

Statistical bulletin

Short-term lets through online collaborative economy platforms, UK: January to December 2024

Number of guest nights, nights, and stays for short-term lets offered via online collaborative economy platforms from Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2023 to Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2024.

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1 . Main points

- From January to December 2024, there were 90.1 million guest nights spent in short-term lets in the UK; of these, England had 70.3 million (78.0%), Wales had 6.3 million (6.9%), Scotland had 11.4 million (12.7%) and Northern Ireland had 2.2 million (2.4%).
- August was the most popular month for guest nights spent in the UK (12.8 million), 3.5 times higher than the lowest month, January (3.7 million).
- Within countries and regions, guest nights were concentrated in relatively few local authorities; about a quarter (26%) of all UK guest nights were in 10 local authorities.
- In 2024, the local authorities with the highest number of guest nights were Westminster (3.9 million), Cornwall (3.4 million), Edinburgh (3.0 million), and Highlands (2.6 million); the average number of guest nights per local authority in the UK for 2024 was 250,000.

2 . Guest nights, nights and stays

In this bulletin, "short-term lets" refers to rentals, such as apartments or rooms, booked through Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group, excluding other forms of accommodation, such as hotels or campsites. You can see more [statistics about leisure and tourism](#).

This analysis provides aggregated data booked through the three large online collaborative economy platforms on the number of guest nights, nights, and stays spent in short-term lets offered via online platforms during the twelve months to December 2024.

The number of guest nights accounts for the number of nights spent during a stay multiplied by the number of visitors in the travel party. This can be influenced by guest group size and length of stay. For example, a group of four staying for two nights would be eight guest nights, but one guest staying for two nights would be two guest nights. The number of nights refers to the number of nights a property or room offered by the platforms was occupied during a stay; whereas the number of stays refers to the number of times a facility offered by the platforms was occupied by a single booking, regardless of length of stay.

This bulletin focuses on the number of guest nights, unless otherwise stated.

Table 1: Number of guest nights, nights and stays in short-term lets offered via collaborative economy platforms, UK, 2024

Country Name	Number of Guest Nights	Number of Nights	Number of Stays
United Kingdom	90,096,700 (100%)	31,769,690 (100%)	9,291,700 (100%)
England	70,272,770 (78.0%)	25,198,910 (79.3%)	7,184,270 (77.3%)
Wales	6,256,930 (6.9%)	1,985,250 (6.2%)	639,140 (6.9%)
Scotland	11,401,670 (12.7%)	3,892,230 (12.3%)	1,210,170 (13.0%)
Northern Ireland	2,165,380 (2.4%)	693,330 (2.2%)	258,170 (2.8%)

Source: Office for National Statistics analysis using data from Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group

3 . UK headline trends

From January to December 2024, there were 90,096,700 guest nights spent in short-term lets in the UK.

The distribution of guest nights across the year was strongly affected by the seasons. August was the most popular month, with 12,788,560 guest nights (14.9% of the annual total) in the UK. January had the fewest guest nights with 3,651,460 (4.0%).

Figure 1: The percentage of guest nights in short-term lets was highest in August and lowest in January for all UK countries

Percentage split of guest nights in short-term lets offered through collaborative economy platforms of 2024 total, by month and country, January to December 2024

4 . Subnational trends

Across countries and regions, guest nights were concentrated in relatively few local authorities, with about a quarter (26.0%) of guest nights being spent in 10 local authorities (out of 361 local authorities in the UK).

Guest nights were not evenly distributed within areas. For instance, Hammersmith and Fulham had 899,610 guest nights in short-term lets in 2024, compared with 154,690 in neighbouring Richmond upon Thames. In Wales, which had 6,256,930 guest nights in 2024, 1,156,590 were in Gwynedd; next-door Ceredigion had 353,850.

Figure 2 shows how the number of guest nights varies between local authorities and the effects of seasonality on the totals.

Figure 2: Guest nights were concentrated in relatively few local authorities

Number of guest nights for each local authority, UK, January to December 2024

The four local authorities in the UK with the highest total number of guest nights in short-term lets in 2024 were Westminster (3,901,890), Cornwall (3,430,070), City of Edinburgh (3,016,130), and Highland (2,622,400). Focusing on these four different places allows us to highlight some of the characteristics shared by locations popular with people staying in short-term lets, as well as distinctions between them.

Figure 3: The four local authorities with the highest number of guest nights in 2024 showed different patterns of seasonality

Top four local authorities by number of guest nights in short-term lets offered through collaborative economy platforms, January to December 2024

Westminster

Westminster, in London, had the highest number of guest nights (3,901,890, 4.3% of the UK total) in 2024. It is an urban local authority which had a [resident population](#) of 211,508 in mid-2023. In 2024, it had an [affordability ratio](#) of 18.0, meaning that the median house sale price was 18.0 times the yearly average earnings of the area.

The average length of stay in short-term lets in Westminster was four days in 2024. Compared with other local authorities where the number of guest nights rapidly increased over summer, short-term lets in Westminster were relatively consistent throughout the year with the highest month of July (416,390) having only twice the number of guest nights in January (210,880), the lowest month. Just over four in five guests (81.4%) staying in short-term lets in Westminster in 2024 were international.

Cornwall

In contrast, Cornwall, the local authority with the second-highest total number of guest nights (3,430,070, 3.8% of the UK total), is a predominantly rural area in the South West of England. In mid-2023, it had a [resident population](#) of 578,342 and in 2024, the median house cost 8.85 times the yearly average earning for the area.

Like Westminster, the average length of stay in short-term lets in Cornwall was four days in 2024. Unlike Westminster, guest nights in Cornwall followed a more pronounced seasonal pattern. In the summer months, Cornwall overtook Westminster as the place with the highest number of guest nights in the UK:

- May (364,110)
- June (378,160)
- July (595,550)
- August (803,920)
- September (320,320)

The Cornish August figure was almost 23 times the UK average guest nights (35,430) at that time. During the winter, guest nights in Cornwall decreased, with the August high being about twelve times the January low (66,810). The proportion of international guests was low, at 16.2%; most people staying in short-term lets in Cornwall were domestic visitors.

City of Edinburgh

The City of Edinburgh in Scotland had the third-highest number of guest nights in the UK in 2024, at 3,016,130 (3.3% of the UK total), which was 26.5% of all guest nights in Scotland. Edinburgh is urban, with [resident population](#) of 523,250. In 2024, the [median house price](#) was £270,000.

Of the guest nights recorded in Edinburgh, 411,900 (13.6%) were in August when the city hosts the Edinburgh fringe festival. During August, the proportion of domestic visitors rose from 22.6% in July to 31.9% August (from 84,970 to 131,510) before falling to 22.8% (63,710) in September. This may be because of the number of UK performers and tourists coming to the city for the festival. January had the lowest number of guest nights (111,820, 3.7%) across the year. Like Westminster, short-term lets in Edinburgh were consistently popular with international visitors: an average of 67.4% of guest nights spent in Edinburgh were by international guests in 2024. The average length of stay was shorter than Westminster and Cornwall, at 3.1 days.

Highland

Highland, which is the northern area of The Highlands, a cultural and historical region of Scotland, had the fourth-highest number of guest nights in the UK. It had 2,622,400 (2.9% of the UK total) guest nights in 2024, which was 23.0% of guest nights spent in Scotland. It is predominantly rural, with a [resident population](#) of 236,330. The [median house price](#) in 2024 was £205,000.

Like Cornwall, guest nights in Highland showed strong seasonal variation. Highland had the highest numbers of short-term lets in Scotland in:

- May (325,820)
- July (407,390)
- August (432,220)
- September (289,830)

Guest nights dropped to their lowest in Highland in January (60,610). The high in August was seven times higher than the low in January. Lower winter visitor numbers are unsurprising, since challenging winter weather conditions in Highland can make hiking and travel harder. The summer months were popular with international visitors, who made up the greater proportion of guest nights from May (57.0%) to September (56.7%), with August (64.0%) having the highest proportion of guest nights by visitors from overseas. The average length of stay by visitors in short-term lets was 2.9 days in 2024.

5 . International guest nights and guests' country of origin

Of the four UK nations, Scotland had the largest proportion of guest nights by international guests in 2024 (45.8%).

However, there are different findings at local authority level. Of the top 15 areas with the highest proportion of guest nights by international guests, 14 were in London; City of Edinburgh (67.4%) was the only local authority outside of London to feature. Kensington and Chelsea had the largest proportion of international guest nights (82.4%) in the UK. East Lindsay, in the East Midlands, had the lowest proportion of international guest nights, with 2.1% of visitors coming from overseas.

More information about international guest nights and the country of origin of guests can be found in our [accompanying datasets](#). Detailed commentary and analysis of country of origin trends can be found in our previous bulletin, [Short-term lets through online collaborative economy platforms, UK: year to Quarter 2 \(Apr to June\) 2024](#).

6 . Data on short-term lets through online collaborative economy platforms

[Guest nights, nights and stays for short-term lets, quarterly, UK](#)

Dataset | Released 19 May 2025

The number of guest nights, nights, and stays for short-term lets offered through online collaborative economy platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group).

[Guest nights, nights and stays for short-term lets by country of origin of international guests, quarterly, UK](#)

Dataset | Released 19 May 2025

The number of guest nights, nights, and stays by country of origin of international guests for short-term lets offered through online collaborative economy platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group).

[Guest nights, nights and stays for short-term lets, monthly, UK](#)

Dataset | Released 19 May 2025

Number of guest nights, nights and stays in short-term lets offered via online collaborative economy platforms, by month.

[Guest nights, nights and stays for short-term lets, by country of origin of international guests, monthly, UK](#)

Dataset | Released 19 May 2025

Number of guest nights, nights and stays in short-term lets offered through online collaborative economy platforms, by country of origin of international guests.

7 . Glossary

Short-term lets

Refers to rentals, such as apartments or rooms, booked through three online booking platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group), excluding other forms of accommodation, such as hotels or campsites.

Number of stays

The number of times a short-term let offered via the platforms was occupied.

Number of nights

The number of nights a short-term let offered via the platforms was occupied.

Number of guest nights

The number of nights spent during a stay, with a night counted per individual member of the visiting group. This can be influenced by guest group size and length of stay. For example, a group of four staying for two nights would be eight guest nights, but two nights and one stay.

"Asia Other" country-of-origin category

The "Asia Other" country-of-origin category includes all countries within Asia, except China, Japan and Korea.

Domestic guest nights

Guest nights spent by tourists who are residents in the UK.

International guest nights

Guest nights spent by tourists who are not residents in the UK.

8 . Data sources and quality

Data from three online collaborative economy platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group) provide data on short-term lets to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Data from Vrbo, Expedia, Hotels.com, Orbitz, Ebookers, CheapTickets, Trivago and others under the Expedia Group umbrella are included as part of Expedia Group. We then aggregate the data for these statistics.

Data include information on the number of guest nights, nights and stays, as well as information on the country of origin of visitors in the UK. Data are provided at the local administrative unit (LAU) level in the UK, which is also aggregated to form local authorities, international territorial levels (ITLs), countries and the UK as a whole.

The data have a strong seasonal trend. Therefore, changes over time should generally be compared year-on-year, rather than month-on-month or quarter-on-quarter.

Strengths and limitations

The article is based on data provided to us by three international platforms (Airbnb, Booking.com and Expedia Group). The data covers short-stay accommodation in the UK, offered by service providers via one of these three online collaborative economy platforms.

Only accommodation offered through the three platforms is included in this bulletin and dataset. It cannot be added to other tourism statistics on holiday rentals or other types of accommodation, such as hotels, because of potential overlaps. Only the merged data for the three platforms are available; individual data on each platform will not be disclosed.

While we believe these statistics cover a large proportion of short-term lets activity in the UK, they do not cover all activity, as data from other providers and platforms are not included.

The data we receive cannot be de-duplicated across the three platforms, which means we cannot calculate the number of unique hosts or visitors.

The Scottish Government introduced licensing for short-term lets in October 2022, with existing short-term let operators having until October 2023 to apply for a license from their local authority. They publish [Short Term Lets Licensing Statistics](#), with the latest data available as of 29 April 2025.

There will be differences between the Scottish Government data and our [Hosts, listings, and bed spaces of short-term lets, UK dataset](#) for a few reasons. Firstly, the Scottish Government publish data on the number of short-term let license applications that were validated by local authorities up to 31 December 2024. Because of the large volume of applications received by the October deadline for existing hosts and some applications being incomplete, some applications were not validated in time to be reflected in their published data. Data are subject to revision in future releases.

Secondly, the data that we have released on hosts, listings and bedspaces refer to the number of hosts and visitors of short-term lets listed by one of the three online collaborative economy platforms in 2023. The number of unique hosts cannot be identified, as there will be duplication because of hosts advertising their property on more than one platform. Consequently, we would generally expect the number of hosts in the data accompanying this release to be higher than the number of licenses in Scottish Government data.

In Northern Ireland, it is a legal requirement that all tourist accommodation providers receive [certification from Tourism Northern Ireland](#) before they are allowed to begin operating.

In November 2024, the Welsh Government introduced the [Visitor Accommodation \(Register and Levy\) Etc. \(Wales\) Bill](#) to the Senedd. Part of this Bill establishes a register of visitor accommodation in Wales. In April 2025, the Welsh government specified its [legislative programme](#), this included its intent to introduce a separate Bill to regulate visitor accommodation through a [licensing regime for all visitor accommodation providers](#).

In 2023, the previous UK Government consulted on a registration scheme for short-term lets, and parliament legislated for a registration scheme for short-term lets in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. In February 2024, the [proposal to introduce a mandatory, national register of short-term lets in England](#) was announced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (known at the time as the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities), which the current government remains committed to implementing.

The House of Commons Library published a paper examining [the growth in short-term lettings](#) and measures to strengthen regulation in England. It also provides a brief overview of the regulatory approaches in other countries at that time.

9 . Related links

[Overseas travel and tourism, provisional: April to June 2024](#)

Statistical Bulletin | Released 18 October 2024

Estimates for overseas travel and tourism, including visits, spending, number of nights, and purpose of visit.

[Travel trends estimates: overseas residents in the UK](#)

Dataset | Released May 2024

Annual estimates of overseas residents' visits and spending. Also includes data on nights, purpose, region of UK visited and mode of travel. Breakdowns by nationality and area of residence are covered.

[Improving our travel and tourism statistics: February 2025 update](#)

Article | Released 25 February 2025

Update on ONS' progress towards planned improvements to ONS travel and tourism statistics, including official statistics in development.

[UK short-term rentals](#)

Report | Released May 2025

This report, published by Visit Britain, provides monthly insights on the overall supply of short-term rental properties across the UK, as well as a selection of performance metrics.

[The growth in short-term lettings in England](#)

Research Briefing | Released May 2024

Briefing from the House of Commons Library which examines the growth in short-term lettings and measures to strengthen regulation of the sector in England.

10 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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