



MEET THE LANDLORD

UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER

MEET THE LANDLORD

August 2007

LANDLORDS – DO YOU STILL HAVE ROOMS TO LET FOR SEPTEMBER ?

The University of Worcester is one of the fastest-growing universities in the UK.

If you have any rooms available to let for the next academic year starting September 2007 you are welcome to come along to one of our **CLEARING** EVENTS. These take place immediately after the A level results are announced and at a time when many prospective students will be visiting the University to secure a place for September.

Finding the right accommodation is crucial to their decision, as every parent will understand. A happy and comfortable environment is very important and if you can offer any rooms, then you would be welcome to come along and to arrange a convenient time for the students and their parents to view the property.

CLEARING EVENTS TAKE PLACE ON:

FRIDAY 17 AUGUST 1 – 3PM

SATURDAY 18 AUGUST 1 – 3PM

WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST 1 – 3PM

THURSDAY 23 AUGUST 1 – 3PM

If you would like to come along, or would like to simply display information about your property, please do get in touch.

Call Debbie Naylor on 01905 855369 or

e-mail: d.naylor@worc.ac.uk



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Buoyant Market

Recruitment at the University has been extremely successful and this year has seen an unprecedented 35% increase in applications. As a result there has been a strong demand for rented accommodation suitable for students, which is great news for landlords. This demand is set to continue as students progress through their courses and as more new courses are introduced.

If you are thinking of expanding your property portfolio or maybe encouraging others to enter the student let market, do feel free to consult our team in the Accommodation Office. They will be able to offer you good advice which will ensure that any potential properties are suitable.



This newsletter has been produced by The University of Worcester in partnership with Worcester City Council.

Meet the Team !



Jenny King

The busy Accommodation Office at the University is managed by Judith Bick, who has a wealth of knowledge on current housing issues particularly relating to the student let market. She can give you helpful advice on a range of topics which might be of concern, such as which legislation is relevant to your property, what rents you might expect to achieve, which locations might rent most easily and so on.

Judith is assisted by Jenny King, who joined the team this year, and is already making a big contribution to the work of this busy office. Jenny is no stranger to the housing market, having worked for social housing in different fields over the last five years. Jenny is well qualified with

an HNC in Housing, which is widely recognised throughout the industry. Jenny also has experience in mentoring and supporting young people and has a qualification in Youth and Community Work. Jenny says "This has been a very exciting time to join the University and I am really enjoying working alongside both landlords and students."

If you need any help or advice, feel free to get in touch with either Judith or Jenny on 01905 855300 or e-mail:

accommodation@worc.ac.uk



studentpad.co.uk goes live in Worcester

Landlords can now take advantage of this brand new internet based service which aims to save you time and money. As a landlord, you can submit and amend your property details over the web and details, once vetted, are updated instantly so you stay in control ! You will be given an individual password to enable you to access your property. There are photos of properties, maps showing where they are, and all of the other essential information like property type, how many rooms are still available, rents, deposits and much more.

studentpad is very popular with students too because they can access details from anywhere they choose 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and know that it is the very latest information so they don't waste time chasing rooms that are already let.

Check out studentpad.co.uk for yourself – there is lots of helpful ad-

vice for landlords and potential landlords, ranging from what to look out for when buying a property, tips on conveyancing, safety hints, tenancy agreements and a list of questions and answers to help you manage your properties.

There is also a useful Directory of Services which can offer help to landlords on things like tax advice, valuations, insurance and so on.

Contact the University Accommodation Office if there is any aspect of *studentpad* you would like to discuss or if you would like us to include any additional properties. 01905 855300 or e-mail:

accommodation@worc.ac.uk

www.worcester.ac.uk





Worcester City Council developments

Do you own an empty property?

Do you want to buy an empty property to renovate?

Worcester City Council is able to offer you a grant to assist you to bring your empty property back into use. The grant is generally available for repair works and improvements required to make the empty property meet the decent homes standard. This will include work such as

- Recovering of a leaking roof
- The provision of a bathroom
- Provision of kitchen facilities
- The provision of a damp proof course
- Replacement of dangerous electrical wiring

The provision of central heating

You can apply for an empty homes grant if:

- The empty property fails to meet the decent homes standard
- You are the owner of an empty property and

The property has been empty for over twelve months

The maximum grant is £10,000. The grant payable is 50% of the cost of the eligible work. The amount you will receive will be dependant on the quotes received for the eligible work. Please note this is a discretionary grant and subject to council funding. There are

conditions under which this grant is provided. Owners will be expected to make their property available for the Deposit Guarantee Scheme, Smart move or Safe Rent (or other relevant Scheme) for a minimum of two years and must meet all regulations laid down by these schemes. The owner must also give an undertaking that the property will be available for rent for a further three years.

If you require any further information or advice please do not hesitate to contact Louise Gittins on 01905 722373



Worcester City Council works closely with The University of Worcester

Saving Money, Energy Efficiency

Here is an opportunity to save money, improve your property and increase its rental appeal **ALL IN ONE GO!!!** As a landlord you will appreciate that with the expanding student accommodation market in Worcester, and the increased interest in saving energy in general, a well insulated house can be a great selling point to letting your property, not just to the students but the parents as well who may end up paying the utility bills!.

And now to make things easier we are working with Hestia, who are managed by the Energy Saving Trust on behalf of the Government, to bring to you **100% grants for student tenants** (to be eligible, student rented properties must be part of the accreditation scheme).

The grants will cover:

- Loft insulation
- Cavity Wall insulation
- Hot water tank jackets

Draught proofing

For more details of how to apply for this grant please contact Barbara Sarbinowska at Worcester City Council on 01905 722272 or email bsarbinowska@worcester.gov.uk.



Tenancy Deposit Protection

Tenancy Deposit Protection (TDP) adds to measures, set out in the Housing Act 2004, to raise standards in the private rented sector. Those measures include licensing multiple occupancy homes and new safety rules. TDP applies to all new assured shorthold tenancies (ASTs) from 6 April 2007 in England and Wales, where a deposit is taken. ASTs are the usual tenancies made between a private landlord and tenants.

To avoid disputes going to court, each scheme is supported by an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) service, whose aim is to make disputes over the repayment of the deposit faster and cheaper to resolve.

There are two main aims:

1. To ensure good practice in deposit handling, so that when a tenant pays a deposit, and is entitled to get it back, he or she can be assured that this will happen.
2. To assist with the resolution of disputes by having an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) service. It will also encourage tenants and landlords to agree - at the start of the tenancy - the condition and contents of the property.

Tenancy Deposit Protection in summary

- Landlords are required to protect their tenants' deposits under a statutory tenancy deposit scheme.

- This means that deposits are safeguarded.
- If tenants have kept the property in good condition and paid the rent, and made sure that any other charges due under the tenancy are up to date, they will be able to get their deposit back.

The schemes offer a free service to assist in resolving disputes.

How does TDP work?

Landlords and letting agents can choose between two types of scheme: a custodial scheme or two insur-

Custodial scheme:

- The tenant pays the deposit to the landlord;
- The landlord pays the deposit into the scheme within 14 days of receipt;
- Within 14 days of receiving the deposit, the landlord must give the tenant specific information about the deposit and scheme;
- At the end of the tenancy, if the landlord and tenant agree how the deposit should be divided, the scheme will pay out in accordance with that agreement;
- If there is a dispute, the scheme will repay any undisputed amount with interest to the person entitled to it, and hold the disputed amount until the dispute is resolved;

The interest earned by deposits in the scheme will be used to pay for the running of the scheme. A proportion of the interest earned will be added to the deposit amount when it is returned to the person entitled to it.

Insurance-based scheme:

- The tenant pays the deposit to the landlord;
- The landlord retains the deposit but pays a fee to the scheme and the scheme insures against the landlord unlawfully retaining the deposit at the end of the tenancy;
- Within 14 days of receiving a deposit, the landlord must give the tenant specific information about the deposit and scheme;
- At the end of the tenancy, the landlord pays the tenant any part of the deposit that is not disputed;
- If there is a dispute over the repayment of any part of the deposit, the landlord must hand over the disputed amount to the scheme for safekeeping until the dispute is resolved;

If for any reason the landlord fails to comply, the scheme will ensure the return of such part of the deposit to the tenant as he is entitled to, and recover any part that it has to pay from the landlord.

Example: a tenant pays a deposit of £1000. At the end of the tenancy, the landlord says he wishes to keep £200 to pay for replacing damaged furniture. The remaining £800 will be returned to the tenant. The tenant disagrees, claiming the furniture was damaged when he moved in. Both agree to go to ADR, so the disputed £200 will be transferred by the landlord to the scheme administrator until the dispute is settled.

For insurance-based schemes, the deposit, or if there is a dispute, the part of it that is not disputed as being payable to the tenant, must be paid to him within 10 days of the landlord and tenant agreeing it should be paid. The disputed part must be paid within 10 days following notification of an ADR/court decision.

For more information about each scheme;

- The Deposit Protection Service (DPS) - visit www.depositprotection.com or call 0870 707 1 707.
- Tenancy Deposit Solutions Ltd (TDSL) - visit www.mydeposits.co.uk or call 0871 703 0552.

The Tenancy Deposit Scheme (TDS) - visit www.tds.gb.com or call 0845 226 7837.

Prescribed Information

Within 14 days of receiving the deposit, the landlord must provide specific information to the tenant.

Generic Information (which scheme must supply to landlord)	Tenancy-specific Information (to be completed by landlord and tenant)
Name, address and contact details of the scheme administrator of the tenancy deposit scheme that is safeguarding the deposit.	The amount of the deposit paid and the address of the property to which it relates
Name, address and contact details of the ADR service offered by the scheme for enabling disputes relating to the deposit to be resolved without recourse to the courts	Landlord's name, address and contact details
Information on the procedures applying for the release of the deposit (including in the event of a dispute).	Tenant(s) names, address(es) and contact details, including such details that should be used for the purposes of contacting the tenant(s) at the end of the tenancy
Procedures that apply under the scheme when either the landlord or tenant is not contactable at the end of the tenancy.	The name, address and contact details of any "relevant person" (any third party who has paid the deposit to the landlord on behalf of the tenant).
Standard information leaflet explaining how the deposit is protected by the Housing Act 2004 provisions. This leaflet will be provided to landlords by scheme administrators.	The circumstances when the landlord will be entitled to retain some or all of the deposit paid, by reference to the terms of the tenancy

The landlord is required to certify that the information he provides is correct to his knowledge and belief and must give the tenant the opportunity to sign the information by way of confirmation that the information is accurate to the best of the tenant's knowledge and belief.

WHEELED BINS FOR DOMESTIC REFUSE AND RECYCLING

An alternate-week wheeled bin system using two different bins is being introduced to households in Worcester. This started in October 2005. There will be four phases of introduction for the new arrangements; phase one and two have commenced for 2/3^{rds} of the city.

Bins will be emptied on **alternate weeks**; the general waste bin being collected one week, the recyclable waste bin the next week, and so on. **This means that each type of waste will need to be safely stored for two weeks.**

Details of the Wheeled Bin Scheme

For single properties, two bins are provided by the City Council; a 190 litre dark grey bin for residual waste and a 240 litre green bin for recyclable waste. Smaller 140 litre bins are available for sole occupants or small families that don't generate much waste. For multi-occupancy dwellings, we provide larger 1100 litre communal bins with a 660 litre size as an alternative where access is difficult.

The City Council has arranged a sole supplier for the provision of wheeled bins and developers/landlords should not source bins in anticipation of the scheme from anywhere else. Developers/landlords wishing to purchase bulk bins before the scheme is introduced or have specific difficulty with the size of bins should contact us (details at end). Each bin is fitted with a microchip. This helps us track where all the bins are and monitor the amount of waste being generated.

A minority of households that are not able to have wheeled bins will continue with the present sack system but will still be subject to the alternate week scheme.

As the new scheme is introduced, householders must continue to place out their refuse, now in wheeled bins, on the "curtilage" of their property ("curtilage" = edge / boundary / perimeter) normally at the front, on their day of collection, and by 7.00am. Where residents use a communal bin store (shared by 3 or more properties), we will collect the bin from that store.

In developments where bin stores are not provided, there must be made space available **on the property** for both types of wheeled bins to be stored by each householder. Bins should not be placed out for day to day storage on the public highway.

Bin Storage Areas and Access Requirements

Storage areas need to be within 25m of where the refuse vehicle can safely stop on the nearest highway and should be easily accessible for the collection crews avoiding steps, steep slopes/ramps and narrow alleyways (not less than 1500mm wide for bulk bins). All bin storage areas should have a suitable enclosure, e.g. wooden fencing, brick or concrete walls to contain the bins and prevent spillages from getting out. Enclosures should have double doors with a clear opening of at least 1500mm and with a mechanism to hold doors open during collection.

Where storage areas are secured, arrangements need to be made with us for the refuse collectors to gain access. Refuse can be collected any time between 7.00 and 17.00.

Space Allowance for Communal Bins

Developers and landlords should allow sufficient space for the number of bins required to hold residual and recyclable waste separately for 2 weeks for the number of dwellings being served. Our guidance is based on the assumption that one 1100 litre bin of mixed refuse could serve 4 flats/apartments for 2 weeks (all household waste generated), i.e. 275 litres per flat. The assumption allows for single or couple occupancy. Flats/apartments with families may require a higher storage capacity for refuse.

Therefore, for the new alternate week scheme, 16 flats would have 4 x 1100 litre bins; 2 for residual waste, 2 for recyclable waste. A combination of different bins can be arranged for any size of development. Sufficient space should be allowed for residents to access the bins and manoeuvring around as bins become full. The sizes of the bins supplied for the scheme are:

Continued over page.



**UNIVERSITY OF
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Working with you
to house our Students

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Orchard House
Farrier Street
Worcester
WR1 3BB
01905 722272

Kate Bailey
Principal Strategic Housing Officer

kbailey@worcester.gov.uk

WHEELED BINS FOR DOMESTIC REFUSE AND RECYCLING CONTINUED

Bin Type	Width	Depth	Height	Comments
140 litre dark grey plastic	480	550	1060	Standard issue for single flats. Available as alternative to 190 ltr for low occupancy households.
140 litre green plastic	480	550	1060	Standard issue for single flats. Available as alternative to 240 ltr for low occupancy households.
190 litre dark grey plastic	525	640	1060	Standard issue to most properties.
240 litre green plastic	575	730	1060	Standard issue to most properties.
660 litre dark grey plastic	1360	780	1190	Communal properties.
660 litre green plastic	1360	780	1190	Communal properties.
660 litre dark grey metal	1290	710	1300	Communal properties – high vandalism risk.
660 litre green metal	1290	710	1300	Communal properties – high vandalism risk.
1100 litre dark grey plastic	1360	1030	1350	Communal properties.
1100 litre green plastic	1360	1030	1350	Communal properties.
1100 litre dark grey metal	1290	990	1360	Communal properties – high vandalism risk.
1100 litre green metal	1290	990	1360	Communal properties – high vandalism risk.

Watch this space!

The University of Worcester is keen to strengthen its relationship with existing Private Landlords and to increase their numbers. We have set up a number of initiatives to work with Landlords and support them:

- **Meet the Landlord Fairs**
- **The implementation of Studentpad**
- **Additional staff in the Accommodation Office**

Katy Boom, Head of Facilities, k.boom@worc.ac.uk

Judith Bick, Residential & Venue Manager, j.bick@worc.ac.uk

Jenny King, Accommodation Administrator, j.king@worc.ac.uk

01905 855300

If you have any queries on licensing a property to rent please contact Worcester City Council

Chris Chapman 01905 722273

Louise Gittins 01905 722373

Barbara Sarbinowska 01905 722276

Further information concerning the above is available from:

Tim Allen

Technical Support Manager

Tel 01905 722487

tallen@cityofworcester.gov.uk

John Bond

Environmental Protection Officer

Tel 01905 722220

jbond@cityofworcester.gov.uk

