



Though exciting, moving out on your own can be as expensive as it is daunting - fear not, our comprehensive student accommodation guide covers everything you need to know.

Choosing who you want to share with

The first thing to consider when deciding to move into private rented accommodation is who you want to share with – remember as most contracts in Selly Oak are for a twelve month period you want to make sure it's people who you think you can spend at least a year living with. Yes everyone (including yourself!) has annoying habits but just be sure you can put up living with these habits for a whole year!

Group Size

In addition to the above work out how many of your friends you want to share with – deciding this before beginning to property search will save you a lot of wasted time, effort and stress further down the line.

Getting the Timing Right

Deciding when to start looking for your student property is just as important as the above items. Although you may have been warned to avoid signing early be aware that properties are let on a first come first served basis. This isn't to say there won't be properties to let throughout the year, however it's obvious to state the better quality properties will get snapped up early so don't delay unnecessarily. This isn't a pressure technique to make you sign – if unsure ask friends who have already gone through the process for clarification of this.

Where to Look

We are a family business and have been involved with letting houses for decades. You can search our website which you are now on, give us a call to see what we have available or pop into our offices situated on the main Bristol Road just up from the University (by the Bristol Pear pub). We have photos of all of our properties, detailed descriptions and newly added videos of many. We have large screen TV's in the office where you can view these if you prefer. When you short list some you want to view let us know and we will arrange a mutually convenient time to meet and show you them.

Searching for the Right House

Everyone will have different priorities and attributes they look for when looking for a house. However, it's worth considering the following when searching:

- **Location** – Decide where you want to live. Usually (but not always) the closer you live to the University the more rent you will pay. It's worth considering how far you want to walk on those cold winter days or whether you drive or can car share perhaps. Also bear in mind that some of the properties may be further away but are near the Train Station and are actually quicker commutes to the University!

- Price – Decide on a budget you can afford and stick with it. You don't want to be struggling to pay for your rent every month which can bring unnecessary added stress. Rents can range between £50 - £100 per week so there is a price point to suit everyone.
- Size of rooms, number of bathrooms etc. – When viewing make sure you are happy with the size of the rooms – larger rooms can give you added space when you need it but as you may be paying a higher rent for these it's worth considering just how much time you will actually be spending in it. In addition, make sure there are sufficient bathrooms, smaller houses will usually have one bathroom, 5 or more bed houses will probably have two and the bigger houses will possibly have three.
- Added Extras! – More landlords are now supplying large wall mounted TV's in communal areas and some even provide each bedroom with them! In addition, some houses will have broadband connections in each bedroom, dishwashers and tumble dryers in kitchens and large cooker ranges and American style fridge freezers. We even have properties with purpose brick built BBQ's, cycle huts and summer houses!

Signing up for a Property

Once you have decided on a property it's time to sort out the admin side of things – but you needn't worry it's all actually pretty simple! All you need to do is make an appointment to come into our office and go through a few things. You will all need to read through our Tenancy Agreement and sign it. A copy of this is available on our website or a hard copy on request. This is provided so you can always get it checked by an independent person, perhaps the University or your parents – to give you added peace of mind.

In addition, you will fill out our tenant contact sheet so we have all your contact details and pay a deposit/retainer of £300.00. This will then be registered with the relevant government backed tenancy deposit scheme at the beginning of your tenancy. For properties which we manage we will give you our bank details so you can set up your monthly rental debits from your account or alternatively for properties where the landlord manages the property themselves we will ask you forward payment to us for the first month's rent one month prior to the beginning of your tenancy.....and that's it – not too daunting really!

We like to think of ourselves as a friendly agent so if you just want a chat, some general advice or maybe query on a specific property just pop in, email us or give us a call.....that's what we're here for!