

University of  
Hertfordshire



# *Private Rented Accommodation Student Guidelines*

# *Contents*

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Introduction	3	Tenancy Deposit	18
Where to look for Accommodation	4	Guarantors	21
Community Liaison and Support Officer	5	Council Tax Exemption	21
Important International Student Advice	7	Housemates	22
What makes a good Landlord/ Managing Agent?	8	Moving In Checklist	24
What to be aware of when looking at accommodation	10	Inventories	26
Property House Hunting Checklist	11	Recommended Repair Response Times (provided by the Local Authority)	27
Once you have found your chosen property...Remember!!	15	Other useful facts	28
Reservation Fee	16	Useful Contacts	29
Agency Fees	16	Important Information	30
Administration Fee	16	Moving Out Checklist	31
		Tenancy Deposit Protection- End of Tenancy	32
		Deposit checklist	34



# Introduction

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**This guide has been produced in response to the many issues which have been raised over previous years. These issues are related to living in private off-campus rented accommodation and are experienced by many students.**

The Community Office, which is situated within the Office of the Dean of Students, is hoping to reduce negative experiences by providing relevant information and enable students to deal with them effectively. This guide also provides information to assist students in their search for private rented accommodation, in addition to how to deal with issues while living off-campus and how to prepare for moving out.

The Community Liaison and Support Officer (CLSO) is available for further support; details can be found under contacts later in this guide.

In addition to this Private Renting Guide there is also a Guide to Living Off-Campus which provides further advice on everything you may encounter whilst living in your accommodation; including neighbourly conduct, refuse and recycling, security and safety etc.



# Where to look for Accommodation

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## *Partnership Accreditation for Landlords (PAL)*



This is a partnership scheme between the University of Hertfordshire and Welwyn Hatfield Council. It is a voluntary scheme which recognises landlords who provide quality accommodation and good practice. The scheme was launched in January 2012 and has allowed the University to provide students with

a recommended list of landlords. To become accredited the landlord has to pass a set of standards. A random selection of 1:5 properties will have undergone inspections. You can find out more and find a list of accredited landlords by logging onto **[www.PAL-online.org.uk](http://www.PAL-online.org.uk)**

## *Local Newspapers*

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Welwyn and Hatfield Times	Wed
St Albans Advertiser	Wed
Herts Advertiser	Wed
The Review	Thur
StudyNet	





# *Community Liaison and Support Officer*

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The CLSO can provide you with a list of local PAL accredited Managing Agents and Landlords in the Hatfield area. The CLSO also provides information and organises off-campus private accommodation Information Fairs, which usually take place in October and January. Local partners such as Herts Police, Herts Fire Service and teams within Welwyn Hatfield Council use these opportunities to spread awareness to students about the rights and responsibilities for those living off-campus.

The CLSO is based between both campuses throughout the working week. Please contact the CLSO at [Community@herts.ac.uk](mailto:Community@herts.ac.uk) in advance to arrange an appointment if you would like to request assistance or advice.

**Email: [Community@herts.ac.uk](mailto:Community@herts.ac.uk)**

**Telephone: 01707 285165**





# Important International Student Advice

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If you are an International student in many cases you will be expected to either have a UK based guarantor or pay several months' rent in advance. The University is unable to guarantee your rent and does not have any power to dictate to a landlord or managing agent on how to manage your tenancy.

However there are legal responsibilities and regulations in which a landlord/ managing agent has to abide by. The University has also launched the Partnership Accreditation for Landlords scheme with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, this will allow for a list of recommended landlords and managing agents. Those accredited will have gone through a process to ensure that the properties they own/manage are good quality and that there is evidence of good practice.

If you rent a property from an accredited landlord you will have the safeguard of

knowing that their property and practices have been verified in accordance with housing law and PAL Code of Standards.

If you are not lucky enough to find an accredited landlord then the Community Office, a department within the Office of the Dean of Students are here to help. They can advise on off-campus accommodation and will investigate any concerns you may have regarding landlords, managing agents, property standards, agreements and much more.

Remember:

- Do not transfer any money prior to you seeing your accommodation or landlord/managing agent. There have been cases in the past of deposit fraud when criminals have posed as landlords or agent representatives and received monies fraudulently in excess of £1600. It is very difficult and in most cases impossible to recover this money.

- As stated above, there are legal requirements for landlords to abide by in relation to the property and their management practices. These regulations ensure your safety and wellbeing when living in private rented accommodation.

If you need any advice or support please contact the Community Office – The Office of the Dean of Students who will be able to answer any questions you may have.

**Email:** [Community@herts.ac.uk](mailto:Community@herts.ac.uk)

**Telephone:** 01707 285165

**Emma Lewis:**  
Community Liaison and Support Officer

**Geraldine Ward:**  
Dean of Students

# What makes a good Landlord/Managing Agent?

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Ask around – there is nothing better than personal experience. Obviously you have to take into account differences of opinion and how individuals react to situations but if the evidence is based on several opinions drawing the same conclusion this has to be a reliable source.



Be prepared to do your homework and ask yourself some questions

1. Are they recommended?
2. Do they belong to an association?  
Such as:

Partnership Accreditation for Landlords (PAL) [www.pal-online.org.uk](http://www.pal-online.org.uk)

The National Landlords Association (NLA) [www.landlords.org.uk/index.htm](http://www.landlords.org.uk/index.htm)

The Property Ombudsman Association (TPO formerly OEA) [www.tpos.co.uk/make\\_complaint\\_rents.htm](http://www.tpos.co.uk/make_complaint_rents.htm)

The National Approved Letting Scheme (NALS) [www.nalscheme.co.uk/frameset.htm](http://www.nalscheme.co.uk/frameset.htm)

The above national associations provide a benchmark for standards regarding the management of properties.

With regards to the TPO there is a complaints procedure in place.

3. Do you find them helpful and easy to approach?
4. Are they rushing you into making decisions?
5. Do they explain everything clearly?

**“Ask around – there is nothing better than personal experience”**

Ultimately it's up to you to do your research but please bear in mind the amount of money you are handing over for your accommodation and the time spent at this address. The relationship with your landlord/letting agent needs to be one of mutual respect – make sure your decision is the right one.





### ROOM RENTAL

This is a legally binding agreement. It is intended to be a representation of the actual terms of the agreement between the parties. All parties shall agree to the terms of this agreement.

RENTAL UNIT LOCATED AT:

(Address)

DARTIES

Landlord/Principal Tenant

(Name)

Tenant

(Name)

TERMS

This agreement is subject to the terms and conditions of the rental agreement or lease agreement. If the terms and conditions of the rental agreement or lease agreement are not included in this agreement, they shall be deemed to be incorporated by reference into this agreement.

Witnessed by: \_\_\_\_\_

# What to be aware of when looking at accommodation

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## Research

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All students are advised to do their research and shop around. Learn about tenancy agreements and deposit schemes prior to viewing.

**Ask the letting agent/ landlord lots of questions and don't be pushed into signing anything you're not sure of; once you've signed this will be a legally binding contract!**

Remember this is going to be your home for a year and you'll be paying good money for it. Know your rights!!! Ask the current tenants if they've had any problems – will you have the same or can they be avoided?

## Location

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South Hatfield consists of old style houses therefore have a greater possibility of defects. More awareness of structural defects such as rising damp will prevent issues at a later date. Student lets are evenly spread throughout the community.

Salisbury Village; affectionately known as 'Bovis'. This area is adjacent to de Havilland Campus. The houses are new and from the upper end of the price band. They are generally made up of flats and three storey town houses. Students often make the mistake of thinking that this area is a student village but you will be living in a community with families, retired and working couples and individuals.



# Property House Hunting Checklist

Address 1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address 2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address 3 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Gas and Electric

	Address	1	2	3
1. Is there a copy of a GASAFE certificate for the gas appliances?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is the heating in the house adequate for the winter months?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do the electric/gas fires work?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Does the cooker work?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have the electrical fittings and appliances been checked? (ask for certificates)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Plumbing

	Address	1	2	3
6. Do all the sinks drain?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have you tried all the taps?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Does the toilet flush or leak?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Does the shower work properly or leak?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Security

	Address	1	2	3
10. Is the house secure?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Are all external doors solid?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Do all the downstairs windows shut securely?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Do all external doors close properly and have working locks?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Fire Safety

	Address	1	2	3
14. Does the house have working smoke detectors?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. In the event of a fire are there accessible escape routes?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Is there a fire alarm?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Is there a fire blanket and extinguisher?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





## *Furniture*

	Address	1	2	3
18. Has the house enough furniture for the occupants?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Is there enough space in the kitchen to store and prepare food?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Does any of the furniture belong to the existing tenants?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Is the fridge/freezer big enough?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Is all the furniture in good condition?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Does the sofa meet with the fire regulations?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Are there any signs of pests (mouse droppings, slug trails, fleas)?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## *Money*

	Address	1	2	3
25. Who is responsible for the water charges?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. What energy rating has the house?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Are you jointly liable with the other tenants?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



*Agreements*

	Address	1	2	3
28. What type of contract is the tenancy (joint or individual)?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Have you talked to the previous tenants about any problems?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



*Owner*

	Address	1	2	3
30. Is the Owner a PAL accredited landlord?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Is the owner or letting agent a member of the NLA/TPO/OEA/NALS? (Recognised national associations promoting best practice)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*The Property*

	Address	1	2	3
32. Are there any signs of damp?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Have the gutters got plants growing out of them?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Are the drains clear?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Is any of the woodwork rotting or unsafe?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. Are there signs of pests i.e. mouse droppings, slug trails?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. Does the property look well-managed?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. Is the property/garden dirty/unkept?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## *Once you have found your chosen property...Remember!!*

1. Read through everything before signing!
2. Don't be rushed into a decision if you are unsure!
3. You should not be expected to sign the tenancy agreement until just before you move in!
4. Get everything and put everything in writing!

Contact your Community Liaison and Support Officer Emma Lewis to answer any queries or concerns on **01707 285165** or **Community@herts.ac.uk**.



## *Reservation Fee*

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When you are searching for a property and find one, you may be asked for a 'Reservation Fee'. This is non-refundable! The agency will then keep the property off the market while the necessary security and credit checks take place. This fee is usually the value of two weeks' rent and may be deducted from the deposit. It may not be fully refunded if the applicant fails the security checks. An agency may use the reservation fee to pay for administration costs or as stated, deduct it from the deposit payable at the commencement of the tenancy. Agency fees should be transparent and inform you exactly what they are for. If they are not helpful then be very cautious about whether you should be signing an agreement!

## *Agency Fees*

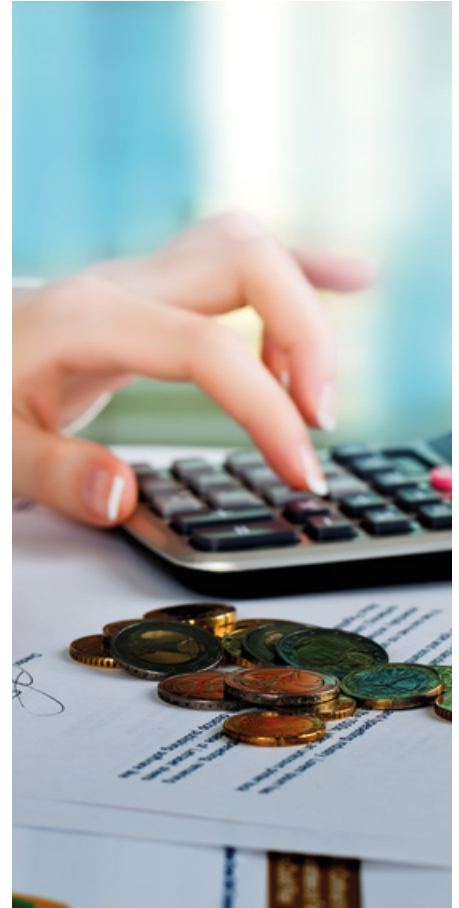
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Research the agencies in the area as they will all charge different fees. Make sure you have in writing what it is for and whether it is refundable if the tenancy does not proceed.

## *Administration Fee*

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The agency charges an administrative fee to cover the costs of credit checks and drawing up the tenancy contract as it is a legal contract. The amount can vary considerably.







# RENTAL AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT is made this \_\_\_\_\_

called Owner, and \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date) between \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_ (Address), hereinafter \_\_\_\_\_ (Address), h\_\_\_\_\_

# Tenancy Deposit

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## Protection (TDP)

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Landlords are required by law to protect deposits with a Government Authorised Scheme. This will help to safeguard your money and also offers an Independent Adjudication Service in the event of a dispute. Your deposit is protected under the TDP to ensure that you receive all or part of your deposit back at the end of your tenancy when you are entitled to it. Disputes are easier to resolve under the schemes and tenants are encouraged to look after the property whilst they are living there. When your landlord/ letting agent takes your deposit they must be protected by one of three government schemes. Within 30 days you must be provided with information telling you how your money is being protected including

- Contact details of tenancy deposit scheme used
- Contact details of the landlord
- Information explaining the purpose of the dispute

- How to apply for the release of the deposit
- What to do in the event of a dispute

At the end of the tenancy the condition and contents of the property should be checked against the Inventory list as agreed and checked at the start of the tenancy. The landlord or agent then agrees with the tenant how much of the deposit will be returned. It is important to remember that the deposit is first and foremost the tenant's money: this remains the case until the landlord can justify their claim to it. The onus is on the landlord to show why they are entitled to claim money from the deposit. Their claim has to be supported with evidence to the breach of the tenancy agreement. For example photographic evidence of damaged contents should only show the items claimed for. For a guide to Tenancy Deposit, Disputes and Damages go to <https://www.gov.uk/tenancy-deposit-protection/overview>.

Please make sure you receive all relevant information regarding the TDP 30 days

after paying your deposit. Landlords are required by law to provide it. If you do not receive information within the required 30 days and find your deposit is not protected within one of the government schemes below, non-compliance may result in a penalty imposed on the landlord, of between one and three times the deposit paid. Seek legal advice by contacting the Students' Union Advice and Support Centre (ASC). Free legal advice sessions are available (appointment required) Wednesday afternoons, during term-time. The ASC is based on the Ground Floor of Hutton Hub, College Lane Campus and can be contacted Monday – Friday on **01707 285022** or [asc@herts.ac.uk](mailto:asc@herts.ac.uk). Alternatively, you may like to visit the Citizens Advice in Hatfield Town Centre.

Below are some useful Deposit Scheme websites offering additional information:

- Unipol Website: <http://www.unipol.leeds.ac.uk/Leeds/IFS/Deposits/default.asp>

- Deposit Protection Service:  
[www.depositprotection.com](http://www.depositprotection.com)
- My Deposits (England & Wales):  
[www.mydeposits.co.uk](http://www.mydeposits.co.uk)
- Tenancy Deposit Scheme:  
[www.thedisputeservice.co.uk](http://www.thedisputeservice.co.uk)

## *Fixed Term Tenancy Agreements*

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Most landlords and letting agents use fixed term, Assured Shorthold Tenancies (AST). The term has to be at least six months or it is not an AST. Student AST's are usually 10-12 month periods. Once you have signed the tenancy you are

**It is important to read everything before signing to ensure there are no hidden agendas. Remember – if you are unsure, ask advice before you sign!**

liable to pay the rent for the full stated term. There is no way out unless there is a specific get-out clause which is highly unlikely. An AST provides you with exclusive possession of the property. You have a right to live there peacefully without harassment from the landlord or letting agent. They can have access to carry out repairs however they must give you at least 24 hours' notice.

## *Joint Tenancy Agreements*

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These are fixed term ASTs and have the names of all those living in the property. Landlords should not be using joint tenancies on houses where the rooms have been let separately. Please beware of renting houses with individuals you don't know as you will be liable to pay their rent if they fall into arrears. Joint tenancies are only suitable for groups who know each other. If any friends fail to sign the agreement and decide not to move in, all those who have signed will be liable to pay their portion of the rent. Students who move in accept the terms of the agreement even if they have not signed.







## Guarantors

Many landlords and letting agents ask for you to provide a guarantor. In most cases, parents or guardians fit the bill. If your parents sign to be your guarantor they will be liable for your financial commitments under the tenancy agreement.

**It is important to understand that where a tenancy has joint liability then a guarantor will be responsible for any tenant who defaults in their rent or payment for damages.**

It is advised that you should never ask your parents or guardian to be a guarantor where the agreement does not specifically limit their liability to your proportion of the rent and damages.

## Council Tax Exemption

If all tenants are full-time students then the property is exempt from Council Tax. If one person is not or they are part-time then the property will have to pay 75%. You are a student from the point of registration to the end of your course. If you receive a Council Tax Demand in the summer months between academic years you are still exempt. Council Tax Exemption Certificate requests are fully online via your Study Record. More information can be found at: <https://ask.herts.ac.uk/council-tax-exemption>.

Once you have completed your request and registration/self-enrolment online and swiped your ID card on campus, a certificate will be emailed to the council you have selected and confirmation will be sent to you. Complete your online request as soon as your tenancy begins. If you move in before September and then go home for the summer months you might come back finding a Council tax demand. Get it sorted!! If your tenancy ends after you have graduated you will be liable for Council Tax for the relevant months.



## Housemates

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Give lots of thought to who you want to share with. Just because you got on in halls doesn't mean you will in a house off-campus. Any annoying habits will be magnified – will you be able to ignore them still or are they going to grate? You won't have cleaners for your bathrooms or kitchens and you have to be responsible for bills being paid. Sometimes a letting agent will ask for a lead tenant with whom they will communicate through. This person will be responsible for ensuring

all information is passed to all tenants and they usually take responsibility for collecting the monies to pay bills. There are no golden rules for a successful house share. In theory a mix of males and females tends to work best however one female in an all male house is probably not a good idea. Also consider that where you get on in a group doesn't mean you get on with everyone as an individual – could this create a problem? Be careful when taking on someone not known to the main group.

We have had problems with housemates not getting on with extra persons. This person can sometimes feel isolated from the group or sometimes create problems as they have entirely different priorities.

**Remember most tenancies are fixed term tenancies meaning the only way out is to find another student to replace you which on average is very difficult.**





# Moving In Checklist

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## In addition to your Inventory

### General

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- 1. Have you identified and put your own postcode on all your valuables? ☐
- 2. Have you been given a copy of the contract you have signed? ☐
- 3. Make sure you have checked the inventory ☐
- 4. Do you have full contact details of the landlord? You are legally entitled even if the house is managed by a letting agent. ☐
- 5. Do you have a number to contact in an emergency? ☐

### Cleanliness

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- 6. Was the house clean when you arrived? ☐
- 7. If it wasn't clean have you told the owner in writing? ☐
- 8. Are the drains clear? ☐

### Escape

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- 9. If there was a fire in the main access passageways of the house, could you get out? ☐

### Repairs

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- 10. Do any repairs need doing? ☐
- 11. Have you told the owner in writing what needs doing? ☐

### Decorating

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- 12. Does any decorating need doing? ☐

### Utilities

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- 13. Have you read your gas and electricity meters on the day you moved in? ☐
- 14. Have you registered the gas and electric in your names? ☐



15. Can you find the stop taps of water, gas and electricity? ☐
16. Do you have the gas safety certificate located near the boiler? ☐

## *Insurance*

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17. Have you thought about insurance? ☐

## *Council Tax*

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18. Have you completed your online Council Tax Exemption? ☐

Your house should be ready for you to move in at the start of your tenancy agreement. A deep clean should have been done if not then within the first few days with prior arrangement agreeable to you. If you are not happy then take photographs and get in touch with you landlord/letting agent straight away. It is important to keep any agreed arrangements with your landlord or letting agent in writing (email is sufficient). This will act as useful evidence in the future, if required.

If they do not agree to put the house in order or the work is not carried out in a reasonable time then contact your Students' Union Advice and Support Centre and make an appointment with the Legal Advisor who will advise you on your rights. Or contact your Community Liaison Officer, **01707 285165, [Community@herts.ac.uk](mailto:Community@herts.ac.uk)**

# Inventories

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Some landlords/letting agents will provide you with an inventory (list of furniture, fittings and equipment). If you have been given an inventory, go through it carefully and note any items missing, damaged or worn. If an inventory has not been provided, make one yourself, again noting any damaged or worn items. When your inventory check is complete, sign and date it; send a copy to your landlord and keep one yourself. Ask your landlord to sign a copy of the inventory and return to you.

## **What to do when issues arise.**

Whether the issues are to do with the house not being clean when you first moved in, that the inventory wasn't correct or that you have a repair to report at any time during your tenancy you must always put the complaint in writing and keep a copy or email the landlord/letting agent. If this is ignored then send a reminder letter informing them you will seek advice if a response is not received in 48 hours.

It is always advisable to file safely any promises and resolutions to issues you have raised just in case there is any dispute at a later date.



# Recommended Repair Response Times (provided by the Local Authority)

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Under normal circumstances the following repairs completion performance standards should be achieved:

## *Priority One – Emergency repairs – within 24 hours*

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Any repairs required in order to avoid a danger to health, risk to the safety of residents or serious damage to buildings or internal contents. In circumstances where this is not practicable, landlords will make best temporary arrangements.

Examples include:

- Damage that puts people or buildings at serious risk
- Total loss of heating in winter months
- Total loss of gas supply
- Total loss of electrical power
- Loss of water supply or a burst water main
- Serious water leaks/flooding

- Insecure outside doors or windows
- Blocked or leaking foul drain or soil stack
- Blocked or no-flushing toilet (if the only toilet in the property)
- Minor plumbing leaks
- Minor electrical faults
- Defective flooring or stair treads if causing trip hazard

## *Priority Two – Urgent repairs – within 3 working days*

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Repairs to defects, which materially affect the comfort or convenience of the residents

Examples include:

- Blocked drains, sinks, basins and toilets (where there is another one working in the property)
- Total loss of hot water in summer months (except vulnerable households)

## *Priority Three – Routine repairs – within 30 days*

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Reactive repairs not falling within the above categories – within 30 working days of report of defect.

Examples include:

- General joinery repairs, for example easing/adjusting doors and windows
- Non-urgent electrical work not listed above

## Other useful facts:

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### *Deliveries*

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Please be aware of deliveries which are not addressed to anyone on the tenancy agreement. Do not sign for parcels if the person does not live in the property. We have found in previous years that criminals use student let properties as a means to commit credit card fraud. You don't want to find yourself caught up in any criminal investigations. Additionally if you receive post addressed to 'The Occupant' – open it!!



### *Mortgage Repossessions*

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A lender must send notice to the property addressed to 'The Occupiers', within five working days of being notified by the court of the hearing date. This ensures you have the opportunity to take advice about the mortgage possession claim. You should have around three weeks' notice before the date of the hearing. If you are aware of the repossession you may be able to suspend the order for a short time to allow you to find alternative accommodation.



### *Off campus*

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#### **Crimestoppers**

(can be called anonymously)  
0800 555 111

#### **Domestic Violence Helpline**

0908 2000247

#### **Drinkline, Advice on sensible drinking and alcohol misuse**

0800 917 8282

#### **Non-emergency Police contact**

101

#### **University Police Officer**

101

#### **Immoblilise Phone Crime,**

to register your mobile phone and what to do if it is stolen

08701 123 123

[www.immoblilise.com](http://www.immoblilise.com)



# Useful Contacts

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## **Emma Lewis - Community Liaison and Support Officer**

community@herts.ac.uk

01707 285165

- Off-campus Student Support
- Neighbourhood disputes
- Landlord/letting agent disputes
- Housemates disputes
- General Housing Advice

## **Students' Union Advice and Support Centre**

asc@herts.ac.uk

01707 285022

The Advice and Support Centre (ASC) is a free and confidential support service based at UHSU. They can help with a variety of issues, including housing, personal, academic, social and health matters. They also provide a legal advisory service on a Wednesday afternoon.

## **Community and Housing Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council**

housingandcommunity@welhat.gov.uk

01707 357673

Environmental Health are legal enforcers of the Housing Law 2004. They have the powers to ensure landlords and managing agents are working within the law.

## **Citizens Advice**

Queensway House

Queensway

Town Centre, Hatfield

www.welwynhatfieldcab.org.uk

03444 111 444

Monday – Friday 10.00 – 4.00pm

General Advice on just about anything.

# Important Information

Use the table below to save all the information related to your accommodation.

Tenancy Deposit	Reference	Contact Details
TDS (see info above):		

Contents Insurance	Policy Number	Contact Details
Company:		

Landlord/ Letting Agent	Telephone Number	Email Address

# Moving Out Checklist

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## Worried about getting your Deposit back?

To ensure you get the maximum of your housing deposit returned to you use the check list below. Students seriously underestimate the cost of repairs and simple cleaning costs. Those managing properties enlist the services of professional cleaners, builders and other maintenance individuals to bring a property up to standard and they will pass this cost onto you plus an administration charge. They can also take action to recover costs exceeding the total amount of paid in deposits. Those of you who lived on campus in your first year will also know that returning you keys late may incur costs such as further rent charges and changing locks.

Ask your letting agent for an inspection visit three weeks prior to your moving out. Be present at the time so you can agree any work you need to do with the owner/ agent. Before the inspection ask for a checklist of what they expect you to do.

If you are paying the energy and telephone bills they need to be sorted out. You should contact the utility companies and arrange for final reading to be taken.

**It is your responsibility to tell utility companies you are moving out and to have your name taken off the bills.**

Arrange a house meeting to divide the work between you. Individuals should be responsible for their own rooms but come to an arrangement for the communal areas. Try not to leave individually and leave the responsibility on one person. You all have an interest in the property and want your deposits back.

## End of year parties:

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Please be considerate when arranging parties or social gatherings at any time

of the year. Parties can result in horrendous clean-ups and in some cases damage. These costs will be passed on to you as the tenant. Parties can also result in the University issuing financial penalties for bringing the University into disrepute, which could be up to £200 in some cases! Remember, the Police or Environmental Health may arrive on your doorstep if things get out of hand!



# *Tenancy Deposit Protection- End of Tenancy:*

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Your deposit should be returned to you within 10 days of you agreeing with your landlord the amount to be returned. If you disagree or the explanation for withholding an amount is unacceptable then you have 3 months from the date you moved out to register your dispute with the relevant TDP scheme.

To give you an idea of what an owner will expect:

## **Bedroom not properly cleaned.**

Cleaning the room would cost about £20 and moving the furniture back to the appropriate room could cost a further £20-£30.

## **Clean all communal areas.**

To clean up the coffee stains and remove the rubbish from this table could cost £5. There also may be a call out charge.

## **Clean your toilet regularly.**

This could cost £40 to descale otherwise.

## **A kitchen left in very bad condition.**

To return this kitchen to a good condition would cost about £120.

## **Fridge/freezer not defrosted.**

To have this defrosted, the water mopped up and wiped clean would cost about £40.

## **Cooker not cleaned.**

To clean a cooker in a very bad condition can cost up to £95.

## **Bag it and bin it.**

This would cost you over £60 to remove.

## **Carpets.**

Depends on the size of the room and type of carpet, but in the carpet is of industrial contract quality then a cost of £200-£400 is possible.

## **Vacuum all communal areas.**

This corridor could cost £20 to have cleaned commercially. Have you used any fire equipment inappropriately - these fire extinguishers cost £30 each to refill.

## **Lost Keys.**

The locks and all keys may have to be replaced at very short notice (for incoming tenants) and this can cost around £200.





**Remember your deposit should be held in one of three tenancy deposit schemes. Your agent/ landlord should have informed you which one it was. Please find links to these schemes below:**

- Deposit Protection Service:  
**[www.depositprotection.com](http://www.depositprotection.com)**
- My Deposits (England & Wales):  
**[www.mydeposits.co.uk](http://www.mydeposits.co.uk)**
- Tenancy Deposit Scheme:  
**[www.thedisputeservice.co.uk](http://www.thedisputeservice.co.uk)**

General information can be found at:  
**[www.direct.gov.uk/en/TenancyDeposit](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/TenancyDeposit)**

# Deposit checklist

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## Kitchen

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- 1. The cooker including the oven to be clean and check it's not missing anything ☐
- 2. The fridge/freezer is empty – defrosted – cleaned– switched off with the door left open ☐
- 3. All surfaces and floor cleaned ☐
- 4. Cupboards emptied and wiped clean ☐
- 5. Bins emptied ☐

## Lounge and Passageways

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- 6. All communal areas have been vacuumed ☐
- 7. All rubbish has been removed ☐

## Bedrooms

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- 8. All rooms have been vacuumed ☐
- 9. All personal possessions removed ☐

- 10. All posters, blue tack and sellotape removed ☐
- 11. All rubbish is removed ☐
- 12. All furniture that was in the room at the beginning of the tenancy has been put back ☐
- 13. The curtains are hung properly ☐
- 14. Paintwork and window sills have been wiped ☐
- 15. Furniture is empty and polished ☐

## Bathroom

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- 16. The toilet, sink and bath have been cleaned ☐
- 17. All surfaces are clean including floor ☐
- 18. All toiletries have been removed and all bins emptied ☐

## Garden

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- 19. All rubbish placed in relevant bins ready for collection ☐



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