



### Your Guide to Private Housing – Beyond University



#### What we will cover:

- Your housing journey, from house-hunting to signing an agreement and being a tenant
- How to make good housing choices
- What to look out for (do's and don'ts)
- How the WSU Advice Centre can support you





#### Meet the Advice Team!



Charlotte Cowdell
Advice Centre Manager



**Heather Groves Welfare Advisor** 



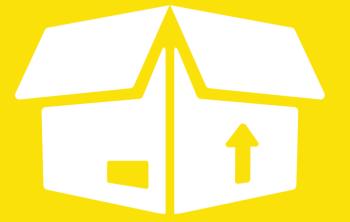
Vas Marinos Welfare Advisor



Mollie Gates
Welfare Advisor







### **Moving Out**

Follow the Advice Centre's moving out checklist - you can find this on our website!



## Moving Out To Do List



- Follow the landlord/agent's 'check out' procedure if they have one
- Clean ALL parts of the property including microwave, oven etc
- Take photographs/video to show condition of property
- Remove <u>ALL</u> belongings and rubbish
- Notify the utility companies you are leaving and give them final meter readings
- Inform Council Tax as soon as you have moved out
- Redirect your post







### **Deposit Return**

Contact the Advice Centre if your deposit is not returned or you want to dispute any charges



# **End of Tenancy**Deposit Return



 You should have your deposit returned within 10 days once an agreement has been met

#### If you disagree with any charges being issued:

- Issue a dispute with your deposit protection scheme
- Include video/photo evidence to show condition of property which will strengthen your dispute
- An adjudicator will make an end decision based on evidence provided

Important: If your landlord/agent has <u>not</u> protected your deposit, you are able to take them to court







### Househunting

Make sure to do your research and follow the Advice Centre's useful tips





### What makes house-hunting successful?

# Planning Ahead



# House-Hunting Planning



- What type of tenancy do you want to sign? Joint vs Individual
- Location- where suits you best? Check local transport links
- Type of property- house, flat, houseshare
- Budget- consider costs you need to pay once you're not a student

Top Tip: Don't panic! Take your time and don't rush into signing an agreement. Once signed, you will be liable for the rent.





## House-Hunting Where to look



- Rightmove- Private renting
- Spare Room- Private renting
- Directly through local letting agents

Important: Do your research before making a final decision. Check for reviews







Housing scams are becoming more common each year.

- Never pay a deposit or sign a tenancy before viewing a property. Some agents offer online viewings
- Be cautious when looking at properties advertised on social media
- ALWAYS check the property exists by putting the address into Google Maps or the Royal Mail website
- Never let a landlord/letting agent keep your ID passport or visa documents



# House-Hunting Choosing Accommodation



 Variety of providers to choose from & wide range of conditions/styles to choose from

- All landlords are expected to meet legal standards. Make sure you know what these legal obligations are
- Seek a recommendation from former tenants and view the property before you sign the contract
- Consider length of tenancy none student tenancies are often a minimum
   of 6 months

### Found a property: First steps and tips



- Read all the information about the property- rooms, communal spaces, costs
- Verify the landlords/agent details
- Check affordability
- Look at the Energy Performance Certificate
- Arrange a viewing
- Who will be managing the property?
- Do you need a Guarantor?



### Found a property: Understanding the costs



- Understand the cost before you pay anything! Rent, bills (gas, electricity, water, internet), deposit
- The only legitimate fees agents can charge are:
  - Rent in advance
  - Tenancy Deposit
  - Refundable Holding Deposit (cannot exceed 1 weeks' worth of rent terms apply)

Important: What needs to be paid and when?







## Tenancy Agreement Check

Get an Advisor to check your tenancy agreement before signing it

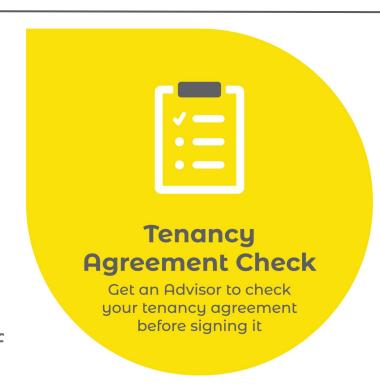


# Found a property: Tenancy Agreement



- A tenancy agreement is legally binding
- Fixed term Check length of agreement
- Consider the type of agreement Joint & Several V.S. Sole Tenant
- No break clause Not permitted to leave the contract early. If you do – replacement tenant

**Top Tip:** If you're unsure about something- contact The Advice Centre





# Signing an agreement: What happens after?



- You should receive:
  - The Governments 'How to Rent' Guide
  - Energy Performance Certificate
  - Deposit Protection Certificate (this <u>must</u> be protected and provided within 30 days after paying the full deposit)
  - Gas Safety Certificate







### **Moving In**

Follow the Advice Centre's moving in checklist - you can find this on our website!



#### Move In Day: To Do List



- Check for the inventory & record the condition of the property take photos/videos
- Report any damages that need repairing
- Check you have been given a gas safety certificate
- Take meter readings

**Common Mistake!** Not taking pictures/videos of property when moving in and/or not checking if the inventory is correct





## Throughout the tenancy: To Do List



- Report any maintenance issues to the letting agent straight away
- Take photos/videos & keep issues documented
- Communicate with letting agent in written format, e.g. emails

Common Mistake! Not reporting issues straight away.







### **Accessing Help**

Get advice as soon as you start experiencing any issues





### If things go wrong...

- Attempt to informally resolve (if possible)
- If informal resolution not possible or successful, there may be more formal options
- Access professional support WSU Advice Centre

**Common Mistake!** Not accessing support straight away. The sooner we know, the more we can help.







# Tips for Housing Beyond University





- Do your research! Don't sign a contract without viewing the property or getting your tenancy agreement checked
- Lots of private landlords will ask for pay slips or guarantors know your options
- Consider length of tenancy agreement different timeframes compared to Uni accommodation
- Learn new costs such as council tax, content insurance, utilities
- Make sure you access help!





### Myth Busting





My bills are capped so this means I won't have to pay anything towards bills during the tenancy

It's fine if I don't like my accommodation, I can just end my tenancy agreement!

I don't need to pay council tax as a graduate





### Where can help me after University?

**SU Advice Centre** 

**SHELTER** 

**Citizens Advice** 





### How can The Advice Centre support you?

Independent advice, support & representation on issues affecting your student experience

- > Impartial
- Confidential
- Professional
- > Free
- Information & Empowerment Service

#### How to get in touch:

Online Enquiry Form on the SU website







### Thank you for listening!

Good Luck House Hunting!

