

Response ID

Submitted to Overnight Visitor Levy consultation
Submitted on 2026-02-17 09:40:11

The case for a local visitor levy in England

1 Should the power to raise a visitor levy also be extended to Foundation Strategic Authorities?

Yes

Provide further detail (optional):

The levy, provided receipts are used to support the local visitor economy, will benefit local people and places. Those benefits would also be felt by those within Foundation Strategic Authority areas.

Use of revenues

2 Do you agree that Mayors should be able to invest the revenues from a levy in interventions to support economic growth, including the visitor economy?

Yes

Provide further detail (optional):

Revenue raised should be spent in ways that directly support the visitor economy (and not the broader, less clearly defined, 'economic growth'). The levy must avoid becoming a tool for filling black holes in local budgets and instead must be used to directly support those businesses who will be responsible for meeting the cost. A centralized framework, designed to direct spending, would help to ensure that those meeting the cost of the levy also benefit most from its use.

3 Should a share of revenues for local authorities be allocated on the basis of the proportion of overnight stays in the authority or some other centrally defined metric, or should the distribution within the area be determined entirely by Mayors and other local leaders?

Determined by Mayors and other local leaders

Provide further detail (optional):

It will be important that local decision makers are able to make decisions as to how revenue is allocated to avoid risks that certain types of area (e.g. rural areas) are not disadvantaged. To ensure that doesn't happen, decision at the lowest practical geographical level would be appropriate.

Scope of the levy

4 Do you agree that all overnight stays in commercially let visitor accommodation should be within scope of a levy, unless otherwise exempted within the national framework or by Mayors (see sections 4.3-4.5)?

Yes

Provide further detail (optional):

Assessments will need to be made (nationally or locally) on the impact of the levy of the tourism market of different places (e.g. to ensure rural areas are not disadvantaged). There needs to be an ability to identify quickly if the introduction of the levy is impacting on places reliant on tourism and that impact cannot be offset by investing the receipts of the levy.

5 Should the government introduce a threshold below which providers are not liable for a levy? If so, what form should this take? Please provide evidence for why any suggestions should be considered.

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

6 Do you agree that the following exemptions should apply at a national level? Please provide details for why any additional exemptions should be considered. Exemptions could include: a) Stays in registered Gypsy and Traveller sites where the accommodation is a primary residence. b) Stays in charitable or non-profit accommodation provided for shelter, respite, or refuge, where the accommodation is not commercially operated. c) Other types of accommodation, such as for statutory Temporary Accommodation arranged by local authorities (please provide details for why any additional exemptions should be considered).

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

7 Do you think that Mayors and other local leaders should have the power to introduce additional local exemptions to those outlined nationally? Please provide examples of specific exemptions, and evidence for these.

Yes

Provide further detail (optional):

Mayors should be able to introduce exemptions designed to support sub-sectors of the local tourism economy. For example, a particular area might be struggling due to factors outside of its control (e.g. it might have been the victim of recent flooding) and therefore it would be advantageous for the mayor to provide support to stimulate that local economy.

Levy rates

8 Do you agree that a levy should be set as a percentage of accommodation costs?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

9 How should a percentage-based levy be applied to inclusive packages where accommodation is only part of the total cost (for example, packages that include meals, entertainment, or transport)?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

10 Do you agree that Mayors and other local leaders should have the flexibility to set levy rates locally? Please describe any factors that should be considered in setting a rate.

Yes

Provide further detail (optional):

Local leaders should have the flexibility to set rates at a local level. In doing so they will wish to consider the impact that raising prices might have on demand, and the extent to which this can be offset by the targeted investment of receipts from the levy.

11 Should the government put in place a cap on the maximum tax rate? If so, at what level should a cap be set? Please provide evidence in support of your views.

Not Answered

Enter your preferred approach:

12 Should the government put in place a limit on the maximum number of consecutive nights to which a levy applies? If so, at what level should that limit be set? Please provide evidence in support of your views.

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

13 Are there any other flexibilities or safeguards that should be built into the rate-setting framework?

Enter your preferred approach:

14 Should Mayors and other local leaders have powers to vary the rate for different types of accommodation, including short term lets?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

15 Do you agree that Mayors should have the flexibility to decide whether the levy applies to different constituent authorities within their region?

Yes

Provide further detail (optional):

Local leaders should have the ability to shape the application of the levy in ways that best suit the needs of the local area.

16 Should Mayors and other local leaders be able to vary the application of a levy in their areas based on, for example, seasonality? Please provide details of any other flexibilities that should be considered.

Yes

Provide further detail (optional):

Local leaders should have the ability to shape the application of the levy in ways that best suit the needs of the local area.

Transparency and accountability

17 Do you agree that a formal consultation process conducted by Mayors and, if powers are extended to them, Foundation Strategic Authorities should be required before a levy is introduced and that this approach is proportionate?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

18 Do you agree with the proposed components of the prospectus?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

19 Do you think that the proposed length of the notice period of 12 months is appropriate?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

20 Do you agree that introduction of a levy, and any subsequent changes to the core elements of a levy, should be subject to the relevant statutory Mayoral budget voting process in MSAs?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

21 If Foundation Strategic Authorities have powers to introduce a visitor levy, do you agree that a simple majority council vote should be required ahead of consultation on a levy, ahead of implementation and this be repeated ahead of any changes to the core elements of a levy? Is this approach fair and proportionate?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

22 If Foundation Strategic Authorities have powers to introduce a visitor levy, what are your views on the consent mechanism in Foundation Strategic Authorities where a levy is applied to a smaller area within the Foundation Strategic Authorities' geography?

Enter your preferred approach:

23 What further or different governance and accountability mechanisms are needed in Foundation Strategic Authorities, Mayoral Strategic Authorities or the Greater London Authority?

Enter your preferred approach:

Regular impact assessments of the impact on the levy on the local economy will support the assessment of impact and can be fed into setting levies that best support the growth of the local tourism sector, though it will be important to ensure that undertaking assessments are not disproportionately onerous on the relevant authority.

24 Do you agree with the proposed approach to reporting, and should any further accountability mechanisms be considered?

Yes, but with further mechanisms

Provide further detail (optional):

The publication of local impact assessments (see above) will ensure transparency and support local buy-in for the levy (though see points above with regards to not being overly burdensome on the relevant authority).

Liability and assessment model

25 Do you agree that it should be the visitor accommodation provider that is ultimately liable?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

26 How could digital booking platforms or intermediaries best be integrated to streamline levy assessment, collection and tax returns?

Enter your preferred approach:

27 Do you agree that a self-assessed model is the most appropriate approach for administering a visitor levy?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

28 Do you agree that the tax point of a levy should be the point of arrival?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

Administration

29 In your view, should levies be administered locally by relevant authorities, through a centralised approach, or a combination of local and central authorities?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

30 Do you agree a portion of levy revenues should be retained by the relevant authorities to fund administration costs, if levies are administered locally?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

31 Should the registration process for accommodation providers to support the administration of the visitor levy be operated locally or nationally alongside the registration scheme for short-term lets in England?

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

32 What processes or solutions for collecting revenues could be introduced to minimise the burden on businesses?

Enter your preferred approach:

33 What further support could reduce the administrative burden on businesses in collecting and remitting a levy?

Enter your preferred approach:

Compliance and enforcement

34 Tax authorities will require enforcement powers to ensure compliance with a levy. Do you agree with the powers listed? a) Civil information and inspection powers, including those to enquire into tax returns, audit records retained by visitor accommodation providers, and inspect premises. b) Civil powers to charge interest and penalties, and to recover unpaid tax, where a visitor accommodation provider fails to undertake their statutory obligations relating to the visitor levy. c) Discretionary debt relief powers, for example the ability to reduce a debt to nil or to not issue a penalty in certain circumstances.

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

35 Do you agree that an appeals process should enable providers to appeal on the basis of liability, classification or enforcement action? Please provide details of any additional areas which should be considered.

Not Answered

Provide further detail (optional):

Equalities impacts

36 Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the proposals in this consultation on persons who share a protected characteristic?

Enter your preferred approach:

About you

Name

What is your name?:

Owain Lloyd-James

What is your email address or telephone number?

What is your email address or telephone number:

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

Yes

If yes, please indicate which organisation:

Historic England