

The Hornby Island Short Term Vacation Rental Association (HISTRA) is a group of neighbours helping neighbours. Our mission is to elevate the experience of vacation rentals on Hornby Island for everyone; owners, visitors and residents alike. Our members run the gamut from generational owners to people who came to Hornby and decided they never wanted to leave. We all share a love for our magical Hornby and its vibrant, diverse community.

Along with everyone else, our world turned upside-down with COVID-19. We felt the ground shake and were lost in uncertainty. But thankfully as neighbours, we had each other to turn to and discovered first hand how much stronger we are together.

Our HISTRA Board has been meeting weekly since the beginning of April to carefully follow Provincial guidance, share experience and information and field community input. Our main focus has been managing our concern over protecting the safety of ourselves and our community while addressing the vital role visitors play in the importance of our local economy. We shared resources and counselled one another about how to practice good business and process fear. As tough a time as this has been, I am happy to say our board feels empowered and energized. Together, we learned faster, accomplished more, and found support. We feel stronger and prepared to safely face the coming summer.

We are following WorkSafeBC protocols and PHO guidances to safely reopen and operate. We are increasing cleaning times to allow for new extraordinary measures, spacing rentals further apart, shortening stays, and educating guests. We are providing our teams with PPE and making sure they are safe at work. Our website HISTRA.ca provides resources, links and articles to help all vacation homes whether they are members or not, so as to better protect us all.

Our summer guests know this is a year like no other. Beyond the new normal of physical distancing, frequent hand washing, and the like, our guests are now tasked with taking care of the homes they are staying in. Like everyone else, they are expected to rise to the occasion and do more to care for their vacation community. Guests are told to cancel their stays if they are sick and are encouraged to stay away from crowded beaches and areas. In addition, our international and long distance visitors are advised our borders remain closed and to cancel or postpone their stays to another time.

We will continue to meet and learn from one another, to share information as it becomes available and to help each other. We are following the directions from the Provincial Health Office and of Dr. Bonnie Henry, who we are indebted to for her care and expertise. We feel blessed as British Columbians and as

Canadians. And we stand with the Hornby community because, as neighbours, this is our home too. As such, we are deeply committed to keep everyone safe and sound.

www.histra.com

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