

Grant Scott gscott@islandtrust.bc.ca

Alex Allen aallen@islandtrust.bc.ca

Chair Timothy Peterson tpeterson@islandtrust.bc.ca

Northern Trust Office Staff northinfo@islandtrust.bc.ca

May 9, 2025

Subject: Short-Term Vacation Rentals on Hornby Island

Dear Trustees,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed changes to the Official Community Plan (OCP) that would limit or prohibit short-term vacation rentals (STVRs) on Hornby Island.

We purchased our home on Hornby in 2015 and, like many others, rely on seasonal short-term rentals of our principal residence during June, July, and August to help manage the substantial mortgage required to purchase property here in the last decade. We operate fully within all existing regulations, listing only on Airbnb to ensure appropriate tax collection and remittance, and maintaining an active provincial STVR registration, which is clearly displayed on our listing.

Our rental is thoughtfully managed. We provide guests with water conservation guidelines, extensive compost and recycling systems, and have even commercially registered our well—paying the associated fees to ensure responsible usage and compliance.

We were led to believe that by following the rules and operating respectfully, we could continue to share our home this way into the future. The potential removal of “grandfathering” for existing legal STVRs is troubling and, in my view, misguided.

Capping or eliminating STVRs will not produce the desired increase in affordable housing stock. Many families like ours, who earn upwards of \$10,000 per summer through vacation rentals, simply cannot afford to rent their homes long-term for \$500–\$600 per month while continuing to pay mortgages ranging from \$1,500 to \$4,500 per month, in addition to insurance and utility costs. The math doesn’t work.

Beyond the personal impact, this proposal risks harming the broader island economy. Seasonal visitors are a key pillar of our local economy—supporting restaurants, shops, and services that struggle through the off-season. As a small business owner on Hornby, I witness firsthand how vital these guests are. They return each summer, contribute significantly to our revenue, and form a real part of the island’s culture and community.

If the goal of limiting STVRs is environmental—relating to water or septic system concerns—those are issues best addressed through education, well registration, and septic system maintenance, not a blanket cap. These matters are already being tackled at the provincial level and should not be duplicated or contradicted by local policy.

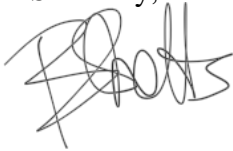
If the goal is simply to reserve the island's beauty for full-time residents, I would ask you to reflect on how many people, including yourselves or your neighbours, first discovered Hornby. For many of us, it was through a short-term rental. Removing that access would limit not only economic opportunity but the future vibrancy and diversity of our community.

Should the Trust proceed with a cap, how will fairness be ensured? Who gets to continue renting and who doesn't? Many owners made life and financial decisions in good faith under the current rules. Removing the ability to rent seasonally could force some to sell, while others will choose not to rent at all—resulting in little to no benefit for affordable housing.

This is a complex issue, and I do not envy the responsibility you carry. However, I urge you to prioritize continuity and fairness. Let the existing BC provincial registration system stand, and allow currently legal and compliant operators to continue under the current OCP and bylaws—supported by Temporary Use Permits where necessary.

Thank you for considering this perspective and for your continued service to the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bree Stotts', with a stylized, cursive script.

Bree Stotts

