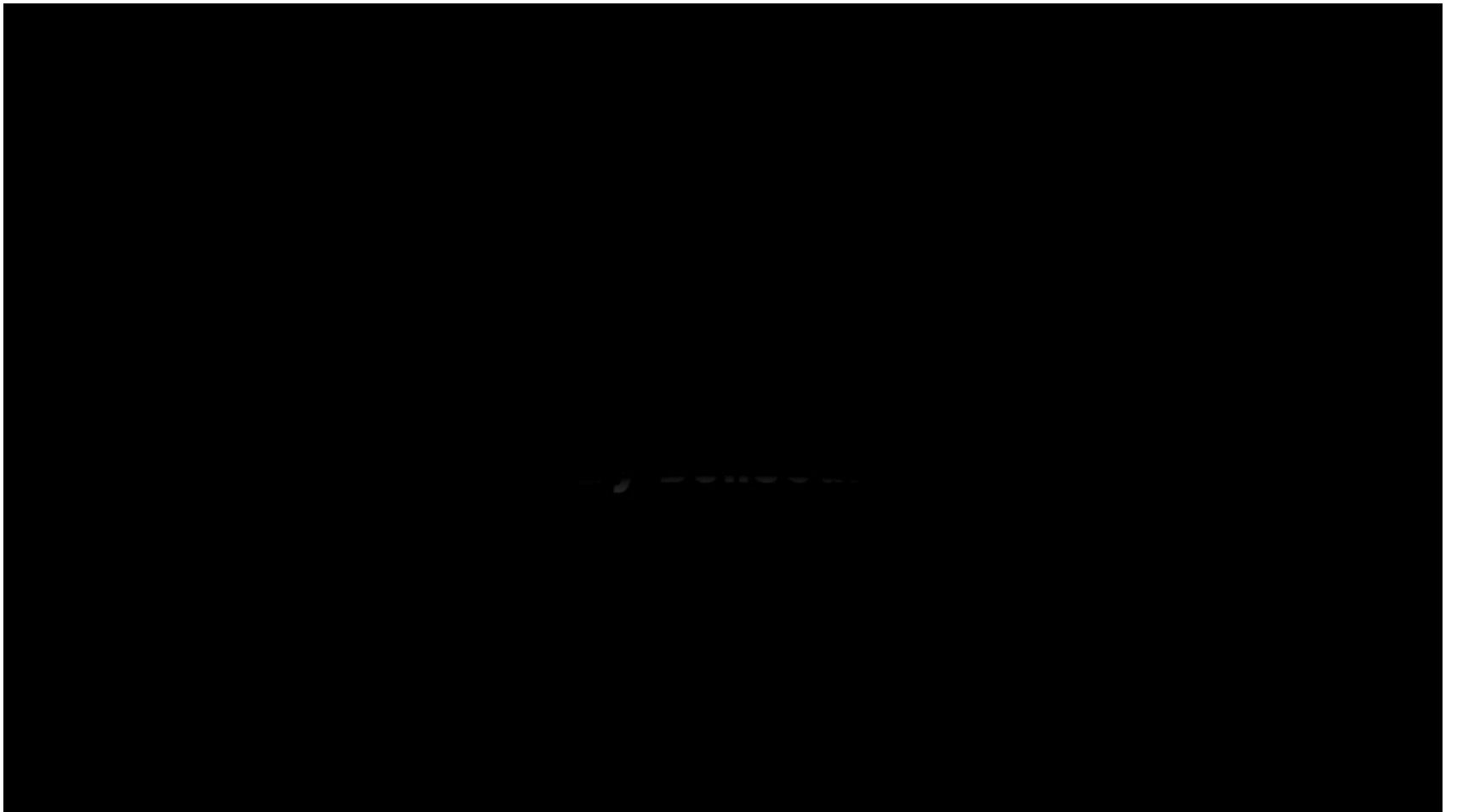
# About Karen Phelps

- Born and bred in Ōtautahi
- Freelance journalist who has written about businesses, builders, developers and construction companies for 25 years
- Property investor for around 15 years – Auckland and Christchurch
- Extensive Airbnb guest user – has stayed in Airbnbs around the world in 32 cities.

# Meet Our Neighbourhood

After the earthquakes people have become forever bonded in Ōtautahi in a way that is hard to describe. It's difficult not to look fondly on the neighbour you have seen dash across your lawn with a roll of toilet paper to use a hole in the ground behind your pear tree when the sewerage system broke down. We share chickens with our neighbour (we house them, he supplies the food), produce from our gardens and more. We solve problems together and we laugh together. I not only know the people who live near us but also those around the whole block. There is Frank and his dog who has an artificial leg called Snuff. There is 'Dave' who I only know as I pass him at the same time each day on our daily constitutional and the 95 year old who waters the garden in her bathing suit on hot day and dances tango. There's Jan who I was chatting to one day and she admitted she had cancer so I gave her a hug and she said 'that's just what I needed, thank you'. There's Brenda, whose hot water cylinder broke when the earthquakes happened and my father went over to her house to help her switch the water off to prevent a flood. There's the neighbour's gardener, a pensioner who often pops over for a chat when he comes to do some work and borrows our gardening equipment.

And last but not least there's Ockie, our cockatoo. The neighbours all put their used magazines and newspaper into our letterbox so Ockie can have great fun ripping them up each night.



*It's important to know the people you live around, made more apparent when disaster strikes. We're all connected and we all need to be able to rely on each other.*

*It's impossible to do that with an unhosted home share accommodation whole residential unit next door and an ever-changing parade of people you never get the chance to know.*

# Issue

- Unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units, particularly in Residential Suburban zones.
- We have no experience with rentals where people who live in their home are renting out rooms on home share accommodation sites. They are there to manage the situation so this is more similar to a 'flatmate' scenario. We assume this will not be as much of a disruptive issue to neighbours but recognise it may present other issues such as having a negative effect on accommodation providers in the city and, if left unmitigated, may present long term problems in terms of overall effect on the city.
- Airbnb is used as an example because I have unique experience of extensively using this service as a guest. But the examples and problems relate to any booking site offering unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units.

What is the effect of unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units in a Residential Suburban zone?

PC4 S32 report: A key question for this evaluation to address is:

“What specific adverse effects does visitor accommodation in a residential dwelling result in over and above the effects that could be expected from long term residents in the same dwelling?”

# Summary of Experience

- Person based overseas purchased house next door and rented it out on Airbnb and Bookabach.
- Result: constant parties, noise, litter, security issues, disruption from guests trying to find house etc . At one point over 100 people on the site.
- Considerable stress/anxiety for neighbours
- Complaint laid with Council, notice issued, problem desisted. They were able to do this due to current regulations.
- Neighbours were left with the responsibility of monitoring the situation on an on-going basis, which resulted in on-going stress.
- There was a cost to Council, and therefore ratepayers, to have to send someone out to issue the notice etc.
- Home share accommodation websites and the host (who had a third party manage the bookings) had no knowledge of, responsibility or involvement in resolving the situation.



# Commercial or Non-Commercial Activity?

PC4 S32 Report: Objective/Scope of Plan Change

7. Clarify whether or not “guest accommodation” is a “commercial activity” and/or “hospitality activity” for the purposes of objectives and policies to primarily direct commercial activities to commercial centres and hospitality activities in the Central City to the Entertainment and Hospitality Precincts and differentiate between types of short-term accommodation that have a residential character as opposed to a commercial character.

# Example Airbnb: Clearly a Commercial Model

- When Airbnb was founded, in the San Francisco Bay Area it marketed itself as a more evolved version of couch surfing, in which youthful travellers used social media to find a free place to crash. Couch surfing was predicated on personal exchange: hosts got to know their guests, with the understanding that one day they might spend a free night at their guests' home.
- Airbnb introduced the notion of hosts charging an affordable rate for that place to crash, so that a tourist on a budget could book a bed in the spare room of a local's home. The company soon raised millions of dollars in venture financing, and its listings and aspirations grew.
- In 2010, Joe Gebbia, one of the founders, told the *Times*, "We started by renting out spare rooms in our apartment, but it's grown to entire apartments, homes, castles, boats, even private islands."
- Chesky, another founder, said at the time that he saw no reason that Airbnb, which extracts commission fees from all transactions, should not grow into a billion-dollar company, by enabling people in appealing locations to "monetize their house."

Source: Airbnb Moves In by Rebecca Meads, *The New Yorker*, April 29, 2019

'Airbnb claims to be part of the "sharing economy" and disrupting the hotel industry. However, data shows that the majority of Airbnb listings in most cities are entire homes, many of which are rented all year round - disrupting housing and communities.'

Source <http://insideairbnb.com/>

An independent, non-commercial set of tools and data that allows you to explore how Airbnb is really being used in cities around the world.

# International Example: Barcelona

- Before Covid-19 there were one and a half million visitors stay in Airbnbs in Barcelona annually. There are almost twenty thousand active Airbnb listings in Barcelona.
- In 2015 nearly half the Airbnb properties in Barcelona were entire houses or apartments.
- Many properties have been bought specifically as short-term-rental investments, managed by agencies that have dozens of such properties.
- In some places, the transformation has been extreme: In the Gothic Quarter, the resident population has declined by forty-five per cent in the past dozen years.

# A Commercial Experience

- I have stayed in Airbnbs renting rooms in people's houses while travelling overseas and on one occasion an apartment. I have lived about 18 months in total in Airbnb accommodation.
- People had no training on how to be hosts so the experience varied.
- Airbnb promises that guests will 'live like a local' but I found hosts were running a commercial business. They were sometimes completely absent, were commercially driven and usually had hardly anything to do with me. In the two years I used Airbnb there were only a couple of hosts in all that time who had anything to do with me in terms of meaningful conversation, hanging out or showing me their city.
- Airbnb for the large part in my experience has now become a purely commercial financial transaction occurring in a residential zone.
- 'Monetizing houses' is now an international problem – cities around the world are experiencing issues as the popularity of short term rental grows.
- These home share accommodation models operate by providing a platform and is a 'hands off' business model. This essentially leaves it up to individual cities and locals to deal with any issues caused or costs incurred as a result.

# Sharing Economy vs Commercial Activity

One of the main benefits of short term rentals is classified as the “Sharing Economy”, “Home Sharing” and “renting a spare room to tourists to help people pay the rent or mortgage”. But is this the reality?

A report that classified Airbnb activity in a number of cities, found that, as at February 2020 (pre-COVID), commercial use dominated Airbnb in every city, with as much as 72% of listings and 94% of revenue (Prague) classified as commercial.

“Home Sharing” activity was occurring, but it generated very little revenue, an average of 12.5% of short-term rental revenue across the 8 cities.

In Christchurch at least 50% of Airbnb listings are whole houses. International examples indicate this figure is likely to grow. I will demonstrate why further on in this presentation when I will examine factors affecting investor activity.

Source: Platform Failures by Murray Cox and Kenneth Haar, 9 Dec 2020. Study commissioned by members of the IMCO committee of the GUE/NGL group in the European Parliament <https://left.eu/issues/publications/platform-failures-how-short-term-rental-platforms-like-airbnb-fail-to-cooperate-with-cities-and-the-need-for-strong-regulations-to-protect-housing/>

# Boarding House vs B&B vs Airbnb

PC4 S32: 4.3.27

The difference between having a host and not having a host is not likely to give rise to a difference in effects that justify a jump from Permitted to Non-Complying Prohibited activity status.

- B&B's have a host on site to manage the situation and mitigate any issues.
- Guests at boarding houses do not generally just stay a night or two, mostly they will stay longer term. Other guests act as 'onsite managers' and will let owners know quickly of any problems with other guests so owners can manage the situation.
- Unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units have nobody on site. It is essentially like dumping multiple unstaffed hotels in residential areas.
- If hotels, motels, hostels etc did not require staff to manage guests, answer questions etc then they would certainly not bother to employ them. Managers and other staff serve an important function in commercial accommodation enterprises.
- Boarding houses and b&bs are not a comparable activity to an unhosted home share accommodation whole residential unit.



### 2.3.3

The S32 report for that review frames the key issues as: “Residential areas have always contained a range of non-residential activities as an inherent element of urban residential environments. These activities include schools, churches, healthcare facilities, daycare facilities, community halls, travellers’ accommodation such as motels and B&Bs, and a range of corner shops, cafes, and small commercial services. These facilities enable residents to conveniently meet a number of day-to-day needs within their local community... There is a continued need to balance the benefits that the provision of such facilities and living options provide to neighbourhoods against the need to ensure they are of a size and scale compatible with a residential location...”

But:

- Some of these activities must occur in commercial zones ie. shops, cafes etc.
- They also have staff on site during hours of operation.
- All of these activities are unlikely to spring up in large numbers unlike the huge continuing growth of unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units.
- You can choose (or not) to live next to many of these activities. How will residents have choice over what they live next to if unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units are allowed to pop up literally anywhere in the city at any time?

An unhosted home share accommodation whole residential unit in a Residential Suburban zone is a commercial activity and does cause adverse effects over and above the effects that could be expected from long term residents in the same dwelling

# Few complaints or few informed citizens?

Many people were not aware an unhosted home share accommodation residential unit was not a permitted activity in Christchurch and therefore neighbours probably would not have complained. There was nowhere for them to complain for disruption such as parking issues, people knocking on doors etc. Any complaints would more commonly have been referred to Noise Control if anywhere.

Personal example: Developer who sold one house and rented the other on home share accommodation websites. Developer's sales assistant told me the people who had bought the house had complained to them about people knocking on their door looking for the short term rental house and parking issues in the shared driveway.

The fact that not many people 'officially' complained does not indicate the full scope of the problem regarding people who were adversely effected by home share accommodation whole residential units in Ōtautahi. We can safely presume that many more people were adversely affected than the 50 complainants who actually knew it was not a permitted activity and that they could complain.

Also once something has got to the point that someone's rung Council to complain it's got pretty bad. How many people were negatively affected but below the 'complain' threshold? Some people (ie. some elderly, ill) wouldn't have been able to pick up the phone to complain and instead simply put up with things even though their quality of life was affected. There is a very real social and human factor that exists.

PC4 S32 2.2.49

However, there may be amenity, coherence or character impacts that are not significant enough to prompt a complaint to Council but which still have an adverse effect on neighbours that justifies intervention through the District Plan. Impacts like not having a neighbour, feeling that one's neighbourhood no longer looks and feels residential or cumulative noise or privacy impacts would also not necessarily prompt a complaint to the Council but still reduce amenity for residents.

# Problems with Proposed Plan Change 4

# Problem 1: Zoning

- Council has zoning regulations to ensure that appropriate activity takes place in each part of the city and people have a choice about where they live.
- They protect the health, safety and general welfare of the people.
- They protect the value and enjoyment of properties and minimise any potential negative impact they may have on each other.
- They provide for the orderly development of cities including making provisions for land use that is in the best interests of its citizens.
- Cities want commercial uses for economic growth, but cities also want single-family residential areas for people to live. But will either the commercial users or residential users be happy if the two users sit side-by-side? Not likely.
- Unhosted home share accommodation residential units essentially 'sidestep' the zoning regulations. This proposal to permit unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units to exist is also in direct conflict with the Council zoning regulations permitting a commercial activity in residential zones.

# Canterbury Regional Policy Statement 2013

b. Encourage sustainable economic development by enabling business activities in appropriate locations.

# Problem 2: Vacation vs Living

People on holiday in an unhosted home share accommodation whole residential unit don't behave the same way as people who live in a home all the time. They are more likely to engage in leisure behaviours such as

- Staying up later
- Drinking
- Partying
- Talking, laughing loudly
- Playing music

They do not know others living nearby and are not thinking about how their behaviour might impact them. In short, like anyone on holiday, they are primarily focused on having fun. I myself was guilty of some of these behaviours while using Airbnbs overseas.

People who live in a home are more likely to want to engage in activities such as relaxing and sleeping. They have jobs, may be elderly, unwell, have families and children. They will more likely know their neighbours and be mindful of how their behaviour might affect them as they have to live there long term. This means they have a vested interest in getting on with the neighbours.

# Protecting residential environments is in the RMA

Issue 4 Maintaining residential and rural amenity, coherence and character

PC4 S32 2.2.44

Amenity values are defined in the RMA as: “those natural and or physical qualities or characteristics of an area that contribute to people’s appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes.”

2.2.45

In a residential context, this can include the ability to use one’s residential property for rest and relaxation, to live in an aesthetically pleasing environment, to enjoy a reasonable level of privacy, and to feel safe in one’s home. These are important contributors to the quality of life of residents.



# Does the review system solve the problem?

- Sites such as Airbnb say they have review systems, which encourage good behaviour in guests. But in reality owners of an unhosted home share accommodation whole residential unit do not know if a guest has caused a disruption to the neighbourhood and only reviews based on things like whether the guest has looked after their property while staying. This does not address neighbourhood concerns.
- My personal experience was that hosts would not want to badly review guests as they wanted the repeat business or did not want to be seen as complaining about guests which might put off future guests. I also was hesitant to make negative comments as a guest because I knew it would adversely affect their ability to rent the room and if there was any chance I might want to stay there again I couldn't say anything negative or I would risk the host refusing my request next time, even for a minor negative comment.
- Home share accommodation websites have a vested interest in protecting their hosts as they are the 'money makers' for their business. I had this personal experience when a host told me he would refund my money if I cancelled my booking so he could rebook my room. He rebooked the room and then refused to refund me. Airbnb initially refused to help.

# Problem 3: Housing Supply and Affordability

PC4 S32: ISSUE 6 2.2.107

It is unlikely, within the context of all of the other drivers of the housing market, that if the District Plan did take a more enabling approach to home-share accommodation, that this would have a significant impact on the ability to achieve the plan's objectives and policies, including Strategic Directions Objective 3.3.4, to meet targets for new dwellings or to enable a choice of housing locations or affordable housing.

- Investors will be the main provider of home share accommodation whole residential units.
- Economist Tony Alexander in his weekly Tony's View economic update has flagged Christchurch as being an attractive city for property investors due to its higher yields compared with other main and provincial centres.
- The Christchurch real estate market has been undervalued but is rapidly catching up.
- Personal example: Investors from Auckland buying up. This also happened in Wellington before the property and rental markets skyrocketed.
- The only thing that has been holding back investors from flooding the market has been fear from the earthquakes. This has now diminished due to higher yields and rising property prices. The results are evident at present. Rental listings in the city in September 2021 were 25% down pre-Covid 19 – around 900 from 1200. In October listings have now dropped to 780 in the whole of the city- a drop of over 33% from pre-covid levels. This indicates a current crisis in the shortage of rental properties, which appears to be growing.

*“Ongoing demand for homes has continued to push property prices up in Christchurch....property analyst CoreLogic says the average home value in the city in April was \$594,000 – 15.1% higher than a year ago...CoreLogic’s head of research Nick Goodall said 27 per cent of those buying Christchurch homes so far this year were investors with mortgages. “Christchurch remains more affordable than the other main centres.”*

# Christchurch losing reputation as affordable housing city as prices soar

Newshub 11/10/21

*“ Christchurch is losing its reputation as one of the only major cities with affordable homes as house prices there continues to soar.”*

Current average house price is \$702,215 and rising.

# Legislative Changes

- Recently the Government introduced new legislation to discourage investment in residential property, recognising that this was a major contributing factor to the housing crisis.
- This move sees residential property investors unable to claim tax deductions on the interest of their mortgages. This means investors now struggle to get a favourable return on a residential property investment.

The Short-term Guest Accommodation Issues and Options report also states that:

*Changes to the Residential Tenancies Act, which require compliance with healthy homes standards and make it more difficult for landlords to evict tenants, may also see more property owners listing their property for visitor accommodation as an alternative.*

# Result

- Home share accommodation whole residential units will now be an even more attractive option for property investors due to the increased cash flow. Local developers have long used this as a selling point. If local government regulations do not discourage this investment we may see a large stream of investors moving into the home share accommodation whole residential units sector thus exacerbating the problem.
- Not considering this now in any regulatory changes will see the housing crisis worsen for both home owners and renters in Christchurch. It would also be in direct opposition to national regulations and the aims of Government.

# Example: Barcelona's Rental Crisis

- Housing stock for locals has been depleted as people prefer to rent houses on short term rental sites as a commercial enterprise.
- Rental prices have sky rocketed due to lack of availability. Rents increase by 7% and property prices 19% from presence of Airbnb





# Other examples

- Amsterdam: 1 in 9 units rented on Airbnb in some neighborhoods
- New York City: 15,000 apartments removed from housing stock
- Paris: 15,000-25,000 apartments removed from housing stock
- Prague: 15,000 apartments lost
- Christchurch district 2,135 lost . What a huge difference this could make to the housing stock and property prices for our residents.

Short-term rentals have proven immune to COVID-19. The pandemic has reduced short-term rental activity but hasn't returned lost housing units back to long-term rentals. Continued regulation and enforcement is needed to incentivise the return of short-term rentals to long-term residents during and post COVID-19.

# Problem 4: Health and Safety

- Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA), every business has a responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers, and that others are not put at risk by the work of the business (for example, customers, visitors, children and young people, or the general public).
- Unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units are not required to meet any health and safety standards. Commercial enterprises are required to have systems in place to deal with medical emergencies. They must provide provide adequate first aid equipment/facilities and access to first aiders.
- Personal example: when using Airbnb overseas I experienced a severe back injury. The host assisted me as best they could but it made me question: how prepared would hosts be for a major medical emergency in their home like a heart attack? What happens in an unhosted home share accommodation whole residential unit with nobody to assist?
- There was a fire in Airbnb in Mt Pleasant. Fortunately nobody was injured or lost their life.

# Christchurch party stabbing: 16yo dies in Fendalton, homicide inquiry under way

14 Aug, 2021 10:28 AM

🕒 7 minutes to read



# Problem 5: Double Standards

- How can we have one set of rules for commercial accommodation enterprises and another set of rules for residents running commercial enterprises from a residential home?
- How can we have zoning regulations that people building homes in residential areas are expected to adhere to but people running commercial operations from homes as unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units aren't?
- How can we have one set of rules for commercial accommodation providers in the city and another for online accommodation provider platforms and their hosts?

# Problem 6: Suburbs are Different

- Different suburbs have their own unique characteristics and therefore unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units can have different effects on different neighbourhoods.
- For example on the hills noise carries and reverberates further – noise (ie. a party) can often be heard from several streets away.
- People generally purchase on the hills for peace and quiet. They want to get away from the hustle and bustle.
- The Port Hills are a protected, special and unique part of Christchurch and the natural peaceful ambience should be safeguarded for locals.

## Problems with proposed regulatory changes permitting unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units for certain days per year

- If people are permitted to rent their houses out 60 days per year minimum they could rent their home in peak periods when they could get the best return ie. weekends and holidays. That could potentially disrupt neighbours every weekend for over seven months of the year. At 180 days this negative effect would be amplified further.
- If people are permitted to rent their home out for longer by applying for a consent obviously these effects would be magnified.
- There would also presumably be a flow-on effect of de-valuing the price of neighbouring properties. People generally would not choose to live next to a commercial accommodation enterprise in a residential area.
- On Mt Pleasant Road and Soleares Avenue there is already an increasing amount of vehicles parking in the street, reducing the road to one and a half lane in places. Guests parking could exacerbate this problem.
- Considering the fast turnover of guests in an unhosted home share accommodation whole residential unit there is no way to manage these homes and ensure there is no negative effect on neighbouring properties.

Solutions

# Solution 1: Room Rentals

Keep unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units as a non-complying and non-permitted activity in residential suburban zones. Globally the mix of residential (homes locals live in full time) and commercial (homes used as unhosted home share whole residential units) activity is where the problems are occurring.

Continue to permit people to rent rooms in residential suburban zones – but regulate that they must own the house, it must be their primary residence and they must live there full time. People are there to host their guests while also being traditional neighbours to surrounding houses. The effect on locals should be minimal. It ensures supply of rooms to meet tourism demands.



# Ensuring Compliance: Hosts and Platforms

As a neighbourhood we were left to regulate the unhosted home share accommodation whole residential unit. We remain concerned regarding how on-going regulation will work in practice – for both hosts and the platforms. We think there are specific issues, which need to be considered.

- Loophole example: In Spain as owners and agencies have been exploiting a loophole in rental regulations that allows a homeowner to rent out a spare room only occasionally. The loophole is being used to justify a single apartment being divided up into three or four rooms, each with its own lock on the door.
- These rooms are advertised on short term accommodation sites as separate rentals. A traveller who signs up for one will find himself sharing a bathroom, a kitchen, and a living space with perhaps half a dozen other renters from around the globe, in a de-facto hostel without a host.
- I have stayed in one of these in Spain. There was no host to assist or monitor the situation. We must ensure this loophole is closed in Christchurch to prevent unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units in residential suburban zones.

# Platform Failures Report: history of non-compliance by platforms

- Amsterdam: Airbnb withdrew ability to enforce 60 day cap after city tightened regulations
- Barcelona: Airbnb provides data but 60-70% addresses are missing or incorrect
- Berlin: 80% of Airbnb listings are still illegal; Platforms refuse to provide data
- Paris: 60% of Airbnb listings are illegal.
- New York City: 85% of Airbnb active listings are illegal
- Vienna: Airbnb refuses to remove listings in Social Housing
- Christchurch 50% of Airbnb listings are not permitted under current regs

# Questions

- Unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units have not been a permitted activity in Christchurch yet right now there are hundreds of these listings on platforms such as Airbnb and Bookabach. Why have they allowed these homes to be listed when they knew this was not a permitted activity?
- The technology to ensure non-permitted activity does not occur clearly exists. Why are platforms such as Airbnb and Bookabach not utilising it and instead leaving the problem and expense of policing their business and hosts to local councils and residents?

**From:** Maaike Veenkamp <[maaike.veenkamp@airbnb.com](mailto:maaike.veenkamp@airbnb.com)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Your story as an Airbnb host  
**Date:** 8 March 2021 at 3:26:01 PM NZDT  
**To:** [karen@launchcommunication.com](mailto:karen@launchcommunication.com)

Hi Karen,

My name is Maaike, I work in the Public Policy team for Airbnb Australia and New Zealand, based in Australia. I hope that you're doing well over in New Zealand.

As you're aware Christchurch City Council is undergoing [changes to the District Plan for managing short-term accommodation](#). I saw that you helpfully made a submission to the public consultation last year, thank you for taking that important step in the process.

Hopefully you received the council email just recently? The hearing is set for Monday 17 May and people can confirm a spot to briefly speak at the hearing to a panel of **independent commissioners** by March 19th. The more who do, the better.

I'd love to chat on the phone with you tomorrow or another day this week perhaps that suits your schedule?

Thanks,  
Maaike

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Maaike  
Advocacy Associate  
Australia & New Zealand  
Pronouns: she/her



Taking this behaviour into account why have these platforms been allowed to continue to operate in this way in our city? If bricks and mortar accommodation providers had ignored regulations in the same way that online platforms have then they would have been shut down.

# So what works?

We need to be wary of pseudo solutions:

- Self regulation tools that are easy for people to bypass ie. yearly caps and 'one host one home'
- Ineffective regulations that delay and block better regulations
- Negotiations (ie. an offer to collect taxes) to avoid regulations

# Proven International Models

As cities around the world continue the work to strengthen their regulations three components are proving essential:

1. Mandatory Registration System
2. Platform Accountability
3. Platform Data Disclosure

In addition:

- ✓ Platforms – not ratepayers - should be liable for costs incurred to ensure they and their hosts are compliant with regulations.
- ✓ If they do not comply there should be real penalties applied to their business.
- ✓ Continued non compliance should result in them ceasing to have the right to operate in our city.

# Solution 2: Grow Local Businesses

- The government throughout Covid-19 has had a 'support local' campaign to grow local business. It has been hugely successful.
- We should continue this and support our local accommodation providers in the appropriate commercial zoning who have invested in our city to grow and thrive.
- This would grow our local businesses and employment opportunities in our city leading to a thriving economy with many positive spin off effects.





# Exploring Alternatives

The alternative is people renting a unit in a motel or a suite in a hotel, which would serve the same purpose – so do we even really benefit in an economic sense from unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units? Hotel and motel options occur in a commercial zone and not in a residential zone, have staff on hand to assist guests and are subject to regulations such as health and safety.

Example: Wyndham Garden Christchurch City. Opened Oct 2021.

“Rooms feature a sleek, modern design with 60 apartment-style options including kitchen facilities for a home-cooked meal, washing machine and clothes dryers for added convenience. Larger groups and families can take advantage of interconnecting rooms for extra space.”

# Solution 3: Support Sustainable Tourism

The government is currently assessing our tourism settings. The need to 'prioritise sustainable tourism that enhances community wellbeing' is the central theme of the Tourism Futures Taskforce report released in March. The report seeks to 're-imagine tourism, long after the COVID19 recovery period'. It sets out a desired 'Future State' where the *wellbeing of communities* is at the centre of the tourism eco-system.

"Brand New Zealand must be protected; we cannot return to business as usual; the full cost of tourism must be priced into the visitor experience; and the Government intends to work in partnership with the sector to achieve change." Tourism Minister Stuart Nash

As a city we should be supporting this government report and not pursuing tourism at any cost – in this case a high social cost. Let's create sustainable tourism where we support our local accommodation providers and create a great experience for locals and guests alike. Let's support creating local jobs, businesses and communities.

# Solution 4: Prioritise Well-Being

The NZ Government chose to prioritise social well-being rather than economic factors during the pandemic. Jacinda Ardern stated the research showed that by prioritising people economic benefit automatically followed. The response has been hugely successful.

In Ōtautahi we need to take a similar stance. By prioritising the social well-being of locals, their right to be able to relax in their homes, have strong resilient neighbourhoods and communities, and supporting local accommodation businesses to thrive, then economic benefit will undoubtedly follow:

- People will want to live in Ōtautahi
- The positive vibe of the residents and city will attract tourists
- Accommodation and tourism operators will thrive and expand
- There will be more jobs and economic activity.
- Covid 19 has shown us the New Zealand economy does not need to rely on tourism to thrive.

# Solution 5: Support Resilient Communities

- After the earthquakes we saw the importance of strong communities. People knew their neighbours and were able to assist when needed. Strong communities built resilience and helped people through the crisis and aftermath.
- Unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units mean no 'neighbours' for the people they are located next to. Who do locals call for help if they need to in the case of an emergency?



# Christchurch People are Special

- In the past decade they have been through the earthquakes the, mosque terror attack, the Port Hills fires and now Covid-19.
- It has been acknowledged that the earthquakes have possibly permanently changed the brains of some residents and the way they respond to stress called 'quake brain', the ongoing cognitive and psychological effects of earthquakes.
- The proportion of people reporting that they felt stressed "always or most of the time" doubled from 8 per cent in the pre-earthquake to 19 per cent in 2015. Last year, police callouts for attempted suicides rose 60 per cent from pre-quake levels, the highest in the country. Canterbury saw a 37 per cent increase in people entering mental health services compared to pre-quake levels. Rural mental health presentations were up 65 per cent. Emergency health presentations have risen 104 per cent, psychiatric emergency assessments up 124 per cent.
- In 2019 then Health Minister David Clark said "There's no question that as a country we can do better to support mental health and wellbeing in our communities. The need has been particularly evident in Canterbury as people live day-to-day with the legacy of earthquakes" as he announced new mental health facilities for Hillmorton in Christchurch.
- A study is presently being undertaken the results due later this year. It expects to show participant's brains have an 'increased functional response' so the brain activates in response to a triggering event more than you would see with someone who hasn't been exposed to any trauma.
- My personal experience: not here for the earthquakes but constant aftershocks have led to a 'fight or flight' response.

# Result

Christchurch people probably have a lower tolerance to stress, higher rates of mental health issues and need their living places to be stress-free places they can relax, recover and feel safe.

# Conclusion

- We are not opposed to home owners renting rooms in their own homes, which they reside in full time, in residential zones. In fact some of us have personally have used this service when travelling and found it useful.
- We are opposed to unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units in Residential Suburban zones. We advocate keeping the current District Plan rules and directing unhosted guest accommodation activities into the appropriate commercial centres.
- We are opposed to neighbours and local governments being left to deal with the problem.
- We are opposed to lack of training and health and safety protocols in unhosted short term accommodation properties.
- We are opposed to ratepayers and tax payers having to finance the mitigation of issues caused by home share accommodation whole residential units.
- We have concerns about the long term social effect of home share accommodation whole residential units on Christchurch's people, communities and neighbourhoods.

Now I don't doubt you're going to hear plenty of stories from those that profit from home share accommodation whole residential units, glowing testimonies of hosts and guests, carefully handpicked research and statistics proving beyond a doubt that it is needed and beneficial for Christchurch.

But I'm here today on behalf of the average Cantabrian. The ones who live here and are elderly, too busy working, bringing up families and taking care of loved ones to come and present their stories today. The ones who can't afford to pay for expert evidence or hire an expensive PR firm or lawyers to spend weeks preparing their case. The ordinary citizens who will be the ones left dealing with the fallout from unhosted home share accommodation whole residential units next to their homes. The ones who may have sleepless nights, experience stress, feelings of insecurity in their own homes and who will no longer have a trusted friend and neighbour they can rely on in times of need or if they simply want a friendly conversation over the fence. The ones who will be forced to pay elevated rental and property prices and who may not be able to afford to have a roof over their head.

Christchurch residents have suffered enough after the earthquakes. The stress will impact the rest of their lives. They need places where they feel safe, can relax and can continue to rebuild their lives.

Let's prioritise their well-being in this decision and make Ōtautahi a place residents can call home.