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Sent: Friday, April 25, 2025 12:25 PM
To: Alex Allen; Grant Scott; Timothy Peterson; [REDACTED] Sonja Zupanec; northinfo
Cc: Carmen Fletcher; Mark Van H; Kirk Van Helvoirt
Subject: A letter to the Islands Trust re: STVRs

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Good afternoon

I write to you to share my family's story of Hornby Island, and how we have come to be in this place of Hornby home ownership, and participation in the Hornby Island Short Term Rental Association.

I first came to Hornby with my parents and siblings in the late 1980s. We camped at Tribune Bay Campground then, and for every summer then on, for the next 30+ years. It was our favourite week of the year. In 2008, when I met my now husband, I brought him to the island and he too, fell in love with all it has to offer. We talked every summer of one day being able to afford a small place that we could visit at will, create lasting memories with our children in, and one day, perhaps retire to. In 2022 while staying on Hornby for our annual summer vacation, we walked past a home for sale on Gunpowder Trail that had everything our family had hoped for. Together with my husband's brother and his wife, who had also begun visiting Hornby more than 15 years ago, we managed to jointly purchase a home on Hornby.

We are in our 40s, with four children between us ranging from aged one to 15. We pay childcare costs, sports costs, and home ownership costs both in Victoria and Hornby. We recognize that we are exceptionally privileged to be able to have two properties, but it is through hard work, scrimping, and saving that we have been able to do so. Our long-term goal is not to continue having a rental property, but to be able to gradually rent less and less until we are able to spend months at a time on Hornby, when our children are finished school and are independent. Being able to gain an income through renting out our home on Hornby through the rental season has taken some of the financial burden off of us as we move through the expensive child rearing years. We have never intended to be ex parte landowners with a sole purpose of making money through an investment property; we rent our home out to both help us in being able to afford the property we wish to retire to, while also being able to offer visitors a place to stay as they visit this beautiful island and stimulate it's tourist-based economy.

We are extremely cognizant of water saving; we have signage in our home requesting guests be mindful of usage, we request that all linens are brought from home, we do not provide access to laundry facilities, and we have a composting toilet for guest use. We have ample off-street parking to keep roads clear, and we strictly adhere to guest limits and weekly rentals, to alleviate burden on the ferries, and to be respectful of our neighbours, with whom we have built wonderful relationships. We employ an incredible property manager, a lovely house cleaner, and a thorough landscaping company, all of whom reside on Hornby, and all of whom would feel a negative financial impact from no longer having the contracts that STVR properties provide. We have an informational pamphlet suggesting visits to all of the wonderful local Hornby businesses, and we proudly display in our home the artwork and pottery of Hornby affiliated artists. We know that when guests stay with us, they are putting income into the hands of local Hornby residents.

We would not rent out our home long-term.

A letter to the Islands Trust re: STVRs

We want to continue being able to get away to Hornby whenever we can, and for our few weeks in the summer over the Hornby festival to continue our Hornby tradition of over 30 years, until we are able to be there long term if not permanently, and as such would not take on long term tenants. Removing our home from the STVR pool would not put a house back into the market for a Hornby resident. All it would do is take away tourist dollars from local families, and decrease income for those who rely on STVRs for contract work.

I truly hope you will listen to these personal stories, and realize that reducing the number of STVRs will not have the positive impact to the lives of Hornby residents in the way you hope it will. I would have attended the meeting on May 16 in person, but our home has been rented over that time by a wonderful doctor who is coming to work at your clinic on the island. What will happen when they cannot find a short term place to stay that is amenable to their needs?

I urge you to consider our story, and those like it, and allow the current STVR properties to continue operating.

Thank you,

The Van Helvoirts