

## Holiday Accommodation

Holiday accommodation is vital to Blackpool's tourism economy.

However, changes in tourism have left Blackpool with more bed-spaces than it can fill.

This has forced many guest houses out of business and some have ended up as small flats and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) that are causing problems.

We are taking this opportunity to explain what the Council is doing to tackle these issues now and how Planning's role in managing future change of use will help to create more attractive neighbourhoods.

We hope you find this helpful.

### What is this leaflet about?

- **The role of Planning**

What Planning can do and how our policy manages the number of holiday bedspaces.

Answering some of your questions around holiday accommodation and our planning policy

- **Who's involved**

Who deals with what issues regarding holiday accommodation

- **What is happening now?**

Current Holiday Accommodation SPD consultation



# The role of Planning

During previous consultation, we realised that there are some misunderstandings about Planning and the holiday accommodation policy. We need to explain some of these issues

## What is Planning responsible for?

- Location of different uses
- Building design
- Enforcement against unlawful change of use and other unlawful development

## What is the Planning policy?

To reduce the number of bed spaces, Blackpool's Core Strategy Policy on holiday accommodation allows more guest houses to change to residential use than before, giving property owners more choice if they decide they no longer want to remain as a guest house. However, if they are located in any of the defined Holiday Accommodation Areas, which cover a smaller area than before, restrictions on change of use will continue to apply.

The policy is explained in more detail in another document, the Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)\*.

This change of use needs to be monitored to make sure it leads to the right balance of quality homes and guest houses to meet the needs of residents and overnight visitors.

To make sure any change to residential use does not result in more poor quality flats or HMOs we introduced new design guidance for residential conversions in 2011. This ensures these conversions provide good quality housing for Blackpool residents.



\*Planners can use terms that may be unfamiliar! Where you see an asterisk we have provided an explanation at the end of this leaflet.

## Myth busting!

### “I’m not in a holiday zone”

Blackpool is a holiday resort and the Council continues to champion the tourism economy, recognising the contribution good quality holiday accommodation makes wherever it is located.

Our holiday accommodation areas ONLY define where guest houses cannot normally change to residential use. There are no “holiday zones”!

A guest house that is not within one of these areas is still part of the resort, but owners have the option to change to residential use should they no longer want to carry on as a guest house.

### “I can’t get a bank loan because I’m not in a Holiday Accommodation Area”

Whether you are within a Holiday Accommodation Area or not should not affect lending. We will make sure that banks and commercial agents are not misinterpreting the policy.

Lack of lending from banks reflects the difficult economic situation and the unwillingness of banks to lend money. People are having problems getting mortgages for homes or loans for their business across the whole country, not just in Blackpool. The leisure sector is no exception to this, particularly in a seaside resort like ours with too many bed-spaces.

### “Planning isn’t helping”

Some people believe that the policy is not working as it is not addressing all the issues in these areas. But Planning cannot solve issues that lie outside its responsibility.

These fall to other council teams and outside agencies who are actively doing something about it, for example, by enforcing against unlawful HMOs and building family homes to replace existing poor quality accommodation.



# Who's involved

People have raised many issues around guest houses and are concerned that Planning is not addressing them. However, many of the issues are outside the remit of planning and fall to other teams and outside agencies.



# What's happening nOW?

During 2016/17 we have undertaken a review of the Holiday Accommodation SPD. In responding to the outcome of the review we propose to make some changes to the SPD:

- Amendments to Promenade guidance (removing reference to fixed quantum)
- Amendments to reflect the updated adopted Local Plan policy framework
- Amendments to the exceptional circumstances test allowing change of use within Holiday Accommodation Areas in certain circumstances including new guidance on the requirements of the viability assessment
- Amendments to text to improve the clarity of the SPD

## Have your say!

We are currently consulting on the **Revised Holiday Accommodation SPD – Consultation Draft**

All documents relating to this consultation and can be found on the Council's website:

[www.blackpool.gov.uk/holidayaccommodation](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/holidayaccommodation)

They are also available to view during normal opening hours at:

- Customer First Centre, Municipal Buildings, Corporation Street
- All libraries across the Borough

### More information:

We have tried to answer the most common issues raised but if you have other questions the Council's website provides further information.

[www.blackpool.gov.uk/holidayaccommodation](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/holidayaccommodation)

[www.blackpool.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/planningpolicy)

## Jargon-buster

### Permitted Development rights (PD)

PD allows certain changes to properties to go ahead without applying for Planning Permission. This can include small extensions to properties, change of use between houses and HMOs, and external alterations.

### Article 4 Direction

This gives the Council the ability to restrict specified Permitted Development rights in nominated areas. Within these areas people have to apply for planning permission to carry out this work.

### Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

These documents provide more detail on policies contained within the Local Plan.

### Selective Licensing

Selective licensing is currently under way in the South Beach, Claremont and Central areas of Blackpool. Selective Licensing ensures that landlords manage their properties properly and that anti-social behaviour issues caused by tenants are dealt with effectively.