

# Short-term lets warning from the Big Apple



**Jane Bradley**  
World Editor

"People who are on a budget aren't going to come to New York any more."

It is the blunt assessment of Lisa Grossman, spokeswoman for Restore Homeowner Autonomy and Rights (RHOAR), a group of home owners in New York who previously let out properties as short-term lets.

Airbnb-style accommodation has essentially been banned in the US city, in a bid to crack down on disruptive "party flats" and return properties to the residential housing market.

In New York City, the number of short-term lets listed on Airbnb plummeted by 77 per cent between May and September 10 – five days after the new regulations were brought in. The vast majority of properties previously operated as short-term lets are no longer legally allowed to do so, meaning huge swathes of accommodation options have been removed from the market overnight and tourists are almost entirely restricted to staying in hotel rooms.

The new rules are more stringent than those planned for Scotland – and have been met with angry opposition from property owners. For Ms Grossman, whose lobby group is made up of people who rented out "granny flat" style accommodation attached to their own homes,

living in New York has suddenly become less affordable.

"The councillors didn't think it all through," she says. "They need to recognise that it's going to affect their home owners; they're going to potentially have lost their homes. Financially, a lot of people are dependent on short-term let income to keep their homes in New York City, which is a very expensive place to own a property."

She points to soaring hotel prices, driven by high demand combined with a lack of accommodation options. In Manhattan, a Hilton Garden Inn, which the hotel chain describes as its "mid-range" level of accommodation and which in Glasgow costs £77 a night this weekend, is listed for £711 a night.

"People with two or three kids will look at the price of two hotel rooms and go somewhere else," Ms Grossman says.

"Since the restrictions came in, you can't rent a private space from anyone. The only option is to rent a bedroom in someone's house, which is really only suitable for a 20-year-old."

Supporters of the scheme argue the new rules have essentially taken Airbnb back to its roots. Under the regulations, which came into force on September 5 and follow restrictions in cities including Barcelona, Paris and Amsterdam, hosts have to be present on the premises while a room is let out – and locks are not allowed on bedroom doors. In short, the accommo-



**Manhattan and the wider city, is increasingly becoming a playground for the rich. Fiona Campbell, chief executive of the ASSC is pictured top.**

dation essentially has to be a host's actual spare room. They say the rules mean residents escape the stress, noise and disruption of so-called "party flats" – and rebuild their communities with a higher proportion of long-term residents.

However, others warn the restrictions take away a significant proportion of accommodation options, which not only pushes up prices for tourists, but deters those who do not want to stay in hotels and prefer to cook their own meals in a residential setting.

Chris Greenwood, senior research fellow at the Moffat Centre for Travel and Tourism at Glasgow Caledonian

University, says entirely cutting out self catering options in New York City will inevitably result in a drop off in visitors.

"A loss of stock impacts on these iconic destinations like New York," he says. "But we also need to address the tourism backlash. Over the longer term, it may recalibrate. But in the short term, there may well be a drop in tourists. Firstly, you're going to have problems with availability of stock, so that's going to push up prices. Secondly, is choice. If you've removed a certain sector of your products, then there might be a problem. Visitors like choice and are becoming increasingly cost

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Lisa Grossman,  
Restore Homeowner  
Autonomy and Rights

conscious and want value for money. People like an experience now – it's not just buying a bed to sleep in, they want that broader understanding of a destination. Renting an individual's home appeals to people and their sense of wanderlust."

He says operators may struggle to host large-scale events in cities which have no self catering accommodation to offer.

"The 2026 football World Cup is being held in America, Canada and Mexico," he says. "New York will be one of the sites that matches are held – and the question is, is there sufficient stock of accommo-

dation to hold another number of fans that will be coming for that? Think of during the UCI cycling event in Glasgow this year. If 60 per cent of the accommodation stock had been removed, would that event have been able to be hosted there?"

Mr Greenwood says some cities with existing restrictions, such as San Francisco, have resulted in a large "underground" market of short-term let hosts.

Fiona Campbell, chief executive of the Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers, says New York's experience should be a warning to politicians still pushing ahead with Scot-

land's own short-term lets legislation. Landlords have until October 1 to sign up for a licence.

Ms Campbell says: "The increase in hotel prices and shortage of accommodation in New York should come as no surprise. It has already happened closer to home in Dublin. When the short-term let sector is over-regulated, the main beneficiaries are big hotel chains.

"It might be a boon for hotels, but if the experience is replicated in Scotland, I fear not only for the self-catering sector, but related businesses in tourism and hospitality who benefit from our guest spend."

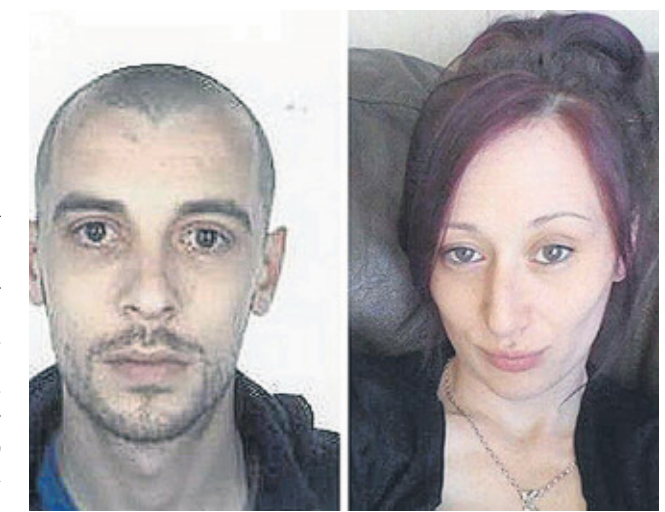
## Sheriff praises farmer who found victims

**Lauren Gilmour**

A farmer who discovered a couple whose car crashed off the M9 has been commended for his actions after he climbed down a steep embankment and helped them.

A fatal accident inquiry into the deaths of Lamara Bell, 25, and John Yuill, 28, is currently taking place at Falkirk Sheriff Court. The couple died after the car Mr Yuill was driving crashed on Sunday July 5 in 2015. They were driving back from a camping trip when their car crashed on the M9, at the east-bound junction with the M80.

The car went undiscovered for three days after a police control-room operator failed to log a 101 call reporting the crash. Local farmer



**John Yuill and Lamara Bell died after their car crashed in 2015**

Robert Findlay, now 66, told the inquiry yesterday how he spotted "a blue object" in a wooded area next to the M9 on Wednesday, July 8. Shortly afterwards, he drove back from the area and had a clearer view of the blue object.

Moving closer to it, Mr Findlay could see it was a car. In order to get closer, Mr Findlay had to climb down a "steep" embankment and over two fences.

When he approached the

car, he saw Mr Yuill and Miss Bell inside.

Mr Findlay said: "When she heard me coming, she was asking for help."

Advocate Depute Gavin Anderson asked Mr Findlay: "What was it you heard her saying?" Mr Findlay said: "[She was saying] 'Please help me, help me get out.'"

Sheriff James Williamson praised Mr Findlay for his actions.

The inquiry continues.

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