



Retaining populations on Small European Islands



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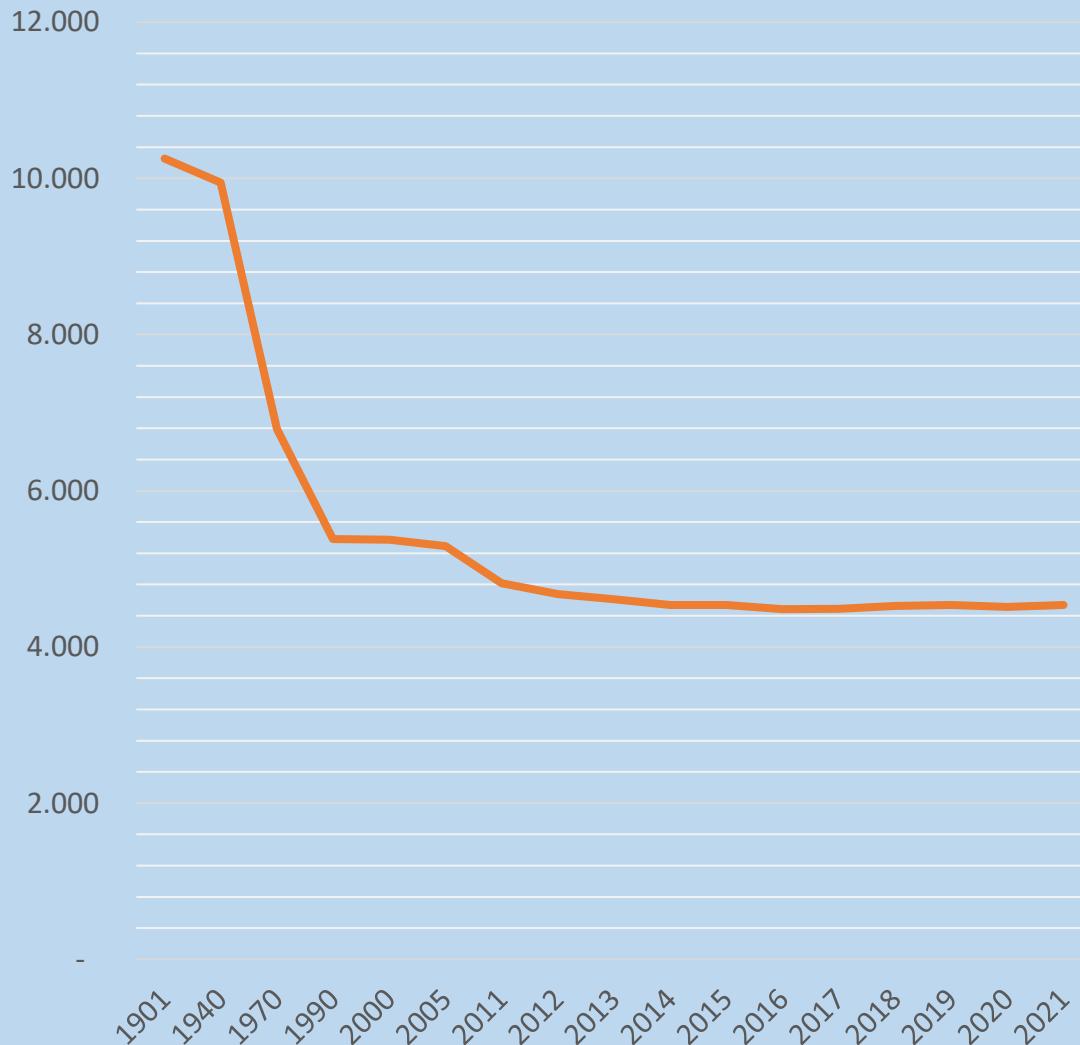
Retaining and attracting residents to small islands is challenging:

It is vital to seek solutions for three issues common to European small islands:

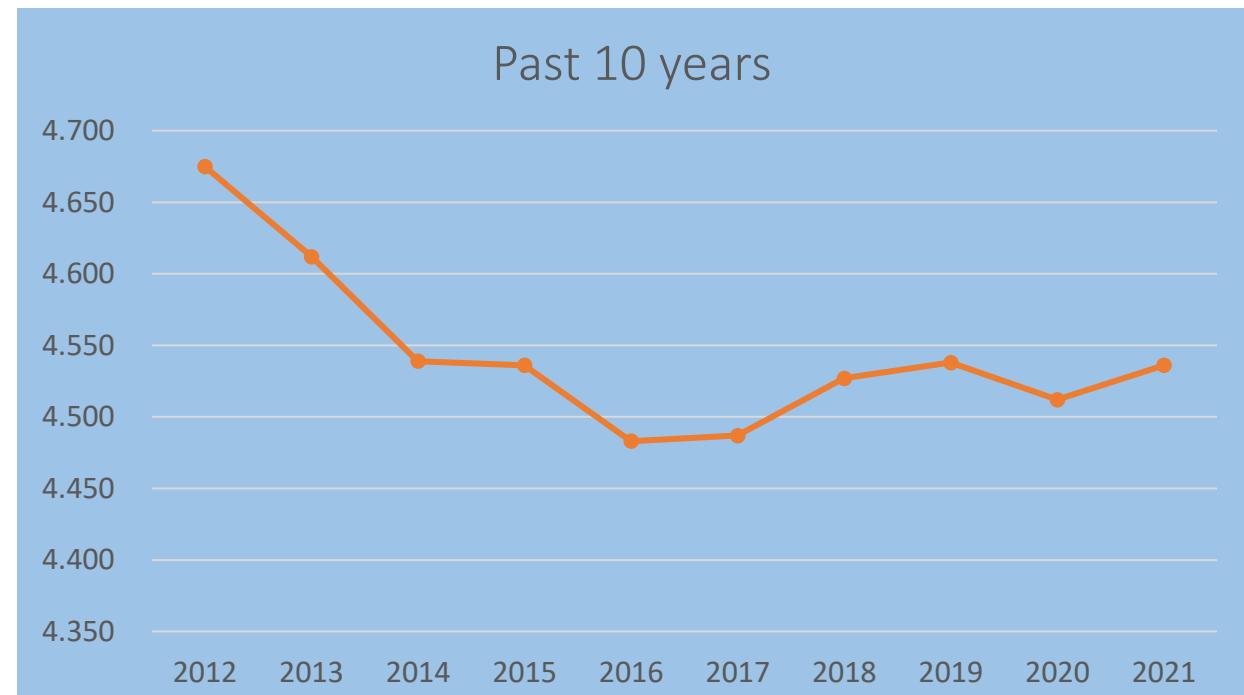
- housing availability
- reliable digital connectivity
- effects of over-tourism on housing.

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Development in population,
Danish small islands. Since 1901

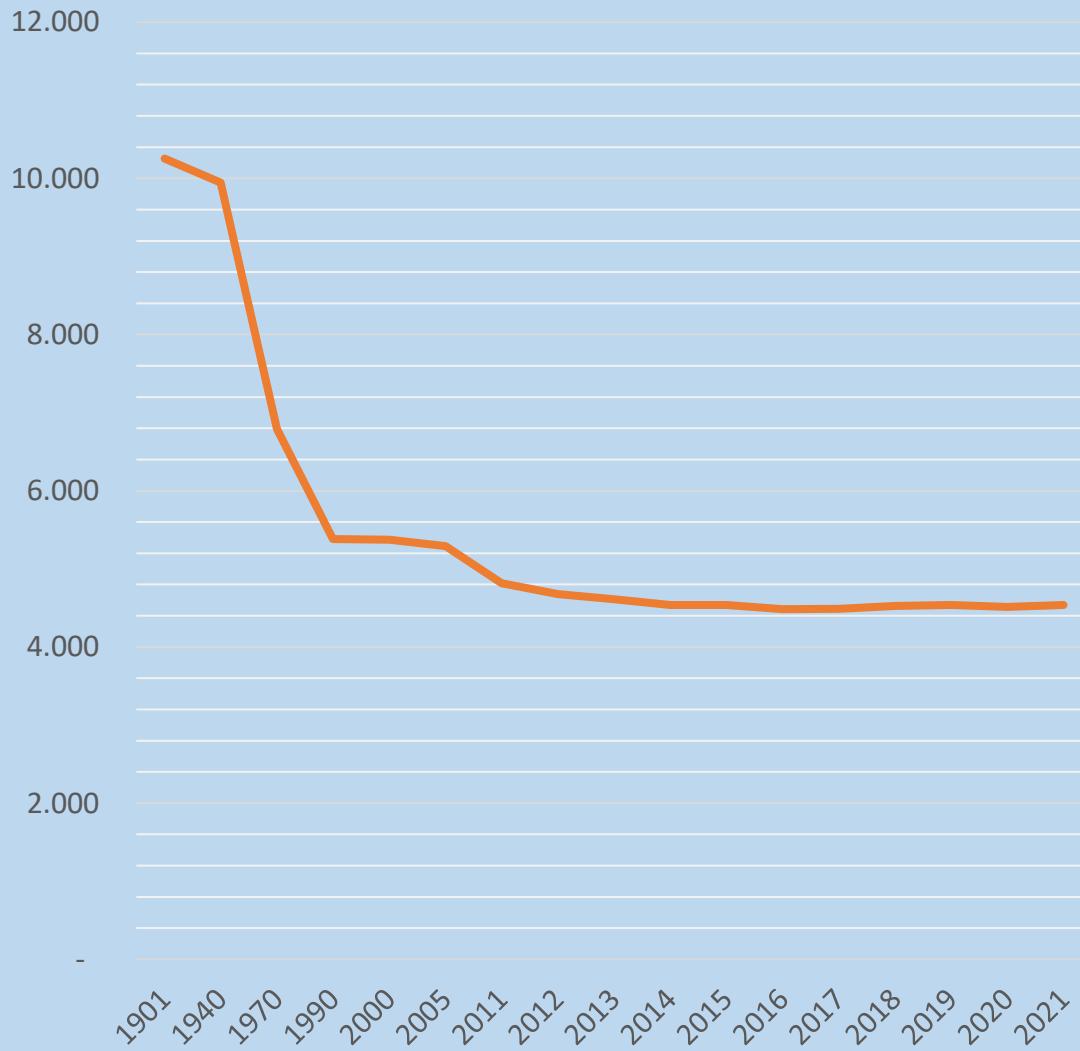


Past 10 years

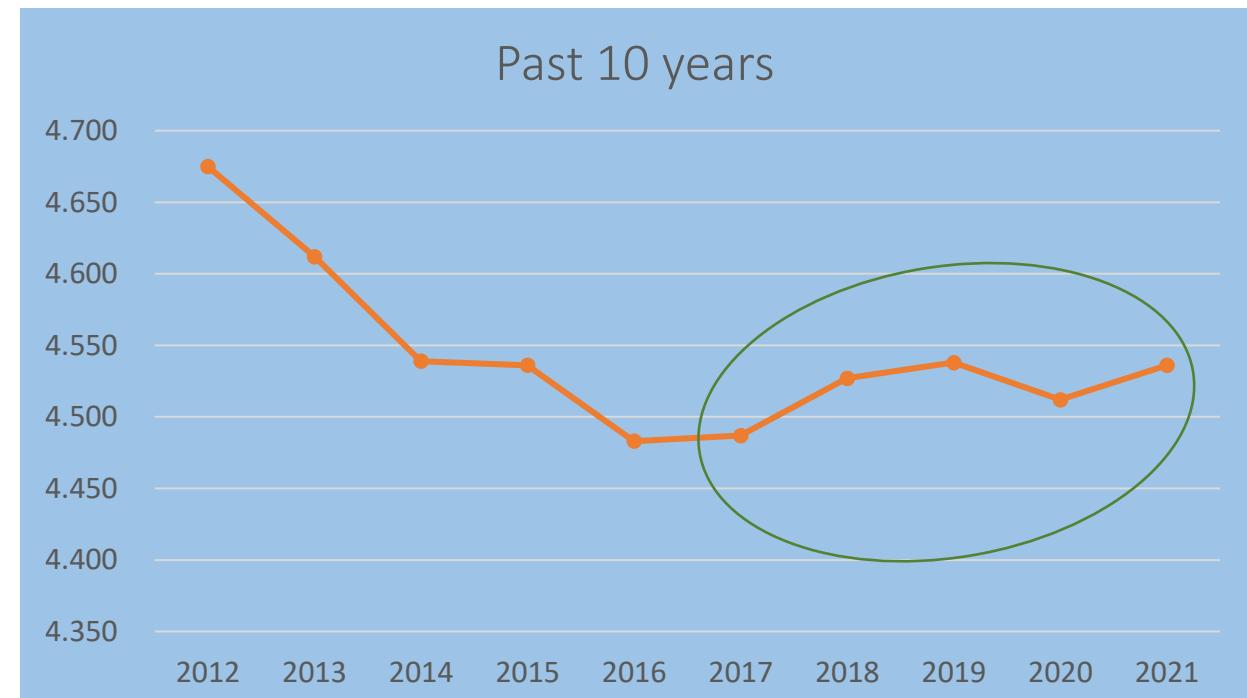


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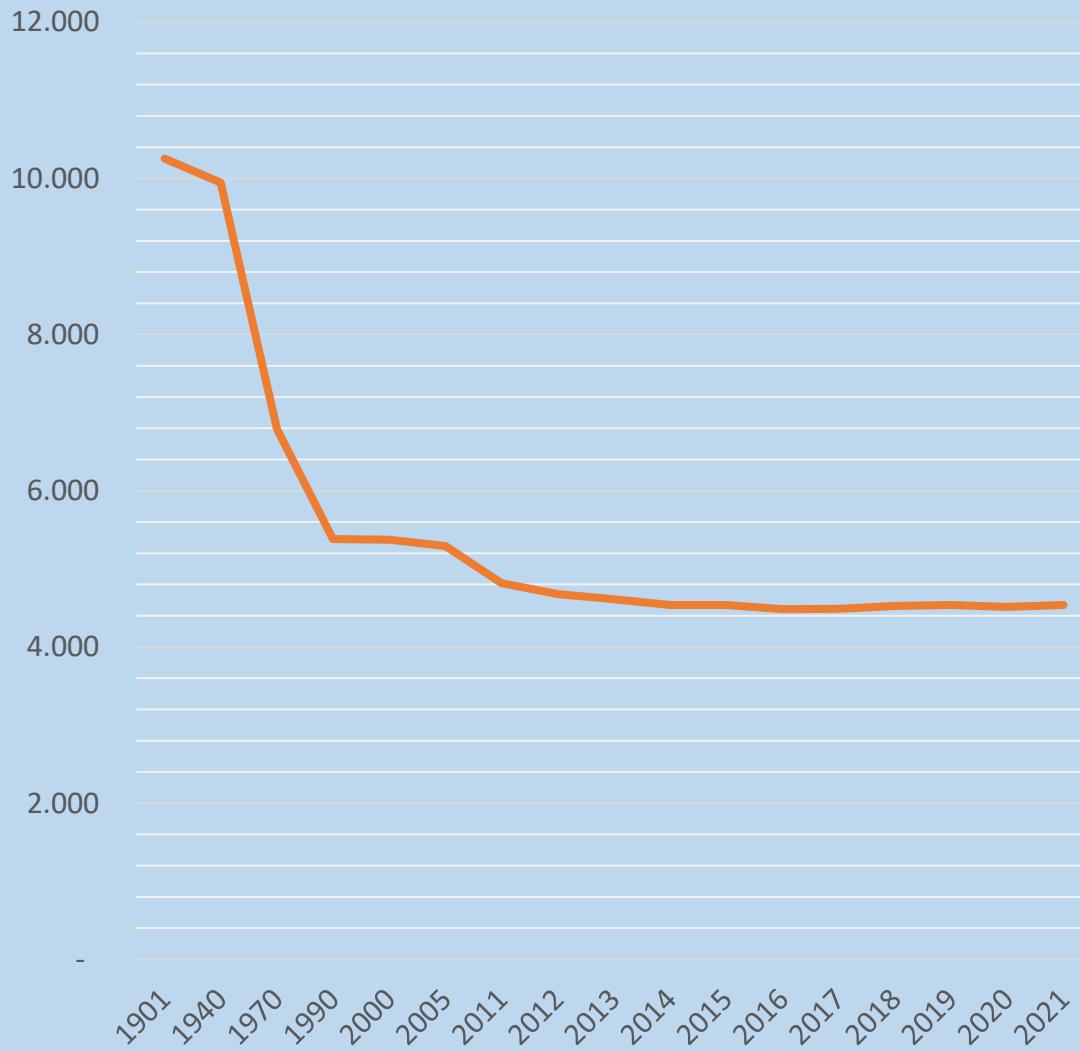


Past 10 years



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Project in 2018-2020

New Neighbors – more island life

Aim: Helping settlement on the small islands

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Project in 2018-2020

New Neighbors – more island life

Aim: Helping settlement on the small islands

- Network groups on 7 islands
- Visibility and communication
- Island consultant
- Matchmaking – pilot project aimed at farms



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Other issues:

- Microtrend - counter urbanization



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Other issues:

- Microtrend - counter urbanization
- COVID19!



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Lack of Housing!

For local people as well as new people wanting to move to the islands.

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Lack of Housing!

For local people as well as new people wanting to move to the islands.

Why?

- Fewer people in each house
- Many houses have been bought as holiday home
- Some houses are not suited for all-year residence
- Building new houses is hard due to lack of financing, regulations and lack of land.

Housing availability

What can be done?

- Local community building affordable housing

Isle of Colonsay, Scotland: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/colonsayhousing>



- Government support for rental housing on islands

Denmark, new legislation 2021

<https://www.trafikstyrelsen.dk/da/Bolig/Lister/Nyheder/Nyheder/2020/12/Nye-puljer-til-almene-boliger-paa-de-mindre-oeer>

- Project on housing issues on the West Cork islands, Ireland

University College Cork in Ireland and other.

- Other examples and ideas?

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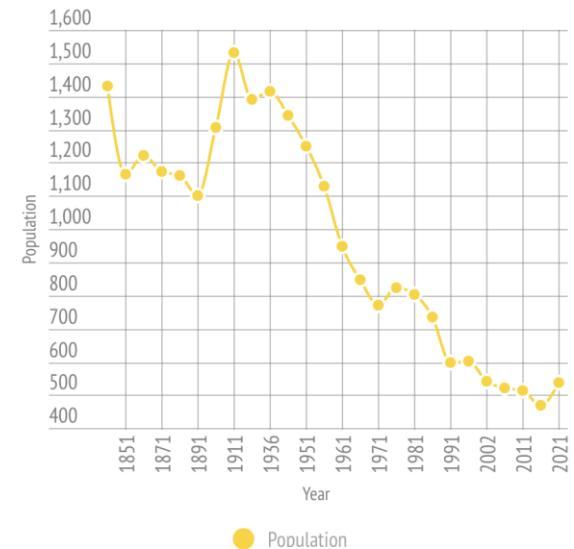
Background

- Arranmore Island, Co. Donegal, Ireland
- Population 2016 - 469. Declining.
- 5km from Donegal mainland
- Fishing and farming; small scale and seasonal.
- Supplemented by tourism. Short season. July-August
- Economic migration to cities and abroad
- School numbers falling
- Solution?

Step 1. Ask islanders....



Árainn Mhór Population 1841-2021



Source: www.cso.ie

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Main Issues Identified



45% OF POPULATION
OVER THE AGE OF 65



INTAKE OF PUPILS IN
PRIMARY SCHOOLS
DECLINING



LACK OF EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES



INCREASING
EMIGRATION IN SEARCH
OF WORK



INSUFFICIENT
BROADBAND
CONNECTIVITY

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+13%

539

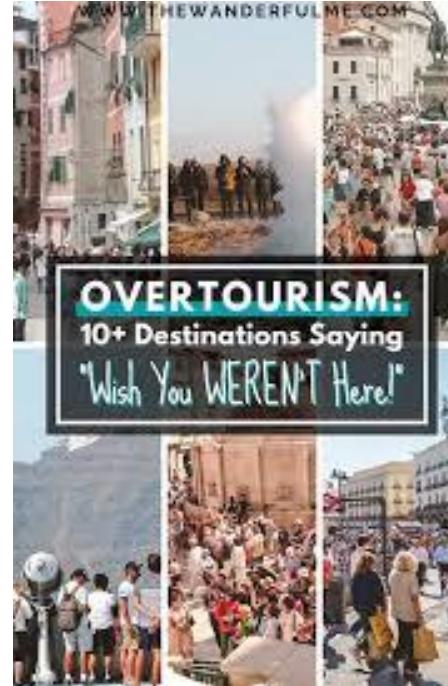
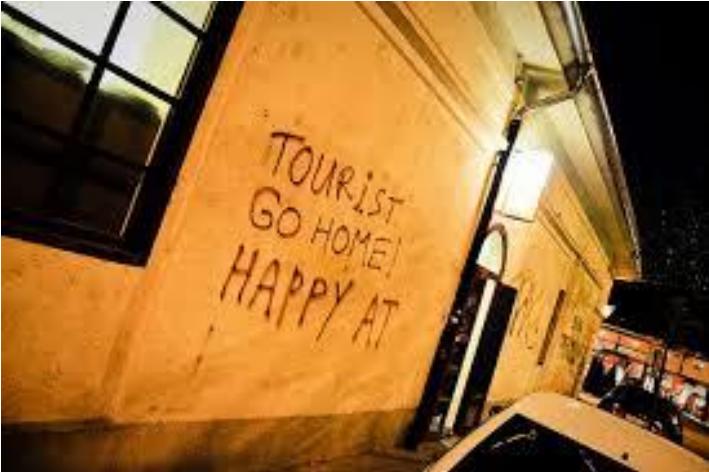


- **The Island Project - Three Ireland**
- **MODAM shared workspace**
- **Internet of Things; Eldercare, Environment, Fisheries**
- **Mobile coverage improved,**
- **Fibre Optic Cable. Futureproof**
- **Linking traditional industry with technology. Abalobi app**
- **Remote jobs. Bring your job with you**
- **Partnerships. Communities, Business, Local authority, Academia, Grow Remote**



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Overtourism



and housing
on our islands



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What is overtourism?

Unsustainable tourism which causes strains on local infrastructure, loss of authenticity and amenity, loss of quality for the social and natural environment.

- **The context**

Huge growth in tourism worldwide, low cost carriers and Airbnb type short lets platforms.

- **The issues**

- Short term view of the industry
- Focus on growth above all else
- Voice of local people is not heard or considered
- Tourist marketing agencies dominating the sector
- **Higher returns from short-term lets incentivises purchase of residential properties for that purpose**
- Local government has no power to intervene through to regulate

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Examples of possible regulatory measures considered by Scottish Government

- **Second home taxation (doubling local tax on second homes)**
- **Cap on second homes**
- **Licencing scheme for short term lets using Local Authorities planning powers**
- **Aims of the Licencing scheme**
 - balance the need and concerns of communities with wider tourism interests
 - deal with huge unregulated growth in short term lets especially through Airbnb
 - Short terms lets
 - are largely unregulated businesses
 - may lack in Health & safety standards
 - **reduce housing stock available to those looking for a permanent home**
 - **push up rents and house prices out of reach of local people**
 - affect the sense of community with no local people left, only visitors
 - compete unfairly with regulated hotels and traditional B&Bs

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How does the Licencing system work?

- The Local Authority sets up the licencing system, aligned with planning requirements
- **Registration** for licencing is **required** every 3 years at a moderate cost (2 to 3% of Income)
- Allows to set **minimum health and safety standards** for fire and gas safety, etc.
- Allows Local Authorities to keep an eye on number of Short terms lets and check it against **local plan**
- Allows Local Authorities to **set up control areas** to ensure **planning permission is required for the change of use of whole properties for short terms lets**, allowing the Local Authority to withdraw planning permission if number of short- term lets is too high.

A Short Terms Lets Delivery Group has been set up to help the legislation become law:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/short-term-lets/>