# Edinburgh Festival Fringe faces accommodation crisis as prices soar amid Murrayfield events



The Edinburgh Festival Fringe, a highlight of the city's cultural calendar, faces escalating challenges regarding accommodation for its performers as prices soar and availability dwindles. The Fringe Society has recently announced over 100 rooms available at designated “Festival Village” spaces at Queen Margaret University in Musselburgh and Edinburgh University near the Meadows. In addition, an innovative “Artist Village” glamping site will be established at the historic Drum Estate, offering bell tents for groups of up to four at a nightly rate of £100.

Despite these efforts, affordability and availability remain significant barriers for many aspiring performers, a reality acknowledged by the Fringe Society. The charity emphasises that the ability to secure reasonable accommodation is essential for artists, allowing them to focus on their work rather than financial pressures. A spokesperson from the Society elaborated, stating, “It's incredibly important for Fringe participants to be able to access affordable accommodation this August and beyond, to allow artists to focus on their work instead of an additional financial pressure.”

The situation has been exacerbated this year by the first concert events at Murrayfield Stadium, coinciding with the Fringe, causing accommodation prices in the area to inflate dramatically. Reports indicate that some luxury hotels are charging over £1,000 per night, particularly on dates when major acts like Oasis and AC/DC are scheduled to perform. This desperation for lodging has unveiled deeper systemic issues within the rental landscape of the city. Recent statistics show Airbnb properties are listed at staggering prices, including one flat on the Royal Mile going for £1,621 per night and another offering a 30-day stay for an outrageous £30,000 during August.

Such price hikes have sparked widespread indignation within the arts community. Notable figures, like comedian Sofie Hagen, have voiced their frustration, underscoring the harsh economic reality many face in trying to participate in the festival. She referred to instances of accommodation costs escalating by as much as £1,125 per night, which has raised a clarion call regarding the festival's accessibility and sustainability for both artists and attendees.

To ease this financial strain, the Fringe Society is actively collaborating with various universities and innovative accommodation providers to enhance options for artists. Queen Margaret University has pledged to keep accommodation prices competitive—single rooms are pegged at £294 per week, while shared apartments are available for £2,034. Meanwhile, Edinburgh University's Sciennes accommodation is being offered at £287 per week. This commitment from academic institutions highlights the importance of accessible lodging during the Fringe, reflecting a broader dedication to supporting the arts.

Lyndsay Wilkie, director of commercial operations at Edinburgh University, reiterated their commitment by stating, “We are fully committed to supporting the festivals and... recognise the need for artists and events professionals to have access to affordable accommodation during the summer months.” By providing clear access routes and budget-friendly options, these institutions hope to foster an environment where artists can thrive without the compounded stress of exorbitant costs.

The Fringe Society's initiative to encourage performers to explore accommodation outside of central Edinburgh aims not only to mitigate costs but also to enrich their experience of the city. By venturing into neighbouring areas, participants can discover quieter locales filled with rich cultural experiences that mainstream tourists often miss, all while remaining conveniently close to the festival action.

As Edinburgh gears up for another bustling Fringe season, the balancing act between maintaining a thriving arts festival and ensuring affordability for its participants remains a pressing challenge. The landscape of accommodation in the city continues to evolve, with significant implications for the future of arts accessibility, and stakeholders are called to innovate continuously in response to these emerging hurdles.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3. Paragraphs 4, 5
4. Paragraph 4
5. Paragraphs 4, 5
6. Paragraph 5
7. Paragraphs 5, 6

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25170364.fringe-accommodation-pegged-300-week/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25170364.fringe-accommodation-pegged-300-week/?ref=rss> - The Fringe Society has announced over 100 rooms available at Queen Margaret University’s campus in Musselburgh and Edinburgh University accommodation near the Meadows. Additionally, an 'Artist Village' glamping site is being set up at the historic Drum Estate in south Edinburgh, offering bell tents for up to four people at £100 per night. The Society encourages performers to consider staying in outlying neighborhoods to reduce costs and experience the 'real' Edinburgh. Concerns over accommodation affordability and availability have been identified as significant barriers to festival participation.
3. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/edinburgh-flats-already-being-rented-28868191> - Accommodation prices in Edinburgh during the Festival Fringe have surged, with some Airbnb flats listed at over £1,000 per night. A luxury apartment on the Royal Mile is available for £1,621 per night in August. This sharp increase in accommodation costs has raised concerns about the affordability of attending the festival for both artists and visitors.
4. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/edinburgh-fringe-festival-airbnb-cost-b2560541.html> - Accommodation prices in Edinburgh during the Fringe festival have inflated by as much as £1,125 per night, with some properties listed at £2,000 per night. This sharp rise is attributed to new short-let regulations introduced in Scotland, requiring hosts to obtain a license or face fines up to £2,500. The surge in accommodation costs has sparked backlash across the arts sector, with concerns about the impact on festival attendance and affordability.
5. <https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/arts-and-culture/theatre-and-stage/edinburgh-fringe-2023-comedian-sofie-hagen-shares-outrage-at-airbnb-accommodation-prices-for-fringe-3993387> - Comedian Sofie Hagen has expressed outrage over astronomical Airbnb accommodation prices for the 2023 Edinburgh Fringe. She highlighted instances where properties were charging nearly £30,000 for a 30-day stay in August, making it financially unfeasible for many performers and attendees. This situation underscores the broader issue of rising accommodation costs affecting the festival's accessibility.
6. <https://www.napier.ac.uk/about-us/conferences-and-hospitality/summer-accommodation/accommodation-for-edinburgh-fringe-artists> - Edinburgh Napier University offers discounted accommodation for Fringe artists, providing fully equipped self-catering apartments ranging from 4-bed to 9-bed units at £350 per person per week. The rate includes a single en-suite room, communal kitchen, free WiFi, and is located a 15-minute walk from the festival hub. This initiative aims to support performers with affordable lodging options during the festival.
7. <https://www.edfringe.com/learn/news-and-events/fringe-accommodation-update-february-2023> - The Fringe Society acknowledges the challenges in finding affordable accommodation in Edinburgh during August, citing factors such as increased tourism and new legislation on short-term lets. They are actively working to assist artists by updating their accommodation portal and exploring alternative options like ships, tents, and vacant shops. The Society emphasizes the importance of early booking and official channels to secure lodging.